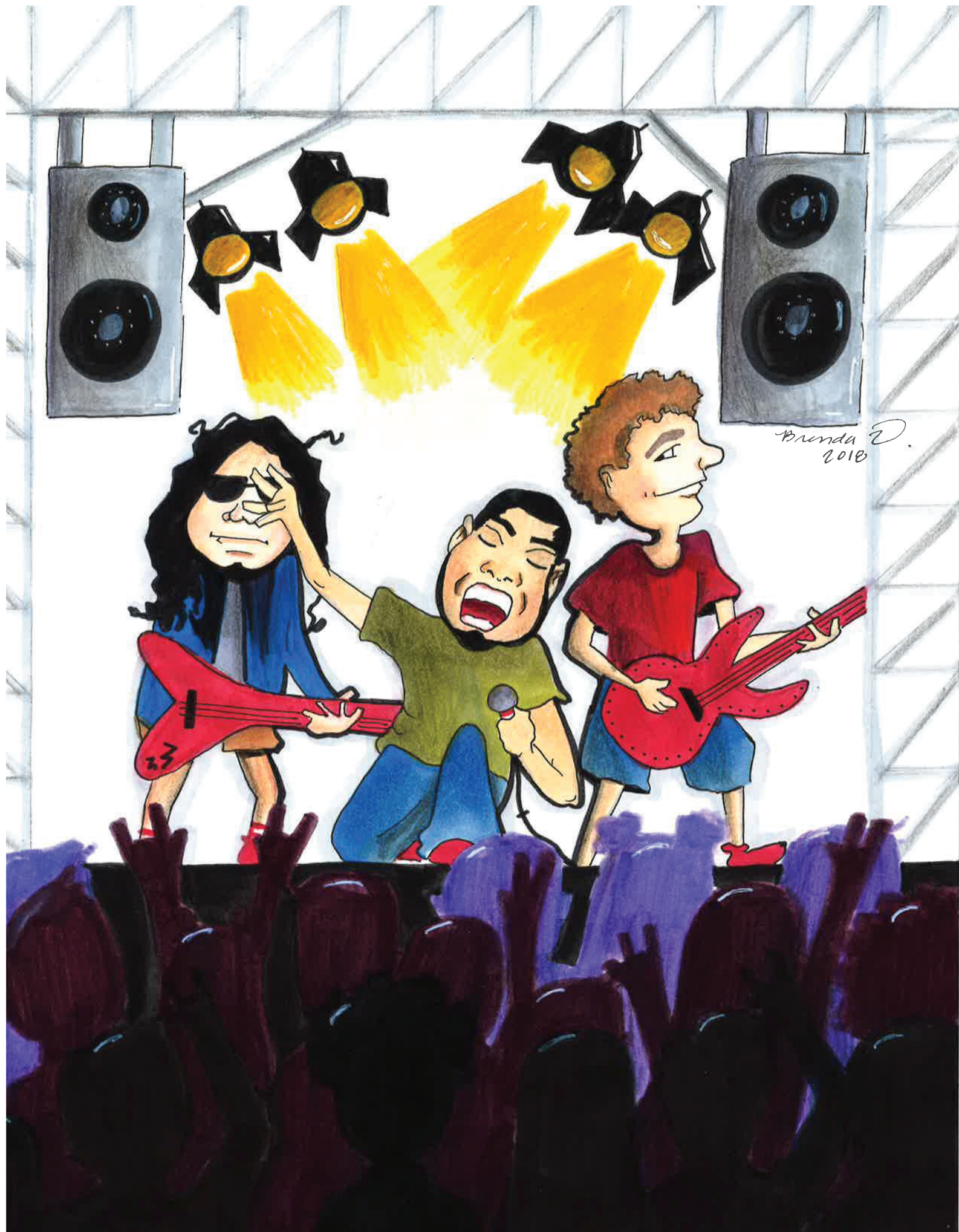


DATELINE:DOWNTOWN

Volume 61 Issue 3

October 23, 2018



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From the editor's desk

by Quintin Coleman

Hello Gators and welcome back to Dateline: Downtown. It's been a little while since you've seen the paper on the stands around campus but we are back and better than ever. Before I go into what is coming up in this issue, I want to say thanks to the staff who have worked with me during the first two issues of the paper during my tenure and the supporters who picked up the paper. Whether it was because of the content of the paper or the stellar art design from Brenda Valenzuela, one of our cover artists for Dateline: Downtown, I appreciate every single one of you who went out of their way to pick up a copy of the first two issues.

Now that we've looked back for a second, it's time to look ahead to what's in this issue. Our feature article for this issue is about a Latin alternative band called Videotheque (which our very own music writer Jesus Garay is a part of) that has a very unique circumstance that ties all of them together. Also on the music front, Jesus gives his perspective on Interpol's recent concert in Houston and also interviewed an artist named NICO, a local musician that enjoys having music that is hard to describe.

We also have some big news about a new nursing program here at UHD and Emily Christiansen dives into the Senate race between Ted Cruz and Beto O'Rourke to identify what each candidate stands for as it relates to the more popular issues that people are concerned about. We also have the numbers on UHD's voter registration drive and an upcoming Walk2Vote event being hosted on campus.

One of the new features we've added to the paper is a column section. We are debuting a column called Lunch

for Less, a column that gives a look at restaurants around the UHD area that offer student friendly deals and are budget friendly to students as well, along with our first faculty column writer Adam Ellwanger, the director of the Master's of Rhetoric and Composition graduate program here at UHD. He's not afraid to go into a hot button issue so his thoughts are definitely worth the read.

There's plenty more that this issue offers but I can't give everything away in the first full page. You're just going to have to see what else is in store in this issue. If you want to talk about anything you've read in this (or any) issue of the paper, let us know on social media. We're waiting to hear your thoughts about what's going on around campus, around Houston, or around the country. If you have story ideas you want to share, send those in as well.

We here at Dateline: Downtown hope that you enjoy this and every issue as long as I'm here. It's good to be back.

Submission policy

Dateline Downtown welcomes submissions to the editor from any member of the UH system. Submissions should include the author's full name, phone number or email address, and affiliation with the University, including classification and major. Writers' Guidelines are available on the UHD/dateline webpage. Anonymous submissions will not be published.

Email submissions to editordatelinedowntown@gmail.com. Letters to the Editor and reader submissions may be edited for space, content, spelling, grammar and malicious, vulgar, or hateful statements. Submissions must be the original work of the writer and must be signed. All submissions become property of Dateline: Downtown and will not be returned.

