

12-3-2019

## **Independent - Dec. 3, 2019**

Frannie Mendoza

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# NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY'S INDEPENDENT

Student-run newspaper since 1962

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2019

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VOLUME 39 ISSUE 8



Youth Climate activists from Sunrise Movement on a banner drop at the Water Tower Place atrium to disrupt Black Friday business-as-usual.

Denise Poloyac

## Green Conservation Group prepares to strike

**Cameron Smith**  
Writer

Students from the Green Conservation Group alongside youth

from Sunrise Movement Chicago organized an Art Build on NEIU's campus just before Thanksgiving break. During this community event, students and a few local

members of Extinction Rebellion and Indivisible Chicago, created large banners which will be used in upcoming actions by Green Conservation Group, Sunrise and

Illinois Youth Climate Strike representatives.

"The purpose of these large banners is to call awareness to the issue of climate change and pres-

ent a striking visual that engages passerby to recognize the need to get involved," said Miranda Green, president of the Green Conserva-

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### NEWS

Financial aid for more students.

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## INDEPENDENT

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# More become eligible for financial aid due to RISE Act

## Amina Murati

Writer

For those students who are not able to apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), they are now able to do so with the Retention of Illinois Students and Equity (RISE) Act.

The executive director of Financial Aid, Maureen Amos, explained that “undocumented and transgender students who cannot fit through the selective service requirement can do a RISE Act application”. This opportunity gives those students a chance to get help from the state.

Earlier this year, Governor J.B. Pritzker passed the RISE Act which will be available for students to apply through an online application. The application will be made available starting Jan. 1, 2020.

When describing the application process, Amos said, “It will be an online application and it will

look very similar to the FAFSA”. She explained how the RISE Act will “help students be eligible for state assistance, such as the Monetary Award Program (MAP) grant, minority teacher scholarships and special education waiver, if they are looking to be in the teacher profession.”

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) further explains the process of applying for the RISE Act. ISAC states that the RISE Act will not only help with student aid, but can also help those who qualify with “any public institution of higher learning including, but not limited to, scholarships, grants, awards or other financial assistance.”

This new law allows previously ineligible students to receive financial aid toward their tuition. According to ISAC, students must meet the following criteria to apply:

- The student must have lived

with their parent or guardian while they were in high school.

- The student must have completed high school and received a diploma (or equivalent).
- The student has been attending school for at least three years since the day they graduated high school.
- The student must provide an affidavit saying that they will become a permanent resident as soon as they can.
- The student must be living in Illinois.

ISAAC also mentioned that there will be pre-screening questions before the application to make sure the student who is applying not only meets the criteria mentioned above, but is also a student eligible for FAFSA aid.

Since the large portion of students who can apply for FAFSA apply back in October, Amos

explained how there will now be a temporary suspension of MAP awards for those people who apply for FAFSA. That way, there is a fair and equal allocation of money distributed to students who are in need of student aid between those who apply for FAFSA and those who apply for the RISE Act.

Amos said, “That window will likely reopen once the state gets a picture of how many RISE Act filers there are.” The establishment of the RISE Act will allow for a significant portion of the NEIU student body a chance to receive student aid from the state.

For more information on financial aid, visit the Financial Aid Office in room D 200 (D Building, second level, above Enrollment Services) or contact the Financial Aid Office by phone (773) 442-5016, fax (773) 442-5040 or by email at financial-aid@neiu.edu.

## POLICE BLOTTER

These incidents occurred on NEIU campus property between the dates of November 14 and November 21.

The Independent is a public forum for all of Northeastern Illinois University's campuses and surrounding community. The Independent is entirely student-run and is published bi-weekly, except during summer and semester breaks. The editor-in-chief is responsible for the content of the Independent, and views presented do not necessarily represent those of the administration, faculty and students. The Independent is a member of the ICPA, CMA and ACP.

For further details email:

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The NEIU police blotter is requested from our campus police for every issue of the Independent because this publication exercises its right to do so, courtesy of the Clery Act. The Clery Act is a federal statute requiring all higher education establishments that participate in federal financial aid programs to maintain records of campus crime and campus security information. Any case that is considered ongoing may not be listed in the blotter. For this reason, there may be updated reports published

retroactively once those cases are closed. For more information about the Clery Act, visit the NEIU police department's webpage.

### 11/14/19 - Parking Garage

Student concerned about weird handwritten note left by unknown subject on his car criticizing his parking.

### 11/18/19 - Nest

Resident reports incident with roommate yelling and cursing at

him causing the resident to feel uncomfortable and does not feel safe in his living space.

### 11/19/19 - 5500 N. Central Park

Two state citations issued for driving with a revoked driver's license and not wearing a seatbelt.

### 11/19/19 - TCF Bank

Off duty officer reports graffiti on the west door of bank. Offender is unknown. Facilities management was notified for clean up.

### 11/20/19 - Lech Walesa Hall

Student became agitated and threatened to bring in a lawyer after being informed of failing class.

### 11/21/19 - Off-campus

At the request of the dean, officers with the assistance of Chicago Police conducted a well-being check at the residence of a student. Everything turned out to be okay.

# Choose your brick-and-mortar

## Francisco Sebastian

Payroll Manager  
IndependentPayrollNEIU@gmail.com

Completed all your shopping this Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and/or Cyber Monday? Or convened with old friends for Blackout Wednesday?

According to StarTribune, "Self-gifting has evolved into a popular trend in recent years, but it's expected to spike this year. Retailers have started to cater to the self-shoppers in their ads this year. Who wants a \$10 toaster as a gift or who can afford to give someone a \$1,500 65-inch Smart TV?"

However, as everyone knows, brick-and-mortar stores are being phased out by the e-commerce giants, eliminating consumer's sense of urgency on Black Friday. Such procrastination leads to Super Saturday, the last Saturday before Christmas, when shoppers swamp stores for immediate items to take home and wrap. Therefore, Super Saturday is a defining moment for retailers that are yet to digitize their brand.

Holiday sales can amount to upwards of 30% of annual sales. According to CNBC, shoppers tend to shop for a longer duration of time if they are in a happy mood. That can be facilitated by, what almost all stores does nowadays, playing Christmas music. But, those who

go above and beyond, will certainly attain more from their customers, as in the example of a Best Buy location in Minnesota. In that location, shoppers are greeted by Best Buy representatives offering hot cocoa and doughnuts. So, next time you go shopping, it would not hurt to write down in their survey box that it would be nice to be provided with a drink while walking along their aisles.

And with that, here is a list of retailers that have been in the news lately, some of which are relying on a fruitful holiday season to fend off their online competitors.

### 1] Kohl's

CEO: Michelle Gass  
Hot Item: Kids Jetson Jupiter Folding Kick Scooter - \$19.99  
E-commerce Competition: Target, Lark and Ro

#### Quick Info:

Kohl's are not normally in malls, thus, they struggle in attaining Kohl's-exclusive clientele. But partnering with Amazon in accepting their returns is a great way to generate store traffic. In a recent conference call, CEO Michelle Gass, disappointed Wall Street by slashing off retailers' profit outlook of the year and stating, "the retailer has to enter the holiday season with 'momentum' and put investment towards boosting traffic". The company was founded by Polish immigrant Maxwell Kohl who started by

opening a corner grocery store in Milwaukee, Wis., in 1927.

### 2] Home Depot

CEO: Craig Menear  
Hot Item: 18-Volt OCTANE Lithium-Ion Cordless Brushless 4-Mode Compact Impact Wrench Kit - \$149.00  
E-commerce Competition: Wayfair.com, Build.com

#### Quick Info:

Home Depot's "holiday" season is actually in spring, but given that this home improvement retailer has been fighting strong against e-commerce, Home Depot will likely profit from the Christmas season. This retailer has shown no signs of regression as sales per square foot in-house last holiday season was \$414.17, a figure that is only expected to increase this year.

Interesting customer-classification that Home Depot uses to sell some of its products are, the DIY Customers and the Professional Customers (or "Pros"). Pros are the type of consumers that make more frequent trips and spend more per trip than the average shopper.

### 3] Gap Inc.

CEO: Robert J. Fisher (Interim)  
Hot Item: Crazy Stripe Dog Sweater - \$39.95  
E-commerce Competition: J.Crew, JC Penny

#### Quick Info:

GAP Inc. is the parent company

of Banana Republic, Old Navy, Athleta and Hill City. Gap's 2019 Holiday campaign is "Gift the Thought," where no matter how simple a gift may seem, the purpose behind that present represents the spirit of the holiday season. In select Gap stores, shoppers who purchase gifts can choose "thought-based gift tags" to go along with their items.

### 4] Ross Stores

CEO: Barbara Rentler  
Hot Item: According to their website, "Bargains are always different, often here today and gone tomorrow."  
E-commerce Competition: Walmart, Macy's

#### Quick Info:

Despite recent speculation of an upcoming recession, Ross Stores, alongside its off-price retail cohorts, are confident in their ability to benefit from an economic downturn. Unlike most retailers, Ross offers an ever-changing merchandise selection, making its fashion trend relevant week to week and consumers seem to like the thrill of the hunt. And for the finance majors out there, Ross Stores shares is trading for 21 times earnings as of Nov. 30.

### 5] L Brands

CEO: Les Wexner  
Hot Item: Logo Short Cozy Robe - \$35.00  
E-commerce Competition: Rhian-

na's Savage X Fenty, Adore Me  
Quick Info:

L Brands' subsidiary, Victoria's Secret, is evolving and growing, and to underscore their growth, Victoria's Secret decided to cancel the most extravagant event of the year, the 2019 Victoria's Secret Fashion Show. Victoria's Secret used to be in the forefront of wearable technology with their Incredible sports bra which used built-in electrodes to measure heart rate. However, it has then died down, but possibly might be revived once more.

This year, retailers have been hit hard with a dramatic calendar shift. Last year, Thanksgiving was on Nov. 22, while this year Thanksgiving landed on the 28th, cutting six days of holiday shopping and one less weekend.

So, put on some nice clothes (or not, go in your pajamas as you won't be the only one) and go into your favorite stores before they get devoured by online giants. And lucky for you, all stores mentioned above are located within driving distance from NEIU, right on McCormick Blvd. Lastly, for those who are always ahead of the curve, Baby Yoda will be proclaimed as 2020's Hottest New Toy!

(Francisco Sebastian has no position in any of the companies' stocks mentioned. The Independent has no position in any of the stocks mentioned.)

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To schedule an interview, email Matthew at  
NEIUManagingEditor@gmail.com

# NEIU display for Polish Heritage Month

**Matthew Rago**

Managing Editor  
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Northeastern Illinois University recognized Polish heritage by commemorating Polish contributions, suffering and involvement during World War II with a special display stationed outside of the NEIU bookstore which also coincided with Veterans' Day.

The exhibition was segregated into 16 topics, identifies and celebrates Poland's victimization and subsequent perseverance and heroism during a period of German and Russian conquest.

The display began by recognizing Sept. 1, 1939--the day Hit-

ler and his army invaded Poland from the West, prompting Britain and France to declare war against Nazi combatants--as both the commencement of World War II and the beginning of Polish suffering. The disagreement between two competing ideologies, communism and Nazism, along with the Allies' failure to intervene doomed an overmatched Poland from the start.

However, the Polish refused to lay down and allow Nazi Germany to impose their will unobstructed.

"The Polish Armed Force was incorporated into the Royal Army," read the display. "Similarly, the Polish Navy became part of the Royal Navy. Diplomatic agreements allowed for new Polish divisions to be

established in Great Britain on its territories in North Africa."

The exhibit emphasized the toll that Nazi and Soviet conquests took on Polish nationals. The display's fourth designation spotlighted Polish refugees, who were forced to flee from their homes and overcrowded ghettos in order to avoid persecution. The exhibit offered harrowing photos of fleeing civilians and dismayed soldiers.

The Nazi forces held the belief that should they effectively deprive the Poles of a centralized home, they could erase Polish identity and culture. This, according to the exhibit, was imperative to the Nazi agenda of "Germanizing the Poles."

"For German Nazis, the new order meant building a new Europe with no place for Poles and their separate cultural identity," read the exhibit's seventh design. "The objective was to Germanize the Poles, turning them into slaves working for the glory of Germany."

