

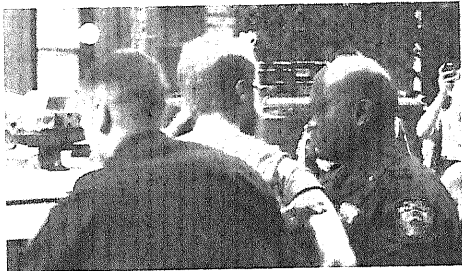
The Banner

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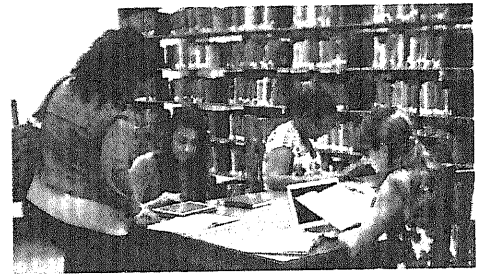
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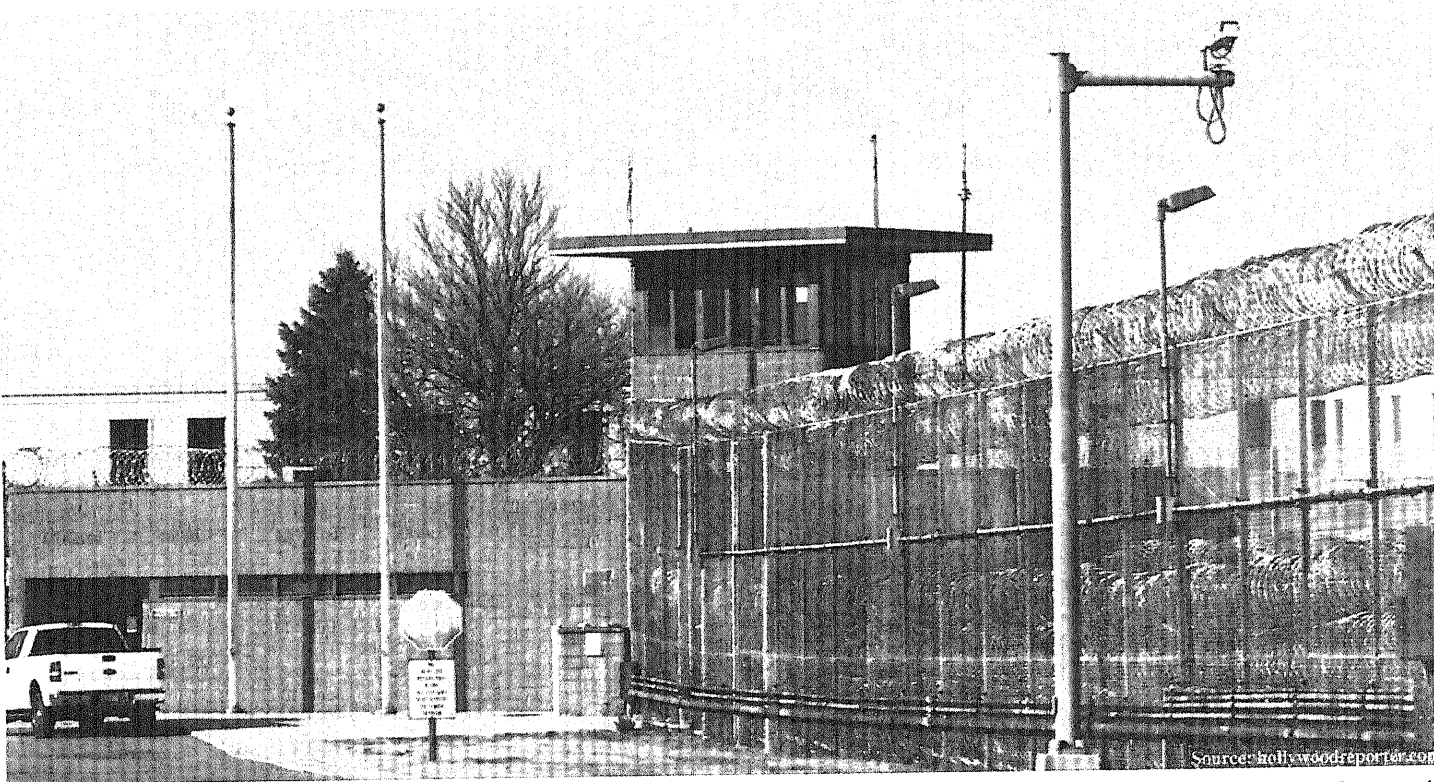


The New Age of Hip Hop - Page 6



Grading System Fails to Inspire - Page 10

Production Studio Coming to Staten Island *Renovation of Abandoned Arthur Kill Prison*



BY JOHN L. FALCONE III

Excited by last month's announcement that a professional production studio is coming to Staten Island, students and faculty of the Performing and Creative Arts department are hopeful that the studio's presence in the community will lead to local internship opportunities.

"If we could get our students hands-on experience with a top notch facility like that, it would be great," said Music Professor Sylvia Kahan. "Too often I hear that internships are about fetching coffee, so it would be fabulous if we could get our students internships with a professional studio like Broadway Stages."

Broadway Stages is the TV, film, and music video production company which has purchased

the former Arthur Kill Correctional Facility for \$7 million dollars in order to turn it into a Hollywood grade production studio.

In their existing studios throughout Brooklyn and Queens, Broadway Stages has hosted the filming of well known shows like "The Good Wife" and "Rescue Me," as well music videos for mega artists such as Jay-Z and Kanye West. With ties to HBO, CBS, Warner Brothers, and Universal Studios it is easy to understand why some students are genuinely excited by the possibilities which this studio could present.

"I heard that it was becoming a movie studio, but Broadway Stages? That's incredible," said Joseph Bushman, a college assistant in the Performing and Creative Arts department. "This

could mean more opportunities for people involved in performing and creative arts, and it will be great for the economy of Staten Island."

While some are excited about the possibilities, others are skeptical that the studio won't provide much in the way of internships.

"I am not really sure how the studio will be beneficial for performing students at CSI. It's going to be a place that they film certain projects, however, I don't think this will affect the casting process for these projects. Actors are still going to need to apply for auditions that will most likely still be held in Manhattan," said Dramatic Arts Major John Petsche. "It's an extremely hard business and a local studio couldn't hurt but I'm not

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The Sixth Annual City University of New York Film Festival

Macaulay Honors College Screens Student Films

BY AMANDA V. GRANBERG
& DAEYUNG A. LEE

The Sixth Annual CUNY film festival was held at the Macaulay Honors College, 35th West 67th Street, where receptionists donned smiles, exchanged greetings, and ushered attendees into a dining room already filled with students anxious to display a private screening of months of productions.

"This is my third year at the CUFF [CUNY Film Festival], my second year as the artistic director," explained Tom Flynn. "Founded in 2008, CUFF has been getting more attention through more submissions, more attendance, and

more sponsors."

Only a small percent of the approximated seventy submissions received were finalists totaling fourteen films, ranging from four to ten minutes each. Submissions were required to be made exclusively by undergraduates, graduate students, alumni or faculty of CUNY. Films of any genre or length were accepted in that they were made in the past two years.

Over fifty attendees engaged in light conversation over a small jazz band between refreshments. With cans of Coke in hand, featured artists described their inspiration behind the films, dissected technique, or posed in front of

the camera on the red carpet.

"It's definitely swankier than I thought it would be," admitted Hunter College Senior, Tyler Byrnes. "I didn't hear about the film festival until recently and just thought it'd be really cool to enter."

Byrnes landed as a finalist in the film festival with five-minute film called *Missed* about a woman painting over wallpaper fitting for a newborns room telling the story of a couple who experienced the toll of a miscarriage.

"Sometimes things get in the way, sometimes you can't complete them," surmised

Continued on Page 8

Exploring Hillel's New Political Advocacy

BY AHMED AHMED

Pro-Israel fervor at Hillel puts the group in conflict with the departments of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work.

The emergence of Students for Justice for Palestine (SJP) has caused tension to arise between the Pro-Israel and Pro-Palestine students at the college. Two organizations are at the forefront of this tension, with Hillel and SJP finding themselves at opposite sides of the spectrum.

SJP seeks to raise awareness for what it refers to as the "Israeli system of Apartheid and discrimination against the indigenous Palestinian population." Its main objective is the promotion of the BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) movement, a Palestinian Civil Society organization that seeks to force Israel into changes by introducing a tactic of economic and political isolation.

"The BDS movement is very similar to the campaigns that ended apartheid in South Africa," said President of SJP Nerdeen Mohsen. "As Americans it is our duty to stand with BDS."

The BDS movement seeks to garner support on university campuses by holding rallies and events promoting the ideas to those who are uninformed of the conditions in Palestine.

Nerdeen says Hillel approached SJP when the chapter was founded in May 2013 to have a collaborative effort in promoting unity between the two groups. SJP declined their offer.

"We felt they were very disingenuous with their attempt," said Mohsen. "Having an event with Hillel frames the situation as if Israel and Palestine are two equal sides that are fighting and need to come to peace, when that is far from the case. Palestine is not at war with Israel. Palestine is under occupation."

Hillel's involvement in defending the Pro-Israel narrative, to the extent that they involve themselves in a controversial issue, signals a digression from Hillel's stated purpose on campus. According to their college website Hillel's role is "serving the entire campus community with engaging programs and activities promoting Jewish values...Hillel provides a comfortable place for college students to express Jewish identity and to explore Judaism."

Hillel's CSI official Facebook page mission statement says, "Hillel seeks to inspire every Jewish student to make an enduring commitment to meaningful Jewish life and community. As members of the Multi Faith Center at the

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The Banner is now offering INTERNSHIPS to CSI students. Internships last one semester and give students the opportunity to learn about media. Interns will work a minimum of 12 hours per week, and can focus on:

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NYPD Source Drops Dime On Dime-bag Dealers

BY BRADLEY POPKIN

Staten Island has become known nationwide as a blemish on the landscape of New York City for all of the wrong reasons. The borough has been battling a prescription drug epidemic plaguing teenagers and young adults for the last several years. In 2011, one island resident overdosed every nine days.

"I haven't come across heavy drugs until I came to Staten Island," said an NYPD source from the 121st precinct. "Members of my team confiscated 892 pills off of a drug deal that just went down. Two kids from jersey I think, they were in Rutgers [when they] bought it."

The source, kept confidential because of department policy, has served on Staten Island for the last two years and has been a police officer for a total of four years. All other sources have had their names changed due to the nature of this article.

"Staten Island has two things going for it," said the source. "It's connected to jersey and we have a major port on the island and that's a huge way drugs get in."

In the past few years, several arrests have been made involving forged prescriptions and pill rings involving doctors. In February 2009, a pill ring was busted involving 22 young adults that led to fraudulent prescriptions filled at borough pharmacies. In January this year Joan Sullivan of Westerleigh, a nurse at a doctor's office, was arrested and accused of forging prescriptions of an Ambien generic. Ambien is a sleep aid.

"They've been charged with a forgery-two, second degree," said the officer. "It's a felony and with that they will usually get criminal possession of a forged instrument. The pills as a controlled substance, depending on how many they get, could be a felony or misdemeanor."

