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a student publication

The **Montgazette**

FREE

The Students' Voice

Issue 82

Serving Montgomery County Community College and the Surrounding Community

May 2020



“from the Editor”
Read on Page 2.

This issue went to press during the College's campus closure in compliance with Gov. Wolf's order to close county schools to stem the spread of the coronavirus. Check MC3.edu for updates!

Photo courtesy of pixabay.

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from the
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Coronavirus: an evolving situation

Josh Young
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Hello, once again. I certainly did not anticipate how much things would change since my last letter, let alone that the College would switch to entirely online. I hope more than ever in times like these that everyone is doing okay and is feeling well. As I write this, the College has recently decided to transfer all classes to online delivery through the rest of the semester as a result of the Coronavirus. Additionally, Governor Tom Wolf has ordered that all schools, gyms, community centers, and public venues where large groups of people might gather to shut down to mitigate the spread of the virus. Non-essential businesses have also been urged to cease operations by Governor Wolf. These are certainly surreal times.

I know that many people who may read this are frightened and/or scared and I think that is within reason. At the time of this writing, the Coronavirus has infected 219,302 people globally, resulting in 8,953 deaths according to worldometer.com. In countries

where the virus had not been contained early enough through social distancing such as Italy, the aftermath has been catastrophic with thousands of people flooding hospitals who then cannot be properly treated by their overworked healthcare system. However, it is for exactly this reason that maintaining social distancing, such as the closure of the physical campuses of the College, and the practice of good hygiene such as handwashing is so important.

I firmly believe that if people self-quarantine, practice good hygiene, and do all they can to limit their interactions with and exposure to other people, eventually the Coronavirus will be contained and its severity on all of us decreased.

In the meantime, while this Coronavirus situation is ongoing, I encourage people to take advantage of the extra time and opportunities that will be afforded to them by turning a negative into a positive. Use this extra time to take up a new hobby

or interest or simply reinvest your time in something that you have not been able to do until now. During this time I have gotten back into reading history books and have watched about 25 or so movies that I normally would not have been able to fit in during the busy semester.

Most importantly, however, take this time to reconnect with your family, friends, or anyone who may be important to you. As this situation proves, our time on Earth is not at all guaranteed and things can change in the blink of an eye.

Once again, I sincerely hope that everyone is doing okay and feeling well. Once again, please do all that you can to limit your exposure to other people and to practice social distancing and good hygiene. Finally, I hope everyone has a great rest of their semester; this will be a time and a challenge that you will recall for the rest of your lives. Good luck and I hope to “see” you all online.

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2020 Montgomery County NAMI Walks: Raising funds to support mental illness

Khushi Desai
The Montgazette Contributor

For 13 years, The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Greater Philadelphia has held its 5K walk to support people living with mental illness worldwide. Called NAMI Walks, the event is hosted by NAMI of Montgomery County, PA., and usually takes place in late April or early May on the Montgomery County Community College campus.

The NAMI Walk is one of the most important events that the National Alliance on Mental Illness conducts in any given year. NAMI was founded in 1979 by Harriet Shetler and Beverly Young, whose sons were diagnosed with schizophrenia. The two were frustrated with the lack of resources available to mental health patients.

NAMI eventually grew into what it is today, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization

that seeks to educate people about mental illness and provide necessary resources and mental health trainings.

The NAMI Walk, where participants walk the perimeter of campus holding hopeful signs and messages, is held to raise awareness about mental health and successfully fight the stigma surrounding the issue by showing that those with mental illnesses are not alone.

The NAMI Walks Greater Philadelphia event that was scheduled to be held at Montgomery County Community College on Saturday, May 2, was cancelled due to COVID-19. That does not mean that the NAMI Walk is not going to take place.

According to Abby Grasso, Executive Director of NAMI, "(While) the details aren't all worked out, we are excited to present the first of its

kind ever Virtual 'Your Way' NAMI Walks! With the safety and health of our community as our top priority, NAMI Walks Greater Philadelphia is going to be a little different this year. With resources for our mental health education, support and advocacy programs needed now more than ever, we are pleased to announce a walk for our times, NAMI Walks Greater Philadelphia Your Way."

Virtual walks have been evolving all over the area as a way for walk and race participants to stay active. The Philadelphia Hot Chocolate Run sent race packets to athletes in April and participants posted their pictures on social media "completing" the solo race. On May 30, NAMI Walks will also join with other NAMI Walks events across the country, to unite and make a difference in the lives of those

impacted by mental illness.

