



# THE MONITOR

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MARYMOUNT MANHATTAN COLLEGE'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER

NOVEMBER 13, 2018

## AMERICA: A CONTINUATION OF HATRED



Photo courtesy of WBUR

### NATION FACES A MULTITUDE OF THREATS AND HATE CRIMES IN 2018

By Fahima Degia  
Staff Editor

October brings about excitement for Halloween, pumpkins, and the beauty of seeing leaves fall. This October was different though, America's excitement faded with the news of hate crimes and pipe bombs that were sent to influential Democrats.

One of the hate crimes took place in The Tree Of Life Synagogue, located in Pittsburgh, on October 27th. The synagogue was invaded by Robert Bowers shouting anti-Semitic slurs. Bowers had an AR-15 rifle and three handguns. Bowers killed 11 members of the congregation, four officers, and two onlookers.

The victims of the tragic shooting, their names are Irving Younger, Melvin Wax, Rose Mallinger, Sylvan Simon, Bernice Simon, Jarry Rabinowitz, Joyce Fienberg, Richard Gottfried, Daniel Stein, Cecil Rosenthal, and David Rosenthal.

Marymount Manhattan College acknowledged the hate crime. In the words of President Kerry Walk, the attack that took place is "the deadliest attack on Jewish people in U.S. history, which

is horrific in and of itself. It is also a deeply disturbing example of crimes fueled by hatred and intolerance that have occurred in this country in recent weeks and months."

Another hate crime this month is the killing of two civilians at a Kentucky supermarket in which Gregory Bush, a 51 year old white male shot and killed two older black shoppers. Bush walked into the supermarket and pulled a gun on 69-year-old Maurice Stallard and shot her several times in the back of the head. Bush then went outside and shot 67-year-old Vickie Lee Jones, who died of multiple gunshot wounds. He now faces two murder counts and 10 other felonies for his previous history with breaking the law.

The similarity of both hate crimes in Kentucky and Pittsburgh is that the intent was clear. Before the murder of Vicki Lee Jones and Maurice Stallard, Gregory Bush had walked into a predominantly African American church intending to attack churchgoers. Robert D. Bowers had been posting anti-Semitic comments on social media preceding his attack as well. There was context to inform that these were predetermined, hate-fueled murders, not random acts of violence.

As the nation heals from both hate-fueled

murders, it also gets ready for midterm elections on November 6. Just as the news of hate crimes came out, America was also informed about bomb threats. A man sent more than a dozen bombs to critics of the president and influential Democrats. These bomb threats coincidentally happened before the election and targeted members of the Democratic Party.

Suspect Cesar Sayoc sent 14 pipe bombs around the country to important Democrats. Sayoc used the mail system and none of the bombs detonated. Among his alleged targets according to CNN are "President Barack Obama, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, former US Attorney General Eric Holder, California Senator Kamala Harris, New Jersey Senator Cory Booker and California Rep. Maxine Waters."

The hate-fueled murders and the pipe bombs all happened during midterm season. This brings about the question, will the hate crimes and pipe bombs sway votes?

Before the general election there was also a rise in hate crimes and violence. Before the midterm elections we also see a rise in hate crimes and violence. History repeats itself and also reflects on our current political climate. The

current political climate makes people worry for there safety.

Safety concerns is why an amber alert was sent out to New York City residents when a pipe bomb was sent to the CNN office. Organizations and people are doing there best to educate and enforce safety protocols, especially with the spur of hate crimes and bomb threats in a intense political era.

There is no perfect solution to safety protocols, but there is preventive measures institutions and organizations can take. This is why Marymount Manhattan College has its own safety system, similar to amber alerts. MMC's alerts are available to students in cases of emergencies and schoolwide updates.

To get onto the system you can go onto Marymount's website and under Campus Safety; Emergency Notifications Via Connected there is an Emergency Notification Link. The link guides you to log in, once you do you can be connected via text and email. You would fill in required fields and will always be notified in the case of any event.

## SGA'S 4TH MEETING: STUDENT Q&A

By Brenelle Braganza  
Guest Writer

Student Government Association (SGA) hosted their annual fall student assembly that happened on Monday 29th of October. The attendees of the event consisted of SGA members, administration, professors from the various departments and students. The mission of the Fall Student Assembly (FSA) was to hear from the students about the issues that exist at Marymount and find creative solutions to the existing issue and/ or have a member of the administration address the issues. SGA talked about their goals and what they have achieved so far during the semester. A few of the goals that they achieved so far; the first goal was having tabling events that educated the students of Marymount on voting and how to get registered. Second, the creation of the first-year student council that is aimed to groom first year students into SGA leadership roles and to help advance the mission of SGA. Third, moving the New York Times Subscription from physical paper copies to online, continuing with their free water initiative

where they give out reusable water bottles to the new incoming class every year and shifting from a paper budget request and allocation form to an online form which all goes with their sustainability goals. Fourth, implementing a rule where by which no registered student organizations can send emails to the whole student body but only to the people that sign up. Lastly, to host two student town halls meetings (fall student assembly and spring student assembly) during the course of the academic year. In case students were not able to make the FSA or/ and wanted their name to be anonymous, SGA created a platform where students could post their questions, comments and concerns. The questions that were raised by students revolved around academic rigor, space constraints, required courses offerings, environmental sustainability efforts at Marymount, financial aid office, recycling at Marymount, international student recruitment, addition of new majors and the prospect of bringing a language minor to Marymount. The students that were present also brought up the idea to have an appreciation day to appreciate the people that work in facilities, Starbucks and the café as an act of positive reinforcement and a way to let the people working in these spaces know that they

are appreciated. This was an endeavor that was taken on by SGA in the previous year and is something SGA is willing organize this year as well but make it bigger and have more student run organizations be a part of since it would get most of the student body involved. Most of the questions that were raised by students were definitely rising concerns, however, they were not issues that SGA as an organization have jurisdiction over, but some the board of directors and higher-level management have jurisdiction. Some of the concerns such as the environmental sustainability efforts, recycling, and the prospect of bringing a language minor are things SGA are actively working on alongside other registered student organizations and specific people from administration and faculty. The other concerns that were raised were addressed by the administration such as space constraints, required courses offerings, financial aid office and international student recruitment. All in all, it was structured assembly that heard concerns of the student body, established solutions to the concerns and addressed the concerns that were voiced.



LETTER *from the* EDITOR

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Dear Readers,

Thank you for picking up the fifth issue of this volume’s The Monitor! This time around, we have a multitude of great pieces crafted together by our brilliant staff and guest writers. Since we are nearing the time to be thankful for all we have, writers Catherine Pool and Gwen Attridge let us know how to survive Thanksgiving as a vegan while also supplying you all with some awesome recipes.

