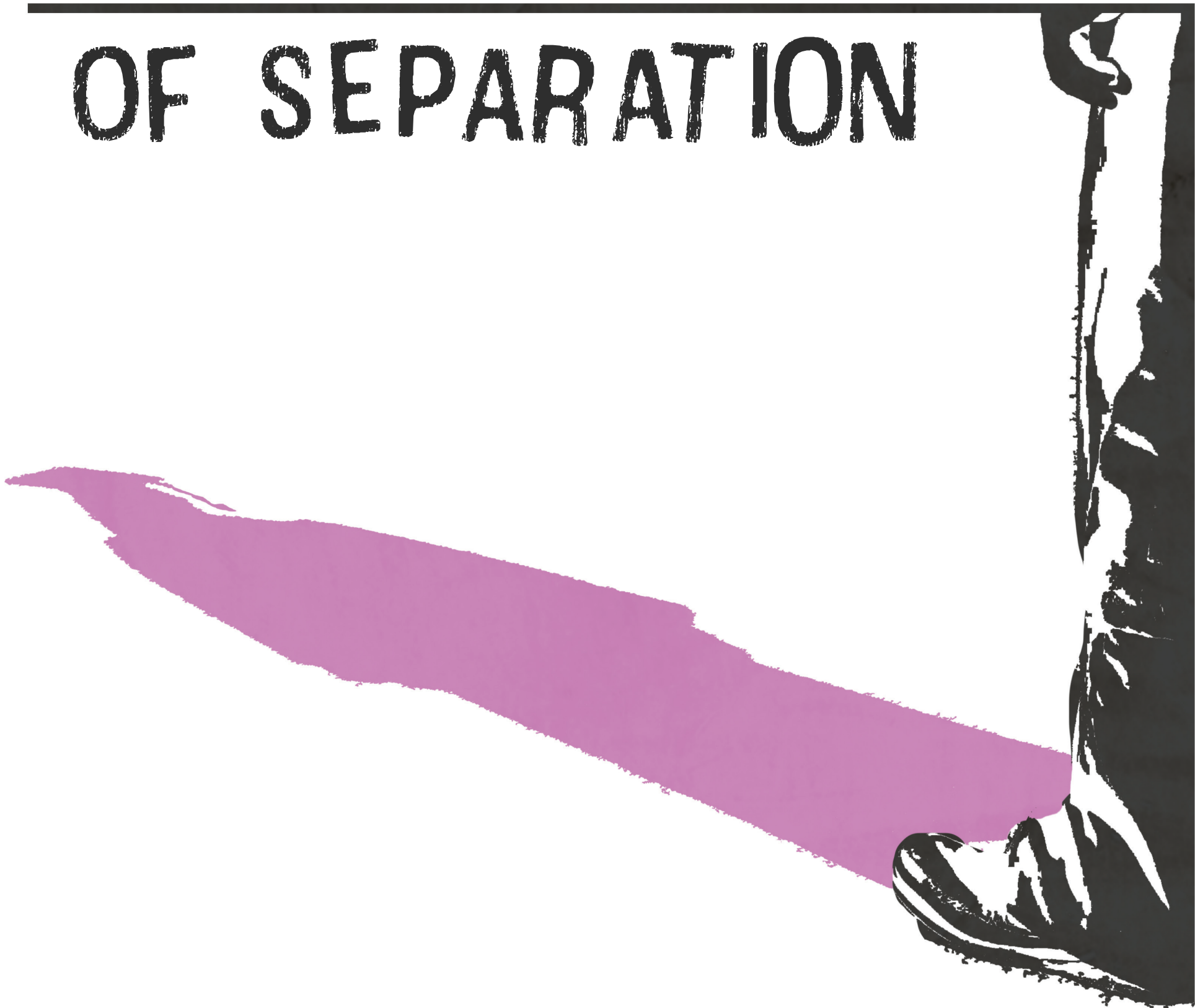


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NEXUS

camosun’s student voice since 1990
Next publication: October 1, 2025
Address: 3100 Foul Bay Rd., Victoria, BC, V8P 5J2
Location: Lansdowne Richmond House 201
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Email: editor@nexusnewspaper.com
Website: nexusnewspaper.com
Publisher: Nexus Publishing Society

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editor’s letter
The power of knowledge

We first started toying around with the idea of doing a story about “useless degrees” some time ago, and—like much of what happens in the newspaper world—the story evolved from what it was in initial conversations to what you read in this issue, a damning and honest look at the divide between gender and societal values. Of course, like most issues, power structures are necessary to examine, and Jasmine Wagstaff’s piece (which you can find on page 6) provides insight and knowledge to perhaps point us into a direction of equitable valuation in education.

We also examine, through conversations with Camosun College Faculty Association president Lynelle Yutani, other systems of power right here at Camosun. On page 3, just a couple weeks into the new semester, we’re already looking at claims that the college is cutting seats in certain programs for financial reasons, but, again, knowledge brings with it power, and no student ever benefitted from being left in the dark.

New *Nexus* writer Simon Swanek makes his debut in this issue, arguing for the benefits of in-person connections in post-secondary and beyond; see his opinion piece right beside this.

Elsewhere in the issue, our writer Marian Restrepo Galindo talks about how students can make comfort foods on a budget, and we all know how much of a budget everyone needs to be on these days. And how much comfort (see page 5). And Nik Ovstaas returns this issue to talk about how literature can help out during times of grief after his dearest furry friend suddenly passed (also on page 5).

Our arts section includes, among other stories, a chat with long-running local staples The Cheesecake Burlesque Revue (page 11) and an interview with Intrepid Theatre about the unfortunate news of the Metro Theatre’s closure (also on page 11).

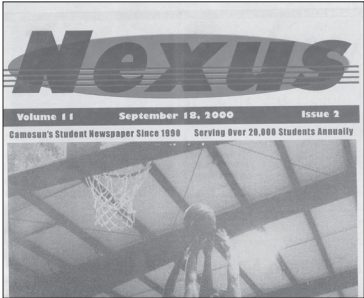
And we’ll see you in the funny pages, where, back on page 10, we’ve only got one comic this issue, from long-time *Nexus* contributor Emily Welch). But, now that it’s September and a new batch of students have arrived, keep an eye on that page next issue for some newcomers.

When is next issue? Glad you asked: we hit stands every two weeks, with our next issue coming out on September 17. Among the stories in it will be a talk with the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations—who all Camosun students are members of—and a look at what it’s like to come to Camosun as a person with ADHD and anxiety.

Where does all that content come from? You have so many great questions! It comes from you: Camosun students. Everything you see here is written by Camosun students, and no experience is necessary. So you know what to do next: email editor@nexusnewspaper.com today to start your journey of becoming a published writer today. We look forward to hearing from you, and we look forward to having you as a reader of our paper this semester.

