



Racism and the media:

Journalists discuss blackface coverage



From left to right: Panelists Jeff South, Mechelle Hankerson, Clarence Thomas and Samantha Willis. Photo by Raelyn Fines

CHIP LAUTERBACH
Contributing Writer

SOME OF RICHMOND'S LEADING journalists discussed the impact of blackface — and media coverage of issues like racism — on African-Americans at a panel discussion at the Commons on Monday.

The discussion was held by the Robertson School of Media and Culture, the parent school of VCU's journalism program. Clarence Thomas, a Robertson School

professor whose research focuses include media history, moderated the panel.

Richmond Times-Dispatch columnist Michael Paul Williams joined freelance journalist Samantha Willis, Robertson School professor Jeff South and Virginia Mercury reporter Mechelle Hankerson on the panel.

See **BLACKFACE PANEL** on page 2



Journalism professor Clarence Thomas is chair of the Robertson School's Diversity Committee. Photo by Raelyn Fines



Redshirt-junior Issac Vann scored 16 points against Saint Louis. Photo by Jon Mirador

Evans leads Rams over Billikens

NOAH FLEISCHMAN
Sports Editor

Men's Basketball won its 100th Atlantic 10 game in school history after knocking off Saint Louis 71-65 Tuesday as redshirt-junior guard Marcus Evans led the way with 20 points.

Evans was 3-for-5 from beyond the arc heading into the halftime break with 15 points and simmered down in the second half. But the Chesapeake native drew seven fouls in the contest, including the fifth and final foul on Saint Louis star D.J. Foreman.

"Not gonna lie, the last one hurt," Evans said. "The last one definitely hurt on Foreman ... but it's what we needed. I got a good little instinct as far as [taking charges]. But like I said, it was needed."

Four Billikens players had four fouls in the final minutes, two of whom ended up fouling out — Foreman and Hasahn French.

"Looking up on the scoreboard I saw that guys were starting to get in foul trouble," Evans said. "[I] just stay in attack mode, but also stay within our offense."

Freshman forward Vince Williams drew three fouls in the contest, including a couple charges.

"Winning plays that don't show up on the stat sheet I think are huge," coach Mike Rhoades said. "Huge for the buy-in for the program and the team, when you see one of your best players out there taking multiple charges and you see a guy like [De'Riante Jenkins] diving head first to the floor ... it makes everybody else [think] I gotta do it too."

See **MEN'S BASKETBALL** on page 6

Stories of the week

NATIONAL: A resolution to overturn President Donald Trump’s emergency declaration is headed to the Senate, after the House of Representatives passed it in a 245-182 vote Tuesday.

INTERNATIONAL: Univision says journalist Jorge Ramos and his crew were detained in Venezuela Monday after questioning the country’s president, Nicolás Maduro. They were released the same day.

BLACKFACE PANEL



The discovery of a racist photo in the yearbook of Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam ignited a conversation about whether media adequately scrutinized candidates during the 2017 election. Photo by Raelyn Fines

Panel: Media should have done better on Northam controversy

Continued from front page

A report from USA Today found myriad examples of blackface and other forms of racist imagery, including people in Ku Klux Klan robes from 1970-1980. Earlier this month, a Commonwealth Times investigation revealed that yearbooks from MCV and the Richmond Public Institute, a school that preceded VCU, had racist imagery in their pages as late as 1989.

These findings led the panel to question the roles and responsibilities of the media when covering deeply sensitive topics.

Thomas began the session by highlighting the damage blackface causes, saying it is never “flattering, innocent or complimentary.”



Journalism professor Clarence Thomas moderated the panel. Photo by Raelyn Fines

“Instead, blackface, as a visual notion is much like how the ‘N-word’ is a verbal notion,” Thomas said. “They are both insulting and demeaning, crafted by an insensitive majority culture and inflicted upon a minority population that had no power to do anything about it.”

Here’s what members of the panel said about a number of relevant key issues:

ON CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING GOV. RALPH NORTHAM AND HOW MEDIA MISSED THE MARK IN COVERING HIS PAST

JEFF SOUTH: Northam seemed so bland that I think journalists had an implicit bias, and that is why people didn’t drill into his background. It is clearly a failing of journalists to vet people who are running for office. That is the role of accountable media.

MICHAEL PAUL WILLIAMS: [Northam’s] refusal to clarify which person he was in that photo is what I found to be highly disturbing. That Klansman in the photo bothers me more than anything else on that page. The fact that there is no distance between that Klansman and his yearbook page is just something that I cannot move past.

MECHELLE HANKERSON: I think it has to do with a lack of diversity in newsrooms, there aren’t black voices standing up and saying, ‘Yeah the blackface thing is really bad, but you know what is worse, there is a dude in a [Ku Klux Klan] robe, and we should probably ask the governor if that is him or who it was if it was not him.’

SAMANTHA WILLIS: Seeing both the Klan robe and the blackface in one picture showed just how pervasive racism is in American society. And the fact that media members didn’t give enough thought to say, ‘let’s breakdown why there is this fundamental failure, where



The discussion was held in the University Commons Theatre and hosted by the Robertson School. Photo by Raelyn Fines

our governor appears in a photo with blackface, but also a representation of a domestic terrorist group.’

It speaks to the fact that racism is deeply embedded in all facets of our society.

ON WHETHER VIRGINIA CAN RECONCILE FOR RACISM IN ITS PAST AND MOVE FORWARD

HANKERSON: For us as Virginians, this is a big deal, because it seriously looked like our Governor was going to resign, which is an extremely rare event. That hasn’t happened since the 1800s.

Look at what else has transpired in Virginia in the last couple years. This is just another indication that we are nowhere close to where we should be as a state.

WILLIAMS: I think Virginia is the perfect place to address these issues because the original sin of slavery started here 400 years

ago, the Civil War ended here, we had the first elected black governor.

If we can solve it here, then we could solve it in America. I would not diminish Virginia’s importance in addressing the issues of race.

WILLIS: There is just no way we can move forward with a real effort of reconciliation with someone as governor who fundamentally doesn’t understand the needs and histories of communities of color.

I feel strongly that we cannot design our way out this, and there seems to be a lack of accountability for racism the same way we now hold people accountable for other crimes such as sexual assault.

Unless we get serious and hold racism as the same type of social ill or moral stain on our society the way sexual assault is, we will never get past the problem. We will never progress as a society to make this a more equitable place for all citizens.

‘39 days to go’: Marchers demand Northam’s resignation

EVIE KING

Capital News Service

Arriving by bus from across the state, protesters gathered at the Capitol continuing to call for Gov. Ralph Northam’s resignation. Their reasons were printed in bold on signs participants carried: “No to racism. No to infanticide. Northam must go.”

The Feb. 23 afternoon rally was held in response to Northam’s support of legislation that would loosen restrictions on third-trimester abortions under certain circumstances, as well as his admitting to dressing in blackface in the 1980s.

“Racism and infanticide have long gone together,” said Rev. Dean Nelson, chairman of the Douglass Leadership Institute.

Citing historical practices of eugenics and population control, Nelson said black people are disproportionately affected by the two issues, but all Virginians should stand up for what is right.

“We are here because we are united rather than divided. Black, white; Protestant, Catholic; rich, poor; men and women — we gather together in one voice saying racism and infanticide have no place in the commonwealth of Virginia,” Nelson said in his keynote address.

As the rain relentlessly poured, leaders of faith organizations and anti-abortion groups spoke to the crowd of nearly 100 protesters.

“Someone asked me what kind of weather we have today, and I said, ‘We’ve got some marching weather,’” said Andrew Shannon, president of the Virginia State Unit of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, to the crowd.

Not all of the demonstrators wanted Northam to step down as governor.

Scott McKenzie made the 2 1/2-hour trip to the Capitol from Java, a town near Danville, Virginia. McKenzie, a pastor at Corner Row Church in Java, said he would like to see the governor change his mind about his stances on abortion. But overall, he said, he supports Northam in office.



Some protesters called for Northam to resign over his use of blackface, others were particularly incensed about his comments on abortion. Photo courtesy of Capital News Service

“He’s done a lot of good work,” McKenzie said, citing the administration’s initiative to restore rights to over 10,000 Virginians previously convicted of felonies.

McKenzie said he is most concerned about the choices Northam is making today, rather than dwelling on his controversial past.

“If I was to be judged by what I did 30 years ago, I wouldn’t be pastoring now,” McKenzie said.

Gloria Jordan is an advocate for vulnerable populations whose priorities align with McKenzie’s.

“What Ralph Northam said in regards to Del. [Kathy] Tran’s late-term bill is even more damning than his racist medical school past,” Jordan said.

During a live radio interview, Northam explained the practices of a third-trimester abortion. Many people in the anti-abortion movement interpreted his remarks as supporting infanticide — the act of killing a child within a year of birth.

Northam, a pediatric physician, responded to the backlash in a tweet: “I have devoted my life to caring for children and any insinuation otherwise is shameful and disgusting.”

Balancing umbrellas and signs, the group marched two-by-two from the Capitol steps to the Governor’s Mansion, chanting “No means no. Ralph must go!”

Nelson said if Northam does not resign by April 3, the group will send out a national call for more supporters and louder voices. “We’re giving him 39 days to do the right thing,” Nelson said.

The rally ended in prayer for the governor, who did not come out to address the protesters.

Efforts to ratify ERA fail on tie vote in House

KAL WEINSTEIN

Capital News Service

Despite a 24-hour vigil by advocates of the Equal Rights Amendment, House Republicans refused to allow a vote on ratifying the measure Thursday — officially killing the ERA for the year.

The defeat comes to the dismay of many who thought Virginia would be the 38th state to ratify the amendment, potentially adding it to the U.S. Constitution. Experts disagree on whether the ERA can be ratified because the deadline to do so has passed.

More than two dozen advocates spent the night of Feb. 20 enduring freezing temperatures outside the Capitol for an “equality vigil” organized by VA ratify ERA. Throughout the event, which was live-streamed, supporters read letters from ERA allies and encouraged those watching from home to call their delegates.

Many Democratic leaders attended the vigil, including U.S. Rep. Abigail Spanberger, who represents the state’s 7th Congressional District; Del. Kelly Convirs-Fowler of Virginia Beach; and Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney. Del. Danica Roem, D-Prince William, showed up with pizza for participants.



With the push to ratify the amendment having failed, activists and lawmakers are turning their attention to the 2019 state elections. Photo by Georgia Geen

“My mother, who does support the ERA, would be very disappointed if I didn’t bring you all food,” Roem said.

With bipartisan support, the Virginia Senate passed a resolution in January to ratify the ERA. However, the proposal died in the House Committee on Privileges and Elections — and so it could not be considered by the full House of Delegates.

On Feb. 21, House Democrats attempted to introduce a rules change that would have allowed a simple majority vote to bring the ERA to the floor. The rules change failed on a 50-50 vote along party lines. One Republican — Del. David Yancey of

Newport News — joined the 49 Democrats in voting for the rules change; all other Republicans voted against it.

Afterward, Del. Hala Ayala, D-Prince William, apologized to constituents.

“As elected officials, we have a moral obligation to listen to our constituents and let their voices be heard,” she said. “I am deeply sorry that did not happen.”

The ERA states that, “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.”

Supporters say the amendment would be a move toward equal rights for women and

men. But others argue there could be unintended consequences, such as co-ed prisons or women being drafted into the military — claims that ERA supporters dispute.

