

Scepter

The Students' Voice

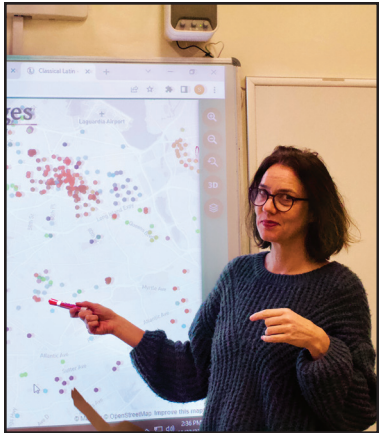
Kingsborough Community College

December 2022

The City University of New York



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Scepter

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Shred Through the Stress

KCC Students Share Their Tips for Work-School Balance

By Maryana Averyanova

Being a working student is extremely difficult. Attend classes, and then rush to work; study at night while worrying about the next rent payment.

Often it ends with either failing classes, a lower salary, or a deterioration in health. However, this does not necessarily mean that it is better not to combine work and study. The thing is to do it right.

According to the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (2016), students worked primarily to pay for living expenses and tuition. Fifty-three percent of CUNY students work for pay. So how do students find a balance between study and work?

Of course, each of us has a different workload provided by our studies and a different major. Therefore, it cannot be said that this balance model will suit everyone. However, one can adopt the following tips and apply them to their own life.

First of all, only keep up with what you have to. It might be impossible to do everything on time, but it is possible to cope first with priority tasks. How often have you made plans for the day to be super productive and came to find that at its end it turned out to be the opposite? Don't take on extra hours at work. If you are running after extra money, you will probably exhaust yourself emotionally and physically. You need those hours to

rest and recover. Prioritize your classes. If you fail a class, you might have to earn more money later to take it again.

"Prioritize your studying, try to concentrate on the implementation of a study program. Also, choose the nearest place of work," said Ibrahim Diallo, 22, Computer Science.

Make a schedule. Between working and studying, you need to take care of yourself. This means you need sleep, breaks, and food. It sounds like a lot because we are used to skipping breakfast and running to classes. However, these are some of the conditions that lead to a productive day. Make a schedule that includes what time you need to go to bed and wake up, and what needs to be done on a particular day according to the degrees of importance and deadlines. At least you will be able to sort everything out and act according to plan.

"It is important to keep a fixed schedule and manage your time, because you need to balance everything: family, homework, job, yourself, and even friends. Get a planner or use a calendar; write a to-do list and set deadlines. Don't go out every weekend, save your money. When you have upcoming finals, ask for a week off at your place of work. Make sure you study in a comfortable environment," said Zeynep Isgorur, 23, Nursing.

Work on your productivity and

discipline. Do you ever notice how your phone gets into your hands and you scroll through a countless number of reels? If we eliminate or limit this time spent on the phone, it will turn out to be at least an extra hour of time. Time is precious, so try to develop more useful habits: listen to or read a book, take a bath, do a couple of simple exercises, or maybe stay in silence and relax.

"I think you need to be very disciplined to have that balance accomplished," said Art Qormemeti, 20, Computer Science.

Self-care. It is essential to be able to keep up with everything you would like to. Be honest with yourself. If you feel bad or if you are sick, then take a day off. You should not engage in self-sacrifice. After all, feeling unwell suggests that the body needs rest, attention, and care. If necessary, go to the doctor and recover. Also, fast food and lack of sleep do not lead to anything good. Listen to your body and your feelings.

"Go to the gym or do some activity to help cope with stress. Also, your friends are coffee, coffee, and coffee," said Zeynep Isgorur, 23, Nursing.

"No matter how difficult it is to combine study and work, there is always a goal and a dream behind it. Understanding that I will be at my dream job after graduation helps me overcome difficulties," said Mustafa Ali Özdemir, 20, Chemistry major.

Faith Perseveres Through Pandemic

Interview with Father Mike of the Newman Catholic Club

By Kristine McNulty

Spiritual beliefs are taboo to discuss in everyday conversations. In recent years, the possibility of starting a fight or saying something offensive seems to happen more often than not, whether intentionally or otherwise. Due to the separation of church and state, many public schools only mention religion as it pertains to common core lessons. Kingsborough approaches the situation differently. There happens to be quite a few clubs for different religions at the school, among them

the Newman Catholic Club run by Father Michael Tedone who takes great pride in his club and talks about it with excitement and a very jovial nature.

Father Mike, as he calls himself, is a part time campus minister who also runs a church. He shares some of his responsibilities: "A lot of it is to work with students, faculty, staff, and to be available for different spiritual events, trying to be present for a lot of different functions as much as I can."

The Newman Catholic Club works on spiritual events for students, like baptisms, communions, confirmations, and prayer services for the college, and Father Mike helps members with their sacraments. "We had a student who was baptized last year. She did it on her own, she wanted to become Catholic. We do first communion or confirmation with students." Many other Catholic holidays, or requirements can be done here as well.

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Campus News

Cutting Through Cultural Boundaries

KCC Student Union & Intercultural Center Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony

By Michele Schultz

On Tuesday, October 18, 2022, former KCC President Farley Herzek, senior administrators, faculty, staff, and a few culinary students assembled inside the campus entrance, for the college's Student Union and Intercultural Center ribbon-cutting ceremony. "A journalist once said: 'We move through places every day that would have never been if it had not been for those who came before us.' Our workplaces are where we spend so much time—we often begin with our arrival. Before me, there were far more Kingsborough presidents, and our Student Union and Intercultural Center would not be possible without them," said President Schrader. "So, I want to thank you Farley, for planting the wonderful seed that is the Student Union and Intercultural Center. I am honored that I'm standing here today, to see what you started come to a close."

