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Kieran Beixe
"I could do anything I want to do."

This semester Mr. Beixe has made it his personal goal to keep the villainous media party in check. He's worked diligently to balance out our endless socialist ramblings and his online interactions never cease to amaze and entertain. But really Kieran thanks for everything you do.

Furor Arma Ministrat

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The Gauntlet is the official student newspaper of the University of Calgary, published most Thursdays throughout the year by the Gauntlet Publications Society, an autonomous, incorporated body. Membership in the society is open to undergraduate students at the U of C, but all members of the university community are encouraged to contribute. Opinions contained herein are those of the individual writers, and do not necessarily represent the views of the entire Gauntlet staff. Editorials are chosen by the majority of the editorial board. The Gauntlet is a forum open to all U of C students but may refuse any submission judged to be racist, sexist, homophobic, libelous, or containing attacks of a strictly personal nature. We reserve the right to edit for brevity. Grievances regarding the Gauntlet follow a three-step process which requires written decisions from the Editor, the GPS Board of Directors, and the Ombudsboard. The complete Grievance Policy is online at: thegauntlet.ca. The Gauntlet offices are located on Treaty 7 land.

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Letter Policy

Letters must be typed, double-spaced and received by Monday at 4 p.m., and must include the author's name, student ID number, telephone number and signature. Letters will not be printed if they include attacks of a strictly personal nature, statements that discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or sexual orientation, or libelous or defamatory material. All letters should be addressed to "Editor, the Gauntlet," and be no longer than 300 words. The Gauntlet retains the right to edit submissions. Letters can be delivered or mailed to the Gauntlet office, Room 319 MacEwan Students' Centre, or sent by email to eic@thegauntlet.ca.

The Cover

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NEWS

ADMINISTRATION »

Student and alumni petitions target university administration

Fabian Mayer
News Editor

Students at the University of Calgary have launched a petition asking the board of governors to dismiss president Elizabeth Cannon, among other demands.

The change.org petition cites the MacHall dispute, the Enbridge controversy and spending on executive offices in 2013.

Upper-level administrators at the U of C have been mired in controversy since a dispute between the university and its Students' Union over ownership of MacHall was made public in September. Further controversy arose in November, when a CBC report emerged outlining pipeline company Enbridge's considerable influence in setting up a sponsored research centre.

First-year law and society student Frank Finley is one of the students behind the petition. He said it is meant to hold administration accountable for numerous scandals under Cannon's leadership.

"It's definitely not solely Cannon at fault here, however with the privilege and compensation for her position, she holds a majority fault if anything goes wrong," Finley said.

At the university's budget town hall earlier this month, Finley asked Cannon if she would resign. Cannon said she would not. Since then, Finley said he discussed the issue with students and felt a petition was necessary.

"There's been such an outpouring of similar sentiment that I really feel like this is important," Finley said.

Students' Union president Levi Nilson said he understands students'



Frank Finley asked president Cannon if she would resign at the university's budget town hall. LOUISE VILLANUEVA

frustration with university administration, but believes it's too early to call for Cannon's dismissal.

"The leadership at the university — especially on some of the big issues we've been facing — I'm disappointed in. But I would say we're not there yet," Nilson said.

A group of alumni have also started a separate online petition urging the university to back down in its battle with the SU over MacHall.

Chris Kerr was one of the U of C alumni who started the petition.

"We want to see this settled outside the courts as amicably as possible," Kerr said. "What we're hoping to see is the board of governors

intervene and direct university administration back to the negotiating table with the SU."

The petition has received 350 signatures since Kerr posted it on Nov. 25. Kerr said he has found the comments on the website from alumni as interesting as the number of signatures.

"We all really care about the place, we care about the school and we have a lot of pride in our education there," Kerr said. "We thought we need to show our support as a group of alumni that we feel what the administration is doing is wrong."

Kerr was an SU executive from 2001-2002. He worries the university's

reputation is being hurt by the dispute.

"It's another controversial thing that we're seeing in the news about the U of C. And I think that it's not a battle that they need to fight and it's not something that's worth digging their heels in on when they've got bigger fish to fry."

A separate group of alumni is writing an open letter calling on administration and the SU to work together on the MacHall dispute.

Nilson said it's nice to see former students weighing in on the issue.

"It's great. The support we've been getting from everybody in the community has been fantastic," Nilson said.

STUDENTS' UNION »

SU sets international student tuition policy

Fabian Mayer
News Editor

Tuition for Albertan students may be frozen until 2017, but international student tuition isn't included in that freeze.

The University of Calgary Students' Union passed a policy on potential international student tuition increases last week. The policy outlines how the SU would advocate against such hikes.

SU vice-president operations and finance Sarah Pousette said they identified the policy gap last year.

"We really wanted to make our current market modifier policy a more inclusive one to include other loopholes," Pousette said.

The new policy lays out guidelines on what the SU expects from the university, should it raise tuition on international students.

"[It outlines] how we would expect outside stakeholders to consult with us in terms of those types of changes," Pousette said.

Numerous Canadian universities, including the University of Manitoba, University of Toronto and University of British

Columbia, recently hiked tuition for international students. UBC's increase of nearly 40 per cent over the next three years has caused controversy in recent weeks.

Pousette said the new policy was partially spurred by developments at other universities.

"This is kind of us making sure that if that comes up at U of C we're prepared, we have a stance that we've taken," Pousette said. "It gives a firm foundation for our advocacy efforts if something like this comes about."

According to Pousette, she

hasn't heard anything from the university about potential increases to international student tuition.

"I don't know what will happen, but we just want to make sure that we're prepared and that we can represent all students' interests," Pousette said.

The provost's office provided the following statement.

"The U of C will not be raising international tuition fees in the 2016/2017 academic year. This is the second year in a row that international fees have not gone up."

Date to add or drop classes may move forward

Scott Strasser
News Assistant

The University of Calgary registrar's office is considering moving the fee payment and add and drop deadlines up earlier in the semester.

Currently, the course drop deadline for fall and winter semesters is on a Friday near the end of each semester's first month. The deadline to add courses is the subsequent Monday and the fee payment deadline is the ensuing Friday. The registrar is now considering moving those dates up by one week.

The new model would allow refunds for dropped courses to be processed earlier, and students who join a class late would have less work to catch up on.

When the topic was discussed at Students' Union Legislative Council, some Students' Union representatives were concerned that the proposed dates would give students less time to make decisions.

SU vice-president academic Stephan Guscott said it's important to find the right balance.

"If you're trying to get into a course [late], there is a better opportunity if there is more time to find a spot in a class. But at the same time, there is more information to catch up," Guscott said.

U of C registrar Angelique Saweczko stressed that the proposal is still under discussion, and hasn't gone through consultation yet.

"We anticipate the consultation process will be completed in early January, at which time we will review the feedback and determine an appropriate course of action," Saweczko said.



LOUIE VILLANUEVA

Students' Union pilots nap rooms as part of Stress Less Week

Fabian Mayer
News Editor

After months of hype, sleepy University of Calgary students finally have a place to rest their weary heads — albeit only for a week. The Students' Union is hosting nap rooms as part of their bi-annual Stress Less Week.

Students can nap between 2:00-4:00 pm in That Empty Space every day this week except Wednesday.

Nyawargak Joseph is in her final year of disability studies. She was one of the room's first users shortly after its initial opening on Monday, Nov. 30.

