NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990

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DON'T FEAR THE ESSAY

In 1571, French writer Michel de Montaigne began writing a series of essays that would eventually serve as a literary self-portrait, perfectly encapsulating his character and personality. He often wrote about the physical and mental experiences of approaching one's own death, believing his demise was surely impending. The first two volumes were published in 1580, and the third in 1588, just four years before he died. Each essay varied in length and covered a multitude of topics, garnering attention for their style, which was unusually informal for the time. His writing was uniquely honest, and now, Montaigne is widely considered to be the father of the modern essay, introducing personal prose as a legitimate literary form. Today, most of us understand essays as pieces of writing that present an argument or follow a particular subject. Structurally speaking, they are technical, informative, and precise. Right? Well, not always. The word essay originates from the French term essai, meaning "to try," and this is how Montaigne intended his writing to be. Unlike most writers of his time, he wasn't concerned with perfection so much as expression. The goal of his writing was to convey something about himself and his understanding of the world, effectively explaining his free-form style. By this translation, the word "essay" is not just a noun, but a verb. It is an action, and therefore, demands effort; that is all it demands. You don't need to be the most articulate, skilled writer on the face of the earth to produce an essay worth reading. And, likewise, you don't need to be a fierce academic to appreciate and indulge in essays. There was a time in my life when I viewed essays as nothing more than the dead weight of a body being dragged across a finish line. They were academic chores; a means to an end. I think a lot of us have negative associations like this, and, as a result, we abnegate the simple act of reading and writing altogether, often due to a self-conceived predetermination that we won't be any good at it. Now, I hate to be the bearer of bad news here, but if you walk through life thinking your capacity for excellence is limited only to what comes naturally to you, you will never get anywhere. Trust me. So, how can we reframe this? Well, the drastic measure would be cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), which, if you aren't familiar with, probably sounds a little bit intimidating to you. Don't worry, it's very simple. At its core, CBT is a goal-oriented practice that helps you to recognize and change unhelpful thought patterns. Surprisingly, despite being widely used across several therapeutic fields, its origins are not psychological. In fact, it was the Stoics of ancient Greece and Rome who first introduced the idea that emotional distress often comes from a distorted way of thinking, rather than external events themselves. But why am I telling you this? Well, Stoic philosopher Epictetus once said that "men are disturbed not by things, but by the views which they take of them," implying that our capacity for growth lies strictly within ourselves and our thoughts, both of which we can alter and train. If you haven't caught on yet, this is my gentle way of urging you to let go of the imaginary concepts of embarrassment and failure, and just try. It's not a matter of being capable; it's a matter of being willing. As humans, we write and recite essays every single day like it's nothing—whether you're sending a lengthy text to a friend, ranting about the terrible day you had, or writing a passage in your journal, those are essays. Language and expression are already a part of our everyday lives, and I'm willing to bet most of us have a pretty good handle on them. All we have to do is change the way we look at things. It's important to remember that essays are not intended vessels for criticism from somebody else. As post-secondary students, I think we tend to forget this. Essays are not meant to be belittling or scary. Because what do we do when we feel scared? We act in the opposite direction of whatever thing is causing that feeling. We become resistant and, therefore, unhappy when faced with the task of writing or reading an essay. And nobody wants that outcome. Yes, you're putting yourself out there, and yes, you'll get feedback. But the purpose of that feedback isn't to tear you down; it's to build you up. It's easy to believe that everyone is against you, and likewise, it's easy for those thoughts to breed insecurity into every facet of your life. But the truth is, no one wants to see you crash and burn. So, how do we craft a good essay? Well, first, your writing should be personally meaningful. I recently picked up a copy of John Green's essay collection The Anthropocene Reviewed, and instantly got a sense of his voice; it was like I somehow knew exactly whose words I was reading and what they meant to him. The thing that makes an essay great for readers and writers alike is the unique voice of the author and how it shines through. When you write honestly and open yourself up to the world around you, you create an open line of connection. Essays are not simply one person talking and another person listening. They are authentic, curated forms of communication that anyone can engage with. For example, in one essay, Green writes that "horror and suffering abound in every direction, and I want writing to be a break from it." This sentence alone made me feel immensely understood, like for a brief moment we were aligned. And that, I feel, is the power of the essay. Growing up, I was enamoured with fiction and had a deeply creative mind, so, naturally, written wor

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OVERHEARD AT *NEXUS*: "Also, it hallucinates often."

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Canada

editor's letter

The dark art of dark liqueur

Wanna know something positively fantastic? The fact that midterm week always coincides with flu season. Being the blessed boy that I am, I spent last week enjoying my life with day trips to crematoriums and evenings watching rats fight each other to the death outside my window. It was bliss. In exchange for my frivolity, I caught the plague. Did I catch it from a rat? From a flame-bound corpse? It's anyone's guess, but I spent the week feeling like death warmed over. And then death from a freezer. And then warmed over again. Hot and cold flashes like I'm in perimenopause, except for the fact that everyone points out when I wear a kaftan: I am a man. And I'm just a sprightly 39 year old. This, apparently, means that I've not been permitted to dress like the Wicked Witch of the West… just yet.

So, luckily, it is Halloween season. It is Halloween and All Hallows' Eve, and Samhain, and Bonfire Night and Guy Fawkes Day and Día de los Muertos, and All Souls' Night, and it's not confined to one night, but the whole season. Whatever it means to you, it's the season when we say hello to our dead and welcome them home to love and terrify us.

It's always bothered me when people dress up as Princess Peach or slutty syphilis on Halloween. The origins of the day explore the idea that the veil between us and our dead is thin, and we must carve terrifying effigial faces into turnips to keep our well-meaning but ultimately evil dearly departed at bay. Why would we ever want to let that tradition be lost?

I urge you, gentle, frightened reader, to not let this tradition of fire and darkness go to waste. Dance in the streets. Set small fires wherever you can. Blow something up.

Now, I will teach you something I learned from a strange Barbadian hoodoo sorceress that I knew once upon a time.

Cut the top off a pumpkin, but do not scoop out its guts; leave them intact. Light a candle, preferably black wax. Put a small amount of black salt into the pumpkin. Empty an entire bag of brown sugar into it and add a single drop of blackstrap molasses. Put the pumpkin's lid back on and seal it with the black candle wax; make it airtight. Leave it somewhere cool and dry, and whisper things to it; things you couldn't say to anyone.

At the end of November, after the fallen leaves have moulded in the gutters and the sky is dark, tear it open. The liquid inside will be the most delicious, dark, and spellbinding brandy wine you will ever taste.

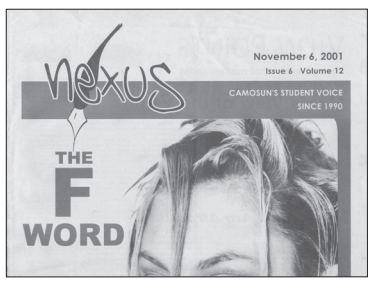
You didn't hear this from me.

PS: What I said earlier was nothing against rats; I love them and have been friends with many, but I believe in letting nature run its course. Even if it makes me sad.

Nik Ovstaas, student editor
nik@nexusnewspaper.com

flashback

25 Years Ago in *Nexus*



JASMINE WAGSTAFF
STAFF WRITER

Royal Roads goes virtual: In 2001, Royal Roads University was expanding into online education with the launch of Virtual University Canada, and we wrote about it in our November 6, 2001 issue. The initiative brought together 12 Canadian universities to offer more than 200 online courses and degree programs, allowing students to study without attending traditional classrooms. Royal Roads was among the founding institutions, with organizers hoping to make post-secondary education more accessible to working adults and students juggling other responsibilities. Nowadays, online learning is a familiar part of college life; back then, earning a degree through your computer was still making headlines. Zoom lectures and discussion-board assignments were waiting just around the corner.

Starbucks stirs up campus controversy: Lansdowne campus has had a variety of coffee shops over the years; back in November 2001, there was a Starbucks kiosk on campus. While some students appreciated the convenience, others questioned the company's presence on campus, and its prices. One Nursing student argued that the cafeteria and Starbucks should be non-profit because students were already struggling financially. Others raised concerns about fair trade, environmental practices, and the effects of large coffee companies on smaller producers. The article also noted that coffee sales helped support Camosun Foundation bursaries and scholarships. The campus has cycled through several coffee shops, but one thing has always held true: students need their overpriced lattes before lectures and midterms.

