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## Independent - Jan. 13, 2015

Luis Badillo

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# INDEPENDENT

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY



Tuesday, January 13, 2015

[www.neiuindependent.org](http://www.neiuindependent.org)

Vol. 34 Issue 9

# #JESUISCHARLIE

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INSIDE...**

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# NEWS

## Letters of Leadership Que Ondée Sola

*Que Ondée Sola* (QOS) was established in 1972 and remains the oldest Puerto Rican & Latin@ student publication in the country. We strive to provide NEIU with an engaging publication that deals with student issues and a focus on Puerto Rican & Latin@, our communities and our homelands. QOS was founded in a time where there were little to no resources for Puerto Rican & Latin@ at NEIU. The magazine was created by a group of Puerto Rican students who felt it was important to create a platform that would enable them to discuss and share the struggles they experience as first generation college students and activists in their communities.

As an organization, we have participated in the creation of the

developmental mathematics courses, Proyecto Pa'Lante, the alternative admissions programs in support of Latin@ students, Latino/Latin American Studies Program, and the Angelina Pedrosó Center. Our past members (and founders) include current Congressman Luis Gutierrez and former City Clerk of Chicago, Miguel del Valle.

*Que Ondée Sola* makes a strong effort to be active in the Humboldt Park community and other Latin@ communities in Chicago. Current members are active in social justice organizations aiming to free Puerto Rican political prisoner, Oscar Lopez Rivera, as well as organizations that work to combat gentrification. Members of QOS are also active in the College Pipeline program where they work with seniors who are in-

terested in attending NEIU and also mentor them for their first two years at the university. The organization brings over thirty students each year for their annual event, Plantando Semillas, for a shadow day. Students are able to experience a day in the life of a college student and become connected to resources on campus.

*Que Ondée Sola* offers students a space to explore social justice, learn more about their culture and history, as well as become more active in the Puerto Rican & Latin@ communities. It is also a great way for students to build writing skills. If you are more artistically inclined, QOS offers students the opportunity to learn and use Adobe Suite, including InDesign and Photoshop. Students will have the ability to edit



Photo courtesy of Que Ondée Sola

**Co-Editor Rebecca Rios with Rep. Luis Gutierrez and Editor-In-Chief Alyssa N. Villegas Rodriguez.**

and design the entire magazine.

If you are interested in participating in planning events, submitting material for the magazine, or even designing the magazine, you can also get involved. *Que Ondée Sola* will be meeting every Thursday from 3-4pm in room E-041 (downstairs from Becks and across the hall from Health Services). If you'd like more information, please

email editor-in-chief Alyssa Villegas at [queondeesola@gmail.com](mailto:queondeesola@gmail.com) or stop by! Our doors are always open!

Sincerely,  
Editor-In-Chief,  
Alyssa N. Villegas Rodriguez

## STUDENT LEADERS IN ELECTIONS

Logo provided by the Student Leader in Elections website

## PSA: Student Leaders in Election

Emmanuel Gonzalez

Be civically engaged, and earn \$170 at the same time as a student election judge on Feb. 24.

Becoming an election judge simply requires the submission of an application form which can be found at <http://www.slechicago.org>. However, there are certain requirements that a student must meet to be an election judge.

Students must be in good standing with a grade point average of 3.0 and they must be U.S. citizens who can read, speak, and write English competently. They must also be able to attend a four hour training session prior to the election. Finally, they must show up promptly at 5 a.m. on Election Day to their precinct and be prepared to work until all duties are completed after polls close.

As an election judge, students would assume responsibilities that include opening the polling place and setting up equipment for voting at 5 a.m. on Election Day, conducting a fair and impartial election in the precinct polling location to which they are assigned and allowing for voting to occur

from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. And finally, they will tabulate the vote totals for their assigned precinct and transmit the results to Election Central.

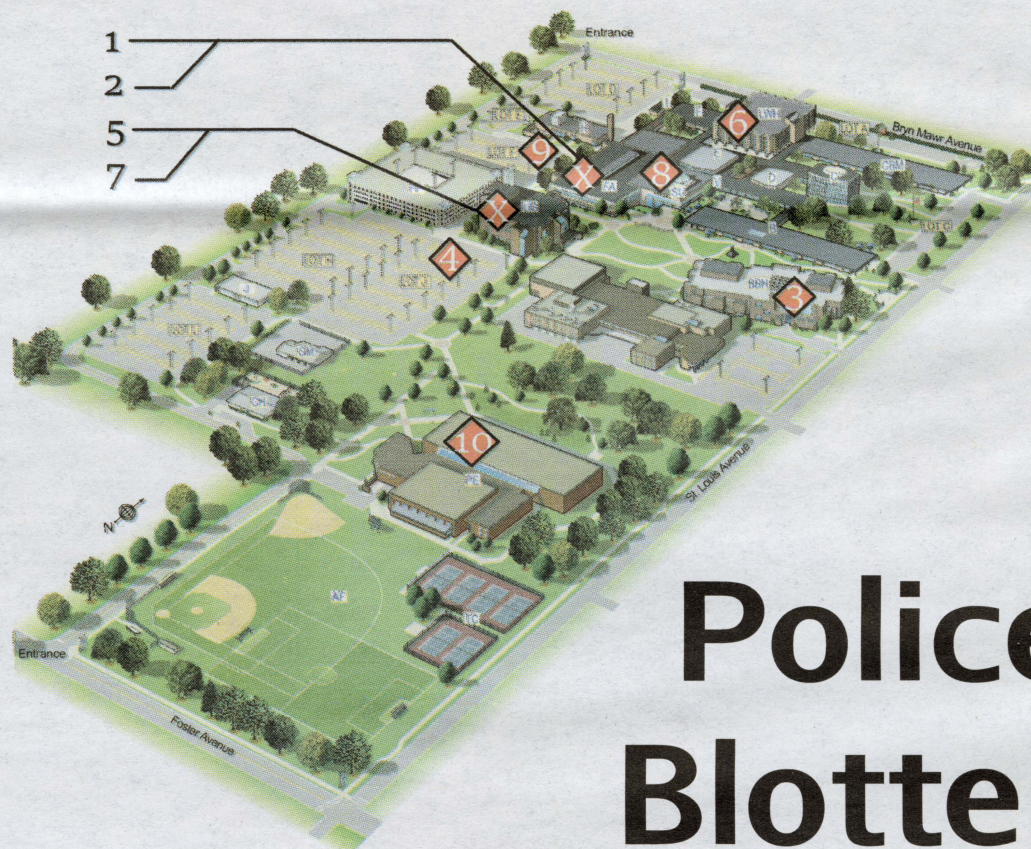
Student election judges may receive an additional compensation of \$25 if they offer to volunteer to pick up the keys for their polling location and/or use their cell phone number for official election business. Payments are usually sent 4-6 weeks after Election Day.

Any income earned is subject to federal income tax, though the income is not subject to tax withholding. Therefore, judges will be receiving their pay in full, but will receive a W2 form for tax reporting purposes.

In last year's November Elections, NEIU was ranked #4 in the number of students of universities in the city who worked as election judges, with 77 students serving on Election Day.

Student Election Leaders is a program that is offered by the Chicago Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights and is partnered with the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners.

The deadline to apply as a student election judge is Jan. 19.



Map provided by NEIU, edited by Emmanuel Gonzalez

## Police Blotter

The following offenses occurred on NEIU's campuses from Nov. 26 to Dec. 16 of 2014:

1. Fine Arts Building, Nov. 26, an unknown offender wrote graffiti on a toilet paper dispenser in the handicap stall of the men's washroom.
2. Fine Arts Building, Dec. 2, an unknown offender wrote graffiti on the partition in the handicap stall of the men's washroom.
3. Bernard Brommel Hall, Dec. 3, an unknown offender stole a laptop from the media center.
4. Parking Lot J, Dec. 3, an unknown offender struck and damaged a victim's vehicle while it was parked in the lot.
5. Library, Dec. 4, an unknown offender left marks and chipped the wood near a door's lock mechanism.

6. LWH Building, Dec. 4, unknown offender(s) stole 2 iPads from the media cart after they were used for a class.

7. Library, Dec. 5, subject stole a laptop computer loaned out by the TRIO program.

8. Student Union, Dec. 6, the fire dept. responded to a call of the deep fryer being on fire.

9. Parking Lot F, Dec. 8, an unknown offender struck and damaged a victim's vehicle while it was parked in the lot.

10. P.E. Building, Dec. 9, an unknown offender damaged the fence on the southwest corner of the P.E. building.

The following offenses were not mapped:

El Centro, Dec. 2, a witness identified a subject as a tagger. Subject was warned and will be sent to student due process.

NEIU (no specific location), Dec. 4, a student became concerned about another student who sent her inappropriate text messages.

El Centro, Dec. 5, a known offender wrote graffiti on the stairwell. The offender had already been referred to due process.

NEIU (no specific location), Dec. 8, an unknown offender stole a victim's iPhone from their jacket pocket.

NEIU (no specific location), Dec. 11, a victim complained of an unknown male stalking her. Police escort services were offered to her.

C.C.I.C.S., Dec. 16, a victim's coat and headphones were stolen. The offender was identified on video camera and the property was returned.



# Attack On Satirical Newspaper Sparks Ongoing Debate

Luis Badillo & Emmanuel Gonzalez

Twelve people are dead after two men stormed the offices of a satirical newspaper in Paris.

