

THE



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DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

NORTH AMERICA'S OLDEST CAMPUS NEWSPAPER EST. 1868



RIO, A FOUR-YEAR-OLD RESCUED SATO - MEANING A STRAY PUERTO RICAN PUP WHO WOULD MAKE REGULAR CONTACT WITH HUMANS - IS READY TO SAFELY CELEBRATE HALLOWEEN. (PHOTO COURTESY OF MORGANE EVANS)

Happy Halloween!

Time for another kind of mask

(If you're socializing with less than 25 fully-vaccinated people)



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Engage with the DSU

Dear reader,

A few hours before I sat down to write this editor's note, the Dalhousie University Student Union (DSU) hosted its annual general meeting (AGM). AGMs are supposed to be one of the most important events in a student union's calendar. They are an opportunity for students to make sure their union is working for them. At each AGM, students are supposed to vote on things like bylaw amendments, which are crucial to a union's improvement. For votes to be valid, a meeting must reach quorum, which means there must be a certain number of students at the meeting. In 2016, the quorum requirement was increased from 75 students to one per cent of Dal's population. According to 2019 enrollment statistics, this would be about 205 students.

The DSU has not met quorum since 2016, failing to do so again this year. This means that the DSU is still operating under the 2016 bylaws. We'll have a story about what this means for students in our next issue, but for now, I want to urge students to engage with the DSU. As *Dalhousie Gazette* readers know, students at Dal face a myriad of problems. Students would have a much greater chance of overcoming these problems if the union was able to function to its full ability, but the DSU can't support students without student support. If the perception is that the Dal population isn't behind them, the student union loses much of its bargaining power with administration.

I understand that many students have valid problems with the DSU. You're back on campus and so are they. Go to a council meeting and have your voice heard. I also encourage students to learn more about what the DSU actually does. When COVID-19 struck in March 2020 and students were panicking about final grades, the DSU lobbied Dal to institute a pass/ILL grading option. That saved my ass, and I'm sure it saved some of yours too.

Being apathetic towards the DSU might be easy or cool, but it really only achieves one thing: nothing.



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Community asks for more respect following homecoming

Hoco parties on Larch and Jennings Street disturbed neighbours and resulted in arrests

BY ADAM INNISS, NEWS EDITOR AND YASMIN ZADUNAISKY, WITH FILES FROM LANE HARRISON

Residents around Dalhousie University are urging students to be more considerate after the homecoming street parties on Sept. 25.

“I really do love having students in my community — for 364 days of the year,” said Larch Street resident Caitlin Lees.

Lees said she and her partner were awake until almost 2 a.m. the night of homecoming, both from the noise and anxieties about student safety.

“I was a student for a long time. I’ve lived here for a while. Moving into this neighbourhood, of course we knew that there would be some more noise and parties, but I’ve never seen anything like that night.”

Lees said students were using her backyard as a toilet, defecating and urinating in the grass where her toddler plays. A physician, Lees became so concerned by what she saw that she provided medical care for a Dal student.

There were also 10 arrests made during the party, according to Halifax Regional Police (HRP). Police also “issued numerous summary offence tickets for illegal possession of open liquor,” according to a Facebook post the HRP made on Sept. 26.

Urge for coexistence

Despite students disrespecting Lees’s neighbourhood and property, Lees still appreciates the students in her community.

“There’s a lot of dialogue and maybe some rhetoric right now, around residents versus students. I want to emphasize that I think that we can all live together and have a community that’s safe and enjoyable for all of us,” she said.

Lees said students have helped babysit her child and having students around gives life to the neighbourhood.

Lees is also hesitant to lay blame on anyone specific. “I don’t think that any students set out that night saying, ‘Well, I’m going to be as disruptive as possible and make my neighbours feel unsafe.’ I don’t think anybody went out with that intention,” Lees said.

“I think COVID-19 has a lot to do with this. People are tired of being isolated. We’ve had students for two years now who have largely



TEN PEOPLE WERE ARRESTED AND MULTIPLE TICKETS WERE DISTRIBUTED, ACCORDING TO HRP. (PHOTO BY LANE HARRISON)

done university online. I can’t imagine having done the first two years of my undergraduate degree online. It would be really hard.”

Dalhousie Student Union president Madeline Stinson asks students to consider what kind of effect they want to have on their community.

“I went to the party in 2017. So I’m not going to tell these students that they’re irredeemable. One of them is probably going to have to be the DSU president someday. The chances

they all become stellar people are out there, they just need to recognize what it means to be

living on your own.”

Stinson said students who attended should look to the future and make positive changes. “Do some self-reflection and think about where you want to be. You don’t need to sit there in shame for months, you just need to recognize that you can probably do better in the future.”

Lees’s medical concerns

Lees said she feared most for the safety of students during the hoco street parties. “One of the things for me is knowing how overwhelmed the healthcare system has been lately. We’ve really struggled with getting timely access to emergency health services,” she said. “So to see people on my property or near my property, who need medical help, and not knowing if they’re going

to get it in a timely way, that was really hard to see.”

Lees said she had to give medical assistance to a party attendee, but wouldn’t disclose more information due to patient confidentiality.

Councillor Wayne Mason, the municipal councillor for district 7, which includes Dalhousie, shared Lees’s concerns. “We don’t need people jumping out of a tree and breaking their leg, or drinking so much that they need to go to the hospital when we already have emergency rooms that are facing risk of overload because of COVID-19.”

The fear of COVID-19 spread following the event was also a concern. Dalhousie asked party attendees to stay home for the week following the events in an email to students and statement

Continued on next page

“I really do love having students in my community—for 364 days of the year.”

released after the parties.

Stinson said the DSU has been getting emails from students concerned about COVID-19 spread. She said she hopes to see responsibility from students moving forward. “I do think students' actions in the coming weeks will be important to limiting the impact on public health,” she said.

Second-year philosophy student Rhamita Roy Bhattacharya was concerned during the events. “We came to Dal on Saturday, when the homecoming parties were going on. I went to see what all the hype was about,” Bhattacharya said. “It was terrifying to see such a big crowd. We had our masks on and nobody else had it on.”

Punishment from Dalhousie

In its statement condemning the “unsanctioned and illegal street parties” Dalhousie said it “will be pursuing disciplinary action under our *Code of Student Conduct*” against students who attended the parties.

The day after the events, Mason tweeted his condemnation of the events and wrote he would “debrief with police and Dal about next steps.”

In an interview with the *Dalhousie Gazette*, Mason clarified his position on pursuing students. “We do not want students in stocks down at historic properties. No. We don't want students walking through the streets being shamed like in *Game of Thrones*, that is not what we're looking for.”

Mason said more so than the university enforcing the code of conduct, students should take responsibility for their own actions. “Should somebody be expelled because there are pictures on social media on Larch Street? No, I don't think so,” he said.

However, Mason does think students who run certain party-centred social media accounts should be punished. “Any of the companies or social media accounts, national social media accounts, that encouraged people to do things that mean that we end up with a Delta [variant] outbreak on campus, and maybe your chance of having in-person classes to the end of December goes out the window?” he said. “Yeah, that violates the code of conduct and you should probably be expelled for that.”

In its message to students after the parties, Dalhousie said the Code of Student Conduct can be applied to off-campus activities “in situations which raise concern for the safety or well-being of students or the university community more broadly.”

Larch Street resident Neil Ritchie shared Mason's feeling. “These are things that are encouraged by these websites and encouraged by the lifestyle. Students are manipulated by corporate interests to drive traffic to their sites and ultimately sell advertising by having outrageous behaviours posted,” he said.

Ritchie and Mason did not refer to any social media accounts in particular.

However, the Instagram account Dal U Party Life, a regional off-shoot of the account Canadian Party Life, shared videos of Larch Street on homecoming to their 14,000 followers. At

the time of writing, the page is private.

Canadian Party Life has more than 500,000 followers. By visiting the biography of Dal U Party Life, users can find Canadian Party Life's website, which sells merchandise. The website does not currently display any advertising.

On Sept. 22, a few days before homecoming, Canadian Party Life posted the “2021 hoco dates” for multiple universities in Canada, which listed Dal's hoco as taking place on Sept. 25. The dates were determined by polls Canadian Party Life had previously posted on their Instagram stories. These stories are no longer available to view on the page, however, Canadian Party Life commented “BASED ON MOST REQUESTED DATES IN YESTERDAYS [sic] STORY POLLS,” under the post listing the various dates.

On homecoming, Canadian Party Life posted a photo of parties in Halifax. The caption read, “You love to see it.”

Dal U Party Life and Canadian Party Life did not respond to interview requests from the *Gazette*.

Ritchie also remarked on some of the demographics of the street party. “I didn't see any Indigenous students, or Black students, or persons of colour or new Canadians in the crowd,” he said. “It seemed to be more of a white privilege crowd. We need to understand the roots of systemic racism and institutional entitlement and we need to take a hard look at how we're educating our young people about empathy and respect and regard for communities.”

From hoco to Halloween: rules moving forward

First-year University of King's College student, Wren McMullen, is among the students

concerned for Halloween weekend after the scale of the homecoming parties. “I think [people partying] is fine as long as they follow COVID-19 guidelines and don't exceed the maximum gathering limit. The problem starts when people are reckless and don't have any regard for the safety of others. Jumping out of trees is probably taking it a bit too far.”