Student Life Director Helen-Margaret Nasser opened the floor about how, "the Student Union and Intercultural Center has benefitted

from grant funding to support programming such as the KCC Sense Series, sponsored by TD Bank, that connected students to receive wholistic financial literacy support, funding from Humanities New York in support of our Holocaust Center programming, and the President's Innovation Award to advance student political and civic engagement. I'm proud that the Student Union and Intercultural Center has stayed true to its mission: to foster intercultural understanding of students, faculty collaboration, leadership, civic engagement, and a deep sense of belonging that complements academic programs and the educational experience of the community." Nasser continues, "Now it is my pleasure to introduce former President Farley Herzek, who initially championed the project."

Former President Herzek expressed how it was an honor to return to campus when walking past the entrance's Hall of Flags. "We thought how great it'd be, not only to have flags that represented our students, but having students



Left to Right: Former KBCC President Farley Herzek, KBCC President Claudia V. Schrader, NYS Senator Roxanne Persaud, and CUNY Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Denise B. Maybank

in the same area with those flags," he mentioned. "And thus, the center went from an idea to what it is today. I thank many people for making this all happen. I have to thank Kingsborough's Building and Grounds Department, as it is on their backs and with their labor that this place looks the way it looks this morning, President Schrader for

championing this wonderful place, The Kingsborough Foundation for providing the funds, and everyone who made this happen in August."

President Herzek mentioned an African proverb: "If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, you go together." He concluded, "Together we got to this point this morning."

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The COVID-19 pandemic led to the shutdown, disbanding or causing the overall abandoning of many social circles, establishments, school functions, and of course, first and foremost, clubs. There were many that didn't see these through the pressures of the pandemic, whether by choice, force from dwindling attendants, or the inability to do activities without meeting in person.

The Newman Catholic Club was a more physically active club before the COVID-19 pandemic, as can be expected, however it would appear that this club was one of the few that was in fact quite active during the pandemic. "We met all the way through the pandemic, on Monday nights on Zoom," He explains how it

was good for the students to be able to meet up with one another and keep the club's continuity through the pandemic because they were all isolated so much. He says the club itself is a good connection for the students to have. He also started doing the Zoom retreats with other colleges during COVID and says he will continue it this year. Each Monday Zoom meeting only lasts for about a half hour to 40 minutes.

Now that COVID has subsided and everything has mostly opened back up, social settings being more accessible again, Father Mike explains that they are still trying to figure out how things are going to work now that we are all, for the most part, back on campus full time.

He says it will probably be a hybrid model. "We're still probably going to meet mostly on Monday nights on Zoom but we're also going to try and do some service projects live in person, we're still working it out."

Some of the service projects that had been done previously included activities like working at soup kitchens. "We try to have people give back to one another." They are able to once again have many of their social events resume now that the pandemic has calmed down. Opposed to it all happening over Zoom, they have already taken action to get back in that motion, "We had dinner at Applebee's in June and were thinking of doing a Halloween party at my church.

We're slowly getting back into things."

As mentioned, one of the social events they participate in is a Zoom retreat with other colleges during Catholic holidays and parties which takes place at Father Mike's church, "We do it on Zoom and have students from maybe five different campuses and we all meet on Zoom for Advent and for Lent."

Father Mike also makes it a point to be very aware and helpful of his club members' mental state, "We do speak, you know we talk about stress and dealing with COVID."

All of these events Father Mike refers to as the four S's, "We do the four S's: social, services, spiritual, and speakers."

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Making Art More Easily Accessible

KAM's *Reflections* Brings Beauty Right to You

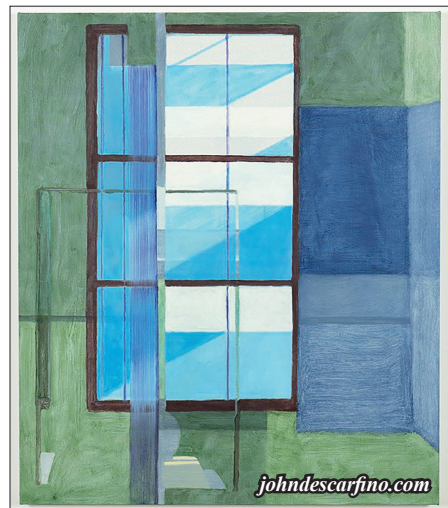
By Joseph Bucci

Aristotle once proposed that “The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance.” Our own Kingsborough Art Museum (KAM) proliferates that philosophy and delivers prime examples of thought provoking, contemporary art right to the heart of our community.

To start off each school year, KAM hosts its newest iteration of the faculty show *Reflections*. Named affectionately in contrast to the student show *Directions*, *Reflections* provides students with an opportunity to get familiar with their future professors' works. Additionally, the exhibition presents the larger Brooklyn community a space to engage with the talented and diligent artists who live right next door. The show floor itself is a single room but contains a rich variety of mediums: concrete sculpture, pottery, oil paintings, and more.