With the ERA now effectively dead for the year, Democrats are turning their attention to the fall, when all 140 seats in the Virginia General Assembly are up for election. The House Democratic Caucus released a statement announcing the defeat, while urging supporters to be optimistic.

“2019 is an election year here in Virginia,” the statement read. “This time next year, when the Democrats do have the majority, we will ratify the Equal Rights Amendment.”

Virginia moves to raise age to buy tobacco products

SERENA FISCHER
Capital News Service

Legislation signed by Gov. Ralph Northam Feb. 21 will raise the legal age for purchasing and possessing tobacco and vaping products from 18 to 21. It is drawing mixed reactions from young adults who will be affected.

On July 1, Virginia will join six other states in raising the tobacco purchase age to 21.

William Bechtle, a 20-year-old computer science major at VCU, said he believes it would infringe on people's rights.

"If an 18-year-old who is legally an adult wants to make the horrible choice to start smoking, they have that right," said Bechtle, who smokes cigarettes. "If they don't, then why is the age of adulthood 18 and not 21?"

Other young smokers do not seem to view the bills as a threat — simply an inconvenience.

"I can get older friends, people at that age limit, to get it for me," said Katie Breighner, a freshman at Centreville High School in Fairfax County. "Regardless of your age, someone can find a way to get it."

Some lawmakers also oppose the proposals to raise the smoking age, but not

enough to derail the legislation.

The House voted 67-31 in favor of its bill, HB 2748. That measure was then referred to the Senate Courts of Justice Committee. The Senate passed its bill, SB 1727, on a 32-8 vote on Jan. 29.

The Senate bill was sponsored by Sen. Thomas Norment, R-James City. Thirteen Republicans and all 19 Democrats in the Senate supported the measure; eight Republican senators opposed it.

The House bill was introduced by Del. Christopher P. Stolle, R-Virginia Beach. Forty-six Democrats and 21 Republicans voted in favor of the bill, while 29 Republican delegates and two Democratic delegates voted against it. Among the opponents was Del. Mark Cole, R-Spotsylvania.

"I have no problem with raising the age to purchase tobacco products up to 21, but I think it should be done in a step process. Because there are, whether we like it or not,

18-, 19-, 20-year-olds who are using these products now," Cole said. "While I applaud the intent of this legislation, I think it has problems."

The legislation targets all tobacco and nicotine products, not just cigarettes. A primary goal is to combat the recent trend of teen vaping, which the U.S. surgeon general called an "epidemic."

The number of teens who said they vaped in the 30 days before a December 2018 survey by the National Institutes of Health almost doubled from the same survey in 2017, including children as young as eighth grade. While some may argue that vaping is healthier than smoking cigarettes, many are unaware that one Juul pod — a popular method of vaping — contains as much nicotine as 20 cigarettes.

That's why students like Reem Alul view the legislation as a sign of progress. Alul, a biology major at VCU, hopes new laws will help curb youth addiction to nicotine.

"As someone who's been smoking for over a year now, I know how addictive and toxic nicotine is to my quality of life," Alul said. "Although minors will still have access to these products, it'll be much harder to get a hold of it on short notice."



The law restricting the sale of tobacco products will go into effect on July 1. Photo by Erin Edgerton

Professor highlights 'professional loneliness' among medical professionals

WALTER CHIDOZIE
ANYANWU
Contributing Writer

The use of technology and automation of the medical industry has led to a decline in face-to-face interactions between physicians and their patients that creates a sense of "professional loneliness" among physicians, according to internal medicine professor Dr. Richard P. Wenzel.

In his article, RVU Medicine, Technology, and Physician Loneliness, Wenzel details the factors that contribute to physicians experiencing a "crisis in job satisfaction."

A veteran in the medical field, Wenzel has experienced the growth and evolution of medicine in recent decades. While many of the advancements have been positive, he began to notice a shift in physician culture as a result of these changes.

"I've actually been thinking about this for a number of years," he said, "from the time when I was doing a lot of clinical work and then more recently listening to my colleagues talk about their experiences in the hospital and the clinics."

One issue, according to his article, is that among physicians, there is a sense



Dr. Richard P. Wenzel. Photo courtesy of Jeff Cherry

that they have less time to really think and even less to spend with their patients. Some doctors rarely even have time to speak to their colleagues.

"When I think about making rounds on my patients 20 years ago, we would stop in the lab ... talk to the microbiologist, and they always know more than they put in their report ... [talking with them] stimulates you to think more," he said.

"You always learn more, plus you're having a conversation with colleagues."

According to an article published in the Journal of Internal Medicine by Colin P. West and his associates, "rates of burnout symptoms that have been associated with adverse effects on patients, the healthcare workforce, costs and physician health exceed 50 percent," Wenzel makes this point in his article as well.

"A lot of physicians feel they have some burnout and many of them would not recommend medicine for their children, which is a pretty sad comment when you think about it, we mostly love what we do," Wenzel said. "That excitement ... we'd love to see it go on. Some of us [still] have it, but some of us, I think, are wearing out."

Wenzel said today, a majority of phy-

sicians' time is spent behind a computer. This results in a kind of isolation that deprives doctors, who are already committing themselves to hours of work daily, from the necessary human interaction that they need. This can also hinder the physician's ability to work effectively.

"If you don't have time to think, you don't have time to imagine a better way to educate students, or a better way to work on your research project if you're doing that, or even a better way to manage the patient," he said.

Over the years, the business aspect of the medical field has taken on a larger role in health care facilities, leading to a prioritization of paperwork, billings and risk management.

Wenzel said physicians being involved in more than just the clinical "mission" of their institutions, which adds more tasks to their plate, contributes to their lack of satisfaction.

Most of these additional tasks do not serve the purpose of advancing the quality of healthcare, but are measures taken by medical institutions to protect their business interests.

"Administrations are worried about their bottom line. The [technology] is often geared, not towards the patient, not necessarily toward the physician, but for the hospital's bottom line," Wenzel said. "With any new introduction in technology, or devices ... or new drugs, you should

be thinking about the patient, not the bottom line."

The provision of health care requires a human element that is quickly being erased by the introduction of and reliance on technology, Wenzel said. This, he said, will require physicians, medical administrators and others in the healthcare field to reflect on ways to reintroduce a sense of connection to the practice of medicine.

“

With any new introduction in technology, or devices ... or new drugs, you should be thinking about the patient, not the bottom line."

Dr. Richard P. Wenzel, internal medicine professor

Wenzel pointed out a way to do so by allocating time and space for physicians to interact with the people they work with and patients they treat. As president of MCV physicians, Wenzel took steps toward making this change by creating a 24/7 faculty dining room, available to all employees.

Community honors dog that was tied to a pole and burned alive

CELESTE CHANCE
Contributing Writer

Dozens of people came to Richmond Animal Care and Control Center last week to pay their respects to Tommie, the dog who died after he was burned alive at Abner Clay Park Feb. 15.

RACC held a five-day memorial for the pit bull last week in lieu of a funeral that originally had more than 6,000 people “interested” in attending on Facebook.

“It’s been overwhelming the amount of donations, the amount of visitors that have been physically here at the shelter,” said Robin Young, outreach coordinator for RACC. “The amount of people that have reached out in other ways has just been above and beyond anything we’ve ever dealt with before.”

The memorial featured tables with cards, art and paper hearts for attendees to write messages on.

“We all adopted you,” read one of the messages.

Jeff Wicker, Rebecca Wilde and Kat Simons, who work at the radio station Mix 98.1 Richmond, attended the memorial after following Tommie’s story.

“We’re trying to keep it positive. One of the things we pride ourselves on for our particular radio station is we don’t want to dwell on the negative,” Wilde said. “While it is a horrific story, we know that something good is coming out of it like this.”

Wilde, who is also a RACC volunteer, has been working in animal welfare for more than 20 years.

Simons said the station features a “pet of the day” from a local shelter each day to bring



A makeshift shrine was set up for Tommie at Abner Clay Park, where he was abused. Photo by Erin Edgerton

attention to animals available for adoption.

Michael Villanueva, of Maryland, and his pit bull Raina attended the memorial Saturday. Villanueva said he decided to attend because he supports pit bulls.

“Everyone portrays these dogs as aggressive and mean,” Villanueva said. “But the reality is, if you treat them right, they’re going to be as sweet as can be.”

Paiton Monocure, of Mechanicsville, said it’s taken a dog like Tommie to bring people to recognize the level of cruelty inflicted on dogs.

Monocure said the timing of “Tommie’s law,” a bill that came from another animal cruelty case, could not be more apt. The legislation, which passed both chambers of the General Assembly with no opposition,

awaits Gov. Ralph Northam’s approval.

Police do not know who perpetrated the crime. They encouraged anyone with information to call the Richmond Crime Stoppers at 804-780-1000.

A separate memorial was also set up at Abner Clay Park to honor the dog.

People can visit Tommie at Pet Memorial Park, where he was laid to rest.

A bill would have put test animals up for adoption. VCU opposed it.

RACHEL RICHARDSON
Contributing Writer

A bill that would require animal testing facilities to release animals for adoption instead of euthanizing them was killed in the General Assembly earlier this month after opposition from VCU.

The bill would have required testing facilities offer dogs or cats that “do not pose a health or safety risk” to an adoption agency release the animal through private placement. Most of these testing facilities are sponsored by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Ashley Hood, VCU’s senior director of state government relations, testified against the bill, saying the legislation was not in the best interest of the animals.

“The veterinarian’s professional discretion would have been constrained by the bill,” Hood stated in an email. “[This] may result in caring pet families adopting an animal who may not be healthy enough to survive or thrive.”

The bill, sponsored by Del. Kaye Kory, D-Fairfax, was placed in the Agriculture, Chesapeake, and Natural Resources subcommittee. Todd Woodson, manager of RVA Animal Advocacy Alliance, testified in favor. The Humane Society and the Richmond Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals also testified.

Woodson said the Virginia university system holds a lot of weight in the General Assembly and university opposition caused the bill to fail.



Dogs or cats that pose no health or safety risk would have been offered to adoption agencies under the proposed bill. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

“Virginia Tech stood up and said, ‘We’re against it,’” Woodson said. “Then VCU’s representative stood up and opposed. And when VCU opposed it, [the committee] decided to table it.”

Woodson suggested training the dogs as service animals once they are released from experimental programs.

“Dogs do so much for the military,” Woodson said. “Why not give these dogs to veterans who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder? These animals can do so much good, and they’re just being wasted.”

One of the testing facilities targeted by

animal activist groups is Hunter Holmes McGuire VA Medical Center, which came under fire in December. Records of Richmond’s McGuire Center show the purchase of eight canines in 2018, four of whom died within eight months. The center researches heart disease and is reported to have tested dogs with pacemakers and treadmills.

Although VCU does not test on canines, the university lists McGuire as a NCORP-MU, or National Cancer Institution Community Oncology Research Program – Minority/Underserved, clinical partner institution and has staff

associated with the center.

Cardiologist Dr. Alex Tan was banned from performing dog surgeries at McGuire after several canine deaths. Tan still works at the Center and recently was hired by VCU as an attending electrophysiologist for humans. Electrophysiologists study the heart’s electrical system.

VCU released a report to the Department of Agriculture in November listing no canines, but 54 pigs and 36 “non-human primates.” The university faced backlash in spring 2018 following reports of inhumane primate testing.

