On Tuesday April 3rd, number 1 Tennessee defeated number 4 Rutgers in the NCAA woman's national championship game. Tennessee and their legendary coach Pat Summit went on to end Rutgers Cinderella story in this year's tournament. Despite the loss, the Rutgers women's basketball team was being praised in the sports world. Sports analysts on television and radio were all raving how this team and their first year coach Vivian Stringer seemed to have a bright future ahead of them. However, on one radio show the subject under discussion turned in the wrong direction.

On April 4th one day after the championship game, radio host Don Imus shared his thoughts on the game during his radio show, “Imus in the Morning.” Imus, however, didn’t talk about the game but instead spoke about the female athletes competing in the game. Imus began making comments on the Rutgers team by saying, “that’s some rough girls from Rutgers.” He then went on, “That’s some nappy headed hoe’s there.” Imus’ shocking comments quickly made his faux-pas the biggest media story in the nation.

Coach Vivian Stringer and the entire Rutgers women’s team quickly held a press conference regarding the matter. Civil rights activists including Al Sharpton and Jessie Jackson wanted Imus punished for what they claimed were racist remarks. They also threatened to protest in front of CBS if no actions toward Imus were made. These requests were met immediately as Imus was fired on April 13th, the same day he was to meet with the Rutgers women’s basketball team.

A new controversy regarding Hip Hop has erupted in the wake of Imus being fired by CBS. Civil rights activists, Sharpton and Jackson, as well as supporters of Don Imus, have claimed that Hip Hop is to blame for the current crop of negative stereo types of women. This accusation of blame has caused many people to take action against rap lyrics. Hip Hop mogul Russell Simmons along with members of the Hip Hop summit now want to ban three words from rap lyrics: hoe, bitch, and nigger. Sharpton is pushing for all rap record labels to adopt new standards and to force their artists to drop these words from their lyrics. By doing so, they argue, negativity toward women as well as racism will end. However, rappers are also taking action. In a recent interview on hiphopdx.com rapper Snoopdogg said, “It’s a completely different scenario. Rappers are not talking about any college basketball girls who have made it to the next level in education and sports. We’re talking about hoe’s that’s in the ‘hood that ain’t doing sh--, that’s trying to get a n—a for his money. These are two separate things.”

Are rap lyrics really the reason for the comments made by Don Imus and his staff? Do lyrics from artists like Jay-Z, Snoopdogg, and Ludacris relate to a man like Don Imus? Was Don Imus thinking of a DMX song when he made those remarks? Probably not. Don Imus is a radio talk show host who talks about real people and real things going on in the world, while rappers, although they claim to be talking about real events, actually don’t.

In an article written by Todd Boyd on ESPN.com, he argues that “Imus is real, featuring real guests and humor based on real topics. However loudly hip-hop might claim to be real, it is not real: it is a form of representation.” Boyd continues by saying, “Though the culture is rooted in the notion and style of authenticity, it is decidedly fictional. If not, the cops could arrest every rapper who talks about selling drugs or killing someone in his or her lyrics.” And that is why Hip Hop should not get a bad rap for Imus’s comments, the lyrics are often not in response to actual events, but fictional representations of events in the artist’s life, similar to the way a motion picture.
How many times has someone asked you where you go to school? How many times have you mumbled the response? And upon answering, how quickly have you said it is just temporary until you enter your four year college in September? Is it fair that students who attend community colleges in the New York City metropolitan area feel beneath those that attend four year schools? Is it fair that as a student who carried a GPA of 3.9 last semester and made the Dean’s list twice, I am still not regarded in the same way as a student who attends Queens College, or Hunter, or Fordham, or New York University, or any other four year school? Why are community colleges and the students who attend them often misconstrued as lesser beings? Is it the fact that in order to enter a community college in the CUNY system your academic standing does not matter as long as you have a GED or high school diploma. One consequence, it seems, of CUNY’s open enrollment policy is that many people believe those who attend these two year schools do so because they were poor students prior to entering college and could not make it into a “better” school. Many people do not realize that the price for attending community colleges as well as all CUNY schools are approximately one-third of the tuition costs at the more “highly regarded” schools. That does not mean, however, that the academic resources are not as good as the four year college courses, that our sports teams are not as talented, or that the students are less intelligent.

Our community college differs from other schools in attendance alone. Many students I have spoken to that have attended and graduated from well known four year schools have told me that their professors never took attendance. One student told me that he never attended classes regularly, and only showed up on test dates. He graduated with a 3.3 GPA. Everyone may complain at Queensborough about the attendance regulations, but wouldn’t we rather be in a school with a faculty that enforces regulations? These regulations help build discipline that allows us to better prepare for the life ahead. We do not only show up on work days on the days we get paid. These are values that students at Queensborough learn, and an edge we have over those that do not. We are unappreciative, perhaps, of the good fortune we have to attend Queensborough, with class size limited, in most instances, to 30. In other schools with lecture halls that seat 150, professors walk right past their students in the halls and do not know it. At QCC, every professor I’ve had knew my name and still waves when we pass each other.

