

THE BANNER

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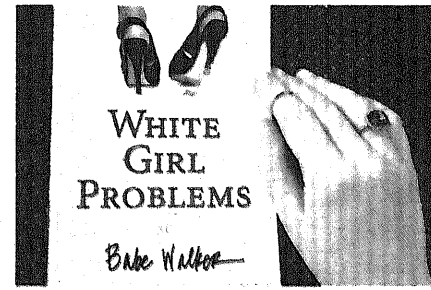
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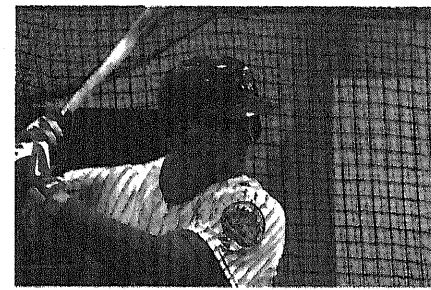
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Geraldo Rivera Donates Funds for Dept. of Social Work \$250,000 to Get Annual Lecture Series on its Feet



Rivera speaks at the Bachelor's of Science in Social Work Commencement Ceremony in May 2014

BY EMILY ZODA & CLIFFORD MICHEL

Geraldo Rivera has donated \$250,000 to fund an annual lecture series surrounding disability studies over the next five years at the newly accredited Department of Social Work at the College of Staten Island.

The fund, officially titled "The Geraldo Rivera Fund for Social Work and Disability Studies," will run for five years and will support public conferences, symposia, lectures, and new informative publications.

"This generous investment in our students, faculty, and college will benefit the academic discourse and rigor on campus, and will allow us to take a leadership position regionally, nationally, and internationally as we promote research, advocacy, and dialogues around this important issue in our society," said CSI President Dr. William J. Fritz.

The Social Work program's first lecture is called "Inaugural Geraldo Rivera Lecture in Social Work and Disabilities Studies," and will be held on May 5 with special guest speaker Dr. Val and co-presenter Beth Rich-

"The people that need you, will be materially enhanced, in a way that you will be a walking angel."

ards.

Administrators also left open the possibility of additional funds being made to the Department of Social Work in the future.

"There might be some other income course in the future," said Social Work director Barbra Teater. "But none has been committed."

Rivera commented on the possibility of continuing his relationship with CSI in the future.

"This is just the first of what my wife Erica and I hope will be a long partnership with this wonderful school," Rivera wrote to Capital New York in an e-mail interview. "We

believe CSI is in the process of becoming the nation's pre-eminent educational center for caring for the disabled."

Rivera said he was inspired by the students at the School of Social Work when he spoke to them at CSI's 2014 Commencement Ceremony and wanted to enhance the education of those who will be tasked with helping a class of people who are often forgotten.

"Asked to deliver the commencement for the School of Social Work last year I was inspired by the young graduates and encouraged them to go out and fight for their future constituents, especially the developmentally disabled," Rivera wrote to Capital.

"As I spoke it occurred to me that I should be more personally involved in motivating and recruiting the next generation of crusaders against the kinds of abuse I uncovered back in the grim old days."

Rivera, a broadcast journalist, rose to

Continued on Page 4

English Major to Present at PCA/ACA

PAPER TO FOCUS ON CULTURAL STRUGGLES IN DJEBAR'S "FANTASIA"

BY JOSEPH PALUMBO

In April, CSI English major Yara Edrees will travel to New Orleans, Louisiana to present her research on the novel "Fantasia" at the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association (PCA/ACA) National Conference.

Edrees chose to focus on the novel after reading it in an English class, discovering that she was able to identify and connect with the novel's Algerian characters as they struggled with French colonization and the ensuing clash of cultures.

Every year, academics from across the nation have gathered at the PCA/ACA conference to present their research. Over 5,000 presentations are given.

Edrees' essay "The Struggle to Maintain Culture in Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade," which discusses how the women in the novel were affected by cultural struggle, will be one of the essays read in this year's wide array of presenters.

"I'm so nervous," said Edrees. "There's going to be so many people there, but it's such a great chance to show off my work."

Edrees, born in Saudi Arabia, experienced a shift in her family's culture when they arrived to the United States.

"I remember it was hard to adjust to American living after coming here. My parents especially had a tough time with the change in culture," she expressed.

She recalled a time when she was younger and her parents wouldn't let her watch certain American television shows because it went against her family's Arabic values, explaining that assimilating into the U.S. took time.

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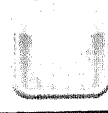
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BANNER POLITICS

Positive and Negative Effects of Marijuana Decriminalization, Legalization

BY JANELLE NORMAN

The harsh penalties for drug-related crime, commonly known as “the war on drugs” was put in place in many countries with the intention of decreasing the amount of people who abuse or sell them.

What happened instead was a large increase of drug-related violence, corruption and distribution, and very little change in the amount of people who abuse drugs.

Compare this to the Prohibition era in the United States during the 1920s and 30s. Alcoholism rates didn't improve, but what did happen was a wave of organized crime, most notably the Sicilian Mafia, who served as an underworld source for alcohol.

Many Latin American and Caribbean countries have experienced waves of drug-related crimes after enforcing laws against them.

As a result many countries, including the United States are starting to consider retracting these anti-drug laws.

On February 24, possessing and cultivating small amounts of marijuana became legal in Alaska. Growing small amounts of weed is now legal in Washington, DC as of February 26.

Although these are the only states that have legalized the drug for recreational purposes, 19 other states have legalized consuming and smoking weed for medical purposes.

Very few people have a true understanding on the stark difference between legalization and decriminalization. Whether a drug is

legal or decriminalized has effects on policing. While many people are either rejoicing or denouncing these decisions, it's important to realize that either decision allows for weed to be sold, consumed or cultivated with impunity.

For example, in countries like Jamaica, which recently decriminalized the possession of at most two ounces of weed on February 25, a person can still be fined if they carry or use it in public.

What has changed for Jamaica is that anyone caught possessing small amounts of weed can't be arrested or charged in court.

Decriminalization is different depending on the country or state, but what is general is

are still certain boundaries that apply. For instance, Alaskans can cultivate and use weed for recreational and medical purposes without being arrested or tried in a court of law, but getting caught selling weed can be fined.

Oddly enough, in Washington DC's legalization laws only legalize the possession of weed, but not the buying or selling of it.

Colorado has probably been the most controversial case of marijuana legalization. While Colorado's laws on possessing weed are relaxed, Colorado's bordering states, especially Nebraska have actually enforced stricter policing to prevent Colorado's influence from spreading.

According to B.J Wilkson, the police

by about 90 percent of these drug arrests are marijuana. The Huffington Post reports that one person is arrested for marijuana every 42 seconds in the U.S.

There are financial benefits to both legalizing and decriminalizing weed. About 7.5 to 10 billion in tax dollars are spent arresting and charging people for drug offenses.

The U.S could save an estimated 13.7 billion in tax dollars if weed was legalized. Colorado brought in a whopping 53 million dollars in tax revenue since selling weed in dispensaries.

Although there are benefits in decriminalizing or legalizing marijuana, there are certain aspects that are just as ineffective as criminalizing the drug. Although Colorado made 53 million dollars last year, it was much less than the economist predicted, around 184 million dollars.

Legal weed sold at dispensaries in Colorado had a 28 percent tax rate. Because of the high price, many people are still purchasing weed illegally for the affordability.

What decriminalization and legalization both fail to do is dismantle large organized drug-distribution groups.

Often times, these laws punish the drug users or individual dealers but don't go as far as to tackle the root of the problem.

So while they both prevent unnecessarily strict policing and saves a country billions of dollars annually, they are just as ineffective as making weed criminal when it comes to eradicating the source of the drug problem.

“What decriminalization and legalization both fail to do is dismantle large organized drug-distribution groups.”

that a person cannot be arrested or sentenced in court for possessing weed as long as it's within the area's limits.

In Uruguay, where possession of small amounts of weed are decriminalized, a person can get their license revoked for weed possession.

In Portugal, a person can be ordered to take classes to help prevent them from abusing marijuana.

In Alaska, Colorado, and Washington DC, weed is legalized, so while there are fewer restrictions for weed possession, there

chief of Sidney, Nebraska, illegal drug trafficking has increased dramatically since Colorado's decision. Marijuana-related crimes have increased 50 percent since last year.

Oklahoma has joined Nebraska in outrage and sued the state altogether. Both states even took this issue to the Supreme Court, demanding that Colorado makes weed illegal again.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, more arrests are made for non-violent drug offenses than all violent crimes combined. A vast majority, specifical-

The Growing Influence of ISIS on Young Americans

BY EMANUELA BALLIU

ISIS, (Islamic State of Iraq and Sham) since 2010, has been led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who holds a PhD from Baghdad's Islamic University.

Back in 2005, he fell into the custody of Camp Bucca in Iraq. Upon his release to Iraqi authorities, a military official claimed the detainee said “I'll see you guys in New York.”

Although it could have been just a snide remark and not a threat, it still gives cause for alarm to the United States.

Fast forward to July 2012, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi threatened to attack the United States, all while stating that “You will see the mujahideen—holy warriors—at the heart of your country since our war with you has only started now.”

Ever since his reign over ISIS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi has been responsible for many attacks across the world, with no consideration for the safety of civilians.

ISIS has control over portions of Iraq and Syria and is bringing terror overseas with a vast attraction from young American adults interested in joining its ranks.

The Pull: According to a former Jihad supporter, Mubin Shaikh, who found the right of path by the help of his religious leaders and family claims there to be a major at-

traction to teenagers from ISIS.

Often times it is sex. Young women are pulled into the desire to marry and be with a “bad-boy.” Is there anything more bad than a terrorist inflicting death among millions? But what they do not know is that they will not find love, but will be forced to become sex slaves and give up the only important thing—their lives.

