



THE FREDONIA LEADER

SUNY Fredonia's Student-Run Newspaper

Students Face Issues Accessing Title IX

See page 3

Rachel Kerr Wins Chancellor's Award for Excellence
Jasmine Johnson's Continued Fight for Student Advocacy
Fredonia Feminists Support Women's Rights
Morgan's Message Spreads Positive Outcome
[OPINION] The Women of The Leader
[SATIRE] Women Are Funny... Yeah I Said It.

THE LEADER

News

3 Difficulties with Title IX services

5 Rachel Kerr wins Adjunct Teaching award

Life & Arts

7 Students behind the art: Rebekah Gerace

8 Jasmine Johnson's continued fight

9 Fredonia Feminists highlight

10 Women in the Fredonia music scene

12 Fredonia's master librarian

Sports

14 Fredonia lacrosse brings mental health

16 5th Quarter Column: The rise of women's sports

18 Girl power: Female student-athletes

Opinion

20 Anything but stereotypical

22 The women of The Leader

23 Women in gaming

24 A Playlist for Every Mood

Scallion

26 Women are funny ... Yeah I said it.

27 Comics

29 Highlighting the feminist men of media

30 Horoscopes

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"I am a very strong believer in listening and learning from others." – Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Proud member of The Associated Collegiate Press.

Students claim difficulties accessing Title IX services

MARISSA BURR
Opinion Editor

CHLOE KOWALYK
Editor in Chief

The Title IX office is located on the second floor of Fenton Hall, but being in a central location on campus has not guaranteed students easy access to its services.

On March 5, The Leader's Opinion Editor Marissa Burr reached out to Dr. Vicki Sapp, Fredonia's Title IX coordinator, to inquire about any events they would be hosting in April for Sexual Violence Awareness Month.

Burr's intention was to write a news piece covering the upcoming events in order to promote attendance by students by giving them ample notice.

However, only after two follow-up emails were sent and 14 days had passed did Burr receive a response.

Referencing the possible event schedule, Sapp wrote, "Please note that currently the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion [ODEI] is going through a transition period. We are excited and preparing to welcome new staff to the office. Once we are able to onboard the staff we will be able to offer campus-wide programmatic initiatives."

Upset by this answer, Burr sent another email to clarify when the campus community could expect events, and if the onboarding process would be completed before the end of the Spring 2024 semester.

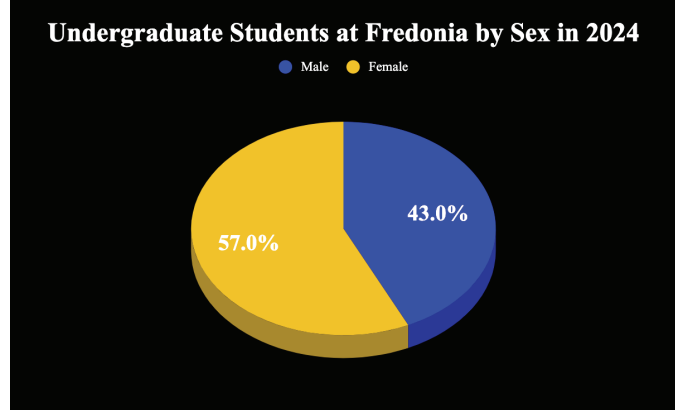
The following was Sapp's response: "The positions have been posted and search committees identified. The Search Committees will engage in the hiring process to identify new staff. The hiring process could take about an estimated timeframe of six to eight weeks, give or take about one to two weeks on both ends to allow the identified staff to transition to their new roles here at SUNY Fredonia. Once ODEI secure staff they will be onboarded and acclimated to their new positions. ODEI will work collaboratively with campus stakeholders and partners to start the process of planning programmatic initiatives for the Fall 2024, Spring 2025 and beyond semesters."

Therefore, there will be no events sponsored by the Title IX office and ODEI for Sexual Violence Awareness Month, despite the recently released results of the campus climate survey, which amplified the need for these institutions to be more available to students.

Chloe Kowalyk, The Leader's Editor in Chief, reached out to Sapp for a follow-up article for the piece "FIRE organization ranks SUNY Fredonia in the 'red' for free speech," which was published on Feb. 20.

In the article, FIRE (Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression) references one of Fredonia's policies, titled "Sexual Discrimination and Sexual Harassment" and critiques it.

Following the publication of the previous article, Kowalyk reached out to Sapp in hopes of gaining clarification on the policy to share with students in an additional piece.



Graphic by MARISSA BURR | Opinion Editor

However, Sapp replied that the ODEI has "no comment." It seems that Burr wasn't the only one to experience this difficulty in communication and accessing the Title IX office.

The campus climate survey results revealed that only 35.6% of student respondents knew how to contact the Title IX office.

In addition, according to the survey, "only 28.4% of students reported their incident to someone and 0% reported the incident to an on-campus resource such as University Police, residence hall staff or campus violence prevention or advocacy staff."

That includes the Title IX office, which claims that staff transitions are preventing them from planning any activities for students until next semester.

When looking at other results from this survey, the need for sexual violence prevention becomes greater.

For instance, 46% of respondents reported unwanted sexual comments, sexual slurs and demeaning jokes.

In addition, 8.4 percent were sexually penetrated without giving consent, and 8.4% have received or been forced to perform oral sex without consent.

Of these respondents, "71.2% of students knew their perpetrator and 42.9% reported that the person was affiliated with the campus community."

Chloe Kowalyk reached out to Sapp for "FIRE organization ranks SUNY Fredonia in the 'red' for free speech." Following the publication of the previous article, Kowalyk reached out to Sapp in hopes of gaining clarification on the policy to share with students in an additional piece.

However, Sapp replied that the ODEI has "no comment."

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These results reveal that Fredonia has a need for sexual violence prevention activities. There are survivors within the immediate school community.

Statistics will show that many of those affected are women.

The National Institute of Health states that “women ages 18-24 have the highest rate of sexual violence victimization compared to females of other ages and 81.3% of female victims experience a first rape before age 25.”

This puts students in a high-risk context due to increased independence and more risky decisions, leading to negative results.

The National Institute of Health reports that the highest risk factors for sexual violence include being female, being of a sexual/gender minority and having multiple marginalized identities.

These are the students who need Title IX resources but do not have easy access to them.

Some students who do access Title IX’s resources have expressed negative experiences following the use of them.

One student, who has chosen to remain anonymous due to any potential retaliation from those involved in the incidents, has faced two significant experiences when attempting to utilize Title IX.

During the student’s freshman year (2020-2021), she had

After bringing the information to Title IX, the student was told that nothing could be done about the incident, as five different people needed to come forward with the same experience. After finding three others, the student returned to the Title IX office. But, because there weren't five as the office had originally suggested, the alleged perpetrator was not held accountable for their actions. He was able to graduate and start a career.

to pass the class.

This anonymous student is not the only one to experience some form of sexual harassment on campus.

Each year, Fredonia releases an annual Campus Security and Fire Safety Report, which details statistics on several different crimes and fire safety ordinances on campus.

In 2022, which was the most recent report The Leader could access, there were four reported instances of rape in on-campus buildings (including residence halls), four reported cases of rape in on-campus student housing and two in on-campus buildings.

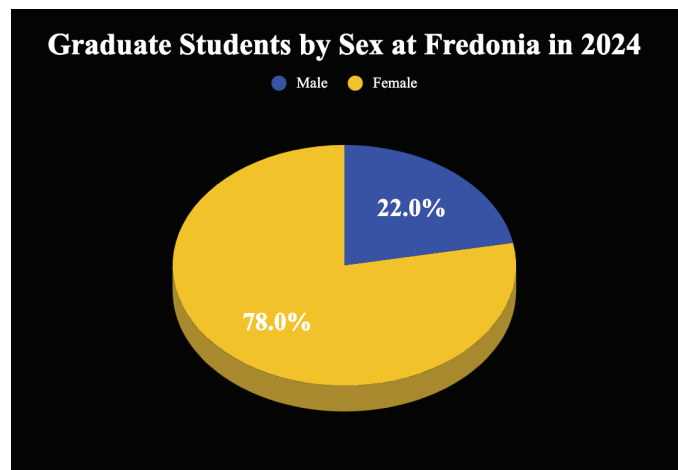
These numbers are slightly lower than those reported in 2020 and 2021, yet it is important to consider how many cases have gone unreported.

In addition, there was one incident of stalking reported in 2022.

While the 2023 Campus Security and Fire Safety Report appears not to have been released yet, it has been made clear through the results of the 2023 campus climate survey that 28.4% percent of students reported an incident of sexual assault or harassment.

The survey recommends that the college “look into the resources provided to students and work on increasing the visibility of both reporting methods and the Title IX office.”

However, with a lack of programs provided by the Title IX office, it is currently unclear how the office is seeking to educate students.



Graphic by MARISSA BURR | Opinion Editor

been sexually harassed by another student who was in a leadership position within a class the student was taking.

The student had screenshots of the messages sent to them by the other student and decided to bring them to the Title IX office.

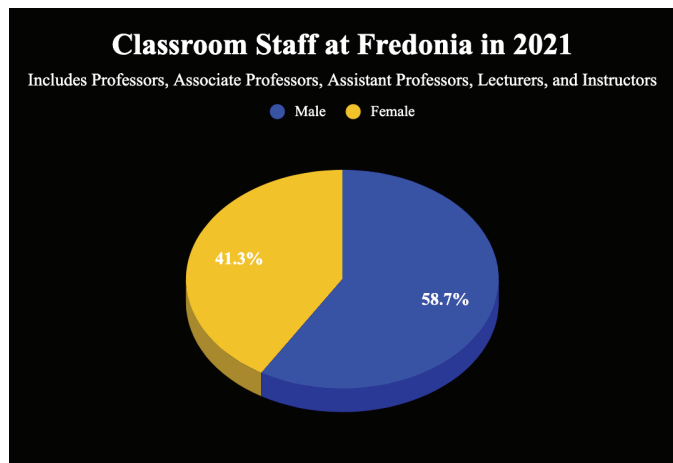
After bringing the information to Title IX, the student was told that nothing could be done about the incident, as five different people needed to come forward with the same experience.

