

# Elephant In The Room

## Counting Cul- ture: 21 to 67

By ELOISE MARTLAND

67 was voted the Word of the Year by Dictionary.com. 67 could be heard in the hallways and all around Milton High School at the beginning of the school year, but now it seems to be losing its popularity.

67 is slang, used by many, mostly teens and younger kids. But, as 67 is more talked about in the news and online, it is not surprising to hear 67 out of the mouth of an adult, especially one who spends time around kids.

67 began its road to fame as a song, when the artist Skrilla released a song called “Doot Doot” and it had the phrase 67 in it. Then, it became a meme on TikTok after a video about basketball players’ heights with Le-Malo Ball being six feet, seven inches went viral. People then started using it everywhere, whether it was in schools, online or just for fun.

But, what does 67 really mean? The answer is, nobody really knows. Freshman Julianna Perella says, “It really has no meaning,” and nobody has a real definition for it.

Could it be that this common slang expression was overused and people are now over it? Freshman Ella Farina said she believes so because, “people don’t say it as much anymore and I don’t really see videos or jokes about it.”

Some believe the cause of 67’s decline is that it has become a common vernacular in older adults, rather than children and teenagers. Many grandparents say to “come over at 67!” or “it’s 67 o’clock!” and, to make matters worse, they’re laughing at it.

Numbers as memes is not a new phenomenon. There is also an older ver-

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## Stepping Out: Milton’s Step Team Revival



Photo By CATHERINE MAYO

The Step Team performs at Milton High School’s Pep Rally.

By CATHERINE MAYO

This year, sophomores Aaliah Liriano and Mariana Maison started Milton High School’s first ever step team. Step is a form of dance that is a combination of African folk traditions and pop culture. Unlike other types of dance, it doesn’t need music because through a series of clapping, stomping and vocalization, the dancers create their own. Step was created by African American sororities and fraternities, eventually being practiced as a competitive activity in high schools across the country, now including Milton High School.

According to Nicholas Marinilli, the club advisor, MHS once had a step club, but it died out around a decade ago. Liriano and Maison wanted to bring step dance back to the school, and beginning a team seemed like an amazing opportunity for people of color to have fun and express them-

selves through the art of step.

Liriano said that she hasn’t always done step and that she actually used to be involved in cheerleading. But while she enjoyed cheerleading, she noticed there weren’t many people of color on the team here at MHS, and step dance caught her interest. “I decided to make a group where colored people would feel comfortable to share their unique abilities,” said Liriano.

On the newly created step team there are about thirteen girls. Marinilli says, “The majority of step club is sophomores and they’re really close friends, but I feel like the second we see someone who might wanna join step or like ever slows down or is interested and watches us practice, we’re immediately like ‘Oh you should join!’ So we’re always seeking new members.” They meet every Tuesday after school for a one hour practice, and they worked very hard as they

planned to have their debut performance at pep rally. Since this club was reinstated only this Sept their team isn’t quite ready for competitions yet, but they hope to be in the future.

While practicing, there have been many challenges to overcome, one of the biggest being the need for everyone to be connected and synchronized. Synchronization is a key factor of step, as they need to stay together and connected in order to create a harmonious rhythm as one, one of the main aspects that define step dance. However, the step team’s hard work seemed to pay off, as in this year’s pep rally, the step team’s first performance embodied the unity as well as the power of step dance. Their routine impressed many, and excited MHS for the team’s bright future ahead.

