

THE **U**NITER

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Deserving of respect



THE STATE OF DISABILITY SUPPORT IN WINNIPEG

U SPEAKER
SERIES



PRESENTED BY THE UNITER
& THE UWSA

Matthew James-Wilson

Discussing hurdles Black artists and workers often face within indie and DIY art communities

Editor of FORGE. Art Magazine, creative director at Danger Collective Records, photographer and writer

HOSTED BY JEREMY
HAYWOOD-SMITH (JAYWOOD)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28 / 7 P.M.

ON FACEBOOK LIVE ON
THE UNITER PAGE





A NEW MANTRA

THOMAS PASHKO
MANAGING EDITOR

THOMPASHKO

“We’re not out of the woods yet.”

I’ve been repeating this old expression to myself over the last several days like a mantra. I’ve been repeating it in reference to COVID-19, to the violence and political strife south of our border, to the various political and social crises that have frayed at my patience and sense of hope for the past year.

I repeat the phrase, not out of my usual sense of pessimism, but to try and temper a new, joyful optimism that, while we might not be out of the woods, it’s starting to feel like we’re getting close.

The disastrous US presidency of Donald Trump ended yesterday. The problems he created won’t leave alongside his bad hair and fake tan. Just this week, federal Conservative leader Erin O’Toole announced his intention to eject MP Derek Sloan from the party after discovering that Sloan accepted a donation from the notorious neo-Nazi Paul Fromm. O’Toole was vociferous in his disavowal of white nationalism, despite using Trumpian rhetoric in his own “Take Back Canada” campaign.

With COVID restrictions about to loosen in Manitoba, it’s tempting to call up that person I matched with on Tinder and, after months of texting and the odd socially distant outdoor walk, say, “Want to grab some dinner?”

We’re not out of the woods yet.

Despite loosening restrictions, Manitoba health officials say delayed delivery of vaccines to Canada means 1,000 fewer doses per day will be administered in the coming months. The revelation that, until recently, gyms inside City of Winnipeg buildings remained open shows we still have a major vacuum of leadership on the current crisis.

I remind myself and repeat that folksy mantra, not out of pessimism, but to remind myself of what we need right now: patience.

We’re not out of the woods yet

In this week’s edition of Origin Stories, arts and culture editor Hannah Foulger looks at the early days of Shakespeare in the Ruins. Read more on page 6.

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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 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.

CORRECTIONS

In the Jan. 14 article “Origin Stories: Jon Klassen,” we stated that Jon Klassen’s book *I Want My Hat Back* won the Caldecott Medal for both writing and illustration. The Caldecott Medal is awarded solely for illustration. *The Uniter* regrets the error.



Keisha Greaves, founder of the clothing line Girls Chronically Rock, will speak as part of the Uniter Speaker Series at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 21.

THE UNITER SPEAKERS SERIES PRESENTS KEISHA GREAVES

A passion for adaptive fashion

KEESHA HAREWOOD | FEATURES REPORTER | KEESHAHAREWOOD

Keisha Greaves truly believes some things happen for a reason. Of course, this sentiment comes with moments of grief and confusion. Certain hardships may always seem senseless in the grand scheme of things. But by adopting this outlook, Greaves maintains a spark of gumption that empowers her fabulous approach to life.

After all, she has a fashion empire to build. Greaves is the business owner, CEO and founder of Girls Chronically Rock, a clothing brand made to motivate those in the disability community to pursue their passions in life and to spread awareness about adaptive fashion to able-bodied people.

"I don't just look at Girls Chronically Rock as a clothing brand. I look at it as a movement," she says.

Greaves was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy at age 24. The decline in her physical ability was gradual, at first.

"When I was first diagnosed, I was still able to walk. I was driving, still doing me, working in the merchandising field."

As things got worse, Greaves had to cope with no longer being able-bodied. She questioned how her disability would impact her dream of being a fashion designer and business owner.

"I totally shut down," Greaves says.

At first, she was in denial. Coming to accept her new situation took time, but with the help of her support system and other members of the disability community, she managed to find some solace and a way to adapt her dream into her new reality.

But once-simple things, like getting dressed, became infinitely more complicated as time went on.

"When I come out of the shower, it's like I just finished the Boston Marathon," she says. "To get dressed, putting on, say, leggings and

a T-shirt, and that's with a personal peer attendant's help, it can be exhausting."

It's for this reason Greaves has a passion for adaptive fashion: clothing designed specifically to be more accessible, so the user can get dressed with less difficulty.

"We have regular merchandise, regular T-shirts, but I now have adaptive T-shirts on my website," she notes.

But Greaves' work goes well beyond creating adaptive garments.

An issue Greaves identified after being diagnosed was the lack of education regarding adaptive fashion in university programs.

In fact, despite having earned a bachelor's in fashion design and merchandising, Greaves did not learn about adaptive fashion during her time at Framingham State University.

"That's why I'm so excited now (that) I'm able to partner and collaborate with the fashion department at Framingham State, teaching them about adaptive fashion.

"I'm looking to get other colleges involved," she says.

In addition to this undertaking, Greaves continues to find ways for her brand to grow.

This March, she plans on releasing an adaptive swimwear collection. The aim for the collection is to help motivate people with disabilities to participate in aquatic therapy and other water-related activities – and to look good at the same time.

"When I am in the pool, I feel like I'm a mermaid, because I can do things in the water that I can't do on land," she says.

"If I can create something like an accessible bathing suit, where it either has the hooks on the shoulder to easily take on and off, something like hooks or velcro in the lower crotch area ... that's going to make a major difference."

Although Greaves' work is impressive and ongoing, she has to reckon with her disability every single day.

"I wake up every day not knowing what the muscular dystrophy wants to do," she says.

Some days are worse than others, but even on a good day, going grocery shopping or to a restaurant poses a challenge. Even if a place is able to accommodate those in the disability community, other people tend to stare and be disrespectful.

Plus, Greaves will experience moments of self-doubt every now and then. She questions whether people are getting the message she's trying to spread, or if her business will succeed.

Still, Greaves is proud of all that she's accomplished. She's happy to have worked through her denial and to know how to express her love for fashion in a way that makes a difference.

"I feel like this is my purpose."

Knowing what she knows now, if she could go back to her 23-year-old self (when the symptoms of muscular dystrophy first began to surface), she would tell herself it's going to be okay.

"You're building something here. Keep going."

Ultimately, that's the message she wants people with disabilities to take in when they listen to her story.

But with her growing fashion empire, upcoming projects and dedication to the disability community, one thing's for certain: Greaves' story is only just beginning.

The Uniter Speaker Series presentation of A Conversation with Keisha Greaves will be held virtually at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 21. To attend, visit [facebook.com/theuniter](https://www.facebook.com/theuniter).

WHOSE SILOAM IS IT?

Social media campaign started to hold Siloam Mission accountable

NAAMAN STURRUP | ARTS AND CULTURE REPORTER |  NAAMANSTURRUP

Started only on Dec. 31, 2020, the Instagram account @notmysiloam (NMS) has already amassed over 1,300 followers. However, NMS creators Kara Von Riesen and Winnipeg musician Sierra Noble say their campaign has only just begun.

Von Riesen says “People often turn to social media when they feel unheard, so this is an opportunity for individuals to have their voices heard and amplified.”

NMS is a campaign to help bring awareness to the lack of Indigenous cultural and spiritual support at Siloam Mission. It calls for the removal of present CEO Jim Bell and to reorganize the board, after their appeal to the board was not heard on Nov. 3 of last year.

As former employees of Siloam, the NMS organizers want to reiterate that Siloam Mission has provided a positive impact in the community, but that can be broadened with some leadership reorganization.

Siloam Mission leaders “have created a lot of problems in the organization and with the community that they serve, and they are simply unfit to fix them and to be in leadership anymore. It is also extremely important that their employee and board seats represent the community that Siloam serves,” the NMS organizers say.

According to 2018 Winnipeg Street Census, an estimated 66 per cent of people experiencing homelessness were Indigenous, and Von Riesen says this statistic calls for organizations like Siloam Mission to represent diversity better in the workplace.

“Indigenous people are best equipped to serve Indigenous people. If 70 to 80 per cent of

people using the services are Indigenous, then that number should be reflected in its staff, board members and essentially along all lines of employment,” she says.

Von Riesen notes that although many campaigns to raise social awareness do start with “Not My,” they cite Not My Stella’s as a local example that communicates a similar message.

“What we liked about Not My Stella’s was that it made clear that Stella’s has great servers people should still be supporting, but there is a very clear problem (with) upper management and the direction of leadership that Stella’s had,” she says.

“In the same way, Not My Siloam tries to articulate that. Siloam does good service, and good work is happening here. However, there is a really big problem with those in leadership positions.”

Although NMS focuses on Siloam Mission, Noble notes that they want their campaign to be an example to other organizations that serve majorly Indigenous communities that are not Indigenous-led.

“We hope that other nonprofit organizations are not looking at this and just sitting back and thinking, ‘So glad this is not us,’ or ‘so glad we are not as bad as them,’” Noble says.

