



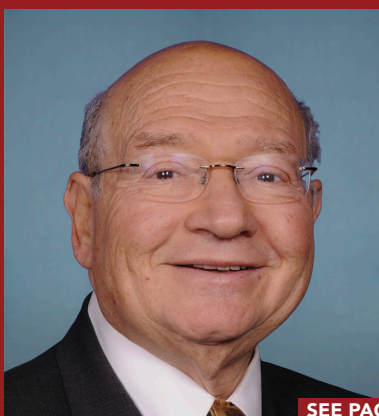
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Do the Right Thing. Recognize Eid.

Maria Mahmood
Reporter

For an institution that prides itself on diversity and inclusiveness, the City University of New York has failed to recognize the Muslim holiday, Eid. Observed after the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, Muslims partake in a 3-day celebration, during which they spend time with family and participate in Eid activities with friends and extended relatives. Since 2016, NYC public schools officially gave all students and faculty one day off for this Muslim holiday. Now, in 2021, CUNY has failed to make any progress in giving observing students a day off without compromising their academic career. Prior to the Spring 2021 semester, Muslim Student Associations across CUNY collectively composed a formal request asking for a day off for Eid, knowing the holiday would fall just before finals week. However, the semester progressed with no advancement toward the recognition of the religious holiday.

With numerous Muslim organizations across campus, it's no secret that Muslims account for a large population of Queens College. While CUNY rightfully gives off for Christian and Jewish holidays, it has yet to acknowledge a Muslim holiday. Its disregard of the religious holiday affects both Muslim students and Muslim faculty. This past semester, a demand for a day off on Eid gained tremendous support. A petition titled "Demand CUNY to Cancel Classes for Eid" received nearly 15,000 signatures, only emphasizing a call for student inclusiveness. In response, Queens College merely cited the New York State Education Law which

mandates the accommodation of any students observing a religious holiday. However, many Muslim students felt excluded from this law, as several professors refused to provide any accommodations. Students reported a failure of professors to cooperate with Muslims and provide adjustments for tests and assignments. One student, who wished to remain anonymous, complained they could not communicate with their professor due to the professor's inability to respond to emails. This lack of cooperation led to the student taking their final on Eid, having to miss their morning Eid prayer, and felt rushed to finish so they can properly observe the holiday.

The email sent by QC only deflects their responsibility on religious and cultural inclusiveness.

Although Eid is celebrated across all 3 days, Muslims university-wide are simply requesting one day off. After a month of fasting from dawn to dusk, all while continuing their education during the semester, Muslims are demanding one day as a mental break from this exhaustion and to celebrate their religious holiday properly. While Muslims observe two different types of Eid, one celebrated after Ramadan (Eid Al-Fitr), and the other celebrated exactly 2 months after (Eid Al-Adha), we are merely requesting the bare minimum: one day off after observing the holy month of Ramadan.

Editor's Note: The author of this article, Maria Mahmood, is the secretary for the Queens College Muslim Students Association.

A message from the Editor in Chief:

Dear Readers,

I'd like to begin my first message as Editor-in-Chief by extending my gratitude once again to Sidd Malviya, whom I succeeded in this position. Sidd continues to provide sound advice to the Knight News E-Board, even as he begins his graduate studies at Dartmouth University. We all wish him the greatest of luck and success.

As we proceed with cautious optimism towards the first broad-scale in-person sessions at Queens College since March of last year, it's worth noting that, in all likelihood, not everything will go exactly according to plan. There may be hiccups along the way which frustrate reopening efforts. As long as we are all patient with, and considerate of, one another, I'm confident that we will all be able to return to the normal M.O. before long. I, for one, am only too eager to set eye and foot upon our beautiful campus once again.

I'm reminded of the lyrics of Bob Dylan, who, in his song "Bob Dylan's Dream," describes a pastoral scene spent with his pals:

"With half-damp eyes I stared to the room
Where my friends and I spent many an
afternoon
Where we together weathered many a
storm
Laughin' and singin' till the early hours of
the morn"

Dylan referred to a dream of the past, but I'd like to think that this can also be a dream for our future — days spent, once again, among friends.

Sincerely,
Johnny Sullivan
Editor-in-Chief



Queens College Student Union LL35

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In-person CUNY Board of Trustees meeting addresses COVID, professor recognitions

Johnny Sullivan
Editor-in-Chief



On July 6th, the CUNY Board of Trustees convened their monthly meeting, their first in-person since February of last year. The board members marked the occasion with a hearty round of applause, and the proceedings began.

The Board unanimously approved a resolution to mandate proof of COVID vaccination for any student wishing to register for in-person classes. The text of the resolution acknowledges that Governor Cuomo, on May 10th, authorized the Board to resort to such measures. Provisions are laid out for “medical and religious exemptions and limitations of licensure as set forth in a University statement of policy...”

Notably, the resolution also gives CUNY Chancellor Felix V. Matos Rodriguez the power to modify the vaccination mandate as he sees fit, so long as such modifications “... take into account and comply with any subsequent change in federal, state and/or municipal laws, regulations, or executive orders, as such relate to the... public health emergency.” The Chancellor will not be required to consult the

Board before making any changes, as the resolution expressly states that no “further action of the University Board of Trustees” needs be taken.

There were several points of pride for Queens College at the board meeting. Dr. Cecilia M. Gonzalez-Mchugh of the Environmental Sciences Department was designated a Distinguished Professor at Queens College, a merit which entitles her to a yearly monetary award in addition to her regular salary. The resolution commends Gonzalez-Mchugh for her “long

and internationally renowned career in her field” as a “world-leading authority in submarine paleoseismology, earthquake geology, marine geology and biogenic sedimentation.”

