

# The Clinton Post

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## Former President Trump Indicted on Criminal Charges

BY: AAROHI KARNAVAT

On Thursday, March 30, 2023, Alvin Bragg, Manhattan District Attorney, accused Donald Trump of devising a hush-money scheme to secure his way to the presidency and later concealing it from the White House. Trump has become the first former U.S. president to face criminal charges and now faces the possibility of a criminal trial. Despite the severe political implications and the commencement of a hazardous chapter in the former president, Trump has denied the charges in court.

It is alleged that Trump was involved in a scheme where his lawyer and personal advisor at the time, Michael Cohen, paid a sum of money to adult film actress Stormy Daniels in exchange for her silence. Subsequently, Trump supposedly repaid Cohen with monthly checks of \$35,000 throughout 2017. To cover up the true nature of these payments, Cohen falsely documented them as legal fees. Although Trump used his own personal funds and trust to make these payments, rather than mon-



Photo Credit: Curtis Means, Associated Press // Clinton Post Staff

Former President Trump in a Manhattan courtroom for his arraignment.

ey from his business, the transactions were still processed through the Trump Organization and recorded in its financial records. Trump was charged with 34 felony counts of falsifying business records during his arraignment and, if convicted on all accounts, may face a maximum 136-year sentence.

During the proceedings, Trump spoke only a few words and remained mostly still, although he leaned forward to enter his plea of “not guilty” in the courtroom. The scene was surreal for a man who, just months prior, was running for his second term in the

White House. His indictment has the possibility to turn off voters who may see Trump as a liability given his refusal to accept his 2020 election loss, the resulting fallout of January 6, 2021, insurrection at the US Capitol, and the bevy of additional criminal and civil investigations he’s facing. However,

At the hearing, Chris Conroy, a prosecutor from the Manhattan District Attorney’s office, mentioned threatening online posts made by Trump in recent weeks. Among these was a statement that there would be “death and destruction” if he were charged. As a

result, Judge Juan Merchan, who presided over the case, advised Trump’s legal team to talk to their client and others and caution them to avoid making statements that could potentially provoke violence or civil disorder.

The upcoming court appearance for Trump is not slated until December, indicating a considerable period of time until the next physical appearance. It is probable that Trump’s legal team will initiate a motion to dismiss the case, with the prosecution receiving an opportunity to counter. Trump will also have an opportunity to respond to the prosecution’s counter. Throughout this period, any interim rulings may be challenged and work their way through the legal system. Should the case proceed to trial, it is not expected to commence until 2024.

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# Lack of Action After School Shooting Leads to Outrage Once Again; Will Things be Different This Time?

Recent protests in response to Nashville School Shooting raise gun control talk.

BY: ANJA DAMON

On Monday, March 27th, Audrey Hale entered The Covenant School while armed with two assault-style rifles: a handgun and ammunition. The shooter, a 28 year old female living in the Belmont-Hillsboro neighborhood, fired 152 rounds. She killed 6 people in total: Evelyn Dieckhaus, 9; Hallie Scruggs, 9; William Kinney, 9; Cynthia Peak, 61; Katherine Koonce, 60; and Mike Hill, 61.

According to video footage released by the police, Hale shot through two sets of double doors to enter. She was faced with no personnel upon entrance. 911 was called from the school at 10:13 am. Within 14 minutes, police arrived, shooting and killing Hale.

NewsChannel5 states that, "Authorities cataloged 47 items they took from the shooter's home, where they found guns, a suicide note, journals and more." Additional specific items found on Hale's person include a detailed map of the Covenant School and what is considered a manifesto. With this information, it was determined that Hale had been planning the shooting for months prior.

Hale was a transgender woman and a former student at the private, Christian school. Though a motive has not been released as to why Hale decided to both enter the school with gun and commit suicide, this fact, though not confirmed, is subject to have influenced



**Photo Credit: Laura Thompson for the New York Times // Clinton Post Staff**  
Mourners during a candlelight vigil on March 29th honoring the victims of the shooting.

Hale's decision.

The shooting caused many outrages around gun violence. "Save our children!" was heard through the walls of the Tennessee capital on Thursday, March 30th, where hundreds of children and parents gathered in protest of stricter gun laws.

Meanwhile, three lawmakers, Justin Jones, Justin J. Pearson, and Gloria Jhonson, stood their ground in protest towards listening to the people to enforce strict gun laws. Jones and Pearson, young activists, were expelled from the house, causing a short shutdown.

The lawmakers were temporarily let back into the house a few days later (each a couple days apart) due to a request from the towns they represent, Nashville and Memphis. An election still needs to be held in hopes to hold Jones and Pearson's spot.

President Joe Biden has spoken out about the lawmakers expulsion, stat-

ing it is "shocking, undemocratic and without precedent."

This commotion has influenced a turning point in Tennessee congress. On Tuesday, April 11th, Governor Bill Lee, a Republican, "announced he would sign an executive order," according to The New York Times. This order would enforce tighter background checks when purchasing a gun in the state of Tennessee and would speed up the process of taking someone's gun.

Gov. Lee also asked legislators to pass an order of protection law. This would ensure that those in danger to themselves or others would not be found in possession of guns. Although this law fits the guidelines of a red flag law, Lee refuses to call it this; alternatively, describing it as "a law that I think is appropriate for our state today," according to The New York Times.

While Gov. Bill Lee's speech brings high hopes

for protesters, all other Republicans in the state are not backing Lee, so the implementation of his proposed laws is not looking good.