Boys are attracted by the strong belief that they should be heroes and soldiers. They often are not aware of the real cause of the war.

“What most believe to be benefits of joining ISIS are often blinded by a false fantasy.”

“Both sexes join to be part of something bigger and adventurous,” Mr. Shaikh states. They are too young to know better and want an out from their everyday lives. Mr. Shaikh believes that there is an awareness we must raise to turn people from this mistake.

What most believe to be benefits of joining ISIS are often blinded by a false fantasy.

CNN reported from the Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, that 180 Americans have tried to board fights to Syria.

However, it is impossible to determine how many have joined ISIS.

Along the released information, a group of people have been accused and acquitted for attempting to join ISIS. The young men and girls listed below are some who have attempted to join ISIS. The shocking news, they are all young and American and like us.

“German authorities intercepted the trio, ages 15, 16 and 17, at Frankfurt airport and put them on a plane back to the United States, where they were greeted by FBI agents.” This trio is three young girls from Denver who cut

He is only 17 years old and accused of helping distribute information about ISIS, tried to help a slightly older adult travel to Syria.

An 18 year old, Abdullah Yusuf, from Grove Heights, Minnesota was stopped by the FBI before boarding a flight to Turkey. Yusuf pled guilty to “one count of conspiracy to provide material support to ISIS.”

Shannon Maureen Conley, a 19 year old who met an ISIS member online and planned to marry him was stopped at Denver's International Airport by the FBI. She attempted to join ISIS and serve them as a nurse in one of their jihadist camps. Conley pled guilty to a terror charge in a Colorado federal court.

Christopher Cornell a 20 year old from Cincinnati, was arrested before he could attack The U.S. Capital. His alleged plan was to set off pipe bombs. When civilians would try to flee, Cornell and an accomplice would shoot them.

This was considered to be a way of supporting ISIS. Cornell claimed to be in contact with people overseas and had aligned himself with ISIS.

Some may believe there to be benefits and hop on a plane to Turkey for Syria. But most do not even know the cause of this war. Islam is about spreading peace and not terror, which is the complete opposite of what ISIS does.

school and flew to Germany, trying to get to Syria to join ISIS.

After their parents filed they were missing, they found the girls' passports were also missing, which led the police to put a stop on their passports.

As the girls reached Germany they met authorities. The girls ran away in hopes of reaching Syria with \$2,000 in cash.

An unidentified Virginia student has been charged with helping recruit people for ISIS.

"Geraldo Rivera Donates Funds"
Continued from front Page

prominence in 1972 after he exposed the horrific abuse and neglect that occurred in the Willowbrook State School.

The school, which was on the same plot of land as CSI, became a national symbol of how the United States failed to treat mentally challenged individuals.

Rivera also made headlines when he interviewed Charles Manson in the 1980s and later down the line as a Fox News correspondent.

The Bachelor of Science in Social Work was fully accredited last year by the Council of Social Work Education.

The program plans to keep the admittance GPA at 2.5.

Since the accreditation, all courses have a specific learning objective according to CSWE standards called EPASS.

Students are to maintain a "B" or better in practice-based courses and obtain 480 hours of field placement work.

CSI also launched a Master's of Social Work program this past fall, which focuses on treating individuals with disabilities, including those who fall within the autism spectrum.

Rivera heralded the achievements and possibilities that the program and its students could achieve towards the end of his speech last spring.

"You will make a difference in the lives of the people you are working with and for. The people that need you, their lives will be materially enhanced, in a way that you will be a walking angel," Rivera told Social Work Graduates last spring.

"For every person that you help, that you guide, that you assist, that you make their lives richer and better, your life will be similarly enhanced by it, your soul will be fed."

"English Major to Present at PCA"
Continued from front Page

When Edrees read "Fantasia," she connected with the novel's theme of cultural struggles, and was motivated to write the paper.

She praised her advisor for the motivation, Professor Michael Schuyler. It was in his class that she read the novel and his words that pointed her to the focus of the paper.

He also suggested she submit the paper to the conference.

"Yara is one of those rare students who has extraordinary talent," said Schuyler.

"She has worked incredibly hard to prepare for this conference and I hope that everyone is as proud of her as I am."

Edrees and Schuyler have met every two weeks to edit the paper. They have focused on what sounds good when read aloud, so that it's clear when Edrees presents it.

In spite of this preparation, Edrees is still nervous, knowing that presenting may result in the essay being published.

She hopes to continue her education after graduation and believes showcasing her research at such a large conference will help her stand out on graduate school applications.

If she attends graduate school, she wishes to focus on Literature and Women's Studies.

Right now, she's just concentrated on the conference.

"I just signed up for the CSI Undergraduate Research Conference. I think it'll be good practice for the bigger one."



(From left) Michael Weinberg, of Staten Island Development Disabilities Council; Dr. Christine Cea, CSI Foundation Board; Dr. Christine Flynn Saulnier, CSI Department of Social Work; Nan M. Sussman CSI dean of Humanities and Social Sciences



CSI Intramurals Embraces Not So Common Sport

An Experiment Turns into Annual Event

BY PASINI WITHANAGE

In 2012, CSI's Intramural Director Sal Caruso partnered the intramurals with Wall Ball World, a non-profit organization, to kick off the first ever CUNY-wide Handball/Wallball Tournament at CSI's Sports and Recreation Center.

Registration was free to all CUNY students and Caruso recalled a turnout of about 20 students, a quarter of which were CSI students.

"It was exhilarating to see so many students from different CUNY schools get together to play one sport," he said. "Even kids from schools like LaGuardia came all the way to Staten Island to compete."

The founder and CEO of The United States Wall Ball Association Inc. (Wall Ball World), Jasmine Ray, attempted to make the collaboration with CSI for years but was not followed up until Caruso took the initiative to welcome the new idea.

It was a single elimination tournament that was open to male and female players. There was a men's doubles category and a

women's bracket.

An exhibition game was played between Team USA and Team Puerto Rico to kick things off.

The event was sponsored by the Municipal Credit Union Bank, along with Redbull and Ekelton, which provided the handballs.

"We're planning to expand, even out of CUNY and make it a college-wide Handball/Wallball Championship, hopefully starting in the Tri-State area."

Officials for the game were handled by Wall Ball World.

Caruso was active behind the scenes, organizing the presentation of awards. Prizes included gift cards from Barnes and Noble for the winner and runner up and trophies and

medals for the other winners.

Robert Lee from Hunter College and Tony Ferruggia from Queensborough Community College won the men's doubles contest and Heather Edell and Jane Chen, from CSI and Kingsborough, respectively, took home huge trophies from the women's

games. CSI student and participant in the 2013, 2014 championships Amir Ismail, mentioned that participants value the experience more than the prizes.

"It's a very competitive scene and it's se-

riously nerve-wracking. Everyone is here to win," he expressed, "but they are also very friendly because they come together to play a sport that they love."

Caruso made sure that all participants were given free t-shirts, preventing no one from going home empty-handed.

"I have never played or attempted to play handball ever in my life," said Caruso. "But I keep seeing kids playing handball all the time and I thought, 'Why not host the tournament again?'"

Since the first tournament was a success, Caruso and Ray decided to make the event an annual championship. The tournament is held during the fall semester in November.

With Caruso's network and Ray's enthusiasm, they have plans to grow in the future, contemplating to start offering academic scholarships to the winners of the championship.

"We're planning to expand, even out of CUNY and make it a college-wide Handball/Wallball Championship, hopefully starting in the Tri-State area," Caruso expressed.

As Fear of Stalled Legislation Increases, An Activist is Left Defiant and Fighting

Monica Sibri Continues to Motivate People to DREAM

BY CLIFFORD MICHEL

Tears began to stream down Monica Sibri's face in the middle of a political science course.

When her professor asked her what was wrong, Sibri walked out of the classroom, quickly washed her face, and quietly returned.

She was watching a livestream of the New York State Senate killing the Dream Act, a bill that offers to provide state financial aid for undocumented immigrants seeking a college education.

Now, a little less than a year later, she's stopped crying. Somewhere between her eight to twelve hour days on campus, Sibri can often be found furiously typing away on her laptop and organizing for CSI DREAMers, a subsidiary of CUNY DREAMers, in CSI's Club Room.

The group made headlines across the city recently when CUNY announced that it would pay tens of thousands of dollars back to over a 100 undocumented immigrants who paid out-of-state tuition in the past.

The Dreamers are also in the center of the New York State Dream Act debate and have been visiting legislators, attending campaign events and doing media avails to raise awareness.

This year the Dream Act is included in Governor Andrew Cuomo's executive budget—rather than being presented as some standalone bill—and is also linked to a GOP-favored tax incentive, giving immigration activists reason for hope.

Sibri founded CUNY DREAMers, an advocacy organization for undocumented students, in November 2013 by painstakingly reaching out to students in every last one of CUNY's 24 campuses. It took nine months to fully establish.

The group focuses on informing and representing the needs of CUNY's 6,000 undocumented students.

Getting students to join CUNY DREAMers was not an easy task. Many undocumented students were hesitant of revealing their immigration status and were fearful that joining the group will make them easy targets for deportation.

In a recent trip to Albany, Sylvia, a CSI freshman, flushed bright red when she realized she would have to speak directly with elected officials. She pulled Sibri aside and chatted briefly.

