

The Cistercian Informer

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Middle School

College Football Playoffs

By Sean Comstock, Aidan Smith, and Rodrigo Navarro, '24, who are very loyal

The first college football playoff game was one of the craziest. Oklahoma opened the game with a 13-yard touchdown pass from Baker Mayfield to Marquise Brown. Later in the quarter, Rodney Anderson got the lead for the Sooners. Oklahoma started off the 2nd quarter with a 41-yard rush by Rodney Anderson putting them up to 14. Soon after, Georgia returned the favor. Austin Seibert made a close 38-yard field goal to lead his team 24-14. Rodrigo Blankenship countered by making a 55-yard field goal to put the Dawgs down 31-17 at halftime. The Bulldogs continued their momentum with a 50-yard rushing touchdown by Nick Chubb, his first touchdown of the game. In the 4th quarter with 55 seconds left, Nick Chubb made a touchdown run to tie the game and sent it to overtime. Finally, in double OT, Sony Michel had a long touchdown run to send Georgia to the National Championship.

The second college playoff game was absolute domination. The first score of the game was an easy 24-yard field goal from Andy Pappanastos. Alabama scored again with a 12-yard touchdown pass from Jalen Hurts. Then, Clemson returned with a 44-yard field goal from Alex Spence. That ended the half. Then, Spence made a 42-yard field goal to bring up the score 10-6. Again, Jalen Hurts leads his team with a 1-yard touchdown pass to a defensive lineman acting as full-back. Then, Mack Wilson returned

an 18 yard pick-six. Alabama ended the game with a total of 120 passing yards and a pair of passing TDs, while Clemson only had a total of 124 yards and 2 interceptions.

The final game of the year started off with Georgia up 6-0. With full momentum, Mecole Hardman led a 1-yard run to bring the score to 13-0 at the half. Then, a 6-yard TD catch put the Crimson Tide on the board. Mecole Hardman then made a remarkable 80-yard reception for a touchdown, giving Georgia a 20-7 lead. Then, Andy Pappanastos made back-to-back field goals to bring the score to 13-20, Georgia. Tua Tagovailoa responded with a 7-yard pass to Calvin Ridley to tie the game. In overtime, Georgia had a 51-yard field goal to take the lead, but Devonta Smith had a 41-yard touchdown reception to win the game 26-23, and Alabama won the game.



other schools and get to know them. Their expectations were not met. "It was too loud," writes Jakob Quarles in our class group chat. Walker Homan replies, "It was so loud. Also, the St. Mark's people were throwing punch and it got on my shoelaces." Typical.

A few classmates, however, had the right idea about JA, and knew that it is designed to give you an idea of what high school mixers will be like. You just need to enjoy the loud music, punch throwing, and constant moshing. Although it may be important to learn about other people in your grade, you should also just try to have fun. By doing so, you show everyone around you that you are capable of having a good time and you hopefully will be invited to other events where you will have your chance to carry out real conversations with them.

Our first JA was a good learning experience for most of the people in our form, but a large portion of the class was disappointed when they didn't get a chance to strike up any actual conversations. Hopefully, they will try to do that at the next JA.

Junior Assembly

By Jackson Summers, '23, who is always working on his tan

Throughout one's middle school experience at Cistercian, social opportunities outside of the school are somewhat limited. There is, of course, one exception: Junior Assembly. Junior Assembly is a chance for 8th graders from Cistercian, Hockaday, Greenhill, ESD, and St. Mark's to socialize. Most Cistercian students expected a calm, social setting where they could meet people (GIRLS!) from

The Nest

Robotics Kickoff

By Davis Jackson, '20, who is my family's lawyer

It's time to dust off that old arcade machine and prepare for First Robotics Competition "Power Up!" Although you will not actually need an arcade game to play, and you may not even own one, this year's FRC theme puts all the teams in a real life retro-game setting. While the Cistercian robotics team is developing a robot for this year's competition, here is a quick run-down of the match.

A match consists of two alliances, red and blue, made up of three teams each. Those who have to work together to defeat the opposing alliance. Each match is split into two main periods: a fifteen-second autonomous period in which robots are only controlled by their code, and a two-minute fifteen-second teleoperated period in which drivers drive their robots via a remote control.

