

Airline Tickets: The new Highway Robbery

By Alana Wielgosz

We've all been there – searching for a deal on airplane tickets only to be disappointed in the sky-high prices. Or perhaps you've been lucky enough to find a fair price and closed the tab for a moment to grab a credit card, only to return to find that the ticket price increased while you were turned away. How can it be that these deals can appear and vanish so quickly? And how do airline companies have the power to manipulate prices for their customers off the cuff?

All airlines face the issue of serving different groups of passengers. According to Cheapair.com, airlines use a technique called “yield management” which means that they “intentionally aim to charge different prices to different passengers in order to maximize total revenue for each departing flight.”

Flights consist of a plethora of different passengers. Airline companies know that there will be passengers who are traveling for leisure, those traveling on business, those traveling because of family emergencies, so on and so forth. Because of this, the companies are able to sort customers into two categories: “those who will fly at any price”, and “those who will fly if the price is good”.

“Those who will fly at any price” are usually passengers travelling on business, because of family emergencies, or those wealthy enough to pay any price for flights. “Those who will fly if the price is good” are families, vacationers, and leisure travelers.



Photo courtesy of Boeing

<http://www.airlinereporter.com/2011/11/an-inside-look-at-boeings-third-787-dreamliner-za003/>

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All in all, airline companies are trying to get as much as they can from each seat. If airlines set their lowest fare at \$109.00 for all 100 seats on the plane, “those who will fly if the price is good” will be willing to buy tickets, but they will be losing money on “those who will fly at any price” because they know this particular group of clientele is willing to pay more for the same seats. However, if airlines set their lowest fare at \$300.00 for each seat, they will get a handful of “those who will fly at any price,” but have many empty seats because ticket prices are too expensive for “those who fly if the price is good”. This is where prices are constantly fluctuating because they must find a happy medium, but also want to make as much money as they can.

Airline economics are very similar to the classic laws of supply and demand. Airlines must fill a certain amount of seats, and rely heavily on the economy, and financial willingness of customers to fly. Say an airline must sell 100 seats, and they are offering lowest fare seats for \$109.00. If bookings are strong, and companies see that these seats are selling fast, they will bump up lowest fare seating from \$109.00, to \$139.00. If the \$139.00 lowest fare seats are still selling, then they will bump lowest fare up to \$179.00. When other airline companies see that bookings are strong, they will also set their lowest fare at \$179.00 to maximize their income. However, if bookings are low, and planes have empty seats, airlines will then decrease lowest fare from \$179.00, back down to \$139.00, and so on.

Many computer users are aware of the idea of browser cookies. For those that aren't, pc tools defines browser cookies as: “...text files retained on computers by browsers

containing various information in regards to a specific website visit.” Basically, browser cookies remember the websites you have visited and what you have looked at, and store this information in your computer to be seen by the next websites you visit. Airlines use browser cookies as another strategy to charge you more money for plane tickets.

Upon visiting a website, airline companies rummage through your browser cookies to see if you have been keeping your eye on tickets, what other websites you've checked for tickets, and your general browser history. From this they decide which price point to offer you. Your IP address is another factor. Companies use IP address to find out when the last time you flew was, how much you paid for that flight, how many tickets you bought, etc. Delta airlines was just recently put in the hot seat for allegedly overcharging customers who purchased flights while using Apple products (iPhone, iPad, Mac book etc.) under the idea that if a customer has enough money to purchase an Apple product, they are able to pay more for a flight.

Because consumers are becoming more aware of the highway robbery of these airline companies, they have begun to research ways to get around these ridiculous marketing techniques.

- Clear your cookies and browser history before, during, and after booking flights online.

I am able to do this through the “Safety” toolbar dropdown when internet explorer is open on my PC.

- Use a different browser than normal.



Are you usually an Internet Explorer user?
Try Firefox or Google chrome.

- Search from physically different computers.

Check flights from home, but also from your work, or school computer if possible.

- Don't shop for flights during the weekend.

Airline companies count on this because the weekends are normally when customers have more leisure time. Prices are increased because of this.

- Check multiple websites

Keep your options open. Just be sure you're deleting your cookies/browsing history frequently.

Though it seems that all is fair in love, war, and Airline marketing, there are many ways to skirt around the ridiculous upcharge that companies are so sneakily tricking passengers into paying. The next time you fly, keep these facts in mind to save yourself some time, money, and hassle. Be cautious, and smart, and you can outplay the companies.



Alana Wielgosz

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

Growing up a Refugee with White Privilege

By Amajla Tricic

My family and I came to America before the 90's ended its great long run, and in all honesty I don't struggle with the turmoil that my family had to face in the war zone of thousands of Bosnian Muslims being slaughtered – I was just a baby – but I felt the presence as my elders had to adjust to a culture they did not fully understand.

Just like most refugees, I lived in a cluttered apartment with any family member anyone can possibly imagine. Did it bother me? Not at all. If anything the comfort of family was nice. The Bosnian language was very prominent in our household, but we younger children mostly spoke the English tongue to each other, and there would be many moments where the adults would interject in the middle of the conversation to shout "Speak Bosnian at home! That's where you come from, that's your language!" I think it was their fear of us losing sight of who we are and them being left alone to wonder how to make it. Most of us were taught English through music and cartoons and the adults were to catch up a couple of years later. But other than the English we caught up with, our house was filled with traditions and culture that was all I ever knew.

I didn't have American friends and I didn't venture far – television didn't teach me about everything I had to know because I was too young to understand, but looking back now, I spent six years of my life living in America without truly understanding America. The



scariest moment of my life was when I started school, and I realized these people were not like me. It was my first time experiencing culture shock because there were so many different ones to learn from and that was terrifying. I met white people who didn't speak a second language like I and adults who only consoled and taught me in English. I saw people of color for the first time in person. I didn't know if I was special or if I was jealous that I was not like other people. I clung to the only familiarity I knew at school and that was children who spoke like me. My teacher was concerned I was not adjusting well to the English Language, when the problem was I did not feel like speaking it.

