NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990

november 18, 2026
issue 6 | volume 37
nexusnewspaper.com

dont forget to ask for an extension!

Doctor appointment @ 2pm

- Finish Nexus deadline
- Do laundry
- Finish essay
- Work on lab
- Study for exam

THE BALANCING ACT

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DEADLINE

- Science - essay due Nov 15th
- Register for classes by Nov 25th
- Exam at 11:30 - Room 204
- Newsletter due @ 9am

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NEXUS

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OVERHEARD AT *NEXUS*: "This is the best day of my life."

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada

Canada

editor's letter

Learning to breathe

There's an old parable of an animal—usually a snail, but sometimes a frog—that makes progress up the side of a well by day but then loses some of that glorious progress while it slips backwards at night. The provenance of this philosophy is our friend Fibonacci, famous for his "sequence." It was introduced to the wider world in 1561, with the multilingual publication of Christoff Rudolff's *Die Coß*, the very same book of mathematical problems (and, apparently, idioms) that brought us the concept of the square root. It's been translated today as the conciliatory phrase much abused by mental-health professionals the world over as "two steps forward, one step back" (although Vladimir Lenin had a different take on it in his 1904 pamphlet titled *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: The Crisis in our Party*).

> We must always remember that a knock-back does not mean total failure: this is something I find myself needing to be reminded of loudly and often.

The point of this little history lesson from yours truly is that we must always remember that a knock-back does not mean total failure: this is something I find myself needing to be reminded of loudly and often.

I've recently experienced some setbacks, some minor and some major—for the moment, anyways. I seem to be moving from one crisis to the next right now, and it's culminated in a few days in the hospital and a battery of strange new medications. It's nothing life-altering in the long run, just one of those things that sometimes happens and must be overcome.

Of course, that's not the way I saw it while I was in the throes of these various and sundry crises. I was in a blind panic, just careening from one moment to the next, and could always feel the proverbial sword of Damocles tickling the top of my bald head, with its horsehair tether thinning by the moment. While I was in the hospital for my relatively brief stay, I was planning on telling them that no one could have any of my stuff, and I must be buried with it, like an Egyptian pharaoh. I'm taking it with me into oblivion.

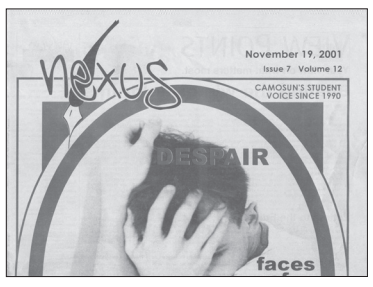
But, lo and behold, I survived.

What I needed was to take a deep breath. And then another. And then a third. And remember another parable that has been near and dear to my heart these many long years. It has its roots in both the Persian Sufi traditions as well as ancient Jewish/Hebrew traditions, and involves a powerful king (King Solomon, if you follow the Hebrew tradition), who asked his master craftspeople to create a ring that could make a sad man happy, or a happy man sad. His smiths created a ring of great beauty inscribed with words we should all take a minute to remind ourselves of once in a while: *This too shall pass*.

Nik Ovstaas, student editor
nik@nexusnewspaper.com

flashback

25 Years Ago in *Nexus*



GREG PRATT
MANAGING EDITOR

As if the microwaves weren't bad enough: Amidst current-day concerns over the state of the microwaves on campus (see page 3), the story "Cafeteria responds to safety concerns" in our November 19, 2001 issue seems almost like parody. The article references "bio-terrorism" and anthrax concerns, not at the college caf in particular, just in the white-knuckle fear of post-9/11 in general. Anyway, the caf was all good, and hopefully the microwaves will be all good, too.

Got some bad news for ya: In "Beating the winter doldrums" this issue, writer Mike Tremblay talked about "the dark and dismal days of winter," although he put a positive spin on it, saying he liked winter and used it as a time of reflection. Well, Tremblay would have even more dark to reflect in now, with the recent time-change shenanigans resulting in a morning that was still pitch black at around 8 today. And that darkness is only going to stretch later into the morning. But, hey, more time to reflect! And hopefully you're wearing something that reflects so tired drivers see you as they squint their way into work.

Buying nothing, still: The Students for Environmental Awareness column in this issue talked about the importance of Buy Nothing Day, an annual day of anti-consumerism that's still going strong in 2026. "Our consumption patterns bring short-term fulfillment but result in long-term environmental damage," the group wrote in the column, and it's a sentiment that still holds true today. This year's Buy Nothing Day is Friday, November 27.

open space

Paid parking preys on students

NIK OVSTAAS
STUDENT EDITOR

Is there anything designed to enrage us more than the hegemonic practices of the car-parking industry? I say no. I understand paying for parking in a secured, sheltered location, but why should we pay to simply leave our vehicles in an untended and unmaintained lot open to the elements? And why are the poor and infirm targeted so much more than any other sector?

> I find it so galling that this corporation preys on broke students trying to go to school, as well as people in various states of crisis visiting the hospital, people who may well be experiencing the worst day of their lives.

Recently I've been hanging out a lot at urgent care centres (apparently, the only way left to have medications refilled, or indeed to see a doctor at all); the only other place I regularly park my car for any period of time is on campus. A major contributing factor to my soaring levels of poverty has become parking. I'm paying out the nose (when I bother to pay, that is) just to let my car sit, minding its own business in an untended lot for an hour or two here and there. It's infuriating. And no better than extortion.

Section 346 of the Canadian Criminal Code relates to extortion or gangsterism (which sounds fun and cool, but in this case isn't). It states, "Every one commits extortion who, without reasonable justification or excuse and with intent to obtain anything, by threats, accusations, menaces or violence induces or attempts to induce any person... to do anything or cause anything to be done."

Without mentioning any names, you'll notice that the parking lots of all the major hospitals on the island are enforced by the same menacing, eye-of-Sauron-esque, yellow-and-black sign as our own embattled parking lots on both Camosun campuses.

I find it so galling that this corporation preys on broke students trying to go to school, as well as people in various states of crisis visiting the hospital, people who may well be experiencing the worst day of their lives. All that hope for the future in schools, and the pain and desperation of the present in hospitals, only to come back to the safe refuge of your vehicle and see that vexatious little slip of indestructible paper waving gaily in the breeze at you from your windshield. And if you are unable or unwilling to pony up the cash, give them their vig, they'll take your mode of getting from place to place away; the similarities to kneecapping someone are blatant and obnoxious.

Now, I'm being melodramatic and engaging in a little bit of hyperbole here; I am, after all, just a cantankerous old blast furnace of a man. But I do so tire of being under the thumb of the chairman. I picture him tilting back in his leather armchair in a walnut-panelled office somewhere, watching on closed-circuit cameras as we count our nickels to see if we can stay to learn today, or visit dear old gran on her deathbed, and guffawing as he ashes his Cuban cigar into a platinum ashtray, swirling his snifter of cognac as he writes himself cheques.

Oh, by the way, the corporation is a private one and not enforced by law, and has no bearing on your licence or insurance. And while they occasionally get testy and tow a car, I'm still not going to pay when I don't want to.

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

Don't fear the compliments

Felt pulled to write in and say how much I enjoy reading *Nexus* while waiting for my bus home after work. I often have to walk to the Camosun Interuban bus loop; it's become my habit to read the new issue every week now as a way to not mindlessly scroll on my phone but to also keep a pulse in local happenings. Keep up the good work! I really liked the feature article ("Don't fear the essay," November 4, 2026 issue) by Ashley Hagel, too.

IENELLE DELOS REYES
COMMUNITY MEMBER



maintenance

Camosun student voices concern over state of campus microwaves



GREG PRATT/*NEXUS*

Camosun College student Freya Zurcher is concerned over the state of the microwaves in the college cafeteria.

> "It's disappointing you have to campaign for a clean space to heat your food, just to take care of basic needs."
>
> FREYA ZURCHER
> CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT

GREG PRATT
MANAGING EDITOR

A Camosun student is sounding the alarm on microwave cleanliness at Camosun's Lansdowne campus.

First-year University Transfer student Freya Zurcher says that she noticed the microwaves located in the Lansdowne cafeteria were dirty when she started using them in September; then, she says, she noticed they were getting worse.

"It's not really my nature to just just complain," says Zurcher. "If I can, I will attempt to take care of matters myself, but I realize we're under the college umbrella, and so there might be some rules and things there. But I just thought that this is gross, so I asked for a cloth."

