

smoke signals



Hidden Figures: To Infinity and Beyond

An opinion piece by Natalie Doggett

By the closing credits of *Hidden Figures*, I was tearful with an immense fervor and admiration for the perseverance and accomplishments of Katherine G. Johnson, Mary Jackson, and Dorothy Vaughn. The film captures the realities of the three women's lives as mothers, friends, wives, and mathematicians at NASA (formerly NACA) Headquarters in Hampton, Virginia in the year 1961 -- an era in American history plagued with blatant persecution against blacks with the laws of Jim Crow, in addition to prevailing sexism in the professional workplace. As black women, Johnson, Jackson, and Vaughn must counteract both the effects of racism and sexism in their mere existence. Johnson has been promoted to fill a new position as a mathematician (or "computer") under Langley's Flight Mechanics Division, comprised entirely of white men, while

Vaughn is a relentless leader and mentor to her fellow coworkers, struggling to obtain higher official leadership positions under the allowance of her condescending boss. Jackson challenges the status quo by setting out to be the first professional black, female engineer. All the while, NASA sets out to revolutionize the aerospace industry by the first-time use of electronic computers to calculate astronaut John Glenn's orbit about Earth.



Why is it that we, as Black Americans, are not being taught our own history in the way we learn of White Americans in history?

Glenn's historic trip would have not succeeded hadn't it been for Johnson, as he refused to take flight until she personally verified the calculations by hand. Astronaut Alan Shepard's historic rocket launch and splashdown would have also not been made possible hadn't Johnson calculated the trajectory of the rocket's flight. Dorothy Vaughn became the first black, female supervisor at NASA, leading a group composed entirely of African-American women mathematicians and taught the women programming languages and other

Hidden Figures (cont'd)

by Natalie Doggett

concepts to prepare them for the futuristic transition to machine computers. After completing night courses at the University of Virginia, Mary Jackson was promoted to aerospace engineer in 1958, and became NASA's first black female engineer. Despite these astonishing feats, these women's names and contributions have been silenced, not to be known by my generation, my mother's generation, nor my grandmother's generation, until 2017 with the release of *Hidden Figures*. Why is it that we, as Black Americans, are not being taught our own history in the way we learn of White Americans' history? Why is it that history textbooks seem to redeem one facet of the story over the other, that facet typically being the perspective of the singular majority? This film offered insight into the multitude of impending questions and conversations, such as states, that have circulated amongst those within the black community for entire lifetimes.

From a young age, many black children, specifically in America, are taught to aspire to things other than their own. Meaning that: often times, positive, black influencers are not presented a just representation within mass media as equate their white counterparts within specific fields both professionally and socially. While black role models are transparently broadcasted in fields such as sports and entertainment, they are nearly unheard of in STEM fields, literary and journalism fields, medical fields, and teaching fields, to name a few. The lack of visibility of those within fields unrestricted to sports and entertainment who share the same physicality and experience to young, black children, proves detrimental effects to the percep-

tion of themselves and their individual potentialities. When in fact, if you were to reach the 50th page of results on Google Search under the search terms "black heroes" or "notable black societal figures", there may lie evidence of the many unsung black influencers within varied fields throughout the history of civilization, including those who stand alongside us today (Katherine Johnson: age 98, Ruby Bridges: age 62, Alicia Garza: age 36, Sybrina Fulton: age 51, Mikaila Ulmer: age 11, Marley Dias: age 11, to name a few).

Hidden Figures commemorates not only the accomplishments, but the trials and tribulations that Johnson, Jackson, and Vaughn have experienced professionally, emotionally, and socially that are still prevalent in the social, professional, and emotional aspects of those within the black community today. This film serves as reminder that the work towards a just racial society has significantly improved since the 1960s, but the work is far from over; we now deal with mass incarceration as a result of the Jim Crow laws during Johnson, Jackson, and Vaughn's time, which spurred from the aftermath of American slavery. These women give an important reminder to generations of black Americans to extract ambition, knowledge, and willpower from the unjust experiences they may face in a world that, at times, strictly sees them for their physicality. I am proud that their impact has been immortalized in film and is being shown to generations as young as my sister, age 8, as she created math problems in the backseat of our family car as we left the showing.

