



## Elevating Black voices in 2021



NewsWire photos by Erik Maahs

The above collage pulls together photographs taken from the Speak Up XU protest, a local Cincinnati protest, the COBRA takeover of SLAB and the sit-in at Gallagher Student Center.

**BY HEATHER GAST AND  
ALEX BUDZYNSKI**  
*Editor-in-Chief and  
Managing Editor*

Students of color at Xavier have consistently had to fight more to have less.

Though this burden has been passed down for decades, Black students have grown more insistent in their collective activism on campus alongside the national Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests last year.

As a newspaper of primarily White students, we see it as our duty to elevate the work of Black students as doing our part to sustain their momentum. Keeping their work in the conversation of campus is the least we feel we can do.

As such, *NewsWire*, intentionally featured content surrounding anti-racism work by students, the BLM movement

or concerns about racial relations in America in each paper last semester.

In prominent news outlets, concerns over inequity like the ones raised by Xavier students rise to the surface and then immediately die away by the next news cycle.

As a university, it is our collective responsibility to divulge the many untelevised incidents of bias and discrimination that occur on and around our campus. It is not enough to wait until another Black person is shot before BLM is picked up again by the news media.

The Capitol insurrection should have served as a wake-up call to the nation about the organizing power of White supremacists. That conversation has passed, and there's little that a college news outlet can do about that. However, we can make a difference on what people talk about here.

This past semester we have seen the grassroots formation of the Speak Up XU Protest, organized by Black student leaders and amassing a crowd of hundreds of Xavier students on a Friday afternoon in September. Upon hearing testimonies at this protest, *NewsWire* explored racial disparities within academic advising and counseling services.

Over the summer, Black students formed the Coalition of Black Revolutionaries and Allies (COBRA) that created a list of demands and organized the Gallagher Student Center sit-in, challenging Xavier to be and do better.

Black student leaders performed a takeover of the October Student Leadership Advisory Board meeting. Soon after, the Civil Rights Commission emerged, existing as a space where students of color can directly communicate their experiences to adminis-

trators.

*NewsWire* printed opinions from Black students about the racial unrest in our country and locally, in addition to issuing the campus-wide opinion prompt, "How does racism manifest at Xavier, if at all?"

All of this monumental work has been done in conjunction with regularly events and meetings hosted by the Black Student Association, Gentlemen Organized for Achievement and Leadership and Ladies with an Emphasis on Achievement and Distinction, as well as the newly formed Black Care Club.

These incredible strides are certainly reason for celebration. However, it is equally important to recognize that for years Black students have not received what they have requested and earned.

It is therefore vital that *NewsWire* continues our weekly coverage of Black student

activism this semester.

Now is not the time for complacency. We must use our words and actions to continually re-emphasize the need for racial justice on this campus.

As Seriah Barnes said on the *NewsWire* Live, "There is very rarely people that want to cover a situation like this... (it's) making sure you guys elevate Black voices and make sure that you're listening as well as trying to push them up so that they're heard by people that don't want to listen."

To the entire Xavier community: let this be a challenge to do more.

The Center for Diversity and Inclusion is currently sponsoring MLK week, the theme of which is Find Your Voice. Reflective and action-oriented events are continuing until Friday, serving as spaces to discern what you can do to advance racial justice on this campus.

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Men's basketball are off to a promising start, despite two COVID-related pauses.



# Xavier's first madam president

*Colleen Hancz, Ph.D. is slated for a visit to the university next week*



Photo courtesy of Xavier.edu

**Continuing the trend among Jesuit academic institutions, Xavier's presidential selection committee chose lay woman Colleen Hancz, Ph.D.. Hancz currently serves as president for La Salle University in Philadelphia.**

**BY ALEX BUDZYNSKI & ROBBIE DZIERZANOWSKI**  
Staff Writer

After a 10-month search, the Board of Trustees announced Colleen Hancz, Ph.D., as the 35th president.

She will be the first woman and the first layperson to serve as Xavier's president.

Next week she will visit the university for the first time following the decision, and a press conference will be held on Monday.

Dr. Hancz is the current president at La Salle University in Philadelphia, a LaSalian Catholic university with approximately 3,600 under-

graduate students. Prior to this, she served as principal of Brescia University College, an all-women's Ursuline school in London, Ontario.

She will follow the longest tenured president in school history, Father Michael Graham, S.J., who will officially step down on June 30. Upon the announcement of his retirement last spring, Hancz was piqued about succeeding her warmly admired acquaintance.

"I've had a great opportunity to see your president, Graham, in action," she explained. "He has done such incredible things with the university... and it is because of that

strength that I was interested in helping to write the next chapter in Xavier's history."

Of the 27 Jesuit colleges in the U.S., there are merely three female presidents and 15 lay presidents. As such, Dr. Hancz brings a number of firsts to both Xavier's 190-year history and to the wider community of Jesuit schools, something she is not afraid to lean into.

"It will be a different chapter coming from the perspective of somebody who's not a Jesuit priest, but I will bring different lived experience. I'm a wife, I'm a mother, and I've had this whole other set of experiences that will inform

my leadership as well."

Dr. Hancz further elaborated on her rich commitment to women's leadership, especially in her career as a lawyer and educator.

She recognizes the importance of diversity in an ever-changing world, particularly within Catholic education.

"When we have the most diverse set of voices around a table, the best decisions come out of that table," she commented.

Several students identified Dr. Hancz's selection as a powerful and exciting action. One such student was sophomore business analytics major Gabriela Salazar. "As a young Latina woman, it is profoundly inspiring and empowering to see a woman fill a powerful leadership position in a historically male dominated field," she said. "Xavier is taking a significant step forward, and I'm thrilled to finish my remaining years at a university that demonstrates what it means to be All for One."

In addition to advocating for gender equity, her mission at LaSalle has included anti-racism work as of late.

"I launched a presidential commission on diversity, equity and inclusion, and that is a body that is working right now towards what will ultimately be a very comprehensive report and a number of changes that (La Salle) needs to make," she said. "This (work) is something that I have been deeply committed to at La Salle, and I'll bring that commitment to Xavier as well."

One of the many facets which drew Dr. Hancz to become a Musketeer is the well-established Xavier community.

"What excites me, among other things, is just a really hyper-engaged, committed, active student body that I have been able to identify already, as well as the faculty and staff...who are really supporting you in becoming the best possible version of yourself through your years at Xavier," she said.

She went on to explain that at La Salle, engaging with students is one of the most meaningful parts of her day.

She plans on spending the early days of her presidency familiarizing herself with the school's culture.