From there, Zurcher did what she could, cleaning the microwaves using supplies cafeteria staff provided her. She says she spent around 15 minutes on cleaning.

"I just seemed like, this feels like I'm the only one who's doing this, who's attending to this. Absolutely, it may not be that person's job or that person's job, but it's also really not mine," she says. "And I don't know if I'm contravening some kind of policy here either by trying to tend to it, and I'm aware that that could be an issue. But at the same time, I'm trying to look out for my own and others around me, my own health and safety and practices around a microwave. I don't want to put my food into something that's disgusting. And, yeah, objectively disgusting."

Zurcher sent emails to the college's Facilities department and the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS). While the CCSS used to be involved in microwave maintenance, a staff member confirmed to *Nexus* that microwaves are no longer the responsibility of the student society.

On a later occasion, a caf staff member stepped in to take over the cleaning. Still, Zurcher is frustrated that having to spend time cleaning is an unnecessary burden on the student.

"It made me feel a little annoyed, because I'm paying thousands of dollars for a great education—profs are great, I've had great experiences. It's disappointing you have to campaign for a clean space to heat your food, just to take care of basic needs," she says.

Camosun director of Facilities operations Julie Oakley says that the microwaves are cleaned by custodial staff on the evening shift once a day.

"Our office manager did a buzz around yesterday to look at them, and when he looked at them, they were clean," says Oakley. "So they are being cleaned once a day."

But Zurcher says that the food sitting in the microwave is more than unsightly: it could be a health issue.

"Of course it could be a foodsafe issue," she says. "I don't see how it couldn't be. Of course it would be."

However, Oakley says that with the microwaves getting regular cleaning, it's not likely to get to that point.

"I would think that if the microwave was cleaned the night before that organisms wouldn't have time to grow to be a foodsafe issue if it was the next day that she was encountering it," says Oakley.

Zurcher says that beyond having college staff regularly clean the microwaves, there should be a way for students to clean up when there are food spills.

"It's disappointing that there's no way for students who are inclined to clean up for themselves, if there's a little over and above mess, accidentally," she says. "There's no way in that moment besides leaving all your things and disrupting the lineup and going and asking for something."

Oakley says this is a great idea and that Facilities will look into implementing it.

"What I think we could do is probably, like the student suggested, put a roll of paper towel and a garbage bin next to them so that folks who maybe make a mess could have things at their disposal to clean up their own mess," she says.

Since sending her emails to the college, Zurcher has heard back from Facilities, who requested more information so they could look into it further. Since hearing back, she says, things are looking cleaner.

"Since I sent those emails, my general perception walking in is that it seems that it got a lot cleaner, which is great," she says. "Hopefully that continues."

Oakley says her team will make sure that regular cleaning is being done.

"We'll continue to make sure that our evening staff are cleaning the microwaves each day, and we'll take a look at deploying waste bins and paper towels nearby where microwaves are so folks that actually unintentionally cause a mess have things available to them to wipe up."

NEWS BRIEFS

Visual Arts brings artist to campus for talk

The Camosun College Visual Arts department is presenting its next visiting artist talk on Wednesday, November 25. From 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm, Beth Stuart will be speaking in the Gibson Auditorium (Young 216) at the Lansdowne campus; Stuart's work—which is in media including ceramics, writing, painting, performance, and more—explores binaries and critiques of colonial traditions, among other topics. The talk is free, and everyone is welcome.

Chargers on top

The Camosun Chargers men's basketball team were ranked number one in Canada recently. For the week of November 3, the team sat on top of the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association national poll. The men's basketball team is currently in their first season with coach Craig Beauchamp. See camosun.ca/chargers for more info on the four Chargers teams.

–GREG PRATT, MANAGING EDITOR

GOT A NEWS TIP? EMAIL EDITOR@NEXUSNEWSPAPER.COM TODAY.

NEXUS
camosun's student voice since 1990

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

CCSS Christmas Market comes back to town, raises money for student cause



PHOTOS PROVIDED

Vendors (above) and Santa (right) from a previous year's Christmas Market.

> "It can be, I guess, a sobering experience, you know, being on campus, head down in the books, feeling the pressure of finals really, really coming towards you. But I just want to give them a little break from that, a little bit of respite."
>
> MADISON HUYNH
> CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY



GREG PRATT
MANAGING EDITOR

For the fifth year in a row, the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) is hosting its Christmas Market, offering students a variety of handmade and artistic goods for purchase.

CCSS women's director Madison Huynh says the market—which takes place this year from 2 to 5 pm on Tuesday, November 24 in the Sherri Bell Hall in Wilna Thomas—started as a way to support and celebrate students' passions and businesses, especially as tuition-fee deadlines creep around the corner.

"Slowly though, it's also morphed into supporting other student causes," she says. "Last year we helped actually build the new boat out by the daycare centre. We raised about a little over $600 for that. And every little bit, you know, goes a long way."

Attendees who donate will be entered into a draw for a chance to win one of 10 door prizes featuring various goods from vendors. This year, the student society will be using donations to support the library purchasing required textbooks, giving students the access to required course information and readings without the high-cost investment textbooks often carry.

"The library tries to keep an updated assortment of all of those textbooks, but it doesn't always have the most recent textbook, and sometimes they don't have textbooks for certain classes," Huynh says. "So this year we're going to be trying to raise funds to kind of fill in that gap and support students that way. Because I know textbooks can cost a lot, and I've depended on the library as a resource. And also, personally, when it comes to online textbooks, it feels like I never own it and you can spend a lot of money to rent a textbook for a year or two when the library is there and it's a free resource."

Students can expect around 40 vendors at the market this year, ranging in price to cater to student budgets and interests.

"This year I'm expecting quite a bit of jewelry; a bit of pottery... there's going to be body care, so like soaps and bath bombs; handmade art; candles; and there's also a leather worker. So quite a variety of things," says Huynh.

But even students with the tightest of budgets can enjoy this year's market; Huynh says free hot chocolate will be available, and festivity will be abundant.

"We got little marshmallows and candy canes to go with it," she says. "And previous years we've had a student dressed up as Santa to take pictures with. We have a big photo booth that people can get their pictures taken. But this year they wanted to really dress up like the Grinch."

As finals approach, Huynh says the Christmas Market is a way to bring a bit of levity to students while they hunker down.

"It can be, I guess, a sobering experience, you know, being on campus, head down in the books, feeling the pressure of finals really, really coming towards you," she says. "But I just want to give them a little break from that, a little bit of respite."

leisure

Five affordable ways for Camosun students to have fun

LAUREN JENSEN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As the midterm season begins to wind down, you may be coming to the joyous realization that your calendar is beginning to open up. Maybe you've spent the last month crawling between home and campus and forgot the rest of the world existed and are unsure how to re-enter society. Luckily, there are plenty of ongoing events and organizations that want to connect people with community and culture at a reasonable price.

Whether you like your enrichment chaotic, crafty, or theatrical, here are some options to get you thinking about how you want to spend your time, now that you finally have some to spare.

For those with musical talent who want to put their improvisational skills to the test, or who want to just watch others create music in front of their eyes, The Grand Bazaar Jam is held every second Tuesday at Forged Axe Throwing. After the opening band plays at 7:30, the randomized ensemble of participants cannot play any pre-written songs, so you're guaranteed a performance you'll never get anywhere else. There's a $10 cover charge to check out (or take part in) the musical chaos on display.

Maybe you're just looking for that third space to gather in community—Simon Says just opened a downtown location to provide just that. Each month they host a number of varied events. Ring making, a poetry workshop, and a night market are just a few of the events held in the latter half of November. Ticket prices vary depending on the type of event—workshop events run slightly higher, and some offer a pay-what-you-want option, but they're all worth looking into.

Fernwood Craft Club holds themed craft workshops once a month. On Sunday, November 22 they're making cozy miniature houses. They offer "buddy pricing" on tickets, which is a cheaper option if you bring a friend. All the instruction and materials are provided for an afternoon of creation.

Did you know the Victoria Symphony offers $15 tickets for most events to anyone under 35? It's true! Just sign up for their mailing list and you can get notified when discount tickets become available. It's a great opportunity to get fancy without paying a fancy price, and they have an array of Christmas-themed concerts in December to get in a holiday spirit.

The Belfry Theatre also does pay-what-you-want tickets to all of their shows. The Belfry puts on a contemporary play almost every month with a focus on Canadian work. *Blind Date*, an unscripted comedy about Mimi the french clown going through the trials and tribulations of dating, runs through December.