Feminism faces a changing future: The cover story of this issue explored how feminism had evolved and what it meant to younger generations. The article examined the movement's history, from women's rights to changing conversations about careers, family life, and gender expectations. The piece also considered whether younger women identified with feminism, particularly as popular culture presented competing ideas about empowerment and independence. Twenty-five years later, conversations about gender equality, representation, and what feminism means are hardly settled. And while some debates remain on newspaper pages, they're also now found on social-media comment sections.

open space

Wealth tax should have been election hot topic

STEPHANIE FINN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

We need a wealth tax.

This is not a tax on your parents, who bought the family home for a toonie and a bag of apples in '95, and now it's somehow worth $1 million. It's not a tax that would apply to your life savings, or a local business. It's a small tax on the very few households whose massive wealth grows faster than anyone could ever spend it.

> The value of Canada is in the skills of its people, and our vast resources and land, and those things don't leave Canada when an individual does.

Let's break this down using an example: if you win the lottery tomorrow you'll make life harder for your loved ones, and it won't be intentional.

Say you win $100 million. That's a supercar, a mansion, and you and your friends flying somewhere warm for lavish meals and top-shelf bottles. After all that, you still have $90 million left to spend.

Okay, okay. You have bigger dreams, so you buy an exotic island. But did you notice what just happened? You bought an asset: something that holds its value or earns you money. You're trying to splurge, but you're accidentally investing. This is because you've run out of things to buy that don't make you wealthier.

Next, you hire a financial advisor to make sure your personal chef gets paid on time and your favourite soda magically appears in your many fridges. Your money is invested at a modest five-percent return, and you're right back to $100 million in a couple of years.

But how does any of this hurt your loved ones? Well, there are only so many new things to invest in, so your money buys what already exists: shares, land, housing. While you're relaxing on your island, your money is outbidding your friend for the condo they've been saving for. Not because you want to live there. Just because it's a decent investment.

None of this is your fault. You did what anyone in your position would do. The problem is what we tax and what we don't tax.

The money in your friend's paycheque is taxed before they ever see it. But, as your investments grow in value, that growth isn't taxed at all unless you sell. And when you want cash, you don't sell. You get a loan, backed by your assets, and the loans aren't taxed either.

This is how the largest fortunes can grow faster than wages, or even the economy. Even the highest earners eventually spend their savings on things like homes and retirement, while fortunes too big to spend keep buying up what already exists. Every year, the rest of us bid for homes against money that never stops growing.

The solution is a wealth tax.

There are two main critiques of wealth tax. One is that fluctuating assets are hard to value. But I'd argue that we already do it: public companies are priced every day, BC assesses properties for tax every year, Canada calculates everything a person owns when they die, and courts value and divide fortunes in high-stakes divorces.

Another concern is that the wealthy might leave, taking their personal spending with them. Some might, and that has a cost. However, the value of Canada is in the skills of its people, and our vast resources and land, and those things don't leave Canada when an individual does.

BC just held two back-to-back elections, and a wealth tax was barely a part of the conversation. If we want to lower the cost of living we must tax wealth the same way we tax work.

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!

letters

Trash talk

We are visitors to Victoria and I picked up a copy of *Nexus*. As a lifelong picker-upper of garbage I was waiting for the author (*A Student's Guide to Local Politics* column, "Trash bags and governing bodies," October 21, 2026 issue) to say that she turned her car around and parked the car and picked up the garbage bag and put it in the car for later disposal. But she then writes, "The most direct force of change you can act upon right now is showing up to vote." I disagree, I think the most direct thing that she could have done was to pick up the garbage bag. Ten people might have seen her do it and as a result may then have changed their way of looking at their own actions. Next time, please stop and pick it up.

ANDREW MURRAY
NELSON, BC

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Got something to say?
Letters to the editor:
editor@nexusnewspaper.com

student politics

Camosun College Student Society holds fall elections



FILE PHOTO

Camosun College students recently voted in the Camosun College Student Society fall board elections.

> "I think everyone deserves a voice."
>
> MIA PURNELL
> CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY

JASMINE WAGSTAFF
STAFF WRITER

The Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) held its fall student board elections from October 20 to 22, with 595 students casting ballots and several new representatives set to join the student society's board.

Approximately eight percent of eligible students voted in the election. This is a slight decrease from the 602 students who voted in fall 2025 and a larger decrease from the 751 students who participated in the spring 2026 election.

Daniella Quesada was voted in as external executive, with 285 votes. Silvana Ramos Cabrera received 147 votes for this position, while Liam McCallum received 131.

For international director, Kendra Gutiérrez received 313 votes, while Phillip Dagson received 220. (Nataliia Merkusheva and Indy Kang were also running for this position and were eliminated during a three-round process of single transferrable voting.)

Several director-at-large candidates received majority support in yes-or-no votes. Eimy Gomez received 465 yes votes for Interurban director-at-large, while Kevin Shawn Anthony Coughlin received 413 for off-campus director-at-large.

For Lansdowne director-at-large positions, Jessie Rousseau-Hanson received 433 yes votes, Angela Chou received 398, and Angelina Obrien received 340.

275 students voted on October 20, followed by 165 on October 21 and 155 on October 22.

The results must be ratified at the next CCSS board meeting before becoming official. The newly elected representatives are expected to take office on November 1.

CCSS electoral committee member Mia Purnell, who is also the CCSS student wellness and access director, says the election proceeded relatively smoothly, with candidates making an effort to promote themselves and encourage students to participate.

"It was pretty typical. There wasn't anything out of the ordinary," says Purnell. "The candidates did a really good job campaigning and setting up posters and getting their voices out there."



Purnell says the fall election went more smoothly than the previous election, which involved difficulties surrounding candidate conduct and uncertainty about existing election rules.

"The last one we had a couple bumps with our candidates having issues," says Purnell.

The CCSS electoral committee is now considering changes to its policies and bylaws to provide clearer expectations for candidates participating in future elections. The committee hopes to address these concerns within the next year. One proposed improvement is an informational pamphlet outlining election bylaws, campaign expectations, and appropriate conduct toward other candidates. Purnell says the goal is to ensure candidates understand the rules before beginning their campaigns, rather than encountering confusion during the election.

"The previous years we had some complications with uncertainty on what is going against our bylaws and what isn't, because we don't have a whole lot of clarity," she says.

The CCSS is also considering ways to provide additional campaign support to candidates, particularly those who have little experience with student government.

"I think another thing is majority [of the candidates] are people who would be new to the board and might be a bit unaware of how to receive more votes and how to get their voice out," says Purnell. "They might be just a little bit more uncomfortable or shy."

During the election, the CCSS offered candidates assistance with creating posters and answering questions about the election process. However, Purnell says campaigning through posters alone may not be enough to encourage greater student participation.

"Posters only do so much, and I find that's what the candidates usually do instead of, like, going out and chatting with people," says Purnell. "It really depends on the candidate, but some people are a bit more outgoing than others."

While the electoral committee considers improvements for future elections, Purnell says newly elected representatives are preparing to begin their terms. Representatives typically receive an orientation when they take office on November 1, covering their responsibilities and other information they need to understand for their positions.

Purnell says it's too early to identify specific new initiatives from the incoming student representatives, as they are still settling into their roles.

Beyond the election results, Purnell says student elections provide an opportunity to increase awareness of the CCSS and the services it offers. She says conversations during election campaigns have revealed that some students remain unfamiliar with the student society, even after attending Camosun for several years.

"I had a bunch of people I was talking to that were in their third or fourth year, and they didn't know about CCSS, and they didn't know about the student council and what we do," says Purnell.

These conversations allow CCSS representatives to explain their work while giving students an opportunity to share concerns about their college experience, says Purnell.

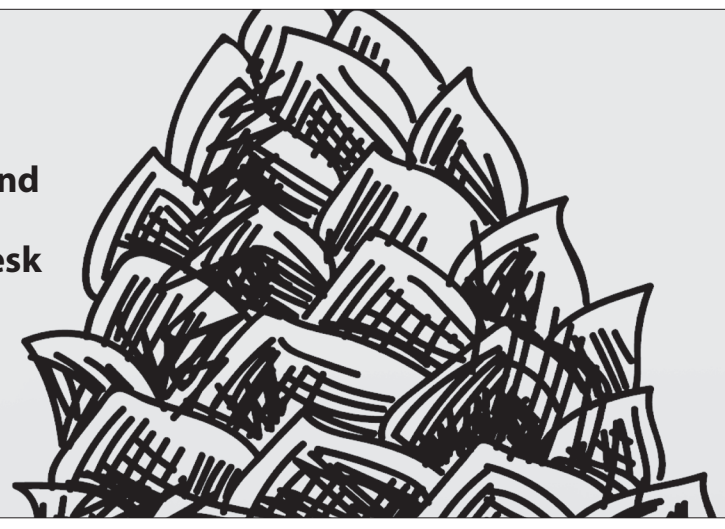
"We can explain it to them, kind of what we're about and how we can help, and then in return they can raise their concerns to us," she says.

