

TEENS **in** PRINT BOSTON

BOSTON TEENS IN PRINT SEPT/OCT 2009™

Going Bi

**Is their new flirtation
with bisexuality
a chance for teens to
really express themselves
– or to just look trendy?**

By Milanes Morejon // Staff Writer

Typical Scene: The bell rings. Students scatter to their next classes. Some are shoving books and papers into their lockers. Others wave goodbye to their teachers. Then, there is that one girl leaning towards another girl for a kiss. Something's going on here. Is this a newfound display of true bisexuality? Or just a chance to look hip?

Lately, teens are saying that "being bi" has become the newest trend.

"In our generation people are willing to try anything that

is different," says Luis Sanchez, 19, from Brighton.

In several Boston Public Schools, teens say students have been finding it hard to ignore the girls they see kissing by the lockers, and the "Did you hear this girl is bisexual?" stories.

Many teens believe that the media has influenced the youth of today. Sensational pop singer Katy Perry captured the attention of many when she debuted her song, "I Kissed a Girl," which became a worldwide hit. Some of the lyrics such as, "I kissed a girl and I liked it," dived into the ears of teens, arousing many mixed reactions.

"It could make you curious about kissing a girl, and bring you face-to-face with a temptation you wouldn't have dealt with otherwise," wrote one woman in a web article entitled, "I like 'I Kissed a Girl,' So What?"

While some teens were only tapping their feet to the beat of this catchy song, Stephanie Robinson, 19, of Boston, analyzed the lyrics, too, on behalf of her bisexual community.

"She broke a barrier," Robinson says of Perry. "Whether she's bisexual or not, it's the bisexual anthem."

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▲ Sneakers by Mary Nguyen.
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photo by Julia Morgan, photo by
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TEENS IN PRINT

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Along with music, MTV reality shows such as Tila Tequila's "A Shot at Love" and the Ikki twin's "A Double Shot at Love," have sent the message that not only is it OK to be bisexual, but that it is also cool. The media has portrayed bisexuality as the newest thing by having gorgeous women on these shows making out with both women and men on people's TV screens.

Just as "mulattos" lie in between the lines of black and white, those who identify themselves as bisexuals lie between the lines of heterosexuality and homosexuality.

People who identify themselves as bisexuals have "the capacity to be romantically and/or sexually attracted to individuals of more than one sex," wrote Robyn Ochs of Jamaica Plain, an activist for the bisexual community and

"Always remember to
be true to yourself.
No one else has the
right to **define you**
or tell you what to do."

— Robyn Ochs, activist for
the bisexual community

munity, but also the bisexual one.

"It's on the cultural menu now," says Ochs, making it a topic that more people are open to talk about.

Some experts say that due to the amount of support available nowadays, teens are more willing to uncover their true identities.

"Teens feel more comfortable and explore or experiment more than before," says Manou Joassaint, the health coordinator at Boston GLASS, a support group for young people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or questioning their gender or sexual orientation.

But with more openness also comes a backlash of harsh rejection.

"Harassment is still a problem in every school district in metro Boston and it hasn't necessarily stopped," says



▲ AFH photo by Ping Zeng

editor of the Bisexual Resource Guide, and Getting Bi, in an essay entitled "Bisexuality."

There is a difference, though, between bisexual behavior and bisexual identity, which is something many teens struggle to understand. Though people may choose to have physical encounters with people of the same and opposite sex, they won't necessarily see themselves as being bisexual. In short, behavior does not determine one's sexuality.

"It's not about what I'm doing," says Ochs. "It's about what I am."

While engaging in bisexual behavior can attract attention, for some it can also be a turn-off.

"It's a way to turn guys on at a party, leaving the real bisexual people looking bad and...confused," says Bruna Lopez, 20, of Somerville, who identifies herself as a lesbian.

Some don't mind the blatant flirtation with bisexuality.

"I think it's OK to experiment; I didn't have to experiment to figure out what I was," says Robinson.

Others say it's one thing to explore bisexuality because you want to find your true self, and quite another to do it to be trendy.

"It's a problem if you're fake, but not if you really are bisexual," says Roeum Bau, 17, of Brighton.

Today, society is acknowledging not only the gay com-

Jessica Flaherty, program director at the Boston Alliance of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Youth (BAGLY). "It is difficult to be a young person and know that most of the world has a heterosexual frame to it....Young people who feel different, feel very, very different."

Bisexual boys seem to have it worse than girls because, as Ochs puts it, "Girls have a much longer leash," when it comes to sexual identity and acceptance.

Still, whether teens are making out in the hallways with someone of the same sex, or truly coming out as bisexuals, Ochs has a message for them.

"Always remember to be true to yourself," she says. "No one else has the right to define you or tell you what to do." ■

Engineering a bright future

One teen's guide to success

By Joshua Donald // Staff Writer

Are teens letting their communities determine their fates, rather than taking advantage of their lives and fulfilling their passions? Life will be hard if you sit around and let it be hard; life can be easy only if you make it easy. I usually ask other teens what they want to do in life; a typical response is: "I don't know."

All I know is that I'm one of those teens actively trying to fulfill a dream rather than accept failure. Teens are making excuses for their inability to succeed, but just because they grew up in violent neighborhoods isn't an excuse. You must make your own success.

My father used to fix cars, and I loved to watch him work. He could change just a few things and make them run. He could build an engine from scratch. But he didn't have time to teach me how to repair cars. So I started fixing things on my own. Around the house, when my father wasn't home, I would fix the handles on the drawers and the broken door knobs. When my mother noticed I had the same ambition as my father for fixing cars, she didn't want me to work around all those chemicals. "Do something in an office," she said. "Wear a shirt and tie."

In eighth grade, I began practicing drawing and got really into it. Then when I found out that the Engineering School in Hyde Park offered programs like architecture, I gladly joined. Freshman year, it had a class called Principles of Engineering that allowed

me to learn different aspects in the field, like civil, mechanical, architectural, interior, and environmental.

The next year I did the Boston Architectural College (BAC) Summer Academy. This program let me get hands-on experience in architecture, urban and interior design, and landscaping. I did the BAC for two summers, the first as a student learning about different areas of designing, the second year as a mentor to other high school students.

After BAC, I joined another program called the Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE) Mentor Program. This allowed me to talk to real-life engineers, architects, and construction workers who came into the program once a week. This fall, I plan on taking a class in architecture at the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology.

I'm only 18, but I'm already on the verge of my success, while some teens I've met haven't realized their passions and set their goals. As the famous United Negro College Fund slogan goes, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste."

But some of our inner-city youth are doing this, wasting their minds, time, and life trying to be other people rather than themselves, and not putting in the effort to succeed in this world. Adults always tell me that the only person who can stop you from succeeding is yourself. So, if I'm willing to challenge myself to succeed every single day of my life, why can't other teens do the same? ■



▲ AFH photo by Haidan Hodgson



▲ AFH photo

A young man – not the author – ponders his tomorrows.

Sex! Sex! Sex! Sex! Sex!

(Um, made y'all look)

By Tyahra Angus // Staff Writer

A woman – a smile carefully placed on her face, carefree and euphoric, her hair animated, scattered haphazardly in excitement – is wearing a bikini, her legs and arms wrapped around the man who is holding her up out of the water. He is sturdy, standing in an undershirt, and has a smile on his face that says he is without a care in the world. He is holding her up in a playful exploit as if she were a cloud. A nearby slogan says, “PURSUE YOUR DAYDREAMS.” Below that is a bottle of Jose Cuervo Especial alcohol.

The presence of sex in advertisements has increased over the years because of the need to attract customers, young, old, and of every race. To do this, advertising and marketing employees for companies have to find something that all of these groups have in common with each other. Sports? Arts? Those things seem to only attract certain groups of people, so they focus on something that EVERYONE is expected to take part in at least once in their lives. Sex.

Does sex actually sell? The majority of Boston teens included in this survey said yes it does, and probably always will. Among the 25 random teens, female and male, ages 15 to 18, who attend Boston Latin Academy and were included in this Teens in Print report, 22 of them said that sexy ads do help sell products.

Morgan Anderson, 15, said: “You automatically think if sexy people wear it, the product will make you sexy and cool.” Meghan Walsh, 17, said, “Who doesn’t like sex? People want to have it.”

The other three teens included in this study said that the sexiness of the advertisement doesn’t matter when it comes to buying things. For example, Sebastian Rodriguez, 15, said, “You wanna look at the girl, but you shouldn’t just for the product.”

Teens said that products using these types of sexy advertisements are as follows: perfume and cologne, clothes, alcohol and cigarettes, condoms, diet pills, lingerie, and even television shows. Anderson said that sexy ads, “probably attracted me to Victoria’s Secret, Hollister, and Abercrombie... like of half-naked people.”

Jean Kilbourne, an expert on advertisements and the role women play in them, said in a lecture, “The ads, as you know, are everywhere. They’re on radio, television, newspaper, magazine, billboards, bumper stickers... and at the same time, everyone in America still feels personally exempt from the influence of advertising.... To a great extent ads tell us who we are and who we should be.... The advertiser is the real pornographer... there is no



▲ AFH photo

emphasis on relationship or on intimacy... pornography has become mainstream.”

