

# THE VERMILLION

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette Student Newspaper 📍 November 24, 2022

## Hazing: mental and physical abuse

**Adhamm Safford**  
MANAGING EDITOR

Earlier this year, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette suspended the Zeta Xi chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha for three years after an investigation into hazing allegations. Through public records, more information about the allegations was revealed.

The first sign of trouble came on Dec. 3, 2021, when a UL Lafayette student went to the Office of Student Engagement and Leadership and said he had an interview with Alpha Phi Alpha. However, at that time, the membership intake process had not started and no paperwork had been completed. Upon further questioning, the student recanted everything.

A few months later, on Feb. 14, the UL Lafayette Police Department received an anonymous tip that Alpha Phi Alpha was hazing and paddling students at night at an apartment off-campus. The tipper also provided a list of names of students who were allegedly being hazed. Alpha Phi Alpha was subsequently placed under a cease-and-desist order pending investigation.

Investigations and interviews were conducted by the ULPD and the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, and no evidence of hazing could be found. The alleged victims named in the tip were interviewed and all denied being hazed. The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities thus

recommended the cease-and-desist order be lifted, and that Alpha Phi Alpha remain in good standing with the university.

But another investigation was soon opened up.

On April 27, an anonymous caller stated that the Spring 2022 line was split into two groups. The first group had gone through an underground process involving hazing before applications were officially processed, while the second group was excluded.

According to public records, the hazing of some members allegedly involved paddling, being sleep deprived and kept in one apartment, being told to pay for things for active members of the fraternity and being told to stay away from campus.

After the underground process, the national organization of Alpha Phi Alpha added five more candidates to the chapter. According to public records, the local chapter was upset that these five were pushed onto them. They were pushed to the end of the line and isolated and excluded from the rest.

Initially, only the first group was posted onto Zeta Xi's website. A photo of only this first group was also posted on members' social media.

According to public records, the second group were told that they did not "cross the burning sands," that they were paper not made and that they had crossed Alpha, but not Zeta Xi. They were also told by the first group that

they "do not eff with them and are not their LB's [line brothers]."

The Division of Student Affairs had shared in a report its concerns about the chapter and its candidates.

"We believe the chapter has suffered emotional and mental fatigue due to their underground process," the report states. "We believe that the 11-15 have been bullied by the chapter and the 1-10 line. They have been called names, isolated, called paper alphas etc."

The report continues, "We are concerned for the mental health of the 1-10 due to their experiences as well as the 11-15 due to harassment and treatment they have endured from pursuing membership within the chapter."

Zeta Xi was asked to comment but refused.

The national organization of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. has an anti-hazing stance and prohibits it in their policy.

"Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. strictly prohibits hazing in any form whether physical or mental as a term or condition of membership in the organization," their website states.

Hazing, however, has long been ingrained in fraternity culture. One notable case occurred in 1994, when Michael Davis was beaten to death while pledging to a fraternity. He suffered broken ribs, a lacerated kidney and liver, and ultimately died from internal bleeding in his brain.

The National Pan-Hellenic Council, which Alpha Phi Alpha and other historically Black fraternities and sororities fall under, officially cracked down on hazing in 1990 by ending pledging and instituting the "New Member Intake Process." The practice still remains, however, simply having gone underground.

According to a report by Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, some officials believe that hazing has only become more risky and dangerous as a result of being pushed underground.

"We just didn't get enough students to buy into the new process at the

chapter level. As a result, hazing has been driven underground where it becomes even more dangerous," said Dr. Jason DeSousa, assistant vice-president for student affairs at Alabama State University.

Many students, both hazers and hazed, report positive outcomes from hazing, stating that it "supported group cohesiveness," "ensured the commitment of new members," "generated a sense of accomplishment," and so on. A 2008 study stated that 31% of students that experienced hazing felt more like a part of the group, and that 22% felt a sense of accomplishment.

Yet, the dangers of hazing remain. Since 1959, at least one hazing death has occurred every year in the United States.

Hazing takes place for a variety of reasons, including as a rite of passage, to align the identity of the individual with the group and to assert power and dominance over new members.

Being a complex issue, a solution is equally difficult to pin down. Filmmaker Byron Hurt, who directed the documentary "Hazing," spoke on how difficult it is to change hazing culture, and that hazing prevention comes down to educating people about the risks and dangers of hazing.

"A lot of it happens underground, in the darkness of night. A lot of it happens in places where people in positions of power and authority are not present and can't really do anything about it," Hurt said. "So I think it comes down to really educating young people about the risks, the dangers associated with hazing culture, which a lot of organizations are already doing."

Hurt continued, "It's difficult work. It's going to take leadership that's really committed to creating that cultural change by having strict anti-hazing rules and policies on campus. And it will take leadership from the ground level, where young people have the permission to stand up, speak out against hazing culture, but then have the creativity to create something new and different."



Graphic by Meg Norwood

## Results of midterm elections and what they mean

**Cade Roland**  
NEWS WRITER

Midterm elections have concluded in the United States, and results appear to be evenly divided among the two parties. Democrats will remain in narrow control of the Senate, with Vice President Kamala Harris expected to cast a tie-breaking vote in the event of a Republican victory in Georgia's runoff election. In the event of a Democratic win in Georgia, Democrats will hold 51 seats in the Senate.

The House of Representatives, on the other hand, favored Republican victory. Currently, Republicans hold the majority with 218 seats, while Democrats hold 212. These divided results can mean many things for the future of government branches.

With legislation, the Republican-controlled House will have the opportunity to chair all committees, as well as make decisions regarding government regulation and economics. The majority Democrat Senate will have control over bills, and what legislation is brought to the floor.

This split Congress also means clashing between the two parties. Since the majorities in each chamber are narrow, it may become more difficult to pass significant bills and initiatives.

With such narrow control in Congress, individual members are more likely to make a difference in the legislation process, and intra-party debate is certain to occur.

Voter turnout for this election appears high, though still lacking

compared to record-setting presidential elections. 46% of the voting population participated in midterms, which falls short of the 2020 presidential election, which held the highest voter turnout of the 21st century at 66.8%. However, it is worth noting that midterm elections usually see lower turnouts than presidential ones.

Younger voters had an increased turnout at the polls, with 27% of them participating in midterms. This figure represents the second-highest turnout of voters aged 18-29 in 30 years.

NPR reports that young voters actually helped decide the fate of the election in some statewide races like Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, but 18-19-year-olds are not as engaged in voting as they were in the year of 2018.

Blythe Castille, a sophomore and economics major at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, gave her thoughts about early voting and the efforts to encourage voter participation.

"I was pretty enthusiastic about the amount of early voting this time around. Also, some of my teachers allowed an excused absence if people showed their 'I voted' sticker, and I felt it was great to support younger voters. The time frame for voting can be tricky for those who work or have school, so it was a kind thing to do," Castille said.

Lawrence Sciambra, a senior studying journalism, shared his opinions about the election results.

"I think, like, nationally, the Republicans underperformed because they were still trying to get the Trump-like style candidates or the candidates

that Trump supported in. So I think this January 6 made the neutral voter, like the right-wing Democrat to moderate Republican voters, not be so inclined to go for the Republican Party," Sciambra said.

