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Hypermasculinity in our Patriarchal Society

By Alana Wielgosz

For years in our society, boys and girls have typically been raised differently. Sure there are some contrasts between the two genders, which would require a difference in certain aspects of growing up, but hypermasculinity has always been an unnecessary divider when raising boys and girls.

Hypermasculinity is defined as “a psychological term for the exaggeration of male stereotypical behavior, such as an emphasis on physical strength, aggression, and sexuality.” This amounts to the need felt by boys to meet an impeccably high standard of masculinity implemented by their parents, friends, and society. This often begins with parents discouraging boys from crying when they are sad, or hurt, and telling them to suck it up.

Don't get me wrong, everyone needs to be strong in order to succeed in life, but telling young boys not to cry when they're sad creates an uneven emotional connection. If this is hammered into the mind of a boy from childhood on, he will feel as if it is never okay to cry. This is unhealthy. Everyone needs to cry. It is a natural bodily function, and reaction. When you cry about something that is bothering you, it gives you a certain amount of closure through acknowledging that something is wrong.

Tied into the forbiddance of boys to cry is the idea that boys should not talk about their feelings, or emotions. Many parents who teach their boys to refrain from crying also encourage them not to speak up when something is

bothering them. If their parents aren't the ones implementing this idea, it is also often reinforced through friends, and peers. Boys often are viewed as weak or feminine, and teased for talking about their feelings with their guy friends. This also is unhealthy. Without the help and advice of others through talking about what's bothering you, a result is never found, and psychological stress is formed.

The need to be physically tough is also a pressure caused by hypermasculinity. Boys are taught that they must be super strong, be able to lift, throw, punch, hit, kick, run, and jump harder, and farther than girls. Boys are taught to be louder and to take the more aggressive, powerful, heroic role in society. Many males have developed eating disorders due to the unrealistic, “toned and chiseled” body image thrust upon them by society and the media. It isn't just females who feel this pressure.

Many parents won't even think about allowing their sons to explore their feminine side, even though many girls are encouraged to be “tom boys”. If there is an aspect of femininity that appeals or strikes the interest of a boy, it should be touched upon in order to let your child grow and develop, not stricken down immediately because of the “taboo” label that society has placed upon it.

Lastly, males who are raised to be hypermasculine have trouble in romantic relationships down the road. They have difficulty expressing their feelings and affection to their significant other, which can lead to relationship issues.



Many people who have ever told their children not to do these things, or enforced these rules upon their children do not realize that this is

hypermasculinity and that it is unhealthy. From the outside it can look like innocent, “tough love”, but masculine standards set this high beginning at a young age, and reinforced throughout life can psychologically damage a child. Don’t force your kid into unhealthy habits. Teach them that life requires them to be tough and physically healthy, but know that there is a difference between “tough love”, and scarring your child for the rest of their life.



Alana Wielgosz

Alana is an English major. Her interests include music, cats, and Harry Potter.



Opening Doors to Diversity in Geek Culture

By Amalja Tricic



Photo by Amalja Tricic

“While we don’t have any market research, the eyes don’t lie. If you go to conventions and comic book stores, more and more female readers are emerging. They are starved for content and looking for content they can relate to.”

– Axel Alonso, Marvel’s editor-in-chief

Being a part of Fandoms has been a huge part of my life – it is the only thing I have ever truly known. Much of my life has been communicating with internet friends over my favorite fandoms. The hobbies jump from signing up for a site specifically for Harry Potter fans, blogs that helped me catch up on the latest superhero movie and television show releases, and recommendations for new books from friends I had met through blog sites like

Tumblr and Twitter. While my interests have rarely changed, I have seen a shift in the way Geek Culture is perceived – one that has had a positive reaction for people who have felt misrepresented and excluded.

As a young girl, it was difficult for me to find a balance between being outspoken about my allure in comics and superhero frenzy and maintaining my femininity without feeling like many boys saw it as a way for me to try to impress them because it was obviously targeted towards their gender and demographic. While many of my girlfriends did not have a problem with me completely rocking a Harry Potter tote everywhere I went, the thought of mentioning any quote, movie, or book that I had been waiting months for to come out made me feel like a weirdo when their discussions were completely different and their topics seemed like things that mattered. I could not find a place to fit into that narrative. I genuinely had a joy for those interests, and it was something I looked forward to when I came home because I had a site full of anonymous friends who understood my own excitement.

