

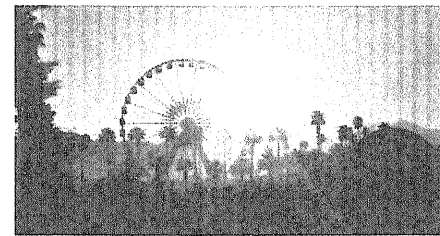
# THE BANNER

The Official Newspaper of the College of Staten Island

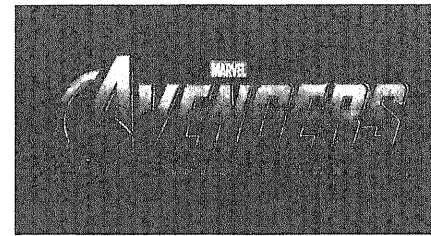
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Issue #14



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## 7th Annual CSI's Got Talent Ends on a Rhyme

Students Show Off Their Vocals and Spoken Words

BY: KENNY VELEZ AND VICTORIA IFATUSIN

The seventh annual CSI's Got Talent recently showcased talent from the student population. The finale of this event was held on April 17 in the Williamson Theater in the Center for the Arts.

With the help of the President's Cabinet, the Office of the Vice President for Student and Enrollment Services, the Office of Student Life, the Center for the Arts and Media Services department, the event was able to take place.

The event was also funded by WSIA-FM, Student Government and the Campus Activities Board who supported the show with funding from the Student Activity Fee.

The hosts, Sal Vulcano, a member of the cast of the show "Impractical Jokers," and Jay Miller, a Staten Island comedian and former producer of "Impractical Jokers," introduced themselves and set up the show for the rest of the night. This is their seventh year hosting CSI's Got Talent.

The first performance of the night was Chris With AK.

Chris With AK is a duo made up of two college students, Kyle Henry and Christopher Gonzalez. Both have had passion for music at an early age, persuading them to learn instruments.

They performed a medley of pop songs, with Kyle playing the saxophone and Christopher playing the guitar.

Among the songs they staged were "Thinking About You" by Frank Ocean,



The first, second, and third place winners of CSI's Got Talent.

"Passionfruit" by Drake and "All of Me" by John Legend.

After Chris With AK was Fatou Thiam, performing a spoken word piece about domestic abuse and traditional marriages. Thiam has had experience with her acting career, as she has performed in plays such as Beyond Spectrum in college.

Next to go was Avery Adams, a Childhood Education and Psychology freshman, who sang a song called "Change".

Tony Aye, a Finance and Data Analytics junior has the "dream of performing on stage in front of hundreds of people." He performed a magic trick involving cards that required two volun-

teers from the audience.

After the magician was Sophia Sparncroft. She grew up in a family of musicians, encouraging her to sing "That Old Black Magic" while playing the cello at the event.

Ramzi Wolf, a senior, displayed some of his unique dance moves. Wolf the only performer to return from the previous year.

He danced to a remix of "Singing in the Rain."

Seventh was Shanice Rodriguez, performing her rendition of "Lay Me Down" by Sam Smith. She happens to be a music major as well.

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## Students Can't Keep Up With Cost of Transportation

Growing Cost of NYC Transit is Expensive for Traveling Students

BY: CHRISTINA FRATTO

Congestion prices are about to be established as upcoming charging fees on drivers traveling throughout the busiest parts of the city in order to raise money to fix MTA services and reduce gridlock.

Governor Andrew Cuomo proposed a plan that charges a daily fee for passenger cars of \$11.52, as well as tacking on a surcharge of roughly \$3 for in-hire cars such as Uber, taxi-cabs and \$.75 cents for carpool rides, according to The New York Times.

CSI students who drive through the boroughs of NYC such as Manhattan,

Brooklyn, and even as far as the Bronx and Queens not only have to worry about gas, but are burdened with the Verrazano-Narrows bridge toll, which costs \$11.52 with E-Z pass. All this on top of the proposed added cost commuters have to face when driving through or traveling through Manhattan.

Students like Amber Shah have no choice but to drive to school because the MTA is unreliable, or they live too far are struggling now.

These changes are only going to make it worse.

"I drive to and from school four

times a week," she said. "I can barely afford to pay for the bridge now, how am I going to afford another toll?"

Students struggle financially every semester to pay for tuition, textbooks, supplies, and now the growing tolls and charges NYC burdens them with every year just to get from one place to another. In order to make ends meet to pay for these necessities, students find themselves working full time as well as trying to manage a full time school schedule.

Joshua Olivencia, a CSI student who lives in Park Slope, wakes up at 6AM ev-

Continued on pg #4

## Macaulay Honors College Hosts Galaxy Themed Spring Formal

May the Fun Be With You at Spring Formal

BY: VERONICA PISTEK

On Saturday, May 5, 2018, CUNY students from all across New York City wore their most out-of-this world outfits for the space-themed Spring Formal at Macaulay Honors College in Manhattan.

The College of Staten Island Macaulay Honors students, along with their neighboring CUNY college students, travelled to party to celebrate the nearing end of the semester with their friends, many photos, lots of food, and dancing that lasted all night long.

Organized by the 2017-2018 Macaulay Scholars Council, the Spring Formal attracted students from Brooklyn College, City College, Baruch College, Hunter College, Queens College, John Jay College, Lehman College, and the College of Staten Island.

Upon entering the quaint

Continued on pg #5

## CUNY Shows Importance of Film

CSI's Film Festival Takes On Controversial Issues

BY: HAZIQ NAEEM

On April 16 and April 20, a satellite film screening of the tenth annual CUNY Film Festival was held at the College of Staten Island.

Held in IP - 223, the room was a small sized theater and sparsely populated by students and other viewers on the second day of the screening.

The viewing experience was mostly smooth, with only one point about halfway into the screening where audio and video became out of sync and had to be paused and dealt with.

Mitchell Lovell, a former student and now employee of the College of Staten Island was the screening coordinator.

Upon entering the screening room,

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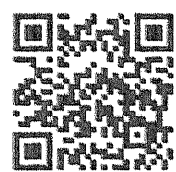
# Lavender Graduation Reception

Honoring the lives and achievements of  
College of Staten Island's  
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Students

4 pm, Wednesday, May 30, 2018  
1C-Green Dolphin Lounge

Please register/rsvp by going to:  
<https://orgsync.com/125833/forms/304256>

For more information: LGBTQ Resource Center, 1C-226  
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# BANNER POLITICS

## Where is Melania?

First Lady Rather Quiet During Presidency

BY: LUCIA ELM

The old saying goes, "silence is the best medicine" but not always - especially as a public figure standing in the midst of a storm.

President Trump's presidency continues to be unsteady as the stakes continue to rise. His questionable decision-making process is not making it easy for not only his professional life, but in his personal life as well.

Last month, allegations surfaced from several porn stars who claimed to have had an affair with the president-to-be during his marriage to Melania. They confess that Trump gave them large sums of hush money to keep the affairs he had with them a secret from Melania.

One of the porn stars, Stormy Daniels, and her lawyer, Michael Avenatti, took the world by surprise last month when they presented some incriminating evidence against Trump's lawyer, Michael Cohen, who aided Trump in the scandalous cover-up.

Avenatti is confident that they have more than enough evidence to convict Trump and his lawyer.

He said in a bold statement during a recent interview with Bill Maher, "I think we are going to get an opportunity to depose Michael Cohen and the president within the next 60 to 90 days and ... I truly believe this is the Achilles' heel of the president.

He has trusted a moron with his innermost secrets."

Karen McDougal, a former Playboy model, has also filed a lawsuit against Trump. She says her affair with Trump

This begs the question: what is her opinion on all this? She has yet to make a statement. But most importantly, how will her silence affect her role as First Lady?

The role of First Lady has always

It's true that she has done a few charity events here and there, but nothing that has become her brand. She is largely a silent First Lady since she stepped into office with Trump.

Now that a number of allegations have surfaced about Trump's mistreatment of women, his earliest being his leaked "grab em' by the pussy" video, perhaps this is her time to step up.

What we are seeing with Trump's mistreatment of women isn't anything new; he's just one of many influential men in history that have used their power to oppress others, including women.

Unfortunately, we must consider that perhaps Melania's silence is only enabling the oppression women have been struggle against for generations.

Being First Lady, the number of times she has been disrespected by her own husband is almost incomprehensible, at least in terms of what we have seen from past first ladies.

What message does this send to young girls and women?

Perhaps this is the fuel Melania can use this as leverage to build her brand as an active supporter of women's rights, an undeniable problem even in today's culture.

Melania, we're counting on you to do the right thing. This isn't about having a pity party for you.



Melania Trump looking somewhat troubled attending Donald Trump's presidential inauguration last January. Photo Credit: Bet.com

lasted for about 10 months until she decided to call it off, due to the feelings of guilt she had knowing Trump was married.

In an appearance on "Anderson Cooper 360", she apologized for what she had done.

"What can you say except I'm sorry? I'm sorry. I wouldn't want it done to me," McDougal said. Nothing has been heard from Melania about her response to this apology.

played an important role in American politics. Much like the President, the First Lady has a significant amount of power to shift the pieces on the political climate board almost as much as he does.

First ladies like Michelle Obama and the late Barbara Bush have used their power to make a positive influence in pressing social issues around the country.

However, Melania Trump has yet to make her mark.

## Commentary: These Resolutions Provide A Solution

NY Politicians Follow Other States in the Call for a Constitutional Convention

BY: CHERMO TOURE

The fight against political corruption continues, and it has arrived in New York.

As of right now, there are two resolutions in the New York State legislature that are calling for an end to political corruption.

These two resolutions are called S3317, which is the NY Senate version, and A5109, the NY Assembly version. Both resolutions call for a convention of the states to add amendments to the United States' Constitution.

These amendments would address the issue concerning the Supreme Court decisions regarding private financing of elections.

In the resolutions, they state that "The State of New York sees the need for a convention to propose amendments in order to address concerns such as those raised by the decision of the United States Supreme Court in Citizen United v. Federal Election Commission... and related cases..."

The convention that these two resolutions are calling for would also address campaign finance reform not concerning Supreme Court decisions, like unions buying political favors from legislators.

A way to end political corruption is through a Supreme Court ruling or a constitutional amendment. Seeing that it was the Supreme Court that brought us to this point, it is unlikely that the Supreme Court

would rule against themselves.

Some may say that Congress could add amendments to the Constitution as well, which is true. However, the current congress that we have right now is part of the political corruption.