## Remembering Reiner: A Princess Bride Review

By FELICITY GOODE

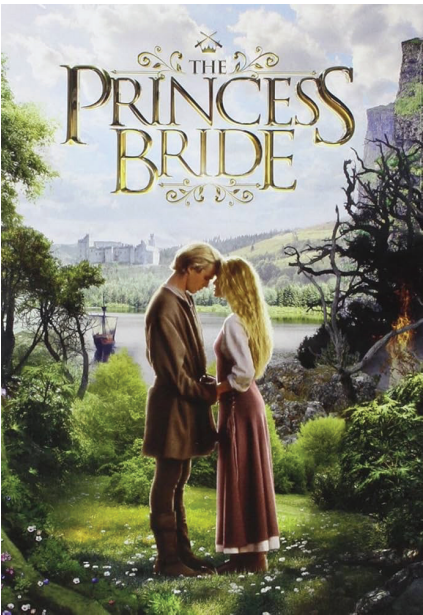
To create a movie that the entire family can enjoy, including the rowdy kids, moody teenagers, busy parents and tired grandparents is extremely difficult. But “The Princess Bride,” directed and co-produced by the late, tragically deceased Rob Reiner, will enrapture every single person in the room with the character’s witty remarks, sarcastic comments, spectacular swordplay and the cheesy reflections on true love. In light of the beloved director’s untimely death, it is particularly important to celebrate his valuable works, and “The Princess Bride” certainly is one. A great family movie, young and old can sit down together and fall in love with this timeless story like countless others before

them.

The entire movie takes place in a little boy’s room while his grandpa reads him a story about “...fencing, fighting, torture, revenge, giants, monsters, chases, escapes, true love, miracles”, and more.

At first, the boy is sick and is grumpy about his grandfather being there, but is soon enthralled with this fantastic story. The book starts out with Westley, a poor farm boy, and Buttercup, a beautiful maiden, falling in true love, the one-in-a-million love that defies all odds. Westley does not have enough money to provide for her, though, so he sets off to earn income.

Soon after, his ship is captured by the Dread Pirate Roberts, and Westley is pronounced mur-



dered. Buttercup is devastated but is quickly forced to be engaged to Prince

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sion of 67, a grandparent of sorts: 21. The reason it became popular? Math. A viral video posted to Vine involving a kid who was asked what 9+10 was and confidently said, “21” instead of 19.

The tragic element is that the kid who was seen in the meme ran away from home after being overwhelmed by teasing from the internet and those around him, as explained by the Meme Fandom, a group that follows and finds background stories of slang and memes in pop culture. It is assumed that he struggled academically and had a hard time understanding certain concepts, including math and spelling. As seen in the note he left, he had poor grammar and many simple words misspelled like “you” which was spelled “yu” or laughing, spelled in the note, “laufig”. It remains unclear if he is still alive, or where he is.

21 debuted in 2013 on YouTube and Vine. It eventually lost popularity but still goes through phases of use, like in 2019 when the video resurfaced and got over 25,000 views in only 4 days. It then resurfaced in 2021, on September 10 because of the way the date is written- 9/10/21 and the math the kid got wrong was 9+10=21.

21 was just an older version of 67. Nobody really knows what it means, yet people liked to use it to lighten the mood of the room. That’s one of the weird things about slang, nobody can really pinpoint why it’s cool, other than the idea that everyone else is using it, and it pressures others into using it.

It is also important to note that English is a very slang-friendly language. Other languages have very strict rules and make it harder to have slang. Take French, for example. Sure, people might shorten words, but they also have the Academie Française, an organization in France that makes sure that the French Language stays “French.” It creates completely different new words instead of using the word if it originated from another language. This word might not resemble the word it is based on.

Meanwhile, in English, there is not a part of the government that is in charge of making sure that they stay “English” and it is also much easier to shorten words in English. This allows English to be more slang friendly, and adapt words like 67 or 21 more quickly.

Is this the end of 67? Or will it keep coming back again and again? Who knows, or should I say, 67?

**The Elephant in the Room is always looking for feedback! If you have suggestions, feel strongly about an article, or think there’s anything The Elephant in the Room should address, feel free to submit a letter to our editors. Email your letter to mhs.eitr@gmail.com**  
Sincerely,  
**The Elephant in the Room Staff**

Princess Bride Review  
(continued from page 1)

Humperdink, a snotty prince whom Buttercup does not love.

One day, Buttercup is kidnapped by three men: Vizzini, the brains, Fezzic, the giant and Inigo, the steel. Soon, Buttercup is rescued by the Dread Pirate Roberts, who is unmasked as none other than her true love, Westley!

The rest of the movie follows Westley and Buttercup’s quest for love and peace, while the audience falls in love with each character, guffaws wildly at Inigo and Fezzic’s plans and sits on the edge of their seats, watching to see what will become of them all while Prince Humperink chases along behind them, intent on fulfilling his own evil plan.