These protests should influence the U.S. Congress, just as it did for Gov. Bill Lee, however, Republicans have shown little interest in changing gun laws. According to CBS NEWS, "Rep. Tim Burchett, a Tennessee Republican who represents the Knoxville area, said Congress isn't going to fix the problems that led to Monday's shooting."

# Pentagon Leaks - The Who, What, and Why

BY: SPENCER KLUGER

Appearing in March of 2023, over 50 U.S. government documents have been leaked to the public. Within these “secret” and “top secret” documents is confidential information on issues such as the Russia-Ukraine war and U.S. spying.

The documents first appeared on fringe social media networks such as Discord, a gaming-focused platform, and 4chan, a site where users post anonymously. The pictures were uploaded by Jack Teixeira, who served as an Air National Guardsman and has since been arrested. The 21-year-old was the head of a Discord group: “Thug Shaker Central.” According to a member of the group, Mr. Teixeira trained mem-

bers to be “supersoldiers”-fit, informed, and connected to God. His job granted him access to the classified documents, and he shared them in an attempt to raise awareness of how poorly he believed tax dollars to be spent.

Although many documents have been confirmed to be genuine, others were doctored for what appear to be political reasons. Over 20 of the documents related to the Russia-Ukraine War, skewing statistics and jeopardizing Ukrainian efforts. Taking a pro-Russia stance, Mr. Teixeira altered statistics about the war. Numbers concerning deaths appear to inflate those of Ukrainians and underestimate Russians.

The leaks contained other information about the war, such as U.S. predictions for its future. Pre-

viously a secret, it is now known that the U.S. predicts a stalemate for the remainder of 2023. Additionally, information of Ukrainian flaws was leaked, aiding Russia and hurting Ukraine.

Typically, information labeled “secret” or “top secret” is kept as such for the presumed benefit of the public. When it is leaked, it may cause more problems than if it had remained unknown. For example, South Korea had been planning to illegally reroute munitions to Ukraine through a third party, Poland. South Korean officials hoped to help Ukraine without creating a public spectacle, but leaked documents sparked a controversy that would have otherwise not existed.

Israel, which has seen much unrest recently, had its problems exacerbated by the

leaks. A leaked document written by the CIA showed that the Mossad, Israel’s CIA equivalent, had encouraged many protests against the government, sometimes through “explicit calls to action.” This treacherous behavior not only undermines overall government legitimacy, but has led to more distrust within the nation.

Despite Mr. Teixeira’s rapid arrest, the rate at which the classified information spread is concerning. All members of the Five Eyes (U.S., Canada, United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand) who share intelligence are on edge and attempting to determine the extent of the damage.

## Finland’s Historic Entry into NATO

BY: AAROHI KARNAVAT

On Tuesday, April 4, 2023, Finland became The North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s (NATO) 31st member state, a strategic defeat for President Vladimir Putin of Russia, who was determined to block the alliance’s expansion. Instead, it incentivized Finland to join amid the ruinous war in Ukraine.

Later that day, Finland’s national flag was raised at NATO headquarters in Belgium. This marked a significant moment highlighting the evolving global dynamics as the West consolidated its alliances in response to Russia’s aggressive behavior towards its neighboring countries. Finland now has access to a powerful military force with a rich history of countering Russian

aggression. President Joe Biden of The United States declared, “When Putin launched his brutal war of aggression against the people of Ukraine, he thought he could divide Europe and NATO... He was wrong. Today, we are more united than ever.”

By extending its commitment to collective defense to Finland, NATO is now obligated to provide aid to a country that shares a long 830-mile border with Russia. In the event of an attack on Finland, the country can rely on the support of all members of the alliance, offering both a practical and psychological boost to the Finnish people’s sense of security.

President Sauli Niinisto of Finland voiced, “It is a great day for Finland.” However, there are still many details to be ironed

out regarding Finland’s integration into the alliance. One of the immediate concerns is whether the incoming Finnish government, which is yet to be formed after the recent elections, will permit foreign troops on its soil or nuclear weapons from its allies. Nevertheless, according to U.S. officials, Finland’s addition to the alliance brings in one of the strongest militaries in Western Europe, along with advanced intelligence and border surveillance capabilities. NATO will eventually have access to Finnish ports, airspace, and sea lanes, which will greatly enhance its defensive capabilities. A November report from the Washington-based Wilson Center stated that “Finland’s artillery forces are the largest and best-equipped in western Europe [and that it] has more

artillery firepower than the combined militaries of Poland, Germany, Norway, and Sweden can currently muster.”

According to James G. Stavridis, a retired four-star U.S. admiral and former NATO military commander, the addition of this country to the alliance presents a significant challenge to defend the border, which creates complications for Putin’s calculations. “A huge plus for NATO.” Britain’s Prime Minister Rishi Sunak tweeted, “This is a historic day for [Finland] and for [NATO’s] alliance. It’s a step that makes every one of us safer.”

# Clinton Theatre Company Returns

## After Two Years Defunct

BY: SIERRA SEETIN

On the night of March 31, the Clinton curtains rose for the first time in two years. The pandemic and following lockdown kept students at home and away from the stage, yet the Clinton Theater Company is now back in full swing. Walking into the transformed gymnasium – disguised by dim lighting and rows of chairs – evoked familiar memories of school dances and middle school performances. By simply darkening the gym, guests are magically transported into the world of each play; this simple mysticism is what gives the Clinton Theater Club its appeal. Throughout the plays, dynamic use of lighting and sound communicates the story whilst the minimal use of props is necessary for tangibility.