We, as humans, are attracted to attractiveness. A psychologist named Abraham Maslow created the Hierarchy of Needs, which is a source that companies can target to get more customers. The levels of the pyramid are as follows:

- 1) Physiological**
(food, water, survival, air, sex).
- 2) Security**
(employment, shelter, safety).
- 3) Social**
(belonging, affection, love, friendship, romantic attachment).
- 4) Esteem**
(personal worth, achievements).
- 5) Self-actualization**
(morality, personal growth, fulfillment).

Look around as you walk in your neighborhood, through the streets, malls, and restaurants, and you will notice what people like me did. The world, no matter where you go, is covered in advertisements. Even the clothes you wear are branded with labels and slogans helping companies sell their products. T-shirts that say GAP, jeans that scream APPLE BOTTOMS, and sneakers that promote NIKE are types of subliminal messaging that are right in your face. Maybe you think you are able to escape the advertisements because you are an individual, unique. Nobody is. We are all human, but we have the ability to choose what we do. Advertisers can only influence us to a certain point before it becomes domineering. We have to become more aware and observant of what advertisers are trying to sell us and determine whether it is for our benefit or for theirs – see need number 5. ■

For more cool stuff,
please visit our website at
www.bostontip.com

Food for thought

Green teens spread the word about eating right

By Akshat Pandey // Staff Writer

7 -Eleven, CVS, and McDonald's: One of them is a convenience store, one is a pharmacy, and one is a fast food restaurant.

But if you ask teens in Boston what those three places mean to them, you'll get one common answer: food. For teens, convenience has become one of the biggest factors in deciding where to eat their next meal. Common sense says that what's cheapest isn't always what's best, but often, due to lack of funds, Boston youth will eat, for lack of a better word, junk.

But despite the ignorance of the larger population, some teens are beginning to learn the physical benefits, and, yes, good taste, of eating healthy. At three Dorchester locations – the ReVision Urban Farm, a single acre spread across three lots; the Fields Corner Farmer's Market; and the Codman Square Farmer's Market – teens this summer were found learning not only how to grow and sell fresh produce, but also how to build a healthy diet that will serve them for their whole lives.

Nicole Blount, from Burke High School, and Ashley Shauna Deleon, from Boston Latin, are two 17-year-olds who worked at the Codman Square Farmer's Market, where they reaped the benefits of eating freshly grown produce. "I've stopped going to McDonald's," says Blount. "For a snack, I have my mom buy blueberries, and peaches, and other fruit."

The alternative to that is a lot of fat and calories, making it a perfect recipe for heart disease and diabetes, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Harvard School of Public Health reports that heart disease is the number one killer of men and women in the U.S.

As a result of the giant "green" movement, a lot more research has been revealed. According to the Princeton University website, the lack of pesticides in organic foods makes them both safer and more nutritious to eat, while simultaneously helping the environment.

Now, teens are spreading the word about the virtues of nutritional food. "It's good for you, and it's good to not eat junk food all the



▲ AFH photo by Darren Hicks

time," says Treyvon Clegg, a 15-year-old from Mattapan who worked at both the ReVision Urban Farm and the Fields Corner Farmer's Market.

Clegg says he is trying to change the eating habits of a friend who doesn't like fruits and vegetables. "I say, 'You should eat healthy,'" says Clegg. "Of course junk food is good, but it's not good for you....Yeah, before I never used to eat vegetables, but now I do. I've learned fresh vegetables taste good, too."

But often, the problem with healthy foods isn't even their taste or price, but their general availability. In some neighborhoods, supermarkets – let alone farm stands – are scarce. Clegg, who has often seen people choose the convenience store to shop, says, "There should be more farms in the community, not just corner stores."

While it's impossible to keep people from going to McDonald's or Burger King, some teens say others should stop and think about what they're putting into their bodies. Deleon says that working at a farmer's market has opened her eyes to the food she's eating. "Now that I have this experience, I'm more open, and more wary, of fast food chains," she says. "Like sometimes, I'll think, 'What does KFC or McDonald's put into their stuff?'" ■



▲ AFH photo by Mary Nguyen



▲ AFH photo by Darren Hicks

Summer T.i.P.sters down on the urban farm, learning about fresh fruits and veggies.

Confessions of a teenage newspaperwoman

By Kadineyse Ramize // Contributing Writer

As a journalist, Caroline Knapp was the rare observer who captured the essence of the culture at large by painfully peering into her own life. When she died in 2002, her uncle established the Caroline Knapp Journalism Internship – administered by WriteBoston, one of T.I.P.'s partners – so that Boston teenagers could help keep that intrepid spirit alive through their unique lenses. This summer, four Boston Public High School students experienced newspapering first-hand by working at The Boston Globe (another T.I.P. partner), The Boston Herald, and the Jamaica Plain Gazette. Here are one young person's recollections of her summer as a member of that special fraternity of wordsmiths.

The Jamaica Plain Gazette is like no other newspaper I have ever known. It has a fantastic staff, and the fact that the Gazette is a community paper makes every experience that much better.

This internship was my first job, and I couldn't have asked for a better one. But this being my first job also made everything a lot more nerve-racking. I didn't exactly know what to expect. As the days progressed, I learned a lot of things, both newspaper-wise and writing-wise.

Newspaper terms, how to write a newspaper piece, and organization of the story

– these were just a few of the skills I was taught.

I also picked up some tips about interviewing people. Calling all of the resources listed in the newspaper and checking for

thing. I appreciate that task because it made me a better interviewer and speaker over the phone.

I had the chance to interview everyone from the director of the Franklin

that I most loved. We would have lunch, and talk about our expectations and accomplishments. We would walk around and observe each other's workplace. We compared the differences in working for a daily newspaper versus a community one.

There was so much to cherish from this summer: I met reporters, authors, neighbors, and plenty of other really cool people. I've had my name published in the newspaper, but I contributed something much bigger than for myself.

That is what working at a newspaper is all about, writing great stories for the population to enjoy. Having your name known is just an extra boost. ■

“I learned a lot of things, both newspaper-wise and writing-wise.”

changes was a big challenge. Sometimes I got transferred to places that had nothing to do with what I was looking for. But I wouldn't trade that experience for any-

Park Coalition to the group leader of the Jamaica Plain Running Club.

Visiting the other Knapp interns at their newspapers was one of the experiences

Violence puts a chill on chillin'

By Rodline Pierre // Staff Writer

Ebony Williams, 16, says her parents want her to stay inside, but that drives her crazy.

“You can't stay inside forever,” says Williams, who lives in Mattapan.

This summer, many kids are concerned about safety instead of going out to have fun. Some teens in Boston are spending more time playing video games and browsing the Internet than hitting the outdoors with friends. This is because, on a daily basis, they are concerned about what's going down on the streets.

Boston youths still remember: Two

years ago, 13-year-old Steven Odom of Dorchester was killed on his way home from playing basketball with friends.

“Teen safety is as equal as anybody's safety,” says Williams. “A bullet doesn't have a name.”

Williams recalls an incident from spring, a hot day when many youths headed to cool off at Revere Beach. “It was there a boy was stabbed in the head,” she says. “This affected me because, ‘What if it was my brother?’ I would go crazy! I can only imagine how the mom feels.”

Although teens are having fun inside, they are also sad about the outdoor activi-

ties they are without, such as riding their bikes.

Teens in Boston are concerned about the future of their neighborhoods.

“Every community isn't safe, but I believe that people can make it safer,” says Williams.

Even staying inside, though, doesn't guarantee total safety. In July, a 12-year-old Dorchester girl was shot in the leg while watching television at home.

Teens can be safe by not going out late or by themselves; by protecting themselves from danger; and by always being aware of their surroundings. ■



▲ AFH photo by Mary Nguyen

“Oh, he’s so gay!”

