In Memoriam

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New CUNYfirst Design Raises Discontent Among Users

By Radwan Farraj
Staff Writer

CUNYfirst’s long awaited redesign over spring break has been met with backlash as students and staff report difficulties with the new design. Advertised as being easier to navigate and possessing a mobile-friendly interface, the redesign has proved to be unsatisfactory for many users since its launch.

“When you’re so accustomed to the old way, you know, change isn’t always great sometimes,” said Jaden Patrice, a senator in the Undergraduate Student Government Student Senate. “But, I feel like this is putting CUNY in a better direction and in a more modern direction, and it’s just gotta have to be something everybody has to get used to.”

In a poll conducted by The Vanguard to measure the experiences BC students have had with the redesign, seven of 17 total respondents answered that CUNYfirst has been at least slightly more difficult to use since the redesign, and another six answered that it was much more difficult to use.

Pooya Solayman, a senior at Brooklyn College, noticed the changes have impacted her as both a student and peer mentor for first-year undergraduates. Even with the help of tutorial videos posted by CUNY, both her and her students have had difficulties navigating the site.

“It’s very difficult to explain because they are freshmen and they have had this system for a semester and a half now, and then it gets changed on them,” Solayman said. Although the redesign went into effect during spring break, she believes that the timing still could have been better.

“...A lot of students are still registering for summer classes and winter classes. It would’ve made more sense to do it after this semester ended,” she said.

Though the site’s revamp raised issues among students, many thought a change was necessary. “The average student, especially when they’re going in, they won’t have to interact with that clunky system that they had before,” said Aharon Grama, USG’s co-president.

Navigating the site’s tile organization, however, makes it slightly harder to access information in comparison to the previous version, Grama remarked. “It [CUNYfirst] did need a revision. It did need an overhaul,” said Grama when asked about the redesign as a whole. However, Grama thinks it is still soon to pass judgment on the design and hopes that as students and staff become more adjusted, they will notice the redesign’s benefits.

Richard Pietras, BC’s Media Relations Manager, told The Vanguard about available resources to help students and staff navigate the new CUNYfirst system. These have been shared through outlets such as the DOSA Newsletter and CUNY’s social media platforms, and a university web page dedicated to aiding students with tutorial videos is available as well.

Corrections From The Editorial Staff

In our previous issue published on Apr. 13, we reported that the suspect of the Sunset Park subway shooting was wearing a green construction vest. This is incorrect. The suspect, Frank James, who was later caught and arrested, wore an orange construction vest during his attack.

In our latest report on the Undergraduate Student Government election results, we miscalculated the student voter turnout. The turnout was 2.04% of the eligible undergraduate body, not 0.02%.

We apologize for the errors and thank you for your understanding. If you spot an error in one of our articles, please email us at thebcvanguard@gmail.com.
BC Community Remembers Nine in COVID-19 Memorial Ceremony

By John Schilling
Managing Editor

Members of the Brooklyn College community gathered in front of Roosevelt Hall on Thursday, Apr. 14 for the COVID-19 Memorial Ceremony, a gathering to remember the nine Brooklyn College faculty and staff members who passed away due to the pandemic. Those commemorated ranged in ages from 31 to 81.

The memorial ceremony remembered Computer and Information Science Undergraduate Deputy Chair Moshe Augenstein; Health, Nutrition, Sciences, and Kinesiology Professor Kenneth Axen; Theater Professor Mark Blum; retired Physics Professor Peter J. Branczio; Philosophy Department Office Manager Jay Jankelewicz; Human Resources Manager Juliet Manragh; Classics Professor James (Jim) Pletcher; retired Music Professor Paul Shelden; and Computer and Information Science Professor Aaron Tenenbaum.

“The losses brought sorrow and an emptiness in our hearts and our lives that is hard to measure and hard to describe,” said Brooklyn College President Michelle Anderson in opening remarks. “But death itself is not the only loss. In many circumstances, the pandemic robbed us not only of our loved ones but the opportunity to say goodbye.”

An effort to do just that was ultimately the inspiration for the ceremony, which was put together by a planning committee made up of students, faculty, and staff. This included Vice President for Student Affairs Ron Jackson; Special Assistant to the President Zunera Ahmed; USG Senators Ryan Fratello and Sadiya Hoque; USG Press Director Jana Taoube; Professor Timothy Shortell, chairperson of the Sociology Department; Professor Ellen Tremper, chairperson of the English Department; Randall Clarke, director of the Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK) Program; Jesús Pérez, director of the Immigrant Student Success Office (ISSO); and Tony Thomas, chief officer of Legal Affairs and Labor Relations.