This year's signature game piece is the "power-cube," a shiny, neon yellow cube which teams will use to gain control of their "switch" and the "scale." Each switch is a balance that has a red side and a blue side, per alliance. If your alliance's side has more cubes (and in the right location) than your opponent, then the switch will tip in your favor and you will earn a point per second! The scale operates in the same way, except it is five feet off the ground.

There are also three "power-ups" known as force, boost,

and levitate. These power-ups are activated by and according to the number of power cubes in your "vault," a place where you can store your cubes in order to receive those power-ups. Force gives your alliance control of your switch, your scale, or both for ten seconds, earning your alliance twenty points. Boost doubles the point value earned from your switch, the scale, or both for ten seconds as long as you control them, for a possible forty points! Finally, levitate gives one free climb to a robot on your alliance.

The last thirty seconds are the "endgame," in which your alliance's robots climb up onto a bar almost seven feet off the ground. If your robot has levitate, then it gets points for climbing while remaining on the ground. The other two robots have to squeeze in tight as the bar is only thirteen inches wide.

It's an exciting new year for robotics, and the game is better than ever. See you six weeks at the tournament!



Photo by AJ Sklar, '20

astounding, mainly because of the well done preview, exciting the student body, not to mention Coach Wesson's absolute destruction of the entire faculty.

As a freshman, I was very amped by Mr. Spence's playing style, running around the court at 60 miles per hour. Our own form master, Fr. Lawrence, almost outran the entirety of both teams, being the former Varsity football running back for all 4 years of high school. Mr. Novinski (and his beautiful headband) was able to create flowing ball movement, and was obviously the glue holding the team together, leading his team almost as well as he leads the high school students. Mr. Blackwell, our college counselor, thoroughly showed us that, maybe, his talents might go far beyond simply counseling (although the floor might need counseling after that backflip).

Without a doubt, this was the best Teachersketball game ever.

Teachersketball II

By Alex Smith, '21, who is basic

Teachersketball was one of the highlights of 2016, and it has taken too long for a second game to happen. Seeing your favorite teachers miss easy shots, and your form master match up against other teachers is always a sight to see. This year's in particular was

The Nest

MLK Service Day

By Ben Woods, '21, who probably shouldn't be an editor

MLK Service Day was a success. For all the middle schoolers who have no idea what I'm talking about, that's when the high schoolers go do service on MLK Day instead of sleeping until 2 PM and eating too much junk food. That might not sound like much fun, but it actually turned out to be a great experience. Nico Lopez, '20, said that he "firmly believes that MLK Day was a positive and enlightening experience for everyone... It was what Dr. King would have wanted to see." The school should definitely continue with this tradition.

We got to school at 10:30, so we got a little more sleep. After acting like idiots for thirty minutes, we gathered in the lunchroom and watched an "informational" video (that ended up being incredibly cheesy) promoting MLK Service Day. It wasn't even well edited and the sound was off from the video, however, it still managed to really make us understand just how important MLK Service Day is. It talked about how Martin Luther King Jr. dedicated his whole life to making this country better, and how, before recently, we took that for granted and were just happy for the day off without even thinking about why we had it. We needed to do something to remember his service to our country, and what's a better way to do that than community service? He served his commu-

nity his entire life, so it's the least we can do to dedicate a few hours to it. Since not doing anything was obviously the wrong choice, Cistercian decided to join in.

After the video, we gathered in our respective buses going to different non-profits around Dallas and Irving. I went to Habitat for Humanity, which builds houses and furniture for the impoverished. It is a great organization, and was in great need of help, as there were clearly too many projects for the few workers there. We put furniture together, from tables and chairs to canopy beds. It was a great opportunity to help those in need, as well as to burn some calories, (something I rarely ever do). We also learned patience, as a few of us had to rebuild furniture we had incorrectly put together, and attempt to help sell windows to people who knew little English. At the end of the day we all felt really accomplished after we had done good and been helpful to such a great organization, and that we got to have fun doing it.

Overall it was a great experience. I really enjoyed being given the chance to do good for our community in the name of such a great and important man. Even though it is a bit of a slap-in-the-face to call it a "Day On," and remind us of the sleep we're missing, it is a great experience that should become a tradition for years to come.



