

GAUNTLET



VOL. 58 | ISSUE NO. 4 | December 2017

TAX TROUBLE FOR  
CANADIAN GRAD  
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TRY THIS HOLIDAY  
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# STUDENT'S UNION

DECEMBER 2017

## Stress Less

... with your SU

### Pet Therapy

@ That Empty Space  
Monday, Dec 4: 12PM - 1:30PM  
Wednesday, Dec 6: 1:30PM - 3PM

Friday, Dec 8: 12PM - 1:30PM



### Winter Wonderland

@ TFDL Quad / MacHall North Courtyard  
\* weather dependent  
Monday, Dec 4: 11AM - 1PM

### Yoga

@ That Empty Space

Tuesday, Dec 5: 12:30PM - 1:30PM  
Wednesday, Dec 6: 12PM - 1PM

Thursday, Dec 7: 12:30PM - 1:30PM

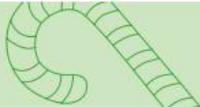


### Tea & Art Therapy

@ That Empty Space  
Tuesday, Dec 5: 2:30PM - 4:30PM

### Terrarium Gardens

@ MacHall North Courtyard  
Wednesday, Dec 6: 11AM - 1AM



### Holiday Decorating

@ MacHall North Courtyard  
Thursday, Dec 7: 11AM - 1PM

### Mini University Carnival

@ MacHall North & South Courtyards  
Friday, Dec 8: 11:30AM - 2PM



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## December 4-8

[su.ucalgary.ca/stressless](http://su.ucalgary.ca/stressless)

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Scholarship

Or via email:  
[ucawards@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ucawards@ucalgary.ca)  
Subject line: Laurence Decore  
Scholarship



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**Golden Spatula:**

Ashar Memon



"Clap along if you know what happiness is to you."

A brief recap on Memon's contributions to the *Gauntlet* over the past year: he's written every month's brief recaps. He's also been patient enough to wait for Tina when she forgets her meetings with him. Thanks, Ashar!



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Differing eggnog opinions destroy friendship  
Mainstreet Research predicts the sun will not rise

**Furor Arma Ministrat**

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The Gauntlet is the official student publication of the University of Calgary, published 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 process that requires written decisions from the Editor and the GPS Board of Directors. The complete Grievance Policy is online at thegauntlet.ca. The Gauntlet offices are located on Treaty 7 land.

The Gauntlet is printed on recycled paper and uses an ink made of sawdust and diamonds. We urge you to recycle/sleep on the floor using the Gauntlet.

**Letter Policy**

Letters must be typed, double-spaced and must include the author's name, email address and title. 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 400 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**

Design by Samantha Lucy

**Advertising**

The Gauntlet's local and national sales are managed by FREE Media, an agency representing the campus press in Canada. View our Ad Sheet online for rates and publication dates. Questions about the Gauntlet's ad policy can be directed to Ron Goldberger at 403-607-4948 or online at yyc@f-media.ca.



# Without a platform, Kenney's social conservatism defines him

A provincial byelection was called for the Calgary-Lougheed riding Nov. 16. Much like the rest of the city, the riding has a history of electing conservative candidates. This time around, that candidate is United Conservative Party leader Jason Kenney, who is campaigning without a policy platform. Kenney believes his policies should be crafted in a grassroots fashion by the party's members once he is elected.

Without a firm platform to evaluate, Kenney can only be judged based on the policies he campaigned on and presided over at the federal level in Canada. Most Canadians will recall the "niqab ban" dominating the 2015 federal election and the pivotal role it played in turning the election towards a Liberal victory. Kenney was the immigration minister who proposed it and strongly advocated to force women to remove face coverings during immigration ceremonies. As a federal conservative, he campaigned on policies that infringed upon individuals' rights, demonstrating a lack of principle and understanding of what issues impact Canadians. Luckily, every other party campaigned against this and Canadians rejected it at the polls.

But that's not all. Kenney was also in the crew of Conservatives who advocated to create an RCMP "tip line" for worried Canadians to report "barbaric cultural practices" like honour killings or sexual slavery. Canadians can already report crimes of that nature to the police. The tip line was more of a hotline for racist neighbours to display xenophobia when exposed to new cultures.

In Alberta, one policy Kenney has been vocally opposed to is Bill 24, which protects minors who join gay-straight alliances at their schools from being outed to their parents. Kenney argues that withholding choices children make at school from their parents and guardians is a breach of parental rights. Even though school officials have a responsibility to ensure students are not endangered by abusive parents, Kenney believes parents have a right to know if their child joins a GSA,



Illustration by Samantha Lucy

which could out closeted minors. In families that do not accept their children for who they are, the consequences of this could be grave. Schools need to provide protection to these vulnerable students. Bill 24 allows that.

Kenney's actions often pander to the small section of his conservative parties' supporters who identify as socially conservative. This has proven unsuccessful for him in the past, so seeing him raise issues like these again in Alberta is infuriating. Albertans respect each other and don't care what clubs high-school students choose to join. They want strong governance that allows all citizens to live as they choose. Kenney has not put forward any policies that show Albertans how he will achieve this if ever elected provincially. He has not done anything to deserve the citizens of Calgary-Lougheed's votes.

Either way, Kenney likely can't rely

on students voting in the riding. Leaked documents from the Manning Centre, a Calgary right-wing think tank, say that only 16 per cent of millennials identify with Canada's conservative parties. Additionally, they revealed that many millennials see traditional social conservative positions "such as [on] abortion, gay marriage [and] immigration" as deal-breakers. That's Kenney's brand of conservatism.

Assuming people will vote for a candidate because they know their name and personality is arrogant. Albertans have shown the days of its electorate consistently voting in conservative governments are gone. Kenney needs to prove he has policies beyond treating at-risk populations like second-class citizens if he wants to represent our province.

Gauntlet editorial board



# Around campus this November

Recap by Ashar Memon  
Photos by Mariah Wilson



The Students' Union is reviewing its health and dental plan after two consecutive years of cost overruns. During the 2015–16 academic year, the SU's health and dental reserve fund covered a budget overrun of \$9,695. That number grew to \$26,400 for this fiscal year. SU vice-president operations and finance Ryan Wallace said the health and dental plan fee has not been adjusted in nearly 15–20 years. He added that a fee increase would go to a referendum.

The University of Calgary Board of Governors unanimously approved the Indigenous Strategy on Oct. 20, which intends to create an inclusive environment for Indigenous learners and perspectives. The strategy also adopted a Blackfoot name — *ii' taa' poh' to' p*, which means to rejuvenate and re-energize during a journey. An event to officially launch the strategy took place on Nov. 16.

New SU vice-president external Puncham Judge told the *Gauntlet* in an interview that extending the tuition freeze and coordinating with Calgary Transit for better transit access are her priorities for the rest of the



academic year. She remained mum on secondary suites, citing a lack of familiarity with the issue.

A new D2L interface called Brightspace will likely be piloted in the Spring 2018 semester, bringing improved functionality, better mobile accessibility and less cluttered layout to students, according to interim vice-provost teaching and learning Leslie Reid.

Facing record demand for food hampers, the SU Campus Food Bank will tap into its reserve fund for a third consecutive year. So far this year, 216 people have used the Food Bank, compared to 116 people by the same time last year. Coordinators Gabby Wagner and Jonathan Espayos attributed rising usage to Alberta's continued economic slump and a lack of social assistance programs for students. Graduate students are the largest group of clients for the Food Bank, making up 46 per cent of users in the 2016–17 academic year. Undergraduate students make up the next largest group, constituting about 40 per cent of the Food Bank's users.



The U of C was among institutions around North America hit with 'It's okay to be white' messages, appearing on bulletin boards around campus on Nov. 2, as well as the Rock on Nov. 6. The U of C said in an initial statement that they are "committed to fostering an environment of free inquiry, open debate and diversity of opinions." Later, a statement attributed to vice-provost student experience Susan Barker denounced the posters as "inherently racist." This was the third time this semester that discriminatory messages appeared around campus. In early September, pride paintings on the Rock were vandalized. Later in the same month, a Confederate flag and the words "Robert E. Lee did nothing wrong" also appeared on the Rock.

Members of the SU discussed the definition of the student experience in several SLC meetings throughout the month as they worked on creating a defining document. Faculty representatives asserted the importance of stating that each student's experience will be unique and explicitly naming respect from university administration as an integral part of the student experience.



# SU restocks on period products as program sees substantial use



Story by Tina Shaygan  
Photo by Mariah Wilson

Over a thousand period products have been handed out to University of Calgary students since the Students' Union made them available for free in early September, according to SU vice-president student life Hilary Jahelka. Free period products are available for students at the MacHall Info Centre, the SU main office and the Q Centre.

During the Oct. 31 Students' Legislative Council meeting, Jahelka reported on purchasing more period products for this initiative. According to her, the program has received positive feedback from students.

"Everyone is really excited to see

this happening. People are excited that we're using the term period products because it's not only women who use period products," Jahelka said. "They like that it is accessible and we've heard it in person. It's exciting to see that people are utilizing it."

Jahelka used her Special Projects funding to account for \$350 of the pilot program's funding. Each year, SU executives receive a certain amount of money to work on their campaign promises. The remainder of the funding came from the "Programs" line in the SU's Student Government budget. Jahelka said \$3,000 — the same amount allocated for the free condom program — has been set aside for this initiative.

"My guess is we wouldn't use the full amount this year but I would recom-

mend keeping it the same next year because hopefully, it will grow and people will know more about it since it is just the pilot year," Jahelka said.

Jahelka added that the cost for this initiative has been added to the SU Programs budget instead of her Special Projects funding in order to ensure its continuity.

"Special projects can change, but programs are pretty much set unless the whole executive team decides to stop it," Jahelka said.

Jahelka said that other universities, particularly smaller students' unions, have been in contact with her to implement similar programs.

"It is definitely catching on," Jahelka said. "Hopefully, we will see a lot more Students' Unions doing it."





# Haskayne students raise over \$25,000 with Chillin' for Charity

Story by Tina Shaygan  
Photo by Kloie Picot

Hosted for the eighth time on the University of Calgary campus, this year's Chillin' for Charity event raised over \$25,000, exceeding the organizers' \$15,000 goal.

Chillin' for Charity is an annual event held by Haskayne School of Business students for JDC West, a competition where business students from 12 universities across Western Canada look to solve business-related case problems, among other things.

Chillin' for Charity tasks participants with jumping in a pool of freezing-cold water to raise money for local charities. This year, U of C students raised money for the United Way Calgary and Area. The JDC West competition is also taking place at the U of C for the first time this January.

According to Julian Brumec-Parsons, one of the co-captains of the U of C JDC West team, the competition is more than just about solving case problems.

"Part of what we do as teams throughout Western Canada is yes, participate in the

cases, but we also do a lot of work in the community," Brumec-Parsons said.

Brumec-Parsons said preparation for the event had an early start of 4:30 a.m. to get the hot tub ready for participants to warm up after jumping. This year, the event started outside of the Taylor Family Digital Library at 9 a.m. and went until late afternoon with over 80 people jumping in the cold water. Brumec-Parsons added that the success of this year's event was largely due to the enthusiasm of the campus community.

"People would come for their jump and stick around just to watch and enjoy the event," he said. "It was a lot of participation, not just across Haskayne, but the entire university."

Nik Golob, Students' Union business representative and a delegate for JDC West, plunged in four times on the day of the event. He said the involvement of faculty members like Haskayne dean Jim Dewald and other campus communities contributed to the positive outcome of the event.

"[Dewald] was a huge part of pushing this forward and got other deans to jump," Golob said. "Other departments like the IT depart-

ment jumped. Our MBA office also had a team."

Brumec-Parsons hopes the event continues to grow.

"We want to make sure the fundraising happens every year and the amount we raise continues to go up. That stems from getting more people involved," he said. "This year was great. We had a ton of people jump in and we are always going to have time to fit more people in."

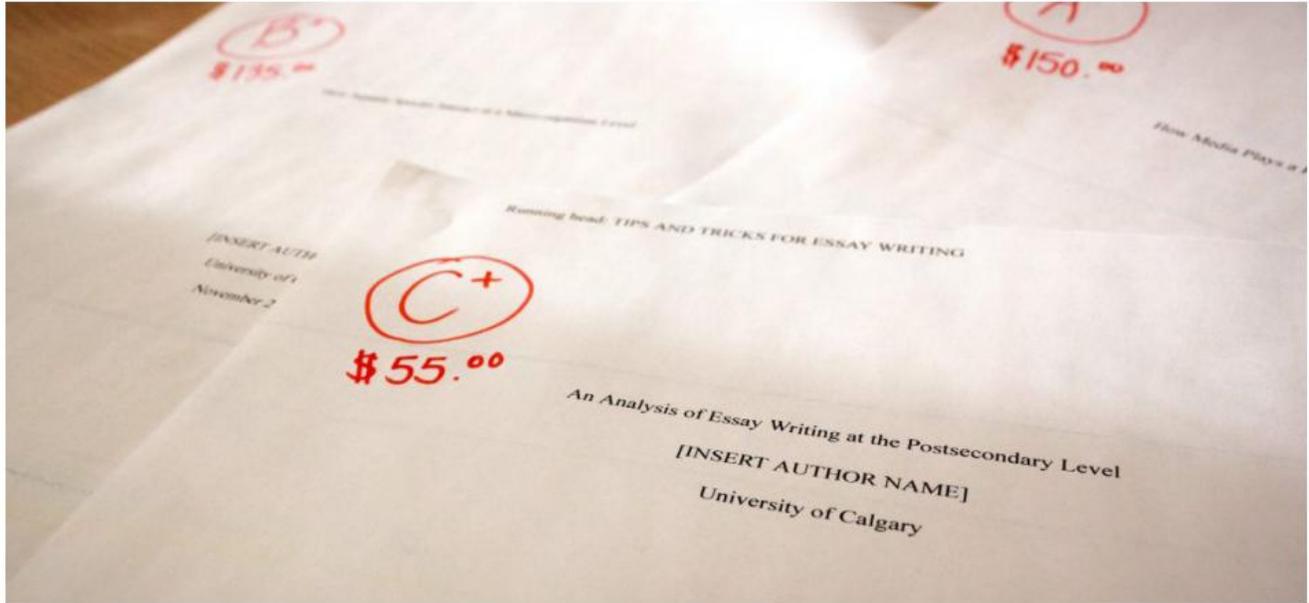
Golob thinks the future growth of the event will depend on community participation.

"I think this year we did a good job getting it out there and trying to get different smaller communities involved," Golob added. "Just getting those people involved and talking about it, telling their friends, it's little by little. If we keep growing like that, it'll be great."

The JDC West competition will take place on campus from Jan. 12–14. The event is open to the public and attendees can watch students from Western Canadian universities take part in a weekend-long series of competitions and events.



# U of C looks to combat emerging academic black markets



Story by Justin Schellenberg  
Photo by Mariah Wilson

University of Calgary teachers and administrators are starting to notice the emergence of an academic black market through contract cheating on campus. They're now looking to tackle the issue.

International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) defines contract cheating as "a form of academic dishonesty where students get academic work completed on their behalf, which they can submit for academic credit as if they had created it themselves."

Advertisements and flyers offering these services targeting U of C students have been discovered on Kijiji and in classrooms on campus.

"It's getting on our radar," said acting associate dean of teaching and learning Sarah Eaton. "Until now, it's been informal. People have been scratching their heads trying to figure out what to do and we haven't had any big conversations about it."

Participating in academic black markets constitutes academic misconduct, which

can result in consequences ranging from a failing grade to expulsion from the university.

Eaton said a lack of local research on the issue makes it difficult to assess the severity of the problem.

"Much of the information we have is from research conducted in other countries," Eaton said. "There hasn't been a lot of research done on this in a Canadian context in the last 10 years. We don't know how prevalent it is here."

Vice-provost student experience Susan Barker stressed her belief that the number of U of C students using these services is very small.

"Academic integrity is a really important cornerstone of the institution," Barker said. "It's difficult to know exactly how many students might be doing this. I would say the vast majority of students are not doing this. I think that people get that it's not appropriate. It's against the regulations."

Barker added that cheating comes down to a small number of students who "don't play by the rules."

"We've got a handful of kids who might think this is an easy way to get a good grade

and it's worth taking the risk," Barker said.

While Eaton agrees the current usage of these services is likely low, she believes that the use of contract cheating is spreading and that more effort will be needed to combat the issue.

"I think it's growing," Eaton said. "I think it's being normalized in ways that are very unsettling."

One of the ways that the U of C tried to tackle the issue was by taking part in the annual International Day of Action Against Contract Cheating on Oct. 18, an initiative in its second year coordinated by the ICAI to help institutions bring forward the issue of contract cheating. Toolkits designed to educate on prevention and detection of contract cheating are also being distributed to faculty members across campus.

Eaton believes the solution to the issue lies in bringing students into the conversation and getting their input.

"We can talk about it at the level of instructors, but this is ultimately a conversation about students learning," Eaton said. "If we're not doing a good enough job of supporting learning, then we need to look at what we can do better."



