

# THE **U** N I T E R

RWB DANCES AT A DISTANCE—P3

LIBRARY SECURITY COMES DOWN—P11

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF DIAGNOSES—P15

## When pandemics collide



### HARM REDUCTION IN THE TIME OF COVID

# STRIFE OF BRIAN

THOMAS PASHKO  
MANAGING EDITOR

@THOMASPASHKO

This week's cover feature, by arts and culture editor Beth Schellenberg, examines how the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated Manitoba's overdose crisis. But longtime readers of *The Uniter* will recognize that this crisis didn't start with COVID.

Since Brian Pallister's election in 2016, *The Uniter* has been examining how the premier's approach to health-care and drug policy has wreaked havoc on all Manitobans, especially those who use drugs.

Whether it's his opposition to safe-injection sites, his moralizing tone or his emphasis on policing over access to care, Pallister has taken every possible opportunity to further criminalize some of the most vulnerable Manitobans. It's upsetting, but not surprising. It's entirely in line with his overarching approach to governance, which almost always substitutes compassion with cruelty.

His and his government's callous positions on COVID aid have severely affected Manitobans at risk of overdosing, leaving community organizations to pick up the slack. But his disastrous handling of the pandemic has only worsened the deep and long-running problems he's created.

It was in November 2019, months before the pandemic started, that *Uniter* comments editor Haley Pauls examined the difficulty in accessing local detox care. In April 2019, I penned an op-ed about how Pallister's closures of clinics and emergency rooms coincided with not just an increase in overdoses, but also an outbreak of syphilis and a drastic decrease in the quality of prenatal and neonatal care.

Has Pallister's government been collecting data on which communities, demographics or neighbourhoods are impacted by cuts? In April 2019, the answer to that question was "no."

Eighteen months later, things have only gotten worse.

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



@TheUniter



@TheUniter



facebook.com/theuniter

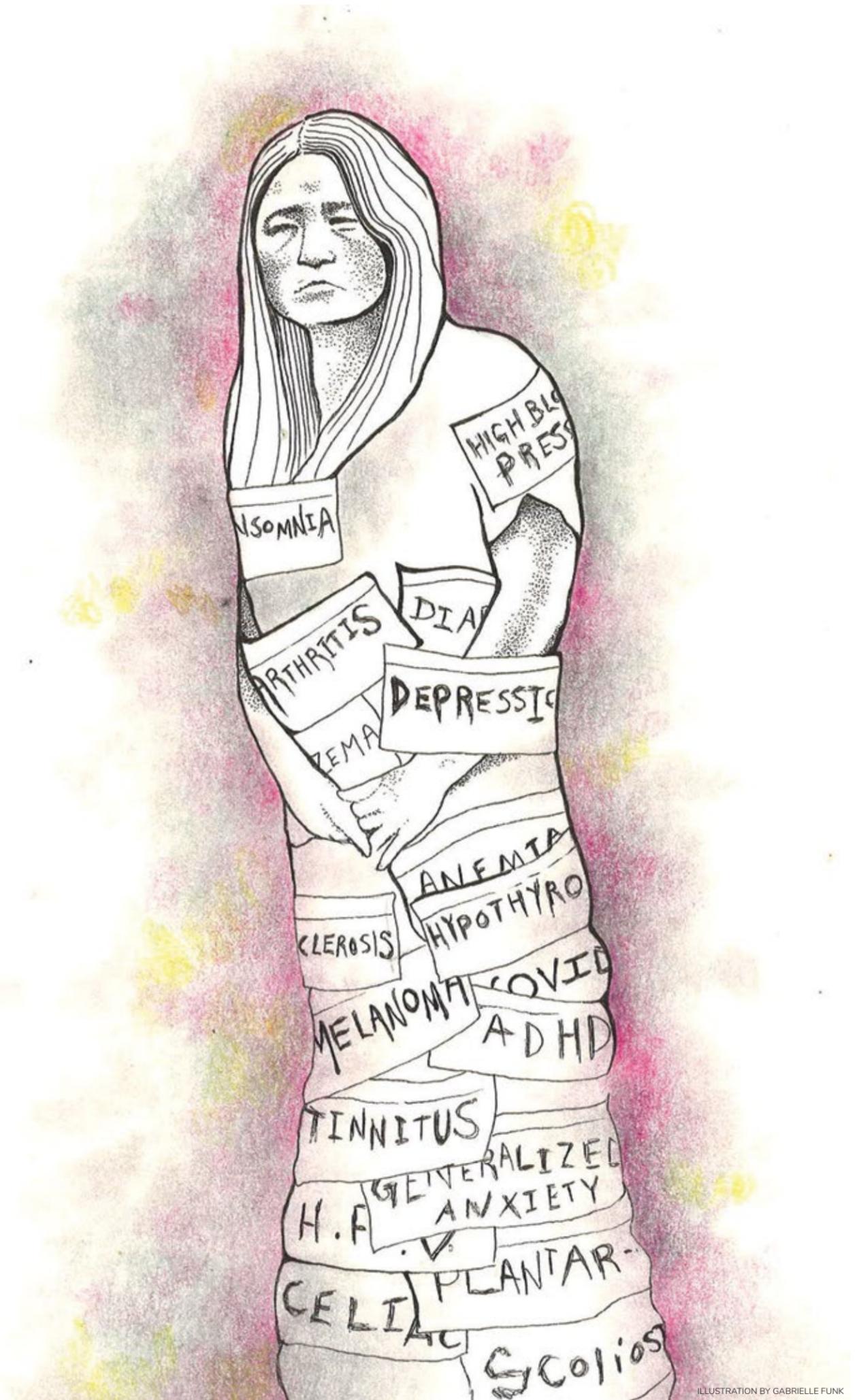


ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

Columnist Hannah Magnusson writes about the benefits and pitfalls of mental illness diagnoses in this week's *Life on the Borderline*. Read more on page 15.

### UNITER STAFF

MANAGING EDITOR  
Thomas Pashko — [editor@uniter.ca](mailto:editor@uniter.ca)

BUSINESS MANAGER  
Olivia Norquay — [businessmgr@uniter.ca](mailto:businessmgr@uniter.ca)

CREATIVE DIRECTOR  
Talia Steele — [creative@uniter.ca](mailto:creative@uniter.ca)

ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR  
Beth Schellenberg — [culture@uniter.ca](mailto:culture@uniter.ca)

FEATURES EDITOR  
Charlie Morin — [featureseditor@uniter.ca](mailto:featureseditor@uniter.ca)

CITY EDITOR  
Alex Neufeldt — [city@uniter.ca](mailto:city@uniter.ca)

COMMENTS EDITOR  
Haley Pauls — [comments@uniter.ca](mailto:comments@uniter.ca)

COPY & STYLE EDITOR  
Danielle Doiron — [style@uniter.ca](mailto:style@uniter.ca)

PHOTO EDITOR  
Daniel Crump — [photoeditor@uniter.ca](mailto:photoeditor@uniter.ca)

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
Callie Lugosi — [callie@uniter.ca](mailto:callie@uniter.ca)

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
Keeley Braunstein-Black — [keeley@uniter.ca](mailto:keeley@uniter.ca)

STAFF ILLUSTRATOR  
Gabrielle Funk — [gabrielle@uniter.ca](mailto:gabrielle@uniter.ca)

FEATURES REPORTER  
Keesha Harewood — [features@uniter.ca](mailto:features@uniter.ca)

ARTS & CULTURE REPORTER  
Naaman Sturup — [naaman@uniter.ca](mailto:naaman@uniter.ca)

ARTS & CULTURE REPORTER  
Hannah Foulger — [hannah@uniter.ca](mailto:hannah@uniter.ca)

CITY REPORTER  
Cierra Bettens — [cityreporter@uniter.ca](mailto:cityreporter@uniter.ca)

CAMPUS REPORTER  
Callum Goulet-Kilgour — [campus@uniter.ca](mailto:campus@uniter.ca)

VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR  
Vacant

### CONTRIBUTORS

WRITERS  
Abigail Byle  
Matthew Flisfeder  
Hannah Magnusson  
Jerrad Peters

### MOUSELAND PRESS

MOUSELAND PRESS BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Kristin Annable (chair), Anifat Olawoyin, Larissa Peck, Andrew Tod, and Jack Walker — For inquiries email: [board@uniter.ca](mailto:board@uniter.ca)

### CONTACT US

GENERAL INQUIRIES  
[editor@uniter.ca](mailto:editor@uniter.ca)

ADVERTISING  
[businessmgr@uniter.ca](mailto:businessmgr@uniter.ca)

ROOM 0RM14  
UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG  
515 PORTAGE AVENUE  
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA  
R3B 2E9  
TREATY ONE TERRITORY  
HOMELAND OF THE MÉTIS NATION

### SUBMISSIONS

Submissions of articles, letters, graphics and photos are encouraged, however, all new contributors (with the exception of letters to the editor) must attend a 45-minute volunteer orientation workshop to ensure that the volunteer understands all of the publication's basic guidelines.

In-person volunteer orientations are currently suspended due to COVID-19, but over-the-phone and remote orientations can be arranged. Please email [volunteer@uniter.ca](mailto:volunteer@uniter.ca) for more details.

Deadline for advertisements is noon Friday, six days prior to publication. The Uniter reserves the right to refuse to print material submitted by volunteers. The Uniter will not print submissions that are homophobic, misogynistic, transphobic, ableist, racist or libellous. We also reserve the right to edit for length/style.

# BACK TO STUDIO

## Royal Winnipeg Ballet returns with smaller performance series

HANNAH FOULGER | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | [@FOULGERSCOVFEFE](#) [@SPEAKSTORY](#)

The annual Royal Winnipeg Ballet (RWB) production of *The Nutcracker* has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

*The Nutcracker* has been part of the RWB season since 1999. In lieu of the beloved classic, the RWB will present stripped-down performance pieces in their Founder's Studio.

RWB was forced to cancel several shows this year, including their spring and fall line-up, which would have been at the Centennial Concert Hall with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, and a full production with the spectacle of set, props and lighting design.

"We took an incremental approach," RWB artistic director and CEO André Lewis says. "We decided to watch what was happening." Under normal circumstances, they would have started their season in July with Ballet in the Park.

Associate artistic director Tara Birtwhistle says, "Although our production of *The Nutcracker* has been cancelled, we're happy to have dancers back in the studio, separated in smaller groups, social distancing with masks, but they are still together doing what they love to do."

The dancers will be back in the studio the second week of October, preparing for the first performance in late November. These performances will be around 90 minutes long, with no intermission.

"November will be focused more on

creation but with some revivals of more neo-classical genres," Lewis says. "We will present smaller works where we respect whatever the (public health) guidelines are in place at the time. In November, it will be movement-driven. It is not going to be about costumes, props. It is essentially a black-box performance."

The benefit of a black-box studio, as opposed to the proscenium stage at their regular venue, the Centennial Concert Hall, is that the seating can be arranged to allow for different audience configurations. Due to social distancing guidelines, the venue will only allow for 40 to 50 people for the performances, depending on the composition of bubbles, and the guidelines set forth by the government at that time.

The December performance will feature suites with a holiday theme, including from *The Nutcracker*. Lewis says "*The Nutcracker* will have a more classical base (than the November performance). The suites will respect the tradition of *The Nutcracker*."

RWB, along with Shakespeare in the Ruins, Martha Street Studio and other arts organizations, received stimulus funding from the Canada Council for the Arts. RWB also benefited from the federal government's wage subsidy, but they still had to lay off some of their staff.

Many different arts organizations are



PHOTO BY CALLIE LUGOSI

Royal Winnipeg Ballet's artistic director and CEO André Lewis

finding ways to safely present their work to the public during the pandemic, as their budgets have tightened.

"We can't offer the production, but we can still offer dance," Birtwhistle says. "The arts have always brought everybody together. If it is going to be in smaller places, if it's going to be with smaller audiences, then we'll still do that. We'll still bring dance, but it will be in a different space."

The budgets may be smaller, performances may look different, but the dancers are still dancing.

