

## North Shore High School Welcomes Principal Contreras

By: Emma Arboleda

This past September, North Shore High School welcomed its new principal, Eric Contreras, with open arms. Despite being hired in the midst of a pandemic, Mr. Contreras is thrilled to become acclimated with North Shore's "robust and vibrant community" and displays great pride in the students, teachers, and staff he has gotten to know during his time here thus far.

With over twenty years of teaching experience, Mr. Contreras is undoubtedly qualified to be North Shore's new principal. In 2003, he worked as the vice principal at Queens High School and was soon after promoted to principal. In 2011, Contreras became the assistant superintendent for the city's Department of Education, and in 2016, he became the principal of Stuyvesant High School in Manhattan. This year, he decided to relocate to North Shore High School. He replaced former principal Albert Cousins who left to become the Superintendent of the Rhinebeck School District. Mr. Contreras' past educational experiences helped to familiarize him with what it takes to be a part of the North Shore community, and he was obviously a great candidate for the job.

In order to start working at North Shore, Mr. Contreras resigned as principal from the prestigious Stuyvesant High School, ranked as the #2 public city school by *US News*—but why? "The COVID crisis," Contreras says, "gave me space to think, reflect, and assess what's important to me." More often than not, he found himself wondering what he wanted from his career as an educator, and, over time, he realized that North Shore was the answer. To him, our school wasn't merely a convenience, but a representation of the values he holds near and dear to his heart; it is

something he referred to frequently as a feeling of "home".

Though North Shore seems to be worlds away from the 10-floor city school he worked at previously, our District's beliefs and values were not unfamiliar to Mr. Contreras. Since he resides on the northside of Queens, North Shore is only a 20-minute drive away, which is a far shorter commute than the hour and twenty minutes it took him to drive to Stuyvesant High School. However, the defining factor that brought him to North Shore wasn't a closer location with fewer floors, but rather his attraction to the strong identity of the North Shore community.

Working in fairly large public-school systems throughout the majority of his educational career, Mr. Contreras sought out a smaller school that has a deeper sense of community and shared values, making North Shore the perfect option. "It's a very special place," he says. "I'm so inspired and impressed by the community and their flexibility and embrace of atypical times." The way that Principal Contreras talks about North Shore makes it clear that he is satisfied, adding that he is "beyond fulfilled in [his] time here."

Principal Contreras thinks he made the right career move, but how is he handling the new job during such a unique time? The answer is reflected in his optimistic attitude regarding North Shore. "I love it [here]" he says, "I wish people could see the smile I have under my mask all the time." Despite the circumstances, he is excited to be principal at North Shore and says that he is "very happy and honored that the community entrusted me to serve as high school principal." He also looks forward to improving the high school in every way he can. Contreras believes that schools are an extension of the community, and during his time as principal, he wants to make sure that

North Shore reflects that.

If you're looking to find Mr. Contreras, or learn more about him, you won't have much difficulty. During his time here, he has made every effort possible to connect with the families and staff of North Shore High School, by even sharing things like his favorite ice cream flavor (Ben and Jerry's Chunky Monkey, if you were wondering), in order to personally bond with the community. In the mornings, you may see him at the entranceway of the High School welcoming the students and even their dogs that escort them to the drop-off point. While during the school day, he is often seen speaking with students in the Cafeteria or popping into classrooms to meet the students and faculty and even learn a bit. Outside of school, he has organized meetings and forums with parents to virtually get to know the families of North Shore. Though he is currently limited

to mainly online platforms, Mr. Contreras is enthusiastic when it comes to becoming acquainted with the students, staff, and families of North Shore.

In the future, Mr. Contreras looks forward to a post-COVID world, where he can finally experience a much deeper involvement in the community. Though Mr. Contreras is loving his new job, he is excited to attend sporting events and other social activities that COVID has postponed; his only complaint so far about the High School is that it does not have a fencing team, a sport he excelled at during his own high school career. Besides this, he is optimistic about his future at North Shore, and getting to know the students and their families is certainly a priority for him. Mr. Contreras already has ideas that will help him connect, namely, "Lunch with Contreras". As unpredictable as COVID is, he is prepared and ready to embrace his new job, regardless of the circumstances; we are grateful to have him here.



Photo Courtesy Of The North Shore High School Website

**North Shore High School: It's Been So Good To See  
Everyone!**

**Thank You To All Who Made This Opening Possible Such As  
Our Board Of Education, Administrators, Faculty, Staff, and  
Custodians.**





## *The Viking View* *Editorial Staff*

### Co-Editors-in-Chief:

**Lauren Hagen**  
**Sophie Rosencrans**

### Assistant Editor-in-Chief:

**Jackson Best**

### Features Editor:

**Jamie Holzmann**

### Assistant Features

### Editor:

**Emma Arboleda**

### Sports Editor:

**Jack Levin**

### Assistant Sports Editor:

**Michael Ye**

### Advisor:

**Sara Millman**

## The Untold Truth Of Cancel Culture

By: Jamie Holzmann

We have all heard the phrase “everybody makes mistakes” when we are forgiving others, or even trying to get others to forgive us. But the question is, at what point does someone’s actions become unforgivable? And is it justifiable to hold him/her accountable for a statement that was made in the past? The recent explosion of “Cancel Culture” has addressed these exact questions as it becomes more prevalent within social media platforms such as Tiktok and Instagram. Now, any public figure is just one step away from being hated and “cancelled” by the internet every day. Whether these accusations are truthful or not, the toxic impact of Cancel Culture has not only ruined careers, but threatened lives as well.

The idea of “cancelling” stems from controversy. If people deem a public figure or company as controversial, they can “cancel” them by no longer supporting their content or products. Any controversial statement, idea, or portrayal by a figure can lead to him/her getting cancelled, often times accompanied by widescale ridicule and shame. There are even figures who are questioned for not mentioning certain controversial topics, such as political movements or current events. Ultimately, the purpose of Cancel Culture is to take away someone’s relevance by shaming them or bankrupting them in the hopes that they will stop their behavior. Is this the case? Not as often as you may think.

If social media scandals have taught its users one thing, it is that everything on the internet is permanent. People have known this for as long as social media has existed; however, most disregard the lesson. There is a responsibility that comes with having a social media platform, especially for those who have thousands or even millions of followers. While there are many people who keep this idea in the back of their mind when addressing anything online, many more forget the power they possess. In the fast and often rude world of social media, someone’s past statements, opinions, musings, videos, tweets or comments can be put up for debate at any time. The concept of getting “cancelled” is similar to a scheme often employed by a middle school bully. If you do something people don’t agree with, they will use anything they can find to crush you. It doesn’t matter if it was something you posted five years ago, or even a private message

from six months ago. What you choose to say is essentially your accountability and can come back to haunt you at any given moment.

The actual effects that Cancel Culture has on issues are murky at best, with accusations ranging from plastic surgery denial to racial and pedophilia scandals. Take Tiktok for example; when someone is “cancelled”, someone can immediately notice it because of the ratio of hate comments that lie within the creator’s comment section. Many will take their anger out on the account’s user to such an extreme level that sometimes death threats are posted. But what do these harsh comments do to help resolve the problem? Rather than piling on the hate, social media users can choose to have more constructive reactions. Taking inspiration from the core concept of Cancel Culture, users can completely withdraw all of their support from a public figure or company. If you don’t like what they do, show it. Part of showing these people that their actions have consequences involves not watching their videos, and more importantly not giving them the satisfaction of commenting, especially if it seems as though the purpose of the controversy they create is to gain attention. The other option is education. Often times you will see public figures getting “cancelled” for doing or saying things they didn’t even realize were offensive. Rather than piggybacking off of the hate, provide information that explains why what they did was so controversial or offensive.

The main issue with the impacts of Cancel Culture is that someone’s career will rarely end when he/she is cancelled. The truth of the matter is that people love to jump on the bandwagon when there is an opportunity for drama. As long as it’s not them getting cancelled, why not get involved? Unfortunately, even when it involves a controversial scandal or issue, a majority of people participate in Cancel Culture for the entertainment aspect. There are well-known creators that are still equally as successful regardless of the scandals they have been involved in. The true purpose behind Cancel Culture is not actively followed within social media; the repercussions it leads to are visibly dangerous to many, if not all, forms of social media. It all comes down to how we as users approach these situations; do we give second chances? Or is toxicity better off being cancelled?

**Are You  
Interested In  
The Things That  
Happen In  
Your School?  
Your Town?  
Your State?  
Your Nation?  
Your World?**

**If So,  
The Viking View  
Wants You On  
Staff!**

**Please reach out to an  
editor, Ms. Millman or our  
Google Classroom for more  
information.**



## With Liberty And Justice For ALL: Why People Sit For the “Pledge”.

By: Sammy Lockwood

2020 has been marked by terror and confusion across the board, with protests and lockdowns adding to the uncertain times the world has found itself in. Recently it has become popular to peacefully protest against the government by sitting quietly through the “Pledge”, rather than standing with a hand across the heart. The question is, why? the “Pledge of Allegiance” was intended to be a promise of loyalty to the US, a country that grants its citizens the freedom to pursue life, liberty, and happiness; it promises all citizens that they will be treated justly and fairly, regardless of their identities. So why would people refuse to pay their respects to a pledge that advocates for equality?