Two armed men entered the offices of Charlie Hebdo, a satirical magazine known for printing comics some readers may find offensive, including depictions of the prophet Muhammad. The two men can be seen in videos taken by bystanders wielding AK-47 assault rifles yelling "Allahu Akbar!" translating to "God is great!" in Arabic.

The following two days would be marked by a massive manhunt conducted by French police. According to the New York Times "France's interior minister announced that 88,000 police and security forces had been deployed throughout the country." By Friday, police had diffused two hostage situations, which raised the body count to 21 dead, including the two suspects.

After attacking the offices of the satirical newspaper, the hashtag

#JeSuisCharlie began surfacing on twitter and quickly became viral. Translated from French, Je Suis Charlie means I am Charlie, which serves as an empathetic message to the lives that were lost.

In response to some of the Islamophobia that occurred after the attack, Dyab Abou Jahjah, an Arab political activist tweeted the message, "I am not Charlie, I am Ahmed the dead cop. Charlie ridiculed my faith and culture and I died defending his right to do so." Along with the message, he began the hashtag #JeSuisAhmed that promptly received 4,000 retweets within four hours of posting.

Though this is not the only instance of this form of dialogue occurring, since the attack the media has carried on conversations of the Islam religion debunking some of the cultural myths. Reza Aslan, religious scholar and professor at the University of California at Riverside, has appeared on live CNN, NBC, and USA Today talking about the matter very fluently.

In an interview with NBC he stated, "What really I think puts an



Photo by Ben Ledbetter

Thousands gather in Paris to show support for the victims of the Charlie Hebdo attacks.

obstacle in the way is opinions like Ayaan Hirsi Ali's and so many others in the political and the media mainstream who continue to say that 1.7 billion people are responsible for the actions of these ex-

tremists. That doesn't help the fight against radicalism. The answer to Islamic violence is Islamic peace. The answer to Islamic bigotry is Islamic pluralism, and so that's why I put the onus on the Muslim com-

munity, but I also recognize that that work is being done."

Whether tweeters are Charlie or Ahmed, free speech will continue to guide this conversation.

## Rauner Cuts, School Prepares

Maya Wagner

Governor-elect Bruce Rauner's Office of Management and Budget (GOMB) has asked for all Illinois public universities, including NEIU, to prepare for a possible 20 percent budget reduction in state funding.

According to Michael Pierick, who serves as NEIU's Vice President for Finance and Administration, the GOMB asked for two budget scenarios.

"The first called for a 'maintenance budget' scenario, the minimum necessary to maintain the current level of programs and services. Our request was submitted to GOMB on Dec. 10. The second calls for a '20 percent budget reduction' scenario," said Pierick.

This state budget cut would be drastic considering the fact that Illinois currently appropriates \$37.75 million to NEIU. Pierick said, "A 20 percent budget reduction would be a cut of \$7.55 million."

When asked about how this possible budget reduction would affect students on financial aid, Pierick replied, "We have worked hard in the past few years to build up our funding for institutional financial aid, which is separate from federal financial aid such as Pell Grants. We would work hard to try to preserve what we have built up, but it's difficult to imagine that we could preserve all of it."

NEIU's faculty would also be negatively affected by this potential budget cut. Pierick said, "Since 81 percent of our budget is for person-



Photo by Steve Vance

Bruce Rauner's transition team has asked Illinois state universities to prepare for possible budget cuts.

nel costs, and much of the other 19 percent is for contracts and supplies (such as utilities, etc.), that cannot be cut by much, a 20 percent reduction in the state appropriation would have a dramatic effect on our employees, and therefore our students."

As far as what plans are in place to preserve NEIU's financial stability, Pierick noted that future decisions would have to go through administrative channels.

"It's hard to imagine responding to a \$7.55 million cut without cutting some classes, increasing some class sizes and increasing tuition more than has already been approved," said Pierick.

Pierick added, "Everything we do at NEIU affects students, faculty and staff. Every budget reduction negatively affects all of those groups and in the end affects students the most since students are why we do everything we do."

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## WINTER WELCOME WEEK

Spot Goldie on any NEIU campus, take a selfie, and tag the Student Leadership Development Facebook or Instagram page for your chance to win a prize!

### MONDAY, JANUARY 12TH:

Coffee & Conversation with Student Government Association - Alumni Hall North from 10AM - Noon

Pride Social sponsored by Theta Pi Sigma in SU 003 (Cafeteria) 11am - 1pm

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 13TH:

Student Involvement Fair - Alumni Hall from 10AM - 4PM  
Eaglettes Performance Schedule: noon, 1:30pm, & 3pm

Sponsors: Red Bull, Jimmy Johns, NPB

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14TH:

Donut Miss Out Transfer Student Social - Student Lounge from 3PM - 5PM

Beverages and Donuts will be provided

Sponsored by Transfer Center & New Student & Family Programs

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 15TH:

Leadership Pathways Workshop - Goal Setting - Student Union 215 from 4:15 - 5:30PM

Meet the Media Night - Student Lounge from 5:30 PM - 7PM

Guest speaker Ken Davis, NEIU alum and host of "Chicago Newsroom."



Independent



### FRIDAY, JANUARY 16TH:

Student Leadership Development Candy Store in Village Square from 10AM - 2PM

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Photo by Viviana Serrano

A wintry NEIU scene.

## A Not So Spring Semester

Viviana Serrano

January has proven to be one of the most brutal winter months so far. The snow, the blistering winds and the extra hour or two added to the day's commute are all too familiar to the start of the past spring semester.

The past week's frigid temperatures left NEIU no choice but to close all NEIU campus locations on Tuesday and reopen later the next day. Mike Dizon, Chief Communications Officer commented, "The bitterly cold weather conditions were such that closing all of our university locations - like so many other college campus and schools did in the area that day - was the right thing to do."

The best way to receive information regarding snow days and late starts is through the N-Alert sys-

tem. The university N-Alert system sends "security and weather related closures" to students and faculty via email, phone and text messaging. "We encourage those who haven't already done so to register their contact information into N-Alert via NEIUport," Dizon adds. NEIU also provided the school closing message on social media. The Northeastern Illinois University Facebook page alerted its followers on Tuesday and Wednesday.

It is important to be prepared for the unexpected during this season in particular. "We ask members of the university to exercise caution and their best judgment when traveling to and from our university during extreme heat, cold, precipitation or wind," Dizon added.

The University Parking Office provides assistance to those who park on NEIU

campus parking lots. Some of the services provided include motor assistance, jump starts, low tire assistance and vehicle unlock.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency provides a list of tips to prepare drivers for any kind of weather related incidents. One of the many tips is to carry an emergency kit in your vehicle. The items suggested include extra clothing, blankets, a shovel, an ice-removing scraper and salt. The list goes on and provides information to situations that can happen during and after your commute.

For more information on the services provided by the university like N-Alert, and Parking-related services, visit the NEIU website (<http://www.neiu.edu>). The list of weather related safety tips can be found on <http://ready.gov>.

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# OPINIONS



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*The Independent* is published every other week except during summer and semester breaks.

Deadlines are eight (8) days prior to the issue in which a contribution is to appear. Views expressed in letters are those of the university community and not those of the Editorial Board.

The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for the content of *The Independent*, and views presented do not necessarily represent those of the administration, faculty or students.

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## Financial UnAid

Emmanuel Gonzalez

Good news: you haven't paid off your tuition from last semester, but you can still register for classes. Bad news: you mistakenly registered for a class you don't need and now you can't change it because there is a hold on your account.

So there you are at the cashier's office, begging for the hold to be lifted for just a few minutes so that you can correct your error, but they're not going to sympathize with you. You're in the cashier's office – the only way things get done there is with signatures and money.

These holds can be lifted through a payment plan, but it isn't really a payment plan because you're expected to pay a third of the debt upfront. And the next two thirds within the following months.

As a financial aid recipient and dependent student, you can most assuredly conclude that the student will not have \$1,000 plus lying around. Even with a smaller debt, \$300 is a lot to ask for from someone who is counting on financial aid to cover their bill.

Though, as mentioned earlier, debts aren't looked at case-by-case. Even with your financial aid ready to be processed anytime now, there is nothing you can do about the

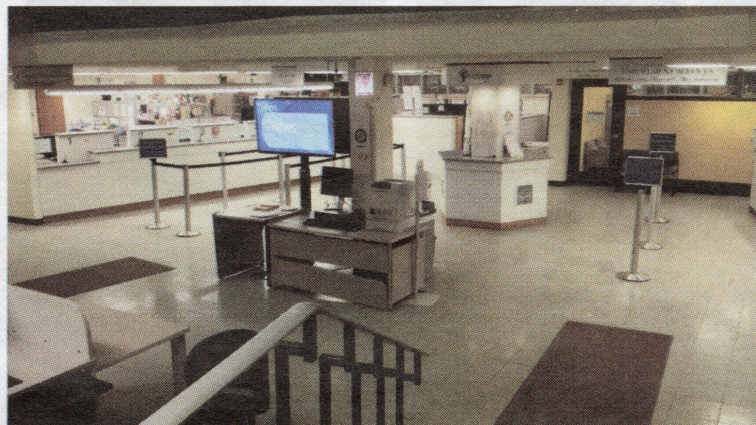
hold on your account unless you have the money.

These processes should examine the individual and NEIU should be able to provide a realistic payment plan rather than the same fixed amount for all. What this lack of care leads to is frustration, stress and possibly even depression.

This financial stress then impedes on a student's academic success. Now the student with a hold must ask the professor whose class they mistakenly registered for not to be dropped so they may keep their full-time status. They must also convince another professor to be a part of their class even though they can't officially register.