Doctor Mary Theresa Kiely and Professor Maaza Mengiste were also on the agenda, as both were granted early tenure by the Board. The honor, conferred upon those individuals whose services an organization wishes to retain, was awarded to Kiely and Mengiste in recognition of their exceptional track record at QC. Dr. Kiely’s work in Special

Education has been published in academic journals and she has given presentations at national conferences such as the Council of Exceptional Children. As for Mengiste, a member of the faculty for the MFA in Creative Writing, her work has also been nationally published, appearing in no less than The New Yorker and Rolling Stone. Mengiste was also instrumental in the introduction of the Writing Minor at QC.

Other colleges in CUNY saw changes to their academics. After a wave of interest, the resolution to introduce an Astrophysics MS at the Graduate Center was unanimously approved. The resolution touted the “coding and problem-solving experience” available to prospective Masters candidates. Brooklyn College, meanwhile, formally said goodbye via resolution to its Kinesiology Department, which had been contending with poor enrollment numbers and a shrinking faculty pool. A separate resolution provided for the transfer of the Kinesiology faculty to “the Departments of Biology, Health and Nutrition Services, and Secondary Education.”

Ackerman: A political mover-and-shaker reflects and projects

Johnny Sullivan
Editor-in-Chief-

Earlier this month, I had the privilege of interviewing former Congressman and Queens College alumnus Gary Ackerman at his home. He had the sort of charisma one would expect of a national politician, and over the course of our four-hour interview, he dished on the state of journalism, politics, and the world as they were, as they are, and as they figure to be.

Ackerman's first foray into journalism coincided with his time at Queens College. At the time, the Summit had a system of what were called house plans (or "poor man's fraternities," as Ackerman was quick to add.) The dues for these house plans were prohibitively expensive, so Ackerman and his friends formed a newspaper called the Knight Beat to expose the situation. They bankrolled the operation by selling ad space in the paper to local businesses.

Ackerman's first major social push, though, came about when he was a schoolteacher in 1969. He applied for paternity leave, unheard of at the time, and endured a protracted court battle to have his request approved by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. As he related to me, he was the subject of ridicule at the time in the New York Daily News, which opined that "it would bankrupt the city if every wannabe dad demanded his due." I asked if he would consider what he did civil disobedience in the spirit of Rosa Parks and the Tiananmen Square protestors. "No," he responded, "I wouldn't. Civil disobedience requires that a law be broken, and I broke no law." Instead, he called his act "civil defiance." His victory was a watershed moment in the advancement of fathers' rights.

Indeed, he's something of a real-life Forrest Gump in his penchant for being present at several events of historical interest. It was impossible to distill the entirety of a thirty-year congressional

career into a portion of a 4-hour interview, but Ackerman still regaled me with some highlights, as detailed as if they had happened yesterday. He was particularly comprehensive in his recollections of crossing Korea's De-Militarized Zone in 1993 as the first man to do so since the Korean armistice. When I brought up that an L.A. Times article had called him "tight-lipped" about the reasons for his visit, he dismissed it as "an attempt to make a big fuss of things." What had happened, per Ackerman, was that North Korea had been stockpiling radioactive materials and turning UN inspectors away from the camera feeds trained on the locks to the vaults. After yearlong talks with a North Korean UN staffer, it was arranged that Ackerman would travel to North Korea to negotiate with the Supreme Leader Kim-Il Sung himself. All the time, he'd remained mindful of the diplomacy of the situation: "The North Koreans wanted me to take a government plane, but I was adamant about taking a chartered flight – and so it was. I travelled under no banner. If things went south, it would be Gary Ackerman who screwed up, not the United States." Fortunately, they hadn't; North Korea agreed not to touch their stores of uranium (plutonium was left off the table), and sure enough, as a previously agreed-upon gesture of goodwill, Ackerman departed North Korea on foot and arrived the same way in South Korea. He would, at the time, call his journey "a very long walk down a very short road." Was this, perhaps, a reflection of the magnitude of the moment? He flashed me a wry smile. "Sure it was a very long walk! It took us a while to get there! They turned the lights off on us!"

I then asked Ackerman what it was that fueled his political aspirations in the first place. "Ego." I hadn't expected such a response, but he clarified. "An ego is fed by any activity which pleases oneself. In much the same way that a baker's ego may be fed by baking and selling loaves of bread, my ego is fed by helping others and ensuring that they are provided for. My interest in political power was never self-serving; I only ever sought to increase my station in order to increase my capacity for helping others." It made sense to me that a man whose collegiate and professional journalistic work was preoccupied with social advocacy would be attracted to a profession which does just that.

Ackerman is well aware of the vitriol inherent in modern political discourse, but he believes that it well predates the era of Donald Trump. Ackerman recalls the exact moment when he became aware of a change in the nature of party politics. "This was around the time of Newt Gingrich, the man who introduced mean (into politics)," he began. A colleague of Ackerman's had been filling him in on the proceedings of a meeting between Republican staffers. They'd gathered together in prayer. "I told him, 'You know me. I'm as big a separation of church and state guy as you'll ever see in Congress. Let them do what they want. It's harmless.'" A pause. "No, Gary, you don't get

it. They're praying for the passage of their bill." It was a sobering moment for Ackerman, who'd realized that things had changed for good. "The conflict was no longer good versus bad, as in the quality of bills. It was now good versus evil: the morality of bills."

Ackerman has also noticed a shift in the mediascape since his time as a journalist. So what's changed? His take on the matter was characteristically blunt. "People have gotten dumber. The difference between news and entertainment has been blurred, and what this has done is cause consumers to demand that you lie to them." He contrasted the current state of affairs in news media with that of 50 years ago. "You used to be able to turn on the television set and never know whether Walter Cronkite had a single opinion, because what came out of his mouth wasn't the news as he saw it, but the news."

In spite of it all, Ackerman still considers himself "a depressed optimist." In his view, "good people still exist on both sides. The problem is that some – not all – Republicans adhere to Trump out of fear. They fear the end of their political career, or else the social repercussions that come with 'abandoning the cause.'" Once people stop being "fearful of each other," Ackerman believes, America and the world can begin to change for the better.



