

THE

LEADER

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**An In-depth
Look at FSA
and the Food
on Campus**

Fashion in Fredonia

Live Music Returns to NPSC

Fredonia Sports Update

Black Hairstyles and Culture Appropriation

I am Losing My Marbles

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Front cover: Rotting strawberries in a Fredibles container from Willy C's. Taken by Chloe Kowalyk.

Back cover: Illustration of rotten food. Created by Lydia Turcios.



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I met Chuck Schumer at a Hemp Farm.

New SUNY vaccine mandate

ANNA SMITH

Special to The Leader

The SUNY Fredonia campus has been abuzz with news of the COVID vaccine mandate that recently took effect on Aug. 23 for all SUNY campuses.

Under the mandate, all students currently enrolled at any SUNY school or facility are required to submit either documentation that they are fully vaccinated or an official exemption from receiving a COVID vaccine.

Exemptions are given to students who cannot be vaccinated for religious, medical or remote reasons. Students were granted a 35 day grace period from the time the mandate went into effect on their campus. At SUNY Fredonia, students have until Monday, Sept. 27 to submit the proper documentation to the Health Center, whether that be proof of being fully vaccinated or a vaccine exemption.

As it happens, the SUNY-wide vaccine mandate does not apply to SUNY faculty members, only students. In an email addressed to members of Fredonia's United University Professions (UUP) chapter, Cynthia Smith, the UUP Vice President for Academics, writes that while campus faculty is not required to be fully vaccinated as per New York State's obligation to consult and/or negotiate with the workers' union that many of Fredonia's faculty members belong to, UUP encourages its members "to protect themselves and others by getting fully vaccinated."

She goes on to address widespread student concern regarding the vaccination status of Fredonia employees, which was apparently "[heard] from multiple campus sources."

Smith ends the message by conceding that faculty are not obligated to disclose their vaccination status to students, but encourages them to do so for the sake of quelling student concern.

Deciding to look further into the campus' response to the mandate, I sought for answers straight from the source.

I asked both students and faculty for

their personal views on the mandate, as well as how they felt it would affect the campus community going forward.

I started off by interviewing two students, both of whom were selected completely at random.

The first student I asked, who wishes to remain anonymous, holds an overall unfavorable opinion of the vaccine mandate, stating that while they "[understand] the intention behind it and [encourage] people to get vaccinated," they think that "the choice to get vaccinated should ultimately be left up to the individual and not forced onto them by a larger institution."



Illustration by Ash Maloney.

On the other hand, the second student I asked, sophomore Sydney Feinsilver, supports the mandate wholeheartedly.

"I think the mandate is reasonable," she said, "especially if it means that more people getting vaccinated will decrease the amount of COVID cases on campus going forward and lead to an ultimately safer campus. Get the vaccine."

I then directed my attention to the views of Fredonia faculty members.

I first posed some questions to Michael Sheehan, Assistant Professor of English, regarding his personal views on the vaccine mandate.

He backs the mandate, stating that "personal health is integrally connected to public health."

To Sheehan, the mandate seems like "a way of asking every individual to commit to the good of the whole com-

munity, and [he] is all for asking students and others to see themselves as part of a larger whole, and to act with the greater good in mind."

He went on to say that while he doesn't see "masking, testing, or other precautions [being] removed as soon as students have presented their vaccine status," he hopes the mandate will allow us "to safely continue the academic and social life of the college."

The second faculty member I interviewed was none other than Dr. Stephen Kolison, the President of SUNY Fredonia.

In asking him what the effects of the mandate will be on the campus community going forward, Kolison discussed the ongoing threat that COVID poses to several communities across the globe.

As such, he believes the mandate "will make the campus safer, especially where student health is concerned."

More specifically, he thinks more students getting vaccinated "will keep COVID cases down on every SUNY campus, Fredonia included."

From these findings, it seems both students and faculty alike are at the very least in support of people receiving a COVID vaccine for the overall health and well-being of the campus community.

The dividing factor here appears to be on the very nature of the mandate itself: should all students be required to be fully vaccinated in order to stay enrolled in the SUNY system?

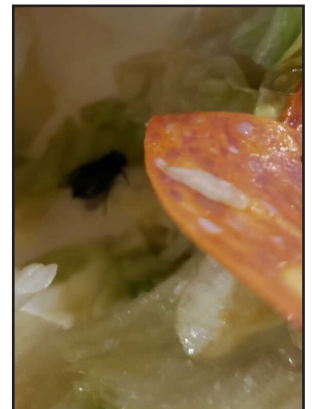
Some might say that this is the purpose of granting exemptions from getting vaccinated to certain individuals for religious, medical or remote reasons.

Others might disregard the allowance for exemptions altogether and say that getting vaccinated should ultimately be the choice of the individual.

There are also those who say that all students being required to get vaccinated will ultimately be for the greater good of every campus community within the SUNY system — that it might be one step closer to things going back to how they were before COVID.

But one thing is for certain: The return to normalcy is what most everyone hopes for, regardless of where you stand.

An in-depth look at



CHLOE KOWALYK News Editor

You walk into Willy C's after a long day of classes to finally get something to eat.

Walking up to the Kiosk, your stomach rumbles.

You order your food, a fruit cup and a sub, and wait the 10 or 15 minutes it takes for your sub to be prepared.

After your order is called, you pick up your bag and head back to your room, stomach still rumbling.

When you make it to your room, you open your bag, and to your dismay, your fruit cup is covered in mold.

That rumbling feeling in your stomach is replaced by a sickening feeling.

Disgusted, you bring your moldy fruit cup back to Willy's and show the workers your fruit cup.

They give you a new fruit cup to replace the moldy one, but do you really want to eat it?

Unfortunately, this story is completely true — it happened to me just a few weeks ago.

Upon sharing my moldy fruit story with my friends and classmates, I found out they have had similar problems with the food on campus.

One friend told me she found a dead fly in her salad from Blue Devil Grill.

Another told me how the chicken on their wrap didn't seem to be fully cooked and made them feel sick.

Yet another student found a long, black hair inside of her fruit cup.

We quickly began to realize that this was a common experience for many students on SUNY Fredonia's campus.

All meal plans, dining halls and catering on campus are organized through the college's Faculty Student Association.

To gain some further insight into this issue, I decided to interview a student who used to work for FSA, at Willy C's and Blue Devil Grill about the sanitation and health practices in the dining halls.

"I personally don't think we had proper training for sanitation and health," the student, who wishes to remain anonymous, explained.

"For the most part, we were just told to do certain things..." the student continued. "I always tried to keep my station as clean as possible and cleaned everything as best as I could, mostly because I wouldn't want to be eating food that came from an unclear preparation space, so why would I serve that to someone else?"

The student explained that Student Leaders were supposed to train the other workers, yet much of the time, the students were not trained on how to do anything.

When it comes to spoiled food, the student explained the FSA workers were told to either throw the food away or get a manager to approve the food to be thrown out.

With my fruit cup story mentioned earlier, the workers did just that. They threw away my moldy fruit cup and replaced it with a new one.

Still, simply throwing away my bad product cannot excuse the fact that so many students are experiencing this.

It doesn't seem plausible that I had simply gotten unlucky with my gross food when so many other students had also gotten "unlucky" as well.

The bad food experiences with FSA don't only exist in the dining halls.

