

**SPECIAL EDITION: BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2021**  
**WITH THE BLACK STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION AT WESTERN UNIVERSITY**





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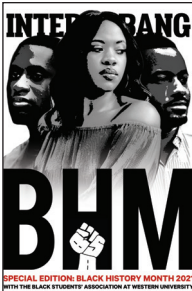
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FROM THE  
EDITOR Angela McInnes

Greetings, Fanshawe College and Western University readers. Welcome to the latest issue of Interrobang.

Canada, the U.S. and U.K. all recognize February 1 to March 1 as Black History Month. During this time, we honour the legacy of Black individuals and their communities by learning about their experiences and perspectives.

In case you weren't already aware, Interrobang partnered with the Gazette at Western University earlier this year, with the aim of unifying London's vast student population via a free community newspaper.

Through this collaboration, we are pleased to present the 2021 Black History Month issue, which includes guest student contributions. The art, poetry, articles and short stories in this issue's special

Black History Month section have been selected and edited by Angie Antonio, the president of the Black Students' Association of Western University (BSA). We also have contributions from Fanshawe's student body.

We are grateful to all those who submitted their work. As editor of Interrobang, I'm hopeful our publication continues to evolve in the years to come.

And so it goes,

Letters to the Editor: fsuleters@fanshawec.ca

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# How to prevent thefts on and off campus



CREDIT: PROVIDED BY FANSHAWE COLLEGE CAMPUS SECURITY SERVICES  
A coat and a laptop left unattended at Fanshawe. To prevent crimes on campus, security asks you to keep your valuables safe.

**Skyler McCarthy**  
INTERROBANG

It's the middle of the second semester and students are getting more comfortable with the way things are going. However, this doesn't mean we should let down our guards on campus. We have to be careful and make sure our valuables are safe. Campus Security is reporting it's seen an uptick of items being left unattended, leading to an increase in thefts.

Mike Dukic, Special Constable at Fanshawe says one tip to prevent theft is "if you're going to go to the washroom, ask one of your friends to keep an eye on your things."

Dukic also provided more tips for students studying on campus.

"Make sure that they shut the doors behind them, and then always reporting any suspicious people or behaviour that they see when they're on campus," he said.

Dukic warned against getting too comfortable in campus surroundings, despite it being less busy.

"It seems like a great place, and you don't think things like that happen? But it does. It may not happen to you, but it does happen here."

If something were to get stolen from you on campus, Dukic says that you should report it as soon as possible.

"When things are reported to us, the sooner the better," he said. "We will immediately go and start viewing video footage from the area to see if we can gain any suspect information. Maybe we end up getting the London Police Service to take a look at the image, and so do we get a warrant out for their arrest? Are they still there? Do we have the opportunity to go find them and retrieve the belonging? Did someone grab it by mistake?"

London Police also have issued out a warning to students. Student

housing units that are left unoccupied because students are at home doing college or university programs online may be more susceptible to break-ins and theft. Police have said some precautions you can take to avoid this is to ensure your doors and windows are locked, and checking in periodically-you or a friend/neighbour.

Lisa Johnson, another special constable at Fanshawe, also suggested that students avoid sharing their locations on social media.

"If they're not home, or if they're vacationing, even if they're home alone, don't advertise it on social media," Johnson said.

When the world is allowed to have parties and when they do, Johnson also suggested only inviting people they know and trust. "Make sure that any of their doors, their locks on their windows are working and not broken. If they are, you should go to make sure they get fixed."

Johnson also suggested leaving cars locked at all times too.

"When students are studying in the school, we try and remind them to keep their house and their car locked at all times because people do steal things out of cars as well as cars getting stolen," Johnson said. "Not leaving your laptop unattended to go grab food from the cafeteria or go to the bathroom, laptops get swiped all the time here." She also suggested registering your cell phone, your laptops with the Fanshawe Stay Safe App, as well as registering bicycles at the 529 Garage Bike Registry. This way it makes it easier for them to track your lost numbers.

Contacting campus security is as easy as calling 519-452-4242 for emergencies and 519-452-4400 for non emergencies. For additional ways to contact campus security and links to other campus supports for students, download the Fanshawe College Stay Safe App.

# Tim Hickman Scholarship now accepting applications

**Hannah Theodore**  
INTERROBANG

Application submissions are now being accepted for the 2021 Tim Hickman Memorial Health and Safety Scholarship.

The scholarship, coordinated by the City of London awards one student a \$3,000 scholarship each year in memory of Tim Hickman. It is available for any student currently enrolled full-time in an occupational or public health and safety related program at a southwest or central-west Ontario college or university.

The scholarship is sponsored by the City of London along with CUPE Locals 107 and 101, with the support of Tim's family and friends.

City of London Manager of Human Resources and Corporate Services, Gary Bridge said the scholarship helps raise awareness for occupational health and safety.

"We have a strong focus on safety and we want to make sure that every worker of the City of London goes home safe," said Bridge.

Tim Hickman was a part-time City of London arena employee who lost his life on the job in 1996. Tim grew up playing hockey with his brother, dreaming of one day playing goal. His passion led to his job with the City of London at Silverwoods Arena. On March 23, 1996, Tim

was killed following an explosion caused by a gas powered ice resurfacing machine. Even in the midst of the chaos, Tim tried to warn the players and clear the arena.

"When this occurred back in 1996, this was quite a blow to the City of London," said Bridge. "And so we've made it our passion and our vision to ensure that every worker goes home safely."

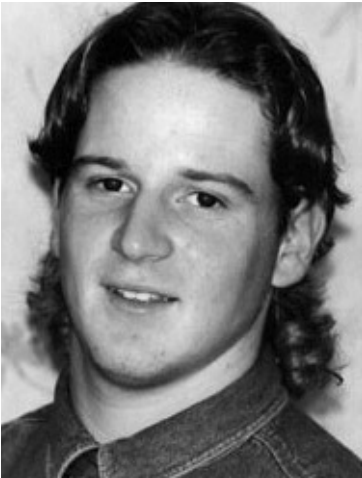
Applicants can apply through the City of London's website. Students will need to write a 300 to 500 word essay explaining a contribution they have already made to the promotion of occupational or public health and safety and/or an idea for a future promotion or plan they would like to implement.

"It doesn't need to be anything major, it may be something they've done or something they're thinking about doing," said Bridge.

Students will also need to submit a resume, a cover letter explaining why they should be considered, and two letters of character reference. One character reference should come from a representative of their school and the other can be someone of the applicant's choice that is not family.

The selected winner will receive a substantial scholarship of \$3000, but Bridge said the scholarship represents more than just a financial benefit.

"Just as important as that is that it gives them the opportunity to be



CREDIT: CITY OF LONDON  
Tim Hickman was a City of London employee who sadly passed away in a tragic workplace accident.

recognized for the Tim Hickman scholarship award," said Bridge. "This is something that is recognized not just by the City of London but the mayor and City Council. It really shows and illustrates their passion for increasing the safety and the public health of Londoners."

The Tim Hickman scholarship has been awarded to a Western or Fanshawe student in three of the past four years, and Bridge said the City would love to see the award once again go to a local partner.

Applications for the scholarship are open now and will close on Feb. 28, 2021.

# Single mothers needed for upcoming book project

**Hannah Theodore**  
INTERROBANG

Single Women in Motherhood (SWIM) is a local organization offering support and guidance to single mothers in London. SWIM is currently in the early stages of developing a special project called "20 Stories of Hope."

The project will be a compilation of stories about local single mothers. The organization is currently seeking writers to help bring the stories to life, as well as nominations from the community as to whose stories should be included.

Ann-Marie Ricketts, executive director for SWIM, said this project has been a long-time goal for her.

"My goal and my vision and my dream is to get single moms that have risen above the struggle and become successful in their mind," said Ricketts.

She hopes children will nominate their mothers for all their hard work and effort.

"They know, they recognize the work their mom did to get them where they need to be," she said. "You want to get kids involved."

Ricketts said she will be looking for nominations that highlight what makes their mom unique, and why the world should hear their story.

As a single mother herself, Ricketts said she believes there is still a stigma about single motherhood.

"There's still young girls becoming single moms every day, all over the world," she said.

She further explained that many of the mothers that come through SWIM struggle with depression and mental illness.

"We do have our ups and downs,



CREDIT: PROVIDED BY THE SINGLE WOMEN IN MOTHERHOOD TRAINING PROGRAM  
Single Women in Motherhood (SWIM) is working on a new project to tell the stories of mothers in London.

every day is a new day, we don't know what tomorrow holds," she said. "So it's an inspiration."

Ricketts added that due to COVID-19, many mothers are more isolated now than ever.

"It takes a village to raise a child and right now we are so secluded," she said.

Once completed, "20 Stories of Hope" will be published as a book, filled with real stories of single motherhood. Ricketts said that our culture focuses too much on stories of motherhood that involve financial success, rather than honest depictions of the experience. "20 Stories of Hope" aims to change that.

"I know there's stories all the time, and it's usually all about successful, rich people who have made millions, but they don't realize that right in your neighbourhood, right

beside you, the woman next door is a hero."

SWIM has become synonymous in London for offering various supports to local mothers, with a focus on developing their full financial, emotional, personal growth, self-worth, and intellectual potential. Mothers can access programs that allow them to talk to one another, find childcare, and speak to life coaches.

"It doesn't matter what walk they come from, we all need that extra support," said Ricketts.

For now, there is no set date as to when readers can expect the finished project. Ricketts is still looking for a dedicated writer to help coordinate the project, and added that people are free to start submitting nominees to their email info@singlewomeninmotherhood.com.



# Off the Radar: What's going on in the world

**Ian Indiano**  
INTERROBANG

To change something, we must understand it first. Therefore, to change society, we must understand it first. We need to notice and find the flaws of a failed system and keep in mind that what we see now, is probably just the tip of the iceberg. Most of the time we are overwhelmed by news (important and unimportant ones) from specific places, losing track of what's happening outside these poles.

To help you keep track of what's happening in the rest of the world, here are five news stories you should pay attention to:

## Cyclone in Mozambique

Cyclone Eloise affected at least 5,500 families, leaving them homeless and with no access to aid. The cyclone affected particularly Mozambique's central Manica Province. Because of flooding, the National Institute for Disaster Risk Management and Reduction (INGD) has not been able to reach them. Right now, the only way to provide food and clothing is by air and the INGD is trying to organize a last-minute aerial operation. They are also evaluating the

possibility of using tractors to get through the flood waters. Cyclone Eloise destroyed at least 800,00 hectares of crops, and to clean up the waste could take more than 30 days.

## India suspended the internet of protesters

The farmer's protests happening in India, already reported by this column, have a new chapter to their story. Now the Indian government has suspended the mobile Internet services in areas where farmers have been gathering in protest against new agriculture laws. The government says their intention is to "maintain public safety." After many talks between the protestors and government, no consensus was achieved. The farmer's union leader Dashan Pal maintains that the movement "was peaceful and will be peaceful." The protestors are fighting against new laws that loosen rules around pricing sale and storage of farm products.

## BLM wins human rights prize

The Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation won the Olof Palme human rights prize in Sweden. The organizers of the prize, who carry the name of prime minister and human rights advocate Olof Palme, assassinated in 1986, said that the BLM movement was honoured for promoting "peaceful civil disobedience against police brutality and racial violence." The prize also comes with a donation of \$100,000.

The movement mobilized millions of people around the world against racial injustice since it was founded in 2013. The Black Lives Matter Foundation is also being nominated for this year's Nobel Peace Prize.

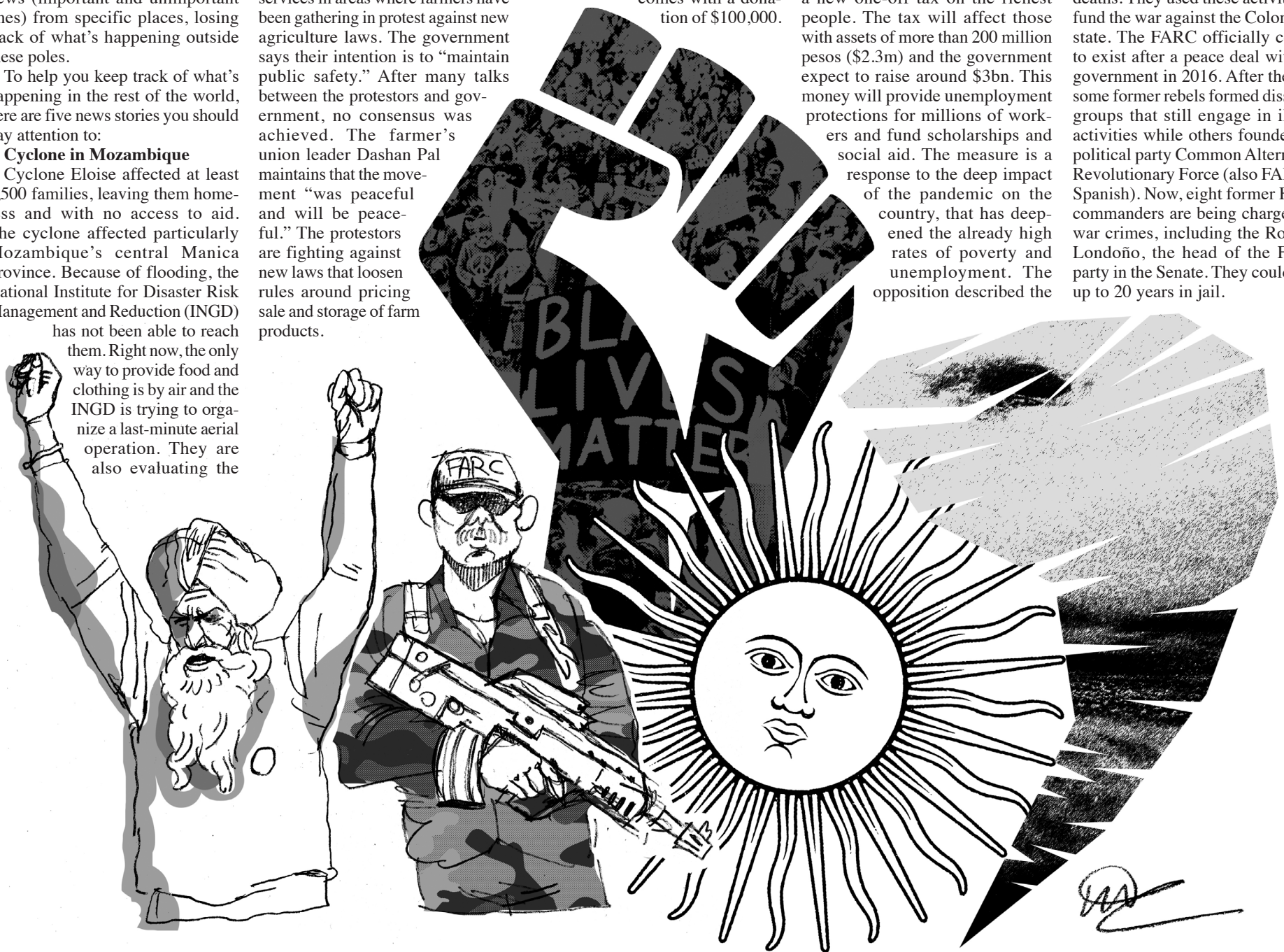
## New tax on rich people helping to fight COVID-19 in Argentina

To help paying for medical expenses and relief business affected by the pandemic, the Argentinian government approved a new one-off tax on the richest people. The tax will affect those with assets of more than 200 million pesos (\$2.3m) and the government expect to raise around \$3bn. This money will provide unemployment protections for millions of workers and fund scholarships and social aid. The measure is a response to the deep impact of the pandemic on the country, that has deepened the already high rates of poverty and unemployment. The opposition described the

measure as "confiscatory" and the Argentine Rural Society fears that tax could be made permanent.