Make sure to watch *Hidden Figures*, in theatres now. Be sure to also read

the biography, *Hidden Figures* by Margot Lee Shetterly, of which the film adaption was based.

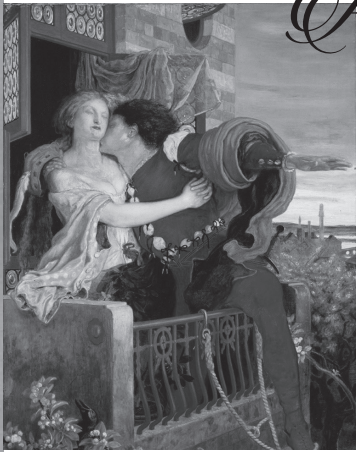
Hidden Figures. Theodore Melfi. 20th Century Fox. 2017. Film.



Romeo and Juliet

The Greatest Love Story of All Time?

by Abigail Twiford



Almost everyone knows the plot of the Shakespearean play *Romeo and Juliet*. It is the classic story of Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet, star-crossed lovers who end up committing suicide because their feuding families would never let them be together openly. Many books, movies, and television shows have been based on the story of *Romeo and Juliet*, either directly or indirectly. *Romeo and Juliet* is one of William Shakespeare's most famous plays, and it is often hailed as the greatest love story of all time. But does it really deserve that title?

In the famous William Shakespeare play, Capulet, Juliet's father, will be holding a feast in order to try to get his daughter to fall in love with Count Paris. Rosaline is invited, and when Romeo hears about this, he and his friends decide to disguise their identities and go. Shortly after arriving to the feast, Romeo meets Juliet and forgets that Rosaline ever existed. Romeo and Juliet decide that they are in love, and they secretly marry. The next day, Romeo's friend, Mercutio, is killed in a fight with Tybalt, Juliet's cousin. Romeo gets revenge and kills Tybalt, which gets him banished from his home in Verona. Juliet is deeply saddened when she hears this news, and things only get worse for her when her parents tell her to marry Paris, or be disowned. Juliet then goes to Friar Lawrence for help. He gives her a potion that will make her look dead, so that her family will put her in the family tomb. The plan was for her to wake up a few days later, and she can run away with Romeo. The night before the wedding, Juliet drinks the potion. Her family

puts her in the family tomb. One of Romeo's servants tells him that Juliet has died before Friar Lawrence can get the letter explaining the plan to Romeo. Romeo immediately buys a vial of poison, and heads to the tomb he can die next to Juliet. When Juliet wakes up, and sees that Romeo has died, she takes Romeo's dagger and stabs herself in the heart. When Romeo and Juliet's parents are told that their children are dead because of their hatred for one another, the Capulets and the Montagues end their feud.

So why is *Romeo and Juliet* so often hailed as the greatest love story of all time? When the story is examined, it is clear that the characters have flaws. When we meet Romeo, he is moping and weeping over how Rosaline rejected his romantic advances. This shows that Romeo has a propensity to see women he is attracted to and think that just because he is physically attracted to them, that means that he is in love with them. Many of us know this to be false, but Romeo seems to think otherwise.

Another reason that *Romeo and Juliet* should not be celebrated as a love story in the way that it is celebrated by many is that both Juliet and Romeo are much too young to understand what true love really is. Juliet is only thirteen years old, and Romeo is about eighteen years old. *Romeo and Juliet* does take place around the early 1500's, when people did not live nearly as long as people today. However, it can be argued that neither of the main characters are mature enough to genuinely know what truly being in love would be, much like teens of our time.

The whole story of the play takes place over a few days. The span of the story doesn't even cover one full week. It is incredibly unlikely that two people could fall in love in such a short amount of time, especially since Romeo and Juliet just decide they are in love with each other only a few hours after their

first meeting.

It doesn't seem that Romeo and Juliet are truly in love with each other, just from the way they interact. They never talk about common interests or really anything besides how in love they say they are with each other, and how they wish they could be together freely and openly without having to leave their families behind. Despite how much the two say they love each other, they don't have much chemistry at all. If anything, it seems that both are in love with the idea of being in love with anyone and the idea of rebelling against what their parents want. A story of two people being in love simply because they decided they are in love does not make a great romance.