The first play, *The B Train* by Bailey Witt, is a heart-wrenching story about how three passengers' lives intertwined on a delayed subway ride. The B Train is relatable; I can imagine this play unfolding in real life, and I bet most riders have wondered if that subway ride would be their last. Despite the realistic storyline, the creative use of lighting, props and sound makes for a memorable and charming performance. As the characters, performed by Pixie Kahanov and Annapaola Fike, are sitting on a bench, subway car noises cleverly insinuate that they are riding the train. The amazing lyrics and singing were beautifully performed by the writer herself, which is a grand accomplishment.

*Midnight to Six-Thirty* by Chelsea Paradiso is a somberly beautiful story about two lovers who can only meet in their dreams. The use of lighting in this show was critical to the story – an ethereal blue light shone whenever the two lovers were in the dreamland – and it made for an epic viewing experience. A dynamic use of music was also used to contrast the two characters, which was critical especially in this type of artwork because performances



Photo Credit: Sierra Seetin // Clinton Post Staff  
Cast and crew members of the Clinton Theatre Company.

rely on theatrical elements. The creative use of layering in the costumes created depth within the piece. The dress could be taken as a nightgown but when layered with a leather jacket, it was professional and communicated that the character was at work. The singing of the two actors, Pixie Kahanov as Elizabeth and Bailey Witt as Lucas, was amazing and I was impressed by the talent that was showcased in this original student play, as the writer herself was one of the key characters in the play.

*Too Late* is a play by Miu Okamoto about growing up and moving away from home, and the stress that distance puts on relationships. Mona, played by Nina Harris, was a realistic picture of young adults amidst their first years of college. The play was relatable and gave insight into the world of adolescents who are gradually growing into adulthood, and the changing relationship between Mona and her father. The setting of a bus stop was symbolic of how life is a series of stops that is always progressing further, and you can only go along for the ride. The use of lighting to demonstrate the character of her father, always present yet out of sight in her life, was done by placing him on a stool in the corner with a blue light illuminating him. This play is an important depiction of the limbo between different life stages and how we change along the

way.

*The Interrogation* by Lola Horowitz is an intriguing performance about three high school students, complete with individual quirks, who have stolen a painting and are in the process of being questioned. Bold, bright and charming, this performance grabs the viewer's attention right off the bat. The first thing I noticed was the stage props; the self-standing door was a perfect iteration of theater magic. In theater, the tactic of 'show, don't tell' is the bread and butter to making a captivating performance. The dialogue is delivered dynamically and there is always movement during the play, either coming from the characters, plot progression or the stage. The costumes were refreshingly playful and reflected the personality of the characters. Max, acted by Cordelia Sireci, felt real and personable due to Sireci's amazing performance. Horowitz creates a brand within her play by having each character so dynamically nuanced and different. Abigail, played by Zoe Roldan-Calvin, was one of the teens who spoke entirely in Shakespearean English. The writing for this character was impressive; it's not every day that modern writers use this type of language as well as actors are able to memorize and put emotion behind the complex dialogue. Violette, performed by Emma Saliasi, was a snarky character whom Saliasi enjoyed

getting into the role of. "I just went over the script a few times to really get the gist of the character," she says. Overall, *The Interrogation* is an intriguing and snappy play that keeps the audience on their feet.

*When There's A Will...* by Indra Hernandez is a compelling family drama that follows three daughters, alongside the help of attorney Larsson, trying to navigate the processions following their mother's death. I liked the realism behind this play. I can imagine that these events have actually occurred in many families following the death of a parent. It was clever how the director chose to place the characters as if they were facing the painting, which was in the audience. This was an innovative way not to need to actually create a painting for the play yet it was still important to the plot. The contrast between the character's costumes was clearly apparent and it was a perfect representation of each character's personality. Hernandez did an amazing job of creating a personable and moving storyline while also maintaining a humorous and light tone.

Artichoke, meatloaf, cheese plate and wine. *Perfect Adult Dinner* by Nico Greenberg is an entertaining yet genuine depiction of young adults trying to navigate a family dinner. Iris, played by Peyton Gallagher, delivered a convincing performance that evoked sympathy in the audience. The stage had the most props for this play, and I admire the specific choices directors Nico Greenberg and Emily Birman made to communicate a kitchen setting. The most compelling moment of the play is when Iris freaks out and 'freezes time' – this was an especially cool effect done just by blanketing the stage in blue light – and breaks out into song. The songs were catchy and upbeat, reflecting the overall tone of the play. Greenberg has combined song and dialogue to create the perfect play; so eat up!

# Hardships in Hollywood

BY: CHIARA MOINE

On March 21st, the world saw one of the biggest and most influential actress and businesswoman brought to court due to an incident that happened seven years ago.

Gwyneth Paltrow was put on trial in late March for a skiing accident that occurred in Park City, Utah in 2016. Terry Sanderson, the other person involved in the accident, sued Paltrow for \$300,000 on account of crashing into him, causing him to spin out of control, leading to a traumatic brain injury and four broken ribs. Sanderson claimed that Paltrow was not following proper ski mountain etiquette, producing the multitude of serious injuries that occurred. Paltrow then proceeded to countersue Sanderson for a price of one dollar. This was to represent how the court case was barely about the crime and how it was really about the money. Especially because the skiing collision took place almost a decade ago. The actress and lifestyle blogger had a major team of attorneys on her side, led by Los Angeles attorney, Stephen Owens.

