

DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

NORTH AMERICA'S OLDEST CAMPUS NEWSPAPER *EST. 1868*



APARNA MOHAN, THE DSU'S INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT (ACADEMIC AND EXTERNAL) SPEAKS AT A RALLY FOR EXTENDING RENT CONTROL OUTSIDE THE NOVA SCOTIA LEGISLATURE. (PHOTO BY LANE HARRISON)

The looming end of rent control

Tim Houston's plans are a threat to students and vulnerable communities across Nova Scotia, protesters say

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Thank you

Dear reader,

It's been about two weeks since I last wrote my letter from the editor. In that time, the *Dalhousie Gazette* held its first and second contributor meetings of the year, in person and in the Student Union Building, for the first time in almost 18 months.

In those meetings, the *Gazette* (safely) filled the SUB's society hub boardroom to the brim with students interested in writing for our pages. I want to use this letter to say thank you to those students. If you ask anyone from the 2020-2021 *Gazette* staff what the largest challenge of the pandemic was, they'll tell you that it was finding new writers. Without the ability to meet on campus, our numbers dwindled. Seeing a room full of students, including many who are new to the university, excited to write for the *Gazette* filled me with excitement for the 10 issues left in this publishing year.

Having new writers doesn't only make our jobs so much more rewarding as editors, it also greatly improves the coverage we supply for readers. The *Gazette's* editorial staff is only made up of a handful of students, it is nowhere near indictive of the entire Dalhousie University community. So, a sincere thank you to every Dalhousie (and University of King's College) student who showed up to our meetings and stopped by our society fair booth. You're what makes the *Gazette* the *Dalhousie Gazette*.

If you're reading this and want to join our writers, email me at editor@dalgazette.com



Lane Harrison, Editor-in-chief

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THE FINE PRINT

The *Gazette* is the official written record of Dalhousie University since 1868. It is published every two weeks during the academic year by the *Dalhousie Gazette* Publishing Society. The *Gazette* is a student-run publication. Its primary purpose is to report fairly and objectively on issues of importance and interest to the students of Dalhousie University, to provide an open forum for the free expression and exchange of ideas, and to stimulate meaningful debate on issues that affect or would otherwise be of interest to the student body and/or society in general. Views expressed in the letters to the editor, in streeters and Opinions section are solely those of the contributing writers, and do not necessarily represent the views of the *Gazette* or its staff.

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CORRECTION

In issue 154-2, an opinions article asked why the Mi'kmaw language is not taught at Dalhousie University, St. Mary's University and Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU). The Mi'kmaw language is taught at Dalhousie, St. Mary's and MSVU. Students at Dal can find Mi'kmaw Language for Non-speakers I (INDG 2901) and II (INDG 2902) under Indigenous Studies in the academic timetable. The *Dalhousie Gazette* has updated the article online and apologizes for this error.

How to fill a stomach with an empty wallet

A guide to budget friendly food on campus

BY MIA ROBICHAUD WITH FILES FROM ADAM INNISS, NEWS EDITOR

Food options have returned to the Dalhousie University Student Union Building (SUB) after a year of COVID-19 closures.

On Sept. 13, the Dalhousie Student Union announced at their first council meeting the school year that the SUB would be returning to regular hours, this has come with the reopening of the food court and most food businesses except Bento Box and Booster Juice.

But the chain restaurants aren't the only food options in the SUB. For students looking for affordable or even free food, the DSU levies a few food options on campus. Aparna Mohan, the DSU's interim vice president (academic and external), said when it comes to combatting the financial issues of students, food access is something the DSU prioritizes.

"Food security is something that's been a really big part of the DSU portfolio. And, in particular, this year, the loaded label and the food bank," said Mohan.

Patsy Ginou, the food box coordinator for the DSU Farmers Market said, "students have more than enough to worry about without having to wonder where their next meal is coming from and if they can afford it. Students pay so much into their institution, and we deserve to have some affordable options in return."

Here are some of those affordable options.

The Loaded Ladle

The Loaded Ladle, supplies sustainable, accessible, locally-sourced free food to students from Tuesday to Friday, 12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m. on the main level of the Student Union Building. The food is plant-based and typically includes gluten-free options. Allie Lum, employee at the Loaded Ladle, said they "strive to create well-rounded warm meals that include the major food groups, including dessert."

The pandemic forced the Loaded Ladle to reduce capacity last year. Loaded Ladle employee Öykü Su said, "Our number of servings reduced by more than half. However, with the reopening this year so far, our servings have surpassed our pre-pandemic average."

Another Ladle employee Lauren Rodrigues

"Students have more than enough to worry about without having to wonder where their next meal is coming from and if they can afford it."

said during lockdowns "time was well spent" organizing and developing new projects off-campus.

Throughout this time, their focus remained on minimizing food insecurity in the student population. They met their goals by delivering about 500 food boxes filled with vegetables, fruit, eggs and tofu to students from April to August of 2020. "Then, from September to December we

supported 50 students with food gift cards from the Halifax Brewery Farmers' Market," said Rodrigues.

The Ladle has also launched a new project, Ladle TV. Ladle TV is a program that provides students with a box of ingredients that they can use to follow along with Ladle TV's Insta-

gram recipes. According to Rodrigues, 300 students have been served through Ladle TV.

"Students are under immense pressure to thrive academically, socially and recreationally

at Dalhousie. These goals are unattainable when we cannot nourish our bodies due to a lack of affordable food on campus," said Lum. "The Loaded Ladle provides a consistent source of food on campus, so that students do not have to worry about affording their next meal between classes."

DSU Farmers Market

Another reliable source of food on campus is the DSU Farmers' Market. Through their website, students can order food boxes, bread, coffee and more, at a nearly wholesale value, to be picked up on the main floor of the SUB on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

"The pandemic has largely affected student work and student income, especially with a lot of students having to move around and quarantine and everything. All of this I'm sure has affected food security," said Ginou.

According to Ginou, their produce is sourced directly from local farmers, such as Abundant Acres, Noggins Farm and TapRoot Farms.

They also occasionally work with the Dal Urban Garden Society, a group who garden and grow fresh produce on campus. The Dalhousie

Urban Garden Society also offers grocery grants to students struggling with food insecurity.

DSU Food Bank

Located in the basement of the SUB, the DSU Food Bank provides free food and hygiene products for students and community members, with halal and vegan options available. Due to COVID-19 the food bank now operates by appointments only, which can be booked through the registration form on their website, dsu.ca/food-bank.

"The food bank was one of the only things that was offered throughout the pandemic," said Mohan.

The various programs combatting food security at Dal all work together and with the DSU to remain focused on their mission, Mohan said.

Ginou said, "I know that all of these groups are doing everything they can to make accessible and affordable and local food options more prevalent to students on campus, in comparison to a lot of the fast food places and overpriced meal halls."



THE LOADED LADLE NO LONGER ONLY PROVIDES FREE MEALS TO STUDENTS, THIS YEAR THEY'VE LAUNCHED A NEW OFFERING: LADLE TV. (PHOTO BY LANE HARRISON)

The need for rent control

Premier Tim Houston doesn't want to extend the province's emergency rent cap

BY ADAM INNISS, NEWS EDITOR AND NATALIA TOLA



MULTIPLE COMMUNITIES IN HALIFAX, FROM STUDENTS TO SENIORS, ARE CONCERNED ABOUT HOW THE END OF RENT CONTROL WILL AFFECT THEIR LIVES. (PHOTO BY LANE HARRISON)

While rent in Halifax continues to rise, Nova Scotia's Premier Tim Houston wants to put a stop to emergency rent control in the province. This change could be a threat to those in Halifax, including students, who cannot sustain a raise of more than two per cent in their monthly rent.

Houston announced his position on rent control at a press conference after his swearing in ceremony back in August. "I don't see a scenario with extending [rent control], that's not something that I've been focused on. I feel very sincerely that the solution to the housing crisis is more housing stock," Houston said to reporters.

Since November 2020, rental price increases have been capped at two per cent in Nova Scotia, a temporary restriction included in Nova Scotia's state of emergency as a response to CO-

VID-19. The rent cap, which was introduced by the Liberal Party of Nova Scotia, is scheduled to end by either February 2022, or when the state of emergency ends.

That state of emergency is likely to end sometime after Nova Scotia enters phase five of its reopening plan, which is slated to happen Oct. 3 at the time of this writing.

For one student who aged out of foster care, "It's brutal"

The association of community organizations for reform now (ACORN), held a rally to keep the rent cap on Sept. 23. ACORN is a tenants union made up of moderate-to-low-income renters.

Second-year Nova Scotia Community College

(NSCC) library tech student Riley Rhodes attended the protest. "I'm here because the housing crisis is getting to be exceedingly outrageous. The lives of poor people need to begin to matter," said Rhodes.

Rhodes grew up in foster care. He said this leaves him particularly vulnerable to the end of rent control.

"You turn 19 and you're dumped in the deep end, you have no backup plan. You're either on the street or you're lucky enough to have an apartment," he said. "If anything happens, you have no safety net, you have no backup plan. There're no parents to give a fuck if you sink or swim. It's brutal."

Though not a member of ACORN, Rhodes wants to see more support from the province for students and youth who age out of foster care

and need to navigate the housing market on little income.

Specifically, Rhodes said the province should help those who age out of foster care with basic living expenses many students rely on their parents for, such as help with purchasing furniture and covering the first month's rent.

"I had nothing. When I came into care, I didn't have a blanket. My care worker didn't give two fucks, and I aged out with nothing. I was lucky to have a small support system that helped me, but it was very much the right place at the right time. And most foster kids are not as lucky," he said.

ACORN demands the province keep the cap

Marjorie Penderton, the secretary for the mainland chapter of ACORN, said the rent-cap helps elderly and disabled people afford housing. “We’re here to protest today, for economic justice, for the poor and the people on fixed incomes. My pension puts me in poverty. I can’t work, I have disabilities,” Penderton said. “I had spine surgery, which is very serious. But I keep going. I’m going to protest this to the end, until we hear from the province and the municipal government about some kind of rent control.”

Gary Burrill, the MLA for Halifax Chebucto and the leader of the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party (NDP), is fighting Houston to keep the rent-cap in the province.

“So many people now in Halifax have received notices from their landlords that on the first day of the first month after the lifting of the state of emergency, they are going to receive rent increases of \$300, \$400, \$500 or even \$600,” Burrill said in an interview with the *Dalhousie Gazette*.

Burrill is not just pushing for an extension of emergency rent control, but hopes to bring permanent rent control to the province.

“A majority of Canadians live in jurisdictions where there is a permanent rent control system, which protects people from these sudden astronomical increases that force people out of their places where they’ve been often for decades,” he said. British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Ontario, Prince Edward Island and Quebec all have some form of rent control.

Justin Lunderigan is one of the people concerned about having to move for more affordability. Lunderigan is a poet who spoke at the ACORN rally, he said when it comes to removing the rent-cap Houston is “out of his mind.”

“He’s not worthy of leadership. Who does he care about? The middle class, upper middle class and ultra-rich? Is that what Halifax is going to turn into? An investor’s city? I love my city, always loved my city. They’re taking away what we like about this place, the people and the affordability,” he said.

Lunderigan said racism and prejudice has made him and his family’s search for affordable housing even more difficult.

“I have personally noticed the looks that we will get when we go to apply to landlords. They’ll speak so friendly and sweet to us on the phone, and then when they see that we’re Indigenous, you get a completely different reaction,” Lunderigan said. “It’s gotten to the point where I think I might even have to move away. I might have to leave Nova Scotia, leave Mi’kma’ki and I don’t want to do that.”

