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# Lake Forest Academy's new Health Center

By: **Nicholas Bisulca & Theresa Fu**  
*Editor-in-Chief & Senior Editor*

On Friday, January 13th, All-School-President Riko Kishitani stood on stage during morning meeting and announced the highly anticipated opening of the LFA Community Health Center on 17th, as the Health Services Department finalized efforts to move into Lower New Hall.

The desire for a larger health center has long been in discussion, as Jennifer Madeley, one of LFA's therapists, and Anna Kliner, the Director of Health Services, noted. "The [previous] Health Center wasn't the most accessible; there was no elevator, nor a lot of privacy with a constant stream of kids walking through," Madeley said.

Chief Financial Officer Mike Reidy added that "in a case like COVID where you've got a lot of students who are sick at once, there wasn't nearly enough room to provide the service for 435 students." The lack of resting rooms, such as in the case of a pandemic, amplified this desire for "stronger student care"-- and on-site, in close vicinity to the student population.

The Health Center received all of its funding from donations. Fundraising activities brought together parents, alumni, and other partners to raise a sizable amount of \$1.55 million, with \$1.25 million devoted to the construction and the additional \$300,000 to an endowment designated for facility upkeep, including the repair and replacement of equipment.

With assistance from the Lake Forest Academy administration and the Board of Trustees, a Gala Project was organized to support fundraising. Potential donors were invited to make their financial commitments-- whose sum, as Christine Ryder, the Assistant Dean of Advancement, said, "has enabled LFA to elevate its facilities to be on par with its stellar health team, and honors students' physical and mental wellbeing."

However, this is not the first renovation of New Hall. Over the years, the "orchestra building" has taken on numerous identities, including a dorm, office space, student center, weight room, and years ago, a chapel. But with the introduction of the JC Cowart Center in 2016 (another huge financial undertaking), the lower area has been largely abandoned,



Photo by Theresa Fu

The LFA Community Health Center is connected to the Formal Gardens.

with the exception of storage, and was closed off to students. Ryder reaffirmed, "This was a complete metamorphosis of the space and a productive way to reuse something from the past."

Construction to revamp the lower New Hall began in the summer of 2022 and continues in the Fink Family Wellness Garden. As the weather warms, the Wellness Garden intends to tie into the formal gardens, creating a peaceful and earthy environment for students to relax when they need a break. The Health Center's interior will also see a number of finishing touches as the Health Services Department unwraps its final boxes and completes furnishing the rooms-- both of which don't bar students from visiting or utilizing new provisions. Upper Reid will also undergo a small transformation, as the IT department will expand into the hallway branching off from the main staircase, where the Health Center used to be.

Inside, the Health Center is split into two main hallways, one for physical health and the other for mental health. The infirmary includes daytime resting rooms, along with overnight rooms with private bathrooms for students who need overnight care. Similarly, caretakers staying overnight have their own rooms to oversee student patients. There are two exam rooms mimicking a doc-

tor's office, a lab where Kliner can write prescriptions and perform physicals, a room dedicated to group therapy, and finally, many puzzles, games, and arts and crafts supplies for student entertainment. With the addition of the exam rooms, LFA opens up the avenue to host on-site doctors, like dermatologists or psychiatrists, should they be needed.

If students ever feel sick, need medication, or need someone to talk to, they can visit the new Health Center located south of the Student Center, under the bridge. To get in touch with a counselor, students can email Madeley or Nirali Dalia, school therapists, and simply stop by the Health Center to access the resting rooms. It is the hope that with LFA expanding its services to encompass a new Health Center, the welfare side of student life on campus will be elevated.



Photo by Nicholas Bisulca

The LFA Community Health Center has seating area for waiting patients.



Photo by Nicholas Bisulca

The LFA Community Health Center appears above.



# Staff expansion within communications office

By Maya Mitchkess

*Managing Editor of Digital & Social Media*

In the corner of Korhummel, three offices tucked away on Lake Forest Academy's campus are home to three people very important to the community—the communications team—and they just got a much deserved expansion. In charge of telling the stories of LFA, the communications office may not be known by all, but they make sure everyone else's messages are heard.

Alex Stevenson is the only employee currently working for the communications office that isn't new this year. With a background in graphic design, Stevenson mainly works on the school's website. He explained the struggle of the workload communications had on all fronts before the expansion: "It has been an extremely busy experience, with little to no downtime between projects. Generally, it has felt like the number of plates that need to keep spinning continues to increase instead of decrease." With two new employees and one new position, the communications office's overload hopefully will subside.

Greg Greenwell became the Director of Marketing and Communications in July of 2022. He works alongside Stevenson on cultivating the school's website while also making sure the collaboration between the three employees of the communications department stays on track. Greenwell is

also looking forward to the department's expansion into social media. On the topic, he commented, "We're starting to wrap our arms around the idea that there's a lot of enthusiasm for social media here, and we definitely welcome and encourage it."

An entirely new position was created, Digital Engagement Specialist, to manage social media, the primary reason the communications team expanded. Emmy Schwerdt was hired to fill this new position in the fall. She has a bachelor's degree in communications from Carthage College and started her love for content creation in high school journalism. Schwerdt can be seen capturing content around campus for LFA's social media pages, trying to revitalize this asset that has recently been underutilized. "I think that we're at a high caliber here, and people really care about it here, and I'm making sure that our content matches that energy," Schwerdt explained.

There are no longer various people running social media, and, with a sole person in charge, the communications office is centered and run more efficiently. Efficiency is one of the biggest goals for the future with the large amount of work the communications office has had to manage in the past. Schwerdt remarked, "The goal of pretty much any communications platform is you want to be proactive; you don't want to be reactive." With the social media under new reins, the website being constantly updated, and even a weekly



*Photo by Maya Mitchkess*

The three employees in the communications office stand together.

newsletter being sent out to the community by the team of three employees, the communications office is learning to take a hold of the work while also continuing to find new ways to keep the communi-

ty of LFA connected. The biggest goal of the expansion is to carry on telling LFA's stories as Greenwell said, "Our job is to let the world outside of this campus know what's so special about this place."

# The new English teacher: David Scarisbrick

By Jessie Ji

*Photo Editor*

Sitting in his high school AP Language & Composition class, reading old texts, interpreting them, and discussing with peers, "I think I can do this for the rest of my life," thought the 17-year-old David Scarisbrick.

Scarisbrick is a passionate teacher who calls himself "a sucker for story." He joined Lake Forest Academy this winter as an English teacher for English 11: Global Literacy and English 12: Senior Composition. *Hamlet* was an influential play for him since high school, which helped him unlock the door to English. He then spent time abroad during college studying Shakespearean Literature at Oxford, which offered him fresh insights on Shakespeare's works and English. While Shakespeare's plays can seem stiff and distant to students due to the Elizabethan language, what's waiting for readers to unveil is the "incredible intersection of identity-making, gender ideology, race, and culture," said Scarisbrick, who finds English a subject that encompasses everything, along with something that you can't get from any other classes.

Possessing a curious inclination towards

people and the eagerness to resolve human conditions, it was almost indubitably destined for Scarisbrick to become an English teacher. What's most fascinating about this subject, he commented, is always the "messy human stuff."

He loves to imagine himself as a detective solving puzzles every time he reads a story, scrutinizing every single thread in a literary piece, because "every little thing can be ordered," Scarisbrick stated with a full-blown conviction. "Even

the challenges—don't discount it, don't get rid of it and set it aside—continue with your method, and eventually put that small thing back into the equation."

As an educator, Scarisbrick enjoys passing on that enthusiasm to his students. In his ideal class, every moment should be in dialogues which make students think critically. He noted that taking English class "isn't about making you a more 'literary' person; rather, it's an exercise for your brain to become a stronger thinker." The cultivation of empathy was another unique element that English has brought to people. Seeing the vulnerable, thoughtful, and hurtful characters is an outlet to construct a world in which human experience can make sense to us, helping everyone to "make sense of the life that's worth living."

Besides English, Scarisbrick has expansive life experiences: working in a haunted hotel, seeing baking as a magical creation, being a DJ in college, studying in Japan, writing short stories and publishing articles for college newspapers...yet, there is a consistency in them: "They all involve reading. Reading the crowd, a situation, a conversation," said Scarisbrick, a funky, interestingly offbeat, but endearing English teacher.



*Courtesy of David Scarisbrick*

David Scarisbrick poses for the camera in a self portrait.



# School-Year Abroad (SYA) trips losing popularity

By Connor Drobny  
Managing Editor of A&E

At Lake Forest Academy, a School Year Abroad (SYA) has been offered since 1964. Currently, available programs are offered in four countries: Beijing (China), Rennes (France), Viterbo (Italy), and Zaragoza (Spain). However, fewer and fewer kids are opting for a school year abroad; typically, only a few students out of LFA’s more than 400. Why do students not want to take a school year abroad?

According to Braeden Murray ‘23, who took his fall semester abroad in Spain during his Junior year, the quality of the trip was not the issue: “My experience with SYA Spain was one of the best opportunities that I had the privilege to take advantage of during my time at LFA.” Adding on to his positive experience, Braeden, when asked if he could change one thing about the trip, wished that, “I would’ve stayed the entire academic year rather than the semester.”

Possibly, the application process scares students. However, Gray Drobny ‘25, who is applying for a School Year Abroad for the fall of his Junior year, felt that “the application process was



Photo by Xitali Ayala

Xitali Ayala and a friend travel across Spain during her SYA trip in 2022.

very easy. I liked the essay prompts and thought the questions were relevant to my future adventures during my SYA.”

Building upon Gray’s opinion, Braeden remembered the application process being “simple,” concurring that it “answered many of my swirling questions before I departed for my trip.” Students should not fear the application process, as it seems more informative than complex.

A lack of advertising may leave many students never thinking about SYA. Yet,

almost every student applying to LFA is informed about SYA. Gray remembered his experience, saying, “I was told about SYA when I applied to school, and I thought I would be interested in it when I heard about it.” Additionally, Gray commented that “Every student knows what SYA is. One way or another, they hear about it.” Yet, is just hearing someone did an SYA enough? Possibly, LFA could organize seminars where students who took a semester abroad talk about their experiences to an audience

of students wanting to apply for SYA.

Likely, most students who hear about SYA are understandably uncomfortable living in a foreign country, speaking a foreign language, and living with a foreign family. High schoolers, typically aged 14-18, feel they need domestic high school to mature and believe they can do a school year abroad in college. Living at home or in the same country as home and speaking your native language all come naturally to students. However, changing and going outside of your comfort zone should not deter you from SYA. SYA allows students to live more independently while experiencing unmatched diversity and culture, and when one considers how many LFA students are studying abroad themselves, that should be inspiring to others.

Although the number of students doing SYA has seemingly decreased, the quality of the enriching experience has not. Students report amazing, practically life-changing experiences from SYA. Yet, at the same time, there is no perfect formula or promise for a good school year abroad. To students questioning whether SYA is the right choice, listen to your parents, counselors, and, most importantly, yourself.

# AP debate: Does the label make a class great?

By Ella Gartz  
Editor-in-Chief

The College Board’s Advanced Placement (AP) program allows students to take undergraduate-level courses and exams in high school. The AP program, given its wide scope and standardization, offers students an attractive trademark that college admissions officers can quickly recognize on transcripts and score reports. “A lot of young people want to show how competitive they are by taking these courses and by taking these exams, so they can get into the schools that they want to get into,” said Nancy Nassr, the Academic Dean. Moreover, once accepted, students can typically exchange passing AP scores for transferable college credits.

LFA has 24 AP courses and 285 students currently signed up to take the exams. Many of these students will actually take many.

