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The Student Who Was Almost Born in Bohn

Sam Nungesser
Editor-in-Chief

We all know that first day of class anxiety — finding our way, meeting new people and the dreaded "tell us a fun fact" ice breaker. However, that ice breaker is senior marine biology major Diana Sisk-Gritz’s favorite part, as she gets to tell her classmates that she was going to Montclair State University before she was ever actually accepted.

Just over 22 years ago, when Sisk-Gritz’s mother, Stefanie Mulley (then Sisk), was a normal freshman at Montclair State as a student herself. Mulley (then Sisk), was a normal freshman at Montclair State University, although her birth, saying "I really want to bring up Africa [and] the beauty of African designers."

"I feel like a secret celebrity, I can. Since her Montclarion debut in 2000, Sisk-Gritz said she loves to show off the article and tell people her story whenever she can. "I feel like a secret celebrity, honestly," Sisk-Gritz said. "It's my favorite thing to talk about."

Margaret O’Shea, who wrote the column “No Morning Sickness and No Weight Gain: Nine Months Pregnant and Unaware,” described the events following Sisk-Gritz’s birth, saying although her friend began commuting after spring break, the entire 11th floor adjusted their busy schedules to help babysit.

“My friends on my floor were amazing,” Mulley said. “They would love when Diana would come visit. She was like a little doll. They would put her on the bed with stuffed animals and light over who got to hold her next. I’m still friendly with a lot of them on social media. They were all so excited when I told them Diana was going to Montclair State.”

An aspiring veterinarian, Sisk-Gritz said she always knew she wanted to come back to Montclair State as a student herself.

Diana Sisk-Gritz was almost born in Bohn Hall.

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Highlighting African Fashion

Lynise Olivacco
Staff Writer

The fashion department of Montclair State University held a fashion exhibit titled “Forgot African Queens” by former student Safiatou Akondo on April 5.

In her home in Togo, West Africa, designing toys and dresses out of paper as a little girl, Akondo dreamed about being a fashion designer, in a place that deprived her of that opportunity. The former fashion studies major reflected upon the stories of African Queens but also the lack of representation of African designs in the fashion industry.

Akondo explained how flea markets in Africa are filled with Western hand-me-downs which made traditional African garb not so accessible. The mass production put shops that sell African garments out of business. Akondo argues this deprives the unique garments of being seen worldwide.

Making the traditional African garb requires more work, which leaves Africans to work, which leaves Africans to make this piece."

She further stated inclusivity in the industry can fix the overwhelming issue of African garments needing more of a platform in fashion. African Fashion continued on Page 3.

The Student Who Was Almost Born in Bohn

(Left to right): Mabruk and Safiatou Akondo surrounded by her "Forgotten African Queens" collection.

Sam Nungesser | The Montclarion

The Student Who Was Almost Born in Bohn

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(Left to right): Mabruk and Safiatou Akondo surrounded by her "Forgotten African Queens" collection.

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Red Hawk Rap Sheet

Thursday, March 31
Theft: A student reported an incident of theft of a personal speaker from Blanton Hall. This case is under investigation.

Friday, April 1
Mischief: parking services reported an incident of criminal mischief, specifically an individual removing gate arms to exit, from the Red Hawk Deck. This case is under investigation.

Sunday, April 3
Ice Arena: A juvenile reported being struck in the stomach by another juvenile while at the MSU Ice Arena. After speaking with reporting party parents, they declined to pursue charges at this time.

Anyone who has information regarding these incidents is urged to call the police station at T-I-P-S (8477).
“Not a lot comes out of Africa,” Akondo said. “If there’s a fashion week going on, there are only those very few people from Africa that can show what Africa is about.” Despite Africa’s lack of representation in the fashion department, she received her Associate of Science in Business and Marketing in Togo, West Africa. She then traveled to America to receive an education in fashion, which led her to Montclair State, where she graduated in the fall of 2021.

Since receiving her education at Montclair State, Akondo emphasizes that it stimulated her desire to help people in Africa who want to receive an education in fashion. She empathizes with the predicament they’re in but also recognizes where they could be.

“After high school, there are people [in Africa] who want to go into fashion but [find it] difficult seeking out those opportunities,” Akondo said. “They really want that but don’t have the opportunity.”

Akondo said educating aspiring African designers enforces different perspectives the fashion industry needs. It imposes the mass production of Western clothing to take a seat so traditional African fashion can take the runway. Akondo argues this allows future designers to see themselves on platforms.

“African garb is not really out there in the fashion world,” Akondo said. “So I really want to bring up Africa [and] the beauty of African designers. The idea of having Africans, like the way we make clothes, especially our colorful fabric, is essential [for] the world to thrive.”

From working 11 hours a day at her job to going home to take care of her kids, she saved time during her busy schedule to make her visions a reality.

“Hopefully people who look at my designs will see something in me that I myself cannot see,” Akondo said. “Sometimes it’s hard to believe in yourself being that good and hopefully people will see something good about the designs I have.”

May Chae, Akondo’s professor and mentor in the department of fashion studies, was very pleased with her work and says she was one of her most hardworking students.

“She’s very creative and intelligent when it comes to developing her ideas and constructing designs so I knew she would have a great collection,” Chae said. “I’m very proud of her and I know people will appreciate her creativity.”

Nayana Sturzeneker, a junior animation and illustration major, said she loves the garment with the leopard print.

“I’m a sucker for gradients,” Sturzeneker said. “If you give me a gradient, I immediately fall in love with it. Minimalistic colors really do it because it’s just all neutral but I love the color pop.”

Allison Castillo, a sophomore visual arts major, said she loves the red piece with the hat that ties everything together.

“It’s very reminiscent because I’m Hispanic so the bright colors remind me a lot of my Latina culture,” Castillo said.

The lack of inclusivity in the fashion industry and the powerful stories the African queens possess motivates Akondo to keep their legacy alive and to challenge the fashion industry through her collection.

“We might be forgotten, or we might be behind, but we are moving up in the world and the motherland has something to show,” Akondo said.
New Jersey General Assembly Member Craig Coughlin was welcomed by the Montclair State University community on Tuesday, March 29 in the School of Communication and Media to assist with launching a new policy studies major and discuss his role in policy development as an elected official.

Coughlin has been a member of the New Jersey State Assembly since 2010. He represents District 19, which encompasses the municipalities of Sayreville, Carteret, Perth Amboy, Woodbridge and the assemblyman’s hometown of South Amboy.

Coughlin shared his process of figuring out what policies are most important to him, especially regarding food insecurity and affordability, along with the day-to-day procedures of revising bipartisan assembly bills that could potentially be enacted into law.

“I don’t know if we’ll see the day where nobody in New Jersey is hungry, but we can sure as hell try,” Coughlin said. His welcoming event was open to students and faculty. Montclair State President Dr. Jonathan Koppell attended the event as well.

Students were also welcome to ask Coughlin questions. Outside of focusing on food insecurity, he also touched upon topics like raising the state’s minimum wage, economic recovery from the pandemic, brownfield remediation and the importance of a liberal arts education.

Dr. Brigid Harrison, chair and professor in the political science and law department, interviewed Coughlin and afterward shared how she felt about the event.

“I thought it was fantastic,” Harrison said. “It was really illuminating to hear about the ‘nuts and bolts’ of the policy process, but also I think it was really important for students to hear about the motivations of the people making policy and the collaborations that are occurring that are occurring that are helping make people’s lives [in the state of New Jersey] better.”

Students who were at the event also shared some of the major take-aways from Coughlin’s insight. Jennifer Trujillo, a senior political science major, was one of them.

“I loved it, [Coughlin] was very informative and he touched upon many interesting topics,” Trujillo said. “I think that I would be considering this program. I love the topics [of food insecurity and affordability] and we have to get more people open to talk and make sure students know their resources and where to turn to.”

Andrew Lyons, a senior political science major, pointed out that a lot of students are not familiar with these types of events and thought it was a huge opportunity to attend.

“I thought it was interesting, it’s kind of sad that a lot of students don’t know or care about these kinds of events,” Lyons said. “[Coughlin] is a speaker in the Assembly, a pretty powerful position. I think it’s important that more students get involved and come to these kinds of events.”

He also shared his insight about the newly-introduced major along with Coughlin’s focus on food insecurity.

“The major is great, if I could I would have definitely tried to double major in this,” Lyons said. “For anybody looking to work in the public sector, I would recommend this major. I also think [food insecurity] is a great cause to take up because it’s something that everyone can agree on. It’s great that our politicians are focusing on issues like this.”
Montclair State University commuter students are paying about 43% more for gasoline than they did a year ago — and are considering skipping classes as a result.

