Midwood on the Silver Screen

Filmmaking: This is a word that has allowed men of its craft to usher in countless thoughts and ideas to be projected onto the minds of audiences around the world. Synonyms for ‘filmmaking’ are often attributed to locations known for contributing to the industry, ranging from the obvious, Hollywood, to the more ‘exotic,’ Bollywood. However, in the eyes of filmmaker and professor Melissa Friedling, ‘Midwood, Brooklyn’ would also be a suitable term.

Observe Vitagraph Studios, located in Midwood, Brooklyn, as it was for a time one of the frontrunners of today’s Hollywood studios according to Friedling, who discussed its history and providence in the aptly named “Midwood, before Hollywood” presentation.

The presentation was held on Thursday, October 5th in the Woody Tanger Auditorium of the Brooklyn College Library. Friedling, assistant professor of filmmaking and director of undergraduate programs in media studies at the New School University, presented alongside Brooklyn College’s adjunct professor Nellie Perera.

“The first modern film studio was here,” Friedling said, referencing the Vitagraph studio in Midwood, which was able to accomplish what few of its competitors at the time could. Founded in 1897 by Albert E. Smith and J. Stuart Blackton in Midwood, the studio would see a gradation of success in a world relatively new to film. In less than two decades after the advent of Edison’s kinetoscope, Vitagraph Studios was already regularly producing silent films and installing some of the earliest movie theatres in Manhattan.

In time, it would become regarded as “one of the most prolific American film production companies” by film archivist Eileen Bowser. In her presentation to the Brooklyn Lifelong Learning program, Friedling iterated the great strides made by Vitagraph Studios, saying “...things that we think about film started here, things like full length feature films, movie stars, the adaptation of classic literature, etc.”

Despite this, its time in the spotlight would shine the impending end of Vitagraph and the age of silent film could be seen in the film’s casting choice. The protagonist in “Buzzin’ Around,” portrayed by veteran silent film actor Roscoe “Fatty” Arbuckle, had recently been acquitted of a murder case and was in desperate need of work. Arbuckle’s performance was not well received and came off as somewhat out of place.

Silent actors were becoming few and far between, the exception being one Arbuckle’s own pupils, Charlie Chaplin. Chaplin, as many would come to know, would see the demise of his career over political conspiracy later on, which ultimately marked the end of silent film altogether.

The Vitagraph Studios building was eventually demolished. Although no commemorative plaque or monument for the studio exists, the aged Vitagraph Smokestack still subsists, like a beacon to an age long forgotten. Yet from the perspective of Friedling, the impression of the area that the Vitagraph building gives is not one of gloom, but of excitement: “For filmmakers like myself, who’s from Midwood, it’s exciting to know their was a major entertainment atmosphere here, even for a time...especially when you realize a lot of the credit really should go to Midwood.”

Friedling highlighted the struggling transition from silence to sound in films. It also may not have been an ideal location to set up a studio. As it turned out, Vitagraph Studios was situated near a train station in the already noise-polluted city, which posed problems with the voice sensitive microphones of the time. Thus began the studio’s descent into relative obscurity and its eventual demise in the age of sound.

The 1933 short film “Buzzin’ Around” was one of Vitagraph Studios first foray into sound films. It also became one of its last independently produced films before the company was acquired by Warner Brothers and ceased productions.

The Vitagraph Studios construction is underway, and the aged Vitagraph Smokestack still subsists, like a beacon to an age long forgotten. Yet from the perspective of Friedling, the impression of the area that the Vitagraph building gives is not one of gloom, but of excitement: “For filmmakers like myself, who’s from Midwood, it’s exciting to know their was a major entertainment atmosphere here, even for a time...especially when you realize a lot of the credit really should go to Midwood.”

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The 1933 short film “Buzzin’ Around” was one of Vitagraph Studios first foray into sound films. It also became one of its last independently produced films before the company was acquired by Warner Brothers and ceased productions. Friedling highlighted the struggling transition from silence to sound in films, which was reflected in films like “Buzzin’ Around,” in which sounds were loud and dialogue was muffled out.

Another telltale sign of the impending end of Vitagraph and the age of silent film could be seen in the film’s casting choice. The protagonist in “Buzzin’ Around,” portrayed by veteran silent film actor Roscoe “Fatty” Arbuckle, had recently been acquitted of a murder case and was in desperate need of work. Arbuckle’s performance was not well received and came off as somewhat out of place.