"Creativity continues. The human spirit will continue no matter what," Lewis says. "We have to find new, creative ways of doing this. That is what makes the art form exciting. We can do this. We have to do this."

**The studio series performances will be in the third week of November and the third week of December in the RWB Founder's Studio at 380 Graham Ave. The venue is wheelchair accessible. More information on how to buy tickets and live stream the studio series is on the RWB website.**

# YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW

## Percy gives insight into complexities of farming and patent rights

NAAMAN STURRUP | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | [@NAAMANSTURRUP](#)

Manitoba farms account for 12.3 per cent of Canada's agricultural area. Canola is the main field crop in the province, making *Percy* arguably one of the most fitting movies for Manitoba's agricultural community.

*Percy*, filmed in Canada, the United States and India, is set to be released in theatres on Oct. 9. Directed by Clark Johnson, the film is set in Bruno, Sask. in 1997.

Based on a true story, it stars Christopher Walken as Percy Schmeiser, a small-town Saskatchewan farmer who becomes embroiled in a legal battle with the agricultural corporation Monsanto over the use of their genetically modified canola. Their legal battle eventually makes its way to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Unbeknownst to Schmeiser, the genetically modified crops have done well and integrated with his own crops. However, after reaping the harvest that year, Schmeiser receives an unexpected seed in the mail: a request from Monsanto to pay a technology fee for using their crops without a license.

As the story unfolds, Schmeiser risks his fortune and reputation to fight against Monsanto. One of the most seemingly innocent characters in the film is Rebecca Salcau (Christina Ricci). Salcau is introduced as a loving environmentalist who

seems genuinely invested in helping the Schmeisers, but over time, hidden motives surface, and her integrity is questioned as she begins to put publicity and fundraising before the well-being of the Schmeisers.

Johnson gives some insight into some of the main characters' developments in the film.

In situations like Salcau's, "the question always comes up, 'does the end justify the means?'" he says.

"Whatever the cause and the (supporting) non-profit organization are, you have to gather the money to be effective. Her main challenge was that she ended up connecting personally with the family, which was a struggle. The big picture was that they had to stop Monsanto and their hoard of lawyers, and that was the task, and sometimes there is collateral damage. She says it in the film that even if Percy does not win, he is going to champion their cause and help them move forward with our endeavours."

As the film progresses, Percy gained attention while fundraising for his cause, which ultimately leads to him travelling and speaking at an agricultural convention in India. During his speech, one of the film's most powerful moments happens: Percy, who is normally independent and strong-willed, is brought to a moment



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Christopher Walken in a scene from *Percy*

of anxiety and worry as he faces some of the world's leading agricultural spokespeople. Facing the different emotions of the crowd, he takes a step back, gathers his thoughts and approaches the mic to deliver a message to reaffirm the audience to band together to fight against Monsanto.

"In that moment, we wanted to remind the audience that this guy had never set out to come to India to speak to this huge group filled with energy and opinions, and

some of the world's leading scholars on agriculture," Johnson says.

"It was a little overwhelming, but that was that moment for him to rise to the occasion and to become the Percy Schmeiser that took it to the Supreme Court of Canada."

***Percy* opens Oct. 9 at Landmark Cinemas 8 Grant Park and Cineplex Odeon McGillivray Cinemas and VIP.**

# DIAPHANIE FINDS SOMETHING BETTER

**ATLAAS lead singer undergoes transformational rebranding**

HANNAH FOULGER | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | [@FOULGERSCOVFEFE](#) [@SPEAKSTORY](#)

Heather Thomas, former lead singer of ATLAAS, has entered a new stage of her music career. Thomas, who was also a member of ukulele '90s R&B covers duo Bunny, has re-emerged under the name Diaphanie with her new single and music video "Something Better."

Diaphanie is a project two years in the making. Her original plan was to release music in the spring and tour in the summer and fall for the first time as Diaphanie. Then COVID-19 hit and, like many artists, her plans changed.

"I got really depressed and uninterested in making music or being creative. I felt lonely, (like) a lot of people did, so I ended up reaching out to a couple of close friends who are also artists and were also feeling unfulfilled creatively and reevaluating art as a career," Diaphanie says. "So I said 'let's play a game. Let's make collaboration from afar.'"

Guitarist Matt Dirks sent her a guitar track, and she wrote a complete set of lyrics before she tossed them out, to write, as Diaphanie says, laughing, "something better" for Dirks' track. In August, they dropped the single and released the music video.

Directed by Samanta Katz, the whimsical video features Diaphanie collaborators Matt Dirks and Elessar Thiessen and their playful folk song. They shot the film guerilla-style in three hours, in a field of warming huts.

"It is not the new sound, but it is part of it," Diaphanie says. She is inspired by Caroline Polachek and Rina Sawayama, two musicians who demonstrate a broad appreciation of genres in single albums.

"I don't have to have a specific sound that I need to stick to. That was part of what made ATLAAS stifling. I wanted to explore different things, and I didn't feel it was the place to do that," she says.

With Diaphanie, she wanted to embrace her feminine side, saying, "I chose (ATLAAS) because it's gender-neutral and doesn't necessarily bring forth the feminine or the masculine. I did that as a way of hiding myself. I've started this new project. I wanted it to be 100 per cent me. I wanted it to be focused on me as a person and less on an idea," Diaphanie says.

The word she chose to describe her new vibe was diaphanous, to which she added an "ie" to make it sound more feminine. She then found out that diaphanie is the art of recreating stained glass on translucent paper. "It was perfect," Diaphanie says.

The shift in musical direction also comes with a shift in management. ATLAAS was a self-managed project, but Diaphanie is managed by Winnipeg actor Jessina Cheffins. Giving away some of that responsibility has eased the stress of having a career in the arts off Diaphanie's shoulders.



Heather Thomas, former lead singer of ATLAAS, is starting a new music project under the moniker Diaphanie.

"At a certain point, I was considering quitting music, because I was so exhausted, depleted and overwhelmed. I realized that I just couldn't keep doing it alone," she says.

In the months ahead, Diaphanie intends to release more new singles.

"I've let go of the fear that if I make something different than what I made before, that people won't like it," she says. "I've really loved people's response to 'Something Better,' but

the baseline for me is making music that I'm really proud of and not worrying about what is going to happen after that."

**Diaphanie's single "Something Better" is streaming on Spotify and Apple Music and available for purchase on Bandcamp. Her next single, "Crossfaded," will be available on Oct. 23.**

# THE SPOOKIEST HALLOWEEN YET

**Winnipeg tries to keep celebrations going**

NAAMAN STURRUP | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER | [@NAAMANSTURRUP](#)

Although Halloween may look and be experienced differently this year, there are still indoor and outdoor activities planned around Winnipeg to keep the holiday spirit alive.

## Knock-knocks turn to beep-beeps

For trick-or-treating, one of the most communal aspects of Halloween, to continue this year, there must be significant protocols in place to ensure safety. Friends of Dyslexia (FOD) aims to make use of social distancing with their Cruisin' the City Halloween Hunt by car on Oct. 17.

FOD vice-president Amber Bollenbach-Hernando says that after the success of last year's hunt at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, it was a no-brainer to have this event again, with some adjustments.

"Last year, we decided that we were going to do this again. Unfortunately, the pandemic has created a little difficulty," she says.

"To make this safe and fun for everybody and an event that everyone can participate in, we thought, 'why not in our cars, looking around Winnipeg and seeing what the city has to offer?'"

FOD has created several clues around Winnipeg, which will be outlined in a map distributed on the night of the hunt. When a team finds a checkpoint, there will be volunteers, mostly from the KC Dyslexic Learning Centre, in their cars with bags of candy as rewards.

Though the object of the hunt is simple, the outcome is far more rewarding, as it raises awareness for dyslexia, a learning disability that is estimated to affect one out of five Canadians.

Hernando says although dyslexia has not garnered much attention in Manitoba in the past, there are now significant strides to help publicize it.

"Last year, we got the Minister of Education, Kelvin Goertzen, to proclaim October as Dyslexia Awareness Month, which is huge for the dyslexia community," she says.

"It is really good that we are having this event in October, because we can really promote awareness as much as we can."

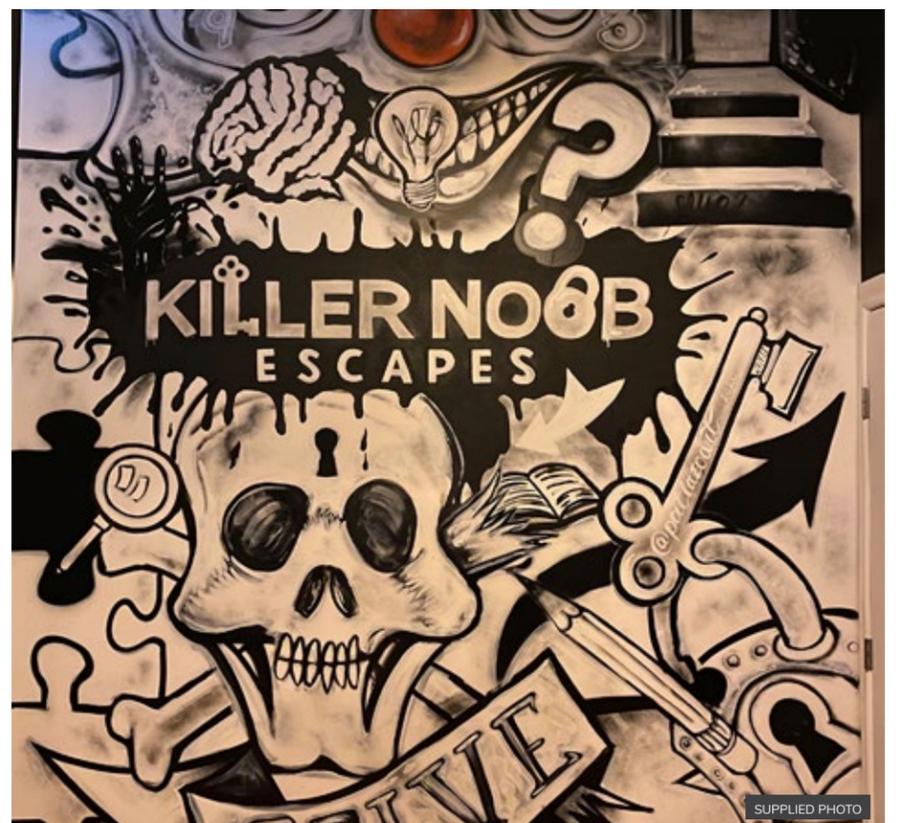
## It's even smaller?

Creepy clowns and being buried alive may not be for the faint of heart, but these aesthetics are what makes Winnipeg's newest escape room, Killer Noob Escapes (KNE), special. Founder Lisa Bernstein says they are integral to Winnipeg's Halloween experience.

"This is a perfect fit for us, where we try to capture the spirit of Halloween and give Winnipeg something fun they can do with their groups in their bubbles," she says.

As KNE recently opened on Oct. 3, Bernstein reflects on the business' creation with her partner Chris McMillan and what they are doing to adjust to new health guidelines.

"(Chris and I) have always been es-



Killer Noob Escapes is one of many local businesses and organizations trying to provide options to celebrate Halloween safely.

cape-room fanatics, and every time we travel, we go out to do escape rooms in other cities," she says.

"We visited one in Las Vegas, and the aesthetics were super cool, almost like walking into a movie set. So after that, we began talking about what we would do differently (and) what it would be like if we can bring something like that to Winnipeg. So we decided, 'why don't we?'"

Mandatory masks, cleaning all highly touched surfaces and props between bookings, using UV germicidal lamps and reducing group sizes are measures now in place at KNE.

Though this possibly makes KNE the cleanest escape room in Winnipeg, it is still a difficult time for businesses. However, Bernstein remains adamant that this is necessary to help preserve a sense of celebratory normalcy in Winnipeg.

"That is why we wanted to have our grand opening in October, because (we wanted to create a) safe way to celebrate Halloween," she says.