And all because of what? They owe money to the school which is definitively going to be paid by financial aid. They have all the green check marks, the office says they're good to go, and it's only a matter of time before it comes through. NEIU, you will have your money, let the student switch their class.

What is the hold even supposed to prove? Is this some kind of Freudian negative reinforcement trick? If a student doesn't have the money to pay the school at the moment, a hold is not going to help them get the money it may even hinder the student from finding a solution for the stress it



The Enrollment Services Office.

causes.

Of course there have to be consequences for students not paying off tuition, otherwise the school would never receive the money it needs in a timely manner. However, when a school fails to look at a student's situation and resolve the issue in a plausible manner, it is only creating more problems and producing at times, failing students.

It doesn't end there, however, because now the student must cover a deferred payment fee for not having the money in time. Right, add more debt. That will surely make the student cough up the tuition and fees.

You might be thinking that it's the student's fault for not having all the paperwork done in a timely manner in order to meet their financial aid requirements. In which case I would refer you to the audit report of NEIU's 2013 fiscal year,

done by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, which stated NEIU's significant deficiency to be, "Failure to Identify and Refund Title IV Aid in a Timely Manner."

While this scrutiny is not directly linked to when financial aid for a student is processed, it speaks upon on the mismanagement and delayed action that comes from NEIU's financial department.

NEIU is a wonderful university. It is home to amazing professors, staff and faculty who create a diverse and culturally rich community. A community that is truly unique in that the community is so interconnected and active. So when these types of problems occur, students tell themselves, "There's got to be a better way. I know the school is better than this."

Come on NEIU, you're slacking.



Pulaski and Foster Avenue after it has been plowed.

## Unplowed Streets Cause Pain & Suffering Amongst Chicago Citizenry

Steven Villa

January in Chicago is always humorless and depressing.

The winter takes its nose-dive into unlivable, borderline Yukon temperatures; the skies, for weeks at a time, remain the same dull and impassive shade of gray native to cinderblocks or bulk grain silos; the temperature can go back up to 40 or 80 degree and just as you begin to acclimate, and then it rains

in a torrential downpour—leaving vast lagoons that turn to ice when temperatures plunge back to zero on the next day; the sidewalks, bus stops and train stations are polluted with the frozen remnants of pigeons, squirrels and vagrants that didn't quite make it to the heat-lamp—soon they will be collected in dark bags, discarded into the wrong bin, and recycled for commercial use.

All of this comes with living in or near Chicago. We are used to it, for good or ill. But these is-

suues become miniscule when the streets, many hours after the commencement of snowfall, remain unplowed.

And unplowed they were, that fateful Monday of last week. It seemed there wasn't a single road—highways included—between Lake Michigan and the sleepy suburb of Oak Park that had received attention from more than a single forlorn snow plow before one o'clock in the morning. Travelling from the Loop in those early hours, only the far left lane of the

Eisenhower expressway had been even marginally attended to—and it was only partially cleared with a long and inconsistent strip that erred constantly from left to right.

The snow, as promised by the city of Chicago, was cleared in the morning. Traffic flowed well. It was like stepping out from some weird kind of dream. The snow plows had indeed done their job, they had done it in the very early morning hours—it appeared that what I saw had only been the vanguard of the fleet. The rest were to be deployed later, in the wee hours.

The snowfall was not unexpected. It came in a major winter storm that, according to Alex Sosnowski of Accuweather.com on Jan. 4, "brought rare snow to Southern California and the Southwest at midweek and [continued] to spread a swath of snow, ice, rain and travel problems from Chicago to Boston..."

On Thursday, Jan. 8, the snowfall was powerful enough to stop a bus—my bus—dead in its tracks—one of its wheels stuck deep in a snow bank—in the middle of rush-hour traffic. Admittedly, a snow plow would have been useless in that situation, but there must be some way to ensure the well-being of the roads throughout the day, as well as in the night.

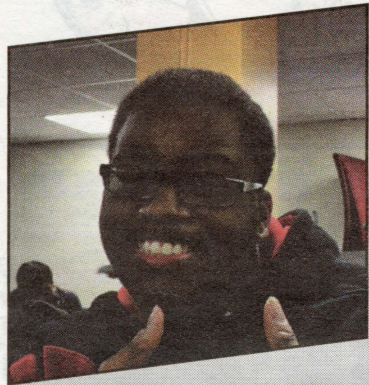
Well, the winter is here now. It is here in full force, and I suppose we'll all just have to deal with that, as we usually do, until Chicago decides it's high time to skip spring and hurry along to summer.



# MAN ON THE STREET

How do you feel about recent events with police and the thousands who protested?

Tiffani Lee



"Even with the two cops that died, NYPD is being disrespectful to any people in power and the mayor. They don't care about the citizens, they care about themselves. As for protesters, it's their first amendment right."

**Niko McGraw**  
Freshman  
Undecided



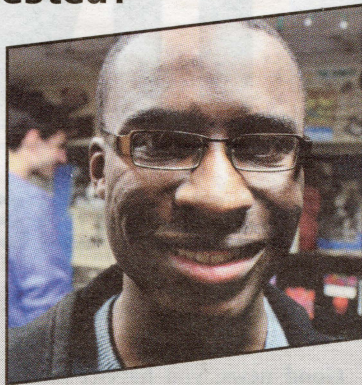
"Riots weren't the best way to protest. It was annoying and created traffic, witnessing the protests while shopping downtown. It did get the point across though."

**Viktorya Obidnyak**  
Freshman  
Undecided



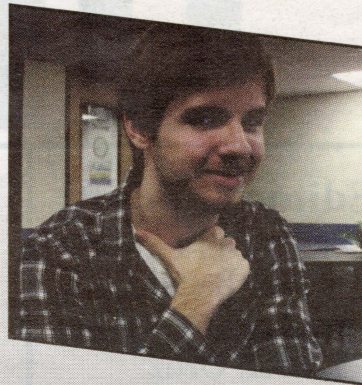
"I support protesters and sympathize with people's outrage and it's their right to protest, and the fact that you're asking this is proving it has a positive effect."

**Emily Anderson**  
Junior  
Special Education



"I think they have every right because they're very serious issues and good that they're bringing lots of attention to them. It's good because most people haven't been exposed to this level of brutality and racism from the police. It shatters the spotless image that police have had for some who have always thought police were absolved of wrongdoing."

**Jeff Brown**  
Junior  
CMT



"I respect the brave men and women putting their lives on the line trying to save the property and lives of people who live in places subjected to the riots. There are better ways to express their outrage."

**Claudiu Moise**  
Freshman  
Computer Science

Photos by Tiffani Lee

## Back to the Future II Got More Right Than You Think

Luis Badillo

No hoverboards. No self-tying laces, flying cars, dehydrated pizzas or even holographic movie displays propagate our lives like it did for those living the futuristic Hill Valley featured in "Back to the Future: Part II."

In fact without being able to predict the prominence of the internet or the rise of smartphones; it's easy to see why the future Doc Brown visited is way off from our real 2015. In the movie, fax machines and physical newspapers were still important communications tools instead of curiosities you might see on the "Kids React" YouTube channel.

Despite all the whiffed tech predictions, there are a couple things that Back to the Future actually got right. Not so much on the technical side, but on the cultural one.

One thing for certain that permeates our culture today is 80s nostalgia. In the 2015 Marty McFly visited, one of the central locations was the Cafe 80s; an automated diner waited by digital imitations of famous 80s personalities including

Michael Jackson and Ronald Regan. Kids can play old arcade machines while "Beat it" plays in the background. Though the restaurant is fake, the reverence for the decade is real and very much alive today. Gamers idolize video games from the era, and pop culture enthusiasts still consume the TV and movies created in it. In fact it's not totally uncommon for people to show up to an 80s party, where everyone shows up wearing fashion from the era.

Though a bit of a stretch, one could argue that the movie also predicted Hollywood's obsession with sequels. While wandering Hill Valley, Marty McFly gets assailed by a holographic shark flying out of a movie marquee, but the real punchline is the title of the movie it is advertising. "Jaws 19" it says. "This time, it's really really personal."

Sadly, sequels still dominate box offices. Over the last couple of years we've gotten our fourth Terminator with a fifth on the way, a sixth Lord of the Rings movie and a seventh X-men movie. And to the annoyance of many movie goers, the trend has also mutated into a habit of releas-



Screenshot courtesy of NBC Universal

Sorry, you're going to have to do your chase scene on a regular skateboard in 2015.

ing remakes. Robocop, Godzilla and Total Recall (though not necessarily bad movies), reflect an industry that would rather recycle an old idea rather than try out something new.

The last thing worth pointing out was the way people relate and use technology in Back to the Future II. This is exemplified by none other than the wimpy Marty McFly Jr. There's just something uncanny about how he comes home

to his big screen TV and turns on six channels all at once. The junior McFly's experience is close to that of any number of people who consume media with the TV on, a laptop and/or tablet to the side and with a smartphone in hand. And the constant need to stay connected is apparent as the McFlies sit down for a family dinner, where both kids are attached to their phones. Granted those phones look like oversized glittery Ray-bans, but they might as

well be iPhones and Androids the way the kids rarely divert their attention from them.

It's unfortunate for us fans of the movie. These little looks into the future aren't nearly as glamorous that enabled the hoverboard chase scene. But it's nice to know that Marty McFly wasn't looking at a 2015 that was 100 percent inaccurate. Just know that we'll probably have to wait another 30 years to live out our flying DeLorean fantasies.