Greg Pratt, managing editor

flashback
25 Years Ago in Nexus



LYDIA ZULETA
STUDENT EDITOR

Tele-Reg-o-Mania: In the age of exasperating online class registration and complicated student portals, we should be grateful of the system’s immediacy. In our September 18, 2000 issue, writer Shane Berkholtz complained about the then-new and painful Tele-Reg process, where students use their phones to—get this—*call* a Camosun hotline to register for classes. Although it may seem simpler, the half-baked menus and busy phone lines proved to be more stressful than classes themselves. Repetitive and unskippable pre-recorded messages further drove callers into a frenzy. Although hardly an excuse, administrators said, “We don’t have enough phone lines,” a problem which hardly persists today.

(Not a) virus dot com: If someone told you to visit the website www.virus.com, your common sense might tell you not to. How-

ever, as we learned in this issue, doing so might just teach you something. The site was designed in Victoria by Brad Goodyear, with aims to spread solid advice and unbiased tutorials on keeping your computer safe from malware. Goodyear claimed to have spent \$1 million on acquiring the domain name alone, a rather steep chunk of the start-up budget. While providing free, thoughtful resources on cybersecurity, virus.com simultaneously tried to make back the money spent on its catchy handle by hosting advertisements and pop-ups, which, we can only assume, could lead visitors to more viruses. The website is now defunct. Great try, Brad!

Before they were famous: On the events page at the back of our September 18, 2000 issue, we’re greeted by a wall of hot upcoming shows and workshops to attend. Although it tells us to call 370-PUNX for information on punk rock concerts, the line is, sadly, now dead. Among the ads for Stir Fry Wednesdays and the Carpe Diem Club, eagle-eyed readers can spot an early pre-pop, pre-commercial-success concert by “acoustic duo” Tegan and Sara at Lucky Bar. The twin sisters signed with Neil Young’s Vapour Records that year. Victoria, seemingly, had its finger on the pulse.

open space
In defence of real life

SIMON SWANEK
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Digital connection has never been more essential. We stay close to friends across continents, access unlimited information, and build communities around shared interests. Life is lived increasingly online, and while millennials and Gen Zs have been coined as “digital natives,” our digital ecosystems have become fertile ground for conquest by those seeking profits.

Your attention is the product being sold. As Gen Z’s favourite

college students seeking transformative personal growth.

This reflects broader research showing how digital relationships lack the depth of in-person connection. It’s been documented that increases in adolescent anxiety, depression, and suicide aligned with the rise of smartphones and social media’s ubiquity. These extreme costs aren’t just personal.

The real-life AI data centres required for the expansion of our digital networks are massive, loud, and environmentally destructive. Virtual

Prioritize human connection: join study groups; go dancing; meet with friends; shop local. These aren’t nostalgic gestures—they’re strategic choices.

economist Kyla Scanlon explains, “attention is infrastructure”—it’s the foundational input that shapes everything else in our digital economy.

Studies show that more than 50 percent of Instagram posts promoting ultra-processed foods use deceptive health cues, while 77 percent of #fitspo videos featuring women focus on a single body part instead of on genuine wellness. Engaging in problematic social media use like this has been associated with measurable physical changes in adolescent brain structure. Social media doesn’t just influence—it’s systematic reality distortion.

Generations are defined by shared formative experiences during identity development. For us “digital natives,” those experiences occurred within systems designed to exploit psychological vulnerabilities.

As a millennial who witnessed social media’s emergence—even lying about my own age so I could poke friends on Facebook in the 2000s—I’ve watched this unfold firsthand. I’ve also experienced the personal cost of prioritizing digital connection over human presence.

Like many mature students balancing competing obligations, I’m grateful for online learning’s accessibility, yet my higher education path has presented unique challenges within remote contexts. Digital connection can be isolating and may complicate access to nuanced understanding, inadvertently compounding social barriers for

products of the digital economy exist alongside real-world businesses, highlighting a crucial distinction we’re losing sight of: digital life has real-world implications.

So, prioritize human connection: join study groups; go dancing; meet with friends; shop local. These aren’t nostalgic gestures—they’re strategic choices. Students who step back from digital-first approaches and step into real life report better focus, deeper friendships, and more authentic learning experiences. Attention flows from your mind like a freshwater spring—protect it.

Yet defending real life isn’t necessarily rejecting technology. Dating apps have allowed queer people like me to find others in ways that weren’t possible before, and digital tools can genuinely facilitate real-world connection. But we must refuse to allow digital systems to replace human experience, especially during formative periods of development. Generation Alpha will inherit an even more sophisticated attention-harvesting machinery, making our choices today crucial for establishing different patterns.

The neurological benefits of in-person connection are undeniable. Your capacity to think, feel, and form authentic human relationships shouldn’t be treated as a commodity. Unfiltered reality serves as an antidote to algorithmic manipulation.

In a world where social-media platforms attempt to hijack and warp our reality, choosing physical presence is revolutionary defence.

Something on your mind? If you’re a Camosun student, get in touch with us with your *Open Space* idea! Email editor@nexusnewspaper.com. Include your student number. Thanks!

NEXUS

camosun’s student voice since 1990

Got something to say?

Letters to the editor:

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post-secondary

Camosun College Faculty Association says college is restricting intakes, overloading classes



FILE PHOTO

The Camosun College Faculty Association says that Camosun is cutting seats in classes despite waitlists.

LYDIA ZULETA
STUDENT EDITOR
AND GREG PRATT
MANAGING EDITOR

The Camosun College Faculty Association (CCFA) is saying that Camosun College is restricting intakes for the fall, and claims that it’s not in relation to demand; the CCFA also claims the college is overloading sections.

CCFA president Lynelle Yutani points to computer science programming in particular as an area where students are struggling to get in: seats in the Information and Computer Systems Technologist diploma program have been reduced from 72 to 40 this fall intake. Yutani says that despite waitlists, the college is cutting seats for financial reasons. (Camosun College declined to be interviewed for this story.)

“So, in particular, the course Computer Science 156 has been reduced from 100 seats down to just 20. And the course Computer Science 132 has been reduced from 72 seats down to 20,” she says. “So this is irrespective of demand, there are waitlists for these courses, and new sections have not been added because the college does not want to hire term faculty to teach these courses.”

These claims are the latest in a conflict between the CCFA and the college that’s primarily centred around how the college dealt with the federal government placing a cap on international students and the resulting financial strain. Yutani says that now what is happening is a “substantial number of faculty members have come to the union and said, ‘I’ve arrived to teach my course that normally has X number

of students, and I’ve got X plus one or X plus three that I didn’t agree to.”

“So what the college is doing is they’re taking the student class size caps, and they’ve just ignored them. They’re just adding students in, and they’re not appropriately addressing what that means for workloads for the instructor,” says Yutani. “And they’re not appropriately addressing what that means for fairness for students, because in the past, when there were too many students, or courses, they would open up additional sections, and then more students would be able to find those sections and take those courses.”