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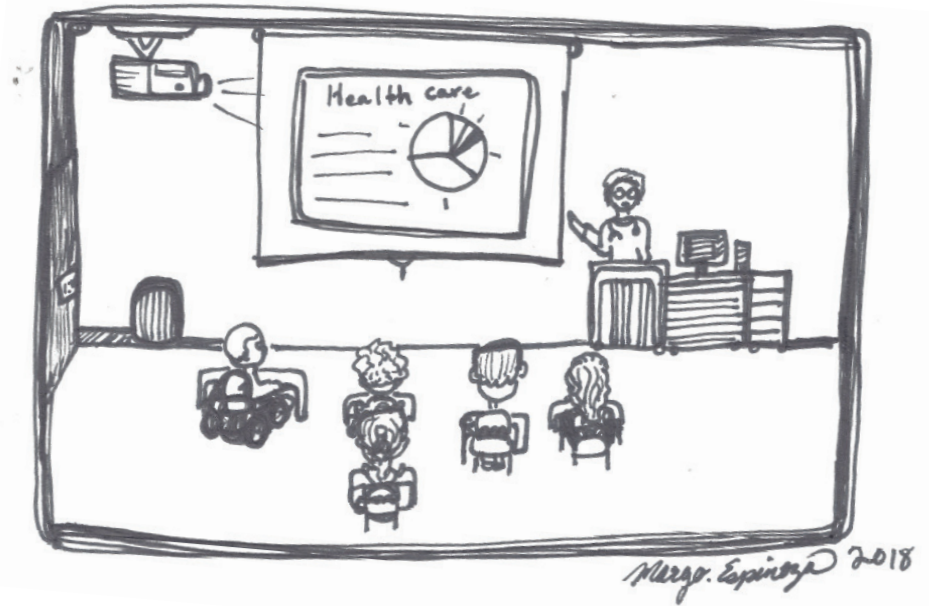
New UHD nursing program serves community

By Sonia Sanchez

This semester nursing students are attending UHD to pursue their bachelor's in nursing that is being offered for the first time as a part of UHD's partnership with Houston Community College (HCC). UHD's nursing program coordinated with Houston Community College to guarantee an effortless transition from Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN).

The program is designed for HCC students with their associate degree in nursing and registered nurse license who are working at the same time, which is why the program is called RN to BSN. Dr. Linda Dune is the program director of RN to BSN. "The curriculum involves activities such as flipping the classroom and high student interaction as a stepping stone from the associate's degree and masters programs to beyond," said Dune

"The transition from HCC to UHD is quicker and faster through this program." One of the advantages of transferring in to UHD's bachelor of nursing program from HCC is the guarantee that they will accept all transfer credits from the associate degree in nursing. What also makes this program stand out from the rest is it focuses on getting RNs more involved in serving their local communities. The nursing students can expect a community focus during their program at UHD. It fulfills UHD's Quality Enhancement Plan, Academic Achievement through Community Engagement (A+CE). There is also support from both UHD and HCC. "It's a seamless transition," said Dr. Linda Dune, program director of RN to BSN, "courses are taught by qualified instructors from both institutions and there is easy access to both campuses via metro rail."



Cruz, O'Rourke run a close race for senate

By Emily Christiansen

Midterm elections are coming in November including the race for Texas senator. The main party candidates are Ted Cruz and Beto O'Rourke. Although Texas has not elected a Democrat to the senate since 1993, the independent Quinnipiac poll has Cruz leading by only 9 points as of late September.

Republican incumbent Ted Cruz was elected in 2012 for his first senate term. Cruz grew up in Houston before graduating from Yale and Harvard. He worked with George W. Bush's presidential campaign. Afterwards, Cruz held several political positions, including solicitor general of Texas for five years. He is well known for his conservative stance on topics such as immigration, abortion and same-sex marriage.

Democrat Beto O'Rourke has served three terms as the U.S. Representative for

the El Paso district. O'Rourke was born and raised in El Paso and graduated from Columbia University. After starting his own business, he became a city councilman in El Paso. O'Rourke holds liberal views on healthcare, drug policy reform and criminal justice reform.

O'Rourke and Cruz differ on many political issues including gun control, healthcare and immigration. The candidates' views discussed below were taken from each of the candidates' election websites and their official government websites.

Gun control

Cruz opposes restricting Second Amendment rights. He helped write a bill that would have allowed making buying and transporting a gun over state lines easier. The NRA endorses Cruz as a leader in the gun rights movement. He also successfully argued before the Supreme Court to overturn a ban on firearms in the

District of Columbia.

O'Rourke supports the Second Amendment but wants to ensure that background checks are done for anyone who buys a gun. He wants to stop the gun show and online buying loophole, which is where private sellers are not required to complete a background check on a prospective customer, unlike federally licensed sellers. O'Rourke also opposes Concealed Carry Reciprocity, which allows people with gun licenses from states with more lax gun laws allowed to carry in Texas.

Healthcare

Cruz favors repealing the Affordable Care Act (ACA). He believes that the ACA is "causing millions to lose their jobs, be forced into part-time work, lose their doctors and health insurance, and pay skyrocketing premiums." Instead, Cruz supports reforms to Health Savings Accounts and allowing people to buy insurance across state lines. Cruz believes that Americans should have the right to choose which healthcare plan they want to purchase. O'Rourke supports having an improved ACA. He says this can be done by stabilizing the insurance market and expanding Medicaid. He also would like to lower "premiums and prescription drug costs by using the government's purchasing power." O'Rourke believes universal health care is a basic human right.