Currently, with lives strained by the coronavirus pandemic, participants will get to make this walk their own. The great benefit is that you can walk anywhere: around the block, around your garden, and so on. People working from home can now get the chance to walk at home, and everyone has the chance to participate in the Walk. "More information will be out on how you can take part in our virtual event," says Grasso.

Grasso concluded, "The mission of NAMI Walks is to help provide financial sustainability to NAMI Affiliates that provide support, education, and advocacy to anyone impacted by a mental illness through awareness."

For more information regarding NAMI, visit: namimontcopa.org.

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Ukrainian food in the United States

Yana Petrova

MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

Not long ago, I moved from Kiev, the heart of Ukraine, to the United States. I found that one of the most notable differences between our cultures was food.

Ninety-eight percent of all Ukrainian products are produced in the country itself. Ukraine is able to accomplish this thanks to its highly developed farm production industry. Additionally, all local products tend to be natural and inexpensive for residents. It is difficult to imagine Ukrainian dishes that do not require fresh vegetables or certain dairy products, which are sometimes hard to find in the United States, especially in cities and suburbs.

Examples of traditional

Ukrainian dishes that I miss are Borscht and Varenyky. Borscht is the national soup; its main component is beets, which make the dish recognizable with its red color. For centuries, Borscht was a daily food on the table of Ukrainians. It is not uncommon to find 50 recipes for this dish in Ukrainian cookbooks because each region has a unique recipe. Usually, Borscht is served with black Ukrainian bread and sour cream.

Varenyky is another, no-less-recognizable and significant dish of Ukrainian cuisine. Varenyky are made by boiling fresh dough and filling it to taste: potatoes, meat, mushrooms, vegetables, fruits, berries or curd. Varenyky

are often mentioned in Ukrainian folklore. Ukrainians were sure that Varenyky had magical meaning, as it was believed that the process of making dough was a symbol of the process of creating, with women rolling round pieces of dough and then cooking it.

Ukrainian national dishes can be found not only in restaurants but also daily on the tables of Ukrainians. In my family we usually ate Ukrainian dishes for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, instead of global or international foods. Also, in our culture there are special dishes for certain holidays, so, for example, on Christmas, Ukrainians prepare 12 specific

dishes, symbolizing the wish for 12 months of happiness.

I have found American food to be a mix of different cuisines of various cultures, and I hope that Ukrainian cuisine can make a definite contribution to American culture in the coming years.

See a
traditional
Ukrainian
table of dishes
on the
back cover.

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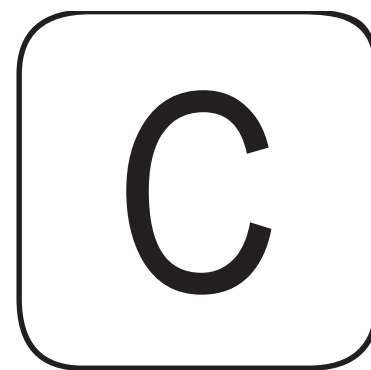
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Start from scratch: How cooking can improve your life

(Amateur) Chef Sean Feller
MSP 111 Montgazette Contributor

Does anyone cook anymore? Sure, you may be able to do grilled cheese, stack deli slices on some bread, maybe even scramble an egg—but can you prepare an actual meal from scratch? It would seem not many can.

With the unlimited resources of prepared food available to everyone—from local take-out, to meal delivery services like Doordash, to online ordering—the distance between the kitchen and the amateur chef has grown wider and wider. In many circles, cooking is viewed as an unnecessary skill, and it is a shame because the entire process in itself is healing, helpful, and fulfilling.

Cooking can improve nearly every aspect of your life: physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

Gathering ingredients and transforming them from individual items into complete meals will enhance your life. It will have you excited to invite friends and family over and make them feel special. Anyone can go out and buy something, but to put the thought, care and love into what you serve makes it that much more special.

The act itself can be meditative. Turn on your favorite music. Pour a glass of your favorite wine (if you are of age) and lose yourself in the moment. Let everything that troubles you fall away. Focus only on the task at hand. Nothing about cooking should feel stressful. It should be ... enjoyable.