My apathetic attitude got me stuck in ESL. A program that consisted of people like me who did speak English as a second language. It might have been frustrating at the time, but now that I look back, it was an uplifting experience. My bond with others who didn't speak my language or understand my culture was almost refreshing because I got to tell them what it was like in my world and I wanted to know about theirs. In the following eight years, I began to feel resentful of who I was and where I came from. I used to pretend I came from an Italian family who had Sunday dinner and had movie night instead of eating alone and waiting for my dad to come home from work. I fanaticized we would take trips down to Florida and Disney World every year instead of plane tickets to Bosnia to visit family members I barely knew. I dreamed that my parents encouraged or forced me to do ballet or join a team instead of watching my brother play soccer every week and wondering what I was able to do and where I was able to go because of a culture that had limit on girls and women.

I think this immense disappointment led me to lose my original tongue a bit as it is now more difficult for me to speak the language that I once was raised with, and my teen years were spent trying to become this Americanized version of myself so I could feel like I could fit in with this "American culture". Now that I'm older I've realized how lucky I was to have both. And how I was yearning for something and I was able to get it. I was able to have the best of both worlds. It didn't matter whether I was immersed in different cultures. No one ever pointed at me and said what I was doing made them uncomfortable or scared because they could never physically see me representing who I was. I may have gone through my own rebellion of trying to fit in and grasp other people's lives, but it was easy for me to hide when I felt someone might be uncomfortable with my beliefs or lifestyle. When I became aware of surroundings that affected my life, I started to become relieved of my default, and that was the color of my skin that I was mostly identified with – I was white. And this part of me helped me avoid a lot of situations that may have made people dislike me.

My first interaction with this was 9/11. Many people in my town knew that the majority of Bosnians were Islamic, and when the hatred of the faith itself was growing stronger and stronger, I became worried that my family and I were going to be attacked. It never really came though. I heard jokes over the years asking me if I was related to Osama or if I had cousins who were in ISIS, and while it hurt me and made me angry that they thought that was all Islam represented, I realized people who weren't me had it so much worse.



There were many more refugees who came in over the years who had distinctive features different than mine. Those features involved darker skin and burqas and hijabs and being completely covered up. Something I chose not to do. Somehow this made them entirely too radical. It made them different, and it made me and my white fellow Bosnians the good Muslims. From a city that was big on letting refugees come in, the people sure had a lot to say about who we were letting in and why it should not happen.

Sure, refugees are never an entirely fun topic for Americans to talk about, and the biggest attack I've ever heard against my people is that we are stealing their jobs and we need to focus on people in America who don't have jobs and not people dying overseas. Sure, sure. All the refugees have heard it. But I've never walked in a grocery store, or walked down the street and felt the heat of people's eyes because of who I was. I've never had someone assume I could not speak English because of the color of my skin or my attire. I've never been afraid to leave my house in what I was wearing in fear of being verbally or physically harmed because someone did not like it. I have heard differences from a refugee like me from Europe and a refugee from the Middle East from coworkers who are in the mid 50's and should know better. I recently had a coworker who is a Bosnian Muslim ask one of our bosses why he believes we should not let the Syrian refugees in when they let the rest of us in and we have not caused any trouble. His replied, "Is your name Akbar? Is your name Asif? Is your name Muhammad? That is a threat. Even their names are different and they sound dangerous. You guys do not have names like that. You don't hide yourself behind those stupid masks." Names. Names

even trigger people into deciding whether a refugee who is running away from danger is a good person.

To repeat myself, I have never had to face turmoil. I have never had to face life and death. Sure, my parents did. My parents sacrificed the world for me and my siblings. My dad had to fight in a war and cross a sea and act like it never happened. My mom had to leave her siblings. My parents had to leave their own mom and dad. They started a life in a place where they did not understand a lick of English. They gave up any education they had and any dream job they were going after to work long days and nights in factories just to feed us and be able to fix a house that was falling apart. It was a struggle, but they made it, and they succeeded. And I think they would never go back now. It's our home. We got that luxury of being accepted and having people lend their helping hand because we were nice white foreigners, and we didn't seem suspicious enough for people to be afraid of us. If anything, people wanted to know us. After all, we are from Europe. Most people assume we lived in luxury before.

But other refugees? Those who come from places of war and destruction are not safe, prominently in the Middle East, continue to be the talk of discussion, as if they want to be talked about. These people came here for the same reason we came here. They want to move on, and it only feels like they are being pushed back. They're being targeted because their culture is too different from the average American life. They are being labeled as radicals because there are certain groups who are taking their faith and skewering it as some Christian cults do in America. .



These refugees hate these groups as much as we do. They hate them more than we do because they are killing these refugees. That's not something we are too concerned about living here. I could be anything I wanted to be. I could be proud of where I came from one day and act like I was a completely different person the next day. These refugees could not afford that with their distinctive features. And sometimes they have to lose sight of who they are and their identity for them to feel safe

We have people who stop wearing their Islamic attire out of force or fear that it does not even become freedom at all for them even after running away for it. Even a place where everyone should have a choice has become a place where people who are not white cannot afford to have a choice because responding to backlash is better than being you. Everyone wants to talk about whether white privilege is a true matter or not, but as someone who is a refugee and has not faced serious violent backlash, but rather curiosity and awe towards my community compared to those who get shot for simply being covered up, I see the problem, and I see the privilege I have received, and the most important thing I have learned is to be aware of it.



Amajla Tricic

Amajla is a Humanities Major. Her interests include writing, musical theatre, and journalism.

