

THE BANNER

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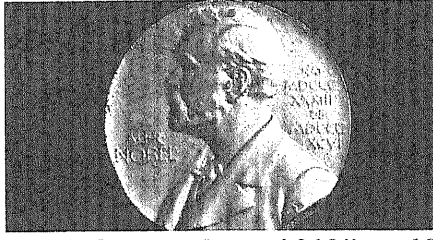
Issue #4



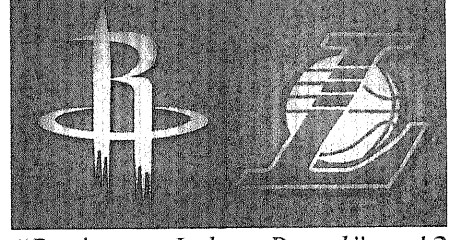
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Student Government Plans to Make Reallocations of CSI's Funding

A New Proposal for the Aging Student Activity Fee

BY: VICTORIA IFATUSIN

Christopher Sorensen, Commissioner of Finance for the Student Government (SG) at the College of Staten Island has produced a proposal to reallocate the funds provided to earmark groups at CSI.

The Commissioner of Finance, Senior Senator for SG, and Senior Nursing stu-

dent has had experience with fees in the past, as he used to serve on the CSI Association as a student board member, and last year, as an Upper Division Board member.

He found certain "trends" that are believed to be detrimental to students and the campus community, leading to a proposition as to how the Student Activity Fee

(SAF) would be spent.

Sorensen saw that earmark groups – groups that receive funding from SAF, such as Athletics, Clubs and Organizations, Health and Wellness, etc. – would eventually have budget cuts by the next academic year, since "the amount that they're receiving from SAF is no longer

keeping pace with the expenses of such earmark groups," according to Sorensen.

The money received by the earmark groups depends on the student's involvement in the college, as part-time students pay less because "they are not on campus as much and are not receiving as much of the services" compared to full-time students.

Thus, as the money they receive is supposed to be used for the benefit of the students, some earmark groups don't use all the money, provoking surpluses of funds that had not been utilized, when other groups lack funds, causing a demand for it.

After realizing this, Sorensen decided to assemble a committee of four senators and two students – the Finance Commission of the Student Government – that would supervise the entire Student Activity Fee.

Therefore, according to Sorensen, he and his commission decided it would be best to "identify those groups and try to do a reallocation of the Student Activity Fee from groups that are underspending theirs to ones that require additional funding based on need."

For example, the residents of Dolphin Cove, CSI's residence halls, depend on the Health and Wellness Center; which gener-

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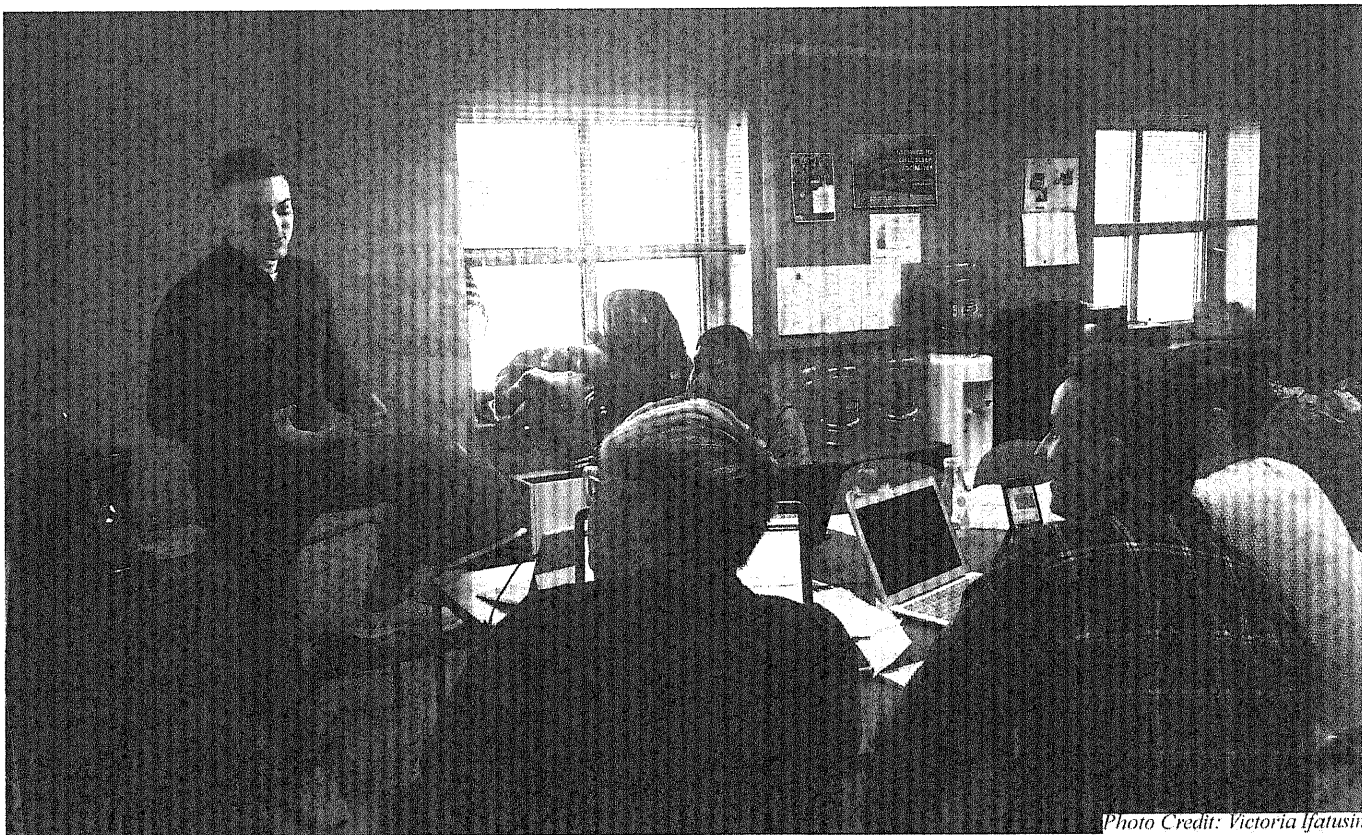


Photo Credit: Victoria Ifatusin

An Old CSI Journal Brought Back to Life with a New Message

All Ways A Feminist Is Open to All Genders

BY: SALVATORE CENTO

Rebecca Ritz, a student activist in her senior year at CSI, as well as a former activist in the Women's Center, is reviving a 30-year old publication with hopes of encouraging a fresh, new message about feminism.

In conjunction with Lori Lambertson, another fellow student, who obtained a scholarship from the Woman's Center for being a single mother, both are inspired and motivated to expand on ideas of feminism with a second iteration of the for-

merly named feminist-centric journal, "All Ways A Woman."

While Ritz made it known that neither her nor Lambertson never disliked the prior name of the publication, the words ultimately sent a specific message across that doesn't necessarily resonate with our modern audience.

For instance, the pair believe that the current generation is filled with feminists that come from all backgrounds.

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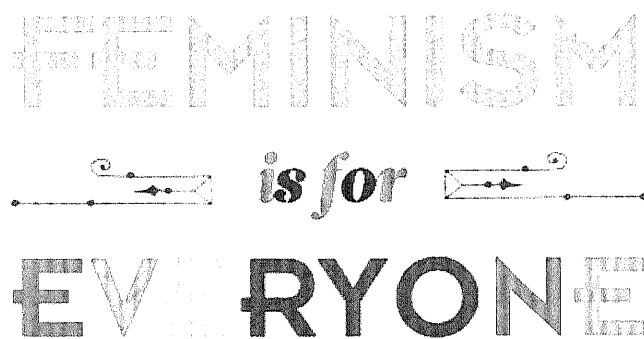


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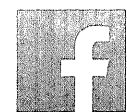
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BANNER POLITICS

Bloomberg's Return to the Democrats Might Mean a 2020 Presidential Run

Rumors of the CEO's Presidential Run Emerge as He Re-joins Democratic Party

BY: RUBEN SIBRI

Former Mayor Michael Bloomberg is making headlines in the political sphere as a possible Democratic candidate for the 2020 presidential race. Bloomberg served three terms as the Mayor of New York City under the Republican party.

Before he campaigned for Mayor and won, he was a registered Democrat for most of his life. After his third term he shifted to an Independent and remained that way until just recently.

On October 10th, he announced online that he re-registered as a Democrat "because we need Democrats to provide the checks and balance our nation so badly

needs." (@mikebloomberg ig).

The CEO of Bloomberg L.P. has been critical of President Trump and the Republican Party in the last couple of years. "I'm just way away from where the Republican party is today," he told the New York Times back in September.

He's also not unfamiliar with the idea of becoming a candidate on the Presidential ticket. In 2016 he opted out of the idea, fearing that running as a then Independent would split the Electoral College up, resulting in a vote for an extremist.

Progressive Democrats haven't taken too well to this possible news, believing Bloomberg's time is way past due. With

a "blue wave" of a wider variety of people running as Democrats for all levels of government, the white seventy year old billionaire isn't the savior they seek.

Even if it's only for the press, Bloomberg insists his focus right now is on the midterms coming up in November. He's in talks with Democratic leaders and his goal is to flip the house in favor of the Democrats.

Despite all this, Bloomberg's views are still mid-center and not progressive enough for the party to seriously consider him a candidate. Bloomberg still defends his "Stop and Frisk" policy that emerged during his time in office. The policy allows for the NYPD to question or detain civilians that are suspicious of crime.

Criticized for having a racial disparity against Blacks and Latinos, Bloomberg states that 'Stop and Frisk' has nothing to do with race but was about decreasing crime. He is also critical of the Democrats' views on big business and is more in line with the Republicans' support of them.

He used Charlie Rose, an ex news anchor with harassment allegations, to express his doubts of the #MeToo Movement. Several women came out against the anchor and he's been outcasted, yet Bloomberg wasn't sure what to believe.

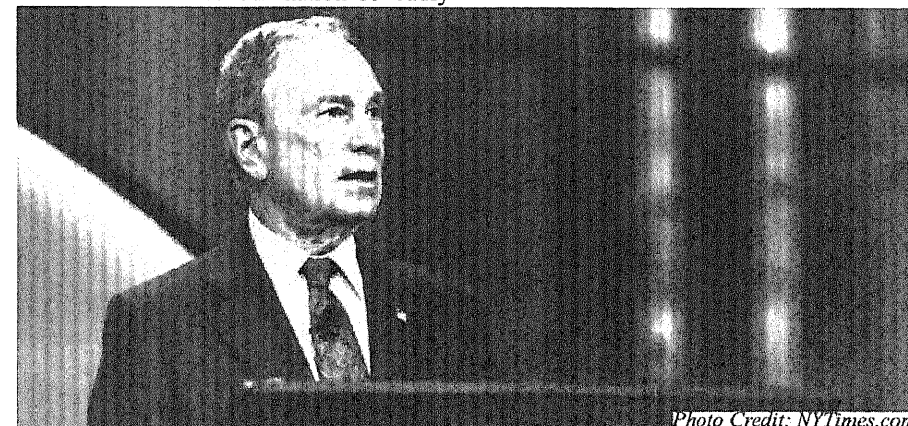
Democrats were outspoken about their support for victims during this time last year when the movement really took off. Bloomberg's attempt at a nomination would certainly be a bit awkward for him with the prevalence of the #MeToo Movement.

