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DEBATE OVER MINIMUM WAGE CONTINUES

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We need a higher minimum wage

During the election, the Alberta New Democratic Party promised to raise the provincial minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2018.

The NDP took control of the legislature from the Tories on May 5, and new Premier Rachel Notley says the party plans to follow through with its campaign promise. Although the proposed change was immediately met with fear-mongering, a \$15 an hour minimum wage will be good for the province.

Living in Calgary isn't cheap. According to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the living wage — the minimum hourly wage needed to raise a family here — is \$17 an hour. The current minimum wage of \$10.20 an hour isn't high enough for workers to stay above the poverty line.

Low wages traps workers in a cycle of poverty that taxpayers end up paying for. If businesses can't afford to pay their employees a living wage, they don't meet the requirements of a functioning business. We shouldn't



SAMANTHA LUCY

have to subsidize businesses too cheap to pay their workers.

Critics claim increasing the minimum wage would be detrimental to the economy, hurting companies that can't afford to increase their workers' wages. But the proposed incremental increase will ultimately have a positive effect on businesses. Corporations will be able to build the projected increase in minimum

wage into their operating costs over the years. The incremental increase gives companies time to adjust to the change.

Businesses won't lay off as many workers as critics think. The shift-based service industries this minimum wage increase will reportedly affect most likely already employ the minimum amount of workers they need to keep their business running.

Companies don't give employees hours out of the kindness of their hearts. They give workers the hours needed to run their business. The amount of hours a company will need to ensure their business can function won't change if the minimum wage rises. Businesses may make less profit, but that's not the same as job loss.

We need to consider what the point of our economy is. Businesses aren't helpful solely because they make money. They supply goods and services we can purchase and give workers a living wage that can be used to purchase those same goods and services. When workers are paid more, they'll have more disposable income to put back into businesses. Everybody wins.

Raising the minimum wage is a no-brainer. If Notley's NDP can ignore the naysayers and pull it off, the standard of living will increase for all Albertans.

Jason Herring
Gauntlet Editorial Board

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STUDENTS SU UNION

PROVINCE »

Debate over minimum wage continues as Notley is sworn in

Fabian Mayer
News Editor

The Alberta New Democratic Party reaffirmed its intention to implement a \$15 an hour provincial minimum wage last week. The promise, part of the NDP's election platform, was celebrated by labour unions and decried as irresponsible by many businesses.

Students are one of the groups affected most by minimum wage legislation. The proposed near 50 per cent increase would give Alberta the highest minimum wage in the country. Many students work part-time during the semester to help pay for school.

The SU does not have an official stance on minimum wage legislation. Vice-president external Romy Garrido said the issue is an economic question that affects all Albertans.

"Minimum wage is such a big conversation, it goes beyond the scope of students," Garrido said.

However, Garrido said a \$15 minimum wage would positively impact students.

"Part-time jobs are really not cutting it to be able to pay your way through education. Any kind of increase in funding that goes into students' pockets is definitely something positive," Garrido said.

U of C economics professor Herbert Emery said it's difficult to predict the effects of such a large increase.

"We're in a bit of a world where we don't actually know what the outcomes will be," Emery said. "We don't know how hours are going to adjust, which might off-set any benefit."

Emery believes increasing the minimum wage won't help society's most disadvantaged.

"It tends not to be the best instrument for addressing poverty. Instead it tends to affect casual employment, younger workers like students," Emery said.

He argues the focus on the topic is politically motivated.

"The fixation on the minimum wage strikes a note with the populist



Rachel Notley promised to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour during the election campaign. **ALEXANDER KIM** start their careers.

It tends not to be the best instrument for addressing poverty. Instead it tends to affect casual employment, younger workers like students.

—Economics professor Herbert Emery

sentiment among the centre-left in Alberta, without actually thinking about [if] it would achieve anything," Emery said.

Third-year computer science student Matthew Bauman works part-time at Tim Horton's during the school year. He makes just above minimum wage and opposes the proposed increase.