Super Bowl Backlash

By Belkisa Nuhanovic

Every year we wait for the *Super Bowl* like its Christmas, and every year some people are happy and some are not so happy. *Super Bowl 50* was the third largest audience in TV history with one hundred and fifteen million viewers! This number of viewers stayed constant with the Super Bowl half time show that included *Cold Play*, Bruno Mars, and the one and only Beyoncé.

With almost 120 million viewers tuning in for the half time show of three superstars, someone at home was bound to be offended. Was it the fact that there were three performers and not one like they have had in previous *Super Bowl* half time shows? Was it that most people felt Bruno Mars and Beyoncé were better parts of the show even though *Cold Play* was headlining the show? Or was it the bright colors of green, blue, and pink, yellow that surrounded *Cold Play* and at the end of the show the words "Believe in Love" was portrayed across the stadium seats in bright colors supporting the LBGT community?

People at home were not offended by those actions, but they were more offended by Beyoncé's introduction into the half time show. Beyoncé and her dancers came out sporting their natural locks and Black Panther outfits. Many of the viewers at home were outraged at Beyoncé's political statement for the *Black Lives Matter Organization*. I think her performance was a brilliant way to bring attention to something that may not be important to others.



After *Super Bowl 50*, reports were made that there were protestors outside the NFL headquarters that seemed to be anti-Beyoncé. I believe that people have made her performance into a racist performance, but that was not the outcome she wanted. She was simply bringing attention to the lives lost by police brutality, attention to the *Black Lives Matter Foundation* and attention to the fact that racism still exists to this day, and that if we do not stand together, then we will stand against each other. I don't believe that her performance was a political one, but it was an informative one – an attentive one, being proud of her roots, and that there isn't anything wrong with that. I believe what she did and has done was a smart move, obviously the negative comments, the hate from protestors didn't hurt her or her fan base – her fans stayed loyal to their Queen and came quickly to her defense when comments on the Internet emerged.

I don't believe that Beyoncé is the first celebrity to receive hate for being informative, and she definitely is not the last, there will be many more celebrities that will bring police brutality to light and using their fame is a smart way to do it.



Belkisa Nuhanovic

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

Americans Face Difficult Choice This November

By Hannah Francisco

Americans will be heading to the polls this November to decide the next Commander-in-Chief, the most powerful position in the nation. This will be after a drawn-out election season filled with mud-slinging, scandals, and an overall feeling of malaise among the nation. We must ask ourselves if we are happy with the candidates the two major parties have presented. If not, what recourse is there?

The best way to answer a question concerning the public good is to simply ask the public. So, during this holiday weekend, I found a few people willing to share a couple minutes of their day to answer a few questions. I asked Mindy, a MVCC alumni, whether she was happy with the 2016 elections candidates. She told me “No. The Democrats and Republicans have failed the people once again giving us a poor choice.”

I asked Larry, a graduate student at SUNY Oswego, his thoughts. He told me “I can't believe where it is right now. I can't believe either candidate has gotten as far as they have.”

Lastly, I asked Taylor, a college student, her thoughts. She gave an extended response, telling me “I don't really know what to think about the election. I try to stay out of politics, because, as with everything else in my life, I end up right in the middle of the spectrum of beliefs. It's also always such a controversial topic, and no one can be civil about things, and



I'd rather keep all of my limbs intact, thanks."

I went on to ask them how they thought a Trump or Clinton presidency would affect the nation. Larry told me "I think regardless of what happens, people will be upset."

Taylor stated "I don't really look at the candidates as much as I look at how the people who claim to be in their corner react to things. I personally think that the 'feminazi' movement will skyrocket and women will be a less than pleasant presence in this country if Clinton gets elected –and I AM a woman, so don't call "chauvinist pig". If Trump gets elected, I think a lot more people will be big-mouthed, prejudiced, and overly sensitive."

Mindy told me simply, "*Negatively.*"

Finally, I asked them if and who they planned on voting for this election. Taylor said "I'm not even registered to vote. I can't fully get behind any candidate, am not educated enough on everything that someone should know in order to make an informed vote, and would rather not settle for the lesser of two evils when it comes to my well-being and rights. Call me when my vote ACTUALLY makes a difference."

Mindy told me "It's too soon to tell. I will probably make that decision a day or two before the election. I will vote, I'm just not sure who I will vote for."

Larry said "Trump. Hillary is a piece of crap and should be in jail."

Overall, the majority of people do not support the Democratic or Republican candidates. Beyond my short survey, the Gallup poll for August 26th-September 1st states only 34% of adults view Trump favorably and 38% view Clinton favorably. This proves that the American public is not happy with our two main

choices for President. In general, we are not voting for a candidate because we agree with their policies or appreciate their character, but because we want the "lesser of two evils." This attitude destroys the notion of representation and freedom our Founding Fathers desired. Some of us have even opted out of politics whatsoever, feeling disheartened with the constant barrage of negativity and lies.

Everybody has one's own answer on how to fix this problem. Some say we need to abolish political parties. Others say we need to turn to religion and prayer. Yet others still say we need to make sure every eligible voter is voting, regardless of how they feel about it. As of now, we are stuck with Trump and Clinton for the two main candidates. Third parties are trying to break into the mainstream political sphere, but they face opposition from the main parties, media, and donors. We are bombarded with stories of injustice, corruption and destruction of our environment. Our nation suffers from exhaustion and social/political burnout, yet our conditioned response is to blame the other.

Although I am not discounting the importance of voting and being politically aware, our problem lies with much more than just an election, or a candidate. Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton did not just magically appear on the ballot, they were voted in by members of their respective parties. Within our nation, there is a faction that feels it would be beneficial to have these two as the nominees, for whatever reason. These factions are made up of people who are sick of the "business-as-usual" mindset of Washington D.C. They feel our nation is taking a turn for the worse –regardless of their definition of worse – and are desperate



for somebody to make it all better. There are many things that could be improved upon in America, so in this aspect I cannot say they are wrong. However, expecting one person to change the nation is unrealistic; even a perfect person could not accomplish that much. Trump or Clinton will not “Make America Great Again”. Only we, together, as a nation can do that.