With midterms so close he is certainly receiving support for the money he is donating to candidates. He is pouring millions upon millions into the Democratic agenda in the last couple of days.

As of right now, Bloomberg has not confirmed any actual plans to run. Although most places have reported on a presidential run for the billionaire, these are nothing more than rumors.

However, a run would definitely explain his pledge earlier this year of over \$80 million to the Democratic Party. His continuous support for a party, despite not being part of it for almost twenty years, also explains this.

Bloomberg's drive for a better environment and public wellness on top of his long political career certainly make him someone to keep eyes on in the next year. For now it's safe to assume anything is possible for the 2020 election for both major parties, although some things are less probable.



Bloomberg announced his return to the Democrats via Instagram on Wednesday, October 10th. Photo Credit: NYTimes.com

Why Michael Avenatti Shouldn't be the Democratic Nominee in 2020

Stormy Daniels' Lawyer Would Only Deepen the Divide in Our Country

BY: GEORGE BURKERT

With the 2018 midterms ending and 2020 presidential election coming up, many Democratic hopefuls are being thrown in the mix like Senator Cory Booker, Senator Kamala Harris, former Vice President Joe Biden, and former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

Another prominent name being mentioned for the presidency is Stormy Daniels' lawyer, Michael Avenatti.

Avenatti has turned into a liberal celebrity this past year. He is best known for filing a lawsuit against President Trump, who gave a 2016 non-disclosure agreement to Daniels for the alleged affair they had.

He also appears on CNN and uses Twitter to speak out against Trump and his political beliefs. People on the right mock Avenatti, including Tucker Carlson from Tucker Carlson Tonight, who has nicknamed Avenatti the "Creepy Porn Lawyer."

The attorney has been hinting at running for president in 2020, which would not be a surprise since Trump's victory in 2016 proved that anyone who runs for president has a chance even if he or she isn't a politician.

If Avenatti was the Democratic nominee for 2020, it would be the worst thing to happen in recent years to the Democrats who are looking to take back the White House.

This is not because he represents a porn star or has become an easy target to mock and make memes out of, but because it would seem hypocritical on the part of the Democrats.

Avenatti would become the Demo-

crats' version of President Trump. While Avenatti is not as controversial as Trump and not accused of racism and sexism, he is no politician and is not afraid to speak his mind.

He encourages Democrats to hit harder when Republicans stoop low, contradicting former First Lady Michelle Obama's phrase, "when they go low, we go high."

Avenatti is brash and not afraid to antagonize his opponents, similar to Trump. Avenatti also uses Twitter to take swipes at his opponents, including the President, who gets criticized for his tweets and other controversial posts.

President Trump has faced controversy for not revealing his tax returns. A recent New York Times article said Trump's parents helped him pay fewer taxes than he should have.

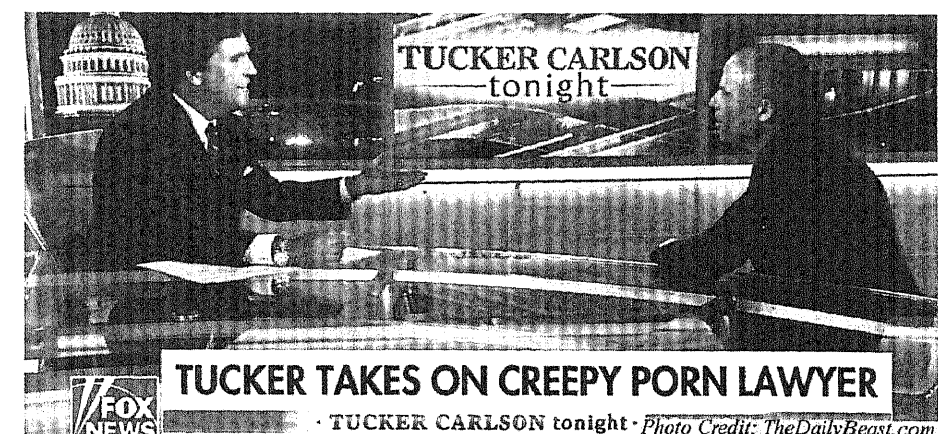
Avenatti is also not free from tax controversy, with his firm having to pay the IRS \$800,000 in unpaid payroll taxes.

According to the "Atlantic Reporter," when asked if he would release his tax returns, Avenatti said he hasn't decided, and turned attention to Trump who has still not revealed his tax returns.

Just how Trump divided the Republican party during the 2016 election, Avenatti could divide the Democratic party.

If the Democrats are serious about preventing a second Trump term, they should unite under a candidate that wants to bring not only Democrats together, but also Independents and Republicans.

Avenatti has already shown on Twitter that he's not afraid to go after Democratic Senators he feels are not doing enough. During the Brett Kavanaugh hearings, he



Avenatti has become a target for Fox News Host Tucker Carlson. Photo Credit: TheDailyBeast.com

slammed Booker and Harris for not fighting like he does.

Some Democrats believe Avenatti was the reason the allegations against Justice Kavanaugh were not taken seriously and turned into a media circus.

Avenatti represented the third Kavanaugh accuser, Julie Swetnick, who accused Kavanaugh of being involved in gang rape and sexually assaulting her.

Members of liberal media sources thought the claims were bizarre and not as credible as the other accusers because Swetnick made changes to her original accusation, and past incidents involving her were leaked.

The debates between Avenatti and Trump can get intense, with more name calling and less policy talk, and even nastier than when Clinton debated Trump.

This will leave a bad taste in the mouths of the majority of Americans who are still unsatisfied with the 2016 presidential candidates. An Avenatti presidency

would ultimately make America more divided than it is right now.

Recently, Avenatti has challenged the president's son, Donald Trump Jr., to an MMA fight. This is comparable to some of the violence President Trump is often accused of promoting at his rallies.

Avenatti has also predicted that Donald Trump Jr. will be indicted by the end of the year. His desire to lock up members of the president's family is similar to how Trump encouraged the arrest of Secretary Clinton by chanting "Lock Her Up" during his rallies.

An Avenatti campaign would open the doors to the transgressive side of the Democratic party, similar to how Trump opened the doors to a transgressive Republican party.

While Democrats have accused Trump and the Republican party of many misdeeds, their nomination and support of Avenatti for the presidency would be hypocritical.

BANNER NEWS

"Student Government Plans"
Continued from Front Page

ates demand from them in order to provide services to students. Whereas, other earmark groups may not have a demand, but rather a surplus that other groups need. Compared to three years ago, Sorensen said, "students received an increase in the Student Activity Fee of \$40 for full and part-time students and \$10 for summer students per session."

Sorensen said it would be easier to do the same and increase the SAF, causing students to pay more, but this is something they would rather avoid.

"We want to take a step back, look at the fee that the students are already paying and see if we can better manage it to meet the needs of the students."

However, Sorensen and his Committee are and will be facing various obstacles along the process of executing their plan.

As mentioned earlier, there was an increase in SAF three years ago, although "it did not affect any of the pre-existing earmark groups," says Sorensen, but it instead added a new earmark group, Transportation, and the increase from the funds then solely went to Transportation's fee.

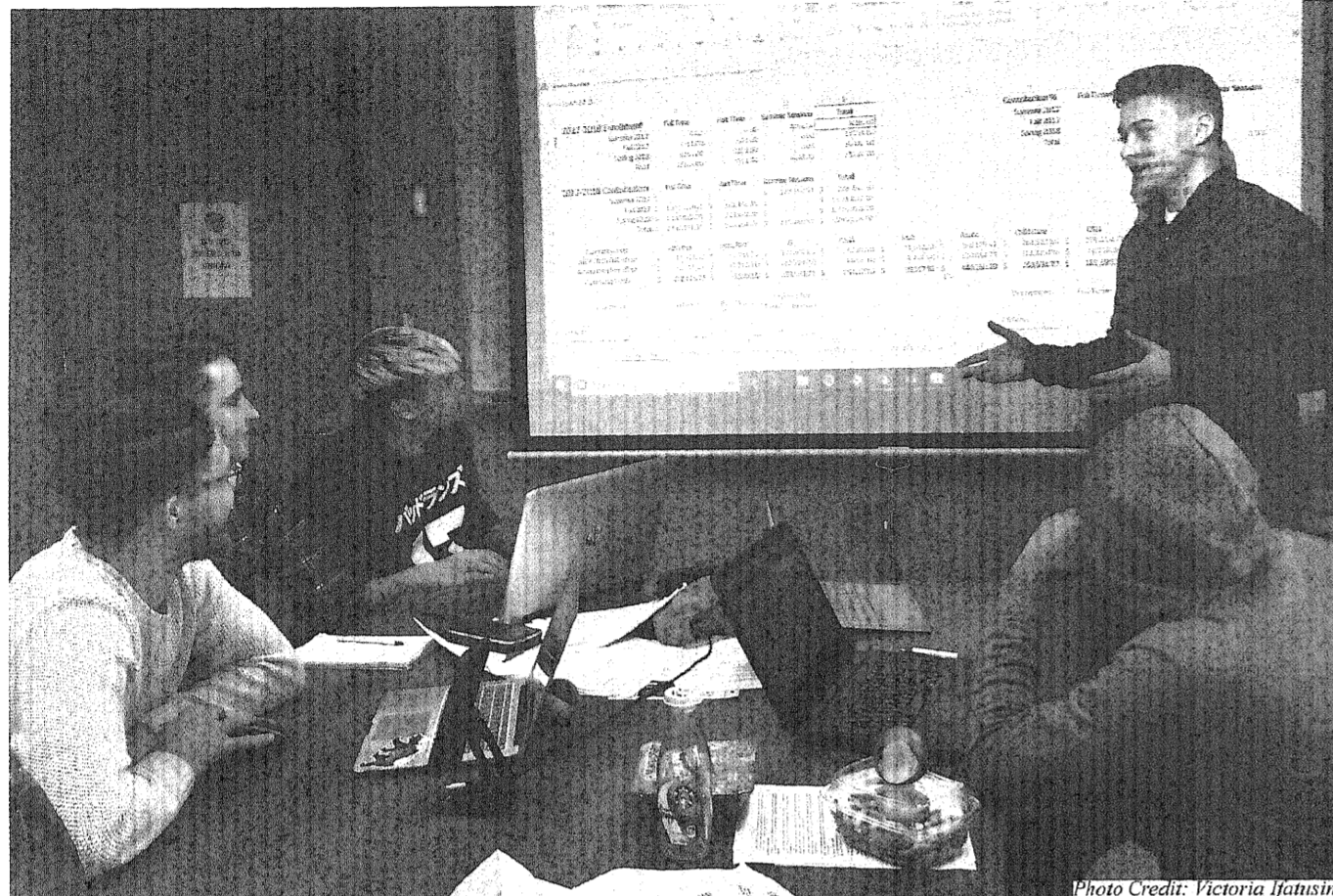
Due to the ten-year-old funding, the groups can no longer base off of it because of the various inflationary adjustments that normally occurs.