Immigration

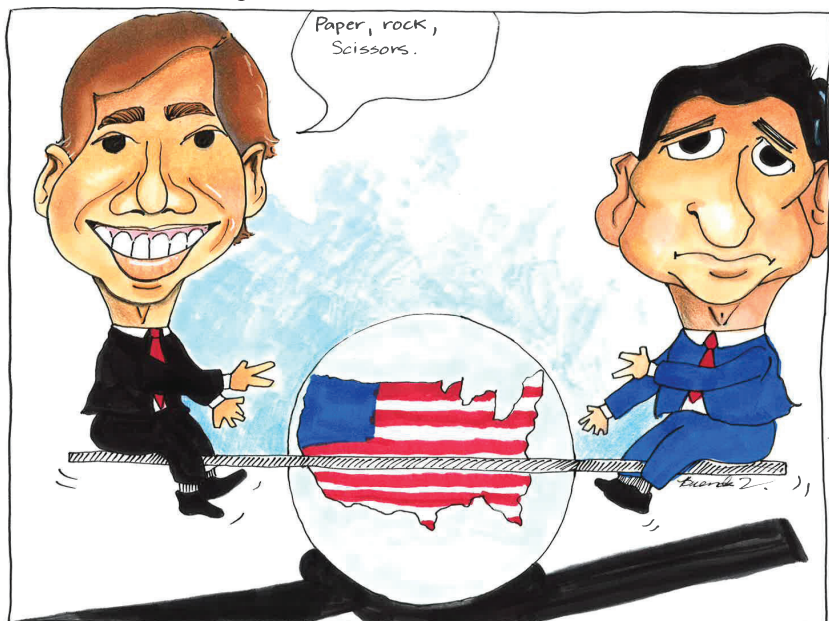
Cruz takes a strong stance on immigration. He is against amnesty for undocumented immigrants already in the U.S. or providing them with any social services.

He also introduced a law for a minimum five-year sentence for people who re-enter the U.S. after being deported. Cruz does support increasing the number of green card opportunities and H1B visas for skilled workers.

O'Rourke supports the DREAM act and wants to reform immigration laws for undocumented immigrants already in the U.S. He also wants to revamp the visa system so that employers can use it to fill job spaces not taken by American workers. O'Rourke opposes private detention centers because these institutions profit off of detaining people.

Voters had a chance to hear Cruz and O'Rourke debate in Dallas in September and San Antonio in October. Both candidates are continuing their campaign appearances until the election. Both Cruz and O'Rourke have well-known supporters. President Trump has endorsed Cruz is appearing in Houston October 22 for a rally. Willie Nelson has performed at fundraisers for Beto O'Rourke.

Early voting begins October 22. Election Day is November 6.



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UHD students included in record levels of voting registration

By Emily Christiansen

684 students registered to vote during the voter registration drive at UHD in October, adding to the 400,000 new voters across Texas.

The influx of voters could make a significant difference in the midterm elections which include the gubernatorial, senate, congressional and local races. Texas Secretary of State Rolando Pablos urges all voters to “prepare yourself, inform yourself, and empower yourself”. In statewide and local elections, every vote counts. UHD’s Annual Walk2vote will be October 24. Students meet up and walk from UHD to the nearest voting site. In addition, Secretary Pablos has declared that October 26 is Student Voting Day. To make it easier on busy students, this day is within the early voting period and

falls on a Friday when many students are not in class.

New voters have a chance to change traditional voting patterns in Texas depending on with which party they are affiliated. Voter turnout in Texas is usually low--between 5 and 38 percent of registered voters make it to the polls unless it is a

presidential election year. Texas Republicans tend to have twice as many voters show up than Texas Democrats.

Although the biggest draw is the race for governor and the senate seat, there are dozens of other races on the ballot including judges and state representatives.

Early voting begins October 22, and Election Day is November 6.

IN STATEWIDE AND LOCAL ELECTIONS, EVERY VOTE COUNTS

Texas is usually low--between 5 and 38 percent of registered voters make it to the polls unless it is a

SGA invites students to join Gator Day of Action

By Emily Christiansen

The SGA presents the Gator Day of Action on October 24, giving students the opportunity to attend a meet and greet with candidates and participate in the annual Walk2Vote. This is the last event in a series geared at encouraging all UHD students to vote.

UHD TENDS TO HAVE VOTER TURNOUT WELL ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

The meet and greet will take place from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the fourth floor North Reading Room. The candidates will be from local, state, and national offices. Students will have the chance to talk to them face to face before casting their votes. Walk2Vote begins

at 12 p.m. Students and candidates will meet on the South Deck and walk to nearby polls.

Walk2Vote began at UHD six years ago in 2012, and has spread to campuses across the nation. UHD has long been dedicated to increasing civic engagement with its students and exercising the right to vote is a key part of that. According to the National Student Learning and Voting, UHD tends to have voter turnout well above the national average. This event garners more attention each year, with city officials and celebrities often attending.

This year, the meet and greet, voter registration drive, and Walk2Vote are sponsored by UHD SGA, UHD library, UHD Texas Freedom Network, Univision, ABC13, Naleo Educational Fund, and the Secular Coalition for America.

ASMR starts new trend for stress relief

By Lisette Perez

The term “ASMR,” or Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response, is a widely recognized one, particularly by those who have internet access. In the past few years, thousands of videos have emerged on social media that are classified as “strangely satisfying.” But what is ASMR? Why did it become popular? It has been claimed that ASMR helps those with anxiety, stress, and insomnia. Regardless, ASMR is clearly here to stay as it is a – somewhat bizarre – genre of entertainment that has gained a large following through all social media platforms. It has gained so much popularity that there are now endless different ways to experience its effects through all kinds of visuals and auditory means.

“ASMR” is an acronym for “Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response.” It is the name given to a selection of sensations caused by certain triggers. The sensations are said to feel like pleasant tingling that begin at the back of the neck and move down the spine, or a general feeling of relaxation. Triggers can be anything a person finds soothing. For instance, the sound of pages flipping, typing on a keyboard, thunderstorms and a crackling fireplace. However, triggers are unique to everyone to every person so not everyone shares the same triggers.

It can be said that YouTube is the one to credit for letting ASMR grow to what it is today. Although ASMR existed before YouTube, it is a relatively new phenomenon. The name ASMR was created in 2010, but the ASMR videos on YouTube brought the name to life, so to speak. Thanks to YouTube, ASMR can be experienced by everyone worldwide. On YouTube, ASMR videos’ views skyrocketed. As more people found out about ASMR, more ASMR artists began to join and create their own videos dedicated to the calming videos. Now, millions of videos can be found on YouTube to fit anyone’s unique ASMR taste. People all over the world have been relying on those videos to wind them down ever since.

To some people, ASMR might seem silly – watching someone on a screen lightly tapping on a ubiquitous object or whispering into a microphone. But, to others it is their way of coping with those difficult days at work, or the uneasiness after taking a tedious test, whatever it may be. It is a way to temporarily transport themselves to a place where they feel safe and cozy. It is a way to put someone with insomnia to sleep. It is a normal, human thing to want to feel comforted and some people find these sensations through ASMR.