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**Whitehead Fence Construction is Underway**

**BY ADAM ZAKI**

Months after a car crashed into the fence adjacent to Whitehead Hall at Brooklyn College, repair efforts are finally underway. "Repairs on the fence near Whitehead began last week," Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration Joseph Giovannelli said in a statement to The Excelsior. "Our contractors started with repairing and reinforcing the foundation and continue to work on installing the new section." Students and faculty members were concerned about the long delay in beginning repair on the fence.

“We expect them to complete work within the next two weeks,” Giovannelli said, providing a timetable for the completion of the construction. "With no comments on the extent of the work that will be done, the students can expect major construction on Campus Road for the majority of October."

"Our contractors are beginning adjustment issues to begin the semester, the construction provides relief for those who were concerned for the students' safety and the beauty of the campus, one of its most enticing qualities."

Construction of the fence that was damaged last spring has finally begun. PHOTO/ Adam Zaki

**Tow Building is Set for Spring 2018**

**BY ADAM ZAKI**

The Leonard & Claire Tow Center for the Performing Arts is on track to open in the Spring 2018 semester, according to college officials. Brooklyn College's newest building is now preparing for providing full function to students and faculty after a highly anticipated wait.

"With the project being held up by insurance adjustment issues to begin the semester, the construction provides relief for those who were concerned for the students' safety and the beauty of the campus, one of its most enticing qualities." The Tow Center is set to open next semester after a long period of construction. PHOTO/ Adam Zaki

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**Events Listing**

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11**

**BC Women's Tennis at Hunter College**

3:30PM

U.S. National Tennis Center in Flushing, NY

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12**

**Civic Minded: A Conversation with Assembly Member Diana Richardson**

12:15PM - 2:15PM

Woody Tanger Auditorium, BC Library

"Diana Richardson, Assembly Member of 43rd district in Brooklyn, will be discussing civic engagement and leadership. This collaborative event is co-sponsored by the Black and Latino Male Initiative (BLMI) and First College Year (FCY). Free and open to the entire BC community."

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12**

**Building Professional Relationships: Mentors and Networking**

12:30PM - 2:00PM

1309 James Hall

"It will address the importance of building professional relationships, networking dos and don'ts, getting an alumni mentor and value of the online networking tool LinkedIn. It is required for students to participate in the Alumni Mentor program. Career Mentoring Luncheon, Company Visit program, Job Shadowing, Networking events and the Magner Center, Alumni & Student Professional Networking LinkedIn group."

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14**

**BC Men's Soccer vs. Hunter College**

12PM

Brooklyn College Field
Eating meals in class is absolutely disgusting. It’s dirty, embarrassing, and most importantly, disrespectful.

We’ve all been in class, with pen in hand and mind on food. With commonalities between students such as lack of sleep, crazy schedules, and poor time management, taking time to get a bite to eat isn’t an option for many. Whether it’s grabbing food on the go, skipping a meal, or bringing snacks to campus, many students have some kind of system to get themselves fed during the busy school day.

The location of where to eat is a key factor for students, with many choosing to eat in classrooms during class time around other students. Although some classrooms and professors have their individual policies, students who have the desire to eat usually test professors, putting the burden on them to have to be the “bad guy” and request that the student put the food away.

Class time ranges from fifty minutes to over four hours at Brooklyn College, and the same standard holds true at many colleges across America. Most longer classes have a break, which allows students and faculty a chance to take care of basic necessities, such as using the bathroom or getting a quick bite to eat.

It’s important to identify the difference between a meal and a snack in this context and what is okay to eat in class. A good rule to live by is that if the food needs to be temperature controlled (meaning heated up or frozen), it probably doesn’t have a place in the classroom.

Class time ranges from fifty minutes to over four hours at Brooklyn College, and the same standard holds true at many colleges across America. Most longer classes have a break, which allows students and faculty a chance to take care of basic necessities, such as using the bathroom or getting a quick bite to eat.

There are plenty of options around campus to get food that is appropriate for a classroom. The dining hall in Boylan Hall has nuts and granola bars; the Library Cafe in Whitehead Hall has much of the same. Starbucks and 7-Eleven are both walking-distance from campus. Although students pack the local fast food joints along with Chipotle and Ovi’s before class time begins, these options would be better suited for those who are on an extended break, so they can enjoy their meals in peace without bothering others because of the sensory reactions their food is causing around them.

