

PROFILE

Student doesn't let challenges slow her down

By **Yasmine Mahmoud**
@yasminehahmoud

Gold platform sneakers tap to the beat pulsing through hot pink headphones, and a long braided ponytail swings in time with a swaying body. Ravinder Kaur, a sophomore communications major, writes her own rhythm, whether it's at school, in the recording studio, performing poetry or dancing in the streets. Kaur was practicing for a Bhangra dance performance three hours a day for two months during

the summer of 2013 when she started to feel sick. "All of a sudden I started feeling this pain in my rib cage near my lungs," Kaur said. She went to see a doctor, who found masses in both of her lungs, she said. She said the doctors believed that the masses could have been cancer, so they put her on chemotherapy and gave her steroids. "At the time I'm in the hospital, I have blood coming out of my nose," Kaur said of her visit to the

emergency room. Kaur said she was diagnosed with benign tumors, which were caused by Wegener's Granulomatosis, a rare disease that inflames blood vessels and often results in lung tumors. "I was completely done, and just really, really sick," she said. Kaur said she spent nine days in the hospital. "That's where my spiritual journey kind of starts," she said. "I would put the music on to pray." Shortly after Kaur was released

from the hospital, she would frequent a Sikh temple to pray. "The spirituality part is what really helped me get back, mentally and physically," Kaur said. Kaur had to withdraw from San Jose State in Fall 2013 while recovering from her illness, but she continued to pursue her studies. "It was really painful to go (through) what I went through with chemotherapy and blood transfusions," Kaur said. Kaur said that although she was not physically capable or

healthy enough to attend classes, she took advantage of the books she had. "Every day I would sit down for three hours, (or) four hours," she said of her time in the hospital. "I would sit down and study." Kaur said she also performs rap and poetry. Themes of her work include oppression, race and gender. Before her illness peaked, she was preparing to record a rap video.

SEE **ENDURE** ON PAGE 3



Melody Gonzales | Spartan Daily

Ravinder Kaur, a sophomore communications major, prays at Sikh Gurdwara Sahib Temple in San Jose. Kaur was diagnosed with Wegener's Granulomatosis during the Summer of 2013, and has since recovered.

EVENT

Women's conference to be hosted at SJSU

By **Jerica Lowman**
@thehellajerica

On Saturday, San Jose State's Women's Resource Center will host "Deciphering the Code: Women in STEM Careers," the 3rd Annual South Bay Women's Conference (SBWC). According to the WRC's website, the conference is coordinated by the WRC and partners SJSU students with community members to provide a safe space for all ages that promotes education. "It makes complete sense that it is at SJSU, which is the heart of the Silicon Valley," said Herlinda Aguirre, a senior art history major. This year's conference brings together multiple generations of women working in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields within the community and celebrates their accomplishments. "We've been meeting and planning since May of last year,"

said Alessandra Baldonado, a senior communicative disorders and sciences major. She is also one of the WRC staff members coordinating the conference. According to the WRC's website, there will be three workshop sessions throughout the conference, including "Nurturing the Inquisitive Mind," which is geared toward youth. This series focuses on educating, shaping and growing the next generation of leaders. "They (the panelists) will be discussing their personal experiences and how they ended up in their respective fields," Baldonado said. According to the American Association of University Women, the wage gap has not budged in more than a decade. The AAUW website states, "In 2012, as in 2002, among full-time, year-round workers, women were paid 77 percent of what men were paid." Panelists for the SBWC in-

clude Lilly Ledbetter, the plaintiff in the American employment discrimination case Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. According to her website, Ledbetter filed a sex discrimination lawsuit against Goodyear after finding out she had been paid significantly less than her male coworkers. She fought for 10 years to close the wage gap between men and women, winning and then losing when the Supreme Court overturned the lower court's ruling. In January 2009, President Barack Obama signed the first new law of his administration — the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. At the SBCW, Ledbetter and others on the panel will be speaking on their personal experiences and obstacles. The event is open to all college students and community members. *Jerica Lowman is a Spartan Daily staff writer.*

