

thereview



VOLUME 150 ISSUE 6 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

NEWS pg. 2
SKATING TEAM
MOURNS TRAGEDY

SPORTS pg. 7
PHILADELPHIA
FLYERS GUIDE

MOSAIC pg. 11
GREEK LIFE AND
MENTAL HEALTH

University skating community remembers the skaters lost in plane crash



NYA WYNN
Co-Managing
News Editor



RISHA INAGANTI
Editor-in-Chief

An air collision on Jan. 29 brought the death of two young skaters, Angela Yang and Sean Kay, and their mothers, Zheheng (Lily) Li and Yulia Kay. Yang and Kay were both a part of the UD Figure Skating Club (UDFSC), an independent figure skating club hosted at the Fred Rust Ice Arena. Yang and Kay, both 11-years-old, were coached together by Alexandr “Sasha” Kirsanov, who also passed in the crash.

The plane, which crashed in Washington D.C., was on its way back from Wichita, Kansas where the duo had competed in U.S. Figure Skating Championships and attended the National Development Camp.

The loss of Yang, Kay and Kirsanov was announced via an email from university President Dennis Assanis on the following day.

“I am incredibly saddened to share the news that several members of the figure skating community connected to the University of Delaware were among those who tragically lost their lives in an aircraft collision last night in Washington, DC,” the email read. “[...] The figure skating community is tight-knit, and many of our students and coaches have trained and competed alongside those who were lost.”

Kay and Yang have been fondly remembered by the community for their dedication, talent and compassion.

“Sean and Angela were two of the most talented skaters I’ve ever met,” Sam Yalvac, a student at the university and member of the collegiate UD Figure Skating (UDFS) club team, wrote in a statement to *The Review*. “I was so lucky to get to share the ice with them. We would always be skating the same sessions early in the morning and no matter what time

I’d stop at the rink throughout the day, I’d see them there again. The second their music turned on your head would turn and you’d move out of the way just to watch them skate.”

Although young, Yang was known as a hard worker and a fiercely passionate skater.

“My best memory about Angela is how hard she worked to achieve her goals and how she was able to achieve them quicker than a lot of my students,” Irina Romanova,

For Kay, skating ran in the family, as he spent many hours at the rink with his siblings.

“Sean and his siblings were present at the rink most hours of the day, bouncing on and off the ice,” Meghan Lapointe, an alum who skated from 2018-2024 while attending the university, wrote in a statement to *The Review*. “Never have I met a kid with more energy... he’d seemingly do run through after run through of his competition programs, never tiring. Him and his siblings were

day, everyday, if their parents let them,” Leah Krauskopf, head coach of the university’s figure skating team, wrote in a statement to *The Review*. “Their work ethic, drive, and passion were admirable to all skaters and coaches lucky enough to share the ice with them. They had the sweetest partnership and were always smiling ear to ear.”

Krauskopf later referred to Kay and Yang as Kirsanov’s “little superstars.”

who knew him. He brought joy to every practice, pushed us to be our best, and made the rink feel like home.”

Emmanuel Savary, who was coached by Kirsanov in the past, echoed the sentiment of Kirsanov’s passion.

“No matter if it was 6am or 6pm Sasha gave all of his students 110% and he expected us to give the same,” Savary wrote in a statement to *The Review*. “He found a way to make skating fun and productive. And even when I [stopped] working with him he was always supporting and encouraging me.”

Lapointe, who was also a board member of both UDFS and UDFSC, described Kirsanov as a “valued coach” who had an immense impact on the skaters he coached, both within and outside of the UD program.

“Sasha was an institution to the UD ice arena family,” Lapointe wrote in her statement. “He truly met skaters where they were at, while pushing them to be the best.

“Sasha, Sean, and Angela will all be sorely missed,” Lapointe continued in her statement. “Sean and Angela will be remembered for their athletic promise, their love of the sport and genuine talent at such a young age. Sasha will be remembered for the truly countless number of lives he touched as a coach, athlete, and mentor.”

A memorial service was held Feb. 2 at the Fred Rust Ice Arena, the same arena where the trio practiced. The arena was filled with university members, fellow skaters, friends and family, who all came together to mourn the loss of the three skaters.

“It’s amazing to see how such a niche community can come together under such circumstances and show their support for the lives that were lost,” Yalvac wrote. “This tragedy has truly taken such a toll on the figure skating community, especially the University of Delaware figure skating community as a whole. Sean, Angela, their mothers and Sasha will never be forgotten. Their lives will forever live on in our community.”



CHRISTINA NATALINI/THE REVIEW

a skater who coached both Yang and Kay, wrote in a statement to *The Review*. “She could work on elements and skating skills for multiple lessons in [a] row without getting cranky or upset.”

“Angela was very close with her Mom,” Romanova continued. “I remember them always hugging and sharing stories off the ice. One time I saw Angela sitting on her Mom’s lap for a quick break and made a comment that it makes me want to ask my 23 year old 6’1” son to do the same that day.”

fierce competitors, but they were just as easily seen playing and chasing each other around.”

Yang and Kay were a dynamic duo on the ice, competing together as a team with a promising future in skating.

“Angela and Sean complemented each other perfectly as skating partners although they both were very young,” Romanova wrote. “With Angela being quiet and a bit of an introverted person, Sean was loud and full on showman.”

“They truly loved to skate, and I bet they would have skated all

In addition to coaching Yang and Kay, Kirsanov was a former coach at UDFS. In an Instagram post on the UDFS account, team president Melissa Maldonado expressed the team’s reaction to Kirsanov’s death.

“Sasha was more than just a coach—he was a mentor, a friend, and a light in the skating world,” the post read. “His passion for this sport was contagious, and his kindness, wisdom, and unwavering belief in his skaters helped so many of us grow both on and off the ice. He left an impact on this team, and his love for skating continued to inspire all

University navigates under Trump administration



LAUREN BOYD
Co-Managing
Opinion Editor

As President Donald Trump regains office, questions and confusion arise out of a slew of recently signed executive orders. Just one week into the spring semester, the university's professors and students remain unsure of how these federal actions may affect them.

Although the university operates independently of the federal government, some existing ties have long been established with Washington D.C.. From providing research funding to offering financial aid, the university's federal support is critical to the work, research and education of students and professors alike.

Students are now concerned about everything from the United States Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) presence on campuses to the viability of federal student aid, calling into question the future of student life in higher

education.

"We've been getting questions about whether we know or understand any [of this]" Lauren Camphausen, assistant director of the university's master's of public health program, said.

"There is uncertainty around whether the focus on immigration reform will affect students and student visas," Camphausen, who is also an adjunct professor and expert in gender-based violence, said.

In an email sent to resident assistants (RAs), Philip Badaszewski, executive director of Residence Life and Housing, acknowledged concerns from students living on campus, and instructed RAs on the potential presence of ICE.

"ICE is not permitted into any of our private buildings on our campus and would require a warrant," Badaszewski wrote in the email. "Do not make any decisions about providing access. Do not feel any obligation to speak to them or respond to their questions."

Beyond the threat to undocumented students at the university, Trump has threatened to deport international students studying on F-1 visas who participated in pro-Palestinian protests. The university's students have organized ongoing protests which were addressed by President Assanis last spring, although no arrests were made.

"[They are] going after people for just their political beliefs, their gender ideology, their sexual identity or just which country they happen to come from," Cindy Romer, Delaware State Representative for the 25th district, said.

While some students remain concerned about their ability to attend the university, others worry about the cost of attendance. The White House's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released a memo, which has since been rescinded, instructing all federal agencies to freeze spending on any financial aid programs that may conflict with Trump's recent executive orders.

"The use of Federal resources

to advance Marxist equity, transgenderism and green new deal social engineering policies is a waste of taxpayer dollars that does not improve the day-to-day lives of those who serve," Matthew Vaeth, OMB's acting director, wrote.

Students worry that although this action has been rescinded, similar will follow, potentially jeopardizing federal student aid that offers nearly 10 million Americans the chance to earn their degree.

The caliber of that degree, derived from the research of the university's top experts and professors, also hangs in the balance. In a recently created webpage dedicated to "navigating the federal transition," the university's research office instructed researchers on a myriad of complications that may arise in the wake of executive orders.

"We anticipate updates to Research Compliance requirements for awards," the website read. "It is crucial to act swiftly to ensure compliance with any new requirements, as failure to do so could jeopardize funding."

The website also acknowledged the

higher scrutiny applied to topics within the scope of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), a potential concern that could affect both research and instruction.

The wide breadth of DEI, though, poses an even larger challenge in both science and academia.

"No one knows, it's not defined," Camphausen said. "Within gender-based violence, you have to talk about identity even if you're just talking about the data. If I'm talking about the data as a cross-section instead of a monolith, is that DEI?"

Davis Knittle, an assistant professor in the department of English, has similar concerns.

"Part of the complexity here, for me as a person who works in queer and trans studies, but who teaches really broadly about power, is that the question here is what is sexuality and gender," Knittle said.

"We have no idea what's going to happen," Knittle continued. "In the meantime, we have to offer the education that our students are at the university to receive."

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION IN DELAWARE



MEGHAN FREEZE
Staff Reporter

According to recent lawsuits, Delaware's waterways have fallen victim to contamination by "forever chemicals," or chemicals that remain in the environment for up to thousands of years after exposure.

Since the 1950s, numerous manufacturing processes have used polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), common forever chemicals that settle in dust, household vacuums, soil, surface wipes and indoor and outdoor air, leading to harmful results for inhabitants.

W.L. Gore & Associates, a materials science corporation headquartered in Newark, faced a recent lawsuit from the state of Maryland due to alleged contamination from 14 facilities in and around Elkton. They are seeking recovery costs for remediation of contamination and obtaining damages for injuries, including cancer.

Through a U.S. Department of Health study, PFAS has been linked to both cholesterol and liver problems. Adverse effects such as

testicular, kidney and pancreatic cancer are risk factors to exposure. Thyroid disease, liver enlargement and ulcerative colitis were also listed as health risks.

Audrey Derturck, junior Wildlife and Ecology major and president of the university's Earth, Ocean, and Environment Organization, is relieved at the accountability larger corporations are facing.

"I appreciate how the environmental movement has moved from putting guilt on individuals for their plastic consumption and shifted that blame over to the large corporations manufacturing these products," Derturck said.

An exposure investigation was conducted in December 2024 by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ASTDR) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). New Castle County was chosen to be included due to higher levels of PFAS in drinking water.

According to the ASTDR study, more than 25% of Delaware residents in their sample group live in areas that are highly impacted by a combination of environmental burdens, social factors and pre-existing chronic health conditions.