Russia’s war on Ukraine unsettled energy markets, causing gas prices, which were already rising amid the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, to skyrocket. The average cost of gas in the United States reached a record high of $4.33 per gallon on March 11, a day after New Jersey’s average peaked at $4.38 per gallon. Although both amounts slightly declined since then, they remain above $4. New Jersey’s average was $4.14 per gallon on April 6.

President Joe Biden announced the release of 1 million barrels of oil per day from the nation’s Strategic Petroleum Reserve over the next six months to curb the cost. States including Maryland, Georgia and Connecticut suspended their gas taxes to ease their states’ prices. New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy said it would be difficult to do the same in this state because the tax is used to fund transportation.

Montclair State commuters discussed how feeling pain at the pump is affecting them.

Jayr Abad, a freshman film and television major, said the high gas prices made him reconsider attending his classes.

“Even though I’m kind of close to campus, [the gas price hike] definitely has been affecting me,” Abad said. “I’ve definitely had those thoughts where I’m like, ‘should I even go to class?’ Sometimes I’m like, ‘I really shouldn’t go just to save gas.’”

Joe Scarry, a senior economics major, said the rising cost of gas forced him to switch to other forms of transportation.

“I don’t really drive around much anymore else now,” Scarry said. “It’s a lot more about public transportation. It’s kind of limited where I go out on the weekends.”

Scarry said he had to cut back on spending money elsewhere to save for gas.

“There’s a lot more home-cooked meals for lunch and dinner now than before,” Scarry said. “[I’m] just kind of holding back and not doing as much.”

Scarry said he had to cut back on spending money elsewhere to save for gas.

Maja Koprivica | The Montclarion

Gas or Class?

Commuters Consider Skipping Classes Due To High Gas Prices

Joe Scarry, a senior economics major, said he had to cut back on spending money elsewhere to save for gas.

Maja Koprivica, a freshman psychology major, said the high gas prices became a source of stress for her.

“Let’s say I want to get coffee in the morning,” Jalo said. “You might think, ‘it’s just $4 a coffee,’ but when you count it up every single day, it starts to add up.”

Jalo said she faces the dilemma of paying for the costly gas and attending class or saving gas and not going to her class.

“If I need to go to class, of course, I’m going to class,” Jalo said. “But if it wasn’t mandatory, there’s a chance that I won’t be able to come because I’m a commuter.”
Getting Curious With Costume Designer Katherine Victoria Repp

Katherine Victoria Repp said, "This show gave me a plethora of outstanding resources in terms of sustainable stores, as well as methods of determining what stores are 'safe' versus which are unethical." Using what she learned in "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time," Repp hopes to continue her more sustainable practices as the costume designer for next semester’s production of "Pippin."

"In my next show, I plan on continuing to use my main resource which was goodonyou.com," Repp said. "This website has an amazing directory. I will also keep utilizing thrift stores and second-hand stores, as well as small costume artisans and businesses."

In addition to sustainable sourcing, Repp also researched how the main character's sensory issues would impact the clothing he wears. The way Christopher perceives the world was crucial to Repp's design concept.

"The overall concept of the show was to show the world through Christopher's eyes," Repp said. "For me, as a designer, that meant that Christopher's clothes had to accommodate his needs."

Because the character of Christopher is neurodivergent, Repp had to take special care in her design decisions.

"I found what parents had done for their children with similar needs as Christopher," Repp said. "His jeans are specifically made to allow for movement and are made with an elastic wastband to help Christopher dress himself. Another thing we did was use elastic laces on his shoes. Converse specifically was recommended by a mom who said that her son preferred them, due to the security around the ankle and the flatness of the soles."

Having researched accessible clothing items for Christopher, some of Repp's newfound knowledge also made its way into her designs for other characters. One elderly character, for example, wore a sweater with back closures designed to provide access to nursing assistance. In that way, considerations of accessibility were not limited to Christopher but became part of the broader fabric of her show.

Her work and effort do not go unnoticed; especially by classmate Justin Stuart, a senior theatre production/design major and also the lighting director for "Curious Incident."

"I think [Repp's] big success was costing an ensemble in modern attire so well," Stuart said. "They all melt into the background when the focus isn't on them, but when they're present, you feel it."

Her director and associate professor of theatre and dance, Heather Benton, also had high praise for Repp's work in sustainable costume design.

"My experience collaborating with [Repp] on 'Curious Incident' was wonderful," Benton said. "From the beginning, [Repp] was very committed to researching and finding accessible clothing for the character of Christopher, and her design was deeply influenced by the nuances of Christopher's character as articulated in the novel, in particular, the way he responds to certain colors and the mathematical properties of patterns."

Above all, Repp's goal was to give audiences a way into Christopher's headspace and foster empathy with his experiences.

This show taught me about how many things go into the clothes we wear, not just in the obvious ways, but also in terms of how we put them on and how trims, seams, closures, etc., make us feel," Repp said. "[Also], how these things can change our mood and either serve or debilitate us. I hope this [allowed] audiences to sympathize with Christopher and really see what his world looks and feels like."
"I feel like I'm a Red Hawk to heart and I bleed Red Hawk," Sisk-Gritz said. "That's what I joke around to people. I actually wrote in my paper to apply, I wrote, like, I was here – I was technically already accepted, you might as well continue it.

Similar to where her life almost began, Sisk-Gritz's college career began in Bohn Hall. "I actually chose Bohn because I wanted to go to where it all started for me ... Bohn is very special to me," she said. There, she met her roommate Tania Dominguez, a senior international business major, who recalled the time she found out Sisk-Gritz was almost born not too far from where their freshman dorm was located.

"When [Sisk-Gritz] first told me the story, I was in total shock and could not believe she was almost born a few floors above our dorm," Dominguez said. "I told her she definitely made it full circle almost being born there and now living a few floors down 18 years later.

Since starting at the university in 2018, Sisk-Gritz has not taken one moment of being a Red Hawk for granted. The accomplished senior is the president of two clubs: the Montclair Marine Biology Organization (MMBO), which she helped start, and the Pre-Vet Animal Science Club (PVAS).

"[The clubs] are both so wonderful to work with and it's so much fun planning an event and having a million things go wrong prior and then seeing it come together," Sisk-Gritz said. "Then when students come out and learn something or gain something, it never fails to excite me."

While it's been just over two decades since the initial shock of finding out she was going into labor, Mulley speculated that her daughter's school spirit began before she was even born.

"[Sisk-Gritz] has grown into a beautiful, mature, driven and caring young woman," Mulley said. "She has achieved every dream I ever had for her. I'm so lucky to be her mom."

Tyler Frantino, a senior visual communication design major and Sisk-Gritz's boyfriend of three years, said his girlfriend is emotionally driven and cares for animals as much as she does people, if not more.

"[Sisk-Gritz] is so driven and set on being a vet or supporting the environment and I cannot see her doing anything else other than that," Frantino said. "She is a natural-born leader; a leader in the sense that it is not all about her, but about helping others toward a common goal."

Her love for animals is not only evident in her extracurriculars, but in her apartment as well. Not all of Sisk-Gritz's roommates are humans as she adopted Achilles, a hedgehog, at the beginning of this school year. "He makes the toughest school days so much easier," Sisk-Gritz said. "He is just the perfect college buddy since he is nocturnal and by the time I come home from class and work, he is ready to play. He is just a big part of my family."

Though she is set to graduate in May, Sisk-Gritz's Montclair State journey is not over yet. The self-described workaholic will be continuing with her master's at the university while she applies to vet schools in the United States, Ireland and Australia.

"I feel so accomplished that I had worked so hard to get to Montclair State and now I'm actually graduating from here," Sisk-Gritz said. "It feels full circle for me."
Tucked away on the first floor of University Hall, most people would walk past the ADP Center and not think twice. But inside this open, collaborative space, one will find plenty of resources to take advantage of when it comes to learning.

The ADP Center for Learning Technologies integrates today’s technology with education here at Montclair State University. From Jamboards that help students improve presentations or workshops on how TikTok videos can be used in the classroom, the ADP Center has much to offer to both students and professors.

Joe Bavazzano, the director of the center, said why he felt the center was so crucial to education at Montclair State.

“We can collaborate, we can break down silos that are so traditional in higher education,” Bavazzano said. “So, having this melting pot where we can all come together around a common goal of using technology to improve learning [is important].”

The center provides plenty of opportunities to tie in technology with learning. It will regularly hold workshops on different digital skills or topics and is open to all students and professors who need assistance.

Bavazzano described the impact that the center has made on students and professors when it comes to help them integrate technology with their learning or teaching.

“I think one of the biggest ways that we could impact it is taking that fear of their learning or teaching and professors when it comes to help that the center has made on students who need assistance.