Noeh Garcia gave us our monthly horoscope once again, so feel free to take a look and see how this Scorpio season is affecting you (good luck), editors Lauren and Kayla gave us some insight on both A Star is Born and the new Netflix show The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina within our Entertainment section, and finally please take a look at our profiles section, as Halle interviews student Shaneka Williams.

We have a jam packed issue for you this week and I really hope you enjoy. Speaking of jam packed, make sure to attend our Writer’s Workshop coming up on November 26th where we will be discussing the importance of journalism, how to structure an article, and more. Be on the lookout for more information coming soon!

Have any feedback? Send us your thoughts through email to marnold@mmm.edu or monitor@mmm.edu. We are still accepting Student Submissions, so please make sure to send those our way as well.

Once again, thank you for reading and I hope you enjoy!

With love,  
*Megan Arnold*  
Editor-in-Chief



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News

MMC’s The Monitor

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE USA

THE IMPACT ON THE MASS INCARCERATION OF WOMEN

By Billie Sangha  
Staff Editor

October was Domestic Violence Awareness Month, but the conversation is just getting started at Marymount. The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences at Marymount recently invited Licensed Master Social Worker Shameeka Mattis-Pinard to speak to the topic of the impact that domestic violence has had on mass incarceration of women in the United States.

When a room of about 40 attendees were asked to participate in a survey and answer the question: “Do you know someone who is or has been in a violent relationship?”, 91% of those who opted in said yes.

Much of the discussion was about defining and recognizing domestic violence and how to support victims in a system and society that villifies and disproportionately incarcerates women (particularly, women of colour) who are often victims of domestic violence that they are trying to escape.

“Domestic violence is intentional. It is about power and control over someone else. An imposition of your will on someone else is an act violence,” Mattis-Pinard explained.

Domestic violence exhibits a pervasive pattern in the United States, in particular. This imposition of power and control begins early through the coercion, manipulation, and even physical discipline or punishment of children. Partners or family members who use fear, power, and abuse emotionally, financially, physically, psychologically, etc. are committing acts of violence. So what allows something that can be agreed on as objectively wrong to exist with such prevalence?

Understanding the present requires consideration of the historical context. DV is rooted in sexism, racism, and a culture of permissive violence. Permissive violence refers to state sanctioned violence like incarceration, which justified the state imposing itself on civilians through the Thirteenth Amendment. Even more insidiously, one should consider the culture surrounding contact sports, video games, and media that condone and in some cases, even encourage verbal or physical violence. This indicates the unfortunate reality that it is sociologically impossible to avoid violence. And the impact it has on women is a battle that needs to be fought on multiple fronts: structurally within the government and law enforcement, and socially among us.

How can we equip ourselves with the knowledge and resources to

protect each other and support victims? The conversation then shifted to trauma. Recognizing and being mindful of one’s own trauma and how one may engage with someone else and their potential trauma is a vital component in support, empathy, and healing.

In the Adverse Childhood Exposure study, trauma was researched in terms of its long-term effects on children. Mattis-Pinard explained that when unaddressed, a child’s traumatic history can manifest itself into behaviours that sprout and may last throughout their life, well beyond adolescence. She went on to say, “Trauma impairs our social cognition, our ability to understand danger.” Students in the audience nodded along, as she explained the connection between having so much left unhealed and the unhealthy, unsafe behaviours being exhibited in later years. “This includes generational trauma, for anyone with a history of immigration - forced or otherwise, domestic violence, incarceration...when this goes unaddressed, people are literally walking around physically, emotionally, mentally sick...and they’re not able to make good choices about who and how they love.”

Trauma happens, and our brain resets. It’s an animal instinct. But when trauma is unhealed and violence is normalized, we lose our capacity to

actually imagine something different if we are constantly fighting for our loves. We lose our creativity, our ability to write or compose our idea of our lives and our success factors.

So then, Shameeka Mattis-Pinard suggests we meet each other where we are. We don’t shove our idea of support in anyone’s face. We ask questions like “what do you need to feel safe?” Let’s start there. Let’s answer that question, heal ourselves, heal our communities, and work our way to making even bigger and more necessary change. She also urges us to answer other valuable questions of how to hold people accountable and what does that look like?

What are you doing with the people around you? What is in your power? (You should not impose yourself or try to save people, however.) What are you doing in your classes? With your degree?

When election seasons come and go, what are you doing with your vote and contact information of your elected officials and representatives?

Mattis-Pinard left us with a call to action, and a reminder to not let the skepticism and disappointment and defeat stop you or discourage you. Healing and change begins with each and everyone of us individually and ripples outward to a nation that needs it.

SAME-SEX MIRACLE BABY

A CHILD BORN OF TWO MOTHERS

By Christina Bae  
Guest Writer

In Mountain Springs, Texas in June of 2018, Ashleigh and Bliss Coulter gave birth to their ‘miracle baby’, Stetson Coulter. What makes him such a miracle? Well, he is the first child to ever be born from two different mothers. This may sound confusing, but to a scientist, the process is actually quite simple.

The process used by the Coulters is known as Effortless Reciprocal In-Vitro Fertilization. In-vitro fertilization (IVF) is a process in which an egg is fertilized outside the body in a test tube or other external object. This procedure combines techniques from two separate types of IVF – effortless IVF and reciprocal IVF. Effortless in-vitro fertilization is a procedure where the sperm and the female’s eggs are placed into a test tube for five minutes, then transferred into an FDA approved device called an INVOcell. The INVOcell is then placed into the woman’s body where her uterus acts as an incubator and carries the embryo for five days. After five days, the INVOcell is removed and the embryo is replaced into the woman’s body where the baby begins to develop. In reciprocal IVF, one woman’s eggs are fertilized, incubated in a lab, and then the embryos are transplanted into the second woman. Therefore, Effortless Reciprocal IVF is a combination of both these methods. Eggs from Bliss’ body were placed into the INVOcell, and she carried the embryo for five days. After the INVOcell was removed, however, the resulting embryo was placed into Ashleigh’s body, rather than back into Bliss, and she carried the baby to term. This procedure was created by Doctor Kathy Doody of the Center for Assisted Reproduction, and her and

her husband turned it into a reality. According to CBS News, the embryos were frozen after being removed from Bliss’ body until Ashleigh was ready to receive them. In order to receive an embryo, Ashleigh was given doses of estrogen and progesterone to make her body more stable and increase her chance of getting pregnant. Once she finished these hormone treatments, one of Bliss’ embryos was placed inside Ashleigh’s body. Ashleigh became pregnant on the first try, after only ten days of holding the embryo.