Many Americans believe that the “Pledge” is one of loyalty to their country and military, which sacrifice their safety for the well-being of their fellow citizens. The people who

choose to stand think that it would be unpatriotic to sit for the “Pledge”. It represents freedom of speech, the right to property, and the right to a fair trial. Most people who stand for the “Pledge” do so because they believe, according to pwestpathfinder.com, that “the good in this country outweighs the bad and [they] feel like the flag represents so much of the good” in the nation. The people who stand for the “Pledge” do so out of pride for the US. These patriots choose to have faith in the good of the country, and choose to respect the military that risks its lives fighting for the freedoms that the “Pledge of Allegiance” promises every American.

Those who sit for the “Pledge”, however, often do not do so out of a lack of respect. As it turns out, this method of protest is not new, despite the media’s portrayal that it’s another disastrous 2020 phenomenon. There has

been an uptick in people refusing to recite the “Pledge” since 2018. Students and teachers who refuse to stand often do not do it out of disrespect for their country and its veterans, but out of respect for what the “Pledge” really means. It promises every individual justice, a promise that has not been fulfilled, what with unarmed black men and women being jailed and killed due to systemic racism, members of the LGBTQ+ community being forced into conversion therapy in 30 states, and countless people of color being denied hospitalization when facing various life-threatening diseases. Given these unjust acts, how can anyone claim this pledge is being honored?

An article from *The Paw Print* describes perfectly what the protesting students are feeling: “We deserve to recite words that have meaning, not just promise to be loyal to a country

that is anything but loyal to us” (Lubs). The students who protest do not do so out of a lack of pride for the US. They have taken up this form of protest as an act of faith in regards to promises that the US has made, but have not been fulfilled.

The controversy about the proper “Pledge of Allegiance” etiquette has no clear right answer; both sides have reasonable explanations for their actions. Similarly, both sides are doing what they believe best serves their country. Standing for the “Pledge” shows support for the country and respect for those who serve it. However, sitting for the “Pledge” does not inherently oppose that. Each side may have different ways of showing it, but those who sit and those who stand do so out of loyalty to their country and its citizens. Ultimately, standing and sitting for the “Pledge of Allegiance” are not inverses; we must start to understand this fact.



# So There Was An Election

By: Ethan Kilada

The presidential election has come and gone between Joe Biden (Democrat), and Donald Trump (Republican). In preparation for this particular election, I surveyed some North Shore High School students in regards to their thoughts on this topic. There were 40 participants varying from sophomore to seniors; out of these 40, 32% claimed to be Republican while 60% said they were Democrats (8% were independent/undecided). All of these students answered the following questions:

**What did you think of the first debate on 9/29?** There was some common ground for both Republican and Democratic supporters in regards to this debate as students who affiliate themselves with both parties said it was “a mess”, “idiotic”, and “unprofessional”. Jackson Best, a senior from Sea Cliff, stated “It looked like an SNL skit”. With Trump’s constant interruptions, and Biden’s unwillingness to answer questions, it seemed to many like they were watching two children bickering, not two candidates who were running for president. With growing tensions in regard to the political divide, it’s at least nice to find common ground between members of both parties.

**What are your thoughts on the upcoming election?** As this article was released after the election, the responses gave some interesting insight as to what people thought before the polls closed. Multiple students reported that they were “scared”. Jackson Best stated that “the future of our country depends on this election”. In many ways this was true, and clearly teenagers were able to pick up on this. Mia Crocco, a junior from Sea Cliff, stated

that she “felt a bit helpless in terms of ways to help or make a difference as she’s too young vote”. It was hard to watch this election take place, knowing that we teenagers were not able to have any impact on it because of our age. Students at North Shore High School seemed like they wanted to do a lot to help out, but did not know how. However, despite being too young to vote, by discussing political topics, informing people about them on social media, and standing up for what they believe in, teenagers are in fact helping.

**What did you think of Donald Trump’s first term?** By far this was the most controversial question on the survey as people are extremely animated about their political beliefs. Of course I received a wide variety of answers to this question. One Glenwood Landing sophomore, who preferred to remain nameless, stated “he did a great job in office” while another Glenwood Landing sophomore stated “he accomplished next to nothing that he had promised”. Interestingly enough, the teenage residents of Sea Cliff who took this survey were much more critical of Trump as 92% of them condemned him. The teenage residents of Glenwood Landing seemed to be the most in favor of Trump according to the survey, with 56% of them having positive things to say about his term in office.

Even though high schoolers cannot vote, the students of North Shore High School are definitely political and passionate about their beliefs, which is never a bad thing. As long as they use their right to free speech as well as listen to the viewpoints of others, America will never fail.

# Only You Can Prevent Wildfires

By: Faith Cook

Over the past few months, California wildfires have spread throughout entire communities leaving families in a state of panic and fear. These wildfires are fast moving and can spread very easily without any hints as to when they will start. Most of the wildfires in California have been started by people, however. When the weather conditions are windy and dry, it makes it harder to keep these fast-moving fires under control. With 18,000 firefighters on duty, it is still hard to maintain and control them. With the increase in the number of fires, there are not enough machines and people to protect everyone’s property.

On September 5th, one of the strongest wildfires began in California. It was called “The El Dorado Fire ” and was started when a family was revealing the gender of its baby. This fire was active for over a month. Through the use of a smoke generating pyrotechnic device, a fire was ignited in the four-foot-tall grass at El Dorado Ranch Park. This fire spread to more than 10,000 acres of land. The family that threw this party cooperated with authorities, but it is possible that they may be facing charges.

Wildfires can have instant or long-term effects. Results of The El Dorado Fire have included a large

pocket of burning fuel. These human-caused fires and wildfires can clearly lead to long-term health problems. This includes respiratory, cardiovascular and mental health issues Wildlife is also clearly negatively affected by wildfires as is the timber supply.

People need to be aware, when it comes to wildfires, of just how problematic their carelessness can be to our environment, wildlife and health. Only humans can help make these wildfires occur less frequently and thus decrease the damage that they cause. To avoid and help these fires from starting, people can report unattended fires, extinguish fire pits and campfires when they are not being used/monitored and only use fireworks in clear areas where there are no woods nearby. Nearly 85 percent of wildfires are caused by humans; therefore, if everyone followed these simple actions, the number of wildfires would decrease. By more people fully understanding wildfires and how to prevent and/or stop them, people, animals and the environment will be safer.



# RBG: One Case Added Up To Something Bigger

By: Ella DeSane

How would you react if you were told to choose between your job or your child? In 1955, Ruth Bader Ginsburg found out that she was pregnant with her first child. At that time, she worked for the Social Security Administration office in Oklahoma and was soon demoted after she told her employer of this news. After she faced this discrimination, she knew she wanted to enroll at Harvard Law, where she was only 1 of 9 women in a class of 500 men. While she was there, she and the eight other women were asked by the dean why they wanted to take away spots that could have gone to men; ultimately, due to her husband taking a job in New York City, she transferred to and eventually graduated from Columbia Law school. This was in 1959. A little more than a decade later, Ginsburg took on one of her first cases involving gender inequality: Struck vs. Secretary of Defense.

Captain Susan Struck of the US Air Force was serving as a nurse in Vietnam. At 25 years old she found out she was pregnant and immediately knew she had a choice to make: keep her baby or her job. Before ACLU attorney Ruth Bader Ginsburg got a hold of this case, the Air Force’s rule was clear: if a female within that branch became pregnant or eventually a mother, she would immediately be discharged unless she terminated that pregnancy. Struck was torn and kept her pregnancy a secret for seven months. Only when her belly was too big to hide, was she told that she had to leave. Once back in the United

States, she knew she had to fight.

At the time when Struck reached out to the ACLU, Ruth Bader Ginsburg was running the Women’s Rights Project; she found Struck’s case to be really powerful. As the case progressed, both Ginsburg and Struck were not viewed highly by many. Ginsburg proved the naysayers wrong though; she showed them what a woman can do and what one should be allowed to do. Ginsburg argued that forcing pregnant women to have an abortion or leave the military was discriminatory and that this policy unfairly placed upon women the burden of child-rearing, denied them equal opportunities and placed them second to men (Link). As the case neared the Supreme Court, the Air Force changed its policy on pregnancy and allowed women to have a child and remain in service. Ginsburg clearly helped to empower women in the workplace during a time when they often took a back seat to men in that area.

Fast forward to 2020; women are still fighting for equal treatment in the workplace, but thanks to Justice Ginsburg’s focus on gender inequality during her years as a lawyer and a Supreme Court justice, major headway has been made. Unfortunately though, on September 18, 2020, Ruth Bader Ginsburg passed away due to pancreatic cancer. She will be missed by so many, but we can only hope that her hard work will live on and headway will continue to be made in the area she fought so hard to improve.