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“I think one of the biggest ways that we could impact it is taking that fear of failure away,” Bavazzano said. “Sometimes learning something new can be scary. And sometimes technology comes with a learning curve. So working in a safe, inclusive environment stuck with me because we want to be a safe space for learning.”

An example of a workshop the ADP Center does is a TikTok workshop for educators. One may think that TikTok, an app that is mostly filled with dances and memes, doesn’t have much in common with education. However, Bavazzano gave a recent example of how the two are integrated.

“We did this TikTok video production workshop at our conference and we just had a teacher email us and say, ‘I made six TikTok videos again. My superintendent loves it,’” Bavazzano said. “She’s a Spanish teacher at a high school who is teaching her kids how to salsa. And [she was able to do that] because she came to the ADP Center.”

Irmak “River” Dagistanli, a graduate assistant at the center, gave another example of how the ADP Center helps students with their digital learning needs when it comes to creating an e-portfolio.

“We work with the dietetics department a lot, teaching or facilitating the use of Google Sites and teaching them how they can display their own work and their portfolio, and just meeting the classes and the students with where they’re at in their program,” Dagistanli said.

Jenny Both, a freshman undecided and a student assistant at the center, said she has seen the center especially help students in the College for Education and Human Services, which is closely connected with the center.

“We’ve done various demos with new teaching equipment,” Both said. “We show future teachers different technologies that they’ll be using in their classrooms.”

Professors regularly use the classrooms located in the ADP Center to enhance their learning, especially for education classes. Zoe Burkholder, a professor of educational foundations at Montclair State, uses the technology in the center to sync all her student’s presentations to every computer and show the implications of the technology they’ll soon use in their own classrooms in real time.

“In this space, [they are] making use of the combination of technology and workspaces that are here,” Burkholder said.

In the long term, Bavazzano said the center aims to make itself more well-known amongst the campus community.

“A main goal of the ADP Center is to increase our presence on campus and across campus, working with other colleges and other centers and reaching out to different student organizations,” Bavazzano said. “My goal is to expand until we can’t. We want this space to be full all the time.”

The ADP Center is located in University Hall on the first floor, room 1140.
Have a thought about on campus or off campus matters? Write for Opinion!

Email: montclarionopinion@gmail.com

Room 2035, School of Communication and Media in Upper Montclair, NJ, 07043

Parking and Fees

Campus Activities
HAWK TALK
What’s one thing you can’t say no to?
By John LaRosa, Photo Editor

“Free food, something off the grill. I like how I don’t have to pay for it.”

David Luque
Freshman
Musical theatre major

“Playing video games. I mainly play Sims. I have a PlayStation and Switch back at my dorm so it’s between that, sometimes Mortal Kombat.”

Sani Hines
Freshman
Undecided major
“Free food. Nobody offers free food but if someone’s giving out free food, I won’t say no.”

Bhoo Vachhani
Junior
Psychology major

“Coffee, I drink coffee like three times a day. I like black coffee; I usually get it from Dunkin.”

Rebecca Hutton
Senior
Justice studies major

“People. People in general, I have a hard time saying no to anything. I’m the type of person who’s gonna say yes to anyone. It’s really scary, I hate it; I wish I wouldn’t.”

Talure Watson
Senior
Journalism major
PART-TIME BABYSITTER

Seeking a part-time babysitter/mother's helper for one or two kids (12 mos and 3 years) in Kinnelon, NJ. Seeking a sitter for spring, summer, and fall with availability within Monday-Friday 11am-6pm (negotiable). The perfect candidate is punctual, communicative and a strong leader. We are looking for someone who is fully vaccinated and has excellent references, infant experience, and CPR certification.

Please reply to 347-870-7757 if interested.

AFTER-SCHOOL SITTER

Looking for after-school sitter for a sweet 4-year-old boy. Hours are M-F 3:30-5:30pm for $20/hr. Must be vaccinated and punctual. Opportunities for more hours and pay are available if desired. Ideal candidate is studying speech therapy or ABA approach as he is in a preschool ABA classroom with delayed communication.

Please reply to 973-495-3670 if interested.

DAY CAMP COUNSELOR & TEACHER

Ramapo Country Day Camp is seeking college students who have an interest in working with kids in their future. Perfect fit for education, psychology, sociology, and nursing students. Group counselor & teaching jobs available. Camp runs from June 27-August 19, Monday through Friday, 9am-4pm. Located 30 minutes from MSU, next to Mahwah, Ramsey, Ridgewood and Montvale.

If interested, visit www.ramapocamp.com and www.ramapocamp.com/staff-application or contact 845-356-6440.
PUZZLES

Pets Edition

By Kayla Carlamere

Across
1. This fish is the most popular to keep. They became the go-to pet for children since they are small, inexpensive and colorful.
5. 25% of bird parents keep these types of birds, found in the parrot family, as pets. They have become the most common household bird due to their small stature, low noise level and easygoing nature.
6. This breed is best known for their work as rescue dogs, as well as their gentle and tolerant nature despite their large stature. The famous film “Beethoven” also features this breed as its title character.
7. This crustacean pet, often bought as impulse purchases from souvenir shops and pet stores with an assortment of decorated shells, gained popularity due to being “low maintenance” pets, though they typically meet grim fates when kept in captivity.

Down
1. These rodents are sociable pets with round bodies, short legs and no tail. They are also often used for experimental purposes, hence their name being synonymous with “test subject.”
2. This cat is the most popular hairless breed, originally bred from a genetic mutation and named for an Egyptian and Greek legend.
3. The gentle, non-aggressive and easy-to-handle characteristics of this snake have made it one of the most popular to keep as pets. They are most commonly red, orange, yellow and brown tones.
4. These small and extremely social marsupials, known for their preference for sweet foods, have become popular exotic pets, though they require a lot of maintenance and attention.

Word Search

t y e z b i q k y c t e u c t o z a m c
o d s s e n r a h u l x w x o f h j j j
x c o z g r o o m i n g l o b r o j q x
y g i m m g a p o y v g d j m h l d v x
f c s b e z k z s p r h o u x t v n o u
v w n f y s h a m s t e r b a l l v m s
v i r z i t s t a e r t z u c k p e y
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ch j a h c t e f u z c f d z m w u u g
x v b l s z g m l v h s p o c t m g n y
h z k i d h t x k h w f b v r d f n d z
l h n t k k h c r e p f k z m h i e n
v c r t n o i n a p m o c a v u p d p l
h s z e c o r q e k g l h k p g j d p x
v s n r h k z j j p q w i s t z m e p n
t e r r a r i u m m c x b f i q l d b j r
i c o l l a r q y s b u r y l l e b m j
q n c b p i h m f l e h x q o r s i k p

Sudoku

6 9
9 4 5 3
1 3 9
8 7 4 5
5 6 1 8 9
4 1 2
2 9 6 1
8 5 6 3 2

Domestic Companion Treats
Kibble Collar Grooming
Terrarium Hamster Ball Harness
Leash Bedding Fetch
Belly Rubs Litter Perch
Let’s not make any bones about it: The atmosphere at Montclair State University right now is pretty tense. On campus, it sometimes feels as though the air could be cut with a knife, especially after everything students have faced.

Sexual assault, religious exemption bans for dormers, parking, the coronavirus (COVID-19), protestors — it’s been an intense year back so far. None of these struggles are truly unique to Montclair State; they affect all colleges on some level. But what makes them stand out is the way in which the student body has responded to these issues and raised awareness.

Both in real life and on social media, students have fought hard to raise awareness and demand action from the university. It was Montclair State students who called on The Montclarion to continue covering the sexual assault reports. The Montclarion serves to amplify student voices, and we could not do the work we do without their clear and consistent support.

It is easy to stay silent and complacent in times of hardship and discomfort, but that doesn’t make it right. Students here have never chosen the easy way.

When a hate group came to campus in January, a counter-protest formed within minutes and students stayed there for hours. Not only did they display profound regard and compassion by defending those whom the hate group came to denounce, but they also did it with humor, weaponizing joy against the vitriol being spewed at them.

This takes courage at any age, but it’s especially inspiring to see so many up-and-coming citizens of the world standing up for what they believe in. There are still so many places where the kind of rhetoric espoused by that hate group is the norm. As hard as it is to fathom, it makes what happened on campus that cold January day even more powerful.

Given the current circumstances, it’s also remarkable that students even found the time and energy to respond the way they did. Even after two years of COVID-19, more often than not, students have continued to do whatever it takes to keep each other safe. Despite the mask mandate still active on campus, some have chosen not to wear masks indoors. But more have continued to do so, and their efforts have not gone to waste.