The animosity at school almost felt like I needed to hide that at a certain time and place. As much as what fascinated me made me happy, it also made me feel like I could not fully be a part of it, something that is not targeted for me should not grab my attention. I saw a change as I got older that I wish I had as a younger girl, to feel secure in a place and represented rightfully so. It was nice by the time I was seventeen to find girls who wanted to share the same interests as mine. After all, it seemed like it was not silly to like it anymore,



even if the portrayal of different backgrounds was not represented in media.

The problem when I was younger was that many studio heads chose to pretend that action movies involving superheroes, and Jedi's didn't appeal to girls or women. It definitely did not appeal to people of color, so they chose to target white males and remove the narrative from anyone else. There cannot be a flock of fans of different backgrounds all in unless there is something that pertains to them. And slowly, Hollywood saw that even if they still don't see that, we need more representation in writers, directors, and producers. However, we're still working on that.

The first black Stormtrooper in *The Force Awakens* to a *Marvel Series* titled *Luke Cage* has a predominantly black cast. It focuses on political issues like police brutality and *Marvel's Jessica Jones'* mental and physical abuse. *Black Panther* is coming out in 2018 with a black cast set in Wakanda. *Wonder Woman* and *Captain Marvel* with female leads are coming also to theaters soon. 42% of women read comics according to Graphic Policy and 40% of graphic novel and comics readers are between the ages of 18 and 25, 5% are under the age of 17, and 16% are between the ages of 26 and 33. This may explain why POC and women are demanding more representation because of the voices of millennials and their politically correct views.

Comics themselves also feature diversity with a female Thor, a Pakistani as Ms. Marvel and a young black girl that has been given the title of Iron Man and also been dubbed the smartest

character in the Marvel Universe. We see this on stage too. *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*

features a black Hermione because her color does not define her character.

Not only that, but many heroes in comics suffer from mental illnesses and physical disabilities. Clint Barton (Hawkeye) is deaf, Jessica Jones suffers from PTSD, Daredevil suffers from Depression and is also blind, Tony Stark (Iron Man) struggles with anxiety and PTSD, Professor X is paralyzed from his waist down, Barbara Gordon (Batgirl) also is paralyzed. It is characters like these we need – not a generic white man who needs to come to terms with his powers. It must be someone who is a hero and does not have their disabilities define them or restrict them but something that is what make them who they are.

This is big progress to growing up and having to see the white male hero be the savior of the day. But I think we still need work. Absolutely. Because we still deal with whitewashing on screen. It still seems so prevalent when so many people are calling for a change.

God of Egypt featured ethnically inaccurate casting with many white people casted in the film playing Egyptians who are historically of darker color. *Marvel's upcoming Doctor Strange* has Tilda Swinton playing the Ancient One who is originally Tibetan in the comics. *Ghost in The Shell* arriving in 2017 is inspired by Japanese Manga and features Scarlet Johansson who is not of Asian descent whatsoever. We all plainly know that.

And it has been proven time and time again that whitewashing a movie and erasing someone's



ethnic identity only leads to a box office disaster. Some executives of big networks and

companies learn from this, but we still keep seeing erasure of identity. It is the excitement of seeing diversity in projects, which would never seem possible to make it to the big screen or television. It keeps pushing fans to make a change.

Long live the fake geek girl trope. Good riddance. I had the opportunity to attend this year's *New York Comic Con* and it absolutely made me be proud of being part of *Geek Culture*. At one point, I would deny such thing. Knowing nothing outside of boys teaming up and telling you that you were not a true fan of certain movies or comics and did not understand the true concept and meaning of such things and were only faking it. After much bullying and avoiding maybe making friends, they chose to victimize themselves.

But here I was. In a room full of thousands of people. Different ages, different genders, girls, women, and people of so many different ethnicities. Black girls as Harley Quinn, a disabled man in a wheelchair as *The Batman*, little girls around running as *Captain America* and *Wonder Woman* and even a dog dressed up as *Captain Marvel* – my favorite. I won't deny it. It felt more like a celebration of diversity than a fan fest.

And *Comic Con* had panel presentations about writing films, TV, and books. A presentation, *Body of Evidence: How We See Ourselves in Comics* discussed the importance of body diversity and how recent trends prove that representations need to be realistic and the

character depictions do have an impact on fans and how they co-play and view their bodies.