## Colombian former rebels charged with war crimes

For more than 50 years Colombia dealt with a violent conflict with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The guerrilla group's actions included thousands of kidnappings, torture and murder and resulted in more than 260,000 deaths. They used these activities to fund the war against the Colombian state. The FARC officially ceased to exist after a peace deal with the government in 2016. After the deal some former rebels formed dissident groups that still engage in illegal activities while others founded the political party Common Alternative Revolutionary Force (also FARC in Spanish). Now, eight former FARC commanders are being charged for war crimes, including the Rodrigo Londoño, the head of the FARC party in the Senate. They could face up to 20 years in jail.



CREDIT: IAN INDIANO

This week on Off the Radar: Black Lives Matter wins human rights prize, new tax on rich people to help the pandemic expenses in Argentina, and more.

## Western researchers develop new COVID-19 antibody test

**Scott Ho**  
GAZETTE

A team of Western researchers has developed a faster and more accurate test to determine who has coronavirus antibodies.

The research, led by Western University professor Shawn Li, developed the test to detect whether COVID-19 antibodies are present and how much immunity a person has.

"Faster tests have been developed in the market ... but the accuracy is not very high. Or there are slow tests that are quite accurate but time-consuming. So we've tried to develop something that can overcome those challenges," said Li.

Li clarified that his team's test is not meant to detect on-going infections, as antibodies only develop three or four days after an individual is infected.

"It's not meant to be a diagnostic test, it's really more for monitoring," said Li.

Western and WORLDDiscoveries, the business development arm of London's research network, have already applied for a patent.

The university is currently in talks with a local company to develop the commercial version of their COVID-19 test, which will likely be used in London.

CREDIT: PROVIDED BY WESTERN NEWS  
A research team lead by professor Shawn Li has developed a new test for coronavirus antibodies.





# Many international students have spent months alone in residence

**Rebekah Rodrigues**  
GAZETTE

Many international students have spent over six months in Western residences, away from their families since first arriving in August.

Western University’s residences are shut to most students until mid February, a decision the administration made 11 days after Queen’s Park announced a province-wide lockdown barring Ontarians from seeing those outside their household.

While some students with pre-arranged travel plans and extenuating circumstances were allowed to return to residence early, many have decided to take a refund of their fees and stay home until the end of reading week.

The closure left residence buildings largely empty for the start of classes — the only students remaining were those who never left in the first place.

First-year medical science student William Chu has rarely left Elgin Hall, a suite style residence with a kitchenette and living room in each suite, since he arrived in August. Chu, an international student whose family currently lives in China, and his family decided it was not worth it to travel home for the holiday break.

“Going back is a pretty monumental task,” admitted Chu. “There are no direct flights straight back to Beijing, which is where I’m from, meaning I would have to quarantine in Shanghai and then catch another flight back.”

According to Chu, there were about 15 people, including staff, in Elgin over the break. Chu celebrated Christmas and New Year’s Eve with friends from other floors — also international students stuck in residence — since his entire suite was otherwise empty.

“I assumed I had the entire floor to myself,” said Chu. “I knew a few guys on [other floors] and we would meet up, but I did feel a bit isolated during that period of time.”

Now that the break has ended, Chu has seen more students trickle into the residence but none of his suitemates have returned and he is still one of the few people on his floor.

Kevin Li, also an international student in Elgin, had a nearly opposite experience. While Li was also unable to travel home to see his family, he was able to leave residence and stay with a friend for a week in Toronto.

A first-year science student, Li returned to Elgin before the end of the break and said his floor is



CREDIT: YIFEI ZHANG (GAZETTE)

Many international students have spent over six months away from their families while living in Western residences.

currently full and his closest friends, also international students, never left residence.

“I enjoyed the quietness [when most students were away for the break], I had my really close friends that I could spend time with,” said Li. “It was a nice break from all the chaos that usually goes on in residence.”

Li decided not to travel home to the United States over the break for the same reason as Chu; it would have been too much of an inconvenience to have to quarantine there and in residence.

Katie Ko, a first-year business management student, has also been unable to see her parents in Hong Kong since she arrived to quarantine in residence in August.

According to Ko, her floor in Elgin is around 30 to 40 per cent full and two out of her three suitemates are back. Like Li, Ko was able to spend time with friends in the Greater Toronto Area for a brief period over the break.

Ko said she also saw no point in returning to her home in Hong Kong only to have to quarantine for 14 days and again upon return to Elgin.

The frosh all said the strong international student community in residence keeps them sane.

“During reading week, [every international student] was here because they were not going to go

back home,” said Ko. “We all have a really good relationship.”

Ko noted that this may not be the case with students in traditional and hybrid style residences, where there is less space to socially distance and non-international students might not feel as safe returning early.

“Students in [Ontario] Hall, for example, are not able to interact in common rooms because they are closed,” said Ko. “A lot of my O-Hall friends have chosen to study at home and take a refund because they know they would not be able to interact with many people anyways.”

Most students will be allowed to return to residence after reading week, once the province-wide lockdown is lifted. In the meanwhile, students in residence are been supported by sophs and dons who have also returned.

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# From *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to real Black churches



**Michael Veenema**  
RELIGION

Some years ago, when I was a seminary student (a seminary is where a person studies in order to become a pastor or minister of a church) I spent a summer in Chatham. While there I came across the historic site, Uncle Tom's Cabin, in the nearby town of Dresden. Somehow — maybe from a display — I learned about the Underground Railroad of the 1800s with Dresden as a destination for Blacks escaping slavery in the United States.

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* is actually the title of an 1852 anti-slavery novel by American author, Harriet Beecher Stowe. Tom Henson, the book's main character, is based on the real-life figure, Rev. Josiah Henson. Henson founded Dawn Settlement as a refuge for Blacks in Dresden. The Uncle Tom's Historical Site features the house Henson built there, and in which he and his wife, Nancy Henson, lived until their deaths.

I want to draw attention to the way Henson is remembered today. From the summary paragraph about him that the Ontario Heritage Trust has posted, a reader could be misled.

Throughout his life, Henson was an important leader for Canada's growing Black community. He led a Black militia unit during the Rebellion of 1837, advocated in support of literacy and education for Blacks, toured parts of the United States and Britain to raise funds to support his activities and helped Black Canadians to join the Union Army to fight against slavery during the American Civil War.

This paragraph could give a wrong impression because it does not mention that Henson was first of all a Christian minister in the Methodist Church, though it is only fair to point out that that is mentioned once, early in the write up. He preached throughout the Eastern U.S. and established a church in Dawn Settlement. (Most Methodist Churches in Canada helped, in 1925, found the United Church of Canada, which survives to this day, although without the zeal of those who once founded Methodism.)

It turns out, however, that Christianity, whether the Methodist or another variety, contributed mightily to the sustaining of Black communities throughout Canada and the U. S. That sustaining has continued to the present.

Take for example, the most famous of the American Civil Rights leaders, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He was first of all a Baptist minister. In the 1960s he was head of the Southern [(U. S.) Christian Leaders Conference. Stephen J. Keillor, in his book, *This Rebellious House* (1996), points out that meetings of the Montgomery (Alabama) Improvement Society led by King "sang [Christian hymns] for three hours before meetings." Keillor writes, "Before marching to face police at Selma's bridge they met in church to sing, *Be not dismayed whate'er betide [whatever happens] / God will take care of you.*"

The power of Black Christianity shows up all through Black History, including here in Nova Scotia where I am currently living. I began to notice this when I started to encounter families from North Preston, a Black community just outside of Halifax, NS. I have met musicians and others who trace their roots to that community. Some who are not living there any longer want to move back and reconnect, above all, with St. Thomas United Baptist Church, which is in many ways the centre of North Preston. I attended a worship service there once, one of the more powerful experiences of my life.

The evidence for Christianity as a sustaining force in Nova Scotia goes back hundreds of years. After the American Revolution, the British dropped many hundreds of Loyalist Blacks from the American colonies onto the shores of Nova Scotia. Both Black and White Loyalists (those who fought for the British in the Revolutionary War) were promised freedom and land in the British territories after the war.

I am not sure who hatched that plan (if there really was a plan), but they seriously underestimated how difficult it would be to free Black slaves. The White leaders of the colonies and many of their subjects were as yet tragically conflicted about slavery. Many wanted to get rid of it. But in the late 1700s there were far too many who fought to retain slavery because it was foundational to the economic and political status quo. (They also misrepresented the Bible to support their defiance.)



CREDIT: IMAGINEGOLF

Opinion: Faith in the Christian church plays a significant role in the history of Black slavery.

The Loyalist Whites who were brought to Nova Scotia, had a rough time of it, but eventually got something. The Blacks, however, received only promises broken. Extreme deprivation, exposure, hunger, lack of work, little shelter, no farm fields — all of this meant disaster for Blacks deposited throughout the region. In Birchtown, just outside of present-day Shelbourne, things deteriorated badly. An anti-Black riot broke out and lasted for 10 days. I believe this was the first race riot on this continent.

What sustained the victims of those racist times? Denise Gillard provides an answer to this question in her paper, "The Black Church in Canada" (McMaster Journal of Theology and Ministry, McMaster Divinity College, McMaster University, 1997). She writes:

Since it was obvious that they were not welcome and could not be nurtured in the Church of England, the Nova Scotian Blacks found their spiritual needs best met by their own lay preachers and teachers, in their segregated communities, and in independent churches only nominally affiliated with the White-dominated parent churches. Their religious meetings became important spiritual and

social outlets. Without them they would have been swallowed up by their broken dreams of protection and security.

Gillard describes how, as slaves, many Blacks already, in the American colonies, had become followers of Jesus Christ, and sought to be treated as equals by the leaders of White churches. There was some success in this but often Blacks were treated as second class church members — in direct violation of Jesus' own teachings, it should be noted — and much worse in other contexts.

Blacks were rejected on virtually all fronts in the colonies except in one area. They were encouraged (if they needed encouragement) to develop their own churches. The church was the one place where they could recognize each other as faithful followers of Jesus Christ, as teachers, preachers, leaders in prayer, fathers, mothers, agents of care for their neighbours, and as people for whom God had a future. Consequently, the churches became the powerhouses of Black communities, enabling them to tap into the grace and strength of God even as racist policies and actions receded all too slowly from the emerging Canadian landscape.

## Linda Hasenfratz is not my chancellor — and she shouldn't be Western's either

**Sarah Wallace**  
GAZETTE

Days since Western's last pandemic-related embarrassment? Zero.

Western University's chancellor, Linda Hasenfratz, will keep her position after travelling to Barbados over the winter holidays, violating provincial travel recommendations and university guidelines. While she resigned from her position on the province's vaccine rollout task force, there is no indication that she will be leaving her position as Western's figurehead anytime soon.

In her statement, Hasenfratz said she was "disappointed" in herself for not setting a better example and apologized for breaching community trust with her "mistake." The words "disappointed" and "mistake" are for when your roommate grabs you the wrong six-pack of beer at LCBO — not when you violate pandemic safety guidelines to go on a vacation.

Hasenfratz did breach the community's trust — Western students created a petition calling for her removal and the University of Western Ontario Faculty Association wrote that her continued employment "undermines Western's reputation and credibility."

Students and faculty have said loud and clear that we want our chancellor gone — but, as per usual, our requests fall on deaf ears.

As Western students, we've been blamed, shamed and punished by Western and the city for the spread of COVID-19. Western's Student Code of Conduct extended to students breaking distancing rules off-campus. Op-eds were written in the local paper comparing us to mosquitoes spreading the West Nile virus. Sophs were kicked out of residence after one offence because of Western's zero-tolerance policy — but it seems everyone deserves a second chance when it's our chancellor.

This isn't to say students aren't responsible for some of the local spread in London — we are. We faced backlash from the community and the school and rightfully so. But while students were reprimanded swiftly and called names, there seems to be no community repercussions for Hasenfratz's "judgement error."

Is this really the figurehead Western students and faculty deserve?

Western's Board of Governors' chair Rick Konrad wrote that he hopes Hasenfratz's vacation will be "a learning moment in the Western community." The only thing I've learned is that if I become chief executive

officer of a multi-million dollar company, I too can go on vacation in the middle of a global pandemic without fear of losing my job.

I understand how someone would need a mental health break. Being a CEO, a chancellor for one of the biggest post-secondary institutions in Canada and a member of the province's vaccine rollout task force is not easy, and I can't imagine the stress Hasenfratz is under. But it's still not an excuse and is frankly insulting to students for her to vacation in a foreign country without regard for the health recommendations her own colleagues put into place.

We've been in lockdown for almost a year. Students lost their jobs, had their degrees sent in the mail and had to say goodbye to family members over the phone. Mental health is at an all-time low and we're isolated from our support systems — and yet, the majority of students are still following provincial guidelines and staying home.

And to our chancellor, I want to go to Barbados too — we all do.

But if there's one thing I've learnt from my time at Western, it is how to develop critical thinking skills. You must have learnt these things too as a Western graduate. And while many of us students have been applying these



CREDIT: PROVIDED BY IVEY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Opinion: Hasenfratz's position on the vaccine rollout task force does not give her an exemption from stay-at-home orders.

skills over the past year, you clearly have not. Own up to your mistake and resign — that will be the true learning moment for the Western community.

Originally published Jan. 29 on western-gazette.ca.



# We're all mad here: It's time to forgive magical thinking



CREDIT: IAN INDIANO

Opinion: We're all prone to unusual ways of thinking while under emotional stress.

**Angela McInnes**  
INTERROBANG

The past 12 months have been a test of faith. Many of us in the North American bubble have lost our sense of safety and security — that is, those of us lucky enough to have it at all in pre-COVID times. Although we are a highly developed nation, the pandemic has proven we are not as immune to disaster as we may have originally thought. It has exposed holes of systemic inequality in our economic, healthcare, and education systems. Naturally, this has been a challenge to our belief systems and we may no longer see the world as we once did.

With our old worldview crumbling, what comes in its place?

It's only natural that in times of crisis, fear and uncertainty, we look for some kind of answer or explanation. Our minds need a narrative that makes sense of chaos. This process specifically

takes place in the left hemispheres of our brains, where we are driven to understand the cause and effect of events around us.

This can culminate into what's known as magical thinking, which occurs when we believe in connections that can't be proven with evidence. A basic example is superstition, such as knocking on wood to prevent misfortune. A more topical example is the belief that government orders to wear masks and socially distance obstruct our human rights.

According to psychologytoday.com, survival requires recognizing patterns: night follows day, for instance, or certain berries make us sick. As I mentioned before, it's how our brains are wired.