Sanderson claimed that the injuries changed him altogether as a person, altering his personality and making him constantly confused. He and his lawyers believed that Paltrow was guilty of these crimes, wanted to cover it up, and not pay the consequences. Paltrow countered with the argument that she had been hit from the back, whether by accident or with malicious intent. She believed Sanderson was trying to benefit from a payday because Paltrow is worth millions.

Paltrow brought in many testimonies: a ski instructor, doctors, a collision expert, and a biomedical engineer. She also testified for herself with her own accounts. Her main point was to demonstrate whether or not it was the crash that caused the

injury or old age. Similarly, Sanderson's lawyer, Kristin VanOrman, brought in many different witnesses to testify against Paltrow, including Sanderson's daughter and a specialized concussion doctor. The doctor testified that Sanderson was still experiencing problems from the concussion and was still not fully recovered, even after about seven years. During cross examination, VanOrman displayed jealousy about Paltrow's height and claimed that Paltrow was the best dressed skier on the mountain that day. Many believed that the questions presented were unnecessary and inappropriate to be asked in court.

At the end of the two week trial, the jury found that Paltrow was not guilty or liable for the crash of Sanderson and the injuries that he sustained. The entirety of the trial was live streamed for the public to watch and the trial as a whole has been ridiculed by many. It was viewed as a first world problem for rich, white people that is very out of touch for other people. Especially since skiing is a privileged sport that many people can not afford to participate in.

# Advice Column

*Dear The All Mighty,*

*I am overwhelmed by the amount of work we have. What tips do you have to better manage my time?*

*Stressed*

OK, Stressed. Before we begin, I want you to ask yourself some questions. How many hours a week do you spend on social media, watching shows or perhaps reading fanfiction? I would like for you to think about that and reflect on how that time could have been used for your assignments. While I understand that you may be very busy, it is very likely that you could be procrastinating your work. I recommend that you use your advisory periods to help manage your time. That's about one hour that you can spend at school doing work instead of at home, which can then later be used for social media or watching TV. So while I can sympathize with your potentially busy schedule my final advice is, "GET YOUR F\*\*\*\*\* A\*\* UP and WORK" — Kim Kardashian.

*I feel stuck in my life and idk what to do for college. help?*

Well, this is a difficult question but I'm gonna try to answer it. While the college process is quite stressful and will require a lot of work, there are different approaches you can take. If we want to get real, of course, you need to do your best. However, you should not stress too much over this. Everything will work out. I'm sure you're a great student and since you go to this school, you're a better student than most in the country or even the world. Stan Supreme Clinton ON TOP on god. Everything is perspective. If you compare yourself to your peers at Clinton, you will never be the best at everything, while if you compare yourself to the state or even the country, you'll be in

the top percentile in many categories. Any college would be lucky to have you. Just trust that everything will work out in the end. Don't ruin your life or social life over this. To be frank, you don't know what will happen and how your life will change in the upcoming years. It's all about what you do with your life. While college should be a major focus, you should focus on what is going on around you, as well. There are plenty of movies about the fun you can have in high school, so treat your life like that movie, be the main character, and enjoy yourself. We should cherish our summers, our breaks, and our friends and family while we can and not get too caught up in the future. Take that extra time to tell your mom you love her and appreciate your friends. A degree is a degree; it's what you do with it. Everything will work out in the end. You just gotta trust the process and trust yourself. Life is unfair and you might not get what you want, but you'll just have to deal with it and keep pushing because that's what life's about: trying, failing, and trying again until you succeed. Final advice: don't give up but don't put your life on the line and enjoy yourself.

Best,  
The All Mighty

*im gonna shoot my shot like im Devon booker could I bag you?*

Hmm well Devin Booker's shooting average is 0.461. So it's looking good. But you're gonna need to fix that capitalization bro.

Kisses,  
The All Mighty

*Need advice? Email theclintonpost@theclintonschool.net to be featured!*

# Two Hands Forward: *Party School*

## Review

BY:  
SIERRA SEETIN

*Party School* is a novel by Jon Hart following Dylan Mills, a troubled teenager desperately trying to navigate the turbulence that young adulthood brings. Dylan's life plan is his girlfriend Rosemary Silversmith, yet college forces them to confront an imminent issue— what happens to *us*? In this coming of age story, Hart explores the ups and downs of adolescence and the painful yet liberating growth that comes with it.

Hart describes his novel as a mashup of *Legally Blonde* and *The Catcher in the Rye*, with Dylan as Holden Caulfield's doppelganger. Holden and Dylan are similar in that they are both unreliable narrators— it's hard to tell what actually happens compared to what Dylan chooses to narrate— and they bend the narrative to serve themselves. When I was reading the novel, I often found myself sympathizing with Dylan, especially towards the end of the novel. Dylan paints himself as reliant and completely subservient to Rosemary, allowing her to 'call the shots', yet he finally finds his power at the end of the book. Dylan seems to have selective rose-tinted vision; Rosemary's controlling and manipulative self is camouflaged by her doting and confident facade. However, initially Dylan fails to find the good in his acceptance to North South, even though it is a decent school and a reach for some. After struggling with his reputation, relationships, academics and drug use, Dylan is able to cast aside his rose glasses and understand Rosemary for who she truly is and also make peace with his college.