As of March 31, the COV-ID-19 Dashboard reports just 25 student cases on campus, and it hasn’t reached over 100 since the very beginning of the year. That couldn’t have happened without the continued efforts of the student body.

Contracting COVID-19 may not be as frightening of a prospect as it used to be, but it still carries the possible burden of lost income and missed classes. Regardless of whether the motivation to wear a mask stems from self-preservation, compassion for others or some combination of the two, it has the same effect of keeping others from getting sick.

You may be reading this and thinking, “Wow, are we really congratulating people for doing the bare minimum? Does everyone get a gold star just for being a decent human being?”

And you might have a point. Many people have complained that is one of the worst things about our generation: too many participation awards and congratulations handed out for anything at all.

But the reality is that practicing basic human decency does not come naturally to everyone. There are a lot of truly awful people out there doing horrible things as you skim this page. If there weren’t, there would be no need for the sexual assault awareness protest.

The list of other awful things impacting us all on a national and global scale would probably take up an entire article of its own, and absolutely no one would want to read it.

So what’s wrong with a little positive reinforcement as the world seemingly burns around us? Holding people accountable for the good they do is important, too.

With that being said, The Montclarion would like to thank the students of Montclair State who have done their part to make this campus and this world a slightly brighter place. We see you and we appreciate you.

**Thank You, Students**

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**Campus Voices:**

- **Catie Knecht**  
  Visual Arts  
  Sophomore

  “It just seems like everyone’s there to support one another just by helping. Even if I [have] a question in class. If I ask someone, they’ll answer it for me. I just feel like everyone’s so friendly here.”

- **Megan Falco**  
  Music Education  
  Fifth-Year Senior

  “I think for the most part we do. I can’t talk about the broader community just [because] I feel like I’m not here as much as I used to be as an underclassmen, but definitely in my classes, we’re very supportive of each other.”

- **Nicholas Lipari Pazienda**  
  Music Education  
  Fifth-Year Senior

  “I feel like Montclair State students support each other, especially through events we have, or even through little communities in the residence halls.”

- **Jackson Dalton**  
  Communication and Media Studies  
  Sophomore

  “I see that students are supportive of one another by going to all these events that happen on campus. I kind of see it around my dorm. I’ve made a lot of friends at my dorm and whenever I’m usually going somewhere, or doing something, they usually follow me. I feel like my friends and students are very supportive of me.”

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*By Hailey Mayewski*
Spring break is a time for celebration and often partying – especially in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. In Wilton Manors, Florida, several students overdosed on cocaine that was laced with fentanyl.

An article from The New York Times released information stating all six men were hospitalized in Fort Lauderdale on Thursday, March 10. The tragedy occurred in an Airbnb vacation house.

Two students had gone into respiratory arrest while the other two tried to help by performing CPR before they too were exposed to the drug. Five of them were cadets at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

This incident resulted in great concern for others with speculation of a bad batch. Normally drugs are not solicited from one specific buyer. People are not clear who sold the drugs, it is unclear where the fentanyl is coming from.

Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic pain-killer used to treat severe pain and slows a person’s breathing and heart rate. It has quickly become a deadly threat and cause of the rising number of overdoses. Fentanyl is known to be extremely potent, addictive and dangerous. Often, it is added to other drugs to make the drugs cheaper. Lately, it seems the amount that’s been laced with fentanyl has increased. Rice said. “Fentanyl is up to 50 times stronger than heroin, so you think about the amount of people dying from heroin that overdosed and then about the amount that’s been laced with fentanyl [that] makes it a much bigger problem.”

The Montclair Local released an article amidst the COVID-19 pandemic on the Montclair community’s experience with 17 suspected overdoses in the first five months of 2020, four of which were fatal according to police. Jon Rice, a former Montclair University student who is now a state trooper in Hamilton, New Jersey, has witnessed the devastating effects of fentanyl-laced substances firsthand.

“The amount of heroin being distributed is at an all-time high as well as opioids that are laced with fentanyl,” Rice said. “Fentanyl is up to 50 times stronger than heroin, so you think about the amount of people dying from heroin that overdosed and then about the amount that’s been laced with fentanyl [that] makes it a much bigger problem.”

As a college student at Montclair State, I can confidently say there have been outbreaks of overdoses close to home. According to Gov. Phil Murphy, a total of 3,081 New Jersey residents died from suspected overdoses in 2021. The Montclair Local released an article, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic on the Montclair community’s experience with 17 suspected overdoses in the first five months of 2020, four of which were fatal according to police.

Fentanyl is one of the most common drugs involved in overdose deaths. The CDC released a tweet on March 22 expressing their concern and sharing useful information to prevent drug-related overdoses. Drugs containing any amount of fentanyl cannot be distinguished from the synthetic drugs themselves.

I find that overdoses don’t appear as often in the news as they are happening. You’d think the constant reminders from family members and friends expressing their losses via social media would have a bigger effect on people who are suffering. Yet fentanyl overdoses continue to soar.

People close to me have experienced great tragedy due to fentanyl overdoses. Just last April, my friend’s ex-girlfriend lost her life after taking a Xanax that was laced with fentanyl. Only two weeks ago, his best friend’s brother also lost his life over spring break due to fentanyl-laced cocaine.

Whether it comes in the form of a pill or powder, fentanyl is not distinctive. Parents seem to be the most concerned with their children becoming too comfortable when it comes to any type of drug. Drugs that are supposed to be taken for anxiety and depression are taking lives.

We need to remind our friends and family of the potential risks at hand before they decide to partake in “party favors.” But on a larger scale, more drastic actions need to be taken as well.

Media campaigns preventing drug use don’t appear as often as they should, nor are they as effective as they could be. Social media users, particularly content creators on TikTok, should bring awareness to the risks of recreational drugs.

Rather than glamorizing drugs and alcohol, a platform as big as TikTok should create a space for this kind of conversation. As a TikTok user myself, I am all eyes and ears when it comes to this app.

Interestingly enough, when you search “fentanyl” on TikTok there are no results found as the phrase may be associated with behavior or content against community guidelines. The idea of promoting a safe and positive experience on TikTok seems nearly impossible if we cannot bring awareness to the tragedies occurring all around us.

These are only some of the actions we must take to ensure college students stay away from potentially laced drugs. A temporary high will never compare to a lifetime of pain.

If you’re at a party looking to use drugs as a Band-Aid for your hurt, there’s always an alternative. Those who are struggling and need to seek help can contact Montclair State’s Counseling and Psychological Services.

Victoria Lodato, a senior public relations major, is in her first year as a guest writer for The Montclarion.
of the foyer to the upstairs hallway. Upon reaching the top he didn't look back. He turned the corner towards his bedroom and slammed the door shut.

The hallway in question was deceptive in depth. The narrow white walls were shrouded from the dark clouds that enveloped the dissipating light from beyond the storm. The thinly laid carpet covered the original flooring which creaked at an unsettling volume with even the most gentle of footsteps. At the end of the hallway was another staircase that was once used in a different life for easy transport to the kitchen, but was now blocked off from years of mounting storage.

Behind the closed door, Jules covered his ears. Regardless, squeaks and screeches came from the blocked-off stairway. The creaks grew louder as the noise came closer. After a moment's pause and only the sound of the rain filling the void, the door handle twisted open. Lost within his fear Jules let no sound escape from his lips.

Slowly the door peeled open. Jules looked between his fingers but saw nothing. Cautiously he lowered them, peering forward at the threshold. Then with the tilt of his head a shapeless and translucent mass, that despite its deformation resembled a tall and slinking man, crawled into view. Standing there with its features unrendered in this realm, a hue of black, just as dark as the depths of a starless night, filled the vacuum of what could only be its body.

The shadow stood still, never crossing the door which it opened. Jules and this walking night terror maintained a moment of disillusioned despair before the ghostly spirit of indescribable malice moved past the door frame and down the hallway in a motion one could only describe as mist-like.

With one last crack of thunder, the power came back and from the base of the foyer, a soft maternal voice echoed.

"Jules! Where'd you go?"

The forest green shutters of the old Victorian home crashed back and forth against the thinly painted tan siding. The air was crisp and storm clouds howled in the distance. They clashed with the ever-receding pink and orange evening sky that would once more rear its head upon the conclusion of this monolithic monsoon.

Jules watched from the living room window. He peered out past the front porch towards the field of horses across the street bucking and running wildly amidst the feverish spring squall. A crack of thunder and a flash of lightning sprang him back from the old antique couch he stood upon. His heart raced and his mind wandered.

"Mom?" he called out. "Dad?" He stood still. The rain had begun following the first clap of thunder. The steady pitter-patter of the hard and fast drops danced in an ethereal pattern, Jules took a deep breath and stepped forward to see the horses again. He climbed up onto the couch and placed his hands on the molded floral inlay of the couch.