Professor John Descarfino's *Viewing* exemplifies the inquisitive nature of art that KAM can provide. Descarfino's recent works are largely evocative of windows, which he describes as an exploration of “perception.” Both the window and window frame are included in his paintings, as the framing for how we see is just as important as what we see. Descarfino's work borders on the abstract and the representative, “both metaphysical and literal,” with which

he hopes to engage the viewer's curiosity. There is also an element of his life as an “urban dweller” in his choice of subject; Descarfino testifies, “When I look out my window, I don't see trees. I see the façade of the building next to mine.” *Viewing* specifically, is unique in its use of overlapping screens. Just as there is no one lens through which we view an object or event, this piece invites us to further explore the interactions between different framings and the expansive number of perceptions those interactions could produce.



John Descarfino's *Viewing*

Professor Andy Cross answers the title *Reflections*, with a trio of pieces: *Caitlin_Trickle*, *@blueberry_broderic*, and *Curtsy_Alli*. Each piece was featured in the Hinoas Gallery earlier this year and displays a portrait on the front of the canvas,

with an “intuitive pairing” on the back. The use of both sides of the canvas is already gripping enough, but perhaps even more fascinating is that the back side of each piece had been painted several years to over a decade later than the front portrait. Cross' revisiting of his older works creates a patent juxtaposition in both space and time between the faces of the canvas, demanding we reflect on the relationship between the two, or even the artist and himself at different points in time. The Hinoas Gallery points out that “many of art history's greatest narratives and archetypal imagery are present, implicit in the details and spanning centuries of styles and movements,” but even without extensive knowledge on the subject, Cross' work stands out as expressive and political.



Andy Cross' *Caitlin_Trickle*, *@blueberry_broderic*, and *Curtsy_Alli*

The mission of KAM extends beyond bringing us art from our talented faculty. The renaming of the museum under Director Dr. Brian Hack, from The Art Gallery, can elucidate what the museum aims to accomplish. As Dr. Hack explains, “there was the perception that [KAM] was just here for the art department and the works were all from the students, but that is not the case. Most of the shows are from outside artists.” In renaming the gallery Kingsborough Art Museum, Dr. Hack hoped to increase its “visibility as a cultural hub”: a role KAM aptly embodies with the exhibitions we will see throughout the remainder of the school year.

Since its inception in 1976, KAM has hosted a myriad of exhibitions highlighting various artists, often from local communities. From New Jersey-born Bisa Butler's portraits celebrating Black life in *Return to Me* to Tommy Mintz's collection of stickers taken from NYC streets in *MoSA: The Museum of Sticker Art*, KAM consistently brings both outwardly beautiful and “inwardly significant” artwork to our doorstep. KAM will continue this tradition with its next exhibition *Contemporary Linocuts*. This show will run from November 16, 2022, to January 18, 2023. Operating hours are Monday-Thursday, 10 A.M. - 3 P.M., and KAM is located in the Arts & Sciences (S) building. Entry is free.

Kingsborough Students Share Their Superstitions

A Matter of Respecting Beliefs and Staying Safe

By Sumaya Jashim

The concept of a superstition is simple. An action influenced by a fallacy in logic. It's avoiding cracks to not break your mother's back, plates breaking with the arrival of guests, and songs about rain leaving that are considered to be black magic. Even saying bless you after someone sneezes can be considered superstitious, preventing the soul from leaving the body. However, according to a study by researchers at the University of Bristol, sneezes can travel at 100 mi/hr.

Considering human beings are incapable of moving that fast, it's safe to say sneezing has deadly potential, so not necessarily a superstition, according to science. The lines of superstitions and reality can be blurred, not only by scientific discoveries,

but also, by religious beliefs. Some religions believe in omens, which are central to their perception of the world. Buddhism and Hinduism, for example, have auspicious dates for weddings and pujas.

At a local academic institution, there are students whose beliefs have more to do with staying safe than being so-called “delusional.” Like telling one to break a leg rather than wishing them good luck. Theater Arts major, Sylvia- Ann Hamburger, is a firm believer of avoiding the word *Macbeth* onstage. “He haunts the stage, mentioning it causes bad luck. Ghost lights are lamps used to respect *Macbeth*'s space,” says Sylvia.

A similar superstition is found in hospitals, which ironically are places for busy intellectuals. The word “quiet” will get you the dirtiest look

in the world from hospital staff who are believed to almost always lead to an unpredictably hectic schedule. This holds true for all hospitals, including world-renowned Brooklyn Methodist. It's enthralling how similar two drastically different spaces are: one for entertainment, another for medical treatment. It is, however, only human nature, that even logical professionals in medicine are also prone to having superstitions, which further refutes it as a delusion of sorts.

“If I say something bad is going to happen, like I haven't gotten sick in 5 years, knock on wood,” says Bernie Avecedo. This is a common way to ward off evil eye, which sophomore Dmitra Gkloula elaborates on by saying, “Never say good things are going to happen or else you will jinx it.” She further exemplified that she

stayed away from predicting test scores and in Albania, it is wise to remain pessimistic about a wedding to ensure it goes well. Journalism major Kaila Maceira says she sprinkles cinnamon on her lawn on the first of every month to ward off evil spirits.

Overall, superstitions can be viewed as silly behaviors that people do to avoid bad things happening to them, and some might say such measures have no grounding in logic. However, as the above superstitions exemplify, there is a wide range of beliefs contributing to superstitions, and lines blur between what is a clear superstition and a behavior that has realistic results and intellectual merit. Next time spooky season rolls around, try to take note of ways you might be superstitious without realizing it.