**Tickets for Cruisin' the City can be purchased on Eventbrite, and rooms at Killer Noob Escapes can be reserved at [killernoobescapes.com](http://killernoobescapes.com).**



# HEROES RISE: THE PRODIGY

Available on Steam and [choiceofgames.com](http://choiceofgames.com)



KEESHA HAREWOOD | FEATURES REPORTER | [@KEESHAHAREWOOD](https://www.instagram.com/keeshaharewood)

In the vast collection of Zachary Sergi's interactive novels/text-based games, *Heroes Rise: The Prodigy* is a badass, campy, quirky, queer, drama-filled romp where the player is an up-and-coming superhero who tries to save their city and cultivate their fame.

Released in 2012, this game is the first installment of the *Heroes Rise* trilogy and plays a significant role in the ever-growing world of the Sergiverse.

The most notable aspect of this game are the abundant queer characters. While a player can customize their character to be queer and have that be reflected in the world of the story (for instance, in the way their friends and family talk to them about their personal life and the romanceable characters that the player has the option to court during the game), there are many side characters who adopt labels on the LGBTQIA+ spectrum in a multitude of ways.

And the best part? They're the heroes! That said, depending on one's choices throughout the story, some of those characters might turn on the player. Others might be their allies. However, the versatility in their behaviour is the direct result of the player's choices.

In this game, the player's choices not only impact the outcome of the story, but they shape the kind of hero they are to the world. The player builds their persona for the world to scrutinize, and the payoff for their choices can, at times, be punishing or exhilarating. Either way, the outcome is meaningful and earned.

This is due to Sergi's skill and writing ability. He's able to balance action-packed drama with hilarity and silliness, while also ensuring the outcomes are appropriate for the decisions made.

Sergi's characters have depth, are cleverly written and have a knack for challenging the player. At times, the player is forced to reconsider their preconceived notions or opinions regarding difficult (at times, polarizing) topics. No stance is framed as right or wrong, but they always garner a response from the people of the world.

Between fighting evil forces and helping civilians, Sergi guides the player through emotional moments with the side characters. Depending on what the player decides, these moments could be heated or heartfelt. Antagonistic or endearing. Sometimes, they can be everything all at once.

This makes the replay value of the game especially high. While the characters are



fascinating the first time around, during the second playthrough (provided if different choices are made), they reveal different aspects of themselves that make them even more well-rounded.

Ultimately, *Heroes Rise: The Prodigy* is a great beginning to a three-part super

adventure. Most importantly, it's a fun time! And with the game being free to play (with two-hour breaks between chapters), there's opportunity to at least try it out and see if it's worth it to play 'til the end and beyond.

## CKUW TOP 30

September 8, 2020



TW = This Week // LW = Last Week // ! = Local content // \* = Canadian Content

TW	LW	C	Artist	Album	Label
1	!		Silver Clouds	Silver Clouds	Disintegration
2	!		Slow Leaves	Shelf Life	Birthday Cake
3			Matmos	The Consuming Flame: Open Exercises In Group Form	Thrill Jockey
4	*		Tough Age	Which Way Am I?	Mint
5	!		Sean Burns	It Takes Luck To Get The Best Of Me	Self-Released
6			Built To Spill	Plays The Songs Of Daniel Johnston	Ernest Jenning
7	*		Zoon Bleached Wavves	Paper Bag	
8			Various Artists	Metal Postcard 2020 Lockdown Samples	Metal Postcard
9			Black Marble	I Must Be Living Twice	Sacred Bones
10	*		Laurence-Anne	Accident	Bonsound
11			Godcaster	Long Haired Locusts	Ramp Local
12			Trevor Powers	Capricorn	Fat Possum
13			Jobs	Endless Birthdays	Ramp Local
14	*		Pharis And Jason Romero	Bet On Love	Lula
15	*		Freak Heat Waves	Zap The Planet	Telephone Explosion
16	*		Braids	Shadow Offering	Secret City
17			Narrow Head	12th House Rock	Run For Cover
18	*		Tommy And The Commies	Hurtin' 4 Certain Ep	Slovenly
19			Protomartyr	Ultimate Success Today	Domino
20			Wicca Phase Springs Eternal	This Moment I Miss	Run For Cover
21	*		New Fries	The Idea Of Us	Telephone Explosion
22	*		Wares	Survival	Miint
23			Woods	Strange To Explain	Woodsist
24	!		Billy Simard	Secret	Ki-Keek
25	!		Pip Skid & Rob Crooks	It's Ok	Marathon Of Dope
26			Washed Out	Purple Noon	Partisan
27			Video Age	Pleasure Line	Winspear
28	!		Mouthfeel	Mouthfeel	Self-Released
29			Vinyl Williams	Azure	Requiem Pour Un Twister
30			Baseball Game	Baseball Game	House Arrest

## ARTS BRIEFS

BETH SCHELLENBERG | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | [@BETHGAZELLENBERG](https://www.instagram.com/bethgazellenberg)

### Theory at home

MAWA's monthly Theory and Beer event will be held online this month at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct 8. Guided by Allison Stevens, an experimental film maker and mixed-media artist from Winnipeg, this session will explore the idea of art for art's sake. Email Adriana at [programs@mawa.ca](mailto:programs@mawa.ca) to gain access to the Zoom link and the reading that will be discussed.

### Free Sunday at the WAG

Free Sunday is back at the Winnipeg Art Gallery (300 Memorial Blvd.) from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Oct. 11. Masks are mandatory, and there is plenty of space to socially distance. There are some family friendly activities between 2 and 4 p.m., and the theme is "Celebrate the International Year of Indigenous languages."

### Reel Pride

This year, Reel Pride Festival is, like so many other events, going online. Programming runs from Oct. 13 to 18 and features 24 different films, the Canadian Short Film Competition and Festival Art Show. Passes and screening schedules can be found at [reelpride.tixit.ca/online/default.asp](http://reelpride.tixit.ca/online/default.asp).

### Storying Violence

A panel discussion with authors Gina Starblanket (University of Calgary) and Dallas Hunt (University of British Columbia) called "Storying Violence During the Stanley Trial" is being re-broadcast by the 2020 Thin Air Winnipeg International Writers Festival. The discussion will be broadcast on Zoom on Wednesday, Oct. 14 at 11:30 a.m. The Zoom link can be found at [facebook.com/events/807251376717189/](https://facebook.com/events/807251376717189/).

### Winnipeg Film Group Workshop

Quan Luong is hosting a camera and lighting workshop at the Black Lodge (304-100 Arthur St.) on Saturday, Oct. 10 and Sunday, Oct. 11. The workshop is designed for beginners and intermediate filmmakers and will teach basic camera knowledge, low-budget lighting options and how to film with natural light. To register, go to [winnipegfilmgroup.com](http://winnipegfilmgroup.com).



# THE UNITER IS SEEKING WRITERS

---

You don't need experience, just a desire to tell stories!

Volunteers can write a maximum of one story a week. There are no minimum requirement of stories for volunteers to produce. Volunteers can write as little or often as they would like.

See your work in newsprint, online and distributed around the city while you enhance your skills.

---

For more information, email [editor@uniter.ca](mailto:editor@uniter.ca).

FEATURE

Words by Beth Schellenberg

Arts and Culture Editor

 @bethgazellenberg

Photos by Daniel Crump

Photo Editor

 @dannyboycrump

Illustrations by Talia Steele

Creative Director

 @st\_talula

# When pandemics collide



## Harm reduction in the time of COVID

While news of the COVID-19 pandemic has flooded our feeds, and rightly so, an opioid crisis of devastating proportions has been quietly ravaging communities in Winnipeg and across the province.

Travel restrictions and general upheaval have disrupted the drug supply and made room for an influx of fentanyl and carfentanil that has resulted in the highest number of overdoses on record in our city.

On Sept. 3, the provincial government announced that they were allocating \$3.5 million to improve addiction support at

the Health Sciences Centre's emergency department. That \$3.5 million sounds like a lot of money, especially when announced with ample fanfare, but compared to the kind of cash quietly spent by the City and Province on other projects (such as the expansion of Kenaston Boulevard to service ill-advised new suburbs, which ran the City and Province over \$50 million), it seems like a pittance.

According to Arlene Kolb, founder of Overdose Awareness Manitoba, this initiative will have very little impact on the drug crisis in its current manifestation.

"I have to clarify that, actually, the government is doing nothing ... There is talk about HSC, but when you put a unit in HSC and hire new security guards and nurses, it is seen by the community as a security issue. It has nothing to do with care," Kolb says.

The \$3.5 million will be spent, as Kolb says, largely on security measures to deal with meth-related incidents, despite a dire need for safe supplies, injection sites and long-term programming.

Feature continues on next page.



The provincial government allocated millions of dollars to increase security around addictions care at Health Sciences Centre, a move that experts say does nothing to address addictions.

In a provincial press release, PC Justice Minister Cliff Cullen explains that the new beds and security staff at HSC will help by “speeding up offload times and allow(ing) police officers to more quickly return to patrolling city streets and ensuring they are safe for all Winnipeggers.”

“This investment reflects our government’s efforts to public safety and improving mental health and addictions services in Winnipeg and across the province, particularly for those suffering from meth-associated psychosis.”

Marion Willis, executive director at Morberg House, says in a CTV article that it is precisely the lack of a supply of meth in Winnipeg, due in large part to travel restrictions, that has led to a rash of opioid-related overdoses, making this decision to amp up meth-related security out of step with the current situation.

While increased funding at HSC will allow for a greater police presence on the street (despite petitions to defund Winnipeg police garnering over 150,000 signatures), it fails to address the real needs of people who use drugs.

The introduction of fentanyl and carfentanil has poisoned Winnipeg’s drug supply and resulted in over 550 cases of naloxone (also known by the brand name Narcan) being administered by the Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Service between January and June this year. These numbers would be much higher if administration of naloxone by community members and organizations could be accounted for.

“The drug supply right now is cut with terrible things. When you work in this field for a while, you can identify different reactions, whereas now it’s unpredictable. Folks who are used to using a certain kind and amount of drug now overdose. It’s a big issue. Overdoses have gone way up,” David F. Cole, operations director of the West End 24-Hour Safe Space (WE24), says.

The staff at WE24 received training to administer naloxone through Street Connections. Cole says this training has been put to

practice several times during the summer.

Dustin Novak, a pharmacy assistant at Brothers Pharmacy (625 Selkirk Ave.) who provides naloxone training to community members and organizations, explains that a nasal application of the compound is much easier to use, which is crucial in a crisis.

“It takes seconds instead of minutes,” Novak says.

Conversely, injectable naloxone requires using a syringe and breaking a glass ampoule, all while trying to give CPR and call an ambulance. Novak says while the pricing of nasal kits is higher than injectable ones, “I would assume that some of the other costs that are going into not having a nasal narcan program would be relieved, such as ambulance rides and potential deaths.”

Kolb believes a lack of easy access to naloxone is largely due to the stigma that surrounds drug use.

“We have a premier who has no interest in educating himself about addictions. It is a moral issue of right and wrong (for him), and this trickles down. The way our healthcare system is run, our (provincial) government just says ‘no, don’t do it.’ There is a lack of education with our Minister of Health, the people who need to know these things,” she says.

Long-term care and rehabilitation for people who use drugs is basically nonexistent in Manitoba, according to Kolb, which she believes is central to the problem.

“A bed is not a home. We have to question what is enough,” she says.

Novak explains that detox programs provide a helpful initial step, but would be far more effective if followed by longer-term supports.

“Detox programs are great, but it would be so much more help if they had programs that could go to long-term, new living situations. I see potential for so much more if they were to offer three-month or six-month or even two-year programs where people can get away from the lifestyle that led to addiction and have access to work



and school programs,” Novak says.

Cole explains that “at WE24, we are all harm reduction all the time.”

“It is a mindset. It’s how you approach caring for someone, which is individualistic ... Folks can come in (to WE24) in any state they are in. They can be high or coming down,” they say.

WE24 is unique in this aspect, as many programs and shelters require sobriety from participants. ArtsJunktion, a community organization that provides a safe and inclusive space for people to explore their creativity using pay-what-you-can, take-what-you-need recycled materials, also has an

open-door policy when it comes to sobriety.