# Faculties cite barriers to URS

Story by Daniel Huss

Photo by Rick Collins

The Students' Union received 140 abstract submissions for the 11th Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS), which took place on Nov. 30. The URS is the only event of its kind intended for all undergraduate students from every faculty. It showcases research done by undergraduate students of all experience levels. However, the number of applications vary across different faculties.

Abstract submissions from applicants are evaluated for acceptance by an SU Working Group, which is composed of the SU vice-president academic as chair, six student-at-larges and two SU elected officials. At the event, three judges evaluate participants' work and submit feedback to the Working Group, who then decide on award winners.

The Cumming School of Medicine and the Faculty of Science had the largest number of submissions with 57 and 49, respectively. The Faculty of Arts had 12 applications, Kinesiology had eight, Social Work had three, and Werklund School of Education had two. The Faculties of Nursing and Law each had one applicant. There were no applicants from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine or the Haskayne School of Business.

SU vice-president academic Tina Miller said the numbers are in line with previous years the symposium has been hosted.

"It's very consistent with what we've seen with smaller faculties," she said. "We consistently get a lower number from professional faculties and from Haskayne."

Miller added she thinks a traditional view of research also contributes to lower numbers of applications from certain faculties.

"I think the numbers in those faculties are consistently lower for this event purely because research is traditionally thought of as something that is done in science," she said. "I think it's challenging to get the outreach to those faculties that have less of an emphasis and focus on research as a whole, regardless of whether students are actually performing research in those faculties."

Each of the faculties with lower submission numbers indicate different barriers to their



students participating in the URS.

Faculty of Arts associate dean of teaching, learning and student engagement Dawn Johnston said the format of the URS — which is posters-only — does not accommodate much of the research undertaken by many arts students, especially those in fine arts.

"Much of [research in arts] is very theoretical and critical, requiring a significant amount of background and context or relies on qualitative research methods, which are less easily translated into graphs, diagrams and the other visuals used most typically in scientific research presentations," Johnston said.

Werklund School of Education associate dean of undergraduate programs Dianne Gereluk said the biggest barrier for education students is the timing of URS.

"Unfortunately, the timing of this particular event is problematic for our first-year education students, because when the call is made they are out in their field experience practicum," Gereluk said. "For our final-year education students, they're in the schools already from the beginning of November until the holiday break."

According to Faculty of Social Work associate dean Christine Walsh, it's hard for social work students to participate in the URS since students' only join the faculty for their third and fourth years of study.

"To orient them to the discipline, the profession, to research and get them involved in things like the symposium, it's a relatively complex and fast job," Walsh said. "It's also the timing. Students who are just coming in their third year don't really have the opportunity."

Haskayne School of Business associate dean Sherry Weaver said that their students have been rejected from the URS in the past because of the nature of the research they are conducting.

"Generally, our research is very problem-focused and less about the traditional methodologies where one would state a hypothesis and having control groups and being able to do a lot of that measurement," Weaver said. "A lot of times, it's a single business and it's solving problems."

Weaver says that the 2018 launch of the honours bachelor of commerce program might change the level of participation among Haskayne students.

"Even though you don't see that many applications this year, I imagine that a couple years from now we will see a rather large contingent of Haskayne students that are going to be participating," she said.

In response to criticism of a lack of research experience required for the Working Group members, Miller had said that she is looking to set up focus groups in the winter semester with both participants and members of the Working Group Committee to review the event. She added that she will also look at promotional strategies.

"I want to look at whether the outreach that we do and if who we're promoting the event to correlates to our applications from different faculties," she said. "I want to see if we're promoting less to faculties with less submissions. I think it comes down to faculty representatives to promote the URS on our behalf."



# U of C professor researches social media campaigns like #MeToo



Story by Hannah Brunn  
Photo by Mariah Wilson

On Oct. 15, actress Alyssa Milano posted two words on Twitter that took social media by storm — #MeToo. In the following days, the hashtag was seen everywhere, used by celebrities and non-celebrities alike to show the world that sexual violence is a structural, institutionalized problem rather than an individual experience.

#MeToo, a response by Milano to the allegations against movie producer Harvey Weinstein, was a campaign created by activist Tarana Burke when a young girl told Burke that she was be-

ing sexually abused. This conversation led Burke to create Just Be Inc., a non-profit organization focusing on empowering young women of colour. Over the years, there have been a number of online campaigns fighting rape culture. #MeToo stood out with its connection to many Hollywood actresses, as well as with the huge numbers of girls and women who participated.

University of Calgary communications professor Jessalynn Keller has spent the last three years studying how women have used social media to combat rape culture and sexual violence. She says that her research shows that by using hashtags like #MeToo and #BeenRapedNeverReported, women

are able to make their stories visible and build connections with other women.

"Hashtags like #MeToo allow women to actually come forth with their own story on their own terms," Keller said.

While focusing on #BeenRapedNeverReported, the women Keller interviewed for her research said they found themselves overwhelmed with the amount of support they received upon posting.

"A lot of people who experience sexual violence think it's just them," Keller said. "By tweeting out their stories, the girls and women I have interviewed talked about a consciousness shift, where they realize that what has happened to them has happened to lots of people."



Keller also emphasized that #MeToo helps highlight some of the problems within modern feminist culture. Initially, the public forgot that #MeToo started with Burke, a black woman. Keller said this illustrates that cultural minorities and members of the LGBTQ community, as well as people with disabilities, are having their stories ignored and that reaching out to those communities is essential.

“Let black women, Indigenous women and other women of colour speak about their own experiences, rather than white women trying to speak for them,” she said. “There are opportunities to reach out to people with a different background than you or people who are marginalized, and listen to their stories,” Keller said.

Other hashtag campaigns that have addressed these issues, like #SolidarityIsForWhiteWomen, critique the ways in which white women sometimes overlook the experiences of women of colour, while #YouOKsis? challenges street harassment against women of colour. #IdleNoMore is a Canadian movement

that resists violence against women and is a response to the overwhelming number of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

According to the Native Women’s Association of Canada, Indigenous women 15 years and older are 3.5 times more likely to experience violence than non-Indigenous women. Seventy-five per cent of Indigenous girls under the age of 18 have been sexually abused and 80 per cent of girls under the age of eight residing in the Northwest Territories have been sexually assaulted in 1999. While the number of non-Indigenous women reporting severe forms of violence has declined since 1999, the number of Indigenous women who have faced similar attacks remains relatively unchanged.

Keller said talking about the issue is just the beginning and that the conversation needs to keep happening even after the hype of the Weinstein allegations fade away. She added that while her research shows that there are benefits to talking about these issues, it’s important to see change.

“It’s about changing attitudes, it’s

about changing institutions and our ideas about gender,” she said.

Keller empathized two things about making change happen. She says one big step is inviting men into the conversation, as well as changing what it means to be a man in society. The other is to have proper education about consent and sexual violence in sexual education programs in schools.

Keller added that just because someone didn’t post or share their story online, it doesn’t make it any less important and that when people do come forth, in whatever way they choose, they deserve to be heard and believed.

“They should by no means feel obligated or feel like their story is less because they don’t tweet out their story or write a post on Facebook,” she said.

At the U of C, students can contact sexual violence support advocate Carla Bertsch in MacKimmie Block 204 or via email [carla.bertsch@ucalgary.ca](mailto:carla.bertsch@ucalgary.ca). Students can also receive peer mentoring through the Women’s Resource Centre and the Consent Awareness and Sexual Education student club.

This month at the  
**School of Creative and Performing Arts**

**Monday Night Jazz**  
**Nate Waters’ Quintet**  
Dec. 4 at 8 p.m. in the University Theatre



**A Celebration of Bartók III**  
Dec. 7 at 8 p.m. in the Eckhardt-Gramatté Hall

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# U of C students launch on-campus food delivery app

Story by Justin Schellenberg  
Photo by Mariah Wilson

A beta version of a food-delivery app for MacHall vendors is now available for download. The app was developed by University of Calgary students Jason Meng, Pouyan Shojaei, Sam Ao, Satyaki Ghosh and Artin Rezaee.

DeliverUs, available on the Android app store, is a service that will deliver food from stores in MacHall to any location on the main U of C campus.

"We have close to 200 downloads already," said Meng, DeliverUs co-founder and fourth-year business student. "Orders are coming in and there's a lot of demand."

A&W, Carl's Jr., Kobe Beef, Dairy Queen, Opa, Coffee Company and Starbucks are available on the app for delivery. The creators plan on having a web application running this month and an iOS version by January 2018.

"We just need a big beta test so we can get information. Next semester, hopefully sometime in January, is when we want to have a more official launch," Meng said.

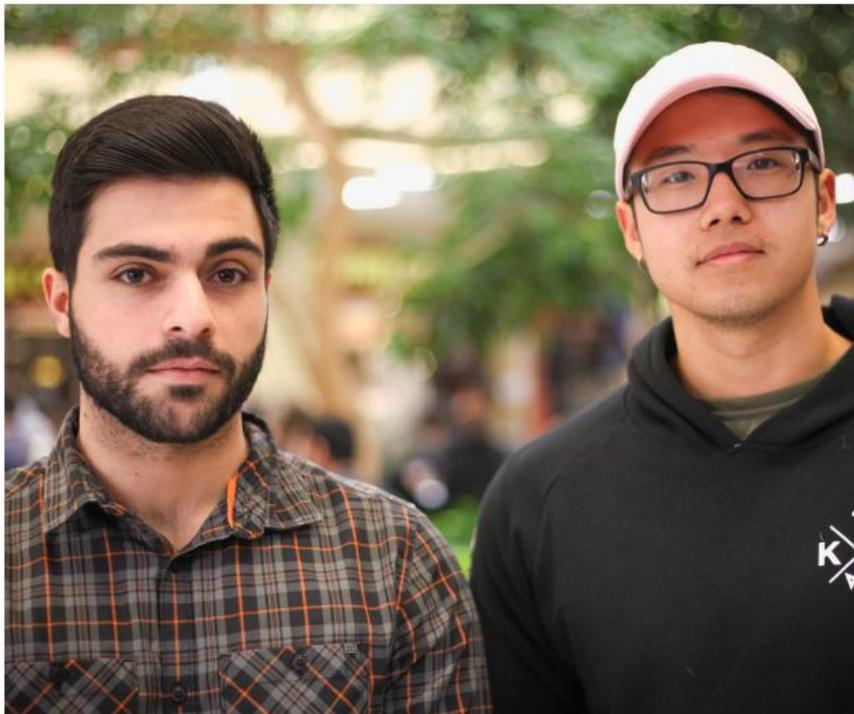
The idea for the app started when Shojaei, a third-year chemical engineering student, was required to come up with business ideas for an entrepreneurial class. He and Meng teamed up to create the app after deciding the idea was worth pursuing.

"We both had a very entrepreneurial mindset and we always wanted to pursue something," Shojaei said.

Meng and Shojaei then signed on with students Ao, Ghosh and Rezaee to develop the app's software.

For all of them, this was their first-large scale project, requiring them to use the knowledge and skills they acquired through their courses at the U of C.

"All the software-designing theories and implementation that we learned in class helped in building this app," Ghosh said. "The basics that we learned in the first and second year of software engineering was a solid



foundation for picking up new programming languages and more complex designs."

The team had help with their project from Houston Peschl, an instructor at the Haskayne School of Business who specializes in entrepreneurship.

"They came to me after they had their idea and it was getting going and they needed direction on how to strategically move forward," Peschl said.

Peschl connected them with Innovate Calgary, a business incubator program that helped them hash out their plans.

"For the entire four months of summer we just did a lot of market research, talking to people, customer delivery, building our team and making those kinds of connections to actually bring us to where we are today," Meng said.

Peschl believes there is strong potential in the team's plans for DeliverUs but says they are not the first to try delivering food on campus.

"The problem is that so many of the pre-

vious students that have tackled it haven't put all the pieces together," Peschl said. "If there's no hiccups there and they figure that out, then I think it's a really elegant model and I think they're onto something."

For Meng and Shojaei, the ultimate goal is to push past the U of C and expand to other campuses.

"Once we're established enough at U of C, we want to be able to scale to all the other campuses, starting with Mount Royal University, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, from there moving to University of Alberta, University of British Columbia and every other campus that we can hit," Meng said.

Shojaei expressed his appreciation for all the help he received through his courses at the U of C and from the instructors who helped them along the way.

"Overall throughout the process, I'd say the learning experience is what's most valuable," he said. "You can't really gain it in any other manner unless you actually go out there and try it."





# Nature of Research course takes multifaceted approach to research

Story by Tina Shaygan  
Photo by Mariah Wilson

**T**he University of Calgary Arts and Sciences Honours Academy (ASHA) program began in September 2007 with a mission to combine arts, sciences and a sense of global awareness. Originally under the Faculty of Humanities with partnerships between the Faculties of Science and Social Sciences, ASHA became part of the Faculty of Arts when the Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences were amalgamated in 2010.

Among courses that ASHA students are required to take is ASHA 501: The Nature of Research. According to instructor Paul Stortz, the course looks to bring an interdisciplinary approach to academic research.

"What I hope the students get is the view that research could be multifaceted and really open to individual

interpretation," he said.

Fourth-year English student Sonia Jarmula is enrolled in ASHA 501. She said the course allows her to view work done in other classes with a new lens.

"I often find that some of the discussions we have are so multidisciplinary in nature and I'm able to talk about literature in ways I haven't before," she said. "It really encourages a love of learning."

Stortz also emphasized the importance of bringing forward different ways of engaging with research for undergraduate students.

"[Undergraduate students] are perfectly capable of doing original and publishable research," he said. "Research isn't confined to university or formal practices and institutions. We do research every morning when we get up until we go to bed at night."

Fourth-year biochemistry student Sarah McColman echoed Stortz's point.

"This particular class is interesting because although I do a lot of research in my other classes, it is very different research than what I have done for this class," she said. "The sources I've had to look through has been very diverse. Not just scientific journals. I've been looking at artistic journals and images."

McColman added that the course has helped her define the idea of knowledge creation and discovery.

"I've always considered research to be just finding out what other people already knew or finding things that are already there that nobody has looked at yet," she said. "The idea of actually creating new knowledge and letting that shape your future endeavours has expanded my perspective on the whole concept of what it means to be a researcher and a scientist."

ASHA 501 is followed by ASHA 503: Capstone Seminar in the winter semester.





# STUDENTS' UNION, U OF C SET OUT TO DEFINE THE 'STUDENT EXPERIENCE'

Story by Jason Herring. Photo by Mariah Wilson

The phrase 'student experience' is so overused among the powers that be at the University of Calgary that it's become a punchline. The words permeate nearly every statement and press release from the school's administration and has become many student leaders' favourite buzzword. There's even a high-level administrator at the university whose job title is "vice-provost student experience."

This isn't particularly unusual among Canadian universities. Most of the country's post-secondaries similarly tout the idea of student experience, largely as a way to affirm to their undergraduates and stakeholders that, yes, they care about the people who pay tuition.

What is unusual, however, is an attempt to articulate the normally ab-

stract concept. But that's exactly what the U of C Students' Union did in November, with president Branden Cave drafting a definition of 'student experience' to be adopted by the SU. The definition was approved unanimously by Students' Legislative Council on Nov. 21. Among its 10 bullet points are declarations that student experience is "our resiliency in the face of challenges," "our acknowledgement and acceptance of everybody" and "our nervous excitement about our future."

Cave said he was prompted to come up with the definition, written from a student's perspective, by members of the U of C Board of Governors. He went to SLC and to his own President's Consultative Task Force to workshop ideas, steps that he says ensured the definition

could speak for all students.

"When I first started thinking about it, it would've been impossible for me to put anything down on paper," Cave said. "The key part of the draft is that it's written from kind of a student perspective. We're speaking collectively."

Cave's draft lines up with the U of C's definition found in their Eyes High strategy, which says student experience means "connecting students with the University of Calgary in ways that enrich their whole lives and foster a sense of community spirit." It adds that students "develop the skills, knowledge and personal attributes necessary to become productive citizens and leaders in their chosen fields."

It makes sense why student experience is a priority for administrators.



They recognize that a big part of recruitment for students coming from outside of Calgary is the non-academic aspects of university. It's no surprise that the top result of a Google search for 'University of Calgary student experience' is a recruitment page for future students — a far more polished website than the school's pages for current undergraduates.

Cave recognizes that the need for a definition of student experience indicates some level of dissatisfaction with students' actual experiences. The U of C has long struggled with student engagement, stemming from the school's reputation as a commuter campus. Cave acknowledges these deficiencies and says the definition is meant to be aspirational. He adds that he thinks it will help spur tangible change on campus.

"It does say that we're not where we want to be and that we want it to get better," he said. "I don't think any person on campus wouldn't acknowledge that us being a commuter campus has a massive role to play in the student experience and how people interact. We need to be doing stuff to make sure that students do want to be spending time on campus, that they have a sense of community, that they're not just going to class and going home."