Making ASMR videos is not

only a hobby to some, it is also a job. Some of the most popular ASMR artists began their careers on YouTube and have gained a significant number of subscribers ever since. In the case of Maria, the person behind GentleWhispering, the ASMR channel with most subscribers, she has made a living out of creating and posting hundreds of ASMR videos. She has also been featured on television and numerous articles. The world of ASMR provides many opportunities for those who would be dedicated to providing relaxation for others.

YouTube is not the only website to show ASMR videos. Now, it is easier than ever to start an ASMR channel or account. ASMR videos have branched out to other social media including Instagram, Twitter, and others. There are no requirements to be an ASMR artist, other than a working camera, of course. ASMR is a great way to stimulate the brain and the senses. It is also a fun activity for people of all ages. Some popular ASMR videos that have been around the web this year include soap carving, floral foam cutting, and slime; they are easy and very entertaining to watch. There is no right or wrong way to do ASMR, it is up to the person to do what feels relaxing.

It is clear that the popularity of ASMR has not faded these past years.

If anything, its popularity only seems to grow. If you have not experienced it, you should give it a try by either watching videos or creating your own. There are hundreds of ways to enhance creativity and focus on well-being through ASMR. Who knows, maybe you’ll like it. It’s up to you to decide. Have you tried ASMR? Do you think it works? Let us know on our social media.

The benefits of bike riding to campus

By Hunter McHugh

Have you ever considered riding your bike to campus? I'm here to tell you that it is possible, fun, convenient, and cost beneficial. If you have looked out the windows in the One Main Building you have seen the bike trails that are available to all citizens of Houston. Have you ever thought about where those bike trails could take you? According to the Green Houston website, "Houston offers a 345-mile interconnected bikeway network spanning across 500 square miles of the city." I challenge you to see if any of the 345-miles of bikeways is accessible to you and where you live.

I am a University of Houston-Downtown student and I love to take the bike trails to the University of Houston-Downtown campus for my classes. I live in the Heights area and I have found from experience that taking the bike trails to campus for my 8:00 a.m. classes takes less time than fighting 8:00 a.m. Houston traffic. If you have lived in Houston for any amount of time, you are familiar with rush hour traffic. Now, a bike commute is made possible for me in the Heights due to the MKT Trail and the White Oak Bayou Trail. And I am happy to inform you that bike trail commutes

are made possible by the extensive Houston Bike Ways from the Jersey Village area, Bellaire, Memorial, NRG Park, Eado, 3rd Ward, and 5th Ward.

I am also delighted to inform you that when I say bike commutes are possible from these Houston areas, I am not simply talking about examples where you can ride your bike on the street. There are off-road bike trails designed to keep bikers as safe as possible from motorized traffic on major streets. These paved, off-road bike trails are safe, fast, and convenient for bikers and pedestrians alike.

Riding your bike to campus is a fun alternative to driving. Not only do you get to see and experience more as you ride, but you get to avoid the stress of driving and finding a parking spot. I have noticed that on mornings that I ride my bike to campus my mind is more clear and well-prepared for class because I do not undertake the stress of finding a parking spot. Parking a bike on the University of Houston-Downtown campus is easy and fast. There are bike racks outside of the 3rd floor One Main Building and outside of the 1st floor one main building. When parking your bike always remember to bring a bike lock and a raincoat because storms roll in fast

around here. Keep in mind, once you are at the University of Houston-Downtown campus the METRO Rail is accessible as well and the rail can continue to take you all over the city of Houston. I think riding my bike to campus is the most enjoyable because it gives me time to think and process my day while physically making my way to campus stress free.

What could you do with \$240 in the breadth of two semesters? Get yourself a coffee every morning? Yes! Buy the more "high quality" pens for note taking in class? Yes! Two hundred and forty dollars is what you will, as a University of Houston-Downtown student, pay for on campus parking for two semesters. I don't think I am the only one who would gladly take an extra \$240 a school year. Riding your bike to campus and parking your bike on campus are both free. Not only are you saving money by eliminating the need for a costly parking pass, but you are also saving money on gas for your vehicle. College is all about preparing for the future and there is no better way to prepare than to save money here and there for important things. Riding my bike to campus has saved me hundreds on parking passes and gasoline costs and I would recom-

mend that all students consider ways that they can save money on this journey through their education.

If you are interested in learning more about Houston's Bike Ways, I would encourage you to check out the City of Houston Website and www.greenhoustontx.gov/bikeways.html.

Seeing clearly doesn't have to cost a fortune

By Lisette Perez

Visiting the optometrist is not the most fun thing to do, but what can be fun is picking out the perfect frames to fit your face. Often times, however, the trendiest frames come with the heftiest price tag. It can be difficult picking out a nice pair of glasses while being a college student and having to pay for tuition, parking passes, textbooks, food, and other expenses. Thankfully, EyeBuyDirect and Zenni Optical are out there for those of us who want to save some extra bucks while looking just as fashionable in some new frames.

Eye exams should be part of your yearly routine, unless you experience noticeable changes in your vision. While they can be uncomfortable, they are an essential part of staying healthy and ensuring your vision stays in top shape. After your eyes have been tested, your eye care professional should give you your eyeglass prescription. You should be given the option to browse around the frames they have in store; the number of frames may vary depending whether you have vision insurance. Typically, the frames available will be quite pricey, especially those that are brand name. So, you must be mindful when purchasing a new pair of glasses.

One way to save some money

is to opt out from buying brand name eyeglasses. However, it cannot be denied that the most well-known brands are known for offering the most stylish frames. Although those prestigious frames will surely give you that look you desire, you will also end up emptying your wallet of money that could have been used for another pair. This means that you will be stuck with the same pair until your next checkup (if necessary).

To some people, owning more than one pair of glasses seems redundant, while others prefer to own more than one. Owning another pair of glasses means you have a back-up pair just in case you misplace or break your original pair. A back-up pair can also serve as a new look; glasses play a big role in changing up your style. But it can be tough to buy two pairs at a time. After all, they can be quite expensive, so it may not be the most convenient option.

Fortunately, there is a way to look trendy – and have a back-up pair, if wanted – while spending half (or even less than half) of what you pay for at the optometrist's. Try buying your glasses online. But make sure to shop at the right places as buying glasses online can sometimes be just as expensive as buying them in stores. Thankfully, you do not have to go hunting for the most

trust-worthy online shops any further. EyeBuyDirect and Zenni Optical are two of the most reliable online shops dedicated to selling the best eyewear to their customers. Both websites pledge to sell high-quality, practical, and fashionable glasses at very affordable prices.