Tabitha Treloar of the Richmond SPCA also spoke on behalf of the bill. Treloar stated in an email that the SPCA made “repeated” offers to McGuire to rehabilitate and re-home dogs released from testing. McGuire replied to the SPCA in a 2017 email saying there were no dogs available for adoption, Treloar said.

Restrictions on animal testing facilities were extended through 2019. Facilities cannot be funded by tax dollars. Instead, they need direct approval from the VA secretary.

The VA is investigating the authorization of these animals by former VA Secretary David Shulkin. ABC 8News reported Shulkin was fired by President Donald Trump the same day the secretary gave verbal approval to the center.

“In his brief stint as VA secretary, David Shulkin made misleading statements to the media,” the VA said in a statement to ABC 8News. “We welcome oversight from the inspector general.”

MEN'S BASKETBALL



Sophomore forward Corey Douglas logged a block against Saint Louis. Photo by Jon Mirador

Rams scrap out ‘bloodbath,’ knock off Saint Louis

Continued from front page

“It was a bloodbath,” Rhoades said. “It was a physical game and we needed that, we definitely needed that. Really proud of our guys finding a way to scrap it out at the end.”

“It was a physical game and we needed that, we definitely needed that. Really proud of our guys finding a way to scrap it out at the end.”

Mike Rhoades, Men's Basketball coach

The Rams started the game on a 6-0 run led by sophomore forward Marcus Santos-Silva, who had 4 points within the first two minutes. Saint Louis was forced to call a timeout following the run. Saint Louis came out of the timeout on fire, scoring 6 unanswered points and tying the game at 6 apiece. VCU used a 7-0 run midway through the first half to build a 10-point lead on the Billikens. Junior guard Mike Simms hit a

3-pointer from the corner to cap the run. Late in the first half, HAVOC was too much for Saint Louis as the Billikens were called for a 10-second violation. Following the turnover, Evans hit a 3-pointer in front of the Saint Louis bench, pushing the lead to 13. The Rams shot 50 percent from the field, including 41 percent from three in the first half. Saint Louis shot 48 percent from the field in the first half, but VCU held the Billikens to 0-for-4 beyond the arc. Saint Louis went on a 9-0 run that spanned just under two minutes midway through the second half, pulling the Billikens within two. “Finish,” Rhoades said of the message in the huddle down the stretch. “We had a lot of 20-point-plus wins but it’s this time of the year, games are going to be a grind, when you’re not playing well you still gotta find a way to win [and] we’ve been doing that.” The Rams answered with a 6-0 run of their own that was just over 1 1/2 minutes to push the lead to 8. VCU held on to the lead for the entire game and was only tied with the Billikens twice throughout the game. The Rams’ bench outscored the Billikens’ 15-1 in the contest, and the defense forced 19 turnovers, scoring 22 points off the errors. “Our style of play, playing a lot of guys, we create turnovers that create offense.



HAVOC forced three Saint Louis 10-second violations Feb. 26. Photo by Jon Mirador

That’s what we do. It’s a cumulative effect, it’s great for morale, it’s great for our guys,” Rhoades said. “We created 19 turnovers, and a lot of that has to do with it. In the last eight minutes of the game, our guys have legs, and maybe the other team doesn’t have as much legs as we do.” The Rams shot 45.1 percent from the field, including 28 percent from beyond the arc. VCU’s No. 2 ranked 3-point field goal defense held the Billikens to shooting 26.7 percent from beyond the arc. With three games left in the regular season, redshirt-junior forward Issac Vann said the team’s goal is to “win them all.”

Baseball topped by Terrapins in home opener

ADAM CHEEK
Staff Writer

Baseball fell to Maryland 4-3 in the home opener Tuesday afternoon.

The Terrapins started the game off with a bang, racking up a single and a double in their first two at-bats, scoring the first batter.

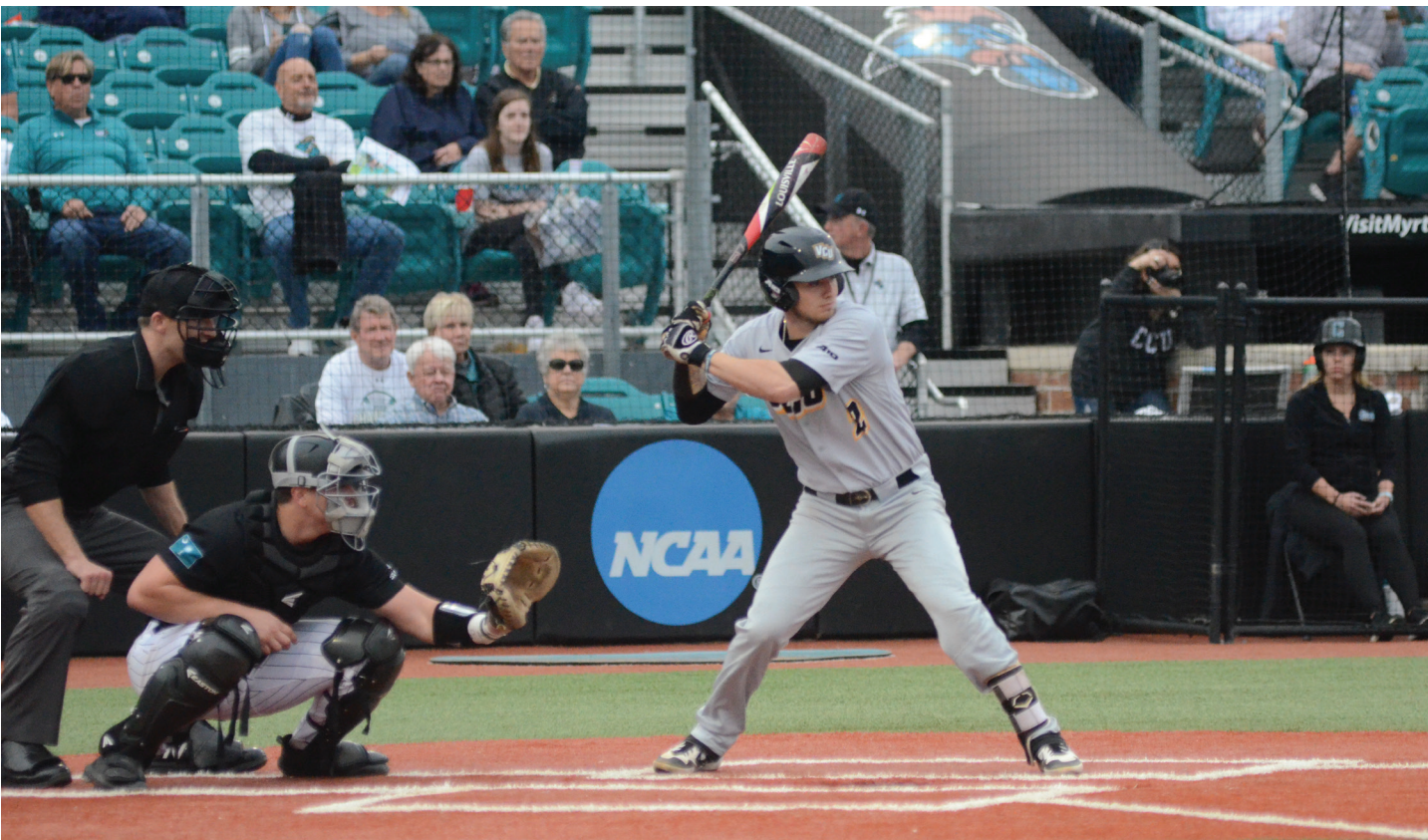
VCU answered with a run of its own in the bottom of the first inning. After senior infielder Zac Ching singled up the middle, junior infielder Brett Norwood singled him to second. Ching and Norwood then stole second and third, after which junior infielder Paul Witt grounded out to second base to score Ching.

The Rams took the lead in the bottom of the third. Sophomore utility player Hogan Brown doubled to center, and a Ching sacrifice bunt advanced Brown to third. Witt then singled up the middle, tallying his second run batted in of the afternoon and giving the Rams a 2-1 advantage.

Maryland knotted up the game at two in the fifth, using a sacrifice fly to center to put another run on the board. The Terrapins added two more in the seventh and ninth, as an unearned run crossed the plate on a single to the left side. The difference-making run came in the ninth inning — a single to second allowed another run to score.

“They just did a good job of getting to second base in a few innings and getting a ground ball through the hole to score runs,” coach Shawn Stiffler said.

VCU came up in the bottom of the ninth, looking to rally, and started strong when Brown doubled to left field. Ching then



Senior infielder Zac Ching was 2-for-4 with a run scored against Maryland. Photo courtesy of VCU Athletics

flew out, advancing Brown to third. Norwood’s single to short scored Brown, bringing the Rams within a run. Norwood advanced to second on a passed ball, and Witt was hit by a pitch, but neither sophomore infielder Liam Hibbits nor junior infielder Steven Carpenter could tie the game, striking out and flying out to right, respectively.

Stiffler said he was frustrated by the outcome, stressing that the Terrapins’ pitching

was VCU’s downfall.

“They threw nine guys and walked three [of our] guys,” Stiffler said. “Anytime you do that, it’s going to be tough for the other team to score.”

Stiffler also emphasized the defensive side of the ball was a point of improvement for the Rams.

“We want to work on the defensive side of the ball,” he said. “We don’t care

about the ball enough ... we don’t protect it enough.”

VCU committed two errors against Maryland.

The Rams have scored 56 runs in seven games, batting a combined .318 and hitting seven homers.

Rams fall in overtime to Dukes



Sophomore guard Taya Robinson scored 10 points in the loss to Duquesne. Photo by Erin Edgerton

JARON NUTTER
Contributing Writer

Women’s Basketball’s seven-game winning streak came to an end on Saturday when the Rams fell to Duquesne in overtime.

The Rams led by 8 points with less than three minutes remaining in the fourth quarter before Duquesne went on a 10-2 run to send the game to overtime.

In overtime, the Dukes took the lead with a go-ahead free throw in the final seconds. VCU failed to get a shot off before the buzzer.

Junior center Danielle Hammond scored a team-high 18 points and recorded five rebounds off the bench. Sophomore guards Olga Petrova and Taya Robinson both logged double figures in the contest. Petrova finished with 14 points, knocking down four 3-pointers. Robinson tallied 10 points.

Sophomore guard Tera Reed made her return to the floor after missing the last two games because of an injury. She finished with 11 points and four rebounds.

The Rams turned the ball over 16 times in total and shot 41.8 percent from the floor. The team also finished shooting 60 percent from three and 64 percent from the free-throw line.

Duquesne guard Chassidy Omogrosso scored a game-high 21 points and four rebounds. Julijana Vojinovic finished with 12 points and recorded two steals for the Dukes. The team’s forward Kadri-Ann Lass finished with 7 points and seven blocks.

Duquesne finished shooting 38.3 percent from the field and grabbed 36 rebounds. The Dukes shot 45.8 percent from three and 66.7 percent on free throws.

The Rams will be back in action Feb. 27 when they travel to Saint Louis to take on the Billikens at 8 p.m.

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PRESS BOX

Why should elite basketball players have to go to college?

NOAH FLEISCHMAN
Sports Editor

Last week, the matchup between rivals Duke and North Carolina brought the sight of Blue Devils star Zion Williamson's shoe breaking. The implosion of his Nike kicks forced Williamson to leave the game after only 33 seconds of play.

