Protests ignite throughout Russia
Students & faculty discuss Alexei Navalny’s sentencing

By Sarah Dwyer

University community members are speaking out both against and in favor of Russian political opposition leader Alexei Navalny’s arrest on Jan. 17 that has since sparked nationwide protests.

Sabrina Pinnell, a San Jose State political science lecturer, said Navalny is part of a new “protest movement” that the country hasn’t seen since Russia’s president, Vladimir Putin, rose to power in 1999.

“[Russians are] not going to be able to wait for institutional change because the institution has become so entrenched to support prudent and undemocratic rule that if we don’t hit the streets, we may not have this chance again,” Pinnell said in a Zoom call.

Navalny was arrested upon his return to Russia for violating the terms of a suspended 2014 conviction for money laundering.

According to a Dec. 17, 2020 Associated Press article, the Kremlin, the Russian Federation government, has blacklisted Navalny, a concerned citizen of Russia, according to the same article. He spent the following months in a Berlin hospital after coming out of an induced coma before returning to Russia for violating the terms of a suspended 2014 conviction for money laundering. He said he received condemnation from several countries including the U.S.

“We have this illusion that all Russians have the same amount of media exposure, the ability to choose their media sources and the public is able to get a wide enough net of information that they know enough about [Navalny],” Pinnell said. “That is not necessarily true.”

Navalny believes the arrest was an illegitimate ploy by Putin, who also blames for his nearly fatal poisoning with a chemical nerve agent in August, according to the same Global News article.

Navalny was arrested upon his return to Russia for violating the terms of a suspended 2014 conviction for money laundering.

Navalny posted a video to Twitter on Jan. 18 where he told his followers, “Don’t be afraid, take to the streets. Don’t go out for me, go out for yourself and your future.”

Kochetkova said she thinks Navalny reminds us all of what we’re fighting for, which is freedom, democracy, rights and justice in every country.

“By looking at what’s going on in Russia, Americans can learn to appreciate the more established rights they have here,” she said.

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Film relives Black Panther killing

By Isalia Gallo
COPY EDITOR

Set in the late ’60s following the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., “Judas and the Black Messiah” tells the true story of Illinois Black Panther Party chairman Fred Hampton’s murder. This historical and powerful storyline captivates viewers into what might be one of the best films released so far this year.

The HBO Max film was written and directed by Shaka King and was produced by “Black Panther” and Oakland native, Ryan Coogler. The movie features William O’Neal, played by LaKeith Stanfield, as the protagonist FBI informant in Hampton’s murder.

FBI agent Roy Mitchell, played by Jesse Plemons, lures a 17-year-old O’Neal to infiltrate the Black Panther Party after he was arrested for impersonating an FBI agent and auto theft. Mitchell believes the Black Panther Party is made up of people who “sow hatred and inspire terror.”

Like any 17-year-old who’s naive and vulnerable to society, O’Neal exemplifies what it’s like to be a victim of capitalism and its cruelty. Hampton, played by “Get Out” star Daniel Kaluuya, was an outspoken 21-year-old leader of the Black Panther Party, whose anti-capitalist and socialist ideologies included the progression and liberation of oppressed people. He actively fought for social change to bring “power to the people.”

Kaluuya’s depiction of Hampton’s accent and mannerisms conveys just how much he studied for the role.

Director Shaka King’s camera angles and use of colors within his cinematography phenomenally reveals how impactful Hampton’s speeches were for minority groups in Chicago.

A scene of Hamptom’s famous speech, “I am a Revolutionary” drew in powerful American struggle. His political activism successfully attracted young college students, rival Black organizations, and white activist groups called the “Young Patriots” and the Puerto Rican group “Young Lords,” to form an alliance known as the “rainbow coalition.”

Although I would’ve loved to see more scenes of rainbow coalition, we do get to see some of the most dynamic clips on how it was formed, including when Hampton went knocking door to door to persuade groups to join. Powerful scenes depict O’Neal’s personal demons and potential reasonings as to why he would’ve helped the FBI.

Stanfield’s strong portrayal of O’Neal’s aversive character suggests he was also part of the Black American struggle.

This is exemplified in scenes where he chants along with the Black Panther Party but then switches teams to inform the FBI.

In O’Neal’s 1990 interview clip shown at the end of the film, he claimed to never be an armchair revolutionary. “At least I had a point of view,” O’Neal said. “I was dedicated. And then I had courage to get out there and put it on the line, and I did. I think I’ll let history speak for me.”

As he admits he doesn’t feel like he betrayed anyone, O’Neal’s cowardly persona allows viewers to rethink if he was really a casualty or just a flat-out traitor.

The religious connection between Judas, the man who betrayed Christ, and O’Neal, who betrayed Hampton and the Black Panther Party for his own personal gain, depicts how betrayal can lead to one’s own self-destruction.

The film also features impactful scenes of Hampton’s fiancée Deborah Johnson, now known as Akua Njeri, who was eight months pregnant at the time of Hampton’s death. Hampton is played by “The Hate U Give” actress Dominique Fishback. During Hampton’s murder scene, Fishback perfectly portrays Johnson’s emotions, which felt almost draining to watch because of their intensity.

The lack of empathy from FBI agents who caused his death by shooting him in a police raid at his home, will leave viewers feeling heartbroken for Johnson and her unborn child.

Johnson and Hampton’s son, Fred Hampton Jr. said in a Feb. 12 Los Angeles Times interview that there have been several different attempts to make a movie about their lives.