*Party School* is relevant; it hits all the "cool teen stuff" criteria in terms of Instagram references, emoji language, and drug terminology. As a teen, reading *Party School* feels real and personable, relatable to my life as it is as well as a reflection of the challenges I'll face as I move from teenagedom to adulthood. The dialogue often feels natural and flowy, especially due to Dylan's comments he sandwiches between con-

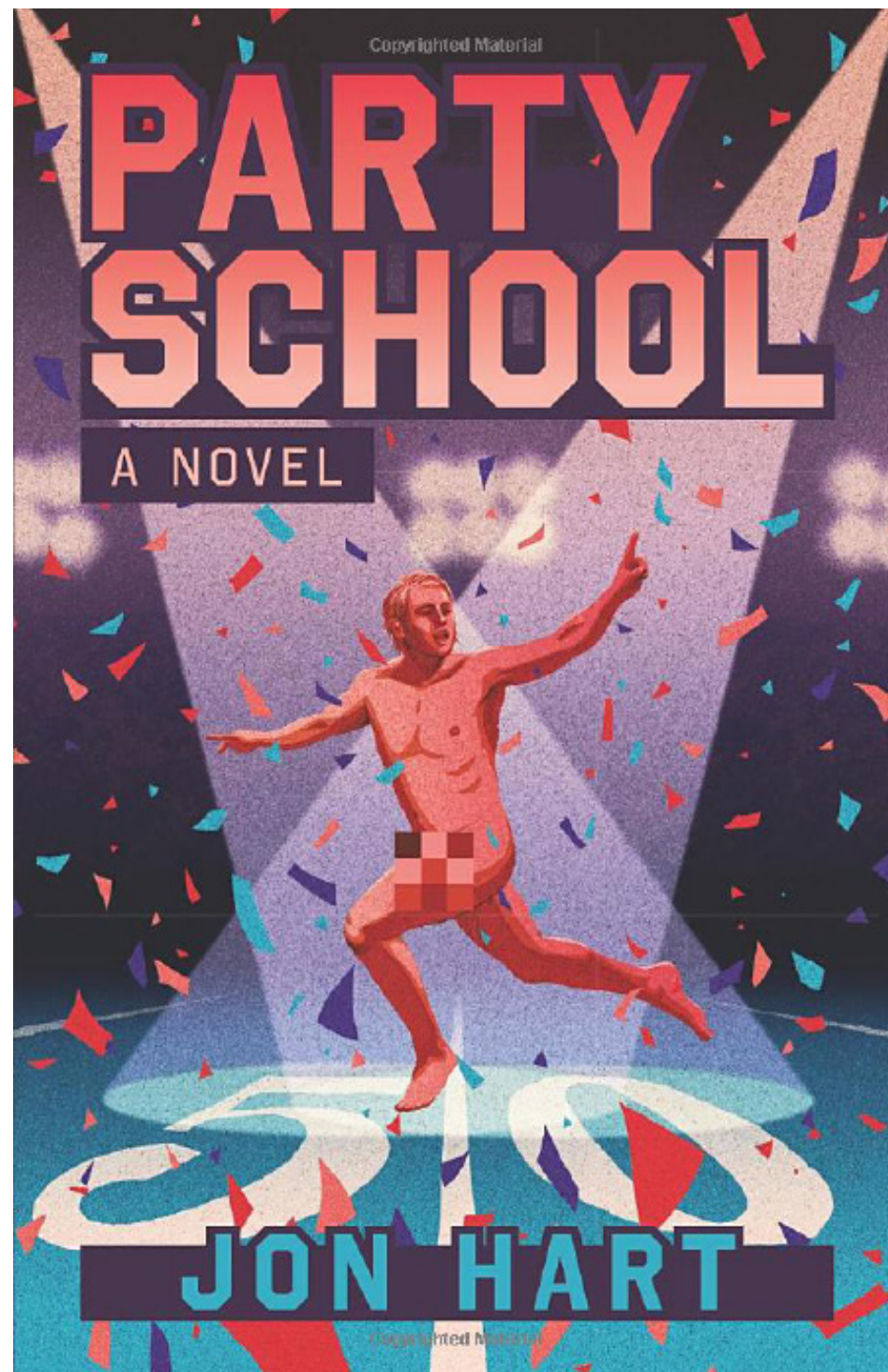


Photo Credit: Amazon // Clinton Post Staff  
Front cover design of *Party School*.

versations. It feels so real that reading Rosemary and Dylan's conversation as the novel progresses gets harder and harder because of the tensions building in their relationship. Sometimes, the texts she would send felt awkward and overly formal, aligning with her character and newfound demeanor. Watching the transformation of Rosemary was moving; I cried at the end of the book. They were partly tears of joy for Dylan and all that was to come, yet I also knew that was the end of *them* and a rocky new beginning for Rosemary. I ended the novel with a sense of anger as well; I despise Rosemary for stringing along Dylan for so long without giving him proper closure. Although she hadn't had her own feelings sorted out, she could have been way more considerate towards Dylan. Dylan's reliance on Rosemary and 'she's the boss' attitude made annoyingly

perfect sense with his character to the point where I had to take a break. Why can't he just think for himself?

This novel was able to evoke deep conflicting emotions that made the reading fun and suspenseful. I was silently rooting for Dylan while also being his biggest critic. A lot of personal connection definitely came from how the book was written in first person; it connected me directly with Dylan and I was able to understand how he thought and spoke and why he acted the way he did. This psychological connection further immersed me into the world of the story and created suspense in guessing what Dylan would do next as well as a sense of connection when I would correctly predict Dylan's reaction to something.