There has to be a better way to run our country. We should not have to accept two political candidates that are smothered in accusations of illegal activities and bigotry. Our electoral process should not dissolve into name-calling, mocking, and other tactics better left to elementary schoolyards. We may be young, but we are not too young to make a difference in this world. Vote for what you believe in, not what your party tells you. Question everything you hear, and the answers you receive. Never stop searching for a better way to do things. Lastly, the world of politics is a harsh and cruel space. Don't let it destroy your humanity. Love your neighbor, and judge somebody for who they are, not what. The powers against us want hatred, not understanding. Don't give them the pleasure of victory.



Hannah Francisco

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



Photo courtesy of ETF News

<http://endingthefed.com/24-hours-after-his-nomination-donald-trump-posts-heartbreaking-news.html>



Photo courtesy of the Los Angeles Times

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/politics/politicsnow/la-pn-hillary-clinton-2016-iowa-caucus-20140701-story.html>



2016 Fall Movie Preview

By Michael Kaye

2016 has had its ups and downs in the world of film. We've had our fair share of surprisingly big hits, such as *Deadpool*, *Lights Out*, *Bad Moms* and *Finding Dory*. Unfortunately, we've also had plenty of misses, such as *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, *Independence Day Resurgence*, *Warcraft* and *The BFG*. Hopefully the worst is behind us, as we now move into the Fall movie season. As much as I love the summer blockbusters, this is my favorite time of the year because it's usually when studios put their best foot forward to deliver top notch entertainment. Here are my top 5 most anticipated films for the rest of 2016, in alphabetical order.

1. *Arrival*



Based on "Story of Your Life" by Ted Chiang, this is director Denis Villeneuve's first foray into Science Fiction before he takes on the sequel to the cult classic *Blade Runner*. The film stars Amy Adams as Dr. Louise Banks, a linguist who teams up with mathematician Ian Donnelly and US Army Colonel Weber, played by Jeremy Renner and Forest Whitaker respectively, to investigate the arrival of a mysterious spacecraft that lands on earth. We've seen these stories of humans coming into first contact with aliens plenty of times before, but I'm excited to see how Villeneuve tells this familiar story. Perhaps he can put a new spin on it, walking that fine line between grounded realism and the supernatural. *Arrival* recently premiered at the Venice Film Festival and opens nationwide on November 11, 2016.

"Most good movies are about the style, tone and vision of their makers.

A director will strike a chord in your imagination, and you will be compelled to seek out the other works. Directors become like friends."

-Roger Ebert

"Movies touch our hearts and awaken our vision, and change the way we see things.

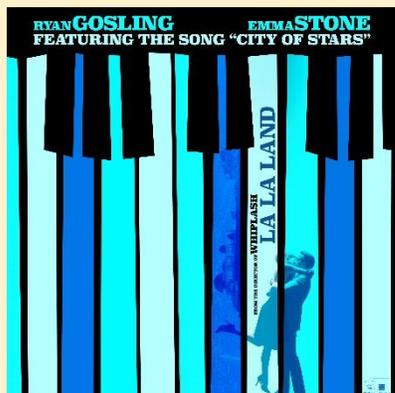
They take us to other places, they open doors and minds.

Movies are the memories of our life time, we need to keep them alive."

-Martin Scorsese



2. *La La Land*



Do you remember the Golden Age of Hollywood, which gave us some of the best musicals such as *Singin' in the Rain* and *An American in Paris*? Well, writer and director Damian Chazelle certainly does, as *La La Land* appears to be a love letter to that era in film. This is Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone's third feature film together, and they star as the two romantic leads, Sebastian and Mia, who meet and fall in love in the heart of Los Angeles. I was a huge fan of Chazelle's previous film *Whiplash*, and given how passionate he is about music, I'm confident that this film will be something special. *La Land* has also recently premiered at the Venice Film Festival, and will open nationwide on December 2, 2016.

3. *The Magnificent Seven* (2016)



This is a remake of the classic 1960 western of the same name, which was in itself a Western adaptation of the Japanese epic *Seven Samurai*. This version is directed by Antoine Fuqua, and centers around a team of seven outlaws hired to protect the town of Rose Krick from the corrupt industrialist Bartholomew Bogue, played by Peter Sarsgaard. This movie has an amazing ensemble cast, including Denzel Washington as Sam Chisolm, the bounty hunter; Chris Pratt as Josh Farraday, the gambler; and Ethan Hawk as Goodnight Robicheaux, the sharpshooter. This film features the final score written by James Horner before he passed away, and they've brought on his friend and frequent collaborator Simon Franglen to finish what he started. *The Magnificent Seven* is premiering at the Toronto International Film Festival this weekend, and opens nationwide on September 23, 2016.

“Certain things leave you in your life and certain things stay with you. And that's why we're all interested in movies- those ones that make you feel, you still think about. Because it gave you such an emotional response, it's actually part of your emotional make-up, in a way.”

- Tim Burton



4. *Moana*



Well of course I'm going to include a Disney animated film on this list, it wouldn't be complete otherwise. This is directed by Ron Clements and John Musker, who are best known for their work on some of the biggest films from the Disney Renaissance era, *The Little Mermaid*, *Aladdin* and *Hercules*. What makes this film special is that it features Disney's first Polynesian princess Moana, played by newcomer Auli'i Cravalho, alongside Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson voicing the demigod Maui. The music was composed by Opetia Foa'i, Mark Mancina, and Tony Award winner Lin-Manuel Miranda. *Moana* opens nationwide on November 23, 2016.