A Bangladeshi immigrant's tragic drive home

Aliyah Ali
Reporter



The death of a Bangladeshi immigrant named Mohammed Shakawat Hossain has shaken up the Queens community. The forty-seven-year-old Lyft driver was tragically killed by twenty-two-year-old Erik Chimborazo early in the morning of June 13th.

The Lyft driver was returning home after the last ride of his shift when he was t-boned by Chimborazo in a Queens intersection. Hossain's last text to his wife before the tragic incident stated "I'm coming home right now." Chimborazo's blood alcohol content superseded the legal alcohol limit, and his Ford Explorer did not have insurance or an inspection certification. The drunk motorist also lacked a proper license. He claims to have had three beers, but it is suspected he was even drunker than thought. Hossain's crash took place at an intersection, which is notoriously known as a dangerous spot by the many residents that came forward to speak about what they saw the morning of the collision.

According to the Daily News, residents have fought for speed

bumps and speed cameras for years to decrease the dangers known to this intersection. Traffic is said to be bad around the scene of the incident. Hossain's family was preparing for a vacation, but the death of their beloved family member has caused anguish and pain as they make funeral arrangements. A GoFundMe page has been set up for the family so that proper funeral arrangements can be made. More than sixty-six thousand dollars has been raised of the two-hundred-thousand-dollar goal currently.

The drunk motorist has been charged with vehicular manslaughter and a DWI. Hossain's final passenger who was in the car at the time of the accident was aided for a broken femur. However, Mohammed S. Hossain was taken to Wyckoff Heights Medical Center where he passed away. Erik Chimborazo was taken to Elmhurst Hospital Center (EHC) where he had his blood alcohol content assessed, which was significantly higher than the legal limit.

Chimborazo's bail was set to

ten-thousand dollars. He was discharged from Rikers Island and had a court date on June 17th, 2021. The family of Mohammed S. Hossain has been trying to raise awareness for the victim and issue of drunk-driving. Many leading Instagram pages known to the South-Asian community such as @bangla.bolo have been raising awareness for the victim. Other Instagram pages that commonly provide updates on NY crime, COVID-19 alerts, and more, such as @coronavirusny, have also spoken up about the issue. Instagram users have expressed a deep sense of rage and sadness for the victim and his family in the comment sections of these pages' posts. Many have also questioned whether fifteen years in prison is enough. Others have tagged the governor and mayor for recognition of the incident. For many in the South-Asian community, this issue has hit hard. The American Dream is often something many immigrants try to achieve when they migrate to the United States, just like Mohammed S. Hossain did as he

parted ways from his homeland, Bangladesh.

A few students were asked for their thoughts on the fatal car accident. They all expressed a personal sense of grief and remembrance of their family's sacrifices when they left their homeland to come to the country of possibilities, the United States. QC junior Sarwar Nazrul, a computer science major of Bangladeshi descent, stated, "I feel like all immigrant families worry every time their family members go out for work. Drunk driving is the most irresponsible thing to do. It is the worst crime ever." This statement echoed the voices of students and Instagram commenters that expressed the struggles immigrant families endure as they sacrifice everything they have for a better life. Mohammed S. Hossain leaves behind three children, Samin (14), Lyba (7), and Labeen (2) along with his wife, Kulsuma Jahan.

Retail workers quit at record rates for higher paying jobs

Stavros Anastasiou
Reporter

With retail being one of the most heavily impacted sectors throughout the pandemic, the recent lifting of restrictions as well as a slow transition into full capacity operations have presented the industry with a new obstacle – compensating for the lack of labor force.

A growing trend is taking place in which retail employees are leaving their jobs in pursuit of higher paying positions. Dissatisfied with the working conditions brought on by the pandemic and emboldened by a strengthening job market, former workers are taking the opportunity to find roles that provide remote options, benefits, and better wages. As Washington Post reporter Abha Bhattacharai explains, “649,000 retail workers put in their notice in April,” contributing to what can only be described as the second-largest one-month exodus in over 20 years within the industry, as recorded by the Labor Department. The recent staffing issue has become an ongoing struggle for many employers since retail stores have begun to open back up for full capacity – circumstances which many who have worked in

the sector before are not surprised of.

For millennials and even Gen-Z, to say that the industry undervalues its workers would amount to a cliché. From low wages and inconsistent hours to dealing with unruly customers as well as negotiating with unmoving managers, employees have become drained with the current state of their retail jobs. Rising sophomore Gloria Drizis describes her own retail experience working as a sales associate at Burlington over the summer: “When I first applied for the job, they hired me on the spot and I was really excited about it. They said they would work with my schedule and give me training. But just after my first week, I started working from evenings to midnight and my manager would be put in different roles despite not getting any training.”

When asked what the deciding factor was behind her quitting, Drizis revealed that she “...went in one day working a 6 hour shift and not getting a single break. I approached my manager and explained to them that I was entitled to at least a 15-minute break – I know that because that’s what they told me during my orientation. When they said that wasn’t case, I was surprised. I couldn’t even eat lunch because I was on my feet... Also, my managers kept getting my name wrong,

even though I was wearing my nametag.”

Similar to Drizis’ account, the majority of retail employees who haven’t left the field also recount experiences of being undervalued, saying that franchise owners have been more focused on restoring the shopping experience of customers before the Covid-19 pandemic. According to a recent survey commissioned by retail operations platform Zipline, a majority of sales associates felt that their employers weren’t putting enough focus in improving their working conditions. Of the 500 responses, 42 percent expressed that they plan or are considering leaving



Source: Columbia

Uber and Lyft are capitalizing in a state of pandemic

Shelly Lora
Reporter

Uber and Lyft are raising concerns all over the nation as ride prices skyrocket to an all-time high. This comes as a result of a decrease in drivers amid the pandemic. Drivers are taking their time returning to work out of fear of contracting the virus and some just aren’t motivated by the rideshare incentives in a time when millions are still receiving ongoing unemployment benefits.