ABC News reports that Bliss was hesitant about having a child, while Ashleigh has always wanted one. Bliss states, “I wanted a child that was biologically mine, but I did not want to carry the child.” This is how Doctor Doody determined that this couple would be the perfect candidates to try this new procedure. It would allow both women to play a part in creating a child, even though only one

woman would carry it. Due to this new procedure, baby Stetson now contains DNA from three different parents. This is a very rare occurrence and there are no solid facts as to what this may mean for the baby’s future. However, as far as Ashleigh and Bliss are concerned, their son was born perfectly healthy and there were no problems during pregnancy.

The Coulters hope their story inspires many others like them, and reminds women everywhere that they always have options. Science is constantly evolving and allowing people to do the unthinkable. The Coulters are the first known people to have used this procedure, and since it worked so well for them, they can only hope that many others after them will consider it as another option for childbirth.



SHANEKA WILLIAMS

FILMMAKING AT MARYMOUNT MANHATTAN

By Halle Roberts  
Guest Writer

Theatre and film are a big part of Marymount. However, there are a finite amount of opportunities to get involved with either on campus.



Image by Ethan Haug

While some students let their frustration get the better of them, others create opportunities for themselves. Take Shaneka Williams (‘19), for example: When Williams decided she was interested in film, she helped found the Cinemaniacs, an on-campus club for filmmakers to gather and make films together. With that under her belt, she went outside of Marymount and joined The Black Undergraduate Theatre Collective, a group for black students from different schools to collaborate on theatre and film. Read on for more details about how Williams did what she could with what she was given at Marymount to do the kind of diverse, relevant work that any good artist should.

How did you get into filmmaking?

I never thought of myself as a filmmaker before coming to MMC. My first semester, I was just a Theatre Arts major. I knew I wanted to write, direct and perform theatre but I thought I would have to master Theatre before making films. After taking COMM 131: Into to Cinema Studies and seeing the power of film, I added the major. Film is more accessible to Black creatives, that is why I gravitated to it so quickly. I have more control over narrative when I chose the lens.

Can you tell us a little bit about your current project, 20 or Something?

20 or Something is a web series that follows CAKES as she navigates new relationships and growing pains. I am the Director of this web series and I couldn’t have asked for a more supportive production for my Directorial debut. Everyone a part of this series was either Black, Brown, or a Woman, which is rare.

What I loved most about working on this series is that I was enhancing a story about ‘20 somethings who were black’ not ‘Black 20 somethings’. Although race does play a role in their conflicts, the characters are more concerned about their relationships and respect, which is truly reflective of the current Black experience.

20 or Something is a collaboration with students from outside of Marymount. How did you get involved?

I am a part of a Facebook group called The Black Undergraduate Theatre Collective and the Producer/Writer/Leading Actress, Mickalia Forrester (NYU ‘19), posted the script asking for feedback.

I loved the script, it was about Brooklyn natives of Caribbean heritage dealing with the tribulations of youth and being a Jamaican-American youth in NYC, I immediately connected with it. A month later, Mickalia posted again looking for a Director and I jumped at the opportunity!

What advice do you have for other student filmmakers who want to collaborate with other students, whether in or outside of Marymount?

Start by getting involved in Cinemaniacs, the on-campus film club, and take on any job. Cinemaniacs is not about making the best film but completing a wholesome project with peers. Even if you have no idea what you are doing, just YouTube it and do it! You can also join the many NYC film collectives, like The Black Tv & Film Collective (which I interned at), Black Film Space, Women Make Films or Motion Picture Institute and take advantage of the learning opportunities. Lastly, follow the right people on social media, it’s all business now and there are too many openings out there!

What can we expect from you next?

I am currently working on my senior thesis film entitled, FRUIT SNACKS. It follows an aspiring social activist’s journey for a formal education but when she hits a major financial road block, she must resort to unsavory tactics to raise money. I’m excited for this project because it will set the tone for me as a filmmaker and hopefully starts a conversation amongst my peers.

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Avenue Q’s University Block Party



Image courtesy of Avenue Q

COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE WELCOMED TO CELEBRATE THEATRE

By Christina Bae  
Guest Writer

Trump is only for now,” a humorous play on words from a line of the show’s finale song, “For Now.” The cast members repped their college merch and posed for photos with all the students who came out to see the show, and there were many.

Avenue Q is a raunchy musical about a young man, named Princeton, who has just graduated college and moved to New York City on a mission to find his “purpose.” He moves into an apartment on Avenue Q, where he meets his many colorful neighbors, including a girl he comes to care deeply about, Kate Monster. Along the way, his neighbors teach him valuable lessons about love, life, and happiness, and he learns that no one ever really has it all figured out. Though it is very sexually explicit and super comical, Avenue Q does subliminally point out some important issues still facing our society to this day,

such as sexuality and racism. This show can especially resonate with the average young adult in New York, since we are living in the big city and are in a similar age group as the main character.

Avenue Q’s University Block Party promotion was part of their contribution to the Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS organization, which, according to the organization’s website, aims to provide men, women, and children across the country with necessary medications, meals, health care, and emergency financial assistance. The annual Broadway Flea Market, as mentioned in our earlier issue, is also a fundraising event for this organization. For more updates on the Broadway Cares organization and to be informed of its events, go online to broadwaycares.org, or you can find them on twitter @BCEFA. Their most recent event was the annual Broadway Run. This year’s event took place on November 3, 2018, in Midtown Manhattan.

The cast of Avenue Q avidly supports this organization and is always looking for ways to contribute and bring people out to their show for a night of laughter and fun. Avenue Q’s next discounted event is called “Thirsty Thursday,” and it will be taking place on Thursday, November 15. It is a one-night only event in which you get a ticket to the show and a beverage for only \$55! Don’t worry, all ages are welcome, but you’ll be served a mere soda or water if you’re under the age of 21. Avenue Q is an off-broadway show, so they offer a multitude of exciting, discounted events every year, you just have to look out for them. To stay informed on all things Avenue Q, follow them on Instagram or Snapchat @avenueqmusical! It’s a show worth seeing, and you won’t wanna miss it.