The future of the United States Government appears divided, and the changes brought by a split Congress are sure to be felt throughout the next two years. Detailed midterm results can be found at AP News.



Photo by Malik Jones

2022 Midterm Election voting sticker.

### News

#### BONES ON CAMPUS

Bone fragments were discovered in a trench on campus. Anthropology professor Mark Rees shares more information.

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The Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns went to Tallahassee to take on the Florida State Seminoles, and ended up receiving a 49-17 blowout.

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Twitter's new CEO, Elon Musk, has made questionable decisions thus far into his ownership. Is the app doomed to failure?

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Discussing the difficulty of growing up in America as the child of immigrants and not knowing how to speak English.

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# Bones found on campus; identification underway

**Lena Foster**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Bones were discovered at the bottom of a construction ditch on Nov. 14 at Girard Park Circle on University of Louisiana at Lafayette campus.

Mark Rees, Ph.D., a UL Lafayette anthropology professor, was at the scene at the time the bones were found. According to Rees, they determined that the bones were from a very large mammal that was not human.

Rees shared how he believed the bones were from an animal the size of a large cow or some large mammal.

“It was impressive sized bones, about four feet below the ground surface,” Rees said.

The physical plant that was working on the construction contacted UL Lafayette’s Office of Facility Management when they saw the bones. The office called Rees and Lynn Funkhouser, Ph.D., a UL Lafayette visiting assistant professor for anthropology, to come out and investigate the bones.

According to Rees, the trench was deep and could potentially be an old trench that was along an earlier road. However, what fascinated him about the bones was the depth of the trench that the bones were found in and the size of the bones. Also, there was nothing else associated with the bones that were found that day.

“I just thought it was a bit unusual that they would find bones at that depth. And it could be something unusual in terms of the species, but we don’t have the identification yet,” Rees said.

Funkhouser is currently spearheading the identification process of the bones.

Rees further discussed the general

identification process for bones. Archaeologists usually start with comparative collections.

They look at the size of the bone, and with the knowledge they have from identifying bones, they could pinpoint the position in the body or the element.

According to Rees, the bones that were found were either a part of the mammal’s femur or tibia.

“You identify the element, and then using a comparative type collection, in which you have bone from known species of animals, you compare it, especially if it’s fragmentary, for a positive match,” Rees said.

Rees shared that finding bones is not unusual and that items are found pretty often; however, archaeologists aren’t usually called to inspect them. In Lafayette, much archaeology hasn’t been done, according to Rees.

Rees discussed the Civil War earthworks, which are forts that were made from dirt that were used to be strong and protective foundations, that were in and around Girard Park that he was looking for.

Rees elaborated on some of the sites and remains that were found along the Vermilion River.

“But there’s certainly Native American sites along the Vermilion. Many of them were destroyed but some are still intact, some dating going back 3,000 years,” Rees said. “Even earlier, actually, there have been mastodon remains found along the Vermilion River as well as projectile points from 13,000 years ago.”

The identification process of the recently-discovered bones is ongoing, and specifics on the mammal’s species will be determined soon.



Dr. Lynn Funkhouser holding a piece of the discovered bone.

Photo provided Mark Rees



Dr. Lynn Funkhouser in the trench where the bones were found.

Photo by Mark Rees



Scan the QR code above to share ideas, topics, and issues we should cover at The Vermilion, UL Lafayette’s student newspaper.

## Police Reports

Compiled by Marie Ducote

### Nov. 18

- At 10:16 a.m., an officer was dispatched to Bonin Hall in reference to a six-inch hole in the sheetrock wall in a Community Room.
- At 2:04 p.m., UL Lafayette Police Department Dispatch was contacted about a disturbance that was taking place at Cajun Field. Officers were dispatched.
- At 5:23 p.m., UL Lafayette Police Department was dispatched to Bonin Hall in reference to the theft of three pairs of Nike sneakers and two pairs of Air Jordan sneakers.

### Nov. 17

- At 9:49 p.m., officers were dispatched to Café Fleur De Lis in reference to the theft of one roll of paper towels.
- At 11:51 p.m., officers discovered a broken window on a vacant residence owned by UL Lafayette and located at 322 Dunreath St. Officers confirmed that no one was inside the home or on the property.

### Nov. 16

- At 11:54 a.m., an individual entered the UL Lafayette Police Department to report the theft of a package containing a Series Three Apple Watch from the UL Lafayette Student Union on Nov. 2.
- At 12:11 a.m., an officer was advised of a suspicious individual in front of Dupré Library. A field interview was conducted, and the individual was warned not to return to UL Lafayette properties.

### Nov. 15

- At 10:09 p.m., officers responded to Coronna Hall in reference to a medical call.

### Nov. 14

- At 4:54 p.m., officers were dispatched to 210 Girard Park Cr., in response to a verbal altercation.
- At 6:21 p.m., officers were dispatched to Coronna Hall in reference to a fire alarm. The scene was made safe for students to return.

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#### THE VERMILION

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# Fall semester finals and winter break: how do students feel?

**Aidan Milford**

NEWS WRITER

As the semester nears its conclusion, students feel the pressure of finals, and winter break is quickly approaching.

Many students have a diverse living situation, so securing housing for next semester comes in different forms. Same-room-renewals are live, so some students have already secured housing for next semester. For other students, finding housing may be more complicated.

University of Louisiana at Lafayette sophomore in psychology Deede Toussaint said that she may radically change her living situation because of cost.

"I live off campus in an apartment right now, but I may become an RA. It's so much cheaper, but RAs have a lot of responsibilities, and I hear they get a lot of problems. I don't know if I could do all that," Toussaint said.

While changes were made to the housing selection process, scheduling

for classes remains largely the same as previous years. For some returning students, the scheduling process was simple. Jolyn Seow, a broadcasting senior, described how her scheduling was a breeze.

"Scheduling was pretty smooth. I had most of my classes planned out already and put down ready to go."

As a senior, Seow takes specific classes for her major, so her classes did not fill up quickly. However, some students could not say the same thing.

Shaniya Butler, a freshman in computer science, said that, while the process was easy, she still had trouble scheduling.

"A ton of my classes were already filled. My scheduling time was at 8 a.m., so I was up at 7:50 and ready to go," Butler said.

For Toussaint, scheduling for classes became easier compared to previous semesters.

"Originally, they had put me in a pre-med track without telling me. This year was very very good, and my advisor was

amazing," Toussaint said. "They helped me get on the track I needed to be on, which is perfect. Now I only have two maths."

With finals right around the corner, students are scrambling to prepare. Some students are inundated with final exams, while others face a downpour of projects. Cassie Bergeron, a broadcasting junior, said she has a lot of projects but less work to actually do.

"I have a lot of projects and essays, but only one cumulative test. Normally, most classes have a lot of work weighted towards the end of the semester, but that wasn't the case this time. My workloads actually went down a bit," Bergeron said.

For Mason McQuade, a senior in microbiology, final exam grades make up 25%-45% of his final grades for different classes.

"I honestly need to be more prepared for my classes. I haven't even really started, but boy, should I. For some classes, my finals are less important, but in general, they make up a huge percent of my final grades," McQuade said.