The question on everybody’s mind should be whether drivers will be more motivated to return to work now that the federal unemployment benefit that grants them an extra \$300 per week is coming to an end in 25 states. A lot of people feel Uber and Lyft need to offer better incentives. “We’re making less than normal,” said Robert Eaton of Reno, Nevada, a full-time Uber driver for over two

years. “While fares have skyrocketed in this market, the drivers’ pay has not been raised at all.” Uber and Lyft have reportedly shared with The New York Times that drivers are making more but the consensus among drivers is that they aren’t seeing much of a difference in terms of payments. In some cases they are seeing less due to longer cancellation times and less minimum charge for longer distances.

Rideshare drivers might not have much of a choice with lack of work, other industries not yet recovering, and the feeling that they aren’t qualified to get work elsewhere. Uber and Lyft seemingly have no prior qualifications besides passing a criminal record and owning a car.

Uber, on the opposition, said that it is coming up with new ways to attract new drivers with offers such as sign-on bonuses being added every day. In May, the company welcomed an additional 33,000 drivers, while 100,000 drivers also returned to work. Yet,

customers haven’t seen a change in the prices for their commute to work.

Chicago customer Matt Shachat said that when he first moved to Chicago, he would pay an Uber \$23 each way to get to his office, but now that number is closer to \$32 a ride. Shachat is not alone. Many other people rely on rideshare services to get to work, for reasons that just make sense and with a phobia of contracting the virus. This coupled with increased vaccine rollout has made some, in contrast, feel safe to start going out again. Therefore, they rely on these services to take them to restaurants and dinner dates with friends.

Amidst all this reliance on rideshares, a rising concern among riders is that they feel they don’t have enough options in terms of services competing with companies like Uber and Lyft. Taxis are drowning with the popularity of rideshare, to numbers never seen before. With less taxis on the road and higher

the retail industry after the pandemic.

For larger figures in the industry, the numbers aren’t surprising. According to Vice President of the Retail Industry Leaders Association Evan Armstrong, “I think the hiring challenges in retail are not that different than the hiring challenges across the economy right now.” One reason Armstrong cites is the Unemployment Insurance government support stimulus, which in some cases has allowed workers to choose not to go back to work due to receiving more than their wages.

As the job market continues to recover and summer enters its last month, retail employers and former workers are navigating a post-pandemic world. With Covid-19 revealing the many pitfalls of the industry, it remains to be seen what initiatives will take place to improve the sector as a whole.

prices on Uber and Lyft, the issue of where riders can turn to for less expensive trips is a pressing concern.

Frustrations among drivers is also prevalent as they are rallying for better work conditions. The uproar is nothing new, as previously riders have protested to be acknowledged as “workers” instead of independent contractors which make less money due to Uber and Lyft’s business model of pocketing a large share of the fares.

What we will see in the upcoming weeks will determine whether riders will continue to wage in on Uber and Lyft’s scandalous business model and whether drivers will continue to put up with frustrating work conditions. In a state of pandemic, we need more companies to side with their employees, instead of giving them the short end of the stick.

Will capitalizing on a pandemic drive these rideshare companies into a state of doom? If so, where would employees turn to – in a time when our economy is being increasingly supported by gig apps, we might have to rethink our economic balance and laissez-faire laws.

NASA intern attacked for her Hindu faith amid Hindu Persecution Awareness Month

Aliyah Ali
Reporter

July is Hindu Persecution Awareness Month, which honors victims of heinous crimes in many countries worldwide, yet NASA intern Pratima Roy was targeted through ignorance and hate for her religious affiliation. On July 9th, NASA posted four photos of interns of myriad origins on Twitter with the caption, “Today’s the day: applications for fall NASA internships are due!” Roy, a CUNY City Tech alumni, was featured in the post, photographed by her desk with Hindu gods and goddesses next to her laptop.

The photo caught the attention of many social media users. Some bluntly insulted Hinduism and the gods like Twitter user @NastikMan, who commented “The 4th intern will send an email saying ‘rama built a bridge’ and sanghis will use that email to say ‘nasa accepted rama as real and the blue guy built that bridge.’” In the Hindu religion, Lord Rama is known as the god of protection, yet this information did not stop the ignorance and dislike for Roy’s faith. Even intellectuals such as Ashok Swain (@ashoswai),

a Professor of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University in India left a derogatory comment: “Why does a Hindu kid need to be surrounded by Gods and Goddesses? Can’t we do anything without them?” This comment has since been deleted due to the outpouring of responses against the Hinduphobia presented in the comment section, however screenshots of the tweet still circulate on various media outlets.

While comments like Swain’s were rampant in the comment section there was also an overwhelming amount of support for Roy. Many were amazed to see the young woman display the Hindu deities, Lord Laxmi and Lord Saraswati. Lord Lakshmi is known as the goddess of purity and wealth while Lord Saraswati is known as the goddess of knowledge, music, art, speech, wisdom, and learning. Many commenters appreciated this, such as Twitter user @BamaWatchtower who wrote, “Brains, beauty, and confident in her beliefs! I am proud for you and can’t wait to see her accomplishments!” Many of the Hindu community came forward and educated others on the Hindu deities and what they represented, resulting in celebrating Roy for

including these goddesses and gods around her for the photo. Together, different communities came forward and requested that Hinduphobia be recognized and spoken about.

In response to the hate, Roy issued a statement on her LinkedIn profile. In a small excerpt extracted from her page she stated, “As an American-born Bengali who practices Hindu, I always strive to preserve my background and culture. This love for my culture is evident in the photo of me that was first shared on a NASA blog in March and recently sparked

a lot of conversation about my faith after NASA published a Tweet about the fall internship deadline.” In the remainder of her heartfelt post, she thanks those who stood up for her and her support team at NASA.

Pratima Roy’s case of Hinduphobia is just one of the many people of the Hindu faith undergo, despite Hindu Persecution Awareness Month being in effect right now, which not a lot of people are aware of. The ignorance and hate displayed in the NASA post showcases that awareness must be widespread.