"A higher minimum wage is just going to lead to problems with employers having to cut hours or

maybe hire less people," Bauman said.

Bauman is not convinced he would personally benefit from the wage hike.

"Not enough that it would matter," Bauman said. "My wage would go up a couple dollars an hour, but I only work a few hours a week anyways."

Emery thinks the fear of the increase hurting businesses is overblown. He worries more about how it might affect students' ability to

"Is the minimum wage the best policy to help young workers gain experience and get a foothold in the labour market? I just don't think it's a great policy for that," Emery said.

The SU has roughly 200 employees, some of whom earn less than \$15 an hour. Garrido isn't worried about the higher wages the SU would need to pay if the NDP follows through on its promise.

"The SU pays above minimum wage to all students," Garrido said. "We keep [wages] pretty competitive and of course with any changes in the province we would continue to keep them competitive."

The NDP plans to gradually phase in the higher minimum wage. Any legislation on the issue will not be voted on until the fall session of the legislature.

short form

What do you think of the idea for a \$15 minimum wage?



"It's good for people that do those jobs."

— Ayesha Irfan, fourth-year engineering



"It would hurt small businesses."

— Roberto Cavedoni, fourth-year engineering



"It's a drastic increase."

— Hayden Segboer, third-year biochemistry



"I think it's a great idea if it's widespread."

— David Piepgrass, first-year masters computer science

Photos: Fabian Mayer
Interviews: Daniela Veiga

Tech expert explores social computing

Claudia Wong
Gauntlet News

Technology expert Xun Luo gave a talk about how social elements are natural ingredients for computing at the University of Calgary on May 25.

Luo works with Qualcomm Research, an American communications company. He holds a PhD in computer science and is the inventor or co-inventor of over 20 American patents.

Social computing refers to the social aspects and behaviours of computational systems. Luo's presentation discussed how the social elements of society interact with computing and how technology will continue to evolve and affect social computing.

Luo does not attribute any one technological breakthrough as having the biggest impact on our lives. Instead, he claims innovation happens from the integration of multiple breakthroughs.

"A common cellphone has almost 50,000 patents built in," Luo said.

Luo said that we are living in an unprecedented era of technological advancement where venture capitalists are investing in social computing more than ever before.

"This is the golden age for innovation and the golden age for users."

Luo defines human computing as "group wisdom" like online restaurant reviews. He believes social computing has become more prominent. Mobile devices make technology more personal, wireless connections allow social computing to work anywhere and many new technologies are available.

"Anywhere, personal and anything. The anywhere part, I call it ubiquitous, and the anything part, I call it pervasive," Luo said.

Three steps make up social computing: input, computing automata and output. A simple example is Dabbawalla, a food express delivery service originating in Mumbai, India before being replicated in China.

The input for Dabbawalla is information about small restaurants on mobile device. The computing automata is the cloud-based processing infrastructure and other mobile computing processes.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers' Calgary chapter hosted the event.

U of C professor wins \$1.65-million grant for carbon capture research

Fabian Mayer
News Editor

A University of Calgary professor has been awarded a six-year, \$1.65-million grant to train students in carbon capture technologies.

Carbon capture seeks to mitigate climate change by collecting carbon emissions from power plants, usually storing it underground.

The Collaborative Research and Training Experience (CREATE) grant is awarded by the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. CREATE grants are meant for research of high strategic importance to Canada.

Chemistry professor George Shimizu will lead the training program.

"It's definitely a high value problem for Canada. It's an area right now that Canada doesn't have enough trained people specifically in," Shimizu said.

Shimizu wants to make the process of capturing greenhouse gases more efficient. He believes energy production must be both environmentally and economically sustainable.

"To make it sustainable you'd like to turn it into something that's not just non-volatile, [but] something that can be used meaningfully and ideally something that can be used to make more energy," Shimizu said.

