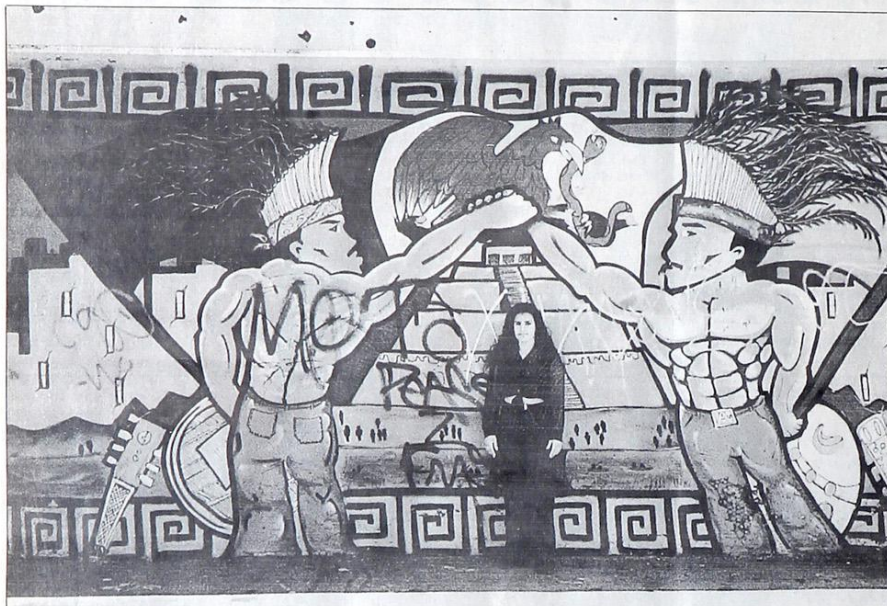


THE MOSAIC

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JENNIE LUNA—MOSAIC STAFF

Lupe Cortez, former gang member, stands before mural that inspired her to go from a life of desperation to one with hope.

That graffiti may be art — or it may mean war

BY JENNIE LUNA
Staff writer

Walking down the streets of East San Jose anyone can see the inconsistent squiggles and scattered lettering that to some mean nothing but to another means war.

By day the walls of schools and stores stand as nothing but support for buildings, but by night they become canvases for youths who "tag" for artistic or individual expression or to claim turf and territory for their gang. According to city officials and community leaders, tagging is growing out of control.

Former gang member Lupe Cortez recalls that the main reason she would tag would be to claim territory and prove that she had been in the varrio of another gang and had gotten away with it. Cortez, 15, will be a junior at Mt. Pleasant High School in the fall. It has been almost a year since she

was jumped out of the gang. Cortez began the gang lifestyle in the eighth grade.

"In junior high I started kicking back with the wrong crowd," she said. "My parents didn't have time and I got into drugs and fights with my friends. In ninth grade I was jumped in by six girls for one minute."

Before a person is jumped into a gang they must prove their loyalty or prove if they are truly "down." Lupe was a Norteña, or part of a gang that is down with the red rag and with her varrio Capitol Park. They would have a conflicting or opposing gang member such as a Sureño or a Samoan approach the new member and ask them if they were down with red. After their loyalty was proven, they could be jumped in or beat up for a set amount of time.

"To continue to prove their loyalty, they tagged. The gang would



JENNIE LUNA—MOSAIC STAFF

A mural from the Barrio Art Gallery depicts the struggles and hardships of growing up in the ghetto.

meet every Friday at 6 p.m., usually in a park where they would drink, tag, and kick back until 1 or 3 in the morning. The gang began to fight the rougher gang-bangers such as Las Palmas. Lupe began cutting school and getting deeper into trouble.

Through communication with the gang's leaders, and with the persistent help, time, and love from a teacher, Lupe got the strength to get out of the gang.

"When you're in a gang, it's like you're in a dark tunnel with no light ahead," she said. "When you live the life of a chola, you don't think about tomorrow. Even best friends, if it comes down to it, they'll shoot."

"The solution is just love," she said. Cortez recalls tagging everything from park benches to the walls of Taco Bell. It's been a year,

See GRAFFITI, Page 10

Little boy face — 'Never did I think Mike would hit me'

BY EVA ZUNIGA
Mosaic Staff Writer

Christina was swept away by Mike's little boy face. For the first few months while they got to know each other, Christina said, "He seemed nice."

They met during Christina's freshman year in high school. As the year passed, Christina realized she was in a serious relationship when Mike would not go out with his friends. But he also did not allow her to go out either.

At first Christina did not mind because she had chose Mike over her friends. The love she was receiving from Mike made her look beyond his bad temper and possessiveness. She had never felt love from anyone else.