"The fee is aging," said Sorensen. "It's not really designed to operate ten years in the future."

So, how will this plan be executed? "We are going to be looking at all the earmark groups that are part of this, and we've combed through all their budgets and identified items and questions which we then brought to the executive directors of those groups or the student body that run it."

Sorensen mentioned that they have received answers to their questions, "fact-finding the needs of these different groups" and are putting information into a spreadsheet that he and the committee have created.

They began looking over it Thursday



Student Government Commissioner of Finance, Christopher Sorensen, and his Finance Commission team discussing their proposal.

afternoon on the 18th of October, at 3 PM.

It occurred to them that some groups "continually add to their surplus which means they spend less money than they take in," said Sorensen.

This produces a problem as students who are taxed eventually graduate and don't get the full value of their fee if such group didn't spend it all during that year.

Not using the student's money would prevent having to increase the fee and he advises earmark groups to work together in planning without causing a fiscal load on the students with the fee.

Other issues do come up, as Sorensen mentions the cutting of the transportation services by "25, 30%."

As the total budget of transportation is around \$1.6 million, according to Sorensen, students are already paying \$1.1

million of the fee, leaving \$500,000. The cut led to the removal of \$300,000, leaving them with \$200,000. The college thus pays \$200,000, while the students pay the majority of \$1.1 million.

Understandable, but debatable, as Sorensen saw this as "unfair."

"They hurt the students and they took the savings on their end, especially when there are other issues that the savings could go towards."

Also, there is only one representative for Transportation, which is a bother to Sorensen. This means that there is only one student voice and vote within this earmark group.

The current allocation of SAF also affects the payment of staff, for example, the earmark Association, which consists of compliance, accounting, resources, and

payroll. "Their primary function is to help administer this fee for all these earmark groups."

Any bill that is paid by an earmark group is forwarded to Association and it is from there that it will be taken care of.

The issue arose when commencement fees were added to the budget, including the payment of cap and gowns, rental of chairs, degree frames, and so on, adding up to \$85,000.

Along with this fee, the cost of wages causes a turnover as Association is no longer able to provide competitive wages. People quit the job and leading a new staff ends up costing more money.

"That now costs the students more because now instead of that accountant doing their work," Sorensen mentions, "There's going to be a period of time in which we have to train that accountant before they can get back into their work."

Sorensen does anticipate another issue - "a disagreement or a lack of understanding."

"When you reallocate, you suffer from the fact that something's coming from somebody. In doing this, we're recognizing that at some point, somebody's going to be upset."

Yet, despite the failure for some earmark groups to understand, Sorensen sticks to targeting the wellbeing of the students.

"We know that some people may be upset with the plan or the suggestions that we put forward but the mission and the goal of it is to benefit as many students as possible. That's the vision in mind and the principle we're going to try to stick with."

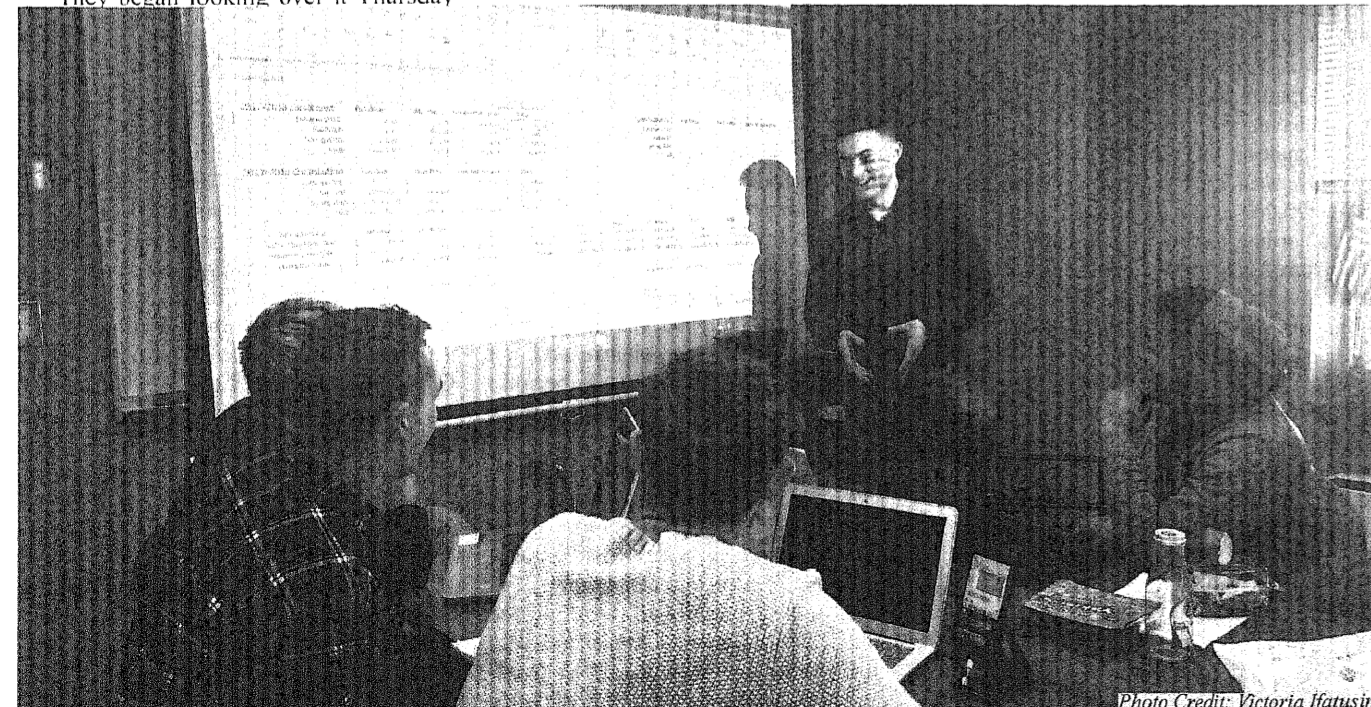


Photo Credit: Victoria Ifatusin

BANNER NEWS

"An Old CSI Journal Brought Back to Life"
Continued from Front Page

"The old title put more emphasis on it being a woman's only publication, and this is a feminist publication. Feminists come in all genders," Ritz says.

First being released to students here at CSI in the late eighties by a group of like-minded feminists, Ritz said that her partner, Lambertson was contacted by Robert King Kee of the Student Publication Office that a feminist based printing was once again warranted by a collective group of students.

"This is so important for both of us," Ritz notes.

"We both have great visions for this project and I think that there's so many amazing perspectives that students have. I believe that this is something that needs to be put to the forefront."

The second coming of the yet to be titled journal will be "gender inclusive", according to Ritz, "Male feminists offer a great perspective, even those who are just being introduced into the movement."

The flyers posted around CSI campus call all feminists to the front line, but various other groups and perspectives are also



Photo Credit: Forwomen.org

very much needed.

"We actually have someone coming from the Licensed Mental Health Counseling Center, who's going to offer a psychological perspective and talk about feminism within the field of parenting, which I didn't even think about" Ritz explains.

"Other than that, Lori and I are looking for people from different social backgrounds, one of them being the LGBTQ+ community, of course."

The first edition will be a much broader view on the current topics that circulate around and touch upon everything within

the feminist motion.

But as time progresses and more printings are released, the pair hope for the upcoming issues to become theme based.

"We have so many possible avenues to go down; from origins on how people found their way here, to domestic violence, sexuality, gender identity, even men in feminism and men's issues as well," Ritz says.

Even though a release date could either be the end of this semester or the beginning of next, because of a missed deadline with the school board, the two founders have found a creative way to work around that when it comes to getting the journal into people's hands.

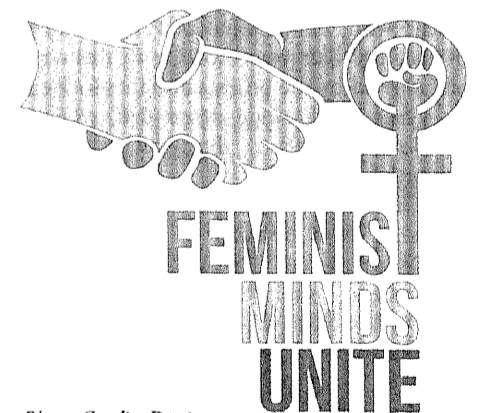


Photo Credit: Deviantart.com

As it shows that they are leaving old names behind, Ritz and Lambertson don't mind looking at their predecessors way of promoting the work.

"We're going to do the marketing, DIY style by handing them out to students walking around campus, just like they did in the nineties."

In describing the possible future, as well as the possible slogan that will unite all of the writers and illustrators that encompass the evolved, second form of "All Ways A Woman", Ritz had this to say: "This is who we are, these are the students on your campus. Let's show you the variety of all the amazing people we have."

Photo Credit: Theodysseyonline.com



Both men and women can participate in female empowerment.

LIFESTYLES

The Glitz and Glam to Becoming a Beauty Influencer

BY: ROSEANNE CASSAR

Ever wonder who are the people behind the YouTube video tutorials and vloggers? They are ordinary people just like you and I, but they decided to take their talent one step further.

These influencers found a way to target and catch their audiences.

They figured that posting videos and writing about their talents would give them a tremendous gain in the internet world. This leap of faith has given a few influencers a leg-up in landing their dream jobs and created partnerships with name brand companies. So, what is a beauty influencer?

A beauty influencer is a marketing tactic. According to the marketing website Izea.com, this is defined as, "a social media user with a significant and engaged following endorsing specific makeup and beauty brands through shareable and digital content."

BusinessDictionary.com says an influencer is a person, "who has the power to affect purchase decisions of others because of his/her authority, knowledge, position or relationship with his/her audience." On social media, there is a term called, "influence marketing."