Sharing a Love of Literature

The Professional Journey of Sara Rutkowski: KCC English Professor and Writer

By Maryana Averyanova

Sara Rutkowski is an associate professor of English at CUNY's Kingsborough Community College. She shares her life, career, sincere feelings, and thoughts about the attitudes of teachers and students towards education.

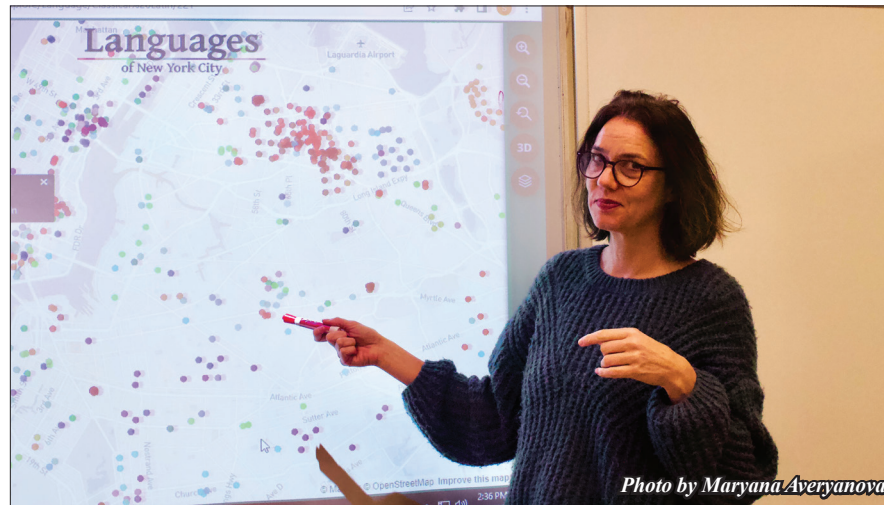
When you first meet her, you realize she is friendly. There's always a smile on her face. She is a statuesque, slender, and elegant lady. During classes, she very rarely sits; on the contrary, she walks around the classroom and actively conducts discussions between students. She is driven by passion for the lesson, but her movements are calm and even swanlike. She maintains a joyful atmosphere in her classroom. Watching her class from the side, the students approach her, share their different life situations, and she gladly devotes time to everyone.

Rutkowski is from Canada. Her parents are Americans who immigrated to Canada. Her father was a librarian at a university, and her mother taught English as a second language. They both loved and read a lot of literature. So, it is not difficult to guess where Rutkowski's inspiration and love for reading and writing come from. She smiles remembering her past.

Her student life was spent thinking about what she is drawn to. For some time, she wanted to study the history of art. She was also interested in women's studies, as well as sociology, which in fact was her major. She remembers herself being conflicted: interested in so many things but unsure of what to do. However, one thing was clear, she wanted to move forward.

"You just figure out as you go," she says.

Interested in writing, she arrived in New York for her internship at a magazine. Then, she went into city government and worked as a speech writer. While she was working, she started doing her master's degree. It was then that she realized she really loved school and not her job. Later, she worked for the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs as a Director of Communications. She did a good job but didn't really see a future there. She decided to quit her job and pursue a PhD in English. It was an important decision. She enrolled in graduate school, at CUNY, and began her studies. She started as a lecturer, and once she finished, she



Professor Sara Rutkowski Sharing the NYC Language Map

became a professor.

Rutkowski remembers her studies with gratitude. Today, she teaches her favorite subject. She communicates with students from different parts of the world and at the same time travels herself. She believes that travel is an important part of life. Only by traveling, a person is able to plunge into different cultures and languages, meet people with different worldviews, and most importantly, find beauty in each of these aspects.

"I am happiest when I am traveling!" she says.

She travels to Canada twice a year, but she usually goes to Europe because she teaches at Franklin University, an American University in Switzerland, over the summer. At Franklin, she teaches writing, some literature and a course on language and culture. Also, she loves Italy, so she learns and speaks Italian.

Rutkowski talks about her teaching experience honestly and confidently. She shares important traits that a professor should have. She believes that beyond the knowledge of the subject, a teacher should be enthusiastic, so that students will feel excited about the course material. She knows and believes that a teacher should be flexible, so that if something doesn't work, they are ready to change: ready to be flexible with the abilities of their students, and about what is happening in their lives. She explains how you must understand that all students are not the same, that students have a lot of challenges (financial, personal, etc.)

"You can't put 'one size fits all' on students. You have to be open minded to their ideas, variances, and the material you are teaching," she says, pondering. "These are certainly the qualities that I strive

for and which, I think, have served me well."

When asked whether a student's academic performance is dependent on himself or the teacher, Rutkowski answers that it depends on both. The teacher's job is to involve students, work individually with students, try to provide them with the necessary support, share very clear instructions and organization to make sure students know what they should do and that they are there to support them. Of course, that's not all. The student must also be very purposeful and keep going forward. Even if you fail, it is important to try not to give up. Many students give up halfway, but many go on to the end.

There is always a book with interesting content on her desk. Besides teaching and reading, she also likes to do research and writing. Rutkowski recently edited a collection of essays, which came out in November of 2022. It is called *Rewriting America: New Essays on the Federal Writers' Project*. She talks about the book with enthusiasm.