EyeBuyDirect and Zenni Optical have frames starting at \$6 and best of all, purchasing glasses with them is hassle-free and straightforward. Their frames are ideal for men, women, and children. They have a large selection of frames of all styles, shapes, and colors. Whether you want some dainty cat-eye glasses or classic rectangle shaped ones, they have it all. All you must do is make an account which takes less than two minutes, then add your prescription. All lenses are compatible with any prescription and they also have the option to be upgraded to tinted or photochromic for an extra charge. All lenses include an anti-scratch coating and a high percentage of UV protection.

No matter what style of glasses you prefer, you can find them all at EyeBuyDirect and Zenni Optical for a significantly lower price than other retailers. All lenses and frames are carefully assembled by cutting-edge machinery in order to provide you with the best eyewear. And with customer satisfaction

being their first priority, you can rest assured as you will be in good hands. If you want to save some bucks while looking hip, make sure to check them out.

6

Local band with a common bond on the rise

By Ashley Medrano

As I drove further into the dark road and rows of lifeless warehouses, I looked down once again at the time (8:18PM) and my GPS. The rehearsal for the band, Videotheque, was to begin in 12 minutes. However, there were no signs indicating the studio existed and the GPS had already announced my arrival. I was to interview a fellow UHD student, Jesus Garay, lead singer, guitarist, and lyricist of, Videotheque, along with band members.

Videotheque, the Latin alternative band,

originated in mid-November of 2017 with only two official band mates: Jesus Garay and Daniel Campos. Once they began recording their music and sharing it with other musicians, Videotheque expanded the following April to six band members: Erik Martinez, Jesus Verdeza, Ildefonso D'Leon and Alexis Aquilar.

Although the enticing 80s synthesizer riffs and deep vocals captured the attention of the last four members, the primary interest formed from the story-based lyrics. The lyrics were inspired by the deportation of Jesus Garay's uncle, Marcelino Garay, who was sent back to Mexico in November of 2017. Due to each member's Latino heritage, they wanted the story to be heard. During an informal conversation Garay explained, "I went through a dark stage after my uncle was deported. He was, like, a father figure to me. Then, I began to write."

After a couple more trial and errors locating the correct building, I

brought to existence the Rhythm Room Rehearsal Studio. As he led us down the empty eternal hallway, past multiple cloned gray doors, he finally stopped and unlocked two padlocks of a door.

Upon entering the room, a musician's safe haven appeared before my eyes. An array of instruments filled almost every square foot of the already limited sized room. Posters of bands such as Daft Punk, Pink Floyd, and Justice decorated the originally asylum-like room, with an assortment of colored lights adding flare to the refuge.

In observing Jesus Garay's fluid set up of his equipment, I thought in amazement of the rich, but delicate vocals produced by the tall burly framed man with a long ponytail. As he finished setting up, we shortly conversed before keyboardist, Daniel Campos, appeared. Daniel, who also shares the lengthy hair, immediately emitted a musician's atmosphere. Although it was past the sun's curfew, Daniel walked in with his sunglasses and denim jacket. The room's posters, colorful lights, and stickers on the doors all belonged to Daniel, whose taste made the room come to life.

Shortly after Daniel's arrival, entered bassist Jesus Verdeza and guitarist Ildefonso D'Leon, carrying beer to share with the rest of the group. Ildefonso's long curly hair matched his bubbly personality. The Fonz, as he is affectionately called, lightened the mood by making jokes with everyone in the room. Jesus Verdeza, whose hair was shorter, but still carried the Fonz's curly volume, was more reserved as he kindly offered water and beer every 30 minutes.

Due to the drummer's conflicting work schedule, the last member to arrive was guitarist Alexis Aquilar whose hair

does not

mirror anyone, but his personality reflects almost every Keanu Reeves' movie role. As the members filled the limited room space, English and Spanish conversations filled the air.

Suddenly, a chord sounded, all conversation stopped, and five men's eyes closed as they swayed to the sound. Just as the arrival of each member added to the room, so did each instrument add



Photo credit: Ashley Medrano

to the song. In unison, Videotheque went into an entranced-state created by each member's raw sound. The vocals and instruments together brought to life Jesus Garay's story about his uncle Marcelino.

Once they finished the last song on their set list, I pointed out the

SILENCE IS NOT AN OPTION FOR VIDEOTHEQUE.."

random small squares centered on each of the four walls. Videotheque explained that the square foam was in an attempt to soundproof the room. The problem was not from being too loud, but of not being loud enough. Videotheque's soft and melodic sounds were sometimes overpowered by the bands next door, or across the hallway causing their story to be silenced.

Silence is not an option for Videotheque. Every instrument covering the flooring of their room was not easy to come by. The patient band members individually acquired each instrument at a pawnshop. The current attained equipment took an estimated six months of searching. One person's sold dreams became the treasures and tools of Videotheque goal.

The band's hope of spreading their story reached the interest of Rock Latino Alternativo Houston. With about 2,900 Facebook followers, this influential community provides Videotheque with slots at different events. Although their first performance was in April of this year, the band members estimate they already have 20 to 30 regular fans. Film student Elias Flores has also developed an interest behind the story of the album and is currently filming a documentary with a planned release in December to coincide Videotheque's debut album.

The concept album created by Videotheque tells the story of an

immigrant and his life leading up to his deportation. This story has not only created a musical bond, but one within the community. With each member identifying with the struggles of immigration, either through their own experiences, or someone close to them, there is much more left unsaid. And so, while my interview concluded, their stories have yet to be told.

Videotheque will perform in Houston at the Dia De Los Muertos festival at Satellite Bar located on 6922 Harrisburg Blvd on Oct. 27.



Photo credit: Ashley Medrano

called Jesus for assistance. As I walked towards his parked vehicle I watched Jesus pull out his rehearsal gear with ease, carry it into the wide building, and not break a sweat. I followed him into the building with awe, but only for a minute before my senses scattered into frenzy. The pungent herbal odor, the extreme dimmed lights, and the erratic sounds created by a jumble of instruments

Artist spotlight: NICO

By Jesus Garay

We live in a time in which even the smallest musician or band can be heard through the many forms of music streaming like Spotify, Apple Music, Pandora or YouTube Music. What was once a game clearly for giant record labels is now a game for artists of all types of levels. The way we hear music now has influenced all the modern-day local artists in our own city of Houston. The local scene has been able to thrive a bit more within the city and outside; an artist from Houston releasing a single has the probability of having it being heard by someone unrelated in Los Angeles, Mexico City or London. One of the artists in Houston that help the local alternative latin indie community thrive is a musician that has a project named NICO.