Williamson, a freshman, came out of high school with viral dunk compilation videos, garnering national attention at an early age. He has continued the crazy dunks at Duke and is a staple on ESPN's SportsCenter highlights. The Blue Devils forward has also been tabbed as the favorite to go No. 1 in the upcoming NBA draft.

On the first possession of the game, Williamson went after a loose ball and slipped on a slick spot on the floor. As he slipped, Williamson's Nike PG 2.5 burst at the seams of the upper part of the shoe as well as the sole. He left the game with a knee sprain, but if the injury were any more serious, it could have hurt his future NBA career.

This injury sparked a debate on Twitter and other social media platforms over whether high school basketball players should be allowed to go straight to the NBA, bypassing college.

Elite high school basketball players should be able to enter the NBA draft without attending college. This would eliminate the chance of a potential top-draft pick losing millions from an injury at the college level. Not only does it solve that issue, but it also eliminates the one-and-done culture at major college basketball institutions, because freshmen stay for less than a full academic year and enter the draft after the NCAA tournament.

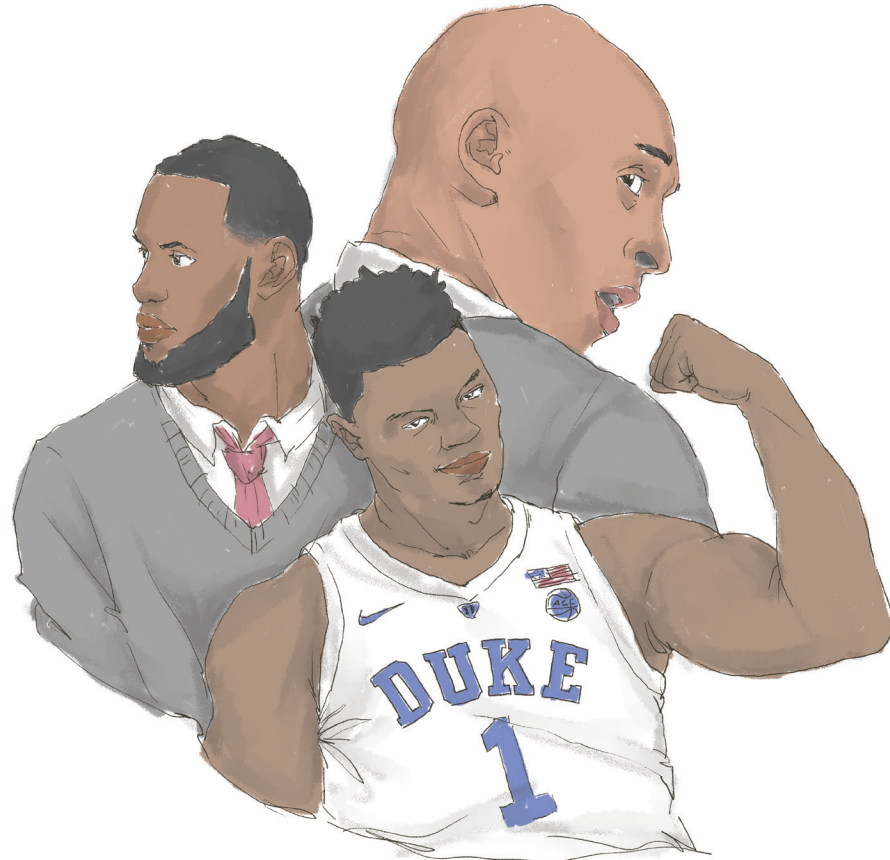


Illustration by Steck Von

NBA stars LeBron James and Kobe Bryant did not attend college — they were drafted right out of high school. But this practice ended in 2005. In a collective bargaining agreement, the NBA changed the minimum age to enter the draft from 18 to 19 and required that players have graduated high school at least a year ago.

The collective bargaining agreement states, “The minimum age requirement has been increased from 18 to 19 years of age. United States players must be at least one year removed from high school AND 19 years of age (by the end of that calendar year) before entering the draft.

International players must turn 19 during the calendar year of that draft.”

The most recent top-draft pick out of high school was Dwight Howard in 2004, the first overall pick by the Orlando Magic. Howard has accumulated almost every accolade a player can receive in high school basketball and the NBA.

As the rule stands, elite basketball players risk their future NBA careers when they're forced to play one year of college basketball.

Michael Porter Jr. played for Missouri last year and injured his back in the team's season opener. He missed the

entire season, only playing off the bench in two postseason games. Porter was potentially going to be the first overall pick in last year's NBA draft, but teams didn't feel comfortable taking him because of his injury. The Denver Nuggets drafted him 14th overall, and he has not played in an NBA game this season because of the back injury he sustained more than a year ago.

Deandre Ayton was drafted first overall by the Phoenix Suns and is guaranteed to receive more than \$17 million over his four-year contract. Porter is guaranteed about \$6 million in his four-year deal. He lost more than \$11 million by falling to 14th in the draft.

The NBA rule was designed to force players to go to college and receive an education before entering the draft. This requirement is pointless — by and large, it doesn't achieve its goal, because many star college basketball players only attend college for one year before entering the NBA.

In the 2016 NBA draft, five of the first eight selected were one-and-done players, including Philadelphia 76ers star Ben Simmons.

Some players still manage to avoid going to college by playing overseas for a year to fulfill the requirements. Others have taken the path of playing in the NBA's G League for a year before signing with a team.

Elite high school basketball players risk injury and millions of dollars if they get hurt playing college basketball. They should be able to capitalize on their playing abilities right out of high school, just like James and Bryant did after their high school careers ended.



Illustration by Mai-Phuong Bui

RecSports adds video games to intramurals

NILE MCNAIR
Contributing Writer

Recreational Sports has introduced an esports league — featuring one-on-one and team games — adding to a selection of other intramural sports, including dodgeball, flag football and soccer.

Some of the games to be offered include “Madden 19,” “NBA 2K19” and “Call of Duty.”

The sports games — “Madden,” “2K” and “FIFA” — will be played one-on-one. “Call of Duty” will consist of five-player games of Team Deathmatch, Domination, and Search and Destroy. “Rocket League” will have two-player and three-player game modes.

Competitors will be able to play from the confines of their homes during the league play.

“Play at home and play by date,” said Will Adams, VCU intramural coordinator. “Meaning you play with your own system, and the intramural office will set matches and the date that a game must be played by.”

Currently, there is a limit of 32 players for each game. But the limit will be raised if

more gamers are interested in playing.

Each game will have its own regular season, followed by double-elimination style playoffs. Seeding for the playoff bracket will be based off gamers' or team's regular season records.

Gamers of any gender are encouraged to join the league.

“This is open to all gamers,” Adams said. “We chose popular games that are also well known, that attractive gamers from both spectrums.”

Esports will have seasons in both the fall and spring semesters.

If the leagues are successful, more games will eventually be added, including bigger competitive games like “Overwatch” and “League of Legends.” In addition, the league might add PC gaming to diversify the selection, Adams said.

“It being the first semester, it's too early to tell right now. But numbers currently are great, especially for our sports games,” Adams said.

For more information, visit recsports.vcu.edu/programs.

Doubleheader pushes Rams' win streak to 6

NILE MCNAIR
Contributing Writer

Riding a four-game winning streak, Women's Tennis entered the weekend's doubleheader looking to continue recent momentum.

TEMPLE

The Rams faced Temple Feb. 24, taking down the Owls 7-0 in the second half of their weekend doubleheader.

A month of strong performances continued against Temple on Sunday, as the women started with a doubles clean sweep.

The duo of senior Anna Rasmussen and sophomore Melissa Ifidzhen were the first to finish, winning their doubles match 6-3.

The Rams also impressed in singles — sophomore Kanako Yano won her first set 6-0 and followed it up with a 6-1 victory to secure the match.

The remainder of the Rams won their respective singles matches as VCU swept Temple.

Coach Paul Kostin said he knew the Owls were a strong team.

"We played very well today because we

knew this team was dangerous," Kostin said. "So, I'm happy with the win."

The win over temple brought the Rams' winning streak to six.

"It's good for [the team] but I don't keep track of those kind of things," Kostin said of the winning streak. "We need to get better so we play our best at the most important times."



Sophomore Paola Exposito Diaz-Delgado was named A-10 Player of the Week two weeks in a row. Photo by Gessler Santos-Lopez

Moving forward to singles matches, VCU continued to dominate. The Rams managed to win five of the six singles matches on Saturday.

Sophomore Paola Exposito Diaz-Delgado was named Atlantic 10 Player of the Week for the past two weeks — she lived up to her accolade in her singles match.

Exposito Diaz-Delgado made quick work of her opponent, winning in two sets, 6-1, 6-1.

Yano and sophomore Marina Alcaide Bakkari were two other standout performances. Both won their singles matches in two short sets.

Kostin was proud of his team's performance and effort against Elon.

"I believe we played well,

we played good tennis, and it's good to see that we were focused and ready to play," Kostin said.

The Rams beat Elon with a final score of 6-1.

VCU will be back on the courts March 2 at home against West Virginia at 10 a.m.

ELON

The Rams opened up strong in doubles against Elon Feb. 23.

The tandem of Rasmussen and Ifidzhen had an impressive 6-0 victory over their doubles counterparts.

To ensure doubles victories, junior Noumea Witmus and sophomore Sofia Sualehe won 6-4 in a competitive one-set match.

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Rams are back-to-back A-10 champs

ANDY RIDDLER
Contributing Writer

Women's Track and Field won its third straight Atlantic 10 title Feb. 24 at George Mason in Fairfax. The men's team finished third for the second year in a row — narrowly missing out on a top-two finish.

WOMEN

Junior distance runner Emily Mulhern was one of four Rams to win an individual A-10 title after edging out a five-second victory in the 5000-meter with a time of 16:35.28. She also ran a time of 9:41.18 in the 3000 to finish in third place, earning a total of 16 points for VCU.

RAM STAT

Coach Jon Riley was named the Atlantic 10 Women's Coach of the Year.

Senior thrower Camora Sanders won two events to earn a team-high 20 points in the championship. She won the weight throw with a toss of 17.57 meters and the shot put with a throw of 13.95 meters. Junior sprinter Kayla Smith won the 200-meter dash with a 24.64-second time. Smith also finished in second in the 400-meter after coming across the line

in 54.37 seconds. Smith earned VCU a total of 18 points over the weekend. Sophomore jumper Aliyah Newman won her second consecutive A-10 triple jump title with a jump of 12.52 meters to earn 10 points for the Black and Gold. Coach Jon Riley was awarded his fourth A-10 Indoor Women's Coach of the Year award as the Rams won their sixth track and field conference championship since 2015.

