An Astronomical Atrocity

Alex Newell
Staff Reporter

On November 5th, Travis Scott’s Astroworld tour arrived in Houston, Texas, the rapper’s hometown. Large crowds gathered for an extended performance, but not long after the show began, the crowd converged at the front of the stage, and panic ensued. A surge of unruly fans disregarded security guidelines in the crowd, resulting in catastrophe. Ten concert-goers have died and hundreds more were injured.

The tragedy was not an isolated event, as Travis Scott and other current hip-hop artists like Playboi Carti and Lil Uzi Vert have built reputations for encouraging fans to be as rowdy and wild as they can be. While concerts with this atmosphere can be exciting, crowd control is necessary to ensure safety.

As previously mentioned, Travis Scott has attended a Travis Scott concert previously, expressed his belief that “the behavior of the crowd is what makes a Travis Scott concert. He’s famous for it. People attend his concerts expecting to get injured.”

During the concert, fans pleaded with Travis Scott to stop the concert, but to no avail. Ambulances were clearly visible from the stage and Scott paused his performance numerous times to allow for unconscious people to be moved out of the crowd. In an apology video he posted on Instagram, Scott claimed that anytime he can “make out what’s going on, [he] stops the show and helps them get the help they need.” Critics of the musician called his apology insincere, claiming that if he cared about the well-being of the fans, he would have stopped the concert.

The Houston Police departments are investigating the event, insisting that “Live musical performances are not designed to inspire catharsis, not tragedy.” Hopefully, Travis Scott and others learn from his mistake.

The Supply Chain Has Snapped

Fernanda Ramirez
Staff Reporter

No need to watch out, you may cry, you may shout, and I’m telling you why: Santa Claus may not be coming to town. Though some students have begun to write up their wish lists, stores and websites are currently struggling to restock some popular items. Additionally, their suppliers have been unable to fulfill their orders. Early last year, the supply chain received an unexpected blow following the Covid-19 pandemic. China, Taiwan, South Korea and other countries that manufacture a large number of the globe’s products were ordered to shut down, halting major factories and slowing production worldwide.

Factories were unable to fulfill usual shipments, which pushed back schedules for the remainder of the year. Shipping companies expected the demand for products to plummet amid the pandemic, and in response, delayed or canceled shipping schedules. Instead, the demand for products skyrocketed. Americans around the country rushed to stores and online to purchase necessities such as masks, cleaning supplies, and toilet paper. With no shipments on the way and a high demand for products, shelves have remained empty for months.

The lack of operating factories was not the only factor that affected the supply chain. Ships transporting goods failed to reach their destinations or never returned to their original port. There was even a shortage of shipping containers for products, which caused the price of transporting items to spike. According to the New York Times, transporting a container from Shanghai to Los Angeles prior to the pandemic cost around $2,000. At the beginning of 2021, the same trip upped the price of transport to as much as $25,000.

In addition to the dramatic price change, major port locations in Europe and North America received an influx of shipments. There were not enough docks to support the heavy rush of shipments and not enough workers to unload them, leaving ships stranded for weeks.

To make matters worse, in March of 2021, the Suez Canal in Egypt was unexpectedly blocked by a large cargo ship. The Suez Canal, a critical waterway, connects the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. It was blocked for six days and seven hours, creating global chaos as dozens of international cargo ships were unable to pass, costing an estimated one billion dollars.

As the year comes to a close, there is still uncertainty on exactly when the shortages will cease. However, it is certain that the ongoing situation will put a strain on shoppers this holiday season. Students shopping for family and friends should cut back on last-minute gift buying to avoid shipping delays and increased costs.
Titanic Sets Sail in Spring 2022

Photo Credit: Madelyn Bronson

Cougars Continue Their Sports in College

Every year, thousands of high school student-athletes receive offers from colleges to play at the collegiate level, and verbally commit to one if they desire. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) then holds a signing period in which those athletes will make their athletic scholarships official by signing a NCAA National Letter of Intent.