Student experience is frequently discussed at the University of Alberta, according to Marina Banister, the president of the school's Students' Union. She said a definition could be helpful, but that her union mainly uses the abstract idea as motivating tool for

## U OF C STUDENTS' UNION DEFINITION OF STUDENT EXPERIENCE

**"We define our Student Experience as:**

- Our autonomy to develop as people, professionals, and leaders in our community;
- Our ability to explore, take risks, and push boundaries, even if this makes us uncomfortable;
- Our sense of being valued and respected by administration and the leaders at our institution, which is demonstrated through accountability, caring, and open-mindedness to our needs and values;
- Our resilience in the face of challenges and growth from overcoming adversity;
- Our access to the resources and opportunities we require to flourish in school, after graduation and for the rest of our lives;
- Our interactions with the facilities and environment that surround us every day and welcome us to spend time on our campus;
- Our sense of belonging to a community of our peers that bring us pride in being students and graduates of the University of Calgary;
- Our relationships which are cultivated through everyday interactions;
- Our acknowledgement and acceptance of everybody regardless of who you are or who you love;
- Our nervous excitement about our future and what exists for us after the University of Calgary."

advocacy efforts.

"We try to keep the experience that all kinds of students are having on campus front of mind with everything we do," Banister said.

At the University of Toronto, student experience is still a widely used term, but is less pervasive than in Alberta schools. Like the U of A, the institution hasn't attempted to codify the phrase. U of T Students' Union president Mathias Memmel said he thinks defining the term discounts the unique nature of post-secondary experiences.

"I think it's really quite impersonal,"

he said. "The diversity of those student experiences is encapsulated not necessarily in the singular."

The provincial New Democratic Party is taking a different approach to the concept. The Ministry of Advanced Education said they don't have a specific definition or mandate for student experience, but that they want to improve certain aspects of the student experience, like mental health and sexual violence prevention. This is starkly different from definitions by the U of C or its SU, which avoid addressing negative aspects of student life entirely. Only a line in Cave's version, which says student experience involves "growth from overcoming adversity," mentions negative experiences.

In his *Gauntlet* interview, Cave stressed that talking about student experience, much like defining it, is difficult because it's an abstract, intangible thing.

"It's hard to talk about these high-level ideas, but I think it's an important acknowledgement that student experience has a lot of room to improve on this campus," he said.

Cave is right — there is a lot of room for student experience to improve at the U of C. Time will tell whether his definition is the catalyst for that change.

## UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY EYES HIGH DEFINITION OF STUDENT EXPERIENCE

"What does student experience mean to us?"

"It means connecting students with the University of Calgary in ways that enrich their whole lives and foster a sense of community spirit. It means enhancing each student's learning experience through a combination of outstanding teaching, research and academic support, and facilities. This includes access to extracurricular lifestyle

and social activities, leadership and professional development opportunities, exposure to diverse ways of thinking and living, and access to community-based work and volunteer opportunities. It also means students are welcomed into a safe and inclusive environment that allows them to develop the skills, knowledge and personal attributes necessary to become productive citizens and leaders in their chosen fields."





Photo by Chris Walker

## **‘Short-sighted,’ ‘mean-spirited’: The uncertain future Canadian graduate students face studying in the United States**

Many Canadians pursuing higher education take their studies south of the border in order to take advantage of funding or to attend schools that offer opportunities in niche areas of research. For many of these students, the tax plan proposed by the Republican party could be devastating, leaving them with only two options — rack up thousands of dollars in debt or drop out of school.

Story by Tina Shaygan



**O**n Nov. 16, United States House Republicans passed legislation that could overhaul the American tax system, and it's causing alarm for both U.S. schools and Canadian students looking to pursue higher education down south.

Now in the hands of the U.S. Senate, the tax-reform bill looks different than the legislation that passed through the House and leaves out some of the provisions impacting post-secondary institutions. However, there are still tremendous uncertainties surrounding the bill. If a version similar to the one passed by the House takes effect, Canadian students looking to pursue graduate or doctoral studies in the U.S. will be among those most impacted.

The House legislation aims for \$1.5 trillion USD in tax cuts over a decade. To accommodate this, the legislation would end many individual tax breaks. The legislation also makes tuition waivers — rebates that graduate students receive from universities in exchange for taking on the roles of teaching and research assistants — taxable. In simpler terms, the legislation deems tuition waivers as taxable income, which would change students' tax brackets to a much higher one and dramatically impact graduate students' stipends. Additionally, student-loan interest would no longer be deductible under the House legislation.

Combined with the steep Canadian-U.S. dollar exchange rate, the impacts of the bill would devastate many professional and graduate students.

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**C**laire Gjertsen is a University of Calgary graduate who is currently pursuing her PhD at New York University. She said she chose to go to a U.S. school because of her interest in pursuing a PhD instead of a Masters of Arts. Additionally, she considered studying in the States more appealing due to funding options available to her.

"I didn't feel that it was necessary to do an MA because I did a lot of research as an undergraduate so I was able to skip the masters degree by going to an American school," she said.

Gjertsen added that a tuition waiver

**"Ultimately, I made my American decision significantly based on funding."**

— New York University PhD student Claire Gjertsen

played a huge role in her ultimately deciding on an American school.

"When I got accepted into Canadian schools, I was offered a stipend to live on but I would have had to subtract my tuition amount from that stipend no matter where I went in Canada," she said. "But in the States, I was offered a larger stipend and I didn't have to pay any tuition."

Gjertsen said that if she had known

her financial options could be altered so dramatically, she would not have gone to an American school.

"I would have had to put a lot more into my consideration between Canadian and U.S. school because I was accepted into quite a few Canadian programs," she said. "Ultimately, I made my American decision significantly based on funding."



Photo by Doc Searls



**D**exter Fergie, a University of British Columbia graduate pursuing a PhD in history at Chicago's Northwestern University, has a similar story. Fergie specializes in U.S. and global history and said he chose Northwestern in part because of its history department's welcoming reputation.

"The people [at Northwestern] are also working on such interesting and important projects that it was really hard to pass over," Fergie said.

Fergie said his funding package includes a \$31,780 stipend and a \$56,000 tuition waiver. Under the Senate plan, however, Fergie's taxable income would include the sum of his stipend and tuition waiver, resulting in him having \$87,780 of taxable income from his funding alone. That would put him at a tax rate of 15.6 per cent when his actual yearly income is \$31,780. Fergie's net stipend amount left for the year would be just \$18,087.

Fergie also said he would not have gone to a U.S. school for his PhD if he had known this could be his financial situation.

"If something like one of the current plans gets passed, I will have no choice but to drop out of my program and try to transfer to a Canadian university," he said. "I make enough to live my life here

in Chicago right now, but I just simply would not be able to afford to remain. The PhD can be a slog, but this just adds so many uncertainties."

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**N**orthwestern University is among many U.S. schools troubled by the tax proposal. In an internal email to graduate students, their dean of Graduate Studies and associate provost for graduate education, Teresa K. Woodruff, called the legislation "mean-spirited."

"The proposed tax on graduate student tuition makes no sense," the email read. "Republican House leaders have either been misinformed about the nature of tuition or are simply mean-spirited and want to punish students."

Internal emails from New York University echoed the same concerns as Northwestern.

"Few of the proposals that have emerged in the tax discussions are as short-sighted as this one," an email from NYU read. "Doctoral programs are inextricably intertwined with research and with the future of higher education. Measures that would make the pursuit of a PhD less affordable endanger the strength of the U.S. research enterprise,

our innovation economy and the succeeding generations of university faculty. It threatens to turn a system that has long been based on merit into a pursuit available only to the well-off."

Both Northwestern University and NYU called the House legislation an attack on higher education.

"The proposal erroneously infers that tuition is an 'income' — it is not," Woodruff's email read. "It is the means by which education is paid leading to our future lawyers, scientists, entrepreneurs, artists and journalists. By punishing the nation's graduate student population, the Republican proposal is taxing us all and the lost income will be measured in lost intellectual capital for generations to come."

"I can assure you that combatting these elements of the bill — on our own, with peer institutions and through higher education associations — is receiving our highest attention and effort," NYU's email read. "We are encouraged that the counterpart Senate bill, which was unveiled this week, does not include this provision. However, that is all the more reason to remain focused on removing it from the House bill, as Congress will be seeking to reconcile the various versions. We will not rest."



Photo by Mariah Wilson



Gjertsen said the uncertainties surrounding the tax plan has caused her difficulty at an already stressful time in her studies.

"This has definitely added to my stress," she said. "Not to mention, the [U.S. President Donald] Trump government adds stress every single day."

She added that from the early stages of the House legislation, she has been involved in trying to raise awareness of the issue.

"I signed a letter to my New York representative pretty much the first day this bill dropped and I heard about it to say, 'Please do not pass this,'" Gjertsen said.

Fergie said that he thinks though universities are troubled by the tax plan, action from students and their unions is needed to stop these changes.

"It'll take mass action from students themselves," he said. "It's times like these where we really need the power that comes with being in a union."

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**U** of C history professor Jewel Spangler said she has advised many students over the years in their pursuit of education in the U.S. but now the prospect of an education south of the border seems too uncertain for many to follow.

Spangler said students may choose U.S. schools for different reasons, including combined programs or supervisors.

"There are lots of places in the U.S. that have multiple graduate programs all in driving distance within each other, something that very few Canadian cities can offer," she said.

She added that competition in the job market for specialized programs is also an-



Students at Northwestern University, including Zachary Angulo, are rallying against proposed changes to the U.S. tax plan. Angulo says that students must embrace their unions to make their voices heard.

other factor of why attending a U.S. school is more beneficial for some students and they could be impacted if tax plans make tuition waivers taxable.

"Because I'm an American-history specialist, the students I'm advising, staying in Canada limits their choices of graduate programs severely," Spangler said. "There are only a handful of programs that have a real depth in American history in all of

Canada. And it also limits their opportunities in terms of employment. They would be strong contenders in the Canadian market, which is pretty small but they would have a tougher time competing more broadly."

With a specialization in American history, Spangler said U.S. schools allow graduates to dig deeper in their research. The tax plan could devastate students in programs like hers.

"It could end a lot of people's careers because people don't have the capacity to pay that kind of tax bill nor can they acquire that kind of debt, nor should they have to," she said.

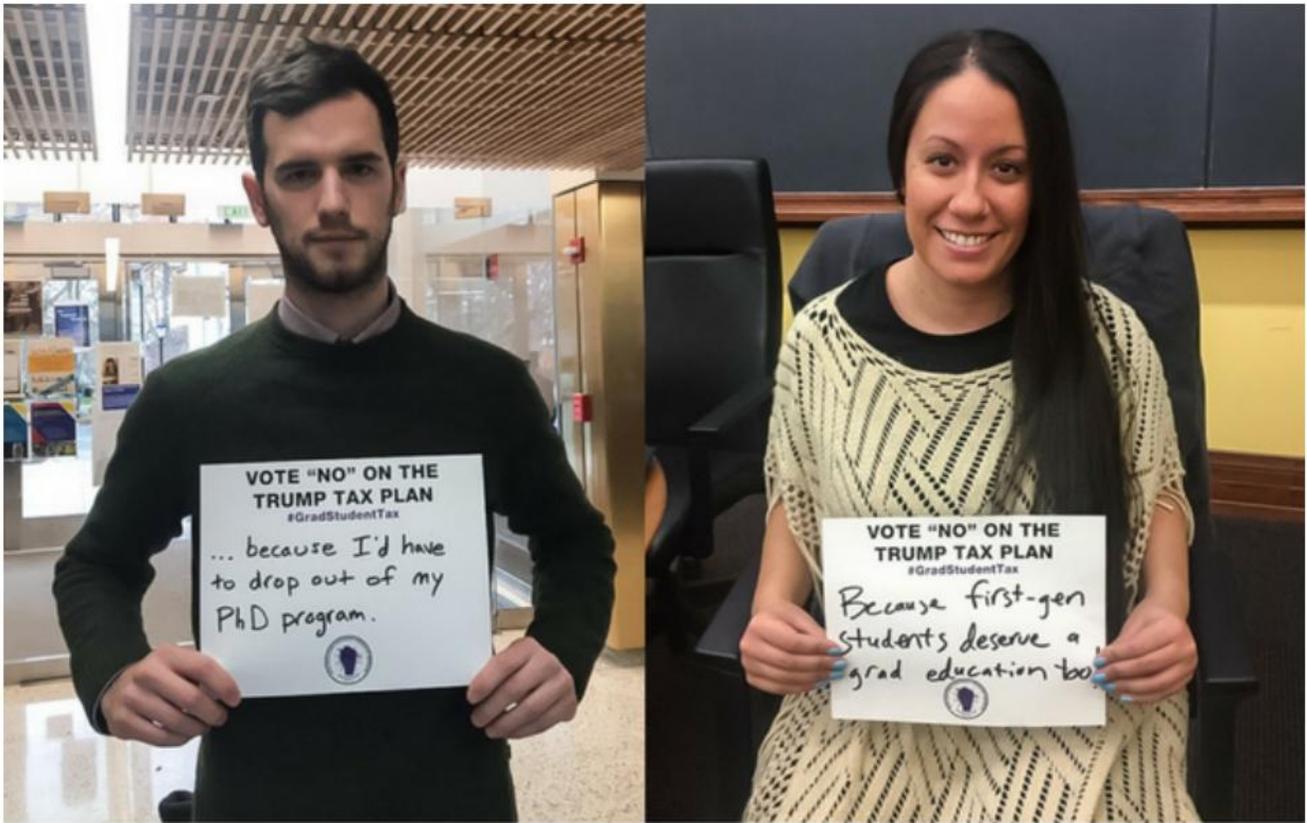
Spangler added that for now, she still advises her students to still apply to U.S. schools but to not commit to anything until further considerations.

"Do not accept an offer of admission without getting real clarification on exactly what provisions in place deal with the possibility

**"People don't have the capacity to pay that kind of tax bill nor can they acquire that kind of debt, nor should they have to."**

— U of C history professor Jewel Spangler





Dexter Fergie, left, is among students at Northwestern University participating in a social media campaign to protest proposed changes to the U.S. tax plan.

that the tuition waiver could be taxed," she said. "In other words, students should request information about whether the school has a defence fund in place to help students or if they would be willing to fund the taxes levied. Don't accept an offer that is impossible to fund."

**A**t Northwestern University, graduate students are looking to unionize in order to make their voices heard. Zachary Angulo, another PhD student at Northwestern University who has been involved with the Northwestern University Graduate Workers (NUGW) since its inception in Fall 2016, said he thinks a union is the only way to advocate for students on all matters, including the tax plan.

"Graduate employees perform essential work for Northwestern University and deserve a seat at the table when decisions are made that affect their lives, their students and the community," Angulo said.

Angulo added that the House tax legis-

lation is troubling because it collects taxes on income students never "see." He said that NUGW has been researching the matter more closely.

"NUGW intends to provide some guidance through our research to the rest of Northwestern's graduate worker community so that they are more aware of how this tax plan may affect them," he said.

Angulo added that NUGW is working on events, informal meetings to provide guidance to students and assistance for students to contact their government representatives.

Fergie added that the tax overhaul is only part of larger changes happening in the U.S. under the Trump administration of that will trouble many students.

"I mean, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has ramped up deportations, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and State Department are being dismantled, the Pentagon is gaining more power to act independently, and Obamacare is being targeted," he said. "None of this began with Trump but it is on a quantitatively different scale."

The future remains uncertain as the bill moves through the Senate. Fergie said the uncertainty is troubling.

"The chances of the tax plan becoming law are slim, but if the last couple years of improbable events — Trump's election, Brexit, etc. — are evidence of anything, it is not beyond the realm of possibility," he said. "So, however incompetent the GOP is and unpopular the tax plan is, it is not comforting to depend on their incompetence and internal discord to save us from the passing of this bill."

Angulo said unions and movements across the country give graduate students their best chance.

"Graduate workers are graduate workers, whether they are from the U.S. or elsewhere. NUGW, and a great many other unionization efforts across the U.S. recognize this and are fighting for international students' place at the table as well," he said. "All graduate workers are welcome to join the cause and I think it is in their best interest to do so."

The U.S. Senate is expected to make a decision on the tax plan in early December.





## Increasing funding for international study opportunities increases accessibility

By Danielle Grant  
Photo by Mariah Wilson

There is a stereotype of post-secondary students who participate in study-abroad programs: spoiled twenty-somethings gallivanting around Europe getting to know different vodkas rather than actually studying. This stereotype can be the foundation for some great jokes, mocking that friend who spent a term in France and now has a prominent sommelier side to their personality. But it ignores the value of global education for Canadian students.

The 2017 “Global Education For Canadians” report from the University of Ottawa and the University of Toronto calls for increased funding for global education because of its benefits for students and society. Global education provides students with enhanced problem-solving, creativity, communication and adaptability skills, with a focus on experiential learning. Global education also diversifies our workplaces, strengthens research networks and can be a gateway to emerging economic markets.

The report stresses that Canada is lagging because it lacks a federal strategy for study-abroad initiatives, while the U.S., Australia and the European Union invest heavily in these programs. Increasing Canadian’s global education should be multifaceted, with the reduction of financial burdens on students being prioritized. The proposal urges the Canadian government to invest in global education initiatives to encourage students to enhance their undergraduate programs and to ensure equal opportunities are available for all Canadian students.