It all depends on the accused's record and the prosecutor to determine if a deal is reached. Currently, they are only receiving "slaps on the wrists" and ROR, or Released On Recognizance.

Prescriptions pills aren't the only drugs plaguing the streets of the island.

"One of my partners got a drug dealer selling ten ounces of crack, which I think is almost \$10,000 in street value," said the NYPD source. "They released him and he was wanted in jersey because he had a loaded gun. He fled."

Dealers typically get longer sentences. According to the source when a dealer buys from an undercover police officer three times,

police will conduct a raid on the home of the dealer.

"If they're selling it on the street, they typically do it by a bodega and take the customer inside," said the source. "A lot of the time they're in on it [the bodega]."

When it comes to cars they usually keep them in the center console, under the seat, or in the side of the door claims the source. Major dealers who run drugs and guns will have what cops call traps in their cars, like a secret compartment. One example is the stereo of a car, where by pressing a button or a combination results in a hidden compartment opening up.

"Usually we'll have a confidential informant tell us," said the officer. "Someone that we arrested that just bought drugs from them and they want to get a lesser charge."

If the source or fellow officers are looking for a pill collar they typically find abusers around Klondike Avenue, a road near the Staten Island Mall and the former 122nd satellite precinct. In this neighborhood of New Springville, officers look for sedans with four occupants driving around, in the area of midnight, on a Friday or Saturday.

High schools around the borough have also been affected.

"I have come into contact with kids who have used prescriptions drugs and have come into my office to confide in me," said James M., a drug educator from one high school. "It's not an extensive problem but it's here. I've seen maybe ten to twelve students in the last couple of years."

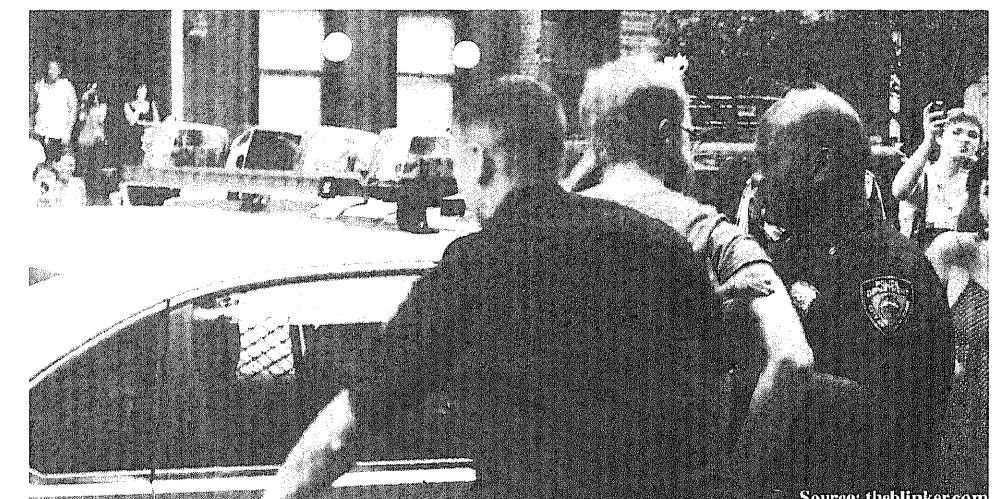
Cuts to drug education and prevention have hindered attempts to influence students. The New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services implemented a mid-year budget reduction of \$3.1 million in 2008. OASAS funds school-based positions.

Numerous drugs have tainted the borough, including CSI. The campus, already being extremely large, received an influx of students last year with the opening of the Dolphin Cove. The campus is smoke-free, a term used loosely because of the lack of enforcement from Public Safety. But smoking cigarettes is not the only issue, marijuana is too. Several residents have complained about the strong stench.

"I've smelled it pretty often," said Joel Youngberry.

Youngberry goes to school in Australia and is studying international business at CSI.

Students have been thrown out of their



Source: theflinker.com

dorms if caught smoking the drug, according to Freshman Joe Tribuzio. There is also a potential incentive regarding the dismissal of residents. According to Clifford Michel, a resident of Dolphin Cove, there is a waiting list.

Searches of rooms are conducted by Resident Assistants. All staff and management are instructed not to speak with press.

"We're never allowed in [dorms] by ourselves," said Lauren P. "We don't do random searches. If there is a search needed we bring in Public Safety or an Assistant General Manager. Noise complaints or any type of smoke constitutes a search."

According to the resident handbook, sanctions may be used independently or in combination for any single violation. Residents failing to comply with any sanction issued by residence hall management may be evicted at the discretion of the management. Management may dismiss a resident for violating the drug policy.

The RA noted that "they're able to appeal and give their side of the story to members of professional staff," in regards to residents being evicted from their dorms. Appeals must be submitted within 24 hours of the sanction decision.

"If a resident is evicted from Dolphin Cove, he or she is still responsible for the balance due on the License Agreement they previously signed," said Vice President of Finance and Administration, Ira Persky.

The crackdown on drugs such as Oxycontin, Valium, and Xanax could lead to unintended side effects, like users turning to heroin. The street value of a pill has risen to as much as \$30.

"Heroin is the next big thing," said the officer. "We often see 60 decks of heroin, decks are like the paper glass they put it in."

Luke Nasta, Executive Director of Camelot Counseling Center, has seen first hand how

deadly of an impact prescription pills have on the island.

"Prescription pills are deceptive," said Nasta. "A deceptive drug made in the U.S. prescribed by doctors. But the chemical makeup of the pill includes the same risk as a bag of heroin, leading to the same lifelong dependency."

Adrienne Abbate is the Director of TYSA, which stands for Tackling Youth Substance Abuse. The initiative began in 2011 and is led by a steering committee comprised of over thirty organizations and individuals from the non-profit, private and government sectors.

"We thought this would be an issue that can bring people across Staten Island and the state together," said Abbate. "Before everyone was just working on their own individual mission, we needed to have everyone come together."

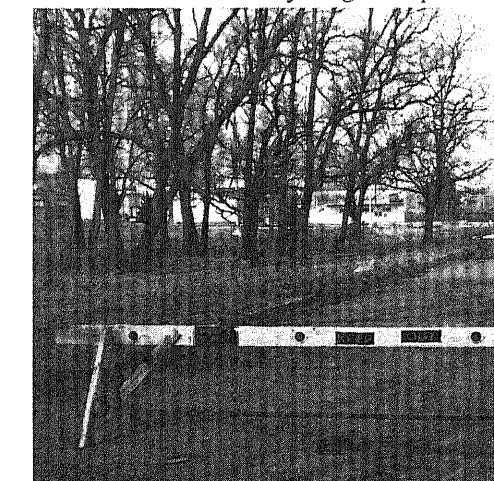
A youth summit on March 29 at the Greenbelt Conservancy, hosted by TYSA, invites kids from across the island to participate and talk about the problem in relation to their neighborhood. TYSA has also partnered with the NYPD to carry naloxone, an opioid antagonist drug used to counter the effects of opioid overdose, in their patrol cars. According to Abbate it is being piloted at one precinct on the island.

Heroin, as both Nasta and the source note, is much cheaper and highly potent. Nasta says that heroin addiction has resulted in a 300% spike in patients admitted between 2011 and 2012. Heroin-related deaths increased 84% from 2010 to 2012 in New York City, according to The New York Times.

"I haven't seen any heroin use in this school," said James M. "I'm not saying it's not here but I haven't heard. I think it's a little harder for a student to come and tell me because it's that dark and dirty drug. They're probably not coming to school anyway."

ly beneficial relationship.

"I think it will greatly benefit Performing and Creative Arts majors if the department endeavors to reach out to Broadway Stages to provide



internship opportunities, or just some hands-on class experience," said Senior Music Major Jose Mendez. "Being able to have this experience is beneficial no matter what career you want to pursue in the arts or in audio engineering."

Though they did not make themselves available for comment, the Broadway Stages website states that the 69 acre site in the Charleston area will be transformed from an abandoned prison to a fully operational studio in approximately one year.

The Arthur Kill Correctional Facility, which opened in 1976, was closed in 2011 as a cost cutting measure by Governor Andrew Cuomo. Since then it has sat abandoned, but the announcement that Staten Island would be getting its own slice of Hollywood in its place has the borough and the CSI campus buzzing with optimism.

"We should hop right on this," said Professor Kahan. "The important thing now is to get in touch with the right people at Broadway Stages, let's do this."

Photo Credit: John L. Falcone III

New Coordinator of the LGBTQ Resource Center

Jeremiah Jurkiewicz Continues a Safe Zone for Students

BY LUCY FARFAN-NARCISSE

The LGBTQ Resource Center at CSI offers students a safe haven of support, understanding, and resources through a number of services and events offered on campus.

The Banner recently had the opportunity to meet with Jeremiah Jurkiewicz, the new coordinator of the LGBTQ Resource Center and a CSI alumni.

The Banner: How long have you been the coordinator and how would you describe your position and what it entails?

Jeremiah Jurkiewicz: I began working as the Coordinator of the LGBTQ Resource Center in November 2013. My job as the coordinator is to support the LGBTQ students on campus and provide a safe space. My office is open for students to utilize, study, and ask questions. Another part of my job is that I work for Student Life and I really enjoy it because it is like working with a family. I try to educate the campus regarding LGBTQ issues through training and programming. I recently received training in Safe Zone and Ally training. Safe Zone training is geared towards faculty, staff, offices and departments on campus where they can learn how to be a Safe Zone for the LGBTQ community.

Ally training is for students where they learn to be an ally for the LGBTQ community. I will be providing training workshops for anyone that may be interested in providing a Safe Zone or becoming an Ally.

TB: What kind of services, resources and programming does your office provide to LGBTQ students?

JJ: We have a small library of LGBTQ books and magazines that students can check out and borrow. The programming put on throughout the year is related to current LGBTQ issues such as the Scott Fried event on March 27 in which he will be addressing STDS, HIV, acceptance and coming out. In April there will be a Coming Out panel where I will be telling my coming out story along with two CSI faculty members. May has basically become Gay Pride Month here at CSI where we try to offer some events. We will be collaborating with Professor Jane Marcus-Delgado for the LGBTQ Human Rights Daring to be LGBTQ Around The World event. A number of speakers will be talking about the movements and struggles of the LGBTQ community around the world. I am also able to provide students with information pertaining to scholarships and upcoming events in the Staten Island community. I have a strong connection with the LGBTQ Community Center on Staten Island and they have actually donated some of the literature in the library. Our office is happy to promote any

events, lectures and anything LGBTQ related on campus. We also have a support group that meets on campus twice a month. A good ending to the academic year is our annual Lavender Ceremony and it is open to any graduating LGBTQ students graduating. It is a time for the college to celebrate its' LGBTQ seniors for their accomplishments and their lives. Students receive rainbow tassels and cords that they can wear to Commencement if they wish. It is good for students that have not come out with their families, they can invite people to come and celebrate themselves and be comfortable with who they are.

TB: In your opinion is there a great need for the LGBTQ Resource Center on campus and do you feel there will always be a need?

JJ: There is a thought or idea like why is this needed? We have marriage equality in New York, we have all these rights. But for me when there is no question when a student can come out to his/her family or to friends on campus and their reaction is like...whatever. When it gets to that point then I will think about there not being a need. Until all laws are passed across the United States and across the world-there is always going to be a need. Just the idea that this office exists shows that CSI is in support of the LGBTQ students.