"I will be looking for opportunities to connect with student government and other student leaders in the various clubs and organizations across the university," she said. "(I want) to really understand, from your perspective, what is different about a Xavier education."

For other students, Graham's departure leaves a gaping hole at Xavier.

"I definitely think she has big shoes to fill after Graham, because he is the heart and pride of Xavier," junior Joe Henry said. "However, I have confidence that she is more than qualified... and I'm excited to see what she can do for the Xavier community."

In his final months as president, Graham will oversee a smooth transition.

He also revealed in March that he will likely be around Xavier's campus post-presidency to assist Dr. Hancz as she acclimates to the university.

Hancz and her husband of 25 years, Peter, will move to Cincinnati this summer along with their two children, Erik and Claire.

## COVID-19 task force adjusts plans for the spring

**BY GRACE HAMILTON**  
Staff Writer

As the new semester begins, Xavier has adjusted plans for COVID-19 testing to match a higher number of positive cases in Hamilton County and to ensure a safer semester for all students.

Hamilton County turned purple on the Ohio heat map for COVID-19 cases on Jan. 14, indicating a Level 4 Public Emergency with widespread cases and exposure.

Hamilton county's active cases are above 60,000, while Ohio's cases are almost at 850,000.

Jeff Coleman, the chair of Xavier's COVID-19 task force, described the task force as being made up of 15 members dealing with COVID-19 issues affecting academics, student life and experiences.

The task force meets daily to develop testing plans with TriHealth; these plans then get reviewed and approved by President Father Michael Graham, S.J.

When discussing the biggest change to how Xavier is dealing with COVID-19, Coleman detailed an increase in surveillance testing.

Last semester, between 100 to 150 students were getting tested each day either through close contact tracing or walk-ins.

That number has now increased by 15%, as the task force is taking a more risk-based approach to testing. Students in high-risk groups will be chosen at random to get tested.

The students will receive an email instructing them to enter login information and get tested at the Health Unit-

ed Building.

Coleman and the task force believe that the amount of COVID-19 cases will increase this semester as students are coming back from break and since Hamilton County hit Level 4.

Coleman says numbers may increase to 35 or 45 active cases, whereas last semester the numbers ranged from 25 to 30 cases.

Coleman stresses that students and faculty must continue to follow COVID-19 safety protocols.

"We want to reinforce the message that we have to keep following the safety procedures," he explained.

As for the COVID-19 vaccine, Coleman believes that the university is a ways away from being able to receive it.

All students are part of the TriHealth pod, which will is-

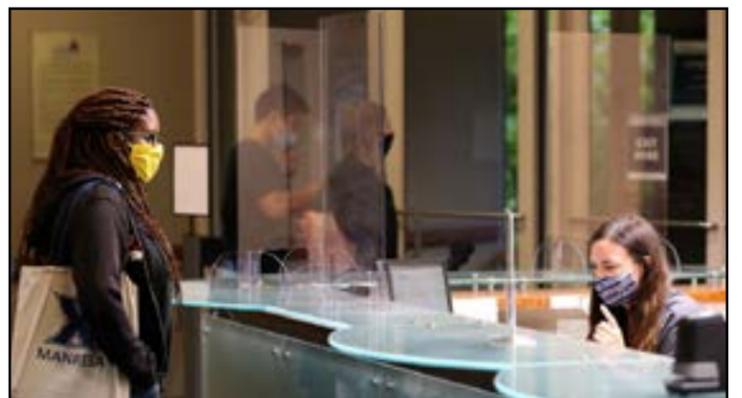


Photo courtesy of Desmond Fischer

**The university will increase testing as infections rise in surrounding area.** sue the vaccine in the summer or in the beginning of the fall semester.

Coleman still encourages students and faculty who are able to receive the vaccine earlier to do so. Once TriHealth has the vaccine, students will be able to get it.

Even so, the task force is still meeting every day to discuss dealing with COVID-19

and testing.

Coleman remains "cautiously optimistic" about Xavier's campus remaining open for the remainder of the academic year, especially because of the success of the fall semester.

Coleman concludes, "We're not resting on our laurels from last semester. We're full-steam ahead."

# Out with the old, in with the blue

Newly-inaugurated Biden enacts 17 executive orders and calls for unity

BY ERIN ALBRIGHT  
Staff Writer

"This is America's day. This is democracy's day," President Joseph R. Biden said at the historic event yesterday.

Biden was sworn into office as the 46th President of the United States yesterday as the country faces greater divides than ever before — economically, politically and health-wise.

After a tumultuous election season during a pandemic, former President Donald Trump's allegations of a stolen election have been halted. Washington D.C. and states across the country were put under strict, heightened security over fears of riots similar to those that occurred on Jan. 6.

President Biden celebrated the start of his term on the first sunny Inauguration Day in nearly three decades.

The ceremony maintained a strict attendance policy with a much smaller crowd than the usual 200,000. Members of Congress received a ticket for themselves and one guest. The National Mall remained closed to the public during the event. Former Presidents Obama, Clinton and Bush attended the Inauguration.

Trump left office and flew to Florida rather than attending, becoming the first outgoing president to skip the



Photo courtesy of bideninaugural.org.

The inauguration was only attended by a small crowd due to the pandemic, but it still featured a star-studded group of performers. Singers Lady Gaga, Jennifer Lopez, Garth Brooks and John Legend sang at the ceremony.

ceremony in over 150 years. Former Vice President Pence attended the event.

Trump's final days in the White House were spent issuing pardons. The former president stuck with tradition, however, by leaving a note for Biden.

The vice president was sworn in first, and became the first female, first Black and first South Asian vice president.

Harris took her oath using two Bibles, one notably having belonged to Thurgood Marshall, a former Supreme

Court Justice.

Vice President Kamala Harris was escorted to the ceremony by Eugene Goodman, a Capitol police officer who steered rioters away from the Capitol two weeks ago. Harris donned the color purple, a simple nod to the first Black woman to run for president, Shirley Chisholm.

The presidential oath of office was administered by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.. Biden used a Bible that has been in his family for 128 years, held by his wife Dr. Jill Biden.

Biden was sworn in exactly 11 minutes before the authority of the presidency would formally change hands. In his inaugural address, the president made note of his hope to eliminate the factions currently dividing the country.

"We must end this uncivil war that pits red against blue, rural versus urban, conservative versus liberal. We can do this if we open our souls instead of hardening our hearts," Biden said.

Biden went on to acknowledge that few people in the nation's history have been

challenged or put in such a difficult time than we are in now. He continued, emphasizing how we as a country must reject the culture in which facts themselves are manipulated or manufactured.

In his first evening in office, Biden signed 17 Executive Orders spanning from immigration protections to a mask mandate on federal properties.