WNDB PRESENTS: Women and Gender Nonconforming Writers of Color in Digital Media discussed how social media has helped women of color have a platform to speak about

different issues and the difficulties to write when many editors don't give them the chance.

Women in Geek Media was a continuation panel that of *Digital Media* that gave tips on how to support women in a fields like comics, film, television, and video games that grow every day.

Afropunks & Blerds: The Black Nerd Renaissance highlighted defying stereotypes of what it means to be black in pop culture and geek culture.

Politics has always been a big role for Comics and has been an inspiration whether subtle or as blunt as *Captain America* punching Hitler in the face. *The Comics & Politics* panel discussed the importance of that because of the amplification of social media and this generation's will to talk about issues.

These panels only further prove what tremendous leaps we have made. Many people may wonder, well why does it matter? Why does whitewashing matter? Why does representation matter? These characters don't exist. But they do. Film and TV and Comics play a major part in our society. It is ingrained in them. Art imitates Life and life attempts to do the same. It is deep-rooted in us that we look for people who inspire us.

I love *The Green Arrow*, I love *The Winter Soldier*, and I love *The Hulk*. I can find things



within them that I carry within myself as well, just like any other person different from me can. But as a woman, I cannot learn or relate to them. How can a woman find inspiration from *Superman*? How can a black man look at *The Green Arrow* and find solace and issues to identify with specifically based on his color? How can the LGBTQ find comfort in straight superheroes and feel secure? How can a disabled person relate to motivations coming from *Thor* who doesn't have to deal with figuring out how to live when there is no one saying "you can do it despite your disability?" To say gender doesn't matter, color doesn't exist, we don't need LGBTQ in media because it unnecessary would be to ignore the things that affect women, POC, the disabled, and the LGBTQ.

People with privilege and people who represent those most of the time just do not have to deal with impeding issues because it is simply not there. They have a world full of white heroes to relate to. But who we are does affect what kind of life we live and sometimes it makes it better knowing there is a Superhero, *Jedi*, or *Wizard* we can relate to. It gives us motivation and inspiration. The world is not made up of white male heroes. Other people do exist, and I know that may be a shocking reality for some consumers.

There was a time when as a thirteen-year-old, I was curious to find an anxiety ridden white female character that I could relate to – one who was bilingual and bi-racial– and simply because of curiosity. Today it is different. There's a world out there in media that I can explore now – and it has led to me to meet a diverse set of people at places like *New York Comic Con*.



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Pharmaceutical Price Gouging

By Belkisa Nuhanovic

Mylan Pharmaceutical has caused quite the stir in the news the past few weeks. The world's second largest generic and specialty pharmaceutical company is all over the media for jacking up the price on one of their most important products, the EpiPen. Mylan Pharmaceutical has significantly increased the price on their EpiPen from one hundred dollars to six hundred dollars. That is a five hundred percent price increase on the drug since 2009. The CEO of Mylan pharmaceutical, Heather Bresch, has been under a lot of scrutiny for raising the price of the EpiPen, and for her income increase which went up by six hundred and seventy one percent. When asked how the price increase of the EpiPen affected his business, local pharmacy owner Rocco Femia said "It's just the tip of the iceberg." He also stated that lots of pharmaceutical companies have been increasing prices on generic drugs year after year for the past five years. Name brand drugs used to be the expensive medication to get, and when their generic equivalent came out it would be the more affordable option for people, but it does not work like that now. Generic drugs are almost the same price as the name brand drug, and in some cases the generic drug is actually more expensive than the brand. One key factor of Heather Bresch making headlines and being scrutinized in the media is because she raised the price of a drug that helps control a life threatening condition. If she had raised the prices on any other generic drug she has available to pharmacies, the media would not

think anything of it. However, the EpiPen is very important to pharmacies and to the people who take it. There are many people who have allergies that can kill them – a simple antihistamine tablet does not help, and even then, most people could not take the tablet anyway because their throat is swelling up. EpiPen is an injectable drug that is administered in the thigh and releases epinephrine into the blood stream to help improve breathing and reduce swelling around the face and lips. There have been many pharmaceutical companies increasing the prices on their name brand and generic drugs, and they are compensated very well for that. Heather Bresch has increased her drug prices and by doing so her salary has increased as well. She is not the only CEO to do so, she has just been one to make headlines in the news and to be attacked for it.

Belkisa Nuhanovic

Belkisa is a General Studies Major. She is interested in reading, Beyoncé, and theatre.





Did We Lose Our Humanity?

