

THE GAUNTLET

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The University of Calgary's independent student newspaper

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Editorial: The SU General Election was annoying, but necessary

It's the most wonderful time of the year — we have a newly elected Students' Legislative Council. How many of you collectively groaned at the posters that peppered Mac Hall, or at the candidates who gave a quick presentation at the beginning of your 2 p.m. lecture? It's a big ask to be able to keep your eyes open, let alone listen to some guy implore you for your vote. And why should you have cared? This upcoming school year will be tough — increased fees and tuition, an apathetic university administration and a government more than happy to keep cutting costs at the expense of students. Things seem pretty bleak, and it's understandable why students may feel as though the SU is something that acts as a resume line for the individuals lucky enough to get elected. Why are the SU elections important?

The Students' Union is one of the easiest and most direct ways to ensure that external and internal boards and governing bodies have students' best interests at heart. Whether it's advocating for better mental health resources, ensuring that the cost of textbooks is mitigated with the use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) or even expanding the food options on campus, the SU makes a whole lot of decisions on behalf of students.



This year, the university went ahead and increased the cost of tuition for all new and returning students, to differing degrees. While it is understandable to feel as though the Students' Union did little to help negotiate with the incoming government and university representatives on a certain outcome concerning the budget, it is exactly this body which will be still responsible when advocating for students next year, as the most recent budget announcement has the university anticipating more

losses to our community. It makes no difference whether you believed the SU election is bogus because these positions have real consequences to the lives and education of U of C students. You were asked to vote for individuals who genuinely believe they have the skills to make a change — and I don't know about you, but I could never in a million years put my face on a poster and bug people in MacHall with a bucket of candy. It took courage for them to put themselves out there like that, which

should be applauded in its own right. Sure, there are people who just want a resume booster, but hopefully we elected knowledgeable and reliable people to work for us, who can manage to advocate for students when the going gets tough. We congratulate the new Students' Legislative Council on their successful campaigns and wish them all the best for the upcoming school year.

—Cristina Paolozzi
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The Gauntlet is printed on recycled paper and uses an ink made from recycled Students' Union General Election posters. We urge you to recycle the Gauntlet and don't think about the amount of trees murdered to make the posters.

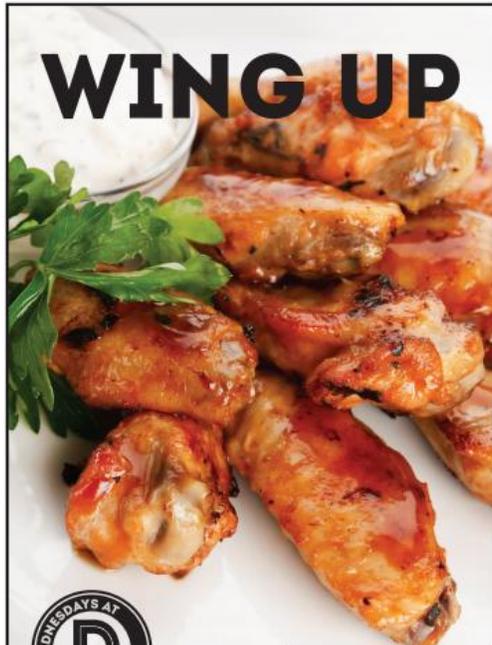
Cover Photo by Mariah Wilson

The Golden Spatula - Lauren Olson



Lauren is our most prolific volunteer so far this year! She's contributed many an article on health, wellness and self-improvement to our new lifestyle section. Thanks Lauren, for lending your voice to our page!

WHAT'S HAPPENING



WING UP



\$5/POUND

MachALL
 concerts

- MAR**
- 07 **Black Label Society** MACEWAN HALL
- 12 **The Glorious Sons** MACEWAN HALL
- 18 **Ariel Rivera** MACEWAN HALL
- 29 **Lil Tjay** MACEWAN HALL
- APR**
- 26 **Yungblud** MACEWAN HALL
- MAY**
- 13 **In This Moment & Black Veil Brides** MACEWAN HALL
- JUN**
- 04 **AJR** MACEWAN HALL
- 05 **Miranda Sings** MACEWAN HALL

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POLICY »



JUSTIN QUAINANCE

CAUS Chair talks sexual violence white paper

Gayathri Peringod
Contributor

Earlier this month, the Council of Alberta University Students released a white paper on sexual violence on Alberta campuses.

The paper "calls on the Government of Alberta to better track instances of campus sexual violence, ensure institutions have robust policies and work with institutions to fund campus sexual violence services as well as programs addressing preventative measures."

CAUS, which represents over 100,000 undergraduate students from universities across Alberta, developed the white paper to provide accurate, up-to-date data on sexual violence on campuses.

"This paper is actually the first of its kind in Alberta to be written by student leaders with research-intensive data, focusing on recommendations for the government of Alberta," said Sadiya Nazir, Chair of CAUS and vice-president external of the University of Calgary's Students' Union.

"Basically, Alberta is one of the few provinces in Canada that does not have any legislation in place specific to campus sexual violence," said Nazir. "In Alberta, we don't have a lot of the campus data in order to form a lot of the policy work."

Nazir stressed, however, that sexual violence is a prevalent issue across campuses.

"Even just at the University of Calgary, we know that support ad-

vocates are working and catering to a community of tens of thousands of people — their offices are quite overworked and they are at capacity with the services that they're offering."

Nazir met with provincial government officials to discuss the white paper on Jan. 29.

"If there are no cuts to post-secondary that will compound the cuts that we saw in 2019, we will have to take a pretty assertive approach," said Nazir.

The paper also calls on the government to financially support the development of online-based educational training for university staff and faculty on effective responses to those reporting acts of sexual violence.

"Realistically, while it might be difficult to get the government to put in the dollars to address campus sexual violence as per our recommendations, we are hopeful that with continued advocacy and research-based approach that we'll be able to see some uptake."

Nazir expects to see a reaction from the students at universities across Alberta regarding the state of sexual violence services on their campus, among other issues.

"With cuts to institutions, university administrations' hands are going to be tied and so without funding for these crucial services that impact lives, I think across Alberta we're going to see students come out and really speak up about this issue." CAUS's Sexual Violence White Paper can be accessed online.

WOMEN'S MARCH »

12th Annual Women's Day March

Manahil Hassan
Contributor

On Feb. 14, the 12th annual Women's Memorial March took place at the Scarborough United Church at 6:30 p.m. Supporters, friends, family and proud members of the Indigenous community wore red to show their support for the murdered and missing Indigenous women not only in Calgary, but in Canada as well.