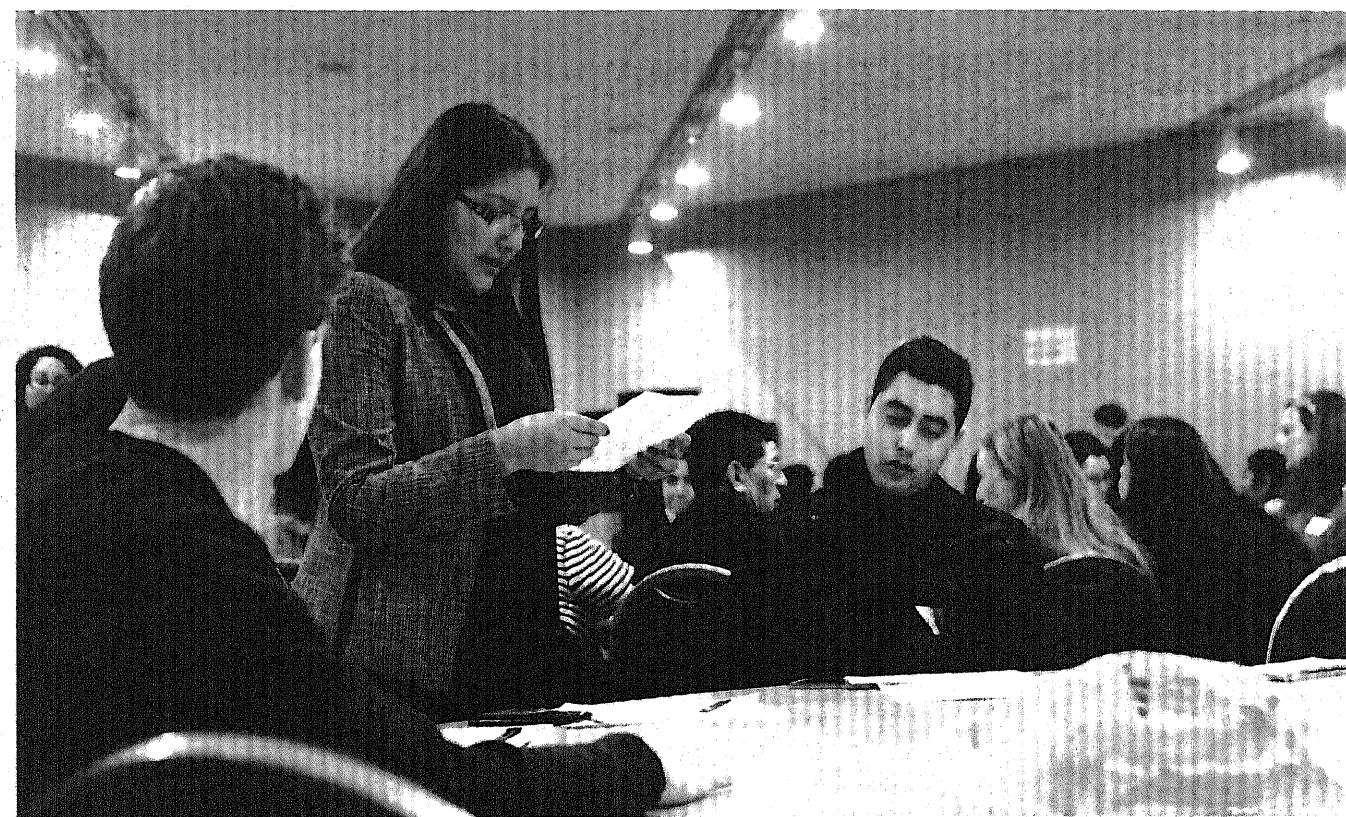
When I asked Sylvia, clinging to Sibri's side, how her legislative visits went, she beamed.

"She did a lot of the talking at first, but it was awesome," Sylvia told me. "I can see why this is important and I just really want to do it again."

She turned to Sibri and asked, "Do we have another visit scheduled?"

Sibri, who is highly politicized, is a strong believer of working within the legislative system and often leads lobbying sessions so students can learn to advocate for themselves more effectively.

In early November, the CUNY DREAM-



ers held a meeting to set their goals for the upcoming year.

Several new and overzealous members hijacked the conversation and talked about how "the system was broken" and politicians only "visit when they need votes."

A steely eyed Sibri gave a quick glare to the newcomer before swiftly redirecting the conversation to Albany's upcoming legislative visits.

"When they first come they're motivated, yet unclear of the process," Sibri said. "But by meeting new people and learning about the system they learn another way to make change."

Anyone who has met Sibri within the last two years would have a hard time imagining anything else than the zealous character who runs around campus, but she often gives credit to those who've come before her.

"I would never be as outspoken as I am if it weren't for dreamers before me," said Sibri. "I owe it to them, I have to do this. This is the way things get done."

Sibri left Ecuador at the age of 16 with her two younger sisters for what her parents told her would be a short visit to the United States. That visit turned out to be permanent and opened a difficult chapter in her life.

She attended Fort Hamilton high school in Brooklyn, where she learned that she was undocumented from a brash college counselor.

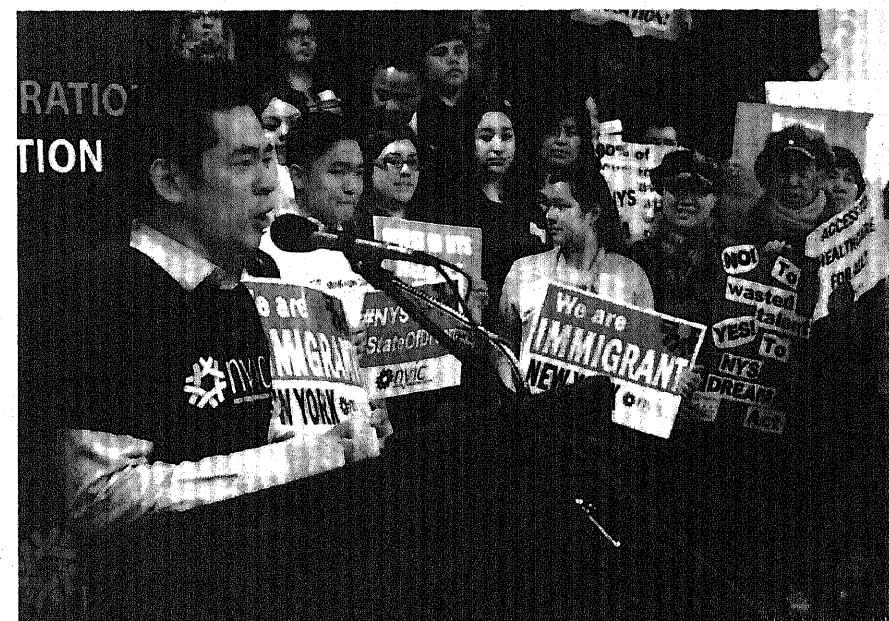
Discouraged, Sibri took a year off from high school to work and improve her English. She then enrolled in the College of Staten Island, where she thought she was the only undocumented immigrant.

Sibri said she'd often stay quiet when classmates would debate immigration reform and use hurtful words such as "illegals."

"It was like living a double life," Sibri said.

Her parents were also nervous about her pursuing higher education.

"My mother expected me to not talk about my immigration status, get married, and just work at a minimum wage job," said



Sibri. "She was scared that going to college would get me deported."

Paying for school is another challenge and a constant source of stress. Since she started college, Sibri has worked different odd jobs, used her parent's savings, and has been depending on several different scholarships.

It was when she received a fellowship in her sophomore year at CSI to work in the New York Immigration Coalition where she worked on projects surrounding the Dream Act.

This was the first time Sibri opened up about her immigration status to others outside her family and learned about other undocumented students, ultimately leading to the creation of CUNY DREAMers.

An overwhelming feeling of community presided over the group's first meeting.

A little over 25 students met at John Jay College and were visited by Vice Chancellor Matthew Sapienza, who offered his support.

The group accomplished a lot within its first year, helping to restore the Academic Achievement Award scholarship at the city level and making sure undocumented students were charged in state tuition, but ultimately failing to get the Dream Act passed in

the New York State legislature.

For this, Sibri blamed the group's naivety about the state of New York politics.

"There were political realities that we didn't know about," Sibri said.

Sibri said the group aimed to make themselves visible by attending many of Governor Cuomo's events during his reelection campaign last year.

During an advocacy day in Albany with more than 300 immigration advocates in early March, Sibri took on the task of visiting Nicole Malliotakis, a Staten Island Assemblywoman who has openly opposed the Dream Act and has voted against it both this year and last.

"The Dream Act, would put aside 27 million dollars for tuition assistance for individuals," Malliotakis told The Banner in an earlier interview.

"I believe we should assist citizens who are struggling to make ends meet to pay for higher education before those who are in the country illegally."

"I'm not trying to change their mind about what's right or what's wrong, sometimes you can't change that," said Sibri. "But they need to know, someone needs to tell them—someone has to be that voice."

BANNER LIFESTYLES

My Unregrettable Journey Back to Eating Meat

Health Issues and Discomfort Changed my Diet, but Not my Mind

BY VICTORIA PRIOLA

When I was a pescatarian, sitting down to eat at restaurants became more of a challenge than a pleasure.

Huffington Post's Healthy Living blog describes pescatarianism as being vegetarian while including seafood in your diet. I limited my food options to veggie burgers and shrimp for a year.

It's not that I didn't like it—the confinement just drove me crazy.

Jose Tejas was the place where that all changed. As I scanned the menu I began to realize the best fit for my dietary preference was no longer preferred. I skipped over the tofu salad and ordered the chicken burrito.

The slaughtering and mutilation of animals used for meals shown in Robert Kenner's documentary "Food Inc." was the inspiration behind my journey to dietary change. The day after I saw that film I went cold turkey and experienced some discomfort.

After a week of no meat I began to feel dizzy and light headed periodically through each day. I didn't think anything of it until I realized it happened every day for a month. I was always tired and, three months in, I noticed large quantities of my hair beginning to fall out. I knew something was wrong with my protein levels and needed to make yet another change.

I have never enjoyed red meat. To this day, I am repulsed by steak and ribs—which should have made my dietary change an easy one but it didn't. Chicken is currently my sole source of protein. During my pescatarianism, others around me considered chicken to be



When done correctly, not eating meat is great; create a diet that's right for you

poultry, and therefore wasn't meat. I considered them crazy.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, beef and pork are labeled meat while turkey and chicken are officially labeled poultry. The term "poultry" means that the animal is domestic and farm oriented. My opinion: if it once had a face, it is meat.