By Hannah Francisco

If you open up the daily newspaper, or turn on the local new stations, you are bound to see stories based on a lack of respect. We hear about politicians are mudslinging and making extremely vulgar remarks, and seeming not to care. There always seems to be another drug bust, or somebody is shot. Children swear at their parents at public events, and threaten to call CPS if they don't get their way (Note: There are many circumstances where CPS should be called, and I am not advocating dismissing *any* claim of child abuse without investigation). Even here at MVCC, many students talk during class, make fun of the professors, bicker with other students, and even just walk out and leave. I feel even 10 years ago, this would not be acceptable, and still isn't today. We must ask the question "Where has the respect gone?"

Many people are quick to blame one thing or another. Some blame video games and social media, others blame guns and glorified violence. Yet others say our problem is a lack of religion and the decline of the nuclear family. But, I'd like to put my two cents in on the lack of respect we're seeing.

As easy as it is to place the blame on somebody or something else, I believe a big part of our problem is ourselves. We have been laboring under the premise that "stuff and things" is most important, and that it's essential to "keep up with the Jones's". As much as having the newest gadget or a newer car is nice, it's rarely

essential. You don't need cable, you don't need the iPhone 7, you don't need a house with a white picket fence, and you don't need to eat out every week. You need friends and/or family that care about you, a safe roof over your head, somewhat nutritious food to eat, and a cheaper phone can keep you in contact with friends, and family. As we place more emphasis on material things, we place less emphasis on the human things. For example, instead of talking with the family during dinner, many children now play on their phones. However, I can't really blame these kids because in many cases, parents are actually worse when it comes to technology. For example, when I worked at an amusement park, it was commonplace for kids to run around while the parents sat on their phones. In some instances, the kids ran out of the park completely, or ran into the ride area, leaving ride operators to both run the ride and play babysitter.

However, we can't blame everything on material goods. I think another aspect of our problem is a sense of entitlement. I, like most people, believe we are entitled to everything in the Constitution, as well as basic food, housing, medical care, and education. We need to work for these things though. High grades should not be given but earned. A college education should not be free, as that devalues a degree, and brings people to the institution that don't care. Instead, we should work on making a higher education affordable with a summer job, and possibly part time hours during the academic year. We are not entitled to be offended. This is reality, whether we like it or not, and in reality there are no safe spaces. People will say things that are vulgar, and downright rude. In this nation, that is their right. Instead of trying to



take that away, we should focus on having counter-arguments and teaching future generations to respect one another in general. When we as a society realize we are not gods, but mere mortal men, we can realize how important it is to respect one another to achieve a common goal.

I do not have the answers to this lack of respect in our society. I don't think anybody really does, just potential ideas and solutions that could help. As products of the society that raised us, and being human beings, nobody is innocent in this. We've all had moments where we felt unjustly entitled, and moments we'd rather be on our phones than paying attention in lecture, or what our family is saying. This is fine, to err is to be human. But, what also makes us human is trying to better ourselves, and rejecting the crassness of our pop culture, and media is a great way to start.

Hannah Francisco

Hannah is a General Studies transfer student. She enjoys music, socializing, and making people think.





Food and a Friend

By Christopher Gray

A hot spot in the middle of New Hartford where the food is hot in the winter, and the beers are cold in the summer. A place where friends gather to laugh, drink, and have a good time. Mike Volz, the owner of Killabrew Saloon, sits at the end of the bar with a cup of steaming hot clam chowder and an ice cold cola, reading over his restaurant notes. He had purchased the business from the previous owner and made many improvements to the business. Although the Killabrew Saloon is a big part of his life, there is much more to Mr. Volz's life than just the restaurant industry. He is sixth oldest of nine children and a native of Whitesboro, New York. His family can recall moments of when he was young and playing in a muddy park with his best friends, they could throw a football around for hours and never grow sick of it. When it was time to eat, they would stack food up on their plates and when they finished that plate, they would go back for more. When winter came around, he would build snow forts and snow men in the backyard, most of years the snow would come down by the foot and fill the yard with white.

I sit with Jennifer, his oldest sister as she recalls the summer of 1995. "Deb, Kris, and I got married that summer, at St. Paul's" she tells me. "While the boys were waiting, they were across the street playing football in the park with their friends." Mike and his brothers show back up at the house just before the wedding with their good wedding clothes covered in mud and grass, Mike's face covered in blood after getting hit in the nose with a football. You can only imagine how furious his parents were at

that moment and his brothers most likely trying to hold back smiles.