There's no need to let a budget stop you from engaging in the culture and community of our whimsical city; you just need to know where to look. Studying and sleep are very important, but so is recreation and indulging in the arts once in a while. Balance is key, and, when you're a student, finding that balance on a budget is essential.



BANKOMEDIA

Students can pay what they want to go see *Blind Date* at The Belfry Theatre.

food security

Camosun College Student Society continues to offer free bread and produce days

> "Students are really struggling... The cost of rent is going up. The cost of tuition is going up. If you drive a car, that gas is going up... Sometimes people may forget their lunch and they're like, oh, I'm just hungry today. You know, that's what it's there for. It's for anybody that needs it."
>
> CHRISTINE DESROCHERS
> CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY



HANNAH UNDERWOOD/*NEXUS*

A selection of free bread and produce available courtesy of the Camosun College Student Society.

STEPHANIE FINN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Every Thursday, alternating between the Lansdowne and Interurban campuses, the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) offers weekly free bread and produce days for students. From 10:30 am until they run out, the CCSS has an assortment of fresh bread, fruit, and vegetables available for students at no cost.

CCSS member services coordinator Christine Desrochers says that initiatives like this are important because these are trying times for students.

"Students are really struggling... The cost of rent is going up," she says. "The cost of tuition is going up. If you drive a car, that gas is going up... Sometimes people may forget their lunch and they're like, oh, I'm just hungry today. You know, that's what it's there for. It's for anybody that needs it."

Desrochers says that initially the free bread and produce program was run by students. In 1999 she joined and helped formalize it. Using the CCSS budget, Desrochers began shopping around for deals, mostly on non-perishables, and arranging occasional fresh produce days.

"I order in anywhere from $600 to $1,000 worth of produce from a company in Vancouver," she says. "We just set up outside and say, 'Hey, you want some free produce? This is all brand new stuff.'"

Then about 11 years ago, Jeneece Place—a home where children and their families can stay while receiving medical care in Victoria—had excess bread, donated to them by Thrifty Foods. They offered it to the CCSS, which Desrochers turned into Free Bread days. Later, COBS Bread would start donating their end-of-day goods, too.

"Then we got involved in something called the Food Rescue Project, which is part of Mustard Seed," she says. "I pay about $25 a year, and we get 10 banana boxes every week. Some weeks we get more. Some weeks we get frozen food with it. Last year, for instance, we were able to do a pizza day for our trades students... Sometimes there's stuff that's brand new, like [the grocery store] just ordered way too many apples, and so we'll get cases of apples... It doesn't cost us a lot of money, and we're helping students."

Desrochers says that special efforts are made to identify and source items that students particularly like to eat.

"Sometimes we'll be out there yelling, 'Come get some free groceries!' And they'll be like, 'No, no, I'm good'. I said, 'You're turning down an avocado? Like, do you know how expensive they are?' So they're like, "Oh, you have avocados? Hold on, I might change my mind.'"

Desrochers says that the CCSS doesn't want students to face any obstacles in accessing this program. No ID is required to get the free food.

"As soon as you put a barrier in front of people, they're not going to jump. And you know who you're going to miss out on? You're going to miss out on the ones that are really struggling and really having a hard time."

Desrochers says sometimes there will be toiletries and other household items mixed in with the bread and produce for students to take. (For more information about these programs and additional resources see camosunstudent.org.)

"Students need those, and if we can give them away, we're going to," she says. "And I always tell students, you know, even if you can't cook that right now, if that pepper looks like it's good, take it home, chop it up, throw it in your freezer."

eyed on campus

Feeding starving students



HANNAH UNDERWOOD/*NEXUS*

The Camosun College Student Society gave out free chili at the Lansdowne campus on Thursday, November 5.



The balan

Learning to juggle

Story by Ashley H

Image by Hannah Unde

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This semester, I became a cautionary tale: six classes, two jobs, zero room to breathe. And I don't say this to garner pity, but rather to offer you some insight into an experience that has been exhausting, boundary-pushing, and should never be repeated again. In other words, I say this to warn you. Because it's easy to dismiss your present needs when you're caught up in the prospect of a future payoff that isn't even promised, actively sacrificing your sanity in the process.

I think, as students, we're pretty well accustomed to living our lives in the future tense, constantly obsessing over the next deadline, exam, or assignment. And in turn, staying present becomes nearly impossible. It seems like every immediate obligation is screaming for your full attention, draining what little cognitive energy you have left. And yeah, I'm sure some people can deal with this just fine, but I, for better or for worse, am certainly not one of them.

Until now, balance has always been a non-negotiable for me. I knew from experience that if I wanted to avoid burnout, then I had to ensure that my life was in no way consumed entirely by school. But this time around, that balance evaporated, and eventually my body stopped asking for rest and started demanding it.

For months, basic human functions became monumental difficulties. I struggled to fall asleep, and even more so to wake up. Over time, it got harder to focus, harder to move my body in a way that felt natural. But what could I do but keep showing up? It wasn't a fear of failure that kept me coming back; that's a pretty unavoidable part of life. Instead, it was this stubborn refusal to clear my plate because I'd made commitments, and ultimately the stakes felt way too high to just abandon them.

As a first-generation college student, I'm proud to be here, but that pride carries a lot of weight. And while I am allowed to fail, yes, I'm not allowed to stop showing up. But what I failed to realize earlier is that "showing up" means a whole lot more than just having perfect attendance and submitting assignments on time. Showing up also means taking care of yourself, even if you have to enforce it.

Now, I'm not advocating for you to skip class or start ignoring deadlines on a whim. But sometimes there's nothing wrong with missing a lecture or two to catch up on sleep or going out with friends instead of starting that assignment. Because, ultimately, if you're suffering from burnout and procrastination, the last thing you need is to be pushed further. The solution, I've found, is to take a big step back and recognize what's really going on: your mind and body are begging for a break.

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king on a heavy workload like me, it's crucial to accept that you cannot ive your all to every single class every single day, and learning how to at workload is key for both personal and academic survival. Believe me, hat this advice can be brutal, especially for perfectionists. But part of life o let go, prioritize your obligations, and trust that the rest will shake out. se you, it will. All you need is a strategy, and the earlier, the better.

operating at maximum capacity, it can be devastating to feel like you're ne thing or another, but the sky won't fall as a result. No matter how you just can't add up. Sometimes, that five-percent assignment has to be can ace your 25-percent midterm. You're allowed to make that choice. In o someday, if you haven't already.

strategy has been to knock out the smaller tasks first. That way, once the , nothing is hanging over my head. Then the bigger tasks come into focus.

ght look nothing like this, and that's fine. Because the fact of the matter is, tegies will hit the wall sometimes. Life happens. You'll get sick, a family ome up, you'll get called into work, or maybe you'll just forget to set your efore. Nobody expects perfection from you, except for you.

metimes I envy the students who genuinely just do not care, who can coast e minimum. I mean, what a luxury to possess that kind of detachment! care to a fault. Like, I've woken up in the middle of the night, running ns and terminology before my eyes can even open. Some might call that might be worth looking into. In any case, it's a pattern that I'm actively ecause not only does it serve no purpose, but it's eroding my health as well.

leads me to wonder what is actually worth the sacrifice. I mean, the last I want is to leave post-secondary as a shell of a human being who never ed how to delegate, set boundaries, or rest when I need it. I'd like to under- nits; what I need and what I don't need.

nester's schedule, my hobbies have pretty much completely vanished. And on that I do find a free moment, this incessant guilt creeps in, insisting that s taking my eye off the prize, even just for a second. But what is the actual nic fatigue? Chart-topping cortisol levels? A generally unpleasant attitude? m working toward a future defined by balance. While I do have career e no intention of making my job the centre of my universe. So why, then, cademic standard that completely contradicts the life I want for myself? I e really necessary to achieve one's dreams? Maybe. But sacrificing every- ad bargain. Don't get me wrong, I have every intention of getting where rever that may be—but not at any cost.

t to remember that college is only a season, and it will soon be over. And urself is healthy, going beyond your limits is not. Sure, nothing changes es. But then what kind of change do you actually want for yourself? To be r, and unrecognizable? Or simply at peace? Conduct yourself accordingly.

