

# featured adventure

On this issue's featured adventure, take a trip to one of Rocky Mountain National Park's most spectacular locations.

story by **john kowalski**

Upper Glacier Gorge is one of the most beautiful locations in Colorado, with towering granite cliffs above a beautiful alpine basin. This amazing location is accessible via a 13 mile hike, travelling on a well-trodden trail through a beautiful glacial valley.

Begin at Glacier Gorge Trailhead and follow signs to Black Lake. After 3 or so miles of hiking you'll reach Mills Lake, a long body of water that provides beautiful views of Longs Peak and the Keyboard of the Winds, a jagged granite ridge above Glacier Gorge.

Continue forward to Black Lake, approximately 5 miles into your hike. From here, an obvious social trail goes around the lake, and brings you past the view seen in the photo. Go a bit further on the trail, and Upper Glacier Gorge is yours.

Looking out over Black Lake and 13,327 foot McHenry Peak.  
photo by john kowalski.



# CULTURE IN 2023

A cultural recap of the last 12 months in Hollywood.

story by **abby henderson**

In the landscape of pop culture, 2023 has proven to be a year of thrilling events, captivating debates, and the resurgence of iconic figures. Pop culture is defined as modern popular culture, often artistic output, that is prevalent in a society at a given point in time. As the year unfolds, the current realm of pop culture is witnessing an abundance of creativity, influence, and discourse.

From Barbenheimer to Taylor Swift's Eras Tour, new releases from Drake, Beyonce, and Olivia Rodrigo, and two Elvis biopics, this year has become a mosaic of pop culture dynamics.

This summer, internet culture created the concept of Barbenheimer, a plan to watch both Barbie and Oppenheimer in the theatres on July 21st, causing memes and fan narratives of Barbie and the father of the atomic bomb, J. Robert Oppenheimer to flood social media.

The same-day release date of Barbie and Oppenheimer sparked intriguing conversations on media platforms, reflecting the public's appetite for unconventional yet thought-provoking content. "They were really different. I think I liked Barbie more as just a viewer versus as someone who likes film-making, I thought Oppenheimer was a little bit stronger. I saw them both on the same day, and I feel like I appreciated Barbie a little more but overall they were both amazing movies and a fun little cultural phenomenon," said John Miley (12). However, others felt contrarily. "Even though I didn't watch Oppenheimer, I think I'd like it better than Barbie because I feel like it's more scientific and involves actual knowledge. I was lowkey over Barbie by the end of the movie," said Darya Iganian (11). Barbenheimer serves as a reminder of the internet's ability

to turn the most unlikely pairings into engaging narratives.

In 2023, Taylor Swift's Eras Tour has become a transformative journey through the chapters of time. Swift's ability to encapsulate distinct eras of her career within a live performance of 73 songs has turned each concert into a celebration of growth and shared experiences within the community. "Everybody loves Taylor Swift," said Gavi Schultheiss (11).

The tour has become a cultural landmark, fostering a collective appreciation for the ever-changing nature of art and self-identity. Swift's Eras Tour has not only brought people together but has also provided a platform for fans to reflect on their own narratives through the music. "They were the biggest spectacle concerts with a giant revenue and no one's every paid as much attention to a concert tour as much as that tour," said Chayne Keith, culinary teacher. Taylor Swift's Eras Tour isn't just a journey through Swift's discography; it has also emerged as a significant economic force. The tour's impact extends beyond the sold-out arenas, influencing local economies through increased tourism, boosted hospitality sectors, and a surge in merchandise sales. "She contributed back money to the Denver area food banks," said office aid, Suzanne Millner. Swift continues to prove that her impact extends far beyond the stage.

The newly released Priscilla movie, directed by Sofia Coppola, has found itself at the center of a casting debate, with Jacob Elordi and Austin Butler at the center. Both Elordi and Butler have played the role of the iconic Elvis Presley in 2023, in their respective movies Elvis and Priscilla. Fans and critics alike engage in conversations surrounding not only the

actors' merits but also the responsibility of capturing the essence of a cultural icon on screen. "I think Jacob Elordi played Elvis really well and was able to express the different layers of Elvis's character through his performance," said Katie Teaford (12), while others preferred Butler's performance of the iconic figure. "I thought Austin Butler did a really great job and his preparation and work showed in his performance," said Rose Meunier (12).