Abby Tartaro, a fellow student here at SUNY Fredonia, was quarantined in Hendrix Hall last semester for concerns related to COVID-19.

Students like Tartaro that are quarantined on campus have no choice but to have their food delivered to them by FSA employees from the dining halls.

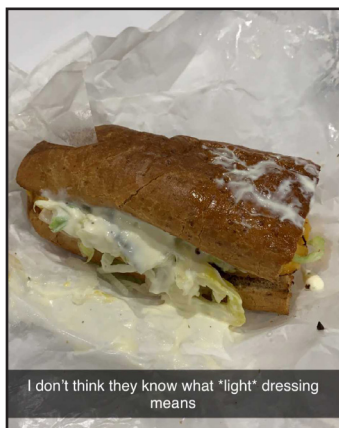
Tartaro explained that she was given two options each day per meal.

While the food being served was properly portioned, included options for those with dietary restrictions and was decently healthy, Tartaro still had some concerns with her quarantine diet.

"Half the time the food was expiring that day and I was too scared to eat it," she said. "This made me uncomfortable and I had to resort to Instacart in order to get food that I trusted."

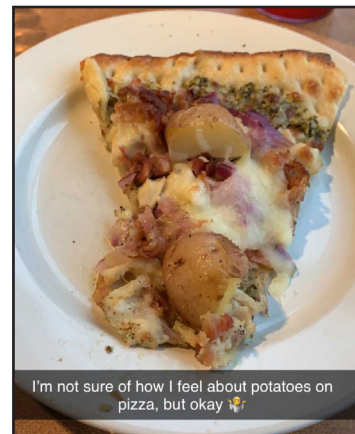
Another student who had to quarantine on campus described his food as being "soggy and mushy and usually cold."

and the food on campus



Darin Schulz, executive director of FSA, says FSA could improve on "the consistency of quality."

Schulz describes how FSA has been dealing with severe understaffing and relies a lot on students, who can only work a limited amount of hours.



Photographs of FSA food submitted to @LeaderFredonia's Instagram.

Not only is the food subpar for both quarantined and not-quarantined students, but the options for dining on campus have been severely limited since the beginning of the pandemic.

Almost all of the cafes on campus, with the exception of Café Mason and FredExpress, have been closed.

Two of the most notable café closures are Sprout Café, which served exclusively vegan options, and Tea Rex, which served boba tea and other breakfast items.

Various students are saddened by this news as they are now very limited in places to use their meal plans.

To get some answers regarding the café closures and about the food here on campus in general, I spoke to Darin Schulz, the executive director of FSA.

Schulz explained that there were many reasons several of the cafés on campus closed.

Sprout Café closed prior to COVID-19, as the college was losing money by keeping the café open.

To keep vegan options available on campus, Schulz explained after Sprout closed, the other cafés began serving the vegan options previously available at Sprout.

Schulz further explained that since many students were virtual and not on campus last year, many of the cafés had to close.

According to Schulz, FSA is also understaffed, and they did not have

enough labor to keep all of the cafés open and staffed.

For the café in McEwen in particular, Schulz says, "we want to get through this year and look at next year with the hopes of possibly opening it back up."

In regards to the budget, FSA did not include opening up the McEwen Café when creating the budget last spring, since the vaccines were just beginning to roll out, and no one knew what the next academic year would look like.

However, the budget is not permanent, as Schulz said FSA can "make adjustments as we go forward."

I also asked Schulz how students with dietary restrictions can navigate their meal plan.

He explained that there are always vegan options available at the dining halls, and there is a guide to avoiding allergens available online, as well as pamphlets for eating vegan and vegetarian at Fredonia.

Regarding the bad food experiences many students have been dealing with, Schulz says he hasn't been "made aware" of these situations, particularly dead flies in the food.

He explains that every once in a while, a bad product makes its way through from either FSA themselves or their supplier, and that they follow sanitation procedures from the county health department.

Schulz emphasizes that if students find a bad product, they should present

it to the manager so they can deal with the situation.

FSA's severe understaffing is also the reason why the food given to quarantined students was "soggy."

Schulz said the FSA workers in charge of providing meals to the quarantined students had to head to the dining halls, get the food, walk back over to Hendrix and then deliver the food to the 20-30 students in quarantine, which is why the food ended up becoming soggy and cold.

Schulz says people's biggest misconception about FSA is that "there is a lack of options."

He says there are always options for students to eat with restrictions on campus, they simply need to ask. Schulz feels FSA could do a better job of communicating those options to students.

Schulz also says FSA could improve on "the consistency of quality."

He describes how FSA has been dealing with severe understaffing and relies a lot on students, who can only work a limited amount of hours.

"It's never something that I thought would be an issue," Schulz said.

There are also significant issues in the supply chain, and FSA has had to make many alterations to meals.

As we move out of the pandemic, we can only hope for new, positive changes to come of FSA and our food on campus.

Afghanistan, How did we get here?

CASEY HUBER

Special to The Leader

What a mess.

At the time of this writing, there have been over 150 casualties in an airport bombing in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan and also the location of the only major airport in the country.

I say “at the time of writing this” because the experts are expecting things to get worse, not better.

The Taliban is back in control of Afghanistan.

To examine what is happening and why, we must examine how we got here.

While history is a patient teacher, there are many lessons to learn when examining the war in Afghanistan.

Early history

George Santayana, a Spanish philosopher, once said “those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it.”

So, in that spirit, we must examine Afghanistan’s history.

I preface this history by saying that it is severely abridged. If you are interested in the complete history of Afghanistan’s governments, check out the Encyclopedia Britannica page.

To say it is complex is an understatement.

The government of Afghanistan has had several major changes.

To start, Afghanistan was ruled by a monarchy for the better part of its history. Regional tribes would vie for power and it would ebb and flow between them, that was interspersed with major conquering events such as the Byzantine Empire, Islamic conquest and Mongol invasions.

We want to focus on the 1700s to the present day.

First, let’s examine the influence of colonialism on Afghanistan. The British and the Russian Empires were in a contest known now as “The Great Game,” where territories in East Asia, including Afghanistan, were in a tug-of-war match

between the two colonial powers.

This resulted in many regional conflicts and a pseudo-proxy war (meaning that the major actors were using smaller groups to do the fighting for them), but most importantly, we find the British were successful in holding the capital Kabul against Russian interference.

British colonialism was not unique to Afghanistan. The British were also well entrenched in the distant neighbor India, and Afghanistan was the route the British took to get to India.

rule of the country back into the hands of the monarchistic Afghan royal families.

The monarchy continued, and almost grew into a more democratic form of government. That’s when a bloody coup resulted in the takeover of the People’s Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (PDRA), a communist faction with close ties to the Soviet Union. The PDRA existed in some form or another until 1992.



“Afghanistan visit” by The U.S. Army is licensed with CC BY 2.0.

Keep in mind this is in the time before planes, and traveling by boat meant traveling around the horn of Africa to reach your destination.

British colonialism in Afghanistan was more of a strategic and regional colonialism than your traditional resource harvesting and market expansion colonialism. This meant the British were not as involved or influential in the daily lives of Afghans.

British colonialism continued until 1919. That’s when a civil war placed

Marxist-Leninist influence

After several quick changes in government culminating in the Saur Revolution, the PDRA once again seized control and renamed the country the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in 1978.

The leaders began implementing Marxist-Leninist laws to replace traditional, secular laws.