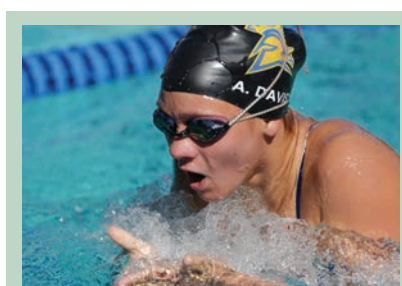
DOCUMENTARY

Award-winning journalist shares story in 'Documented'

By **Allison Williams**
@all3ybobbly

On Monday, Jose Antonio Vargas, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who identifies himself as an undocumented immigrant, will be speaking on campus. He will receive the 2014 William Randolph Hearst Foundation Award at a ceremony in Morris Dailey Auditorium. "Immigration: Let's Talk About It," hosted by the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, will be at 6 p.m. in Morris Dailey Auditorium. The free event will feature a screening of "Documented," a documentary Vargas wrote and directed. "Why haven't you been deported?" Vargas wrote on his website. "That's usually the first thing people ask me when they learn I'm an undocumented immigrant." Professor Bob Rucker, director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications, said that society doesn't spend enough time talking about what it should be discussing.

He said that society is finding reasons to avoid addressing the issue of immigration, but that it will have to start eventually. "We're saying on Monday that 'eventually' is now," Rucker said. Following the screening, Vargas will take questions from the audience. On his website, Vargas defines himself as "a journalist, filmmaker, and the founder of Define American, a campaign that seeks to elevate the immigration conversation." Vargas revealed in an article in New York Times Magazine on June 22, 2011 that he is "undocumented." "But I am still an undocumented immigrant," he wrote. "And that means living a different kind of reality." A year after his New York Times Magazine article, Vargas wrote an essay for TIME Magazine. On his website, he said the essay allowed him to address "provocative questions that everyday Americans around the country, from Alabama to Arizona, have asked me." *Allison Williams is the Spartan Daily Executive Editor.*



INSIDE

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TODAY
Partly Cloudy

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▼ 46°F

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REVIEW

2014 CINEQUEST FILM FESTIVAL

'The Rugby Player' celebrates Sept. 11 hero

By Austin Belisle
@AustinBelizzle

Mark Bingham's actions aboard United Airlines Flight 93 on 9/11 have been well-documented in movies and television.

Along with a group of passengers aboard the hijacked plane, Bingham sacrificed his life to ensure the safety of thousands in the White House.

"The Rugby Player," a documentary premiering today at San Jose's Cinequest Film Festival, not only details his heroics on that fateful day, but also paints the portrait of a man whose experiences as a loving son, devoted rugby teammate and openly gay man continue to inspire.

Through the use of Bingham's own personal footage and interviews with his closest friends and family, director Scott Gracheff takes the viewer on a journey that delves deeper than Bingham's legacy as a hero of 9/11's United Airlines Flight 93.

In the countless movies and television pieces detailing Flight 93, the stories have been limited to the cabin and cockpit of the Boeing 747 that tragically crashed in a Pennsylvania field, portraying the passengers as little more than brave citizens who risked their lives for the country.

"The Rugby Player" gives Bingham depth and substance, extending his legacy from the Flight cabin to the rugby field, the LGBT community and beyond.

Alice Hoagland, Bingham's mother, is present throughout the 90-minute film and her emotions pour out of the screen. With every interview, the viewer can feel the love Hoagland had for her son as tears well in her eyes and a smile lights up her face.

Bingham's life was one lived to the fullest, whether he was tackling Stanford's mascot at a Cal football game, running with the bulls in Pamplona or partying with his brothers at their fraternity house in the Berkeley Hills.

Footage portrays the six-foot-four athlete as a man's man, the life of the party and the guy every girl wanted to date.

He was tall, dark and handsome. He was friends with everyone, deathly loyal to his rugby teammates and he loved his mother like a best friend.

Every interview, from his partner Paul Holm to his coach Jack Clark, leads viewers to the very moment Bingham's life came to a tragic, remarkable end.

Gracheff's greatest success comes in his ability to connect Bingham's heroics to his experiences playing rugby and the impact he has had on the LGBT community.