Wikipedia.com states that influence marketing is a "form of marketing in which focus is placed on influential people

rather than the target market as a whole." There are seven habits that you can follow to become an influencer.

One good habit to follow is to believe in yourself. Another habit is to treat people with respect. It's true that actions speak louder than words.

Thirdly, you should be genuine. A fourth habit is to show interest in others. Also, always speak politely.

The sixth habit is to smile. Also, don't forget to be helpful. These are really good



Who's your favorite?

habits to keep in mind and follow if you plan on becoming an influencer on social media.

What does it mean to be an influential person? A positive influencer will want to create a video and express how they feel about the scenario.

They can also share their own experiences about what they went through. The key is to post your YouTube videos and vlogs on a positive note.

Keeping your attitude positive and

showing off your talent in a realistic way.

By doing this, it will help you to gradually gain plenty of followers on every social media network you are using to attract your target audience.

If ever you decide to become a positive influence for yourself or for others, all you have to do is follow these seven uncommon ways to lead people in the right direction.

Rule one is to respond, don't react. Next, you should remain neutral and objective when things go wrong. Another suggestion is to be honest about your emotions but also learn to reign them.

The fourth rule is to show that you are glad for others. Also, it is important for you to be strong for others. You should also choose to be happy.

And last but not least, you should intend your day. These tips should be used as your guide line for success. You can even heighten these tips in your own way and turn them into skills that can lead you in the direction of an influential leader.

All of these tips can be useful when you are demonstrating yourself through video or vlogging on social media when showing people the newest trends that are going on to help others keep up with what's popular.

Get Into the Essence of a Dream Journal

Should You be Keeping a Dream Journal?

BY: NADIA DIAZ

Running through the tall grassy meadows filled with dandelions and chrysanthemums, my hair was blowing in the wind and carried by the bright sunlight. Suddenly, a huge dark cloud descended over the meadow and with it, the wind picked up strength.

But then my eyes shot open, realizing it was all just a dream.

Dreams occur during the REM stage of our sleep, usually when brain activity is high and signals are sent to the spinal cord to make our bodies minimize movement during the sleep stage.

Keeping a dream journal is an interesting and unique hobby to get into.

Waking up daily to write what one has dreamed can be beneficial.

The dreams could be interpreted to mean something or, they might not even mean anything at all. It all depends on how the individual wishes to interpret the dream.

The beliefs of Sigmund Freud were that dreams are based off of the unconscious part of the brain; thoughts that one may not even be aware of.

Freud also believed that dreams were the unaccomplished wishes that an individual has.

Keeping a dream journal and writing down the smallest details that may not seem significant, such as how well your sleep was, or any feelings you may have felt, is more important than you actually think.

There could be a pattern that can start to show that can relieve what is going on in one's life.

Dreams can sometimes explain things about ourselves. As time goes on, when writing in a dream journal, it's possible that one can make connections between dreams and real life circumstances.

A dream journal may not work for everyone; each individual is different and therefore, can have a different experience.

A possible outcome of keeping a dream journal over time is that it can lead to lucid dreaming.

This is a state in which the individual is aware of the dream that is occurring at the moment it is happening.

How interesting would it be if one could have a lucid dream and be able to control anything that goes on?

To keep a dream journal, one must stay on track in writing your dreams as soon as you wake up. In my personal experience, keeping a dream journal didn't work out so well due to other factors, such as a busy schedule.

Also, not taking the task seriously enough can cause you to lose track of your dreams.

But you can always start the process again in keeping a dream journal even if you don't have any dreams. To start out, you can just write about the quality of your sleep.

Imagination is something that can stem from a dream. A flow of creativity can emerge from recording dreams, and if you really want to get the creativity stirring,

you can even title the dreams.

Dream journals can be a creative and interesting writing experience for many who wish to view it as a fun concept for writing down dreams.

All one needs to do is either keep a journal or a pad on the side of your bed with a pen.

When you are about to start an entry, you should write the date and time it has occurred, and when you're about to start writing about it.



Record even the smallest details in your dream journal.

Write down what you dreamt, everything you can remember, even if it is the smallest of details.

You can even add little notes in the margins or whatever you are thinking in the moment, whether its about the dream or other things wandering around in your mind.

There is no specific time or date when to start a dream journal. The perfect time is now to start writing down your dreams.

LIFESTYLES

Beauty Hacks 101: DIY Moisturizing Masks

Brighten Up Your Under Eye with Some Affordable Beauty Hacks

BY: LEAH OLIVER

Who wants to spend \$200 on face peels and eye creams? Buying beauty products, especially ones for skin care, can rack up in cost.

The best option is to make it yourself

and saving money. Late nights writing papers and studying for tests can cause bags under the eye.

No need to be ashamed, we all get dark spots. A good and quick fix is to use turmeric and buttermilk.



Photo Credit: Forhomemedies.com

There are many natural and easy ways to look and feel beautiful.

The best way to make the mixture is to add the turmeric to buttermilk. This type of milk tends to be thicker than most.

After, the mixture will turn porous, also it should not be too viscous. Once completed, you can store the mask in the fridge for future use.

It is recommended only preserving the mixture for 5 days. Applying under the eye especially when dry, moisture may create a tingling or stinging sensation depending on skin type.

Being that turmeric is a spice you may feel a bit of mild spiciness under the eye. If there is intense burning remove the mask quickly.

Turmeric and lemon juice are another option as an applicant mixture. Turmeric can also be used for dark spots from blemishes.

These two masks can be left on for 10-15 minutes then rinse. Aloe vera and carrot blended together with one egg white is also great for dark spots and moisture formed under the eye.

It is suggested to use natural aloe vera since pure gel leads to better and faster results than a gel that is not completely fresh.

Exact measurements: one teaspoon of aloe vera and one tablespoon of shredded carrot.

The mixture should be frothy upon applying. This mask can be left under the eyes for 15-30 minutes; can be refrigerated for further use no more than 5 days.

The eye mask should be rinsed off with cool or lukewarm water; though cool water is better.

My go-to face mask is the banana and honey mask. This is great for oily skin or simply for a shine free T-zone. Two tablespoons of honey and one ripe banana mixed thoroughly will do the trick.

The mask hydrates the skin while reducing shine from oil. Cucumber blended with aloe vera is also great for hydrating dry skin.

A half of a cucumber cut into slices and two tablespoons of aloe vera is sufficient. A smooth blend of this is best suitable for face application.

Make your way to the produce section to get your skin right and age-free for the winter.

A Friendly Reminder From your Local Nature Guide: Go Take a Hike!

Explore The Trails of Staten Island's Greenbelt

BY: PHILIP SANZONE

Hiking is a good and easy way to stay healthy. Also, it's fun to do during the summer and winter months.

You don't even have to leave the borough. On the Greenbelt alone, Staten Island has six different trails. It contains beautiful and refreshing sceneries that whisk you away from the tribulations that come from school or work.

Plus, there is a plethora of interesting and diverse plants like red/black oaks and tulips as well as common hickory and beech trees. There are even red maple, swamp oak, and willow trees. And if you're lucky, you might even spot sweet gum trees along the trail.

Woodland trails are color coded. One trail is called the Blue Trails. It is considered to be of easy-to-medium difficulty and stretches 12.3 miles from Staten Island Boulevard to Todt Hill. According to Sigreenbelt.org, it is also the farthest point on the Eastern seaboard between Maine and Florida.

Another trail is called the White Trail, which is considered to be the same difficulty as the Blue Trail, but runs at a length of 7.6 miles long. Starting on the southern part of the Greenbelt, it is connected to Great Kills Park. At the halfway point you'll be met by the Greenbelt Nature Center, which is a good place for a quick

and relaxing break.

Then there's the Red Trail that is considered to be of medium-to-hard difficulty. It is 4 miles long and loops around the heart of the Greenbelt. This trail also has an extension going down hill to Historic Richmond Town near St. Patrick's Place.

The Yellow Trail is the same as the Red Trail in level of difficulty. However, compared to the Red Trail, it is 4 miles longer. Some areas visible on the Blue Trail will be visible on the Yellow Trail. The Greenbelt also has two more trails, but they aren't color-coded.

Easy is mainly made of flat grounds while medium is similar, but it has slightly elevated hills. Hard is mainly hilly grounds but also contains some of the same features from the other levels.

Along the trails, there are also Canadian mayflowers, trout lilies, and wild violets. You might even notice chipmunks, moles, and a diverse selection of songbirds. Red and white-tailed hawks are also seen in the area.

During the springtime you'll hear spring peepers marking the beginning of the spring season with their chirps. The terrain is perfect for new hikers of all ages. Plus, there is also a trail that is good for children, known as the E Trail.

They also have a multi-purpose trail, which is completely different from the

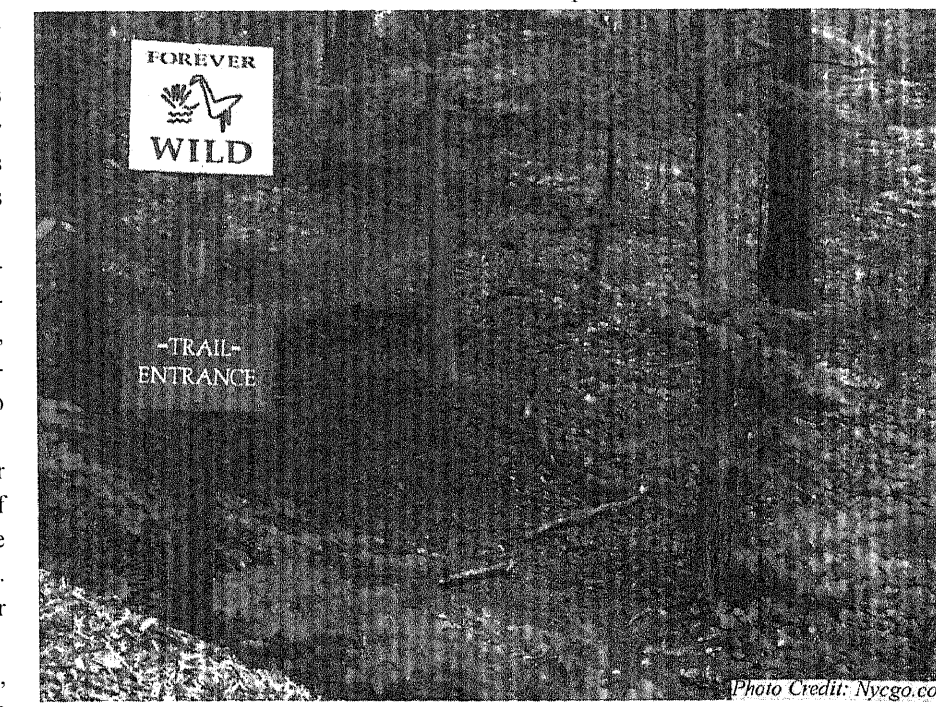
others mentioned. It has refurbished pedestrian walkways as well as bike lines. It won't give you a big leg day workout, but it does give a relaxing and fun experience for people that want to bike ride or hike with their kids.