DSU demands rent control

Aparna Mohan, the interim vice-president (academic and external) at the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU), spoke at the ACORN rally on behalf of the students struggling with the housing crisis.

“There are students who are couch-surfing ... and living in less than acceptable circumstances because they either cannot afford better or

there’s too much competition for better affordable housing,” Mohan said in her speech.

“We regularly get bursary applications at the student union from students who are approaching bankruptcy and houselessness and are constantly wondering whether they can pay rent next month or whether they’ll have to choose between groceries or a roof over their head. That is not acceptable.”

After her speech, the *Gazette* spoke to Mohan about what the DSU has been hearing from students about the housing crisis.

“We get emails from international students who are just so caught up in figuring out how to get to Dalhousie that they don’t have time to figure out housing,” said Mohan.

According to Mohan, international students are hit particularly hard by the rental market. “We’ve heard from [international] students who are asking for classes to continue online, just to accommodate the fact that there’s no housing here and they would be much better off just staying home. And these are students who haven’t set foot on Dalhousie campus at all.”

Pablo Rios, an international third-year creative writing student at the University of King’s College, said that a potential rent increase is difficult to understand for those who are new to Halifax. “There’s so much fear. When I finished my first year at King’s, I was excited to move into a new house. But as soon as I started hearing the stories, I worried landlords would never take my side.”

Mohan and the DSU would like to see more support from Dalhousie regarding housing,

“Dal does have such an opportunity and leverage to advocate [for housing justice]. And that’s not what we’re seeing happen. We know that the student affairs office, for example, is doing a lot of advocacy. But we need to see it from more from the university.”

Burrill does not believe the Conservative government’s private sector approach to the housing market is responsible to citizens, including students.

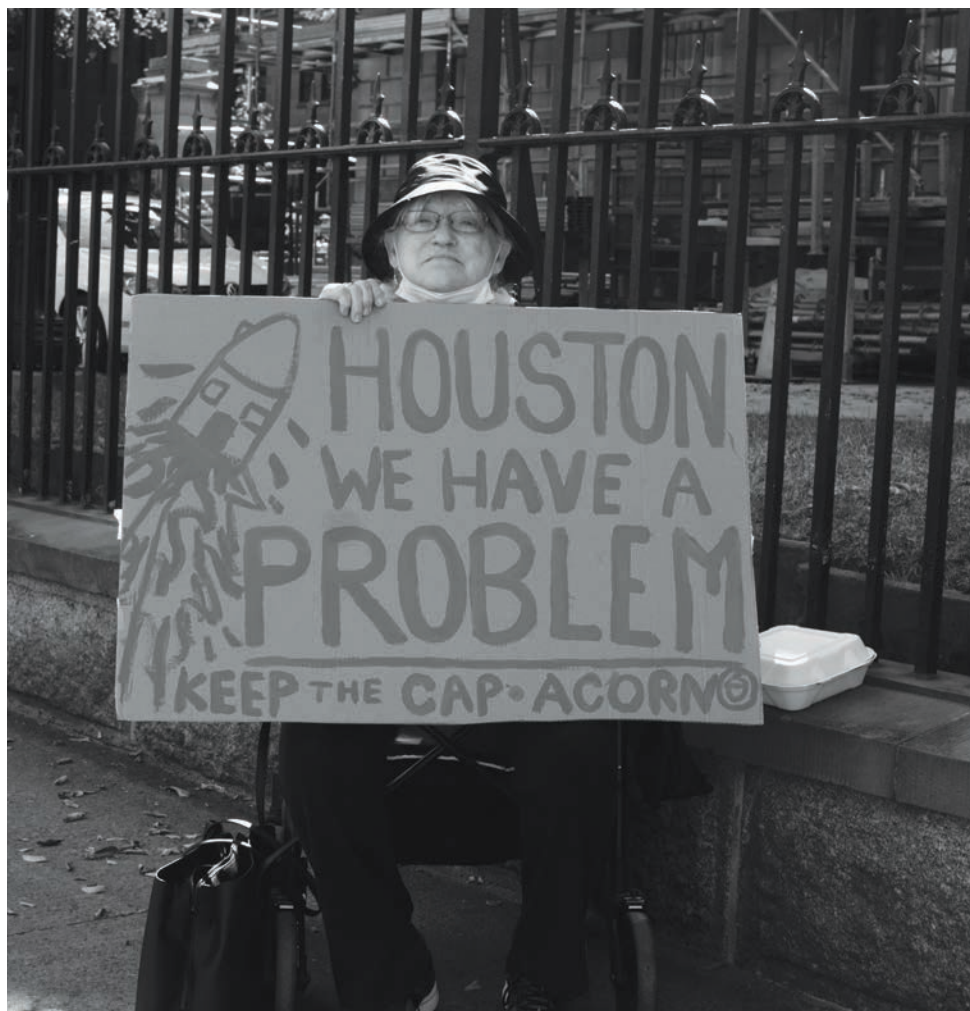
“The student population ought to be treated with more respect than to leave them to the pressures of the private market at a time when the private market is putting extraordinary upward pressure on renters,” he said.

Dal off-campus housing team

The Dalhousie off-campus housing team is one of the offices in Dalhousie Student Affairs trying to help students find housing in this difficult and changing market. They help connect students struggling with housing with bursary programs or legal aid. Just recently, they housed a number of students temporarily at the Double Tree Inn in Dartmouth from Sept. 1 to Oct. 6.

Heather Doyle, special projects director for student affairs, said rooms were provided to students who “just don’t have a place to live and are potentially homeless, or their apartment is ready Oct. 1, but they have nowhere to go until that date.” She said most of these accommodations are for international students.

Doyle encourages students to reach out to housingsupport@dal.ca for assistance.



MARJORIE PENDERTON IS CONCERNED FOR HALIFAX’S ELDERLY POPULATION IF RENT CONTROL ENDS. (PHOTO BY LANE HARRISON)



(PHOTO BY LANE HARRISON)

Harvard University announces divestment

What this announcement means for Dalhousie and the world

BY TAYLOR ADAMS WITH FILES FROM ADAM INNISS, NEWS EDITOR AND LANE HARRISON, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



AFTER A QUIET YEAR DUE TO COVID-19, DIVEST-DAL HELD THEIR FIRST IN-PERSON EVENT THIS MONTH: A POSTER MAKING SESSION FOR THE SEPT. 24 SCHOOL STRIKE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE. (PHOTO BY LANE HARRISON)

In a major victory for the divestment movement at universities in North America, Harvard University has announced it will no longer invest in fossil fuels.

Harvard's president, Lawrence Bacow, announced on Sept. 9 that the school's endowment, valued at \$42 billion, will divest from all fossil fuel holdings. This would make Harvard the richest university to divest from fossil fuels if they follow through on the announcement.

This comes after over a decade of activism from Fossil Fuel Divest Harvard, one

of many campus divest groups around the world. Divestment is the act of selling shares in a financial holding so you are no longer invested in that holding, campus divest groups demand their universities divest from fossil fuel companies that are contributing to the climate crisis.

Rosie Bleyer, a campaigner with Divest-Dal — the group has no hierarchical leadership structure, all members are campaigners — and third-year environmental science student, sees Harvard's divestment as a big step for divestment

movements at all Universities. "It's really exciting to hear that Harvard has committed to divestment, I think it's honestly a bit of a game-changer," she said.

Setting an example

At a Divest-Invest leaders press conference on Sept. 15, many pro-divestment organizers voiced their hopes that Harvard's decision would set an example for other institutions around the world. Divest-Invest is a global network of people

and organizations committed to divestment from fossil fuels and reinvestment in a greener economy.

"If divestment can happen for Harvard University, with an endowment the size of a small nation, then other universities, state governments and powerful actors have no excuse," said Isa Flores-Jones at the press conference, an alumna of Fossil Fuel Divest Harvard.

Bill McKibbin, co-founder of 350.org, a global movement that campaigns against fossil fuels, said after Harvard's divest-

ment, other universities will have “no place to hide.”

Morgan Whitten, another Fossil Fuel Divest Harvard organizer who spoke at the leaders conference, said, “Harvard didn’t lead, it conceded. Whether there was a ‘final blow’ is beside the point — it was the force of years of zealous campaigning and unrelenting pressure that pushed them over the edge.”

Harvard and Dalhousie

Divest-Dal is our campus equivalent of Fossil Fuel Divest Harvard. This is a group of students, alumni, and community members who have been advocating for Dalhousie to eliminate its investments in the fossil fuel industry since 2013.

In 2014, Dalhousie released an investment committee report to the board of governors on fossil fuel divestment arguing against divestment. This report cited Harvard as an example of a university that hadn’t divested.

“The university outlined that, while it is important to address climate change, it did not feel that divestment from the fossil fuel industry is warranted or wise,” the report said.

The Dalhousie investment committee released another report in February 2019, the “Fossil Fuel Investment Review.”

Here, Dalhousie continued arguing against divestment, saying investing in green companies alongside fossil fuels was a better plan. They once again cited Harvard as a school that had “rejected divestment.”

With the recent news from Harvard, Bleyer said “that argument kind of falls by the wayside.”

“If an institution the size and scope of Harvard can [divest], Dal ought to,” said Rob Tremayne, another campaigner with Divest Dal, also a third-year sustainability and philosophy student.

Since that 2019 report, Dalhousie has made no official announcements regarding investment in fossil fuels. As of 2021, Dalhousie holds shares in fossil fuel companies like Suncor, Husky Energy, TC Energy, Parkland Fuel, Canadian Natural Resources and Cenovus Energy. The full list of Dalhousie endowment investments for 2021 can be

found on Dalhousie’s Treasury and Investments page, at dal.ca/dept/treasury-investments.

Divest-Dal’s revival

According to Bleyer, Divest-Dal is working on rebuilding its membership. The group’s activities dwindled over the last year because of the pandemic, she said.

On Sept. 23, Divest-Dal hosted a poster

making event on campus for the Sept. 24 School Strike for Climate Change. The event also served as a way to gauge interest in Divest-Dal, Bleyer said.

“Right now we’re just really focusing on gaining some traction on campus,” Bleyer said. “The turnout is really amazing. We had this idea of less than a week ago, to get this all set up. So seeing all these people here is honestly shocking, and really, really motivating.”

After seeing students come out to their first event, Bleyer said “this is just the beginning” of Divest-Dal’s in-person planning for this year.

Legal action and Harvard’s divestment

Fossil Fuel Divest Harvard filed a legal complaint with the Massachusetts state attorney general back in March, arguing Harvard’s fossil fuel investments violated state laws surrounding the management of institutional funds.

Specifically, the legal complaint argued that Harvard was breaching state laws that require institutions to invest in a way that incorporates the university’s charitable purposes. By investing in fossil fuels, the complaint argued, Harvard was negatively affecting the world at large, meaning it was also affecting its physical and financial future.

At the Divest-Invest conference, Ilana Cohen, the organizer of Fossil Fuel Divest Harvard, said this legal approach was “potentially key to the victory.” She hopes that similar complaints can be used to uplift other divestment movements.

Divest-Dal hasn’t taken the legal route yet, “we’re hoping to bring Dal with us will-

ingly, but I think legal action is definitely a tool we have at our disposal, because if nothing happens when we’re asking nicely we’ll ask less nicely,” said Tremayne. He said he was unsure of what that legal route might look like in Nova Scotia.