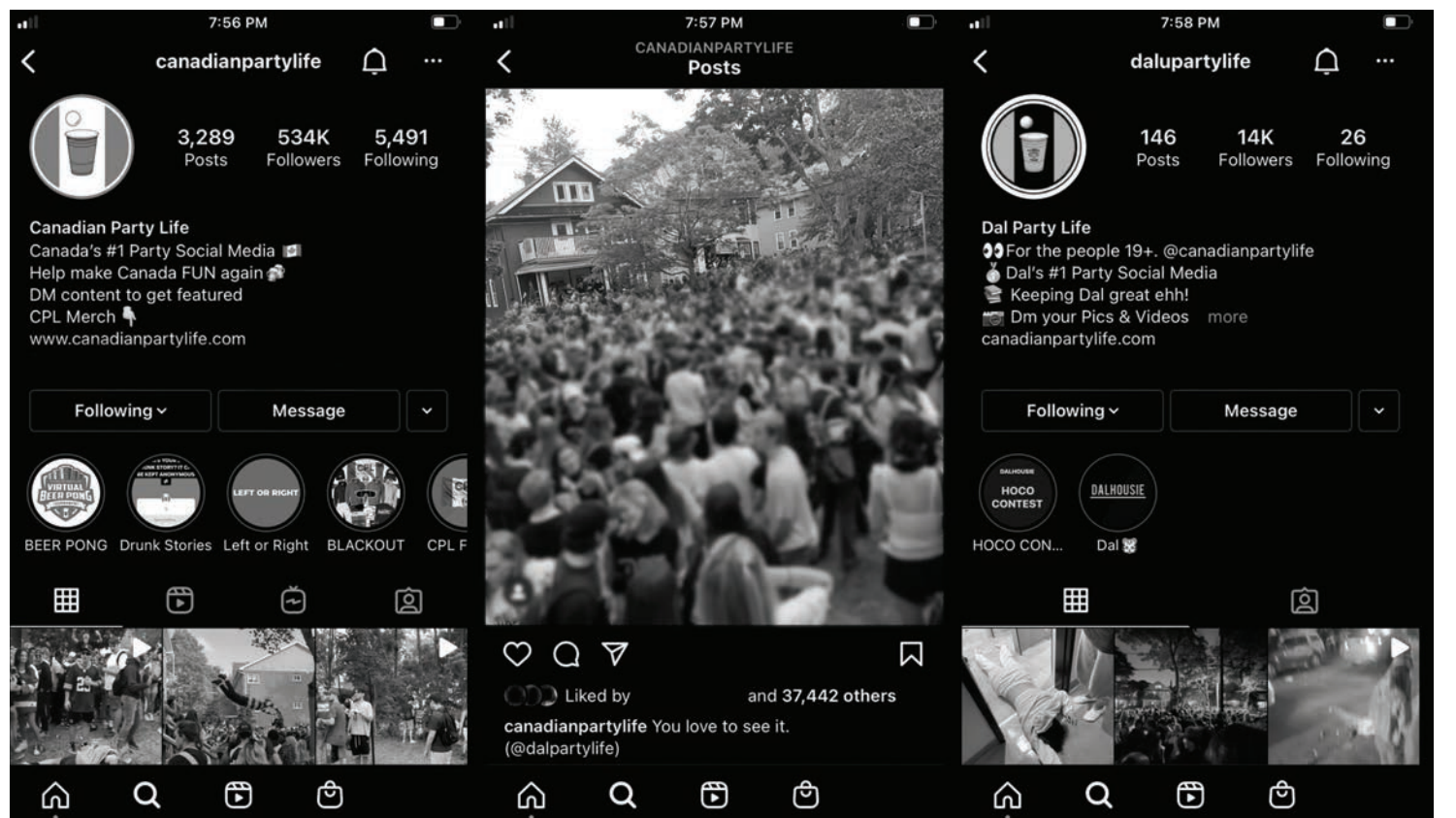
Bhattacharya said, “If other people are celebrating in a way that's not safe for most of us, then I don't think I'll be going out. I'll stay home with my roommates and a few other people over. That's about it.”

Under the new phase five restrictions of Nova Scotia's reopening plan, there are no formal gathering limits on events hosted by organizations. However, informal social gatherings, like the September homecoming parties, will continue to be restricted. No more than 25 people indoors or 50 people outdoors are allowed to gather, which is unchanged from phase four.

Additionally, mask requirements will remain in place for indoor public places. Proof of vaccination will also be required at any formally recognized event.



(LEFT) CANADIAN PARTY LIFE'S "2021 HOCO DATES," POSTED ON SEPT. 22. (RIGHT) CANADIAN PARTY LIFE'S COMMENT INDICATING THE DATES WERE DETERMINED THROUGH STORY POLLS.



(LEFT) CANADIAN PARTY LIFE'S MAIN INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT. (CENTRE) A PHOTO CANADIAN PARTY LIFE POSTED OF HALIFAX ON SEPT. 25 WITH THE CAPTION "YOU LOVE TO SEE IT." THE GAZETTE HAS BLURRED THE PHOTO TO ENSURE THIS STORY DOES NOT INADVERTENTLY AID DALHOUSIE IN PUNISHING STUDENTS. (RIGHT) DAL U PARTY LIFE, THE REGIONAL ACCOUNT FOR CANADIAN PARTY LIFE.

Dalhousie Bike Centre reopens

Borrow a bike or get one fixed for free

BY ADAM INNISS, NEWS EDITOR



STUDENTS CAN GET THEIR FEET ON THE PEDALS BY EMAILING BIKECTR@DAL.CA. (PHOTO BY ADAM INNISS)

The Dalhousie University Bike Centre has reopened for the first time since April 2020. The centre has 18 bikes to loan out for students and a repair shop where people can fix their bikes and learn about bike maintenance.

“During COVID-19, it was a little difficult. There was a lack of volunteers to help organize, so we closed down for over a year. But now we're back at it since we have students on campus again. So we're happy to be here,” said bike centre manager Derik Sauve.

As he spoke, the break line popped off a bicycle frame behind him, he leapt back to help the rider secure it back on, then turned to help another student find the right tool to tighten her brakes.

“Here you go. Sorry, what was I saying?”

How it works

If someone is interested in borrowing a bike, they don't need to pay. They just have to be a student of Dalhousie University or the University of King's College. To request a bike loan,

students can email bikectr@dal.ca.

“Right now, the waitlist is like a week long, because people are really looking for a bike. It's pretty straightforward,” said Sauve. “We get you our bike once your place comes up on the waitlist. [The bike] comes with a helmet, and locks and lights, so you have everything you need to ride.”

You can also bring your own bike into the shop for repairs. The shop, located on Studley Campus, is open from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. “We're hoping to go to three days a week,” said Sauve.

Dexter Banda, a nursing master's student at Dalhousie, was repairing his bike in the shop with Sauve's help. “I know some general maintenance stuff to be able to kinda take care of my bike, but there's some stuff like changing the cables that I haven't done before and don't have the tools for,” he said. “I live in a small apartment so it's easier to work in a comfortable place like this. It keeps you from making a mistake and having to do things twice or messing up.”

Banda said the centre is his go-to before heading to any bike shop, “it saves you money and you can do it on your own schedule. You also learn something.”

Banda says knowing how your bike works is important. “If you're on a ride and you're 60 or 70 kilometres from home and all of a sudden something breaks, you might have a better chance of getting yourself moving again if you know what's happening,” he said. “I think it makes you a safer rider if you can look at your bike or feel something and say, ‘oh, that's not right.’”

Bike centre history

According to Sauve, the bike centre has been running on campus since 2009. “We opened up with a grant from the Green Foundation and the Dal sustainability office. For the most part, it was run by Dal until a few years ago when the DSU took over. And now we're happy to say this is a completely student-run organization.”

Back in 2009, the centre had six bikes to loan

out. Now they have 18 and the DSU levy has helped them fund their repair space.

According to their website, since students took over in 2017, the bike centre has helped 3,878 cyclists repair their bikes and loaned out bikes 2,057 times.

Winter plans

The timing of the bike centre opening gives students a brief window to borrow bikes before the winter comes, but the centre will remain open throughout the year.

“During the wintertime, we do a lot more classes to help people learn how to work on bikes, and maintain their own bikes. We're always here when we're open to help you work on your own bike,” said Sauve.

The bike centre doesn't have a schedule up yet, but they're planning to run workshops on maintenance once the roads get icy.

In the meantime, you can visit the centre during their hours or reach them over email to get biking.



Are modern horror movies missing the point, or making a new one?

The subjective success of modern horror

BY MANDY KING, OPINIONS EDITOR

Modern horror movies don't abandon the spooky path laid by filmmakers like Georges Méliès and Alfred Hitchcock by choosing to use technology and ideas available to them. Just as Mary Shelley and Bram Stoker paved the way for writers like Stephen King and Anne Rice, modern filmmakers are extending the roads their predecessors started. And the lanes are expanding.

In the beginning

Sometimes I wonder if films are getting bigger and more intense because of the audience and our evolving tastes, or if filmmakers work with what they have.

The first horror film, although maybe not intended as such, was Méliès's 1896 film, *La Main-or du Diable*, or in English, *The House of the Devil*. Méliès was a known illusionist and stage magician, but he's also a credited director, making approximately 520 short films in his time.

Comparing *The House of the Devil* to the 2013 film *The Conjuring*, or other horror films using CGI, the transformative technology in Méliès' film appears amateur. At the time, however, there was no digital technology to morph a bat into the devil, a feat Méliès perfected through his skill of illusion and handy camera work.

Thinking about the early works of horror and the work of today, maybe horror cinema isn't getting too big for its britches, so to speak. Maybe horror cinema is expanding at the rate of technology, and that's exactly what audiences have come to expect.