Reaching students can be challenging because Camosun operates across multiple campuses and has a lot of turnover, says Purnell. Despite those challenges, she encourages students to participate in future elections, whether they are familiar with the student society or voting for the first time.

"I think everyone deserves a voice," she says.

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FYI Langford learners: you can now find copies of *Nexus* at the John Horgan campus! Find us at the Connection Desk on the second floor.



events

Student society to bring Transgender Awareness Week to campus



PHOTO PROVIDED

The CCSS will be tabling again this year during Transgender Awareness Week.

> "It's about informing people a bit about the struggles that people may go through. It's about celebrating those we still have, and it's also about supporting them, showing them what resources are there and that people have their back, and then it ends off with the Day of Remembrance for those whom we have lost."
>
> MADISON HUYNH
> CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY

AETIUS ARDEN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

During the week of November 16 to 20, leading up to Transgender Day of Remembrance on November 20, the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) will be holding Transgender Awareness Week. CCSS members will be setting up tables on campus to offer resources and information to students and passersby; they will be at Lansdowne campus in the Fisher lobby, and at Interurban in the CBA atrium.

CCSS women's director Madison Huynh says it's important to acknowledge the Day of Remembrance.

"It's about informing people a bit about the struggles that people may go through," says Huynh. "It's about celebrating those we still have, and it's also about supporting them, showing them what resources are there and that people have their back, and then it ends off with the Day of Remembrance for those whom we have lost."

As part of spreading awareness and recognition, Huynh will be found showing her support and handing out treats on the Lansdowne campus.

"I'm kind of doing something similar to what I did last year," she says. "It's mostly tabling. I'm offering some treats to people, I usually get sugar cookies and then I have a few gluten-free options."

With the help of the previous CCSS pride director, Huynh has compiled into a pamphlet a list of local resources and information to be handed out to whomever may be interested. Highlighted this year is the news of recent expansions made to the Camosun student health insurance policy.

"Mostly what I intend to offer is information and support," says Huynh. "This year particularly, what I'm excited to talk about is we updated our insurance policy that all students have access to, and it includes supportive gender affirming care. The provincial government kind of supports people, and besides that though, people experience a lot of financial pressures after the fact, and so our intention here is to fill that gap. So I'm excited to talk about that, because not only is it for the students that we have on campus, but people can get family members on their plan and that can help support them too."

Aside from distribution of information, the aim of Transgender Awareness Week is to recognize transgender people and their experiences, and to show to students that they are supported in being who they are. Huynh says that she wishes for students to feel that campus is a safe place for them to understand themselves.

"I feel like whatever I say will never do justice to the actual experiences that people may have," she says. "I'm here mostly as a supporting role, trying to show people that they're not alone. And I'm pretty limited in that role... I think everyone should be comfortable expressing their gender, exploring it. Everyone should find what is most comfortable for themselves and be allowed to exist as that. I worry about that state of the world, so anything that I can do to say, 'No, there is support out there'... I generally try to be uplifting when I do all that, but I know it can be a very tough subject for a lot of people."

Huynh hopes that by seeing the support on campus, students will "feel like they're allowed to belong," she says.

"I feel like belonging is an important part of the human experience, and life can be isolating," says Huynh. "So I hope to facilitate a bit of that."

See camosunstudent.org or find the student society on Instagram (@camosunstudents) for more information.

campus

How to survive awkward gaps between classes

MATIAS LI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

We've all been there: you've just staggered out of an 8:30 am lecture feeling half dead, and you realize you have an hour-long void before your next class. You don't have enough time to go home, you don't have enough time to do a flow-state study session, but you have more than enough time to doomscroll through Instagram reels.

If you want to use that time in a productive way, here are three practical tips to conquer that awkward gap.

Batch your quick tasks

Instead of letting errands bleed into your weekends, evenings, and study sessions, where you need uninterrupted blocks of time, use your gaps for these tasks. Finish those quizzes, answer that email from your manager, pick up conditioner from the store, finalize that weekly grocery list; do whatever little chores you need to finish. This not only genuinely knocks responsibilities off the dreaded to-do list, but it provides a necessary "I did it!" shot of dopamine and relief, which will help remove that nagging sense of unease when you do sit down for your study sessions.

Get your workouts or physical activity done

Sitting in lecture halls, labs, and seminars all day listening to complex theories makes your body ache and your brain feel like it's crawling through thick mud. So it makes sense to use these gaps to reset physically and mentally. Jog around campus, try getting five more seconds on your planks, hit the treadmill... Even a simple five-minute session in that terrifying, mysterious plant-infested area with a ball of light in the sky known as "outside" stimulates that sluggish noggin and genuinely helps to reset your mental state.

Use these gaps to help manage burnout and exhaustion

Let's face it: that panic-fuelled part of your brain telling you if you aren't revising flashcards, re-reading your assignment rules for the fifth time, or pumping out Einstein-level performance every hour of the day is straight-up lying. If your brain is deep fried, trying to force a hyper-productive study session where you crush two weeks' worth of content is like attempting to squeeze 3D rendering out of your uncle's ancient Windows XP laptop. Sometimes the best way to beat the burnout is to surrender to it. However, resting doesn't involve a gaming session that leaves you feeling even more hollowed out. Give yourself permission to just kick back in a quiet place and listen to a podcast or some music, finish that one fanfic chapter you've been meaning to read for weeks, watch other burnt-out husks scuttle about looking for their midterm room, or lie on a cushioned bench to let gravity undo the achy hunch. Honestly, give yourself some time to mentally check out, because if you don't, your brain will pull the plug at the most perfect time: during your three-hour long midterm.



FILE PHOTO

If you're dealing with awkward gaps between classes at Camosun's Lansdowne campus, enjoy what nature has to offer.

The awkward gaps between classes don't have to be misery sessions of awkwardly lingering like a stalker outside of your classroom and brain-dead doomscrolling. By implementing some of the above suggestions, you're taking control of your life, grades, and sanity without attempting to turn yourself into a productivity bot. By being healthy regarding these gaps, you can manage the chaos of student life so that when 7:00 pm rolls around, you can close your laptop and pretend your lecture notes don't exist.

events

Camosun College Student Society Diwali celebration returns

JASMINE WAGSTAFF
STAFF WRITER

The Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) is partnering with local organizers to celebrate Diwali at Lucky Bar on November 6, continuing a tradition that has grown from a small campus gathering into one of the student society's most popular events.

The celebration, presented by local event promoters Dilwale in collaboration with the CCSS, begins at 10:30 pm and features music by Inspire & Bliss. Tickets are available to the general public, with discounted admission for Camosun students. (See Dilwale's Instagram page at @dilwalevictoria for ticket info.)

Diwali, commonly known as the Festival of Lights, is celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and some Buddhists. Although its religious significance varies between communities, celebrations often involve lighting lamps, gathering with family and friends, and sharing food. The festival is widely associated with the triumph of light over darkness.

The student society's first Diwali event took place during the day at Camosun's Lansdowne campus, attracting approximately 40 attendees.

"It originally started, we had a board member who wanted to do it," says CCSS clubs and events coordinator Tagg Kelt. "They wanted it to be mostly like a religious observance."

The event grew steadily over the following years, eventually moving to an evening celebration as attendance increased.

"The next year we did more and more, and it sort of kept building until it became too big for us to run on campus," says Kelt.

The decision to move the event off campus came after attendance exceeded what organizers could safely accommodate with the available security, says Kelt. The celebration has evolved from an event primarily intended for Camosun students into one open to the wider Victoria community.

"It's been one of our most popular events, for sure," he says. "People just wanted to come to it."

Kelt says the current event operates in partnership with an outside promoter who handles ticketing and other arrangements. Admission is now just under $20, with a discount code available for Camosun students. While the celebration has expanded, Kelt says the CCSS remains committed to making student events affordable, particularly as rising living costs leave students with less money for recreation. He points to events such as CamFest and Clubs Days, which the student society offers free of charge, as examples of its efforts to make campus life more accessible.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Students at last year's Diwali celebration, put on by the Camosun College Student Society.

"The cost of living and entertainment has sort of dramatically outpaced people's ability to pay for it," he says.

Kelt says extracurricular activities are an important part of post-secondary education because they allow students to develop friendships and connect with people outside their classrooms.

Unlike high school, where friendships often develop through geographical proximity, college brings together students who have chosen to pursue similar academic interests, he says.

