



HORRIFYINGLY UNDERRATED

Some hidden gems creep in the catacombs of the horror genre

BY GAVIN TISCHLER
STAFF WRITER

Predictability packs no scary punch. In recent years, horror movies have been in decline with many heavily relying on only jump scares and shock factor. As someone who is a huge fan of the horror genre, I am going to share my top five *underrated* horror movies of recent decades.

These movies that some might consider “hidden gems” are recent horror flicks that not everyone has seen or even heard of.

Starting off the list is *The Belko Experiment*. The movie follows 80 workers in an office building that is locked down and they can’t leave until a certain number of them are dead. The acting is great. You feel for characters

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Can modernizing schools jeopardize student learning?

A paperless push could produce a pullback on focus, comprehension

BY BRITTNEY DIEHL
STAFF WRITER

Sixth president of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, Arthur Levine, states that “the country is undergoing profound, continuing, and accelerating change as it makes the transition from a national, analog, industrial economy to a global, digital, information economy” which, in turn, crumples social institutions, including education.

The issue of modern technology used in the classroom has led to contrasting views. Aaron S. Richmond and Jordan D. Troisi, both professors of psychology, may have a point arguing against the use of technology due to the distraction it causes, leading to poor classroom performance.

Richmond and Troisi explain a study that showed when teachers provide “free rein” for cellphone use, students finished with a half grade lower than others without that freedom.

Under these conditions, cellphone usage not only damages the user but fellow peers as well. An additional research study mentioned by the two professors notes that “it’s not just distraction that’s the problem; it’s the actual process of taking notes on a computer that hurts learning.”

The same trial states that the slower method of handwriting notes allows for any student to think about and compre-

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Scholarship program commends Cheesbrough

BY THE EDITORIAL STAFF

Northern Lehigh High School Principal Robert Vlasaty recently announced that Cole Cheesbrough, senior, has been named Commended Student in the 2020 National Merit Scholarship Program.

A letter of commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, which conducts the program, was presented by Mr. Vlasaty to this scholastically talented senior.

“It’s a really proud achievement. Being compared to every other test-taker in the country and being considered one of



the top scorers is a real honor,” Cheesbrough said.

Approximately 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the 2020 competition for National Merit Scholar awards, these students placed among the top 50,000 scorers of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2020 competition by taking the 2018 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. “Those being named Commended Students have

demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success,” said a spokesperson for NMSC. 🐾

INSIDE



There is a noteworthy election in the near future. If every vote counts, should 16-year-olds be included in the numbers?



See page 3 for more.

Marching band is 'More Than a Number,' but hits no. 1

Weekend competition conquered for the third consecutive year

BY BRIANNA KUNTZ
STAFF WRITER

The Northern Lehigh Marching Band has been known to develop very different concepts for their shows. This year NL's show is entitled "More Than A Number," meaning that every person has their individuality and personality that makes them more than just another person in society. Every person is more than just a social security number. We feel, think, and love. We are more than what we are labeled as.

Update: At press time, the marching band won the Tournament of Bands Region 2 Championship and best color guard. The band has now won three years in a row – something that has not been done before in NL history. They won with an overall score of 89.05.

Our coordinating staff has been known to direct shows that are very "out there" and unique. "We want to make other bands look at our performance and think, 'Wow, I wish we could do something like that,'" said Northern Lehigh band director Mr. Dave Carroll.

Along with having very unique meanings and aesthetics to our shows every

year, we also have been doing well, competitively, for years now. "We have been in the top five at Atlantic Coast Championships for almost the last decade. We outscore many bands much larger than us and we are the two-time defending regional champions," said Mr. Carroll. "I am very proud of our accomplishments for how small of a band we are and school, overall."

For this year we had abandoned the traditional uniforms of the instrumentalists and we now have the color guard and instrumentalists wear the same costume. We are all dressed like 'nerds'. From taped glasses to lab coats to geeky hairstyles, they did a good job of portraying our geeky characters through our costumes.

"We have costumed the entire cast before the same way in 2013," said Mr. Carroll. "With the number of people we have, we decided to costume everyone the same to make us look larger and give us a great deal more flexibility with regards to the visual set up of the program." There is also a lot of spoken word in our show that

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Guarding the Color for this year's marching band, in order of pyramid: Victoria Halkias, Sabrina Marsh, Brianna Kuntz, Trinity Miller, Brooke Delancey, and eighth-grader Kiley Kennedy.



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TECHNOLOGY

From page 1

hend what they are writing. This process is called *active* learning, "which has its roots in decades-old research on depth of processing in memory" and continues to trump the use of computers for note-taking.

Whether students or educators approve or not, our school and others are modernizing their learning through the use of modern technology.

Instead of textbooks, there are now computers, Google Docs instead of notebooks, and keyboards instead of pens and pencils. Yet, some choose to ignore this issue regarding the education of not only this generation but the ones to come.

Aside from cellphones containing the distraction of games and a form of communication, school-gifted laptops also present a threat to student learning.

Despite any school's efforts to block access to games on the computer, there is always that one unblocked website that the whole student body discovers. This discovery can then lead to controlled chaos. Despite this, taking computerized notes also seems to have a negative effect on learning.

When typing notes, students' brains fail to make the connection between typing and understanding what the teacher is saying. Although this method of note-taking is efficient and easy for teachers and students alike, what does this

mean for future generations? This leads any school system into a deep, inescapable hole.

As a race, we all have to adapt. Those in the Great Depression learned how to survive with scarce food, and men in the trenches lived through survival of the fittest. Man learned to build houses, install indoor plumbing, and create technological machines to make life easier.

However, will men have to learn how to adapt to their everyday lives because of these machines or will we simply plummet? Some may question whether or not the utilization of technology in classrooms is the reason for the dropping of grades and the slower learning of society's children.

Yet, society seems to discourage paper and pencil learning and, in turn, blames the teachers for the materials they were given to teach their students. They blame the students for their inability to learn when, realistically, it may not be the teachers or the students. It may be the items, the lesson plans, or the materials used to teach.

Administrations are encouraging items that may be pushing their students down. Society is constantly working toward advances in technology and education, nationally and even globally. After all, what is society and the world here for, except for advancement? 🐾



Could lowering the voting age offer a more diverse voice?

BY ALEX FEIFEL
STAFF WRITER

High school history class teaches us about the world, including politics. We learn about American government makeup and the government affairs happening today. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi recently brought light to this subject in a press conference.

“I think it’s really important to capture kids in high school when they’re interested in all of this, when they’re learning about government, to be able to vote,” she said.

Ms. Elizabeth Hannon, U.S. history teacher at Northern Lehigh, shows her class CNN10 when possible. CNN10 is a 10-minute recap of current events. “It is essential that we have an understanding about what’s going on not only in our country, but also what’s going on globally and the impact it has for us,” she said.

When asked about the voting age, she said, “I believe that 16 is a bit young to vote. Some people do not get a civics education until their junior, or possibly their senior, year. And in order to understand the voting process, in order to understand America’s political climate, you need to have a background in government and understanding why voting is so essential to our democratic republic.”

Students play a big part in this as well. They are the soon-to-be voters we would be talking about. So, I asked Kristen Guelcher (junior) the same question and she offered a similar opinion: “I think the voting age should not be lowered because kids younger than that are not mature or educated enough to make a smart decision on



the matter.”

I believe that 16-year-olds should be trusted to vote. They are old enough and have had all the knowledge from years of history classes — enough to make their own decision. Through meeting a lot of juniors and sophomores who are 16, I have found that they are very opinionated and educated on the world around them. Today’s

teenagers are doing amazing things, and it would only benefit our country if a younger audience voted.

We may be still adapting, but in today’s times it’s essential in our society that kids stand up and take our place at the world table. The world is dark and scary but new minds and ideas might help to shed a little light in the world. 🐾



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HORROR

From page 1

and hate others, and the ending is probably the best on this list. As the stakes get higher, you get more into the movie. It’s entertaining, gory, and even funny at times. It is a film that most people will definitely enjoy from start to finish.