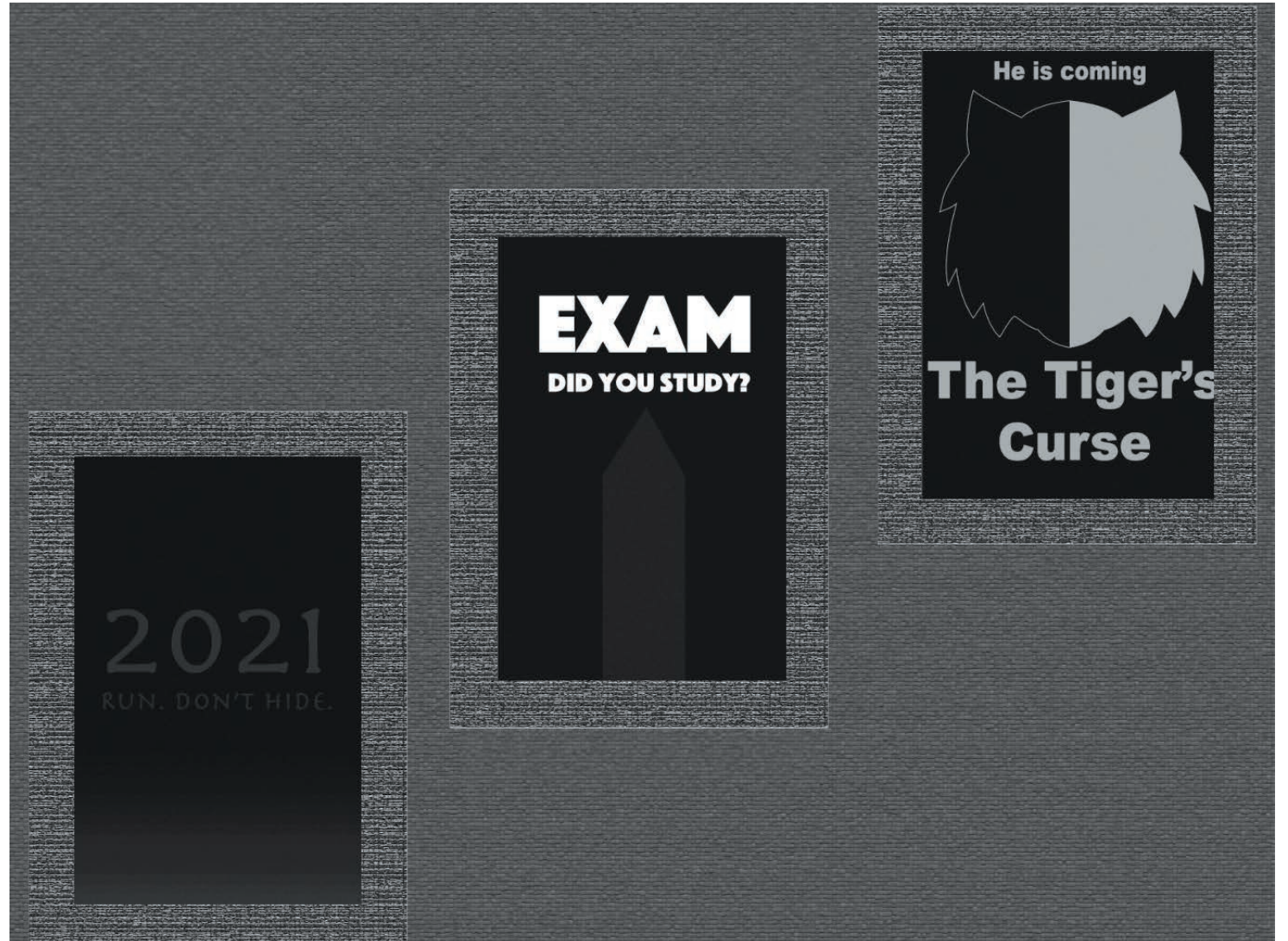
Cinematic evolution and horror ideals

Films are not created for the purpose of continuity. Like any creative endeavor, they are made to evolve with their viewers.

While big box office horror successes like the 2017 remake of Stephen King's *It* and *The Nun* (2018), count on special effects and million-dollar budgets to deliver scares, they're not less relevant to horror culture than early classics. They're just different.

Horror holds within it several sub-genres. I, for example, love films that centre on the supernatural. Growing up, some of my favorite movies were oldies like *The Exorcist*, *The Amityville Horror* and *Poltergeist*. Now, I'm drawn to modern takes on similar subjects, like *The Woman in Black*, *Insidious*, and *Crimson Peak*.

Supernatural horror is only one theme in a sea of haunting subject matter. From slashers and



HORROR MOVIES ARE PUSHING BOUNDARIES AS FILMMAKING TECHNOLOGY EVOLVES, WHICH ONLY MEANS GOOD THINGS FOR FANS OF A FRIGHT. (DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION BY MORGANE EVANS)

zombies to sci-fi mashups and mind-bending thrillers, there are many different layers to explore. Just as themes vary in horror, so does the level of gore, special effects and big scares. New or old, subtle or obvious, horror cinema is subjective.

Some modern horror takes it back a notch

Not all modern horror aims for the bloodiest, scariest, jumpiest movie of the year. Some modern horror still focuses on subtly inducing dread.

This September, I was fortunate enough to earn an invite to a friend's horror thriller premiere at FIN: Atlantic International Film Festival. *Shush* took us on a creepy ride through the life of an ASMR YouTuber and sushi waitress,

and her potential new beau as they explore the dark side of the web.

Written and directed by Michael Ray Fox, the film doesn't rely on jump scares, gore and special effects to win audiences. It focuses more on the intellectual side of horror, keeping you guessing until the end.

Bigger isn't always better

While I stand by my statement that big cinema isn't bad cinema, some horror movies are better without the bells and whistles.

The understated perfection of the 1978 *Halloween*, for example, is obscured by modern takes on the Michael Myers tale.

Rob Zombie's 2007 reboot of the franchise chose to amp up the gore and body count, changing Myers from an almost supernatural

bulletproof fiend who never speaks to a human killer with a past. More than doubling Myers's murders, *Zombie* also builds up the character's backstory, introducing a deranged young boy with a love of hurting animals and people.

As a lover of classic slashers, I wasn't a fan of the remake. For me, one of the scariest things about Myers was his lack of humanity.

That's the beauty of this genre – it's all relative. Whether you're a purist with no time for remakes, or you're open to all interpretations of horror, this is a genre that isn't defined by box office success or budgets.

Personally, I'm happy to keep an open mind, as long as they don't send any more classic killers into orbit. After all, who can take Jason Vorhees seriously after seeing the half-metallic space ensemble from *Jason X*?

Hocus Pocus 2: magical news or a potential nightmare?

More like Hocus Pocus, Boo!

BY MILES ANTON



IT'S DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE WHAT COULD JUSTIFY A SEQUEL TO THE 1993 ORIGINAL. (PHOTO BY MORGANE EVANS)

In 2019, Disney announced that *Hocus Pocus 2* was in development. The film is slated for release in 2022, and due to its predecessor's cult status, fans are excited. While the original has become a Halloween classic, fans nostalgic for the 1993 film may be setting themselves up for disappointment.

The flop that made it big

It's important to note that *Hocus Pocus* was not a box office success. The film only made \$40 million in theaters, costing Disney tens of millions in earnings and quickly falling from the top 10. The film also received poor initial reviews and holds a mere 38 per cent rating on Rotten Tomatoes.

With such low scores from critics and an initial bomb at the box office, why is a sequel in the cards? My thoughts? Simple '90s nostalgia.

In the decades after its initial 1993 theatrical run, the movie has garnered a cult following, especially among '90s kids (those who grew up in the '90s). The film fared better commercially in the 2000s and 2010s, attracting millions of

fans and culminating in a pandemic-era re-release, during which, it finished second only to Christopher Nolan's *Tenet*.

I believe this second wind is not because people have suddenly realized *Hocus Pocus* is a creatively impressive masterpiece, but because the kitsch is fun and the premillennial aesthetic reminds us of simpler times.

Cheesy but fun cinema

Hocus Pocus is an unapologetically fun movie that doesn't take itself too seriously. The early CGI gags work well with zombies getting their heads knocked off, talking British cats, translucent green-screened ghosts and witches casting lightning zap spells.

The performances are totally over-the-top and suited to the choreographed musical numbers and jokingly self-aware dialogue. Throughout the film, Bette Midler, Kathy Najimy and Sarah Jessica Parker steal the show with their spooky, synchronized performances as resurrected Salem witches. Everything about this film, from the moronic school bullies, self-serious teen protagonist, dated pop culture references, overly

theatrical score and bad special effects make *Hocus Pocus* the most "'90s" movie ever.

All these elements are great because *Hocus Pocus* doesn't try too hard to be something it's not. In a way, it almost feels like it might be in on its own joke.

So, is it a good, 95-minute flick that can serve as atmosphere or background noise while you prep for a Halloween party? Sure, but it's not good. And that is my chief concern with *Hocus Pocus 2*.

Nobody cares what happened to Max Dennison

In an era of excessive remakes, reboots and sequels, any potential continuation of a cinematic franchise should justify itself. The reason *Hocus Pocus 2* doesn't, is because *Hocus Pocus*, as a franchise, is over.

If the first movie of a franchise showcases impressive storytelling or worldbuilding, or introduces some fascinating characters or mythos, I think it's fair game for exploration in a sequel. But who finishes *Hocus Pocus* and asks, "I wonder what happened to Max Dennison?" (That's

the protagonist, by the way, and I wouldn't blame you for forgetting). *Hocus Pocus* is a stand-alone movie, and it should stay a stand-alone movie. But it won't.

I bet there are hundreds of thousands of millennials who will buy tickets to *Hocus Pocus 2*, and Disney knows it. So, of course they'll make this movie and of course they'll pump millions of dollars into their budget and recruit A-list talent for the cast and crew to back it up.

Maybe this time Disney will use modern filmmaking technology and avoid the instantly dated effects of the original. Maybe this movie will receive better reviews and make more money in the process. But none of these efforts will recreate that '90s purity *Hocus Pocus* evokes. Why? Because *Hocus Pocus* didn't have big funding or next generation digital effects, and in that gap, it was able to create nostalgia-inducing magic.

If you're excited for *Hocus Pocus 2*, I don't mean to kill your buzz. I just don't have very high expectations for this sequel. Then again, that's what everyone thought about *Hocus Pocus* when it was first released.

Show off your smarts this Halloween

The sex appeal of a witty costume

BY MANDY KING, OPINIONS EDITOR



PUT YOUR BRAINS ON THE OUTSIDE, AND I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT TRICK-OR-TREATING AS A ZOMBIE. (DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION BY MORGANE EVANS)

Every year, pop-up Halloween shops like Spirit Halloween miraculously appear in HRM, gifting us with costumes and decor galore. Every year, parties around the city are filled with scantily clad comic book characters, naughty nurses and buxom pirate wenches. Surely, in an age where we're finally recognizing the value of brains over beauty, we can find a way to celebrate both equally.

Halloween is a night for fun, and I'm all for body positivity and empowering sexuality, but why can't a subtle, punny, or witty costume be considered sexy?

Wear your brain for Halloween

In a 2019 study on intelligence and mate choice, researchers found that participants valued intelligent partners over unintelligent partners, and preferred intelligent partners particularly when choosing a long-term mate.

One problem with rating a potential mate on smarts versus sex appeal is that smarts are less visible in an initial introduction. This is a major benefit to choosing an intelligent Halloween costume. You can put your brains on the outside for once, and I'm not talking about trick-or-treating as a zombie.

