HE LEGACY OF KOBE BRYANT

By Ben Kim
On the morning of January 26, 2019, the entire world was in shock after hearing the news that Kobe Bryant, his 13-year-old daughter, Gianna, and 7 others passed away in a helicopter crash in Calabasas, California. His NBA career was illustrious, making 18 All-Star game appearances, winning 1 MVP award, and winning 5 NBA championships with the Los Angeles Lakers.

Straight out of high school at 17, Kobe understood what it took to be the best in the league. His work ethic was unrivaled, as players and coaches shared stories of the countless hours he put in the gym. Even if you weren’t a basketball fan, people from every walk of life strived to replicate his dedication and hard work which became known as the “Mamba Mentality.”

“Kobe’s competitiveness, knowledge of the game, and will to win, translated to the late game heroics that fans across the world were so eager and astonished to see.” - Ivy Chen

By Ian Clark
Few films have been able to captivate worldwide audiences the way that Bong Joon-ho’s Parasite has. The film first premiered in May 2019 at the Cannes Film Festival, where it won the festival’s highest award, the prestigious Palme d’Or. From there, it gained the Love for Parasite award, the prestigious Palme d’Or. From there, it gained accolades and awards, Bryant’s largest interest after retiring was coaching his daughter Gianna’s eighth-grade basketball team. According to the Los Angeles Times, Bryant “tested” his players. Occasionally, he scheduled scrimmages against high school-age club teams. Bryant’s commitment allowed Gianna’s team to develop into one of the best fifth grade teams in the nation.

“Parasite is an outstanding mix of drama, comedy, and suspense. Das, a junior, says “Parasite is a film that speaks volumes through its simple yet profound messages. It completely broke the standard of American films by seamlessly introducing a new, hybrid genre of humor and suspense. It kept me on the edge of my seat during the whole movie and left me wanting more at the end.”- Mita

Parasite is a boundary-breaking Best Picture: a milestone in the history of foreign language films and cinema in general, and one can only hope that this acclaim will attract more people to foreign-language films. “Once you overcome the one-inch tall barrier of subtitles, you will be introduced to so many more amazing films.” That quote came from Bong Joon-ho himself during his acceptance speech for Best Foreign Language Film at the Golden Globes. Many incredible foreign films have come out in these past few years, including Roma, Potcull’s of a Lady in Fire, Pain and Glory, I Lost My Body, Cimar, Cold War and Shoplifters. If you are interested in discovering more of Bong Joon-ho’s other films, you can currently find Snowpiercer and Okja on Netflix.
Hello all,

Spring is upon us! You can finally put away your heavy winter coat. It is no longer dark at 5 p.m. If you listen very closely, you might even hear a bird chirping. As the first semester stress starts to wind down, make sure you’re taking care of yourself; go outside and enjoy the fresh air-- or at least let it flow in through your window; spend your free time hanging out with friends or exploring your hobbies; clear your room of all the winter clutter; start that thing you’ve been putting off for months. With the cold and bitter months behind us, nourish your mind and body for the excitement that lies ahead.

Likewise, as the second semester starts to pick up, grab every opportunity that lies ahead of you; read that book that isn’t required for class; do that extra credit assignment to boost your grade; volunteer somewhere even if you’d rather stay home. With this opportunity for a fresh start of both a new season and new semester, take the time to focus on your personal growth and well-being. Spring is the season of growth and flourishment for all; make sure where-ever it takes you, you are ready to shed the old-habits of the cold past, and embrace the bloom of opportunities that lie ahead.

Your EICs,
Amasha and Eva

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The Clarion
Staff 2019-2020

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Come to my house for St. Pat’s Day party!

Ok! What do I wear?

Just normal St. Pat’s Day Stuff!

Later that night...

Aight imma head out

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Down:
1. George Washington’s Birthday
2. Stream “Yummy”
3. These young entrepreneurs will give you a sweet deal
5. A pointy Italian shoe
6. Bracket szn
8. The only time when the commercials are just as important as the televised event
9. I am once again asking for your ________

Across:
4. 366
7. Beware the ________
10. More man than a horse? Or more horse than a man?
Since Halloween season, I’ve been on a big horror movie kick. I started specifically watching a lot of the old-school Universal monster films. My favorite monster is easily The Mummy, but I think that’s the scarier teacher in me. Frankenstein, however, seems to have the best moves. Surprisingly, The Invisible Man might be the most entertaining of the bunch. Watch the original before you go to see the new one coming out!

