

The truth of “alternative facts”



by Max Minogue

I’ll be the first to admit that I’ve joked many times about the current political and general landscape of America in a rather nihilistic fashion.

After all, the easiest way to deal with all the problems out there is by pretending they don’t exist. Yada yada, ignorance is bliss.

For example, in regards to the environment it’s so convenient to pretend that everything is okay.

It’s awfully nice to pretend that the irreversible damage done by climate change is a non-issue, especially when it’s such a nice, warm February day.

I try not to think about that through my day-to-day life, because the idea of irreversible damage to our planet stresses me out.

Unfortunately for me and all of you, everybody now needs to be more involved in the political news cycle than ever before.

This has never been more clear than in the recent debacle involving the term ‘fake news.’

Essentially, CNN reported on an intelligence briefing regarding Russian involvement in the election. President Trump called the organization ‘fake news,’ refusing to answer any more questions.

More recently, President Trump tweeted about CNN cutting off Senator Bernie Sanders in an interview for jokingly using the term ‘fake news.’

This statement, according to

Politifact.com, is false and thereby fake news. They report that the broadcast only experienced technical difficulties several sentences later.

Quite the debacle. This happened in conjunction with Kellyanne Conway, Counselor to President Trump, using the infamous term ‘alternative facts’ when speaking of inauguration crowd size.

It’s the age of mass media at the price of reliability, quantity over quality.

Quite realistically, there isn’t a single most reliable source. MSNBC is the classic antithesis to Fox News, a liberal bias versus a conservative one.

CNN is its own problem, a victim of the 24 hour news cycle demanding constant news, resulting in a watered down yet over-dramatic broadcast.

There’s also, of course, the thousands of sensationalist ‘news’ sites being shared on Facebook and elsewhere, some being twisted truths and others being plain falsehoods.

This isn’t a conservative problem nor is it a liberal problem, it’s just a problem. And the solution is putting in a little more than the minimal effort to be somewhat aware of what’s happening.

That means not only reading more than the initial headline, but potentially reading two opposing articles on the same topic.

It means actually watching the source content, be it the Inaugural Address or the weekly White House press briefing. It is so incredibly easy to manipulate what people say by creating a context-less three second soundbyte.

In the case of the Sanders interview with CNN, Trump only mentioned Sanders saying,

“Well, I don’t know, maybe he was watching CNN fake news, what

do you think?” The interviewer, Burnett, responded “You don’t buy it?”

President Trump was honest in saying that the interview cut out after. However, Sanders responded “That was a joke.” Burnett responded saying, “I know it was a joke. I’m saying, you don’t buy what he said, obviously?” with the footage then cutting out.

It’s the age of mass media at the price of reliability, quantity over quality.

News organizations and politicians alike can manipulate anything people say possessing the slightest bit of humor, sarcasm, or personality into something despicable.

It’s exactly what happened after every single presidential debate, with ‘winners’ being declared as if it were a sporting event rather than a discussion on policy.

This problem is what I believe to be the root cause of the polarization of today’s political scene, which nearly every student can agree is a problem.

People on opposite ends of the political spectrum can never agree on a topic, since their underlying facts are different.

Therefore, to actively fight this polarized America that we all complain about, we all have to put forth some effort in order to become educated on topics, regardless of whether or not they agree with our own previous beliefs.

All current readers are not only the purveyors of the finest media outlet out there, the New Trier News, but also at the receiving end of a pretty great education. Use it.

Amy Adams deserves an Oscar



by Sam Blanc

On Jan. 24, nominees were announced for the 89th annual Academy Awards. 2016 having been a pretty noteworthy year for film, there were plenty of actors, actresses, and directors to choose from. So many, in fact, that it was inevitable that some of our favorites would be snubbed.

One snub, however, hit me harder than the rest. The fact that Amy Adams was not nominated for her leading role in “Arrival” honestly made me angrier than it probably should have.

This is ridiculous. I demand a recount. Fake news! SAD.

All jokes aside, I think she was brilliant. Let’s start at the beginning. For those of you who don’t know, “Arrival” is the most recent to join the ranks of such films as “Interstellar,” “Gravity,” and “The Martian”: movies about space that not only examine the power of space travel or a post-apocalyptic future, but to address common humanity as more than futuristic adventure stories.

It’s a film focused on a single story even with an expanding, worldwide narrative. And that single story relies wholeheartedly on Amy Adams who plays her role as Dr. Louise Banks with courage and

vulnerability.

Of course, with only five nomination spots, a great actress can still not make it. So let’s look at the women nominated: Ruth Negga in “Loving,” Isabelle Huppert in “Elle,” Emma Stone in “La La Land,” Natalie Portman in “Jackie,” and Meryl Streep in “Florence Foster Jenkins.”

The first problem I have with this list is that I have not seen the first two movies. Embarrassingly enough, I did not know what the film “Elle” was about until I googled it about five minutes ago. I know, I’m a disgrace to the film-loving community.