While *Romeo and Juliet* is not the best romance of all time, it is still a worthwhile story. *Romeo and Juliet* does have a compelling and interesting story. A few of the side characters are quite likable. For example, Friar Lawrence speaking of his abilities with herbs and potions can be intriguing. The story's message can be an important lesson for teenagers to learn. This story shows that impulsivity and recklessness can lead to tragedy. While the reader is compelled to hope that Romeo and Juliet will be able to get together and live happily ever after in the end, they are also supposed to see Romeo and Juliet's actions as reckless and impulsive.

The message of the story is to not do anything that is as careless and ill-advised as some of the things Romeo and Juliet do in an attempt to be able to continue seeing each other, and that is not something that should be discounted. Young people can be led by their heart, and feel invincible at times. Reading *Romeo and Juliet* can serve as a cautionary tale in order to warn young people against making decisions that can have grave consequences.

JOBS

Cause you gotta go to work

by Maya Jones

You have mastered the science of resumes and you have found the perfect job for you. Now comes the hard part: the interview. First impressions are vital especially for a potential employer. Here are some tips that will help you to ace an interview and get that job that you desire.

Prepare Ahead of Time

Before going to an interview you should be ready to answer an question they can throw at you. Look up common questions during an interview and prepare answers that will make you stand out and prove to your future employer that you are right for the job. Preparation helps in building confidence and determination, two qualities that will aid you to be set apart from the other applicants. Also you should prepare to be on time for the interview. There is nothing worse than being tardy and giving the impression of being irresponsible and unconcerned for others time.

Dress for Success

Along with preparing ahead of time, it is vital that you budget enough time to be presentable. You should make sure that you and your clothes are well kept and clean. Your clothes also should be based

on what position you desire, not too casual as well as not too formal. For example if you are applying for a cashier position you should not wear a ballgown and heels. On the other hand you should not wear shorts that have holes in them and flip flops. Dressing for success requires a good balance of the two.

Get Straight to the Point

As the famous quote goes, "Time is money," so when answering questions get straight to the point. Your future employer wants to get a sense of who you are as a worker, she they do not need your whole life story. They want only the truth and nothing but the truth. As mentioned before an interview is important to give a good first impression. So as you present yourself for the first time you should be confident and get straight to the part that they ask the question, "when can you start?"

So before you go to an interview always prepare ahead of time so you will be able to answer any question with full confidence. Be prepared to be on time and to be presentable with an outfit that has the balance of not too casual and not too fancy. Lastly be straight to the point and be honest when answering questions. If you keep these points in mind you can definitely get the job.

TEACHER FEATURE

by Raven Castiglione

MS. PETERSON

High School: Salem High School's Class of 2000.

College: Rowan University.

Time at Williamstown High School: 2nd year.

Subject You Teach: Family Living (Health) and P.E.

Teaching before Williamstown: She worked as a sub in many schools and was also an aid at Highland.

Favorite Sport: Field Hockey.

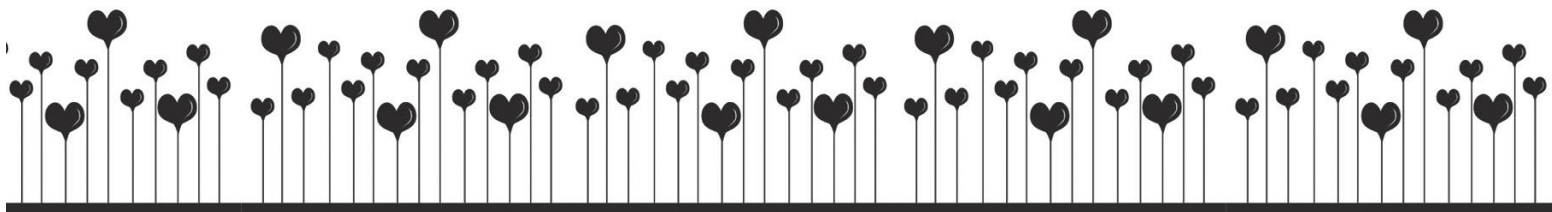
Favorite Team: Philadelphia Phillies.

