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THE BROOKLYN COLLEGE
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Tenant Sues After Flatbush Building Collapse Claims Multiple Lives



1321 and 1323 Flatbush Ave. after the collapse./***Courtesy of Jwswikiuser191 via Wikimedia Commons***

By Emily Nixon
News Editor

Dengane Omari Jack, a tenant, alleged in a lawsuit that he reported cracks in the building's exterior weeks before a three-story residential building collapsed into a neighboring construction site at 1321 Flatbush Avenue on Nov. 11.

"During October 2026, [Jack] observed cracks at or near the building's entrance, photographed those cracks, and reported the condition to the landlord or management responsible for the building," stated the lawsuit filed on Nov. 16. " [Jack] was falsely told, in substance, that the condition was not the landlord's fault or could not be fixed."

Eight people, including two children, were killed in the collapse, according to The New York Times (NYT).

Nicole Daniela Sabala Rodriguez, 9, and Kevin Santiago Reyes Gonzalez, 11, were the youngest victims. Rodriguez's father, Juan Daniel Sabala Guzman, 31, also perished in the collapse.

Among those who lost their lives were construction workers who worked at the site next door. 26-year-old Edgar Santiago Sapón Gutierrez, from Guatemala, José Luis Caguana Cosquillo, 26, and Gabriel Siguencia, 22, both from Ecuador.

Mamadou Bhoye Barry, 23, and Mamadou Bhoye N'Diaye, 31, were roommates from Guinea who perished while getting ready to go to work.

Eighteen people were injured either in the collapse or its aftermath, according to a press conference held by New York City (NYC) Mayor Zohran Mamdani the morning after the incident. Four of the injured were firefighters digging victims from the rubble.

One notable survivor of the incident was a gray and white cat named Issac, who was reunited with his family members, Zariah, 13, and Sheena Coleman, Zariah's mother, four days after the building adjacent to their apartment collapsed, according to NYT.

The lawsuit alleged that Olufemi Falade, the landlord of 1321 Flatbush, had been made aware of possible risk months before the tragedy.

"A preconstruction condition survey ("Pre-Construction Survey") prepared for the project in or about March 2026 documented cracking in the building's exterior," stated the lawsuit. "The Pre-Construction Site Conditions required competent evaluation in planning and performing excavation alongside the building."

New York's Building Code requires such surveys before starting any excavation exceeding 10 feet in depth regardless of distance from an adjacent building. These surveys document the baseline stability of the adjacent buildings and prevent potential lawsuits and damage to nearby properties, according to ABC Safety Group.

The lawsuit alleged that Falade, among other entities responsible for 1321 Flatbush, did not properly monitor the excavation process.

"During the Project, the excavation at the Construction Site was carried out to a depth exceeding ten feet below grade," stated the lawsuit. "[The construction was done] without adequate measures to preserve the Building's stability, and prevent loss of supporting soil, settlement and structural movement."

Falade has made the Department of Housing Preservation and Development's (HPD) list of worst landlords six times in the last decade, according to a press release by the NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams. The property itself has 98 open violations "ranging from bedbugs to leaks," as reported by CBS.

In response to the tragedy, multiple NYC departments have launched an investigation into the property owners to discover the cause of the collapse.

"A tragedy of this magnitude demands a comprehensive and thorough investigation that includes both the construction site and the building that collapsed," said NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani in a press conference on Nov. 12.

The New York Department of Building's logo./
Courtesy of the NYC.gov website

The investigation will span all properties owned by Falade and any relevant entities involved in 1321 Flatbush Ave, according to Mamdani.

"The investigation will not stop at the sites that we are here to speak about today, but will extend to any and all sites that those who operated these sites are currently operating in across our city," said Mamdani. "If there is anyone or any entity operating in this city that bears responsibility for what happened, we will hold them fully accountable."

Multiple community hubs have begun organizing to provide for the victims of the collapse and others displaced in the community. The YMCA, located at 1401 Flatbush Ave, collected donations of items and gift cards to help support victims of the incident, according to their Instagram.

"The city and the Red Cross are continuing to provide expanded services from the YMCA, including temporary housing for displaced residents, assistance with social services, and mental health support," said Mamdani in the Nov. 12 press conference.

Blocks from the collapse, multiple Brooklyn College (BC) organizations such as the Student Activities, Involvement & Leadership Center (SAIL) and the Black and Latino Male Initiative (BLMI) began collecting donations to support affected families, according to their Instagram. BC Bound students, a program for individuals who earned their GED to enter as full-time freshman students at BC, collected approximately $1,000, which was then used to purchase essential supplies to donate to the YMCA for affected families, according to a BC Brief.

The Department of Buildings told residents of 1323 Flatbush Ave. that due to structural risks, they would be unable to retrieve their property from their homes, reported NBC.

"Unfortunately, allowing workers into the building to do the necessary heavy-duty shoring needed to stabilize the building would put those workers at risk," said Buildings Commissioner Ahmed Tigani in a statement to NBC. "Given the dangerous condition of the building and the imperative to make sure no one else gets hurt, ordering for the controlled, safe demolition of the building is the only available option."

As the community began to repair itself, Mamdani reminded the community they were not suffering alone.

"This has been a very dark evening and morning for our city," said Mamdani. "We are mourning too many people who we loved. And as we grieve, and as we rebuild, we will do so together, as one city."

NVIDIA Embroiled In Scandal After CEO Found Having Extramarital Affairs

By Haliya Jooda
Staff Writer



NVIDIA Logo./***Courtesy of the Nvidia website***

On Nov. 17, Jensen Huang made his first public statement after his resignation as Nvidia's CEO and cofounder following a scandal regarding his multiple extramarital affairs. He apologized and suggested he would return to NVIDIA if given the chance.

"Since my departure, I've seen an outpouring of calls from NVIDIA's employees, investors, business partners, and customers for me to return as CEO [...] If the Board of Directors decides that my return is in the best interest of our shareholders, our employees, the company, and America, I would be honored to answer these calls and return as CEO," said Jensen Huang on X.

The discovery of Huang's affair came after a New York Times (NYT) exclusive on Oct. 29.