## Aqua Brasil Boutique



**683 Glen Cove Avenue**  
**Glen Head**  
**(516)-676-1860**  
**aquabrazilny.com**



## Protest to Policy: How Cities Are Grappling With Police Reform

By: Jackson Best

On May 25th, 2020, George Floyd, a 46 year old African American man, was murdered by Minneapolis police officers over a counterfeit \$20 dollar bill, sparking protests across the United States demanding racial equality and police reform. While violence committed by law enforcement has had a long history within US cities, a new slogan has grabbed the attention of demonstrators, civilians and legislators alike: Defund the Police. Depending on who you ask, these three words mean radically different things to different people, ranging from mild reforms to total abolition of law enforcement departments. Despite its elastic definition, the statement “Defund the Police” has rallied protesters across the country, even being painted on the road to the White House. Galvanized by George Floyd’s death, different cities have taken different approaches to converting cries for justice on the streets into actual policy, namely: Minneapolis, Newark and New York City. Should these varying strategies succeed, the Spring of 2020 may be remembered not only for a global pandemic, but the end of policing as we know it.

The public killing of George Floyd rocketed Minneapolis into the media, as the once prestigious Minnesota Police Department drew the ire of activists around the country. As such, Minneapolis took perhaps the most drastic route for police reform, disassembling and rebuilding its law enforcement from the ground up. After a majority of the Minneapolis City Council voted to dismantle the city’s police department, activists and skeptics alike waited for the Council’s replacement plan. So far, nothing has been done. The Minneapolis Charter Commission moved to delay the proposal from the City Council, citing that the Council had little to no plans regarding what the police department would be replaced with. The proposed “Department of Community Safety and Violence Prevention” would have a group of armed police officers, but the Council never specified how many of these officers would be deployed, or even what they would do. With the delay pushing the proposal past its required deadline for the upcoming election season, the once historic decision is now in political limbo. While certainly armed with good intentions, the rapid and arguably haphazard construction of such legislation is not benefitting anybody. Months after George Floyd’s death, Minneapolis has done little to fundamentally change its police force.

Newark, New Jersey has been battling police violence long before this past May. Tensions erupted in 1967 as white police officers beat and arrested a black taxi driver, sparking citywide riots, looting and violence. The animosity between civilians and police continued for decades, leading the Department of Justice to begin an extensive investigation into the Newark police department in 2011. The investigation revealed that illegal stops, arrests and uses of force were overwhelmingly targeted against black people. As a result, in 2016 the Justice Department placed the city under a consent decree, demanding large scale police reform

over a period of five years. Now with George Floyd’s death rekindling debates concerning police violence, many have turned their attention to how the city has reformed its own police force. Since 2014, progress has been made. 34% of the once almost exclusively white department are black, and another 44% Hispanic. Anti-bias training, use of force investigations and community outreach programs have all been implemented throughout the department, pointing to federally enforced action as a possible solution to police reform. However, Newark is far from perfect. In fact, since the consent decree was passed, use of force has increased drastically against black people, although police officials are quick to point out that such a spike coincided with an increase in reporting within the department. Skeptics are questioning whether Newark will meet the 2021 deadline of the consent decree, and the increase in force is certainly alarming. But the city has made it clear that federally backed reform implemented over time can yield results, unlike the rickety legislation from Minneapolis.

New York City has taken another avenue towards police reform, the implementation of the Crisis Management System or CMS. The CMS, which operates within smaller teams throughout high risk areas, is operated by a network of non-profits who receive funding directly from the city. From 2010 to 2019, areas under CMS control have reduced shootings by 40%, beating out the 31% reduction seen within other sites. CMS workers are typically made up of individuals from the city itself, often having been exposed to the same violence they are employed to stop. Rather than relying on force and firearms, CMS workers focus on de-escalation strategies and rely on their familiarity with the community to build meaningful relationships with those at risk for gun violence. What’s more is that Mayor Bill de Blasio plans to increase CMS budgets by ten million dollars. While these developments are certainly promising, the New York City Police Department has seen little change. Following George Floyd’s death, De Blasio rejected proposed cuts of up to a billion dollars on the city’s police budget, and instead offered a plan which took money away from youth services, leaving the police almost untouched. CMS workers have certainly made a good start, but the large scale police reform demanded by protesters is still far away within New York City.

There will never be a singular solution to police violence in our country. Systemic racism, poverty, mental illness and the defunding of social programs all play a role in how policing works, and while protests are entirely necessary to make the public aware of such violence, Defunding the Police alone will not solve anything. It has become clear that rushed laws created to appease public outrage are ineffective; rather, the American public needs to vote on tested legislation and discuss large scale societal change before any real progress can be made.

## What Works Best?

By: Jessica Lillis

With all of the new COVID guidelines and restrictions, coming back to North Shore High School has been a strange adjustment for everyone. Only coming in twice a week and then being responsible for all work every other day while at home is the new reality we’re all dealing with. Both methods to learning have so far been successful, but which do students really prefer?

After surveying a group of six 10-12th graders, results indicated that 100% of the students preferred to learn in school. When asked why, there were two main reasons. Overall, students favored in-school learning because they have the ability to ask questions and get direct answers from the teacher, which they cannot do from home. Due to the asynchronous video lessons, students have to wait to ask their questions until the next time they are with their teacher, which can be up to a three day wait. When students have to wait that long, they may forget the question by the time they are back in school and it goes unanswered.

Secondly, students claim it is easier to retain the information when they are learning it in person, rather than sitting at home with numerous distractions around them. A school setting encourages focus because it is designed for learning and includes all necessary materials. Whereas, one’s house may have factors that interfere with a student’s ability to learn, such as a pet, siblings, and easy access to an electronic device whenever they want without having a teacher tell them not to go near it. The amount of work may also be overwhelming for students to do it all in one day; thus, their focus may be on just getting the work done rather than retaining the information.

Although the majority of students favor in-school days, online learning was essential for the reopening of schools this past September. Without these remote and hybrid options, students may not have been able to stay on track with their credits and graduation requirements. Also, as a result of this hybrid model of reopening schools, our number of COVID cases had been low prior to Halloween and events that took place outside of the building.

Another positive component to being in school is the ability to socialize. Even with social distancing guidelines, friends can still interact and spend time with each other in a way they can’t achieve while isolated at home. It’s important for students to form relationships and stay social with their peers. Having this interaction helps move the day along and makes it more enjoyable.

Overall, in-school learning was favored by everyone. Ideally we hope to be able to go back to that format on a daily basis as soon as we can. However, we also know that we are fortunate that we can still go to school, even if it’s only two days a week, to stay on track with lessons and the path to graduation. In order to help continue this path, everyone needs to wear his/her mask, wash his/her hands and socially distance.

## College Apps In The Age Of Covid

By: Lily Molesky

While the COVID-19 pandemic has uprooted many facets of our lives, one of the most unknown and troubling adaptations for high school juniors and seniors has been the college application process. A stressful time to begin with has been compounded with new policies and guidelines that leave many in the dark, in search of quick and clear answers. I spoke with North Shore High School’s Guidance Department Director, Mr. Daniel Doherty, to gain insight and clarity on what colleges are looking for during this unprecedented time, and how North Shore’s guidance department is adjusting to fit each student’s needs.

One of the biggest questions that has been posed by high school students is the legitimacy of the “test-optional” policy that many universities have adopted. The policy, while slightly varying at each college, does not require SAT or ACT scores from applicants in order to be considered for admission, and those who do not submit scores will not be penalized. When asked how students could be equally measured if some have test scores and others do not, Mr. Doherty explained, “that is the question that we, as a department, have been asking admissions officers,” and noted that it is hard to predict how admissions officers will evaluate.

While many find the choice between submitting scores and not to be intimidating, the accommodations being made for this year’s college applicants can have lasting impacts at the benefit of many students. With fewer students submitting standardized test scores, admissions offices are being forced to look at students from a more holistic perspective, and may transition these policies into a more permanent reality. “Some of the bigger schools are being forced to tweak how they look at students, and I think that is a positive thing,” Mr. Doherty said. “It will be interesting to see what college freshmen classes look like next year, and how they perform in comparison to past classes”. In an age of controversy surrounding the significance of test scores and whether they are a true metric of intelligence, this may be the push many universities need in order to view students on a more personal basis rather than on one that is numerical.

At North Shore High School, the guidance department has had to turn to an almost completely remote system when it comes to communicating with students and parents. The adjustments being made vary from the creation of a Google Classroom for seniors to many popular college-related events being held online rather than in person. Mr. Doherty notes that there are many positives as a result of these changes, such as the increased technology skills that the department has gained; some now see these new adjustments lasting for years to come.

The college application process is difficult to begin with for all who are involved, but now many students have to balance the management of their time between applications, school, and living life during a stressful pandemic. When I asked Mr. Doherty for any parting advice to those applying to schools during this chaotic time, he simply said to “highlight what is important to you and try not to overthink it.” Overall, with many deadlines both passing and approaching during such a unique time, it is important to stay informed on the policies at the schools one is applying to, and to make sure a student’s application is the most holistic representation of oneself. Only time will tell what the repercussions of this unprecedented era will be.