The USSR began pouring money and resources into the country, with estimates reaching around \$1.25 billion in

new infrastructure.

Unfortunately, there was significant unrest in 24 of the 28 regions in the country due to the new laws and what was perceived as a move away from traditional Islamic teachings.

Over half of the army either deserted or joined the insurrection.

In response, the USSR sent in troops to support the Marxist-Leninist government, and thus began the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan as well as the beginning of America's foreign interference.

Charlie Wilson's war

If one man is to be blamed for the reckless support of the Afghan mujahideen (an Islamic word for freedom fighters), it is Texas Democrat Charlie Wilson.

Wilson was in office from 1961 to 1996, and over those 24 years, Wilson made himself known as a warhawk.

A warhawk is a congressional representative who advocates for and supports military interventionism.

In Wilson's case, his war manifested itself in the conflict between the then USSR and the Islamic mujahideen that were rebelling against the country.

Wilson was responsible for the funneling of as much as \$40 billion dollars to the mujahideen forces in cash and guns.

Most notably among the contributions to the rebellion were the over 2,000 surface-to-air missiles, which were intended to act as a repellent to the USSR's helicopters.

These surface-to-air missiles would become a major threat once al-Qaeda, a faction developed from the mujahideen in the 1980s, would attack the United States on Sept. 11, 2001.

The US attempted to buy back the missiles — at exorbitant prices — but it was ultimately unsuccessful.

These powerful weapons could be used against the US in a multitude of ways, namely in follow up attacks on US soil after 9/11.

The resources given to the mujahideen became tools used by al-Qaeda against the United States. Charlie Wilson's actions cost both American and Afghan lives.

So why did he do it? Why did Wilson fund the mujahideen in such absurd quantities?

Fear of communism.

Wilson was a believer in containment theory, which you may have heard about through a history class in high school.

Containment theory is the idea that if one country falls to Communism, then their neighbors will do the same, until all the dominos fall under the oppressive and brutal rule of the Communist leaders in the USSR, therefore the US should do everything in their power to contain the spread of Communism.

Debates over whether containment theory has any merit can be left to a separate article.

In fact, any perspective on containment theory leads us to the same unfortunate conclusion: The US involvement in the USSR's war in Afghanistan directly led to a power vacuum in which terrorist groups flourished.

Defining the Taliban and al-Qaeda

Before we continue to modern history, let's examine some of the key differences between the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

It is a common mistake to conflate or confuse the two groups, but there are notable distinctions.

The Taliban and al-Qaeda are both fundamentalist Islamic organizations, but al-Qaeda is considered extremist.

Likewise, the Taliban is a political organization, where al-Qaeda is a terrorist organization.

On many occasions, the Taliban has been complicit in the terrorist actions of al-Qaeda.

For example, the 9/11 Commission found that the Taliban had allowed al-Qaeda to plan and coordinate the 9/11 attacks.

The Taliban was responsible for hiding al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden after the 9/11 attacks.

But make no mistake, al-Qaeda is the group that planned and carried out the terrorist attacks.

Now, it is theorized the Taliban is in charge of Afghanistan after US withdrawal, they will allow al-Qaeda to continue operating.

9/11 and killing bin Laden

On Sept. 11, 2001, terrorists gained control of several airplanes and sent them crashing into the twin towers and the Pentagon.

With more destruction planned but thwarted by the brave American heroes on Flight 93, the plane destined for the

US capitol building instead crashed into the ground in Somerset County, Pa.

These are stories we lived through, grew up hearing or heard from others about the horrors al-Qaeda caused.

Retribution against al-Qaeda and bin Laden was justified in the minds of Americans after 9/11.

So, we went to war.

It took 10 years to kill bin Laden.

10 years.

I remember when bin Laden was killed. It was a jubilant time, and though I was too young to remember the 9/11 attacks, I was told that the country had a similar feeling of unity and celebration.

But the story doesn't end there.

The US didn't leave Afghanistan for another 10 years.

Why?

Why we stayed

Some people say that the US stayed in Afghanistan after bin Laden was killed to keep nation-building and ultimately protect the Afghan's freedom.

Some people claim that the US stayed because of the natural resources of the region, namely oil.

Some people will tell you that no president had either the opportunity or the will to completely withdraw.

Only time will tell what the true reason was.

In the meantime, we should examine what the present holds for Afghanistan now that the US is gone, and the Taliban are in control.

Taliban rule

To understand what the future holds for Afghanistan, we should remember the past.

During the war, the Taliban were sidelined from the government, so we must examine what life was like before 2001 under Taliban rule.

The US Department of State has an analysis of the Taliban's rule, particularly through the lens of Taliban rule over women.

"Islam has a tradition of protecting the rights of women and children. In fact, Islam has specific provisions which define the rights of women in areas such as marriage, divorce and property rights. The Taliban's version of Islam is not supported by the world's Muslims."

"Although the Taliban claimed that it was acting in the best interests of

Continued on next page.

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women, the truth is that the Taliban regime cruelly reduced women and girls poverty, worsened their health and deprived them of their right to an education, and many times, the right to practice their religion.”

“The Taliban is out of step with the Muslim world and with Islam.”

These statements from the US Department of State show an important distinction for where to cast blame.

Islam itself is not to blame for the Taliban’s brutality.

The Taliban is to blame for the Taliban’s brutality.

Western media tends to portray the Taliban as unintelligent brutes.

Afghanistan veteran Mark Bort has a different perspective.

Bort was a US contractor from 2010 to 2011 and saw his fair share of the Taliban’s brutality.

He describes them as “very intelligent” in their “guerilla warfare” tactics.

Furthermore, Bort says the Taliban would rarely do their own dirty work, often paying impoverished civilians to do the work for them.

On the training of soldiers, Bort sees the native Afghan soldiers as people just trying to get a paycheck.

“They never really wanted to fight,” Bort said.

With this perspective in mind, it is not surprising that Kabul fell to the Taliban as fast as it did.

Perhaps trying to train civilians whose only priority was getting enough money to put food on the table was a fool’s errand.

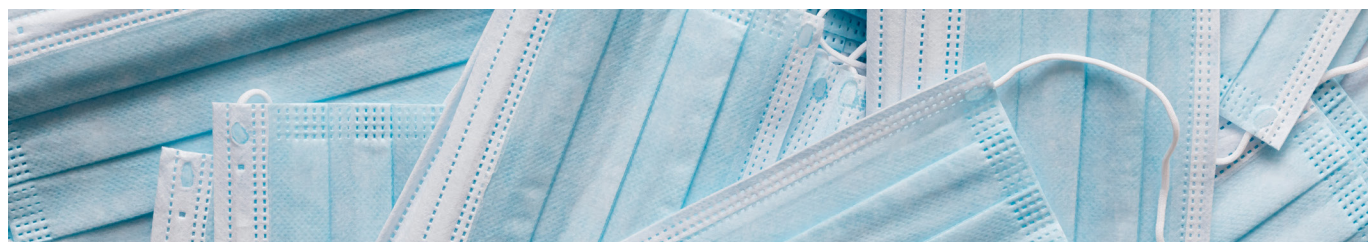
Final thoughts

The war cost 20 years, \$1 trillion dollars, 2,300 US soldiers killed, 20,660 US soldiers wounded and 111,000 civilians either killed or wounded.

Knowing what little we know now, there is one question on my mind.