The NYT first reported that a top executive at Megaspeed was suspected of smuggling advanced Nvidia chips to China. Megaspeed is the biggest buyer of Nvidia chips in Southeast Asia.

This quickly set off alarms at United Stated (U.S.) intelligence agencies, as the U.S. had barred the sale of Nvidia chips to China since 2022 to keep its edge in the AI race against China, according to the Council on Foreign Relations.

It became even more alarming to the U.S. agencies when they learned that Alice Huang had close connections to one of the most influential people in the AI world, as reported by the NYT.

The U.S. intelligence agencies alleged that Alice Huang (no relation to Jensen Huang) was recruited as a spy to influence Nvidia to make its most advanced chips more available in China through her upcoming appointment as a top executive in the company.

Ms. Huang, once a television reporter in China, became a director at Singapore-based Megaspeed in 2023. The two met in Dec. 2023–both married at the time, Mr. Huang to Lori Huang, Ms. Huang to Kang Wei–when they had dinner with colleagues at a restaurant in Singapore. In June 2024, they were seen socializing at an event in Taipei, Taiwan.

After the 2023 meeting in Singapore, Ms. Huang, whose Chinese name is Huang Le, used her experience and connections in the world of Shanghai finance to work her way into tech circles. She turned Megaspeed into a destination for Nvidia technology, working with a longtime business partner who was often introduced as her husband, according to the NYT.

A year prior to the reveal of the affair, President Trump had been briefed about the intelligence findings and chose to do nothing about it, reported the NYT.

Trump denied the allegations and claimed he had heard nothing about it, according to the NYT. Disrupting Nvidia's chip sales, which drive U.S. AI advancement and the entire economy, as the company makes up around 8% of the S&P 500 by market capitalization, as well as further complicating trade relations with China, were points of concern for Trump, according to Forbes.

Trump and Mr. Huang have been close since their first meeting in Jan. 2025.

Trump was taken by Mr. Huang's charisma and success in building Nvidia into the dominant player in its industry, people familiar with the matter told The Wall Street Journal.

Trump often referenced Mr. Huang's genius and role in keeping the U.S. ahead of China in the AI race, calling him at night to consult him on major policy decisions, The Wall Street Journal added.

On Nov. 8, in an email sent out to Nvidia employees, Mr. Huang admitted to having the affair.

"I owe my family and all of you an apology. I was unfaithful to my wife. My actions hurt her and our children. There is no excuse for what I did. I am deeply sorry," wrote Huang.

The following day, at a press conference, when asked by a reporter about Mr. Huang's affair, Trump said he had spoken to him and was "amazed" by claims that Huang had an affair with an alleged Chinese spy, and that the FBI was now looking into the issue, reported The Guardian.

For the most part, Beijing has denied claims that Ms. Huang was a Chinese spy, calling the allegation "unsubstantiated," according to AP News.

"The so-called Chinese spy allegation is unsubstantiated. It is nothing but smears against China," Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Guo Jiakun said.

Singapore also said it was investigating Megaspeed and that it "does not condone businesses" circumventing or violating other countries' export controls, according to AP News.

Mr. Huang was accused of a second affair by the NYT on Nov. 11. This time with Kimberly Powell, Nvidia's vice president of health care. This relationship violated Nvidia's code of conduct.

In it, employees are told to "avoid situations where our actions create conflict," including "personal relationships," and the company states that it "promptly investigates reports of misconduct."

The two were captured on video being affectionate at a San Jose, CA, hotel during an Nvidia conference in March, the NYT wrote, although the authors noted that they had not seen the video.

On Nov. 12, Mr. Huang resigned as president, CEO, and board member. The Nvidia Board of Directors then appointed Colette Kress, executive vice president and Chief Financial Officer, as Interim CEO, according to a press release by Nvidia.

Allegations of a third affair with a second Nvidia employee were released by Reuters on Nov. 13, who remained unnamed, as the fallout from the scandal spread. Reuters cited two anonymous sources describing an "intimate relationship" with another Nvidia employee. The report did not name the woman, and Nvidia declined to comment to Reuters.

Following his resignation, a petition was started to reinstate Mr. Huang as Nvidia's CEO. It has over 200,000 signatures, from prominent tech leaders, Nvidia employees, and shareholders as of Nov. 20.

"A petition is underway to reinstate Jensen, and I'm signing it too," Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk posted on X.

Y Combinator CEO Garry Tan also posted that he'd signed, saying: "Jensen deserves due process, not whatever is happening right now." Epic Games CEO Tim Sweeney posted "save Jensen!" as he shared the petition.

But Nvidia's board unanimously accepted Mr. Huang's voluntary resignation and has no plans to reinstate him, Harvey C. Jones, the chair of the board, said in a call to the NYT on Nov. 17.

Following President Trump's meeting in Shenzhen on Nov. 18 and 19 for the 2026 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Trump told reporters that he discussed Huang with China's leader Xi Jinping.

"He said, 'Oh, brilliant, brilliant, he's a brilliant man.' He is," Trump said. "And I think the company, if they were smart, they'd take that brilliant man, accept an apology, and let him go back to work."



Jensen Huang speaking in White House with President Donald Trump./
Courtesy of The White House via Wikimedia Commons

New Student Thesis Film Restrictions: Safety or Censorship?

By Josiah Sanon
Staff Cartoonist



Brooklyn College Film Department logo./***Courtesy of Brooklyn College***

The Brooklyn College (BC) Film Department announced new changes to the safety guidelines for student thesis films in early Nov. Students, staff, and administrators have begun to share their concerns over the regulations censoring student films

The new rules have been a point of controversy amongst students, specifically those in film production. Students have stated they face the strictest restrictions from these new standards. A previous iteration of the rules included not filming in dangerous places such as moving vehicles and rooftops, and not allowing nudity in student films, which was not contested by students.

The Film Department has since increased enforcement of these rules, as well as expanding the list to include more content restrictions. According to an anonymous BC student, "The former no nudity rule has become a restriction on any intimacy shown on screen; even kissing is prohibited."

The restriction on filming in moving vehicles has now broadened to bikes, skateboards, and wheelchairs. The rule about no open flames on set will now extend to various lighting fixtures: candles, matches, lighters, prop cigarettes, and aerosol haze devices, which are assistive lighting fixtures that can't be used in films without a professor's approval.