At the same time, the USSR aimed to impose communist ideology on the vulnerable country.

The Polish were also victims of mass extermination. Civilians were indiscriminately massacred via public executions, private killings and massive gas chambers that killed hundreds of persecuted Poles and Jews. Per the exhibit, "Out of 6 million Polish citizens who lost their lives in World War Two, over 5.5 million were killed as a direct result of operations by German occupiers."

The number of Poles who lost their lives to Soviet forces remains unknown.

The display illustrated the efforts that an embattled, penetrated Polish front offered toward eliminating modern history's greatest threat to Western civilization. As a result of World War II, over 2.5 million Polish civilians emigrated to America. Hundreds of thousands of Pol-

ish soldiers died trying to defend Poland from invasion, regrouping and recalibrating in the face of impending defeat. The war reshaped both Poland's identity and physical boundaries, leaving a wartorn country to rebuild from the Axis' failed attempts to eliminate Polish culture.

With the display, NEIU offered gratitude and somber remembrance towards the brave men and women who suffered through needless persecution and fought back from a disadvantaged position.

(Photos are from the display cases.)



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# A classic tradition at our campus

**Tim LeCour**

Office Manager  
NEIUindependent@gmail.com

For the last 22 years, the Ruth Page Civic Ballet has performed E.T.A Hoffman's "The Nutcracker" in NEIU's auditorium, where dancers of all ages and backgrounds bring a show to life that is nearly 127 years old.

Director Victor Alexander began as a dancer in Havana. He's been dancing in the United States since 2002 and became the school director in 2012 for Ruth Page Center for the Arts.

"There wasn't a big change made when they started doing (the show) again after we had this gap from 1997 to 2002, especially in the first act. The party scene, we started using actors. It's kind of like a narrative idea. We have the dialogue happening while the dancers are dancing," Alexander said.

The Ruth Page Civic Ballet has performed a version of "The Nutcracker" since 1965. The company took a hiatus from the show in 1997 when it was produced by the Arie Crown Theatre. The performance was revived in 2002 and revamped into what it is today.

Alexander said, "We did have to make drastic changes because before we were produced in the Arie Crown. And being in the big theatre, now we're not. Now we're produced by Northeastern, Grayslake College and the theaters are not the same size."

He continued, "The whole scenography was huge. Choreographically it's the same."

Alexander's goal is to bring in professional dancers who are still active work as soloists alongside the students in those main roles. "We hire professionals to do all those soloist roles," Alexander said.

This mixed collaboration is what makes the Ruth Page performance unique. Students are pushed to the next level and professional dancers pass on skills and techniques to a new generation of dancers.

"This 'Nutcracker' has a different feeling," said Alexander. It's family friendly. It allows kids to be part of the dream. It allows kids to be part of the world and build that imagination. That's one thing I really love with this production."

Since Ruth Page is one of the oldest performances of "The Nutcracker" in Chicago, the audience tends to be mixed. Multigener-

ational audience members watch with those who are seeing the Nutcracker for the first time. The show keeps both entertained.

Lucy Taylor is American Beauty Rose in this year's performance. The 15 year old has been working with the company since she was six years old.

"I practice six days a week during the regular year when we don't have the Nutcracker or something big," said Taylor. And I have about two classes a day, so about three hours. When 'Nutcracker' or the spring shows come, then we go seven days a week. We'll have normal classes during the week, then rehearsals after three days a week and also on Sundays. So seven days a week." She danced in nine performances of "The Nutcracker" with Ruth Page and started as a Bonbon child during Mother Ginger and the Bonbons in act two.

"I really like perform-



The Nutcracker rehearsal at Ruth Page Center for the Arts.



The two main characters in this year's performance.



ing Rose. This will be my first year dancing her...I've watched so many dancers do Rose. My teacher, Ms. Dolores, she did it. I've watched videos of her performing it. So it's really cool to be doing it, when I've seen so many people I look up to who have done it for so long," said Taylor.

Natalie Morro (Clara) is in her third year of performing "The Nutcracker" with the company. The 13-year-old dancer started dancing four years ago.

"Overall, this has been a really great experience," said Morro. "The show is really family friendly with lots of acting, pretty costumes and great dancers... You get to see a work of art right here in Chicago."

Todd Keich (Mouse King/Mother Ginger), an accomplished professional dancer, began working with Ruth Page three years ago as a soloist performing the part of the Mouse King. His body art illustrates a story almost as intricate as his performances. In this performance he appears adorned in a giant hoop skirt on four foot stilts, hiding many adoring Bonbon Children.

"My favorite (role) to perform is Mother Ginger," said Keich. "Just because it's fun, it's ridiculous. The character is...It's not a lot of difficult movement but you get to be really over the top and ridiculous."

Keich continued, "(The Nutcracker) is classic. It is a holiday tradition. It is gorgeous to look at. It's a beautiful score. It's an amaz-

ing group of performers. It's just an amazing holiday experience."

The Ruge Page Civic Ballet will be back at NEIU's main campus this holiday season to perform "The Nutcracker" on Dec. 7 and 8.

**The character of Mouse King and Mother Ginger during rehearsals with the Bonbon children.**

**Photos by Tim LeCour**

# H&H awareness      Congrats, grads!

## Amina Murati

Writer

NEIU participated in its annual National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week on Nov. 18 through Nov. 23. While the annual tradition was held, assistant director of Student Leadership Development, Rae Joyce Baguilat added some twists this year to get NEIU students more involved with helping the community.

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week occurs every year throughout the entire country on the week before Thanksgiving. Baguilat mentioned that every year, students and staff are encouraged to donate clothes, food and toiletries to families in need.

Another annual tradition which takes place at NEIU is the Oxfam banquet. It is a hunger banquet that informs students about world hunger. The Pedroso Center also showed two documentaries describing the struggles of both world hunger and homelessness.

A Thanksgiving Family Dinner sponsorship collection also took place. "Throughout the course of the week we ask faculty, staff and student organizations to sponsor families and donate \$40 for their Thanksgiving meal," said Baguilat.

Every \$40 donation is enough to cover the expenses of an entire Thanksgiving meal for one family. "We work with A Just Harvest and they give us a list of families who are in need and then we sponsor them," said Baguilat.



Volunteers during Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week.

With the donations that the NEIU community collects, families are able to get their food delivered to their homes. For those without a home, the food is dropped off at A Just Harvest where families can enjoy Thanksgiving dinner. A Just Harvest is a soup kitchen that NEIU works with during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.

They also visited another pantry to develop an understanding of the food distribution process. "This year, we went to Lakeview pantry. I wanted to show students how it looks like to donate food, where it goes, what it looks like to donate to people," she explained. Students served food to participating families who were able to pick their meal. It was a way for students to "be able to work with individuals and families in a more humane way, which kind of helped them keep their dignity."

Baguilat wanted to teach students that homelessness is synonymous with housing insecurity. "Typically, when someone says homeless, they think 'oh, this is someone who is living on the streets or in their car' but a lot of the housing insecurity for our students is that they don't have a secure place to sleep." One of the aired documentaries described homelessness in our country, depicting people with different stories and how they manage to survive despite not having a permanent residence.

For those who wish to help but are unable to donate, Baguilat offered the option of making hats and scarves in lieu of monetary contributions. The hats and scarves were then distributed by the Student Veterans Club during their annual Hike for the Homeless where they take the clothes that were donated and hike down to the 'L' to look for people who are on the streets and in need of warmth.

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week is a process that shows students how it feels to give back to their community and those in need of a Thanksgiving dinner. With the contributions of the NEIU community, those in a position of need are able to seek community assistance during the holiday season.

## Karina Bran

Writer

We have come to the finish line, graduates. After the stress of deadlines, assignments, staying up late and toiling in the library for endless hours, the most anticipated day of your college career has arrived.

If you attended the Commencement Fair in early November, you felt the build-up and excitement of gathering your graduation materials. The Alumni Hall had professional photographers take pre-graduation photos with your cap and gown. There was music playing in the background, tables set up to pick up graduation tickets, alumni gear, career assistance and even an Instagram-worthy station to take fun pictures.

In a recent NEIU Targeted Announcement email, we were informed of an event that graduating seniors can attend. In light of the upcoming graduation, there are different ways in which you can prepare for the big day. The following are some tips you can use to make the countdown to graduation day more memorable and thrilling.

### Attend the Senior Send-off Party.

Student Leadership Development has created this party and invites seniors to attend the party at Joy District from 7-10:30 p.m. on December 12th, 2019. NEIU December graduates can bring one guest and add their name to a waitlist if they want another ticket. There will be food and soft drinks provided as well. What a fun way to do a pre-celebration with your selected guest! Joy District is located at 112 W. Hubbard St., Chicago, IL 60654

**Cap Decorating.** This is a fun trend that has happened in the last few years and it is a creative way to express yourself. NEIU will have a cap decorating event on campus Wednesday December 4th, 2019 from 2-4 p.m. at the Pedroso Center (B-159) and supplies will be available. If you cannot make it, no worries! You can also do this in the comfort of your own home and take as much time as you'd like. I personally like going to the craft store Michael's and choosing unique embellishments. Essentially, choose something that is meaningful to you.

**Pick out your outfit ahead of time/shop if you need to.** Although this notion might seem trivial, it is something important to consider for several reasons. When it comes

to graduation day, you want to look your best so you can celebrate to occasion accordingly. As the saying goes "look good, feel good" you will feel this if you plan ahead of time. This consists of choosing the outfit you will be wearing at graduation, going early enough to buy something, choosing accessories, shoes, etc. That way, when it is graduation day you don't have to be running around town and deciding what you are going to wear. It makes it less stressful and you will be ready to go.

### Take a day (or two) to pamper yourself.

Everyone has different ways to do self-care, so choose the option you will enjoy. It is necessary to take a day or two before graduation to do things that are fun for you. After all the stress from classes, work, internships, etc. pamper yourself. Go to the spa, get a massage, watch a movie, take a bath, go out with a friend to eat, etc. and it will be a great reward after all your determination and hard work.

**HAVE FUN!** Whatever activity/activities you decide to do for your upcoming graduation, remember to always have fun and be safe. Gather your friends, significant other, cousins, whoever you are close to and plan on thrilling activities. Essentially, the activities/events will create everlasting memories. Choose something that suits you and that you love.



Congratulations NEIU Class of 2019,  
best of luck to you all!  
From all of us at The Independent.

## GREEN

Continued from 1

tion Group at NEIU.

She continued, “We wanted to bring this opportunity to campus so that students can get involved even if they don’t know much about the problems we face or don’t have the capacity to demonstrate themselves. We hope to host more events like this in tandem with visiting organizations to bring more high-impact climate action opportunities to NEIU.”

The banners created this time around are blue and gold, sporting phrases like “People and Planet over Profit” and “Respect Indigenous Rights”. Another fabric banner reads “Strike With Us December 6th” referencing the National Climate Strike which will occur downtown, starting near Millennium Park at 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 6.

Students from Green Conservation Group plan on attending the Strike but a few will be in the midst of final exams on campus. The latter group will instead be supporting the strike through social media, sharing photos and related posts.

The National Climate Strikes come a week after the Global Climate Strikes happening worldwide on the Nov. 29 aka Black Friday, which is the United States’ largest retail holiday. Though there are no posted events, there are whispers of solidarity actions across the Chicagoland area to support Global Climate Strike visibility. The strikes are intended to show the enormous support for climate action from the public and pressure politicians or other entities to take responsibility and act on behalf of the planet.

Green further explained, “Our goal is to inspire people to think critically and act, as



Frannie Mendoza

**Students with NEIU GCG, Sunrise Movement Chicago youth and Extinction Rebellion representatives during the art build to prepare banners for the next climate strike.**

well as to let people know--there is still time to avoid the worst effects of climate change

but only if we choose to act now to change the way we live. It is up to us to decide our

# Creating respect for natural hair

**DeShawn Clay**  
Writer

On Nov. 14, Timothy Mays collaborated with NEIU sociology students to plan an event titled “Her Hair Is Her Crown,” a discussion event which called attention to discrimination between people’s hairstyles and hair textures (mainly applied towards women of color). The event saw people share with one another their experiences with hairstyle and texture discrimination.