The evening began with a pre-ceremonial song, sung in rounds of three to welcome every supporter to the circle. As described by the host of the event, Chantal Stromsong, the song allowed for individuals in the room to honour not only their ancestors but acknowledge the differences between their peers. The evening ensued with a prayer led by Elder Jackie Bronley, encouraging onlookers to commemorate and remember their loved ones and pray for those that had gone missing. With light refreshments in the hands of the supporters, an honour song was sung by not only the host of the event, but by mothers, friends and family who grieved and honoured their lost family members. As each onlooker prepared for the annual 20-minute march, men in the room were encouraged to take the Moose-Hide pledge to participate in the campaign to help end the violence against women and children and to speak up and defend those who are unable to do so for themselves.

The march itself started from Scarborough United Church, went through 14th Street and finally along 17th Avenue. Members were given the choice of holding drums to play while partaking in the honour song



MARIAH WILSON

while others were provided with the opportunity to hold a person in red. With the person in red feeling heavier as everyone walked, supporters were encouraged to respect and remember the struggle of members of the Indigenous community who not only experienced grave losses but were also suffering.

The annual memorial marches first began in 1992 in the Downtown EastSide in Vancouver. After the body of Cheryl Anne Joe was found dismembered near the Powell and Salisbury streets in the city, a group of First Nations women were determined to march every year to shed light onto the violence and brutality that Indigenous women and girls experience so often. Now, cities all over Canada have begun to participate and arrange their own annual memorial marches for Indigenous women. For many, these events are paramount to remember their sisters and do justice for them through traditional ceremonies and beautiful

but powerful displays of their culture and tradition.

There have been many reports conducted which detailed the violence against defenceless women and children. A study conducted by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police found that approximately 1,200 women were murdered or went missing from 1980–2012. Another study done by the Native American Women's Association reported that between 2000 and 2008, Indigenous women and girls represented around ten per cent of all female homicides when Indigenous women only made up around three percent of the female population.

It is statistics like this that drive many people to come attend these marches and empathize with grieving family members and friends. One participant named Brennan Wares has attended these marches for five years and believes these marches "Bring light [...] on how big of an issue this is."



MARIAH WILSON

CORONAVIRUS »

The campus communities impacted by the Coronavirus

Sophia Lopez
News Assistant

In the past few weeks, the coronavirus epidemic has sparked the attention of everyone around the world. It is evident to see, through news and videos, that this virus has affected many people in China and outside of China. With this said, many haven't realized the psychological effects the virus has had on Asian communities, especially the Chinese community.

The University of Calgary has a Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) that focuses on modern and traditional Chinese culture. With information about the coronavirus being so easily accessible to everyone, the U of C community has also been affected by this virus, with specific communities facing the brunt of the paranoia caused by the epidemic. The virus has caused people to become cautious to the point where other communities, particularly Asian ones, report being treated differently.

Eric Yu, a member of the Univer-

sity of Calgary CSSA, spoke on his community, as well as other Asian communities, and how they've dealt with this virus.

"Everyone wants to try and take their precaution now to, first of all, create moral support and build support for their families overseas, comforting them," said Yu, "and also doing their part in society by washing their hands, covering their mouths, etc."

Yu also explained that the coronavirus has caused him and his friends to question themselves. With everyone worrying about the virus, it has caused them to feel a sort of pressure not to get sick.

"It seems like there's a stigma between our society and its views towards the coronavirus regarding the Asian community," said Yu. "It feels like 'We're Asian, maybe we have a higher chance of catching the virus or higher chance that we have the virus!'"

Yu stresses that the school community needs to understand that not every Chinese person is affected by coronavirus and that clear communication can lead to a more

understanding environment, where all people of Asian cultures are being respected.

"All we can do right now is just be open about it," said Yu, "clarifying everything people are worried about."

Just like everyone else, Yu and the rest of the Asian community wishes to see the coronavirus come to an end.

"Communication is key here and just like everyone else," said Yu. "We hope for the coronavirus to swiftly come to a conclusion."

Yu and the CSSA remain optimistic, expressing their hopes to see the U of C community returning to being one that respects and does not discriminate against those of different races or cultures during the coronavirus epidemic.

To get in touch with, or gain more information about the Chinese community and culture, the University of Calgary Chinese Students and Scholars Association (UofC CSSA) can be reached through email, cssacalgary@yahoo.com and through their Facebook page, UofC CSSA.

UCalgary restricts travel due to Coronavirus

Nikayla Goddard
News Editor

After "careful consideration of the risks to the campus community," reads the email sent out this afternoon by Dru Marshall, Provost and Vice-President Academic, travel to China, Hong Kong, Japan, Iran, Italy, South Korea and Singapore has been banned until September 2020 due to the spread of COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus. This suspension is directed to students and non-academic staff, though academic staff are also encouraged to avoid travel.

Students and faculty who are presently in the suspended countries have been contacted and "strongly suggested" that they "immediately" return to Canada.

"Our decision was made after reviewing and assessing key medical information and updates from global health experts that advise against all nonessential travel to areas af-

ected by the virus due to the potential health risks," reads Marshall's statement. "We're concerned for the safety and well-being of our campus community."

For those travelling abroad in spring and summer 2020, the email cited that alternate arrangements will be made for them. There is no mention of whether Fall 2020 Travel Abroad will be affected as of yet, but Werklund's Teaching Across Borders (TAB) has said that their plan is to move forward with preparations for TAB 2020, though to hold off on purchasing flights, and a new evaluation will take place May 1. If travel is still banned, TAB has said that "alternative placements" will be discussed.

In the past weeks, the university has made several steps to ensuring the campus is kept up to date on the status of COVID-19, including a Coronavirus website and updated emergency plans in the event that a public health emergency should occur.



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BLACK HISTORY MONTH »

Black History Month continues to leave its mark on Alberta

Fernando Moreno
Contributor

Black History Month continues to leave a lasting mark on Alberta in just three short years since becoming officially recognized by the province in 2017. From being recognized thematically by multiple businesses such as Michaels, to events being held around the city by academics and other organizations, there is no sign of slowing down in the years to come. The campus abounded with various tributes and events relating to this month of recognition and work towards better integration and reconciliation. This month has been one of the most eventful Black History Months on campus yet.

The Faculty of Social Work held the Centering of Black Women's Voices and Experiences event on Feb 14. This show has proven to be very popular as it was sold out. The panelists included Dr. Régine Uwibereyeho King, Patrina Duhaney, Lemlem Haile and Monique Minvielle. The Faculty of Social Work also held another event on Feb. 25, "Garnering Respect For the People and Communities of African Descent in Canada" with speaker Dr. David Este. Dr. Este enlightened his audience with stories of his disappointments and disillusionments of how things have not really changed much since the 1960s while also paying tribute to numerous other figures that advocate for better recognition of black history especially in the field of social work. According to Dr. Este "when we talk about the civil rights [movement] we automatically think the United States," but he named Toronto, Halifax and Montreal as focal points in the movement and revolution.