Michael Kaye

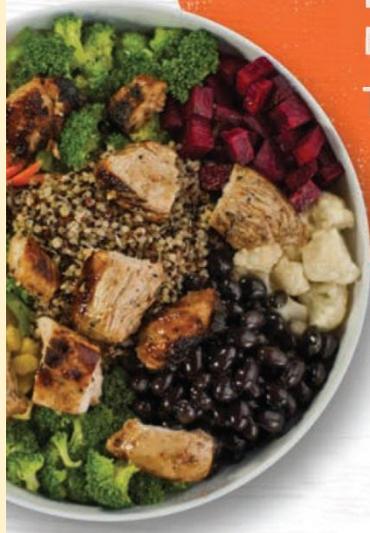
Mike is a Media Marketing and Management major. His interests include movies, music, comics, and animation.

5. *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*



What better way to end this list than with another tale from a galaxy far, far away. This is not a direct sequel to *The Force Awakens*, instead it's a stand-alone adventure that takes place before the events of *A New Hope*. Directed by Gareth Edwards, *Rogue One* follows Jyn Erso, played by Felicity Jones, as she is recruited by the Rebel Alliance to steal the plans for the *Galactic Empire's* new weapon, *The Death Star*. I had a feeling that only good things could come from Disney purchasing Lucasfilm in 2012, and so far things have been going really well. This movie comes with a lot of "firsts." It's the first movie in a new line of Anthology films that take place outside of the main *Skywalker Saga*. It's also the first film in the series to not feature the Jedi, although Donnie Yen's character Chirrut Îmwe is a warrior who has a deep spiritual connection with the Force. Most notably, this is the first live action *Star Wars* film not to be composed by John Williams, as Alexandre Desplat has taken over. *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* opens nationwide on December 16, 2016.

These are my most anticipated movies for the rest of 2016. This year has had its fair share of ups and downs, but I really want 2016 to end on a high note. With many of these films premiering early at film festivals such as Venice, Telluride and/or Toronto, they have the potential to become major awards contenders.



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The Unsung Heroes of Music

By Christopher Gray

Mohawk Valley Community College's campus events team carefully chooses awesome Entertainment of all kinds. From illusionists to magicians, they always find a way to bring students together in a fun and stress-free way. Bands such as *Run With It* have recently taken the stage to excite and entertain students. These musicians spend countless hours preparing themselves for their shows to make sure they perform the best they can.

But who keeps the show running smoothly and sets up the stage for each performer to have a flawless show? Sound guys, the unsung heroes of music, the guys in the background. Each one of the people on these teams are all practiced stage crew who have set and taken down the stage event after event. These are the people who run cords and set up lights. They sound check each musician or entertainer, and they put up with the complaints or abuse of the most bad-tempered artists. These are the people who sit in the background of music and entertainment, for they know their stuff and they make sure that everyone has an enjoyable time. In my own short experiences as being stage crew, I've done sound checks and equipment set up and breakdown. I've endured only parts of the troubles that some of these guys face on a day to day basis. From massive stadiums to the ACC college center at MVCC, sound guys all over definitely don't get the full credit they deserve for working so hard at keeping these shows amazing.



Christopher Gray

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

“I love those who can smile in trouble,
who can gather strength from distress,
and grow brave by reflection.
‘Tis the business of little minds to shrink,
but they whose heart is firm,
and whose conscience approves their conduct,
will pursue their principles unto death.”

- Thomas Paine



A Cherished Class

by Alec Ambruso

The 2016 Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame class was announced on Friday, September 9, which includes ten of some of the most notable figures in basketball. Highlighting this rich entry of new faces to the hall of fame, which is located in Springfield, Massachusetts, are legends Shaquille O'Neal, Allen Iverson, and Yao Ming.

Among the other living honorees are current *Michigan State* coach Tom Izzo, *WNBA* star Sheryl Swoopes, and *Chicago Bulls* owner Jerry Reinsdorf. The posthumous honorees in this year's class are coaching legend John McClendon, *ABA* star Zelmo Beaty, star basketball and baseball player Cumberland Posey, and referee Darrell Garretson.

The trio of stars in this class—O'Neal, Iverson, and Yao – have left some of the biggest footprints in the world of basketball, literally and figuratively.

Let's start off with the career of Yao Ming. Two distinct features of Yao that set him apart from even average basketball players are his nationality and height. Firstly, he is a Chinese basketball player—born in Shanghai – which is something of a rarity in the *Association*, despite the game's popularity overseas. His second distinct feature is his staggering height; at 7-foot-6 inches tall, not much is left to the imagination in thinking about how Yao was able to become a basketball player with a little bit of hard work thrown in. And boy, did he use his gifts while he could; he posted

career averages of 19 points, 9.2 rebounds, 1.6 assists, and almost 2 blocks every day he was on the hardwood. Though Yao never won an *NBA* championship, he was an *All-Star* in all eight of the seasons he played for the *Houston Rockets* – stress fractures in his feet cut his career short – and five *All-NBA* teams. He may not be the most decorated player in basketball history, but he certainly is the greatest basketball player from China and one of the most iconic players of all time.

Shifting from the center position for a moment brings us to one of the greatest guards the *NBA* has ever seen in Allen “The Answer” Iverson, or just simply, “A.I.” What made him so great? For starters, he posted career averages of 2.2 steals, 6.2 assists, and 26.7 points per game, and to contribute to that, he averaged over 30 points per game for five seasons in his fourteen year career. He was also named *Rookie of the Year* in 1998, was an eleven time *All-Star*, seven time member of the *All-NBA* teams, and to cap it off, he was named the league *MVP* in 2001. The same year he took his *Philadelphia 76'ers* to the *NBA* Finals against the *Los Angeles Lakers*, where they lost in a five game series. And get this – the man is listed as being six feet tall with shoes on, but he was really shorter than that. Yet, he was able to tear up the league with his scoring ability, amazing handles, and love for the game, but certainly not his love for practice.