Was it worth it?

Mask mandate announced to stay in place on SUNY Fredonia campus



Photograph from Pexels, Karolina Grabowska.

CLARE NORMOYLE

Special to The Leader

The fall 2021 semester has been a little different for Fredonia students this year.

It’s the first semester in almost two years where students and faculty will have a full day of classes in person.

But with this physical luxury comes safety requirements.

SUNY Fredonia President Stephen H. Kollison sent out a campus-wide email last Thursday letting students and faculty know that when they are inside of campus buildings, they are required to wear masks at all times.

This announcement comes after the spike in positive cases in the county in the last couple of weeks.

“If you look at the CDC data tracker for Chautauqua County, the numbers are not good. The seven 7-day positivity rate is 12%. The number of positive cases in the county is up 13% over the past week,” said Kollison.

So, with these mandates set forth, campus clubs are looking to find ways to still enjoy their clubs and activities while still remaining safe.

Emily Cammarata, president of The Riveters, an a capella group on campus said, “As a group, we are still holding attendance as a way to enforce active participation, but we are modifying it to be more lenient when it comes to health concerns. If a member is sick or was exposed, we encourage them to stay home! It is not worth the stress and worry to

come to rehearsal if someone feels they could be spreading the virus.”

Cammarata’s goal with The Riveters is to make sure their club finds ways to stay active.

She wants to make sure that everyone feels safe and comfortable in the environment created for them, even if it means adjusting activities such as their audition process..

Other clubs, such as PRSSA, are making changes to their group’s agenda as well.

“Public Relations Student Society of America will be doing their meetings in a more hybrid format, meaning some will be in-person and others will be on zoom,” said Ariana Tooker, the club’s president.

While the weather is still cooperating, many organizations are looking to move their larger activities outside if possible.

Tooker is also the Vice President of Latinos Unidos.

Although most of LU’s events are in person, Tooker explained that “movie night, for example, will be outside to make it safer for those not comfortable attending indoor events on campus.”

Many clubs on campus recognize that COVID-19 is still around, and the numbers are increasing.

Thus, they support the President’s decisions and the guidelines given in order to reduce the spread.

Kollison also wanted the campus community to know that, “...wearing a mask can be an inconvenience. But, compared to the impact of getting infected with COVID-19, the inconvenience associated with the mask is far better.”

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Chautauqua Cen  er

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Life & Arts

Fredonia Marxonia art contest

LYDIA TURCIOS

Art Director

Fredonia Marxonia: The Marx Brothers Film Festival and Symposium celebrates the creative works of the Marx brothers and their connection to the town of Fredonia through “Fredonia,” the fictional setting of their 1933 film, “Duck Soup.”

The event is multifaceted and includes a yearly art contest. After all, what better way to celebrate than through creative works of your own?

Each entry must relate to the Marx brothers — Harpo, Groucho, Chico, Zeppo and Gummo — or their works in any way, shape or form.

Anyone within the Fredonia community is allowed to enter, and you are free to use any medium you choose! From a diorama, a detailed charcoal piece or even a lifesize standee.

Besides paying tribute to the famous comedians, the best part about this festival is its accessibility to any skill level. You are being judged more on your creativity than your technical skill. Go wild with your concepts and don't worry too much about the outcome — the only rule is keep your work original.

All entries qualify for cash prizes — \$100 for first place, \$75 for second place and \$50 for third place.

The winning entries are to be included in a small display at Reed Library, including entries from this year and entries from the previous year. This display will run from Sept. 28 through Oct. 17.

This year's entries are due by Sept.

28. You may submit your entries to

Cindy Yochym in Reed Library, or contact her at Cynthia.Yochym@fredonia.edu. If you're not sure where her office is, ask an employee at the reference desk in Reed Library or make a left at the Office of the Registrar.

Examples of submissions and more information on the event can be found at fredonia.libguides.com/marxonia.

The fully online illustrated lecture “Home Again: The Marx Brothers and New York City” (2020) by Noah Diamond can also be found here as last year's commemoration, which will soon be followed by this year's “There's Nothing Like Liberty: The Marx Brothers and America” (2021). Both of these films are entirely free and open to the public.

Support for the Fredonia Marxonia comes through the Hahn Family Fredonia Marxonia



Illustration by Ash Maloney.



You're welcome here



Health Care
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ROCKIN THE COMMONS



**EVENT
POSTPONED**

**NEW DATE COMING
SOON**





MJ Derilus



Halle Cook



Luke Varacek



Freedom of Fashion in FREDONIA

ALYSSA BUMP

Editor in Chief

One of my favorite parts of attending a liberal arts school is walking around campus and getting a sense of how unique every individual is through their clothing choices.

Clothing is a form of self-expression. You can base your style off a specific aesthetic or switch things up depending on your mood.



Above: Halle Cook's backpack.
All photographs by Alyssa Bump.

Societal expectations can make it difficult for some people to dress the way they'd like, but college students have always been known to push boundaries.

MJ Derilus, a freshman political science major, defines their style as "punk and a little bit of goth."

Derilus was walking near UC Commons in a blue striped dress, ripped tights, black platform boots and an array of silver jewelry.

To pair, they wore dark colored eye makeup as well as a necklace that encased a scorpion.

Derilus said their friends inspire their style. "They are really cool to me, and they help me become more confident in myself."

My favorite aspect of Derilus' style is their bright, red hair and their facial piercings.

Derilus feels as though their mood impacts their outfits. When they are feeling confident, they sometimes put on white face paint. Derilus said the look "sticks out on campus, but I don't mind people looking at me."

Another person's outfit that stood out to me was Halle Cook, a senior English major.

She wore a pair of hand-embroidered overalls with a red undershirt. Her burlap backpack also fit an indie-hipster vibe, which had an image of a Grateful Dead album cover on the front pocket.

She defines her style as "fairy-esque and whimsical."

Cook frequents thrift stores and Depop for her clothes, and often cuts and

reshapes them into original pieces.

One of her style inspirations is Florence from Florence The Machine.

Cook said, "I love the way people dress on campus. Everyone walks to the beat of their own drum."

Luke Varacek, a sophomore acting major, wore a seatbelt buckle belt with Birkenstock sandals, a camp t-shirt and grey shorts.

Varacek got the shirt from his job in Long Island where he worked with young actors. The theme happened to be "camp gateway," which is written on the front of the shirt in wooden lettering.

"Most people don't know what it [camp gateway] is. But that's what I sort of like about it," said Varacek.

The shirt also pictured a tent with several green pine trees and a bird flying over the sun.

Varacek said he likes to dress nice because "if I'm going to look nice, then I'm going to feel good."

Looking across the campus walkway were dozens of other tasteful, trendsetting outfits. Floral dresses paired with corduroy jackets, cargo pants with headscarves, bucket hats, plaid-patterned pants and of course, the ever-present sweatpants and t-shirt combo.

But above all else, everyone has the freedom to wear what they please on this campus. Whether it be a comfy sweater kind-of-day to feeling confident enough to wear something a bit daring, our outfits are an outward extension of ourselves.

Fredonia Honors Program presents leadership stories to campus community



Betty Gossett. Image from State University of New York at Fredonia.



Vicki Sapp. Image from State University of New York at Fredonia.



David Starrett. Image from State University of New York at Fredonia.

ALYSSA BUMP

Editor in Chief

Most college students are on a journey of self-discovery.