With classes coming to a close, some students feel relief as their classes ease up.

"My classes are finally winding down. It's been a very tough semester, so this is very nice," Toussaint said.

Other students said their classes were well paced and evened out as the semester progressed.

"I didn't feel so rushed this semester. All of my assignments and schedules have been pretty manageable. I took six classes last semester, so only having five this semester has been great," Seow said.

Ethan Forster, a senior graduating in computer science this semester, described this semester as one of his most difficult yet.

"I decided to take the two hardest classes in my curriculum this semester, operating systems and networking. I seriously wouldn't recommend it. My schedule was easy, however, because they assign each of the 400 level classes to different time slots throughout the week. I really appreciated that," Forster said.

Winter break is coming, and students detailed their plans for the month. Some plan on traveling and visiting family.

"I'm traveling up the East coast and I will visit my family in New York. On my trip I'll be visiting Chicago, Pennsylvania, New York and some others! This is the first time in forever that I'll be getting to go on a long trip," Seow said.

"I'm gonna celebrate Christmas with my family, and hopefully I will see a bunch of family at graduation. Ideally I want to take a trip to New Mexico to see my older brother. The last time I saw him was seven years ago," Forster said.

Making money for college is the plan for other students this winter break, with some staying in Lafayette, and some going to their homes elsewhere.

"I'm going home to Slidell and I'm going to work literally the entire break to save money for next semester," Butler said.

"I will just be staying in Lafayette and working the whole time. Beyond that I will spend a lot of time with my dog," Bergeron said.

Toussaint had a different idea entirely. "I'm finna just have me time. I will definitely have self-care week, cuz this semester has been a lot," Toussaint said.

Since scheduling, many students are looking forward to classes next semester, but for differing reasons.

Some students, like Bergeron, are excited for classes for a social reason.

"I'm really looking forward to my lighting and editing class because I'm taking it with my friends," Bergeron said.

Other students, such as Butler and Seow, are looking forward to classes which let them develop skills in their fields.

"I'm looking forward to my computer science 260, intro to data and structures, because it's in my major," Butler said.

"I'm pretty excited about two classes. I'm taking a photography class for art, and the second is television news for broadcasting," Seow said.

Toussaint, being a black student, said she is excited for the Black Students Matter class, which holds cultural relevance.

Finally, as a graduating senior, Forster didn't express excitement for any class, but for his institutional freedom.

"I'm just excited to get the hell outta here," Forster said.



Photo by Malik Jones

Students studying in Edith Garland Dupré Library.

## Sports

### Cajuns smashed by Florida State Seminoles, crushed by ground game

**Caelan Broussard**

SPORTS WRITER

In their first matchup against a Power Five opponent this season, the Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns traveled to Tallahassee, Florida to take on the 19th-ranked Florida State Seminoles. This game would not have been easy, as the Cajuns were 24-point underdogs as reported by the New York Post. It would only get harder with the news that quarterback Ben Wooldridge, who had been starting for the Cajuns since the game against Marshall, was out with injury for the rest of the season. This paved the way for Chandler Fields, the original starter this season, to take the reins today.

Louisiana won the toss, so the Seminoles' offense took the field first. They steadily drove down the field. Jordan Travis led the 'Noles offense to a quick touchdown on a 36-yard run by Treshaun Ward. As quickly as the game started, the Seminoles led 7-0.

With Wooldridge out, Fields led the offense out on their first drive. The offense was stymied by the ferocious Florida State defense, and as such, were forced to punt their first drive.

Florida State would get the ball with good field position as the sun broke through in the Sunshine State. Seminoles tailback Lawrance Toafili would break for a big gain to put his team in the red zone, capped by a Travis scamper into the end zone to extend the lead to 14-0.

Fields would respond by leading the Cajuns down the field, crossing midfield before turning the ball over on downs. The Seminoles took it personally that the Cajuns went for it on fourth down, going down the field and scoring on another

rushing touchdown by Travis. Florida State went up 21-0.

Rinse and repeat. Another three-and-out by the Cajuns to end the first quarter. The second started with the 'Noles driving, but the Cajuns finally forced a punt.

Louisiana did absolutely nothing once again on offense. Deja vu once again, the Seminoles scored a touchdown to go up 28-0 on another Treshaun Ward touchdown.

The outmatched Cajuns once again had to punt the ball away, and the Seminoles went up by 35 on a Travis pass to wideout Malik McClain. Towards the end of the half, the Cajuns drove down the field and stalled out at the 2-yard line, with kicker Kenneth Almendares kicking the field goal to avoid a shutout, ending the first half with the Seminoles up 35-3.

Out of the halftime break, Louisiana started with the ball but were stymied again, with the Seminoles responding with a touchdown from Trey Benson, putting Florida State up 42-3.

The Cajuns fumbled on their first play from scrimmage, which was recovered by the 'Noles in the Cajuns' red zone. Within two plays, Duffy threw a beautiful pass to Markeston Douglas, caught in the end zone to make it 49-3.

Fields drove down the field late in the third quarter. They were stopped on third down at the Florida State 45-yard line, but once more failed to convert. Luckily, FSU showed mercy and gave the ball back to the Cajuns as the third quarter expired.

The fourth quarter, which was entirely garbage time, saw more Cajuns points on a Fields pass to Michael Jefferson, Jr.



Photo by Peyton Baker/Tomahawk Nation

Seminoles' tailback Lawrance Toafili stiff-arms a Cajuns' defender at Doak Campbell Stadium in Tallahassee, Florida on Nov. 20.

to cut the lead to 49-10. Then Fields ran it on the next drive to make the score 49-17.

Simply put, the Cajuns were outclassed against the ranked Florida State, from the opening kickoff until the clock hit triple zeros. The defense allowed over 250 rushing yards, and the offense was putrid. The Seminoles completely dominated the Cajuns, and

I tip my hat to them. If you're a sports better, you should have picked the 'Noles to win by more than 24 points.

The Cajuns will look to clinch bowl eligibility against the Texas State Bobcats next week in San Marcos, Texas. Kickoff will be at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 26.

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# Cajuns' basketball's excellent season start now stands at 4-0

**Isaac Henry**  
SPORTS EDITOR

After their opening week wins over the Centenary Gentlemen and the Harvard Crimson, the Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns men's basketball program finished their run in the Asheville Championship on Sunday, Nov. 13 facing the East

Tennessee State Bucs before returning to the Cajundome for a meeting with the Louisiana Tech Bulldogs on Thursday, Nov. 17. Both teams had opened their respective seasons with solid wins over the Elon Phoenix and the Mississippi College Choctaws respectively.

The first game opened with a flurry of scoring for the Cajuns. The first

five minutes featured a 12-5 run, and the first 10 minutes closed with a Joe Charles three-pointer to make it 21-10. Jumpers were the name of the game in this matchup.

The Cajuns scored just 26 points in the paint all game to the Bucs' 44, but would maintain a sizable lead by making shots that the Bucs could not, most notably those of the three-point variety. The Cajuns went 10-21 from three for a 47.6% rate from deep, while the Bucs sank 3-16 for a dismal 18.8%.