Lou Gandier and Helga Jakobson, who are ArtsJunktion co-directors, have noticed a sharp downturn in the mental health and wellness of the community they serve. They have also heard positive things from people in their neighbourhood about how other grassroots organizations and the supports they provide are crucial.

“People need to be welcomed into a community with whatever capacity they have. Resources from within community-driven organizations where folks are able to show up as they are are incredibly important. The increase in awareness of spaces like



Lou Gandier (left) and Helga Jakobson (right) at ArtsJunktion in Winnipeg's Exchange District

WE24, as well as resources for (naloxone) through orgs like Central Neighbourhoods and Street Connections, are creating a more well-informed harm-reduction approach," Gandier and Jakobson say.

Harm-reduction principles, while readily embraced by many healthcare professionals, community organizations and the governments of other provinces, unsurprisingly do not appear to resonate with the Progressive

Conservative provincial government here in Manitoba.

Justice Minister Cullen referred to an NDP report outlining a harm-reduction approach to the crisis of addiction and overdose as "half-baked and dangerous," going on to say "Wab Kinew wants to tell kids it's okay to do meth and other illicit drugs."

Premier Brian Pallister has repeatedly emphasized abstinence and law enforce-

ment, and in a CTV interview said "there are as many dangers as positives out of having a so-called safe injection site. It draws drug dealers. It draws crime."

In addition to safe-injection sites, which overwhelmingly lower overdose mortality, it is now possible for provinces to import prescription-grade heroin (diacetylmorphine) as a treatment for adults with opioid dependency.

This option of a safe supply comes at the recommendation of Dr. Theresa Tam, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, but, given Pallister's reticence to move beyond abstinence-based treatment models, it seems unlikely that Manitoba Health will pursue this potentially life-saving option.

Pallister, who has infamously spent one-fifth of his time as premier on vacation in the tropics, often peddles austerity and has



The Magnus Eliason Recreation Centre where WE24 is located. WE24 is a 24-hour safe space in Winnipeg's West End neighbourhood.



Signs and mementos adorn the Manitoba Overdose Awareness Memorial Garden in Stephen Juba Park.

guttled Manitoba's healthcare and social services throughout his tenure, despite receiving \$400 million from the federal government in 2017 to fund health, including mental health and addictions services.

In a letter sent to the provincial and territorial ministers, Canada's Minister of Health, Honorable Patty Hajdu writes: "It is vital that we recognize substance-use disorder is a health and social issue, and that we treat people who use drugs with compassion and give them the support that they need." In the letter, she also refers to the overdose crisis as "one of the most significant public health crises in recent Canadian history."

Between 2016 and 2019 alone, over 15,000 people lost their lives to presumed opioid-related causes in Canada.

When viewed as a public health crisis that exists at the crossroads of colonialism,

racism, poverty and trauma, rather than as a morally righteous "war on drugs," it is nearly unbelievable that drug use and addiction are still criminalized, and that those who are dying are treated with stigma rather than empathy.

As with so many aspects of our society, the pandemic has starkly revealed the deep cracks that have always existed in our social systems.

"It puts a magnifier on what is lacking, but we already knew those things were lacking," Cole says.

Now we are being forced to reckon with these failures and decide as a culture if we want to do right by those who have been historically left behind due to age-old conservative notions of moralism and victim-blaming.

**Street Connections offers support for people seeking counselling and housing, and also offers naloxone kits and safe supplies. WE24 is a safe environment for youth aged 13 to 26, and Main Street Project provides non-judgmental care for adults.**

**If you are looking to learn how to administer naloxone, Brothers Pharmacy offers training on a rolling basis, so give them a call. They also have naloxone kits.**

# BOOKS WITHOUT BARRIERS

## Millennium Library reopens without security screening

CIERRA BETTENS | CITY REPORTER | [@FICTIONALCIERRA](#) [@CIERRABETTENS](#)

Frequenters of the Millennium Library may notice an absence upon their arrival. As part of the third phase of reopening libraries, Millennium Library has now opened its doors without security screening measures in place at the entrance.

The “airport-style” measures, introduced in early 2019, were criticized by community organizations for being invasive, exclusive and counterintuitive to the library’s community-centric purpose.

In email correspondence, Joelle Schmidt, a communications officer for the City of Winnipeg, says the decision to suspend the library security measures has not been finalized, and the library is currently in the process of conducting a community consultation to determine the next steps.

The City of Winnipeg did not comment on whether the current suspension of the security measures were due to concerns over COVID-19 transmission.

Putting the reasoning behind the suspension of the program aside, Brianne Selman, a member of Millenium for All, sees it as a positive for the downtown community. As one of the key organizations that

advocated for the removal of the security barriers, Selman says the suspension is preceded by over a year-and-a-half’s work of community organizing and resistance.

Selman, who also works as a scholarly communications copyright librarian at the University of Winnipeg, saw the security measures as going against the professional ethics of the library community. She says the invasiveness of having to go through a search can potentially be a retraumatizing experience for marginalized library patrons.

“They disproportionately affect anyone who has had negative experiences with law enforcement,” Selman says. She says this includes racialized communities, refugees, sex workers, trans people and even parents who don’t feel comfortable normalizing the security measures to their children.

Given that the measures have not been finalized by the City of Winnipeg, it remains uncertain as to whether or not they will return in the future. For the community groups who rallied against these measures, the fight may not entirely be over.

To prevent a reintroduction of these measures in the future, Millennium for



PHOTO BY DANIEL CRUMP

On Feb. 25, 2020, people gathered at the Millennium Library to protest its “airport-style” security measures, one year to the day after they were first implemented.

All’s Facebook page encourages people to volunteer at the library or consider running to be on the Winnipeg Public Library Board to have their say. Selman adds that local news reporting and public awareness of these issues is also a crucial part of elevating the cause.

However, Selman stresses that supporting and advocating for the downtown community must not stop at removing security barriers. Public services, as well as public spaces, must also be improved.

“There are much bigger conversations we need to be having as a city,” she says. “The library is a community service, but it’s certainly not a replacement for funding healthcare, harm reduction and all the services that people need to have downtown.”

“We need to think about public space downtown,” she says. “The downtown needs to have public space where people can be without being harassed or bothered by security. That’s what we need to keep fighting for.”

# NCTR HOSTS ONLINE PANEL ON RECONCILIATION

## Virtual dialogue held on reconciliation and 94 Calls to Action

ABIGAIL BYLE | VOLUNTEER | [@ABBYINITIO](#)

Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) continues to offer education events, with the Allyship in Reconciliation virtual event held on Oct. 7.

Kaila Johnston, acting supervisor of education, outreach and public program for NCTR and one of the organizers of the event, says it came together through a partnership between NCTR and Health Canada, in an effort to “develop a learning event for public servants.”

“One of the most frequent questions we’re asked at the centre is ‘what can we do?’” Johnston says.

In response, they created a series of learning dialogues and sessions. This discussion on being an ally in reconciliation was hosted by Kevin Lamoureux, an instructor at the University of Winnipeg and a well-known speaker on colonization and reconciliation in Canada, with a panel of renowned guests discussing the 94 Calls to Action identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The panellists included Sherri Chisan, president of University nuhelot’ine thaiyots’i nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills (UnBQ); Harlan Pruden, educator for the British Columbia’s Centre for Disease Control’s Chee Mamuk program and managing editor of the *Two Spirit Journal*; and Edna Elias, educator and former politician from Qurluqtuq, who served as the fourth commissioner of Nunavut (2010 to

2015) and was a 2019 recipient of the Order of Canada.

Panellists spoke on their individual experiences and expertise and also answered questions from audience members who registered to attend the event. Topics included the need to acknowledge the impact of colonization, ways to decolonize programs and policies, the importance of preserving Indigenous culture and tradition and practical suggestions on how to become a stronger ally.

“Although a good portion of the public is able to see that they have a part in supporting reconciliation, they often don’t know where to start,” Johnston says.

“Reconciliation at its root is about our relationships with one another,” Lamoureux says. So having these dialogues and being open and willing is crucial to the reconciliation process.

“Reconciliation is about not feeling guilty for something we didn’t do, but rather taking responsibility for the future,” Lamoureux says. Allies educating themselves and beginning these conversations is a crucial step. Lamoureux points out that Grand Chief Littlechild, one of the Truth and Reconciliation commissioners, said that 72 of the 94 Calls to Action are about education and awareness.

Johnston says a great place to begin is to get informed, and she suggests that people watch, listen and read credible news sources to stay up to date on current issues.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Kevin Lamoureux, a University of Winnipeg instructor and panellist at the Allyship in Reconciliation virtual conference

NCTR offers presentations and workshops around the history of residential schools, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the 94 Calls to Action for anyone who wants to become more involved and active in social justice and reconciliation.

Lamoureux suggests that people who

want to be allies in reconciliation should think about their relationships with themselves and with Canada.

“Reconciliation is a gift that has been given to us by survivors so that we can all collectively be part of leaving behind a better Canada,” Lamoureux says.

# GETTING HOME SAFE(R)

## Transit alternatives during COVID-19

CIERRA BETTENS | CITY REPORTER | [@FICTIONALCIERRA](#) [@CIERRABETTENS](#)

In the time of COVID-19, some may feel uncomfortable riding public transit. Though Winnipeg Transit states that they have been taking extra measures to ensure public health safety, including frequent sanitization and mandating face masks on all buses, riders may still be concerned about potential exposure risks.

For riders who do not own vehicles, cycling and car-sharing are a few of the alternatives to public transit they can explore.

Philip Mikulec is the operations manager at Peg City Car Co-op, a car-sharing company with numerous membership options. With dozens of co-op vehicles located all around central Winnipeg, car-share users can book a Peg City car when they need it, paying an hourly rate that differs based on membership choice.

Mikulec says Peg City Car Co-op is not a competitor with Winnipeg Transit, but an ally. Rather than act as a replacement for riding public transit, their car-sharing program aims to supplement it.

“We want to augment and support different transportation options,” he says, “to use our cars as a specific tool for times when other transportation options aren’t super feasible in a city like Winnipeg.”

Those who wish to use the car-sharing service temporarily or to avoid riding public transit during peak hours may be interested in the casual plan, which of-

fers a low-commitment, non-membership-based option for occasional users.

Cynthia Carr, an epidemiologist at EPI Research, says using a car-sharing service could reduce the exposure risk by decreasing the number of passengers in an enclosed space.

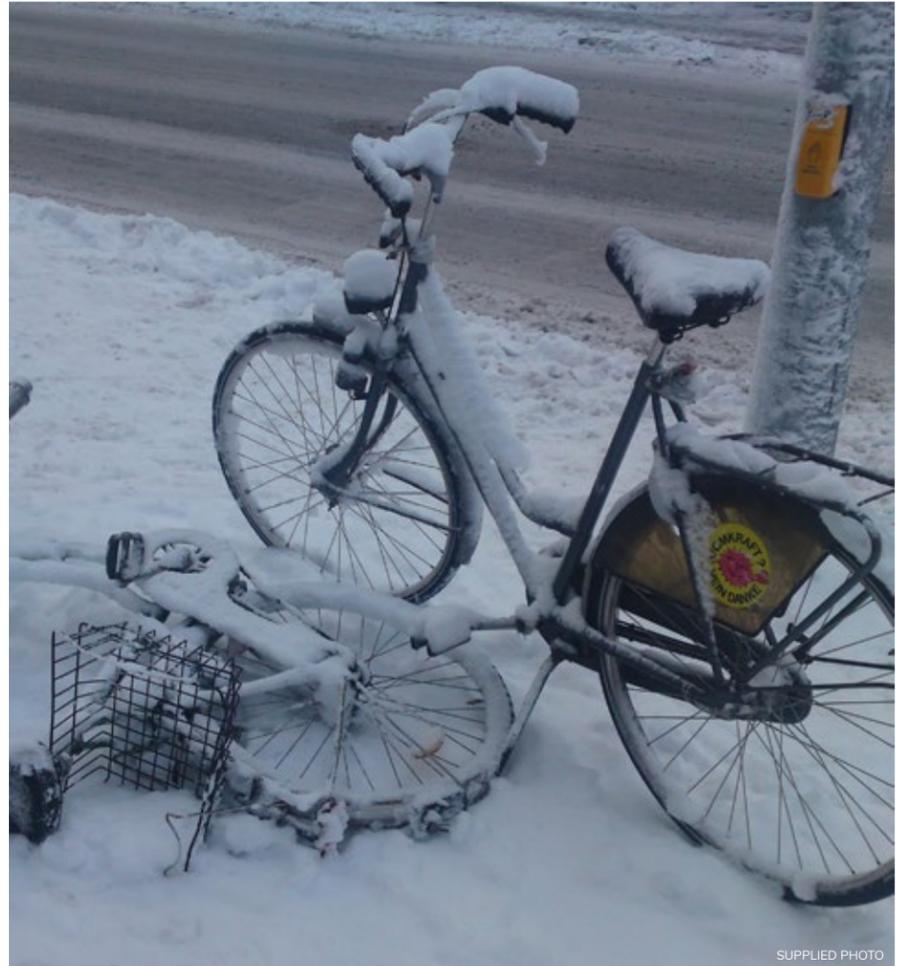
“A car-sharing service could potentially cut down on the number of people you’re exposed to,” she says.

