

# THE COMET NEWS

Fall 2018

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## COMETS WIN DEFENSIVE BATTLE OVER WESTBURY

Written by: Andrew Scarpaci

The Hicksville Comets played their homecoming game at Hicksville High School against the Westbury Green Dragons on October 13, 2018. Coming into the game, The Comets were 1-4 on the season, with their one win coming from defeating the Green Dragons in their second game of the season by a score of 28-25. Coach Cardoza and his staff were looking to win their second game of the season while also trying to win Homecoming for the second year in a row, after defeating the Herricks Highlanders last year by a score of 14-7.

Set to lead the way was starting QB Liam Lipien. The team is also comprised of key receivers Connor O'Keefe and Anthony Cerrato, Shane Buquicchio and Anthony

Squillacioti. The ground game was anchored by running backs Brendan Pursuo and Chris Lopus. Leading the defense was Esai Garcia on the line, Brandon Lang at linebacker and John Fisher in the secondary.

The first half was all defense. Many big plays came from both defenses and 3rd and 4th down stops seemed to be the trend for the game. The second quarter did not look promising early, as Lipien would leave the game, with what seemed to be an injury to the knee. Shane Buquicchio would come in.

To start the second quarter The Comets would lose possession on a failed 4th and 3 pass attempt deflected by a defender at

the Hicksville 29 yard line. This gave Westbury the ball back and running back Perez of the Green Dragons would have a long rush downfield to put them in good field position. They then scored a touchdown on a three yard rush to open up the scoring and give the Green Dragons a 6-0 lead with 3:15 left in the half.

Westbury did not hold this lead for long. Connor O'Keefe brought the kickoff out to the 35 yard line to start off the drive. After a couple of successful rushing attempts, Anthony Cerrato received a pass, and got down to the Westbury 35 yard line with 1:52 left. A long 21 yard pass to O'Keefe brought Hicksville down to the nine yard line. After a Hicksville timeout, Connor O'Keefe would get the ball again, but this time make it into the end zone for the nine yard touchdown reception with 40 seconds to go, effectively tying the game at six. Once again the two point conversion was unsuccessful.

Lipien came back in at the start of the third quarter. Hicksville went 4 and out with an incomplete pass in the end zone, giving the ball back to Westbury. This time, a fake punt on 4th and 2 by the Green Dragons cost them big time. With a couple small rushing plays bringing up 4th and 2, Lipien would look for a familiar face yet again in Connor O'Keefe for the 23 yard touchdown, giving the Comets their first lead of the day, 12-6. They would go for two once more, this time successfully, with a rush in by Lipien. The score became 14-6. After a quick three and out, the Comets would get



Pictured above: Hicksville Comet's players kneel as an opposing player is helped off the field.

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# POSITIVE TURNOUT FOR DRENCHED FAIR

Written by: Roman Charan

Hicksville High School held its annual Homecoming Fair on Saturday, October 13 from 10am to 1:30pm preceding the football game. In spite of the inclement weather in the morning, all of the advisors and students were in good spirits and ready to make money for their clubs.

Homecoming can mean many different things depending on who you ask. Freshman Jabir Ahmed would say homecoming is “interactive, fun, and crazy” while Dr. Piscitelli, a teacher at the high school, described it as “spirited, exciting, and delicious.” I bet if you asked really anyone else, they might give you a

different answer. This is because homecoming is what you make of it. With all the different booths at the fair, there is bound to be something that you liked and stood out that made your homecoming memorable.

Student Government sold bagels to fundraise for their Senior Citizens Prom.

Key club had a bake sale to fundraise for future events that will help the community, homeless, and students in need at Hicksville High School.

Interact club sold apple cider, and Robotics had their robot that shot balls in the air. If you caught one then you would win a fish.

These are just a few examples of all the awesome booths that were at the homecoming fair. Each booth brought something a little different to the fair, but left the same thing on everyone who came from them, a smile. Everything was at an affordable price and it was all going to a variety of good causes.

Comet the dog even had his fair share of fun at these different booths. Jabir said his



Pictured above: The winning class banner and Comet the Dog and students at the fair.

favorite booth had to have been the “robotics booth, it is cool to see how the robot works and winning fish.” Dr. Piscitelli said her favorite was “any booth that sells food.”

The Homecoming Fair brings a community together. Kids, teachers, and parents from all different schools come to homecoming because they know how amazing it is and how strong we are as a community. Homecoming this year was a success. It may have been cold and wet but it may have also been our best homecoming yet.