Since 1958, Gore has been using forever chemicals within their manufacturing processes. The Maryland lawsuit introduced complaints of contamination of the state's natural resources,

major cause for PFAS found in our drinking water," Derturck said.

The ongoing lawsuit is not the first, as Delaware Attorney General, Kathy Jennings, filed a lawsuit against 13 chemical companies



LARISSA VERONICA HEATHER/THE REVIEW

threatening the welfare of residents.

Derturck expressed concern about the difficulty of avoiding PFAS when they infiltrate everyday items, such as plastic.

"Plastic is incredibly hard to avoid in your day-to-day life and is a

that used PFAS in operations back in October 2023. This reinforced the idea that forever chemicals are caused by multiple companies.

Companies included in the report were DuPont, 3M and Deepwater Chemicals. The complaint alleged that the companies knowingly

designed, manufactured and marketed PFAS-based products.

In the lawsuit, Jennings and the Delaware Department of Justice cited that forever chemicals can cause illnesses, including various cancers, diseases and reproductive disorders.

With the ongoing battle against forever chemicals, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) plans to create strategies to protect the health of Delawareans and the local environment.

DNREC suggestions to lower the risk of PFAS exposure include cleaning and dusting households, frequently changing heating and cooling filters and replacing worn products with PFAS-free items.

As the fight for a clean environment continues, Derturck is hopeful that the studies and lawsuits will bring Delaware closer to a safe environment.

"We have contaminated every corner of this planet with PFAs and microplastics, and it's time these companies took responsibility for engineering a product they knew could be harmful to us and our environment," Derturck said.

University launches new clinical psychological master of science degree



NYA WYNN
Co-Managing
News Editor

The university is launching a new master of science in clinical psychological science, which will begin to accept students for fall 2025, to help combat the state and nationwide gap in mental health services.

According to Ryan Beveridge, executive director of the university's Institute for Community Mental Health (ICMH), there are approximately 250,000 people with unmet mental health needs in Delaware alone, with only 12% of the population receiving the mental health help that they need.

The American Psychological Association (APA) recognized this pattern nationwide, and as a result, began accrediting masters programs in clinical psychology in hopes that this lack of mental health providers could be filled.

"20% of adults and children have anxiety disorders in the United States, about 8% to 10% have depressive disorder," Beveridge, who is also a professor of psychological and brain sciences, said. "This program will train students to implement the best science-based treatments for those really common presenting mental health needs."

According to Franssy Zablah, interim director of the ICMH Clinic, if an individual begins feeling symptoms of depression or anxiety and attempts to seek mental health help, that individual may not be able to see a professional for five to six months due to the lack of mental health professionals available.

"Their functioning is really going to deteriorate during that time waiting," Zablah said. "We're envisioning this [masters program] as a way to increase the number of mental health professionals out there [...] so that the individual who's starting to feel

these symptoms in February can see someone no later than March."

The university currently offers a doctoral degree in clinical science, however many of the students in the program go on to stay in research or academia as opposed to going into the field.

"The majority of the students that come through our [doctoral] program have an intention of continuing in research-based careers, whether it is in academia, academic medical centers or policy," Zablah, who is also an assistant professor of psychological and brain sciences, said. "That is great, but unfortunately, that doesn't do much for meeting the need for mental health professionals in the field."

Students in the new master's program will take many of the same foundational courses as those in the doctoral program, along with gaining hands-on experience in local mental health centers. Beveridge emphasized that students coming out of

the program will be trained to understand how to implement psychological research in practice.

"Our program trains clinicians to think like scientists, providing evidence-based care, tracking patient progress with data and gaining hands-on experience in research labs that develop treatments based on our evolving understanding of mental illness," Beveridge said.

Zablah and other heads of the program are working with various mental health centers in the community and throughout the First State so that master's students can begin providing mental health services during their time in the program. In addition to this external field experience, the students will also provide services at the ICMH Clinic.

Another part is the Center for Training, Evaluation and Community Collaboration (C-TECC), which aims to bridge the gap between academic

research and practicing mental health professionals.

"I always say, what happens in the lab stays in the lab," Beveridge said. "We have all these treatments that we know work, but in these community settings they're not often being provided. C-TECC is really about taking those treatments we know work out to the people who need them."

After completing their two-year master's degree, students are required to do a third year of an internship where they can apply the evidence-based treatments they learned to service the local community.

All three parts of the ICMH – the clinic, C-TECC and the new master's program – come together to enhance students' learning and train the next generation of mental health professionals.

"We're not just teaching students to use the best treatments, we're training them to improve and innovate them," Beveridge said.

MATT MEYER AND KYLE EVANS GAY INAUGURATED



ETHAN GRANDIN
Political
Coordinator

Matt Meyer and Kyle Evans Gay took the oath of office Jan. 21, becoming Delaware's new governor and lieutenant governor.

The inauguration ceremony was moved indoors to Delaware State University's William B. DeLauder Education and Humanities Theatre due to frigid temperatures blanketing Delaware. Surrounded by family, former governors, legislators and a crowd of supporters, Meyer and Gay pledged to lead Delaware forward.

Gay, a former State Senator, reflected on her shared vision with Meyer for the state's future in her speech. She highlighted their commitment to addressing key issues from the campaign, including housing and education.

"I'm looking forward to working with Governor Meyer to bring forth our shared vision of ensuring Delaware is the best place to live, work and play," Gay said in her speech. "A true partner to our legislature. My colleagues in the General Assembly are unrelenting

in their service to Delawareans and I will do all I can to uplift their efforts."

Meyer, the first former public school teacher to hold the office, focused his inaugural address on education and job opportunities for students. He pledged to support educators and ensure every child in Delaware has a chance to succeed.

"As a teacher and as governor, I refuse to accept that any of our kids are written off," Meyer said in his speech. "Because I've seen what they can do when they're given a chance. That's why, right after this, I'll be signing our first executive order to create and expand job opportunities so students can learn and earn at the same time."

Meyer signed executive order one immediately after the ceremony. The order focuses on increasing youth apprenticeships and "earn and learn" opportunities for students statewide.

It requires agencies, including the Department of Education, Department of Labor and Delaware Workforce Development Board to submit a report within 30 days outlining recommendations and or a proposed process for implementing youth

apprenticeships in state government.

The initiative will also involve representatives from the

While Meyer expressed a willingness to work with President Donald Trump to improve the lives of Delawareans, he also pledged to

"You heard what I said today," Meyer said to reporters while signing the executive order. "We're going to do everything we can to protect the rights of everyone in Delaware to celebrate the promise that is America."

Delaware's universities and businesses host a number of international students who may hold the F-1 student visa, J-1 exchange visa or an M-1 student visa for non-academic or vocational study in the United States.

Currently, there are just over 3,800 international students attending Delaware's colleges and universities. As of fall 2023, the university reported 2,239 international students are enrolled in courses with 600 at the undergraduate level and 1,639 at the graduate level.

Meyer and Gay expressed gratitude to attendees and reiterated their eagerness to begin implementing their agenda. With the legislature already in session, both officials will focus on advancing their plans in the coming months.

Their shared vision, outlined in the ceremony, sets the stage for their administration to tackle education, housing and workforce development in the First State.



ETHAN GRANDIN/THE REVIEW

university, Delaware State University, vocational schools and K-12 public schools. Representatives from participating institutions are supposed to work collaboratively to ensure students have access to these opportunities.

Meyer's speech also addressed the new administration in Washington, and what that will entail for those residing in the state.

protect the rights of everyone in the state.

"Let me say this about the new president," Meyer said in his speech. "I will work with anyone, of any party, who is ready to advance the best interests of the people of Delaware."

However, Meyer added a firm caveat.

News analysis: What Trump's win means for Delaware



ETHAN GRANDIN
Political
Coordinator

With President Donald Trump now back in the White House and a bevy of executive orders issued ranging from challenging birthright citizenship to undoing former President Biden's halt on drilling on federal land, questions on how the First State will respond to the new administration remain.

Immigration, which is one of the president's highest priorities, has been at the center of the conversation.

It has also been at the center of the pushback to Trump.

Currently, Delaware hosts over 95,000 immigrant residents and 65,000 of them participate in the workforce in a variety of fields, ranging from the service industry to STEM fields.

"Do you throw them out the street?" State Senator David Sokola, said. "Or do you have horror stories happen?"

Sokola, who is President Pro Tempore of the State Senate, raised a multitude of questions and possible inflection points. He highlighted the critical role undocumented immigrants play in agriculture, construction and hospitality in Delaware's communities.

"[Trump] better not do [mass deportation]," Sokola said. "Because when you look at where the undocumented people are, they're largely in agriculture, they're in hospitality, they're in construction."

Sokola went on to elaborate that SB 30, which allows for bond and capital improvements for the fiscal year of 2026, could be impacted by the inflation of construction costs.

"If you look at our Bond Bill, you know the inflation for families is one thing," Sokola said. "Inflation for construction is ridiculous, if you lose a share of your workforce, that's only going to be magnified."

Inflation and the housing crisis has impacted countless Delawareans and their families, with the legislature responding to the crisis back in July 2024.

Those now in the executive after a large win on the state level, such as

Lieutenant Governor Kyle Evans Gay, argued that the tariffs which President Trump was supposed to implement on Feb. 3 with a 25% rate on products from Canada and Mexico will be detrimental to Delaware's small businesses and entrepreneurs.

"If the tariffs are implemented in the same ways that have been promised, either through Project 2025 or through the President's proposals, we know that small businesses will suffer," Gay said. "We know that increased prices for materials are going to hurt some of the most entrepreneurial folks."

In her new role, Gay also expressed some of the other challenges facing the nation and the state, specifically with the challenges surrounding communication during the most recent election cycle for Democrats.

She emphasized the need for the presence of changemakers within local communities, who not only have a difference in ideals, but also a difference in perspective.

For Gay and for others seeking a difference in perspective, it is important to face the realities of

the current economic situation in America, not only for the electorate but also for those who are dealing with a lack of economic opportunity.

"From my perspective, our economic conversation has to be a broad spectrum, and it has to include common sense," Gay said. "I think that we can do that in a way that doesn't just benefit individuals or benefit families or benefit kids, but also brings a very important communal benefit to our state and will lift us up."

This conversation regarding economics, as Gay mentioned, is continually being mulled over by not only those who ran and won this past election but also those who lost.

For Timothy Shaffer, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) chair of civil discourse, the question that remains is how such a massive influx of money made its way to former Vice President Kamala Harris's campaign. Shaffer, who also serves as the director of the SNF Ithaca in the Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy and Administration, has additionally focused on how the Harris

campaign played out on a local level.