When you assemble your own meals, you control exactly what goes into them. Treat yourself! Spend a bit extra on the more expensive ingredients, because you deserve it. If you are particularly picky about certain foods, then you can mold your recipes and repertoire to include only your favorites. And, best of all, for those looking to improve their bodies as well as their minds—you can use wholesome options to aid your journey of self-improvement.

Of course, it's not always convenient to get yourself to the grocery store; gather ingredients; take them home; and store, prepare and clean the dirty dishes—if everybody could have a professional restaurant dishwasher and someone to load it, we would cook all the time! But it's not about the convenience of dialing your phone and placing an order or pressing a few buttons on your smartphone.

This is about something deeper, something more fulfilling and rewarding. It's a skill that you can improve on and hone like the sharp edge of a blade that's become dull. It will impress those who you care about, and in the long run, give you a deeper sense of accomplishment within yourself.

Nobody needs to make a French soufflé or a crème brûlée for his or her first foray into the kitchen, okay? Start small.

Make a pot of vegetable soup.

Learn how to sear a piece of meat properly or roast vegetables, or how to prepare a simple salad, dressing and all. Find recipes for your favorite cuisine and learn to cook it. If you already enjoy the meal, why wouldn't you want to learn to recreate it on your terms? There's even enjoyment in the errors, lessons to be learned for the next time and always room for improvement.

Not everything needs to be made

from scratch. Nobody expects the bread or the butter to be homemade, but there are always techniques to improve upon them. Make a compound butter with garlic, herbs and seasoning, brush onto the bread and bake—homemade garlic bread! Semi-prepared ingredients count as well.

And don't forget the most important lesson of all, have fun! Taste and season as you go.

Bon appétit!



French Apple Tarts.

Photo by Sean Feller

Social media: Its impact on your mental health

Khadiga Elfaki
ENG101 The Montgazette Contributor

It's time to take your "Social Media Usage" temperature. Are you running a fever? Then, it's time to do something about it!

It's no longer a question of whether social media's benefits surpass the disadvantages. Rather, it's a question of how social media negatively impacts your life. "Social media" refers to Internet-based applications and websites that help people find others across the globe who share the same interests and exchange with them anything from information to their thoughts and feelings. People can access these applications and websites from their computer, tablet, and smartphone and share any content efficiently.

Social media has become a part of people's lives. Today, many people use it every day and all day long because they can communicate everything from major life events to minute particulars. Social media has changed the everyday lives of many people, affecting everything from shopping and job searches to relationships. Social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and more—and even multi-player online games!

Although social media has helped people in different ways, when it is overused, it can still have a negative impact on their mental health, as shown by the development of depression, addiction, and sleep problems.

One of the biggest negative outcomes of overusing social media is depression. In her American Psychiatric Association article "What Is Depression," Ranna Parekh states, "Depression is a common and serious medical illness that negatively affects how you feel, the way you think, and how you act." Social media can cause depression in three ways. One way concerns the amount of time spent on it. According to Liu Yi Lin, in 2016 a study was done of 1,787 people aged 19 to 32 in the United States that shows an association between social media use and depression. There was a linear association between how long participants spent on social media daily and how much they felt worthless, hopeless and helpless, which are all symptoms of depression.

Another reason social media can cause depression is because people's online lives (as shown in pictures on their Instagram and Facebook profiles) look more ideal and amazing than their real lives. Being exposed to endless filtered images makes it impossible not to compare yourself to others. Lin says, "People who engage in a lot of social media use may feel they are not living up to the idealized portraits of life that other people tend to present in their profiles."

Finally, struggling to balance real-life and virtual relationships causes depression. Today, a majority of people use social media regularly, and this makes it impossible to avoid

virtual relationships. It may not be a problem if used in a balanced way, but the problem comes when people replace their personal relationships with digital ones. Lin mentioned this problem in his study: "People who are already having depressive symptoms start to use social media more, perhaps because they do not feel the energy or drive to engage in as many direct social relationships."

In contrast, according to Bessière and others, in an article for the Journal of Medical Internet Research, some studies found that using the Internet to communicate with family and friends is associated with decline in depression.

Addiction can also be a negative

effect of social media. Social media addiction is a behavioral or psychological addiction described as overuse, driven by an uncontrollable urge to check and scroll through social media, causing the user to lose track of time. At some point it becomes harmful and affects their ability to function.