“I hope that they take this as an opportunity to really take a hard look at what they are doing and how they can be doing it better, because reconciliation is hard work. It is the most important work that needs to be happening in our country, and it is up to all of us, but especially up to settler populations to be a part of it and an active part of it at all times.”



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Siloam Mission has come under fire by former employees, who allege the organization has failed to accommodate Indigenous spiritual and cultural programming.

In an emailed statement to *The Uniter*, Siloam Mission quoted CEO Jim Bell as saying, “One thing we all share is a commitment to, and compassion for, those living in poverty and homelessness in our inner city. In acknowledging that mistakes have been made, we have accepted an invita-

tion to begin a collaborative conversation in an effort to walk a path together toward resolution on these important matters.” The statement goes on to say that “arrangements are already underway. Siloam will continue to provide further updates.”

BUILDING A COMMUNITY FOR ACCESSIBLE SPORTS

Manitoban athletes with disabilities share their stories

SUNNY ENKIN LEWIS | VOLUNTEER

Many athletes with a disability have lost their access to sport during the COVID-19 pandemic. Founded in 2018, Accessible Sport Connection Manitoba (ASCMB), formerly known as Manitoba Accessible Sport Council, aims to connect accessible sports organizations and support athletes with disabilities.

Kirby Cote and Jared Funk are co-hosting a series of events for ASCMB titled “Disabled People Talking: A Virtual Conversation on Accessible Sport in Manitoba.” The event on Jan. 16 invited participants to share their stories, experiences and ideas about accessible sport in Manitoba.

As stated on the event’s Facebook page description, “through individual storytelling, we hope to begin gathering our community together, by sharing the joys and connection that accessible sport and recreation might facilitate.”

ASCMB “is an organization that is looking to bring the accessible sport community together,” Cote says. There are separate organizations for each accessible sport, so they “just want to come in and try to create some community,” Cote says. They also hope to increase communication and participation.

Cote, a visually impaired Paralympic swimmer, and Funk, a wheelchair rugby Paralympic athlete, both have the role of communications and collaborations within the organization. Cote also holds the title of vice-president.

ASCMB also hosted the H.E.A.R.T. awards, which honoured athletes with disabilities.

The event was inspired by a similar one Cote attended for the Burning Man organization about inclusion and racism.

“It was excellent,” Cote says. “I was able to just sit and listen to what (the speakers) had to say and hear about how the Burning Man community could become stronger within itself and better for BIPOC folks. I wanted to give persons with a disability in Manitoba the same opportunity to come in and share their experiences in accessible sport – not too much direction, just whatever story they’d like to share.”

Funk sees the virtual format as an opportunity to connect athletes across Manitoba. “The very hard thing about Manitoba is that we’re very well spaced out,” Funk says. “So this is great, where we can just get everybody together to talk and (ask) questions, (share) stories (and) communicate with each other,” Funk says.

The event is especially important now, because “persons with a disability living through a pandemic, and especially active persons with a disability ... have lost a lot more access than an able-bodied person has,” Cote says. “They are going to be, most likely, some of the last people to see a return to play or a return to sport or a return to activity just because of any risk factors associated with their health.”

“I think having this event, it’s the beginning, and hopefully when things become safe for our community to get back to being active, we’re ready to start creating that post-pandemic environment,” Cote says.



SUPPLIER PHOTO

Paralympic wheelchair rugby player Jared Funk is one of the co-founders of Accessible Sport Connection Manitoba.

Both co-hosts highlighted the contributions people from Winnipeg have made to accessible sports, including the invention of wheelchair rugby. “We really are the heart of accessible sport in Canada, and we’ve really never come together to acknowledge that, and we would like to bring all that back together as a group,” Cote says.

“Creating a community and becoming stronger, having a stronger voice is one of our main focuses,” Funk says.

To keep up to date with future events and connect with Cote and Funk, follow ASCMB’s Facebook or their Instagram, @ascmanitoba.



ARTS



SUPPLIER PHOTO

An early performance by Shakespeare in the Ruins, which has performed William Shakespeare's work in public spaces since 1993.

INVIGORATING THE BARD

Origin stories: Shakespeare in the Ruins

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

Since its inception in 1993, Shakespeare in the Ruins (SIR) has delighted audiences with its innovative approach to William Shakespeare's works. The Trappist Monastery ruins in St. Norbert, as SIR's venue for most of its tenure.

SIR began as a small co-op of theatre professionals, at a time when premiere Winnipeg theatres were largely casting out-of-town actors. The founding members included director Ann Hodges, Debbie Patterson, Maggie Nagle, Arne MacPherson, Sarah Constible, Grant Guy and Michelle Boulet.

While many larger cities, including To-

ronto, Vancouver, Chicago and New York, were performing Shakespeare in parks, there was nothing like that in Winnipeg. In 1994, SIR staged its first production of *Romeo and Juliet*.

"Right out of the gate, it found its niche, and there was no going back," Boulet says. "The first year, we had more school shows than public shows. It was our bread and butter." SIR has toured stripped-down productions of Shakespeare's plays to schools since 2004. They also present a full production in the Trappist Monastery ruins every summer.

The original monastery was developed in 1892 by Cistercian monks. In 1978, the monks moved to a more secluded location in Holland, Man. A fire destroyed most of the buildings in 1983, leaving behind the Tyndall-stone chapel that forms most of the ruins. In 2001, a wall fell on Arne MacPherson during a production of *Hamlet*. The following year, the structure of the ruins was deemed unsafe and closed for reconstruction and reinforcement of the buildings.

During the years-long reconstruction, SIR performed in a number of parks around the city and on the roof of a downtown parkade. Boulet says these venues were great but had some drawbacks. "We were fighting with urban noise all the time," Boulet says.

As soon as construction was finished in 2012, they were back in the ruins. Thanks to an exclusive contract with the Manitoba government, they have priority control over the park during productions.

Since then, SIR has continued to make innovative promenade-style theatre at the ruins. Audience members are moved from different areas around the buildings to view

different scenes. The ruins add a striking effect to each production. The flexibility in staging contributes to the innovative and evolving work of SIR.

In 2016, SIR founded a Shakespeare education and acting program at Stony Mountain Penitentiary. They have also facilitated the development of new plays like *Awaken* (2020) by Tracy Penner and *Head* by Debbie Patterson (2006) and *The Odyssey* (2000) by Rick Chafe, which went on to full productions at SIR.

In 2019, Rodrigo Beilfuss, director and alum of the Stratford Festival, stepped in as SIR's new artistic director, the first in its 25-year history who was not an artistic associate of the company.

"Many of our city's greatest actors and technicians started at SIR," Beilfuss says. "We value up-and-coming voices deeply, and we love working with young people. In terms of outreach and inclusion, we are in the process of assembling a search committee to expand our board. We have also shifted our focus to developing new plays that are Shakespeare-inspired and that look through the perspective of 'othered' communities."



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SUPPLIED PHOTO

RATATOUILLE: THE TIKTOK MUSICAL

Original TikToks available under #RatatouilleMusical



KEESHA HAREWOOD | FEATURES REPORTER | @KEESHAHAREWOOD

Ratatouille: the TikTok Musical is the first of its kind: a crowdsourced virtual musical and internet meme adapted from the 2007 Pixar film *Ratatouille*.

As the Cinderella of internet memes, in August of 2020, Emily Jacobsen posted a TikTok to celebrate Remy from *Ratatouille*. This sparked a popular trend throughout the TikTok community. Many composers, actors and choreographers individually posted their

own TikTok contributions for the musical.

The musical continued to evolve, and before long, a few professionals from the award-winning theatrical production company Seaview got involved. Working with the original TikTok creators, Seaview put on the show in the form of a filmed Broadway-quality charity concert, featuring an all-star cast.

Since its premiere on Jan. 1, 2021 the ticket sales have amassed \$2 million for The Actors

Fund. This isn't surprising, because the musical itself was a delight.

The musical features a long list of incredibly talented performers. Naturally, Tituss Burgess as Remy, Wayne Brady as Django, Andrew Barth Feldman as Linguini and Adam Lambert as Emile stand out.

Despite most of the cast having to record their scenes at home (with the exception of Burgess, who recorded his parts in a studio), they brought a great deal of personality and charm to their roles.

Burgess was the perfect choice to play the musical version of Remy. There wasn't a single moment where Burgess was not expressive or fun to watch. His comedic timing and acting ability came through consistently – not to mention his voice was outstanding and contributed greatly to an altogether sensational performance.

Brady, Lambert and Feldman were incredible. It was impossible not to smile every time they popped up on the screen. Their voices were phenomenal, and each of them committed to their characters, fully living out the emotional highs and lows and each scene. Considering how they pulled

this off while filming from home, the quality they each brought to the table was nothing short of impressive.

But the best part about the musical was the soundtrack. Every single song in the musical has that classic, glorious aspect to it that one would typically see in other light-hearted Broadway musicals. It's whimsical, cheerful and bursting with energy. Each song was distinct and perfectly tailored to the characters they were written for. Plus, the songs are catchy. The lyrics are witty and just the right amount of corny. It's the kind of music that's easy to sing along to.