Established names like Drake, Rihanna, and Beyonce, along with the fresh talent of Olivia Rodrigo, continue to push the boundaries of musical expression. Drake, known for his chart-topping hits, has teased new music that promises to dominate the charts once again. "The new Drake album came out, which was big because his last one sucked," said Angel Marquez (11). Jane Barlament (10) thought the most iconic pop culture moment this year was "Rihanna's Super Bowl halftime show," which took place in February of this year, in the middle of the Philadelphia Eagles and Kansas City Chiefs Super Bowl game. These artists' upcoming releases and tour announcements signal the enduring appeal of live performances in an era dominated by digital consumption.

As the cultural landscape of 2023 unfolds, these facets of pop culture serve as reflections of a society navigating between tradition and innovation, individualism and collective experience. They contribute to a collective dialogue, offering insight into the intricate interplay between art, commerce, and societal narratives.



# A PUSH FOR INCLUSIVITY

The ongoing effort to bring an Ethnic Studies course to Fairview High School.

story by john kowalski

In some parts of the country, there has been a push for inclusivity in education, with districts and school boards implementing diversity and inclusion programs throughout all levels of U.S. education. From efforts to introduce students to the harmful impacts of racism at an early age, to the creation of Ethnic Studies courses that attempt to provide students with representation, there is an increasing want for opportunities that increase equality and bring justice across the board.

"When I went to college I... didn't have an Ethnic Studies department," said Dr. Patricia Gonzalez, the Assistant Dean at CU for Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion. "It was on January 1st, 1996 that the Department of Ethnic Studies came to CU Boulder... It began based on people wanting this type of conversation to happen, wanting their experiences to be centered at the college level, and also because nationally there were other colleges like San Francisco State University who were already... establishing the work," said Gonzalez.

Throughout many collegiate spaces inclusivity has been pushed to the forefront, with difficult discussions regarding the history of higher level education occurring in lecture halls and classes across the nation. "Higher education is a system which was created for the predominantly white male... Christian... and oftentimes, well, economic status played a role in that... So, a lot of people, including women... low-income class... individuals had to play catch up to be able to be a part of that system," said Gonzalez.

"If we didn't focus on diversity, if we didn't focus on equity, a lot of folks would not be able to access education today," added Gonzalez.

This movement has not solely been relegated to collegiate education though. In school districts around the country there has been a push for more inclusive education, education which gives voice to underrepresented minorities and the struggles they face. This hope for more representation exists in BVSD as well, with one group working hard to bring Ethnic Studies courses to schools around the district.

Ethnic Studies is a course that aims to educate students on the impact of racism and bigotry on underrepresented and undervoiced groups, such as the BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ communities.

**"THERE'S MULTIPLE OTHER STUDENTS ACROSS BVSD... THAT ARE PUSHING FOR THIS COURSE TO COME INTO THEIR SCHOOLS."**

TRISTAN FOSTER (11)

"It also helps to give a background that not a lot of people get to hear. It kind of focuses on not so well known leaders and civil rights movements and Black Heritage and all that fun stuff" said Tristan Foster (11).

Foster is a member of BVSD's Youth Equity Council, an organization which aims to give a voice for the students of the district, who are not typically represented in meetings at the administrative level. With various equity projects being undertaken by the group, Foster and a determined team have been working on bringing Ethnic Studies to Fairview, a course which is present in a select few schools in the district. "So Isaiah Williams worked really hard on this course. He pretty much built it up from the ground up... it's been pretty much his life's work, which is kind of funny because he's still young" said Foster.

"But he got it into Centaurus, and I believe there's people working on it at Boulder, Broomfield and here. There's multiple other students across BVSD... that are trying to push for this course to come into their schools" added Foster.

Although some school districts in the U.S. are working to bring courses and programs like Ethnic Studies to their classrooms, others are pushing back against inclusivity programs, citing indoctrination of the youth and a "woke" ideological agenda. "DEI [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion] is better viewed as standing for discrimination, exclusion, and indoctrination, and that has no place in our public institutions" said Ronald Desantis, Gov. of Florida (Source: *10 Tampa Bay*). This pushback is taking place within the college admissions process as well, with affirmative action in admissions, a program meant to serve underrepresented minorities, now illegal.