While there is a real life Castleton in Vermont, Hart creates an eerily familiar world

of American teen culture in his novel. Party spots, homes on the wrong side of the tracks, and bubbling diners are quintessential to an average American teenager's hometown. Castleton's common and mass-produced facade could be mistaken for Anytown, USA— and this is the exact true beauty. This anonymity created by the lack of actual identifiers (for one, *it* school rather than ivy) allows readers to truly invest themselves into Dylan's world. Lunchonette is the name of the bustling community gossip and news hub; how more stereotypical can it get? Castleton's aesthetic tastes like a dry ham and cheese sandwich; well known and tolerated but not notable. The same way Dylan feels nothing is notable about him; he projects his internal feelings onto literally everything, even the way he describes how he does his job.

Dylan Mills feels he is quite run-of-the-mill, made clearly apparent by his narrative choices, behavior and relationships. However, by sticking out the tumultuous ride that adulthood will put you through, Dylan is able to find his stride and break the mold. He creates his own future, with himself at the center of it; putting Rosemary and all of Castleton into the past. Dylan is inspiring because he has been able to make great changes in his life, while actively work to better himself without relying on others. Dylan is a model for lost young people in the world who feel they need to embrace their own spirit and drive (literally!)— and not let someone else steer their life. Take life by the wheel and put two hands forward; drive.

# The Super Mario Bros: How Super Are They?

BY: LILIANA KAGAWA

Who would've expected a side character originally named Jumpman to make it to the big screen? 40 years later, Mario leaps into theaters with Nintendo's recent movie. With a net worth of almost 50 billion, Nintendo is a company that must always be developing and releasing content. Nintendo's latest addition to its media repertoire is *The Super Mario Bros. Movie*, a film with a title just as terrible as its plot.

The film opens on a lonely castle in an unknown icy location, with the appearance of Bowser picking up the pace. Animated armies rush in from each side, filling the screen with red and blue hues. The visuals would almost be too intense if not for the fast-paced action accompanying it. This is quickly dashed when we transition to Brooklyn. The bright, loud animation is now accompanied by slow dialogue and two plumbers, nothing like the scene found moments before.

In the movie's attempts to explain the title characters' personalities, it spends what seems like much more than 10 minutes on the very much not exciting life of two washed-up plumbers. When the movie finally moves back to super-powered turtles and talking mushrooms, the two brothers have been separated. The *Super Mario Bros* are down to one bro, who finds himself in the Mushroom Kingdom. Mario's overnight training arc, in which he inexplicably becomes a master at parkouring through platforms, is shortened to just over a minute. Princess Peach's promise to take Mario to the Jungle Kingdom if he can pass the course is disregarded due to plot armor disguised as blue overalls and a red cap. The trek from the Mushroom Kingdom to the Jungle Kingdom is a two minute long myriad of transitions made purely to fill time and how the



Photo Credit: IMDb // Clinton Post Staff  
The Super Mario Bros. Movie poster.

group arrived at the Jungle Kingdom.

What follows next is considered by the audience to be the best scene in the movie. Jack Black delivers raw emotions of love and desire in the Billboard Top 100 original song "Peaches," aptly named for the love-letter-esque style of the song. The audience is given a better understanding of Bowser's character and how deep his love for Peach is. Another fan-favorite character, Lumalee, provides comic relief in the contrast between its adorable design and nihilistic character, spouting lines like "There is no escape. The only hope is the sweet relief of death." What seems like a depressive and life-hating character is actually a reference to Lumalee's species, which will happily sacrifice themselves for the

greater good by exploding into planets or supernovas. Among all of the rushed and forced references to the greater Mario universe, Lumalee is definitely the most well-written and adds just enough dialogue for the scenes in the Koopa Kingdom prison to stay relevant.

Plot armor strikes again in the Jungle Kingdom, where Mario must fight and best Donkey Kong in order to win the might of the Kong army. A glance at both Mario and Donkey Kong would tip the scales in the gorilla's favor. He's bigger, stronger, and has fought people since he was young. Mario is five feet tall and the only thing he knows how to fight is a plumbing leak. Against all odds, with the power of friendship and being the main character, Mario dons a cat suit and knocks

Donkey Kong out. With the trustworthy Kong army on their side, Mario and co. are surely able to defeat the Koopas, right? Surprise, surprise, the expert war general Bowser has found out about their pathetic ambush attempt and instead gets the jump on them first. What ensues is a chase scene down the iconic rainbow road, before the inevitable (literal) bump in the road, where our trustworthy main character takes a tumble into the seemingly inescapable abyss of the ocean and a giant fish's stomach. Meanwhile, roles are reversed as Luigi plays the damsel in distress, locked up. This is an interesting concept to work with, especially as Luigi's character is more of a frightened one, but the train of thought is compromised by the end fight between Bowser and the brothers. Luigi, despite a lack of both screen time and character development, quickly becomes fearless and able to fight alongside Mario.

Overall, the plot riddled with holes and bad writing is saved only by the visuals, with color filling the screen. References run amok, the excessive amount perhaps only appreciated by the most hardcore Mario lovers. The quality of recent movies such as *Puss in Boots: The Last Wish* and *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* have raised critics' standards for animated films. Not only is the plot expected to be complex and well-written, the animators' unique styles must shine through. If you're looking to watch this movie, expect the plot to be mediocre but a fun watch regardless.