Students who have studied abroad understand the value of international education and are more likely to support increased participation. However, like other proposals asking for federal funding, predictable argumentative discussions emerge before the proposal can even be read. The two most common comments are that a global education initiative would “spoil the already elite” and the more underwhelming attempt at an argument — “Not with my tax dollars.”

The notion that studying abroad is a

luxury that should be reserved for students studying on their wealthy parent’s dime is founded on an outdated understanding of the value of studying abroad. Becoming global students is important for Canadian graduates to remain competitive. Canada has the highest enrolment and education attainment rates among the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. But access to education still varies between economic backgrounds. The report calls for targeted strategies to focus financial supports on students who would otherwise be unable to study abroad. This isn’t a call to fund already privileged students. It’s recognizing that global education is valuable for all Canadian students and financial status should not limit participation in these programs.

Graduates need the skills that global education provides to ensure they’re qualified for leadership positions. Otherwise we will be surpassed by other graduates who are better equipped. Canada’s continued apathy means our students are already falling behind.



# Proposed changes to residence meal plan are out of touch with students' needs

By Jesse Stilwell

The University of Calgary Board of Governors should not approve changes to the residence meal plans as they are currently proposed. Doing so would be exploitative and prove that the administration and Residence Students' Association are out of touch with students' needs.

Students want nutritious food that is readily accessible. The food that is currently available in the Dining Centre is overpriced and unhealthy. The proposed changes do not address these issues and create new problems. This is largely because the U of C's administration, the RSA and the Students' Union struggled to communicate. It has been difficult to gather information about these changes since these offices have told different stories about them.

A few things are clear. The changes to the Dining Centre will include taking away dif-

ferent food stations, such as the smoothie bar, stir-fry station and salad bar in favour of one massive buffet. This is called an "All You Care To Eat" plan. The changes would also decrease the Food Fund, which allows students to purchase food outside of the Dining Centre with their Unicard, like Tim Hortons and Jugo Juice in MacHall. Diversity of choice is one of the best aspects of the meal plan and should not be changed.

Another proposed change is that students will no longer be able to take their food out of the Dining Centre unless they pre-order take out. It makes no sense that a student could take food from MacHall anywhere they like, but not from the Dining Centre. Having the freedom to easily munch on a snack while studying in your residence room should not be a privilege the university can take away.

The worst part of these changes is that they come with a cost increase. Purchasing a meal plan is mandatory for those who wish to live in first-year residence, so the

cost should be kept to a minimum. There is no reason to remove choices and restrict where people can eat while hiking the price. This exploits first-year students who have no choice but to purchase these plans with a cost that's already hard to justify, especially when living off campus is more popular than residence at the U of C. Passively allowing this cost increase to reach the BOG unopposed demonstrates that the RSA is out of touch with the students they are supposed to represent.

Every residence student should hope that our administrators reject these changes when they vote in December. Despite its problems, not changing the meal plan at all is a better option than this proposal. Thankfully, the SU sees this as well. There is a good reason that no other university in Alberta offered a plan like this until this year — these programs do not serve students' needs. The U of C should not throw away the already meager quality of the Dining Centre.

## Campus quips: What are your thoughts on the proposed changes to the meal plan?



"I'd miss not being able to grab take-out easily."

- Jaqueline Buhler, second-year kinesiology



"This sounds terrible."

- Ben Stewart, first-year engineering



"I don't see any benefits in these changes."

- Carly Sugden, second-year business



# Undergraduate Research Symposium excludes valuable student work

By Jesse Stilwell  
Photo courtesy University of the Fraser Valley

The University of Calgary Students' Union was satisfied with the number of applicants they received for 2017's Undergraduate Research Symposium. The event, which showcases research from undergraduate students from all experience levels, received 140 submissions. That's about the same amount as in previous years, meaning the SU is content with flatlining rather than improving.

However, some faculties and students are unimpressed with another year of the URS boasting thousands of dollars in prize money but being tailored towards traditional scientific research. Not all U of C students conduct research that follows a rigorous scientific method or makes for a nice poster. Regardless, research that deserves to be shared is being conducted in all faculties.

An English major's poster analyzing the

great works of a renaissance writer isn't visually appealing and no one wants to look at pictures of horrific violence being studied by an International Relations student. Business research often don't make it past the application stage because it doesn't follow the scientific method that the rubric the URS selection committee uses. The biggest event for undergraduate research at U of C should accommodate these projects.

The honours programs in many Faculty of Arts departments is set up in such a way that students produce proposals in the fall and finished research in the winter semester. Unfortunately for them and the wider campus community, the URS will not accept projects at the proposal stage, which disadvantages these students.

The URS could easily be more accessible. The SU should not apply the same rubric for all faculties when deciding which projects get to compete. Instead, specialized rubrics suited for the needs of each faculty should be used so that projects

are judged fairly. Scientific research is valuable, but should not be prioritized over other forms of research.

There are other opportunities to showcase research throughout the year on smaller scales that accept other presentation formats for research, such as the Faculty of Arts Students' Association's symposium and the Program for Undergraduate Research Experience Awards. Students are allowed to submit reports or display fine arts the way they are created, such as dance or sculptures. By forcing students to only create posters for the URS, the event excludes some of the most interesting research being done at the U of C.

With some simple changes, the URS could see major increases in applications. All research would be on display at the event, rather than the few projects that fit within its criteria. It's still worthwhile to attend the symposium and enjoy the posters that made the cut, but its important to acknowledge that many students were unable to participate.





# Safe injection sites should not require federal approval

By Derek Baker

Photo by Justin Quaintance

**D**rug addictions should be treated as health issues, not criminal issues. Unfortunately, the way our governments currently operate suggests the narrative in Canada is still that addictions should be punished.

On Oct. 27, Health Canada approved Calgary's first supervised consumption site, which is being implemented at the downtown Sheldon Chumir Centre. Five other locations have also been approved for the province — four in Edmonton and one in Lethbridge. Alberta's government had to apply for permission from Health Canada way back in June to create these sites.

In a society fighting an opioid epidemic, the implementation of supervised consumption sites is an essential step towards recovery. These sites are harm-reduction mechanisms that ensure medical staff can monitor substance users in hygienic environments. They also provide a crucial point of contact for addicts to access treatment services.

The decision to implement these sites should be applauded by all. Drug addiction is a public health concern that necessitates healthcare solutions. However, the steps required to approve these sites suggest that drug addiction is still considered a criminal issue instead of a health concern. Though opioids and other illicit substances are listed in the federal Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA), provinces shouldn't have to go to the federal government to seek exemptions for supervised consumption sites if recovery is the true goal.

The legality of supervised consumption sites has been turbulent, culminating in a 2011 Supreme Court of Canada decision. In the case, the federal government alleged that they could deny exemptions to the CDSA to operate safe injection sites. The court ruled against the federal government, declaring that denial of such services constitutes a breach of Section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which grants "the right to life, liberty and

security of the person." Provinces must still apply for federal exemptions to set up supervised consumption sites, but because of the ruling it's now unconstitutional for Ottawa to deny them.

Despite this, it still took five months for Alberta's applications to be approved. Though Ottawa recently passed Bill C-37, which is aimed to streamline the application process for safe consumption sites, they could've eliminated this step completely if the sites were considered solely health issues and were only under provincial jurisdiction, negating the need for federal input.

The opioid crisis is a health issue, not a criminal issue. Having to seek federal approval for supervised consumption sites creates unnecessary hurdles. In Alberta alone, 586 people died from opioid-related overdoses last year. Our society needs to address the issue as a matter of public health. We must be critical of the current process required to grant supervised consumption sites approval.







# Banning books limits discussion and hinders societal progress

By Stephen Lee  
Photo by Mariah Wilson

A school district in Mississippi recently banned *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee's classic book about an innocent black man wrongly accused of rape during the Great Depression. The district complained that language used in the novel makes middle-schoolers uncomfortable. Most of this controversy is over the main characters' use of racial slurs.

It's understandable that the language used in the book makes people uncomfortable. Language is powerful because it can evoke strong emotional responses from even the most basic prose. But the whole point of this book is to make readers uncomfortable and challenge their unconscious biases. The explicit

use of racial slurs and depiction of systematic racism should be unnerving, especially for young students getting their first glimpse of these societal problems.

You're supposed to feel uncomfortable with Lee's use of language. That feeling of unease is crafted to evoke discussions about racism. When you limit people's exposure to books like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, you also limit their conversations. If the goal of our society is to better ourselves, hiding uncomfortable truths won't benefit anyone. Young people need to learn about social issues like racism if we want to eradicate these problems.

Another example of this censorship affected Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, a book that's been the victim of various censorship at-

tempts in schools. People are so averse to feeling unnerved that they would rather bury poignant content than address the issues it presents. The only way progress occurs is through a dialogue about the problems that haunt our society. By banning books because of their language we are hindering our ability to teach people about topics like slavery and discrimination.

When I read these books a few years ago, I was only a couple of years older than middle school students. Obviously, the use of racial slurs was jarring. It was the first time I'd been exposed to that kind of content. However, I didn't run from the feelings that the text created. Instead, I investigated them and learned from the experience. I'm better off now after reading these books than if I had fled from the prose of Lee and Twain.



# Four reasons why missionary is the best sex position

By Lady Marmalade

As far as sex positions go, missionary is probably the most common and unfortunately, most underrated. While the kids nowadays are getting fancy with their 69s and cowgirls, the true beauty of this overlooked sex position is taken for granted. If you aren't familiar with this position, it involves the penetrating partner lying directly on top of the penetrated partner while having sex. Here are four reasons why missionary is the best sex position and deserves more respect.

## The Intimacy:

Missionary is easily the most intimate sexual position because it involves you and your partner lying face-to-face. Up-close and personal. Nothing strengthens a connection like good eye contact. You're in the best smooching zone and have easy access to your partner's hair, neck and face, so make the most of it.

## The Stimulation:

This position allows for more stimulation for the penetrated partner because the angle of penetration comes in close contact with the clitoris. The G-spot — a sensitive area located on the upper wall of the vagina — is easily stimulated because the partner with the penis will be penetrating from a lower angle and can reach the upper wall of the vagina with less effort. It's a win-win.

## The Ease:

Speaking of less effort, this position also tends to be the most comfortable and least intimidating for many partners. If you're the partner on top, you can hold yourself up while going at it and it's easier to reach orgasm. In fact, this position allows for a ton of control over what angle you enter your partner at because you can use whatever surface you are on for lever-

age. For the partner lying on their back, missionary is a walk in the park. You will have your hands and legs free to amp up the situation, as well as the ability to arch your back and control where you are stimulated.

## The Versatility:

Not only is missionary the simplest position out there, but it acts as a gateway to some new possibilities. Adding a pillow underneath the bottom partner's hips will completely change where stimulation takes place, because of the change in the angle of penetration. This position also provides ample opportunity to maneuver the bottom partner's legs into a horizontal squat to add extra stimulation. Both partners still have their hands free in order to get the job done. The possibilities are endless. Go for it.

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# U of C alumnus releases first horror short-story collection

Story by Matt Hume  
Photo courtesy Samara Burns

Looking for stories to send chills down your spine? There's no need to wait for the next blockbuster horror flick or nostalgia-based Netflix series. U of C master of arts alumni Mike Thorn is released his debut fiction collection, *Darkest Hours*, through Unnerving on Nov. 21. The collection consists of eight previously published and eight never-before published short stories that all fit somewhere within the vast realm of horror fiction.

The collection, which was written over the past two years, ranges in style from "satirical to brutal horrifying realist fiction, to more supernatural horror," according to Thorn. *Darkest Hours* has already received substantial praise from notable horror writers such as S.P. Miskowski and Robert Dunbar.

Each story in *Darkest Hours* stands alone in terms of plot. Thorn says it's difficult to pick a personal favourite while reflecting on the collection.

"My answer changes depending on the day," he says. "But I usually bring up a story called 'Fear and Grace' which is less of a genre story. It's more of a realist fiction

piece with horrifying content in it so I'm pleased with that story."

When it comes to writing horror fiction, Thorn says it's not a conscious choice. Instead of writing fiction to deliberately cause unease within the reader, Thorn writes to combat the anxieties of a modern world in a defensive manner.

"That's just what comes out when I write. But I also think living in 2017, the world's a pretty terrifying place. I think most of us live with some degree of anxiety," he says. "It always comes from some deep-seated anxiety or fear of my own and I try and resolve that through some kind of armature of horror."

Thorn's MA research focused on John Carpenter's 1987 fantasy sci-fi film *Prince of Darkness*. He explored the philosophical problem of epistemophobia, or knowledge and its relation to fear.

"I don't know if it affects [my fiction] in any direct way, I don't like to go in with explicitly theoretical intent when I'm writing fiction," he says. "I just want to focus on mechanical things like, are the character's motivations clear, is the plot structured effectively and so on and so forth. But I'm sure in ways I'm not conscious of my academic work has influence on my fiction."

Even with the recent release of *Darkest*

*Hours*, Thorn is already working on his next tale. He hopes to return to long-form writing and find a home for his first novel sometime in 2018. Although he's only in preliminary stages of research for the novel, Thorn hopes to expand on a concept touched on in the *Darkest Hours* short story "Satanic Panic."

"I'm very interested in the 'satanic panic' pandemic that occurred in the late '80s early '90s in the U.S. and its relation to metal music," he says. "And I'm very interested in that sort of cultural milieu and the [legal] trials that occurred."

After you finish *Darkest Hours*, there's plenty of horror fiction for you to enjoy. Thorn's favourite writers include Virginia Woolf, Kathe Koja and Stephen King, but he currently recommends Gwendolyn Kiste's debut fiction collection *And Her Smile Will Untether the Universe* and Edin Robinson's latest novel *Son of a Trickster*.

*Darkest Hours* is available on Amazon in eBook and paperback. Thorn will also attend two Calgary book launches at the Mount Royal Bookstore on Dec. 1 at 2 p.m. and at Owl's Nest Books on Dec. 6 at 7 p.m.

Check out previously published work and other content from Thorn at [mikethornwrites.com](http://mikethornwrites.com).







# Student raises Indigenous Strategy awareness with campus-wide project

MFA student Nicole Tritter aims to garner student support for the initiative

Story by Matt Hume

Photos by Mariah Wilson

**Y**ou may have noticed a few new posters and stickers around campus lately. They're familiar at first glance but are certainly a new sight upon inspection. It's a reworked version of the U of C coat of arms — the bull is replaced by a buffalo and a flag replaced with a feather, with the Four Directions and medicine bundle also featured. The banner reads "Iinni awanii, 'Ma'tookit! Koistomi naato," meaning "Buffalo says, 'Take me! Your body is sacred,'" in English. The Indigenized U of C coat of arms is a project from master of fine arts student Nicole Tritter as part of her MFA research in Indigenization and actions of reconciliation.

Tritter says the project is intended to garner "grassroots" support for the university's upcoming Indigenous Strategy, which was approved unanimously at the Oct. 20 U of C Board of Governors meeting.

"It was an action of reconciliation and a gesture for Indigenizing campus. I know the U of C has their own Indigenous strategy and I wanted to use this as a way to support that," Tritter says. "We can talk about reconciliation all we like, but if there isn't any action that is attached to it then it goes nowhere."

With Mi'kmaq, Acadian-French and Ukrainian roots, Tritter says the first step of her research was understanding

her own connection to Treaty 7 land. After taking INDG 312, a cultural immersion course taught by Reg Crowshoe and Rose Crowshoe, Tritter found the inspiration for the poster project.

Before placing the art around campus, Tritter ensured proper protocol.

"I did actually contact the Native Centre on the first day [of the posters being up] so that they understood that it was done with the correct protocol. I contacted the Crowshoes and they became my elder consults for the project," she says. "They gifted the Blackfoot phrase that I used within the coat of arms. I gave tobacco beforehand — that's to get the exchange of knowledge. I wanted the





**"I wanted something for students to say, 'Yeah, we are excited about this Indigenous Strategy and we want to show our support for it.' "**

**– Nicole Tritter, coat of arms artist and MFA student**

Native Centre to know that was done and that it was part of my MFA research."

The Native Centre was the only party aware of the project for the first few days of the poster campaign. Tritter says she wanted to "let it sit" with the rest of campus before revealing herself and the project's intention.

"Perhaps it was cheeky of me to put it on the door of the president's office," she says.

Tritter maintains that the true purpose of the project — on top of being a

branch of her MFA research — is to bring awareness of the Indigenous Strategy to the campus in general.

"I wanted something that the university body could use as an idea to support the Indigenization of campus," she says. "I wanted something for students to say, 'Yeah, we are excited about this Indigenous Strategy and we want to show our support for it.' "

Tritter's design is meant to display oral and written knowledge in equal space.