A costume doesn't need to be subtle to be smart. There are some amazing in-your-face costumes that speak for themselves.

he didn't bother writing or sticking on anything, and when asked, told his coworkers he was one of the *Men in Black* guys.

A costume doesn't need to be subtle to be smart. There are some amazing in-your-face costumes that speak for themselves.

Quirky costume ideas for a witty night in

Hosting a Halloween party (with all the current COVID-19 restrictions in mind, of course), but not in the mood to be Officer Pat U Down (Spirit Halloween's take on take on a female police officer) or a Beer Garden Babe (their Oktoberfest themed offering)? Why not create a costume with a play on words?

Wearing a word puzzle is a great way to spark conversation and keep your party guests guessing. The internet is full of ideas. One *Buzzfeed* article on the subject offers suggestions like a combination of a white sheet and fake face tattoos to become Ghost Malone; a beret wearing couple with a baguette and face paint as a French kiss; and a yellow and black striped living dead zom-bee.

Book smarts aren't the only type of skill you can wear for Halloween. Another fun but witty costume concept relies on showcasing your interests and hobbies. Instead of wearing a Lycra bodysuit to portray the newest Marvel character, choose a member of your favorite off-beat band, an under-appreciated book protagonist or forgotten villain from movies of yore.

Have fun with it

Sexy isn't a defined factor we can achieve with one look or talent. It's different for everyone – a subjective quality.

In an article by *Time Magazine* about what makes us sexy, writer Eric Barker determined that we gauge sexual appeal on humor, popularity, conversation, personality and looks. While I agree on all five of these categories as important aspects of mate choice, it needs to be said that four out of five aren't physical traits.

Whether you choose to show off your bod with a fitted costume, shake things up with a topical play on words or create a balance of both, I hope everybody has a fun and safe Halloween this year.

As for me, I'll take an obscure Quentin Tarantino reference over a feisty fireman or naughty nurse any day.

Smart costumes come in all shapes and sizes. The key component is that they make your audience think.

Smart costumes from pop culture

One of the first witty Halloween costumes that comes to mind when I think about smart costumes is Jim Halpert from *The Office*.

While some might call Halpert's costumes lazy, their blatant refusal to fit the cliché Halloween mould is exactly what makes them smart. From his year as Facebook with the clever scribbling of "book" across his face, to three-hole punch version of himself (this is funny because he works at a paper company), he always hit his mark. There was even one episode where

The balancing act of Halloween

When it comes to creeping out the neighbours, how far is too far?

BY MAIRI GRAHAM



A REMINDER THAT REMINDERS OF DEATH AND VIOLENCE CAN BE DIFFICULT FOR MANY. (PHOTO BY MORGANE EVANS)

We all know that cultural appropriation is harmful, but more issues continue to be overlooked during this holiday. It begs the question, “What other sensitivities are triggered during Halloween?”

It’s officially the spooky season! Leaves are falling, there’s pumpkin spice fever and the biggest indicator of the season, people are preparing for Halloween. Unfortunately, not all Halloween preparations are sensitive to the needs of our friends and neighbours.

Between decorating, dressing up and having an excuse to eat unlimited amounts of mini

candies (they’re called ‘fun-sized’ for a reason), it’s hard not to love this holiday. However, it might be a difficult time for some if the sights and sounds trigger upsetting thoughts or memories.

Halloween needs a glow-up

To further investigate this matter, I decided to visit my local Glow Halloween store to conduct some research. I was disappointed that nothing being sold struck me as

fearsome. Although, many products appeared bizarre to me.

In one corner of the store stood a scene of

I have a policy about shopping. If I have to think twice about buying something, I probably shouldn’t buy it. This concept may also be applied to Halloween costumes and décor.

who hate the sight of blood afraid of it, or are they just disgusted by it? If this store is any indication, anatomy appears to play a huge role in modern trends of nauseating Halloween content. During my visit, I passed a whole aisle dedicated to various dismembered limbs.

Cheesy haunted houses, like the one which used to grace now closed theme park, Upper Clements Park in Annapolis Valley, use these items in murder or medical horror scenes. The unsettling nature of the gore might evoke a good scare for some, but what thoughts might these scenes evoke for somebody who has undergone a medical amputation?

Where do we draw the line between good fun and being conscientious of others’?

It’s a balancing act

Are scary decorations and disturbing decor one in the same? Maybe. What is considered Halloween fun for some might be offensive to others.

I’m not scared of dismembered bodies, but someone who has witnessed a horrific accident might be. This unknown territory of individual triggers makes it difficult to celebrate Halloween while simultaneously being conscientious of others’ feelings.

It isn’t only gory or scary Halloween trends which can offend. With COVID-19 still an active worry in Canada and around the globe, the subject remains touchy, especially for those who have lost loved ones to the virus. Despite this, you can purchase COVID-19 inspired costumes, including one depicting a Corona beer bottle with a virus icon slapped on the label.

As we choose costumes and decor, it’s important to consider some of the major participants in Halloween activities are children. According to Statistics Canada, the prime trick-or-treating age is between five and 14. While a 14-year-old might find bloody limbs on the lawn perfectly creepy, it could give a five-year-old nightmares.

I have a policy about shopping. If I have to think twice about buying something, I probably shouldn’t buy it. This concept also applies to my Halloween costumes and decor. If we have to think twice about whether something could offend someone, chances are, it will.

Being more mindful isn’t less enjoyable, it simply means that we are changing our perspective to create a more positive experience for everyone.

animatronic zombie babies performing acrobatics. While the dolls weren’t lifelike, the concept of a living dead baby could be hurtful to somebody who has lost a child.

Glow Halloween also sells animatronic nuns inspired by the 2018 horror film, *The Nun*. The character is fictional, but the religion it represents is real. This begs the question: is it okay to use religious figures in Halloween decor? If so, which are okay and which are off limits?

The gross side of scary

As I looked at the products scattered throughout the shop I got the sense most of these decorations are designed to revolt the senses.

I realize the horror genre comes in many forms, but I’ve never understood the connection between fear and disgust. Are people



The rise of the Ouija

Why it's okay to play

BY L. A. ITURRIAGA



DO THEY REALLY SELL PORTALS TO HELL AT TOYS“R”US? (PHOTO BY JOSH OLADE ON UNSPLASH)

When we come to the impasse of understanding death and what lies beyond, some of us turn to alternative sources of information, such as divination. I think this might be because we'd rather have potential misinformation than no information.

The only thing more terrifying than expecting something to happen, is not knowing whether anything will happen at all. This is where the Ouija boards come in.

Medicine and necromancy

The words “prepare to meet thy God” hung above Dr. Alexander Ogston’s operating room in the 1800s, until he learned sterilization techniques from Joseph Lister.

We have certainly come a long way since we had to worry about dying in minor surgery. We have learned to fly, extend lives, visit the stars and see through skin without breaking it.

Despite our best collective efforts, some knowledge remains inaccessible, like what happens after we die.

Necromancy is the practice of communicat-

ing with dead people. This is, essentially, what a Ouija board is supposed to do. The original board was a wooden tablet with 26 letters of the alphabet, numbers zero to nine, and the words “yes” and “no.” And while, currently available for the low price of \$17.99 at Toys “R” Us over in Dartmouth Crossing, the product has been around for more than a hundred years.

The birth of the Ouija board

The Ouija board rose to fame in 19th century America. In 1861, the United States plunged into civil war for six years. During this time, a drastic rise in spirituality occurred as families longed to connect with those lost to the war. A couple of decades later, the “talking board” was trademarked, and at the turn of the century with the coming of World War I, it became an immensely popular product.

Despite our best collective efforts, some knowledge remains inaccessible, like what happens after we die.

One of the eeriest facts about the board, which was invented by the Kennard Novelty Company, is its name. After designing the board, one of the four investors Elijah Bond took the board to his sister-in-law, a practicing medium. After asking the board what it would like to be named, it replied letter by letter “Ouija”. When asked why, it spelled “Good luck.”

What are we to make of the Ouija board in a modern world where so many mysteries are explained by science over the supernatural? Is it a product of shaky hands? Are we really connecting with spirits on another plane of existence?

Is divination possible?

Marie Curie, who won the Nobel prize for physics in 1903 and chemistry in 1911, once said, “Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.”

Getting to the bottom of the board

As it turns out, the phenomenon taking place on a Ouija board’s surface is not supernatural but psychological. The phenomenon of the ideomotor effect, the official term for the movement people’s hands may make while touching a Ouija board, consists of automatic physical movements which, in theory, could be interpreted as signs cast by a mystical agent.

Even with this knowledge, it remains a popular tool and toy. So, maybe the Ouija isn’t a portal to the spirit world, but it helped families grieve loved ones lost in the civil and first world wars. Maybe they continue to help people cope with grief today.

When Galileo, in his genius, was forced by the church to recant his astronomical observations that the earth moved around the sun, it is said he muttered the words “eppur si muove” or “and yet it moves.” Whether we believe in the powers of mystical forces or good old-fashioned science, the same could be said for the Ouija board.

The truth is out there, right?

Contemplations on the allure of alien existence

BY GABRIELLE DRAPEAU

Ever had an experience you couldn't explain or witnessed something seemingly supernatural? Aliens check both these boxes. According to a 2021 survey by market research company, Ipsos, two in three Canadians believe in extraterrestrial life. Why are aliens such a popular subject? I think there are many reasons, but the bottom line is, we're attracted to the mystery.

UFOs in our own backyard

One of the best documented UFO sightings in Canada happened here in Nova Scotia. On Oct. 4, 1967 residents of the small fishing town, Shag Harbour, began calling in reports of a flying object crashing into the water. It was first believed to be a plane suffering engine failure but scouring of the alleged crash site turned up no wreckage or bodies.

Despite this report, and reports through the years, no one has officially made contact with alien life. Most recently in alien news, the *New York Times* reported in June that American intelligence officials could find no evidence that, "aerial phenomena witnessed by Navy pilots in recent years are alien spacecraft, but they still cannot explain the unusual movements that have mystified scientists and the military."

This lack of evidence opens doors for creativity when we consider what an extraterrestrial might look like, eat or how they would operate as a society.