While AP courses at LFA are popular, it is not always because they are believed to be “better.” In fact, many students feel that some AP courses just “teach to test” and that students’ questions, beyond the prescribed curriculum, will be dismissed. However, limitations vary across departments and between skilled-based and content-based courses. Cameron Fink ‘23 said that the AP program “works best for math and science classes, given it is more objective than social science and foreign languages.”

Many teachers of AP courses have admitted to their students that they “hate the AP” or do not “believe in it,” with some having

even seemingly abandoned the prescribed curriculum. Fink said that he “thoroughly enjoyed AP Government [Comparative and US] at LFA [last school year], despite it not being taught strictly to the AP Curriculum,” because it “taught more about the process of politics than its impacts.”

However, Nassr stated, “part of being able to teach an AP class is signing an agreement basically with the College Board that you will teach the content and the prescribed skills, and you have to submit the syllabus for your course.”

Some teachers have taken it upon them-

selves to create their own courses, some of which have been incredibly successful. For example, APA (a combined Algebra II and Precalculus curriculum) and Discrete Math: Fundamentals & Applications are two popular courses at LFA, which were both completely designed by Math Teacher, Jeff Bateman. Others have created electives, such as Kim Graham with her The Science of Joy course and Sam Wold with his Human Rights course. Nassr is “a big fan of creating advanced courses that are not attached to the AP” because “they speak to the opportunities that we have,

and the interest of our students.” She is currently working with department chairs and faculty on these opportunities to be more “responsive to the changing needs of not just students, but the world around us.”

The value and implementation of the AP program will likely continue to be debated at LFA given the school’s unique position as a boarding school in the larger regional context of highly-ranked public schools. Yet, the actual classroom practices and teacher philosophies behind what is being taught will likely also continue to spur the liveliness of the debate.



Photo by Ella Gartz

The College Counseling Office lines its bookshelves with AP test preparation books.



# Are nepo babies the future of Hollywood?

By Tanya Ganesh & Ela Jain  
Sports Director & Staff Writer

Nepotism babies have taken the internet by storm. With a recent *New York* magazine article detailing who, exactly, in the entertainment industry found major success with the help of their well-connected parents, this prevalence of these individuals has been made abundantly clear.

A nepotism baby, or “nepo-baby,” is a child who has found success using the already well-established title of their parents, and often their connections, to make bigger strides in the entertainment industry. The term was popularized on Twitter after it was discovered that Euphoria star Maude Apatow was not a self-made actress but the daughter of iconic director Judd Apatow and actress Leslie Mann. Since then, the slang term has exploded in use, and with it, more and more nepo babies are being revealed for their privileged parents and ready-made connections.

Nepotism babies have existed in Hollywood for as long as it has been around. The daughter of Charlie Chaplin, beloved movie star of the 1920s and 1930s, is a Golden Globe nominated actress. She then gave birth to *Game of Thrones* star Oona Chaplin, proving the chains of nepotism can be traced back to the beginning of film.

From *Stranger Things* actress Maya Hawke, daughter of Uma Thurman and Ethan Hawke, to *Emily in Paris*’s Lily Collins, daughter of musician Phil Collins, it seems that every popular television show or film has some sort of nepotism connection baked in-

side, causing many to feel that the industry is closing its doors to new talent.

*SNL* has been recently outed as a hirer of nepotism babies, despite the reputation they’ve earned as an honest comedy show that takes the time to scour new talent. Robert Downey Jr., nephew of *SNL* writer Jim Downey, was an actor on the show for a season, known throughout *SNL* fans as one of the poorest casting choices the show has ever made. Most recently, sons of two *SNL* alum, Martin Herlihy and John Higgins, are now members of *SNL* group *Please Don’t Destroy*.

It is not as if being a nepo baby is inherently a bad thing. Plenty of incredibly talented actors and actresses have come from nepotism, like Laura Dern, George Clooney, Angelina Jolie, and Jamie Lee Curtis. However, what’s irritating about nepo babies, and what is fueling our fascination with them, is the way in which they choose to react or address the privilege they garner.

Lily-Rose Depp, daughter of Johnny Depp, caused outrage when she spoke on nepo babies, saying to Elle, “It’s weird to me to reduce somebody to the idea that they’re only there because it’s a generational thing...Maybe you get your foot in the door, but you still just have your foot in the door. There’s a lot of work that comes after that.” This, of course, caused many to be upset with her, as it’s an opinion steeped in privilege. This idea overlooks the difficulty of getting a foot in the door for a non-famous person.

The concept of nepotism in the Hollywood industry makes us ask questions about what its future holds. Is the scav-



Courtesy of Creative Commons

Nepotism baby and actress Maya Hawke is the daughter of actress Uma Thurman.

enge for new talent over? Do others have a chance to make it in the industry, or are all the spots bound to be filled by prior connections? The Hollywood industry has become a toxic web of ancestral suc-

cess, making it hard for others to weave through the preset strings and ties. Today, “discovering” nepo babies has become the norm, it is the people that got in this position from nothing that are truly rare.

## Start the new year off right, not with a resolution

By Esti Rosenblatt  
Photo Editor

have been your first mistake of 2023.

Many people are drawn to the satisfying start of a new year and choose to start it off with a resolution. January 1st

seems like the perfect day to make a new goal; however, it’s so easy to say, “I’ve got the whole year! I’ll do it tomorrow.” Creating a resolution on the year’s timeline is unproductive, especially because most people’s goals are not realistic nor easily achievable within a year.

It’s exciting to fantasize that on December 31st, one year later, you will look into a mirror and see the ideal version of yourself. What was your goal? Doing a calorie burning workout five days per week for all twelve months; going from a C average student to one with a 4.0 GPA? Can any of those goals be achieved within the next year?

Resolutions are supposed to revolve around self reflection and personal growth But often end up being formed to build some ideal, yet unrealistic version of yourself. Resolutions are dangerous for people who believe that, upon completion, they will become that ideal self. This is dangerous because, for those people, the issue is a deeper rooted problem, and setting an unrealistic

goal that is likely to fail will not help them. Likely, when that person does not reach their unreachable goal, they will self deprecate and put themselves down.

Taking time to self-reflect at the beginning of the new year is a great practice. But, it’s unhealthy to say you need a certain result and you need it by December. Instead of setting strict timelines and grading yourself on a pass/fail scale, take the time you need to make productive changes in your life without the pressure of an overly ambitious goal. People should set goals for themselves, however, it does not have to be within a year.

A new year’s resolution doesn’t have to be a bad thing. Setting a productive goal that’s not backed by an insecurity or an unachievable goal to timeline ratio can be a super healthy start. Unfortunately, most new year’s resolutions aren’t productive, healthy goals.

The new year is meant to be a fresh, healthy start. Not one that is followed by strict timelines, criticism and overly ambitious goals.



Photo by Esti Rosenblatt

Students write their healthy goals outside LFA’s media commons.



Editorial: Study Spaces

Last semester two weeks before finals, a new policy was enacted prohibiting group study in the dormitory commons during study hours unless it was for a group project. This policy was put into place on the grounds of two reasons determined by residential council: Students were using this time to socialize rather than study. Noise levels were getting too loud in the commons and it was distracting to other students. Residents of each dorm felt uncomfortable with outsiders being in the common spaces during study hours. Getting rid of group study entirely created mixed feelings amongst the student body. Some were glad they had their common space to themselves, but this left a sour taste in the mouths of individuals who enjoy group study. Students who would like to study individually have multiple spaces on campus to do so, including the Student Union, Media Commons, and their own rooms. A few months ago, group study was banned in the Student Union as well. Ultimately, with it being banned in dorms too, there was no space

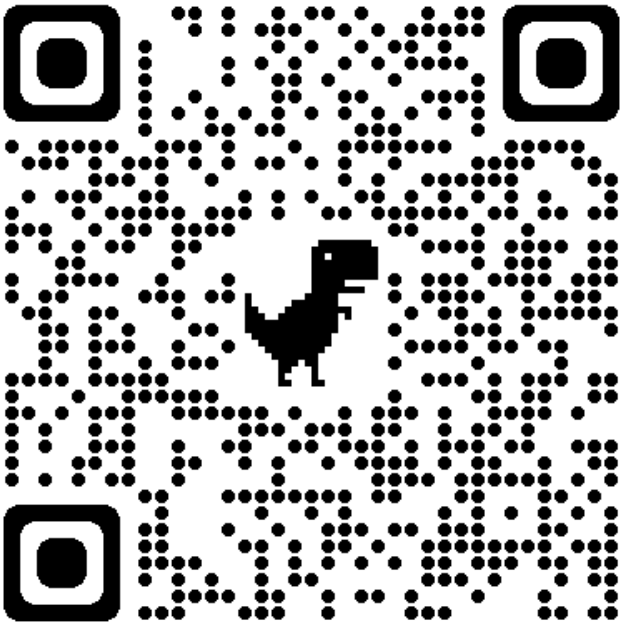
on campus for students to group study. One of the main reasons this created conflict was because of the mission the academy claims to follow. Going to a boarding school enables students to work collaboratively in times that normal high school students would not be able to. Another issue is that there was no warning prior to revoking group study, which created confusion in the student body. In response to dorm feedback, the proctors met with the Residential Council in December to discuss how the policy was impacting the students. Through this meeting, the Residential Council and the proctors were able to reach a middle ground. The new policy for the rest of the semester is as follows: Between 7:30 pm - 8:00 pm students wishing to host a “study buddy” can request permission to have a visitor during study hours from dorm parent/s on duty. You must be working on the same subject and will need to tell the duty faculty member why group study is needed (working on a group project, preparing for a test together, etc.). You may not request a

visitor just because you want to be near that person while working on separate assignments. Honors Study Hours students may still use the area by the STU fireplace to work and/or socialize quietly during study hours. However, this middle ground is unfair. Why should students be robbed of studying with their peers because of their GPA? Not only does this create inferiority complexes among students because it splits peers up depending on grades, but it still does not address the problem of students feeling deprived of time with their peers. Yes, students have the ability to study with each other after school and before study hours, but conflicts between arts and athletic requirements interfere with this. All in all, if not the dorm commons and not the Student Union or Media Commons, students deserve a spot to study with each other regardless of grades. Possible spaces could be the Upper Science Center, the Library, or Lower Student Union. It is the hope of the student body that group study will make a return before the end of the semester.



Saanvi Malkani studies in the Field commons during study hours.

Photo by Riya Kapoor



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EDITORIALS

Opinions of the staff are presented in the form of unsigned editorials. Personal views are bylined or presented as formal dissents.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

The Spectator welcomes responses to its articles in the form of Letters to the Editors in addition to letters on subjects of the author’s choosing. Please e-mail Letters to the Editors to Mrs. Krause at akrause@lfanet.org

AWARDS

The Spectator has been awarded several prestigious journalism awards in recent years. It has consistently taken first place in competitions against schools of similar size held by the American Scholastic Press Association and the Kettle Moraine Press Association.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Work hard in silence. Let your success be your noise.” -Frank Ocean



# George Santos: A con man & liar in Congress

By Claire Ireland  
Senior Editor

Elected in November of 2022, George Santos is the current congressional representative for New York's 3rd District. As a freshman member of Congress, Santos has been unexpectedly found in the limelight for one main reason: a vast majority of his campaign and self-proclaimed past was a lie.

Notably, a significant portion of Santos's resume is proven to be fabricated. On his resume (obtained by the New York Times), it was falsely stated that he attended Baruch College (obtained a 3.89 GPA) and received an MBA from NYU when in reality he has a high school equivalency diploma.