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# SPORTS

## Bulls Off and Running

Larry Thigpen

The grind of an 82-game NBA season is in full effect for the Chicago Bulls. This season the team's stars have been exceptionally healthy and are getting prepared to attack full speed ahead towards the ultimate team goal in mind, winning a championship.

With a very good overall record at this point in the season (25-11), head coach, Tom Thibodeau continues to consistently preach defense and intensity on the defensive end of the court. Even with their defensive mindset, the Bulls have been able to improve dramatically on the offensive end, which was an area they struggled in the past couple of seasons. They are averaging 102.8 points per game, ninth best in the NBA.

The Bulls averaged just over 93 points per game (30th overall) last season, however, only gave up just under 92 points per game, the lowest of any team.

This lack of offensive firepower was largely due to player injury and the vacancy of supporting cast members to take on a bit of the load. The Bulls of yesteryear have been able to play team basketball and compete at a high level game after game but there has been significant improvement by a couple key players this season.

The addition of power forward Pau Gasol has been a breath of fresh air for the team, fans, orga-

nization and critics. He's replacing the much-maligned Carlos Boozer, so he didn't have to do much to be loved but his play so far this season has been superb and he is on track to start in February's All-Star game for the first time since 2011.

During the offseason, the Bulls were able to acquire Gasol in free agency after playing six seasons for the Los Angeles Lakers. In the first 36 games of the season, Gasol has averaged (18.1) points, (11.1) rebounds and (2.3) blocks per game. It looks as if he has found the fountain of youth in his game and has gone back in time to re-introduce the Gasol everyone became accustomed to seeing. In some cases, a change in scenery can significantly improve the overall state of a player and this definitely seems to be the case for Gasol.

As we've seen in years past with the Bulls, just one All-Star caliber player is not enough.

The emergence of shooting guard Jimmy Butler has really taken the Bulls to a whole different level. Butler has been given the opportunity to showcase his skills and has exceeded all expectations this season. Leading the league in minutes (39.8 per game), Butler is averaging career highs in points (21.7), rebounds (6.3) and assists (3.2) per game.

Why is Jimmy Butler playing at such a high level? It's simple, confidence.

Tom Thibodeau has confidence

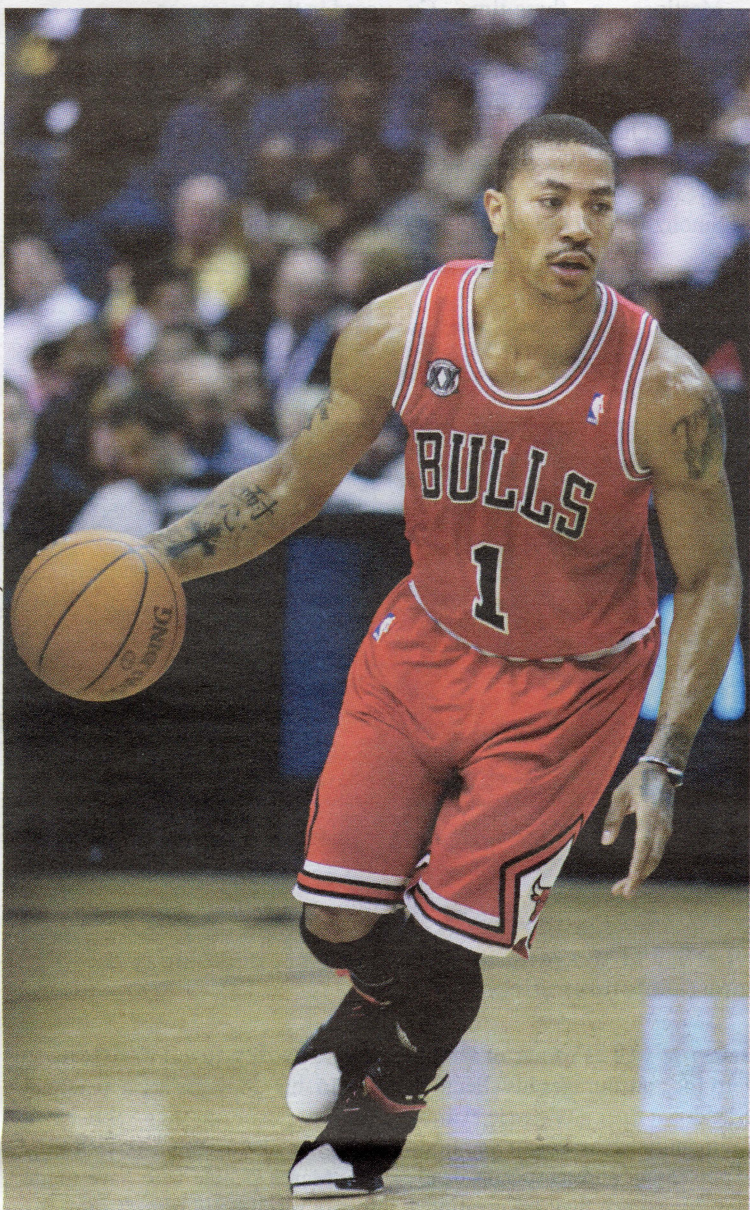
in his play and ability and Butler possesses the confidence in himself to perform. He also often credits his teammates for instilling confidence in him everyday. Butler and former MVP Derrick Rose make up one of the best backcourts in the league and with the presence of Gasol and reigning Defensive Player of the Year, Joakim Noah in the post, the Bulls are serious championship contenders.

Over the past 6-8 months, there have been barrages of predictions from former coaches, players, writers and broadcasters about which two teams will meet in the NBA Finals and who will actually win. A number of teams have made significant improvements to compete, which increases the level of competition. LeBron James returning home to the Cleveland Cavaliers had everyone talking over the summer. That acquisition, plus the improvement of many other teams had those analysts offering a number of scenarios.

A Bulls versus Spurs Finals matchup is very realistic and would be one to remember. Both teams play "the right way" and focus on team play more than individual accolades. Both conferences are top heavy, but the Bulls seem to be the favorites from the East thus far. One thing is certain about the Bulls team: they are hungry and prepared to make that push towards greatness.

All stats as of Jan. 9.

Photo by Keith Allison



Despite a recent five game stretch of 25-95 shooting, Rose continues to be a serious weapon in crunch time.

## Missing Monsters of the Midway

Mario Mayorga

Charles Peanut Tillman and Lance Briggs came into the Chicago Bears together in 2003 and quite fittingly, it seems like they will be going out together as well. This past season provided some major shortcomings for these two former great players due to injury. Tillman, or "Peanut" as he has become known, only got to play two games while Briggs played eight games.

The past two years the stats have been dropping dramatically for these two fan favorites but it is time for the fans to say thank you and move on. The Bears had one of the worst defenses of the league in 2014 and nobody knows how improved the defense will be until next season under new general manager, Ryan Pace with a new coaching staff. This uncertainty will likely leave over-the-hill players like Peanut and Briggs without a spot on the roster.

Tillman is arguably the greatest cornerback in Bears franchise history. After being drafted in the second round in 2003, Peanut helped the bears become one of the best defenses in the league with

his remarkable skills. Since he has been in the league, he ranks first in forced fumbles, tied for fifth in interceptions and is third overall in tackles for Bears franchise history. He is behind Brian Urlacher and Lance Briggs in tackles but this stat is quite remarkable to have with such a long history of great defenders for the Bears.

Tillman did not only have a great career with the Bears, but his off the field life said a lot about him as well. He was given the Walter Payton Man of the Year award in 2013, which is given to honor a player's volunteer and charity work, as well as his excellence on the field. Also, he was given the Brian Piccolo award twice which is voted within the Bears locker room and awarded to the player who best exemplifies the courage, loyalty, teamwork, dedication and sense of humor of the late Piccolo.

Briggs is also one of the greats to ever play in a Bears uniform. He was selected in the third round in 2003 when he began a great career with the Bears. One cannot deny how great the defense was when Briggs was on the field. His stats recently are not great but a few years ago, Briggs showed that he was

one of the best outside linebackers in the league. Briggs is a seven time Pro Bowler, he is second in franchise history in tackles, and his five interceptions returned for touchdowns are tied for third for linebackers in NFL history. Briggs is one of the great ones to ever put on a Bears uniform.

Even though 2014 was a dismal year for any Bears player or fan, the way Briggs and Tillman went down in their last years add salt to the wound. Watching the team play while Tillman was on the sideline this year showed the Bears were simply not the same defensively. Briggs' on and off injuries this year showed it was time for him to call it quits.

Bears fans know how great these two were. They played with heart and they showed why the Bears were called the Monsters of the Midway. They helped the Bears reach the 2005 Super Bowl and without that defense the Bears would have not gone that far. These two are Hall of Famers in Chicago and even though the defense needs to change drastically, they are two players who are truly going to be missed.