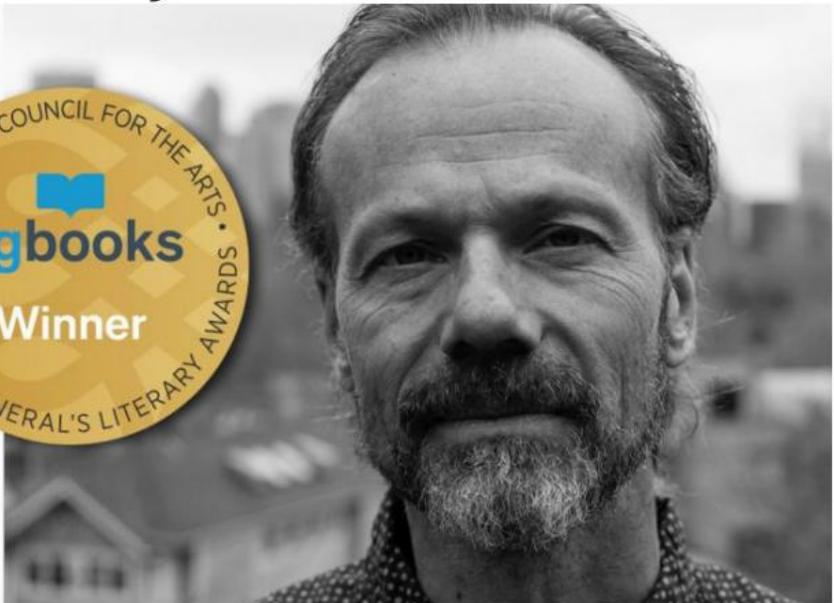
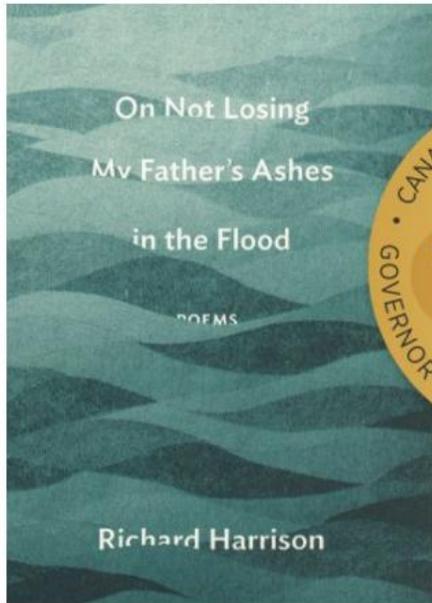
"The Four Directions in the middle,

the book and the medicine bundle on the other side, that's what creates an ethical space between them," she says. "The medicine bundle itself has objects within it and is wrapped up. And as you bring these things out during ceremony knowledge is being shared. So I thought of all these things as chapters in a book and as you're unfolding these items within a medicine bundle it's kind of like a chapter."

Keep your eyes peeled for the unique coat of arms across campus.



# Calgary poet earns 2017 Governor General's Literary Award



Story by Jill Girgulis  
Photo courtesy @CanadaCouncil

It's taken a few decades, but Calgary poet Richard Harrison finally feels like his writing is "getting better."

Harrison is the 2017 recipient of the Governor General's Literary Award for English-language poetry for his collection of poems, *On Not Losing My Father's Ashes in the Flood*. The 1995 University of Calgary Writer-in-Residence is currently an English professor at Mount Royal University and has been publishing literature for 30 years.

"This particular prize has the history of being part of the making of Canadian identity," Harrison says. "It's arguably 'the' prize."

The Governor General's Literary Awards were created in 1937 to "foster Canadian literature," as Harrison puts it.

"In many ways, the strength and variety of Canadian literature is a large part due to the fact that the Canadian government [recognized the need for Canadian culture]," he says.

Prior to its release in October of 2016, Harrison spent 11 years working on con-

tent for his award-winning book. He cites three main influences on the final product.

"I started writing poems about poems. That was the first idea thread of the book," Harrison says. "[The second thing was that] my dad was sick with dementia at the time — it was a slower, longer decline [than other forms of the disease]."

Harrison says that spending time with his father strengthened their relationship and he was able to learn much from the experience.

"He and I got a lot done over that time. In some ways it was us making peace with each other for our lives and in some ways this was sort of the last of his lessons," Harrison says. "The third thing was the flood in 2013. It was this incredibly unique experience — things happened that I had never experienced before and poetry has to answer that."

The interaction of these three factors eventually resulted in *On Not Losing My Father's Ashes in the Flood*. As Harrison summarizes, "It's all those things pulled together as I'm working through what they mean in my life."

Creating the book was an enduring

process, but one particular formatting suggestion from his editor stands out to Harrison as being especially pivotal.

"The poems are not in the standard verse form. They're much more spread out across the page," he says. "Words in the place of notes on a musical score."

The unconventional choice introduced a welcome challenge for Harrison.

"When the words are spread out and they take up more space on the page, they really do have to be right," he admits. "I had to make sure every word was worth as much space as it was taking up."

Harrison says he does not have a favourite passage in his book. Rather, he describes how reactions from readers influence his opinions of the poems.

"As people are responding to the book and stories are gathering around certain verses and certain lines, I'm more happy with [the poetry]," he laughs. "Until a story comes along in response to a line, I don't really 'know' that line — so I'm just getting happier all the time!"

More information on this year's Governor General's Literary Awards winners can be found at [ggbooks.ca](http://ggbooks.ca).



# Get a holiday snack with your holiday snack

Story by Nikayla Goddard

Between the upcoming onslaught of exams, the pile of last-minute essays and completing your Christmas shopping, it can be hard to find time for the significant other. Fight the holiday stress with some date night ideas that won't take up too much of your precious time.

If you're looking for a quick brunch location to spend a morning with your date, Buttermilk Fine Waffles hits the spot. Located on 17 Ave. SW and open seven days a week from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., this cozy spot — and the delicious waffles they serve — provide a great shelter from the cold. Buttermilk Fine Waffles serves both sweet and savoury waffles and has a growing collection of board games available to play. They also host Buttermilk Cinema nights, where you can enjoy an evening cozying up to your date, alongside a plate of fresh waffles.

Kill two birds with one stone by spending time with your partner and also getting

some Christmas shopping done by attending one of Calgary's many Christmas markets together. The Calgary Farmers Market's Christmas themed market is open until Dec. 23 and hosts a variety of events, including a live ice-carving demonstration on Dec. 17, make-your-own-maple-taffy from Dec. 16–19, as well as glass-blowing classes, festive music, gift-wrapping and more. Other Christmas markets include the Festival of Crafts at the

BMO Centre from Dec. 7–10, Haysboro Winter Market on Dec. 3 and Market Collective Cheer on weekends in Inglewood.

Enjoy a free Christmas movie in Kensington at the Plaza Theatre. You and your date can sit down and watch a favourite holiday flick, such as *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Elf* and *Home Alone*, screening every Saturday from Dec. 3–24. Doors open at 3 p.m. and movies start at 3:30 p.m.



## God's Own Country is a Sundance standout

Story by Jocelyn Illing

When I saw the trailer for *God's Own Country*, it didn't really spark my interest. Frankly, it looked like the British version of *Brokeback Mountain*. However, this film stands out as its own. Its central characters aren't discovering their sexuality — they know who they are and what they desire.

A film by Francis Lee, *God's Own Country* was the only British flick to be featured in the World Drama category at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival. Josh O'Connor gives an impeccable performance as a Yorkshire farmer named Johnny. When Johnny isn't working on the farm, he's either binge-drinking at the bar or engaging in anonymous sex. Things change when a Romanian migrant worker named Gheorghe, played by the smoldering Alec Secareanu, arrives at the family farm. As they work in close proximity with each other, it becomes evident that the two share a connection.

Part of what makes this film unique is its uncomfortable realism. The focus of Johnny and Gheorghe's relationship is on their sexual and physical attraction, rather



than their emotional connection. Instead of the audience watching them get to know each other through conversation, we see them engaging in intense sexual activity. While one might prefer to see a couple meet, get to know each other, fall in love and then, maybe, have tasteful, discreet sex, real relationships don't always play out like they do in the fantastical world of film. The reality is that life and sex are messy — a message that it seems Lee was trying to get across with this film.

Although the graphic scenes involving the leads were unpleasant at times, I found sweet and subtle moments between them, which marked Johnny's character growth. Gheorghe teaches Johnny the little ways in which one can show affection for another. As their relationship progresses,

Gheorghe tries to move away from sex in favour of more tender moments, such as touching his hand to Johnny's face. At first, Johnny is hesitant, but he eventually realizes the thrill in the acts simplicity.

When Johnny's dad falls ill and is taken to the hospital, Johnny uses this newfound sense of touch to express his emotions, letting his dad know that he is there for him by holding his hand. Johnny's character development helps balance out the explicit and sweet aspects of the film, achieving an admirable level of realism.

I did not particularly enjoy *God's Own Country*, but I can't say that I regret watching it. It gave me a new perspective on relationships that I think will help me to better understand the world. After all, life is not a fairytale.





## *The Room* co-star Greg Sestero brings new film *Best F(r)iends* to Calgary

Story by Matt Hume  
Photos courtesy @BF\_Movie

**T**he Fifth Reel is a local staple. For half a decade, they've delivered highly engaging screenings of cult classics from *Rushmore* to *Space Jam* along with opening sets from live bands and an abundance of audience interaction. On Nov. 29, The Fifth Reel celebrated their fifth anniversary in glorious style. Greg Sestero, critically acclaimed writer and breakout co-star of the 2003 cult classic *The Room*, returned to Calgary for "Oh Hi Mark! With Greg Sestero."

The event featured a live reading of *The Room's* original script with Sestero, a screening of a short documentary produced by Sestero about the making of *The Room* and a book signing of his

now-famed memoir, *The Disaster Artist*.

Is there anything left to be said about *The Room*? The film has been viewed thousands of times over, deconstructed, laughed at and cherished. Love it or hate it, as the unofficial "best worst movie ever" it has brought joy of some kind to people worldwide.

"It feeds from the people's enthusiasm, so it's hard to get tired of something when you show up and you see people just have the time of their lives and they want more and more of it," Sestero says.

Part of *The Room's* charm is Tommy Wiseau, the man who wrote, directed, produced and starred in the movie. His eccentricities fuel the film's ongoing legacy.

"The intriguing part of *The Room* for me was obviously watching the

way people responded to the film having known Tommy for years before," he says. "Had I not written [*The Disaster Artist*] and everything that's evolved from that taken place, I think it would be kind of played out obviously for me at this point."

Sestero says script readings like the one at The Fifth Reel event keep *The Room* interesting.

"I don't watch *The Room*," he says. "But if there's new ways to come at it — like it was discovered after a few of the script readings — it's actually really fun to see people see what it was like shooting a first draft of the script and see what that was like to go through. I think the evolution keeps it more interesting than just the same movie playing over and over."

Sestero rekindled the film's discourse



with his memoir, *The Disaster Artist*. It explores the story behind *The Room*'s absurd existence and was adapted for the big screen under the same name by Seth Rogen and brothers James and Dave Franco released on Dec. 1. The biographical comedy-drama has brought a resurgence of attention to Tommy Wiseau's magnum opus.

"I was ambitious with [*The Disaster Artist*]. I thought initially I wanted it to become its own Oscar-winning film. It's crazy that it's all come together and it's definitely rewarding. *The Room* wasn't something I had any creative role in, so I thought the book was a great way to show that there's more to me than [my character in *The Room*]," Sestero says. "I think *The Disaster Artist* turned out exceptionally well. It captures what the whole experience was like and what it's like to try to follow your dreams. There's a lot of comedy and it's heartfelt — extremely funny but at the same time at the end there's a lot of people that have felt very inspired by it and that's all I

could really hope for. I think *The Room* was obviously looked at as the worst movie ever — or best worst movie ever — so my goal with the book was to tell a great story that would captivate people in a different way."

In the film, James Franco portrays Wiseau. Sestero says Wiseau has, in general, responded well to the flick.

"He's been positive," Sestero says. "For the most part I don't think Tommy is someone you can ever fully make happy but I think he should be."

The Fifth Reel event also featured a screening of the to-be-released *Best F(r)iends*. Written by Sestero, the film is based on a road trip he took with Wiseau during their friendship. Sestero says the inspiration for *Best F(r)iends* came after viewing the adaptation of *The Disaster Artist*.

"People would ask me, would I ever work with Tommy again, and the answer was honestly 'no.' I thought that after *The Room* I couldn't foresee myself doing something else with him,"

Sestero says. "Something came about a year and a half ago at a screening of *The Disaster Artist*. I ended up seeing Tommy in a little bit of a different light. Seeing him from a different perspective was inspiring in a way. He just wanted to be taken seriously as an actor and I realized no one had given him that chance."

Sestero says *Best F(r)iends* is an opportunity for Wiseau to do what originally wanted with *The Room* — to be taken seriously.

"He made himself a Marlon Brando leading man [in *The Room*] which became a comedy," he says. "So this idea popped in my head, 'What if Tommy was put in a role that was giving him the chance to succeed as an actor and only an actor?'"

Those in attendance on Nov. 29 for the Fifth Reel event are a lucky few, as *Best F(r)iends* has yet to be assigned a specific release date. Until then, the film can only be found at select screenings across North America.



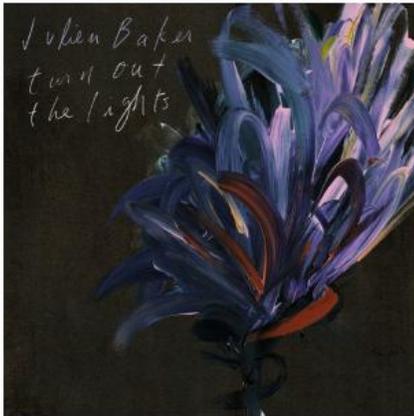
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A L B U M R E V I E W S



Julien Baker  
*Turn Out the Lights*  
 October 26, 2017  
 (Matador Records)

The 2015 debut album from Tennessee's Julien Baker was almost uncomfortably candid. The 22-year-old songwriter confided about being Christian, gay and suffering through depression and addic-

tion through sparse arrangements that felt more like canvases for confessional poetry than fully formed songs. Her sophomore effort, *Turn Out the Lights*, hits the same notes while adding polished instrumentation to the mix.

"Appointments" is an early-album highlight, documenting the frustrating cycle of being unable to go to therapy or see a doctor because symptoms of the same illness inhibit the appointments that would treat it. Its backing flirts with post-rock tropes, letting the same progression of pianos and twinkling guitars repeat among swelling strings as Baker's voice crescendos overtop.

Pianos and strings reappear throughout *Turn Out the Lights*, but they're clearly secondary to Baker's voice and lyrics. Absent of any instrumentation at all, Baker's voice would still be arresting. She's most effective on tracks like "Televangelist" and "Even," grappling with doubt, self-worth and God.

More than anything, *Turn Out the Lights* is about faith. Baker repeatedly addresses a "you" in her lyrics, each time raising her voice until it breaks. In "Shadowboxing," she offhandedly mentions "singing too loud in church," which is the exact image her music evokes. It's highly devotional, giving praise not in spite of Baker's problems but because of them. Closing track "Claws in Your Back" peaks with that acknowledgement — "I think I can love the sickness you made," Baker says. It's achingly genuine.

The rest of the album carries that same candidness, but is sometimes bogged down by melodrama or repetition. *Turn Out the Lights* is spectacular in its wholehearted declarations of faith but fails to keep those professions fresh over 11 songs. Still, Baker's passion and talent make for some of the year's most cathartic moments.

Jason Herring



Casper Skulls  
*Mercy Works*  
 November 3, 2017  
 (Buzz Records)

Torontonian quartet Casper Skulls caught nation-wide attention with their 2016 *Lips & Skull EP*. Only one year later, the group has delivered a synthesis of post-punk and dream-pop that's nothing short of a masterpiece in their debut LP, *Mercy Works*. Recorded with co-producing engineer Josh Korody — known for work with the likes of Fucked Up and Weaves — and mixed by the seasoned Alex Newport, the

album is tight, clean and fully realized.

Brief opening track "Mercy Works" sounds like a swelling collection of instruments and effects à la My Bloody Valentine, tuning like an orchestra before a concert. It sets an underlying tone for the 44 minutes to come while being a great foil for the post-punk grooves that immediately follow. "You Call Me Allocator" starts as a no-frills beat with lazy guitar licks and grows into densely layered sounds.

Dual-vocalists Melanie St. Pierre and Neil Bednis successfully compliment each other regardless of whether the track calls for harmony or distinct juxtaposition. As the album continues, the toe-tapping rhythms, lazy grooves, carefree angst and distorted chords counterpoint beautifully with well-timed dynamic changes and diverse instrumentation. "Primeval" displays the band's skill with a perfectly disjointed melody that would make David Byrne dance behind Bednis' spoken-word nonchalance and St. Pierre's full-bar chorus notes.

"Colour of the Outside" is a standout.

Two guitars play off each other in reverb heaven, with well-timed bends and unexpected fills. Occasional half-step chord changes make for ominous moments within an otherwise relaxing melody.

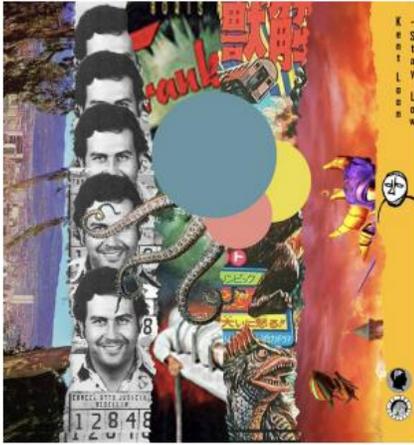
*Mercy Works* has no apparent low-points. The album's quality is consistent and keeps a coherent sound without falling into repetition or bleeding tracks together. The meticulous care and precision of its composition sits humbly behind lackadaisical vocals, washy reverb and pitch-bending, making the album enjoyable no matter how much attention you offer it.