Photo by Fr. Anthony

Valentine's Day

By Saish Satyal, '21, who has a 6-pack

It seems like Valentine's Day is just around the corner and boy-friends everywhere are starting to panic! Luckily, a small preparatory school in Irving has a school newspaper with a writer/editor who has a girlfriend; that writer/editor is not me. That man is my friend (at least I think he is) and I've meddled in his relationship plenty of times, so I'm obviously an expert. Before we get into the main part of this article, I should point out that this year Valentine's Day happens to fall on Ash Wednesday, so the practicing Christians out there must fast and celebrate at the same time. Even if you're not Christian, you still wouldn't want Valentine's Day on a Wednesday, because, let's be honest, it's a Wednesday; it isn't even one of the good days of the week.

Continued Online!

The Nest

Ask Kattdaddy!

O most wise & mysterious Kattdaddy,
what is the highest truth?

Submitted by the sage Johannes

My articles.

What do you think of the *Black Panther*
movie?

Submitted by T. Challa



Photo by The Photoshop Club

A documentary that spends two hours marveling at the glories of a feline family is
a 10/10 from me. What?...It's not a documentary?...It's about a man in a rubber cat
suit?....Why would people possibly want to see that?

What did you think of Justin Timberlake doing the Super Bowl Half-Time Show?

Submitted by Janet Jackson

If Coldplay can do it...anybody can.

What's your favorite rom-com?

Submitted by Valerie Breiman

The one with Adam Sandler.

What are your plans for Valentine's Day?

Submitted by Claudius II

To honor and revere the feast of St. Valentine of Rome, an honorable man from
whom we all have much to learn. Why? Were you planning not to do this?

By The Numbers

Sophomore average on Chemistry final

64

How many calories are in a banana

105

Number of tongue clicks it takes to shame:

673

Number of Parts of Speech

3

Number of male movie award winners

2
MANY

Submit your questions to kattdaddyinformer@gmail.com!

The Nest

The New Gate

By Ben Sanford, '19, who is not anti-gate

Recently the Cistercian campus has undergone a relatively significant change. I say relatively significant because, considering the school has just renovated the science building and built a crypt, “significant” is a bit of a stretch. I’m referring to the newly installed gate in between the gym and the main building. Many students have offered their takes on this controversial issue. Some have speculated that it will maximize security in the case of a “lock-down” situation, while others seem to believe that it serves no purpose whatsoever. This seems to be a major concern for junior Nate “Dirty” Sanchez. In an interview, he stated “I don’t know why it’s there. It’s an eyesore and it serves no purpose. It doesn’t even lock.” This “atrocious,” as Sanchez puts it, has also been criticized for being restrictive by Sanchez’s classmate and ring speaker, Jack O’Neil. “A lot of bonding comes from unrestricted movement around the campus,” O’Neil says, “Guys going places with other guys and ‘bro-ing down,’ and I feel like this gate restricts that.” And students are not the only people who feel this way. Fr. Ambrose expressed his unimpressed opinion when he said, “The first thing I thought when I saw that gate was, ‘If I were a bad guy, I would just jump over that gate.’” If there were an intruder on campus, it appears that the gate would be a completely superfluous measure. Officer Ed-

wards is an extremely capable man, but I doubt he has the ability to get over to the gate to stop an intruder in the four extra seconds it takes to hop the gate.

Luckily, Officer Edwards was available for an interview about this new gate, and he said that the primary purpose of the gate is for security, and to protect the students on campus. However, the gate is not completely finished being worked on. He said that the gate will be more of a help to the school's security once the project is completely finished.

The ordering of the gate and most things about it like design were the work of Mr. Parker. He ordered it from a company in Florida known as NatureRails after stumbling upon their company by accident. He worked with a senior creative designer named Rob Gerdin to find a design that worked. The vision was to have a secure gate featuring the native animals found around the Cistercian campus.

As for the design, it looks as if it was designed by an avid outdoorsman. The gate depicts wildlife roaming all across its surface. The gate is not an “eyesore;” however, it has little to no significance in the minds of the students. What is the point of depicting a group of animals? Why not use a design that the students can relate to and be proud of, something that will stir in them a sense of community and belonging?