If you must eat during class, get a granola bar, protein shake, or some fruit to hold you off. Leave jerk pork and McNuggets outside the classroom for the sake of your classmates. Everyone can smell your halal food, and the rice from your Ovi’s burrito is left on the seat for the next student to wipe off. We’re all adults, and if you can’t hold off a big meal until before or after class, then you can’t possibly have the self control or determination to succeed during or after college.

Stop Eating Meals in Class, We’re All Judging

The opinions expressed in the Opinions Section do not necessarily reflect the views of The Excelsior.
The First 30 Days: Where We Are and Where We Are Headed

A Message From CLAS Student Government

BY NISSIM SAID

As fall approaches, it is time to turn over a few leaves, if you will. It has been a busy term so far. Looking back on what we have accomplished and the many projects we have been working towards, I feel hopeful and motivated! In this letter to you, I wish to share some of that hope.

In our first couple of weeks, CLAS has launched its new mentorship program. In the past, membership to student government was severely limited; it was based on connections. With the launch of this program, we are transitioning into a system based on merit alone—setting new precedents to hold our institution to higher standards. So far we’ve had over 60 students apply, all of whom were accepted. The goal of this initiative is to increase student involvement on campus, absent the CUNY blocks. In August, we spoke to the incoming freshmen at orientation and at the activity fair. CLAS members spoke about our experience as student leaders, advertising our CLAS mentorship program. To continue these efforts, we are in communication with the first-year Director, Ms. Sarah Crosby. Senior CLAS members are going to use the month of October visiting INDS courses. The goal is to recruit as many freshmen as we possibly can. Investing in our future needs to be a constant effort from our CLAS members.

It is no secret that voter turnout has been a challenge. Why? Perhaps students are not interested in the process, or it is too much of a hassle. The process is confusing. In a multilateral approach, we are addressing all of these avenues. For us, that means achieving a CLAS Student Government Election with a voter turnout of over 16%, doubling that of previous years. We are redesigning the election act to create a more competitive election culture, where the best students are elected for their ideas and work ethic. Election campaigning should be extended to one full month, and 1 full week for elections to be open. We’d like to have three as many candidates as there are positions. We need to make sure there is enough time for students to ask questions, be involved and make informed decisions. The Speech and Debate team agreed to moderate the elections during the campaign season, and we’re thankful for them.

Transparency, a campus-wide initiative, is about being personable, available, and honest. Hoping every student knows of student government, and their representatives. We have already planned Meet Your Reps, as well as live stream and CLAS Leader talks. We’re doing our best to reach out to as many students as we can. The Office of communications is allowing us to email all CLAS students on important legislative matters and CLAS updates that pertain to all students. We created a newsletter specifically for student leaders and eboard club members. We listened to the rightfully deserved criticisms and outreach this project has been much improved. More newsletters, more information, more flyers around campus, and better utilization of social media.

A playing part in transparency, is creating guides to facilitate and support student leadership for CLAS. We created a manual for representatives and student leaders to understand the enormous system that is Brooklyn College and CUNY. It’s open for all students to leverage. Additionally, we are crafting a guide for all student leaders & eboard members that would include necessary info about how to start, how to run, and how to transition a club with every document and piece of advice we have to offer. Campus life at BC is a gem in the CUNY system and we need to build on a culture of student leadership. We’re even working on creating a technology crash course to teach to student leaders, faculty, & the administrators on how to be more efficient and automate the most mundane parts of your job.

Unfortunately in years past, CLAS would find it difficult to fill committees where students could work along with faculty and administrators to create a better campus. The student voice was lacking and not always present, but this year we made sure to reach out to students and recruit students representing all positions in those committees and serving the campus body. I can proudly report we have an incredible amount of interests from students this year, filling all but a few committees. It goes to show that the students care about this campus and are willing to do the work.

One of the biggest themes of this year is recruiting clubs and student leaders to CLAS and helping us serve the campus community even better. We need to work together to create a better, more inclusive campus for each of us. Brooklyn College is full of bright minds and leaders in need of an opportunity to make a difference. The collaboration of the events for Black History Month was unparalleled to anything we’ve seen before, and it inspired us to be better.