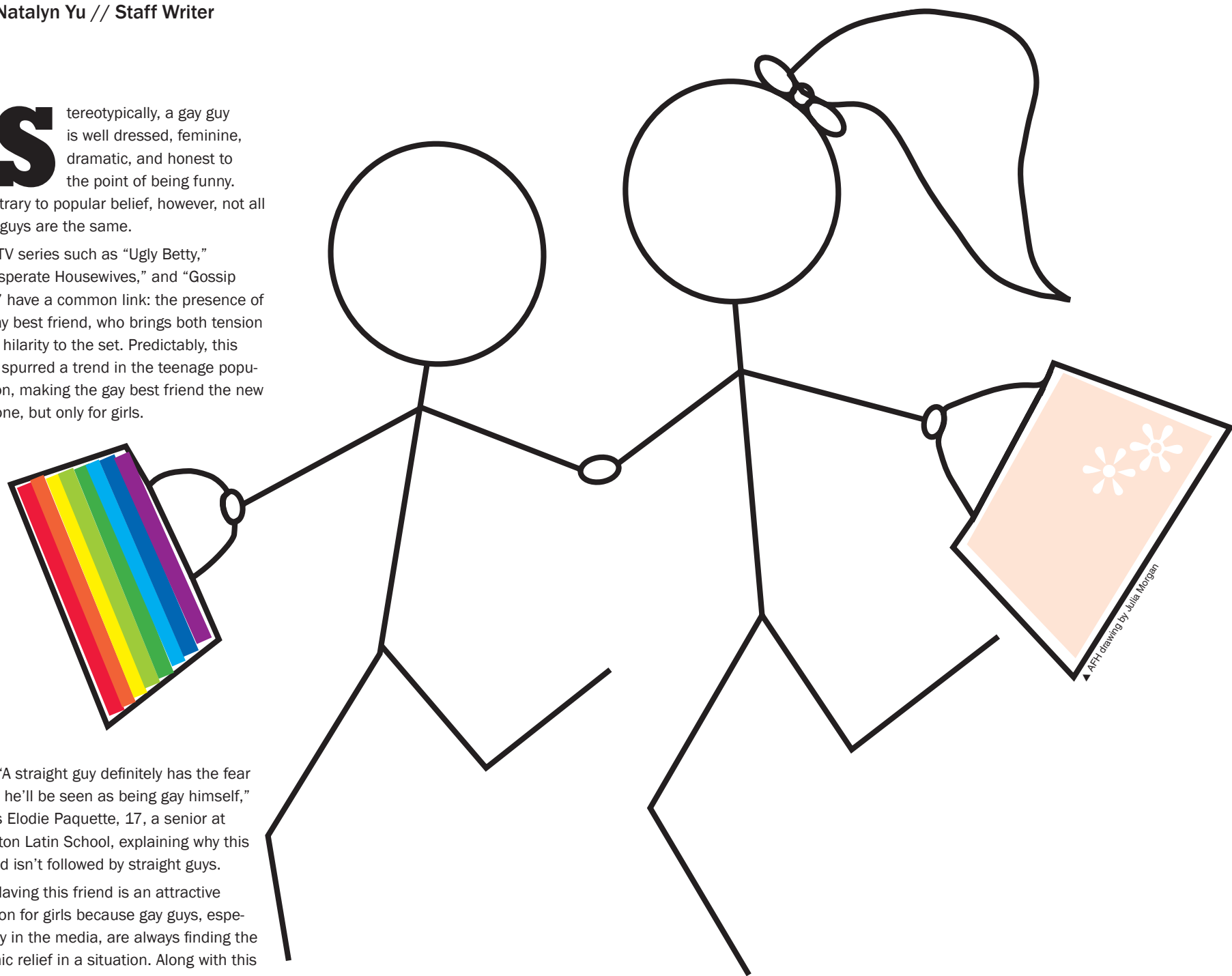
“Yeah – and he’s my BFF!”

By Natalyn Yu // Staff Writer

Stereotypically, a gay guy is well dressed, feminine, dramatic, and honest to the point of being funny.

Contrary to popular belief, however, not all gay guys are the same.

TV series such as “Ugly Betty,” “Desperate Housewives,” and “Gossip Girl” have a common link: the presence of a gay best friend, who brings both tension and hilarity to the set. Predictably, this has spurred a trend in the teenage population, making the gay best friend the new iPhone, but only for girls.



“A straight guy definitely has the fear that he’ll be seen as being gay himself,” says Elodie Paquette, 17, a senior at Boston Latin School, explaining why this trend isn’t followed by straight guys.

Having this friend is an attractive option for girls because gay guys, especially in the media, are always finding the comic relief in a situation. Along with this is the notion that there will be less competition between these friends, because of their different sexual preferences.

Also, with a gay best friend, girls can be assured that the guy wants a genuine friendship, not a hookup.

“People often criticize and outcast a gay guy because of his sexual orientation. A gay guy understands a girl’s feelings because they experience a lot of

emotional stuff,” says Yanyi Weng, 17, of Boston Latin Academy, who is talking from secondhand experience.

Lily Burger knows of teens who are best friends with gay guys so they’ll be something like the girls’ mascot, to go shopping with, and to choose outfits together.

However, the friendship Burger has with her best friend is different. “His being gay is definitely not the ‘appeal’ of our friendship,” says Burger, 16, of Boston Latin School. “We’re friends because we have the same interests. We just understand each other really well.”

Is there anyone who really wants to be someone’s mascot? A gay teen from Jamaica Plain, who did not want to be named, answers emphatically: “I wouldn’t want to be a girl’s friend if they just wanted to use me,” he says. “That wouldn’t be fair.” ■

No rush to find your crush

By Cheila Martinez // Staff Writer

You see him or her walking down the hallway. You've got the butterflies that never leave your tummy when that special someone is around. And all you can think about is whether that person is into you as much as you're into him or her. Which leads to this question "Are you compatible with your crush or not?"

Whether it's your zodiac sign or it's just an attraction, there are many ways to find out whether or not you are compatible with that special someone. Sometimes all you need to have are common interests with someone and then let nature take its course. For all you impatient lovers: If your crush is as shy as you are, you'll be waiting forever for him or her to make the first move. You need to be the master of your own relationship. Don't be afraid: the worst your crush could do is say no.

To know if you and your crush share common ground, the two of you must, according to therelationshipgym.com, have the required chemistry it takes to maintain a steady relationship; be able to make changes in the relationship without absolutely changing yourselves; both feel the same way about each other; and be positive about your feelings.

"When that someone makes you feel special and no one can give you that same special feeling," is how Taylor Martin, 15, from O' Bryant High School, describes the sense of finding that match.

"You know when you're compatible when you can open up to that one person and tell them all your personal feelings and you know that you could confide in them for all your needs, mentally and physically," says Devante Monroe, 15, of the Hyde Park Education Complex. "I feel happy and great to be alive when that true person is by my side."

So how do you know when you're in a bad relationship? "The first sign of being in a wrong relationship would be physical, emotional, or verbal abuse," says Peter Nguyen, 16, from the O' Bryant.

You should feel secure and safe in your relationship, not scared and vulnerable. According to therelationshipgym.com "If



"When that someone makes you feel special and no one can give you that same special feeling."

—Taylor Martin, 15, from O' Bryant High School

you choose to stay, you know why you are staying and you're much more committed. If you've chosen to go, then it's because you've tried everything and it's time to say goodbye."

Not all relationships will last forever. But when you find your special someone, it may be your crush or not, but don't be disappointed. Good things always come to those who wait. ■

▲ AFH photo by Mary Nguyen

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Dreams Deferred

College-bound teens waylaid by economic crisis

By Anumita Das // Staff Writer

Patricia Hooper, 18, of West Roxbury, had her heart set on attending Barnard College. Barnard offered the charm of a small school, but provided the great research facilities of Columbia University, its affiliate, not to mention the university's diploma. Having graduated from Boston Latin School this spring, Hooper took multiple AP and honors courses in high school and had an outstanding 3.83 GPA. She was the captain of the school swim team and was active in student government. She presented the whole package. Patricia Hooper was even accepted to her dream school. However, Hooper will not be going to prestigious Barnard College.

Our current economic crisis has forced her to change direction: The falling stock market raged through the small college fund set aside for her by her grandfather, simply not leaving enough to face the projected \$53,480 annual cost for attending Barnard for a Boston resident.

"My number one choice, Barnard College, provided so little aid that if I had attended, I would have been over \$100,000 in debt when I graduated," Hooper says.

These are the realities of an economic recession. President Barack Obama issued bailouts, banks filed for bankruptcy, companies closed, parents got laid off.

However, not only does it affect the careers of adults, but it also impacts us, the teens of Boston – especially the incoming seniors preparing themselves for the rigorous college application process.

When choosing the perfect college, one major item taken into account is the cost. With the economic crisis, it has gotten increasingly more difficult for households to deal with the financial burden.

Now, teens are revising their college plans. Although accepted to Barnard, Hooper decided to attend Commonwealth College, a very competitive honors program at UMass/Amherst, after, she says, she received a scholarship that will relieve her of paying the approximately \$12,000 tuition fee out of the estimated \$20,000 total in-state cost of attending UMass.

"I'm really happy with the decision I made because I will be stress-free," Hooper says. "I didn't want the doom of loans to loom over my college experience."

Like Hooper, many students across America are considering state schools rather than private colleges for the lower cost. There is definitely an advantage in going to a private school because of the individual attention and the prestige, but ultimately, as Hooper says, "It's more what you do, than where you go."

Hooper admits that her experience at UMass will be distinct from Barnard, but she is confident that she will still get a good education.

John Travers, Director of School Counseling at Brighton High School, has a similar ideal. He says, "Any college will

get you the education you need, but it depends on the individual and how you present yourself."

Patrick Mendes, 17, an incoming senior at Brighton High School, confronts a situation similar to Hooper's. Mendes aspires to attend top institutions such as Harvard and MIT, and would like to study business and zoology to eventually become the CEO of a company. Although ranked fourth at his school for his 4.64 GPA in his junior year, and working at Harvard Medical School in the program, Project Success, he worries about his future because of the declining economy. As discouraging as it may be, Mendes says that the economic crisis has motivated him to study more diligently in school and strive for success.

"Now, I always say. 'If the sky is the limit, why not reach further,'" Mendes says. "Every challenge is a

step forward."

Mendes believes that this motivation will compel him to succeed through the financial crisis. He realizes that with the current economic crisis, he must study harder than ever to obtain scholarships, because he does not want to have any loans while he is in college.

"I don't want any weight on my shoulders," he says. "I just want to focus on school."

Ultimately, when it comes to choosing the right school, the most important factor may well be happiness.