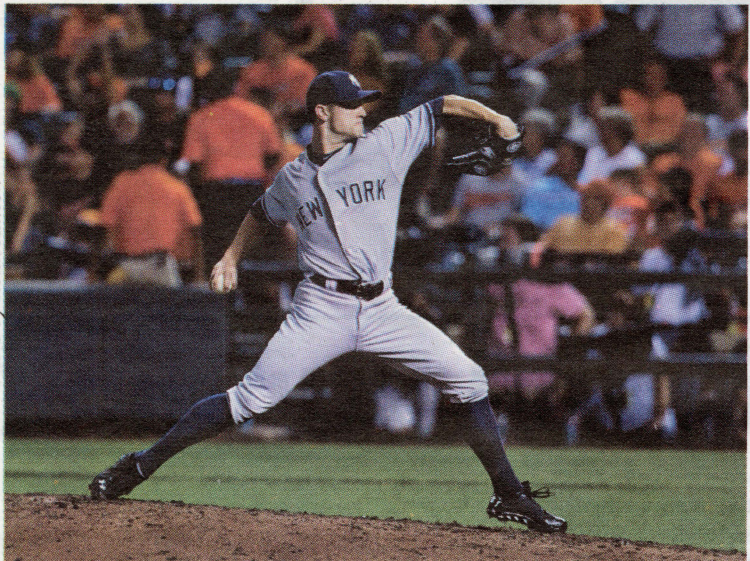


Photo by Mike Morbeck

Briggs led the Bears in tackles during their run to the 2007 Super Bowl with 109.



Photo by Keith Allison



The White Sox, as a team, had 36 saves last season. Their new closer, David Robertson, had 39 with the Yankees.

## Cubs, Sox Impress at Winter Meetings

Alejandra Franco

Baseball may be in its off-season, but it has not been absent this winter. During the annual Winter Meetings, both the Chicago Cubs and Chicago White Sox gave the fans something to look forward to when the season begins in April.

The White Sox ended their 2014 season with just 73 wins; despite that they have two key players on their roster that can be franchise cornerstones. One player, Jose Abreu, won the American League Rookie of the Year. The other, Chris Sale, finished the season with the second lowest ERA in the A.L. Both players were All-Stars, and both were very important to the White Sox lineup. However, they alone could not bring the team to contend in the playoffs.

It is because of this that the White Sox were very aggressive during the Winter Meetings. The White Sox acquired former Cubs pitcher Jeff Samardzija from the Oakland Athletics. To solidify their bullpen, they also signed lefty reliever Zach Duke and closer David

Robertson. In just a couple weeks of meetings, the White Sox managed to create a potential contender as what could be toughest division in the American League.

Although it was not a competition, it could be argued that the only team more successful at the Winter Meetings was the Cubs. Theo Epstein and Jed Hoyer continued feeding the fans' anticipation before the meetings with the signing of Joe Maddon, the manager chosen to lead the Cubs into their new era.

The front office wasted no time, and shortly after, closed the biggest deal at the meetings and signed Jon Lester. The pitching ace signed with the Cubs for a 6-year, \$155 million contract. The team also added veteran pitcher, Jason Hammels and catcher Miguel Montero.

With the new additions to the rosters on both the North and South sides of the city, the upcoming baseball season could be more than just a battle of fandom during the two interleague play series between the teams. Both organizations are hoping to become serious playoff contenders.

## Historically Big Unit Of Hall of Famers

Andrew Pappas

For the first time since 1955, four players were selected as baseball Hall of Fame inductees in the class of 2015.

Randy Johnson, Pedro Martinez, John Smoltz and Craig Biggio all got more than the required 75 percent of votes. Johnson, Martinez and Smoltz, all dominant pitchers from the steroid era, were inducted on their first tries. Biggio had failed twice before, falling short by just two votes last year.

534 of 549 ballots by veteran

members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America selected Johnson, a five-time Cy Young Award winner with 303 victories (22nd all-time) and 4,875 strikeouts (second all-time). His 97.3 percent-age was the eighth highest in the history of voting.

Martinez, a three-time Cy Young winner, appeared on 500 ballots (91.1 percent). He led Major League Baseball in ERA five times and in 2004 helped the Boston Red Sox to their first World Series title in 86 years.

Smoltz was picked on 455 bal-

lots (82.9 percent) and will join former Atlanta teammates Greg Maddux and Tom Glavine, who were inducted last summer. Smoltz, the 1996 NL Cy Young winner, was 213-155 with 154 saves, the only pitcher with 200 wins and 150 saves. He had a remarkable 15-4 record in the postseason.

Biggio appeared on 454 ballots, 42 more than the 75 percent needed. He had 3,060 hits (20th all-time) in 20 seasons, all with the Houston Astros.

The foursome will be inducted in Cooperstown on July 26.

## Resolving Resolutions

Samentha Sepulveda

2015 is the year! You've resolved to make 2015 the year you lose those extra pounds, lead a healthier lifestyle or simply become more active. You're not alone. These resolutions are quite popular. According to a survey of 1,000 people done by time management firm Franklin Covey, becoming more physically fit, losing weight and improving health ranked among the top 4 resolutions in both 2012 and 2013. The survey also indicated by the end of January, 35 percent of people will have derailed from their resolution and that losing weight was the first abandoned resolution. Furthermore, the number of people who abandon their resolutions will have increased to 78 percent before the end of the year.

How do you keep from becoming a negative statistic? Consider these tips from fitness experts and those who've succeed in keeping their resolution on track to keep your resolution going strong well into the year. Heck, take it to the end of the year!

### Make your resolution a processed based goal not an outcome based goal.

Clint Phillips, owner of Fit Chicago, explains, "Deciding to lose 15 pounds is an outcome. What process will bring that about? Exercising four times a week is a fine process-based goal."

### Re-assess your resolution.

"Choose a resolution that is something you can do, rather than something you must avoid," Phillips recommends. He presents the example, "Vowing to start your day with a healthy breakfast is easier to do than cutting out all sweets."

### Create a contract with yourself.

Michael Hanover, an ISSA and Sports Specific Certified Personal

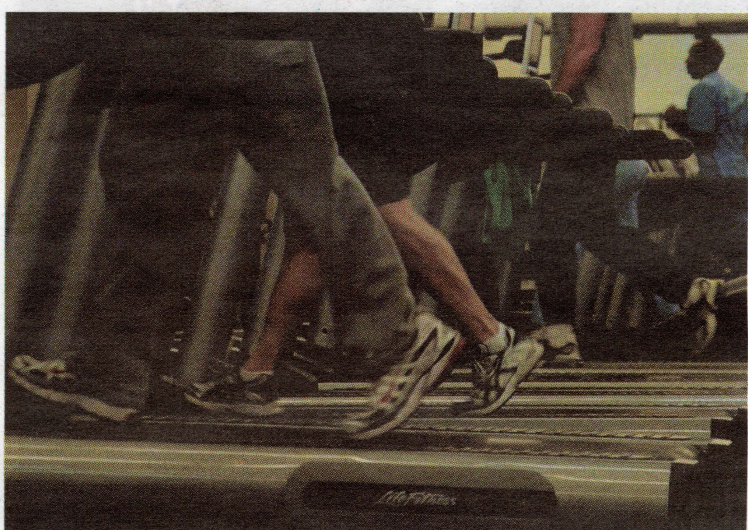


Photo by Araceli Alarcon

Whether at the gym, or anywhere else, make 2015 the year your resolutions stick.

Trainer as well as owner of Fitness Hero Inc., encourages his clients to write down their goals, record measurements such as weight and body fat percentage and set specific deadlines. In essence they are creating a physical document that holds them accountable for their progress.

### Find a hobby that makes you sweat.

If you love doing something then it won't ever be a chore. There are so many ways to get that heart rate up, tone and build muscles and burn calories beyond the conventional gym session that includes running on the treadmill and lifting weights. For instance, if you love to dance sign up for dance classes. NEIU offers Zumba dance classes multiple times each day Monday - Saturday, with the exception of Thursday.

### Consider how those around you impact your success.

According to 41 percent of the 1,000 people surveyed by Franklin Covey, sharing their goals with their friends and asking for their support was the most effective method for staying on track.

### Seek professional assistance.

In his 18 years as a personal trainer, Hanover has noticed a surge of new clients every Spring. "By March people who have made fitness resolutions haven't seen the results they are looking for solo so they come to me," Hanover says. If you've already fallen off track perhaps you should consider hiring a personal trainer.

### Don't underestimate small goals.

Hanover has taken his clients from obese to fit, non-runners to half marathon completers, dependent on medications to completely pill free. But this happened over time, with the completion of small goals. "What if you could get 1 percent better every day?" Phillips asks. Allow yourself small victories and through perseverance they will become enormous victories!

## SPORTS HISTORY FROM JAN. 13 - JAN. 27

JANUARY 13, 1999

CHICAGO'S MICHAEL JORDAN ANNOUNCED HIS SECOND RETIREMENT FROM THE NBA, JUST PRIOR TO THE START OF THE LOCKOUT-SHORTENED 1998-99 NBA SEASON.

JANUARY 15, 1892

THE 13 ORIGINAL RULES OF BASKETBALL WERE PRINTED IN THE SPRINGFIELD YMCA TRAINING SCHOOL NEWSPAPER.

JANUARY 16, 1966

CHICAGO WAS GRANTED AN NBA FRANCHISE TO BE CALLED THE BULLS.

JANUARY 18, 1958

WILLIAM O'REE OF THE BOSTON BRUINS BECOMES FIRST BLACK NHL PLAYER.

JANUARY 19, 2013

LANCE ARMSTRONG ADMITTED TO DOPING IN ALL SEVEN OF HIS TOUR DE FRANCE VICTORIES.

JANUARY 20, 1892

THE FIRST OFFICIAL BASKETBALL GAME TOOK PLACE AT THE YMCA GYMNASIUM IN SPRINGFIELD, MA.

JANUARY 22, 2006

KOBE BRYANT SCORES 81 POINTS IN A 122-104 LAKERS VICTORY AGAINST THE TORONTO RAPTORS.