"It was very soothing, very calming," Joseph said. "The music is really amazing."

Students are allowed to nap up to 40 minutes before being woken

by attendants. Joseph hopes the nap rooms become permanent, but thinks the time should be extended.

"40 minutes is too short," Joseph said. "Even adding like 10 minutes would be nice."

/// Lack of sleep is one of the largest contributing factors to many mental-health issues and a lot of students don't prioritize sleep.

— Students' Union vice-president student life Kirsty McGowan

SU vice-president student life Kirsty McGowan campaigned on bringing nap rooms to campus during the SU election last March. She said there's a reason students' nap time is limited.

"40 minutes is the recommended time for napping so that it

doesn't affect your natural sleep," McGowan said.

According to McGowan, there was a lot of positive feedback from the students who used the nap rooms. McGowan was pleased with Monday's turnout of 10 students.

room is a big improvement on her usual napping space — the Taylor Family Digital Library.

"There's no noise, and even just the fact that there's no light in there, it's really nice," Joseph said.

McGowan wants to highlight healthy sleep habits during Stress Less Week.

"Lack of sleep is one of the largest contributing factors to many mental-health issues and a lot of students don't prioritize sleep."

According to McGowan, 11 people used the nap rooms on Tuesday. McGowan said the Stress Less Week nap rooms are a test run to see if there is enough demand to justify a permanent nap space on campus.

"I'd like to see it run close to capacity most of the days," McGowan said.

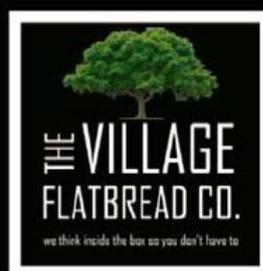
She said the SU will evaluate options for future nap rooms following Stress Less Week.

And that's the way
the news goes.

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Haskayne Faculty Council votes to include only one undergraduate rep

Fabian Mayer
News Editor

Undergraduate representation on Haskayne's faculty council has been cut to just one student.

The Haskayne Students' Association, Students' Union and Commerce Undergraduate Society urged council members in a joint letter to include the CUS president and SU business representatives as voting members. But the council decided at its November meeting to include only the HSA president as a voting member.

CUS president Zeid Ayoub thinks the result is unfortunate.

"We were fighting for broader student representation and it didn't seem that we really could hold a voice anyways, even with our unified letter," Ayoub said.

Haskayne dean Jim Dewald said the decision was part of an overall decrease in council membership.

"We really trimmed back faculty council and got refocused on what is the job of faculty council and who are the right people," Dewald said.

Prior to the change, the Haskayne faculty council included two voting undergraduates — one for the CUS president and a shared



Students' Union business representative Conrad Lowe has concerns about the council's decision. LOUIE VILLANUEVA are not voting members.

While Dewald believes student input is important, he thinks one voting member is enough.

"Faculty council is very specific to academic decisions and programming decisions," Dewald said.

"That's a responsibility which is largely how academics feel about admissions and program completion and so on."

SU business representative Conrad Lowe has a different view.

"We all fundamentally disagree because we believe we're the ones going through the curriculum changes," Lowe said. "I believe that my constituents have lost their voice on faculty council."

The CUS president and SU representatives will be invited to council meetings as guests. Dewald believes students can offer input even if they

BRIEFS

Alberta farmers irked by NDP's Bill 6

About 1,000 Albertan farmers showed up to the provincial legislature on Monday, Nov. 30 to protest Bill 6.

The bill would subject the province's farms and ranches to occupational health and safety regulations.

Albertan farmers are upset the bill was introduced before they were extensively consulted.

An amendment to the bill was introduced on Dec. 1, clarifying that neighbours and kids could still help out on farms.

Another protest on Tuesday near Nanton also drew around 1,000 people. If passed, Bill 6 will become law on Jan. 1, 2016.

Uber drivers take to Kijiji after shutdown

"Bandit" cab drivers in Calgary are taking to kijiji.com to find business after Uber suspended operations in Calgary last month.

"Bandit" cabs are illegally operated taxis. Without Uber, drivers have been advertising their services online.

"When you have a family to feed and there's no work, sometimes you do stuff like this," said one anonymous ex-Uber driver in an interview with *Metro*.

Uber suspended their Calgary operations after an injunction from city council was approved by a judge on Nov. 20.

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Do you think U of C president Elizabeth Cannon should resign?



"Let's wait until the investigation is done."

– Ryan Stetter,
second-year music



"Yes, there was a conflict of interest."

– Kirsten Arnason,
fourth-year electrical engineering



"If she's responsible, then cut her out."

– Mitchell Smith,
fourth-year electrical engineering



"I feel like there needs to be more information first."

– Daniela Galindo,
third-year international business

Photos: Louie Villanueva
Interviews: Babur Ilchi

EDITORIAL »

Elizabeth Cannon must resign

It's time for Elizabeth Cannon to resign. Her five-year tenure as university president has been marred by a series of controversies, including a lawsuit with the Students' Union, inappropriate relationships with oil companies and excessive administrative spending. Cannon needs to take responsibility for this misconduct by stepping down.

Her resignation may not solve the larger problems with university administration. It likely won't stop the University of Calgary from cozying up to corporations, spending too much money on their offices or treating the Students' Union unfairly. But it will send a message.

University administration makes bad decisions because there are no consequences when they do. There were no repercussions for 2013's widely criticized \$4.6-million office renovations. There's no knowing whether the investigation into Cannon's involvement with the Enbridge Centre for Corporate Sustainability will result in any meaningful change, due to the university's lack of a comprehensive conflict of interest policy. And it took a historic provincial election and hasty legislation to repeal market modifiers, despite months of outrage from students when they were first proposed.

Cannon's resignation won't solve all of the U of C's problems, but it is a tangible way to prove there are consequences for disregarding students and faculty. As students, we don't have the



SAMANTHA LUCY

power to stop university administration once they've settled on a course. But that doesn't mean our only option is to wait until administration decides to take advantage of us.

Enough is enough. We're tired of this administration. We're exhausted by the condescension, the backdoor efforts to take money and space from students and the flimsy state of academic integrity on campus. And we're tired of knowing that the people in charge of our education aren't all that

interested in our education.

It is true that Cannon has done good things for the U of C. It's also true that past U of C presidents have done worse. In fact, there's a good chance whoever we get next will be forced to make some of the same decisions she has. But just because something is systemic doesn't mean no one is at fault.

We should ask ourselves — has Cannon's administration given our campus the leadership it deserves?

And if it hasn't, whose responsibility is that?

Changing the culture of a university is a long process, and many of the U of C's recent controversies could have happened if another upper-level administrator was president. But part of managing an organization is assuming responsibility for it, in both good times and bad. Cannon is the president of the U of C. She is responsible for the decisions made by university administration and its public image.

Both of these things have suffered for years, and Cannon hasn't made steps to change that. A pipeline company like Enbridge can buy influence over academic research. The board of governors is stacked with corporate executives. Provost Dru Marshall's tone-deaf handling of both market modifiers and the MacHall lease negotiations have irritated undergraduates and created a rift with the SU.