So, when we're in emotional distress, it's not unlikely that our brains will snap into a heightened mode of survival where we might generate more magical meaning than usual. This can make stories about insidious origins of the virus seem appealing. It can also create a sense of control for those who have lost their jobs and face financial

hardship.

Magical thinking has gone mainstream, thanks to misinformation shared like wildfire across the internet. There are evidently millions of people who currently believe in conspiracy theories about the coronavirus. And as easy as it is to judge those who fall for misinformation as "stupid," ridicule is no longer a viable form of social mitigation.

There's no excusing violence and extremism, but the divide between magical and evidence-based thinking is growing as global tensions continue to rise. Obviously we need to strategize ways to bridge that divide, not expand it.

The word "forgiveness" is not used nearly as often as it should be, so I'd like to remind you that it is still an option. Forgive magical thinking, and forgive fear — in yourself and in others.

## Systemic racism exists in Canadian healthcare

**Salma Hussein**  
INTERROBANG

Healthcare workers try to maintain professionalism and a welcoming environment for clients. However, there are many instances of unintentional and intentional racism that stem from the assumptions and stereotypes that healthcare workers possess. In Canada, the populations most affected by interpersonal racism in healthcare are Black and Indigenous people.

In a healthydebate.ca article, written by Nagozi Iroanyah and Madi Cyr, titled "Navigating systemic racism in Canadian Healthcare," a woman with sickle cell disease, Serena Thompson, noticed the bias in the treatment others receive in comparison to her experience with healthcare services. The article addresses how Thompson felt as healthcare workers alter medication or dosages because they assume, she, and other members of the Black community, may get addicted.

Her conditions come with a lot of pain, but Thompson reveals that many Black Canadians are raised to hide their pain and under exaggerate any suffering as to not burden others. So, as a result, when healthcare professionals use the pain scale and they answer with 10, for example, healthcare workers respond with comments like "you don't look like you're in that much pain though." These presumptions about the client's actual pain affects their judgment when deciding to provide treatment, like lowering doses because of speculating the presence of a drug addiction.

A Canadian Medical Association Journal article titled, "Time to dismantle systemic anti-Black racism in Canada," talks about the factors that contribute to systemic racism in healthcare towards the Black community. One of the main contributing factors is the lack of Black representation in medicine.

Black healthcare workers also note that they have experienced racism in Canadian healthcare institutions. Representation can come a long way in change, however, due to the disproportion of Black physicians to other physicians and

healthcare workers, anti-Black racism continues to be unacknowledged.

Listening to and advocating for the voices of Black Canadian patients and healthcare workers is the first step to dismantling the systemic racism prevalent and rampant in healthcare settings. The article highlights that the next step is for healthcare institutions to promote and enforce training for healthcare providers in anti-racism practices to reduce and eventually eliminate the root of intentional or unintentional bias and prejudice that healthcare workers hold towards Canadian Black patients.

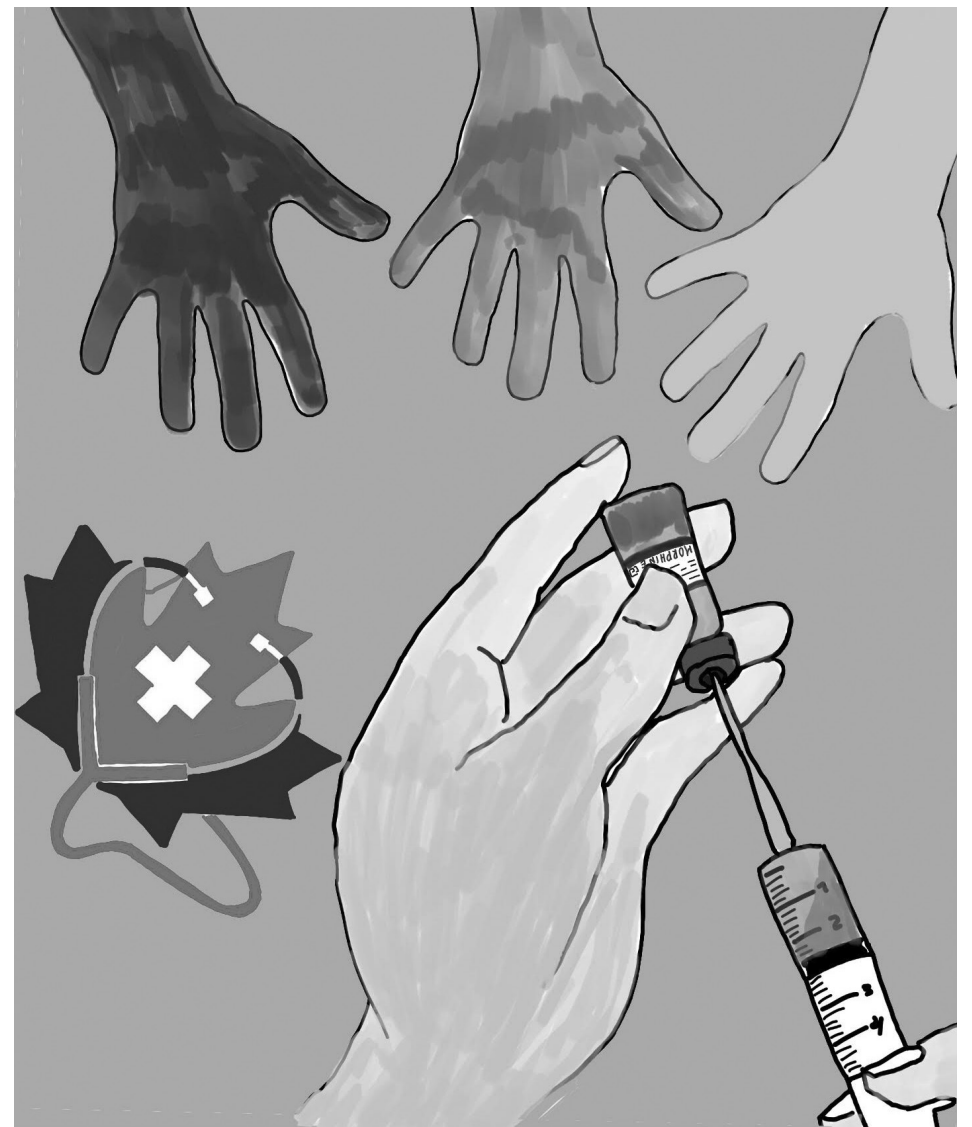
Unfortunately, the Canadian Black community is not the only one suffering from interpersonal racism in healthcare settings. The Indigenous population has been suffering from this issue as well.

The same stereotypes, bias and prejudice are held for indigenous people by healthcare workers.

An article by The Star, titled "Decrying medical racism, Indigenous leaders demand health care 'transformation,'" talks about the discrimination Indigenous people face when seeking healthcare services. The article shares the story of Carol Wood, a member of the O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation in northern Manitoba, who broke her leg in a car accident, and after being driven for four hours by her husband to the nearest emergency room, screaming in pain, a nurse deemed that the leg didn't seem to be broken and sent them home. Because this incident, Mrs. Wood has to take medication to this day for the broken leg and has a scar to remind her of this horrific event for the rest of her life.

This story is just one of many in a long and never-ending chain of events that prove systemic racism to be a severe issue in healthcare institutions. These stories will continue to happen so long as a culturally safe care practice is never enforced or practiced.

The College of Family Physicians of Canada published a fact sheet, titled "Health and Health Care implications of Systemic Racism on indigenous peoples in Canada," that talks about the importance of implementing Culturally Safe Care in healthcare settings. This practice requires



CREDIT: SALMA HUSSEIN

Opinion: The bias and prejudice healthcare workers carry with them can be detrimental to the health and safety of Black and Indigenous clients.

healthcare workers to respect the patient's way of knowing as valid, that the patient is part of the decision making in their health, and that the patient is the one who determines if the healthcare they are receiving is culturally safe. This practice will provide patients with their right to autonomy and feeling of safety when receiving treatment in healthcare institutions.

The road to more culturally safe healthcare environments will be challenging, but it is an essential change that needs to be made for the health, safety, and respect of the people in our

communities who are affected daily by systemic racism in Canadian healthcare. The first step is to acknowledge the problem, and then find where the root of the issue is. In this case, it is the bias and prejudice healthcare workers carry with them in the workplace. In order to fix these presumptions and stereotypical kind of thinking health professionals carry, training, teaching, and workshops that address and work towards dismantling anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism need to be implemented and enforced in healthcare institutions.



**HAVE AN OPINION? SUBMIT YOUR STORY!**  
**Letters to the Editor: [fsuleters@fanshawec.ca](mailto:fsuleters@fanshawec.ca)**



# It's okay to reach out for the ear of a peer

**Christopher Mischak**  
INTERROBANG

The pandemic is causing so much stress for so many individuals. The environment we are in is unique, plaguing us with our own set of struggles.

"We are all struggling with a sense of loneliness and peer support is a great opportunity to connect, to create a sense of belonging with other peers who simply get it. We do not have the same wellness strategies or self-care resources that we once had pre-pandemic. Peer support is trying to meet some of those unique needs of the students," said Ashley Cochrane, Fanshawe's case management counsellor and peer support lead.

The peer support program at Fanshawe College has been operating since 2018. Initially it was in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) crisis services. Since then, it has grown and evolved in terms of offering a variety of different services. Since September, the peer support program has been offering services virtually only. Adapting the program entirely and offering virtual drop in spaces for students.

The student peer support volunteers are trained in active listening, communication skills, anti-oppressive practice, diversity issues, oppression, accessibility concerns, supporting students in distress, and specifically how to respond to them by navigating and sharing that information, as well as resources with students on or off campus. Many have also been provided with Mental Health First Aid training as well.

Even after graduation, these peers use those skills to further their careers and improve their own interpersonal lives. They become ambassadors of human connection. There is going to be this ripple effect in our communities because of their beliefs and values and in how they care and love people.

"If you are a student at Fanshawe, there are so many services in place for you. There are so many people there for you. No matter what you have going on if you think you are struggling with something, there are people that you can talk to, to use as a sounding board if you are not sure," said Lindsay Jackson, a student peer



CREDIT: CHRIS MISCHAK

Your peers understand what you're going through better than anybody.

support volunteer who spoke to help advocate the peer services at Fanshawe College.

Rae Manjira, another student peer support volunteer added, "It's good to have a judgement free place, where you can be yourself. It is so nice to be able to connect with another student, whom maybe has experienced similar things. It is nice to have that kind of connection."

"Since we are all at home – social distancing, no one knows how to deal with that emotionally or mentally. For a peer-to-peer mentality, it is very good to talk to other students who are also going through that right now too. This is because online school, as convenient as it is with not having to travel. Simply tripled the amount of work and made all of it not worth a lot. It all equals 100 but there are 200 things to do. There is just so much to do," said Cam Gillis, another student peer support volunteer. "I think that the ability to participate in peer support is simply more of a stress reliever. It is incredibly brave to be able to reach out. One does not have to be experiencing a midlife crisis to reach out. Peer support has been here the whole time, we would love to talk to anybody." There is some comfort in knowing that

what you are feeling that others are feeling it too, this normalizes it. You do not feel like you are going crazy, but that everyone else is feeling just as overwhelmed. It is okay to feel how you are feeling.

Something that peer support is trying this year is to have a social media presence to pull students in. In offering peer support in new and innovative ways. By offering peer support infographics about self-care, or an inspirational video. This too is a form of peer support because it will provide support to those who do not want to reach out to us individually. The goal is to reach people emotionally through social media and through technology.

Cochrane explained that the best way to connect with our peers is to email at [peersupport@fanshawec.ca](mailto:peersupport@fanshawec.ca). From there you will be asked to provide some contact information and be provided with a zoom link. Drop in spaces are on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. You can attend as many sessions as you want, for as little or as long as you want. Students typically stay for about five minutes or up to 20 minutes. It all depends on what you are comfortable with.

# Skincare: Natural isn't always better

**Hannah Theodore**  
INTERROBANG

Anyone that has ever taken the plunge to improve their skincare game has probably gone through the "kitchen phase."

It's that awkward period where we inexplicably rub things like avocado, lemon juice, and honey all over our faces in the hopes of keeping things natural.

As skincare has grown in popularity with the rise of TikTok and YouTube channels like Hiram, though, it's become clear that natural isn't always better. Dermatologists have spent decades studying and refining chemical formulas to do exactly what they're supposed to do.

The problem is, the world of skincare is vast and misinformation can spread quickly on social media. There was a time not long ago when TikTokers tried to tell us that toothpaste could clear up blemishes (it can't). So how can you know what's best for you?

Terms like "chemical" tend to trigger some folks to run for the hills in search of more natural alternatives, but this reaction stems from a common misconception. Chemical products are not unnatural, in fact, everything in the world is made up of chemicals. The popular idea that there is something scary about chemical products is something we have to let go of. Oftentimes, chemical ingredients in skincare are formulated from natural products like citrus fruits and plant oils, expertly crafted so as not to overwhelm your skin with a high concentration. Experts agree that chemical ingredients tend to be more stable on the skin, because they have been formulated to cause the least amount of irritation.

That is not to say there are no raw ingredients that have benefits for the skin. Raw honey, rose water and Aloe Vera are all known to have positive effects on the skin when used minimally. However, you might be better off just using a chemical product formulated with these ingredients to avoid irritation. The Rose Hibiscus Coconut Water Face Mist from Herbivore is a great example of a product that uses natural ingredients, but has been carefully put together by dermatologists to provide the most benefit to your skin.



CREDIT: HANNAH THEODORE

Skincare is a game of trial and error until you find what works best for you.

Most experts agree that when it comes to natural products, reading beyond the label is key. Far too often, brands sell themselves on being "natural," with earthy tones on the packaging or promises of being "organic." Research and ingredient-list literacy is essential to making sure you're making the right purchasing decisions. Take a brand like Lush, for example, who pride themselves on using all natural ingredients but still use some non-organic products and even formulate some products with potentially harmful parabens. Just like with the food we eat, we as consumers have to be skeptical of claims like "organic," especially when we're considering products for sensitive skin types.

It has been pretty well agreed upon by experts at this point that things like lemon juice and apple cider vinegar are things you should not be rubbing on your face. Plenty of research has been done in recent years on the skin's pH levels, something that can be easily disrupted by heavily acidic ingredients like raw vinegar. If brightening your skin is the desired effect, consider a vitamin C serum derived from fruits or ascorbic acid, such as the Strawberry C Serum from Volition.

Skincare is a messy game of trial and error. What works for someone might not work for you, and the only way to really find out if a product is good for you is to test it out. For optimal results, don't box yourself in to only using natural products or only using chemical products. Do your research, play the field, and remember that skincare is a marathon, not a race.

# An evening with Senator Patricia Bovey

**Ian Indiano**  
INTERROBANG

Honorable Senator Patricia Bovey talked to the classes of Fanshawe's fine art program on Jan. 28.

The talk was hosted by Mary Reid, professor of art history and director/curator of the Woodstock Art Gallery. The talk also counted with the presence of other Fanshawe college representatives like Gary Spearin, visual artist and professor/coordinator of the Fine Arts Program, Anne Marie DeCicco-Best, executive adviser in government relations, Tracy Gadies, dean of the Faculty of Creative Industries, and Dana Morningstar, associate Dean of the School of Design. The encounter also celebrated the 50th year anniversary of the first graduating class of the fine arts program.