In one of my four classes alone, there are students that intend to go to Harvard in the fall, students with sporting scholarships, students with academic scholarships, and students in the CUNY honors program. I have been in classes with students that have attended Ivy League schools who have said that they prefer Queensborough. The diversity alone allows students to feel more comfortable in their surroundings, providing a welcome to every ethnicity. In a school with a student population as diverse as Queensborough, stereotypes often do not exist to the extent they do in other less diverse schools. Having attended Queensborough Community College, sheltered individuals are less likely to experience culture shock as they venture out into the real world.

The CPE — A Completely Pointless Exam

By Jaclyn Soloman

If I am not mistaken, there are college students who possess excellent academic skills that are not good test takers. They perform well in class, do the assignments and participate in class. In the way the CPE is currently administered, it actually places a limit on the extent to which one can plan for the future. I know I do not perform well when it comes to exams; I never have and never will. In college students are regularly required to write essays, and in most instances they receive critical feedback from their instructors. Professors show you where the mistakes are, and how best to revise. On the CPE, however, you don’t have a professor there to help, and so you run the risk of repeating the same mistakes over and over. College is supposed to be the stepping stone in life to help you reach your dreams, not a never-ending gauntlet of tests after tests.

In the QCC Faculty/Staff Guide to the CUNY Proficiency Exam, it states: “Note, however, that some students may not receive the 45 credit letter until just before the scheduled exam date, giving them little or no time to prepare.” What happens when a student is absent the day the teacher distributes that notice, and misses the exam? Why should the student have to forfeit one of their chances to take the exam? If the CPE is so important an assessment of “certain vital academic skills,” why should we agree to take a test for which preparation is neither required nor enforced?

The Office of Academic Affairs states: “You will no longer be permitted to register as a matriculated student at CUNY if this is the third time that you have taken and failed the CPE, unless you file an appeal to re-take the exam a Fourth time.” If you are graduating and the CPE is the only thing holding you back, you just want to get out of the school already! After the first two times failing the CPE, anyone would be under a lot of stress. Some students may say the exam is a piece of cake, others may say its tough. Whether the CPE is difficult or not, a hard working student who has put all the time and effort into passing all of his or her classes should be able to move on. When I say move on, I mean furthering their education by achieving their Bachelors Degree, or moving on to their actual profession. College is supposed to be a place where you can find the one subject or disciplinary field you can truly excel in. The grade that one receives in one’s course work is the only thing that should matter. Colleges teach students to be open minded, to perform to the best of their ability, and to learn skills needed for the real world, including social skills. Life is one big test. Do college students really need the stress of one more major exam when our whole life is supposed to be beginning?
President Bush: Genocide is happening right now in Darfur. You can end it.
400,000 people dead. 2.5 million driven from their homes. Untold thousands raped, tortured and terrorized.
Ending the horror will take immediate action by a strong United Nations peacekeeping force. The Sudanese regime that's sponsoring this brutal extermination can no longer be allowed to block UN intervention. President Bush must act now to save Darfur.

Stop the Genocide. | www.SaveDarfur.org

When rape is the weapon, the wounds never heal.
A lot of college students have cars. Though car ownership costs significantly more than using public transportation many college students don’t care because of the comfort and the time saved that a car provides. Not to mention the enjoyment taken in cruising around with friends with the windows rolled down and the stereo system up. In New York City, taking the bus to college costs only $76 for unlimited monthly rides. Compare that to the expense of owning and maintaining a car.

For those of us who have a car, or for someone thinking of purchasing one, it makes sense to run the numbers on what your actual expenses will be. An affordable used car that runs well can cost anywhere from $2,500 to $6,000. In addition, you have to insure the car which can run you from $1,000 to $4,000 a year. Fuel will cost approximately $60 to $100 a month, and the cost of maintaining your car including tune-ups, oil changes, breaks and rotors, tire replacement, and cooler, can more run from $500 to $1,500 a year. WOW! You can expect to spend approximately $500 in the first year owning a car, which comes to $435 to $1,058 a month. Compare these numbers to a $76 month metro card. Subway anyone?

Maybe you should think twice before purchasing a car. However, if you still want a car there are several ways to save money on maintenance.

• Buy a cheap running vehicle that can get you from point A to point B: You don’t want a car that’s beaten up or has been hit by a train. You can buy a nice running and good looking car for approximately $5,220 to $12,700 in the first year of ownership. The lighter the car is the more smoothly it will drive. Picking six friends into a 2-door car not only burns more gas, but your engine will fail sooner.

• Go to trustable independent mechanics rather then dealers: They both fix cars, but independent mechanics charge a fraction of the price a dealer would charge.

• Wash your own car: It’s fun, and when you’re done you are satisfied. Did you know that regular car washes use dirty water?

• Change the air filter, wiper blades, tires, and electrical lighting yourself. It’s not as hard as you think. It’s basically like changing a light bulb, or putting a simple puzzle together.

• Get an oil change only when it starts getting dirty: Oil change is required when the oil gets dirty. Your mechanic will say every 2,000 to 3,000 miles. They want your money.