Cannon isn't the only problem with the U of C's administration. But she is its public face and one of its highest authorities, and she has done her job poorly. Under her leadership, university administration has spent \$4.6 million on their own offices, forged dubiously ethical relationships with oil companies and tried to seize control of our student centre. If Cannon resigns, the problems we're facing likely won't disappear — but there will be consequences for them.

Gauntlet Editorial Board

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE »

Union membership should be optional

Kean Bexte
Gauntlet Columnist

Freedom of association isn't about politics. It's about the freedom to choose which organizations, activities and points of view you join and support.

Right now, however, students in Alberta are legally required to be a member of numerous organizations that claim to represent them — the University of Calgary Students' Union itself, plus several 'unions of unions' like the provincial Council of Alberta University Students and the federal Canadian Alliance of Students Association.

As it stands, there isn't any way to go to a university in Alberta and not be a part of these associations. Students' union executives like it this way. They're scared that, given the choice, you wouldn't voluntarily join them. What does this say about their

own confidence in the services they provide? If these unions provide a valuable service, students will join. And if students don't join, the services couldn't have been that valuable.

Freedom of association isn't about destroying students' unions — it's about improving them. When members are free to leave if they're unhappy, businesses, non-profits, political parties and sports clubs all have to work harder to provide something that people value and want to be a part of.

The most common argument against voluntary students' unions is that these organizations are like municipalities. Like paying your taxes, students shouldn't be able to opt out of them.

But while similarities can be drawn between student politicians and regular politicians, students' unions are an incorporated society, not a government. Comparing unions to

governments only outlines a willful misunderstanding of student associations' position — one designed to mislead students.

The U of C SU is not responsible for a \$2.5-billion budget. They have dreadful voter turnout figures, even compared to municipal voting rates. They're not subject to the checks and balances of the 500-page Municipal Governance Act, and I doubt they'd want to be held to that onerous standard of reporting.

A better comparison would be a local sports club. They undeniably provide a valuable service to a community. But few would suggest forcing everyone in a five-kilometre radius of a new outdoor skating rink to join a hockey team. Sure, a lot of people like to play hockey. Sure, the club provides valuable services to a community. Sure, the majority of members would benefit. But not everyone can skate. Not everyone would use it. And just

because something is good does not mean it should be compulsory.

Supporters of compulsory students' unions claim that without forcing everyone to join, students that aren't union members would take advantage of union services without paying the membership fee. These people have apparently never heard of a membership card. Millions of organizations around the world use them, and implementing such a system shouldn't be outside the capabilities of a university organization.

Voluntary students' unions would ensure everyone in Alberta, not just at the University of Calgary, has access to a students' union that cares about their members, responds to their needs and provides value for its membership cost. If the law surrounding students' union membership is changed, it wouldn't make student services worse — it would make them better.



COMMENT

RE: Medication key to mental health initiatives

"The health coverage offered by the university is absolute shit if you actually need it, but they can get away with it because most of us are "healthy" and still covered under our parents' insurance. The insurance is only meant to be supplemental for this reason. Which is useless to those of us who no longer qualify for our parents' insurance."

Bryek
via Reddit

RE: Foothills F.C. aiming for spot in major league soccer

"Major League Soccer is an utter pipe dream. It is already hard to see MLS expanding too much farther, and as a North American market, Calgary is very weak. Certainly Edmonton would deserve a shot first, and I don't see them making it either. Not when there are a dozen similarly sized American markets that MLS (and especially its sponsors) would undoubtedly prefer."

The proposed C League is what Calgary is probably going to level out at. Still, if we can get a good CFL-style Canadian soccer league in this country, that would be a major step forward for our entire national soccer infrastructure."

Resolute45
via Reddit

RE: Eyes too high: a brief history of administrative controversy at the U of C

"Usual Gauntlet garbage."

Supadawg
via Reddit

How many students switch majors?

Jill Girgulis
Gauntlet Columnist

University sounds so simple. A student makes it through high school. Check. They get accepted into a university. Check. They decide to pursue a degree that suits their interests and abilities. Check. They flourish in the job of their dreams that they somehow knew at age 17 was something they'd want to do for the rest of their life. Check?

Undergrad students that feel dissatisfied with their major aren't alone — at least, that's what people tell them.

If you asked a member of the university faculty how many students end up changing degrees throughout their undergrad career, chances are you'd hear a fairly high number. Many would put the number at around 70 per cent, which is the range I was told by a relative who teaches at the University of Calgary. I'm not sure if this number was

supposed to be reassuring to students who find themselves unhappy with their initial choice of study program, but it sounds to me like a whole lot of indecisiveness. Have nearly three-quarters of all U of C students been so dissatisfied with their majors they decided to switch? And how many unhappy students don't switch?

In order to get a sense of how students really felt about this issue, we conducted a short survey of 130 undergrad students from around campus. Students were asked two simple questions — if they ever considered switching their university major, and if they actually did it.

Out of all the responses, we found that around 64 per cent of students admitted to having second thoughts about their program of choice, but only a mere 34 per cent of those people had actually taken the plunge and changed their major — hardly the bold three-quarters some people will have you believe.

After running some statistics on the data, we found that our survey supported the idea that less than 50 per cent of students will eventually change their major — again, not the rumoured 70 per cent we initially thought.

So why the reluctance to switch majors? The opportunity to realign your degree with your interests is available, so why did we only see about half the students who'd expressed interest in switching majors actually go through with it? I think it's because we feel obligated to "finish what we started" and avoid the sense of failure that comes with not finishing a program of study.

But there's also the sword hanging over almost every student's head — the fear of not getting a job.

When registering for this year's courses last March, something strange happened. Rather than panic over my selection of awful lab times or back-to-back-to-back lectures, I worried about what I

wanted to do with my life. It's not enough to plan for the next year or semester.

Students are experiencing increased pressure to complete a degree that will land them the best job post-graduation. As a result, students pay for four or more years of education that won't have had much significance to them.

You're a different person now than you were at the end of high school, and this might mean your current major is no longer suitable. But that's not such a bad thing. Chances are, you've probably thought about switching majors. Consider taking the plunge and joining the minority who actually do.

But in the end, it really is a minority of students who switch their major during their university careers. So even though my statistics prof would cringe at the method of research we employed, I am confident enough to declare this myth: **BUSTED.**

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GAMING »

2015 in review: Canadian video games

Jason Herring
Entertainment Editor

Exceptional video games have dominated 2015, with titles like the post-apocalyptic *Fallout 4* and the endlessly addictive car-soccer game *Rocket League* experiencing massive critical and commercial success.

But while major studios put out spectacular games over the past calendar year, Canadian indie developers are releasing experimental projects that push the boundaries of artistry, gameplay and narrative.

Platforms like Steam's Greenlight are making it easier for independent studios and developers to bring their ideas to the public. While these platforms house a seemingly endless number of worthwhile projects, these are three of this year's best home-grown releases.

Invisible, Inc.:

(Released May 12, 2015 on Steam for \$21.99)

A masterful combination of tactical turn-based strategy and espionage gameplay, *Invisible, Inc.* gives you control of a spy agency under attack by a faceless corporation. You're given 72 in-game hours to complete covert missions and collect gear to prepare for a final infiltration of the corporation's



Invisible, Inc., a game by Vancouver's Klei Entertainment, is among 2015's best indie titles. COURTESY KLEI ENTERTAINMENT

heavily-guarded headquarters. The game is developed by Vancouver-based studio Klei Entertainment, who released the immensely popular survival game *Don't Starve* last year. On each mission, you take control of different agents with unique skill sets to take out guards and disable alarm systems on maps that change with each playthrough.