However, given Canada's current policies, he doubts the technology



Chemistry professor George Shimizu will lead the new carbon capture training program. LOUIE VILLANUEVA

will be widely used any time soon. Canada has relatively lax greenhouse gas regulations and no national tax on carbon emissions. Higher carbon taxes or a cap on emissions would make carbon capture more economically viable.

"Barring some substantial political policy incentives, I'd say low oil and few policy incentives [make] it simply not good business," Shimizu said.

Shimizu is more optimistic about applying the emission-reducing technology in developing countries like India, where many people live without electricity.

"You can't say as a first-world country that they can't have the same lifestyle," Shimizu said. "These are places where I actually think we might have more buy-in just because they're actually building new facilities and it's

an easier adaptation."

Shimizu plans to train as many students as possible, claiming the grant will have positive spin-off effects.

"The number of students that benefit goes well beyond the number of students that will get paid," Shimizu said. "Workshops and the courses that we offer, they'll be available to everybody."

STUDENT SERVICES »

Foothills Campus installs secure bike storage

Fabian Mayer
News Editor

Cyclists at the University of Calgary's Foothills Campus have a new place to store their bikes. The secure bike storage facility is in the courtyard between the Health Sciences Centre and Health Research Innovation Centre.

The caged facility can accommodate about 250 bikes and costs \$30 per year to use. It is part of the university's goal to make its campuses more sustainable.

Associate director of parking and transportation services Susan Austen supports the initiative.

"There is a parking shortage at Foothills, so encouraging other

means of transportation is a great way to try to help the problem," Austen said.

Austen is hopeful more people will bike to Foothills Campus now that there is secure storage.

"People wanted somewhere a little bit more secure to leave their bikes and something also with a little weather protection," Austen said.

Secure bike parking was introduced to U of C's main campus in 2013 and is located on the lower level of the Art Parkade. Austen said only about 30 people use it regularly.

"It could be a little bit stronger," Austen said. "It is on the south side of campus and a little bit removed."

According to campus security,

approximately 30–40 bikes are stolen on campus every year. Austen believes this keeps people from biking to the university.

"Unfortunately, it's quite a high number and people with higher-end bikes are understandably a bit hesitant to bring them," Austen said. "Hopefully these secured areas would help that."

Rick Gysen is a patrol supervisor with campus security. He believes bikes make an easy target for thieves.

"We're an open community, anyone can come onto campus," Gysen said. "People need to just kind of keep that in the back of their mind."

Gysen thinks more secure bike storage might help the problem.

"It would give people another option," Gysen said. "We're trying to give people reasonable alternatives."

Austen said the university will keep encouraging students and staff to bike to campus with more secure bike storage.

"What we hope to do eventually is spread them out a bit more," Austen said. "The next one that's been discussed is potentially somewhere near the LRT station."

Austen hopes the next facility will be installed in 12–18 months, citing cost as the main reason for the limited facilities.

Campus security encourages cyclists to note their bike's serial number and invest in a high quality bike lock.

ACADEMIC »

U of C author's work found on bin Laden's bookshelf

Fabian Mayer
News Editor

A University of Calgary professor's celebrity grew last week when the CIA revealed that one of his books was found in Osama bin Laden's Pakistani compound.

Barry Cooper teaches courses in political philosophy and has been at the U of C for over 30 years. His book, titled *New Political Religions, or an Analysis of Modern Terrorism*, was found along with 38 other English-language books in bin Laden's compound.

Cooper said he wasn't sure what to make of the news when he first heard it.

"I was kind of bewildered," Cooper

said. "I had no idea why he would be interested in reading it because it's not a standard discussion of terrorism or counter-terrorism or anything like that. It's a book in political philosophy."

Cooper hopes the CIA will let him look at bin Laden's copy of his book next time he's in Washington D.C.

"It'd be interesting to see if he made any notes," Cooper said. "I suspect I'd find a lot of disagreement."

The book, published in 2005, is a discussion of the spiritual aspects of terrorists' motivations. Al-Qaeda, the terrorist group bin Laden led, features prominently in the book.