The album concludes in strong form with "Faded Sound," showing off many of the group's strengths and removing the surface indifference, revealing genuine emotional passion in vocals and sound.

*Mercy Works* is a can't-miss addition to Canadian music in 2017. Its variation bridges the gap between quiet introspection and noisy adventure. For any full-lengths to come, the bar sits deservedly high.

Matt Hume





Kent Loon  
*Stay Low*  
 November 17, 2017  
 (P.O.W. Records)

At four-years old, Kent Loon and his mother fled from their native Bogota, Columbia in search of greener pastures and a life unthreatened by Pablo Escobar's thugs. They spent the next handful of years hopping about, eventually settling in St. Petersburg, Florida. As a freshman in high school, Loon

connected with fellow internet bohemian, current label-mate and best friend Chester Watson. Loon's debut, *Stay Low*, is in equal measures the fruit of their kinship and medicinal-grade hydroponic.

It's obvious that Loon inherited some of Watson's mystique. Of *Stay Low*'s 12 tracks, eight feature Watson on mic, behind the boards or both, shrouding the concise album with a hazy flair. He adapts a blunted lo-fi approach around Loon's heavier vocals and affinity for deeper low-ends. Voices oscillate between headphones as Loon plods along at his own pace, trudging through tar, bass and synths fit for another *Blade Runner* remake.

Loon rarely animates, maintaining a low-octave mumble for the bulk of the record. In moments when he does flex his chops, like on the Watson-produced "Big Wins," the results are as thrilling as unsettling.

According to P.O.W. Records label owner Jeff Weiss, the genre is tentatively called acid trap. Its brilliance could

almost be called sedated if it didn't bump so violently.

MF DOOM and Madlib are the most obvious of Watson and Loon's influences, making *Stay Low* play much like one of their records. Songs are brief and no-bullshit, littered with dark humour and opaque visions of grandeur. Loon's staccato raps emphasize the punch in the beats, his sleepy delivery accommodating the more driven rhythms than what Chester typically raps over.

"I'm not a monster, I'm just ahead of the curve," announces a sample of Heath Ledger's Joker at the onset of "Dinner Plate." Loon and Watson are 21 and 20, respectively. They're certainly ahead of the curve — young faces of an ever-shifting paradigm too weird to follow. But they're monsters of the craft. *Stay Low* is as accomplished a debut as you're likely to find treading the depths of Soundcloud. Loon and Watson ooze potential. Should they feel inclined to spark it, the future's on the tip of their blunt.

Thomas Johnson

90.9 fm  
 CJSW  
 TOP  
 30

The top 30  
 albums played  
 on CJSW 90.9 FM  
 this week.

Week of Nov. 20, 2017

Tune in to  
 CJSW 90.9 FM and  
 online at cjsw.com

1. Project Pablo - *Hope You're Well* (Technicolour)
2. Rubim De Toledo - *The Gap* (Self-Released)
3. Petunia and the Vipers - *Lonesome, Heavy and Lonesome* (Self-Released)
4. Courtney Barnett, Kurt Vile - *Lotta Sea Lice* (Matador)
5. King Krule - *The OOOZ* (True Panther Sounds)
6. Various - *DRAFT: Live Sessions From CJSW 90.9 FM* (CJSW 90.9 FM)
7. Jayne Murray - *Happenings* (Self-Released)
8. Julie and the Wrong Guys - *Julie and the Wrong Guys* (Dine Alone)
9. Little Miss Higgins - *My Home, My Heart* (Outside)
10. Mauno - *Tuning* (Idee Fixe)
11. Weaves - *Wide Open* (Buzz Records)
12. Murder Murder - *Wicked Lines & Veins* (Self-Released)
13. woulg - *Tiny Moon* (Outlier Recordings)
14. Amp Fiddler - *Amp Dog Knights* (Mahogany Music)
15. Blü Shorts - *Blu Wave Music* (Self-Released)
16. Tatrix - *Cassette Romance* (Self-Released)
17. Brett McCrady - *Drifting Through the Ordinary* (Self-Released)
18. Raleigh - *Powerhouse Bloom* (Self-Released)
19. Chad VanGalen - *Light Information* (Flemish Eye)
20. Sure - *Positive Mental Energy* (Self-Released)
21. Woolworm - *Deserve to Die* (Mint Records)
22. Common Deer - *II* (Self-Released)
23. Peach Pyramid - *Repeating Myself* (Oscar St.)
24. Faith Healer - *Try* (Mint)
25. White Poppy - *The Pink Haze of Love* (Lone Hand)
26. Whitehorse - *Panther in the Dollhouse* (Six Shooter)
27. Wine Soaked Preachers - *Tales of Western Noir / Same Old Town* (Self-Released)
28. Bibio - *Phantom Brickworks* (Warp Records)
29. Sharon Jones & The Dap-Kings - *Soul of a Woman* (Daptone Records)
30. RSXGLD - *RSXGLD* (Fat Beats)



# Find the perfect gift at one of Calgary's great independent shops

Story by Matt Hume  
Photo by Mariah Wilson

Nothing puts loathing of materialism on hold like the holiday season. After a long semester, finding the right gift for friends and loved ones can be downright euphoric. Instead of panic-purchasing gift cards at 7-11 on Christmas Eve, take advantage of Calgary's wealth of amazing independent and locally owned stores. Here are a few great places to start your holiday hunt.

## Steeling Home, 1010 17 Ave. SW:

This can be your one-stop shop. What started as an artist-run co-op in 1993 has evolved into a quirky general store with something for everyone. Goofy holiday cards, Alberta-themed apparel, Canadiana galore, stylish home decor, unique children's toys, enamel mugs, pins, handmade soaps, zany books — the list goes on. If you have no idea what to get someone, there's a good chance you'll walk out of Steeling Home with the perfect thing they never knew they wanted.

## Plant, 1327 9 Ave. SE:

After finding success at the Red Deer Farmer's Market and Market Collective, Plant got its own Inglewood storefront in 2014. The go-to for the green thumb or succulent aesthetic enthusiast in your life, Plant carries an ever-changing selection of indoor and outdoor plants for every bookshelf and window sill. Terrariums and arrangements are handmade in-store making for a genuinely unique gift. Gardening tools and DIY materials are also a big draw at Plant. If spending time with someone is more precious than a physical gift, take them to one of Plant's terrarium workshops or classes.

## Pages, 1135 Kensington Rd. NW:

You can't go wrong with a good book. Located right beside the Plaza Theatre, take one trip to Pages and you'll never step foot in Indigo again. With a vast used section, books from independent presses and unique



reprints, this is another great place to go if you don't have a specific gift mind. Even classics have a new flavour at Pages, like a copy of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* with a cover depicting the monster as a leather-jacket wearing, pulp-action bad boy. For the picky intellectual, you'll be able to find great essays and non-fiction volumes with ease.

## Another Dimension Comics, 424B 10 St. NW:

If your future giftee likes their books with a few more visuals, there's no cooler stocking stuffer than a crisp comic book. Up the street and around the corner from Pages, Another Dimension Comics in Sunnyside is the perfect shop for new comics, back issues and an impressive selection of collectibles. Paperbacks are available from every publisher you can think of and it's your best bet of finding that hyper-specific action figure your sibling swears exists. For the extra-serious collectors, Another Dimension is stocked with tons of graded key-issues and Sideshow statues. Who doesn't want a three-foot maquette of Dr. Doom?

## Turn It Up! Records and Hi-Fi, 632 16 Ave. NW:

The warm crackle of a fireplace pairs well with the warm crackle of a vinyl record. If you're shopping for the golden ear in your family who scoffs at the sight of Sunrise Records, look no further than Turn It Up! Records and Hi-Fi. In addition to their drool-inducing selection of vintage equipment, the independent shop is the best place in town for high-end gear from Pro-Ject, Ortofon, Rega and more. Even if you're not looking for that big gift, Turn It Up! also has a great selection of new and used vinyl and MoFi master recordings for your favourite audiophile, plus turntable accessories and maintenance tools aplenty.

## Doodle Dogs, 3A Parkdale Cres. NW:

Your fuzzy friend needs a cool gift too! Doodle Dogs is a cozy pet supply shop that sources products from local vendors and Canadian suppliers. The only downside here is your pup might wind up more stylish than you in their new rustic plaid bandana and brown leather collar.



# Traditional and unusual winter activities to try through the campus Outdoor Centre

Story by Christie Melhorn  
Photo courtesy Daniel Leifheit

Calgary's biting air and slushy streets don't exactly beckon us to spend more time outdoors in winter. Most of us prefer to bundle up in a blanket and admire the snow from afar. Despite how cold and uncomfortable the season can be, it has inspired fun outdoor activities that let you socialize while working out. The University of Calgary's Outdoor Centre offers classes in both traditional and less conventional winter activities.



## Snow kiting:

A sure way to feel like a total badass is snow kiting — a wind sport utilizing the pull of a kite to glide over snow on skis or a snowboard. The Outdoor Centre offers sessions on skis that takes place just outside of Cochrane. Participants can develop greater coordination and spatial awareness while learning how to manipulate their weight for a successful ride.

Comparable to skiing, snow kiting is an intense strength and cardio workout. It forces major and minor muscles to control the kite, which tones your core, arms and legs. In the thick of an incredible adrenaline rush, you can develop faster reflexes and critical thinking skills.

It also fosters a greater awareness of the elements, which has a profound effect on mental health — according to ongoing research by the University of Derby, a closer connection to nature diminishes anxiety and enhances a sense of life satisfaction.

Day-long snow kiting workshops through the Outdoor Centre start at \$130 — steep for a student budget. However, this covers all equipment rental fees and is probably just as fun, if not more, as an equally expensive Thursday.

## Back-country skiing:

Spending time on forest trails is not just for hot summer days. The Outdoor Centre pro-

vides guided back-country skiing tours and clinics in world-renowned locations, such as the Wapta Traverse in Alberta and Roger's Pass in British Columbia. These trails boast striking mountainous views and offer a refreshing change of pace from ski resorts.

According to the University of New Hampshire's health blog, *Healthy UNH*, skiing is a holistic, full-body workout. It can improve posture and cognitive function — both of which could benefit students on long days cooped up in the library.

One-day courses start at \$80. Prices raise depending on destination and session length. Rental fees for equipment are covered in some packages but not in others.

## Snowshoeing:

As a historical survival tool, snowshoeing is significant to many Canadian Indigenous communities. It helps develop a respectful relationship with nature. Traditional snowshoes are built with a wooden frame woven with animal hide and are an iconic symbol of Canadian culture. The modern version's generally made of metal and plastic and fit onto snow boots.

David McMahon, owner of Natural Fitness Lab in Ottawa, says that snowshoeing is effective, low-impact cardio that burns between 420–700 calories an hour. It targets your core and glutes but also sculpts your arms if you use poles.

The Outdoor Centre offers a variety of snowshoeing information sessions, day treks and weekly programs that accommodate various fitness levels. Prices start at \$98 for one-day classes and increase with program length. Fees include rentals costs for snowshoes.



# Sporting clays offer a fun, unique way to bond with others



Story by Christie Melhorn  
Photos by Kurtis Kristianson

**G**rowing up in a hunting and fishing household, seeing my dad in a camouflage windbreaker loading his truck with rifles was a Saturday morning tradition. While I've never gone into the bush with him for a hunt, my childhood was embellished with crisp fall and spring mornings at the shooting range. We would sit silently as his truck rattled over bumpy back-country roads on our way there. The consequential headache would usually make me resent being dragged away from my Nintendo 64. But once we arrived to the grounds, the clink of metal and echoing crack of a fresh bullet was captivating — especially at a clays course.

Sporting clay courses are fitted with

machines that eject small clay discs at a variety of angles and speeds, simulating small-game animals like pheasants, ducks and rabbits. The National Sporting Clays Association (NSCA) website explains that clay shooting helps hunters to sharpen their skills during the offseason. But Ron Hillman, an NSCA-certified instructor at Silver Willow Sporting Club in Carstairs, explains that the sport is purposeful for hunters and non-hunters alike.

“It was initially thought of as a game for the hunter. But not everybody who shoots wants to compete — they’re looking for fellowship,” Hillman said. “The first target a person breaks, they get pumped. It demands strong hand-eye coordination. You learn a different stance and how to position your body. It’s really unique.”

Silver Willow is a family-run club

founded almost 30 years ago by Don and Gwen Day. As accomplished trap shooters — another form of target shooting — the Days sought a fresh challenge. Shortly after trying sporting clays, Don proposed building a course on their third-generation family farm. Gwen Day says they wanted to share their love for the sport with others.

“We wanted other Albertans to enjoy what we enjoy. It’s rare opportunity — especially back then. A lot of people didn’t have access to this before,” she said.

As a recreational shooter, I find reward in both the sensory pleasure of the shattering clay and making a hard shot. But more importantly, shooting is a bonding opportunity with my father, whose aloof demeanor often causes unintentional distance between us. The



## “Nobody really has an advantage when they’re learning to shoot. You’re mostly competing against yourself.”

— Silver Willow instructor Ron Hillman

intense focus and meditative quality of shooting helps us connect in ways that verbal language sometimes can’t.

Based on the camaraderie Day and Hillman experience at Silver Willow, the relationship my father and I have with shooting is widely shared. Day and Hillman agree that it creates intimacy with others and nature, which carries potential benefits for students.

“It’s something different to do with fellow students that pulls barriers down. Nobody really has an advantage when they’re learning to shoot. You’re mostly competing against yourself,” Hillman said.

“It’s a stress relief. You can’t think about work or your to-do list,” Day added. “There’s also the element of being in nature. We’re open year-round so you can experience shooting during the different seasons. Seeing frost on the trees and hearing the crunch of snow under your feet gives an appreciation

for the seasons.”

Hillman says the humbling and engaging nature of the sport has inspired its popularity, giving it the nickname of “golf with a gun.”

“I am seeing a lot of family and couples shooting — it’s the new date night thing,” Hillman said.

In their nearly three decades at Silver Willow, Day and Hillman have noticed the once male-dominated shooting industry evolve to be more welcoming of women and children.

“You learn a lot about different social dynamics at the club. On average, women and children tend to listen better,” Hillman said. “The whole industry has evolved. Guns used to be designed for the average-sized man. Manufacturers now create stocks for children and women to ensure they can shoot comfortably and make those targets.”

“I’ve seen juniors, seniors, men and women all shoot together,” Day added.

Now a more inclusive sport, Hillman emphasizes that shooting can help break down cultural stereotypes and misconceptions. He recalled a private session he once led.

“I guided a team event for a large oil and gas company a few years ago. On my squad, I had the CEO and his administrative assistant,” Hillman said. “The CEO was this 6’4”, athletic guy. And his assistant was a

petite lady. With a lot of guys there’s this whole macho-thing where they think, ‘I’m going to figure it out for myself’ — that was the exact scenario here. But she didn’t feel that she had to prove something and proceeded to kick his butt.”

Hillman explains that Silver Willow has a particularly inviting environment that values safety and education. All are welcome to visit, given that the club’s safety procedures and ethics are respected.

“From a safety point of view, there’s never been an accident. People are looking after each other here, regardless of if you know them or not,” Hillman said. “In a learning scenario, there are no errors. It feels like family.”

Based on Hillman’s statement, the Days’ have met their goal of creating a friendly, inclusive club. Day remains humble in saying that the club’s influence exceeded the family’s initial vision.

“One client said to me, ‘You didn’t just build a business, you built a community.’ I thought that was a really powerful, humbling statement. I can’t say that was a lofty goal of ours. We’re just real people who try to welcome everyone who comes as a guest at our home,” she said.

Visit [silverwillow.ca](http://silverwillow.ca) learn more about Silver Willow Sporting Club and [cnsca.ca](http://cnsca.ca) for more information about Canada’s sporting clays community.





# University of Calgary research reveals complexity of relationship between exercise and cognitive health

Story by Jennifer Khil

From visits to the doctor's office to posts on our Instagram feeds, we're constantly reminded of the value of exercise. It's become known as a fix-all for just about any health complication and is especially recommended for sedentary individuals — a lifestyle familiar to students swamped by endless papers and tests. While pronounced evidence exists showing that exercise can improve well-being and mental clarity, the direct links between cognitive health and physical activity are intricate and difficult to study.

University of Calgary postdoctoral researcher Cameron Clark is currently analyzing this complex relationship through the "Brain in Motion" study. Clark was awarded a full T. Chen Fong Postdoctoral Fellowship in Imaging Science to fund his research. He is one of four scholars to receive the fellowship in 2017 and the year's only full-fellowship awardee.

"Brain in Motion" is led by Cumming School of Medicine physiology and pharmacology professor Marc Poulin. Clark holds a strong background in clinical neuropsychology, focusing on cognitive tests and diagnoses related to traumatic brain injury, stroke and dementia. Clark and Poulin's collaboration fuels a broad, interdisciplinary study of how exercise impacts brain health.