If nothing else, seeing the work of non-professional artists from TikTok come to life with professional Broadway talent was inspiring. The TikTokers whose work was featured in the musical were credited in a meaningful way, with the artists appearing on screen during the end credits and their names being listed in the online playbill. Unfortunately at press time, tickets for *Ratatouille: the TikTok Musical* are no longer available. At least the original TikToks are still there for everyone to see.

ARTS BRIEFS

HANNAH FOULGER | ARTS AND CULTURE EDITOR | @FOULGERSCOVFEFE @SPEAKSTORY

Juice Journal

University of Winnipeg literary journal *Juice* just released its 20th-anniversary issue. Originally slated to come out fall 2020, *Juice 20* is finally available. To order a copy, send an email to uwinnipeg.juice@gmail.com with a name and phone number, the number of copies you wish to purchase (at \$5 each) and preferred option of curbside pickup or delivery, as well as an e-transfer with the correct amount.

Planet Pantry

Planet Pantry is now offering \$5 delivery, as well as curbside pickup. This online market started in the fall with pop-up markets delivered to The Forks. It's now expanded to a 24-7 online web store. Planet Pantry sells sustainable, ethical and local pantry items. Find their store at planetpantry.square.site.

Creating in a digital world

Prairie Theatre Exchange is hosting a free professional development workshop as part of their Training Hub. Join HEIST, a live-art media company from Halifax as they discuss dramaturgy for the live digital medium. Registration opens on Jan. 25. The Jan. 30 workshop runs from 1 to 2 p.m. for a maximum of 20 people. Sign up at pte.mb.ca for this free workshop. Closed captioning and ASL interpretation is available.

Mocap with your webcam

On Jan. 25, Video Pool and Young Lungs Dance Exchange are co-hosting a workshop for contemporary dancers and performers about motion-capture technology. Media artist Freya Björg Olafson will lead participants through a virtual hands-on experience of using RADICAL, an AI-powered motion-capture application with webcams. This free workshop has a limit of 100 participants. It runs on Jan. 25 from 7 to 8 p.m. For more information, visit videopool.org.

Artist Boot Camp on grant writing

On Jan. 23, Creative Manitoba and MAWA (Mentoring Artists for Women's Art) will host a workshop on how to write arts grants. Writer and editor Daniella Sanader will lead participants through preparing budgets, resumes and project proposals. Participants are encouraged to bring projects they wish to write grants for. This free workshop will be hosted through Zoom on Saturday, Jan. 23 from 1 to 4 p.m. Email Alison at info@mawa.ca to register.

Cinematheque at Home: Sound of Metal

Cinematheque is hosting weekly screenings through Vimeo on Demand. Patrons pay for access to featured films through the Cinematheque website. From Jan. 8 to 28, *Sound of Metal* will play. The debut feature of Darius Marder follows a drummer touring the US who starts to become Deaf. The film is in English and ASL with French subtitles. Cinematheque at Home titles are \$5.99 to rent.



THE UNITER IS SEEKING COMIC CONTRIBUTORS

The Uniter is looking for local emerging artists to create comics on a volunteer basis.

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

Contact Talia at creative@uniter.ca for more information!

Deserving of respect

THE STATE OF DISABILITY SUPPORT IN WINNIPEG



Kalyn Falk and her son Noah Falk. Noah has autism and is aided by a direct support professional.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, essential workers have borne the brunt of exposure for the sake of the public. Direct support professionals (DSPs) – who work with people with developmental disabilities, either in day programs or around the clock in group homes – have only recently been given the “hero pay” premium afforded to other

essential workers during the pandemic on top of their regular salaries.

While working with people with developmental disabilities during a pandemic places DSPs at a higher risk of getting sick than those working jobs with less human contact, the everyday reality of direct support in Winnipeg previ-

ous to the pandemic was already fraught with problems. While the community-based approach to disability care is an improvement on the institutional system, it is flawed and devalues the work of DSPs.



These archival photos from the 1950s show what is now known as the Manitoba Developmental Centre, which housed many Manitobans with developmental disabilities starting in the late 19th century. Photos courtesy of Mary Horodyski

History

From the late 1800s to 1970s, Manitobans with developmental disabilities were housed in what is now known as the Manitoba Developmental Centre (MDC), which continues to operate on a reduced basis today. People First of Canada, an initiative of people with developmental disabilities, has advocated for the complete closure of MDC and other institutions because of the neglect and abuse many of them faced there.

David Weremy, an MDC survivor and winner of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for his anti-institutionalization activism, was quoted in the *Institution Watch* newsletter from People First: “An institution is no place for anybody to live. You don’t really live there – you just are there.”

In the 1960s, new models of community-based care started to develop, allowing people with developmental disabilities to live independently and have support workers come to their homes. In Manitoba, most direct support comes from for-profit enterprises, like DASCH, St. Amant, Epic Opportunities and Pulford Community Living Services.

Direct support professionals have a wide variety of roles, including assisting with financial decisions, arranging transportation and facilitating activities, as well as more physical supports like helping people to bathe, eat and dress. The benefit of community-based support is that people with developmental disabilities can find what works best for them, in a living situation they choose, which is a right afforded to them by Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by the United Nations and Canada:

a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement.

b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community-support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community.”

Noah’s story

The rights and freedoms of people with disabilities have been complicated by the pandemic. Noah Falk, a 22-year-old autistic artist, had been living half-time at a group home until the Code Red lockdown. Since then, he has been living at home full-time

with his parents Kalyn and David Falk and attending a day program with ImagineAbility. While Noah is fun and friendly, he needs direct support in order to be his best self.

“If Noah can communicate, it is quite easy to live with him. If people don’t understand him, he can be very aggressive and can be very frustrated,” Kalyn Falk says. “With (Noah), you have to learn a whole new language, and you have to have a behavioural strategy. You can sometimes get choked and injured.”

Noah is able to thrive with the right DSP who has the ability to implement behavioural strategies, modifying their behaviour to meet Noah’s needs. However, when DSPs are themselves improperly supported by their agencies, it makes it more difficult for them to provide the best care.

Julia, whose name *The Uniter* changed to protect her identity against reprisal from her employer, is a DSP at a for-profit support agency in Winnipeg.

“I love being able to help people,” Julia says, “but there is definitely a lack of communication.” She says that staff meetings are rare, and she’s never seen a manager read the daily reports written at the end of each shift.

“Somebody called them absentee managers. I think that that’s probably a good way to describe it,” Linda Williams, a DSP in Winnipeg and Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) executive, says. “It’s very hierarchical and top-down. (The managers all) want to do administration and write reports, but nobody wants to do the direct service” in homes, which would help them properly understand how things really work in the house.

This administrative disconnect can mean that decisions are being made that don’t reflect the needs or desires of DSPs or the people they support. Julia says that when organizations are buying new properties for their clients, “they’re buying them in newer developments, such as Sage Creek. Multiple staff members tend to bus to work, and there is not a (reliable) transit option during the day or into the evening.”

Wages

Many DSPs struggle to make ends meet because of the low salaries set by each agency, which is likely why so many of them use public transit. Julia continues to live with her parents and cannot afford to live independently or purchase a vehicle.

“The wage range is \$13.75 to \$15.05 (per hour). With such a high turnover rate in this field, it stands to reason that most (employees) are near the entry rate,” Williams says.



The #EssentialToUs campaign fought to secure pandemic “hero” pay for direct support professionals.

“Every time you turn around, you’re dealing with a new manager or somebody else that you don’t know. It’s very difficult for staff, and just think how bad it is for the people that we serve. They’re the ones that suffer the most.”

Even though DSP work can be strenuous and difficult, their wages do not reflect the value of their labour.

“Noah’s had hundreds of workers already

in his lifetime. He’s 22. They are fond of working with him, but as soon as they get a better job, they move on,” Kalyn Falk says. “Our last guy couldn’t afford to pay his rent, so he had to find a second job. He would work with Noah all day, and then he would work in a factory for eight hours. In the morning, he would come to our house completely exhausted.”

During the pandemic

During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, Abilities Manitoba advocated for DSPs to receive “hero pay” through their #EssentialToUs initiative. They asked for a raise of wages to \$15.11, with an additional \$5 per hour premium for people directly working with COVID-19 patients.

The Manitoba government eventually instated the Caregiver Wage Support Program in early January 2021, which topped up the regular DSP salary by an extra \$5 paid directly from the government. This program only covers working hours between Nov. 1, 2020 and Jan. 10, 2021.

While this program may be extended past Jan. 10, that leaves seven months of the pandemic unaccounted for. As well, the added premium will take most DSPs to \$18 per hour, which is only just above a living wage.

During the time unaccounted for by the Caregiver Wage benefit, the Manitoba government initially failed to provide adequate protection for DSPs. In October 2020, CUPE reported that the Manitoba government provided home-care workers and DSPs with expired personal protective equipment (PPE). Manitoba teachers who received the same PPE reported to the media that the masks had started to cause rashes. Support agencies have since started to provide adequate PPE to DSPs, Williams says.

