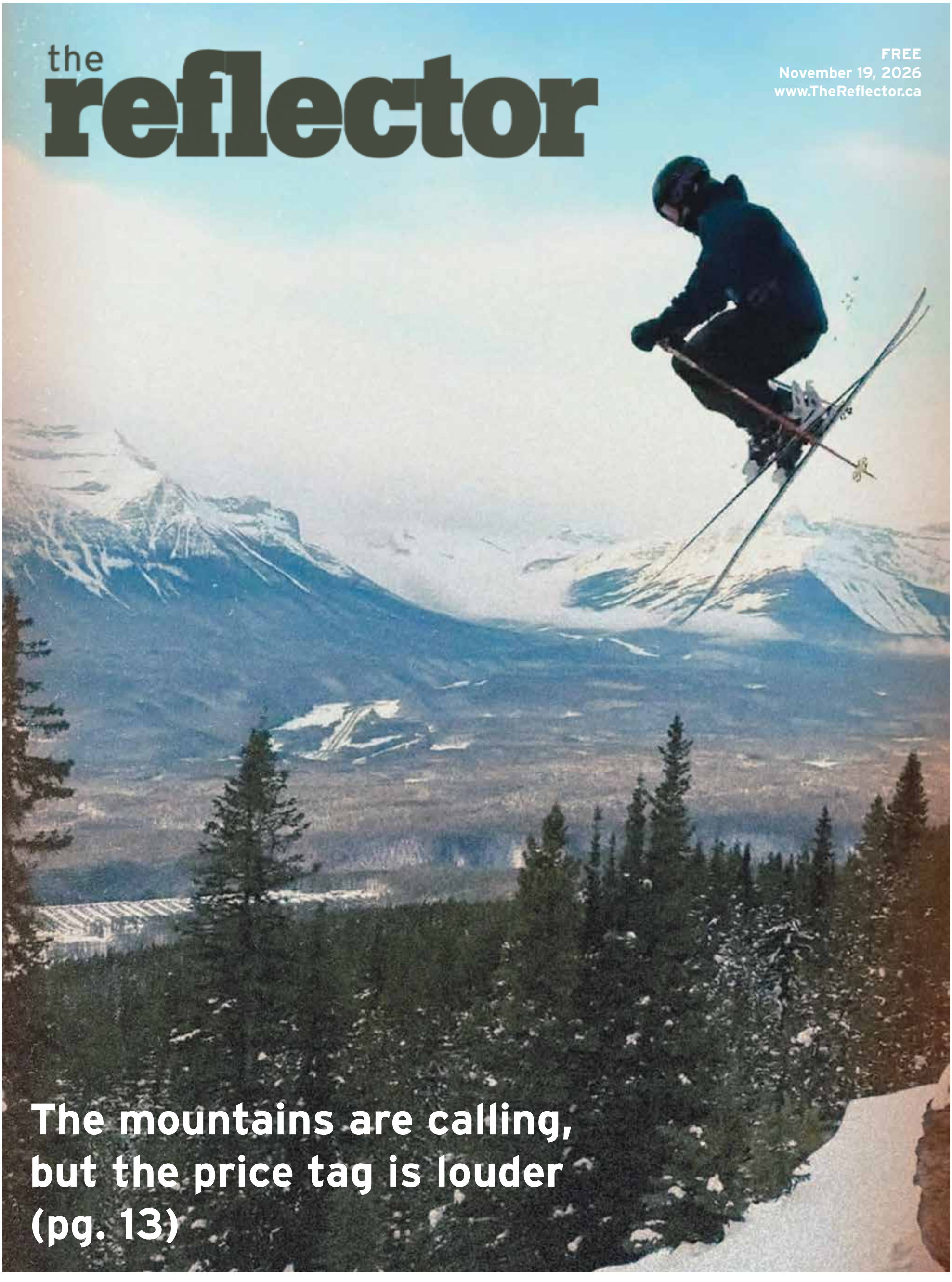
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The mountains are calling, but the price tag is louder
(pg. 13)

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There's a Redditor in city hall

Calgary's mayor is changing how politicians connect with younger audiences

Sofia Ibrahimi, Staff Writer



To promote water conservation, Mayor Jeromy Farkas showered with CJAY92's host Tyler Middleton. Photo courtesy of Instagram / @cjay92rocks and @tyler_on_air

Calgary Mayor Jeromy Farkas has used social media to connect with the community long before he was elected — but over his first year in office, his online presence has grown significantly as he continues to communicate with Calgarians and strengthen engagement in municipal politics.

During his 2025 campaign for mayor, Farkas used social media to hear from Calgary residents. He held an 'Ask Me Anything (AMA)' on Calgary's Reddit page in September of that year.

This online forum is used by Calgarians to get involved in their city's politics and the AMA discussion covered issues such as housing affordability and Calgary's future.

Vivek Bobby, a student at the University of Calgary's Haskayne School of Business and founder of the Youth Policy Council (YPC), said Farkas has tried to engage younger people in several ways.

"I think Mayor Farkas' approach is certainly a break from the past, in terms of what we've seen from different mayors," Bobby says.

As an example of his more casual online presence, Bobby highlighted a post on the mayor's Instagram which shows him dressing up as Mario from the video game *Super Mario Bros*.

Before Farkas was elected as mayor, YPC hosted a fireside chat with the candidate, with roughly 50 people in attendance. It was an event where the YPC could ask Farkas about different political issues and get his take on them.

Bobby noted Farkas' communication style is adaptable to different audiences.

"For anybody who's in public office, it doesn't matter what political stripe they are, you have to be able to communicate your ideas to different groups," Bobby says.

How are Calgarians responding?

The mayor has created an online presence through which citizens of Calgary can contact him with questions, comments or issues affecting the city.

While some have expressed appreciation for the mayor's availability, others have utilised the online forums to ask questions about municipal policies and decisions.

A survey by Leger for the 2025 municipal election showed that 58 per cent of respondents in Calgary were familiar with Farkas prior to his candidacy.

Of those who were familiar with him, 48 per cent approved of him as a candidate for mayor.

For Bobby, social media can make politicians more accessible to the public, especially to younger generations who do not regularly read newspapers or watch TV news.

Beyond social media popularity

In addition to having a large presence on social media, Bobby believes that having conversations with younger Calgarians in person is also important for encouraging political participation.

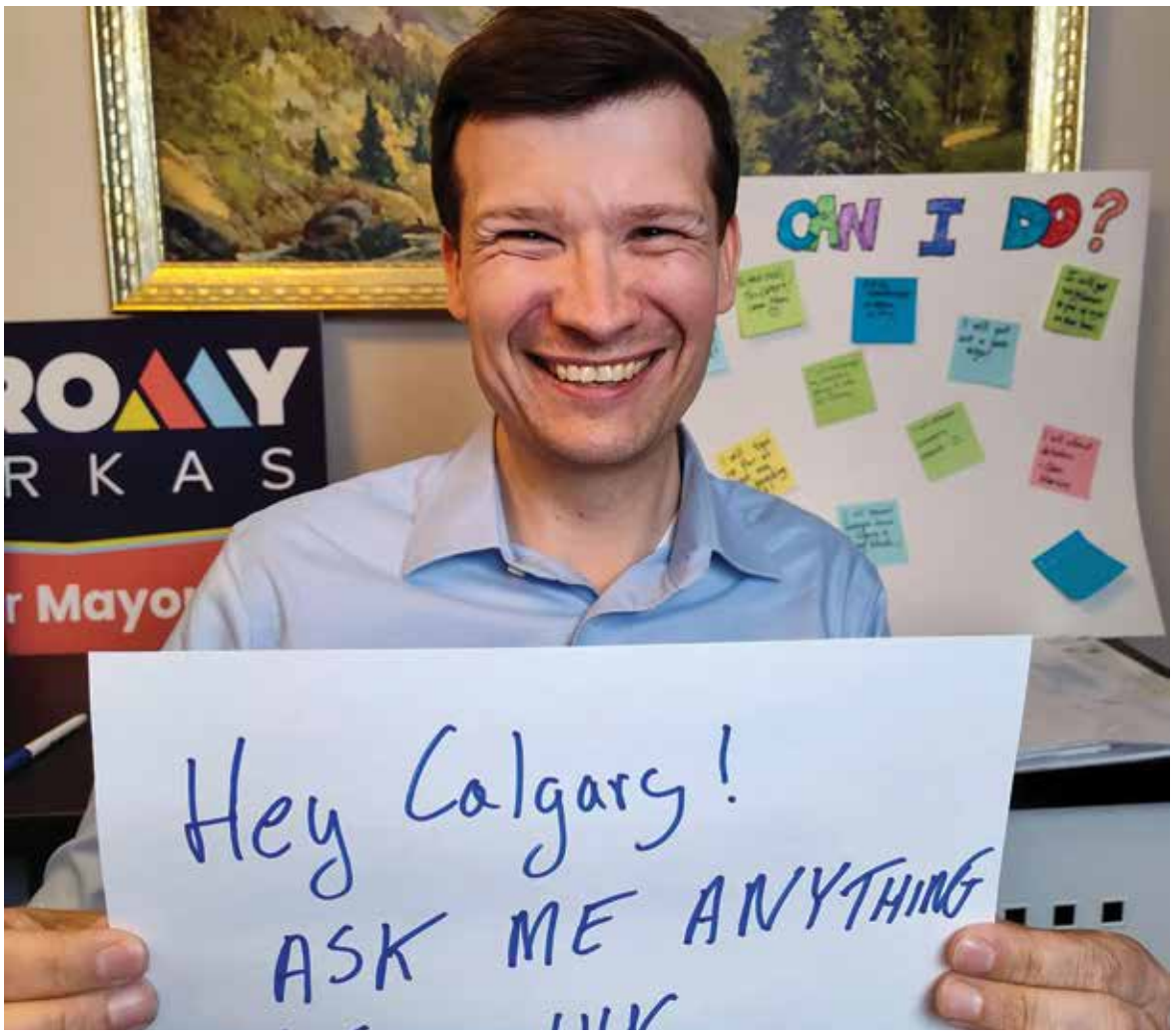
He has experience working with Mayor Farkas through the YPC and he says the mayor is open to reaching out to younger audiences outside of online platforms.