Photo by Mike Stautz, '21

Personally, I think that the gate can only add character to the campus. This is simply part of the evolution that schools undergo over time. In a decade, or maybe even less, there will be students who cannot remember a time without the gate. And as for the usefulness with respect to security, the only thing it can do is help. At worst the gate will become unbearably dull and be torn down, and at best it will be generally accepted by the student body and meld into the students’ perception of the campus.

Whatever the case may be, the new gate helps to continue the process of the campus’s recent enhancements and is a sign of the administration’s mindset of actively improving the school grounds. It’s clear that the administration is at least trying to improve the campus in some way, which all Cistercian students should look to as a sign of more changes to come.

News

Bitcoin, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Blockchain

By Winston Hartnett, '20, who has plenty of crypto

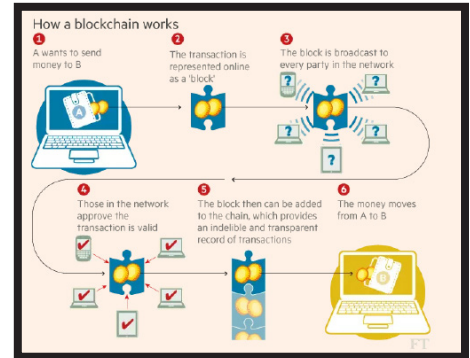
Bitcoin never fails to leave investors, speculators, and average Americans alike stunned by the speed and volatility of the cryptocurrency market. Despite this, the currency's nebulous future, coupled with over-hyped present-day news coverage, overshadows its equally nebulous past. The craze that gripped online markets began the 9th of January 2009, with a white-paper titled "Bitcoin: A Peer-to-Peer Electronic Cash System" written by a certain Satoshi Nakamoto, a pseudonym. It didn't take long before Bitcoin took off and Nakamoto, identity unknown, vanished.

Bitcoin wasn't wholly new, however, as digital currencies had been around before, but mainly was important as a case study for a new kind of data storage system known as blockchain. A relatively obscure accounting practice never widely used, the concept of the blockchain itself had been around since 1991, when two researchers published the system in the *Journal of Cryptology*. Nakamoto's use of blockchain solved many problems plaguing the cryptocurrency market, but also solved another problem in the world at large: how to keep track of stuff cheaply, securely, and quickly.

Blockchain is a mixture of recently developed cryptography, networking tech, and algorithmic advances that are used to create a ledger that manages itself. For example, if you, Adam, wanted to give money to Sally, a bank would

have to verify your transaction, update both you and Sally's account balances on their master ledger, which is overseen by an army of accountants, and take a potentially hefty fee for its services. A blockchain, by contrast, uses modern cryptography and peer-to-peer networking to quickly and securely update a world-wide ledger, and give individuals a small fee for the work required to maintain the network. It eliminates the need for most, if not all, modern accounting work, and at a certain scale, eliminates the need for banks as a whole.

A transaction within the blockchain starts with what's called a block. Inside each block is a group of transactions individuals made to others, like "Adam transfers Sally \$10." Next, someone called a miner will compute a unique identifier for that block called a hash, that makes sure each block is different and tamper-proof. The miner, in return for his services, gets a small amount of Bitcoin. Once that hash has been computed, the miner will broadcast that block with the unique hash across the network. Then, each person on the network will find the block with the most computing work and the most miners working on it, and add it to their blockchain, hence the name blockchain. They link the new blocks with the old ones in a chain so that it's impossible to change the history of transactions, or else a hacker or fraudster would have to recalculate the unique hash



of every single block before his new one. This makes sure that both the currency can't be duplicated and that everyone has the same ledger across the network. Once everyone has the same ledger, the process continues, moving onto the next block, completely devoid of any accounting work.

The net effect of a network like this is that trust, practically a commodity today, is completely out of the picture, and management, a necessity, is handled algorithmically by the ledger itself and by the people using it. But blockchain can be used for anything that involves transactions: inventories, employee data, loan processing, court cases, voting, and every other sector that involves some kind of central ledger. All those areas that were previously expensive to manage, prone to human error, and vulnerable to attack are now easy to protect, update, and use. Banks today have started to use the technology to eliminate middle-management and accounting jobs, starting small-scale deployment saving up to \$20 billion dollars. By putting an algorithm in charge, people ironically have more control of their money.

Continued Online!