"Having something for people to do that's affordable and they don't have to carve money out of their living budget to do is an important thing for people to have," says Kelt.

The celebration also offers opportunities for students to connect with cultural traditions; Diwali celebrations give international students opportunities to wear traditional clothing, celebrate their heritage, and share their culture with others. Kelt says providing students with affordable opportunities to socialize and participate in campus life remains a priority for the student society.

"There's less and less of that just generally in the world, right? Free or very affordable things to do," says Kelt. "The more of that we can do, the better."

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Don’t fear

Story by Ashley Hag
Image by Nik Ovst

In 1571, French writer Michel de Montaigne began writing a series of essays that would eventually serve as a literary self-portrait, perfectly encapsulating his character and personality. He often wrote about the physical and mental experiences of approaching one’s own death, believing his demise was surely impending.

The first two volumes were published in 1580, and the third in 1588, just four years before he died. Each essay varied in length and covered a multitude of topics, garnering attention for their style, which was unusually informal for the time. His writing was uniquely honest, and now, Montaigne is widely considered to be the father of the modern essay, introducing personal prose as a legitimate literary form.

Today, most of us understand essays as pieces of writing that present an argument or follow a particular subject. Structurally speaking, they are technical, informative, and precise. Right? Well, not always.

The word essay originates from the French term essai, meaning “to try,” and this is how Montaigne intended his writing to be. Unlike most writers of his time, he wasn’t concerned with perfection so much as expression. The goal of his writing was to convey something about himself and his understanding of the world, effectively explaining his free-form style.

By this translation, the word “essay” is not just a noun, but a verb. It is an action, and therefore, demands effort; that is all it demands. You don’t need to be the most articulate, skilled writer on the face of the earth to produce an essay worth reading. And, likewise, you don’t need to be a fierce academic to appreciate and indulge in essays.

There was a time in my life when I viewed essays as nothing more than the dead weight of a body being dragged across a finish line. They were academic chores; a means to an end. I think a lot of us have negative associations like this, and, as a result, we abnegate the simple act of reading and writing altogether, often due to a self-conceived predetermination that we won’t be any good at it. Now, I hate to be the bearer of bad news here, but if you walk through life thinking your capacity for excellence is limited only to what comes naturally to you, you will never get anywhere. Trust me.

So, how can we reframe this? Well, the drastic measure would be cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), which, if you aren’t familiar with, probably sounds a little bit intimidating to you. Don’t worry, it’s very simple. At its core, CBT is a goal-oriented practice that helps you to recognize and change unhelpful thought patterns. Surprisingly, despite being widely used across several therapeutic fields, its origins are not psychological. In fact, it was the Stoics of ancient Greece and Rome who first introduced the idea that emotional distress often comes from a distorted way of thinking, rather than external events themselves.

But why am I telling you this? Well, Stoic philosopher Epictetus once said that “men are disturbed not by things, but by the views which they take of them,” implying that our capacity for growth lies strictly within ourselves and our thoughts, both of which we can alter and train.

If you haven’t caught on yet, this is my gentle way of urging you to let go of the imaginary concepts of embarrassment and failure, and just try. It’s not a matter of being capable; it’s a matter of being willing.

As humans, we write and recite essays every single day like it’s nothing—whether you’re sending a lengthy text to a friend, ranting about the terrible day you had, or writing a passage in your journal, those are essays. Language and expression are already a part of our everyday lives, and I’m willing to bet most of us have a pretty good handle on them. All we have to do is change the way we look at things.

It’s important to remember that essays are not intended vessels for criticism from somebody else. As post-secondary students, I think we tend to forget this. Essays are not meant to be belittling or scary. Because what do we do when we feel scared? We act in the opposite direction of whatever thing is causing that feeling. We become resistant and, therefore, unhappy when faced with the task of writing or reading an essay. And nobody wants that outcome.

Yes, you’re putting yourself out there, and yes, you’ll get feedback. But the purpose of that feedback isn’t to tear you down; it’s to build you up. It’s easy to believe that everyone is against you, and likewise, it’s easy for those thoughts to breed insecurity into every facet of your life. But the truth is, no one wants to see you crash and burn.

So, how do we craft a good essay? Well, first, your writing should be personally meaningful. I recently picked up a copy of John Green’s essay collection *The Anthropocene Reviewed*, and instantly got a sense of his voice; it was like I somehow knew exactly whose words I was reading and what they meant to him.

The thing that makes an essay great for readers and writers alike is the unique voice of the author and how it shines through. When you write honestly and open yourself up to the world around you, you create an open line of connection. Essays are not simply one person talking and another person listening. They are authentic, curated forms of communication that anyone can engage with.

For example, in one essay, Green writes that “horror and suffering abound in every direction, and I want writing to be a break from it.” This sentence alone made me feel immensely understood, like for a brief moment we were aligned. And that, I feel, is the power of the essay.

Growing up, I was enamoured with fiction and had a deeply creative mind, so, naturally, writing had always been a reprieve for me. I was the proud architect of a thousand different realities and could flip from one world to the next in only a matter of minutes. Fiction made me feel safe. But for a long time, this love affair with figments ultimately kept me from indulging in anything else.

I always wanted to be somewhere I wasn’t. I wanted to escape. But eventually I came to the realization that all fictional stories are rooted in reality, and that reality is pretty subjective. Essays have the unique ability to reflect that clearly and openly.

As I write this, there are roughly 8.3 billion people inhabiting our planet, which then amounts to roughly 8.3 billion different experiences, beliefs, emotions, and thoughts. And while some things are universal—illness, hunger, heartache—we all have different associations with them, and it’s important to explore those.

So what’s the best way to navigate the machinations of your inner world? Well, you could watch movies from different countries (I recommend the 1983 Scottish film *Local Hero*), listen to every kind of music you can think of, and, of course, read and write essays about absolutely anything.

In post-secondary, most of the essays we read and write involve some kind of textual analysis, but that shouldn’t feel limiting to you. Oftentimes, we hear the word “analysis” and do a mental eye roll. But why? Well, usually it’s because we have these preconceived notions about literature and logic, and make the same assumptions

the essay

gel, features writer

aas, student editor

whenever they come up, regardless of context. Really, all analysis does is open the door for broader conversations and allow us to explore counterarguments.

Counterarguments can be useful tools when crafting (or reading) an essay. When we identify perspectives that challenge our stance, we engage more deeply with the material. We find new ways to strengthen our arguments or, sometimes, even change them. Basically, we practice empathy.

Now, I'm sure I don't have to tell you that empathy is a crucial part of the human experience, if for no other reason than it calls into question how we perceive the world around us and why. Further, when we read an essay, we effectively absorb another person's inner consciousness. We're tasked with following a foreign train of thought, not knowing when or where it will stop.

For this reason, I find it exceptionally valuable to engage with essays written by people whose lives are wildly different from my own. When we do, our ability to comprehend social, cultural, and political differences increases. We learn to develop an understanding of the world, rather than try to escape from it. Now, that's not to say that escapism should never have a place in our lives. Just that it's more conditional.

On a similar note, I've also found value in cross-pollinating my education, so to speak. This semester, I'm challenging myself by taking several classes unrelated to my major, including political science and geography. I think we can gain a lot from branching out and having experiences we otherwise never would've considered.

Our lives are very self-centred, and while that's fine in its own right, it's not without its side effects. So easily we miss the endless crossovers that are constantly at play in our world. We assume things aren't as connected as they are and fall into a self-made trap of isolation. We stagnate ourselves, weighed down by our desire to be immediately good at things or not do them at all.

A thing is not worth doing just to be great at it, and this is a lesson that so many of us forget as we get older. Cliche as it is, it's important to try new things. It's important to be bad at things before you can be good at them, and that takes a level of discipline that not a lot of us have. But when we fail to make an effort, we condemn ourselves to a one-note way of life.

All of us want to be well-rounded, right? We want to be interesting and worth knowing. Well, the first step is considering what it takes to get there.

In my opinion, when we open ourselves up to the world around us, engaging with people and their stories, we learn a little something about how to be and how not to be. And I know all of this sounds, like, nauseatingly basic, but it's a lesson worth relearning, especially now.

With the sudden rise in AI usage, we've become so grossly accustomed to this instantaneous pseudo-productivity that really requires no skill at all. You just enter a prompt and get a result; no real work involved. And I think what a lot of people miss is that the work, in itself, is the most meaningful part. We're not cutting out the middleman by using generative AI; we're cutting out the man, period.