Students suspect the new rules and enforcement stem from a recent incident on a student's film set, according to a student who worked on the film set where the incident occurred. Following a formal complaint to the film department, a director was allegedly fired from the equipment room after an incident involving nudity while filming on a public beach, according to the source.

The revised guidelines were given to students in their thesis production classes around Oct. 26th. Students who already worked on their scripts and filmed their scenes throughout several semesters seemingly got the short end of the stick, as previously approved films were now getting denied.

The penalties for having a film that breaks the rules are also very severe; according to an anonymous production major, students whose thesis films did not conform to the new restrictions risked not having their work shown at BC's Annual Film Festival. They also risked failing thesis classes if guideline violations in their work were deemed severe enough.

Film department Chairperson Sarah Christman told The Vanguard that affected students would receive support from the department.

"The updated guidelines were first introduced in thesis classrooms, where the most complex and large-scale production takes place. Thesis productions affected by the updated guidelines are receiving individualized support to preserve students' creative visions and make sure they remain on track to graduate on time," said Christman.

Along with Christman, film production Professor Mustapha Khan has been working with his students to adjust to the revised guidelines and joined the statement, rejecting the notion that the new regulations were a way to censor student films.

"As a working filmmaker myself, I am certainly obligated to follow the safety protocols outlined by my union (the Directors Guild) and those of the other professional film unions, who work diligently to keep their members safe while making films," said Khan. "In my 30-plus years of making films. I have never felt creatively limited by the boundaries of these common sense safety guidelines. If anything, I have felt reassured by them, and have always been able to freely tell the stories I wanted to tell."

The production student body is seemingly split on this topic. However, most are not so sure about the fairness of the rules, and some wonder if their artistic expression is being over-policed.

Justin Lewis, a film major with a former focus in production, felt that film students will continue to be able to fully express themselves under these new guidelines.

"The restrictions are more practical than artistic," said Lewis. "But overall, you can still find a workaround that fits your artistic vision, so I still think it is possible."

Reyli Veras, a production major who shot their thesis under the new guidelines, told The Vanguard that the new regulations are reminiscent of the Hays Code era.

The Hays Code was a strict set of guidelines in Hollywood instituted from 1934 to 1968 that banned profanity and obscenity while heavily controlling the way things like criminality, violence, substance use, promiscuity, and homosexuality were depicted.

"I really do feel like these rules are very limiting and restricting,"

"Sometimes, that can be a good thing, but it just feels like too much. [Film students] can't even light a cigarette on camera. It feels like we're making films during the Hays Code era."

said Veras.

A film student who spoke to The Vanguard on condition of anonymity said the new rules were still being negotiated with the department administration.

"Literally anything interesting and edgy got banned," said the student. "However, I will say, us students have done a lot of heavy pushback against these rules, and it's still an ongoing conversation."

Students have been looking for workarounds to the rules, while others are feeling the weight of these new rules on their creative vision and artistic pursuits.

As negotiations continue about the guidelines, the future of student film productions' creative expressions on the BC campus is far from set in stone.

One Campus, Many Cultures: BC Celebrates Multicultural Night

By Vanessa Archer
Staff Writer

On Nov. 19, students from different cultures and on-campus clubs came together to host Brooklyn College (BC)'s annual Multicultural Night. A collaboration between Black Student Union (BSU), Caribbean Student Union (CSU), The Blaze Dance Team, Dominican Student Movement (MeDo), York College Dance Team (Sovryn), and fashion designers Solitudenewyork and Cozycrochetcouture showcased their designs on some of the BC students.

Performers went through rigorous days of rehearsal; people worked together on their costumes, and others perfected their performances.

The night opened up with a fashion showcase featuring pieces from Cozy Crochet Couture. Models walked across wearing outfits designed to represent different Caribbean flags. Various pieces like skirts, two-piece sets, pants, and dresses were knitted in a variety of colors to create flags.

"I wanted to give Caribbean heritage with these pieces," stated Hannah Pierre, fashion designer and CEO of Cozy Crochet Couture. "I wanted to show that each color, each stitch will show the background of each person's culture."

Following Cozy Crochet Couture's showcase, streetwear brand Solitude New York followed suit with their own original pieces.



Erika Torres walking in Carnival Attire./***Vanessa Archer***

Thierno Bah, CEO of Solitude New York, shared his experience of making his fashion statement noticeable.

"I was inspired by the streets, growing up in impoverished neighborhoods really opened my eyes to fashion," Bah shared. "The goal behind my brand is to bring authenticity to everyone, meaning bringing back what you like to do and not worrying about others' judgments and opinions."

Once the fashion show concluded, Sovryn performed a piece to various different genres of music; from hip-hop to Spanish-language music and afrobeats, the dancers showcased different styles and rhythms, bringing cultural heritage into one routine.



Final walk of all the models dressed in their crochet pieces./***Vanessa Archer***

The performances continued as BC's own student organizations took the stage. BSU, CSU, and The Blaze Dance Team each brought their own style and cultural heritage to the dance floor. As the music played, people in the audience sang and danced in their seats. The Blaze Dance Team added its own creative twist by incorporating pieces of High School Musical into their performance.

"Me being an African and the only one on my team, I feel blessed to bring my culture to the team and explain different styles and techniques that they're not really used to," expressed Evelyn Kedelina, president of Blaze Dance Team.

The CSU brought a carnival atmosphere to the stage featuring colorful masks and costumes representing different countries. Each performer walked out by country and performed a short routine while showcasing their costume.

"The biggest challenge [of planning Multicultural Night] was getting funding. You have to make sure your event is worth funding, especially with how big this event is, providing food, music, drinks, and costumes," shared CSU President Shovanna Grosvenor.

MeDo President Lizmell Rodriguez emphasized the importance of cultural clubs on campus in supporting representation.

"[MeDo] is just not a club but it's a movement to represent Dominican students on campus. But we welcome everybody of other cultures to celebrate Dominican culture and keep it alive on campus."

BSU played an important role in bringing cultural representation to the event. Their members contributed to the celebration of Black culture and excellence, emphasizing the importance of creating a space where students of color can share their experience and grow in their identity.