nout a clear idea of who you are, where you're going, or what you're doing ere, you can easily become untethered, and thereby susceptible to winds that ay carry you places you never wished to visit. As author Edward Abbey put e sake of growth is the ideology of the cancer cell." Without a determinate risk of spiralling into an endless cycle of self-improvement with no clear why. What are you trying to get better for? What is actually driving you? ys had a pretty clear idea of who I am and who I'd like to be. I'm a writer, possess an annoyingly sensitive soul. I see beauty and pain in absolutely ruminate like nobody's business, although I will be the first to tell you ome a highly destructive habit if you let it.

ay, I was not built for accounting, health care, or engineering. I mean, of mense respect for those fields; they keep our world turning. But in a soci- institutions and corporations, I think we tend to forget to also credit the us want the world to keep turning. As Robin Williams put it in the 1989 *Society*: "Poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for." y, institutional metrics have deemed that monetary value is the single factor in determining all other forms of value. So I guess it doesn't really oy painting if painting doesn't pay the bills. Now, as an English student, fold in real time has been particularly heartbreaking. Because the way I ut passion is no life at all.

r's really driven that point home for me.

is brings me to something that's been on my mind quite a bit recently. se of the seemingly endless onslaught of post-secondary budget cuts, I nable to register for any classes related to my major, and as a result, my e an uninspiring cocktail of science, social science, and history—all won- nd you, just not really my things. That, coupled with an unforgiving work etely eradicated any ability I once had to relax or even enjoy my hobbies. t took a toll.

ighlights a growing crisis in post-secondary education. Here at Camosun, a large portion of our student body is enrolled in the University Transfer program, aiming to finish their degrees at a different school, often high-profile institutions like UVic or UBC. And while I know many of us appreciate Camosun's quaint atmosphere, I also think there's a myth that choosing to transfer to a similarly small institution means getting an inferior education with fewer opportunities, which is very untrue.

But as deficits, program cuts, and staff layoffs continue to spike across the province, it isn't multi-million-dollar research universities that suffer. Smaller, more accessible institutions are getting gutted, and Camosun is one example. We're also seeing it at Vancouver Island University, University of the Fraser Valley, and Vancouver Community College. Langara College was hit particularly hard, with over 200 faculty members receiving layoff notices and departments being forced to slash their budgets by 25 percent. The more we dismiss these smaller institutions, the fewer options we'll have. So if you're planning on transferring, I strongly urge you to look closely at all your options before defaulting to a massive institution, even if that's still what you end up choosing in the end.

Now, it would feel disingenuous for me to lecture you on stress management, sleep hygiene, or self care when I still struggle with those things immensely. And the timing doesn't help either. The days are getting shorter and darker, and it's incredibly difficult to find motivation when the world around you is blanketed by clouds and rain, the sun disappearing for weeks on end. It is bleak, and it is hard. Give yourself some grace for trying to continue.

Everything in the world, including us, is bound to a constant cycle of growth and decay. Seasons, we call those! Remember? They can shape our internal landscapes, as well as our external ones. I know I certainly move a little slower around this time of year. But in just over a month, we will reach the winter solstice; the shortest day of the year. And from then on, the world will get lighter and lighter, as will you.

Now, as we head into the home stretch of this semester, I want you to remember that it's possible to keep going, even when it feels utterly exhausting. You are relying on you, which means you can't afford to let the engine run dry. You have to be gentle with yourself. You have to do the next right thing, even if that thing is simply closing your laptop, pulling up the blankets, and taking a break.

While it's necessary to look ahead, to get excited for what life has in store, and keep the bigger goals in your line of sight, it's just as crucial to stay present. Because try as you might—and goodness knows I do—you cannot plan for what you do not know. The future holds endless possibilities, yes, but you can't predict its exact trajectory. And that's okay.

Sure, we can treat our plans like immutable blueprints, but in reality, I think they're a lot closer to rough sketches. I mean, for over a year, I meticulously planned my university transfer so that I could one day complete my BA with a concentration in English Literature. Then one day in early October, that option disappeared completely, and, suddenly, the plan that I'd spent so much time working toward fell into a sinkhole.

So, what could I do? Well, exactly what I've always done, and exactly what every student navigating this volatile system must learn to do: keep going, find a new direction, and see where I land. Because what's the alternative? Taking it on the chin and abandoning everything I've worked for? Curling up in defeat because the universe didn't adhere to my clearly mapped-out plan? No. And honestly, that all-or-nothing mindset is going to hold you back.

Instead, you pivot. You adjust your vision of the future, accept that it's infinitely susceptible to change, and you keep moving forward with the pieces you have left.

One day, this frantic scrambling won't feel so terrifying, stressful, or upsetting. One day, the dust will settle, and it will just be your life—a good, somewhat unpredictable life. But in order to get there, you have to keep showing up however you can, in whatever capacity you have to give, and remember that this gruelling semester is only a season. It may be cold, rain-soaked, and dark right now, but eventually winter has to give up, and the sun will shine once again.

What I'm starting to realize is that the classes we stress over, the grades we kill ourselves to achieve, and the timelines we arbitrarily impose on ourselves are entirely secondary to the act of actually living. And when we take away the GPA requirements and the crushing weight of an unmanageable course load, all we're really left with is ourselves and the things that make us feel alive—our favourite stories, our favourite memories, music that gives us an escape, and, most importantly, those fragile moments of genuine connection with the people who love us for exactly who we are, not what we can accomplish.

So, if you're holed up in the library, buried under a stack of flash cards and wondering how you're going to survive the next few weeks, I just want to remind you to look up and remember that there's a world out there beyond the perimeter of this campus, and it is fundamentally indifferent to whether or not you get an A or a C on your next exam. I'm not telling you not to try, but I am encouraging you to detach from the outcome and just do your best. That's all you can do.

As we finally approach the end of what's more or less felt like an endless semester, I want you to hold on to that feeling of resilience, even if you can't really recognize it right now. We are so close to the end, and you managed to get yourself here. That's something to be proud of. All we can do now is take it day by day, one day at a time.

I'll see you on the other side of the solstice.

exhibit

Into the Wosk Collection melting pot of 20th century artists

MATIAS LI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Bringing together legendary household art names like Picasso and Kahlo alongside regional heavyweights such as Fred Herzog, a new exhibit at The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (AGGV), *Into the Wosk Collection: Discovery & Wonder*, offers a panoramic view of art across mediums, including portrait photographs, prints, books, and many others.

The work is made up of pieces from the collection of Vancouver-based scholar and and philanthropist Yosef Wosk. AGGV director of collections and facilities Stephen Topfer says that this is a captivating collection looking at 20th century artists.

"Well, I suppose there's multiple hooks. One is if you're interested in art collectors from the region, it's certainly one of the significant ones. But personally, what I find interesting about the show is that it's a cross-section of 20th century art and artists," says Topfer. "So it's kind of a who's who of Chagall, Matisse, Picasso, photographers like Ansel Adams. I mean it's, to me, interesting in that sense because it's a very rare show that has this variety of artists represented."

While a visitor may walk into AGGV expecting the usual gallery, with walls filled with oil canvases and traditional paintings, *Into the Wosk* pivots away from this format and instead focuses on the printed images, the photographs, and the paper pieces.

"It's not so much photography versus printmaking or any other media, it's just that there's names in the show, again, like Fred Herzog, for instance, who's from Vancouver, or Marc Chagall, or Diego Rivera [whose photograph of Frida Kahlo is in the exhibit], Henri Cartier-Bresson, Man Ray, Diane Arbus, Walker Evans, I mean I could go on and on," says Topfer. "It's, I think, the variety of the people participating whose works are represented in the show that's really significant."

The exhibit bridges the gap between internationally well-known artists and local talent. For example, Herzog's pioneering work in street photography is featured alongside global giants. However, Topfer says that smaller names have recently started garnering interest.

"Fred Herzog... who for much of his career, when he was doing street photography, was not widely recognized as a street photographer because he actually had a day job, paid the bills, and the street photography was something that he did outside of work," says Topfer. "But since his passing, there's been a number of publications about him and exhibits around his work. I think he's quickly becoming a person of interest to anybody studying street photography or anybody studying photography from the west coast, for instance."



PHOTO COURTESY OF EQUINOX GALLERY AND THE ESTATE OF FRED HERZOG

Fred Herzog's untitled photo, taken at the PNE in 1960; the photo is part of *Into the Wosk Collection: Discovery & Wonder*.

Amidst the abstract and dense historical, cultural, and artistic themes, Topfer's goal with *Into the Wosk* remains grounded.