Yutani says that there are also problems with students not being able to enrol in classes that either aren’t offered or are offered in minimal sections; these students could potentially lose funding they

“This is irrespective of demand, there are waitlists for these courses, and new sections have not been added because the college does not want to hire term faculty to teach these courses.”

LYNELLE YUTANI
CAMOSUN COLLEGE FACULTY ASSOCIATION

have if they can’t keep a minimum level of classes. This can also cause problems for international students.

“So if I’m a student in a cohorted program and the courses that I need to take to progress are unavailable to me, and I can’t take enough courses to maintain my funding, my grants, my scholarships, then I can lose my student visa if I’m an international student, or I have to be in school for longer, which means more loans and more debt,” she says. “[You’re] loading the cost of your education, because you have to take something because you have to take something but it doesn’t help you achieve your program completion or your personal educational goals.”

Yutani says that it’s “devastating” to have to explain that the CCFA can only compel the college to follow the collective agreement. And sometimes, she says, it’s students who she has to explain that to.

“The collective agreement does not guarantee us good management,” she says. “It does not guarantee us evidence-based decisions, and it does not guarantee us that what the college chooses to do will always be student-centred. I got into teaching because those are the

kinds of things that really mattered to me. So sometimes that’s a really hard thing to explain to people. And sometimes I’ve had to explain it to students because they’re looking for help in understanding why things are the way that they are at the college, too.”

Yutani says particular students will be disproportionately affected by these changes—students facing financial insecurity and juggling other responsibilities.

“The students that are trying to balance home and family life are students who might be single parents or have responsibilities for family care in the home, they’re the ones that are most affected always by restrictive schedules,” says Yutani. “Students that are trying to work or have challenges with housing are absolutely negatively affected by this, especially students who are temporarily relocating to Victoria to finish or complete their schooling. I think that having to be in a city that has a really high cost of living longer because you need to stay around for a whole other year to catch up to all the courses that you need to finish your program, that’s, I think, an unfortunate challenge.”

NEWS BRIEFS

Camosun president appointed for second term

Lane Trotter has been appointed as Camosun College president for a second five-year term. Trotter’s first term started on January 1, 2022; that term ends on December 31, 2026 and his new term will begin on January 1, 2027. Before starting at Camosun, Trotter was president and CEO of Langara College in Vancouver.

Resilient Leadership Program students come to Camosun

The first cohort of students studying at Camosun College through the Resilient Leadership Program are starting this fall. The training program, which is funded by Global Affairs Canada, is administered nationally by Universities Canada, and Colleges and Institutes Canada; it aims to empower young entrepreneurs, with a focus on marginalized students and women, by offering practical training. The four students, all from Kenya, will be

studying in Camosun’s school of Business this semester.

Camosun Westshore campus opens

Camosun College’s new campus has officially opened. The John Horgan Campus, located in Langford, is a split campus with Camosun, UVic, Royal Roads, and the Justice Institute of BC all offering classes there. Camosun is offering an Information and Computer Systems Technologist diploma, an Early Learning and Care diploma, and a Health Care Assistant certificate through the campus.

Peer Pods return

Camosun College’s Peer Pods are returning this semester after a summer-long break. The student-led initiative—where students meet weekly in small groups called “pods”—alternate between skill-building activities (looking at, among other things, academic and emotional strategies) and social hangouts aiming to provide a safe and comfortable space to talk about college life. See camosun.ca/

new-students/student-orientation/peer-pods for more information.

Have your say on Quadra McKenzie Plan

The District of Saanich is having another round of engagement on its Quadra McKenzie Plan. Residents can have their say on the plan, which has already been discussed in heated public forums, during a series of upcoming open houses taking place at Saanich Municipal Hall. The open houses are scheduled from 4:30 pm to 8:00 pm on Wednesday, September 17; 11:00 am to 3:00 pm on Sunday, September 21; and 4:30 pm to 8:00 pm on Tuesday, September 23. The plan looks at housing, infrastructure, services and amenities, and public spaces in the Quadra/McKenzie area over the next 20 to 30 years.

—GREG PRATT,
MANAGING EDITOR

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AMY LEE-RADIGAN

British Columbia Federation of Students chairperson Debi Herrera Lira (left) and Camosun College Student Society women’s director Madison Huynh connecting with students on the Lansdowne campus in September.

reconciliation

Orange Shirt Day event returns to Lansdowne campus



CAMOSUN COLLEGE

Orange Shirt Day is a day to recognize the effects of the residential school system and to honour the lost children and survivors of the system; this year's ceremony takes place on Monday, September 29.

LYDIA ZULETA
STUDENT EDITOR
AND GREG PRATT
MANAGING EDITOR

On Monday, September 29, Camosun College will host its annual Orange Shirt Day ceremonies at the Lansdowne campus.

Morning workshops will run from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at Na'tsa'maht and the Sherri Bell Hall in Wilna Thomas, and the ceremony takes place at 1:30 pm at Na'tsa'maht.

Last year, the English department spearheaded the organization of the event, the first the college has taken on the role from previous organizers in the Centre for Indigenous Education and Community Connections (IECC). This year, the Community, Family and Child Studies department is organizing the event. Camosun IECC

administrative support Christine La Vallee says that "we're very proud" of Camosun to be moving forward with planning the annual event.

"One of the calls to action that was taken on by the college was to not have the Indigenous department be the ones to bring awareness, because we as individuals are so deeply affected by this day and our own lived experiences in history, so as Indigenous people we are all very sensitive to the day," she says. "It, in the past, has been challenging to be the educators about this day, given the so very personal history that is around not only Indigenous individuals but communities and events, such as the reveals of finding the remains of our loved ones who turned out to be missing in the era of residential schools."

La Vallee says that the result of this is that attendees will learn about

Orange Shirt Day from "perhaps a less Indigenous view but perhaps the same important historic values of what happened."

"Orange Shirt Day doesn't need to be a conversation held just within Indigenous communities," says La Vallee. "Certainly the caregivers of those residential schools were certainly not Indigenous. Not that it is the non-Indigenous colleague's role to field that information, but it is a milestone for non-Indigenous communities to be discussing Orange Shirt Day outside of the experience of Indigenous peoples."

La Vallee says that it's important to attend events like this to bring awareness to the harms of the past in an attempt to ensure they don't happen again.

"Indigenous students know why it's important to attend," she says. "Those values would have to

be found within the students themselves, but of course we encourage that the attitudes that prevailed through the residential school era no longer exist... So while I think Indigenous students are determined to not have anything like this happen again—that's a resolve that we as Indigenous people all have: this will never happen again—I think for the non-Indigenous student, the awareness of harmful attitudes and perhaps historic harmful attitudes never get repeated."

La Vallee says that people should be gentle and respectful when talking about these subjects with Indigenous communities and members, specifically with Indigenous elders, as the subject of residential schools isn't something that everyone is emotionally capable of discussing.