Social media users can get addicted to social media, just like drugs and alcohol, because of proffered reward. Trevor Haynes, a researcher at Harvard University, explains how social media notifications stimulate dopamine, which gives a little jolt of pleasure each time a person receives a "like," "comment," or "retweet."

Continued on Page 15

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EDITORIAL



The Montgazette
The Students' Voice

Editorial: Safe injection – What's so safe about that?

Abigail Santoro

MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

Philadelphia is and has been for many years a hot spot for crime. According to neighborhoodscout.com, Philadelphia is deemed to be safer than only 8% of other American cities, so it should come as no surprise that the city has a very big problem with drug activity and crime-related deaths. However, in the past two to three years, there has been a significant spike in drug-overdose deaths, specifically involving opioids.

The problem is so bad that the city is considering providing controversial resources, some of which may make the entire community extremely uncomfortable, to those suffering from addiction.

For one, Philadelphia is in the process of trying to re-open the country's first safe injection site. Advocates of such a site believe that by providing a safe and clean environment for addicts to use, not only will the shame and stigma surrounding drug use be diminished, but it shifts the focus onto rehabilitation as opposed to punishment. In theory, the streets of Philadelphia will likely see crime rates fall.

The Kensington area of Philadelphia is the community in most need of help when it comes to the opioid crisis. This section of Philadelphia contributed the brunt of the city's staggering 1,217 overdose deaths reported in 2017. Since then, the crisis has showed little sign of abating,

with 1,116 people dying of overdoses in Philadelphia in 2018 and projections for 2019 looking like they will be remarkably similar, according to Aubrey Whelan of The Philadelphia Inquirer. As a result, the streets of Kensington have become extremely dangerous, not just with addicts but also with needles in public spaces that could be picked up by small children.

The city is doing what it can, implementing programs like The Philadelphia Resilience Project, which include major neighborhood cleanups, and also placing "SHARPS" containers all over the Kensington area in hopes of proper syringe disposal.

Even after all these progressive steps have been taken by our city, could still more be done to save the citizens of Philadelphia and create safer spaces for our children to grow up in? Introducing safe injection sites to suffering areas like Kensington will contribute monumentally to the city's efforts to clean up this area.

The idea of a safe injection site in our city might be described by some as "crazy." However, drastic times call for drastic measures. There are countless and very legitimate concerns, and even protests from citizens, about facilities like this opening in this area. Many believe that addicts will come from all directions, flooding the area, resulting in a spike of

crime. These citizens are unaware that safe injection sites can introduce countless rehabilitation opportunities for addicts as well, removing the possibility of an addict overdosing by providing options and education on top of the safe injection environment itself.

It is 2020 and I think it is about time we put "The War on Drugs" to bed. The old government model of locking up addicts and "throwing away the key" has proven to be a failure time and time again. Incarcerating addicts as a punishment often backfires. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, 85% of the average prison population abuses drugs or is in jail for a drug-related crime. Addicts who are incarcerated are also more likely to overdose following their release.

A safe injection site could be part of a larger, unified solution to this nationwide problem. By removing stigma and providing resources to addicts recently released from prison, a road to recovery and even a normal life, for them, becomes a very real possibility.

The best solution for the city of Philadelphia's opioid crisis is to provide education to non-addicts on the benefits of rehabilitating addicts as opposed to punishing them. Educating fellow Philadelphians on the benefits of safe injection sites could allow for sites to open in several zip codes in the area that are most heavily affected.

There are no Starbucks in Burma

Hting Ra

MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

With time to clear my head during this quarantine, I thought back to my first experience with Starbucks. It may not seem like a big deal, but I only came to America, from Burma Burma (also known as Myanmar), in 2015 when I was 32 years old. I first heard about Starbucks through a YouTube commercial that featured a band performing music, and it attracted my attention. Even though I am a coffee lover, I did not know about Starbucks because I lived in a country far from global brands. One of my friends told me that this place called Starbucks had the best coffee in the world and that you could not beat the taste.

Although American-based Starbucks coffee was a popular throughout the world, and even for neighboring countries like Thailand, Singapore, and Malaysia, it did not make it to Burma due to the precarious political situation there. Burma's government has been unstable because of a long and complex civil war. As part of this war, Myanmar's (Burma's new name) military leaders were accused of human rights violations against Rohingya Muslims and minority groups in the country. Until these issues are resolved, and peace returns, it is unlikely that a brand like Starbucks will invest in the country. One of Burman's local news outlets, Coconut Yangon, reported that Starbucks changed their mind to invest in the country because of these issues, cancelling a planned \$6 million investment.