The student then began looking for other students who had also been sexually harassed by the same person.

After finding three others, the student returned to the Title IX office. But, because there weren't five as the office had originally suggested, the alleged perpetrator was not held accountable for their actions.

He was able to graduate and start a career.

However, the student was removed from the class she was in with him, and needed to find a tutor to teach her the material



Graphic by MARISSA BURR | Opinion Editor

Rachel Kerr wins SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Adjunct Teaching

ROSEMARIE RAPISARDA

Staff Writer

Inspirational, passionate, supportive, kind-hearted, enthusiastic, eccentric, funny, honest and fashionable.

These are some words from a few former and current students that they used to describe Rachel Kerr, an adjunct communications lecturer.

In early March, Kerr won the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Adjunct Teaching.

This award recognizes and honors expertise, dedication and commitment. As role models for the SUNY community, the award recipients personify professional excellence.

Kerr was nominated for this award by Roslin Smith, the chair of the communication department, and Dr. Angela McGowan-Kirsch, an associate communications professor.

Both Smith and McGowan explained the reasons why Kerr should receive the award.

"Throughout her encounters with students, Rachel uses superior communication and listening skills to help students gain a deeper understanding of difficult subjects," McGowan said. "Her professional experiences and ability to maintain a friendly and approachable demeanor are likely why students thrive in her courses."

"[Combining] a strong work ethic, her warmth, sense of humor and easygoing manner makes her a pleasure to work with," Smith said.

Kerr had to put together a whole package including her resume and lots of writings in terms of philosophy. "They sort of supported me in that. I feel grateful to be working with them," Kerr said in regards to Smith and McGowan.

Kerr has been praised by some of her current and former students.

"She teaches not only course materials, but also life lessons. She shares her life experiences with students and is happy to talk about 'the real world' with them," said Jackson Snaith, an alumnus and media management major.

Snaith recalled an experience he shared with Kerr during his time at Fredonia.

"One day it was pouring rain and I didn't have an umbrella. She let me walk under hers with her, then gave me an extra one to use for the day when we got to her car," said Snaith. "She told me to keep it, but I couldn't, so I gave it back the following week."

Dakota Richter, a junior biology major said, "My favorite thing about Professor Kerr is her ability to connect with any student that she has in her class, no matter what background or ethnicity or sexual orientation.

"I had a hard time freshman year and she was the only professor in my emails asking if I was okay. She truly does care about helping shape the future generations," Richter added.



Rachel Kerr. Photo by ROSIE RAPISARDA | Staff Writer

Thomas Hayes, a junior theater arts major said, "Professor Kerr has always been there for me in class and outside class. She truly cares for her students personally and she cares about their success in her class.

"She would often encourage me to step out of my comfort zone and would always congratulate me on my accomplishments," Hayes added.

Cassidy Mullin, a senior music industry major said, "She takes time to have conversations with her students even if it's about small things in their day."

Audrey Erickson, a senior communication studies major shared that, "She enjoys making sure her students are learning without immense pressure. In my opinion, that makes learning much more enjoyable."

Kerr was born in Buffalo, N.Y. but was raised in San Jose, Calif.

When she was young, she lived with her mom (a teacher), her dad (a philosophy professor) and her sisters, Jennifer and Lauren.

Following a childhood spent in theater, Kerr decided to pursue an education in it as a young adult.

She earned her Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in performance studies at San Francisco State University (SFSU).

After getting her MFA, she stepped foot into the world of being an educator.

"They immediately hired me at San Francisco State University to be a voice teacher. It was like you have to have teaching experience to get teaching experience, and I got lucky right out of the gate," Kerr said.

Continues on next page.

She worked at SFSU for two years before moving to New York City to keep up with her passion for the arts, theater and being an educator.

While living in the Big Apple for 20 years, she worked as an actor, a director, a producer and a playwright. "I'm more on the writing side now, or the visual art," she said.

On the side, she taught public speaking at LaGuardia Community College.

There, she uncovered that her teaching is something she is most proud of.

"I've grown through experiencing the diverse groups that I worked with. I am most proud of the roots I have in all of those communities," Kerr said.

Kerr decided to spice things up in her life again by returning to her birthplace, Buffalo, where she's resided since.

She came to Buffalo to pursue another master's degree, a

Master in Arts (MA) for performance studies at the University at Buffalo (UB).

"After living in San Francisco and New York City, I really like it here. I like how close nature is, so I think I am staying," she said.

She currently lives with her 12-year-old tabby cat, Mariposa. "She's kind of independent, but also completely needy ... she's sweet," she said.

Once she graduated from UB, she began her teaching career at Fredonia.

Her passion for communications began the second she got her MA. "[The program] involved media studies and a deeper, more theoretical understanding of communication," she said.

According to Kerr, teaching feeds her. "You're constantly stimulated by new people and by new material and all of that kind of stuff. So I've always loved it."

The best thing about being a professor to her is the students. "They always make one feel joyful, or funny or humorous," she said.

Life & Arts

Students behind the art: Rebekah Gerace

EJ JACOBS

Life & Arts Editor

In a time of decrease and cancellation of majors, Rebekah Gerace has not given up on her commitment to being a double major in photography and history.

When it comes to being a double-major, some prospective students find it beneficial for a university to have strong programs in both of the majors they wish to pursue.

For Gerace, finding a school that offers both artistic and typical academic programs was important.

"I had a list of schools that [have] arts and photography programs and then I had a list of schools that were big in history, closer [to home and] more affordable. I didn't want to have to choose between the two and so I found Fredonia," Gerace said.

Gerace is one of many people who picked Fredonia from all the rest for its well-known arts programs.

"My roommate chose Fredonia out over some of the most elite schools that she got accepted to because she felt like the variety within the arts at Fredonia was just as good," Gerace said.

Many students end up looking for a well-rounded and well-accredited program and education when looking at universities.

Gerace didn't originally start as a history and photography double-major.

Back in Fall 2023, she enrolled at Fredonia as a social studies education major with a minor in arts.

Her idea was to fill the arts minor credits with all photography classes, because a sole photography minor does not exist.

She later decided to switch to her current majors of history

and photography.

"I recently switched to the photography major because I heard that they were proposing to discontinue it. And I didn't want to come here to do photography, and then have that opportunity limited to me," Gerace said. "So, I decided to switch into the major just so that I'm guaranteed to be able to finish it."

With this, she now hopes to graduate and finish her degree. That doesn't, however, stop her worries about the future of the university at large.

"The thing is that the student body is, above all else, upset and concerned about the future of the university," Gerace said.



Rebekah Gerace. Photo by LORI DEEMER, courtesy of GERACE



Photos provided by REBEKAH GERACE | Special to The Leader

Jasmine Johnson's continued fight for student advocacy

MIA CIECHALSKI
Special to The Leader

Jasmine Johnson is a senior art history, drawing and painting major at Fredonia. That itself gives the public an insight into who she is, her life and what she has been up to recently in the face of the university program cuts.

Johnson has faced many hardships in her lifetime. However, she didn't let what had happened stop her from moving forward and making a future for herself. She lost both of her parents who passed away due to drugs, and it has only been her and her sister since then.

They made sure to do what they could to live their lives normally, and they acknowledge that they are lucky to have had so many kind people in their lives.

The reason why Johnson decided to come to Fredonia was because of how affordable it was to attend.

"Many other students don't have somewhere they can happily call home, and many students like me don't have reliable resources, which is why affordable schools like Fredonia are so important," she said.

Johnson has recently become one of the main activists on campus due to the recent budget cuts that have been announced, which are discontinuing 13 current majors at Fredonia. One of the majors that has been discontinued is art history, one of the subjects Johnson is studying.

After hearing that her major will no longer be offered at Fredonia once all of the current students enrolled in that program have graduated, she, along with many others, decided to try and fight this decision.

She said, "By cutting arts and humanities at schools like Fredonia, you are actively making education less accessible and saying that me, and students like me, don't deserve a rounded and quality education."

She and many other students have become extremely passionate about these issues, and the people who are enrolled in the majors that are being discontinued know that their future careers are on the line because of this recent decision.

Johnson, along with Abigail Tartaro, a senior psychology major, Sophie Myers, a senior psychology major, Benjamin Evans, a junior writing and animation and illustration major and Henry Domst, a senior graphic design and art history major, all wanted the student body's voices to be heard.

Evans was one of many who coordinated and made the first protest against the budget cuts last December at the end of the Fall 2023 semester.

On the same day that Johnson found out about these program cuts, she also lost her mom. Once she found out about the protest, she knew that she had to go.

While she was there, she realized what was to happen next for her. She said, "I realized what was at stake: the community I fell in love with and call home, the support system I built here, the life I've built here and the commitment I've made to my education."

If it weren't for that first protest, then there might not have



Jasmine Johnson. Photo by MIA CIECHALSKI | Special to The Leader

been the club we know as Students for Fredonia (SFF). The first protest made Johnson join SFF because she wanted to turn things around and restore Fredonia to the "whimsical place" it was when she first found it.

Not only did this protest inspire Johnson, but it also inspired Tartaro and Myers to join SFF as well. Johnson, Evans, Tartaro, Myers and Domst have all worked together since SFF was created and have put over 150 hours of work into organizing events, protests, an Albany trip in which 50 students went to speak to state legislators and, most importantly, making sure to support the faculty and students who are impacted the most by this decision.

Myers spent December through February meeting with United University Professions (UUP) to plan all the logistics of funding, transportation and meetings with legislators.

From them deciding to go to Albany that was sponsoring 50 students, Johnson just couldn't say no. "I consider myself a politically active person, and I was honestly just excited to be able to cross off 'lobby the government' on my bucket list," she said.