Pictured above: Homecoming King Anthony Cerrato and Queen Kerry Bernet

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## A STRONG DISPLAY OF HICKSVILLE PRIDE

Written by: Roxy Dias

Hicksville High School was pumped up on Friday, October 12th during the 2018 Pep Rally. School spirit was visibly present in the exuberant gymnasium as the Comets waited for the start of Homecoming weekend. The rally was comprised of costumes, loud music, performances, and everything you'd need to replace your average school day with a thrilling day of Hicksville Pride.

With the gymnasium dressed in orange and black, the pep rally began with an exceptional singing of our national anthem by Jade Vila. Our cheerleaders then did a cheer, which was followed by a short performance from every other varsity team. These performances were very creative; they ranged from walking in the gym and sitting down, to flips, confetti cannons, and a dance off. Our boys soccer team even gave us

a spontaneous dance off. It started with a player dressed in a red Teletubby costume dancing against the school mascot, Comet the dog, and ended with Aesha Butt taking it all as she generated the loudest, most enthusiastic cheers. This was a clear demonstration of the diversity, maturity, and character of Hicksville High School.

The Starlets closed the student performances. The team, which is ranked third nationally, had a coordinated routine that displayed outstanding talent and skill. Although the Starlets were the last of student performances, the show continued when the students started their own chant, "Dunk! Dunk! Dunk!" They were begging for Mr. Williams to dunk the ball, as he did two years ago. He complained about his knee, but the crowd did not relent. He had to do it, and he had to make it in, as everyone

had their phones out to record him. Just like a scene from a movie, Mr. Williams fulfilled expectations, and Hicksville High School roared with applause. That put the cherry on top of an exciting pep rally.

As a freshman, this was a welcome surprise to see students be so passionate about their support for Hicksville, and so accepting of all members in our community. Each sports team had to prepare for this on their own time, and either create or buy whatever they wanted to use during their part at pep rally, and it was clear that some teams put a lot of time, effort, and money into making pep rally as exciting as possible. Mr. Williams saw this pride, and declared "this is going to be a great school year," and we at Comet News couldn't agree more.

## HOMEcoming GAME CONTINUED

back on offense. O'Keefe's 12 yard punt return started the drive at about midfield. The Comets went for it again on 4th and 2, scoring once more on a 15 yard rushing touchdown, extending the Hicksville lead to 20-6.

The Green Dragons immediately fumbled the kickoff on the very next play, giving the Comets the ball back. The fumble recovery was made by Brandon Lang. After an interception by Westbury's Watson, Lang returned for another big play. This time he had an interception of his own

on the 41 yard line three plays into Westbury's drive. After a short rush of three,

Brendan Pursoo would seal the game with a great 38 yard rushing touchdown into the end zone. After a couple last second attempts by Westbury, the game was called.

The Hicksville Comets defeated the Westbury Green Dragons 26-6. Liam Lipien deserves much credit for playing with an injured knee throughout the second half, and Connor O'Keefe filled up the box score with receiving yards, rushing yards, and return yards. It was a great game for Hicksville, bringing their record to 2-4 on the year.



Pictured above: Anthony Cerrato of the Hicksville Comets.

## WELCOMING A NEW SUPERINTENDENT

Written by: Katherine Jergensen

Hicksville rang in the 2018-2019 school year with a new Superintendent of the school district. Ms. Marianne R. Litzman replaced Dr. Carl Bonuso, who retired last June.

Ms. Litzman has been a part of the Hicksville UFSD for many years. She began her time at Hicksville as a science teacher at the Hicksville Middle School. She then served as Assistant Principal at the Middle School, and then evening school Principal of Hicksville High School. Her rise at Hicksville continued when she became principal of Dutch Lane Elementary School. Ms. Litzman moved to the Administration building and served as Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction under both Maureen Bright and Dr. Carl Bonuso. While in her role as Assistant Superintendent she served a key role in improving the educational curriculum in all main subjects as well as electives and

physical education. Another initiative Ms. Litzman embarked on was getting iPads and Chromebooks for all the students so that they would have a technological aide for learning.

Of her new role, Ms. Litzman said, "I am honored and privileged to work in this community to be able to inspire our teachers and administrators to help every child meet their potential and go off into the world as healthy, contributing citizens. My favorite thing about Hicksville is the diversity of the community and the students who go to school here... their passion for learning and desire to create a better world."