TB: Is there anything the straight community at CSI can do to help promote awareness and encourage support to LGBTQ friends, family and students?

JJ: There are many little things you can do in your own personal lives to make LGBTQ people feel more welcome and comfortable. Watch the way you use your language, you may not realize you are offending someone with your words. Speak up when somebody uses homophobic, transphobic, racist, or intolerant language. LGBTQ students are not looking for attention or special rights, they are simply asking to be treated equally and given the same ground. They want to feel safe in our own communities and not to be attacked for holding hands with their boyfriend or girlfriend while walking down the street.

TB: What are your hopes and goals for the future of the LGBTQ Resource Center at CSI?

JJ: I would love to build a larger community on campus of students that know that they can come for information or questions whether they are straight or LGBTQ. I want to know that every student is supported. My hope is for all 14,000 students at CSI to know that the LGBTQ Resource Center does exist and to increase student knowledge around this matter. If they want information they have the place to seek it.



Photo Credit: Lucy Farfan-Narcisse

Coordinator of the LGBTQ Resource Center Jeremiah Jurkiewicz offers all students a safe place on campus to study and find resources pertaining to LGBTQ opportunities and events and is open to all students to utilize and ask questions.



Photo Credit: Lucy Farfan-Narcisse

Scott Fried (left), an award-winning international public speaker, HIV/AIDS educator and author gave a lecture titled "AIDS, Love & Staying Alive"



Photo Credit: Lucy Farfan-Narcisse

Students from CSI's WSIA interview Scott Fried after his 90 minute lecture

remain a safe space for pro-Israel students on campus... Often bullied and intimidated by anti-Israel campaigns and propaganda, pro-Israel students need a place to call home- Hillel," the petition stated. "As concerned students we ask that Hillel maintain the National Hillel Guidelines for Campus Israel Activities and continue to politically serve the pro-Israel community."

Hillel's shift towards political advocacy puts the organization into conflict with those who have differing opinions on Israel.

On March 4 a joint event between Hillel and

Chi Alpha invited David Walker, Northeast Coordinator of the organization Christians United for Israel, to give a lecture on the importance of fostering a Pro-Israel narrative on College campuses. A new group called OpenHillel seeks to counter the political nature of the former, as the Pro-Israel and political advocacy of Hillel begins change within the national organization.

"Hillel International's current standards for partnership are counterproductive," said Hillel. "They prevent campus Hillels from inviting co-

sponsorship or dialogue with Palestinians as almost all Palestinian campus groups support the boycott of, divestment from, and sanctions against Israel... and although the Hillel International policies are called 'guidelines,' Hillel International has threatened to disaffiliate schools that do not abide by them."

When The Banner approached President of Hillel, Mitchell Harris, for clarification the request was denied. "The Banner has been biased," said Mitchell. "They have taken things out of context."

BANNER POLITICS

The DOT's Newest Way to Raid Your Bank

Enforcement by Entrapment

BY JOHN L. FALCONE III

If you think you know where all of those pesky traffic cameras are on Staten Island, think again.

Sure, there are plenty intersections that have red light cameras which many Island motorists are aware of, like the corner of Hylan Boulevard and Burbank Avenue in front of Shoprite, the intersection of Travis Avenue and Richmond Avenue by Barnes and Noble, and the one just outside of campus to terrorize students on their way to classes at the corner of Victory Boulevard and Morani Street.

But, in addition to the many red light cameras that have popped up throughout the Island over the years, drivers now have to deal with a slew of bus lane cameras, traffic flow monitors, and speed cameras.

School Zone Speed Cameras

Thanks to Mayor de Blasio's Vision Zero traffic initiative, a plan that he has implemented with the goal of reducing the city's traffic fatalities to zero in the next ten years, you need to pay extra attention to your speed when you are near a school.

Yours truly found this out the hard way, as I was blatantly entrapped by one of these cameras outside of St. Charles Catholic elementary school near the corner of Tysens Lane and Hylan Blvd. Before you send hate mail to The Banner about its staff trying to justify breaking the law, hear me out.

Having lived in the area of this intersection for a while, I knew of the red light camera which was located at this intersection, so one afternoon a few months ago I approached the intersection and saw that the light was about to change, so I sped up and cleared the intersection.

Little did I know that this camera was now doubling as one of de Blasio's vaunted speed cameras. It caught me doing the ungodly speed of 51 in a 35. I figured all of this out when I received a \$50 summons in the mail a few weeks later.

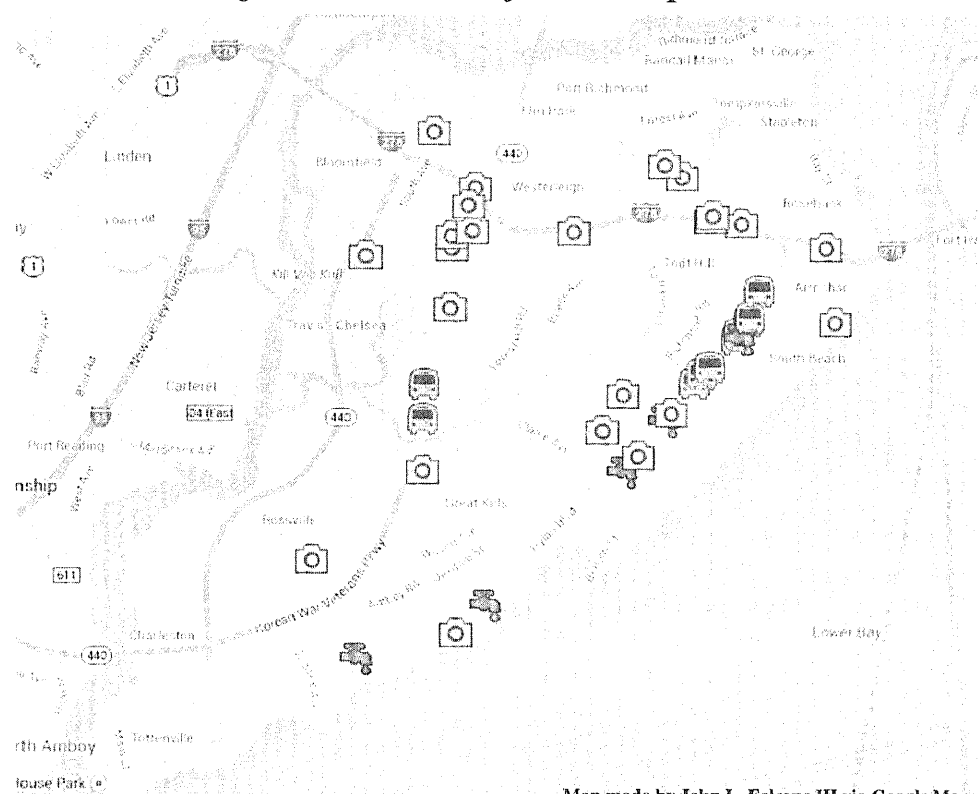
Don't worry, however, if you aren't caught picking up the pace to avoid a red light ticket, you might be nabbed by attempting to turn through a bus lane.

Bus Lane Cameras

The summer of 2013 saw the launch of the MTA's S79 SBS (Select Service) bus line, which utilized hard to miss red painted bus lanes to help buses cut through rush hour traffic.

In order to enforce these "bus only" lanes, the DOT (Dept. of Transportation) installed 10 bus lane cameras which photograph your license plate and send a \$115 fine to your mailbox.

Massive controversy erupted over this last fall when in their first two months these cameras issued more than 7,000 violations totaling over \$800,000 in fines. Many of the tickets issued were done so by cameras which Island politicians have said are placed at points where they are guaranteed to catch a motorist



Map made by John L. Falcone III via Google Maps

Red light camera locations are indicated by "camera" icons, bus lane cameras are indicated by "bus" icons, and traffic flow monitors are indicated by the "water faucet" icons. School zone cameras are currently being kept quiet by the DOT.

who wasn't trying to flaunt the law, but simply trying to drive. "Sometimes it's physically impossible for you to safely navigate yourself from the right lane that you turned into...which is the bus lane, to the center lane." Borough President James Oddo told the Staten Island Advance. "Now if you've failed [to exit the bus lane.] you get a ticket."

Traffic Flow Monitors

As if being entrapped by speed cameras and bus lane cameras is not enough of a burden for Island drivers, your movements are also being monitored.

In the spring of 2013, the DOT installed at least 5 EZ-Pass scanning devices at major intersections along Hyland Blvd.

The DOT claims the system is in place to help monitor traffic and make adjustments to traffic light sequencing. The DOT also claims

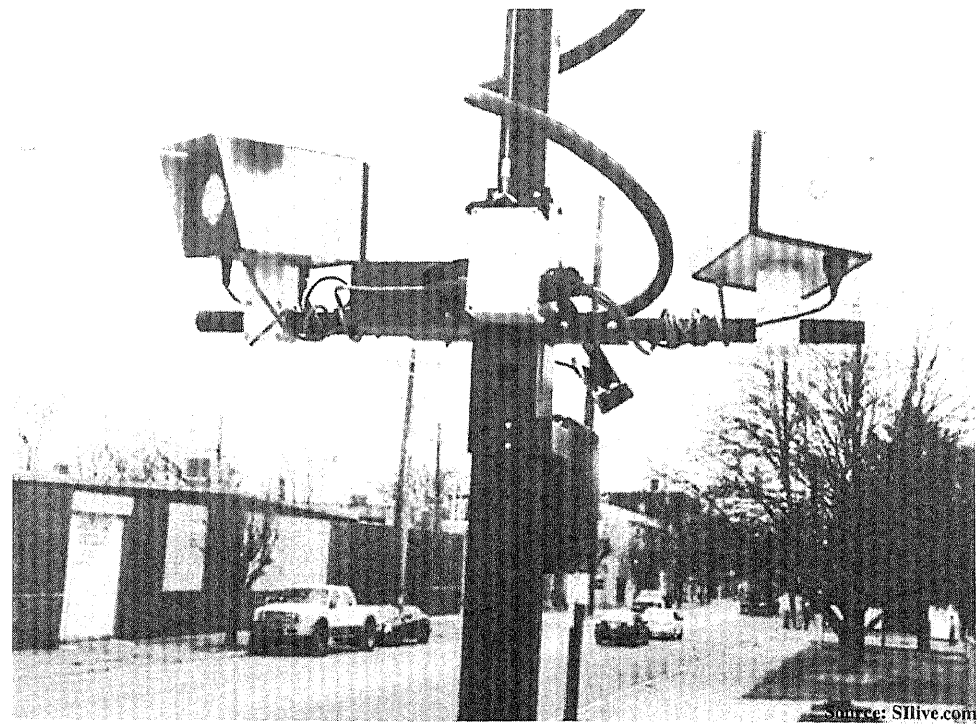
that your individual EZ-Pass tag information is scrambled, though it admits that all of our movements are conveniently posted on the internet.

"Readers collect aggregate traffic information only, which is scrambled and does not identify individual motorists," said DOT spokesman Nicholas Mosquera. "This data [is] viewable by anyone in the public on www.nycmta.org and at www.511ny.org."