"The Indigenous elder that's sit-

ting on the bus, you know, if you're curious, there's a whole big internet, and the topic is so personal that not everyone is equipped to talk about it, not everyone is emotionally capable of having words to the depths of this experience. It's an event to explore internally, within the person, Indigenous or non-Indigenous. I would just encourage tact when hoping to get into conversations about Orange Shirt Day, make sure there's an openness and a consent. If it's in depth, I would hope that the person being talked to about Orange Shirt Day, if Indigenous, would have some emotional care and emotional support around. You can't just open up traumas and then, 'Okay, I'm done,' and leave that elder to put themselves back together... It's a depth that has to be respected and cared about, in conversation and in deed."

eyed on campus



AMY LEE-RADIGAN



GORD RANT

The Camosun College Student Society welcomed students back to campus this September with CamFest and Club Days events happening on both campuses.

literature

How to hide from heartache: books to help during hard times

Another book that makes my dark heart sing is *Devil’s Knot* by Mara Leveritt. It’s true crime at it’s best, and, boy howdy, this book will mess you right up. You’ll be too busy getting furious at the legal system and orchestrating a crusade against judge Barnett to worry about whatever this brutal universe is throwing at you.

NIK OVSTAAS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

My dog died very suddenly recently of massive organ failure, and I have no answers as to why. My heart is broken, and as I grieve, I turn to media that is fit to nurse a mournful condition. Below are books that I rediscover when I need to leave this painful world behind.

Who doesn’t love a bit of gay romance and science fiction? T.J. Klune’s *The Bones Beneath My Skin* is a departure from his more saccharine offerings, like his Cerulean Sea schmaltz. When I want to feel the love, but I want it to hurt, this book delivers.

Another one that totally shows you the harsh side of loving life is by a Canadian author, and every word is true. *Wild Swans* by University of Toronto professor Jung Chang is a hefty tome, and it tells the story of her grandmother fleeing a Chinese warlord, followed by her mother standing her ground against the Kuomintang, and wrapping up with

the author herself becoming disillusioned with her place amongst Chairman Mao’s red army and fleeing to Canada. Wild swans indeed.

Another book that makes my dark heart sing is *Devil’s Knot* by Mara Leveritt. It’s true crime at it’s best, and, boy howdy, this book will mess you right up. You’ll be too busy getting furious at the legal system and orchestrating a crusade against judge Barnett to worry about whatever this brutal universe is throwing at you.

A book I pick up whenever my heart is sore and I need some reprieve is *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*. It’s like Rupi Kaur before Rupi Kaur was a thing. Soft poetry full of metaphors for getting messed up on homemade booze that will take you out of yourself.

Young Mungo by Douglas Stuart will bring you some more queer tears of gay joy, as you also slowly wish you were dead. It’s fantastic. Set in the brutal streets of impoverished Glasgow, a young man finds



PHOTO PROVIDED

The author and his dog, Mr. Gabby; during times of grief, turning to literature can be a way to cope.

some semblance of peace when he meets a strange boy his age that hates the thug life and loves his dovecote. Pigeons are cool, and we owe them our adoration.

If you’ve been smacked in the heart with a horrible thing that you’re not sure how to navigate, and you need to just lose yourself forever in a book series, then I have just the ticket. The Three Pines series by Louise Penny will sweep you away into a different world, and if you’re

like me and miss Montreal with every fibre of your being, there are so many nods to *la belle province*. Each book has a murder mystery at its heart and a warm soul to carry you through. There are roughly 20 books, and they are all golden. My favourites are *The Brutal Telling* and *A Trick of the Light*, but I highly encourage you to go in order, starting with *Still Life*. This series is so worth it.

These are the books I have

stacked in teetering towers around my bed as I try to figure out who I am without my sweet boy, Mr. Gabby. My reading list gets more adventurous when I’m not just trying to carry on in the face of horrendous heartache, but, I promise you, if you’re having the blues, these titles will take care of you.

Wish me luck as I delve into a new Allan Bradley book and try to forget and remember at the same time.

food

Enjoying fall comfort foods on a student budget

MARIAN RESTREPO GALINDO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It’s a Wednesday evening and you’re heading back home from a busy day at college. The wind chills the environment and you deeply crave something familiar and warming, something home-made with easy ingredients. That’s when the idea comes to mind: comfort food. The moment when food connects with the soul, and the dish leaves your mind satisfied.

Comfort foods are cultural. They are those homemade jewels that tie back to our roots and cherished memories, back from those moments when that meal was exactly what we needed.

This can vary within each culture, as the concepts of homemade and nourishing are constructed distinctly. As an example, here in North America, some people love the grilled cheese sandwich (either by itself or with soup), a staple meal coming out of simple ingredients that manage to combine amazingly that has delighted the hearts of many throughout the years. It’s a generational favourite, like its counterpart sandwich, peanut butter and jam.

Comfort food is not defined by

Comfort food is not defined by its fanciness, but rather its significance—the way it makes you feel and the joy that’s found in each bite.

its fanciness, but rather its significance—the way it makes you feel and the joy that’s found in each bite. In other parts of the world, like in Latin America, people might like a grilled cheese sandwich, but they might find deeper connection with a warm *arepa* or a hearty *tamal*; those dishes that people grew up with and that bloomed from times when families had to innovate and make do with what was available in the kitchen.

My comfort foods are linked to the people that I love, like Sundays at my grandmother’s house, having precious meals that were full of love, warmth, and intricate joy. But my favourite meals also originate from days when I went home and made myself Kraft mac and cheese. Comfort foods are all about sharing; it’s about intentionally giving a bit of yourself in those dishes that might

not be the fanciest but are worth everything to you.

It’s a creative play, where you take the lead as a chef and reinvent what’s already there and what’s unseen, like, for example, instant ramen but with a “you” twist. I like to add to my own veggies, an egg, and even some soy sauce—a simple but effective upgrade catered to my taste.

When cooking meals as students, it’s often a priority to use affordable ingredients. Keep things budget-friendly with potatoes, rice, eggs, bread, lentils, canned items (sauces, proteins), and ensure your stock is well-maintained so as to not be tempted by take-out after a long day’s schoolwork. If you have one of these as a base, then, believe me, you have half a meal ready. Also, explore online different ways to cook something; there are multiple



LYDIA ZULETA/NEXUS

Comfort food, like grilled cheese sandwiches, can be made on a budget.

YouTube tutorials that you can see on how to cook an egg, for instance, so you can now alternate between hard-boiled and something more fun, like poached or steamed.

A tip to elevate anything is to garnish or add toppings to meals, such as herbs, spices, and sauces. I challenge you to go into your kitchen and see what you find. Mix things and come up with your own

creation, and maybe you’ll find your favourite new topping for your egg fried rice, unique to you.

As an incentive to guide you through your foodie voyage, I recall the words from the 2007 animated film *Ratatouille*: anyone can cook. To that, I add the following: anyone can make a five-star dish, even with budget-friendly ingredients. It’s only a matter of creativity and trust.

Not only do women have to deal with the stereotype that their majors are “easy” or “useless,” but they’re also pushing back against the ubiquitous belief that women’s interests, albeit perhaps stereotypically, aren’t important.