We understand the criticism Brooklyn College often hears. There’s almost no pride that students show of their college. We are trying to create more opportunities for students to showcase their individuality and embrace our BC Pride culture. We’re creating the first design the next CLAS logo competition, trying to leverage our talented students here at BC and making students feel like a part of CLAS. We’re also organizing the first CLAS Halloween Costume competition, as part of our BC Pride Initiative. We’re also trying to create the first faculty and staff vs student leader charity dodgeball game. Another idea was inspired by Penn State’s Thon; it’s an event that raises millions of dollars every year, and one we’re trying to recreate for BC on a smaller scale to fundraise for important charities. The choice of charity will be decided by a student vote on the BC in the Know 2 FB page. CLAS is working on the first holiday giving program for BC students.

Additionally, we are working on CLAS governance structure and working along with ACA and SGS, to create a undergraduate representation body. Each campus will represent all students, ensuring that every student and minority has a seat at the table and feels that their student government works toward their interests.

Technology improvements across BC is something we are working hard for this year. We’re leveraging our best students to help answer the question, “How can this be done better?” One of the initiatives we are working on is automating and simplifying a lot of the forms, and tasks that student affairs required of clubs and student leaders. The more time we can save student leaders, the better they can serve their constituents. Not only in student affairs, but how can we improve the BC Navigator app? How can we ensure Brooklyn College students are gaining access to all important information without roadblocks and misinformation that weighs down students. There are some issues that are on current priority list. We’ve been working on fixing the state of the Residence Halls. We learned that there is a separate private entity that owns the residence halls, and BC is almost powerless to do anything about the awful conditions. We’re working with Andy Auguste, the Housing Coordinator to ensure our student’s complaints are being addressed. One of the ideas we had is to create a session to inform residence students of their rights, and how they can move forward with their complaints without the fear of being targeted for speaking up.

We need to evaluate the licensor agreement and confirm systems are put in place to help students, and not management.

Along with our Strategic Planning report, we’re working on removing the mandatory homework software students need to purchase in order to do their homework. McGraw Hill’s Open Connect is not the best idea for our Brooklyn College students who are already paying increased tuition rates and working part-time to make ends meet. Additionally we are working on building our Student Discount program for local businesses in the area, so students could have better variety and support local businesses.

On the topic of academics, we are hearing loud and clear the shortcomings of the online BC Bookstore. One of the ideas we’ve had in addition to using Open Source Textbooks, is adding an amazon locker on campus where students can order their textbooks. We’re also working on a syllabi database where students can take a look at the workload of classes before they enroll in them. How are we making college affordable? One of the initiatives we’re working on is printing course packets in house instead of Better Copy. Let’s put money back into student’s pockets and ensure we all have an opportunity for an affordable education.

We are putting every effort we can into the wide issues we are tackling. Our first goal is how can we negotiate a deal with the MTA for student discounted metrocards for all CUNY students. If CUNY is to be the home of affordable education and a model for the rest of the country, how are
The Worst Mass Shooting in History, Again

BY CARMEN SAFFIOTI

Last Sunday, Stephen Paddock, from his 30th floor hotel suite, opened fire on a crowd of 22,000 people, killing 58 and injuring more than 500. The crowd was gathered in Las Vegas for one of the country’s biggest music festivals, the Route 91 Harvest Festival. Paddock, described by his brother, was “just a guy” who had no children, political affiliations, or religious ties. The incident succeeds the Orlando nightclub massacre as the country’s largest mass shooting.

Authorities believe that Paddock acquired his weapons and ammunition over decades and meticulously planned his attack. Police uncovered nearly 50 firearms, a dozen of them equipped with bump stocks, a device used to change a rifle from semi-automatic to automatic. After the tragedy, Democrats began to push for increased gun control, while Republicans responded with silence, claiming to be out of respect for the victims.

After the Orlando shooting, political commentator Don Hodges tweeted, “In retrospect Sandy Hook was bearable, it was over.” This grim stance is one that many millennials have adopted. Mass shootings happen, on average, every two months since 2011 (according to Mother Jones and Harvard School of Public Health). It is almost like clockwork. There seems to never be too much time in between mass shootings. A majority of the country supports gun control, yet as a nation, there are very few restrictions on gun ownership. Stephen Paddock, Omar Mateen, and Adam Lanza all used multiple semi-automatic weapons in their attacks, yet not one piece of legislation has been passed, even limiting the amount of war weapons an individual can purchase. It speaks volumes about the power of the gun lobby in this country. It is so powerful that they can make a nation forget time and time again, limiting their representatives accountable.