After opening remarks from President Anderson, the ceremony continued with a poetry recital by Monique Ngozi Nri, a poet who graduated from Brooklyn College in 2021 with an M.F.A. in Creative Writing and the director of CUNY EDGE at Brooklyn College. Ngozi Nri recited “Covidium Sestina,” a poem she wrote in 2020 that reflects the fear and uncertainty of the pandemic, as well as the hope that America would ultimately overcome the challenges it brought about.

“We fondly hope that there will come a night when we can meet each other at the fence, drink champagne... and laugh together humbly as Americans, losing all sense of this foreboding, forgetting now the sad sounds of sirens,” read Ngozi Nri.

Following the poem, the ceremony continued with friends and colleagues sharing their memories of those lost within the Brooklyn College family, all of whom spoke of their dedication to the school, recalled their many accomplishments, and noted what made them special.

“He was known as a compassionate, available teacher, who maintained contact with many students long after they were in his class, supporting them in their lives and careers,” said Health and Nutrition Sciences Assistant Professor Margrethe Horlyck-Romanovsk of Prof. Kenneth Axen. “[...]

His original thinking and ability to integrate math and basic science into his explanations, and a bit of philosophy, made him a stimulating research mentor to undergraduate, Master’s, and Doctoral candidates.”

“Jim shared with everyone around him his loves and passions, frequently marked by heartfelt discussions about British 80s pop music, Pittsburgh sports, the Greek novel, and everything in between,” said Classics Assistant Professor Brian P. Sowers of Prof. Jim Pletcher. “There is not a day that goes by that I don’t miss my friend, and I [instinctively] reach to my phone at least once a week to send him a text.”

To further honor the lives lost, members of the Conservatory of Music’s brass ensemble performed George Frideric Handel’s “Lascia Ch’io Pianga,” a somber aria reflective of loss and the sense of weeping that comes with that pain.

The piece was performed by a trio of Ryan Martin on trumpet, Steven Alesso on baritone, and Justin Laurenceau on trombone.

The memorial came to an end with an invitation from Vice President for Student Affairs Ron Jackson, who drew everyone’s attention to a planted tree with a red ribbon located on the small lawn of grass to the left of Roosevelt Hall. Although the memorial focused on the lives lost within the Brooklyn College community, Jackson urged all in attendance to come up to the microphone, share the name of someone they lost due to COVID-19, and pour a cup of water on the tree in their memory.

“This tree will symbolize and honor the people that we’ve lost and will serve as an on-campus location to perpetually pay tribute to our beloved community members,” said Jackson. “May this tree grow in their remembrance.”
BC Cancer Center Hosts First Heath And Wellness Fair On West Quad

By Gabriela Flores
Editor-In-Chief

After nearly two years since its opening, the Brooklyn College Cancer Center (BCCC-CURE) hosted its first Health and Wellness Fair in person on Tuesday, Apr. 26. Organizers sought to educate the BC community on their mental and physical health, hosting a range of activities from talks on cancer prevention to mindfulness exercises, such as yoga and Japanese floral arrangements.

"We felt that the whole college community really needed a happy event where you didn't have to be focused on something and you can just enjoy yourself because for two and a half years we've been carrying a lot of existential angst and we've been isolated from each other on campus," said Dr. Jennifer Basil, the center's Associate Director for Community Outreach and Engagement. "And we just thought it could be a positive event for everyone to come together [...]"

With its focus on educating and advocating for the healthcare of Brooklynites, the Cancer Center continuously works with local organizations and hospitals to create more visibility of different health issues, like cancer screenings. BCCC-CURE also pipelines students to different educational programs at Maimonides Hospital and Mount Sinai Cancer Center.

Bringing its services to the BC campus, the center hosted blood pressure checks, glucose tests, a COVID vaccine and testing van, along with other wellness tools. Local Brooklyn groups, unions, and BC organizations like the Immigrant Student Success Office (ISSO), joined the fair to share their resources with community members.

"Our goal here is to work with the students to make sure that they know their classroom work is important, but their wellbeing is more important," said ISSO Director Jesús Pérez, noting that the fair also forms part of the office's Immigrant Heritage Week Celebration.

"It feels amazing to see students out here really enjoying themselves, interacting with each other, and of course, taking the information in from the different tables," Bartolome said.

"The best way to prevent cancer is starting young because skin, lung, and cervical cancers are an issue for younger people," Basil explained, who is a survivor of breast cancer. "In particular skin cancer for anyone of any skin tone, people just don't think about it. But it can be an issue."

BCCC-CURE's events and outreach won't be ending with the fair as its leaders are currently partnering with the American Cancer Society to run two fundraisers in the next six months: one for women researchers and another for Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October. At its core, the center intends to continue informing the Brooklyn College community and the broader Brooklyn scene of the importance of health awareness.