COVID-19 exposure

As of Jan. 10, 2021, the Manitoba government made COVID-19 vaccinations available to home-care workers, and DSPs have started to receive their vaccinations.

However, in the past year, St. Amant, Epic Opportunities and Pulford Community Living Services have all reported cases of COVID-19, and, in some cases, deaths of clients and staff. Mark Carreiro, who was supported at St. Amant, died Dec. 19 2020, after spending his last two weeks on a respirator.

“One worker got it in the backseat of the taxi going to the hospital with this guy, and, of course, the hospital doesn’t really want them either, because with (intellectually disabled people), you can’t keep masks on them. (Three residents) in that house caught it as well as staff,” Williams says. “I think this is going to go on for quite a while, (and) even though vaccines are coming out, there’s still danger everywhere.”

After the pandemic

Even after all DSPs in Winnipeg are vaccinated, and the pandemic is effectively over, the wage increase should be kept in place because of the importance of the work they do. A system that lacks administrative support, living wages and a COVID-safe environment is not built to succeed in a way that benefits everyone.

Noah is “deserving of respect and ... a good life, and the people who support him are also deserving of respect and a good life,” Kalyn Falk says.



“Noah’s had hundreds of workers already in his lifetime. He’s 22. They are fond of working with him, but as soon as they get a better job, they move on.” - Kalyn Falk

CITY BRIEFS

ALEX NEUFELDT | CITY EDITOR

ClimateWest begins work

The University of Winnipeg’s Prairie Climate Centre, the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the University of Regina’s Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative have co-founded ClimateWest, a non-profit regional hub for credible climate information, data and adaptation guidance for the Prairie region.

Sharing the ToyBox

The ToyBox project, a literacy and numeracy tool created by University of Winnipeg professor Dr. Sheri-Lynn Skwarchuk, has received provincial funding and will soon enter its second round of testing, aiming to have 800 families participate in the project. It’s open to all Manitoba families with children from two to eight years old.

Inaugural writer-in-residence reading

Souvankham Thammavongsa, who is the U of W’s 2021 Carol Shields writer-in-residence, will give her inaugural reading on Feb. 4, as well as a distinguished lecture on Feb. 24. Thammavongsa won the 2020 Scotiabank Giller Prize with her short-story collection *How to Pronounce Knife*.

Taking the road to decarbonization in architecture

Sustainable Building Manitoba is holding The Road to Decarbonization with Efficiency Manitoba on Jan. 27, which will feature Éric Souque, an energy-efficiency specialist from Efficiency Manitoba. The event will focus on how to reduce energy consumption in new building projects.

Upcoming Weweni panel discussion

On Jan. 27, Dr. Julie Nagam will moderate a panel that will “reflect on the collapse of the old world order, sustained through ongoing fears and objectification of the other, critically mapping the emergence of new and radical alternatives” and feature Dr. Ronak Kapadia, Dr. Jenny Heijun Wills, Dr. Heather Iglo-liorte, Tasha Spillett and Dr. Mishuana Goeman.

Black Writing in Canada speaker series: Brandon Wint

Brandon Wint is a poet, a spoken-word artist and the latest writer to be featured in the University of Winnipeg Department of English’s Black Writing in Canada speaker series in a virtual event on Jan. 28. Wint’s poetry has been published in *The Great Black North: Contemporary African-Canadian Poetry*, *Black Writers Matter*, and his debut poetry book, *Divine Animal*.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD THAT NEVER GAVE UP

Book highlights the evolution and resilience of West Broadway

CIERRA BETTENS | CITY REPORTER |  FICTIONALCIERRA  CIERRABETTENS

What defines neighbourhood change?

That's the question Dr. Jino Distasio and Mike Maunder ask in their new book, *Divided Prairie Neighbourhood*.

Through an extensive culmination of archival research and interviews with former and current residents, *Divided Prairie Neighbourhood* tells the story of West Broadway's history, evolution and resilience.

"Among Canadian neighbourhoods, West Broadway is very unique," Distasio says. "It has been an area where there's just been this tremendous level of community resilience in the face of so many different challenges – but nobody's ever given up."

Distasio says West Broadway has attracted folks of many stripes since the '60s.

"People were pulled into the area, whether they were draft dodgers, hippies, all kinds of activists, all wanting to do two things: find a place where they might fit in but also put the time and energy into making the place that they were in better," Distasio says.

Today, the neighbourhood where nine in 10 residents are tenants continues to boast a diverse population home to students, Indigenous people, newcomers and many others. Distasio says what binds them together is a sense of collective agency: a powerful, underlying desire to make the neighbourhood the best possible place it can be.

Greg MacPherson, the executive director

of the West Broadway Community Organization (WBCO), first moved to the neighbourhood in 1995. While he says the neighbourhood itself has changed significantly, its ethos of collectivity and community has remained.

"It's a community and neighbourhood in the truest sense," he says. "People are always working towards something better, and there's a ton of activism."

Over the years, the WBCO has offered a wide range of programming. Some of their ongoing projects include the Good Food Club, which has been combating food insecurity through community building since 2002. Recently, MacPherson says they've started an initiative to deliver tablets to people who don't have access to computers.

In a city renowned for suburban sprawl and car culture, MacPherson says West Broadway remains one of the few places in Winnipeg where living without a car is feasible.

"If you're a person who travels by wheelchair, by transit, there's really no better place in Winnipeg for someone to live," MacPherson says.

West Broadway hasn't been without its share of challenges over the years. The emergence of high-rise condos and forms of gentrification have posed risks of displacing lower-income residents who call the neighbourhood home.



UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG (SUPPLIED)

University of Winnipeg professor Dr. Jino Distasio has co-authored *Divided Prairie Neighbourhood* with Mike Maunder.

Still, Distasio says the unique resilience embedded within the community comes from their willingness to rise up to challenges and come up with solutions.

"Through community organizing efforts, there's been a real shift in some of the outcomes," MacPherson says. "I think the

story of our neighbourhood is one of perseverance and transition."

Whatever challenge comes in West Broadway's way, community members never back down. They roll up their sleeves and organize for the better.

TENSIONS BETWEEN CHURCH AND SKATE

Queer skate community says The Edge Skatepark's religious ties exclude many

CIERRA BETTENS | CITY REPORTER |  FICTIONALCIERRA  CIERRABETTENS

In the past few weeks, The Edge Skatepark, run by the non-denominational Christian organization Youth for Christ Winnipeg (YFC Winnipeg), has been the subject of a dialogue started by the 2SLGBTQIA+ skate community in Winnipeg, where a number of skaters expressed discomfort with the policies of YFC Winnipeg that govern the skatepark.

For those who wish to keep skateboarding into Winnipeg's long, harsh winter months, indoor skateboarding is often the only option. However, Chrussy, an organizer with Queer Skate Winnipeg, says many 2SLGBTQIA+ skaters miss out on skating in the winter months because of The Edge's ties to certain religious beliefs.

"The Edge is the only major indoor skatepark (in Winnipeg)," Chrussy says. "It's central, it's a nice facility, but this church element has prevented so many people from showing up."

Cliff Heide, the executive director of YFC Winnipeg, declined *The Uniter's* request to be interviewed. However, Amber Anderson Skrabek, YFC Winnipeg's senior director of community and partner relations, said this in an email statement:

"We all want all youth to feel loved and accepted in all our programs, and after the stress of this past year, it's more important

than ever that we find a way to work together to ensure a safe space for all youth to hang out and have fun. We're hopeful this dialogue will help us do that better."

Sophie Ashton is an organizer with *The Other Skaters* zine. She posted a list of calls to action to YFC Winnipeg and The Edge Skatepark on Instagram. She says they would like to see the removal of exclusionary language in a policy within YFC's employment contract that Ashton says prevents openly 2SLGBTQIA+ skaters from holding leadership positions at The Edge.

"Not even just the policies, just the association of the church is enough to make people feel uncomfortable," Ashton says. "It's supposed to be a space of community recreation, but because it's funded a lot by donors who are primarily religious donors, they (2SLGBTQIA+ people) can't become leaders in leadership roles, and they can't be staff."

"We acknowledge the wording can appear exclusionary for those who do not share or fully understand our beliefs," Anderson Skrabek said in an email statement. "Our beliefs are what enable us to raise the financial support needed to run these programs and enable our staff to raise their own financial support to work at YFC."

Ultimately, both Ashton and Chrussy say they would like to see an alternative indoor



PHOTO BY KEELEY BRAUNSTEIN-BLACK

Sophie Ashton of *The Other Skaters* zine worries that the church-run The Edge Skatepark is further marginalizing 2SLGBTQIA+ skateboarders.

skate space separate from religious affiliation implemented in the city.

"We could have one that has an indoor skatepark, but also harm-reduction supplies," Chrussy says.

In the meantime, Ashton says *The Other Skaters* would like to see a public statement

from YFC Winnipeg on the matter, as well as more training for staff on the barriers 2SLGBTQIA+ folks face.

"Primarily, we want people who work at The Edge to put that pressure on YFC and make sure that they know that this is not an issue that's going to go away," Ashton says.