Becoming a pescatarian was supposed to help me lose weight but the only thing getting thinner was my wallet. I no longer got away with purchasing the frozen chicken nuggets and calling that dinner. Whole Foods and Trader Joe's were my go-to places, but since their products are organic, their prices were higher than most.

According to the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, the mean cost for

organic food items is 68 percent higher than for non-organic food.

Due to my terrible eating habits and strong dislike for kale, I actually gained weight. When I needed more protein and energy, I thought it was logical to eat more foods high in sugar and fat so my body had extra fuel to run on. Reading that now, I still scratch my head and ponder on what sense that made.

Finding a place to eat while on the go became progressively harder as the year progressed, because most of the restaurants I favored left out their vegetarian menu. With four hour work shifts and eight hours of school five days a week, I had no time to prepare a full course meal with all the vegetables my body desperately needed.

I lived out of my car so I needed some-

thing quick and simple. On days that I would be in a rush, I would drive to Wendy's and grab their cod fish sandwich. After a while, I was informed that the sandwich was seasonal and that they had taken it off the menu and replaced it with a Baconator doppelgänger—a switch great for their business but not great for me.

A piece of advice I would give to someone wanting to embark on a similar lifestyle change would be to make small changes and work your way up. My goal was to be a vegetarian and I thought I was doing such a great job until I took a step back and realized living off of bagels and shellfish was not a way to live.

Before jumping right into changing your ways, pregame your fridge by looking up recipes for pescatarian breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals. A favorite source of mine is Pinterest because most of the recipes require minimal work and common household ingredients.

A life change is more effective if you have someone to try it out with you. It is more likely you'll stick to being a pescatarian if you have a friend to cook with and keep each other on track. Having dinner dates at home reduce the risk of being stumped with a limited restaurant menu.

When done right, not eating meat is awesome. There is a comfort in knowing that you are not indulging in a mass amount of protein and supporting the killing of animals. I may try to eliminate meat from my diet again someday but until then, I'll have the chicken beef burrito—hold the tofu please.

The Influential Success Stories of My Colleagues

BY EMANUELA BALLIU

Our day begins with the usual routine of coffee, stairs, work, school, and going home, never taking the time to stop and see the people around us.

I have been in the presence of what anyone can define to be outstanding people, who are the best at their job, by far.

Rickey Rodriguez has been working as a security guard for Century 21 for six years, and for the last five, he has been statistically ranked as the top loss prevention guard of all Century 21 locations.

"It's a philosophy," said Jason Neally, a close co-worker of Rodriguez, "he believes he can be great [at his job] and he is. It's basic."

Starting from the bottom and climbing to the point where Rodriguez is the number one ranked loss prevention guard began six years ago, when he worked as just another employee with minimum wage.

After becoming a loss prevention guard he became more motivated with his work, realizing that money is not the root of all evil.

There are benefits to working hard and working 12 hour shifts week after week, as

Mr. Rodriguez so often does. "It's an addiction" he stated. You begin to work hard and then it pays off, always.

What began this impressive drive to work hard came three years ago when Rodriguez's life took a twist. He found out that his girlfriend was pregnant.

"It motivated me to be better," Rodriguez proudly said.

A young Rodriguez had to grow up and do what some young men often fail to do—take care of his family. What makes a person

"After becoming a loss prevention guard, he became motivated with his work, realizing that money is not the root of all evil."

outstanding is his ability to take care of his responsibilities.

Upon interviewing, a close co-worker Denzel Cayenne revealed that Rodriguez is not only a driven worker, but a driven prankster.

"One time at a party, he made me drink a whole bottle of Jack Daniel's. And when he saw I was almost done, he switched it with an almost full one. And then for me to sober up

he gave me a water bottle filled with vodka. He's a great guy. You know, 'ha-ha funny.' And he's like a brother to me," said Cayenne.

Rodriguez will never fail to express himself. He comes first and he understands that one's sole purpose in life is to oneself. He is an impressive human being and that fact can be supported by many.

A most impressive human found among my co-workers is Elisea Vazquez. A young woman who began working as a Loss Prevention guard three years ago and has now

arrived at a manager position.

Upon her promotion, she believes that the most difficult circumstances were setting boundaries among her co-workers who would now be her employees.

"I have a lot more responsibilities now," she stated, "but it's worth it."

Vazquez's daughter holds the key to her heart. It is because of her that she is driven to work harder and always keeps her spirits

high.

At 18, Vazquez dropped out of school but stepped it up and went back. She wrote that it was for her daughter. "I had to show her that as a single parent I don't need a man. I can step it up"

On being held back because of her sex, she said: "As girls we have to work harder because we are already being discriminated against."

She has always been able to "hustle harder" than most boys whether at work or even on the basketball court.

Vazquez believes that in anything she does she has to "keep pushing." Nothing comes easy, after all, and nothing will come around by waiting for it.

Vazquez is an ambitious woman who strives to always be better.

She is one of the few that make me proud to call her my friend.

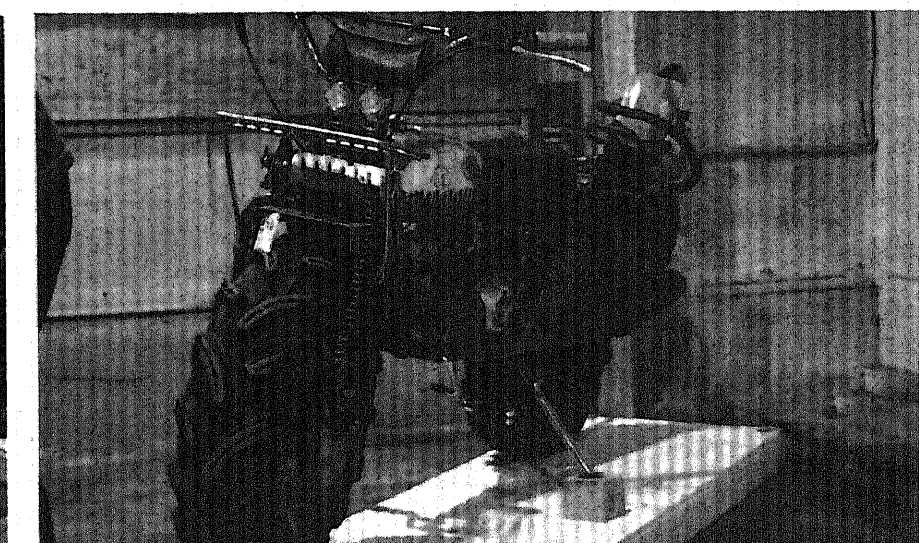
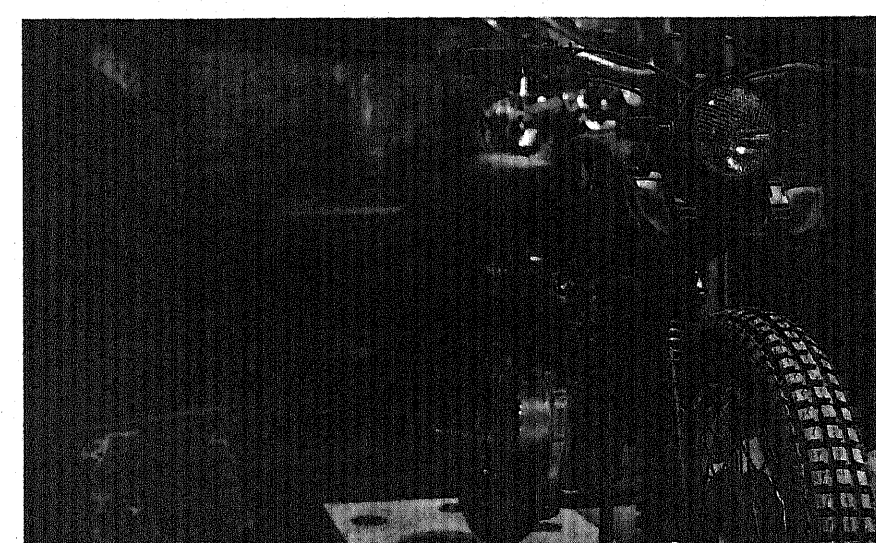
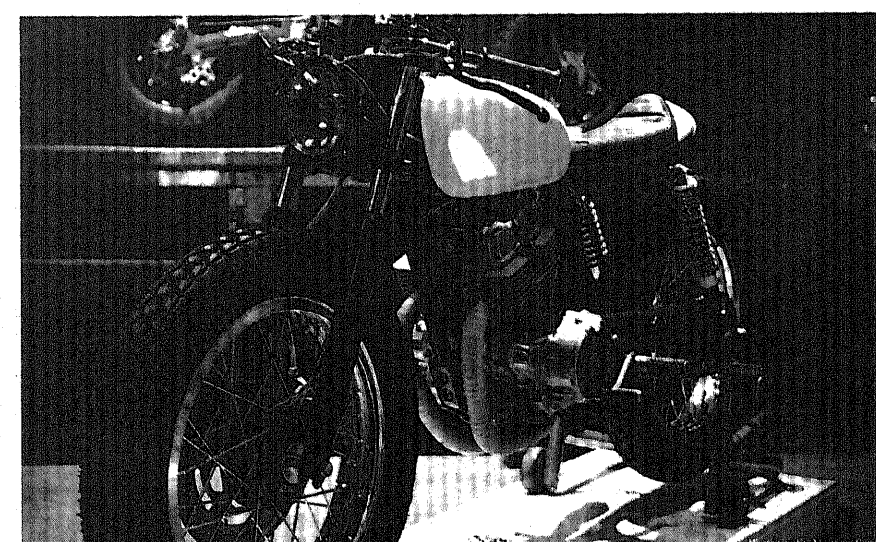
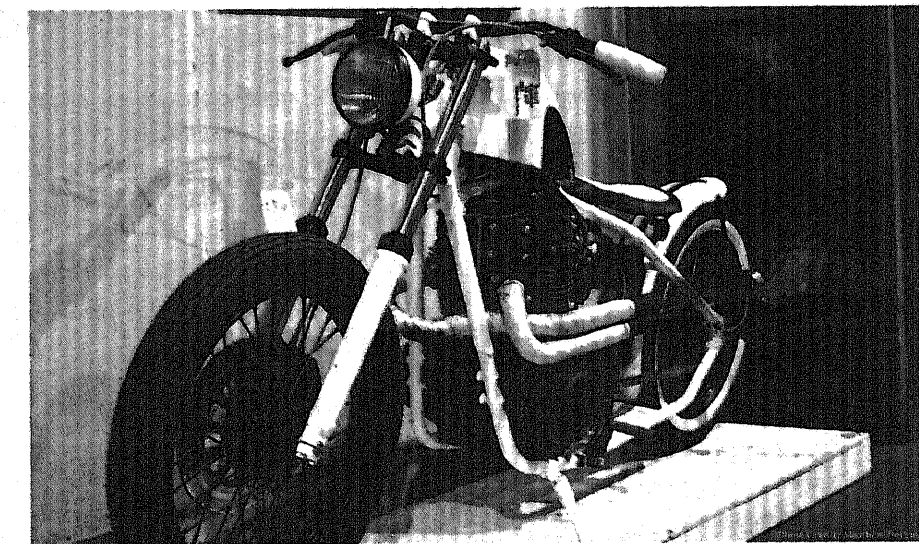
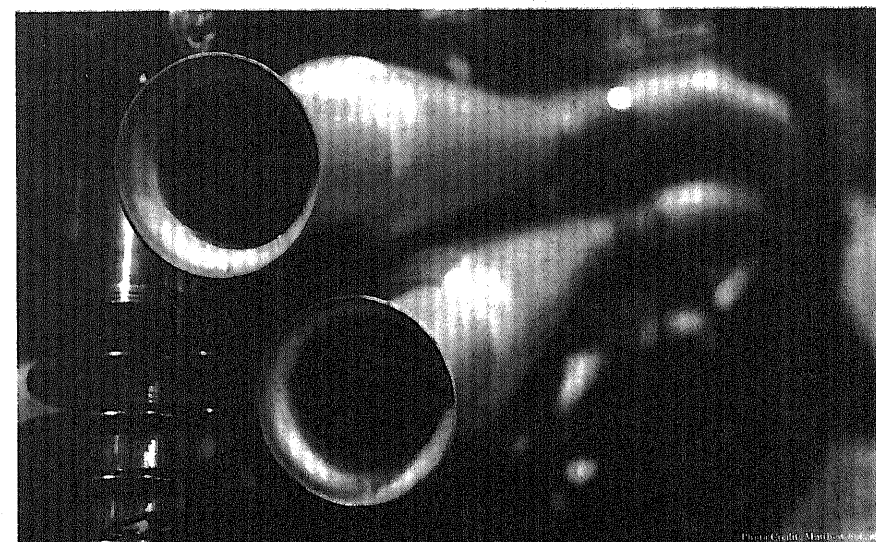
She is a woman who has realized the beauty of life and has dedicated herself to finding happiness not just for herself but for her daughter as well.