With Texas, Florida, Tennessee, Oklahoma, and even more states implementing anti-DEI laws, a large shadow looms over the future of some Ethnic Studies programs in the country. "I don't understand it. It's just diversity. People are all people in my head," said Foster. "We should all be equal. There's no difference

between you and me, you know, except for our personality, and I feel people should be judged based on their personality instead of things they can't control like they're race, identity or gender," added Foster.

Even with such heavy barriers, many students would still take an Ethnic Studies Course if it came to Fairview. "I think that could be really cool," said Malcolm Hunter (10). Foster has heard similar responses from other students as well. "I've actually had a couple of students come up to me and be like, thank you so much for doing this work, I really like this class, I really want to take this class. So I definitely think there's a group of students that want to take this class here at Fairview," said Foster.

The importance of having inclusive education for all students cannot be overstated. When equity and inclusion is actively worked toward, it ends up benefiting everyone, not just the students that it targets specifically. "When I think about equity, I think about... if you've ever seen a ramp when you go up a sidewalk. Oftentimes people may think, well, that's a ramp for disabled people, but I think about how everyone benefits from equity. I think about that ramp when I'm pushing my son in his stroller. I'm able to go up the ramp when I have heavy things, if I'm carrying luggage and I'm running to go somewhere. I'm able to use that ramp when I am riding a bike," said Gonzalez.

**"AND WHEN WE THINK THAT IT ONLY BENEFITS BIPOC PEOPLE AND DISADVANTAGES OTHERS, THEN WE'RE NOT UNDERSTANDING WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT WHEN WE SAY EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION."**

DR. PATRICIA GONZALEZ,  
ASSISTANT DEAN AT CU FOR JUSTICE  
EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

"I think about the benefits, right? I think about how equity is so necessary. And when we think that it only benefits BIPOC people and disadvantages others, then we're not understanding what we are talking about when we say equity, diversity and inclusion," added Gonzalez.

## featured adventure

In this issue's featured adventure, take a classic Boulder hike to a beautiful vantage of the Third Flatiron.

story by john kowalski

The Third Flatiron.  
photo by john  
kowalski.

This is a fun adventure up to one of the best views in Boulder. Begin by hiking up the main Chautauqua Trail, following signs for the 1st/2nd Flatiron Descent Trail. Ascend up this route, making sure to take in various spectacular views along the way. Finally, you'll make your way up between the 1st and 2nd Flatirons, going behind them and reaching this marvelous vista.

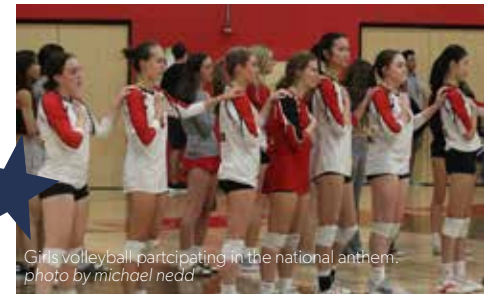


# PLEGGED TO A PRETENSE

Why the Pledge of Allegiance is obsolete and puts pressure on students

story by natalie nedd

*I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND TO THE REPUBLIC FOR WHICH IT STANDS, ONE NATION UNDER GOD, INDIVISIBLE WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.*



Girls volleyball participating in the national anthem. photo by michael nedd

These familiar words ring across not just Fairview but every school in the United States daily.

Patriotism bleeds in our lives so frequently that we sometimes fail to distinguish it. From sporting games to classrooms, we sing the praises of America all too often. It may seem mundane, but the words that I match to recite are something that I don't think about too frequently.

Everybody reading this article has some positive or negative opinion or a specific memory associated with the Pledge. My first day of kindergarten was new and puzzling, as everything was new to my six-year-old self. What I remember being most striking was having to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. I had never heard of such a thing - why did we have to stand up and recite an oath of allegiance? I was confused because I had no prior knowledge of this tradition, and I didn't understand why we all had to do this stand-up, hand-over-heart thing every morning.

Historically, the Pledge of Allegiance has been honorable in American public schools. Written in 1882 by Francis Bellamy, it was incorporated into schools to instill pride and patriotism into the youth of America. For generations, the Pledge of Allegiance has been so prevalent in many societal aspects that it's permanently fixed as a pivotal part of American culture.