There are many things in Ms. Litzman's life that influenced her to choose a career in education. She grew up in a small town in the Catskill Mountains called Loch Sheldrake, NY. When she was

young, she was inspired by the story of the Statue of Liberty, as well as the Emma Lazarus poem, 'The New Colossus.' "In grade school we learned about the history and construction and gift of the statue and I was fascinated by a statue that you could climb up to the top from the inside and the idea of welcoming the "huddled masses yearning to breathe free" and I was inspired to believe that freedom was something I could help perpetuate through teaching and education." Ms. Litzman had always known that she wanted to enter the field of education. "I believe that education is the pathway to freedom and world peace as understanding of all cultures brings knowledge, tolerance and respect for others."

The Comet News sends their congratulations and gratitude to Ms. Litzman for all she has done for Hicksville thus far, and we are looking forward to a great school year.

## GIRL'S LOCKER ROOM UPDATE

Written by: Jamie Brueckel

*\*\*\*This story is an update to a story that initially ran in the Spring of 2018\*\*\**

This year, the girls of Hicksville High School came back after the long summer to a new, renovated locker room. Over the summer, the school replaced many of the older, more decrepit features of the locker room that the female students of Hicksville High have had to deal with for years, while the boys received many of the new perks the school had to offer.

The bathrooms have been redone with stall doors that actually closed and the dirty tiles have been replaced with new, shiny white ones. The lockers are replaced by newer black ones. The entire room, as well as the area surrounding

the physical education office and area surrounding the locker room, have been redone with new black and orange tiles, adding some school spirit to the locker room. Much of the room now looks quite similar to its counterpart belonging to the boys. The room has better insulation than it did last year, as well.

The Quinlan gym and the boys' gym received a bit of a renovation as well. Both of these rooms had their interior mats redone from the old blue mats to newer black ones to match the new orange paint covering the exposed edges of the walls. The girls of our school now have many of the luxuries that the boys' locker room possesses. Of course, the rooms may have a bit of a difference in size, but the current state of the locker

room is much better than it was last year. Last year, and many years before that, the girls of our school had to deal with a much shabbier version of the locker room.

This new renovation isn't all that the school board has in store. Thanks to the new bond, our auditorium, cafeterias, and music wing will be renewed and redone in the coming months and years. The locker rooms are just the start to a new version of our high school.

## CELEBRATE HICKSVILLE'S DIVERSITY WITH THE INTERACT CLUB

Written by: Stephanie Gabriel

There are many clubs at Hicksville High School that deserve immense recognition. Many clubs make themselves stand out and show their originality. There are smaller clubs that want to be put in the spotlight as well. Interact Club is a lesser known club at Hicksville High School, but it has a lot to offer.

The club has seen a bit of change this year thanks to some new advisors. In the previous years of the club's existence it was centered around planning for International Night. The club has added to its list of goals with its three new advisors. They want to do more to discuss diversity and bring new topics to light that highlight culture. The club's main focus is to put more attention on the variety of cultures in and out of Hicksville.

International Night is one of the biggest nights of the school year. Hundreds of people come to the event. There are boards set up to represent different countries. There is free food but in order to get it you must see all the country boards. There's also a fashion show where traditional clothing of many cultures are showcased. The performers of the night are also a big hit. In the past there have been groups that dance to K-Pop music. The Hicksville High School string ensemble also plays some cultural pieces. Auditions for the performances normally happen about a month in advance.

People of all ages are welcome to bask in the glory of culture. At Homecoming, the club showcased a map of the world.

Everyone who passed by had an opportunity to add a pin from the country that they are from.

Interact meetings will hold a variety of different things. There are no bad ideas or topics. The club is always open to discuss what is on the minds of its members. Everyone's voice will be heard. Meetings are held every Wednesday in Cafeteria A and new members are always welcome. There are many upcoming events that Interact plans on participating in. Make sure to keep an eye out for the club and its members.

## NATURAL HELPERS RETREAT

Written by: Alaha Nasari

Hicksville High School's Natural Helpers recently attended their annual retreat at Camp DeWolfe, a two day trip in which new members acquired the necessary training to become official Natural Helpers. During the retreat, students became familiarized with the responsibilities expected from members of this club, and also received expert guidance in enhancing their abilities as the leaders of our school.

Over the course of two days, students actively participated in seminars and discussions, and had the wonderful opportunity of listening to several guest speakers as well. More importantly, these engaging activities fostered the development of new friendships and interactions among all members of the club. Ishita Sharma, co-president of the club, describes her experience during the retreat, "The retreat is definitely an experience that leaves all

members with lasting memories. As an officer of this club, it was an amazing opportunity to help coordinate the activities."