TWO U OF W STUDENTS START NON-PROFIT

A.S.E. provides free tutoring and mentorship to students

CALLUM GOULET-KILGOUR | CAMPUS REPORTER | CGOULETKILGOUR

Transitioning from high school to university is hard, regardless of the circumstances. This must especially be the case this year. With most Canadian universities holding most of their classes online due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many students, especially those in their first year, are struggling with the transition and are having a hard time meeting their fellow students.

Two University of Winnipeg (U of W) students are trying to address this problem. Cousins Jacob Wiseman and Jonah Perlmutter are the cofounders of A.S.E., a not-for-profit organization with the goal to make “transitioning from high school to first-year university as easy as possible,” according to their website.

“We’re a tutoring and mentorship group completely run by students,” Wiseman, a kinesiology student, says, adding that all those involved in the organization are volunteers.

“We originally started A.S.E. because of the pandemic,” he says. “Our goal is to match first-year students with upper-year students that are willing to help them in their subjects.”

To access A.S.E.’s services, students visit their website and fill out a short form. From

there, they are matched with a tutor or a mentor who will help them at no cost.

“Mentorship and advice can help people have a good post-secondary education,” Perlmutter, a biochemistry student, says.

“It’s as integral to post-secondary education as is anything,” he adds.

Currently, A.S.E.’s services are offered at eight Canadian universities: University of Alberta, University of British Columbia, McGill University, McMaster University, University of Ottawa, Queen’s University, University of Toronto and Western University.

To run the operation, Wiseman and Perlmutter have a large team.

“We have just over 80 (volunteers),” Wiseman says. He notes that these include not only tutors and mentors, but also volunteers working on the operational and financial sides of things.

“There’s a lot of great volunteer opportunities,” Perlmutter says.

“Being able to give volunteers the opportunity to practice their teaching and ‘practice their subject’ is pretty amazing,” Wiseman adds.

Moving forward, A.S.E. is planning to expand in other North American institutions.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

U of W biochemistry student Jonah Perlmutter is one of the co-founders of A.S.E., a not-for-profit tutoring organization.

“One of the first next steps we’re planning to take is expanding to the University of Winnipeg,” Perlmutter says.

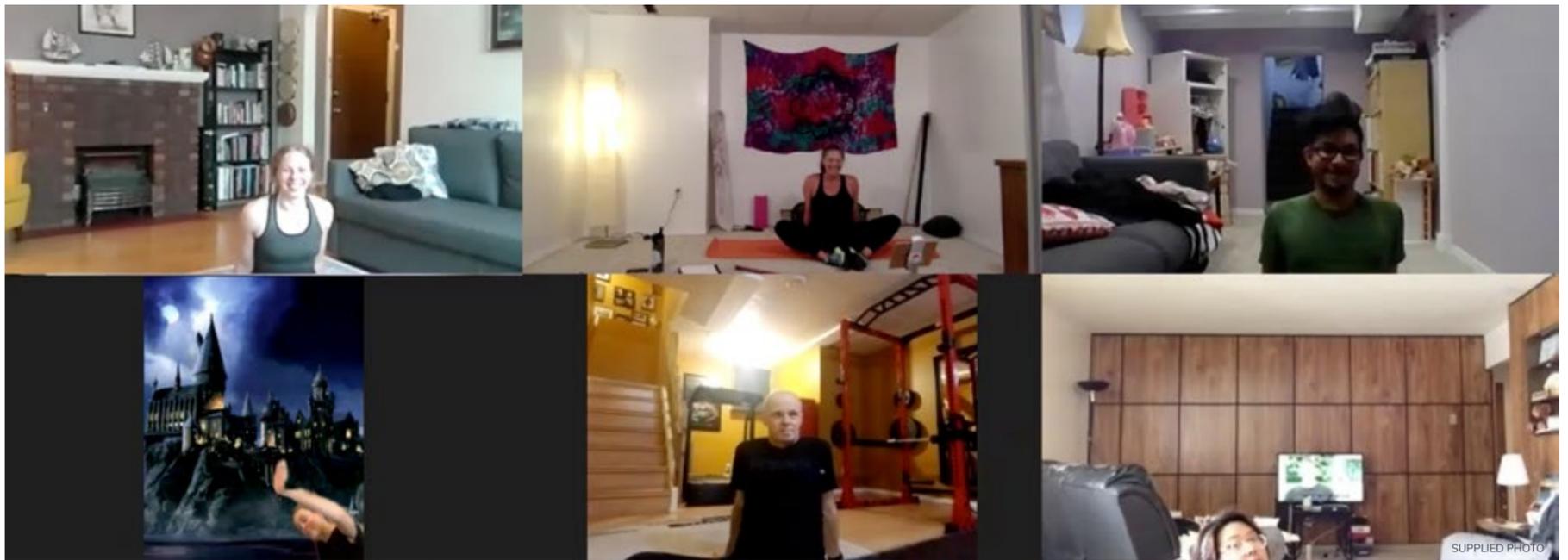
“Another thing that’s in the works right now is an Indigenous youth outreach program,” he says.

The co-founders mention that Indigenous students are disproportionately faced with poor internet access. They hope to provide tu-

toring via the phone as an alternative to bandwidth-heavy video calls.

“We’re working on this outreach program to help level these systematic disadvantages,” Perlmutter says.

For more information on A.S.E., visit their website, asetm.com.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

A screenshot from one of the Bill Wedlake Fitness Centre’s online sessions in the early days of COVID-19

U OF W FITNESS CENTRE OFFERS ONLINE COURSES

Helping students stay active during the pandemic

CALLUM GOULET-KILGOUR | CAMPUS REPORTER | CGOULETKILGOUR

Since last March, it seems that many days are spent sitting down in front of a computer screen. With COVID-19 lockdowns, online learning or work and self-isolation, people are staying home much more than usual. For many, this means that they are not able to get as much exercise as before the pandemic.

Though the University of Winnipeg (U of W) Bill Wedlake Fitness Centre has been

closed since March 2019, the Recreation Services department is offering free online fitness classes to all members of the public.

Tricia Klassen, manager of the Fitness Centre, encourages students to take advantage of what is being offered.

“We have a wide variety of classes that we’re offering, such as yoga, a barre circuit and a total-body workout,” she says. All classes are held via Zoom.

Klassen notes that these classes are accessible to beginners.

“The level is definitely good for everybody, and we try to keep it simple,” she says. In fact, equipment is not needed for any of the classes, though those who wish to have a more challenging workout have the option to use dumbbells and bands.

“The focus is getting people moving ... in an inclusive environment where everyone can feel comfortable,” Klassen says.

She adds that she and her colleagues miss having day-to-day contact with centre members.

Currently, fitness facilities are closed in Manitoba due to public-health orders. Klassen says plans are in place to have a more COVID-friendly space when the centre reopens – which will happen when the rest of the university reopens.

Iris Griffin, a U of W Fitness Centre patron, is enrolled in four of their online classes.

“I work remotely, and having the classes scheduled into my day is the perfect break,” she says, adding that she is as active as she was before the pandemic.

“Staying active is always important,” Griffin says. “Right now, it’s even more important

from a mental-health and health perspective.”

So far in January, participation in online classes offered by the Fitness Centre has doubled. However, for those who might not want to register for a fitness class, there are other ways to stay active.

“Taking small walk breaks during the day or things like that can definitely help,” Klassen says. The U of W Athletic Therapy Centre’s website also has easy-to-follow exercise programs posted.

“It’s really important (to stay active), especially now that we’re all so separate,” Klassen says. “If someone doesn’t want to take a fitness class, they could dance to their favourite music or (do their) favourite exercise while watching TV.”

Studies have shown that during the COVID-19 pandemic, people’s average screen time has increased, while average exercise time has decreased.

“Exercise is really important for well-being,” Klassen says. “Just moving is really important.”

Information on the U of W’s Recreation Services department’s online fitness classes can be found at bit.ly/3bHdVY7.



ILLUSTRATION BY TALIA STEELE

ON AGENCY IN DEATH AND LIFE

The tricky conversations around Bill C-7

ALEX NEUFELDT | CITY EDITOR

In December, the Supreme Court of Canada granted the federal government a two-month extension to pass Bill C-7, delaying the deadline until Feb. 26.

Bill C-7 would reduce the limitations on who is able to get medical assistance in dying (MAiD) by eliminating the requirement for foreseeable death and eliminate the currently mandatory 10-day reflection period for those whose death is foreseeable.

Whitney Hodgins is the chairperson of the Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities and lives with disability and mental illness. She says the league's stance on

the bill is "a tricky one."

"I know there are benefits, but we have to look at the negatives," Hodgins says. "It begs the question of our government: are we actually supporting people to thrive or to do the opposite?"

Hodgins says the changes proposed by the bill would theoretically help people who have struggled to get through the process of being approved for MAiD, but they have much wider-reaching potential impacts.

"We're in the middle of a pandemic, and a lot of people are struggling right now with surviving in general, and now you put people

potentially who have disabilities in a situation where they're not being supported already by programs provincially or federally," she says.