Josh Aalampour, EBHS Senior

I began bowling in eighth grade on my own. Instantly, I came to love the sport and enjoyed playing with my friends & family. [When it] became a sport I could join in high school, I immediately took the chance...it has been a thrilling and rewarding experience playing for the bowling team and making new friends. I’ve learned to work with my teammates, develop better techniques and skills, and manage my time for after school matches. As my last year of high school approaches, I am ready to make the next bowling season.

Zach Kim, EBHS Junior

Hi, my name is Joshua Aalampour. I like to play chess, compose classical music, and study theoretical physics in my free time. Recently I’ve been attempting to understand the workings of the quantum field theories that underlie the phenomena of particle physics, inclusive of string theory and quantum gravity.

Josh Aalampour, EBHS Senior
Coronavirus Updates

by Carson He and Aaron Tsui

Perhaps you first heard the word “coronavirus” while watching the morning news. Or maybe you’re like sophomore Maxwell Guo, whose first time hearing anything about the virus was “from memes online” and “conversations at school.” Either way, many people are unclear as to what exactly the coronavirus is.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the coronaviruses “are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases.” While most coronaviruses aren’t dangerous, the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) can cause a fatal disease known as COVID-19. This strain was first detected in Wuhan, China in December 2019. The virus appears to have originated from an animal sold at a Wuhan seafood market, though bats are also known to carry the virus. Some Chinese researchers have even suggested that pangolins may be the “missing link” in the spreading of the virus. As of the 14th offers a holiday to lift our spirits. It is a holiday surrounded by cold weather and shorter days. As we enter mid-winter, the beautiful Hallmark Holiday? It’s all very materialistic,” Sophomore Jillsa Taormina said. Sophomore Akash Srivastava agreed, saying that “Valentine’s Day should be more related to the actual sentimental value than gifts and how many flowers you got.” Ironically, this materialism seems to be so popular that it is the very reason that EBHS senior Manisha Parthasarathy claims that Valentine’s Day is not overrated. She says that every year, Spanish Honor Society sells flowers and chocolates for this special holiday and they “end up raising tons of money.”

On the other hand, several students enjoy the holiday simply because it is a day to spread love. Even without a significant other, students use this holiday to express their feelings to others. Valentine’s Day doesn’t always have to be romantic. You have love for your parents and friends. It can be about celebrating with them.” Junior Iman Qaisar says. Dawson Joseph agreed with this sentiment, noting that “in an age where social media is a huge thing in our lives, we get so lost in showing and bragging to the world what we have that we forget the important things that actually matter.” However you feel about the so-called “Day of Love,” this is still the perfect opportunity to remind someone close to you that they are appreciated. Or, if you’re feeling adventurous, the time to be daring and confess your feelings to that special someone.

The prevalence of the coronavirus issue around the world has also caused social media users to take advantage of the topic’s popularity to promote their own content. Some users have hashtagged posts #coronavirus—even when the posts don’t relate to the virus at all—in order to tie the top of searches. As sophomore Pratik Singh sees it, coronavirus gets more views with bacteria-causing headlines because “Worldwide Pandemic” attracts far more attention than “Small Virus Being Contained.”

Currently, neither a cure nor a vaccine exists for the coronavirus. Although scientists have been performing vaccine tests on animals, they have yet to come to conclusive findings. It may be several months before a coronavirus vaccine will be produced and made available for human use. In the meantime, there are preventative measures that people can take to avoid being exposed to the virus. Avoiding contact with people who are sick, covering coughs and sneezes, washing hands often, and disinfecting frequently-touched objects can help to prevent a coronavirus infection.