"I want you to feel like you've had a great time," he says, "and you've seen firsthand some work of some of the best artists in the 20th century."

Into the Wosk Collection: Discovery & Wonder
Until Sunday, April 25
Art Gallery of Greater Victoria
aggv.ca

review

Betrayal as insufferable as its characters

> I do wonder if the lack of movement was intentional, underscoring how emotionally constipated and underdeveloped these characters are.

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Betrayal is a 1978 stage play written by Harold Pinter currently being presented at The Belfry Theatre. It follows the lives of three people—Jerry, Robert, and Emma—over the course of several years. Robert and Emma are married; Jerry is Robert's best friend, and Emma's lover. *Betrayal* is presented through isolated vignettes travelling backward in time; we gradually gain an understanding of the intertwined relationship of these three as they struggle to obfuscate, justify, and come to terms with their uncomfortable arrangement.

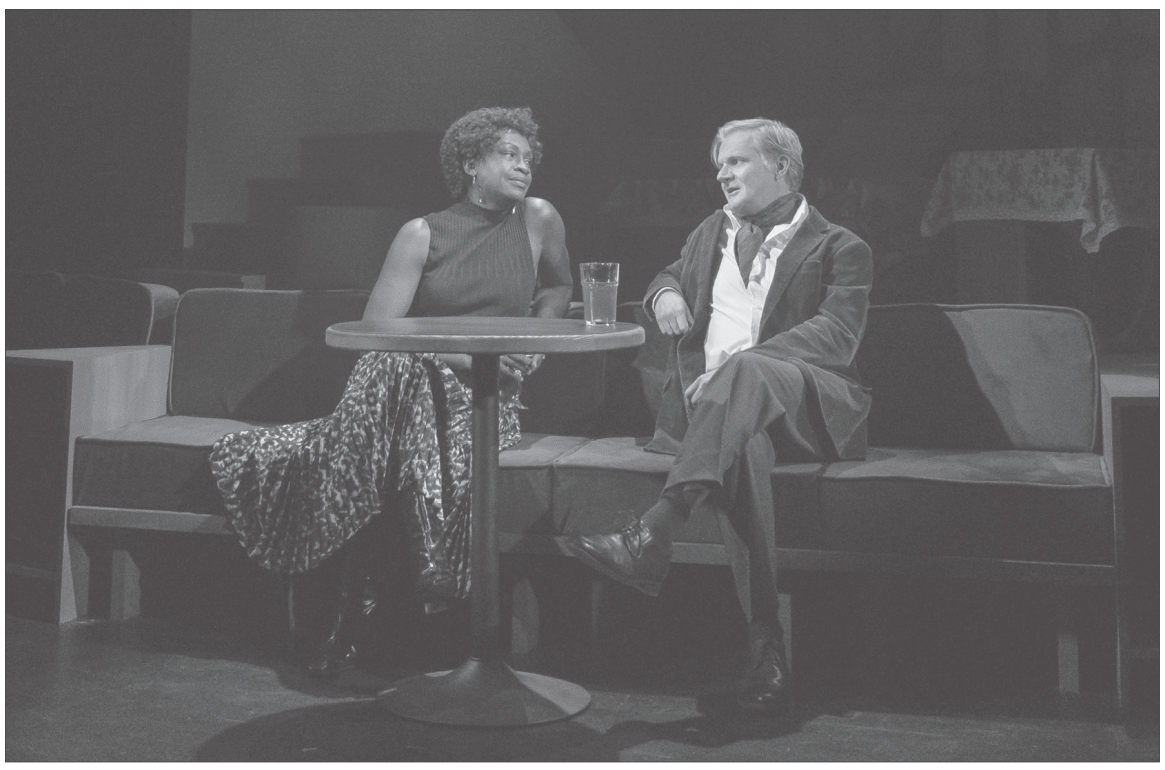
The main problem that I have with *Betrayal* is that its "protagonists" are all tedious, shitty people, wallowing in a swamp of childish upper-class malaise where their lives revolve around excessive day drinking, going out to "lunch" (mentioned 35 times in the script) and playing squash. Their idea of fun is drinking two bottles of wine at noon, being rude to their cafe server, and discussing their perfectly boring lives as editors of poetry at Cambridge and Oxford Universities.

Truly, we can all relate to this.

Attempting to be a comedy, its jokes revolve around low-intellect word play that amounts to little more than repeating the same thing four or five times in increasingly convoluted ways. As far as the subject matter goes, these characters are pathetic, loathsome, and reprehensible. They ceaselessly manipulate and mock each other while desperately trying to justify their repugnant behaviour. Throw in some casual jest about domestic violence, and I found myself begging for the end, or even the intermission, so I could forsake this travesty.

There was no redemption in the acting. The delivery was unnatural and wooden, and the characters had zero on-stage presence or chemistry. A good actor knows how to portray their characters as real human beings, rather than flat caricatures. However, considering the source material, maybe the acting was actually on point.

The blocking was savagely inadequate. A good director knows how to use character movement dynamically to allow their movement and body language to express how they feel, and to use the set in creative ways. In *Betrayal*, the actors rarely move at all, spending 10-minute scenes sitting or standing in the exact same place. I do wonder, on the other hand, if this lack of movement was intentional, underscoring how emotionally constipated and underdeveloped these characters are.



PETER POKORNY

The Belfry's presentation of *Betrayal* runs until Sunday, November 22.

Finally, concerning the set and costumes, I'm delighted to proclaim that this was the only positive aspect of the whole production. The set and costumes were stunning, and beautifully portray the period of the late '60s and early '70s. I was amazed by one design choice in particular, which was to communicate the changing time periods through songs piped over the radio. Although brief, they were well-written and beautifully sung.

I rarely regret seeing live theatre. However, *Betrayal* was insufferably boring in every way imaginable. My girlfriend commented on the suffocating ennui, suggesting the characters were just killing time, waiting to die. I understood, in that moment, as I sat and watched the minutes drag by, that I had finally found a way to relate to them.

Betrayal
Various times and days,
until Sunday, November 22
Pay what you can,
Belfry Theatre
belfry.bc.ca

review

Christos Papadopoulos stuns with contemporary dance performance



PINELOPI GERASIMOU

Christos Papadopoulos and his The Lion and the Wolf contemporary dance company recently came to the Royal Theatre.

> Never in my life have I witnessed stamina, strength, and memory like these dancers have.

GRACE CHOWNS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Even though I have a background in dance, nothing could have prepared me for *My Fierce Ignorant Step*. The performance—contemporary dance choreographed and directed by Greek choreographer Christos Papadopoulos—was presented at the Royal Theatre by Dance Victoria on November 6 and 7 as part of a world tour that includes Italy, Australia, England, and China.

Before the performance started there was an optional pre-show chat with Papadopoulos and University of Victoria Fine Arts professor and dance historian Allana Lindgren. They talked about what inspired Papadopoulos to begin his dance journey and start his own contemporary dance company The Lion and the Wolf, as well as where the ideas behind his performances come from. The pre-show wasn't very long, but I quite enjoyed it and believe it enhances the worth of the ticket.

Although Papadopoulos is a highly accomplished contemporary choreographer, earning him the 2025 Sadler's Wells Rose International Dance Prize, he didn't begin dancing until he was in post-secondary. As someone who thought they started pursuing dance too late, I love seeing others start their journey later in life as well.

My Fierce Ignorant Step is an hour-long performance; considering that tickets range from $35 to over $100, I wish that it was a bit longer. I also understand why it isn't, though: to my surprise, the dancers danced for the entire 60 minutes straight. No breaks, just constant movement. Never in my life have I witnessed stamina, strength, and memory like these dancers have. They move as if they are one being, and yet each person has their own individual moments and displays their own individuality.

The music is instrumental; it starts calm and builds tension, and just when I thought it couldn't get more powerful, it did—it's mesmerizing to witness. Headset mics pick up the sound of the dancers' breath to create interesting, almost chant-like sounds that increase the intensity of their movement.

You can tell that this group loves what they're doing and loves working together by the way they move in sync and make eye contact, which adds connection to the piece, and reminds me of when I would dance. Some movement was isolated and precise; other movement was fluid and connected. Each has purpose and control, no matter how big or small it is.

Because of the price, I can't fully justify that this show is right for everyone, especially those looking for something budget friendly. But I loved it; if you like dance, want to see something new, hang out with friends, and dress up in formal attire, then I highly recommend going to one of Papadopoulos' performances if he returns.

review

Clayface right movie at right time

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

> Matt Hagen is a vaguely pitiful creature shaped and manipulated by a ruthless cycle of external validation and vanity—the very system that you and I have bought into and actively perpetuate.