To Mendes, happiness is attending his dream college at Harvard. To Hooper, it is attending UMass/Amherst without the burden of loans darkening her college experience. To others, it may be attending their top college even with the financial load. As Hooper says, "You can never put a price on happiness." ■

College Prep

For those teens concerned that the current economic crisis might derail their college dreams, here is some advice to help stay on track:

(1) It's never too early to start preparing.

Start familiarizing yourself with the college application process in the early years of high school.

(2) Utilize the resources around you, especially your guidance counselor.

Keep your eyes and ears open for seminars about financial aid, college preparation, and anything else that may be on your mind.

(3) Apply to as many scholarships as you can in the beginning, especially smaller ones.

Although you may need to write more essays when applying for smaller scholarships, they can accumulate and be very beneficial. Just because a college accepts you does not mean that it will necessarily pay your way.

(4) Clarify the definition of "cost" for each individual college.

There are scholarships that cover college tuition. However, many colleges have other fees in addition to the tuition, such as room and board, that are quite expensive as well.

(5) Don't let the cost deter you from applying to a college.

It is important to first find a place that is academically suitable for you, and that provides the ideal student life. Although you may hear that a certain college is very expensive, it may still be an affordable option with academic scholarships and financial aid.

(6) You can't put a price tag on happiness.

Whether it means you are at your dream college, but have many loans, or at a state school, with a full scholarship, make sure you are happy. College is one of the greatest experiences of your life.

Sources:

College freshman Patricia Hooper, 18, of West Roxbury; John Travers, Director of School Counseling at Brighton High School; Patrick J. Callahan, a UMass/Amherst spokesman; and Tony Erwin, Senior Director for University Financial Aid and Scholarships at Northeastern University.

From high school to med school: paging Dr. Rocha!

By Melissa Rodriguez // Staff Writer

She was once homeless. Now she dreams of becoming a doctor, and, through a special program, has already been accepted to medical school – as a teenager.

Melissa Rocha, 18, just graduated from Health Careers Academy public school in the Fenway as valedictorian of her class, and will be HCA's first medical student.

Being a doctor has been a goal for Rocha since the seventh grade.

"Nothing intrigues me like medicine," says Rocha.

Although she has achieved a tremendous amount of success, Rocha has gone through some glitches on her journey. Around the age of 13, Rocha was homeless with her mother and younger brother. Due to the separation of her parents and her father's abrupt move back to Cape Verde, Rocha's mom could not keep up with the bills and the rent. Her family was homeless for about a year and lived in a shelter. But Rocha says the experience did not bring her down; it motivated her to succeed more. "It opened my eyes," she says.

Rocha's mom was working and saving money and after a year was able to find a home for the family.

Rocha participated in the Student Success Jobs Program at Brigham and Women's Hospital. She was in it throughout her high school career and was heavily

exposed to different medical cases. In her senior year of high school, she was moved to the burn trauma unit.

"I always wanted to work in the burn trauma unit," she says. "I had to work my way to get there."

Rocha recalls an intense experience she had while in the unit. A woman who was a Jehovah's Witness had been in a serious car accident, and to save her life she needed a blood transfusion. Due to the woman's religion, this was not going to be possible, and she continually rejected the transfusion. For Rocha, the episode was frustrating.

"All you want to do as a doctor is help the person," she says.

Fortunately, the woman survived.

Rocha is enrolled in the University of Rochester's Early Medical Scholars program, which runs for eight years and includes a bachelor's degree followed by a medical degree.

According to Jonathan Burdick, Rochester's Dean of



Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid, the program is highly competitive: The admissions office, he says, receives 800 to 1,000 applications a year. From those, they choose 50 students to be interviewed; from those, they pick 10 who are accepted.

Nationwide, by one account, there are more than 70 similar high-school-to-med-school arrangements.

According to enrollment.rochester.edu, students typically must have a GPA of 3.95 or higher to be accepted into the program. Rocha had a 4.42 GPA. They also have to be in the top three percent of their graduating class, and have significant experience in the medical field.

Rocha's other interests have included some modeling when she was six or seven years old, but her mother says she never stopped talking about becoming a doctor. "I would love to work for [fashion designer] Marc Jacobs, but I wouldn't give up medicine for anything," says Rocha.

As Rocha embarks on her college career, her advice to high school students is this: "Find something that you're passionate about and nothing will get in your way." ■

BSAC BUZZ

By Raychel Wingert // Contributing Writer

Hey everyone! My name is Raychel Wingert, and I have been elected the new T.i.P. writer at BSAC (Boston Student Advisory Council) for this upcoming school year. I am in tenth grade at Boston Latin Academy.

Sadly, our summer has ended, and school has started. However, this also means we have a chance to jump on all the new and exciting activities we have planned for BSAC this year! BSAC is a place where students from all different high schools in the Boston Public School system meet and have a voice on what is going on.

Last year, our main goals were on the budget cuts, student-to-teacher constructive feedback, and the Boston Public Schools Code of Discipline.

Each one of us had a voice on what we thought about each subject, and we were also able to attend rallies to

get our ideas heard even more!

For the budget cuts, we talked about how we felt and how the problem should be resolved. The school system wanted to cut our art classes and other electives that had a great deal of importance to us. We fought against it by calling politicians, attending boycotts, writing letters.

Another issue was teacher evaluations. This project was set up to let students have a say in their teachers' performances. It is an appropriate area because teachers are always judging their students, as in the "conduct" and "effort" portions of their grades. The BSAC students made a survey, asking questions such as, "Do you understand the material your teacher goes over in class with you?" and "Are your questions answered in a way that help you understand better?" Also, "Do you feel comfortable talking to your teacher?" With the anonymous results, headmas-

ters can discuss improvements with their teachers.

Lastly, we were part of the review process for the Boston Public Schools Code of Discipline.

This year, we will continue to work on those goals, such as making sure the budget cuts don't get out of hand. Also, we are still working on the student-to-teacher constructive feedback so that students are getting all they can from their educations. In addition, we are exploring many other possible projects for the school year.

Being a part of BSAC is a great opportunity to let your voices be heard on things that affect you, your friends, and your education.

If you are interested in joining BSAC, or getting more information about our work, please contact Maria I. Ortiz at mortiz@boston.k12.ma.us or at 617-635-8079 ext 104. ■



TYAHRA ANGUS
Favorite song before your time:
 “Three Little Birds” -- Bob Marley
Most recently purchased sneakers:
 Converse pink plaid -- my 14th pair
Dream career: Write for Cosmopolitan
Who would play you in a movie?
 Keke Palmer if she gained 30 lbs.



ASHLEY BARKER
Favorite song before your time:
 “Pump Me Up” -- Krosfyah
Dream career: Pediatrician
Who would be your mascot?
 Fred Flintstone or Barney Rubble
How many pairs of skinny jeans do you own? Three



SHANASIA BENNETT
Favorite song before your time:
 “I’m Going Down” -- Mary J. Blige
Best spot for a tattoo: Upper Back
Dream career:
 Journalist/author
Who would play you in a movie?
 Keke Palmer



LADONYA BUCHANAN
Favorite song before your time:
 “Teacher” -- George Michael or
 “Sweetest Taboo” -- Sade
Dream career: Psychiatrist
Who would be your mascot?
 SpongeBob SquarePants
Who would play you in a movie?
 Taraji P. Henson



ANUMITA DAS
Favorite song before your time:
 “My Heart Will Go On” -- Celine Dion
Nickname: Numi
Dream career: Doctor/journalist/lawyer/dancer
Who would play you in a movie?
 No one can play me in a movie;
 I’m just too awesome...duh



JOSHUA DONALD
Favorite song before your time:
 “I Like the Way (The Kissing Game)” -- Hi-Five
Best spot for a tattoo:
 Right Arm
Dream career: Architect
How many pairs of skinny jeans do you own? None!!!!



NENETTE ELIE
Nickname: Tinker
Most recently purchased sneakers:
 Converse (Chucks)
Dream career:
 Choreographer
Who would play you in a movie?
 Takara (America’s Next Top Model)



SANDY GERMAIN
Favorite song before your time:
 “Let’s Talk About Love” -- Celine Dion
Nickname: Spicy Angel
Dream career:
 Pediatrician
Who would play you in a movie?
 Angelina Jolie

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KYSHAWN HILL
Favorite song before your time:
"Pretty Young Thing" -- Michael Jackson
Nickname:
Toni Boston/Ky Boi/Daddy/Cutie
Dream career: Too hot for TV
Who would play you in a movie?
Tupac Shakur if he were still alive



SHANTEANA SAMUELS
Nickname: Tiggy
Dream career:
Nurse
How many pairs of skinny jeans
do you own? Nine
Who would play you in a movie?
Gabrielle Union

KATRYNA MAHONEY
Favorite song before your time:
All of Bob Marley's songs
Most recently purchased sneakers:
I don't purchase sneakers
Who would be your mascot?
A lion; it's fierce
Who would play you in a movie?
Angelina Jolie



SANDRA SEMEXANT
Favorite song before your time:
"Very Special" -- Big Daddy Kane & Spinderella
Dream career: Lawyer
Who would be your mascot?
Gir from "Invader Zim"
How many pairs of skinny jeans do you own?
Skinny jeans ain't for me