Bin Laden helped plan and carry out the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States. He was killed in an American raid on his home in 2011.

Cooper hasn't checked if the book has seen a boost in sales.

"I was suggesting I might e-mail my publisher to tell them they should bring out a special edition, 'found on bin Laden's bookshelf,'" Cooper joked.

Cooper said he would be happy if the recent revelation led to more people reading the book.

"It's a brilliant analysis of spiritual disorder," Cooper said. "I think it would benefit everybody, including bin Laden if he actually read it."

// I was suggesting I might e-mail my publisher to tell them they should put out a special edition, 'found on bin Laden's bookshelf.'

—U of C professor Barry Cooper



#throwbackthursday: Former Dinos mascot Dexter rides a mechanical bull as confused onlookers watch.

BRIEFS

Alberta's new premier and cabinet sworn in

Thousands of Albertans crowded onto the grounds of the legislature on May 24 to watch the swearing-in of Rachel Notley's government. The new premier also used the occasion to unveil her 12-member cabinet, the smallest in decades.

Notable appointments include former Calgary city councillor Joe Ceci as finance minister and former party leader Brian Mason as minister of transportation and infrastructure. One of the most controversial appointments was Marg McCuaig-Boyd as energy minister. Her experience with the oil and gas industry has been questioned by pundits.

University of Calgary alumnus Lori Sigurdson was given the newly created post of Innovation and Advanced Education, Jobs, Skills, Training and Labour. Prior to her successful election bid, she worked as an instructor at both the U of C and MacEwan University in Edmonton.

The cabinet includes three MLAs from Calgary. It is the first cabinet in Alberta's history with an equal number of men and women.

Islamic State makes gains in Iraq and Syria

Islamic state militants have made territorial gains in their fight with the Iraqi army and international forces.

The group has captured the city of Ramadi, capital of Iraq's Anbar province. Ramadi lies just over 100 kilometres west of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad.

In Syria, ISIS took over the ancient city of Palmyra, whose ruins are a UNESCO world heritage site.

Reports by the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights indicate that ISIS has carried out mass executions in both cities.

The developments are a major setback for both the Iraqi army and the many countries participating in airstrikes on ISIS targets, including Canada.

Following the Iraqi army's defeat, American Defence secretary Ashton Carter said the Iraqi army lacked the will to fight ISIS forces, claiming the army vastly outnumbered ISIS fighters.

Canadian officials have dismissed the setback as part of the inevitable ebb and flow of armed conflict.

FIFA officials arrested on bribery charges related to awarding of World Cups

Seven FIFA officials were shown red cards this week when Swiss prosecutors opened criminal proceedings for alleged bribes related to the awarding of the 2018 and 2022 FIFA World Cups.

The organization has been plagued by corruption scandals and allegations for years. Preparations for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar were already mired in controversy over working conditions for labourers and the decision to host the tournament in a country where summer temperatures often exceed 40 degrees Celsius.

Despite the allegations, FIFA has ruled out a re-vote on the host countries of the next two World Cups.

The FBI, who provided evidence for the arrests, found that FIFA officials took bribes totalling \$100-million and dating back to the 1990s. FIFA president Sepp Blatter was not named in the cases. Blatter is seeking a fifth term as president in this week's FIFA presidential election.

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Students' Union Program for Education Related Work

COMIC BOOKS »

University of Calgary researcher mixes comic books and academic thought

Rachel Woodward
Entertainment Assistant

Most students view their dissertation as little more than a lengthy paper or research project standing in the way of graduating. The opposite is true for Nick Sousanis, a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Calgary who wrote his entire thesis in comic-book form.

The dissertation Sousanis wrote at Columbia University, *Unflattened*, is being published by Harvard University Press. The book, which argues for the "importance of visual thinking in teaching and learning," is the first doctoral dissertation ever presented as a comic. Sousanis says working in the medium was an easy choice.