Source: Twitter

Critical Race Theory: behind the debate that’s sweeping the nation

Avi Koenig
Editor

Over the past several weeks, the concept of Critical Race Theory has exploded into the popular consciousness in the wake of several state legislatures passing laws purportedly banning the teaching of the concept in K-12 schools. Some have pushed back against these bans arguing that these pieces of legislation are simply strawman to attack diversity initiatives in schools more broadly.

But what is Critical Race Theory anyway? Critical Race Theory is defined by Richard Delgado, a pioneer in the field, as “a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power.”

More concretely, Critical Race Theory is a legal framework which examines how racism intersects with the legal sphere, and its central tenant argues that racism is systematically embedded in American institutions. The fact that Critical Race Theory is at its core, a legal one in nature rather than one based in historiography (the study of the methods of developing history) or educational theory means that most schools aren’t actually teaching Critical Race Theory in its pure form. As Randi Weingarten, the head of the American Federation of Teachers says, “Let’s be clear: critical race theory is not taught in elementary schools or high schools. It’s a method of examination taught in law school and college that helps analyze whether systemic racism exists — and, in particular, whether it has an effect on law and public

policy.”

In fact, although some of the public-facing rhetoric made by politicians in support of the aforementioned laws mention Critical Race Theory, the text of the laws themselves in most cases doesn’t mention the concept at all and generally stick to statements outlawing racial preferences with bans against teaching certain elements of Critical Race Theory woven in. For example, Tennessee law HB50, while banning such things as “An individual [being] discriminated against or receive adverse treatment because of the individual’s race or sex” and that “One race or sex is inherently superior to another race or sex”, it also outlaws teaching that “A meritocracy is inherently racist or sexist, or designed by a particular race or sex to oppress members of another race or sex” or that “[Tennessee] or the United States is fundamentally or irredeemably racist or sexist”, two concepts that are often pushed by proponents of Critical Race Theory.

That being said, this debate over Critical Race Theory shouldn’t really be looked at as one over that concept but rather as a debate over how our education system should deal with

the issue of how to teach about race and its long and bloody history in this country. Another prong in the running debate that started with the New York Times’ 1619 Project in 2019 which aims to place the discussion of slavery and racism at the center of how we understand American History. For those considered in the debates of the past several weeks to be pro Critical Race Theory”, they view the education system as needing to take a proactive role in integrating racism into history education not only in teaching about racism in the past tense but also in the present bringing in discussions of systemic racism and social justice into the classroom. For those in opposition, they view teaching history as something that by its nature requires neutrality, apoliticism, and for some, even a degree of patriotism.

This debate is likely to rage on for the foreseeable future, yet another facet of a growing new phase of the culture wars and in all likelihood is going to have a significant influence on the future of how we educate young people. What that future is will heavily depend on how this debate (and resulting legislation) progresses over the coming months and years.

Recent study shows Amazon rainforest emitting more carbon than it absorbs

Vaishali Patra
Reporter

As the world grapples with the effects of climate change, a recently published study has revealed that sections of the Amazon rainforest are emitting more carbon than they absorb. Known as a carbon sink, the rainforest has absorbed carbon dioxide from the Earth's atmosphere to create a cooling effect for decades. The BBC reports that "since the 1960s, these [carbon] sinks have taken in around 25% of carbon emissions from the use of fossil fuels." However, with a marked increase in global warming, deforestation, and forest fires in recent decades, sections of the Amazon rainforest are beginning to lose this capability.

A study published in the scientific journal Nature on July 14th found that "this carbon sink seems to be in decline [...] as a result of factors such as deforestation and climate change." Another study published in Nature in 2019 found that during a decade-long period from 2010 to

2019, the Brazilian Amazon emitted more than 0.65 billion metric tons of carbon than it absorbed. What caused this? Scientists in the study pointed towards the "loosening of forest protection policies" as a significant factor. In a statement released earlier this year, INRA, a French research institute that was part of the study claimed that, "A change of government in Brazil in 2019 brought a sharp decline in the country's environmental protection policies." Specifically, this is referring to the election of President Jair Bolsonaro in January 2019. There has been extensive reporting about how Bolsonaro's policies have proven to be extremely harmful to the environment. Human Rights Watch (HRW), for example, has claimed that his administration "has sabotaged environmental law enforcement agencies, falsely accused civil society organizations of environmental crimes, and undermined Indigenous rights." The Guardian recently reported that some European nations are even willing to block a trade deal

with Brazil "unless Bolsonaro agrees to do more to tackle Amazonian destruction."

As a result, pressure has been mounting upon the U.S. and the Biden administration to limit its trade relations with Brazil and block the import of goods linked to the degradation of the Amazon. In April 2021, dozens of celebrities including Leonardo DiCaprio and Katy Perry among others signed a letter "[urging President Joe Biden to not sign any environmental deal with Brazil" owing to Brazil's role in the deforestation of the Amazon. Additionally, a report prepared by academics from U.S. and Brazilian universities also called for a "U.S. policy to block goods linked to forest destruction."

A large chunk of the Earth's biodiversity and

carbon percentage is concentrated in the Amazon rainforest. Thus, any harm to it will negatively affect the lives of not just Brazilians but of the entire world. It is yet to be seen whether world leaders, will recognize their collective responsibility on this issue and keep their promises to protect the Amazon rainforest and preserve the Earth for future generations.



Credit: Photo: Carl de Souza/AFP/Getty Images

Missing lake in Antarctica may warn of the harmful effects of climate change

Aliyah Ali
Reporter

Antarctica remains as one of the world's most mysterious places on Earth, but recently a missing lake in the continent is shedding light on why humans need to be aware of global warming.

In East Antarctica, the Amery Ice Shelf experienced the disappearance of a ginormous lake in 2019. This took place in three days and went unnoticed until the following summer of the occurrence. A glaciologist who is affiliated with the Australian Antarctic Program Partnership at the University of Tasmania, Roland Warner, noticed this on a satellite whilst examining the Amery Ice Shelf. This ice shelf is the third largest ice shelf in Antarctica. Ice shelves help keep ice sheets stable, without them glaciers would accelerate and ice would be emptied into the ocean.