Ending political corruption seems more pragmatic to do through the states. As of now, there are 14 senators in the NY State Senate that are supporting S3317.

Meanwhile, in the NY State Assembly, there are 40 assembly members supporting A5109. The numbers are only going to increase because there are many activists lobbying and calling their representatives to have them support both resolutions.

Some may say that the NY State Senate is controlled by Republicans and Republicans would never let these resolutions pass. However, what is always omitted in this point is that ending political corruption is a bipartisan issue.

Although legislators receive "campaign contributions" from PACs (political action committee) around the country, most of them feel stressed and uncomfortable having to beg PACs for money to run their campaigns.

According to a Huffington Post article, politicians are growing tired of having to raise money for their campaigns. If legislators could do anything to alleviate that stress of having to raise money from PACs, they would.

There are people who would say New York is a big state and it would be nearly impossible to get people en masse to get their representatives to support S3317 and A5109.

However, according to a Quinipiac poll done in 2016, over eighty percent of New Yorkers believe that political corruption is a serious problem or somewhat of a serious problem.

In a 2015 poll done by Gallup, over seventy percent of Americans believe that there is widespread corruption going on in the country.

California, which is the most populated state in the country, has already passed the very same resolution to have a convention of the states to end political corruption. We can even look across the Hudson River, where New Jersey has already passed the same resolution. The list of states also includes Illinois, Vermont, and Rhode Island.

S3317 and A5109 are not just calling for a constitutional amendment to end political corruption, the resolutions are also calling for public financing of elections.

There are some who bring up that the taxpayers would be on the hook for the cost of a constitutional convention. Even though it would, the taxpayers would save a lot of money just by moving to a public financing election system.

According to Priceofoil website, oil companies receive \$17 billion in govern-

ment subsidies, which is not a coincidence. It's because oil companies have the money to buy political favors from legislators.

This political corruption also includes the military.

Back in the 1990's, Lockheed Martin was chosen to be the company to construct the F-35 military jet. In a 2016 Times Magazine article, the taxpayers paid up to \$1.45 trillion for the F-35 military jet that had problems flying. In a 2017 The Hill article, Congress has already given the Pentagon \$27 billion to revamp the F-35 program.

This is not a coincidence that Lockheed Martin was the company chosen for this. Lockheed Martin is one of the top political donors to Congress.

Political corruption has become the main polluter of our democracy.

Just about every issue that us, the citizens, want to become law is halted by corporate-PACs, super PACs, or normal PACs that buy political favor from legislators; it is a usurpation of our form of government from a republic to an oligarchic plutocracy.

After the Constitutional Convention of 1787, a lady asked Benjamin Franklin what type of government the United States would be. Franklin replied to her by saying, "A republic, if you can keep it."

Benjamin Franklin's words haven't been more relevant than it is today.

# BANNER NEWS

"CSI's Got Talent"

Continued from Front Page

Another singer, Jacqueline Paige, went next, singing "Feeling Good" by Michael Buble. Similar to other performers, she's had an interest for music "ever since [she] could talk."

Next was Guangcheng Xing, who at once performed in a Chinese TV show similar to American Idol. He sang an original song dedicated to his wife and child called "I Say I Am Loving You" on the piano.

Tenth was Reginald Bray performing a spoken word poem called "Influence." Bray was popular with the audience, as they roared with approval before and after he performed.

Eleventh, Dominique Mendez who sang "Don't You Remember?", as this contributes to her singing career.

Lori Miho went last and sang "This is a Man's World," who has a similar interest of music like many of the other contestants since she was young.

The top five contestants chosen were Avery Adams, Shanice Rodriguez, Jacqueline Paige, Reginald Bray, and Dominique Mendez. Avery went first, and sang a song called "Waiting For Life."

Rodriguez sang a cover of Pink's "What About Us", followed by Paige singing "Gravity."

Reginald Bray performed another spoken word poem, this time on the theme of alcoholism. This act resulted in a loud ovation from the audience.

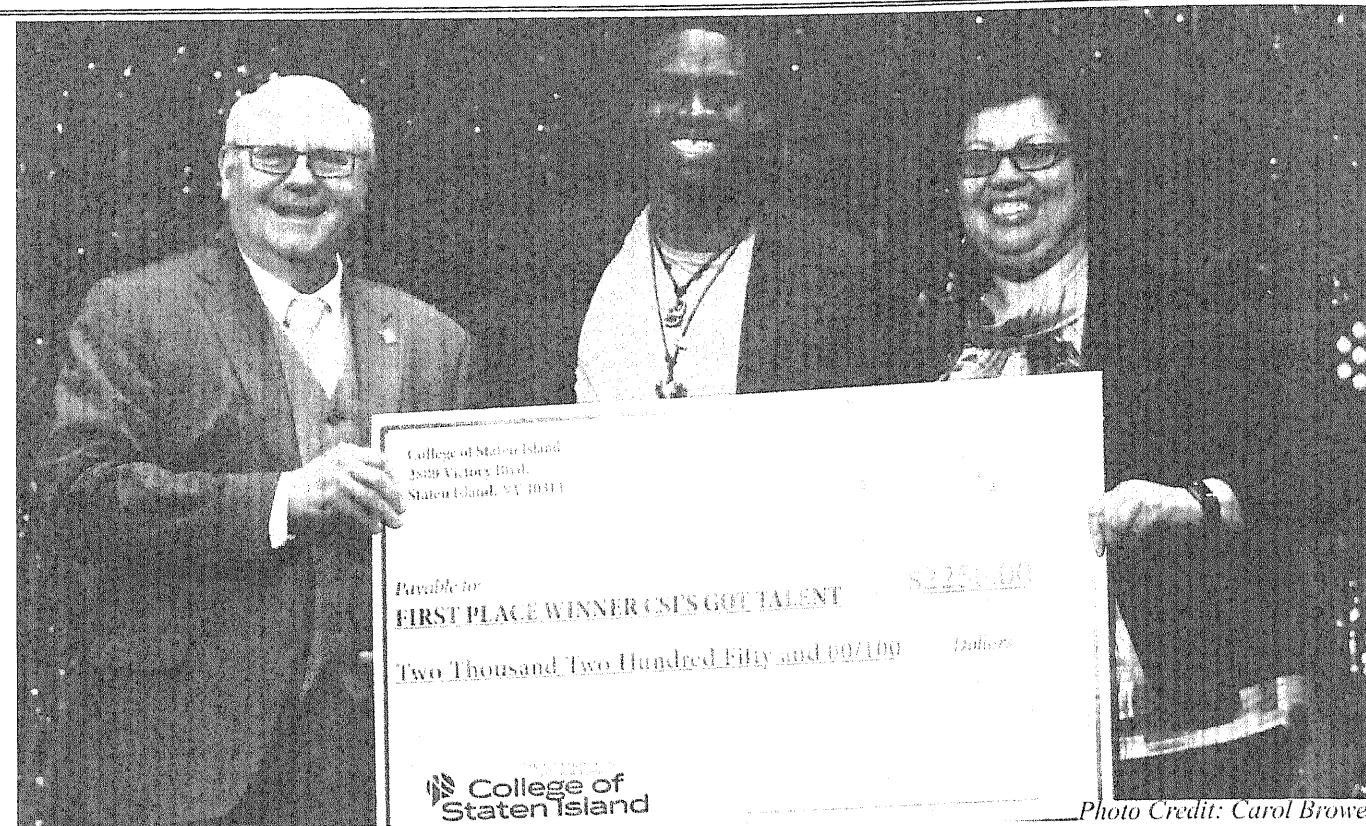
Dominique Mendez was the last to go, singing "And I Am Telling You," receiving an even larger ovation herself.

The judges then met in private to discuss the acts and who would win the competition. While that happened, the hosts

"Students Can't Keep Up"

Continued from Front Page

ery morning to catch the B64 bus, which usually runs late, to catch the s93 bus in Bay Ridge to make it to his 9am class. After class ends, he does it all over again just to get home, or even worse, takes an Uber or a cab to the city to make



The first place winner, Reginald Bray, displayed their talents for the second time that night.

Jay Miller launched socks into the crowd with a slingshot, while Sal Vulcano painted a portrait of a nude man who had already appeared earlier that night. The painting turned out to be a sign that said "Alan Hoffman Sucks".

Alan Hoffman is one of the judges of CSI's Got Talent, and he was the butt of several jokes throughout the night. But it was all love as Sal handed the professor the sign.

The judges came to a decision on the top three. All the performers were called back to the stage, holding hands as the

his job.

His occupation helps to pay for the expenses of a monthly metro, his school supplies, and or an Uber which he takes more times than he would like.

"There is not enough time or money to keep up with these expensive costs," he said. "It's almost impossible."

walked to face the audience.

Then, the top three winners were called to the front of the stage in reverse order. Jacqueline Paige, the third place finisher was called first.

Then, the second place finisher, Dominique Mendez, was called to the front. The winner of the Seventh Annual CSI's Got Talent was called to the front: Reginald Bray.

The audience erupted as Bray was presented his check for winning.

After the event, the first-place winner was asked about his history with spoken words.

The political science and philosophy

According to Dnainfo, the average cost of a monthly metrocard in 2016 was \$116.50. In 2018, it rose to \$121, a \$4.50 increase, which could have been used to buy a meal or some sort of greater purpose for the individual buying it.

These rising prices were said to fund maintenance on trains and buses accord-

ing to the MTA, but no improvements have been made.

There is no leeway or discounted prices for tolls on college students and these costs are clearly getting too high to handle.

Assemblyman William Colton has stated he is against these plans, as he believes it is unfair to subject New Yorkers to additional fees without some fort of increased benefit, which the plan has not mentioned.

It merely mentions how and why the city might be charged a congestion fee if passed but fails to provide what benefits it will bring and how it will impact the city in a positive way. According to Amny, Mayor Bill de Blasio agrees with the idea of the plan but clearly sees its faults and lack of fairness.

Mike Intriago, another CSI student, has been working since he was 16 years-old to help his family pay bills, as well as being a fulltime student, finds it extremely stressful and hard to manage money and school costs.

"I have a lot of bills to worry about, I help support my family," he said. "I hope this doesn't get passed, or I might even have to drop out because it's getting too much."

Photo Credit: Carol Brower

# BANNER NEWS

"Macaulay Honors College"

Continued from Front Page

building just a few blocks down from Central Park, the celestial decorations inside immediately gave the impression of a night sky filled with stars.