"One of the goals of this book is to introduce students to this incredible moment in American history, during which the federal government sent thousands of unemployed people to document the country, and more specifically to collect the stories of people across the country. It was in 1930 during the Great Depression. It had a huge impact on American culture," she explains.

People interviewed other people, wrote stories, and described the country. In addition, part of the goal was to create a sense of national identity, to define the country. Rutkowski assures, "it is very powerful to introduce people to this."

Kingsborough's Perceived Lack of Social Spaces

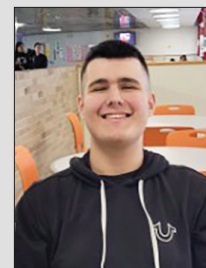
By Kristine McNulty and Sumaya Jashim

Kingsborough is neither a large nor prestigious school, compared to most, being a two-year community college, so there's always something that can be fixed or improved. Surprisingly most people don't have much to say about the school in terms of classes, professors nor the school itself as a whole, but would prefer a more sociable environment.



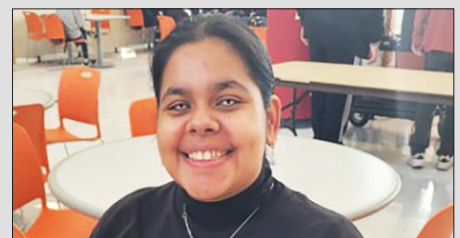
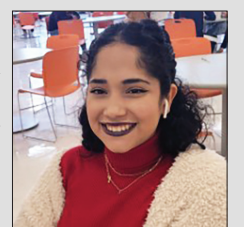
"Some of the events, I don't really know how to explain it, they're kind of lackluster" **Jenaya Cole**, 20, Computer Information major.

"No social activities; everyone comes and leaves" **Benjamin Luciano**, 20, Computer Science major.



"They could really add like a football team. They have a huge football field, but I just say that cause I like football" **Tim Kukaj**, 18, Computer Science major.

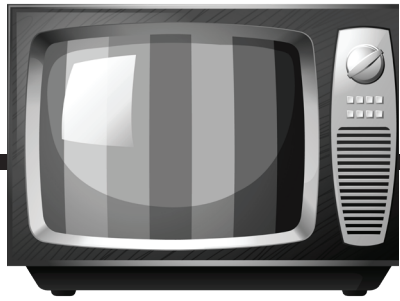
"Everyone just does their own thing and leaves. It would be cool if there was a place to hang out" **Leandra Surriel**, 18, Fine Arts major.



"There should be more big events to interact with others. There should be more events outside like during the summer. Everyone just kind of sits alone, myself included" **Jovanna Sampayo**, 20, Fine Arts major

In response, Director of Student Life Helen-Magaret Nasser points out that, "The Office of Student Life has hosted approximately 50 events this semester! Students can follow us on Instagram @kccstudentlife and visit our webpage to find out about events." Perhaps students could take better advantage of clubs and events hosted on campus.

Photos by Kristine McNulty



Entertainment

Makeup Through the Ages

How the Form and Function of Make-Up Has Shifted With Society

By Sumaya Jashim

Makeup, whose earliest use dates to 4,000 B.C.E., is no longer a mark of aristocracy or promiscuity, but a tool for creative expression. Makeup is the art of painting one's face. It can enhance or completely change one's appearance for various purposes.

Ancient aestheticians created makeup for the aristocrats. The earliest makeup found, excavated by archaeologist Yimin Yang and his team in 2017-18, was men's makeup. Researchers published in the journal *Archaeometry* that Chinese men of wealth used moon milk to whiten and smooth their complexions. Previously, it was believed that only women were prone to such practices. The Egyptian upper class employed servants to line their eyes with kohl and bright pigments, hence the infamous Cleopatra eye.

As noted by the Library of

Congress, this practice of using makeup faded with the fall of the Roman Empire: the last society influenced by ancient Egypt. Christianity's spread denounced makeup for all but aristocrats, desperate to remain beautiful, and entertainers.

Bromine and iodine dyes painted the lips, which unsurprisingly led to a surge of new diseases, as noted in *Reading Our Lips: The History of Lipstick Regulation in Western Seats of Power* (2006 Third Year Paper). Regardless, women of power popularized wearing makeup, using lead to whiten their faces and rouge their lips and cheeks. It quickly gained mainstream traction, especially with political issues at hand rapidly evolving conservative views on makeup.

Proudly touted on their websites, Rimmel takes credit for creating mascara while perfuming Queen

Victoria. Maybelline further refined the craft after the founder's sister Maybel Williams created one to conceal a minor burn incident. Elizabeth Arden starred in the suffragette campaign where lipstick was a power tool. Covergirl was the first drugstore brand, and the first to advertise using models, leading the way for modern makeup marketing.

Since 1961, makeup is no longer restricted to strict beauty standards. Makeup has evolved to incorporate products meant for women, men, the elderly, and all ethnicities. Makeup is also inclusive of all budgets with products ranging from \$3 (e.l.f. 's Bite Size Eyeshadows) to \$129 (Natasha Denona's Bibi Eyeshadow Palette).

The relevant topic and demand for inclusivity has inspired companies to consider and respond to it more deeply; originating with foundation. Until Fenty Beauty by Rihanna

launched in 2016, foundation shades were exclusively light. As darker women continuously state on social media, it is difficult to find face products darker than sand. Tarte and Beautyblender came under fire for their foundation range of more than thirty shades of white, peach, and sand. Since then, such brands have experienced backlash for seeming colorist, with ratings for their products dropping over the years. However, other brands like Lancôme, Estée Lauder, and Maybelline introduced a diverse shade range to accommodate more skin tones.