However, Carr says if the vehicle is being used to carpool multiple passengers, there could be a greater risk of transmission. She says keeping car windows open and knowing how large each passenger’s contact bubble is can be a form of harm reduction.

“We have to trust that we’re doing the right thing,” Carr says.

Despite the existence of these options, there still remains a gap in who these alternative transit methods are available to. Considering that Winnipeg Transit services people with disabilities, seniors and young people who may not be able to drive or cycle, riding a bike or using a car-share may not be an option for some bus riders.

For public transit users, transportation to COVID-19 testing sites also remains an issue. Riders are told not to ride Winnipeg Transit if they are symptomatic. According to a statement made to the CBC by the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, special transportation to testing sites may



Winter cycling is one of the many alternatives to buses that Winnipeggers are exploring following multiple COVID-19 exposures on Winnipeg Transit.

be organized through Health Links under circumstances where no other means of safe transportation is available.

For those who continue to ride Winnipeg Transit, Carr adds that public transit riders can protect themselves and others

by wearing a mask, washing their hands frequently and physically distancing themselves from other riders as much as possible.

“Public transit is doing their best at harm reduction,” she says. “It’s up to us to follow the rules and do our due diligence.”

# PANDEMIC MAY INCREASE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## Awareness month highlights increased risks and challenges

ABIGAIL BYLE | VOLUNTEER | [@ABBYINITIO](#)

November is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and the risk of violence has only increased with the ongoing stress and restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Canadian Women’s Foundation, a Canadian woman is killed by an intimate partner every six days.

In addition to the added risks to victims, there are additional challenges for service providers helping victims and survivors, and Winnipeg is no exception. Experts say that domestic and family violence is often heightened by the stress, social isolation and restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, not to mention its impact on supports, services and shelters.

Dr. Kendra Nixon, director of RESOLVE, just received a grant for her research project studying the impact of COVID-19, and also pandemics generally, on domestic violence service providers and survivors. RESOLVE describes itself as a “prairie-based research network that co-ordinates and supports research aimed at ending violence, especially violence involving girls and women” and has offices at the Universities of Manitoba, Regina and Calgary.

Nixon says there is anecdotal evidence that domestic violence may be increasing, because victims are at home more often and may not have respite from the perpetrators of violence due to pandemic restrictions, as well as the stress and financial pressures created by the pandemic itself.

Nixon’s research will study the impact on survivors and service providers to learn from their experiences and to be prepared for future waves of this pandemic, and even future pandemics. Her research will involve interviewing service providers and mothers across the province who have been in shelters and second-stage shelters, as well as in different areas of programming and need.

Marcie Wood, the executive director at Willow Place, says they are the largest shelter providing domestic violence services in Winnipeg, and that “usually people that are using our shelter space have exhausted all other resources, and it’s their last bit of hope to come to, to be safe.”

Willow Place is a 24-7 facility, with services like counselling, harm-reduction programs, a healthy living program and an on-site schoolteacher supported by the Winnipeg School Division.

Willow Place operates from a trauma-informed, strength-based perspective, “trying to meet people where they are at, to provide services according to what their wants are, when they want them,” Wood says.

Due to the pandemic, the shelter is limited to only 17 residents, with only one person or family per room, compared to their usual capacity of 38 spaces. Wood says they have worked hard to implement procedures to make the shelter space as safe as possible for everybody.

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19



Dr. Kendra Nixon, director of RESOLVE

pandemic, shelters are open and offering safer spaces for victims of violence. Nixon says that during a pandemic, safety planning looks different, and being able to reach out to victims and survivors is vital. As Nixon says, victims of violence may have thought, or been told by perpetrators, that shelters are closed.

Wood says domestic violence “exists everywhere, in every race and social class. It’s not something that people talk a lot about. People think it happens in certain spaces to certain

people.” Wood encourages people to reach out and ask questions to learn more about what it is and who it impacts, because it could be the person sitting next to you.

**To access Willow Place services or the emergency shelter, phone the 24-hour crisis line, 204-615-0311 or 1-877-977-0007. For information on shelters in Winnipeg, visit [domesticshelters.org/help/mb/winnipeg](http://domesticshelters.org/help/mb/winnipeg) or [maws.mb.ca/](http://maws.mb.ca/).**



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Bronwyn Dobchuk-Land, an assistant professor of criminal justice at the U of W, has encountered challenges to conducting research during the pandemic.

# COVID-19 DISRUPTS RESEARCH

## Two professors share their perspectives

CALLUM GOULET-KILGOUR | CAMPUS REPORTER | @CGOULETKILGOUR

As most Canadian universities have shifted to online instruction, much of the media focus has been on how instructors and students have adapted to online classrooms.

Research, a fundamental aspect of universities, has also been rapidly affected by the pandemic. Professors and researchers at the University of Winnipeg (U of W) face numerous challenges.

Among them is Dr. Jeff Martin, a professor of physics, who says COVID-19 has hugely disrupted his research, including preventing him from taking a trip to a

particle accelerator facility in Japan this past summer.

"It's mostly been negative," he says, though Martin notes that the pandemic has made his teams of colleagues quite robust.

"Team members who would not normally meet with each other are getting together on these digital platforms globally, much more regularly than we normally would have," he says.

According to the U of W website, Martin is a Canada Research Chair (Tier 1) in fundamental symmetries in subatomic

physics and "the Canadian leader of a major experiment searching for the neutron's electric dipole moment, which is being conducted at TRIUMF (Canada's National Laboratory for Particle and Nuclear Physics)" in Vancouver.

"Usually, I would go to Vancouver about once a month, but now I haven't gone at all," Martin says.

"We have been allowed to restart (in-person) research, as long as we're able to physically distance," he says, referring to his lab at the U of W campus.

Bronwyn Dobchuk-Land, an assistant professor of criminal justice, has also encountered challenges facing researchers.

"The act of writing up research results takes a particular kind of focus and energy, and I found it really difficult in the context of uncertainty and anxiety around my elderly parents, my kid and my family abroad," she says.

"Because I research policing, the pandemic context has been a wild one," Dobchuk-Land says.

According to the U of W website, her current research includes "an analysis of community-police partnerships in the context of the Winnipeg Service's Smart Policing Initiative."

"The type of research that I do strives to be community-based, so it's often interview-based and rooted in public education workshops and engagement with activist movements," Dobchuk-Land says.

"Some of the interview research that I have been doing before just had to stop."

Dobchuk-Land says she's still in the process of trying to get her research back on track.

"We're going to see the effects of a big gap in the productivity of scholars," she says.

"On the other hand, these times have revealed all sorts of important information about social structures and the social world, people, institutions, systems and social change.

"There's a richness in the material we have to work with, but, of course, that material is mostly human suffering."

## CITY BRIEFS

ALEX NEUFELDT | CITY EDITOR

### Gearing up for the byelection

The deadline for UWSA byelection nominations is Oct. 8, and after reading week, the byelection campaign week will begin. Because COVID-19 has pushed campaigning online, students should be prepared to see new campaign tactics and engagement approaches and be ready to vote from Oct. 26 to 28. Best of luck to all the candidates!

### New infill guidelines Q-and-A

The City of Winnipeg released new infill guidelines on Sept. 18 and will host virtual infill guideline events on Oct. 7, 8, 14 and 15. The events will cover the changes made to the infill guidelines and aim to engage the public and respond to questions about the state and impacts of infill in Winnipeg.

### Love After the End book launch

*Love After the End: An Anthology of Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer Love* will have a virtual launch party on Oct. 8. McNally Robinson is hosting the launch of the anthology, which was edited by Joshua Whitehead, who is a University of Winnipeg alum. The event will also feature contributors Nathan Adler, Kai Minosh Pyle and David Alexander Robertson.

### Imagining a better recovery

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and the Canadian Community Economic Development Network held a virtual panel discussion titled *A Resilient Recovery for Manitoba's Economy* on Oct. 7. The event featured discussion about equitable economic recovery in the context of COVID-19 and featured Louise Simbandumwe, Jessica Dumas, Jesse Hajer and Doug Ramsey.

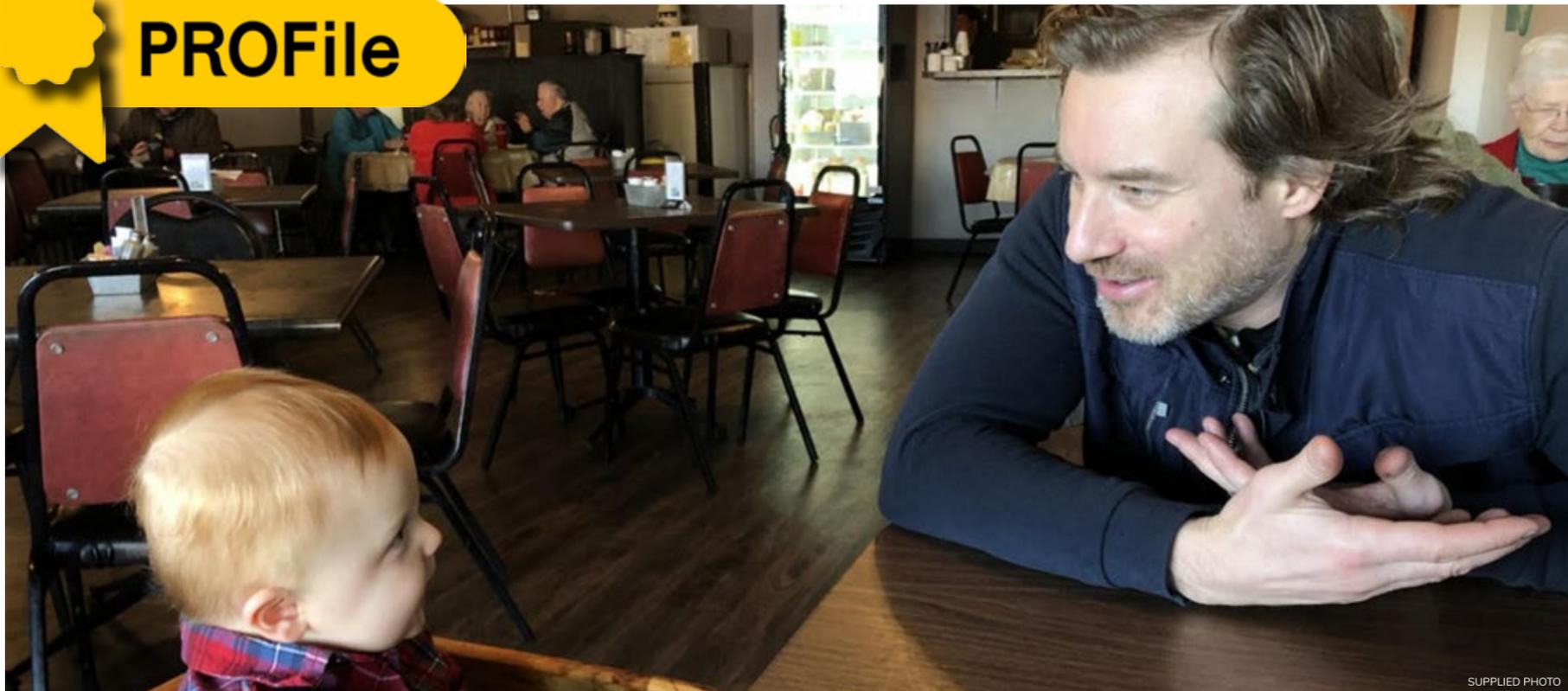
### Webinar Wednesdays

For students having a difficult time settling in to virtual university life, University of Winnipeg Student Services will host Webinar Wednesdays to provide support and information. The webinars will cover a wide range of topics, including technical assistance, finding community, working with Accessibility Services to get accommodations, managing shifting workloads through the semester, meditation and exploring career options.