In fourth place is one of my favorite horror movies of all time. *You’re Next* is a dark, creepy, and realistic story about a whole family being hunted down in their cabin. The movie is great from credits to credits and not many people have seen it. The ending has a twist that you will not see coming, it has some incredibly violent kills, great acting and a scary killer that’ll make you want to watch it again and again.

Coming in third is probably the creepiest on this list. *The Babadook* is a movie about a mother whose son believes that a monster is in their house. It may sound like an average monster movie but it’s so much more. From the terrifying scenes of the monster coming after them, and the twist ending that reshapes the entire movie, it is a lot better than it seems. This one is on Netflix and if you haven’t seen it, I highly suggest you get moving.

The second-to-last movie on the list is

Quarantine. It’s a found footage movie like *The Blair Witch Project* and *Paranormal Activity*, except it performs much better. The plot is about a reporter going to a fire station to document the life of firefighters. It takes a turn when they’re called to an apartment complex where a disease is spreading that turns people into pseudo-zombie creatures. The movie’s stakes build as they explore the building and try to survive the night. There isn’t much shaky cam like most found footage movies, the acting is really good and realistic, and the movie gets crazier as you watch.



My favorite and the scariest movie on this list is *The Green Inferno*. This movie is brutal and not for anyone with a weak stomach. The movie follows a group of student activists going to a rainforest to save the trees. Everything takes

a turn when the plane crashes on an island and cannibals kidnap and plan to eat all of them. The acting is amazing, the brutality is highly gruesome, and the movie is non-stop *fun* from start to finish. If you haven’t seen this movie and you have a strong stomach, check it out, especially if you love over-the-top, brutal horror movies.

There are many more underrated and rarely-seen horror films of the recent decade, but these are the most enjoyable and best ones overall. If you are a fan of the horror genre and have the time, you should sit down and watch one or all of these films. 🐾

WORKPLACE INK UNCOVERED

Once taboo at the office, tattoos are now common on the job

BY LILY GROOVER
STAFF WRITER

Walking into a gas station, buying a bottle of water, and some gum, I see that the cashier has two full-sleeve tattoos. It barely crosses my mind that anything is wrong. Now it's the week before my major back surgery, and I'm about to meet the surgeon who's in charge of the whole procedure.

As we shake hands, I see he's covered in tattoos. Now, I'm not so comfortable. Is there a line, and if so, where should it be drawn?

As of 2018, 29 percent of Americans have at least one tattoo, and 99.9 percent of those people have a job in America, according to the Harris Poll. Tattoos in a professional setting are something that employers have been contemplating for years. While tattoos are becoming increasingly mainstream, 60 percent of human resources managers say that having something inked into your skin can have a negative impact on whether they hire you or not.

Still, most people feel that they should be given the right to do whatever they want with their own life. It's their skin. Who's to say they can't get a tattoo? But, businesses do have the right to turn away people who have body art. They are to accommodate sincerely-held religious beliefs dealing with tattoos unless doing so poses an unnecessary hardship.

Like any other controversial topic, there are two sides to the argument. Mr. Robert Vlasaty, Northern Lehigh High School principal, is "totally cool" with tattoos, but he says there are some boundaries you can't cross.

"If you work at a traditional white-collared job, then there should be a certain level of professionalism due to where you work and who you see on a daily basis. I don't have any tattoos, but I'm not opposed to getting one. Since I have an administrative position, it might be best if I did have that tattoo covered up during the workday. But, if a student were to see me at, let's say, a football game, being in a more lax environment would allow me to maybe show my tattoo. It all depends on the atmosphere you work in."

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BAND

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conveys the meaning to the audience even clearer! For the spoken word, we have multiple band members quoting the lines on recording that we play at certain parts in the performance to bring the people in the stands into the show and grasp their attention. During the performance,

we all have lab coats on with random numbers on. The numbers are defining and presenting us as nothing other than that number. Consequently, at the last part of the performance, we aggressively rip off the lab coats to expose the colorful shirts we have on underneath.

Mr. Carroll describes it as a "celebration." Everyone is doing something different — yelling "I am more than a number," the color guard doing random tosses, the rest throwing their coats in random places. It truly is purposefully chaotic and gives off the best message.

"We are basically breaking every rule in marching band. This not 'marching band 101' at all with us," says our drill/color guard/music instructor Jim Corle.

Since 2015, the color guard has been uninformed as gypsies, little girls, wolves, birds, and now nerds. Every show has a different story to tell and completely different aesthetics and meanings. Marching band can be very difficult, me and many others in the band can agree on that. It is a time-consuming activity that can physically drain you sometimes, but I wouldn't trade it for the world.

I have been in color guard since 2016 and the amount of amazing people that I have encountered truly astonishes me. "Being one of the two drum majors this year has been a very positive experience for me," says senior Calvin Shelly. "I have been able to watch everybody in our group grow and develop into very conducted and talented people. I have made friends that I never thought I would make before but they have had such a positive impact on my life and I'm very appreciative of being able to say that I've met them."

I know when most people think of the marching band they think of a bunch of geeks. You know, the gross nerd with a bunch of pimples, that weird kid that never talks to anyone, or the kid that always smells bad.

People think that marching band is lame, boring and useless. These assumptions truly upset us, especially when it is so far from the truth. From the aching shoulders, loss of sleep, and aching wrists — it is worth it all. If you are hesitant to join, just go for it. I can assure you one thing — you will not have one ounce of regret. 🐾

New school counselor joins Bulldog ranks

Mrs. Raquel Hoffert brings beliefs of efficiency and cooperation to position previously held by Mrs. Lanshe

BY AVA ROSARIO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

This year, Northern Lehigh High School is welcoming a new school counselor, Mrs. Raquel Hoffert. She grew up in a small town in New Jersey but moved after graduation.

"I wanted to get further away and experience more," Mrs. Hoffert said, "so I went to Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers."

There, Mrs. Hoffert got her bachelor's in psychology while minoring in education. She returned North for her family and the seasons, where she went to Marywood University to get her master's degree in counselor education.

"I now live in Bethlehem with my husband and two dogs. We enjoy playing volleyball tournaments together." Mrs. Hoffert and her friends also enjoy playing in volleyball leagues, as well as running races and 5Ks.

Growing up, Mrs. Hoffert was the listener in her group of friends. She grew up in a single-parent family and some friends' childhood experiences influenced her interest in psychology. Mrs. Hoffert has been in the Allentown and Palmerton school districts, but she has previous knowledge of Northern Lehigh. "I actually know a lot about Northern Lehigh from going to trainings. I've seen people like Mrs. Chruscial there and others."

She wants to incorporate her skills of teamwork into her role as a counselor. Teamwork is especially important in the counselor's office as they work with many different people, including the principal and assistant principal. Everyone has to work together to strengthen efficiency and cooperation.

Mrs. Hoffert's approach as a counselor is one of active-listening: "I like to hear student's stories and how they experience the world. I like applying things that they talk to about to what they are passionate about after high school." She stresses the connections that students may make when discussing their real-life experiences and how that can be applied after graduating.

She wants to be a friendly face for students and executes this through an open door policy. She wants students to be able to come into her office and simply chat or talk about their feelings.

"My goal for students during high school is to explore different things such as different sports or talking to new people in different classes," she said. "I want to help them come up with a plan so they are not on their own too much after high school." She emphasizes self-discovery and understanding while also learning about the outside world.

Students today need a counselor who is non-judgmental, in her opinion. They need a counselor who will let them express their feelings and emotions. "A counselor is someone who can help navigate through those feelings and help students learn more about themselves and how to cope with things in the world." Things happen, and a counselor is there to help a student through the journey of school and life.

Counselors do not only hand you a schedule and guide you into what classes to take. They are there to help students with different coping strategies and be a listener. "I may bring up grades and talk about your classes, but I'm also going to ask about your outside life and how you function in society." The role of school



counselors encompasses more than simply academics.

"Many students think we're here to just talk about classes," Mrs. Hoffert said, "but I think there's more to us than that. We're a good resource for kids to use whether they're having a bad day or want

to know more about a certain career or major. Sometimes when we're going through a rough time we need someone to talk to other than a parent or sibling."