JANUARY 24, 1962

JACKIE ROBINSON WAS FIRST BLACK PLAYER ELECTED TO BASEBALL HALL OF FAME.

JANUARY 26, 1986

SUPER BOWL XX: CHICAGO BEARS BEAT NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS, 46-10 IN NEW ORLEANS.

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Matchbox (Alexandra Fisher) is strangled to death by a masked killer (Jim Poole).

# Desperate Dolls Debut

Hailey G. Boyle

Few would believe the Chicago theatre is more lively and diverse than the theaters of the more famous Broadway productions of New York City. But risk taking is in Chicago's veins: it is a place to come, build your skills and try out new things without the fear of failure. Second City native and playwright Darren Callahan takes many risks, some that fly and some that fall in his latest produc-

tion, "Desperate Dolls." It made its world premiere at the Strawdog Theatre in Chicago in late November of 2014.

Directed by Michael Driscoll, "Dolls" follows three beautiful, young women who come to Hollywood in 1968. They come looking for stardom but find trouble. They land an audition with 'Sunny' Jack Fennigan, a small-time producer who makes female-dominated independent films but lacks the funds to make the big pictures he

desires. But when a powerful agent known only as 'the Captain,' played by Jim Poole, swoops in seemingly to save the day, Sunny Jack and his girls (known only as Matchbox, Pretty Sexy and The Vil, played by Alexandra Fisher, Kelsey Shipley and Hillary Marren respectively) have their dreams turn to nightmares of murder, hypnotism and seedy motel rooms.

"Dolls" plays like those B-horror movies from the 60s and 70s you find in the dark corner

of Netflix when you're bored at 3 a.m.; beautiful, naive girls who want to be stars, twisted psychos, and of course, buckets and buckets of blood. Unlike those B-movies, this play wasn't something you like because "it's so bad, it's good." It actually was good.

The acting was, of course, over the top but not in a distracting way. It was homage to those movies we love to hate but took a modern spin on it. Joe Mack, who played Sunny Jack, warned his wife about

the despicable things his character does. Sunny sleeps with all three of the girls in Dolls, almost raping one, and there is of course lots and lots of blood. "But what I didn't expect was to feel sad for these girls," Mack said.

Fisher, Shipley, and Marren bring a sense of innocence to the piece. They're wide-eyed dreamers who will do anything to be stars. Though none of the characters have a real name, so to speak, we care about them because they are real people.

Murder is not an easy thing to stage but the stage combat displayed in one of the first murder scenes was so impressive, I forgot it wasn't real but rehearsed; she's not actually getting hurt. The Captain picks Matchbox up by the throat with one hand and throws her across the room. This is more impressive when you take into account how small the stage was. The space was no larger than a big living room, holding about 30 or so audience members—some of their feet actually touched the set pieces. This level of intimacy made the fight choreography more exciting and the play even more bone-chilling.

We like B-movies because they're simple and we can laugh at ourselves for watching something so silly. "Dolls" defies that convention and is more than just a bloodbath. It makes you think about the seediness of Hollywood, the desperation of fame and that monsters aren't just on the silver screen. Sometimes they are in the room next to yours.

Maybe in the future, "Desperate Dolls" will play among the elite of Broadway or be filmed in one of Tinseltown's studios, but remember you saw it in Chicago first. The Second City is first in just about everything else.

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# Louis C.K. Takes The Chicago Theatre

Steven Villa

Louis C.K. has embarked on another tour, one which just passed through Chicago on the fifth and sixth of this month, and will have hit both Los Angeles and New York by the time this article is published. Whether you love, hate or are completely indifferent to his act, C.K., hailed in 2014 as the "Undisputed King of Comedy" by *GQ Magazine* (a title he accepted with a trademark sense of embarrassment and humility), has managed to define himself as one of the great comics of this, and the last, decade. He's carved a niche distinctly his own: stepping effortlessly through dark, deeply relatable and humanistic subject matter; painstakingly crafted toilet humor; philosophically bent rants on human nature and his own unique brand of bizarre and sometimes obscene absurdist comedy.

Whatever the status of his legacy, the years in which C.K. was supported mostly by a combination of devout fans and small club gigs across the long roads of America have long since passed. The crowd he drew at the Chicago Theater was immense enough to add two late-night shows to Mon-

day and Tuesday—and even those, despite hellish single-digit weather and the cruelly unplowed streets, were almost completely filled.

The crowd huddling before the doors on the cold, snow-swept ground beneath the marquee of the Chicago Theatre was vast and determined. Mostly young,—most were in their mid-twenties to mid-thirties, though some teens and some elder folks peppered the audience as well—they smoked cigarettes and talked amongst each other, some about the upcoming acts at the Theatre and others about C.K. or about the cold, and shivered before the doors opened. When they did, the crowd entered gracefully and without incident.

Chicago-born comedian Hannibal Burress opened the show. He began his act with a reference to the hellish Chicago weather of that day stating, "This is the kind of weather that makes people leave Chicago," and supposed that numerous people who had bought tickets for the show would opt in for a warm night of Netflix, rather than brave the cold.

The style of Burress, in a stark contrast to C.K., took a conversational tone. It was reminiscent of conversations with a group of close

friends—espousing weird situations and complaints, personal stigmas taken from the overabundance of internet pornography and observations made while on the road.

When Louis took the stage, he needed only his appearance in itself and his voice to silence any murmur in the crowd. His voice demands attention. It is clear and acerbic, simultaneously disinterested and irritated, angered and surprised—all while cutting like glass through the audience. There was never a loss of clarity in the whole show. Every word was perfectly enunciated and repeated, if required for the joke. The economy of words displayed was difficult to comprehend. Remove a single word—or an emphasis on a vowel, or a hesitation between two subjects—and it would fall apart.

In a display typical of his weird sense of versatility, C.K. jumped hoops through topics as diverse as self-awareness, Mark Twain, and rat fornication. He slipped from bit to bit so deftly that at times it was difficult to keep up; an anecdote on one topic could morph into another at any moment. The punchlines came like an ambush—seemingly from nowhere, leaving you to

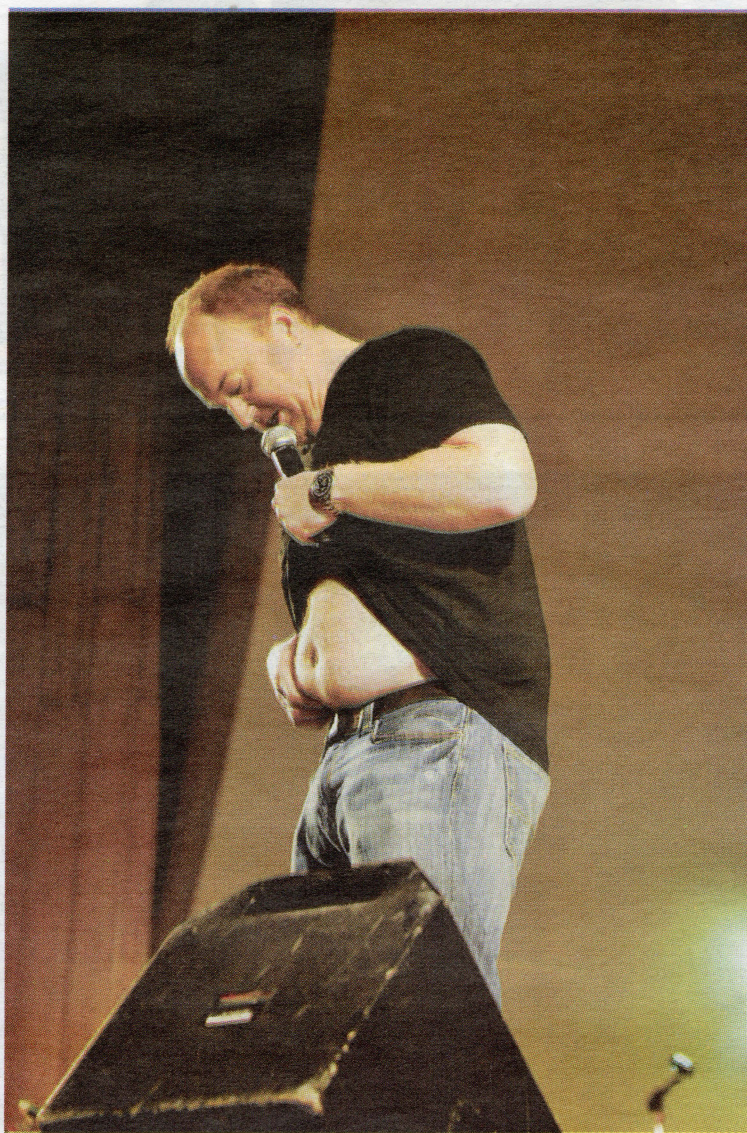


Photo courtesy Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Ewer

Louis is never afraid to criticize himself on-stage.

collect your senses.

The only disappointment, if it could be called that, was a sense of familiarity I picked up throughout his act. Every hour of material C.K. has composed thus far has

been completely unique from the last, and while this was no exception, some of the bits seemed stylistically reminiscent of his prior specials. Some of the bits seemed a little rough-hewn—though still incredibly funny—for Louis.

## From Woeful to Wack

one thing we haven't seen? Onika Maraj, the girl who was born in Trinidad and moved to Jamaica, Queens.

Nicki shows off her softer side on her new album, "The Pinkprint." She doesn't let her alter egos run amok. Instead she reveals much about her personal life. However, to the listener's dismay, the album has no direction: the tracks range from rump shaking to head shaking in both a good and bad way. The "Pinkprint" is a chaotic mish-mash of tracks: the inevitable stripped down album—but not really.

