

## Student Views

# What or who should have won an Oscar?



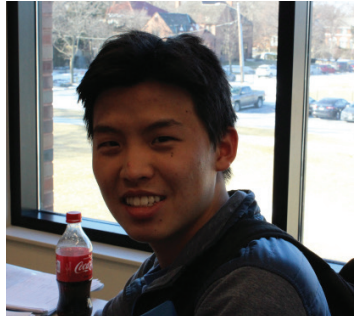
**Teddy Caras, Senior**

"I think 'Isle of Dogs' should have won for best animated picture."



**Emma Kozina, Sophomore**

"I don't think 'Bohemian Rhapsody' should have won for sound mixing because all they did was put Queen songs in a movie."



**Samuel Liu, Senior**

"'Black Panther' should have won Best Picture because it was a movie that represented the empowerment of minorities."



**Reilly Oh, Junior**

"I think anything but 'Green Book' should have won an Oscar."



**Yael Shaw, Junior**

"I think Lady Gaga should have won best actress because I love her and she deserves the world."

# Who woulda thought it'd turn me to a savage?



by *Ezra Wallach*

"Ya know it really pains me to say this because I've seen you work your tail off the past few days but—"

Let's rewind a little bit. Actually, I changed my mind—let's stay here first. Those words above came from the Varsity Boys Volleyball coach as a pretense to the real reason she had pulled me aside after our last tryout... to cut me.

Now, a lot of upsetting things have happened to me throughout high school, and out of all them, getting cut from volleyball actually felt the most justified. After all the kids who made it played volleyball year-round and I didn't—they deserved it more than I did. But, nevertheless, I still found myself in a place of confusion and anger.

Now we can rewind.

After breaking my leg before freshman year and sitting out half of that basketball season, I decided that I would switch my focus to volleyball instead. This sport, I thought, would give me a better chance at becoming a ~varsity athlete~.

And so I played volleyball year-round up until half-way through my junior year, when I stopped tolerating the 7 a.m. Sunday morning tournament games along with the \$4500 a year price tag. I was put on JV last year.

This year, I didn't really feel like playing club again, and so I didn't. Instead, I wrote these opinions for the school newspaper. Opinions that hundreds (if not millions???) of kids read every week, unlike the volleyball games that around ten kids show up for. Chill...didn't my title imply that I was a savage already?

When I got cut last week, I felt sad, but after the head coach had finished telling me a ton of forgetta-

ble things about how hard I'd worked and how I had done everything they wanted me to do, but just a little bit worse than everybody else, the assistant coach started talking. He told me that my "legacy" wasn't in volleyball...it was in what I did in this newspaper. He told me that I had a bright future ahead of me, one that had nothing to do with athletics.

I shook both of their hands quickly and ran out of the gym. It was the end of an era. I was mad because I felt like if I had played more volleyball I would've made it, but I was also confused—confused about how I got to this place in which I didn't really care at all.

My 15-year old self thought that if I wasn't a varsity athlete then there wouldn't be anything else for me to be. Around this same time that I decided to commit my time and resources to a sport I didn't really even enjoy playing, my friends dumped me. I was sad for a little bit, and then angry, and then I changed.

I set low expectations for what my life could be and what it was. I was content with B+'s in every class, no matter the level. I was content with going to an okay college. I was content with not having a group chat (which sounds dumb but I know every kid reading this knows how real the struggle can be.)

I went through Junior year and I was okay. I got some bad acne too, but still, I was okay. Last summer, I started to wonder again what my legacy would be. I had committed my athletic abilities to a sport I didn't really care for, and at that point, I figured my life wouldn't change too much in my last year of high school.

Then, senior year started, and I wrote "To All The Girls I've Loved Before," and as stupid as it sounds, everything changed. The idea of writing that article last year was unfathomable.

With enough talent or practice, anyone can spike a volleyball or make a three-pointer; only yours truly had the courage to write that article. What followed were a series of opinions that were all different. If you're a true fan, you might even have your personal favorite.

The title of this article comes from the verse in "7 rings" by Ariana Grande that goes, "been through some bad s---/I should be a sad b---/who woulda thought it'd turn me to a savage?"

Instead of letting other people decide what they wanted my legacy to be, I made up a completely different one for myself. Throughout all the bad stuff that could've turned me into a sad boy, I decided I would become a savage. In other words, I realized that my only option was to take control over my own life, rather than letting others dictate my life. I realized that my goal for high school was simply to be happy, and to leave a legacy behind, two things that didn't necessarily always come from being a varsity athlete or having a friend group.

Last weekend, I went with my mom to see the musical, "Dear Evan Hansen," which tells the story of the wild last year for a formally depressed senior in high school.

Without digging into the plot, which is incredibly complicated, there was a scene in which the main character Evan is told by his mother that this part of his life will at some point seem like a distant memory.

I felt that. Hard. Like really, really hard.

There were times over the past couple of years in which I knew that college was around the corner and that this part of my life wouldn't last forever. But in those moments, sometimes it felt like there was no future and it felt like my life would never change.

I know for a fact that the "bad stuff I've been through probably isn't any worse than what the average high school student goes through, but still in those rough times, I could've never imagined the life I have now. I mean if you told me all that stuff would've turned me into a "savage," I probably would've told you to shut up. The funny part is, all the stuff I have now is ten times better than what I used to wish for just last year. But it's also different. And that part of my life that I spent watching Netflix on Friday nights really does feel like a distant memory.

Last week, in the moments after I was cut, I realized that because I was a senior, I could no longer do anything to prove to those coaches that I deserved to make the team—so I transferred the energy. The sport of volleyball no longer deserves

my energy. All of that energy and anger that came from being cut was put into this article, and into deep English class discussions, and into arguments with my friends, and into spinning classes at LifeTime (which are ten times worse than at Soul Cycle but they are free with a standard membership so we are chillin), and into many other, more deserving things in my life.

Instead of cutting me, my volleyball coach could've told me a million things about how I was the best volleyball player in the world—and that would've been great. But when my volleyball coach told me about how proud he was of how much I had grown throughout high school, that actually felt pretty great too.

So, I write this today, without a group chat or a spot on a varsity sports team, but with pink toenails, an amazing girlfriend, and a fire twitter account, still \*somehow\* with everything I could have ever wanted.

Take control of your life and transfer your energy towards worthy places and who knows what could happen. Maybe, just maybe, you'll turn into a savage just like me.



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