### Indigenous governance and co-operative models

On Oct. 15, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and the Manitoba Research Alliance will host *Indigenizing the Co-operative Model*. The event celebrates the launch of a report by the same name and will include panel discussion. Mark Intertas, Crystal Laboraro, Kathy Mallett, Mary Nirlungayuk and Jim Thunder will take part in the event.

# PROFile



SUPPLIED PHOTO

## JACK OF ALL TRADES

Shawn Moi, Instructor, Department of Rhetoric, Writing and Communications, U of W

KEESHA HAREWOOD | FEATURES REPORTER | @KEESHAHAREWOOD

For Shawn Moi, becoming an instructor for the University of Winnipeg's (U of W) Rhetoric, Writing and Communications department was not something he planned from the start.

"My first degree was in English," he says. "I have five in total. I went to university for a long time."

In fact, Moi was a student for 16 years. In addition to his English degree, he earned his doctorate in philosophy, as well as an education degree at the U of W. As a result, Moi is an incredibly versatile educator.

"I'm a public school teacher as well," Moi says. "I've taught in a number of schools in town here. Last job I had was at Sisler High School teaching English literature, so Shakespeare, poetry and novels."

With expertise in multiple fields, Moi enjoys exploring the overlap between two (if not more) areas of study.

"In a broad stroke, I love the intersection of literature and ideas," Moi says. "Well, mostly philosophy and literature."

Specifically, Moi appreciates the freedom that comes with interpreting a poem

and philosophical thinking.

"No idea is too absurd, or often what people call, 'deep,'" he says. "I don't really like that word very much."

Despite the distaste for the word (or the stigma attached to it), Moi likes deep ideas, especially if they're outrageous or weird.

Funnily, Moi will deliberately ask his students questions to really make them think. Questions like: "what is a thing?" that he asked his students just this year.

"I guess I like getting carried away in class," he says. "I like to bring that about in an audience of people, and that's when I feel really successful and good about what I'm doing. People start wondering about questions that have not occurred to them or reconsidering concepts that seem simple at first, (but) turn out to be nebulous – mysterious, really."

**What is something you've learned from your students?**

"People come from all different places

in the world, and they have different needs that they might not articulate on their own right away, and you can't expect them to, and you've gotta be very empathetic."

**If you could have any superpower, what would it be?**

"Time travel."

**What do you like to do in your free time?**

"I bought an electric surfboard this summer, and I'm out on that for hours every day now."

**What was one of the best answers a student gave you when answering a philosophical question?**

"When I ask them what a world is, sometimes they'll tell me it's the earth plus the human spirit. I thought that was a pretty clever answer."

## FREE COMPUTERS PROVIDED TO STUDENTS

The UWSA partners with Computers for Schools

CALLUM GOULET-KILGOUR | CAMPUS REPORTER | @CGOULETKILGOUR

With the shift to online learning for post-secondary institutions, having access to a computer and an internet connection is necessary for students. Through a partnership with Computers for Schools Manitoba, the University of Winnipeg Students' Association (UWSA) is providing computer equipment to 50 students.

Justin Menard is the executive director of Computers for Schools Manitoba.

"Understanding both the technology needs of students and that some may not have means to obtain devices, we felt it natural to approach various groups who have reach within post-secondary institutions," he says in an email to *The Uniter*.

"With student associations having such a far reach into the student (population), it makes it very easy to ensure students know of our program," Menard says.

Those receiving the computers applied through an online form. They will each receive a computer, monitor, mouse, keyboard and all required cables.

Menard says one of his organization's goals is to "combat the digital divide many (students) experience."

"For those who don't have the ability to access technology, it can be like running

a race with your shoelaces tied together," he says. "All students should have access and the means to excel in their education, regardless of barriers they may be facing."

Numerous studies have found that significant inequities exist in terms of computer and internet access. The pandemic-induced shift to online learning has only exacerbated this problem.

Dagen Perrot, UWSA urban inner-city campus director, is very concerned about this problem and applauds the association's partnership with Computers for Schools Manitoba.

"By offering someone a decent computer, it's one piece of a much more complex puzzle," he says.

"Anything we can do to make it easier for students to participate and to carve out a space in their home is important."

He notes, however, that quality internet access is also important but much harder to address.

"There's a push internationally to recognize internet (access) as a human right and something that needs to be just offered to people," Perrot says, adding that he has been encouraging the UWSA to advocate for these issues.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Computers for Schools Manitoba partnered with the UWSA to provide 50 U of W students with computer equipment.

Menard stresses that, during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for computers has been at an "all-time high."

"I wouldn't say the pandemic has brought on (any) revelations ... it has magnified and brought to the forefront what we already knew: many simply don't have access for various reasons, be (they) financial, geographical or something else," he says.

"If individuals or businesses have any surplus or unwanted devices, they are urged to visit us online or contact our office, so we can continue to bridge the digital divide," Menard says.

Computers for Schools Manitoba's website is [c4smb.ca](http://c4smb.ca).



# LIFE ON THE BORDERLINE

Are you there, diagnosis? It's me, Hannah.

HANNAH MAGNUSSON | COLUMNIST | @HANNAHCANWRITE

Shortly after giving birth to my first and only child, I was diagnosed with postpartum depression. It was the wrong diagnosis. I've had mental illness for the entirety of my adult life and likely most of my teenage life, as well. Diagnoses came and went, but one label was always the same: atypical.

Major depressive disorder with atypical symptoms, general anxiety disorder with atypical symptoms and complex post-traumatic stress disorder with, you guessed it, atypical symptoms. Those were only the formal diagnoses. Doctors tried a lot of different labels for my unexplainable symptoms. Although they were later removed, this left a lasting mark on my medical file.

I have a complicated relationship with the idea of diagnoses. On the one hand, a proper diagnosis paired with appropriate, multifaceted treatment and follow-up can save lives. On the other hand, rushed diagnoses with hastily written prescriptions and no supplementary treatment can lead to worsening symptoms, isolation, stigma and a higher chance that illness will recur in the future.

At the end of the day, a diagnosis is a label, and labels have a funny way of defining people. This is why it's dangerous to be overly prescriptive when discussing something as nuanced as mental health.

The thing is, especially in times of high stress (for example, living through a pan-

demio), not all symptoms of mental illness warrant a formal diagnosis. Similar to when we get a cold and we don't necessarily go to the doctor, some mental illness symptoms can be treated at home.

The key to home treatment, however, is honesty. If a cold persists for too long, or concerning symptoms arise, we know it's time to go to a doctor. If our symptoms of mental illness worsen, it's equally important to seek medical help.

How do we know that it is time to get help? The Centre for Addictions and Mental Health, Canada's largest mental health teaching hospital, says that if your symptoms start to affect your life, it's time to see a professional. This could mean seeing the effects of your symptoms on your relationships, your work or education or other aspects of your own well-being.

The first step should always be assessment. To be sure that your care is aligned with your needs, make sure that your symptoms are heard and your concerns addressed before leaving your appointment. If something doesn't feel right, trust your intuition and ask more questions or seek a second opinion.

As for me, after months of assessment and continual self-advocacy, I finally got a diagnosis that fit and led to treatment that worked. I have borderline personality disorder, the first diagnosis that ever classified



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

me as a typical case.

I'm not here to say that after proper diagnosis, my life has been sunshine and roses. It certainly hasn't been, especially in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. What my life has been is manageable, leaving my brain with room to enjoy life with my two-year-old, and I truly can't think of a better outcome than that.

Hannah Magnusson is a master's student in the arts department at Athabasca University. Her research focuses on the intersection of storytelling and advocacy, studying how fostering empathy between different perspectives can build a bridge to understanding and action. She lives on Treaty 1 territory on the shore of Lake Winnipeg.



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

## Student Services

### ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

#### Volunteer Notetakers

Are you interested in doing volunteer work while you are attending online classes this fall?

Volunteer notetakers are needed to share their notes with students who are unable to take notes in their classes for reasons related to a disability or medical condition.

If your instructor makes a request for a volunteer notetaker in one of your classes, please don't hesitate to sign up!

For more information, email the Accessibility Services Volunteer Notetaker program at: [vnt@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:vnt@uwinnipeg.ca)

### AWARDS & FINANCIAL AID

More information on the topics listed below is available on our website: [uwinnipeg.ca/awards/](http://uwinnipeg.ca/awards/)

#### Current Award Opportunities

A \$78 UWSA Transit Subsidy is available to students who purchase a semester bus pass for the 2020 Fall term. Applications are available through our online award application system and will remain open until Oct. 31. More information is available here: Applications for the UWSA transit subsidy program

Graduate and Professional Studies Expenses Bursary is available for students in their final year of an undergraduate degree program in the 2020-21 academic year that are applying for Graduate or Professional Studies which begin in 2021-22. The application is open until funds have been exhausted. To obtain the application form, visit: In-Course Awards (current students).

The 2020-21 Work-Study Program is accepting student applications until Fri., Dec. 4. The position listing is now available online. More positions will be available to those that apply early. To obtain the application form and check out the position listing, go to: Work Study Program

#### Student Aid

The Canada Student Aid program is offering more loans and non-repayable forms of aid (grants) this year. If you have ever thought about applying, this would be the year to do so. For more information, check out Government Student Aid.

Need help getting connected to the financial supports you need and deserve to pay for your education? Visit our website to check out our various info pages, or Contact Us to find out the many ways you can connect with Awards and Financial Aid staff.

### STUDENT CENTRAL

#### Undergraduate Tuition Fees

Fall (U2020F) and Fall/Winter Term (U2020FW) fees were due Sept. 24.

Students can pay for tuition fees either:

- as a bill payment through their financial institution (online, telephone, in-person at a branch) using your seven-digit student number as the account number, or
- via Flywire.com (international payments)

The final day to drop a U2020F or U2020FW course for full refund was Sept. 21. Please consult the withdrawal schedules online.

#### Fall Reading Week

The University of Winnipeg's third annual Fall Term Reading Week will take place from Oct. 11-17. No classes will be held, except for Education students taking 4000-level certification courses who are required to attend class and practicum during this period. Please consult your course outline for more information.

#### myVisit App

Need to drop in to see someone from Student Central via Zoom? You will be able to add yourself

to the line virtually!

Download the myVisit app today, available through Google Play or the App Store. The myVisit app allows students to enqueue themselves to see a Student Central representative on Zoom.

A text message will be sent with the Zoom meeting ID and passcode when you are near the front of the line. The waiting room will be enabled.

Students will be admitted one at a time and will be required to show their student ID (or other photo ID), the same as in-person inquiries at Student Central.

Students can also use myVisit to book an appointment with an academic or career advisor from Academic and Career Services and/or International, Immigrant and Refugee Services (IIRSS). Appointments with advisors can be booked through [myvisit.com](http://myvisit.com) as well.

#### Campus Closed

The University of Winnipeg campus remains closed at this time. Student Central (SC) and other Student Services are continuing to provide services remotely though. Please check our websites for contact information. SC will be closed for Thanksgiving on Monday,

Oct. 12, but open (remotely) the rest of Fall Term Reading Week. SC's regular hours are 8:30-4:30 Monday-Friday.