At the beginning of the event, sheets of paper were placed on every other seat. On these sheets of paper were posts and memes from various social media platforms explaining “relatable” moments involving people with “kinky, ziggly or curly” hair, based on the most common hair grade charts. Some of the posts also expressed serious, more direct messages projecting that texturism and hair discrimination is unacceptable, and that women of color should wear their hair as they please, regardless of society’s conformity regarding hairstyles.

The event started with an introduction to the Crown Coalition, an organization founded by Sen. Holly J. Mitchell to birth the CROWN Act which stands for Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair.

According to the website, thecrownact.

com, CROWN Act “ensures protection against discrimination based on hairstyles by extending statutory protection to hair texture and protective styles.”

Next, the sociology students gave a short presentation on the history of hair discrimination, starting with the Tignon Law of the 1700s before explaining the spiritual meaning behind natural hair from as early as 2500 BCE to present day.

Then came the discussion portion of the event which was mostly critical in nature.

Around 20 men and women of color shared their experiences of hairstyle discrimination and texturism, which ranged from other people touching their hair as if they were an animal to memories of hot comb burns from mothers that kept trying to straighten their hair.

The audience was also asked to share about instances where they had to change their hair for the sake of social inclusion. The discussion also touched on the generational gap and disparities in grooming expectations

between baby boomers and Generation Z.

As of Nov. 29, the Crown Coalition has collected approximately 44,000 signatures towards the CROWN Act, about 1,000 short from their intended goal of 45,000.

To learn more about the CROWN Act and sign the petition to provide a safer, non-discriminatory environment of having people of color express themselves through their natural hair, visit <https://campaigns.organizefor.org/petitions/help-make-hair-discrimination-illegal>.



**The audience share the experiences they have had with hairstyle discrimination and texturism.**

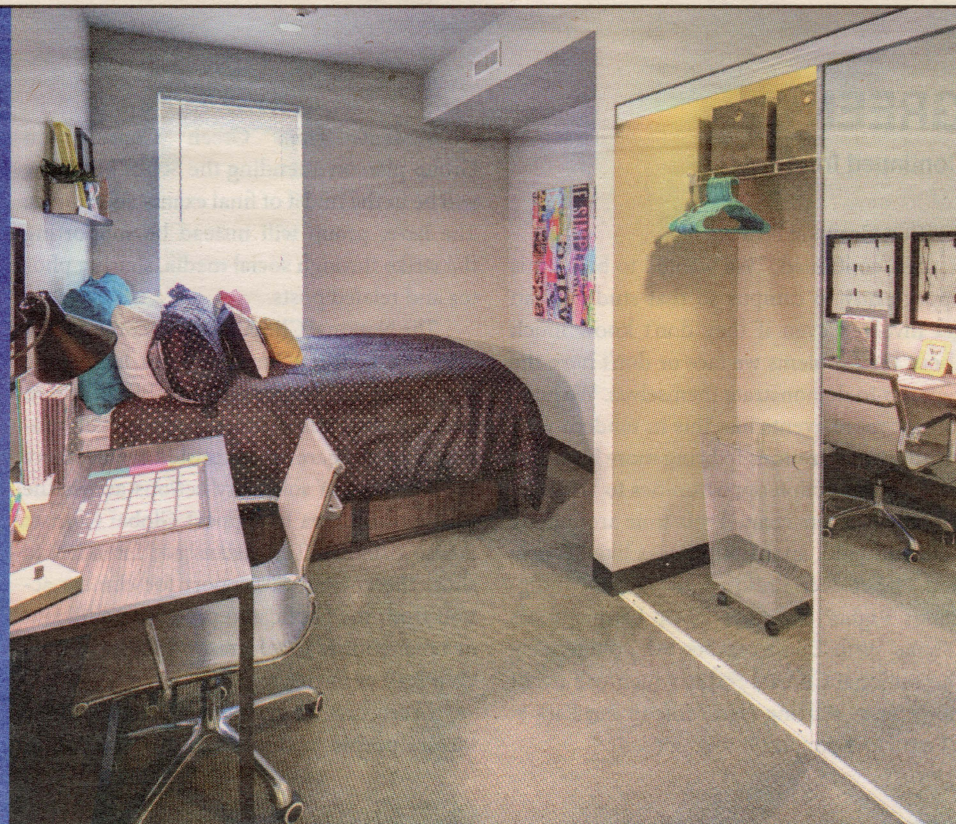
Tim LeCour





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# America's desensitization to mass shootings

**Matthew Rago**

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The United States of America has become immune to the impact of mass shootings. Long gone are the days of extended press coverage following the indiscriminate slaying of American citizens. The exhibitions of camaraderie and national pride that used to follow the needless loss of life have all but dissipated. In its place lives complacency bordering on apathy.

Between Nov. 14 and Nov. 18, America endured four separate mass shootings. The first occurred on Nov. 14 at Saugus High School in California, where two teenagers were killed and another three injured.

Two days later, five members of the same family lost their lives to gun violence in San Diego, with three of the victims being under the age of 12. The very next day, four lives were claimed in Fresno at a football watch party. Six others were injured. One day later, a gunman took the lives of two shoppers at a Walmart in Duncan, Okla., before turning the gun on himself.

What's worse is that it has become hard to authentically care about the dire state of America. Of course we cringe at the thought of innocent Americans dying at the hands of senseless violence, but mass murders have become so common that we've become de-

sensitized to the occasion. A few short years ago, a mass murder would stop America in its tracks, an occasion so chilling that we would voluntarily pause our daily routine in favor of displays of solidarity.

Today, such killings invoke a casual interest accompanied by a sigh of relief that we weren't the unlucky ones. We hover over the headline and caption, distractedly pondering the location, underlying cause and number of lives claimed. Sometimes, we break the newly hardened mold and offer the deceased an artificial "R.I.P" before continuing our day unencumbered.

Five dead Americans barely registers on our collective radars at this point. We've seen that before. It's old news. For the devastation to truly resonate, we need an interesting caveat, something that deviates away from our dystopian norm. Once in a while we'll see a hate crime so egregious that it inspires outrage.

Other times, we will hear about a shooting that claimed such a staggeringly large amount of victims that it shocks us into caring. However, before we do, we make sure to hop on social media and offer a long-winded stance on gun control. Maybe we'll even diverge from discussing the actual act of terrorism and debate the semantics of firearm categorization.

But the reality of the situation is unset-

ling. According to Gun Violence Archives, as of Nov. 18, America has suffered through 371 mass shootings in 2019. On average, America sees more than 100 gun-related deaths per day. In other words, gun violence has become normalized in the United States, almost ingrained in our culture via a constitutional amendment that was composed during an era where muskets were the preeminent firearm.

However, our first-world counterparts don't suffer from the same level of gun homicides. Compared to other developed nations such as the United Kingdom and Japan, the United States has exponentially higher rates of gun crime. For example, the United States civilian gun-death rate is 35 times higher than the UK and 53 times higher than Japan.

America suffers from both a series of lax gun laws riddled with loopholes and a culture indoctrinated to believe gun violence is an inevitability. In a previous article, we detailed some of the loopholes that hamper the United States' effort to curtail gun crime.

For example, of the 51 states (including Washington D.C.), only nine states mandate that gun owners register their firearms. Only 15 states require a permit in order to purchase a gun. In 30 states, you can completely bypass a background check should a private buyer purchase a firearm from a private

dealer, a loophole also known as the "gun show loophole".

But we can argue about the effectiveness of gun legislation until we are blue in the face. We can reject the ethical foundation of our lawmakers accepting donations from organizations with the sole purpose of expanding gun accessibility. We can mock the idea of gun ban, claiming such a ban would only incentivize criminals. Regardless of what side of the ideological spectrum you lay on, one thing is certain: Americans are dying from gun violence at an unprecedented rate and we no longer care like we once did.

But it is about time that America challenges itself as a nation. The fact that we are entertaining ideas of providing every American with a firearm to counteract gun crime should alert us to the seriousness of the matter. The fact that parents are willing to standardize active shooter drills while sending their children to school with bulletproof backpacks rather than address gun violence head on is astonishing.

It's time that America conducts an internal investigation and eradicates the issues that are exacerbating gun violence. Truthfully, we might be too far gone for gun legislation reform to have any meaningful, tangible impact. However, we must make an attempt to curtail this deadly trajectory.

At the very least, we must try.

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# Black Wednesday Lifeline for the lazy

**Frannie Mendoza**

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The earliest record of the term “Blackout Wednesday” surfaced on the internet back in 2014 and most Millennials that have been of legal drinking age for the past decade or so, would probably know what that is. Of course, the term itself gives some idea of the kind of night that Wednesday would entail.

But just because pop culture gave it a name five years ago, it doesn't mean that such debauchery didn't exist before. It definitely existed before Millennials entered the nightlife scene. Previous generations celebrated it too, but they just didn't bother to give it a name probably because there weren't any online photos to caption or memes to post.

Do you know another tradition that occurs on the same night? Friendsgiving Dinner. The earliest record of the term online dates back to 2007. Whether intended or not, we all partake in one or the other.

The night before Thanksgiving is considered the biggest night of going out because everyone is home for the holidays, many are allowed to take a half day from work and most significantly, many more will not have classes or work the following morning. They will just wake up and share a gluttonous feast



Friendsgiving Dinner will have potluck, board games and maybe karaoke.

with family and loved ones.

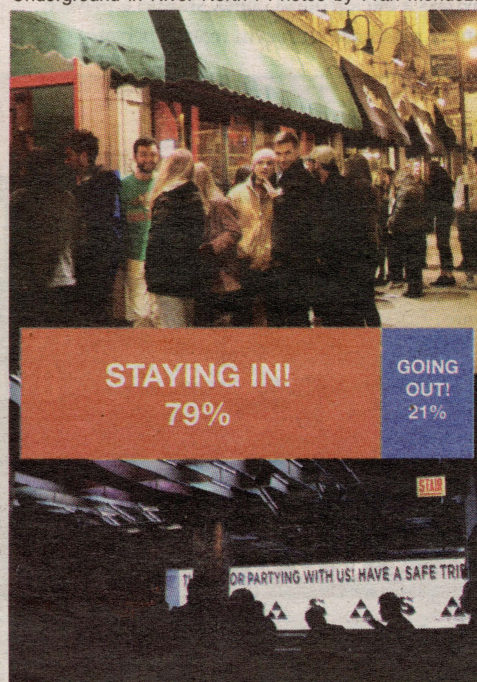
For this special November Wednesday night, people have their preference over how they choose to catch up with old and new friends. If you don't mind the rowdy crowds, long lines and trying to figure out which Uber is yours in the sea of vehicles that swarm the city sidewalks when folks stumble out of their chosen indoor playgrounds, then you probably still have it in you to partake in Blackout Wednesday.

However, there is always the slightly older tradition of Friendsgiving Dinner where you and your friends can decide how memorable it will truly be.

One thing is for sure, if you are looking to catch up with dear friends, having Friendsgiving Dinner will only require you to talk over that one loud friend (there's at least one in every group), instead of blaring music and a crowd of strangers who are probably looking for someone to Netflix and chill with during the coming cold months.

Reporter Goldie asked our Instagram followers what they were up to on the night of Nov. 27 and the results showed how responsible many of us must be. Either that or those who went out were already busy making memories from whatever is left of 2019.

Chicago photos: Emerald Isle in Edison Park and The Underground in River North | Photos by Fran Mendoza



Blackout Wednesday will have long lines and big crowds---if you don't mind that.

**Matthew Rago**

Managing Editor

NEIUManagingEditor

As students, we have all taken part in a collective sigh of exasperation when the teacher announces an upcoming group project. More often than not, an explanation centering around the need to foster team building skills accompanies the announcement as though most college students, particularly those attending commuter colleges, haven't learned such skills at, you know, their actual jobs.

Dedicated students understand the consequences of group projects. The group leader will inevitably be burdened with an increased workload as apathetic group members take credit for the leader's efforts. Unfortunately, instructors seem to turn a blind eye to such patterns, countering any reservations with outdated explanations of teamwork and camaraderie. What's worse is that these same instructors grossly underestimate the life experience of millennials and Generation Z, two generations struggling to deal with an economy destabilized by baby boomers and Generation X.

