

A Sampling of the Paly Journalism Archives

Materials have been collected via requests placed in Paly alumni Facebook groups, as well as combing garage sales for lost issues. The collections, which include topic sections on both world wars and the period of Japanese internment (the official student publications were largely silent on the deportation of Japanese students), have recently been augmented by a group of pamphlets from alternative presses in 1969-70 and beyond. Formed in response to the Free Speech Movement, these publications include the *Student Body Review*, sanctioned by the administration, and several others like the *Radical Rag*, the *Movement Against Student Suspensions*, and *Radio Free Heaven*, which were unsanctioned and prohibited from distribution on campus. “Underground” student journalists for these publications, risking expulsion for their provocative content, used pseudonyms to report on and organize anti-war protest and demand administration reform of police treatment, existing racism and sexism, and national and local policies.

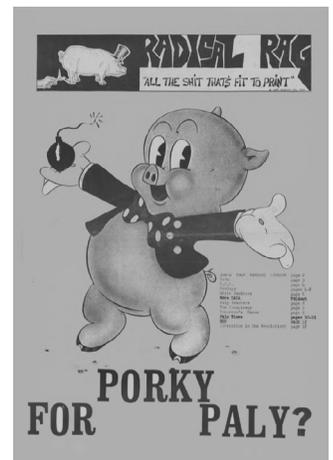
The official publications generally used the presses at the *Palo Alto Times*, while the alternative publications were typewritten with line drawings and pasted graphics that were then photocopied (Xeroxed) and distributed surreptitiously. *The Radical Rag*, for example, would stack its issues underneath the sanctioned *Student Body Review* to avoid notice by teachers. As a recent student-organized panel launching the archive brought to light, the FBI monitored this underground scene (including students’ families) with informants on the Paly campus, which declassified records now show included the principal.

Both official and unofficial publications had advertisers which offer a history of Palo Alto commerce as well as a snapshot of the times. These advertisers included Kepler’s Books, artisan boutiques in the late 60s, and downtown stalwarts in the official publications, such as Thoits’ Shoes (1909), Peninsula Creamery (1925), and Rapp’s Shoes (1956) in the *Madrono*. One can follow trends in period dress and hairstyles, as well as levels of patriotism (greater during wartime and nearly altogether absent after the 1960s), as well as local issues and concerns, particularly in April Fools’ editions which lampooned then-current figures and traditions.

Kellerman notes a number of “throughlines” in the publications along which one can follow developments in Paly student life and society more broadly, including the emergence of multiculturalism, students wanting to have their voices heard (not as true in the 1950s), and student desire to get informed, be active in society and demand change. Generally, if the students had an interest, the faculty would support their publishing efforts and usually find some way to fund them, not necessarily true in other schools.



An early Viking motif on the 1934 cover of the Madrono yearbook. Paly adopted the Viking as a mascot in 1938. After the US entered the Second World War, the yearbook portrayed a patriotic and hopeful mood on campus.



The 1969 Madrono cover (above left) and 1970 example of the banned Radical Rag reflected the stronger desire for student voice in local and national affairs.



Publications relied on local advertisers to fund printing, such as Thoits Shoes (1909) and The North Face (1970).



The April Fools edition has been a classic tradition in many volumes of the Campanile. Here the leaning campus tower suggests school closure in 1965. Other issues “reported” on a 1954 “faculty dope ring” and alleged 1992 “preppy gang violence.”



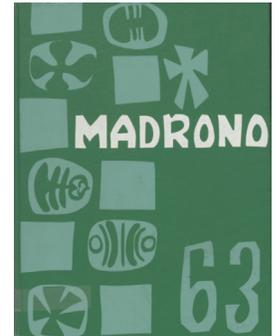
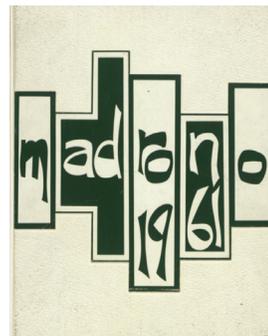
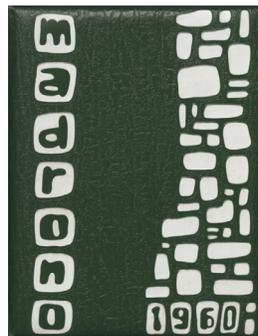
Young women were integral to Palo Alto High School journalism from the beginning. Dorothy Nichols, class of 1919, left, was the founding editor of the *Campanile*; a “Girl’s Issue” of the *Madrono* (1916) appeared annually.



Graphic design could be of very high quality, such as the 1930 Art-Deco *Madrono* above. Feg Murray, who practiced his craft in early student work (such as in the 1913 sketch below) went on to national fame as a cartoonist.



The archiving team uses an extra-wide scanner to digitize full versions of Paly newspapers and yearbooks, such as the early 1960s *Madronos* below.



According to Kellerman, the Paly journalism archive is unique on several counts. First of all, it is one of the only high school journalism archives that has been digitized and is available to search easily on the Web—and in so doing preserves authentic student voices that would otherwise be lost. These voices in themselves are unique, going back to 1895, and document Palo Alto and its highly educated, highly motivated families connected with Stanford University from the very beginning. Palo Alto’s emphasis on secondary education was rare in the 1890s; Paly was the only high school between San Jose and San Mateo when it opened. An example of this progressivism is the constant involvement of young women in the paper from earliest days; the *Campanile*’s founding editor was Dorothy Nichols, class of 1919.

A further distinguishing feature of Paly journalism has been its generally high quality. School support and highly motivated students have produced polished publications that have won awards for both incisive journalism and at times exquisite design. The expansion of the media program in recent years to include a wider range of publications, as well as online publishing, podcasts and television (and related coursework) has garnered further accolades. Many student contributors have gone on to greater renown, including illustrator Feg Murray, *Economist* journalist Ben Schneider, and television reporter Wes Rappaport.

The key feature of all these publications is their authenticity. The archives give a sense of everyday life, which as Kellerman points out “included the good, the bad and the ugly”, such as statements that would now be viewed as racist or sexist, as well as the perennial “lame jokes” that only teenagers find funny. Throughout, students come across as both motivated and increasingly assertive. During World War II, students sent out copies of the *Campanile* to Paly alumni stationed all over the world. Kellerman suggests the activist journalism of the late 60s and early 70s offers a lesson for current students seeking to express themselves. “I love students to [who] lift up their voices to challenge in a respectful way,” she said. “I think it’s what we need to do as a society.”

—Jon Gifford with generous support from Rachel Kellerman and Charlotte Kadifa. Visit palyjournalismarchive.pausd.org for more!