Comprehensive Map

Though the locations of school zone speed cameras are kept under wraps by the DOT, many motorists will soon be finding out the hard way where they are.

In order to help you avoid red light tickets, bus lane tickets and unwanted EZ-Pass scanning, the map below shows known locations of traffic enforcement cameras on the Island.



Source: Sllive.com

Known Red Light Camera Locations

- Victory Blvd & Morani St
- Richmond Ave & Arthur Kill Rd
- Milford Dr & Clove Rd
- Narrows Rd North & Richmond Rd
- Clove Rd & Cheshire Pl
- Clove Rd & Bard Ave/ Bement Ave
- Forest Ave & South Ave
- South Ave & Travis Ave
- Richmond Ave & Lander Ave
- Richmond Ave & Eton Pl
- Narrows Rd North & Clove Rd
- Huguenot Ave & Woodrow Rd
- Richmond Rd & New Dorp Ln
- Narrows Rd North & Fingerboard Rd
- Fr. Capodanno Blvd & Sand Ln
- Gannon Ave & Bradley Ave
- Amboy road & Tysens Ln
- Hylan Blvd & Burbank St
- Hylan Blvd & Arden Ave

Known Bus Lane Camera Locations

- Hylan Blvd & Hunter Ave
- Hylan Blvd & Atlantic Ave
- Hylan Blvd & Midland Ave
- Hylan Blvd & Seaview Ave
- Hylan Blvd & Burgher Ave

Known Traffic Flow Monitor Locations

- Hylan Blvd & Seaview Avenue
- Hylan Blvd & Richmond Avenue
- Hylan Blvd & Guyon Avenue
- Hylan Blvd & New Dorp Lane
- Hylan Blvd & Huguenot Avenue.
- Richmond Ave & Victory Blvd
- Richmond Avenue & W Caswell Ave
- Richmond Ave & Travis Avenue
- Hylan Blvd & Old Town Rd
- Hylan Blvd & Jefferson Ave
- Hylan Blvd & Cromwell Ave
- Hylan Blvd & Yukon Ave
- Hylan Blvd & Forest Hill Rd

How To Appeal A Red Light Camera Violation

It is hard to dispute a clear photograph of your vehicle going through a red light camera in NYC. Some defenses may include:

1. The photograph doesn't clearly show that your vehicle went through the red light,
2. You were in the middle of a medical emergency,
3. Your vehicle was having mechanical difficulties, or
4. Someone stole your vehicle

"Conflicting Values"
Continued from Front Page
College of Staten Island, we welcome the entire campus community and strive to be valuable partners in CSI's vibrant, diverse student experience."

No official description from Hillel's various media pages indicated a Pro-Israel stance or a Pro-Israel lobbying effort. This has changed with a petition called SaveHillel, which was promoted by Hillel's official Facebook page.

"We believe that campus Hillel's should

CAMPUS STYLES

Hip Hop Culture Adjusts to the Digital Age

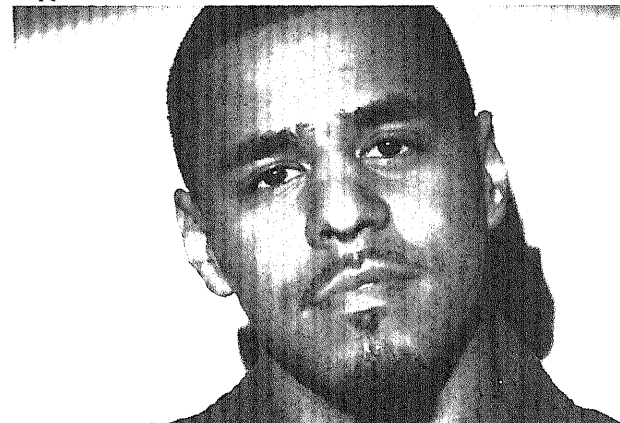
Mixtapes, Politics, and Self-Production

BY CLIFFORD MICHEL

In the summer of 2013, Kevin David Smith Jr. was frustrated with some of the music he was hearing over the air waves. His favorite genre was being swallowed up by tunes that lacked substance and were filled with elementary rhymes.

"I was thinking 'I'm a singer and I can rap better than that.' I used to write poetry so I just transferred poetry to rap. It was that easy," said Smith, a freshman at the College of Staten Island.

With websites like Datpiff, HipHopDX, and Live Mixtapes, millennials and Generation Y-ers are able to publish their work easier than ever before in hopes of gaining popularity or getting signed. Long gone are the days where an aspiring artist would have to go directly through major label companies to get noticed. Some established artists such as Chance The Rapper, J Cole, Wiz Khalifa, Mac Miller, and



Source: collegesocial.com

Meek Mill owe most of their success to the internet. While others are still budding (Action Bronson, Joey Bada\$\$, and Iggy Azalea) thanks to the new online democracy.

A basic microphone, a pop filter, and any audio program is enough to get started.

While the prospect of being the next hip-hop artist to be noticed is exciting, some wonder if the onslaught of newcomers will make it impossible for true talent to shine over the sheer amount of people publishing mixtapes.

"I think it's like a doubled edged sword because before there was a lot of talent that couldn't make it. Strictly because they didn't have the means or the buzz to make it, on the flip side though you can blow up because you're a bum," said Smith.

Being rich and famous is always in the corner, but for some, rapping is just a fun hobby. Social media sites such as Facebook and SoundCloud give users a feeling of community



Source: soulculture.com

where their art is appreciated and enjoyed by others. Spending hours in the studio with friends and working out kinks on your newest song has become synonymous with hanging out at the mall.

"We do hip-hop to create a story, to tell what we've been through and to express ourselves," said Rakim Deberry, 20. "Not everyone's trying to make it, that's so unreasonable. We're just trying to create a culture, sometimes we over exaggerate about what we've been through but still. Other people paint—we just make music."

Painting a larger picture and making cultural connections are valued more in the digital age of Hip-Hop.

"Some rappers who really do have talent dumb themselves down sometimes or try and act a different way to make a hit. When I get in my zone, when I hear a beat, the idea automat-

ically comes up and it's hard for me to change it. Once I get that thought in my head about what fits with the beat, it's mostly stuck, I can't fake it," said Smith.

Some aspiring artists feel that rapping forces them to learn more about their craft and be more in sync with ideas that matter to the community at large.

"Yeah I can write a basic ABAB rhyme scheme, but that sounds childish. I have to be clever and figure out what people really want to hear. I mean we can sit here and talk about love, but did people want to hear love in August? Nope, they wanted to hear about stop & frisk. So we have to educate ourselves and figure out how to relay it back to the community," said Akin Haynes, 17.

"At the end of the day, whether we're inexperienced or overqualified, we're all adding our piece to the melting pot."

Campus Styles



Photo Credit: Larry Zankiratsky

Loujain Charif
Favorite Store: Sephora

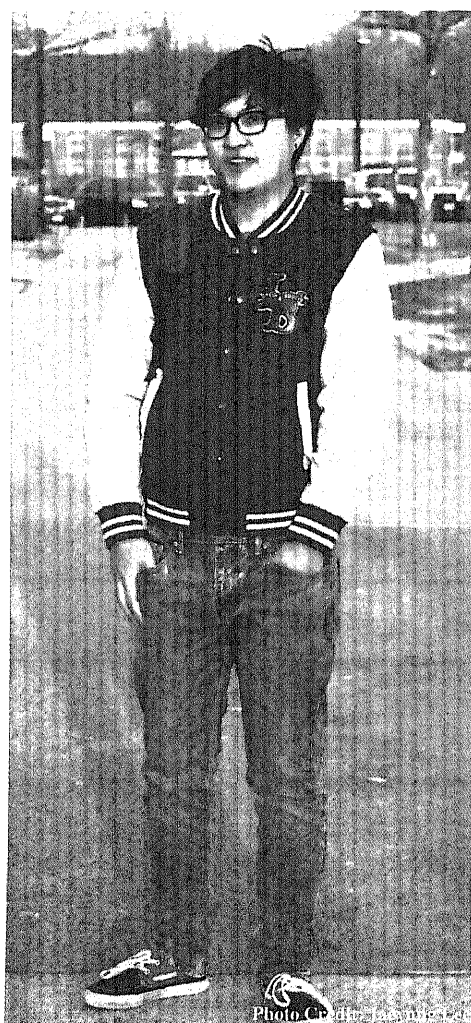


Photo Credit: Jody Gifford

Francisko Kim
Favorite Store: Levi's

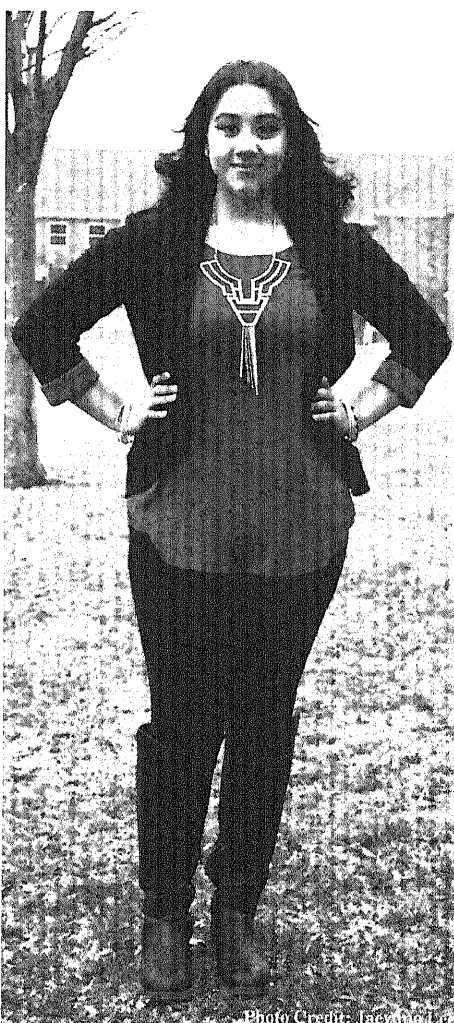


Photo Credit: Jody Gifford

Ashley Mercado
Favorite Spring Accessory: Necklaces

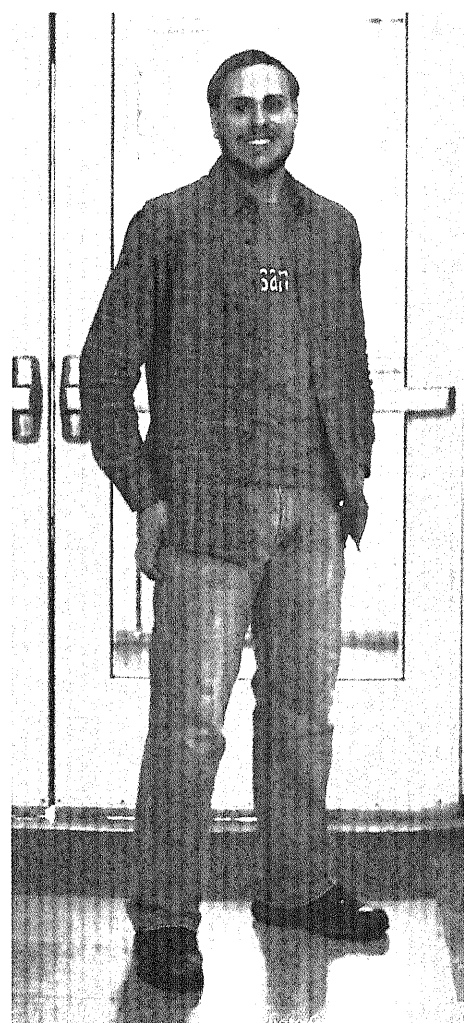


Photo Credit: Jody Gifford

Jose Mendez
Favorite Store: Urban Outfitters

BANNER STYLES

A Few New Twists on a Classic Fashion Trend

The Do's and Don't of Denim

BY VICTORIA CAROCCIA

Denim has been around for as long as we can remember. It was airbrushed and ripped up by our moms and dads back in the '80s, and adorned by every wannabe grunge rocker on MTV in the '90s. Plus, how can we forget Justin and Britney's denim-on-denim red carpet look at the 2001 American Music Awards? Despite some major faux pas throughout the years, denim is still a fashion staple today and has made a huge splash on Spring Fashion Week runways.