Current freshmen and sophomores are all encouraged to apply to become members of this club. Natural Helpers are identified and selected through an application process that is available around May of each school year. The selection process is a serious attempt to identify those students and adults who are seen as "natural helpers." The Natural Helpers program is based on a simple premise: Within every school, an informal "helping network" exists. Students with problems naturally seek out other students — and adults — whom they trust. The Natural Helpers program utilizes this existing network and provides training to students and adults who are already serving as informal helpers. It gives them skills to help others more effectively

and provides places to turn to when they are not able to help.

After the retreat, Natural Helpers attend ongoing training, generally during the after school meetings held every two weeks. This training enhances basic skills and information covered in the retreat training. They tend to explore topics of concern to students, like stress, suicide, eating disorders, and relationships with friends and with family. Natural Helpers report significant benefits from being involved in the program, whether their involvement is helping one to one, assisting with program coordination, volunteering for community projects, or fulfilling some other role.

## COLLEGE SPOTLIGHT: SBU

Written by: Rawan Mohamed

Stony Brook University seems to be at the top of many student's college lists. But is Stony Brook all that glamorous as it is set out to be? A college alumni, Maram Abdelhamid, has stepped forward to give us the scoop.

Stony Brook is a college that caters more to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Maram was asked about this issue and she sets the record straight by saying that, "Stony Brook is known for STEM, and the arts do get overshadowed by it through budget cuts. Maram also stated that, "Compared to some other STEM based schools, Stony Brook has a more prestigious program for the arts [in general]."

SUNY Stony Brook has diversity through its educational programs and through its student body. The university is filled with different races and religions which can give a sense of comfort in knowing that it's okay to be different. So if you ever felt that you had trouble fitting in because you're different, Stony Brook is the school for you because it embraces and accepts all. Maram let us know that you will have [a] "lot more in common with people who are taking your classes" and she suggests to "join clubs to make

friends."

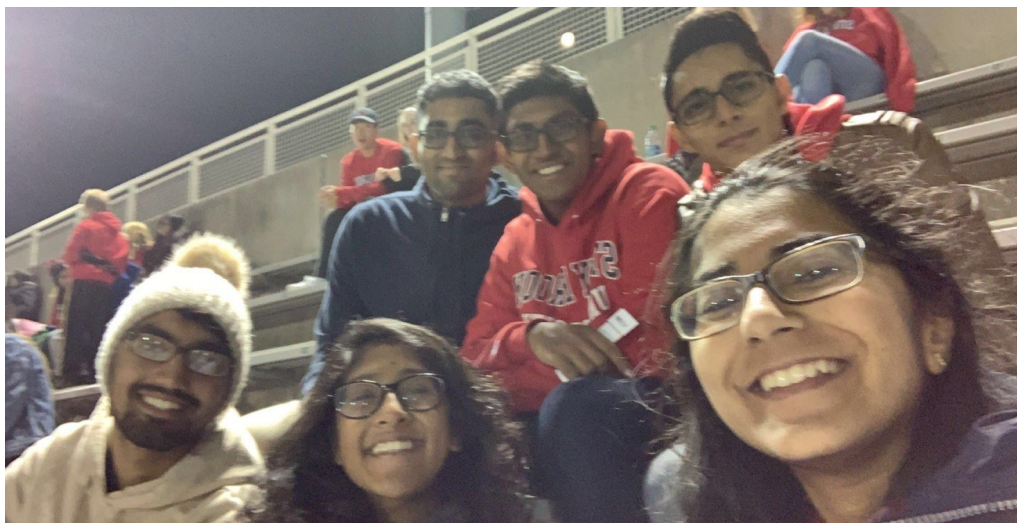
If you've never been to the university, the campus is huge, covering 1454 acres. There are a lot of people who attend this school and it's easy to get lost in. Finding your way around the 220 buildings that are found throughout this campus is definitely a challenge. The biology major had trouble finding her way around as well, saying, "Google maps was my best friend, but you have huge gaps in between classes. I took one day to familiarize myself with the campus and it helped me out so much!"

One of the top reasons that people enjoy attending Stony Brook is because it is a top school and it offers financial aid. Maram ensures, "Stony Brook and New York state as a whole offer great scholarships like Excelsior, FAFSA, etc., they are very understanding of family's situations." Since Stony Brook is so close to Hicksville, many people do attend because a 45 minute commute is not that bad.

Overall Stony Brook University is a good college to attend. It has a lot of diversity



and unique people, great professors, and good financial aid. Besides the campus being large, Stony Brook has a lot to offer and it may be worth it for Seniors and Juniors at Hicksville High that are weary of leaving home to give Stony Brook a sincere look.