The trail is made of crushed gravel and is six feet wide, making the trail more comfortable to walk on. The trail has been a perfect tool used by runners, walkers, and cyclists. It was also used for the Green Belt's annual Cold Feet 10K race back in

February.

And that's it for the trails of the Staten Island Greenbelt. Don't forget that there are even more trails on Staten Island that you can find just by searching online. There are also amazing trails in upstate New York that are worth exploring, such as Pillsbury Mountain and Pillsbury Lake.

Hiking can be a fun activity in the winter, summer, spring, and fall seasons. It has a certain wonder to it that nothing really can replicate.



Staten Island's Greenbelt offers excellent hiking opportunities.

Photo Credit: Nycgo.com

BANNER ARTS

A Star is Born: A Bold Retelling That Hits and Misses

Bradley Cooper's Remake Soars Above its Predecessors, but Falls Short in Depth.

BY: LAUREN SILVERMAN AND VINCENT VILLANI

"A Star Is Born" is a Hollywood legend retold over and over again. For his directorial debut, Bradley Cooper crafted his own original version of the classic story, which was released in theaters on October 5th.

The film's heroine is a small town girl named Ally, played by Lady Gaga. She has a tremendous singing ability, but is stuck working a menial job and performs at a small bar in the evenings. By chance, she comes across the aging rockstar Jackson Maine, played by Bradley Cooper, who carries the burdens of alcoholism and drug addiction.

Not long after they meet, Ally is thrust into the spotlight and must quickly adjust to the glamour and madness that come with fame. The film explores the trials and triumphs of her relationship with Jackson as well as her musical career.

"A Star Is Born" is unique for more than its innovative retelling. Its critically-acclaimed soundtrack has topped international charts. Its ability to convey the story to listeners while standing out as an independent album make it successful.

The soundtrack contains over thirty songs, most of which are originals composed by Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper.

Upon its release, the duet single "Shallow" sold 12,000 copies and ranked 14th on Billboard Digital Songs chart. It boasted 8.3 million streams at the end of its first week.

The film contains some impressive performances from a fantastic cast. Lady Gaga's portrayal of the rising star Ally

stands out during the film.

While she is an accomplished pop star, Lady Gaga stuns the audience with her acting ability. She gives Ally ambition and dimension, making sure audiences fall in love with her as much as Jack does. Gaga portrays Ally as talented but humble and at the same time unafraid to chase her dream.

Bradley Cooper also reminds us of his versatility as an actor. Cooper portrays Jackson Maine as a man with many demons, but a genuine heart. Jack struggles with alcoholism and drug addiction for the duration of the film, but his love for Ally is unwavering.

"A Star Is Born" also boasts a cast of talented supporting actors.

Hollywood veteran Sam Elliot portrays Bobby Maine, Jack's older brother and former bandmate. Bobby acts as his father figure, albeit a questionable one, cleaning up Jack's messes and pushing him to take care of himself.

Ally's father Lorenzo, a car service driver, is portrayed by Andrew Dice Clay. Lorenzo adds extra depth to Ally's character, having been an aspiring singer himself. This drives Ally to take a leap of faith and join Jack on stage.

Comedian Dave Chappelle makes a brief but impactful appearance as Noodles, Jack's old friend from Memphis. After one of Jack's drunken escapades, Noodles takes him in and helps Jack realize how he truly feels about Ally.

But despite its dynamic cast and passionate soundtrack, "A Star Is Born" falls short of its full potential.

Despite Cooper's strong acting ability,



Jackson (Bradley Cooper) and Ally (Lady Gaga) perform together in "A Star is Born." Photo Credit: Variety.com

his portrayal of Jackson paints an unnerving picture. Jackson's obsessive pursuit of Ally is charming to the characters, including Ally herself, but unsettling to viewers. His initial creepiness makes him difficult to sympathize with later on in the film.

A deeper look into Jackson's addictions might have given the audience a chance to connect with him. However, a great portion of his health struggles are presented through the other characters' frustrated dialogue, including passive comments about his drinking or arguments about his well-being. This causes further disconnect between Jackson and the audience.

Ally is often at odds with her manager Rez, portrayed by Rafi Gavron, who tries to market her as a pop star instead of a humble ballad-writer. Though she resists him at first, they eventually make compromises and her career takes an intriguing

turn.

Yet the jump from refusal to complete acceptance leaves questions unanswered. The audience does not see enough of Ally's struggle to remain true to herself amidst the demands of the music industry, which is an unfortunate loss.

These issues lead to an overall lack of depth, which in turn diminishes the believability of the characters' behavior.

Ally's story, however, is an interesting reflection of Gaga's career. Hailed as a queen of modern dance music, she treated fans to the soft, stripped-down album "Joanne" in 2016, where she explored themes of family and emotional turmoil.

"A Star Is Born" received a rating of 90% from Rotten Tomatoes and 88/100 from Metacritic. The movie will be sure to enchant the audience with its soundtrack and heartfelt story.

BANNER ARTS

Venom is Not So Toxic After All

He's Not The One We Call Our Favorite Neighborhood Web Slinger, But He's Good Enough.

BY: SALVATORE CENTO

Released on October 1st, 2018, Venom aimed to please by providing the viewer with outrageous CGI, action packed scenes and a compelling story that would possibly open up doors for another Marvel cinematic universe.

While it is an action movie where those traits should be apparent, especially where an alien symbiote bites off people's heads, the first two mentioned is all this flick could really achieve.

Besides Tom Hardy who carries the movie in the lead role by capturing the image of somebody down on his luck with his gritty and dirty look combined with his harsh and crackling voice, the rest of the main cast is just unadorned.

Anne Weying, Brock's fiancée, who is played by Michelle Williams, is stale and forgettable. The beginning moves at such a quick pace that you don't have time to care when she loses her job. When Eddie tries to work out their problems, you're not surprised when you see her come home with a new boyfriend because you already learned how abrupt she can be.

Carlton Drake, played by Riz Ahmed, the CEO of Life Foundation, the corporation that brings the symbiotes to earth, really doesn't seem threatening enough for the part.

You could tell the writers were going for the physically smaller but powerful

backing type of villain, but the Life Foundation doesn't have a noticeable foundation. They try to take Venom back with thugs and drones. Even Drake himself needs Riot to get somewhere.

Some of the minor roles such as Mrs. Chen, Maria and Roland Treece are

script.

In a matter of a few minutes, Eddie Brock and his fiancée are happily together and then just like that, both of them lose their jobs and Anne leaves him.

In a matter of a few minutes, after taking over Brock's body, Venom names him-

have made the audience more interested in the characters.

However, there was enough action and aesthetic CGI to keep the viewers' eyes attracted to the screen.

The way that Venom fought the thugs in Eddie's apartment while Eddie himself was just dragged along was a new take on the "suddenly-know-how-to-fight" trope.

It was uncomfortable, in a good way, watching the symbiote oozing out of its containment shell, plopping onto the floor and slowly stalking the unwilling participant in the lab experiment.

The choice of using blue for the explosions instead of the typical assortment of colors for the explosions during the night time car chase scene was innovative, if not whimsical.

The climactic fight scene showed every splattering inch of the two symbiotes spreading off of their hosts and onto the other, combining and then separating.

All this was done with a slow motion, three hundred sixty degree technique so you could see all the details. This was the highlight of the movie, as the climax should be.

"Venom" keeps on climbing toward success by apologizing for its missing pieces with sophisticated action and detail to the smaller aspects of its plot.

Making more at the box office than projected, "Venom" is guaranteed to already have a sequel in the works.



The symbiote not only affects Eddie Brock but those around him as well. Photo Credit: AVForums.com

unique since they deviate away from the usual molds of a hero-esque movie. The dialogue that they are given fits their character's roles and as the viewer, you are satisfied with the pairing for these specific characters.

But the biggest disappointment in this movie that ails everything within, is the

self. He doesn't take a liking to him at first, but changes his opinion within a moment's notice.

By including flashbacks or background information on Eddie and Anne, and why Venom was such a loser on his home planet, or how the little girl gruesomely made her way into the Life Foundation, would

Venom: What and Who is He?

The Supervillain Has Been Around For Many Years, But Do People Know About His History?

BY: MARK DEUTSCH

The long awaited movie about a villain called Venom, who hails from the comic book giant Marvel, has debuted on the big screen.

At least half of the audience will probably go see it because the trailer is captivating and the other half will go because they know about Venom. So, to give the other half of viewers a brief history lesson on Venom, there will be some explaining to do.

To start off with the basics, what are Venom's powers in general aside from the powers of its current host?

They are super strength, speed, durability and enhanced healing. His shape-shifting is on another level, from producing webs like Spiderman and shapeshifting, the one major weakness is high pitched or loud sounds, like the sonic spears in "Black Panther".

What most people who discover Venom know is that the symbiote has gone through multiple hosts and yes, Venom isn't exactly a person but a symbiote.

The Venom symbiote has been worn by many people, the two most important being Eddie Brock and Spiderman. These two are the most important because Spiderman found the suit when it plopped out of a strange machine onto his head and the symbiote met Brock after Spiderman.

The definition of a parasite that has developed a symbiotic relationship with its

host is called a symbiote.

Over the years, the Venom symbiote has given its various hosts amazing powers or enhanced pre existing abilities and has even been affected by the personalities of the person that it resides in.

This affects the next host it inhabits since an evil alien that previously used the host before Spiderman caused the web slinger to mentally wrestle with the urge to kill and discard the symbiote.

The symbiote considered Spiderman to be the ideal host but had been discarded and couldn't fight the friendly neighborhood hero for control over his body.

The main person who would define Venom as a villain would be Edward "Eddie" Brock.

Eddie was a journalist who wrote an article that would've jettisoned himself into stardom. It was about a suspect who was a serial killer, until the wall crawler found the real killer and cleansed the name of the innocent man who was arrested.

For Eddie Brock, things turned from bad to rotten since his life fell apart and he lost everything.

Eddie blamed Spiderman and when the symbiote made contact with him, they bonded over their hatred for the Spiderman.

What wasn't mentioned in the paragraph about the symbiotic relationship is a question that most of those with biology majors are asking.

"What does the Venom parasite gain

from bonding with a host?"

Well, the answer appears to be that it feasts on either brain matter or adrenaline.