Shaffer's inquiry about funding the Harris campaign also leads to the wider question plaguing the Democratic Party: What went wrong in the campaign as a whole?

"You know, the question of where did the \$1.5 billion go, and however many weeks, so I think there's going to be a lot of questions of what happened or what didn't happen," Shaffer said.

He added that American citizens have two choices, and they choose their candidate; however, with those down-ballot races, it was different.

"I think, interestingly, at least some of the first kind of takeaways is where are there variations of what happened at the top of the ballot versus further down," Shaffer said. "We've heard lots of people talk about the continual effects of, sexism and racism, and then on some of the bigger topics that were the driving theme."

Shaffer detailed the reality of the American political system and expressed how, although many

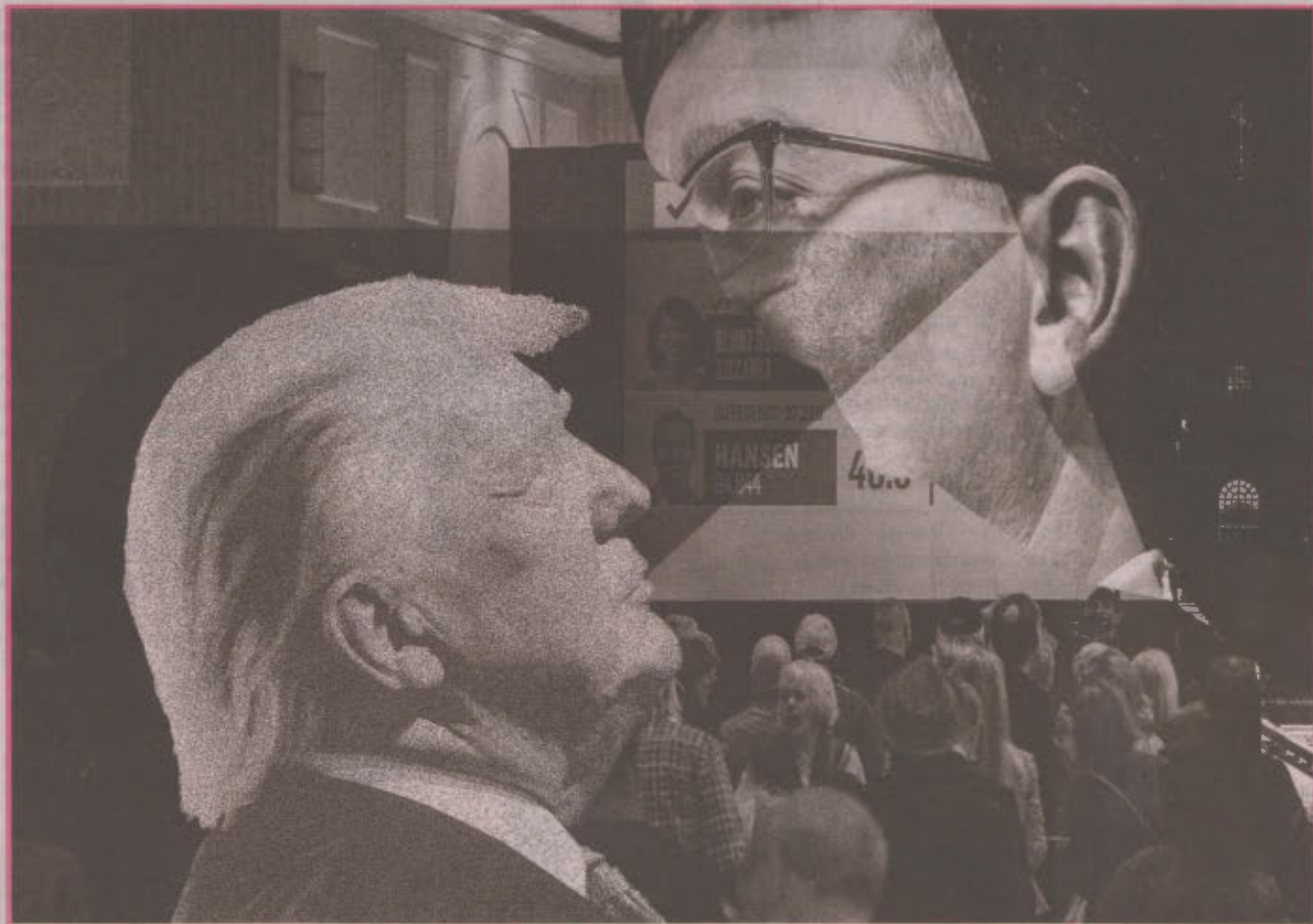
holding power currently insist with rhetoric that they have a mandate, that is not necessarily the case.

He detailed that those who voted for President Trump are different from his original demographic, including Hispanic and African American men.

Shaffer also elaborated on the importance of being involved in local politics and elections; while there may be a difference of opinion, the goal is to improve the community. If that divide widens too far on a local level, especially in a moment of crisis or in critical elections, there can be a sense of a lack of trust according to Shaffer.

He noted that elections have consequences. According to Shaffer, those voted into power attempt to do things promised to voters. For Trump, tariffs, redemption and a crackdown on immigration are those promises.

"I'm not telling people to run out to Costco and buy the big frozen bag of peas, but you know, all of this will come with a cost," Shaffer said.



ETHAN GRANDIN/THE REVIEW

THEATER REVIEW: "ROMEO + JULIET"



**BETH
WOJCIECHOWSKI**
Managing Arts &
Culture Editor

Despite having always considered myself to be more of a musical fan than a play fan, I have been wanting to see the "Romeo + Juliet" revival on Broadway since it opened for two reasons. The play's stars: Rachel Zegler and Kit Connor.

Connor and Zegler star as the titular Romeo and Juliet, respectively. Having opened in October, the show will run through Feb. 16 at the Circle in the Square Theatre. While it is a play, the show also features some musical moments throughout, with songs being

composed by Jack Antonoff, a frequent collaborator with Taylor Swift and Lana Del Rey.

Going into the show, I was quite familiar with the source material and had a pretty good idea of what the production would be like. However, my expectations were completely exceeded.

The lobby of the theater, which is reached by an escalator ride, was decorated like it was a Charli XCX music video. There were neon flashing lights, teddy bears everywhere and "Rush" by Troye Sivan was blasting. The merchandise also matched that theme, and there was even a claw machine in the lobby where you could pay a dollar to win a small pink

teddy bear wearing an "R+J" shirt. Despite the fact that my sister and I spent over ten dollars and did not win anything, I still found the claw machine to be such a cool idea, especially since most Broadway merchandise can cost upwards of thirty dollars. Overall, it was a totally different aesthetic than one would expect from "Romeo and Juliet."

The aesthetic continues on stage, as it is decorated very similarly to the lobby. Also, unlike any other Broadway show I have seen, some of the cast were already on stage and in character before the show began. I was immediately drawn to the modernized costumes that were worn throughout the show (think

baggy jeans, leather jackets, graphic tees, etc.), especially the glittery suit worn by Connor during Act 1. I also could not help but feel that the overall vibe was very similar to the 1996 modernized film adaptation starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes.

While the show featured a wholly modern aesthetic, the dialogue throughout was word for word from the original

Shakespearean text. I also felt that the actors really leaned into the comedic elements of the source material, and I found this version to be funnier than any other "Romeo and Juliet" adaptation I have seen, which could be due to the actors' physicality during the moments of more comedic dialogue.

My favorite aspect of this show was its

interactiveness. Due to the theater being "in the round," which means that it is a round stage with the audience seated all around the stage, the actors were able to utilize the entire theater and surrounding space. There was not a bad seat in the house, and regardless of where you were seated you still experienced the interactivity of the show. There were scenes that took place in the rafters of the theater above the stage, on platforms located within the audience, and within the aisles.

For example, there is a scene in Act 1 where Connor runs up and down each aisle. There is also a scene where he asks an audience member

for their chair and then proceeds to use it in the next scene to reach Juliet's balcony. Speaking of the balcony scene, the way that it was staged in this production was such a standout for me.

During the balcony scene, the floor of the stage was covered in fake flowers which was very visually engaging. Also, due to the audience's proximity to the stage, this scene felt especially immersive. I also have to mention the viral moment of this scene where Connor does a pull-up to reach the balcony. It was truly insane to get to experience that scene live after seeing it on TikTok for months on end, and it was even cooler

than I expected it to be.

Connor was the true standout of the production for me, and I would not be surprised if he was nominated for a Tony Award for his performance. He was equally great in both his comedic scenes and his more emotional scenes. In addition to Connor, I also found Tommy Dorfman, who plays the Nurse and Tybalt, to be a standout. Her comedic timing was great, and she definitely stole every scene she was in.

I also loved every musical moment of the show. I have been a fan of Zegler since seeing her in "West Side Story" back in 2020, and I truly believe that she was made to be on Broadway. She sounded absolutely amazing singing live. My favorite song of the production was "Man of the House," which Zegler sang at the end of Act 1 and was reprised by Connor in Act 2. I definitely feel that the inclusion of an Olivia Rodrigo-esque ballad helped production to appeal to and be more easily understood by younger audiences.

I personally found that the modernness of the adaptation made the Shakespearean language much easier to understand and digest. Every element of the production felt so thought out and purposeful, and it was truly a theatrical experience that I will never forget.

From the actors to the set to the music to the costumes, I cannot pick an element of the production that I did not enjoy. Overall, I cannot recommend this adaptation of "Romeo + Juliet" more and I can promise that it will be the only thing I talk about for the next few months.



Flyers 101: A beginner's guide to Philadelphia hockey



MACAYLA COOK
Development
Officer

The world of professional hockey can be difficult to understand for newcomers. Hockey is, by nature, an aggressive sport, and National Hockey League (NHL) play is very fast. The puck is small, the players are skating at top speed and the fans are screaming mean things at whichever team is losing, even if they happen to be wearing that team's jersey.

All these factors might leave an NHL neophyte overwhelmed. However, budding Flyers fans are always welcome to join the sometimes-extremely-disappointing club.

Players to Know

Matvei Michkov

The 20-year-old Russian right wing is garnering significant attention right now due to the miraculous circumstances surrounding his coming to Philadelphia. Michkov started playing professional hockey overseas in the Kontinental Hockey League (KHL) in 2021 and was supposed to continue playing for SKA Saint Petersburg until 2026.

He was the Flyers' seventh overall pick in the 2023 draft, but due to the St. Pe-

tersburg contract, he was not supposed to play in the NHL for at least two more years. Following the unexpected termination of his Russian contract, Flyers players and fans alike are excited that he is here early, having signed a three-year contract.

Michkov was named the NHL Rookie of the Month in October after scoring nine points (four goals and five assists) in only 11 games played with the Flyers.