There are thousands of things

“Indeed, it is a cheesy, romantic classic, but it has twists and turns to make it unique”

that are phenomenal about this movie. But no one can’t say that one of the best parts is the distinctive wording used by the characters. From “inconceivable!” to only “mostly dead”, it adds to the overall vibes of the movie to make it romantic, but also humorous.

Indeed, it is a cheesy, romantic classic, but it has twists and turns to make it unique as well as the inspir-

ing quotes: “ ‘Westley and I are joined in the bonds of love,’ Buttercup stared Prince Humperdink in the eye and said, ‘And you cannot track that, not with a thousand blood hounds, and you cannot break it, not with a thousand swords.’ ”

Each character, even though they are a side character and not essential to the story, has individual characteristics that will forever be remembered. The most unforgettable are the Miracle Man, the Albino, and the Priest, but the most loveable is, of course, Fezzic and Inigo Montoya.

There is very little that should be changed in this movie. It is beloved in so many ways, but the one thing that was disappointing was the audience is left wanting more due to an abrupt ending. Instead, the producer could have added more of an epilogue or hints at what comes next for each character.

Though some could argue that certain parts could have been more realistic, overall, the stuffed animal-like quality of the R.O.U.S’s (Rodents of Unusual Size) and Buttercup jumping out of a tall castle into the arms of Fezzic, prove that it is a classic, a rom-com twist of fantasy and great literature while occasionally stretching the truth.

From romantic comedies like “10 Things I Hate About You” and the magical creative aspect of “Lord of the Rings”, the “Princess Bride” embodies hope, fear, dreams, determination and the true love that is so often overlooked in our bustling, technological world today. After all, as Westley says to Buttercup, “Death cannot stop true love. All it can do is delay it for a

while.”

However, this movie is in a league of its own when compared to other “rom-coms.” It has the romantic plot points and nobody could argue that it isn’t hilarious, but it has elements of fantasy fiction instead of high school love in small towns or big city campuses that is thought of as the typical romcom setting.

Finally, though some might think otherwise, teenagers would also love this movie even if it is considered “old” because many times in life, we all need the predictable, happily-ever-after endings that this story provides. Indeed, it appeals to a broad audience.

I love this movie so much and have seen it many times and it never gets old. Seeing it again for the first time in years, it reminded me of why classic Disney movies are so amazing. Each individual story follows an algorithm that ends happily ever after... But each tale has its own spin, its own characters, and its own unique ending and qualities that can’t be found in any other.

The “Princess Bride” is a movie where magic comes alive, the audience feels what the characters feel, whether it’s laughing along with Fezzic and Inigo’s rhyming to lamenting with Buttercup when it seems as if Westley had been killed.

I would give the “Princess Bride” a 9/10. The producer could have given a bit longer of an ending to Buttercup and Westley’s adventure but altogether, it is a wonderful movie and I highly recommend it to all age groups.

Cast of Frozen Puts on Chilling Production



Photo by SOPHIE SHAW and DANICA CARINO

The cast of FROZEN mid-peformance.

By CORY WONG

Walking into the auditorium, I was greeted by the sight of laughing kids with glow wands dressed in costumes, and a general sense of excitement in the air. As the lights dimmed, the musicians began to play, creating a richness in the air. The music felt as if it physically took up space. In an instant, the auditorium was transformed into the kingdom of Arendelle, the setting of MHS’s recently staged pro-

duction of the Broadway-adapted Disney movie, Frozen. If you haven’t seen the film, I recommend watching it!

The play begins with the royal family, the King and Queen, and two princesses. The oldest, Elsa, has magical powers of ice (hence the movie name), but struggles to control them, injuring her younger sister, Anna, one night. After that, Elsa pushes away her younger sister, vowing to never hurt her again. When the King and Queen tragically die at sea, Elsa must succeed

to the throne. However, on the day of Elsa’s coronation, she loses control of her powers and runs away, leaving Anna to go find her in the North Mountain before Arendelle freezes for good. All in all, Frozen is a joyful story about sisterhood, love, and family.