CHEILA MARTINEZ
Favorite song before your time:
"I Will Survive" -- Gloria Gaynor
Most recently purchased sneakers:
More of a high-heels girl
Dream career: Singer/songwriter
Who would play you in a movie?
Jessica Alba



DAJA TAYLOR
Nickname: Dae Dae
Best spot for a tattoo:
Upper back
Dream career:
Writer for Rolling Stone
Who would be your mascot?
A panda

MILANES MOREJON
Favorite song before your time:
"Golden Girls" theme song
Best spot for a tattoo: Tattoo Party
Dream career:
Some kind of lawyer
Who would play you in a movie?
Cassie Steele (Manny Santos from Degrassi)



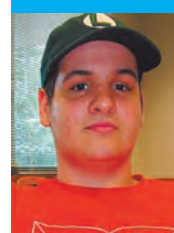
PRISCA VILJEAN
Favorite song before your time:
"If You Asked Me To" -- Celine Dion
Nickname: Black Queen
Dream career:
Pharmacist
Who would play you in a movie?
Beyonce

AKSHAT PANDEY
Favorite song before your time:
"Pusherman" -- Curtis Mayfield
Most recently purchased sneakers:
ASICS
Dream career: In a touring band
Who would play you in a movie?
Al Pacino



GABRIEL WARD
Favorite song before your time:
"Old Time Rock and Roll" -- Bob Seger
Nickname: Waffles
Best spot for a tattoo:
The wing span of an eagle, gracefully
across my back
How many pairs of skinny jeans
do you own? Over 9,000!!!!

RODLINE PIERRE
Favorite song before your time:
"Thriller" -- Michael Jackson;
"Hello" -- Lionel Richie
Best spot for a tattoo: Nowhere!!!!
Dream career: Child psychologist
Who would play you in a movie?
Queen Latifah or Jennifer Hudson



TREVOR WARD
Favorite song before your time:
"Octopus's Garden" -- the Beatles.
Nickname: Luigi
Dream career:
Artist at Pokémon USA
Who would be your mascot?
Kirby

NECOLETTE PRATT
Favorite song before your time:
"Candy Rain" -- Soul for Real
Best spot for a tattoo: Wrist
Dream career:
Veterinarian
Who would be your mascot?
Chowder/Flapjack/Ed



NATALYN YU
Favorite song before your time:
"Twist and Shout" -- the Beatles
Most recently purchased sneakers:
EcoSNEAKS
Who would be your mascot? A lion
How many pairs of skinny jeans
do you own? Four

MELISSA RODRIQUEZ
Favorite song before your time:
"Livin' on a Prayer" -- Bon Jovi
Dream career: Pediatrician
Who would be your mascot?
Edward Cullen (smiles)
Who would play you in a movie?
America Ferrera



**For more
sweet stories,
please read on.....**

A teen talk with Shepard Fairey

How he went from street artist to iconic superstar

By Milanes Morejon // Staff Writer

From sneaking into back alleys to having his artwork on display in various museums, it is safe to say that Shepard Fairey has come a long way. Influenced by punk rock music, Fairey emerged from the skateboarding scene to become the well-known street artist responsible for the Obama HOPE and PROGRESS posters.

With anti-war messages and propaganda incorporated into most of his artwork, Fairey manages to use his own language and sense of style to express his own ideology about things. Widely known artists such as Tupac, Biggie, Flavor Flav, LL Cool J and Bob Marley are all part of the exceptional portrait collection that Fairey created. Although his record may not be as clean as the work he puts on display – he has been charged with vandalism numerous times – Fairey credits his success to the people who support him, “There is the old school that doesn’t like what I’m doing, but there are a lot of younger people that are inspired by it. That makes me happy and keeps me motivated,” says Fairey.

Whether people consider his artwork as being strikingly offensive or particularly amusing, Fairey continues to spread his collages, portraits and stenciled creations all over the world. With over 200 of his works put on view at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in Boston, Fairey appeared this summer at the museum and gave a group of Boston Public High School students – including representatives from T.i.P. – the opportunity to ask some questions.



▲ AFH photo by Mary Nguyen

How do you feel about people who think of you as a graffiti artist?

I think that graffiti very literally translated is images and words on walls and other public spaces and I think that it’s OK, you can call me that (ha-ha). I do that. But graffiti for some people...it’s going to have a negative connotation in that graffiti artists are anarchists who don’t care about being a positive part of society, and I would take issue with that definition in general. But, also very specifically for me, I do what I do as an artist to be a populist. I put my work in public spaces not to say ‘Screw you, I do what I want wherever I want,’ but to say that there is room for more expression in public space than just advertising. We all as taxpayers own a little bit of the public space and should be able to have a voice in public space. It shouldn’t just be for corporations and the government.

On average, how long does it take to make one piece of artwork?

Anywhere from a day to a month.

When people insult your art, do you just brush it off?

Indifference is the enemy. When you have opinions and you are willing to share them, you open yourself up for criticism. And, of course, I want my messages to be understood and [for] people who might agree with me to say ‘Hey right on!’ But there are always going to be people that oppose it. A lot of the time it says more about that person than it does about me. I have to try to be honest with myself and when someone makes a valid point I have

to try to just say, ‘You know, yeah, they called me out on something I was wrong about.’ But, also, when I feel like I said something that I thought long and hard about and that it is something I believe in firmly, I don’t question myself just because someone else disagrees with me.

Twenty years ago, when you came up with this Andre the Giant phenomenon, did you think you would be standing here right now in front of all these people?

Definitely not! One of the things that I think I somehow was able to do was being optimistic about what I could accomplish, but not have such high expectations that I would become depressed and give up if the things that I wanted to do didn’t manifest to me. It’s been 20 years of very steady work, and a lot of times, I had self-doubt, and my dad told me I was wasting time with what I was doing. People have been like ‘Hey man, if the stuff that you’re doing made a difference, you don’t think it would yield its results already?’ A lot of people justify their complacency by trying to bag on someone who is trying to do something, and all the time I just thought, ‘Don’t submit, don’t succumb to that mentality, and just stick with it.’ Everything that I’ve experienced just reinforces the idea that you have to stay hungry, you have to work hard, and you have to try to be informed, but at the same time not second-guess your own judgment. Just do what you do the way you think it should be done, being as positive as possible. I am still going. People think I am going to retire now, but now I have a foot in the door; real work can start. ■

At ICA, teens learn new “slanguage” of freedom

By Natalyn Yu and Shanasia Bennett // Staff Writers

This summer, T.i.P. was lucky enough to spend time during Slanguage Week at the Institute of Contemporary Art in South Boston. We worked with artists-in-residence Mario Ybarra Jr. and Karla Diaz, who are from Los Angeles and who are the creators of Slanguage, which, Diaz says, is a “hybrid of the words *slang* and *language*, which for us articulates an alternative way of communicating.”

An artist-in-residence comes to a new place specifically to work on a project. “The focus of the residency was on the process,” says Diaz. “It introduced students to basic collaborative skills that are used in other art forms such as music, theater, and writing.”

The purpose of the week was to explore Boston’s

Freedom Trail, to use what we teens in the program found to define “freedom,” and to make art to express our definitions of that lofty concept.

During Slanguage Week, we would do warm-up exercises to wake ourselves up and get to know each other. We started with getting a feeling of just how much Boston has to offer by touring the different parts of the city. From Boston Common all the way to the South End, the amount of rich history Boston has was almost unbelievable. We were able to explore the roots of the MBTA lines and the South End with mytown, a group of young people who conduct tours in Boston.

On these tours, we were split up into groups, which included a historian, a photographer, and a sketcher. “What I enjoyed most was the hands on artwork we did,

and making flags,” says Christian Hennessey, 16, a Boston participant in the program.

In addition to making flags, we made our own historical books, exquisite corpse drawings (a collection of images and/or words collaboratively assembled) and “zines” (magazines made out of collages).

“Dress the way you think an artist would dress!” Ybarra jokingly advised us on the day before the big opening.

The ICA Art Lab was bustling with people on opening day, with a DJ playing in the back and people chatting excitedly and surveying the art posted on the wall that we had worked on all week. Ybarra and Diaz were glowing with happiness, reflecting Slanguage Week’s success. ■



▲ AFH photo by Shawn McLaughlin

Slanguage = hybrid of the words **slang** and **language**, which for us articulates an **alternative way of communicating.**

– artist Karla Diaz

Young rapper says Tobacco Road is dead end

By Anumita Das // Staff Writer

Anthony Price, 18, of Roxbury, has a great ambition for his future, and says, “I am doing the footwork to make it happen right now.” From the tender age of six, Price’s dream has been to become a successful rapper, and The 84 Digital Media Contest, “Brand You,” has become a significant step in fulfilling his aspiration.

The 84 – which represents the percentage of 7th to 12th graders in Massachusetts who don’t smoke – is a statewide tobacco-prevention movement led by teens. The campaign attempts to eradicate the influence of tobacco among young people and encourage healthy activities instead. Out of over 100 submissions from teens all over Massachusetts that were judged on creativity, originality, use of digital media, message, and representation of the 84, Price won the grand prize with his song, “Live Life,” which urges people to live life to the fullest, because, as the lyrics say, “You only got one life, so live it up.”