One of *Invisible, Inc.*'s few flaws is its short length and consequently low replay value. But with some

new downloadable content recently released and the promise of more to come, Klei have produced a top-notch game that's sure to entertain for years to come.

NOCT:

(Released Oct. 21, 2015 on Steam Early Access for \$10.99)

In *NOCT*, a survival horror game by Toronto developer Chris Eskins, Earth is transformed into a post-apocalyptic wasteland ruled by a dark force known only as 'the

Nocturnal.'

NOCT is visually striking, with all gameplay taking place through a top-down infrared view. As a nameless and featureless protagonist, you must make your way through the ruined environment with minimal knowledge of whether objects in your path are weapons for you to use, allies to assist you or rogue creatures looking to cause harm.

One of the game's best mechanics is the scarcity of weapons and

ammo, which forces you to be more prudent with resources as the game progresses. *NOCT* also features exceptional online multiplayer — you can meet other players to team up, but you also have to be prepared for them to stab you in the back and take all of your weapons.

Pulse:

(Released Oct. 20, 2015 on Steam for \$16.99)

Pulse puts you in control of Eva, a young girl who became blind at an early age but can now 'see' her surroundings through sound. The visual side of the game reflects this, with pulses rippling through the screen to reveal the expansive world around you.

The game, developed by Vancouver's PixelPi studio, features a pastel colour scheme that's fittingly childlike. But the saccharine environment is deceiving — the enemies encountered throughout the journey may not be particularly harmful, but their appearances are disconcerting.

Pulse's unique gameplay doesn't always work. It's easy to get lost or find yourself running in circles when exploring the open-world due to some minor problems with the mechanics of sound-vision. But when it works well, *Pulse* is a smart adventure game from a young studio that should be watched in the coming years.

THEATRE »

Fantasy improv play lets audience take centre stage

Rachel Woodward
Entertainment Assistant

Alberta Theatre Projects is presenting their fantasy improv play *Legend Has It* at the Martha Cohen Theatre until Dec. 31 before taking the play to New York City in January.

The play has an interesting twist — the main character is pulled from the audience at the beginning of each show, making decisions and solving problems as they lead the audience through a *Lord of the Rings*-esque journey. Co-creator and cast member Jamie Northan explains the structure.

"We do have the structure of the world and a little bit of narrative," Northan says. "But we leave the major decisions and plot points open to the audience member that comes on stage. Our main character is a member of the audience and we hope they become

the hero along the way and make choices that help save our world."

Before each show, cast members mingle with the audience to create a list of possible heroes. Only willing participants are listed, ensuring that members with petrifying stage fright won't be forced into the spotlight. The hero helps build a fantasy universe by manipulating scenarios and solving problems with cast members.

The cast of *Legend Has It* come from a largely improv-based performance background. The play was workshopped at Loose Moose Theatre, a venue created by University of Calgary professor Keith Johnstone to foster improv theatre in Calgary.

"We figure [the audience member] is surrounded by about 117 years of improv experience combined on stage," Northan says.

ATP originally presented *Legend Has It* two years ago during their



Legend Has It picks an audience member to take the stage alongside seasoned improv actors. reception to the play has been incredible and that many attendees come to productions dressed up in fantastical attire. "Somebody will always come up with something to help that person through the process, but we listen

COURTESY ATP

to them," Northan says. "They are a stranger in a strange land, and we need their help."

For more information on *Legend Has It*, visit atplive.ca

FOOD & DRINK »



JASON HERRING

Stay warm this winter with carrot cupcakes

Alena Martin
Gauntlet Entertainment

Winter has fallen upon Calgary and it's getting chilly outside. Exams are coming, but you'll make it through them — because the holiday season is just on the other side.

With this season comes baking, and lots of warm, tasty goodies. Impress your loved ones at the dinner table with these delicious carrot cupcakes.

Cupcake Ingredients:

2 cup flour
2 tsp baking soda
2 tsp ground cinnamon
2 tsp ground ginger
1/2 tsp salt
1 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
2 cup granulated sugar
2 tsp vanilla extract
4 eggs
3 cups of grated carrots

Frosting Ingredients:

16 oz. cream cheese
8 tbsp unsalted butter
1 1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup powdered sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
1/2 tsp cinnamon

Prep time: 25 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

Makes: 24 delicious carrot cupcakes!

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and line a muffin tin with 24 paper liners.

2. In a large bowl, combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger and salt until well-mixed.

3. In a separate bowl, combine vegetable oil, unsweetened applesauce, granulated sugar and vanilla extract. Mix thoroughly, adding eggs one at a time.

4. Combine the two bowls, mixing

fully. Fold the grated carrots into the mixture.

5. Put cupcake batter in the tin and bake for 18 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean.

6. To make the icing, use an electric mixer to combine cream cheese and butter until well-mixed.

7. Mix brown sugar, powdered sugar, vanilla extract and cinnamon into the icing.

8. Generously apply icing.

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FOOD & DRINK »



SEAN WILLET

We went to a Carl's Jr. media event and it was utterly bizarre

Jason Herring
Entertainment Editor

Carl's Jr. opened up their first Calgary location on Dec. 1, and they invited some writers from the *Gauntlet* to a media event for a first-hand experience.

We happily accepted their invitation. After all, who could turn down free, American fast food right in the middle of a school day?

But to my surprise, the Carl's Jr. media event was one of the strangest experiences of my life.

I didn't know much about Carl's Jr. In my head, I had them in the same class as joints like Sonic and Jack in the Box.

But I learned a lot from the complementary tote bag I picked up at the door. It included a press booklet featuring scantily-clad women feeding each other disgustingly huge burgers

with names like the "Jim Beam Bourbon Thickburger."

It's obvious that Carl's Jr. is trying to equate the apparent sexual lust they assume we feel for these women to the pure, animalistic lust they hope we have for their burgers.

We sat down just in time to witness the ceremonial ribbon cutting undertaken by the joint's co-franchisees. This too was weird, since the ribbon was held up by two guys in suits on either side.

The Carl's Jr. administration was also suspicious of our presence, probably because we're a rowdy bunch of fresh-faced youths who kept accidentally getting in the way of press photos.

A worker donning a giant Carl's Jr. star outfit with limited arm mobility strolled around the store. I pitied the person in that suit so much I could hardly stomach my burger.

Oh yeah, the food. It was okay, I guess.

2015 in review: best albums of the year

As 2015 draws to a close and album releases slow down, it's a good time to reflect on the past year's music and discuss the albums deserving of recognition as the year's best.

While it's easy to pick favourites

some years, 2015 was packed so full of exceptional releases that choosing a single album is incredibly

difficult. Female punk-rock icons Sleater-Kinney reunited for *No Cities to Love* without missing a step. Local art-rockers Viet Cong put out their excellent but controversial

debut LP. And Kendrick Lamar released *To Pimp a Butterfly*, a jazz-infused hip-hop masterpiece that will dictate the direction of the genre for years to come — and those are just

the albums we didn't choose.

For more coverage of the best music, film and art of 2015, tune into *Gauntlet* radio on CJSW 90.9 FM Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 11:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.