Jennifer recalls another story of when Mike was only a toddler. He was a child with personality, and great hair. "Dark brown curls" she describes to me. She goes on to tell about how her siblings as well as herself were upset when her parents finally decided to cut his long curly hair.

I talk with the man himself, a tall guy with an outgoing personality but very polite and respectful. "The biggest reason I am where I am in my life at this point, is because I have tried to work hard and to stay humble. I have learned that through my parents, they constantly taught us to work hard at whatever we do and to be grateful for what we have. No matter what it was that I was doing, I always tried to give 110% whether it was school, sports, or work. I tried to carry that on into my adulthood and give the same effort towards my career and more importantly, my family." Mike Volz, a business owner, a husband, a father, a good friend. He knows how to make someone laugh, he knows how to work hard. That is the kind of friend I'd like to have, that is the kind of business I'd like to support.



Mike Volz, Business owner



Christopher Gray

Chris is a photography major. His interests include photography, camping, doing interviews, and music.



What They Don't Tell You About the Healing Process

By Carissa Constantini

Mental illnesses have begun to plague the halls of high schools, and colleges. Some people are able to escape it, completely untouched. Others have bad spells, and periods of depression, or increased sadness, but some people are taken ill completely, unable to escape the mean, cold, rigid hands of mental illnesses.

Going through high school at all can prove to be an incredibly difficult experience for anyone. Dealing with bullying, grades, hormones, nosy parents, all the while trying to figure out who you are as person is to say the least, exhausting. Now throw in a mental illness like depression, and you not only have outside voices controlling you, but you have an internal voice that no matter how hard you try, you cannot get away from.

That internal voice follows you everywhere, whispering horrible things in your ear that nobody else can hear like, "well at least if you don't pass this test you could always just end it all right after." It haunts you during school as you plaster on a smile, and avoid eye contact, so nobody will see the pain in your eyes. It follows you home as you tell your parents your day was fine, and retreat to the confines of your bedroom where you can finally be alone. That is until the voice starts up again, telling you are not fulfilling your duty as a student, as a friend, as a son/daughter.

Then finally your senior year comes along, and all of your friends are talking amicably about what college they are going to, what they're going for, and what they want to do after college

while you sit there nodding your head along to everything they're saying, pretending you too have a plan for your future. But you don't. You never even thought you would make it this far, let alone into college.

That's what they don't tell you about the healing process, and recovery of dealing with a mental illness. Nobody tells you that you missed a huge amount of time to decide on your future, while you were trying to convince yourself that you could stay alive for one more day. Nobody tells you that yes, you are alive, but now you have to decide on how to actually live.

For so many high school and college students, this is their reality, and that's okay. It is okay not know immediately what you want to do with your life. The future is virtually empty, and can be filled with whatever you choose. Try different things, learn about what you like, what you don't like. Be realistic, but not uncreative. Most importantly, be You.

Nobody tells you about this part of recovery, nobody tells you it will be easy, but nobody tells you that it can't be fun. It's okay to be wary of the future, as it has not been the focus in life for quite some time, but be accepting, and open, and eventually it will all work out.

Carissa Constantini

Carissa is a General Studies Major. Her interests include reading, dogs, and debates.





The Election: Don't Worry About It.

By David Penner

This election season, tensions are high, very high. In fact, of the three elections that I actually remember, this one is definitely the most vitriolic of them all. I've seen lies, slurs, threats of violence, and general hysterics from those on both sides. And it doesn't stop, there is no escape from this election. Even a friend of mine from Brazil is taking a side.

On one side we, have Donald Trump supporters. These tend to be people so terrified of Hillary Clinton that they support a candidate who they don't actually like.

On the other side, we have the Hillary Clinton supporters. These tend to be people so terrified of Donald Trump that they support a candidate who they don't actually like.

It's a pattern I see a lot. People are so terrified of "the other side" winning that they allow their own side to get away with some really terrible things. This increases the fear on the other side, so "they" let their own side get away with worse things, and the cycle continues.

You can see how "the system" uses fear and division to get away with more and more. So what can we do about it? Stop being afraid. I can hear some of you thinking "It can't be that easy." Well, it's not, but hear me out. We can see that if everyone stopped being afraid we might end up with better candidates, but it doesn't seem to make a huge difference if you

stop being afraid. Sure, maybe it gets an alternative candidate a bit closer to victory, and of course one person not being afraid brings the world one step closer to everyone not being afraid, but I think all of this misses the primary benefit of this approach to politics: Personal happiness.