Starbucks's Asia-Pacific Public Relations Director, Marianne Duong, reported, "Even though our company is avidly trying to break into the international market, we haven't decided on establishing a business in Myanmar just yet."

For me, it was a very happy moment to taste Starbucks coffee on my first overseas trip to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in December 2011. Before I

started my trip, I called my friend who lived there and asked him whether they had Starbucks coffee. My friend said, "Oh, of course! Just come visit; Kuala Lumpur has all of the biggest global brands."

One of my friends, a Starbucks coffee lover who was studying in Singapore, came to Malaysia with me and said, "I am going to drink two cups of Starbucks because I have to pay double in Singapore. Malaysia is much cheaper, I have to take advantage." So, during my three-day trip to Kuala Lumpur, I enjoyed Starbucks coffee. My first drink was Coffee Mocha. The taste was so good, and I felt

I was very proud of myself for finally joining the global community in this way.

I continue to be heartbroken by the link between politics and coffee in the country where I was born. Peace is certainly the most important need in Burma before welcoming global brands, but these investments can help foster positive economic growth and lift people out of poverty, thereby granting them better lives. Starbucks may seem like something very simple to most of my classmates, but I will not take it for granted. I hope everyone in my home country can enjoy a cup soon as well.



My most recent Starbucks coffee

Photo by Hting Ra

Panic! At the Disco's "Pray for the Wicked" is real and inspiring

Samantha Moore
MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

Recently, I celebrated my boyfriend Bryan's 21st birthday by treating him to pizza at his favorite pizza place, then Dairy Queen for ice-cream. I gave him a shirt that I bought from Hot Topic, one with a logo from the newest album by Panic! At the Disco, "Pray for the Wicked," which was released in mid-2018. This was one of the first albums we enjoyed together. I only knew a couple of songs from it at the time, but I still remember enjoying it.

It took me until this quarantine to sit and listen to the entire album from start to finish. I went to my Spotify app, searched for Panic! At the Disco, found the album, added it to its own playlist, and sat back and let the music fill my ears.

What I heard was a mix between something different and something that I would expect from music written by Panic!'s lead singer, Brendon Urie. I got the iconic theatrical vibes that Urie is particularly known for, which reflect his background in musical theatre and Broadway, but then there's also a new type of sound that I'm not used to hearing in music by Panic!. In songs like "One of

the Drunks" and "King of the Clouds," there is an electronic and new world symphonic sound that caught me off guard, but that I still enjoyed.

The album overall has a high energy to it, and songs like "High Hopes," "Dancing's Not a Crime" and "Hey Look Ma,

I Made It" all contain heartfelt messages such as to be yourself, put in hard work and stay hopeful for the future.

Brendon Urie has always been a creative and free spirit, finding new ways to communicate with his fans. So far in 2020, Panic! has no

concerts planned, although reportedly Urie is working on a new album. However, he does stream on Twitch, answering fan questions, and playing video games. It is unknown what he has in store for the future of Panic!, but it would still be quite interesting to watch.



Brendon Urie "Pray For the Wicked" Album Cover

Photo by Fueled By Ramen: Found on "The Michigan Daily"

Editorial: “Music to Be Murdered By”

Bryan Palicki

MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

The man who jokes about mass shootings, makes fun of the handicapped, and plots to kill his ex-wife is at it again. This winter we saw the release of Eminem’s 11th studio album, with a title that was taken from the Alfred Hitchcock album of film scores by the same name — “Music to Be Murdered By.”

“It’s your funeral” said Eminem on Twitter when he announced the release of his new album, which will be his 10th in a row to debut at No. 1 on Billboard 200. But despite its victory on the charts and the popularity of its videos on YouTube, Eminem’s latest work leaves much to be desired.

I wanted to hear catchy beats by Dr. Dre and clever, methodical rhymes that make the hairs on your neck stand up, but unfortunately the only thing that was murdered by this album was my expectations.

Eminem’s skill is undeniable, but his new album feels like it’s lacking the energetic, soul-bearing performance that his earlier music was known for. Rolling Stone said it seems like Eminem has developed a “lack of interest in the industry he once transformed,” and stale work such as this may prove them right.