Not only did this trip inspire Johnson, but it also inspired Chandler Cotter, a sophomore photography major and art history minor, to join the Albany trip.

Cotter was invited two weeks before the trip by Tartaro. "The planning by both UUP and SFF was done very quickly and very efficiently," said Cotter.

Both Myers and Evans have also been the main reason why Johnson was able to tell her story and speak out about the recent budget cuts. They wrote a 10-page paper about their demands that they then reduced to one page, which they shared at the most recent protest at the beginning of March.

Them sharing their thoughts and demands also gave Johnson the chance to tell new ears about her life story on why these decisions are so important and how they affect current students that are involved in these majors.

"My story is not unique; many other students don't have somewhere they can happily call home, and schools like Fredonia are so important," said Johnson.

Chandler Cotter, who was interviewed for this article, is the Assistant Photo Editor of The Leader.

Fredonia Feminists provides space for supporting women's rights

CHLOE KOWALYK

Editor in Chief

With the rise of changing legislation surrounding bodily autonomy and women's rights, feminism stands as a relevant topic across the United States today.

However, feminism isn't just a national topic — it's also a local topic, as Fredonia has its own club on campus dedicated to women's rights and feminism.

Fredonia Feminists has recently seen a revival at Fredonia.

Sangai Keita, a senior double majoring in political science and public relations, is the current president of the club.

"Fredonia Feminists is a space for everyone to develop and discuss the social development of feminism and to be empowered to be educated on the impacts of feminism and how it affects everyone," she said. "Our mission is to improve the social and cultural development on campus by increasing awareness through workshops, literature, the arts, speakers and other various forms of communication."

As a club that largely focuses on educating students and the community about feminism, Fredonia Feminists seeks to spread their message through various events.

For instance, during Women's History Month in March, the club did a series of "HERstory" events. These events included defense workshops, paint-and-sips, movie nights, collaborations with the club Sister Circle and even a pop-up shop for female-owned small businesses.

In the past, Fredonia Feminists has also hosted a "slut walk" demonstration to emphasize women's empowerment and the right to choose what to wear and the confidence in doing so.

Soon, Fredonia Feminists will also be tabling at The Leader's Pool Party event, as they help gather donations for feminine hygiene products as well as holding coloring activities.

They also plan to table at Relay For Life, a fundraiser for cancer research and patient care led by Fredonia's American Cancer Society.

By collaborating with other clubs, Fredonia Feminists hopes to continue raising awareness for women's rights.

In addition to events, the club also holds weekly general body (GB) meetings every Wednesday from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in S204 ABC in the Williams Center.

At these meetings, Fredonia Feminists "speaks on topics regarding individuals who have inspired the feminist movement, and [looks] at the intersections of it," Keita said.

Keita also explained that Fredonia Feminists focuses on various topics including culture, language, race, gender, socioeconomics and media.

While the club emphasizes women's rights, it is open to all students.

"Any open-minded individual is able to join the club, no matter where you come from or how you identify yourself," Keita said.

Drew Paluch, a junior photography major, is the historian co-chair of Fredonia Feminists.

She said she joined the club to learn more about feminism.

"My favorite part about being in the club is that I get to document all of our meetings and events. I am the co-historian for Fred Fems, and my job is to take photos while our E-board does presentations about different feminism topics during our GB meetings," she said.

Keita also noted that oftentimes, students have presumptions about what clubs like Fredonia Feminists or other intercultural clubs discuss based solely on the name of the club.

Keita advises getting more involved in intercultural clubs across campus.

"If you are a student that isn't involved and want to know more about what is on campus, take a week to dedicate your time to attending at least one GB meeting for each [intercultural] club and gain your own experience through it," she said. "If you have any questions, always ask them if need be. Many E-board members would be happy to help, but we won't know who to help if you [don't] take the initiative to ask."

Through both their general body meetings and events, Fredonia Feminists is continuously working on ways to amplify student voices.

"We are a club that is striving to support all individuals," Keita said. "Being a part of this club or coming to our [general body meetings,] you can find that we want to bring awareness to the experiences we all have, as we face various systems that perpetuate separation, inequality and power dynamics."

Keita also emphasized that the E-board of Fredonia Feminists "are not all the same and we emphasize diversity not just on the sole basis of color, but we want to make this a diverse place based on our cultures, our experiences and the various ideas we form through the lives we come from."

Drew Paluch, who was interviewed for this article, is the Photo Editor of The Leader.



Sariya Groce, Drew Paluch, Cynthyuna Hunter, Katherine Hanley, Sangai Keita, Alejandra Herreros Not Pictured: Taj'Anay Quigley.
Photo by DREW PALUCH | Photo Editor

Fredonia/Buffalo music scene as

Photos by Emma Christopher
and Chloe Kowalyk



LivInGroove.
Photo by EMMA CHRISTOPHER | Special to The Leader



Stress Dolls.
Photo by CHLOE KOWALYK | Editor in Chief

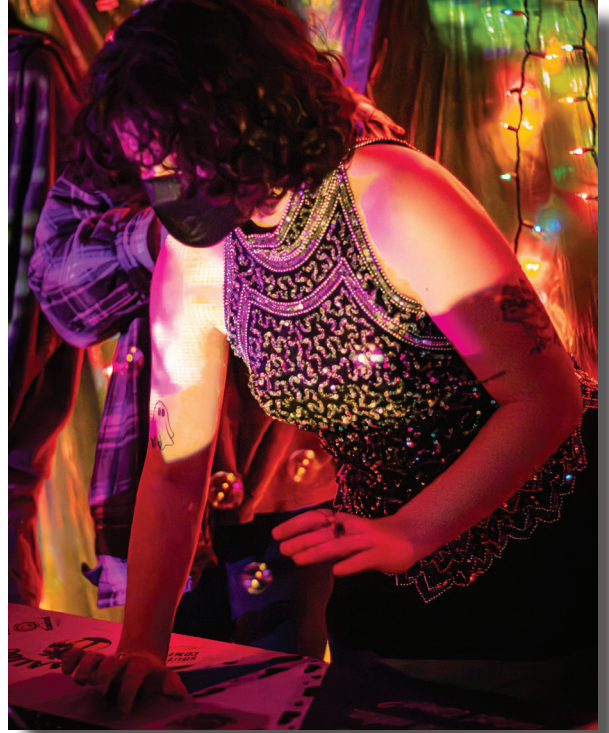


Starjuice.
Photo by CHLOE KOWALYK | Editor in Chief

seen by female photographers



Pool Kids.
Photo by CHLOE KOWALYK | Editor in Chief



Kiwi Grimm.
Photo by EMMA CHRISTOPHER | Special to The Leader



Marina Laurendi.
Photo by CHLOE KOWALYK | Editor in Chief

Fredonia's master librarian: Kerrie Fergen Wilkes

DAN QUAGLIANA

News Editor

Walking into Reed Library is like walking into the manifestation of academia itself.

Shelves upon shelves of books line the far windows in front of a multitude of study carrels; a research hub lies right next to the main entrance and PCs for work adorn practically every other space that would normally remain unused. It's no surprise that many students like to use the library as a quiet study space.

But what does it take to make an academic library this effective? And who makes the decisions that get it to that level?

At Fredonia, that responsibility falls to Kerrie Fergen Wilkes, Reed Library's director.

With a tall stature, glasses and a blonde bob of hair, Wilkes can seem like an imposing figure to those who don't know her, but the reality couldn't be further from the truth.

Wilkes started working here on Feb. 1, 2001, in what was supposed to be only a temporary position that she wasn't even sure would work out. "I moved here on great faith," she said.

But Reed Library wasn't where Wilkes started her career in libraries.

That honor lies with the Grand Island Memorial Library, in Grand Island, N.Y., a branch library that's part of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Libraries.

Wilkes started out there during high school as a shelving page, where her sole responsibility was putting away books that library patrons had returned. It was here that Wilkes realized that she "was a closet librarian, there's no way around it."

The librarians who worked at the library with her tried to talk her out of it — they told her she wouldn't find a job, that she wouldn't make any money and that libraries would soon be changing the way that they worked, so librarians would be less useful than they were then.

After high school, Wilkes enrolled at SUNY Potsdam in 1992, where she graduated four years later with degrees in history and English writing, as well as a minor in French Canadian studies.

When she was done with her undergraduate schooling, Wilkes didn't quite know where to go or what career path to go on.

She eventually decided to get a Ph.D. in history at SUNY Binghamton, where she studied medical history and 19th-century French midwives, in addition to becoming a residence director in the dorms. "I'm probably the only person in the universe who's read 'The History of Forceps,'" she recalled.

But after one semester at Binghamton, Wilkes again realized that she was meant to be a librarian. She couldn't study one area like 19th-century French midwives that intensely for the rest of her life.

She transferred to University at Buffalo (UB), where she enrolled to get a master's degree in information and library science. During her schooling there, Wilkes worked at the Audubon branch library in Buffalo as a desk page, but eventually migrated to the business library at UB, where she would work



Photo via fredonia.edu

"I've had every job in this library except for cataloging. I was associate director for a couple years [where] I ran circulation [and coordinated student workers]."

—KERRIE FERGEN WILKES

Director,
Reed Library

as a graduate assistant in the library school office as well.

All that experience served her well after she graduated with an MLS — Wilkes quickly got a job at the Woodward Memorial Library in LeRoy, N.Y.. But working at a public library wasn't exactly her cup of tea: "I was also doing pre-k story [hour]," she remembered. "I had to make these dumb little colored cups ... This is what I went to graduate school for?"

After languishing in a public library for a few years, Wilkes's

sister Kimberlie Ball, who is now the interim director of admissions at Fredonia, told her about a job opening at Reed Library, where she's been ever since.

But what Wilkes has done since she got that job would take many pages to detail: "I've had every job in this library except for cataloging," she recalled. "I was associate director for a couple years [where] I ran circulation [and coordinated student workers]."