THE HISTORY OF MAGIC: A HARRY POTTER EXHIBIT



Image by Ethan Haug

By Cross Nelson  
Staff Writer

Twenty years ago, author J.K. Rowling introduced the world to one of modern literature’s most well loved characters, and two decades later, the wondrous world of Harry Potter continues to enchant readers and movie watchers worldwide. From the moment Rowling released the first novel, Harry Potter brought a new kind of magic to the world and that magic only continues to grow. Wands, spells, flying broomsticks, and fantastic creatures, seem to come to life through the words of Rowling, and devout fans of all ages still wait for the day that they will receive their letter from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. But ow, Hogwarts is bringing itself to New York City in a special exhibition that allows muggles and wizards alike to step out of Manhattan and into the wizarding world for a spell. “Harry Potter: A History of Magic” takes fans on a journey through a world of magic that combines the Harry Potter books with the actual history of magic; making one feel as if they themselves have become a student at Hogwarts with Harry and his friends. Accordingly, the exhibition is cleverly laid out to mimic the classrooms at Hogwarts, with each room specializing in a different area of study, such as divination, potions, alchemy, or care of magical creatures. As viewers walk through the rooms and educate themselves on these magical topics, the line between fantasy and reality seems to fade and one can begin to see how Rowling used the history of magic to craft her books. Within each gallery of the exhibition are Rowling’s original drafts, annotated manuscripts, and sketches from the books that allow viewers to catch a glimpse into the creative process of the author. In viewing Rowling’s works, it is apparent that she composed a lot of research in order to make the magical discourse in her novels seem more authentic and connected to the historical magic of the past. For example, notes that Rowling scribbled indicate that she created her spells heavily based off of latin words, such as the charm, “expecto patronum,” which literally translates to “expecting a guardian” that Harry uses to conjure his stag guardian or patronus to fight against the dementors in the third novel. This attention to detail can also be seen in Rowling’s creation of her characters’ names. Many of the characters within the novels have meaningful names that derive from astrology, such as the character Sirius Black, who can take on the shape of a dog, and whose name fittingly comes from the star, Sirius, which is also known as “the dog star.” Rowling also named several characters after figures from latin or greek mythology, like the sharp and intelligent Professor Minerva McGonagall, who is rightly named after Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom. These are the little details that make Rowling’s magical world so unique, and such attention to authenticity seems to bring the magic to life. Overall, this exhibition is the perfect overview of the Harry Potter series, and it artfully combines history with fantasy to create an experience that pulls you out of the real world and into the classrooms of Hogwarts. Who knows...maybe it will make you believe in magic? Experience the wonder of “Harry Potter: The History of Magic” for yourself, now through January 27th at the New York Historical Society.



Image by Ethan Haug

Photos courtesy of Patch.com



# A Vegan Thanksgiving

HOW TO SURVIVE THANKSGIVING WHEN YOU CAN'T EAT WHAT'S ON THE TABLE:  
GWEN ATTRIDGE AND CATIE POOL

Fall is well under way and that means that Thanksgiving is right around the corner. Many may be going home for the holiday, some may be celebrating friends-giving, and others may just want a delicious dish. Whatever your circumstance, wherever you are, these recipes will help add some seasonal flare. All are no-bake recipes with info on how to make them vegan!

## CANDIED YAMS

**Ingredients**  
4 large yams  
1 cup brown sugar  
1 stick butter\*  
1 ½ marshmallows\*

Peel and boil the yams until almost tender. Drain then slice the yams. Return yams to empty pot. Stir brown sugar into melted butter, then pour over yams and cover pot with lid. Turn stove to low heat and simmer for 1 hour. Serve and enjoy!

\*To make this side dish vegan, use a non-dairy butter and vegan marshmallows!

## MASHED POTATOS

**Ingredients**  
4 potatoes  
½ a stick of butter\*  
½ cup of milk\*

Peel potatoes. If large potatoes cut them into quarters, if small just peel them. Boil the potatoes for about 15 minutes, or until tender, a fork should be able to easily cut through the center. Drain potatoes and place in bowl. Mash potatoes until lumps are mostly gone. Add in butter and milk and mix well. Serve and enjoy!

\*To make this side dish vegan use an unsweetened non-dairy milk (almond or soy would work best) and non-dairy butter!

## DOUBLE LAYER PUMPKIN PIE

**Ingredients**  
1 graham cracker pie crust  
1 cup whipped cream\*  
½ cup cream cheese, softened\*  
1 cup and 1 Tbsp milk\*  
1 Tbsp sugar  
1 can of pumpkin  
2 packages of Jello Vanilla flavor instant pudding  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
½ tsp ground ginger  
¼ tsp ground cloves

Mix cream cheese, 1 Tbsp milk, and 1 Tbsp sugar in a large bowl until well blended. Gently fold in half of the whipped cream. Do not over stir. Spread the mixture over the bottom of these graham cracker crust.

In a separate bowl mix together 1 cup of milk, pumpkin, pudding mixes, cinnamon, ginger, and cloves. Best with whisk until well blended. This should be a thick mixture. Spread the mixture over the cream cheese layer. Refrigerate he pie for 4 hours, or until set. Garnish the pie with the remaining whipped cream. Serve and enjoy!

\*To make vegan use non-dairy cream cheese, whipped cream, and unsweetened milk (almond would work best).

## CARMEL APPLE PIE TRUFFLE

**Ingredients**  
4 potatoes  
½ a stick of butter\*  
½ cup of milk\*

Peel potatoes. If large potatoes cut them into quarters, if small just peel them. Boil the potatoes for about 15 minutes, or until tender, a fork should be able to easily cut through the center.

Drain potatoes and place in bowl. Mash potatoes until lumps are mostly gone. Add in butter and milk and mix well. Serve and enjoy!

\*To make this side dish vegan use an unsweetened non-dairy milk (almond or soy would work best) and non-dairy butter!

## GREEN BEANS

**Ingredients**  
2 cup green beans (canned or fresh)  
½ cup water  
A pinch of garlic salt  
1 Tbsp butter\*

Combine green beans with water in a medium saucepan and bring to boil. Once boiling turn stove to low heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Add garlic salt and butter. Serve and enjoy!

\*To make vegan, use a non-dairy butter!

The holiday season is always one to unfold before our eyes, spanning the months of October through January from Halloween to New Years and packing them to the brim with cheer and spirit. Halloween sparks the general excitement, allowing those to become whatever they wish to be and drown in candy. Christmas prompts the spirit of giving and comfort as trees and decorations go up as soon as Black Friday hits. But between these two holidays comes one important date that many would like to lookover, due to over excitement and commercialization of the other two holidays: Thanksgiving, a genuine occasion, celebrating the unity and thanks dating back to the very beginnings of America. But while Halloween has costumes and Christmas has the innumerable array of decorations and festivities, Thanksgiving has one, main highlight: the food. When researching the definition of Thanksgiving, one will find the very first definition states, “an annual national holiday marked by religious observances and a traditional meal including turkey.” This sounds pretty normal to the 96% of Americans who do not follow any sort of restrictive diet on animal products. However, this provides a pretty tricky task for the remaining 3.3% of the population, or eight million American adults, who are either vegetarian or vegan, according to the Vegetarian Resource Group.