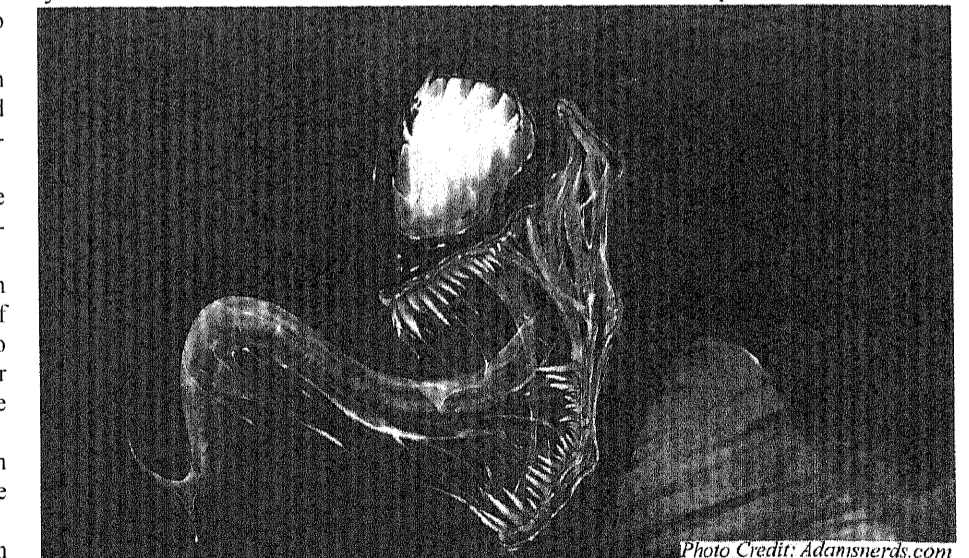
This means that the symbiote can feed on the current host that it inhabits or hunt for prey to satiate the hunger.

Back on the symbiote home planet, the usual course of action was to permanently bond with a smaller host to survive in

forge a permanent bond with a host, it was exiled for good and eventually made its way to Peter Parker after bonding to Deadpool at the end of Secret Wars.

This explains why the symbiote went a bit crazy with Brock, since a genocidal crazy symbiote plus an angry man is a recipe for disaster.

Venom is a unique character who has



Venom's appearance includes a black and white bodysuit with his signature pointy teeth and long tongue. Photo Credit: Adamsnerds.com

a symbiotic relationship. But as the years passed, the symbiotes became true parasites by feeding and killing the host they inhabit.

Since the Venom symbiote wanted to

his fair share of time in the comics, Venom has debuted in "Spiderman 3" and now has a movie of his own to star in, without Spiderman.

The Next Generation Interactive Adventure Rooms

A New Way to Utilize Your Five Senses

BY: BROOKE PRICE

Looking for something fun to do, but the mall or bowling won't suffice? Are you bored of escape rooms?

Well, look no further because 5 Wits will be sure to take you on a thrilling journey!

This entertainment company puts their guests in a fully immersive experience that requires guests to utilize their five senses, their intuition and problem solving skills. Each room encapsulates a specific theme through the props, atmosphere, special effects and design.

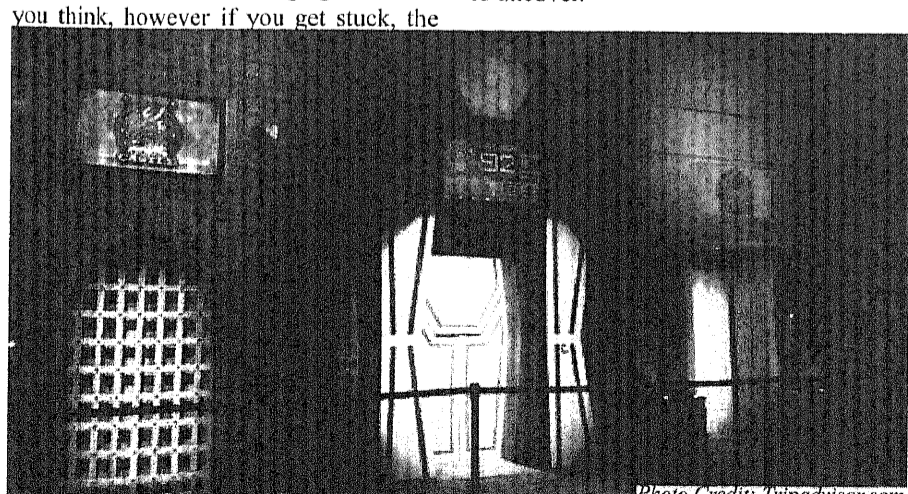
The puzzles are challenging and make you think, however if you get stuck, the

room gives you hints to help you progress through the puzzles. There are also hidden cameras in each room so that the staff can monitor each team's progress.

Some of the activities in the rooms require you to have good hand to eye coordination as well as a good memory.

Up to twelve people can be in a room and each adventure ranges from half an hour to an hour.

Teamwork plays an important part in the adventure rooms. The more people you have, the more puzzles you will be able to solve and the more clues you will be able to uncover.



The rooms at the 5 Wits in the Palisades Mall include a castle, a spaceship and a tomb. Photo Credit: Tripadvisor.com

There are five rooms in total. The three main rooms present at several locations are Drago's Castle, Deep Space, and the Tomb.

In Drago's Castle, players start out in the dungeon and by solving riddles and performing hands on tasks, maneuver their way to the castle. Through this series of problem solving, they must locate the escaped dragon and face off against him.

Deep Space transports participants onto an abandoned starship where they have to figure out the ship's issue, rewire the motherboard and endure an asteroid attack. They must also combat an evil Artificial Intelligence to escape.

In the Tomb, you need to escape from a Pharaoh's tomb by solving interactive puzzles. In one of the rooms of the Tomb, the ceiling slowly comes down and it is a race against time to try and figure out the puzzle and escape.

The other two rooms are Espionage and 20,000 Leagues. The 20,000 Leagues is only located at the Massachusetts 5 Wits, while Espionage is located at the Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Syracuse, New York locations.

Espionage is a spy themed room where you need to break into enemy territory, avoid lasers and hack computers to prevent an evil company from prevailing. Attendees will also use clues to help them escape

without being detected by the enemy.

In 20,000 Leagues, participants go aboard a submarine which takes them below the ocean. There, they have to fix the submarine's engine, use clues to escape and endure a sea monster's vengeance.

The goal is to try and get close to a perfect score. You are based on how fast you work, your problem solving ability, time management and ability to escape the room.

Each story for the room has two separate endings depending on if you succeed in escaping or if you failed to solve the puzzles.

At 5 Wits, you can purchase one adventure for \$19.99, two adventures for \$25.99, or three adventures for \$29.99.

The company offers a dinner and adventure combo. This allows guests of 5 Wits who show their receipt from the adventure room a discount on their meal at affiliated restaurants.

There are currently 5 Wits locations in Albany, New York; Buffalo, New York; Foxboro Massachusetts; Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania; Syracuse, New York and West Nyack, New York. Each location has a variety of rooms to explore.

If you're up for a new adventure, come see what 5 Wits has in store. It's an opportunity to stimulate your senses and explore.

BANNER OPINIONS

Read This Before You Buy That At-Home DNA Test

Is The Rise of Consumer Genetic Testing Convenient or Controversial?

BY: OLIVIA FRASCA

Order a kit, spit in a tube, and in a few weeks you'll have access to all sorts of information about your health and ancestry. From your own computer, your genealogical history is at your fingertips.

23andMe, Ancestry, and MyHeritage are popular sites that offer direct-to-consumer DNA tests at decent prices.

While Ancestry and MyHeritage will reveal one's family history and nationality makeup, 23andMe goes the extra mile in revealing one's health risks, genetic traits, and general wellness too.

If you are curious about your family history, distant with relatives, or wanting to start a family, these DNA kits are a simple way to discover where you come from and what diseases you are predisposed to.

But before you immediately scroll to the bottom of that license agreement to purchase yourself a kit, you may want to give it a read. After all, your DNA is the most personal information you own.

Health risk reports produced by genotyping are approved by the FDA, as advertised on the 23andMe website. Other practices such as manufacturing, processing, and storing samples meet FDA criteria as well.

According to Forbes.com, most of the companies' private policies are common

practice. 23andMe, Ancestry, and MyHeritage claim that they will not share your genetic data with third parties without your explicit consent.

If you create an account for these sites through Facebook or Google, the sites will have access to basic profile information on these platforms such as your name and email.

These companies will also share information that is necessary to carry out their services. Service providers include payment processors, laboratory partners, storage facilities, and DNA shipping, according to the Ancestry private policy.

Aggregated data may be shared for marketing purposes, according to 23andMe. This type of data can include the age range, nationality, and region of those that use the service, but does not include personal information.

So while these companies do not intend to share your genetic information with others, "it's possible that somebody will hack into a company database that does contain your information," NBC News reported.

Most of these DNA testing companies also carry out research projects on the side. When users purchase a kit, they are asked if they would like their biological samples to be used for future genetic research.

If you opt out of this, your DNA sample

will not be used for research once you have received your genetic report, but rather stored by the company.

You may request for your biological sample to be destroyed, but this does not remove the copy of your sample, which has been replicated by these companies' systems, according to NBC News.

Ancestry does state that they will destroy all genetic data by request. If you previously consented to research though, your data will not be removed from completed research projects.

While these DNA kits are a fun way to uncover family history, any health concerns revealed by a kit should be discussed

with a medical professional. Direct-to-consumer genetic tests are not meant to diagnose anyone, nor are they 100% reliable.

DNA testing companies such as 23andMe, Ancestry, and MyHeritage are businesses above all. They need to satisfy service providers and carry out their own research projects.

Direct-to-consumer genetic testing is a fascinating industry that continues to grow. With any purchase, however, there are risks and benefits to weigh.

So think twice before purchasing a test, as your DNA is one of the only things you have that no one else does.

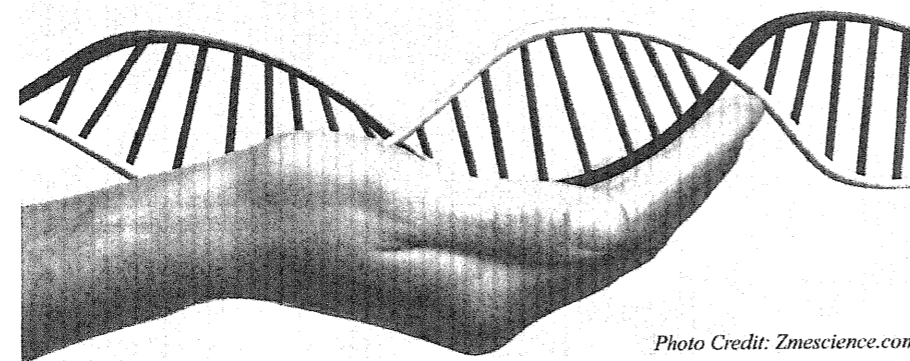


Photo Credit: Zmescience.com
DNA tests are a fun, yet controversial way to uncover family history and personal wellness stats.