Fear of the unknown

In 2020, at the height of COVID-19 lockdown, Canada reported a 43 per cent increase in UFO sightings, according to Winnipeg based Ufology Research. Were there more flying saucers in the sky or did Canadians have more time to think about the unknown?

H.P. Lovecraft, American horror and science fiction author, said, "The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown."

Are we searching for aliens in the vastness of space to alleviate fear of the unknown? Even with the advancement of science and space

travel, we don't know the boundaries of the universe. I believe the possibility of intelligent life outside of earth somehow makes the universe



UFO SIGHTINGS IN CANADA SPIKED DURING THE PANDEMIC, WHY? (DIGITAL ILLUSTRATION BY MORGANE EVANS)

feel a little less lonely.

While I do believe there is life besides humanity, maybe even life that resembles ours, I'm not entirely sold on the idea of visits from alien life.

Wondering what to do this Halloween? Consider taking a drive to the South Shore to visit the Shag Harbour Incident Society Interpretive Centre, a UFO museum in honor of the supposed sighting.

Aliens in popular culture

The draw to a possible alien existence is clear in the movies, books and video games we consume. From childhood cartoons like Disney's *Lilo and Stitch* to Ridley Scott's *Alien* franchise and beyond, humans push the boundaries of our imaginations to fill this need to understand

the unknown.

Does the popularity of aliens in pop culture reflect the number of believers in the world? Is be-

lieve a requirement of extraterrestrial fascination? I would think not. After all, we are drawn to many types of fiction with no need for reality to factor. So, maybe it isn't just the possibility they exist that piques our interest.

Space travel and contemplations

Some of us are fascinated by aliens because we're fascinated by the universe. Avi Loeb, Harvard University astrophysicist, was featured in a piece this year by *Scientific American*, citing his belief of alien existence, proving that even the most knowledgeable on the subject of space have considered life on other planets.

Perhaps we just want to know what this world is capable of. Is human life on Earth a fluke? If there's life in our little corner of the Milky Way, is it so improbable sentient life exists out there somewhere too?

Maybe aliens take up so much space in our thoughts because we're interested in the possibility of an encounter of the third kind? Who wouldn't want to solve a mystery where the

prime suspects are from a different planet?

The existence of aliens is still up for debate, but I think a large part of the allure of aliens is the debate as to whether they exist. It challenges what we currently know about our universe. It inspires us to search for indications not only of existence but of a possible earth visit from extraterrestrials.

Until we have definitive proof of their extraterrestrial life, we are still haunted by the question: are we truly alone?

The truth is yet to be seen

Whether we will ever confirm an extraterrestrial reality in our lifetime, it's still exciting to consider the possibilities.

Wondering what to do this Halloween? Consider taking a drive to the South Shore to visit the Shag Harbour Incident Society Interpretive Centre, a UFO museum in honor of the supposed sighting. You never know what you might find hidden among the clues of our backyard encounter.



WE'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES BACK ON CAMPUS THIS SPOOKY SEASON. (COMIC BY SAL BODEN)

What's new with CBC's *Diggstown*?

The ups and downs of Halifax's hard-hitting legal drama

BY MARIA COLLINS



PHOTO COURTESY OF CBC

Editor's note and trigger warning: This article contains mention of sexual assault.

CBC's *Diggstown* struggled against the COVID-19 pandemic before it could bring Atlantic Canada to the world stage for its third season.

But main character Marcie Diggs, a legal aid lawyer born in North Preston, N.S., was back on screens for the season premiere on Oct. 6.

Shooting during the pandemic

The show's creator Floyd Kane says production of the third season was only two weeks in when the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic hit Nova Scotia.

"It was pretty brutal," Kane says of his experience filming during the province-wide lockdown.

The crew faced new challenges in the production of the third season. Kane says the biggest challenge was bringing in actors from outside of the province. The crew worked tirelessly with the government to get actors approved to come into Nova Scotia.

The original plan for *Diggstown*'s third season was not to address COVID-19 at all, but with the progression of the pandemic, Kane decided to write it into the storyline. The third season takes a look at possible legal cases that could be born amid the pandemic; the first case focused on issues surrounding long-term care homes.

Kane also wanted to discuss the issue of landlords, tenants and rent release, which will appear in later episodes.

Owen Thomas, who appears in the seventh episode of the third season, says the biggest challenge he faced was the pre-production process. The writing room took place entirely online, making the writers feel disconnected during the brainstorming process.

Thomas plays a survivor of sexual assault in the third season and has been working on the show as Kane's assistant since October 2020.

Bringing Atlantic Canada to the world stage

Not only is *Diggstown* filmed right here in Halifax, but its storyline is also based in Halifax. A lover of the east coast, Kane wanted to paint a picture of Nova Scotia the world doesn't normally see.

"When people think about Nova Scotia . . . they think about sailing, they think about fishing, they think about lobster and about the tattoo," Kane says. Kane ditched the New Scotland heritage and the quaint reputation of South Shore for the opportunity to share the beauties of the east coast with the world.

Actress Tori Divine, who plays Elina Smith in episodes three and six, says she enjoys that *Diggstown* is based in Halifax because there is no need to hide any famous landmarks that identify the city.

"You can see the Halifax ferry in the background sometimes, and the waterfront, and parts of Africville and all of these places that are significant to Nova Scotia," Divine says.

Born and raised in Halifax, Divine says she didn't have to worry about her Nova Scotian accent coming through while she was filming.

Kane also chose to base *Diggstown* in Halifax so he could create representation for the Black and Indigenous Nova Scotians that don't often see themselves on television.

"You can see the Halifax ferry in the background sometimes, and the waterfront, and parts of Africville and all of these places that are significant to Nova Scotia."

What's new in the third season

The third season begins to expand on Marcie's personal life. Thomas says the show has a newfound identity to it.

Divine also looks forward to sharing the shows development into Marcie's life and says despite the first two seasons

being extremely personal for Marcie, this season hits even closer to home.

Diggstown has always focused on racism in Nova Scotia. Divine believes that during the pandemic, people began to realize how badly racism affects Canadians.

"I think this season is going to resonate with a lot of people," Divine says.

Thomas says there are many topics they've left uncovered. He hopes the third season will educate viewers on things they may not know about the legal system.

Dalhousie graduates

Born in East Preston, Kane attended law school at Dalhousie University and graduated in 1996. Kane says going to law school taught him to think like a lawyer, which helped him throughout his career and the production of *Diggstown*.

"I mean it was great," Kane says. "It was a very formative experience."

Divine also studied in Dal's acting program with a minor in French language.

"It was good and it was weird and it was exhausting just like everybody's university experience," Divine says when discussing her years at Dal.

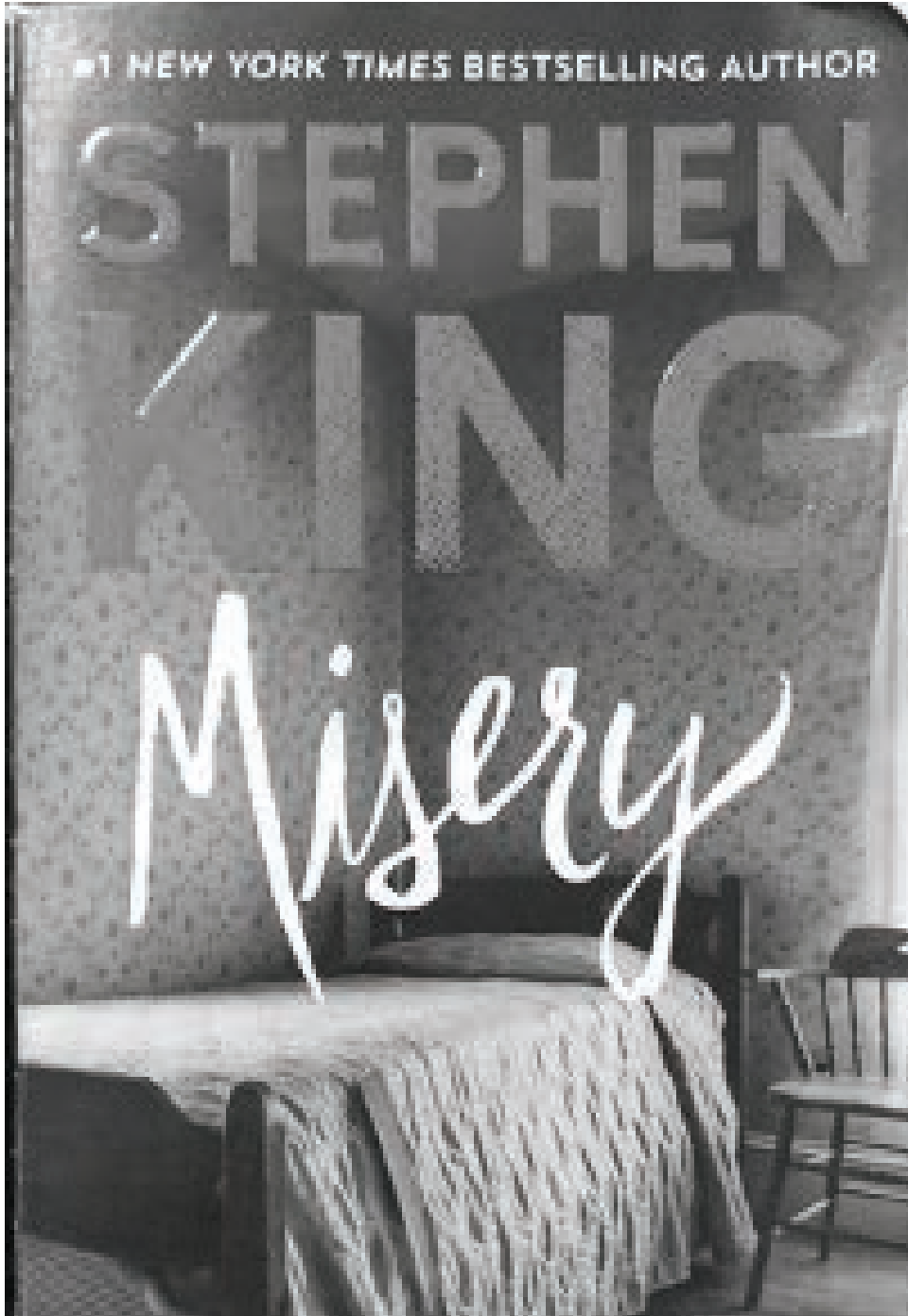
Also once a Dal student, Thomas majored in cinema and media and minored in creative writing. Thomas graduated in May 2020.