The president signed orders revoking the Keystone XL pipeline permit, rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement and ending the Trump-era 1776 Commission. The commission, a controversial "patriotic education" program released last September, was thought by some to promote incorrect or racist ideas.

Other orders included plans to temporarily halt new fracking and drilling operations in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, ending border wall construction and an extension on housing foreclosures and federal student loan debt.

Over 25,000 members of the National Guard were deployed to the Capitol in preparation for Biden's inauguration. This came after the attempt by militant Trump supporters to occupy the Capitol building on Jan. 6.

No major acts of violence were reported during or after the inauguration despite widespread concern on social media.

## The Lighter Side

"The Weirdest, Wackiest and Wildest News of the Week!"



Robocop vs. robopup, space samosa, personal rodeo expenses

- A hacker figured out the code for an app-based sex toy, prompting researchers to worry about the adult chastity belt's safety. The hacker extorted the toy's owner for approximately \$270 in Bitcoin, telling the owner, "Your c\*ck is mine now." The toy's owner said he was not using the item at the time of the raunchy ransom (Jan. 9).
- The Honolulu Police Department spent over \$150,000 in federal CARES funding, designed for COVID-19 relief, on a robotic dog named Spot. The hardware hound will be used to take the temperature of people experiencing homelessness in the city's downtown area (Jan. 10).
- Owners of an Indian restaurant in the U.K. used helium balloons in an attempt to send their restaurant's samosa into space. Unfortunately, within a day, the samosa shuttle crash-landed in France (Jan. 12).
- A board member of Mississippi's Pearl River County Crime Stoppers was accused of embezzling over \$50,000 from the anti-crime program. Local investigators claim that she used the money for "personal rodeo expenses" (Jan. 12).
- Rapper Post Malone donated 10,000 pairs of his self-designed Duet Max Clog II Crocs to frontline workers around the country through non-profit Musicians On Call (Jan. 14).
- A "vagina candle" sold by Gwenyth Paltrow's lifestyle brand, Goop, exploded in a U.K. woman's home, frightening but not



Photo courtesy of pixy.org

A UK woman claims this vagina-scented candle exploded in her home.

- harming any members of the house (Jan. 18).
- A U.K. birdwatcher accidentally stumbled upon real buried treasure, finding 1,300 gold coins that some experts have dated back to the first century C.E. (Jan. 18).
- Washington state became the first state to allow "human composting" this year. The process, known as natural organic reduction, has been used on eight deceased individuals so far (Jan. 18).
- A Northern Kentucky couple celebrated their 73rd wedding anniversary by receiving the first dose of their coronavirus vaccinations. Husband Gene Record noted that he was particularly excited to soon be able to square dance with his friends again (Jan. 19).
- The Royal Canadian Mountain Police concluded a massive drug investigation after a grocery store mistakenly received a shipment of bananas containing thousands of kilos of cocaine. Police noted that it was "enough contraband for every resident in the City of Kelowna to receive nearly six doses each" (Jan. 19).



Photo courtesy of commons.wikipedia.org

Canadian police found cocaine in banana shipments for grocery stores.

# President Hanycz, your first request

Hello President Hanycz, Congratulations on being named Xavier's first lay president. I'm excited to see the direction you take the institution that I have come to call home. I hope you find your welcoming as warm as I did a few years ago.

I do, however, have one request for you on behalf of the Xavier community: a parking structure. I believe that a sustainable parking structure would be a wise investment that could pay dividends for the university in the future.

I understand that balancing the school's budget is not an easy task, even in the most forgiving of circumstances, and certainly not amidst a global pandemic. That being said, it seems very important to make sure that there is an effort to invest in capital improvement projects that allow the school to expand in a sustainable way.

A parking structure would help solve two problems that the university faces. The first, and most obvious, is the short

term alleviation of the parking space headache that students, faculty and staff alike have to deal with. The second being it would create a lot more space on the campus for whatever building or green spaces the university needs in the future.

In regards to the first issue, it is clear to see that Xavier doesn't handle it's parking in the best way. For resident and commuter students, the parking lots are really far away. And if you're not lucky enough to get a spot in the closet R-1 or C-2 lot, it's an even longer hike. It is also my understanding that the situation for faculty is not great either.

In addition to fixing a current problem, the decision to build more space-efficient parking would allow for more headroom to help Xavier ex-

**[Building] more space-efficient parking would allow for more headroom to help Xavier expand and create top notch facilities to attract more students and talented faculty.**

pand and create top notch facilities to attract more students and talented faculty.

As it currently stands, the outer parts of campus are littered with sprawling parking lots which seem to be a rather terrible use of space. I would like to see that space used in a more productive manner. A more efficient use of land is always

a good thing considering that land is always expensive.

And to add a big cherry on top of this proposed parking structure project, it could have a positive sustainability impact.

Parking lots take up a lot of valuable space that cannot be occupied by trees, flowers and grass — all of which bring us

oxygen, joy and create a way for rainwater to drain. When the lot is instead filled with concrete, the rainwater cannot drain into the ground and instead goes into sewer pipes.

The end result of this lack of proper rainwater drainage is that, when the drains receive too much water, they overflow into raw sewage pipes and result in a discharge of raw sewage into the surrounding waterways. It's pretty dirty to think about, but it is an issue that Cincinnati continues to have a problem with.

Instead of having sprawling concrete raw sewage machines sitting on campus, those spaces can be used for

future buildings that can have sustainable infrastructure built into them, marking a positive change in the shift towards sustainability.

A parking structure would be a perfect infrastructure project. It would make a positive impact today, tomorrow and in a few years. Thanks for your consideration.

God bless,  
Joseph Cotton



Joseph Cotton is a Junior economics and Philosophy, Politics and the Public double major. He is the Campus News Editor for Newswire from Dearborn, Mich.

## The abstractions: An introduction

Among the needless constraints on our individuality lies something far more sinister than any material dangers that the human creature could experience. This form of danger is intangible. It is the primordial soup of the oppression and injustice we bear witness to. That sinister thing is known as the abstraction.

The term for this malice was coined by one of the fathers of egoist thought, the philosopher Max Stirner. He considered all immaterial extensions of human society and the conception of society itself to be oppressive. Colloquially, it is known as the "spook." But in contemporary social theory, it is known as the social construct.

Social constructs have varied throughout the vastness of human history. Some wither away and crumble due to

their eventual obsolescence, while others linger and plague civilizations for centuries until the spook eats away at the nations and empires of legend.

These poisons include ideas of race, class, money, ownership, borders, ideology, supremacy and privilege.