For scoring, Cajuns forward Jordan Brown led the way with 14 points on 6-10 from the field. Four other Cajuns players: Kentrell Garnett, Terence Lewis II, Greg Williams Jr. and Themus Fulks also had nine or more points.

The Bucs' physicality and skill at getting to the free throw line helped them even the score at 55-55 with 11 minutes left in the game, but despite being outscored by 10 points in the second half, the Cajuns held on late to win 88-77.

In rebounding, the Bucs held the slight advantage over the Cajuns 38-32 and saved 11 offensive rebounds to the Cajuns' seven. Lewis led the way for the Cajuns with nine rebounds.

Greg Williams Jr. pulled in six boards to lead all guards in the contest. The Cajuns also held a slight advantage in assists, making 14 to the Bucs' 11. Fulks and Michael Thomas led the way in this stat.

For the game Thursday, the start was quite different. For the first five minutes, the Louisiana teams were neck-and-neck, trading scores for a 10-9 Bulldogs lead.

After that, a series of missed shots and turnovers would give the Bulldogs the upper hand, and the end of the first ten minutes would see them build a

20-15 lead. The Cajuns would hit shot after shot trying to climb back, but the Bulldogs maintained their lead, and the first quarter ended 42-35 in favor of Tech.

The Cajuns' starters dominated the scoring in this game. To overcome a nine-point deficit in bench production, Lewis had to score 23 points off 9-11 shooting, and Garnett, Brown and Williams Jr. all poured in 16 points each.

The charity stripe was a huge aid in the Cajuns' comeback. 22-32 for a 68.8% rate for the Cajuns against the Bulldogs' 13-14 was a godsend.

The Cajuns pulled even with six minutes remaining in the game, and didn't take the lead until the 36th minute of the contest. The Cajuns outscored Tech by 13 points in the second half and by six points after first trying to clutch the win, 94-88.

The Cajuns were dominant on the boards, out-rebounding the Bulldogs 35-25, and won the offensive rebounding 11-6. Lewis and Jordan led the way for all players in the game with 12 and eight rebounds respectively.

The Cajuns' passing, especially late, helped get them into position for the win: they made 20 assists to the Bulldogs' eight. Fulks had an impressive seven assists, and six Cajuns logged at least two.

The main takeaway of these wins should be the resiliency of the main cast. Whether they're facing a fast-paced, run-and-gun offense or a physical, in-your-face one, the Cajuns can find the energy and heart to match up and work around the other team's weaknesses.

Next up on Tuesday, Nov. 22 will be a drive west to Dallas for a game against the SMU Mustangs, followed by a trip to Des Moines to match up with the Drake Bulldogs.



Photo by Andre Broussard

Terence Lewis II (#34) during a break against the Louisiana Tech Bulldogs on Nov. 17.

## Allons

# What gardening can do for you

**Kaylin Ambrose**  
ALLONS WRITER

There are very little downsides to gardening. Whether it's a garden dedicated to growing food or flowers, the benefits of gardening are more than you might think. Not only does gardening have countless benefits to mental health and initiating healthy habits, it also uplifts the environment in a multitude of ways.

Other than that, it's just a fun activity. It allows you to connect with nature in such a unique way because you become a part of one of Earth's most essential processes. While there are definitely

other ways to do this, gardening is one way that has tons of benefits all around.

Many of these benefits were really showcased in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. With so many people stuck at home looking for hobbies to keep them busy, gardening became very popular.

Doctor and professor Charles Hall looks into the many ways that growing plants can be beneficial to one's mental health. Among these benefits are: "anxiety and stress reduction, attention deficit recovery, decreased depression, enhanced memory retention, improved happiness and life satisfaction, mitigation of PTSD... [and] enhanced self esteem"

Further, Hall notes that vitality and quality of life in general are enhanced by gardening because it helps put the mind at ease. He includes all ages within this report, encouraging things like community gardens that bring groups of people together socially.

It's hard to get young people to slow down long enough to engage with projects like this, but Hall urges that we attempt to get young people involved in gardening to help with test performance and stress.

I found this to be interesting for college students who may need help getting their mind off their many assignments or who have mental health

struggles. I think slowing down and even just committing to growing a houseplant could be more fulfilling than we think.

Gardening is also very good for the environment and sustainable living. For one, it encourages biodiversity, meaning it breeds an ecosystem which is good for pollination. Plants also help improve overall air quality.

Another element of gardening I find particularly interesting is that it encourages what Anissia Klimova refers to as "conscious consumerism". Conscious consumerism involves making deliberate and conscious decisions about what we buy, consume and use. In regard to gardening, this involves knowing what you are using and at what rate.

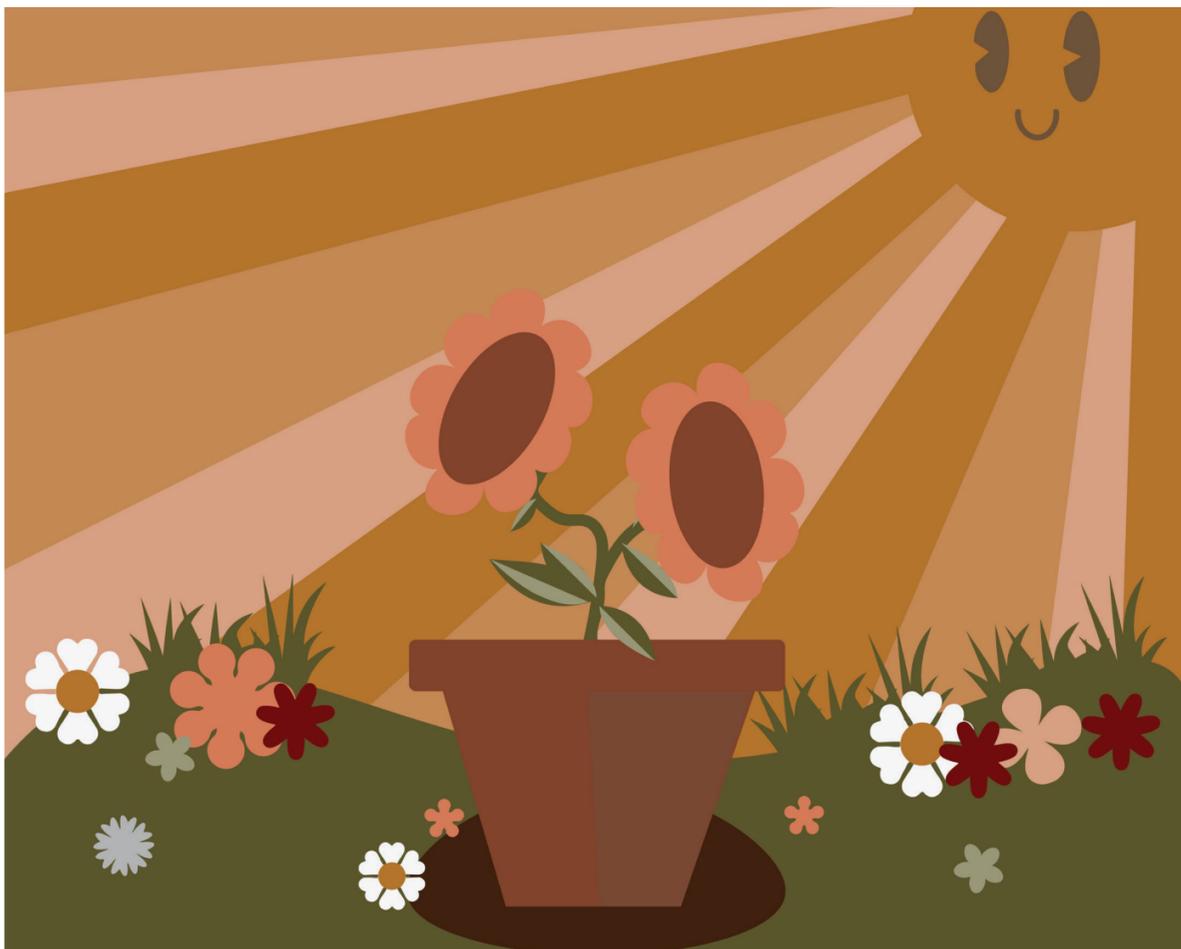
When you are this closely connected to the consumption process you can make conscious decisions that have positive effects on the environment.