### STUDENT SERVICES

#### Webinar Wednesdays

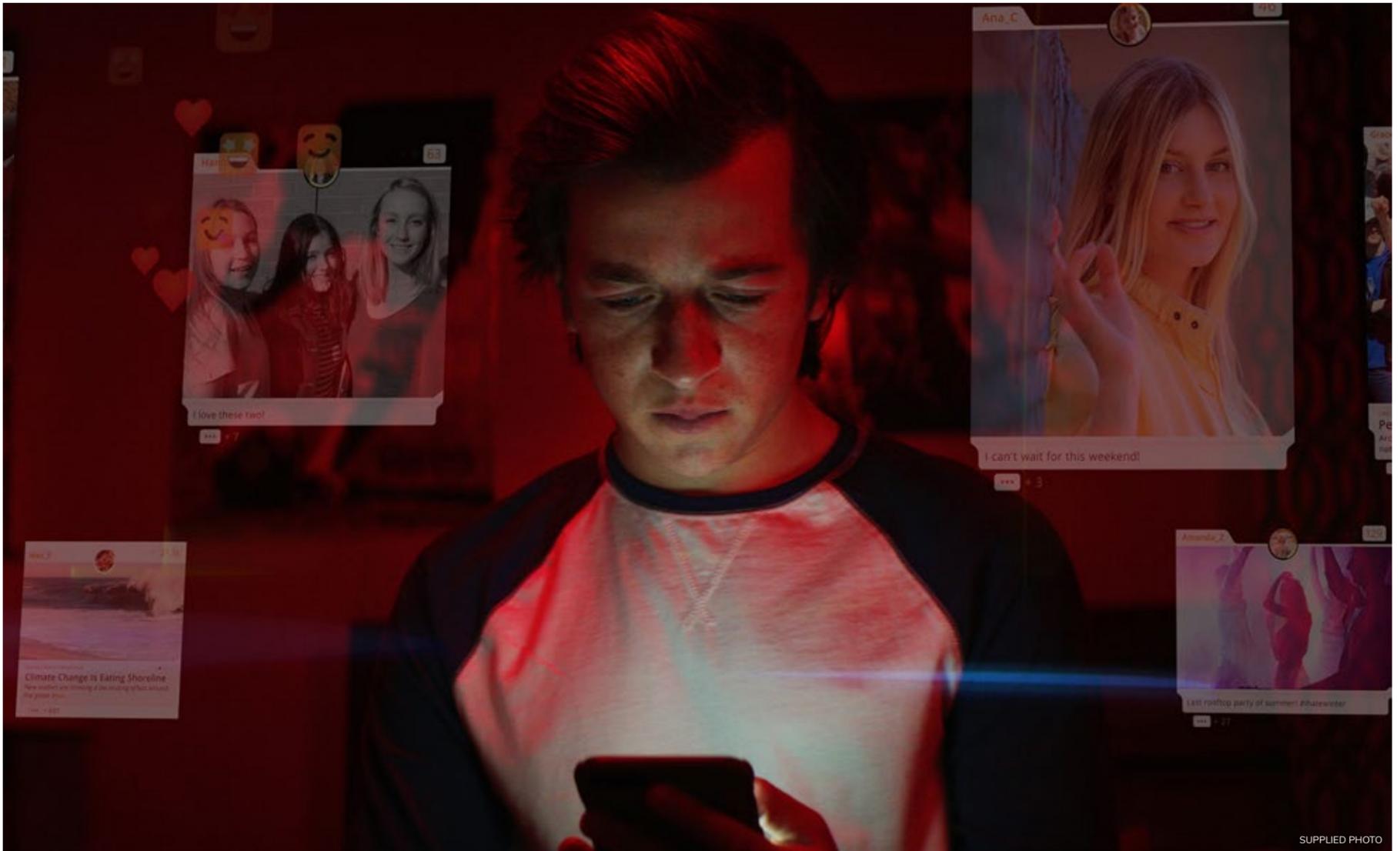
In weekly half-hour sessions, Student Services staff will share valuable strategies to help you settle in and succeed at UWinnipeg.

Topics for the series:

- WebAdvisor Tips and Tricks from Student Central (Oct. 21)
- Joining a Community at UWinnipeg (Oct. 28)
- Accommodations for Students with Disabilities or Medical Conditions (Nov. 4)
- Final Drop Date and End of Term Tips (Nov. 18)
- Meditation for Grounding and Relaxation (Nov. 25)
- Exploring Career Options and Gaining Relevant Experience During your Studies (Dec. 2)
- Preparing for Winter Term (Dec. 9)

All sessions are from 12:30-1:00 pm.

Advanced registration is required. Sign up here: [uwinnipeg.ca/webinar-wednesdays](http://uwinnipeg.ca/webinar-wednesdays)



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Netflix's docudrama *The Social Dilemma* misses the mark on the cultural impacts of social media, says Jerrad Peters.

## THE ANTISOCIAL DILEMMA

### What Netflix's new docudrama gets wrong about social media

JERRAD PETERS | VOLUNTEER | [@JERRADPETERS](#)

Near the beginning of Netflix docudrama *The Social Dilemma*, former high-level employees of Google, Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest are asked to identify the single underlying problem with big tech.

To a man – and most of the interviewees/co-stars are white men – the onetime executives and engineers are stunned silent. It's surprising, given that they have plenty to say about subjects from psychology to sociology to communications science. But in that moment, they offer nothing.

If the viewer hasn't jumped off the couch and screamed the answer at the television, they've perhaps at least guffawed while Claude Shannon and Stuart Hall turn over in their graves.

This subject is crying out for academic input, desperate for the expertise of cultural studies, eager to be seen through a lens of media theory that would at least clarify a cloudy and multi-layered topic.

"The bastard form of mass culture is humiliated repetition ... always new books, new programs, new films, news items, but always the same meaning," Roland Barthes said.

"What would Roland Barthes say?" tends to be a useful question in matters of media. While we can't ask the late pioneering French social theorist to help us make sense of Facebook, he already provided its DNA map some decades ago: hermeneutics, proairetics, semantics,

symbolism and culture.

We shouldn't take theory lessons from email designers or the inventor of the "like" button, no matter how well-meaning. The techies masquerading as professors in *The Social Dilemma* are well-meaning. They're earnest, if not naïve, in their desire to create a friendlier social media landscape.

But they're still selling something: the idea that social media as it exists is bad and unfriendly. It's the "be-wary-of-big-tech" sub-genre of big tech – a pop category that actually serves to launder the tech giants of Silicon Valley via the notion that there can be an industry ideal as it exists under capitalism.

Market economics figures prominently in the film. The cast are under no illusions about the sea change that took place when Facebook and Twitter went public. They point out that "our attention is the product" and that social media is "a market that trades in human futures," exchanging profiles built by user data for aggressively targeted advertising.

The film's lack of depth is exposed in blanket statements about wireless applications "changing what you do, how you think, who you are," as if such changes haven't accompanied human evolution from the start.

Handheld technology has accelerated this process, but so did the development of writing, the printing press and the automo-

bile, which completely altered the makeup of cities and the way we communicate. Virtual proximity is no less real than physical proximity, although anxiety over what is and isn't real occupies significant attention in the film.

This is no doubt due to the information interference that affected the 2016 United States presidential election, the Brexit vote and numerous polls since. "Fake news," don't forget, was first used to describe the troll-farmed material and outlandish conspiracy theories that permeated Facebook feeds four years ago. The right wing later adopted the term, further confusing users and buttressing "lame-stream media" scoffers who were (and are) on the lookout for alternatives to the truths that merely reflect cultural and societal trends they dislike.

Kellyanne Conway's infamous "alternative facts" terminology not only makes perfect sense in this context – although it was obviously nonsense – but also sheds light on what a lot of people want to see on their screens.

Social media algorithms aren't mysterious, scheming voices instructing us to do this or that. They aren't telling us anything new or introducing brand-new behaviours or ideas from scratch.

The cast of *The Social Dilemma* gives itself away by mashing their "attention is the product" premise, which is correct, with the idea that "disinformation is the business model."

Of course it's not. Is disinformation widely shared on social media? Certainly. But it's not shared in a vacuum.

It's here that the Shannon-Weaver model of communication is particularly useful. Each message or piece of information has a sender and a receiver. For the message to get from one to the other, there must be transmission, a channel for transmission and an ultimate reception, after which there is a feedback loop.

Social media is merely the "channel" in this model. It isn't the "sender," as it doesn't, without human input, create the message. It's not doing the transmitting, unless we're sending information to ourselves. The "channel" brings the message to the "receiv-

er." Their interaction – a "like" or "retweet" – is the feedback loop. Further conversation can ensue. The process repeats itself.

This isn't unique to social media. Protagoras and the other Greek sophists were practicing the persuasive arts as early as the 5th century BCE. But even they didn't invent the desires and appeals to popularity they used to serve their purposes. It would take a particular hubris to assert to have done so, but it's an accomplishment the interviewees of *The Social Dilemma* claim.

In stereotypical tech-presentation style, they put on headsets and pace onstage while lecturing about behavioural exploitation and the nature of truth. But there's no dramatic curtain-raising to reveal that ultimate, underlying question to the problem.

The film's strongest segment is at the end, when the cast is asked about how best to monitor or regulate big tech, especially regarding election advertising and data collecting. Aside from the inevitable utopian soliloquies, there are some pragmatic suggestions. Data could be taxed as a prohibitive measure, like a carbon tax. They proffer that governments could ban certain data harvests altogether, like they ban the harvest and trade of human organs.

Capitalism renders the latter scenario highly unlikely. There isn't currently a moral imperative to treat social media as a human rights item. While a data tax seems sensible and possible, taxation is rarely a winning political strategy.

Besides, what the occasional alarmism of half-hearted committee hearings and films like *The Social Dilemma* ignore is that people mostly enjoy what big tech is giving them. They like looking at themselves, and they've enjoyed it ever since the 15th century invention of the convex mirror that, itself, accelerated human mediation during the Renaissance.

And this is that single, underlying problem – if it's a problem at all – with Google, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and all the rest.

The problem is us.

**Jerrad Peters lives, thinks and writes in Winnipeg.**



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

# UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME IS NOT THE ANSWER

## A leftist case for social investment

MATTHEW FLISFEDER | VOLUNTEER | [@MATTF LISFEDER](#)

Is a guaranteed liveable universal basic income (UBI) the right solution for current economic woes? Or does it make more sense to re-invest back into public institutions and social services?

In August, Winnipeg Centre MP Leah Gazan proposed extending the CERB (Canada Emergency Response Benefit) into a permanent UBI. Motion-46 proposes introducing an unconditional, guaranteed liveable income to all Canadians above the age of 18, paid on a regular basis, supplementing benefits already received from current and future government public services. The motion has been received positively by many, including students.

A recent article in *The Uniter* states, “For post-secondary students, many of whom have had to deal with precarious work conditions, coupled with having to adapt to abrupt changes in how classes are delivered, a basic income could prove to be beneficial.” But is UBI really the solution?

In the context of increasing government cuts, can we even be sure that UBI will keep us afloat against rising inflation? How can we be sure that it won’t be used as an excuse for more cuts to education and healthcare? The Government of Manitoba even floated a 30 per cent cut to public universities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Considered in the context of government cuts to spending, UBI raises several red flags. It may in fact contribute to exacerbating some of the larger economic and

social problems we currently face, such as rising costs of living and greater austerity. Social investment might be a better solution than a UBI.

UBI is an idea that I first took seriously after reading Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams’ 2015 book, *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work*. The authors defend the implementation of a fully automated society, alongside a UBI to alleviate potential drop crises in market demands as automation comes to replace human labour.

Their proposal seems somewhat unrealistic and problematic, as they imagine a technological solution to economic problems. It also disregards decades of divestment from public institutions and social services. However, the context of the COVID-19 pandemic has given many people a reason to seriously consider the implementation of a UBI.

The CERB helped to relieve stresses from incomes lost during the pandemic and provided an added incentive for people to comply with needed quarantines. But we should be wary about turning it into a Band-Aid solution for our larger economic problems.

Gazan and other MPs supporting the idea of the UBI are to be commended. They have clearly shown that their interests are with the people, supporting our needs for a healthy and sustainable life.