"I make comics. I make educational ones that do complex, sophisticated thinking, but I can also make them accessible. So [when I wrote] my doctorate, I wanted it to be something people read," Sousanis says. "I wanted to take

Nick Sousanis wrote his dissertation *Unflattened* entirely in comic-book form.

advantage of what I think is my best way of thinking, which is through comics."

Sousanis says he didn't expect the book to have such a large impact, but is glad his work is helping to change ideas about what a dissertation looks like.

"It's not until I got into school and [*Unflattened*] started to make some waves and people started questioning it that I realized that this was a political act. We are reconfiguring what scholarship looks like," Sousanis says.

Sousanis wants *Unflattened* to show that not every learner is able to

make connections in the same way, especially in the classroom. With a comic-book format, Sousanis uses movement to express concepts otherwise difficult to explain in words.

"I can draw a slumped-over figure and you read lots of information in it instead of me writing 'there was

a sad man.' The visual way that you organize space allows for a lot of different ways to convey stories and ideas," says Sousanis.

Sousanis's post-doctoral research at the U of C is being done with English professor Bart Beaty, who recently wrote a book examining how children's media, like the *Archie* comics, deals with social issues.

Sousanis will be teaching ENGL 517 in the fall semester. The class is called *Comics as a Way of Thinking* and will discuss the influence comic books have on teaching and everyday life.

"We'll make comics, think about how you organize ideas in the spatial way that comics allow and how they can facilitate new ways of expressing yourself," Sousanis says. "It'll give an insight into [student's] own thinking and their own ways of working."

COURTESY NICK SOUSANIS

For more information on Nick Sousanis' book *Unflattened*, visit spinweaveandcut.com

OPINION »

Music streaming undercompensates artists

Jason Herring
Entertainment Editor

When online music streaming service TIDAL launched in late March, it was accompanied by a press conference featuring 16 of the most popular musicians today, who are 'artist shareholders' of the company. Jay-Z, Kanye West, Beyonce, Daft Punk, Arcade Fire and Jack White were just some of the artists onstage promoting the service, which allegedly pays more royalties to musicians than any other streaming service.

But exactly what per cent of the profits are given to artists as royalties is anyone's guess, as TIDAL is tight-lipped about the financial specifics of the service. Each of the 16 artist shareholders gets a three per cent stake, according to company executives. When 16 artists account for 48 per cent of the company's ownership, it's easy to be cynical

about the rich getting richer.

The stakeholding artists are trying to fight this perception in recent press releases, talking at length about "speaking for the little guy." But it's still a sentiment coming from a bunch of millionaires.

Another issue critics have is TIDAL's marketing. The service ran a social media campaign with the hashtag #TIDALFORALL, but the cost of \$20 per month for high-fidelity streaming means the service is unaffordable for many music fans.

The problem TIDAL is attempting to address is a real issue. Musicians don't receive enough compensation for their work. Spotify has gained notoriety for their royalty payouts in recent years. According to an article in *The Atlantic*, it takes the average artist 3349 Spotify plays to earn \$1 from the service.

The amount of money Spotify gives artists is obviously too low, but we can't judge TIDAL as a

competitor until they reveal the amount of money their artists receive. As long as the company keeps their royalty information private, consumers should be skeptical about whether they're better than other streaming services at all.

Ultimately, musicians are failed by more than streaming services. Even albums bought off iTunes pay the artists little more than nine per cent of the album's cost. The problem with the industry is no different than before streaming services existed — record labels get a disproportionate amount of revenue.

So how can you actually support musicians? According to a study by the Northwestern University School of Law, 28 per cent of an average musician's revenue comes from live performances, while only six per cent of revenue comes from sales of the artist's compositions. While it's never a bad idea to pay



Jack White rocks. TIDAL doesn't.

for an artist's work, the best way to benefit musicians instead of labels is to see them live.

The musicians behind TIDAL may be acting with the best intentions, hoping to benefit under-compensated artists. But until they

release hard figures detailing their royalty percentages, the service shouldn't be trusted.