Courtesy of @santos4\_congress on Instagram  
George Santos speaks at the Republican Jewish Coalition.

Santos also claimed that he had worked for CitiGroup and Goldman Sachs for a period of time. When this information was fact-checked, the companies disclosed that they had never been affiliated with Santos.

Santos similarly has provided many falsehoods concerning his identity, especially in connection with his family. He has wrongly claimed that his mother was both a 9/11 victim and survivor at different points (refuted by the fact that his mother was not in the United States at that time) and that he had family members who were Holocaust survivors. Further, George Santos lied about being Jewish, as he simultaneously is a Catholic. Santos admitted to this in an interview with the *New York Post* stating "I am Catholic. Because I learned my maternal family had a Jewish background I said I was 'Jew-ish.'" This was most likely motivated by the large Jewish population in the 3rd district of New York where Santos was running. "Lying about your background to try to appeal to a certain constituency...how can anyone trust you about anything?" said Jessica Kapadia, Chair of the History and Social Science Department and Jewish Student Union faculty advisor.

George Santos has also found himself entangled in many financial frauds. Various GoFundMe scams have been con-

nected to him where he utilized known aliases Anthony Devolder and Anthony Zabrovsky (the latter in an effort to pander to Jewish individuals according to Santos's former roommate). The scams were in conjunction with a "philanthropic" organization, Friends of Pets United. Additionally, he pleaded guilty to stealing a checkbook in Brazil and managed to evade going to court as he could not be located until recently. With questionable sources of his campaign funds and a connection with a company Harbor City Capital, a known Ponzi Scheme, the list of Santos's financial missteps go on.

Santos's lies were subsisted by a consistent lack of care when it came to checking into his credentials. Opponents of Santos in the 2020 representative election opted to avoid opposition research, as they felt the expense was not necessary. Similarly, the NRCC (National Republican Congressional Committee) neglected to run a background check on any of Santos's claims. The Democratic Party even shirked the responsibility; they have to check on various parts of political figures' backgrounds including the education background of Santos, stating that universities and private institutions were more likely to share information with journalists than political parties.

This lack of fact checking, while not necessarily required but typically underwent through election processes, has led to the simple fact that George Santos is a member of Congress despite his lies. With more information coming to light, representatives such as Daniel Goldman (D, NY 10th District) are filing formal ethics complaints against Santos. Despite this, House Speaker McCarthy is standing by Santos, stating that he had been fairly elected and his lies were not far off from that of other House members who also had embellished their resumes. This solidarity has been emphasized by Santos's assignment to two House Committees: the Small Business Committee and Science Space and Technology Committee.

Santos's ability to be fairly elected to Congress stresses the fact that voter's can not depend on the government to vet candidates. Because of this it is becoming more and more necessary for the general public to vet who they vote for. Educating oneself about the prospective candidates within your voting district, even down to the mayoral level, is the best way to ensure avoiding electing someone who is unqualified. Kapadia elaborated, "You have a responsibility as a citizen using your voice to vote, to do your own research."

## Kevin McCarthy's plight to become Speaker of the House

By Theresa Fu & Claire Ireland  
Senior Editors

After 15 rounds of close-calls and relentless bargaining—the longest since 1859—the Republican representative of California, Kevin McCarthy was elected to be the Speaker of the House in the early hours of Saturday, January 7th. These votes spanned over the course of five days, with a consistent group of 20 Republican Representatives voting for a different Republican candidate, preventing McCarthy from receiving the majority of votes.

McCarthy faced one of the smallest majorities since 1931, with Democrat John Nance Garner in a similar situation. While the 15 ballots pales in comparison to the 133 rounds of votes during the 34th congress (1855-1857), the last time when the House Speaker took multiple votes to elect was in the 68th congress (1923-1925). Such an occurrence reflects the intense partisanship occurring within Congress, bipartisanship which was also present in 1855 and 1923. "The number of votes it [the House Speaker election] took represents how divided America is today," elaborated Suzanne Vaughn, History and Social Science teacher.

First elected to congress in 2006, Kevin McCarthy has since been a consecutive member of the House. After being appointed as Chief Deputy Whip, he was elected to be the House Majority Whip in 2010. From 2014-2019, McCa-

rthy was the House Majority leader, and went on to become the House Minority leader from 2019-2023. While McCarthy was considered a moderate earlier on in his career, he has tiptoed farther away from this line and closer to far right conservatism as the years have progressed.

This "moderate" association led extreme right representatives to work to deter McCarthy from becoming House Speaker, as they perceived McCarthy as misrepresenting the goals of the Republican party.

Such Republicans including Lauren Boebert, Matt Gaetz, and Byron Donalds (the other nominated Republican in the House Speaker race) who, amongst 17 others, utilized the Republicans slim majority as a bargaining chip. By preventing McCarthy from being elected, although momentarily, they managed to get their spotlight to spread their far right ideals, namely how they thought that Kevin McCarthy would be an inadequate and lenient House leader who would do little to advance Washington. Largely, the goals of this supposed protest outside of increased power for the far right were unclear, delegitimizing their efforts and making the actions more of a nuisance to politicians than a bastion of change. "It showed some real division within the republican party," said US History teacher, Suzy Vaughn.

McCarthy's victory, and now present position of House Speaker came at a cost; in order to win over the Republican majority, he presented a series of con-



Kevin McCarthy speaks for a crowd.

Courtesy of Creative Commons

cessions to far-right ultra-conservatives, which include lawmakers that deny the 2020 election and seek to reinstate former President Trump to power, known as the Freedom Caucus. To secure a narrow win, McCarthy pledged to accommodate a list of demands that benefit his opponents, amongst which included allowing any one lawmaker to "snap-vote" him out—or oust the speaker—despite his previous comment about how that would be akin to signing the death warrant.

Given the House of Representatives, unlike the Senate, determines what rules will govern the House anew every two-year term, there was a lot of push-and-pull for McCarthy to agree to rules that swayed power from one source to the other. One of which includes McCarthy's commitment to give the Freedom Caucus at least a third of the seats in the House Rules

committee, which organizes the hearings of bills. There's little the committee cannot do (even passing legislation), so long as the House is willing. This way, the bloc has direct access to the power to reform how bills are amended and brought to the floor, regardless of McCarthy's personal preference or "inadequacy."

During McCarthy's five days of voting, no speaker headed the House; bills were left un-passed; incoming lawmakers were without committees and unsworn in. McCarthy has seen a time of disrest before he even landed House Speaker, and the divide may continue to fester in the next two years with his authority residing on the stability of a snap, the Freedom Caucus rising in possible influence, and impending decisions involving raising the debt ceiling where concessions have shaped his standing (for better or worse).

# The ban on Afghan womens' education

By Avery Martin, Anusha Srivastava,  
& Esti Rosenblatt  
*Managing Editor of A & E, Managing  
Editor of Production, & Photo Editor*

Women’s rights in Afghanistan are being stripped away, and there needs to be more of a global spotlight on the issue. Most recently, Afghan women have been banned from universities under Taliban rule. This ban creates a devastating domino effect on the lives and futures of Afghan women. One Kabul University student explained in a statement to BBC, “They destroyed the only bridge that could connect me with my future.”

Initially, in the 1990s, the Taliban emerged after the Soviet Union withdrew forces from aiding the Afghan communist government in the Afghan War. Islamic guerrilla or Afghan mujahideen, the anti-communist party that overthrew the existing government, consisted of young Pashtun tribesmen from East and South Afghanistan and from some parts of Northern and Northwest Pakistan. Pashtun were religiously educated men that preached Sunni Islam, and they wanted to restore the order of their country by overthrowing the government and reinstating Sharia law, which they thought would bring back peace and stability to the country that was lost under the corrupt Afghan communist regime.

After the mujahideen successfully overthrew the government in 1992, the whole country—except the capital Kabul—was in chaos. Towns would frequently be subject to extortion and assault from local militias and warlords. However, people quickly turned their support to the mujahideen, who slowly defeated the various terrorizing warlords and militias. Eventually, mujahideen gained total power over many Afghanian factions; this movement would eventually become known as the Taliban. By 1996, the Taliban had taken over Kabul and now had



Courtesy of Creative Commons

Afghan women take a photojournalism course at a university in Farrah City, Afghanistan.

power over two-thirds of the country.

However, the Taliban quickly became corrupt as they asserted their own strict and repressive interpretation of law and order. Under this law, women had become almost completely banned from public activities, including education and employment. Then, in 2001, with the help of the US, the Taliban was overthrown. But, the US was not able to capture all the head figures of the organization, and the group, through the 2000s and 2010s, regrouped and began to grow once again. Finally, in August of 2021, after the US had left the country, the Taliban gained enough power to incite a successful attack on the capital, regaining their power over the country.

After two decades of being ousted from power, the Taliban reclaimed their hold on the Afghan government and have enforced many drastic changes with full force. Many of these rules have greatly affected the country’s female population. As of January 2023, women have been banned

from going to parks, gyms, sports, public baths, and higher education. Women have also been forced out of government jobs, and their salaries have been slashed.

In late December of 2022, the far-right nationalistic militant group had already taken away women’s secondary school education. In hopes of reversing their rule, many women and men marched and protested in the capital, Kabul, but were quickly shut down by Taliban officers. The Taliban regime’s goal is to “return” Afghanistan to adhering to stricter Islamic values, which, in turn, would make the country a safer and more secure place. In Afghanistan, the primary sect of Islam is Sunni. Under such practices, women are supposed to be fully clothed, covering their faces in public.

These women and girls are being treated as second-class citizens. Women are forced to quit their jobs and have to carry the name of a male figure, like their father or husband. These laws extend as far as only

allowing women to travel certain distances with male supervision and permission.

This discrimination against women has caused concerns globally, including at Lake Forest Academy and the Amnesty Club. Amnesty student leader Ambika Gupta explained, “Last year, we worked with Refugee One - an organization helping Afghan women - by holding a bake sale and raising about \$1000.” Gupta went on to say how they also held a drive for pots and pans, which they delivered to Refugee One on service learning day. She continued, “This is not just an issue of Afghan women, but of women all over the globe.”

The United Nations [UN] called the ban a devastating step backward and are deeply concerned. UN Human Rights High Commissioner Volker Türk stated that the ban is a clear violation of Afghanistan’s obligations under international law.

A woman’s ban on education will have everlasting effects. Dr. Mike Hall, a math teacher who got his Ph.D. in mathematics, self-efficacy and gender studies, spoke on this ban. “Women’s success in higher education has been dismissed. For many years scientists and researchers have said and believed that men are naturally better at math than women.” Through his dissertation research, Hall found that these unsupported conclusions were, in fact, wrong. Hall described his findings, “The commonality that I found was that the girls who were doing best in math had something in their background such as educated parents.”

Hall agreed that Afghanistan’s ban on women’s higher education would have lasting effects for generations. It’s especially important for young girls to have educated parents or a female role model to look up to. If the Taliban’s laws against women continue to populate at their current rate, generations of future children will be impacted as heavily as their mothers, sisters, and grandmothers are now.



Courtesy of @victorblue on Instagram

Women protest the ban in Shar e Naw park.



# The tragic truth behind the Qatar World Cup

By Tanya Ganesh & Jason Xing

Sports Director & Managing Editor of  
Global Perspective

Eight years before Qatar opened its doors to the 2022 World Cup, the nation was dotted with skyscrapers juxtaposed to sand dunes. Doha, the capital, was a cosmopolitan city of marketplaces and steel high rises near the Persian Gulf. Starting from 2020, Qatar's Education City was converted into a football stadium. Towards south at the heart of Doha's Sports City, the Khalifa International Stadium awaits as the Al-Bayt Stadium rises to greet the impending fanaticism of the crowds. Fast forward eight years to present day, Qatar saw the comeback and commencement of eight sport stadiums alongside a collage of neon lights feeding to the fervor of the game. Yet behind Qatar's grandeur stood decades of human exploitation.