Sports

NFL Postseason

By Michael Stautz, '21, who wants everyone to know that he is the sports editor in case he hasn't told you

The NFL Postseason has been very entertaining. During Wild Card weekend, there wasn't one unremarkable game. During the first game of the weekend between the Tennessee Titans and the Kansas City Chiefs, the Titans were losing at halftime 21-3. Everyone watching, myself included, believed that the game was out of their reach. We were corrected when the Titans were somehow able to win the game 22-21. This was in part due to the spectacular plays between Marcus Mariota and Derrick Henry. Mariota threw for two touchdowns and caught a touchdown in the second half, while Henry ran the ball for 156 yards and scored a touchdown as well. This loss to the Titans, a team that experts believed to be one of the worst to make the playoffs this year, cemented the 2017 Chiefs as one of the greatest disappointments in NFL history. After starting 6-0, the Chiefs went into a total freefall and lost 5 straight games. The next game was between a young Los Angeles Rams team and the defending NFC champions, the Atlanta Falcons. Although everyone believed that the Rams, one of the greatest surprises this year, was the better team, led by star running back Todd Gurley and defensive stud Aaron Donald, the Falcons prevailed 26-13. The next game was between the Jacksonville Jaguars and the Buffalo Bills. This was the first time since '99 that the Bills made the playoffs, almost a 20 year

drought. In a defensive slugfest, the Jaguars prevailed 10-3. Blake Bortles, the quarterback for Jacksonville, had more rushing yards than passing yards. The final game of Wild Card weekend was the New Orleans Saints against the Carolina Panthers. The Saints overcame their rival 31-26. Drew Brees had a spectacular day, while the dynamic duo of Alvin Kamara and Mark Ingram had a terrible game.

In the Divisional Rounds, the Atlanta Falcons played against the top seeded Philadelphia Eagles. Ever since Carson Wentz went down with a gruesome torn ACL, everyone has been doubting the Eagles due to Nick Foles being the new starter at quarterback. The Eagles defense played spectacularly and held the Falcons to 10 points. The Eagles were able to make a few key plays, and won the game 15-10. The next game was the Titans playing the number one seeded Patriots. Although after one quarter the Titans were winning 7-0, they were not able to handle Brady and the depth of the Patriots at running back. The Patriots scored 35 unanswered points and won the game 35-14, and I can't say anyone was surprised. The next game was the Jacksonville Jaguars against the Pittsburgh Steelers. In a very surprising upset, the Jaguars won 45-42 led in large part by rookie running back Leonard Fournette. Fournette had over 100 yards and 3 touchdowns. Lastly, the final game of the Divisional Round was

by far the greatest game so far of this postseason. The Saints went to Minnesota to play the Vikings. At halftime, the Saints were trailing 17-0. During the second half, the Saints were able to overcome the strong Vikings defense and led 24-23 going into the final minute. With seconds left on the clock, the Vikings were trying to get into field goal range for Kai Forbath. Case Keenum threw a poor ball to Stefon Diggs who made a spectacular catch, and after Marcus Williams missed a tackle that would have ended the game, Diggs ran into the end zone in front of 100,000 cheering fans. It will go down as one of the greatest moments in football history.

In the Conference Championships, The Vikings went to Philadelphia to face the Eagles, and the Jaguars headed to Foxborough to face the Patriots. In a spectacular comeback, the Patriots defeated the Jaguars, with Danny Amendola winning the game on a difficult catch. At one point in the last quarter, Jacksonville was leading by 10. In a different, totally lopsided game, the Eagles scored 31 points going from a tie game to a 38-7 victory. The result was rather unexpected, and was not fun for Cowboys fans to see.

In the Super Bowl, the Eagles unexpectedly beat the Patriots 41-33, with Nick Foles being named MVP for his great performance as Eagles' quarterback in the game.

Sports

Varsity Soccer (Was) Undefeated

By Chase Frutos, '21, who spoke too soon

Note from the Editor: This article was written prior to the team losing a game.

As of mid-season, Cistercian Varsity Soccer has won every single game, only allowing for three goals, two of which were from free kicks. Every game, our defense prevents the other team from having one decent shot on goal.

Although we are currently undefeated, we have suffered some recent injuries. Christian Schommer halfway through the game against the Dallas Christian School, was horrendously fouled at midfield by the other team. He separated his shoulder and the defender received a red card. Luckily, this game took place right before the winter break giving him a chance to recover. Our right back, Kyle Blessing tore his ACL in the last fifteen minutes of the same game! He will be out for the remainder of the season and will be missed.