Having just released his first single this summer titled *Te Fuiste a Marte*, the single was well received by local artists and it has everyone wondering about what is yet to come. NICO took the time to talk to the Dateline Downtown team about what the song is about, his influences and what kinds of things go through the mind of a musician.

JG: What is your band/artist name?
NICO: The name of the project is NICO

JG: So, tell me...what is the genre of music that you play?
NICO: Well, I call it "Pop-Rock Trovero/Bluesjazzero con aires de Bossa cum-bianchera" I honestly like it when most people can't explain our genre of music.

JG: Out of the many amazing artists that have existed and the ones that exist today, who would you consider to be some of your main influences?

NICO: I have many but I'll just mention six that influence me directly: Caetano Veloso, Silvio Rodriguez, The Beatles, Jorge Drexler, Cafe Tacuba, El David Aguilar.

JG: How long have you been playing music? And has your style evolved a lot since your beginnings?

NICO: I've been playing music since I was thirteen, so, that's sixteen years now. Wow, time flies! And yes I think it has evolved a lot since I was thirteen. I started playing "trova" always as a solo act with my nylon stringed guitar. Then I started exploring and experimenting with other sounds and now I play mostly with a full band. You can probably tell that I'm still very influ-



Photo credit: Jesus Garay

enced by trova but a bit more noisy.

JG: Some musicians are obsessed with the gear that they use to play music with. Do you have a specific brand loyalty for the type of guitar that you use or do you just play anything that sounds good to you? And what about the current guitar that you use? Did you choose it based on the style, color or cost?

NICO: I don't think I'm very obsessed about my gear but I like how Fender amps sound with our music. My favorite right now is a Fender '68.

About my guitars.....I have many (about 10) but the ones I currently use for gigs are a Fender Stratocaster and a Gretsch hollow body. I chose both because of the style. They can give me the sounds I create in my head and I like how they compliment each other. To me it's like the perfect guitar duo on stage.

JG: What is one of your favorite venues to play at here in Houston and do you have any upcoming shows that you can tell us about so we can catch you at your next show?

NICO: My favorite place to play at right now is Axelrad. I actually like how most people that go there don't go for the music, so it becomes a challenge to get their attention. It takes you out of your comfort zone.

My next three shows are all at the Continental Club:
November 10 - Festival
November 24 - Opening for Adan Jodorowsky

December 8 - At the Glass and Elyze album release

JG: We can now access your single titled *Te Fuiste a Marte* on Spotify, YouTube Music and Apple Music. Tell us a bit about that song. Where did it come from?

NICO: The story is simple: It's about a guy with his girlfriend at a coffee place, excitingly he's telling her about his plans/projects when all of a sudden he realizes that she's not with him in that moment. She's only there physically but her mind and soul are already in a different world, in a different dimension, maybe in Mars. He realizes

that there's nothing he can do about it but to let her go. Whenever he's talking

there's a magical connection with the cosmos that occurs and opens his eyes. He wakes up! And almost at the end of the song there's a pause and then a bit of instrumentation giving it the meaning of freedom.


JG: Which goal would you like to achieve next in your musical career?
NICO: Two goals: Finish the album and tour in Mexico in 2019

JG: If you did not become a musician, what would you be doing right now with your life?

NICO: Maybe I would have a family by now, a stable job, sleeping at 10 PM, watching my favorite tv show. You know.....doing what normal people do....a normal and not very exciting life.

JG: Last but not least is a fun question that I use to end all music-related interviews with: Lennon or McCartney?

NICO: Lennon. His way of writing was always very expressive.



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White Oak Music Hall turns on the bright lights

By Jesus Garay

They have come a long way from their debut album, 2002's *Turn on the Bright Lights* to the recently released *Marauder* which debuted on August 24 of this year and yet, somehow, Interpol has managed to maintain the same sound despite the changes in the musical landscape. Most artists evolve or change musical directions in their careers after a while but the new entry in their discography brings a fresh look at the post-punk revival sound that made them famous in the indie music scene. In support of their new album, Interpol began their tour back in June in Vienna, Austria with three stops planned for Texas in late September. One of those stops was on September 29 at the White Oak Music Hall. A concert which brought worry amongst fans at first due to a probable cancellation at the hands of the rainy weather outside but the weather settled just in time and the show was well on its way.

The concert was aimed at fans that have followed their career which spans 6 studio albums with only three tracks off of their recent album making it to their setlist. Their introduction began with a slow song titled *Pioneer*

to the Falls but quickly picked up pace with the second song titled *All the Rage Back Home*. For the casual fan, a lot of songs would seem unfamiliar due to their selection focused mainly on a lot of material that rarely gets played live but they did not leave off their well-known hits. Songs such as *Narc* and *Obstacle 1* took us down memory lane and reminded us why we still listen to them after all these years. Based on other concerts in the past they have shown to be a band that does not focus on the spectacle and glitter of playing live but about the emotion of their music. This show was no different in which the lights added some visuals to the overall experience but the music

itself was the main thing that guided the listeners throughout the whole show.

PROS:

- 1) The lighting: even though it wasn't a huge part of the show they arranged the effects to fit the emotional mood of each and every song.
- 2) If you are into collecting merchandise from the band at the merchandise table; the selection was pretty decent. They had well designed shirts, hoodies, canteens, tote bags, hats, pins, CDs and vinyls. The best part of the merchandise was a poster with the three Texas dates printed on it along with the name of the cities and venues they played at.

CONS:

- 1) The rain from the hours prior to the concert made the grass wet and slippery which caused minor inconveniences
- 2) The guitars were low in sections of songs where they needed more volume.
- 3) The ticket scanners at the gate were slow at times causing long wait times at the line.