Clark plans to eventually return to clinical practice. However, he stresses that research is valuable in developing the knowledge and skills practitioners can use in clinical settings to further help patients.

"I'm still on the hunt for things that can make people smarter, extend cognitive functioning and recover from stroke or traumatic brain injury," Clark said. "People diagnosed with early Alzheimer's in clinical practice ask what they can do. I'm always dissatisfied with the typical advice I can give — 'What's good for your heart is good for your brain. Get exercising because that

will help mitigate the neurodegenerative process'. I want to know that's true and how we, as a research community, know that."

In the last five years, Poulin's team has extensively studied the effects of increased physical activity of 250 healthy but sedentary adults over the age of 55. This involved a six-month walking intervention taking place at the University of Calgary's indoor track where participants gradually increased distance and speed traveled. Thirty individuals from the sample also underwent pre- and post-intervention MRI brain scans.

"[The participants] started walking for 20 minutes and progressed to a full 45-minute exercise with a warm-up and cool-down," Clark said. "We challenged them to increase the intensity themselves as well."

**"On one hand, the technology we have is amazing and on the other hand, we're not even close to understanding what's going on."**

**— University of Calgary postdoctoral researcher Cameron Clark**

Clark is currently assessing the resulting data to decipher changes in the brain after the six-month intervention.

"When looking subcortically at the deeper, older brain structures, there is some indication that cellular health is better in the area of the putamen [a part of the brain associated with limb movement] following exercise intervention," said Clark. "The putamen is involved with learned physical behaviours, which are important in sports and exercise and in higher-order cognitive functions."

While these results are promising, Clark

emphasizes that there is still much to learn about how exercise affects mental health. But as extensive as this process is, there is value in revealing the complicated nature of knowing how to pursue a healthy lifestyle. Clark emphasizes that social, emotional, cognitive and physical forces all thread together and affect our health. This suggests that both improving and studying cognitive health demands a holistic approach.

"Our brains are our three-pound universes. Every thought, every person we know and every sensation we feel is made by our brains," Clark said. "Something as seemingly complex as MRI is still nowhere nearly as complex as what's going on in there. On one hand, the technology we have is amazing and on the other hand, we're not even close to understanding what's going on."

Regardless of his findings, Clark is more aware about what motivates us to exercise and the importance of pursuing activities we genuinely enjoy.

"Change is hard — that's the number one rule of psychology. How can [people implement change] without stressing themselves out or having it impede other healthy things in their lives, such as socializing?" Clark said. "This study has also changed the way I think about my parents. There's more fuel on the fire to convince my dad to get out on a bike."

Despite the colossal amount of work remaining, Clark embraces the difficulty of the learning process with optimism.

"What can you get people to do that will be better for their cognitive health? That is my personal interest in all of this and what drew me to the lab," he said. "This dataset will be interesting in 10, 20 years from now. It will keep giving as time goes on — as long as we want to find something to motivate or assure people that they're doing the right things for their health."

To learn more about the "Brain in Motion" study, visit [obrieniph.ucalgary.ca/brain-in-motion-II](http://obrieniph.ucalgary.ca/brain-in-motion-II).



# Five tips for beating the winter blues

Story by Christie Melhorn

Every year, the frenzy of Calgary's first snowfall results in hundreds of car accidents and even more bitter Facebook statuses. Once the initial shock of snow fades, those of us with a deeply rooted preference for summer are plagued by general mopiness. Whether you're a snowbird, would rather migrate south or are indifferent to the season, the following tips can make winter more tolerable.

## Spend time in bright spaces:

Shorter winter days often instill a sense that there is less time to get things done. According to *The Atlantic*, the part of the brain that regulates sleep is highly sensitive to light. Lack of sunlight can throw our bodies out of whack, making us sleepier sooner and therefore less motivated to write another page of a paper or read one more textbook chapter. While synthetic light can't fully simulate the sun, spending time

in bright, warm-toned spaces can keep you alert and stunt drowsy spells. The Taylor Family Digital Library on campus invites lots of natural light during the day and stays bright inside after the sun goes down.

## Dress appropriately:

Being cold is one of the most uncomfortable sensations experienced by the human body. Losing feeling in your fingers and toes is panic-inducing and, until warming up, can make it impossible to unlock your front door or respond to texts in a reasonable amount of time. Carrying around a bunch of layers when you get to campus is cumbersome but is better than getting frostbite on the way there. Invest in footwear that can tolerate at least -30 C weather or wear a few pairs of socks when necessary. Now's the time to splurge on that cool toque and a blanket scarf you've been eyeing. If you don't have a campus locker, you can stash your stuff in a day locker for a quarter or two in the locker rooms by the Red and Gold Gyms in Kinesiology A.

## Exercise:

Between packing on 30 pounds of layers and enduring scary road conditions, everything takes extra time in winter. While this seemingly makes skipping the gym or avoiding exercise more justifiable, doing so is counterproductive. Physician Martin Vatheuer says that even just 30 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous exercise three times a week combats depression. The release of endorphins boosts mood, refreshes focus and offers a sense of reward. All of these factors work together to increase motivation and productivity, so making the time for even a quick walk around campus is worthwhile. This could also be an opportunity to try a new fitness class or winter sport – the Outdoor Centre offers everything from skating to snowshoeing.

## Drink a warm beverage:

The heat of a beverage doesn't permanently alter your body's temperature. However, the fleeting warmth is enjoyable when it's snowy and cold. Sipping peppermint or ginger tea can bolster your immune system and the distinct flavours engage your senses, helping you feel awake. A classic cup of hot cocoa is comforting but if coffee is your vice, the caffeine content actually has warming effects by stimulating your metabolism – but don't count on this as a way to fend off extra winter weight!

## Be around plants:

The scent and colour of plants can have a profound impact on our well-being. On the wellness blog *Psychology Today*, psychologist Jonathan Kaplan explains that even just being around potted house plants can lower anxiety as well as enhance productivity and attentiveness. The compelling nature of plants grounds us in the moment and can instill a sense of calm. However, taking care of a house plant as a student can be a lot when you're struggling to take care of yourself. Try popping into a garden centre or florist for similar benefits. Plant in Inglewood is a very engaging and wholesome space to spend time in. Studying in the atrium in the on-campus Administration building is another great option – just bring a sweater. It gets chilly in there.

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## Dinos men's hockey team full of holiday spirit

Story by Christie Melhorn  
Photo by Justin Quaintance

For many University of Calgary student athletes, December is full of rigorous practices and games on top of exam preparation. Since the Dinos men's hockey team's season continues in the winter semester, they have to keep their skills and skates sharp during the break and into the new year. However, they ensure to slow down and have some light-hearted holiday fun when the holiday break commences.

Fifth-year arts major and forward Chris Collins says the team hosts an annual Christmas party and fundraiser called Hog Fest, inspired by the 2007 comedy *Wild Hogs*. He says it's a great way to decompress after a long fall semester and

that anyone can purchase tickets to attend.

"[Hog Fest] is an ugly Christmas sweater party where you mostly mingle and get to know other people," Collins said. "The last couple of years we've done it at Cowboys. We're still nailing down [this year's] details but we invite all of the athletics department and sell tickets to anyone who wants to come. Then we donate the money to a charity or a good cause every year."

Second-year arts major and forward Logan Fisher says Hog Fest is always full of unexpected surprises and comical moments.

"A lot goes on that night," Fisher said. "The most fun part is the surprise of seeing the ugly Christmas sweaters people show up in."

Separate from Hog Fest, the team's yearly gift exchange is also full of surprise

and creativity. It involves each participant bringing a wrapped, unlabeled present and adding it to a pile. Gifts are distributed one at a time based on numbers drawn by everyone involved. After choosing a gift, each person immediately opens it, revealing it to the rest of the room. The next person who chooses can either open it or swap with the previous person while the gift is still wrapped. Collins says the exchange is full of unpredictability and shenanigans.

"There's everything from gift cards to adult beverages to the crappy gift," Collins said. "There's also some odd stuff — Pepperidge Farm sausages and different cheeses. For some reason a lot of the guys bring Lululemon underwear. I don't think buying underwear for your teammates is a normal thing but it's a pretty hot item."



While Collins and Fisher are fond of Dinos holiday traditions, they are grateful for the down-time and indulgent feasts with their families over the break.

"For me, it's nice going home [to Red Deer]," Fisher said. "We have family dinners on Boxing Day as well as Christmas that are really good. Ferrero Rochers are my favorite Christmas-y sweet but my mom makes a turkey dinner that I look forward to year-round."

"We usually have a family hockey game on McKenzie Lake on Christmas Day. It's really fun," Collins said.

Along with a wholesome post-game Christmas dinner with family, Collins enjoys a simple and nostalgic holiday tradition.

"Hands-down, my favorite treat is a Christmas morning Lifesaver," he said.

The Dinos' next game is on Friday, Dec. 1 at 7 p.m. against the University of Lethbridge Pronghorns in Lethbridge. You can watch them play at home before the semester ends on Saturday, Dec. 2 when they take on the Pronghorns again at 6 p.m. at Father David Bauer Arena. Students receive free admission.



Photo courtesy of Omarukai

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# Bake gingerbread cookies to soothe stress during exam season



Recipe by Christie Melhorn  
Photo courtesy Kristin Marr

**H**oliday food culture is loaded with sensory delight, nostalgia and pure indulgence. But the subsequent sugar crash can leave you feeling sick and lethargic. However, you can still satisfy your sweet tooth and stress cravings by swapping refined sugar for natural sweeteners in homemade goodies. Take a break from the books or celebrate the end of exams with a batch of classic gingerbread cookies. Gingerbread's subtle spice and richness makes it a holiday classic that can soothe your inner scrooge.

## EQUIPMENT:

- Two large mixing bowls
- Egg beater or sturdy fork
- Mixing spoon
- Rolling pin
- Spatula
- Cookie sheets
- Wax paper
- Cookie cutters
- Ziploc bags
- Scissors

## ICING INGREDIENTS:

- Two cups icing sugar
- One egg white
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract (optional)

## COOKIE DOUGH INGREDIENTS:

- 2 and 1/4 cups all-purpose flour (substitute equal portions whole wheat or gluten-free options)
- One egg
- 1/2 cup maple syrup
- 1/2 cup soft butter (or equal portions coconut oil)
- 1/2 cup molasses
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp ground ginger (or 1 tbsp grated fresh ginger root)
- 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- Splash of milk (if needed)

## INSTRUCTIONS:

- With a beater or a fork, combine flour and maple syrup in a large mixing bowl. Once the maple syrup is evenly dispersed as possible, add softened butter followed by one egg. Blend until smooth.
- In a small bowl, mix the cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, baking soda, baking powder and salt. Slowly sprinkle and stir into the batter
- Pour half the molasses into the batter and thoroughly stir. Once the mixture has darkened, add the rest and prepare your arms to feel sore. The batter should be thick but not dry — add a splash of milk if necessary.
- Knead the dough for about 1–2 minutes then compact into a ball in the large mixing bowl. Cover with a kitchen towel and set in the fridge for one hour.
- While the dough sits, prepare the icing by mixing the icing sugar, egg white and vanilla together until thick. Add a touch of milk if it's too dry — add more icing sugar if it gets too runny. Place in the fridge and let sit.
- After an hour, remove the dough and place it on a lightly floured surface.
- Roll dough about 1/8-inch thick and cut with cookie cutters. This will make roughly 24 cookies. For thicker cookies, roll to 1/6–1/4 of an inch — just know they will bake pudgy!
- Place shapes 1/2 an inch apart onto a cookie sheet lined with wax paper. To prevent damaging the cookies, use a spatula to lift them off the counter. Bunch the stenciled dough back into a ball and re-roll.
- Bake for 8–10 minutes. Depending on the thickness, they might need more time. Remove when lightly browned.
- When done, let cool for at least 20 minutes before decorating — this prevents liquefying the icing.
- While cooling, spoon icing into a Ziploc and use scissors to snip off one small corner. The incision's size determines how precisely you can decorate.
- Finish by garnishing with any assortment of sprinkles, candies or toppings you desire. Enjoy!



# Opinions on festive drink destroy life-long friendship

Story by Evan Lewis

Photo by Mariah Wilson

**W**ith eggnog popping up on store shelves, it's no surprise that a rise in eggnog-related incidents is already sweeping the nation.

In a shocking public outburst, life-long friends Natalie Winger and Lydia Bukhari announced the immediate termination of their friendship over a disagreement on the quality of the controversial beverage.

The announcement took place at the MacHall food court. Students eating lunch were abruptly interrupted as Bukhari and Winger — who have reportedly been friends since elementary school — stood on opposing tables and began hollering their well-developed arguments about the festive beverage at each other.

Winger was the first to deliver her thoughts.

"Eggnog is literally the best thing ever," she said. "Do you just hate happiness and joy?"

Bukhari's response was equally evocative and poignant.

"It's not my fault your favourite thing in the whole world smells like permanent marker! It's got a weird texture, too. How can you drink so much of it?" Bukhari exclaimed.

The argument went back and forth for several minutes, with each student repeating their position several times as they realized there aren't that many different ways to state one's opinion on eggnog.

Bukhari concluded with the powerful and convincing words, "Well, if you love eggnog so much why don't you marry it, stupid?"

Winger responded, "Maybe I will, dumb butt!"

Following the conclusion of the



intense debate, the two friends sat with their backs turned to one another at their respective tables until Winger threw a ball of paper at the back of Bukhari's head. When uncrumpled, the paper read, "Friendship OVER."

Much of the cafeteria had gone back to eating their lunch by this time.

"I'm honestly pretty impressed that it wasn't worse," commented an observer. "I've seen debates over eggnog devolve into fist fights. Once, a guy I knew chugged a two-litre carton of 'nog, and then just shouted, 'It's good, see?' over and over for about 10 minutes. It does things to people's minds, man."

A recent study of North American consumers revealed that the population is

evenly divided between the two opinions. In fact, opinion is literally divided in half.

"It's the most divisive and extensive study we've ever had," said Starbucks barista Yvonne LeBlanc. "No matter how many people we asked, as soon as we confirmed that a subject was on one side, a different person would stand and up and disagree."

LeBlanc then proceeded to show reporters a chart that was really just a circle with a line drawn through the middle, with one half labelled "Eggnog is blessed" and the other "Very not-good."

If you or anyone you know has been affected by eggnog-related trauma, the Government of Alberta has established a hotline at 1-888-EGG-NOGG.



# Three completely logical tips for driving on snowy roads

Story by Fatima Pirmohamed

It's that time of year again. The temperature has dropped to the negatives and snow keeps falling. Though it's a friendly reminder that winter break is just around the corner, it's also responsible for the volume of car accidents increasing ten-fold. If you've lived through a Calgary winter, you've probably heard someone say something along the lines of, "As soon as it starts to snow, everyone forgets how to drive." Here are three things to remember when driving on snowy roads.

## 1. Know what time you should leave by:

Avoid getting stuck in traffic and being late. Figure out what time you should leave by in order to get to your class on time, then leave 10 minutes later because you couldn't find your keys or a pair of socks. Remember to make a detour for coffee to keep you awake and alert, which you'll need because you'll have to drive 40 km/h over the speed limit to be on time. If you get pulled over, you'll have a pretty legitimate reason for being late — and the ticket to prove it! If you're really worried about being on-time, you can always just sleep in your lecture hall the night before. You'll be in class before it even starts.

## 2. Be cautious:

In order to conserve battery power, don't turn on your headlights. It doesn't matter if the sun hasn't risen yet. Most on-campus parking lots don't have outlets and you'll want your block heater to be working when it's -25 C outside. If there's poor visibility conditions, don't worry — you can use the headlights of the cars around you to see further down the road. If you're stressed about not knowing what's in front of you on the road, just follow really closely behind a vehicle. Tailgating is also a great strategy to use someone else as a lookout.

## 3. Speed, speed, speed:

Though it may seem counterintuitive, going faster on icy roads can actually make your commute much safer. You don't want to be on these roads for very long. To minimize the amount of time in which you could get in an accident, drive generously over the speed limit and you'll get to your destination much faster. Plowing down Crowchild at a steady 110 km/h in the right-hand lane is actually the safest way to navigate those treacherous streets. The less time you spend on snowy roads, the better.





# Premature Christmas celebrations cause kerfuffle

Story by Devin Aggarwal

Photo by Mariah Wilson

The annual war on Christmas reached new levels of severity this week, as members of the Union against early Christmas Plans (UCP) retaliated against the Nativity Decorators Protectorate (NDP) for their continued promotion of the practice of putting up Christmas decorations before Dec. 1. The retaliation took the form of a large demonstration outside of the festively decorated Chinook Centre. The situation quickly turned ugly as protesters broke into the barricaded mall.

NDP members held the UCP at bay by throwing ornaments and laying traps made of ribbon. However, they were unable to stop the anti-festivity mob, who broke into the mall and headed straight for the Santa's Workshop display.

"I actually love Christmas," one UCP member, who wished to remain anonymous, claimed. "I just hate those who feel the need to shove it in my face for a month and a half, starting on Nov. 12."