### Stony Brook University Quick Facts:

**Established:** 1957  
**Size of campus:** 1364 acres  
**Undergraduate enrollment:** 17,364  
**Cost of Tuition:** \$8,885.00  
**Athletics:** Division I  
**Number of majors:** 60+  
**Mascot:** 'Wolfie' the Seawolf

Pictured above: Alumni from HHS attending functions at Stony Brook University.

Pictures provided by: Sejal Luthra and Anya Marquardt

# MOVING ON FROM HURRICANE FLORENCE

Written by: Maria Garrido

Hurricane Florence hit the East Coast on August 31, 2018, but its effects were still being felt up to two weeks later, and in areas that were hit more heavily, the repercussions will be felt for much longer.

The damage that Hurricane Florence caused was immense, but what happened to the people? How many survived? What was the death toll? Just how dangerous and powerful was the hurricane in relation to other storms? What did people do to help others that were injured during the horrendous storm? Many people volunteered to help with donations, life supports, shelter, and clean up efforts in towns in North Carolina. It was still in progress as many supporters and the US government rushed to their aid. But most importantly: What happens next?

## Saving Others and Their Support:

One of the supporters helping victims from the hurricane is 4-year old Florence "Flo" Wisniewski, who lives in Chicago and got inspired to help the victims by collecting donations. "She didn't know exactly what was happening, so we started showing her videos and reading her articles. She wanted to help," said Tricia Wisniewski, Flo's mother, to a local news station. The family also put a donation bin on their porch and received thousands of

dollars from the community. The community has gathered a ton of supplies like food, diapers, toiletries, and clothes. "People are coming up to me at the store... and telling about and it's been great. Speaks volumes of the neighborhood," Wisniewski said. "I think it's right to do. To help people," Flo added. Thanks to Flo and the other rescuers, many of the victim's prayers for help have been answered. Many donors and supporters are still getting as many supplies as they can to help the victims.

## How Did Our Government React?

During the last few weeks of September, President Donald Trump and Gov. Roy Cooper arrived at New Bern's Temple Baptist Church to help volunteers bring hot meals to victims of the storm. "To all those impacted by this storm our entire American family is with you and is ready to help," Trump said. "To the families that have lost

loved ones, America grieves with you."

During Trump's visit, Gov. Cooper had been delivering many speeches and met



Image courtesy: PSMAG.com

with volunteers in different hospitals, like the Red Cross. "That's what this effort is about. Helping people who need it," said Cooper. "There are people who would really just love a hot meal and a dry place to stay tonight and there are people across the state who are working hard to make that happen." A few weeks later, Cooper and many different governors from FEMA or the Federal Emergency Management Agency, visited many parts of North Carolina to help many victims to find many shelters to make them feel safe.

Since Hurricane Florence has passed, Trump has visited the Horry County Emergency Operation Center to meet Senators Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott and South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster and Congressman Tom Rice. McMaster stated that Hurricane Florence, "may be the worst disaster that we've had in South Carolina."

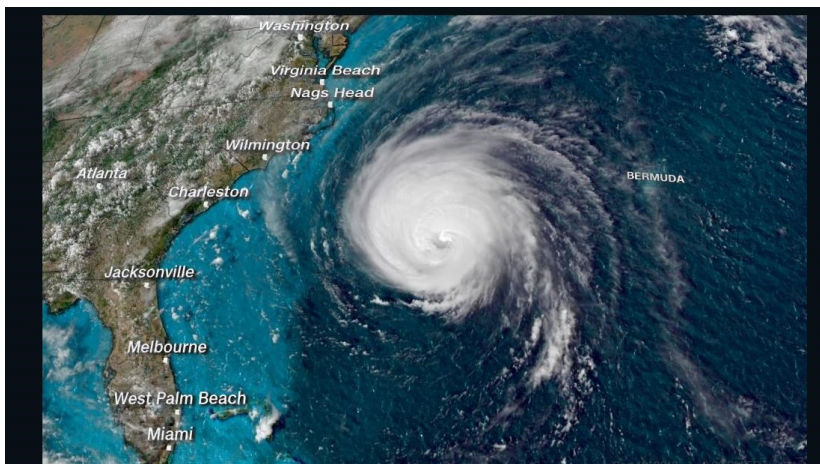


Image courtesy: CNN.com

# WHEN YOUR PAST COMES BACK TO HAUNT YOU

Editorial written by: Anya Marquardt

Have you ever posted something online that you regretted? Have you done a double take before retweeting? These things could be the difference between a college acceptance letter, or a college rejection letter. This could be the difference between getting the job of your dreams, or being unemployed. You could have the perfect GPA, or the perfect resume, but the small things that we do online could be the breaking point. Today, more than ever, we are seeing that not only “regular people” are facing consequences for their activities online, but also the ones that we once thought were “untouchable:” celebrities.