• Get Liability Insurance: Do you need full coverage on your car? Full coverage is worth more than an average college student’s car. You may as well buy a new car each year.

• FOLLOW YOUR OWNERS MANUAL: Your owner’s manual is important because it can help you keep your car up-to-date and running. Car manuals help you understand your car.

Mechanics tell you what your car should have, not what your car needs. They make the problems seem bigger than they are and then take advantage of those individuals with a lack of knowledge about cars. Always shop for different rates and estimations. Spend a little time figuring out who can do the job better. Get to know your car. Know what you need and don’t need. Do you need that navigation/DVD system? Get a map! Why get a body kit for your car when you’ll eventually hit a pot-hole and damage it? Teenagers tend to spend money on things of little to no value. Keeping that extra money in your pocket you can purchase some nice clothes or get something for that special friend.

College students don’t make much money to begin with. We have to worry about tuition costs, books, food, clothing, transportation, and other expenses. Saving a few bucks here and there really makes a difference. Enjoy your car, and drive safe.

Depression: You Can Stop It!!!

By Safiya Whitehead and Jay Lee

What is depression and where does it start? Depression is a type of mental health disorder that often affects people who suffer from stress, and who are exposed to a major life change. Depression is an illness that can affect the way you eat and sleep, change the way you feel about your job or yourself. Often affects people who suffer from stress, and who are exposed to a major life change.

Identifying your symptoms can be useful to taking a first step toward gaining a deeper understanding of how depression could affect you. According to the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health (medicinenet.com), the main symptoms are the following:

• Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood
• Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism
• Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness
• Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities that were once enjoyed, including sex
• Decreased energy, fatigue, being “slowed down”
• Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
• Insomnia, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
• Appetite and/or weight loss or overeating and weight gain
• Thoughts of death or suicide; suicide attempts
• Restlessness, irritability
• Persistent physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders, and chronic pain

If you or anyone you know experiences one or more of these symptoms, the recommendation is that you get professional help. There are many services available for depression, but prior to visiting a professional here are some ways to control stress according to Mental Health America (mentalhealthamerica.net):

• Be realistic. If you feel overwhelmed by some activities (yours and/or your family’s), learn to say NO! Eliminate an activity that is not absolutely necessary.
• Stay in the “superwoman/superman” urge. No one is perfect, so don’t expect perfection from yourself or others.
• Meditate or Exercise. Just ten to thirty minutes of reflection or physical activity may bring relief from chronic stress as well as increase your tolerance to it both mentally and physically.
• Visualize. Use your imagination and picture how you can manage a stressful situation more successfully.
• Take one thing at a time. For people under tension or stress, an ordinary workload can sometimes seem unbearable. The best way to cope with this feeling of being overwhelmed is to take one task at a time.
• Hobbies. Take a break from your worries by doing something you enjoy.
• Healthy life style. Good nutrition makes a difference. Limit intake of caffeinated alcohol and (alcohol actually disturbs regular sleep patterns), get adequate rest, exercise, and balance work and play.

• Share your feelings. A conversation with a friend lets you know that it’s not just the only one having a bad day. Don’t try to cope alone.
• Give in occasionally, Be flexible! If you find you are meeting constant opposition in either your personal or professional life, rethink your position or strategy.
• Go easy with criticism. You may expect too much of yourself and others. Remember, every-one is unique, and has his or her own virtues, shortcomings, and right to develop as an individual.

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The War on Terror brings a new challenge to the American public. People have misconceptions about American-Muslims. According to the latest FBI reports, published on the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) website, in the year 2005, reports of Anti-Islamic hate crimes were released. These reports show that the number of hate crimes has increased significantly. In January of this year, for example, six individuals were released by the Federal authorities, they were detained for several hours. After the Imams were released, they reported on an incident involving six Imams of American-Muslim organizations across the nation began to host open discussions with academic scholars and journalists trying to bridge the divide between American-Muslims. In April of this year, a recent Georgetown University panel discussed the current stereotypes and frustrations that surround Muslims in the United States. At the discussion, concerns were raised over the media’s role in perpetuating some of the stereotypes that exist today. According to the Federal authorities, the media plays a significant role in shaping public perceptions and attitudes towards American-Muslims. The media is not necessarily biased, but out of practicality, the news tends to focus on stories involving conflict. Quinn added, “You cover what is newsworthy. That’s all you ever hear about them, that’s all you ever see on television.”

The stigma American-Muslims face is not confined to individual prejudices; Muslim-Americans now face widespread institutionalized prejudices as well. American-Muslims are now confronted with the challenges of “flying while Muslim” which holds a symbiotic relationship to “driving while Black.” In November 2006, a report on an incident involving six Imams (Muslim clerics) who were removed from a U.S. Airways flight leaving Minneapolis, MN. The situation ignited after three of the six Imams began praying in the Airport terminal for their customary evening prayers. The prayers caught the attention of nervous passengers who then paid close attention to the Imams actions while boarding the flight. Passengers subsequently reported the Imams to the authorities after the Imams allegedly boarded the plane and split up in groups of two according to by-standers. Federal authorities removed the six Imams from the flight and detained them for several hours. After the Imams were released by the Federal authorities, they were refunded service from U.S. Airways and later informed that their flights had been refunded. Russell Knoke, a former spokesperson for the Department of Homeland Security has commented, “This was a difficult spot for the airport police, and for the pilot. This is an unfortunate circumstance, and we recognize that these six individuals were inconvenienced and delayed about three hours.”