And back to the center position and the granddaddy of them all; “The Big Aristotle,” “Superman,” “Diesel,” “The Big Shaqtus,” or just simply “Shaq,” one of the most beloved sports figures in history, Shaquille O'Neal. Where can you begin with Shaq? The man's a monster, all 7-foot-1 of him and add in his



muscle mass, and he's instantly one of the most physically superior big men the *NBA* has ever seen. His first taste of the *NBA* Finals came when he was a youngster on the *Orlando Magic*, in a 4-1 series loss against the *Houston Rockets* in 1995. This was during a time when he possibly could go to the Finals as Jordan had "retired" which gave teams in the *Eastern Conference* a better shot at a championship, or just even a Finals berth for that matter. Shaq played nineteen seasons in the *NBA*, and in that span, he averaged a double-double with 23.7 points and 10.9 rebounds per game. It was certainly a block party whenever he hit the floor, as he averaged 2.3 blocks per game. During his rookie campaign in the 1992-1993 season, in which he won *Rookie of the Year*, Shaq averaged a whopping 3.5 blocks per game and got 286 total, good for third place on the all-time standings for rookies. Shaq is without a doubt the most decorated player in the 2016 Class, as he was an *MVP* in 2000, won three titles with the *Los Angeles Lakers*—including one against Iverson in 2001 – and one with the *Miami Heat*, and was an *All-Star* fifteen times. While he may be one of the funniest players the league has ever seen, he at least has enough hardware to give him the right to be the joker he is – I'm looking at you Dwight Howard.

The Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2016 is certainly an ensemble of game changers, as it contains two of the most iconic big men of all time in Shaq and Yao, and one of the craftiest handlers and daring scorers in A.I. I don't even have to use their full names for people to recognize whom I am talking about. They have had amazing careers in what is quite possibly the best era in basketball history—the 90's and 2000's – and will live on

in our memories and hearts as some of the best athletes of all time.



The three legends in their orange Hall of Fame jackets. Photo from www.espn.com



Alec Ambruso

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



From www.bustle.com/articles/109794-14-fall-memes-so-you-can-usher-in-the-greatest-season-of-them-all-with-a



From Pools to the Ocean

By Carissa Constantini

The people who romanticize small town life are people who are not from small towns. Living in a small town can prove to be not only intrusive, but also exceptionally limited in the opportunities available. Small town life can make doing something extraordinary, or on a large scale in the world seem impossible, but one student had big dreams, and unbeatable determination.

Leah Harter graduated from Holland Patent High School in 2015. Throughout her schooling, she had performed exceptionally well. She always had great ideas for essays, always knew what the answer to the math problem was, and always knew all the little things about the government. Leah was a very intellectual student, but she was also so much more.

I met Leah during middle school, and from the get-go, I knew she was someone I wanted to befriend. The friendship continued throughout high school, and still today. Leah had a heart of gold. No matter what a person was going through, Leah was always there to

help them. It was this characteristic that helped her pick what to do with her life after high school.

During her senior year, just like every other student, Leah had to decide where she would be going to college, and what she wanted to do there. She went back and forth between *Clarkson University* and the *Coast Guard Academy* –not exactly similar choices and not exactly easy ones either. Leah knew she wanted to be involved with the government at some point in her future, but to get there was the obstacle standing in her way.

In the end, Leah chose the *Coast Guard Academy*, determined to make it all the way through. Just in her first year at the Academy, Leah has been gifted many opportunities of a lifetime.

Last year, Leah was able to march in the *Veteran's Day Parade* alongside all the other people who have helped this country. She ventured out to sea with the rest of her class, aboard the *Coast Guard's* training ship named *Eagle*. The voyage lasted 20 days, crossing the Atlantic Ocean and arriving in Ireland. After enjoying her bit of vacation time, she boarded *Eagle* once more for a trip lasting 13 days from Dublin, Ireland to London, England.

While aboard the ship, Leah learned a variety of different skills she will need in her future. She learned how to handle the helm, which is how they steer the ship and, learned the appropriate measures involved in being on lookout. While school for most people takes place before the stars come out, it was an integral part of the learning process for Leah that she learned how to navigate during the

night, solely relying on the location of stars. Before returning to the Academy, Leah stopped in Neah Bay, Washington for six weeks doing search and rescue.

With all of these experiences now under her belt, Leah has started her second year at the *Coast Guard Academy*, and is looking forward to all of the adventures it has in store for her. While she is out in world already making a difference, there are people back in the small town of *Holland Patent* who have already been touched by Leah's accomplishments. From the librarian who smiles at her every time Leah walks in, to the women who work at the bank, and all of her friends, and family. To say that all of us are proud would be an understatement. Leah went from the pool, to the ocean, from a small town, to the whole world, and this is only the beginning.



Carissa Constantini

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

The Big Scam: Why Democracy Doesn't Protect Your Right to Chose

By David Penner

It's voting day. With grim satisfaction you arrive at your local polling station to join millions of other Americans in performing a civic duty. You enter the building. Maybe it's a church fellowship hall, or a fire house, or the gymnasium of the local school. Whatever it is, it is adorned with carefully balanced amounts of red and blue. You wait in line to get to the front desk where you will be greeted with a ballot and grandmotherly instruction.

Finally, you're in the booth, ready to add your voice to the millions that will change the future of the country - of the world - forever. You read your options:

- Coca-Cola
- Pepsi

Now, what's wrong with this picture?

Obviously, the situation is unjust *somehow*, but it's important to be more specific. It's only after we define a problem that we can start thinking of ways to solve it. So what, *exactly*, is the problem here?

Is it that the two options are very similar? This is an obvious problem. Though there are many people who can tell the difference between the two and swear by their favored brand, many people can't tell the difference or, like myself, just don't care.



But if we walked into the voting booth and the options were “Coca-Cola” and “Ginger Ale” instead, would that really make things better? I don’t think so, the problem is more fundamental.