"We hope that people can just celebrate black culture and how black culture has a major role in American culture," said BSU President Jayden Johnson.

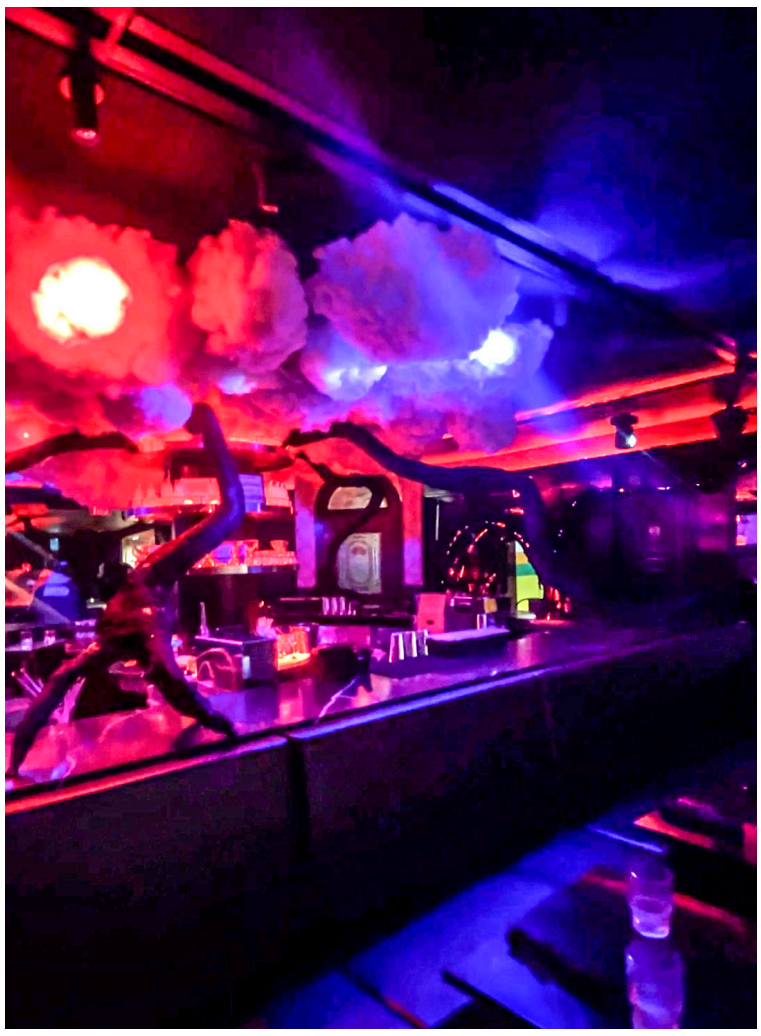
"If it wasn't for the music we made, the art we made, the style that we have, American culture would not be what it is now. We hold so much ground when it comes to just the evolution of what culture is in America, in the world as a whole."

As the evening continued, food was then shared among the guests. They enjoyed a variety of Caribbean and international dishes: jerk chicken, macaroni and cheese, jollof rice, curry chicken, roti, and more. The variety of these dishes allowed attendees to experience the art and taste of different cultures.

From colorful fashion collections to cultural dances and dishes, BC's Multicultural Night offered students more than an evening of entertainment. This event showed that no matter where you're from or what background you have, culture brings people together.

For more information on the clubs involved in Multicultural Night, visit @brooklyncollege_csu, @bc_blackstudentunion,

Into The Upside Down: 'Stranger Things' Diner Opens in NYC



Bar Area of the Diner./***Serena Edwards***

By Serena Edwards
Managing Editor

Entering the Upside Down: Event-curating company Bucket Listers and Netflix collaborated on a new Stranger Things Diner in honor of the 10th anniversary of the Netflix original series.

Stranger Things is a sci-fi horror series set in Hawkins, a fictional town in 1980s Indiana. During this multi-season series, the disappearance of a boy sparks a string of mysterious and supernatural events, including the introduction of a powerful girl named Eleven.

Just minutes away from Times Square, the experience takes you through all five seasons of the series with hidden gems and photo opportunities. When walking into the diner, you enter through the hallways of Hawkins High. Missing Will Byers flyers are pinned to the bulletin board, and the lockers feature clothing from characters such as Steve Harrington and Robin Buckley, immersing you in Hawkins before you enter the diner.

With an entrance modeled after the interdimensional door, "the Rift", the diner includes important symbols such as the villain Vecna's father clock that is used to possess the other characters.

"Netflix's Stranger Things has built one of the most recognizable worlds in entertainment, and our goal is to give fans a new way to experience the beloved story," said Derek Berry, President of Experiences at Bucket Listers, in a press release by Bucket Listers.

The diner featured a curated menu with food and beverages inspired by different characters and phrases from Eleven's levitating waffles to mocktail "Should I Stay or Should I Glow," which sits in a lightbulb cup.

Stranger Things merchandise was also available at the diner in a place decorated as Will's Cast.

Speaking about the timing of the diner's opening, Keely O'Neal, Director of Experiences at Bucket Listers, stated how the timing fits perfectly with Stranger Things Day; a day celebrating the hit television show dedicated after the day Will Byers went missing on the show.

"It couldn't have been better timing because we announced on Stranger Things Day, we went on sale on Stranger Things Day, so it was perfect timing," stated O'Neal.

Bucket Listers is known for many curating experiences and pop-ups across the nation in major cities like Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Chicago, and so many others.

" [. . .] This is just one of the coolest experiences we could bring to life. You can see everywhere, there's super fun special effects. Every single area is a vignette from the show. Easter eggs from season one through five."

The Diner's opening comes right after Netflix's announcement of a spin-off to the original series, "Other Worlds: A Stranger Things Adventure". The prequel series is set years before the original series during the 1950s in the heart of Hawkins.

Bringing back excitement to the brand, the diner included many photo ops including the ice cream shop, Scoops Ahoy, which was featured in the series during season three. The diner also included the Byers couch, where you can use a walkie-talkie to speak to Will Byers in the "Upside Down".