So she would make up excuses for Mike

when he would slap, punch and kick her. "Never in my wildest dreams did I think that Mike would ever hit me," Christina said. It is not her real name. She is 17, a student at James Lick High School in San Jose and works part-time.

Her boyfriend gave her dark, deep bruises that wouldn't heal for months. She would hide them with her clothes as much as possible, but friends eventually did notice them. Christina made up lies. She'd look away when her friends pressed her for answers.

There are no exceptions to where or whom it can affect.

"Reasons for this trend has been encouraged by unstable family life, low self-esteem, jealousy, TV, movies, and music," said Rich

Garcia, a counselor in the men's program for the Mid-Peninsula Support Network for Battered Women. Others counsel abuse wives and girlfriends. Garcia tries to cure their men. He said teenage abuse of girlfriends is increasing and some abusers today are as young as 13.

Not only does the violence increase in time but so do the mind games for gaining control.

"The cycle of violence could end if one gets help and identifies that they have a problem," Garcia said.

The physical abuse was only one of the ways that Mike, also a pseudonym, hurt Christina.

See ABUSE, Page 10

Abortion foes to launch S.J. campaign

BY ELIZABETH FUENTES
Mosaic Staff writer

Vanessa Ayala, 17, relies on Planned Parenthood for birth control and checkups. She first went to a clinic in Salinas in February when she started having sex with her boyfriend of two years.

She chose Planned Parenthood because she said she didn't want her parents to know she was having a sexual relationship.

Vanessa, who first heard about the clinic over the radio, said she made an appointment for a routine examination, which is required before birth control pills can be prescribed.

The examination process, she said, was very rude but she's glad she went.

"I was very nervous and wanted to get it over with," she said.

Now teenagers like Vanessa might have more reason to be nervous and afraid about going to a Planned Parenthood office.

On July 9th, the anti-abortion group, Operation Rescue, is planning to launch a campaign in San Jose.

The group is known to use

intimidation to convey its message.

Its members stage protests and have used scare tactics to shut down clinics that perform abortions.

They also have confronted doctors at their homes and on their way to work.

"If a (young woman) is going to a clinic to have an abortion, she should be nervous," said Sally Ashe, local director for Operation Rescue.

She would not reveal the group's strategy in San Jose.

"Nobody knows until the event happens," she said.

However, local Planned Parenthood offices and other clinics that offer gynecological services say young women need not worry.

"You don't need to be afraid," said Diana Choles, assistant director of Planned Parenthood on The Alameda in San Jose.

She says they will have assistance from the San Jose Police Department.

"If they (potential patients) need to get any answers, they should not hesitate to call us."

Musicland anti-theft policy severely restricts teenagers

BY DEMONE CARTER
Staff writer

Young adults under the age of 18 might be insulted by an anti-theft policy at the Musicland store in the Pavilion shopping center downtown.

The policy severely restricts teenage browsing in the store unless they are accompanied by an adult.

On a recent weekday during the lunch hour, four high school students stopped by the store to look at tapes and CDs.

As soon as the students entered Musicland they were approached by a sales clerk.

He asked them a series of questions: "Hi, how are you?" "What can I do for you?" "Can I help you find anything?"

After they politely informed him his help wasn't needed, he informed them of Musicland's policy which permits only one person under the age of 18 to shop in the store at any one time.

Although one of the students was 18 when asked for identification she and her peers exited.

Suspecting possible discrimination, the students, who were all racial minorities, went back that same day to test the policy. Their test proved to be inconclusive. They all walked into the store without incident and were not confronted with the procedure. Musicland district manager Fred

Attincio explained that the Pavilion store had experienced problems with teenage shoplifters and that the policy at the Pavilion store was a preventative measure.

"We had a real high loss in inventory at that store," he said. "Too many kids were in the store, so we decided to cut down on the number kids in the store (at any one time)."

Many teenage music lovers said they were not pleased with Musicland's anti-theft tactics.

"That's stupid that they do not trust teen-agers," said Syvritl Perryman, 17.

Her comment was echoed by Ken May, also 17.

"I guess it's their right, but it's bad for them because most of the people who shop there are under the age of 18," said May. "You're never going to stop shoplifting and plus, not all shoplifters are under 18."

A quick check of music stores in this area indicated that the anti-theft policy is unique to Musicland.

Tower records employee Sean Love said shoplifting is a problem everywhere.

"But I can understand [their measures] if they do not have good security," he said.

Musicland's national headquarters in Minneapolis, Minn. could not be reached for comment.

INDEX

San Jose Life.....	Pages 2 and 3
Careers.....	Pages 4 and 5
Culture.....	Page 6
Social Justice.....	Page 7
Challenges.....	Page 8
New Voices.....	Page 9

Intense pressure for the perfect body: When dieting becomes too dangerous

BY LIZ CORRALES
Mosaic Staff Writer

Teenage girls today not only feel the pressure of succeeding academically, they also feel intense pressure to have a perfect body. Often, they nearly self-destruct in their efforts to be as thin as they deem necessary to meet society's ideal.