Sufjan Stevens
Carrie & Lowell
March 31, 2015 (Asthmatic Kitty)

"I can just hear them now: how could you let us down," Tame Impala's Kevin Parker laments on the closing track to 2015's *Currents*. And rightly so — many psych-rock purists were disappointed by the musical sidestep of Parker's latest album.

Heralded as the sonic successor to Pink Floyd, Tame Impala's early work triggered a psychedelia revival but ultimately suffered from a lack of emotional maturity. However Parker exhibits a fervent

I've loved Sufjan Stevens as long as I've listened to music. I first heard *Illinois* in middle school, and his mix of nuanced, orchestral Americana and deeply personal lyricism followed me ever since.

But it wasn't until this year that Stevens released *Carrie & Lowell*, his unequivocal masterpiece. The album details Stevens' relationship with his mother Carrie, who was absent for most of the songwriter's childhood, and touches on ideas of loss, redemption and hope.

display of thoughtfulness in *Currents*, my favourite album of 2015.

Parker retreats from his previous tendency to writing personal odes to alienation, choosing instead to showcase a vibrant and intricate expression of self-acceptance and impulsiveness. Sonically, songs like "Cause I'm a Man" and "Yes I'm Changing" are experimental mixes, while the synth-driven explosiveness of "Let it Happen" and "The Moment" draw comparisons to EDM.

Carrie & Lowell is a marked return to Stevens' earlier works, which were driven by acoustic guitars and banjos. This shift back to pared-down instrumentation works perfectly with Stevens' vulnerable and personal lyricism, creating an incredibly intimate record.

That's where the true strength in *Carrie & Lowell* lies. Stevens wears his heart on his sleeve and even though his experiences and mournings are deeply personal, it's easy to form your own emotional connections.

Currents is a pop record, but it still makes room for experimentation. The pulsing chillwave interlude "Nangs" is an implicit reference to inhaling nitrous oxide. "Past Life" sees Parker compare a casual run-in with an ex-lover to a distorted dream. The pace grows more frenetic with each passing track. There's no other band making music quite like Tame Impala. Underneath the shimmering layers and expertly crafted instrumentals, the true centerpiece

The whole album is filled with heart-wrenching moments. Album opener "Death With Dignity" is a plaintive reflection on mortality. "Eugene" taps into the strange mix of nostalgia and dread that accompanies childhood memories, while "The Only Thing" concerns itself with the role religion plays in coping with grief. And "No Shade in the Shadow of the Cross" is an acoustic-guitar masterpiece that rivals works from songwriters like Neil Young and Elliott Smith.

But even though all these songs are

of *Currents* is Parker himself.

The album is a rare moment of musical self-actualization where Parker embraces the limelight and accepts himself for all his flaws. It's a contemporary message wrapped in perfect packaging, and will undoubtedly remain one of the greatest records of a generation.

Jarrett Edmund

Honourable Mention:
Carrie & Lowell by Sufjan Stevens

heavily concerned with death and regret, Stevens maintains a glimmer of hope throughout. Even in the album's darkest moments, he finds beauty in nature, companionship and unwavering faith.

The hope Stevens emanates strikes a chord with me, and that's why *Carrie & Lowell* is undoubtedly my favourite album of 2015.

Jason Herring

Honourable Mention:
Divers by Joanna Newsom



Ratatat
Magnifique
July 17, 2015 (Because Music)

I've had an affinity for Ratatat's signature sound since I first heard the Brooklyn-based duo impress on classics like "Seventeen Years" and "Wildcat."

Five years passed between Ratatat's last album, *LP4*, and their newest piece, *Magnifique*. Their 2015 release was not only a triumphant return for Brooklyn's finest, but a commanding statement on the pair's growth as electronic pioneers.

While some felt Ratatat's sound became stagnant on *LP4*, *Magnifique*

dismisses these issues by blending the duo's previous electric bite with a newly discovered emotional range.

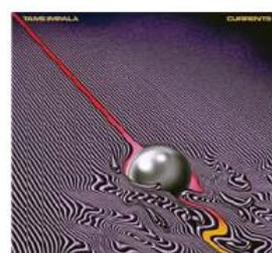
The new collection still has all the standard conventions of a Ratatat record, but also features laid-back meanderings that would've seemed out of place on previous albums.

It's more mellow and sullen, but still ramps up into poignant moments of energetic electronic chaos when it needs to. "Cream on Chrome" is the album's greatest success, opening with a low-key

rhythmic groove before evolving into a gritty, distorted masterpiece.

But we see Ratatat's new approach best on the album's title track. "Magnifique" is a far cry from the duo's previous club bangers, a soothing departure that sees them trade harsh guitar leads for swelling strings.

Some may find *Magnifique* barren at times, lacking Ratatat's signature energy and aggression, but it shouldn't be compared so linearly with the duo's previous records.



Tame Impala
Currents
July 17, 2015 (Interscope)

Magnifique has different goals. It represents a different set of emotions and does so with a new set of tools. The album exists more as an alternate storyline than a pure sequel, and on that front it stands as an undeniable success. *Magnifique* reigns as this year's best electronic record, and my top choice of 2015.

Sonny Sachdeva

Honourable Mention:
How Big, How Blue, How Beautiful
by Florence + the Machine

What a semester.



I'm supposed to give you the highlights of this semester from the SU's point of view, but with current actions taken by the University of Calgary, it has become a difficult task.

Instead of talking about all the great events, initiatives, and actions taken by your SU Execs and Faculty Representatives, of which there are many, I'd like to talk about recent actions taken by the University of Calgary's administration.

First, they've tried to take the management and operations of MacHall out of students'

hands. During the past two years of negotiations, the university refused to discuss student ownership of the building. Losing MacHall to the U of C would essentially destroy the SU as the majority of our revenue

comes from the building. It's why the SU fee hasn't been raised in 19 years. They've claimed to have "50 years of documentation proving ownership" but have refused to show anyone. The SU actually has 50 years of documentation and have published it openly at www.mymachall.com. We've escalated this to court in order to see their documentation — an unfortunate development brought on by their arbitrary termination of our agreement and their opposition to having a shared dialogue about student investment.

Second, if you live in residence, your fees are going up. Again. For the third year in a row, residence rates are going up past the rate of inflation. When asked why costs are going up well beyond the rate of inflation, administration

"Losing MacHall to the U of C would essentially destroy the SU as the majority of our revenue comes from the building. It's why the SU fee hasn't been raised in 19 years."

was unable to give a clear answer. As a former residence student, it's my view that the cost of residence should be as accessible as off campus housing, so everyone can participate in the great residence community — but at this rate that seems unlikely.

And third, students have raised concerns with me about the ethics scandal regarding corporate donations to the university. I support the independent investigation into the controversy initiated by the Board of Governors which is currently scheduled to be completed on Dec. 14.

I wish I could paint a lovely picture of the great things that have happened on campus. But that will have to wait. I'm committed to keeping the management of MacHall in students' hands and advocating for an affordable and accessible university that we can be proud of. But there's more work to be done. If you share my frustrations, I implore you to get in contact with me at supres@ucalgary.ca or come to the SU office to share your concerns.

The Students' Union advertisement is provided by the SU and published without Gauntlet editorial revision.