Since she's been at Reed, Wilkes has seen the job go from completely paper-based to web-based. The library was a lot busier in 2001 when librarians had to focus a lot more on reference and research help for students, as opposed to administrative and budgetary work as they do now. "[We had] 12 librarians and 15 clerical staff," Wilkes remembered.

After running circulation, she served as the interim director on and off for a couple of years, which was, "good training for being the permanent director," she said, which she became in September 2022.

"[The job is] harder now, since I'm an administrator," she said. "Being the big boss is not a glory position. There's no glory in it; it's the most humbling position I've ever had, since decisions I make affect people's lives. [The] number one thing as an administrator is that I do what's best for my staff so they can do what's best for the students."

To Wilkes's credit, her staff agrees.

"She gives 110%," said Toni Jachimowicz, one of the circulation clerks at Reed Library, about Wilkes. "And that goes for any project, whether it's with a student, faculty member or someone from the community."

Julie Crowell, one of the interlibrary loan clerks at Reed, agrees. "I had a lot to learn about the circulation desk and supervising student workers. Kerrie always showed confidence in my abilities and encouraged me to learn new things," she said. "After only six months of working here, she trusted me to become the sole interlibrary loan clerk when the previous clerks retired. Kerrie is a tireless advocate for Reed Library, always seeking new ways to not only maintain services for Fredonia students and faculty, but to expand and improve them."

Wilkes has gotten many awards for her service at Reed: in 2005, she won the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Librar-

"I had a lot to learn about the circulation desk and supervising student workers. Kerrie always showed confidence in my abilities and encouraged me to learn new things. After only six months of working here, she trusted me to become the sole interlibrary loan clerk when the previous clerks retired. Kerrie is a tireless advocate for Reed Library, always seeking new ways to not only maintain services for Fredonia students and faculty, but to expand and improve them."

—JULIE CROWELL
Interlibrary Loan Clerk,
Reed Library

ianship, and in 2022, the Western New York Library Resources Council (WNYLRC) Excellence in Library Service Award.

She says that the one thing that's changed most about her job since she came to Fredonia is that she and the rest of the librarians have become "more like real teachers ... In print, you researched what was there, and then you exhausted it. In the online age, there's so much [information] out there, how are [students] going to make sense of it?" she explained.

Now, as the director of Reed Library, her job is, "budget. It's all budget," she said. "I have to run a library on only \$300,000."

But Wilkes still considers working at Fredonia to be "the best job I ever could've asked for. I met my husband at Reed Library," she explained. "His sister was the head of circulation, and she set us up on a blind date, and 18 months later we got married, [which] we've been ... for 21 years. My life has literally been at Fredonia and in libraries."

Dan Quagliana, the author of this article, is employed at Reed Library as a student supervisor.

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SPORTS

Fredonia lacrosse brings mental health to forefront with Morgan's Message

PARKER GURNETT

Staff Writer

Content Warning: mentions of suicide

When athletes take the field, to some, they lose their human characteristics.

They become the face of a sport and are almost meant to be robotic and perfect at their sport in every way imaginable.

Many believe it is not fair for athletes to be expected to be perfect at everything, especially at the collegiate level.

For college athletes, there is one program that comes to mind to help support this feeling.

That program is Morgan's Message.

Morgan's Message was created in 2020 following the death of Duke University lacrosse player Morgan Rodgers.

In January 2017, just before the beginning of her sophomore season at Duke, Rodgers endured a horrific knee injury. She spent the next 12 months determined to return to the field, undergoing surgery and dedicating herself to an intensive rehabilitation program.

Rodgers struggled with this abrupt change because she felt she had lost control of her life.

She struggled with her mental health, keeping it from her friends and family.

As a result, her sense of self-worth plummeted, and on July 11, 2019, at just 22 years old, she died after committing suicide.



Player 23 Sydney Buchko.

In 2020, Morgan's Message was created in her honor to help eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health among high school and collegiate athletes.

On Wednesday, April 3, the Fredonia women's lacrosse team hosted its first Morgan's Message tribute game against Buffalo State University.

They would wind up losing this game 13-11, but to many, this game was bigger than the score.

That's especially true to junior Emma Cockerel who helped bring Morgan's Message to Fredonia.

"This summer, I did a lot of reflecting on myself, and what I needed to do to help myself and my peers. Mental health plays such a big role in my life, so when I discovered Morgan's Message, I immediately felt a personal connection to their mission." Cockerel said. "I ended up bringing this organization to our campus. I became an ambassador for Morgan's Message, and am now the president of the club here on campus. Being a student-athlete along with running this club has added a lot to my plate, but it is one of the most rewarding challenges that I have ever faced and I am honored to help eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health."

So many college athletes feel the stigma surrounding mental health as being something to push off and ignore because they are expected to perform to an elite level on the playing field.



Number 19 Leah Kunisch



All photos by BECCA TORNCHELLO | Staff Photographer

The reality is that college athletes are playing sports at an amateur level and should not be held to the same standards as professional athletes.

Unfortunately, this is not the case in many scenarios, though. When we asked members of the Women's Lacrosse team what this Morgan's Message game meant to them, we got the same answers; they were happy and proud.

"The Morgan's Message game to me means that mental health is being treated and paid attention to more, especially in athletes," said junior Alexa Ventura.

"Playing for Morgan's Message means getting to spread awareness and being able to play for something bigger than me, our team or the sport," said sophomore Alyssa Vukosic.

Vukosic's statement really hits home for not only athletes but for everyone, as spreading awareness of the stigma around mental health is bigger than the sport or a team and must continue to be fought for.

"In the world of athletics, many were told to be tough and to battle through adversity both physically and mentally. Because of this, many grew up bottling feelings and struggles inside," said freshman Ella Forrest. "This can lead to extremely destructive behavior as well as thinking you are alone in your feelings. Bringing awareness lets others know that there are better days and that it's not something to struggle with in silence."

"Mental health is such an important topic for athletes and non-athletes. The stigma around mental health and athletes can result in athletes not reaching out for help," said senior Sarah Guariglia. "Bringing awareness to this topic allows athletes to know that they are not alone and that there are people out there that care about them and want them to seek help."

Junior Audrey Brown echoed the Morgan's Message sentiment "Human > Athlete," which points out the core lesson here.

Athletes are humans before they are athletes and more people need to recognize this. You may be an athlete on the field, but when you're on the field, you're still human.

Everyone has feelings and everyone has their personal battles that they go through. And thanks to Morgan's Message, college athletes don't have to go through it alone and will always have

support right there for them.

If you're struggling with mental health, do not be afraid to reach out, because you are not alone.

For Fredonia students, there is a Counseling Center in Lograsso Hall.

Call the office at 716-673-3424 to inquire about services and to schedule appointments.



Number 11 Victoria Burget.

5th Quarter Column:

The rise of women's sports

MITCH HORUCY

Asst. Sports Editor

Ever since sports became one of the biggest sources of revenue and entertainment, it has been dominated by male athletes.

However, in the last few years, women's sports have skyrocketed in the public eye.

There have been a ton of sports that have contributed to this, such as women's soccer, hockey and basketball.

In 2019 the FIFA Women's World Cup had over one billion cumulative viewers.

The championship game between the U.S. and the Netherlands averaged a live audience of 82 million viewers and reached a total of 263 million unique viewers.

This was up 56% compared to the 2015 final between the U.S. and Japan, which averaged a live audience of 52 million people.

These are both tournament records that still stand to this day.

Starting on Jan. 1, we had the inaugural season of the Professional Women's Hockey League or PWHL.

The league consists of six teams in New York, Boston, Minnesota, Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto.

The league streams all games on their YouTube channel, and are also streamed regionally in the U.S.

In Canada, they are nationally televised on networks such as TSN, Sportsnet and CBC.

The attendance for the PWHL is very impressive as well. The average attendance for the league is right around 6,000.

Some might not think this is that good but there are five teams with a maximum arena capacity of under 9,000, three under 6,000. They've also sold out numerous NHL-sized arenas.

In February, in a game between Toronto and Montreal at Scotiabank Arena, the final attendance was 19,285, a total sell-out.

The league also started selling tickets for Toronto vs. Montreal on March 20, this time in Quebec, Montreal at Bell Centre.

Tickets for the 21,000-seat venue sold out within an hour.

Possibly the biggest rise in women's sports, however, is the emergence of women's college basketball.

Over the past few years, it has gone to heights that seemed unobtainable in the past.

The women's Elite Eight game between LSU and Iowa showcased those heights.

The game was a rematch of last year's National Championship which drew right around 10 million viewers, which broke the previous record for women's college basketball.

However, the rematch that took place on April 1 shattered that record.

The game had an average of 12.3 million viewers and peaked at over 16 million.

For reference, here's a list of everything that this game outranked in terms of viewership:

- Every NBA game in the 2022-2023 season except game five of the NBA Finals

- Every MLB game in the 2022-2023 season

- Every NHL game in the 2022-2023 season

- Every men's college basketball game except Duke vs. NC State in the Elite Eight

- Every college football game except the College Football Playoff, SEC Championship and Ohio State vs. Michigan

Iowa played UConn for a spot in the national championship on April 5.

According to ESPN, this game had the second-highest get-in price for a women's basketball game since 1990.

This is crazy to think about now, but especially when you factor in where women's college basketball was three seasons ago.

Sedona Prince, a member of the TCU women's basketball team, had a chance to make the tournament when she was with the Oregon Ducks in 2021.

She was very vocal about the lack of resources and subpar facilities that were given to the women's teams.

Compared to the men's, the weight rooms were vastly undersized.

While the men had buffet-style meals, the women were left with pre-packaged food.

Additionally, the women received way less gear in the "swag bag" given out by the NCAA.

Another big difference was that the NCAA didn't send any photographers to the first two rounds of the women's tournament despite sending many to the men's. The NCAA stated that they were trying to cut costs and save money due to the COVID-19 pandemic as a reason for this.