If you want to support musicians, buy a concert ticket — and pick up some merch while you're there.

COURTESY TERESA SEDÓ

TELEVISION »

How David Letterman changed late-night TV

Sonny Sachdeva
Sports Editor

May 20 marked a historic shift in the late-night television landscape as David Letterman ended his 22-year run as host of CBS's *Late Show*.

Letterman's departure is more than the beginning of a new era for the well-known talk show. It caps off an exceptional career that permanently changed comedy culture in North America.

Late-night television is a strange world. There's an unavoidable comfort that comes with taking part in the spectacle. Regardless of the door issues the news is relaying or the daily stresses you endure, a goofy host is there in a suit and tie, ready to crack a few jokes.

This all started with Letterman. There were shows that came before, but those programs were a little more suave and clean-cut. When Letterman was given *Late Night* in 1982, he brought a new energy to the genre.

The greatest gift Letterman gave the television world was his willingness to take risks. His stunts were absurd instead of inspiring or well-intentioned. Seemingly unconcerned with what his producers thought, he carried out inane



David Letterman interviews First Lady Michelle Obama in 2012. His 22-year run as *Late Night* host ended last week.

COURTESY CHUCK KENNEDY

segments that saw him wear suits made of Alka-Seltzers, stream video from a camera mounted on his dog and drop watermelons off the roof of his studio.

But that was only part of the story. He was also quick-witted, kind-hearted and genuinely invested in bringing people together. While much of the show's run consisted of silliness,

it had some truly poignant moments. Six days after the Sept. 11 attacks, Letterman spoke eloquently about the tragedy, urging New York City to come together in recovery. Letterman was the first comedian to return to air after the attacks, and his words paved the way for the sincerity found on television in the following days.

Though we won't see his wry

smile on our screens any time soon, Letterman's impact on television is far-reaching. Current late-night TV greats are undoubtedly the result of his efforts. They'll carry the comedy torch forward, but Letterman's singular presence will be sorely missed.

Late-night television isn't the most important industry, but Letterman's career was something more

than entertainment. He proved you need not settle for things as they are and that you can find success by following your own path, even if the odds are against you.

After 33 years of doing it his way, Letterman revolutionized the entertainment industry. His legacy as the king of late-night continues as many follow in his footsteps.

NEW MUSIC »



Speedy Ortiz
Foil Deer
April 21, 2015 (Carpark Records)

I hate the term 'indie rock.' When I hear it, I imagine music that's nondescript and impotent. So when I started hearing good things about Massachusetts four-piece Speedy Ortiz's latest album *Foil Deer*, I was wary of the band's indie rock classification. But the group manages to craft biting songs in an original style.

Foil Deer is defined by frontwoman Sadie Dupuis' charged vocals. Her impassioned performance is reminiscent of Sonic Youth's Kim Gordon and

her presence gives the album an edge.

The record's best song, "The Graduates," explores the idea of never being the first choice, whether in academia or romance. "I was the best at being second place, but now I'm just the runner-up," Dupuis laments in the track's angst-filled chorus.

One of the album's other great tracks is "Zig," which is bookended by Dupuis asking "how many laps does it take to decide you're back at the start" over soft acoustic guitars.

By contrast, the middle of the song is characterized by tortured instrumentals and anxious lyrics. Speedy Ortiz pull off the cyclical structure seamlessly.

The album's instrumentals also impress. Songs like "Homonovus" have surprisingly vicious backing tracks and the band has no shortage of catchy riffs, like on lead single "Raising the Skate."

Foil Deer isn't all hits, though. The middle of the album is mostly filler

tracks — songs that aren't bad, but have no lasting identity. While most albums have some filler, it's less excusable on a record that struggles to reach the 40-minute mark.

But those are minor quarrels. *Foil Deer* is a solid album that's powered by Dupuis' strong vocal performance, proving that Speedy Ortiz can be more than a generic indie rock group. I can't wait to see what they come out with next.