Behind the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize Winners

The Push to End Sexual Violence Being used as a Weapon of War

BY: ANES AHMED

On the fifth of October, 2018, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has made the announcement of the latest Nobel Peace Prize laureates, and their contributions have been pivotal to combating global war crimes.

The recipients, physician and gynecologist Dr. Denis Mukwege and UN Goodwill Ambassador Nadia Murad, have pushed efforts to bring awareness to sexual violence as being a weapon and tactic of war.

While both have focused their efforts in different countries - the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Yazidi population residing in northern Iraq, respectively

- they have put their personal health and lives at risk to reach out and support victims while holding perpetrators accountable.

Born in Bukavu, Belgian Congo, Denis Mukwege grew up studying medicine to provide for the ill for those his father (a Pentecostal minister) prayed for. After seeing first hand the complications of childbirth endured by the Congolese women who had no approach to specialist healthcare, Mukwege sought to establish access to provisions for treatment and medicine for patients.

After completing his studies and residencies in France and returning to assist in Congo, the First Congo War triggered inner conflicts. This led to Mukwege found-

ing the Panzi Hospital, which has reportedly treated over 85,000 patients who have been victims of conflict zones, civil wars and mass rape.

When observing the mutilation of genitals and the conditions of patients arriving into the hospital, Mukwege devoted himself to assisting the women through reconstructive surgery. This has resulted in him performing over a thousand surgeries for survivors of rape.

Throughout his career, Mukwege has been celebrated as a human rights activist, an exemplary surgeon and voice of resistance against sexual crimes, which has resulted in a powerful speech given by him in the United Nations, an assassination attempt on his life, and most recently, jointly receiving the Nobel Peace Prize.

Nadia Murad was born in Kojo, a Yazidi village located in the Sinjar District, Northern Iraq. She grew up practicing the ethno-religious Yazidi faith while tending to her siblings and academics till the age of nineteen.

In September 2014, Daesh soldiers invaded and rounded Murad's community which resulted in the killing of 600 innocents and the abduction of 6,700 Yazidi women, including Murad. The captured "spoils of war" were subjected by their captors to sex slavery, brutal beatings, burned with lit cigarettes, and were gang-raped if attempting escape.

After three months of these atrocities, Murad fled when finding an opportunity

of escape and was taken and tended by a neighbouring Muslim family. The family provided all they could and smuggled her out of the Islamic State area, which distanced her from ISIS soldiers.

After living in a container at a Rwanga camp and providing testimonies to reporters of daily newspapers, she and a 1,000 women and children were provided assistance by a refugee programme of the Government of Baden Württemberg, Germany.

Being a victim of war crimes and rape, Murad openly speaks of her painful experience to make others aware of the brutal and primal delinquency that occurs to women during genocide and trafficking.

She became the first speaker to address the United Nations Security Council on these issues and has continued as an ambassador to assist displaced people and victims.

While both Denis Mukwege's and Nadia Murad's stories may be intense and foreign to us, it is essential to be aware of these vocal issues.

Women have been demanding change through protest such as the #MeToo Movement, and it is raw experiences such as these that further this message.

This year's recipients have pushed tirelessly to reach out to those who are blind to these international developments and are entirely deserving candidates of the award. On an upcoming date, they will speak about their recent winnings through a broadcast of the Nobel lecture.



A Sketch of the Newest Nobel Peace Prize Recipients, Dr. Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad.
Photo Credit: www.Nobelprize.org

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS

A Love and Trust Potion

The Effects of Oxytocin and Vasopressin in Interactions Between Men and Women

BY: LEAH OLIVER

Why is she attached? Why is he committed?

Some might call it a love potion, some might call it too attached, but science explains it as hormones.

In relationships, hormones play a role in stimulation, intimacy, and even feelings of acceptance.

Oxytocin is a hormone secreted from the pituitary gland during social bonding. This hormone also plays a role in mother-infant bonding, as well as father-child bonding.

This hormone has many nicknames: love hormone, attachment hormone, orgasmic hormone.

When a woman experiences an orgasm, oxytocin is released thus leading to the desire for more intimacy.

Though this orgasm creates trust, Psychologytoday.com states that this trust only lasts for a short period of time.

If you have ever noticed yourself wanting attention and comfort after sex, that is a product of the release of oxytocin.

This consistent desire to cuddle after sex is why a guy may see the female as attached. Ultimately, she is now under the impression that her partner is trustworthy.

As a result, the desire to hug and spoon is a way of bonding and achieving more of a sense of intimacy.

The hormonal release also leads to the

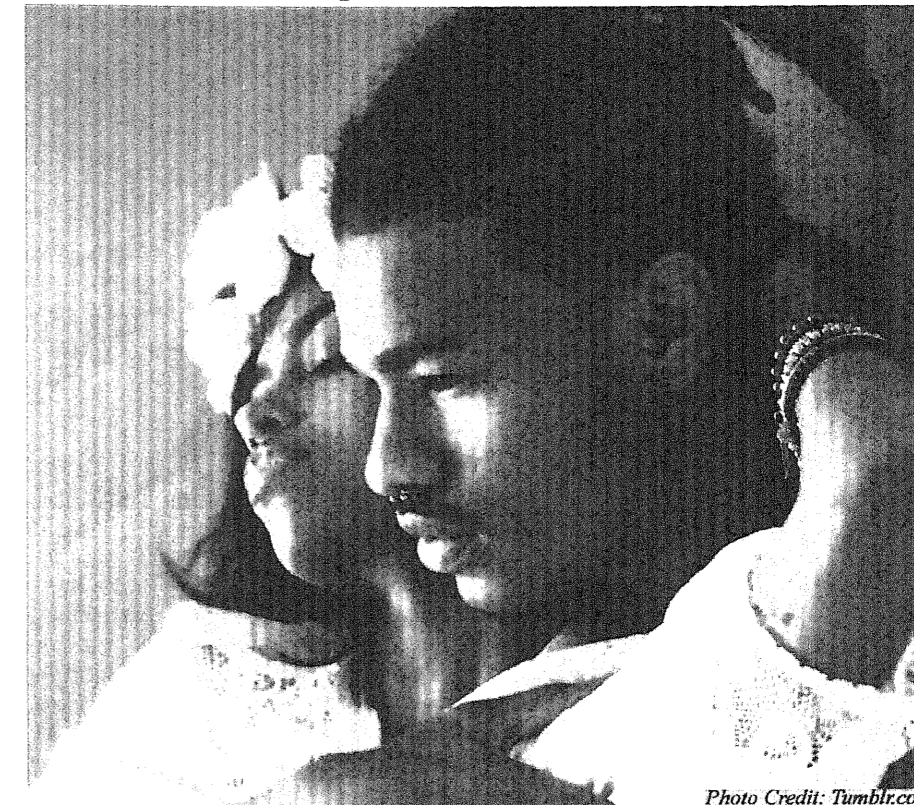


Photo Credit: Tumblr.com
Hormones such as oxytocin and vasopressin play a key role in trusting and loving your partner.

desire to form a monogamous bond with the partner. Monogamy is the state of having only one sexual relationship or marriage with a person.

This commitment arises not just from this hormone, but also from finding a partner that feels the same way about monog-

amy and staying true to yourself and your desires.

In a similar way that oxytocin impacts women's desires, an increase in a male's vasopressin spurs the desire to form a monogamous bond.

According to a study in the New York

Times, when a male is sexually enticed, vasopressin levels increase - and during sex levels decrease.

A male's vasopressin levels tend to be high during enticement or commitment.

When people fall in love, exclusivity is indicated. Women tend to fall in love when they have sex, being that during the dating stages oxytocin is rising, trust is being established, then during orgasm oxytocin sky rockets.

Men tend to fall in love when they commit; their dopamine increases, testosterone decreases thus increasing passivity, and vasopressin increases. The secret is out! Gotcha!

Science indicates the good ones stick around through all the enticement.

The moment a guy approaches by means of "getting to know you", he wants to get in your pants, not to scatter your life simply because he's attracted to you.

Women don't want to smother you and purposefully be clingy; she's enamored.

She's already grown to trust you and you've given her the rollercoaster ride of her life, so of course she wants to be with just you.

So, take note of your interactions with your potential partners or current partner. Your hormones might help you establish trust, but don't let them deceive you.

It's Not You, It's Me: Setting Personal Boundaries

Stay True to You With Relationship Rules- For Yourself

BY: LAUREN SILVERMAN

Entering a new relationship means journeying into unfamiliar territory, sending our hearts and brains into overdrive. Our hearts tell us how we are feeling and encourage us to act on instinct, whereas our brains try to analyze and plan every situation. This could become tricky when the two are at odds.

All healthy relationships include boundaries. Ideally, both people respect the other's limits and rely on consent to ensure comfort and security.

However, it is equally important to set personal boundaries for yourself. By respecting both your heart and your brain, you will feel confident in your relation-

ship, whether or not it is your first.

So what are personal boundaries?

They are the limitations you set for yourself about your partner, depending on how comfortable you feel. When you set boundaries for yourself, you are setting personal reminders of what feels safe and what does not.

It goes beyond sexual consent and can include something as small as holding hands or walking together at night.

Most importantly, they involve only one person: you.

Your boundaries are a tricky balance between emotion and logic and they could change quite often. You must decide what you are comfortable doing in a relationship while avoiding overanalyzing and under-

mining these situations.

If you let emotions dominate this process, you might push yourself into an uncomfortable situation.

For example, if you are about to have your first kiss, several emotional factors might override your brain's warnings that you do not feel ready. You might be excited because you like the other person, or you could feel pressured by societal standards that expect some relationship "firsts" much earlier than college.

This could cause a variety of results. You might feel insecure or regretful because you did not respect your own wishes and in turn, forced yourself into an uncomfortable situation. If you push yourself too far out of your comfort zone, you may feel violated and unsafe.

It is important to challenge ourselves and strive beyond the safe haven of our comfort zones, but this is not always the case with relationships. It is much better to ease yourself into situations until you feel completely secure and ready for the next steps.

However, giving your brain complete control can also have disastrous results.

Logic is an essential tool for functioning, especially when considering the tough problems you might face in a relationship. However if it completely blocks out emotions, you would be planning and analyzing too much to act at all.

Overthinkers, especially people with high levels of anxiety, tend to have this

problem. A new relationship can be frightening, especially if it is your first, but if you spend too much time thinking of every possible situation and outcome, you will likely be too nervous to contribute to a healthy partnership.

While safety and comfort are essential, it is also important to remind yourself that you are human.