THE DEGREE OF SEPARATION

For a long time, the topics in the ethos of femininity or fields that women, for the most part, choose to study within have not been taken seriously. The social sciences and humanities are seen this way: dismissed under the assumption that they add less to societies, especially compared to subjects traditionally dominated by men. Even when women make serious contributions in fields like science, politics, or literature, their work is often overlooked or undervalued. There appears to be an unwritten conclusion that if a subject is connected to women, it's therefore less significant. This underlying valuation doesn't just hurt women—it means we all miss out on important ideas and perspectives.

More women study social sciences than men, and there are a few reasons why. From a young age, girls are encouraged to be interested in people, relationships, and helping others, which aligns with subjects like psychology, sociology, and education. Boys, meanwhile, are more often pushed toward logic—math, science, and technology. Careers that come from social sciences, like teaching and counselling, have long had more women, making those fields feel more welcoming and accessible.

For women who choose social sciences or humanities, the disrespect these fields sometimes get can feel personal. Not only do they have to deal with the stereotype that their majors are “easy” or “useless,” but they're also pushing back against the ubiquitous belief that women's interests, albeit perhaps stereotypically, aren't important. Someone studying sociology, psychology, education, or gender studies is often confronted with the big question: What are you going to do with that? It's as though their work doesn't tackle some of the most complicated and meaningful issues in society. The kind of issues that build the very foundation of society.

These fields explore how society works—how people interact, how power spreads, and how race, gender, and class shape our lives. Women in these areas often lead conversations about change, justice, and inclusion. So when their work isn't taken seriously, it isn't only frustrating, it's a reminder that some kinds of knowledge still aren't valued as they should be. Choosing to study these subjects is a statement: these issues matter, women's perspectives matter, and we won't stop asking tough questions just because the answers might be uncomfortable.

Gender and women's studies are important for this reason. The field creates dialogue around issues that have been left neglected or dismissed for too long. Whether it's researching unpaid labour, analyzing media portrayals of women, or exploring gendered health issues, gender and women's studies proves that women's lives and contributions are essential to understanding the world.

Take unpaid domestic labour as an example—tasks like cooking, cleaning, and caregiving—which has been ignored in traditional economics. For years, economic models focused only on paid work, usually done by men, and left out unpaid labour that is done predominantly by women to keep households and societies running. Gender and women's studies helped highlight this problem, showing how this unpaid work adds billions to the economy. This research has led to policy changes like paid family leave and better childcare support and has changed how we think about what counts as “real” work.

Studying psychology, another female-dominated major, matters because it helps us understand how people think, feel, and act not just in extreme situations, but in everyday life. It explains, for example, why people procrastinate. It isn't laziness, but because of fears or how their brains respond to rewards. Psychology helps us figure out strategies to manage stress and improve how we work, learn, and relate to others.

Sociology helps us understand how society works and how things like culture, race, class, and gender shape our experiences. It explains why some neighbourhoods have better schools or why certain jobs are valued more. Sociology encourages critical thinking about the systems that shape our lives and helps us see connections that aren't always easily apparent. This kind of work is critical for how we can untangle and catalyze political and social progress.

Anthropology is another social science that often doesn't get the respect it deserves. It's all about studying human cultures, societies, and how people live and interact around the world. Even though it gives us important insights into things like inequality,

identity, and social change, anthropology is sometimes seen as less practical or too academic compared to STEM fields. But what people miss is that anthropology helps us understand

the roots of many social problems by looking at different cultures and perspectives. It challenges what we think of as “normal” or natural, which is important for creating a more open and fair society.

A lot of women are drawn to anthropology because it connects to issues like gender, race, and power across different communities. Still, just like in other social sciences, anthropology often gets undervalued because it's linked with women's interests and what some see as “soft” skills. The work requires deep research, empathy, and critical thinking, but it doesn't always get the recognition it should. This hurts the field and the mostly women who choose it as a path. Understanding why anthropology matters is key to seeing the full picture of human life and tackling social challenges in a meaningful way.

Because these degrees are often seen as less practical or valuable than STEM fields, funding and resources can be harder to come by, and the issues that they seek to resolve may remain stagnant.

And, indeed, social science majors tend to earn less than those in STEM fields. That's because social science careers are often in lower-paying sectors like education, social work, or non-profits, usually coming with smaller budgets and salaries on account of their misled valuation. STEM careers, by contrast, tend to be in fast-growing, high-paying industries.

Society also tends to undervalue work that involves caring for others or supporting communities. There's a belief that this kind of work is “natural” or emotionally rewarding enough that it doesn't need high pay. This mostly affects jobs traditionally done by women, like teaching or counselling, which remain underpaid compared to male-dominated fields.

Since more women study social sciences, this pay gap affects women more. Women are more likely to enter lower-paying fields and face additional gender pay gaps within those fields. So even though social sciences can make meaningful impact, they often come with financial trade-offs.

There's also a pattern where as more women enter a profession, the field tends to lose status and pay. This isn't because the work changes or becomes less important, but because society devalues what it sees as “women's work.” Fields like teaching and human resources saw this trend—the more women entered, the less those jobs paid and the less prestigious they became.

And, in the other direction, programming used to be considered women's work and was low paid, but when men dominated it, salaries and prestige rose.

This reflects a deep gender bias: anything linked to women is often seen as less valuable. That harms not only women but also devalues important work that keeps society running. This trend is clear in social sciences, where most professionals are women and the fields don't get the respect they deserve. That's not about the work itself but about society's tendency to undervalue women's contributions.

This lack of respect matters because it limits the kinds of questions researchers ask and the solutions they propose. Women in social sciences bring vital perspectives on inequality, identity, and social change. These are issues that affect everyone. When their work isn't taken seriously, academia misses out on important knowledge that could help build a fairer society. That's why supporting women in social sciences and valuing their research isn't just about fairness, it's about making sure the social sciences can fully contribute to understanding and improving our world.

At its core, the way society values different fields of study reveals a lot about deeper biases, especially around gender. Ironically, these challenges also highlight why gender and women's studies, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and other social sciences matter so much. When we listen to and support research that centres on gender, identity, and social justice, we gain a deeper understanding of the challenges people face every day. This knowledge helps shape policies, improve health care, promote equality, and build stronger communities. That is why no academic discipline can be considered useless; every bit of knowledge contributes. Some, even, hold the crucial tools for change.

Story by Jasmine Wagstaff, contributing writer
Graphics by Lydia Zuleta, student editor

review

Victoria Fringe Fest returns with mixed bag of performances

1ForUOne4Me is a show by comedian Leslie Cserepy where he swaps between doing one absurd task for himself and one for the audience. There is certainly originality involved, but very little of it is actually funny.

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

This year, going on their 39th, Victoria Fringe Fest returned with over 35 shows from small creators across the country. As a reviewer I’m limited in my ability to see all of them, and as such, I have to base my observations on an extremely small sample size. This time, two out of three shows I saw were severely lacking, but I will acknowledge that this may not be accurate to the majority of the shows on offer.