For those who follow these food cultures, especially vegans, they must go the extra mile to find replacements for the beloved food of this holiday, which is centered around meat itself. However, we must address the roots of meat-eating during the holidays. In America’s earliest years, meat, especially poultry like turkey, was readily available to be hunted from the area and could feed a great number of people. But in this day and age, we worry more about snatching the last turkey from the store than scrounging for one in the wilderness. Though Thanksgiving is the main food-focused holiday, it becomes apparent that the meals we share as tokens of love and plenty during every holiday are primarily made up of meat and animal-products. Saying this, it is important to take into consideration that “there’s been a 600% increase in people identifying as vegans in the U.S in the last three years...according to a report by research firm GlobalData” (foodrevolution.org). With veganism and vegetarianism only growing in our society, why is it still so hard to stray away from our meat-loving ways and accommodate to our loved ones who choose the dietary path? Does this lack options for vegans and vegetarians create any sort of tension during the holidays that would normally not exist for meat-eaters? The effects of these social norms on vegans and vegetarians during holidays can

go highly unnoticed, but can be a source of a lot of anxiety for themselves and family members. Sarah Clark, a health behavior research specialist from University of Michigan, explains this divisive effect after the conduction of a survey of 910 parents with children who followed these certain diets. She explains, “So much is built up around these special holiday meals where we all are supposed to come together in harmony...but there are a lot of food traditions that run smack-dab into conflict with the diet.” Hailey Bakos, a 17 year old from New Jersey who has been vegan for two years now, portrays this feeling of frustration when discussing holiday meals. “Eating during the Holidays is the most annoying thing,” she explains. “I am the only vegan in my family and of course people feel bad I can not eat anything and always make a big deal.” She continues to explains how despite the fact that her parents support her lifestyle, she gets criticized and questioned from older relatives, resulting in the fact that “being vegan is always the topic of discussion at any family gathering.” These feelings are common amongst households who are not common with the detrimental effects of our diets on the environment. Madison Emery, 20, of New Jersey speaks to this by explaining her choice of becoming a vegetarian in early 2017. “I had a revelation of how large my im-

pact on not only my world but my children’s world one day was, and I decided to do my part in making a change.” It is the older generation’s lack of knowledge behind the reasoning of one to go vegan or vegetarian that creates this awkward tension at the dinner table. After making this decision for herself, Madison stated that “holidays definitely feel much more non inclusive.” From making separate meals to bring to family functions and being the center topic of conversation at every dinner, it is almost impossible for a vegan or vegetarian to feel completely comfortable during holiday dinners. However, there is a direction we can move in to eliminate this negative feeling that should be nowhere in sight during the holiday season. It is a solution that is the basis to solving any problem: a mutual understanding of people’s choices and beliefs. Leslie Lytle, a nutritionist and professor of health behavior at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, comments about this strategy, being a parent of vegan herself. She explains how families, especially parents “[should] approach it as, let’s figure this out together.” It is the collective knowledge of a loved one’s choice that can show them the care and comfort everyone should feel during the holidays, especially when we should be thankful for those that surround and support us through life.



# NOVEMBER HOROSCOPES

By Noeh Garcia  
Guest Writer

## SCORPIO

Happy Birthday Scorpio! This Scorpio season might have felt a little bit different this time around, as it began with Venus in retrograde in your sign, where your focus was on yourself and how you present yourself, and continues with Venus moving into Libra, which shifts your focus towards deeper, more lofty ideas like your spiritual journey and any hidden truths you might find. Something that you may have been trying to figure out about yourself will reveal itself to you in this time. Scorpio season comes to a close with Mercury in retrograde the same day that Venus retrograde ends on November 16th. Now don't be frightened, this is a great time to look back and see what Venus' retrograde taught you. Keep communications simple to prevent miscommunications and it'll be smooth sailing.

## SAGITTARIUS

Mysterious Scorpio season will have you exploring the mysteries of your inner psyche, Sagittarius, which makes November a great time for mental development and meditation. Your ruling planet, Jupiter, will be moving into your sign on November 8th, for the first time in over 10 years! This powerful position will help your personal growth and help you get connected to your inner self and what's best for you. But if this seems to good to be true, you might be right. Don't get too comfortable in this zone, remember to be wary not to jump into what you think may be one of Jupiter's blessings. Gear up for Sagittarius season at the end of this month!

## CAPRICORN

Scorpio season is full of new beginnings for you, Capricorn. The new moon in Scorpio on November 7th will open up a door in your social life. Make sure to communicate any issues you have in any relationships. Matters in your professional life or school have felt stagnant since Venus went into retrograde, but come November 16th, when Venus' retrograde ends and Mercury's begins, it'll be a good time to return to old projects you had put on the backburner and get things moving again. But this retrograde is also a good time to relax, let yourself sleep in, and just generally give your mind a chance to recharge.

## AQUARIUS

The end of Venus' retrograde and the beginning of Mercury's retrograde on November 16th is going to bring everything you've been needing. Venus is your planet of home and family life so you'll find yourself getting on the right page with your loved ones, and working through issues that have been on your mind for a while. Be mindful about communication during Mercury's retrograde, try not to overshare during this time. Make time for all your favorite people who you haven't had a chance to see in a while during this time as well. The new moon on the 7th will kick up your creativity and is a good time for manifestation.

## PISCES

The new moon in Scorpio on the 7th will get you excited for your future, and get your creative juices flowing. Use this inspiration as a time to manifest something great for yourself. Mars, the planet of action, enters your sign on November 15th, which will bring you a much needed burst of energy. Mars is an aggressive and impulsive planet, so be wary of these feelings coming along. You are particularly affected by Mercury in retrograde, but you can get through it, Pisces! Avoid starting new projects, and making any big commitments.

## ARIES

The end of Venus' retrograde on November 16th will help you get things moving forward with your desires and wants, especially in your sectors of love and money. Trust the direction that things are going for you. Mercury going into retrograde on the same day might make things like communication, travel, and school frustrating, but keep your cool, Aries, it won't last too long. The new moon in Scorpio will allow for a cleansing new start for you.

## TAURUS

Your ruling planet, Venus, has been in retrograde for a while now, which has left you feeling kind of off. During this retrograde, indulge in some serious self-care to get back in touch with yourself, figure out what has you feeling funky and make it right. Treat your body right, and make sure you are exactly where you need to be. When Venus' retrograde ends, Mercury's immediately begins, which will urge you to take responsibility for the issues you might've been avoiding. Mars in Pisces will activate your social life in new ways.