# You Are Never Too Old To Dress Up On Halloween



*Photo Courtesy Of: Meghan Braunn*

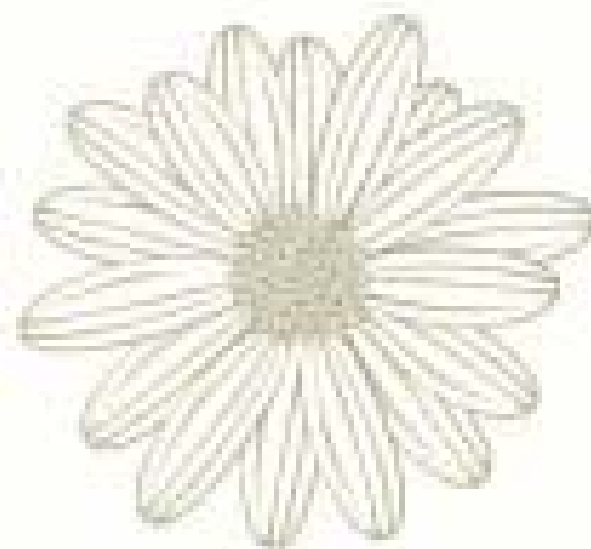


*Photo Courtesy Of: Samantha DiBenedetto*

## BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS

58 GLEN HEAD ROAD  
GLEN HEAD NY 11545

516 801 3937  
844 343 1600  
FAX 516 200 5445  
BEAUTIFULFLOWERSNY.COM



BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS  
FLORISTRY



# Halloween At North Shore High School



Photo Courtesy Of: Erica Jud



Photo Courtesy Of: Aaron Dranow



Photo Courtesy Of: Gillian D'Amico



Photo Courtesy Of: Libby Denley



Photo Courtesy Of: Maddie Bush





# 2020



Photo Courtesy Of: Ashton Guss

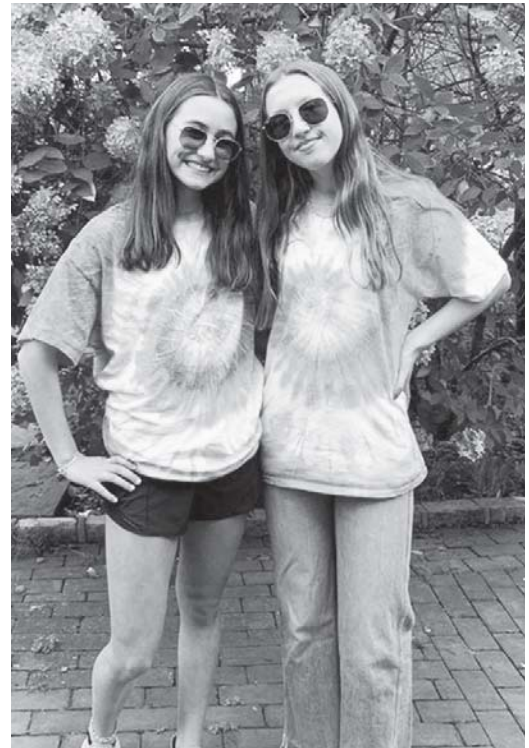


Photo Courtesy Of: Ari Guss



Photo Courtesy Of: Amanda Ayres



Photo Courtesy Of: Ali Mele



Photo Courtesy Of: Cole Gibstein



# Connecting and Controlling

By: Sophie Rosencrans

The world that we live in has drastically changed over the last twenty years. As technology has continued to advance, the human experience has been increasingly transformed by a bombardment of information that is accessible at the touch of a screen. The availability of technology in nearly every aspect of daily life has made many people unaware of the extent to which technology has truly overtaken our lives. In fact, the technology that connects us, also controls us- it divides us, distracts us, monetizes us, manipulates us, and polarizes us. Jeff Orlowski's Netflix documentary *The Social Dilemma* explores these issues and aims to analyze the unintended consequences that have come about amidst the age of social media. His reason for sharing this information is that "if we can't address our broken information ecosystem, we'll never be able to address the challenges that plague humanity" (*The Social Dilemma*).

*The Social Dilemma* utilizes multiple storytelling techniques to relay information to the viewer. These methods include interspersing tech insider interviews with scenes of a fictional suburban family that struggles with social media addiction. Orlowski revealed that, "by following the family in the film, we are able to see the different ways these platforms cause real-world harm" whether it be harm in the form of a mental health struggle, political polarization, or in the ability to connect with others in the physical world (thesocialdilemma.com). The tech insiders were chosen as interviewees because they are all former employees of giant tech companies and now fear the far-reaching consequences of the technology that they helped to create. As the viewers hear accounts from these people and watch the fictional family complete different tasks during its day, they begin to understand the immense role that the virtual world plays in humanity today, as well as reflect on the role that technology plays in their own lives.

Interesting points that are addressed in *The Social Dilemma* include the ways in which giant tech companies are able to manipulate their users. For example, they are able to monitor and record every action that a user on their site will take. Some of these actions include liking a photo, spending time on a user's profile, and engaging with similar content. As a result, they can highlight the users' interest and create personalized recommendations that will keep them engaged and scrolling. This has transformed the business of marketing, making it so that humans are the products being sold to advertisers. Tech companies are vying for human attention; they are using our own psychology to model our behavior, target us, and ultimately increase their own profits by acquiring advertisers. Tech companies do this by creating artificial intelligence that can "use a system of algorithms" and "create or modify algorithms without human intervention through the process of continually optimizing for better and better results" (thesocialdilemma.com). As the surplus of digital human footprints grows, tech companies are simply building more

advanced AI systems that have the capability to extract endless amounts of information, thus, making social media more addictive for each user.

While it may not appear to be such a massive problem when first pondering social media usage, one must take into account the fact that 50 men in Silicon Valley have influenced the lives of over two billion people worldwide. The simple action of implementing design features such as a "like-button", or a "friend request" has conflated self-value with a superficial means of connection. As a result of its highly influential nature, social media may be the single greatest hegemonic force of the century. Furthermore, social media has led to increased political division in the United States. Due to the ease with which fake news can be spread, real people and events can be manipulated. According to thesocialdilemma.com, "Social media advertising gives anyone the opportunity to reach huge numbers of people with phenomenal ease, giving bad actors the tools to sow unrest and fuel political divisions". This idea was clearly exemplified when Russia created thousands of social media accounts by posing as US citizens in order to spread disinformation campaigns and interfere with the 2016 election. As described in 'The Mueller Report', Russia's interference was largely successful as these accounts reached millions of social media users, persuading Americans to vote for Trump.

Upon watching *The Social Dilemma*, I instantly associated the role of social media with Plato's *Allegory of the Cave* which presents a scenario where a group of prisoners have lived chained to a wall of a cave for the entirety of their lives; they are simply able to see the blank wall before them. The people watch as shadows from puppets are projected onto the wall that is illuminated by a puppeteer by using the fire light behind them. While these shadows are not accurate representations of reality, they are the only reality that the prisoners have been exposed to. Thus, they are ignorant as to what is true and thus they are being manipulated by puppet masters that they do not know exist. Similarly, one can argue that we are now prisoners that are being manipulated by social media so that it can further its own agenda. We are being fed a skewed version of reality so that we slowly beginning to lose a sense of who we are and what we believe.

Nevertheless, there is hope. We can help change how social media is designed, regulated, and used by taking action and beginning uncomfortable conversations. We can learn the truth by escaping the cave, seeing the sunlight, and pushing ourselves to educate other victims. Watching *The Social Dilemma* is the first step in the process.

# Microsoft Powers Up

By: Trevor Janusas

On September 21, 2020, Phil Spencer, the current executive vice-president of gaming at Microsoft, as well as the head of the Xbox brand, one of the largest gaming companies, helped Microsoft acquire ZeniMax Media, the parent company of Bethesda Softworks for 7.5 billion dollars. Microsoft buying Zenimax media means that it now owns some of the most accomplished video game studios such as Bethesda Softworks, Bethesda Games Studios, Id Software, Zenimax Online Studios, MachineGames, Arkane, Machine games, Tango Gameworks Alpha Dog and Roundhouse Studios. Bethesda is a huge company so this means that Microsoft now has ownership of many game franchises such as the *Elder Scrolls*, *Fallout*, *Wolfenstein*, *Doom*, *Dishonored*, *Prey*, *Quake*, *Starfield* and many more. Xbox now goes from 15 to 23 game studios.

All of Bethesda's games are also now going to be added to Xbox Game Pass, a service that allows the customer to buy more than 200 games to play for \$9.99 a month. Game Pass will clearly be more valuable because most of Bethesda's games go for \$49.99-\$59.99; thus, those who don't really have expendable income for gaming can get more games for an affordable price. Bethesda was already an early supporter of Game Pass, adding most of its games to the service soon after the service was released.

The purchase of Bethesda is being endorsed by Todd Howard, the games director and executive producer of Bethesda as seen when he said: "We can't think of a better group of people to do that with than those at Xbox." He thinks that Microsoft is the best place to spread Bethesda's games because that company has been very helpful to Bethesda in the past when making games for the earlier consoles. Howard also said, "I can remember my first trip to Redmond to discuss the new system and bringing our next game, *Morrowind*, to the Xbox." Howard loved how helpful Xbox was when Bethesda added its games to the original Xbox console. He was very happy that Xbox took the time with him and his company that it did to work on that game and hopes to see the same type of dedication again soon.