Diggstown season three premiered on CBC beginning Wednesday, Oct. 6 at 9pm ADT and is available to stream on CBC Gem.

Feeling our-shelves: With Lili and Reanna

Halloween edition

BY LILI SCHWARTZ AND REANNA DRUXERMAN



IF YOU WANT SUSPENSE, YOU'LL FIND IT ALL IN MISERY. (PHOTO BY SHIRLEY MEISELS)

Misery - Stephen King, 1987

Misery by Stephen King is a rollercoaster of suspense and terror. Paul Sheldon, a popular author, gets into a car accident while driving down an isolated road during a terrible blizzard and is miraculously saved by superfan Annie Wilkes.

Paul's legs are severely injured, leaving him immobile. No one knows where he is, and it is the 1980s so there are no cellphones. It soon becomes apparent that Annie is a dangerous psychopath and Paul knows that she will not let him go.

The events that take place and the twists that are revealed while Paul attempts to escape are absolutely insane, and quite disturbing at times. The suspense of it all will have you sitting on the edge of your seat — guaranteed. Tip: the book is 10 times better if you imagine Annie as Kathy Bates and Paul as James Caan, the stars of the film adaptation of *Misery*.

Lili



CORALINE IS THE PERFECT QUICK READ TO GET YOU IN THE HALLOWEEN SPIRIT. (PHOTO BY SHIRLEY MEISELS)

Coraline - Neil Gaiman, 2002

Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* is a children's book that's so dark it should be found in the adult section. It's one of my personal favourite stories of all time. The protagonist, Coraline, goes on the adventure of a lifetime after moving into an apartment in an old house called the Pink Palace.

Coraline is an only child and is unhappy with her parents and her mundane circumstances. Not long after moving to the Pink Palace, she discovers a little door that seemingly leads nowhere until one night a portal appears. After crawling through the door, she is greeted by a woman who looks exactly like her mother except with button eyes. This woman introduces herself as the "Other Mother" and spoils Coraline with attention, delicious meals and fun activities.

Coraline is told that she can stay in the Other Mother's world forever but in order to do so, she will need to have buttons sewn into her eyes. Coraline refuses and the Other Mother gets so angry that she turns into a monster. It is now up to Coraline to defeat the Other Mother with the help of a talking cat, ghost children and a magic stone. Filled with very eccentric characters and unsettling imagery, *Coraline* is a quick read that is perfect for Halloween.

Lili



THIS CLASSIC IS ENTIRELY WORTH THE HYPE. (PHOTO BY LILI SCHWARTZ)

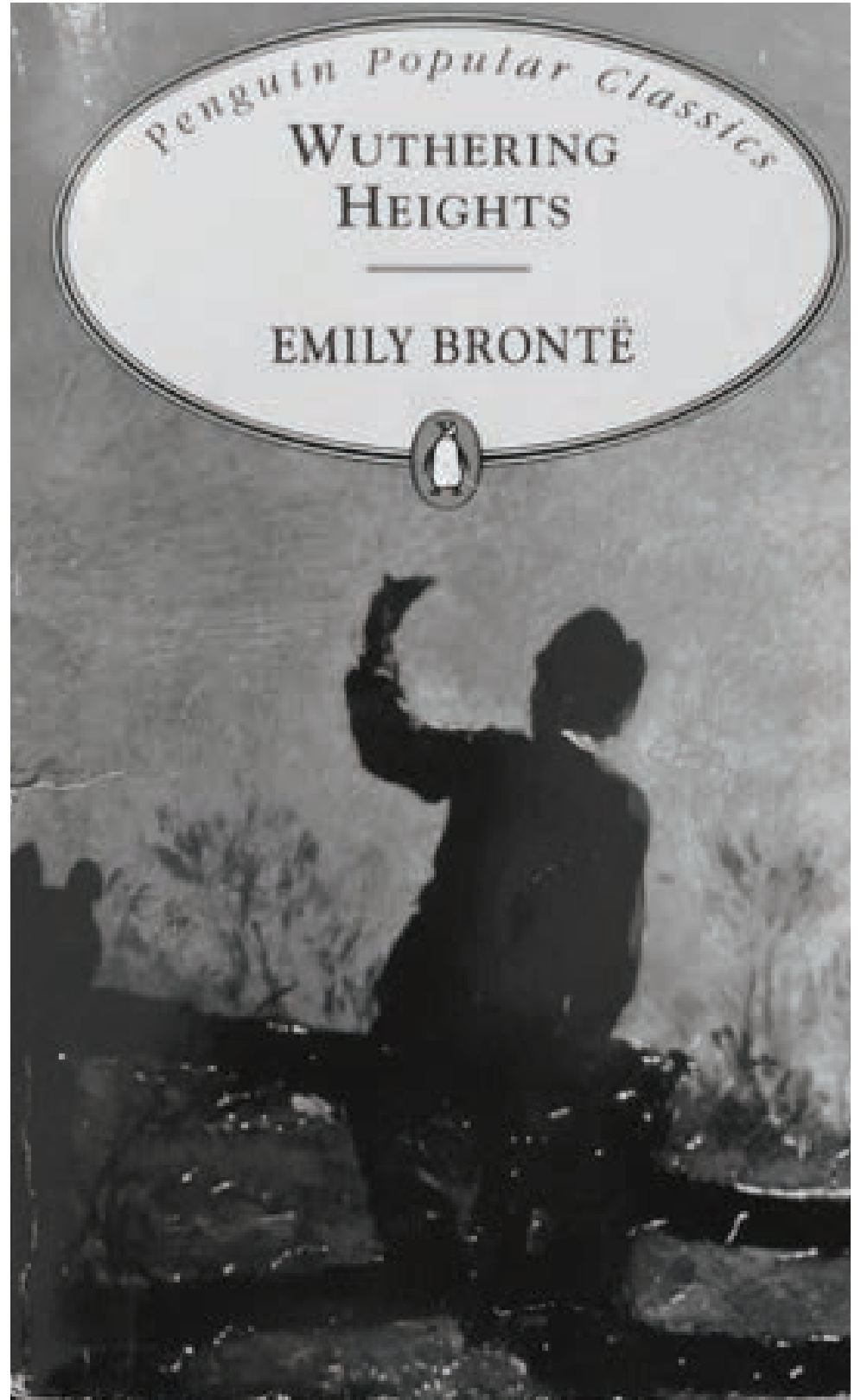
***Jane Eyre* - Charlotte Brontë, 1847**

Although the novel is, at its core, a romance, the gothic elements within the story make it just creepy enough to be a Halloween must read. Set 1800s England, the reader follows Jane, an orphan on her solitary journey to adulthood.

After being neglected and abused under her aunt's care, Jane is sent to Lowood Institution where she is able to overcome her suffering. She eventually becomes an immensely intelligent and well-respected teacher. Jane is then employed as a governess at Thornfield Hall for Adèle, the ward of Edward Rochester, the house's owner. As Jane's time at Thornfield progresses, she becomes aware of a danger that lurks in the night.

Throughout Jane's story there are prominent themes of class and social order, as well as society's gender roles during this period. This classic is entirely worth its hype. The language in *Jane Eyre* is completely accessible and the storyline keeps the reader engaged from start to finish.

Reanna



WUTHERING HEIGHTS IS AN ENTERTAINING BLEND OF FAMILY DRAMA AND GOTHIC THEMES. (PHOT BY SHIRLEY MEISELS)

***Wuthering Heights* - Emily Brontë, 1847**

Wuthering Heights follows the story of two families, the Earnshaws and the Lintons, and the impact their adopted son Heathcliff has on their lives. Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff are in love, however their love for each other plays a major role in destroying the lives of those around them. While both Catherine and Heathcliff are known for being unlikable characters, rightfully so, it is easy to sympathize with them throughout the novel.

Although Emily Brontë uses some complex language in *Wuthering Heights*, the story completely sucks you in. To put it simply: *Wuthering Heights* has the family drama of the Kardashians and a Chuck Bass and Blair Waldorf-esque relationship from *Gossip Girl*, while being a perfect gothic novel, down to the death and ghosts. If you're into classics you've either already read this book or have it on your list, but if you haven't gotten to it yet it's 100 per cent worth the read.

Reanna

I watched all the *Conjuring* movies so you don't have to

A brutally honest review of the franchise

BY ELIZABETH FOSTER, ARTS & LIFESTYLE EDITOR



IN SHORT, DON'T DO IT. (PHOTO BY MORGANE EVANS)

Last summer, I came across a photo online of all the *Conjuring* movies listed in the order they occur within the *Conjuring* universe.

Because I love horror, and because I didn't have much else going on, I did what any sane person would do – settled down and embarked on a summer-long quest to watch almost 14 hours of *Conjuring* footage.

Spoiler non-enjoyers be warned.

***The Nun* (2018) - Set in 1952**

While not the first movie in the franchise, the events in *The Nun* are set before anything else. The story follows a priest and a young nun in her novitiate as they investigate a mysterious death at a cloistered abbey in Romania. Once there, they discover the abbey is under attack by a demon who takes the form of the titular Nun.

As a fan of gothic horror, I had high hopes for this movie. *The Nun* was set up as this terrifying entity, and there was a lot of potential for scary scenes in the dark, decaying abbey.

However, this movie falls flat. It's one of

the worst movies in the series, solely because it had so much potential to be good. The movie recognizes that its setting and the main character are scary, and it leans too much into this, forgoing any meaningful storytelling. It's the film equivalent to junk food – it looks good, but lacks substance, and leaves the audience feeling empty. In the end, the message seems to be, “*The Nun* is scary because it is. Accept it.”

***Annabelle: Creation* (2017) - Set in 1958**

Full disclosure: I think *Annabelle* gets more screen time than she deserves.

In the original *Conjuring*, she was a nice introduction to the world of Ed and Lorraine Warren. Her story serves as a warning not to invite unknown entities into your life. Then she gets a prequel and a sequel. Then this movie is a prequel to the prequel.