Kilmova adds that this encourages sustainable living and a more nurturing attitude altogether when it comes to how we grow food and plants. Growing your own food specifically helps cut out all kinds of processes that have a negative environmental impact like plastic packaging and carbon emissions from transportation and heavy machinery.

These findings lead us back once again to how beneficial communal gardens can be and I agree. With all the benefits gardening has on the environment and quality of life, it's hard to argue that a community coming together to make a sustainable garden could be a negative thing.

It gives us an opportunity to slow down, feel the sun and be involved in cultivating something new outside of ourselves. This is true whether you are considering starting a food garden, interested in growing a houseplant, or trying to get a community garden started in your city.

Despite the fact that we are quickly heading into the cold, winter months, there are still lots of plants you can work on cultivating and plants you can start planning to grow once spring rolls around. Gardening could be the perfect activity to pick up to unwind after this tiring fall semester.



Graphic by Iyahna Johnson

# I downloaded Twitter for this?

**Ann Soileau**

ALLONS WRITER

If you've been anywhere near the internet in the past few weeks, you've probably heard by now that Tesla CEO Elon Musk is now owner of the social media platform Twitter.

According to a New York Times article about the situation, the deal was finally closed after months of drama between Musk and the former heads of Twitter.

Originally, Musk made an unsolicited offer to Twitter for the amount of \$44 billion. Although he attempted to back out, it was closed after a lawsuit from Twitter to uphold his end of the deal.

On Oct. 27, Musk tweeted a three-part statement about why he acquired Twitter in the first place. He explained, "The reason I acquired Twitter is because it is important to the future of civilization to have a common digital town square, where a wide range of beliefs can be debated in a healthy manner, without resorting to violence."

Musk continued by writing, "I didn't do it because it would be easy. I didn't do it to make more money. I did it to try to help humanity, whom I love."

These statements are particularly humorous given how the quality of Twitter tanked almost immediately.

One of the first changes Musk made was to add a system where anyone could have a verified account for only \$8 a month. In a Twitter thread on Nov. 1, Musk explained that the reasoning behind this decision was to "...give Twitter a revenue stream to reward content creators."

Some Twitter users speculate that this decision was made solely to compensate for his overspending on the platform.

In the same thread, Musk provided a list of features that would come with

that blue check mark. The list includes: priority in replies, mentions and search, the ability to post long video and audio and "half as many ads."

Not only is this a very stupid incentive, but the system failed pretty early on.

Twitter users were able to use the paid verification system to impersonate companies such as Chiquita, Roblox, and, most notably, the pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly.

Eli Lilly is a top seller of insulin, a product that was intended to be free by its inventor. A fake Eli Lilly account wrote in a now deleted tweet, "We are excited to announce insulin is free now."

This prompted the real Eli Lilly account to make a statement, tweeting "We apologize to those who have been

served a misleading message from a fake Lilly account." Then their stocks tanked.

Personally, I don't really have much sympathy for a billion dollar company who profits so heavily off of a life-saving medication, but the negative effects that this is having are clear.

Other controversial changes Musk made upon his entrance into the company include the firing (and rehiring) of Twitter employees and unbanning certain accounts in the name of free speech. This mass unbanning does include that of former President Donald Trump, who was banned after the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

Musk's own Twitter page is filled with both professional statements and outright cringey memes about himself.

That is, of course, when he's not going on rants about free speech, which is really less about censorship and more about the ability to spread hate speech.

Clearly, having someone who does nothing but meme all day probably wasn't the best idea. In fact, it is incredibly frustrating trying to decipher what is and is not a joke when he tweets.

A lot of the problems we see with unregulated social media is that, because anyone is able to use it, you have some people who use platforms to spread ignorance, hate and bigotry.

If Twitter wasn't already like this, I fear that with Musk in charge, it will become much worse.

That is, of course, if Musk's poor leadership doesn't bring about Twitter's downfall.



Graphic by Sarah Guidry

# The 'Lolita Complex,' and the cultural perversion of innocence

**Mallory Michel**

ALLONS WRITER

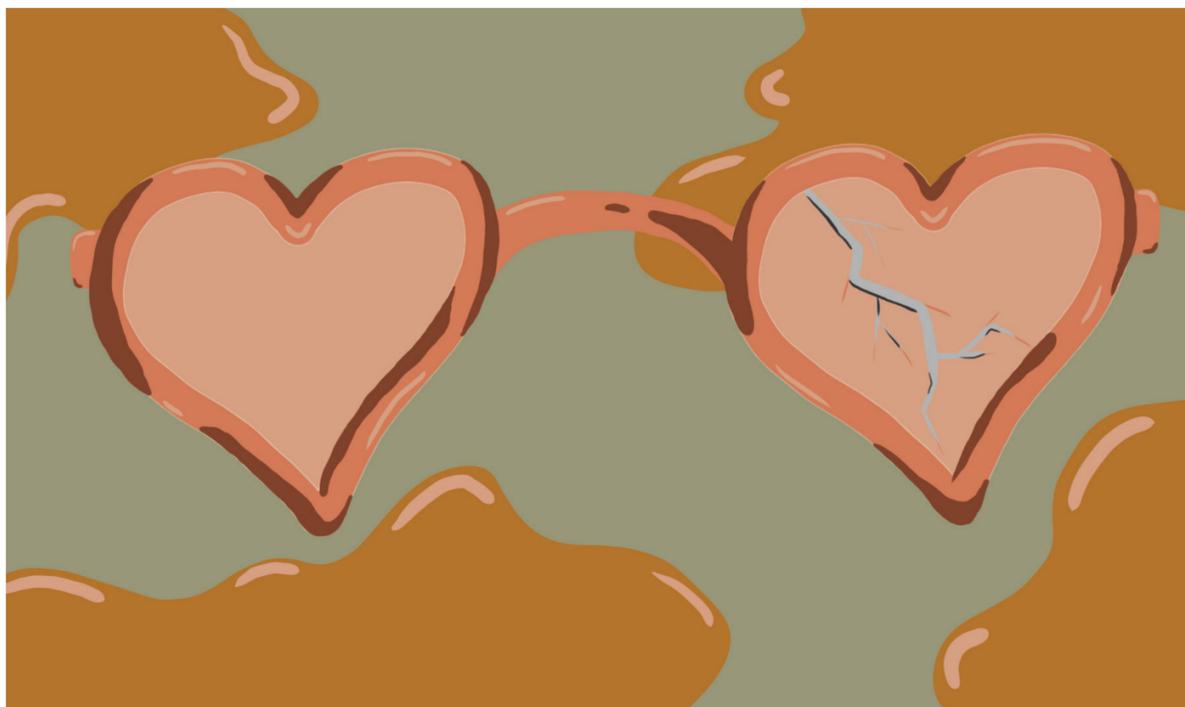
"Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins." This is the first sentence uttered in the book "Lolita" by Vladimir Nabokov. It is a nickname given to young Dolores Haze by the protagonist of the story, Humbert Humbert. While most might consider this book a tale of a young girl seducing an older man, that is absolutely not the case.