They serve no purpose or benefit, nor do they hold any utility or provide for us an atom's weight in physical or spiritual sustenance. If the sun rose tomorrow and humans suddenly ceased to exist, these ideas would be as significant as the sound of a dying ant's footsteps upon

desert sand. We have conjured these spooks and begun worshipping them as gods, similar to the way the ancient Romans,

Arabs and Japanese did in creating and worshipping theirs.

In our modern context, Money has become our Jupiter, Race is our Al-Lat and Class is as essential as Izanagi.

We hold fast to the abstractions, and never do we question them since doing so paints one as either an ignoramus or a madman. Humanity refuses to realize that they are pure fiction. Man-made ideals. Imaginations we desire to uphold.

We create these tools for our subjugation, and we have simultaneously gone mad with piety and reverence toward them. And to demonstrate the contradictions in our delirium, one would cite hierarchy as the "natural order" of things, and a world with no need for money is inconceivable.

But somehow, the wars, genocide, starvation, perse-

cution, incarceration, poverty and mental exhaustion that arise from these opiums are more preferable. What a dazzling narcotic the social abstraction is. A genuinely euphoric poison.

Since that is the apparent reality, what needs to be done is the disposal of the abstractions, spooks, social constructs or whatever one wishes to refer to them as. They are not good for their consequences, nor are they good for their own sake. They are useless, and thus arises the obligation to destroy them and their cause(s) of existence.

But one must look intently at the conditions which allowed for the abstractions to arise in the first place and the history behind them. The ideals of the last century have changed drastically in the span of decades and therefore have found new meanings and operate differently under the current social structure. This requires those who suffer the

most under the foot of the abstractions to criticize them and understand how they operate in relation to other abstractions and other people as well.

We must force ourselves to detach our ego from subjectivity and learn to view reality critically. And when we criticize ideas and find that the harms within them outweigh the benefits, it is both logical and essential that one would seek to dispose of them.

With that, let us continue to find faults with the useless chains of the social constructs, so that we may find true value in individuals shackled by them.



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The Xavier Newswire is committed to reporting the news as well as explain its significance to readers. In addition, through publishing opposing viewpoints and opinions, the Newswire hope to foster a dialogue on campus, among students, faculty and staff.

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### For Your Information

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# How to actually 'be there for them'

For a little over a couple years now, I have been diagnosed with depression. Since then, it's been a rollercoaster of ups and downs, but recently, I've found it harder and harder to cope.

Everything has seemed so overwhelming recently, and I feel like it's getting harder and harder to grab on. There are days when getting out of bed is a Herculean task for me, and nights are spent with my anxious thoughts keeping me up.

This is a delicate subject, and even as I type this, I find it difficult to express my thoughts into words. But let me make it clear that I'm not writing this to gain your sympathy or pity. As a matter of fact, that's the one thing I'm tired of gaining.

When I felt I was at my lowest points, I took to social media as a sort of journaling therapy — a way to get my thoughts across while seeing if anyone had ever had experienced something similar and had advice to give. Most of the answers I found, how-

ever, were less than helpful.

"You can talk to me if you need to," they tell me. If that were the case, I would've hoped they would have more to say other than "That sucks" or "Sorry to hear that" when I tell them what's going on. All the messages saying "I'm here for you" or "Things get better" don't help when you're not actually there for someone, and to them, things can't get better. These words are nice on paper, but in reality they are only performative acts of sympathy.

There is a very fine line between sympathy and empathy that often gets too muddled, and I think that line needs to be a lot sharper and bolder.

Sympathy tells a person you feel bad that they are struggling, empathy tells a person you can understand their struggles because you've made an effort to put things in their perspective.

Now, I don't think people are purposefully using sympathy as a performative act of kindness. However, I do think most of the time people

choose sympathy over empathy because they are afraid to say things that might hurt the person in question or because they find it particularly hard to imagine themselves in the other person's position.

An effort has to be made though, because the problem with sympathy is that people often feel like their act of sympathy is enough, and they've done the best they can for the person struggling, when in reality, if empathy is applied, you may find that there is so much more you could do to help.

So, allow me to offer the first basic tip for how you can help your friends by being more empathetic and less sympathetic: check up on them more than once. Sure, you responded to their initial statement about depression by telling them you're there for them anytime, but you're forgetting the anytime part.

Depressive symptoms don't just go away after a day. Just because your friend doesn't post something or say something doesn't mean they aren't

all of a sudden not struggling. Never be afraid to be the one to reach out and ask if they are OK.

On that note, don't be afraid to ask them questions. This plays off that idea that people choose sympathy being too afraid to say something wrong, but making that effort to understand exactly what your friends are going through could really make a difference. You shouldn't be afraid of awkwardness if it means a more trusting and hopeful future for those struggling.

These are the things I had wished people did for me back when I was at my lowest points and the things I was the most thankful for when people I knew would occasionally do it for me.

So, take it from someone who has had to pull himself back from the edge multiple times: don't make your depressed friends feel like they

only have themselves. Most depressed people find it extremely difficult to carry out simple tasks, even if

it's for their own good. Seeking help is, at least for me, one of the most difficult and nerve-wracking things I've had to do.

In a time when depression has increased significantly due to COVID-19 and other stressors, a lot more people may be struggling than you think. I'm sure a lot of those people would really appreciate some empathetic check-ins right now.



Griffin Brammer is a first-year nursing major. He is a staff writer for Newswire from Dublin, Ohio.

## Think outside your party

The incredibly polarizing state of opinions in America right now is palpable, as I'm sure you've all noticed.

I don't mean controversial and emotionally provocative, although those descriptors are also valid. I mean binary — you choose one thing or the other and often no one outside two points gets a chance with the other or with the general public. Only two political parties seem like a viable option to vote for, and everybody has a hill they're willing to die on.

I don't pretend to be exempt, as I am politically active and opinionated, and I also don't pretend to be an authority in this field. However, from what I've observed, it seems like categorizing ideas into "-isms" is part of the reason no one can agree on anything, and I think it's about time we learn to change.

This phenomenon is noticeable in everything from conversations at home and in school to the rhetoric of U.S. politicians.

Take, for example, a discussion I overheard between two classmates about the ethics of anti-vaxxers.

One person was advocating for a vaccination requirement for U.S. high school students, and the other argued that this was a "utilitarian" solution to a complex problem and was therefore, invalid.

I, like many others, find myself conversing with my parents about U.S. policy when I visit home, and we often disagree on the most effective solutions to a plethora of social issues.

My father, a staunch conservative, does not agree that corporations should be subject to government restrictions on their green-

house gas emissions because that is a "socialist" policy.

Why are we often so quick to write off ideas when they fall under the umbrella of an opposing philosophy we can name? Is it connotation that causes this dismissal, or is it fallacy? More than likely, both of these factors play a leading role.