Social media is constantly changing the way we live. We depend on it in order to get our daily news, check in with our friends, and see what is going on in the world. Twitter, which was created in 2006, is one of the most used social media platforms: Twitter has been the largest source of breaking news since the 2016 presidential election. However, Twitter has also been a popular platform for many recent celebrity scandals. Popular media figures have had major blows dealt to their careers because of their history on Twitter. James Gunn was fired from Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3 due to tweets he wrote making

fun of pedophilia from over five years ago. Laura Lee, a popular beauty Youtuber, lost over 200,000 subscribers in a week due to racist tweets from 2012. She has consequently lost all of her sponsorships from major makeup companies. However, other popular figures in media have been in the same situation as Gunn and Lee, but came out unscathed. Racist tweets written by Buffalo Bills quarterback Josh Allen came to light right after he was drafted, but he was not dropped from the team. Allen wrote the tweets five years ago. Baseball player Josh Hader was also stuck in a racism scandal over tweets he wrote when he was a teenager. So, the question stands: should people be held accountable for their actions online, even if what they did occurred years in the past?

Some believe that people should be forgiven for their actions, and after all, we do change over time. We mature, and we grow as people. We learn more about ourselves, and what we believe in. You may no longer believe in what you posted years previously; you could believe in the complete opposite now. However, we always have control over our actions, and especially what we post online. We should be held accountable

for what we post on Twitter, or any other social media website. There are consequences to our actions, and we must accept them in order to understand the entirety of what we did.

As high schoolers, we all use social media. We use it quite constantly. However, we are also at the point in our lives where everything we do has an impact on our future. That post on Instagram that you made, or a tweet you wrote on Twitter, could be the deciding factor between getting accepted or rejected to the college of your dreams. Our use of social media is completely up to us, and we should use it responsibly in order to avoid the consequences that people like James Gunn are currently facing.

We can clearly learn a lesson from what we are currently witnessing on Twitter: none of our actions truly go away. We must think before we tweet or post online, because what we post can impact our lives in ways that we don't even think about. We should always be held accountable of our actions, no matter how long ago these actions occurred. We are in control of our social media presence online, and we must remember not to abuse that control, as we may not be able to avoid the consequences.

## CELL PHONE DEPENDENCY

Editorial written by: Alina Naqvi

It is a recognizable truth that almost everyone has a smartphone. But there have been a few issues rising that many don't recognize or think about. Whether in the halls or in class, phones are everywhere. Many believe that phones are not a problem and should be used in schools. Whether you agree or not, phones do have some negative aspects in schools.

Have you ever noticed, how in the halls,

when someone is on their phone and doesn't look up because they are distracted, that it results in someone bumping into them? This stops many students from arriving to class on time. An example from our own high school is the fiasco that occurred in the overly populated hallway between the cafeterias and gymnasiums, during the first week of school. Many students were still stuck in the hallway as the second

bell had already rung. These students could barely move and no one really understood what was occurring in the first place. I believe cell phones play a large role in hallway traffic.

Another issue brought up because of cell phones are the resulting disagreements between teachers and students. Phones have become a third arm for some people and many are not willing to keep their

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## VENOM FILM REVIEW

Written by: Eric Wang

Venom(2018), directed by Ruben Fleischer and starring Tom Hardy as Venom, was just a weird mess of a movie that was only slightly enjoyable. Venom is a well known character with a long history, and the character's previous appearance in Spider-Man 3 did not do the character any justice.

The excitement about a Venom solo movie was palpable when it was first announced, but that excitement wore off after the first trailers began to leak online. The PG-13 rating did not help, and while it is understandable that Sony and Marvel rated the movie that way for financial reasons, movies like Deadpool and Logan show that even if there is an R rating, the movie can be a huge hit with both critics and fans. The action scenes also could have used the help of an R rating to give them more options to explore the darker sides of Venom.