SETLIST:

- 1) Pioneer to the Falls
- 2) All the Rage Back Home
- 3) If You Really Love Nothing
- 4) Public Pervert
- 5) Roland
- 6) NYC
- 7) The Rover
- 8) Leif Erikson
- 9) Not Even Jail
- 10) Number 10
- 11) Rest My Chemistry
- 12) Narc
- 13) Take You on A Cruise
- 14) NYSMAW
- 15) Evil
- 16) Lights
- 17) Flight of Fancy
- 18) Obstacle 1

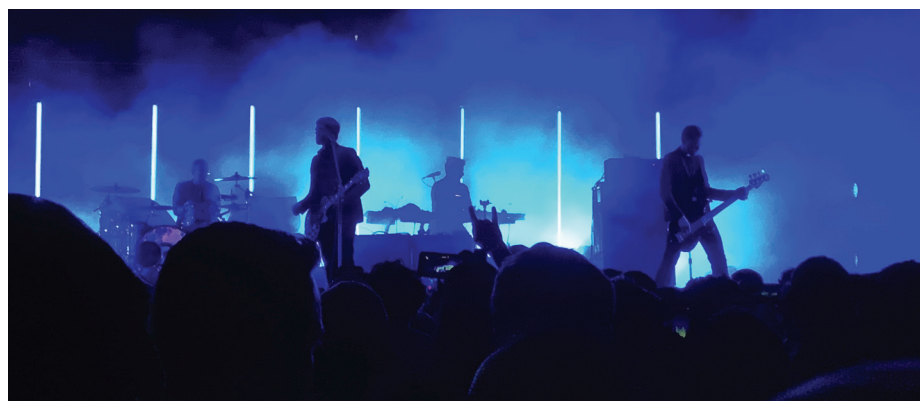


Photo credit; Jesus Garay

Houston artists showcase work at local benefits

By Emily Boyd

Art is a natural and rare talent many do not possess. Houston has an abundant number of individuals whose passion is to express themselves through art. These local artists tell a story through their drawings that when looked upon you can almost feel their emotion. It is an extraordinary gift that many Houstonians are not familiar with. When exploring Houston, it is possible to view the works of these artists on the walls of an underground bridge, the side wall of popular businesses, in alley ways between buildings, and more. Most of the time, the art is hidden to where it isn't



Photo credit: Emily Boyd

easily seen, which is what makes the art so special and unique.

Most local artists do not showcase their art for the benefit of profit. Their main goal is to show Houstonians

their artistry through storytelling and color in hopes of connecting with their viewers. It is possible to just sit for hours at a mural. One might admire its beauty or attempt to understand the deeper meaning behind it.

Recently, local Houston artists have come together to not only showcase their talent, but to benefit others through it as well. Houston offers many local art events that benefit organizations in Houston. Most of the time the events are free, but donations are optional.

These events bring together cultures, new ideas, and experiences. It is something that put together talent with helping the community.

Not every Houstonian is interested in art but that is not an

issue for these types of events. While these events primarily showcase local artists, they also offer live music, opportunities for various vendors to sell their wares, and refreshments. Many events are family friendly, pet friendly, and open to the public. These events attempt to bring people together for the hopes of joining as a community while also enjoying local talent.

It is often asked why local art or these benefit events could bring about passion. Being a Houstonian does not mean just waking up to carry on day to day. Being a Houstonian means being there for your community and those who live in it. It means supporting artistic development, hidden talents, local organizations, and new ideas. It means engaging in your community and being a part of something special. These events show what being a Houstonian is all about.



Photo credit: Emily Boyd

THESE LOCAL ARTISTS
TELL A STORY THROUGH
THEIR DRAWINGS

NaNoWriMo takes place this November

By Sara Ali

One of the events that takes place in November is the annual internet-based creative writing project called the National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo). Between November 1st and 30th, participants attempt to write a 50,000 word manuscript. On November 1st, writers begin working towards the goal of completing a 50,000 word novel by 11:59 p.m. on November 30. The focus of NaNoWriMo is about the length of the work rather than the quality. This project encourages writers to finish their first draft so that it can be later edited at the author's discretion.

This event was started in July 1999 by the freelancer Chris Baty with twenty one participants in the San Francisco, Bay Area. In 2000, he moved this project to November "to more fully take advantage of the miserable weather" and then launched a website through one of his friends. This website provides participants with tips on preventing writer's block, information on where the local

participants are meeting, and an online community for support. Baty expected similar numbers that year, but 5,000 participants registered, and the news of these events was spread by various news organizations such as the Los Angeles Times and Washington Post.

In 2002, due to the attention from media sites such as the National Public Radio and CBS Evening News, the number of participants in the challenge raised to 14,000. By 2015, the numbers of participants of this event was raised to 431,626 people of 63 different regions. More than 40,000 of the participants completed the challenge.

The Office of Letters and Rights was established in September 2006 when NaNoWriMo officially became a nonprofit-organization. The NaNoWriMo collaborated with child literacy nonprofit Room to Read and continued this partnership for four years. This program retired in 2007 and continued to focus its resources on NaNoWriMo and the Young Writers Program.

The Laptop Loaners program

started in 2002 and it was run for those who do not have regular access to a computer. This program is mainly for participants who come from low-income families. Some laptops that were donated by NaNoWriMo participants were old but functional.

Then in 2004, NaNoWriMo ran the Young Writers Program (YMP) which was a writing workshop whose purpose was to aid classrooms of kindergartners through 12th grade students. For this group, the participants are usually young kids.

Camp NaNoWriMo was established in 2011. This camp did not have a forum, but participants can choose to join a group of up to 11 people editing notes and interacting with publishers. This camp is mainly for participants who are continuing writers.

Then in 2013, the months of February and January were known as NaNoWriMo "Now What Months?" which are designed to help novelists during the editing and revision processes. To participate, writers must make a

commitment again to visit their novels which includes signing a contract through NaNoWriMo. The main goal of the "Now What Months?" is to get the novelists published.

Another further step is to attend different internet seminars where publishing experts and NaNoWriMo writers are available to assist novelists on the next step in revising their first drafts. Participants use Twitter to compare editing notes and interact with agents and publishers.

This event continues to be a pivotal moment which impacts writers of all ages. The amount of participants continues to increase every year. National Novel Writing Month is great for writers of all ages, who are eager to get their novels published and to anyone who is passionate about writing. By contributing to this event, it could ignite the spark for writing for anyone craving or who has been having thoughts about writing.

Poor Johnny...

By Brenda Valenzuela



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Lunch for less

By Victoria De Leon

One of the perks of being a student at the University of Houston-Downtown is the location. We are right in the heart of downtown and walking distance from restaurants that every UHD student should try. Frankly, it's part of the experience of being a student at this campus. Even if the restaurants downtown don't offer any kinds of student discounts, they almost always have specials going on so that you can have a great lunch without breaking the bank.