Eminem raised the bar for hip-hop and inspired a whole generation of rappers, but this new album feels painfully average compared to his

pioneering work 20 years ago. Variety magazine called it a “passable, forgettable meandering through popular hip-hop sounds.”

Eminem might have cooled off a little, but he’s still no stranger to controversy. The video for the song “Darkness,” which depicts the man from the 2017 Las Vegas massacre showering the sunset strip in gunfire, was both harshly criticized as insensitive and also praised for bringing awareness to gun control issues.

In addition, some of the reviews of “Music to Be Murdered By” were positive, and Eminem’s extremist satire and obliterative rhyming skills did not go unnoticed. A more complimentary article on Apple Music’s site says that “snarling beats heave beneath wordplay as impressive and elaborate as it is aggressive, sinister, and unescapable.”

Even though Eminem’s latest gift to hip-hop may not be his best work, he still holds his own as a gifted and creative entertainer, and his volume of work over the last two decades is impressive, to say the least. Eminem continues to be a strong presence all over the music community, collaborating with artists like Logic, Joyner Lucas, and even Ed Sheeran. Though his new album may be a disappointment to some, like me, there are still millions of music lovers who will rock out to his head-spinning flow.

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2017 Houston Astros: The new Black Sox

Joshua Young
The Montgazette Editor-in-Chief

In 1919, the Chicago White Sox etched their name into baseball's annals as the archetypes of corruption in the soon-to-be-named "Black Sox scandal." The outcome of this dark bit of baseball history was that eight players from the White Sox allegedly conspired to throw the World Series against the Cincinnati Reds in order to win money from gamblers who promised to supplement their meager income. (White Sox owner Charles Comiskey was notoriously stingy with money, and players could not move teams unless released or traded.) Fast-forward 98 years, and baseball has the modern archetype for corruption in the form of the 2017 Houston Astros.

To recap, the Houston Astros were found to have stolen signs between the opposing pitcher and catcher using cameras that they set up in their home ballpark. Thus, opposing teams had no chance to conceal their signs, giving the Astros an unfair competitive advantage (they went 8-1 at home during the 2017 playoffs). For the uninitiated, baseball teams use signs to communicate what pitches to throw and where to throw them. For example, every time a catcher puts up one finger that means he wants a fastball. If the catcher holds up two fingers, he wants a curveball, and so on.

The method used by the Astros for stealing signs worked like this. When the camera recorded the signal being made by the opposing team's coaches, the operator would send it to someone in the dugout, who would then bang on a trash can in a rhythmic way, which would be understood by the batter, who is well-versed in the different rhythms. The banging of the trash communicated which pitch was coming, making it far easier for

the batter to react with an appropriate swing. A number of YouTube videos demonstrate how this works to those who want to see this process in action.

One may say that "sign-stealing in baseball has been around for the 'entire history' of the sport," but, previously, sign-stealing was done without the use of technology or with devices that were unavailable to the opposing teams. The concept of tipping pitches did not come about by recording other team's games and stealing signs, but rather through observing small changes in a pitcher's stance or mannerisms which "tipped" the batter to look for a certain pitch.

The cheating gave the Astros an unfair competitive advantage, which they used to win the World Series in 2017, robbing my beloved Yankees of a World Series berth and likely costing the Los Angeles Dodgers their first World Series title since 1988. Additionally, it is extremely conceivable that the 2017 Astros team could have won a World Series without the use of technology, making the cheating even more egregious.

Still, the worst part of this whole situation is that the players will get away largely unpunished, which marks a severe departure from the Black Sox scandal, where eight players were banned from the game for life. In the MLB's investigation, commissioner Rob Manfred made the incredibly short-sighted decision to award all players who participated in the investigation full immunity, meaning that no players who were heavily involved in this scandal will be punished for their actions.

At the same time, the only people to be punished from within the organizations were

Astros General Manager Jeff Luhnow and Manager A.J. Hinch (both were banned from baseball for a year), and the organization was fined \$5 million. Others implicated in the scandal were hired as managers elsewhere; included were Carlos Beltran and Alex Cora, but they were subsequently fired as public outrage grew. However, that is the extent of the punishment for such egregious cheating. Still worse, the Astros will be allowed to keep their trophy and will still be recognized as 2017 World Series Champions.