Senator Bovey was appointed to the Senate of Canada in 2016 by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as

an independent Senator from Manitoba. She was the first art historian and museologist to be appointed to the Senate. Before assuming her seat, she had a long and well-respected career as a gallery director and curator, art historian, writer, professor and art consultant. With many areas of interest, she is member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Arctic Committee and Transport and Communications Committees.

"My focus is to strengthen the positive role of the arts in all aspects of society," Bovey said.

She explained how she addresses her role as a Senator, which she divides in three areas: Legislation (introducing, sponsoring and debating laws), Investigation (studies done by committees), and Representation (improving society representativeness at the Senate). Among the themes discussed during the talk is the creation of a Parliamentary Visual Artist Laureate at the Senate, one of Senator Bovey's most important projects.

The Laureate would be entitled of producing or cause to be produced artistic creations, sponsor artistic events, enrich the cultural holdings of the collection of the Parliamentary Library, and perform other duties related to the Senate.

One of the points that Senator Bovey presented, something that she constantly mentions in her speeches, is how arts and culture are essential in every aspect of contemporary society. She listed eight initiatives that encompass the goals of every level of the government: tourism; employment; environment; economy; rural revival; health; education; and crime prevention.

"I've spent a number of years researching anecdotally and statistically what is the role of the arts in each of these sectors," Bovey said. "And I can honestly tell you that my conclusion is that not one of these issues can be addressed, let alone, resolved without the arts and culture sector."

Senator Bovey reiterated the huge economic impact of the arts in society mentioning that this sector is the third-largest employer in Canada — double the number in forestry and more than double the number in banks. The arts industries also contribute about 7.4 per cent of Canada's GDP.

"We know that people who attend live art events live two years longer, get out of hospitals earlier after elective surgeries, miss less work, cost the health system less," she said. These are, unfortunately, little known facts.

After a brief Q&A session, Senator Bovey closed her presentation by quoting two phrases. One by Canadian writer and political philosopher John Ralston Saul: "Culture is the motor of every successful society," and the other by Canadian writer and playwright Mavor Moore: "The root meaning of culture, as every farmer and chemist knows, is 'preparation for growth' — and in our communities we are 'growing people.'" Bovey



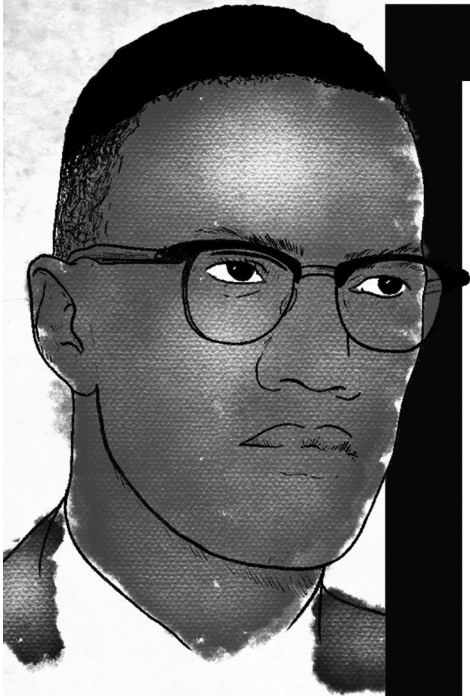
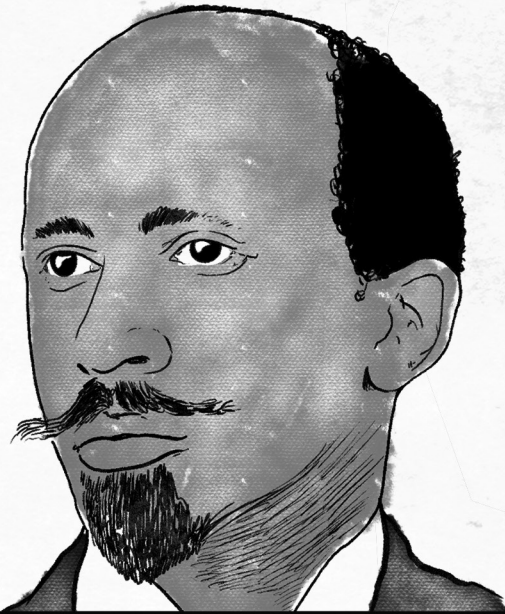
CREDIT: IAN INDIANO

The Honorable Manitoba Senator Patricia Bovey had a talk with the Fanshawe College fine arts students.

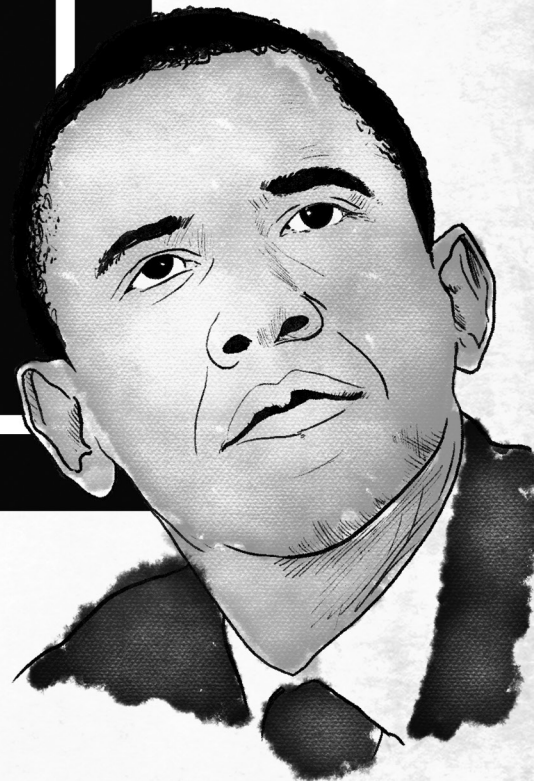
added, "And is you, as artists, who are providing that nurture for that 'growth of people.' So, don't think you're unimportant."

A full recording of the talk should be available at the Senator's website soon.





# Black History Month





## Black History Month

# LETTER FROM THE BSA PRESIDENT

**Angie Antonio**

The Black Students' Association at Western University presents our edition of Black History Month which is themed "New Era." The Black Students' Association is a sociopolitical club at Western University dedicated to improving the experience of Black students at a predominantly white institution.

Traditionally, when we discuss BHM and its relevance, we tend to only discuss injustices from the past such as slavery and segregation. Only referring to these instances perpetuates the idea that these issues are not relevant to today. This past year, the world began to see parallels to a time not long ago. The fight that started with our grandparents and parents continues to be the fight we champion today.

Racialized people face alienation, objectification, discrimination, systemic and social racism as a long term effect of slavery. Despite this, we continue to speak our truth — even if that means our voices may shake. We need all people, regardless of race, to help enact an actual change.

This month, please take the time to recognize the enormous contributions of countless Black individuals who sacrificed their lives in the fight for freedom and justice.

We use Black History Month as a time to remember, celebrate, learn and grieve the injustices our grandparents and parents endured and what we have to experience today.

This marks a new era, a time not to forget, a people never changed.

Angie Antonio

President of BSA, 2020/21





Black  
History  
Month

# ARTWORK SUBMISSIONS



*Look Back at the Past and Cultivate a Future by Caroline Alpert*



*Black and Bold by Caroline Alpert*



*Drawing of the Late Emmet Till by Meena Myrie*





# Black History Month

## A COLLECTION OF POEMS

### Delicacy

Glenys Obasi

My delicacy is one without a fortress, Exposed  
to sorrow and weariness,  
Fragile enough to fracture,  
Tough enough not to shatter.  
My delicacy is one that is ductile,  
Contoured to bear the weight of my ache, Engulfing  
my pain,  
To shelter my heart, in vain.  
I am not granted the privilege to be soft, Nor can I afford  
to be a damsel in distress, Because Blackness is not  
awarded daintiness. Blackness erodes my vulnerability,  
Giving me this fallacy of being invincible, As if I were  
not birthed with the same skin, That bruises and bleeds,  
And the same heart that breaks.  
My niche is to play heroine,  
To come to everyone's rescuing,  
To be everyone's saviour,  
To be my knight in shining armour. Blackness  
corrupts my femininity, Escaping with my  
innocence and purity, For that is reserved only,  
For the fair, white and lovely.  
My esse is disposable,  
For as a Black woman,  
As I exist, chiefly, to be of service to others. My  
misery is minute,  
For I am humanity's sacrificial lamb, And that  
is my virtue.  
Yet I find solace in my solitude,  
For I can disintegrate,  
And find bliss in my melancholia.  
And envision a utopia,  
Where I release myself from,  
The demands of a dauntless demoiselle, And  
metamorphosize into,  
My rawest, truest, self.  
And feel every ounce of my woes,  
Then mold my unraveled soul,  
And reappear whole.

### Resisting Arrest

Usman Dauda

Silence, something about silence makes me sick  
Because a vocal minority  
Talk, Talk, Talk about the fate of minorities  
Who never asked for them to make being their saviour a priority  
Yet they battle on the terminology, two sides of a toxic dichotomy  
That result in words without action, any taken executed improperly  
And decades of debated philosophies, year upon year is stopping me  
From feeling safe from those who say to protect and serve gives them superiority  
Over my actions, temperament, and personality,  
I guess that's what happens when the license to kill becomes as easy to obtain as any other commodity  
Still atoning for the primal sin,  
Of having a different colour of skin,  
Where its hard to get loans because you're on the wrong side of the lines that were red,  
And leaving for a jog from your home, can turn to running for your life instead,  
When your back is a threat, according to those wearing the bullet proof vests.  
Its easy to sleep on a world hoping to write you off as resisting a rest.  
And now people awake from years of inaction,  
To bring justice to actors with a passion, for trashing the people they're passing,  
And carved from the ashes of the times when slavery was sanctioned,  
Were the badges that were passed to the anti-civil rights assassins,  
Who followed the fashion,  
Unionized to bring you the thin blue line faction,  
"Protect only your peers in blue, and serve the powers that be.  
Don't worry, you're new, but from years in our system you'll see,  
It's all of them against you, and that's how it always will be.  
And if the heel of our boots, don't paint the scene of the scheme,  
Take a page from their book, and switch to taking a knee."

### Within Our Roots

Kimberly Douglas

we have had crowns placed on our  
heads since birth  
in the form of culture-rich curls that  
hold our history  
ringlets which keep us grounded in  
our roots  
preserving each strand of our identity  
like the DNA we hold hair so pure,  
rich, and delicate it is only fitting  
to refer to it as "natural"

but the audacity to claim it's "just  
hair"  
is the silencing of a nation  
for this hair holds so much more  
"just hair" translates to  
"just" mediocre  
"just" ordinary  
"just" average

but black hair is not the bare  
minimum

black hair is black expression  
black freedom  
black joy  
black liberation  
black history in the making

we should find confidence and comfort  
in our kinks and coils our bantu  
knots and braids

every dip and rise within our waves  
our edges natural or laid  
our cornrows act as the preservation  
of black stories

years of struggle and triumph neatly  
overlapped and intertwined our locs  
hold keys to our lineage

wrapped tightly to encapsulate our  
close-knit communities we walk this  
earth with crowns on our heads  
passed down by the ones who came  
before us

there are centuries of triumph within  
these roots

and despite this worlds efforts to  
break us down

we are known to grow and flourish  
from our struggles so we nourish our  
scalps and caress our coils  
so our manes can do the same

black hair is black power  
with the strength to spark an uprising  
the ability to leave heads turned,  
jaws dropped, and eyes widened beads  
dangle from braids clacking together  
like a million ancestors applauding  
in approval

afro picks sit comfortably tucked  
against scalps  
fists standing high in the air like a  
revolution  
each style asserts itself like a  
battle cry  
a resistance  
a movement that will never die

black hair is magical  
ethereal  
with the ability to defy gravity  
exceptional  
a reflection of the world around us  
so our afros resemble trees  
because we are a product of our roots  
in touch with nature  
every strand on our head crafted with  
intention by our creator our twists  
are sun kissed  
our puffs, powerful  
so we wrap our hair in silk to  
maintain this magic  
black hair is beautiful, mystical,  
versatile  
in every length  
thickness  
texture  
and style

black hair is black professionalism  
and white professionalism  
and every type of professionalism  
for years we've been brainwashed to  
believe our coils were a calamity  
convinced that black hair wasn't  
beautiful

wasn't precious  
wasn't acceptable  
but colonialism has no place in these  
curls

I will not texturize the tradition out  
of these tresses  
or relax these roots to maintain a 9  
to 5

I refuse to tarnish this crown  
for the sake of eurocentrism

so understand that when you steal our  
styles you are erasing black stories  
muting black voices

capitalizing off black creativity  
being praised in the same breath as  
we are penalized

understand that such beauty cannot  
be diminished to mediocrity and  
prefaced with "just"

black hair is far more complex, far  
greater, essential, a must

so no, you can't touch it  
can't run your fingers through my  
family tree

can't tug at my lineage  
but I don't blame you for marvelling  
at such greatness for being stopped in  
your tracks

for staring in awe at the many  
cultures wrapped up in my curls my  
hair is a historical landmark  
my mane, a museum

the crowns on our heads have been  
placed here since birth so you may  
look but not touch

for this work of art is priceless  
observe the uniqueness  
behold the beauty  
gaze in awe at the grace  
that lies  
within our roots



Confessions of a dark-skinned Black woman  
Enys Obasi

Black Lives Matter.  
Sorry, my apologies,  
I meant all Black Lives Matter.  
Because with the thousands of analogies,  
Deciphering this movement,  
Somehow the codes got lost in translation,  
Putting Black men in focus,  
Blurring Black women into silhouettes.  
Because the currency of a Black woman's life,  
Does not equate to the currency of a Black man's life.  
Giving us a Black life exchange rate of,  
"Black Lives Matter," equals Black men matter  
And "All Black Lives Matter," equals Black men and women matter. But I am deeply  
sorry.  
Sorry that my blackness and my womanhood,  
Not being mutually exclusive identities,  
Coexisting since conception in my mother's womb,  
Is a nuisance to my existence and my essence.  
I am deeply sorry.  
That I cannot remove the Black,  
From the woman and just be woman,  
Or remove the woman from the Black and just be Black. I am deeply  
sorry.  
That me being Black and a woman simultaneously,  
Is an inconvenience for you, a Black man, to humanize me. You scream,  
"Black Lives Matter," with the same breathe, That you use to suffocate Black  
women to their deaths. Because for you, "protect Black women," comes with  
a clause. There needs to be familiarity or desirability.  
And I have neither.  
There is no familiarity,  
For you have no knowledge of my existence,  
And I lack desirability,  
Because the depth of my blackness is not palatable to you. Because your  
desirability hinges on the darkness of my melanin, And the richness of my  
blackness,  
Is one without proximity to whiteness.  
And for these reasons,  
I cannot rely on you, a Black man, for solidarity.  
Which is why the one who fights for me,  
And the one I fight for,  
Is Black women.