Perhaps the most telling example of the NCAA's lack of effort to promote women's basketball wasn't fixed until 2022.

The term "March Madness" has been used to describe the men's tournament officially since 1982.

However, the NCAA withheld the women's right to use the term when talking about their tournament.

They weren't allowed to put it on the court or merchandise. This was changed after the 2021 tournament when there was a huge outcry from athletes and fans when it was pointed out.

While there is still a long way to go in terms of getting women's sports where they need to be, it's amazing to see the game grow as much as it has in recent years.



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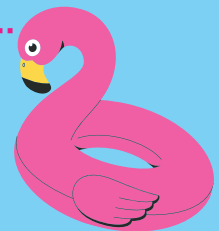


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Girl power: The heroes of Fredonia's female student-athletes

MATT VOLZ
Sports Editor

As sports fans, we all have our idols.

Many of us grow up worshiping certain athletes and we carry that into our adult lives.

Some sports heroes are obvious, like Michael Jordan, LeBron James, Tom Brady or maybe even a coach like Vince Lombardi.

But in a sports world that's often dominated by men, prominent women can sometimes be overshadowed.

They're certainly not overlooked by young women in sports, however, as many young female athletes look up to the ones who have gone on to make names for themselves.

The growth of women's college basketball in recent years has produced several role models for women and young girls to look up to.

Caitlin Clark, for example, has shattered basketball records at not only the University of Iowa, but nationwide.

She's regarded by many as one of the greatest college basketball players to ever play the game, men's or women's.

But it isn't just her scoring ability that makes her a role model.

"Not only is she the leading scorer [in women's college basketball history], but [she] also leads in assists which shows she isn't a selfish player," said Grace Alexander, a freshman on Fredonia's women's basketball team.

It's pretty common to see athletes looking up to Clark, as her popularity has soared over the last couple of years.

But besides her, who else do Fredonia's female student-athletes look up to?

Several of them look up to successful women within their own sport.

Emma Abrahamson is a former cross country and track and field athlete at the University of Oregon, and since then she's become a YouTube influencer with nearly 70,000 subscribers.

Her channel focuses on running and promoting a healthy lifestyle.

"One of her main mottos is that running is for people in every body shape and size, and she is a strong advocate for runners fueling their bodies for success," said Holly Rohrbach, a junior on Fredonia's women's cross country and track and field teams.

Valerie Cagle is a softball pitcher at Clemson. Last season she was named by numerous outlets as the top college softball player in the country, setting a program record for the Tigers with 83 hits.

"She is an outstanding student-athlete who performs and delivers," said Mack Celauro, a sophomore on Fredonia's softball team. "I aspire to contribute to my team as she does for hers."

Although role models are typically thought of as athletes, a good coach can also be a figure to look up to.

Multiple Fredonia lacrosse players have highlighted their coach, Tori Poffenberger, as someone they admire.

"Having a coach that you can relate to and having achieved your goals is such an inspiration because she is giving you the steps to achieve greatness just as she did," said Alyssa Vukosic, a sophomore on the lacrosse team. "Having a strong female leader on and off the field is something we as a lacrosse program are so incredibly lucky to have."

Noelle Mendez, a sophomore on Fredonia's lacrosse team, also looks up to her coach.

"To know her is to know her passion for the game," Mendez said of her coach. "She is disciplined, resilient and insanely talented. She is also kind, patient and extremely empathetic."

Mendez said she also looks up to leaders on her own team, specifically mentioning senior Sydney Buchko.

"When you need someone to get something done, you put Syd in," she said. "She is versatile all over the field and is the most humble athlete I have ever met."

Some Blue Devils admire successful female athletes who have overcome significant adversity to get where they are today.

Alexandria Visconte, a sophomore on Fredonia's women's swim and dive team, says she admires Jessica Long, a Paralympic gold medalist who first won gold at the age of 12.

Long was adopted by her American parents after being born in Russia to two teenagers who left her in foster care. When she was only 18 months old, she had both legs amputated due to a disease.

That clearly didn't stop her from reaching her goals, and she has since become an advocate for women in sports and disability support.

Visconte also said she admires other successful swimmers like Missy Franklin and Lydia Jacoby.

"To me, these people have inspired and shaped me into the swimmer and woman I am today," she said.

Overcoming criticism is also a large part of battling through adversity.

Babe Didrikson Zaharias, a multi-talented athlete in the mid-20th century, was no stranger to this, as she faced a great deal of sexism and was often accused of being a man due to her athletic prowess.

She took home two gold medals in the 1932 Olympics, and to this day, she remains the only Olympic athlete to ever win individual medals in running, jumping and throwing events.

In her later years, she became a professional golfer and is widely regarded as one of the best and most popular women's golfers in history.

"I remember my parents talking about her," said Fredonia women's tennis coach Jane Gens. "She was unflappable about participating in sports despite the criticism from others."

Allie Wandell, a junior dual-sport athlete in softball and basketball, said she admires a few different athletes in her respective sports, Paige Bueckers and Nika Mühl of the University of Connecticut's women's basketball team and Oddici Alexander of James Madison University's softball team.

“They celebrate and uplift other women. In this society, we are constantly pinned against each other and being compared,” said Wandell. “These women stay resilient and that is what I admire the most.”

It can be difficult for women to break into a male-centric sports world, but because of these successful stories of resilience and determination, many women and young girls can feel like they can do it, too.



"They celebrate and uplift other women. In this society, we are constantly pinned against each other and being compared. These women stay resilient and that is what I admire the most."

—ALLIE WANDELL
Junior dual-sport athlete,
SUNY Fredonia

Graphic by ROEN CLOUTIER | Staff Artist

Anything but stereotypical

MARISSA BURR
Opinion Editor

Trigger warning: mentions of sexual harassment, sexual assault and self-harm

Women are constantly defying expectations with their accomplishments and abilities, but what seems to ruffle the misogynists' feathers the most is when stereotypes get shredded — as they should be.

Our society is known for treating women as “less than” by expecting them to hold up archaic standards.

News flash: we are in 2024 and women don't owe anyone anything.

If men are free to be whatever they'd like, then women deserve nothing less.

And for those of you out there who believe that these female stereotypes no longer exist, here are a few that I've encountered in the last 21 years.

Dresses are prettier than pants

Throughout middle and high school, if a girl showed up in a dress, everyone would ask why she was dressed up, and who was she dressing for?

A girl could only be beautiful if she was wearing a skirt or dress, so that's all you saw at dances or special events.

If you were wearing pants, you received homophobic slurs and accusatory stares.

But if you didn't wear pants during school hours, you better do the “hands at your side test” to make sure it was an appropriate length.

Too short of a skirt meant that you couldn't learn as well and neither could your classmates.

Never mind the male teachers who probably enjoyed dress coding a little too much and the blatant sexualization of young girls.

Nobody blamed the stores that only carried dresses that were short or floor-length gowns — there was no middle ground.

I also remember having to spend extra time the night before school shaving my legs in the shower because even though guys could walk around in gym shorts with hairy legs, girls couldn't.

Not only would the guys say something, but so would other girls.

It was a cutthroat time to be a girl.

Periods are gross

I still have not escaped this stereotype.

Even though girls are getting periods as early as eight or nine years old now, it's still a taboo subject.

In fifth grade, girls and guys were separated and the girls learned all about periods, tampons and pregnancy.

As I went through school, I had to hide pads in my pencil case because we couldn't carry our backpacks around, and I had to stuff them in my pockets so other people didn't know I was going to the bathroom to change mine.

Teachers would continuously ask if we “really needed to” go to the bathroom as we were actively bleeding through our clothes.

Four-minute passing periods weren't enough time, especially if you had a heavy flow like I did.

Menstrual cycles come with uncontrollable bleeding for days, accompanied by horrible cramps, mood swings, cravings, acne flare-ups and breast tenderness.

Yet, this was no reason to miss school or even lie down in the nurse's office for more than one period.

The school wouldn't send you home, and I grew up in a household where they wouldn't pick me up either.

Periods were just something that happened that we shouldn't talk about but rather suck it up and take it.

It might be a hot take, but this would not be the attitude if men had to experience them.

And if you disagree, look on the internet for videos of men trying period cramp simulators.

I couldn't talk about periods with my father or brother because it grossed them out, so I never even tried to bring it up to male partners, friends or coworkers.

If it's so gross, then maybe women shouldn't have to go to work or school during this time.

If it's so gross, then maybe there should be free menstrual products in the bathroom so we don't have to carry them on our way there.

If it's so gross, then maybe boxes of tampons shouldn't be at least eight dollars for enough tampons to last some women half of a cycle.

They can be free and available everywhere so nobody knows when a woman is actually bleeding.

Women have to be nice to men who make them uncomfortable

I'm just going to start off by saying that the fact that anyone has had to experience this is utter bullshit. The amount of creepy men online that think it's okay to send messages detail-

ing the sex they're going to have with you, five minutes into a conversation, is disgusting.

Plus, if you ever listen to their crass comments, they're describing things that they'll do to you that will only be enjoyable for them.

Even in their pre-foreplay, they don't care about your pleasure. In October of 2020, just a week or so after my eighteenth birthday I joined Tinder and matched with this guy the same age.

Well, it turns out he was a pick-me guy, which if you aren't aware of that category of douches, refers to the guys that continue to say they're "too ugly" or just a "nice guy" and that's why they are still single.

They're essentially fishermen searching for someone to compliment them over and over again.

Well, I got sick of it and tried to let the conversations die naturally and slowly stop contacting him and hope he got the message.

I was met with dozens of messages in a row asking where I was, then how he knew I was the same as other girls, and that he was going to kill himself if I didn't answer him.

I blocked him and didn't care what happened because at that point, I knew that his actions were not my responsibility, nor was unraveling his insecurities.

The thing is, men have this warped sense of entitlement that makes them believe that if they're nice to women, whether it's through words, actions, buying them drinks, holding the door, etcetera, they are somehow entitled to get whatever they want from us.