Jason Herring



Holly Herndon
Platform
April 21, 2015 (Independent)

Glitzy electronic soundscapes, fragmented vocalizations and bizarre

sound collages define Holly Herndon's latest album *Platform*. The San Francisco-based composer's sonic experimentations are original and compelling, but too indulgent at times for most listeners to enjoy.

Platform finds Herndon building on the largely conventional electronic sound of her debut. While her first album had hints of the anxious voice-centred electronica she's creating now, it failed to find a solid identity.

Even though *Platform* doesn't settle on a uniform sound, it establishes Herndon as a daring artist who isn't

afraid of taking risks.

This is made clear from one of the record's first tracks, "Chorus," which blends Herndon's augmented voice with unusual samples over a bass-heavy beat. On the track, her experimental tendencies create a captivating song with a catchy melody.

Another track where Herndon successfully pulls off her unorthodox style is "Home." The song explores the fear of the dissolution of privacy online, building a paranoid atmosphere through a minimalist backdrop and an arresting vocal performance. This is

Herndon at her best.

Unfortunately, Herndon's experiments don't always click. An example of this is album closer "New Ways to Love," a song whose dissonant instrumentation and jumbled rhythm make for an unsatisfying end to the record.

The most unusual track on the album is "Lonely at the Top," a spoken-word piece that explores the phenomenon of ASMR — a physical pleasure some people experience while listening to relaxing sounds. While the track showcases an interesting idea that's well executed, it

breaks up the flow of the album and will likely polarize listeners.

The best part of the album is how nuanced it is. Herndon's densely packed electronics are filled with subtleties, making *Platform* a rewarding album to unfold with repeated listens.

Holly Herndon creates challenging experimentations that reward listeners willing to unpack the intricacies of the record. But if you're looking for a heavy electronic record to bump at parties, *Platform* isn't for you.

Jason Herring

SOCCER »

American soccer gaining global prominence

Sonny Sachdeva
Sports Editor

When you think of soccer's powerhouse teams, a few names come to mind.

Manchester United. Real Madrid. Barcelona FC.

Europe has ruled the sport for much of its history. Brazil and Argentina are the only non-European nations to boast some of soccer's best players.

One country that certainly doesn't command the same respect on the international soccer stage is the United States — but that may be about to change.

America's Major League Soccer (MLS) has only existed so far as a goofy younger brother to the European titans — the English Premier League, Spain's La Liga, and Germany's Bundesliga.

However, the MLS made great strides in the last few years and looks set to take a significant step forward next season. While the overall talent level in the league pales in comparison to those of their rivals in Europe and South America, it has gained international respect due to the arrival of some of the game's brightest stars.

English legend David Beckham kicked off the revival when he made the controversial decision to leave Real Madrid and sign with the MLS' Los Angeles Galaxy back in 2007.

Since then, other superstars have joined the American league after turning 30, opting to finish their careers in America rather than with the historic European clubs.

Thierry Henry was undoubtedly one of MLS' biggest signings so far. The French striker rose to international acclaim during his career with Arsenal FC. and France's national team. But in 2010, Henry left Europe for the MLS and began a four-year stint with the New York Red Bulls.

The American league has also seen the arrival of famed Irish striker Robbie Keane (Los Angeles Galaxy), Brazilian legend Kaká (Orlando City S.C.) and English star Jermaine Defoe (Toronto FC.).

The trend looks set to continue this season, with three high-end talents signed on to join MLS clubs in 2015.

England's Steven Gerrard and Frank Lampard, who have both been among England's top players for over a decade, have agreed to join the Los Angeles Galaxy and New York City FC., respectively. Spanish star David Villa also recently began his MLS career, serving as New York City FC.'s first-ever captain.

While it may not be what the MLS' founders envisioned when they created the league back in 1993, the organization has carved out a nice niche for themselves. They can attract the

sport's top talent to America — albeit in the waning years of their careers.