Because denim is such a timeless and versatile fabric, it's helped construct a ton of questionable wardrobe choices. One of those pieces is a pair of denim overalls. In the old days the only people to be caught dead wearing overalls were farmers, train conductors, and pre-schoolers. As of last summer, however, the overall trend has returned and can look absolutely adorable when done correctly.

Overall shorts are the perfect summer music festival statement piece. Pair them with a cute cropped t-shirt underneath or a strapless bandeau. If you want to go for a more traditional look, wear a colored button down shirt underneath a pair of long overalls. If you're wearing pants in lieu of shorts, wear them with a pair of high heels for a more feminine look.

Another unexpected denim trend comeback has probably been collecting dust in the back of your dresser drawer since middle school. Denim mini skirts were all the rage back when the Jonas Brothers were still a band

and are (surprisingly) still considered fashionable. The denim mini is best paired with a menswear inspired piece, like an oversized button-down shirt. Tuck in the front and wear it with a pair of flip flops or boat shoes for a preppy, Abercrombie-inspired look.

If these trends still leave a bad taste in your mouth, there are a million and one ways to wear denim. One of the easiest and most stylish ways is with a chambray shirt. They

come in all different washes, and whether dark or light, dressed up or dressed down, make an adorable and classic outfit.

While the weather is still frigid, throw a light cardigan over your chambray with the sleeves rolled up. For something a little more fancy, wear it underneath a blazer. On a warmer, more casual day, wear a chambray as an overshirt with a cute graphic tee or colorful tank underneath. Accessorize your chambray

with a fur or cargo vest, or button it all the way up and wear a statement necklace.

Chambray shirts can be paired with black or colored jeans. If you plan on wearing denim jeans along with your chambray shirt, make sure to contrast the washes. A light wash top with a dark wash bottom will make you look long and lean while helping you avoid the dreaded cowboy tuxedo. (I.e. Justin and Britney's epic fashion fail)

Another simple way to wear denim is with a classic denim jacket. Whether it's oversized or fitted, a jacket can be thrown over almost anything. Pair it with a cute, flowy dress and a pair of boots to edge up a girly spring look. If you want to wear a denim jacket with a pair of jeans, stick to the golden rule of contrasting washes!

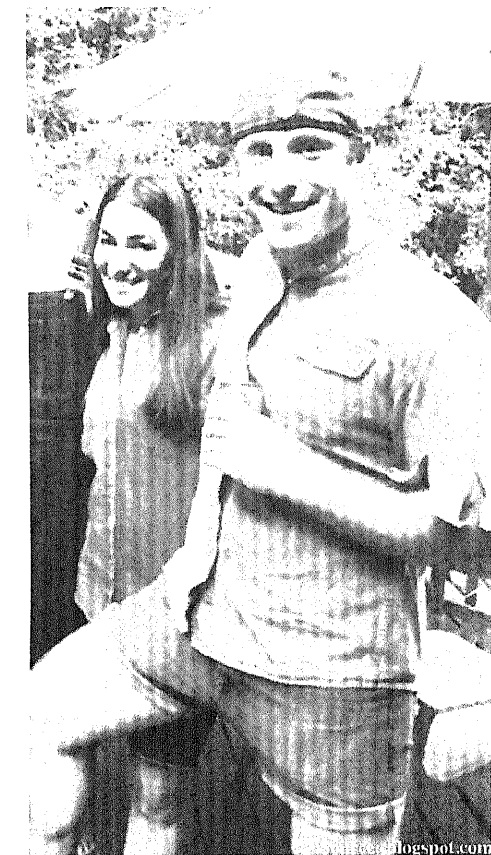
As every bad-ass rock & roll biker chick knows, denim is best paired with black. To add some edge to denim-on-denim, pair with a leather motorcycle jacket and some metallic accessories.

If you want to spice up your chambray shirt, throw on a leather mini skirt or some sexy leather shorts. Everyone will be asking you if you're one of the Hell's Angels or if you hung out with Rihanna in 2012!

Denim has been around longer than most of the people reading this article have been alive. Although it has definitely inspired some major fashion flaws, denim is a timeless wardrobe staple that will serve us effortlessly for years to come.



Source: blogspot.com



Source: blogs.pops.com

The Rhythm and Blues of Getting in Shape

Finding a Good Workout Pattern

BY JAEYUNG LEE

When you are new to working out and want to get to a comfortable weight level, or even trying to stay in shape, it is extremely difficult to find time and motivation to get off the couch and lift some weights. Half of the battle with exercise is finding the right rhythm and pattern to fit your schedule best.

It is simple to find a great rhythm to working out, although it seems impossible. In fact, the problem can disappear with some easy steps that take little time and effort on your part.

When planning to start working out, the best course of action to take is to make a workout schedule. You can coordinate your time so that your workouts complement the schedule of your daily plans. By ensuring that you'll have time each day for either cardio or muscle-building, you'll already be very close to finding a great rhythm to your workout.

Planning for time to work out is a huge step forward, but the next course of action that will keep you moving forward is planning your rest days. Working out every day will not only destroy your muscles, but will affect your motivation as well.

By planning a rest day for a set interval you give your mind and body a well deserved

day off and refresh yourself for the next set. This should be included in your schedule in a very noticeable way, but should not be mistaken for lying on the couch and binge-eating.

One vital component of motivating yourself to work out is finding the right music to work out with. Music makes working out much easier than you expect. It's truly about finding the right playlist for every type of workout you have planned.

The trick to building the right playlist is to find the songs you love and add them in. When you relate working out to the songs you love, it makes working out very enjoyable and rewarding at the same time.

Don't go to the Rocky soundtrack and pick the songs you would never listen to on an hour commute. Pick the songs you can rock out to, and start your workout. Get your heartbeat working to the rhythm of your favorite songs.

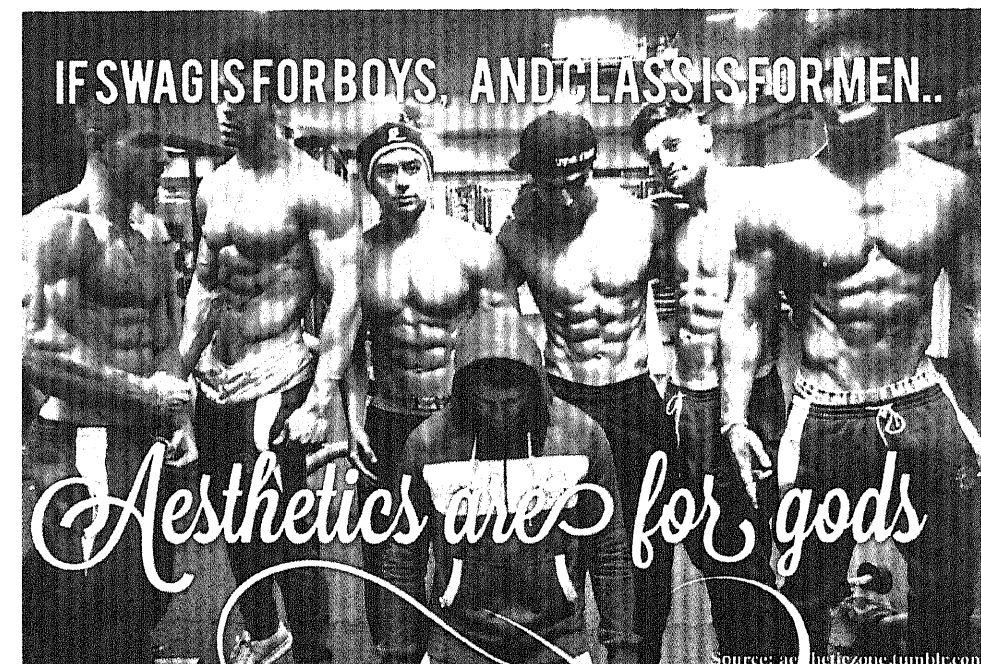
Variety in exercise is always great. Whether it's switching from cardio to weightlifting, it's best to make your workout schedule have a great assortment.

The trick is to work on one area of your body at a time, so that you can plan for days ahead. From cutting weight to the infamous leg day, there are more ways to have fun and work out at the same time. A great alternative to cardio is shadowboxing. When looking for new workouts, think of activities you love and search for ways to work those activities into real life.

Another helpful hint to finding a comfortable workout pattern is finding a nice area to work out. Going to the public gym and lifting weights can prove to be a distraction when you find yourself in the wrong crowd.

Sometimes you can have a better session of exercise at home, or in a scenic park by your house. When going for a nice jog, pick a scenic route where you can take your mind off of your heart racing and the pounds melting away.

Creating a rhythm to a workout is a simple process. From making a schedule for working out, to setting the right atmosphere for your exercise, all you need to stay focused on your goal is the will to stay organized.



Source: au.hicetone.tumblr.com

"Sixth Annual CUNY Film Festival" Continued from Front Page

Byrnes. Given his submission, it was clear that months of effort had been dedicated towards the delicate details such as lighting, directing, and content.

Macaulay Honors College and CSI alumnus, David DiLillo submitted five-minute film entitled *Carnival Autumn* that focused on memories of his own childhood showing foliage of upstate New York at a local carnival as well as rural areas of York, Pennsylvania.

"I was a photography minor and a math major. I've been into getting my art out there though," said DiLillo. "Production for *Carnival Autumn* took in between two months and editing was a longer process."

DiLillo's film introduced a beautiful juxtaposition between music and photography, a rare addition to the other collection of films screened that night.

Before the group was ushered upstairs to a private theater for viewing, many stopped for a quick shot by the red carpet and picked up a pro-

gram. The program handed out by CUFF introduced the finalists, as well as the sponsors, B&H Photo Video Pro Audio and AMC Networks Inc.

As the lights dimmed in the theater and the audience was introduced to the fourteen short films. Screenings that were shown but were out of competition were: *The Seagull* by Nikolaos Sarafis, *Ladies Man* by Lee Quinby, *Breathwork* by Daniel Cowen. Finalists in competition were: *A Qui La Faute* by Morgan Gicquel, *Until Next Time* by Matthew Marquez, *Cosplay: The Art of Self-Expression* by Shelley Hu, *Rice* by Uladzimir Taukachou, *Shanghai Gourmet* by Carey Hu, *Missed* by Tyler Byrnes, *Super Wild* by Josephus Tutud, and *Carnival Autumn* by David DiLillo. Prize winners in competition were in third place *Segues* by Kenneth Axen, second place *Erased* by Alison Corsie, and the grand prizewinner *Shoot One, Please* was directed by Ken Christensen.