Already too late for divestment

Divestment can’t come soon enough for McKibben, who said at the conference “this day comes too late to save the people who died in Hurricane Ida, or to save the forests of the West that have gone up in the last six months, or, frankly, to save the people who will perish in the years ahead, but it’s not too late to be a huge help in doing what we still can.”

For McKibben, divestment helps to fight the “hypocrisy of an institution that in some classes is teaching its students about the wrongdoings and ethical implications of the oil sands or oil spills, and that same institution receiving money from those companies.”

In his announcement on Sept. 9, Harvard President Bacow said “given the need to decarbonize the economy and our responsibility as fiduciaries to make long-term investment decisions that support our teaching and research mission, we do not believe such investments are prudent.”

“Those in charge of Dalhousie’s investments, they have that responsibility to look to the future and the longevity of the fund, and they’re not doing so by clinging to the past of the oil and gas industry,” said Tremayne.

Dalhousie did not respond to an interview request regarding divestment for this story.



STUDENTS AT THE SCHOOL STRIKE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ON SEPT. 24. (PHOTO BY ALAN ITURRIAGA COUTINO)

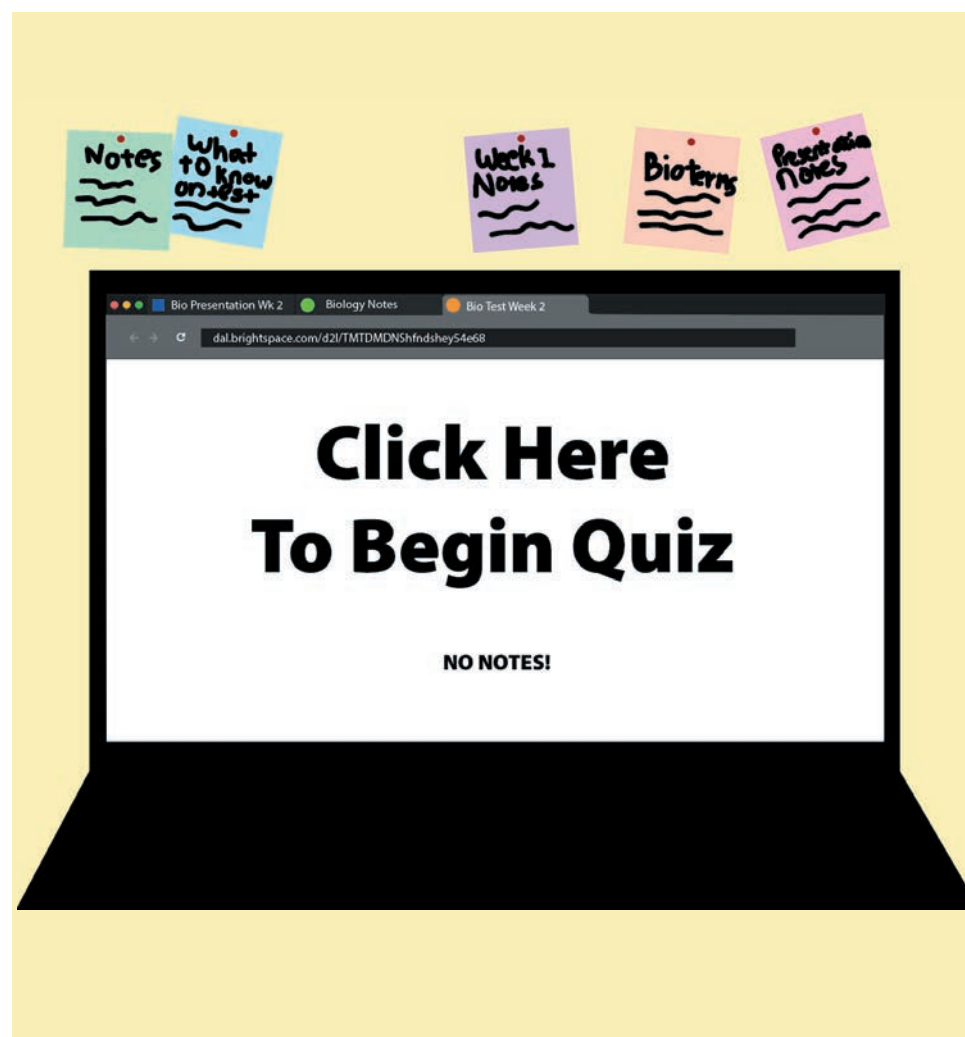


DIVEST-DAL HAD TO FIND AN EXTRA ROOM TO CREATE POSTERS IN AFTER SO MANY STUDENTS SHOWED UP TO THEIR FIRST EVENT ON CAMPUS THIS YEAR. (PHOTO BY LANE HARRISON)

Re-learning to learn in a classroom

Learning online made cheating simple, being back in class is better for everyone

BY MILES ANTON



ONLINE CLASSES PROVIDED STUDENTS WITH A MULTITUDE OF NEW LEARNING TOOLS, WHILE ALSO MAKING SURE THEY DIDN'T REALLY LEARN. (GRAPHIC DESIGNED BY MORGANE EVANS)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, academic cheating skyrocketed, according to an August report from National Public Radio. Online learning allowed students to take digital shortcuts that were previously unavailable to them. With almost 80 per cent of Canadians vaccinated, we've been told to expect to be in classrooms for the foreseeable future. Will students see a change in grades without access to the online world?

Being stripped of online resources in asynchronous lectures makes me feel disempowered and confused about my approach to learning. I can't pause lectures to research what the professor is talking about. I can't skip past content I already know. It's been hard to re-integrate into the classroom.

I lose focus quickly during lectures, but I can't rewind the video. It feels foreign to contribute by talking rather than writing. Instead of mining documents for relevant infor-

mation, I'm learning to absorb texts by reading them through.

For the second time in my life, I have to learn how to learn.

Digital tools during the COVID-19 pandemic

To achieve academic success, students must provide the correct answers on tests, essays and assignments. Before the COVID-19 lockdown, students got these answers one of two ways: by putting in the work, or through traditional cheating methods like cheat sheets, also known as crib sheets.

Lockdown changed all of this. Communication with professors was limited to 80-minute Zoom sessions and shoddy Wi-Fi detracted from peer conversations. It was hard to focus with classes consisting of computer screens and online modules. These screens became

our classrooms during the pandemic. Most communication, learning and socializing for Dal courses happened in these digital spaces.

The pandemic caused a drop in grades and a rise in academic-related stress. The conditions did not facilitate learning, but did facilitate cheating.

As the *Dalhousie Gazette* reported in October 2020, the pandemic caused widespread anxiety. Cory Williams, a fourth-year history and political science student at the time, told the *Gazette*, "It's been rough," Williams said in the fall of 2020. "I'm relying solely on myself to succeed and I don't have the same support systems I would have had if I was on campus."

Growing up digital

Most college students have grown up in a digital age. Students are comfortable using computers and the internet to streamline everyday activities like banking, checking grades and chatting with friends. When these tools became the primary medium for education, we quickly learned the best digital shortcuts for other things.

Online learning led to new cheating methods, such as covert, student-to-student collaboration during exams, or idling course materials in a second window during closed book tests and keeping answers hidden off-screen. For a professor, these cheating methods are hard to identify and even harder to stop.

Some universities turned to software that monitored their students' screens for them. The return to the classroom may offer teachers and administrators relief from the struggles of maintaining academic integrity on top of organizing an online teaching routine.

Back to class means less cheating

As the school year progresses, cheating rates will probably go down. This is unequivocally a good thing as cheating is proven to impede learning. If students find every answer online, there is no incentive to develop an understanding of different ideas. This devalues education and students won't retain their education over time.

A return to academic integrity will make us all better students. That said, this return to in-person classes will probably cut too hard in the other direction.

As much as the pandemic fostered cheating, it also inspired students to discover new

learning supports. Some strategies I began using include typing "CTRL+F" to quickly find important details after a thorough reading of a document, or using online searches to clarify a professor's points during lectures.

The pandemic allowed me to speed up recorded lectures and process the content in half the time.

There are also classic tools, like SparkNotes, eNotes, EasyBib, Wikipedia, search engines and add-ons. Many of these supports can be used in classes where professors allow computers, but not all tools cross the barrier from online classes to in-person classes. YouTube tutorials, audio language translating apps and other helpful tools won't make the cut. These all make classes easier by fast tracking tedious tasks and simplifying complex topics, but might be deemed disruptive.

Lectures have resumed at regular speed with no ability to pause and resume. No more muting or ducking off camera to listen to the pronunciation of a word before being called upon in class, or watching video clips defining concepts being discussed.

Age gaps and iPods

There has always been something of a generational disconnect between teachers and students. The average student-professor age gap, in Canadian universities, is thirty-five years, according to 2017 data from Statistics Canada. An average third-year Dal student is younger than Google, iPods and Wikipedia. The average Canadian professor was a college student when the internet first launched.

I don't blame professors for not fully grasping how vital the digital sphere is to the way our generation learns. However, I feel like my teachers have always harbored skepticism toward the internet.

Many teachers discourage Wikipedia as a resource. They often mandate the use of print resources for essays. It was probably difficult for teachers to be forced into an entirely digital environment and I empathize with this struggle.

Back in classes, students are now joining professors in the difficult process. In our current reintegration period devoid of digital shortcuts, grades may fall. As a consequence, traditional pen and paper cheating may even rise.

Finding equilibrium will be a long process, but if students and teachers move forward with understanding and empathy, I know we can survive it.

The weighty subject of weight

The best time to comment is never

BY MANDY KING, OPINIONS EDITOR



UNLESS YOU'RE INVITED TO COMMENT, IT'S BEST NOT TO. (PHOTO BY MORGANE EVANS)

COVID-19 forced many students into solitude last year. When the dust settled and mandates relaxed, some of us came out looking a little different. It might seem natural to mention a friend's changing figure, but please fight the urge. It's never okay to comment on someone else's weight — even if the change appears positive.

For my family, lockdown felt like a time warp. Days blurred, and much like Christmas vacation, our home was suddenly full of comfort food.

Stress-eating isn't normal for me, but spending most of my time inside during those early pandemic days, my

eating and exercise habits changed.

When it was announced students were heading back to campus this fall, I was excited at the prospect of meeting peers and professors in person. I was also nervous about the extra weight I now carry.

COVID-19 impacted us all differently

I wasn't the only Canadian whose weight was impacted during the pandemic.

A study by Dalhousie University's Agrifoods Analytics Lab in April 2021, reported that 42.3 per cent of Cana-

dians felt they had put on weight during the

height of COVID-19.

The study found 72 per cent of research participants experienced heightened stress levels during the pandemic, while 74 per cent found their eating habits had changed.

The stress of the pandemic may have triggered eating changes, but not all changes result in weight gain.

A CBC News article written by Kayla Hounsell in March 2021 reported a 100 per cent rise in inquiries to the National Eating Disorder Information Centre's help line during the pandemic."

Eating Disorders Nova Scotia, a not-for-profit organization created to support Nova Scotians in overcoming eating disorders, has reported a 400 per cent rise in service requests.

Weight gain can also be attributed to eating disorders, such as compulsive eating or binge eating disorder.

Before commenting on a friend's weight

gain or loss, consider it may not be something to celebrate.

You never know what might be causing weight change

It isn't just the pandemic which wreaks havoc on our bodies and mental states. There are many reasons we may not want to share our weight gain or loss stories with others.