There was a photo booth, respectively with a galaxy themed background and the opportunity to take photos with a life size blow-up alien.

Next to the photo-booth, a glitter tattoo station was set up to get students in the vibrant space-spirit and dress up their sparkling outfits.

As more students arrived, they rushed to mingle with familiar classmates, and even branched out to meet some new faces from each of the eight CUNY campuses.

While students posed with their friends for Instagram-worthy photos, the screening room upstairs played Star Wars and Guardians of the Galaxy for students to watch and enjoy.

Since the night was still young, the staff provided the attendees with delicious Middle Eastern food, Asian-style food, and various snacks to indulge in.

There were even delicious mocktails that everyone from freshmen to seniors sipped on throughout the night.

Meanwhile, a group of Macaulay Honors College musicians accompanied the mingling portion of the evening with live upbeat jazz music.

Long awaited throughout the event, students finally rushed to the basement to dance their way out of this planet and into outer-space. The music sent students into a state of euphoria, forgetting about the stress of finals and focusing on having a

great time with great friends.

The Freshman Macaulay Scholars Council Representative of CSI, Shawn Abraham, took to explaining the inner-workings of the highly-anticipated event.

"It took several months to organize the Spring Formal under the leadership of Maisha Kamal, Macaulay Scholars Council President, and Destiny Batista, Vice President of Student Life. Our Student Life Committee ran this wonderful event."

Abraham, beaming with pride, explained how efficient the Macaulay Scholars Council worked together.

"From finding a DJ and a live band, to the decorations, and even just ordering the delicious food, the council was on top of everything. Although the Student Life Committee was in charge of this event, our IT and Communications Committee led by Samah Islam was in charge of letting people know about the event through social media, such as Facebook and Instagram."

Abraham continued to describe how "The majority of students attending were from our College of Staten Island Class of 2021. Our goal during the next academic year is to have events tailored toward home campuses, instead of focusing just on Macaulay Central in Manhattan."

As the College of Staten Island students are often discouraged to travel during the school week to attend events in Manhattan, the representative explained, "We are planning on creating more attention toward the Macaulay at CSI aspect to remind students about their home campuses and what it can



Students filled the dance floor to dance all night long, offer in conjunction with Macaulay.

Ending on a positive note, Abraham expressed his jubilation by stating, "Overall, the event was beautiful and it was really awesome to see all of my good friends at our Spring Formal! I wish I knew how to dance as good as my friends—but I took plenty of notes for next year!"

Many CSI students travelled a distance to attend this event, but many would agree that it did not disappoint.

Macaulay Honors College and CSI student, Lauren Silverman, saw the Spring Formal as a positive opportunity.

While spending the night on the dance floor with her friends, Silverman stated

that "The Macaulay Spring Formal is a great opportunity to meet people from other campuses. I think our campus is special because of its small size, but it's nice to connect with people from the other Macaulay locations because we don't see them very often. I think distance is a barrier for CSI, but making the trip into the city is totally worth it when we have the opportunity to connect with our diverse Macaulay community."

Hopefully, this Spring Formal marks the beginning of bridging the gap between the College of Staten Island and the rest of the CUNY campuses throughout New York City.

Photo Credit: Shawn Abraham

"CUNY Shows Importance of Film"

Continued from Front Page

viewers were handed the timetable of the films to be screened.

A satellite film screening was held at Lehman College as well, in Gillet Hall.

The main Film Screening was at Macaulay Honors college on April 20 and 21. The awards ceremony was held there on the 22.

All the film screenings were free and open to the public.

Students, both undergraduate and graduate as well as alumni, submitted their films to the annual CUNY Film Festival.

The festival, which is entirely student run, was started in 2008 by then student Dan Cowen.

Majority of the submissions for the film festival came from students enrolled at Macaulay Honors College.

The students worked alongside faculty and alumni to create the films. The productions ranged from amateur to professional.

Films that had been completed within the past two years were the only ones that were eligible for submission for the festival.

The two categories of films that were screened were "Documentary and Experimental" and "Narrative and Animation".

Films screened at Macaulay were shown in order of categorization, where as the screening at CSI was not categorized in any particular order.

There were a total of 121 films that were screened at the festival over the two days.

Some notable sponsors of the CUNY Film Festival were BBC America and Sundance Channel.

There were a total of 14 jurors on the panel that evaluated the films for prizes and awards.

The jurors ranged from professors to journalists, comedians, authors, producers, directors and editors.

The first film screened at the College of Staten Island on April 20 was titled "Angela, Darling".

The theme of the film was of desperation and sadness, with a mother seemingly addicted to drugs trying to get in contact with her daughter.

The second and third films struck a similar chord, showing the subject of the film in desperation or in a strenuous situation.

The third film, "Bruises", was in black and white - an interesting artistic decision.

The subjects of the film were of two queer women who suffered physical brutality and had visible bruises on their bodies.

The causes of those bruises are not mentioned, although it is assumed that their occupation is the reason. Of course, their sexual orientation plays a large role in the brutality, and the black and white visuals seemingly want to associate our minds with the idea that this oppression is ages old.

Most of the films tackled real world issues, trying to raise understanding or empathy with a people.

The winners of the 2018 CUNY Film Festival from the College of Staten Island were Lauren McKenna for the best documentary titled "We Serve Too", Michael Fischetti and Gara Munoz Blazquez won the LGBTQ Image Award for "Bruises" and "Ella" respectively, and John Rizzo won Best Experimental for "Chess and Chagrin".

Photo Credit: Haziq Naeem

CUNY Film Festival Screening at CSI



E-ZPass is just another form of a metrocard but for drivers - there is no discount or reduction on toll price for college students.

Photo Credit: Christina Fratto

# LIFESTYLES

## The Evolution of Festival Fashion: Coachella Valley's Impact

*Daring to Dress Your Best in the Desert*

BY: VERONICA PISTEK

Music is no longer the main focus of Coachella's annual attendees.

Ever since capturing "instagrammable" and "picturesque" moments have become the backbone of our everyday millennial lives, the music takes a backseat to the images of the concert.

Whether we are waiting for Vanessa Hudgens to post her bohemian-princess outfit or the Kardashian family's iconic looks, it is undeniable that Coachella has provided the rest of the nation with fashion inspiration.

Since 1999, Coachella has been an annual "Woodstock-influenced" festival in Indio, California. The last 19 years of this festival have provided the world with nostalgia-filled, vintage-inspired outfits, bold aesthetics, and the ultimate commercialization of the indie look.

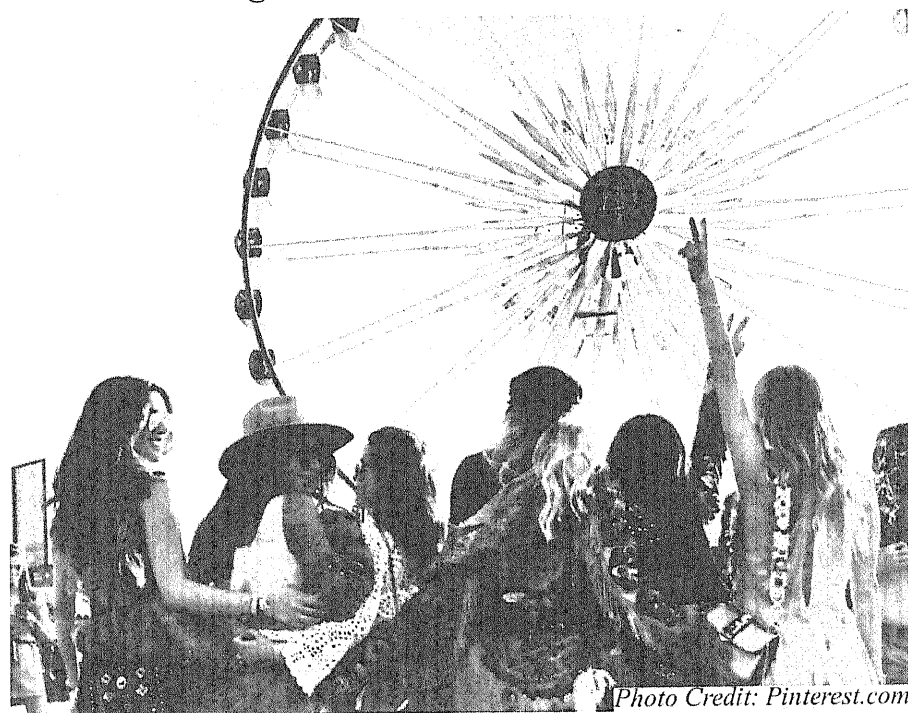
The romanticized idea of living in a desert community free from stress has been transformed into a physical style. The flower child look, the hippie attire, and the bohemian dress are just a few of the general styles that people began to associate Coachella Valley with.

Let's begin with the California's most influential celebrities. Who hasn't admired the effortless glamour of celebrities throughout the years?

No one has been able to outdo Vanessa Hudgens.

This Coachella icon has since grown out of the high school musical era and moved into crop tops, flower crowns, body jewelry, and tie dye patterns.

Since the brink of our social media-driven society, Hudgens has graced us with even more bohemian looks: hair



The ideal Coachella Instagram post.

feathers, high waisted shorts, colored locks, and tribal patterns.

Setting the precedent back in the early 2000s, celebrities and even just typical Coachella-lovers have jumped on the indie-inspired wave.

Throughout the evolution of our generation, these desired styles have been shared by countless platforms and fashion industries. As a result, Coachella style transformed from representing hippie culture, to now becoming a symbol of ours.

In past years, Coachella outfits were seen as vintage and glamorous—only to be worn at such festivals. Nowadays, a girl that walks down the street in a pair of circle sunglasses and a crochet crop top is just

another casual sighting.

Our culture has been driven by styles that become commercialized, especially when worn by Hollywood's hottest influencers.

Anyone that has any connection to WiFi on their wireless device has seen the widespread pressure for festival-goers to look picture-perfect.

Not only is Kylie Jenner and her best model friends editing their pictures to have perfect lighting to show off their bold outfits, but average Instagram users feel the need to have flawless photos in front of the big ferris wheel.

Some have argued that Coachella used to be a place for freedom of expression.

Now, festival-goers are less concerned with the desert-musical experience, and more focused on what they are going to share across their social-media blogs.

Not only has the focus shifted from music to style, but now major brands are looking to profit from popularized events like this.