A doctor in a hospital in Wuhan, China wearing a hazmat suit visits a patient infected with coronavirus (Image 469x856 to 595x793)

Concerned passengers use face masks to avoid spreading the virus outside of China (Image 470x649 to 595x793)

Dawson Joseph agreed with that "some parts of Valentine’s Day have become overrated due to social media with people almost only acknowledging it to show off their gifts or significant others.” Sophomore Dawson Joseph agreed with this sentiment, noting that “in an age where social media is a huge thing in our lives, we get so lost in showing and bragging to the world what we have that we forget the important things that actually matter.” However you feel about the so-called “Day of Love,” this is still the perfect opportunity to remind someone close to you that they are appreciated. Or, if you’re feeling adventurous, the time to be daring and confess your feelings to that special someone.

by Alefyia Presswala

As we enter mid-winter, the cold weather and shorter days can make everything seem dreary. However, February fourteenth offers a holiday to lift our spirits. It is a holiday filled with love. Right?

Several people wait for their bouquet of roses or their handwritten love poem. Many swoon over the idea of a romantic Valentine’s Day date. But others gag at this same idea. Opponents of the ‘Hallmark Holiday’ claim that Valentine’s Day is a holiday purposely made popular by big companies like Hallmark, which is well known for its greeting cards, or other organizations like chocolate and flower businesses, so that they can increase profits.

Some people choose not to celebrate this holiday for its materialism and associations with cliche stereotypes, and xenophobia. Across several of these platforms, a video depicting a Chinese woman eating a bat has circulated; the video places blame for the coronavirus outbreak on the unsanitary eating habits of Chinese people. In reality, the video wasn’t even taken in Wuhan but in the Pacific island Palau.

Just another Hallmark Holiday?

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The doctors in a hospital in Wuhan, China wearing hazmat suits (Image 470x649 to 595x793)

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In 2018, Netflix released a four-part “Summer of Love” promotion, with clickbait titles such as Set It Up, Sing to Me. In this case, To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before. This film, follows Lara Jean’s mixed-race heritage, as she ends up dating one of her crushes, Peter Kavinsky. The film succeeded far more than its Netflix counterparts, reaching 80 million viewers, and a soaring increase in Instagram followers for both lead actors Lana Condor and Noah Centineo. The sequel, To All the Boys I’ll Always Love You, was released on February 12th. Junior Lauren Choi says the film is “a thrilling time for the Asian community. It’s coming right when Asian films are winning awards, such as Parasite, and becoming box-office successes, such as Crazy Rich Asians.” All of its success cannot be attributed to one reason, however. TATBILB, is a very cute movie that has a pleasing storyline. It has great asian representation, but I think the movie is about more than that; and succeeds because of “more than that”. The sequel offers a more relatable look into high school relationships, continuing the story off of the happy ending of the first film. TATBILB carries the same sentiment, but represents a new Hollywood and a new American teenager—one major reason for its popularity. PS, I Still Love You follows the same characters but with a new love interest in Lara Jean’s life, causing a love triangle—a staple Hollywood motif. The chemistry between the two leads, Centineo and Condor, is palpable and causes the movie’s flow to be exciting but relatable. It is for these reasons that Junior Flora Cai believes the film is “a really amazing movie that has a pleasing story line. It is palpable and causes the viewers to be invested.”