"All Things Go" is a standout introductory track, with a good beat and even better rapping. She trades in her often pompous style for genuine honesty about personal details in her life she has never publicly shared. In one of the verses she raps, "my child with Aaron, would've have been sixteen, any minute," which implies that she had an abortion. "The Crying Game" featuring Jessie Ware has a wickedly slick piano/drum/guitar lead beat paired with haunting vocals.

The album takes a dive into absurdity with the next few tracks. "Get on Your Knees" (featuring Ariana Grande) is a song that doesn't even attempt to be modest, blatantly stating its message. The nonsensical placement starts around this next track. In "Feeling Myself," Queen B (Beyonce) and Nicki are on an ego trip—pro-

claiming they don't need a man and will please themselves. "Only" (featuring Drake, Lil Wayne & Chris Brown) has only one flaw: Chris Brown. Otherwise, the distinct sound of a xylophone overlaid with a rap beat is too pompous for its own good—neither is it serious.

"Buy A Heart" and "Trini Dem Girls" are good filler songs. They don't do much, other than provide some mediocre down time. "Trini Dem Girls" has a stunning beat; it unnecessarily features Lunch Money (look beyond the name—I am sure he is a good artist). "Anaconda" takes a dive back into wack rapping and cleverly samples "Baby Got Back" by Sir Mix-a-Lot. I give this song two jiggy butts up in the air for being the next bootylicious anthem. The next trios of tracks spew enough introspective sadness to fill the two tubs of ice cream listeners inhale after hearing the songs back-to-back. In fact, removing all tracks besides "Buy a Heart," this trio, coupled with the first three tracks, would veer this album back into a truly stripped down heartbreak album.

"Pills N Potions" is a good mix of rapping and singing. It is frank and catchy—radio ready and relatable; and so is "Bed of Lies" featuring Skylar Grey. It is wrought with sadness and the rap (which in general can be brash at times) never detracts from this message. The trio is completed with "Grand Piano," a subdued, melancholy

violin- and piano-led ballad that features Nicki's singing chops for more than a few bars. This sophisticated set of tracks introduces Onika to the world—and Nicki lets her alter egos go hands on with the other tracks.

But only a few tracks later, she delves back into ratchet rap spouting out typical Nicki lines in "Shanghai." This boastful rap begins to introduce the end of the album and the return to one of her alter egos—my guess, Nicki the Boss. In the final track "Win Again," she reclaims her title as a bad [expletive] in a song that teeters between rap-singing and pure rapping.

Most of Nicki's die-hard fans and those looking for Nicki to evolve musically will be impressed. If you are looking for tracks featuring Nicki stroking her ego or being humble, pick up The "Pinkprint." Even if the tracks are not superb, Nicki never loses her swagger swinging through the musical jungle of rap, hip-hop and pop. She contrasts this album with simple ballads, easily understandable raps and then rattles off a few verses that make "The Pinkprint" a good album, though still nothing compared to her boastful and unregretful freshman and sophomore studio albums: "Pink Friday," "Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded" and the re-issue, "Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded Re-Up."



Photo courtesy of Christopher MacSurak

Nicki sheds her many alter-egos on Pinkprint.

Abraham Harb

Nicki Minaj has made her mark on the rap industry, changing the game forever. Since blowing up in 2009, she has consistently produced crazy raps and shown her pop side. Nicki has shown us she can be featured on dozens of

tracks and remain a ruthless rapper. Nicki has showed the world she can acquire a rap from just a few words and a sick beat. Nicki has shown us her alter egos: Nicki Lewinsky, Nicki the Boss, Nicki the Ninja, Female Weezy, Roman Zolanski, Martha Zolanski and Harajuku Barbie. But what is the



# 2014 Music Year in Review: 6 Songs You Should Hear

Jonathan Extract



**Flying Lotus**  
**Never Catch Me (feat. Kendrick Lamar)**

Genre: Hip Hop/Jazz  
Flying Lotus' 2014 album *You're Dead* is a musical journey into the afterlife. Surreal, somber and exhilarating, its lead single, *Never Catch Me*, brings together both the brilliance of Steven Ellison from Flying Lotus and Kendrick Lamar in this genre blurring single that seamlessly meshes Hip Hop with Jazz all under the haunting elasticity of Ellison's production.



**Aphex Twin**  
**Xmas Evet10 (thanaton3 mix)**  
Genre: Electronic/Modern Classical

It's been 14 years since the last proper Aphex Twin release, and the unquestioned master of electronic composition returns with *Syro*. As if dropped from an alien space ship, this fantastically ornamental Faberge egg of an album bares no influence from current trends in electronic music. Where previous releases—though equally virtuosic in complexity, and musicality—had a more rigid and grating quality, *Syro*, and tracks like "Xmas Evet," instead present an environment that is soft, porous, and hallucinatory; a landscape in which shadows and beats drift in and out of the listeners mind, never staying the same, always changing, always illusive.

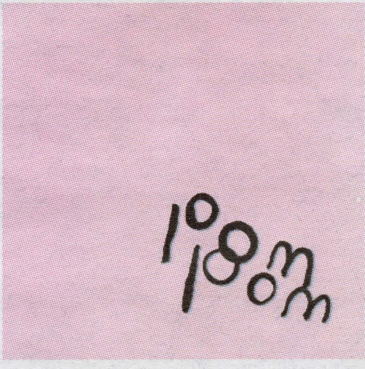
**Todd Terje**  
**Johnny and Mary (feat. Bryan Ferry)**  
Genre: Electronic/Pop

The mid-album ballad of this otherwise instrumental collection of songs by the very talented producer, Todd Terje, is actually a lost-and-found cover of Robert Palmer's original, whose up-tempo staccato rendition from the 80s bares little resemblance to this emotioned, sad and dreamlike reimagining. Almost twice the original's length, Todd Terje's version wastes no time and owes much of its strength to the vocal performance of none other than Bryan Ferry, singer-songwriter of Roxy Music fame.



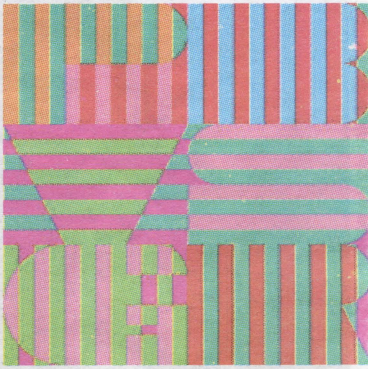
**Mac Demarco**  
**Treat Her Better**  
Genre: Rock/Pop

Mac Demarco is a solid songwriter. Lyrically, *Salad Days* has been somewhat of an opening up for Demarco, with him speaking more personally about his life, and his relationships. Still, musically is where Mac Demarco and his band are exceptional; whether it is the whammy-bar guitar noodling, the slight pitch-shifted production, or Demarco's croon. Songs like *Treat Her Better* prove Demarco to be one of the most accomplished singer-songwriters on the scene.



**Ariel Pink**  
**Black Ballerina**  
Genre: Pop

This is pop, *good* pop, but through the lens of Ariel Pink's demented and queasy world. It was reported that Madonna had approached Pink to ghost write for her upcoming LP, but in step with Pink's character he openly chastised the performer instead. Just one of many petty and public squabbles, Pink's checkered personality comes through brightly on *Black Ballerina*, which is about One Eyed Billy's first experience with C-String Sally at a topless bar. As unappealing as that premise may seem, the song is infectious, and the humor—which includes a mid-song skit—as well as the musicianship bares strong resemblance to Frank Zappa, especially in the stranger moments.



**Boys Latin**  
**Panda Bear**  
Genre: Psychedelic/Pop

What begins with a sea-sick electronic warble indicative of the experimental nature of Panda Bear and his collaborative project Animal Collective soon unveils a canon-round of singing harmonies that lull the listener into a pleasurable trance reminiscent of the brief but influential psychedelic era of the Beach Boys. A positive step from the condense and impenetrable *Centipede Hz* in 2012, *Boys Latin* the first single from the upcoming 2015 release *Panda Bear Meets the Grim Reaper* is giving strong evidence that it will be one of the most rewarding albums of the new year.

Photo and Illustration Credits: Flying Lotus – Shintaro Kago  
Aphex Twin – The Designers Republic, Anastasia Rybina  
Mac Demarco – Corey Brown  
Ariel Pink – Matt Fishbeck  
Panda Bear – Marco Papiro, Seen  
Todd Terje – Bendik Kaltenborn

## The Top 15 Records of 2014

Eddie Pedvin

The fireworks have exploded, the champagne is flat and the hangovers have been nursed; New Year's Eve, and thus 2014, are now but a memory. However, they're not such a distant memory that one can't look back. 2014 was a great year for music, with so many highlights that it's hard to narrow down what really stood out. That being said, these are my choice records of the last year.

