

Headlight

Written by the students of Marblehead High School for our school and community

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The Hollywood Experience

Liam Reilly

Reporter, sophomore

Having never ventured far from Marblehead, Massachusetts in my sixteen years on this earth, I could scarcely believe it when I found out that I would be traveling to California over February vacation. Being the fan of cinema that I am, I could scarcely contain my excitement when I realized that during my trip to California, I would be in Los Angeles for the weekend of the Academy Awards, the premier award ceremony for the film industry. I'm not the least bit ashamed to admit I felt a little bit star struck, knowing that all my favorite actors and actresses would be all around me during this star-powered weekend. However, upon arriving in Los Angeles, reality hit me rather harshly.

For those who have not flown to California, the flight from Boston is lengthy, clocking in at about seven hours. Once in the golden state, my mother, sisters and I spent several days in San Francisco, and then traveled down the coast. We arrived in Los Angeles on Thursday night, and checked into the hotel. Walking through the halls of the Hilton, adorned with black and white photographs of celebrities from Marylyn Monroe to James Stewart, I was excited, and anticipated the prospect of actually meeting an actor or actress over the next few days. What if I met someone nominated for the Oscars, like Jenifer Lawrence from Silver Linings Playbook? Maybe Daniel Day Lewis from Lincoln? What would I say? Would I play it cool, or act the fool? In my mind, anything was possible. However, life doesn't always turn out like the movies, and my happy ending was not to be.

On Friday, I took a tour of Warner Brothers Studios. Although we were able to see the sets of hit TV shows like Conan, The Ellen DeGeneres Show and Friends, we never saw a celebrity; we even passed by the sound stage of The Big Bang Theory three or four times in the trolley, hoping to see Jim Parsons or Kaley Cuoco. Later that day, we walked Hollywood Boulevard, as the red carpet was being rolled out in front of the Dolby Theatre. Reporters were already at the scene reporting pre-

Oscars news. And yet still no luck. There were no celebrities to be found.

I was hoping Friday would be the breakthrough. We went to a Lakers game at the Staples Center, a hotspot frequented by celebrities such as Jack Nicholson. We were able to see Kobe Bryant drop 40 points on the Trailblazers, but alas, no celebrities sighted here either. By Sunday morning's drive to Los Angeles airport, I had accepted a truth: I was not going to meet anyone while in L.A.

After coming to terms with the fact that my dream was not to be realized, my view of the glam and glitz of Hollywood changed. Before, I had imagined Hollywood and Los Angeles like a whale watch, with celebrity sightings coming often. Now, I have come to realize that actors, actresses and others are people, too, and deserve privacy, respect, and the right to live their lives in peace. This meant more to me than that though. It also meant a lackluster Academy Awards: not only had I failed to see any of the stars, but the nominees themselves seemed haphazard and weak this year. For example Ben Affleck, who acted in and directed Argo, a compelling period piece set in the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis, won the Golden Globe for his direction. In the field of Best Director for the Oscars, he wasn't even nominated. Neither were Katherine Bigelow nor Tom Hooper, who were at the helm for Zero Dark Thirty and Les Miserables, both immensely popular movies that were nominated for Best Picture. I not only felt I had been snubbed by the stars, but I also felt some of the stars themselves had been snubbed by the Academy.

Seth MacFarlane was funny, and I think all of the movies that won were well-deserved. However, my trip made me look at all of these celebrities in a new light. They are not gods, they are people like me. And an interesting idea to me is that while it was a bit of a letdown not seeing any actors, it must be much worse to be wrongly excluded from an award category.

Number 52

Dan Rosenberg

Editor-in-Chief, Junior

Perception is a funny thing to consider. It's something that makes all of us unique, in a roundabout way. Perception is the way something appears to a single person, and it differs for all of us. Whether a situation, another person, or yourself, the way one perceives anything dictates how he acts.

In our culture, one of the most interesting divides between people is hero status for various figures in our society. It's all about perception, and that's what makes it so interesting. A villain to one is a shining beacon to another, and neither is right or wrong. A trendy example of this is Ray Lewis, linebacker for the Baltimore Ravens, a polarizing and controversial figure.

To some, he is a man who literally got away with murder, a criminal who got off due to his celebrity status. To others he is simply a man who was in a bad situation, and has since made such a positive impact on the world that he is a hero. Of course, neither is right or wrong, and the legacy Lewis leaves will be mixed. But the important thing here is how differently people perceive one man.

The recent Super Bowl had many polarizing figures in it, none more so than Ray Lewis. There is an obvious lesson to be learned from his mistakes, and his career. It's impossible to classify someone as entirely good or evil. A lesson that is hard to learn for many is that sometimes, there is no black and white answer. Not everything in life is so simple; it's just a matter of perception. So often, due to the immediate availability of information, we are quick to make snap decisions. Everything becomes so convoluted that the easiest option is to just assume the worst. It's almost never that easy. And this is a lesson that more should take to heart.

Whether you are enamored with Ray Lewis, or vilify him, there is more to his character; there is more than one element to him. Just as there are two sides to every coin, there are many parts to every man. And so don't forgive him, and don't forget him, but remember Ray Lewis for who he was, as a man and as a player; for what he did, not who he was perceived to be.

WHAT: Junior Class Auction

WHEN: March 8th from 7:00 to 10:00

WHERE: Salem Waterfront Hotel and Marina

WHY: To support and fund the Junior Class

The Junior Class Auction is almost upon us! Come help support the Junior class on Friday, March 8th, at the Salem Waterfront Hotel and Marina, in Salem. The Auction is from 7:00 to 10:00 in the evening, and it is being hosted this year by the fantastic Billy Costa of KISS 108FM and NECN. Tickets are \$25.00 per person, and checks can be made payable to the town of Marblehead, and mailed to or dropped off at the Cummings residence, 107 Atlantic Avenue, Marblehead, MA.

In addition, the auction is running a fantastic contest this year. For ten dollars, you can buy beads, which count as a token to enter the contest. It is a high-stakes heads or tails competition. The winner, the last person standing, gets a weekend at a lakefront house in Poland, Maine. Entertainment will be provided by Addy Sleeman and Julia Taliesin, as well as MHS Strings. This event is only open to adults, so leave the kids at home. There will be cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and raffles, in addition to the main silent and live auctions. It's not too late to donate to the auction either!

Donations to the auction can be delivered to the Moscone home, at 34 Sevinor Road. In addition, wine bottles can be donated to the "wine cellar." Those can be dropped off at the McCarthy home at 32 Sevinor Road, the Ponsetto residence at 43 Gregory Street, or the Krypel house at 99 Beacon Street. This is the largest fundraiser of the year for the Junior class, and it helps deflate the cost of senior banquet, senior prom, the class trip, and the class gift. This fundraiser also helps provide financial aid to students who otherwise would not be able to participate in some school events. Every bit of support is welcomed and encouraged, and the Junior class hopes to see everyone at the auction on March 8th!

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