The “thoughts and prayers” routine has really grown tiresome to me. What are you praying for if you still support the gun lobby? President Donald Trump followed in the footsteps of many other Republicans; he denounced the act as “pure evil,” planned a visit to Las Vegas, and then promptly avoided talking about common sense gun laws. We are the only country with this problem, and it doesn’t help when those who oppose gun control won’t even bring up the conversation. Many Americans defend the Second Amendment as their constitutional right, but this isn’t consistent when every other amendment has been heavily altered since its inception. In fact, the First Amendment has many more restrictions than the Second Amendment, irrationally out of fear of violence.

Those on the other side of the issue argue that if semi-automatic rifles were banned, then it would create an unregulated black market, but I find this hard to believe. Twelve days after the Port Arthur shooting in Australia, the Australian government placed heavy restrictions on all firearms. The government bought back and destroyed over one million firearms and placed long waiting periods on gun purchases. Homicide in Australia has decreased overall after these laws were implemented. Less than one person per 100,000 people died of a homicide, according to GunPolicy.org. The evidence of strict gun control is clear—less people will die if there are less guns. But it seems that the United States’ politicians will not even discuss gun control on semi-automatic rifles (weapons that were built for the purpose of killing other human beings). It would seem that gun control is the obvious answer. This is the only argument where this happens regularly.

I do believe that common-sense gun control will happen eventually, but I hope it is not because of an even more devastating shooting. Tragedy does not seem to affect our government. The people must root the change. The people must demand change. There are very few restrictions on guns, even though we are in a nation that is bears more restrictions than the Second Amendment. But as a nation, we need to come together and push for laws that will protect veterans and our students through the bureaucracy that is CUNY. Too often our students fall through the cracks and never receive the guidance they need. We barely even touched the subject on events. Just this semester alone we’ve planned Movie Night on the Quad, Diwali at BC, Townhalls, Meet Your Representative Tablings, Bookroberfest, Puppy Therapy, Coffee and Donuts for Finals, World Kindness Day, a Thankfulness & Multicultural Dinner, and that is barely scratching the surface of what CLAS is planning.

The biggest thing is, in order for us to serve the campus and negotiate on our students’ behalf, we need support. We need data to prove that we truly care for this idea, because nobody is complaining. If we come to the table with real numbers and data representing at least a 1,000 students, we know that our demands cannot be ignored. To us, our positions are a privilege. We understand the weight of responsibility that comes with our roles. Our duties go towards the betterment of the campus community and that is the kind of impression we want reflected in our future members. We hope we are clear to students, faculty and administration when we say we are here to represent our students loudly and boldly. We thank you all for entrusting us with this massive responsibility and we hope we can live up to your expectations.
What’s Happening on “American Horror Story: Cult”? 

BY MICHAEL ALFORD III

Ally Mayfair-Richards (Sarah Paulson) is phobia-infected. It’s something she struggled with all her life, as she admits to her therapist. Ally had been getting better, but once she saw the news that Donald Trump won the election, it was like a switch had been forcefully flicked on.

So far in the show, she has been tormented by clowns that appear out of nowhere, who often commit murder. Of course, with her fear—or phobia—of clowns, she is constantly having panic attacks whenever they come around. Besides being petrified of almost everything, Ally ends up almost cheating on her wife, Ivy Mayfair-Richards (Allison Pill), with the babysitter, Winter Anderson (Billie Lourd), and is likewise in a house to fend for herself while all the terror around her is rising.

In last week’s episode, “Holes,” Ally’s neighbor tells her that Ivy is in on it with the clowns. Ally becomes skeptical of Ivy in the last few minutes of the show and seems to internally question what’s really going on.

On the other hand, Ivy is a strong woman. She has made tremendous strides with helping Ally get over her phobias and raising their son, Oz (Cooper Dodson). She is also keeping the family afloat by taking care of their restaurant and home expenses while Ally is going through her more consistent panic attacks.

While she seems ideal, Ivy is not even close to innocent. Viewers soon find out that she has become a part of this cult and is one of the clowns that is committing the murders. She’s been colluding with assumed leader and Trump supporter, Kai Anderson (Evan Peters), in setting up her wife’s cheating scenario and leaving her. Ivy’s conscience, however, has seemed to be getting to her in the recent episode.

Every person has the lines in which they will cross, but it looks like Ivy is realizing that she will have to lose her sense of morality to comply with Kai’s plans.

Kai considers himself “the humiliated man” archetype. He has been recruiting people to be a part of the new order that he’s creating. He invokes fear into people by using his crew to commit crimes across town and record them to put on the news. Every move he makes is calculated and carried out precisely with little room for disobedience from his followers.