Mrs. Hoffert knew that Northern Lehigh was right for her, and she is excited to provide all the help she can. 🐾

Rapid health-decline needs to improve early

BY GIANA ROSARIO
STAFF WRITER

Have you ever thought about what health really means? It is not the same as it used to be, as the world is experiencing a rapid decline.

One obvious factor that contributes to your health is food. Fast food may be more dangerous than you realize. Even though we might have a little bit of fast food on occasion, the impacts can be costly.

According to foodrevolution.org, eating fast food once every week, you are 20% more susceptible to dying from coronary heart disease.

Whenever we drive through a popular city or area, we drive past countless fast food restaurants and think nothing of it. In fact, there are 74 McDonald's restaurants in Manhattan alone. You can't travel very far without bumping into those golden arches.

What other things contribute to

your health? Your mental state is another big one. According to psychologytoday.com, "Anxiety and depression are markedly higher than they were in earlier eras." Because of social media, school, and various other pressures, we are always pressured to look our best even when it's not who we truly are. It's hard to escape the pressure in this generation.

The media shapes our view of what is cool and trendy, and we have to listen because otherwise we won't fit in. It helps to keep a balanced view of what we see in the media, so try to limit the time you indulge in it.

Physical health is very important, too. People may not like to hear this, but the best way to improve our physical health is to exercise. Studies show that most teens get as much exercise as a 60-year-old. Just think about what a 60-



year-old does everyday...not very much. We waste hours of our day scrolling through social media, when we could be on a bike ride or spending some time with our family. We are only teens for so long, so make the most of it.

According to betterhealth.vic.com, if you exercise just 60 minutes a day, you are less likely to develop diseases like type 2 diabetes and cancer. Although exercising isn't that appealing, there are

simple ways that we can do this without even thinking about it. Exercising 60 minutes a day isn't all that hard. When you need to go upstairs in a building, choose to take the stairs instead of the elevator. Walking at school is already about half of your time, so spend the last half-hour doing something that interests you like swimming or basketball.

If the world's health continues to decline at this rate, our future will be even worse than we ever thought imaginable. For example, do we need 74 McDonald's restaurants in one city? Of course, people want convenience, so maybe fast food restaurants should have some healthier options to choose from.

In the end, being healthy is really just a matter of us making good choices about what we eat, how long we are on our phones, and how active we are each day. 🐾

OPINIONS

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Editorial

Save yourself before joining the statistics

Ignore the flavor traps. Heed the death warnings. Seriously. Cool?

Who's next? Has it come to this?

Granted, it took decades to fully understand the deadly effects of smoking cigarettes before they left the cool-factor behind in movies, TV, and diner lobbies. Yet, the facts are here – now – everywhere, and the growing number of vaping-related deaths is not enough to deter you from a quick fix?

It should be.

In last month's Slate, editor-in-chief Ava Rosario reported the scary facts and troubling statistics of the vaping (and Juuling) epidemic, which should be enough to make an addict think twice, or at least make the curious second-guess a puff.

One Juul pod contains 20 cigarettes' worth of nicotine. Do not fall for the "convenience" factor. You are just dying faster. Cool?


The flavors should not trick you, either. Mango, raspberry tart, and gingerbread cookie sound so enticing but should be kept for the dessert table. You are just making death taste sweeter. Cool?

According to Truth Initiative, America's largest nonprofit health organization that is committed to making tobacco-use a thing of the past, almost one-fifth of middle and high school students have seen a Juul used in school. Have you? Understand that by telling a staff or faculty member, you are not *ratting out* a criminal, you are helping them where they refuse to help themselves.

Speak up. Scream out. Not to catch them but to help. Tell someone.

Need more than just the numbers? Fine. The deaths are piling up. Cool?

Last week, a Bronx boy, 17 years old, was the youngest of 23 people who have now died of vaping-related illnesses. Several states, including New York, have responded to the outbreak, and to the increasing rate of teenage vaping, with efforts to ban flavored e-cigarette pods that are especially popular with children. The Trump administration even said last month that it was considering a federal ban on flavored e-cigarettes.

But why wait for the ban? Save yourself now. Do not join the ranks of "national statistic." Cool? 

I look so good on my own

...why didn't I think of this sooner?

BY BREANNA HOPPE
STAFF WRITER

Throughout life, things are thrown at us from all different directions. The most difficult things to overcome are sent to those strongest to conquer them. Teenagers deal with things along the lines of heartbreak, struggles with self love, mental health issues, and everything from the highs to the lows.

Someone once said, "So many years of education yet nobody taught us how to love ourselves." Heartbreak and self-love tend to come together. After spending nearly a year in an isolated, trapped state of mind, breaking free needed to happen.

People imagine themselves loving someone they meet at a young age for an eternity. Some people may find their soulmate at a young age; for others, they become their own when there's nowhere else to turn.

A relationship with yourself is truly incomparable to a relationship with anyone in high school. Many people's minds are unfortunately filled with the idea that a relationship is the only key to their happiness. The truth is, we do not know who we are. At this age, our lives are unpredictable and certainly not in one place. People barely know who they are or who they will continue to become.

Why should we rely on someone else to help us figure that out? Life is a much more beautiful experience to explore when we are on our own at this age. You are given one life to live and so many incredible opportunities... cherish some of these things on your own.

Throughout the past four months of my life, I have become a person that I never imagined being. On a journey of healing, progressing, and changing as a person, for the first time in my life I am incredibly proud of who I am. Toxic relationships can heavily influence your life in a negative aspect. Remaining in a toxic relationship takes a toll not only on your mentality, but the person you are.

During the entirety of my sophomore year, I was not the same person. Isolation became the only thing I had known. When people are hurt or unhappy, they tend to distance themselves from the things that truly bring happiness into their life. Toxicity is overwhelming; conquering it is incredible.


Growth comes in many different forms. Healing is a process that only the strongest can learn. There's a peri-

in a toxic relationship, I had been overwhelmed with the belief that there was nowhere to turn. Up until the point of freeing yourself from toxicity, you will never reach the happiest state of mind. Throughout the past four months of life, independence and self-love has been key.

Just a few months ago, I was under the impression that the unhappiness I had dealt with was all I deserved. Months later, I have surrounded myself with remarkable people who truly love me. I no longer wake up in the morning with the lingering question, "Am I good enough?" My family has pushed me through painful times and has devoted all they can to help me grow as a person. The way I see life has entirely changed. Happiness is deserved. I have become beyond involved in and outside of school and want nothing more than to pursue genuine happiness. Everybody deserves to feel like somebody. There will no longer be days where I am under the belief that I don't deserve every ounce of happiness I can get. Where there's rain,

there's flowers. No matter what the circumstance is, never lose yourself.

People around each and every one of us are struggling with something. Whether problems are bigger or smaller than others, everyone is going through something. There's never a scenario where someone's problems deserve to be neglected. Unhealthy relationships are a horrible environment for those suffering in one. There is no such thing as no *escape*. If you are someone struggling in silence, you are never alone.

The happiest people on the outside can be the ones battling the hardest mentally. Love is an incredible thing and loving yourself is beautiful. I am beyond proud of the resilient, empowering person I have become. The journey I'm on has only just begun. Embrace the journey your life will take you on. Cherish the highs and the lows, the time is now. *Carpe diem.* 



od where you believe happiness will never be felt again. One day, you wake up and the realization hits. Happiness truly occurs when you discover who you are. Life has been challenging. Finding myself was an adventure that I would relive one million times over again. Discovering the person you desire to become is a long journey. Once you realize life can be amazing on your own, it changes forever. Living on your own is a perfect way to discover yourself. Up until I did this, I held the belief that relying on others was my only source of happiness. Independence has brought me far more happiness than being surrounded by negative, draining energy. One individual can influence not only your happiness, but mental health.

Mental health held an incredible amount of importance throughout my life. It is an essential thing that needs to be taken far more seriously. Those who surround you play an extremely important role in it, too. While being

OPINIONS

I may go against your morals, but that's OK. Move on.