Our future careers are contingent on our academic prowess. As students, we voluntarily dive into crippling debt in order to afford ourselves a career that will one day offer us financial comfort. We simply cannot afford to see our grade point averages tarnished thanks to an uninvested group partner. Yet our concerns go unheeded.

Earlier this semester, one of my professors assigned a group project midterm, allowing individual students to hand select their own group members. One student whom I had befriended selected me and one other woman, who later left the group due to a series of miscommunications. A week before the midterm was due, my partner informed me she was unwilling to meet at a previously determined time, prompting our third member to depart the group. Two days before the midterm, the remaining group member, who had been responsible for cancelling the original meeting,

Reporter Goldie asked on Instagram: 🤔

How do you feel about group projects?



informed me she was unable to complete her portion of the assignment, leaving the entire burden of a three-person project on my shoulders. Sure, this is an anecdote, but it seems to mirror the experiences of most when participating in group projects.

Who are these projects for? During my time at NEIU, I've identified a tendency for instructors to cater to the laziest of students. I've walked into classrooms where the entire class roster was promised an A simply for showing up. I've taken classes where the professor asked if the class was comfortable with her only showing up for one-fourth of the scheduled classes, essentially transacting good grades in exchange for cooperation. Group projects seem to follow the same rubric; in other words, if universities can find a way to tether weaker students to stronger students, they can both raise the average class grade and incentivize students to re-enroll in future semesters.

That's simply unfair. Strong students don't deserve to be burdened by students unwilling or unable to commit to their academic careers. College-level students should be conditioned to adequately prepare themselves for the sake of academic independence. Displacing responsibility for weak students onto stronger students stimulates a parasitic relationship that is both emotionally and mentally taxing for the student or students tasked with actually performing the work.

Save for a few remarkable cases, college students are adults. We do not need to be coddled or eased into college life. We were forced to learn interpersonal communication in real-life work environments. For those who were fortunate enough to come from a financially stable household, it is the responsibility of their agents of socialization to teach them such skills, not our professors and certainly not fellow students. Artificially boosting grades isn't a strong enough reason to keep such an ineffective teaching method intact.

It's been said before but let's say it again: eliminate group projects at the college level.

*"Sometimes I liked group projects because you're able to split the work. Other times I don't like them because you always get the one person or two who don't do their part. If they do it's incorrect and given the night before. It's very frustrating especially when counts for a huge percentage of your grade."*

Sent by @yasminepandora

# No Angels here: Victoria's Secret is out

**Karina Bran**  
Writer

You might have heard of the famous Victoria's Secret that is televised annually, with past performances by artists such as Taylor Swift, The Weeknd, Ariana Grande, Fall Out Boy and Halsey. This year has taken a different turn. The Victoria's Secret brand, known for its glamorous fashion shows, style and lace/sultry aesthetic, has been cancelled.

According to Thevox.com, CEO Les Wexner told employees in an internal memo that the company has decided to rethink the traditional Victoria's Secret fashion show. Wexner also added, "going forward, we don't believe network television is the right fit."

The Victoria's Secret Fashion Show has aired annually on ABC. It was first introduced by Stephanie Seymour and it was held at the Plaza Hotel in New York City in Aug. 1995. Some people may be more excited than others to watch the show because they either enjoy watching the VS Angels catwalking in

bedazzled lingerie or they want to see who will be that year's celebrity performer.

I remember when Taylor Swift performed at the fashion show in 2013; I watched it because I both wanted to see Swift perform and to see what the fashion show is all about. The models looked the same to me—tall, toned figures strutting down the runway. However, their height and Victoria's Secret-clad figures were the highlight of the fashion show. Victoria's Secret's message is clear: that women should look like this in order to wear lingerie or workout gear.

As LZ Granderson of CNN.com expressed, "Victoria's Secret's strict definition of female beauty—thin, bosomy, unattainable—is not only outdated, it was never accurate to begin with. Beauty is truly in the eye of the beholder."

Granderson points out that Victoria's Secret's beauty standard is "unattainable" and some women's biological characteristics disqualify them from adhering to Victoria's

Secret's standard of beauty. You are born with what you have, but women and those who identify as women seek ways to look better by altering their bodies, faces and hair.

The promotion of a standardized beauty model is a rejection of body inclusivity. It is no wonder that Dove's Real Beauty campaign is the counterpart to every Victoria's Secret campaign and has been more readily embraced by today's younger generation.

The majority of women do not look like a Victoria's Secret model. There are so many body types and sizes in society that by enforcing a certain beauty standard is definitely discouraging. It is and can be discouraging because some impressionable young women and those who identify as women could compare themselves to models and negative thoughts can arise rather than accepting their own body or focusing on inner beauty.

Halsey, a member of the LGBTQ+ community that performed on the show in 2018, called out Victoria's Secret after Chief

Marketing Officer Ed Razek said that they did not want to include transgender models "because the show is fantasy."

In other words, Razek is saying that in the fantasy world of Victoria's Secret, only thin, tall models exist. Furthermore, models of color are severely underrepresented. They have a exotic-looking models, but the majority are individuals of Caucasian descent who identify as female.

Maybe it is 'ut as simple as Victoria's Secret being one of the many brick-and-mortars with plummeting sales due to e-commerce, which has been the issue in the past few years. But surely it wouldn't have hurt to include some diversity and inclusivity into their marketing campaigns in order to remain relevant to the next generation.

It is truly astonishing that in 2019, inclusivity and marginalization is still so commonplace in the world of the VS Angels. Perhaps, this is only a hiatus for them to come up with a new secret.



# NEIU Artist Spotlight: Katharina Losacco

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Northeastern Illinois University alumna Katharina Losacco is an aspiring poet unafraid of projecting the frustrations of emotional trauma onto her audience. Losacco, who graduated with a bachelor's in English, currently works as a bartender at The Nest Bar & Eatery, a quaint yet bustling bar in the Dunning neighborhood of Chicago.

In 2017, Losacco drafted "Disoriented Innocence," a poem that narrates the struggle between confrontation and avoidance.

## Disoriented Innocence

*I have forced your image out of my head  
I have blocked out minutes and days and  
months just to say we have never met  
I refuse to engage in your memory  
Sometimes I combine you with countless men  
who have entered my body  
I hate you  
You have taken my body and made a dollar  
store art project  
You have taken your hands and smeared  
hate and shame all over my torso  
You have hit me and beat me with your  
words from other mouths that turn into per-  
fect frowns as they tell me I am overreacting  
I can count on my fingers how many times I  
have been called a liar—  
Once  
Your black silhouette still haunts me as I lie  
in bed staring out my window  
Leftover guilt gathers and makes way,  
as if my mind was a watering hole for self  
disgust  
I look at you as irrelevant chapters in an old  
book that don't quite fit,  
In the novel that I read and keep next to my  
bed at night  
You are a portrait of me at my worst  
And a photograph that was burned in a fire  
that occupied my crown  
The fire burned out long before I wrote this...  
But the smoke still lingers, clogging my view.*

Losacco harnesses the ability to concurrently illustrate a pointed narrative while leaving her work just abstract enough for her audience to inject their own interpretations.

Her words are powerful, vivid and unapologetic, forcing her readers to both reminisce on fonder memories while reenacting moments of emotional trauma.

On first read, it appears that Losacco has relegated the memory of a figure from her past to the aging pages of an outdated novel. Those memories, so inconsistent with her current trajectory yet still enticing enough to reread, read like a harrowing simplification of sociology's Social Mirror Theory, which states that we subconsciously adopt others' perception of us into our own self-image.

"You are a portrait of me at my worst."

"Disoriented Innocence" also stimulates consideration as to why we feel obligated to mentally and emotionally block our ex-partners from our lives. Are we traumatized by the actions of our significant others or simply handicapped by the memory of a time when we were happy?

Our generation latches onto nostalgia, eagerly receiving anything that reminds us of a less complicated time in our lives. Sure, we may no longer possess feelings for the actors of our past selves, but that doesn't stop us from allowing their lingering memory to serve as a vivid reminder of our failed expeditions into friendship and romance.

Finally, "Distorted Innocence" exposes the double standards of an abusive relationship. "You have hit me and beat me with your words from other mouths that turn into perfect frowns as they tell me I am overreacting," writes Losacco, exploring the suffocation of not feeling heard.

The only thing more disheartening than the actual experience of emotional trauma is being spurned when you try to communicate your pain. Abusers haze. Abusers bully. Abusers tear their targets down just to reconstruct their victims in an image more fitting for their fragile egos. But when the abused speak up or, god forbid, speak to their abusers in the same manner that their abusers

speak to them, communication devolves into conflict. Perhaps the abuser will adopt a victim's complex in an attempt to diminish a valid contention. Or worse, the abuser will become more malicious, aiming for the most vulnerable spot on an already compromised self-esteem.

We become isolated, too afraid of rejection to reach out to others yet too unsatisfied to continue along the same path. Losacco's description is raw, suggesting a personal connection to the carefully crafted words.

However, Losacco offers a much more harrowing backstory. "Disoriented Innocence" explores the trauma and subsequent emotional recovery from sexual molestation.

Preferring to create in both a vulnerable and inebriated state, Losacco documents the frustrations she felt unable to express to her support network. "If I'm completely sober--like if I'm not drinking or anything--I guess it's hard to admit my feelings and admit things that I was going through," said Losacco.

"But the older I've gotten, I think it's easier to pick apart my brain and figure out how I'm feeling, why I'm feeling those things and how they connect to the things that happened in my past."

But Losacco says that discovering poetry as an outlet to confront feelings of shame or displaced guilt has been therapeutic. Embracing her demons has afforded her an understanding that her conflicting emotions are normal. Losacco understands that she's not on an island, that what occurred in her past is not exclusive to her.

"I was molested when I was really little," said Losacco. "I was scared, angry and did not know how to let that out. But since I've been writing, I think it's easier to show that through my writing."

Losacco says family infighting and jealously guarded secrets stunted her healing process and created divisions that are only just beginning to mend.

Over the past year, Losacco has discovered a newfound appreciation for intimacy, something she struggled with prior. "I can be intimate with people now. For a while, it was

really hard...I felt like I was back when I was 7 years old."

Losacco champions the importance of moving on and finding healthy, constructive ways to lessen the burdens of trauma. She regrets masking her feelings with alcohol, stating that while intoxication is a temporary reprieve, alcohol doesn't eradicate the underlying stressors of emotional pain.

Losacco concluded the interview by emphasizing how valuable solidarity and community are when dealing with emotional blockages. She highlights the importance of ventilation and the consequences of nurturing a parasitic relationship with our traumas for the sake of secrecy.

"You have to have something to let your anger out," said Losacco. "If you don't, it just manifests [itself] and gets worse. Definitely go talk to somebody. Because I feel like if you don't, you can't get through it on your own."

"You're not alone. You're not the only person that has been through it. It doesn't make you a bad person and it's never your fault when something like that happens to you. It took me a long time to figure that out."



Matthew Rago

**Katharina Losacco shares her story of perseverance.**

# 'The Celebration of the Life of Vinnie Paul'

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HELLYEAH's "The Celebration of the Life of Vinnie Paul" tour rolled through Rockford's Apollo Theater A.C. with support from Fort Lauderdale's Nonpoint and Greenville's Deepfall.

### Deepfall

Deepfall kicked off the show with unabashed energy. Touring in support of their debut album "Broken," the Michigan-based rockers were tasked with introducing themselves to a Rockford, Ill., crowd that was impatient and fidgety after a delayed start time.

Vocalist Rich Hopkins' commanding vocals were complemented by guitarists Anthony Battista and Max Carrillo's dueling solos and powerful riffs. Deepfall proved that energy is contagious, taking a relatively disinterested crowd and coaxing them into investing in their product.