Qatar relied on 2 million migrant workers from South Asia and Africa to host the 2022 World Cup. Workers built stadiums, roads, and metros, while providing security for football matches, transportation to the games, as well as service in hotels and restaurants.

With total spendings of \$220 billion leading up to the tournament, Qatar expanded its airport and constructed new hotels, railroads, and highways, in addition to building eight new stadiums. Migrant workers accounted for 90% of the Qatari workforce. Since Qatar won hosting rights for the 2022 World Cup in 2010, FIFA executives faced countless allegations of bribery in voting for Qatar. Similar indictments were also directed towards the 2018 World Cup in Russia. Migrant workers suffered from forced labor, unpaid wages, and excessive working hours. Leaving their homes with hopes of reaping financial rewards in one of the

world's richest nations per capita, workers found themselves sharing a single room with 24 others. Residential quarters included only one bathroom, no showers, and a mattress ridden with bedbugs. Working sites often lacked water, and many workers suffered from heatstroke and deaths by cardiovascular diseases.

Since 2010, 6,500 South Asian migrant workers have died in Qatar, most of whom were involved in low-wage and dangerous labor under extreme heat.

"Once people started to speak out against it, they [Qatar] tried to flip it, throw it back to the people that were criticizing them - back and forth - then try to change the topic by holding up a mirror to other countries in the world," said Sam Wold, club advisor of Amnesty International and Human Rights teacher at LFA. "They were never going to come out and talk about the human rights violations because they are the ones that chose the country with these human rights violations, with respect to migrant workers."

Qatar's labor system centers around sponsorship under the Kafala system, which binds migrant laborers to their employers. This prevents job changes, departures, and international travels without the employer's prior knowledge and approval—thereby confining foreign workers under a roof of exploitation.

Faced with growing pressures from the international community, the Qatari government signed an agreement with the International Labour Organization (ILO) aiming to target labor exploitation and structure its guidelines and practices according to international criteria. Qatar established labor dispute committees, insurance funds, as well as two treaties on human rights, including the right for workers to form trade unions.

In addition, Qatar ended the require-



Courtesy of Creative Commons

Migrant workers rush to work on al-Wakrah football stadium for the Qatar World Cup.

ment for workers to appeal for travel permissions and granted migrant workers the right to switch jobs without employer oversight and maintain adequate lifestyles via the introduction of a new compulsory minimum wage. The emergence of new reforms seemed to create promising outlooks for the impending World Cup, yet Qatar's labor forces continue to fall under inadequate enforcement.

Diana Bishopp, a member of the Girls Varsity Soccer team at LFA, explained, "We are part of the issue...I love the World Cup, but I am not going to go support an event if I knew how the stadium was built."

Migrant workers continue to fall under-subjugations by their official sponsors (employers) from entry to employment in Qatar. Employers withhold the right to appeal or renew the employees' residencies, and often workers experienced punishment when employers failed to renew their permits. An imbalance of power remains as employers can file charges or threaten for arrest or deportation against migrant laborers who left their occupations without permission, confiscate passports, and delay or withhold wages to generate illegal recruitment fees alongside loans with high interest.

For instance, 100 employees under Qa-

tar Meta Coats, a design and construction firm in charge of building the Al Bayt Stadium, were denied pay for seven months - as each owed between \$2,200 and over \$16,500 in salaries. The company left migrants at risk of detention and deportation as their residence permits expired, depriving them of access to health systems, contact with loved ones, or effective civil appeals for financial compensation.

Amidst failures of reforms and industrial corruption, football clubs from eight European nations urged FIFA to seek for improvement of migrant worker rights in Qatar. Beginning from September of 2022, England's FA pushed for financial compensation for families of migrant workers injured or killed in preparation for 2022's World Cup. Simultaneously, the Netherlands national team wore t-shirts printed with the words "Football supports change" while Norwegian players wore shirts written with "HUMAN RIGHTS" and "On and off the pitch." To further national initiatives, the Dutch Football Association (KNVB) announced for the Netherlands team to auction their shirts to benefit migrant workers in Qatar, and speak to migrants who contributed in the construction of World Cup stadiums.

"The problem is when you have an event like the World Cup—one of the most loved events in sports—a lot of people are going to overlook a lot of the horrible human rights violations that are happening," Wold said. "I think one of the key things you can do despite raising awareness is to make those connections to things that are happening here, so people know that this is also an American problem—it's local to things that are happening to us."

Under the scene of exhilaration and controversy, FIFA decided to remain focused on football, directing players and national associations away from the advocacy for compensation. For Qatari authorities, the potential remains for the nation to build on existing mechanisms to amend industrial abuses. Despite both parties aiming to prioritize corporate revenue over collective rights, it may finally come down to the fans—of their mother country—of football—to perpetuate the sport's positive legacy via a collective stand for redress.



Courtesy of Omar Chatriwala on Flickr

Qatarians gather in Doha to protest Qatar's migrant labor human rights standards. A contingent joined in the march as well to protest Qatar's migrant labor human rights standards.



# 2022 FIFA World Cup: Now is all

By Harry Luo  
Staff Writer

The 2022 FIFA World Cup ended with the hard-fought moment of Argentina lifting the trophy against France on December 18th at Qatar's Lusail Stadium. Yet leading to the final stage, the 2022 World Cup showcased a series of compelling and competitive matches.

Record-breaking results unfolded on the first day when Qatar lost a 2-1 game to Ecuador, becoming the first host nation to lose in the opening match of the World Cup. Following Qatar's defeat, Argentina ended with a heart-wrenching 1-2 loss against Saudi Arabia, shocking their fans and putting themselves in a despairing position at the start of the group stage.

Awakened from the loss, Argentina emerged triumphant from the group stages after two consecutive victories against Mexico and Poland. Simultaneously, Japan—despite losing to Costa Rica—took out two top competitors, Germany and Spain, to secure first place in Group E. Perhaps the most shocking result emerged as South Korea tied to Uruguay on November 24th and procured a victory against Portugal on December 2nd through a final-minute goal.

Most games of the round of 16 ended in a predictable fashion. However, the Moroccan squad surprised the world as they performed solid defense to force



*Courtesy of Creative Commons*

The Adidas World Cup 2022 Al Rihla League ball was the official soccer ball used in Qatar.

Spain into the penalties and won 3-0.

The quarter-finals contained four very competitive matches. Croatia and Brazil both scored a goal in extra time, and Croatia surprisingly won through a penalty kick-out by a 4-2 score line. England and France pulled off a competitive game, and due to a missed penalty shot by Harry Kane, England lost 1-2 to France. One of the most physical games happened between the Netherlands and Argentina where a total of 18 yellow cards were shown, the most in World Cup history. The Netherlands

came back from 2 goals behind in the last 10 minutes of the game. The game ended with Argentina winning a very close penalty shootout, 4-3. Lastly, Morocco stunned the world again by beating Portugal 1-0, making themselves the first African nation to enter the semi-finals of the world cup.

The semifinals. Both games were seemingly one-sided, with Argentina winning 3-0 against Croatia and Morocco losing their ambitions of representing Africa to France. This takes Croatia and Morocco into the third-place

play-off, where Croatia won by 2-1.

The final could be one of the most dramatic soccer matches in World Cup history. It started one-sided, where Argentina received a penalty from Di Maria, and Lionel Messi scored it during the 23rd minute. 13 minutes later, a precise display of teamwork on the side of Argentina earned them another goal.

“France fell short in its sideline defense in the first half when Ousmane Dembélé left an accidental opening for Di Maria,” said Zian Yan. “France had zero ball possession in Argentina’s penalty box,” Yan mentions.

With a two-goal lead by Argentina, much action happened until the 80-minute mark when Nicolas Otamendi from Argentina fouled Kolo Muani in the box, prompting Kylian Mbappe to score this penalty. Within less than a minute, Kingsley Coman stole the ball away from Messi, and France quickly switched to the left side for Mbappe to score the equalizer. The game progressed to the extra time with the 2-2 scoreline. At a hundred and eighth minutes, Argentina started a series of passes to progress into the penalty box; as Lautaro Martinez’s shot got blocked, Messi touched it back in. Ten minutes later, France received a penalty opportunity with a handball, where Mbappe again scored. This made him one of the few that scored a hat trick in a world cup final. The game ended with Argentina winning a 4-2 penalty and Lionel Messi completing his career checklist.

## Ronaldo’s new journey in Saudi Arabia

By Max Ma  
Senior Editor of Social Justice

The 37-year-old Portuguese professional soccer star, Cristiano Ronaldo ended his Manchester United career following the explosive interview with Piers Morgan, and officially announced his move to Al-Nassr FC, signing a two-and-a-half-year contract on December 30th.

This move was seen by many as a signal to the end of his top level playing career in Europe. His contracts with Al-Nassr will ensure that he is extremely well-compensated as he approaches his retirement. Many outlets cited Ronaldo’s salary with Al Nassr at around 200 million dollars per year, making him one of the highest-paid athletes in history. Ronaldo was still eager to participate in European leagues, however, considering the wages he demanded and was being offered, it may have appeared that no teams in Europe were truly interested in signing him.

Many others saw his decision as the start of a new adventure. In an interview, Ronaldo claimed his motivation, “in Europe my work, it’s done. I won everything. I played in the most important clubs in Europe and for me now, it’s a new challenge.”

JV Boys Soccer Head Coach, Ackim

Mpofu believed that as a five-time Ballon d’Or winner and a five-time Champions League champion, the move to Saudi Arabia is not a step down for his career. According to Mpofu, “Making the move to Al Nassr is a new journey. He’s done everything he needs to be approved in Europe. Undoubtedly he is one of the best players ever. He still deserves the respect.”

Eager to experience a new soccer league on a different continent, Ronaldo could bring a significant effect on and off the pitch for the club, the country and the wider footballing [soccer] world. “He probably can bring a lot more sportlike to that league in the Middle East of the region in terms of football [soccer],” said Mpofu. With his experience and the attention he gains, Ronaldo can certainly renovate soccer in Saudi Arabia.

His deal with Al-Nassr also sparked some controversies. The first controversy surrounds his first press conference in Saudi Arabia when he mixed Saudi Arabia with South Africa. Following Ronaldo joining Al-Nassr, his girlfriend, Georgina Rodriguez, will also move to Riyadh along with Ronaldo’s five children. However, the pair was never married. Their relationship to live together as unmarried couples was strictly prohibited by Saudi’s Islamic Kingdom laws. However, the couple was even-



*Courtesy of @cristiano on Instagram*

Ronaldo holds his Al Nassr Shirt with the club’s president Musali Al-Muammar.

tually excused from this law and permitted to live together, indirectly reflecting Ronaldo’s global significance and influence.

Despite all the controversies, this contract will provide a new and promising future experience for the Portuguese star. At 37, Ronaldo is already at the normal retirement age for a professional soccer player; however, Mpofu still expects Ronaldo to have

around 4 or 5 years left for his career. “He decides to start a new Chapter. He probably might come to the U.S, to the retirement league. Or he might finish his career in Portugal,” said Mpofu. Whether this is an end or a new beginning, Ronaldo’s decision certainly marks a brand new phase for his own career, the leagues in Saudi Arabia, and even the larger world of soccer.