1ForUOne4Me

If you’ve always wanted to see a clown in a lumpy pink jumpsuit scream in your face, this is the show for you. *1ForUOne4Me* is a performance by comedian Leslie Cserepy where he swaps between doing one absurd task for himself and one for the audience. There is certainly originality involved, but very little of it is actually funny.

The most important element of comedy is timing, which Cserepy can’t seem to figure out. Unfunny jokes drag on too long with the hope that continuing long enough will eventually lead somebody to laughter. There’s an over-reliance on crass sexual humour, and Cserepy seems to think that if it contains the word “fuck” or is grossly sexual then it’s an automatic ticket to hilarity. One notable sequence was when he spent more than 10 minutes miming having raunchy porn sex with the actual earth, together with a bizarre house/dance soundtrack overlaid with gross sexual phrases.

The rest of the time was spent expressing his anger and rage at life’s perceived injustice, culminating in him literally screaming about the things he hated. It all came off

as tedious and unimportant, like someone endlessly complaining about the guy who cut them off on the way to work. For a show that was supposed to be funny, the level of bitter anger was off the charts.

The only really funny moment was when a skit he had planned fell apart and Cserepy had to improvise his way out of it. He showed actual skill here, and I don’t know why he didn’t just make an improv show. It seemed like he didn’t have the confidence in his improv ability to think on his feet, and so his solution was to write an overwrought pre-scripted mess.

Another crucial element of comedy is reading the room and adjusting to crowd reaction, and this is why improv, or the ability to modify a script, is so versatile. Cserepy, on the other hand, seemed to have no idea how wearisome he actually was, and flogged his tired script until his audience could thankfully escape.

The Last 5.5 Years (not to be confused with the musical)

Written by Kayla Hart, this is a biographical story about the life of an individual severely suffering from OCD and her struggles to survive the pandemic and try to write a Fringe show. The problems began right away, when it became clear that the “performance” consisted of Hart sitting motionless in a chair and reading hesitantly off a literal script in her hands (according to Fringe, this show was accepted and put together in a month and “should be considered more of a workshop production”). Occasionally she would spice things up by rising and standing behind or beside the chair while she fumbled through her



PHOTO PROVIDED

Leslie Cserepy’s *1ForUOne4Me* was a disappointing performance at this year’s Victoria Fringe Festival.

multi-page manuscript, before sitting down again a few seconds later.

The theme of the story was that despite her challenges, she managed to somehow overcome her OCD and perform a Fringe show. However, it was clear she was not ready. She has no stage presence and is extremely uncomfortable in front of a crowd. She had memorized nothing, so her nervous performance came across like an elementary-school talent show that parents are polite enough to applaud their way through.

The story was uninteresting and delivered with no dynamism or understanding of how to engage an audience. Hart has clearly had no acting training and is not a performer, and it seemed like all of this was a way for her to get free therapy and sympathy applause by a group of people trapped in a room with no alternative but to politely listen.

From her story, it’s clear that Hart has come a long way in battling her illness, and this has clearly been a triumphant journey for her, but this is a monologue that’s more suited to her counsellor than a Fringe show.

The Lady in the Fountain

After the first two duds, I was happy to witness a performance by Hanna Ockednen, where she tells a romantic adventure story set in the 1920s, revolving around an unexpected romance between two women in Italy and their attempts to hide a murder of passion. The story itself was short and simple, and Ockednen clearly had a strong understanding of theatre and engaging stage presence. Using a minimalistic stage with very few props, she used the space dynamically to tell an energetic story.

Ockednen had a surprisingly

good Italian accent, and the characters she created were distinct and memorable in their delivery. The storyline leaned a little too heavily into the themes of sexual diversity and one-dimensional misogynistic males that oversaturate pop culture these days, but, despite this, it was a strong minimalistic performance that didn’t overstay its welcome. It told a simple story with excellent delivery and showcased Ockednen’s talent as a thespian.

Fringe celebrates small theatrical talent, and the quality there can be a bit of a gamble. While I think their audition and screening process would benefit from being far more selective, I respect the dedication to alternative theatre and breaking out of the constrictions of conventional theatre to present the audience with something more raw and expressive.

New Music Revue

Yasmine Hamdan
I remember I forget
(Crammed Discs)
4.5/5

To listen in length to an unfamiliar language is to become fluent in a spirit. When listening to Yasmine Hamdan’s latest album *I remember I forget*, I do just that—understand not the words but the distress, the devotion, the tenderness. She carries in her tune a cathartic plea for hope in her birthplace of Lebanon. It’s strung up by her vivid tonal shifts and held between meditative harmonies.

The album recounts with unique potency a history of Lebanon—the 2020 Port of Beirut explosion, the economic collapse, the 2019 revolution. In this way, she is a narrator

of crises that she detangles with patience. She performs a graceful act with radical vigor.

Opening track “Hon” and, later, the title track and “Mor” are resonant of traditional Arabic melodies and percussion, merging modern sound with persisting soul. I am warmly lulled by its nostalgia and revived by its newness.

Occasionally, she becomes playful in her rhythms and vocals. During “Shadia,” I am swaying, my limbs and hips thawed for movement. My head takes control for the sake of efficiency on the bus where I listen. The song is sweet and sincere and capable of transcending the fractured world. The distortion initially placed over her voice lends itself to a digital age, one where

tragedy is perpetually recorded and viewed.

In “Shmaali,” we hear this too—an electronic production meets Palestinian *tarweeda*, encrypted songs sung predominantly by women to communicate to loved ones dating back to the Ottoman Empire and into the British Mandate era. The juxtaposition frames the thrust of this album; indeed, today, in this age, there is continued suffering.

Hamdan treats her various themes with ardent attention—no sound found on *I remember I forget* was created in afterthought. She has wholly infused the richness of her history into the potential of today.

-Lydia Zuleta





Pieces of Performance

by Acacia Tooth

A slice of Cheesecake offered up with burlesque revue

“It started off as friends taking a workshop... [to performing] in a cramped living room... everybody’s jammed against the bay window and were just performing away.”

CHAMPAGNE SPARKLES
THE CHEESECAKE BURLESQUE REVUE

For 20 hot years of sweat and happy tears, The Cheesecake Burlesque Revue troupe has been blessing stages and audiences from Victoria to Europe. Longtime Cheesecake performer Champagne Sparkles has deep pride in their small beginnings, which built to who they are today.

“It started off as friends taking a workshop... [to performing] in a cramped living room...everybody’s jammed against the bay window and were just performing away,” she says.

The Cheesecakes have developed a reputation for being the campiest, hardest-working group in town, currently consisting of 14 people.

“Were planning a year to 18 months ahead when we’re doing shows,” says Sparkles. “We decide if it’s something we can take on... We’ve really developed a way of working together.”