So many people read "Lolita" and expect something romantic and elicit, as if they are reading any other romance novel. However in this case, the situation is more of a horror story. The book is seen through Humbert's eyes, so we are automatically made to feel more sympathetic towards him. No matter how much of a disgusting person and unreliable narrator he is, you always feel the compulsion to root for the protagonist.

Despite this, Dolores is most certainly a victim, not some seductress trying to lure a good man into doing bad things. She is only a child, being preyed upon by this man who later becomes her stepfather, complicating things to an even more repulsive degree. This is also why Nabokov, the author, hated the idea of Lolita being cast in a movie by an actual young girl or having one on the cover of the book.

By doing this, she is automatically being sexualized. This is also a real problem that the world faces today in almost every aspect and it is nearly impossible to escape. Girls are no longer allowed to be girls – only objects for male attention. No matter what a woman will do, there will always be someone to pervert it into something for their own pleasure.

This is especially prevalent with the



Graphic by Sarah Guidry

concept of innocence as a whole. You will constantly see women on social media acting like children to appease a male audience and this always works. Whether it be for publicity or money, these methods are a surefire way to get men's approval and attention.

It is not the woman's fault, however. Not usually, at least. From prepubescence to adulthood, women and girls are groomed into this behavior whether they are aware of it or not. "Men don't like hairy legs, you need to shave." "Stop acting like that or you'll never get a boyfriend." These are very common things that most girls hear, especially at a young age.

The perfect picture of a woman has been warped by these pedophilic beauty standards, and it is expected for all women to perform in this way. Flawless, smooth skin, big doll eyes, a small stature and thin frame and the most adorable naivety to tie it all together. Even after knowing all of this, women will attack each other for this as well, when we should all be supporting one another.

It is absolutely disheartening whenever women tear each other down, knowing that most are struggling with the shame and the baggage that comes from this societal expectation. In fact, it is not just cis women. Any feminine

presenting person has to deal with this, especially transgender women as well. They are expected to display their femininity to an exhausting degree, even if that is not what they prefer. If she shows one moment of masculine presentation, she will be deemed "fake" or "not trying hard enough."

That is why, in my opinion, it is really not worth attacking girls over how they view themselves and how they act. Everyone is in this together, so why all the hatred? Nobody likes to admit that they can be just like Lolita: a damaged girl who is demonized and taken advantage of by someone she thought that she could trust.

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# Misogynoir in the rap industry

Summer Landry

ALLONS WRITER

According to the BBC News, Megan Thee Stallion was reportedly shot in the foot by rapper Tory Lanez on July 12, 2020. Since this event happened, Megan's case has been an ongoing trial. Everyone in the industry and fans of both of these artists are awaiting the verdict to see if Tory Lanez is innocent or guilty. However, many people in the industry have not been silent.

A famous DJ named DJ Academiks came out recently to say that he felt that Megan Thee Stallion was fabricating her trauma. Then the rapper Drake and rapper 21 Savage released an album this year referencing the situation. Drake basically said that she lied about being shot in his song "Circo Loco."

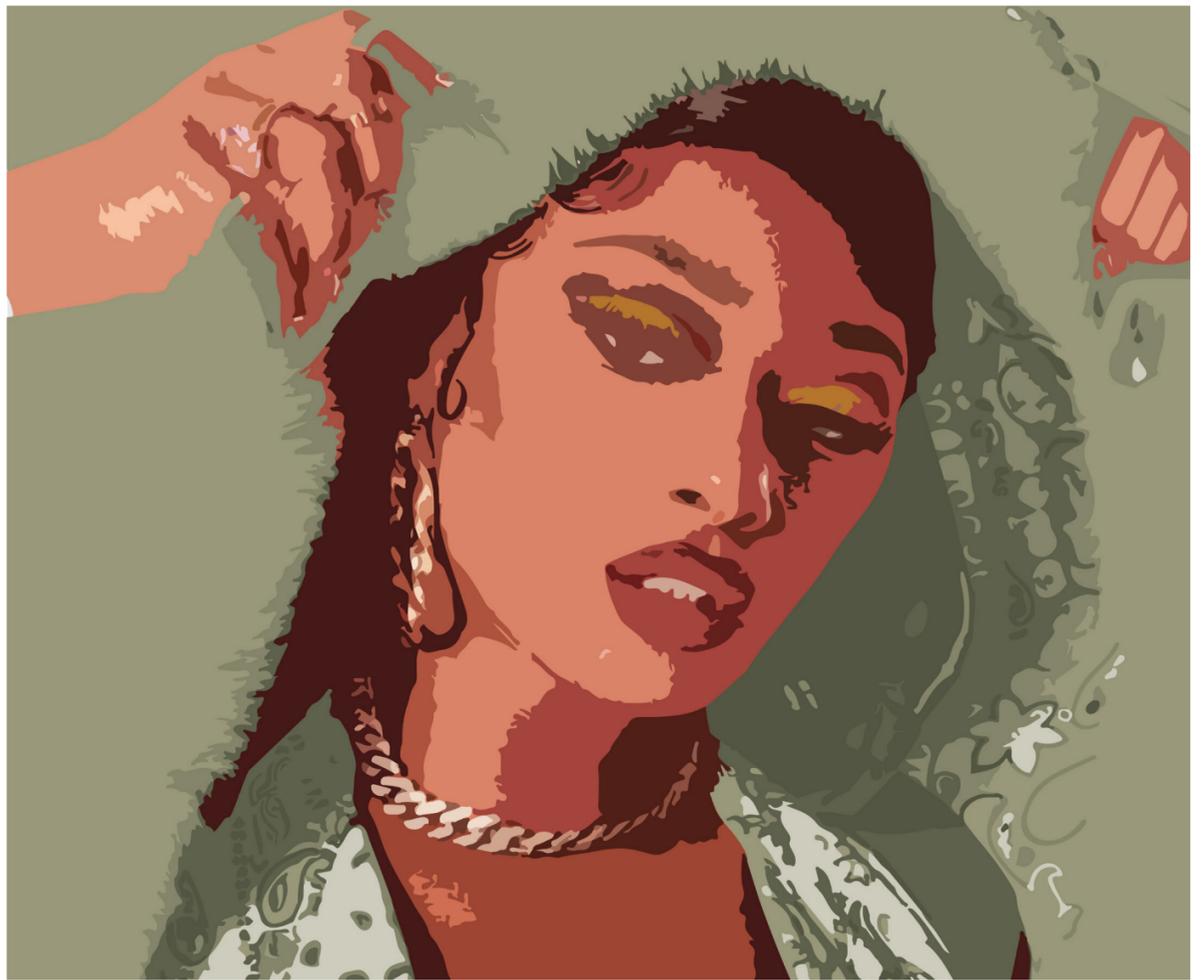
As an African American, rhythm and blues, jazz, country, hip-hop and rap all originate from my culture. Nevertheless, rap is the only genre of music that not only has a history of promoting violence but protecting it too. Now rap music is not all bad. For many artists it is used as a place to vent. It is a safe place to be heard.