We find ourselves in the United States. A husband and wife lose their daughter, *Annabelle*, in a tragic accident. Twelve years after the accident, the couple has opened

their home to six orphan girls, one of whom discovers the *Annabelle* doll hidden away. It is revealed the couple invited what they thought was their daughter's spirit into the doll, but surprise! It was a bloodthirsty demon instead.

This movie contains a bit more substance than *The Nun* and had some good scenes, but it leans too heavily on jump scares and gore rather than compelling storytelling. It's here that a valuable lesson to the *Conjuring* franchise is introduced. When it comes to horror, sometimes less is more. Sometimes not knowing everything is scarier than knowing.

***Annabelle* (2014) - Set in 1970**

Annabelle picks up where *Annabelle: Creation* leaves off. Expecting couple John and Mia witness their next door neighbours getting murdered by their adopted daughter and her satanic boyfriend.

Spoiler alert! Having just watched *Creation*, we know that the adopted daughter is actually one of the orphans who has lived

for years possessed by the *Annabelle* demon. The *Annabelle* doll comes into their possession and shortly after, John and Mia begin experiencing paranormal events. They eventually move to a new apartment where 98 minutes of demon-filled fun ensue.

This movie is very clearly inspired by the 1968 psychological horror film, *Rosemary's Baby*. While at some points the parallels are clever, at others they simply don't work. *Rosemary's Baby* is an entirely different type of horror from a different era. *Annabelle* also commits the grave sin of the other two movies by over-relying on jump scares.

***The Conjuring* (2013) - Set in 1971**

This is where watching these movies in chronological order gets interesting. After three movies, the original *Conjuring* still stands out as the best. It's not only a good horror movie, it's a genuinely well-made film.

The Conjuring follows the Perron family as they call upon demonologists Ed and Lor-



raine Warren for help following a series of paranormal events in their new Rhode Island home. *The Conjuring* reminds us how good horror is written and how it starts in the smallest, most chilling details. Starting with the death of the family pet and mysterious bruises on the mother's arm, the movie builds up to a bombastic climax. The audience is left feeling thoroughly chilled and rewarded.

Watching it in chronological order, you see references to *The Nun* and the previous two *Annabelle*'s, which is fun, but *The Conjuring* truly works best as a standalone film.

***Annabelle Comes Home* (2019) - Set in 1972**

By this point I was pretty sick of *Annabelle*. The pessimist in me wanted to write off this entire movie because of that. To its credit, it wasn't as bad as I expected.

In the year following the events of *The Conjuring*, *Annabelle* now lives in a glass case in the Warren's spooky artifact room in their house (yup, the Warren's have a spooky artifact room in their house). The Warrens leave their daughter Judy in the care of her babysitter, Mary Ellen, who invites her friend Daniela over. Daniela manages to break the one household rule, which is not to go into the spooky artifact room. This inadvertently sets *Annabelle* free.

It's clear here that the franchise was trying to step away from the formulaic approach they'd established in the first films:

family is introduced, paranormal events begin, demon possesses someone, demon is exorcised from said person. This movie did better with building up its story and produced some creative, and genuinely scary, moments.

***The Curse of La Llorona* (2019) - Set in 1973**

If *Annabelle Comes Home* was a step away from the formulaic demon trope, *La Llorona* was a giant leap.

The movie begins with a flashback to 1600s Mexico, establishing the legend of *La Llorona* which is a real story in Latin American folklore. It then flashes forward 300 years to Los Angeles, where a social worker named Anna checks in on a family that, unbeknownst to her, is being haunted by *La Llorona*. Anna's actions cause her own children to become targeted by the spirit and she must work with a priest to break the curse.

If I were to rank all of these movies, I'd put this one at the very bottom, even below *The Nun*, because while *The Nun* had potential to be scary, this movie doesn't. The stakes are incredibly low. We don't know anything about the charac-

ters, and there's almost no connection to the rest of the *Conjuring* Cinematic Universe. This movie relies more on jump scares than any other movie in the franchise. It shows us too much of *La Llorona*, who as an antagonist, is about as scary as a Spirit Halloween costume.

***The Conjuring 2* (2016)- Set in 1977**

Even if you know nothing about directors, it is abundantly clear that *The Conjuring* and *The Conjuring 2* are directed by the same person. They outshine all of the other movies in the franchise. Unlike some of the others, it's clear that effort and understanding of the

horror genre went into this film (Looking at you, *The Nun* and *La Llorona*.)

The Warrens are back, this time investigating the haunting of the Hodgson family in Enfield, England. The story is loosely based on the case of the Enfield poltergeist. The Nun is back too. Like *The Conjuring*, this film

tells a story, and builds its horror subtly and creatively. While it pales slightly in comparison to its predecessor, it still remains a good movie, and one I would recommend watching if you want to be genuinely scared.

***The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It* (2021) - Set in 1981**

Like *La Llorona*, you can tell this is an earnest attempt by the franchise to step away from the demon trope. Rather than butchering traditional cultural folklore, they decide to dip their toes into the occult.

As in the case of the previous two *Conjurings*, this movie is based on a real-life case investigated by the Warrens. It begins with the exorcism of eight-year-old David Glatzel. Halfway through, the exorcism is botched and the demon possesses David's sister's boyfriend Arne. When Arne later murders his landlord, his lawyers claim his innocence by reason of demonic possession and the Warrens set off to collect evidence to back this up.

While not the best, this movie certainly wasn't the worst. I didn't love the beginning. The exorcism scenes served as great climaxes in the other *Conjurings*, so to start off with one was a bit jarring. The rest of the movie mainly focuses on Ed and Lorraine's detective work, which is an interesting, logical and refreshing change of pace. However, it can feel a bit all over the place with different stories happening at once. I almost miss the haunted houses.

In conclusion, not all of these movies were fantastic, but they were fun to watch with other people. Would I ever give 14 hours of my life to the *Conjuring* franchise again? Absolutely not, but these movies reminded me about what good horror can be – and what it can't.

“When it comes to horror, sometimes less is more. Sometimes not knowing everything is scarier than knowing.”

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Rock on!

Students hunt for painted rocks around campus

BY ALEXIS MOFFET



THE PIECES OF PORTABLE ART CAN BE FOUND HIDDEN AROUND CAMPUS. (IMAGES VIA @DALHOUSIE_ROCKS ON INSTAGRAM)

Jaime Becker had little hope. The Instagram post was made hours ago.

But when she walked to class, Becker, a second-year oceanography student at Dalhousie University, noticed it lying atop the sundial. She sprinted across Studley Quad to grab the blue mandala rock, worried that anyone and everyone around her was eyeing it.

About a week earlier, Kira Ridgley, a second-year English student at Dal, was in the Student Union Building scrolling through her Instagram feed. One post caught her attention: “The pink rock is near the SUB by the bus stop,” the caption read. “Posted four minutes ago.”

Ridgley bolted outside and found the pink rock speckled with white flowers awaiting her.

“I like the way that they paint, I like the designs they make.”

The second-year students are two of many joining the scavenger hunt for painted rocks hidden around campus by Instagram page @Dalhousie_rocks.

“I like the way that they paint. I like the designs they make,” says Becker. “I just want as many as I can find.”

“I like the idea of having something that somebody painted on,” says Ridgley.

Becker discovered the page when it requested to follow her. She excitedly accepted the request and followed the page back. Ridgley followed the page

after reading a post about it on Dal Mobile.

Immediately after following the account, both Becker and Ridgley turned post notifications on. They hoped it would give them a chance to find rocks before they were gone.

Now, Dalhousie Rocks prepares rocks to hide every weekend. She spends one day painting and another sealing the rocks, which are painted in layers. After each brush of colour, Dalhousie Rocks leaves them to dry and returns intermittently to add more layers. Depending on how many she does, the painting can take three to four hours. Each rock is numbered, allowing her to track how many she decorates.

Some designs stem from Halifax pop culture references, while others are inspired by Pinterest. The collection includes Halifax icons like the Ikea shark and the Dal Memes Instagram account profile picture. Other designs feature fruits and animals.

Following the design process, Dalhousie Rocks curates photos to post as previews. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, she scatters the rocks around campus and posts stories hinting at where they’re hidden.

Spreading happiness through art

Before bringing rocks to life, Dalhousie Rocks’ creative outlets included digital art, water colour painting, wood burning and making jewelry. But she wanted to find a way to share her art with others.

“That’s kind of why I create art,” she says. “I like to make people happy with it.”

In the summer, she found a painted rock while walking with a friend. That’s when it hit her.

“I was like, ‘Oh, I should really do this this year.’”

From there, Dalhousie Rocks was born. With the help of a friend, she filled a backpack with rocks at Point Pleasant Park and dug out her old acrylic paints left over from a class she’d taken. Since then, she’s hidden 17 rocks. She’s also asked for design suggestions, which she then painted and hid specifically for the people who submitted them.

Like she’d hoped, Dalhousie Rocks’ is making students happy. Becker and Ridgley turned to Instagram, where it all started, to share their finds and feelings.

“I cannot even put into words my joy when I found this pretty rock,” Ridgley wrote on an Instagram story of the pink rock sitting on her bookshelf. “This will be the thing that gets me through this degree. I am confident!”

“We found the rocks!! I’m so happy,” wrote Becker, tagging Dalhousie Rocks in a photo of her, her friend and the rocks they found.

Dalhousie Rocks doesn’t plan to stop anytime soon. Before winter hits, she’ll stockpile rocks so the Easter egg hunt can carry on. She plans to continue until at least next year and says she may eventually hide rocks beyond campus. Good news for devoted rock hunters – and for her too.

“I’m kind of hooked on it,” she said, laughing.

Behind the page

As of October 2021, Dalhousie Rocks’ Instagram page has over 360 followers, and more trickle in every day. Running it is one Dalhousie student, who wishes to remain anonymous.

The *Dalhousie Gazette* has granted the anonymity request due to the artist’s previous experiences with a stalker. The author is concerned that being named in the article could reveal her location, making her vulnerable to further harassment.

She created the Instagram account on Sept. 6, the day before school started. Hoping it would gain traction, Dalhousie Rocks made an introductory post. The next day, she carried a large rock concealed in a lunchbox to a bench in front of the Henry Hicks Building. After sitting for a while, she got up and casually left the rock behind. She posted a photo hinting its location.

That was the beginning.