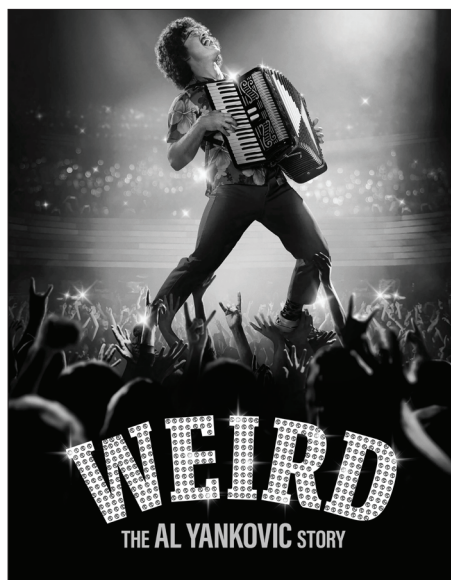
Although it's not ideal, makeup has become more accessible in the past decade for millions. Every day, people wake up, don their outfits, and often make up their faces. As the late Coco Chanel famously said, "If you're sad, add more lipstick and attack."

Does Weird Al Work on Screen?

Renowned Parody Musician Takes His Art to a New Medium

By Joseph Bucci

Effective parody is marked by a strong adherence to an original work's form while criticizing that original's function, but what happens when parody drifts from both form and function? *Weird: The Al Yankovic Story* demonstrates both successes and failures in its use of parody as a mode of expression.



Al Takes His Oddity to Film

The biopic parody film covers the "true story" of Weird Al, outlining his struggles in early life, meteoric rise to fame, and subsequent intoxication with his success. Daniel Radcliffe, portraying the adult Weird Al, delivers an excellent performance that genuinely enthralls the viewer in the ups and downs of Al's life. Radcliffe's performance is highlighted by a myriad of celebrity cameos, providing ample reactions to Al's unique brand of art. However, the film overall lacks poignancy and can stray towards juvenile, out of character, humor at random.

Right from the start of the film, Weird nails the idiosyncrasies of the genre. Al's early life is largely defined by his transgressive use of the accordion and rewriting of song lyrics, against his father's beliefs. Al's mom, in efforts to accommodate the wants of his father, informs young Yankovic that they "think it would just be best if you stop being who you are and doing the things you love," as he continues

to practice the accordion in secret. This tension between Al's passions and his father's attempts at molding his son into a prime candidate for work at "the factory" masterfully parodies how parents can be portrayed as evil in overly dramatic films.

From humble beginnings, Yankovic's rise to prominence contains most of the best, gut-busting, scenes in the film. In recent decades, the internet has given birth to an uncountable number of parody songs, rendering Weird Al's lyrics not very novel in a modern context. Weird does not make the mistake of playing into whatever humor lies in those lyrics, but instead focuses on how positively the world reacts to the young musician. The passion and sincerity that listeners, nation-wide, respond to Al meets the silly nature of his parody lyrics to create hilariously absurd moments. This deadpan humor, with no straight man or audience perspective character, resounds through most of the film as an effective use of the parody medium.

Unfortunately, the latter third of the movie veers from the success it had in earlier parts of the film. As Yankovic's success grows, the conflicts he encounters range from just too normal, barely meeting the parody standard, to way too out of place. While alcoholism is a very real issue, *Weird* seems to include it just to create conflict, almost inadvertently recreating the tropes of the genre that the film is supposed to be parodying. Most of the payoffs for early setups were just eye-roll-inducing at best and plain boring at worst. Weird Al's conflict with a "Colombian death squad" feels too out of the scope of the biopic format, and the reveal of Al's father's history with accordions is too expected to yield its intended effect.

While *Weird: The Al Yankovic Story* fails to set a new standard for parody, it contains a plethora of laughs suitable for all ages. It is worth a watch if you enjoy the genre, but in-universe Salvador Dalí's hypothesis, "Weird Al will change everything we know about art," is unlikely to ring true.

The Next Big Antihero

Explore the Complexity of DCEU's Most Recent Addition, Black Adam

By Maryana Averyanova

DC Comics has once again given the world the opportunity to plunge into its fictional superverse of fighting evil and sometimes good. *Black Adam* follows the Joker and Harley Quinn spinoffs in that it is a film focused on an antihero.

Black Adam is one of the canonical DC Comics characters. In the comics, he had more gray tones, and was never completely a hero or a villain. He presented more as an antihero due to his worldview. More often in the comics, he fought with Shazam, but this parallel was not presented in this movie. Black Adam was revealed to us through the events of the present.

Black Adam was supposed to appear in the movie *Shazam* (2019) as the main antihero. However, Dwayne the Rock Johnson insisted on a solo movie for his character, so later viewers would feel and see the difference between these two characters. Well, the Rock was right.

It is also important to note that the comic, *Black Adam: The Justice Society Files* (2022), was specially published for this movie's debut. You will see the Rock as Black Adam on the comic's cover. In general, this was done for pre-story about the characters of the movie. This comic book series does not give any spoilers, but on the contrary tells us about details that we will not see in the movie.