Christensen is a recent graduate of the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, and a multimedia journalist in New York City. The seven minute and seventeen second winning film

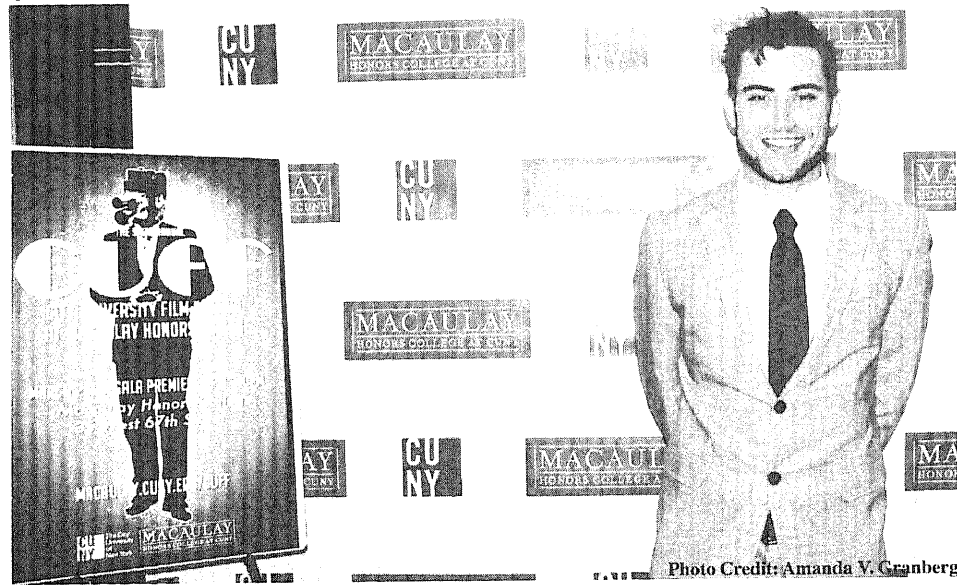


Photo Credits: Amanda V. Granberg

CUFF Artistic Director and Macaulay alumnus Tom Flynn

I'm Not the Hunger Games... I'm Divergent

The Secret Life of a Dauntless Teenager

BY LUCIA ROSSI

Divergent is a heart-pounding action thriller, but let's face it - it's not *Hunger Games*. The same premise as *Hunger Games* is present, a female heroin becoming a symbol of rebellion against a governmental group in a dystopian war that is about to break out. If this were a race, then *Hunger Games* would win by a landslide.

Expectations for this film are very high because of the wonderful success of the book series by Veronica Roth, but does the film do it justice? Most fans would say yes, but critics such as those on Rotten Tomatoes only give this film a 5.5 out of 10 stars. The Box office says it grossed \$22.8 million on its opening day. *Divergent* also became the biggest advanced ticket seller on Fandango, beating out 2008's *Twilight* by five folds.

Shailene Woodley plays the role of Beatrice "Tris" Prior, a girl who lives in a seemingly perfect society made up of five factions: Abnegation (selfless), Amity (kind), Candor (honest), Erudite (intelligent) and Dauntless (brave), based on personalities. Tris then finds

out that she is divergent, meaning that she belongs to more than one faction. Divergent people are considered a threat to their society because they cannot be manipulated or controlled. While living in the Dauntless faction, Tris uncovers the truth about what is really going on in her society and the real danger that people are going to face.

The film itself is overall very enjoyable with its great special effects of a dystopian Chicago and really intense fight scenes that make you cringe. Sadly, there are a couple of things that caused me to have qualms with the film.

Tris Prior's character is a very interesting one, but it did not seem as complex as it could have. The screenwriters do not give her long or inspirational lines, most of her lines actually only consist of one word answers that became annoying very quickly. You look for more with her, but can only take what we can get from her actions and not her words. The acting is believable but not very emotional compared to Jennifer Lawrence's role as Katniss Everdeen. Katniss Everdeen didn't have many lines either but the emotions were always on her face to the



Photo Credits: Amanda V. Granberg

Macaulay and CSI alumnus David DiLillo stands on the red carpet for a photo before heading to a private screening of his film *Carnival Autumn*

was featured in the Opinions section of the New York Times. The film followed a fifteen-year-old boy, Glen Cioccarei and his father from Stanford, NY during an early morning hunting trip. This Opinion styled documentary focuses on how young teenage children are affected by family pressures and the culture of hunting.

The wide-variety of the films exhibited the time and attention dedicated toward detail by each artist. While *The Seagull* made use of beautiful Greek countryside, *Ladies Man* donated a calmer documentary centered around the life of a Jazz legend. Each film seemed to meet its polar opposite in the hour and a half screening session. *A Qui La Faute* played up a classy old film look and feel while *Cosplay: The Art of Self-Expression* made use of the vibrant colors of costumes and makeup. *Rice* revolved about a village's backbreaking efforts to plant, harvest, and sell produce but *Shanghai Gourmet* dissected the lifestyle of American-Chinese cuisine. The multitude of topics, emotions, and colors released

from each film truly gave the feeling of a festival. While viewers remained quiet throughout the screening, scenes from each film were occasionally punctuated with laughter, sighs, and gasps.

Amidst applause for every film, the evening concluded with Flynn addressing all the participants and viewers with thanks. Each production was lauded for its individualism but Flynn made sure to give respect to the collective effort as well.

"It's extremely difficult to even complete a film," added Flynn. "Just making a film is such a victory."

With that developed sense of victory, finalists, runner-ups, and grand prizewinners exited the stage for dessert, all congratulating each other for their hard work. Despite the competitive nature of CUFF, CUNY students still held the night in celebration of months of preparation, development, and editing.

For more information visit
macaulay.cuny.edu/community/cuff/films/

very last shot of the film. This is not the case for *Divergent*.

The special effects for the landscapes are amazing, very realistic, and breath-taking. But the special effects for the makeup are terrible. Dauntless is a group that trains by constantly fighting and getting beaten up to stay alive in order to keep from getting kicked out of the faction. There are scenes where Tris is suppose to be badly beaten from these one on one fights but the damage is very minimal and she still looks pretty and well kept. Mascara and eyeliner intact with maybe a bruise and a scratch. With a PG-13 rating, they could have made it more gory to be realistic. Despite the lack of goriness, this is a film that is masculine enough for guys to enjoy as well, not just the ladies.

Some things to look out for is the cliché love story with Tris and Four, played by Theo James, which grew from the typical teacher-student relationship. This is already played out in the recent film, *Vampire Academy*. The chemistry between Tris and Four however is more natural and intense than in *Hunger Games*. Also the male friends of Tris, (AI, Will, and Peter) all look very alike so keeping track of who is who

during the first watch of the film is somewhat difficult. They aren't very distinctive.

There is also the issue that Tris in the beginning is completely inexperienced in combat but by the end of the film she is an expert. We don't actually see this progression from novice to near professional. Out of nowhere, she becomes a talented gun shooter and fighter. At least we knew Katniss grows into her skill because of hunting.

The movie warns people of the dangers of conformity and shows that joining a faction is almost like joining a frat or sorority. Hazing and all.

Now that I have ended my rant, the best thing about the film is how it always puts you on edge. It constantly gives you that feeling of paranoia that someone could die or get hurt at any moment and that made it very exciting.

The sequel, *Insurgent*, is already in the works and is scheduled to be released in March 2015.

Divergent is definitely worth seeing with all its disappointments, even though it's not quite as great as *Hunger Games*. Next time, let's not jump the gun.

Metal Gear Solid Five: Ground Zeroes

Prologue or Tutorial? New MGS Enjoyable Not Essential

BY STEPHEN KLEIN

With *Ground Zeroes* said to be a prologue to the upcoming main installment, *The Phantom Pain*, *Metal Gear Solid V* starts off mildly rocky.

Of course, that's not to say that *Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain* will be bad by any stretch of the imagination. In fact, I think it will be phenomenal. I think it will be something very special.

I don't even think *Metal Gear Solid V: Ground Zeroes*, the prologue and first half of MGSV, is bad at all or deserving of any hate. I enjoyed playing it, at least most of the time. The problem is that there wasn't enough of it.

I have to admit that *Ground Zeroes* is extremely short and that there isn't much to the story either. *Metal Gear Solid* is usually known for its intricate yet incredible story, but here it's just straightforward. Straightforward stories aren't bad. Some would argue that *Metal Gear* has gotten too convoluted, but in *Ground Zeroes*, there's hardly any real story.

While it is very true that *Ground Zeroes* is only a prologue, it is in itself a separate game. This is a great tutorial for *The Phantom Pain* and its new mechanics. I'm just not sure if it's a great prologue.

Speaking of the game's new mechanics, the revamped stealth elements feel great. I could

probably go as far as saying that *Ground Zeroes* has all the makings of an open stealth simulator. However, I have to admit that previous *Metal Gear Solid* games such as *MGS4*, and even *MGS2* and *MGS3*, were not as punishing for getting caught.

I understand that *Metal Gear Solid* is first and foremost a stealth game, but for those less skilled at using stealth, I feel as though previous installments allowed you to be slightly action-oriented in your approach. In *Ground Zeroes*, if one guy spots you and he's not taken out right

away, a whole army comes after you and I found it extremely difficult to escape them afterwards. I'm embarrassed to say how many times I must have failed the game's only main mission or died trying.

Despite my mixed feelings about stripped action and increased difficulty, there is still a lot to love here even if it's all far from perfect. For instance, I love that they added a backstory in the main menu that explains what happened in *Peace Walker*. While I thoroughly enjoyed *Peace Walker*, I feel as though it wasn't exactly

as huge a hit as other installments. Even with the backstory, I still strongly recommend that you play *Peace Walker* if you haven't as I feel as though the backstory doesn't explain things that well or does the story justice, but it is better than nothing.

In addition, the voice acting is well done. Kiefer Sutherland is not bad at all as Snake, also known as Big Boss. The music is cool too and really gets you pumped, tense, and craving action.

One thing in particular that I truly can't fault at all would have to be the graphics. Played via my PS4, everything ran very smoothly and looked amazingly realistic. The new Fox Engine from Kojima Productions should do *The Phantom Pain* over very, very well.

Lastly, and this is extremely important, there is a lot of extra content unlocked once you beat *Ground Zeroes* and the main mission itself is certainly replayable especially if you want to experiment with the *Ground Zeroes* app for smartphones and tablets. I personally feel mixed on if the side content is that appealing or if I want to play the main mission over and over again, but the options are always there.

Ground Zeroes really is a good game overall. It really, really is. It's just short, difficult, and mildly unsatisfying. *Metal Gear Solid V: Ground Zeroes* receives an 8 out of 10.



Source: blog.games.com

The Fault in Our Stars Hits Theaters This June

An Instant Classic Brought to Life

BY VICTORIA PRIOLA

The Fault in Our Stars is one of John Green's bestselling novels. The story of how sixteen-year-old cancer patient Hazel Grace Lancaster and seventeen-year old ex-cancer patient and amputee Augustus Waters fall in love warmed the hearts of many. The two characters met in a cancer patient support group where they form a connection based on their similar sarcastic and witty personalities. They do not let their disabilities define them as people or as a couple.