Sean Couturier

No, Philadelphia fans do not boo their team's captain when he steps on the ice. Instead, it is tradition to yell a nickname for one of the franchise's longest-standing players: Coots.

The 32-year-old center was drafted by the Flyers in 2011 in the first round, eighth overall. Since then, he has been loyal to the City of Brotherly Love, helping catapult the team into the Stanley Cup Playoffs in the 2017-18 season.

This year's season is also the first that Couturier has been able to play in full in a while, as he returned to the team during the 2023-24 season after taking 22

months off due to a herniated disk.

Travis Konecny

Konecny serves as one of the Flyers' alternate captains. He is also the team's lead goal scorer.

Wearing No. 11 on the ice, the 27-year-old right wing was drafted by Philadelphia during the first round in 2015, 24th overall. During his first season as a Flyer, he scored 28 points (11 goals and 17 assists) in 70 games, the most points by a Flyers rookie forward since the 2011-12 season.

Konecny also has a reputation for chirping during games, making him a beloved part of a franchise and a city that takes pride in being unlikable.

Scott Laughton

The Flyers' other alternate captain is another player with longevity, having been with the team since 2012 after being drafted in the first round, 20th overall.

Laughton is 30 years old and plays center. He wears No. 21. He also fulfills the extremely important role of one of Gritty's best friends.

Jamie Drysdale

Drysdale, despite having a slow start to the 2024-25 season, was an exciting addition to the Flyers' roster last season.

Now 22 years old, Drysdale was drafted by the Anaheim Ducks in 2020 in the first round, sixth overall. The Canadian defenseman was then traded to the Flyers with a second-round pick last season in exchange for Cutter Gauthier.

Drysdale missed 12 games this season due to an unspecified upper-body injury, but was reinstated to play against the Utah Hockey Club on Dec. 8.

Owen Tippett

Tippett's claim to fame is that he is currently the fastest player in the NHL, making him an effective goal scorer.

Able to skate at top speeds of just under 25 miles per hour, the Canadian right wing has scored 77 career goals since being drafted by the Florida Panthers in 2017 in the first round, 10th overall.

He was acquired by Philadelphia in the 2022 trade that sent long-time Flyer Claude Giroux to the Panthers.

Samuel Ersson

The Flyers' Swedish starting goalie was drafted by Philadelphia in 2018 in the fifth round as the 19th pick, 143rd overall. He maintains a career save percentage of .892.

Head Coach John Tortorella reports that originally, the plan was to develop Ersson, but he quickly became the Flyers' most reliable option in the net after Carter Hart departed from the team in January. Nevertheless, Tortorella maintains that the franchise has faith in Ersson's abilities.

Earlier in the season, Ersson missed 11 games due to a lower-body injury, leaving backup goalies Ivan Fedotov and Aleksei Kolosov to tend the net in his absence. He was reinstated along with Drysdale on Dec. 8.

The Season So Far

The Philadelphia Flyers are currently 24-26-7, meaning they have won 24 games, lost 26 games during regulation play and lost seven times in overtime or shootout.

Last season, the Flyers finished with a record of 33-38-11. They finished sixth in their division with 87 points, just four short of a playoff spot.

Will the Flyers Make the Playoffs?

The Flyers are currently ranked eighth out of eight teams in the Metropolitan Division with 55 points, meaning that if playoffs started tomorrow, Philadelphia would not make the cut.

However, the Stanley Cup Playoffs are not until April, so it is difficult to say with any certainty who will qualify, especially considering that despite their current low standing, the Flyers remain less than ten points from a playoff spot.

The Flyers have qualified for the playoffs 40 times out of 57 seasons played. The last time Philadelphia played in the championship game was 2010, which ended with a loss to the Chicago Blackhawks.

The Flyers franchise overall has two Stanley Cup wins, riding momentum from the Broad Street Bullies era to secure back-to-back wins in 1974 and 1975.

The last time the Flyers made the playoffs was the 2019-20 season when they lost to the New York Islanders in the Eastern Conference semifinals.

Last season, playoffs looked certain for a moment, but Philadelphia concluded the season by racking up an eight-game losing streak that cost the team its spot.

Ultimately, the Flyers are a wild card, and until the Stanley Cup Playoffs are far closer, it is impossible to predict whether or not they will qualify.

LARISSA VERONICA HEATHER/THE REVIEW

Additionally, he hit the milestone of 100 career goals this season, scoring all four goals in the Flyers' Dec. 12 game against the Detroit Red Wings.



The **Class of 1955 Ethics Endowment Fund** and the **University of Delaware**
Departments of Philosophy and Political Science & International Relations present

DEBATING

Voting

DO WE HAVE A DUTY TO VOTE?

A philosophical debate between internationally renowned scholars, with ample time for audience questions

THURSDAY, MARCH 13 · 5:00 P.M.

MEMORIAL HALL 127
FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
RECEPTION TO FOLLOW



JULIA MASKIVKER
ROLLINS COLLEGE

Julia Maskivker is George and Harriet Cornell Distinguished Professor of Political Science at Rollins College. She specializes in political theory. Her books include *The Duty to Vote* (Oxford, 2019) and *Self-Realization and Justice: A Liberal Perfectionist Defense of Freedom from Employment* (Routledge, 2012).



JASON BRENNAN
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Jason Brennan is Robert J. and Elizabeth Flanagan Family Professor of Strategy, Economics, Ethics, and Public Policy at Georgetown University. He specializes in politics, philosophy, and economics. His many books include *Democracy: A Guided Tour* (Oxford, 2023), *Why It's OK to Want to Be Rich* (Routledge, 2020), *Good Work if You Can Get It* (Johns Hopkins, 2020); *Against Democracy* (Princeton, 2016), and *Why Not Capitalism?* (Routledge, 2014).



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
ARTS & SCIENCES

philosophy.udel.edu

The University of Delaware is an equal opportunity institution. For the full Notice of Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, see www.udel.edu/home/legal-notices (02/25/AB)

BEING A BLACK NONBINARY GAMER IS EXHAUSTING



YVES ALLEN
Staff Writer

I can hear the fans of my struggling gaming laptop whirr as I boot up my favorite game. Moonlight pours in through my windows, hardly illuminating my cluttered bedroom. I can finally engage in my favorite hobby other than writing – playing online games.

Online team-based shooters – games where teams work together to eliminate enemies and complete objectives, like “Overwatch 2,” “Valorant” and “Apex Legends” – have provided me thousands upon thousands of hours of entertainment over the past several years. Even team games I enjoy more casually, such as “League of Legends,” a multiplayer online battle arena title in which two teams of five push to destroy the enemy team’s home base, called the “nexus,” stimulate a part of my mind that no other hobby I enjoy can.

The feeling of improving at these games by mastering your favorite character and watching your in-game rank increase provides a rush like no other.

However, even in these spaces where fun is emphasized over all else, I still at times feel unwelcome. Competitive gaming spaces, especially those in the first-person shooter genre, have communities made up of mostly cisgender, heterosexual white men. Unfortunately, that means that even in spaces where I am meant

to enjoy myself, I find myself in a minority population.

This sense of vulnerability is further heightened through my use of features such as Pride-themed collectibles and memorabilia like weapon charms and account icons, as well as my use of voice and text chat.

With the use of these features, my unmistakably queer voice and dialect out me consistently.

The exposure of my identity has gotten me into trouble countless times throughout my years playing online games. I was told to “speak like a man” when trying to communicate a strategy with my teammates on “Valorant” a month ago. I’ve seen racial and homophobic slurs thrown about lobbies with no remorse; a common experience in online spaces, but one that takes on a more hurtful essence when targeted to the minority groups being attacked.

The regularity of these attacks cannot be overstated. While taking a break from writing this article to enjoy a session of “Overwatch 2” with my friends, I was called a n— by an anonymous teammate.

Even as video game companies begin to roll out nonbinary-identified characters in seemingly profound acts of inclusion, the community’s mixed reception to these characters makes me feel even more unsettled whenever I log in for a session.

I’ve seen this acutely in recent months with the launch of

Blizzard Entertainment’s launch of Venture in “Overwatch 2” and Riot Games with the creation of Clove in “Valorant.” I have also witnessed the same mixed reactions levied at “Apex Legends” characters Bloodhound and Catalyst, a nonbinary person and a transgender woman who were released in 2019 and 2022 respectively.

These characters are often purposefully misgendered both in-game and on social media by their game’s communities despite their parent developers making clear the pronouns the characters use (they/them for Venture, Clove and Bloodhound, and she/her for Catalyst.) Other comments by players go further, with statements frequently calling these characters “mentally ill” or claiming that “there are only two genders;” offenses that ultimately extend beyond the characters they’re directed towards and hurt their real-life gender-nonconforming players.

How am I supposed to feel welcomed and safe as a nonbinary video game enthusiast when the representation that I’ve wanted so desperately is met with consistent backlash and hatred by the community with whom I have to play?

Witnessing the video games I love so deeply morph into a site for the same bigotry that I try to escape in the real world has been incredibly saddening. Knowing that the same hatred I experience daily in the real world has the potential to haunt me in the privacy of my own room during my free time is devastating.

There are some days when the fear of being called a slur keeps me from playing games I used to enjoy logging into daily.

When I do power through and log on, I know that respect for me as a human is contingent on me performing well. In the online gaming community, making mistakes seems to give people a reason to treat me poorly – calling me slurs, making fun of my voice and calling attention to my use of Pride-themed cosmetics. This constant hypervigilance makes playing video games that were once a reprieve from my daily life more stressful than my actual responsibilities, with each session ending with a profound sense of anger and exasperation. This is not okay.

When I talk with my other friends who enjoy playing online video games, many of them tell me to “just ignore it.” I understand that, like any other space on the internet, people can and will take advantage of anonymity to say and do nasty things. While this advice rings true, I have a counterargument: Why is bigotry so normalized in online spaces?

Why should women, nonbinary folks and other non-men-identified folks have to wonder if and when their gender is going to make them susceptible to mistreatment?

Why do video game companies release diverse characters while doing very little to protect the communities that these characters represent?

Why do those in racial minorities have to constantly hear slurs that go against their very existence thrown about by their white teammates?

The lack of answers to these questions has forced me to migrate to games with communities where I have the option to not interact with others at all.

Titles like Nintendo’s third-person shooter “Splatoon 3” and Behaviour Interactive’s asymmetrical horror game “Dead by Daylight,” for example, give me the option to play games that do not feature options to communicate with other players in the match. Splatoon is an especially affirming title for me, with my custom playable character being

genderless, Black and even having an afro just like me. Respawn Entertainment’s “Apex Legends” allows me to queue with a friend in a duos format, eliminating the need for strangers to populate the rest of the team and setting my risk of being verbally mistreated to zero.