It all starts in ancient times, about

5,000 years prior to the present. Teth Adam was enslaved by the ruling king, who was trying to find a rare mineral: ethereum. According to the legend, if you forge a crown from this mineral, you can summon great forces of evil and rule the world. That's what the local king was doing. But at some point, everything changed and Teth Adam got magical power from another ancient magic (the same magic that gave power to Shazam but from Egyptian Gods) and shifted the balance of power. Therein he overthrew the local tyrant. at least, that's what was thought. But later, at the beginning of the third act of the movie, the story acquires new colors, whereby the viewer begins to see the picture differently. It creates a kind of 'wow effect,' which you definitely don't expect to see in the film.

Black Adam can definitely be called a complex and rather ambiguous character, which is competently revealed on the screen. In my opinion, producers succeeded. From his first appearance on the screen, Black Adam appears, if not in the image of an antihero, then in the image of an extremely atypical superhero. He willingly disregards the taboos of many heroes: the concepts of morality, ethics, and easily killing everyone in his path, which makes his disclosure quite interesting even with the extremely simple dramaturgy of his formation as a hero.

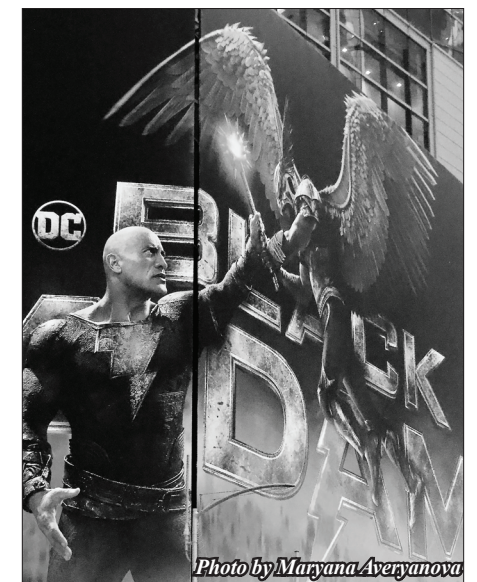
Noticing the presence of a new personality in tights and with superpowers, Amanda Waller gathers a squad of the Justice Society, consisting of Carter Hall aka Hawkman, Kent Nelson aka Doctor Fate, Albert Rothstein aka Atom Smasher and a young genius, Maxine Hanks aka Cyclone. They will have to find out what this new force is and subdue it. During various battles, they eventually team up with Adam for a while to participate in the battle with another evil represented in the picture.

"Who are they?" The question arises during the movie. They seem to resemble the abilities of Marvel heroes. Superheroes are not disclosed, and judging by the length of the movie, it seems that there was simply nowhere to insert at least a backstory. Therefore, *Black Adam: The Justice Society Files* (2022) comics were released to help the audience.

The director Jaume Collet-Serra shot perhaps the most spectacular and dynamic DCEU movie after *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* (2016) and *Justice League* (2017) by Zack Snyder. The whole film is packed with a huge number of spectacular scenes with explosions, chases, battles, and maximum destruction of the environment, which look brutal and spectacular. Especially pleasing is the increased level of cruelty. The film stood on the verge of a PG-13 age rating with an eye for an R rating.

Not to mention the amazing scene after the credits with the return of the *spoiler* to the image of one of the most powerful and main superheroes of the universe and DC comics.

Basically, not full disclosure of the characters (heroes and villains) reduces the rating of the movie. Also, the movie is not as dark as other DC movies. However, *Black Adam* does not leave anyone without good impressions. This is really a kind of bid for the return of the former DC direction, where in the near future viewers will be able to see the entire old Justice League team. I want to believe that the Rock, who seems to be taking part in this formation, will present new projects with his character and other DC heroes.



Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson Watching Over Times Square as Black Adam

Procrastination

What it is and How to Overcome it.

By Sumaya Jashim

"I'll do it later." The most common lie students tell themselves. Assignments wait for the privilege of being written. Even an article on procrastination is not immune to its writer's laziness.

Procrastination is the intellectual sport of distracting oneself until one feels the urgency to complete a task. The best cure for procrastination is a purpose, a need for urgency.

This is likely why a study published in the Journal of Health Psychology states lazy people are more likely to be successful. People who procrastinate enjoy activities requiring higher levels of cognition. Thus, they have the hours and commitment to flesh out large-scale businesses or invent cures.

There are, however, imperative consequences to neglecting duties. One may miss out on the college of their dreams due to bad grades or a job they could have had with more preparation. Thus, multiple tips and guides exist to combat procrastination and increase productivity.

One method is working under a time limit. It assists some to work as much as possible within 20-50 minute intervals and then take breaks in between. The idea is to increase efficiency, with the time limit causing faster workflow.

Another approach used by the Chairman of Alphabet, Eric Schmidt, is doing tasks immediately. "It makes me more efficient as an executive," said Schmidt. A caveat

to this approach is that it may also be procrastination: getting things done for the sake of it. A direct consequence of this is diminished quality. However, it's effective for those struggling to start tasks. It is easier to finish something one has previously created rather than complete something from scratch.

Fear of failure and responsibilities can become controlling. Tasks can become overwhelming when done all at once. The strict solution is to break it up and schedule each assignment with breaks in between. It means forgiving oneself if missing an event, making it up, or moving on.

As the Chinese proverb goes, "Fall seven times, get up eight." Failure is a natural part of success

because to succeed, one needs to ensure one can handle their own in all scenarios. And if it does not work out, iterate. It is a substantial part of being an engineer, among the best professions. And considering how engineering has revolutionized society (the wheel, planes, phones), failure is worth it to arrive at a better station in life.