Although the case of the six Imams has received world-wide coverage, there have been many other incidents which received little media attention. In January of this year, for example, Northwest Airlines barred forty Muslims from boarding a flight from Germany to Detroit. The forty individuals who were denied from Hajj (The Holy Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca) were forced to pay their own hotel accommodations and find their own return flights to the United States. According to the Detroit News, Andrea Newman, the senior VP for marketing of Northwest Airlines, remarked that the airline will seriously “consider” reimbursements for the hotel accommodations the forty Muslims unwillingly incurred. In response to the many stereotypes that confront American-Muslim organizations across the nation began to host open discussions with academic scholars and journalists trying to bridge the divide between American-Muslims. In April of this year, a recent Georgetown University panel discussed the current stereotypes and frustrations that surround Muslims in the United States. At the discussion, concerns were raised over the media’s role in perpetuating some of the stereotypes that exist today.

Emphasis is placed on secular aspects of Islam, which holds a symbiotic relationship to American-Muslims. Educators examine the role of the media in Western countries. The panel’s discussions, King Abdullah hosted a meeting consisting of scholars and representatives from 45 different countries. In the meeting, King Abdullah of Jordan denounced the London bombings, and any other Muslim associated with violence or terrorism. Unfortunately, the conference received virtually no media coverage inside the United States. Despite the stereotypes, American-Muslims are as diverse and varied as the very country we live in. According to the Department of State, between 17 and 30 percent of American Muslims are converts. However, because of the media’s influence, a small minority of the Muslim population tends to define Muslims on the whole. At the Georgetown University conference, the first female to head the Islamic Society of North America, remarked, “They tend to view us as a stereotype, a collective, rather than as unique individuals…Each Muslim has a different issue, and we want to be able to define ourselves.”

Teenage Muslims in the United States have made great leaps at dispelling the myths associated with their religion. Burdened with an unfortunate weight, the younger generations’ acceptance of Western ideals plays a pivotal role in shattering myths often linked to Muslims. Children’s Express, a nonprofit organization which works alongside children from a variety of cultural backgrounds conducted interviews involving Muslim teenagers who reside in Harlem, New York. After being asked his opinion of terrorism, thirteen year old Haifa Abdul Hakim, who resides in Harlem, stated, “Terrorism,” asked why, she responded, “Because that’s all you ever hear about them, that’s all you ever see on television.”

Don Imus wasn’t fired because of words that he might have heard in a rap record. He was fired because he was a radio host trying to be funny, but just like the rest of his lame jokes it wasn’t funny. It was just a terrible thing to say against a group of young women who played their hearts out a day prior to his comments. You would only know that I am Muslim if you converse with me. Many Muslims don’t worship at the Mosque with are just like me: we act, dress, and enjoy life as anyone else does. Our religious values are aligned with many other religions – such as Christianity, Catholicism, or even Judaism. Just because Muslims are Muslims doesn’t make it true. Don’t people heard the saying – you shouldn’t believe everything you see on TV.”

Breaking Boundaries

By DAVID SATYNA

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Imus

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can be based on a “true story.”

So if three words are banned from rap will it change the way Hip Hop views women? Will it stop people from using these words? It probably won’t, but one thing is certain – rappers will be denied the freedom of artistic expression. If some lyrics may not be suitable for some people, but just like every other genre, these artists speak the way they do to create certain effects. Their choice of content comes from their everyday lives prior to being famous, growing up in a society that used words like hoe and bitch in everyday life.

Banning these words won’t help people forget them, but instead force them to forget. In the United States that is considered violating freedom of speech. If a musician cannot say what they want in their music, then a writer will not be allowed to say what he or she wants to say in a novel, magazine, or even a screenplay. Just as the first amendment allows people to choose what to say, it also allows people the freedom to choose. If Hip Hop lyrics are not suitable for a person or their child, follow the parental advisory sticker on the cover of the album and choose not to listen to it.

Don Imus wasn’t fired because of words that he might have heard in a rap record. He was fired because he was a radio host trying to be funny, but just like the rest of his lame jokes it wasn’t funny. It was just a terrible thing to say against a group of young women who played their hearts out a day prior to his comments.
On April 16, 2007, 23-year-old Seung-Hui Cho opened fire at Virginia Tech campus killing 32 students and then committed suicide, leaving the world with nothing – no answers and no reasons.

On April 20, 1999, two teens, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold entered Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado and killed 12 students and a teacher while turning the guns on themselves. Despite massive speculation, we still know almost nothing of their motives. Many adults found the horrifying incident inexplicable. Many teens, however, show some sympathy for the killers having walked the same lonely hallways themselves.