Warner and the researchers

involved in this project noted that this was a rare phenomenon called a hydrofracture. This is a process by which water that is under pressure on top of the ice shelf fractures, usually the water is quite dense. Warner stated that, "We believe a large crack opened briefly in the floating ice shelf and drained the entire lake into the ocean within three days", due to that rapid flow of water he likened it to the sight of water flowing on the Niagara Falls. The Amery Ice shelf is around 1,400 metres thick and the hydrofracture is said to have split it fully, which would explain why this is called a rare sight, because of the Amery Ice Shelf's massive thickness. Since the lake drained out a large ice doline, a sinkhole was left which measures 11 square kilometers. Approximately 21-26 billion cubic feet of water was lost to the ocean, posing a threat to the sea levels rising.

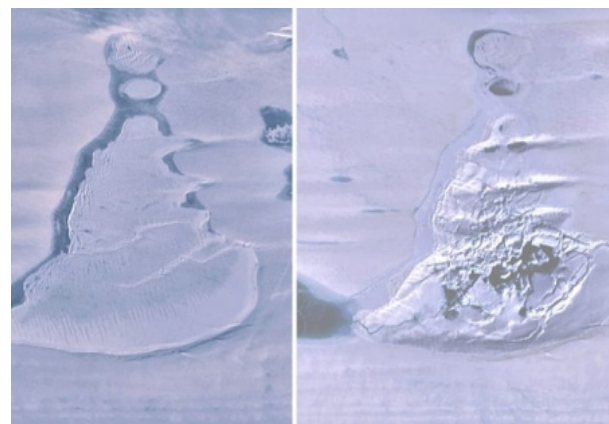
Research is still being conducted about this missing lake, which has

no name, but the missing lake is a big indicator of global warming becoming a major global issue. The Arctic regions are melting at a rapid rate which contributes to sea levels rising. Traditionally the ice in these areas are thick, but Indiatoday.in reported that ships are able to move freely through these pieces of ice on the sea. Studies are still being done on how climate change is affecting the Arctic, and what steps can be done to conserve these study-worthy regions of the world.

Warner and his team have used climate change models to understand how a rise in temperature is linked to an increase in the meltwater on the Antarctic ice shelves. Warner added that more

data and variables are needed to make the climate change model even more accurate. However, the initial findings have found that as the temperatures rise globally there is an increase in surface meltwater which may cause the rise in sea levels that other researchers are finding. Warner and his team are currently comparing data they have from decades prior to understand this incident, but this mysterious event has shed light on how the Arctic is in danger due to factors related to global warming.

Despite the ongoing research of this issue, the humongous lake disappearing in Antarctica should be a reminder to everyone about how valuable Earth is and how the loss of these natural formations could harm us, as humans.



Euro 2020 Results

Kasia Lipa
Treasurer

On a night of immense tension, Italy was crowned the champions of the UEFA Euro 2020 after defeating England in a penalty shootout with a score of 3-2 on July 11 at the Wembley Stadium in London.

Italy's victory was not clear cut in the first half as England's Luke Shaw scored the fastest goal in Euro final history in a minute and 57 seconds, causing a huge eruption of applause. England continued to dominate the midfield with the duo of Declan Rice and Kalvin Phillip, but it wasn't enough to score another goal.

Italy's recognizable strength, after being unbeaten in 33 consecutive matches and conceding only 10 goals, made an appearance in the second half in the form of equalizing the game at the 67th minute mark — credit to Leonardo Bonucci silencing the crowd.

In celebration of his goal, Bonucci ran to the camera closest to the net and screamed to the viewers, both in the stadium and across the world,

"It's coming to Rome. It's coming to Rome!"

The phrase was altered in mockery of the English fans who chanted "It's coming home. It's coming home. It's coming. Football's coming home," during this year's Euros. The words were actually repopularized by the fans as it was released in 1996, when England hosted the Euros; coincidentally or not the slogan of that year's championship was: Football Coming Home.

The 1-1 score stayed put through the remaining 23 minutes and also 30 minutes of extended time, leading to the highly stressful penalty shootout. For those unfamiliar with how penalties work, five players of both teams are picked to participate and alternate between shots. To determine which team begins the penalties, the captains of both teams meet with the referee and settle it with a coin toss. The team that scores the most penalties after the first five takes wins the match.

In order: Domenico Berardi, Italian forward, scored after putting the ball in the bottom left. Harry Kane,

England's captain, scored the same way as Berardi and gave England its first point. Their goalkeeper Jordan Pickford saved Andrea Belotti's shot while Harry Maguire, England's defender, scored at the top right corner. Leonardo Bonucci once again equalized the score, this time being 2-2. Marcus Rashford, forward, misses his shot by hitting the left post and Fed-

erico Bernadeschi scores at the center of the goal. That would end up being the winning goal as England's Jadon Sancho and Bukayo Saka missed their shots. As a result, Italy won the shootout with a score of 3-2.

Italy's win marks the first time that it won the Euros since 1968. Bonucci was right — football came to Rome and not home - to England.



Credit: Yahoo! Sports

MLB All-Star Game moved from Atlanta due to election laws passed

Christos Kladeftiras
Reporter

After a shortened season, the 2021 MLB All-Star Game was set to take place in Atlanta, Georgia on July 13th at Truist Park, home of the Atlanta Braves. That was the plan until President Joe Biden appeared on ESPN and claimed that due to Georgia's new election laws, they should move the All-Star Game out of the state. President Biden claimed that Georgia's new laws were "racist" and said they echoed "Jim Crow" senses.

Georgia's new legislation was made to slowly start getting things back to normal while still allowing for leeway within the system. The most notable changes are the requirement of identification when voting, removing some drop boxes, and giving the state more control over how elections are run.

