

Celebrity look-alike trend is silly and fun

LAILA CASIANO

OPINION EDITOR

If you're as chronically online as I am, you've probably seen the viral trend of people gathering worldwide to compete in celebrity look-alike competitions.

Let me just say, this recent craze of supposed doppelgangers resembling the world's biggest heartthrobs and the latest "White Boy of the Month" gives me a surprising sense of hope for humanity.

This is the most united and fun I've seen people be since "Barbenheimer," the cultural phenomena that had people celebrate and tribute the iconic dual release for the 2023 summer blockbusters "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer," by watching both features back-to-back and dressing accordingly to the film's aesthetic.

And I know "Barbenheimer" only occurred a year ago, but a lot has happened since then. With the most recent presidential election, having a sense of community and unity over something so stupid, random and outright ridiculous is needed.

It all began with the Timothée Chalamet look-alike contest on Oct. 27, where it was created by a

Youtuber named Anthony Po, who is referred to by his fanbase as the "less hot Timothée Chalamet." He posted 100 flyers around New York City, encouraging anyone who resembles the "Wonka" actor to come and compete for the chance to win \$50.

Roughly 10,000 people attended, with ten "Timothées" competing and Chalamet himself making a surprise appearance.

Since then, other celebrity look-alike contests have sprung up, with people hoping to catch a glimpse of someone who could vaguely resemble Harry Styles, Dev Patel, Paul Mescal and Zayn Malik. With future dates for contests taking place for those who resemble Zendaya, Josh O'Connor, Mike Faist and John F. Kennedy in the remaining days of November and the start of December.

But it's not just about Hollywood heartthrobs. The diversity in these look-alike competitions reflect a shift in celebrity culture. Fans celebrating figures like Patel or Malik show a broadening range of who we as a society consider iconic and worth emulating. And through social media platforms like TikTok, X and Instagram, the hype and love spreads and gains amplification.

These gatherings offer a unique form of connection within this digital age, uniting fans and people in the real world through shared humor and a sense of community.

I remember first seeing the Chalamet look-alike event flyer circulating on X, formerly known as Twitter, and thinking it was dumb and hilarious. After that, I didn't really think much of it since the event was still two months away from taking place.

It wasn't until the notorious

Pop Crave account began counting down the days leading up to it that I started to get really excited. Imagine my surprise when I saw photos and videos of hundreds of people actually there.

And I was even more shocked when I saw AP news streaming live from the event. I remember watching it with my friends as we refreshed our timelines to see who the contenders were.

And although there were some questionable winners — oftentimes, I had to squint

to really see the similarities — these look-alike contests were more than just a parade of good-looking men or silly gimmicks. They offered a fun and unexpected sense of hope and childlike joy that often gets lost in the chaos of everyday life.

Celebrity culture can be so chaotic and toxic, but this aspect — where people come together to enjoy a rare, odd and spontaneous experience — feels like something we've needed since the pandemic forced us to socially distance.

In an era where heavy news cycles and ongoing societal challenges are present, it's no wonder people crave moments of pure joy and lighthearted fun. These contests bring a much-needed break, allowing us to bond over our shared fascination with celebrity culture in a way that can be fun and heartwarming.

So, now seems like the perfect time to embrace moments like these, where we can gather, participate and share in the simple joys of being happy and silly.



COURTESY OF AP NEWS

Miles Mitchell, the winner of the Timothée Chalamet look-alike contest in New York City, dressed as Willy Wonka.

Paul vs. Tyson was sad and disappointing

ELIJAH TEMPLETON

LIFE EDITOR

Last weekend, Jake Paul and Mike Tyson finally met in the ring for their highly anticipated spectacle of a boxing match. I was thoroughly disappointed.

Despite an exciting build up of Paul guaranteeing a dominant knockout victory and Tyson uttering incredibly chilling lines straight out of a gladiator movie, the fight itself failed to deliver on much at all.

8 rounds of Tyson standing with his hands up, chewing on his glove and hardly throwing a single punch. He seemed a shell of himself, looking all of the 58 year old man that he had managed to convince many he was not.

Paul did not do much to help either, seeming reluctant to really engage and spent most of the fight throwing left-handed jabs that merely scored points rather than inflicting any damage.

That is not to say that I wanted Paul to hurt Tyson, in fact, I more so wanted both fighters to put on an entertaining show but walk away relatively unscathed.

Paul ended up winning the fight by unanimous decision and was gracious enough in his victory speech, heaping praise and respect on Tyson for stepping into the ring at

his age, but the live crowd and the millions watching did not share the sentiment.