MEN

The Rams came close to breaking past their program-best third-place finish this weekend, finishing 5.5 points behind second-place Rhode Island. Redshirt-junior jumper Bashir Idris won the long jump with 7.09 meters. Freshman jumper Camron Browne finished in third place with a leap of 6.90 meters, edged out of second place by 0.02 meters. Idris also brought home second in the triple jump with a 15.03-meter leap,



The 4x800 meter relay team of Ashley Greenlee (above), Ashley Brown, Judith White and Nichelle Scott placed third at the A-10 championships. Photo courtesy VCU Athletics

finished in third place in the weight throw with a toss of 18.19 meters. Schwartz improved on last year's performance, in which he finished in sixth with a 15.27-meter throw. Freshman sprinter JeVon Waller and senior sprinter Jamik Alexander finished first and second, respectively, in the 60-meter dash. Waller won with a time of 6.86 seconds, barely edging out Alexander who came across the line in 6.89 seconds. Freshman thrower Jaekob Vollbrecht won the shot put with a throw of 17.09 meters, beating the next closest competitor by 0.42 meters. Junior hurdler Ian Davis won the 60-meter hurdles and broke the meet record in the event with a time of 7.94 seconds. Davis was joined by junior sprinter Chukwuezugbo Aguolu, freshman sprinter Emmanuel Waller and redshirt-senior sprinter Nicholas Buckingham on the 4x400 team that earned a second-place finish with a time of 3:18.67. The Rams will compete again on March 8-9 in the NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championships in Birmingham, Alabama.

Santos-Silva thrives in starting role



Sophomore forward Marcus Santos-Silva shoots a team-high 60 percent from the field. Photo by Jon Mirador

RYAN GRUBE
Contributing Writer




In the world of college basketball, the “next man up” philosophy is an overriding mentality — college athletes only get four years to showcase their talents, which presents younger players opportunities to step into bigger roles. When First-Team All-Atlantic 10 forward Justin Tillman graduated, sophomore

forward Marcus Santos-Silva knew it was his void to fill. “The coaches just told me to be ready,” Santos-Silva said. “We lost Tillman, so I’m going to have to step up my role even bigger this year to help the team out and to get a whole bunch of wins for us.” A year after averaging 3.1 points and three rebounds, Santos-Silva has risen to the challenge. The big man out of Taunton, Massachusetts, is averaging 9.7 points and

seven rebounds on the season. Santos-Silva credits his offensive jump to a productive offseason, during which he focused on broadening his postgame. “I give most of it to my big man coach, coach [Brent] Scott,” Santos-Silva said. “This whole summer, we were working on post moves, control and also getting my confidence up. So, I owe them a lot.” Along with his improvement on the offensive end, Santos-Silva has anchored a

strong defensive season for the Rams. VCU, which finished 179th in defensive efficiency last season according to teamrankings.com, is now up to third in the nation. Santos-Silva says the drastic surge is a testament to a summer filled with defensive workouts. “We would do a lot of defensive drills in the summer for basically the whole entire practice. Sometimes, we wouldn’t even touch the ball,” Santos-Silva said. “But, it paid off.” And paid off did it ever. Currently, Santos-Silva averages 1.2 blocks and 0.9 steals, good for second and third on the team, respectively. His stellar overall play has VCU (20-6, 11-2 in A-10) back in the NCAA Tournament discussion after the team missed out on the “big dance” for the first time in seven years. Santos-Silva said while last season was rough, he and the team used it as a learning curve for 2019. “It was hard, but it also made us mentally stronger for this year because right after that season was over, we got straight back to work,” Santos-Silva said. “We used last season as motivation for this season.” Following a dominant win over Rhode Island Feb. 19, Santos Silva and the Rams stand alone atop the A-10 standings. With just three games remaining in the regular season, Santos-Silva has his sights on one goal in particular. “We’re here for a big goal,” Santos-Silva said, “and that’s to win the A-10 championship and make it to the tournament.”

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A yellow and white student ID card template for Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The top half is yellow with a faint grid pattern. The bottom half is white. On the left, there is a circular VCU seal and the text "VCU" in large orange letters. Below that, it says "Radney The Ram" in bold black text, followed by a placeholder for a photo and a placeholder for a name and ID number "123456 1 234567891". At the bottom left is a barcode and the text "VCU Police : 828-1234". On the right, there is a placeholder for a photo of a student, a photo of Radney the Ram mascot, and the word "STUDENT" in large bold black letters.

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On this day
In 2018, Barbra Streisand revealed to Variety that two of her Coton de Tulear dogs are clones of her deceased pet, Samantha.



“The Quarry” by Robert Scott Duncanson visualizes the relationship between industry and the environment. The dry area in the foreground represents humanity’s impact on the world. Photo by Gessler Santos-Lopez

VMFA event pairs African-American art with poetry

IMAN MEKONEN
Contributing Writer

WALTER CHIDOZIE ANYANWU
Contributing Writer

RICHMONDERS AND VCU COMMUNITY members shared a night of powerful storytelling and appreciation for African-American art at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Feb. 21.

To celebrate Black History Month, the VMFA hosted its annual “African-American Read-In,” which featured a different reading every 15 minutes. Speakers recited poems by African-American authors in front of art that related to the poetry.

“It’s always nice to have a cross section of voices from different backgrounds because we all interpret it differently,” said Dr. Tresie McMillan Cottom, author and VCU assistant professor. “That’s what art does, you find it where you are and you make sense of it yourself.”

McMillan Cottom read “Joy in the Woods,” a poem by Claude McKay that describes a black laborer working in a capitalist society. His freedom is limited because of the way society looks down at the working class. McMillan Cottom read the poem in front of a Robert Scott Duncanson painting called “The Quarry.”

Created during the Harlem Renaissance, “The Quarry” visualizes the relationship between a worker and their environment.

Themes of social inequality prevail throughout the text, and the image of nature’s freedom in the background contrasted with the poem’s content.

“The Quarry” displays three signs of industry and the progression between them. The foreground shows a dry, undeveloped area of land. The middle ground shows an area with vegetation, and the background shows several trees and mountains.

“[The event is] designed to highlight the black artists in the collection,” McMillan Cottom said. “They don’t pull out the black art and put it all in one room. The fact that you have to move through the entire museum to see the respected pieces says that those things are interwoven into all of the art.”

Another piece highlighted at the event was “Willem van Heythuysen” by Kehinde Wiley. The painting depicts an African-American man posing with a sword, imitating the Dutchman in Frans Hals’ “Willem van Heythuysen Posing with a Sword.” The man depicted wears Sean John streetwear and Timberland boots to confirm his role in the contemporary world. Wiley’s piece points out similarities and differences between the two time periods.

The “Old Master,” which was created during the Renaissance period, illustrates elegant red and gold swords against a vibrant background with blooming gold tendrils.

The work is from a series of Wiley’s paintings that insert African-Americans into the styles used in the Renaissance to praise their elegance while criticizing the exclusion of people of color.

An excerpt from George Jackson’s “Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson” accompanied the piece. It

was read by Chioke I’Anson, an assistant professor in VCU’s Department of African-American Studies.

In the excerpt, Jackson writes to his girlfriend about the conditions he faces in prison. He reflects struggles faced by black people in America during the 1960s and emphasizes his willingness to resist oppression.

“Whenever anybody can be under really bad conditions and still express themselves eloquently and amazingly,” I’Anson said, “you’ve got to pay attention to that.”

The event included other pieces and readings that focused largely on the same themes, such as Pixley Seme’s 1906 speech “The Regeneration of Africa.” The speech was read in front of a large Kente Cloth in the African Galleries of the museum.

I’Anson said public performances of African-American art give people the opportunity to learn about societies, cultures and struggles they might not have known otherwise.

“It shows people what you do at the museum, you come and you be a person,” McMillan Cottom said. “It doesn’t have to be intimidating, you don’t have to get dressed up, you don’t have to know what the pictures are about.”



Kehinde Wiley’s painting titled “Willem van Heythuysen” depicts a contemporary black man wearing Timberland boots and Sean John streetwear. Photo by Gessler Santos-Lopez

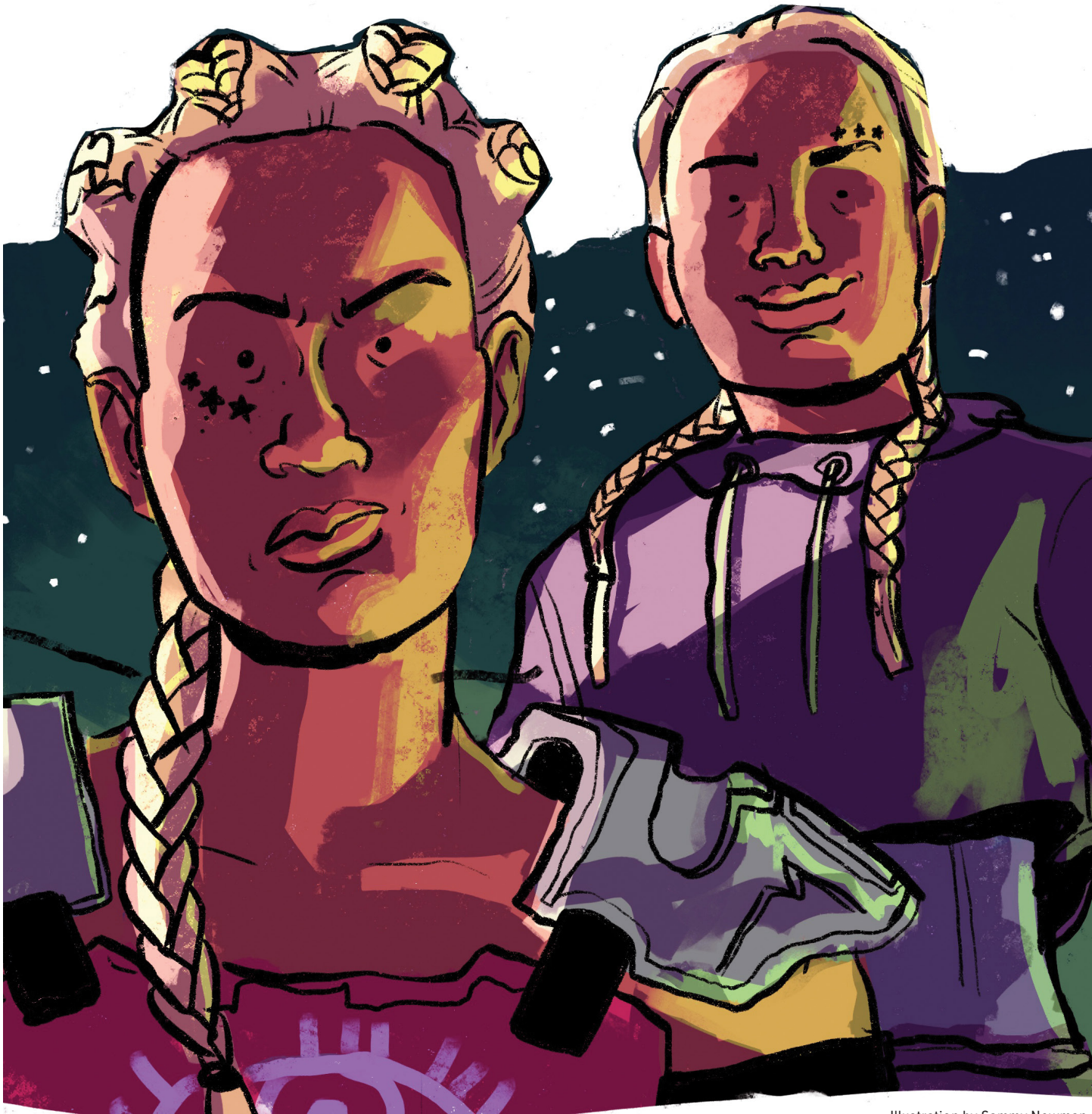


Illustration by Sammy Newman

“Far Cry New Dawn” aims too low, offering a boring expansion to its predecessor

JONAH SCHUHART
Contributing Writer

The newest “Far Cry” game is not the best. But “Far Cry New Dawn” is still enjoyable because it has the core mechanics that made the original so successful.