But guess what?

They're not.

So girls, if you're out there feeling as though you have to do something for a guy that makes you uncomfortable or who you don't want to be around, make sure you stay safe and do what is right for you.

They claim they're so tough, so they should be able to handle your rejection; if they can't then that says more about them than you.

Women did something to deserve being assaulted

Without a doubt, this is one of the worst ideas that is still a

So girls, if you're out there feeling as though you have to do something for a guy that makes you uncomfortable or who you don't want to be around, make sure you stay safe and do what is right for you. They claim they're so tough, so they should be able to handle your rejection; if they can't then that says more about them than you. No one, no matter what they do, where they go, who they talk to, or what they wear, deserves to be assaulted. Nothing in this world gives someone the right to ignore consent and harm another person.

pillar in our society.

No one, no matter what they do, where they go, who they talk to, or what they wear, deserves to be assaulted. Nothing in this world gives someone the right to ignore consent and harm another person.

I was assaulted in my own house, wearing pajamas, by my roommate who came home from a party high and didn't accept the fact that I didn't want to "fuck" (his words).

Yet, post-assault, I was blamed because I didn't scream or tell someone right away. I was blamed because I let him and his friend move in with me.

I was blamed because I "could've done something to stop it" — which I couldn't have — but I internalized these thoughts.

It is a "stuck point" in my recovery process, and that is because everyone is so quick to blame the woman for something going wrong.

Women can do so many amazing things, but controlling other people's actions is not one of them.

The sooner that the bigots of the world get that through their heads, the closer we will come to an equal society.

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Back: Nicole Thorson, Kelly Ibach, Marissa Burr, EJ Jacobs, Abbie Miller, Sierra Mills. Front: Drew Paluch, Chloe Kowalyk, Isabella Rizzo.
 Photo by HENRY DOMST | Design Editor

The experiences of the women of The Leader

KRYSTYNA PORTUGUES-KLOS

Staff Writer

The Leader has been the newspaper of Fredonia since 1893.

Originally called the Fredonia Normal Leader, it was run strictly by women, an all-women group named the Agonian Literary Society, but then was combined with the men-only Zetesian literary society.

In 1936, the Fredonia Normal Leader changed its name to “The Leader” and has since been published under this name.

Over 100 years since its inception, The Leader is still largely run by women, so what do they have to say about writing for The Leader and women in journalism?

A survey via Google Forms was shared with the female E-board members of The Leader.

Positive feedback is all there is when asked how it feels to be writing for a largely women-run paper.

The women of The Leader are proud of their presence in the paper, and happy that they can be part of what they call a welcoming and wonderful environment that fosters creativity, inclusivity and empowerment.

When it comes to writing for The Leader, it's tens all across the board, with positive reviews and joy from the staff.

One of the most common issues in modern media is being silenced by others, and the women at The Leader feel that their

voices can be heard and that their ideas and suggestions are always considered in the process of creating stories.

With the welcoming atmosphere and encouragement to try new things, the women at The Leader are proud of Fredonia’s newspaper.

The presence of women in the field of journalism has definitely grown, but there are still some glass ceilings to break through.

The ladies of The Leader believe that it is important to have women in the newsrooms and that the acknowledgment of unfair treatment to women in the field is extremely important, but mostly that the growth of women’s involvement in the field is a fantastic push forward.

For all of the aspiring journalists out there, they have a message for you!

1. Never give up.
2. Speak your mind, your words matter.

To all the women out there, never think that you can’t do something because you’re a woman. You are strong and inspiring and can do anything you set your mind to.

Special thanks to the wonderful women at The Leader: Abigail Jacobson, Julianna Lalomio, Megan Kidby, Chloe Kowalyk, Sierra Mills, Kelly Ibach, Abigail Miller and those who wanted to remain anonymous.

Keep being awesome!

A woman's experience within the video game community

ABIGAIL JACOBSON

Asst. News Editor

Content Warning: slurs, sexual comments, mentions of sexual assault, threats of violence, self-harm, suicide

I grew up playing video games with my father and brother. My sisters would join in too, and it was some of the best times I've had with them.

It helped me gain a love for video games.

But, as I got older and more interested in newer and more popular video games, that all changed.

Especially when being a woman.

According to Statista, in 2023, women made up about 46% of video gamers in the United States.

I can say very confidently that a majority of that percent of women have probably experienced derogatory statements.

"Fat." "Whore." "Slut." "F-slur." "Good girl." Literally ew to that last one. Any derogatory statement you could think of, I've been called in a video game.

I've been told lots of other things as well, such as "Go make me a sandwich," "You would look better on your knees" and "You should slit your wrists and kill yourself."

Not only do some players say these types of things, but they also make sexual references to other players who they find out are women.

I've heard things like, "You're so good at this baby, what else are you good at?" to the extreme of, "I'm going to r*pe you," and sometimes someone just saying my name and then moaning or making sexual noises.

Literally what the fuck.

I've also been told that since I'm a girl, I'm terrible at video games. But when I prove them wrong, I get told "Oh, well your boyfriend is playing for you."

No. I'm just better than you.

You know what's my favorite thing I'm told a shit ton of times? "You're good for a girl."

No. I'm just that good at the game. Sounds like a skill issue on your level my guy.

I know I'm not the only woman out there who has experienced these types of statements in video games.

So, I decided to make a survey. The following responses are printed exactly as they appeared in the results.

First, 83.3% of respondents said they have experienced rude behavior, such as cyberbullying or name-calling, in the video game community because of their gender.

"I've definitely been called female-descriptive derogatory terms (c*nt, bitch, etc.) numerous times, over literally nothing, and completely unprovoked," Jaded, the gamertag of one respondent said.

Another respondent included statements that they have experienced but more on sexual terms.

"When they realize I am a female they would say my name over and over again annoyingly, say I "suck c*ck," call me the f-word slur and say I like "sucking d*cks," NotoriousJCM said.

I asked the question in my survey, "What would you say to those who are afraid of joining the video game community because of what they have heard about the community?"



Graphic by ADELIZ GOTTINGER | Staff Artist

"I completely understand the fear; there are negative, hateful people everywhere. But they don't represent us or make up the majority," Jaded said.

"The best part about the video game community is that you can find communities within it and surround yourself with the good people."

All of the answers and feedback I received — some good and some bad — made me feel worse.

Why is it that because of my gender, I am being disregarded, made fun of and receiving all of this hate?

The community I grew up in with my family has changed so much, it's honestly depressing.

The older I got, the more I would hear these types of things.

If I had to tell 10-year-old Abigail that this is what she will experience years later, I don't think I could. I wouldn't want to break her heart.

I took out a book from the library titled "Gamer Girls: 25 Women Who Built the Video Game Industry" by Mary Kenney. This book gave me the strength again to not hate myself because of my gender.

Seeing all these beautiful and powerful women who helped build up the video game industry, my heart felt so full.

I related so much to one sentence in this book. "...it seemed that if you weren't a white, cis, able-bodied man, you weren't allowed to be part of games — either as a developer or player."

With all of the hatred I have seen being pushed onto myself and other women because of our gender, it is just unacceptable.

I should be able to play whatever video game I want without worrying that someone is going to tell me that they hope I get raped.

The hatred towards women in the video game community is completely unacceptable. We shouldn't have to experience this type of hatred just because we are women.

We should be able to play video games and have fun rather than worrying about when we will hear disgusting and derogatory statements.

We, as women, should be able to experience anything and everything we want to in life.

For me, all I want is a positive video game community.

But from the looks of it, that's not happening any sooner.

I leave you with this: You have the power to do whatever you want. You are beautiful, kind, smart, compassionate and everything else. You are a woman, and you should be proud.

A Playlist for Every Mood: Who runs the world?

MARISSA BURR

Opinion Editor

Trigger warning: mentions of sexual harassment, sexual assault and self-harm

Lately, I've been hearing people discuss the Bechdel Test for movies.

Essentially, the test examines films to see if two female characters a) appear, b) talk to each other, and c) do so about something other than a man.

Spoiler: recent movies such as "Oppenheimer" and "The Super Mario Bros" do not pass.

It seems as though there's a similar standard in music that female artists don't create songs about anything other than men.

Yes, there are a large number of songs about breakups, relationships and parental struggles, but those come from both men and women. They're experiences a lot of people go through, so they're going to be popular inspirations. But, to shut the bigots up, here is a list of songs by mainstream female artists that weren't written about men or for men — no dads or no dudes allowed.

"Run the World (Girls)" by Beyoncé

I would be remiss if I didn't start this female-centric playlist with the queen that inspired its title.

This is known as one of the ultimate girl-power anthems of the early 2000s, and to this day, you can play this at any party and I guarantee half the room knows every word.

Beyoncé wrote this for that purpose, and all hail the queen.

"Confident" by Demi Lovato

This song was my alarm for at least a year and a half in high school, and that timeline lined up perfectly with a low point in my self-esteem.

I needed to start my mornings with Lovato's song or else I wouldn't have had the energy to face the horrors of the world.

The chorus says, "What's wrong with being confident" to purposely call out the misogynists out there who arrogantly believe that self-assured women are somehow in the wrong. In reality, it's just their insecurities shining through.

Lovato created this banger for every woman to scream at the top of their lungs in the club, or even just behind the walls of their bedroom.

Doesn't matter where, confidence looks beautiful in any light.

"Applause" by Lady Gaga

Before it was playing to announce Taylor Swift's arrival on stage, this song had me dancing around my room so much I'd get dizzy — the Kidz Bop version, of course, since I was still a preteen in a religious household at that point.

Lady Gaga created this bop to depict the public view of celebrities, and how they always wanted attention.

She was calling out the fact that her fans were the demanding ones, living for her every move, not the other way around.

"All American Bitch" by Olivia Rodrigo

The opening track of her latest album "Guts" relays the struggles that come with being a woman.

Her verses are the "acceptable" ways of a woman, but as she enters the chorus she tears through the bonds and lets loose with all the screams and frustrations that women are forced to hold in.