But with self-discovery comes confusion, and even when we think we are on the right track, it is nice to get some reassurance and advice from those we look up to.

The Fredonia Honors Program is aware of the value advice holds, so it recently hosted a free event for students to get professional advice from campus leaders.

The program, Opening Doors: Leadership Stories & Strategies from Campus and Student Leaders, was held in the Kelly Auditorium of the Science Center Saturday, Sept. 18 from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Light refreshments were served within the first half hour of the event, which included lemonade, cookies and sliders.

Many of the attendees spent that time socializing with one another in the lobby of the Science Center prior to the event.

Campus leaders that were invited to share anecdotes about how they got to where they are included: Betty Gossett, Interim Vice President for University Advancement and Executive Director of the Fredonia College Foundation, Dr. Vicki Sapp, Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, and Dr. David Starrett, Executive Vice President and Provost.

Dr. Natalie Gerber, the Director of the Honors Program, said this year's speakers "showcased campus leaders who play a significant role in the vitality and

vision of our campus."

Some of Gosset's main advice during her speech was to embrace change and take chances.

Gosset is a Fredonia alum, and she credited doing internships and networking to her success.

Both Gosset and Sapp spoke about how they were first generation college students, but both have very different upbringings.

Sapp is originally from the Bronx, and she emphasized the importance of understanding how everyone has their own story.

She spoke about being very angry when she first went to college due to her home life, but she took control of her education and excelled.

At one point in her speech, Sapp said, "Opportunities will open up for you, but will you walk through the door?"

She ended her speech with the beautiful poem, "Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes, to drive home that everyone has their own story. Although most of us will never fully know each other's past, we can work hard to grow and move forward.

Starrett spoke about his struggles with public speaking and how he learned to leave his comfort zone.

He also advised the audience to never wait until they are ready for leadership roles because it is hard to ever feel ready. Rather, it is important to get comfortable with uncomfortability.

After the campus leaders spoke, a speech was made on behalf of Israel Ortiz, President of the Student Association, about his leadership

journey during his time as a Fredonia student. Following, Omicron Delta Kappa Honor Society led leadership activities for event goers.

Ortiz said he hopes his speech "inspired students, especially first year students to get up and get involved ... We need more students who will take the initiative, step up, put their neck on the line, and stand up for themselves and their constituents."

Peter Howlett, co-presenter of Omicron Delta Kappa's workshop, said that their leadership activity "assisted attendees in redefining their leadership values and in reframing their motivations as a leader for a more empathetic expression of their abilities as a leader."

To close the event, Jody Gordon and Abby Hart spoke about student-led sustainability projects on campus, which encompassed a journey to the campus garden.

Gerber said she hopes students are "inspired by the campus and student leaders and use their stories and strategies to envision next steps for themselves in their academic, extra-curricular and professional experiences."

The event, in Gerber's words, was "a rare opportunity to sit down in a relatively small gathering with campus leaders and hear them talk about their journeys and share advice for how to become a successful leader."

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LIVE MUSIC RETURNS

to North Pole Strip Club



Left: Fernway. Middle: Eeries Shores. Right: The Safest Ledge. All photographs by Karalyn Hope.

KARALYN WALTER
Special to The Leader

Note: The North Pole Strip Club is a venue for live music shows, not an actual strip club.

The North Pole Strip Club, better known as NPSC, hosted their third live show of the semester on Sept. 18, 2021 with The Safest Ledge, Fernway and Eerie Shores.

Not only was this show one of the band's first shows since early 2020, but there were a lot of new faces in the basement marking their very first house show.

Run mainly by students of Fredonia's Music Industry program, the NPSC house has been hosting shows for a few years now with sets from various genres and artists. Last year, during the pandemic, instead of hosting shows, they created "The Maple Tapes Live," a series on YouTube where bands recorded a live set in the basement of the house to be streamed.

Saturday night marked the welcoming back of the Eerie Shores boys to their old dojo with two very familiar names: The Safest Ledge and Fernway.

The night before the NPSC show all three bands played a fun and successful show in Youngstown, Ohio at WestSide Bowl. Not only was this a hometown show for The Safest Ledge, it was Eerie Shores' first show out of state.

Eerie Shores kicked off the NPSC show by playing a variety of brand new, unreleased and older songs including "Killing" and "Cover Me." Eerie Shores also played their song "Ghosts (Dried Out)" live for the first time in a while. The idea came to them earlier in the day to revisit and perform the song. Everyone, including myself, enjoyed hearing this song back on the Eerie Shores setlist.

The Safest Ledge — Youngstown, Ohio's rock, emo and alternative band — returned to NPSC for their second time.

The Safest Ledge is a group to keep on your radar. Their 2021 single "What

Have You Done" is a must-listen and a great song to start with if you missed the show and or want to re-visit the discography of the traveling, out-of-state, group.

Fernway ended the show in the best way by playing some of their recent singles including "Good Enough" and "Mountain Climber" along with 2020 songs "I Have to Return Some Video Tapes" and "Big.Bad.Ugly." Fans had their dancing shoes on.

Overall, the show was filled with high energy and smiles throughout, marking it my favorite NPSC show of the semester so far.

Entry is always free to the shows and donations are always encouraged because some bands travel many hours to include a Fredonia spot on their tour.

Interested in attending the next NPSC show? Follow @npssc_npssc_ on Instagram for more information about shows. For the address of the NPSC, DM the venue's Instagram.

Vaccination cards are required at the door, and the venue has a limited capacity.

John Buck: Prints and sculptures



Left: "The Coal Mine" (1996) by John Buck. "Fact and Fiction" (1997) by John Buck. Photographs by Lydia Turcios.

LYDIA TURCIOS Art Director

I had the pleasure of attending the John Buck exhibit of woodblock prints and sculptures at the Marion Art Gallery this past Friday, Sept. 10. I've been to quite a few of the exhibitions here at Fredonia and I am happy to say this is one of my favorites.

I'll keep it concise since I really believe this is something you should see for yourself, rather than reading a description.

John Buck's woodblocks read as beautifully written diary entries about his experiences and views of the world.

The woodblocks stand the height of an adult, averaging about five feet tall, and there is something new to see every time you look at a piece.

I looked at "The Coal Mine" (1996) at least six times during my visit and continued to find new things to see, from the depiction of Lady Godiva atop her horse, to an adult dancer jumping out of a cake. This portion of the installment is an ode to women's treatment throughout human history. The piece depicts a woman — a wire

woman holding a crow beneath her ribcage upon a backdrop of objectification, mutilation and sexualization.

One may find this to be a touch on-the-nose. Personally, I found the forthrightness of most of his politically and socially driven works to be refreshing.

There are no guessing games, no need for a degree to make sense of his point — just a pair of eyes and a willingness to look and listen.

Whatever your pick of poison is, there's likely a print that would speak to you in his portfolio of work: war, religion, economics, oppression, environmentalism — all things found in the carefully cut and inked puzzle pieces of his work.

The breadth of his work was so extensive it seemed that he had put his heart on display for the public to see.

While I did say his work is forthright, he has created one piece specifically meant to be up for interpretation by the viewer, and this is this one I encourage you to see for yourself.

"Fact and Fiction" (1997) is an eight-color woodcut demonstration of the juxtaposing sides of the human mind. The emotional, raw, surreal, and

sometimes dangerous "Fiction" side, and the analytical, calculating, logical and sometimes volatile "Fact" side.