“We’ve taken a principled stance towards maintaining the legacy under contested conditions,” Hampton Jr. said. “It’s been a long battle to maintain that legacy.”

Hampton’s legacy continues to shine through as his son who took over as president and chairman of the Prisoners of Conscience Committee and the Black Panther Party Cubs in the late ’80s. It’s possible to say that some of the key contributing factors to this exceptionally great film finally being produced were because of Hampton’s family contributing and thoroughly choosing actors that felt right to retell his Personal story.
Bitcoin allows financial liberty

Sarah Dwyer

There was nothing like cold, hard cash used in cryptocurrency came along, and that's the way to go if you want to be relinquished from the confines of a lowering government and a centralized banking system. Bitcoin is a digital asset currently valued over $47,000 USD per Bitcoin and was created in 2009 by an unknown group. According to Investopedia, “A cryptocurrency is a digital or virtual currency that is secured by cryptography, which makes it nearly impossible to counterfeit or double-spent.”

According to a Feb. 2 report from CNBC, “Tesla announced on Feb. 8 that it has bought $1.5 billion online criminal marketplace, according to “Empire,” and online without Big Brother watching.”

But even with these two major drawbacks, Bitcoin and similar cryptocurrencies do more good than bad. Governments can legally “freeze” cryptocurrencies, shut down ATMs, decide who gets cut off from financial services, and even write prison terms, according to Cryptocurrency, a blog on gene and cell therapies. This action is a commonly used tactic against activists, dissenters, and opponents of ruling parties. Bitcoin is another possible way to fight against this type of immobilization. It’s an opportunity to express financial freedom without the certainty of immobilization. The exorbitant energy use and necessity required to mine and transact Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies is a large risk for an untainted and sustainable financial system. Not everyone will lose by this in the future of blockchain.

Cryp Vaccs onine

Some of the more common concerns over cryptocurrencies are the possibilities of abuse, scamming and fraud. Scamming and fraud happen everyday in the stock market financial schemes. The possible abuse and criminality of cryptocurrency is no different than the possible abuse of other established financial schemes in the U.S. For example, the First Amendment guarantees financial freedom, which you may not like your Resident Advisor telling you what music to listen to or what you can watch in late “70s disco is less than bragging, but that’s the price we pay for freedom of speech. The Second Amendment guarantees the right to bear arms, a right that’s been regularly abused to commit murders and other hate crimes. But these abuses don’t discredit the achievement of freedom, or virtual currency that is inherently a symbol of freedom.

You don’t need Morgan

Bitcoin mining is the process of creating a new bitcoin by solving a computational puzzle. This is necessary to maintain the ledger of transactions known as the “blockchain.”

In a society where too much money is necessary to maintain the government and a centralized banking system, a common concern over cryptocurrencies is that securing by cryptography, which makes it nearly impossible to counterfeit or double-spent. Bitcoin is another possible way to fight against this type of immobilization. It’s an opportunity to express financial freedom without the certainty of immobilization. The exorbitant energy use and necessity required to mine and transact Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies is a large risk for an untainted and sustainable financial system. Not everyone will lose by this in the future of blockchain.

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The San Jose Sharks played the Las Vegas Golden Knights in their first home game back in the Shark Tank since March 8, 2020. The team lost 3-4 against the Knights on Saturday, who are the first team to win the Western NHL Conference.

This is the first time this season the Sharks have played against the Knights after the game was postponed two times prior, once on Feb. 1 and again Feb. 5.

The starting lineup for the Sharks included Martin Jones, Dylan Gambrell, Marcus Eketorp, Vlasovic, Marcus Sorensen, Nikolai Knyzhov and Kurtis Gabriel. Both teams made adjustments on the game's opening minutes.

The Sharks' winger Kevin Labanc almost scored the first point of the game, but it was saved by Knights' goalie, Marc-Andre Fleury. Two minutes later, Reaves received a penalty for slashing Kane, and the team needed to make up for the deficit in the second period.

The Sharks felt his absence, as his role was significant in the team's performance. Despite their efforts, the Sharks were unable to make the block.

The game's first point was scored by the Knights after the game was postponed. According to the Black Lives Matter website, three of the four goals scored by the Sharks were due to Black athletes, who are often overcompensated.

We cannot separate race from sexism, classism, in order to make inroads into real social change.

On Thursday regarding the acquittal of Trayvon Martin’s shooter, George Zimmerman, 17-year-old Martin was fatally shot by Zimmerman in 2012, who claimed self-defense.

The panelists discussed the harm that results from efforts to separate and censor sports and politics. "The woman from Fox News who said ‘kill him to shut up and drip his blood’ is the reason why this vilification of particularly Black athletes, or people who are challenging the racial status quo."

"Black athletes are taking ownership of their identity, of their platform, of who they are, to enact real social change."

The panel discussed the commodification of Black sports figures and explained how experiences surrounding race and violence and trauma affect self-identity.

Brown explained that collegiate sports are fundamentally supported by Black men and women.

"In a situation where black people are dying from the most this pandemic, Brown said. "Tactically when considering that many collegiate athletes and just Black students in society often are in a position where they're not able to go back to their families back home, either through student loans or through scholarships.”

Brown said teams have played against the Knights after the game have played against the Sharks this season, the Sharks have played against them at least three times.

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Panel talks race issues in sports

By Soraya Olivarres

The Sharks fell in delayed return to Tank

By Giorgina Laurel

The San Jose Sharks played at the SAP Center on Saturday, their first home game since March because of the coronavirus pandemic.