Nine years ago, when I got pregnant with my son, I assumed I'd gain weight and I was comfortable with the notion. In the beginning, however, I got sick.

I don't know why they call it morning sickness because it didn't discriminate based on time. I lost 25 pounds my first trimester, and it carried on through my second.

At first, the compliments were nice.

"You look so slim, what are you doing to lose weight?"

Eventually it became tiring trying to avoid these questions.

Apart from having an unpleasant answer in store for them, I wasn't ready to tell the world I was pregnant. And I shouldn't have had to.

Our bodies aren't the business of others.

Support at Dalhousie

Weight gain and loss can be triggered by many things, such as illness, changing hormones, mental state and food access. Fortunately, Dal has supports in place to help students in many of these areas.

It may come as a surprise that not all Dal students have the benefit of food security. Dal supports students through a student union run food bank. Students in need can apply for assistance through the DSU for a scheduled pickup time and obtain food at the SUB.

Dalhousie also offers support to students through an Eating Disorder Drop-in Group, mental health resources and social worker services, including stress and anxiety management.

Being there for each other

While our school is equipped to help us overcome some negative causes of weight fluctuation, it falls on us as peers to be there for one another.

Our words are impactful and it's important we support fellow students by respecting boundaries surrounding weight. I believe one of the best things we can do is accept each other as we are.

In instances of body changes, the classic adage, "If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all," is rendered moot. Advice to consider instead may be, unless you're invited to comment: it's best not to.

Our words are impactful and it's important we support fellow students by respecting boundaries surrounding weight. I believe one of the best things we can do is accept each other as we are.

Neo is back...or is he?

I don't care, I'm thrilled either way!

BY MANDY KING, OPINIONS EDITOR



WHEN WHITE RABBIT STARTED PLAYING IN THE TRAILER? *CHEF'S KISS*. (PHOTO BY MORGANE EVANS)

The *Matrix* trilogy started in 1999 and finished in 2003, or so we thought. A new installment to the franchise will be released Dec. 22, 2021 and while some may be bored with the concept, I am barely holding it together.

The new trailer

A black cat crosses a desk and Neil Patrick Harris asks, "Thomas, you seem particularly triggered right now. Can you tell me what happened?"

That's all it takes. I am fully committed to this trailer and all it promises.

Why? Because the last time we saw Keanu Reeves as Thomas Anderson, also known as Neo, he was floating away on a glowing platform in Robot City after his final faceoff with Agent Smith. Trinity was lying dead in the aircraft that brought them there.

That's it. Fade to black and credits roll. What happened to Neo?

Apparently, he's alive and looking an awful lot like his canine loving doppelgänger, John Wick.

Does that mean Neo is alive but only in the *Matrix*? Is this a new *Matrix* and a new version of Neo? Is Neo in a perpetual dream state being fed upon by the robot leader? I need to know!

The trailer progresses with an appearance from Carrie-Anne Moss who plays Trinity. She shakes Neo's hand.

"Have we met?" She asks.

I'm hyperventilating.

As the first few notes of Jefferson Airplane's *White Rabbit* play, I get chills.

Does that mean Neo is alive but only in the *Matrix*? Is this a new *Matrix* and a new version of Neo? Is Neo in a perpetual dream state being fed upon by the robot leader? I need to know!

Even if you're unfamiliar with the 1967 chart topper, its lyrics paint a perfectly nostalgic picture of the *Matrix* we once knew.

"One pill makes you larger, one pill makes you small," Grace Slick croons.

I immediately picture a red and blue pill in Morpheus' outstretched palms.

"And if you go chasing rabbits," The song continues.

Again, my mind takes me to the first message Trinity sent Neo all those years ago, telling him to "follow the white rabbit."

We're back!

What's the big deal with *The Matrix*?

I realize many Dal students weren't born when *The Matrix* first aired, but some films stand the test of time. *The Matrix* is such a movie.

Clothing and technology may appear dated at first glance, but once you enter the scorched skies of the "real world" and witness the pods of harvested human bodies, an agelessness sets in. The dystopian 2199 and its digital counterpart could be anywhere, anytime.

The film also has all the makings of an epic adventure. At its core, *The Matrix* is a quest movie, and quest stories have always and will always be loved by the masses.

Like *The Lord of the Rings* with Frodo and Gandalf, *Star Wars* with Luke and Obi Wan and even the story of the *Sword in the Stone* with Arthur and Merlin, *The Matrix* follows a "chosen one", his mentor and a band of loyal companions on an impossible quest. What's not to love?

More than a movie

The Matrix makes us think. It offers the possibility of other worlds.

The concept of an alternate reality, or a reality in-

side another reality is not new. In fact, it's been argued by philosophers for centuries.

Descartes' dream argument postulates that it's impossible to know when we are dreaming or dreaming within a dream. It suggests our reality, while real to us, isn't as real as science would suggest.

Modern philosophers have suggested similar theories. Nick Bostrom from the University of Oxford, for example, believes the world we live in could be a virtual reality, based on calculations he published in 2001. Elon Musk and astrophysicist Neil de-Grasse Tyson agree with the idea, explaining that one day virtual reality video games will be impossible to distinguish from reality.

The Matrix introduced a generation to the notion of rejecting what we see and considering alternate versions of our reality.

Take the red pill

The trailer for *The Matrix Resurrections* brings flashes of red and blue pills, air ships in a dystopian future, physics defying feats and plenty of Keanu Reeves action.

As my first glimpse of the film concludes with Neo and Trinity leaping from the top of a skyscraper, I'm reminded of Cypher's words, "Everybody falls the first time."

I hope I fall this time too. Which pill would you take?

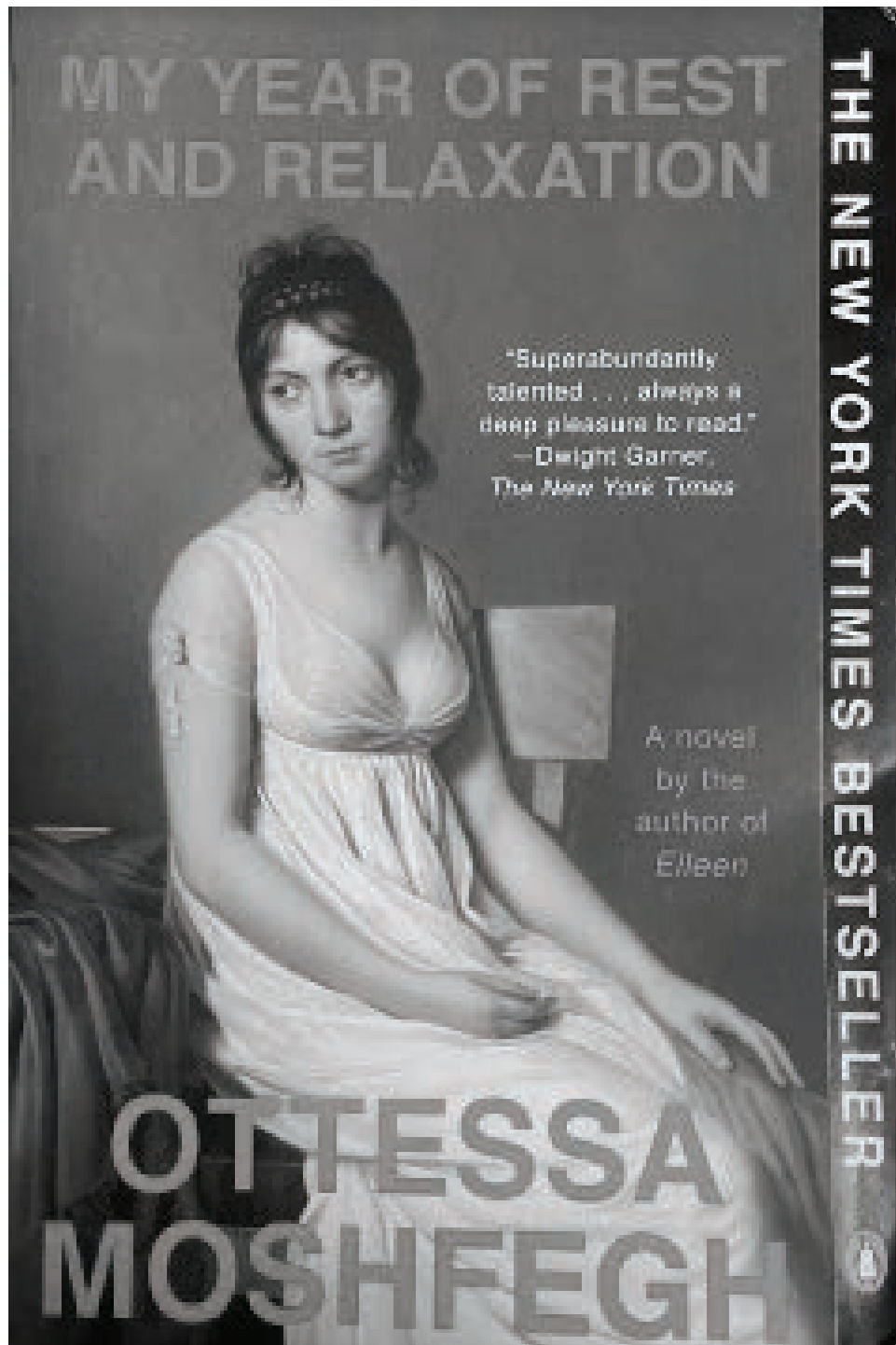


"YOU TAKE THE BLUE PILL, THE LIBERALS WIN ANOTHER MINORITY GOVERNMENT. YOU WAKE UP IN YOUR BED WITH THE SAME MP YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD. YOU TAKE THE RED PILL, YOU STAY IN WONDERLAND AND I SHOW YOU WHAT A CANADA WITH ELECTORAL REFORM WOULD REALLY LOOK LIKE." (PAINTING BY MANDY KING. CAPTION BY LANE HARRISON)