He also noted that bringing young people and political leaders together in a real setting can lead to more meaningful interactions than merely posting information online.

"You actually have to look at what they're saying and give thoughtful responses on the spot that aren't scripted," says Bobby.

While Farkas continues to reach out to the community through social media, Bobby believes it is essential for young Calgarians to keep up to date on political issues and form their own opinions.

"You want to look at what is being said critically. And you want to make an informed decision based on that," he says.



Jeromy Farkas hosted an AMA on Reddit before the mayoral election in 2025. He responded to the questions live on r/Calgary. Photo courtesy of Reddit /jeromyYYC

New post-secondary legislation sparks debate

Talks about neutrality and tuition leave Albertans confused

Lacey Holowaty, Staff Writer

On Nov. 3, Bill 38 was introduced by UCP legislators. This bill proposes changes to the existing Post-secondary Learning Act, as well as to topics such as tuition, institutional neutrality and student codes of conduct.

Minister of Advanced Education Myles McDougall, the primary sponsor of the bill, says the legislation is grounded in "common sense principles" and will promote "clarity" for prospective students regarding their tuition.

Bill 38, or The Advanced Education Statutes Amendment Act, was introduced in response to the 2025 Expert Panel on Post-Secondary Institution Funding and Alberta's Competitiveness, which reported on the current state of Alberta's post-secondary environment and proposed changes for improvement.

'Clarity' for tuition

Currently, Alberta's post-secondary institutions set tuition limits within a 'growth cap.'

At each institution, individual programs can increase their tuition by up to 10 per cent, as long as the average tuition increase across all programs of an institution remains at two per cent — which, according to McDougall, could introduce big differences in costs from program to program.

The proposed solution, through Bill 38, is to move towards minister-approved tuition maximums for specific programs.

During the bill's second reading on Nov. 5, David Eggen, shadow minister for advanced education and NDP MLA, questioned the intent behind the legislation.

"[McDougall is] obviously moving this capacity and this power over to himself to increase tuition," he stated.

Eggen highlighted that the expert panel report focused on increasing funding for post-secondary institutions and increasing spaces for incoming students — aspects not touched on by the UCP's proposed legislation.

The neutral institution

During a press conference announcing Bill 38 on Nov. 3, most of the questions presented to McDougall centred around institutional neutrality.

According to the proposed legislation, it would be up to the institutions to manage their own neutrality policies while making sure students and faculty can freely express their opinions on political matters.

However, some felt the standards for neutrality were not clear in the legislation.

Photojournalist Leah Hennel called out the unclear definition during the conference, requesting further explanation on what a neutral environment would look like.

McDougall explained that while students and faculty are free to express their opinions on political matters, the institution itself would not be allowed to make any political statements.

"I would think that this is common sense in terms of how you would interpret that," he said.

McDougall was also asked whether or not this legislation was a response to any specific event or recent occurrence.

"Well, it doesn't take too much to look through what's been going on in media and newspapers around the world, frankly," he responded.

However, he did not further specify any incidents that could have prompted the legislation.

Going forward

The status of Bill 38 remains unknown following the Nov. 3 reading, resulting in adjournment.

According to Eggen's speech during Bill 38's second reading, the proposed legislation has allegedly been viewed as redundant in terms of solving issues within Alberta's post-secondary institutions.

He said the principles outlined in the legislation are things that institutions have been regulating for "more than a hundred years."

Eggen also said that, despite McDougall insisting that the intent of the legislation will not be policing or dictating post-secondary institutions and students, it's the likely outcome if Bill 38 is successful.

"You'd better keep your mouth shut because you never know who's going to be watching and how they'll judge you," he said to the Legislative Assembly at the second reading.

He added that the bill's intent is likely to divert attention from the lack of funding going towards post-secondary education in Alberta.

"It's a technique to control people. It's a technique to scare people, and it's defining a problem that doesn't even exist," said Eggen.



Following the proposal of Bill 38 on Nov. 3, post-secondary institutions are left confused about what neutrality means and how it will be enforced. Photo courtesy of Jaythen Bagayan / Pexels

Here's some good news...

Calgary's water use stays in the green zone

As new city-wide water restrictions were introduced on Nov. 4, Mayor Jeromy Farkas is praising Calgarians for maintaining water levels in the green zone. With a 500 million-litre threshold, residents are doing their part, with recent reports showing daily usage at 474 million litres across Calgary.

Source: City of Calgary

The physical cost of carrying school materials

Heavy backpacks leave MRU students with more than books

Sofia Ibrahimi, Staff Writer



Heavy backpacks can cause a variety of health issues, mainly impacting the shoulders, back and neck. Photo courtesy of Vitaly Gariev / Pexels

University students often have to buy books and school supplies on top of paying tuition fees.

Many students also carry laptops or class equipment needed to complete their schoolwork.

However, the physical strain on students' backs, necks and shoulders from carrying all of these materials around campus is often overlooked.

While heavy backpacks are nothing new for university students, many programs at Mount Royal University (MRU) require additional materials to be carried around campus on top of textbooks.

Mathieu Gauthier, a fifth-year environmental science student at MRU, said he is used to carrying heavy backpacks for school and other activities like weightlifting and outdoor fieldwork.

Gauthier said he occasionally experiences shoulder pain from carrying his heavy backpack around campus and has seen a chiropractor in the past for related issues.

"There were periods of time where I would have two computers in my backpack plus everything I needed for the day," Gauthier says. "It was heavy."

Although he does not consider backpack weight a major personal issue, Gauthier says carrying his belongings can cause shoulder discomfort.

"I think a lot of people don't know that wearing a backpack all the time does have effects on your back," he says.

Sohann Sivakumar, a first-year nursing student at MRU, explains that in some of his classes, students are required to bring along lab materials such as a lab coat, a blood pressure cuff and a stethoscope.

Sivakumar recalled hauling his belongings around campus at the start of the semester, before he was able to obtain a locker on campus.

The physical toll of big backpacks

Students are used to carrying large bags, but how they carry them can have serious effects on their bodies, said Heather Whelan, a senior lecturer in MRU's health and physical education department.

"Essentially, carrying a heavy backpack would be considered a form of strength training," Whelan says.

Poor posture can lead to increased stress on the lower back, neck and shoulders. Additionally, students who carry their bags on one side of their body can increase stress on certain areas.

Whelan said the trapezius, the large muscle that runs from the base of the skull down to the middle of the back, can be particularly strained when students shrug their shoulders to carry heavy loads.

"When you have both straps on, the load is being supported by both sides of the body," Whelan says.

Lightening the load

There are ways MRU students can attempt to reduce the weight of their school supplies.

