



The High School View

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Brawl erupts on softball field

By Naomi Pallas

Armed with swords, students battled across the regional high school softball field, beating each other over the head and stabbing each other in the stomach.

Theater teacher Kate Murray's students practiced new skills, which they learned from fight choreographer J. David Brimmer, with fake weapons such as pool noodles, and real-looking violence.

Mr. Brimmer was invited to the Island by The Yard to teach students about stage combat from March 15-20. Mr. Brimmer, along with three New York University alum, taught students how to punch, kick, pull hair, slap, strangle, and use sword fighting techniques without causing physical harm to anyone.

"Our objective is to be able to show an audience the truth of the violence, not the reality. Reality doesn't work on stage," said Mr. Brimmer.

20 students gathered outside to watch the NYU alums Rin Allen, Ruby Joy, and Turner Smith perform sword fight scenes from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill*. "When plays were performed during the 17th and 18th cen-

turies, people knew what sword fighting looked like, so they had to be realistic," said Mr. Brimmer. "These days, combat still has a big demand based on what people see on TV and in movies."

"I got a demand for the Broadway show *Equivocation* for an actor to be hanged and quartered. When his head was off, it

people use can remove body parts and people have been killed on stage," said Mr. Brimmer. "But you can stop the swords on a dime, which is what you want to be able to do. Once, an actor had the direction to do a stomach slash, cut, and duck, but he ducked at the wrong time."

Mr. Brimmer also helped to choreograph the theater student's piece that they will perform at the Fringe Festival in Scotland in August, 2010. "I loved having outside artists teach us in their realm of expertise," said junior Vivian Ewing. "We were able to build off of what we learned last year, which was the first time that Mr. Brimmer worked with us."

Throughout the week, theater students staged fake fights in the hallways, shocking both faculty and fellow students. "It was awesome," said junior Ryker Maynard. "The fighting was so realistic, and so was the blood." The students had also learned to create blood from corn syrup, chocolate, peanut butter, and food coloring.

"People were shocked when they saw bloody kids running around the halls," said junior Mike Patnaude. "The whole experience was a lot of fun. We learned how to kick butt safely."



PHOTO BY MATT FISHER

NYU alum Turner Smith (left) and Rin Allen clang swords to demonstrate stage combat techniques.

had to be held up and say a line," said Mr. Brimmer. "The hanging was easy because we just had to clip the actor into a harness. But we put him in a black cloak to hide his body, and if the lighting was off, people in the audience just thought, 'oh, look, he's wearing a black snuggie.'"

"The steel swords that most

Struggle for redemption brings speaker to stage

By Caitlyn Clark

Mesmerized students and faculty sat quietly, asking only an occasional question, last Friday in the high school's Performing Arts Center as guest speaker Cory Scanlon took the stage. Cory described what it was like to live inside a nightmare from which waking up was not an option.

"We were four underage kids in a bar somewhere, totally out of our element," he said as he began to recall a night eight years ago.

During the school assembly, sponsored by the Youth Task Force, Cory spoke to students about drunk driving and underage drinking. "In high school I played soccer, baseball, and basketball. I was a normal kid growing up," he said, in Halifax, Massachusetts. "My parents were

very active in my life.

Like most freshmen entering high school, Cory was confronted with the problem of fitting in, finding himself, and dealing with peer pressure. "In seventh grade I met different people from three towns at our regional high school. I started drinking and smoking weed at 12 or 13-years-old. It escalated from that point on in my life."

In November of 2002, Cory and his three best friends Mike, P.J., and Brendan all went to a bar in Providence to celebrate P.J.'s 20th birthday. Cory was 19 at the time. After having only two shots and one beer the whole night, Cory thought he was capable of driving them all home. After leaving the bar, he still remembers his three friends laughing before they got into the car. To this day,

he can't remember what they were laughing about. When the car crashed, Mike and P.J. were ejected from the vehicle after hitting a guardrail on the highway and flipping over three times. Mike and P.J. died that night.

"I'm the reason why Mike's older brother and sister are now older than he ever was," Cory said. "This is Mike and P.J. up here. Take them with you. Help keep their memory alive. I want to prevent this from happening to someone else. I went to therapy for a while, and it helped, but I didn't feel like I was doing anything. That's why I'm here."

Cory was sentenced to four years in Dedham Correctional Facility and his license has been revoked for life. He was also on probation, and while he is legal to drink now, he chooses not to. "A

Delegates model the world

By Toby Riseborough



PHOTO BY TOVA KATZMAN

(From left to right) Taylor Smith, Rachel Pires, Olivia Hart, and Kayla Johnson are engaged in one of the many committee meetings students from all over the world attended last week.

New York City was filled with an especially high concentration of global issues last week as students from around the world—including Martha's Vineyard—came together to brainstorm solutions to what at times seemingly intractable problems.

Regional high school students recently returned from the National High School Model United Nations (NHSMUN) conference in New York City. They came back informed about world issues that they had the opportunity to investigate during five committee sessions during the trip.

Led by Spanish teacher Cindy West and parent chaperones Katherine Harcourt and Duke Smith, a group of delegates ranging from freshman to seniors traveled to explore common interests and learn about political policies from

different countries. There was constant communication with students from all over the world who came to debate issues such as the Darfur conflict in Sudan and HIV/AIDS education.

"The students loved traveling and the constant interaction with students from around the world," Ms. West said. "I loved that international boundaries were broken by the constant communication. The questions were definitely challenging."

Many of the students who attended were impressed by the trip. "I enjoyed the interactions the most," said junior Justine Tucker. "And also the political views of international students. The meetings enlightened us."

Being in the city became a new life experience for those who traveled. "I enjoyed just being in New York and meeting a lot of different people," said sophomore Eva Faber. "The committee meetings were pretty long—six hour sessions. I went because my parents thought it would be a good educational trip and I could meet new students."

"I was fascinated by the diversity," said junior Rachel Pires. "I enjoyed the meetings and I gained quite a few more views on international issues. It was also a big commitment, going to meetings and doing research."

day will come when my kid will ask me for a ride to soccer practice, and I won't be able to," he said.

According to Cory, his friend Brendan, who survived the accident, is currently doing well.

"The assembly was somber. I do not know how [Cory] can put himself through that at every assembly; he seemed to be going through a lot," an anonymous student said. "Wherever it comes from, either from the Island or somewhere else, underage drinking that results in drinking and driving is just terrible. I understand why we have him here, it might do things for drunk driving and it might raise awareness on the Island, but I don't know how much help it's going to do for underage drinking."

Cory also held the same assembly for parents on Friday night. "I think it was a genuine presentation and I think he did a great

job," said Sgt. Michael Marchand of Oak Bluffs Police Department, who attended the second presentation. "I actually had something like this when I was in high school, so this reminds me of the presentation I had. I think that his emotions made it more convincing and believable. It's no joke when you do state time—not that doing time here on the Island is easy, but when you're 18- or 19-years-old, doing state time is tough."

"It was informative and powerful, really made you think about what he was talking about," said sophomore Celia Mercier.

With both students and their parents satisfied with the information and knowledge they received, it is safe to say that Cory accomplished what he came to do. "Try to help each other out," Cory said. "A true friend doesn't put a friend in jeopardy."

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