His eyes slowly lifted and before him out on the sidewalk was an older woman. Her dress looked to be like an old nightgown, now drenched from the storm, with her hair stretched back into a taut gray bun. Her skin was sickly and pale. She tilted her head and locked a gaze behind blackened eyes. Jules's spine knitted and shivered at the sight.

A crack of lightning brightened the sky and the lamps that filled the living room fell dark. Disoriented by the loss of power Jules looked back out into the throes of the storm. The lady had vanished.

Stunned and sickened, Jules rushed forward towards the front door. Feverishly he locked it and looked around. Once more he called out.

"Mom!" Where on Earth could his family be in a moment such as this? Without much thought, he shuffled towards the winding stairs that crawled up the walls of the foyer to the upstairs hallway. Upon reaching the top he didn't look back. He turned the corner towards his bedroom and slammed the door shut.

The hallway in question was deceptive in depth. The narrow white walls were shrouded from the dark clouds that enveloped the dissipating light from beyond the storm. The thinly laid carpet covered the original flooring which creaked at an unsettling volume with even the most gentle of footsteps. At the end of the hallway was another staircase that was once used in a different life for easy transport to the kitchen, but was now blocked off from years of mounting storage.

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"Jules! Where'd you go?"
9 Performers, 80 Oranges, 7 Watermelons.

“Juggling becomes flights of inspired poetry, musical choreography with strong dance elements, crazy-comedy surrealism, breathtakingly dexterous virtuosity, darkly absurdist drama. Gandini opens windows in the mind.”

– ALASTAIR MACAULAY, THE NEW YORK TIMES
Montclair State University professor and founder of "MEDIA MAKE CHANGE," Dr. Tara Conley is producing her first feature documentary, "DRY BONES," with the help of her students. The documentary sheds light on the story of Ike Maxwell, a Black high school football star in Elyria, Ohio, who broke multiple records and was on his way to making it big in the 1970s. But, after his brother, Daryl Maxwell, was shot and killed by a white police officer, the tailback’s career was derailed. Fellow Black Elyrians and other allies protested his brother’s death, which according to Conley, was framed by the news media as a “race riot.” Since then, Maxwell faced heavy hardships and trauma in the years that followed, which resulted in mental health issues. The film offers a look into Maxwell’s legacy and how the community of Elyria continues to support him today.

Although the start of this story took place decades ago, it mirrors the many accounts of police brutality and racial injustices that have plagued the nation in recent times. The mission statement for the film states “the project seeks to spark national conversations about what racial justice can look like across communities in the United States.”

The town of Elyria has had a long history of racial enmity, according to Conley. “This story is as much about [Ike Maxwell] as it is about my hometown and the racial tension there,” Conley said. “It’s also about a small town trying to get through some racial reckoning and healing.”

When it comes to contemporary media focused on life in the mid-western United States, some argue the stories of Black people, as well as indigenous people and people of color, are severely underrepresented. Narrative inequality is the concept in which some stories are repeatedly told while others are passed over and ignored.

One of Conley’s goals with her media making is to disrupt the forces that keep marginalized stories in the dark. “Narrative inequality is just this notion that there’s other stories that are put ahead of other stories, and I want to try to intervene in that space through documentary film.”

Conley offered extra credit to her transmedia students who were interested in assisting with post-production, but extra points on their final grade are not the only thing they will be walking away with.

Chelsey Johnstone, a senior journalism major, works as an archivist for "DRY BONES." She has varied experience with journalism and multimedia content and also contributes to the social media presence of the film. Over the last year, Johnstone has done extensive archival research, a key element to paint the picture of the story that is being told. It has consisted of gathering newspaper clippings and photos, reading articles, both hard news and opinion, of the night of Maxwell’s death, as well as the aftermath and rise in racial tensions that followed.

While helping Conley produce the film, Johnstone’s appreciation for storytelling has fruitfully grown. “Sometimes as a journalist, we get so caught up in writing a story … and then once it’s finished, it’s done with,” Johnstone said. “What this experience has taught me, too, is that, you know, your stories impact many people whether it’s the people you’re writing about or [how] what you’re writing about impacts others. I really learned to take away that this isn’t just a story...
for the world to be hearing, but that Maxwell and his family deserve to have their story told, and I think it's important that the story gets heard."

Grace Pula, a junior film and English major, works as the film's social media manager. Pula has done research surrounding the film's story in an effort to connect the film to its online presence. Following that, different graphics are created and used for promotional posts on the "DRY BONES” Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.

The project has helped Pula acknowledge the potential small stories have and the impact they hold. "Some things I've learned on the project is that everyone has a smaller story they can tell," Pula said. "Odds are that each smaller story extends to a larger picture on our culture."

The presence of Montclair State's finest are not only a part of the post-production team, they are also a part of the film's earlier stages. Alumni accompanied Conley in Ohio to help film. Sean Arnold, a 2021 filmmaking graduate, worked on the film as a producer and production manager and has collaborated with Conley for over a year. Eddie Swanson, a 2019 communication studies graduate, is the film's director of photography. Michael Guerrieri, a 2021 filmmaking graduate, worked as the film's sound mixer and drone pilot. He also filmed the aerial shots.

"DRY BONES" is currently in its post-production stages and further research is being done for the film. Conley plans to return to Elyria in the summer to collect more information and create additional footage that may be needed to complete the film.

Her major focus now is fundraising for the production. To recoup some of the costs Conley funded herself as well as cover additional costs, a campaign through Seed and Spark is collecting donations and pledges to support the action-oriented documentary. The "DRY BONES" team will focus on applying for filmmaking grants in April and May.

Some ways the Montclair State body can support Conley and the students' efforts are by pledging or donating to the film through their online campaign or simply spreading the word about the project to friends and colleagues. Words of encouragement, line campaign or simply spreading the word about the project to friends and colleagues. Words of encouragement, networking and connections are also productive ways to support the film.

For Conley, it is fundamental the students working on the film are recognized for their efforts and accomplishments by their fellow peers and professors. “This is important for [Montclair State] students and [School of Communication and Media] students,” Conley said. “Just showing that the students that I'm working with … they're just brilliant, I mean, when it comes to filmmaking and when it comes to strategic [communications] work. They're actually doing something, and to be able to showcase what they're doing and their work I think is super important. And I really do hope that this film can be used as a vehicle for the students I'm working with that they can use to then do what they [want to] do in their careers.”

With her methodical and considerate expertise in organizing and delegation, Conley is an influential example of what a director and producer of a film should be. Pula will carry with her what it means to produce a film such as Conley's into her future endeavors. "DRY BONES" is a great example of transparency both within Dr. Conley, the people working on the project, as well as the community story being told," Pula said. "I will definitely keep this in mind moving forward as an example of great direction and leadership." Johnstone believes her experience working on the film will guide her in the way she navigates her own journalism journey.

"I think it's [going to] amplify my journalism career to not only think carefully about what I write but think about how my writing impacts other people,” Johnstone said. “We can't really make change without the help of others and telling stories and bringing them to the forefront of people's daily lives.”
After the coronavirus (COVID-19) omicron surge caused a delay, the 64th Annual Grammy Awards took place on April 3 and was hosted by the previous year’s host, South African comedian and “Late Night” host, Trevor Noah. It was a big night for acts like Silk Sonic (Anderson .Paak and Bruno Mars), Olivia Rodrigo and Jon Batiste who each took home multiple awards. Silk Sonic took home four awards, including record and song of the year for their No. 1 hit, “Leave the Door Open.” Rodrigo took home best new artist, best pop vocal album for her 2021 debut “SOUR” and best pop solo performance for her debut single, “Driver’s License.”

Going into the night, Batiste was the most nominated artist with 11 nominations. He left with five of them, including a surprising win for album of the year for “We Are.”

Montclair State University students shared their thoughts about these artists’ accomplishments and the overall ceremony.

Mateo Paredes-Barchus, an undecided freshman, enjoyed the awards. “It was a pretty good show,” Paredes-Barchus said. “From Silk Sonic of course opening up, it was a great, great performance.”

Paredes-Barchus supported Rodrigo’s best new artist win. “Yeah she should have won,” Paredes-Barchus said. “She has been putting out a lot of good hits.”

Ashley Campos, a junior communication and media studies major, also enjoyed the show even though she missed some of the big performances early on. “I missed the first half-hour, and everything else after that was really slow-paced,” Campos said. “I didn’t really know much, like the performers and presenters. Also, the way they presented the awards, at one point I thought, ‘Are they going to present any more awards for the night?’ It wasn’t paced very well from what I can tell.”