Feeling our-shelves: With Lili and Reanna

Back to school edition

BY LILI SCHWARTZ AND REANNA DRUXERMAN



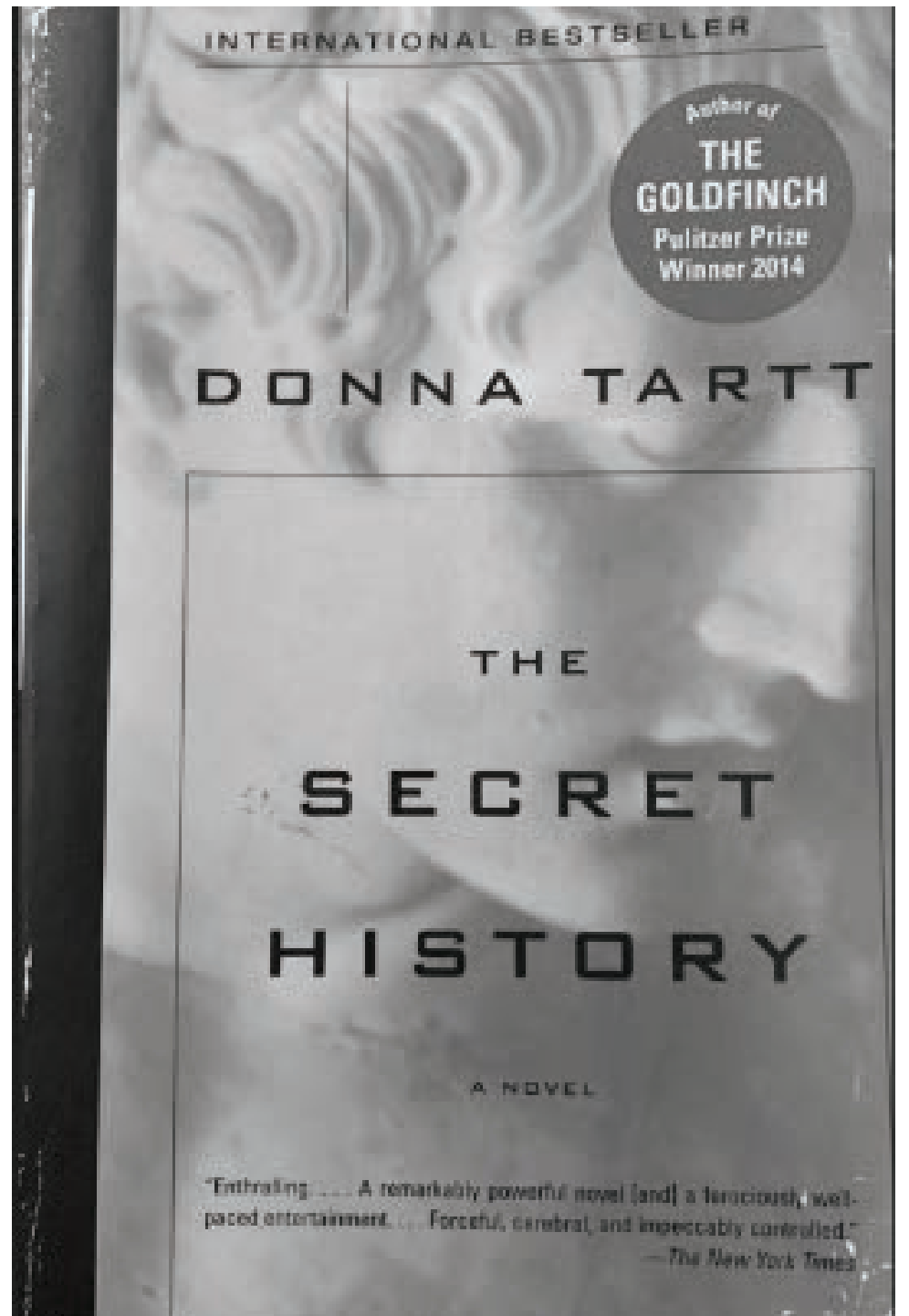
(PHOTO BY STELLA EDNEY)

***My Year of Rest and Relaxation* - Ottessa Moshfegh, 2018**

My Year of Rest and Relaxation follows an unnamed young woman's descent into chaos while attempting a prescription pill-induced year-long hibernation in hopes that her life will transform. Our protagonist is beautiful, wealthy, employed and in a relationship, however nothing in her life satisfies her and she feels as if she has no direction. The novel deals with themes such as grief, privilege and femininity in a particularly brutal fashion. Moshfegh presents a hilarious yet sad story which leaves the reader asking questions about the absurdity of it all.

Outlandish and mad, there are points within *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* that remind me of the COVID-19 pandemic. The main character's mindset is similar to many of ours throughout the pandemic, with the goal of improving or reinventing ourselves over quarantine. The ways in which she deals with her struggles are drastically different from my personal coping mechanisms, however it creates a sense of comfort knowing although one's circumstances seem ideal, they could still be going through something equally, if not more, unfortunate.

Reanna Druxerman



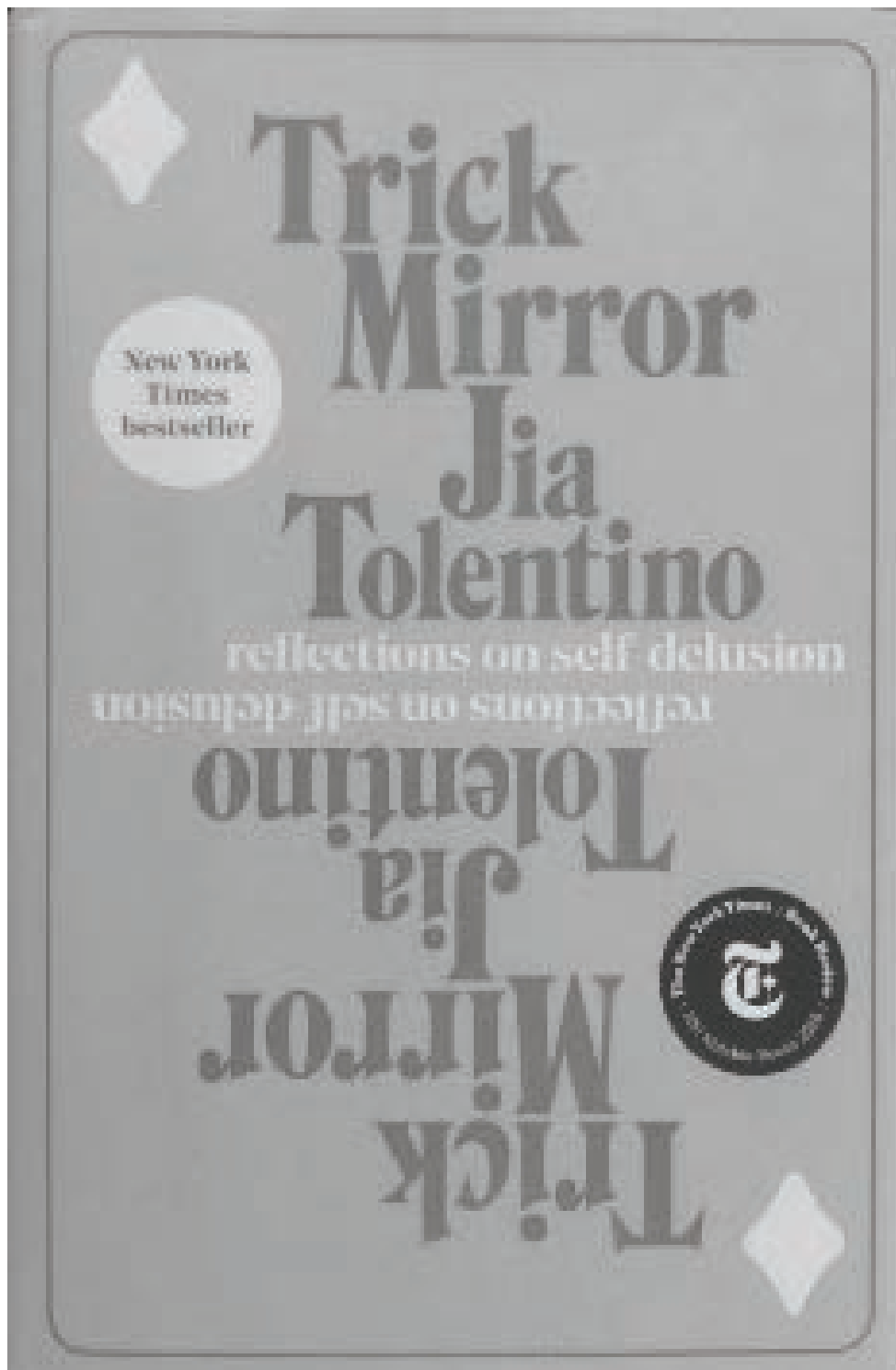
(PHOTO BY REANNEA DRUXERMAN)

***The Secret History* - Donna Tartt, 1992**

Friendship and loyalty are two prominent themes in Donna Tartt's *The Secret History*. Upon his arrival to the elite New England Hampden College, Richard Pape finds a safe haven with a clique of clever and sophisticated classics students. In an instant, Richard becomes a beloved member of their cult-like group consisting of five students, completely absorbed in their Greek homework while toasting martinis in hopes of living forever.

If a dense book about terrible people isn't your cup of tea, this may not be for you. Through a series of events preceding the death of long established group member, Bunny Corcoran, this murder mystery answers the question of 'why' rather than 'who' in a beautifully complex way. This is the perfect novel to indulge in as we slip into autumn, like Richard and his peers find themselves transitioning from plain obsession into calculated evil.

Reanna



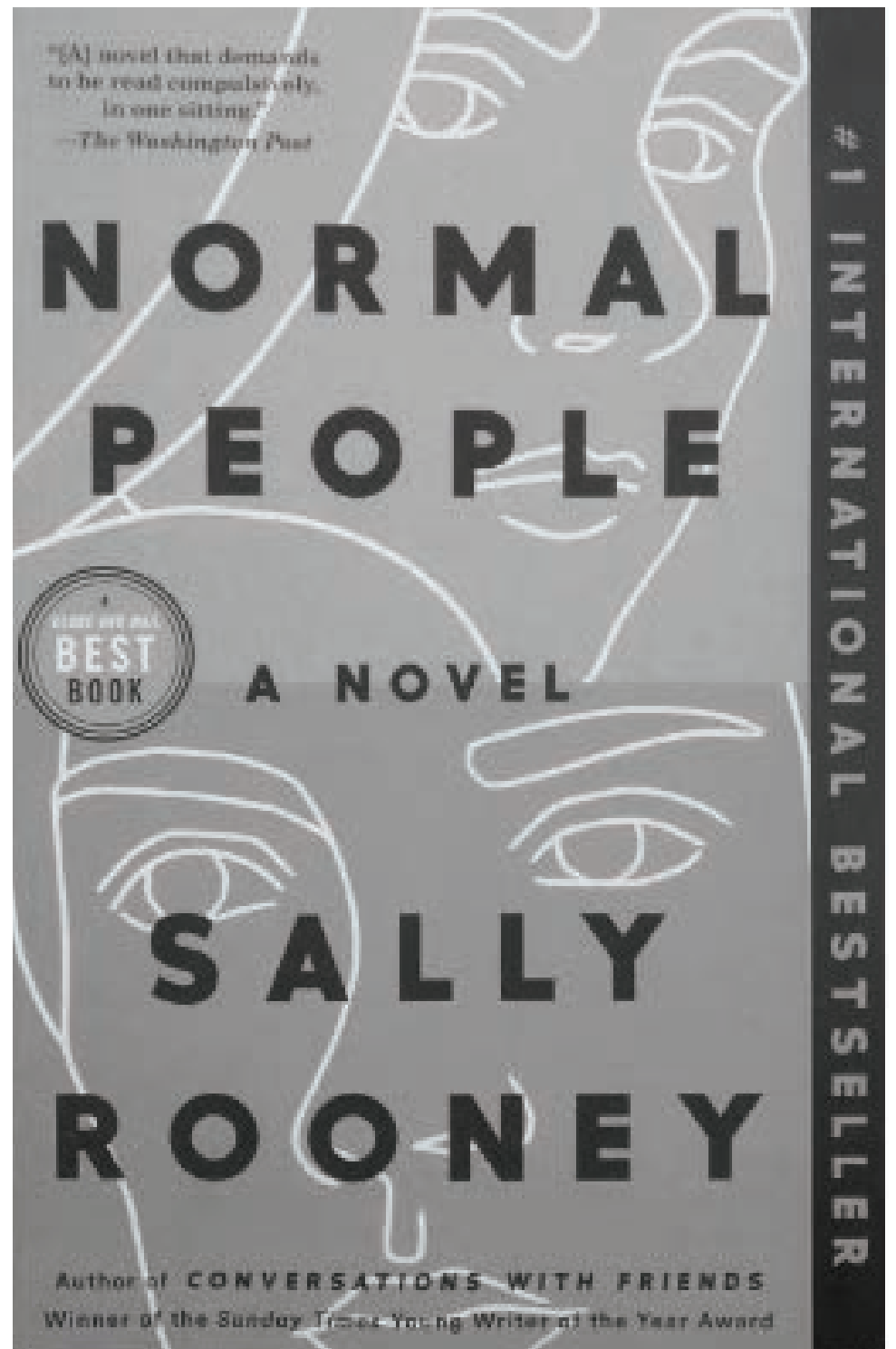
(PHOTO BY SHIRLEY MEISELS)

***Trick Mirror: Reflections on Self-Delusion*
- Jia Tolentino, 2019**

Jia Tolentino's debut novel, *Trick Mirror: Reflections on Self-Delusion* should be a mandatory read in all schools. It is a collection of unrelated essays, with topics ranging from the author's experience starring in a teenage-reality television show, to an analysis of seven modern-day scams. Each essay is fascinating and thought-provoking, especially her essay on the historical origins of fraternities and the often-ignored sexual violence that occurs on campus.