Brands like Forever 21, Revolve, and ASOS have boosted their marketing and promotion by throwing exclusive pool parties, having their attendees post sponsored outfits on platforms such as Instagram, and ultimately racking up thousands of likes and traffic to their websites—all to boost their sales.

Though this commercialization might decrease the values of freedom and nature that Coachella originally intended to exemplify, there is definitely an interest from the people scrolling from their beds at home.

While these people are blogging breathtaking images, average dreamers are wishing that they were having a weekend filled with as much glitter as Coachella attendees are.

Though not everyone is into flowers, fringe, and frayed clothing, it is impressive how Coachella has had an impact on our millennial culture.

Festivals should continue to be an experience for you and a few friends to relax, enjoy some great music, and make some great memories.

So what if you cannot obtain the glamour that celebrities are flaunting online. Embrace your trendy outfit and share some desert selfies—but don't forget to cherish the freedom of expressing your truest self in a world filled of mainstream fashion.

## The Month Of Ramadan Explained

*A Closer Look Into How Muslims Observe Ramadan*

BY: HAZIQ NAEEM

This year, the beginning of Ramadan will take place Tuesday, May 15 and will conclude on June 14 in the United States.

The month of Ramadan is considered the holiest month in the Muslim culture. It is said to be the month that God sent down the first chapter of the Quran, the Holy Book for the Muslims, to the Prophet Muhammad.

The holy month is observed by fasting every day from sunrise until sunset, increased prayer, and mindfulness of one's actions and thoughts.

During this holiday, millions of Muslims around the world will be fasting,

which lasts one whole month.

A single sip of water is enough to invalidate the fast; the window between dusk and dawn is the only time that fasting Muslims are allowed to eat and drink.

Contrary to the belief, many Muslims that fast continue with their day to day activities as they normally would, whether it be school or work.

Muslims that observe the month of Ramadan by fasting usually eat a well rounded meal in the early morning just before sunrise to last them the rest of the day. This meal is called "suhoor" in Arabic, which means the pre-dawn meal.

Fast is broken with a meal just after sunset, usually with water and dates before

the meal. This meal is called the "Ifar," Arabic for the "meal after sunset."

After the Iftar meal, the last prayer of the day is usually increased in length for the month of Ramadan.

Every night during Ramadan, many mosques offer free Iftar meals that are open to the public.

Not everyone is obligated to fast during the month, however.

Children, the elderly, and the sick are usually exempted from fasting since it will be unreasonably strenuous for them.

Moreover, Muslims are obligated to pray five times a day, and during Ramadan they strive to complete as many of these prayers as they can everyday.

The last ten days are considered to be the most blessed of the month.

During these final days, a few Muslims dedicate the entirety of their day at the mosque, making minimum contact with the outside world and giving up most material comforts and attachments.

The purpose of spending the last ten days in seclusion is to increase one's faith, awareness of one's own thoughts and actions, and becoming a better person by being less attached to material comforts.

This also increases understanding and empathy with people who don't have much to begin with.

These last ten days that some Muslims spend in seclusion can be most closely related to a meditation retreat, though it is religious in nature.

The end of Ramadan is marked by a three day celebration called Eid-al-Fitr. The first day is usually started off by a prayer in the morning.

Muslims also use this month to shed their bad habits, and as a result, develop better ones. This may include quitting or reducing smoking and swearing, becoming more devoted to faith and family, and increasing prayer and charitable actions.

Besides strengthening and focusing on one's faith during the month, Ramadan is also meant to increase one's awareness and empathy for those that are less fortunate and poor.

Muslims who fasted are required to give the poor a set amount of money at the end of the month. This donation is supposed to help the less fortunate celebrate the holiday of Eid-al-Fitr as well.

Muslims no longer have to fast when Ramadan ends. However, they can still choose to fast if they believe it benefits them.

Overall, people usually mark the end of Ramadan with a celebration, gathering with their close family and friends, appreciating their connection and culture.



Photo Credit: Google.com

Ramadan is the most sacred month of the year in Islamic culture.

# LIFESTYLES

## Battle of the Beauty Conventions

*Beautycon vs. IMATS: Who Will Win?*

BY: LUCIA ROSSI

Much like how Comic Con is to pop culture lovers, IMATS and Beautycon is to makeup lovers.

However, not all beauty conventions are created equal.

In April, these two powerhouse beauty conventions were on back to back weekends in New York City with the International Make-up Artist Trade Show being April 13-15, and Beautycon from April 21-22.

Although both events focus on beauty and makeup, they are actually very different in their own ways.

International Make-Up Artist Trade Show, or IMATS, is mainly geared towards makeup artists (as the name says). There is a strong, general focus on education and special effects, which can be useful to both consumers and artists alike.

This year, Kat Von D, a diamond sponsor for the event, had several speakers and demonstrators from Kat Von D's team, like Kelseyanna Fitzpatrick, and a huge booth with their full collection sold with a 30% off discount.

Similarly, NYX cosmetics was also present with a 40% sale, exclusive new launches, and makeup masterclasses by



Photo Credit: Lucia Rossi

From April 13-15, the International Make-Up Artist Trade Show had its doors open at Pier 94.

professionals like Jordan Hanz.

Other popular brands sold their collections at discounted prices like MAC, Make Up For Ever, Bh Cosmetics, Lit Cosmetics, RCMA, Purllisse, Kryolan, Bdellium Tools, Sugarpill, Lime Crime, Morphe, and many more.

Brands like Morphe, however, had long lines that lasted for over two hours.

IMATS is also known for its competitions for students who specialize in special effects. This event is called Battle of the Brushes, where each artist has to do an entire body look on a model under a specific theme. The students are then judged at which point a winner is chosen and wins \$5,000.

There is also a section of the convention dedicated to being a museum for prosthetics, costumes, special effects, and memorabilia used in television shows and movies, such as "Gotham" and "The Tick".

Beautycon, on the other hand, is less focused on the craft and more focused on advertisement and commercialism for the brands.

The Javits Center is much larger than Pier 94, although only the basement portion of the center was used.

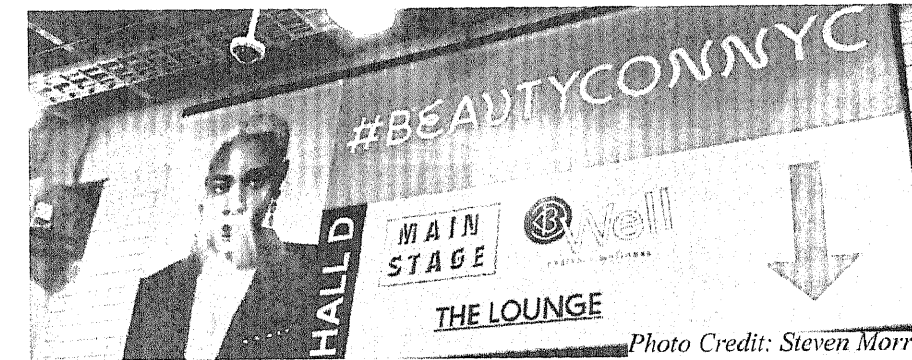


Photo Credit: Steven Morris

From April 21-22, the Beautycon Festival resided in the Jacob Javits Center.

Unlike IMATS, Beautycon had meet and greets with popular beauty gurus, and panels with widely known actors and artists.

There were panels for discussion with Laverne Cox and Dascha Polanco from "Orange is the New Black", Youtubers Jackie Aina, Kandee Johnson, Gigi Gorgeous, artists like Bobbi Brown and Mario Dedivanovic, and even actors like Lucy Hale and Zendaya.

There were more drugstore brands with some high-end products, including Almay, Maybelline, Covergirl, Revlon, Rimmel, Urban Decay, Anastasia Beverly Hills, Inglot, Winky Lux, and BECCA.

There were also health and wellness brands giving free samples like Vitafusion, Target, Honest Tea, Hippeas, Lifetime, and Panty Fresh.

Overall, Beautycon provides visitors with a lot of free merchandise compared to IMATS. It was often that big brands weren't selling but were merely advertising and wanted people to see new items and test samples.

Most companies required visitors to follow them on social media, make a post with their tag, or sign up for frequent emails in order to be given a free product or sample.

The brands that were selling products did have sales, like Pixi, TreStiQue, Es-

sence, Catrice, among others, but had limited varieties since their booths were quite small and were considered "pop-up shops".

The lines for certain brands were of course long; however, they didn't really have people or belts separating the crowd like IMATS—this led to disorganization.

Korean Beauty also had its own section of the convention, called K-Town, where they focused mainly on skincare.

There were novelty aspects to some of the booths: Essence gave people the opportunity to make their own lip glosses, hair tool companies did various braid styles on guests, and most booths had a decorated wall for photo-ops, like Target with its huge paper flower display and swings for people to sit on.

Beautycon also had a lot of children with their mothers around since it was a more family-friendly event, while IMATS had a more young-adult range of visitors, since most attendees were students and artists.

Ticket price wise, Beautycon is a bit cheaper with general admission for one day being \$60 and \$65 for IMATS.

In the end, both beauty conventions are worth going to and can provide you with a special experience with access to products for less. It's all a matter of your preference.

## Ikigai: The Intersection of Your Strengths and Passions

*A Japanese Concept To Find Career Happiness*

BY: VERONICA PISTEK

Part of being young and human is feeling lost and scared to commit to doing one thing for the rest of your life.

Though there is no way to predict your exact path of life, a secret Japanese concept found a way for humans to hone in on some clues that can help you lead the most fulfilling and practical lifestyle.

As we go through life, we stumble upon new skill sets that build upon our already established strengths and talents.

The practice of ikigai reinforces the idea that we are all meant to follow a career path that we truly love, but also a utilize this career to help to others and sustain a comfortable living for ourselves.

To break it down, ikigai means your "reason for living." This concept branches off into four parts: what you love, what you are good at, what the world needs, and what you could be paid for.

By first diving into what you are good at, you can focus on your main skill sets, talents, and your innate gifts. Spending time to realize the strengths that you already possess might help you gain insight into what you can contribute to a specific area in life.

Once you determine the arsenal of

skills that you have stored, start soul searching to figure out the things that you love. Dig deep to find your passions and curiosities.

This practice might help you ignite a spark within you that has been waiting to be set ablaze. Whether we stimulate that fire or put it out, as humans we need to indulge in the things we love to do in order to live a healthy and happy life.

Once you have figured out the things in life that make your heart race, focus on the what the world needs. While we all have different ideas of what the world is lacking, brainstorming the world's weaknesses leads us one step closer to taking the initiative to help society.