# Deion Sanders and the future of HBCUs

By Djasahn English

*Managing Editor of Social Justice*

Within the football world, the name Deion Sanders or “Prime Time” is synonymous with the flashy showboating commonplace in the late 90’s early 2000’s. Sanders played 14 seasons in the NFL from 1989 to 2005, across 5 different teams, dominating as the first starting two-way player (defense and offense) since 1962. Deion Sanders also competed in the MLB where he played 9 seasons for 4 teams.

Aside from his clear athletic prowess, Sanders’s playoff success in winning two Super-Bowls and having a World Series appearance, cemented Sanders’ legacy as one of the most complete athletes of all time.

For this reason, it was a shock to many when the Pro-Football Hall-of-Famer announced on September 21, 2021 that he would be accepting a coaching position at Jackson State University.

Jackson State University is an HBCU [Historically Black College or University], which generally does not have the type of recruitment power/attraction that other D1 PWI’s (Predominantly White Institution) programs, especially power 5 conferences, have.

This is why the language the Coach Prime used when announcing his commitment to coaching at Jackson State University was impactful.

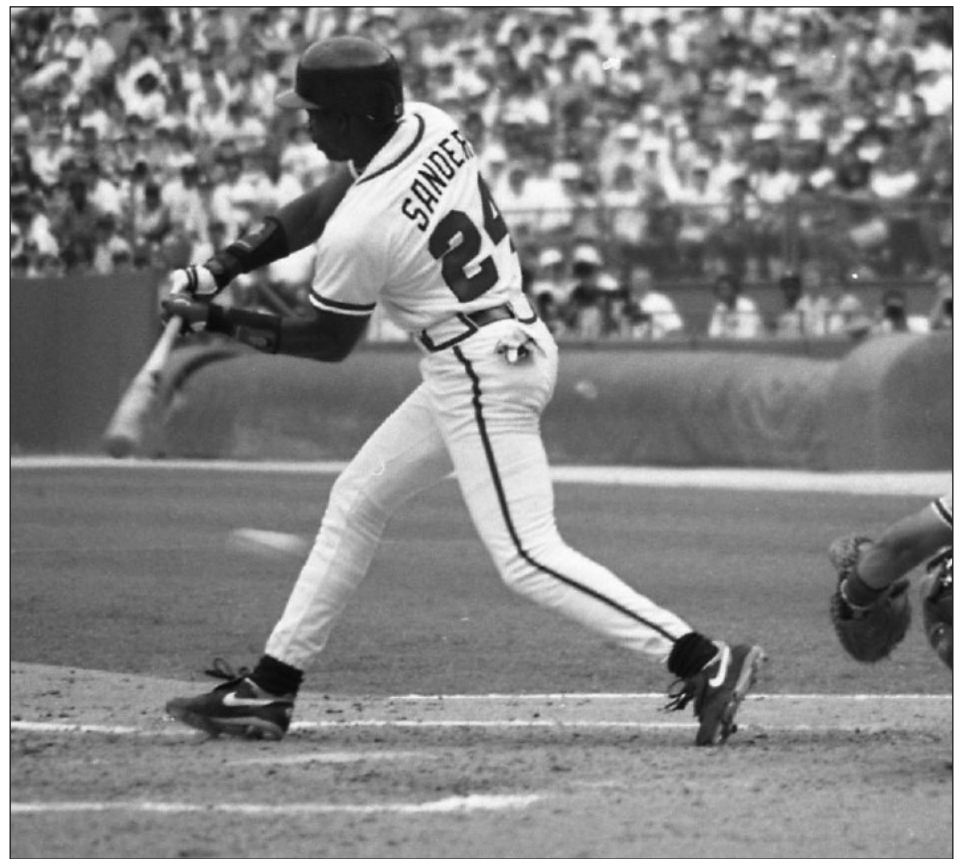
In a statement issued by Jackson State University [JSU], Sanders said, “It’s my desire to continue this storied tradition and history of JSU and prayerfully bring more national recognition to the athletes, the university, the Sonic Boom of the South, and HBCUs in general.”

That is exactly what he did; immediately there was a shift in the recruitment class and caliber that Jackson State University was receiving, dubbed the “Coach Prime Effect.” Prior to Deion Sanders arrival, Jackson State University had failed to acquire even one 4-star recruit (heavily scouted highschool prospects will be ranked between 1 to 5 stars). Yet, in the summer of 2021, Jackson State University received 8 recruits with 4-stars or higher, including Shedeur Sanders, the son of Deion Sanders at QB.

Most noticeably, two-way player and the number one high-school prospect in the 2022 recruiting class, Travis Hunter, who just may be one of the few two-way players to enter the NFL, committed to Jackson State University hoping to be mentored by a Hall-of-Famer with experience at his positions.

After a 12-1 season—the only winning season at Jackson State University since 2013 (only falling short in the celebration bowl,)—Deion Sanders announced that he would be taking his coaching talents to the Pac-12 Conference.

There was a lot of noise created by



*Courtesy of Creative Commons*

Deion Sanders swings up at the plate during a baseball game.

this decision about whether Deion Sanders was in the wrong or appearing to ‘use’ an HBCU coaching position as an entry level job to get to a more prestigious position at a Power-5 PWI.

LFA student Gavin Berlin ‘24 said, “It is clear that he is chasing a bigger bag, a job at Colorado will definitely come with more money, benefits, and facilities that he can take advantage of. But, that’s not entirely a negative. If I’m being honest he accomplished a

majority of what he said he would, and created a lot of noise and popularity circulating the HBCU football scene.”

As for the future of HBCU football, it is dependent on their ability to remain appealing to bigger names and higher ranked recruits. SWAC Defensive Player of the Year, and JSU’s star linebacker, Aubrey Miller Jr. called out to athletes being recruited, and said, “Your talent needs to come back home. You need to play for your people. If we do it you can do it.”

## ESGs: Ethical consumerism and investing

By Djasahn English

*Managing Editor of Social Justice*

As the health of our environment grows increasingly threatened, and social issues become progressively polarizing, it may be valuable to many to have the tools to be conscious of who they are buying from and what they are investing in. Environmental, Social, and Governance [ESG] policies have become more frequently emplaced by businesses and companies across the past 5 years.

There are many tools that the average personal investor can use to research and gain a deeper understanding of the company to which they invest. To be an ‘Ethical Consumer,’ it is important to know what and where your money is going towards. Similarly, to be a good investor, it is imperative that you know the ins and outs of not only the company that is being invested in but also its competition in that specific market.

So why are ESG ratings important? ESG ratings assess a business based on how ethical its actions are towards the envi-

ronment, contributions to social issues, or participation in global events. In the past, businesses could hide in the unknown with misleading statistics, but with the revealing nature of social media and the devastatingly corrective nature of call-out culture, it has become more profitable for a business to be active in pursuing social justice.

Activists, like Greta Thunberg, have actively protested against businesses ignoring their environmental footprint. According to the World Economic Forum, a survey of 330 sustainability, energy, and resource experts, showed that 82% of businesses believe that their organization will be more committed to sustainability in 2020 compared to 2019, and of those, 41% mentioned Thunberg, as an inspirational figure.

LFA student Philip Kavu ‘24, an avid investor, explained how he is selective when investing into mineral resource companies because of both their environmental impact and social disregard.

Kavu said, “With today’s climate I just don’t think it’s right to invest in a lot of the companies that ignore the direction the climate is going... I’d feel guilty like it’d weigh on my conscience for sure. Also as an African, I pay close attention to the mining practices of any mineral resource

company I invest in because many are very destructive and harmful to my culture.”

Recently, the positive impact that ESG ratings provide is at risk, as multiple states have begun taking action against them. Negative sentiments against the Green New Deal, or any fossil-fuel reform, have always existed, and it’s no different with ESG ratings—because of the attention the environmental section of ESG brings. Florida state Governor Ron DeSantis passed a resolution that instructs fund managers of Florida’s pensions to invest state funds without screening ESG criteria.

Ron Desantis explained clearly his disdain for ESG ratings. He said, “(ESG ratings are)...an attempt to impose through the economy, an ideological agenda that could not win at the ballot box.

Adding on, Arizona Republican Senate nominee, Blake Masters, dubbed ESG an existential threat to the American economy.

However, the value of ESG ratings has only continued to grow. Globally, ESG-focused institutional investments are expected to increase 84% from \$18.4tn to \$33.9tn. In the past five years ESG has evolved from something that was almost non-existent, to a major aspect of everyday investors research, and a valuable tool to any ethical consumer.



*Courtesy of Creative Commons*

Climate justice activists protest in New York.



# Damar Hamlin and sports injuries

By Beverly Fishman  
Managing Copy Editor

On January 2nd, 2023, Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin suffered cardiac arrest during the football game against the Cincinnati Bengals. He was rushed to the University of Cincinnati Medical Center where he received the care to be alert and responsive just days later. Both teams and the NFL fan base exuded overwhelming support and prayers for his recovery. While these seasonal and career impacting injuries are common among many other contact sports, the national story of Damar Hamlin sparked conversation and questions about the safety of sports and current regulations.

Cardiologists speculate that Hamlin experienced commotio cordis—a rare medical phenomenon in which a blunt impact to the chest causes sudden arrhythmic death. His injury is also linked to chronic traumatic encephalopathy, better known as C.T.E. which is extremely common in football players and is caused by repeated impact to the brain. In 2017, Boston University researchers diagnosed C.T.E. in 99% (110 of 111) of former NFL players whose brains were donated for study and 87% of all players at every athletic level of football were diagnosed with the injury as well. Although C.T.E. injury is fairly normalized in contact sports, the neurological damage and personal effects it has can be detrimental as it causes emotional irregularities and severe memory loss. While we see high

percentages of these injuries in football players, both commotio cordis and C.T.E. are not singular to just this sport. Other related contact sports such as lacrosse, rugby, and ice hockey have alarmingly high rates of the same neurological damage.

While no longer offering a football program due to it being discontinued a few years ago, LFA offers sports like lacrosse and hockey, which are intense contact games. When asked about how injury can impact a player, Prep Hockey player Tyler Gearman stated, “Injury is definitely something athletes always think about. The constant feelings of uncertainty and possibility for injury is concerning, but most players care more about the love for the game.” It is important to acknowledge the impact these sports have on players at all levels, not just professional, and it is key to remember injury is more than the physical aspect.

LFA Athletic Trainer Jeni Gorey touched on the importance of medical standby, saying, “Contact sports have higher risk of acute injuries, which is why it’s super important to have trainers at every game and EAP’s in place. We are lucky to have trainers on campus when so many schools don’t have them available.”

The question is posed: How can athletics be made safer, and is this possible? It is difficult to imagine rough sports with less physical impact, as the tactics of the game revolve around contact with other players. Many sports make it a point to enforce the proper padding and headgear to miti-



Courtesy of Creative Commons

Buffalo Bills fans stand together in support of Damar Hamlin.

gate the impacts, but even so, injuries are an integral aspect of being a player. Damar Hamlin is one of hundreds of injured players just this season, but his near-death experience has brought light to the harsh repercussions contact sports can have on physical and especially mental state.

Injuries impact players more than just initial physical pain. Recovery and reinjury can bring extreme depression and anxiety, creating a huge mental toll. Professional athletes already face an immense amount of pressure and continuous injuries, especially those that impact the brain, that can be truly detrimental to them. Even after they have finished their career, most players will continue to suffer from lingering effects. Ath-

letes have had their personal lives and future impacted and controlled by the erratic behavior caused by neurological damage.