Ubisoft is one of the kings of yearly video game franchises. The company is a master of making the same game every year with minor changes — even if the quality does vary a bit. Some may hate this system, but it isn’t necessarily a bad thing. There’s room in the world for these kinds of casual series, even if they are pretty similar.

In terms of gameplay, the combat systems are entertaining, whether the player uses stealth or goes in guns blazing. That means the majority of “New Dawn” is enjoyable to play, even if it is just more of the same content. The enemy-riddled outposts are a series staple, and they — like other side quests — can be replayed at higher difficulties for greater rewards. This adds a lot of replayability to the game for completionists.

Movement is also fun. The player gets a wingsuit, a double jump, a grappling hook and a zipline. So, with enough skill, the player can zip around enemy outposts like Spider-Man as they massacre guards with the slew of weapons provided.

The story, however, has serious problems. Everything is shallow. It’s like the writers never developed the plot beyond a few bullet points outlining the game’s events. Some of the dialogue is humorous, but there is zero character development, and therefore zero incentive for the player to actually care about the story.

The main villains — who are usually a selling point for “Far Cry” games — are more bland than ever. They get some last-minute development in the final act, but it’s shallow and the player never interacts with them enough to really care.

“New Dawn” also tries to make a grand point about how people should always have hope for the future. But the story does not invest in the player enough. So, when a major character hands the silent protagonist a beer as they stare off into the sunset, full of optimism, it feels more

like two planks of sentient wood trying to imitate a dramatic human moment.

The only good parts of the story are the parts about the last game’s antagonist, Joseph Seed. I hated Seed in “Far Cry 5.” His motivations were complete nonsense and the game did nothing to oppose his ideals. “New Dawn” makes the character’s plotline interesting by giving him some real development, for once.

Overall, “Far Cry New Dawn” is a fun experience, but I’d hardly call it a full game. It’s more like a big expansion. It’s the same systems as the last game, but with a smaller map, a shorter plot and some new base-building and rocket propelled grenade mechanics. At least Ubisoft was smart enough to sell this game for \$40 instead of \$60. If you like “Far Cry,” or if you’re looking for something casual to play, it’s worth buying.

Rating: 6/10.
Overall: Not a bad game and pretty fun to play. But it’s superficial to the utmost degree.

UPCOMING EVENTS

See something

WED. 2/27

ICA Cinemas Series: “Black Mother”

“Black Mother” from New York artist Khalik Allah explores life in Jamaica by focusing on testimonies from the people who live there. RSVP at icavcu.org.
6-8 p.m., *Institute for Contemporary Art* (601 W. Broad St.) Free.

THURS. 2/28

Stand Up Science with Shane Mauss

Local scientists, comedians and other guests will join award-winning comedian and podcaster Shane Mauss. At the end of the show, the guests will return to the stage for a panel discussion led by audience questions. Pre-order tickets online.
7-10 p.m., *The Broadberry* (2729 W. Broad St.) \$15 in advance.

FRI. 3/1

First Fridays

New exhibitions will open across Richmond’s galleries, including 1708 Gallery, ADA Gallery, The Anderson and more.
All day, city-wide. Free.

FRI. 3/1

Drake Bell at The Canal Club

Musician and actor Drake Bell will perform at The Canal Club. Additional performances include Sam McCoig, Midlife Pilot and Caleb Folks.
7 p.m., *The Canal Club* (1545 E. Cary St.) \$15 in advance.

Do something

THURS. 2/28

A Mindful Approach to Leadership

Participants will learn how to connect with others in the workplace and at home. Methods include finding a calm way to exist in the present moment.
8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., *Room B3189, Snead Hall* (301 W. Main St.)

SUN. 3/3

Invasive Plant Removal

Ryan Ginsburg from the James River Association will lead an invasive plant removal taskforce. Participants are advised to bring a water bottle and wear closed-toe shoes, long sleeves and long pants.
11 a.m.-2 p.m., *RVA Createspace* (607 Wickham St.) Free.

Learn something

WED. 2/27

QTPOC Gathering: Black Power & Appreciation

In commemoration of Black History Month, there will be a discussion on the contributions of black individuals in society. This event is hosted by the Queer & Trans People of Color Collective.
7-9 p.m., *Office of Multicultural Student Affairs* (907 Floyd Ave.) Free.

THURS. 2/28

Vida Williams: A Social and Civic Innovation Lecture

The VCU da Vinci Center will host a lecture led by Vida Williams. The talk will address the design, development and provision of social and civic innovations.
5-6:30 p.m., *da Vinci Center* (807 S. Cathedral Place)



Illustration by Karly Andersen

Music defines the world: black history throughout the years

IMAN MEKONEN
Contributing Writer

Throughout history, African-Americans have turned to music to express emotion and creativity. Many artists have created unforgetting and game-changing albums that have redefined what it means to be a black musician in the music industry. Although there are many who fit the category, here are just a few examples.

“THRILLER” BY MICHAEL JACKSON (1982)

Jackson’s most commercially successful album defined the unique sound of the 1980s and continues to hold cultural significance in the black community. The extreme success of “Thriller” marks its relevance to all communities by connecting people from all backgrounds and transcending geographical borders.

This nine-track album changed the way artists promoted their work. “Thriller” was released as a single and accompanied by a 14-minute short film, which helped its commercial success. Directed by John Landis, the film was inspired by the horror movie genre and Landis’ film, “An American Werewolf in London.”

It also acted to break racial barriers — MTV hesitated to broadcast Jackson’s music video at first, but it was immediately successful.

Jackson won seven Grammys for the album in 1984, including “Album of the Year.” “Thriller” is one of the highest-selling albums in the U.S. and it includes themes of unity, racial equality and interracial relationships. It also features performances from popular rock musicians, and the influences of disco, jazz, blues and rock’n’roll can be heard on the record.

Jackson sings a duet with musician Paul McCartney in the song, “The Girl is Mine.” Jackson and McCartney sing in a conversational style about fighting over a lover, highlighting interracial relationships.

In the music video for “Beat It,” Jackson

unites two violent gangs together through the power of music and dance. The song also features a guitar solo from Eddie Van Halen and includes elements that suit all music tastes.

The creation of Jackson’s album helped pave the way for other black artists in the music industry, including Prince. The musical style and lyrical storytelling within “Thriller” continues to inspire generations, artistically and musically.

“THE MISEDUCATION OF LAURYN HILL” BY LAURYN HILL (1998)

Hill’s debut solo album marks her only album to date, but it serves as an inspiration to members of the hip-hop community even 20 years later.

Its commercial success opened doors to other black female rappers in the male-dominated hip-hop industry.

Inspired by her departure from rap trio The Fugees and her unexpected pregnancy, “The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill” acts as a poetic diary into her life by combining the diverse sounds of soul, doo-wop, hip-hop, and rhythm and blues to tell stories about love, motherhood, religion and her exit from The Fugees.

The Fugees’ second album “The Score” includes the singles “Fu-Gee-La” and “Killing Me Softly With His Song,” which highlighted Hill’s strong rapping ability and unique vocal range.

The album includes skits at the end of a few songs like “To Zion” and “Doo Wop (That Thing)” about children in a classroom setting talking about love.

The single “Doo Wop (That Thing)” communicates Hill’s stances on self-respect and empowerment seen in the lyrics “Don’t be a hard rock when you really are a gem/ Baby girl, respect is just a minimum.” The song debuted at number one on the Billboard Hot 100 chart.

The song “To Zion” is dedicated to Hill’s first-born child and describes her relationship with motherhood. She speaks

on the joy brought into her life with references to the Bible.

“The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill” earned 10 nominations and won five Grammy Awards in 1999, including album of the year — becoming the first hip-hop album to do so. Hill became the first woman to earn 10 nominations for an album in a single year, as well as the first woman to win five awards in one night.

Hill’s role as a successful woman in the music industry has empowered the black community with her unapologetic attitude, creative lyrics and signature dreadlocks.

“808S & HEARTBREAK” BY KANYE WEST (2008)

Written in the wake of his mother’s death and a breakup with his fiancée, “808s & Heartbreak” serves as a magnifying glass into a deeply emotional and dark time in West’s life.

The content of the album is as honest as the title. It’s a personal story about his battle with heartache and told with the use of electronic beats from a Roland TR-808 drum machine. Auto-tune, a program used to alter the voice, heavily influences the album’s sound and serves to show emotion and grief.

“808s & Heartbreak” diverges from West’s previous albums and shows an alternate side to his life by allowing listeners to understand his pain.

The loneliness and insecurity he experienced after these events are particularly prevalent in the two songs, “Welcome to Heartbreak” and “Coldest Winter.”

The former explicitly depicts the audience the loneliness he suffered in the line, “My friends show me pictures of his kids ... All I can show him is pictures of my cribs.”

West’s musical vulnerability has inspired other artists, like Kid Cudi, Drake and Frank Ocean.

West’s emotional expression helped the world understand what he was going through.

With these albums, he has influenced black America and the entire music industry.

“TO PIMP A BUTTERFLY” BY KENDRICK LAMAR (2015)

In “To Pimp a Butterfly,” Lamar tackles tough conversational topics, including police brutality, slavery, gun violence, colorism and mental health.

Inspired by a trip to South Africa, Lamar shares his experiences as a black man in modern-day America. The album is heavily influenced by his trip, shown in the elements of the album’s sound.

The song “Complexion (A Zulu Love)” discusses colorism, a form of discrimination based in the idea that lighter skin tones are favored over darker skin.

Lamar alludes to the beliefs of the Zulu, a South African ethnic group, emphasizing human kindness and love regardless of skin color.

Lamar continues to reference Africa in “i,” where he denounces the use of the N-word and supports the use of the word “Negus,” a term used in the Amharic language from Ethiopia to describe members of royalty.

The single “Alright” has served as an anthem for the Black Lives Matter movement by bringing a message of hope in a time of suffering. The chorus, sang by producer Pharrell Williams, is constantly repeated throughout the song — “We gon’ be alright ... Do you hear me? Do you feel me? We gon’ be alright.”

In “Blacker the Berry,” Lamar mentions Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old black teenager who was killed by a neighborhood watch captain in 2012. Martin’s death sparked outrage and inspired the Black Lives Matter movement, which highlights oppression experienced by black people.

Lamar uses his voice to call attention to issues and topics that could make the listener uncomfortable — but that’s the point. “To Pimp A Butterfly” serves as an inspiration to the black community because it explicitly tells the story how it is.

BRANDON'S ANGLE

Films by African-American creators commemorate black history

BRANDON SHILLINGFORD
Contributing Writer

As Black History Month comes to an end, I'm reminded of many films made by black artists that made me fall in love with movies. With that being said, here are just a few that I love and find the most influential. And if you haven't seen them, drop whatever you're doing and check them out.

**"GANJA AND HESS,"
BILL GUNN (1973)**

After premiering at the 1972 Cannes Film Festival, Gunn's masterpiece was lauded by French critics, but adversely panned in the states. American critics called it "slow" and "pretentious," and it was pulled from theaters after three days.

"Ganja and Hess" operates as a subversion to the highly popular blaxploitation films of its time, which were often overproduced and showy — critics of the genre said it promoted stereotypes about black people. Most blaxploitation and horror movies were fast paced and filled with action — "Ganja and Hess" is the exact opposite. Slow and deliberate, it seeks to study love, passion, and religious and social confines in the black community. It also serves as an allegory for addiction.