Though financial success should not be the only goal in life, finding unique things that can be paid for might allow you to gain more money to ultimately fulfill your main passions in life.

Conjure up some practical, and even fun ways to make money.

Once you feel that your brainstorming session is complete, you will have a sense of your ikigai, or the sweet spot that all of these four circles will overlap.

Sounds simple, right?

Finding your ikigai can be as simple as following these four steps, but you can also

implement key lifestyle tips to help you feel comfortable in that sweet spot.

Living in the moment and being aware of the present may help you feel grounded. By stretching too far into the future, it is easy to feel wrapped up in a state of day-dreaming, rather than reality.

Acknowledge the people in your life that support and appreciate you. Though your ikigai should only reflect your personal desires, we are influenced by love ones since birth.

Thanking the people who truly want to see you flourish will remind you of your main reasons for living and help you continue being the person that you are.

Try to neglect the things that make you feel overly anxious. Adapt a slower-pace lifestyle and try to exercise your body, mind, and spirit.

Ask yourself what makes you feel most alive. Don't build monotonous routines that suck the spark out of you.

The only way that you can truly find your meaning and fulfillment is by asking questions and letting your curiosity run wild. Try contemplating life's mysteries every so often, and you might find yourself comprehending more and more each day.

Remember, there is not one thing that you are supposed to do for the rest of your

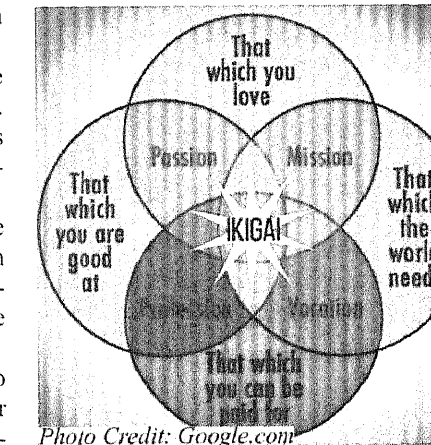


Photo Credit: Google.com

Discovering your ikigai, or your reason for living, in four steps.

life. There are endless opportunities and paths that you are suited to discover.

If you feel like the one thing you thought you loved most is no longer making you feel alive, it is always an option to change your reason for living and continue soul searching.

Like many have said, life is not one straight path—there are loops and turns that we all must go and grow through.

Tapping into your internal compass, or your ikigai, will remind you that finding your purpose and pursuing it with every ounce of your being is the most important part of your reason for living.

## BANNER ARTS

## "Avengers: Infinity War" Packs a Punch In Theaters

Does the Film Go to Infinity and Beyond Expectations?

BY: LUCIA ELM1

Bring your friends and get ready to have an all-out nerd-fest because Marvel's most highly anticipated film ever is finally here.

Be forewarned: a box of tissues is a must, maybe even a week's supply if you know you're a crier.

After Marvel's mainstream success of "Black Panther" earlier this year, "Avengers: Infinity War" continues that winning streak, and made a whopping \$39 million during just its single Thursday night preview opening.

With other films like "Deadpool 2" and "The Ant-Man and The Wasp", expected for arrival this summer, it seems 2018 is going to be an exciting one for Marvel enthusiasts.

A main concern that critics and skeptics have about the movie is if it would be able to balance out such a large cast of important characters which is a very touchy subject for many.

Safe to say, writers of the film handled that matter well. For the most part, almost all the characters had their moment to shine on screen.

Even if some weren't given a long appearance, they were sure to leave a lasting impression on audiences, whether it was with a snarky joke or a spell-binding action sequence.

Another concern was how well the pacing of this movie was going to flow.

It brought into question just how well the pacing would be with so many characters making an appearance, and with them their own set of subplots. With so many



Our hefty cast of characters in "Avengers: Infinity War"

Photo Credit: thisinsider.com

character has taken a more not-so-cheesy approach compared to what we're used to typically seeing from Marvel villains, both on and off the screen.

There is a surprising added level of

depth to his character as we begin to see just how he rationalizes his cruelty and need for power. It makes him appear more "human", rather than just an omnipotent big purple guy sitting in a floating chair out in the middle of space. It's refreshing to see this new take on villains in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, and from one of the most unexpected villains as well.

That being said, this movie will also disappoint fans, but it's all with good intention. It's a hard reality many will have to face: characters will die - important characters, the type you love to hate and hate to love.

Their deaths weren't careless attempts to rile up the audience - they happened because they were necessary to the storyline. Sometimes the truth hurts, but that doesn't mean it's a bad thing.

If you can't handle it, make sure to bring an extra pair of pull-ups with you.

Overall, I would say this movie was a success, considering the number of difficulties it had to overcome. As with every movie, it has its flaws but nothing that takes away from the enjoyment of the film.

As heart-felt as this movie was, we should prepare ourselves for an even more soul-shattering part-two to this film. We may have to say goodbye to more characters. We'll just have to wait until next year to find out.

Although at some points it seemed to drag on just a little, the overall pace of the

board for a winner selection. What also makes this win quite noteworthy is that the bulk of the jury was not especially familiar with hip-hop.

Members of the jury included a violinist, a supervisor of the Met Opera commissioning program, an English professor, and a composer.

So how would a body so adjacent to the world of hip-hop began to even consider a piece so detached from their realm?

David Hajdu, one of the music jurors this year, said that the group considered over 100 compositions, including "some pieces of classical music that drew upon hip-hop as a resource".

This once distant linkage, with an evidently subsided border between the two genres, led to a discussion among the ju-

riations outside of his home.

Lamar weaves in and out of this perspective throughout the album infusing it with lighter notes of sentiment directed at a lover on the album song "LOVE.", featuring singer-songwriter Zacari.

The album takes you through these peaks and troughs, helping you understand that despite his gang driven past, he is not some depraved being deserving of an entire society's shun but a young gang member who carries his neighborhood flag. Plus, there is no figure present to reprimand him for it.

His nature being virtuous, only his acquired sense of loyalty and martyrdom driving him to perform actions that outsiders would deem as base.

"This is a big moment for hip-hop music and a big moment for the Pulitzers," Dana Canedy said in her interview.

The Pulitzers, whose only stated criteria is "for distinguished musical composition by an American" had yet to recognize the musical prowess that hip-hop houses.

Now that the seal is broken one may be hopeful to see this distinguished prize being granted to genius in a broad range of genres. It's important that talent be recognized and encouraged. It provides fuel for artists as it solidifies the notion that their work is stimulating.

Let Lamar continue to paint a picture of a world many of us acknowledge but fail to understand the inner-workings of.

Understanding is preceded by knowledge and understanding helps us tear down walls.

"DAMN." peaked the charts, becoming one of last years most-streamed albums, grappling with social issues both personal and political, including faith, race, and the trials of commercial music success.

The album is a masterpiece entwining rich beats and incendiary lyrics that tell the tale of Kendrick's destiny in America.

Storytelling has been Lamar's strong suite and most primary reason of being. He sets to take his listeners on a tour of his surroundings.

Much of the album is written from the viewpoint of a boy who grew up without a father. In the boys mind the father's role was to steer him away from the wicked

BY: DOMINICK WOJTAS

Hip-Hop artist Kendrick Lamar has won the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for music—specifically for his studio album "DAMN."

Not only is Lamar the first rapper to have been given this prestigious honor since the Pulitzer's expanded to music in 1943, but is also the first victor who is not a classical or jazz musician.

"The time was right," Dana Canedy, prize administrator, spoke in a post-announcement interview. She continues, "It shines a light on hip-hop in a completely different way. This is a big moment for hip-hop music and a big moment for the Pulitzers."

The music finalists were selected by a five-person jury and then presented to the

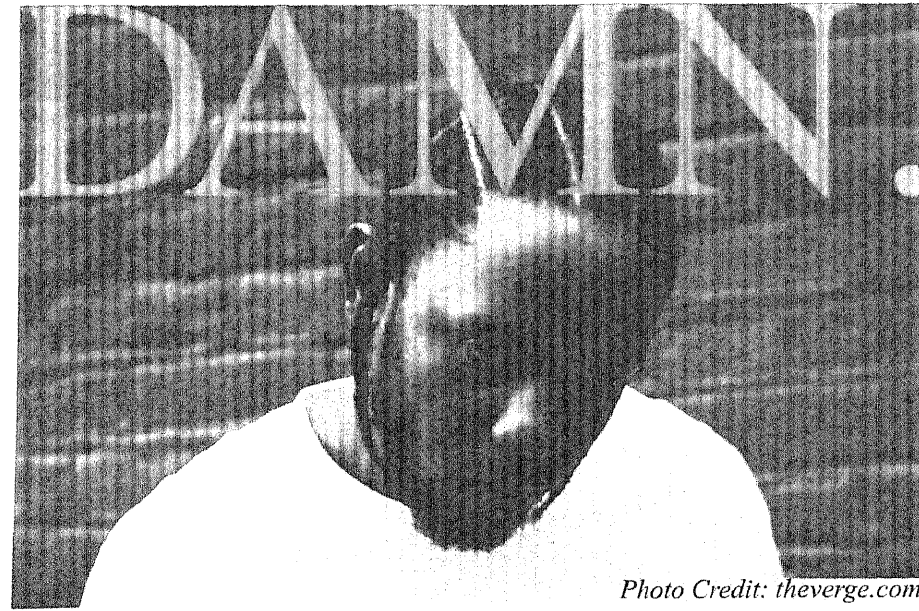


Photo Credit: theverge.com

## Kendrick Lamar Awarded Pulitzer for Album "DAMN."

Hip-Hop Beats Out Classical for Prize

## BANNER ARTS

## Hip-Hop Artist Topples Competition With Ease

J.Cole's New Album, "KOD" Has Largest Opening Week

BY: AMANDA GIRARD

J.Cole, aka Jermaine Lamar Cole, is an American hip-hop artist, self-taught pianist, and producer raised in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

After concluding that he would have a higher chance of landing a contract for a record label in New York City, he chose to attend St. John's University after high school and move up north.

In 2007, the same year that he graduated from St. John's University with a 3.8 GPA, he was recognized as a rapper after the release of his first mixtape titled "The Come Up". With strong intentions of continuing this path, in 2009 he released two more mixtapes after signing under Jay-Z's Roc-A-Fella company. Two years later in 2011, he released his first studio album titled "Cole World: The Sideline Story."