But similar to Paredes-Barchus, Campos agrees with Rodrigo’s wins. “I thought ‘SOUR’ was a cute album, and I just thought it was fun,” Campos said. “As far as the other nominees go, I’m not mad that she won.”

Batiste wouldn’t have gotten Campos’ vote for album of the year, though. “[‘We Are’ is] a good album, but no one saw it coming,” Campos said. “I was thinking [Eilish’s] ‘Happier Than Ever,’ [Lil Nas X’s] ‘Montero,’ maybe ‘SOUR.’”

She is, however, excited about some of the other winners. “I’m happy [Rodrigo] won something,” Blaier said. “I’m happy she got her accolades. ‘Kiss Me More’ winning was great. It was so funny that [Doja Cat] was in the bathroom when they won. I love that moment.”

Regarding some of the night’s snubs, like Eilish going home empty-handed, Blaier shared her love for the artist but felt it may have been for the best. “I’m obsessed with her,” Blaier said. “But she won a lot two years in a row, and her first year she got everything. So I feel like it may have made her feel good to not win something. Maybe since the attention was off of her, other artists who deserve to win were able to get that attention.”

This year, the Grammys lived up to their notoriety, proving they are still relevant no matter what some people think.
Red Hot Chili Peppers’ ‘Unlimited Love’ Doesn’t Live Up To Previous Works

Los Angeles rockers Red Hot Chili Peppers returned from a five-year hiatus with their new album, "Unlimited Love." While the work may be something special to die-hard fans, to the everyday listener it is nothing more than an average alternative album with a few more grooves than usual. With the return of beloved guitarist John Frusciante, the announcement of a 2022 world tour and multiple press leaks from Frusciante’s hairstylist, Shampoolio (yes, you are reading the name correctly), the momentum for a new Red Hot Chili Peppers album has been building since well into pre-pandemic times.

When it comes to the overall feel of the album, fans can expect to hear both the classic funk-rock sound of their early days mixed with the mel- low pop-rock ballads of their recent releases. The most positive attribute of the album is the musical chemistry among each member of the band. Unlike other works, drummer Chad Smith plays a leading role in the instrumentation of the album, providing fans with fills and grooves reminiscent of early Led Zeppelin. Frusciante alongside bassist Flea work together to create hip-shaking funk melodies that have not been present in their music since Frusciante exited the band in 2008. Frontman Anthony Kiedis’ lyrics, however, come off as corny and uninspired at many parts throughout the album.

"Unlimited Love" opens with "Black Summer," a pop-rock tune with catchy verses and a climactic guitar solo that allows fans to fully embrace the return of John Frusciante. It’s been a long time since I made a new friend / Waitin’ on another black summer to end," Kiedis sings. The opening track is one of the few highlights the album provides, along with the following track, “Here Ever Aft,” a bright, drum-heavy song that also gives fans an exciting change of pace compared to other tracks. Other big moments include “These Are the Ways,” a rock and roll ballad with an energetic arena-rock chorus and a breakdown reminiscent of the ‘90s grunge era. The album’s closing track, "Tangelo," a sleepy lullaby with a modern-day indie feel, also serves as another highlight.

However, the other tracks lack both inspiration and originality. They come off as underwhelming and painfully repetitive at times. Tracks like “She’s a Lover” sound identical to songs off their 2006 album, “Stadium Arcadi- um,” while ballads like “White Braids & Pillow Chair” sound similar to songs off their 2002 album, “By the Way.” Another noticeable void in the album was the lack of a stand-out hit. While multiple songs on the album have the potential to be brought to life on their upcoming tour, there was not a single song that could captivate fans the way “Under the Bridge” or “Scar Tissue” have in the past. There was also no catchy guitar riff or chorus for fans to whistle along to.

While Red Hot Chili Peppers’ "Unlimited Love" is in no way unlistenable, it lacks the innovation and growth promised to fans upon its first announcement. Although it does not take away from the four-decade legacy of the band, it certainly does not add anything either.

Peter McLaughlin
Guest Writer
The Most Enchanting and Captivating Period Drama Films


Some might regard “Pride and Prejudice” (2005) as another one of many film adaptations of Austen’s most celebrated title, first published in 1813. Though I might be biased as it is one of my favorite films ever, I cannot stress enough how astonishing this film is.

Kiera Knightley stars as Elizabeth Bennet, the witty and smart one of five daughters who comes across a wealthy and judgmental Mr. Darcy, played by Matthew Macfadyen. The film explores how two people that despise each other at first are forced to face their pride and deepest prejudices (ba-dum-tss), coming to realizations that will change their lives forever. Put director Joe Wright and Knightley together and you will see magic come to life.

It makes you laugh, cry and hope you ever get a chance to love so deeply. If I am wrong for loving the 2005 version more than the 1995 one, then I wish to never be right.


Set in 19th century Saint Petersburg, “Anna Karenina” is an adaptation of Leo Tolstoy’s 1878 novel, widely considered to be one of the greatest works of literature ever written.

Directed by Wright, the cast is made up of the talented Knightley, Jude Law, Aaron Taylor-Johnson and Macfadyen. The film tells the story of Russian aristocrat Anna Karenina (Knightley) and Count Alexei Vronsky’s (Taylor-Johnson) public love affair, which leaves damaging consequences in the lives of those around them.


Period dramas are good, no doubt, but period dramas portraying queer people give me an infinite sense of longing for more representation in period films.

“Portrait of a Lady on Fire” is a French movie that tells the story of painter Marianne, played by Noémie Merlant, who has been commissioned to paint a wedding portrait for fresh-out-of-the-convent Héloïse, played by Adèle Haenel.

Simple enough? No, my dear gentle readers, nothing ever is. Marianne must paint the soon-to-be bride without her knowing, observing Héloïse day by day as she becomes her companion, or perhaps something more.

5. “Emma” (2020, Available on Amazon Prime Video)

Based on the 1815 novel also by Jane Austen, “Emma,” tells the story of the rich and clever Emma Woodhouse, played by Anya Taylor-Joy, whose attempts at matchmaking turn the lives of her loved ones upside down. Amongst those is her new friend Harriet Smith, played by Mia Goth, a young lady of dubious parentage who Emma is set on marrying with a nice gentleman at any cost. Johnny Flynn plays the honest and kind Mr. Knightley, Emma’s treasured friend who she clashes and disagrees with as a result of her questionable choices.

Overall, the film is a parody of marriage culture during Austen’s time and how uncomfortable circumstances life presents us with can lead to a happy ending.


“The Favourite” is a delightful take on the inner workings and influences of the British monarchy. Olivia Coleman plays Queen Anne, whose favorite lady at court is Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough, played by Rachel Weisz. The Duchess puts her privileged place beside royalty at risk when she attempts to help out her cousin Abigail Masham, played by Emma Stone.

Though not historically accurate in terms of fashion or language, the dark comedy’s plot is inspired by the real-life rivalry between the cousins for Queen Anne’s attention. Colman’s stunning performance won her the Academy Award for best actress.

“With the help of these films, let’s dive into this period and break our hearts, laugh, and yearn for more.”

Sofia Acevedo Valencia
Staff Writer

In a day and age where online dating is done as a sport and genuine connections are hard to come by, period dramas bring us stunning visuals, attractive people in big fancy clothing, as well as love stories that break our hearts and leave us yearning for more.

Here are some of the best period films, spoiler-free:

Sheila L collision of love

Photo courtesy of Focus Features

Photo courtesy of Universal Pictures

Photo courtesy of Focus Features

Photo courtesy of Pyramide Films

Photo courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox

Photo courtesy of Focus Features
‘Deep Water’ Lacks Substance That’s Surprisingly Not H2O

Sofia Acevedo Valencia  
Staff Writer

Despite an iff y film description that made my skin crawl, my love for Ana de Armas and psychological thrillers encouraged me to be open-minded and not judge a book by its cover. What I did not expect was for the book to smack me in the face.

Director Adrian Lyne made his first comeback to the big screen since “Unfaithful” (2002), with “Deep Water,” a Hulu Original and adaptation of the 1957 book by Patricia Highsmith with the same name. The title takes place in the 1950s and exposes the terrors of American suburban life. Because, of course, heterosexual couples entering a union in which neither is like the other is such an out-of-this-world concept.

Meet Melinda (de Armas) and Vic Van Allen (Ben Affleck) — therapists’ biggest dreams and family lawyers’ worst nightmares.

The film shows the Van Allens navigating their social group of equally rich friends as it is made clear that Vic is not the only man in Melinda’s life. Their open marriage is not a secret amongst their friends either. Melinda grows close to her latest conquest, and Vic gets increasingly jealous, telling her she can see other men as long as she doesn’t abandon her family. But at no point during the development of the plot is this agreement stated. The story circles around town, raising questions as to the story’s truth. Everyone knows adaptations can change the original plotline; that’s why entertainment giants buy rights to a book in the first place. You can more or less do whatever you want with it. If the book was anything like this, have not read the book that inspired the movie, you can appreciate for what it attempted to do. Sadly, “Deep Water” is exhausting to watch, like walking with an annoying head-ache all day after failing to find a painkiller.