The negative connotation many people associate with the word "socialism," for example, connects it with Soviet communism, under which millions of people died. But communism is not the same as socialism, and not all communism is Soviet communism.

These false equivalences can lead to the ruling out of plenty of reasonable suggestions, which, in high stake situations such as debate on the Senate floor, wastes valuable time that could be used to improve the lives of the

American people.

No group of ideas which becomes a philosophy can be perfect, at least not for long, because humans are susceptible to error and because the world is always changing.

Sure, labels for certain groups of belief systems can be useful in identifying like-minded people, but they often just serve to limit us to the opinions within those groups, which can prevent meaningful progress.

Sometimes we don't even have an opinion on a subject before we read or hear our affiliated political party's stance on the matter.

No one knew about COVID-19 before December of 2019, meaning it was a non-issue until that point. Yet, after experiencing only a year of feeling its effects, the two major American political parties have drawn a stark line in the sand and

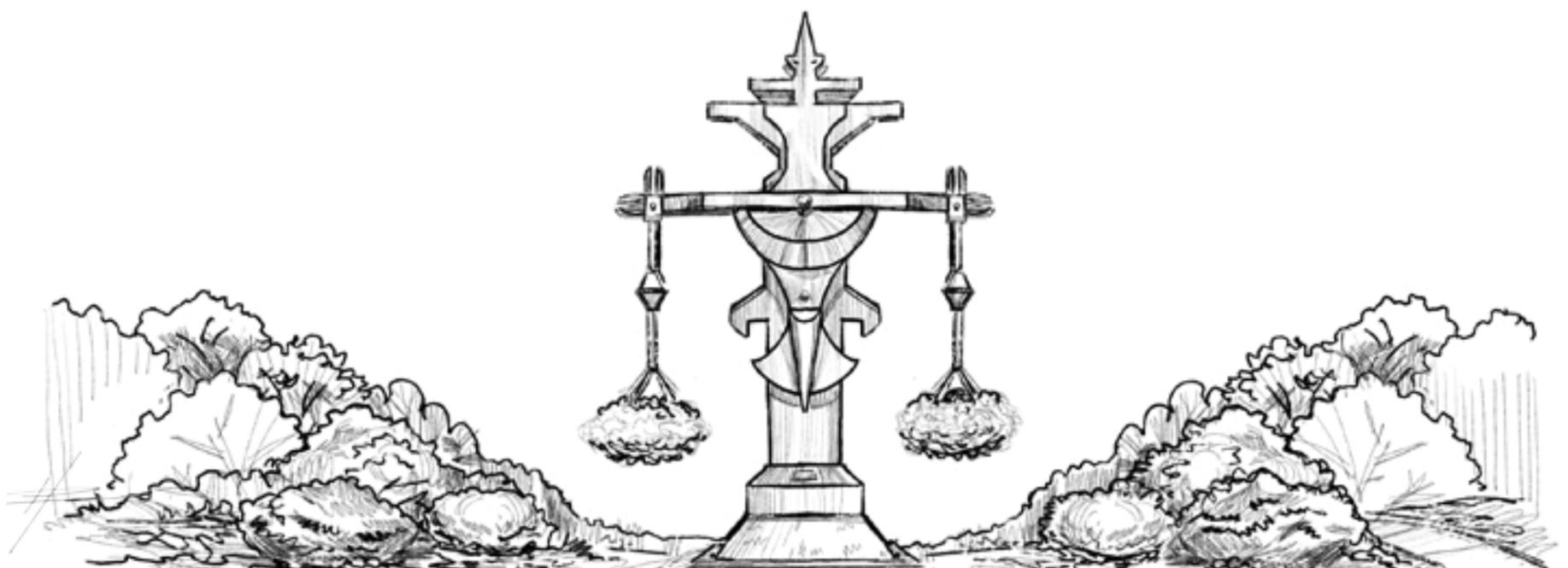
made their stances on masks and lockdowns clear.

You are not betraying your ideals if you agree with the opinion of someone who values different things or disagrees with you on every other subject.

I do not propose that people stop speaking their minds when they disagree and certainly not that unity should come before justice — however, I do think we can take one step closer to both by freeing our opinions from their current bundled dichotomy.



Julia Lankisch is a sophomore environmental science and music double major. She is a staff writer for Newswire from Naperville, Ill.



# Xavier basketball off to hot start

Men's team on pause due to COVID-19, women's team improved at 4-4

BY JOE CLARK  
Sports Editor

Xavier men's basketball is currently on its second in-season pause due to positive COVID-19 tests within the team's tier one personnel.

Prior to the most recent pause, the Musketeers were having a strong season and currently sit at 10-2 with a 3-2 record in Big East play. Xavier's most recent win was a 74-73 win over Providence at home on Jan. 10 that was highlighted by a game-winning three-pointer from Colby Jones.

Jones was named "Big East Freshman of the Week" following his performance against Providence and in Xavier's win over St. John's earlier that week.

Xavier has had strong performances this year from sophomore Zach Freemantle, who averages 15.8 points and 7.9 rebounds per game. Senior Paul Scruggs has been one of the best passers in the country, averaging 6.3 assists per game and scoring at a high rate with 13.8 points per game.

Grad transfer Nate John-



Newsire photo by Desmond Fischer

**Paul Scruggs has taken a big step forward for Xavier this season, providing veteran leadership and a legitimate threat on both sides of the ball. Xavier's men's basketball team is sitting at 10-2 so far this year.**

son has been a sharpshooter for the Musketeers, shooting over 50% from three point range this season. Xavier's also had strong performances from senior Jason Carter, who's been the team's best interior defender this season.

Xavier's biggest strength this season is their depth, as they bring sophomore KyKy

Tandy, senior Bryan Griffin, junior Adam Kunkel and either freshmen Dwon Odom or Colby Jones (depending on which one isn't starting) off the bench.

They spent the early part of Big East play figuring out which lineup combinations worked best, but they seemed to find a good balance against

Providence.

Going forward, it'll be important for Xavier to continue to find what lineups are most effective. Cutting down on turnovers and becoming more consistent from three-point range will also be important for Xavier as they look to make a run in the Big East and eventually in the

NCAA Tournament.

Meanwhile, Xavier's women's basketball is showing major improvements in Melanie Moore's second season as head coach.

They stand at 4-4, with a 1-3 conference record. Xavier has wins over Detroit Mercy, Wofford, Indiana State and Providence.

The Musketeers have been a tough out in conference play as they only lost to Creighton by three points and Marquette by seven points. Miami (OH) transfer Nia Clark has been Xavier's leading scorer with 15.2 points per game.