Xbox buying Bethesda will deeply impact the gaming industry. It may bring the price up on Game Pass or stop releasing its games to Playstation. Although Xbox isn't entirely clear about its plans for the future, it will definitely touch the gaming industry right at its core.

Works Cited:

Spencer, Phil. "Welcoming the Talented Teams and Beloved Game Franchises of Bethesda to Xbox - Xbox Wire." Google, Google, 2020, [www.google.com/amp/s/news.xbox.com/en-us/2020/09/21/welcoming-bethesda-to-the-xbox-family/amp/](http://www.google.com/amp/s/news.xbox.com/en-us/2020/09/21/welcoming-bethesda-to-the-xbox-family/amp/). Studios, Bethesda Game. "Todd Howard On Joining Xbox." Bethesda.net, Bethesda Game Studios, 2020, [bethesda.net/en/article/4IwKWij174Cb2QNTTtBAEb/todd-howard-on-joining-xbox](http://bethesda.net/en/article/4IwKWij174Cb2QNTTtBAEb/todd-howard-on-joining-xbox).

# To Venus And Beyond

By: Nicole Miraglia

Life on Venus. What was once an impossibility is now under the microscope, as on September 14, 2020, scientists discovered a chemical known as phosphine in the atmosphere of Venus. Phosphine has been known to be a killer of aerobic organisms, those that require oxygen to survive. However, the presence of phosphine may be an indicator of non-aerobic life. The discovery of phosphine on Venus has scientists scrambling to answer the question: Is there really life on Venus?

The scientists who discovered this pivotal information have yet to produce hard evidence of these Venusian microbes. Phosphine is a harsh chemical that is detrimental to aerobic organisms because of its toxicity. However, non-aerobic organisms are able to live with this chemical in close proximity because they do not have to breathe it in. By looking at the planet with a powerful telescope, scientists were able to find evidence of phosphine being present in the atmosphere of Venus. Even though there has not been sufficient evidence to detect life, such as a specimen, scientists are still hopeful. In a *New York Times* article entitled "Life on Venus? Astronomers See a Signal in the Clouds", molecular astrophysicist Clara Sousa-Silva told interviewers that, "We know that this is an extraordinary discovery. We may not know just how extraordinary without going back to Venus."

The surface of Venus—with its scorching temperatures—seems inhospitable to life. Beyond the high surface temperature of Venus, the planet is covered in clouds that contain droplets of sulfuric acid, and the terrain is so rocky. It would be a struggle to properly land there, let alone build! These obvious environmental obstacles have caused Venus to be overlooked in the search for extraterrestrial life. Other planets such as Mars, Europa, Enceladus and other icy moons of giant planets have been investigated as possible places that could contain extraterrestrial life.

Life on Venus. It seemed impossible, until it became possible. Although it has not been substantiated as of yet, scientists are continuing to explore these new findings and are excited to discover the results.

Works Cited:

NASA. "Biomarker Phosphine Discovered in the Atmosphere of Venus." *NASA Science*, NASA, 15 Sept. 2020, [science.nasa.gov/biomarker-phosphine-discovered-atmosphere-venus](https://science.nasa.gov/biomarker-phosphine-discovered-atmosphere-venus). Accessed 12 Oct. 2020.

—. "The Return to Venus and What It Means for Earth." *NASA Science*, NASA, 11 Dec. 2019, [www.nasa.gov/feature/jpl/the-return-to-venus-and-what-it-means-for-earth](http://www.nasa.gov/feature/jpl/the-return-to-venus-and-what-it-means-for-earth). Accessed 9 Oct. 2020.

—. "Titans Relative Size." *NASA Science*, NASA, 17 Dec. 2004, [solarsystem.nasa.gov/resources/11996/titans-relative-size/](https://solarsystem.nasa.gov/resources/11996/titans-relative-size/). Accessed 13 Oct. 2020.

O'Callaghan, Jonathan. "Life on Venus? Scientists Hunt for the Truth." *Nature*, 2 Oct. 2020, [www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02785-5](https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02785-5). Accessed 12 Oct. 2020.

Stirone, Shannon, et al. "Life on Venus?" *New York Times*, 14 Sept. 2020, [www.nytimes.com/2020/09/14/science/venus-life-clouds.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/14/science/venus-life-clouds.html). Accessed 11 Oct. 2020.



By: William McConville

The Coronavirus pandemic has affected every major sport in the world, from the pandemic shutting down the world's sports in mid-March to their recommencement, as well as the difficulties that have come with reopening these sports. Each sport has struggled in its own unique way, but the sport restart that has had the biggest ripple effect worldwide would have to be the start of the 2020/21 season of the world's soccer leagues, as it is the most popular sport in the world.

The world's top five soccer leagues in England, Spain, Italy, Germany, and France have all differed in how they have handled the Coronavirus situation. England's Premier League has not had fans present during a match since before the lockdown started, and there are worries of a financial crisis in the League since there isn't any ticket revenue being earned. There were plans to reopen stadiums for fans that should have gone into effect by October 1st, but they were abandoned by the English government, as they were beginning to enforce a new set of restrictions in the country. These restrictions are currently planned to be in effect for at least the next six months, meaning that it's very likely that the doors of the stadiums of Premier League clubs will remain closed to supporters for the entire 2020-21 season.

Spain's professional league, La Liga, has been dealing with similar problems as to those of England. Fans are not allowed in the stadiums and Spain has some of the strictest guidelines on players out of any other league. Spain's infection rate has grown in the past month and Spanish health officials found that locker rooms were the place where players were most at risk of contracting the virus, with second division club Fuenlabrada being the prime example of this. 28 players and coaches were simultaneously infected with the virus in July due to having close contact in the locker rooms. As a result, players can no longer change or shower in the locker rooms, and time there for team talks has been limited to only a few minutes before and after matches, with the longest time duration allowed being 10 minutes during half time.

Italy has not been doing very

well with the virus either, as several big names in the league have contracted the virus, most notably Cristiano Ronaldo of Juventus. Ronaldo tested positive for the virus two days before he was supposed to play for the Portuguese national team in a Nations League game against Sweden and he has since been dropped from the squad and self-isolated until his hopeful recovery. The virus was also contracted by his Juventus teammate, American player Weston McKennie, which ignited fears that the virus could have spread to even more of his teammates. This did not end up being the case, but the entire Juventus squad was required to go through a two-week quarantine period anyway. The infections are not limited to Juventus players though, as Italian team Genoa recently had 14 of its first team members contract the virus, which put its most recent opponent, Napoli, at risk. Zlatan Ibrahimovic of AC Milan was infected with the virus as well, but he has recovered. Despite the outbreak amongst the players and officials of the Italian league, it still carries on and hopes to complete a successful season by May 2021.

The German soccer league however, the Bundesliga, has been more positive in dealing with the Coronavirus, as fans are being allowed back into the stadiums for the start of the new season. Stadiums can only be filled to 20% capacity and all fans are required to wear a mask and follow social distancing protocols. France's soccer league, Ligue 1, has also been allowing up to 5,000 fans inside the stadiums, although several big-name players such as Kylian Mbappe and Neymar Jr have contracted the virus, so this may change if issues persist. Even so, one thing that all soccer leagues and sports leagues worldwide have in common is the desire to complete their seasons successfully, with little or no cases of the Coronavirus being contracted and spread.

## Are You On Harry Potter TikTok?

By: Lauren Hagen

The critically acclaimed author, JK Rowling, who is responsible for the Harry Potter series, has stepped back into the spotlight as a result of her newest book, *Troubled Blood*. Unfortunately for Rowling, this book has been met with almost nothing but criticism and anger, rather than the love her previous stories received. *Troubled Blood* is a murder mystery in which the killer is, as Rowling has referred to him as, a "transvestite," a derogatory name for a cross-dresser. The controversy surrounding this character has only been compounded by Rowling's recent transphobic tweets.

JK Rowling's Twitter is filled with rants about the "dangers" of trans activism. Rowling has taken to using her platform to question the existence of transgender teenagers. In an essay Rowling uploaded to her Twitter page outlining the "five reasons [she is] worried about new trans activism," Rowling speculates about the legitimacy of transgender claims. In Rowling's opinion, many teenagers wish to transition in order to avoid gender discomfort; some women transition into men in response to the patriarchy. Or people attracted to the same-sex transition to avoid labels such as gay and lesbian. She goes on to say that later on in life some people regret their decision and attempt to de-transition; thus, she adds, allowing people to transition early on in life can negatively impact their future. Rowling's beliefs were only further scrutinized when she launched a discussion about how youths are persuaded into proclaiming they are transgender by falling victim to "social contagion" and "peer influence." The suggestion that teenagers would 'come out' as transgender in order to buy into a trend is an offensive notion that undermines the oppression and abuse many transgender people have faced.

While Daniel Radcliffe, the actor that played Harry Potter, attributes his career to Rowling, he refuses to ignore her hurtful commentary, tweeting "to all the people who now feel that their experience of the books has been tarnished or diminished, I am deeply sorry for the pain these comments have

caused you. I really hope that you don't entirely lose what was valuable in these stories to you." Radcliffe is not the only *Harry Potter* cast member to speak out against Rowling; Emma Watson (Hermione Granger) and Rupert Grint (Ron Weasley), have also spoken out against Rowling, urging fans to separate the author from the series.