Lara Jean and Peter Kavinsky at the lights festival

TO ALL THE SEQUELS I’VE LOVED BEFORE

by Annaika Taneja

President Trump Acquitted

by Austin Yang

On February 5, 2020, the Senate voted to acquit Trump from both impeachment charges, with a vote of 52-48 for Article I (“Abuse of Power”) and a vote of 53-47 for Article II (“Obstruction of Congress”). Both Articles failed to muster the 2/3 majority in the Senate required to remove Trump. Upon reflection of Trump’s impeachment trial, it is clear that the Impeachment was not an issue of Trump’s ability as a president, but rather of the deep, bitter divide between the two main political factions of the United States. In the House voting, 229 and 228 of the 233 Democrats voted for Article I and Article II, respectively. Comparatively, 195 out of the 195 Republicans voted against both Articles. A similar pattern was seen in the Senate, where all 45 Democrats voted to charge Trump for both Articles, while almost all Republicans voted to acquit Trump. “It was a really partisan issue,” notes Pratik Singh, a sophomore in EHS, “and it represented the huge divide in Congress right now.” The impeachment process clearly exposed the extreme polarity of America’s current political parties. “[The Impeachment] seemed like more of a symbol,” says Nicolas Vinco, another EHS sophomore, of the extreme ideological divide in America rather than “the expectation that something would come of it.” But what about Trump now? Just two days after Trump’s acquittal, Trump fired Gordon Sondland, the ambassador to the European Union. The day after, Trump dismissed Colonel Vindman’s inevitable acquittal. On February 5, 2020, the Senate officially voted to acquit Trump from both impeachment charges, with a vote of 52-48 for Article I (“Abuse of Power”) and a vote of 53-47 for Article II (“Obstruction of Congress”). Both Articles failed to muster the 2/3 majority in the Senate required to remove Trump. Upon reflection of Trump’s impeachment trial, it is clear that the Impeachment was not an issue of Trump’s ability as a president, but rather of the deep, bitter divide between the two main political factions of the United States. In the House voting, 229 and 228 of the 233 Democrats voted for Article I and Article II, respectively. Comparatively, 195 out of the 195 Republicans voted against both Articles. A similar pattern was seen in the Senate, where all 45 Democrats voted to charge Trump for both Articles, while almost all Republicans voted to acquit Trump. “It was a really partisan issue,” notes Pratik Singh, a sophomore in EHS, “and it represented the huge divide in Congress right now.” The impeachment process clearly exposed the extreme polarity of America’s current political parties. “[The Impeachment] seemed like more of a symbol,” says Nicolas Vinco, another EHS sophomore, of the extreme ideological divide in America rather than “the expectation that something would come of it.” But what about Trump now? Just two days after Trump’s acquittal, Trump fired Gordon Sondland, the ambassador to the European Union. The day after, Trump dismissed Colonel

Alexander Vindman. Both men testified against Trump during the House impeachment inquiry. Both of these removals, to many, questioned the integrity of Trump. Is Trump able to act objectively? Or is he simply unable to make decisions without personal input? “Presidential power should not be used for personal gain. Period,” criticizes Singh, “and it’s shameful how [Trump] acted, very well knowing he represents the whole country.” One thing is certain, that no matter what their political affiliation may be, the entire nation will be

IMDb

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The Influence of The Influencer

by Minta Caune

As the role of social media in the 21st century continues to grow, so does the role of the “influencer,” a nickname for the many social media celebrities with the platform and power to persuade followers. Currently, according to Statista.com, about 79% of the population of Americans have a social media profile of some kind, whether it be Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, Snapchat or YouTube. And as this generation grows, so does the role of influencers in advertising, politics, and entertainment.

“A lot of people take the words and actions of influencers to heart,” Junior Anderson Edwards said regarding the influencer’s impact on students. To Edwards, influencers also create a “uniform dynamic” in schools. “A new trend comes out, everyone follows it, whether they realize it or not. Then, another trend comes along and the cycle repeats,” he stated.

Sherpa jackets, cameos and checked patterns are only a few of the iconic trends of students’ wardrobes this past year, thanks to the styles of Instagram influencers like Kylie Jenner (162 million Instagram followers), Gigi Hadid (38.8 million) and Rihanna (78 million). More recently, the rise of TikTok has led to fashion trends related to “e-boys,” “e-girls” and VSCO girls at East Brunswick High School, which were celebrated by the East Brunswick High School Student Council’s “Character Day earlier this year.”

Influencers span many industries, from beauty to sports. Influencers have also been positive. New platforms have created many opportunities for models like Ashley Graham (10.2 million Instagram followers) and Winnie Harlow (7.6 million Instagram followers) to spread body positivity and redefine beauty standards. To senior Shrutia Shah, influencers can also help teens see that they “can’t still be an influential role model through social media, especially if they decide college isn’t their thing.”

Whether it be tweets from the President of the United States (55 million Twitter followers) or a controversy over the “hype” of TikTok Charli D’Amelio (26.5 million TikTok followers), the words, actions and appearances of influencers are becoming more and more pervasive in the lives of teens today.