Still, I find that hip-hop only amplifies certain voices. For male rappers, rap music has become a safe haven. They can rap about violence, say derogatory things about black women or even have the choice to use rap music as a light. While male rappers have all this freedom, female rappers are kept on a tightrope.

Matter of fact, before they can even be allowed to rap, they must fit the physical requirements. Once they fit the physical requirements, they are expected to rap about their bodies. They must oversexualize themselves and their images. They must look a certain way just to be heard or they get ridiculed.

Hip-hop has a long history of misogynoir, and this does not just affect female rappers but Black women as a whole. Female rappers like Meg Thee Stallion are just a visualization of it happening before our eyes in higher places. Many Black women think that just because they have accumulated prestige, money or fame, that will alleviate their chances of experiencing misogynoir.

Having said that, if those that are in positions of power are not shielded from misogynoir, then what protections do



Graphic by Julia McDow

Black women who are not in positions of power and privilege actually have? For example, according to Billboard, the rapper Rick Ross admitted that he would never sign a female rapper because he would be spending so much money on her that he would expect sexual favors from her.

Recently this exact situation happened with the rapper Latto, and she admitted that she was not able to get a collaboration because the person she was collabing with expected this kind of favor. Yet, when she admitted that it was a famous male rapper who demonstrated this kind of behavior she received backlash.

She admitted that she wished she would not have said anything. Black men are so protected in this genre that it forces the voices of Black women to be muffled, stifled and silenced. I will never understand how a genre that was created by African Americans only protects Black men mostly. I say mostly because the same violence that not only affects Black women in the hip-hop industry also affects male rappers, but the biggest difference is the level of empathy.

When a male rapper dies from gun violence, the world cries. For example, the rapper Takeoff recently died a tragic death due to gun violence. The same violence that is promoted in rap music.

At the same time, when Meg Thee Stallion speaks up about her trauma due to gun violence, those same empathic eyes become blind to her situation. Rap has always been a place for African Americans to be able to not just vent, but to express ourselves. This makes me wonder, will Black women ever be able to use this device when it is most prominently used to be divisive towards them?

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## The types of friends you'll encounter

Nyria Mustiful

ALLONS WRITER

Having friends is a blessing, especially if you happen to find life-long companions. I know I've found a few myself. However, for some people, the process of finding friends and maintaining those relationships can be difficult. Here's a guide to the types of friends there are and how to navigate those different relationships.

First up is the "associate." This is a person that you met through someone else and you just happen to have some

things in common with them. This person has the potential to level up the ranks, but the relationship is still fresh. Be open to enhancing the connection, but also be cautious of potential red flags.

Next is the "acquaintance." The acquaintance is someone who you met on your own, but they're still fairly new to you. You may be closer to them than an associate, mainly because the connection was initiated by you versus someone else that you know. Again, be open but cautious.

The "work friend" is next. This is the friend you make at your place of work,

normally while bonding over shared hate for an authority figure or maybe a shared project. These relationships are quite easy to develop, seeing as you see the person quite often. The only snag of this relationship is that the boundary between personal and professional needs to be kept in mind.

Next up, the "regular friend." This is who people are typically referring to when they reference friends. This person is someone you hang out with a lot, someone you talk to often, and someone who you trust. You and this person have a pretty solid bond that can always

be built upon. I would say to still be cautious of these people because they can still turn out to be foul.

Finally, there's the "best friend." There's no one closer to you than your best friend. You and your best friend do everything together, from shopping to skydiving. This is the one person you know, with all your heart, truly cares about you and will always have your back.

With any of these types of people, you should always be aware of "fake" friends. People can always seem to be great and then turn out to be manipulative. You could be friends with someone for 10 years and when the opportunity presents itself, they stab you in the back for whatever reason.

In these situations, it's best to approach them as a lesson, not a failure. Sometimes, you truly never know people, and that's okay. The most important thing is that you analyze what went wrong and apply it to new scenarios and people.

I have been through each of these types of friends in my 18 years of life and I can definitely say that each of them brings their own different trials and tribulations. Growing up, it was really hard to make friends and I never truly understood why. Later on, I realized that it wasn't about me and it was more about the people I was trying to be friends with.

My advice to anyone still struggling to make friends would be to assess your personality and values. Don't necessarily look for someone with those exact qualities, but look for someone who has similarities. You also want to be able to grow from the friendship, so look for differences as well. Most importantly, don't compromise yourself just to find a friend. You'll regret it, trust me.

I hope this article helps all of you make new friends and maybe it'll give you some insight on your current friendships. Either way, good luck!



Graphic by Meg Norwood

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# Learning English and navigating American culture simultaneously

**Kay Padilla**  
ALLONS WRITER

Growing up in the United States with immigrant parents was hard. The language barrier between my parents and the outside world created a lot of problems. And this, in turn, created a disconnect between myself and my school life.

My parents raised me speaking Spanish, and I was comfortable with that. The problems came when I started American schooling. From the ages of 2 to 7, I could not properly communicate with English speakers.

From bullying to racism, I experienced it all. It felt intimidating not knowing how to communicate with caretakers, teachers, cashiers, doctors and countless other people. English was something that I needed for survival, and I had to master it one way or another.

A common thing in the United States is children from immigrants, or child immigrants themselves, coming to school not knowing English. Today, it is easier to learn because most of the media kids consume today is in English, so they catch onto it quicker.

In the early 2000s, I did not have much access to media in English. I do have “Dora the Explorer” and “Blue’s Clues” to thank for teaching me a few words before I entered Pre-K. But as amazing as they were, they were not enough to prepare me for the real world.

I hated daycare. My parents both worked during the day, so I had to stay in a daycare. It was horrible, so much to the point where it’s one of my first memories. I vividly remember one of the other daycare students stealing my shoes everyday.

Don’t ask me why, I don’t remember. But what I do remember is the feeling

of being hopeless. I couldn’t explain to my caretakers that the other student was forcibly taking my shoes off of my feet.

In Pre-K, I had another incident where I could not explain a situation that happened, and I was severely punished for it. I did not know how to communicate that I was not the aggressor and that it, in fact, was the opposite.