Online reactions were overwhelmingly negative and the stadium crowd in attendance booed the fighters throughout the fight and rained boos down on Paul when he was announced the victor.

It was not the kind of boo's that Paul works to garner however. Not the kind of 'heat' that helps him to promote fights and get people to fork over money to watch someone potentially knock him out. These were the kind of boo's that come from a crowd who felt like they just wasted their time and money on a disappointing event that did not live up to the billing they were sold on.

The under card for this event was actually fairly strong,

but ultimately, I felt silly for wasting time watching it. It was a spectacle to be sure, but lacked any real substance. The promoters were able to get millions of eyes on this card and failed to deliver on anything that could conceivably draw viewers back for Paul's next bout, whenever that may be.

Paul will no doubt coax some another former MMA champion out of retirement for a knockout and a paycheck and life will go on as it ever has.

It was sad to see Tyson look so far removed from his glory days, but as they say, father time is undefeated and I am ultimately grateful that he wasn't seriously injured because he looked completely out of his league with Paul, a reality that no one would have hoped to see.

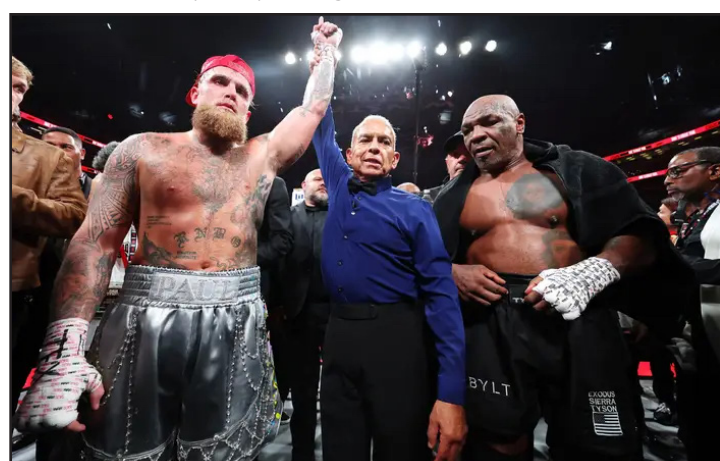


PHOTO COURTESY OF BUSINESS INSIDER

Jake Paul is announced as the winner of the fight by unanimous decision.

THIS WEEK'S POP PICK

ELIJAH TEMPLETON | LIFE EDITOR

"DUNE: PROPHECY"



COURTESY OF IMDB

Sunday night was the series premiere of "Dune: Prophecy," the new prequel series set in the universe of Frank Herbert's sci-fi classic "Dune."

The show primarily follows two sisters, Valya and Tula Harkonnen, as they work to establish control over the universe and form the sisterhood that will become known as the Bene Gesserit.

"Dune: Prophecy" is set 10,000 years before the birth of Paul Atreides, the protagonist of the first three "Dune" novels and the character played by Timothée Chalamet in Denis Villeneuve's box office smashing big screen adaptations.

The first episode was a very strong opening to the series, doing the difficult task of introducing potential new viewers to the world of "Dune" and doing it quite well, with little room for viewers to be confused as to what was going on or who a

character was.

The casting is superb, with Travis Fimmel, playing the mysterious Desmond Hart, being a particular favorite of mine.

The plot is intriguing with a variety of unique characters who are all working towards their own ends, ensuring a fiery conflict that is sure to come to a head later in the season.

The score is excellent and very reminiscent of the sound established by Villeneuve's adaptations.

The show centers around 'palace intrigue' with different characters scheming and double crossing each other in pursuit of power and control, more reminiscent of early seasons of "Game of Thrones" than an action packed blockbuster.

I am often cautious about prequels and spin-off series, as they far too often feel like hollow cash-grabs meant to capitalize on the success of an IP instead of creating a unique entity that can stand on its own.

"Dune: Prophecy" is not reliant on the viewer having seen the "Dune" movies or having read the books. It is great and stands on its own two feet in a way that is really exciting for the future of the show and I cannot wait to see where it goes from here.

Official Score: 9/10

CLUB SPOTLIGHT: SAI EPSILON GAMMA

LAILA CASIANO

OPINION EDITOR

Sigma Alpha Iota (SAI) Epsilon Gamma, one of the three music Tri-Greek chapters, fosters sisterhood, community and philanthropy while encouraging and supporting musicians of all majors.

Students from choir, music education and instrumental make up most of its membership, with roughly 15 active members.