Clearing up some of the transgender clouds

BY CODY GRABARITS
STAFF WRITER

What exactly is being transgender? Well, being transgender by definition is “relating to a person whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with their birth sex.”

Being trans brings along gender dysphoria, which means “the

condition of feeling one's emotional and psychological identity to be at variance with one's birth sex.” Basically, it means that someone is terribly uncomfortable and extremely aware that their body does not match the way that they feel inside.

As a transgender male, I would like to talk to you about the importance of certain things and maybe help you understand a little better. I can't get down to the fine details of trans women or nonbinary people, but I can give an overview of such.

The first thing that I want to say is that it is okay to ask trans people questions! Many welcome it because it's better than people just assuming. Asking someone what their preferred pronouns or name is not rude.

Humans are genuinely curious

creatures, so it's expected for people to have questions, but they have to still be appropriate. Asking a trans person what's *in their pants* or *how they have sex* is inappropriate and uncalled for. Unless you're going to be their significant other, you have no reason to ask.

Pronouns. Pronouns are very important to a transgender person because using the wrong ones can send a person's dysphoria skyrocketing. The same can go if they hear their birth name, often referred to as a dead name. It's important to use the correct name and pronouns because if not, there's a high chance of making someone uncomfortable and dysphoric. Without anyone telling them, trans people understand their body doesn't match their gender, so they change their pronouns and name to fit what they feel.

Some trans people don't pass well, meaning they still look like their birth gender. Just because someone looks masculine/feminine doesn't give you the right to purposefully misgender them. If you know a trans person that passes well, I just want to tell you right now that saying *I couldn't even tell* or *you pass so well!* isn't a compliment.

Some take it that way, but it isn't really because that's the whole point of packing, tucking, etc. You aren't supposed to know. The same thing goes when they start hormones or surgically transitioning. But some people can't do that. Some are incapable of medically

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Through My Lens

By Brooke Bower



Photography is a great way to express yourself without showing your face. It's a way to show what you can do and have fun doing it. I do it because it's what I love and I want to continue it as a profession. But I also have a passion for writing, so I put the two together and I aspire to be a photojournalist. It's my way of showing who I am without saying a word, and going to LCTI and being on *The Slate* staff allows me to do so.

At LCTI, I have access to a studio, camera, and computers with various software to edit. I have the freedom to go on photoshoots outside and inside the school and sometimes in the classes. We are also given opportunities to job-shadow a professional photographer that advertises for the school, and then we get the chance to shoot photos for the same thing.

To take a photo like the ones printed here, you need to freeze the action that is happening; also, you need a light shining above the fish tank and a black background. The settings of a camera can be confusing at first, but there are little tricks to remember them. To freeze the action of the object, there is a setting called shutter speed, and the higher the number, the clearer the object will be. Photography isn't just about positioning someone and taking a picture. You see something that other people don't.

For example, dandelions — some people look at it like it's a weed, but a photographer may see the detail in the pollen and want to get so up-close you won't even know that it is a dandelion. Photography is an eye-opener because you're more observant of your surroundings and you see the little things. 🐾



All Photos by Brooke Bower

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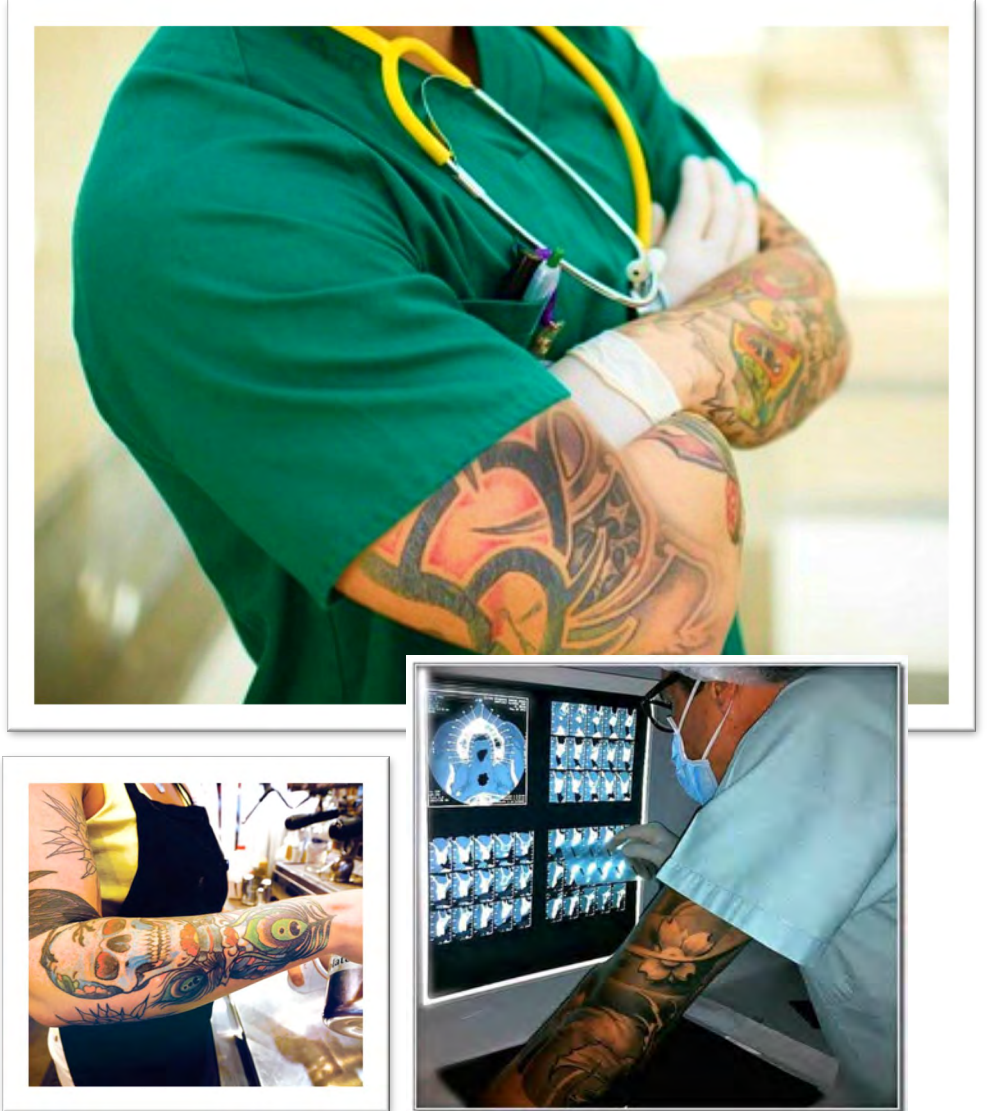
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Mrs. Diana Detweiler and Mrs. Shelly Pender (above) join Mrs. Kathy Nolin to help make the NL office run like clockwork.

Do tattoos diminish the performance?



INK'd

From page 4

While keeping a professional appearance, according to Mr. Vlasaty, tattoos are acceptable at the appropriate time and place. However, having vulgar or inappropriate tattoos crosses that line of professionalism.

Some individuals might be OK with seeing a tattoo in a profession, but sometimes people think that tattoos cause distraction. A close family friend of mine, John Annoni, has worked at Trexler Middle School in Allentown for 31 years and is the CEO of a volunteer corporation called Camp Compass. His opinions on tattoos in the workplace, especially in an educational environment, are quite the opposite.