Hodgins notes that people with disabilities in Manitoba could receive \$200 in pandemic support from the provincial government and \$600 from the federal government: far less than what was provided through the Canada Emergency Response Benefit.

Hodgins says while she thinks Bill C-7 comes from a place of attempting to help people, the full repercussions of legislation like this have to be considered.

Dr. Michelle Owens is a professor in the women's and gender studies department at the University of Winnipeg and the program co-ordinator for the disability studies program. They see the subject of MAiD come up most often in upper-level seminar classes. Their students "realize it's complex and multifaceted and approach it with a great deal of sensitivity."

Owens often introduces the topic using Dr. Alison Kafer's work on the death of 12-year-old Tracy Latimer, who had multiple disabilities and was killed by her father in 1993.

"That was around the same time that Sue Rodrigez, who had ALS, wanted to kill herself but lacked the ability to do so and was

aided by former politician Svend Robinson," they say. Owens explains that Rodrigez's death is an example of what the first wave of MAiD legislation aimed for, "but in the public imagination, they both became seen as a kind of mercy killing."

Owens says while they believe people should be able to control their death as a feminist principle, they understand why the focus on death in MAiD legislation instead of better social supports for people with disabilities in life is a red flag for many.

"When you look at it, they're taking away a very big safety net for making sure that people know what they're doing and are sure of what they're doing," Hodgins says.

"Considering we passed legislation a year ago that was going to promote inclusion in public spaces, it feels like this bill is a step backwards from what we were doing before, at least from my perspective," she says.

Owens says MAiD should be a part of academic classes outside of the philosophical and legal, initiating larger conversations in the arts and social sciences about what impacts quality of life and what it means to offer a better life.

PROFile

HOW TO GET AWAY WITH SCREENWRITING

Noam Gonick, instructor, theatre and film department, U of W

KEESHA HAREWOOD | FEATURES REPORTER | @KEESHAHAREWOOD

When it comes to running a screenwriting class, Noam Gonick, an instructor for the theatre and film department at the University of Winnipeg (U of W), prefers to incorporate storytelling into his teaching style.

"I try to be as casual and unplanned as I can be within the syllabus, so that I can throw out a lot of those stories from my work experience so far that might be beneficial," Gonick says.

Gonick picked up this technique from attending acting classes by Wynn Handman, the late director and teacher.

"The neatest thing about Wynn Handman was that his classes were just all storytelling," Gonick says. "The stories came out of his real lived experience as a director, as an actor, some about Broadway – and those, I think, stick with you a lot. And there's no plan to them. A lot of times, it's just some-

thing random he said because of something that a student did in their performance."

Gonick also devotes time toward giving practical advice to help his students, especially for those who are serious about pursuing a career in the arts.

"There's a lot of unknowns when you enter a career in the arts, and you're a student considering becoming a professional artist, filmmaker or a writer, a screenwriter," he says.

According to Gonick, there's a need for more talented screenwriters and artists in Winnipeg. He hopes to inspire any new screenwriters by making the way forward a little more clear.

"I'm hoping that, at least from every few classes, somebody tries to devote themselves to that practice."



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Do you have any go-to stories that you like to tell your students?

"There's a new one that I told for the first time that I'm excited about, which is that for the first time, I'm actually working with one of my students on a new feature-length film script. So that's started, I don't know where it's gonna go, and I don't know if I'll tell those (stories) to the next batch of

students, but I did tell them to this batch, because it kind of made me feel a bit like Annalise Keating from *How to Get Away With Murder*."

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

"Flying would be nice."



YOU GET ME SO HIGH

Mother of Goo

MADELINE RAE | COLUMNIST | @MOTHEROFGOO

This article contains descriptions of drug use and sex. This writer is not suggesting the purchase or consumption of illegal drugs. In the spirit of harm reduction, this writer strongly urges folks who choose to use drugs (whether legal or illegal) to research how this may affect them and/or interfere with prescriptions they already take.

People partake in drugs to feel pleasure. Monique Tula, executive director of the New York-based National Harm Reduction Coalition, speaks to adrienne maree brown about drug use in *Pleasure Activism*, saying: "First and foremost: no one should be punished for what they put in their own body if it doesn't cause harm to other people."

"Pleasure is that 'I'm alive' feeling that can intersect with addiction, control, coping, escape, trauma and so many other experiences of harm." (adrienne maree brown, 242)

I am not promoting drug use, but I am suggesting that people exercise critical thinking before judging someone for using. It's also important to question the reasons a substance is illegal. A quick Google search into the racist history around cannabis prohibition should explain the importance of paying attention to motives.

"Sluggish, lazy, stupid, and unconcerned." (Rosie Watson quoted in Frank Ocean's "Be Yourself")

The above quote is a mother pleading

with her child to not smoke cannabis. I've been smoking weed for years, and, yes, she's right that weed can make a person act in those ways. But it has also been a wonderful medicine for myself and many others. Now that the Canadian government has deemed weed legal to consume, much of the stigma and derogatory language once attributed to it are slowly disappearing.

I take an SSRI antidepressant every day to thrive (and function). In a way, it has helped my sex drive, because wanting to die is not a very sexy feeling. But one side effect of SSRIs can be difficulty climaxing.

Cannabis has once again shown up in a very helpful way in my life. It helps me tune into the delicate sensations required to climax and tune out unwanted distractions. Diane di Prima writes about fucking under the stars while stoned out of her mind: "(We) made love, and made love again, smell and touch alive as never before, all our skin one flaming organ of touch."

I will never forget the first time I had sex on mushrooms, because it was beautiful, and because it was the first time I ate ass. It is incredibly vulnerable to be high with someone you are having sex with, even if that person is yourself. Sensations are heightened, the ego disappears, and an uninhibited ability to feel it all takes over.

An hour into my mushroom trip, my skin begins to tingle. I look at the hairs on your chin like tiny evergreen trees, and I count them



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Mother of Goo columnist Madeline Rae says cannabis can be an important part of a healthy sex life.

while my eyes dilate. The blue around my pupils disappears. The television screen is paused, and a giant, glowing orangutan is watching us fuck. We will never climax, only get closer and closer, like an asymptote. The present is stretched beyond my comprehension of time, warped so that this moment is now forever. I cannot comprehend how much love I feel for you pulsing through my entire being.

I'm thankful for the sex I've had on drugs. I'm thankful for those overwhelmingly gorgeous moments of connection with someone I love, my own being and the living, breath-

ing earth around me. These moments have served as reminders for me to stick around, to take time for holy pleasure.

Madeline Rae is a pleasure activist, writer and artist living on Treaty 1. Rae holds a BFA Honours in performative sculpture and is graduating with her BA in psychology in June 2021, while pursuing a career in sex therapy. She is trained in client-centred sex education and harm reduction. She can be found at motherofgoo.com.



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

Student Services

STUDY SKILLS WORKSHOPS

Study Skills Workshops are designed to improve your learning skills and help you achieve your academic goals. Organized by Academic and Career Services, these workshops are FREE to all students. Topics that will be covered include note-taking, using the Library, time management, and academic writing.

The workshops for Winter Term 2021 will be delivered via Zoom on Mondays and Wednesdays **until Feb. 3**. Pre-registration is required.

Please see: uwinnipeg.ca/academic-advising/study-skills-workshops.html.

TUITION FEES FOR WINTER TERM

How do I pay my fees if Student Central is not open for in-person payments?

Tuition payments can be made using the bill payment feature on your financial institution's website.

1. Log on to your bank's website
2. Add The University of Winnipeg – Tuition as a bill payee
3. Use your seven-digit student number as the account number

(International payments can be made via flywire.com.)

U2020W fees are due **Fri., Jan. 22**.

Note: The fee deadline is NOT the same as the Add/Drop Period (which ended on Jan. 19). Students who drop a U2020W course January 19-22 and onwards are still responsible for paying all of the course fees.

SINs AND TAX RECEIPTS

The Canada Revenue Agency requires all designated educational institutions to

provide students' Social Insurance Numbers (SIN) on the T2202 tax forms and so The University of Winnipeg is requesting students' SIN in order to comply with this requirement. There is a module in WebAdvisor and Student Planning through which students add their SIN to their University record. Please follow these steps:

1. Login to WebAdvisor
2. Click on Current Students
3. Click on Student Planning/Registration or Student Finance
4. Choose Social Insurance Number (SIN) Information
5. Click on the pencil/edit icon on the right side
6. Type in your nine-digit SIN and save

The University will begin the process of creating the T2202 tax forms on Jan. 22, in order to have the forms ready to be posted on WebAdvisor on February 28. It is very important that students provide their SIN before **Fri., Jan. 22**.

GRADES

Grades for Fall Term classes will be posted on WebAdvisor about **Wed., Jan. 27**.

Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, University of Winnipeg students may choose how their grades will affect their grade point average (GPA) calculation for the Fall 2020 term. For details, please see: uwinnipeg.ca/covid-19/final-grade-operations-faq.html.

APPLICATIONS FOR GRADUATION

Applications for June graduation are now open for students who expect to complete all of their requirements by the end of April. The deadline to apply for graduation is **Mon., Feb. 1**. Go to the "Student Planning/Registration" link on WebAdvisor. Click on

the "Graduation" tab and apply to graduate.