Vazquez's ability to always be cheerful, despite the circumstances arising throughout the day, is by far the most impressive.

BANNER LIFESTYLES

Driven with Excitement for Motorcycles, Artists Alike Unite

Banner Photographer Observes Portland's Spin on Typical Motorcycle Show



"The excitement of the people looking at the projects and standing in awe of the bikes the people put together was felt," said Banner Photo Editor Matthew Bergman. "It was a movement of people who saw the pictures and heard the stories of 'the good ol' days' from their grandparents," One Moto's website states. The art manifested itself in the form of seeing something someone put their heart and hearing their story into

BANNER ARTS

Hilarious, Rude, and Chic, "White Girl Problems" and "Psychos" Delights

BY LOREN TRAPANESE

New York Times bestselling author, Babe Walker, is something fierce. Her books, "White Girl Problems," and its counterpart, "Psychos," will basically make you fall in love—with her.

From losing her virginity to her gay best friend, getting labiaplasty, and throwing a funeral for her split personality, Babe Walker walks you through her life.

White Girl Problem #5, "My Vagina is Bullshit." Females are concerned about their vaginas, it's normal.

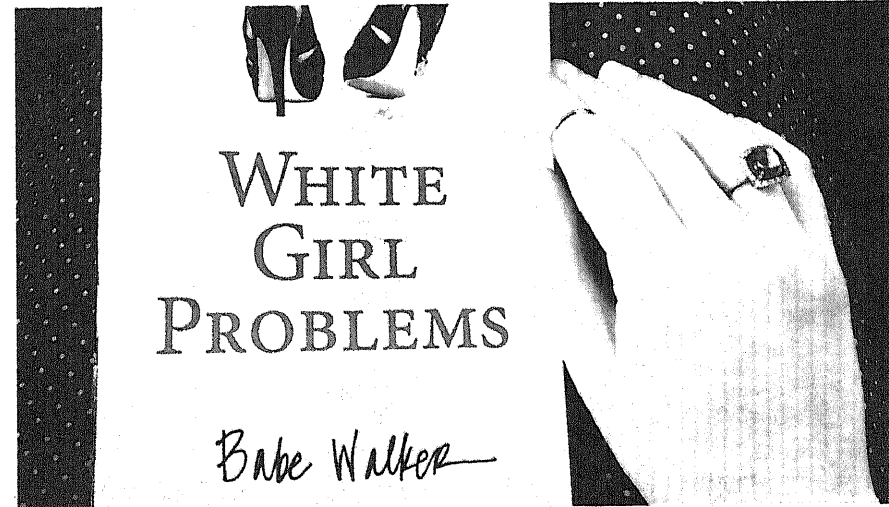
Babe however, is deeply worried that her vagina looks more like a, "free spirit that doesn't represent who she is as person." To put it more bluntly Babe says, "My vagina looked like it had Down syndrome."

She decides at 18 years old to undergo a labiaplasty (plastic surgery of either the labia majora or the labia minor, or both, that reduce the size of elongated labia).

White Girl Problem #2, "If I like him, he's probably gay." Yes, and despite that problem, Babe doesn't care. Her BFF Roman is super hot, so, Babe decides that she must lose her virginity to him.

She has her Jamaican nanny/mother/best friend Mabinty, hide in the closest and video tape it. Freaking hysterical!

Babe gets Roman completely drunk, puts on Grease (his favorite movie), and basically lays on the moves, with "Tom Ford" being the safe word, not kidding, Babe actually pulls it off and loses her virginity to a gay man.



Babe lives in a fashion on fashion world. She is seriously obsessed with shopping and layering herself in the latest collection.

Birkin bags, de la Rentia, and Pucci, are amidst a slew of designers that she drools over.

Throughout each book, you'll see sketches of outfits that fit her mood, or just simply show you the look she was going for.

White Girl Problem #17, "I need a therapist to talk about the problems I'm having with my therapist."

Not to give it all away but, her therapist Susan kind of fell asleep during their session which ended up in Babe drawing a dick and balls on her forehead. This is also the chapter that we learn that Babe has a personality disorder.

Babette is Babe's alter ego who is brought out when Babe meets the love of her life, Robert. She is the raunchy version of Babe who wears glitter and Bebe—which is

a fashion meltdown. Babette causes serious problems in the book, "Psychos."

White Girl Problem #23, "I bottomed out in Barneys." She walks into a Barneys and \$246,893.50 later, Babe awakens in a dressing room and realizes she has a problem that needs to stop. Mirror broken, lipstick on the wall covered in "fall's finest pieces," Babe admits herself into rehab in Utah for a shopping addiction.

While Babe is at Cirque Lodge (rehab), the reader gets a deeper look into Babe's mother. Gina, Babe's roommate, turns out to be Babe's mothers' wife. Bizarre huh?

When the reader meets Donna (momma Walker), the only thing we know is that she was a former model. By the end of the book, the mother-daughter relationship starts taking baby steps.

"Psychos," is a continuation of "White Girl Problems." When Babe comes home from two months away at rehab, she hopes

for a fresh start. That doesn't really happen.

When Babe starts talking to Robert again, Babette comes back to life. Poor Babe. The plot really focuses more on the fact that Babe believes she is being stalked.

She wakes up one morning to a threatening message on her mirror that written in lipstick. Who could've done it?

Because of this "stalker," Babe decides to take months at a time traveling and living in Europe—still the stalker lurks. We don't find out the culprit until the end of the book though.

In "Psychos," Babe takes on a little more responsibility from getting an actual job, getting fired—thanks to Babette, and having life-changing epiphanies.

We learn a lot about Babe in "Psychos." Not anything particularly useful though, maybe the, "Babe Walker on the male anatomy" chapter is rather helpful. Penis types. Who wouldn't be curious?

Babe even finds love in the sequel, and kills love also.

She may be a complete high maintenance bitch who is obscenely rude, smoothie obsessed, and utterly vain but you wind up absolutely loving her. Like, full on, lesbian loving her.

Babe Walker is one of those girls who you love to hate but kind of love more than hate. Honestly, I stalk Babe Walker on Instagram and Twitter after reading these books because I can't get enough of her.

At the same time, even though you may not want to admit it at first, you'll kind of realize that she just, gets you.

Books That'll Prepare You for the 2016 Presidential Race

BY CLIFFORD MICHEL

With the Iowa Caucus less than a year away, both political junkies and those unfamiliar with national politics are beginning to peek their interests as the 2016 elections come into view.

Whether you're an extreme right conservative or a hardcore Marxist, only good can come out of keeping up with the pop-political culture.