, What's Your Emergency?  
Sunday Ajak

growing up, the first phone number I ever learned was 911.  
My mother always told me that if I was ever in danger, I  
could call 911 and someone would come to my rescue.  
If I was hurt, I could call, and an ambulance would rush to my  
side. If there was a fire, I could call, and a team of firefighters  
would come and battle the flames. If I was in danger, I could  
call, and brave policemen would come save the day.  
Now for the good majority of my childhood I believed this to be true,  
as would any other child. And for the most part, it is. However,  
there was one more lesson about 911 that I wasn't prepared for.  
That sometimes 911 was the call that would put me  
in danger, rather than get me out of it.  
That depending on who you are, where you are, and what you look like, would  
be the deciding factor on whether 911 could help you or could hurt you.  
And if you have no idea what I'm talking about, then you know what  
side you're on. Because on one side, you get everything you expect  
out of police officers. You get immediate assistance, you get to trust  
them, and above all you don't have to fear them. Whereas on the other  
side, you get delayed responses, malpractice, and sometimes death.  
And the disparity doesn't lie within "a few bad apples". No, and  
if were using that metaphor to defend police brutality than it's  
not just a few bad apples. It's the tree that they grow on.  
A tree that's rooted with racism, inequality, oppression, discrimination,  
injustice, slavery, stereotypes, prejudice, shall I keep going?  
So, we can blame the officers as much as we want, we can  
shout for their arrest and demand justice but that doesn't  
change the fact that there will always be another one.  
And for that to change, we need to dismantle the very system  
that allows it to perpetuate over and over and over again.  
Because until a drastic change occurs at the very core of  
our society then were just fighting the same vicious circle.  
It's the exact same situation, different hashtag.  
And this is not just my opinion, this is not me trying to start a  
revolution, this is merely a message to those who run this society.  
And to them I have one thing to say, and one thing only. Do Better.

Sunday Ajak is a 21-year-old motivational speaker and  
activist studying social justice at Western University.

The Sophist  
Isabella Isabage

If the way that you make me feel,  
The way you consume my thoughts and overthrow my  
action is wrong then my heart never wants to be right.  
If the way I yearn for you to yearn for me,  
And the way that I'd risked my all to keep you, my angel,  
in this cage of timber framing was horrendous, then I'd  
do it again because you're the one thing in my life that  
was momentous.  
I'd had countless students drift in and out of my  
classrooms,  
But like me, they were traveling in that vertical tunnel,  
headfirst, shadows of unconscious consciousness, baggy  
eyes and sweet temporary highs, heads filled with clouds  
of smoke.  
Then I encountered you.  
A psychedelic experience, a rude alteration to my  
mundane actuality. My favourite pair of scissors cutting  
me away from my dull reality. My lectures washed over  
you, a layer of peel off pain to be shed away.  
Irrepressible, you refuted control, histrionic narcissist,  
Your provocative ways aimed at drawing attention. My  
attention.  
Well now you had me hooked.  
I wanted you, needed to have you. A thorn encased in a  
kaleidoscope of glass too unique to not want to keep.  
But you didn't notice me.

Untitled  
Joel Zhang

I question my choices,  
I don't know if it's worth it.  
All the years of pain and sacrifice, being brought from the depths of my heart,  
to the surface.  
I don't even know what I look like.  
I tried not to identify, with colours like white, yellow, and black But I'm still bound by  
my ancestors in the fields wearing rice paddy hats.  
Just because it's black history,  
doesn't mean we pass his story.  
That wasn't clever at all, but if I'm yellow you expect me to be clever huh?  
I read the autobiography of Malcolm X.  
I felt the pain in his words when his values were under attack. They asked him not to fight back  
But if peace don't solve the storm in your heart you got no choice but to fight that.  
Respect.  
Shoutout to my brothers over there singing their anthem  
to further preach that black can be pretty and handsome.  
In hip hop and poetry we preach love and peace  
but we still struggle to grasp the concept of racial inequality  
I see all the demonstrations,  
Across several nations  
Reminds me that humans are still far from god's envisioned creation.  
But don't preach peace if you teach hate. Don't feel strong if you're a heavy weight.  
You lift a heavy weight,  
On your conscious.  
If you live your life cautious.  
Stand up for those who choose to stand Because they don't choose to stand To create chaos,  
end up arrested and banned. For those who wonder why I stand here, despite being Chinese  
It's because I refuse to let blood, sweat, and tears, get beaten to their knees.

What If?  
Joseph Hill

What if Instagram stories  
And heartfelt "I'm sorries" don't change  
Centuries of destruction

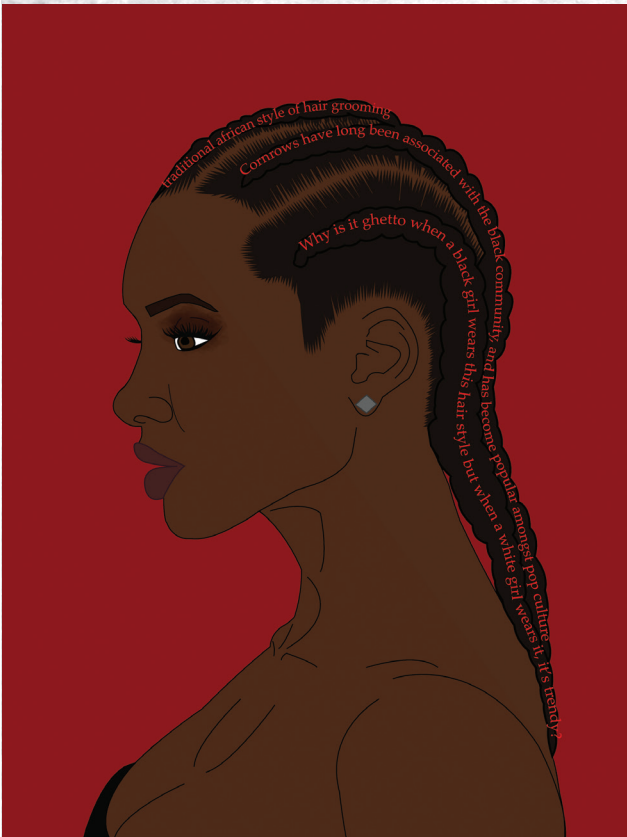
What if bad news gets worse and nothing can reverse  
The deep seated stains soiling skin and kin  
As Black boys and girls, feel the results of  
Man's original sin  
What if pride and prejudice  
Won't naturally dissolve after years of movements and apathetic resolve;  
Requiring a much stronger dose than sympathy and guilt  
To tear down the fortress white supremacy has built.

What if abolishing slavery and integrating schools  
Is said to be charity to all the Black tools;  
Manually abused, wrongfully accused, and too often misused,  
Never truly escaping the feeling of being bruised.  
Now if this is true, I can't subdue  
Prior agony and present pain;  
I ask what if, and what comes next  
Desiring to know, and fearing the truth  
Yet seeking solace in God's ability to soothe  
All those who come to him, a true fountain of youth.



Black  
History  
Month

# ARTWORK SUBMISSIONS



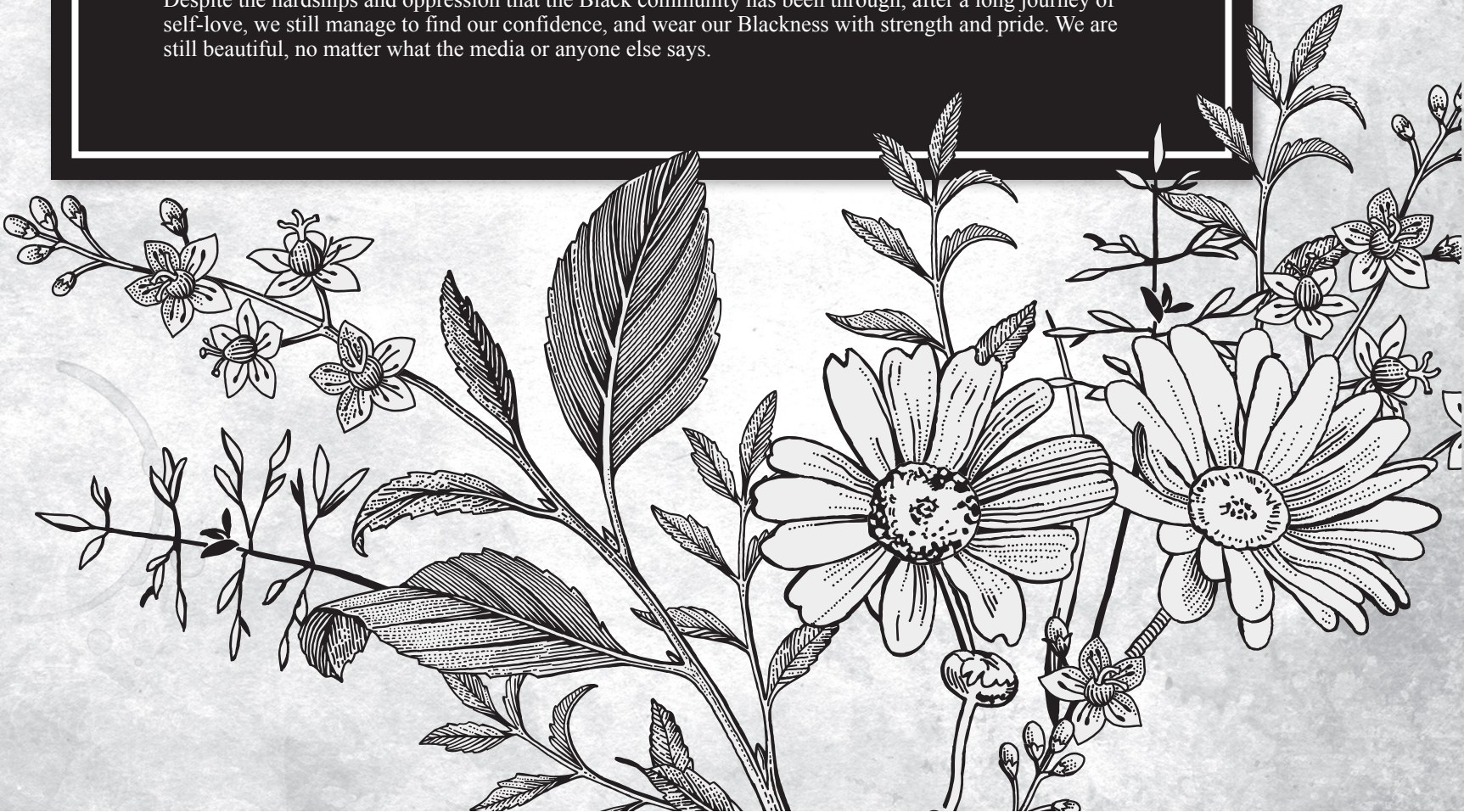
# BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL

Janelle Allan

The theme of these three pieces is voice and diversity. Having no representation of Black people has been an issue for me my whole life, whether it be in my school communities, neighbourhoods, and friend groups. This rubbed off the impression that Black isn't worth being represented, and that it is ugly. This is why I wanted to use this piece to shine light on a different type of beauty that is not recognized enough — Black beauty.

When glancing at the three pieces at first sight, what you see are three strikingly beautiful figures. When you take a closer look, there are deeper messages that shine light issues concerning the Black community. These issues are something that I as a Black individual have been affected by, but being present in multiple communities that are predominantly white, many people are blissfully unaware of these issues. The issues I focused on were cultural appropriation, police brutality and beauty double standards. The statements on each piece were phrased as questions, because I wanted to provoke people's thoughts and make them look at each issue from a different perspective — one that they may have never considered before.

Despite the hardships and oppression that the Black community has been through, after a long journey of self-love, we still manage to find our confidence, and wear our Blackness with strength and pride. We are still beautiful, no matter what the media or anyone else says.







# BUTTERSCOTCH

Tega Aror

Mara had skin that was dark and rich like Madam Frida’s malted fudge brownies. She also had thick, coarse hair that required a most delicate touch to maintain in its natural state. But Mara did not have the time to baby her hair - not with Port Valley’s athletic banquet coming up so soon. Mara was a setter on Port Valley High’s Sr. Girls Volleyball Team and an executive member of athletic council. Every year the athletic council organized a banquet in late winter where they recognized accomplished students, raised money for the teams, and everyone got to dress up for a night.

Each year a theme was chosen as inspiration for the decorations and dress code. This year’s theme was ‘Gods and Monsters’. Mara wasn’t too sure what colour scheme or type of outfit read Goddess - but had settled on a navy wrap dress after her mother had convinced her to buy it. She had earlier been eyeing a loose-fit marigold shaded dress, but her mother insisted that a muted colour would look better against Mara’s complexion.

When it came to special occasions, Mara usually took care of her own hair, but this time she was hoping that the occasion would be more than special. She planned to ask her friend Jaymor to attend the banquet with her. He played on Port Valley’s Sr. Boys Basketball Team and was also a member of athletic council.

Mara had collected the contact information of a hair stylist from her mother, and scheduled an early morning appointment two Saturdays before the banquet.

Before leaving for the salon, Mara’s mother had caught her on the way out the door. The house was quiet, and the corridor dimly lit, it being not quite 7am. She perched on the staircase which overlooked their front entrance and peered down at Mara.

“So, you’re finally braiding that hair. Thank God. No more of that rat’s burrow you call a ‘puff’.” Her mother was still dressed in her sleeping silks, yet had already put on her bobbed wig.

Slipping into her sneakers, Mara exhaled. “My hair isn’t messy just because it isn’t blown out or flat ironed.” Or under a wig, Mara hadn’t dared to add. “As long as it’s clean - which it is - then there shouldn’t be a problem. This is how it grows naturally, after all.” She wondered how her mother never grew tired of this conversation.

Her mother looked down at her with pity. Pity for the poor child who may never know any better. “If you purchase a blouse from the store, will you wear it wrinkled just because that’s how it came?” She sucked her teeth, the universal sound of disapproval.

Well, in their culture anyway.

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Later at the salon, Mara sat in a black leather swivel chair with a nylon cape draped around her shoulders, facing a mirror. She rotated her head in the mirror, marvelling at her appearance. Mara’s hair, which usually consisted of fluffy curls and coils had been gradually transformed into what Essence Magazine called ‘goddess box braids’. Single braids that flowed free down her back, complete with the odd curled section to add body and style.

The hair stylist’s name was Idara, but seeing as the woman was even older than her parents, it was customary for someone Mara’s age to address Idara as “Auntie”. Even though there was no blood relation.

Auntie operated her styling business out of a modest salon that was located at the corner of a strip mall. The place was built with wooden floor boards and cement insulation. The salon was kept tidy, although the air was laden with a scent comprised of what Mara assumed to be a mixture of dozens of hair oils, creams, and gels.

It was a wondrous task, braiding afro hair with extensions. First Auntie would take a pair of shears to a bundle of synthetic extensions and cut to the desired length. Afterwards, she would use her rattail comb to section off little tufts of Mara’s hair that would later become full braids. Auntie did this by taking a sliver of synthetic hair from the bundle, looping it, then skillfully weaving it into Mara’s hair. Auntie’s fingers were swift and nimble. When Mara tried explaining the process to her friends at school, they thought of it like a magic trick. She saw it as more akin to a miracle. To Auntie, it was just business.

Laying on the vanity’s counter amidst the hair products and tools that Auntie would periodically reach for during their session, Mara’s phone pinged. It was the athletic council group chat.

Nisha: So we reaching Frida’s or nah?

Jaymor: Yea, I’ll reach around 6.