BURSARIES

Winter 2021 Bursaries will open mid-December 2020. Application deadline will be **Mon., Feb. 1**.

Need help getting connected to the financial supports you need and deserve to pay for your education? Visit the Awards website uwinnipeg.ca/awards 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.

TRANSIT SUBSIDY

A \$78 UWSA Transit Subsidy will be available to students who purchase a semester bus pass for the 2021 Winter term. Applications are available through our online award application system and will remain open until **Mon., Feb. 1**.

WEBINAR WEDNESDAYS

In weekly sessions, Student Services staff will continue to share valuable strategies and tips to help you succeed at UWinnipeg. The next session is on **Wed., Feb. 10**. Please see: uwinnipeg.ca/student-services/webinar-wednesdays.html.

FALL/WINTER TERM COURSES – FINAL WITHDRAWAL DATE

The final day to withdraw from a Fall/Winter Term (U2020FW) class is **Tues., Feb. 23**. No refund is applicable. Courses are dropped through WebAdvisor using the "Student Planning/Registration" link.

BURSARIES FOR GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDIES EXPENSES

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.

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. You can still receive student aid for the September 2020 to April 2021 study period even as long as you **apply before the end of February**. Go to: uwinnipeg.ca/awards/government-student-aid/index.html.

MYVISIT APP

Need to see a Student Central representative or an Academic or Career Advisor? You can now queue for Zoom drop-in sessions with Student Central, and/or Academic & Career Services using myVisit!

Student Central has drop-in Zoom sessions where students can ask questions "in person" with a SC staff member.

The Zoom waiting room is enabled. One student will be admitted at a time. Students wait for their turn and need to present their UWinnipeg student card (or other photo ID) to talk about their account, the same as actual in-person interactions at SC.

To add yourself to the queue, please use the myVisit app (by Q-nomy) available for Apple or Android phones. Turn off the location permission in the app. The SMS notification when it is your turn shortly will provide the Zoom info. Student can add themselves to the queue 10:00 am - 4:30 pm from Monday-Friday.

Thirty-minute Zoom appointments with Academic and Career Advisors can be booked through the myVisit app or via myvisit.com as well.



CALLING OUT COVID DENIERS WON'T CHANGE THEIR MINDS

But there are still benefits

ALLYN LYONS | VOLUNTEER | @ALLYNLYONS

About a month ago, while on an Instagram binge, I noticed an acquaintance of mine from high school had shared a story of a man in scrubs spewing COVID-19 conspiracy theories. In the video, the man made a number of claims, including that “the media” is exploiting pandemic content for views, the government is trying to control us, and the vaccine was created too quickly to be safe. None of it was highly original or believable.

I typed a knee-jerk “lmao are you stupid?” in the reply bar but froze over the send button.

I know most people don't change their mind when you embarrass them online.

I recrafted the message and sent my high school acquaintance a link to statements from Manitoba's doctors and nurses. We argued. Neither of us convinced the other of anything.

Fear of vaccines isn't new. A now-debunked 1998 paper suggesting a link between vaccines and autism led to a measles outbreak in 2008 and 2009 after parents opted out of having their children vaccinated.

It's easy to label anti-vaxxers as stupid, but the truth is a lot of people are just plain scared. Parents don't put their kids at risk of catching a

deadly disease unless they think they're protecting them from something else.

A 2017 *New Yorker* article by Elizabeth Kolbert examined how, when presented with facts, more often than not, people will double down on misinformation that confirms their worldview.

Right now, COVID-19 is an extremely chaotic force in many people's lives. Believing they are protecting themselves and their families by not getting the vaccine is one way individuals might feel like they are winning back control.

Since most people are not experts in epidemiology, it isn't shocking that people are trying to understand this new virus in ways that fit within their perspectives.

But what can we do when a perceived threat of vaccines leads to real, dangerous consequences for people who are at higher risk for COVID-19?

Instagram has started to link to resources from the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as local health ministries, whenever someone searches for coronavirus-related material. When searching for vaccine info on Pinterest, users are only shown results from public health organizations like the WHO and Cen-

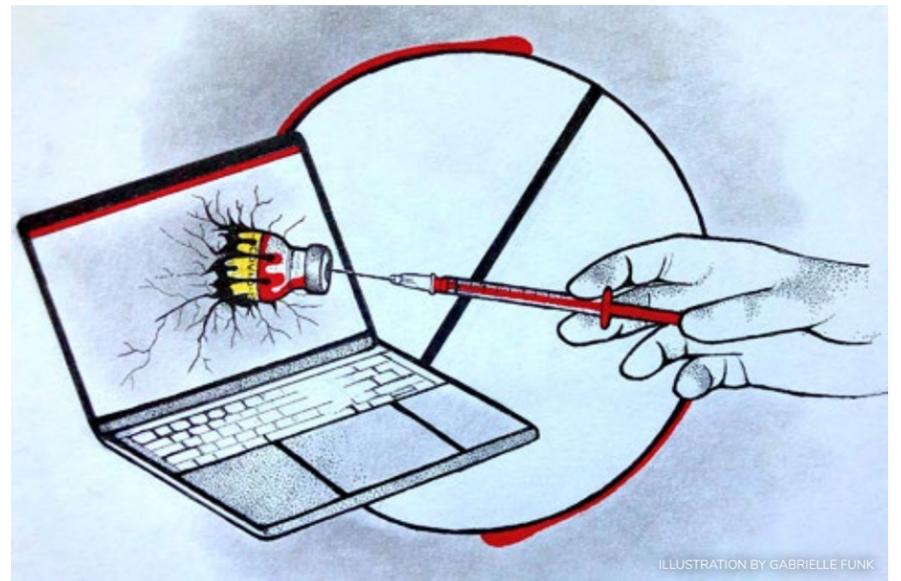


ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

ters for Disease Control (CDC). Nonetheless, people who truly believe COVID-19 is a hoax will find voices to bolster that belief.

A popular way to combat COVID-19 deniers has been to call them out online, either by messaging them privately or quoting their tweets with disparaging comments.

In July, a Toronto woman filmed herself being denied service at a hospital after she refused to wear a mask. Twitter users tried pointing out that healthcare workers were simply trying to keep people safe, and some folks just made fun of her.

Despite the online teasing, the self-described “Freedom Lover” has continued to share information about upcoming anti-mask rallies on Twitter.

If someone believes from the bottom of their heart that Bill Gates has filled

the COVID-19 vaccine with microchips, changing their mind seems unlikely.

But someone who is nervous about receiving the vaccine or who is wondering if all these precautions are really worth it might feel more assured when they see people they know and trust sharing accurate information.

Calling someone out for sharing vaccine misinformation might not lead to a moment of seeing eye to eye with them, but there is always still a chance that it will save someone from being persuaded to wade into the COVID-19 conspiracy swamp.

Allyn Lyons is a graduate of the University of Winnipeg and Red River College's Creative Communications joint-degree program. Please don't call her “Allen.”

WITNESSING 'WHITE SUPREMACY UNCHECKED'

The words we use to describe violence

DANIELLE DOIRON | COPY AND STYLE EDITOR | @DANIELLEDOIRON

Months before the COVID-19 pandemic made its way to North America, I walked through an exhibit at the Newseum in Washington, D.C. Every gallery in this now-closed museum focused on journalism, storytelling and First Amendment rights, but one dedicated to the 9/11 terrorist attacks gripped me.

From floor to remarkably high ceiling, the exhibit displayed newspaper covers in different languages and from countries around the world, all detailing what happened that day in September 2001. After dutifully locating every Canadian newspaper they archived, I remember comparing the headlines and images each major outlet used.

I did something similar after a violent mob stormed the United States Capitol on Jan. 6. The rioters, spurred on by then-president Donald Trump and armed with weapons, zip ties and American flags, attempted to halt Congress' confirmation of the 2020 election results.

The *New York Times* called the attack a “rampage.” The *Winnipeg Free Press* referenced “chaos at the Capitol.” A handful chose the term “insurrection” in bold letters. Far-right media outlets like Fox News, Breitbart and One America News Network opted for the phrases “supporters of President Trump” and “protestors” to describe the rioters and “vandalized” to depict the havoc these people wreaked.

Words matter. Roxane Gay, an author and *New York Times* contributor, didn't mince hers when, a day after the attack, she wrote that “the world bore witness to white supremacy unchecked.”

On Jan. 6, the US Congress was, in Gay's words, “set to conduct a largely ceremonial count of the electoral votes. There were rumblings that a few ambitious, craven politicians planned to object to the votes in several states.” Instead, the country and world looked on as “radical, nearly all white protestors (stormed) the Capitol as if it were the Bastille” at the “ex-

PLICIT invitation of the president.”

The next week, James Poniewozik wrote that this “insurrection was one of the rare live-TV atrocities that grew only more sickening, more terrifying, more infuriating as more days passed.”