The African-Caribbean Student Association (ACSA) in partnership with the Ethiopian-Eritrean Students' Association (EESA) has been particularly active in keeping Black History Month to the attention of the campus community. They held a date auction in late January which raised almost \$2000. They held their "Melanight" on Feb. 15 which is a celebration of culture through food, fashion and entertainment. Co-president Ife Adedipe hopes this becomes their annual gala. The night included a reception of relevant cultural cuisines, dance performances, poetry readings and ended with an open dance floor towards the end of the night. It was a chance to enjoy the

food and dances from the local African and Caribbean communities. The proceeds will go to the Build Africa charity which seeks to oppose poverty through education.

"What Melanight aims to do is actually promote and celebrate the different cultures, heritages, food of the different regions we represent," says Adedipe. "What we aim to do is bring people from campus of all kinds of backgrounds... as long as you have an interest in experiencing this different part of the world then you are more than welcome to come to Melanight."

The work and accomplishments of these African-related clubs are far from limited to Black History Month. Throughout the semesters a lot of work is being done through separate and joint means. EESA has taken a role in helping with the academic portion.

"They create a space for our members... to actually branch out and form connections with different professionals, different students in undergraduate and graduate degrees and just basically giving more educational portion to our already vibrant and cultural goals," Adedipe says.

ACSA has taken a significant role despite being a rather young club, dating only to 2018. The club seeks to create a space where students can excel and also feel at home.

"I think that education is important because if you don't really know the logistics of the situation you're in it's definitely harder to find ways to escape that situation," said Adedipe. Thus, Build Africa seeks ways to access to the tools one has and to use those to tools to escape poverty.

Black History Month has not been without controversy. Some people see it as unnecessary, dated, misused as a platform for extremism and even claim it has only served to further segregate peoples of African and Caribbean descent in our communities. Adedipe argues for the contrary.

"Even though we would like to think that this world is more integrated," Adedipe says, "in reality black people are still a minority and they still are a group that goes unrecognized, stereotyped and discriminated against." This is not to say that other minority groups don't have a reason to be celebrated as well however this month strives to recognize the importance of an often overlooked group in North American history. Groups like ACSA seek to find ways for black people to have a voice.

Although the goal of organiza-



The African-Caribbean Student Association and the Ethiopian-Eritrean Students' Association have been particularly active in keeping Black History Month alive on campus.

TRICIA LIM

tions like ACSA is to "address issues pertaining to our communities that includes specific niches within the large range of people we represent including black women," and to build a "repertoire of events where we are addressing the most pertinent issues pertaining to our members and [the] communities we represent," they are also very inclusive and not militant.

Ife goes on to say that, "There are a whole myriad of issues pertaining to a specific group of individuals and it would be a disservice to not have events catered toward addressing those problems. Our goal is to make sure that we create a voice for African-Caribbean students on campus and have events that address these communities... and from there [ACSA] could be a point of reference for the university to actually include the perspective of our students creating better services that represent every single culture. Black History Month is garnered towards creating a [voice and movement] for the black community to move up and stand against historical oppression."

Adedipe added, "Even though we would like to believe that racism is going away [...] in reality it's just as strong as it was it's just that we are more aware of it." This has allowed people to be more prepared to address the serious issues that weren't as spoken of in the past.

Black History Month serves as

a platform to bring attention to an important conversation surrounding mitigating the problems that still go on today. Through events such as Speak Your Truth, many controversial topics have been brought to light. The month has served as a means of improving communication and dialogue to better understand and bring reconciliation of different perspectives without judgement. By holding events that get many people from campus involved, it "forms part of integrating the black community within the campus community so that segregation starts to lessen," said Adedipe.

A divide is not desired but rather an environment where everyone feels comfortable with each other "without diluting their own cultural identity [...] We're trying to create a space where people see the strengths of each other's cultures and the overall picture of each other's cultures" in order "to celebrate them for what they are instead of what we think they should be," Adedipe explained.

One issue mentioned frequently is how being black fits into the standards of beauty. "Our beauty in the international sense doesn't fit in with the standard beauty that has been accepted and adopted in western societies and cultures" explains Ife.

Speak Your Truth allowed attendees to hear various perspectives and work towards making people feel

comfortable with what they are. The conversations are intended to break down barriers. "Our natural beauty as black women is being seen more as something that is beautiful rather than something that needs to be changed," Dr. Este says. Historically and even in the present "conceptions of beauty were not related to blackness."

A lot has happened in recent months that show have demonstrated a global progression despite how many of the speakers feel there is still so far to go. Adedipe is South African born and Nigerian by descent, and was proud to see the winner of the Miss Universe pageant win with her natural hair. "I could not help but feel pride and especially the fact that she did the pageant in her natural kinky hair which has never been seen before," she said. "A lot of components of the world are moving towards breaking down these barriers between which ethnicity or which race is more beautiful or more superior but really acknowledging an individual for the qualities that they display from the inside out," said Adedipe.

As Black History Month draws to a close, there seems to be no signs of slowing momentum for how the communities are reaching out locally and beyond. The spirit of what the month is about continues on throughout the rest of the year.

ARTS & CULTURE »

MUSIC »

Hotel Mira's thoughts on perfectionism



Hotel Mira is set to play at the Gateway on the SAIT campus on March 27.

courtesy LIGHT ORGAN RECORDS

May Domingo
Contributor

Hotel Mira, formerly known as JPNSGRLS, took the Vancouver music scene by storm when they formed in 2010. Gaining the number 13 spot in Billboard Canada's Alt-rock charts with their beautifully-written songs is just one of the many successes they have achieved. They will be bringing their theatrical energy to Calgary with a show at the Gateway on March 27. The *Gauntlet* spoke with the band's frontman, Charlie Kerr, before they performed their first concert of the tour and we talked about their new album, finding one's identity and the psychological condition of perfectionism.

The band maintained their classic alternative sound through the flairs of Charlie Kerr, Colton Lauro and Mike Nobles while incorporating the talent of Grammy-Award winning producer, Eric Ratz, as well as adding Clark Grieve and Cole George to the band.

"He's [Ratz] amazing and has got a really good ear for what I can improve in a song," Kerr says. "It

didn't really feel like they [Grieve and George] were a new addition, they're both incredibly talented."

The new album provided the genre a fresh mix of background chants and an 80s funk feel that will satisfy old fans and new.

Perfectionism is an album filled with the band's commentary on heartbreak and, as the album title suggests, perfectionism. Fittingly, it was released on Valentine's Day.

"I've always hated Valentine's Day and what it stood for. It was cool to do something that I thought could be utilized for people who felt lonely that day, that they get a record to listen to instead of a diamond ring or some shit," Kerr says.

It is a record that must be heard. One of my personal favourites, "Better on Your Own" was explained to be a four-minute song encompassing his shame, feeling of inadequacy and struggle to feel grateful.