The bottom line is: no matter what reason people have not to want to do something, productivity is always gratifying. It may not be as easy as checking off tasks on a to-do list, but it requires patience and self-love to be successful. Whatever it is that you need to do, as Nike loves to preach, "Just do it." It may be the opportunity of a lifetime.



Sports

Pandemic Gives Opportunity for a New Kind of Sport

Interview with KCC E-sports Coach Dr. Daniel Kane

By Mateo Silvera



E-sports Coach and Lifelong Fan
Dr. Daniel Kane

Imagine, having a lifelong passion for something that most people don't take seriously and, out of nowhere, you are given the opportunity to prove those people wrong. For Dr. Daniel Kane this opportunity was the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic shut down everything for several months including sports like football or basketball. Kingsborough Community College professor Dr. Daniel Kane saw this as an opportunity to focus on E-sports and grow a program that could compete at the top level.

"COVID happened and as traditional sports were getting shut down, I was able to really talk about how we can have an E-sports program take over as our athletic program until we know when traditional sports would restart."

From then on Dr. Kane became the E-sports head coach where he would have immediate impact.

"I've had Madden, Fifa and Hearthstone teams all make it to the semi finals," Dr Kane says. This a very impressive feat for a program that is still in its infancy and can most likely be credited to Dr. Kane's coaching and attitude towards E-sports. He does not see E-sports as a fad or alternative to sports like soccer or baseball, but instead as an equal that provides just as much emotion and excitement and

takes as much skill and dedication to compete in.

"It's hard to say that E-sports is a fad. It's hard to say E-sports is just playing a videogame and nothing else, and anyone can do it. I challenge everybody to pick up a controller and attempt to compete," he continues his passionate statement, "It's going to be the same as if you were trying to throw a football against Tom Brady. Million out of a Million times Tom Brady is going to beat you."

This ardor and complete devotion to the field helps make Dr. Kane one of the better E-sports head coaches at the junior college level. Growing up he was a competitive gamer himself, even winning a Blockbuster competition, but similar to basketball player Demar Derozan, he was born in the wrong era; at the time, E-sports was nowhere near as popular as it is now. However, this experience provides him insight into the mind of his E-sports athletes, which in turn helps him coach better.

Dr. Kane noticeably calls his team members "athletes." Some may see this as weird because when they imagine an E-sports player they imagine some non-athletic person staring at a screen. In spite of that perception, if someone were to ask Dr. Kane why E-sports should be considered a real sport and not a hobby, his response is very clear.

"I challenge people to define what a sport is... What is a sport? Webster's dictionary adds one sentence to it that, really, people use to discern what a sport is, and that is physical exertion... Well if you are playing a video game, an E-sport, and you are in a competition and you're feeling the same stress as an athlete, if your heartbeat is going up to the same as an athlete, if you're sweating like an athlete, if you're producing the same results as an athlete, well what's the difference then?"

He also raises an interesting point about inclusivity when discussing how some people don't have the opportunity to be an athlete.

"Not everyone can be an athlete in the traditional sense... What if your body isn't made in that same concept? What if you're a little heavier? What if you're a little out of shape?... What if you just plain cannot play a traditional sport? Should that mean that you can't be an athlete?"

This coincides with Dr. Kane stating that all his life he experienced sports from the fan's perspective.

He also states, "Instead, what happens if you have amazing hand eye coordination? And you're still going to get the same reaction and the same feelings as other athletes. E-sports provides the ability for people to be athletes where they might not be athletes in traditional sports."

Dr. Kane is an ambitious man that has lofty goals for the E-sports program at Kingsborough. He

uses his prior experience and his education to help student athletes reach their potential and reap the rewards they worked hard for. Dr. Kane doesn't just coach so that he can have personal success or feel like he achieved something. By coaching E-sports he can give students another pathway towards scholarships and furthering their education. He gives young adults the opportunity that he wasn't able to take advantage of. This is because Dr. Kane knows who is the most important factor for any sport whether it is traditional or not.

"For me it's about the student athlete. I'm starting to get calls and e-mails from four-year coaches offering scholarships in E-sports. So if I can connect that student athlete, which I have previously done, with an E-sports coach and they can talk, scholarships and that can go through, then that is a shining moment."

In Search of a Mascot How Do You Have a Walking, Tangible Wave?

By Michele Schultz

Prior to Nov. 14, 2022, Kingsborough's Marketing and Communications Team sent out an email about rebranding the college sports team, The Wave, asking for students' input.

"Rebranding is the wrong word for what is happening," KCC Athletic Director Robert Allison said, "Not changing anything. The logo and the school mascot are two different things."

To explain what the Athletic Director means by "different," he jokingly references the school nickname and logo, like how do you have a mascot dress up as a tangible wave?

The Athletics Department is trying to come up with an idea for a mascot that will complement the game and increase crowd participation.

"So, we brainstormed and came up with a couple of ideas," Allison said, "but we wanted it to be a student-driven decision, not a faculty or administration decision."

The survey the department sent to students' emails included a write-in section alongside popular choices. "So if anybody has a better idea— we'll go from there," said Allison.

There was no big decision taken before 2022 other than that the coronavirus shut down athletics for a year and a half.

"Last year, we came back, and the return, like everything, was a little bit slower, so it's like we're almost back to normal capacity," Allison continues. "We're just trying to augment. That's the story."