The reasons couldn’t be put into words, but many understood what these boys felt. Moral panic is what happens when we stop searching for answers and assume we have already found them. Seung-Hui Cho and the two Columbine killers have one motive in common and that is hopelessness. They saw no real future for themselves and no acceptance from those around them. They became self-hating. Then they started to hate those around them. Then they became angry, and then they became violent. Finally, in one insane, twisted moment, they believed they had power over a world that had kept them down. All three were mentally imbalanced and had clear bipolar tendencies, had been treated with medication and were angry with society, with the hand they had been dealt, and with a world where they couldn’t go a day without being spat at, mocked or told they weren’t good enough; They were made to believe that their dreams could never happen, and that the world would never get better.

These students withdrew from everyone else and fed their own delusions. They kept their beliefs to themselves, figuring the rest of the world would never understand them. They developed God complexes. What shred of morality they had were laying out in front of people and they were simply being ignored; the truth is Cho was a troubled and dangerous kid. But what turned these boys’ souls into poison? Their anger and hate fueled for so long, it was an air that they were breathing. They say that the Virginia Tech tragedy is a college Columbine, but there were differences and similarities; innocent kids died that hadn’t yet enjoyed life, they won’t see how the world changes and will not see the sky change from dark to light and light to dark, they will never do the things they loved because of three lost souls. Cho, Harris and Klebold took the easy way out, taking the lives of kids who were loved and then took their own lives, leaving the world with nothing but shattered dreams.

Cho, as reported in the press, considered Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold martyrs. The young men thought they were above the rest and that they could do anything they put their mind to. Cho wanted fame and popularity, sending his tape to the mass media, leaving essays and notes on his plan and a last tape testament he had figured out the ending for his rampage long before anybody knew what was happening.

In the aftermath of such evil, we look for reasons and for guilt, at everything these boys owned, at everything they did, every single detail is to be examined under the biggest microscope. The world has never produced the killers, never will. The inner lives probed for clues. Surely, somebody needs to be responsible for this tragedy, somebody needs to be found guilty and pay for the crimes committed by such misguided souls. Sadly, these young men, these killers, had no inner life. There are no side tracks and no clues connecting anybody, for example, to Cho. His was a singular act and people cannot bear that thought because there is no one left to blame.

The world prays and feels for the families of the victims, and tries to come to a conclusion about how the killing of so many young people can happen. The people who lost their lives at Virginia Tech and at Columbine will never be forgotten, their presence will always be with their loved ones, who will make sure that their lives were not wasted. The community will hold them close to their hearts and keep them in their prayers.

Stop Gun Violence

By Candice Thompson

In the wake of the most deadly shooting to ever take place on a college campus, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg has started a nationwide campaign against illegal guns aptly titled “Against Illegal Guns.” Bloomberg’s initiative began in 2006, and immediately following upon the Virginia Tech shooting the support from mayors all over the U.S. has increased.

The opening summit of Mayors against Illegal Guns included mayors from Washington, Philadelphia, Dallas, Milwaukee, Seattle and twenty-seven cities in New Jersey who have joined with the mayor of New York. The mayors gathered at Bloomberg’s request, consulted with experts and to promote law enforcement cooperation among their cities. The summit had been planned for months, and took place within days following the Virginia Tech shooting that took the lives of thirty-two people. According to a report in Newsday, Mayor Bloomberg said, “It’s a terrible reminder of what can happen when guns wind up in the wrong hands.” The mayors who have signed on to Bloomberg’s effort have signed a resolution to stop gun violence; the mayors hope to eventually start a public relations campaign to pressure the federal government and state legislatures to follow suit.

At the present time, mayors are fighting an amendment to federal laws that continues to keep important information on firearms collected by the federal bureau of alcohol, tobacco, firearms and explosives confidential. Tiahrt Amendment supporters, named after Representative Todd Tiahrt (R-Kansas), say that releasing the data would jeopardize ongoing investigations and that it is already made available for specific criminal probes and prosecutions. The national rifle association would not support this amendment permanent. But Bloomberg and many other mayors across the U.S. would like their police departments to have access to this information so they can shut down the flow of illegal guns into their streets.

In his second term, Bloomberg has made gun control one of his top priorities. The mayors’ resolution promises to give those who commit crimes the harshest punishment allowed and to target gun dealers who break the law. The question is how do you know who to sell a firearm to? In New York, in order to own a shotgun, rifle, or handgun you need a permit to purchase a gun, a registration of firearms, and licensing of owners and a permit to carry a gun. If a person carries the gun is required to keep records of the guns that are sold. One tragic example of how unregistered weapons wreak havoc occurred December 2006, and involved a man from the Bronx who accidentally shot and killed his older brother in their apartment on Ellis Avenue in Parkchester. After a night of partying and drinking, the suspect was apparently trying to shoot outside an apartment window into the sky but accidentally shot his brother instead. The investigation later revealed that neither the suspect nor the victim had a license for the weapon.