"That conditioning was kind of fascinating to me and it was kind of this thing that I found both in my professional and personal life," Kerr says. "My perfectionism was kind of damaging things that were

important to me and when I started writing about it, there was so much to unpack and so much that I think is really, really universal about it."

Kerr explains that this has inspired him to continue writing and be more outspoken, especially in this new album.

"If something really fucked up is going on in the world, I'm gonna want to explore that in writing for whatever reason and if something really good is going on societally, I'd like to put a megaphone up to that as well," Kerr says.

He found songwriting to be a compulsion. This is apparent even in their previous works like *Bullied For You*, *Brandon*, and *Mushroom*. Gathering insight from his experiences, the movies he watched (*Boys Don't Cry* is an inspiration to Brandon), and the stories he hears from his friends who are women, the band was able to put out songs that inspire others and bring awareness to important issues. "Overall, I think it was just really important, growing up, to value empathy and put yourself in other people's shoes. So, there was never really a second thought in

terms of identifying with and supporting those who have been marginalized," Kerr says.

His identity as a Cree Métis also plays a part in his activism through songwriting.

"I think it's a very gradual process, in general, to become accepting and okay with your identity because of the various stigma that we internalize over the years," Kerr says. "I got comfortable with the fact that I was uncomfortable about my identity."

His thought-provoking responses during the interview are no different from his honest lyrics throughout the album and the rest of his previous works. Kerr understands that it's always scary to release a part of himself in a song that millions will hear but he wants to motivate others.

"Dig deep and try to communicate and express something that might be tied up in shame, fear and guilt," he says. "This might sound controversial, but music isn't everything. There are elements of your life that you should be taking care of that aren't predicated by your success as a musician."

Noticing that hard work seems to be the one thing that makes a difference in one's career, he wants to encourage those wanting to pursue music.

"Continue doing it because you love it because everything else is so far from guaranteed," he says.

Kerr hopes he can one day reach the point of perfection.

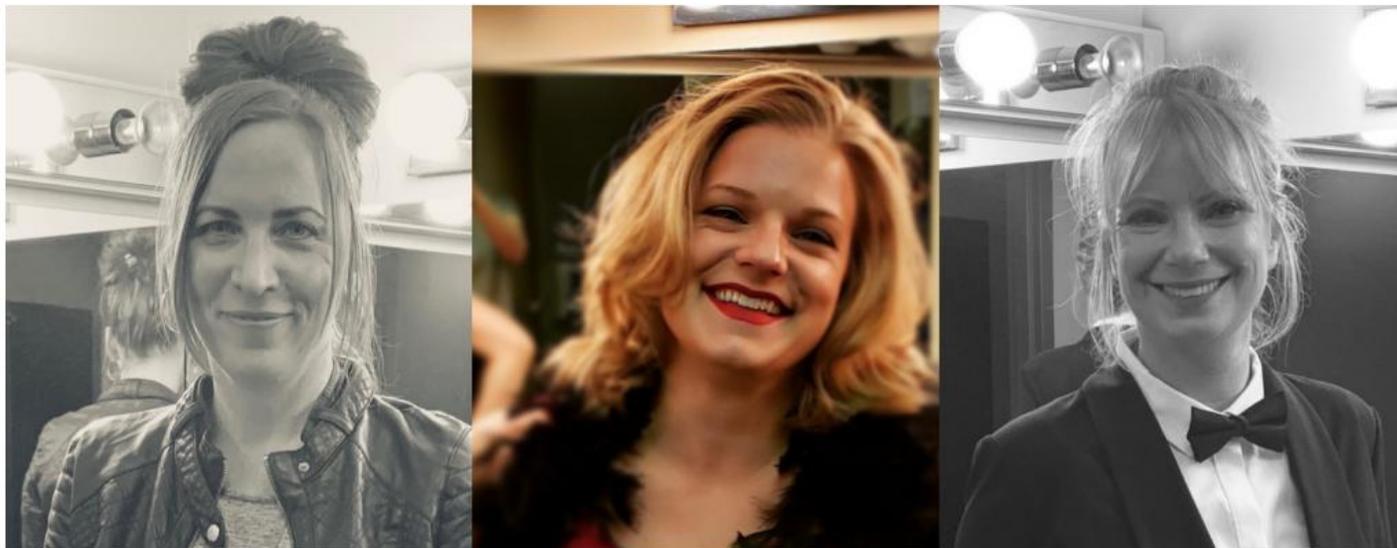
"I hope so. That's kind of the goal. We'll see. It seems pretty ingrained in me to just be overly critical. As much as I can chip away at that, I also have to have some self-acceptance in terms of that," Kerr says.

Perhaps that is the first step to success. Undoubtedly, Hotel Mira is climbing towards that point.

His passion, as well as the band's, is manifested in the concerts they perform. They are a definite must-see act. You will be able to witness Hotel Mira on March 27 at The Gateway on the SAIT campus. Doors open at 9:00 p.m. Online tickets start at \$14.95. Instead of being one of the 102,744 monthly listeners on Spotify, go out and experience one of the wildest concerts you may ever encounter.

FESTIVALS »

Pumphouse Theatre hosts Calgary Region One-Act Play Festival



The Calgary Region One-Act Play Festival will run March 18–21 at the Pumphouse Theatre.

courtesy MARGARET DAHLBERG

Troy Hasselman
Arts & Culture Editor

Calgarians will have a chance to see work from our city's up-and-coming theatre artists with the 37th Annual Calgary Region One-Act Play Festival, coming from the Pumphouse Theatre in collaboration with the Alberta Drama Festivals Association (ADFA). This festival will include 10 one-act plays over four nights and is one of nine regional one-act play festivals held across the province every year, with winners going on to partake in the Provincial One-Act Play Festival that happens every May in Canmore.

"It's ultimate goal is to provide for non-professional artists — whether it's emerging or community or independent — an opportunity to showcase their work," Pumphouse Theatre programming Director Kelly Malcolm says. "There are about nine different regions throughout the province and each region has their own one-act play festival. At the end of each regional festival, we all come together and do a provincial festival as well. It's a way to connect Alberta through community, non-professional theatre."

The festival will be adjudicated by a surprise special guest who will hand out awards on the final night of the festival and deliver public remarks to the audience and performers at the end of each night of the festival. The adjudicator is selected by a com-

mittee involving members of the Pumphouse Theatre team and the Calgary regional representative in the ADFA.

"We look for an individual who has a connection with the city, first and foremost, and we look for someone who has some experience with providing a backing to artists in the past or has strong connections with the theatre community whether they are professional actors, directors or playwrights," Malcolm says. "We ideally are looking for someone who can give critical or positive feedback to all of our participants because ideally these are folks who are participating in the festival. This is the first time they will be representing a particular work. By doing it here and getting that feedback, they can take that work and move it onto the next level whether that be at fringe festival, another kind of festival or its own production somewhere in the city."