# Species of Costa Rica

BY: LUCIA SANTIAGO

Costa Rica is a geologically and biologically diverse country, filled with varied environments and thousands of species. I traveled there over spring break, and with Naturalist Kevin Quirós, I had the opportunity to document and photograph many of the wildlife in the tropical forests and arid coastal forests. Costa Rica is home to about 6% of the world's biodiversity, despite covering only 19,760 mi<sup>2</sup>. For reference, that's smaller than the state of Virginia by around 20,000 mi<sup>2</sup>. This makes Costa Rica the most densely biodiverse country in the world.



Image left:

## Red-legged honeycreeper (left)

The red-legged honeycreeper is distinguished by its bright blue color and red legs. They are small songbirds, and live in forest canopies.

## Clay-colored thrush (right)

The clay-colored honeycreeper, or yigüirro, is the national bird of Costa Rica. The bland color of the thrush displays the humbleness and humility of the Costa Rican people. Despite its appearance, it has a gorgeous song which represents the creativity and art of the Costa Rican people.

Image right:

## Three-toed sloth

In Costa Rica, these sloths are commonly called “osos perezosos” - or lazy bears. Funnily enough, these creatures are not related to bears whatsoever, and instead are in the same family as armadillos. These sloths have a condition called monochromacy, which means they lack cone cells in their eyes. If it's too bright, they can't see, and if it's too dark, they can't see either. Three-toed sloths are found in dense rainforests.

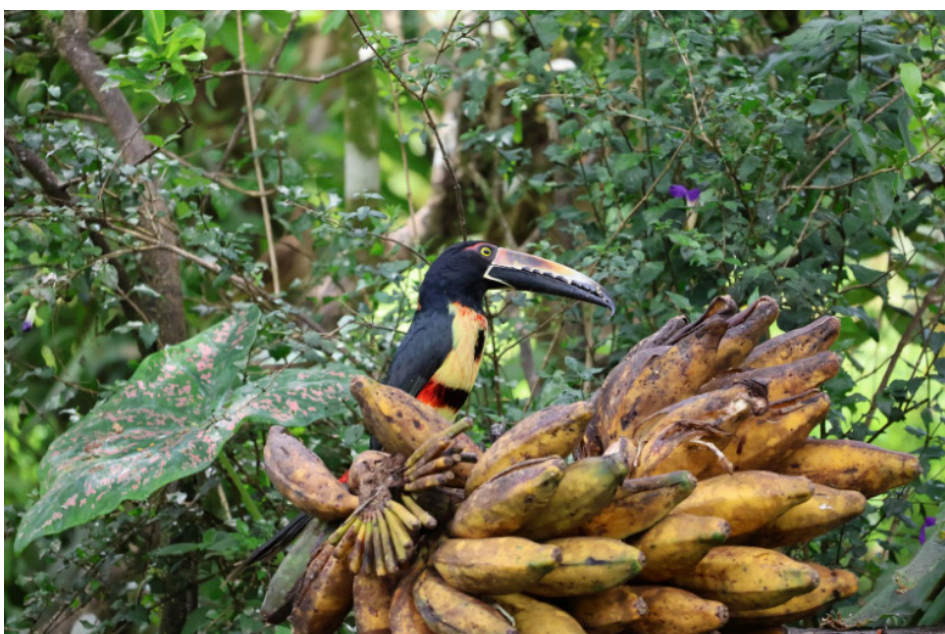


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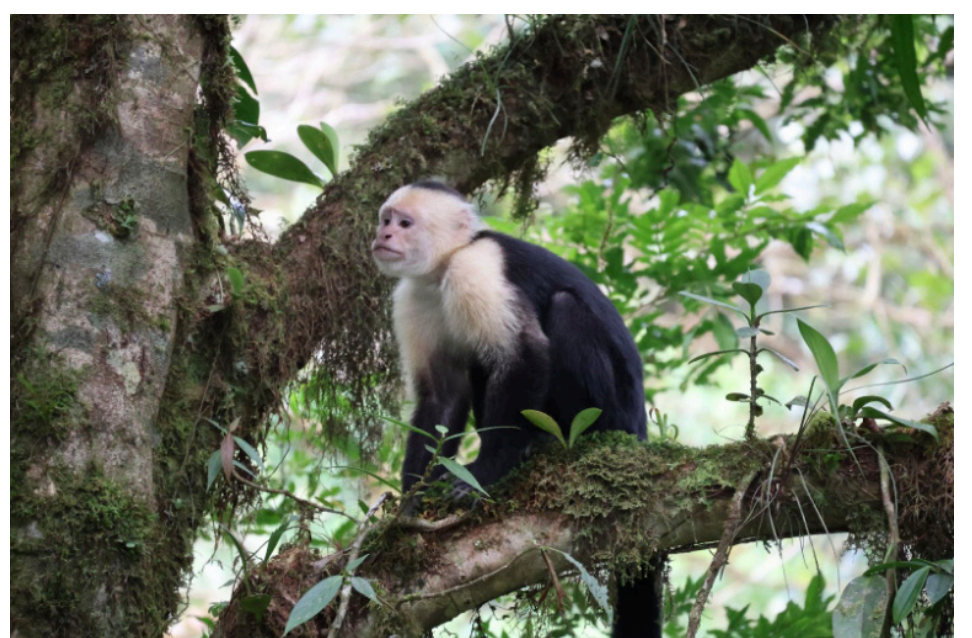
## Collared aracari

The collared aracari is a prominent species of toucan, with a vibrant color palette. The collared aracari lives in the Caribbean lowland and forests. They are almost identical to the fire-billed toucan, but their ranges are very different. The fire-billed aracari lives in higher elevations, while the collared aracari lives in lower elevations.