Carrillo stole the show with an advanced array of guitar tricks, crowd surfing mid-riff and fretting with his guitar positioned behind his neck. Drummer Nick Gray (formerly of Tantric) and bassist Taylor Brandt, whose stoic stage presence operated in stark contrast to Hopkins and Carrillo's vigor, expertly directed the rhythm. Most importantly, the band impressed with their original content, though their cover of Journey's "Separate Ways (World Apart)," which spotlighted keyboardist Tim King, didn't resonate with the crowd as one might expect.

While the concept of Deepfall is still in its embryonic stages, the band manages to harness the power of Disturbed and combine it with the precision of Alter Bridge. As the Michigan rockers continue to hone their craft and fine tune their identity, they will inevitably make waves in an ultra-competitive rock music scene.

### Nonpoint

Nonpoint's evolution from fringe headlining act to bonafide stars has come to its natural conclusion. A few years ago, Nonpoint was forced to watch a mass exodus of fans who abandoned their headlining concert after support act Escape the Fate concluded their set. Fast forward three years

and Nonpoint has audiences in the palm of their hand.

Vocalist Elias Soriano thrives on crowd engagement. His energy was infectious, befitting of a veteran accustomed to coercing a crowd to follow and mirror his every move. Bassist Adam Woloszyn, lead guitarist Jason Zeilstra and rhythm guitarist Rasheed Thomas displayed their advanced understanding of the riff, staggering between different beats and melodies as they transitioned from verse to chorus to bridge. The bridge riff in "Dodge Your Destiny" had the entire crowd dancing in stereo.

Nonpoint opened with the underrated yet catchy "Breaking the Skin" before picking up the pace with the spirited "Chaos and Earthquakes" off their new album "X." "Chaos and Earthquakes," which has already usurped "Bullet With A Name" as Nonpoint's most-streamed song across digital platforms, drew an enormous pop from the crowd. "Fix This" and "Milestone" were contemplative and subdued relative to the rest of the set, allowing the crowd to moment to unwind before revving the energy back up with "That Day."

Nonpoint's paused their set as members of Hellyeah and Nonpoint congregated on stage to celebrate Thomas' birthday. Once hugs were exchanged and the candles were blown out, Nonpoint continued with their adaptation of Phil Collins' hit song "In The Air Tonight" before concluding with high-energy metal anthem "Bullet With a Name."

### HELLYEAH

HELLYEAH honored former Pantera and Hellyeah drummer Vinnie Paul's passing by transforming tragedy into a celebration of art, music and life.

If you've never seen Chad Gray (formerly of Mudvayne) perform live, you're missing out on one of history's great rock acts. Bombastic, eccentric and just an overall wholesome guy, Gray has mastered heavy metal. His flow rivals the best of rap's golden years. His pace is overwhelming yet captivating. But what differentiates Gray from his contemporaries is his ability to balance his unclean vocals with clear, succinct intermissions of calm.

Gray regularly departed the safe confines of the stage to walk along the barricade,

which essentially served as a de facto tightrope. He jumped into the crowd, held the hands of concertgoers and sang into his audience's faces, introducing a sense of community absent from many other shows.

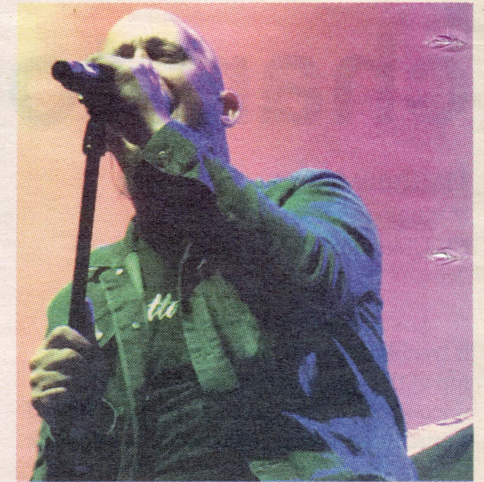
HELLYEAH proved why they are held in such high regards within the metal community. They are loud, but their sound has a purpose. Their energy is raw, but their performances are meticulously calculated and coordinated. They overwhelm you with passion omit filler noise. And the crowd responded accordingly.

The audience chanted "Oh My God" and "Black Flag Army" as though they were age-old anthems rather than 1-month-old releases. Concertgoers risked concussing themselves as they headbanged along to the racing speed of "X" and "333." HELLYEAH's cover of Pantera's "Walk" and "I'm Broken" was a beautiful tribute to both Paul and "Dimebag" Darrell, two icons of the metal scene.

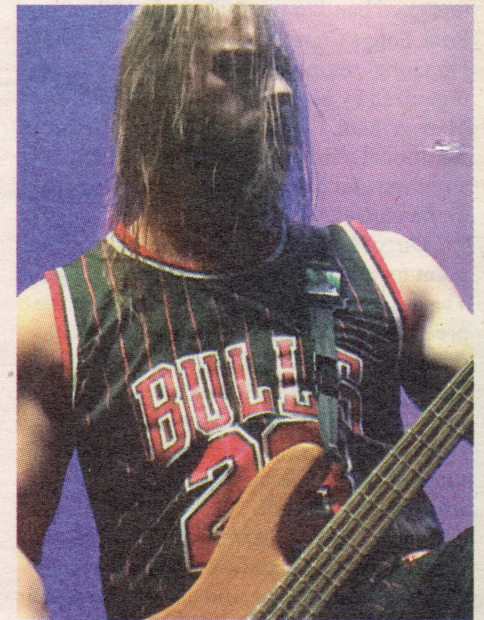
Gray also offered an introspective, reflective speech thanking deceased rock legends for their contributions. Rather than jockeying for position within the genre, Gray celebrated the collaborative effort put forth to make rock and metal what it is today. He thanked Chester Bennington of Linkin Park, Chris Cornell of Soundgarden and Lemmy Kilmister of Motorhead for their tireless dedication to their crafts. He relayed a sobering, blunt narrative of Paul's fear of death.

My only reservations with the show was with the Apollo Theater A.C. itself. Technical issues delayed the advertised door time by over thirty minutes. However, rather than offer an explanation or have attendees line up inside, as the venue has done for past concerts, the Apollo Theater A.C. staff opted to leave fans outside in the blistering cold. Once inside, Apollo Theater A.C. security afforded two overserved men four chances to instigate a fight. Fans openly petitioned for the removal of both fans, only for security to reject the pleas. Eventually, both men were removed after one man struck a teenage girl, prompting a fan revolt that required immediate intervention.

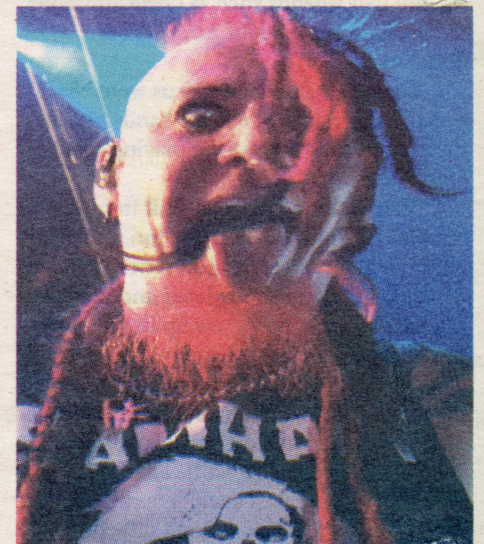
Overall, this show was a fantastic showcase for three bands that adamantly defend the value of crowd engagement. The energy was refreshing, the brazen celebration of all things metal was endearing and the music was lively.



Rich Hopkins of Deepfall



Adam Woloszyn of Nonpoint



Chad Gray of Hellyeah

Concert photos by Matthew Rago

# Dirty Honey talks sweet chart-topping Billboard success

**Matthew Rago**

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Los Angeles rock quartet Dirty Honey is trailblazing an uncharted path to the top of the charts. Along the way, their uncompromising brand of rock has injected a much-needed shot of adrenaline into rock n' roll.

On Oct. 5, Dirty Honey became the first unsigned band to top Billboard's Mainstream Rock Songs Chart when their single "When I'm Gone" reached No. 1. Navigating a path organized by Mark DiDia of Red Light Management, the blues rockers rejected traditional wisdom, proving that talent, ambition and passion are enough to appeal to the masses.

Dirty Honey's success serves as a turning point for a genre that has suffered through a well-documented decline. Rock, once the preeminent music genre, devolved into a caricature of itself, segregated into a series of subgenres ranging from post-hardcore to nu metal. Sure, exceptional artists were categorized under each of those respective subgenres, but collectively, rock music as a whole began to labor.

Dirty Honey bassist Justin Smolian appreciates the magnitude of the band's accomplishments. He understands how their success has helped reshape the landscape of a genre that legends such as Gene Simmons of KISS and Scott Ian of Anthrax have declared dead.

"It's cool that a band like us went No. 1 because there are not a lot of bands playing the style of rock that we are playing," said Smolian.

"We're starting to feel a shift in rock n' roll. Maybe it's a little more fun, a little bit more blues based. It's solid rock n' roll, which I think everybody loves and is what I think a lot of people grew up listening to their parents' record collections. All my parents played in the car were Tom Petty, the Beatles and Led Zeppelin. I think a lot of people had the same experience."

Smolian states that while Dirty Honey always wants to reach a wider audience, they are satisfied with their current direction. While it would be nice for top 40 radio

stations to take notice of their music, it isn't their underlying goal to be featured on the same radio station as today's foremost pop, EDM and rap artists. "If you write good songs, people will listen to them," said Smolian, laughing. "We're pretty happy with the steps we're taking in the rock format. We always want to get bigger, but I don't think it's our immediate goal to be on the same radio station as, let's say, Katy Perry."

However, despite their rapid ascent up the rock charts, Dirty Honey began from humble beginnings, evolving from a cover band to a bonafide headlining act.

"To make money, we were doing a lot of cover gigs with different drummers with tons of drummers throughout L.A.," said Smolian. "[Dirty Honey lead guitarist] John Notto and I were both session musicians on the side playing with lots of artists."

According to Smolian, once DiDia got on board, the opportunity for the members of Dirty Honey to showcase their talent and establish a unique brand manifested itself. From there, the band started creating more original content, committing to the fulfillment of their artistic potential.

"Once he got wind of 'When I'm Gone,' he totally jumped in," said Smolian. "Once Mark DiDia got involved, it all just took off really fast. We were in Australia a couple months later recording our EP. Once that was done, we kind of just toured and haven't stopped since then."

Smolian also credits his chemistry with Notto and vocalist Marc LaBelle as the catalyst for their transformation from session guitarists to opening act for rock legends such as Guns N' Roses, Alter Bridge and The Who.

"The first time John and I met at a jam session, we kind of immediately locked in with each other and I was like, 'Okay, this is a person I can make music with.' The first time I sat down to make music with Marc, we wrote a great song and finished it in like an hour."

The chemistry is apparent in Dirty Honey's performances. Watching LaBelle's contorted expressions as he explores the full range of his vocal spectrum is energizing. Seeing Notto expertly navigate the fretboard to create a blues rock sounds reminiscent of

the great acts of yesteryear is invigorating. Witnessing Smolian and drummer Corey Coverstone dictate the tempo is a special experience. And Smolian, whose natural humbleness betrays his cool, charismatic onstage presence, knows it.

Where many contemporary rock artists have abandoned traditional rock principles in an effort to recruit fans of neighboring genres, Dirty Honey generates inspiration by exploring the past. Smolian cites Coverstone's appreciation of Van Halen, LaBelle and Notto's love for The Black Crowes and Led Zeppelin and his own fondness of Guns N' Roses and the Beatles for helping sculpt their vision and inventiveness. Smolian states it bluntly: "we all love rock n' roll."

Learning from established rock acts has not only helped Dirty Honey's creative process, but has also helped guide their maturation as a live act. Smolian credits their performances in support of The Who for teaching them how to navigate larger stages during arena tours. He also credits Slash for helping reinvigorate his love for performing.

"We all learned a lot from Slash," said Smolian. "Slash is a huge rock star. That guy has made a ton of money; he doesn't need to be doing this. But he's still backstage playing for three-and-a-half hours jamming on his guitar. They don't need to play for three-and-a-half hours, but that's their favorite part of the day. I want to have that when I get older; that's something I strive for. I want to still love playing music thirty years from now. I don't want to be jaded."