Another aspect that differentiates the One-Act Play Festival from others is the first-come, first-serve selection process for acts to take part in the festival. With no curator or selection process involved, acts are able to take part so long as they fit the criteria of being under 60 minutes and being made up of a non-professional cast. The festival has a wide variety of types of plays shown with dramas, comedies, new works and classics all represented.

"There is a wide range of pieces that people come up with either

as original works or they have written themselves and are producing themselves," Malcolm says. "There are strange or interesting or well known one act plays that have been produced for many years so it is a mixed bag depending on who gets to submit their work each particular year. We have a movement piece, we have straight up comedy, quite a range through the board and we try and mix it up every night. So if you're not coming one night we try to mix it up so it's not drama, after drama, after drama. So you get a bit of all the emotional range when you come to the shows."

This year's festival will have a mixture of new and returning theatre companies offering up some plays that heavily contrast in tone from one another. For example the Thursday night of the festival will include a drama which focuses on the issue of women's bodily autonomy and will be followed by a lighthearted political comedy. The festival will also include work from established Calgary theatre companies such as the Confederation Theatre Society and the Morpheus Theatre Company, which has been producing work for the past two decades and will be presenting their work called *The Shift*, which tells the story of two people struggling to connect with one another in a world dominated by artificial intelligence technology.

"We have a couple of people who have returned to the one act festival and have participated



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in the past," Malcolm says. "For example, Reckless Daughters Creative have participated in the festival before and they have presented a work by Madeline Greg called *The Way we Burn* which is all about seven different women who are navigating through figuring out bodily autonomy. It's quite a more serious work. On the same night we have a completely new company in town, I.D.G.A.F. Theatre and they're presenting a political-comedy called *The Face-off* which brings together political fans in kind of a hockey setting and they duke it out to support each political party. Just that night we have quite a range. I'd say in those two we have up-and-coming, new and emerging artists. We also have two groups who are emerging in the festival who have been established community theatre companies in the city here for the past few years. We have Morpheus Theatre who have been around for the past 20 years and Confederation Theatre Society which has been around for the past three years."

Malcolm says one of the best aspects of the festival is the role it plays in building support for community theatre and spreading the love of theatre amongst those getting started with the medium by making theatre accessible to

performers and audiences alike.

"What's great about this particular festival is that it really does support community and non-professional theatre," Malcolm says. "Ofentimes in these communities or small rehearsal halls in people's basements, the love of theatre is continued. It's organizations and small companies like this that come to festivals like ours that really keeps the love of theatre around in the community. The festival is really here to showcase that you don't have to go out and buy a \$80 ticket to go out and see an amazing show at Theatre Calgary. You can see a show on a community level and still be blown away. It's not to say that those other companies aren't great. They're wonderful, but I think people kind of forget that community theatre is where it starts and continues."

The Calgary Region One-Act Play Festival runs March 18–21 at the Pumphouse Theatre. Tickets for single nights of the festival cost \$15 for adults and \$12 for students and seniors, while full festival passes cost \$40 for adults and \$30 for students and seniors. More information about the festival, including a festival schedule with a list of participating plays and information about the theatre companies involved can be found at pumphousetheatre.ca.



The Shift is one of the works involved in the One-Act Play Festival.

courtesy MORPHEUS THEATRE

A promotional graphic for CJSW Calgary radio station. The background is green. On the left, the text "DON'T MISS A MOMENT." is written in large, bold, black letters. On the right, there is a large, stylized logo for CJSW. The logo consists of a circular dial with "ON AIR 90.9 FM" at the top and "ON DEMAND CJSW.COM" at the bottom. In the center of the dial, the word "Calgary" is written above "cjsw" in a large, green, stylized font.

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FEATURE »



MARIAH WILSON

Calgary bans conversion therapy

Nikayla Goddard
News Editor

Calgary City Council unanimously voted on Feb. 3 to draft a bylaw banning conversion therapy, following in the steps of Edmonton and St. Albert, who banned the practice on Dec. 10 and Dec. 18 respectively.

Conversion therapy is a discredited practice where there are attempts made to change a person's sexual identity, orientation or expression of gender to fit heterosexual and cisgender norms, often through means of harmful or extreme counselling and behavioural coaching. Businesses or individuals found advertising or offering these services can be fined up to \$10,000, and it will be illegal to have these services registered as a business in the first place.

Councillor Evan Woolley, with Mayor Naheed Nenshi and councillors Druh Farrell, Gian-Carlo Carra, Jyoti Gondek and Peter Demong brought forward the notice of motion to the city council. The motion was unanimously passed, resulting in a sweep of positive remarks for this passing from UCalgary members.

Aishwarya Harish and Greyson Mannella, program coordinators for Q: The SU Centre for Sexual and Gender Diversity, released a statement to the Gauntlet.

"We're so thrilled to hear that

this motion passed. Conversion therapy goes against the principles of self-acceptance and living unapologetically on which our community was built. We're so grateful to Calgary City Council for taking steps to support our community, and we're also thankful to the huge crowd of community members who showed up at City Hall on Monday to show support."

Dr. Darren Lund is a professor at the Werklund School of Education, and was able to provide context on conversion therapy and its harmful effects, especially to youth.

"I am very pleased that our municipality has joined several others in the province to ban this highly damaging and scientifically discredited program that has already harmed so many people," Lund said. "This ban is an important formal mechanism to help those individuals whose families are trying to force them to try to change who they are. Conversion therapies are highly destructive and misguided attempts to shame young people into hating their own sexual orientations or gender identities, and have resulted in unfavourable outcomes for their recipients. Any public policies and increased awareness of this harmful practice are steps in the right direction for honouring all of our province's young people, and protecting their individual rights and dignity. For educators, our daily

contact with young people involves looking out for their best interests, and this ban will assist teachers in protecting the wellbeing of all of their students."

In 1987, during Lund's 16-year stint as a high school English teacher, he and a group of students formed the Students and Teachers Opposing Prejudice (STOP) program, which Lund says "undertook many innovative forms of student/teacher activism over the years. Students planned specific initiatives to tackle racism and discrimination in the school and community, and to promote human rights and social justice in Alberta, Canada, and globally. The STOP program won several awards in its two decades, and became a model for so much other student activism that followed."

The STOP program resulted in the creation of Alberta's first Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) in 2000 to raise awareness in the school and community, as well as create a safe environment for all students.

"Despite some community and parent resistance," Lund said, "the GSA group provided an important sanctuary and gathering place for any students who wanted to learn more, and make the school more inclusive to all."

From his perspective as a teacher, GSA organizer and university professor, Lund explained that the ban on conversion therapy is

a great step forward considering how harmful and illegitimate the practice is. But despite this step forward, last year Alberta became the first jurisdiction in Canada to roll back the rights of LGBTQ+ students. Lund explained that the "UCP's introduction and passing of Bill 8 removed important protections and rights of students to form GSA groups in their schools. These groups have been proved to reduce discrimination and foster better learning conditions for all students in schools where they exist."