This decision by MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred to allow the Astros to escape virtually unharmed and still be remembered as World Series champions is one that is totally unacceptable. Although the commissioner may think the World Series trophy is "just a piece of metal," I know that other baseball fans and I hold far more respect and veneration for that trophy and the work that it entails. I also suspect another reason why the MLB does not want to strip the Astros of the title: They want people to simply forget about it, and 50 years from now, when the record books are written, people will read, "Houston Astros, 2017 World Series Champions," and the cheating surrounding that team will not be noted. In this way, the MLB hopes that it will simply pass out of memory.

However, I can assure you that baseball fans, especially hardcore fans like me, will not forget, because memory is much more important to baseball than to other sports. Fans in MLB still talk reverently of players who played 100 years ago, such as Babe Ruth and Ty Cobb, much more than NFL fans talk of players like Jim Thorpe or Don Hutson.

I would like to close by comparing this

SPORTS



The Montgazette
The Students' Voice

to the steroid era that rocked the MLB in the mid-2000s. The late 1990s are called the steroid era because of the remarkable number of home runs hit during that time. Players like Mark McGwire, Sammy Sosa, and Barry Bonds broke decades-long records for home runs both in a single season and in a career. These players are largely credited with saving baseball by exciting fans and coaxing them back to the ballparks after the strike season of 1994, when there was no World Series.

However, an investigation later revealed that the players I named and a multitude of others, such as Alex Rodriguez, used steroids, which allowed them to build greater muscle mass and hit with more power. These players, although not banned from baseball, have been entirely disgraced and stand little chance of being elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. Even Barry Bonds, who would likely have been a Hall of Famer before he started juicing has recently come out

and said that he feels “blackballed” by the MLB.

Some have tried to argue that since these players have not been banned from baseball or faced any severe punishment in terms of suspensions that the Astros should get the same treatment. However, this opinion fails to take into account the rampant use of the drugs during the time. It is likely that each team had multiple players using steroids, meaning that an unfair competitive advantage may not have been wholly present.

Unlike the situation with the Astros, however, using technology and strategies that cannot be duplicated by opponents is a vastly more egregious violation. Additionally, players like McGwire, Sosa, and Bonds won a grand total of zero World Series titles during their juicing days. Instead, the teams that won a World Series during this time period, like the New York Yankees, Florida Marlins, and Atlanta Braves, relied on strong

pitching and smart hitting (meaning hitting low numbers of home runs but large numbers of hits and walks) to win titles. It is unsubstantiated whether the use of steroids changed the course of baseball history, unlike the use of sophisticated technology by the Houston Astros, which directly resulted in a World Series victory.

I fully support stripping the Astros of the title, forcing owner Jim Crane to sell or leave the team, and banning the major players involved from the game for life. I believe that this is necessary in order to ensure that nothing like this ever happens again (or at least not for another 100 years). More importantly, I think that the MLB needs to restore integrity to the game for fans. The MLB has had a number of black eyes in recent years in addition to the Astros scandal, but I think the most worrisome has been the much-publicized decline in attendance that has accelerated over the course

of the last decade. The decline seems to have started around 2007, according to Forbes, right around the time the MLB steroid scandal hits its peak. Since then, the MLB has seen a couple of years of modest attendance improvement followed by several years of consistent declines. I think part of this reason is because casual fans have become utterly disillusioned with the game due to its cheating scandals, and the Astros scandal is another match on that fire.

Hardcore fans, like myself, will continue to watch the game, but for casual fans and younger people, these scandals will drive them away into the arms of other sports leagues like the NFL. In taking harsh measures, I believe that a small part of the integrity can be restored by making sure that no one dares to attempt to do the same things. However, I fear that the actual measures will not do that and may even exacerbate the problem.