While I am grateful to have games like these available to play, it does not erase the unfairness of being forced to play them in order to avoid bigotry. Why should players be forced to choose between playing a game they truly love or settling for a game that will not get them hurt? Why should I even feel the need to write this article?

It is also important to realize that the “Splatoon,” “Dead by Daylight” and “Apex Legends” communities, while certainly more tolerant than the aforementioned titles, are not utopias. Even without in-game communication, the congregation of players in both online and in-person settings continues to enable the perpetration of hatred, a sentiment that is articulated well by YouTuber and “Splatoon” content creator Rose of Battle in a video documenting women leaving the “Splatoon” scene.

As a scholar who studies both race and gender, I understand that bigotry in video games is a microcosm of the broader issue of systemic hatred. I understand that as long as gaming is perceived as a white, masculine space, those outside of these communities will continue to be ostracized, mistreated and targeted.

This fact, however, does not take away my right to be exhausted.

I am not sensitive and I am not dramatic – I deserve to have the companies whom I pay in both time and money create safe spaces for myself and those like me to play.

I am, however, a Black, nonbinary gamer and I am angry.

Yves Allen is a staff writer at The Review. Their opinions are their own and do not represent the majority opinion of The Review staff. They may be reached through The Review’s message box.



LAUREN BOTHUM / THE REVIEW

The outdated-ness of New Year's resolutions



ALEX KEATING
Co-Managing
Opinion Editor

Ironically, I often find myself dreading New Year's.

It seems so counterintuitive given the fresh start that we associate with the concept. Not to mention the actual celebrations: parties, glitter, seemingly endless joy. What's not to love?

Promises of a clean slate and endless opportunity have become ... tacky, I guess. I'll be the first to admit that I'm not the most optimistic person on the best of days, but every year on Jan. 1, I find myself asking the same question - why do we limit our capacity for change to one date in a calendar year?

It's easy to get trapped in a cycle of waiting or planning for the perfect moment to make a change; but doesn't that defeat the purpose? If there is something that we think will improve our quality of life, doesn't dragging out the process of implementing it just result in a state of purgatory - further

exacerbating the situation?

Many polls suggest that most people do not follow through on their resolutions after a month, let alone the entire year. Although it might feel like otherwise, the world doesn't stop spinning during the holidays. It's much easier to come up with that ever-growing list of resolutions during the end of December when time doesn't feel real, than it is to actually carry them out when work and school and life resume on Jan. 2 (i.e., why I'm writing this in February).

For those like myself, who aren't patient by nature, it's also much harder to see a goal through if there isn't some form of immediate results. I'm constantly working on shifting that mentality because these things do take time - a resolution in and of itself, you could say. But the grandiose nature of New Year's resolutions becomes added pressure. Oh, and let's not forget the discouragement that comes if you don't finish it at all.

I find that social media adds fuel to the fire. Whether it be wellness routines, organization, workouts or anything in between,

the perfectionist standard that has long been inherent to posting online is worsened when it comes to resolutions. Now, not only are you expected to reach that usually unrealistic standard of living, but you're forced into an often impractical timeline as well.

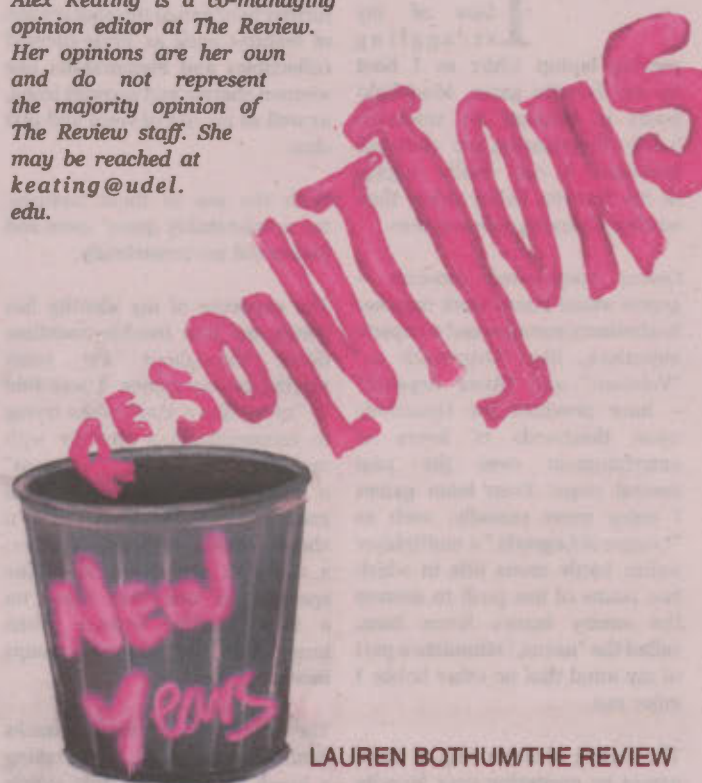
All of this is not to say that resolutions are solely negative. Many people work well with a goal in mind and social media can serve as inspiration, community or a way to track progress. But like everything in life, there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

You know yourself best. It's not up to anyone else to determine what, when or how you achieve any kind of goal. I gave up on New Year's resolutions because I found them more harmful than helpful to me, but that's not the case for everyone. Some people swear by them and that is more than okay! I have immense respect for people that can operate like that.

But I also don't think it's fair to treat them as a constraint to making a change. Life is short

and time never stops; don't let a calendar or a stranger on the internet dictate how you go about your life.

Alex Keating is a co-managing opinion editor at The Review. Her opinions are her own and do not represent the majority opinion of The Review staff. She may be reached at keating@udel.edu.



LAUREN BOTHUM/THE REVIEW

thereview



Stay up to date by following @udreview on instagram!



Check out our website for more content at <https://udreview.com/>



PERSONAL ESSAY: MENTAL HEALTH VS. GREEK LIFE



JENI NANCE
Staff Writer

If you'd asked me when I was a freshman if I'd ever join a sorority, I would've laughed in your face. But as time went on, and the thought of making friends seemed nearly impossible, I grew desperate for a sense of belonging. And, midway through September of my sophomore year, a new prospect for finding people was revealed.

I found out about continuous open bidding (COB), which is informal recruitment. I reached out to one of the sororities that was participating and set up a date with a couple of the chapter's members. I received a bid the next day. For the first time in a long time, I felt wanted. I had no idea who these girls were, but their sheer acceptance was enough for me to accept the bid.

I went through all the motions, getting my big (a designated "older sister" who acts as your mentor), meeting my sorority fam and, finally, getting initiated. I thought I found a true sisterhood and a true fam in my big, g-big (your big's big) and twin. All of this hope and happiness was quick to fall into shambles during the spring semester.

As time went on, I noticed how my sorority fam was drifting apart. The excitement of having a big, little and twin had died down. Although initially disheartened watching other fams do activities together outside of sorority events, I grew unbothered, recognizing I'd made some solid friendships.

However, I wouldn't say that I was ever truly in a friend group. My member class had become close during their recruitment season, which happened the semester before I joined. The newest member class also grew close during recruitment. You could say I was friends with everyone. But being on the outside of everyone's friend groups made me feel like I was friends with no one.

It's so hard to be a part of an organization, especially one that costs so much, and still feel like

an outsider. I was friendly with everyone, yes, but never enough to get invited to things like outings, lunches or pre-games. Even finding someone to accompany me to a sorority mixer was a struggle. Some days I would just lay in my bed, ready to go out, crying all of my makeup off because I couldn't find anyone to go with.

with being in a sorority. Despite the animosity, I attempted to keep my head held high.

In late October, I was at work when one of our new COB members approached me. She and I talked about work and studies, and we later landed on the topic of our chapter. I told her that I

attempt to find some comfort. But even with her on the other end, I felt alone. Again. There was one thought that crept into my mind that night: Why am I here?

You might be thinking: Over a group chat? Yes and no. Not just over a group chat. My life leading up to this point hadn't been easy. I

little parts of me were slowly being chipped away from the beginning.

I recognize now that I'd been paying to be bullied. But I wasn't the only one. Four other incidents of bullying were reported that week.

Since then, I have observed that two types of girls join sororities:

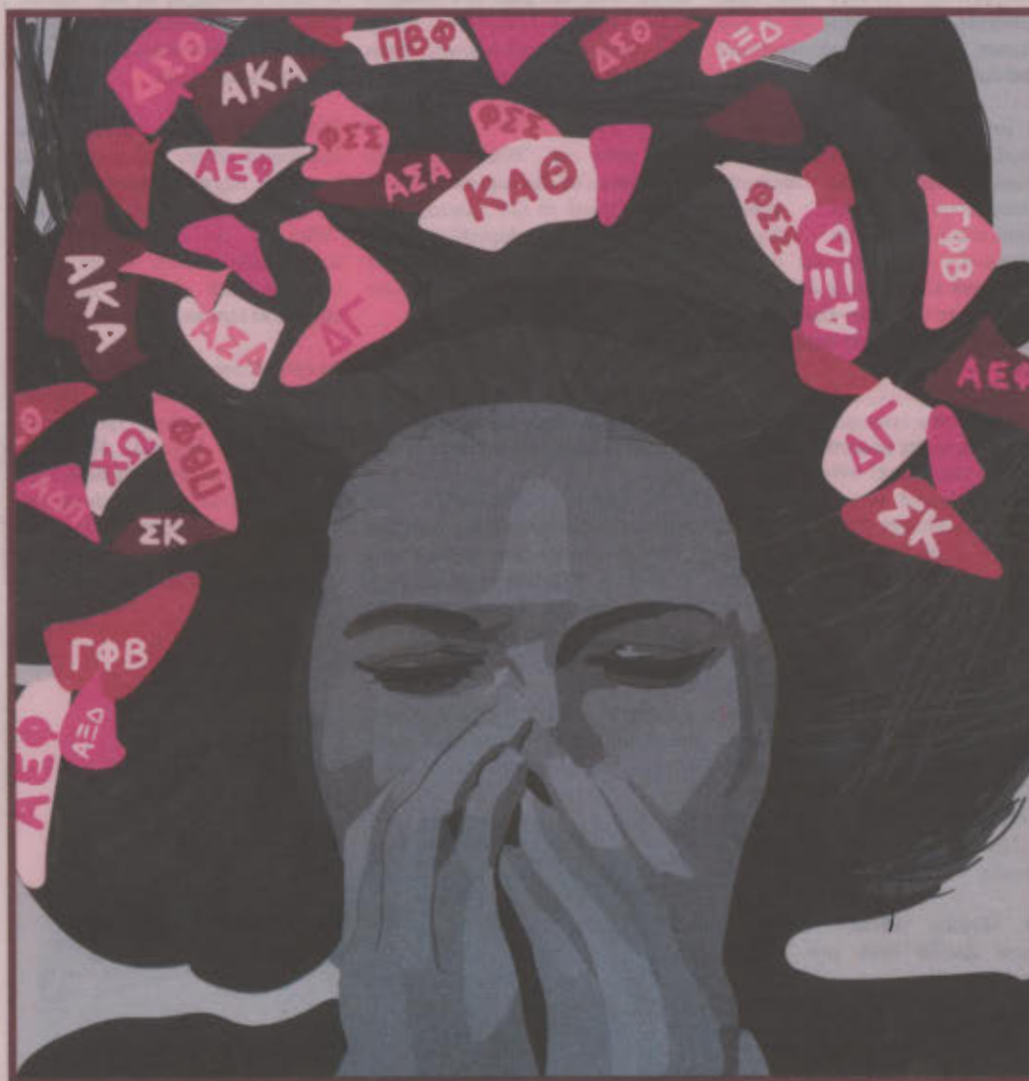
Type A: those that join to make friends. These girls usually struggle to make new friends and need a leg up when it comes to establishing these relationships (I fell under this category).