Sivakumar suggested that for some nursing lab classes, the school could provide some of the materials required for the lab, such as a blood pressure cuff.

Another way universities can help decrease the amount of materials students are required to carry to campus is by making digital resources for class more easily accessible.

"If there is something that faculty can do, it's make class resources free," Gauthier says.

Whelan suggests that students take stock of what they are bringing to school each day and then leave behind what they don't need.

While carrying school supplies around campus is routine for university students, many may not consider the physical effects it can have on their bodies.

THE REFLECTOR

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Blame it on the retrograde

What happens when five planets go backwards?

Acacia Carol, Layout Editor



The first recorded retrograde was in the seventh century B.C. by Babylonian astronomers. Photo courtesy of Alexandre P. Junior / Pexels

Those attuned to the heavens might be experiencing some trouble in communication, technology and personal accountability. Mercury, Venus, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune are among the trouble-causing retrogrades astrologers might tie their woes to.

According to a 2024 Pew Research Center study, one-third of adults consult new age practices like astrology, tarot or fortune-telling. The star-reading practice has its roots in various ancient cultures, with leaders in Mesopotamia using astrology to predict death, famine and weather.

But can planets actually impact daily life?

Planet transit

Retrogrades, outside of astrology, are an observable astronomical optical illusion from Earth.

According to The Planetary Society, the movement is technically referred to as an "apparent retrograde motion," wherein a planet's observed motion is backwards for a short period of time.

While no actual movement is occurring in space, the human observation of the planets creates a perception of retrograde motion.

For ancient cultures, Earth-centric ideas about celestial bodies meant that observing these phenomena would contribute to conclusions about wartime strategy.

However, like any belief system, astrology is flawed. And even in ancient times, no self-respecting astrologer would advise a militia based solely on a retrograde, Nicholas Campion — director of the Sophia Centre for the Study of Cosmology in Culture at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David — told National Geographic.

The stars aren't *all* about you

Despite being an ancient belief system, astrology certainly isn't free from reproach in modern-day society. Astrological critics often cite a 2022 study that concluded that there was a correlation between an individual's narcissism and their belief in astrology.

"The positive association is possibly due to the self-centred worldview uniting them," the report stated. "Further, since astrological predictions and horoscopes tend to be positively framed, this reinforces grandiose feelings and thus might appeal even more to narcissists."

While not everyone who checks whether Mercury is going to impact their morning commute is a narcissist, there is certainly an online sentiment against those who proudly laud 'it's 'cause I'm a Gemini' when faced with real criticism.

That critique is shared by scholars of ancient astrology as well, such as Mount Royal University professor and esoteric practitioner Tracy Derynck.

In an email statement to *The Reflector*, Derynck wrote that she has downsized astrology in her own practice, especially given the rise of social media memes about retrogrades.

Derynck is critical of the fascination with astrology. While she recognised that it allowed for connection, the stars can quickly become another avenue for avoiding a serious examination of "their own role in the matter."

"I hate to sound like I am being a jerk because I know everyone out there is going through a hard time and is trying to cope in their own way," Derynck wrote. "But as a practitioner of a spiritual path that puts a lot of emphasis on self-empowerment and personal responsibility, I have more scepticism toward astrology than I have use for it."

Seriously limited belief

It's worth mentioning that in the Pew Research Center's 2024 study, only 10 per cent of participants seriously consult the universe for help. For most believers, astrology is a fun way to practice self-examination.

Either way, retrogrades are what you make of them.

Need an excuse to watch another episode? Blame the universe. But miss an assignment because you binged? Blame yourself.

Horoscopes

Anais Loeppky, Web Editor

Aries *(March 21 - April 19)*
You're entering your academic weapon era! Consider this a sign written in the stars to crack open your textbook and submit that one assignment you have been putting off.

Taurus *(April 20 - May 20)*
Your wallet is in desperate need of a break. Maybe substitute Starbucks for a cosy homemade morning coffee!

Gemini *(May 21 - June 20)*
That person you keep flirting with in class? It's time to shoot your shot! Staying friends is safe; that doesn't mean you should.

Cancer *(June 21 - July 22)*
Between school projects and chaotic plans, a night in might be the way to go this weekend. Have some friends over for a game night or a movie, and unwind!

Leo *(July 23 - Aug. 22)*
Someone might have a little campus crush on you. It's time to make those hallway glances a little more obvious and maybe even put your phone down between classes.

Virgo *(Aug. 23 - Sept. 23)*
You have everything planned out to a T. But maybe pencil in more than three hours for sleep! A good schedule includes time for you!

Libra *(Sept. 23 - Oct. 22)*
You are ready for relaxation and perhaps a little academic validation. Unfortunately, your group project partners are not making this seem possible.

Scorpio *(Oct. 23 - Nov. 21)*
Someone from your past might make an appearance. Before reopening that door, remember why the chain was on it in the first place.

Sagittarius *(Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)*
Sagittarius season is here! You are ready for a new adventure — book that grad trip, go to that school event and hang out with new people.

Capricorn *(Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)*
You're working hard, and it is paying off! Just make sure to allow yourself to have some fun between study sessions.

Aquarius *(Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)*
You're in your own little world this week, and there's nothing wrong with that! Start sharing your ideas, maybe even raise your hand in class.

Pisces *(Feb. 19 - March 20)*
Your friendships are looking great! But it might be time to invite a little romance into your life; it's time to plan that date!

ramblers

Caffeine's capture on students

Are university students' favourite beverages harmful?

Brook Van Ham, Staff Writer



Health Canada recommends that adults consume less than 400 mg of caffeine a day . Photo by Serena Kanji-Ramji

Caffeine is a worldwide commodity. However, students are among the top consumers, shifting connotations from a pick-me-up to a coursing reliance.

The side effects of caffeine are frequently talked about and debated, yet many continue to drink it religiously.

High demands, insufficient sleep and cognitive performance are among the many explanations for why over 90 per cent of students consume caffeine regularly.

Society is routine-driven, especially in school settings where class schedules are often rigid and expectations are high. Many consumers simply grab a coffee because it's a daily habit and helps them fight through the day's slumps.

Cafés are one of the top utilised spaces for studying, drawing yet another correlation.

In the academically driven world known and intensified for students, it is no wonder they reach for solace in caffeine more than the average person.

Anxiety is already raised in student populations. Caffeine has been argued to add to anxiety as well as negatively impact sleep, creating this cycle of a quick solution, possibly leaving counteractive effects.

Caffeine also comes in a variety of forms. From the more recently popularised matcha, as well as tea, energy drinks and even foods like chocolate.

Not all types of caffeine have the same side effects, energy effects or crashes. Energy drinks are known to be a quick boost, but temporary.

Matcha has health benefits from natural antioxidants and amino acids. It's known to provide steadier energy than coffee.

Research sways, and plenty of factors influence caffeine's effects: personal tolerance, other lifestyle choices and more — helping combat controversies and myths around caffeine.

The words 'reliant' and 'drug' are alarming, but as long as there is a balance, is it really concerning if this worldwide stimulant is supporting social lives and studies?

If the reality is that caffeine is an outlet for positives within stressful student lives, to what extent does concern really belong?

MRU statues reappear on campus

The return of monuments after G-Wing renovations

Nathan Bergen, Staff Writer

With the G-Wing renovations wrapping up, some familiar faces are back on campus.

The Centennial Sundial Garden, or the stone garden — located on the lawn between the T and G-Wing — features stone statues and art pieces demonstrating the creativity and diversity of Mount Royal University (MRU).

Recently, with the G-Wing lawn almost complete, some of its statues have reappeared, expressing curiosity from students who are now seeing them for the first time.

A familiar face

One statue that has made a reappearance is 'Mother Nature.'

The statue, a face with free-flowing hair, embodies the feeling of living in the moment with nature and Earth.

This statue was carved by James (J.R.) Galts-Goldsmith, a local artist from Calgary.

While he's best known for his commissioned artwork around the city, he creates an array of art pieces, from wood carvings and paintings, to sculptures and engravings.

His work perfectly emphasises that you can be self-taught and have success in the art world, whether it's a job or a hobby.

In stone

Another statue returning to the Centennial Sundial Garden is 'Mountain Stroll.'

The statue is of an animal skull, possibly a ram, engraved around a large piece of rock. The statue's stone is dotted with small white specks that add texture to its smooth surface.

The statue was sculpted by Eric Peterson, a stoneworks craftsman born in Vulcan, Alta., who now lives in High River, Alta.