When speaking with the Bucket List team, Events and Experiences Operations Manager Nyeri Stepanian spoke about the hidden gems throughout the diner.

"There is a storm in the mine layer that happens every hour, which is amazing. It goes along with the lights flickering and makes a whole noise," explained Stepanian.

The diner is designed after multiple settings of the show; one featured setting is designed after the series-featured "Mine Layer," where the main antagonist resides.

Many of the staff at Bucket Listers found this collaboration to be fitting, with almost all of them being fans of the show themselves.

"I think it was a perfect partnership with Netflix where they came up with their ideas and we are huge fans of the show, so we had our own ideas and the demogorgon was one of them," stated Stepanian.

O'Neal explained the process of this diner coming to life, "We always put a tremendous amount of work into all of our projects. It's been really great working with Netflix on this from the start. The whole thing takes a couple of months, you know, between 180 and, you know, working with our venue and just putting everything together."

The Diner is open for reservations starting Nov. 18 and runs until Feb. 28.

For more information about the Stranger Things diner and Bucket Listers, follow @bucketlistersnyc.
For more information on Stranger Things, visit their official Instagram: @strangerthingtv



Graphic by Jocelyn Rios



Photos Courtesy of Bucket Listers and Serena Edwards./***Collage by Jocelyn Rios***

MESHA Hosts Book Talk on "Un Nahual En El Imperio"



Panel speakers for the MESHA book talk./***Courtesy of MESHA***

By Manuel Polanco
Sports Editor

Brooklyn College (BC)'s Mexican Heritage Student Association (MEHSA) hosted a panel discussion about the book "Un Nahual En El Imperio" on Nov. 19 in the Woody Tanger Auditorium.

Junior and MEHSA President Elizabeth Vargas led the discussion with MEHSA Vice President and junior Alejandro Hernandez.

The book follows the life of Don Jaime Lucero and his path to the United States, navigating life in a new country as an immigrant. The book was written by Mexican author and journalist Maurizo Guerrero covering topics of immigration, the American dream, and immigrants' rights.

These past couple of years Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids were rampant and mass deportation escalated, the rights of migrants were a key thing people talked about and were one thing that Lucero talked about in this panel.

A Nahual is a shapeshifter who can transform into an animal and originated in Mesoamerican folklore.

When he was younger, he was dubbed a Nahual and according to a native healer in Latin America (also known as a curandera), would be hurt by the outside world.

Whilst not transforming into an animal, Lucero transformed into a different version of himself that was much different than the one he was when living in Mexico.

"One of our biggest goals is being demonstrative of Mexican heritage and culture and the people. If you look at the statistics, a lot of the Mexicans living in New York City are of immigrant origin or descent. It's a reflection of the community we want to highlight. Being here with ISSO, whose main goal is to empower immigrant students, is a beautiful thing," shared club connector and MEHSA Co-Founder Ari Tirado.

Lucero created two organizations: a foundation called Fuerza Migrante, which provides legal help to migrants, as well as Casa Puebla, which gives out scholarships to many Latinos, regardless of immigrant status.

When asked how it feels to have a biography written about him, Lucero responded with enthusiasm about readers seeking representation.

"When you read the book you'll find something that speaks to you, your father, your mother, something that speaks to all of us. It's a book that talks about migrants and the process that has been continued to better your life in a new place."

Vargas felt proud to lead the event and represent not only her club but the BC Latino community.

"It was definitely nerve-racking. I hold Don Jaime to a very high regard, and I respect him a lot, and to hear him say on stage that he was nervous as well […] It makes me feel like I'm taking the right steps. I always want to be able to represent my team and community any way that I can."

Director of ISSO Jesus Perez spoke on the panel and assisted as a translator for Lucero.

Perez was honored by the work MESHA did with the event and was proud of the leadership shown.

When asked how she wants this book to represent, Vargas emphasized the recurring theme of empowering all members of the Mexican community.

"I want this book talk to be representative of what a Mexican can do in this country, especially undocumented," shared Vargas. "I want this event to be indicative of the fact that no matter how old you are, no matter where you are in life or stage of success you're at, you can always pursue whatever you want, whenever you want."

For more information regarding MEHSA, visit their Instagram: @bc.mehsa25
"Un Nahual En El Imperio" is available at any major bookstore or online publishing site.

American Students Must Take Note of The 11N General Strike in Spain

By Adam Magwood
Staff Cartoonist

On Sept. 23, María del Carmen Abascal, 87, was evicted from her home of 71 years in Madrid, Spain, and carried out on a stretcher by law enforcement. Abascal was expected to be discharged, but no more than 2 weeks later, she passed away in a hospital.

The real estate company that owned her property sought to rent it to another tenant at a higher price, uprooting Abascal from the home she had lived in for decades.

What survives her now is an image of the violence of the housing industry in the country, and an ignition of a political mobilization that has long been brewing. The frustrations felt by many are not only towards the housing market, but also towards the ills of capitalism, and a distrust of leadership.

Marches and demonstrations have taken place, from the encampments at Puerta del Sol in Madrid to the mass protests in Barcelona.

Alongside tenant and trade unions in Spain, youth have firmly established themselves in this fight. This collaboration has led to a call for a general strike on Nov. 11, ahead of the Nov. 29 snap elections.

The students and youth of Spain have connected the struggles of the housing activists to their own, and student groups like Contracorriente and CRT (The Workers Revolutionary Current) have been leading the charge by organizing education strikes and assemblies that promote class struggle and solidarity in support of the general strike on Nov. 11.

Under the slogan of "Ens Costa La Vida" ("Living costs us our life"), demands include defending housing and public services, and sustainable infrastructure and pay.

Marching in the strike, there was a palpable fury in the voice of the people, but even more palpable was the compassion people had for their peers.



Marchers protesting at the November 11th General Strike in Barcelona Spain./***Adam Magwood***

There was music and hopeful chanting, graffiti, fireworks, and noisemakers; there was laughing and embracing, creating a welcoming environment that encouraged unity.

Several people were there attending their first protest; some were experienced protestors, and others were used to being involved in such demonstrations.

The jingling of house keys was a recurring sound as protestors marched, a visual reference to the struggle to afford a home; as more people joined each time, it became clear that what happened to María del Carmen Abascal can happen to anyone.