## CANCER

This year is going to be great for your career and personal advancement, as Jupiter enters Sagittarius from November 8th where it will stay until December 2nd, 2019. Jupiter is the planet of growth, and fiery Sagittarius will give you the confidence to get you far. Mercury retrograde on November 16th might throw a wrench into this growth, you might find it messing up your schedule or plans, but just try not to commit to too many obligations, because you might find yourself overwhelmed. Your fifth house of drama and passion will be energized by the Sun on November 22nd, so try to keep a handle on your emotions and reactions, don't let them boil over.

## LEO

Jupiter entering Sagittarius from November 8th to December of 2019, will kick up a lot of fun for you in the next year, Leo. It'll bring out your creativity, sense of passion, and adventure. Take advantage of this energization, and make the best out of every situation you find yourself in. Venus' retrograde will help in connections with your love life, so keep your mind open to new possibilities. Mercury's retrograde on November 16th will make communication tough for you, proceed with caution when it comes to making binding commitments, and make communications simple so as to avoid misunderstandings.

## VIRGO

Venus' retrograde in Scorpio might've been a frustrating time for you in terms of your love life, and financial gains, but this has taught you some important lessons about your values and what you want to pursue. It ends on the same day as Mercury's retrograde begins, on November 16th. Mercury is your ruling planet, so it's retrograde might particularly affect you, but make sure not to spread yourself too thin with commitments, and avoid miscommunications at all times. The beginning of Sagittarius season on November 22nd will open up your house of home and family sector, making it a great time to make your living space beautiful, connect with any family members, and make new friends.

## LIBRA

Mercury in retrograde in philosophical Sagittarius will give you a good time to breathe, relax, and look inward to your inner thoughts and take time to reflect. Avoid making important decisions or commitments during this time. Communication might get a bit muddled for you, with Mercury in retrograde at the same time as the beginning of Sagittarius season on November 22nd. Sagittariuses are known for having a big mouth, and Mercury's retrograde is infamous for making communication tough. You might be overwhelmed with the juicy gossip information you're receiving, as well as the information you're wanting to share, but make sure not to cause any drama.

## GEMINI

This Venus in retrograde has taught you important lessons about love, relationships, and your real values. When it comes to an end on November 16th, Mercury beginning its retrograde on the same day gives you a perfect opportunity to absorb and reflect on these lessons. However it might be hard for you to express your thoughts during Mercury's retrograde, and you might feel some changes or shifts in your relationships. Make an effort to be clear and open with your feelings. A full moon in Gemini on November 23rd marks a new beginning or turning point in your relationships.

# THE EVER-EVOLVING A STAR IS BORN

## FOURTH TIMES THE CHARM

By Lauren Garafano  
Staff Editor

Unless you've been living under a rock during the past couple of months, you've probably heard that *A Star Is Born* has yet another remake. This time the film stars the equally iconic Bradley Cooper and Lady Gaga. This adaptation of the Hollywood classic is fourth in the line of movies and remakes and takes place in a modern day 2018. The first debuting in 1937, second in 1954, and third in 1976. Having not seen any of the past films prior to 2018, the new blockbuster finally gave me a reason to go back and dive into the Star is Born franchise and see exactly what the fuss was about. During my binge-session, one question stood out to me the most though. I found myself wondering what is it about this movie that makes it so timeless?

To fully understand where *A Star Is Born's* success comes from we first and foremost need to discuss the overall plot structure that occurs. Once we understand the sequence of events, we can begin to comprehend why these films are so necessary to their time, plus why this plot is able to be recycled again and again (and again).

All four films follow this basic story: Esther Blodgett, longs to become a big name in Hollywood. Norman Maine, an already established celebrity with a substance abuse problem, meets Esther, sees her perform and pursues her. With Norman's initial guidance, Esther's career begins to take off more widely than she ever thought imaginable. Esther's fame grows immensely, as Norman's declines. The two eventually get married. Esther wins an award and Norman, in the midst of a downward spiral, drunkenly interrupts. Lastly, Norman dies, and Esther pays tribute to her late husband in front of an audience.

The 2018 version of *A Star Is Born* is the most different from the 1937 original, which only makes sense when the two are 80+ years apart. The modern day adaptation is truly a product of the generation it exists in and here's why: The biggest difference between movies is that this time around, the film focuses largely on Jackson's backstory. Throughout the two hours we learn about Jackson's tragic storyline about diminishing stardom, mental health, and a tough battle with addiction. Cooper's portrayal and Jackson's extensive backstory allow the audience to sympathize with the character when he eventually spirals. This version recognizes that

Ally's success isn't what ultimately ruins Jackson's career. Yes, the film tells the story of a star being born, but it also tells the tale of another burns out. Lastly, we need to talk about why this film is just as successful the fourth time around. As trends fade and music evolves, *A Star Is Born* shows us that Hollywood remains the same. One of the most important themes in all four movies is the toxicity Hollywood has on its inhabitants. Whether it be Esther (or Ally) changing everything about herself and where she came from or Norman's (or Jack's) diminishing fame and death, stardom isn't always what it's cracked up to be. What *A Star Is Born* shows audiences every single time is that there is no escaping the plight of the A-list celebrity and the cycle will continue for years and years to come. The plot itself is flexible enough that it can be totally transformed and still remain true to the original. Plus, it sure doesn't hurt that each film stars a bunch of Hollywood royalty: Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper (2018), Barbra Streisand and Kris Kristofferson (1976); Judy Garland and James Mason (1954); and Janet Gaynor and Fredric March (1937). So should we expect another remake in 20-30 years? You bet. But for now let's just bask in the glory of the 2018 version.

# THE NEW SABRINA SPELLMAN



Image courtesy of blogspot.com

## FROM COMIC TO COMEDY TO DRAMA

By Kayla Pacenka  
Layout Editor

If you're an early 2000s kid, you're likely familiar with *Sabrina the Teenage Witch*, the whimsical and comedic animated take on the Archie comic. Netflix's *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina*, however, strays away from that comedy feel that the comics once had, becoming a series best described as when *Riverdale* meets *American Horror Story*. By the creators and producers of *Riverdale*, *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* tells a thrilling story about love and hexes. \*Note: This article may contain some spoilers, so beware.