Many stubborn NDP supporters set up more barricades around the display, made of Christmas-present props and candy cane decorations, hoping to stop the flow of UCP members. They were quickly dismantled, however, by the haggle of disgruntled scrooges.



"All we want to do is to bring the Christmas spirit to everyone," NDP leader Rachel Kelley said. "And everybody should embrace it, whether they celebrate Christmas or not."

As a last resort, the NDP began throwing Starbucks holiday cups at the impending UCP mob to keep them at bay.

"These holiday cups don't even mention Christmas!" a UCP member said while physically recoiling from being hit with the inclusive cup. "The NDP have gone too far in promoting this politically-correct garbage."

At an emergency meeting following the attack, the NDP resolved to double down on their core message and begin a campaign

to have all radio stations in Calgary play an hour of Christmas music every day. The campaign is reportedly costing the protectorate up to \$30,000 a day and is being partly funded by big-box companies hoping to promote sales for the Christmas season.

"It's an extravagant waste of money," claimed UCP leader Jason Loyola. "All that this serves to do is to drive up costs for consumers, while providing no real benefit to society as a whole."

Conflict between the two factions is expected to continue until mid-December, where everyone will then become too stressed out about the realities of Christmas to care anymore.

## It goes without saying – Dawn Muenchrath





# Mainstreet Research poll predicts sun will not rise tomorrow

Story by Derek Baker

**R**enowned pollsters at Mainstreet Research have predicted the sun will not rise tomorrow. This conclusion was drawn from the results of a lengthy phone survey of celestial objects in the sky.

The apocalyptic prediction follows a recent poll by the same firm that put mayoral candidate Bill Smith 17 points ahead of winner Naheed Nenshi — a mere 24 points off the mark.

“We’re sure about this one, though,” Mainstreet Research president Quinto Maggi said. “It’s going to take a miracle for the sun to rise tomorrow.”

The research methods leading to this alarming prediction have come under scrutiny from experts in the field. Christopher Komet, a University of Calgary astronomy professor, criticized the prediction.

“I have quite a few concerns with their research methods, so I would suggest viewing these results cautiously,” Komet said.

Still, Mainstreet remains confident in its findings.

“When the sun does not come out to-



tomorrow and it is clear that our detractors were wrong, it’ll be payback time,” Mainstreet executive vice-president David Valentin said. “After all, our polls are always right, 19 times out of 20.”

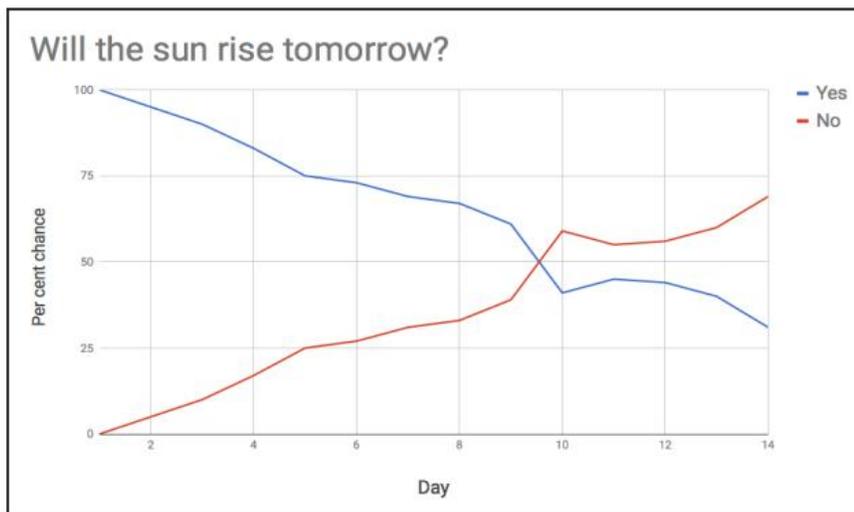
Maggi is also standing by his firm’s poll.

“Our results will be fully validated and vindicated when you wake up tomorrow and it’s still dark out,” Maggi said.

It has been alleged that Mainstreet Research may be in collusion with multiple doomsday bunker companies — allegations that the company fiercely denies. Even so, bunker sales have significantly increased since the poll was released.

“I’ve never even thought about buying an Armageddon-proof bunker, but then I read that the sun is about to explode and thought, ‘Man, I need to get me one of those,’” said Terry Truman, a 65-year-old community member and avid newspaper reader.

Whether or not the prediction holds true, it is still recommended that students complete their assignments and study for their midterms. The university has said a doomed, sunless world is not sufficient grounds for excusal.



**Update:** It is now tomorrow and the sun is shining.

“Looks like we fucked this one up, too,” Maggi said.



# Six very legit paper-writing tips

Story by Tina Shaygan

**T**o help you combat creeping paper deadlines, we compiled a list of the very best advice for writing an A+ scholarly masterpiece. Follow these simple steps to create your best academic work.

## Come up with a very hot take:

Make sure to include the edgiest, hottest take you can muster. Your classmates have mediocre takes on boring issues. But you, an intellectual, will dazzle your professor with an offensive and bold take. Your professor, blown away after hearing your spicy opinion, will give you an A+ for your sheer bravery.

## Never consult your professor or visit office hours:

Office hours are for suck-ups. Plus, your professor will appreciate an element

of surprise in your paper. So make sure to stay away from their office hours and never consult them on possible topics. They'll love that you came up with all of this entirely on your own.

## Use every source cited at the bottom of a Wikipedia article:

Everyone knows Wikipedia is where it's at. Your professors are fooling themselves saying you shouldn't use the website — everyone does. Just scroll to the bottom of the page and cite every source there. No one will know and your professor will be impressed by your very thorough research.

## Start the night before it's due:

The key to a good paper is working under pressure. Grab some coffee, 22 energy drinks and bring blankets to the library. The faster your heart rate, the better your paper will be. Diamonds

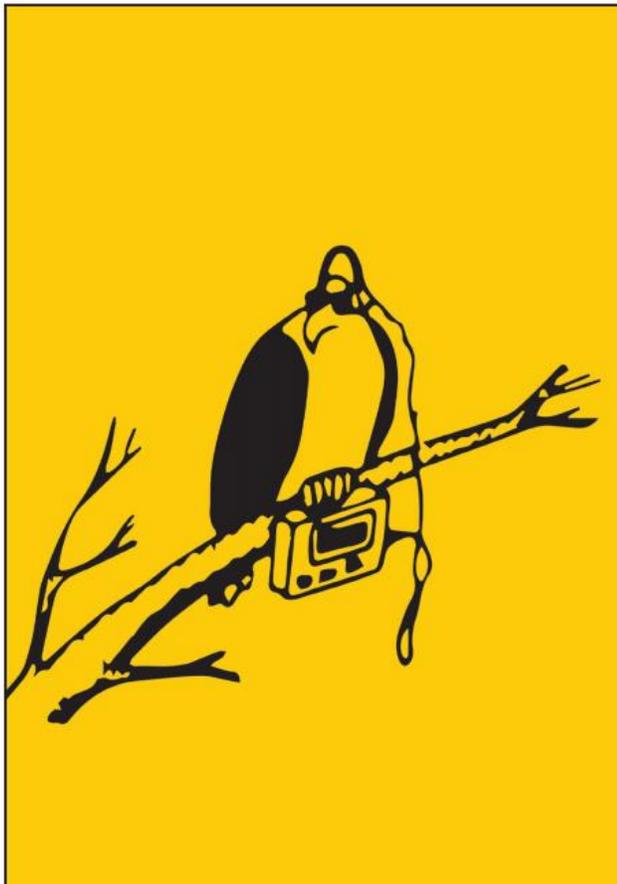
aren't made under pressure — excellent papers are.

## Dont' eDit:

You want to make sure your true, authentic self shows in all your work. Editing takes that away. Hemingway said, "Write drunk, edit sober." But let's be real — as a student, you're never sober. Your drunk-on-caffeine thoughts deserve to stand on their own. Let the brilliance flow!

## Book a TFDL workroom to cry in:

Sometimes, you just gotta let it all out. If your paper is due at 11:59 p.m. that evening and you haven't started yet, crying is a cathartic way to release some stress before you get writing. The rooms are soundproof enough and are a good place to have a breakdown. No one would judge you, anyway — we've all been there.



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# How well will you get by this finals season?

By Usman Zia



**Sagittarius**  
(Nov. 22 – Dec. 21)

You want to take a few exam prep courses, but can't stand the thought of losing a couple hundred bucks from your study snacks budget.



**Aries**  
(March 21 – April 19)

You've failed every midterm prior to your finals. Somehow, you'll ace your exams and squeak by each course with a C+.



**Leo**  
(July 23 – Aug. 22)

After a successful finals season, you will reward yourself by breaking the bank on a pair of Balenciaga Crocs.



**Capricorn**  
(Dec. 22 – Jan. 19)

You'll join a study group in an effort to have some fun while studying and end up at the Den. Waking up the next morning, you'll realize you've missed your exam.



**Taurus**  
(April 20 – May 20)

You finally picked up something other than your phone for the first time in weeks — a textbook. Until this point, your life was indistinguishable from a virtual reality experience.



**Virgo**  
(Aug. 23 – Sept. 22)

You will not succeed in cheating on your finals — the old trick of putting chapstick over the Scantron bubble sheet failed you again. At least your lips are hella moisturized.



**Aquarius**  
(Jan. 20 – Feb. 18)

This exam season is a chance to re-evaluate your life. After your marks come in, you'll end up scoring a job at a multi-billion dollar company. That's right — it's McDonald's.



**Gemini**  
(May 21 – June 20)

Your dedication and hard work will earn you an A+ in all of your fall courses. Who knows — you may become the one of the lucky few who gets a job when you graduate.



**Libra**  
(Sept. 23 – Oct. 22)

Drinking may not be the best idea to calm yourself before your math final, but no one's knocking Ad-derall. So it looks like you're not doing suspiciously well, leave a few answers blank.



**Pisces**  
(Feb. 19 – March 20)

You will not sleep for two weeks, pulling all-nighters to study. The dark circles around your eyes will become a fashion trend by the time finals are over.



**Cancer**  
(June 21 – July 22)

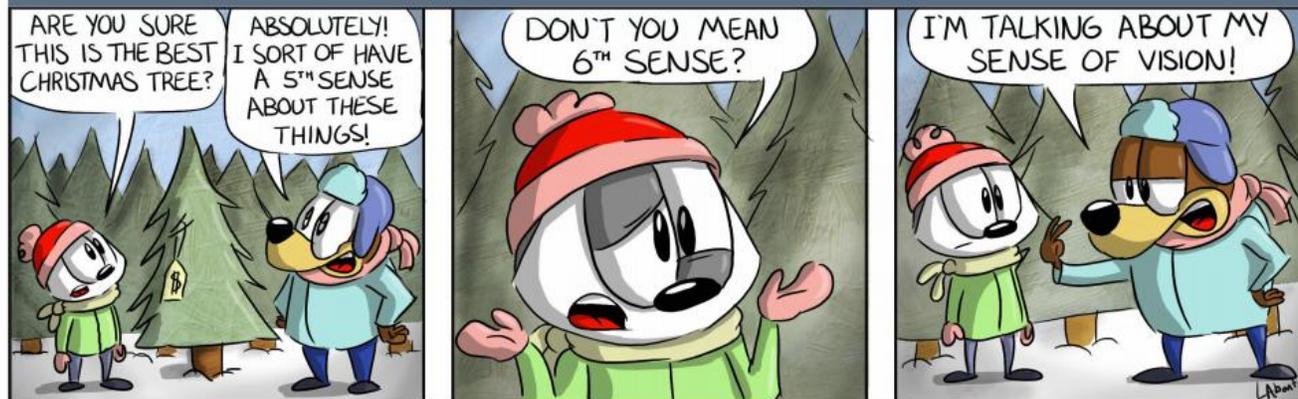
Ever the social butterfly, you'll raise everyone's confidence before going into the exam room. The boost in morale will backfire, as their high marks will result in your grade getting curved down.



**Scorpio**  
(Oct. 23 – Nov. 21)

You'll put hours into studying with a group. The pressure to remain accountable almost keeps a Netflix binge at bay. However, you'll be unable to face your group after a last-minute *Stranger Things* relapse.

## Filbert Cartoons – L. A. Bonté





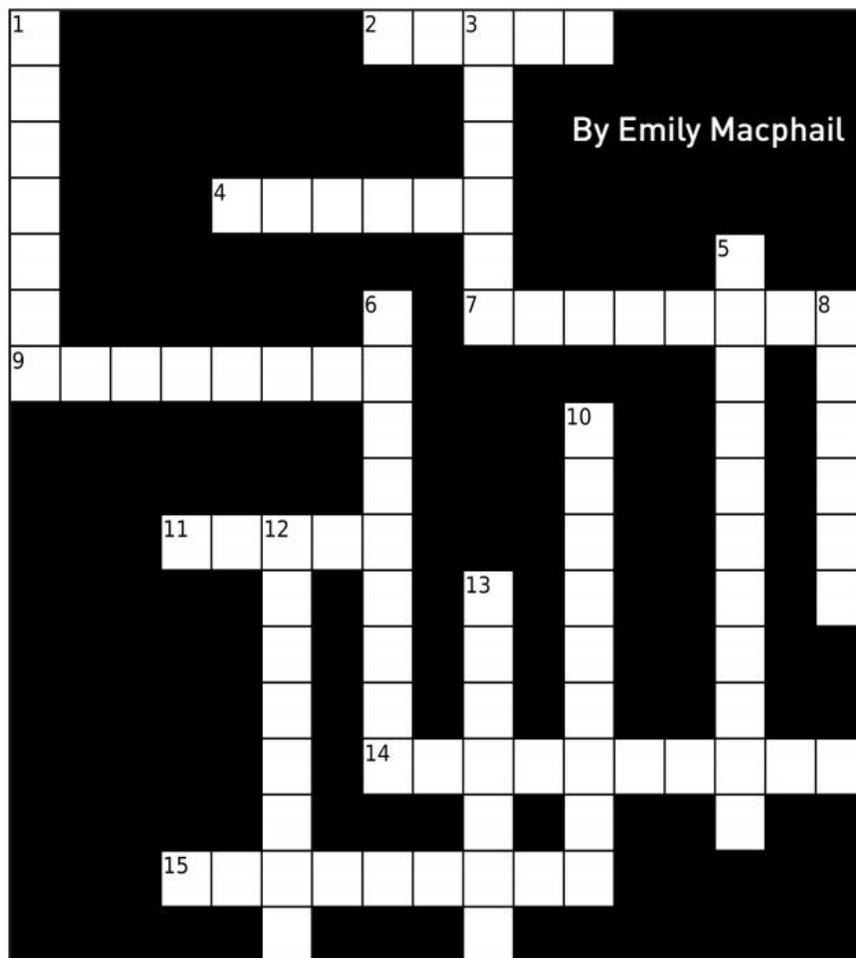
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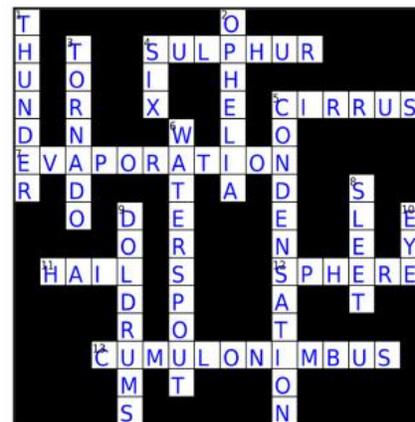


# Cryptic Christmas Crossword



By Emily Macphail

## November Solution:



Congratulations to Carsey Furgason for being the first to complete last month's crossword!

Send in a photo of a completed crossword to [humour@thegauntlet.ca](mailto:humour@thegauntlet.ca) to be congratulated in our next issue. Also, be among the first five submitters to win a *Gauntlet* mug.

A twist on our classic crossword, this puzzle requires you to decode the clues to come up with the correct solutions.

### ACROSS:

- 2. Religious qualifier becomes a wintry plant when the capital of London drops in.
- 4. "\_\_\_\_ queen" alternatively spelled, or just a holiday ride for the less hip among us.
- 7. Pagan festival requires ice slots, shuffled.
- 9. For eight holy days, the bookkeeper, setting aside fright and ending, placed an empty urn beside and was surrounded

by laughter in a mirror.

- 11. When shorthand gin and tonics are filled with possibility, they become something to give to the whole family.
- 14. Casual ants out of formation are a favourite holiday visitor.
- 15. A crazy holiday guest, whether as an opinionated relative or imperishable dessert.

### DOWN:

- 1. A casual text of "you are" turned, riding the front of a dolphin is really a holiday guide.
- 3. Jilts, but takes the curve off of the front, thereby illuminating.
- 5. A tasty cookie is made by a redhead,

British and ready? No need for whys here!

- 6. This December holiday is created by blending starch with a short simulation.
- 8. A chicken's lay by the top of a head makes for a delicious drink.
- 10. Kicking dance is made into a real treat by putting hair colouring on the tips.
- 12. Fuses explode around the watcher sitting inside a shortened television where this *Seinfeldian* holiday originated.
- 13. Famous American figure skater Michelle snacking down on some delicious Domino's 'zaa.