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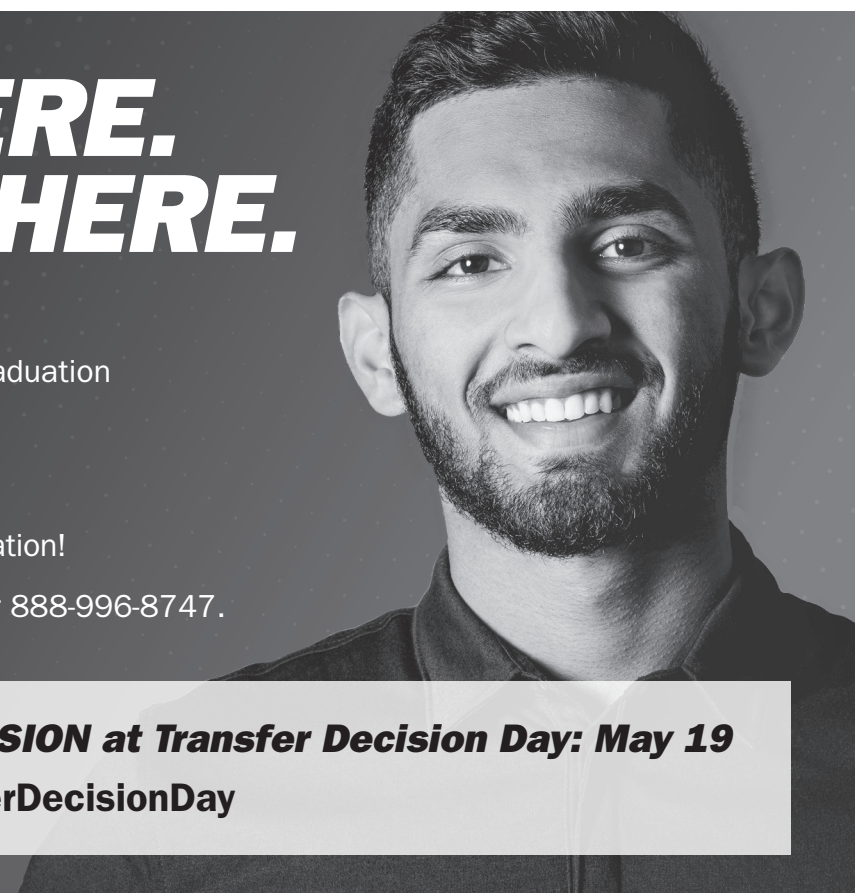
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Social Media and Your Mental Health Continued from Page 7.

The biggest reason behind social media addiction is FOMO—or the fear of missing out. As a part of a BBC News School Report story related by Reeta Chakrabarti, a group of Year 11 students participated in a challenge to quit social media for a week. School reporter Sheveen, part of the group, wrote about his experience and says, “As we shut off our devices, I already felt as if I had lost a limb.”

Social media addiction can isolate individuals from their communities and cause them to become less productive. For example, according to Rob Nyland and others, an online survey of 184 social media users shows that the people who spend more time on social media were less involved with their real-life communities. Notifications are the main reason for social media addiction because they work as a reminder to people to use these apps. By turning off these notifications, people can reduce the time they spend on social media.

In addition to the addictive quality of social media, there may be an association with sleep

disorders. A 2015 study by Scott and others, of 11,872 UK adolescents (aged 13-15 years), examines the association between social media use and multiple sleep parameters. The researchers asked the young people about the time they spent on social media during a typical school day and on the weekend, and quizzed them on their sleep habits. One third said they used social media for less than an hour per day, while for the rest the average was between one and three hours. Those who used social media for one to three hours were least likely to fall asleep late.

Social media disturbs sleep no matter when people use it, but it has a more negative effect when it is used before bed. For instance, Jessica Levinson and others, in a nationally representative study, assessed a sample of young adults aged between 19 and 32. The researchers found the group who often checked social media 30 minutes before the bed was more likely to report increased sleep disturbance compared with those who rarely checked social media before bed.

The effect of social media can go beyond sleep quality and also affect the functioning of people the next day. For example, one study by A. M. A. Nasirudeen and others looked at 1,000 teenage

students in Singapore. The researchers observed a correlation between nighttime social media usage and lower amounts of overall sleep. They also observed increased levels of daytime sleeping and impaired functioning after students engaged in late-night social media use.

Although social media leads to problems for users regarding sleep and emotional well-being, it is not all bad if people use it wisely—to stay engaged, without ruining their sleep.

In the end, evidence indicates that heavy usage of social media is harmful to your mental health. It is also strongly associated with depression, addiction, and sleep problems. As such, consider digital detox as a first step for rebalancing your usage of social media. A digital detox is not a complete absence, mind you: It could be as simple as turning off notifications. On the other hand, social media has unique features that create new opportunities. They have a large range of potential benefits, including improving interpersonal relationships, providing entertainment, and exploring how people interact with the world around them.

So, social media can be an asset, or it can cause harm.

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A traditional table of Ukrainian dishes. Read about it on Page 4.

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