"What's important is that people know what they need to do and they know where they can go to do it, and ask if they don't know," said Basil. "Because the solution to illnesses – and in particular, cancer – is knowledge."
BC Students Share Important Work During Annual HSS Student Expo

By Serin Sarsour
Features Editor

Brooklyn College's School of Humanities and Social Sciences held a two-day student exposition on Apr. 25 and Apr. 26 to showcase the work and research students in the HSS program have done. Ranging from History to Political Science and Africana Studies, there were a total of 14 zoom and in-person events covering a diverse array of topics.

The first of the 14 events was led by History Professor Philip Napoli in which his HIST.1101 students presented interviews that they conducted to represent the experiences people encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic. “We’ve been talking about a couple major themes in the class, [such as] the historical processes that shaped the contemporary world. I’m really interested in the way the past is connected to the present,” said Professor Napoli, explaining what his course is all about.

During the Zoom presentations, Professor Napoli's students revealed how the pandemic has impacted their interviewees in several ways, including the transition to socializing online, losing loved ones being stuck at home at all times, and becoming closer with family members during quarantine.

Professor Napoli also hosted an event where students from the History, Philosophy, and Judaic Studies departments at BC were able to share the undergraduate research they have been conducting throughout the 2021-2022 school year. One of the students, Alyssa Rodes, did her research on the surprising revelation that there was once a Jewish population in small-town Goshen, Indiana.

Rodes shared that there was an apparent mix of Eastern European and German Jewish people present in Goshen by the 1850s, both Orthodox and traditional. There were “two family groups [that] formed the core of the community.” These families made important contributions and made imprints on Goshen as they opened a variety of businesses in the town, one being a clothing store.

The Jewish population in Goshen went up from 125 in 1878 to 139 in 1907. However, it then drastically declined to 51 Jewish people in 1927 as Jewish people began expanding beyond Goshen and migrating to places like Michigan.

Although Rodes is actually a Christian, she has always had a fascination for Judaism and was shocked to find out that Jewish people actually once resided in the small-town she grew up in.

Later on in the expo, Professor Rebecca Boger, BC’s Urban Sustainability Director who also teaches Earth and Environmental Sciences, hosted an event that celebrated the research, community involvement, and accomplishments that the Urban Sustainability students and alumni have done.

Philosophy Professor Michael Menser is also a member of the Earth and Environmental Sciences doctoral faculty, and stepped up to the podium in the Woody Tanger Auditorium to further discuss the program and a new sustainable urban gardens course that was first taught last fall.

“This course has got a hands-on component to it, as well as an in-the-class component,” said Professor Menser. “So you actually learn how to plant seeds, how to cultivate those seeds, how to water the plants. That means being outside, it means also taking advantage of our greenhouse on campus. We have a new garden space that’s next to the Performing Arts Center.”

A BC alumna named Alison Derevensky also spoke at the event. After graduating from BC in 2019, Derevensky started an internship at Binghamton University to do a graduate assistantship while working to receive her double master's degree there.

Additionally, Derevensky had an internship at BlocPower where she currently works and plans to continue working after graduation.

“They’re a New York City based green energy company that’s working to electrify buildings across the country,” she said.

BlocPower does this by installing electric heat pumps in buildings, which are somewhat replacements for old heating systems.

The Fight For Peace: How Nobel Peace Laureate Leymah Gbowee Ended A Civil War

By Gabriela Flores
Editor-in-Chief

Whether it be fighting against the Second Liberian Civil War or preserving in the wake of struggles, Leymah Gbowee has become a powerful figure of peace. Before being named Nobel Peace Laureate in 2011, Gbowee was on the frontline of protests she and her fellow Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace launched, ensuring that their call for a ceasefire did not fall on deaf ears – even if that meant risking their safety for the cause.

"Peace for me is not just the absence of war. Peace is the presence of conditions that dignify all of us," Gbowee said during a conversation with Brooklyn College President Michelle Anderson on Apr. 8.

The college invited Gbowee to speak about her advocacy along with Liberia's wars and complex history. Anderson, who sat beside Gbowee in the Woody Tanger Auditorium, kicked off the dialogue by asking the activist where her story all began: as a child living in Monrovia, Liberia.

"I consider myself a daughter of the community. A daughter of the generosity of people and a daughter of many tribes," Gbowee said. Within her neighborhood, Gbowee and her neighbors were living by Umbuntu, a principle of how someone is who they are “because of what we all are.” This translated to the activist

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being cared for by many, even getting a dollar coin by those in her vicinity if she had a strong report card. Her spirit to stand up for herself and others, however, bloomed from her "first feminist teacher": her grandmother.