Amy Adams plays her role as Dr. Louise Banks with courage and vulnerability.

This issue makes it pretty difficult to judge the two nominees on their performances, so I’ll just assume they were absolutely spectacular (as I’m sure they were).

Emma Stone was nominated for “La La Land” as well. Anyone who’s looked over to see what I’m listening to on my phone knows that I’m absolutely in love with this movie. In fact, a lot of people seem to be in love with this movie.

The film won seven Golden Globes--Emma Stone winning for Best Actress in a Musical or Comedy Motion Picture--and it’s sure to win some Oscars as well considering its 12 nominations.

Of course, I’m from the

generation of ‘everybody plays, everybody wins,’ and I’d like to see Amy Adams get some love too.

The next nominee is Natalie Portman for her role as Jackie Kennedy in “Jackie.”

This movie was one of many in 2016 that made my pre-awards binge so depressing. One of a string of movies about the harsh realities of life with no happy endings that leave viewers with tears in their eyes and a little less hope in their hearts. (I’m looking at you, “Manchester by the Sea”).

I’ve found that it’s difficult for me to judge actors separately from the films they’re in, but to the extent that I can, I’ll say that Natalie Portman did a very good job.

Last, but most certainly not least, Meryl Streep in “Florence Foster Jenkins.” America’s favorite “overrated” actress.

I’m not going to lie, I really liked this movie. I really liked Meryl Streep in this movie. However, it was kind of a fluff piece and I just don’t think the role itself gave enough leeway for a best actress nomination.

It was certainly fun and goofy and likeable, and Streep had her touching moments at the end, but the role just didn’t pack the same punch as Adams’ did.

So I’m a little PO’ed. Can you tell? However, despite this disappointment, I’m excited for the 2017 Academy Awards and I’m looking forward to yelling my opinions about this award at the television. But hey, that’s showbiz.

Staff Editorial

Speak up or strike out

The Grammys, Golden Globes, and the SAG awards were filled with an abundance of political statements. From Meryl Streep’s comments against Donald Trump, to Katy Perry’s message to resist, to David Harbour’s passionate plea to repel bullies and accept the freaks, Hollywood has taken up the resistance against Trump’s policies.

Hollywood’s biggest stages have become political battlegrounds. On Sunday Feb. 5 America forgot the glam of Hollywood’s award season, and sports biggest field was instead in the spotlight.

Super Bowl LI was full of eventful moments from the Atlanta Falcon’s early points, to Tom Brady’s charge down the field to tie the score, to the historic overtime victory.

Throughout the game, viewers saw subtle political statements. Commercials from companies such as Lumber 84, Budweiser, Airbnb, and Coca-Cola made sly political statements supporting immigration, acceptance, and equality. Lady Gaga’s half time show was also riddled with understated political commentary.

Despite these instances of companies and performers taking a political stand, the athletes themselves never voiced their personal perspectives on the heated political climate. Despite all the screen time, all the moments between plays, the postgame interviews, no athlete made an effort to address our country’s issues.

Now, yes, they were playing in one of the biggest games of their careers, so their minds might not have been focused on the politics.

But the pressure and prestige of the Olympic games did not stop American athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos from using their spotlight to do the black power salute, a gesture that was meant to represent the fight for human rights across the globe.

Even American athletic icon Muhammed Ali advocated for civil rights and criticized the Vietnam War. Ali was even arrested for draft evasion in 1967, temporarily stripped of his titles and banned from boxing before his conviction was overturned by the Supreme Court.

Our political climate has begun to mirror the global political arena of the 1960’s-1970’s. Controversy and backlash follows every decision President Trump makes as political sides battle it out to form their ideal America. Protests and demonstrations are the new brunch. Many ordinary people have become more vocal. Isn’t it time athletes do the same and advocate for what they believe in?

Athletes offer a unique perspective, for only they continuously know what it is like to work as a team every day for one goal. Professional teams work together, despite race, ethnicity, political affiliation, or sexual orientation, to win. Jackie Robinson, the first African American baseball player exhibited this sentiment when he said “how you played in yesterday’s game is all that counts.”

Athletes only succeed with unity and cooperation, and yet when the unity and cooperation of the American political dynamic seems almost extinct, they stay mute behind their million dollar salaries.

We, as Chicagoans, know the high esteem we hold our athletes to, but they should no longer stay silent. They must use their spotlight to take a stand no matter the consequences. As Olympian John Carlos told The Guardian in 2012, “I had a moral obligation to step up. Morality was a far greater force than the rules and regulations they had.”

It is time for athletes to step it up.

New Trier’s Senior Class Presents Winter Carnival 2017

Friday, March 3
5:30 PM – 9:00 PM

New Trier High School – Winnetka Campus
Proceeds Benefit Habitat for Humanity
Fun for the entire family