Fran: Shoot, was that today? I’ll try and figure something out but I can’t make any promises.

Mara: Finishing up my braids, then I’ll be there!

Cleveland: Y’all can order without me, I’ll be a bit late.

Auntie lightly tapped a corner of Mara’s temple. A signal for Mara to hold a braid in place to ease some of the tension and tugging while Auntie wove the strands together.

“So your mother tells me that you guys are leaving town soon.” Auntie mentioned in her thick Igbo accent.

“Yes, Daddy booked our flights and hotel rooms not too long ago.” Mara peered at Auntie through the mirror, setting down her phone.

“How exciting!” Auntie paused to make a part in Mara’s hair. “Where are you going?”

“We’re going to the Dominican Republic. It will be nice to escape over winter break.”

“The Dominican - wow!” Auntie exclaimed. “Just make sure you stay out of the sun.”

Mara’s phone pinged again and she glanced down at her screen. “Why?”

“You don’t want to get too dark, is all.”

Mara’s gaze snapped back to the mirror where she watched Auntie section off another part of her hair, the metal handle of the rattail comb dangling from her teeth.

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Auntie finished up the braiding soon after. Mara had never worn goddess braids before, but she couldn’t think of a better style to go with the theme of this year’s banquet.

She took the bus from the salon to meet up

with her friends. Madam Frida’s was a beloved local café that sold hand-crafted hot drinks and decadent pastries. It was a hangout hotspot for students from Port Valley, since it was located only a couple blocks from the school. A large poster was stuck to the glass of the front door reading, Certified Black-Owned Business. The interior had been lined with teal cushioned booths, resembling an old-fashioned diner. The menu was on a chalkboard that hung above the baristas behind the counter, bordered by Hollywood-style LED lights. Every item on the menu had been handwritten in cursive, hot drinks in white and pastries in teal. In the corner of the board, Mara could see that the day’s special was the white macadamia nut cookie. Being the first of the group to arrive, Mara and Jaymor decided to order their food, then wait for the others.

Once they had reached the front of the queue, Jaymor playfully gestured to the counter. “Star setters first.” He insisted, winking at Mara.

Mara rolled her eyes and stifled a small smile. “One small iced caramel latte and a malted fudge brownie please.” Her usual.

The cashier rang her up. “That will be \$6.28.” Mara handed her a bill. The lady turned to Jaymor. “Same for you?”

“Same drink, but I’ll take a butterscotch brownie instead.” The cashier took Jaymor’s change and told them to wait to the side, where they could pick up their items once ready.

The pair walked to the pickup corner. Mara glanced at the entrance and swallowed.

The others would probably be awhile, so now was as good a time as any.

“Jay, I’ve been meaning to ask you,” She started.

“Shoot.” Jaymor grinned, his teeth bright against his dark skin. He wore a knit toque that lay so crooked on his head, it had almost fallen off. Mara resisted the urge to snatch it and place it on her own head.

“What if... could we... would you maybe want to go to the banquet together?” Mara bit the inside of her cheek. “If you’re not already going with someone else, I mean.”

Jaymor’s eyes widened. “Oh, um...”

She must have asked too late. “You’re already going with someone else.”

“No. It’s not like that.” He swiped the toque off of his head.

It was worse than she thought. “It would be too weird then?” Mara pressed, praying he wouldn’t utter the words ‘like a sister’.

“No, it’s just,” He met her eyes, apologetic. “I’m into light skins.”

“Oh.”

A barista announced their names and set their orders on the counter. Mara picked up her food and turned to go find somewhere to sit. The front door opened and Cleveland strolled in. Jaymor lingered to greet him.

Sat at a booth by herself, Mara stared at her pastry. She had skin that was dark and rich like her malted fudge brownie. But Jay preferred butterscotch. Apparently, everyone did.







# WHY THE REVOLUTION WILL *NOT* BE TELEVISED

Mudia Iyayi

“The revolution will be televised.”  
“The revolution will be livestreamed.”  
“The revolution will be live-tweeted.”

These are some of the sentiments that have been heard over the past year in response to the growing protests and outrage against police brutality and acts of violence against the Black community. However—none of these phrases are true.

People often quote the phase: “the revolution will be televised,” without knowing that this statement is a corruption of the Gil Scott-Heron poem, *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*. Scott-Heron emphasizes titular point in his poem, but this hasn’t stopped thousands from misquoting the late poet.

It’s finally time to debunk this misconstruction by analyzing some of the poem’s verses and how they can be applied to our society today. Scott-Heron recorded the poem in 1970, and while many of the references and allusions are over 50-years old, the core message of the poem still resonates.

He opens the poem with a stark demand:

*You will not be able to stay home, brother  
You will not be able to plug in, turn on  
and cop out*

These lines already outline the tone of the poem as he is stating that when the revolution comes, no one will not be able to plug in their television and watch passively from the comfort of their home. He argues that change can only come with active participation, a message that he stresses throughout the poem.

*The revolution will not be brought to you  
by Xerox*

*In four parts without commercial interruptions  
The revolution will not show you pictures of  
Nixon blowing a bugle*

Once again Scott-Heron affirms that the revolution will not be sponsored by an advertiser, nor would it be conveniently broadcast without commercial interruption. It is also important that he remarks the former United States president Richard Nixon, who infamously started the “war on drugs,” which detrimentally impacts Black people to the south of our border till this day.

*There will be no pictures of pigs shooting down  
brothers on the instant replay*

Scott-Heron states the clear intent of his aforementioned “revolution.” The term “pig” refers to the police and he states that there won’t be any broadcasting of innocent black men and women being shot and killed by the police.

This statement can be interpreted in two ways. One, he may be providing commentary on mainstream media’s tendency to neglect news about police brutality, especially in the late 1960s and 70s. And when it is broadcast, it is often sensationalised and shown with “instant replays.” More likely however, this line is referring the fact that the revolution will not allow for this type of violence to go unchecked, even to the extent that it won’t even be televised.

*And women will not care if Dick finally got  
down with Jane  
On “Search for Tomorrow”  
Because black people will be in the street  
looking for a brighter day  
The revolution will not be televised*

In accordance with his allusions to television, he states that what happens on the next episode of *Search for Tomorrow* will pale in comparison to the fights for justice and equality that Black people will be advocating for in the streets. Unfortunately, 50-years later, black people are still advocating in the streets in search for that brighter day.

*The revolution will not be televised  
Will not be televised  
Will not be televised  
Will not be televised  
The revolution will be no re-run, brothers  
The revolution will be live*

The final lines of the poem deeply reiterate its message. There will be no re-run or recordings of the revolution. The revolution will be live and in the now.

If you haven’t already picked it up, Scott-Heron is not talking about an actual, physical revolution. This is why saying “the revolution will be televised” is so wrong.

Scott-Heron’s revolution is bigger than a movement or march. It is so much bigger than anything that can be captured on film. It is bigger than the trivialities of daily life. It’s an internal change of mind and attitude; something that can only come from a true moment of insight. Scott-Heron remarked, that only once this happens, can individuals be ready to create tangible change in society, for the betterment of Black lives. This is why the revolution can only be live.

So unfortunately, contrary to your social media feed, the revolution will not be televised, livestreamed or even broadcast for that matter. You’ll just have to wait for the revolution to come to you. And when it does, it will undoubtedly *not* be televised.





# SOCIAL CURRENCY: HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

Ilhan Aden

CREDIT: ILHAN ADEN

As the dawn of a new day rises, will we ever close the chapter that is blackface?

Social currency will have you acting like a complete fool online or as some put it, behaving like TikTok stars.

Although that may come off as harsh to some and truthful to others, the reality is people will do anything for the drug that is attention, and that’s on all corners of the internet.

Unsurprisingly — just like most things stemming from the internet — it then becomes a trend. So, what “new” trend has me up in arms this early in the article?

Blackfishing — specifically, blackfishing for social currency.

Now, if you are an older millennial or above you understand blackfishing as good ‘ole blackface minus the minstrel show. As hyperbolic as that may sound, it is the truth. Blackfishing is the modern-day iteration of blackface.

Blackfishing and blackface both describe the ability to wear Blackness as a costume but with different motivations. Canadian freelance journalist, Wanna Thompson coined the term in 2018 after noticing an alarming trend of white women cosplaying as Black women on Instagram.

She posed the question to Twitter and found worrisome results noting, “[The] charade in question has been embraced by numerous celebrities, which then trickled down to influencers who are simply following a formula that has proven to yield tremendous success for the high-profile women they idolize.”

What success you ask? Social currency that is!

Social currency is defined as one’s ability to create resources and cultivate opportunities as per their social network both on and offline. It is an extension of the social capital theory in which positive cooperation between groups can be beneficial for those involved.

In other words, the more people participate with the uplifting of your platform, the higher the likelihood you will be able to garner opportunities from businesses interested in your audience.

What we are witnessing in this current era are those actively choosing to build their platforms with a certain aesthetic knowing it is trendy enough to help them navigate monetizing their online space. Sounds harmless until you realize people are receiving paid opportunities to be people they are not especially in the makeup and fashion world.

The transformative nature of makeup and fashion have been and will forever be praised for its creative expression. However, as Dr. Aria Halliday, assistant professor of Africana feminisms at the University of New Hampshire explains, “Being able to costume oneself via makeup as a completely different culture or ethnicity just [helps people] perform [blackface] even more.”

There are some that will see it as nothing more than an extra dark tan, lip fillers and people with too much time on their hands, but I’d argue this is a symptom of a much bigger problem — one involving the usual “isms.”

What is happening is an increase in profitability with the erasure of Black women in different online spaces. And as the topic of blackfishing enters the vernacular of the everyday world, what we are seeing is the self-fulfilling prophecy that is the trope of the angry Black woman.

The idea of having your cultural/ethnic identity striped from you and displayed as costume for others to profit understandably would make anyone angry, but instead Black women are being called bitter, jealous, delusion and gas lit to believe they are wrong.

Blackface has not disappeared; it has instead become repackaged in more digestible terms from generation to generation. It will continue to re-emerge until its many underlying issues are solved, one being that Black women have long been told everything about them is wrong and needs to change while those that emulate Blackness are praised.

Thompson describes it best as, “White women want access to Blackness but don’t want the suffering that comes along with it...it reaffirms the belief that people desire Blackness, just not on Black women.”



# NETWORKING WHILE BLACK IN WHITE SPACES

Brittany Baah



CREDIT: PEOPLEIMAGES

Nobody should have to put on an entire persona to gain white adoration.

Black Canadians are a small population. We make up about 3.5 per cent of the population, according to the 2016 Census. That percentage is mostly comprised of the growing young, city-living, Black population. Networking is an important part of careers however and making connections is a task within itself. Once we layer on being the *only one*, networking becomes complicated.

*Tokenism* describes sought out diversity for its aesthetic. Those tokenized are the “only ones,” taking on the role of representing everyone else. Experiences range from being called on to explain concepts like the versatility of Black hair, being the resident race relations expert (to an extent), and the Black One™ in photo shoots for organizations. The token’s role consists of dealing with micro-aggressions and overworking themselves to avoid being overlooked.

BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Colour) values share an emphasis on being “the best.” Our parents moved here and drilled the value of hard work into our psyche. Aspiring to be a *model minority* harms us when companies seek to exploit our labour. We work our fingers to the bone, just to have our work othered, plagiarized, or minimized.

Seeing other Black/BIPOC in majority-white spaces is endearing.

In my experience, moving from a neighbourhood in Mississauga, where the beauty supply store is a walk from my mom’s apartment, to attending Fanshawe College where I was the only Black student in my classes, was different. That’s not to say I have never made up the minority living in Mississauga.

Meeting other BIPOC students in London is *different*. We are very few. Some have adjusted to being “the one” and are not particularly interested in meeting “the others.” Then there are those with an established Black/BIPOC network. Usually in the second semester, they are mature and know the ins and outs of living in London. What about Black students new to London, from diverse spaces, and struggling to find BIPOC networks here?

It is challenging to find Black networks, especially amidst a pandemic. Meeting new people is almost impossible, but now we can utilize the Internet to network. There are organizations within Ontario, dedicated to Black student networking and providing resources. Black Outreach Leadership Directive (BOLD) connects Black mentors with students. Bold also currently hosts virtual events to support Black post-secondary students. Look out for social media groups/pages for BIPOC students mingling.

The feeling of sticking out like a sore thumb is so common that Eternity Martis, an alumna of Western University, wrote an award-winning memoir on her experience. *They Said This Would Be Fun: Race, Campus Life, And Growing Up*, is a story many Black students can relate to. Stories like Eternity Martis’ memoir are essential.

I feel less isolated when I hear other accounts of *getting glances when race is brought up in class*. They remind me I am not the only one.

In your professional and personal interactions, it is important not to fully compromise your authenticity. Nobody should have to put an entire persona on for white adoration.

Changing the unique characteristics that make you who you are can be harmful. If white counterparts are not asked to change, silence, or soften themselves for the comfortability of others, why should we?

Dear Black students: Take up the space you need. There should be no question on whether you deserve a say.

To argue that race has no impact on meeting new people is naive. Race adds a layer of depth to everyday life.

Change is a long process. To hope that things change is also naive. Predominantly white towns, institutions, and spaces are resistant to change. The best way to retaliate is to make yourself comfortable. Denounce the racialized roles you don’t want and enter spaces that welcome you.

Networking, being black, and maneuvering professional/personal life is complex. It’s easier said than done when your livelihood does not depend on assimilating. If you take one thing from this piece, remember you deserve a seat at the table.

*Brittany Baah is currently enrolled in Fanshawe’s radio broadcasting program.*





# BLACK HISTORY MONTH: MOVIES, BOOKS AND MORE

**Salma Hussein**

Black History Month is here and despite the chaos in the world, this has been a monumental year for African Americans and Black people all over the world because of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Many books, memoirs, movies and even shows have been created to honour and remember the struggles that Black people have faced. It is important to keep yourself aware of the history, because ignorance can be just as harmful.

A good way to get started is by picking your favourite way to learn their stories. Whether it's by reading a book or watching a movie, take the time to soak in the tales of a not so long-ago past. Here are some titles to get you started:

## *Hidden Figures*

Like the title suggests, this is movie that unravels the stories of Black women of history, hidden in the shadows of white men's victories. These women's contributions to NASA were pivotal to the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit. Their strides changed the world, and not many knew about it; this award-winning movie changed that for sure. It not only talks about the discrimination women faced in the '60s, but also about the racial segregation prevalent in this time. This movie is empowering and inspiring to younger girls who dream of becoming engineers, scientists, physicists and any other career you could think of that is predominantly male dominated.

## *The Hate U Give*

First a book, then shortly after adapted into a movie, the message of *The Hate U Give* is an unfortunate reality of today's world. The movie and book follow the life of Starr Carter who is stuck between two identities. After a childhood friend is shot by a police officer, both of her worlds begin to crumble as she realizes she can't keep her voice silent against the racism around her. This story will make you realize that society justifies the violence against Black people from stereotypical beliefs white communities hold.

## *The Help*

Also adapted into a movie, this is a story of Black women's experiences as housekeepers in white homes in the '60s. At first many are hesitant to share their stories, but one by one, they came forward. Spectators and viewers can walk in the shoes of these maids and learn about their daily humiliations, struggles, hardships, and most of all how they managed to survive.