The switch back and forth between the sounds shows the constant need to "fix yourself" for men.

"Everybody's Fool" by Evanescence

Yes, I was that angsty tween listening to Evanescence and relating to the lyrics way more than I probably should have.

But that's okay because my dad introduced me to them and listening to their music helped me feel closer to him — after all, he's the one who taught me that the car was the best place to jam out to rock.

This song in particular was on repeat on my stereo.

Preteen Marissa struggled with the ideas brought up in this song about how people were often insincere and two-faced.

The fact that the antagonist mentioned in the song was also a woman was so real to me since that's who my biggest bullies were.

Listening to it now, I know that I never really grasped how powerful that idea was that people could seem one way to everyone else but then turn around and be so different to me.

As a woman, I need that validation that we're not all singing "Kumbaya" and braiding each other's hair, and that's okay.

Not all girls have to get along.

"Sit Still, Look Pretty" by Daya

Switching gears slightly, because not every anthem has to have a rock band behind it.

With a steady dance beat for the base, Daya wrote a song about feminism and becoming something more than what men expected women to be.

Relating these ideas to medieval times, she sings "This queen doesn't need a king," to tie in the chorus.

No longer will women accept the role of smiling and holding their tongues on a throne. If they're in power, they're going to act like it.

"22 (Taylor's Version)" by Taylor Swift

Yeah, we all knew a Taylor Swift song was coming. Her music is so diverse that she fits on every playlist I can think of.

In fact, the morons that say she only writes break-up songs were the reason I wanted to make a playlist like this in the first place.

Swift wrote this song for her friends about just going out and having fun.

Because it's okay to do that. Not everything has to be about a guy or a relationship or hardships.

We owe it to ourselves to enjoy what little time we have on this planet.

"Wings" by Little Mix

If I was screaming Evanescence on Monday, odds are Tuesdays brought this Little Mix song during my middle school years.

Its purpose is exactly what they say: don't let anybody put you down or keep you up at night.

We're all born with wings that are meant to take us so far above the hatred. When these women belt "They're just like water off my wings" after the bridge, my whole body gets chills.

Add this song to every workout, girl power, feminist, party, etc. playlist.

A Playlist for Every Mood



Graphic by JOHN LEAHY | Special to The Leader

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THE SCALLION



Satire and parody for Fredonia

Women are funny... Yeah I said it.

MEGAN KIDBY
Scallion Editor

I believe women are funny despite what Dan Schnieder thinks.

In a world teeming with age-old debates, from the existence of extraterrestrial life to the proper way to hang toilet paper, one question continues to perplex and bemuse scholars and comedians alike: are women funny?

This enigmatic query has sparked numerous discussions, studies and even stand-up routines.

But fear not, dear readers, for today we embark on a satirical journey to unravel the baffling mystery behind the alleged comedic prowess of the fairer sex.

We have devised a comprehensive explanation to put this debate to rest once and for all.

Our hypothesis?

Women are funny because ... well, because they're human! Shocking, we know.

It appears that humor, that delightful cocktail of wit, timing and absurdity, knows no gender boundaries.

However, we must acknowledge the elephant in the room — or rather, the joke that just fell flat.

The persistent doubt surrounding women's comedic abilities is not rooted in any empirical evidence but rather in the fertile soil of patriarchal norms and stereotypes.

It's the same outdated mindset that once deemed women incapable of voting or driving, conveniently repackaged in the guise of a harmless jest.

In the grand tradition of satire, let us turn the mirror on so-

ciety and examine the real source of this comedic conundrum.

Could it be that the reluctance to embrace female comedians stems from a deep-seated fear of women usurping traditionally male-dominated spaces?

After all, what better way to maintain the status quo than by dismissing women's voices as inherently unfunny?

Moreover, let us not forget the double standards that female comedians face daily.

While their male counterparts are celebrated for their irreverence and boldness, women are often held to a different standard, expected to be both funny and palatable — a delicate balancing act that would make even the most seasoned tightrope walker break a sweat.

But fear not, aspiring comediennes, for the tides are slowly but surely turning.

With each uproarious punchline and belly laugh-inducing anecdote, women are rewriting the script and carving out their rightful place in the annals of comedy history.

So the next time someone dares to question whether women are funny, simply flash them a knowing smile and deliver the punchline of the century. After all, laughter knows no gender — and neither does wit.

In conclusion, dear readers, let us bid adieu to the antiquated notion that women are somehow less capable of tickling our funny bones.

For in the grand theater of life, the true punchline lies in the absurdity of such beliefs.

And remember, if all else fails, just blame it on the patriarchy — it's the ultimate punchline.

THE PARTY B4 GRADUATION

Page 3 of 5
update bi-weekly



Weirdo

Yo are you ok?

Yea, I used my Man repellent!



Yea, I can't imagine dancing with another dude.



Girl. We are NOT passing The Bechdel Test.



Damn. Are we bad at feminism?



You just need a distraction. Like a random hookup.



Jemah. I'm Demi.

So we'll find an old classmate. Don't worry, I'll be your Wingman.



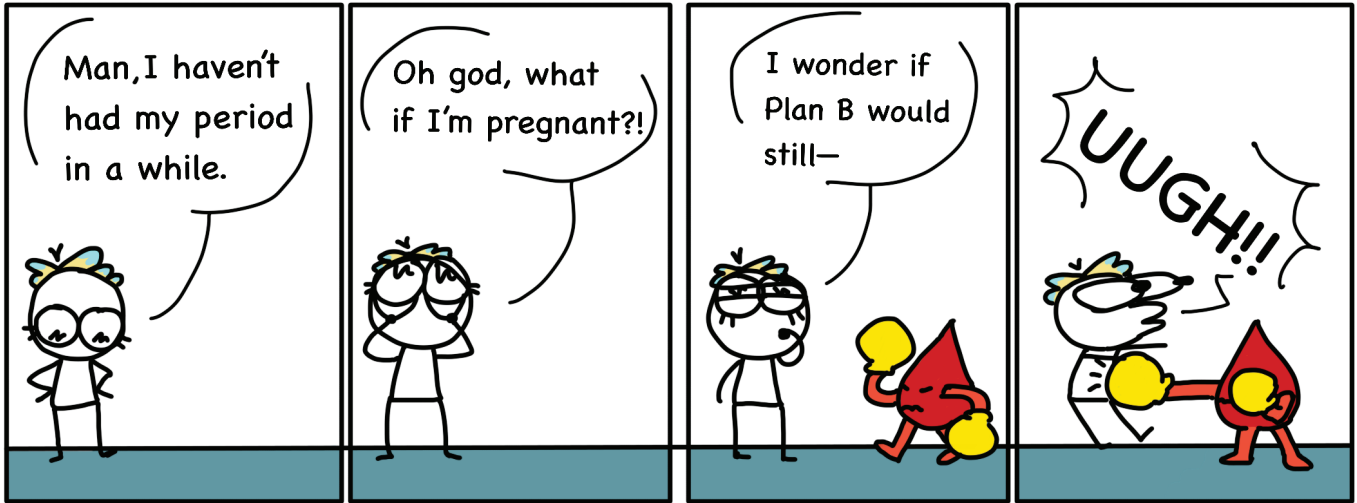
OMG I love your dress!
OMG same to you!
No you're SOO HOT!
No you're Gorgeous.
No I'm Bi, I would so kiss you!
So do it.



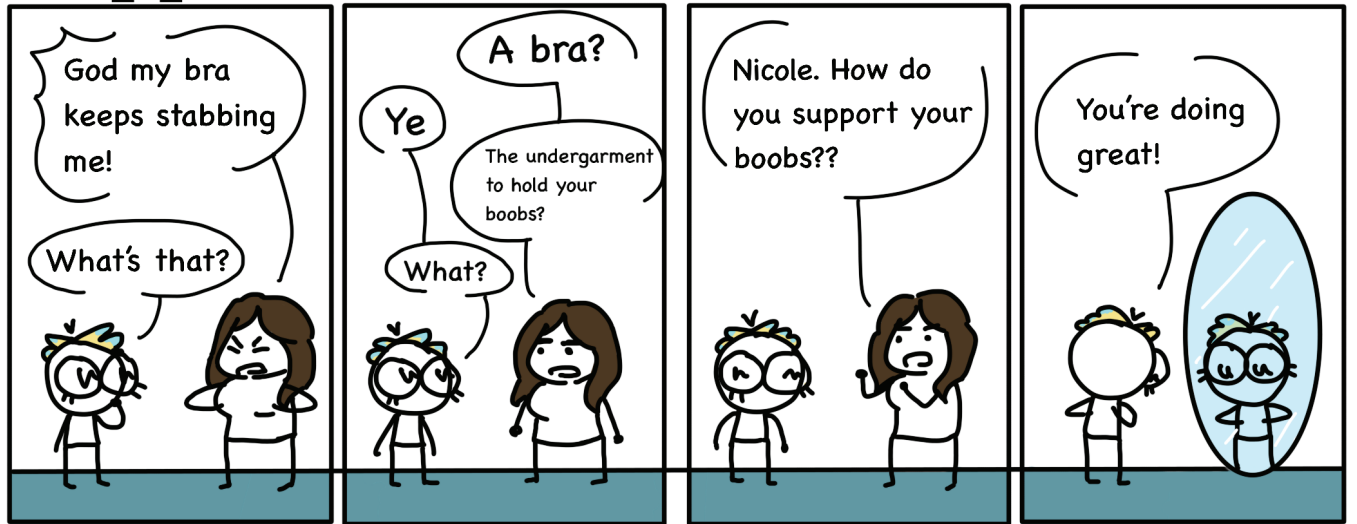
So much for a wingman.