Peterson is best known for his works in stone and steel, with many on display across the city.

A piece of history

These statues have been on the MRU campus for longer than a decade. A little piece of the school's history that many students today may not be too familiar with.

As MRU continues to grow, these statues will remain part of its history.



'Mother Nature,' one of the statues found in the Centennial Sundial Garden at MRU. Photo by Nathan Bergen

Are Calgary Gen Zs going California sober?

Looking into the potential pros of semi-sobriety

Liam Rockcliffe, Contributor

Year after year, more Canadians are putting down the bottle and pursuing a more relaxing pastime with cannabis instead.

This recent phenomenon, coined 'California sober' or semi-sobriety, involves replacing a more traditionally 'harmful' drug with a perceptively safer one — such as swapping alcohol with cannabis.

But is this actually a safer, healthier approach to substance use, and how common is this new lifestyle in Gen Z — especially at Mount Royal University (MRU)?

California sober

The term 'California sober' was coined primarily by Michelle Lhooq in a 2019 essay for VICE magazine. Lhooq explains her personal experience, going from an expert on every drug found on the streets of New York City to a stoner who cut out most drugs — including alcohol — except weed and psychedelics in California.

Upon going semi-sober, Lhooq experienced a "clearer mind and cleaner skin," but was still able to experience nightlife, keeping her "feet in both subcultures, while its parameters make it easier not to cave to temptation."

This idea is at the core of the Cali sober mindset. You still get to enjoy the highs and lows of drugs and partying the night away — but you don't wake up in the morning thinking about where your next rush is coming from.

As a result, this lifestyle has become attractive to Gen Z — especially since it has never been easier to purchase cannabis products.

In 2024, roughly 30 per cent of Canadian youth ages 16 to 24 report having used cannabis in the last 30 days. In the same year, 30 per cent of adults in Canada reported that they drink alcohol less than once a month.

Supposedly, Gen Z is shifting towards cannabis not just because of the high, but also for therapeutic benefits.

But is this shift actually better for young Canadians?

What constitutes sobriety?

While switching to cannabis from a more harmful substance may seem like a stepping stone towards sobriety or a healthy medium, cannabis' own risks must be assessed.

One in three people who partake in cannabis develops an addiction, cannabis use disorder and can find it almost impossible to quit. This is especially prevalent in people who use cannabis frequently or started using cannabis as an adolescent.

Cannabis has also been associated with higher rates of depression and anxiety, even when compared to harder substances. But if these risks are understood, psychiatrist Jared Harp of Cleveland Clinic said in a podcast that as long as it's approached cautiously and not as a major substance abuse problem, it may have several benefits.



Alberta's liquor market was recently valued at $2.81 billion. Photo by Karra Smith

These include an easier transition, a sense of control over recovery and a higher functioning state compared to other substances.

In a study by Brown University, cannabis use was seen to reduce urges to consume alcohol in the short term, but there have not been any long-term studies on the effect of replacing alcohol with cannabis.

Overall, cannabis can absolutely be beneficial in stepping away from harder substances. But, as with any substance, every person is different, and it's important to approach it with caution, as it could lead to just another addiction.

The local perspective

Daniel Gonzalez, a fourth-year business student at MRU, praises it. Especially when it comes to working out and meeting goals.

"It's less intense. You can just relax, lie back and actually enjoy everything," says Gonzalez.

Unlike alcohol, Gonzalez finds that cannabis allows him to work out, hit a flow state and actually be productive in comparison to alcohol.

Jaiden Schrock, a student studying to be an electrician at SAIT, says that cannabis can enhance daily life.

"Food tastes better, and sleep hits harder," says Schrock.

When put in comparison with the downsides of alcohol, Schrock says he doesn't understand why anyone would choose a different lifestyle.

At the end of the day, the decision to pursue any way of living or level of sobriety falls to the individual. The trend shows that Gen Z still wants to unwind, but with more control over how they do it.

Calgary may be far from California, but come January, students may want a piece of that sunny state of mind.



There are over 700 licensed cannabis retail locations throughout Alberta. Photo by Karra Smith

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arts

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The value of documenting university life

How does photography shape expectations of student experiences?

Katrina Ebuenga, Staff Writer

Is the university party scene faltering, or are the expectations for university life too far out of reach?

As colder weather snaps back on campus, students may be more inclined to bring the party indoors. However, one thing that remains the same is the role social media plays in documenting and promoting campus life.

Whether it is sharing photos of the past month or sending an instantaneous video to the group chat, capturing these moments has become a ritual of campus life.

But how do you decide which moments are worthy of sharing on social media?

Say cheese!

Constant connection to social media fabricates the idea that university life should be filled with large and even disorderly social gatherings and as much as that may be true for some, it lays a veneer over the university experience.

As a result, the desire to keep up with the trends surrounding university life creates a chase for students to find the next exciting experience the algorithm says they are supposed to have.

This may be why trends involving compact and digital cameras have continued to gain popularity over the last few years, which goes hand in hand with how students document their lives on social media.

In a data report from Petal Pixel, compact camera shipments have increased for two consecutive years for the first time in nearly two decades. A tool that never goes out of style, the pocket-sized camera is able to encapsulate timeless memories during a time of constant change.

Not only is the functionality of the camera reduced to one purpose — to take a photo — but it also delays seeing the result. For university students who are always on the go, digital cameras force them to slow down and enjoy the authenticity of the moment.



As social media shapes perceptions of university life, students look to one another for real connection on campus. Photo by Emma Voelpel

Despite camera sales slightly dropping below last year's report, as provided by Digital Camera World, Hillary K. Grigonis suggested there has been increased interest in compact and bridge cameras, "reaching 115.3 per cent of the previous year's numbers."

As the older style of film and photography creates a nostalgia that is tangible for many, the limited storage results in thoughtful evidence of the night shared between friends.

People are buying, but where's the value?

When taking a photo on a digital or compact camera, there is an added care and process to getting the right shot that encapsulates the entire night within one or two photos.

However, as this trend blooms, the Xaverian Weekly suggests that scrolling through Instagram has become a constant string of digital camera photos, which feature experiences that are not quite so analogue as people would like to believe.

As this common trend grows and becomes too popular, it starts to lose its own value.

With social media shaping our perceptions of how life should be lived, scrolling through what seems to be endless photo dumps only adds to the expectations of what campus life should and should not look like.

As a university strives to create communities on campus, being able to have physical forms of those shared life experiences with friends increases the value of life on campus.



Students are constantly snapping photos of one another, showing campus life through a different lens. Photo by Rylie Perry

But at what point is the constant presence of university life on social media creating fear of missing out for students, rather than creating opportunities for students to make memories?

Say hello to FOMO

While the exposure of good moments on campus certainly serves a purpose, much of it produces the notion that every day is and should be exciting, especially for students who feel they need to engage in constant visibility on social media.

The nostalgic photos or short clips of silly moments shared with friends should be the most important element captured through photography or videography for university students.

However, the appeal towards documentation through digital cameras creates a paradoxical effect, which has students experiencing a loss of connection and distorted expectations of university life through social media.

For students, these moments now boil down to the intention of the photo and how they post it on social media.

OUT'N ABOUT

Calgary Winter Market

Located in Eau Claire Plaza, the Calgary Winter Market runs from Nov. 19 to Dec. 24. This European-inspired Christmas market offers free entry before 5 p.m. every day, featuring live music, handmade crafts and artisan goods. For more information, visit calgarywintermarket.ca

Elf at Horizon Drive In

With Horizon Drive In, it is never too early to ring in the holiday season. This November, enjoy a screening of the iconic Christmas movie *Elf* in the Badlands parking lot on Nov. 27, starting at 7 p.m. For more information or to buy tickets, visit horizondrivein.ca

Zoolights

For over 30 years, the Calgary Zoo has hosted Zoolights. This annual holiday lighting festival illuminates the park from Nov. 13 to Jan. 3, featuring over one million lights. Enjoy festive food, drink, interactive activities and more. For more information, visit calgaryzoo.com

Calgary Hip Hop and Streetdance Festival

Hosted at Contemporary Calgary, the Calgary Hip Hop and Streetdance Festival is back for its fifth year. The festival is set to feature masterclass workshops, an opening film screening, dance battles and more across three days from Nov. 19 to Nov. 22. For more information, visit calgaryhhsdf.com

Pulling the aesthetic out of the stone

How media is shifting back to 'medieval core'

Karra Smith, News Editor



Medieval core's princess, Chappell Roan, performing in Kansas City last year. Photo courtesy of Instagram / @chappellroan

Whether it's adding more whimsy to daily life or a desire to return to analogue tools, the cultural niche of medieval core is making a recurring appearance in media.