Frozen has to be my all-time favorite Disney movie. Having watched both the movie iteration and the recording of the Broadway show,

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# Bridges, Not Borders

By AALIAH LIRIANO

Immigration is a road filled with horror, pain, and suffering. Immigration is one of the most controversial topics in the US at this moment. Immigration impacts all Americans, whether you’re an immigrant or not. So how does this issue affect not only our country, but also specifically residents of the Boston area?

As a Dominican, I am scared for myself and my hard-working community being stripped away from their everyday lives. As I write this, friends, family and strangers are suddenly being taken away from their everyday lives in ordinary places. According to Homeland Security 2.5 million people left the U.S. by December 2025, including 605,000 deportations and 1.9 million self deportation. Moreover, an important fact I think we should acknowledge is that there is more than one person to blame for the deportation numbers rather than just the US President Trump. With this saying there are various political workers who had to approve the idea of deportation other than a singular individual.

In this particular story below my close friend described a recent ICE case. It’s about a man in East Boston who was with his girlfriend at Meridian East Boston court. Sofia, my close friend, was out with her friends when they witnessed a man being taken from his daily-life in the U.S. In order to protect this man’s identity, I will refer to him as Jake. Below is Sofia’s story:

“I was walking and I heard a guy screaming for help and I was with my friends and then we looked and it was a guy on the floor and he was begging for help. He didn’t have any shirt on. All [Jake] had on was a pair of shorts and he was on the floor with scratches on him and there were police cars there.

“[Jake]’s girlfriend kept asking for help. The cops kept telling everybody to back up. Everybody started filming. We heard police coming and there were so many police guards, they didn’t do anything, they were just staring at us. We couldn’t even see because they kept telling us to back up.”

“Suddenly a random car comes in, and then this guy comes

out of the car and grabs [Jake] by his legs, and then another grabs his arms. They shove him in the car and take off. They also pepper sprayed his girlfriend in the face meanwhile as he was asking for help. She said that the reason that they were taking him was because they were just in the court and then as soon as he got out [of the court room], they [the ICE officers] just were right there waiting for him.”

Jake’s life changed completely in the blink of an eye, leaving the girlfriend to endure pain and suffering. As similar stories like this continue to unfold, many people agree with this deportation, saying that immigrants should not come to the US illegally, while others fight for justice for those who have been deported.

At the end of the day, we shall not let this situation define us, but refine us. There are many pros, cons and influences to deportation of immigrants. Although there aren’t a lot of deportations in Milton specifically, the issue is closer to us than we may think, affecting everyone more than what we believe.

# The Films Jafar Panahi Wasn’t Supposed to Make

By ADAM CHEAIRS

There’s a short list of just five filmmakers who have managed the “grand slam” of film, winning prizes at the three major European film festivals: Cannes, Berlin, and Venice. Under any circumstance, the feat is rare. In Jafar Panahi’s case, it borders on the surreal. As the newest member of this prestigious club, every one of his victories has been earned while working under restrictions supposed to end an artistic career entirely.

One of Iran’s most recognized filmmakers, Jafar Panahi is known for politically outspoken work. In 2010, his criticism of the Iranian regime earned him a six-year prison sentence and a twenty-year ban on filmmaking and travel. He didn’t stop, shooting “This Is Not a Film” on an iPhone in 2011, which he smuggled to Cannes on a USB drive hidden in a cake. His latest film, “It Was Just an Accident”, won the Palme d’Or at Cannes earlier this year and was filmed secretly in and around Tehran.

“It Was Just an Accident” follows a group of former political prisoners who become convinced that a man is the interrogator who once tortured them, a figure they never saw clearly but remember through voice, habit, and a squeaking prosthetic. They load him into a van, and what begins as a chance encounter stretches into a long day circling Tehran, stopping to track down other former prisoners, arguing over whether the man’s voice was enough to prove who he is, and weighing whether to take justice into their own hands. The film’s final moments really do stay with viewers long after the credits, circling back to its moral knot about whether revenge

can ever be anything other than more violence.