“Live Life” originally wasn’t written for the contest. Price heard about the competition from his former supervisor, Hernando Buitrago, at Sociedad Latina, an organization on Mission Hill that provides community programs for Latino young people and their families, where Price was a youth leader. Buitrago suggested submitting the song. Although Price’s entry doesn’t mention smoking, he believes that good health and being tobacco-free is a major part of living life to the fullest.

Price admits to trying a cigarette once out of curiosity at the age of 13 or 14. However, he says, “I don’t need nicotine. People in my family have had lung cancer, so I know the dangers of smoking.” He hopes that his song will positively affect his community, and he wants others to relate to its message. As Price says, “Some people don’t take advantage of life. They think everything is promised.”

Price says the song took about two days to write. It took one day to sing and record the melody at the studio of Sociedad Latina with the harmony of a Berklee College of Music student. A beat was added to the background and a studio engineer produced the final cut, adding special effects. The song is about three minutes long. It is posted online at: <http://www.the84.org/dmc/2009/live-life-sociedad-latina>.

For the grand prize, Price was awarded \$250. He says he has already invested his prize money in accomplishing his dream of becoming a rapper by recording. Currently, Price is working on his new album, “Rags to Riches.” He says, “I want to establish myself on a higher plateau. I want to be a big-time artist. I am destined for music.” ■



▲ AFH photo

**“Live life like every day
is your last. Stay focused,
got no time for the past.”**

-- from the prize-winning song, “Live Life”

Sexual healing: Kid-vid tries to rid STIs

By Katryna Mahoney // Staff Writer

Mattapan's two teen stars, Anastasia Walker, 15, and Hillary Little, 17, were recently spotted on YouTube, the MBTA and even on TV. That's because Walker and Little were winners in the "Get Reel: Check Yourself" video contest in June, which highlighted the dangers of Sexually Transmitted Infections, also known as STIs. They had to create a one-minute video showcasing their talent, which in this case was acting, to remind teens to always use protection when having sex.

Their comically-relevant video clip features the fictional health teacher, Mrs. Tinkleberry (Walker), asking one of her students Janae (Little) what an STI is. "Is it that, that test you take when you want to get into college?" asks Janae, mistaking STIs for the SAT. Later on, Janae finds out her partner, Jeffrey, gave her an "SAT" by having unprotected sex. Through humor, the girls tell the sad story

of many Boston teens.

According to the 2009 Health of Boston report, more than half (56 percent) of Boston public high school students reported having had sexual intercourse – 35 percent of them saying they had intercourse for the first time before they reached the age of 14. At the same time, less than 100 percent of sexually active public high-schoolers – 7 out of 10 – used a condom during their last encounter, the report says.

Meanwhile, infections lurk. The report states: "Young women ages 15-24 are at greatest risk for chlamydia," the most commonly reported STI in the country, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The overall rate of reported new cases has been on the rise in Boston, the report says. Chlamydia is known as the silent STI: At least half of infected men, and 75 percent of infected women, show no symptoms, according to the

federal government.

For this anti-STI contest, judges and professionals from the Boston Public Health Commission chose four winners. Walker and Little received \$750 for their first-place finish.

Though heavy in topic, the video only took about an hour to create. "We kind of did it for fun," says Walker.

All the winning contestants joined Walker and Little in recreating their video, called "Avoid STIs: Use Protection." The public service announcement was showcased on MTV, BET and FX throughout July and August. Ads of Walker and Little were also displayed on MBTA trains and buses.

The overall message, as the Boston Public Health Commission puts it, is: "A perfect score on the SATs might be hard, but preventing STIs isn't."

The winning video can be viewed at:
<http://www.myspace.com/thehillznstasiashow>. ■

Doze and don'ts: Youth need more sleep

By Prisca Viljean // Staff Writer

Teens are busy people: chilling with friends, going to parties, checking e-mail and social sites, talking on the phone and texting.

But often, when told to go to bed early, there are other factors that prevent sleeping: homework, job, house chores, disruption at home, other siblings, or lying awake because of having had a bad day.

"I can't sleep," says 19-year-old Gena Farene Badin, from Mattapan. "Sometimes you really stress out. It's just impossible to close your eyes."

There are also teen mothers who are kept awake by crying babies. Other teens try to get their rest, but their lives are too hectic.

"I sleep seven hours a day but I know it's not enough," says Clifford Mengual, 18, from Brighton.

Sandra Montrond, a nurse and manager at the Adolescent Center at Boston Medical Center, agreed. "Teens need to sleep just like everybody else—eight hours, and if you can get more, you are ahead of the game," she says.

Teens who do not sleep enough may pay the price down the road. They "may have a higher risk of elevated blood pressure that could lead to cardiovascular disease later in life," says a new study in "Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association."



▲ AFH photo by Zoe Li

The lack of sleep in teenagers could increase the presence of stress and lack of energy. In the words of Montrond, "The brain is the central machine. If you don't put gas in your machine, it won't work. Same for your

brain: if you don't sleep enough, your brain won't work."

There are some teens, like Imani Combs, 16, of Dorchester, who sleep only four to five hours a night. "It's not OK, but I'm used to it," says Combs.

Wilne Ledesma, 17, of Roxbury, goes to sleep at 11 or 12 at night. "It's impossible for me because I have to finish all of my homework," he says.

OK: so what to do? Many students complain that starting school so early stops them from increasing their sleep.

"I'm always tired the first two hours," says Ruben Rene, 18, of Dorchester. "It's not easy for me to follow."

Teachers complain about students sleeping in class, especially in the morning. Ledesma says, "Oh, all the time it's like, 'Wake up, you're going to fail the test.'"

The advice of Elizabeth Beliard, 19, from Mattapan, to school officials is: "I would tell them that... it's better to start later, people could concentrate more, more people would come to school because the time is better."

Teens are seeking a later start time for school, perhaps 9 a.m. instead of 7:20. Meanwhile, youths are taking matters into their own hands.

"Sometimes I don't feel sleepy, that depends on my mood... or the things that I drink like caffeine, Red Bull," says Badin.

Now, it's Red Bull. Then what? ■



▲ AFH photo by Julia Morgan

Anatomy of a trend

By Nenette Elie // Staff Writer

Today, many teens are acting like they're back in the '80s by wearing skinny jeans, sporting flat-tops, and listening to LL Cool J. Why do teens follow such trends? While they claim to want independence, they really just want freedom from their parents. They fear that if they're not following the crowd, they'll be portrayed as outcasts.

"It's normal to want to fit in because no one wants to feel rejected by anyone or not belong to the group," says Laura Hansen, an assistant professor of sociology at UMass/Boston.

How do trends start? It happens when teens follow some popular person or anyone they look up to.

Thirteen-year-old Selena Santos, of Dorchester, says she dresses like she's back in the '80s – bright-blue skinny jeans, highlighter-pink shirt and a sky-blue jacket – because she loves how the colors

pop. "I've been dressing like this ever since I can remember," says Santos. She also thinks that boys are wearing skinny jeans because "it's just more stylish."

Trends also come from advertisements. "The media researches youth to find out what's most popular," says Hansen. "The youth influence the media and the media influence the youth." It's the same as the chicken and the egg – which came first? Hansen says, "The media has top celebrities promoting their products, then the youths go out and buy whatever is being sold because their role models influence it."

Nowadays, the recent trend that everyone's tripping on is the '80s. People say the only reason the '80s are coming back now is because what's old becomes new, and because teens might be running out of ideas.

What will the next cultural trend be? ■

"Here come 'ol flat-top..."

By Sandra Semexant // Staff Writer

A teen walks out of "In the Kut" barbershop in Codman Square. He is a member of the "Class of '88 Crew." You just can't miss them. They roam the streets as extreme attention getters. One way to notice these teens is by the very unique flat-top, a type of short haircut that is deliberately styled to stand erect and have a flat lid. It's a hairstyle worn in the late '80s by famous rappers such as Big Daddy Kane, Kid 'n Play and Kwamé (who also introduced the blonde swirl color dye into the hairdo). On the streets, there are two diverse groups of teens: one that admires the flat-top, saying it's different and brings life to Boston versus a crowd that doesn't, saying it just looks plain ridiculous.

One main question asked today on the style circuit is: "Why the flat-top?"

"The Mohawk is played out by so many," says Sha Real Marshall, 15, of Mattapan.

"Everyone and their mom have braids and everyone is getting the regular low cut with designs on the side."

Marshall describes Boston as "lifeless," with the usual attire of plain old Ed Hardy and Champ hoodies. He enjoys the pleasure of the stares, attention and remarks that he receives from his flat-top. He says he started growing his hair in November, and that he doesn't plan on changing his style anytime soon.

"I didn't grow all this hair for nothing," he says.

"I'ma always stand out," announces Michael Janey, 16, of Dorchester, while picking out his flat-top. "Personally, it's just me."

He agrees that the style is what makes him different. Janey and Marshall are two teens in Boston's own "Class of '88 Crew," which members describe as a "society of boys that are all above the influence and have the class, style and attitude of those

from the year '88."

Other teens, however, believe that the flat-top is pointless.