Time of the Month

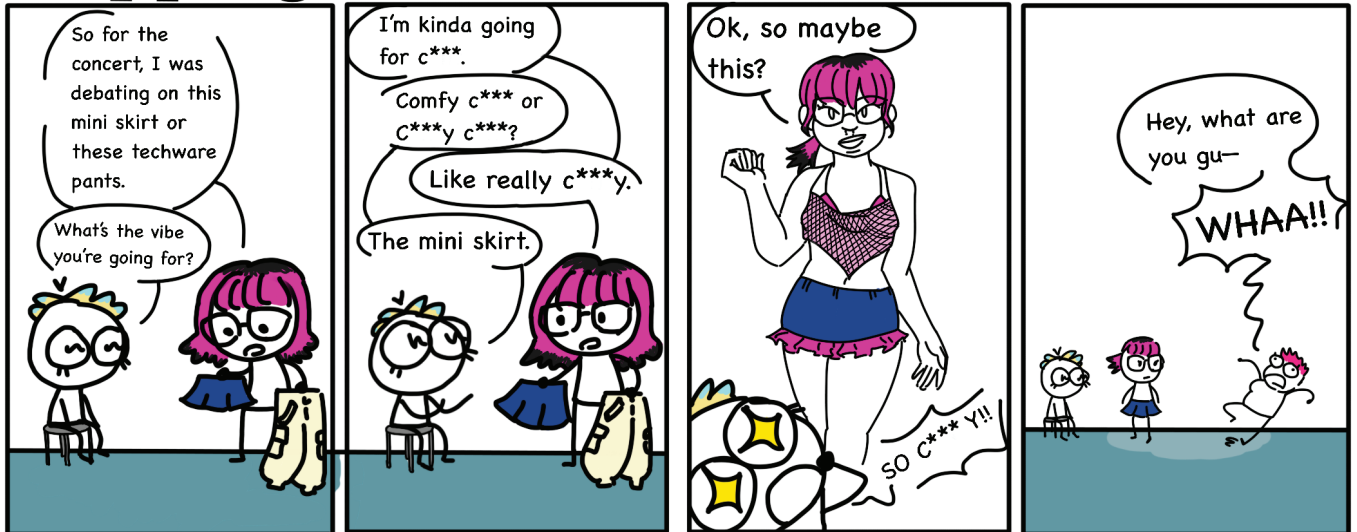
Comic by NICOLE THORSON | Art Director



Support



Sopping



Highlighting the feminist men of media: Andrew Tate and Elon Musk

MEGAN KIDBY

Scallion Editor

In honor of this special issue, I wanted to highlight some quotes from the most amazing men ... Elon Musk and Andrew Tate.

These beautiful men have really paved the way for strong and powerful females like me.

Once, I was just a self-conscious girl and I had zero prospects whatsoever.

Now that I've found the alpha universe and the men who run it, I have become a proud alpha woman.

Now I'm sure some of you are thinking "Megan ... Andrew Tate and Elon Musk are actually horrible people. Think of all of the anti-feminist things they've said."

To that, I say: Would someone who believes women are inferior say that women belong to the man when they're married?

I don't think so.

Someone who respects women would absolutely say that.

Would they also make a tweet talking about making a university only for it to be a tits joke?

Absolutely!

That's the most feminist thing to do. Some women have boobs, my friends.

Here are a couple of quotes from Andrew Tate that really inspire me to be a confident woman:

"Men can cheat, women can't."

"I was getting on a plane and I could see through the cockpit that a female was the pilot and I took a picture and I said, 'most women I know can't even park a car, why is a woman flying my plane?' and they banned me."

"18 to 19-year-old women are more attractive than 25-year-olds because they've been through less d*ck."

"I don't sleep with vaccinated women."

"I do know how to administer CPR. However, I will not administer CPR unless you're a hot female... If you're some fat dude and you just had a heart attack and I don't really know you, you're gonna die... No, not even if you're a friend."

"Society's expectations of men are much higher than the societal expectations of females."

I don't know how you're feeling, but I know I'm feeling totally

safe and comfortable in my body and in my femininity.

Andrew Tate really loves women and believes we're equal to men in every way.

You know who else believes this?

I DO IT'S ELON MUSK!

Elon Musk has done wonderful things to support all women! Here is a list of things he has done to support us:

Running a company (Tesla), where a female worker said sexual harassment was "rampant,"

Running a company (X), which ran sponsored "timeline takeover" content from PragerU, a fringe conservative organization, promoting its new "so-called" documentary on transgender people.

Blaming Crossroads School for Arts & Sciences in Santa Monica for infecting his trans daughter with the "woke mind virus."

Shared "What is a Woman?", a 2022 online film by "The Daily Wire" 's Matt Walsh that urges intolerance of trans people and opposes medical intervention for trans children on his X account with the caption "Every parent should watch this."

Wasn't that such a girly pop thing for him to do?

Honestly, I feel like nothing is wrong with the men who have invaded our media conglomerates and the things they stand for.

If it were up to me, I'd genuinely let the gross, disgusting old men run the world because they have the right things in mind when it comes to us females.

Thank you for reading my article and I will go back to the kitchen now.

... are the toxic men gone? ...

PHEW OKAY PEOPLE I CAN SPEAK FREELY.

These toxic men who think they can stop us need to be proved wrong.

We are strong, hard-working, dedicated and amazing individuals who need to go up to these gross stinky men and kick them in their shins (not actually because The Leader does not condone violence on campus).

They say behind every man is a strong woman but I believe that a strong woman should shove the man aside and take her own place in the line.

As one of my favorite feminists, Chrissy Chlapecka, says: **"HE'S JUST A GUY! BLOCK HIM AND HIT HIM WITH YOUR CAR!"**

HOROS

Moments of womanhood aligned with the signs

JACE JACOBS

Assistant Editor of The Scallion

ABIGAIL MILLER

Managing Editor

Hello Fredonians and a very happy Woman Issue to all who celebrate (guys please don't hate me for calling it that, it's literally what our Editor in Chief called it)!

For some context, I am a transgender man, so although I was born female,

I had very fleeting moments of true connection with womanhood.

So, for these horoscopes I had an extraordinary guest come up with some of her favorite moments of womanhood, so everyone please give an extra special thank you to Abbie for her help!

Thank you pookie, and I hope all of the signs out there enjoy this break from comedy to enjoy something a little sentimental from the Scallion. <3



Aries

Chips, queso and margaritas after a long week

As a sign that values little treats and finds comfort in good food, Aries know the value of using food as a way to destress. With all the pressure often placed on women, unwinding at the end of a long week is always a great idea! Aries women typically hold themselves to such high standards that the feeling of a reward at the end of a long week is always something to look forward to.



Taurus

Having a sweet treat before bed

My fellow bulls, I know I said I would try not to do us dirty by making our horoscopes about food, but come on. No one is better at getting a sweet treat and passing out in bed than Tauruses. Ending the day with a sweet treat after a full day of just existing is the perfect overlap between bulls and the best moments of womanhood.



Gemini

Debrief sessions with the girlies

Debriefing after a long day is a crucial part of womanhood, and as one of the signs most connected to listening and sharing gossip, Gemini understand the importance of a good debrief. This is not to say that debriefs are just gossip (because they're not, they're so much more), or that Gemini are chronic gossips (they're not, they can be trusted to lock secrets away), but to paint a picture of how much of an impact understanding and communication have on the lives of women.



Cancer

The way your sheets feel after you shave your legs

Cancers value comfort, and there is nothing comfier than getting all bundled up in bed with freshly shaved legs. Various sensory experiences are also typically valuable to Cancers, and this is no exception. This is also a moment of womanhood cherished by all of the women in my life, so I am sure many Cancer women will understand exactly why this is on our list!



Leo

Your hair looking good on a non-shower day

Like a lion taking pride in his mane, Leos tend to take pride in their appearance. A good hair day is a great thing, especially for those with unruly hair, and is one of Abbie's listed favorite moments of womanhood. I imagine many Leo women feel the same way.



Virgo

The feeling of being refreshed after an everything shower

As another sign that values comfort highly, Virgos are no strangers to the relief and feeling of being refreshed that follows an everything shower. Multi-step skincare and haircare routines are often the norms for Virgos, especially Virgo women, so this moment of womanhood is felt frequently by them.

COOPES



Libra

Finding an outfit that fits just right

Libras are one of the most fashion-forward signs, valuing how they present themselves to the world and the impression they leave on others. Finding an outfit that fits just the way they want it to is a perfect overlap of womanhood for Libras.



Scorpio

Being told you smell good

Scorpios tend to have a very good sense of self and an understanding of what styles of clothing and cosmetics work for them. This includes perfumes, which can guarantee that others see Scorpios the way they see themselves. Receiving compliments overall is a very important part of womanhood, but I've heard from the women in my life that being told you smell good is the best kind of compliment that can be given, of which I'm sure Scorpio women would agree.



Sagittarius

Having another woman tell you "I'm listening" after everyone else has tuned you out

Sagittarius is a sign that values communication, and feeling left behind or ignored is one of their least favorite feelings. As a woman, the understanding and acknowledgment of another woman in the room can go a long way, and Sagittarius women feel this on an even deeper level.



Capricorn

Using girl math to shop

Capricorns are one of the more disciplined and self-preserving zodiac signs, but this doesn't mean they can't get by on girl math every once in a while. Setting a budget and deciding what money, if any, is real and how to spend it is a great representation of the enterprise of modern womanhood.



Aquarius

Getting your eyeliner right on the first try

Every Aquarius woman I've ever met wears flawless makeup frequently, and I am sure that they have all put many hours into perfecting their personal techniques and styles. Flawless eyeliner is hard to come by, especially on the first try, but many women and Aquarians alike feel the same joy when executing this marvel of technique!



Pisces

Locking yourself in a study room in the library and not leaving until all your work is done

As one of the most scholarly signs, Pisces understands the importance of having a dedicated space to get work done, and the immense relief that comes with getting everything done. Pisces women especially tend to feel an immense amount of pressure on themselves to get everything done that they need to on time, so this is a moment I'm sure many of you will find relatable.