The Virginia Tech massacre was a tragedy that could have been prevented if more stringent gun control laws had been in place. Newsday reports Mayor Bloomberg as having said, “Everyday, 30 Americans are murdered” through gun violence. There has to be a way to stop illegal guns from being distributed in the U.S. There are too many situations when the use of a gun has taken someone’s life, whether by accident or on purpose. Gun control continues to be a highly contested moral and political issue.

Depression

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At CUNY students can speak to counselors many of whom have experience and an education- al background in psychology. Each campus has their own counseling service that conducts academic advice and personal counseling. Here at Queensborough, counselors can be found in the Library, L-428. Dr. Stanley Rustin is in charge of the office and can be reached by phone at 718- 631-6370.

Virginia-Tech Massacre: No Easy Answers

By Lukasz Lagucki

The Virginia Tech shooting raised a lot of questions about what could be done to prevent another horrible tragedy like this one. There were warning signs: Cho expressed his violence in his writings, his thoughts and every little thing he did. His English professor even turned in his plays and essays to college administrators on account of what he had written. Sadly, Cho did go to counseling for 2 days but was then signed out and never sought additional help. His roommates described him as a quiet and a lonely person, he never had any visitors and over a whole year none of his family ever visited him; every morning he played the same game over and over again. He was a disturbed kid. There had been a couple of earlier incidents on campus that involved police activity in the dorm. Cho had been stalking a girl on campus and she eventually informed the campus police, shortly afterwards, Cho mentioned the idea of committing suicide to one of his roommates. He was instantly transferred to counseling and was released from therapeutic counseling a couple of days later.

At the end, everyone is saying that the warning signs were laid out in front of people and they were simply being ignored; the truth is Cho was a troubled and dangerous kid. But what turned these boys’ souls into poison? Their anger and hate fueled them for so long, it was an air that they were breathing. They say that the Virginia Tech tragedy is a college Columbine, but there were differences and similarities; innocent kids died that hadn’t yet enjoyed life, they won’t see how the world changes and will not see the sky change from dark to light and light to dark, they will never do the things they loved because of three lost souls. Cho, Harris and Klebold took the easy way out, taking the lives of kids who were loved and then took their own lives, leaving the world with nothing but shattered dreams.

Cho, as reported in the press, considered Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold martyrs. The young
Anaka, the next Metallica?

BY ALEXANDER ORJUELA

In the middle of the night, erupting from the Don Hills bar located on Greenwich and Spring Street in Manhattan, a sound emerges from the mouth of Jimmy Pallis, lead singer and front man of the band Anaka. Jimmy takes the stage screaming “Are you motherf**ker’s ready?” There’s an energy that makes you feel like you’re at a Metallica concert. Originating from Bay Ridge Brooklyn, this five-man group has never had anything handed to them.

The year was 1995, and Peter Pallis had just been bitten with an obsession for guitar. One day while playing, his brother Jimmy walked into his room saying there was someone outside his window asking who was playing guitar. This was the first time Peter met his future band mate Tony Herdia, a local band drummer. Along with the friendship of bassist Karl Anderassen, little did Pallis know that this would be the start of not only a friendship but that of a band. A couple of years later, Tony and Karl quit the band they were involved in and decided to join up with Peter to start a new one, which would later be known as Anaka. With Peter writing the lyrics, all that was needed was someone to put them into song. Pallis was not a vocalist, and he wouldn’t trust just anyone with his lyrics. Consequently Pallis went to his brother Jimmy. Jimmy had a great voice and not only that, Jimmy understood the heart and soul that his brother put in the band, making him the perfect addition. In February 2001, Jimmy Pallis became not only the lead singer but the front man for the band. Jimmy would not be the final new member; in 2006 Kenny Kuehn would become the second guitarist in Anaka.

Anaka is not just another local garage band playing at crapy bars on late Saturday nights. Anaka has played in some of the world’s best rock venues, including CBGB’s, Irving Plaza, and Don Hills. And most recently, Anaka competed in the Bodog’s Battle of the Bands making it all the way to regional finals that took place at the famous Irving Plaza. The band’s unique sound and style feels like a synthesis of Metallica and Alice in Chains. Never compromising their sound for what record labels want, the band has kept its own originality and not sold out to the pop rock scene of MTV. Not to say that the band’s songs are not catchy or marketable. Anaka’s song list contains a large arsenal, including “Rust & Jade.” “Nevermore,” as well as others that are appreciated among the rock/metal community and by some of the more pop based music heads. For a taste of the band’s music, 89.5 SOU radio plays Tuesday night triple shots of Anaka at 11pm. Anaka has even managed to break out of the U.S. thanks to MySpace, successfully developing a fan base in Germany and Italy, and in South America, particularly in Argentina and Brazil, the band has a fan base of 50,000 and growing.

With Anaka’s recent signing to Godsends label as well as receiving endorsements from Halo Guitars and Basson Music Equipment, the band has just begun to receive their long overdue respect from the music world. With its unstoppable supporters and fans it is not hard to imagine that one day Anaka will become a worldwide phenomenon. For now, we can only sit and wait for the new album to be released.

