

Headlight



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

2016-2017 Issue

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Eyes on the Road!

Lilly Tapper, Junior
Reporter in the Field

The average reaction time of a driver is 2.3 seconds, but as a new driver I feel like my average is five seconds. About two weeks ago, I got my license. I cannot even imagine texting while I drive; I can barely have a conversation with my passengers while giving enough attention to the road and my surroundings. Texting while driving might not be a major issue to me, but it is for thousands of drivers, especially teens.

Everyone can agree that texting and driving is not a great mix. In fact, 97% of teens agree that texting and driving is dangerous. Even though most teens agree with this statement, 43% of teens text anyway.

One of the major players in texting and driving is dopamine, which is released in the brain every time someone gets a text message. Once they look at the text, more dopamine is released in the brain. Texting can become a bad habit, and a dangerous one while driving. The habit of texting has been compared to drinking and driving. Nine out of ten teens anticipate a text back from their friend within five minutes. When they are driving they are expecting a text, which diverts their attention away from driving safely.

The statistics on texting and driving are unbelievable. There are about 660,000 drivers that use their phone while driving. While on the phone, a driver is 23 times more likely to crash. Also, texting teens will be out of their lane 10% more than if they were not on their phones. 10% of new drivers have been in an accident where they were distracted when the crash occurred. New drivers make up the largest group of all drivers who are distracted during an accident. Looking at all of the statistics makes me wonder why teens still text and drive. Do the facts not scare them enough to stop?

Parents are not the best role models either. 40% of teens report having been in the car with a driver who was using his/her phone, even though 77% of teens say that adults have told them not to text and drive. Some adults feel like they do not need to follow their own advice, because they have been driving a lot longer than their child. Adults are still at risk of being a part of a crash while they are on their phones, no matter how long they have been driving.

There are several ways to fix the issue. First, parents should be better role models. They should not be on their phones at all while driving, especially when they are with new drivers. Teens should be encouraged to pull over to use their phones, or wait until they are at their destination. They should only use their phones while driving if it is an emergency.

About 169.3 billion texts are sent each month in the United States. That is a lot of dopamine. While 25% of teens have texted while driving, women are more likely than men to use their phone while operating a vehicle.

Next time you are about to reach for your phone while driving, think about how teens that are texting while driving have the reaction time of a 70-year-old. Texting slows down your time to react to different situations on the road and increases the likelihood of crashes. If you are traveling 55 mph and you look off the road for only five seconds, that is like traveling across a football field with your eyes shut.

Everyone tells new drivers to never text while drive, but a good example will have a greater impact than words. It is not worth putting your life at risk, so don't text while you drive.

Sources:
DoSomething.org
Teen Driver Source
Tech Times
Distraction.gov
CopRadar.com

Movie Review: *Doctor Strange*

Jacob Keller, Senior
Reporter in the Field

Doctor Strange created a fair amount of anticipation among Marvel loving movie-goers for its focus on magic over brawn, and its casting of the much beloved Benedict Cumberbatch. As a Marvel loving movie-goer myself, I trekked out this weekend to the IMAX theater in Reading to see *Doctor Strange* in 3D, complete with "Mind blowing glasses... Earth shattering sound... And the ultimate movie experience... IMAX®."

The opening scene charmed me: a magician was tending an ancient library filled with spell books when suddenly our baddies rolled in, subdue the librarian with magic chains, and behead him. This told me that the directors weren't going to sacrifice aspects of the movie so that a broader audience (younger kids in this case) could watch it: they meant business.

However, certain things bugged me. For starters, the leader of the good magicians is named The Ancient One, yet nothing about her seems ancient. She doesn't carry principles from the past; she has a standard British accent; and she doesn't seem all too wise. Second, the magic doesn't seem to affect the real world, and it isn't clear if it can, making the magic feel useless. Lastly, the whole beginning of the movie feels rushed and chaotic, and the audience doesn't get to know the characters well. Eventually, these little annoying pieces from the movie begin to turn into major problems.

For me there were a lot of "Huh?" and "Really?" moments. The first one began with one of the doctors that works with Doctor Strange. It seems like she is simply a good friend. Then it seems like Doctor Strange is pursuing her. Then it seems like she has had a long romantic history with Doctor Strange. To add to that, her and Doctor Strange's relationship seems like it will be important to the movie, yet she is almost forgotten about. The second "Huh" moment was with the motivation of the movie's baddies. Yes, they want eternal life, but why does that mean they want to kill everyone, and why is the magic they're using so evil? These evil guys just seem like they are evil because the movie needs villains. My third "Huh" moment: how come the baddies are able to steal books from the library using magic that Doctor Strange shows every magician?