Ariana Gray is second in scoring with 12.7 points per game and also leads the team in rebounding with seven rebounds per game.

Kae Satterfield, a transfer from Cincinnati, is a close second with 6.8 rebounds per game, while also contributing 9.8 points per game.

The Xavier women's team hasn't played since Jan. 3 due to COVID-19 concerns impacting other Big East programs. They resume play on Saturday when they travel to South Orange, N.J. to play Seton Hall.

## NFL playoff action entertains viewers

BY JOE LAURICH  
Staff Writer

The Divisional Round of the NFL playoffs took place last weekend and gave viewers four games that didn't disappoint.

The first game of the weekend featured the NFC's best team in the regular season, the Green Bay Packers, who took on the Los Angeles Rams in what was touted as a battle between the Packers' high-scoring offense against the Rams stout defense.

The Packers offense showed off what they were capable of early on, taking a 19-10 lead into the half before winning 32-18.

The Packers will return to the NFC Championship game for the second year in a row. Last year, the Packers got blown out by the San Francisco 49ers in that game, but they'll look to have a better showing this year.

In the second game on Saturday, Josh Allen and the Buffalo Bills took on Lamar Jackson and the Baltimore Ravens. While both teams feature high-powered offenses, it was defense that won the day as the game was low-scoring throughout.

The highlight of the game was Bills' cornerback Taron Johnson's 101 yard interception return for a touchdown, and the Bills took home a 17-3 win.

They'll face the reigning Super Bowl champs, the Kansas City Chiefs, in the AFC

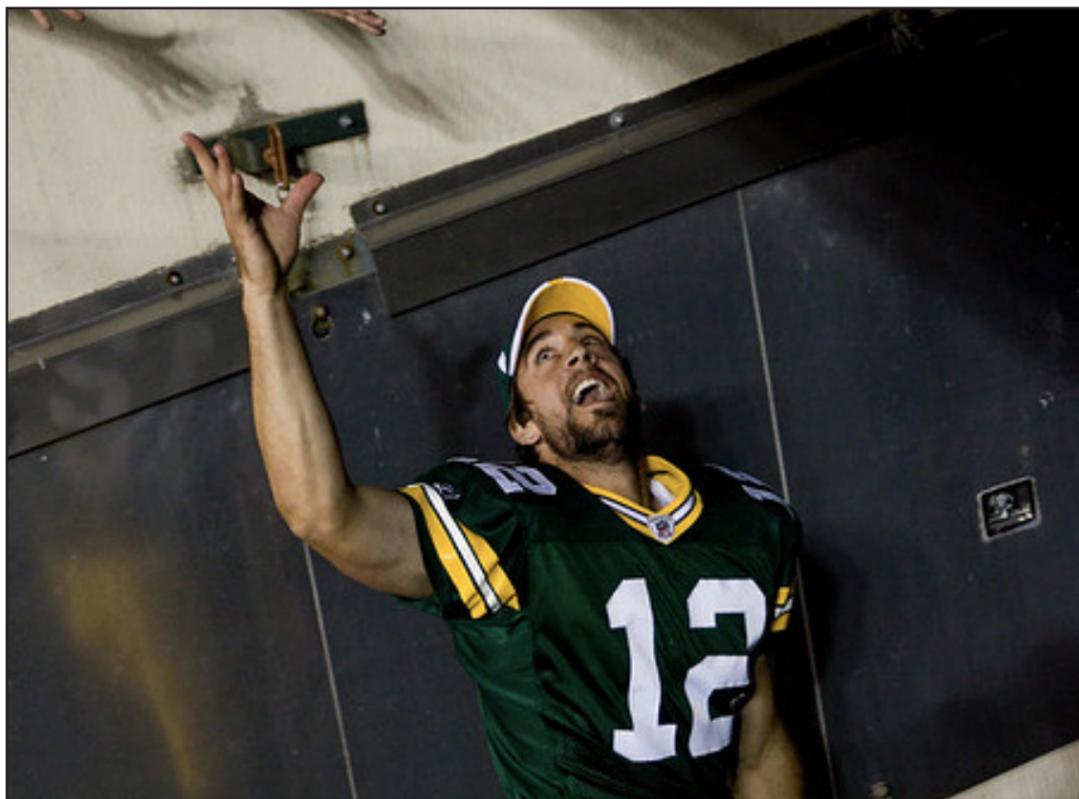


Photo courtesy of Creative Commons

**Aaron Rodgers will look to win the second Super Bowl of his career, but first he has to get through Tom Brady and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the NFC Championship game. Rodgers is playing at an MVP-level this year.**

Championship game next Sunday.

The Chiefs played the Cleveland Browns on Sunday in a game that was exciting until the very last play.

Cleveland hadn't been in the playoffs since 2002, but following an injury to Chiefs star quarterback Patrick Mahomes, they had a great opportunity to upset the heavily favored Chiefs, as they had the ball trailing 22-17.

However, the Browns failed to score since Mahomes' backup-Chad Henne made two great plays, scram-

bling for a big gain on third and long. He completed a pass to Tyreek Hill on fourth and inches to clinch the win for Kansas City.

The final game of the weekend was one of the most exciting, as it pitted two all-time great quarterbacks against one another, while Tom Brady's Tampa Bay Buccaneers faced off against Drew Brees and the New Orleans Saints.

In Brady's first year with the Bucs, he was looking to take them to a conference championship game, a place

where he'd been many times with the New England Patriots.

With a little help from his defense, he was able to do just that as the Bucs beat the higher-seeded Saints 30-20 in Drew Brees' last game in the NFL. The Bucs defense got three interceptions off of Brees to send Brady to his remarkable 14th conference championship game appearance.

This weekend, we'll find out which of these teams will be heading to Tampa Bay for Super Bowl LV.

## Big East Scores

**Men's Basketball**  
Villanova 76  
Seton Hall 74

The Wildcats played their first game since Dec. 23 on Tuesday night, narrowly edging out Seton Hall. Jermaine Samuels had 20 points and nine rebounds for 'Nova, while Sandro Mamukelashvili led Seton Hall with 23 points, nine rebounds and five assists.

**Women's Basketball**  
UConn 103  
Butler 35

UConn Head Coach Geno Auriemma moved past former Tennessee women's basketball head coach Pat Summit for second on the all-time wins list for NCAA women's college basketball with the blowout win over Butler. Aubrey Griffin had 17 points and ten rebounds for the Huskies.

**Men's Basketball**  
Butler 67  
DePaul 53

South Carolina transfer Jair Bolden contributed 21 points and six rebounds for the Bulldogs, who are now winners of back-to-back games.