Kai has been carefully watching potential followers. It seems like a scary scenario when he admits to one follower that he’d been watching him for a while but it also makes him more convincing. After all, he does see everything that is going on in a person’s life. Kai is a dangerous person because of his power to persuade.

Fortunately, in the last episode, we see Kai’s vulnerability when reporter Beverley Hope (Adina Porter), asks what makes him tick. His message is extremely radical but the fear he is inflicting is very effective.

As a reporter, Beverley is frustrated with being put out on the sidelines when it comes to the hard-hitting news, while her coworker, Serina (Emma Roberts), is doing reviews on spa treatments. Beverley attacks a skateboarder after several incidents of people saying “grab her by the pussy,” while she was on air and ends up in a psychiatric care center for a month.

When she returns, she confronts Serina and news anchor Bob Thompson (Dermot Mulroney) about being able to air the stories she’s doing. Unfortunately, it doesn’t go over well with them. Beverley then kills them both, each at different times, after joining Kai’s cult.

Beverley has gotten more interesting as the show progressed. After the one-on-one conversation she had with Kai, it seems there is more to her than what meets the eye. I firmly believe that if Kai ever falters, she will become the next leader.

As for Kai, I’m anticipating how well he will do in this cult. Although I’m not at all rooting for him, bringing these people together was a feat that he has accomplished. Each person is so different, yet under him, they become one, which is crucial when trying to lead.

These four characters, I believe, are essential to this new season. The storyline follows each one of these characters more intimately than the others we see. All in all, “American Horror Story” has gotten a lot more realistic. Incorporating the 2016 election and building a story around it was pure genius; I hope its ending will be just as genius.

“The Mayor”: A Modern Day Sitcom Worth Watching?

BY ASIA MICHEL

There is a new edition to the ABC family, and I am not sure how I feel about it. “The Mayor” isn’t a show I would race home to watch every Tuesday night, but I can appreciate what it brings to television.

This show offers its viewers an opportunity to have important conversations. The comedic sitcom follows Courtney Rose (Brandon Michael Hall), and his efforts to become the mayor of his hometown, while in pursuit of stardom, he decides to run for mayor to get additional publicity for his music. He is clearly the joke in this mayoral election but ends up winning anyway.

I wonder where this idea came from. The question then becomes: what does being mayor require?

This show is a call to the younger generation, urging them to take initiative and do more. It also seeks to illustrate that you must be willing to take a risk and try to make a difference in a community that needs it.

With respect to all the underlying issues this sitcom tries to address, “The Mayor” has an interesting road ahead. It was nice to see familiar faces like Brown and Lea Michele, who will hopefully bring in a larger audience. However, simply having familiar faces will not cut it. After watching, I found myself thinking about the Netflix series, “Dear White People,” and the similarities these shows seem to have.

They want to educate. They want to bring important conversations to the forefront and illustrate the various ways “we,” as young people, can bring about meaningful change. The difference between the two is that “Dear White People” does not try to show that there are no other characters doing the Milly Rock or boy listing all his favorite rappers who just so happen to be white. “The Mayor” lacks authenticity. If there is going to be a young black man taking charge of his community, why does he have to be pursuing a career in rap? Is Courtney Rose’s pursuit of a music career used to show that there are no other career paths? Were they trying to illustrate that you do not need to come from a specific background to get involved and make change?

As of now, I am not a fan of the show, but this was only the first episode. As the season progresses, we might see more depth and authenticity from their characters. “The Mayor” has potential to be the breath of fresh air we desperately need. I find it interesting how the 2016 presidential campaign has influenced so many sitcoms today. Every show you turn to references Donald Trump, Russia, and the role of women in society.

It’s about time our sitcoms take more responsibility in addressing our political climate and racial issues. “The Mayor” has the possibility of addressing this, but the question is no longer will they, but rather, can they, and can they do it effectively? Only time will tell.

“The Mayor” airs on Tuesdays at 9:30 p.m. on ABC.
Giants' Injuries May Provide Much Needed Change

BY ADAM ZAKI

In their continued dismantle of 2017, the 0-5 New York Giants have continued their freefall from their pre-season status as Super Bowl contenders, past mediocrity and now into shamefulness. With a complete lack of core fundamentals, like blocking and tackling, the offense’s most powerful weapon, the receiving core, has become its weakest component thanks to a series of injuries that took place over the course of 60 minutes against the San Diego Chargers on Sunday.