Poniewozik, a *New York Times* TV critic, describes how people tend to remember the initial moments of horrific events, especially if they're broadcast live. “What we remember of the 9/11 attacks, for instance, is largely what we saw in the first few hours: the planes hitting, the towers collapsing, the pedestrians fleeing.”

What happened on Jan. 6, he notes, “seemed to last for days. New smartphone videos of violence came out one by one. The horror came in waves, the attack revealed with every image as more bloodthirsty and deplorable.” And with each new video, discovery and arrest, media outlets had more material to cover.

But despite everything I learned since, it's still hard to shake that initial image, which Poniewozik describes as “a sea of attackers seeping up the steps and through the entryways” of the Capitol. It's also difficult to clear my mind of the words I read immediately after the attack.

Rep. Cori Bush quickly named the rioters who stormed the Capitol as “domestic terrorists” in tweets I rushed to share on my personal accounts. I couldn't let go of that label when reading and watching the news. I not-so-silently judged public figures and reporters who couldn't seem to utter the word “terrorist.”

I can't speak for the many politicians who, in Gay's words, “shared the same platitudes about America that they always do when something in this country goes gravely wrong,” but I'm all too familiar with the ethical dilemmas most journalists face.

The Canadian Association of Journalists ethics guide reads: “We serve the public interest, and put the needs of our audience — readers, listeners or viewers — at the forefront of our newsgathering decisions.”



ILLUSTRATION BY GABRIELLE FUNK

That includes using words that accurately reflect what's happening but don't cause readers, listeners or viewers undue harm. It's dangerous to conflate a violent, armed mob and peaceful protestors. However, while some people feel that terms like “domestic terrorism” more appropriately describe the attack, these charged phrases also deserve scrutiny.

Instagram account @vigilantlove uses “arts, healing and activism to organize against Islamophobia” and shared a series of text slides explaining why they avoid the phrase “domestic terrorists” when discussing the white supremacists who stormed the Capitol.

“Calling white supremacists ‘terrorists’ fuels the Islamophobic and racist war-on-terror apparatus,” one slide reads. “The war on terror disproportionately harms Muslim, Black and Brown communities ... and thrives on surveillance, criminalization, incarceration and deportation. Using language that has been weaponized to harm these communities is neither radical nor helpful in the fight to protect the very communities that white supremacists and white supremacy (harm).”

The Instagram account @antiracismdaily posted about their decision to stop calling the Capitol rioters “domestic terrorists” in a recent post: “referring to terrorism, although well-intentioned, can have a negative impact on Communities of Color.”

As difficult as it might be to both accurately and responsibly describe this siege and its fallout, coverage is crucial. That's why it initially annoyed me when podcaster Ryan McMahon directed this tweet to Canadian media outlets:

“We don't need a week's worth of your takes on what happened in the US yesterday. Today, pivot directly towards the organizations, the politicians, lobbyists and corporate

skills that are pushing these same ideologies here in Canada. Tell us about that.”

Canadians absolutely need takes from local media, but McMahon has a point: where's the widespread coverage, disdain and outrage for horrific attacks that happen within our borders?

When commercial fishers in Nova Scotia threatened Mi'kmaq lobstermen, dumped their catches and raided their property, a *Times* correspondent called the targeted violence “the latest flash point in a series of abuses of Indigenous people in Canada.”

The *Washington Post* described how “angry mobs ransacked two lobster pounds holding the Indigenous fishers' catch, pelting the buildings with rocks, barricading some fishers inside and dumping their lobster. One of the pounds was later burned to the ground in a fire that police deemed ‘suspicious.’”

In Canada, media outlets seemed to tiptoe around the issue. Using language eerily similar to how right-wing American news outlets described the Capitol attack, CTV News referred to the “Mi'kmaq lobster dispute,” while CBC used the phrase “skirmish” to describe what the federal Indigenous services minister labelled “unacceptable acts of violence.”

Watered-down versions of events may seem more palatable, but, just like sensational news headlines, they can do more harm than good. More than ever, journalists need to operate somewhere between these two poles. Here's hoping we can strike a balance.

Danielle Doiron is a writer, editor and marketer who splits her time between Winnipeg and Philadelphia. She's spending the pandemic reading, practising yoga and cursing out the governments in both cities she calls home.



HOROSCOPES

It's Aquarius season!

Aquarius is a fixed air sign, which means it's about the ways ideas remain constant. Thoughts and people are powerful at this time. This is an opportunity to link and build, at least online.

SOURCE: ASTROLOGY.COM

ARIES

If people came with warning labels, yours would say something like "Danger. Do not test me!" Heaven help anyone who decides that it might be fun to see just how far you can be verbally pushed, because right about now it won't be very far at all. Of course, as fiery as you are, this situation isn't all that rare, so the next best thing would be to have a T-shirt made up for occasions such as this.

TAURUS

Making a new friend isn't easy for you, especially now. You're feeling even more secretive lately, so if you do decide to let someone in on what you're feeling and how you've arrived at your decision, they'd better understand just how special that makes them. Then again, if they don't, would you have let them this close to start with?

GEMINI

If anyone knows how wonderful it is to have entertaining friends, it's you. You've spent a whole lot of time cultivating such a crew, and you don't take their affection lightly. You also don't invite someone into that circle without considering how their company will add to it or how existing members will take to them. Now that you're ready to open the books, be sure someone lets this fortunate newcomer know just how special the invitation really is.

CANCER

You've always had a great relationship with your superiors. In fact, they often treat you as if you're a peer, and most times you feel as if you're part of a family. That's exactly how you'll feel now when the higher-ups come to you for advice. If tongues start to wag, don't be too stressed about it. Everyone needs someone else to talk about.

LEO

When you're happy, everyone's happy. Your fiery nature just won't allow anyone to be depressed in your immediate vicinity, not if you can do anything about it. At the moment, you're feeling pretty darned fine, which means you can and will do your very best to make everyone around you as happy as possible. Stop short of interfering with the celebration of that well-deserved streak of luck you're currently enjoying.

VIRGO

If you're not sure about how to handle a certain situation that's far too delicate for prime time, don't mention it to anyone yet. You know as well as they do that there are still issues to be resolved, and until then, keeping quiet is best. You're in charge and you know it too. Call a meeting if you must, just to be sure that everyone is on the same page.

LIBRA

Relationships are always your number one priority, but at the moment that's going to go double. Your lucky other half, or prospective other half, will enjoy all kinds of wonderful attention, all aimed at ensuring that they know not only how deeply you care but also that those feelings aren't going anywhere. It's a given that your feelings will be returned, but it might be nice to have that conversation anyway.

SCORPIO

If anyone can make good plans and see them through to the end without even thinking about aborting the mission, it's definitely you. You're a planner and a plotter, equal parts detective and analyst. You've got a plan going now that's just about perfect from beginning to end, so much so that you'll be confident about sharing it with anyone. It involves helping a loved one out of a tough spot. Don't lose sight of your own needs in the process.

SAGITTARIUS

Generosity and excess make a dangerous pair of qualities to tote around, and it takes a special kind of person to do it. Those are your burdens. For the most part, you're up for the challenge and happy about it. Still, you should ensure that everyone you're so kind to appreciate what you're doing and that they're not taking you for granted. You should also take a little time to spoil yourself simply because it's time.

CAPRICORN

You've never been shy, no matter what the subject or where you happen to be when it's broached. You won't be shy now, but if you start to feel a bit of it coming on, remind yourself that if anyone has the right to be confident, it's you, especially since you've been so diligent and hardworking for so long. Relax. Let the rest of the world worry about your feelings for a change.

AQUARIUS

If you're at all worried that you might say or do something to offend someone, especially if you're pretty sure about who it is and what the situation might be, take someone along for the ride who's equipped to mediate in situations such as this. You know the person to ask because you've probably had to call on them in the past for just such a reason. And remember that it's not you they'll be watching out for.

PISCES

You're not in the mood to shop at the moment, but that doesn't mean there isn't something out there that will appeal to you so much that you won't go through hell or high water to have it delivered to your door within 24 hours. If you're not sure you can afford it, call the one person you know who'll talk you out of it without making you feel like you've cheated yourself.

THE AGE OF AQUARIUS

WHAT IS THE AGE OF AQUARIUS?

An astrological age is a time period in astrologic theology which astrologers claim parallels major changes in the development of Earth's inhabitants, particularly relating to culture, society and politics.

This cycle, which lasts roughly 26,000 years, means the zodiac sign visible at dawn on

the first day of spring changes about every 2,000 years.

Out of all the signs, Aquarius is the most free-thinking. The Piscean Age was dominated by a Christian patriarchal system. The new age is all about making room for a more egalitarian world.

Aquarius is heavily associated with getting informed and technology. So, the Age of

Aquarius, then, is about acknowledging that the system is broken and not waiting for someone to fix it.

As the Age of Aquarius begins, humanity is set to focus on the innovative and socialist ways that only the air element can generate for us.

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

— Knowledge is power. 2020

has shaken us all to our core and helped expose the cracks in society's foundation.

We've all experienced a shift in the way we relate to power and safety, so we should think of 2020 as the training wheels for a revolutionary couple years to come that could change the way we relate to our communities and what we value in society.