Much like "The Coal Mine" (1996), I found there was always something new to see in the backdrop. My favorite tidbit is the gas-mask-wearing angel rowing down a river of sludge. Or maybe it's the Tower of Babel perched atop a head composed entirely of mouths.

Before I wrapped up my visit to the gallery, I asked the faculty why they believe students should come and see the exhibit.

Barbara Racker, the Marion Art Gallery director, said the exhibit would be a good source of inspiration. Hyla Stellhorn, the Marion Art Gallery assistant director, pointed out there was no better way to experience it than in person. I must agree that, although one may try, pictures and descriptions of Buck's work does not do it justice.

There is plenty of time to stop in between classes and see the exhibit for yourself.

The John Buck exhibit will run in the Marion Art Gallery from now until Nov. 19.

Fredonia's 25th Red, White & Blues Festival: Staying cool and community connected



Vendors and attendees at the festival on Water Street. Photograph by Luis Rios.

LUIS RIOS

Special to The Leader

Fredonia's annual Red, White & Blues Festival, held on Sept. 10 to 11, brought excitement to Fredonia's Beaver Club on Friday night and a parade of performances and vendors to Water Street on Saturday.

This gathering of the community ranged from volunteers to stall vendors to the festive locals and college part-takers celebrating the rock 'n' roll. The event commemorated 25 years of the festival, since last year's festivities were pushed aside due to the pandemic.

Despite the ongoing construction at Barker Commons, the normal location of the event, Water Street accommodated the festival just as nicely for the main event at the end of the week.

There were stalls selling doll clothes and tie-dye shirts. Others offered quick eats, fudge that doesn't melt and taste testing for whiskey and wines. The wonderful food, well spirits and rocking music on such a smooth September afternoon couldn't be beaten.

Various vendors agreed that "the music was an added bonus."

Owen Doran, a senior music industry student, said "It's something very fun to do here on a Saturday at Fredonia while the weather's still nice, and I could be listening to this music all day."

Starting off and setting the mood for the Women in Blues theme was Buffalo's own rock band, Grosh. The headlining act, Kara Grainger, performed soon after.

Kara Grainger's lyrics and music was just as smooth sounding to the ears as whiskey is to the tongue.

Special events like this don't just kick off on their own though. It comes from the help of the volunteering board of directors and various committee members of Festivals Fredonia who arrange this and the other festival events. Each event is planned at the beginning of the year.

Larry Fiorella, chairman of the Festivals Fredonia board, said the volunteers "all love doing this," and have "a good time helping each other out making sure that the festivals run smoothly. I am very grateful to these guys."

Fiorella has been helping since the 20th anniversary of the Red, White & Blues Festival in 2015.

When reminded of the recent COVID-19 cases spreading in Fredonia, Fiorella said, "I understand that some of the cases in the county are rising now, but if you don't feel comfortable coming to an outdoor or indoor venue, you don't have to go. If you feel comfortable wearing a mask, go ahead and go enjoy yourself."

With pandemic problems aside, the event did happen on Sept. 11, an anniversary no one can forget. To commemorate the lives lost in that tragic event 20 years ago, there was a fundraising raffle booth offering both prizes to the people attending and comfort for those affected.

The whole festival wasn't confined to Water Street. There were equally entertaining smaller venues spread around Fredonia's downtown from Prospect Street to Canadaway Street Friday through Saturday.

To follow all of Fredonia's festivals and check in for volunteering, sponsoring or donation options go to festivals-fredonianian.org.



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SPORTS

Fredonia sports update



SUNY Fredonia University Stadium. Photograph by Derek Raymond.

ANTHONY GETTINO

Sports Editor

Written Sept. 19, 2021.

This past week was jam packed with Fredonia sports, as almost all our fall teams were in action.

Women's tennis had their only scheduled match of the week against Alfred cancelled Tuesday. This week the team is on the road against Penn State Behrend on Tuesday and Brockport on Saturday.

Women's volleyball traveled to Rochester for the Nazareth Golden Flyer Invitational, where they won one of three matches they played.

In the two losses, the team dropped all three sets. In the win against Morrisville, the Blue Devils won a tough contest three sets to two. Leading the team in the win was Emily Jones with 15 kills and Christie Ackendorf with 10 of her own.

The team goes on the road to face Penn State Behrend on Tuesday before hosting SUNYAC competitors Oswego and Cortland in Dods Hall Friday and Saturday.

The men's soccer team had a great week, winning both of their games. The team has been all about close games as both matches were one score differences.

Against Medaille, the Blue Devils won 4-3. Kaleb Stewart had two goals in the match, while Matt Cullen and Kevin Loftus each added a goal of their own.

The second game of the week was once again a 1-0 victory for Fredonia. Matt Cullen scored the lone goal of the game.

The team will be on the road for both games this week. First against Alfred on Tuesday before facing off against Buffalo State on Saturday.

As for the women's soccer team, they split their two matches, first with a win against Medaille before falling to St. John Fisher for their first loss of the season.

Against Medaille, the Blue Devils put up seven goals.

Bri Grazen and Maddy Payne each scored two goals, while Gabby Alston, Sophia Alesi and Jessica Caracciola scored one apiece.

In the second game of the week, the team lost in a 0-1 shutout.

This week, the soccer team will first travel to Allegheny on Tuesday before coming back home to face Buffalo State at University Stadium on Saturday afternoon.

Both the men and women's cross country teams traveled to the Yellow Jacket Invitational at the University of Rochester this weekend. For the women, Netasha McIntosh was the first Blue Devil across the line in 26:14 for 6K, good for 115th place. Other scorers included Ally Battaglia, Vanessa Ryhal, Morgan Russell and Colleen Tytler.

This was the first time any of the team had run this event collegiately. The team placed 18th.

On the men's side Anthony Ruiz ran the 8k in 26:12 to place 16th overall. Kyle Campbell, Josh Walters, Ethan Pocock and Aaron Mendez rounded out the scoring group for the Blue Devils as they placed 10th overall as a team.

Both the men and women have this weekend off before they travel to Geneseo for the Mike Woods Invitational.

What **unvaccinated players** could **cost the NFL** this season

PATRICK POLLARD
Special to The Leader

As we enter the last quarter of 2021, we are approaching the start of a brand new NFL season which is very exciting. In the modern days of COVID-19 and the increasing Delta variant cases, many of us are wondering what that means for the football season.

With the start of this season, there is something special happening: all three vaccines are readily available for everyone. With this you would think the players of our favorite game would get it to keep the games active throughout the year, but that's where you'd be wrong.

Even though the Pfizer vaccine is FDA approved, the NFL has had trouble passing a player mandate for the vaccine, making it difficult for the organization to get some players vaccinated.

This is where a problem emerges, as according to the NFL's research on the first three weeks of August, there is only a 0.3% infection rate in vaccinated players, whereas unvaccinated players are at a rate of 2.2%. This is seven times higher than that of the players who are vaccinated.

While the risk of a shutdown of the league is little, players like Josh Allen who are not vaccinated may cost their team — and your fantasy team — important games due to their doubts. Yet through all this gloom there is a light shining through, as the league has proposed weekly tests for unvaccinated individuals, rather than bi-weekly.