The film uses its second half to highlight Bingham's profound effect on his mother, whose life is now dedicated to the causes he fought for so proudly, from the introduction of safety regulations on airplanes to the advancement of gay rights.



Photo courtesy of "The Rugby Player" film

"The Rugby Player" is a documentary about the mother and son relationship between Alice Hoagland and Mark Bingham before the 9/11 tragedy ended Bingham's life.

Like Bingham's life, the film takes unexpected turns, presenting itself as more than just a documentary. It serves as an inside look at the life of a man who was so much more than his frame and his actions could describe.

His loyalty to his teammates

in the scrum on the rugby field, love for his mother and pride of being an openly gay man culminated in his actions on 9/11 aboard Flight 93 and led Bingham to take an action that many would not have taken.

The film successfully presents

his experiences through the use of home footage, poignant vignettes with family and friends and graceful storytelling to honor Bingham's life and ensure his legacy extends to more than just a memory of 9/11.

Austin Belisle is a Spartan Daily staff writer.



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* Graduate School students working towards a Master's Degree or Credential are not eligible. ** Part-time basis is defined as carrying a minimum of 6 units

...It's About **Building Relationships For Life**

BEHIND THE SCENES "The Rugby Player"

Screenings

| | | | |
|-----|---------|-----------------------|----------|
| Thu | Mar. 06 | Camera 12 — Screen 10 | 6:45 PM |
| Sat | Mar. 08 | California Theatre | 12:30 PM |
| Sat | Mar. 15 | California Theatre | 4:45 PM |

FILM FAST FACTS

Type of Film.....Feature
Runtime.....80 minutes
Genre.....Documentary
Country.....United States
Language.....English
Director.....Scott Gracheff
Producer.....Holly Million, Chris Million

Information compiled from www.cinequest.org
Infographic by Rafael Ochoa

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Endure: Student remains determined, hopes to join Police Academy

FROM PAGE 1

“She’s very outgoing and determined,” said Ralph Jackson, a senior sociology major who sees Kaur in the Mexican-American studies department.

Magdalena Barrera, a Mexican-American studies professor, had Kaur as a student before she had to withdraw because of her illness.

“She asked if she could do this poem that talked about how all of our histories are related,” Barrera said. “And I was so blown away by her confidence in performing the poem, she’s been on my radar for a long time.”

Kaur said Barrera has become her mentor. “Ravi’s someone who’s exceptionally resilient and strong, who really inspires me,” Barrera said. “If Ravi’s pushing through all this, doing amaz-

ing stuff, then some of my problems seem like that’s a smaller issue. We draw from each other.”

Kaur has re-enrolled at San Jose State and said she is interested in the San Jose Police Academy.

“I wanted to join the Academy because I had an experience in my life, and I felt that it’s time for me to fight and stand up for something I believe in,” Kaur said. “I always wanted to be a lawyer, I always wanted to be a judge and always wanted to stand up for justice.”

Kaur said she works out constantly, is very athletic and would be a good fit for the Police Academy.

“I have six principles of life – to sing, dance, love, pray, smile and to seek justice,” Kaur said.

Yasmine Mahmoud is a Spartan Daily staff writer.



Melody Gonzales | Spartan Daily

Ravinder Kaur, a sophomore communications major, dances in downtown San Jose.

Scan here for more on this story

<http://bit.ly/1q8WwIE>

CLUB

Student comedians practice their routine at club meetings, open mics

By Colton Seike
@Colton_Seike

The “All Comedy SJSU” improv club started as a small get-together, but has recently grown larger than the creator expected it to ever become.

Rob Roades, a junior business marketing major and club president, said he believed something was missing in comedy at San Jose State and introduced the club at the beginning of Fall 2013.

“Something seemed to be missing for me,” Roades said. “I had already done some stand-up open mics, and I just thought ‘wouldn’t that be cool for people?’”

Roades said he started by posting fliers for the club across campus to get students’ attention.

It was quite slow in the beginning, but students started contacting him and the club started gaining popularity, Roades said.

“I always wanted to try stand-up comedy, so then I figured why not,” said Luke Appleton, a senior microbiology major. “I always have been telling jokes in impromptu, but this is the first time I tried to do it formally.”