These rollbacks are fortunately reflective of the minority of Albertan beliefs, as Lund cites that over 70 per cent of Albertans support gay marriage.

"However," Lund added, "we also know that there are many people — some currently in positions of political power — whose narrow views and regressive policies on sexual orientation continue to make our LGBTQ+ community significantly more vulnerable in terms of risks to their mental health, to becoming a victim of harassment, bullying, or hate crimes, and to being targets of hate-motivated violence."

Sean Bristowe, a member of Queers on Campus, explained how often the group experiences discrimination, and how harmful conversion therapy and the attitudes it perpetuates is.

Bristowe remarked that people who avidly and publically support

conversion therapy in their prejudiced practices "should be banned from public spaces if they choose to show up and harass queer folks and perpetuate these incredibly harmful messages."

MLA Janis Irwin, Official Opposition Deputy Whip and Critic for Women and LGBTQ issues, also had a lot to say on both the good news and what yet needs to be done.

"I've had the opportunity to talk to a lot of folks who've been either directly impacted by conversion therapy or who've had loved ones who have been," Irwin said. "The stories are just devastating. So to hear that Calgary has followed the lead of a number of other municipalities is absolutely promising. But in the same breath, I have to say that it's shameful that the UCP hasn't committed to taking any action."

She continued, "Clearly, Albertans are opposed to this practice and they are coming out in strong numbers to support a ban, yet again, the UCP and Jason Kenney are not willing to speak out about it. That's the disheartening part — we still have a lot of work to do."

What can be done to keep moving things forward? Education. Lund says parents, teachers and political leaders, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, need to educate the general public and children in order to "better understand, enforce, and bolster human rights laws in Alberta."



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NETFLIX HAS BEEN GOOP'D »



Gwyneth Paltrow's Netflix series promotes pseudoscience that can be dangerous to women's health.

courtesy Jared Purdy / Wikimedia Commons

Netflix marketing: A new frontier for pseudoscience?

Stephen Lee
Contributor

What would you say if someone told you to place a piece of jade inside your vagina? What if this person was ignorant of gynecology, vaginal microbiology or science in general? Finally, what if Gwyneth Paltrow — the actress known for winning an Academy Award for Best Actress in the early 2000s and for playing Pepper Potts, her career relatively uneventful besides those — is the one telling you to shove porous stones up inside yourself? The kicker in this scenario — Netflix paid for the advertising. It sounds like a dream, a psilocybin (more on this shortly) or lysergic fantasy — sitting in a faux-gynecological practice listening to the late Tony Stark's wife preach about jade stones for the vagina (without knowing the difference between vagina and vulva), the net cost of her recommendations insurmountable, Netflix logos pulsing on LCD screens in Paltrow's office. But it's not a dream. Recently, Netflix released a six-part docuseries called *The Goop Lab* in which Paltrow et al. explore various pseudoscientific topics such as psychic mediums, energy healing and psilocybin treatments in Brazil as a substitute for therapy.

The surface-level value of this show is low. Much of what Paltrow's lackeys learn about is unverifiable. There's a lack of logic galore here,

perhaps the most overt being an episode about the Wim Hof breathing technique and its asserted ability to influence the autonomic nervous system. The show depends on the correlation-causation fallacy for everything except one episode about sexual education — albeit the most valuable episode whose topic was that women should be sexually informed and empowered.

When there aren't logical fallacies used as “undeniable proof of the given phenomenon,” there are unverifiable elements such as energy healing — the belief that the conscious human mind can influence the body at the subatomic level. Not only was this a gross misunderstanding of quantum physics, the entire “field” was debunked on cable years ago. The most infuriating episode was about psychics. I had vitriolic hatred for the unyieldingly-stupid interviewees in this episode, not to mention the various cases of psychics disproven on television. All of this is to say that if the attentive reader wants to experience skin-peeling frustration akin to being blue-balled for twenty years or Tantalus relegated to a murky slough, then go ahead and watch this because your desire will be fulfilled.

The subtext of this show, however, is incredibly profound and frightening. On the surface level, the series provides brief forays into various “alternative health approaches,” though Netflix legitimized a fraudulent, perni-

cious, unsubstantiated brand in a growingly-ignorant world. Netflix is no stranger to sending sour messages. Their quasi-Hallmark teenage romance movies have dubious messages for impressionable audiences. Netflix has also produced documentaries with obviously unfounded topics such as *Area 51*. The key difference between *The Goop Lab* and these shows is the intent. Regarding Netflix's platitude-laden romcoms, it is the classic argument that the parent is obliged to ensure that their children receive or do not receive values from television, not the studio. Regarding other documentaries, the “truth” they peddle is not inherently harmful. Believing in an Area 51 conspiracy may be delusional, though it won't inflict physical harm. Conversely, *The Goop Lab* is meant to expand the company's reach, to discretely advertise underneath the sleek production of a Netflix original, the glossy pearlescent highlights hiding the fact that the content is illegitimate. Paltrow et al. have essentially done a cosmetic overhaul — as they do with all their merchandising, advertising and aesthetic — to hide the searing bluish that is the brand's track record. The aforementioned jade vagina stone, which Paltrow has spoken about with late-night hosts Colbert and Kimmel, has been denounced by physicians because jade is a porous material that can introduce foreign, harmful bacteria into a tightly-knit vaginal microbiome,

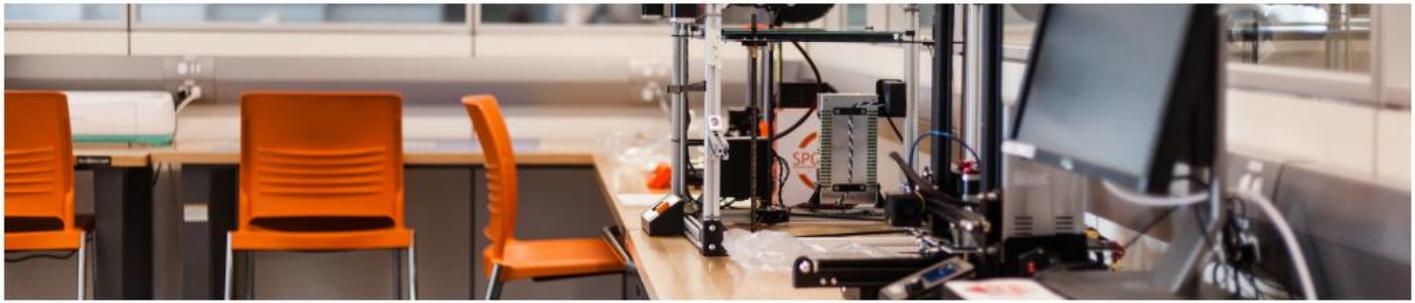
the naturally-occurring bacteria that colonize the birth canal. Or consider Paltrow's coffee enema, vaginal steaming and others. With this new show, Netflix has provided free advertising to a company that peddles harmful products and contributes to the growing insurrection of pseudoscience into medicine.