Tolentino's use of thorough research presented with her personal experiences will make you think unlike ever before. *Trick Mirror* is on my "to reread list," but in the meantime I will be patiently waiting for her next book.

Lili Schwartz



(PHOTO BY SHIRLEY MEISELS)

***Normal People*
- Sally Rooney, 2018**

Sally Rooney's award-winning novel *Normal People* is a back to school must-read. In 2018, *Normal People* was nominated for The Booker Prize, won the Waterstones' Book of the Year and the Costa Book Awards' 'Best Novel' award. It was then nominated for the Women's Prize for Fiction in 2019. The book was also adapted into a critically acclaimed limited series in 2020, produced by the BBC.

Following Marianne and Connell as they move through high school and university, the reader is subjected to their dysfunctional relationship and unlikable personalities. Do not be mistaken, this is precisely what makes the story such a memorable emotional rollercoaster. Jumping between Marianne and Connell as the years go by, without many key events in the plot, the story is a gradual documentation of their growth. Dating other people, making and losing friends, battling mental health issues and navigating changing power dynamics are just a few of the challenges that Marianne and Connell go through both as individuals and as a pair. Sally Rooney does an effective job of using these themes to exemplify what it is like to be a contemporary young adult. At times a little over dramatic and at other times justifiably emotional, *Normal People* is a relatable and short read.

Lili

FIN's top films

From French Palme D'Or winners to Atlantic Canadian game changers, reviews from this year's Atlantic International Film Festival

BY LANE HARRISON, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AND GOKCE ON

Wildhood

Directed by: Bretten Hannam
Country: Canada

Every year, FIN Atlantic International Film Festival is the best place for cinephiles in Atlantic Canada to discover new films from our backyards and film industries around the world.

The programming team at FIN couldn't have chosen a better film than *Wildhood* for its opening night gala. To its core, Bretten Hannam's second feature is a film about someone finding a new culture, identity and community, in the province they've known their whole lives.

The film is a revelation for its incorporation and empowerment of Mi'kmaq culture, despite the fact that Hannam fought for nearly a decade to bring it to the screen, he said at the post screening question period, serving as a reminder of the importance of and ongoing adversity facing Mi'kmaq stories in film.

Written and directed by Hannam, an expansion of their 2019 short film *Wildfire*, the film is set in motion when Link – a two-spirit Mi'kmaq teenager living with his younger half-brother Travis and their abusive white father in rural Nova Scotia – discovers that his father has been lying to him his whole life and his mother is still alive.

Then begins Hannam's road movie. Shortly after leaving home, Link and Travis meet Pasmay, a travelling powwow dancer whom Link falls in love with as he teaches him about the culture he's never known.

The depiction of this culture and the characters who inhabit it are what makes the film so incredible. Mi'kmaq is spoken multiple times throughout the film and on Sept. 18, FIN showed a version of the film that was dubbed entirely in Mi'kmaq. The film provides seldom seen representation for those who are from the world it inhabits and an indispensable educational experience for those, such as my Torontonians self, who are not.

That's not to say Hannam's film is more substance than style. *Wildhood* is as beautiful to look at as its story is to experience. The film is shot by cinematographer Guy Godfree – who also served as director of photography on the Ethan Hawke and Sally Hawkins led Maude Lewis biopic *Maudie*, released in 2016 – in a perpetual state of golden hour. The time of day constantly representing the time in Link's life: a moment of change.

The camerawork also seems to be largely handheld, which provides many scenes with a documentary feel that heightens *Wildhood*'s function as a portrait of an underrepresented community. A community that, as *Wildhood* demonstrates, has so much to give to the world of cinema.

Lane Harrison

Titane

Directed by: Julia Ducournau
Country: France

Julia Ducournau first bit a chunk out of the big screen with her 2016 debut feature *Raw*, a coming-of-age story about craving flesh.

Now, she is back in cinemas with another stomach-twisting, mind-bending, psychedelic joyride of a film, *Titane*. While the movie isn't made for mainstream audiences due to its extreme violence and body horror, Ducournau showed the world that sometimes the best movies are the ones that makes us most uncomfortable when she won this year's Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

So, what's *Titane* even about? On the surface, the film follows a rather unhinged woman who goes into hiding as the long-missing and presumed dead son of a fire station chief, after she commits numerous murders.

However, when you watch *Titane*, all the grotesque murder scenes are the most mellow part of the experience. The film opens with the protagonist, Alexia, and her father, in a car. Two minutes in, it crashes and things only escalate from there.

Shot mostly in low angles and dim lighting, *Titane* makes itself an atmospheric experience more than anything else. The film has its own unique way of holding the audience's attention, just like its predecessor, *Raw*.

Audiences can expect to be on the edge of their seat for the entire 108 minutes. *Titane* forces its audience try and understand what's going on in the moment, while trying to guess what's going to happen in the next. Each scene presents one hundred new possibilities as to where the plot can go, and somehow, every time, *Titane* goes that one hundred and first route. There's a lot going on in this Cronenbergian film. Like *Raw*, *Titane* leaves its audience with more questions than answers.

The film's body horror elements won't be too extreme for fans of David Cronenberg,

but any audience member who is new to the genre will see more than enough. *Titane* relies heavily on the main character's fetishistic relationship with cars, which is where much of the body horror is derived. Each moment, no matter how disgusting or incredible, is supported perfectly by the film's soundtrack.

Titane is a must see for any horror fan and would definitely be a palate cleanser for people bored of mainstream Hollywood movies.

The film will be released theatrically on Oct. 1 by Neon, who also handled North American distribution for the 2019 Oscar best picture winner *Parasite*, directed by Bong Joon-ho.

Gokce On

Memoria

Directed by: Apichatpong Weerasethakul
Country: Colombia, Thailand, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Mexico

Thai filmmaker Apichatpong Weerasethakul has cemented himself as one of the greatest filmmakers to emerge from 21st-century cinema – from his debut narrative feature *Blissfully Yours* in 2002, through to his Palme D'Or win at Cannes for the 2015 release *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*. His most recent release, *Memoria*, which screened at FIN Atlantic International Film Festival, leaves no doubt that Apichatpong will continue to hold that title as the century enters its third decade.

Apichatpong is known for making films that are contemplative both in form and function, through motionless cameras that linger on their subjects for extended periods of time and narrative logic that forces audiences to deeply consider what they're seeing. But the Colombia-set *Memoria* begins with a bang, literally. In Apichatpong's first film shot outside his native Thailand and with a Hollywood actor, Jessica (played by Tilda Swinton) is awoken from a silent sleep by a mysterious, jarring noise.

In its simplest form, *Memoria*'s narrative is about Jessica's quest to find the source of the strange sound, which appears at random and only she can hear. She describes the sound as "a rumble from the core of the earth," or "a ball of concrete hitting a metal wall surrounded by seawater." The audience never discovers what the sound is. Instead, we and Jessica must hear it over and over again, sure that it's the same sound but



AS USUAL, FIN BROUGHT A WIDE RANGE OF INCREDIBLE FILMS TO CINEPLEX CINEMAS PARK LANE. (PHOTO BY LANE HARRISON)

powerless to describe what it is.

The confusion the sound creates for Jessica permeates every aspect of her life: a male character becomes much older without explanation; memories she thought she shared with others turn out to be only in her mind.

As the film progresses, Jessica's confusion leads to alienation. She stands still in many scenes, often standing with her back to the camera as the world moves and progresses around her. These scenes are beautifully composed by cinematographer Sayombhu Mukdeeprom, who also shot *Uncle Boonmee*, seemingly inspired by René Magritte's late-career paintings of men in bowler hats with their backs turned.

With the camera often static, Apichatpong borrows from Taiwanese New Wave master Edward Yang and allows all the activity to take place within the frame, while the camera steadily observes the life within its borders. He also evokes the work of Yang's fellow Tai New Wave filmmaker Hou Hsiao-hsien. Like in Hou's films, *Memoria*'s camera will remain motionless on its subjects for minutes at a time before the film cuts to another shot, forcing audiences to draw their own value from each frame after careful contemplation.

In the film's final act, Jessica ventures from Bogota to the Colombian countryside to accompany an archeological dig. In this act, the film offers a hint of an explanation for the mysterious bang, while also subverting its entire narrative with one CGI-powered twist.

In the world of *Memoria*, very little can be explained in simple terms. But in this world, one thing is clear: Nobody is making films like Apichatpong Weerasethakul.

Lane Harrison

Behind the scenes with Wayne Carter

Who is FIN's executive director?

BY GOKCE ON



WAYNE CARTER HAS MADE A CAREER OUT OF SHARING FILMS WITH CANADIANS. (PHOTO BY CHRIS GEWORSKY)

Wayne Carter believes, “If you work around something you love it’s never really work.” Carter has been the Executive Director at the FIN Atlantic International Film Festival for the last decade.

Being in the film industry over the years

Carter’s career started with managing a film theatre in the late 1970s, when he was in high school.

“I’ve virtually been around film all my life,” says Carter.

When he moved from New Brunswick to Toronto in the 1980s, he spent a considerable amount of time in the home video business, then worked his way to becoming the vice president of sales for Warner Home Video, the home video distribution division of Warner Bros. Entertainment. When he decided to come back to Atlantic Canada, he didn’t have a job. When he saw the position at FIN was posted, he applied, interviewed and got it.

“It’s been a bit of a charmed life, I must say,”

admits Carter when talking about how he and his career have evolved through the years. “Particularly in the last five years, it’s been a very interesting time because so much is happening. The whole theatrical world is changing in terms of how people experience content.”

The change in the industry has also led audiences to change. People are exposed to more content every day and are looking for even more things to watch.

Taking advantage of the conditions

“What we’ve seen at [FIN] is, our audience has grown, and it’s grown in a very unique and unusual way,” Carter says. This is largely due to video

streaming.

“We’ve really noticed that audience habits or audience taste have grown, as they have access to this content. The other side of that, and why film festivals are more important now than they’ve ever been, is our role as a curator.”

“We’ve really noticed that audience habits or audience taste have grown, as they have access to this content. The other side of that, and why film festivals are more important now than they’ve ever been, is our role as a curator”

The programming team at the FIN watches over a thousand films and narrows them down to over a hundred.

Carter urges the festival goers, or anyone, to keep the festival program with

them and pick a film from it when “you’re sitting in the middle of a snowstorm and looking for something to watch.”

FIN 2021

FIN’s mission is, “to champion our regional content, first and foremost. Atlantic Canada has an incredible industry, there’s so much screen content made in all four Atlantic provinces,” he says. “So, making sure that content has a platform and it’s what we are identified with the most is always a first thought.”