But life as the activist knew it changed on Dec. 24, 1989 – the day that Liberia's first civil war began. At the time, Gbowee was 17, grappling with the shift in her neighbors' attitudes toward one another and a specific ethnic group.

"[...] It confused me as a 17-year-old because my best friend till today was part of the ethnic group that everyone was calling evil. But prior to that war, I slept at their house, their mother washed my clothes, she took care of me," Gbowee said.

The war that flipped Liberia upside down stemmed from the nation's long history that began with the American Colonization Society (ACS), an organization created by Congress after slavery. With formerly enslaved black people gaining their freedom, the ACS sought to move them abroad so they would not "overrun the white population," Gbowee explained, noting that Liberia was never intended to become a country but was simply "a project." What waged once freed slaves came to Liberia in 1847 was a similar look to segregation in America, where the newcomers "did exactly what was done to them on the plantation to the indigenous people," Gbowee said.

"If you had my last name at the time, you couldn't go to a particular high school. So segregation was there," said Gbowee. The indigenous people of Liberia eventually executed the leading descendants of free slaves in 1980. Fast-forward nearly a decade later, Charles Taylor, the country's former president, started the First Liberian Civil War in 1989. Taylor, a descendant of free slaves, fought against the government, creating a war that killed about 10% of the roughly 3 million Liberian population at the time.

"Once he became president and eventually decided to become a dictator, another round of violence happened in 2003," Gbowee noted, indicating that the latter war pushed her and her fellow activists to organize the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace.

"It was in 2003 that we stepped out and started protesting 14 years of the loss of our innocence, the loss of children, the loss of everything," said Gbowee. Putting her nose on the grindstone, Gbowee was reckoning with her anger of the war's impacts and the challenges she faced in her personal life as a mother who left an abusive relationship. According to Gbowee, anger is "fluid" and cannot be simply defined as good or evil. There are two compartments, or "containers," of anger that vary from one another: non-violent and violent.

"And what I recognized when we started activism was that you can't give what you don't have. You can't be a peace activist unless you have a sense of peace," Gbowee said.

Once she was able to configure this, she and her seven female colleagues, who were tired of the war, began working on a statement to President Taylor – fiercely calling for the immediate ceasefire of the second civil war, deployment of an international intervention force, among other demands. There, they named themselves Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace and were able to catch the attention of the press and other women with similar beliefs. Before they knew it, the group built by the seven extended to thousands and was finally able to speak to the president face-to-face after many turn downs.

Once the group made Liberian officials sign a peace agreement and demobilize soldiers, members did not stop there, as Gbowee and her colleagues sought to ensure that democratic elections were restored in 2005.

In the face of adversity, Gbowee didn't stand down from her responsibility as a leader to her fellow Liberian women who were of different religions and backgrounds. Though she earned her title of Nobel Peace Laureate in 2011, she never went into her activism with the intent of garnering personal accolades.

"The difference with movements today, once the leader gets to some form of notoriety, they want to maximize every personal benefit," said Gbowee, noting that she and her fellow activists were only driven by the cause.

Once Liberia's first female president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, came into power, Gbowee decided to take a breather from activism and return to academia, coming to the United States to pursue a master's. During her studies, she searched to determine if she contributed to "actual peacebuilding" and later found she did exactly what is described in theory.

After many years of hard-fought battles, Gbowee finds herself today reflecting on her life as a whole, determining that self-care is important to keep up any good fight for peace.

"I always say to young people, 'The essence of why you started a movement is either to bring peace into your community or to achieve a specific goal,'" said Gbowee. "All of the opportunities that you see around you will come if you stay on the course."
BC Spotlight: From Designer To Writer, Joshua Leonard Takes Passions By Storm

By Michela Arlia
Arts Editor

While the start of the pandemic in 2020 brought destruction and some depression for most people, it also brought many a rebirth of ideas, hobbies, and passions. For students like Joshua Leonard, it ended his days as a fashion designer and brought about his new pursuit of a second degree.

“I wish I could’ve found myself at this point in my life through other means. Without COVID, I probably would have left fashion eventually,” Leonard told The Vanguard.

Originally from Louisiana, Leonard is a BC student majoring in creative writing whose approach to a second bachelor’s degree started rather unconventionally. He previously had a career in the fashion industry before being laid off at the start of the pandemic and turning to study another passion of his.

This decision didn’t come out of the blue, as Leonard had expressed not being happy in his profession prior to COVID, taking his lay off as an opportunity that allowed him a way out and a chance to be happy in a passion he truly enjoys.

To rewind his story, Leonard says he first entered the fashion world in a non-traditional way.