The Woman, The Myth, The Cunningham

by Aaron Zhu

EBHS urban legend has it that Miss Cunningham is intimidating. When I asked her about this, she laughed and said with a knowing smile, “Yeah, that’s what I’m going for!” Anyone who meets her soon learns that this persona is just her loving irony. “It’s really just tough love,” she says. In Cunningham’s class, her quirks, unbridled sarcasm, and wit make it easier to laugh at and learn from our mistakes and become better readers and writers. It’s because of this air of familiarity that Junior Gianna Sanseverino sees Miss Cunningham as radiating those “cool mom vibes.” Cunningham agrees; she envisions herself as “mama bear” and the students her “bear cubs,” always backed by “mama’s strong, stay-true-from-an-inner-truth.”

Miss Cunningham loves her job. It took her, in fact, a couple of days to find words to describe herself other than “teacher,” because an educator, she says, “is always what she has been.” Cunningham wasn’t a teacher, she’d be a scriptwriter, producer, director, or actress — anything to do with storytelling. Her creative proclivity is inspired by her favorite writers, Ernest Hemingway and James Joyce, and her favorite artist, the eccentric Salvador Dali. Cunningham went to the homelands of her favorite writers, Ernest Hemingway and James Joyce, and her favorite artist, Salvador Dali. We can all learn a lot from Cunningham. Her advice is to avoid complacency and to constantly push yourself to learn more and do better. When Cunningham couldn’t stand her clumsy journalism skills, for example, she taught me how to interview her for this piece. Be, like her, a little introspective. “I yell at me a lot!” Think deeply and use words precisely; say what you mean. Let yourself off the hook for being a “perfectionist” — the worst that can come from it is overthinking; the best is hard work and a sense of purpose. Be who you are, even if it’s misunderstood at times, but make sure, like Miss Cunningham, that you’re empathetic at heart.

The social media industry knows the power these influencers have over their followers, which is why influencers with 4 million followers can charge up to $175,000 per sponsored post. More recently, the rise of TikTok has led to fashion trends related to “e-boys,” “e-girls” and VSCO girls at East Brunswick High School, which were celebrated by the East Brunswick High School Student Council’s “Character Day earlier this year.”

The social media industry knows the power these influencers have over their followers, which is why influencers with millions of followers can charge up to $175,000 per sponsored post. For others, the power of these influencers extends much further than just advertising and personal fashion influence. “Influencers tell more than just what fashion or makeup trends are in right now. They play an even bigger role in how we all see ourselves,” Sophomore Samarth Shah said. The use of Photoshop and the prevalence of models who look a certain way can “influence the way we feel we are viewed by society and increase social anxiety,” according to junior Rishika Rajendra. However, the impact of social media, especially if they decide college isn’t their thing.”

Whether it be tweets from the President of the United States (55 million Twitter followers) or a controversy over the “hype” of TikTok Charli D’Amelio (26.5 million TikTok followers), the words, actions and appearances of influencers are becoming more and more pervasive in the lives of teens today.
Smartphones are being used to cast ballots in Seattle.

Baby Boomers are expected to vote in the 2016 presidential election, which will make up about 10% of the voting on their phones? For another four years. But the president may remain in office while some believe the current model will not be fixed anytime soon. According to the Iowa Caucus but there was no “backup plan in case of technological mishaps” in Iowa and that more education and testing is needed to get “more people to vote so they reduce the polarization.”

However, President Sheila Nix also supports mobile voting because it is predicted to help with the current primary system, which mostly draws people from political extremes to participate. Nix also supports mobile voting because it is predicted to help with the current primary system, which mostly draws people from political extremes to participate. Nix also supports mobile voting because it is predicted to help with the current primary system, which mostly draws people from political extremes to participate because they are the most involved. The overall goal of the project is to get “more people to vote so they reduce the polarization.”

Overall, this tricky situation has left students stumped. There are benefits to this system, but how can we progress if the safety of our voting is compromised? While it is safe to say that this problem will not be fixed anytime soon, there is hope that EB students, as well as our peers around the nation, will find a way to fairly participate in the democracy we hope to uphold—the democracy we were promised.
The Pod Save " or "

With social media in use, the award show institution has drawn concern from many. People are questioning the culture of fame and wealth, which celebrities walk the lush red carpet dressed in luxurious gowns and tuxedos, appealing to younger audiences. Yet, this temporary ban still relies on the free version, demonstrating that the effects of the removal of political ads from Spotify will inevitably be tremendous and pervasive.