Katherine, 17, was obsessed with her weight by the time she was nine years old. First, she went on a calorie reduction diet, but when she thought she wasn't losing enough weight, she ate even less.

By the time she was a sophomore in

high school, she said she was taking 14 laxative tablets a day—seven at a time. The recommended dosage is not more than two pills a day.

"I knew it was wrong but I didn't care," she said. "I would do anything to lose weight."

Katherine, who asked that her real name not be used, is tall and blond. She is appears thin, standing 5-foot-8 and weighing 130 pounds. But at one time, she was anorexic and bulimic, weighing just 105 pounds.

Katherine suffered from eating disorders that often strike teenagers and young women, according to Joanne

Iked, a dietitian and professor at the University of California at Berkeley.

"There is definitely more social pressure in females (to be thin) than males," she said, explaining that it's OK for men to be big because it is looked upon as being strong, whereas for women, being heavy translates to just being fat.

Iked added that female teenagers try too hard to emulate the thin models they so often see in magazines.

"We need to recognize that human beings come in different body shapes," she said.

Most often, women and young girls with eating disorders are white. The rea-

son, said Ikeda, is that there is more of an emphasis on thin being the ideal body type among Caucasians.

The African-American culture, for instance, is more tolerant of different weights and figure types which, in turn, gives black women less to feel insecure about, she said.

Katherine became critical of her weight when she others started commenting on her size. She remembers her mother telling her she should watch her weight.

"I will never forget the time a boy told
See EATING DISORDER, Page 10

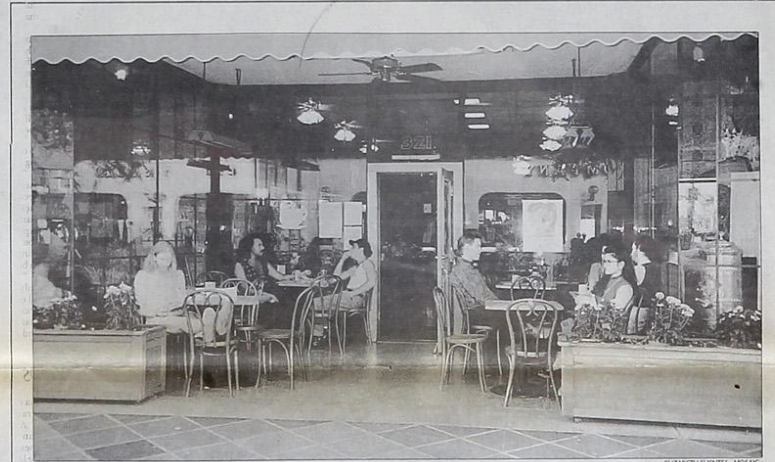
SAN JOSE LIFE

A ride with the cops opens eyes

BY ELLI NAVA
As I open the door to the San Jose Police Department, a cold artificial air hits me...

Many people have come in and out, including police officers. So when Officer Rick Yu came in...

majority have a positive outlook on us generally, those who think negatively probably have been arrested before...



The Keystone Coffee Store in downtown San Jose is a popular spot for a cup of java or mocha or cappuccino.

Coffee Culture
Hot places for a cup of java around downtown San Jose

Friday night at 10:30, a young man with pink-spiked hair and a well-worn leather jacket enters a small, crowded coffee shop on busy First Street and orders an iced cappuccino...

SAN JOSE LIFE

Cops:

problem areas. They all looked pretty cool when we drove through them...

Working out, Mexicana style



Mariela Soto works out in Redwood City.

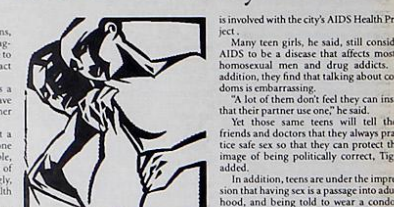
Feeling of alienation and self consciousness keep many women away from the health clubs
BY ANGELICA CASTANEDA
Mariela Soto is a beautiful and intelligent fashion model drenched in sweat...

Las mujeres mexicanas estan ausentes de los clubes de salud en los Estados Unidos

BY ANGELICA CASTANEDA
Mariela Soto es una modelo bonita e inteligente que estaba bañada en sudor. Mientras habla "aerobics", alegremente al ritmo de la música en un gimnasio de Redwood City...

Condom use is overinflated: Safe sex is just hot air

BY APRIL JONES
Chris started having sex a year ago. She had had a steady boyfriend for about a year and felt ready for a sexual relationship...



involved with the city's AIDS Health Program. Young girls, he said, still consider AIDS to be a disease that affects mostly homosexual men and drag addicts...