It really feels like, these days, we've forgotten just how much the process matters. We now live in a world that is obsessed with outcome, not realizing that the process is ultimately what matters more. An essay isn't interesting simply because it exists; it's interesting because someone took the time to write it, edit it, and proofread it, then rewrite it again. It's interesting because we can see the effort that was put into it. And we humans tend to act in the direction of whatever outcome we expect. So if we want to be good at something and hold ourselves accountable to that desire, we will put in the work. We must be willing to put in the work.

I think the real difference-maker is that, among many things, we're able to recognize exactly what sparks creativity in people—and it's usually boredom. You see, nowadays, with all this convenience, stimulation, and dopamine, we aren't so willing to allow ourselves to feel bored, even just for a moment. But it's in this nullified state that we can invent new ideas, create new things, and learn new skills. Boredom is the root of creativity and a necessary component of humanity. And when we allow others to think and feel for us, we start to lose hold of that humanity.

Gosh, where was I? Right, essays! Now, this isn't to say that I've always been a lover of the essay. No. I mean, I was never particularly bad at them, but they left me vulnerable and opened me up to sometimes harsh criticism. I understand why someone would be uninterested in them. I'm just inclined to challenge that viewpoint.

Now, you might be asking yourself what the point is of engaging with this form of literature (or any literature, for that matter) outside of an academic context? Why waste your time writing about your life, or worse, reading about someone else's?

Well, simply put, because they're interesting. Not every essay, sure, but the beauty of this writing style is that you can zero in on absolutely anything you like. Your words don't necessarily have to be educational (though they will almost certainly be insightful). And you don't have to do a bunch of research on some niche topic no one's ever heard of before; you can write about yourself, your experiences, or your life, because there is value in that.

And, you know what? I'm going to take this opportunity to let you in on a little secret: I haven't really been trying to persuade you to write an essay. What I'm trying to do is help you see just how meaningful and diverse literature can be, because the human experience is, for all of us, just that.

Each of us harbours different interests, talents, and loud opinions. Some people lose themselves in the process of engineering, while others give themselves over to music. We are all different, and that's what makes us pretty amazing. But how we learn to embrace those differences is largely dependent on how we present ourselves to one another.

Still having doubts? Well, just think about your textbooks. No matter the subject area, someone had to take the time to put their vast knowledge and experience down in words for you to read and hopefully learn from. They shared something with you: a part of themselves.

Now, broadly speaking, everyone has a story to tell. Articulation and expression are powerful skills that often require a great deal of creativity and curiosity. Are you curious? Are you someone worth knowing? How do you measure that? Honestly, what's the point of all this?

Well, in my eyes, the point is to hold on to your humanity as tightly as possible, because, as John Green puts it, "when our light goes out, it will be Earth's greatest tragedy, because while I know humans are prone to grandiosity, I also think we are by far the most interesting thing that ever happened on Earth." The point is to tell your story and listen to others. Perhaps not to be remembered, but to be known.

The point is to hold on to yourself.

review

A Chorus of Disapproval counters flat writing with enthusiastic performances

> Each student was truly marinated in their role. It was fun to watch fellow students learn, engage, and succeed in such a different manner.



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Canadian College of Performing Arts presented their take on *A Chorus of Disapproval* from October 22 to 25.

ISABELLE KAERCHER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Have you ever watched a play about a play? Well I can now say I have after attending opening night of the Canadian College of Performing Arts' (CCPA) presentation of *A Chorus of Disapproval*.

The plot follows a novice theatre group who take on a new cast member who ascends to a lead role rather quickly. But it's not necessarily smooth—the audience sees how the backstage drama affects the working of their upcoming production. After multiple affairs, constant role swaps, late nights at the bar, and a director who lives vicariously through his actors, the play eventually finishes.

Still, to be quite frank, nothing really exciting occurred during these 2 and a half hours; in that sense, it was rather boring. I found the writing to be extremely flat; I was waiting for ebbs and flows that never arrived. Serious monologues were often punctuated with humour that distracted rather than complemented; this prevented me from really connecting with the performance.

Being set in 1984, I was expecting to see some clothing that wouldn't be accurate but I was proven wrong. Every cast member had slick costume changes that were without a doubt leaning heavily into '80s fashion. It appeared both realistic and smooth. Props were moved by the cast members themselves during quickly dimmed moments, which helped aid a smooth show. Stagecraft was simple but effective, although the backdrop—a projector screen displaying random stock photos for each scene—could use some work.

As for crowds, I can confirm these students are well equipped in supporters. Smiles were exchanged left and right before the play had even started. A sense of pride was evident, being shown not just by parents, grandparents, or friends, but through the students. Whether they were in stagecraft or an actor they most definitely carried themselves with grace. Regardless of if they were checking people in, handling the concession, in charge of lights, or up there on stage, their passion for this art captured me.

The atmosphere in this environment made for an enjoyable time whether or not you connected to the production.

Each student was truly marinated in their role. It was fun to watch fellow students learn, engage, and succeed in such a different manner. It would most definitely take dedication and countless hours to make a production seem so effortless. This was not an empty theatre, and for good reason.

Here are my recommendations to my fellow Camosun students. If you're not a theatre fanatic, then perhaps you will not find enjoyment through *A Chorus of Disapproval*, especially if it's your first time going to see a play. However, if you want some entertainment that demonstrates storytelling by students for students, I encourage you to watch one of CCPA's takes on a more familiar production.

Beyond all the lights and the scripts, it's truly the passion radiating from these students that makes the performance.

New Music Revue



Corduroy Aspect
H.A.G.
(Distribution Aspect)
3.5/5

Local punk band Corduroy Aspect's new EP *H.A.G.*—released one year to the day after their debut album, *It's the Best I Can Do Right Now*—brings a tight runtime packed with energy. At just under seven minutes, *H.A.G.* manages to fit in four new songs plus an interesting cover for a fifth track. While the short length is a bit disappointing, the music on the EP is fantastic, fun, and true to the band's punk sound.

The first track, "Shut the Fuck Up," only has five lines, all identical to the title. This might seem repetitive, but the song is only 48 seconds long; its length actually makes it play as an effective intro to the EP, creating a quick sense of hype and excitement for the following songs to capitalize on.

"Feel Nothing" immediately builds off that momentum to explore its manic emotions. Making efficient use of its longer timestamp, it rapidly paints an aggressive and authentic picture of emotional overwhelm. You can feel the desperation in the vocals, and the urgency in the sharp guitar chords.

With how simplistic the first track was, I expected something similar from the third and fourth tracks, which also clock in at under one minute. I was quickly proven wrong. Despite being short, they both bring a lot of value to the EP.

The fourth song, "My Love Grows Deeper, Pt. 2," manages to evoke a very particular feeling through both its sound and lyrics. Its noisy, angrily loud instrumentation and detached lyrics capture the intersection of angst and apathy, singing about poor communication and dirty dishes piling up.

After the band's original songs, *H.A.G.* finishes with a cover of "King of Carrot Flowers, Pt.1" by Neutral Milk Hotel. Despite punk rock not being a genre the original song draws from, Corduroy Aspect adapts it wonderfully, bringing a punk-rock influence to an already brilliant song.

Between the excitement all the new songs bring, and the quality of the EP as a whole, *H.A.G.* is a huge little success for Corduroy Aspect. The only issue I have is how short it is, leaving me wanting more, but that's why playlists exist.