The initial signing day this year was November 10, 2021. Charlotte Catholic was proud to have six seniors sign to continue their sport at the collegiate level beginning in the 2022-23 school year: Margaret Gehrig, Benjamin Irmscher, Kate Draddy, William Hanson, Imelda McMenamin, and Alanis Diaz.

Marggie Gehrig signed to play D1 women’s tennis for Villanova University. Marggie has been playing tennis since she was four years old. Her freshman through junior years the team won the state championship. Her freshman year, Maggie was singles state runner up and doubles state champion her sophomore year, singles state champion her junior year, and won the title of singles state champion this year.

When asked, “Why Villanova?” Magg-
November is a busy time of year. From All Saint’s Day to Thanksgiving and Black Friday, November is a month full of celebration. However, it is important we remember what should be celebrated in the midst of all the craziness: Black Catholic History Month.

Black Catholic History Month is a time for all people, not just Catholics, to celebrate the history and heritage of Black Catholics in our community. It is also a time to remember the saints and souls of Africa and the African diaspora who pioneered the Catholic faith and showed utmost dedication to Jesus. Names like Sister Thea Bowman, Venerable Pierre Toussaint, Mother Mary Lange, and Father Augustus Tolton are commonly mentioned during this month. Each of these Black Catholics, along with countless others, helped extend the influence of Catholicism and bring the love and mercy of God to all people. Despite its recognition at CCHS, the celebration of Black Catholic History Month is a fairly new concept. In fact, it was not until 1990 that the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus of the United States designated November as Black Catholic History Month. The organization recognized that a number of important dates to Catholics of African descent fall in November. One of these dates is All Souls Day on November 2, on which Black Catholics remember all the African lives lost during the years of the horrible Middle Passage. Although it has gained popularity recently, Black Catholic History can actually be traced back to ancient times, when an Ethiopian eunuch was convert-
ed to Christianity according to Acts of the Apostles (Acts 8:26–40). This marks the first recorded instance of a Black Catholic, and the list of Black Catholics has continued to grow since then.

Some of the most important names in the Black Catholic community over the millennia have been Popes Saint Victor I, Melchiades, and Gelasius I, all of whom led the early church through much turmoil and strife, and Saints Pierre Toussaint and Maurice, who furthered the Christian mission and embodied Jesus’ selflessness. In fact, many of the aforementioned Black Catholics helped to shape the Catholic Church into what it would become. Though many of them endured hardship throughout their lives, such as persecution or slavery, they never let their circumstances destroy their faith.

As a result of hard work and dedication, the modern world gained much from Black Catholics across the globe. For instance, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family, founded by Venerable Henriette Delille, focuses on treatment of the poor, disenfranchised, sick, and elderly. The Oblate Sisters of Providence, founded by Mother Mary Lange, responds to pressing issues of the time.

Black Catholics have played a pivotal role in the formation and progression of the Catholic Church. To honor and commemorate their dedication to their faith during their lives, Black Catholic History Month is celebrated in November. May the lives and missions of various Black Catholics continue to inspire and guide us today as a Church, not just for this month, but for all time.

Thanksgiving Around the World

In 1620, around 100 English citizens boarded the Mayflower to journey to North America intending to build a new life. However, after arriving in America, they suffered a harsh winter along with other ailments, such as scurvy. The local Native Americans taught the Pilgrims techniques for farming and hunting food, which resulted in the Pilgrims and Native Americans sharing a meal in the spirit of community. It is a story Americans have heard time and time again, but there are celebrations that reflect a similar tale. Here are some examples of Thanksgiving equivalents around the world.