"Being a part of Sigma Alpha Iota means so much to me," Caidyn Smith said. "Being able to just create friendships and build my future, it's incredible."

Smith, a senior interdisciplinary studies major with a focus on funeral science from Truman, Arkansas, serves as the chapter's president.

She got involved with the chapter during her sophomore year after searching for a group to join. Encouraged by a clarinet player who was president at the time, Smith soon became secretary and later vice president for membership before running for her current position.

"I'm really passionate about the chapter, and I really loved being the secretary, and I wanted to do a little bit more, so I did that, and really enjoyed it," Smith said.

She said the chapter focuses on making connections that will be beneficial for future careers.

"It's all about making connections with the people in the group to use in the future, and then getting to know people with different jobs,

and just building a contact book of people," Smith said.

She added that being a part of the chapter has helped her grow personally and professionally.

"I really kind of struggled with that in high school but when I got to college and joined this group, I really kind of came into my own," Smith said. "It's helped me get better at talking to people above me, and just interacting with others in general."

The chapter has been active since the 1970s, focusing on community, music promotion, service projects and professional networking. SAI has worked closely with alumni chapters at local schools and conducted service projects on campus to strengthen its ties within the community.

Last year, the chapter hosted a Christmas toy drive and is currently working on philanthropy projects to support its national headquarters, which was affected by a hurricane.

Smith said that as the organization gains momentum and membership, its visibility has been key to its philanthropic efforts.

"Getting more recognition and being seen just a little bit more has made me really proud to be part of the fraternity that's doing its job and getting things done," Smith said.

Kristin Leitnerman, an assistant professor for oboe and bassoon, is the adviser for the chapter.

She said SAI and the other music Tri-Greek organizations contribute to the overall

musical experience at A-State through its networking efforts.

"It is very important to have these student-led organizations within the Department of Music because it gives our students the opportunity to get experience in leadership roles where they have a say in what they are creating for their organization and the department," Leitnerman said.

She said the organization helps bridge a gap between music majors and other students across campus that still love music and want to be involved in it.

"The students get very close to each other and become a support system for each other," Leitnerman said.

Zoey McGillvray, a

sophomore music education major from Bald Knob, Arkansas, is the chapter's editor.

She said SAI is a social organization for like-minded individuals who share a passion for music.

"We are set apart in the way that everyone is involved in a musical aspect on campus in one form or another," McGillvray said.

Through these organizations, she said she was given many performance opportunities, as well as lasting friendships and memories.

"Sigma Alpha Iota is such a friendly and outgoing organization. Our fraternity loves all things music and everyone is so supportive of each other," McGillvray

said. "There's so much learning experience and opportunities within SAI."

As a smaller group compared to other musical Tri-Greek chapters, McGillvray said close contact and connections help affirm the chapter's support for its members regarding future prospects, academics or personal concerns.

"If a member needs anything at all, we will absolutely be the first person there for you," McGillvray said.

She also highlighted a special tradition for graduating members: the chapter sings in a circle around them.

"Although we lose a classmate, we never lose a sister," McGillvray said. "Us singing is a way of

expressing our gratitude for them; we don't sing as a goodbye, but as good luck."

She said she's excited to see the chapter grow as they recently welcomed three new members this semester. She said she is optimistic about the next semester regarding membership.

"I love getting to design and create new projects in order to help spread information about us and hopefully gain interest," McGillvray said.

"I am excited to see what we take on next semester and to see what all I can create!"

To join, candidates must have at least one hour of college music credit and a genuine interest and passion for music.



Members of SAI Epsilon Gamma at an initiation event.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CAIDYN SMITH

Student Speak: What is your dream job?



Jarius Jackson, a senior history and philosophy double major from Little Rock.

Jarius said:

"I guess a job where I have a lot of free time to explore things, maybe a job where I get to travel."



Ryan Brasher, a senior creative media production from Benton, Arkansas.

Ryan said:

"My dream job is being a touring concert photographer, so being hired out by bands to go on tour and do other media and video, photos and all that fun stuff."



Kyra Evans, a sophomore nursing major from Cave City, Arkansas.

Kyra said:

"It would have been really cool to be a fashion stylist. They don't really have fashion schools in Arkansas, though, and I'm just kind of riding out my scholarships right now. But after graduation, maybe. Maybe one day."



Joseph Crumpler, a first-year accounting major from West Memphis, Arkansas.

Joseph said:

"My dream job is to actually work for the Federal Reserve of St. Louis and be a bank auditor."