Yes, politics may cause arguments, but at the end of the day it still determines how our public goods are dealt and our dominant ideologies are viewed.

So for those of you that are coming of age in the next election cycle, here are some reads that'll give you a layered understanding of the American political landscape:

"A People's History of the United States" by Howard Zinn

Zinn's 2003 best seller fundamentally changed how history is studied and taught in the United States. The book takes an intense focus on the perspective of the common person, instead of the political elites and ideological triumphs.

Zinn begins with the pillages of Columbus and ends with the beginnings of the war on terror.

Though the book is lengthy (well over

600 pages) Zinn's prose and to-the-point descriptions of the U.S.'s already colorful history is sweet, sharp, and simple.

Zinn also has a knack for causally mixing in names of prominence with little known character traits and historical tidbits, which is always fun.

Few have disagreed with the ideas that Zinn has put forward, but those who have still admit that it's an extremely original way of observing U.S. history.

"Politics may cause arguments, but at the end of the day it still determines how our public goods are dealt and our dominant ideologies are viewed."

While Zinn's focus may seem a bit distant from the political issues of the day, they strongly reflect the struggles and discourse that Americans have fought for throughout their history and gives an holistic look on how essential public goods came about and how it impacted everyday life.

In 2016, everything from education to fracking will be debated and a firm understanding of our country's political history and how it affects citizens will be more than useful when you're watching Hillary Clinton

and Jeb Bush try to piece together their policy plans.

"World Order" or "On China" by Henry Kissinger

Kissinger, the famed and controversial political scientist who served as both Secretary of State and National Security Advisor, played an extremely prominent role in foreign affairs from 1969-1977. Even today, potential Republican candidates want to be connected to him.

His ploy may've not been successful, but the book sure has. "World Order" tip-toes through the increasingly global world we live in. Kissinger leads the reader through countless examples of how international affairs affects different countries and how there will probably never be true world order.

Putting aside Kissinger's stark stances on certain political matters, Kissinger's two books gives a grounded portrayal of foreign affairs in both theory and reality.

Avoid Autobiographies/Biographies
No, this isn't a critically acclaimed book. This is me, telling you (reader) to avoid any presidential candidate's novel at all costs. Just save yourself the 400 to 500 pages of propaganda and fake introspective reflections.

In "On China" Kissinger assesses what

BANNER ARTS

A Sentient Cop's Journey to Personhood

Sci-Fi Installment "Chappie" Promises Enjoyment

BY MATTHEW MCKENNA

Half way through "dead season" in the movie world, the new science-fiction movie "Chappie" arrived and it has promise in terms of enjoyment.

Neill Blomkamp, who directed "District 9," also directed "Chappie." There is a strong cast behind it, including Hugh Jackman, Dev Patel, Sharlto Copley, and a few others. It is rated R.

Set in Johannesburg in the near future, crime runs rampant in the city and it needs a new kind of cop to make it safe. The city creates robotic cops known as Scouts to work with human cops in an attempt to restore order.

We are introduced to a couple of gangsters, Ninja, played by Watkin Tudor Jones, Yolandi Visser, who plays herself, and America, or Yankie, played by Jose Pablo Cantillo, who are in trouble with the local crime lord and must pay him a lot of money.

Unknowningly, they are followed by the police force and a huge fight occurs. When one of the robots gets seriously damaged, audiences are then introduced to the one who created the robots, Deon, played by Dev Patel, who orders for it to be dismantled.

Deon desires to create artificial intel-

ligence and when he succeeds, he uses the damaged robot as a test subject. However, he is kidnapped by Ninja and Yankie and ordered to get the robot working so they can pull off a heist.

When it comes to life, it acts like a baby, scared and not knowing who the people are that are surrounding it. It is Yolandi who gives the robot a name, Chappie, voiced by Sharlto Copley.

As time passes on, Deon wants to increase Chappie's intelligence and creativity

while Ninja wants to turn Chappie into a killer so that he can pull off the heist.

As Deon tries to teach Chappie, he is discovered by coworker and rival, Vincent, played by Hugh Jackman, a veteran and creator of the failed Moose program that was the original idea for the robot police force.

Chappie learns new things and develops a personality of his own, one that is funny and innocent as a child.

As the movie develops, Vincent hatches a plan to get his robot to work while Deon

is left to fail and Chappie gets himself into trouble. Eventually chaos breaks out into the city and the tension rises.

This movie overall is good and has its highlights, but has some downfalls.

What is bad about this movie is that even though the plot and story are there, with all these characters, you tend to get confused. Luckily, it all comes together in the ending.

Another issue is that it is hard to determine whether it's good or bad is how the movie is very similar to "Short Circuit," where the robot, Johnny 5, is trying to learn but is also being hunted by the government.

Some of the dialogue doesn't feel believable or doesn't make sense.

What is enjoyable about this film is watching Chappie's growth as a character—from a newborn to a robotic gangster. The special effects are fantastic to the point where you can't tell if Chappie is a CGI or is animatronic.

The casts' performance is crisp and believable and each one has their own arc. Sigourney Weaver makes an appearance and her character is also believable.

Action scenes are terrific and enjoyable to watch. The humor in the movie is also a great factor.



Off-Broadway Musical Sings Grimm Tales

BY LUCIA ROSSI

The one thing you need as an audience member for this show is imagination.

With the fantastical and extravagant "Into The Woods" film premiere in December last year, expectations for the off-Broadway show version were high. The amount of talent did not disappoint however, the lack of crew, props, and scenery did.

Using your imagination to enjoy this show may be something you love or hate, but it is required since each cast member plays more than one role.

You clearly see them play instruments and do sound effects, the only set is that of the inside of a house—although most scenes happen in the woods, the characters costumes change very little—and without major special effects tools they improvise by making shadows of scenes using lights and bed sheets.

"Into The Woods," performed at the Laura Pels Theatre in Manhattan, is a musical twist on several, intertwined Brother's Grimm fairy tales that explore the consequences of what you wish for.

The story comes together with the tales of Cinderella, Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Rapunzel.

They are all connected by a baker and his wife who want to break the curse of a witch to give them a child.

There is no doubt that the ten actors of the show certainly had their work cut out for them. The most pressure seemed to be on the piano player, Adam Marks. Since there was

no orchestra, he played all the songs.

Exhaustively working throughout the performance, he was constantly being moved around the stage as a prop while playing, actors kept jumping on and off the piano, or hiding behind the piano, and he had a few lines.

Every actor did their part and more. Literally. Andy Grotelueschen played Milky White the cow, Florida (one of Cinderella's evil step sisters), and Rapunzel's Prince. Noah Brody played Lucinda (Cinderella's other evil step sister), the hungry wolf, and Cinderella's Prince. Yes, men played female characters and it was hysterical.

Emily Young played Little Red Riding Hood and Rapunzel. You get the point. Some of the sound effects they made were crying babies, galloping horses, and stomping giants. On top of that, they played a few instruments for musical numbers.

They made full use of whatever means they had. And with the help of imagination, it all looked and sounded completely legitimate.

The music was written by Stephen Sondheim who also wrote the score for Sweeney Todd. The song lyrics were witty, addictive, and humorous, and the music was catchy and ranged from strong and dramatic to soft and sweet.

One of the funniest songs was "Agony" sung by the two prince brothers about how their pain is worse than the other's because of their circumstances with Cinderella and Ra-

punzel. They argued about who had it worse.

Other songs like, "I Know Things Now" by Red Riding Hood and "On The Steps of The Palace" by Cinderella are songs that are in stream of thought; they think about what they are saying and doing as they sing it. It is like you are accompanying them on their process of having a great revelation.

Since the film version of the show was a Disney production, they had to make certain cuts and plot changes to make it more appropriate to a younger audience. Not to spoil, but one princess dies in the musical that does not in the film, and two characters sleep together in the show that don't in the film.

The show is a little more intense and it delves deeper into what happens to Rapunzel and her prince.

The show also contains a few different musical numbers. In the film, the song "Rainbows" was written specifically for Meryl Streep as the Witch to compensate for cut songs.

Every actor fit each character perfectly, whether they played a man, a woman, or beast.

Each person was vital to the story; there were truly no background characters. Each person used a certain piece of clothing or prop to signify that they were a certain character like a shawl, a cape with a hood, a cowbell, a jacket, or a hat.

Some of the most memorable lines come when Cinderella's Prince says, "I was raised to be charming, not sincere," and the Witch's

line "I'm not good, I'm not nice, I'm just right."

The actors were very friendly and interactive with the audience as well. Before the show began, they mingled with the audience by introducing themselves and asking how people were doing.

During the show, they had audience members in the front row hold props for them until they needed them back. In another scene, the baker's wife hid within the audience and pretended to read a playbill. This was very refreshing to see.

The Roundabout Theatre Company that presents the show is a not-for-profit organization, so it is no wonder why the show lacked the extravagant props and set. While the show was simple, it did not take away from its enthralling performance.

The theatre is relatively small, so the view is clear from any seat. Also don't try to take pictures of the set because it is copyrighted and they will call you out.

Despite the lack of materials, the show was nothing short of spectacular. Sometimes there are those shows or stories that make you go through every emotion and "Into The Woods" is one of them.

Don't be surprised if you have the songs stuck in your head for days, they are very catchy.

This show might also give you the urge to belt out "There are giants in the sky! There are big tall terrible awesome scary wonderful giants in the sky!"

BANNER OPINIONS

A Short Analysis of Americans' Views on their Soldiers

The Debate Struck up by American Sniper Chris Kyle

BY EDWARD ANGELL

It is a blessing that America has never been invaded by a military with sufficient strength to make life a prison.

Most Americans have learned to really appreciate the servicemen and women that protect their way of life and their homes and families.

However, a lot of controversy has been surrounding one soldier in particular. Chief Petty Officer Chris Kyle of the United States Navy SEALs has been the subject of much debate among Americans in every corner of the country.