Even the title of the show contains subtext. Notice the word choice of calling it a “lab,” a word occupying a unique place in the English lexicon. It denotes a degree of rigor, a degree of authority. That is, information sounds more official when I say it was produced by a lab. Paltrow et al. were clever to use this subtle technique to help legitimize their bullshit. Moreover, the information presented by the interviewees is ostensibly researched. They name-drop various quasi-scientific terminology that has no substance, my favourite being “quintuple-blind method.” I think this is something inevitable with the advent of the internet, with the mass availability of information. I see a compression of sorts — information at the high end of the spectrum of validity, cogency or value is lowered. Conversely, information at the low end of this spectrum is raised such that from a general public perspective, all information is equal. Academics clearly see a hierarchy of information, though the general public does not, or at least is not as aware of such a gradation. This is

problematic, especially considering that personal health is at stake. There is a disclaimer at the beginning of each episode, though it is disingenuous and clearly meant for preventing legal action should someone take their fraudulent message to heart.

This is not the first use of media for disseminating pseudoscience. The progenitor of the anti-vaxx movement, Andrew Wakefield, directed a film called *Vaxxed* which was defended by Robert De Niro in 2016. This was not widely-released like a feature film but consider that Netflix has now entered the fold as a medium for disseminating such information. The truly pernicious effect of Paltrow's show is less about her material, but the precedent it sets for future releases. Netflix has a huge distribution and given that they seem to have no concerns with the validity of their content, it is scary to consider a world where anti-vaxx messages are streamed directly into the eyes of the masses underneath Netflix's high-end production. This is truly a wolf-in-sheep's clothing situation. Granted that Paltrow does not have to reconcile with the deaths of thousands like the anti-vaxx people, it is clear that neither she nor Netflix's creative team have considered the potential ramifications of their actions. It would be prudent for either to reflect on this, assuming they have the capability to do so.

BUDGET CUTS »



The provincial budget cuts impact the university on many levels.

MARIAH WILSON

Budget cuts impact more than just students

Kristal Turner
Contributor

Do you remember that scene in *The Godfather* when Michael closes the door on Kay? The anguish on her face at being shut out. After all that time, and what they had been through, only to be dismissed in such a manner? It's hard to watch that scene, and even harder to experience that kind of rejection. Watching what the university is going through now, for staff and students, feels like that moment. That may sound harsh, but we are family only until we are not. You are the one impacted or the one who survives the cuts, struggling with a backlash of emotions and continued fear at be-

ing next. As a former staff member and current MA student, it's hard to watch people I know lose their jobs from a domino-decision driven down by the government. Increasing fees while cutting staff and resources isn't a place the university wants to be in, but the administration has allowed each faculty to make the cuts that one hopes is the best decision they can make. I can name any number of studies that discuss the impact of cuts to education funding, but we all have access to the library database, so I won't go into that here. Instead, I'll highlight the impact that cutting technicians and facilitators will have to the maker spaces and capstone/honours projects. It is important

to keep staff running these spaces to engage a wide range of students. How else will anyone learn that these spaces are there to help them? These types of cuts impact all students, not just those already struggling to afford an education that will set them up for future success. And yes, there will be money set aside for more scholarships, but we can't ignore that people will fall through the cracks. Cuts to education hurt us all, but they cut most deeply to those hovering on the boundary already. No student truly supports tuition increases, not wanting to lose more money from already tight budgets. You say what you have to when you don't feel you have any power.

The impact of staff reductions on students is being noticed, they are feeling the loss of those who spoke up in support of their needs, even when it wasn't what those who make the decisions wanted to hear. Staff that are now afraid to speak up or contradict, because they might be next. The loss of power, agency and the effects on everyone's mental health is staggering. I try take the time to listen to those impacted, to do my small part. My job as an advisor ended in June of last year, and I chose to accept my admission to graduate school knowing that work would be hard to find and knowing I was likely to be impacted by the cuts. It's been hard being on campus watching the impact on my

friends and colleagues from the sidelines, but there are moments that break through and make me feel hopeful, like seeing the student and union protests and the Calgary community working together to humanize the cuts in Alberta. We can't be silent during hard times. As someone who went back to school to study education and advocacy, I know the power of speaking out with a combined voice to help each other. I want to use my skills to make sure we don't stay silent and that we know we need to fight these government cuts. So, I will write. It's easy to fear the repercussions of speaking out and staying quiet, but that won't help our education system. And it won't help us.

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LIFESTYLE »

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The true ingredients behind the listed words



Educate yourself on the actual ingredients you put into your body before believing flashy health labels.

SHANGNONG HU

Lauren Olson
Contributor

Food and eating — in the immortal words of Avril Lavigne, “Why’d you have to go and make things so complicated?” Food and eating really shouldn’t be complicated. Eat food, nourish your body, be alive and well. The thing is, food isn’t just food these days. Food has become food products, often disguised as healthy options that are discreetly made up of questionable components that our bodies don’t actually recognize or know what to do with. Food companies have figured out that if they label something with trending keywords — think “vegan,” “gluten free,” “no artificial flavours” and even “organic” — people will assume those words mean “healthy” and won’t miss a beat in tossing those items into their shopping carts. The thing is, just because something is “sugar free” doesn’t mean it’s healthy. In my mind, when I see a label boasting about the lack of any demonized ingredient, the first thing I question is the replacement ingredient.

I’ll preface the rest of this article with full disclaimer that I’m not a nutritionist, a doctor or technically an expert at anything that I’m talking about. I’m a self-educated, regular human who has made an effort to listen to podcasts about nutrition, read a lot of books and do a lot of experimenting on my own

self with what types of foods work best with my body. I’m an obsessive ingredients lists reader and on a personal crusade against certain added ingredients. Basically, I’m just interested in being healthy and, in all honesty, I feel passionate about spreading the word because I think a lot of people are trying to be healthier these days and it’s so easy to get caught by marketing traps that are extremely misleading.

I wanted to highlight a few popular food items that I’ve noticed are on the radar right now and that I think people need to pay a little more attention to what is actually in them — meat substitutes, bars and non-dairy milk alternatives.

Starting us off, meat substitutes. As a former vegetarian — I didn’t eat meat for six years — I get it. People who don’t eat meat are looking for something to replace it with, of course! Lately, certain brands of no-meat burger replacements have blown up and everyone is raving about how good they taste, and that’s exciting. However, what is actually in these pretend burgers? Has anyone even looked at the ingredients? I did. Sure, there’s no meat. But you know what is in those “burgers”? Highly processed oils such as canola or sunflower, “natural flavours” — which are “derived from something in nature,” yet still are extremely processed, include chemicals and are known neurotoxins. Oh yeah, they’re also designed to make the food taste extravagant

so you’ll activate the “happy, feel-good” receptors in your brain when you eat them. It is worth noting that because everything is so processed there are likely no inherent nutrients left in anything.