Costuming, travelling out of town, and rehearsals can be intense with multiple schedules to work around. With shows such as Isle of Tease 2025 and, most recently, at the Burlesque Hall of Fame in Las Vegas, it’s all hands on deck.

“[The previous] year we won so we got to do our step-down number [in Vegas],” says Sparkles. “We started planning before Christmas, deciding which act to do, ordering fabrics... and in January just hit the ground running.”

Sparkles says that some of the best parts of doing large-scale performances are the placements in the festival lineups that can offer a chance to sit back and relax.

“[The first day,] people are fresh, they’re super excited to be there, so the audience is just on fire [and] not exhausted after three days,” says Sparkles, “and then you’re done and you can enjoy the rest of the weekend.”

Community has always been a big source of support for the troupe, and they’ve found many ways to give back. Specifically, with a local organization that was established by, with, and for sex workers within Victoria. Peers Victoria has played a big part in lending a space for the Cheesecake crew to rehearse, and when it’s time to return the favour, they do it in style.

“We do a fundraiser show at the Belfry called Hot Pink,” says Sparkles. “I think we have done about



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Cheesecake Burlesque Revue have been performing both at home and elsewhere for over two decades.

12 of them now. It’s been a really great connection... We’re happy to be able to support them.”

With more spaces in town closing, local performers have less places to perform and practice for larger opportunities and shows. Establishing connections and embracing diverse crowds has been a way to survive and support those who have had to pivot when it comes to producing and hosting events such as these.

“The Belfry is a great space. It’s not that easy to get in there and do a

show, so we feel grateful that we get to be in that space once a year... We bring in a different type of audience so that [Peers] can connect to a different part of community,” says Sparkles.

The organic love for one another in this group has become a primary piece of comfort and offers the chance for vulnerability in a supportive way, whether that’s for solo or group performances.

“We have a feedback process that we use for our solo stuff,” says Sparkles, “and for one, two, or three

people that really have that idea and are running with it... the technique actually comes from [burlesque performer] Indigo Blue and [burlesque conference] BurlyCon... making it actionable and useful.”

Sparkles says that the best parts of performing in this group and with others is when “we get to be crazy stupid on stage and be fully ourselves... and we present a full range of us.”

Watch out for the Cheesecake Burlesque Revue in 2026 with some fresh new acts and silliness.

stage
Intrepid Theatre’s Metro Studio closing after 20 years



MACKENZIE LAWRENCE

Intrepid Theatre will be closing the Metro Studio's doors in the new year.

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After two decades of running the Metro Studio, a small venue in the southwest corner of the Victoria

Conservatory of Music that has provided a performance space for independent theatre initiatives since 2005, Intrepid Theatre will soon be closing its doors.

Confronted by a large rent increase, the organization has made the decision to not renew their lease next year.

“The financial situation of a

rent increase just really made the financial realities of operating Metro untenable for the future of the company,” says Intrepid Theatre artistic director Sean Guist. “We’re sad to lose our home that we’ve been at for 20 years, and we’re trying to look at what could be possible in our next steps, whether that is a new space somewhere or a partnership on a new space.”

Guist says that the closure of the Metro Studio doesn’t mean Intrepid Theatre is closing down, and they will continue to provide the community with independent theatre initiatives at their Fisgard location, and at the Metro until next spring.

“We’re still at our Blanshard space on Fisgard, which is our 45-seat studio and our office space there, so we’re still present and active downtown,” he says. “We’re also still at the Metro with programming through next February, so we’re open to what the future could be; we’re just not sure what that looks like.”

For the last two decades, Intrepid Theatre has utilized the Metro to produce their own theatrical events as well as to rent the space to community theatre initiatives. Guist says that the decision to close it down was made in order to preserve in-

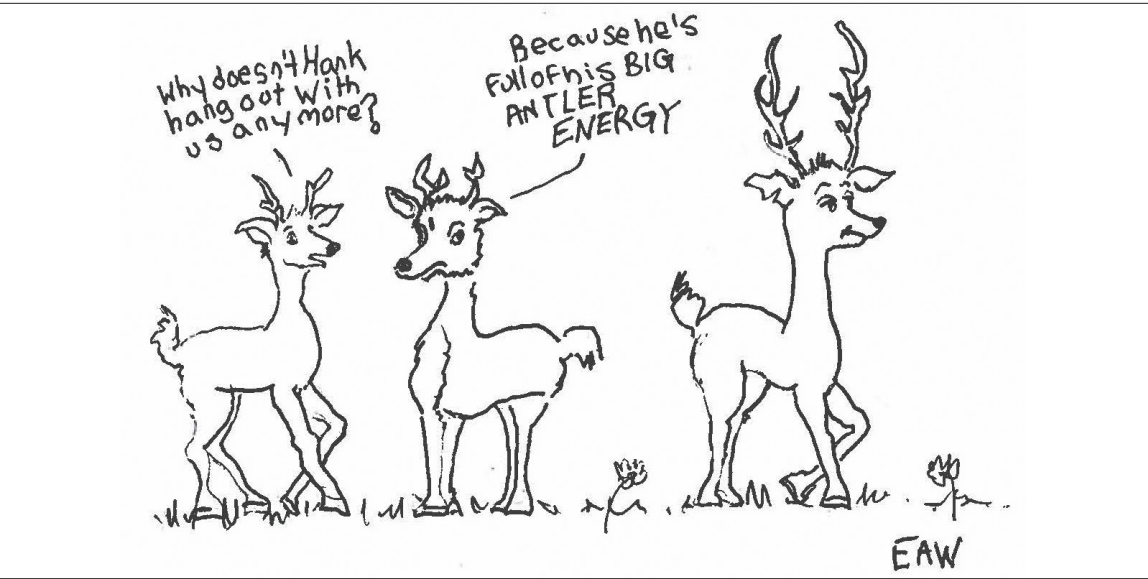
dependent theatre in Victoria, since maintaining the space would be a financial drain on Intrepid that may have jeopardized the company’s financial viability.

“Especially with the large rent increase that was coming, the numbers just didn’t work,” Guist says. “We really needed to take care of Intrepid Theatre as a company, and our own programming, which we need to preserve and deliver, so that’s why we made the difficult decision to wrap up next spring. We didn’t want to sacrifice that by running a venue with a huge loss, because it really would start to cut into what it is that we can do for artists, and for our festivals, and for the community.”

Guist reassures theatre patrons that while the closure of a decades-long icon of independent theatre may seem dire, it is merely a strategic logistical decision made to ensure the future of local independent theatre.

“We’re not going anywhere, just closing the Metro,” he says. “We really are focused on preserving the financial realities to continue to bring three festivals a year and remarkable work all season long to the city, so that’s what we’re going to keep doing; we’re just going to look a little bit different.”

Natural Selection - Emily Welch



word search



After you read writer Acacia Tooth's column on page 9 about the Cheesecake Burlesque Revue, find the related words in the above word search.