Varsity's first game back after Christmas break was against Oakridge, one of the hardest teams we will play this season. We had been training the entire break so that we would be ready for the game.

We arrived at Oakridge about half an hour before the game and began to warm up. It was incredibly cold, and the sun went down soon after we arrived, doing nothing to help the temperature. The referee blew the whistle and the battle began. Oakridge was one of the most aggressive teams we

have played this season. Both teams were colliding into each other trying to win the ball. Seven minutes into the game, Conner Blend took a quick throw to Evan Anderson on the far left side of the field, about five yards outside the box. Evan jumped up and volleyed the ball right over the keeper's head, putting us up one to zero very early on in the game. Evan has a quite a bit of soccer talent. Although he only started playing club soccer three years ago, his passion and dedication helped him to develop his talent for the game as he continued to work at soccer with his own private coach. Not long after the first goal, Evan received the ball towards the middle of the field. He beat his defender and took a beautiful shot with his left foot from about the twenty-yard line. The shot slid past the keeper on the right and went in, putting us up two to zero before the half.

Going into the second half, we were confident, calm and collected. Our defense was so strong that we prevented them from having any real chances at goal the entire game. The second half remained scoreless until the last fifteen minutes. Caleb punted the ball downfield and flicked it to David Navarro, who had an amazing first touch down the right side of the field. He hit the ball past the defender and in order for the defender to stop him, the defender fouled David in what seemed to be inside the box! Everyone thought



Photo by Andy03

that the foul was inside the box including the other team, yet the referee apparently thought otherwise. Evan went up to take the kick. The free kick was too far to the right of the field for Evan to shoot so he instead decided to perform a rabona kick to cross the ball. The ball was crossed perfectly across to the center of the goal. Oscar Anderhub came out of nowhere and headed the ball down perfectly to where the keeper could not reach it. We finished the game with a decisive three to zero victory.

This game was special not only for the team, but for Coach Walsh. This game was Coach Walsh's 200th soccer game as a coach for Cistercian Soccer. Congratulations Coach Walsh! For this reason, we wanted to win this game more than ever. Coach Walsh not only coaches our team, but he puts us in the best position to win possible. He is constantly observing other teams play so that we know what to expect when we play them. We were proud to serve up a win for his 200th game and will continue to serve up wins for him and the school.

The Arts

Opinion: The Best Album of 2017

By Alex Smith, '21, who has bad taste in music ... according to Geary

In the year 2017, there were many records that stood out to me, but *The Search for Everything* by John Mayer stood out the most. Keep in mind, this may not be your "best" album of the year; everyone has different taste and music should not be ranked.

The album itself was a minor change in John's sound from his last couple records, and it was filled with catchy hooks and incredible production that the public seemed to accept it very well. Although it may not get the credit it deserves, I believe this album had the best songs of later year. However, it's also fair to say that you can't really compare these songs to cuts from, for example, *Culture* by Migos. Either way, this album had my favorite songwriting of 2017. John Mayer always had an astonishing insight on real life situations, and that's really on display throughout *The Search for Everything*, which in itself is a killer title.

The album kicked off with "I Still Feel Like Your Man," which had a beautiful guitar track, not to mention the haunting lyrics. Throughout the record, there was a constant theme of hope. Maybe "hope" isn't the best word to use in this case, but it'll do. It's hard to name the best song off this album, but "In the Blood" is definitely in that range. The song is about family lines, and is a great song to ponder about. "Helpless" is my favorite

song on the record. There is a great sense of desperation in the song, and John kicked off every show of his tour with the up-beat song. The most underrated song on the album was "Roll It on Home," a song about moving on in life. There are many songs underrated like this one, which is why I put *the Inform-er* readers up to the task of listening to some of them.

The Search for Everything was John Mayer's first project since 2013.. To me, Mayer has never been repetitive in his music; every album has been different then the last. His previous album fell under the genre of "Americana," but *The Search for Everything* doesn't have a genre. It's simply unique to Mayer, and doesn't fall within typical genre lines. Mayer has always had a unique sound, and he's far separated from the pack in terms of music. Not only that, but he's an awesome person to talk to (watch some interviews).