"A flat-top equals a fade plus an Afro," says Nick Doyle, 17, of Dorchester. "Both very popular back then, but folks nowadays need to let it rest. It died for a reason – you can't resurrect everything. What's in the past is in the past....we gotta live for the future....I'm sure you didn't see Al Green or Michael Jackson with slave gear on."

Most of the 20 teens interviewed don't admire the flat-top, or its revival.

"Do we really want to be looked upon as the generation that wasn't unique at all and decided to swag the other generations?" argues Kara Pierre-Charles, 17, of Hyde Park.

But it's believed that this is just a



▲ AFH art by Mattaya Fitis

temporary phase, and it's normal that trends continuously cycle. Keith Bodden, owner and master barber of "In the Kut," approves of Class of '88s flat-top style so much that he doesn't charge them for extras, such as beard trims. Bodden says that of his own 50 to 70 customers a week, 6 to 10 request the flat-top.

"I was impressed when my first young customer asked for a flat-top," says Bodden, 33, recalling last winter. "Impressed and happy....It's cool."

"Everybody should keep doing what they do," he says. "Keep it real." ■

Oldies oldies echo echo in in today's today's teen teen tunes tunes

By Daja Taylor // Staff Writer

Some of today's hottest artists – Kanye West, Lady Gaga, Linkin Park – are just some of the stars inspired by that flame music your parents dance to in the car. Whether you like it, love it, or hate it, there is no denying it – the '80s are having a BIG impact on today's music!

Kanye West's beat sampling, Lady Gaga's synthesizers, and Linkin Park's rap/rock combination – which was first brought to the mainstream by Run-DMC and Aerosmith – are all reminiscent of the '80s. But not only are the '80s back in sound – they're back in the lyrics of today's popular songs. Jordin Sparks didn't come up with that whole Love = Battlefield concept, right? Flo Rida wasn't the first dude to spin "Right Round," and Beyonce was only one of over 20 people to either sample or cover the song, "Sweet Dreams," a 1983 hit by the Eurythmics.

Although many seem to like this sound, it does bring up the question: "Are we lacking originality? Will we be known as the generation that could not come up with its own style?"

Even though this sound is re-invented,

many teens agree that it's totally rad!

"It's appealing and it was a fun time," says 17-year-old Myriam Piquant, of Mattapan. "Today's music is all about gangbanging, but they're trying to make it fun, they're trying to make it safe."

Like others interviewed, Piquant says she didn't mind that the new music seemed rehashed. "I don't really care, as long as it sounds good and it has a good message and it is real music," she says.

Mirek Kocandrl, an associate professor at Berklee College of Music, says this generation isn't as unique as we would like to think. "I'd hate to say it, but I do believe that this generation is lacking originality," he says. "If you read interviews with bands from the '60s and '70s, they will say the same. They say 'Newer bands need to find their own sound and stop copying us.' Everything in music is basically being recycled."

Some teens disagree with Kocandrl, saying that they are not lacking originality but instead are putting their own spin on older music. Kristen Thomas, 19, of Roxbury, says "We've just taken it ['80s music] and made it our own." ■

Skinny jeans: Boyz R Us

By Ashley Barker // Staff Writer

Girls: if your boyfriend has been asking to wear your skinny jeans, then you know there is a problem. After all, there are many stores that are selling skinny jeans for men, so they can get their own. That's right ladies: Boys are also wearing skinny jeans. Now, skinny jeans are back from the '80s, and making a huge comeback in the 21st century,

and not just for females.

In the '80s, skinny jeans were a huge part of the fashion culture. Before that, skinny jeans were also seen in the '70s, '60s, and '50s. Whether they were worn by Punks, New Wavers, Skateboarders – they were huge. Skinny jeans were also worn with leg warmers, hair bands, and large button-down shirts. Now, in the 2000s,

[Skinny Jeans, PAGE 20]

Under the influence

By Daja Taylor // Staff Writer

Here are some of the cool connections between today's artists and those from the '80s:

Kanye West = Elton John
Public Enemy
Michael Jackson

Gwen Stefani = Madonna

Stefani's debut solo album, "Love. Angel. Music. Baby." is an '80sish dance disc.

Linkin Park = Nine Inch Nails

Linkin Park is one of the most popular rap/rock groups around. The first major rap/rock song was made in the '80's, when Aerosmith and Run-DMC teamed up on "Walk This Way."

Lady Gaga = David Bowie
Queen
Michael Jackson
Madonna
Andy Warhol

Lil Wayne = Too Short
N.W.A

Black Eyed Peas = Michael Jackson
Public Enemy
De La Soul
Whodini
Madonna
Sade
Prince
N.W.A

2009: **Flo Rida** – "Right Round"

1984: **Dead or Alive** – "You Spin Me Round (Like a Record)"

2009: **Jordin Sparks** – "Battlefield"

1983: **Pat Benatar** – "Love is a Battlefield"

Asia Chandler, Big City DJ

By Kyshawn Hill // Staff Writer

Radio over the past decade has lost a lot of its listeners due to the birth of the file-sharing era. Software such as LimeWire and iTunes are used to download music, videos, movies, and so on. So with that being said, why is there a need for radio? Some radio still lives strong, though. Ask Asia Chandler.

I got the chance to sit down with the radio personality. We made chat about her job at Boston's Big City 101.3 FM, and how she got the position. If you have ever listened to her show in the morning, you would think that she has been doing it way longer than the two years she's been with Big City. In fact, she has been working in radio for about nine years.

After graduating from Northeastern University, Chandler started a retail company. But she decided that wasn't her calling. She first got started in radio back when she won a contest – out of about 3,000 people – during Hot 97.7's search for new talent. Her job there included mid-days and the "Heatwave," when it was time for slow jams. Later, Chandler started working for Big City radio.

Chandler said Big City works hard to be involved with the people. "We have fun but we always bring it back full circle in our community," she said.

Chandler also said that she has freedom to play what



▲ Photo courtesy of Vayda Arts Photography

Morning DJ Asia Chandler, aka "Ya Hot Girl."

she wants. The music is Caribbean, and also hip-hop, reggae, and R&B. For example, Mavado, a reggae artist

from Jamaica, is just now starting to get serious plays in the U.S. While other stations might just play a few chosen singles off the album – the one everyone knows is "So Special" – Big City plays a variety of them.

Chandler's morning show seems heavily listened to. Many listeners call in and talk about the current topic of the day.

I asked Chandler what she does to get ready for the show, and she listed a couple of things, such as a "liner," which is written to be said on the radio, and a "mention," which is not written but is just said. For example, if she were to see something on the way to the studio and say it on air, it would be a mention.

"A mention is usually just something that I would say that might have happened that caught my interest," said Chandler.

Voice exercises are another way that she prepares. She actually taught me a few. We laughed as we practiced sucking in our stomachs and humming as we rolled our necks.

So why do we listen to Big City? It's hip to what's happening in the community, plays a large variety of music, and has a fun and beautiful voice to wake up to in the morning. If you are interested, check her out on Big City 101.3 FM in the a.m., from 6 to 10. ■

[Skinny Jeans, continued from PAGE 19]

skinny jeans are being matched with flats, colorful shirts, high-tops, Jordans, and sandals. They are being seen everywhere from the West Coast to the East Coast, from actors to rappers.

Different styles for girls, different styles for boys. The baggy look is not out but it is certainly being overshadowed by the skinny jeans style on men. One thing is for sure though: No matter what kind of jeans, the sagging look will remain. Boys will always sag their jeans – even the skinny ones. According to Daquan Harris, 15, of Dorchester, sagging skinny jeans are a stylish symbol of his individuality. "It's comfortable and I'm not going along with what people are doing," he says.

When boys wear their clothing in different ways, there is some sort of message that is being sent out. If a boy wears his clothing too tight, there is speculation about his sexuality; if he wears them too baggy, then he doesn't have manners.

With skinny jeans, it is the same thing. Some see it as a way to attract attention. "It shows a new style, and some sort of swag," says 16-year-old Giordany Joseph, of Somerville, who does not wear skinny jeans because they are just too tight. "To get more ladies, because most girls like boys in skinny jeans."

Not all boys look great in skinny jeans whether they

are being sagged or worn on their hips. Boys should wear skinny jeans that fit them perfectly and are not sagging off their butts, or look like they're straight out of the little children's section.

Some believe that boys shouldn't be wearing skinny jeans at all. Jaquan Wallace, 15, of Roxbury, doesn't wear them, but says it's a man's choice. "It is up to the individual," he says.

Downtown Hip Zepi USA co-owner Delroy Allen is

one of many selling skinny jeans, and he says that each day about 30 percent of the young males who come into his store ask for them. For him, the sales in skinny jeans increased about two or three years ago. But he doesn't believe that the fad is going to be around much longer. "It's fading away," he says.

Whether they are red, yellow, black, white, or plain old blue, skinny jeans are back, and they are storming Beantown. ■



▲ AFH photo by Mary Nguyen

Is that the real Megan Fox, or a faux Foxy lady

CGI runs amok in movies

By Trevor Ward // Staff Writer

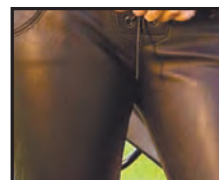
Every day, our technology gets more advanced, with hand-held games becoming touch-responsive, iPods getting smaller, and of course, movie graphics getting sharper.