Another problem might be there are only two options. How is an election supposed to be fair if there are only two options? People have varied preferences, shouldn’t this be reflected on the ballot?

Okay, so let’s change the ballot to include every type of soda imaginable. Coca-Cola and Pepsi are joined by Ginger-Ale, Root Beer, Dr. Pepper, Orange Soda, Cream Soda, Mountain Dew, and any other variation you can think of. Does it feel right now? I’d wager not.

All of the previous improvements are ways to produce more fair ways to vote on which soda the country is going to embrace. We could also, rather than voting on sodas directly, elect a Soda Council that attempts to create a perfect Soda Synthesis for everyone. We could change the voting process from first-passed-the-post to an Instant-Runoff system, but we have not questioned the assumption that *the entire country should drink the same soda*. Once you question this any of the ways one could create a more “fair” way of deciding the soda become ridiculous and silly. Everyone should be able to decide which soda they should drink and to change their minds from day to day without having to convince everybody else to switch as well.

Why is this different for government?

This problem is not new. Once humanity was ruled by monarchs, and dictators, who decided themselves what governance their whole nation should have. They ruled by force, crushing anyone who did not submit to their will. Eventually the decision-making process was taken over by the noble class and landowners, but the force and the crushing remained. Today we live in an egalitarian democratic society where everyone has a “say” in the governance, but this “say” accounts for almost nothing because we haven’t dealt with the underlying problem: the will of the individual is still subject to the will of the forcers and the crushers.

Democracy plays up the fact that “The people” chose their leaders, but that doesn’t change the fact that, for a minority or sometimes even a majority of people, their government is chosen for them by stronger or more organized political factions. What is said to be an end to forcing and crushing is really only the concealment of the forcing and crushing beneath a facade of ballot boxes.

In the days of the ancient tyrants, an egalitarian democratic society might have been inconceivable, just as a society without force and crushing might seem outlandish today. Still, someday perhaps we can build a society where people really are free to choose, completely free from the having the will of others forced upon them.



David Penner

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



Who's next?

By Anna Compton



From Baton Rouge to Chicago to New York City, more and more lives are being taken every day. Police brutality has become a huge topic across the fifty states. Movements like *Black Lives Matter* has formed and people are making their voices heard. People are hurting over the losses of their loved ones.

Back in August 2014, when Michael Brown was shot and killed in Ferguson, awareness to the racism rose. People are becoming more and more vocal about their anger towards the system in America. Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, and Philandro Castro are only three of over a hundred that have been killed within the past few years.

Often these killings are associated with White Privilege –a set of advantages or immunities that white people benefit from on a daily basis that are beyond common to others. This is often referred to as “an invisible package of unearned assets.” In other words, while black people fear walking

past cops, whites often may not. White people feel more welcomed in places where black people do not. White people are often considered more scholarly or hireable, while black people are not.

Mya Black is 17 years old and is from Brooklyn, New York. I had the honor of speaking with her earlier about what it is like to be a black female living in New York City. My conversation with her was as follows:

AC: What is it like to be a Black female in New York City with all of the current stories on police brutality and racism?

MB: To be a black female in New York City is very scary. You are constantly thinking about the men and women taken every day because of the color of their skin and are always wondering if you are next –if you’re going to be the next one on the news or you’re going to get a call about your little brother, or your boyfriend, or your mom. It’s scary. It’s not how we should be living. There’s other ways to stop what they define as crime, especially when it’s an innocent man with his daughter in the back seat. No child deserves to see their innocent father die and grow up thinking that there is something wrong with them because they are black, something that is out of their control.

AC: What do you think about the police brutality problem?

MB: I feel that the police brutality problem is disgusting. It’s disgraceful. It makes me fear my life as an innocent civilian because to see people die because of their skin color, which is the same as mine, is scary. It leaves the question in my head “who’s going to help us



when we need help from those that are supposed to help, but are putting us in harm?" Police are trained in a certain matter, and I feel as if they abuse their authority. There's many precautions that they can take.

AC: What do you think is the main part of this issue?

MB: I think it's just plain ignorance. People live in fear of those who don't look like them. We also are not punishing the cops who were wrong in the situations they were in. We give them paid leave instead of charging them for second degree murder or sending them to jail. We don't punish them because they are cops. That is privilege in itself. They do not get any consequences for their actions. It leaves an awful example. It shows that it's okay to pull a trigger if you're scared. And it's not. Somebody loves that innocent person. Within one seconds they're gone and you took them away and there is no getting them back. You shouldn't be getting paid leave. You should be paying the price that a man who isn't in uniform would pay.

AC: Do you think White Privilege exists?

MB: Yes absolutely. One hundred percent. I think many Caucasians get a pass because of their physical attributes. Especially white men. For example Brock Turner raped an unconscious female but was only in jail for three months with "good behavior" because he comes from a good background and is a good swimmer. But if he was a black man from a bad background, would the circumstances be the same? No, they would not be. Regardless, if

someone is a rapist they should be locked up. Black, white, female, male. It doesn't matter. You hurt someone. You took something from someone. You pay the price. You hurt someone you pay the consequences. But why was an innocent black man killed in front of his daughter because the officer was scared that he was 'reaching for a gun?' While a white male who comes from money rapes an intoxicated girl, but her drinking is to blame because he has a future? So did Philandro Castro.

AC: What is your biggest fear?

MB: That someone that I love is next. My boyfriend, my mom, my sister. That I'm next.

AC: Why do you feel this way?

MB: Because of the pigment in my skin. There's a lot of limitations when you look how I look. I am constantly judged. We shouldn't be scared every time that we see a cop, we should feel safe.

AC: What are these limitations?

MB: People automatically assume that your potential is less, that you aren't as smart or driven. That you aren't a good person. That you have bad intentions when passing a happy family or when going into a gas station. They think we're less educated and that we don't want to go to college and pursue a degree, when I as a black female actually want a higher education.