The DCU has always been the simpering little brother of the MCU, trying and failing to follow in the footsteps of Marvel. With few exceptions, DCU has been a collection of mediocre, forgettable films that didn't seem to have the technical expertise or narrative competency of the MCU. As an inexhaustive example, *The Flash* (2023), *Suicide Squad* (2016), *Aquaman* (2018), and *Black Adam* (2021) were all travesties of poor CGI, bad acting, and narrative incomprehensibility.

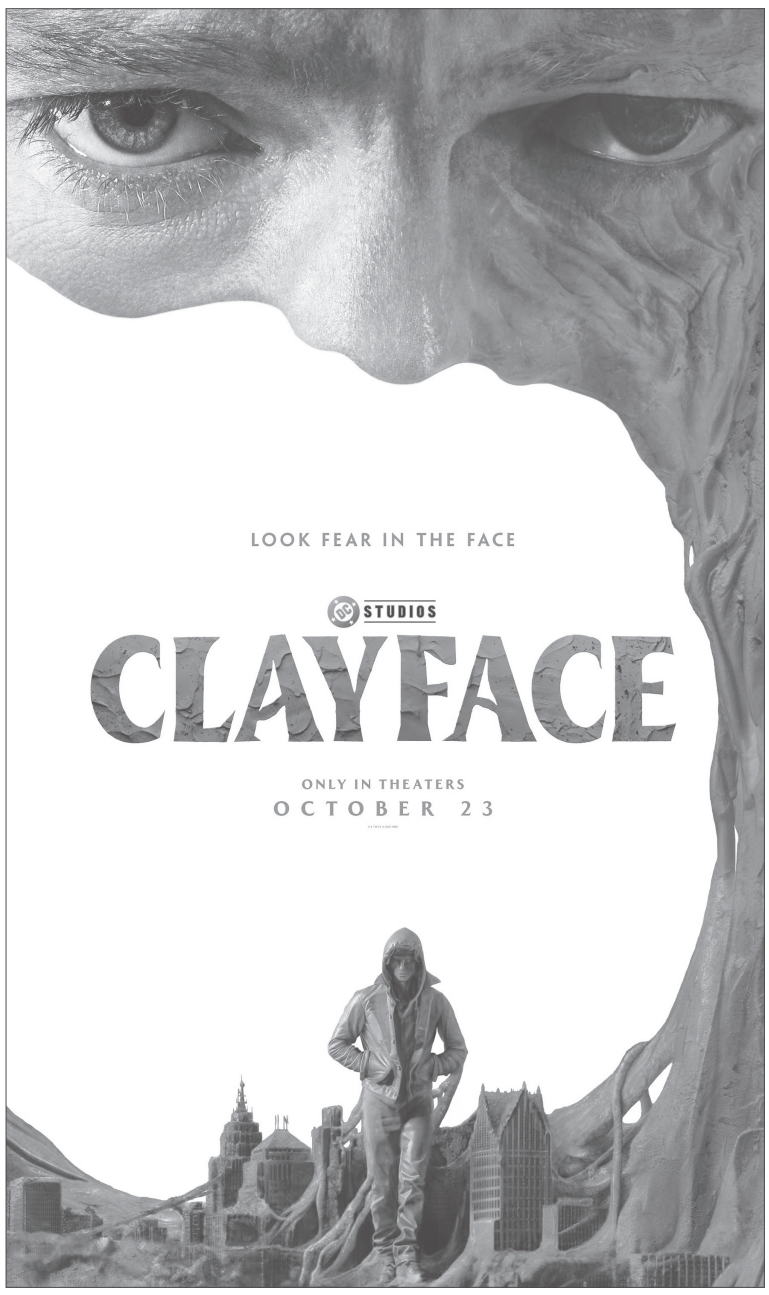
However, over the last decade, Marvel has gradually but thoroughly undermined its own legacy. Corporate greed created a slop factory, valuing quantity over quality, shovelling out garbage like *She-Hulk: Attorney at Law* (2022), and *Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania* (2023). In the process, they pandered to all of the low-IQ, pseudo-political cancer that fell from the rotting brains of millions of TikTok users. All the while, DC has been lurking in the shadows, waiting for the titan to fall.

Clayface depicts the origin story of Matt Hagen, a rising movie star caught in the clutches of the greedy, superficial, parasocial Hollywood industry that values physical attractiveness above all else. Hagen, played by Tom Rhys Harries, is relishing the success of an Academy Award nomination. During a drunken celebration, he becomes intertwined with Mia, the girlfriend of Gotham City mob boss Markos Szabos. To teach Matt a lesson, they brutally slash his face, and Mia publicly accuses him of sexual assault. Disgraced, desperate, and disfigured, Hagen seeks redemption in an untested, experimental treatment which can supposedly heal him through nanotechnology.

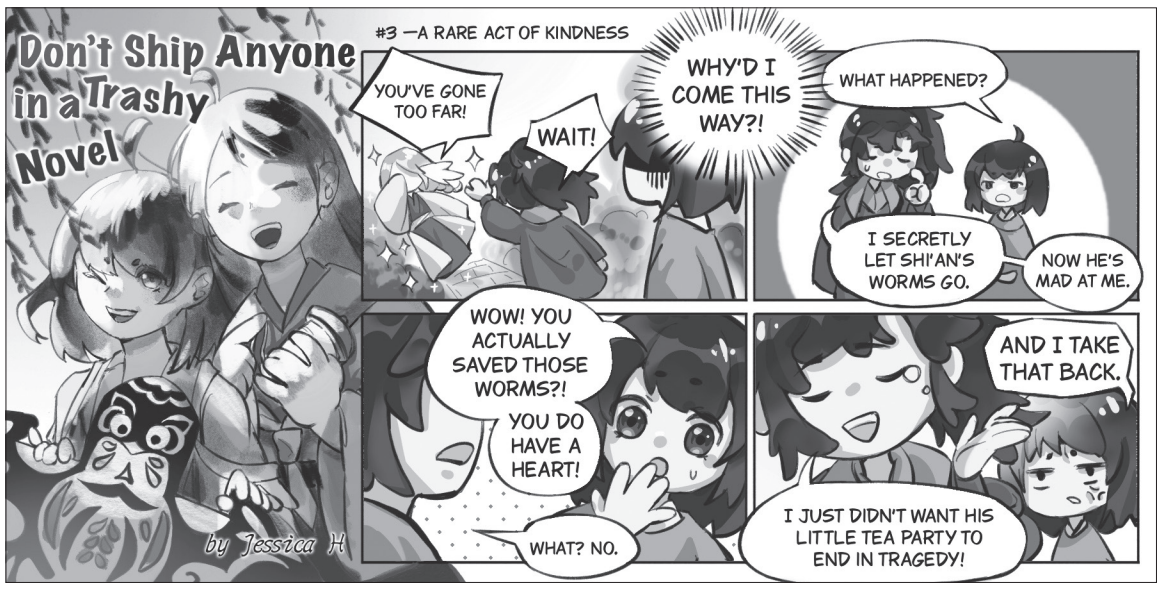
The treatment is initially a success, and Hagen once again basks in the adoration of the media, but following an unexpected regression, he impulsively takes an astronomical overdose. This has the unexpected result of allowing him to change his physical appearance at will, as the nanobots reprogram his cells on the fly. Hagen embarks on a quest for revenge, and his practitioner, Dr. Caitlyn Corr, gets caught up in an ever-deepening spiral into madness.

In the current social-media climate, new forms of mental illness seem to be emerging based on the chronically online Instagram lifestyle of virality and perceived popularity. Perhaps this is why Hagen seems so tragically relatable. He's a vaguely pitiful creature shaped and manipulated by a ruthless cycle of external validation and vanity—the very system that you and I have bought into and actively perpetuate. We try to shrug it off and say, "I would never be so pathetic. I'm smarter than that." But you're not. The desperate lust for fame and approval is an unchained monster nobody is prepared to face when it bounds from the darkness and swallows you whole, then regurgitates you onto the pavement for the whole internet to jeer and repost.