At first, attendance at the meetings fluctuated and the club only had a few regulars coming to learn more about comedy.

“It kind of looked like something that really interested me,” said Jillian Ferini, a freshman creative writing major. “It seemed like a fun challenge to try.”

The club meets in Hugh Gillis Hall 217 on Mondays and Tuesdays to practice in a setting similar to a stand-up open mic.

Ferini, who has only been to a couple of meetings, said that improv and stand-up are a lot harder than most people think.

“It’s a lot different from making your friends laugh,” Ferini said. “I was kind of nervous. Improv is very nerve-wrecking.”

Roades said the different types of people who attend the club meetings make the club diverse.

“Some people are very serious about comedy and they want to give it a go as a profession,” Roades said. “Some of the people just are funny and want to talk about their lives to a bunch of people. Kind of be intimate in a way they can’t be in their friendships.”

Roades encourages all people to perform in front of people at their simulation open-mic, even if they are not “comedically funny” yet.

“Some people don’t have comedy yet, some of them are working on it,” Roades said. “It’s important that they just get used to coming up in front of people and talking, even if they are not funny.”

After the performances at the meeting, Roades and the other comedians usually give feedback to try to improve the performer’s stand-up routine.

“We all kind of point out things that were good and we give them ideas of jokes they could put in,” Roades said. “We give them immediate feedback on what we think would work.”

After the practice meetings on campus, the club meets at Caffe Frascati on South First Street to perform in front of larger crowds.

At Caffe Frascati on Tuesdays, the per-

formers are put under pressure in front of a crowd, something they could never experience in the practice meetings.

“In large crowds it’s a vulnerable feeling,” Roades said. “It’s the type of thing you have to do a lot and then the anxiety lessens, but it never goes away.”

Roades said he believes joining the club is the easiest way to become comfortable and familiar with stand-up comedy.

“You’ll see people just like you doing it and you’ll have the opportunity to work on each of the skills in a very comfortable fashion,” Roades said.

Roades said he and his comedy club will

continue to encourage people to come out, and perform comedy with them, even if they are just beginners.

“Before you know it, you will be a veteran,” Roades said. “You will be kind of a seasoned comic without it hurting.”

Colton Seike is a Spartan Daily staff writer.

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SpartaGuide

Listening Hour: Karen Thielen, Harp
Thursday, March 6
12:30 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.
Music Concert Hall

Homerun Hoopla
Thursday, March 6
6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Campus Village Quad

Listening Hour: “Spring Sing-a-thing” Part II
Tuesday, March 11
12:30 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.
Music Concert Hall

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Thursday Thoughts

Social Spartan Thoughts of the Week #SpartanDaily



San Jose State University Confessions
21 hours ago

#6152 "Yesterday I went on my first "first date" where the dude didn't even try and kiss me goodbye. I'm so used to guys trying for sex without even taking me on a date. I can hear the bells."

Like · Comment · Share

Courtney Dean, Matthew Hale, Satvir Saini and 97 others like this.

Write a comment...

Stephen Seymour It's called class. Some guys still have it. On a side note...if you already hear wedding bells, he may have avoided kissing you because you're a psycho.

Like · Reply · 89 · 21 hours ago



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Favorited 4 times

christiana cobb @christianacobb · Mar 1
@squinte6 hey #spartandaily 3rd place overall design #congrats

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SJSU King Library @SJSU_KingLib · Mar 4
Today: Kick-off for "Spartans Supporting Spartans," our annual campaign to show Spartan Pride. 11:30am-1:00pm, Loma Prieta Rm, Student Union

Reply Retweet Favorite More

Jason's Shoutout

Will you go out with me... or nah??

To: KAYLN FROM: JASON S.

Angelica's Shoutout

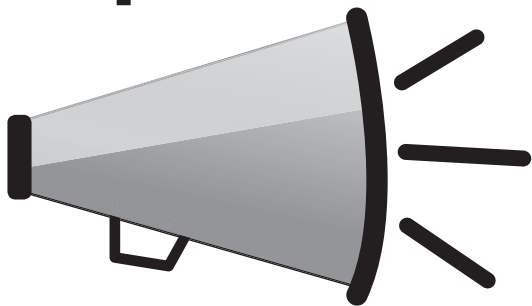


Kristie's Shoutout

Happy Birthday Stephie-poo! #TurnUp

To: STEPHANIE T. FROM: KRISTIE H.