-Evelyn Myst, contributing writer

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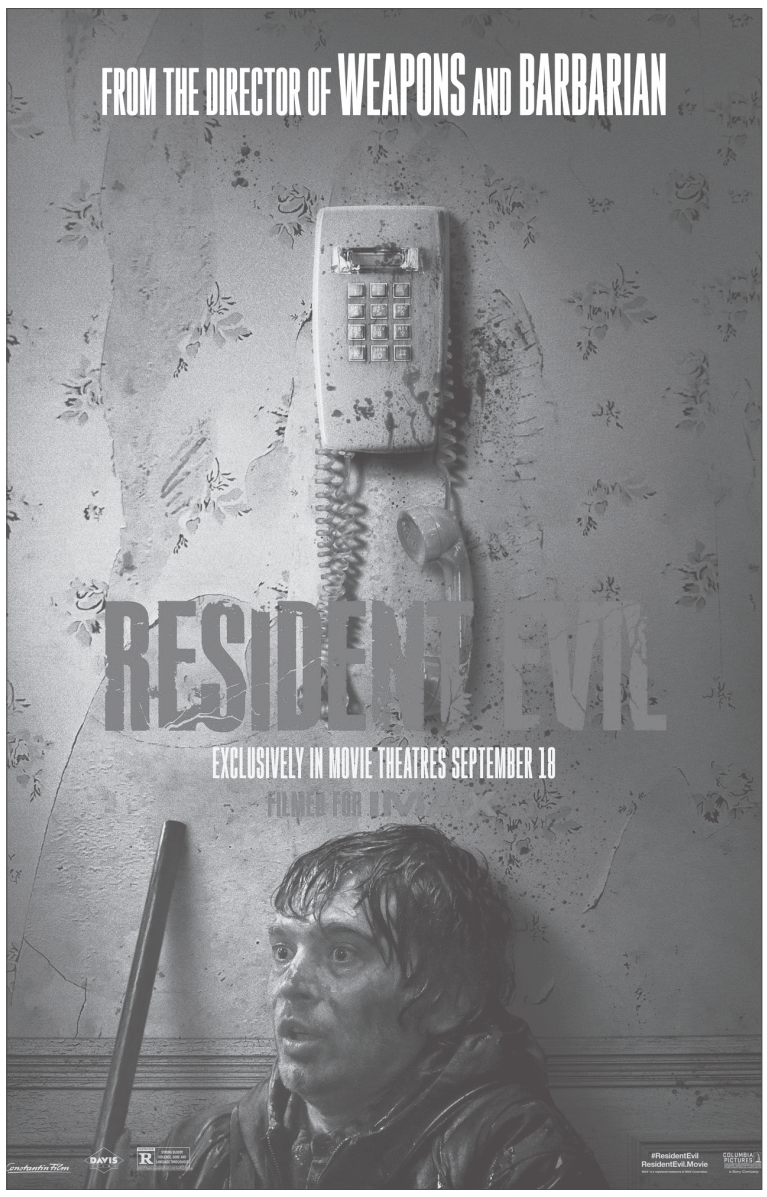
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review

Resident Evil showcases great vibes, abysmal characterization

Linear horror games are rife with silly tropes, nonsensical design choices that serve mostly to disguise programming limitations. This movie mocks them perfectly.



LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Resident Evil is a horror franchise initially developed by Capcom that saw its first entry released in 1996 for the Sony Playstation. RE1 was a slow-burn classic that saw a group of special operatives holed up in a mansion one evening, only to find that the building is infested with nightmarish monsters.

At the time, the natural limitations of the Playstation—gritty textures, crushed audio, low draw distance, low rendering ceilings—culminated in horror games that leaned primarily on silence and dread, punctuated by brief moments of action, made all the more tense by poor controls and a dearth of resources.

Resident Evil has seen its fair share of time on the big screen as well, with its most infamous film series starring Milla Jovovich. Now, Zach Cregger (writer and director of *Weapons*) has released a film simply called *Resident Evil*. It follows Bryan, a medical courier who sloppily DoorDashes body parts between hospitals. When an emergency package is to be delivered to Raccoon City Hospital, predictably, shit hits the fan. What follows is a movie that many viewers have said doesn't feel like *Resident Evil*. They are correct.

Let's first talk about how the film succeeds. Linear horror games are rife with silly tropes, nonsensical design choices that serve mostly to disguise programming limitations. This movie mocks them perfectly.

Bryan finds himself inexplicably alone most of the time, wandering from one bombastic set piece to the next, encountering forgettable characters who offload exposition then die horribly. He receives dispassionate directions over the radio by a faceless stranger; he must push onwards despite every reason not to; and, my personal favourite, he repeatedly encounters doors and gates barred with padlocks that seem illogically invincible to brute force.

Everything that gamifies survival horror is present in this movie, and in that sense, it's a good *Resident Evil* movie, in a tongue-in-cheek sort of way. However, the problem revolves around Bryan's characterization. He's a slovenly, weak, imbecilic nuisance who insists on narrating every piece of inane drivel that occurs to him, as if the viewers need to be informed about how to feel about the strange events occurring. There is not a moment in the film where Bryan isn't spouting an endless stream of insipid verbal diarrhea. This is not what made *Resident Evil* games compelling. It was the dread and silence that drew us in; the cold, merciless isolation and loneliness.

Many modern filmmakers worry that the current generation of TikTok junkies will get bored if not constantly engaged. However, silence is more powerful than any dialogue in a thriller. An excellent illustration of this are the 2022 and 2025 films *Sisu* and *Sisu: Road to Revenge*, starring a grizzled, aging man who singlehandedly takes on a platoon of Nazis to fulfill a vendetta. In the first film, he says 11 words. In the second, he says nothing. A well-written film and strong actor can carry a performance without words, and it's that powerful silence that invites the viewer along for the ride.

Resident Evil entirely misses the point of this, and, accordingly, is an abysmal failure at capturing the gritty survival-horror vibe of the original series. This is a shame, because if the protagonist were written and cast differently, it would have been been a great film.

review

William Head on Stage creates memorable production, experience

NIK OVSTAAS
STUDENT EDITOR

William Head on Stage's production of *45 Days in Orbit*, performed by incarcerated men at the institution, was not only as glorious as I suspected, but touching in a way I couldn't have foreseen.

The play itself was a strange, quirky production with fly-by-night prop work and actors who sometimes forgot their lines and, seemingly, forgot what they were doing at times, but it still was one of the most memorable performances I've ever seen.

You would be hard-pressed to find actors as dedicated to their storyline as the incarcerated men of William Head Institution. It was such a joy to watch these men find their role and slip into a different world. That is the true heart of this show, and indeed the true heart of dramatic production. In that, they were flawless.

The experience, beyond the play itself, was fascinating. I arrived at the ineffably beautiful grounds of William Head Institution just as the sun was dipping behind the western horizon, and was greeted by a tall, bald man who would've been intimidating were he not immediately charming. He asked me if I had any water bottles, cell phones, firearms, or hard drugs stuffed into any part of my personage, and then invited me inside. I went through a security screening and then I was invited to stand under a spotlight in a back parking lot to await a sprinter van.

As the van, with myself in tow enjoying soft-rock radio, approached a building further back within the complex, we were greeted by two kind men with lost-and-found suit jackets and the polite demeanour of those who have seen much worse than you and were doing their utmost to make you feel welcome. I loved them.

Going inside, I was greeted by a gauntlet of art created by the inmates: wood burns of wistful window views and beaded jewelry meant for someone else. Hideously bad black coffee was offered by an eager man with sad eyes. I bought my mother a pair of earrings, and myself a carving of a lonesome trestle spanning calm waters. I will treasure it always.

The play was gorgeous and heartbreaking; the men obviously cared about this production and made sure it was a glorious and heartwarming occasion, even if the lines and stage directions were sometimes momentarily forgotten.

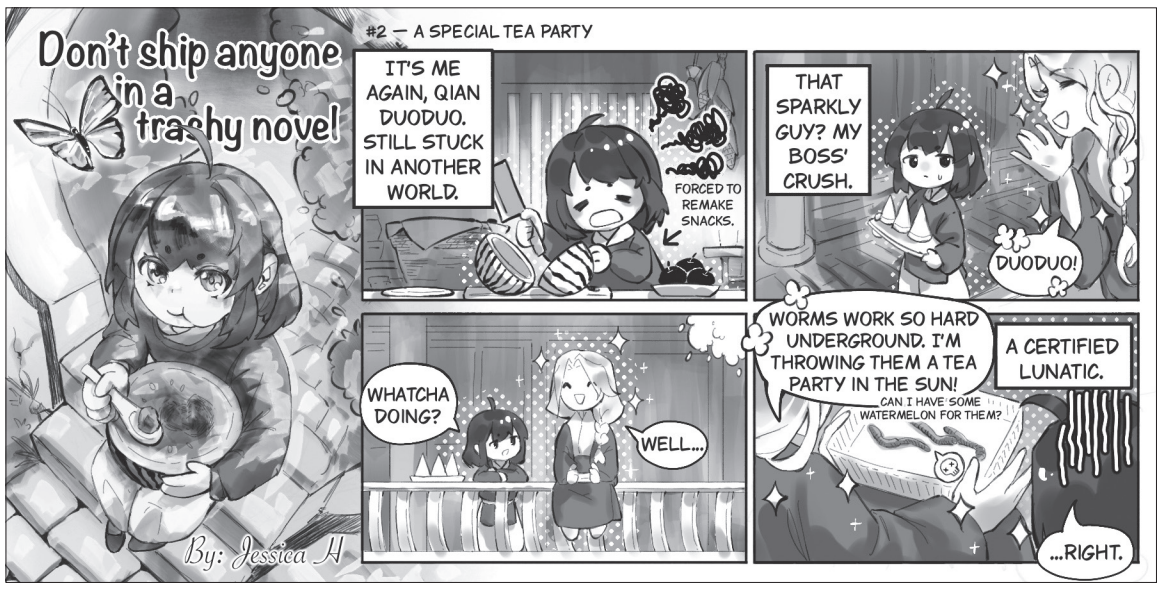
After collecting my watch, wallet, and sense of freedom, I thought about these men as I made the long drive home. This was not the most skilled production I've ever seen, nor did it have the most moneyed and exotic set design, but it was truly a production that I will never forget. I will go to every single William Head production I can, ad infinitum.