This year, FIN made that mission clear with their choice of opening film.

“We wanted a film that checked off several different boxes. In the last couple of years, we’ve been very fortunate in that we’ve had local filmmakers who are on their first or second feature, or decidedly at the end of their career delivering films that are intrinsically about the Atlantic Canadian experience in one form or another,” says Carter.

This year’s gala film *Wildhood* — written and directed by Bretten Hannam, a two-spirit Mi’kmaw filmmaker — continued this tradition, and according to Carter, “it’s not just astoundingly good, it’s poetic, it’s beautifully shot and it’s well written, but it is also coming from a voice that has not had its time yet.”

The evolution of an artist

Director Shelley Thompson and her journey from in front of the camera to behind it

BY GOKCE ON



KNOWN FOR APPEARING IN ALL 13 SEASONS OF TRAILER PARK BOYS AS BARB LAHEY, SHELLEY THOMPSON DEBUTED HER FIRST FILM AS A WRITER-DIRECTOR AT THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL. (PHOTO BY CHRIS GEWORSKY)

Shelley Thompson is a Canadian actress turned writer-director and one of the featured directors at FIN this year.

According to her Twitter bio, she is a “writer, filmmaker, actor, fierce mother, agnostic gambler, LGBTQ+ ally and warrior. All that and more.”

However, all the labels aside, she says, “trying to encapsulate who you are seems to always be tongue and cheek. It’s really hard to sum up who you are because you are a different person in every day of your life.”

From actress to director

Born in Calgary, Thompson’s love of acting eventually moved her across the pond to England. She remembers the first time she ever visited, at 14 years old, on a school trip.

“I just fell in love with it. I had always been a kid that was really interested in history—not in an academic way, I just loved the stories.”

Among her favourites was Shakespeare. “I was a bit wacky for a kid, but I did. I loved Shakespeare, I loved the stories, I loved the lan-

guage, loved imagining that world he lived in. So going to England, weirdly, felt like coming home.”

After she completed her education at London’s Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Thompson appeared on countless different stages, including London’s West End theatre and the Royal National Theatre. Later, she gained recognition in Canada as Barb Lahey on the television show *Trailer Park Boys*, appearing in all 13 seasons.

However, acting slowly got less fun for her and it was getting harder for her to find roles as she got older, she says. So, she decided to try her hand at a career behind the camera.

“I was finding [being behind the camera] easier to maintain. And I knew that eventually what I really wanted was to create. I wanted to write and direct,” she says.

“It’s really hard to sum up who you are because you are a different person in every day of your life.”

Dawn, Her Dad, and the Tractor

Dawn, Her Dad, and the Tractor, Thompson’s first feature film, presents the audience with a dad trying to understand and repair his relationship with his transgender daughter. The film is a nuanced examination of subjects like the meaning of love and family.

“[People] need to be kind, and open to experiences that aren’t their own, and recognize that we’re not all the same,” Thompson says. Communities are built on people coming from different places, all working for the same goal: being loved, feeling

safe, and having a community that respects them, she says.

The screenplay for *Dawn, Her Dad & the Tractor* was the recipient of the 2018 Women In The Director’s Chair (WIDC) Feature Film Award. At the script stage, *Dawn* was one of 12 projects

invited to the U.S. Writers Lab, an organization supported by Meryl Streep and Nicole Kidman that provides an intensive four-day script development session for women over 40 looking to break into filmmaking. The Lab selects 12 screenplays each year and invites their writers to work one-on-one with film industry leaders.

On the making of the film Thompson says, “because of the subject matter, and because it was close to home, I wanted to make sure that I was respectful; that I had done my work, that I researched, that I talked to a lot of trans individuals and they had input on the project. For those things were really important to me.”

Growing up and moving on

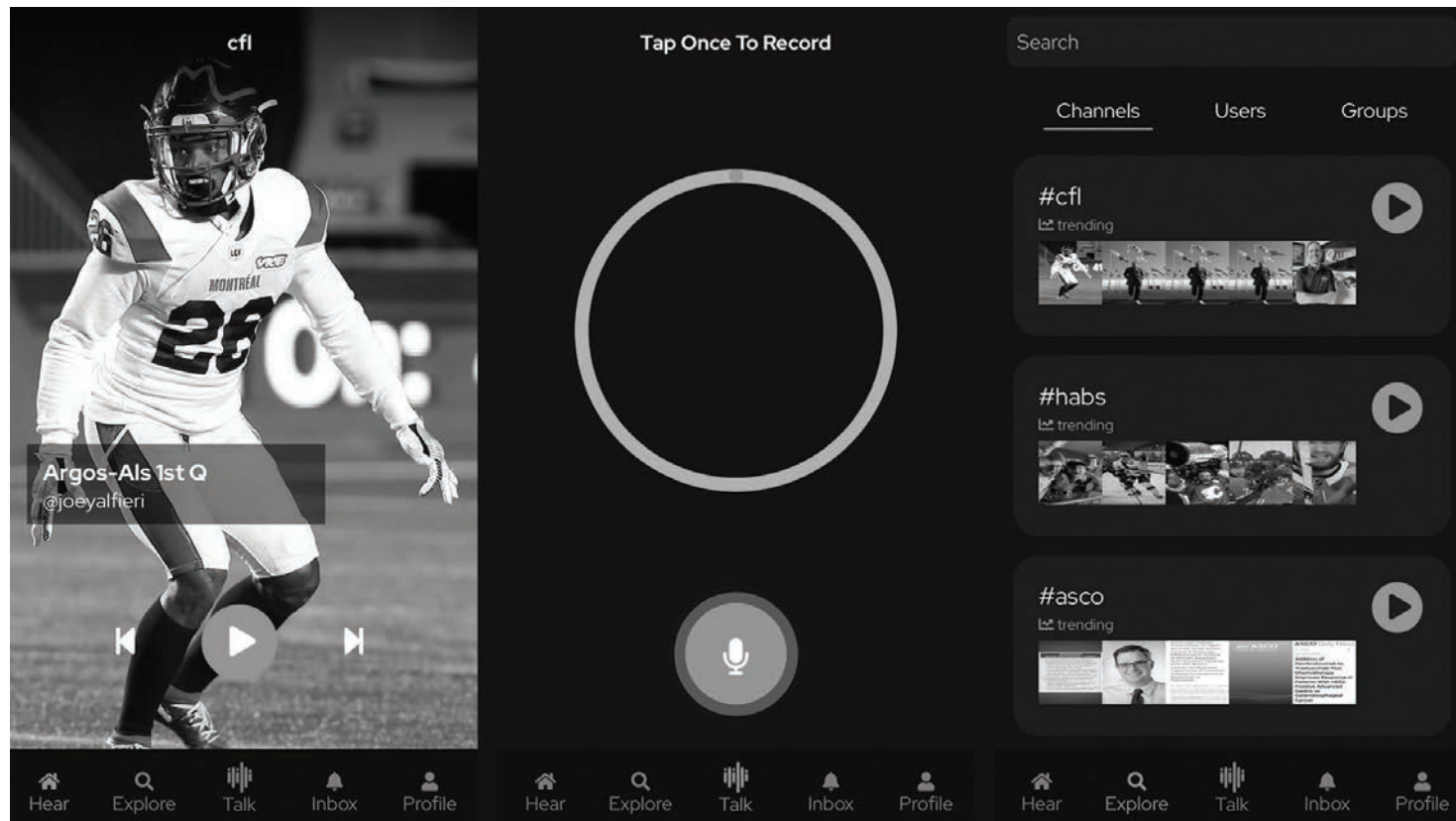
“I am a different person now than when I was in my twenties, before I had a child, before I moved countries,” says Thompson. “All these things make you feel like: ‘I need to find who I am now, because now I’m not that person.’”

Dawn, Her Dad & the Tractor can be streamed at the St John’s International Women’s Film Festival, taking place from Oct. 14-17.

Dal students help develop app gaining traction in sports world

ililli, an audio-driven platform, is targeting U SPORTS and CFL coverage as it grows its name within Canadian sports

BY LUKE DYMENT, SPORTS EDITOR



THE APP ALLOWS USERS TO UPLOAD SHORT, AUDIO ONLY CLIPS. (IMAGE BY LANE HARRISON)

A Halifax-made social media app called ililli, which launched in June, has gained traction within Canadian sports social media. The app was developed and marketed with the help of Dalhousie University graduates and students.

Ililli is a social media platform that emphasizes the use of audio, whether voice or sound, in its posts, called tiny audio posts (or TAPs). With a 15-second limit on TAPs, ililli's goal is to foster content that's intriguing but digestible.

Evan Johnson and Adam Johnston are part of the team developing ililli (pronounced eye-lilly) for Halifax tech company Watzan. The company's founder, Charles Benaiah, introduced the platform to TSN reporter Dave Naylor through an "acquaintance of an acquaintance," according to Evan.

Naylor was a fan of it. He convinced some of his colleagues like fellow network reporters Farhan Lalji and Marshall Ferguson to check out the app.

Soon enough, Naylor, who covers the CFL for TSN, his colleagues and other people involved in Canadian football launched a campaign on the app called "#TalkMore," which aims to increase the conversation around the Canadian version of the sport through talks and original content on ililli.

The campaign's timing is of extra significance as the Canadian Football League (CFL) returns this year. The league didn't play in 2020 due to financial complications resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We initially weren't aiming for sports," Evan, the app's product manager said. Watzan has a reputation in the conferencing and pharmaceutical world, previously launching an app called Mapt., a conference navigation app, among other services. Much of ililli's plan was for use in medical conferences.

"Folks in the company have a background dealing with the pharmaceutical industry," Evan said. "It just happened that Dave [Naylor] stepped in. And we kind of felt stupid. Sports are for the hot take, right?"

What is ililli?

What makes this app in particular attractive for

the "hot takes," or opinion-driven commentary on a topic created to attract attention?

Ililli's TAPs are designed to help users get to-the-point ideas across in a limited timeframe. With the uniqueness of the TAP, developers came to the realization of its versatility. News and lifestyle topics fit well with ililli's bite-sized emphasis. But sports, with sound bites, athletes and personalities potentially reaching audiences and, of course, "the hot take," presented a world of opportunity.

With that in mind, it wasn't long before developers changed the goals for the app.

"It's like Twitter, but speaking," Adam, who's been with ililli as a developer and marketer since the summer, said, comparing the 15-second TAP time to Twitter's 280-character limit in tweets. "Podcasts really took off during the [COVID-19 pandemic], which is when the app started development. The idea came from those, and TikTok too."

Dal's involvement in app and future growth

Adam, a third-year commerce co-op student, said the app is essentially "Dal-made." Much of the app's business and technical development teams are either graduates of or students at Dal. Ililli and Watzan founder Benaiah earned a Dal master of business administration from Dal in 1993.

Although the ililli team works from different parts of Canada and the United States, the app's Dal ties and student involvement make Halifax a hub for much of the group's work.

"As we're looking to grow into the college and university sports universe, Halifax is a good start because it's Dal-made," Adam said. "[Benaiah] graduated from Dal and I go to Dal. He [pointing in Evan's direction] went to [the University of King's College]. We have a bunch of graduates."

Adam said much of ililli's focus on the sports side of things involves U SPORTS. As the app is on the rise with personalities from TSN aboard among others, its less than 1,000 users means not as much new content will get crowded out by other TAPs.

This combination, Adam said, is ideal to help bring attention to "grossly undercovered" university sports in Canada.