The talent level could ramp up significantly in the coming seasons, as Real Madrid star Cristiano Ronaldo — widely regarded as the greatest player in the sport today — has suggested he'll join the MLS after his contract expires in 2018.

Regardless of his age, having Ronaldo in the MLS would be a major coup for the league, and would significantly raise its international profile.

Though nearly all of their high-profile signings thus far have involved players nearing the end of their careers, the arrival of these respected stars has made the MLS more appealing for younger players as well.

Michael Bradley and Jozy Altidore both serve as evidence of this shift. The two American-born stars (27- and 25-years-old, respectively) both returned to the MLS this year to play for Toronto FC., leaving successful stints in the Premier League and La Liga.

While it will be years before the MLS warrants the same respect as the world's top leagues, they are undoubtedly on the rise. With the talent level growing and the league adding four new teams in the next five years, their ascent looks set to continue.



Cristiano Ronaldo could soon be playing in the MLS. COURTESY CHRIS DEANH

HEALTH & WELLNESS »

Juice should be a supplement, not a replacement

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Remember when açai berry was the superfood touted as the key to instant weight loss? Before that it was kale. Before that, spinach. Now it's juice.

A new health trend has hit Calgary. Juicing, a health binge emphasizing a diet of only raw juice, is the newest nutrition buzzword. The theory is that drinking fruit and vegetable juices detoxifies the body, cleanses your organs and ultimately leads to increased weight loss. But is there any substance behind these health claims?

Juicing is yet another spinoff of the raw foods diet, which emphasizes the consumption of raw fruits and vegetables and other uncooked

produce either exclusively or in excess. Health enthusiasts claim this high-carb and high-sugar (natural, not refined) diet boosts the metabolism by burning through carbohydrates quickly. By avoiding complex carbohydrates and saturated fats, the body is constantly digesting low-calorie, high-glucose meals. Its metabolism is supercharged, as the body quickly uses up fructose sugars, discouraging the storage of fat. That's the claim, anyway.

New stores emphasizing this nutrition theory are popping up around Calgary, but their products are hyped up by the prospect of a desirable lifestyle. Cru Juice, a whole foods juice store, popped up last summer in Bridgeland, along with Juice Because, Well Juicery and Mamasu.

But shops like this aren't selling a

diet. They're selling a lifestyle. The central desire of people who turn to these never-ending fitness trends seems to be the prospect of not only being healthy — but also becoming thin and attractive.

Cru Juice spends a lot of time on social media touting their exclusive #RawandReal lifestyle, but their website doesn't point to any scientific studies on the health benefits of their juice. It's about being thin, beautiful and healthy, while also selling a product. This lifestyle is likely more important than promoting long-term health.

It's a shame because some scientific studies suggest juice can provide genuine benefits to an already healthy diet and lifestyle. But juice alone won't cure your health woes.

Two studies presented at the

International Symposium on Human Health Effects of Fruits and Vegetables in 2009 claimed the addition of pure vegetable juices to diets helped participants achieve their recommended daily serving of fruits and vegetables. Subsequently, this led to more weight loss in overweight individuals than in other non-juice drinkers. Another study from the US National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey found the consumption of pure juice in children between the ages of 12 and 18 led to a decreased risk of obesity.

The catch is that the juice must be 100 per cent pure fruit. No concentrate, no added sugars. It's difficult to find this in juices sold at grocery stores, or the concentrated stuff found in most juicebox brands.

That's where this new health trend comes in. Stores like Cru Juice do sell unpasteurized, pure fruit juice. But they tack it onto a dieting lifestyle that does more harm than good.

There's no quick fix. Most health experts believe the safest option for weight loss is a balanced diet containing full recommended servings of all food groups. Healthy diets should supplement healthy lifestyles. It's not enough to neglect daily physical activity and focus solely on diet.

Health is a two part equation, and the overall goal should always be long-term healthy development rather than weight loss or a certain body type. You can have your juice and drink it too — but you're better off eating something else along with it.