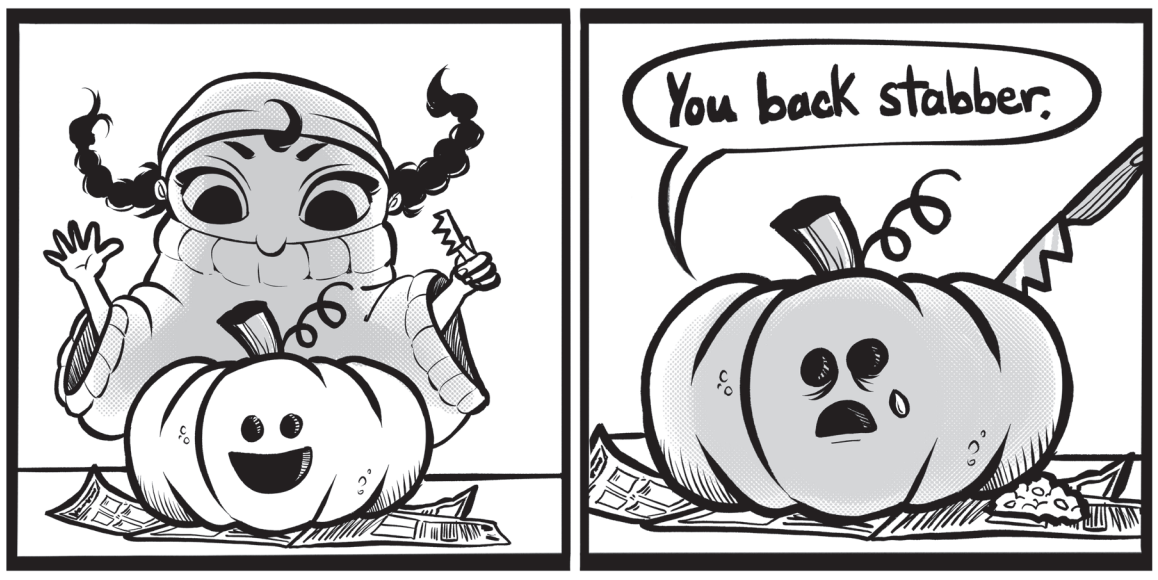
PHOTO PROVIDED

Actors at a previous William Head on Stage production (photos for *45 Days in Orbit* were not cleared by press time).

Don't Ship Anyone in a Trashy Novel - Jessica He



Selah - Lauren Dellebuur





JEREMY LARRY JAMES FREDERICKSON
INDIGENOUS DIRECTOR, CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY
VICE CHAIR, NATIONAL INDIGENOUS ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

When I stepped into the role of Indigenous director at the Camosun College Student Society, I carried with me not only my own story, but the voices of my ancestors, my children, every Indigenous student who has ever walked onto this campus wondering if they truly belonged. This work is deeply personal, deeply relational, grounded in the teachings I carry from my community and the Elders who have guided me.

One of those Elders is Wilfred Buck, a Cree star knowledge keeper I've had the honor of meeting, learning from, and bringing to Camosun. His teachings stay with me, especially his reminder that "We are star people. We come from the stars, and one day we will return to them." That teaching is about identity, but it is also about responsibility, about remembering who we are and why we walk the paths we do. It guides me every day in this role.

This fall, I've been working in Nova Scotia with the National Indigenous Advocacy Committee (NIAC), representing Camosun at the national level through the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA). For many students, CASA is just another acronym in student politics. But for Indigenous students, CASA is a doorway... a place where our stories, our barriers, our hopes can reach federal decision-makers. Through NIAC, that doorway becomes Indigenous-led, Indigenous-informed, as well accountable to our communities.

Across the country, Indigenous students are leaving post-secondary education or not attending at all because the system was never built with us in mind. The barriers are heavy: chronic underfunding, food insecurity, lack of cultural supports, intergenerational trauma, and the ongoing impacts of residential school denialism. Many students do not have access to band funding. Many are first-generation learners navigating complex forms alone. Many are carrying responsibilities to their families and communities that institutions do not understand.

In Nova Scotia, I met students who told me they almost didn't apply to school because the financial forms were overwhelming. At Camosun, I've sat with students who skipped meals to afford textbooks. I've listened to students who felt unsafe in classrooms where their histories were debated instead of respected. These stories are systemic.

My role, both at Camosun and nationally, is to make sure these realities are not ignored. Through NIAC, we are pushing for increased federal funding for Indigenous learners, adjustments to out-dated scholarship programs, and stronger supports for work-integrated learning so students don't have to leave their communities to survive. Through CASA, Camosun students gain a national voice, one that can influence policy, funding, and the future of post-secondary education in Canada.

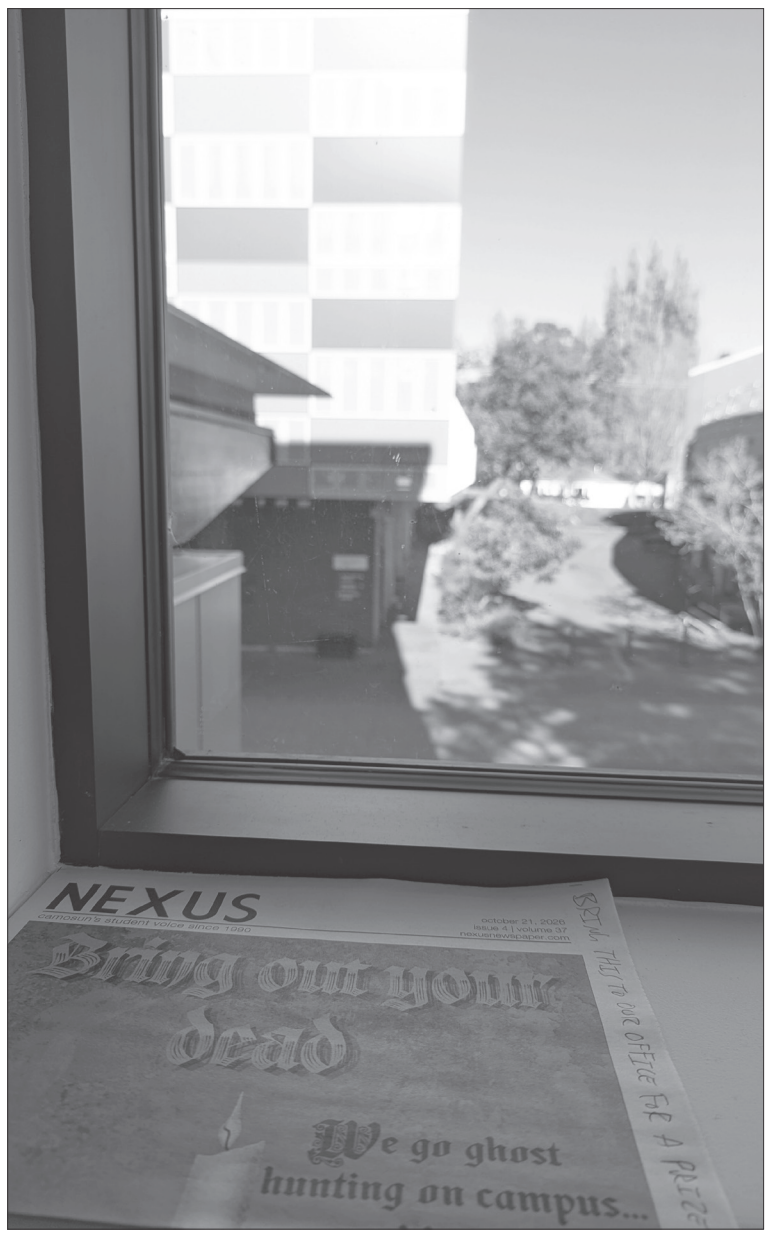
This column is about legacy. About change and a good path forward...

I am building systems, relationships, cultural foundations so that when the next Indigenous director steps into this role, they inherit something stronger than what I received. They will have Elders connected to the college. They will have clearer pathways to support. They will have national relationships already in place. They will have a fire that is already burning.