People’s favorite professional athletes have more meaning than the game winning goal or the shocking touchdown. These players risk their social, emotional, and physical health for their love of the game, their team, and their loving fanbases. Corporations, managers, and fans can try to promote a positive and safe environment so that everyone involved may continue to enjoy the game. While the future safety changes in contact sports remain undetermined, it is hoped that players will try their best to follow protocols, get regularly examined, and maintain a healthy wellbeing.

## The Rise of “Mr. Irrelevant”: Brock Purdy

By T.J. Minsky & Quinn Knight  
Staff Writer & Senior Copy Editor

Mr. Irrelevant. This is the tag that San Francisco 49ers quarterback Brock Purdy was labeled with after the 2022 NFL Draft. Purdy was selected with the 262nd (last) overall pick in the NFL Draft – which is also known as the “Mr. Irrelevant” draft pick. The Mr. Irrelevant tradition stems back to 1976 where former NFL wide receiver Paul Salata began a series of events in Newport Beach, California with the player given the title of “Mr. Irrelevant.”

This nickname is nothing new to Purdy, as he knows what being doubted on feels like. Purdy grew up in Gilbert, Arizona, and played for his local high school, the Perry Pumas. His success at Perry was nothing short of exceptional. Throughout his three year varsity career, he threw over 8,900 yards and 108 touchdowns. His talent on the field led to the attention of several division one colleges such as Alabama, Texas A&M, UCF, among others.

On February 7th of 2018, Purdy would sign his letter of intent to Iowa State University. By no means did Purdy have high expectations going into college. He was rated as a 3 star recruit and the 839th

best player in the country according to 247Sports. Immediately after arriving at Iowa State, Purdy was faced with a difficult task: he was announced as the starter as a true freshman which is not a normal feat in the type of college football he was playing in. Throughout his time at Iowa State, Purdy threw for 12,170 yards, 81 touchdowns and 33 interceptions.

Purdy was seen as just a solid collegiate level quarterback, nothing more or less. His scouting report out of college was not attractive to say the least. NFL Draft Scout Charlie Campbell stated, “In the NFL, I think Purdy could end up being a quarterback similar to Barkley. Barkley (6-2, 234) and Purdy are similar in size and have limitations that make them backup caliber.”

Despite all of these limitations and critiques, Purdy now finds himself starting on one of the best teams in the NFL because of the top two quarterbacks’ injuries. He has thrown for 13 TDS and has an outstanding QB Rating of 107.3.

Purdy’s job is not finished yet though. He will look to become the first Mr. Irrelevant QB to win a Super Bowl ring.



Courtesy of @Brock.Purdy13 on Instagram

Brock Purdy was the very last pick in the 2022 NFL draft.



# Remebering the late greats of 2022

## Barbara Walters

By Anusha Srivastava  
Managing Editor of Production

Barbara Walters was a pioneer for female journalists. On December 30, 2022, Walters passed away surrounded by loved ones at the age of 93.

Growing up, Walters was surrounded by celebrities in her father’s club theatrical impresario. This early introduction to fame allowed her to build strong social and communication skills while learning to be unphased when meeting famous people, which would later help when conducting interviews. Walters attended Sarah Lawrence College – a liberal art college based in Bronxville, NY – graduated in 1953 and became an assistant publicity-direct for New York City’s NBC soon after.

In the early 1960s, she began her broadcasting career at NBC’s *Today Show* as a reporter, writer, and panelist. When

initially hired, Walters was considered just a “pretty face” on air, but quickly the network and her colleagues saw her immense potential through her intelligent presence and in-depth journalism reporting talent. By 1974, she became a co-host of the program. Then, in 1975, she won an Emmy for her work, which in 1976 got her a five year contract for ABC News as the first female anchor, and most paid anchor.

During her time at ABC, Walters hosted several specials, giving leeway for interviewing important and famous figures like Nixon, and all the presidents succeeding him. Walters was a unique interviewer who asked very direct questions and was persistent on usually evasive figures.

Eventually in 2004, Walters opened her own daytime talk show, *The View*, which highlighted a diverse panel of women, quickly gaining popularity. She retired after hosting the show for 10 years and over 50 years of anchoring. Over Barbara Walters’ career, she won 8 Emmys, was



Courtesy of @theviewabc Instagram  
Barbara Walter being surprised by various women in the industry for her appearance on The View in 2014

added to the Walk of Fame, and won 10 other reputable awards among 60+ nominations she received during her lifetime.

Walters shaped the world’s perception on how women are regarded when

anchoring, hosting, and writing, while promoting diversity. Barbara Walters was a trailblazer that paved the way for other women in the field of entertainment and broadcasting journalism.

## Edson Arantes do Nascimento (Pelé)



Courtesy of @pele on Instagram  
Pelé is memorialized in a tribute on Instagram.

By Nicholas Bisulca  
Editor-in-Chief

Brazilian soccer player Pelé passed away on the 29th of December 2022 at 82 years old. Labeled as “the greatest” by FIFA, Pelé has had an enormous impact on the sport.

Born on October 23rd, 1940, Edson Arantes do Nascimento received his first soccer ball when he was just six years old, around the same time he was given the nickname Pelé. Under the mentorship of former World Cup player Valdemar de Brito, Pelé quickly developed the skills of an elite soccer player, and, at 17, he was recruited by the Brazil national soccer team.

Throughout his career, Pelé made an outstanding 1,279 goals in 1,363 games, a Guinness world record. He won his first world cup just 2 years after joining the Brazilian National team and is currently the only player to have won three world cup titles (1958, 1962, 1970). Additionally, he is also recognized as the youngest player ever to win a world cup. According

to Tostão, his strike partner at the 1970 World Cup: “Pelé was the greatest – he was simply flawless. And off the pitch, he is always smiling and upbeat. You never see him bad-tempered. He loves being Pelé.”

Having grown up poor, Pelé developed an affinity for charity work. Throughout his career, he supported organizations such as 46664, ABC Trust, FC Harlem, The Littlest Lamb, and many more.

Pelé is remembered for a life beyond the field, inspiring youth as an iconic athlete, and becoming perhaps the most well-known person on Earth. He was included in Time’s list of the 100 most important people of the 20th century, was named Athlete of the Century by the International Olympic Committee in 1999 and even won the World Player of the Century by the International Federation of Football History and Statistics in 2000.

Today, we celebrate Pelé’s life as both a humanitarian, committed to spreading love throughout the world, and a world-renowned soccer star, who will continue to inspire all of us for generations.

## Dame Vivienne Isabel Westwood

By Ava Trandel  
Managing Editor of Features

Dame Vivienne Westwood, the pioneer fashion designer known as the “godmother of punk,” died December 29, 2022 at the age of 81. The fashion industry has been deeply devastated by the news, both by the loss of a talented designer and highly influential person.

For over 50 years, the self-taught designer has been revolutionizing the fashion industry and using her platform as an activist, often bringing awareness to global issues and politics through her designs. Messages protesting war and climate change are often seen both on the Vivienne Westwood runway and in stores. One of the defining

characteristics of the brand is that the radical designs aren’t reserved for the inaccessible runway: they’re meant to be worn on the street by anyone. She is credited with changing the nature of streetwear in the 70s, bringing punk to a scene that at the time was dominated by flower power. Westwood, in all aspects of her life and career, defied convention and conformity, and made fashion political when it never had been before.

Westwood has supported many human rights, anti-war, and climate change organizations over her thirty-four plus years as a designer, including the Humane Society International, War Child and Liberty, and Climate Revolution: a campaign she spearheaded.

Immediately following her death, Vivi-



Courtesy of @viviennewestwood Instagram  
Vivienne Westwood is memorialized in a tribute on Instagram.

enne Westwood closed all of its store locations and website in her honor. The brand recently announced the establishment of The Vivienne Foundation, created to preserve

her legacy and “create a better society,” by means of continued activism and making an active effort to stop climate change, a cause Westwood was passionate about.



# A review of *Avatar: The Way of Water*

By Riya Kapoor & Ela Jain

Managing Editor of Collaborations & Staff Writer

James Cameron's sequel to the 2009 box office record setting *Avatar* aired on December 16th, 2022. *Avatar: The Way of Water* quickly became the 7th highest grossing film ever, taking down the notorious *Jurassic World*. The movie features Jake Sully and Ney'tiri, two Navi people, the indigenous species of the land Pandora, that have now formed a family and are forced to flee their home in the forest and explore the waters when decade-long threats descend on the planet. The film has mixed opinions, and therefore, it only felt fitting to do a love it/hate it review:

## Love it:

*Avatar: The Way of Water* is nothing short of a technological and creative masterpiece. Not only is the plot of the movie an emotional journey, but Cameron was able to redefine what the cinema's future of technology is. The movie pioneers extremely advanced mechanics known as DeepX. DeepX technology significantly reduces the distortion caused by water particles and movement. Using this, Cameron was able

to create incredibly realistic visuals. Along with the marvelous technology, the message of loving family unconditionally and learning how to live up to familial expectations surrounds the plot. While in most cases a 3-and-a-half hour movie can be too long, Cameron does a phenomenal job at creating a heartfelt, emotional plot that the viewers are able to follow along with. The pacing of the movie was done perfectly. Jake and Ney-tiri's devotion to their family and protecting them sends a message of courageousness to all families watching. The film also teaches viewers to face their fears instead of running in the case of danger as Jake is faced with the challenge of either hiding from the powerful enemy or fighting against the evil. *Avatar: The Way of Water* manages to beautifully convey the message of family, protection, and courage, all in incredible visuals.

## Hate it:

While the technology of *Avatar: The Way of Water* is a wonder, the plot brings you a bloated, boring, low-brow mess brought from the mind of James Cameron. The movie follows Jake Sully's new family as they flee their home to a new water-loving home, complete with turquoise people,

rather than the traditional blue. This sets up an almost teen drama-like plotline where the water tribe leader's kids and Jake Sully's kids bicker, fight, are told off, and in a cliché moment that seems like it's stolen from the plot of *Glee*, one of Jake Sully's kids, Lo'ak, gets left behind in the ocean as the other kids run away as a prank. This brings us to the most bemusing part of *Way of Water*, the tragic whale backstory. While Lo'ak is lost in the ocean, he meets a whale whose family was killed by humans and is now shunned by the water tribe. This whale spends a lot of time going through his tragic backstory, adds nothing interesting to the plot, and is just another example of Cameron using beautiful visuals to mask his lackluster script. The biggest downfall of this movie is a villain so inconsequential

that his weak motive gives way to nothing other than cheap anger, Colonel Quaritch. Quaritch also has a human child adopted by Jake Sully named Spider, and we follow Spider in a subplot where he betrays the Sullys for human love. There was potential in these ideas, but the movie puts no emotion into his downfall. Cameron does not care about developing his characters, and instead uses them as fodder to show the beautiful water. The frame rate experimentation is headache inducing, the dialogue is out of an after school special, the movie is too long. Maybe there was a good film buried inside the amount of filler and awkward characters, but James Cameron's lack of storytelling talent pads the runtime too much to ever want to dig through the haystack to find the gold.



Courtesy of Creative Commons

*Avatar* uses highly detailed CGI to bring their characters to life.

# Unpeeling the *Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery*

By Finn Harrison

Managing Editor of Politics

*The Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery* (2022), the second installment in Filmmaker Rian Johnson's *Knives Out* franchise, has lived up to its predecessor, once again proving to be anything but your run-of-the-mill detective film. The premise that is thrust on the series protagonist Detective Benoit Blanc, played by a returning Daniel Craig, is that of tech billionaire Miles Bron, played by Fight Club star Edward Norton, who invites his wacky and ambitious friends to his isolated island in the Aegean Sea. This includes his ex-business partner turned enemy, Andi Brand, played by Janelle Monae; the governor of Connecticut played by Kathryn Hahn; his chief scientist played by Leslie Odom Jr.; a model named Birdie Jay played by Kate Hudson; Birdie Jay's annoyed assistant played by Jessica Henwick; and even an Andrew Tate-esque character named Duke Cody played by Dave Bautista-made all the better by his unenthused yet ambitious girlfriend played by Outer Banks star Madelyn Cline.