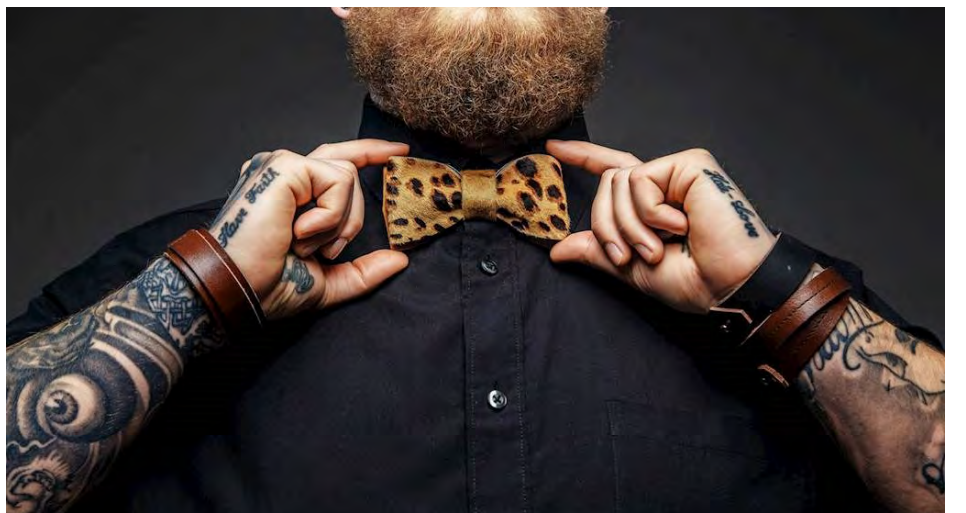
“A tattoo is reserved for mature judgment because of its personal meaning and permanence. School is not a place for a

personal exhibit; it is a professional setting where a visual representation on a body part can be misinterpreted by a young mind,” he said. “They simply should be covered during the workday and revealed as the adult owner sees fit outside of the workplace.”

Even though his opinion toward tattoos says they don't belong in a professional setting, especially one with young minds, Mr. Annoni has 14 tattoos. None of them has ever been seen by a student.

As society changes, people must change with it. Being in the 21st century, many people are getting decorative with their skin. If we keep growing at the rate we are, then it will be inevitable to find an employee without at least one tattoo.

The statistics are slowly shifting with less stigmatism towards those with tattoos. People need to understand that it is up to the person to decide what is right for their own life — a change that is much needed in our fast-paced society. 🐾



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Understanding the tears of our fallen ‘heroes’

Weepy, saddened Avengers fans prepared me for Rambo’s final standoff

BY CHRISTOPHER BARNES
MANAGING ADVISER

I get it now. It took until the conclusion of one of my favorite movie franchises, but I get it now.

Last year, the buzz around the final scenes of “Avengers: Endgame” seemed silly. Fans were posting Instagram stories of their tears, reflections and emotional breakdowns regarding the sacrifice they just witnessed on screen. One of their fictitious heroes, *played by an actor*, had retired to the great superhero gig in the sky.

C’mon, kids, I thought. *It’s just a movie*. Then I got schooled by Elye Albert and Kenneth Dyer, sophomores at the time. They explained, in great detail, why this tragic demise was affecting the fanbase so closely. These were characters they had followed throughout the series, between the battles, through thick and thin, and now, one of them was gone with such a dignified goodbye.

And BOOM. This was my Rambo.

“The Rambo movies have defined American action culture since before the sort of action movies we know now even really existed,” writes Cinemark.com. “Beginning with ‘First Blood’ in 1982, Sylvester Stallone’s character has evolved from a tormented veteran suffering [Post Traumatic Stress Disorder] into a heavily-muscled *avenger* of America’s wartime losses, and finally into a monster with ferocious killing instincts that supersede even his own humanity.”

What sets the character apart from any other in a Vietnam War-related movie — *Apocalypse Now*, *Platoon*, *Full Metal Jacket* — is the unrelenting grip that the PTSD held on so many wartime soldiers



Spoiler Alert: Rambo does not die in the fifth and (hopefully) final installment of the Stallone franchise. Also, my eyes watered a bit. So?

who returned from the jungle. (*The Deer Hunter* was the only other one which came close to displaying such mental agony, but it did not create such an iconic protagonist).

My connection revolved around a story I have told to students for years. My Uncle Sonny never returned home from the war. The plane he captained was shot down somewhere over the Vietnam mountains and neither he nor the crew (or any part of the plane) was found for decades. Part miracle, and (much more) part of local historian Mr. Lewis Schmidt, my uncle’s partial remains were found shortly after my dad passed away in 2011. (The cool emotional twist is hoping my

dad went looking for his brother. I’m not a religious believer but it was a comforting thought).

I always wondered had my Uncle Sonny returned from the war, would he have been constantly traumatized like the fictional character I had followed for years. For this reason, I wanted John Rambo to simply find peace. No more trouble, no more torment, no more mental suffering from the hell inside his head.

So at the end of 2008’s *Rambo IV*, I was happy to see him return home to Bowie, Arizona, and, as the credits rolled, peacefully walk down the long and winding road to his father’s farm — unaware of what would be there. I did not *need* to

know. My hero was home.

Therefore, I was anxious about a fifth-and-final (dare I even say unnecessary) installment of the franchise. Did Stallone, now 73, really have to create one final war?

I immediately thought of those Avenger tears. What if my guy did not make it? What if, after all these years full of stoic-faced, catatonic, trauma-induced existence, he met his match? Surely, Hollywood would not pull a *Tony Stark* on me.

I was nervous, but excited for the 11:15 a.m. show on opening day. The

See Rambo, page 13

Has Hollywood’s silver screen lost all its luster?

BY AVA ROSARIO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

The silver screen is going bronze as the film industry has begun to suffer from the epidemic of predictability. Laziness has become too apparent to ignore, a sense of originality that has been lost over the years.

Yes, one story always takes from another, but today’s tales have become so redundant and predictable, and predictability can only be good when done right.

Older movies hold merit that modern films simply do not. I rarely walk out of a movie theater today thinking that what I just watched will become a classic. But who knows, our parents could have very well done the same after watching *Ferris Bueller’s Day Off*. There is something about movies even two decades ago that simply made them better. My opinion is that today’s stories have become lost in production.



To get to the bottom of this, I spoke with Video Production teacher and co-producer of “The Dog Dish” Mr. Kern: “There’s a lot of factors to consider. I think back then there was a little bit more care given. Nowadays it’s very easy to fix things on the computer. Back then you had to make sure what you were seeing through your camera is what you wanted to see.”

Computer-generated imagery (CGI) has infiltrated and destroyed filmmaking. It’s not about the story anymore; it is about how much CGI a production can fit into its budget. It doesn’t even have to look good anymore, and sometimes, it

just isn’t necessary. Take *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn – Part 2*. Not only was the CGI baby completely unnecessary but it was so bad that it made what would typically be considered a little angel look like something straight from a nightmare. We’re not experimenting as much as we had to decades before, using technology to better build or portray a story. Just relying on the backbone of special effects.

Acting is no longer about talent. In today’s media-driven world, companies are looking for handsome faces and photoshoot-ready bodies. Modern streaming services are churning out new media every day. Requiring so many actors ultimately leads to including some subpar ones. Deadlines don’t change and time is money, so expectations have to be lowered to accommodate so many new films and shows.

The Oscars has also lost some merit.

See Films, page 15

SPORTS



Page 10

Flippin' out

Should Major League Baseball place fines on these rightfully-arrogant celebrations or should batters be permitted to toss their pride in the air?



BY BRIANNA SCHUCK
SPORTS EDITOR

In today's day and age, it is hard to find a topic that isn't debated way too much for such a silly reason, or in this case, we question why it is even debated at all. Five, 10, even 15 years ago, "over-celebrating" was not a thing, especially in the sports world. Yet, today, players in the NFL get flagged for taking pride in themselves and what they accomplished. It doesn't end there, though, as it happens in different shapes and sizes across different playing fields.

Alike to getting flagged in the NFL, many MLB players have been getting fines or possibly thrown out of a game because of something so trivial: bat flips.

Now if you don't watch baseball or you aren't a fan of it, I am sure it sounds quite dangerous and you can see why players are getting fined for it. However, that isn't the reason why they are getting fined; they are getting fined because of "excessive celebrating." Let that sink in.

These grown men were once little boys, watching their favorite baseball players on TV. At that age, they knew they wanted to be just like that guy in the pinstripes way out in right field, or the skinny guy throwing 100-plus miles-per-hour on the dirt. They worked their entire lives to get there, and now they are getting fined for celebrating it.