Type B: popular in high school. These girls had their main group of friends for most of primary and secondary school. The highlight of their lives was their social standing in high school, and they felt the need to mimic that in college.

Unfortunately, most girls are Type B. These are the girls I frequently encountered in my chapter. The girls who were genuinely kind and inclusive were few and far between.

I'd been waiting weeks for my sorority to do something. I wanted to see these girls face consequences less for what they did, but instead, for how they made me feel. It wasn't until a few days ago that I realized the power was in my hands. It always has been. Whether the girls in the group chat face consequences or not, I have the power to shed light on a bigger issue that isn't talked about enough — mental health vs. Greek life.

I know I'm not the only person in Greek life who is going through it right now. I know there are people, in other chapters especially, who are also struggling. I want them to know that they're not alone. I also hope to give a little insight to the potential new members rushing this spring. At the end of the day, college is only four years of life, and there's so much more to it than Greek letters.



LARISSA VERONICA HEATHER/THE REVIEW

Over the summer, it's hard to keep in touch with people, especially with everyone being from different parts of the country or going on trips. So, I just watched from afar, seeing our PhotoCircle get flooded by endless photos of sisters reuniting.

Going into this semester, I knew people were talking about me. Unfortunately, that just comes

was bothered about people talking behind my back and she said she heard about the situation. And then, she told me that there was a group chat dedicated to talking about me.

My heart sank. Once she walked away, I immediately burst into tears. I ran to the bathroom and called my friend who sat on our executive board at the time, in an

kept getting tossed aside by people in my life. But this was the straw that broke the camel's back.

I felt so helpless. I've spent the better part of two years trying to heal myself mentally, and all it took was that one group chat for everything to come crashing down. But, I guess looking back on it now,

BATTLE OF THE MOVIE MUSICALS: "WICKED" VS. "EMILIA PÉREZ"



ALIYAH JACKSON
Staff Writer

The Golden Globe Awards is known for being the first awards ceremony of the year. This year's Golden Globes took place on Jan. 5, and although the night was filled with dazzling fashion and fun, the aftermath sparked debates surrounding two nominees.

"Wicked" (2024), the movie adaptation of the popular Broadway musical, received four Golden Globe nominations and was expected to sweep its categories after becoming a mainstream cultural phenomenon over the past few months.

However, "Emilia Pérez," a musical crime drama that follows a Mexican cartel leader who seeks out a lawyer to help her transition into a woman, shocked the masses with 10 Golden Globe nominations.

The award show concluded with "Wicked" winning one Golden Globe for "Cinematic and Box Office Achievement" and "Emilia Pérez" winning four, including a win against "Wicked" for "Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy."

Prior to the Golden Globes, I hadn't considered "Emilia Pérez" to be the movie to beat this awards season. But after its unexpected win and the fact that it recently received 13 Oscar nominations, the most nominations for any film this year and one away from the all-time record, I anticipate that it'll continue to surprise viewers.

I was fortunate enough to see "Wicked" on Broadway as part of a school trip during my sophomore year of high school, so when the movie was announced, I was eager to see if I'd enjoy it as much as the Broadway musical.

I went to see it in theaters a few days after its release and immediately fell in love. It was an

immersive cinematic experience and the performances given by Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande were entertaining and impactful.

A few weeks after the Golden Globes, I decided to watch "Emilia Pérez" so I could understand the comparisons between the two. However, after giving it a fair chance, I was left underwhelmed and disappointed.

It lacked the foundations of a good musical, such as compelling music composition, dynamic choreography and overall memorability. The singing repeatedly took me out of the story and I felt that it didn't add anything to the plot – the opposite of what a musical is supposed to do.

Although the concept of the film was unique, its execution severely missed the mark. What could've been a decent movie ended up being a lackluster film with absurd music, a disorganized plot and characters that were hard to take seriously.

Despite my dissatisfaction with the film, I can appreciate it spotlighting Karla Sofia Gascón, a transgender actress of color, and giving her an opportunity to showcase her versatility in an industry that still struggles with inclusivity regarding transgender people.

In "Emilia Pérez," Gascón plays Emilia both pre and post-transition, a choice that impressed me and highlighted her dedication to the role. While I wish the film as a whole had left a stronger impression on me, I believe this performance will open more doors for transgender women of color in the industry.

So, if the film wasn't cinematically impressive, what about it is

putting it into conversations with a box office hit such as "Wicked?" In my opinion, it's a matter of familiarity versus novelty.

On Broadway, "Wicked" is one of the longest running Broadway shows of all time, after opening in 2003. Over the past two decades it has become revered by many and insanely well-known, from die-hard fans to casual theater enjoyers.

The story of "Wicked" is an adaptation of the classic story of "The Wizard of Oz" (1900), and the movie is an adaptation of the Broadway musical, meaning the story is one that tons of people are familiar with.

What gives "Emilia Pérez" a slight edge over "Wicked" is its uniqueness, since it's a story that has never been told before.

Nevertheless, "Wicked" has maintained its popularity over the years due to its timelessness and its impact. This film is an addition to an ongoing legacy and has further increased the longevity of this story.

To create a lasting legacy, a film must touch the hearts and souls

of its audience, offering a story that resonates for years to come. As an LGBTQ+ person of color, I found myself connecting more with "Wicked," despite "Emilia Pérez" being intentionally crafted to spotlight social issues and the LGBTQ+ community. Because of this, I struggle to see "Emilia Pérez" as a timeless film, and I believe longevity should be a factor in awards decisions.

While "Emilia Pérez" has impressed critics and voters with its bold storytelling, its impact on audiences remains debatable. "Wicked," on the other hand, has already proven its ability to resonate with viewers, both on stage and now on screen.

As awards season continues, it will be interesting to see how "Emilia Pérez" and "Wicked" fare at the Oscars and beyond. However, in the end, a great musical isn't just about awards. It's about the emotional connection it creates, and only time will tell which of these films truly stands the test of time.

Poem: A letter to my ex-best friend



JENI NANCE
Staff Writer

I forgive you because
From the moment we met,
You made me feel comfortable
enough to be myself
And that's something I'll never
forget.

I forgive you because
You opened my eyes to so many
different views of the world,
Showing me another outlook on
life
While embracing my differences.

I forgive you because
You showed me how to value
myself,
Despite breaking my trust
And taking advantage of my
vulnerability.

I forgive you because
When you're sitting next to your
future best friend
And you ask her what's her
favorite color,
Mine will pop up in the back of
your mind: Pink.

I forgive you because
I know you're never going to find a
friendship like the one we had,
And even though you decided to
leave,
When the dust settles, this
breakup will be harder on you
than it was on me.

I forgive you because
As you're slowly pulling the knife
that you stabbed in my back,
You realize that you're the one
who is bleeding
And that's when you lost me
forever.

I forgive you because
Even though I'm sitting here
alone,
Writing on this tear-soaked page,
The lessons our friendship taught
me aren't something I would
trade.



LARISSA VERONICA HEATHER/THE REVIEW

Personal essay: When home isn't quite so



YVES ALLEN
Staff Writer

I walked past the line of citizens, clutching my passport between my fingers as I approached the border officer. My eyes went to his gun and, for the first time in my life, I realized where I came from.

The land of self-proclaimed gunslingers and vigilantes who, with no regard for others, feel the need to clutch to instruments of lethality with a casualness so sickening and disturbing that I had not yet recognized it. The land where said instruments rip through flesh and mutilate lives with a frequency that should terrify us, but can't – lest we grow too afraid to live altogether.

The land of the free where freedom* reigns with an asterisk. Where battles are fought and lost for rights that should be immutable facts of citizenship. Where progress can be erased under the guise of a wicked man who, in the eyes of his supporters, is making our nation great again; purging great evils that exist only in the minds of the deluded.

Ordinarily, I'd pause to ask: For whom is our nation being made great again for? I'm afraid, however, that we've sunken below the point of self-interested hypotheticals. To pretend that this question hasn't been answered is ignorance weaponized.

As I handed the border patrol officer my passport, I learned that home can, and often does, change. Home isn't an immutable fact of geography – a destination, a coordinate on a map. It's only when its definition shifts that, suddenly, the absurdity in which you've survived becomes visible.

"Welcome back to the United States, P—."

The result has been nothing short of agony; of bleeding eyes and ears.

I thought, as I greeted my parents and began the dreadful journey home, about that magical city that, unable to stabilize against the sheer density of warmth, seemed to wind and warp inward on itself. I learned, then, what home means.

Wilmington, with its empty streets contaminated by dead dreams, isn't my home. Newark, the town overflowing with youth who have no concept of self nor desire to learn, isn't my home. The state of Delaware, a land split in two by the Mason-Dixon Line; the land where the north silently wishes I'd disappear and the south openly brandishes such, isn't my home.

The ailing First State is far too small, in scale and mind, to hope to hold onto me. The United States, the country which seeks to annihilate me;

that strives to send me careening back in time to a place where I'm nothing, isn't my home.

I don't care that I was born here. I don't care that I was raised here. I don't care that I studied here. I don't care that I found love, pain, joy and heartbreak here. There's nothing to celebrate about a past that was won in wars that left me hardened and jaded; not less beautiful, but infinitely less happy.

There is no joy in realizing that, by leaving the United States, I was planted for the first time, in rich soil.