He is the deadliest sniper in American history, with over 160 confirmed kills and an unofficial kill count somewhere in the mid 200s.

With that, he has cemented himself as one of the deadliest Americans to have ever lived.

Most citizens recognize his bravery and understand his job was to take the lives of people who would otherwise wreak havoc on American soldiers and civilians if given the opportunity.

As a sniper his primary objective was known as "overwatch," meaning he was responsible for surveying the area of operations and carefully watching over American troops while they did things that ranged from going door to door looking for intel on terrorist activity or simply looking for terrorist forces in general.

Most men and women cannot fathom what it must be like to know someone has killed hundreds of people, even if the killing is justified. There are those who simply cannot accept killing as a means of defense.

On February 2, 2013 Chris Kyle was killed along with his friend while attempting to help the very man who ended his life, Eddie Routh.

On February 25, 2015 Eddie Routh was convicted of capital murder and sentenced to life in prison without parole as reported by Ed Payne, Dana Ford, and Jason Morris of CNN.

After the verdict, social media was ablaze with arguments concerning Chris Kyle's life choices and if he really should be a person to be admired, with most of these comments coming from America's youth.

Teens and young adults in their 20s also criticized Kyle.

War is definitely the most atrocious thing we humans have ever committed against our fellow man.

One thing many people are ashamed to admit however, is that as bad as war can be,

it can also at times be necessary.

Where would humanity be if no one had stopped Hitler's Germany, or if Japanese Emperor Hirohito were not challenged by the United States after the massacre that was Pearl Harbor, or if no one stands up to fanatical terror groups who wish to kill those with conflicting beliefs.

America is at a stage where many of its younger generations do not understand what war really is, after all, how could they?

America has been strong enough to de-

showcase how truly horrid some among us can treat those who serve for the good of the country.

American opinion of its soldiers has greatly improved since the 1960s.

Despite the improvement America is still one of the most overly critical nations when it comes to military conflict and how they handle it.

Asking veterans their own opinions on how they have been treated is a more direct way to find out exactly what life is like for

basis.

The Banner: When and for how long did you serve in the armed service?

Dennis Nash (DN): I served from 1987 to 1995, I was first assigned to Okinawa, Japan with the third marine division.

From there I went to Thailand and South Korea, where we trained Thailand and South Korean troops as part of Operation Aslan Globe.

From there I came to the United States where I was stationed at Camp Pendleton in California with the First Marine Division where I dispatched to Panama to assist in Operation Just Cause.

The Banner: Were you part of any armed conflicts during your time with the Marines?

DN: I was part of the excursion of Manuel Noreiga in 1989, and was then assigned to the first Marine corps field service support group and from there went to participate in operation Desert Shield/Storm with the Marine Corps expeditionary force for one year.

We were assigned on the border of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

The Banner: As a veteran how have you been treated by fellow American citizens in the United States?

DN: We are treated very well in regards to the civilians, I believe the U.S. Government has to simplify the Veterans Administration, they have to make more simple because it is too bureaucratic.

As for civilians, they show me the utmost respect and dignity.

They understand, for example, we do play a role as you can clearly see with the conflicts in the Middle East via ISIS.

They understand that we play a role in defending people's freedom and understand there are those out there who would harm them if given the chance.

Mr. Nash and many other veterans appreciate the respect American civilians have shown and humbly ask that the respect continues for future generations of American veterans.

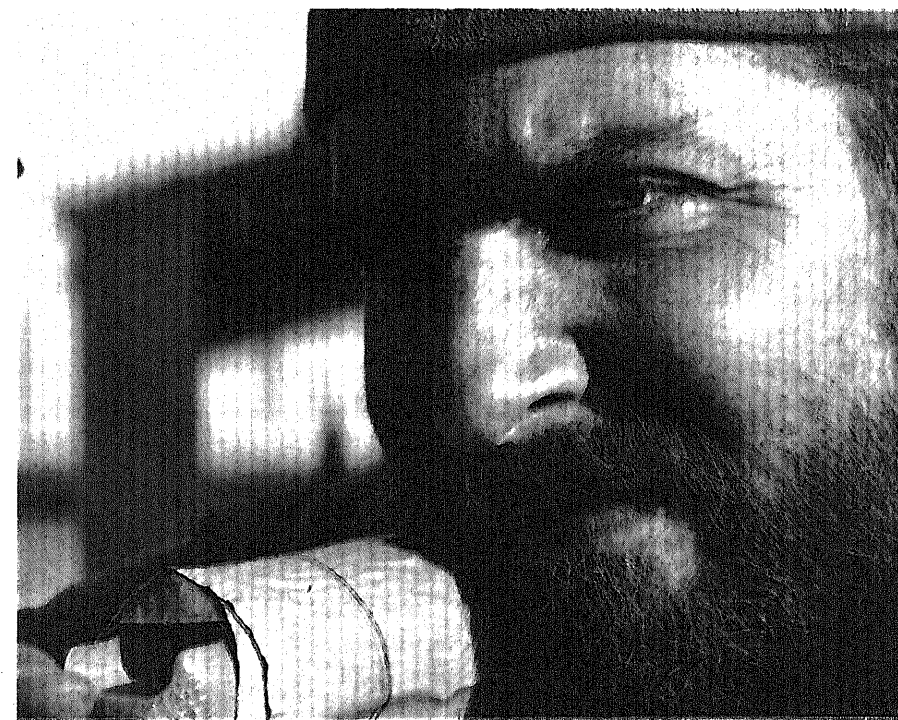
They are the ones who will have to answer the call to arms should a serious threat arise to the safety of American freedom.

Younger generations of Americans are showing that they are capable of respecting those who give it all for their country.

Those select few who choose to bash American servicemen and women continue to be a highly alienated minority within the United States, as they should continue to be for the foreseeable future.



One medium that brought Kyle (pictured above) back into the spotlight was the Clint Eastwood film "American Sniper," (below) which fostered provocative discussion of Kyle's actions



defend herself from any foreign threats and has never experienced the horror that is foreign occupation by an opposing force on our home soil.

America's occasional distaste for its troops is well documented, with the Vietnam war being a common reference and

those who are consistently viewed under a microscope.

Dennis Nash, a former United States Marine who was honorably discharged at the rank of corporal answered a few questions concerning his interactions with civilians and how they treat him on a day to day

SEX AND THE ISLAND

How Your Sex Life Changes When You Move In Together

BY LOREN TRAPANESE

You and your significant other have been dating for quite some time. Naturally, you hope to take it to the next step—moving in together. Moving into your own place with your partner is a huge deal. What many young couples don't realize is that your relationship changes drastically, sometimes for the better, or not.

Playing house seems all fine and dandy until having sex becomes an activity that was once at the top of the list but is now at the bottom—way, way bottom.

My boyfriend and I have been dating for four years. Last year we decided that we were ready to take our relationship further and moved in together. You know they say every relationship goes through a honeymoon phase? Well, that applies to living together too.

Things were fabulous, I felt grown up coming home to my boyfriend every day, knowing that every night I would be cuddled up next to him and wake up the same way. Sex was a constant. You realize, "Oh my God, I can get it all day every day," and it is exactly that. You can.

However, that honeymoon phases dies down real quick. Like, slap you in the face quick. Initially, you may brush it off but it

eventually starts to bother you. It bothered me a lot. I even started questioning if it was me, that maybe he wasn't attracted to me anymore.

I began making the moves on him consistently, and consistently I was getting rejected. It hurt my self-esteem big time and I became very insecure.

I am not making this stuff up. Sex takes a tumble and when that happens, fights happen. Because I was feeling so denied, I would pick

up, and every time we have sex, I can't help but wonder when it's going to happen again. Insane, right? It actually drives me nuts.

I try everything: lingerie, walking around naked, playing touchy-feely, and still, it doesn't work. My boyfriend chooses his video games. I have made an effort so often that I am sick of doing so. However, a girl has needs too! It's not fair for him to only want to have sex when he's in the mood.

Want to hear something really pathetic?

biggest sacrifice.

You could call me a liar but how often do you hear of marriages failing? Or cheating due to lack of bedroom playtime? Exactly. It is the truth.

I am not damning all who decide to move in with their significant other. I am simply giving a heads up to those who are curious. I wholeheartedly love my boyfriend and I also love living with him, it has made our relationship much stronger.

Unfortunately, it altered our once thriving sex life, especially since my boyfriend and I are sexual people—or were sexual. I still try to keep fire the burning. Cliché I know, but I mean it. I don't have much luck but I deal with it.

Personally, I do not understand how a plummeting sex life can occur when two attractive people, who are in love, live together. It doesn't seem right. We are young and while we still look this damn fine, we should take advantage of each other.

So, to all of you couples out there looking to take that next step, remember my forewarning: Don't neglect sex!

I am not saying that you have to be on each other like white on rice, I am simply saying to get frisky often enough with your partner so that they still feel desired.

"I do not understand how a plummeting sex life can occur when two attractive people, who are in love, live together."

fights with him, hoping to figure out where his sex drive went.

When you live together, you are with each other every day and knowing that, sex isn't as big of a deal as it was when you weren't living together—like sneaking in a quickie every time you were at each other's houses. When living together, you are not as eager to "get it in."

I have to be honest, I have been living with my boyfriend for a year and five months

When he does decide to play (with me, not his stupid video games), I savor the moment because I know that I'm not going to be getting any for at least a few weeks. Actually, as of right now, my boyfriend and I haven't had sex in a month. Shut up.

Couples think that living together is this wonderful grown up thing, and it is; it teaches you a lot about responsibility and compatibility. What a lot of you don't realize is that you make a ton of sacrifices too. Sex is the

Hookups and Heartbreaks: The Modern Day Relationship

BY ROBERT LAROSA

About a year and a half ago I was a cashier at Western Beef and had just finished checking out my girlfriend at the time. Before she left we smiled and said we'd hang out later, and the customer behind her—an older man—started giggling.