Many are likely to remember actress Zendaya's 2018 Met Gala look, which featured a Joan of Arc-esque vibe, with a full Versace chainmail outfit.

Similarly, much of Chappell Roan's wardrobe offers the same energy, with the iconic 15th-century staple headdress, the hennin, highlighted throughout her media.

In a 2025 article, Elle Magazine contributing editor Kristen Bateman called out the bizarre Middle Ages fascination, particularly on the runway.

"Earlier this year, someone wearing a 15th-century suit of armour became the street-style star of the front row at Burberry," she wrote.

> *"Times are strange, and apparently call for even stranger fashion.*
>
> – Kristen Bateman

However, these trends go beyond appearance.

A recent video went viral in one of the many corners of the internet, showing a Lime bike joust.

The London-based event took place in October of this year and shows actor Camtholomew the First and artist Jack Carden riding the motorised bicycles equipped with PVC pipes and lances.

While in a BBC report, the Lime company strongly advised against this practice in the name of safety, it is one of many examples of current generations yearning for a time before the 21st century.

Another example is social media accounts that focus on offering viewers ways to add whimsy to their lives through medieval aesthetics.

One such account is Instagram user @sirkadeansidequests, who posts daily activities and challenges for followers to complete.

While much of the medieval aesthetic gets roped in with fantasy and mystical themes, there is a cultural comeback of the Middle Ages becoming prevalent in current media, and it can only be assumed these trends will continue until the next best thing comes along.

For now, we can only assume that, centuries down the line, youth will be re-enacting our daily practices in the hope of discovering the wonders of our everyday lives.

MRU talks GTA VI

'To tell you the truth, I didn't think it would ever happen'

This month, *The Reflector* conducted a nine-question survey that asked students how they felt about the upcoming release of *Grand Theft Auto VI (GTA VI)*.

Set to release on Nov. 19, *GTA VI* has been in the making for over a decade. The game dates back to 2015, when Rockstar North developers took their first field research trip to Miami, marking the start of what they consider their most ambitious game yet.

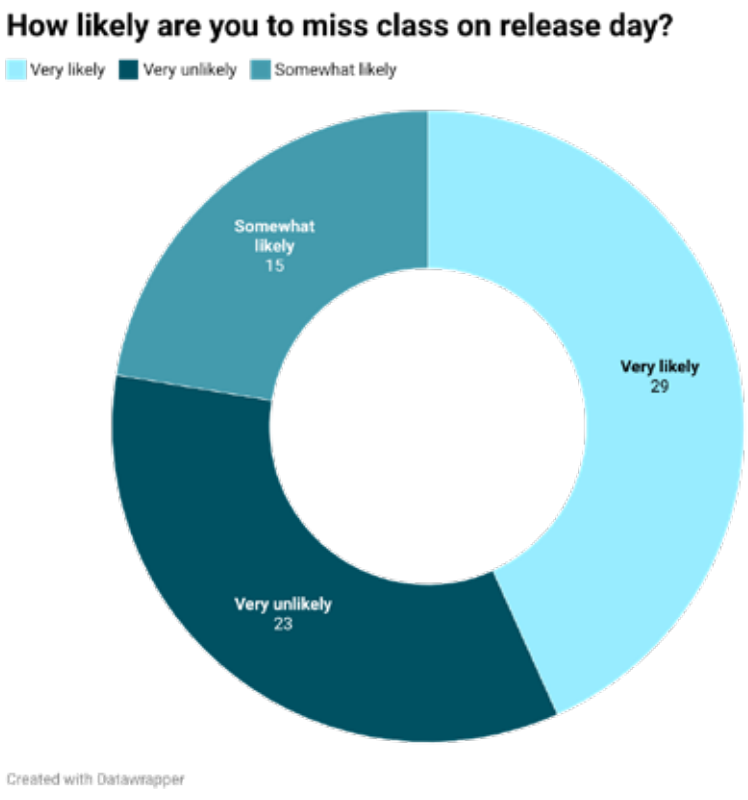
Following in the footsteps of *Grand Theft Auto V*, released in 2013, *GTA VI* is finally here.

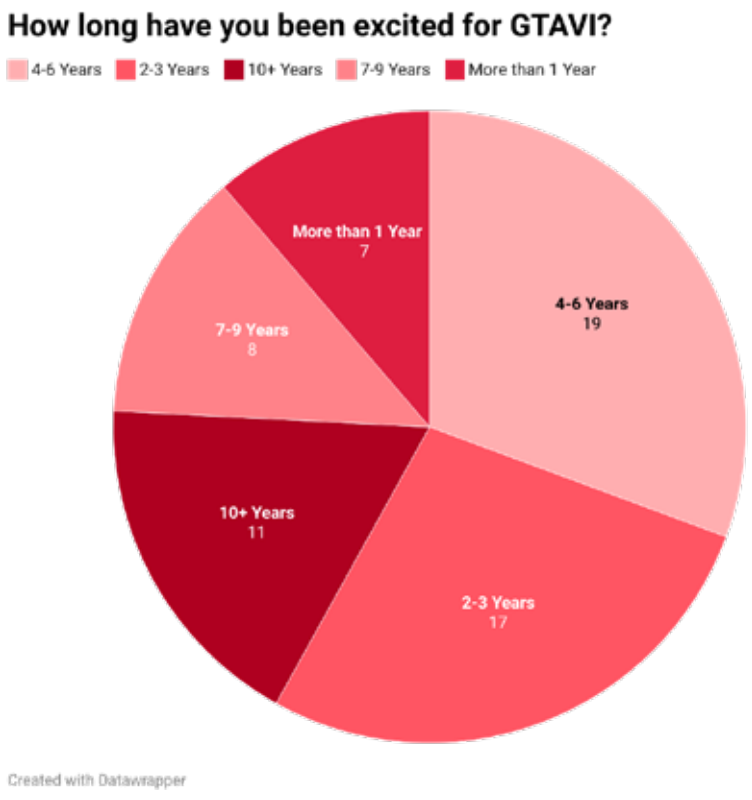
These results reflect the opinions of over 60 respondents across every faculty.

One respondent wrote that they looking forward to exploring the small details that the developers have included.

"This game is highly anticipated," they wrote.

—**Rylie Perry**, Arts Editor





Most of our respondents have been waiting for the release of *GTA VI* for years and are willing to miss class to play. With files from Jarod Lechadores

The game is afoot at Vertigo Theatre

Sherlock Holmes unravels on stage this winter

Keira Solomon, Staff Writer

The pieces are set and the game has begun for the master sleuth at Vertigo Theatre.

During its 50th-anniversary showcase, Calgary's Vertigo Theatre presents a new rendition of the beloved detective in *Sherlock Holmes: The Hunt For Moriarty* from Nov. 14 to Dec. 19.

A classic but familiar tale

After Sherlock Holmes begins investigating the murder of a junior government clerk, more bodies begin to appear. The killings seem to lead back to one ominous figure and in a warped game of chess, Holmes needs to decide how much he can sacrifice.

The play explores themes of control, power and the dangers of secrets, which capture current political and global issues within its framework.

The first act sets the scene, puts the players afoot and introduces a mystery that is already in motion. Then, in the second act, the pace picks up drastically, culminating in the climax, which Jack Grinhaus, artistic director of Vertigo Theatre, describes as "a full meal."

"[The story] does feel like it's happening in today's world, even though it takes place 100 years ago," Grinhaus explains.

Despite its modern themes, it remains a classic tale and a nostalgic play to see during the holiday season.

Bringing the story to the stage

The playwright, Nick Lane, brought the theatre previous success with *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in 2023, so when he came back to the company with the thrilling story of Sherlock Holmes, it was a perfect fit for the showcase.

Lane has experience writing captivating, long-form plays and his British background gives the characters and story an authentic base, whereas Grinhaus brings a more Canadian perspective to the play.

"[Lane] actually understands deeply what the soul of those characters is like," says

Continues on Pg. 12



Based on the works of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *Sherlock Holmes: The Hunt for Moriarty* makes its North American debut at Vertigo Theatre. Photo courtesy of Fifth Wall Media



Handshake Thugs (Single)
Arkells
Arkells Music Label Inc.
Score: A

Now more than ever, people look to artists and celebrities to speak on divisive issues. Arkells have done exactly that with their newest single, "Handshake Thugs," released Nov. 3.