Despite the fact that the odds are against them, Hazel and Augustus go on adventures and romantic dates, doing their best to make the most out of their lives. Although their time together is short, Hazel Grace describes their experience together as "forever within the numbered days," and "a little infinity."

Hazel and Augustus would make fun of couples who tell each other their love will always last. They knew with cancer in their lives they themselves will not always last. They instead say "okay" to each other as a sign of their significant bond. It may not last forever, but it will last as long as they both live and that is "okay" with them.

Any reader that gets a hold of *The Fault in Our Stars* cannot put it down. It leaves them wanting more as the chapters roll by. As Green wrote the book, he did have some concerns on how the broad audience would take to being exposed to how cancer really affects young

people.

"I thought a lot of sick kids would dislike it, maybe," said Green in an interview with Goodreads.com, "It's a very bold and strange thing to do as a healthy 34 year old man, to publish a book [written in the voice of] a 16 year old girl."

The risk he took was worth it in the end. Since its publishing in January of 2012, the book has grown in popularity throughout social media and bookstores around the world. This fast growing success was so great that it caught the eyes of major motion picture company, 20th Century Fox. John Boone will be directing the film for *The Fault in Our Stars*, coming out June 6. Before filming began in August 2013, the debate over which actor and actress would

take the leads as Hazel and Augustus were highly debatable. Once Shailene Woodley and Ansel Elgort were chosen as the faces of the movie, Green's readers had mixed reviews on the casting call.

Shailene Woodley, known for her lead role in the television series *The Secret Life of the American Teenager*, really dedicated herself to the role of Hazel Grace. Before filming, Woodley cut her long hair into a short bob in order to really get into character. Although the actress donated her hair to charity, this was not enough to save her from the overwhelming amount of fans who claim this casting call was just not acceptable.

Woodley herself does not match the persona of whom most readers thought Hazel

Grace would be. Reviews have stated that Woodley is too pretty to play Hazel. She has been portrayed as a happy-go-lucky "every boy is in love with me and that's my only problem" teenage girl in her past few roles. It is hard to picture her as taking this role seriously. As talented as she is, readers hope she makes their fan-base proud.

Viewers have not been exposed to Elgort yet. His last role was in the remake of *Carrie*, but other than that he's never had a real lead. He seems like an appropriate choice for Augustus but only time will tell.

Shailene Woodley and Ansel Elgort have both made a debut in the recent film *Divergent*. Is this a coincidence; probably not. The fear of the fans is that their beloved book will become so mainstreamed that the public will only go to see the film because of the lead actors and ignore the storyline. They have waited over two years for this book to become a movie. If it is going to be done it should be done right. Another actor making his way into the film is Nat Wolff, a child star from Nickelodeon's "The Naked Brothers Band" series. He will be playing Isaac, a friend of Augustus and Hazel's who is blind.

The Fault in Our Stars is said to be a tear-jerker. If it's anything like the book, it'll be a hit. No matter what the mixed reviews say, the movie is anticipated to do very well in the theaters. John Green fans now have something to look forward to this summer.



Source: wallpaperpassion.com

BANNER OPINIONS

The Exaggerated Importance of Your GPA

How Much Will an F in Math Hurt Your Career?

BY HADIATOU WANN

You've ditched recreation, stayed up for hours, days, weeks studying for a crucial exam. You take the exam and feel like you've overcome an avalanche. The exam finally makes its way onto your table with a big fat F artistically stamped on it. Don't you dare shed a tear because this does not mean your future will be a big fat failure.

After you've received that not-so-appealing grade, you try to calm your nerves, but as soon as you look over your shoulder, you notice that the person sitting behind you earned a big fat A. And then begins the process of comparison and self-sabotage.

"When I was in 10th grade, I received an F on my History exam," recalled Abdourahmane Sow, freshman at the College of Staten Island. "I felt like a failure, like if everyone else was better than me."

You begin to ask yourself how come your classmate(s) earned an appealing A and you didn't. Could it be that you're not smart enough and going to spend the rest of your life after college hanging out with a homeless guy until you "figure things out?" Or could it just be that you need some discipline, or better yet, anxiety pills?

Those who do not earn an A should receive help, not be ridiculed. Discipline, rather, is what a student needs in order to excel in his endeavor,



Photo Credit: lib.jjay.cuny.edu

ors, not a constant reminder from a professor about how the student had done poorly on previous exams.

Teachers are not hired to babysit students, but they certainly get paid to help students learn the material. It would be helpful if teachers started giving out as many uplifting words as they do bad grades. Something along the lines can be written next to every low grade, "you got a low grade on this exam, but don't worry you'll do better next time. Let's sit down and figure out what you need help with."

If this comes to pass, the student is aware that he did not do well, but does not beat himself up for it, because he knows that there's room for growth.

"I personally am a good, test-taker but I know people who are not, because they get nervous breakdowns," opined Oumou H. Cherif, a student at the University of Massachusetts, Boston currently pursuing a Bachelors of Science in human services. She added, "but that doesn't mean they aren't smart."

Exams can be very overwhelming. For those who get anxiety breakdowns just thinking about exams, it is not your fault if you've been bestowed with this symptom.

According to an article written by the University of Alabama's Center of Academic Success on "What Causes Test Anxiety," when these symptoms are present, basic thinking processes like remembering, analyzing, and problem solving are affected.

Our lives are inundated with labels and if we aren't careful, these labels can leave a dent on our self esteem, and possibly hold us back from reaching our highest potential.

A good studying method is also necessary. Some students simply need a better way of studying to better their chances of scoring high on an exam.

Furthermore, when students apply for jobs after graduating, potential employers will not look at their GPA alone. Other factors such as unique skills, personality, involvement in the community, experience play a key role in deciding whether an applicant is suitable for the position.

So, while grades are an imperative and help keep a record of students' performance throughout their academic year, it is also an imperative to note that grades do not define ones success, determination, perseverance and connections do.

Analysis of *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*

Trapped in the Elizabethan Closet

BY LARRY ZAKHARENKO

The real tragedy of Hamlet is that you didn't catch on sooner to the Prince of Denim and leather chaps. To be – or not to be gay, that is the question that brings Hamlet to his knees.

Considering GhostHunters' lack of evidence within medieval castles it can be assumed that ghosts do not exist. The "ghost" of King Hamlet may instead be a symbol for the fear and gossip that shrouds homosexuality.

The ghost of Prince Hamlet's father may represent outdated male stigma over how a father in that time would be disappointed to discover that his son is gay. And who is the one that first spots this ghost? It is Horatio, Prince Hamlet's gay lover, and it is only these two men who have ever seen the ghost.

Hamlet confesses to Horatio, "Give me that man that is not passion's slave, and I will wear him in my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart, as I do thee." Although straight men today express love for the bond between their closest friends, few admit to "wearing him in my heart's core."

Hamlet then says, "something too much of this," as if these feelings are too much for him and transcend the boundaries of friendship. It would make sense for Horatio to be Hamlet's lover because no one else stands so solemnly by his side, even in death.

Do not forget Ophelia, the young maiden

who practically throws herself at Hamlet every way she can before being rejected and throwing herself into a pond. Hamlet's cold-shoulder approach to Ophelia is not out of some "Jerks Get Laid" heterosexual handbook. It's because Ophelia doesn't have a penis.

Speaking of penis, when Laertes tries to defend his sister's honor, Hamlet decides to settle the argument with a "sword" fight – something that Frat boys secretly do after pounding down Natty Light.

So what is it that drives Hamlet to con-

spire and rebel against Claudius? Let me ask you this, who is the number one enemy of homosexuals? That's right, rednecks. Claudius married his brother's wife, styles his political control after Republicans, and hates plays (like the one put on by Hamlet.) On a scale of how redneck and conservative Claudius is, he would be South Carolina.

With a lack of a father figure and oppression from Claudius, Hamlet becomes confused about his own sexuality. But the scene in which Hamlet stabs Polonius is when things

really get weird. There is an awkward moment of anger and sexual frustration in which Hamlet holds down his mother over her bed, as if about to rape her. When he leaves her there and abandons the scene of the murder, Hamlet is in fact leaving behind his heterosexuality.

Polonius was someone that wanted to set up his daughter with Hamlet and conspired to send Hamlet to England, the way Christians send their children to Jesus Camps to scare the gay out of them. By vanquishing Polonius he has quelled all confusion and understands who he is. Unfortunately, Hamlet becomes more obsessed with hating Claudius than loving Horatio.

It is well speculated that Shakespeare has written about homosexuality before, and that he himself may have been gay. No matter how you interpret this tragedy, you cannot deny that Hamlet is a character who struggles with internal conflict, indecision, and moral friction.

Many men today struggle with coming out to the world or with finding support from a parental figure. Although Hamlet's reactions were dramatic, they weren't far off from interpreting how someone today would be feeling, (minus the Game of Thrones style ending.)

Now that Disney has finally represented a black princess, maybe this gay prince will be your child's next Disney classic.



Source: gogonzojournal.com

SEX AND THE ISLAND

How to Lose A Girl in Seven Ways

A Manly Interpretation of a Rom-Com

BY LARRY ZAKHARENKO

You got lost in New York City when you went to an IHOP for pancakes but it turned out to be an S&M dungeon that stood for "International House of Pain." This was expected of you, because you're someone who refers to Manhattan as "the city."

Your ignorance hurts more than whips or chains possibly could, so a dominatrix takes pity on you by name-dropping some places like she's the Roger Ebert of underground clubs. Flash forward through two bus rides and a game of guess the mystery flavor at a hotdog stand, and you're crammed into the Russian owned Dollhouse where drugs, vodka, and blondes are internationally imported.

"You see Her, the only one who is worth the artificial confidence flowing through your liver. She is living like it's the last minute of 1999, and you are her midnight escape."

You see Her, the only one who is worth the artificial confidence flowing through your liver. She is living like it's the last minute of 1999, and you are her midnight escape. In a club built to accommodate two-hundred patrons you are the anomaly of five-hundred who will chance to escort this Wilma and her Flintstone body back to Bedrock, where you hope to fulfill your need for the sensation of skin against skin before she wakes for a 9-to-5 in the Y2K.

You feed her Chernobyl state of mind with another White Russian to keep her hydrated, because the sweat that glistened on her skin is now soaking through her dress to reveal a red string thong.

Beneath the flashing of a strobe light vortex you attempt the mating ritual known as Twerking. She is pleased and reciprocates the Twerk.

This Helen of Troy, whose true name was an unheard whisper on shattered eardrums, is impatiently ready for your Trojan horse to breach her gates. The two of you abandon your post for a breath of fresh cigarette air. This cigarette leads to an anxiety ridden taxi ride.

This drive leads to her apartment where the cabbie's fare matches the rate of your pulse. She offers you sex, but she pronounces it "coffee." Maybe she's French? Your brain didn't have time to process this sooner because all engines were set to ogle the ass.