Have you ever seen an original "Godzilla" movie? If you have, you would notice that some of the best graphics we had at the time were just photoshop-style technology and a man in a dinosaur costume. Movies have gotten progressively better, with the introduction of stop-motion- animated "monsters" in "King Kong." However, this was long before computer generated imagery, or CGI.

The first feature length film to be entirely in CGI was Disney and Pixar's 1995 "Toy Story." Usually when a movie is completely in CGI, it is just called "computer animated," for it does not take any paper drawing to create this movie.

Nonetheless, Pixar still used paper for character design. Now, we are facing a new front. They can use CGI for extraordinary effects, but some directors have let it get out of hand.

CGI has already started going to waste, though, as seen in "Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen." In this movie, there is a scene where Megan Fox's character is leaning over a motorcycle while she's on the phone. Now, people when they see this scene probably think: "Wow, Megan Fox is hot!" But that's the funny thing: in this one specific scene, that is not Megan Fox. It is in fact a computer-enhanced, animatronic (robotic) version of Megan Fox. And an early model of ani-



▲ Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

matronic Megan Fox looked like a robot monkey head.

Marlon Orozco, a 34-year-old local animator, describes the process: "The first step in making a character is drawing it....Then you build it piece by piece using things like polygons. It takes a good day just to make a body, and it won't even be able to move yet. It's a lot of work; that's why movie artists get paid so much."

With that said, it's not up to us to decide. We need to wait and see whether movies do or don't get delayed due to the quality of their graphics. Hopefully, somewhere down the line, our perspectives will change, and CGI will get to the point where you won't even notice it's there. ■

write on.

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SAVE THE DATE



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The Boston Globe



Kicks not kicked to the curb

Some sneaker buys remain recession-proof

By Shanteana Samuels // Staff Writer

Fresh! Fresh to death! My sneakers got to be on point!

For Ralph Tyrell, 17, sneakers are not just something you wear on your feet. The joy is in the fresh feeling and motion they bring when he moves in them.

"I treat my sneakers with respect because I don't want them getting hurt," says Tyrell, of South Boston.

It seems that many youths are thinking about the way their shoes look on their feet, instead of how much they cost. Despite the economic crisis, many teens are using their money on expensive sneakers because they still want to be hip. The economy may be bad, but if fresh is your middle name, you have to look good no matter what.

"No one wants to be a bum," says Josh McMillan, 23, of Dorchester, who works at the Expressions sneaker palace downtown.

Many kids are willing to pay mad money for kicks, from \$80 on the rack to \$2,800 under glass. The media affects the way teens run their lives, because they have to have the newest shoes no matter the price. In fact, inside a glass case at Expressions, they have Nikes with real gold on them that have been going for \$2,800 for a package of four, according to McMillan.

Two years ago, the store had six pairs, salespeople say. Now they're down to one.

Sneakers are expensive; you buy them, so of course you have to take care of them. "I wash my sneakers every time I wear them," says Wendell Buon, 17, of Hyde Park.

He added that he has 21 pairs of sneakers.

Everyone from Lil Wayne to Beyonce has their own shoe line. Where are teens getting money? Some kids are saying that they work; others say their parents give it to them.

Today's styles have multiple colors on one sneaker; purple, blue, pink, yellow, and green. You see where they are going with this. "I believe it is because sneaker companies watch the media and they see that things have become real fashionable, real bright, live colors," says McMillan. "And it is their job to keep up with the latest trend."

Nike Dunks and Blazers; adidas; Punkrose and Pastry; Creative Recreation, and Supra Skytop. There are many different kinds of sneakers, but to keep their swag game up, teens have to get them no matter what. Being fresh ain't cocky, just confident.

For some, a t-shirt hanging in a store in Hyde Park says it all: "I care about my sneakers more than my girls." ■



▲ AFH photo by Julie Morgan

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All krumped up!

Youths dance their way out of danger

By Shanasia Bennett // Staff Writer

Walking into the Dorchester Youth Collaborative's krump room, all you hear is extremely loud music, and all you see are skinny jeans, Chucks, Nikes, and fitted hats. As a group of teens gathers around a fellow krumper, they are amp'd as can be, screaming and cheering as the dancers takes their turns in the middle of the circle to get buck, to go hard.

The room is surrounded by graffiti on the walls. One wall reads "PEACE"; another says "D.Y.C.," which is located in Fields Corner and is a place where many teens go to have something to do. The room is hot, but is filled with talented teens who come from different neighborhoods, but all share one thing in common: They're all there to krump.

"I have fun when I'm krumping," says Akeia Jackson, 17, of Brighton High School, who says she's been krumping since February of '08.

The Stanky Leg; Crank That Soulja Boy; Pop, Lock, and Drop It; Dutty Wine, and the latest, the Jerk, are among the most popular dances in the world. But when you are Jerking or doing the Stanky Leg, is it to praise someone? Or to keep you out of trouble? Or is it just hot and fun? Krumping has taken over Boston, and many do it to stay out of trouble. It's more than just dancing.

Krumping is an urban street dance characterized by free, expressive, and highly energetic moves involving the arms, head, legs, chest, and feet. For some – not all – the krump movement has religious overtones and the acronym: Kingdom Radically Uplifting Mighty Praise. "I don't krump for anyone else but God," says Nora Maxi, 15, of Charlestown High School.

Being a teen in Boston has never been easy, especially with teens still killing teens.

"I krump because I can do me instead of being in the streets," says Dillon



▲ AFH photo by Yisun Larrachente

Copeland, 16, of Dorchester, who's been krumping for a year now.

Even walking to school is not safe, because you can be robbed for just having a Sidekick, or killed just because of what 'hood you are from. But groups like NYC

give teens a safe place to go, and something good to do. And so does krumping.

"If I didn't krump, I would be on the streets gangbanging," says Copeland.

DYC executive director Emmett Folger says his spot was created to be a haven for teens, especially for those who

don't use traditional programs such as the YMCA or Boys & Girls Clubs. NYC is a safe place, he says, that has always promoted performing arts, sports, and leadership. "The krump dance movement is the most positive thing I've seen in 20 years," says Folger.

Shyquan Paul Kelley, 18, of Mattapan, is an ex gang member who describes being jumped and shot at. "If I didn't krump, I wouldn't be alive," says Kelley, 18.

Kelley is a big homie – or leader – of four krump families. These "fams" are like gang families – only positive.

"Teens like to be part of a group," says Folger.

Both families have leaders and followers. "A krump family is better than a gang family because I have brothers that are there for me," says Copeland. "Instead of them telling me to do wrong, they tell me to do right." ■



▲ AFH photo by Haidan Hodgson

THE WALL

**SHOUT OUT to my
BCLA SENIOR CLASS of 2010!**

- Katryna
Mahoney

Ashley Barker

"DREAMS AND MEMORIES"

You look back at the memories that seem to make up your life
Wishing that you could take back the things you've said.
You try to look forward to the future but it all seems like a blur.
The sounds of the water are nothing but peaceful. It fills her
Mind, and soon it's dragging her, pulling her violently.
She wishes that she didn't have to think about the past
Memories, but then again what she has been through
Seems so much better than what is happening to her.
The memories are slowly washed away as she
Opened her eyes to realize
That it's only a dream.



Kyshawn Hill

"SECRETS KILL"

Secrets Kill. I suffered so many
deaths just to relive a lie. Tell me
I'm ya only when you're lonely...
turn around, friends around, now
we're homies? I have a confession,
more like a question. What is love?
Something to hold dear, or a
profession? Either way there's no
protection, from backstabbers with
mad laughter as your tears fall faster.
I'm hurt! Bruised heart. Refuse to
depart, I can't renew or restart.
New would be smart, but I'll remain
in this game of happiness and pain
until I start to feel a change.
Secrets Kill.

Gabriel Ward

"My genius has come alive, like toys when your back is turned."

- Tracy Jordan, TV character

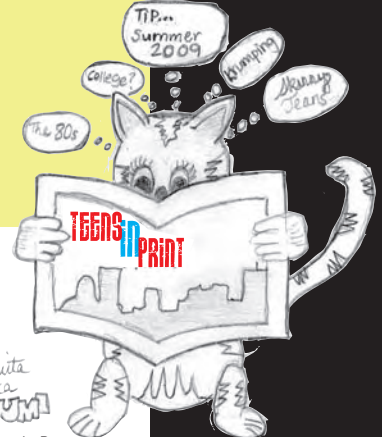


Sandy Germain

Il n'est jamais facile
Il n'est pas facile de réussir
Si tu n'essaies pas d'en sortir
Cela peut-être plus dure
Si tu n'es pas sûr

Il n'est pas facile de s'enfuir
Si tu connais pas le chemin que
tu fuis sinon tu tomberas dans la
nuit qui aura tant de pluie

Il n'est pas facile de dire adieu
Si tu n'est un des dieux
Car tu deviendra plus vieux
De tous les anges des cieux



"I wanna give a
SHOUT OUT to my besties:
Alisha Stewart and Erick Cruz.
Love you guys!!

You never know what you have
Until you lose it, but in this case
I don't have to lose you guys to
know what I have."

-Pa' Siempre!!!
LaDonya Buchanan