Treebeards on Market Square

315 Travis St, Houston, Texas 77002
Entree with two sides- \$10-\$13
Treebeards is a Southern style restaurant with daily specials that are too good to miss out on. Depending on the day of the week, you can choose between a chicken, fish, or meat entrée with a choice of two sides. Additionally, you have unlimited bread and butter, and free refills for your drink. If you have a huge gap of time in between classes, I would recommend dining in. The restaurant has outdoor seating with a great view of downtown

facing Market Square Park. I will admit that my first time at Treebeards was confusing since it is not your typical sit down and order restaurant. Instead, you pick up a tray and go down the line cafeteria style, telling the employees what you want on your plate. This is part of what makes Treebeards one of my favorite lunch spots. Interacting with the employees is always a pleasant experience. Having a conversation with the person serving your food gives the soul food a great home feeling. As a first timer, it is good to know before you go. Their daily specials and menu can be found online at www.treebeards.com.

Roma's Pizza

233 Main St, Houston, Texas 77002
Lunch special- \$6-\$9
I like to think of Roma's as a classic UHD lunch spot. You can't be a student at UHD and not have had a slice of pizza from Roma's. A six-minute walk from school gets you some of the best pizza in Downtown Houston. Their weekly lunch specials are available Monday-Thursday from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.. Dining in at Roma's will give you a glimpse into how diverse this city really is. I love coming into Roma's because not only do I get great pizza, but I almost always end up having a great conversation with someone new. The tables are somewhat close together, making it almost impossible to not converse with the

people sitting at the next table. A trip to Roma's is always interesting because you never know who you're going to meet. Maybe a trip to Roma's will even turn into a networking opportunity. After all, we are in the heart of downtown—home to major corporate offices in different industries. You can take a look at their menu here: www.romaspizzahouston.com.

La Calle Tacos & Cantina

909 Franklin St, Houston, Texas 77002
Taco Tuesday- Tacos \$1, minimum 5 tacos
Tuesdays are great for tacos. Celebrate Taco Tuesday by walking down Main Street to La Calle Tacos & Cantina. After my first time visiting La Calle, I was hooked. It became my go-to taco spot. I try my best to go every Tuesday because of the cool specials they have.. For those of us who are over 21, the restaurant has happy hour Monday-Friday from 3:00pm-7:00pm, which includes \$1 tacos al pastor, \$2 Tecate cans, \$3 La Cantina Draft, \$4 Margaritas, \$6 Caguama Coronas, and more. This is a great place to enjoy authentic Mexican food surrounded by authentic Mexican décor and music. Eating tacos and listening to the popular and classic Latino hits playing in the background make this a great place to unwind after class. While there, do not forget to take that Instagram worthy picture by the

famous "I love tacos so much" wall. This restaurant is very active on social media and worth a follow! You can find their social media links, menu, location and contact information at <http://www.lacalletacos.com>.

Our Confused Sexual Ethics

By Adam Ellwanger

Given the prevalence of #MeToo, it is a curious moment for a push against monogamy. Scarlett Johansson, a staunch advocate of #MeToo, announced in 2017 that she sees monogamy as unnatural. In the past 5 years, CNN online has published at least 3 articles that reject monogamy, asking "Could opening your relationship to others benefit you and your partner?" Needless to say, CNN also celebrates #MeToo. The left-wing opinion site Vox recently debuted a Netflix show entitled Vox Explained. The first episode? An explanation of why monogamy is unnatural. Despite the scientific veneer of these explanations, make no mistake: these are ethical claims masquerading as scientific ones. What they really say is that monogamy is bad...because it is "unnatural." This desire to return to a sexual state of nature is odd. Over the past 50 years, the cultural left has pursued what they call "sexual liberation," and their biggest successes in this quest are rooted in the assumption that nature *shouldn't* restrict the satisfaction of sexual desire. Birth control pills are one example of this victory over nature. Breast implants and Viagra are other examples. Why, then,

are progressives now calling for us to affirm the natural order? Well, it's because they really don't care about nature one way or the other. When nature is a barrier to total sexual gratification, then it is a problem. And when nature enables gratification, then it must be sanctified. What really matters is that everyone gets off. And that's all well and good. But it doesn't make sense to be calling for a return to a sexual state of nature while you tweet about the merits of #MeToo. #MeToo rightly *affirms* the central importance of consent in sex. And it demands a fairly strident level of decorum from men in the way they interact with women. For example, the myth that 20% of college women will be sexually assaulted in the course of their studies is based on Obama-era government research that classified an "unwanted kiss" (among other adolescent misunderstandings) as a "sexual assault." As a conservative, I am wholly in favor of demanding this kind of restraint and decorum from all men – but I also know that human nature isn't so decorous or restrained. So, if you think that monogamy is unnatural and that the puritanical sexual ethic of #MeToo is fantastic, then you are calling for men to restrain themselves at the same time that you are calling for *lifting the*

restraints on sexual desire. And that's a troubling contradiction.

A return to a sexual state of nature is a really terrible idea. And if the left ever achieves total sexual liberation, I'm not sure that they will like what they see. A close observation of nature shows that it isn't much concerned with consent. And we have to ask: if we revised our sexual ethics in accord with the demands of nature, would those ethics conform to other progressive values? For example, in our natural state, we are particularly drawn to external beauty and strength. So, it follows that under a natural sexual ethic, the beautiful and strong would have greater access to sexual gratification. By the logic of contemporary progressive politics, then, it would seem that beauty and strength are forms of "unearned privilege." Do we really want a sexual ethic that legitimizes privilege? One of the great things about monogamy is that, in theory, there is a partner for everyone. A return to a sexual state of nature would ensure that some people have more partners than others. Put differently, normalized polygamy would violate another ideal that both conservatives and progressives hold dear: equality of access and opportunity. Maybe monogamy is unnatural. I'm not a scientist. But what I do know (as a student of human nature) is that the true liberation of sexual desire through the abolition of all societal restrictions on sex wouldn't give us a life of blissful

fulfillment. It is more likely that it would be an unequal, violent, coercive mess of blood and other bodily fluids. So, I'm thankful for our monogamous norms. Even if they're "unnatural."

Adam Ellwanger is an associate professor in the English department and he directs the M.A. program in rhetoric and composition. He plays guitar and is a member of Heterodox Academy.

12 Can't hide our gator pride 2018!



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