Anaka’s next show will be on June 23rd, 2007 in the Don Hill’s tavern located at the corner of Greenwich and Spring Street. All ages welcome. For more information on Anaka, visit www.Anaka.net, or at their myspace page www.myspace.com/anaka.

Lindsay Lohan and Britney Spears Abusing Rehab?

BY MUREILLE BLANC

A recent article in the Press Release Newswire asserts that celebrities are giving drug and alcohol rehab centers a bad name. “Our research shows that when someone is addicted to drugs and alcohol it is imperative that they remain in treatment for around three to four months, depending on the individual, in order to ensure a lasting recovery,” said Barnett Gilmer, intake counselor of The Narconon Gulf Coast Residential Drug and Alcohol Treatment, Rehabilitation and Education Center in Gulf coast Florida. What benefit do celebrities derive from walking in and out of rehab centers? ABSOLUTELY NOTHING but additional media exposure!

Celebrities are considered role models to some. When celebrities are seen walking in and out of drug and alcohol treatment centers they make it seem as if rehabilitation is an easy and quick process. There are celebrities in rehab who attend with the intention to change their behavior for the better, and there are some who attend for publicity. Two recent examples of celebrities in rehab, though for different purposes, are Lindsay Lohan and Britney Spears. Lindsay Lohan has been going to rehab for about a year and is dedicated and committed to it because she wants to change her life style and live healthier. On the other hand, when one reads about Britney Spears and all that she’s doing, it’s easy to conclude that she’s a prefect example of a celebrity who is abusing the help she receives. Recently, Britney Spears checked herself into a facility in Antigua, an island in the Caribbean, and one day later checked herself out and headed to Florida. Following a party weekend in the Bahamas she checked herself into a Bahamas facility, stayed for two days, and then went on her merry way to Los Angeles. As you can see, Britney Spears is not serious and committed to getting the help she needs. But her brief visits do guarantee her media attention that her waning music career no longer garners. A down side of her cavalier attitude is the possibility that people may believe that rehab is a joke and that it does not work.

There are certain rehabilitation centers that will not accept celebrity clients because they assume that the celebrity may not be serious and fully committed to recovery. Sue Allchurch, the director of Mimosa Recovery, runs the Lynwode Group of Treatment Centres. She does not take in celebrities because she believes “celebrities are giving a bad name to rehab centers.” She has also reported to have said that “Celebrities pop in and out of rehab centers for the publicity it generates, inadvertently discourage people with real problems who are serious about changing their lifestyle. Why let anyone take that opportunity away?”

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Queensborough Communiqué, May 2007
Darfur Revisited  
continued from page 1

Crimes in Darfur. Unfortunately, four years into the war, and although the decision to prosecute war crimes was praised by the Save Darfur Coalition, the legal action comes almost too late for the people of Darfur who have lost all hope in the international community.

Faced with the grim reality that the violence and starvation in Darfur will further worsen before getting any better, the question we are left to ask is, what can we do? This question has been thought on and answered by Queensborough Community College’s Music Society: “Take action.” The Music Society is hosting a fundraising concert for the crisis in Darfur on May 16th in the theater in the Humanities building, at 1:00PM. With NYPIRG, the Future Teachers Society, and Phi Theta Kappa as co-sponsors, the Music Society’s goal, in addition to raising funds for the crisis, is to raise awareness of what is going on in Darfur. Tickets for the event will be on sale at the box office and at the door on the day of the concert.

In this time of calamity, I implore you once again to not forget about Darfur, and to accept the challenge of the late post World War I poet Siegfried Sassoon when he wrote “Look up to the sky and swear by the green of the Spring that you will never forget.”

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Women’s “Fast Pitch” Softball

The Lady Tigers finished the regular season with a record of 12-5 (13-7 overall) to capture First Place in Region XV. QCC will be competing as the #1 seed in the Region XV Tournament on Friday-Saturday, 5/4/07-5/5/07 @ Westchester CC. The winner of the Region XV Tournament advances to the NJCAA College “Fast Pitch” World Series @ Rochester, Minnesota on 5/17-5/20/07.

The following QCC Student-Athletes have received Regional Honors:

1st Team All Region
Iana Johnson (also nominated for All American)
Sabrina Moore

2nd Team All Region
Samantha Pine
Jodi Vitale

Honorable Mention
Amy Ayala
Rachel Babooram
Yadira Bernal
Tasha Brignoni

The QCC Coaching Staff
Vicky Vlachos
Christine Dondero
P. Marchiello
have also been chosen as the Region XV Coaches of the Year.
The Proverbial Skeleton in the Closet of the Sporting World!

By Kendel Ortiz

Gaps in the NCAA’s steroid testing program have allowed performance enhancing drugs to become a rising problem in collegiate baseball. The proverbial skeleton in the closet of the sporting world as they say, the use of steroids and other performance enhancing drugs in sports is a hot topic. On the heels of new evidence of the steroid problem in pro sports, the question now becomes: Is the problem the same in the NCAA? Steroids and sports, today, are two seemingly connected words.