If you're stressed about who is going to be the next president, something that is honestly rather outside your control, it adds extra stress to your life, potentially even damaging relationships with people who you disagree with. This further contributes to the division and hostility in America, but on a personal level, it's just sad. You don't need more sadness and stress in your life, especially over something you can't control.

Instead of fighting over the election, give someone a compliment. Instead of stressing out about the outcome, find and solve a problem in your own community. Give money to charity; give your time to a good cause. Leave future problems for the future, and don't let politics sabotage your friendships. Do the right thing always, and remember that senseless worry about things beyond your reach will only drain your energy and sap your joy. Let it go, spite the politicians, and be happy.



David Penner

David is a History Major. His interests include Politics, Philosophy and Minecraft.

"How do you defeat terrorism?
Don't be terrorized."
— Salman Rushdie



Gone Too Soon

By Alec Ambruso



www.usatoday.com

In sports, athletes retire every year, whether it be for old age, injury, or a loss of interest in the game. Every year to replace them, new, young talents come in to begin their professional careers in hopes that they can become the next big superstars for years to come. Some of these talents spend years in the farm system before they get called up, some quickly earn a spot on a professional roster, and some may never get the call ever. In the case of *Miami Marlins* pitcher José Fernández, it is the former.

Fernández was drafted with the fourteenth overall selection of the *2011 MLB Draft* by the then *Florida Marlins*, whom he signed with receiving a signing bonus of two

The injury would end his 2014 campaign, and it would cut into three months of his 2015 season until he would play again – that is until he strained his bicep in his pitching arm that would

million dollars. He started out jumping around minor league teams within the *Marlins* system impressing with every promotion. While with the *Greensboro Grasshoppers* and *Jupiter Hammerheads* during the 2012 season, he won all but one of his fifteen games with a 1.75 ERA to go along with that record. It was due to this that he was not only named the *Marlins' Minor League Pitcher of the Year*, but also promoted to the majors in the following season.

In his MLB debut on April 7, 2013 against the *New York Mets*, Fernández impressed again. After all, he was the fifth best prospect in baseball at the time. In five innings, Fernández got eight strikeouts, and allowed one run on three hits. The *Tampa Bay Rays'* manager Joe Maddon hailed Fernández as “...the best younger pitcher I've ever seen, at that age.” The kid was just oozing potential during his rookie campaign.

That same season, Fernández made it to the *National League All-Star Team*, was named *National League Rookie of the Year*, and was third in *Cy Young Award* voting. Unfortunately, Fernández' 2014 and 2015 seasons were cut short due to an injury to his elbow, as an MRI showed he had a torn ulnar collateral ligament, which required Tommy John surgery to recover.

keep him out for another month.

Then came the 2016 season, where Fernández was back on the mound regularly again and was back to being great with health on his side. This season, he was one of the best



pitchers in baseball as he had the seventh lowest ERA in the league of 2.86, along with 253 K's – the most he has ever had in a season thus far. In addition, he was back to being named to the

National League All-Star Team and was getting back on track in his pursuit for greatness – a pursuit, that ended prematurely.

On September 25, Fernández and two others were involved in a boating accident off Miami Beach, Florida, where their boat crashed into a jetty and overturned in the very early hours in the morning at about 3:20 a.m., resulting in the deaths of all three, who were found to not be wearing their life jackets. The once joyful, talented, and optimistic Fernández, was gone in a flash.

The baseball world was shocked to hear the news as one of the best pitchers in their sport would no longer grace the mound, and the *Marlins* lost one of their franchise players with as bright a future as anyone. What adds more weight to the severity of this tragedy is that Fernández' girlfriend, Maria Arias, is currently pregnant with their daughter. In August, Fernández posted a picture of his pregnant girlfriend on Instagram with the caption, “I'm so glad you came into my life. I'm ready for where this journey is gonna take us.” The next game against the *Atlanta Braves* was canceled due to the accident, followed by a league-wide moment of silence to remember one of their own. On

September 26, the *Marlins* announced that they would retire Fernández' jersey number 16. That same day, the entire team wore his number on their backs during a game against the *Mets* to commemorate their fallen teammate and friend. Two days later, a public memorial service was held, in which thousands of people came to say goodbye to one of the city's favorite athletes.