Tigers launch in-house female coach development program

Led by Cindy Tye, every female varsity Tigers coach will take part in the program

BY LUKE DYMENT, SPORTS EDITOR

There aren't many firsts for Emily Clarke because she's already accomplished quite a bit.

She enjoyed a successful cross country and track career as a Dalhousie University Tigers student-athlete. She's now in her fifth season as an assistant coach with each team. Last year, she was selected to participate in the inaugural U SPORTS Female Coach apprenticeship program.

Now, with the launch of the Dalhousie Tigers Female Coach Development program led by women's soccer coach and associate athletic director Cindy Tye, Clarke said this will be the first opportunity she's had in her career to work with a female head coach.

"I've had a lot of great male coaches my whole life, including Rich [Lehman, head coach of Dal's cross country and track and field teams]. But I'm excited to have a female head coach's perspective on things," she said.

Michele Tchiakoua is debuting as an assistant coach with the women's basketball team this season after playing with the team for two seasons (plus a third missed due to injury). She's ecstatic to be working with Tye and other coaches in the program, knowing the skillsets of different coaches she'll possibly encounter and learn from.

"It's amazing to have her as a mentor because she has a lot of experience, as both an athlete and coach," Tchiakoua said. "This is important for me since I don't have much experience yet coaching. It will be important to gain confidence as a coach, to work on my communication and leadership skills and create relationships with coaches and players."

Building further female representation in coaching

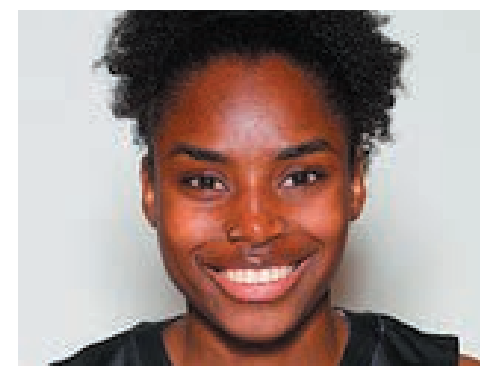
The program, which is slated to run for at least a year, is split into two parts. One group consists of six coaches who will take part as apprentices and work on a near-monthly basis with Tye, often in each coach's work environment.

Clarke and Tchiakoua are part of the apprentice group. Jodi Langley, who coaches with Clarke in track and field, and Marika Williams, who works with Tchiakoua on the women's basketball staff, are also apprentices. They are joined by Savannah Newton of the women's hockey team and Tessa Bulmer of women's volleyball.

Over a dozen more coaches will take part in a monthly peer development group with a focus on training certification and developmental opportunities. From Dal's seven varsity sports, every female assistant coach will take part as either an apprentice



CINDY TYE, EXPERIENCED IN TAKING PART IN MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS PROVINCIALY AND NATIONALLY, SAID FEMALE COACHES ARE ESPECIALLY UNDERREPRESENTED AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL OF SPORT. (PHOTO COURTESY OF DAL TIGERS)



MICHELE TCHIAKOUA IS IN HER FIRST SEASON COACHING DAL'S WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM AFTER SPENDING THREE YEARS WITH THEM AS A PLAYER. (PHOTO COURTESY OF DAL TIGERS)



TIGERS CROSS COUNTRY AND TRACK AND FIELD ASSISTANT COACH EMILY CLARKE. (PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILY CLARKE)

or within the peer development group.

"When applying for [program funding], one of the reasons was because female coaches are underrepresented at almost every level, especially at the university level," Tye said. "In our environment, we felt like we could do something. We chose female coach development, being a group that needs that. They're underrepresented in our department."

Accessibility to one another in Dal-based program

One hallmark of the program is each coach's accessibility to one another. Programs that Tye has participated in before, like the Nova Scotia Black and Indigenous Coach Mentorship Program, are often spread out over larger areas (like the province or country) and limit time mentors and apprentices share working together. COVID-19 only further restricted that interaction.

Now, with nearly everyone back on campus, Tye said the ability for participants to meet up, whether formally or informally, will go a long way.

"Once a month I'll be able to go to [each apprentice's environment], but probably more often because they're so accessible," she said. "That's a cool

part about the program is that everybody is, obviously, at Dal. That way, I can access them easily. In the groups, participants can access each other easier too."

Tchiakoua said the fact the program is right at Dal will help her towards building her coaching skills. She also looks forward to serving as a potential role model for women in the program now and in the future.

"It comes back to my goal to build communication and leadership skills, and how to provide players with a positive experience," she said. "If you can give a positive experience, you have happy players who look forward to coming back to the gym every day because they like being there."

"It means a lot to give back to the community that welcomed me at Dal. I want to be able to be relatable to my players and people who watch me."

Tchiakoua added it's fantastic to see how the Tigers have taken initiative to increase support for their female coaches.

"Representation matters," she said. "It's important to have female coaches and assistant coaches, especially for women's teams."

Being in this position means a lot to Clarke too.

"It's nice to be that voice and bring that perspec-

tive into coaching," she said. "I hope that I'm able to bring a little more of a balance to the coaching staff and provide different perspectives and approaches. I hope this program inspires other women to go into coaching. I hope I can inspire more people."

This resource for female coaches will reflect positively on the program for years to come, Tye said.

"When you put time into developing your coaches, better coaches are better athletes," she said. "The coaches get a better understanding of what they do and how they communicate. They dig in to make themselves better and when they get better, then they're better for the student-athletes. It makes everyone stronger."

Not many school-based programs addressing this area of coaching exist, not only in the Atlantic University Sport (AUS) but in the rest of U SPORTS. The *Dalhousie Gazette* asked Clarke and Tchiakoua whether the Tigers initiative will lead to other athletic programs doing similar things.

"Yeah, I hope so. I hope it inspires other schools to follow suit," Clarke said.

Tchiakoua said she was sure of it.

"100 per cent. I think, 100 per cent, other schools do the same."

From Dal pharmacy student to Paralympian

Dal student Kamyille Frenette reflects on her journey to Tokyo 2020

BY THOMAS SCOTT



FRENETTE RACING AT THE TOKYO 2020 PARALYMPIC GAMES THIS PAST AUGUST. AS THE THIRD-YOUNGEST TRIATHLETE IN THE PTS5 WOMEN'S COMPETITION IN TOKYO, SHE FINISHED FOURTH OUT OF TEN RACERS. (PHOTO COURTESY OF KAMYILLE FRENETTE)



KAMYILLE FRENETTE (THIRD FROM LEFT) MAY RACE FOR HER COUNTRY NOWADAYS, BUT IT WASN'T LONG AGO SHE HELPED LEAD THE TIGERS CROSS COUNTRY TEAM TO AN AUS CHAMPIONSHIP IN 2019. (PHOTO COURTESY OF KAMYILLE FRENETTE)

Kamyille Frenette has come a long way in her paratriathlon career.

Fresh off a fourth-place finish in the PTS5 paratriathlon competition at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, she used to spend her days training at Dalhousie University with the cross country team. She's no stranger to the word busy.

"It's definitely busy. There's always something going on but to me, honestly, doing both school and triathlon at the same time has been a blessing in disguise," Frenette said. She is in her fourth year of Dal's doctor of pharmacy program and split time in Halifax last winter training for the Paralympics and going to school.

"It is busy, but it's a good way to balance everything else, so I'm not putting all my eggs in one basket. I balanced it by trying to be as organized as I can with my time and I always think it works. I love studying and I love sports. It's a dream being able to do both."

Maintaining ties with the Tigers

Frenette was born with unilateral talipes equinovarus, or unilateral clubfoot, and had corrective surgery when she was four months old. The procedure resulted in her right leg being smaller than her left, but nothing would stop her from becoming an elite athlete.

Running for the Dalhousie cross country team, Frenette helped the team to a 14th place finish at the 2019 U SPORTS national championships. Even though she does not compete for the Tigers anymore, Frenette can still be found training at Dal. Even after her last year of eligibility, she trained with the team.

To run a triathlon, one requires off-the-charts endurance and motivation. And that's just to compete, not attend classes at the same time. Frenette starts her training as early as 5:45 a.m. each day to manage her coursework.

"I usually swim four times a week. I'll bike four times a week, run three to four times a week and

"I usually swim four times a week. I'll bike four times a week, run three to four times a week and then I'll go to the gym to do some strength about two days a week, sometimes three."

then I'll go to the gym to do some strength about two days a week, sometimes three," she said. "The days are definitely busy. I'll train two to three sessions a day and it's busy, but it's manageable."

Journey to becoming a Paralympian

Not only is Frenette an impressive athlete, but an inspiration. In a piece by CBC, she discussed her internal debate regarding her place in the Paralympics. She said in the article she never thought of herself as eligible for the games until the Canadian Paratriathlon team approached her in 2016. It took her "a while" after that to publicly accept she has a disability, she said in the piece.

"It was definitely a long process and it's definitely ongoing, but I think it's about taking the time. I always tell people that I think everybody has something that's different about them," Frenette said to the *Dalhousie Gazette*. "I think that will always be an ongoing debate that I'll have with myself, but I enjoy the sport and I think for me, it's a great way to reach the peak of my high-performance dreams."

Sports are not just physically wearing, but mentally wearing, too. Frenette said the Dal community has supported her in so many ways. Her former Dal cross country coach, Richard Lehman, and other athletes helped her during her trials and

tribulations at the university.

Breaking through those barriers to qualify for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games was a massive achievement on many levels. She began training only three months after fracturing her arm in a bicycle crash in 2018.

"It's really, really cool. It's that I get to say I got to reach a lifelong dream and reach my high-performance peak or peak of excellence," she said. "It means a lot to be able to represent Canada and represent the East Coast. Those are all things that really motivate me."

Frenette was inspired by her father who ran triathlons and began to run them with him. In an already impressive 2021, she also won a bronze medal in the World Triathlon Para A Cup event in Spain. After starting to train for triathlon at the age of 16, making it to the Paralympics within nine years is an impressive feat.

After coming so close to a Paralympic medal, Frenette is not yet content. She is focused on upcoming events like the 2022 Abu Dhabi World Triathlon Championships.

"The facilities and organizing the Games throughout a pandemic, it was really, really impressive how they pulled it off," she said, recalling her time in Japan. "It was a great time. I really, really enjoyed my experience; it was more than I could have imagined."