Right before halftime, wide receiver Brandon Marshall was carted off the field after attempting a one-hand-ed catch on the sideline. Five plays prior, Sterling Shepard went down with an ankle injury himself, and had to be assisted off the field by several Giants. Neither Marshall nor Shepard returned to the game after their departures. Marshall is now out for the season, while Shepard is being evaluated day-to-day.

To continue the trend, Giants kick returner and fourth-string wide receiver Dwayne Harris broke his foot to open the second half. This made a healthy Rodger Lewis, Jr. and an already hobbling Odell Beckham, Jr. the only available wide receivers with later in the second half, with the Giants down by one against a fellow winless team.

Outside the realm of possibility for most, the worst injury for the Giants was yet to come. With less than five minutes remaining in the game, a high pass from quarterback Eli Manning on a routine slant route caused Beckham, Jr. to distort his body, making for an awkward landing and a season-ending ankle injury. The Giants now have to weigh their options on the future of the season.

Presuming the Giants’ receiving core is substantially injured for weeks to come, they only have a few options offensively. Without an offensive line or a running back that can carry a run-dependent offense, the Giants’ offense over the next few will probably look much like it did in the final minutes of Sunday’s game: miserable. Tight ends Evan Engram and Rhett Ellison were out on the hash and motioning across the formation from the slot in the Giants’ receiver-less attempt to come back in their final drive on Sunday. The team is going to be forced to play other position players as pseudo-wide receivers once again, unless they bring in free agents from the street.

The 36-year-old, 14-year veteran receiver Anquan Boldin is a viable option as the Giants will lack a top-tier receiver for weeks to come. A New York Post report indicates that the G-Men are going to bring back Tavaree King, who they cut in September. King showed some signs of life on special teams for the Giants and would also be coming back to the team without having to deal with a learning curve of a new offense, which would be a huge plus in a moment where there is little time to learn a playbook. The same report also tells us of the promotion from practice of Travis Rudolph, a star receiver from Florida State.

In light of the team’s woes, the Giants can focus on a group effort to compete and focus on development. With the attitudes of self-recognition over success departing from the starting lineups with these injuries, a much-needed change of attitude and culture may take place for this club.

Eli Manning and Ben McAdoo may have an opportunity to amend the selfish culture that has developed around them after some of the team’s biggest personalities fell to injury on Sunday. PHOTO: Curt Johnson – Flickr Creative Commons

BC Women’s Tennis on the Rise

BY CHRISTOPHER THOMPSON

Having finished the 2016 season with a 4-13 record, the Brooklyn College women’s tennis team made far too many errors last year. After last Wednesday’s 5-4 victory over the College of Staten Island (CSI), the Bulldogs are competing with an overall record of 5-3 (3-2 in conference). Second-year coach David Wallis credits the success to extra time during the off-season for practice and creating a strong team synergy for the Bulldogs’ success this year. Coach Wallis depends on the mental strength and toughness of his players.

“Know your strengths, don’t waste shots, and know when to be offensive and defensive,” Wallis said as he laid out his keys to success on the court. He also credits the victories to new players, like sophomore Georgeren Belrose and freshman Rosa Aksanov, and to the return of top play-er Ievgenia Kostenko, who missed all of the 2016 season.

Before last Wednesday’s match, Coach Wallis discussed what motivates him as a coach.

“Players,” he said. “And a team that want to continue to grow and get better.”

Getting off to a hot start

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with a 3-1 lead during their doubles match, Kostenko and Aksanov quickly found themselves trailing 4-3 to St. John’s. Aksanov, showing great hustle, made a gritty dig, scooping the ball out of the corner and tying the match at 4-4. After losing the next set, putting the duo down 5-4, Leveniia helped rally her team back with a beautiful touch drop shot along with two powerful slams that tiptoed along the baseline to regain the lead. Never looking back, they won the match 8-5.

“We were overconfident and too relaxed,” Aksanov admitted after the match. “We quickly realized that we can’t be this relaxed, and we needed to secure a win for the team. After that we started to be more aggressive and started attacking all the balls.” Kostenko and Aksanov both enjoyed victories during their singles matchups as well. Belrose also notched a victory when she easily handled her opponent, winning 6-1, 6-3 in straight sets.