Cheesecake
Burlesque
Revue
Champagne
Sparkles

Community
Silliness
Vulnerability
Support
Diverse

contest

Find the hidden Nexus and win

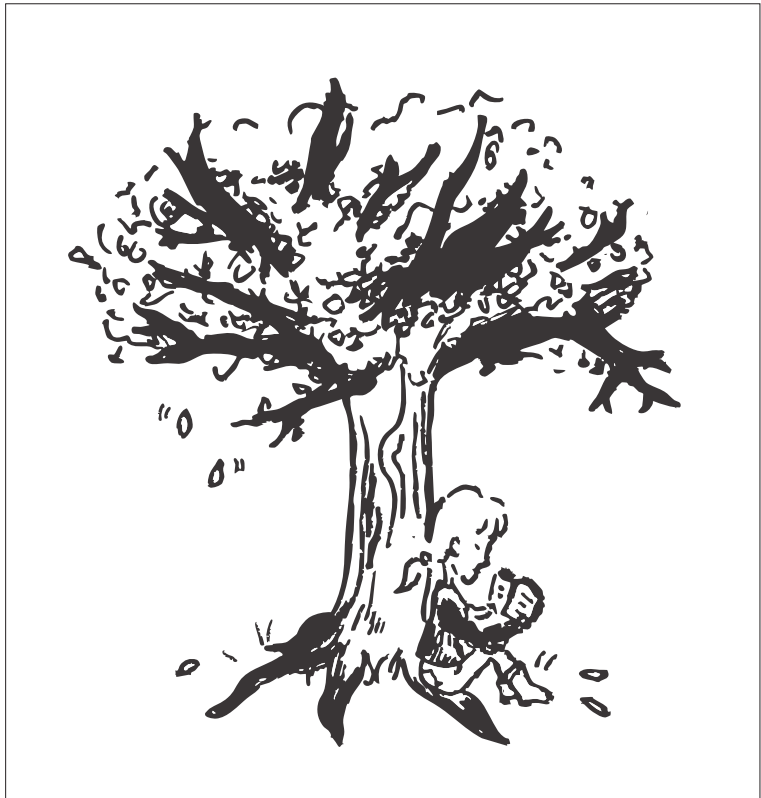


GREG PRATT/NEXUS

We've hidden this copy of our last issue somewhere at the Lansdowne campus. Bring it in to our office to claim a prize from contest sponsor Arsenal Pulp Press, who have donated an assortment of books for you to choose from. *Nexus* HQ is located at Richmond House 201 at Lansdowne.

spot the differences

Can you find the seven differences between the two drawings below?



NEXUS

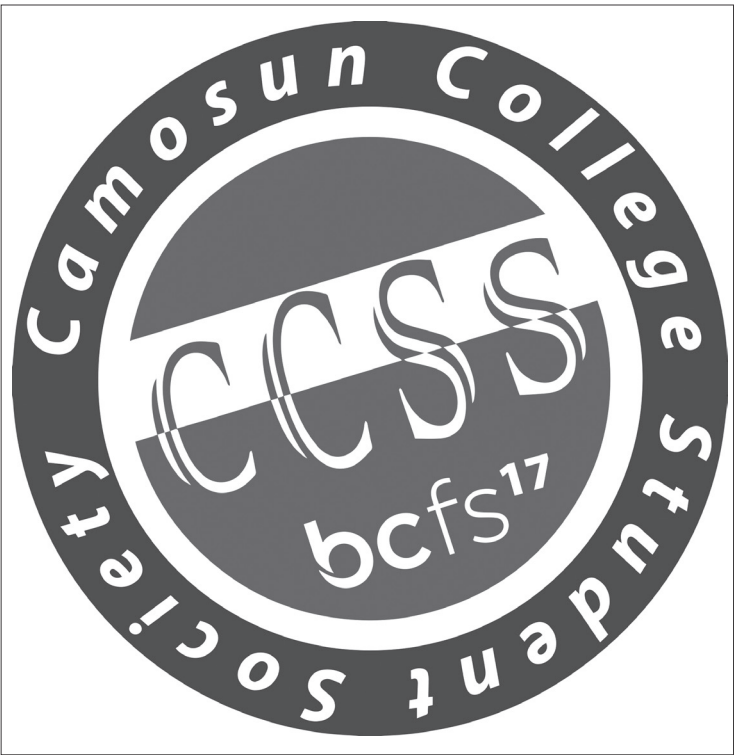
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Message from your student board

When you pile textbook costs on top of rent, food, transit, and just trying to live, it’s no wonder so many of us are struggling.



Hello Camosun students! I hope the first few weeks of the fall semester have been kind to you.

The start of the semester is always an adventure—finding friends, figuring out which hall-way leads to your classroom (so you don’t walk in late again), and memorizing your syllabus like it’s the script to your favorite television show.

Personally, though? It’s the textbooks that really get me.

Textbooks are expensive! Like, “do I eat for the week or buy this book?” expensive. Every time I open a syllabus, I’m crossing my fingers hoping to see those magical words: “No textbook required.” When it’s there, it feels like winning the lottery.

But when it’s not? Ouch. Text-books usually swing around \$100 to \$150, and sometimes even more.

One time, I shelled out \$280 for a single course textbook... only for the instructor to barely use it. Painful doesn’t even begin to cover it. Online “e-texts” sound cheaper, but the catch is you don’t actually own them. Once the term ends, poof—your access is gone, and you can’t even download a copy.

And this isn’t just me complain-ing about being broke (although, let’s be real, I am). Research with the BC Federation of Students (BCFS) shows that 26 percent of students don’t register for a course because of textbook costs. That’s a quarter of students missing out on opportunities to succeed—all because of money. When you pile textbook costs on top of rent, food, transit, and just trying to live, it’s no wonder so many of us are struggling.

Now, I get it. Some students

turn to pirated copies online. I don’t encourage it, but I don’t blame them either. When the choice is between eating ramen for the fifth night in a row or buying a \$200 book you’ll barely touch... desperate situations lead to des-perate choices.

But here’s the good news: there’s another option. It’s called Open Educational Resources (OER).

OERs are free or super-low-cost textbooks and course materi-als funded by the BC government. They’re online, editable, and flex-ible. Instructors can remix them to fit their lessons, add resources, and make the content more engaging. Students don’t have to stress about a \$150 price tag just to get started.

Camosun already supports OER, but it’s not everywhere yet, and I believe we can do better.

That’s where we come in. Talk to your instructors about OER. Ask them if they’d consider adopting it for their courses. Point them to the library’s OER resources. And if you want backup, come chat with us at the CCSS—we’d be more than happy to help you start the conversation.

Because at the end of the day, textbooks shouldn’t be a barrier to

learning. Let’s push for a campus where knowledge is accessible to everyone—not just those who can afford it. Nobody should be left behind!

So let’s make it a movement: encourage your instructors to join us and say, “I’m in my OER era!”

In solidarity,
Terence Baluyut
External Executive

NEXUS

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