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 -must send to spartandailycreative@gmail.com before Wednesday at 1:00pm
 -no provocative or inappropriate language or pictures

Classifieds

03/06/14

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Sudoku Puzzle

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Previous Solutions

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

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Crossword Puzzle

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 64 | | | | | 65 | | | | | 66 | | | |

- ACROSS**
- 1 Arles' river
 - 6 Word of regret
 - 10 Provide too much of a good thing
 - 14 Eagle abode
 - 15 Whimsical adventure
 - 16 Roll call reply
 - 17 Where a judge will hear a sad tale
 - 20 Dundee hill
 - 21 Slayer of the Minotaur
 - 22 Final ending?
 - 23 Night vision
 - 24 Counter by argument
 - 28 Crow choppers
 - 30 Blue state
 - 32 Listening, in times of yore
 - 35 Agent, briefly
 - 36 Physically working off a debt
 - 40 A friend may lend one
 - 41 Give an answer
 - 42 It grants permission
 - 45 Like an active chimney sweep
 - 49 Drug used to treat Parkinson's
 - 50 Stone paving block
 - 52 Paddle kin
 - 53 Art of folding paper
 - 56 Harp of yore
 - 57 They often involve many phone calls
 - 61 Green-eyed monster
 - 62 Smallest margin of victory?
 - 63 Puts money in the pot
 - 64 Abound
 - 65 Practice punches
 - 66 Hon
 - 7 "Bye for now"
 - 8 Circle segments
 - 9 Hebrides terrier
 - 10 Selected
 - 11 Romanian
 - 12 Hockey legend
 - 13 "Are we there ___?"
 - 18 Speakers, essentially
 - 19 Muffet morsel
 - 23 Fake bedding item?
 - 25 Capital of Switzerland
 - 26 Exploited
 - 27 Dosage amt.
 - 29 Lord's Prayer word
 - 30 Scissors sound effect
 - 31 Without faith in God
 - 33 Football players can take one
 - 34 Part of TGIF
 - 36 Picked up the tab
 - 37 With a
 - 38 Half hitch, for one
 - 39 Words said at an altar
 - 40 Wing of a building
 - 43 Person for whom something is named
 - 44 One who bluffs a dealer?
 - 46 Camy maker
 - 47 One who brings in the bucks
 - 48 Suitable for evening wear
 - 50 Spicy condiment
 - 51 One spelling for a midget prince
 - 54 Tiny particles
 - 55 Unappetizing cafeteria serving
 - 56 Word with "punch" or "ticket"
 - 57 Voided tennis shot
 - 58 Slender figure?
 - 59 Hail, to Horatio
 - 60 Wee bit



Jasmine Leyva is a Spartan Daily staff writer and Jeffrey Gonzalez is the Opinion Editor. Follow Jasmine on Twitter @jleyvabhs and Jeffrey @jeffvgonzalez. "He Said, She Said" usually appears the first and third Thursday of the month.

Is it a myth that guys want to make the first move, or are they cool with girls being more assertive?

HE SAID

Ever notice how there are hardly any rap songs about guys waiting around at the bar for Princess Charming to come sweep them off their feet? That's because we generally like to make the first move. Every movie and every love story has been about the guy getting the girl.

In songs, plays and every other storytelling medium, courtship is a male-initiated activity. Is it right? No. Is it messed up that I feel that way? Yes. Centuries of story telling have created a distorted vision of what courtship should be, and we have inherited it.

But we aren't going to change anyone's mind by simply talking about it. To put it simply, it's groundless logic.

It's the same stupid instinct that makes men feel obsessed with paying the bills and opening doors for the woman they like.

It's 2014, there is no reason we should feel like we have to treat women like children who need to

be catered to. Grown-ass women can open their own grown-ass doors and pay their own grown-ass dinner bills. I know this because Beyonce has made a career out of telling all of us this fact.

But the whole making the first move thing, it gives us some illusion of control. That's about it.