Tragedy can strike at any moment. It can happen to anyone at any time, and the outcome is not always controllable by those whom it may affect. The world is not a fair place, and we should never take for granted the presence of those whom we admire or love. Fernández is one of the cases of people who were taken too soon with still much left to give and accomplish in life, joining the likes of other athletes such as Steve Prefontaine and Len Bias – just to name a couple – who died at such an early time in their lives. While José Fernández is no longer living, he will always be remembered in the world of sports and abroad, and his death will serve as a reminder that life is just not fair.



Fans pay their respects to Fernández. www.newsday



Alec Ambruso

Alec is a Social Sciences, and Humanities major. His interests include sports, writing, and running.



Dakota Access Pipeline

By Anna Compton

Back in August, the fight over the Dakota Access Pipeline moved from the prairies of North Dakota to a federal courtroom in Washington D.C. The Dakota Access Pipeline is approximately 1,172 miles long, and has a 30 inch diameter pipeline that will connect the Three Forks production areas and the Bakken, which is rapidly expanding. This is occurring from North Dakota, to Illinois. Due to the media blackout of this event, there is much to know.

Around 7.4 billion barrels of oil that is undiscovered will be in the U.S portion of the Bakken Formation, according to the U.S Geological Survey. Who is protesting this? The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe filed a complaint in the federal court, stating that this pipeline is a danger to the environment and economic wellbeing to historic sites. This will also damage tribe's drinking water due to the building of this pipeline underneath the Missouri River. BBC reported that this protest is "the largest gathering of Native Americans in more than 100 years. Protesters cried out on social media amid reports of attack dogs, pepper spray, and inquiries". Tribes from all over the

Nation are standing together in solidarity in the hopes of stopping this pipeline in its tracks.

A topic that has been brought up throughout the entirety of this protest is, "What about the next generation?" Activist Winona LaDuke wrote on Ecowatch that, "the pipeline struggle represents the future of all people. All of us. If I ask the question, what would Sitting Bull do?- the answer is pretty clear. He would remind me what he said 150 years ago, 'Let us put our minds together to see what kind of future we can make for our children.'"

Yes, maybe this pipeline is estimated to create over 4,000 jobs in Iowa. But we need to look at the bigger picture. We need to choose people over profit, and we should not allow poisoned drinking water to hurt the very few tribes in this country. We cannot choose profit over people, and ruin a source that is key for the livelihood of these people. Clean drinking water is a basic human right, and no one has the privilege of taking that away.

Anna Compton

Anna Compton is a Social Science major. She is interested in Social Justice, Travelling, and Volunteering.





The Talent Behind *Smergly Comics*

By Alana Wielgosz

Chance Porter has always dreamed of a day when his artwork would reach many people. Through talent, dedication, and hard work, he is making this dream a reality. Chance is a twenty-year old artist living in Canandaigua, NY. He grew up in Fulton, NY and Syracuse, NY where art was always a part of his life. I had the opportunity to ask him how he has formed his success.

AW: How long have you been involved with art?

CP: As long as I can remember, honestly.

AW: What has been your biggest motivation to create art throughout your life?

CP: Comics and other digital art.

AW: You seem to really enjoy comics. What makes you choose comics over other art forms?

CP: Because comics and drawings are something that I've been ok at. They are readily available, and unlike photography and film making, which all requires expensive equipment, I can get a pencil and paper for super cheap.

AW: So tell me about *Smergly Comics*. What is it? What made you think of the idea, and what is your overall goal for *Smergly Comics*?

CP: *Smergly* is just me finally making a comics page that I've been putting off for a while. The idea was already in my head, but reading more successful online comics got me motivated. A goal is to make more comics. Lately I'm lazy and busy, so I don't frequently make comics.

AW: Where can folks go to find your comics and artwork?

CP: *Smergly Comics* can be found on Facebook, Instagram, and tumblr.

If you are interested in, or enjoy *Smergly Comics*, please feel free to like them on Facebook, and follow them on Instagram and Tumblr.

Alana Wielgosz

Alana is an English major. Her interests include music, cats, and Harry Potter.





Chance Porter

Resident of Canandaigua, NY. He enjoys drawing, acting, and dogs.



Photography by Christopher Gray. *Green Lakes State Park.*

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To contribute to our Special Presidential Election, please email submissions to atreis@mvcc.edu



Photography by Christopher Gray. *Black River.*