Image right:

## White-faced capuchin

Also known as the white-faced monkey, these capuchins inhabit rainforests and tropical dry forests. They are commonly seen across the country, and tend to travel in packs.





# Beginners Book Recommendations

BY: LOLA HOROWITZ

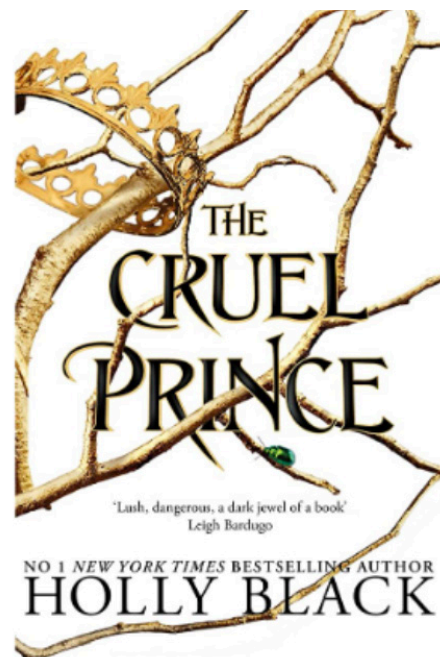
Want to start your reading journey but can't decide on the right book? While the wide variety of selections can be intimidating, here are some acclaimed recommendations for different fiction genres.

**Young Adult Romance:**  
*Everything Everything* by Nicola Yoon



A heart-felt young adult romance read about a teen girl who has been sheltered from the world and her nextdoor neighbor who is willing to show her everything she's missed. With themes of coming of age, trust, and bravery, *Everything Everything* will change your perspective on what it means to truly live.

**Fantasy:** *The Cruel Prince* by Holly Black



An adventurous fantasy book about a knight-hood-destined mortal girl who must prove her worth in a fairy world. With themes of corruption, power, familial struggles, and valor, *The Cruel Prince* will enthrall you with magical courts, throbbing loves, and fatal consequences.

**Crime:** *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder* by Holly Jackson



An intriguing and gripping murder mystery novel about an ambitious and intelligent teen girl solving a cold case that has haunted her town. With themes of perseverance and courage, *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder*

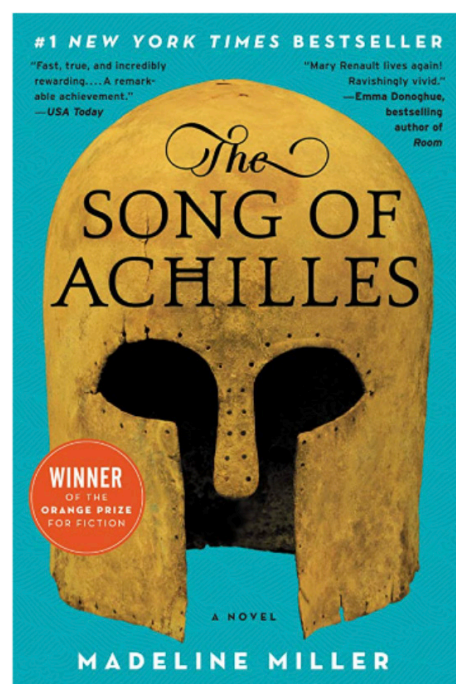
will teach you that not everyone is who they claim to be.

**Science Fiction:** *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner



A thrilling and futuristic page-turner about teen boys who find themselves mysteriously teleported into a stone maze with whipped memories and no way of escaping. With themes of friendship, justice, chaos, and sacrifice, *The Maze Runner* will take you on a journey through a post apocalyptic America.

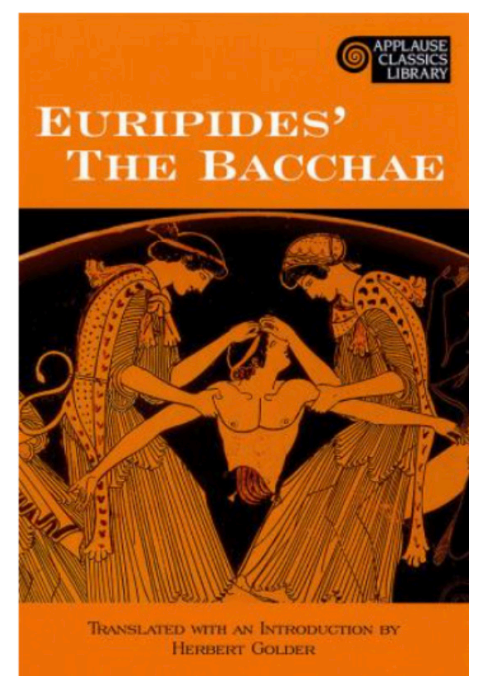
**Historical Fiction:** *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller



A poetic retelling of the Greek hero Achilles' life

and his involvement in the Trojan War, narrated by his lover Patroclus. With themes of love, honor, legacy, and violence, *The Song of Achilles* will retell the consequences of glory and inevitability of fate.

**Classical Tragedy:** *The Bacchae* by Euripides



A gruesome myth of Dionysus, the Greek God of wine and women, punishing a royal family who refuse to worship his existence. With themes of death, madness, womanhood, and power, *The Bacchae* will test the strength of mortality against godly wrath.

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## Letter from the Editors

We are so excited to be printing again! We are extremely proud to say that The Clinton Post is finally back in print after a three year hiatus. Please enjoy this issue and share it with your classmates, friends, and family.

- Arya Chawhan and Violetta Atocha