The Canadian rock band has always loved an anthemic, rallying cry. This single, in particular, truly has a defiant, activist feel that has been at the root of so many iconic rock songs.

With a direct call out to the elitist one per cent, the song challenges the idea of who the real "thugs" are in today's world.

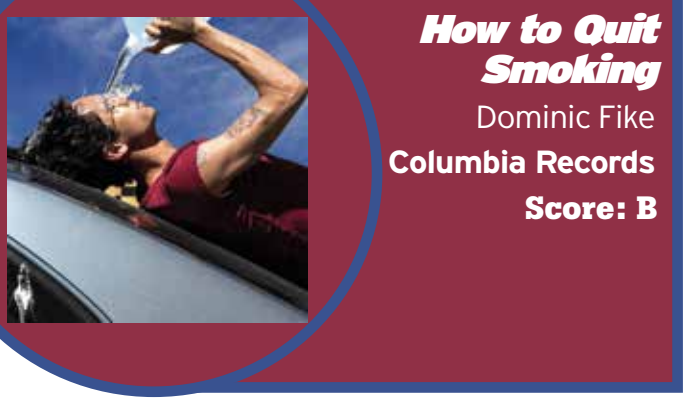
Rather than looking at thugs as the stereotypical hoodlum committing petty crimes, Arkells turn their attention to the real criminals. The lyrics hold the plutocracy accountable, referring to them as "cowards" and stating that "beneath every fortune, there's some kind of crime."

What I love most about this release is the political bravery behind it. Recent events have shown just how risky speaking out can be. The world just watched Macklemore face removal from Ed Sheeran's tour after sharing political views that challenged those in power, reminding us that there can be significant consequences for artists who refuse to stay quiet.

As expected with an Arkells song, the single has that lively rock sound fans love, and is full of catchy hooks in an almost infectious way.

It is fearless, timely and unapologetic.

—Anais Loeppky



How to Quit Smoking
Dominic Fike
Columbia Records
Score: B

Dominic Fike released his third album, *How to Quit Smoking*, on Oct. 30. The album captures the 30-year-old artist and new father navigating sobriety, existential anxieties and the growing pains of adulthood. Across the project, Fike combines his signature sunburned, distorted guitars and sing-rapping delivery with catchy indie pop hooks and hip-hop production.

Track seven, "WHITE KEYS," which Fike released as a single in November 2025, gained significant popularity during that time, becoming one of his most popular songs.

However, I felt that the last few songs really lost momentum. Fike usually switches things up mid-song to keep listeners engaged, but I found that the last few did not have that special Fike flair.

For most of the album, I felt like he was trying to prove his creativity with experimental sounds he hasn't used often in the past. For instance, the stutter effect at the end of "CASTING CALL" or the buzzing sound in between my two favourite songs, "RENO" and "LILY WAS A CAVALIER."

The album ends with a dialogue between imprisoned rapper Tay-K regarding fatherhood, aging and preserving one's inner child in "SPOTLIGHT / INNER CHILD."

Overall, I would argue that while this album may not live up to the high standards of his earlier albums, it is a great addition to his discography with many great tracks that I know myself and others will be adding to their playlist.

—Noah Mulhern

Continued from Pg.11

Grinhaus.

Now that the works of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle are in the public domain, Lane has the opportunity to put an amazing twist on a classic tale.

While the play is making its North American premiere with Vertigo Theatre, it was performed across the UK throughout 2025 and early 2026 .

Meet the talented detective

Grinhaus believes that an important part of a good play is finding a strong lead who can guide their peers on and off stage.

Stafford Perry is just that for Vertigo Theatre. Perry's ability to serve as a strong Calgarian lead while also filling the big shoes of Holmes is essential to the success of the play. It is important to the theatre that they recruit local talent and Grinhaus says this was easy with Calgary's theatre community.

Grinhaus describes Calgary's cohort of actors as a "huge, hungry, passionate community with a lot of talent," which has helped shape the show to this point.

When Perry, who plays Sherlock Holmes, and Daniel Bruyere, who plays Watson, first auditioned, Grinhaus was blown away by their natural chemistry.

"It was like they'd been best friends forever," Grinhaus says.

And as it turns out, the two gentlemen had — they performed in plays together as teenagers, which gives Holmes and Watson the authentic, earned relationship that viewers yearn for.

> *When you take on this character, you're taking on the lineage of everyone who's ever played it*
>
> — Jack Grinhaus

"That relationship between Holmes and Watson has to be like Batman and Robin," adds Grinhaus.

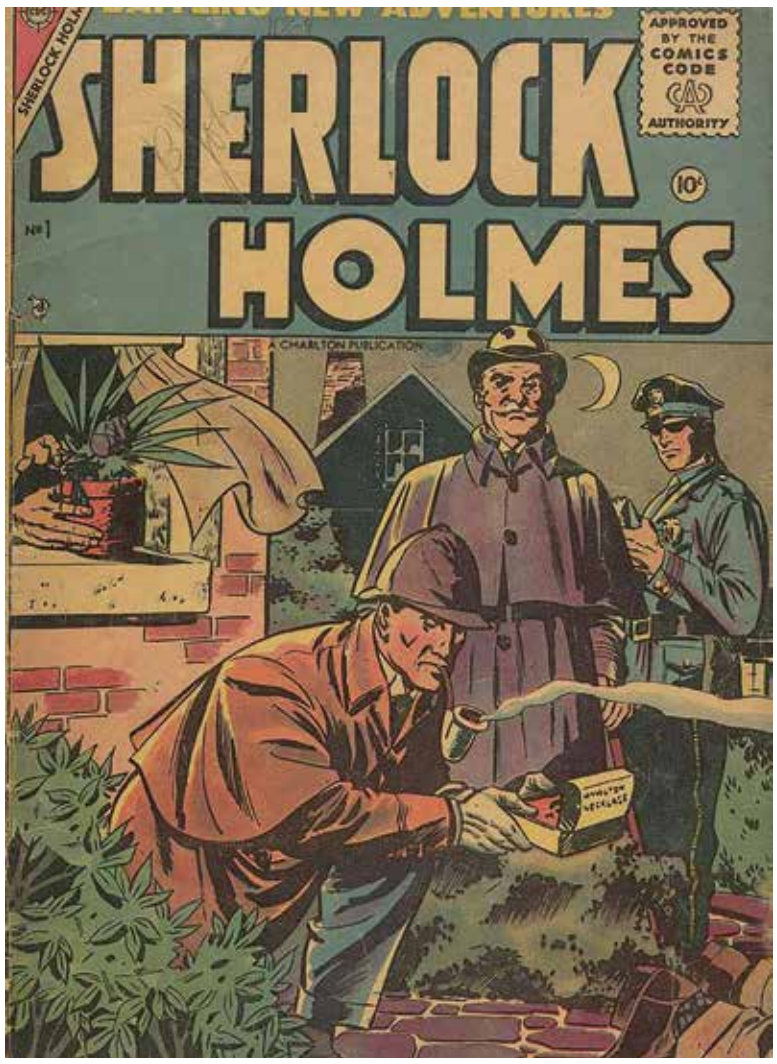
Perry's role as Sherlock, however, remains the most crucial piece in the play.

A mystery for the masses

At Vertigo Theatre, audiences are not handed the obvious answers they might expect from such a classic tale, especially when the theatre invited the famous detective himself to the stage.

For the creative team behind the production, letting the audience engage with the play and break down the clues for themselves is half the experience.

"I want them to get out those amateur sleuth brains that they love to bring to Vertigo and just try to solve that mystery," Grinhaus says.



Professor Moriarty first made his debut in 1893 in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's short story, "The Adventure of the Final Problem." Photo courtesy of PICRYL - Public Domain Media Search Engine

samru students' association of mount royal university

Meet your
STUDENT GOVERNING BOARD (SGB)



The SGB is made up of 14 elected MRU students who make key decisions and help shape how SAMRU, your Students' Association, supports you.

samru.ca/sgb

samru students' association of mount royal university

and your
REPRESENTATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (REC)

The REC team is 4 elected MRU students who put the SGB's representation priorities into action by advocating for you to the University and government.

samru.ca/rec



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sports

Sports Editor
Julia Finot
sportseditor@thereflector.ca

The price of winter sports

Cost-effective ways to hit the slopes

Emma Voelpel, Features Editor

A day on the slopes in Canada's Rocky Mountains has become a quiet luxury. Real estate, snowmaking and a warming climate are all raising ticket prices at resorts.