The main reason for this removal is Spotify's inability to fact-check these political ads. "At this point in time, we do not have the necessary level of robustness in our processes, systems and tools to responsibly validate and review this content," a spokesperson told Ad Age. This suspension ultimately serves as an obstacle for presidential candidates in the 2020 election to promote their campaigns. Yet, this temporary ban still has limitations. Political advertisements embedded in third-party podcasts (e.g., "The Joe Rogan Experience" or "Pod Save America") will still be allowed, meaning politicians will still have some control over a voice on Spotify.

Spotify is just one of the many companies that have begun regulating political content. Because of the mass dissemination of false information in 2016 and with the approach of the 2020 political election, countless Tech Companies have cracked down on different types of advertisements. In October 2019, social media sites Twitter and TikTok removed political ads. Twitter's CEO Jack Dorsey tweeted about this ban, saying, "We believe political message reach should be earned not bought." Likewise, LinkedIn, Pinterest and Twitch have followed suit and withdrawn political ads as well. On the other hand, Facebook has refused to remove or fact check political ads because the company considers this action to be a violation of free speech. Between these two ideologies, companies such as Google and Snapchat have taken this route by fact checking their political ads. Still, EBHS junior Emily Dong performs that political advertisements still be removed completely because any type of political advertisement, "can easily contain bias and be manipulative, especially for younger generations.

With a multitude of approaches from different tech companies, sometimes one can only rely on his or her intuition and critical thinking to assess the credibility and/or bias of political ads.

Lights, Camera, Canceled?

The future of awards shows

The most wonderful time of the year in Hollywood has come to its bitter-sweet finale. From November to February, there have been a multitude of award shows. During these hectic nights, the general public can watch their favorite celebrities walk the red carpet, dress in the most luxurious gowns and tuxedos, and receive awards others can only dream of winning. However, with the passing of the 62nd Grammy Awards that took place this January, many people are questioning the whole award show institution. With social media in use, weep victories. Yet, the statistics clearly show a plummeting decline in viewership. According to The Hollywood Reporter, 18.7 million viewers watched this year's program. It is the smallest audience count since the 2008 Grammys, which amassed only 17.18 million viewers. In fact, the 2020 Grammy numerical isn't far off from the lowest Grammy viewership ever—the Grammys in 2006, which counted for a measly 17.1 million. The 18.7 million views are down by 1.2 million views from the 2019 awards. This year's Grammys also set a new record for the lowest rating. With a 5.4 rating among adults between the ages of 18 to 49, the awards show had the poorest audience critique ever.

And it's not just the Grammys. The MTV Video Music Awards has seen a 35% decline in its audience members in recent years. And as for the Emmy's, the audience fell nearly 20% from the years 2018 to 2019. There are several different answers to explain this occurrence, one major being the twenty-first-century lifestyle. Nowadays, many people don't have the time or the patience to sit through an entire awards show. As junior and Bella Voice singer, Juvari Pai says, "It's much easier to watch only the best clips online, many people prefer this option instead.

The Grammys have also become more of a political event rather than a musical one. Many presenters and references of politics ruin the entire mood." The other hand, many applaud these artists for using their platforms to discuss topics they care about. However, even with the decline of views, award shows are still a popular program and are likely to remain that way. They will never fail to appeal to younger audience members with their showcases of glitz and glamour, whether through cable television or a two-minute YouTube video.

Although this does raise the question of freedom of speech, Twitter is a private company so in the end they are allowed to do as they wish. Both of these practices have sparked backlash in the media. In an interview with CNN, political commentator Mark McKinnon @markmckinnon that the right way to regulate ads is to “take a look and see if it’s factual...There’s got to be some accountability and responsibility.” Companies such as Google and Snapchat have taken this route by fact checking their political ads. Still, EBHS junior Emily Dong performs that political advertisements still be removed completely because any type of political advertisement, "can easily contain bias and be manipulative, especially for younger generations.

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