“A lot of my landing in fashion has to do with being a diabetic,” said Leonard. “I’ve had Type 1 Diabetes since I was 16, and I’ve had to make a lot of compromises. Back in high school, I had a few creative paths I wanted to take with my life, but hardly any of them came with health insurance. Fashion did, and thankfully I loved designing clothes.”

Knocking out two birds with one stone through fashion led him to earn his first B.F.A. in fashion design from The Art Institute of Dallas. From then, he relocated to New York as he was fortunate to get a summer internship for the popular clothing label started by singer and actress Jessica Simpson.

Since the 2010s, Leonard has designed for other big name brands such as Tommy Hilfiger, Levis, Calvin Klein, Michael Kors, and Nautica. He mostly designed in the realm of outwear, dipping into swimwear and dresses as well.

After all his time in clothing, Leonard explained his initial decline for fashion started as a “slow burn,” mainly caused by workplace burnout.

“Long hours, hard work with little compensation, a general mindset that if you aren’t at your desk seven days a week you don’t care about your career,” said Leonard. “Behind closed doors, the fashion industry thrives on toxic work environments with little to no oversight. You’re trained to feel guilty for requesting a day off, even if you’re sick.”

Hand in hand with the burnout came hard work in exchange for little to no recognition. Leonard recalled how overlooked his efforts were during his experience he had with designing a jacket for a major fashion brand that would otherwise be considered a significant accomplishment. He recounted the wholesale company Costco taking a heavy interest in his piece and ordering a large amount for their stores.

“Costco saw it in our showroom, loved it, and ordered twenty-five thousand pieces! Trust me, that’s a gigantic order. The jacket sold out in under two months,” Leonard said. “So Costco came back and ordered five hundred thousand more pieces. My one jacket alone made the company fifty-six million dollars.”

Despite his excitement for this wonderful accomplishment in his career, Leonard explained he gained no thanks, no recognition, and definitely no pay raise for his work.

“I never got so much as a thank you from the higher ups. My barely-above-entry-level pay wasn’t increased, my small annual bonus wasn’t anymore than the year before. That was when I realized I was a cog in a machine, doing my work without the company’s pockets with gold,” he said.

With no room or opportunity to climb the professional and career ladder due to his work, Leonard took this as his first big sign that he needed a change.

“I would see my coats everywhere in public and felt nothing,” he said. Running on autopilot and waiting to clock out every day, Leonard started to turn his attention to writing workshops at Gotham Writers in the summer of 2019, something that brought him much joy and helped him through a difficult year.

While Leonard says that his lay off really became a numbers game for his former employer, he mentioned he was fortunate enough to not need his employment anymore at the time and took the initial news as a good omen.

“I know the majority don’t have this luxury, but when I got the call I was being laid off, I danced around my apartment,” he said. “I’m very much a horror passion and find a place he truly felt he belonged. One thing he was sure of was that he wanted to be a writer. His forte in writing is mainly horror."

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BC Theater’s ‘Concord Floral’ Delivers Powerful Performances And Storytelling

By Samia Afsar
Staff Writer

Your past will come back to haunt you in the BC Theater Department’s recent production of “Concord Floral,” a play written by Jordan Tannahill and directed by Brooklyn College alum Nick J. Browne.

The play, which opened on Apr. 8 in the New Workshop Theater, is a horror-drama tale that takes place in the one-million-square-foot abandoned greenhouse called “Concord Floral” in Staten Island, where the neighborhood kids go to smoke pot and hook up in a coming of age site and story.

The story revolves around the deserted greenhouse where best friends Nearly (Greta Rustani) and Rosa (Celeste Sena) discover the body of a teenage girl in a hole while navigating the 21st century. It is raw, brave, and perfectly captures an adolescent’s familiarity with secrets, shame, and mercy. “Concord Floral” is quite familiar to tales of a suburban dystopia. Ghosts aside, Tannahill’s play is simply about kids being kids as they attempt to figure out who they are while navigating the 21st century. It is raw, brave, and perfectly captures an adolescent’s familiarity with secrets, shame, and mercy. “Concord Floral” is quite familiar to tales of a suburban dystopia. Ghosts aside, Tannahill’s play is simply about kids being kids as they attempt to figure out who they are while navigating the 21st century. It is raw, brave, and perfectly captures an adolescent’s familiarity with secrets, shame, and mercy. “Concord Floral” is quite familiar to tales of a suburban dystopia. Ghosts aside, Tannahill’s play is simply about kids being kids as they attempt to figure out who they are while navigating the 21st century. It is raw, brave, and perfectly captures an adolescent’s familiarity with secrets, shame, and mercy.