A full-day adult ticket at Lake Louise, Alta. now ranges from $80 to $185 depending on the time of year. Meanwhile, a full-week adult season pass can be over $1,700.

At Banff Sunshine Village Ski & Snowboard Resort, an adult season pass is nearly $1,900 and a family pass can hit $4,000.

Those are numbers for just a day trip from Calgary — and that's before you've paid for gas, parking or a hot dog.

The ice we skate is getting pretty thin

The biggest driver isn't greed so much as snow.

Ethan Essex, president of the Mount Royal University Ski & Snowboard Club (MRU Ski Club), says that one of the biggest struggles for ski resorts is climate change.

"It's becoming something that's harder and harder to fight," he says.

Ski hills across North America are grappling with less reliable snowfall and shorter seasons. As a result, operators are responding by investing in snowmaking, grooming and water storage.

"As the industry gets more constrained, they have to spend more to make more," says Essex.

Shifting precipitation patterns and warmer winters have made long-range planning uncertain for operators, pushing them toward higher prices and premium pass products.

The big three

The resorts in Banff National Park have a cap on development, which keeps competition out.

SkiBig3 markets a single pass across Banff Sunshine, Lake Louise and Mt. Norquay. A season pass for all three hills equals over $2,200.

Also available for purchase is the Rocky Mountain Passport — a pass that grants you access to hills beyond Banff National Park for $2,842.

According to Essex, the ticket prices they offer cater to an international crowd.

"They'll partner with an airline or try to get people to stay on the hill with their whole family and spend a lot more money," he says.

With a weak Canadian dollar, a short 20-week season and a customer base willing to pay more, you end up setting prices that are over budget for a post-secondary student.

How students can still get out there

Though winter sports have become a luxury, there are still ways for students to enjoy a day at the hill.

The MRU Ski Club works with all resorts on a consignment basis, offering the club discounted rates to sell back to students. The club also works with multiple gear rental shops in Calgary, offering members a discounted rental fee compared to those in the Rockies.

The club packages together a coach bus, lift ticket and even energy drinks for $185 so students can make their way to the mountains.

"There's been a hunger, a need for people trying to get out there," says Essex.

Alternatively, there are other hills in Alberta with lower rates compared to the big three.



The MRU Ski Club does giveaways to students for $185 each trip. Photo courtesy of Mount Royal University Ski & Snowboard Club

Nakiska Ski Area sells short-session tickets for $40 to $46. The other passes also come at a cheaper cost, with the season pass costing $1,179.

Hidden Valley in Cypress Hills, Alta. charges $495 for an adult season pass—a fraction compared to Banff pricing.

A chilly future

As seasons shorten and prices rise, the forecast is that skiing and snowboarding will remain something students can do.

Winter sports for students are changing shape, not disappearing. MRU's Ski Club will make it easier for students to enjoy the outdoors even in the cold.

"I'm really proud of what we do," says Essex. "When we see the community out there and the people impacted positively by even other clubs, not just us, it really keeps me going."

Warmer temperatures mean resorts lean harder on snowmaking, which keeps the season going, but pushes ticket prices up.

Students will just get better at skiing in these circumstances, as the slopes will continue to be affordable, accessible and worth the drive.

COUGAR OF THE WEEK



Photo courtesy of Awien Ngor

Awien Ngor

Opposite
Calgary
3rd year Physical Literacy

Awien Ngor is *The Reflector*'s Cougar of the Week!

Appearing in 23 sets to start the season, Ngor has made her presence known on the court. She has almost doubled her career high in kills, with 50 in only six matches, while also contributing eight service aces. Ngor is not only exciting to watch on the floor, but her celebrations from the bench are also some of the best in Canada West.

Congratulations to Ngor for an exciting and fiery start to the season.

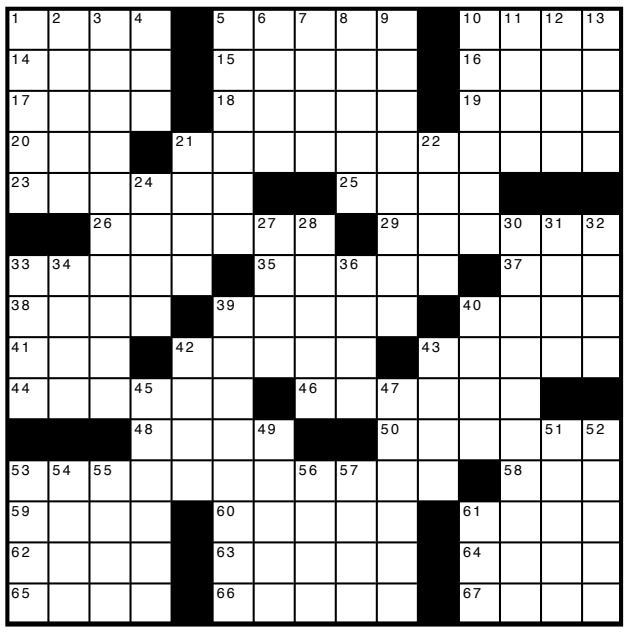
Q&A

Describe yourself as a player in three words. *Passionate, Dedicated, Exuberant.*

What's one thing no one knows about you? *I used to struggle really bad with mental health, specifically my perception of my self worth. I have dealt with incredibly low self confidence as well as self destructive thoughts that thankfully did not overtake me completely... Sharing this is important to me because not only is it a reminder of how far I've come in navigating that area of my life, but also a reminder to all who do struggle that there is light at the end of the tunnel!*

Do you have any pregame rituals? *Honestly I am not too much of a superstitious person but I will say a pregame nap is essential! After my nap, I like to blast my music while I do my hair or while I journal.*

REFLECTOR DIVERSIONS



ACROSS

1 Acting part
5 Largest country in Africa
10 Freeway access
14 Cupid, to the Greeks
15 Me too
16 Robt. ___
17 Donated
18 Put a new price on
19 Moat
20 Mineral suffix
21 Prudence
23 Sailor
25 Let ___
26 Very cold
29 Chinese tea
33 Thin, crisp biscuit
35 ___ there yet?
37 Wine container
38 Old-fashioned exclamation of surprise
39 Pilfer
40 Office note
41 Wreath of flowers
42 Defraud
43 Green _____ is the place to be
44 Abject fear
46 Lunatic
48 Israel's Barak
50 Gibson of tennis
53 Produced in the bone marrow
58 ___-Margret
59 Oscar ___ Renta
60 Conductor Solti
61 Gaelic
62 Hissy fit
63 "Love Story" author Segal
64 A shivering fit often a precursor to malaria
65 In ___ (actually)
66 Clear of vermin
67 Prepared to drive

DOWN

1 Philbin of TV
2 Give a valedictory, say
3 Romantic relationship
4 Computer ending
5 Loose-fitting skirtlike garment
6 Computer owner
7 Go with
8 Fine fiddle
9 Person who stays up late
10 Gas up again
11 Sleep like ___
12 Interlock
13 Nuisance
21 So-so
22 Bassoon relative
24 TV horse
27 Must've been something ___
28 Fantasize
30 Gouge
31 Appoint
32 Pontiac muscle cars
33 Lash mark
34 "A Death in the Family" writer James
36 I could ___ horse!
39 Drew up shoulders
40 Future doc's exam
42 Small salmon
43 Feels off
45 Tell
47 Nothing
49 Tractor pioneer John
51 Come after
52 On ___-to-know basis
53 Gds.
54 Itches
55 Yalies
56 Pinot ___ (wine)
57 Killer whale
61 Devour

Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com (https://www.bestcrosswords.com). Used with permission.