Allegations of steroid and other performance enhancing drugs in Major League Baseball and have threatened to distort the careers of countless premier athletes, as in the case, for example, of Lance Armstrong. At the same time, well documented cases of high-profile athletes using performance enhancing drugs in various professional leagues have overshadowed the issue on the collegiate level in terms of media coverage.

The NCAA with hundreds of athletes at each of its more than 1,000 member institutions has seemingly played safe and drug free during this unstable period of drug use allegation. But just how effective is the NCAA’s drug testing program? At least a few former and current athletes say it’s not good enough.

The NCAA spends $4 million annually on its entire testing program, and historically has between one and two percent of the tests return with positive traces of banned substances. The NCAA began testing in 1986 at championships and football bowl games after steroid use became more common in locker rooms across the country. The NCAA doesn’t regularly test baseball or any sport other than football for steroids during the regular season. The NCAA does test every sport during postseason play. Thus, a baseball team whose school did not test for steroids and did not make the NCAA Tournament could go the entire season without being tested for steroids. The lack of comprehensive testing has given college baseball players an opening to exploit.

The association adopted a nearly year-round testing program (the most recent year available), only half of 70 universities to warn of the hazards of substance use. The NCAA with hundreds of athletes at each of its more than 1,000 member institutions has seemingly played safe and drug free during this unstable period of drug use allegation. But just how effective is the NCAA’s drug testing program? At least a few former and current athletes say it’s not good enough.

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The association adopted a nearly year-round testing program (August-June) in 1990 and expanded the range to include all athletes from nearly every sport in Division I and II. Division III is currently looking into the possibility of implementing a drug testing program.

A former Division I football player, choosing to remain anonymous, testified in front of the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control in 2004, as stated in an article in the school newspaper and website of the University of Michigan, about the “widespread” steroid problem in college sports, particularly Division I football where the man knew of many players taking steroids. The same unidentified man said that his close friend “supplied seven to eight players on the team with steroids.” He also said his experience reflects other big-time Division I programs. He stated the NCAA’s testing procedure was “weak and predictable,” making it easy for athletes to take steroids without punishment.

When athletes are selected, they must urinate in the presence of a crew member to prove that they are supplying their own urine. The sample is then analyzed at the UCLA Olympic Analytical Laboratory, where experts search for more than 90 banned substances listed under various categories including stimulants, anabolic agents, street drugs, peptide hormones and analogues as well as diuretics, which are substances aimed at masking drug use. A trainer who works for a big Division I program in the mid-west region, who has requested anonymity, has spilled a few dirty tricks a lot of schools use to get around steroid testing. “A trainer of a school usually knows ahead of time who is going to get tested and when,” said the trainer. He also stated, “If a well known college player is going to get tested, most trainers will give that athlete advice on how to get around or how to pass the test, illegally.”

Condoms filled with someone else’s urine and even athletes injecting themselves with someone else’s urine, are two ways that an athlete who takes steroids can pass the testing, if not supervised.

One of the major flaws of the NCAA’s past approach was that it did not test in the summer months. For example, an athlete could consume a banned substance in late June or July and attend fall camp in August more-or-less clean of any traces. This June will be the first time the NCAA will extend its program to include the summer months. If selected, the athlete will not be forced to return to campus. Instead, crew members will travel to the athlete’s place of residence during the summer to conduct the testing.

According to NCAA documents from 2001 (the most recent year available), only half of 70 Division I institutions that responded to an NCAA survey test for anabolic steroids. Another NCAA report shows the NCAA didn’t test a single Division I baseball player for steroids during the 2003 regular season. When the use of steroids filters down from the majors into college baseball it is a big problem. Most things from pro sports trickle down to the younger and upcoming players. Anything that happens in the “bigs,” for example, from earrings to goatees, haircuts and tattoos, tend to influence the younger players. With something as serious as steroids, you’d think the NCAA would be more cautious.

Meanwhile, the numbers of college baseball players using performance enhancers has been creeping up. Two former Duke players told the university’s school newspaper they used steroids in the summer of 2002. One of those players said Blue Devils head coach Bill Hillier implied that the players should use steroids. Hillier told the News & Observer the accusations were false and created by disgruntled former players. Many players have told their coaches that steroid use is rampant in college baseball. When athletes play summer ball with players from other schools, they often come back and tell their teammates and coaches stories of athletes at other schools using steroids.

When athletes use steroids it gives them an advantage. The playing field isn’t level because the athlete can hit the ball 10 feet further or run .356 seconds faster than your average and in some cases above average athletes. A college athlete caught using illegal or performance enhancing drugs is suspended from competition for one year. A second offense results in the revocation of a scholarship. Sadly, such penalties have not been enough to discourage the abuse of these drugs in collegiate sports.

The NCAA national office provides educational materials to its member colleges and universities to warn of the hazards of substance abuse. More information about NCAA drug testing can be found at www.ncaa.org/health-safety.
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