"American [NCAA] Division I sports are as big, if not bigger than pro sports. No one cares as they should about Canadian [university] sports yet, which we are passionate about," he said. "We want to make sure that these student-athletes that have so much talent can get someone speaking for them and showing how they're the future of sports in Canada. It's about getting some more talk around U SPORTS in general."

Evan said the opportunity window for people to use ililli to make use of and gain a following on the app, whether as a student-athlete promoting their own brand, a fan taking part in the hot-takes fun or someone else, is an under-appreciated aspect of the platform.

"It's a good opportunity for student-athletes and people like that since if you go on [the app], it's you and all these guys from TSN and other athletes and media outlets," Evan said. "Someone into sports betting posted something that caught the eye of a bunch of users, including TSN's Darrin Bauming."

"Think of the Dal football team. They're not in [Atlantic University Sport, or AUS] but if you have a coach or player talking in there, they have their name in with pro football. That way, smaller college teams get more exposure. Right now, there's a dearth of representation in what university sports have to offer."

Mark your calendars

A look at the most anticipated Tigers games by team in 2021-2022

BY LUKE DYMENT, SPORTS EDITOR

In issue one, the *Dalhousie Gazette* previewed this fall sports season, which included blurbs on each team's home openers. Now, we look at some of the most anticipated games across Dalhousie University Tigers sport in the 2021-2022 season.

This particular preview will cover many of Dal's varsity teams, to an extent. By the time this hits the newsstands, the Atlantic University Sport (AUS) soccer regular season will be at its midpoint, so half of all soccer games aren't accounted for here.

Sports like track & field, cross country and swimming that host competitions are omitted based on the assumption that the AUS and/or U SPORTS championships are their most highly anticipated events. Yes, you could say that for the below sports too, but the team sports don't hold the same guarantee of qualifying for championships like the competition-based sports. With that said, let's dive in!

Women's soccer

Oct. 24 @ Cape Breton University Capers

These are both teams off to strong starts in the AUS season. Dal hasn't lost through its first two weeks of play, honing in on a solid, defensively-backed style of play. Cape Breton also doesn't allow many goals, but that's probably because they're too busy scoring them. Throughout their first three games, the Capers have scored a mind-blowing 16 goals, including seven in one game.

When they finally meet in October, Dal will be in the toughest stretch of its season, facing the Saint Francis-Xavier University X-Women each week they play CBU. But with CBU and Dal playing like polar opposites, yet both contending for the top of the AUS, the Oct. 24 match in Sydney will be a fascinating one.

Men's soccer

Oct. 22 @ StFX

The Tigers' match against the University of New Brunswick Reds on Sept. 10 was an entertaining one, as they gave one of the AUS's top teams all they could handle in a 1-0 loss. They don't play UNB again this regular season, but they do face the team that beat them: the StFX X-Men.

StFX won all of their four games in the first two weeks of the season and like the women, the men's Tigers close their season with two games each against StFX and Cape Breton. With this game being the first in a string of their toughest games of the year, Dal has a chance to make a statement and grab some important points in the playoff race.

Men's hockey

Oct. 8 @ Acadia

The Tigers have a challenging opening month schedule, facing top-tier AUS squads from UdeM and SMU. Then back-to-back home games against national powerhouse UNB. But the team's trip to Acadia on the season's first Friday will attract a lot of eyes.

The reason for that, mainly, is a first look at young players on both sides who were brought in over the last two years. Some young guns played for each side in one exhibition game against each other in February 2021, a nail-biting 5-3 Acadia victory. Rookies stole the show in that game, and with so many this time around, expect more of the same this time around.

Women's hockey

Oct. 6 vs StFX

There's no shortage of good games to open the season for the women's hockey team. They face the two best teams from 2019-2020 in week one of the season, the X-Women on Oct. 6 and SMU on Oct. 8, both at the Halifax Forum.

The SMU game will be highly anticipated for sure; Dal played well against them in the winter during a four-game exhibition series, proving they can hang around with one of the best squads in the conference. Now, the Tigers get to try their hand against the defending champions from StFX, in a game that's bound to set the tone for the rest of the 2021-2022 season.

Men's volleyball

Oct. 29 @ University de Montreal Carabins

For the Tigers, the trip to Montreal itself is a highly-anticipated one. As members of the réseau du sport étudiant du Québec (RSEQ), they (along with UNB) face Quebec's U SPORTS teams and they haven't been able to enjoy a trip with the team that far since early 2020.

But the game itself will be significant too. The Carabins dominated the RSEQ in 2019-2020, with only one loss in 16 regular season games and none in the playoffs. As Dal is a retooling team looking for their first conference win since February 2019, their showdown against the RSEQ's best early in the season will be a measuring stick of how far they're coming along.



WITH BOTH TEAMS OFF TO A SCORCHING START, DAL VS CAPE BRETON LOOKS TO BE ONE OF THE TOP MATCHES IN TIGERS WOMEN'S SOCCER THIS YEAR. (PHOTO BY CHRIS STOODLEY)

Women's volleyball

Nov. 6 @ Acadia

Dal's game at SMU the following week will be fun, as they are cross-town rivals and playing a rematch of the 2020 AUS final. But there's a level of intrigue about the Acadia matchup in the Tigers' first road game of the season.

The last time Dal travelled to Acadia in the regular season, on Feb. 10, 2020, was the last time Dal dropped a match to a conference opponent. They got revenge a week later, beating Acadia comfortably. But outside of exhibition scrimmages, the teams haven't met since; SMU took out Acadia before the Dal final. A playoff meeting would have been interesting but since there wasn't one, the Axewomen will be out to prove right away they can keep up with the powerhouse Tigers.

Women's basketball

Nov. 27 vs Acadia

Dal will have their hands full early in the season. They host the defending AUS champion UPEI Panthers on Nov. 5 and 6, which will for sure be a fun weekend of basketball.

But Acadia is also a very strong and interesting team, falling just short of UPEI in the 2020 final.

Plus this game for Dal, along with the team's next meeting with the Axewomen in February, will be a four-point game. A win in AUS basketball is typically worth two points but since these two teams play twice instead of four times this regular season, each game between them will be worth double. For a Tigers team looking to crawl back into contention in the conference, an early high-stakes game against a thriving opponent will be a hard-fought battle.

Men's basketball

Jan. 28 @ UNB

While Dal faces plenty of stiff challenges in November and December 2021, they have to wait until the end of January 2022 to face fellow top-three AUS team, the UNB Reds, this season.

UNB made an intriguing addition earlier in May 2021, adding veteran National Basketball League of Canada coach Joe Salerno. Salerno's resume includes three coach of the year honours in the NBL, a league championship in 2019 and serving as the head coach of Syria's national men's team. As an already powerful team, UNB is going to get a huge boost from the addition of Salerno, perhaps enough to challenge the Tigers for the AUS crown. The fun in this game is the hype we get to watch build up for three months before the two AUS titans square off closer to playoff time.



CAN THE ACADIA AXEWOMEN KEEP UP WITH THE POWERHOUSE TIGERS IN WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL? WE'LL FIND OUT ON NOV. 6. (PHOTO BY EVAN DE SILVA)



DALHOUSIE MEN'S BASKETBALL FACES OFF AGAINST UNB ON JAN. 28, A POTENTIAL AUS CHAMPIONSHIP PREVIEW. (PHOTO BY SAM GILLET)

The ‘centre’ of attention

Dalhousie ice clubs excited about the new opportunities an on-campus ice rink may bring

BY AIDIN POTTIE WITH FILES FROM LUKE DYMENT. SPORTS EDITOR



THE DALHOUSIE RINGETTE SOCIETY IN 2020. BOASTING A COMPETITIVE TEAM THAT REGULARLY PLAYS IN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS, THE DAL EVENTS CENTRE COULD GRANT THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO ONE DAY HOST A CHAMPIONSHIP. (PHOTO COURTESY OF ALAN SAADE)

The Dalhousie University Tigers have been without an on-campus home rink since the Dalhousie Memorial Arena was torn down in 2012.

Since then, Dal ice sports organizations have been based out of the Halifax Forum. Among them is the Dalhousie Ringette Society and its teams.

“We haven’t had a rink in [nearly] nine years,” Alan Saade, coach and club manager at the Ringette Society said in an interview with the *Dalhousie Gazette*. “We’ve been fighting for ice time.”

The Forum is not a Dal-exclusive facility. With the influx of local teams and clubs like minor hockey and skating programs, its two ice surfaces book up fast.

That’s left some clubs, like the Dalhousie/King’s Figure Skating Club (DKFSU), in a tough place. With the sparingly available ice, the club can only offer ice times on Monday afternoons and Friday mornings, which is during class for many students.

“We’ve had conversations around how some people cannot make 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. ice times on a Monday afternoon because of classes or work,” Delaney Henderson, the DKFSU’s president, said of the issues the Forum’s ice times provide. “It’s wonderful Dalhousie helps us access ice times at the Forum, but it can be frustrating for some

skaters not making sessions since they’re not necessarily primetime hours.”

Long commute from Dal campuses

When Dal announced the new Events Centre’s plans in June, the fact that “the Halifax Forum does not present an attractive opportunity to Dalhousie Athletics and Recreation” was the main reason why an investment into an on-campus arena is necessary, the statement said.

Two of three main reasons Dal provided for its 55 per cent reduction in ice sports participation since 2012, according to Dal Athletics, include the lack of available ice time and inability to acquire primetime hours on the ice.

The third reason is the Forum’s distance from the Studley and Sexton campuses.

“Many of the first-year girls don’t have vehicles as they typically live on campus where everything is within walking distance,” said Shane Galley, president of the ringette society. “The Forum is a great rink [but] it will be nice to have a close rink.”

Like any sport, ringette includes gear that needs to follow the team wherever they go to play. Because of this, public transit isn’t an option, posing

a problem for Saade.

“Travel is a problem. I have to coordinate with all of the girls to see who is coming with who, which players need a drive, who is bringing the gear,” he said. “I [often] have to make two trips in order to get all of the gear [to the rink].”

Henderson said the Forum’s distance from Dal has put some skaters at unease or even scared away participants from joining, especially for those new to Halifax and not familiar with the city.

“One of the questions new participants ask is ‘Where is the rink on campus?’ When they find out they have a long walk or have to take the bus, some people aren’t as keen to join,” she said. “Some make it work and that’s great, but there’s definitely a level of disappointment for them knowing they have to commute to a rink not super close to campus.”

Potential turning points in clubs’ histories

A new rink will mean a great deal to all of Dalhousie’s sports teams, but for low-publicity groups, like the ringette society and the DKFSU, the Events Centre provides a chance to grow and promote their sports.

Henderson said the skating club has wanted to hold a showcase for a long time but has been unable to without the available ice time. The Events Centre could change that.

“People work on their skills and different things throughout the year and they have interest in holding a showcase at the end of the year, but we’d have to outsource extra ice for that,” she said. “We’re excited for all of the opportunities that could come with access to more ice.”

Within the ringette society, there are two groups; a non-competitive club that gives everyone a chance to play and a competitive team that competes for national championships.

As the only Atlantic Canadian team that plays in the national championships, Galley said she hopes the Events Centre could put the team on the map.

“A home rink would give us the opportunity to host a national championship,” she said, adding with most of the team’s players coming from elite backgrounds in the sport, the team could showcase its talent and boost popularity. “I think that would create more school spirit. We’re really passionate about the sport.”

Saade feels the same way.

“I can’t wait for that new rink.”