Just recently, on April 20, 2018, he released his latest album titled "KOD" with a total of 12 songs. J.Cole states that this acronym has 3 meanings behind it — kids on drugs, king overdosed, and kill our demons. Though J.Cole gives his fans the meanings of his new album title, he leaves the rest of his album for the fans to interpret, including why he chose these three meanings.

J.Cole, known for going double platinum without featured artists, introduces a new feature artist on "KOD" who goes by the name of kiLL edward.

kiLL edward is an unknown or even anonymous artist. The only time he has appeared anywhere is on "KOD", and doesn't seem to have music of his own.

This raised suspicion in the fans that this just might be J.Cole since it sounds like

him in a deeper tone.

J.Cole recently confirmed that this is, in fact, true.

Cole stated that this somewhat evil alter-ego he created was inspired by his stepfather named Edward.

The reason Cole created this alter-ego was because his stepfather and biological mother separated in 2013. This separation led his mother, Kay, to do drugs and drink alcohol.

In his song "Window Pain (Outro)", he raps that "all he wants to do is kill the man that made [his] mama cry." Thus, we start to get the sense that this alter-ego embodies his darker, more violent tendencies.

kiLL edward appears in two of J.Cole's songs, "The Cut Off" and "FRIENDS." Both of these songs discuss cutting off those who are close to you, and drug abuse/addiction.

Within the first 4 days of KOD's release, Cole dropped two videos from his album as well.

The first video was released on April 20, 2018 (the same day of his album) for his song "ATM." Assuming that the acronym for ATM is "Automated Teller Machine," J.Cole creates a whole different meaning for the purpose of the song with his video.

That being said, Cole's meaning is "Addicted to Money." The song, along with the video, speaks about how money is a necessity in life. He goes on to hint that money could be a type of "drug," because of its addictive quality.

Cole spits the line, "Can't take it when you die, but you can't live without it." The video is clearly all about drugs and money, and it is easy to see that throughout the video, J.Cole carelessly spends money on ad-

dictive things (such as gambling and drugs) and ends up paying for a car with his arm and leg — quite literally.

The second video that Cole released 4 days after the album release and the "ATM" video, was the video for his song "Kevin's Heart."

Surprisingly, the actor/comedian Kevin Hart actually stars in this video. The title, the lyrics, and even the video all refer to Hart's cheating scandal against his wife and child.

The video shows Hart walking around in public and drawing disgusted stares from various people. During this women will "flirt" with him through facial expressions, and he will politely wave and/or decline.

With onlookers seeing this, they give him dirty looks, assuming he is flirting back. This song doesn't only refer to Hart, though. Cole might also be hinting at his own issues with cheating on his wife while addressing a bigger theme of man's cheating tendencies as an addiction.

J.Cole also has a track titled "KOD", the same title as his album. This is one of the more popular songs off of his album.

In the first verse of this track, Cole is addressing his competitors, telling them to back off after they question why he doesn't include features on his albums.

The second verse addresses himself when he was younger, and how he started to get involved with the wrong crowd and got into using drugs. Listening closely this track also includes the voice of kiLL edward during the second verse when he begins to actively use the drugs as if to foreshadow the character of kiLL edward.

At the end of this track, they list a few of the most addictive drugs. The last one

they list is supposed to be the strongest, most powerful drug — love.

The third track of "KOD" is titled "Photograph." This track talks about a different type of addiction, that being the internet. In this, Cole talks about how he found a picture of this girl on social media and hopes to be with her and get to know her.

One line that exquisitely sums up this track is "Love today's gone digital, and it's messing with my health." This one line describes how social media and the internet has become this new type of drug that many people are incapable of living without, and how it carries the ability to ruin society.

The last track on this album is called "1985 - Intro to 'The Fall Off.'" The spoiler is in its title — this track is the intro to J.Cole's next album called "The Fall Off."

In this track, he talks about his successful career is and how he's flourishing as a rapper. He discusses the disses that he's received from other rappers and how they're irrelevant to him, but under the same breath, he wants them to realize and learn from their youth and reckless experiences, just as he had.

Rumor has it that in this track he is speaking directly to rapper Lil' Pump, as a message to all young rappers of his kind. This track shows how Cole has matured throughout his career, and how he is going to continue this pace.

J.Cole debuted "KOD" at No. 1, making it the largest opening week of 2018, so far. The album has been extremely successful considering it was announced less than a week before its release without a single promotion.

At the end of this track, they list a few of the most addictive drugs. The last one

## The Award Show Everyone Will be Talking About

Musicians Nominated for the 2018 Billboard Music Awards

BY: BROOKE PRICE

On Tuesday, April 17, Billboard released its nominations for their 2018 music awards.

Some artists who were nominated include Drake, Ed Sheeran, Bruno Mars, Kendrick Lamar, Taylor Swift, Cardi B, Imagine Dragons, Panic! At The Disco, and BTS.

Billboard is a magazine emphasizing entertainment and music. They publish music charts ranking popular songs and albums.

The BBMA's started in 1990 in December, and were held annually until 2006. They were then revived in 2011, where they were held annually in May.

"Nominees for the BBMAs are selected through a number of factors, including key interactions with music fans, album and digital song sales, radio airplay, streaming, touring and social engagement, as tracked by Billboard and its data partners over a 12-month period" (Billboard).

Fans can vote for two categories of awards. These include the Billboard Chart Achievement Award and the Top Social Artist.

The categories for the 2018 Billboard Music Awards include Top Artist, Top Duo/Group, Top Social Artist, Top Selling Album, and Top Rock Album.

Drake is a rapper who is nominated for nine awards, including Top Artist, Top Male Artist, Top Rap Artist, and Top Rap Album. He is known for songs such as "God's Plan," "Work," and "One Dance."

Drake's album "More Life" is nominated for Top Rap Album and Top Billboard 200 Album. Last year, Drake was nominated for 22 awards at the BBMAs, and won 13 awards.

Ed Sheeran is nominated for 15 awards, along with Bruno Mars and Kendrick Lamar. He is nominated for Top Artist, Top Male Artist, and Top Billboard 200 Album.

Sheeran's album "Divide" is nominated for Top Billboard 200 Album. His song "Perfect" is also nominated for Top Selling Song.

Bruno Mars is nominated 15 awards including Top R&B Artist, Top Song Sales Artist, and Top Artist. His album "24K Magic" is nominated for Top R&B Album. Mars is known for his songs "Finesse," "24K Magic," and "That's What I Like."

Kendrick Lamar is a rapper nominated for 15 awards. These awards include Top Rap Album, Top 100 Song, and Top Rap Song.

Lamar is known for his song "Humble," which is nominated for Top Rap Song.

Taylor Swift is nominated for five awards this year, including Top Selling Album, Top Billboard 200 Album, and Top Female Artist.

Her album "Reputation" is nominated for Top Selling Album and Top Billboard 200 Album. She is known for her songs "Delicate" and "Look What You Made Me Do."

Next is Cardi B, known for her song



Nominations have been released, and fans are anticipating who will win

as the title track "Death of a Bachelor" and other songs like "Don't Threaten Me with a Good Time" and "Crazy=Genius."

BTS is a popular South Korean boy band, nominated for Top Social Artist along with Justin Bieber, Ariana Grande, Demi Lovato, and Shawn Mendes.

BTS has garnered a large following on social media.

They were nominated and won last year for Top Social Artist, being the first ever K-pop group to be nominated and win a Billboard Music Award. They broke Justin Bieber's winning streak, and were nominated last year in that category along with Bieber, Selena Gomez, Ariana Grande, and Shawn Mendes.

Kelly Clarkson will host the show, and will be held on May 20 on NBC.

## BANNER OPINIONS

### Facebook's Privacy Issue - Is Our Severity Warranted?

An Interview with Aza Rakin of the Center of Humane Technology

BY: DOMINICK WOJTAS

Recently, The Los Angeles Times published a transcript of a conversation between interviewer Patt Morrison and Aza Rakin, co-founder and chief strategy officer of the Center of Humane Technology.

The center's purpose is to raise awareness and produce solutions regarding the belief that technology and tech companies manipulate reality and truth, shred our attention, and cause us to feel isolated. Their mission statement is "Technology is hacking our minds and society."

In my opinion, the responses provided to the Morrison's questions were quite inarticulate. I believe this is arguably the most pressing first-world issue but Rakin does not have the answers.

Regarding the business models of social media platforms, Rakin says "We make money when people spend time in our site, and this creates a whole bunch of bad incentives to stick around."

This statement is too open ended. Facebook makes money on ads.

The more time spent on site, the higher the probability for someone to view or click

on an ad. But this doesn't necessarily imply that sites like Facebook need to create "bad" incentives.

Frankly, I don't understand the incentives that Aza is referring to; he would need to define them. Instagram has no other incentive than to watch what your friends are up to and surely this can't be defined as 'bad', yet people stay on.

He said in regards to social media and tech companies that they are deciding what we see and what we believe is true - ultimately, what our sense of reality is.

I believe in this notion but indirectly.

On Facebook, I see content posted by my likes and friends. I consciously let this content in.

And on sites like Reddit, the self-proclaimed front page of the internet, is formulated by an upvote system; the content that the community likes gets pushed to the front page, while everything else gets pushed down into the abyss. If anything, we have more control of what we read now than we've ever had before.

Yet, I am not completely defending Facebook. I believe they have allowed themselves too much data for their own

good. They could very well concoct some harmful serum based on my data that could be detrimental to my well-being.

Yet all I see while scrolling through my Facebook feed is now content from mediums that they let in. I'd blame these mediums for my brainwash and not Facebook, the gracious host.

Lately, it seems that companies like Cambridge Analytica have been able to harness the power of Facebook for evil. Facebook should certainly work on this, perhaps indite stricter policies and not allow third party companies to suck up so much of their data.

Rakin also stated that in order for Facebook to restructure their product properly, they must take a hit on their revenue. This statement to me seems extreme as 97% of their data comes from advertisements, which to my understanding doesn't necessarily correlate with misuse of data.

I understand that Facebook is allowed to hone "my" data to target advertisements, but this doesn't bother me. Rather, I might get advertisements that may actually be of interest as a result.

I trust that these tech companies use

algorithms that are fair. I do believe that with the internet, I am given enough credible information to form an educated opinion about a topic.

I don't believe Facebook itself is evil. I believe it can be used by third parties with an evil intent and that should definitely be looked into.