Once she left I asked him what was so funny and he said "Damn kid I think she liked you." I began to laugh and came back to him with a clever remark, "I hope she does since she's my girlfriend."

His laughter quickly died down to a surprised "Oh," then telling me I had made a mistake with my youth. Surprised and confused, I honestly didn't know how to make sense of what he was saying. As he finished his order he started telling me of all the girls he'd gotten with when he was my age, which was fine because I didn't care. After he left, I stored our conversation in the back of my mind and left.

At my new job at ShopRite, I still get customers who ask if I'm single and assure me that this is the best way of living. One long relationship and three "almost dated" hook ups since, I can say both have their pros and cons. However more and more, it feels like this generation is forgetting what the word relationship means.

If you and your significant other just want hook ups and both know where you stand, that's perfectly fine. I'm not trying to preach that everyone should be in a committed relationship, because everyone is different.

However, I feel like we have forgotten the meaning and values of relationships. Or maybe this hookup generation is the relationship of today.

I've been on both sides, with serious relationships to almost dated relationships, and like everything else there are pros and cons to fit with each. In my experience, dating seriously was great because we worked up a strong bond and were practically best friends.

Our families met, our friends became friends with one another, and there was a lot of respect for each other. On the flip side of almost dated, we started off as friends, our

I showed respect by communicating, not pressuring each other and being 100 percent straight up. Even if they are casual hookups, serious relationships, friends with benefits, or fall into the almost dated category, respect should always play a large role.

A point was made by someone I was with when she said "We're basically boyfriend and girlfriend, just without the title." You spend your free time with this person, you go to movies, dinner, have sex, and open up to each other but never officially dated, because you guys "almost dated."

Technically you're not committed to one

back of my car were fun and all, but there was no foundation for us to get serious. All in the blink of an eye things stopped being fun and that's when I started hanging out with a friend from work. Initially it was nothing serious until one day I realized that I wanted to be with this new girl instead of who I was originally with.

This situation and feeling flat out sucked and I cannot think of a better word to use because, originally we started off great, but things just didn't seem to work out. So much time and effort goes into someone even though you're not dating and in the end you realize this isn't what you want. I had to be as honest as I could be and tell her that things weren't working and whatever we were became repetitive and redundant.

Honesty is key and will set you free, so I told her that I liked someone else and would not talk to both of them at the same time because that wouldn't be fair. We ended on as positive a note as we could get—"See you on Tumblr"—and haven't talked since.

I ended up seeing the girl from the gym for a few months and became extremely suspicious and caught her lying about seeing her ex-boyfriend and immediately ended things. Talk about irony.

These situations look like a giant waste of time for everyone but it was a lesson well learned. Being in this situation is a very weird space to have be in, and it looks like it will be the modern day relationship of my generation.

"It feels like this generation is forgetting what the word relationship means."

friends knew about us but nothing more, bonds weren't as strong, or even weak, and our respect dropped drastically for each other.

Respect is huge and should be a top priority in dating or hookups but it really seemed to lack in my experience. This is something that I never fully understood and maybe I never will but with the last person I was with, the level of respect was non-existent, despite warning signs shot off everywhere. When you want something to work, you ignore the noise around you.

Any time before that my partner and

person so any pressure of having a girlfriend or boyfriend isn't there but once you've put a lot into this "fling" you guys are practically together.

This is where lines start to get crossed because if one of you start talking to another person and get interested, the original person is going to get hurt. Some can pull this off and keep both people and use the "We're not dating" motto to get out of a situation like this but I wasn't one of them, and not everyone is.

While I was with a girl, everything seemed okay until it just didn't feel right anymore. Hookups and fooling around in the

SPORTS

Baseball Season Ever Closer with Spring Training in Motion

The AL, NL Players that will Call New Clubs Home

BY NICK CERASO

The American League

The Baltimore Orioles finished the 2014 season as the American League East division winners. In the offseason, they let two of their outfielders leave for free agency, including Nelson Cruz, who lead the majors in homeruns last year with 40.

Meanwhile, Boston and Toronto looked for offense. The Red Sox spent the most money this offseason, signing former shortstop Hanley Ramirez for four years, \$88 million and the three time World Series champion third basemen Pablo Sandoval for five years, \$95 million.

The Jays signed catcher Russell Martin to a five year, \$82 million deal and traded for third basemen Josh Donaldson.

The New York Yankees kept most of their money in their pockets, as they re-signed Chase Headley for four years \$52 million and signed lefty reliever Andrew Miller for four years \$36 million. However, the biggest talk for the Yankees this offseason has been the health of starting pitcher Masahiro Tanaka and the return of Alex Rodriguez from his 2014 suspension due to steroid use.

The additions the Red Sox made to help the offense should be beneficial for them in the AL East division. Last year the Red Sox finished in the bottom five in the AL in runs scored with 634.

Baltimore did not look to add any players to the offense once Cruz left the team, while the Jays did not add any pitching to the staff that allowed the sixth most runs in the AL. Both these decisions should help the Red Sox in the end.

The American League Central division winning Detroit Tigers saw 2013 Cy Young winner Max Scherzer leave for free agency to sign with the Nationals. The Tigers traded away another starting pitcher, Rick Procello, for outfielder and two-time Homerun Derby champion Yoenis Cespedes, who will provide power in the Tigers lineup.

Coming off a World Series loss, the Royals watched as their starting pitcher James Shields signed with the Padres.

However, it is the Chicago White Sox who made the most moves in the Central, signing former Yankee closer, David Robertson, outfielder Melky Cabrera, and first basemen Adam LaRoche for a total of \$113 million. They also traded for starting pitcher Jeff Samardzija.

These four additions could propel the team to the top of the division. As both the Tigers and Royals will be entering the 2015

season without an ace in their rotation.

The Texas Rangers offseason has not gone as planned. Coming off of last year's record for the most injured players in a single season, the Rangers traded with the Milwaukee Brewers for starting pitcher Yovani Gallardo, who will have to step in for the Rangers top spot.

Yu Darvish, their number one starter, will undergo Tommy John surgery and is done for the season, and second basemen Jurickson Profar, who missed all of last season, will again miss all of the 2015 season with a torn labrum.

The Seattle Mariners needed offense and someone to hit behind Robinson Cano and that's exactly what they got when they signed Nelson Cruz to a four year \$57 million deal. Seattle finished last season in the bottom five in runs scored with 634 in the AL. However, they allowed the least amount of runs scored against them at 554 in all of the majors.

The Oakland Athletics spent the offseason rebuilding, as they look to be big competitors this season. General Manager Billy



Bean traded away three of his top players including Josh Donaldson, who had the third highest wins above replacement in 2014 at 7.4.

The A's also watched as starting pitcher Jon Lester left for free agency to sign with the Cubs. With the Athletics looking like they are partaking in the rebuilding process, it could take them out of contention for the division.

The Los Angeles Angels and Seattle Mariners are the clear favorites in the American League West. The Angels finished with 98 wins last year—the most in the majors—did not look to make any changes to the roster.

The biggest move was trading for former all-star outfielder Matt Joyce. Who at the moment looks to be the everyday leftfielder

“The Yankees kept most of their money in their pockets, resigning Chase Headley for four years \$52 million and lefty reliever Andrew Miller for four years \$36 million.”

with a suspension looming over Josh Hamilton. The Angels and Mariners have the best chance to go to the World Series in the American League.

The National League

The 2014-15 offseason has drawn a lot of attention in the National League. Most of the biggest pitching names in free agency signed in the National League. Including some record-setting deals.

The Washington Nationals finished the 2014 season with 96 wins, winning the National League East and owning the best record in the league. At the end of the 2014 season they already were the favorite to win the division again due to having one of the

best rotations in baseball. signing of Michael Cuddyer to a two year deal for \$21 million. However, the most important day of the offseason for the Mets came on March 6, when Matt Harvey had his first spring training outing after returning from Tommy John surgery.

The Chicago Cubs looked to make some big moves with the team having a lot of young and talented players hitting the majors. The Cubs signed Jon Lester for six years for \$155 million and one of the best managers in the game, Joe Maddon, to a five year deal worth \$25 million.

Maddon is known for teaching and developing young talented players during his time with the Rays.

The St. Louis Cardinals biggest offseason move was acquiring outfielder and defensive star Jason Heyward from the Atlanta Braves. With a 2.8 in defensive war or defensive wins above replacement, Heyward finished in the top five and second amongst outfielders, which will provide the Cardinals with better defense as they go after the division title for a third straight season.

The World Series Champion San Francisco Giants are coming off their third title in five years. However, the team will be without third basemen Pablo Sandoval, as he signed a deal with Boston. Pablo was on the team all three years the Giants won the World Series.

The San Diego Padres in August hired A.J. Preller as the new general manager. From December 18 to the end of December, the Padres were involved in seven different trades. Preller quickly acquired an entire new outfield featuring Justin Upton, Matt Kemp, and Wil Myers.

During the offseason the Padres also signed James Shields to a four year \$75 million deal. These moves shifted the Padres from a projected .500 win team to a possible playoffs and World Series contender.

The Los Angeles Dodgers are coming off their second straight division title. They will be without their all-star shortstop Hanley Ramirez, who signed with Boston. The Dodgers also traded Dee Gordon—who led the league with 64 stolen bases—to the Marlins. The Dodgers also acquired former all-star and all-time hit leader in Phillies history Jimmy Rollins.

Second basemen Howie Kendrick from the Los Angeles Angels also joined the roster, and this combination will improve the team's defense.

The Dodgers have been one of the game's best teams the last few years, lead by 2014 MVP and Cy Young winner Clayton Kershaw.

“The Mets offseason saw the signing of Michael Cuddyer to a two year deal for \$21 million.”

“It's a landmark moment for the franchise and Giancarlo,” said Loria. “There will be no distraction about, will he be traded.”

The New York Mets offseason saw the