Various groups filled the streets, from the flags for Spain's General Union of Workers (UGT), masked graffiti artists who made their way through the crowds to mark the streets, communists flying the hammer and sickle, as well as young children and students.

Kids no older than 5 years old were shouting for "La Vaga General" (General Strike), and everywhere you looked was a congregation of students, be it high school or college or graduate students, all who showed up that day to demand a future they feel has been ripped from their grasp.

Around 25% of those arrested in the Barcelona protests on Oct. 24th were minors, demonstrating the fact that the radical political mobilization in not only Spain, but globally, is skewing younger.

Students, who have lived here most of their lives and want to continue doing so while studying, told me that they "dream of buying a house," though it is unlikely because of the current conditions of the market, and "people aged 22-25 are now staying at home with their parents instead of living on their own."

The University of Barcelona was a few blocks from the main street where the demonstration was happening, and it was a gathering place for many.

Students were walking out of the building with their flags ready, emergency aid groups prepared for the strike on the entrance steps. A huge banner hung from the building that read "11N – VAGA GENERAL." This was the first general strike Spain has seen in roughly 14 years, and another student told me that despite the current conditions being fought, she is more hopeful now than ever, and at the strike of 400,000 in Barcelona today, she had a "lot of faith that this will work."

Natalia Lago, of student political group Contracorriente, remarks in an interview with "El Tablero" that "we want to do what they did in France."

France has been in the news as of late for the mass uprisings in its cities and suburbs, stemming from students fed up with the state of their underfunded education system, short staffing, and poor building quality inhibiting their education, and eventually bringing in workers who were fed up with the austerity of the Macron Regime.

India has recently seen its young population rise up as part of the "Cockroach" movement, co-opting a comparison India's Chief Justice made between student protestors and pests.

Social media shows us in real time what is happening on the ground internationally and allows this political energy to spread like wildfire globally, independent of borders; many whom I spoke to insisted it played a major role in spreading the word and organizing the strike.

The student protests in Belgium and school occupations in Italy show a youth fed up with a system that has failed them, realizing the future they were promised does not exist under it.

Democratic Socialism has seen major wins domestically and received fantastic publicity in New York City, with Mayor Zohran Mamdani.

Young Americans are more sympathetic to socialism as they become disillusioned with capitalism. The second election of President Donald Trump is, to my mind, a great turning point of American politics, as we have since witnessed a huge leftward shift in the population– see the recent blue wave covered by The Vanguard.

However, the fight for a better future is not only at the polls. As Lago states in her interview, channeling discontent cannot be directed solely toward electing candidates "at the service of [capitalists]." The dire housing situation plaguing Spain has happened while the center-left PSOE and SUMAR parties have held power since 2018.

The strike on Nov. 11 shows the power of unity and solidarity, and our ability as young people to disrupt the status quo.

There is certainly a fire that burns for justice at the heart of the student population in the United States.

As the suffocation under a capitalist system becomes increasingly undeniable to us and youth everywhere, what's preventing us from similar mobilization?



Marchers at the November 11th General Strike in Barcelona, Spain./***Adam Magwood***

"...And Justice for All": The Disconnect Between Song and Artist

By Elianna Tsigler
Staff Writer



Metallica's "...And Justice For All" Lady Liberty in Las Vegas Sphere./***Courtesy of Brett Murray***

Whenever someone asks how they can become part of the punk, goth, metal, or any alternative music scene, the answer is often the same: It is about more than just listening to the music or dressing the part. These communities have historically been tied to specific values, and to be a part of it, you must align with them.

But what happens when some of the most influential bands within these genres no longer uphold those same principles? What happens if these principles never existed?

On Oct. 10, during a performance at the Las Vegas Sphere, Metallica frontman James Hetfield stated that "Metallica is not here like some other entertainers to influence you with their bull–."

The band has been saying this for years; however, to many new fans this comes as a shock—myself included. "I hate politics, I don't want to talk about politics," Hetfield shared with La Tercera back in 2017.

As someone hearing this for the first time, it's quite bewildering to hear this contradicting apolitical stance when, as a longstanding fan, you can't escape the political messages in Metallica's music.

In an interview with Rolling Stone, Hetfield spoke about the meaning behind one of their songs, "Ride the Lightning." He stated that "We just got into some social topics. The death penalty was a big question and the electric chair […] That's what that song was about, being accidentally found guilty and put to death with no way to stop it."

"Ride the Lightning's" lyrics portray criticism about the government: "Who made you, god, to say 'I'll take your life from you?'" This is a rather common argument opposing the death penalty as well, which can be seen in an article by Amnesty International—a group that campaigns against the death penalty—where it states that "All too often, it's [the death penalty] used as a weapon of state control – designed to expand authorities' unchecked powers and punish dissent."



James Hetfield performing in Las Vegas./***Courtesy of Britt Bowman.jpg***

Similar things can be said for "...And Justice for All". Some of the songs on this album, such as the title track, "The Shortest Straw," "Blackened," "One," and "Eye of the Beholder," all hold political meanings.

Hetfield also said in a 2018 interview conducted by So What! magazine that "'The Shortest Straw' for sure is more political than any of the other songs. I mean, it talks about a time, McCarthyism and the artist not being able to be free, but also [when] communism is a problem." He also affirms that "'One' is an anti-war song."

During live performances, these messages are reinforced—especially for "One"—through visuals depicting war and destruction. But, despite all of this, in 1992 Hetfield said that "I mean we're not anti-war, we're not pro-war."

Fan reactions have been split. Some have expressed support, arguing that politics have no place in music or that they don't matter. Meanwhile, others question the significance of the albums mentioned, such as "...And Justice for All," if they weren't supposed to be political.

The discussion grew further when Sharon Osbourne—the wife of former Black Sabbath frontman and arguably the most influential figure in metal, Ozzy Osbourne—publicly supported Hetfield's statement.

While it may come as a shock, it is something that has apparently been said for decades. In a 1970 interview with New Musical Express, Osbourne said that while Black Sabbath's song "War Pigs" carried a message, the band itself was not political: "We're not a political group, it's just that most of our songs have messages."