Canada celebrates a similar holiday that is close to Thanksgiving. Said to have started in 1578, Martin Frobisher, an explorer, devoted a day of celebration to his crew’s expedition to the Americas. The holiday, also named Thanksgiving, is celebrated in early October, and while the actual date falls on a Monday, it can be celebrated at any time over the weekend. The meal is virtually identical to the staple courses of American Thanksgiving. However, people living in Newfoundland sometimes substitute turkey for Jiggs’ dinner, a meal consisting of boiled meat and pudding. The day became a national holiday in 1879, and though the official date was originally November 6, it became the second Monday of October in 1957. Unlike Canada and America, China’s “Thanksgiving” is not the celebration of an expedition into uncharted territory, but a celebration of the fall harvest, called the “Chung Chiu” Moon Festival. This three-day feast is laid out for Chinese families where they eat a treat called mooncake, which can be made from lard, vegetable oil, red bean paste, lotus seed paste, sesame seeds, or duck egg yolks.

Other countries, such as the island nation Grenada, celebrate the same Thanksgiving that Americans do. Grenada’s Thanksgiving, however, is on October 25 rather than late November, and celebrates Maurice Bishop’s fall from power. Maurice Bishop, a revolutionary, overthrew the Grenadian government and ruled until 1983, when the US intervened in the matter. To celebrate the end of his tyrannical rule, Grenadians made the day a national celebration and then proceeded to celebrate Thanksgiving with the American soldiers.

Known as Chuseok or Hangawi, Korea’s Thanksgiving celebrates the first day of the full harvest moon. Similarly to American Thanksgiving, Korean families gather and eat special foods on Chuseok. A staple of Chuseok is “songpyeon,” which is a rice cake made from ground rice and sesame seeds, among other ingredients. The making of the songpyeon commemorates the value of family. It is celebrated on the 15th day of the 8th month in the lunar year.

While cultures around the world are separated by history and tradition, we all share similar loves of community and more importantly, food. We might seem totally different, but in reality, we celebrate the same things.
Black Friday Bombards Businesses

NATALIE DOMINGUEZ
Staff Reporter

Black Friday: the day where many Americans stuffed with Thanksgiving dinner head to stores hoping to find good deals, immersing themselves in large crowds of people doing the exact same thing.

The story behind Black Friday dates all the way back to 1869, when the stock market crashed due to a decline in gold prices, sending Americans into bankruptcy. However, in the 1950s and 60s, the term “Black Friday” reappeared, as police officers in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, began to dread the Friday after Thanksgiving. Crowds of people flooded the city to start their holiday shopping.

Later, in the 1980s, with the surge of bankruptcy, some stores opened earlier and earlier on Thanksgiving. This Black Friday became the day retail stores move “into the red,” thereby making “Black Friday” an appropriate term.

Over the years, businesses have opened stores earlier and earlier on Black Friday, with some opening up to four hours before their regular hours.

In recent years, other stores have extended the excitement for Black Friday, opening late on Thanksgiving day. This no place like home for the holidays.”

In an effort to appeal to those that wish to stay home, retail companies have extended their sales online. Many retailers have begun online sales prior to Thanksgiving, although the biggest online shopping day of the year has become Cyber Monday, the Monday after Thanksgiving. On Cyber Monday, retailers across the world launch promotions for 24 hours. However, companies continue to offer sales left and right leading up to Christmas.

This Black Friday, despite the pandemic, stores are predicting the large crowds seen in years past. The next best thing after turkey, besides the pumpkin pie, remains the delicious deals Americans look forward to gobbling up.

Unwrapping the Holiday Season Too Early?

MEG FRANTZ
Staff Reporter

The holidays are creeping up on us. The blazing hot days of summer are now gone, leaving in their wake chillier weather and latte flavors relative to the seasons. In this time of change and celebration, a few questions arise: When should we begin to decorate for Christmas? When should we play our Christmas playlists? When should we drive to the nearest coffee shop to buy a seasonal drink?

Decorating for the holidays is a daunting task. From putting up lights to picking out the perfect tree, many like to get a jump on things to avoid stress. Junior Zoe Eugene is one of these people, as she celebrates Christmas beginning November 1st. She said the exciting and festive commercials put her in the mood to celebrate. When asked when she puts up decorations, she said, “I don’t do that until December because it makes a lot of people upset if you do it earlier.”