President Biden denounced the new laws toward the MLB and

other companies that did business with Georgia while these laws were being signed. After these claims were made, the Washington Post gave his speech "Four Pinocchios" which is their way of saying Biden's claims were inaccurate. Stacey Abrams, former Georgia Representative was in agreement with the President, claiming that the Georgia GOP "traded economic opportunity for suppression." This was also marked as false by the Washington Post, as they said that Georgia was actually looking to expand business opportunities inside the state.

Biden's claims of racism were echoed throughout the sports world and were heard by many people including the MLB Players Alliance, who pushed MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred to change the location of the All-Star Game. Georgia Governor Brian Kemp said in a press conference, "We shouldn't apologize for wanting to make it easier to vote and harder to cheat."

Georgia answers those concerns

by still allowing absentee ballots without giving a reason for the absentee, allowing up to a 17 day period of early voting, still having voting boxes throughout the cities, and letting citizens enter the buildings to vote as long as they have picture identification with a signature. The latter has been needed for voting in some states, as well as common things in life like buying cigarettes or alcohol and entering federal buildings. This is in stark contrast to Delaware, Biden's home state, which offers a reasonable excuse for absentee ballots, no early voting laws, no vote boxes, and laws already put in place for voter identification. Georgia claims that these laws, in fact, help encourage and enforce registration.

MLB made the decision to move the 2021 MLB All-Star Game as well as the MLB Draft from Atlanta to Denver,

Colorado in Coors Field, the home of the Colorado Rockies. This decision to move has split many people and has cost the state of Georgia over \$100 million since they lost hotel reservations, advertisements, and endorsements, just to name a few. This will be the 91st MLB All-Star Game, as well as the second time hosting for the Rockies, who last hosted the event in 1998 in the same stadium.



Source: MLB

In The Heights Review

Jayla Cordero
Managing Editor

the knight news, July 2021
theknightnews.com

In *The Heights* directed by Jon M. Chu, is a musical filled with elements of hip-hop, salsa, merengue and soul music. The film explores the lives of three characters in the New York City Latino neighbourhood of Washington Heights. It depicts how a Latino community is clinging to their dreams while trying to make ends meet, living paycheck by paycheck, but doing it with their heads held high and with pride.

We are introduced to three characters: Usnavi (Anthony Ramos), a bodega owner who has a dream of moving to the Dominican Republic to rebuild his late father's bar, Nina (Leslie Grace), a Stanford College student who's trying to find her path in life, and Vanessa (Melissa Barrera), a nail technician at a salon with a dream to become a fashion designer. It also involves the complicated love affairs of two couples, Usnavi and Vanessa and Nina and Benny, an off-license taxi

dispatcher. As the film progresses, we see the struggles each character faces such as Nina, who returns home from college feeling lost and discouraged and shares her college experience as lonely. She fears the disappointment from her father and the community she's grown up with, telling her that she was "the one who made it out" and waiting for her to succeed. She is drowning in the expectations of others while having to deal with the stereotypes that she faces as a Latina at an elite college. All of this causes her to lose her sense of self and her career path. We can see the transformation in Nina throughout the movie in the beginning, when she shows up from college with her hair straightened and wearing muted colors. This represents her trying to change herself to fit in, but later in the movie as she returns to Washington Heights, she is soon seen with her natural curly hair and wearing brighter colors.

Then we are introduced to Vanessa, who struggles to accomplish her dream to become a fashion designer. In her current job at a salon, she feels boxed in but endures it because she's chasing a goal. She breaks into a song about chasing her dream and ends with saying "it won't be long now, anyway" with a discouraged face. Even though she continuously tells herself that her dreams will come true, there always seems to be barriers that she has to overcome. The stories told by these characters give an authentic view as to what minorities go through to achieve their dreams.

As a person who was born and raised in Washington Heights, I loved reminiscing on some of my childhood memories that popped up in the film such as piragua, shaved ice with flavored syrup, on a hot summer day and running through the open fire hydrants. This film represented the atmosphere of the neighborhood perfectly, with

how the people in the community supported each other and were basically family to one another. We see this with characters such as abuela Claudia who takes care of everyone in the neighborhood and always has people over at her house for gatherings and dinners.