It appears that when politics are mentioned outside of their music, it is an issue, and the band no longer has a stance on what their music advocates for. Although people can interpret lyrics in many ways, some meanings are simply undeniable, especially when reaffirmed by the artist themselves.

As a member of the metal community, I can confirm that it is much like a family. The community itself spans multiple generations of fans. We are all there for one specific reason: to enjoy the music. But we enjoy the music not only for how it sounds, but also for how it resonates with us and the messages it conveys.

Heavy metal has always had political roots. It began specifically with the Vietnam War, and "since metal has had a rich history of influencing the anti-war counterculture movement."

There have been three major phases in metal: "(1) The 70s-80s anti-war rhetoric, (2) the 70s anti-monarchy movement in Britain, and (3) the modern movement against corporatism in the US," according to The Sais Observer.

Thrash metal came from heavy metal, emerging in the early 1980s, and kept the political ideology, with messages changing to reflect the issues of their time. Overall, "the world started seeing metal bands as necessary voices."

This is why the issue has become such a dilemma. A considerable portion of the community has been built around these values, and many bands have incorporated them into their music. While there are plenty of non-political songs throughout the genre's history, those that carry political or social messages should not be dismissed under the guise of neutrality. Doing so risks overlooking the significance those songs have held for listeners and the role they have played in shaping the community itself.

This is not to say that the legitimacy of the messages or the genre should be in question—as if the pillars are crashing down—or that people should stop being fans, because, regardless of the ideologies the band may hold, the music speaks louder than them.

We're Ready For Another Woman-Led Rap Revolution

By Samuel Mortel
Opinions Editor



Collage by Samuel Mortel

In every generation of rap, there have always been a few women holding their own in what's considered a male-dominated genre. From Queen Latifah to Lil Kim to Gangsta Boo to Nicki Minaj to Cardi B and Doechii, women have been there standing right alongside men, shaping the culture. But a few years ago, we saw a real phenomenon: a rap ecosystem where women were firmly in control, undoubtedly the key figures driving innovation and keeping the genre afloat. Over time, this dynamic has leveled out, but we may be on the precipice of another Women-Led Rap Revolution.

In the early 2020s, women were dominating the rap game. From 2020 to 2024, it seemed like every viral song you heard on the radio or social media was made by a female emcee, with numerous stars rising to fame off catchy, fun hits.

By the end of 2020, music journalists were already sensing a coming shift in the genre, labeling it as The Year Female Rappers Dominated. Since then, we've gotten many monumental, chart-topping hits from artists who've grown to become some of the defining voices of our era, like "Savage" by Megan Thee Stallion, "Up" by Cardi B, "Big Energy" by Latto, "Tomorrow" by Glorilla, and "Agora Hills" by Doja Cat. While there were, of course, a bunch of hits by male rappers as well, this burst of female talent was something relatively unseen before in the rap ecosystem.

Recently, this phenomenon has settled down, and while all of the listed women rappers are still as powerful as ever, the playing field between men and women has evened out.

However, while the wave of female rap superstars has calmed down in the mainstream, a talented crop of smaller artists is waiting to take over. Just in the past year, we've seen career moves that show these women have a bright future ahead of them, and some might cross the bridge from the underground to the mainstream.

On May 15, 2026, millions of people got their first taste of Molly Santana. The 22-year-old rapper has been grinding for years, with her earliest album being 2022's "Neptune". Earlier this year, the young veteran got the biggest spotlight of her career with a feature on Drake's song "Run To Atlanta" alongside Future. Before the song dropped, Molly Santana had just over 500k monthly listeners on Spotify, and after delivering a verse on the same track as two of the biggest stars in rap, her listenership shot up to nearly 18 million the following month. As of now, her monthly listeners have plateaued at nearly 4 million, but she stands to capitalize on her recent success with her upcoming album "Black Punk".

Similar to Molly Santana, BKTHERULA has had skin in the game for a while. The 24-year-old is mostly known for her songs "Tweakin' Together" and "SANTANNY", released in 2020 and 2021, respectively. These tracks had moderate success as social media hits, but so far that hasn't translated into mainstream recognition. Still, the emcee has maintained a decent career with a number of relatively impressive projects. This year, BKTHERULA has made larger strides, becoming a member of the newly formed rap group The Scythe, alongside notable names like Denzel Curry and A$AP Ferg, as well as fellow underground female rapper TiaCorine. The group released its debut EP, "Strictly 4 The Scythe," earlier this year. She currently has nearly 2 million monthly listeners on Spotify.

Though Molly Santana and BKTHERULA are the two most prominent women in underground rap, neither is the most famous person in the scene. Though she has an unfair advantage, that title would undoubtedly go to North West, the 13-year-old daughter of Ye (formerly known as Kanye West) and Kim Kardashian. Make no mistake, though; nepotism has little to do with West's rise. She's shown herself to be quite a child prodigy and is on a journey to carve her own lane by showing off the skills she inherited from her father. Her career started to take shape in 2024 when she appeared on "Vultures 1" and its sequel—two albums her father made in collaboration with Ty Dolla $ign. Her track on "Vultures 1," titled "TALKING", is among one of the most listened-to songs on the album. Since then, the young artist has been hard at work making connections throughout the industry.

So far, she's had a feature on FKA Twigs' 2025 album "EUSEXUA" and has built an impressive resume as a producer for fellow underground artists like Matt Proxy, as well as some women and gender minorities like Molly Santana, Babyxsosa and skaiwater (though many of these collaborations are unreleased). She's also released an entirely self-produced EP, "N0rth4Evr," as a precursor to her upcoming debut album, "Elementary School Dropout."

Trim is a rapper whose career is bubbling, and she's bound to explode any day now. In a relatively short time, the 20-year-old hitmaker has garnered a reputation that she feels earns her the title "Princess of Rap", dropping viral songs and earning high-profile features on remixes of some of her catchy anthems, like a rerelease of her song "Boat" featuring Pooh Sheisty and a new edition of "Nobody" featuring Monaleo. She currently has 2 million monthly listeners, but it feels inevitable that she'll become a household name.