To go even further, the league has proposed making the vaccine mandatory for all players, according to Larry Ferazani. So while maybe right now things aren't looking too good, hopefully within these next few months we will be able to watch our Sunday football without the interference of COVID-19.



Photograph from Pexels,
Natalyia Vaitkevich.

College football season preview

ANTHONY GETTINO
Sports Editor

This season is starting like many before it.

There are the few teams who can compete for a National Championship, then the rest. While most of these top tier teams are the usuals, there are some teams that are trying to show that they too belong.

At the top of the totem pole, there's Alabama. The Crimson Tide are clearly the favorite to repeat for the title, with a team stacked with NFL talent including sophomore quarterback Bryce Young.

Others in the SouthEastern Conference include Georgia, Texas A&M and the wildcard Florida Gators. Each of these teams has talent that needs to perform at the top of their ability to compete with Alabama, but it can be done.

From the Atlantic Coast Conference, Clemson was the only team who had a chance, until it lost to the Georgia Bulldogs in the first week of the season. Even if the team wins out, it seems as though its chances to go to the College Football Playoff in the post-Trevor Lawrence era will have to wait another year.

The Big 10 took a big hit with its top contender Ohio State's loss to Oregon at home this past weekend. The team

was ranked third in the nation but will see its ranking fall dramatically. Others that can move up in the conference are Iowa and Penn State. Both of these teams have their faults and don't have the talent of a championship team on their roster, however.

The Big 12 and the Pac 12 seem to be an enigma. Oklahoma is seen as the cream of the crop in the Big 12, but in their first game they looked bad against a mid-major program, barely squeaking past them in a shootout. Iowa State looms as a team that is built for a one year Cinderella story with a returning group of players that have plenty of experience and talent.

For those of you waiting, no, Texas is not back.

USC may be, though. They have a competent quarterback and always have talent all over the field. They just need to put it all together for an entire season and not just small stretches of play.

Oregon made Ohio State look silly in their 35-28 road victory and will undoubtedly be the Pac 12 team to watch. They have been rolling in the recruiting trail and seem ready to put their name in that upper echelon of teams that stay in the top 10 year in and year out.

Notre Dame is decent, but they made it last year, so it's unlikely they make it two in a row when not in a conference.

Cincinnati should be considered in the mix for a championship run. They have the talent, the quarterback and the moxy of a championship team.

They just aren't in a Power Five conference, so there's no chance it'll happen. Sorry Bearcats fans.

In a local look at college football, we have two main teams in upstate New York we can examine. Neither is a championship caliber team, but that doesn't mean we can't root for our local teams.

The University of Buffalo has a solid team. They lost their head coach very late in the offseason to Kansas, so there may be an adjustment period as they get used to the new style of play.

This shouldn't be a problem for them, as they were a team that made a bowl game last season. I expect them to once again be in the running for a Mid-American Conference title and another bowl game appearance.

As for Syracuse football, it's a rebuild. They won just one game last season, but have already matched that total.

They should be a much improved squad. Not on par with the team in 2018 that won 10 games and beat West Virginia in a bowl game. They should win between four and six games which gives hope of a bowl game appearance at least.



Photographs from Pexels, Dziana Hasanbekava.

OPINION

No, it's not "just hair"

JESSICA MEDITZ
Former Editor in Chief

Trends are a strange phenomenon I never understood.

It's almost juvenile to think someone is of greater social status because they're doing or wearing something that everyone else is, too.

Although most trends — especially those involving fashion — can be brushed off as simply frivolous or materialistic, others can be quite damaging.

Trends go from juvenile to problematic when qualities or characteristics one cannot change are involved, especially someone's culture or race.

It seems like every day I see a white person attempting to inject themselves into a culture in a way that is not welcome.

This past April, Justin Bieber shared a photo of himself sporting locs, a hairstyle that is traditionally associated with Black culture.

According to Faith Karimi for CNN, this isn't the first time Bieber's faced backlash over his hair, and people are upset (understandably).

Dr. Saundra Liggins, Fredonia's Interim Chief Diversity Officer last spring, describes cultural appropriation as, "When a person (or group) that is part of the majority culture takes on the wardrobe, stereotypical characteristics or other elements of a minoritized culture, usually, but not always, for a comedic or demeaning purpose."

At face value, Bieber's hairdo does not scream "demeaning." But when you think

deeper into it, it is.

Consider the history of the word commonly used to refer to this hairstyle: dreadlocks. Lori L. Tharps, hair historian and coauthor of "Hair Story: Untangling the Roots of Black Hair in America," says "the modern understanding of dreadlocks is that the British, who were fighting Kenyan warriors (during colonialism in the late 19th century), came across the warriors' locs and found them 'dreadful,' thus coining the term 'dreadlocks.'"

Essentially, the word has a negative, racist connotation and many Black folks who wear their hair in locs have purposely dropped the word "dread" from the name.

Black people still face discrimination to this day for wearing locs and other Black hairstyles.

Liggins said there can be a great deal of privilege attached to who is able to wear what hairstyle: "Certain 'ethnic' hairstyles have been prohibited in the workplace, for example. And hair has been an important signifier for many cultures for centuries." Hearing this as a white person and seeing Bieber, an insanely rich, white celebrity wearing locs at his convenience for some attempted fashion statement, makes me feel uneasy.

After reading such informative, powerful pieces like Ta-Nehisi Coates' "The Case for Reparations" and NYT's "The 1619 Project," I was able to see concrete, firsthand examples of ways in which Black Americans have had their cultures, identities and

their cultures, identities and rights stripped away.

Due to the lack of understanding or knowledge of their cultural history as Nikole Hannah-Jones pointed out in her essay, Black people have reclaimed their cultures in their own unique ways. One of these ways is hair.

Hannah-Jones wrote, “Our style of dress, the extra flair, stems back to the desires of enslaved people — shorn of all individuality — to exert their own identity. Enslaved people would wear their hat in a jaunty manner or knot their head scarves intricately. Today’s avant-garde nature of Black hairstyles and fashion displays a vibrant reflection of enslaved people’s determination to feel fully human through self-expression.”

As for the Kardashian sisters who wear their hair in cornrows and box braids here and there? Also cultural appropriation.

The race of the person you’re married to or even your own children does not matter in the slightest.

You’re still white, and you’re part of a privileged group who will never experience the effects of racism for being Black and wearing those hairstyles.

Similar to locs, the history of cornrows and braids goes deeper than most know.

Colonizers would sometimes shave Black women’s heads to try to rid them of their personhood. But what I find truly remarkable (and not talked about enough) is the fact that Black women used their hair to communicate with one another.

According to Lydia Kiros, “the number of plaits worn could indicate how many roads to walk or where to meet someone to help them escape bondage. Similarly in

the early fifteenth century, hair functioned as a carrier of messages in most West African societies including the Wolof, Mende, Mandingo and Yoruba. Hair was an important piece of a complex language system, in which it communicated the identity of the person wearing the braids.”

It’s wrong to assume, but I would be willing to bet Kim Kardashian didn’t exactly study up on this topic before posting her Instagram photo wearing box braids, captioned: “Hi, can I get zero f*cks please, thanks.”

I think the most important thing white people need to take away from this discussion is that it is not the duty of Black people to educate us on what is and is not acceptable.

It is not their job to teach us about their culture’s traumatic history.

It’s our job to do the work and the research. And it’s our job to understand why appropriating a culture that isn’t ours is so offensive and demeaning, even if that wasn’t the intention.