Most of the action scenes weren't very original and were set during the night, which made Venom harder to follow and made some of the scenes look sloppy. There were also some issues with the writing. The tone often shifts from dark and sinister to witty and humor-

ous, making it hard to care or empathize with any of the characters besides Eddie and Venom. Dr. Skirth was underutilized, the romance between Eddie and Anne wasn't fleshed out enough for me to care about, and the worst part is that the villain, Carlton Drake, was neither menacing nor intriguing. It's very disappointing to see overqualified actors such as Michelle Williams and Riz Ahmed reduced to playing clichéd and uninteresting characters.

There is one aspect of the movie that was pretty fantastic. That is the dialogue between Eddie and Venom, both of which were played by Tom Hardy. The interactions between a parasite and host trying to get along lead to some pretty funny and entertaining moments. It's just really fun to see Eddie trying to interact with other people while Venom is constantly interfering with his own opinions and ideas. Sadly the charming and witty aspects of Venom weren't enough to make it a good movie.

Comic book movies have a pretty high standard thanks to the popularity that Marvel has brought to the table, and

when popular characters like Venom get adapted to the big screen, fans will have high expectations. Venom (2018) was entertaining at times, but it definitely had the potential to be so much more than the mediocre movie that it is.



Image courtesy: IMDB.com

## CELL PHONE DEPENDENCY

phones away. Many students keep their phones on the desk, or in their laps instead of 'away,' as the teachers would prefer. This is unnecessary but some feel the need to watch over the phones as if they will disappear. I have seen students argue with teachers due to this. Some teachers try to mediate the situation by allowing phones to be off and silenced but kept out. In school, it is reasonable to have a phone as it lets you contact others when

needed, but you don't need it on your person 24/7. There are studies that have been done that show how students who don't have their phones with them during school hours have the tendency to do better in school as students become more focused at the task at hand.

Cellphones obviously do have some good aspects to them, as they allow communication for students. For

many, however, cell phones have a negative impact due to the large amount of distractions they bring up and students should be mindful of them.

## INSATIABLE REVIEW

Written by: Alina Abraham

*Insatiable*, created by Lauren Gussis, took social media by storm when the trailer was released in July. Many people were thrilled to see their favorite childhood Disney actress, Debby Ryan, return to portray a character in their age group. It seemed innocent enough.

The trailer introduced Debby Ryan, acting as an overweight teenager nicknamed “Fatty Patty” by her cruel classmates. Her loneliness prompted her to binge-eat to deal with her issues, until she was assaulted by a homeless man. It resulted in her jaw being wired shut. This caused her to lose 70 pounds and gain a beautiful body. After meeting a disgraced pageant coach, Bob, Debby decides to enact her revenge upon everyone who caused her pain before her weight loss. This revenge involved vio-

lence.

Many were appalled by the controversial trailer and voiced their concerns. Critics believed that this would set a terrible example for teenage girls who are constantly assaulted by toxic ideologies about their bodies. However, supporters argued that it was a dark comedy and it was supposed to be a parody of what society preaches: A better body is equivalent to a better life. The actual television show aired on Netflix on August 10, 2018.

It seemed that viewers either hated or loved it. Many loved the satire the show conveyed, with its low-hanging comedy and exaggerated characters. They viewed it as a parody that exhibited very dark humor that wasn’t meant for everyone. Others called it “the worst show created by Net-

flix.” Critics condemned the show for showcasing that fat people had a right to hate themselves and life won’t improve unless you lose weight.

I think the TV show had a goal and it achieved that goal. The show was supposed to exhibit the exaggerated and unrealistic views of life. I don’t think the intention was to make it seem that being fat is looked down upon, but rather, people don’t change simply by losing weight. I thought the show was meant to portray the idea that losing weight changes appearances, but not the person. Patty is as delusional as she was before she lost weight.

The show is available on Netflix and is based on a 2014 New York Times article by Jeff Chu.

## A MATTER OF IDENTITY IN FILM

Written by: Lillian Aljada

When you think of a coming of age film, what films usually come to mind? Maybe it is a movie from the 1990’s, like *Stand By Me* or *The Breakfast Club*. Maybe a more recent movie, like *Mean Girls*, comes to mind. But, *Eighth Grade* is not like any coming of age film you’ve seen before.

Unlike most beloved coming of age movies, *Eighth Grade* takes place in current day. The film follows Kayla, a socially awkward 13-year-old, as she goes through her last week of eighth grade. She’s no different than any other kid you would see today, but she seems to find maneuvering social media a lot harder than her peers. Kayla also struggles with self esteem issues and has a “fake it till you make it” attitude, which she reinforces with her YouTube channel that features advice for teens who want to be more confident. As is usually the case for teen girls with low self esteem, Kayla also finds herself struggling when it comes to boys, who she seeks validation from.