I remember how I awoke each morning excited to be myself, to venture forth into a city that promised all the riches in the world for the low price of being who I am. I remember how eyes gazed upon me not with disdain, but with awe. I remember how I was alive; how, suddenly, beauty began to live in all things. I remember scribbling poems on my phone; in the pub after catching the eyes of the bartender; on the train after speaking with a stranger.

And then, I looked back.

I saw the calamity smoldering atop my country, which was being ravished by fear and hatred, and I wept! I finally saw the H*** itself, rather than the smoke I've lived in my entire life, and I felt my heart shatter within me. I

cried in the arms of my friend in a hotel room on my 22nd birthday, and told him, "I want them to be alright! I want everyone to be safe!"

I felt hopeless. I felt afraid that my words would fall lifelessly to the floor, doing nothing to save those I fight for; I felt afraid that nothing at all could save them.

It was only then that I realized how the language of home morphs. For a short three weeks, it was no longer us, but them. The direct implication of myself in the s***hole we call American "politics" was, temporarily, suspended. In this strange place, I was free.

I paid for said freedom with overwhelming visions of anguish; premonitions of the pain that would, in just a week's time, wash over me at once with such a force that I believed I would drown. How was I to call the wretched place I was to return to home? How could home be the place that I've grown in spite of rather than because of;

where I'm lucky to have evolved into who I am now, rather than to have retreated inward as I was told to.

Since returning to the land where my ancestor's bones rot beneath me in unmarked graves; where terror looms just above my head – high enough to be unreachable, close enough to become maddening – I have felt myself decaying.

I don't know how to fight on days where it feels impossible to even leave my bed. I don't know how to fight when the news tells me I'm worthless. I don't know how to fight when my brothers, sisters and siblings are facing certain annihilation and all I can do is watch.

This ugliness; this hatred; it isn't normal.

I close my eyes and imagine a world where I'm happy. It doesn't look like this.

I hold tight to this dream, knowing that it must end; knowing that, upon my awakening, I'll descend back into this home that isn't quite so.

* whites only



ALBUM REVIEW: "EUSEXUA" BY FKA TWIGS



ALEX LAVINSON
Co-Managing
Mosaic Editor

FKA Twigs is one of the most interesting voices in contemporary music, not only in her sound – which is somewhere between atmospheric R&B and club-inspired art pop – but also in her lyrics, which are often sensual and strikingly vulnerable.

Her first album, "LP1" (2014), is a great example of this, as it sees her trying to reconcile with self-image, desire, emotional abuse and self-love through a collection of glitchy electronic pop songs. From the haunting yearning of "Pendulum," to the lonely and submissive "Closer," to the prideful and empowering outro, "Kicks," "LP1" has long been one of my all-time favorite records.

The same can be said for Twigs' sophomore effort, "MAGDALENE" (2019), a project that dives even deeper into her dreaded psyche, especially in the song "cellophane," a heartbreaking ode to a broken relationship in which she faced outsider criticism and unreciprocated feelings. This, to me, is her most powerful song to date.

Six years later, broken up by her

slight yet enjoyable and catchy mixtape, "CAPRISONGS" (2022), Twigs has returned with her third full-length album, "EUSEXUA" (2025).

The project was first teased in September 2024, with the opener and title track, "Eusexua," which features beautifully hushed vocals and simmering trance production. Boasting a hypnotic build to a quietly devastating finale, the song remains one of the record's standouts.

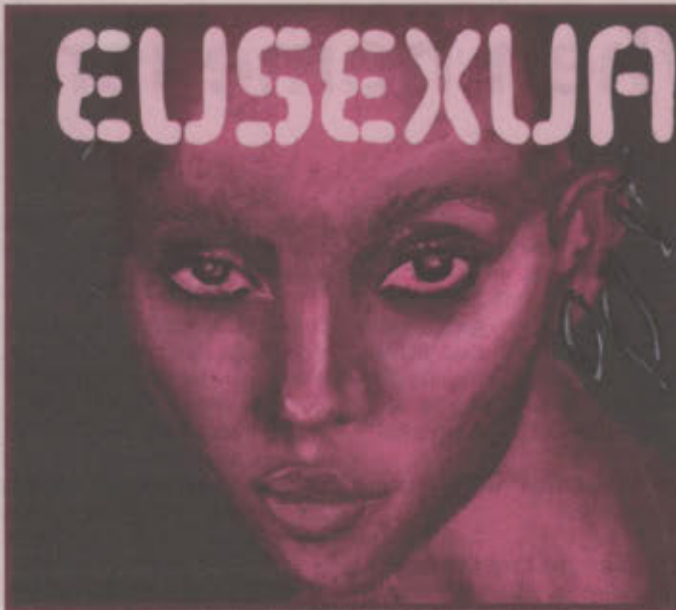
The other two singles, "Perfect Stranger" and "Drums of Death," were sweet, but significantly less convincing. Especially the former, which plays more like generic dance-pop than anything else on the record. But, needless to say, it wasn't until hearing the rest of the album that I was able to piece together Twigs' latest vision.

Tracks like "Room of Fools" and "Keep It, Hold It" offer transportive sonic experiences featuring some of Twigs' most captivating vocals to date, while offering a window into Twigs' bubbling feelings and desires.

But, the biggest standouts of the album cuts are "Sticky" and "Striptease," two tracks that expose the core of Twigs' emotions and intentions with "EUSEXUA." The

former, which features some of the most striking production choices on the record, is a somber track in

which see Twigs falling back into her old habits of being submissive and feeling lost in her life. Though,



LAUREN BOTHUM/THE REVIEW

which Twigs details her desire to be vulnerable with someone who won't allow her to be; while in the latter, a catchy and addictive tune, Twigs finds comfort and openness within her lust and pleasure.

Then, there's the final two tracks, "24hr Dog" and "Wanderlust,"

there's a sense of fulfillment to the song "Wanderlust," which sounds like Twigs having the revelation that feeling and sexual pleasure will always be available in her life, even when she is low.

As a whole, "EUSEXUA" feels like an album about the power of

feeling. "Eusexua is the pinnacle of human experience," Twigs said, in reference to the word she created. It seems as if Twigs reaches this feeling primarily through passionate lovemaking. But, to some extent, this album also relates back to the themes of self-pleasure that Twigs expressed on the closing track of "LP1," "Kicks."

Throughout "EUSEXUA," Twigs describes the ways in which her body moves during these euphoric episodes, whether it be "king-sized, I'm vertical sunrised" or "my sternum stretched wide." This feeling of "EUSEXUA" seems only achievable through self-love and feeling seen, desires that Twigs has long reckoned with in her music. So, in achieving "EUSEXUA," this project feels like Twigs' most empowering venture to date.

"EUSEXUA" is yet another singular and mesmerizing vision from FKA Twigs. Its sound is pure, buttery and addictive. Outside of the underwhelming "Perfect Stranger" and the confusing and random "Childlike Things" – featuring North West, of all people, who sings almost exclusively in Japanese – the album is constantly engaging and refreshing, from the vulnerable lyrics to the transportive production and heavenly vocals. 9/10.

ALBUM REVIEW: "DEBÍ TIRAR MÁS FOTOS" BY BAD BUNNY



JENI NANCE
Staff Writer

Bad Bunny is one of the most popular Latino artists right now. In fact, he was number one on Billboard's Top 10 Latin Artists of 2023 list. He has revolutionized Latin trap music and reggaeton. While he might not be a new artist, I've just now discovered him with the rise in popularity of his most recent album, "DeBÍ TIRAR MÁS FOTOS."

"DeBÍ TIRAR MÁS FOTOS" was released Jan. 5. They say never to judge a book by its cover, but I knew from the album cover, which has two empty plastic white chairs, that this was going to be a good one. It perfectly encapsulates the primary message of the album: Embrace the present and capture as many moments as you can.

"DeBÍ TIRAR MÁS FOTOS" translates to "I should have taken more photos," and that's all you really need to know. The music speaks for itself.

The first song I listened to from this album was "DTMF." You don't have to know Spanish to be moved by this song. It conveys its message on a completely different level. You can feel it in the music and every lyric sung, even if you don't know what it means. It's by far my favorite song at the moment and never fails to make me cry.

The lyrics "DeBí tirar más fotos de cuando te tuve," which translates to "I should have taken more photos when I had you," are the most impactful. Yes, you want to live in the moment, but what about when the moment is over? The mere memory of it won't last forever.

What follows is "DeBí darte más besos y abrazos las veces que puede," which means "I should have given you more kisses and hugs whenever I could." It makes me think of the time I've lost with my loved ones and the things I'd do if I could see them again.

A couple of my other favorite songs from the album are "LA MuDANZA" and "BAILE INOLVIDABLE." "LA MuDANZA" shares the story of how Bad Bunny's parents met and their journey. "BAILE INOLVIDABLE" is about a woman who Bad Bunny once loved and can never forget.

As someone who speaks Spanish, even I struggled to follow along at first, as my family is from a different region where the dialect is different. It's also not the kind of music I'm used to, so it took a moment for my ears to adjust. Despite struggling to understand at first, I understood the importance

of every song.

When you're listening to the music, you can hear the traditional Puerto Rican rhythm. There's so much Spanish soul embedded into the framework of this song. It's also given a more modern, euphoric feel with its electric instrumentals. If you want to hear a more modernized version of classic Spanish genres, specifically salsa, this is the album for you.

But this album and this song aren't just meant to tug on your heartstrings and bring back old memories of your youth. It's also meant to share the impact of gentrification and tourism in Puerto Rico, Bad Bunny's native country.

Along with the creation of this album, Bad Bunny released a short film with the same title. The film shows the impact of gentrification, as an older native

man attempts to purchase food at a cafe in his neighborhood. As he walks down the street, you see how Americanized it has become.

When the man attempts to pay, he's faced with insanely overpriced food and a cashless payment system. A bystander pays for his food and says "Seguimos aquí," which means "We are still here," to which he replies saying the same.

Gentrification isn't only happening in Puerto Rico. It's happening in several other Latin countries as well, including Mexico and Colombia.

This album has impacted me so much because it's something I can relate to. There's so much to learn from this album, both about the real world and yourself. So take the photo, before both chairs end up empty.

MY EXPERIENCE VISITING JAPAN



SHAYNA DEMICK
Co-Managing
Mosaic Editor

I may not have done a winter session study abroad, but I went abroad over the winter and took a course during that time, so I'd say that's close enough. Whatever you want to call it, what I did was pretty awesome. I visited one of my best friends in Japan and got to spend 17 days in what I'd consider to be one of the coolest places on the planet.

While I was probably the least preferred type of foreigner, being American, vegan and barely able to communicate in Japanese, I had nothing but positive interactions with locals. Everyone is super mature and respectful, which was a refreshing contrast from what I typically experience in the states.