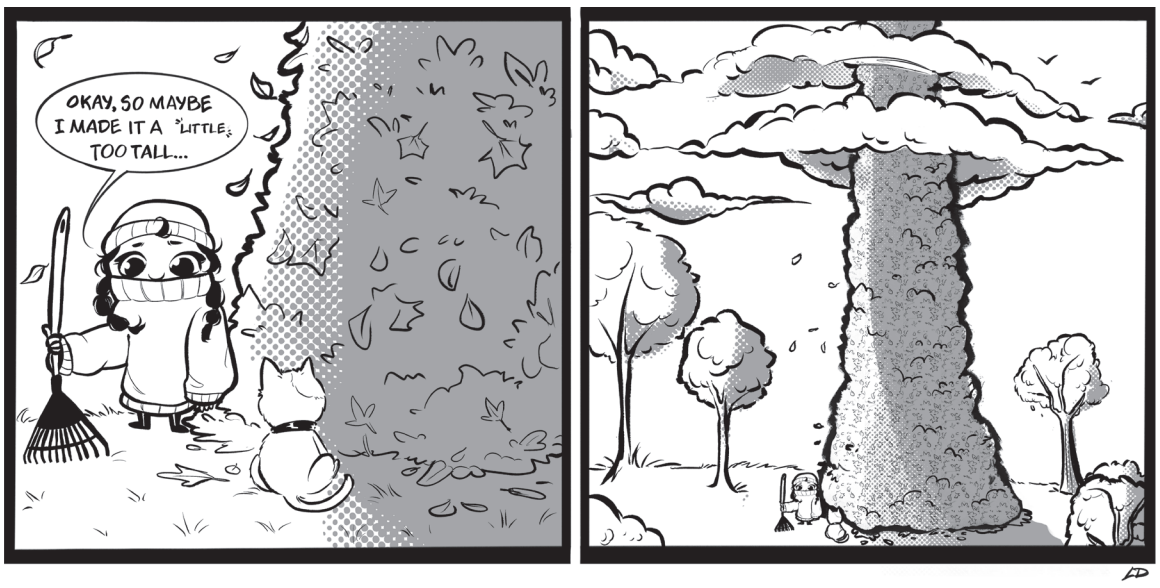
Clayface doesn't bother with identity politics. It doesn't care about delivering a silver-tongued message to ingratiate itself with the capricious masses. Instead, it points out our shameful vanity, the lonely desperation each of us feels, when those who cast the golden glow of desire upon us coldly turn away.



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



Selah - Lauren Dellebuur





Claire's Celluloid Closet

by Claire Diamant

Five older movies you probably haven't seen but definitely should

Have you ever stumbled into a movie theatre, sat down in a random chair, and thought *They make these in colour now?* Do you have strong opinions about one-word reviews on movie-logging platform Letterboxd? Do you fall somewhere in between? Wherever you are on the movie-watcher spectrum, this new column may be just the thing for you.

My credibility? One (1) semi-successful Letterboxd review, perpetual unemployment, and a preoccupation with movies that are almost old enough to qualify for a senior discount. And so, for my inaugural column, I've taken it upon myself to craft a list of Five Older Movies You Probably Haven't Seen but Definitely Should.

5. *The Last of Sheila* (1973)

Directed by Herbert Ross (*Footloose*), *The Last of Sheila* is about a group of friends who reunite to play a mystery game created by their dead friend's millionaire husband. Her death? Mysterious. Only a year ago. This movie? An unpredictable, darkly comedic ride. *The Last of Sheila* is unique in that it is entirely its own creation—it draws from no preexisting source material, a rarity in whodunits.

4. *Cactus Flower* (1969)

Have you seen the Adam Sandler movie *Just Go With It* and thought, "Wow, I wish I could see a version of this with an Oscar-winning performance in it?" If you have, look no further than *Cactus Flower*. Featuring a supporting performance that won Goldie Hawn an Oscar, Ingrid Bergman, and a shocking amount of scenes that take place in a dentist's office, *Cactus Flower* is a lighthearted romp that may make you explore Walter Matthau's entire filmography. I think more people should have framed headshots of their significant others beside their bed.

3. *The Ladykillers* (1955)

The Ladykillers tells the story of a group of robbers who decide to rent rooms from an elderly widow, intending to use her home as their base for a sophisticated bank robbery. The ensemble cast is stacked with comedic heavyweights, but Katie Johnson—who plays the widow—holds her own with ease.

2. *The Young Girls of Rochefort* (1967)

Do you like bright colours and beautiful costumes? Do you like romantic comedies with side plots about serial killers? *The Young Girls of Rochefort* may be just the film for you. Directed by Jacques Demy, this movie creates a colourfully musical dreamscape you can't help but want to live inside. The songs being incredibly catchy doesn't hurt, either—there's even Gene Kelly in a supporting role.

1. *Some Like It Hot* (1959)

Some Like It Hot defies genre. It's part romantic comedy, part buddy film, part gangster movie. What it is, above all, is really freaking awesome. You would think a movie made in the 1950s about two men dressing in drag to escape the mob would age poorly, but writer-director Billy Wilder's take on it is impossibly modern. Featuring one of the best final lines ever, this is a movie you need to watch, then watch again.



Walking together: Renewing Indigenous Studies at Camosun

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

As Indigenous students, our education journeys are often about more than earning a credential. They are about finding connection, reconnecting with culture, deepening our understanding of Indigenous histories and laws, and preparing ourselves to serve our communities in meaningful ways. That is why many of us are looking forward to the upcoming revisions to the Indigenous Studies diploma program at Camosun College.

The Indigenous Studies diploma has long provided students with an opportunity to explore Indigenous worldviews, governance, histories, languages, and contemporary issues. For many learners, it serves as a pathway into careers in education, social services, governance, community leadership, law, and advocacy. More importantly, it creates a space where Indigenous knowledge is recognized, respected, and centred.

As students progress through the program, we often hear conversations about how the curriculum can continue to grow alongside the needs of Indigenous communities and the realities facing Indigenous peoples today. Many students are excited about the review process because it represents an opportunity to strengthen what is already working while introducing new perspectives that reflect current Indigenous priorities.

Among the hopes shared by students are opportunities for increased land-based learning, stronger connections to Indigenous legal traditions, expanded engagement with local Nations, and more pathways for students interested in leadership, governance, and community development. Students have also expressed interest in greater flexibility between courses, creating learning experiences that connect classroom knowledge with community practice.

The future of Indigenous education isn't static. Across the country, Indigenous scholars, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and communities continue to shape how education can support self-determination and cultural resurgence. Programs must evolve to reflect those conversations, and curriculum reviews offer an important opportunity to listen, learn, and adapt.

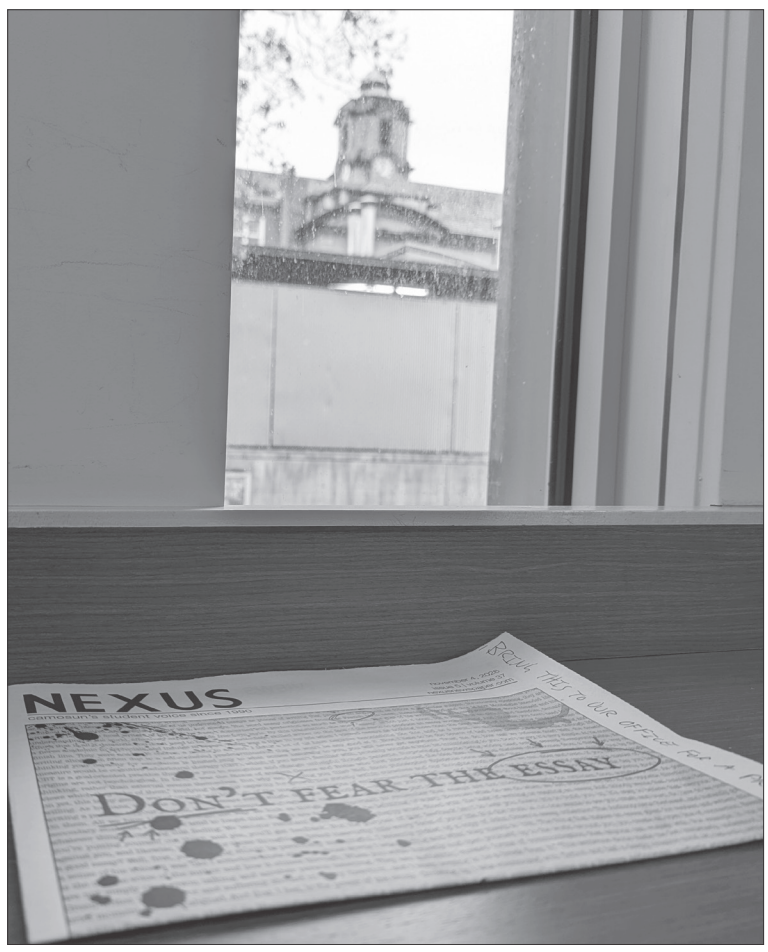
What makes this process particularly meaningful is that student voices are part of the conversation. The experiences of current learners help identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities within the program. By creating space for dialogue, the college can ensure that future students inherit a program that remains relevant, responsive, and grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing.