Emotions are telling. If you enjoy someone's company but are too nervous to date them because you are afraid of the potential outcomes, you must take a step back and get in touch with your feelings.

You like this person for a reason- don't let logic ruin a wonderful opportunity.

It's difficult to determine what is safe for you. After all, you might want to try something first before deciding how it makes you feel.

The best way to set personal boundaries is to judge your past experiences, if any, and build upon your feelings from those moments. If you are still waiting for your relationship firsts, then you must remember not to rush yourself.

Consent is vital in any relationship. Partners must communicate with each other to understand personal limitations. The importance of consent carries over into your sense of self. In order to prepare for the unknown, you must trust yourself to know what you feel ready for.

When you respect your well-being, your confidence will soar, and you will be prepared for a fulfilling relationship.



Photo Credit: Theodysseyonline.com
Regret is common in relationships between people with a low sense of self.

SPORTS

Rockets vs Lakers Brawl Ends in Suspensions and Attacks

NBA Season Begins With an Ugly Fight Between Key Players

BY: GEORGE BURKERT

The Houston Rockets vs Los Angeles Lakers game on October 20 was LeBron James' first home game as a member of the Lakers, but will instead be remembered as one of the most intense NBA brawls since 2006.

With 4 minutes and 13 seconds left and the Rockets up by 1 point, the game took a turn for the worse after Lakers forward Brandon Ingram was called for fouling Rockets star James Harden.

Ingram, angry at the call, shoved Harden and confronted the ref. This was only the beginning, as the confrontations got more heated.

The most memorable fight in all of this was between Lakers point guard Rajon Rondo and Rockets point guard Chris Paul.

Rondo was accused of spitting at Paul, who tried confronting the point guard, only to get punched by him.

This put James in an interesting position, who took Paul away from the fight despite not being teammates. James and Paul are close friends and both men are godfathers to the other's children.

The final score was 124 to 115 with the Rockets winning. Paul, Rondo, and Ingram all got ejected from the game.

Both Rondo and Paul are players who are not afraid to speak their minds and get into it with other players.

Back in January, Paul lead Rockets teammates into the Los Angeles Clippers locker room to confront Clippers players after an altercation during that game.

The NBA is no stranger to brawls breaking out due to hard fouls. Back in 2004 the Malice at the Palace started with Ron Artest fouling Ben Wallace and later involved players going into the stands and fighting fans, changing how the league handles fights.

Ingram was suspended for 4 games for instigating the fight, confronting a ref, and also throwing punches while Rondo got 3 and Paul got 2. Ingram believes he deserved the suspension he got.

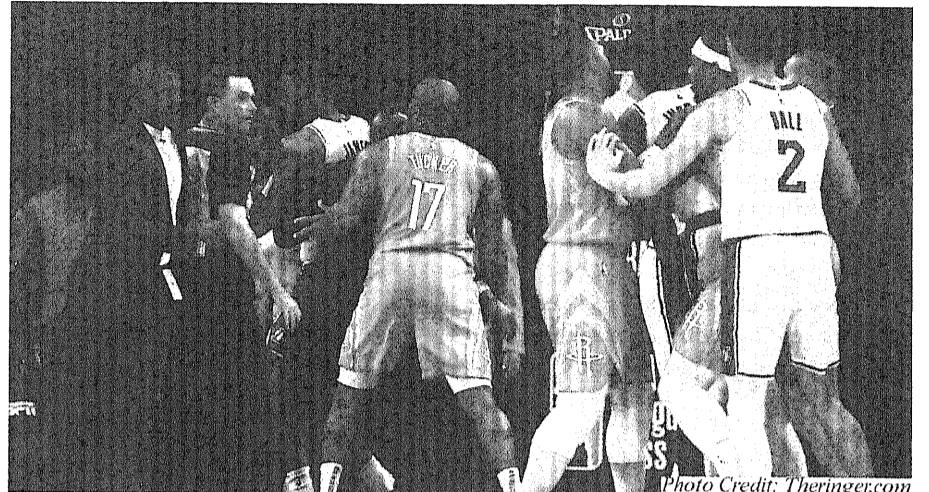
Rondo has not been afraid of throwing shade at Paul since the fight, denying the spitting incident and calling Paul a horrible teammate. Rondo believes the media has been favoring Paul by trying to make him a good guy.

Paul has been praised as one of the best point guards in the modern era of basketball and has helped communities. He is also the president of the National Basketball Players Association.

Since Rondo's comments on Paul, however, some of Paul's past teammates Glen Davis and Ryan Hollins have agreed with Rondo's comments, with Hollins also calling Rondo one of his favorite teammates of all time.

According to Chris Broussard of Fox Sports, an executive from the Clippers told him Paul was not a great teammate during his time with the Clippers.

Rondo has also been called out for being an unpleasant teammate in the past, having a beef with former Boston Celtics teammate Ray Allen, which was part of the reason why Allen left the Celtics back in



The brawl got so intense players had to be separated

Photo Credit: Theringer.com

2012.

Back in 2017 on the Chicago Bulls, Allen went back at former teammates Jimmy Butler and Dwyane Wade after they criticized the younger players on the team for not wanting to win as much as they did.

Rondo has also been criticized for not getting along with coaches he played for in the past, butting heads with his former Celtics coach Doc Rivers.

Back in 2015, Rondo got into arguments with Dallas Mavericks coach Rick Carlisle, eventually quitting on the team in the first round of the 2015 playoffs.

Paul also had problems with Rivers during his time with the Clippers, having issues with the amount of minutes River's son, Austin Rivers would play. This would continue into last January during the Rockets vs Clippers game where there was an

altercation.

Lakers coach Luke Walton has defended Rondo believing he did not spit while Rockets coach Mike D'Antoni has defended Paul.

The suspensions have put the Rockets off to a rocky start for the season having lost those 3 games because of the incident. As for the Lakers, they lost the first game after the incident, but won their next 2, with Kyle Kuzma and Lonzo Ball filling in for Ingram and Rondo.

Both teams are still struggling after the suspensions, with the Rockets losing because of Harden missing games from injury. The Lakers are still adjusting and Ball has replaced Rondo in the starting lineups.

The NBA season usually has interesting storylines and the Rockets-Lakers brawl is no exception.

Yankees Potential Offseason Moves

What the Yankees Need to do to Ensure a World Series Win

BY: KENNY VELEZ

After the New York Yankees got eliminated by the Boston Red Sox in the American League Division Series, the team can look to the future to see what they need to do.

A few ways that the Yankees can improve has been evident recently.

Yankees shortstop Didi Gregorius had Tommy John Surgery after the team's season came to an end.

The Yankees think he will be out until the middle of the 2019 season.

So, one of their priorities would be to have a shortstop who can take Gregorius' place until he can get back-if he gets back at any point during the 2019 season.

The Yankees General Manager Brian Cashman has said in the season-end press conference that the team is planning to "relocate" Sonny Gray.

He specified that Gray's talents would be put to better use elsewhere.

Gray has not pitched well for the Yankees, especially at Yankee Stadium.

During the 2018 season, he lost his spot on the starting rotation and got moved to the bullpen.

There are other moves that they can make over the course of the offseason.

They need a first baseman, as they have a black hole at first base.

Greg Bird has been dealing with injuries for the past several seasons, and he lost his everyday spot on the team to Luke

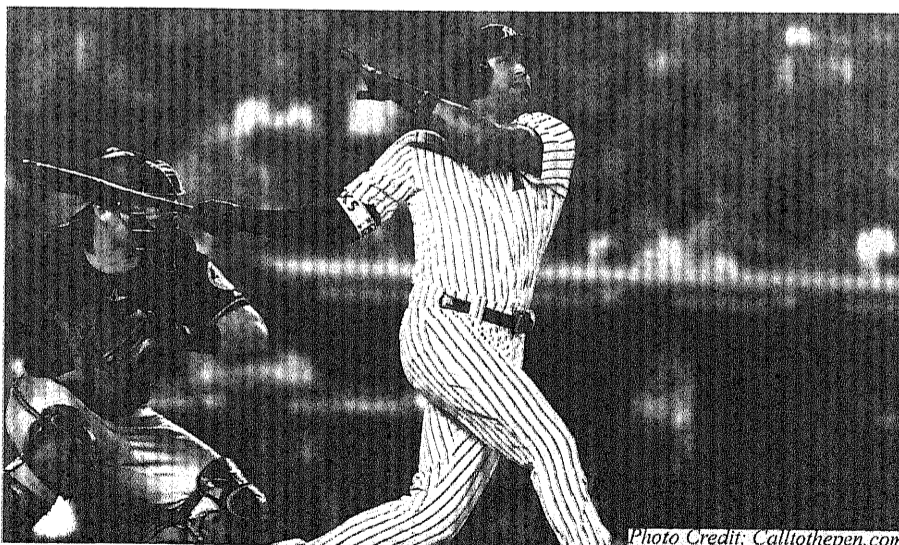
Voit, who was acquired in a trade from the Cardinals.

If Voit is just a fluke and Bird cannot find the magic again, then the team will need to get a first baseman from another team.

They also need starting pitching.

If the 2018 team had any weaknesses, it was their starting pitcher.

Masahiro Tanaka and Luis Severino are the only starting pitchers on the team



The Yankees can improve and look forward to secure a win in 2019.

Photo Credit: Calltothepen.com

that are signed for 2019.

Then there is CC Sabathia.

He said many times that he was considering retirement but came back in 2018

to get another chance at a World Series.

He is a free agent, so time will tell if the Yankees re-sign him.

Also, left handed pitcher Jordan Montgomery will most likely be coming back in late 2019 from Tommy John Surgery that ended his season last year.

Will he still have it as a starter, or will he be moved to the bullpen? Along with that are a bunch of rookie pitchers.

Domingo German was a starter last

season, doing good initially then struggled in the first inning of his last start before being sent down to Triple A and being placed in the bullpen in September.

Justus Sheffield was a starter in Triple A Scranton Wilkes-Barre and made his Major League debut in September coming from the bullpen.

He could be a Major League starting pitcher in the future.

Gary Sanchez led the league in passed balls in 2018.

This is despite missing most of the season with a groin injury.

In an interview on "The Michael Kay Show", Cashman has said that Sanchez will be the Yankees' starting catcher next year, and that what he did in the postseason is more "representative" of what Sanchez is than the regular season where he struggled.

Either way, they will need to get more consistent play from Sanchez, both as a hitter and as a catcher.

Andrew McCutchen is a free agent in 2019, so the Yankees will have to decide between signing him or letting him go in hopes that they can keep their other four outfielders.

Brett Gardner saw his playing time reduced this season after McCutchen came to the team from a trade from the Giants.

There is a possibility that his option for 2019 will not be picked up.

The team has several pieces of their future in place, but they need a few more pieces in order to win a World Series in the near future.