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Collective understanding, a majority represents a numerical superiority, requires a majority. Besides what should be done decision, a proposal for of everyone who has ever change. Obtain a majority and effect their validity in order to societies, one must argue using a variety of sources. The present must be settled decisions and challenges of inform you that you may be it brings me no pleasure to past. If this is your practice, on consideration of the present can be made solely to untangling what is from what others think it may be. Regardless of the unlikely odds that the present will ever be blessed with a moment of clarity distributed amongst a majority of the population, I still find the pursuit of truth to be of utmost importance. Of course, the past can be a valuable tool for solving present problems, but it certainly can not be the only one. It should always be a voice at the decision-making table, but no one decision made in the present must be settled using a variety of sources. And whatever sources are considered, in democratic societies, one must argue their validity in order to obtain a majority and effect change.

To the great bereavement of everyone who has ever had to make a collaborative decision, a proposal for what should be done requires a majority. Besides numerical superiority, a majority represents a collective understanding, or a commonly held truth. Take a group of people stranded on a remote island, for example. Low on food, the group votes to send half of their party out on a potentially dangerous expedition to see if there are any other nearby resources that could save the group. In this case, a numerical superiority was needed to send out the expedition and in order to obtain it, members in favor of the proposal must convince their peers of the truth as they see it. In this example, the truth could be that everyone may starve if they don't risk half the group to find more resources.

While this is simply democracy, what intrigues me is the role of convincing others not to simply vote for you, but to share the truth that you carry. Using this basic formula, you can exploding common conceptualizations of the political arena as a series of conflicts over truth. And what is fascinating about the American political sphere is that you have two parties who are both concerned less with convincing the other of the truth as they see it, but instead both practice a continual dilution and denial of the greater underlying truths baked into the white marble of the nation's capital.

This brings me to what we might call a political skeptic, whose triumph lies in the burden of proof they carry to make their case. For a strong adherent to a specific political party, one must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that everything that their party has to say is true. An essentially impossible task. For a skeptic, however, all they must do is prove one thing that either party says is false and they won their essential argument. If lies and dishonesty are to be found in your ranks, then you lose the vantage point from which you can declare you have the truth, but if your quest to find the truth, then you are able to find fault in just about any side claiming to have it. This is where the Ancient Greek philosophers might suggest the legitimate deployment of a noble lie. A lie that is told by those in charge for the benefit of the public and not to further entrench their power. But truth and power are inextricably linked, as the holders of truth also hold more power. With the truth, or the witholding of it, you can effectively control people's perceptions and their subsequent actions. The challenge then is to arrive at an ideological stance which can survey the field of current events, remain inspired to effect positive change, while being constantly bombarded with countless instances of powerful people not telling the truth.

All it really takes is one example of a power at large lying for one to start pulling at the thread of their integrity. If, for example, it could be proven that the government lied about details pertaining to the assassination of a political figure, a conflict overseas, or perhaps even a domestic terror attack, the logical next step is to ask why? This question can, unfortunately, lead well-intentioned individuals to a demise colored by incessant fear and paranoia about the world around them. Instead of falling for this, I would recommend asking all the questions your curious mind wants to ask, but do so without expecting an immediate alternative to the truth. The truth is out there, but if it is being withheld, then it might be safe to assume that the holders of the truth are concerned that it would endanger their power if it were to get out. The contents of history hold clues as to where the truth can be found, but it doesn’t offer any guidance about what to do with it. That undertaking, as I hope to explain later, is left to the prisoners of the present.
Opinion:
Ramadan Is For Everyone

By Priscilla Mensah
Staff Writer

Over the past few years, it seems that Ramadan as a religious holiday and observance has become somewhat mainstream. Talks of Ramadan seem to be everywhere, whether it be the numerous local and global politicians saying Ramadan Mubarak in displays of solidarity with Muslims observing the holy month, or the more recent #Ramadanforaday on social media.

Amidst such frequent mentioning of Ramadan, for reasons both political and otherwise, it may be the case that people who are not Muslim feel left out. It is because of this that I - as a Muslim who has observed Ramadan for over a decade and as someone who was raised in a Muslim household - feel compelled to invite any and everyone to join in on the fasting for a month fun that is Ramadan.

Because of its growing popularity, I'm sure many people are aware of at least some of the holiday's components. For those who may not be as informed, Ramadan is a month where Muslims do not eat from sunup to sundown. About a half an hour before sunrise, observers of Ramadan have a meal called Suhoor, where they eat food equivalent to breakfast, that is meant to hopefully sustain those fasting for the duration of the day.

One of the major purposes of Ramadan is to reflect on and be thankful for all that you have while being cognisant of those who are less fortunate. This is primarily why Muslims abstain from eating during sunlight hours for the whole month. The reason why Muslims fast then is probably one reason that all can relate to and appreciate, which is why I'm inviting anyone to participate in observing Ramadan.