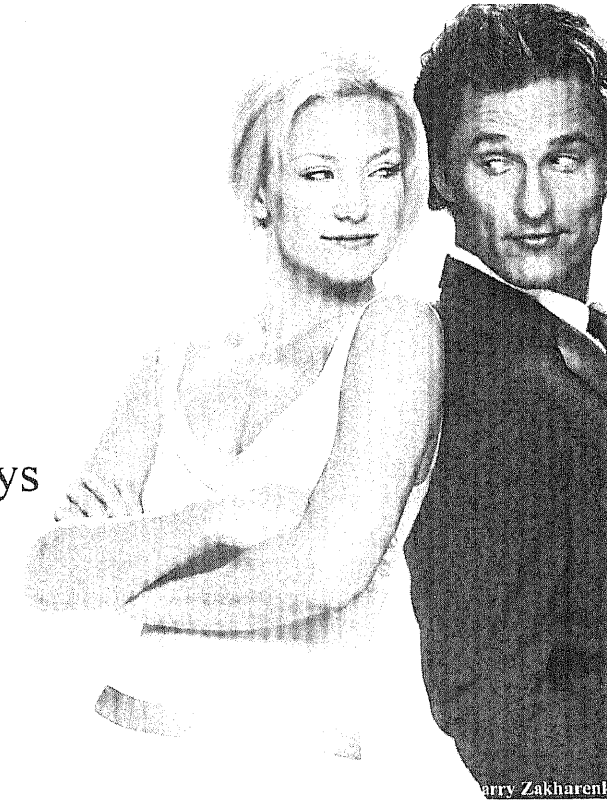
A week passes, and what was meant to be another notch in your belt of clichés has turned into the greatest exercise your thumbs have had since your ex was still a contact in your phone. You text her Hey's, K's, and

those awkward delays during your attempt at taking a flattering dick pic, until it's your one month anniversary at that Italian restaurant that looked fancy on Google Maps.

While shopping together against your will at Linens 'n Things, amidst your embarrassing pet names and her contagious laughter, you will feel a pleasant nausea in your chest cavity. In this moment between an isle of throw pillows and edible soap you are diagnosed with love. WebMD says it's not terminal.

You introduce her to the family on Thanksgiving dinner. When she is passing the mashed potatoes your mother will give her a backhanded compliment on her choice of makeup. You spend Christmas with her family and meet her racist grandma. Her Instagram

HOW TO LOSE A Girl In 7 Ways



by Zakharenko

The number one killer of relationships (besides STD's) is long distance relationships. Say that you have to move for work, school, or family, and that it would be healthier for her to move on to someone else. The hard part about this is living the lie. You will have to physically avoid her as much as possible. In the event she wants to "make it work," have no fear for there is beer.

Option three: Confess your addiction for alcohol. The imaginary AA program you're in requires you to cut ties with those

Option four: Develop an actual addiction to alcohol. The idea is that you become so disgusting and undesirable that she will do the breaking up for you.

Option five her like a Stage Five Clinger. Demand to be wherever she may be. Taking a poop? Not without you. Going on a lunch break? Table for two. Cling to her like the bad repertoire that clings to a neighborhood slut.

Option six means you're gay for dicks. Feign gayness and never look back. Say that you have found Jesus and he is a handsome five-foot-two Mexican in leather chaps.

Option seven won't get you into heaven. Feign death and bury all sense of morality with it. Have a friend or sibling pass on the news of your funeral being held in Yemen because your family overseas wanted to have a traditional burial. This shouldn't be used unless you're absolutely desperate.

But really, you should not use any of these excuses besides option one. If you're too afraid or in too much doubt to do something as simple as talk to your significant other about breaking up then consider how terrifying these ideas are. You don't need to be an alcoholic or dead to have a good excuse to be apart from someone close to you. It should be a basic human right to claim solitude from whoever you like.

"You don't need to be an alcoholic or dead to have a good excuse to be apart from someone close to you. It should be a basic human right to claim solitude from whoever you like."

"All is well until you can no longer balance a relationship with school and work, or a new life-depriving video game comes out, or you have an existentialist breakdown, or someone better comes along."

over your sunset wedding.

All is well until you can no longer balance a relationship with school and work, or a new life-depriving video game comes out, or you have an existentialist breakdown, or someone better comes along. You love Her, but you're not in love with Her. Now you need to break up without shattering her many vases of emotion like a bull in a Chinatown shop. This is how to lose that girl you care about in seven ways with no mess or spills.

Option one: Explain your need for space the way stars need distance to be appreciated without you burning to a cinder. If she has cut off diplomatic ties but assumes the relationship is still kosher, then she is in a stage of denial. Let her sleep on it before you make it Facebook official.

Option two: If your need for space didn't get across, then make some real space.

SPORTS

Dolphins Slay John Jay in Home Opener Softball Defeats Bloodhounds in Double Header

BY JESSICA PIFALO

The College of Staten Island Softball Team returned home after spring training in Florida to host the Bloodhounds of John Jay College on March 21, 2014 at the CSI Softball Complex. The defending CUNYAC Champions would show their dominance by trouncing the Bloodhounds in both games with scores of 8-0 in game one and 11-3 in game two.

Hitting the field in game one, the Dolphins were able to shut out the Bloodhounds with freshman pitcher Jacqueline Cautela, who threw a one-hitter tallying eight strikeouts. Cautela would show her dominance early in the game as she went one two three in the first three innings.

The Dolphins would get on the board early when Senior Victoria Procopio singled advancing Solari to second base and Smith to third when the

Bloodhounds would see themselves commit a throwing error, sending Solari to third and Smith to score as the Dolphins led the Bloodhounds 1-0 in the bottom of the first.

The Dolphins came up again and attacked when Christina Tufano singled, sending Solari and Procopio to score as the Dolphins extended their lead 3-0 in the bottom of the first inning.

The Dolphins capitalized on John Jay's poor fielding an inning later as the runs just kept pouring in. Sophomore Chyanne Gilliam would advance to first after another John Jay error. That's when Cautela slammed a triple to right field, sending Gilliam home to score, making the score 4-0. After Smith singled to shortstop, Gilliam would advance to score with Smith right after her as she stole second and third and would score unearned after a throwing error by John

Jay's pitcher, as the Bloodhounds would see themselves down 6-0 in the bottom of the second inning.

The Bloodhound's poor fielding continued through the bottom of the second as CSI drove in two more runs after Solari was able to get on base after an error by the Bloodhound's second baseman. Procopio added a double, advancing Solari to third base after yet another John Jay error. Tufano would seal the final two runs with a single to center field, sending Solari and Procopio to score as the Dolphins would finish the last two and a half innings scoreless but come out with the 8-0 victory.

Jumping into game two, Victoria Procopio was on the mound for the home squad as she kept a clean record through the first inning, until John Jay got their first run of the evening after a fielding error for the Dolphins. CSI was able to answer quickly in the bottom of the second inning when Maxine Jasko scored on a wild pitch, advancing Alyssa Setteducato to third base. Gilliam blasted a line drive as it went right past John Jay's third baseman, sending Setteducato to score. The Dolphins took control of game two from there, scoring four runs in the bottom of the fourth and another run in the top of the fifth.

With the win, the Dolphins are 5-4 overall and 2-0 in conference play. The Dolphins will hit the road to travel to Union, NJ to take on the Cougars of Kean University on March 22 in double-header action.



Photo Credit: Lucy Farfan-Narciss

Inside the Dolphin Tank

Meet Senior Softball Player Stefanie Solari

BY CLIFFORD MICHEL



Photo Credit: Clifford Michel

The Banner: How do you feel about the team's 5-4 start to the season?

Stephanie Solari: It's not a bad start, going 3 and 2 in Florida was definitely a good thing, and with the home opener taking two from John Jay and starting 2-0 in CUNYAC was good.

TB: What do you define as a successful 2014 season?

SS: Definitely winning the CUNYAC Championships again and hopefully getting our first ever NCAA tournament win.

TB: What is the hardest part of being a captain?

SS: You have to keep everybody in check and you have to be aware of your attitude and demeanor, and whatever I do everyone else will do. If I'm in a bad mood everyone will follow, but if I'm up and ready everyone will try to be up.

TB: How do you specifically prepare for games, do you have a pre-game ritual?

SS: Not really, before a game we do batting in the cages while warming up—you just need to stay loose and comfortable, that's the key.

TB: What was your favorite memory in softball?

SS: Probably winning my first CUNY tournament as a freshmen and then winning it again last year.

TB: How did you start playing softball?

SS: I originally started off as a soccer player when I was five, and then my dad suggested playing softball and I've been playing ever since.

TB: Why do you feel it's important for you to test yourself against so many out of conference teams?

SS: It's important because some of the teams in the CUNYAC aren't as strong as other teams like Montclair, Kean, and SUNY Cortland. So it's good to play better teams to prepare us for the bigger games down the road.

Men's Tennis Wins Over City College

BY MICHAEL PAPANDREA

CSI came back from their 0-3 Florida trip for their first home game of the season. The team came back with a vengeance as they defeated the City College of New York, 8-1. The matchup opened with a series of doubles matches played simultaneously across the court. The first team to finish was Ed Ruffe and James Chuenpratrum. The duo was able to Cruz to an 8-1 victory while another CSI pair soon followed.

Austin Kapetanakis and Jack Benjamin were able to shutout CCNY's Ahmed Sallem and Reswan Islam. The meeting seemed well in CSI's favor with one last doubles match being played on the first court. This time, the Dolphins would have to come from behind if they wanted to sweep doubles.

CSI swimmer and tennis player, Timur Shamuradov and captain Dan Ursomanno would find themselves down against the Beavers' Michael Arrias and David Arroyave. Early in the match, with just one referee monitoring the action for all the matchups at once, CCNY would go on to make a questionable call on Ursomanno's serve.

"Outside?" Ursomanno asked the CCNY player after he casually didn't play the ball. The home audience disagreed with the call and CSI would go into a mini funk. Ursomanno had a series of shots that hit the net as they fell behind. With the help of Shamuradov's powerful serves

and returns, Ursomanno would turn it around and play smoothly close to the net. They would score 8 of 9 final points to cap off the win.

Afterwards, the players split up to play singles matches where CSI would keep the pressure on. Joel Youngberry, Ursomanno, Kapetanakis, Ruffe, and Chuenpratrum would all collect wins in singles action. CCNY's only win came against Shamuradov, but by that time CSI had the match won. While the Dolphins knew they played strong, some credit did go to the windy conditions that CSI has grown accustomed to. The wind helped them to chip and slice the ball to keep their opponents off guard.

"The wind doesn't effect our team that much. We're out here all the time, hitting, playing, and we use it to our advantage. Teams come out here and they have no idea what they're doing," said

Ed Ruffe. "Seriously, they don't and we come out and just take the wind to our advantage."

Another thing to note was the lone senior, Ursomanno, playing in his final first home game. The team captain has played in many big matches for CSI over the years, including last years CUNYAC finals match which was lost to Baruch. CSI has never won the CUNYAC but they are hoping to change that this year.

"Dans the captain, he is the leader. When we are all down he picks us up," said Ruffe. "It's his last year as a senior and we all wanna make sure that all of us on the team are gonna win a championship and it's for him because he dedicates so many man hours and time and cancels his schedule to come help us. Hopefully when we are holding that CUNY championship we are holding him on our shoulders."



Photo Credit: Clifford Michel