Mayer is only 40 years old, and although this may be his most recent project, it might just be his best. Without a doubt, Mayer will have many more great albums to come, and I highly recommend you listen to this one. You may even find a few songs to relate to, not to mention the anthems these songs could become. And again, this isn't the only good album of the year; there's a lot else out there worth hearing!

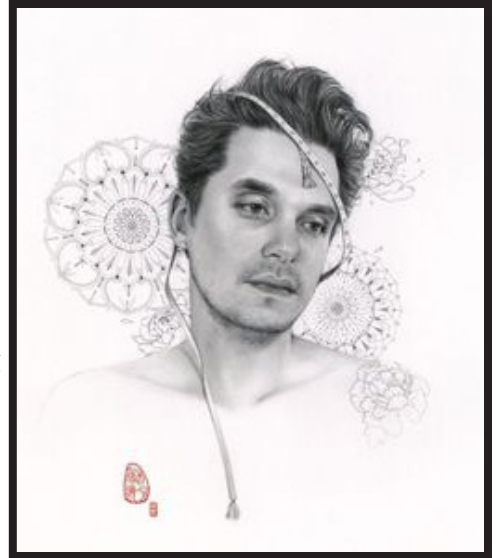


Photo Credit: Columbia Records

Informer Rates...

***Star Wars: The Last Jedi* - 8.75/10**

***Jumanji* - 8.25/10**

***The Greatest Showman* - 8.5/10**

***Pitch Perfect 3* - 7.5/10**

***The Commuter* - 7.75/10**

***The Cloverfield Paradox* - 8.5/10**

***Black Lightning* - 9/10**

Teachersketball II - 11/10

JT's Halftime Show - NOOOOO

***Han-Solo Trailer* - FINALLY**

***Jurassic World 2 Plot* - 0/10**

The Arts

The State of Awards Shows

By Jake FitzGerald, '18, who is our only Senior

In a recent poll to the class of 2018, 75% of seniors voted that they either didn't care or cared very little about award shows. Take last month's Golden Globes. Almost no one in the form could tell you who took home best actor, director, or film because, in reality, the movies and series that won are not the ones that people are watching.

Award shows take on an almost meme-like status on social media. The substance of these shows and the award winners have forfeited the spotlight to the pop culture buzz they generate. The mix-up at last years' Oscars and #Oprah2020 are examples of this. Additionally, every movie seems to advertise past Academy Award nominations more than the actual content of the film, so they lose their ability to convince people to see them. On top of these superficial reasons, there are issues inherent to the awards that are turning viewers off. The fact that only two people in the Senior class said "Yes!" to watching and caring about awards shows does not bode well for its future.

One recent problem that contributes to their low number of views is the politics that permeate every single one of these shows. It is becoming more and more common to use these shows as a medium by which to cry out against political and social issues. This is, at least in some sense, a tradition of the

Academy Awards, going back to when Marlon Brando sent Sacheen Littlefeather to refuse his award for *the Godfather*. Today's award shows take it to a new level, leaving some disatisfied and many alienated. Some want to boycott the show; many just do not want to watch more politics.

The tensions between acclaim and earnings don't help either. The movies enjoyed by younger audiences, such as films by Marvel and other big action and adventure franchises, are rarely nominated for awards. When one such movie is nominated, it is not for Best Film. It is for niche categories recognizing scores, costumes, and special effects, awards for which they are a shoo-in for due to their enormous budgets. Looking at this year's Academy Award nominations, only *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2*, and *Beauty and the Beast* were both nominated for awards and also among the top ten hits of the year, and all of those nominations were in those niche categories.