The movie is beautifully shot, and despite this, I have no complaints about the cinematography and acting. A film should be enjoyable to watch, and even if you don’t agree with certain creative choices, you can appreciate them. As for my criticism of the plot, I don’t mean to bash the author because, truthfully, I have not read the book that inspired this catastrophe. Everyone knows adaptations can change the original plotline; that’s why entertainment giants buy rights to a book in the first place. You can more or less do whatever you want with it. If the book was anything like this, have mercy on whatever abusive trope with a nauseating, bad plotline shall befall us next.

Melinda and Vic constantly play this game of cat and mouse where they just traumatize each other and their poor child, Affleck and de Armas’ chemistry is overwhelming as I tried to reduce myself to nothing to no avail, being stuck in an infinite vicious circle of suffering and pain at the hands of straight people. Someone, please call child protective services on the Van Allens. A film should be enjoyable to watch, and even if you don’t agree with certain creative choices, you can appreciate for what it attempted to do. Sadly, “Deep Water” is exhausting to watch, like walking with an annoying head-ache all day after failing to find a painkiller.

For a film called “Deep Water,” it sure was the most shallow cinematic experience I’ve had thus far. As for my criticism of the plot, I don’t mean to bash the author because, truthfully, I have not read the book that inspired this catastrophe. Everyone knows adaptations can change the original plotline; that’s why entertainment giants buy rights to a book in the first place. You can more or less do whatever you want with it. If the book was anything like this, have mercy on whatever abusive trope with a nauseating, bad plotline shall befall us next.

Overall, “Deep Water” promotes a disgustingly toxic relationship in which the ethnically ambiguous foreign woman is panned out to be promiscuous and wild as the majority of their white elitist rich friends all agree the white man is the victim.
Daddy Yankee Says Goodbye to Reggaeton in ‘Legendaddy’

Victor Muñiz
Staff Writer

The reggaeton artist Ramón Luis Ayala Rodríguez, better known as Daddy Yankee, has recently announced his retirement from music with a final tour and album. His last album, “Legendaddy,” was released on March 24 with mixed reactions from fans and music critics alike.

Daddy Yankee is without a doubt one of the most important artists in Latin American history. He paved the way for Latin urban artists to sell out stadiums and venues around the world with the sounds of reggaeton, a genre that wasn’t accepted for many years until the world fell in love with dembow, a style of dance music.

His “Legendaddy” starts with a song of the same name where American boxing ring announcer Michael Buffer introduces him.

“Presenting the heavyweight champion in music / With an undefeated record of 32 years / He is the founder and creator of reggaeton,” Buffer says.

This introduction is considered true by many, as Yankee made the genre popular worldwide with the song “Gasolina.” I find this an appropriate start for an album of this magnitude considering the 32 years of music that exists with Yankee.

Then we hear a song similar to Yankee’s “Campeón” called “Uno Quitao y Otro Puesto,” where Yankee says he’s the best of the best. We also start hearing the style that has been dominating his latest hits like “Problema” and “Qué Tire Pa’ Lante” with the songs “Remix,” “Rumbatón” and “Enchuletiao.”

Furthermore, we begin to listen to collaborations with Latin artists like Myke Towers (“Pasatiempo”), Bad Bunny (“X Ultima Vez”), Sech (“Para Siempre”), Pitbull (“Hot”), Natti Natasha and Becky G (“Zona del Perreo”), El Alfa and Lil Jon (“Bombón”), Rauw Alejandro (“Agua”) and many others. In these features, we not only see the artist shine, but his colleagues as well, with their voice and rhymes.

Many Latin American Student Organization (LASO) members, or “miembros,” praised how Daddy Yankee included these artists.

Alexa Quito, a junior marketing major, said featuring these artists helped them.

“I love how he passed the torch to artists like Bad Bunny and Sech,” Quito said. “Sech is so underrated, and this album gave him that push.”

However, many LASO members were waiting for something bigger.

Shantal Proano, a junior medical humanities major, was not expecting the album to turn out the way it did.

“I thought this album was going to be better,” Proano said. “I think he should’ve brought [original] artists like Cosculluela. Nicky Jam especially, and Don Omar. I know he tried to include the new generation, but there’s not one song with a reggaetoner from back then. He only made a homage to Trebol Clan and didn’t even include them in the song.”

Briseyda Mancebo, a junior business administration major, felt similarly.

“And the fact that Nicky Jam was not in [the album] blows my mind,” Mancebo said. “It was supposed to be all of his styles, yet he did not include one ‘player.’”

“Legendaddy” was not the best send-off for an artist like Daddy Yankee. He promised different styles, but I only heard more of the same things he has released for the past five years.

I wanted to hear music similar to his early albums like “Barrio Fino” or “Talentoso de Barrio.” Many artists who were part of Daddy Yankee’s growth were missing as well, like duos Wisin & Yandel and Zion & Lennox and longtime collaborator Nicky Jam.

Because of this, I cannot give “Legendaddy” a stellar review. On a scale from one to five, I have to give the Big Boss a 3.5/5, despite him being one of the greatest of all time, or “G.O.A.T.,” the reason why his cover album is a goat with scars and long horns that represent his hard work to be on the top of the charts.

You can listen to Daddy Yankee’s farewell album, “Legendaddy,” on all streaming platforms.
Amy Schumer has had a great comedic career so far, even with the many differing opinions on it. And this next chapter, with her new Hulu show, “Life & Beth,” seems like the perfect addition.

“Life & Beth” is about Beth (Schumer), who works as a wine seller, has a boyfriend who is not great to her and has just lost a very important person in her life. After that loss, Beth has to decide if she is actually happy or not and that involves going through her past traumas to understand her present.

Like in Schumer’s 2015 semi-autobiographical film “Trainwreck,” “Life & Beth” takes the best parts of Schumer but puts them through a more melancholic lens. This show features that melancholic comedy that has been a rising genre in many television shows and films recently. But, I enjoy it most when Schumer is the one doing it.

“Life & Beth” incorporates multiple parts of Schumer’s grown-up life like her relationship with her mother, her romantic relationship and most importantly, her relationship with herself. After a pivotal moment in the first episode, Beth is at a work karaoke night and sings Ace of Base’s “The Sign,” showing in real-time how she processes what just happened with stress and anxiety while also catching a glimmer into her new life.

The brightest moments from the show are anytime Beth is with her group of girlfriends from her volleyball team. Every time she is with one or all of them, I laughed. The group has great chemistry together and perfect comedic timing, especially from Yamaeika Saunders who plays Beth’s friend, Maya.

Another highlight from the show is watching Beth get closer to John, played by Michael Cera. He is unlike Beth’s previous boyfriend in so many ways, and you can tell why she ends up falling for him.

Since the show deals with the many traumas Beth has gone through since childhood, like bullying, her parent’s divorce, losing a best friend and dealing with a hair-pulling disorder, you can tell she longs for comfort. There is a significance about hugs in the show that you start to realize as the episodes go on. In the vulnerable or emotional moments of the show, Beth goes to whoever she is talking to and hugs them. You quickly notice these hugs are important to her and something nostalgic.

Schumer’s acting abilities really begin to stand out around the end of the fourth episode when Beth herself starts to shine as she puts these past traumas behind her and starts to own who she really is.

The soundtrack to the show is surprisingly great, featuring multiple tracks from artists like M.I.A. and Miley Cyrus. Particularly, the use of Cyrus’s 2015 song “Slab of Butter (Scorpion),” from her psychedelic album “Miley Cyrus & Her Dead Petz,” is a perfect choice for the scene, which deals with John, Beth and her sister going on a mushroom trip.

Schumer has found a new way to show us all a piece of herself and her comedy shines with this new series. “Life & Beth” is an enjoyable show that may have some more dramatic moments but never loses its comedic appeal.
Joshua Tapia  
**Staff Writer**

Montclair State University’s club softball team has had some strong performances in the National Club Softball Association (NCSA), which they owe to their team’s reliance on sisterhood.

Senior outfielder Meghan O’Neill says the chemistry within the team is present even when they aren’t playing.

“We’re a family,” O’Neill said. “We love each other and we’re all best friends at the end of it, even when they aren’t playing.”

Along with O’Neill are two other senior leaders, President Nicole Ferry and Vice President Kasey Coury, who commit themselves to operating games, lineups and coaching for the group while also filling key positions like pitcher and catcher.