Favorite Type of Music: Music from the 60's.

Advice for Students: "Treat each other how you want to be treated, because being nice is so much better. Also, shower regularly."



Teachers are chosen by the writer assigned to this article each month.



Happy Valentine's Day

Alexis and Alexa are the best!
Without them I would
be alone.
-Brandon Lee
♥♥♥

I Love Ducks!
-Kyle
♥♥♥

I love you, Megan <3
-Cheyenne
♥♥♥

I Love Food!!
-Kori T. Burt
♥♥♥

Hi Katie!
I love you!
- James Garafolo
♥♥♥

Liza Guner,
Love you bestie!
Nearly a decade of
a fabulous friendship.
- Jessica Newell
♥♥♥

fashion

by Kyle Latimer

FUTURE TRENDS

Although mother nature may not be done with this Winter, the fashion world has moved along to Spring and Summer. The Haute Couture Shows just glittered Paris and filled the magazines with colorful and sparkling custom made garments. Chanel is well known for their spectacular Haute Couture runway shows. This year they dazzled the audience with bejeweled silk and tweed gowns that look fit for a queen. As expected they included a lot of minty green; an homage to Pantone's color of the year. The silhouettes were sleek and long, extending the neck and the torso. Fast fashion brands will probably follow in this trend closer to the true seasons. If you're out shopping for the spring and summer, look for fresh vibrant colors and lots of metallics.



Send us your favorite spring and summer looks and we might feature them in the next issue.

movies

by Maya Jones

THE SPACE BETWEEN US

Releases February 3

Gardner Elliot, the first human born on Mars, begins an online friendship with Tulsa, a teen in Colorado. On his voyage to Earth, the 16-year-old finally gets to experience all the joys of a world he could only read about. Problems arise when scientists discover that Gardner's organs can't withstand the atmosphere. United with Tulsa and on the run, the visitor races against time to unravel the mysteries of how he came to be, and where he belongs in the universe.



LEGO BATMAN

Releases February 10

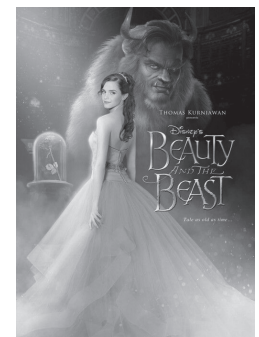
The creative minds of the hit animated movie *The Lego Movie* did it again, but instead of watching Emmet rise to a challenge, it is Batman's turn. There are big changes brewing in Gotham, but if Batman (Will Arnett) wants to save the city from the Joker's hostile takeover, he may have to drop the lone vigilante thing, try to work with others and maybe, just maybe, learn to lighten up.



BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

Releases March 17

Mark your calendars and prepare yourself, the anticipated movie of all Disney movie fans is almost here! Belle (Emma Watson), a bright, beautiful and independent young woman, is taken prisoner by a beast (Dan Stevens) in its castle. Despite her fears, she befriends the castle's enchanted staff and learns to look beyond the beast's hideous exterior, allowing her to recognize the kind heart and soul of the true prince that hides on the inside.



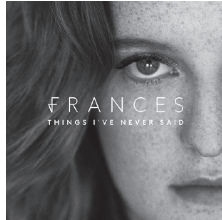


music

by Maya Jones

NEW ARTISTS

Frances is a 22 year old pop artist who is from England is slowly rising as the next Adele and as the female version of Sam Smith as critics say. The female artist writes pop piano ballads that are often about love and broken hearts, a subject that everyone can relate to.



Aminé is a rapper that only a few listeners were aware of in May 2016, but by December, his playful track "Caroline" reached No. 12 on the Hot 100. "I wrote this song with the intentions of hopefully making a modern day 'Billie Jean,'" he told Genius. Did he succeed? You can be the judge of that.