But despite the parallels in sound and creative drive, the trials and tribulations experienced by an embryonic Guns N' Roses differs from the obstacles facing modern rock acts like Dirty Honey. According to Smolian, modern artists benefit from the exposure offered by digital platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music. "Because of Spotify and Apple, we get messages from people from all over the world who love our music," said Smolian. "That's been really cool, to have people say 'come to Brazil' or 'come to Portugal' or 'come to Spain.'"

Untethered to a major label, Dirty Honey has been able to reach international fans without a concerted effort from a marketing team. Digital platforms have allowed good

music to stand out, says Smolian, somewhat undercutting the need that once existed for bands to sign on with major labels. Furthermore, Dirty Honey's adherence to their unique songwriting process has allowed them to organically develop their brand.

While Smolian appreciates the complexity of the extended guitar solo, he gravitates toward simplicity. Dirty Honey's songs aren't meant to be a blind exhibition of talent. Instead, their self-titled EP relies on a collaborative effort that underscores their common vision. Smolian says Dirty Honey avoids micromanaging their musical offerings, instead allowing their songs to flourish through a loose songwriting process.

"We all feel the same way," says Smolian. "The most important thing for the band as individuals is writing really good songs. It's fun playing a tough solo or playing a complicated song, but I'll tell you what, it's way more fun playing something that grooves really well and then the audience will sing along."

In an era where the nuances of rock have been replaced by conformity masquerading as an identity, Dirty Honey proudly flaunts their rock n' roll roots. In a generation that abandoned the guitar solo in favor of power chords, Dirty Honey explores the subtleties that propelled yesteryear's rock to the top of the charts. Dirty Honey offers refuge during an age where crescendoing vocals have been displaced by ear-splitting screams and stage presence has taken a backseat to props. And thanks to bands like Dirty Honey, rock n' roll is in a healthier place.

As the new year approaches, Dirty Honey looks to build on their momentum with the "Rolling 7s Tour," their first extended headlining tour. While Smolian balks at the idea of giving away too many secrets, he did share his expectations for crowd participation and a sense of community that stems from a common love of rock n' roll. "More solos, longer sets... it's going to be a blast," said Smolian.

The "Rolling 7s Tour" rolls through the Bottom Lounge in Chicago on Feb. 11, 2020. Dirty Honey will be supported by United Kingdom rockers, the Amazons. Tickets are available on TicketWeb or at the Bottom Lounge box office.

# Netflix and chill: Let It Snow

Ana Peres Bogo

Writer

Netflix released its holiday movie “Let It Snow” on Nov. 8. The movie, based on the 2008 book called “Let It Snow: Three Holiday Romances” by Maureen Johnson, John Green and Lauren Myracle, offers a refreshing take on the holiday genre, introducing multidimensional characters who go through a variety of funny and unpredictable scenarios.

Similar to the book, the movie follows three different storylines. Each plotline is set during Christmas Eve festivities, each spotlighting teenagers and the problems that may appear during this period of their life.

The first storyline that is presented to the audience is the story of Julie (Isabela Mercedes). She is looking for a specific miniature of a special holiday collection elf to make her mother’s Christmas perfect. Once she becomes frustrated from a fruitless search, she departs from the train station. However an out-of-service train allowed her to meet a famous singer named Stuart (Shameik Moore). Together, they both ditch the train and go to the Waffle Town nearby.

The audience then meets Angie “The Duke” (Kiernan Shipka) and her best friend Tobin (Mitchell Hope). The two have known

each other since they were little, but Angie does not know that Tobin is secretly in love with her. They go through some very funny situations, such as stealing a keg of beer from a party thrown by two teenage brothers who were in jail. It’s that cliché love story of best friends falling in love with just enough twists to make it feel free and interesting.

The final story follows the love life of two friends, Addie (Odeya Rush) and Dorrie (Liv Hewson), who have both been obsessed with pigs since they were little. Addie’s boyfriend is not answering her messages or calls, so she goes looking for him. Dorrie is falling in love with a girl named Kerry (Anna Akana), who she met only a couple days prior.

Kerry and Dorrie end up meeting again at Dorrie’s job, which is coincidentally at Waffle Town. However, Kerry is with her friends so she pretends not to know who Dorrie is. The queer storyline was not in the book, but the authors already expressed how much they loved this change. John Green, the author of this story, even said to Buzzfeed News that “I hope more young people feel supported coming out and being who they are.”

This movie has it all: friendship, self discovery and even a musical piece. The

soundtrack itself is also very diverse. While the film featured a few modern songs, the majority of the movie’s score were throwbacks such as “Rock the Casbah” from The Clash and “100 Years Ago” by The Rolling Stones. It was a very nice surprise and it made the movie feel more authentic than other holiday specials.

The humor was pointed and well-directed, particularly within Angie and Tobin’s storyline, the latter being the origin of most of the jokes. In one of their earlier scenes, Tobin is about to shave a hair on his nipple when Angie enters unannounced in his bedroom. He ends up cutting himself, a development which is addressed throughout the entire movie, for his nipple keeps bleeding and staining his shirt at the funniest, most inconvenient times.

The dialogue could have been a lot better. There were a couple of scenes, especially

in the beginning, that were a bit difficult to watch. One in particular came when Julie and Stuart shared their first ‘real’ conversation. It was very awkward and the dialogue was subpar. Perhaps the blame should be attributed to the actors; however, there is an abrupt change in the quality of the dialogue throughout the rest of the movie.

All the characters end up meeting at the end of the movie at Waffle Town. It’s a very wholesome scene where the viewer ends up seeing everyone together having fun during a last-minute party. It’s a very nice way to end and connect the storylines, affording the viewer the heartfelt feeling of Christmas.

“Let it Snow” is a good holiday movie if you want a bit of change. The reliability of characters is accompanied by great storylines and the discussion of important subject matters. A funny movie to watch with the whole family to get into the holiday mood.

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# 'How to Hero' immerses its audience

Ana Peres Bogo

Writer

"How to Hero, or the Subway Play" by Georgette Kelly just had its run of six days (Nov. 14-16, 21-23) at NEIU's Stage Centre Theatre. In a partnership with Filament Theatre, the play sold out almost every performance.

The play was a youth-oriented performance featuring exceptional dialogue that everyone could enjoy. "How to Hero, or the Subway Play" was also a great story that teaches its audience how to cope with loss and what constitutes a true friendship.

It was an immersive theatre experience, which is something that is becoming more popular in theaters throughout the U.S..

The audience walks with the characters

through different scenarios. The performance lasted 70 minutes with no intermission. The audience was standing up with the actors most of the time, only sitting down once.

"How to Hero, or the Subway Play" offered a very different experience that truly brought the storytellers and their audiences together. It highlighted the difference between sitting down to enjoy a play as a casual observer and actively participating in the performance.

The play tells the story of Webster (Leo Aranda) and his sister Rory (Abbey Kruse), two siblings who recently lost their father. With the help of their friend Madison (Susana Acevedo), they enter a quest to find their father's missing words, as well as the fond memories that they inspire. It is a rereading

of the classic Greek myth "Perseus."

The audience, in the immersive experience, walked the subway tunnels of New York City with the characters, which only enhanced the emotions the play was trying to evoke.

Webster wanted to be Perseus, the hero in one of the many stories of his father's book. His sister ended up occupying the role of Medusa and Madison was the princess that he needed to save.

Throughout the play, the characters routinely reference Greek mythology. They enter what they perceive as the underworld (the subway tunnels) after passing through three workers, which they see as a three-headed dog.

Overall, the play served as a fun way to learn a bit more about the classic tale of

Perseus, especially for the kids that attended the play. Spectators even received a small prop, a flashlight, to help while entering the dark 'underworld'.

"How to Hero, or the Subway Play" was definitely a sensorial experience. From the lights, the smell and the sounds--especially the whispers which was a big part of the narrative--each aspect helped create the atmosphere of the magical journey that both the character and the audience were experiencing.

This was the last Stage Center Theatre production of the 2019 fall semester and a fantastic way to finish the season, leaving everyone who attended eager to see what else they will produce during the upcoming semester.

# Coldplay's ordinary 'Everyday Life'

Matthew Rago

Managing Editor

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Coldplay's fall from grace has been cold and swift. Once celebrated for their bold exploration of progressive rock, Coldplay has been relegated to Nickelback status--ruthlessly ridiculed without any tangible reasoning behind it.

Coldplay's evolution from angelic melodies to stadium rock was welcomed with a reluctant enthusiasm. The Chris-Martin led quintet out of London deviated away from their comfort zone, embracing the natural progression that inevitably accompanies fame and popularity. And for a while, it worked.

But somewhere along the way, Coldplay fell out of public favor. Perhaps perception shifted after Coldplay was upstaged by both Beyoncé and Bruno Mars at the 2016 Super Bowl Halftime show. Perhaps Coldplay's audience became fatigued by experimentation, longing for a return to the formula that made Coldplay a fan favorite.

"Everyday Life," Coldplay's eighth studio album, isn't going to engage listeners disen-



Coldplay has been around since 1998.

chanted by Coldplay's new direction. The London-based prog rockers struggle to identify a happy medium between their desire to appeal to the masses and goal of promoting a politically conscious message.

Previously defined by vague expressions of emotions that invited listeners to inject their own personal experiences, Coldplay's clumsy attempt to touch on culturally relevant topics falls flat. In a political climate infected by pointed rhetoric, hateful slogans and general incompetence, lazy messages of camaraderie--"Arabesque" is simply Chris Martin repeating that we have the same

blood--are not enough to offset even lazier composition.

Coldplay's newfound passion for politics seems artificial. Stating that guns are bad is a political statement by default, but "Guns" failure to investigate any of the underlying causes or tragedies caused by gun violence renders the entire effort meaningless. Even those who appreciate the socially conscious identity of "Everyday Life" will have difficulty looking past the sheer lack of energy and enthusiasm.

This album is the equivalent of a midlife crisis. "Trouble in Town" and "Daddy" never progress beyond first-gear, operating as a tired, piano-driven ballad. "BrokEn" sounds like the result of a pop band attempting to penetrate the gospel market recently explored by Kanye West. "Orphans" possesses the elements to potentially serve as an anthem for the inebriated youth, but an uninspired chorus atop mundane instrumentals drags the entire song down.

The only redeeming factors aside from the Jonny Buckland's mildly catchy riff in "Arabesque" are "Champion Of The World" and "Everyday Life," the album's penultimate and closing tracks. "Champion Of The World" is a pointed narrative of the failures

and subsequent perseverance that precedes success. Martin expertly describes the leap of faith required to remain unencumbered by frustration and defeat.

"Everyday Life" depicts the shared-yet-unique pains that we all endure. Martin prompts his audience to abandon vendettas and embrace the commonalities of the human race, asking, "How in the world am I going to see you as my brother, not my enemy?"

Nevertheless, neither "Everyday Life" nor "Champions Of The World" are everyday listens. I wanted this album to make me feel. I wanted to rediscover the celestial sound that propelled Coldplay to the top of the charts. I sought the inspiration and pensiveness that I associate with Chris Martin and Co. But I never got it.

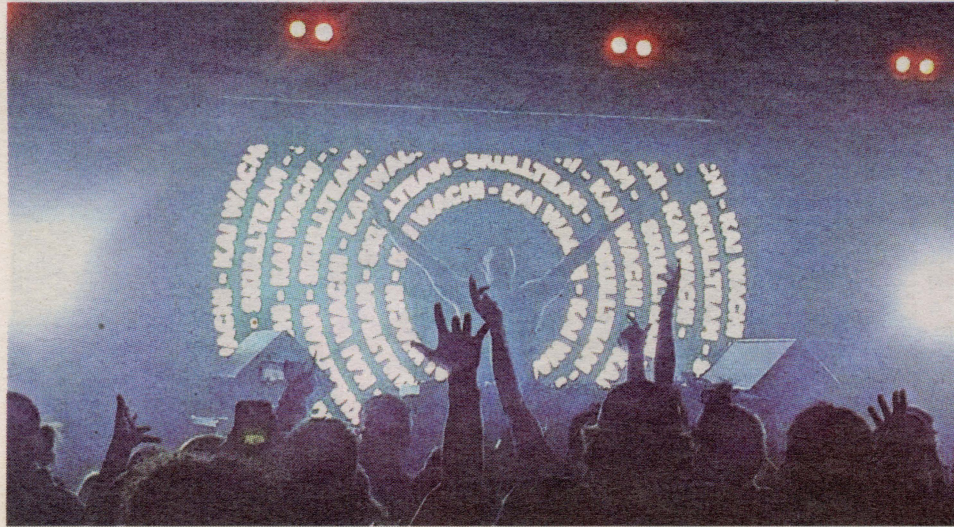
Instead, I heard a band fumbling for an identity, sterilizing their music in an effort to recruit fans who didn't appreciate their previous art.