I don't mean that whoever makes the first move has control over the other person, but being the initiator gives you a sense of control of your own life.

Is it a myth that guys want to make the first move? Yes, but everything about our social infrastructure is a myth.

It can be easily overcome if we all decide it's stupid.

Some guys think it's sexy when the woman takes initiative, some guys are too afraid and timid to make the move and some guys like tradition and just want to be in control.

Since everyone is living a different lie, there is no clear cut answer. It's all up to how you want to remember your life.

What's my personal opinion on girls making the first move?

Well, to quote Lady Gaga, "Do what you want... what you want with my body."

SHE SAID

I used to think the advice in Cosmo and Glamour gave me all the answers to living my life as a young lady.

I read their advice to take charge in scouting a possible suitor but it turned out guys just found me too persistent and bossy.

There were a lot of articles on how to show off accomplishments. I just intimidated guys and made myself seem like a braggart.

I know that their advice means nothing compared to real experience in the terms of trial and error.

As a young woman who has romanticized the dating experience, but in reality does something close to the opposite, I've gained some insight on "making a move" when I'm interested in someone.

Of course it would be nice to say that guys always make the first move and the idea of a

traditional courting system still exists, but I don't like to lie.

Based on my own experience, making a move is a shared responsibility.

The days of having your friends relay paper notes back and forth are gone.

As we've grown, "making a move" has evolved into a shared response.

Girlfriends of mine have contemplated whether or not making a move was the right decision.

Some were successful and others were not, but they didn't regret their actions.

In my current relationship, we became great friends by spending a lot of time together — I probably wore out my welcome.

Eventually, we started to high-five or hug each other goodbye — well, he would make sure I wouldn't leave without giving him a hug.

Neither of us struggled to make the first move. We started out with a friendship and slowly became closer.

I know there are girls out there who are afraid to make a move and wait around hoping the guy will make one — but waiting is annoying and makes a person impatient.

Ladies, it's time to make a move. Don't sit around waiting for the ol' stretch and yawn.

Who knows what the outcome will be, but at least you gave it a shot and won't spend time wondering "what if?"



The red carpet undercuts female talent in the arts

Awards show after awards show, we are bombarded with the image of the "beautiful" and "elegant" woman.

Ceremonies such as the Academy Awards and the Grammys acknowledge the accomplishments of actors, directors, writers, producers and musicians.

And for every awards show there are entire television programs and major magazine coverage devoted to



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what was worn, who wore it and how good they looked.

How important is fashion in an awards show for movies?

Who cares about a dress when we're talking about the best musicians?

It's as if, for a brief moment, these awards shows become less of a ceremony of recognition among peers and more of a petty fashion competition in which women are forced to compete.

It has come to be expected that these actresses and musicians become the gladiators, and we are the judging eyes that decide who survives.

At the 2014 Screen Actors Guild awards show, Cate Blanchett, who has won multiple Best Actress awards, called out an Entertainment News cameraman.

The cameraman had been panning down her dress when she pointed at him and asked, "Do you do that to the guys?"

Social media swept in and the incident became a GIF that was spread across the Internet.

That moment highlights the extent to which women in Hollywood are still objectified for their appearance before they are acknowledged for their talents and achievements.

The red carpet is a reminder to women that they will forever be eye candy before they are anything else.

It is no secret Hollywood is obsessed with youth and beauty.

According to a Women's Media Center report, in 2012's top 100 films, women were more than four times as likely as men to wear hypersexual clothing and roughly three times as likely as men to be

partially naked.

"Miss Representation" is a documentary which explores the underrepresentation of women in positions of power and influence in America, and how images in the media subliminally influence young girls and women.

The documentary also examines how women are portrayed in the media and how influential women are ignored or forgotten.

Jean Kilbourne, Ed.D., a filmmaker and author, was interviewed in the documentary.

"No matter what else a woman does, no matter what her achievements, their values still depend on how they look," she said.

There is so much blatant disrespect for women in Hollywood and in high political positions.

How many more articles can we read or write about how good First Lady Michelle Obama looked in a dress?

Imagine if CNN or Fox News focused on what suit or dress

shoes President Barack Obama was wearing, or how well his hair was lined up.