The increased controversy surrounding JK Rowling has had an unexpected effect: an explosion of *Harry Potter* TikToks. For those unfamiliar, TikTok is a form of social media in which users upload short clips about any topic. The Summer of 2020 was dominated by edits of movie scenes, point of views about what it would be like to date certain characters, fan theories, art work, etc. The *Harry Potter* world is now beyond its source material, going as far as to bring characters into the modern day world; the speculation about whether Neville Longbottom would be a Black Lives Matter activist is the clearest example of this phenomenon. It seems that by doing this, fans have taken Radcliffe's advice and claimed the story for themselves, refusing to let the series go.

One character that has become increasingly popular on TikTok is Draco Malfoy, who Rowling regarded as one of the *Harry Potter* series' villains. Fans have given Malfoy his own redemption arc, humanizing a character that was meant to be hated. Many fans have found his lack of redemption arc to be another source of contempt. Malfoy's character suffered years of abuse, was isolated from his peers, pressured into siding with the villains, and was seen crying each time he was forced to commit heinous acts. Unanimously, fans have decided that Draco Malfoy was not at fault and was in fact a victim. Rowling's insistence that Malfoy is unredeemable only further angers her fans, who feel she is victim blaming.

Rowling's reputation as an author has clearly taken several hits, but the reinvention of the *Harry Potter* series seems to suggest that the author was not the one responsible for making the books amazing; instead, it was the fans, who transformed them from works of literature into a world of their own.

## Beauty And The Screen

By: Summer Rice

Every day, millions of people sit and scroll on their phones, liking pictures, sharing videos and leaving comments. As time-filling and entertaining as this can be, do you really know what it could be doing to the user's view on self-image.

Throughout history, style and beauty trends have drastically changed; however, in every time period there is always a standard of beauty that many people try to embrace. "The main beauty standards of today are being perfectly fit and skinny as well as having a perfect face", says Olivia Morra, a sophomore at North Shore High School. For some, achieving these qualities might not be as hard as it is for others, but for those people who struggle with achieving these qualities, they can feel quite obligated to fit into the beauty standards. "I have felt

pressured to change some of my looks and also my weight", states Morra.

Social media sites like TikTok and Instagram are filled with images and videos of popular influencers such as Addison Rae, Charlie D'Amelio, and Madison Beer. These influencers have qualities that fit within the beauty standards of today. This results in many people comparing their own appearance to these influencers. A survey conducted by a health care institution called the Florida House Experience showed that, "87% of women and 65% of men compare their bodies to images they consume on social and traditional media." ("Link Between Social Media & Body Image").

Many social media platforms portray beauty standards, although TikTok, one of the current most popular social media platforms, with, "800

million active users worldwide" (Mohsin), is shown to have a greater impact on beauty standards when compared to other platforms. Rachel Hunt, a sophomore at North Shore High School says, "I think TikTok has a greater impact on the beauty standard because most people that become famous on the app get their fame truly based off of their looks." For example, Charlie D'Amelio gained millions of followers in a very short amount of time because of her looks. So did Madison Beer, who got a lot of publicity because of people saying she was extremely pretty. Shannon Stalzer, another sophomore at North Shore High School added, "I think TikTok has a greater impact on beauty standards because if you don't fit within the beauty standard, then you tend to not get likes." Since there are so many people active on

TikTok, the beauty standards portrayed could greatly be affecting one's view of self-image and confidence.

Could we even imagine a world where we are not constantly bombarded with images of what beauty is now seen as? "I think if social media did not exist, the beauty standard would not be portrayed as much because there would no longer be an everyday thing to compare yourself to others," says Gazelle Dunphy, a senior at North Shore High School. Overall, it can be extremely exhausting both mentally and physically. So always make sure to take a step back from social media and focus on what's really important when you feel as if it's getting to be too much.



November 2020



# New Year. New Season: The Quest For The 2021 Stanly Cup

By: Michael Ye

The 2021 NHL season is right around the corner, giving all 31 teams yet another shot at winning the Stanley Cup. In September, the Tampa Bay Lightning defeated the Dallas Stars in six games to win the championship in a restarted season that was due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The season is set to begin January 1st, with each team playing a normal 82 game schedule. Now that the entry draft and free agency have concluded, we have an idea as to how team rosters will look. Heading into this season, there are many great teams filled with superstars that are in contention to make deep playoff runs. Who are the favorites though that have the best shot? Only one will remain and claim the greatest prize in all of hockey.

Winning a championship in back to back years is a tough task for any given team and was last done by the Pittsburgh Penguins in 2016 and 2017. However, the Tampa Bay Lightning remains a Cup favorite coming into the regular season. The team has the best goalie in the league in Andrei Vasilevskiy, who won the Vezina Trophy during the 2019 season. In 2020, Vasilevskiy posted up a .917 SV% with a 2.56 GAA. The Lightning’s offense is a top five unit in the league led by its captain, Steven Stamkos, who scored 29 goals and had 37 assists for a combined 66 points in 2020. The top six also includes 2019 Hart and Art Ross Trophy winner Nikita Kucherov, who has become the best winger in the league, as well as Brayden Point who has emerged as a top 25 player. In 2020, Kucherov put up 33 goals and 52 assists for a total of 85 points, while Point scored 25 goals and had 39 assists for 64 points. The defense is just as good led by 2020 Conn Smythe winner Victor Hedman and Ryan McDonagh. Hedman is a complete two way player who has been the best defenseman in the league for the past few years. His offensive production, paired along with his elite defensive skills is what made him a four time All Star and the 2017 Norris Trophy winner. An intriguing part about this Tampa team is its powerplay, which ranked in the top five in efficiency for the 2020 season. The Lightning is a team filled with star power, making it an annual Cup contender.

After entering the NHL as an expansion team in 2017, the Vegas Golden Knights have made the playoffs every year in its franchise’s history. Last season’s restart saw them make the Western Conference Finals before getting knocked out by the Dallas Stars in five games. Coming into the season, the Golden Knights is the best team on paper and my prediction to win the Cup. In free agency, the team signed the best defenseman available, Alex Pietrangelo, to a seven year \$61.6 million contract, ending his 12 year tenure with the St. Louis Blues. Pietrangelo is a top five defenseman in the league and joins a top four that already includes Shea Theodore, who’s a young, up and coming star. In 2020, Pietrangelo scored

a career high 16 goals along with 36 assists for a total of 52 points. In addition to putting up elite offensive numbers, he’s also a consistent defender that can play top pairing minutes. The same applies to Shea Theodore, who is only 25 years old and already a top 15 defenseman in the league. Like Pietrangelo, Theodore is a two way defenseman who provides immense value offensively and defensively. Last year, he put up 13 goals and had 33 assists for 46 points. Him and Pietrangelo are locked up for the next five years and will hold down the blue line for the future. However, the Golden Knights’ offense is even better and far deeper than the defensive core. The top six consists of above average players such as Mark Stone, William Karlsson, Max Pacioretty, Jonathan Marchessault, Reilly Smith, and top prospect Cody Glass. With the exception of Glass, each player scored 15 or more goals and put up 46 or more points in 2020 while also contributing to Vegas’ top 10 powerplay unit. This group of experienced veterans has played in numerous playoff series and can produce points. Furthermore, the Knights have the best goaltending tandem in the league which consists of Marc Andre Fleury and Robin Lehner. Last season, Lehner posted a .920 SV% and 2.89 GAA, while Fleury had a .905 SV% and a 2.77 GAA. Both of these goalies have proven that they are reliable in the playoffs and can lead a deep post-season run. The upside about Vegas is that it has an extremely deep core and great players at every position. 2021 is more than ever looking like Vegas’ year to win its first Stanley Cup in the team’s franchise history.

After starting goaltender Philipp Grubauer and backup Pavel Francouz went down with injuries during the 2020 Western Conference Semifinals, the Colorado Avalanche was forced to lean on Michael Hutchinson for the decisive Game 7. This likely cost them the series as they ended up losing that game to the Dallas Stars in overtime. While they didn’t do much in free agency, the Avalanche still remains a championship contender coming into the season. Its top line is one of the best in the league, which includes superstars Nathan Mackinnon, Gabriel Landeskog, and Mikko Rantanen. Mackinnon was a runner-up for the Hart Trophy in the 2020 season, where he scored 35 goals and had 58 assists for a total of 93 points. He was able to put up these numbers without his linemates, who went down with injuries of their own. Their young defensive core is solid as well, with 2020 Calder Trophy winner Cale Makar, Samuel Girard, and Ryan Graves. At only 21 years old, Makar is already an elite offensive defenseman who can quarterback the powerplay. In 2020, he put up 12 goals and had 38 assists for 50 points. Their goaltending is by far the weakest part of the team, yet they still have a solid goalie in

Grubauer. In 2020, he posted a .916 SV% and a 2.63 GAA while helping Colorado clinch the number two seed in the Central Division. What separates the Avalanche from other teams is its youth. The team’s best players are all 25 years of age or younger. Many players are expected to play even better next season and produce to their potential. Injuries were what took them out of the last post-season, and they could have won the Cup if everyone had been healthy. Coming into 2021, the Avalanche has high expectations as many are predicting that the team will go all the way.