This album isn't for fans of any one genre. It's inoffensive yet unremarkable, a forgetful experience for all rather than meaningful listening for a few. Give this album a shot, but temper your expectations.

# Demi-God Tour brings bass to Bottom Lounge

Rachel Willard

Writer



Concert photos by Rachel Willard

Boise, Idaho native DJ Kai Wachi obliterated Bottom Lounge in Chicago Friday, Nov. 22. With support from local artists Bass-iLL, Smokahauntas and Montreal native Sam Lamar, this show was destined to be filled with heavy, filthy bass and it did not disappoint.

Bass-iLL and Smokahauntas got the party going Friday night with a surplus of oscillating, wonky basslines to go around. Sam Lamar took the stage sporting a Kurt Cobain t-shirt before proceeding to blow the crowd's minds with earth-shattering bass. Afterward, Lamar crushed his set and really got Bottom Lounge rocking.

Lamar was casually spotted in the crowd

during Kai Wachi's set shooting videos on his cell phone. Some concertgoers, including myself, recognized Lamar and greeted him. Lamar seemed both friendly and down to earth, openly communicating with fans. He told me that this was his first time playing in Chicago and seemed to be thoroughly enjoying the Chicago crowd, vibe and atmosphere.

Kai Wachi came to Chicago ready to put on an epic show with "The Demi-God" tour, his first headlining tour. The energy in the room was invigorating. The crowd was buzzing with excitement and anticipation for his set. He incorporated songs into his set from his newest album, "Demi-God," as

well as other bass-heavy bangers that had the crowd going crazy.

A highlight from his set was when he dropped the dreamy tune "Photograph," then smoothly and effortlessly transitioned into his new monstrous title track "All My Demons" from his latest EP. He did a great job feeling out the energy of the crowd, slowing things down when concertgoers needed a moment to catch their breath before staggering everyone with nasty drops that shattered expectations. Chicago now patiently awaits the return of Kai Wachi.

You can check out Kai Wachi on all streaming platforms including Soundcloud:

- <http://soundcloud.com/kaiwachi>
- <https://www.facebook.com/KaiWachi.Official/>

Also check out:

Sam Lamar

- <http://hyperurl.co/SamLamarDarkPower>
- <https://www.facebook.com/SamxLamar/Bass-iLL>
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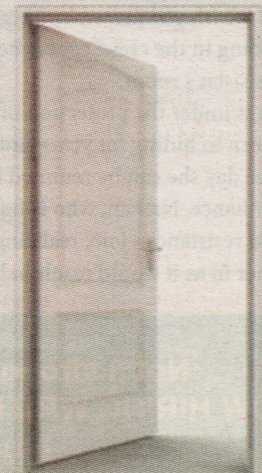


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# Jojo Rabbit starts to question his world

Montgomery Blair  
Writer

Jojo Rabbit is the comedic and dramatic story of a timid and lonely 10-year-old Aryan boy named Jojo, played by Roman Griffin Davis, whose only friends are that of Yorkki, played by Archie Yates, and Jojo's imaginary friend Adolf Hitler, played by the director Taika Waititi.

The movie takes place near the end of the war as the German army is getting increasingly more desperate for soldiers--to the point of recruiting children to fight--and paranoid of dissidents.

Jojo is a young and emphatic Nazi who starts his journey at a Hitler youth training camp run by the one-eyed Major K. played by Sam Rockwell where after an accident he is ineligible to serve in any form of combat, though he, being a die-hard Nazi, wishes to fight for what he sees as his country. This ineligibility for combat results in his usefulness of the war effort being reduced to that of propaganda dissemination and metal collection.

Jojo lives alone with his mother Rosie, played by Scarlett Johansson; his father fighting in Italy as he understands it and his sister died from an unmentioned cause prior to the beginning of the movie.

Upon return from a day out plastering propaganda on walls throughout the city, Jojo comes home to discover Elsa, a seventeen-year-old Jewish girl played by Thomasin McKenzie, hiding in the crawl spaces behind the wall of his sister's room.

Elsa, who is under the protection of Jojo's mother has been in hiding for years and is longing for the day she can be reunited in Paris with her fiance, Nathan, who is fighting in the partisan resistance. Jojo, realizing he cannot turn her in as it would result in his

mother's arrest, sets out to learn all he can from Elsa about the Jewish people, resulting in a budding friendship between the young Nazi and the Jewish girl hiding in his wall.

Jojo sets out to write a book about the Jewish people titled Yoo-hoo Jew, though it is obvious from the start of his interrogation of Elsa that he takes all the learned prejudices that were taught to him by the Hitler youth at school and is merely interested in confirming them.

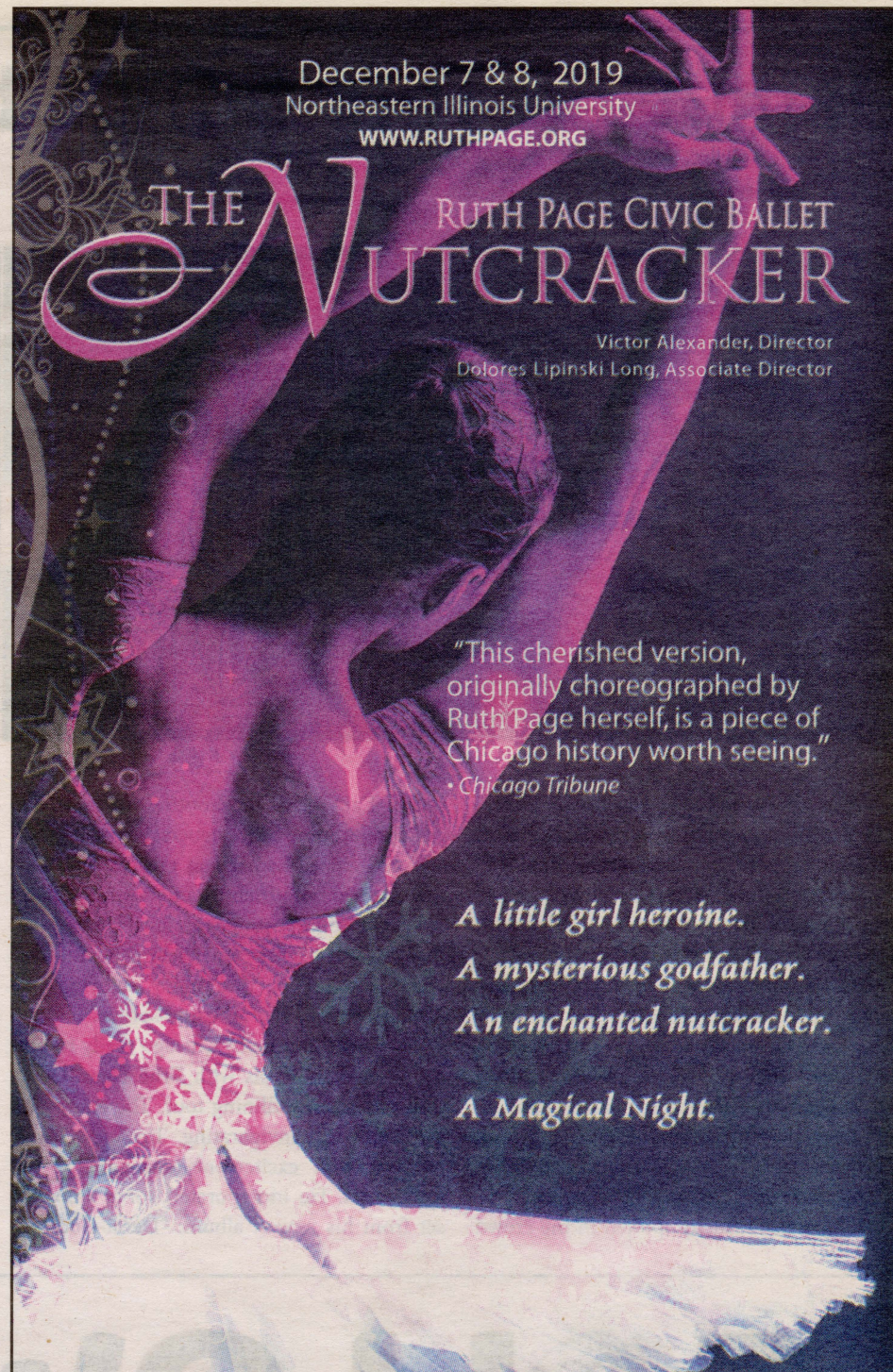
However, over the course of writing his book Jojo grows to like Elsa and begins questioning his preconceptions towards her and the Jewish people as a whole.

The film itself satirizes many aspects of the Nazi's from the assumed, or assigned, roles that men and women were given by the Nazi leadership for the success of the Third Reich, to the ridiculousness of having to "Heil Hitler" upon all greetings of ranking officials in the German leadership. Whilst this is of course a fitful comedy, it is a drama with the seriousness of the setting taken to heart.

Showcasing the horrors and paranoia present at the time in Germany may seem a tall task coming from a satire, but alas, I think Jojo Rabbit succeeds in bringing both tears of joy and tears of sorrow to those who see it.

In today's world where bad news is as frequent and fast paced as the crashing of rapids it is important we all take the time to laugh and to dance. This film is an excellent reminder of that. For those of you who have not seen the film yet, I hope this has persuaded you to see it, and as for those who have seen the film I will leave you with this:

Let everything happen to you  
Beauty and terror  
Just keep going  
No feeling is Final  
-Rainer Maria Rilke



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# WWE superstar Seth Rollins calls out Bears' Eddy Pineiro

**Matt Rago**  
Managing Editor  
NEIUManagingEditor@gmail.com

Appearing on Fox 32 Chicago's Bears Unleashed, former WWE Universal Champion Seth Rollins discussed the current state of the Bears and his frustrations as a fan. Rollins took issue with Bears' kicker Eddy Pineiro's missed field goal attempts.

Responding to Gabe Ramirez's question on who he'd like to face in a WWE ring, Rollins singled out Pineiro.

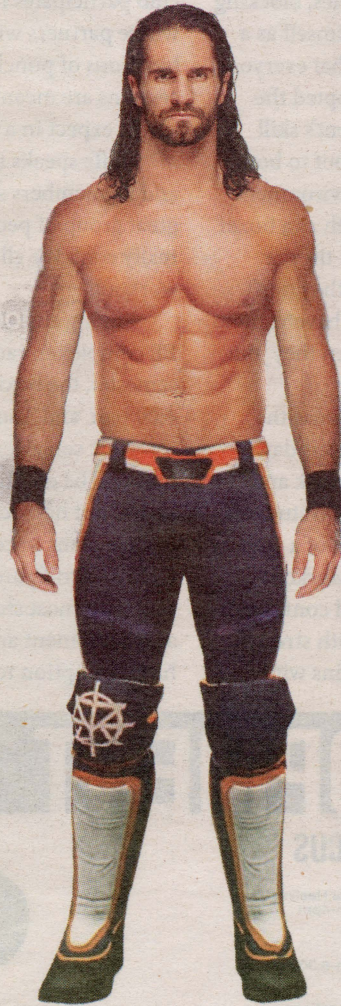
"This one's too easy," laughed Rollins, "but it's got to be Pineiro this week. I have a distinct size advantage over him, but you can't be missing two kicks like that...you get paid to come here and make kicks and you got to do it. If the hold is right, you got to put it down between the uprights. That's it, that's six points."