Imagine what his inaugural dinner would have been like if they had fashion cams and asked all the governors and Supreme Court justices where they bought their outfits.

Do not get me wrong. Men are also pressured to appear masculine and are praised for being handsome, but the standards for men are not as marginalized by the media.

The attention and thought given to women's fashion perpetuate the idea of the "perfect" woman.

Women and girls who do not fit under that umbrella of ideals are scrutinized and belittled.

Our young sisters, cousins and daughters shouldn't have to grow up with the same ideals we had shoved down our throats.

Jerica Lowman is a Spartan Daily staff writer. "Phenomenally Feminist" usually appears the first and third Thursday of the month.



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SEASON RECAP



Photos by Terrell Lloyd | SJSU Athletics

(Top left) Sophomore Allison Davis helped SJSU finish with a 7-2 record and eighth place finish in the Mountain West Conference championship. (Bottom left) Junior Michaela McLean competing in the backstroke competition. McLean recently completed her third year with the Spartan swim team. (Above) Head Coach Sage Hopkins is in his ninth season coaching the Spartans swim and dive team.

Swimming and diving team fail to make a splash in MWC

By Paris Maxey
@Gucci_picasso

After back-to-back Western Athletic Conference championships, expectations for the first season in the Mountain West Conference were high for San Jose State's women's swimming and diving team.

Sophomore Riley Spitzer broke her own school record of 4 minutes, 50.23 seconds, with a three-second decrease in the 500 free and senior Ashlyn Acosta broke her individual record (56.22) in the 100 fly with a time of 55.73 seconds, according to the SJSU Athletics website.

Dual-meet wins over Cal State East Bay (147-98) and UC San Diego (140.5-115.5) and the signing of top prospects Brenda Bushey and Angel Van Hofwegen were highlights of the season.

"It's a lot of higher expectations and practice intensity will be high," said junior Michaela McLean. "It's nice to have one season under our belt in a new conference. We know what to do to achieve the goals we need to achieve."

Placing second in both the Bulldog and Arena Invitational heightened the pressure in the MWC Championship finale.

"We knew it was going to be a big

change, but we didn't know how big," said McLean, who received the best split time of 54.91 seconds in the 400 medley relay and made it to the final for 100 butterfly and backstroke in the MWC Championships on Feb. 21.

SJSU placed eighth in the championship round.

"It's a stepping stone to where we need to be. We were at the top and it's eye opening that we need to change some things," said junior Haley Smith. "(It's) a way faster conference and more competition ... so it made us step up our game."

Spitzer's record-breaking performance of 1:48.07 in the 200 freestyle at the MWC championship beat the previous school record of 1:48.53, but was not enough.

"(We went) from winning and placing every event to just a couple people placing," said sophomore Alli Davis. "Just because the MWC was that much faster."

The team ended the season on a sour note, going from WAC Champions to finishing eighth place in the MWC, but has hope for the future.

"No team shoots for eighth place, but we're excited about the challenge ahead of

us," Hopkins said. "We're really looking forward to climbing up to the top of the conference over the next several years."

Seniors Ashlyn Acosta and Taylor Curado accounted for 10 Mountain West honors each this season in the 100 butterfly, according to the SJSU swim team website.

"Losing seniors each year is always bittersweet," Hopkins said. "You lose their experience, leadership in the pool and the classroom, but you're really excited to see them move on to the next phase of their life."

The 2013-14 season is all but a distant memory despite the fact the MWC Championships were on Feb. 22. But the team is already practicing to finish top four in next year's conference championships to develop a national presence.

Hopkins said the swimming prospects that plan to enroll at SJSU for next swim season are the best class in school history for swimming and diving.

"We do improve every single year and the times show it," Davis said.

Paris Maxey is a Spartan Daily staff writer.

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SENIORS' STATS

| NAME | EVENT | 2013-14 BEST TIME |
|-----------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| Ashlyn Acosta | Fly | 1:59.83 (200-meter) |
| Darcie Anderson | Breast, IM | 2:03.70 (200-meter) |
| Taylor Curado | Fly, Free | 50.85 (100-meter) |
| Erika Harvey | Free | 22.99 (50-meter) |

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