Photo Credit: Veracode.com

## Statistics Show a Decline in Infant Deaths

How to Prevent Infant Mortality

BY: ROSEANNE CASSAR

As women, many of us want to have children one day.

There is a built-in mechanism in ourselves called "maternal instinct." But before giving the idea of having children a thought, we first need to educate ourselves about the precautions that are needed to protect and keep our babies alive longer than what statistics may say.

To understand what Infant Mortality Rates or (IMR) truly is, one must know of its two categories. Neonatal mortality, which occurs the first 28 days after birth and post-Neonatal mortality (29 - 364 days), in medicine, which affects infants usually from the end of the first month to a year after birth.

It is said that "most infant deaths take place in the neonatal period," even though

the United States is a well-developed nation. There are approximately 25 other industrialized nations that do an even better job at keeping babies alive in the first year of life.

According to the NY Metro Parents Newsletter, for expectant parents, the statistics are surprising, as it is relatively good news for New Yorkers. The IMR in New York City and the surrounding areas are at a remarkable low.

New York City's local infant mortality rates between the five boroughs are as follows: The Bronx at 5.1, Queens, 4.2; Staten Island, 3.8; Manhattan, 3.7 and Brooklyn last, at 3.6.

According to the statistics, there are three leading causes of infant deaths: prematurity, birth defects or congenital diseases, like Aaron's Zellweger Syndrome and cardiovascular disease.

Other examples of infant death causes are a baby born to a mother with a causal medical condition and a baby who dies from a sudden death syndrome or an accidental suffocation while sleeping.

Not included in these stats are how babies can die from inflicted deaths, caused either by one of the parents such as the father, the mother or the stepfather, boyfriend of the mother out of jealous rage, ongoing abuse or neglect.

Mental health is a very big issue, especially when postpartum for a new mother takes over her state of mind.

There are ways to minimize the danger of infant deaths.

Pregnant women can start with getting prenatal care. Pregnant moms who don't take prenatal care will have babies that are at a higher risk of infant mortality.

Your baby's doctor will prescribe you

prenatal vitamins, recommend exercises, offer instruction on healthy pregnancy diets, and will monitor you and the baby to help ensure a fruitful pregnancy, delivery and infancy.

In today's new medical age, there are advanced ways of testing during the prenatal period. These new tests can show how a fetus is growing and also shows if there are any signs of genetic defects in utero.

To grieve a child's death is definitely the toughest thing a mother can go through, especially a new mother.

Specialists mentioned that grief commonly shows four stages: accepting the death, working through the feelings of pain and grief, adjusting to life without their beloved child and continuing a bond with their baby. This often happens by memorializing their lost loved one, whether it be through a ritual or by joining or starting a group.

It is a good idea for grieving parents to join some kind of support group that can help with alleviating the pain of loss of something so precious.

To take grievance pictures prior to the funeral would not be necessary. Grievance pictures won't soften the feeling of loss. If anything, it would make the feeling of loss become worse.

The best course of action would be talking about the loss of your child with other people or keep something that was once in your child's possession, such as a stuffed animal, a baby blanket etc. Sit in the big rocking chair that was meant to be used to bond with your baby while bottle feeding.

To hold on to a keepsake that was for your baby will help slowly heal the loss that you feel. Time is the essence for healing, and as the saying goes, "time heals all wounds."

Photo Credit: Google.com

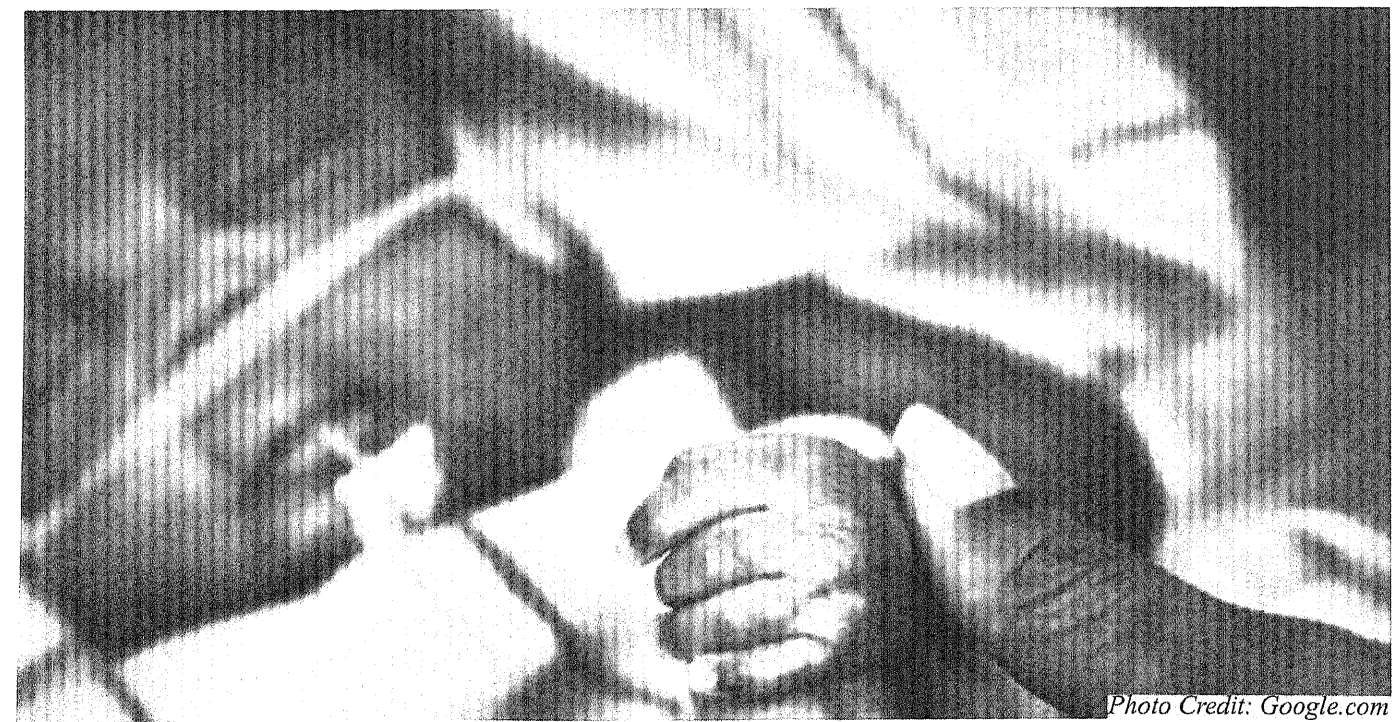


Photo Credit: Google.com

## SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS

### Say Goodbye to the Honeymoon Phase

How to Manage Your Relationship When Things Get Real

BY: JESSICA SCARIMBOLO

Everyone knows this stage all too well; it's when you cannot seem to be away from your partner and nothing they do is bothering you, even when you know it very well should be.

Maybe your partner leaves the seat up after he pees or leaves her dirty laundry on the floor of your bedroom, and in the first six months to a year of your relationship, those things don't bother you at all.

Though this timeframe isn't the same for every couple, you can identify the honeymoon phase when your relationship constantly feels exciting and new, a feeling that clearly can't be forever.

Also, when starting a new relationship, nearly every day in the first year contains a new adventure where you each learn something about the other person.

Unfortunately, this happy and carefree phase does not last and it's important to understand how to manage your relationship as the honeymoon phase begins to fade out.

First, it's important to understand the difference between losing interest in a person and simply fading out of the honeymoon phase. If you have begun to think about other people because you are simply bored, that person may not be the one.

However, if you just find yourself getting annoyed by the things you once thought were cute but still want to be with them, you two have just left the honeymoon phase. Maybe now you have recognized that your partner sneezes too loud or they don't fold the laundry correctly, but you still want to be with them.

It is important to remember that though this transition can be scary for couples to go through, it's a good thing. If you and your lover have made it past the hon-



A couple on a couch movie date

Photo Credit: Twitter.com

eymoon phase, it's a milestone, but now the real tests begin.

After dating for a while, it may feel difficult to have romantic date nights together.

Remember that while expensive dates are fun once in a while, you two can find fun on a cheap night in.

Now that the honeymoon phase is over, you have to find different ways to spend time together, since all the traditional ways have probably already been done.

Instead of going to an expensive Italian restaurant, you two can order in and eat pizza on the couch while watching a good movie. You can even look up recipes online and make something from scratch.

Also, try to do something new together at least once a week. Look up fun events going on in your area or see if a new movie is playing. Instead of going to your closest movie theater, maybe try a new one in a different place, which will inevitably give the two of you a new experience.

However, these little changes can be fun, the end of the honeymoon phase also means more disagreements. In the beginning, you just agree to disagree because your partner is so cute.

As the honeymoon phase ends and you two become more serious, you'll realize that you need to get used to arguing and disagreeing.

While you learn all the fun things about your partner in the honeymoon phase, like their favorite food and the movie they can watch 100 times without getting tired of it, the end of the phase forces you to learn the type of person your partner is during and after an argument.

After this phase, it may even feel like the two of you fight more than ever. This is normal!

At this point, the two of you have been together long enough to be annoyed by little things, and to feel comfortable expressing that. The important thing is mak-

ing sure you learn to pick your battles and understanding how to move past an issue after it comes up.

Maybe the two of you are the type of people to let an argument resolve itself with a few minutes to an hour, or maybe you want to talk about the issue at length until it's over. Whatever the case may be, you and your significant other will need to learn to argue, and more importantly, how to settle it.

Make sure that though your relationship isn't new anymore, you two continue to love each other the way you did in the beginning. Make time for one another on busy days the same way you do on your free days and never forget to show your partner the way you love them.

And hey, pat yourselves on the back, if you've heard your partner fart and burp more times than you can count and you still like them, the love is definitely real.

## How to Differentiate Between a Boy and a Man

Save The Drama for Their Mama

BY: ROSEANNE CASSAR

After experiencing a rocky end to a relationship a long time ago, I'm only now reflecting on how much impact it has had on my life. I gave myself enough time to get through the hurt and pain and believe that I have gained some clarity in the realm of love.

I struggled to allow myself to let my guard down but knew at some point "you must." If you don't, then you're holding yourself back from a better opportunity with another person.

Maybe that opportunity can turn into something worthwhile, potentially something more tangible like marriage, kids, a dog or a cat or maybe a farm with a lot of land, letting the two of you build a house with a white picket fence.

It is not a bad idea at all. That dream is out there. You need to start looking for that one person that will want to help you fill in the gaps.