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OPINION »



COURTESY SOFTPEDIA

E-sports ready to join the mainstream

Sean Willett
Opinions Editor

After years of trying and failing to grab hold of the public consciousness, e-sports — or competitive video games — are slowly but surely becoming part of the mainstream. Game streaming services are becoming more ubiquitous. The games played are easier to watch and more people are now interested in video games than ever before.

But there's another, less obvious reason e-sports are growing. As they become more popular, fans are focusing less on the games themselves and more on specific players.

A few months ago, I watched the

finals for the Evolution 2015 *Super Smash Bros. Melee* tournament on the streaming site Twitch. The bracket had been narrowed down to the top eight, and the next match was between Leffen, a tournament-winning Swedish player notorious for his snobby persona, and Plup, a relatively unknown American who wore a panda hat. Everyone expected a blowout, but didn't get one.

As a streaming audience of over three million people looked on, Plup was able to bring the best-of-three series to 1-1 tie. The final round had me on the edge of my seat — it ended with both players on their last lives, the commentators freaking out and the 1,800 spectators chanting "USA." Plup finally landed a grab on Leffen,

threw him into the air, then caught him with a hard hit on the way down. It was over. And as I stood and cheered along with the people in the crowd, an important realization suddenly hit me — that this was sports.

As someone who enjoys both video games and sports, e-sports seem like something I should have immediately taken a liking to. But they always failed to grab my attention. Despite enjoying games like *Super Smash Bros.* and *Heroes of the Storm*, I could never force myself to sit down and watch other people play them.

But then something changed. After watching a documentary called *The Smash Brothers*, which profiled the lives of numerous prominent *Super Smash Bros.*

players, I found myself suddenly invested in the results of the latest *Melee* tournaments. I was cheering on the players I liked, and cheering against those I didn't. I was listening to post-match interviews to hear what players had to say about their performances. I even started reading their tweets to see them trash talk their rivals.

It wasn't until I started caring about the people playing the games — their stories, personalities and rivalries — that I was able to get invested in e-sports. It's the same with traditional sports — ask an average NHL fan and you'll find they likely aren't watching just because they really like the game of hockey itself. They care about the NHL because they care about their favourite teams and players.

A few years ago, video game fans would be in a tiny minority if they could name even a single e-sports team. But now even I can name a handful of *League of Legends* teams, despite never having watched a match. Just from browsing through video game news sites I could tell you that American team TSM is currently rebuilding, or that Fnatic just lost a couple of its star players. This is the kind of coverage you see now — news about teams, players and personalities.

This is what fans care about, and what makes e-sports more like traditional sports than I thought possible. It's our personal connection to the athletes and players that makes sports interesting, and it's what e-sports needed to finally become something more than a novelty.

DINOS BASKETBALL »

Dinos defend home turf, earn sixth straight win

Emilie Medland-Marchen
Sports Assistant

The Dinos women's basketball team overcame a slow start in their Nov. 27 tilt against the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds to earn a 70-50 victory, extending their win streak to six games.

Back-and-forth play defined the game's first quarter, but the Dinos quickly caught on to their opponents' offence and found a way to pull ahead. The Dinos entered the second quarter with the game tied 18-18, looking to regain their focus after a number of missed shots.

Head coach Damian Jennings said that his team's hard fight ensured a Dinos win.

"I felt that it was a little lacklustre at times but it got the job done," Jennings said. "So I guess we just have to say we gritted this one out, though it was a little ugly, and I hope it's a prettier game tomorrow."

After finding their groove in the second quarter, the Dinos upped the pace and took control of the ball for the majority of the game. Their aggression managed to inch the points away from UBC, giving U of C a 36-23 lead at halftime.

The Dinos continued their expertly executed possession game

in the second half. U of C guard Emma Nieuwenhuizen sunk another two points and fifth-year veteran Kelsey Lund went two-for-two from the free-throw line.

A powerful play from Dinos guard Brianna Ghali added insult to injury, as Ghali took a flying leap to sink the ball and secure a 46-31 Dinos lead.

The Dinos got defensive as the game neared its close, limiting the Thunderbirds to nine points in the final quarter while still managing to post 14 of their own. Fourth-year Dinos forward Claire Colborne led the way, finishing the night with a team-leading 16 points.

The Dinos have now officially beaten every team in the Canada West conference. However, the victory over the Thunderbirds was a significant one, according to Jennings.

"We haven't beaten them since 2010," Jennings said. "UBC has been a powerhouse in basketball — they were the bronze medalists last year in the CIS. So from that side I'm pleased."

Dinos forward Vanessa Wesolowski was also happy with the victory.

"We were a little stagnant tonight on offence," Wesolowski said. "But I think at certain times people

saw that and we were trying to just play as a team tonight."

Nieuwenhuizen said it took a unified strategy to come back from their early struggles.

"We definitely had people step up at different times during the game," Nieuwenhuizen said. "Our team is so diverse in that way. We have a lot of people who catch themselves up when everyone else is not on."

The Dinos took down the Thunderbirds by a score of 74-72 in the second match of the back-to-back set one night later, completing the sweep and taking their winning streak to seven games.

DINOS HOCKEY »

Dinos hockey earns shutout victory over UBC

David Song
Gauntlet Sports

Before their Nov. 27 clash with the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds, the University of Calgary's men's hockey team held a mediocre record of 9-11-3. The Dinos knew a well-rounded effort was needed to win against the rival Thunderbirds and that's exactly what they got on Friday night, prevailing with a 4-0 shutout win.

Dinos head coach Mark Howell was pleased with how his team bounced back from their recent string of subpar performances.

"It's been a tough couple of weeks, but I thought the guys got refocused," said Howell. "We made sure we stayed on the right side of the puck, and as a result we had the momentum on our side for the most part."

Second-year Dinos forward Cain Franson opened the game's scoring near the end of the first period, beating Thunderbirds netminder Eric Williams with a long-range snapshot on the powerplay. However, UBC pushed back, forcing Stanford to make two quality saves in the final five seconds of the opening period.

The physicality ramped up significantly after that, culminating in a 10-minute misconduct penalty for UBC defenceman Kyle Becker.



The Dinos capitalized on their special teams opportunities en route to their 4-0 victory over the Thunderbirds.

COURTESY STEPHANE ARNAULT

"Physicality really helped set the tone for the game," said third-year Dinos defender Caylen Walls. "When you start getting the body on their forwards, start turning over pucks and start creating chances for our own forwards, it's a huge thing and we really prevailed in that area tonight."

The Dinos added two goals in the second period courtesy of Adam Kambeitz and Dylan Walchuk, as the U of C's forwards continued to battle hard in front of the Thunderbirds'

net. Franson sealed the deal with an empty-net goal at 19:14 of the third period, earning his second tally of the night.

Despite the team's offensive success, it was netminder Steven Sanford who reigned as one of the game's top stars, stopping all 21 of UBC's shots to record his third shutout of the season.

"It's always nice to get a shutout," Stanford said. "Usually when you get a shutout, it means your team's playing good defence. Everyone's

buying into our system and it took some time, but every day we're getting better."

Howell claims the team's return to a defensive mindset played a key role in the club's overall success against UBC.

"It didn't matter who were going to play, we needed to make sure we came out with a really honest effort," Howell said. "We got back to skating, and not just skating but sprinting and winning some races. Our goaltending was great. We had

some 'D' playing forward, and they just kept it simple, moved the puck up the ice. That helped our game — just staying simple."