AC: What do you hope happens?

MB: That there is justice. That the justice system actually gives justice. To everyone. I hope to see the world realize that we're all the



same. I hope to see everyone receive the same punishment for the crimes they commit rather than different levels of punishments for different races. When people do wrong, punish them. But do not take innocent lives because of their skin color. I hope to see a better police force. I hope to one day not jump inside when I see a cop across the street or when I pass one because I need to reach for my phone in my pocket. I hope that my children hear about these issues as history and don't have to live through them like I did.

AC: Why did you decide to go to college?

MB: Where I'm from – a lot of girls or even boys don't find it important to or don't have the opportunity or resources to get a higher form of education. Money is also a huge factor in this issue.

AC: Do you plan on taking an initiative on creating change and fixing the system?

MB: I feel that I have a purpose on this planet, and I want to take initiative whether it's in the field or protesting. I am majoring in Psychology because I want to understand people's brains. I want to understand their thought process and why they think that I am any different than their daughters. I want to help educate people who feel so much hatred in their hearts towards my people.

According to the Guardian, blacks killed by police this year were more than twice unlikely to be unarmed as were whites. Are we excusing the behavior of cops and allowing them to get away with taking innocent lives for things such as broken tail lights because they're "intimidating." That right there is the issue. Are our police force scared of black skin? That even

when innocent, with their children in the back seat, these black men and women are being taken away from their families because of an impulsive move done by a cop because they're "scared." But what are they scared of? Where did this fear come from? Are they trained to be scared? Did they learn this in their Police Academies? Were they raised this way? This is what America needs to uncover. We need to find the source. We need to find where this fear is coming from.

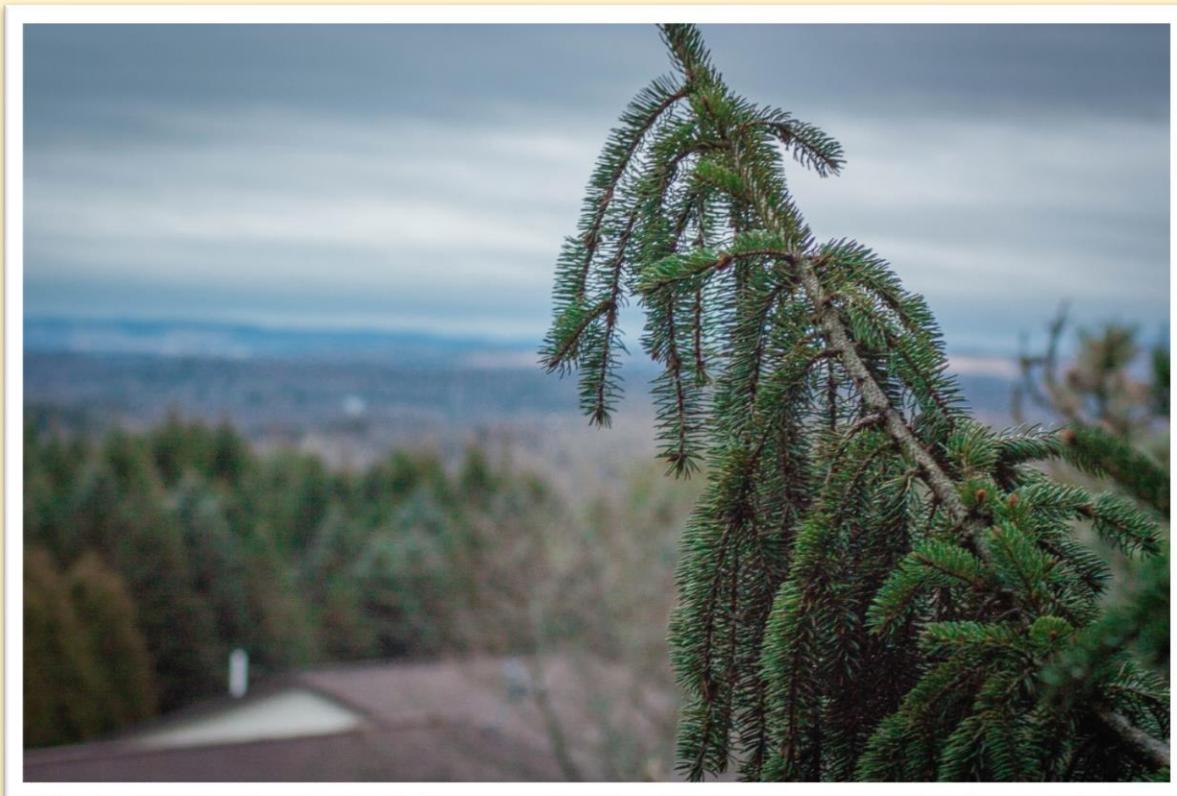
Personally, I have never feared my life walking down the streets of a city as a white female. I have often feared my safety as a female, but never have I feared my life as a white individual. When we deny our white privilege we are only adding to the problem. To say that we don't fear our lives because we are white, is privilege. The only way to help diminish this issue is to acknowledge that the only difference between whites and blacks is that we feel safer as white citizens than black citizens do. This is the issue. We should all feel safe.

My interview with MB ended, and so did this mind-boggling conversation concerning our police officers whom we grow up to respect and depend on for keeping peace.



Anna Compton

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



**Would you like to contribute to
The Student Voice?**

*We invite MVCC students to send
articles for consideration to us via Email
at atreis@mvcc.edu.*

Tree View

Photograph courtesy of Christopher Gray

The Student Voice would like to
thank our editors for the September
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Editor-in-chief: David Penner

Editor: Anna Compton

Editor: Alana Wielgosz



Photo credit: <http://www.lovethepic.com/image/128231/keep-calm-and-welcome-autum>

"And all at once, summer collapsed into fall."

-Oscar Wilde