It is really hard to find a decent man out there: finding that perfect person is really tricky.

Now the problem isn't boys, it's find-

ing a man who isn't going to try to "play" you. There are two types of "players" out there.

The first kind of players are men who don't care about a woman's feelings at all. They will run around with every other woman behind your back and not think twice about it.

The second kind of players are men who want a serious relationship but they don't want the commitment that goes along with it. They start to feel suffocated or trapped, which makes them run in other directions.

Ladies, this is very true to what men do and how they react when things start to get serious. They start having thoughts going through their minds and the biggest worry that comes to mind is change.

Change is a huge hurdle for people, particularly men. It's something that they know exists and they know they have to accept it. Sometimes though, they have difficulty getting through it, so they cry to their friends because their freedom will be cut by more than half.

If you are out there still looking, there are some ways to help you differentiate a

boy from a man.

A man knows what he wants and goes for it while a boy may have somewhat of an idea, but not entirely. He doesn't think too much about it, and even if he does, he doesn't exert much effort to get it.

A boy is passive while a man is assertive. A man plans for his future and is working towards building a foundation and infrastructure in order to fulfill a purpose or a passion in his life.

A boy lives only in the moment and his plans are mostly around which bar he's going to hit up on the weekend, while a man looks for a woman with intelligence, who is supportive, grounded and encompasses a shared set of values when choosing a partner.

A boy often only cares for girls who are hot, wild and exciting while a man knows a good woman when he meets one and will take initiative to get to know her.

A boy may make an attempt if you're lucky, but gives up before ever really trying. A man has the courage to have uncomfortable conversations and is honest with his intentions and lets people know where they stand.

A boy avoids confrontation or any serious talks about feelings. Instead of dealing with a situation, he runs away from it or creates excuses to mask the fact he's not that interested in you or a relationship.

A man knows when to invest in a woman and jump in with two feet. A boy is always "testing" - he doesn't fully commit because he never knows if he is quite ready. The truth is, because he is a boy, regardless of who he meets, he will never be ready due to the stage of life he is in.

A man knows how to have a good time and be social, but is often busy making strides in his career and building his life. A boy is getting drunk with his buddies at the bar every weekend. A man takes the time to reflect on the type of man he wants to be, the example he wants to leave and the vision for his life.

He has put thought into his values. A boy has not established his moral compass or values and consequently, is often inconsistent; a man has integrity.

It is important to be happy so I'm hoping these tips help all the women out there who are looking for their soul mates.

## SPORTS

## Patriots' Tom Brady, Bill Belichick Engaged in Feud

*Surprising Tension May Spell End of Dynasty*

BY: ERIC RANSOM

For years, the Patriots have been at the pinnacle of football success.

Where all other teams struggled to keep up, Tom Brady, Bill Belichick and Robert Kraft (amongst cheating scandals) scooped up Super Bowl victories one after the other, seemingly with no end – until now.

In what may be one of the more surprising turns of events in all of sports, the

quarterback Tom Brady and head Coach Bill Belichick.

Between the two, both have amassed five Super Bowl titles in eight tries and 15 AFC East titles, including nine in a row. Brady has won three MVP's with Belichick winning three Coach of the Year Awards, a relationship full of dominance beginning in 2001.

The duo is considered to be the greatest player/coach partnership in football

dynasty may last – possibly even ending after the upcoming season.

A report by Tom Curran of NBC Boston says that Brady may go against his head coach, as well as talk show host Colin Cowherd saying that he feels Brady is leading a "revolt."

Brady and Belichick are known for having powerful, competitive personalities, and with their egos clashing, it may have been just a matter of time.

Although the Patriots have had constant success over the last 15-plus years, even their judgement was put into question.

One of the more controversial decisions the Patriots have made came in 2017, when Patriots owner Robert Kraft suggested that the team trade their young promising quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo.

Brady, 40, was still dominating the league, but with older age being a factor, a new quarterback was being bred to succeed Brady should he retire.

Instead, Garoppolo was traded to the San Francisco 49ers for draft picks, ensuring Brady would remain at the forefront for much longer.

Belichick strongly disagreed with the move and Brady denied any involvement in the decision making process. The feeling was that the future of the Patriots was compromised for the benefit of Brady's position in the team.

More denial flooded the news, as Kraft stated that he didn't recommend Belichick to trade the young quarterback after all.

In a more "personal" act between Brady and Belichick, personal trainer Alex Guerrero, who has been with Brady for years, recently was denied further access to Gillette Stadium by Belichick himself.

Brady credits his incredible shape and endurance to the regimens that Guerrero works with, stretching his career as far as age 40 to this point. Over time, the atmosphere of Guerrero and Brady's workout program has spread to other players, almost forcing them to utilize it.

Some have described it as becoming a "cult."

Belichick then took action by banning Guerrero from Gillette Stadium late in the regular season last year.

Brady has commented on this alleged feud, assuring the NFL world that there is nothing wrong.

"I can only speak for myself and really my relationships with everybody that I deal with I feel are so positive. To think anything differently of that is complete nonsense," said Brady.

Amongst the tension, the Patriots still managed to appear in their eighth Super Bowl, losing to the Philadelphia Eagles, 41-33.

Belichick, 66, will remain with the Patriots and will commit to coaching them for the upcoming 2018 season, after rumors of taking a job with the New York Giants.

With Brady and Belichick only getting older, time is certainly not on the Patriots' side. Time will tell how much this feud should be taken seriously, as well as just

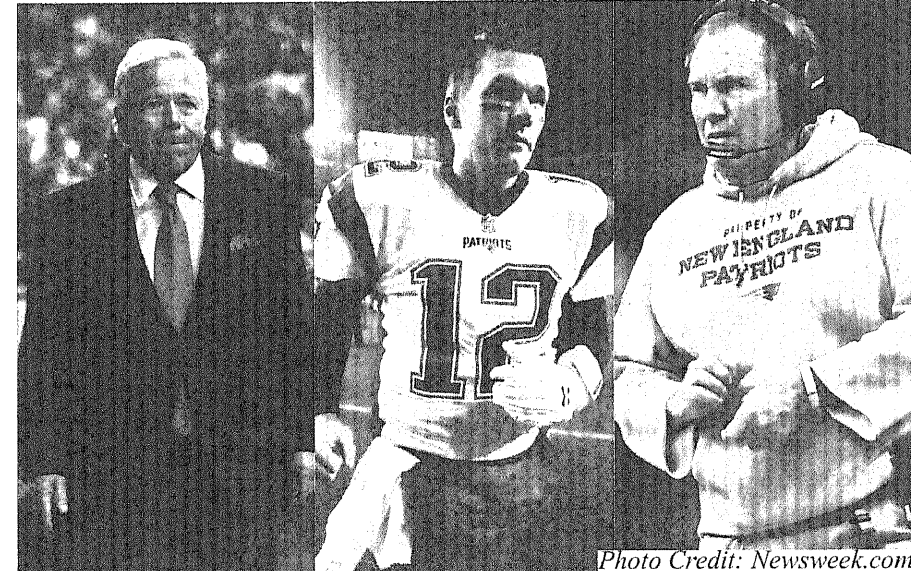


Photo Credit: Newsweek.com  
Despite the success of the Patriots, cracks in the armor are being revealed amongst the core of the team.

once impenetrable Patriots may be crumbling from the inside.

Reports from sportswriters and analysts across the spectrum are picking up on a developing rift between superstar Pats

history and could be almost certainly first ballot Hall of Famers.

That is until recently, in which Brady and Belichick have been butting heads, enough to question how much longer this

## Tibbs vs. Petosa: From the Player's Perspective

*Comparing CSI's Two Recent Coaches*

BY: ERIC RANSOM

Recently hired Head Coach T.J. Tibbs takes over CSI basketball's former Coach Tony Petosa, the question of whether Tibbs is better than Petosa is put up for debate.

New basketball head coach T.J. Tibbs recently led the CSI Dolphins to another CUNYAC championship, holding up the legacy of recently retired Head Coach Tony Petosa.

Winning has been part of Petosa's legacy for many years, but retired after a long-tenured, 27-year head coaching career. Tibbs is a former student-athlete and graduate from CSI, who has hefty expectations from the CSI community to keep the legacy alive and ongoing for years to come.

Tibbs was inspired by his father to become a basketball coach along with other coaching legends such as Bill Belichick, Gregg Popovich, and even his former coach - Tony Petosa.

His will to coach stems from the relationships he hopes to build with his team and the community around him. He feels it is his duty to associate himself with his colleagues.

All the great coaches that he learned from are inspirational leaders to him, absorbing what they taught him, to drive to be just like them.

"I try to learn more from my role models all the time," Tibbs said. "They inspire me to become the coach I am today."

Abdoul Azika, a player for the CSI basketball team, stated that both coaches have two different playstyles - Coach Petosa follows by the playbook, and Tibbs utilizes his assistant coaches to run plays for the team. He was worried when playing under coach Petosa, as he was so cautious to make a mistake. Azika said that playing under coach Tibbs that you are more open to play like yourself.

Two years ago, in the championship game playing under Petosa, Azika was put under a lot of pressure in that game coming off the bench.

He knew he had to prove why he deserved to be out there. He did not want to disappoint his fellow peers, coach and most importantly, himself. He went on to score 20 points and played during the end of the game when it mattered most and helped his team win the game.

"In that game, I did all that I could to show the coach why I'm made for these moments," Azika said. "I knew it was my time to shine and so I did."

Azika exclaimed that Petosa was assertive and blunt on how he should play, and that he should be more aggressive. Tibbs explained how to play in simpler ways and clarified his strengths and mis-



takes to him in greater detail than Petosa ever did.

Adeola Latunji, another player who has only played for Tibbs in his playing career, described him as a guy who has a strong love for the game of basketball, and always wants his players to practice and improve every day.

He said when the team played a tough game earlier this season, Tibbs took him out because he was playing for the crowd even though he felt he was not. Latunji states he is a very challenging guy who expects a lot and wants to see his players



Photo Credit: CSIDolphins.com  
excel and always do better.

On the other hand, Coach Tibbs looks up to his predecessor. He bellows that Petosa has been nothing but supportive on his journey to now become the interim Head Coach for CSI basketball. Tibbs admires the things he has taught him and what he has done for CSI's basketball program.

"I love this place and I love these kids," Tibbs said. "I'm just trying to add on to what Coach Petosa has done here and do the best job I can for this program."