Of course, I'm by no means suggesting that one just jump in and start fasting without having ever done so previously. Nor am I even suggesting that people should fast. The operative word here is can. My invitation is for all to know that if they want to fast, they can. In that vein, my call is primarily for those interested in fasting but may also feel left out of the mix with all of the talks of community iftars on social media and scores of messages of “Ramadan Mubarak” from our elected officials.

If you decide you want to observe Ramadan, I think it may be best to, at least at first, only fast for one or two hours of the day, maybe half a day or a day at most, and see how you feel. A great example of a first step to take in participating in Ramadan, especially if it is your first time, can be found in #Ramadanforaday on social media.

As the hashtag suggests, Ramadan for a day involves presumably non-Muslims participating in Ramadan. The hashtag encapsulates precisely what I am encouraging in this piece: that anyone who may be interested in or perhaps curious about Ramadan can go for it.

Be sure to never feel pressured to do anything, of course, and always listen to your body. If you decide to participate in the #Ramadanforaday challenge or choose a different way to partially observe, make sure you feel up to it. In some cases, it may be best to even consult with a doctor first.

Caveats and disclaimers aside, giving your body a break from eating has many health benefits. This idea can be seen in a post on social media where someone wrote “Ramadan is the original keto diet.” If just for this reason, or for one or several of the other reasons previously mentioned, I am inviting any and everyone to participate in Ramadan.
The Nets Have Run Out Of Answers, Time, And Fans’ Patience

By Johan Abdu
Staff Writer

Bring out the broomsticks, Boston, because the Nets have been swept.

The Nets looked hopeless on Monday, Apr. 25, losing 116-112 in their fourth game in a row to the Boston Celtics, being eliminated from 2022 NBA Playoffs fourth round.

After a close 115-114 loss in Game 1 two weeks ago at the Barclays Center, the Nets were still a bit more confident that they could challenge the Celtics. The game was tight and nearly went Brooklyn’s way: its 53.8% field goal percentage beat Celtics’ 47.2%. The team also made more three-pointers than Boston did and generally played better.

It was Game 2 last Wednesday, Apr. 20, that showed why Celtics’ defense is considered the best in the league. The trident of Jaylen Brown, Jayson Tatum, and Marcus Smart has been considered the best in the league. The trident of Jaylen Brown, Jayson Tatum, and Marcus Smart has been sensational in one of the most dominating playoff performances in modern-day NBA Playoff history. This young trio has the stamina and versatility to box out and challenge some of the best scorers in the NBA, to the point of forcing turnovers. Game 2 ended 107-114, with coach Steve Nash saying their loss proves their lack of continuity.

“We just haven’t had any continuity for the two seasons,” Nash told ESPN.

“That’s our challenge, and we’ve got to embrace that. And see what reward there is in embracing that challenge and trying to overcome.”

Saturday night, Game 3, was just more of the same: all talk was on this stellar Celtic trio playing against the Nets. Despite a solid performance during the game’s second half by Blake Griffin, both defensively and offensively, sloppy possession led to 18 turnovers and 22 personal fouls. Tatum and Brown outscored Nets’ Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving 62-32, and Smart’s ability to match the pace of the Nets attack and his playmaking earned him NBA’s Defensive Player of the Year. Smart is the first guard to win it since Gary Payton in 1995-96 and the sixth guard in NBA history to earn the title.

With James Harden traded to the Philadelphia 76ers – and Ben Simmons essentially ruling out Game 4 because of back pain issues along with poor team chemistry – the future of the Nets, with or without a Fourth Round Playoff exit, seems to be falling out of whack.

Two days later, on Monday, Apr. 25, the Nets were in desperate need of a championship-winning performance just to compete with Boston in this playoff series. From the first minute, there were glimpses of a better overall performance. Durant didn’t go down without a fight, bouncing back with a solid offensive performance and game-high 39 points: 13-of-31 shooting from the field and 3-of-11 from three-point range. He also made seven rebounds, nine assists, a steal, and four turnovers in just 47 minutes of play.

Irving, who was pretty passive on the offensive end for a majority of the contest, finished with 20 points on 6-of-13 shooting overall and 2-of-3 shooting from behind the arc. In the end, Boston’s hulking defense and nimble counter-offense were too much. Boston had won all four games and swept the Nets for the fourth time in playoff franchise history – and the first time for both Durant and Irving.

As the Nets recuperate from one of their worst performances, Irving, who missed most of the season due to his refusal to be vaccinated against COVID-19, stated his intentions to stay and rebuild the team amid rumors of exiting the Nets.