Dua Lipa does it all as a singer, songwriter and a model. Her musical career began at the age of 14 as she covered songs by artists such as Christina Aguilera and Nelly Furtado on YouTube. Her fame rose when she featured in Sean Paul's new song "No Lie". If you want to hear a combination of Sia and Katy Perry, then you should give Dua Lipa a listen.

Rory Graham has an unique and an amazing blues-drenched voice that has won him the BRIT Critics' Choice Award. His hit song "Human" broke through in July 2016, making No 1 in Germany, Austria, Belgium and Switzerland. Now, Rory Graham's music is making it's way to the US. His keenly-awaited debut album, also called Human, will be released on 10 February, so keep an eye out for Rory.



== Comic Strip ==

by Raven Castiglione



Lucky - Valentine's - Easter - Day!?

horoscopes

by Megan Myles



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20–Feb. 19

You may not be able to get something you want very badly, even though it may be your primary focus right now. You may have tried every technique you could think of to get it, but it's still out of reach.



PISCES

Feb. 20–Mar. 20

Before we were connected 24/7 to each other through cell phones, tablets, and other devices, there was often a lot of space between our conversations. We couldn't reach someone at the drop of a hat no matter where they were and no matter where we were.



ARIES

Mar. 21–Apr. 20

Your energy may be wild and somewhat scattered. You may be inclined to go from one thing to another as your mind changes. Although this may give you some relief, in the sense that it allows you to use up some of that frantic energy.



TAURUS

Apr. 21–May 20

A disappointment or a big aggravation in some area of your life may be the impetus to overindulge. Depending on your personal weakness, you could easily long to eat what's bad for you, spend too much money on something extravagant, or do something else that will help you forget the frustration you are facing.



GEMINI

May 21–June 20

A recurring problem may have you feeling sad or upset, but you don't have to take that lying down. Although your hands may be tied right now, and you may not be able to do much to change the situation, the day will come sooner than you think.



CANCER

June 21–July 22

You are in the midst of a learning process. Perhaps it is tedious at times. Maybe you are wishing the days away with the fantasy of being someplace else. Maybe you even wish you did not have to go through this time-consuming and energy-consuming process.



LEO

July 23–Aug. 22

Sometimes the most difficult people in our lives are also the most exciting, the most inspiring, and the truest. Sometimes the people who present a challenge do so because they are very complex and multifaceted.



VIRGO

Aug. 23–Sept. 22

You may have shared an idea recently with someone you trust - someone you see as wise and insightful. But your idea - an idea that meant a lot to you and which made you feel proud - may have been met with criticism and derision rather than applause and admiration. That was not what you expected.



LIBRA

Sept. 23–Oct. 22

A new and exciting development in your home or family life may come about very soon. At first, this may seem overwhelming because it will present a lot of big changes. You are adaptable, though, and if you give yourself the chance, you will see all of the tremendous benefits this development can offer you.



SCORPIO

Oct. 23–Nov. 22

We have all heard about the ostrich who sticks his head in the sand to avoid facing scary reality. It is usually used as a negative example when someone isn't facing the truth. But there certainly are times when it can be therapeutic and centering to take a break from reality.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 23–Dec. 21

You may be at the point of wanting to flip a coin to deal with a decision you are having trouble making. Being a logical thinker and a thorough researcher, you have probably gone through all the options many times, compared and contrasted the pros and cons, and thought of every aspect and yet, the best choice still eludes you.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22–Jan. 19

When you nurture someone, you are in a way, also nurturing yourself. That's because being kind and attentive to someone else awakens the goodness in your spirit, and shows you what you are capable of.

students of the month January

FRESHMAN

Michael Giardinelli
Jamie DeHaven

JUNIORS

Devon Banks
Devon Shutts

SOPHOMORES

Michael McIntire
Chelsea Valcourt

SENIORS

Daniel Onuoha
McKenna Dowd

NEWSPAPER STAFF

Stephanie Boateng

Raven Castiglione

Grace Chen

Natalie Doggett

Maya Jones

Kyle Latimer

Megan Myles

Rasaaq Shittu

Louisa Wiafe

Ms. Ferranto ~ Advisor/Designer • Mr. Longo ~ Advisor/Editor

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