## *Self Made*

Follow the life of Madam C.J. Walker as she goes through abusive relationships, humiliation because of her darker skin, and the untold story of her contributions to Black hair care. Her struggles with standardized beauty, racism, and abusive relationships didn't stop her from being innovative and creating a self-made business that eventually made her the first woman to ever become a millionaire. This four-episode mini-series is available on Netflix.

## *Selma*

After the Civil Rights Act of 1964, America was officially and legally desegregated. However, racism persevered, and the Black community struggled to vote in their country; a right that every citizen should have no matter the colour of their skin. Set in 1965 Alabama, the movie follows Dr. Martin Luther King Jr as he leads the fight for suffrage in a march that began from Selma to Montgomery. This movie does a great job of portraying the civil rights protests and the evolution of change.

## *The 13th*

While there have been many positive changes to the inequalities that Black people have faced, many systemically racist realities still exist today. The movie *13th* explores the racial inequalities and prejudices that the Black communities suffer from, specifically the prison system, and the fact that they are predominantly filled with African Americans.

## *Dreams from my Father*

Barack Obama's presidency was a revolutionary moment in American history, as he became the first Black president in the history of the United States. This memoir of the previous president explores his earlier life in Honolulu until his year in law school. Themes of race, identity, family, and community are prevalent in this story as the origins of Obama are revealed in his own words and experiences as the author of the memoir.

## *Men We Reaped: A Memoir*

A coming of age story and memoir of the author that also discusses the death of five young black men in her community. In the story, the author searches for the reasonings behind these men's deaths and also shares her experiences as a Black woman living in southern America. The main theme of this book is the undeniable reality that history tends to repeat itself; a never ending cycle that is hard to break and results in dangerous consequences.

We need to make sure we remember these stories, because at least then the people of the past will be remembered by their legacies. All these stories are from a history that happened not too long ago, and for the sake of not repeating mistakes, keep yourself informed. Unfortunately, racism is not something that has stayed in our past. It is a plague that harms people of all colour daily. The best way to start on a better course and end the cycle of hate, is to remember the history and acknowledge the wrongdoings. Hopefully these picks can give you somewhere to start.



CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1. Go off script
- 6. They're often billowed
- 11. Matterhorn, e.g.
- 14. Green shampoo
- 15. Explanatory end of a poem
- 16. Alpine sight
- 17. It won't keep you up
- 18. Old English coin
- 19. "Fantasy Island" prop
- 20. 911 respondent
- 21. Was introduced to
- 23. Hurdles for future attys.
- 25. Met productions
- 28. Puccini productions
- 29. Carbonium, e.g.
- 30. Slang for Canadian of limited intelligence
- 32. Oak seed
- 35. Where forgotten umbrellas may accumulate
- 39. Toni Morrison novel
- 40. Market surpluses
- 41. Heavy cart
- 42. Architectural features above arches
- 44. Protection
- 45. Biblical king
- 46. Noted Indian diplomat
- 47. Bundles, as wheat
- 50. Li'l Abner's creator
- 53. Anklebones
- 54. Varnish resin
- 55. Pasta suffix
- 58. The Cyclones of the N.C.A.A., for short
- 59. Camera brand
- 63. Cousins of ospreys
- 65. Tone \_\_\_\_ (early rapper)
- 66. Finally, in France
- 67. "E pluribus unum," e.g.
- 68. M.D.'s specialty
- 69. Odd-numbered page
- 70. Inclined, in London

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
14						15						16		
17						18						19		
20					21	22				23	24			
		25	26				27		28					
			29				30	31						
32	33	34				35						36	37	38
39						40						41		
42				43						44				
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47	48	49					50	51				52		
53							54					55	56	57
58					59	60	61	62			63	64		
65					66						67			
68					69						70			

DOWN

- 1. Cathedral area
- 2. Apothecary's weight
- 3. Slow, musically
- 4. Breed
- 5. Accuse
- 6. Big name in mattresses
- 7. "Wheel of Fortune" request
- 8. It climbs the walls
- 9. Mauna \_\_\_\_ (1984 erupter)
- 10. More inane and ridiculous
- 11. Large supplemental insurance provider
- 12. Deliberately deceive
- 13. Rainbow maker
- 22. Coastal raptor
- 24. Approached boldly, with "to"
- 26. Carnivorous fish
- 27. Ought to have, informally
- 28. Ultrafast flyers, for short
- 31. Feed bag contents
- 32. Pack animal
- 33. Trophy
- 34. Pay extension?
- 35. Nile queen, informally
- 36. Alternative to net
- 37. Month before juin
- 38. Part of GPS: (Abbr.)
- 40. Canine warnings
- 43. Chastity violator
- 44. Small power source
- 46. \_\_\_\_ Victor
- 47. Steps over a fence
- 48. Wears
- 49. Eject violently
- 51. Grassy plain
- 52. Noted caravel
- 56. German denial
- 57. Negative contraction
- 60. Vane direction
- 61. "Documentary Now!" channel
- 62. Op. -- (abbr. in a footnote)
- 64. Ontario Premier, once

WORD SEARCH

J	R	C	H	U	C	K	B	E	R	R	Y	J	T
M	A	R	U	N	D	M	C	A	L	X	B	I	W
N	L	M	S	A	M	C	O	O	K	E	O	M	E
M	E	S	E	E	T	N	Y	E	E	W	D	I	C
I	A	Y	B	S	I	E	U	A	F	C	I	H	N
L	D	Y	M	O	B	S	J	A	B	H	D	E	I
E	B	H	M	T	E	R	T	L	B	A	D	N	R
S	E	A	W	N	V	S	O	E	K	N	L	D	P
D	L	S	Y	X	D	N	W	W	I	D	E	R	D
A	L	H	C	O	S	L	A	A	N	Y	Y	I	E
V	Y	B	M	A	C	N	O	D	G	C	B	X	S
I	B	I	L	L	I	E	H	O	L	I	D	A	Y
S	N	T	H	E	S	U	P	R	E	M	E	S	S
O	R	E	D	N	O	W	E	I	V	E	T	S	N

AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC ARTISTS

Lead Belly	The Supremes	Miles Davis	WC Handy
Bo Diddley	Billie Holiday	James Brown	Fats Domino
B. B. King	Stevie Wonder	Prince	Sam Cooke
Chuck Berry	N.W.A.	Jimi Hendrix	Run DMC

SUDOKU

4		8	7			5	6	
		9	4		8			1
	1			2				
	7				2			
8								4
			3				7	
				4			1	
1			9		7	4		
	4	7			1	8		5

Puzzle rating: Very Hard

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 grid contains the digits 1 through 9. That means no number is repeated in any column, row or box.

CRYPTOGRAM

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
24					4																				6

“  
25 9 6 7 15 12 7 3 25 10 19  
4 7 9 3 25 3 25 19 2  
25 21 17 24 9 23 4 24 7 11 20 9 19  
10 21 14 19 9 3 7 14 2 3 21 15  
”

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

5	9	8	1	6	2	7	4	3	1	8	5	6	2	9	6	8	3	5	1	3	6	2	7	4	8
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3			9	6	8	4	5	3	1	8	5	6	2	9	6	8	3	5	1	3	6	2	7	4	8
4			9	6	8	4	5	3	1	8	5	6	2	9	6	8	3	5	1	3	6	2	7	4	8
5			9	6	8	4	5	3	1	8	5	6	2	9	6	8	3	5	1	3	6	2	7	4	8
6			9	6	8	4	5	3	1	8	5	6	2	9	6	8	3	5	1	3	6	2	7	4	8
7			9	6	8	4	5	3	1	8	5	6	2	9	6	8	3	5	1	3	6	2	7	4	8
8			9	6	8	4	5	3	1	8	5	6	2	9	6	8	3	5	1	3	6	2	7	4	8
9			9	6	8	4	5	3	1	8	5	6	2	9	6	8	3	5	1	3	6	2	7	4	8

“Trying is the first step toward failure.” — Homer Simpson

FREE INTERROBANG

NEW ISSUE ON STANDS

Bi-Weekly



FIND US ON



FSU INTERROBANG





Freshman Fifteen



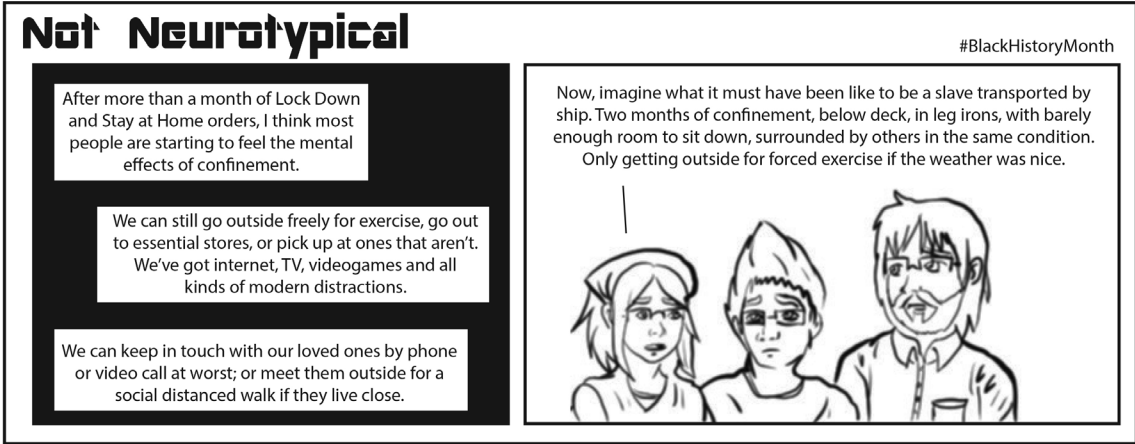
By Alan Dungo



@FilbertCartoons



By Christopher Miszczak © 2020



Ian Indiano



Aries

Keep an open mind these next two weeks. If you make assumptions, you'll make mistakes. Discuss your plans with someone who owes you a favour, and you'll receive suggestions and hands-on help. Reach out to an old acquaintance and you'll be offered information regarding an opportunity that interests you. Romance is on the rise; let someone special know how much you care. Refuse to let an emotional situation spin out of control on. Someone will use manipulative tactics to take advantage of you.

Taurus

An innovative approach to life, love and happiness will open your eyes to new beginnings. Don't let a challenge stand between you and what you desire. Put your heart and soul into something you enjoy doing and you'll discover ways to overcome any adversity you encounter. Use intelligence to win over those less willing to see things your way. Do not ignore a good suggestion. Look for alternatives when faced with opposition and negativity. Be fair and willing to listen and compromise. Look for the good in everyone and you will keep the peace.

Gemini

Live and learn. How you conduct yourself will make a difference in the way things turn out. Act with compassion, and pick up the slack when necessary. Focus on your accomplishments and you will make an impression on whoever is in charge. Getting along with your peers will encourage them to pitch in and help. Do your part to make your dreams come true. Someone will use emotional tactics to throw you off guard. Don't get flustered or reveal secrets. Focus on family fun or romance and you will enjoy the rewards that follow.

Cancer

Be creative when dealing with home issues and you will find solutions that will improve your relationships with those close to you. Take care of your responsibilities first and you will avoid getting into an unnecessary emotional battle. Getting along will be half the battle when dealing with roommates. Patience and kindness will pay off. Choose peace and love over chaos and divisiveness. Learn something that you can incorporate into your ability to earn more money. Pay attention to the wording on labels. Someone will mislead you if you ignore details.

Leo

You may not like the changes taking place around you but if you look hard, you'll find the silver lining that will encourage personal growth. You'll have plenty of opportunities to voice your opinion and if you speak from the heart, you will touch others with your words and make a difference that will improve your life. Romance is in the stars. Listen carefully to what others say and what they desire. Be willing to compromise if you want to keep the peace and bring about the changes that will make you happy. Straightforwardness will help if you're going to agree with someone.

Virgo

Share your feelings and you'll resolve issues and bring about positive changes in your relationships with friends and family. Put thought and effort into how you earn your living and how you handle your money and your relationships with peers. You'll accomplish plenty if you pursue your objectives with a positive attitude. Take better care of your health and physical well-being. Expect confusion to set in if honesty doesn't prevail. Put more effort into research and getting your facts straight before you voice your opinion. Trouble will surface at home or with someone you love. Disclose your long-term plans.

Libra

Make physical changes at home that will help keep the peace or make your life easier. Refuse to let a bad attitude take over. Offer your skills, knowledge and experience along with a positive plan, and you will get the backup you need to pursue your goal. Don't take physical risks. An emotional mistake will be costly. Be responsible and look at the possible outcome before you make an irreversible change. You'll find it easier to sort through information that can help you make a practical and ethical choice. Romance is on the rise and will enhance your life.

Scorpio

Stick to your plan and partner with someone who shares your goal. Love and romance will help you bypass a difference of opinion. Gather information, learn a skill and avoid getting into an argument with someone you love. Keep busy, and do something that helps someone having trouble navigating his or her way through life. You'll question things you've done and believed in. Revisit the reason you chose the path you took, and you'll find your way back to the goodness it provided at a time you needed a life-altering experience.

Sagittarius

Confusion will surface if you listen to someone who uses emotional manipulation to twist facts. Be smart, and you'll make conclusions using intelligence and facts. Focus on money matters. Don't let a foolish mistake disrupt your relationship with someone you love. Make your voice heard and your feelings known. Emotional spending, abusing your health, or taking unnecessary risks will set you back. Think before you leap into something you cannot control. Patience and caution are favoured. Take the initiative, and share your emotions with someone you love.

Capricorn

Your intuition will keep you moving in the right direction. Plan your actions with precision, and don't stop until you reach your destination. You'll get a good indication of the way others feel about you. Listen to any complaints or criticism carefully, and it will encourage you to try harder and be more respectful of others. What you reap is what you sow. An emotional setback will be a telltale sign of what's to come if you don't make some personal adjustments. Do what's required and keep moving forward. Someone will offer sound advice that encourages you to make a lifestyle change.

Aquarius

Listen to your conscious not what someone tells you or wants you to believe. When in doubt, take a breather. You'll find a new way to make your money go further. A penny earned is a penny saved if you are diligent about the way you handle your finances. Reveal your feelings to someone you love, and make a commitment. Emotions will be difficult to control. Listen to what others suggest, but look for answers conducive to what you are going through and the changes you want to make. Don't rely on others, or you will end up disappointed.

Pisces

Strive for perfection and you'll impress someone you love. A kind gesture will change the dynamics of a relationship that means the world to you. Work behind the scenes until you are satisfied with the results you get. A partnership with someone who can offer you what you need without interfering with your plans will ease stress. Keep your emotions under control. Innovation will be the answer to a project that has the potential to derail. Proceed with caution. Verify everything you hear before you share. Nurture a relationship with a good friend or relative.



# BCCA aims for advocacy, networking for BIPOC community in sports

**Alex McComb**  
GAZETTE

Eighty days.

That's how long the Major League Baseball's National League took to meet, draft schedules, formalize contracts and play its first professional baseball game in 1876.

Now, how long did it take them to introduce the first Black professional athlete to play in the MLB — Jackie Robinson?

71 years.