“I don’t really plan on going anywhere,” said Irving to reporters after the game. “I’m just looking forward to the summer, just building with our guys here.”

For a team that was tipped to reach the Playoff Final this season, only time will tell if this star-studded squad can bring a title to the Big Apple soon.

BC Sports Recap (Apr. 12 – Apr. 25)

Men’s Tennis Looks To Rally After Rough Week

By Owen Russell
Sports Editor

After starting the season with a 4-1 record, the men’s tennis team stumbled this past week, dropping two of their three matches.

The Bulldogs hosted Lehman College for a conference matchup on Apr. 12, showing out against their conference rival and securing a 7-2 win. Brooklyn did its work in the doubles competitions, winning all three matches. Sophomore Aymen Kuc secured victories in #1 doubles and #4 singles, which helped Brooklyn defeat its CUNYAC competitor.

After winning its fifth straight, Brooklyn dropped its next two decisions starting on Apr. 13 against Baruch. The normally strong Bulldogs could only capture one victory on their way to a 1-8 loss. Brooklyn’s only victory of the day came in #6 singles, as John Kondmouroudas beat his opponent after three tightly contested sets. It was a rough day for a Brooklyn team that has experienced plenty of success this season.

The Bulldogs would yet again lose 1-8 against Ramapo College on Apr. 20. For a second straight time, the Bulldogs swept in doubles competition. Brooklyn’s sole victory of the day came in #5 singles as senior Christian Pena handled his opponent in two straight sets. It was another tough loss for the team that looks to rally in the coming weeks.

Brooklyn marches towards the playoffs now and will get a chance to build momentum on Apr. 26 against Farmingdale State College.
By Owen Russell  
Sports Editor

Brooklyn had its hands full these past two weeks, playing a total of twelve games (six doubleheaders) and winning only two.

Brooklyn's first doubleheader came on Apr. 11 against Lehman. The Bulldogs battled hard against the Lightning but eventually came up short, losing both games by three runs or less. First base Stella Witkowski lit up the scoreboard for Brooklyn, totaling four RBIs, six runs, four walks, and a stolen base over the two games. The Bulldogs lost game one 8-10, and game two 10-13. For a Brooklyn team that has had trouble scoring runs this season, the showing was not all bad.

Two days later, on Apr. 13, the Bulldogs suffered another two-game sweep. This time against John Jay. The Bloodhounds beat the Bulldogs 9-3 in game one, and game two 10-13. For a Brooklyn team that has had trouble scoring runs this season, the showing was not all bad.

Two days later, on Apr. 15 against Baruch in yet another doubleheader. The Bulldogs had already suffered a two-game sweep to Baruch earlier this season. Brooklyn lost the first game 1-9 in five innings with its sole run coming on a passed ball in the fifth inning. Brooklyn bounced back in game two, but ultimately still lost 9-10. First base Stella Witkowski led Brooklyn's offensive charge with three RBIs, including one home run. The Bulldogs showed their scoring capabilities despite the eventual loss.

Brooklyn's skid didn't end there. On Apr. 20, Brooklyn squared off against Lehman for the second time in ten days, losing another doubleheader to the Lightning. In game one, Brooklyn lost 5-12. Catcher Zoey Van Vleet was responsible for Brooklyn's three earned runs, with two hits and three RBIs. Brooklyn also scored twice on errors. Game two saw Brooklyn lose 2-14 in six innings. With the loss, Brooklyn found itself falling even further in the CUNYAC standings.

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The game started well for the Bulldogs. Brooklyn scored its only two runs in the first inning and held Lehman scoreless. After that, the Lightning poured it on, scoring 14 unanswered runs. With the loss against Lehman, Brooklyn had suffered an eight-game losing streak. The Bulldogs finally found a victory on Apr. 21 against York College. The Bulldogs swept the Cardinals and beat them by a combined 27 runs. In game one, pitcher Danielle Guzzardi held York scoreless and only allowed two hits. She also struck out ten batters along the way. Brooklyn won game one 15-0 in five innings. Game two saw another impressive offensive output. The Bulldogs compiled 15 runs and only allowed two, beating York in five innings once again. Stella Witkowski hit a home run along the way, her second in one week. Brooklyn could not build upon its success against York when the team faced Hunter College on Apr. 22. Brooklyn was held scoreless on its way to two double-digit losses. Game one saw the Bulldogs lose 0-13, and game two saw them lose 0-10. It was not an ideal outcome for a Brooklyn team that needs as many wins as possible heading towards the postseason.

The Bulldogs will look to rack up as many wins as possible before the end of the regular season. Their next chance will be a doubleheader against York College on Apr. 27.