Taking place in the fictional town of Greendale in an unknown state (a problem talked about for years, but many fans deduce it may be New York or Massachusetts), the show starts a couple days before Halloween, prior to Sabrina Spellman's "dark baptism" on her 16th birthday. With this, Sabrina faces a tough decision: become a full witch and never see her friends and boyfriend again or please her coven and her aunts by enrolling in the "School of the Unseen Arts." This presents the central struggle for Sabrina, while the Dark Lord, referring to the Devil himself, wants her to become a full witch. Once he doesn't get his way, life becomes

rather hard for Sabrina and she finds the only way to live the blended life she wants would be to defeat Satan himself.

Taking place in a contemporary context with a strong theme of feminism, *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* is different from other horror shows in that it does not stray from current and controversial topics, such as gender inequality, censorship, and religious persecution. In the beginning of the series, Sabrina and her friends create a women-supporting-women club called WICCA (Women's Intersectional Cultural and Creative Association), which is an acronym that plays on modern paganism/witch practices. The catalyst for this organization is the patriarchal response of the principal after her friend Julie, is bullied for not conforming to her gender by hypermasculine jocks at school. When the boys are still tormenting Julie, Sabrina puts a hex on them and blackmails them into never messing with Julie again with the help of other witches who attend the School of the Unseen Arts. Similarly, there are monologues and feminist-activist themes of how witches should support other witches rather than internalizing and projecting hate because they've faced collective scrutiny and should stand together. Although many people have enjoyed the show and its empowerment of youth and various minorities, it has also faced

a lot of backlash since coming out in late October. Some viewers have been vocal about being upset over the character Prudence Night, a black teenager who is characterized as the "bad witch" of the show and also becomes the victim of explicit and racially triggering actions without a content warning. Furthermore, Prudence can also be seen as just a character foil for the white, blonde "good" witch that is Sabrina and is simply a stepping stone for Sabrina's quest. Later in the show, when Prudence's critical demeanor begins to soften and she becomes a better person, many believe that she was written into the stereotype that black women need to be contained, pacified, or tamed.

Unsurprisingly, The Satanic Temple is angered by the new series as well. The religious organization has decided to sue Netflix for its illegally copied Baphomet Statue of a demonic goat, which is culturally significant to Satanism. This has brought up an interesting debate on copyrighting religious figures, and if that is morally ethical or not. While some believe the statue was a direct copy of one made by the Satanic Temple, others think you cannot sue over a statue for simply depicting a religious figure.

Less controversial but just as interesting is the fact that *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* takes place in the

same universe as *Riverdale*, which is not left unnoticed. Throughout the show, several easter eggs are placed to give hints to the fans of both shows. Once, a boy from Greendale asks a witch if she goes to Riverdale High. Sweetwater River is also mentioned throughout the show, which is a location many *Riverdale* fans are also familiar with. But the most obvious moment in *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* is when Ben Button, a frequent character in *Riverdale*, delivers a pizza. Many fans hope for a *Riverdale* and *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* crossover but because Sabrina is most likely set in the 60s with more intention than just a retro aesthetic in a modern setting like *Riverdale*, it will probably never happen. So, sorry fans, but I don't think we'll see KJ Apa and Cole Sprouse summoning demons anytime soon.

Overall, *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* is a unique and unexpectedly creative twist on the horror genre and the Archie comics themselves. While many loved the original series as children for its lighthearted take on witchcraft integrated into everyday life, you could love it as an adult for its drama and suspenseful nature. *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* is currently on Netflix now available for streaming and bingeing, and has already started filming its second season.



# ONE DEGREE SEPERATED

LIVING WITH SOMEONE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS



Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

By Alex Reilly  
Guest Writer

Television series these days are almost always constructed to portray a specific change producers wish to see in society. Some of the more common and popular shows like *Atypical* are aiming to show their audiences what it is like to be in a close relationship with someone with a mental illness. *Atypical* sheds light on the idea that a small portion rather than much of society tends to think about which people are close to mental illness and which are just barely touching it. In this series the main characters showcase an unbreakable brother-sister bond highlighting the positives and negatives they both face stemming from the brother's autism. The show focuses heavily on the relationship trying to paint a picture of how they will experience hardship but that there is always a way to coexist peacefully and fulfillingly between one that has a mental illness and one who does not.

In our current society worry constantly falls on those who possess mental illness, and though this worry is rightfully deserved, when does society stop to bring attention to those who are one degree separated? Rarely do we discuss the effects of a constant circulation with others suffering with a mental illness. It is a common occurrence that many have come to face at some point in their lives and that is not to say all cases are the same. Sometimes it could be a loved one sometimes a new friend. The thing is you simply don't know until you do. College is a rigorous experience for practically any first year student especially those who have a mental illness like anxiety or depression, and

so on, inherently making the transition difficult many times over. According to the Director of Counseling and Wellness at Marymount Manhattan College, Dr. Hajizadeh, "People oftentimes want to 'fix' a problem they see without realizing it is more complex than it appears. This feeling of uncertainty or helplessness can lead to

insecurities about the self." Which exhibits the issue at hand, how do people with mental illnesses affect those around them?

Now it is simple to say that this affects other students' moods when consistently socializing with peers with mental illness, but more importantly we must figure out why. An Marymount Manhattan Freshman, Julianna Bulsa, who encounters this topic on a daily basis in her own dorm room says "I get very insecure when expressing my feelings about my life, that are hard for me,

to her because I know I don't have it as hard as she does and I don't want her to think I am trying to 'one-up' her." Which closely ties in with what Dr. Hajizadeh had to say about how some may begin to question themselves and form new insecurities as a result of associating with struggling individuals. This of course is not to say that absolutely everyone struggles in this particular way by being one degree separated from these individuals, but it is an important

thing for those who are to realize that what they are feeling is valid. It is necessary to shed light on students who are confused about what they may be feeling and experiencing in cases such as these within college especially.

Experts from Health guide online highlight the importance of self care for those who are close to

people with mental illness and even suggest ways to help your loved ones and protect your mental health simultaneously. They begin by stating "If someone you love is depressed, you may be experiencing any number of difficult emotions, including helplessness, frustration, anger, fear, guilt, and sadness. These feelings are all normal. It's not easy dealing with a friend or family member's depression. And if you don't take care of yourself, it can become overwhelming." The most crucial notion of this statement being that if one doesn't take care of themselves they can put their own mental health at risk and in a college setting this could not be more prevalent. The most helpful part of the article explained how to cope and help those in your life who need it, for example, they share things to ask your struggling loved one and things to say that show support such as "You're not alone in this. I'm

In cases where students feel hardships surrounding mental illness, those who are one degree separated must take into account their own future and prepare to prosper no matter what obstacles they face and should learn to help those around them who need them.