I visited Tokyo, Kyoto, Chiba and Nara. I spent six days in Tokyo, four days in Kyoto and seven days in Chiba. Each city was very unique and had lots to offer. There wasn't a single boring moment anywhere, nor was there a single less-than-exceptional meal.

I started my trip in Tokyo.

It was very vibrant, with so much to do, so many places to go and so much food to eat. On the first night there, we went to a massive arcade that had hundreds of gachapon, which are adorable toy vending machines. I was overwhelmed by cuteness and wanted to get

everything. For just 30 yen (about 20 cents), you could have a lovely trinket. Of course, I got two. I got a fake eyeshadow palette keychain and my friends and I got matching ice skating cats.

The claw machines also had the most precious stuffed animals. I won a yellow fuzzy My Melody stuffed animal on only the second try and I was over the moon. Unsurprisingly, I ended up going to another Tokyo arcade with a different friend when I later returned to Tokyo for a weekend. I must say that Sanrio character stuffed animals are much cuter than the stuffed animals in American claw machines (minus Squishmallows).

On our second day in Tokyo, we went to teamLab Borderless, a digital art museum with moving projections all over the walls and hallways. The music and imagery were entrancing – I felt like I was inside of a painting! I especially appreciated the many flowers and butterflies dancing along the walls. It was a magical experience.

My favorite shopping experience was in the district of Harajuku. I bought the cutest animal keychains and Studio Ghibli chopsticks, along with other trinkets. I also got the most adorable fuzzy pink earmuffs, but I left them in my AirBnb – a true travesty.

On New Year's Eve, we went to Tokyo Skytree, a massive observation tower that overlooks the entirety of Tokyo. We got to

admire the city from 350 meters high – so high that my ears popped on the elevator ride to the top. The view was spectacular, and I enjoyed just sitting and admiring the beautifully lit up buildings and rivers.

I returned to Tokyo at the end of my trip because of how much I loved it. I tried some spectacular vegan restaurants and explored the night life (which goes until 5 a.m. or later if you're curious). I stayed at a capsule hotel and a hostel, both of which I'd never done before. I stayed at both places alone, but each floor had a locked door with a unique passcode, so I never had to worry about intruders.

Capsule hotels are what they sound like. The room is just a little capsule with a bed. My capsule had a tiny shelf, an outlet, a built-in alarm clock and a television. The bathrooms were incredibly spacious and stocked with many beauty products, including cotton rounds, q-tips, hair cream and lotion. A fancy vanity wrapped around the entire wash area.

The hostel was also very nice, with the beds being bunked and each bed on the bunk having a pull down curtain for complete privacy. Inside of them, there was a rod on the wall with hangers, along with outlets, a night light and a spacious locker. They came with clean sheets on the bed. I was pleasantly surprised with how clean, spacious and comfortable the beds were and how safe I felt in a co-ed room.

After my first time in Tokyo, we took an impressively fast bullet train to Kyoto.

On our first day in Kyoto, we went to the temple Kiyomizu-dera, which is an incredible World Heritage site with a mountain view that overlooks the city. We got to see the sun set over the city and it was glorious. The temple was enormous and there was so much to see. The next day, we went to the temple Kinkaku-ji, whose centerpiece is a gold-plated reliquary. The pond and garden at the temple were full of stunning greenery and happily swimming ducks.

The highlight of Kyoto was the gorgeous Arashiyama, where we saw monkeys, a bamboo forest, Kimono Forest and lots of local shops. We had to hike all the way up a mountain to get to Iwatayama Monkey Park, but it was so worth the hike. The monkeys were free-range, and they made sure you knew it. I was mesmerized by their cuteness and ended up taking hundreds of photos of them.

While in Kyoto, we took a day trip to Nara and went to Nara Park. Words can't express how much I loved Nara Park. An entire park full of friendly deer that bow to you to ask for food? Nothing gets better than that. I got to feed deer for hours and become best friends with them (and was mauled by a few). I would recommend going to Japan just for Nara Park – it's that incredible.

After bouncing around cities, we planted roots in Chiba for over a week.

We stayed in a town called Kujukuri, which is where my friend is living for her English teaching program. It's pretty rural and empty (and I was starting my class at this point anyway), so I mostly stayed inside. However, we did go to a massive cat cafe that had dozens of cats all the way up to the ceiling, which was fantastic.

I took a day trip farther into Chiba near Tokyo, where my friend and I went to Tokyo DisneySea. The area by the entrance was designed to look like Italy and even offered gondola rides, which I of course took. All of the park rides were adorable and I especially enjoyed Journey to the Center of the Earth. And by enjoyed, I mean I closed my eyes the whole time and screamed.

Overall, Japan was remarkable. It has great shopping, fascinating culture, delicious food, unbeatable nightlife, beautiful architecture and public transportation that'll make you wonder why you ever use a car in America. If you can afford a plane ticket to Japan, I seriously recommend going – it'll absolutely change your life. After all, it changed mine, and for that I'm so grateful.

FEBRUARY HOROSCOPES

ARIES

You know what season it is: the season of love. Or, for you, the season of winning. Even if you're not in a relationship, you're determined to out love every lover this Valentine's Day. You're going to collect every love interest possible and keep them in your pocket all season long. Time to go through those matches on Tinder from months ago you never messaged - it's their time to shine. No shame in backsliding; you gotta do what you gotta do to get some Valentine's lovers.

LEO

Not everyone is in love with you! Delusion was so 2024, Leo. We have to come up with new material. Attention can be fun, sure, but you know what else is fun? Accepting that you're actually not as desirable as you've believed yourself to be all these years. Your exes were probably pretending to like you and the fact that you keep bouncing between relationships reveals a true skill issue. You should consider spending this Valentine's Day feeling alone and pensive. Maybe next year, with proper reflection and repenting, you can get the valentine you deserve. Or maybe not. We'll see!

SCORPIO

Expect nothing but attention this Valentine's season. If your significant other, friends and loved ones don't shower you with gifts, simply tell them they're the worst. You should be getting chocolates, teddy bears and, most importantly, some crisp dollar bills. If you don't get at least two gift cards, make sure everyone in your life knows that your heart has been shattered. If your significant other doesn't buy you the most expensive gifts and foods, say goodbye. They should know you by now, and know that you're nothing short of a luxury item and should be treated as such.

GEMINI

No, that person in your class is not your valentine. No, not the one you've been staring at for the entire first week of class. No, not the person you told your friends you blocked but didn't. And no, definitely not that Tinder match who's playing hard to get. They probably matched with you by accident and are afraid of confrontation. Why don't you take yourself on a date, especially considering your, um, multifaceted personality! We're sure you would be a delight to everyone at a restaurant, as you talk out loud to yourself over a delicious meal.

TAURUS

This Valentine's season is all about you, love. It's time to hit up the local Lush and buy every bath product with an unnecessarily sensual name. Treat yourself to rose petals, bath bombs, salts and whatever sweet treats your heart desires. Buy yourself dinner and don't feel bad about it. Use a credit card if you have to; money isn't real anyway! Even if you have a valentine, ditch 'em. This season is about you and only you. Tell them to take a chill pill and hang tight until your anniversary - not everything is about them! (They'll love hearing that!).

CAPRICORN

You little perfectionist. We bet you have Valentine's Day all figured out already. Your outfit is picked out (or at least in mind) and reservations are made - you know the drill. But for my single Capricorns, don't let that stop you from winning Valentine's Day too! Get back at all those dating rascals and be the first in line at CVS for half-off candy! Put those plotting skills to work and make sure no one is happy but you! Some may be fine dining, but you'll have chocolate and a terrible tummy ache! Our verdict? Huge win.

AQUARIUS

Aquarius, will you stop playing around and ask out your class crush? At least one of them! We get it, you love your daydreams and fantasies, but the clock is ticking! What if your crush gets taken by "gasp" a Leo! Or, a Virgo! Aquarius, you must act quickly! Your delusionship might fall into calamitous hands if you don't go after what is rightfully yours! Wouldn't it be fantastic to have your dreams come true? Your heart is so big, and your imagination is even greater! Share it with someone else, before they start a semester-long situationship and are out of your grasp forever!

PISCES

Pisces, we know how much you love the season of love. You make sure to show all your friends, especially the single ones, that they deserve to feel special this season. You've been collecting an absurd amount of pink/red and heart-shaped items since last March. Nothing gives you more joy than hosting a Valentine's gathering. It's time to put that Pinterest board to use and get to baking and decorating. Classes? No, those don't matter. Valentine's Day! Now that's the real stuff. It's time to remember what's actually important in life.

SAGITTARIUS

You're a nosy little one, and this Valentine's season is your time to get dirt on everyone. All the people you've been suspecting were in relationships but haven't hard launched yet! Well, now's the time for them to finally give the people what they want and drop a little pic on their story. Feel free to drop some hate on the boyfriend reveals - we know you've been dying to say something. Tell those beautiful girls that they can do better! Yeah, looks aren't everything, but you're telling us a man's personality is that good? Uh, yeah. We'll have to see it to believe it.

CANCER

We're gonna hold your hand when we say this: Put. The credit card. Down. We know you're thoughtful, sweet and nice, but ask yourself: Does my crush really need another teddy bear? (No, they don't). Follow up question: Can my credit card handle another teddy bear? (Also no!). Great. Now that we've got that established, let's come up with a Plan B: How about dinner at a cheap restaurant, or takeout and a nice movie? The horizons are broad, dear Cancer, but only if you're willing to be creative! Lovey-dovey, Hallmark channel dates are out of the question in this economy.

VIRGO

Virgo, we challenge you to put the books down and go outside. You will not fail your class if you go out on a Valentine's Day date. We know, groundbreaking announcement. Instead of trying to meticulously plan your semester - fresh off the heels of syllabus week, might we add - why not put that energy into another person? School is temporary, love is forever. Are you seriously going to remember the name of that rock in your geology class? No! But will you remember the 10 you fumbled because you went to bed when they texted "U up?" Probably! Lower the bar a little bit for yourself this Valentine's Day, you might just surprise yourself!

LIBRA

This Valentine's season is your time to flex your relationship. But hey, if you got it, flaunt it! You should be proud of yourself and the hottie you pulled. Now, you have the opportunity to post pictures of the two of you on Instagram. Drop a story! Drop a post! Heck, drop three! Post every photo of you and your cutie to commemorate this holiday. Start a movement for everyone to fill their feed with couple's photos - we've heard that's never been done before.

SHAYNA DEMICK
Co-Managing Mosaic Editor

YVES ALLEN
Staff Writer