# Taylor Swift satisfies for-*Evermore*

BY MORGAN MILES

Staff Writer

Released on Dec. 11, *Evermore* is Taylor Swift's ninth studio album. *Evermore* brings back producers Jack Antonoff and Aaron Dessner alongside Swift, "WB" Joe Alwyn and Bryce Dessner to create *Folklore*'s sister record.

Though described as similar to *Folklore*'s indie-folk *Evermore* expands the reach of genres to include alternative rock, folk-pop and country elements.

There's such a vast array of choices ranging from love songs to ID-channel-esque murder mystery to a wife consumed by her affair with another man.

Vocally, Swift's more memorable country twang or era of peppy pop radio hits are hardly recognizable. She uses a more somber tone, utilizes deeper pitches and isn't afraid to allow emotions to seep into her voice. Even so, that emotion never harms her performance.

*Evermore* has 15 tracks in addition to two bonus tracks. Kickstarting the album is "Willow" followed by "Champagne Problems."

The depth of the lyrics Swift provides in the two songs allows a sort of rawness to prime listeners to feel more personally connected to Swift's storytelling. Nitty-gritty, lower-pitched vocals matched the tone of the



Photo courtesy of Commons.wikimedia.org

**Taylor Swift's newest album *Evermore* came as a surprise to many fans when it was released in December 2020. As a sister album to her previous album, *folklore*, it shares the same folk sound with different themes.**

beginning perfectly.

As Swift reflects and admits to past mistakes or endearment for her lover, the album shifts to "Gold Rush." A magically soft and airy sounding instrumental aids Swift in illustrating the story of a beautiful love that is all passion and not based on reality — it's not meant to be.

"'Tis The Damn Season" and "Tolerate It" follow, but fall flat instrumentally in comparison to the previous tracks. In both, Swift sounds convincingly emotional as she sings. The latter is track five, which is generally known as Swift's most vulnerable track.

She delivers by reminiscing a once happy relationship turned sour.

"No Body, No Crime" is an ID channel story wrapped into a country song. Swift collaborates with HAIM. Though you can't hear their vocals because of Swift's lead, I think they pair well together for the intensity of this song.

Next, "Happiness" serves as a message to appreciate relationships even when they come to an end. She doesn't play the victim and doesn't turn her lover into a "villain" for moving on.

Lighter and peppier sounding than the previous tracks,

the song "Dorothea" contrasts Swift's more somber tone. The tone compliments lyrics recounting an old friend wondering if Dorothea would ever remember them or if she's still the same person.

"Coney Island" is a collaboration with The National, and I adore the far deeper male vocals paired with Swift's. Although not astonishingly sounding, "Coney Island" is another tale of love, loss and regrets with emotional lyrics.

The song "Ivy" story captures attention far more than its sound. Roots from another man grow into a married

woman's heart, and she realizes she can't escape her affair.

"Cowboy Like Me" is another country song. It reminds me a bit of a matured version of her older music because it adds the album's consistent love-story-with-a-twist element. It's soft, slow and toned down but pleasantly so.

"Long Story Short" is quicker in pace and differs in instrumentals. I'd describe it as sweet and catchy.

"Marjorie" is a personal, bittersweet track in memory of the relationship Swift had with her grandmother. Vocals of Marjorie herself are featured in the background.

The song "Closure" has a choppy sound that is less appealing and more so annoying and distracting. The powerful message of independence and emotional maturity is still heard, which I think still has the potential to be helpful for Swift's audience.

"Evermore" is the closing track and title of the album. Collaborating with Bon Iver, Swift is cut off and then begins to sing over — yet simultaneously alongside — Justin Vernon.

Their voices mesh together seamlessly and provide insight into a journey of healing after experiencing the pain of deteriorating mental health.

**Total score:**

# *Mank* brings to light lost story of famed writer



Photo courtesy of Newyorker.com

**New blockbuster film, *Mank*, does an excellent job showcasing its dazzling cinematography and demonstrating its powerful story telling.**

BY BEN THOMSON

Staff Writer

In a year of cancellations and catastrophes from the capsizing film industry, one studio courageously conserved Hollywood through this caustic pandemic. That studio was Netflix.

In July, the studio released

Spike Lee's *Da 5 Bloods*, in September they released Charlie Kaufman's *I'm Thinking of Ending Things* and most recently in December, they gave us David Fincher's *Mank*, the story of Citizen Kane co-screenwriter Herman "Mank" Mankiewicz.

*Mank* is a sight for sore eyes. Fincher took great pains

to replicate the look and feel of a movie from the 1930s and 40s. The cigarette burned, black and white picture and crackly audio pastiche the likes of *Citizen Kane* and *It's a Wonderful Life*, all while maintaining the careful, calculated direction for which Fincher is synonymous with.

Gary Oldman, Amanda Seyfried and Charles Dance bring the right amount of subtlety and showmanship you'd see from the likes of Jimmy Stewart or Rita Hayworth.

The black and white filter creates absolutely stunning imagery, with the most beautiful taking place at night. That said, these little details don't serve any higher purpose than aesthetic. Even then, its mask of antiquity never fully conceals its green screen sets or digital photography.

At its surface, *Mank* seems like yet another *La La Land*-esque romp through Hollywood's fabled "golden years." Unlike *La La Land*, however, *Mank* holds very little sentimentality for the era it strives to replicate.

Taking place over the course of a decade (specifically 1930-1940), *Mank* doesn't

shy away from the uglier side of old Hollywood. Studio heads and executives are portrayed as disconnected from the plight of their employees, pretending to act sympathetic as they cut salaries in half.

Conversations about Adolf Hitler are out of touch, downplaying him as a threat and calling the would-be tyrant a "drip" who "won't be around for too long." Even *Mank*, the most honest and sensible man depicted on screen, is an alcoholic, sarcastic, undeniably genius piece of work.

What surprised me most about *Mank* was the relevancy it held in the year 2020. Despite being about *Citizen Kane*, a nearly 80-year-old film, the world of *Mank* felt surprisingly familiar.

The Great Depression serves as a backdrop for the plot. Scenes of people taking pay cuts and losing their jobs feels eerily familiar in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 1934 gubernatorial election between Upton Sinclair (portrayed briefly by Bill Nye the Science Guy) and Frank Merriam greatly influences *Mank*'s past and shapes his future.

The media plays a big role in the outcome of the election, with MGM producing propaganda films that favor Merriam, ultimately winning him the election. *Mank* brings a whole new meaning to the phrase "history repeats itself."

This is far from the best thing David Fincher has directed. This felt like more of a passion project, given that the screenplay was written by his late father.