Like Colorado, the Winnipeg Jets were decimated by injuries to key players in last year’s post-season. They were knocked out of the Play In Series by the Calgary Flames losing three games to one. However, they were playing without their two best players in Mark Scheifele and Patrik Laine. Coming into 2021, the Jets are seen as a dark horse pick to win the Stanley Cup, and for a good reason. In the off-season, they once again traded for Paul Stasny from the Vegas Golden Knights in exchange for a fourth round pick and a prospect. This trade finally gives them the second line center they desperately need. Stasny now joins a stacked top six with superstars like Scheifele, Laine, Kyle Connor, Blake Wheeler, and Nikolaj Ehlers, who all scored at least 22 goals and 58 points in 2020. Their defense is easily the worst part of the roster, but it still contains solid players such as Josh Morrissey and Neal Pionk. Both of these players are only 25 years old and provide offensive value, putting up 31 and 45 points, respectively. While Pionk is more of an offensive defenseman, Morrissey is a two way defenseman and is extremely reliable when it comes to shutting down opposing players on his own end. Finally, the Jets have a top five goaltender in the league with Connor Hellebuyck, who won the Vezina Trophy in 2020. Even while playing behind a rather sub par defense, Hellebuyck was still able to post a .922 SV% and a 2.57 GAA. He was easily the best goaltender in the league last year, and will be looking to build off of his stellar season in 2021. Winnipeg clearly has the superstars necessary to compete with other teams in the Western Conference. If they are going to make a deep playoff run, it’s going to depend on how well the defense plays. The roster may not be as good as the best teams in the league, but nobody knows the unpredictability of playoff hockey.

The off-season has clearly shaken up the league, with many new faces on different teams. There are obviously other great teams such as the Boston Bruins, Toronto Maple Leafs, Dallas Stars, etc. All of our questions and concerns will be answered next year though, when the season begins. A whole other year of hockey is just a few weeks away.



# Forget The Rhetoric; Just Play

By: Matt Malone

Picture this. You had a long, stressful week and to get your mind off of all of the bad news going on in the world, you tune in to watch your favorite baseball team. Just as the “National Anthem” begins, several players and coaches take a knee, attempting to make a political statement. Now the one place that you go for entertainment and relaxation is stuffed to the brim with politics. The more recent protests, such as kneeling during the “Anthem” in sports, were sparked by the death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020. Events like this however, can be traced back to the 1968 Olympics, when gold track medalist Tommie Smith and bronze track medalist John Carlos raised one fist skyward during the “Star Spangled Banner” to represent black power. Many people argue that athletes doing this is beneficial because they have a tremendous audience and can really help promote their cause. However, most people want to watch games purely for entertainment, and do not want to be bombarded by other people’s political beliefs at that time. Politics must be removed from the sports arena to avoid causing animosity and divisiveness among people.

Sports ratings have recently been declining. This is no coincidence and should not be taking anyone by surprise. Throughout the first twenty five percent of the 2020 NFL season, ratings were down an overall 10% from last year and NBC’s Sunday Night Football is down 14% (*Sports Business Daily*). People simply do not want to watch players preach their political beliefs on the sports field. The NFL needs to enforce rules about players protesting on the field because it is not only bad for business, but it is also bad for sports. Furthermore, a poll in 2016 was conducted surveying 1,000 people and 32% reported they are not as likely to watch an NFL game when players protest the “National Anthem” (*The Undeclared*). If protocols are not changed, this could present major obstacles for the future success of the National Football League. This is also the case for Major League Baseball. The MLB hit a four-year primetime broadcast low in August of 2020. The case could easily be made that the MLB’s ratings are down due to its players kneeling and becoming involved in social justice issues on the field (Game 7). The reality is that players protesting on the field are chasing fans away from the game. Baseball is America’s “national pastime”. Historically, the game has helped our country through some challenging times, dating back as far as the Civil War. It is woven into the fabric of our society. The fact that Americans are turning away from an institution that has often brought this country together is disheartening. We can not allow this practice of protesting during games to persist.

Is there an appropriate time and place for American athletes to voice their political opinions? Of course there is; it’s imperative that they do so. They have a tremendous fan base and their voices can really be a catalyst for change. However, just as bad sportsmanship has no place on the field, politics are more appropriate outside of the stadium.



# Is It Worth The Risk? The Bolts Strike Back

By: Jules Firouztale

And just like that, North Shore's Fall sports season was swept right out from under its feet. The words danced across the television screen: "Coronavirus News: Nassau County Postpones All High School Fall Sports." The unexpected swiftly became a reality. The devastation across all of Nassau County was evident as complaints from coaches, parents, and student athletes were heard.

For many students, sports are a way to de-stress after a long day of school. Likewise, parents enjoy cheering on their kids at games. Thus, at North Shore, these two factors led to the creation of intramurals. I decided to pose some questions and answer them as best as possible in regards to this new program, with the help of North Shore High School's Athletic Trainer, Michael Gonzalez and a few student athletes.

**Q:** Why does society care so much about sports? Why is it so important for students to play sports now?

**A:** According to Gonzalez, with the uncertainty of the future of high school sports due to Covid, it is crucial that students stay active. Sports and physical activity is not only paramount to an adolescent's development, but they also help how his/her body matures which includes his/her motor skills, coordination, and focus skills. Physical activity not only has innumerable immediate health benefits, such as improved sleep and a better school performance, but it also offers mental health benefits. Exercise is an outlet to reduce stress and help ease people's moods and emotions. Helping a child to create ideal habits at an early age makes it more likely that he/she will live a dynamic way of life as an adult.

**Q:** How are intramurals going? Have the intramurals been focused on proper safety precautions?

**A:** North Shore High School's alternative to Fall sports (football, volleyball, soccer, and field hockey) currently is intramurals. Intramurals is a substitute created by the North Shore

coaches of various sports who have a common goal of getting students active and ready for sports when they do come around hopefully in 2021. As North Shore High School has gone into the hybrid method of learning, students have been separated into two cohorts: Cohort 1 and Cohort 2; so the kids go to intramurals on the days they are present in school. So far the intramurals are going well, according to Gonzalez; however, the kids are not separated by teams, but by names which makes it difficult for teams to get cohesive practices in.

From a student perspective, Varsity Cross Country and Track and field runner, Carson Paradis says, "As a distance runner, I believe intramurals should implement more distance based workouts that will benefit the sport I do compared to short sprints that aid lacrosse or football athletes." However, he did add that intramurals are following proper protocols when it comes to social distancing and washing equipment after use.

**Q:** Should masks be worn during high intensity training?

**A:** Imagine running, but it feels like you have 50% less oxygen. That's what it feels like when running with a mask on. It is required thought to wear a mask when social distancing guidelines cannot be met; however, when working out in a distanced situation, it is acceptable to not wear a mask. Varsity Cross Country and Track and Field runner, Sophie Rosencrans, anticipates not wearing a mask while running because if a mask is worn, it will inhibit her ability to breathe and be detrimental to his/her health. On the other hand, if the guidelines can't be met, she knows that it will be necessary to wear a breathable mask.

All in all, as seen by recent news stories, many student athletes and coaches strongly seem to feel that sports should have taken place this past Fall season; however, student athletes at North Shore are currently working harder than ever to get back to the way things used to be prior Covid-19.

By: Matthew Grinberg

In the Spring of 2019, the Tampa Bay Lightning looked unstoppable. After finishing with a record-breaking 128 points in the regular season, it seemed like the team was destined for the Cup. But the eight-seed Columbus Blue Jackets shocked the hockey world with a four game sweep, knocking out the Lightning in the first round of the playoffs. Some considered it a fluke, while others thought Columbus was the better team. Regardless of how one viewed it, Tampa Bay came into this past season with one goal in mind: Cup or bust.

In "win now" mode, the Tampa front office made some big moves in order to build the best team possible. This included giving away valuable first round draft picks for both Barclay Goodrow and Blake Coleman. Julien BriseBois, the general manager, considered these overpayments necessary in order to assemble a team that was capable of a deep playoff run. After signing Kevin Shattenkirk, Pat Maroon, and Zack Bogosian to expensive contracts, Tampa had an

impressive roster. The pressure was on. If they didn't win this year, their window of opportunity might be gone for good.

Tampa, despite having an impressive regular season, did not seem like the juggernaut from the year prior. Despite the team's apparent regression, the Lightning still entered the playoffs as the second seed, only behind the Philadelphia Flyers in the Eastern Conference. But this was just the beginning. With Tampa's captain, Steven Stamkos, battling a lingering injury, the rest of the team had to play at an elevated level if they wanted to make it far. Thankfully, that's exactly what happened.

Defenseman Victor Hedman quarterbacked the team, seemingly scoring at will. Depth players like Blake Coleman and Anthony Cerelli had a visible impact. Through grueling overtimes and many close games, the Tampa Bay Lightning redeemed itself. With a commanding 2-0 shutout against the Dallas Stars in Game 6, Tampa won the Cup.