We live in precarious times, brought about not only by the COVID-19 pandem-

ic, but also by times of economic, environmental and social uncertainty. However, the recent discussions about UBI have reminded me about many of the concerns I had previously when reading Srnicek and Williams’ proposal for full automation.

Spending cuts dominate government policy in light of the reigning neoliberal orthodoxy that prioritizes markets over people. The market fundamentalism of neoliberalism, a political and economic approach that favours deregulation and privatization at the expense of public services, means that government policies have turned the market into the primary space for accessing needs through personal spending and consumption. Attached to neoliberal governance is a policy of balancing government budgets and austerity, which sounds good on paper, but rarely helps us out in practice.

Neoliberals often use the metaphor of the individual household managing incomes and budgets to support their positions, claiming that we shouldn’t spend above revenues. But governments aren’t individual households. They are responsible for ensuring equitable access to needs and are accountable to society as a whole.

Austerity has resulted in divestment from education, healthcare, city budgets and costs allocated to daily needs like transportation. At the same time, the international deregulation of finance has been one factor in rising costs of housing. All of these costs, which in previous generations were covered collectively through progressive taxation and investments into public institutions and social services, have now been offloaded onto individuals and individual households, and is a major factor for rising costs of living.

Taking all of this into consideration, UBI, while appearing progressive, will only help to merely prop up markets and service debts we shouldn’t have in the first place. We are now paying out of pocket for many of our resources and needs that should be provided by our governments.

Although Motion-46 registers the need to maintain the existence of current public services, it makes no mention of costs and budgets.

Instead of fighting for a UBI, we must demand a reversal of the neoliberal doc-

trine. We must demand a return to major investments in public services. We must fight for free university education, free public transportation, free universal childcare, fully funded pharmacare and free high speed internet.

We can impose stricter regulations on finance, and we can roll back tax laws that unfairly favour the wealthy. We can also join the fight to raise the minimum wage to (at least) \$15 an hour, struggles for which are noteworthy, since wages haven’t even kept up with inflation. To my knowledge, there are no proposals to keep UBI amounts pegged to inflation.

We need to be more creative and imagine more progressive ways to subsidize and lower real costs of living, putting the onus back on governments and the wealthy. We need to alleviate the stresses of individual households having to manage previously subsidized costs, while at the same time going to school, taking care of our families, making health decisions and working multiple jobs to make ends meet.

Our situation here in Canada is better compared to our neighbours to the south. But why don’t we compare ourselves to the best-possible, rather than the worst-possible scenario?

Without lowering real costs of living, a UBI risks becoming nothing more than a mere prop to markets and a way to service individual and household debts.

There is an earnestness in the supporters of Motion-46. However, before we make hasty decisions about this proposal, we need to have serious conversations about the bigger picture and the need to increase social spending.

The student movement must be a major player in this fight and demand an end to cuts, as well as reinvestments in education and all other valuable public and social services, which subsidize real costs of living. This is an endeavour that builds on the ethics of social justice and a demand for the democratic governance of our economy. UBI only makes sense when we don’t have to worry about cuts to social spending.

**Matthew Flisfeder is an associate professor of rhetoric and communications at the University of Winnipeg.**



## HOROSCOPES

The moon enters Gemini on Oct. 6

On Thursday, October 8, the moon continues its transit of curious Gemini until it enters protective Cancer at 11:45 AM. There could be feelings of discontent in relationships or an uncomfortable choice regarding personal relationships, money, or possessions.

SOURCE: ASTROLOGY.COM

### ARIES

You could feel like you're firing on all cylinders on the job on October 5 when the emotional moon in your second house of income forms a harmonizing trine to lucky Jupiter, transformative Pluto, and taskmaster Saturn—all in your tenth house of career. Putting yourself out there and pitching a passion project could prove fruitful, as could sticking to tried-and-true fix-it plans for any concerns that pop up now. Tune into your intuition, and you'll know how to best proceed.

And on October 10, social Venus in your sixth house of daily routine forms a harmonizing trine to game-changer Uranus in your second house of income, and you might be inspired to try your hand at a new moneymaking plan. An eye-opening experience could prove thrilling, but just look before you leap.

### TAURUS

On October 10, relationship-oriented Venus, your ruling planet, in your fifth house of romance forms a harmonizing trine to revolutionary Uranus in your sign, and you'll be itching to experience something truly pleasurable and out of the ordinary in your closest relationships or through a creative outlet. Your appetite for flirtation and fun might even catch you off-guard. Satiating your need by getting out of your comfort zone (think taking an impromptu road trip or working with a new artistic medium) could prove emotionally gratifying.

And on October 11, the confident sun in your sixth house of daily routine forms a tense square to lucky Jupiter in your ninth house of adventure and higher learning, taking your curiosity and perception of your day-to-day bandwidth to the next level. Be sure not to take on more than you can realistically handle or you might risk burnout.

### GEMINI

You'll want to shake things up on the home front—perhaps trying on new techniques for better balancing your work and home lives—on October 10 when romantic Venus in your fourth house of home life forms a harmonizing trine to revolutionary Uranus in your twelfth house of spirituality. Adding a new practice, like weaving a regular meditation into your morning routine, could prove enlightening and helpful. As long as you're enjoying something out of the ordinary, you're sure to feel satisfied.

And on October 11, the confident sun in your fifth house of romance forms a tense square to fortunate Jupiter in your eighth house of emotional bonds, and you might be tempted to play hooky and focus more on pleasure than caring for everyday responsibilities. A measured approach serves you best.

### CANCER

You'll want to bring a shiny, innovative approach to your interactions with others on October 10 when romantic Venus in your third house of communication forms a positive trine to game-changer Uranus in your eleventh house of networking. If you've been thinking about heading up a brainstorm with colleagues or proposing a new volunteer project with friends, this could be an exciting time to do just that. As long as you're straying from your usual mundane routine, you'll feel thrilled and fired up.

And on October 11, the confident sun in your fourth house of home life forms a tense square to lucky Jupiter in your seventh house of partnership, and you might be empowered to dive into a family project with all your energy. The issue is that you might be overestimating how much time or get-up-and-go you truly have to spare. Make sure you take it one step at a time.

### LEO

Hitting it off with colleagues comes naturally on October 7 when the emotional moon in your eleventh house of networking forms a positive trine to the confident sun in your third house of communication. This could be a brilliant day to collaborate on a group project.

Then, you could find yourself itching to be spontaneous and switch things up on the job on October 10 when money-conscious Venus in your second house of income forms a harmonizing trine to game-changer Uranus in your tenth house of career. This could mean letting go of a commitment that hasn't been serving you financially or intellectually, or diving into a new project that feels unexpected but potentially rewarding. Just make sure you've crossed all your Ts and dotted your Is before going for it.

### VIRGO

It's easier for you to express what's in your heart and your head to friends on October 9, the emotional moon in your eleventh house of networking forms a harmonizing trine to information-gathering Mercury, your ruling planet, in your third house of communication. This moment could help you get even more in sync.

The same old routine, perhaps on date night or when spending time catching up with friends, likely won't feel nearly as appealing as usual on October 10 when romantic Venus in your sign forms a positive trine to revolutionary Uranus in your ninth house of higher learning and adventure. You'll want to have an eye-opening experience (think cooking an exotic recipe or enjoying a thrilling hiking trail). Make your desires known, and you're sure to have a memorable time.

### LIBRA

You'll be in your feelings in a positive, harmony-bolstering way on October 7 when the emotional moon in your ninth house of higher learning forms a happy trine to the confident sun in your sign. Getting in touch with your intuition comes naturally and can fuel your personal and professional goals. You'll do well to zero in on skills you'd like to hone in order to boost your profile.

And on October 11, the confident sun in your sign forms a tense square to lucky Jupiter in your fourth house of home life, and you might overcommit yourself when it comes to tasks for and social fun with loved ones. Although your heart feels so full and generous right now, it's really quite possible that less could be more.

### SCORPIO

You'll feel like your most rational thoughts are in sync with your heart's desires on October 9 when the emotional moon in your ninth house of adventure forms a harmonizing trine to communicator Mercury in your sign. This could be an ideal time to plan an upcoming trip or have an overdue philosophical conversation with a loved one.

Then, you might feel like you want to shake up the way you're relating to and working with others on the job on October 10 when social Venus in your eleventh house of networking forms a positive trine to revolutionary Uranus in your seventh house of partnership. Pitching a creative new project that requires all hands on deck, or sitting down with a close colleague to hash out an exciting plan you'll execute one-on-one could feel like exactly what you need to satiate this current urge for excitement.

### SAGITTARIUS

Working alongside friends or colleagues can prove exhilarating on October 7 when the intuitive moon in your seventh house of partnership forms a harmonizing trine to the confident sun in your eleventh house of networking. It's easier than usual for everyone to get on the same page, and together, you can formulate a plan that helps you execute and cross the finish line on a crucial group project.

Then, on October 10, money-conscious Venus in your tenth house of career forms a harmonizing trine to revolutionary Uranus in your sixth house of daily routine, and you might find yourself craving new responsibilities or a different creative outlet on the job. Exploring this desire now could lead you to exciting new horizons and opportunities. Just make sure you're being true to yourself, and the rest will follow.

### CAPRICORN

Expressing your most creative ideas to colleagues and friends can come even more naturally on October 9 when the emotional moon in your seventh house of partnership forms a positive trine to communicator Mercury in your eleventh house of networking. In turn, their feedback and collaboration could propel you to the next level. Trust that your head and your heart are in sync—which is sure to set you up for success.

And the same day, go-getter Mars in your fourth house of home life squares off against transformative Pluto in your sign, potentially setting up a power struggle with a loved one. Taking a step back to reflect on and better understand your motivations could prove useful and give you a leg up when it comes to navigating through this challenging moment.

### AQUARIUS

On October 9, when the emotional moon in your sixth house of daily routine forms a harmonizing trine to communicator Mercury in your tenth house of career, you'll be able to tune into your intuition just as easily as your rational thoughts when it comes to plotting out a game plan for reaching your current professional goals. Giving equal weight to your gut and your head can help you land on and pursue the next right move.

And on October 10, romantic Venus in your eighth house of emotional bonds and sexual intimacy forms a cozy trine to game-changer Uranus in your fourth house of home life, and you might be inspired to surprise your partner or someone special with a sweet, out-of-the-blue date night or gesture. Trusting your gut could lead to an exceptionally pleasurable time.

### PISCES

You might be frustrated if it feels like the world is against a certain, heartfelt game plan you had in mind for spending time with loved ones or a partner on October 6 when the emotional moon in your fourth house of home life forms a tense square to romantic Venus in your seventh house of partnership. It's totally natural to feel disappointed, but also know that this moment will pass.

On October 9, the intuitive moon in your fifth house of romance forms a sweet trine to communicator Mercury in your ninth house of adventure, making for a beautiful moment in which you'll absolutely trust that you know what you want to say to someone special. Speak from the heart, and you'll be exactly where you're meant to be.



ILLUSTRATION AND RECIPE BY TALIA STEELE | @ST.TALULA

### FLUFFY “SPOOKY” PANCAKES

What makes these pancakes spooky is eating them in “spooky season,” of course! Put the batter in Halloween-y cookie cutters if you have them.

- 1 cup flour of choice (GF blend works)
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup milk of choice (I use oat)
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp vanilla

1. In medium bowl, add flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and mix with a spoon.
2. Mix liquids in a liquid measuring cup.
3. Pour liquid mixture into dry mixture. Whisk.
4. Let batter rest for 5 minutes.

5. Pour 1/4 to 1/2 cup of batter onto a nonstick pan or griddle over medium heat.
6. When the tops begin to bubble, flip each pancake and cook until golden (after about 3 minutes).
7. Serve warm with maple syrup and a dash of cinnamon, if you'd like. Enjoy!



# GET PUBLISHED!

---

*The Uniter* is seeking volunteer writers, illustrators and photographers.

---

You don't need experience, just a desire to tell stories!

---

For more information, email [editor@uniter.ca](mailto:editor@uniter.ca).