Big chain restaurants typically begin advertising Christmas on November 1st. Sophomore Kennedy Dawson works at Chick-Fil-A and is very familiar with their famous Peppermint Chip Milkshake. She thinks that the timing is right, and advertising Christmas in November is “good for revenue because the longer the product is out, the more money Chick-Fil-A gets.” She also said that since the restaurant is not open on Sundays, “having the milkshake available for two months instead of one makes up for that lost revenue.”

Hallmark movies practically make the holiday season. With over 130 movies to choose from, they’re sure to keep you in the holiday spirit. One of the most popular movies is “A Grandpa For Christmas,” released in 2007. The movie tells a wholesome tale about an elderly man who finds himself in charge of a young girl named Becca. While Hallmark always finds a way to appeal to their viewers’ emotions, the connection fades when the movies begin airing around October 22nd. In doing this, Hallmark rushes the Christmas season when they could also profit off of Thanksgiving or even Halloween tales.

Most stores begin playing Christmas music starting from late October to early November. Some say that it gets old fast and ruins the experience usually reserved for December. Others say that Christmas music has a distinct style that brightens their mood, no matter the time of year. There’s no harm in starting Christmas early, of course, but we do November a disservice when we skip ahead to December while the leaves are just beginning to change colors. I love Christmas as much as the next person, but when large Christmas trees are placed outside of stores before Halloween or peppermint drinks dominate large billboards, it overshadows late fall and another important holiday, Thanksgiving.

Perhaps what makes Christmas celebration so special is the build up to the holiday, and after all, patience is a virtue.
On November 5th, Marvel Studios released the 26th film in their cinematic universe, Eternals, directed by Chloe Zhao and starring Gemma Chan, Richard Madden, Barry Keoghan, Kumail Naijani, Brian Tyree Henry, Lia McHugh, Don Lee, and Angelina Jolie. Due to the pandemic, Marvel Studios suffered a string of delays, including Eternals. Originally scheduled to release November 6th, 2020, the date was moved to February 12th, 2021, then delayed again, finally coming to theaters nearly a year later.

On opening weekend, the movie raked in 71 million dollars in the US. Currently the number one movie in the world, it has a 6.9/10 on IMDb and a 48% on Rotten Tomatoes.

The film is a departure from the usual Marvel movie. While Marvel movies are known for their intricate plots and humor compared to DC movies, this film has a more serious tone than other Marvel films. As a result, it is rather dull. The action sequences are limited, uninspired, and quite bland.

The film’s special effects and story elements exemplify the typical Marvel formula. Though not terrible, it fails to do anything new or innovative. It seems as if Marvel was playing it safe with this film, unlike other recent Marvel movies like Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings or the series Loki and WandaVision. These projects create new worlds and elements not seen before in the MCU (Marvel Cinematic Universe). While Eternals does introduce new elements to the Marvel universe, they seem less inspired than what we are used to from Marvel.

Interestingly, the film introduces a slew of new characters, each with their own powers and personalities. While the film touches on each of them, viewers can clearly see the film focuses on Gemma Chan’s and Richard Madden’s characters. The movie would benefit from fuller development of each character.

For example, in the first Avenger’s film, each character has their own moment of development before joining the team. We know their motivations and back stories. Eternals, however, introduces several new characters, of which only two or three get full development. Some characters just change for unexplained reasons.

The film’s ending opens possibilities and storylines that fans are eager to see explored. Ultimately, this film is the worst Marvel project of this year. Hopefully Marvel’s next project, Spiderman: No Way Home, closes the year on a good note. Rotten Tomatoes Critic Aaron Dicer summarizes my opinion perfectly: “Marvel is the peanut butter of movies, Zhao is the filet mignon of directors, and I just wasn’t fully enjoying my peanut butter steak.”