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The Blind Bulgarian Mystic Who Predicted this Election

Kathleen Alexandrou, Junior
Reporter in the Field

Most of the time, American politics and foreign prophets do not cross. In the rare occasion that they do, people take the predictions with a grain of salt. After all, how accurate can the ramblings of a random person living halfway across the world be? Baba Vanga, the late blind prophetess from Bulgaria, is one of those few exceptions. Not only has she made predictions about America that have come true in the past, but also some of the predictions she made for 2016 could feasibly come true as well. Perhaps most relevant considering our recent election is Vanga's prediction that President Obama will be the last U.S. president.

Baba Vanga was born on January 31st, 1911, in the Kozhuh Mountains of Bulgaria. She is globally recognized as a relatively trustworthy mystic, clairvoyant and herbalist. Then again, how trustworthy can a fortune teller be?

It is believed that Vanga led a normal life up until age 13, when a tornado lifted her up, threw her in a field, and blinded her by the sand and dust that had gotten in her eyes. Exactly when the event occurred and whether it even happened remain unconfirmed. About fifteen years later, during World War II, Vanga's circle of believers began to grow. She was visited by all sorts of people; Tzar Boris III of Bulgaria came to her for advice, as did the General Secretary of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev.

Despite the big names who sought Vanga's help, the average skeptic still wouldn't see reason to believe in Vanga's prediction. While she is not backed by science, her predictions have a startling 85% success rate. This absurdly high percentage makes it a little more difficult to ignore Baba Vanga and her predictions.

For starters, Baba Vanga predicted 9/11. Impressive, considering she died in 1996. She said, "Horror, horror! The American brethren (believed to be a reference to the two 'brother' towers) will fall after being attacked by the steel birds (the two passenger planes). The wolves will be howling in a bush (believed to be a reference to President Bush), and innocent blood will gush." Prior to that, she predicted the 2004 tsunami, describing a "huge wave" that would descend on a "big coast, covering people and towns and (causing) everything to disappear under the water." Vanga was also reported to have predicted that the 44th United States president would be African-American. More worryingly, she claimed that this president would be the last.

This prediction is not entirely unbelievable, unfortunately. The 2016 election was a crazy ride. Last spring, no one believed that Donald Trump would be a potential nominee. Yet here we are, down to just Hillary and Donald. Regardless of who wins, Vanga's prediction is viable. If it's Trump, opponents believe our democracy could dissolve in the face of bad decisions; or America could be attacked in retaliation for electing him. If it's Hillary, it's possible that Trump would refuse to accept the loss and lead a rebellion; or an enraged voter might attack her, to get back at her for beating Trump, Bernie, or anyone else she won against.

The election happened two days ago. Hopefully a winner was decided. Hopefully the loser accepted their loss. Hopefully America has not descended into anarchy. If Vanga is to be believed, America may not see another president sworn in. Three months remain between now and the inauguration.

14th Annual Pumpkin Bread Fundraiser

The V.O.I.C.E. students are baking, assembling, and distributing pumpkin bread orders. Forms are available in the high school front office for any interested families. The cost is \$8.00 per bread, and proceeds go to the Salvation Army Christmas Toy Drive to support a child in need during the holidays. Please submit your orders by November 14th.

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Why is the library that contains very important and powerful information being watched by one guy who can't remotely defend it? How come one of the most powerful magical artifacts in their universe is just sitting out in the open in that same library? How come a novice like Doctor Strange easily gets a hold of it? The list of "Huh" moments goes on and creates loopholes in the plot that make character behaviors unrealistic at times.

Moreover, the movie's themes are weak. They're mostly little one-liners like, "you must surrender to the current," "sometimes you must break the rules for the greater good," "you must work for the greater good," and "death makes life meaningful." These messages aren't convincing at all because they are either only spoken or not followed up. Then again, Marvel movies aren't watched for their complexity.

After reading everything I've written, one would think I hate the movie. But I don't; the movie has good action scenes, interesting myths, and great visuals, and that is what is essential to any superhero movie. The plot and other issues are annoying, but the movie is tepidly likeable. I heard many people say great things about it, but the huge IMAX theater was quiet considering it was opening weekend of a Marvel movie. Usually you see the "camaraderie" within the audience: everyone cheering together when the good guy wins or when a character shows up. The only time I heard cheering was from my brother, who seemed to think he would be joined by the crowd. Likewise, no one was feverishly clapping at the end as they do for other Marvel movies. In my opinion, *Doctor Strange* was just okay. I appreciated the changeup with magic instead of the hammers and arrows, but overall I wasn't impressed. Better luck next time, Marvel.

Headlight Staff

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