The Pledge of Allegiance was evidently created with the idea of nationalism and symbolic intention. It's similar to how others, including myself, will cheer for Team USA during the Olympics. We all have our ways of expressing our patriotism. However, the U.S. has become much

more multicultural since the Pledge was written in 1882 due to immigration from WWI and WWII. Since then, many Americans have become attuned to the pledge and its meaning, spiking major controversy. Though I respect the intent of the pledge, not only has it become prob-

lematic to myself but to others as well. Times are changing quickly and dramatically, and the backbone of American pride needs to change with them.

Part of the problem lies in the pledge's place in schools, more of a habit than a symbol. In the first few years of my academic career, nobody explained its significance to me. However, I participated anyway due to the pressure from classmates, teachers, and general social standards. As I've intellectually grown, I developed my own opinions and ideas and began to recognize the symbols of patriotism and honorship behind the pledge, it became uncomfortable for me to state these words that I did not believe in nor relate to. The pressure I developed in my elementary years had given me a new perspective. Scolds of "stand up" or "be respectful and say the pledge" were completely defunctive and hypocritical of the ideas the United States flag represents.

The issue was not the pledge itself, but the cultural phenomenon it has created. Peer and adult pressure made me insecure; I felt I was doing something wrong if I didn't participate. It's ironic that a country that supports liberty and freedom of thought constantly pressures students to recite an oath of allegiance - especially since many of these students are young and uninformed people with no understanding of its significance.

The phrase "with liberty and justice for all" is very contradictory to me. Injustice and discrimination have incessantly plagued our nation from its very founding to the world we live in today. Racism, sexism, and homophobia are not issues America has left in a distant history; society and the government have historically targeted these marginalized groups, making them vulnerable and in the spotlight of violence. Some of these people have or have had a point living in America while treated with prejudice - a hypocritical statistic for the values set upon the 1st amendment. I don't believe this part of the pledge reflects accurately or fairly in our country.

The phrase "one nation under god" originally wasn't in the pledge but was added in 1954 during the Cold War to emphasize the United States' superiority over the Soviet Union. This of course was a time when Christianity was and still is the prominent religion in the U.S.

As history has progressed, much more diversity and culture is in the US now. As there are more religious demographics in the US, I believe that "under god" kind has the connotation of being a nation under "Jesus," which has become outdated and discriminatory towards other demographics. I don't believe it would be fair for other religious followers to pledge themselves to a religious figure they don't believe in. It's also ironic how a nation that dignifies the separation of church and state allows for a religious theme in the pledge for students to participate in, especially when lots of them are uneducated about the meaning - just as I was.

I heavily mentioned the intent and symbolic meaning the Pledge has in American culture. Over the years though, it seems the pledge, written in 1882 vs. 2023, isn't on the same page, due to time and technology changing American culture. To some, the Pledge would be considered politically incorrect. During the time it was written, it may have been effective and agreeable to the American people, but in modern times, I see many problems with it. Our societal values are changing, and what might have been true in the 1800s isn't necessarily something we would agree with now.

The United States is a country with many accomplishments and advancements, though has its issues. In contrast, the Pledge of Allegiance isn't the largest problem our country is facing. The Pledge of Allegiance provides an inaccurate sense of symbolic association. The many controversial and hypocritical aspects coming from the Pledge are something that I cannot participate in. To me, the Pledge of Allegiance isn't beneficial and isn't an appropriate way for me to recite my patriotism. Expressing patriotism is different for all, and it needs to be recognized in a way that doesn't pressure the children of America to stand up and make a Pledge of Allegiance.



Soaring above Boulder, this spectacular viewpoint of the Maiden Flatiron and its massive, 200 foot overhang is accessible via a steep climber's trail and some adventurous route-finding.

Begin at the South Mesa Trailhead and follow the Mesa Trail until it intersects with the North Shadow Canyon Trail, about 2.2 miles into your approach. Follow the trail for half a mile, and then take a right at a large cairn.

From here, the trail steeply carves its way through the brush, before ultimately arriving at the base of the flatiron.

To reach the viewpoint, follow a rough path along the south wall of the formation.

As the walls box you in make sure to look to your left, finding a small cave. A cramped space, a small opening exists in the back of the cave. If you manage to crawl through this claustrophobic tunnel, you'll find yourself in a small alcove, below a large rock.

A short scramble up the rock, and the view of the Maiden's South Face is yours.

## featured adventure

On this issue's featured adventure, take a route to one of Boulder's best overlooks.

story by john kowalski



The Maiden's South Face, with a 200 foot overhang. photo by john kowalski.