*Eighth Grade*’s portrayal of preteens and teenagers growing up in today’s society is the most genuine yet. Bo Burnham, the writer and director, was able to write a script that felt as if it was written by someone who was born in the 2000’s. The movie was also able to successfully capture the culture that comes with social media in a time where most teen movies use it as a punchline. The way Kayla navigates the internet serves as a reminder of the manufactured appearances we put forward and how our own self image can suffer because of it. The film also perfectly encapsulates the pressures of being a teenage girl in the modern age. While Kayla is struggling with her identity and her expected maturity level, many of the boys around her are reckless and don’t realize how their actions affect those around them.

Before *Eighth Grade* came out, I thought that *Lady Bird* was the best representation of a teenage girl in film. Because of its popularity last year, and the fact that the two movies share a similar subject matter,

*Eighth Grade* will inevitably be compared to *Lady Bird*. While I find both stories to be emblematic of my experience, they represent two different time periods. *Lady Bird* tackles the financial instability and political anxiety of the early 2000’s, while *Eighth Grade* takes on a time with a little more support. Both stories are brutally honest in their depictions of young women, but *Eighth Grade* isn’t nostalgic about it, because it doesn’t have to be.

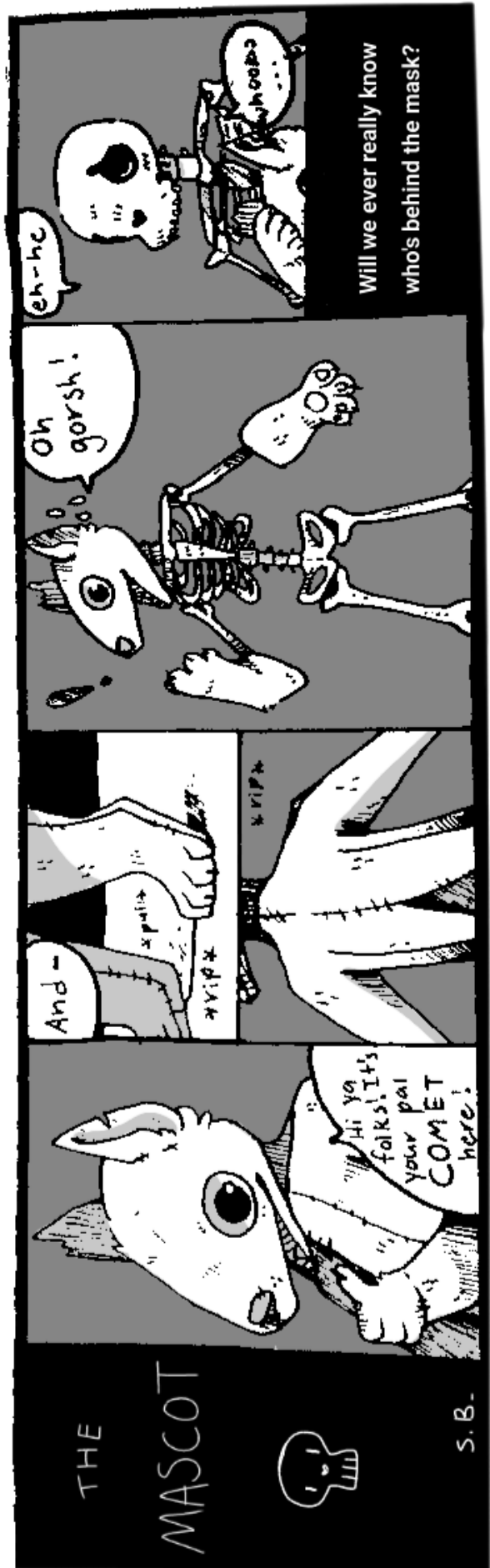
As a teen girl who also went through an identity crisis at the tail end of eighth grade, I can safely say that Bo Burnham’s *Eighth Grade* fully expresses those feelings of uncertainty and inadequacy. *Eighth Grade* is the movie I needed to watch when I was thirteen, but it is also the movie I needed to watch now, at age seventeen. It may be a story revolving around kids currently growing up, but the message that you should be yourself, and that you should be okay with whatever it means to be yourself, is timeless.

# THE SKETCHPAD

IS it to early to celebrate? By: Taylor Murphy



'Enjoy Autumn'  
By: Isabella Weber



THE MASCOT



S.B.

'The Mascot'  
By: Sage Boiko

Will we ever really know who's behind the mask?



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## Words:

- Freshman
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