Dr. Hess Green is a wealthy, intelligent and clever black man. He's a contrast to the way black men were portrayed on screen in the '70s. Duane Jones' nuanced portrayal of Hess is a welcome deviation from stereotypical genre conformity, especially in horror where black men are often treated as expendable.

"Ganja and Hess" is a phenomenal piece of horror history that taps into cultural and racial taboos and fears, permeating the psyche. It creates a specific type of cerebral horror and has influenced countless films like it.

**"DO THE RIGHT THING,"
SPIKE LEE (1989)**

Lee's magnum opus is an unparalleled work of cinematic rage. Lee puts his heart and soul into the film. His passion is seen in every frame, and venom comes from every word in the script. It's impassioned filmmaking at its finest.

Lee taps into hot-button racial issues in a masterwork of tonal balance, shifting from being uproariously funny to profoundly sad. "Do the Right Thing" is a film of its time and acts as a snapshot, with vignettes of Lee's character Mookie experiencing life. He delivers pizzas, talks to neighbors and visits his girlfriend, all while the neighborhood racial tension reaches a boiling point.

It's a personal film for Lee and one of

the most important of all time. Provocative and fearless, "Do the Right Thing" is a film we still discuss 30 years later.

It's a vital piece of cinematic art that leaves an impact which lasts long after the credits roll.

**"THE WATERMELON WOMAN,"
CHERYL DUNYE (1996)**

"I'm working on being a filmmaker. The problem is, I don't know what I want to make a film on. I know it has to be about black women because our stories have never been told," Dunye said while playing herself in "The Watermelon Woman."

As a thesis statement for independent film and a generation of women that had yet to be authentically represented, Dunye's "The Watermelon Woman" was truly ahead of its time. It tells the story of a young black woman — played by Dunye herself — navigating dating life, filmmaking and family.

The film uses its miniscule budget to its absolute advantage. It doesn't use Dunye's sexuality as a story device or as an obstacle for her to overcome, but as an advantage that allows her to see the world from a unique perspective.

Dunye brings essential questions of race and sexuality to the forefront in a

medium where filmmakers never had the courage to do so before.

**"GET OUT,"
JORDAN PEELE (2017)**

While it may be cliché to label a film as an "experience," I find it hard to think of a more appropriate term for Peele's masterful and genre-transcending directorial debut, "Get Out."

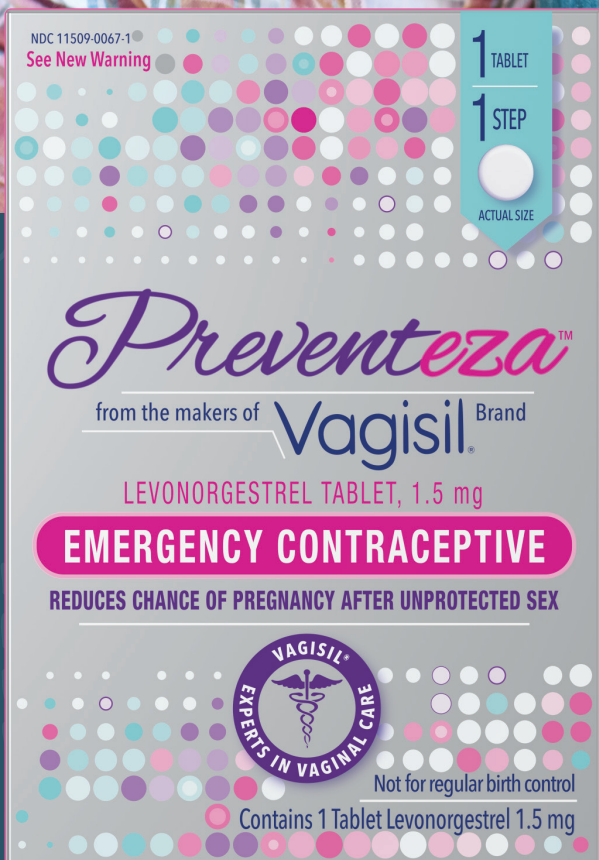
From the opening shot, "Get Out" takes you into its clutches and doesn't let go. It's extremely visceral, setting a very specific tone right from the beginning. Peele seeks to put you in the shoes of main character Chris — conveying his terror, excitement and anger — as a weekend away with his white girlfriend's family reveals sinister intentions.

Taking cues from films like "Ganja and Hess," Peele crafts a rich cinematic experience that not only rewards the viewer but challenges them, making it an essential piece of contemporary African-American cinema.



Illustration by Steck Von

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CT Opinions

Quote of the week

"You don't have to be a man to fight for freedom. All you have to do is to be an intelligent human being."
— MALCOLM X

400 years ago they came in chains

BRIANNA SCOTT
Opinions Editor

T

This month marks 400 years since the first slaves were brought to North America. Kidnapped from their homes, forced onto boats, their destiny unknown — the arrival of these slaves to Virginia in 1619 left an imprint on our society forever.

Some historians identify this as the beginning of slavery in the U.S., but I'm not here to give you a history lesson. I'm here to discuss what this 400-year anniversary means to me.

It might seem quite selfish to be thinking about myself, but it's more so about my own ancestry. I'm originally from Alabama; yes, sweet home Alabama. It's where my parents were born and raised.

I know my family's roots are buried in slavery. There's no getting around that when you're black and from Alabama. Where I'm from, there are beautiful white antebellum houses surrounding my parents' modest childhood country homes.

When we go back to visit Lowndes County, Alabama, there are fields and fields of crops — probably the same fields that grew cotton for slaves to pick. There's an old pool near my dad's childhood home that was for black people only and a shed right next to my dad's childhood home where his mom went to school.

My mom's father built the first black well in his area. Old photos show my grandparents voting for the first time. Historic sites litter my hometown and Confederate flags display the deep-seeded delusions of racist rednecks.

I moved to Virginia pretty early in my life, so I didn't grow up in Alabama. But moving from one slave state to another isn't any better.

I currently live in Jackson Ward, which used to be called Black Wall Street. Now, it's an empty shell of what it used to be; gentrification swept away the last remnants of its history.

Shockoe Bottom was the second-busiest slave-trading site in the country before the Civil War. Now, it's a booming neighborhood with restaurants, shops, nightclubs, art galleries and \$1,000 one-bedroom apartments.

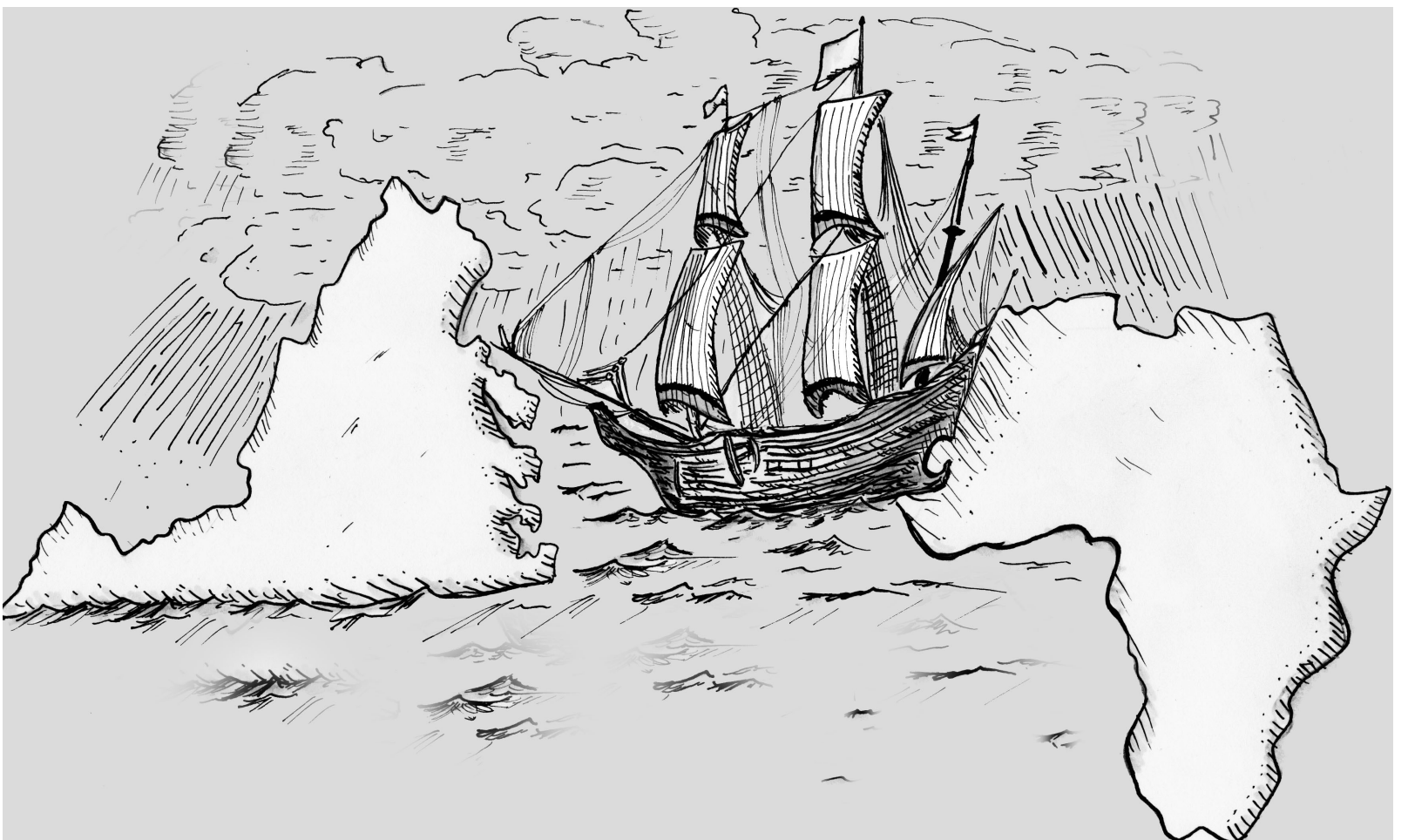


Illustration by Adam Goodman

Shockoe Bottom was named one of 11 most endangered historic places in the U.S. in 2014 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

It's strange knowing I'm walking, standing and sitting where the dehumanization of my people happened. Where families were ripped apart. Black bodies sold, whipped and hung from trees — all those things happened right where we live.

I moved from the Chesapeake suburbs to Richmond for college. Going to school in the former capital of the Confederacy opened my eyes.

You see, I was a starry-eyed girl with democratic blue braids when the 2016 presidential election sparked my passion for activism. I felt something ignite inside me, something in my head telling me that I needed to act. Everyone knows what I'm talking about: Donald Trump. President Trump didn't create the racial problems in America, but he embodies white supremacy — the ideology that enslaved my people.

I believe my ancestors would be pained in a bittersweet way by the current state of the U.S. I know my grandparents are. For all the progress we've made — and we've made so much — it can seem so fruitless when thinking about issues that continue to plague the black community, from police brutality to mass incarceration to modern-day disenfranchisement.

The first slaves might have been brought to what is now the U.S. 400 years ago, but slavery's painful effects lasted far longer. The Jim Crow era was 142 years ago. Brown v.