Those expecting another *Fight Club* or *The Social Network* will be sorely disappointed. But even a mid-tier Fincher flick shines above the rest. If you're a fan of *Citizen Kane*, don't expect a perfect retelling of history (the script was based heavily on Pauline Kael's controversial essay *Raising Kane*).

If you haven't seen *Citizen Kane*, I suggest watching it before *Mank*, but this isn't necessary for understanding the plot. Regardless, I have no doubt we'll see *Mank* once again at this year's Academy Awards.

**Total score:**



**Aries:** Now that Joe Biden is president, you can finally stop doing your Trump impression all the time. Trust me when I say: no one will miss it.



**Taurus:** Your new year's resolution sucks. Pick an easier one: have 2021 be the year you go through your hoe phase.



**Gemini:** Don't worry, no matter who you are or what you do, the stars love and respect you. Unless you unironically enjoyed *Wonder Woman 1984*. In that case, the stars think you're cringey.



**Cancer:** It's 2021, so it's time to turn your life around. Stop writing D'Artagnan x Blue Blob slash



**Leo:** You like sports, and you don't even care who knows. But maybe you should care at least a little. It's a bit excessive.



**Virgo:** Hey, Doug. I've been trying to reach you but haven't found any other way to contact you. Could you shoot me an email? You can reach me at callahana2@xavier.edu. If your name isn't Doug please disregard this horoscope, and please do not spam my inbox.



**Libra:** Don't expect much from this year. With Christmas and New Years behind us, it'll be ten more months until the next good holiday.



**Scorpio:** You should listen to *In the Aeroplane Over the Sea* by Neutral Milk Hotel. This isn't even a horoscope, it's just a really good album.



**Sagittarius:** This semester, try to make sure all your professors know you by name. It's as simple as walking into class naked one day for you to be a student they'll never forget.



**Capricorn:** Don't get cocky. You're not a chess expert just because you watched *The Queen's Gambit* over winter break.



**Aquarius:** This semester, stop putting off your assignments. As *Cyberpunk 2077* has taught us all, just because something is delayed doesn't mean it will be good.



**Pisces:** Every action has an equal and opposite reaction. When we lose one bad president, we also lose a great one. RIP Father Graham, 1955-2021.



# 21 tips for 2021

BY EMMA STEVENS AND AIDAN CALLAHAN  
*Staff Writer and Back Page Editor*

With the start of the new year, resolutions are on everyone's minds. Statistically, you've most likely already failed whatever goal you set for yourself. But don't give up yet! Try any of these 21 tips for a terrific 2021:

**1. Drink some water!** College kids are notoriously terrible at staying hydrated. At least once a day, put down the coffee, Bang or Mountain Dew and drink a cup of water.

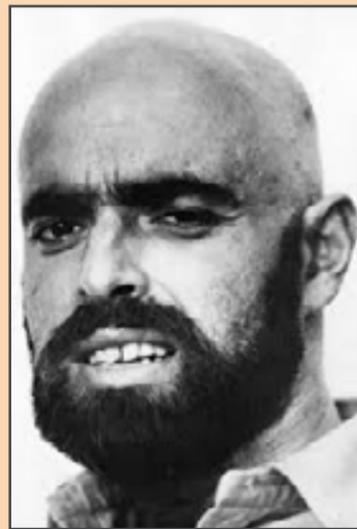
**2. Add a fruit or vegetable to your plate at a meal.** Change is hard. You don't have to give up the pizza or the fries. Just pick up a fruit cup, too.

**3. Get up and move.** Studying and sitting go hand in hand, but being still can suck the energy out of you. Simply taking a walk to go study in a different building can help recharge your mind.

**4. Try to decrease your screen time.** Being on the computer all day for online classes or scrolling on TikTok for hours can cause your brain to melt.

**5. Buy a house plant for your dorm room or apartment.** Having something to nurture can help fill the void. Condolences in advance if it dies.

**6. Try reading some poetry.** You'll find inspiration reading the words of Oscar Wilde or Emily Dickinson. But do not read any Shel Silverstein. Man gives me the heebie jeebies.



**7. Keep in touch with your parents.** Living a busy student life, you may forget these guys. Try to call them at least

once a week; you don't want to miss out on any useful nuggets of advice, words of encouragement or lowkey racist political opinions.

**8. Become a pirate.** WandaVision is great, but Disney+ is expensive.

**9. Spice up your sex life.** Paprika, cinnamon, parsley, sage — any of these spices will bring excitement back to your bedroom!

**10. Work on your Sicilian Defense.** It's statistically proven to be the most successful response to white's famous 1. e4 opening.



**11. Try a new catchphrase.** I don't think anyone has ever used "Bazinga!" so give that one a go.

**12. Get ahead on your assignments now.** You never know what the rest of the semester is going to bring. A ghost could start haunting you and totally cramp your style, so crank out as much as you can while you aren't being haunted.

**13. Get to know your professors.** If they are acting sus, that may be a sign they are an imposter. Does anyone even still play that game?

**14. Try something new everyday.** Phineas and Ferb built a new crazy contraption every day while you spent 2020 with the same album on repeat daily. Be better.



**15. Invest in a leather jacket.** If the apocalypse comes tomorrow, do you think someone with a leather jacket or someone with a Champion hoodie will last longer? There is only one right answer. Buy the leather jacket.

**16. Make sure your door has a good lock.** If we've learned anything in the last few weeks, it's that security is a must have. You never know what you might need to keep on the other side of that door.

**17. Pack a "Go Bag."** Being able to flee at any given time is a necessity during these tumultuous times. Don't get caught lackin', start packin'.

**18. Build a bomb shelter.** This one is self-explanatory. If this year outdoes 2020, you'll need a place to hole up. Reference our Oct. 29, 2020 Back Page article on bunkers if you need more information.

**19. Start hoarding batteries.** The grid could go down any day now. Call your friendly neighborhood doomsday prepper for advice on what you should collect before the world as we know it ends.

**20. Carve some wooden stakes.** Vampires could totally become a thing, and it never hurts to be over prepared. If you aren't prepared, you might literally regret it for the rest of your life.

**21. Wake up.** You've been in a coma for five years. Nothing you see is real. Please snap out of it, your family misses you.



## Fictionary

Your weekly well of wacky words™

BY TESS BREWER  
*Staff Writer*



**Corny toad (core-nee toe-d):** A creature that lures mates by making very bad puns.

*Ex: Do you think this is a croak? Hah, I amfibbian.*

**Moidah (moy-dah):** A homicide in New Jersey.

**Marteur (Mmr-too-er):** The French version of Sherlock Holmes' nemesis. An artist's rendition is featured on the left.