My hope is simple: that every Indigenous student at Camosun feels seen, supported, and grounded. That they know they belong here. And that the echoes of our ancestors guide us forward, together.

contest

Find the hidden *Nexus* and win



NIK OVSTAAS/*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.

NEXUS
camosun's student voice since 1990

Need some advice? On your own for the first time? Navigating school, work, and life and getting overwhelmed?

Let Mel—a mom, a current student, and a former post-secondary academic advisor—answer your questions!

A new column coming soon in *Nexus*!

Email your questions to editor@nexusnewspaper.com today!



Trill's Recipes

by Trillium McNabb

Apple cinnamon bread

Bread ingredients:
2 or 3 large apples
1 tbsp cinnamon
1/2 cup and 3/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup melted butter
2 eggs
2 tsp vanilla extract
3/4 cup milk
4 cups flour
2 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp salt
Crumble ingredients:
1 cup quick oats
1 cup flour
1 tsp cinnamon
1 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup melted butter

With autumn in full swing, fall flavours are everywhere. My personal favourite is apple cinnamon, so here's an apple cinnamon bread recipe.

This kind of bread is made in a similar way to banana bread.

First, peel and core 2 to 3 large apples. Then cut them into chunks approximately an inch long. In a bowl, coat the apples in 1 tbsp of cinnamon and a 1/2 cup of sugar, then mix thoroughly. Put the apples in a pot and turn on the stove to medium-high. Once the juices that the apples release start to simmer, turn the temperature to medium. Stir occasionally until some of the apples are cooked all the way through and others have broken down. Take the apples off the heat and let them cool.

To make the crumble topping, measure out 1 cup each of flour, quick oats, and brown sugar into a bowl. Add in 1 tsp of cinnamon and give everything a mix. Melt 1/2 cup of butter and pour in a third at a time into the flour mixture. The crumble should be able to hold its shape and have a sandy texture.

Preheat the oven to 350 F. For the dry ingredients, measure out 2 cups of flour, 2 tsp of baking powder, 1/2 tsp of baking soda, and 1/2 tsp of salt. Give the dry ingredients a mix with a whisk. For the wet ingredients, measure out 1 1/2 cups of the apple filling, 3/4 cup of sugar, 1/2 cup of melted butter, 3/4 cup of milk, 2 tsp of vanilla extract, and 2 eggs. Mix the wet ingredients together until it's well combined.

Pour the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients in parts. Mix between each addition. The batter should be loose, but thick enough that the apples stay suspended. Pour the batter into a loaf pan that has either been greased with butter or cooking spray. You can also fill the pan halfway then sprinkle extra cinnamon. Pour the rest of the batter on top to have a decorative line through your loaf.

You can use a strip of parchment paper on the bottom and sides of the pan to help prevent sticking; this also helps pick the loaf up out of the pan.

Add the crumble on top of the batter and put the pan in the oven; set a timer for one hour. Check to make sure that the loaf has cooked all the way through with a toothpick or a wooden chop stick. The toothpick should come out clean. If not, put the loaf back in the oven for five-minute increments, checking each time.

When the apple cinnamon bread is done baking, take it out of the oven and let it cool in the pan. When the pan is cool enough to touch take the loaf out. Let the loaf cool for a few more minutes, then it's ready to be cut into and enjoyed.



TRILLIUM MCNABB/*NEXUS*

Get ready for a taste of fall with this apple cinnamon bread recipe.



A Student's Guide to Local Politics

by Amelia Wilde

The importance of having values in 2026

It's hard to not be discouraged these days when your social-media feed is plagued with horrific news updates, and any attempt to reach out and support causes you believe in feels like you're not doing enough. This effect feels even worse when the issues hit close to home, just like the recent municipal elections hit me.

As I angrily paced around my living room, fresh off seeing the new names listed under the Langford town council results, I stopped to notice a book I had left out on the table earlier: *I Told You So!* by Matt Kaplan.

The bright red letters on its cover stuck with me as I swallowed a festering ball of complicated feelings in my gut. The book discusses remarkable scientific breakthroughs throughout history that came at the cost of the scientists who uncovered them; those who found themselves shamed, ridiculed, or even imprisoned for proposing theories that were later proven to be true.

I have reflected a lot on these scientists in the last week, particularly on their role in progress and what it means to be "progressive" in a world so rife with judgement and division.

I was fed a steady diet of perfectionism from a young age. I hoped that by appeasing everyone around me, I could avoid trouble in the long run. This fell apart quickly, however, when I learned about the land of talking heads and dress pants that led our society. In the land of politics, one doesn't simply make friends with everyone on the playground; in fact, it can often be in your own best interest to disagree on certain matters (the major difference being that your parents probably won't get called in if you get into a fight over who's been on the swing too long).

Nevertheless, "I hate politics!" was my standard catchphrase throughout childhood, simply because I never wanted to be the minnow that swam against the current. The truth is that I never really hated politics; I simply hated that the political sphere didn't feel like a safe space where one could truly be vulnerable or express their viewpoints without an ensuing character assassination.

This is why Kaplan's book fascinates me so—to learn of these quiet historical figures who have shaped our lives so tremendously yet suffered at the hands of many because of it.

I contemplate being one of those scientists in today's modern political climate. In a world where every hypothesis feels like a critique, and every criticism becomes a dogpile, it's troubling to find the most empathetic ways into a conversation. But at the risk of losing a couple colleagues along the way, I've begun to implement these fun things called "opinions" into my daily life. Sure, it may be a disagreement about chocolate being better than vanilla ice cream now (fight me!), but I think the overarching goal is to be able to speak my mind on the actual values I hold without worrying about ostracization.

In a world where I'm still privileged to be able to speak my mind, vote for who I believe in, and diplomatically criticize others' choice of hat, I'd like to take my chances and choose vulnerability over fear. Who knows? Maybe one day I'll be the one crying, "I told you so."



Mindset Matters

by Feya Rose

Why comparison hurts us (part 1)

"Comparison is the thief of joy." We've probably all heard this quote at some point, regardless of whether or not we know to whom it's attributed. We all understand this on a surface level: if you compare your achievements or failures to other people's, you'll likely feel disappointed if you don't measure up, and that could make you want to quit.

However, it goes much deeper and can be even more damaging than people realize.

This quote is misattributed to a few famous people in history; however, its origins lack substantial evidence supporting its authenticity to any of them. The earliest verified match for this statement (or close to it) that I could find is attributed to author and Jesuit priest John Powell, who wrote in his 1989 book *Happiness Is an Inside Job* that "comparison is the death of true self-contentment."

This likely got deeper over time than he realized.

Powell lived in a period where social media, as we know it in the modern day, was likely not even a consideration for how quickly and easily people could stay connected in real time. The way we now have access to seeing these perfectly curated snippets of people's lives—especially of their successes—has created a space where we put our best selves forward. And only our best selves.

If you're a rarity like me, you might overshare about your life in conversations and in your social-media presence. This is because I try to adhere to the same lifestyle that I teach: one that is built on a foundation of honest communication, genuine connection, and being fully transparent with everyone around me.

However, if you are like 99 percent of the world's population, you probably carefully curate what you do or don't say in public spaces. This could be for many reasons—for example, safety, comfort, censorship. These are all completely valid; your space, your rules.

However, when we are constantly being bombarded with these snippets of everyone's perfect lives, suddenly, perfection looks like the norm, and anything less than that just feels like a personal failure. Because it's not just celebrities or famous people we're looking up to now; it's every average person with a social-media account who appears to have the lifestyle we wish for. Which is entirely where the problem stems from.

We don't know what went on behind the edited photos or the AI-enhanced captions (many influencers are now using AI to "optimize" their posts, so we're losing even more honesty from the voices we see online). That makes it so crucially important to remember that there's always something else going on behind the scenes: the complications or hurdles not shown, the injuries or illnesses and setbacks not shared, the self-doubt or retries not mentioned. Those were all an important part of the process, too—the most important part, I'd argue. Because without those missteps to learn from, we can't see what works or not for our own process. Without learning, we can't grow; without growing, we can't reach our goals; and without reaching our goals, we can't succeed.

Comparing ourselves to another, without keeping in mind that they may have a unique process or different circumstances in life, robs us of the opportunity to learn and grow on our own.

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We're back!

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Instagram: @nexusatcamosun

CCSS Holiday Hamper

Registration opening soon!

Registration will run from Noon on November 17th until Noon on November 19th.

Due to overwhelming applications last year, this year's hampers will be given out via lottery, and students who register will have the chance of receiving a hamper!

Registration link will be live on the linktree in our bio on Nov.17th at noon! Any questions please email:

ccssplan@camosun.ca



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