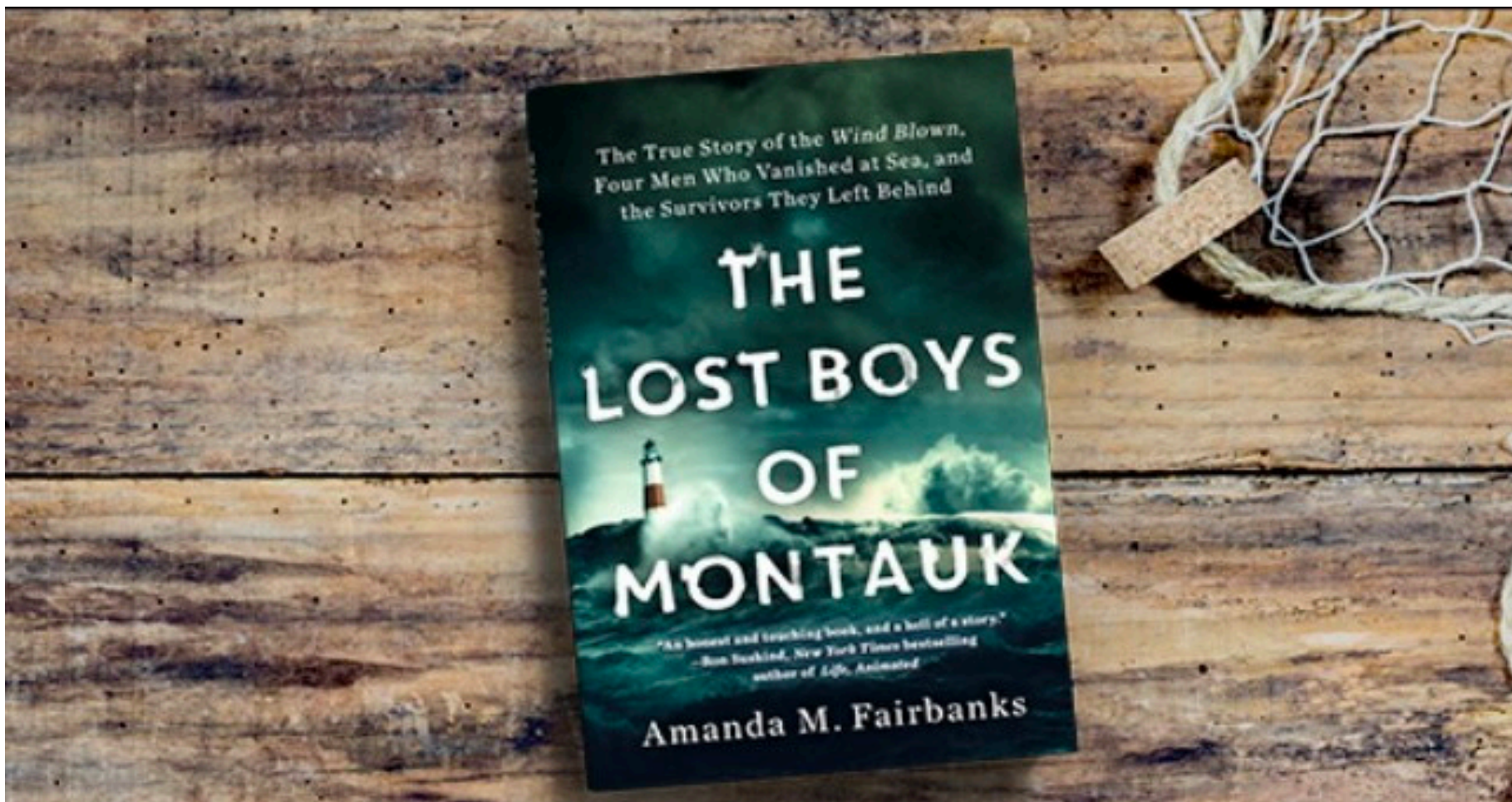
This film also brings up important issues such as DACA and how Hispanics don't fit into the "American dream" ideology that if you work hard in America, you will be rewarded for it in the end. There are obstacles that Hispanics and other minorities have to overcome that make it nearly impossible to achieve the American dream.

Overall, this film showed the robust lives and dreams of the Latino community in Washington Heights. There's a distinct sense of pride that is exhibited in this film, that is celebrating where many of us came from and it shows that we should have a promising outlook towards where we're all going next.



Simons Says : Lost Boys is a Bittersweet Slice of Home

Ashley Simons
Editor



In 1984, the commercial fishing ship, the *Wind Blown*, left Montauk Harbor to never return. What seemed like a routine offshore fishing expedition turned into a tragedy that is now a core piece of local folklore. *The Lost Boys of Montauk* tells the true, heart-wrenching tale of four men lost at sea.

After a few days of embarking on the *Wind Blown*, the ship and crew suddenly vanished forever. They were fighting for their lives and were victims of a nor'easter storm. The *Wind Blown* and the bodies of the crew were never recovered. We read about the victims of the storm such as Michael Stedman, Captain of the *Wind Blown*, was a loving husband with three sons. David Connick was an avid surfer from an affluent family. Michael Vigilant was only 19 years old when he proposed to his girlfriend before heading out to sea for the last time. Scott Clarke was the youngest of the team, an 18 year old determined to make his mark.

The *Wind Blown* disappearance was an awful loss to their families and the East End as a whole. It is truly a tragic story that shook

the East End, and haunts their families to this day. This book shows how commercial fishing is no easy task. It pushes the young and brave far beyond their limits. It is a dangerous job and one would wonder who would take up such a task and why. These men make their motives very clear, despite the risks that they take.

It's not just the story that drew me in, but also the clear writing, wonderful storytelling, and photos. Fairbanks obviously did her research and uncovered the lives of the deceased. This is more than just a story about a sunken vessel and men lost at sea. It talks about the lives of the Captain and three mates, their families who are in desperate need of closure and a recovering community. It is driven by first-hand accounts of their families and friends who combat immense grief, in the big and small ways, that will touch lives for generations to come.

Even decades later, everyone who was interviewed could remember that day so clearly. This shows how much of an impact it had on their lives. Photos are dispersed throughout the book which only makes the story more real, almost

giving the reader an intimate relationship with the people. This story would be a phenomenal documentary film. With many of their immediate relatives alive today, as well as friends, neighbors, and townspeople, presenting this information in another medium would be doable, if not already necessary.

Although, there are quite a few fillers, some which may be too personal about the lives of the missing men. There were moments when I thought about the ethics of journalism. While it is a journalist's job to accurately record history and share it with the world, there were times when it felt disrespectful and invasive to share such information. The book was teetering on just enough information and "TMI" moments. Additionally, many of the people mentioned seemed to blend towards the end with the constant back and forth of the different people and times. It lacked some coherence because each chapter jumped from one time period to another.

You know the Hamptons? Think again. From a small fishing community with working-class

families to a playground for the wealthy, Fairbanks touches on the social divide. This tale exposes the lives of true locals. Look past the luxurious Hamptons and get a taste of local life. Famous and wealthy tourists frequent the Hamptons for its horse shows, estates, and most importantly, the pristine seaside. Little do they know about the sea's powerful force, one to be feared and loved.

As someone who grew up in the area, the references to local shops, landmarks, and streets that I know and love, like Gosman's and Ditch Plains, make the story even more real. Every place mentioned I could see in my mind and think of my own memory there. The familiarity of the area makes this book a must-read for East End locals especially.

The Lost Boys of Montauk shows the timeless and horrific tragedy of resilience, love, and sorrow. Fairbanks wonderfully captures the raw story of four men who perished at sea and life after such an incident. It is an unfinished story that will neither be forgotten nor fully understood, yet beautifully finds a way to bring a torn community together.