**15.) Freddie Gibbs and Madlib - Pinata**  
Genre: Rap  
A collaborative effort featuring Gibbs' smooth flow over the flawless beats by Madlib.  
Choice Cuts: Deeper, Robes (ft. Domo Genesis and Earl Sweatshirt)

**14.) Sleaford Mods - Divide and Exit**  
Genre: Punk/Rap  
"Aggro-poetry" about the plight of modern day England over sample-based punk beats.  
Choice Cuts: Tied Up in Nottz, Tweet Tweet Tweet

**13.) Alex G - DSU**  
Genre: Indie  
Hazy and sentimental with a sound reminiscent of 90s indie rock  
Choice Cuts: Harvey, Hollow

**12.) Gridlink - Longhena**  
Genre: Grindcore  
The band's swan song after a ten year career is a blistering and brilliant

liant half hour of metal glory.  
Choice Cuts: The Last Raven, Look to Windward

**11.) Iceage - Plowing into the Field of Love**  
Genre: Post-punk  
This Danish punk band's foray into a cowboy-punk delivers some of the best sounds they have ever recorded.  
Choice Cuts: The Lord's Favorite, How Many

**10.) Coaster - Tattoos**  
Genre: Rock  
A five song EP showcasing why this Chicago four-piece could be big in the near future.  
Choice Cuts: Write My Name, Swell

**9.) BLACKIE - Imagine Yourself in a Free and Natural World**  
Genre: Experimental Rap  
The noise rapper who influenced Death Grips switches gears somewhat with a record of screamed vocals over free jazz.  
Choice Cut: Forrest of Ex-Lovers

**8.) Juan Wauters - North American Poetry**  
Genre: Indie  
The solo debut from the lead singer of The Beets is the soundtrack to a lazy summer day featuring songs in both English and Spanish.  
Choice Cuts: Woke Up Feeling Like Sleeping, Sanity or Not

**7.) Shabazz Palaces - Lese Majesty**  
Genre: Experimental Hip-Hop  
The second record from the Seattle group is a soulful, prog-opus featuring rhymes from the former rapper of Digable Planets  
Choice Cuts: #CAKE, They Come in Gold

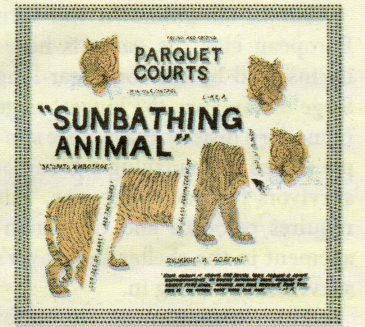
**6.) Perfect Pussy - Say Yes to Love**  
Genre: Punk  
Noisy, feedback-laden punk featuring hard to discern, but profound lyrics.  
Choice Cuts: Interference Fits, Driver

**5.) Run the Jewels - RTJ2**  
Genre: Rap  
Killer Mike and El-P's second collaborative album builds exponentially on their stellar debut and hits harder than any rap record of the past few years.  
Choice Cuts: Blockbuster Night Pt. 1, Close Your Eyes (And Count to F\*\*\*) (ft. Zac De La Rocha)

**4.) The Bug - Angels and Devils**  
Genre: Electronic/Rap  
The fourth album from the UK producer showcases his beat-making prowess and a slew of fantastic featured artists  
Choice Cuts: Function (ft. Manga), F\*\*\* a B\*\*\*\* (ft. Death Grips), Void (ft. Liz Harris)



**3.) Aphex Twin - Syro**  
Genre: Electronic  
Fourteen years since his last album, Richard D. James has finally released new music as Aphex Twin. Over an hour of his signature glitchy sound that probably influenced your favorite EDM producer.  
Choice Cuts: minipops67, XMAS\_EVET10, 180db



**2.) Parquet Courts - Sunbathing**

**Animal**  
Genre: Indie/Punk  
The third album from this New York group spotlights a more refined sound while still hitting hard.  
Choice Cuts: Duckin' and Dodgin', Instant Disassembly, Sunbathing Animal, Dear Ramona



**1.) Protomartyr - Under Color of Official Right**  
Genre: Post-Punk  
This Detroit band's second record is desolate and dark, but powerful nonetheless—a modern punk masterpiece.  
Choice Cuts: Come & See, Trust Me Billy, Pagans, Maidenhead

Photo and Illustration Credits:  
Aphex Twin – The Designers Republic, Anastasia Rybina  
The Bug – Simon Fowler  
Run the Jewels – Nicholas Gazin



# Cloak and Stagger: The Interview Review

Photo by Ed Araquel



Where satire and fart jokes collide.

Luis Badillo

It must suck to have your movie be at the center of an international incident. Very few comedic endeavors can say that they were the trigger for an attack by a foreign state, let alone a cyber attack.

Yet, that's precisely what happened just before the release of "The Interview," a satirical flick set in North Korea starring Seth Rogen and James Franco.

Despite a brief cancellation, the picture saw a limited release on Christmas day, along with digital distribution. Unfortunately, "The

Interview" to most moviegoers, will likely be a disappointing experience. But what little "The Interview" does, it does well.

Rogen and Franco play Aaron Rapoport and Dave Skylark who run a celebrity talk show, devoid of any real journalistic integrity. Luckily for the pair, North Korean dictator Kim Jung-un is a fan of the show and agrees to a one-on-one interview with Skylark. The duo is approached by the CIA and given instructions to assassinate the supreme leader.

Though the subject matter may seem heavy, the product is a mostly childish one. Much like most every other Franco and Rogen flick, "The Interview" is a bombastic celebration of bromance. Viewers can expect the familiar story beats of two men finding themselves in a crazy adventure, having their friendship tested, but ultimately having it strengthened in the end. Think, "Pineapple Express," with less marijuana and more irreverence for the autocratic nation it takes place in.

To expect "The Interview" to breathe new life into the comedy genre is to expect disappointment. Though the weeks leading into the film's release might have you believe that it would revolutionize the way the film industry handles satire, it simply doesn't. It cannot be stressed enough how much "The Interview" is like Rogen's and director Evan Goldberg's other movies. Here you will find the same absurdist slapstick humor that defined those other films; jokes about defecation, sodomy, Lord of the Rings, and Katy Perry set the tone for most of the film's punch lines.

Though Rogen and Franco pull off a reasonably good straight man/fool act, where "The Interview" truly succeeds is in its depiction of the reclusive North Korean government. Though in real life the rogue state is responsible for some of the worst human rights violations, in "The Interview," Kim Jung-un and company make for great comedic punching bags. Randall Park's portrayal of the megalomaniac is that of a lonely man-child, who is

afraid to publically drink margaritas because they might be "too gay" and is only able to dunk in his personal basketball court because the nets are set to a lower height.

This is why "The Interview" works well as a satire, because at its heart the movie is about the power free speech. Plotwise, the two protagonists weigh if an assassination or a proper interview is the right thing to do. Both the depicted North Korean government and the actual one would rather not have their supreme leader seen as anything less than a god. And that disregard for Kim Jung-un's image gives "The Interview" some power and allows it to be funnier than it has a right to be.

Is it smart comedy? The answer is mostly no, but at times it can be. Amidst all the butthole and fart jokes, "The Interview" is able to find its legs in the backdrop of a country whose actions are just as absurd and bizarre as Rogen and Franco's humor.



Photo courtesy of www.11bitstudios.com/games/16/this-war-of-mine

How long can you keep your refuge safe?

## A Gem in the Rubble: This War of Mine Review

Luis Badillo

Over the holiday season, the video game market is saturated by explosive blockbuster titles centered on war. These big budget games tend to run with a familiar formula, sure to appeal to the widest audience possible. Think of franchises like "Call of Duty" or "Halo" where the player gets to live out a power fantasy of being a single man army.

"This War of Mine," developed by 11 bit studios, takes the concept of war and does something different with it. Instead of focusing on a soldier's narrative, the game's point of view is from the civil-

ian's side. This perspective paints a much more grim painting, and "This War of Mine" manages to build an immersive, stressful and thoughtful game around the hell that war is.

Set in an unknown war-torn European city, the game is heavily inspired by the four year-long Siege of Sarajevo, the longest siege in modern history. Players are simply tasked by managing a group of survivors to survive the war. This requires resource and time management in the shelter the player's survivors are living in.

This management is what makes up most of the time spent in the game. The siege has cut off all

resources from the outside world, so survivors have to acquire resources through much more difficult means. Expect to click around a whole bunch in order to tell survivors to chop up furniture for firewood, melt snow for drinking water, or catching rodents for fresh meat.

"This War of Mine" manages to imbue the survivors with personality. Not only does each one have a photographic portrait at the corner of the screen, but each one will have their own back story, set of useful skills and drawbacks that need to be addressed. This mix of characters brings a sense of variety to the game. In one instance of the

game my shelter had a former celebrity cook, a defected soldier, a cat burglar and a mathematician working together to survive the war. And with so many potential ways to lose a life, they would be working overtime.

That's what makes the nights in "This War of Mine" so scary. When the sun goes down, the game gives you the opportunity to visit other locations to scavenge for supplies. There players can encounter bandits, soldiers, rebels or even other groups of survivors who are trying to survive the siege. Interpreting their intentions is key to survival. Some will want to trade or offer help, while others simply want to be left alone or even shoot you on sight, ending the already fragile life of your scavenging survivor.

The mix of all these systems creates a constant loop of needing to make tough decisions on the fly. Do you trade your last can of food to acquire a gun for self-defense?

Do you help fellow survivors dig their friends out of rubble at the risk of being undermanned for a day? Do you kill an innocent civilian to get to medicine that could save a fellow survivor? All these choices simulate weighing the value of human life, which (even in a video game) can be a taxing process.

Though not a large game, "This War of Mine" is complex on a mechanical and emotional level. The decisions players make, combined with the pencil sketch art and somber music show a different side of war that games often overlook. And the systems in place allow for players to construct their own narrative, as everyone who plays the game form their own stories of success and failure to see the end of the war. It's the opposite of glamorous, but "This War of Mine's" grisly narrative of war is one that is hard to come by, and won't be replicated soon by any medium.