## LONG ISLAND'S OWN



**Congratulations To The  
Valedictorian and  
Salutatorian Of The Class  
Of 2021:  
Sophie Blumenthal and  
Kate Weseley-Jones**

CALL: 516.676.3100



## Disadvantaged and Disheartened

By: Kate Gilliam

Inconsistency has been a common theme throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and high school sports are no exception. On August 24th, when Governor Cuomo announced that low-risk sports could take place starting in September, Long Island was buzzing with excitement. Student-Athletes looked forward to a sense of normalcy and the opportunity to compete. However, this excitement soon turned to disappointment when Nassau County postponed sports until 2021. Suffolk County followed suit several days later, but there was one group of schools that still allowed sports: The Nassau Suffolk Catholic High School Athletic Association (NSCHSAA).

Considering the state that the world is currently in, the decision to postpone high school athletics until 2021 is justifiable. Nassau and Suffolk County public schools argue that there are too many unknowns with COVID-19 to allow students to play. In an interview with ABC Channel 7, the Section VII coordinator, Patrick Pizzarelli, announced that the committees felt that the postponement is in “the best interest and health and safety of our students.” These ideas seem reasonable, but the inconsistencies between different schools on Long Island undermine the public schools’ decision. Why can Catholic schools play while public schools cannot? This question has yet to be answered.

Despite the acceptable reasoning behind the postponement of sports in public schools, the varying decisions about conducting sports has caused unrest among public school attendees. Public School Student-Athletes feel disadvantaged, and quite frankly, they are. After-school athletics provide students with time to decompress after a long day of school and socialize with their teammates. Exercise does not exclusively improve

physical health; it is also a positive way to alleviate the stress that comes with rigorous academics. Interscholastic athletics clearly correlate with mental health and overall happiness. Unfortunately, public school student-athletes are being robbed of the opportunity to destress; something most student-athletes would benefit from in these trying times.

Regrettably, the postponement of public high school sports is not only impacting the present lives of student-athletes, but it is also affecting their futures. Students competing in the NSCHSAA are currently accumulating stats, times, and game film in their desired sport. This data is critical for college recruiting because of the virtual scouting that has been happening due to COVID-19-inspired restrictions on travel. This is putting public school athletes at a disadvantage for college recruiting as they have not competed since late February, and therefore, are unable to showcase their current abilities to collegiate coaches.

While it can be argued that Section VIII has the student-athletes’ best interest at heart, the inconsistency between the athletic programs across Long Island has created an unintended disadvantage. Although both systems have the health and safety of athletes in mind, it seems as if there is no right answer to the question of reopening athletic programs: Is the NSCHSAA too relaxed? Or are public schools taking too many precautions? Only time will tell.



## Different View Of The NBA

By: Jack Levin

On March 11th, 2020, the Utah Jazz and Oklahoma City Thunder’s game was postponed indefinitely until the NBA ended up shutting down the league due to Covid-19. Fans were disappointed, but little did they know that within a few months, they would witness a very different type of NBA.

June 26th, 2020 was a very happy day for basketball fans all over the world. This was the day that the NBA created a coronavirus ‘bubble’ in Walt Disney World for all teams that had a shot at making the NBA playoffs. This ‘bubble’ was created for the players and staff so that they could finish the NBA season in a safe way. The players were not allowed to leave the ‘bubble’ and they were tested every day while there. This way, they would be able to play the last eight games of the season prior to the playoffs. If a team didn’t make it, it left the ‘bubble.’ “We’re glad to be able to provide a unique venue where the NBA can resume its season at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex,” said Josh D’Amaro, Chairman, Disney Parks, Experiences and Products. The real question was if this new

NBA would give fans the enjoyment it originally did. The answer was quickly discovered.

The Disney ‘bubble’ gave teams and players the opportunity to prove themselves. The Phoenix Suns was the first team to make an impact as it was the only team to go undefeated in the ‘bubble’ while making other teams nervous. The Suns slowly rose up the rankings from one of the last teams to qualify for the ‘bubble’ to playing a sudden death game to make the playoffs. Unfortunately it struck midnight for this Cinderella story as the team eventually lost to the Portland Trail Blazers for the last spot in the West. The Denver Nuggets made a name for themselves as well. This team made history as it came back from not one, but two, 3-1 deficits during its playoff run only to lose to the Lakers. Other teams like the Miami Heat had a lot of luck as it was the fourth seed going into the playoffs and it took down the Indiana Pacers, the heavily favored Milwaukee Bucks, and the Boston Celtics. Even though the Heat lost to the Los Angeles Lakers in the NBA finals, the team made a name for itself for years to come.

But other teams weren’t as lucky. The Los

Just about every person knows at least one other person whose current life revolves around fantasy football. If you know this person, you should know the importance of this season. Fantasy football is one of the best times of the year for sports fans. More than ever, this four month period of fantasy football is necessary. In a time of insanity with players testing positive for COVID, injuries and overall poor performances, this article is here to give you the information you need to become the fantasy champion this year.

With so many unknowns this year, it was nearly impossible to tell who was going to have a breakout season and who would not. Going into week five, there have been many players who unexpectedly became one of the best at their positions, but with that there were also many players who unexpectedly were terrible. It is far enough into the season that fantasy owners know who is going to have a good season and who will not, so this article is dedicated to the players who have not yet shown whether or not they were worth a draft pick this year.

One player that has shown his worth so far is the Carolina Panthers wide receiver Robby Anderson. Anderson is currently a top 15 wide receiver, averaging nearly 18 points, already with three weeks over 15 points. Anderson is leading the Panthers’ receiving core, surprisingly over DJ Moore. Anderson is definitely a player that should be traded for before his worth goes up even higher. The sooner you can get this guy on your team, the less you can get him for. The next player to add to your roster is Baltimore Raven’s wide receiver Marquise Brown. Although he has had a very slow start, this is partially due to Lamar’s slow start. Since he is only averaging 10 points at the moment, he can be traded at a cheap price. He also has one of the easiest playoff schedules, which means he may be a major factor in some playoff games. Next is the Tampa Bay Buccaneers’ running back Ronald Jones, who has proven that he can be an RB two on some teams. Most notably was his 15 point game against a pretty solid run defense, the Chicago Bears. Jones can probably be traded for pretty cheap and can be a solid player to start. Finally, Indianapolis Colts’ running back Jonathan Taylor can be a steal this year. Although Taylor received high praises at the beginning of the season, he has had a slow start. Taylor can most likely be

acquired for a pretty cheap price, and he is a bit of a risk, but can easily transform into an RB one.

Although there are many players that should be picked up as soon as possible, there are others that should definitely be avoided at all costs. First is the Carolina Panthers’ wide receiver DJ Moore. DJ Moore has been way worse than expected this year, and it doesn’t seem like anything is going to change. Moore has already had three of four weeks below 10 points, and with Anderson playing the way he has been, it does not look like Moore will start getting the points fantasy owners want him to get anytime soon. The next player is Cleveland Browns’ Odell Beckham. After having a pretty bad season the previous year, little was expected from him, but after his 38 point game against the Cowboys, that notion began to change. However, the Cowboys currently have let up the most points in the NFL; OBJ is getting five or less receptions a week, and most other weeks OBJ has done rather poorly. OBJ is not worth a trade unless he can be gotten for cheap. Another player in a very similar situation is Cincinnati Bengals’ running back, Joe Mixon. After three bad weeks, he had a break out week of 42 points. Nonetheless, the Bengals’ offensive line is so bad that Mixon’s points depend solely on who they are playing. If the team they are playing has a good run defense, Mixon won’t put many points up, while if it’s a bad run defense, he will. Finally, is Cleveland Browns’ running back Nick Chubb. Chubb is currently hurt, but either way he should not be traded for. Although Chubb has been putting good numbers up, he has proven to be touchdown-dependent and has touchdowns taken from him by Hunt. The game Chubb did not score in, he got five points, on top of the fact that he is splitting carries with a very talented running back. Chubb is going to have a solid season, but at the moment, he has a higher asking price than he is worth.

Overall, these are the players that can make or break a fantasy season and the information that may sway one towards or away from them. With some players making fantasy owners’ seasons and others ruining their seasons, this year has had a wild and unexpected start. Nonetheless, fantasy football only comes around once a year, so make the best of it.

65.2 percent shooting from the field, and 60.9 percent shooting from three-point range” (Sbnation.com). He was the Micheal Jordan of the bubble. He proved he was worth more than what he was traded for. Some very unknown names made a statement as well. Miami Heat rookies Tyler Herro, Duncan Robinson, and Kendrick Nun filled their roles on the Heat, behind Jimmy Butler and Bam Adebayo.

During these difficult times, fans missed sports and when they came back, it was stressful to watch them because if one thing slipped, it would have all been done in an instant. The NBA did everything correctly though. “Of the 344 players tested for COVID-19 on the NBA campus since July 20th, zero have returned confirmed positive tests” (NBCsports.com).

It was an amazing experience watching teams rise and fall in the ‘bubble’. In the end, the Los Angeles Lakers ended up winning their 17th NBA championship against the Miami Heat.