With the team match tied overall at 4-4, senior Julia Mekler won her first set (6-3). After dropping the next set (3-6), the pressure was on. Mekler finished the match the way she started, claiming a (6-3) win. This gave the Bulldogs the tiebreaker they needed for the 5-4 victory over the Dolphins. “I believe our team became better and smarter towards the end of the season,” Kostenko, the junior captain, said. “We can see that there’s a great possibility for a victory; our team is more hungry for it. I think all of the girls showed great improvement throughout the season, and I hope that our game will only get better.”

In a road trip on Oct. 6, the Bulldogs traveled to Jamaica to take on York College. Brooklyn pummeled the Cardinals, winning the match 9-0. The victory pushed the Bulldogs’ City University of New York Athletic Conference (CUNYAC) record to 3-2.

The Bulldogs have four more matches on the schedule, with the last coming at home on Oct. 16 against St. Joseph’s College (SJC) of Brooklyn before postseason play begins on Oct. 22. The Bulldogs need to welcome SJC to Flatbush with a thud in order to stir momentum for a playoff push and to complete the season undefeated at home, continuing their program’s much-needed success.

BC Women’s Volleyball Splits CUNYAC Doubleheader

BY SAMIP DELHIWALA

The Brooklyn College women’s volleyball team went into Manhattan to compete in the City University of New York Athletic Conference (CUNYAC) Tri-Match on Monday and walked away with a win and a loss in the crucial doubleheader.

After being shut down in a 0-3 (18-25, 17-25, 15-25) loss to powerhouse Hunter College (17-3, 6-0 in conference), which leads the conference with the best overall and in conference record, the Bulldogs (13-8, 5-1 in conference) bounced back with a significant 3-1 (25-22, 25-17, 20-25, 25-14) win against John Jay College (7-9, 4-2 in conference).

The Bulldogs jumped out to an early 3-0 lead in the first set after Michaela Appel and Pik Ka ‘Tang recorded a kill each. After the Bulldogs added two points of their own, BC went on a massive 8-0 run to take a 12-2 lead in the set. But John Jay recovered well, as Brittany Steane and Brianna Geraldo recorded a kill each to spark the Bloodhounds’ 5-0 run to cut the BC lead to 12-8. Both teams essentially exchanged runs until a kill by Sarina Rozek clinched the Bulldogs’ first set win.

The second set featured a similar start, with another 3-0 Bulldog lead that included a Tang kill. But a few minutes later, thanks to a kill by John Jay’s Mallou Berete and ball handling error by BC’s Kate Meltzis, the Bloodhounds took an early 7-5 lead. The Bulldogs responded ferociously with multiple service aces and three kills by Appel to take a 13-8 lead. Appel and Tang contributed even more to help their Bulldogs take a 20-12 lead, which was too much to overcome for the Bloodhounds.

In the third set, with both teams tied at 9-8, the Bloodhounds began to gain momentum in the match by taking a 12-9 lead on a Brianna Geraldo kill. Tang and Appel helped respond to cut the deficit to one, but costly attack errors and a few service aces put John Jay up 19-13. Later in the set, Rozek pitched in two kills while Jailene Paredes and Lucy Yazikova notched a kill each to cut the Bloodhounds’ lead to 22-20. But another costly attack error by Rozek made it 23-20, and Brittany Steele delivered two kills to win John Jay’s first set of the match.

The fourth and final set featured yet another neck-and-neck start, with both teams tied at 14-14 as John Jay was attempting to tie the match at two sets apiece. And that is exactly when the Bulldogs unleashed an offensive masterpiece in the form of a match-clinching 11-0 run. Rozek gave her team a 15-14 lead with a kill, and then followed with a service ace. Yazikova added her own kill, while Rozek contributed with three more service aces. Appel delivered the final blow to the Bloodhounds with a kill of her own.

Appel led the Bulldogs with 21 kills, while Rozek had a well-rounded offensive performance of 16 kills, seven aces, and 11 digs. Steele led the Bloodhounds with 16 kills and two aces, while contributing 14 digs as well. The Bulldogs’ primary advantage on offense came from the ace disparity, as they recorded 17 aces while John Jay only had five.

The win moves BC up to second place in the CUNYAC standings, while John Jay drops to fourth. The Bulldogs trail only Hunter College in the standings. BC will have the week to rest before traveling to the Rutgers-Camden Tri-Match this Saturday, Oct. 14. The Bulldogs will face off against Rutgers-Camden at 12 p.m. before having a rematch with John Jay College at 2 p.m. in a non-CUNYAC designated match.