Sports have often acted as a reprieve from the real world. While for some, sports are simply an escape from final exam anxiety, we cannot forget that for many Black, biracial and Indigenous athletes — for which hanging up their cleats, skates and sneakers means they return to a life riddled with racial discrimination.

There is an observable pattern of racism against Canadian coaches and student-athletes that the Black Canadian Coaches Association and its founder, Lee Anna Osei, hope to change.

Osei, the head coach of the St. Francis Xavier University women's basketball team and a former women's basketball player for the Laurier Golden Hawks, founded the BCCA as a conduit for Black coaches and student-athletes in June 2020.

The launch came just weeks after George Floyd's killing, which sparked one of the largest social justice movements in recent history.

Osei said the BCCA's objectives are to develop advocacy through allyship and connect people of colour in sports to network and share common experiences.

"We wanted to create something that was visible and something that was tangible; a platform that can really celebrate Black coaches, athletes and individuals in the sports space that are contributing to racial equity and racial justice in sports," said Osei.

"Through our platforms and through our membership, we're able to create learning sessions, lecture series, speaking engagements and interactive engagement that is geared around advocacy, providing education and raising awareness."

Olivia Ghosh-Swaby, quarterback and president of the Western women's football team, was recently a part of the BCCA's roundtable discussion *Beyond the Sidelines*, representing individual experiences of being a Black student-athlete in Canada.

"[*Beyond the Sidelines*] was amazing because I got to hear about some amazing initiatives that are being done by other individuals and these were all Black women in Ontario, in Quebec and across Canada," said



CREDIT: LEFT IMAGE: COURTESY OF LAURIER ATHLETICS, MIDDLE IMAGE: COURTESY OF THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL TEAM, TOP RIGHT IMAGE: COURTESY OF THE BCCA, BOTTOM RIGHT IMAGE: COURTESY OF LOUIS-MARIE PHILIDOR/CBC

The Black Canadian Coaches Association (BCCA) is working to eliminate racism in Canadian sports. Pictured are Corey Grant (left image), Olivia Ghosh-Swaby (middle image), Keyara Valencia-Hinds and Nelly Owusu (bottom right image, left to right).

Ghosh-Swaby. "I didn't realize how deep it went in terms of education, racism efforts, what's done across leagues across Canada and how it's super heterogeneous."

She hopes to represent this voice at future BCCA events, alongside other Black student-athletes.

Ontario University Athletics coaches have also been active with the BCCA. One of those coaches is Corey Grant, the receivers coach for the McMaster University football team and one of the directors of the BCCA.

He credits his knowledge of Black, biracial and Indigenous athletes' struggles to listening and connecting with the panelists on the *Beyond the Sidelines* segment.

"We're all having these discussions, we're all in our own way and in our different sports having similar trials," said Grant. "But what I'm also finding out through these conversations, we have tremendous leadership. We have great people that are in that space and leaders that are willing to speak up, that are speaking up and that are starting to use their platforms for change."

Grant is a Laurier Golden Hawks alumnus and played collegiate football as a receiver from 1995 until 1999. He then moved to the Canadian Football League as a player and then a coach, leading to his current position with the Marauders.

As a student-athlete, he remembers having uncomfortable conversations about racial discrimination — Grant's goal is to reach a point where Black athletes will no longer have to.

"I expressed to these student-athletes to continue to use their voices because I have two kids that are

going to be going to university," he said. "I don't want them to be having the same conversations. I want their conversations to be different. I want their experiences to be different. If we're still having the same conversations today as I was having 20 years ago in university, that needs to change."

Grant explained that the racial injustices that took place in summer 2020 shed light on the anti-Black racism that still very clearly exists in sports and beyond.

He believes that the BCCA and segments like *Beyond the Sidelines* have the potential to play a major role for Black student-athletes to have their voices heard and to hold others accountable.

Ghosh-Swaby mentioned that she met some great student-athletes during the panel who have done "amazing work" to bring more attention to the mistreatment of Black athletes — an issue that is often overlooked.

Two of those student-athletes were Concordia University's Keyara Valencia-Hinds, a women's rugby player, as well as Nelly Owusu, a women's basketball player.

Valencia-Hinds expressed that she's had to stand up for herself against anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism one too many times as a Concordia student-athlete.

"Being Black and Indigenous myself, it's a struggle and it's exhausting," said Valencia-Hinds. "You constantly feel like you have to stand up for yourself because, one minute, you're being mocked for being Indigenous, with your language being called animalistic and then the next minute, you have teachers say the N-word. And then on top of that, you're told to forget about that and just focus on your sport once you get to practice."

Valencia-Hinds, the BCCA and other Black, biracial and Indigenous student-athletes, particularly in Quebec, have tried to reach out to the Réseau du sport étudiant du Québec — the governing body for all levels of sport in Quebec — to discuss anti-racism policy and initiatives but garnered few results.

Due to RSEQ's lack of communication with her and the BCCA, she and Owusu decided to write open letters to the RSEQ, demanding that they break their silence and have conversations with Black student-athletes in their conference.

"As more individuals around the world unite in efforts to become more anti-racist, your voice continues to be non-existent and it is seen, felt and heard," she said in the letter. "Black-Indigenous athletes, such as myself, dedicate, at the minimum, four plus years of passion, fierté and love to the RSEQ and in return we have received no support in this time. Our lives are not politics and our lives are more than just sports. My life is more than just rugby."

The RSEQ responded to the letter with a statement on Nov. 3, 2020 that Valencia-Hinds called "dismissive."

"The board of directors as well as the general management of the RSEQ wish to recall how unacceptable any form of discrimination is within the student community ... The RSEQ has already put into place procedures outlining how student-athletes should report discrimination (directed at themselves or others) to their educational institution. We take transgressions seriously and hold individuals accountable for their actions," stated in part by the RSEQ in response to Valencia-Hinds and others' open letters.

The RSEQ responded to the *Gazette's* request for comment in January, with a statement originally published on Jan. 20.

"In the student-athlete milieu just as in society, on the fields, courts, and arenas, just as in the stands, discrimination, exclusion, and humiliation are unacceptable ... Together with the members of the RSEQ, we are currently working on the implementation of initiatives aimed at generating a positive impact, in all regions of Quebec, by prioritizing four issues: [racism, the place of women in sport, the participation of individuals with a functional limitation and the inclusion of LGBTQ+ communities.]"

The RSEQ's statement also adds that there will be an independent committee for each issue and their intention is to "foster an open dialogue" with their member schools and students community.

"We hope that this open and transparent process will lead to tangible directions, solutions, and tools to promote student sport in an even more inclusive and safe environment," the RSEQ added in conclusion.

Osei said she's proud of the two young women for stepping up for themselves and for all other Black student-athletes in Canada. The

BCCA founder and chair also mentioned that she does not wish to blame other institutions or conferences, but to continue fighting racism with better communication.

"I think it does require us to think a little more critically about how important it is to create a space for that kind of dialogue; to create a place that people can go to if they're having problems," said Osei.

Looking forward, Osei said that the BCCA is hoping to hire more staff due to the growing amount of work. The organization will continue to apply for grants and fundraise to provide more resources for Black, biracial and Indigenous student-athletes.

The BCCA is also working to formalize partnerships with community sports organizations that have been working with Osei since the group's inception in June.

Ghosh-Swaby, Grant and Valencia-Hinds are all looking to contribute to the BCCA in the near future and beyond.

Ghosh-Swaby is interested in continuing to work with the Black Female Coach Mentorship Program — an initiative that was launched in October by the BCCA that provides mentorship, advances coach professionalization and allows for leadership development for Black female coaches.

She said that her next steps to help the community is to recruit young Black women to play either on the Western women's football team or other football organizations she's a part of.

She hopes that through including more Black athletes to these football programs, they too can be supported by the BCCA.

"By using the Black Canadian Coach's Association as an opportunity to either support their work or be an advocate on their behalf is something that I'm super interested in," said Ghosh-Swaby. "We need to have these conversations and the different leagues across Canada need to start doing better to support BIPOC athletes."

Although the BCCA is a strong start, Black, biracial and Indigenous coaches and athletes are looking for more open dialogue to bring awareness and eliminate racism from a Canadian sports scene with a history of silence.



**Have any questions  
or comments about  
Fanshawe's Mission, Vision,  
Values or board policies?**

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**Tom Hutchison-Hounsell**

Student Representative to  
The Board of Governors



# Dreams of Olympic gold dance in Sara Villani’s head



CREDIT: PROVIDED BY REKORDS AND THE INTERNATIONAL BOBSLEIGH & SKELETON FEDERATION

Sara Villani and her pilot, Christine de Bruin, finishing fifth overall at the Winterberg, Germany World Cup on Jan. 9, 2021.

Alex McComb  
GAZETTE

From the age of peewee rugby to minor league hockey, wide-eyed kids from around the world dream of, one day, stepping on the Olympic podium — achieving a level of physical prowess that most humans can’t even fathom.

Only one of Western University’s athletic alumni have compete in an Olympic Games in the past 10 years, when Lesley Thompson-Willie was the coxswain for Canada’s women’s eight rowing team at the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Former Mustangs track and field student-athlete Sara Villani is looking to break Western’s cold streak as she sets her sights on gold for 2022.

However, she won’t be competing in a sport she trained for at Western, nor is it an event she has ever participated in before her varsity career. Villani is working towards qualifying for the Beijing Games as a Canadian bobsleigh athlete — a sport she has competed in for just over two years.

After experiencing a series of setbacks at Western — through injuries and life events — she assumed the Olympics were no longer a viable goal. That is, until her dreams were reignited by bobsleigh.

“In 2018, I had my first experience in a bobsled in Calgary,” recalled Villani. “After that week, I went home and I told my mom that I was going to bobsled. I finished up my last year of university and then that summer, I started to transition to more bobsled training.”

The former Mustang spent time training in Whistler, British Columbia in December, where the Canadian bobsled team prepared for a spot in the World Cup circuit on Jan. 9 in Winterberg, Germany.

Villani and her pilot, Christine de Bruin, placed fifth in the women’s World Cup bobsled race, finishing with a time of one minute and 54.43 seconds after two runs. This was Villani’s first World Cup race.

While Villani’s new-found success on the bobsled circuit is impressive, her history of success goes back much further.

In her first year at Western, Villani won an Ontario University Athletics Bronze medal in pentathlon, a junior national championship in heptathlon and represented Canada at the 2015 Junior Pan-Am Games in Edmonton, Alberta.

She earned an Ontario Junior Women’s Top Athlete of the Year award, an OUA gold medal in pentathlon and an OUA and U Sports silver medal in shot put during her Mustangs career.

While Villani is focused on her new athletic career, she holds her Mustang memories close to her heart. She especially remembers those dog days when

training was tough, but the camaraderie was tougher.

“When I was training for the pentathlon, Wednesday’s were our special endurance days. I found those days especially tough and those are the days where we would grind together and get through together and try to be as positive as possible,” she said.

“In my last year, the throwers, we [would] always have 7 a.m. weight sessions and just getting up that early to be in the gym can be quite tough. But we all arrive, blast some music and just put our head down and get the work done.”

Since graduating from Western in 2019, Villani’s training has only intensified. With a career in bobsleigh, training and sliding is a 24/7 job.

In her first-ever run in a bobsled, December 2018, Villani crashed. She has since experienced four more crashes, yet still gets up each time and reminds herself of the goals she’s set for herself.

“The majority of bobsled crashes, people walk away and they’re fine,” she explained. “But I would say that, even though you’re physically fine, it does have a mental toll. A bobsled crash is likened to a car crash. You have to learn how to manage the emotions, the fears and just try to remember your long term-goals. Crashing is just a part of the sport.”

Looking forward, Villani is preparing for another World Championships event in Altenburg, Germany this month where she is looking to be a brakeman for Team Canada.

Although the coronavirus pandemic has hindered Villani’s training, she eventually had the opportunity to train in a team environment in the fall after more than four months of at-home training and said it’s been a better feeling for her and her team.

“[Canadian Sport Institute Calgary] and WinSport have been excellent at having really good protocols that allow for the national athletes to continue to train and use the facilities,” she explained.

The long-term goal is getting to Beijing 2022. Villani has yet to qualify for the Games but trusts that her training will get her to wherever she needs to be.

The Mustangs alumna advises that if there is a young athlete at Western with dreams to earn a spot at a World Championships or seeing their name on the Olympic podium one day, they need to be willing to sacrifice more than they know to get there.

“You have to be prepared to put a lot of things on hold like visiting friends, family, financial security, staying up late every night and eating a bunch of junk food all the time,” she said.

“Hopefully, you’ll be able to do them later on but when you’re going for Olympic gold, your training and focus has to be incredibly intense.”

# How *Space Force* might be your new alternative to *The Office*

Skylar McCarthy  
INTERROBANG

*The Office* is one of my favourite shows on Netflix.

When you talk about all the characters in the show, they all play their parts perfectly. Rainn Wilson, the actor who played Dwight, fit the character well. Steve Carell plays the role of the boss perfectly. However, In June 2019, Netflix USA announced, “NBC has decided to take *The Office* back for its own streaming platform, but you can binge-watch the show on Netflix until January 2021.”

Because NBC’s Peacock service isn’t available in Canada, Netflix Canada will still play the show. It’s not clear until how long *The Office* will be available, so I wanted to find an alternative.

That’s when I came across *Space Force*, a Netflix show that has 10 episodes, and also starring Steve Carell. The show was all about the people tasked with creating a sixth branch of the armed services: the Space Force.

Without giving much away, Carell plays General Mark R. Naird, a former pilot assigned to be the leader of Space Force.

There are also many great actors as well in the series. Ben Schwartz, who voices Sonic in the *Sonic the Hedgehog*, plays the general’s media advisor. John Malkovich, who is most known for his role in the 1984 drama *Places in the Heart*, and 2001’s *I’m Going Home*, plays Dr. Adrian Mallory and assists General Naird in space missions.



CREDIT: NETFLIX

*Space Force* is a great binge-watch on Netflix.


Jimmy O Yang, someone who is most known on HBO’s *Silicon Valley*, also is in *Space Force* and plays Dr. Chan Kaifang who assists Dr. Mallory. Diana Silvers, best known for her role in *Ava*, also plays as Naird’s daughter. So, the show has some pretty great actors.

However, I like some others, think this series isn’t as great as it was supposed to be. *Space Force* shares *The Office*’s creator Greg Daniels and lead actor Carell but that’s about where the similarities should stop. I found Carell’s character, General Naird underwhelming. He doesn’t have the magic that he had on *The Office*, and the characters underneath him aren’t sure whether he’s a tyrant or just a buffoon. Some people like myself, expected *The Office* in space, or *The Office* in a military setting, and those people will be disappointed.

To them I say, move on and enjoy this for what it is.

However, every episode had something unique, which keeps you entertained throughout the full season. It is pretty funny as well from time to time. I don’t think this show was aimed at full comedy, but there are tons of jokes ranging from American politics, POTUS and twitter, Nancy Pelosi and AOC.

While some critics have been harsh, the show is actually enjoyable. However, it isn’t for everyone. *Space Force* is a political satire comedy that aims to portray the ridiculousness of trying to militarize space and it does this extremely well. My verdict is that while the show can be slow at times, it is an enjoyable series and it had a number of plots to keep the story moving forward. It is a great show to binge on Netflix.



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