As someone currently completing the Indigenous Studies Diploma, I see tremendous value in the community that exists within the program. The relationships built between students, faculty, Elders, and community members often become just as impactful as the coursework itself. Looking ahead, there is excitement about how the next generation of students will benefit from a program that continues to grow while remaining grounded in Indigenous values.

The revision process is ultimately an act of renewal. It reflects a commitment to continuous learning, accountability, and creating educational pathways that support Indigenous student success. As these changes move forward, many of us are eager to see how the program continues to evolve and how future students will carry that knowledge into their communities and beyond.

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.



Trill's Recipes

by Trillium McNabb

Mini french toast cinnamon buns

Bread ingredients:
2-3 pieces sliced bread
1/4 cup margarine
1/4 cup sugar
1 tsp and 1 tsp cinnamon
1 egg
1 tbsp milk
Icing ingredients:
1 cup powdered sugar
1 8oz block of cream cheese
1 tbsp vanilla

Cinnamon buns are one of my favourite treats to have during the fall season. But I often don't have enough time to make the dough, and sometimes the pre-made tubes are too expensive, so I created this quirky recipe. It uses simple and cheap ingredients and is an easy recipe that only takes 15 to 20 minutes to make.

First, soften your 8oz block of cream cheese by letting it sit on the counter until it reaches room temperature. Then, in a bowl, beat the cream cheese smooth with a large spoon. Using a whisk, mix the cream cheese with 1 tbsp of vanilla. Make sure to whisk gently and get rid of any clumps. The mixture should look thick and smooth. Then in parts, add in the 1 cup powdered sugar, stirring with a whisk between each addition. Once everything is evenly combined, let the icing rest in the fridge while you prepare everything else.

To make the dredge, put 1 egg, 1 tsp of cinnamon, and 1 tbsp of milk in a bowl. Whisk it all together, making sure to get rid of any clumps of cinnamon that may form.

In a different bowl, make the filling by measuring out 1/4 cup of margarine, 1/4 cup of sugar, and 1 tsp of cinnamon. Mix gently with a spoon by pressing the margarine into the other ingredients. It might look like there's too much sugar, but keep mixing—it will eventually combine evenly.

Prepare the bread slices by cutting them into 2-to-4-centimetre-wide strips, and cut the crusts off the edges. Spread the filling on one side of the bread strips. Make sure to add lots, because this step acts like glue. When the bread strip is covered in filling, slowly roll the strip. The dry side of the bread rolls onto the filling side. Gently squeeze the outside edge of the roll to help keep the roll's shape. Keep repeating these steps until you're out of bread.

Next, preheat your pan on medium-high heat and give a light spray of oil on the bottom. With tongs or two forks, dunk your rolls in the wet dredge. Cover all the sides with the dredge and let the excess drip off. Gently place on the pan; the filling will leak out of the tops and bottoms of the rolls. The sugar will start to caramelize.

If you like a lighter flavour I recommend turning the heat down to medium or medium-low, but doing this will make the rolls take longer to cook.

Once the first side is done cooking, flip the roll to the opposite side. Cook all the sides until they're golden brown and you can smell the cinnamon and caramelized sugar in the air. Take the rolls off the heat and gently place them on a plate. Take the cream cheese icing out of the fridge and give it a gentle stir with a spoon. Drizzle the icing over the French toast cinnamon buns, then they're ready to enjoy.



TRILLIUM MCNABB/*NEXUS*

This delicious cinnamon bun recipe only takes 15 to 20 minutes to make.



A Student's Guide to Local Politics

by Amelia Wilde

To densify, or not to densify?

As new local governments are sworn in over the next few weeks, and with a provincial super-majority just around the corner, I've been contemplating the topic of population growth and densification in the Greater Victoria area.

Sure, housing is generally chalked up to being one of the provincial government's responsibilities, but when it comes to the nitty-gritty planning, local governments are typically the ones actually implementing and coordinating individual housing projects. So, what makes it so difficult for the provincial government to cooperate and build more housing?

Bill 44 was announced in 2023; it was regarded as the province's way of speeding up housing availability throughout municipalities. This was done by streamlining the development of new housing projects, encouraging target municipalities to densify, and outlawing public hearings for developments that were pre-approved by official community plans.

While this worked out considerably well for certain municipalities (for example, the City of Victoria well exceeded what the province was asking them to build), others were left feeling overwhelmed by the thought of densifying in neighbourhoods that were primarily single-family dwellings.

This bill also came under fire by active community members, who felt that streamlining the process and outlawing certain public hearings would silence their concerns around overdevelopment of the land around them.

This is where we get into NIMBY ("not in my backyard") territory, which generally centres itself around standing up to local infrastructure development, and is typically sparked by a citizen's proximity to such a development.

While NIMBYs often receive the short end of the stick (I mean, who enjoys being called a condescending acronym?), I'd like to narrow in on a topic that often gets thrown around in our community circles: what does density look like and how should we properly implement it?

The reality is that with an influx of opportunity and economic value, more people will gravitate toward this growth, meaning city planning becomes a crucial consideration in urban city centres. While we tend to romanticize the idea of the "white picket fence," with a vibrant lawn and a private house you can call your own, the truth is that this reality often clashes with the lifestyle needed to maintain such a living situation.

Since the cost of living seems to be a never-ending battle, many people are pressured to work in larger city centres—such as Victoria or Vancouver—just so that they can afford their monthly grocery bill. This causes an increased need for housing opportunities in downtown cores, but what happens when the downtown core had already been developed many decades ago? This is the crux of re-zoning and development in suburban and urban neighbourhoods, especially in a place like Victoria, where many buildings carry heritage status and cannot be demolished.

I'd like to leave you with a quote from urban theorist and journalist Jane Jacobs: "designing a dream city is easy; rebuilding a living one takes imagination."



Mindset Matters

by Feya Rose

Why comparison hurts us (part 2)

A couple years ago, a friend in my writing group said to me, "I wish I knew everyone as well as you do; you always know what's going on in their lives, their story details, and the progress they're making." Before she could spiral down that mental rabbit hole, I reminded her of key differences in our lives. She was a full-time mom, basically doing the work of two people. I watched the shift in her expression and eyes as she finally realized it was okay to not be able to dedicate the same time to the writing group as I could; it was okay to be in a different place in life.

It's easy to compare ourselves to those around us, particularly anyone with similar qualities to us. We see their success, and we wonder why we can't seem to achieve that same level of dedication, skill, or progress.

It becomes easy to forget who you are and where you've been. Keeping your circumstances in mind and keeping the context of your life and experiences in mind is key for allowing yourself to succeed. Even if you have similar situations to those around you, your struggles will never be 100 percent exactly the same.

And, crucially, we don't always know where that person is on their journey. They could have more experience or less experience than you have, and here's the plot twist: it doesn't actually matter. The only progress that matters for the sake of your own achievements is your own progress.

It doesn't matter if Person A advanced in their career faster than you, or if Person B can write a whole novel in only a month, or if Person C has perfect grades in all their classes. It only matters what you can do, what you can improve, and the progress you can make toward your own goals.

Someone else's success, or failures, will almost certainly not change your own trajectory—unless you allow it to. When we compare, we tear ourselves down. We break the confidence we had been building up. We open ourselves up to only recognizing criticism and disregarding our own strengths.

When you look at someone's current place or the final product of their work or hobbies, you only see the result of the time and energy they have poured into it. You aren't seeing the trial and error, the mistakes and setbacks, or the tears and long sleepless nights that got them there.

Things are very rarely perfect on the first try; you can't master a skill you haven't yet learned or practiced.

Exercise patience and give yourself the time and space needed to develop your skills, passion, hobby, career, or habits. You'll get to where you're going at your own pace, regardless of how quickly or slowly others arrive at the same destination.

Someone else's success is not a sign of your failure.

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