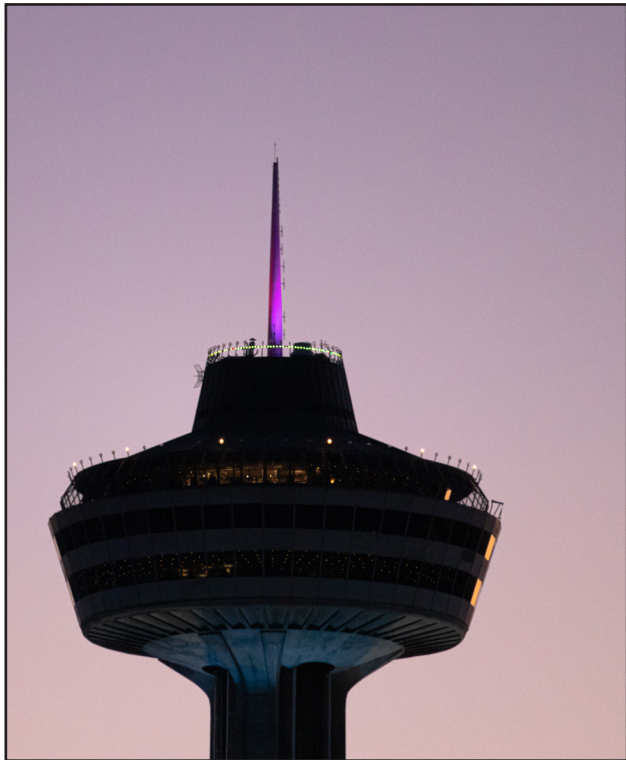
As Liggins said, “Not every person in every culture feels that hair is important to their identity, of course. To some people, their hair is ‘just hair.’ But for others, how you wear your hair indicates a sense of belonging.”

So, no, it is not “just hair.” And if you’re white, it’s not your place to say if someone should be offended by your actions or not.



Photographs from Pexels, Dziana Hasanbekava.

Derek Raymond: Falling for You at the Falls







Jules Hoepting: Post Down Pour Glory



THE SCALLION

Satire for Fredonia



I'M GOING TO LOSE MY MARBLES: MY JOURNEY FROM ONE JOB TO THE NEXT



DRAMATIC MARBLES.

“marbles” by photos_martha is licensed with CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

MATTHEW BAUM
Scallion Editor

For many of us here at SUNY Fredonia, this summer was a trial. Our collective patience, strength and mental fortuity was tested day in and day out. I understand this exhausting feat first-hand, as I served as a camp counselor in the middle of the Massachusetts woods for close to three months straight.

Here’s the thing, though — I didn’t know I was going to be working there until a week before I had to ship out, with my confirmation email coming in on Wednesday night of last semester’s finals week. I was a nervous wreck following that, in a mad dash to grab everything I would need to help me corral young camp-goers as efficiently as I could. The work was gruelling, and I was not in a headspace to properly combat the incessant whining of the noise-making younglings. But, after a time I began to fall asleep to the sublime tunes of off-pitch “Despacito” from the mouths of high-strung nine-year-olds.

Then, I was called up by representatives of this very school, offering me a position as a Residence Assistant no more than 10 days before I was scheduled to come to school as a plain old resident! I was fuming!

Of course, I accepted the job because I have a passion for helping people. But for God’s sake — what aspects of me keep attracting jobs that do not give me a fair warning!?

Following my initial reaction, I calmed down enough to realize I’ve always had a yes-man mentality. Ever since I was half my age, I would be the one helping my teachers clean up the messes made by other kids right before I would leave for recess. Following that, my reputation for last-minute help preceded me, and my high school teachers always expected me to be ready to present on the topics they were planning to teach, just in case they found better things to do.

Finally, when I graduated, I was approached by a traveling blues band, who were in dire need of a harmonica soloist. I couldn’t help but join them on

a national tour, ho-hummin’ the days away until I remembered I agreed to come to college.

I have now realized the pattern. Because I started young and desperate for the attention from my higher-ups, I always jumped in and gave it my all. As a matter of fact, it’s gotten so bad that businesses I’ve only ever read about are calling my house number and offering me same-day positions. Obviously, I go and help out, because, duh, they’re short-staffed!

But now, as soon as I finish writing this article, I will no longer be the dependable last-minute man everyone expects me to be! I will become a pain in the ass to book, because I deserve it! I will intentionally do the bare minimum, as a show of solidarity for those of us who just give too much.

Therefore, starting now, I will only be accessible for hire via messenger pigeon. On Thursdays. From the hours of 1:35 p.m. to 1:55 p.m., Central Standard Time. Hoorah.

WHY I'M PISSED WE HAVE TO WEAR MASKS



FRUSTRATED WITCH DOCTOR.

"Plague Doctor" by robnguyen01 is licensed with CC BY-NC-SA.

JAY BYRON

Staff Scallywag

If you live in the United States, or maybe even other places, I'm sure you've heard we have to wear masks. This mandate has been in place for a while and it's caused a bit of a stir.

Well, I've been ruminating; I don't think it's a good idea to continue wearing masks, and I have a few reasons why. With enough support, maybe I could get us to stop this heinous idea of wearing masks indefinitely.

First of all, I saw some sports-goers (sorry, I don't know a single sport) wearing a big mask that looked like a freaking cage.

No thanks! I'm no bird!

Pardon me, but how the heck is this useful at all? Why do you wanna look so big and clunky with those bars?

Unnecessary. I don't know about you, but it absolutely stinks that we have to remember sports exist AND let the sports players wear such strange attire. It is completely against their will to look

so trapped and scared. Hang on! We will stop this!

As an acting major, which is precisely the reason I don't know anything about sports, it is absolutely appalling how often we've been wearing these masks recently. In ancient Greek theater, actors had to wear these freaky-looking masks that fully hid their faces and portrayed a single emotion.

They were GROSS. They look like absolute demons with the structure of their faces. I mean, I've mostly seen these online, but either way, they're nasty and I'm so ashamed of myself for once enjoying their majesty. If I see one IRL I will freak the freak out! HYUCK! I can't even bear it anymore.

Also, has anyone ever seen that spooky beak-looking plague witch doctor mask? I've got a qualm with those menaces. If I ever saw one within five feet of me, I would blow that sucker off a peasant's face with a full-battery-charged uppercut. Not hitting the person's face, though, because I spare mercy upon sinners.

I think it is absolutely ridiculous that we have to cover the human face because that is not what God intended. We're just not human with a mask on! Like, I can hardly even tell a human is under there. The masks are so disturbing, I nearly pee myself in fear on a daily basis.

I will say, though, if there was a pandemic with a potentially fatal disease as its catalyst, maybe I would wear one JUST IN CASE. Okay? But for real, though, otherwise I probably wouldn't wear any one of those dastardly things.

So, what have I been wearing ever since this weird mandate? Well, I'm quite glad you asked. I've actually been wearing a horse mask because I wanted to be cute and quirky. It looks good, matches with any outfit and literally everyone I've seen thinks it's cool. They're right. It is definitely the coolest mask. I totally advise you to buy yourself a horse mask because you will be cooler than anyone else.

COMIC: NICOLE THORSON



IS AMERICA TO BLAME FOR THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN?

BRIAN CECALA

Staff Scallywag

Yes.

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