However, Rollins said he would want nothing to do with former Bears linebackers Dick Butkus, Mike Singletary or Brian Urlacher.

Taking a break from professional wrestling ahead of a commercially successful Survivor Series weekend in Chicago, Rollins described himself as a lifelong Bears fan.

However, despite his loyalties, Rollins communicated his dissatisfaction with the Bears roster as a whole.

"It's been rough," said Rollins with a wry smile. "If you follow my Twitter, you know I either love football or hate football and unfortunately this season has been a lot more



**Seth Rollins in his Bears themed attire on Royal Rumble.**

hate than love."

Rollins also criticized the offensive line, stating they "haven't been getting it done." He attributed the Bears lack of success in the run game to a lackluster effort from the Bears offensive linemen.

Rollins also opined that the Bears miss Jordan Howard, who was traded this past offseason to the Philadelphia Eagles for a conditional 2020 sixth-round pick.

"I love David Montgomery, but we miss Jordan Howard a little bit," stated Rollins. "He just falls forward. At the very least, he's going to get you two, three positive yardage and we miss that."

Rollins' comments conclude a difficult week for Pineiro. After missing two field goals in the Bears' Primetime loss to the Los Angeles Rams on Sunday, many fans began comparing Pineiro to the departed Cody Parkey.

Mayor Lori Lightfoot even quipped that Pineiro needs to "find his leg again," to which Pineiro responded, "Tell her I said, 'Thank you,'

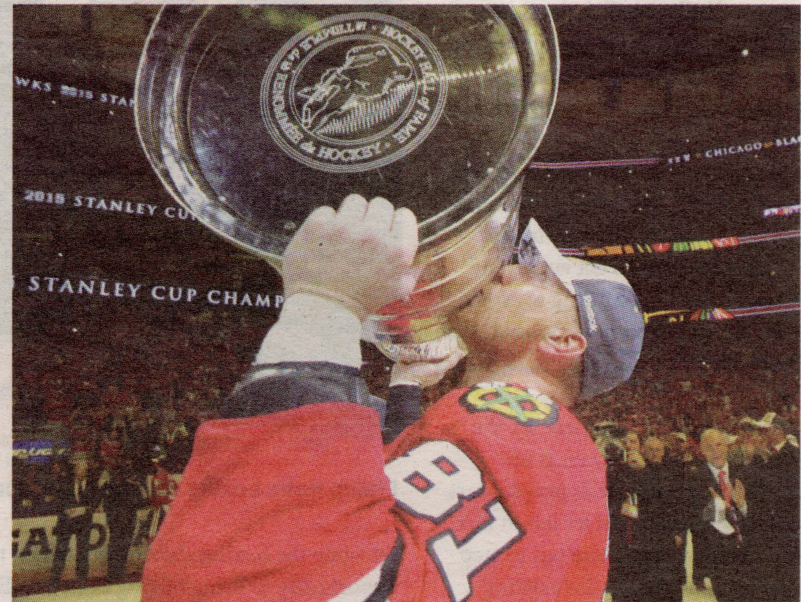
I'll try to find my foot."

As for Rollins, he will captain Team Raw in the traditional five-on-five men's Survivor Series match against contingents from both Smackdown and NXT. Chicago plays host to Survivor Series Weekend, which includes Friday Night Smackdown, NXT Takeover: WarGames, Survivor Series and Monday Night Raw.

Survivor Series begins at 6 p.m. Central Standard Time and airs exclusively on the WWE Network.

# Hossa to the Hall?

**Matt Rago**  
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Chicago Tribune

Former Blackhawks' winger Marian Hossa will be eligible for the Hall of Fame consideration beginning in 2020, according to Pierre LeBrun of The Sports Network.

Hossa, a three-time Stanley Cup Champion with the Chicago Blackhawks, was forced to unofficially retire from the NHL after missing the entire 2017-18 due to a degenerative skin disorder exacerbated by his hockey equipment. However, despite an unceremonious conclusion to a storied career, Hossa is still celebrated as a premier two-way talent.

When healthy, Hossa was a transcendent player. In his prime, he was an annual threat to score 40 goals and push the 90-point plateau. Hossa, who also spent time with Ottawa Senators, Atlanta Thrashers, Pittsburgh Penguins and Detroit Red Wings, was known for his incessant backchecking and ferocious snapshot.

Hossa's eligibility remains consistent with the guidelines put in place by the NHL to honor former St. Louis Blues and Philadelphia Flyers' defenseman Chris Pronger. Like Pronger at the time of his 2015 induction, Hossa is still technically under contract with the Arizona Coyotes. However, because Pronger was unable to compete for three years at the time of his induction, the

NHL overlooked his active status in favor of enshrining his contributions in Toronto.

Following two consecutive Stanley Cup losses, Hossa signed with Chicago as a free agent in 2009. Hossa would go on to play a crucial role during the Hawks' run of three Stanley Cups in six seasons, scoring 186 goals and 415 points over 534 games in Chicago. Over the course of 19 seasons, the right winger tallied 525 goals and 1,134 points. He added another 149 points (52 goals, 97 assists) over 205 postseason contests.

Hossa is also celebrated for helping elevate Slovakia's Men's National Hockey Team to international relevance following the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. Over 81 contests with the senior circuit, Hossa contributed 32 goals and 71 points. He played an instrumental role in Slovakia's fourth place finishes in the 2004 Hockey World Cup and the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver. He did not participate in Slovakia's gold medal effort in the International Ice Hockey Federation World Championships.

Should Hossa both earn induction to the Hockey Hall of Fame and opt to represent the Blackhawks, he will be the first Blackhawk to be inducted since Phil Housley in 2015.

# NEIU's boxing club packs a punch

Rachel Willard  
Writer

Sophomore Phillip Noffz helped rein-vigorate NEIU's previously dormant boxing club this past spring, offering students a safe outlet to release pent up aggression and stress.

Noffz, a physics major at NEIU, harbors a passion for athletics and boxing, inspiring him to start up a boxing club that invites students of all skill levels to get active and sample combat sports. According to Noffz, he was looking to join an on-campus athletic club and learned that NEIU previously had a boxing club.

"There was a boxing club here for the longest time but what usually ends up happening with boxing clubs is people start it up then they graduate, and it's left in flux," said Noffz. "Then someone else has to step up. I wanted to actually join the existing one. When I was on the NEIU website for intramural sports, it said there was a boxing club but when I checked it out there were no members. That's when I took the initiative to create one."

Once Noffz was given the green light to



Rachel Willard

Phillip Noffz boxing with Matthew Scanlan

reinstate the boxing club, he embraced the opportunity to bring boxing back to NEIU.

Noffz, who serves as president of the boxing club, has boxed at a variety of gyms, allowing him to learn different training styles. He takes the aspects of training that he believes to be the most effective and applies it to exercises at the club. Vice pres-

ident Michael Castellanos also brings years of boxing experience to the club, having previously taught park district boxing.

The boxing club welcomes students of all skill levels and invites students who are new to boxing to come and learn the fundamentals of throwing punches, blocking and footwork. Noffz describes himself as a patient teacher, understanding that everyone learns at a different pace. He adopted the approach of determining a student's skill set before modifying each workout to both create a comfortable learning environment and optimize the student's growth as a boxer.

"A lot of people come in and they're kind of hesitant to join because they don't know anything about boxing or haven't done boxing before," said Noffz. "When they join, almost everyone really likes it."

Boxing is a great outlet to release the stress that students incur from everyday responsibilities, including both work and school-induced stress. Not only do students receive an opportunity to be part of a club, they also get in an invigorating workout. Staying healthy and fit can instill confidence and help students better cope with stress. A typical boxing club meeting begins with

stretching warm-ups before transitioning by fundamentals training. The fundamentals include different types of punching styles, such as jabbing, hooks and uppercuts. Students participate in partnered drills using pads, punching mitts and gloves. Sometimes the club participates in mock sparring exercises where partners will throw half-speed combinations of punches at each other. Sparring sessions are meant to simulate what someone might expect in a boxing fight.

Noffz speaks highly of the boxing club and its members stating, "I think it's just a great group of people honestly. Everyone is really cool. We all get along and it's a great workout."

Boxing club meetings are held at the PE complex in racquetball court four. This semester, the boxing club meets Mondays at 4:00 p.m. and Thursdays at 2:00 p.m.

Next semester, Noffz anticipates meetings will be on Tuesday and Thursday, but he has not hashed out the exact time frames yet. He plans to collaborate with existing members to figure out time slots that work well with most students' schedules. Gloves and equipment are provided but students have the option to bring their own.

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### SLD

**Alternative Spring Break Info Sessions** (If you are interested in applying for an ASB trip, please attend one of the following 30 minute info sessions in the Pedrosa Center lounge)

Contact Rae Joyce at [r-baguiat@neiu.edu](mailto:r-baguiat@neiu.edu) for more information.

### December Graduates Celebration Week

- President's Salute to Graduates Tues Dec 3rd 5pm - 6pm Alumni Hall
- Cap Decorations Wed Dec 4th 11am - 4pm Pedrosa Center
- Senior Send off Gift Thurs Dec 5th 2pm-4pm Pedrosa Center
- December Graduates Send off Dec 12th 7pm - 10:30 Party Joy District. Graduates \$10 additional guest \$15. To purchase tickets visit <https://www.neiu.edu/alumni-and-giving/senior-send-party>

### MEDIA ORGS

#### SEEDS: ARS A Reading Series

There is one more opportunity to attend SEEDS: ARS A Reading Series. If you are interested in reading please reach out to Leana at [l-okeefe@neiu.edu](mailto:l-okeefe@neiu.edu) for more details and to reserve your spot. Tuesday, December 3rd @ 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM Location TBD.

WZRD, SEEDS and Que Ondee Sola (QOS) present Las Américas "Para La Cultura" Celebración!

This event will celebrate cultural wealth and resilience of las Americas y el caribe by bringing together artists, musicians, poets, entrepreneurs and activists from Chicago communities. All proceeds will benefit The Alliance 98.

Event takes place at the Hairpin Arts Center, located on the 2nd Floor of 2810 North Milwaukee Ave., Chicago. For more information contact [Programdirector@wzrdchicago.org](mailto:Programdirector@wzrdchicago.org). General Admission \$5, NEIU students \$3. Thursday, December 5th Doors open at 6:30 PM, Art Reception from 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM, Celebración 8:00 PM - 11:00 PM.

#### SEEDS Accepting Submissions: Deadline Posted

Submissions are now open for our Seeds Spring Journal! This is not a themed publication, send us your best poems, prose, and visual art. Visit [neiu.edu/seeds](http://neiu.edu/seeds) for more details and submission guidelines. Deadline is January 6, 2020. We cannot wait to see your work!

#### Que Ondee Sola (QOS) Accepting Submissions

Que Ondee Sola magazine is consistently accepting submissions! Please email [queondeesolamag@gmail.com](mailto:queondeesolamag@gmail.com) for more information, or visit their office, E 041 (under the bookstore and across from the student lounge) to say hello and pick up the most recent copy.

#### The INDEPENDENT Newspaper is Hiring

We're hiring! Do you have a passion for editing, journalism, photography, business or graphic design? If you're interested and a student @ NEIU then we want you to join! No experience necessary, we will train. Please email [theneiuindependent@gmail.com](mailto:theneiuindependent@gmail.com) today!

### BLACK CAUCUS

FRIDAY, DEC 6TH  
Meditation for Spiritual Healing  
Pedrosa Center • 3pm-4pm

FRIDAY, DEC 6TH  
Kwanzaa Celebration  
Pedrosa Center • 5pm-8:30pm

FRIDAY, DEC 13TH  
Black Graduation Reception  
Alumni Hall • 6:30pm-9:30pm

### SGA/SENATE UPDATES

THURSDAY, DEC 5TH  
Giftcard Giveaway  
Village Square • 3pm-4pm

There are still open seats for SGA Senator and SGA Council of Clubs Representatives. If you are interested in being part of SGA, please go to: <https://tinyurl.com/NEIU-SGA-InterestForm>

Student Government Association members are part of various committees aimed to better NEIU. If you have any concerns or issues please visit the SGA offices located in the lower level of the E building near Health Services.