Success does not stop just because you have reached your goal. Success does not stop period, and neither should the drive to want to be successful. A guy like Bryce Harper, for example, may not be the most well-liked, but he certainly is an amazing baseball player, and you have to give respect where respect is due. The guy hits home runs almost as often

as a baby cries. He has been in the league for a couple years now, and after each home run he hits, he shows off his swagger by tossing his bat in style. To me, I see absolutely nothing wrong with that. Yet for some reason, the umpires who get paid a lot of money to judge a baseball game, think it is a large epidemic that must be stopped.

Personally, I think I could be a better judge from my couch at home, watching the game on TV, and I am sure the players wouldn't mind, as I would let them flip their bats every which direction in celebration.

At times, I am sure they do it out of spite. For example, if the pitcher pegged the guy before him, and he steps up and hits a homerun way over the left fielder's head, there's no doubt in my mind that he's going to flip that bat with confidence, as he should.

A guy should not have to justify his reasoning for it, though. He should not have to be questioned about it at all. If he wants to flip his bat, let the guy flip his bat. There is no difference if you toss it towards the dugout, throw it towards the dugout, or flip it towards the dugout. Either way, you just hit a homerun and the bat is going to end up back into the dugout.

Spectators and umpires have become too soft in this generation. In simple terms, just let the guys be guys and have a little bit of swagger and pride in themselves. They get up to that plate and swing away. Do not ruin that for them because of "excessive celebration," or whatever that even means. After all, these umpires are getting paid to watch baseball every night of their life. If that was my situation, I know I would not be complaining about something as silly as "excessive celebration."



Pectus Excavatum: The Saga of Iron-Chest Boy

Part magnetic, part bionic — zero percent zoo animal. No poking, please.

BY CALEB HANKEE
STAFF WRITER

Halloween is the perfect time to talk about fears. Everyone has them, whether they're rational or outrageous. Unfortunately for me, the biggest fear I have is twisting too much during Yoga Wednesday in gym class.

That sounds stupid. It is stupid, but it makes more sense when I add the part about me having a humongous slab of steel in my sternum that can shift at any point. Before you ask, I'm not the terminator.

Over the summer, I had invasive surgery to correct my sunken chest, medically known as *Pectus Excavatum*. If that flew over your head, picture this: my chest was a cereal bowl up until a few months ago. While I was far from self-conscious about it, even going as far as having someone drink water from my gaping chest hole (really process that image), the medical risks it imposed far surpassed the convenience of being a walking cup holder.

Before I knew it, I had a group of surgeons playing Jenga inside of my ribcage. The procedure went well, and I was out of the hospital after a week of staring at my sick new pecs, trying to regain feeling in them.

Usually the first thing you do when arriving home from a lengthy hospital visit is eat or rest, but my family and I huddled around the fridge at 9:30 p.m. to see if any magnets would stick to me. Sadly, I'm not magnetic, which is a shame. I could've had an amazing

career in magic if that were the case.

Adjusting to the life of an iron-chest boy was no easy task. I was so heavily restricted from movement after surgery that I was not allowed to twist my body. The surgeons nagged me about being wary of what I do, which was pointless because I was already terrified of movement. I thought one wrong move would shoot the bar out of my sternum like a cannon. I was so paranoid, I would walk around with the grace of a stop-motion Lego figure, scanning the area ahead for anything that could compromise the bar.

I'd soon find out that no matter what I did, my chest will snap, crackle, and pop like Rice Krispies. Most times, it's not even painful, it's just unnerving. It creaks like a squeaky step. Thankfully, I'll only have to put up with this for a measly two years, which is when I have the bar taken out.

This all sounds horrible, and yeah, it kind of is. Nevertheless, I'm still super happy with the results I saw from the surgery. It feels great being able to breathe normally and it doesn't negatively affect me as much as I may have made it seem.

I hope this has answered some of the questions and concerns people have had. I wrote this so I won't have so many awkward conversations about my chest, but in reality, this is probably just going to make that problem worse. If you have any questions, send them my way, just please don't ambush me and start poking me like a zoo animal. 🐾



RUN, LADIES, RUN!



NL girls cross country keeps on running with (as of press time) a record of 8-1-6. The team's final meet was on Oct. 23. Pictured are Natalie Keller, Cary Mikulski, Reagan Pender, Ali Lora, Emily Moyer and Stef Steckel. (Photo courtesy of Ali Lora).

National Necessities: What the next administration needs to be

BY OWEN LEVAN-UHLER
STAFF WRITER

When President Trump was elected in 2016, the United States was introduced to a different personality and different interests than those of former President Obama, and not everything was positive. But this article is not about what our leader is and isn't; rather it is about what our country needs and what it doesn't.

So... what *does* our country need?

The fight against global warming and climate change is one of the biggest issues our country is facing at this point, with fewer than 12 years before the damage humanity has done becomes irreversible. Do not believe that blame is being appointed when this is stated, but the current administration is not very interested in helping the climate at all. In fact, many of the current office's legal proposals and actions were made specifically to do away with many of the previous office's attempts to improve the way we interact with the environment.

Our next administration's actions toward climate change need to be in favor of the environment, but not harmful toward business.

Yes, while you may say that this is hard to accomplish, it is not impossible. Years of research and action have shown

this. In the 80's and 90's, when the world realized that the ozone layer was being depleted, governments around the world banned chemicals that harmed the environment. Businesses bounced back with products less harmful to the environment, and the ozone layer has healed better almost every year. With actions like these, the U.S. could be one of the world leaders in reversing harmful climate change.

With that said, the next big issue is the country's economy. While there has been a steadily rising bull market on Wall Street for the last decade, and more businesses have expressed interests in moving their manufacturing back to the U.S. or have already done so, many businesses have decided to look elsewhere for the manufacturing of their goods, and tariffs on goods coming in and out of the U.S. have dramatically risen in even just the past year.

With the current administration, there is too much emphasis on trade and production within our country, rather than doing business with ourselves and other nations. When the next election comes to a close, it is important that the



next president is interested in trade with the world, as well as promoting "Made in the USA" policies.


America's economy has mostly healed from the recession 10 years ago. But the education system still does not get the money it needs. Teachers in 42 states are earning less than they did a decade ago. According to Dr. Sylvia Allegretto, "the average U.S. teacher today makes \$30 less a week than they used to." This is an al-

most \$2,000 wage difference, on top of rising costs of healthcare, retirement, higher education, and basic living. And this isn't the only problem with our country's education system.

There were many states that cut school spending after the recession, and most still haven't caught up.

In 2008, Texas decreased its per-pupil

See Prez, page 13



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Zach Moyer was not wearing a costume.



Evan Zambo refereed a scene from Stallone's "Over the Top" between AJ Berger and DeSean Smith.



Mr. Gupta tried convincing Dale Wanamaker that rock always wins.



This, also, was not a costume.



Tyler Long's shorts were short but the fuzz caught the perp.

Photos by Brooke Bower

RAMBO

From page 9

theater was surprisingly packed and I wondered if they felt the same.

The first 85 minutes went by with a lot of splattered blood, explosions, stab-bings, shootings, and more mousetrap-

like carnage than the previous four movies combined. After the heart-ripping final kill, Rambo was still standing, but would he survive? The war inside his head was immortal; he was not.

Bruised, injured, tired, weary and severely battered from a battle to merely do what was right — the great character who simply wanted to get something to eat in Hope, Washington, in the 1982

original — stumbled to his damaged front porch and sat on the proverbial rocking chair. Credits rolled. Fellow movie-goers got up and headed for the exits. I waited. I was still not satisfied. A greatest hits of images from the first four movies flashed on the screen and then, my hero — after having slaughtered a ton (literally) of Mexican criminals — was on his horse, not leisurely riding, but stam-

peding into the distant sunset where he will continue to wander the world, trying to figure out what the holy hell had happened starting all the way back in the 1960s until time naturally runs out.

Selfishly, I was content with this final shot and farewell ride. And to all the Avengers fans who had a tough time dealing with *your* final moments, I get it. Peace be with us all. 🐾

PREZ

From page 12

spending by 20 percent. Though a study from researchers at Northwestern University and University of California, Berkeley showed that, "low-income children whose schools received a 10-percent bump in per-pupil spending before they enrolled in public school ended up earning 10 percent more when they reached adulthood." So even though states' tax revenues and the economy have improved, why hasn't education been better funded?