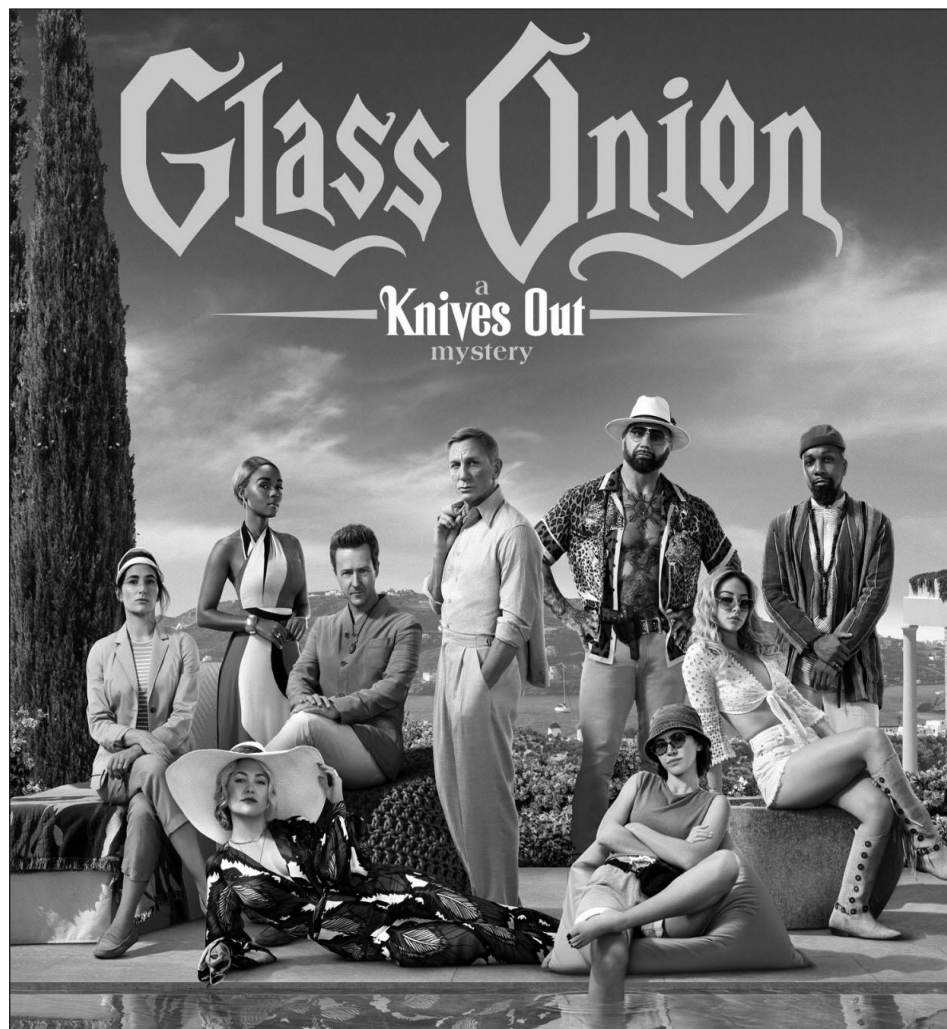
Well, to be frank, I liked most of the movie. The film, at times, veers between a satirical, usually funny, take on the insanity of our present times-specifically the sociopolitical backdrop of pandemic America-, and a thoughtful character-driven drama, both of which it pulls off well.

This in many ways reflects the original *Knives Out*'s commentary on issues of xenophobia and greed. That being said I believe *The Glass Onion* adds a refreshing new lens to these subjects. The film draws on the real-life quirky characters who exert tremendous influence over our world. Think of the Elon Musks, Andrew Tates, or

literally any other influencer. We see this with Birdie Jay and her scandalous tweets causing a child labor hiccup in Bangladesh or Miles Bron's ability to decide elections based on whether he gets his power plant or not. With the exception of Benoit Blanc, the film frames all of its characters as wanting something from Miles Bron, mostly

money. Throughout the film, it's interesting to see this dynamic play out as their greed-driven loyalty to Bron is repeatedly tested. Taken from this perspective the movie is a damning take on the transactionality of relationships in a money-driven world. This strange dynamic with Bron is played for laughs to spectacular effect as each character vies for his attention. Putting aside its messaging, the film does expand upon its predecessor in that it gives its main character, Benoit Blanc, significantly more levity. Through his relationship with Janelle Monae's well-developed character, we see much of his backstory fleshed out allowing us to understand him as more than just a Detective on a case but someone with his own beliefs and motivations. It also makes for an amusing cameo from Hugh Grant if that's extra motivation.

While much of the plot was developed well, by around two-thirds into the film one can essentially predict the ending. In this way, the movie falls a little flat compared to its predecessor. The original *Knives Out* had one sitting on the edge of their seat till the end, *The Glass Onion*... not so much. While it compensates for this by using spectacular special effects in the film's final scenes, it doesn't quite make up for the plot slowdown in the third act. While using its strong talent and spectacular effects to mitigate its lacking in the end, one comes out of the theater wondering if it could simply be half an hour shorter.



Courtesy of @knivesout on Instagram

*Glass Onion*'s poster showcases the main characters.



# The unwelcomed resurgence of 90s fashion

By Ava Trandel & Nghi Doan

Managing Editor of Features & Managing Editor of News

Androgyny, dark eyeliner, cool tones, and grunge street style characterized the fashion scene in the 90s and extended to mainstream culture. Designers like Vivienne Westwood, Jean Paul Gaultier, and Thierry Mugler popularized this streamlined punk style that countered the shoulder pads and vibrant colors of the 80s.

With these changing trends came an entirely new set of beauty standards and perception of high fashion. Not only were certain fashions trending but so were certain bodies to accompany them. The beautifully disheveled, pale, emaciated waif with dark circles and stringy hair was in – traits that were coined “heroin chic” due to them being associated with the effects of cocaine and heroin use. Looking lifeless was en vogue, and the general public was influenced. It’s no surprise these trends were highly problematic considering how they glamorized drug abuse, unhealthy habits, and unattainable beauty standards, so when they began to go out of style, it brought relief to many.

Recently, there’s been a renaissance of the 90s— in part due to the natural fashion and trend cycle that has always existed. Social media and Gen Z’s popularization of vintage clothes and thrifting has contributed in bringing the era back in full swing. Low rise jeans and ultra mini skirts are taking over runways, becoming fashion staples for influencers and models who have a great impact on dictating trends.

What has sparked concern, though, is not the revival of the clothes, but the reinforcement of diet culture and toxic beauty standards. The past decade has been ruled by the “BBL” body, popularized by Kim Kardashian and other celebrities. but, with the revived emphasis on thinness, BBLs are less marketed, and healthy, curvy body types are now out of “trend.” Kim Kardashian losing over 16 lbs in a matter of weeks in order to fit into Marilyn Monroe’s iconic birthday dress, a controversial move in itself, was reminiscent of the fad diet trends from 30 years ago. In 2022, Kate



Courtesy of @katemossagency on Instagram

Model Kate Moss in a set of assorted magazines.

Moss did a campaign for Diet Coke, and, although some called it iconic and right on brand for her, others found Kate Moss being the face of any product associated with “diet” alarming.

The return of 90s style isn’t the problem, the resurgence of “heroin chic”

is. It’s disappointing that even as far as society has come in terms of body acceptance – though not nearly far enough and often performatively – high fashion is still limited to very specific bodies. Clothes should be able to exist without uprooting society with them.

# Have the Oscars become obsolete?

By Ela Jain

Staff Writer

Award season is almost here, a time that gets film-fanatics and casual viewers alike buzzing about seeing their favorite movies, actors, writers, and directors get the recognition they deserve for their truly exemplary work throughout the year. The highlight of the season is the elite Academy Awards, colloquially known as the Oscars. But as viewership drops, and audiences lose interest, cinephiles are forced to face the question: are the Oscars obsolete?

To answer that, we have to go back to the origins of the Oscars. The first ever Oscars was a private dinner with a small ceremony, honoring fifteen exceptional filmmakers over the course of fifteen minutes. The next year, the awards were broadcasted over radio, and in 1953 it was televised for the first time. Throughout the early days of the Oscars, the movies that were nominated generally reflected the public’s interests, as well as the critic’s opinions. *Gone With The Wind* captured the public’s hearts, making 221 million dollars in its first year and still is the highest grossing movie of all time when adjusted to present value. Subsequently, it won eight Oscars, including Best Picture. Later, during the Hollywood musical heyday, musical movies dominated pop culture, and therefore, dominated awards season, with *Mary Poppins*, *My Fair Lady*, and *Sound of Music*

all becoming huge hits and winning Oscars, and *My Fair Lady* and *Sound of Music* winning the Best Picture award in 1964 and 1965 respectively.

This trend continued throughout the decades, with movies like *The Godfather*, *Rocky*, and *Rain Man* winning Best Picture, and *Star Wars: A New Hope*, *Jaws*, and *M\*A\*S\*H* being nominated. Interest in the Oscars started to dwindle in the 90s, as more and more independent and unknown films were nominat-

new era of oscar-bait was shuffled in.

Oscar bait is the concept of dark, gritty, unpopular movies campaigning for awards as to gain viewership. Oscar bait has been a concept since 1948, with the word being first used in a review for *Fort Apache*, a war centric western film. However, the Oscars campaigning did not begin until 1978 for *The Deer Hunter*, a commercial flop that became an Oscars darling, becoming the first real Oscar bait film. *The Deer Hunter* was a

*The King’s Speech* in 2010 using similar practices and winning Best Picture.

Now, films like *The Artist*, *Spotlight*, and *The Shape of Water* represent what Oscar bait is. While these movies are beautifully done, they don’t represent the interests of the public, exactly the way *The Deer Hunter* did not represent the interests of the public in 1978. As more and more of these types of movies are nominated for Oscars, the viewership of the program goes down. The few upticks in Oscar viewership also show that viewers are still willing to enjoy the Oscars, as long as they are familiar with the content of the award show, such as the 2003 with the win of *The Lord of the Rings: Return of the King*, or 2010 with the nomination of *Avatar*.

In 2022, audiences have seen an eye-rolling amount of Oscar bait, with films like *Babylon*, *The Banshees of Inisherin*, *The Fabelmans*, *She Said*, *Armageddon Time*, *Tar*, and *Triangle of Sadness*. However, it seems like the Academy is taking viewership into account, nominating *Avatar: Way of the Water* and *Everything, Everywhere, All At Once*, both films grossing over 100 million dollars at the box office. Time will tell if viewership of the Oscars rises with the more popular films this year being nominated for awards. Until then, viewership of the Oscars is at an all time low, and they have become obsolete. However, they are heading in the right direction, and we may be witnessing a revival of the Academy Awards.