They are held in the Student Recreation Center at Montclair State, where each individual player introduces a specific part of the game they’d like to work on, leading to suggestions and hours of training from the rest of the group.

Those intense practices have helped shape several players into dynamic roles, most notably junior third baseman Allie Leach, who willingly plays several positions when the team lacks depth.

Leach was first introduced to the club when the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic broke out, cutting her season short. Though COVID-19 made it tough to conduct any games or practices, Leach was able to make an early friendship with teammate Tina Ilkow, who currently holds the highest batting average on the team this season at .600.

“Ilkow] is probably the most knowledgeable person on our team when it comes to the sport and that’s a great characteristic of hers,” Leach said.

Though the club has an overall record of 8-13, they have clearly personified what it means to work collectively. They have won doubleheader games by a score of 8-1 and 9-5 against Bucks County Community College in Newtown, Pennsylvania.

The team continues to have stellar play from key positions as pitcher Ferry holds 15 strikeouts this season, while O’Neill has five outs from the outfield.

The senior also had a tremendous spike in her batting average from the fall 2021 semester at .268, to a now impressive .462.

As the wins add up, O’Neill has started to prioritize building confidence amongst her group to take over the helm. With May 1 marking the end of the season, O’Neill looks to spark up leadership commands from players who will stay past her graduation this semester.

“My so much confidence in the team,” O’Neill said. “I know some of the girls are very quiet and don’t feel like they can take on the leadership roles, but they have so much to offer … I want the girls coming back to continue our [seniors’] legacy which is being positive and going into games wanting to win every time.”

A winner’s circle starts by finding the right people to take on opening positions. Ferry and Coury acknowledge how filling the most vital roles of the executive board can be challenging.

In previous tryouts conducted, they stressed the importance of finding people who fit the club’s morals rather than the skill set brought to the table. The goal was simple: find a group that is willing to work together not only in games, but also to build a bond outside of the sport.

“The biggest challenge has been striking that balance between being a leader of this team and also wanting to be a friend,” Ferry said.

“I want to make sure everyone is satisfied, which is hard because there’s a lot of people to take into consideration, but we want every one to abide by those rules.”

Their commitment to this mentality helped revive a story that was reaching its end. O’Neill had played softball her entire life, but as she was entering her first year of college, she had decided to give the sport a rest and pursue opportunities to support her family.

That was until she saw a post on Instagram of the club team’s tryouts, giving her all the motivation to give it one last ride.

“I’m so happy I just did it,” O’Neill said. “I’ve built so much confidence in myself and so many friendships along the way with this team.”
Christian Boyle Reaches 100 Career Points

Boyle hits a historic milestone in only 41 career games

Christian Boyle made history on Wednesday, March 16.

Emmi Denovellis
Guest Writer

Christian Boyle made history on Wednesday, March 16. The senior attacker for the Montclair State University men's lacrosse team recorded his 100th career point as the Red Hawks knocked off Misericordia University 18-16 on their home turf at Sprague Field.

Boyle applauded his teammates for helping him reach this milestone.

"The best is definitely just having the best teammates around me," Boyle said. "My ability to shoot and everything has all been given to me by my teammates."

Junior attacker Mike McCrery explained how the team's chemistry has been improving every day.

"Chemistry is a big thing on our team, whether that includes attacking, middie or defense," McCrery said. "I think all three categories need to mesh well together, and just being on the field and practicing every day has allowed us to get overall better chemistry together as a team."

Boyle entered the Misericordia game with 96 career points and only needed four points to reach the prestigious mark. He gave credit to head coach Matt Poskay for pushing him to be his best during practices and games.

"On the field, Poskay not only pushes me every day, but he pushes our team, too," Boyle said. "He always knows what we can do. If we do not do our best, he pushes us more and more because he sees us day in and day out. He knows what we can do and what we can be."

Against Misericordia, Boyle tallied three goals and two assists with seven out of eight of his shots being on goal. His 100th career point came when he delivered a pass to senior midfielder Joe Covino, who scored to give the Red Hawks the lead for good at 13-12.

Poskay praised Boyle's work ethic both on and off the field.

"He's a two-time captain, and that speaks volumes of the respect he garners from our younger guys," Poskay said. "He's great in the classroom and the success on the field is a reflection of the complete package he is."

Throughout Boyle's career at Montclair State, he has started in 43 out of the 44 games he's appeared in. He has been a major contributor to the team since the start of his freshman year.

During that first season, Boyle appeared in 17 games, earning 16 starts. He scored 22 goals and also had 11 assists for 33 points. That season laid the foundation for his future success at Montclair State.

Long before he stepped foot on campus, Boyle explained how it was his parents who were his biggest role models. They were the ones who guided him and were there for him every step of his journey.

"From the very first day I started playing lacrosse, my dad and my mom have always pushed me to be the best athlete I can be," Boyle said.

Boyle gives nothing less than his best in games and at practices. Poskay described the two-time senior captain as a leader both on and off the field.

"[Boyle] is a great contributor to all aspects of our program," Poskay said. "He earns respect from his teammates with his work ethic."

As for the rest of the Red Hawks' season, Boyle is hoping the men can make it to the conference finals and bring a championship home to Montclair State. The last time the Red Hawks won a conference championship was in 2017 when they were members of the Skyline Conference. Since then, they've moved to the Colonial States Athletic Conference.

As a senior, Boyle still has one more year of eligibility because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) shifting NCAA eligibility rules. However, he does not plan to use that fifth year.

"After college, I do hope to keep coaching and keep being involved in lacrosse," Boyle said. "I love lacrosse and I love being involved in it, so I do want to keep having a hand in it, whether it's coaching or maybe playing in a men's league somewhere."
From Montclair State to USA Volleyball

Former Red Hawk Coach Brian Hurler Becomes Performance Analyst for USA Volleyball

The similarities in coaching style between Creighton and Montclair State helped Brian Hurler thrive with the Blue Jays.

Both star players for the Red Hawks also agreed that Hurler was a very positive person and no matter what was going on with them, on or off the court, he would always be there for help.

Hurler joined the team in 2016 after graduating from The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) with a finance degree the prior year. That was the year when Montclair State won the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) Championship against Ramapo College and moved onto the NCAA Division III Tournament, where they lost to Clark University in five sets.

Hurler learned success in volleyball pretty quickly thanks to the team they had in 2016 and the expertise of both the head coach and the staff. And while it seems obvious that the coaching staff would have a relationship with each other, Hurler harped on the chemistry he had with Stawinski and how that helped him thrive with the Red Hawks.

“Stawinski is one of the most inclusive coaches that I have ever known,” Hurler said. “It was the perfect place for me to develop because you got to see how everything was handled and contribute to everything. He was more than willing to open the door for me and allow me to make mistakes and learn from them.”

In 2017, the Red Hawks lost in the NJAC semifinals, and then in 2018, they lost in the conference championship game, but Hurler proved with his meticulous planning and support that he was a crucial piece to the Montclair State volleyball puzzle. Then in 2019, a new door opened up, and Hurler joined a new school: Creighton University.

Hurler joined their staff as a graduate manager and technical coordinator, helping the coaching staff with scouting and opponent breakdowns just as he did with Montclair State.

But because he joined a Division I program, his arsenal of resources was much more expansive. Hurler believes his time at Creighton was helped thanks to what he learned at Montclair State.

“I was looking for an opportunity to keep growing and learn a little more about Division I volleyball, and it was a good fit in terms of transitioning from what I learned from Montclair State,” Hurler said. “The head coach there, Kirsten Booth, worked like [Stawinski] in a lot of ways, which helped me in terms of mentorship because she let me make mistakes and helped me grow.”

After Creighton won the Big East conference championship, the next year, Hurler moved onto the national side for a little bit, helping with open tryouts for USA Volleyball, and was briefly named to the coaching staff of the U.S. Collegiate National Team.

Then in 2021, he moved on to Stanford University as a technical coordinator, and the Cardinals made it to the second round of the NCAA Division I tournament before losing in four sets to Minnesota.

This year, an opportunity came calling and he now has a permanent position with the national volleyball team.

With the small group of players he trained in Dallas for a professional season and most of the other players playing overseas for their seasons, things are currently quiet for Hurler in Anaheim, California with USA Volleyball.

But with tournaments in the summer coming up, Hurler is confident his scouting expertise can go even further than it has with Stanford, Creighton and the place where he got his start in coaching: Montclair State.

“I remember watching the 2016 Olympics back home in New Jersey and I remember being like, ‘Man, it would be so cool one day to be on an Olympic staff,’” Hurler said. “I decided I was going to head in that direction, and maybe I would never make it. But this was the goal and somehow it all worked out.”