The next president needs to be interested in either getting the states to increase their funding of schools or gaining more federal funding for the education system if the states aren't able to provide more money.

Another flawed system in the U.S. is healthcare. Most gross domestic product, or GDP, spent by industrialized nations like the U.S. on healthcare is around 10-11 percent. But in our nation, we spend over 18 percent GDP; and that number is still rising. There are many reasons why this number is so high. According to Edward Hoffer, MD, "It is estimated that about 25 percent of U.S. healthcare

spending goes to administrative overhead, both directly to the insurers and on the costs of billing, pre-authorization, and other expenses to the providers."

Also, physicians' costs and debts of medical school are extremely high, causing hospitals to charge more money to pay them. And because hospitals hire too many specialists instead of primary-care physicians, patients' bills go up.

With physicians being stretched so thin, seeing one often involves up to weeks of waiting for an appointment that lasts for 10 minutes before the physician needs to see the next person. Perhaps the most expensive part of the current

healthcare system in the U.S. is insurance. Insurance deductibles of at least \$7,000 are now common for most families. Even with a deductible, most insurance companies pay only 60 to 80 percent of the cost of your care, so patients still end up with out-of-pocket costs. The next president needs to focus on strengthening the current system, creating policies that lower the cost of insurance and healthcare.

There are still many national problems, like immigration and taxes, that many citizens would agree that require attention, which will be discussed in a future article. 🐾

Relationships form the foundation for success

BY CHLOE HAWK
STAFF WRITER

Best friends, girlfriends, boyfriends, and everything in between. So many relationships happen during high school: some that break your heart and some that last a lifetime. Finding people that you can genuinely connect with in those 4 years of your life can be very difficult. We are all changing and trying to figure out who we are, who we want to be and what we want for our future. It's the most awkward time of our lives.

Friendships and relationships take up a significant role in our high school years because they're basically what shape it. Most of us aren't going to look back and remember that insanely boring geometry lesson, we are going to remember the people we were around, the crazy times we had with friends, our first loves and the people we just couldn't stand.

The relationships you develop in high school can affect you for the rest of your life and it's important to be careful about who you let into it. It's also important to make sure that you aren't neglecting any relationships or friendships you have. It's not healthy to isolate yourself. What is healthy is being surrounded by people who cherish and value you.

There are so many things that can make a relationship great, like being able to bond about shared interests, having a similar sense of humor with someone or just having someone you can be your genuine self with. It's not always easy to feel understood while being a teenager, so it can be beneficial to have people that you can relate to in some way.

Not every friendship or relationship you are involved in will be positive. Like I said, it's important to be careful about who you let in your life. Not everyone has good intentions or are mature enough to keep a relationship on the right track. You won't always be able to see somebody's motives. That's why trust is such an important factor in both platonic and romantic relationships.

There are different factors for each kind of relationship. They all work differently, but at the end of the day they all should be healthy and good for you. Sadly, they won't always be, but it's up to you to decide whether you want to put your time and effort into them. Some people just simply aren't meant for you. Everyone eventually finds that out the hard way. In your adolescent years, you will meet and become acquainted with tons of people.

Relationships can also be formed with your teachers whether it impacts you negatively or positively. Most people just think that teachers are there for us to learn, however, you can learn a lot more from a teacher than

just the quadratic formula. If you pay attention, not only to the subject matter being taught, you can learn a lot of life lessons from them.

A teacher's personality can impact you a lot, again, positively or negatively. Many teachers want to help their students as much as they can, whether they know it might be affecting how we look at relationships or not.

There are, however, teachers that are only there to teach and don't really care about what their students are going through. Having a teacher like this can negatively affect how you feel about yourself. 🐾

RELATIONSHIPS EXIST ON A SPECTRUM

All relationships exist on a spectrum, from healthy to abusive to somewhere in between. Below, we outline behaviors that occur in healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships.

HEALTHY	UNHEALTHY	ABUSIVE
<p>A healthy relationship means that both you and your partner are:</p> <p>Communicating: You talk openly about problems, listen to each other and respect each other's opinions.</p> <p>Respectful: You value each other as you are. You respect each other's emotional, digital and sexual boundaries.</p> <p>Trusting: You believe what your partner has to say. You do not feel the need to "prove" each other's trustworthiness.</p> <p>Honest: You are honest with each other, but can still keep some things private.</p> <p>Equal: You make decisions together and hold each other to the same standards.</p> <p>Enjoying personal time: You both can enjoy spending time apart, alone or with others. You respect each other's need for time apart.</p>	<p>You may be in an unhealthy relationship if one or both partners is:</p> <p>Not communicating: When problems arise, you fight or you don't discuss them at all.</p> <p>Disrespectful: One or both partners is not considerate of the other's feelings and/or personal boundaries.</p> <p>Not trusting: One partner doesn't believe what the other says, or feels entitled to invade their privacy.</p> <p>Dishonest: One or both partners tells lies.</p> <p>Trying to take control: One partner feels their desires and choices are more important.</p> <p>Only spending time with your partner: Your partner's community is the only one you socialize in.</p>	<p>Abuse is occurring in a relationship when one partner:</p> <p>Communicates in a way that is hurtful, threatening, insulting or demeaning.</p> <p>Disrespects the feelings, thoughts, decisions, opinions or physical safety of the other.</p> <p>Physically hurts or injures the other partner by hitting, slapping, choking, pushing or shoving.</p> <p>Blames the other partner for their harmful actions, makes excuses for abusive actions and/or minimizes the abusive behavior.</p> <p>Controls and isolates the other partner by telling them what to wear, who they can hang out with, where they can go and/or what they can do.</p> <p>Pressures or forces the other partner to do things they don't want to do; threatens, hurts or blackmails their partner if they resist or say no.</p>

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Recommended recent reads — Check these out

BY ALISSA MELENDEZ
STAFF WRITER

As long as I've been reading, I've kept a shelf reserved for my favorite books. The books have rotated throughout the years -- from *Junie B. Jones* to *The Fault in Our Stars*. However, there are certain staples that have kept their place as soon as I was done reading them. These books have left an outlasting impression on me.

The Darkest Minds by Alexandra Bracken changed the way I wrote, especially in terms of character. *Fangirl* by Rainbow Rowell made me come to terms with struggles I might face in college. *We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart influenced how I thought about plots and the shock value it takes to make a reader cry not once, not twice, but *three* times. I cried three separate times while reading that book. So

while my shelf may acquire new additions, these three books will keep their place.