Courtesy of @JamesJeanArt on Twitter

The poster for Oscar nominated film *Everything, Everywhere, All At Once*.

ed. However, the most viewed Oscars in history was in 1997, when megahit blockbuster *Titanic* won Best Picture. *Titanic* marked a shift in the Oscars, and suddenly, less and less popular movies were being nominated or winning Academy Awards, and with it, the decline of viewership. Gone were the days of populus concurring with critics, and the

turning point, as it started to change what movies were considered Oscar worthy. *The Deer Hunter* was the first gritty, depressing drama that used the Oscars to gain notoriety and praise, similar to the immense amounts of harsh and realistic movies nominated today. The practice that *The Deer Hunter* began became commonplace for Oscars hopefuls, with



# Influx of Canadian immigrants

By Richard Zhang

Managing Editor of Digital

Just a month ago, the government of Canada announced their plan to take in around 500,000 new immigrants a year, totaling an expected 1.5 million immigrants by 2025. Canada has been keen on welcoming immigrants into the country in the past, but this type of immigration rate—which would be 8 times more than the UK and 4 times more than the US—has caused unease within some residents of the nation.

For years, Canada has been open to taking in permanent residents in order to keep the population and economy growing. Last year, the country welcomed in 405,000 immigrants as legal permanent residents, the highest number recorded in Canadian history. The motives for these increases in immigration are fairly simple. Like other western nations, Canada has an aging population and a declining birth rate, and in order to stimulate the national economy and growth, migrant workers are needed to fill the gap left by this precarious situation.

Historically, Canadians have always been more welcoming than other countries on immigration, holding the highest percentage of an immigrant population among G7 countries (a grouping of 7 of the world's strongest economies), with 1 in 4 Canadians being immigrants. However, this doesn't mean that views on immigration have caused no controversy at all. In 2018, a fringe right-wing party, the People's Party of Canada, continued to claim

immigration as part of a larger Canadian infrastructural issue in the lead-up to the 2019 elections. Additionally, the province of Quebec also stated that it would refuse to take in more than 50,000 new immigrants in a year. The Premier of Quebec, Francois Legault, expressed his concern that an influx of immigrants would interfere with the historical French influence in the province stating that, "Already at [just] 50,000, it is difficult to stop the decline of the French [influence on Quebec]." Furthermore, two of the largest cities in Canada, Toronto and Vancouver, also have housing crises of their own, unable to provide all residents affordable housing due to a huge spike in housing prices. In

a recent poll of 1,537 Canadians, 3 out of 4 said that they were somewhat or very concerned about the effect that the new immigration plan would have on housing and social services. On this issue, Caden Ye '26 said, "In Vancouver, there are specifically a lot of Asian immigrants, and I think that this influx of immigrants really brings great culture in Canadian society."

Canada still takes in more economic-class immigrants (skilled workers, businessmen, caregivers, etc.) than any other nation, with over half of their permanent residency cards issued to skilled laborers. Canada's points system to judge skilled laborers, which judges a worker's language, education, work-experience, age, arranged

employment, and adaptability as possible benefits to the Canadian workforce, has worked well to help with finding immigrants who can truly contribute to the Canadian economy. Not only does Canada take in economic-class immigrants at a high rate, but they also take in some of the most refugees than any other nation. Back in 2021, Canada took in 20,428 refugees in, which was actually less than their ambitious target of resettling 59,000 refugees. All in all, while Canada would like to meet their goals to prop up their economy with the loss of much of the baby boomer population to retirement, Canada's own lofty expectations might be the barrier to realistically reaching this end goal.



A sign stands before the entrance of Canadian immigration office in Ottawa.

Courtesy of Creative Commons

## Winter Break: cold and snow lead to airport mess

By Marvin Ma

Staff Writer

Christmas without snow and cold isn't truly Christmas. Conventionally, Christmas has always been portrayed as a merry yet chilly time of the year when families gather and celebrate with hearty meals. The warmth of family gatherings is juxtaposed with the gently falling snow and the chilly temperatures, setting a scene of serenity and peace.

Christmas is the time of the year when people travel around the world to unite with their families, and this past Christmas was no different — except that the wind, the cold, and the snow turned out to have disrupted the travel plans of many Americans. Strong wind combined with heavy snow and temperatures dropping below freezing resulted in the cancellation of flights, causing major inconveniences for the traveling population and forcing many to resort to driving.

The temperature dropped 43 degrees within just one hour in Wyoming; Denver had observed the coldest day in the city since 1983 around Christmas, with a low of minus 24 and a high of minus 6; with winds falling to minus 17 degrees in Nash-

ville, minus 15 degrees in Little Rock and minus 4 degrees in Dallas even the South have experienced freezing temperatures; on Christmas morning in New York City the wind chill was forecasted to be at minus 4 degrees and minus 5 degrees in Atlanta, minus 17 degrees in Jacksonville and minus 19 degrees in Tampa, marking the coldest Christmas for Nashville in 39 years and for Atlanta in 37 years; in Chica-

go, the wind chill was forecasted to plunge to a bone-chilling minus 33 degrees.

According to flight tracking website FlightAware, at least 3181 flights, domestically and internationally, were canceled on Christmas Day, and roughly 6800 flights were delayed. As a result, a number of travelers were forced to wait — and even some having to spend their nights — in the airports.

Fortunately for the students at LFA, the

cold temperatures did not affect them and their travel plans as much. For some it was because they didn't have to travel during Christmas break, like Henry Gold, who said that "I do not travel on Christmas, so it did not disrupt my plans" — for others it was because they were traveling to warm places such that the snow and the cold didn't bother them at all, like Jorge Valle, who said he "went to Mexico with [his] family."



Cars are covered in a thick layer of snow.

Courtesy of Creative Commons



# India clutches onto Russian oil

By Ambika Gupta  
Editor-in-Chief

In October last year, 143 Member States of the United States voted in favor of not recognizing the four regions of Ukraine, which Russia claimed and now is demanding that Moscow reverse course on its “attempted illegal annexation.” India, however, abstained from voting, showcasing their continued resistance in confronting Russian invasion. Much to the



Courtesy of Shreya Sahai  
India faces serious pollution, impacting air quality.

dismay of numerous Western nations, today India remains importing Russian oil.

As Western nations impose sanctions and restrict purchases, India and China are now the biggest customers on discounted Russian oil. Russia is now the No. 1 oil supplier for India. Though India has issued indirect statements like the Foreign Prime Minister Jaishankar’s comment, “that the global order is anchored on international law, [the] UN Charter and respect for [the] territorial integrity and sovereignty of states,” India’s position regarding the war has been one of neutrality overall.

However, Sonali Srivastava, an LFA parent who was born and raised in India, said that “historical context is important.” During India’s conflict with Pakistan in 1965, Russia intervened, which ultimately ended in a ceasefire. Additionally, during the 1971 Indo-Pak war, Russia, once again acting as a trusted ally, signed the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. Srivastava said, “at the end, when no one stood up for India, Russia stood up” and that was in the “living memory of the people.”

Srivastava also added that “population pressure” plays an important role in the continued consumption of Russian oil. This year, India’s population (1.4 billion) has surpassed China’s this year, making it the most populous country in the world.

Throughout the past decade or so, India has proven to be an important world influ-



Photo by Riya Kapoor

India’s population is now the largest in the world with a population of about 1.4 billion.

ence. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was an important manufacturer site of vaccines. Numerous companies have opened factories in India, intending to diversify their manufacturing beyond China’s surveillance state. Srivastava also noted that in the 1940s “the first prime minister of India [Jawaharlal Nehru] had a major emphasis on making India self-reliant” and that India’s economy was largely “closed before the 1990s” from international trade.

Beyond the international impact of India’s consumption of oil, another debated concern is the environmental effect. Upon both of these topics, Jaishankar said, “since February, Europe has imported six times the fossil fuel energy from Russia that India has done” and “if a \$60,000-per-capita society feels it needs to look after itself, and I accept that as legitimate, they should not expect a

\$2,000-per-capita society to take a hit.”

Though, that is not to say India has not made any steps towards a more eco-friendly society. Srivastava recalled the “reuse and recycle” culture of her childhood, which was “part of your DNA.” For example, newspapers would not be thrown away, instead someone would purchase old papers and reuse them as paper bags. She also noted how the city of New Delhi has transformed after the Supreme Court banned plastic in that region. Additionally, most of New Delhi’s buses are CNGs [compressed natural gas], as opposed to petroleum based fuel.

Overall, this controversy opens up the large debate of the responsibility of developing nations in terms of climate change and humanitarian crises. On this topic, Jaishankar stated that “Europe’s problems are the world’s problems, but the world’s problems are not Europe’s.”

# Response to China’s new COVID-19 policy

By Jessie Ji & Cynthia Li  
Photo Editor & Staff Writer

On December 7, 2022, the Chinese government lifted the long-lasting Zero-Covid Policy, which gave rise to a massive outbreak of pandemic all over the nation. China’s Zero-Covid Policy, an approach the government adopted to suppress the spread of Covid infections nationwide for about three years, aimed to eliminate all cases through lockdowns, quarantine, and travel restrictions. To achieve this, the government established lockdowns of buildings, communities or even cities as soon as covid cases were detected. Major cities like Shanghai had been in lockdown for several months. Covid testing has become a daily iteration for Chinese citizens since they were all tracked by apps that record their movements Covid test history. People who tested positive for Covid had to be moved to government facilities or hospitals; even the people near them had to be quarantined. Harry Luo 24’, a Chinese international student in LFA, said, “Due to the covid restrictions, returning to China after summer immersion programs only allow me two weeks, and most of this will be eaten up by quarantines. Despite being homesick, this is the main reason why I didn’t return.”

For Zero-Covid Policy’s removal, the tracing apps discontinued their service, Covid testings were no longer mandatory, and people traveling from a foreign country were no longer restricted upon arriving in China. David Yao 24, a Chinese student at LFA, said “The covid policy is relaxed now in China, I don’t have to worry about buying a plane ticket, and I don’t need to be quarantined, which enables me to reunite with my family and friends earlier.”

Although the sudden loosening of Zero-Covid Policy may seem abrupt, waves of protests of Chinese citizens occurred in the late November in 2022 indubitably accelerated the denouncement of the government’s stubborn and inflexible Covid

measures. The restricted policy has not only burdened people with tremendous inconvenience but also with disasters. On the night of November 24, 2022, a deadly fire that broke out in Urumqi caused the outburst of protests, expressing the long-simmering discontent of this policy. Due to the unaccommodating policies, it took firefighters that had been sent to the neighborhood three hours to extinguish the blaze. Besides, some residents were afraid to leave the building as “without permit it will violate the law even if the building gate is not locked.” A man in a residential compound near the fire said to the BBC (British Broadcasting Company).

To mourn those who lost their lives in the

Urumqi fire, the A4 Revolution started. It is one of the one of the boldest and broadest revolutions, symbolizes the “blank A4 paper,” which represents a form of silent rebellion and the long shuffling of justice in China. The A4 Revolution did not only happen on the scattered streets of big cities; students from universities and colleges across the country also voluntarily joined the revolt by holding up protesting white papers. There have been 23 demonstrations of revolt in 17 different cities within mainland China, sweeping across the country with great conviction.

Nevertheless, China’s new Covid chapter brought by the loosening policy also has its downside: While the previous lockdown provided a short-term defense of covid, most citizens stayed extremely vulnerable due to the absence of exposure to the disease. Since early December in 2022, 60,000 people have died of Covid in less than two months. As the sudden shift of Covid policy has left its Chinese citizens and health facilities unprepared—a huge shortage of medicine was faced by various citizens, who then were limited to only six tablets per day in the drugstore in many places, some long term effects on Chinese economy and social life after the loosening of Zero-Covid policy is still unforeseen.



Courtesy of @northern\_square on Instagram  
Residents in Shanghai gathered at Urumqi Rd to commemorate people perished in the deadly fire in Urumqi, Xinjiang, holding a white paper in their hands to show support for the A4 Revolution.