UBC was able to even up the season series with a 4-2 victory one night later, giving each club two wins in their four games against each other this year. The Dinos now look ahead to an extended break before they travel to Saskatchewan for a pair of road games against the University of Regina Cougars on Jan. 8-9.

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FESTIVE FUN »

A very serious Christmas carol review

Jill Girgulis

Takes her infants tender and mild

It's that time of year again — the snow is falling, your relatives are calling and, most importantly, Christmas carols are playing on every radio station. To combat the incessant holiday spirit, I rounded up the most festive songs and applied my finest critiques. Also, can you move your Christmas tree away from your front window? Those bright lights and colourful ornaments are an eyesore for the 30 milliseconds I have to drive by your house every morning.

"Jingle Bells": Can anyone explain to me why only one miserable horse is featured in this holiday carol? What makes him think he's so special that he gets a private sleigh? How did this hotshot horse manage to land this sweet gig? And what happened to the nine reindeer? This is discrimination.

"Oh Christmas Tree": This song is only acceptable when sung in the original German. On that note, feel free to sing any Christmas carol around me — so long as its lyrics are written and performed in a foreign language. Pig latin is referred-pay.



"Oh Christmas Tree" is only acceptable when sung in the original German.

COURTESY TORANGE

"Silent Night": The numerous references to a "holy infant" and a "holy night" make me wonder whether the lyricist was trying to decide whether the word "holy" is spelled with or without the letter "e". I'm going to let this one slide, but only because it evokes fond memories of Wing Wednesday — anyone up for a plate of tender and mild wings?

"Frosty the Snowman": I find it disturbing to sing about a fledgling relationship between children and an adult collection of densely packed water molecules. Also, how did those kids manage to get their hands on a real, genuine corn cob pipe? I doubt any of them were eighteen or older. If they were, then that's a whole different level of concern.

"Deck the Halls": This song promotes violence and destruction of property, and that's enough to put it on my naughty list.

"All I Want for Christmas Is You": Nice try. All I want for Christmas is a double-whip candy cane frappuccino — I'm a devoted follower of the church of Starbucks*.

"I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus": This song teaches children that the mere presence of a sprig of vegetation permits them to abandon all their morals and kiss whoever happens to break into the house that night. Also, it promotes the idea of hiding extramarital affairs from parents. I pity the emotionally traumatized child who first witnessed this family debacle.

"Rudolph, The Red Nosed Reindeer": What disgusts me most about Rudolph is that no one seems to care that this majorly immunosuppressed caribou is contaminating his fellow sleighmates with an obvious case of seasonal influenza. Red nose? More like congested sinuses. Seriously, be more considerate — caribou are a threatened species, asshole.

"Up on the Housetop": Santa Claus' lack of conscientiousness for the innocent family that lives in the titular house is appalling. How does he know the roof onto which he illegally parked his sleigh is structurally sound enough to support the extra weight? Nine reindeer, a sleigh filled with presents for more than 2.1 billion people and a man who binges on cookies and milk — that's gotta be heavy.

HOT TIPS »

Five essential items to bring to your exams

Melanie Woods
Always smiling

The end of the semester means the end of classes, but it also means the start of finals. To help you succeed, we compiled a list of five essential items to bring into every final exam.

Water: Staying hydrated during periods of high stress is incredibly important, so make sure to bring a full bottle of water for every exam. No one will hear your desperate screams of agony if your throat is parched!

Snacks: When the proctor summons a primordial beast to devour any students remaining in the last fifteen minutes, you'll be extra prepared with an apple-cinnamon Nutrigrain® granola bar to throw into its gaping maw, giving you time to flee to safety.

Well-sharpened pencils: When the exam inevitably requests that you murder a man in cold blood for bonus marks, ensure that you are more prepared than your peers with dozens of number 2 HBs sharpened to deadly perfection.

A smile: Half of succeeding on your exams is believing in yourself. That in mind, immediately start grinning as soon as you walk into the exam room and don't stop until you've handed in your test paper, no matter how painful it gets. Feel the corners of your face start to twitch and contort with muscle exhaustion. The exam administrators will be impressed by your positive outlook and the way your eyes glaze over from not blinking for two and a half hours.

Existential dread: Thankfully, there's no chance of you forgetting this.

HOROSCOPES »

'Tis the season for the future

Melanie Woods
Watched *Elf* twice already

Sagittarius
(Nov. 22 – Dec. 21)
Your significant other will purchase you a knock-off *Minions* bodypillow for the holidays. Your "google-wearing villain assistant" will keep you warm during the dark, cold nights.

Capricorn
(Dec. 22 – Jan. 19)
While indulging in a festive cup of rum and eggnog, you will find an actual egg at the bottom of the glass.

Aquarius
(Jan. 20 – Feb. 18)
A reindeer will shit on your ECON 369 final paper.

Pisces
(Feb. 19 – March 20)
Your secret Santa will purchase you 50 identical blue ballpoint pens.

Aries
(March 21 – April 19)
While grocery shopping, you will notice that you can purchase eggnog-flavoured cream cheese. Has mankind gone too far?

Taurus
(April 20 – May 20)
You will attend a holiday craft fair and discover that all of their wares are made entirely out of human hair.

Gemini
(May 21 – June 20)
You will watch the hit holiday film *Elf* 12 times this month and realize how empty your life is.

Cancer
(June 21 – July 22)
Over Christmas dinner, your racist uncle will unleash all of his opinions on ISIS, the Trudeau government, Benghazi, marriage equality and the Syrian refugee crisis.

Leo
(July 23 – Aug. 22)
You will lose your keys in a snowbank. Three months later, you'll find the raccoon that found them is now running an illegal drug cartel out of your trunk.

Virgo
(Aug. 23 – Sept. 22)
A fat man in red will approach you on the train with a sack full of "gifts." He's not Santa.

Libra
(Sept. 23 – Oct. 22)
In an attempt to find out if there's a difference between candy cane Oreos® and mint Oreos®, you will eat 500 Oreos® and immediately regret everything you've ever done.

Scorpio
(Oct. 23 – Nov. 21)
You will construct a snowman friend. Unfortunately, due to climate change, your only friend will melt into a sad puddle.

The very educted film critic reviews *Star Wars*

Andrew Kemle
Loves *The Phantom Menace*

Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope, because it's apparently so good it skips the first three, is a purported space opera from the mind of director and screenwriter George Lucas, also known as George R. R. Martin with a worse beard.

Real original, George — a hero's journey against the forces of darkness after discovering he's destined for the light. Please, like we haven't seen that a million times in Hollywood. Stop trying to be *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, Lucas. Nobody wants to watch a movie like that.

The special effects look like they're straight out of the '70s, with prop guns that might as well have been re-painted WWII weapons. There's a scene where the bad guy is supposed to use his magic wizard powers to crush someone's throat and I can clearly tell that the actor is just choking himself — unprofessional and sloppy!

Oh, and don't even get me started on the models. Was CGI not available to the filmmakers or something? Am I supposed to be impressed that it was created almost entirely with



No one will remember this awful film.

practical effects? Where are my big damn explosions?

There is one good explosion, when an evil space-Nazi decides to blow up a planet about midway through the film, which I found to be in poor taste. It's only been 10 years since we lost Pluto as a planet — does Lucas have no decency?