What makes today's award shows different from those of years past? Why did films like *Silence of the Lambs*, *the Godfather*, and *Titanic*, all solidified in pop culture win when today the award-winning movies exist in the middle of the pack? The contention between "common" and "refined" tastes can begin to account for this. As

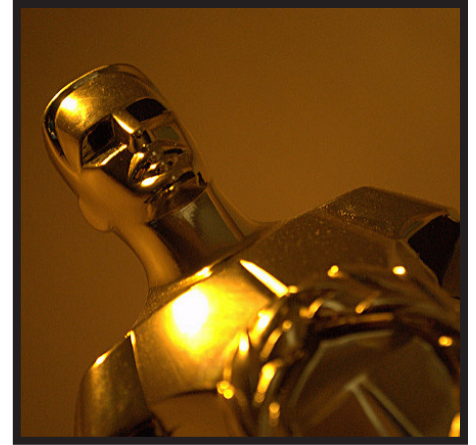


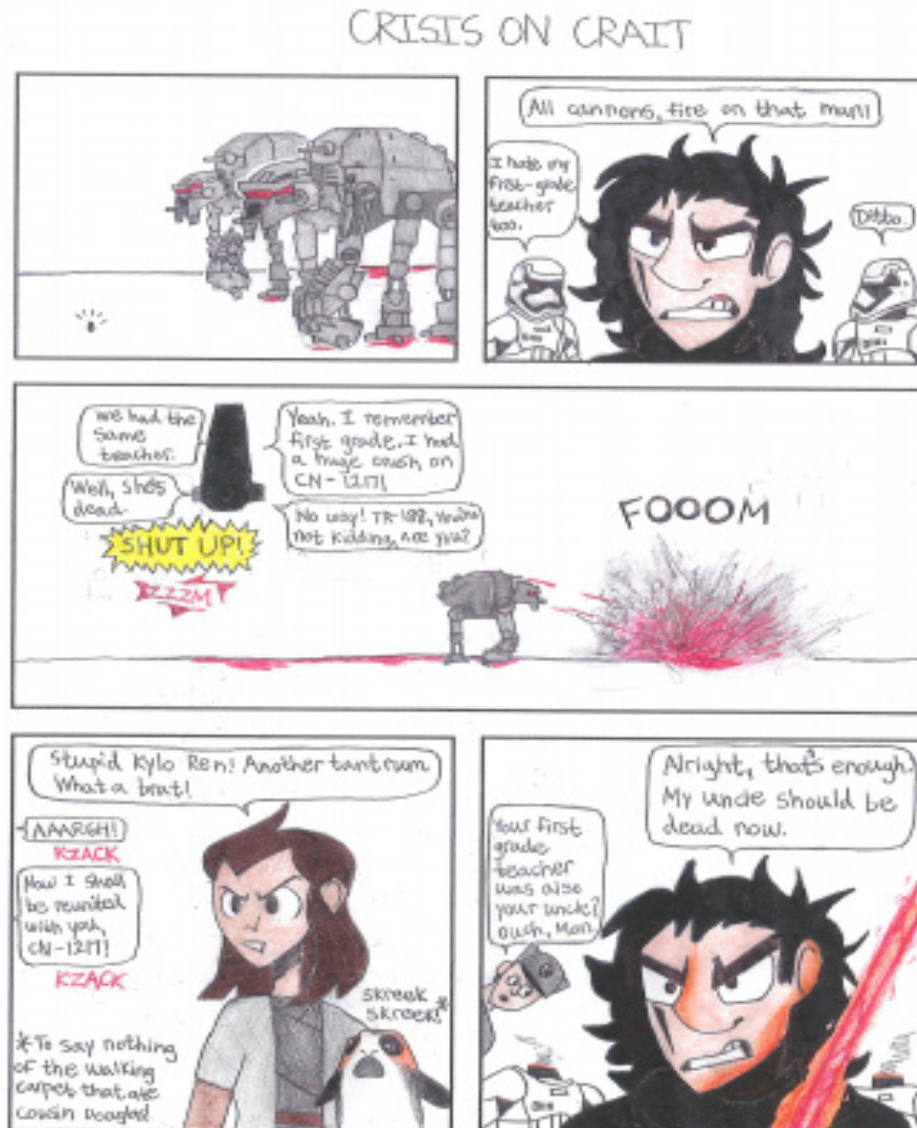
Photo by Davidlohr Bueso

mass culture extends, the majority tends to be unsympathetic towards cultural elitism and vice versa. The Academy would scoff at blockbusters being the best picture, but in the end the blockbusters are the ones that make money. The 2018 Grammys are at the forefront of the fight against cultural complacency. In trying to stay relevant, top streaming songs like "Despacito" were nominated for Record of the Year. They also nominated minority artists without sacrificing critical integrity. With the success of the Grammys, hopefully other award shows will learn how to become relevant once again.

Feb. Movie Preview

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