In my opinion, eating real food makes way more sense than eating these science experiments loosely called “food.” Now, I’m not saying if you’re a vegetarian that you’re dumb and should eat meat. But, I am saying that these meat substitutes are highly-processed food products and our bodies don’t necessarily know what to do with them. So, my suggestion is to read ingredients lists and simply make an informed decision on what you’re choosing to put into your body. There are meat substitutes that do have a much shorter ingredients list and there are ways of making your own high protein dishes at home. It might take a bit more effort, sure, but in my humble opinion, it’s well worth the effort to give your body real food as opposed to these brand-new products that have no evidence of long term health advantages. Verdict: Have them occasionally, but don’t make them a staple in your diet.

Next up, bars. I am the first to admit, I love bars. They’re convenient, they taste so good, there’s an unreal selection and variety available nowadays and they boast all sorts of nutrients and healthy snack rights. Once again, however, ingredients should always

be read. The problem with bars is they are typically very processed and contain elements that have to be included to hold the shape of the bars. Things like agave syrup, palm oil, tapioca syrup and dates are often used and maybe they’re generally okay ingredients, but they do rack up a high sugar count. Bars also tend to be home to those sneaky “natural flavours.” These are one of my personal crusades, and a follow-up article about these pesky flavours is in the works, but in the meantime to reiterate — natural flavours are not as innocent as they sound. The word “natural” is one of those buzzwords that marketers use to make consumers think they’re making a healthy choice. Again, I’m not trying to scare anyone off bars completely. I am suggesting that if they’re a food group of their own in your diet, perhaps rethink that! And always read your ingredients and try and choose bars that have fewer ingredients and decide for yourself which ingredients you’re willing to consume and which ones are non-negotiable.

Finally, non-dairy milk alternatives. Similarly to bars and pretty much everything you eat, with milk alternatives it just comes down to reading the labels and using some common sense. Again, look for suspicious sounding things “cough, cough” natural flavours, and other ingredients that make you wonder, “What is that?”

One thing many milk alternatives contain are emulsifying agents. Examples of these are soy lecithin, mono- and diglycerides, carrageenan and guar gum. These little guys are added to keep the texture of the “milk” homogenized to prevent separation of ingredients. There’s nothing technically wrong with these agents, but personally I wonder if those ingredients are making the milk product hold together, what are they doing in my stomach when I drink a cup of oat milk with my breakfast? My common sense asks me why would I use a brand that uses these extra ingredients when there are brands out there that don’t? To me it’s about simplifying. The less ingredients, the better. Also, consider mixing up your pretend-milk beverages occasionally. There is such a thing as too much of a good thing, believe it or not. Drinking too much almond, soy, rice, oak, coconut or cashew isn’t proven to be bad — to my knowledge — but it makes logical sense to me that you may want to ingest with caution.

So there you have it. A bit of food for thought — pun very much intended — and hopefully some inspiration to do yourself and your body a favour and just pay a little closer attention to what you’re feeding yourself. Critical thinking, without getting into over-analysis territory, is a good thing. Especially when it comes to your health.

OIL CLEANSING »

Switch out the harsh chemicals for oil cleansers

Tori Taylor
Lifestyle Editor

One are the days of Proactiv being hurled at us from every media outlet and mall stand. I grew up thinking the more chemical ingredients the better in a face wash. If there was a higher level of salicylic acid — bathe me in it. If that benzoyl peroxide content was above 2.5 per cent — lather me up. I don't want to say that this doesn't work for some people as skin types vary so much. But more often than not we seem to fall into the consumer trap for more and more.

Oil cleansers have taken off in the last few years as people begin to understand that cleaning your face does not mean stripping it of all moisture. When you dry your skin out you actually cause more oil to be produced. This leads to breaks, rashes and flaky skin. There is rarely a reason to dehydrate your face. We live in a very dry place and breakouts can happen from this intense dryness. There are a few oils that are well-known for cleansing and promoting healthy skin.

Avocado oil:

Full of oleic acid (omega-9), avocado oil is considered the gold standard for dry skin. It is a god-



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send for anti-aging and contains high levels of antioxidants that keep inflammation under control — great for around the eyes before bed. Avocado oil contains palmitic and stearic acids that are actively antimicrobial and heavily hydrating. This oil helps reduce fine lines, wrinkling and discoloration.

Sweet Almond Oil:

Almond oil reduces puffiness and inflammation. It is a natural anti-inflammatory and helps improve uneven skin tones. With such gentle properties, this oil is wonderful for the treatment of eczema and psoriasis. The fatty acids can improve acne by dissolving excess surface oil on the skin. Almond oil is high in vitamin E which

can help reduce sun damage and scarring.

Grapeseed oil:

This is another oil very high in vitamin E. Vitamin E is a fat-soluble antioxidant which means that it protects your skin cells from the damage it is exposed to daily. The sun, wind, toxic chemicals and gases that hit our skin

on a daily basis can lead to early aging and breakouts. This oil is by far one of the best for sun damage as it helps lighten uneven tones and reduces scarring. Grapeseed oil is highly-recommended for healing acne because of the high levels of antioxidant and vitamin E.

Castor Oil:

Castor oil is the one-stop-shop of organic oils. It can be used for just about every hair and skin ailment you can think of. This oil has intense antibacterial and antimicrobial properties. You can use castor oil as an overnight mask to treat fresh outbreaks, healing sores or reduce scarring. If you are someone that picks your skin and often leaves behind big red marks then castor oil might be perfect for you. You can spread a layer over your face and neck as a bed-time mask and fall asleep. Gently rinse off with warm water. Castor oil is a great aid for any topical infections. It is deeply hydrating and absorbs quickly instead of staying on your skin for too long.

All in all, I would encourage you to do your own Googling. Find the best recipe for your needs and begin making your own cleanser! Look for local refilleries or health food stores to find the best ingredients at affordable



"There is harmony between good and bad. There isn't one without the other, because they create meaning and meld together to form the big picture in life. We just need to learn how to navigate that."



HUMANS OF UCALGARY

The Gauntlet has teamed up with Humans of UCalgary, a campus club inspired by Humans of New York, to share university students' often unheard stories.

"Recognizing that you're sad is a privilege. Not a lot of people have the time to sit and reflect on how they feel. Not enough people spend that time to take care of themselves. Sometimes people assume that they aren't sad because they don't have time to think.

When you sit and recognize that you're sad, that's a privilege because most people can't. That reflection gives you time to adjust your life. That's why I often feel happy when I'm sad."



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