Then there's the cast. God, the cast. Who in their right mind thought casting Mufasa as the bad guy was a smart move? And apparently Mark Hamill is taking his post-Joker career for the worst kind of spin. Stick with animated TV shows and movies, buddy.

Poor Harrison Ford is completely

forgettable as Han Solo, and I mean Indiana Jones level of forgettable.

No one's going to remember this guy. And what the hell is Carrie Fisher's character even doing in the movie? She's actually helping the main characters and taking charge of the situation — what kind of a lousy damsel in distress is that?

This was a turgid, horrid affair of a movie, and I can't wait for it to utterly fail at the box office. Come find me when Lucas utilizes the full potential of modern technology and creates a fully CGI comic relief character with vaguely racist undertones. Then we'll really be in business.

HOT TIPS »

Four gifts that perfectly say what you would never dare say out loud

Jill Girgulis
Give the gift of passive-aggression!

Tis the season for giving — giving someone a piece of your mind, that is. But instead of airing your grievances with the Grinches in your life, try giving them subtle hints through beautifully wrapped holiday gifts.

Your least favorite professor: Regardless of what you give this professor, make sure to drop it off when they're in the middle of a meeting or rushing off to teach another class. Take an exceedingly long time to explain the meaning behind the gift, throw in a few awkward anecdotes, ask them to take a moment to ponder its significance and then poll them about it using TopHat.

Your lacklustre lab partner: This student deserves something truly special this holiday season. Why not give them a framed list of all the due-dates for your collaborative lab assignments? If you want, you can even go all out with some glitter glue and edible jingle bells. For an extra-special touch, toss in a personalized pipette with

step-by-step instructions or some monogrammed paper towels so they can clean up all the toxic chemicals they spilled on your notebook this semester.

That one friend who has their life together and buys all their Christmas gifts before Halloween: The best method for dealing with this person is to pretend Christmas doesn't exist this year and then give them a gift on Boxing Day. Tell them it's for next Christmas and that you're just really ahead of the game. No big deal.

The registrar's office: Perhaps the most deserving of your heartfelt Christmas gifts, the registrar's office would love to receive an expensive advent calendar. Instead of cute little Santa chocolates behind each door for every day in December, they will find a 200-question true-or-false exam worth 55 per cent of their grade that they have to complete in less than 10 minutes. If you're feeling extra generous, sneak in an extra test at 7:00 p.m. on the very last day of exam week — what a pleasant surprise!

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AND COPIED**

**CONSIGN
YOUR BOOKS!**

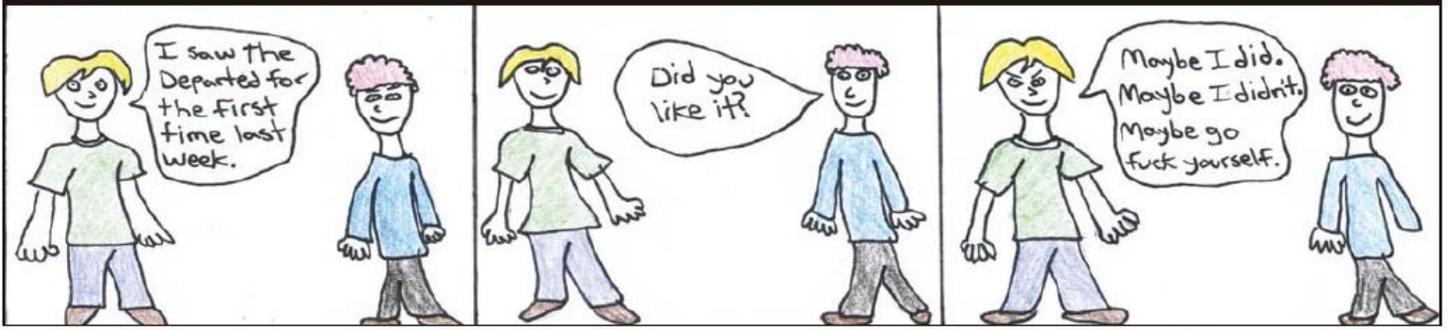
**DECEMBER 9 - 11, 14 - 18, AND 21 - 22
JANUARY 4 - 8 AND 11 - 15**

9 A.M. - 4 P.M. NORTH COURTYARD, MSC

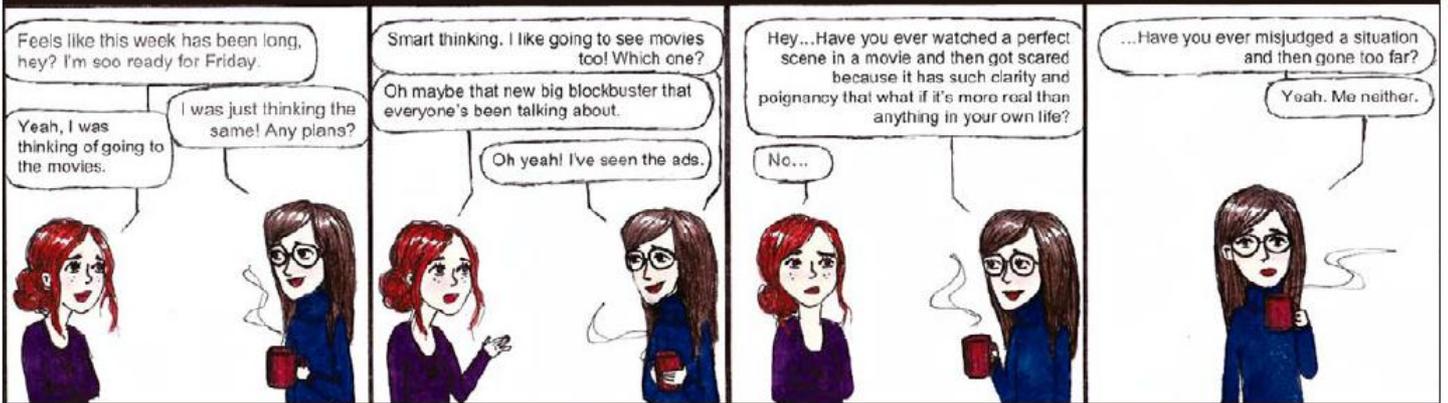
***CONSIGNMENT MEANS THAT YOU DO NOT GET ANY MONEY
UNTIL YOUR BOOKS HAVE BEEN SOLD***



The Other Guy - Scott Strasser



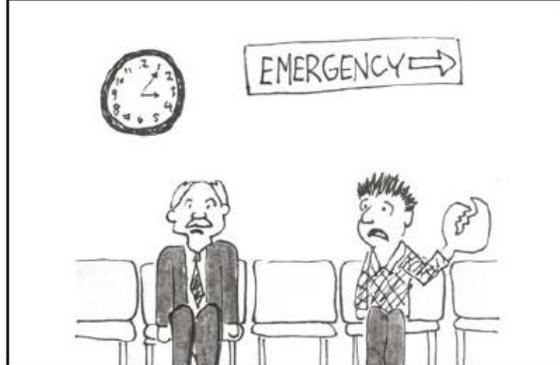
It goes without saying - Dawn Muenchrath



Syncopated - Justin Knudsen



Last week's caption contest



"When the government announced 'funding claw-backs in healthcare,' this isn't what I had in mind."

Craig Christensen

Happy holidays from the *Gauntlet!*

See you in the new year!



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