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here for you," and "Tell me what I can do now to best help you," which are positive to think of when one is having difficulty relating to new friends, roommates and even classmates. The transition is difficult and so those who are struggling must recognize how to keep themselves on a focused path and help their peers to do the same.

College is meant to be a learning experience and is built to help fresh young adults to find themselves and become the mature citizens who will contribute to society one day. In cases where students feel hardships surrounding mental illness, those who are one degree separated must take into account their own future and prepare to prosper no matter what obstacles they face and should learn to help those around them who need them to build a sense of community even in a new setting with new people. There are several ways to create a balance between those who do and do not have mental illness in close relationships. This is certainly something that not all of society considers when discussing the topic of mental illness but it is crucial to look at how both sides are affected and how mental illness can encompass all people, diagnosed or not. It is imperative to recognize those who are experiencing difficulty around people/students with mental illness especially in the formative college years of a student's young life and if you are one of them, you must stay aware and establish a balance in your own mental health because that above all is important to not only yourself but to those around you.

# AMERICAN SON



Image courtesy of American Son on Broadway

A NEW SHOW OPENS ON BROADWAY

By Skylar Woodhouse  
Guest Writer

*American Son* a new Broadway play starring "Scandals" Kerry Washington and Steven Pasquale brings empowering acting while recognizing the treatment of black people in today's society, regardless of how many obstacles have been knocked down by Civil Rights Activists and how successful one might be. *American Son* written by Christopher Demos-Brown and produced by a various Hollywood powernames, Shonda Rhimes, Jada Pinkett Smith and Gabrielle Union. This new play will be running for a short 16 weeks with final the show taking stage on January 30, 2019.

*American Son* is a powerful play revolving around a biracial couple, who faces the struggles with receiving information on their teen son, who has gone missing. *American Son* only has a cast of four, and each cast member acts with true grit as they perform this raw play as people of color still have show why they belong. In an era where the Black Lives Matter movement has been taking the United States and world by storm, *American Son* could

not of come out at a better time. This play deals with controversial topics, ranging from how a man gets treated over a woman, falling into the various microaggressions, of women need to sit back and relax, and do not need to be over sensitive and emotional. The story revolves around a black educated woman who is married to a successful white man, and together the two have provided their son with an elite education, to ensure he is already one step ahead in the world. Though the son has grown up in a privileged world, the play touches on the invisible things, people do not realize children of color go through while being in these inner circles. Children of color, especially black children who attend private schools, that are majority white, become the expectation of what all black people are like, and when one black person messes up, that child has to prove why they are not like the rest. But when a white person shoots a school, or gets arrested for drugs they do not have to prove why they are different from all other white people.

The son in the play has gone missing and the mother has a gut instinct that something is terrible has happened to her son. The mother waits

patiently at the police station in the middle of the night to be talked down on, overlooked and ignored as she waits to learn about what has happened to her son. The mother is black and her son is also black with cornrows. Because her son has corn rows the police officer has an expectation that he can only be the stereotypical black male who is portrayed as being a troublemaker. This play is more than just looking at the disrespect black people face on the daily, but brining a very sensitive conversation to light. The great thing about this play is due to the arts, actors and actresses have a platform where they can get people talking as people watch a show and become educated on why it is so important to not judge someone, or automatically assume something negative due to the color of their skin.

Police brutality is not new, and has been going on for decades, and just because black community has had a Black President, does not mean all of black peoples problems can go away. The tone to which black males are depicted in society is still not okay, and due to all of the police shootings involving innocent black people, have forced black parents to have serious

conversations with their children at a young age, to make sure they know how to handle themselves in a situation if they were to be involved with a cop. Having these conversations at such a young age can scare a child, creating a distrust with local law enforcement at a young age. When asked about having trust with the police and remembering conversations her parents had with her brothers about the Police Marymount Manhattan Sophomore Britteny Dymond exclaims "I trust the police only because I haven't personally experience any discrimination by an officer or anyone in the force... I just remember one time my mom got pulled over, and got in the wrong lane and the office stopped her and was rude, my brother woke up from a nap and my told him to be quiet and stop talking because she did not want anything to happen to him"

Power is something so small that has such great importance in society. *American Son* addresses a white man's world, as they still have all the power and can strip something so important to a black person's life without blinking twice.

# NEXT TO NORMAL

THE RIVIAL AT ADVIL BROWN THEATRE

By Jasmine Ledesma  
Guest Writer

In high school, I was obsessed with musical theatre as I am sure much of Marymount's student body was. It was my guilty pleasure. However, as I got older, I stopped singing into hair brushes and thinking about shows on the bus ride home. When I got to college, I had shed my theatre kid persona entirely and forgot everything I crammed into my head years before. Every chorus and line. When my friend asked me if I wanted to go see *Next To Normal*, a musical I once knew every word of, a week ago, I was a little hesitant but agreed to go with her. I am now glad I decided to.

When I met her in front of the theatre, I was surprised at how humble it was. Advil brown and small, it could have passed as a library. Purse hauling parents stood outside with us, scattered and waiting for the doors to open. The actual theatre was just as small as the exterior and when they finally allowed us to pour inside, I wondered how we would all fit. It was no issue, though. The space

was intimate and unlike any other show I had ever been to, high school productions included. The set was sparse, only a couple of white moveable squares and a table adorned the stage. When the show began, and as it continued, the memories of watching the show over and over as a teenager came flooding back. I could still guess what line was next.

While the intimacy and set design were impressive, what really struck me about the show were the performers. They were raw and emotional and unafraid of going to dark places and bringing the audience with them. There is a particular scene where the main character attempts suicide and I thought the way they handled the subject matter was incredibly important and gentle. The ending made the message clear - if you need help, it is not embarrassing or shameful to ask for it. In fact, it is the most important thing you can do for yourself. I am so grateful I got to see it the way I did, in an intimate setting where you could really feel every emotion.

As someone who has bipolar disorder, whose life has been greatly affected by this illness, it was

refreshing to see a character with similar challenges. As well as a little scary. It was a little terrifying to see the main character struggle with finding stability, but more so the fact that I could relate. I always imagine how I am going to maneuver life with a chronic mental illness but if this show taught me anything, it is that it is possible. If you advocate for yourself and do what you know is best, you can be well.

My friend who attended the show with me, Kayla Zimmerman, said about the show, "It was incredible to see a story being told that is rarely portrayed in any sort of mainstream way, particularly within musicals" In a society that typically either ignores or romanticize mental illness, it was nice to see something that told the truth. Without sugar coating it or damning it's characters to a life of misery, it told the story of a family's struggle with mental illness in a thought provoking and honest way. The way stories of this type should be told. This show is vital and powerful. It is biting and tender and so incredibly significant.





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