When Panahi was barred from leaving Iran in 2010, that travel ban remained for more than a decade. After 14 years of enforced confinement, Panahi’s travel ban was lifted in 2023. He now lives in France, and is completing a six-city tour with “It Was Just an Accident” in the United States. He visited the Coolidge Corner Theatre on November 25th to screen his film, speak in a Q&A moderated by the film critic Ty Burr, and receive the inaugural Coolidge Impact Award for “artistic bravery and persistence of vision.”

After the screening, Panahi walked onto the Coolidge stage to a standing ovation.

Panahi spoke early in the Q&A about the people he lived with in prison. He didn’t describe them as characters or inspiration, but filmmakers. “I wasn’t the one who made this film,” he said. “The people who lived with me in prison made it.”

Whenever Panahi delivered a sharp or tender line, the audience would interrupt him with applause. But then there were periods when he spoke slowly in Persian and interpreter Sheida Dayani carried his words into English, and the room went still. “I really did not want to make a film about revenge,” Panahi confessed. “Revenge and forgiveness are in the film, but they are only on the surface. They are supposed to take you to the stage of rationality for you to think what needs to be done.”

Much of the film was shot and edited in secret. Editor Amir Etminan worked entirely offline on a modest 2020 MacBook Air using proxy files

and external SSDs to assemble the footage without internet access.

Panahi turned to a simple comparison. “If you decide to leave your home, you check the weather. You think about whether you need a jacket. To make films, I also had to think about what to wear.” Panahi described beginning with low-risk shots in the desert, then gradually moving into the city until, inevitably, security forces intervened. “We had two days of shooting left,” he said. “I paused for a month, came back with a smaller team and finished only the necessary shots.”

It was not lost on moderator Ty Burr that American censorship issues are beginning to echo the pressure Panahi has lived through in Iran. Burr asked him to speak directly to young creators about artistic freedom.

“We only have two types of filmmakers. Those who chase the audience. And those who make their own film and let the audience find them. The important thing is to have faith in what you do.”

A man banned from filmmaking for a decade, detained twice, censored at home and celebrated abroad, even being sentenced to yet another year in prison and a two-year travel ban on Dec. 1, standing in a Brookline theatre telling young artists that the only real obligation is to know your own taste and refuse to bend.

It’s one thing to hear that philosophy from a director on an awards stage. It’s another to hear it from someone who finished this very film after interrogations, surveillance, and threats to his cast. The room seemed to recognize the difference. Burr joked that we shouldn’t expect a Panahi su-

## MHS Frozen Review

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I had very high expectations coming into watching this show. However, the show exceeded them by far, the production full of laughter and love. Additionally, I had the privilege of seeing this show twice (Thank you, Mrs. Cahill and Slo for these opportunities!), and even the second time around, I was spellbound.

The actors took the stage and began the show. Starting out, I must give props to every single member of the cast and crew— I know how much effort they put into this show, and it truly showed. Not only through the breathtaking music and voices on stage, but the smaller details like the props and costumes made everything come together perfectly on stage. Starting off, the iconic “Do You Want To Build A Snowman?” was one of the highlights for me. Sophie Middleton and Lily Nolan, who played the younger princesses, nailed their roles and hit each note perfectly.

The ensemble danced amazingly and added great vocals. Notably, any scenes with the trolls felt wondrous and magical. Likewise, Kristoff (played by Will Gordon) and Anna’s (played by Emma Nolan) “What Do You Know About Love” showcased the actors’ amazing talents of making the crowd laugh and smile.

Anna was a wonderfully joyful and funny character, and I had so much fun watching her throughout the play. Sadhbh Brunnock as Elsa had such a beautiful voice, with perfectly delivered lines. I found myself laughing through Hygge and getting goosebumps through the incredible harmonies of “I Can’t Lose You”.

As far as the audience reaction went, heard a lot of laughter for Olaf and Sven (incredible job, Owen Kelly and Georgia Manning!) and giggles from many kids during “Fixer Upper” with the trolls and Kristoff. I’m not exaggerating when I tell you I heard loud gasps from the people around me when Hans (played by Jayce Crichlow) revealed his true nature.