This situation seems to be recurrent in many non-native English speakers’ childhoods. Because they did not know English and could not defend themselves, they were accused of something they did not do.

Slowly but surely, I was able to grasp a bit of English. Learning that Americans sang weird chants to a flag was a weird experience for sure. Once I mastered English at age 7, I had to master American culture.

In my family, we went to the Latin stores and flea markets, because that

is where my parents were able to communicate and buy in Spanish. I did not understand what Chuck E. Cheese or Target were.

So, when I would hear my classmates talking about their trips to Disneyland or their new Shopkins from Walmart, I was in shock. I felt like I was missing out on an entire other world, and I was.

This was obviously not on purpose, my parents and I simply could not understand the outside world. We felt like aliens that landed on a new Earth. As the years progressed, we learned about the basics of living in the United States.

Car insurance, police tickets, how to find jobs and even going to doctors appointments were things in American culture that my parents and I had to learn the hard way. This stunted my way of communicating with my peers even further.

I could not always contribute to conversations in class, so my teachers thought I was dumb. But I wasn’t, I knew what I could say but I could only say it in Spanish. I took it upon myself to learn both of my languages to the fullest extent.

Living in the deep southern parts of Louisiana, I was no stranger to racism. My skin color was a shock factor to my all white middle school. But what I was not prepared for was the verbal harassment I experienced from both teachers and students.

I was angry that I was viewed as dumb simply because I could not communicate in one language. In my quest for redemption, I think I went overboard. I was always the smartest in my classes and my reading comprehension skills were better than the American children.

Although I am a little jealous, it makes me happy to know that kids today do not grow up in the hostile environment I grew up in. Americans adapting and accepting other cultures will always be a win in my books, no matter how hard it was to get here.

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Graphic by Iyahna Johnson

## The cyclical nature of music biopics

**Marie Ducote**  
ALLONS EDITOR

If you have ever watched a music biopic, you know how the story goes. Artist is born, or a band is formed, they get discovered, then find fame and success, tragedy strikes and they suddenly lose all their fame and fortune, but don’t worry, a well-time comeback concert will give them success again. And they realize the money isn’t important; it is the music. It was always the music. The screen goes black and a paragraph shows what will happen to our main character later in life.

Sounds familiar, right? While writing that paragraph, hundreds of music biopics came to mind. In the past few years, we have seen biopics about Queen (2018’s “Bohemian Rhapsody”), Elton John (2019’s “Rocketman”) and Elvis Presley (2022’s “Elvis”). All of which, if you take away the glitz and glamor, have the same plot with a few differences in between.

I’m not putting any of these movies down. I saw all three in the theaters and enjoyed them to varying degrees. But I feel like we have become oversaturated with the music biopic.

It seems like every year, some Oscar-contending life story gets released or announced. While doing research on this article, I found out that biopics about Madonna, Cher, Bob Dylan and Dolly Parton are all in different stages of development. And a Whitney Houston biopic titled “I Wanna Dance with Somebody” is scheduled to be released this December.

When a biopic is released, I always see videos or articles usually from WatchMojo or BuzzFeed with titles like “Things that were missed in the movie” or “Fact or fiction: things that were made up for plot and things that were not.” A biopic is not a documentary; it will make up things for dramatic effect. The purpose of the movie is to be entertaining.

Now sometimes, a music biopic

will break the rules the genre has set for them. Take 2002’s “24 Hour Party People,” a film about the rise and fall of the Manchester-based record label Factory Records (1978-1992) and its founder Tony Wilson. It also takes the viewers through the careers of the bands signed to the label such as Joy Division now known as New Order, Happy Mondays and many more.

Tony Wilson, played by Steve Coogan, breaks the fourth wall many times in the movie, acknowledging that it is a movie. He even at one point says, “When forced to pick between truth and legend, print the legend.”

Wilson knows he is an unreliable narrator and only tells or shows the parts to the audience that make him look good or that will immortalize him in music history. But also just completely making up scenes that have no basis in facts. With him in voice-over revealing that never really happened. “24 Hour Party People” blurs the line between reality and fiction.

Who better to make a parody of biopics than the master of parody, “Weird Al” Yankovic? Well, that is exactly what he did in co-writing “Weird: The Al Yankovic Story” (2022). This movie is a highly fictitious telling of Yankovic’s life.

This movie covers all the cliches of the biopic, from the line, “You’ve changed man. Fame’s really gotten to you,” to the black screen with a wall of text I mentioned in the opening, and I enjoyed every minute of it.

Daniel Radcliffe (yes, Harry Potter) really sells the plot’s ridiculousness in his performance as Yankovic. And who knew an accordion would be the emotional center of the film?

“Weird: The Al Yankovic Story” obviously is trying not to tell the truth; it’s over the top and making fun of a type of movie we have all seen.

The music biopic is never going away anytime in the near future. I guess next time you go see a biopic, take it with a grain of salt.



Graphic by Meg Norwood

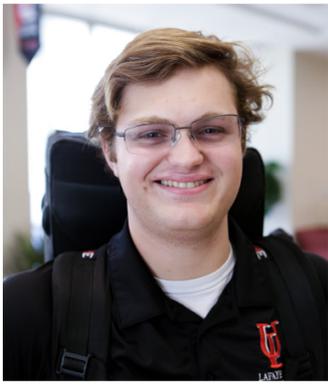
# SOUNDING OFF

**"How do you feel about the semester coming to an end?"**



**Josh Roberts**  
MECHANICAL ENGINEERING FRESHMAN

*"It went by fast. Looking back felt like two weeks ago and being excited for college and the new opportunities."*



**Joe Spears**  
MUSIC PERFORMANCE SOPHOMORE

*"Pretty confident, except for one class. Everybody got that one class."*



**Jamil Rogers**  
MECHANICAL ENGINEERING FRESHMAN

*"I feel relieved. It wasn't that bad, but I came in too confident and the semester showed me."*



**Amat Jones**  
ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING FRESHMAN

*"I feel a little more prepared for the next semester knowing what to expect."*



**Dillan Thomas**  
MASS COMMUNICATION BROADCASTING FRESHMAN

*"I feel a break is needed. It's been a lot adjusting to college life after high school but no complaints."*



**Kyla McDowell**  
KINESIOLOGY FRESHMAN

*"I feel that this semester has definitely been an experience with figuring out how I thrive best in a different environment."*

*Sounding Off is a section devoted to the voice of students. Views expressed in Sounding Off do not reflect those of UL Lafayette administrators, faculty, staff or other students.*

*Photos and interviews by Malik Jones.*

## COMIC

# Visiting family



Comic by Lauren Gerald, Meg Norwood

## Did you know?

There have been nearly **3,000 weekly visitors** at the UL Fitness Center this Fall for a total of **29,993 visits!**

Over **1,280 students** attended a career fair this Fall!

There are over **200 student organizations** available!

The Learning Center has provided over **1,263 hours of tutoring** this Fall!

For more information about these student involvement and support activities, including the number of students participating in recreational sports and the most tutored disciplines at The Learning Center, please visit the **Office of Institutional Research's Stat of the Month** at: <https://getdata.louisiana.edu/stat>