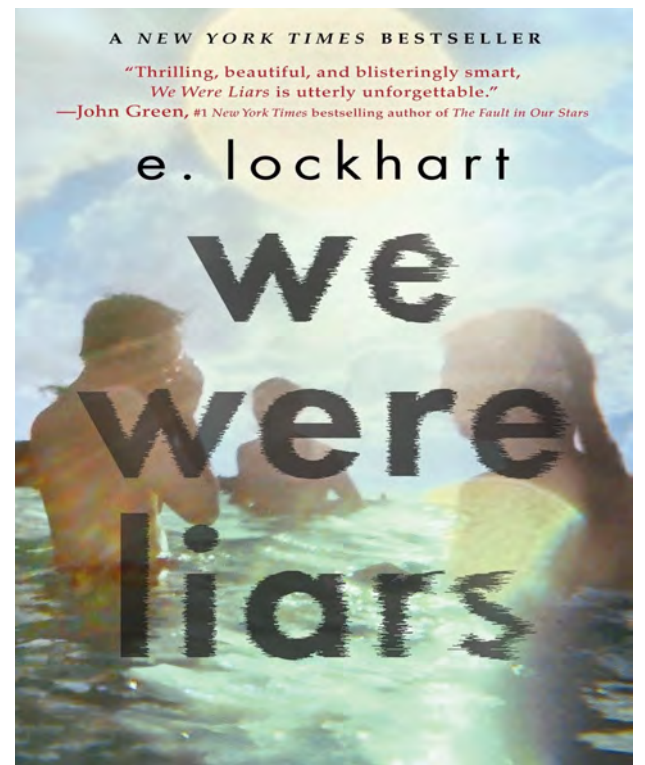
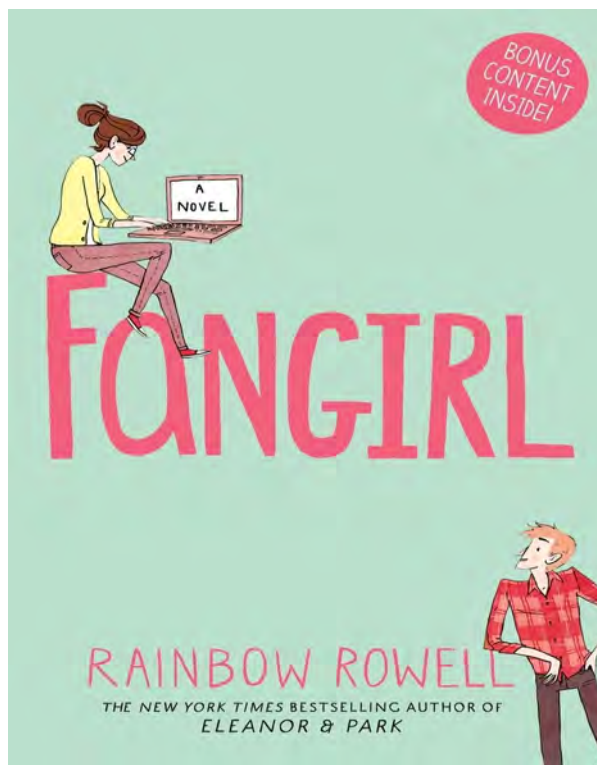
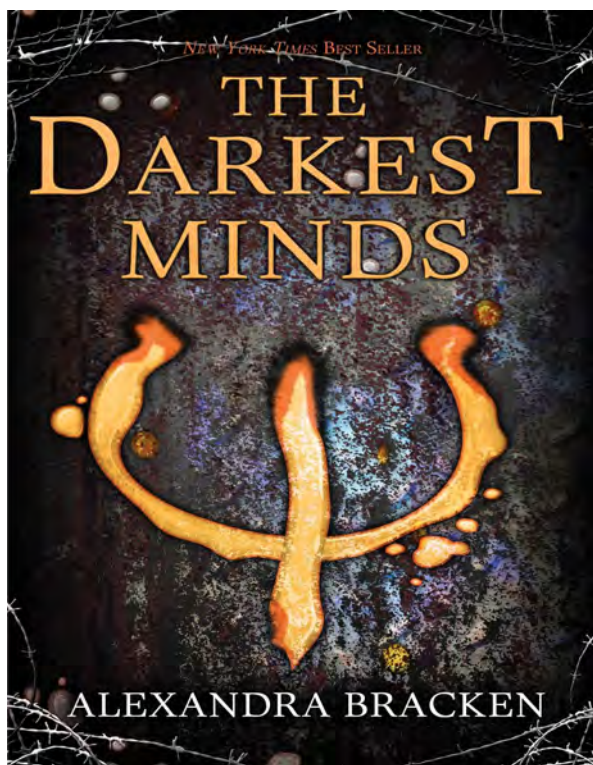
The Darkest Minds: In a distant future, all minors develop an illness. This illness either kills them or gives them abilities. These abilities are classified by 5 colors. The greens are considered the least dangerous. These children have photographic memory and are incredibly smart. Blues are second in the chain. They can levitate objects. Then, there are yellows who can manipulate electricity. Oranges are considered very dangerous because they have mind control. Reds are the most dangerous and control fire. The main character, Ruby, finds herself at 8 years old being put into a camp where all the children who didn't die from the illness go. Adults are afraid of them and the

government says they're being taken care of at these camps. However, no one is attempting to help these children. That is until Cate, an undercover agent for an organization trying to help these kids, breaks Ruby out. Ruby ends up losing Cate and finds herself in the company of three other children and they go on a hunt for a safe haven where they don't have to worry about the government trying to bring them back to these inhumane camps.

Fangirl: Cath has always loved writing, but she's never written a story with her own characters. Cath loves (a Harry Potter-like series) and she writes fanfiction about the characters. When Cath gets to college, she expects her English class to be easy, but her professor won't accept her fanfiction. This causes Cath to

begin to doubt her talents as she struggles to write something original. Cath was used to sharing the spotlight with her twin sister, Rin. Rin was always the popular one that everyone loved. But, when Cath is left by herself, she struggles to figure out her academic and romantic life.

We Were Liars: Cadence came from a rich family. So rich, in fact, that they owned their own island where they vacationed during the summer. But last summer, something happened and no one will tell Cadence. She remembers bits and pieces and she knows it had to be something bad, *really bad* because every time she asks her mom about it, she cries. Cadence attempts to recall the past summers events with her cousins and figure out what exactly happened and why no one is telling her. 🐾



TRANS

From page 7

transitioning, and that's okay, too. Not transitioning doesn't make somebody less transgender.

Speaking of people passing or not passing, outing people is another thing. Outing someone means you're telling someone else that this person is transgender without consent. The same goes for sexuality preferences, too, but I'm sticking to the trans part of it. Outing people can sometimes be okay, es-

pecially if the trans person is shy, because then you've helped them. But if someone comes to you and tells you they're trans, but not to tell anyone else, don't tell anyone else!

Even if you're with other friends, you'll most likely have to refer to them by their dead name. Outing people is not okay because the situation could be dangerous for them.

They could be physically or emotionally abused. For example, I got outed to my mother. She's very transphobic, making my home life more tense and unwelcoming. Some of the things she says to me breaks my heart because

I got outed to her. Do not out people, please.

It's okay for trans people to have questions, too. If you have a trans friend, and they want to talk to you about insecurities, let them. Two years after coming out, I still have questions about being transgender. That's okay and natural. It's also okay for everyone else to have questions. All trans people ask for is for others to try. Slip-ups are okay because we know that they happen. Respect is different than agreeing, too, and that's what so many of us are trying to say. Respecting preferred names and pronouns doesn't mean you

automatically accept the whole transgender thing. Maybe it goes against whatever morals you have. Respect does not equal agreeing, but it goes a long way.

Why constantly bring someone down because you don't like it? It's like someone who doesn't like chocolate asking you to stop eating it because they don't like it. Stupid, right? The same thing goes for pronouns and names. The less respect you give, the less we are required to give back. Just have some respect; it makes everyone all the more happier. 🐾

FILMS

From page 9

In the 2019 awards ceremony, *The Incredibles 2* was nominated for *Best Animated Feature*. In the same category as *Isle of Dogs* and *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*. Thankfully, it did not win, but even nominating the average sequel

made me question whether or not The Oscars should still be trusted.

Sometimes we may forget that the movies we are seeing from decades past are typically hits. We can just brush past the bad films because we are not living at the time of its release.

"We remember the hits and we forget the misses," Mr. Kern said. "I think there's just as many hits and misses now as there were years ago." We focus so

much on movies like *Back to the Future*, *Gremlins*, and *Star Wars* that the failures of the time seem nonexistent.

Of course, there are greats today, just a few including *The Dark Knight*, *Million Dollar Baby*, and *Moonlight*. What these movies focused on is what made them great.

Rather than simply throw their budget towards effects, the filmmakers made sure to focus on the story, its

characters, and the relationship between those two elements.

There's still hope in Hollywood. The accessibility of modern filmmaking has created a rise in independent directors who create wonderfully crafted short films. The world can only hope that their devotion to creativity will take over theaters and restore the reputation of today's films. 🐾

THE RETURN OF THE SUPERHEROES



NAZI GERMANY, 1944



BANG!



WHAT HAPPENED?
WHO WENT BACK TO ERASE MS. A FROM TIME?

WILL OUR STUDENT HEROES BE ABLE TO SAVE HER?

WHERE ARE BOURBON AND TRIPPLICA IN THIS TIME OF CRISIS?

TUNE IN NEXT ISSUE TO HAVE YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED!



...Why?

TO BE CONTINUED...