In short, I would give this play 10 gold stars! The MHS theater program executed everything perfectly, from music, lights, acting, and costumes. I want to congratulate everyone who was in it, and let me speak for us all when we say: we can’t wait to see what you do next!



Photo by Coolidge Corner Theatre/Iz Indelicato.

perhero movie anytime soon, which felt right, as his films have never needed costumes to show how much ordinary people are asked to carry.



# ELEPHANT ENTERTAINMENT

## The Dessert With Infinite Names: Hello Dollies

By SOPHIE SHAW

Coconut shavings and graham cracker crumbs scattered along the counter tops of the kitchen lead to a masterpiece of deliciousness... and a later clean-up.

Hello Dollies are a rich and sweet combination of all sorts of ingredients adding up to a moist and melt-in-your-mouth treat. These delectables come from the online recipe website, Allrecipes.com. As you eat them it feels like they have been around for centuries. My family tends to make the Hello Dollies around Christmas time, and sometimes Thanksgiving.

The Hello Dollies are a tradition for other families as well, just with different names and slightly different ingredients. Some call them angel bars, magic bars, and seven layer bars, and the list goes on. It's fascinating to see this recipe come from many

different families each with their own unique twist.

Now, despite the theatre name of Hello Dollies, these goodies don't have any direct trace to the musical "Hello, Dolly!" The treats were around long before the musical debuted; however, they went from being called the seven layer bars to Hello Dollies when the musical tracked attention. In my family, it's said the name of the bars came from my great aunt who brought the dessert into my family decades ago.

The best way to enjoy the Hello Dollies is sitting at a table with your loved ones, laughing, smiling and, of course, enjoying this homemade dessert, of course!

**For this recipe you'll need:**

- 1 ½ cups of graham cracker crumbs
- ½ cup of butter (melted)
- 1 can of sweetened condensed milk (Make

sure it is 14 ounces!)

- 1 ½ cups of semisweet chocolate chips (In my family, we normally eyeball the chocolate chips!)
- 1 cup of chopped walnuts
- 1 cup of shredded coconut
- OPTIONAL : ½ cup of white chocolate chips

**Instructions :**

- 1) First, preheat your oven to 325 degrees Fahrenheit.
- 2) In a bowl, mix all of your graham cracker crumbs with your melted butter until everything is evenly moistened.
- 3) Press the Graham cracker mix into the bottom of a 9x13-inch baking dish.
- 4) Pour ½ of the sweetened condensed milk over top of the graham cracker foundation. Sprinkle your coconut, walnuts and chocolate chips over top. (If it doesn't feel like enough, feel free to add more!) Push these



toppings into the coated base.

- 5) Drizzle your remaining sweetened condensed milk over top.
- 6) Cook the dessert in your oven until the coconut is golden brown and fragrant which tends to be 25 to 30 minutes.
- 7)Let the dish cool completely before cutting it into squares for serving.

And with that, you have yourself a delicious holiday treat, enjoy!

Some Lovely Chilly Tunes for the Holidays!

By Sophie Shaw

Sleigh Ride  
By The Ronettes

Jingle Bell Rock  
By Bobby Helms

Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree  
By Brenda Lee

Pieces By Vince Guaraldi Trio!

Little Birdie

Skating

Christmas Time Is Here

# Maze

Start

Finish

## CROSSWORD

1. A light snow storm (DQ Item)
2. Strings of them on trees
3. Santa's red nosed friend.
4. Classic edible house material
5. Doorway greenery (Typically followed by a kiss.)
6. Each Ones Unique
7. Doorstep Group Activity
8. 🎵 \_\_\_\_\_ And Gold 🎵
9. Window Decorations
10. Cozy Chocolate Treat

## Riddle

Which one of Santa's Reindeer can you see from space?

"I dont know what to tell ya Frosty, we didnt get quite the 'White Christmas' this year."

RIDDLE: Comet!

1. Flurry 2. Lights 3. Rudolph 4. Gingerbread 5. Mistletoe 6. Snowflake 7. Caroling 8. Silver 9. Reefs 10. Hot Cocoa

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