Board of Education was only 65 years ago. It was only 54 years ago that Malcolm X was assassinated and 51 that Martin Luther King Jr. was shot.

“

America looks at slavery as a mistake. But enslaving, beating, raping, lynching, segregating and dehumanizing thousands of black people for years was not a mistake. It was a horrific choice that was made.”

Brianna Scott, opinions editor

While Brown v. Board banned public school segregation, we know that segregation was happening illegally. My grandparents lived through that. My grandparents lived the civil rights movement — they sat at the back of the bus, they walked to work in protest. My dad's parents are still alive, and they remember all of it. They remember the deaths of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. People cannot argue that this was so long ago and we should forget it when people can still recall these events and talk about their lasting impact.

America has yet to reconcile its dark past with slavery and the oppression of black people.

You can't say we've moved on as a country or that we live in a post-racial society when the Unite the Right rally happened less than two years ago. The two-day white supremacist rally that took place in Charlottesville resulted in three people killed and more than 30 injured.

People continue to preach the gospel of white supremacy in 2019 that colonizers preached in the 18th and 19th centuries.

America looks at slavery as a mistake. But enslaving, beating, raping, lynching, segregating and dehumanizing thousands of black people for years was not a mistake. It was a horrific choice that was made. This country has to take responsibility of that choice because it has affected the black population ever since.

Four hundred years ago, the first slaves were brought to Virginia and their fight began. It's heartbreaking to think about what my ancestors went through to gain their freedom.

My people were supposed to get 40 acres and a mule after slavery ended, but that never happened. That promise was below the bare minimum of what they deserved and it's insulting. What they received instead was years and years of fighting to prove their humanity and rights to a group of people who never saw them as anything but property. And we're still fighting today, just for different reasons.

Last week I supported Jussie Smollett. Now, I’m not so sure.

TAGWA SHAMMET
Contributing Writer

When I hear about hate crimes, it brings me to tears. The blatant disrespect and violence against people for being themselves; it’s enraging. But sometimes people lie. “Empire” actor Jussie Smollett’s case broke my heart.

Smollett said he was attacked Jan. 29 by two white men who were alleged supporters of President Donald Trump. Amid the investigation, an anonymous tip was sent to investigators saying Smollett not only knew his attackers, but orchestrated the entire attack. The two men who allegedly attacked him are brothers — Ola Osundairo and Abel Osundairo.

According to NBC News, “Chicago police confirmed on Tuesday that they received a tip from someone claiming to have seen the three men together in an elevator of Smollett’s apartment building on the evening of the attack.” If these claims are true, Smollett faces far more than public outcry.

I wrote about Smollett the week of his attack. I stood behind him and believed that he was the victim of a hate crime. With the hate and polarization plaguing our country today, it was easy for me to come to that conclusion. Why would anyone lie about this?

Then, allegations that he orchestrated the attack arose. Aside from that tip, Smollett isn’t helping his case by refusing to talk to authorities. If he truly was a victim of the crime, he would be doing everything in his power to help law enforcement catch the perpetrators. Instead, he hasn’t said anything about the situation, aside from his lawyer denying the allegations on Smollett’s behalf. As of Feb. 21, Smollett has been arrested and faces felony charges.

Hate crimes are some of the most difficult crimes to prosecute. In 2017, the FBI

released data on bias-motivated incidents that shows more than 4,000 hate crime offenses were motivated by race or ethnicity. Nearly 1,000 hate crimes were based on sexual orientation, according to the data.

People are afraid to report hate crimes, and prosecutors struggle to prove, beyond reasonable doubt, the legitimacy of the crime. For someone like Smollett, a person in the spotlight, being accused of utilizing a hate crime as a publicity stunt is disheartening. All it takes is one. One case like Smollett’s leads people to dismiss the hate

crimes that occur everyday. By allegedly lying, Smollett has disrupted justice for actual victims of hate crimes in the U.S.

Smollett not only faces a ruined career, but real prison time. He is at risk of being charged with a Class 4 felony — the falsification of a police report. This could land him in prison for one to three years. Because Smollett is famous, he is also a high-profile case, which means the nation is watching. If Smollett is found to be lying, he will lose the support of his fans and of the public, which will land him in even hotter water. The same way Americans expected justice in the cases of O.J. Simpson, the Menendez brothers and Willie Horton, they will be waiting for the same tough

punishment against Smollett.

If it’s proven that he falsified the attack, Smollett deserves to be punished to the fullest extent for his crime. What would he gain from lying — extra publicity? All at the cost of real victims of hate crimes being put into danger by having their cases doubted.

I don’t retract my previous story on the polarization of America. Trump is pushing us further apart, and cases like this are real. Whether convicted or not, I’m eager to see justice served in Smollett’s case.



An Ode to Self Care



Recommended listening while reading:
“CUZ I LOVE YOU”
Lizzo

SHAUN JACKSON
Staff Columnist

I’m having fun, I’m young and in my 20s and am terrified of wasting them. I am always honest when I tell girls I don’t want to be exclusive, but I usually always feel guilty after. Thoughts?

I definitely get where you’re coming from. A lot of people think the point of dating is to fall in love, and it does work like that for some people. But many people haven’t had the experiences or opportunities to fall in love, be in love or simply be loved. However, in your case, I think it’s the emotional dishonesty you originally

presented in order to have sex with them that makes you feel guilty. Which it should because, to be frank, that is a total douche move.

Thinking of confessing my feelings to a guy that has become a close friend. Good idea or bad idea?

It all depends on you. Why are you confessing? What do you want to happen when you do? If you don’t have quick and rational answers to both of these questions, it’s probably a bad idea.

My current job is a huge stressor and anxiety trigger for me. I am applying for other jobs but don’t really know the protocol. Like, do I tell my employer that I have had it and am looking for an out?

I would say continue your search, keep your head down and don’t make waves. A general rule: Never tell your current employer that you are looking for other work unless you are in a strong negotiating position for a raise or promotion. If that’s not the case, just find another job and quit.

Is it wrong to have a rebound fling to get over someone? My ex told me I wouldn’t be a “good girl” if I had sex with someone about a month after my relationship ended.

Firstly, rebound sex is only bad when you aren’t honest with your new partner. They deserve to know the dynamic of the

relationship you’re setting up as well as the fact that you are emotionally unavailable. Secondly, your ex sounds like a pathetic, vindictive and conniving man. Put him on block and enjoy the rest of your life without him in it.

I’m having trouble figuring myself out. Like, am I bi if I only sleep with women and don’t usually care for men sexually, except for fooling around with the men I’m comfortable with?

I’m gonna be honest here: it’s hard for me to tell whether you’re a predominantly homosexual woman coming to terms with heterosexual tendencies or a predominantly heterosexual man coming to terms with incidental homosexual tendencies. The great thing is that either way, it is entirely up to you whether you want to choose to identify as bisexual. You can if you want, and you don’t have to if you don’t want to. But never forget that no one else gets to decide but you.

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CT

Puzzles

For answers to this week’s puzzles, check commonwealthtimes.org/puzzles every Friday at Noon.

Los Angeles Times

Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

- ACROSS

1 Cheese companion

4 Brewery fixtures

8 Minute dispute

12 Sandal features

19 “Barefoot Contessa” cook Garten

20 Journalist Larson

21 Pro shop purchase

22 Group bar orders

23 Revenue for a monarchy?

26 Crêpe cousin

27 “My mom is gonna kill me!”

28 San Simeon family

30 Sleep ____

31 Running total

32 “The Hurt Locker” backdrop

33 Upscale automaker

35 It might be generic

38 Novelist Waugh

39 Kids nagging

44 Which one

45 Predator and Iconia computers

47 Jack Reacher creator Child

48 Dept. formed under Carter

49 Bread grain

50 Agassi rival

53 Muses’ domain

55 Massage offering

57 Important span

58 Bungalow inundated with vacationing relatives?

63 ____ column: concrete-filled steel support

64 Rope in

66 Quite a stretch

67 Freshly stained

68 Dr. Leary’s turn-on

69 Sullen

70 Old Venetian coin

72 Capital that’s home to the Potala
- 74 “This is my ____”

77 Dodge logo critter

79 Poor, as excuses go

80 Ghee-brushed bread

81 Unwitting victim

83 Puts the worm on

85 Funny BBQ scene that got cut?

88 It’s often bookmarked

89 Be there

91 Decorative jug

92 It may be lit during the holidays

94 Withdrawn

95 They may be wireless

98 Ristorante suffix

99 Links army leader

100 Loan letters

101 Unlikely winner of a trite joke contest?

104 Vicksburg soldiers

108 One of Tom Brady’s three

110 “JAG” spin-off

111 Has too much

112 Piazza De Ferrari city

113 Humorist Barry

115 Takes care of a toy?

119 “To conclude ... ”

120 Govt. water-testing sites

123 Group unhappy with election results?

125 SoCal daily

126 Pre-calc course

127 Rich deposit

128 Job ad abbr.

129 Pose a greater climbing challenge

130 “I’ll get this one”

131 Chuck

132 Chekov’s orig. “Star Trek” rank
- 2 Dog or dogie

3 It may be scented

4 WWII surrender celebration

5 2016 MLB retiree

6 Virginia senator Kaine

7 Vail toppers

8 Gp. advocating adoption

9 Substandard

10 Charity

11 Line dance step

12 On the job, initially

13 “Rebel Without a Cause” actor

14 The Bee Gees, e.g.

15 New-product div.

16 Preview from St. Peter?

17 Candy invented in Austria

18 Dallas-to-Houston dir.

24 Easy pill to swallow

25 Pianist Peter

29 Confident

32 Less favorable

34 Unpleasant noise

36 DIY mover

37 Sidestepped

39 Flung with force

40 Put on conspicuous display

41 Seedless plants

42 Green of “Robot Chicken”

43 Question doggedly

46 Shoe with lots of holes

50 Tourney ranking

51 River of Pisa

52 “You’re a big girl now”?

54 “Who cares?”

56 Roundup catcher

59 Postgame staple

60 Band aide
- 62 Area 51 creatures, it’s said

65 Doggone mad

71 Battleship letters

72 Hugh of “House”

73 “Just ____”

75 Fiend of fantasy

76 Legendary soccer star

78 “Morning Joe” network

80 Ad infinitum

82 Hatcher of “Desperate Housewives”

83 Jazz count

84 Pal of Aramis

86 Relative who shares your birthday, perhaps

87 “Hair” styles

90 Queen’s mate

93 Mother canonized by Pope Francis

96 Hammer throw trajectory

97 Impudent sort

99 Pasta water prep instruction

102 Did, but doesn’t now

103 Campus recruiting gp.

105 Dining selection

106 Balladeer Michael

107 Give the okay

109 Bush or Clinton, once

112 Rubbernecks, with “at”

114 Seductive sort

116 Struggling to decide

117 Triathlon component

118 “Picnic” playwright

119 Bygone Fords

120 2015 Payne Stewart Award honoree Ernie

121 Touch gently

122 Return ID

124 Great Lakes’ ____



Have March Madness? Compete in intramural sports! recsports.vcu.edu

Prep-Positioning by Gail Grabowski

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11		12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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Sudoku

By The Mephram Group

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Complete the grid so each row, column, and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit sudoku.org.uk

3			8		9		4	
	2			4				
	9			1			7	
	4	2				6		7
		7				8		
9		6				1	2	
	7			2			6	
				5			9	
	8		7		6			3

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Pwatem