This is not to mention the other dozens of unique women rappers who've popped up in recent years like Mel V, Vayda, K3, Anycia, KARRAHBOO, Kori, KingJilli, Lil Glee, Lisha G, Cortisa Star, Bby Kell, or Baby Osamaa—the list can go on and on. There's truly no shortage of young women who'll leave you feeling confident about the future of rap.

It's important to note, though, that all of these artists (with the slight exception of Trim) are trying to rise through the underground scene. It's hard enough to find success with a sound and aesthetic that may be off-putting to mainstream audiences. This is made even harder for women considering that underground rap is even more male-dominated than the mainstream.

Though she's the most prominent woman rapper in the underground, Molly Santana has resisted the "Queen of the Underground" label, explaining she's in a tough position as she feels the scene "doesn't really like women." These rappers have to impress an audience mostly made up of young men, and many are conditioned to simply not take a woman seriously and may especially feel that a woman is "out of place" in an experimental subgenre that is usually more hardcore and violent.

Like in most aspects of life, these women have to thrive in a culture that's positioned against them. Nonetheless, they're so full of talent that some are undoubtedly bound for stardom. I'm always on the search for unique artists with fresh perspectives, and I think diversity adds real value by creating a healthier environment where the genre can evolve. There are few male rappers who are as unique, diverse, and have fresher perspectives than what they provide.

With rap often being such a male-centered field, these women are essential to the continued success of the genre. Remember these names, because it's only a matter of time before some of them transform from interesting underdogs into the superstars shaping our culture.

The Price of Being a Woman in Sports: The Pay Gap Between the NBA and the WNBA

By Victoria Marte
Content Creator



Player's reach for the net ./***Courtesy of Samantha Riedel Yahoo Sports***

The New York Knicks and the New York Liberty have something in common beyond being two professional basketball teams based in the same city; both are led by athletes who've reached the highest level of their sport.

Consider Breanna Stewart and Jalen Brunson; both have led their teams to a championship, making them the faces of New York basketball.

Yet in 2026, Stewart is estimated to make $1.2 million while Brunson is projected to make $32 million, nearly 30 times more than Stewart's salary. The difference cannot simply be attributed solely to talent. It reflects a larger economic and cultural gap between the two leagues.

The players train, compete, and perform under the pressure that comes with being a professional athlete. Despite the similarities between the two leagues, there is a massive difference in how their players are compensated.

This disparity raises a question that goes beyond basketball: if women are capable of playing the same sport at the highest professional level, why is their labor worth so much less?

The easy answer is that the NBA (National Basketball Association) brings in more revenue. The league has more viewers, larger television deals, bigger arenas, and a longer history of commercial success. Due to this, many people argue that the difference in player salaries is simply the result of an economic principle: supply and demand.

More people watch men's basketball, so men's basketball players get paid more. It sounds logical. Yet the problem with this argument is that it treats the current popularity of men's sports as though it appeared naturally, without decades of investment, marketing, and cultural preference behind it.

The difference between the NBA and WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association) is not simply a difference between male and female athletes. It is also a difference between how American culture has historically decided whose athleticism is valuable.

The NBA and WNBA do not operate under identical circumstances. The WNBA was created decades after the NBA, meaning it entered a sports industry already heavily developed around men's basketball. The NBA had years to establish itself as a major American entertainment product, build its audience and create generations of recognizable stars. Meanwhile, the WNBA had to build its audience while simultaneously fighting the idea that women's sports are somehow secondary.

That distinction matters when people use viewership as the explanation for the pay gap. Viewership does influence revenue; it'd be dishonest to pretend otherwise. A league that brings in more money has more money available to distribute to its players. But viewership itself is not created in a vacuum. People watch what they are encouraged to watch. In the early 2000s, fewer than 25% of WNBA games were aired, compared to the NBA, where nearly all games were televised. Fans can only become familiar with a league when they are consistently given opportunities to see it.

This creates a cycle. Men's sports receive more attention, which creates larger audiences: 45% of United States adults follow men's professional sports, compared to 23% of viewers tuning in for women's professional sports. Larger audiences create more advertising and media revenue, which leads to greater investment. That investment makes the sport more visible, which creates an even larger audience. Women's sports have historically been given far less access to this circuit.

The result is a frustrating contradiction. Women are told they need to generate more attention before they can receive the financial investment given to men's sports, even though that investment is one of the things that creates attention.

This becomes even more complicated when looking at the athletes themselves. The WNBA is not made up of athletes who are somehow playing a lesser version of professional basketball. These are elite athletes who have reached the highest level of their sport. Many WNBA players also play overseas during the offseason because their WNBA salaries have historically not provided the same level of financial security available to NBA players.

The issue, then, is not whether women deserve to be paid exactly the same amount as NBA players. The bigger question is why women's athletic labor has historically been valued less and why society continues to accept that difference as though it were inevitable.

There is also something deeply uncomfortable about the way women's sports are often discussed. Female athletes are frequently expected to prove that they are entertaining, marketable, and commercially valuable before their athletic achievements are considered enough. Men's sports are generally allowed to exist; women's sports are often asked to justify their existence.

This is where the conversation about pay goes beyond basketball. The pay gap reflects a cultural hierarchy that has existed far beyond professional sports.

Women have historically entered workplaces where their labor was undervalued, their accomplishments questioned, and their economic contributions treated as secondary. This mentality is reflected in salaries; in 2024, women in NYS made 91.4 cents to every dollar a man made, according to the Department of Labor. Sports simply make that inequality particularly visible because the numbers are so enormous and the comparison between leagues is so easy to see.

The recent growth of women's basketball proves that this system is not permanent. The WNBA has continued attracting attention, developing recognizable stars such as Caitlin Clark and Angel Reese, who have built them a larger audience. That growth causes us to reconsider the assumption that women's sports are inherently less valuable.

Maybe the question should not be, "Why don't WNBA players make as much as NBA players?"But rather, "What would women's sports look like if they had been given the same investment, promotion, and cultural support from the beginning?"

The answer to that question could completely change the conversation. If the WNBA's popularity is growing despite decades of being treated as secondary, perhaps the pay gap is not evidence of women's sports being worth less. Perhaps it shows how long women have been expected to prove their worth in the first place.

The Wound That Never Heals

By Adam Magwood
Staff Cartoonist