SUDOKU

EASY

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	3	9		8				
4	8	7	6					
7			2		6		4	1
9		1				3		2
8	4		3		1			
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MEDIUM

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HARD

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	6		9					
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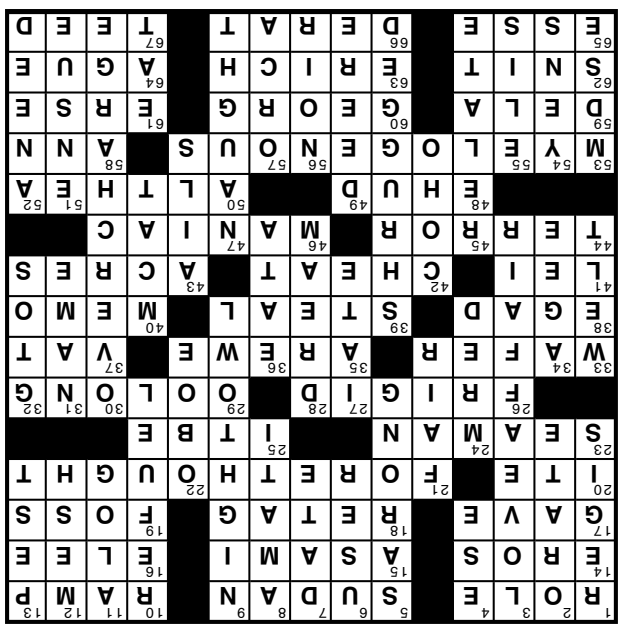
WORD SEARCH

WINTER AND WINTER ACTIVITIES

P	H	W	I	N	D	C	H	I	L	L	J	G	S	K	I	S	L	E	D
C	I	S	N	O	W	S	H	O	E	I	N	G	F	R	O	S	T	H	I
Z	E	A	R	F	L	A	P	S	A	I	X	S	N	O	W	B	A	L	L
I	T	U	B	I	N	G	W	I	N	T	E	R	L	U	D	E	T	Z	Q
H	S	G	S	N	O	W	P	A	N	T	S	S	N	O	W	F	A	L	L
M	C	N	J	R	G	A	G	U	P	K	G	S	E	D	I	Y	V	W	U
Y	W	J	O	N	J	G	M	D	C	N	K	G	J	L	F	O	R	T	U
L	A	Z	I	W	O	T	T	A	I	K	A	N	R	A	U	R	O	R	A
F	E	I	U	B	M	N	S	D	S	T	Y	I	S	K	A	T	I	N	G
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S	N	O	W	B	L	O	W	E	R	D	R	M	H	L	T	G	D	K	O
N	C	I	F	L	U	R	R	I	E	S	A	P	A	Y	U	M	G	A	Q
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AURORA
CABIN
CHAIRLIFT
COTTAGE
EARFLAPS
FLURRIES
FORT
FROST
FROSTBITE
HOARFROST
MITTENS
MUKLUKS
PARKA
PUCK
RINK
SKATES
SKATING
SKIDOO
SKIING
SKIS
SLED
SLEDDING
SLUSH
SNOWBALL
SNOWBANK
SNOWBLOWER
SNOWBOARD
SNOWBOARDING
SNOWDRIFT
SNOWFALL
SNOWMOBILING
SNOWPANTS
SNOWSHOEING
THERMAL
TOBOGGAN
TOBOGGANING
TOQUE
TUBING
UNDERWEAR
WINDCHILL
WINTERLUDE

CROSSWORD PUZZLE SOLUTION



The cost to watch sports in Calgary

Breaking down the expenses of streaming local professional teams

Nathan Bergen, Staff Writer



As the average NHL ticket can be more than $350, more fans are starting to watch games from home despite streaming costs. Photo courtesy of cottonbro studio / Pexels

Have you ever anticipated watching your favourite team on TV, just to learn that the game will be broadcast on a separate streaming service — one you don't already pay for? It is a frustration that many sports fans are battling.

In recent years, many sports leagues have transitioned to streaming platforms in their broadcasting agreements. This impacts fans across Canada, but Calgary fans are finding it particularly difficult to reconcile with this financial burden.

To stream Calgary's professional sports teams, fans will have to tune into games across nine different platforms.

No more hockey night

This hockey season saw Sportsnet sell the rights of "Wednesday Night Hockey" to Prime Video as part of a 12-year broadcasting agreement.

Now fans who want to watch English-language National Hockey League broadcasts will need subscriptions to TSN (Standard $24.99/month), Sportsnet+ (Premium $44.99/month), and Amazon Prime Video ($9.99/month).

These subscriptions will cost a basic viewer $799.70 for a whole season, not including the regional blackouts that occur for TSN and Sportsnet games, which can only be watched if you are in that regional area.

DAZN's hands on the Stamps

The NHL isn't the only league to partner with Canadian broadcasters for the season. In May 2026, the CFL announced the extension of its broadcasting deal with Bell Media to continue streaming games on TSN and RDS — TSN's French-Canadian counterpart.

Starting in 2027, DAZN will be streaming one game each week for domestic audiences alongside the site's international coverage.

This deal will see DAZN exclusively stream 24 total games, including one preseason match, 21 regular-season games, and two playoff games — one quarterfinal and one semifinal game.

Fans hoping to watch the Stampeders next season will need both a TSN subscription and a DAZN subscription (Monthly Flex $34.99/month). This cost would total $359.88 for the whole six-month season.

Canada's national sport falls victim

This isn't just occurring in Canada's top leagues. The National Lacrosse League (NLL) recently announced a deal with FloSports to broadcast all of its regular-season and playoff matches on NLL+.

The FloLacrosse monthly subscription is currently listed at $49.99. That, alongside the standard TSN subscription, means fans are having to pay $449.88 for the entire Roughnecks season.

More hockey please

The Calgary Wranglers have their broadcasts streamed on FloHockey after an agreement between the American Hockey League (AHL) and the FloSports hockey platform.

Similar to FloLacrosse, FloHockey also has a $49.99 monthly price tag. In addition to watching the AHL, viewers can watch all Alberta Junior Hockey League (AJHL) matches, including the Calgary Canucks.

Luckily for fans, not all Calgary hockey comes with a price tag.

The Calgary Hitmen have all of their 2026-27 season games being broadcast on YouTube for free. This comes due to the closure of Victory+, which was also streaming all Western Hockey League matches for free, along with Dallas Stars games.

Let's play ball

Soccer broadcasts are more affordable compared to hockey. Some Calgary Wild Football Club (FC) and Cavalry FC matches streamed directly onto CBC Sports — which is free for Canadians.

The Cavalry also have all of their matches streamed on OneSoccer. The platform carries all the Canadian Premier League (CPL) and national team matches for $14.99/month.

While OneSoccer is limited in its content, focusing on just soccer, TSN has played a major role in the Canadian sports broadcasting market, showcasing multiple leagues with a single subscription.

CBC has been playing a role in showcasing Canadian talent on multiple of its platforms, like the Canadian Elite Basketball League (CEBL), with all Calgary Surge games being shown on either CBC Gem, CBC Television or the CBC Sports YouTube channel alongside the CEBL YouTube Channel.

The cost to fans

Adding up all of the monthly subscriptions comes to $2,819.16 for a single fan to keep up with all the major sports teams in Calgary.

Many teams use streaming services that do not overlap with other teams in Calgary, including DAZN, OneSoccer and the multiple FloSports channel subscriptions across different sports.

Though aside from that, a handful of teams use TSN, which provides more variety to what fans get with their subscription. CBC has also been a primary broadcasting partner, which has allowed for local fans to become a part of their team's fanbase with no cost.

This leaves questions about what may change in these broadcasting agreements once other contracts between the leagues and media companies are up.



DAZN introduced a new multiview feature that allows fans to watch up to four live games on one screen. Photo courtesy of Jakub Zerdzicki / Pexels

The mental court: Ego and confidence

Athletes' mentalities around the game and themselves

Brook Van Ham, Staff Writer

The 2024 Super Bowl showcased Travis Kelce as having a big ego when he was left out of a play, running over to coach Andy Reid, physically and verbally attacking him. Unfortunately for Kelce, the incident was on a worldwide broadcast, but he did not seem to face any repercussions.

Competitive play challenges athletes to constantly perform their best. To what extent do these pressures account for the mindsets and mental responses athletes have on and off the field?

Ego entitlement

Every individual athlete is different, but fans often see common themes, especially around athlete egos.

Whether it is valid or unprecedented scrutiny, only an athlete understands the amount they put in for the outcome seen in a game. Viewers truly only get a snippet of the commitment, hours and mental battles athletes put in each day.

Therefore, when an athlete is confident in themselves and their sport, it could at times be easily misinterpreted. The line between ego and confidence can be blurred, and differs by perception.

"Confidence is thinking 'I believe I can do this' whereas ego might be more 'if I do this I prove something to others,'" says sports psychologist Lesley Tims.

Ego typically carries a negative connotation around it, suggesting focus on individual status, arrogance and a need for external validation. Motivation can be found through striving to always be the best and desiring to hold oneself in a certain esteem.

"It can also be used as a positive tool as well," says Tims, challenging the typical assumptions that high-egos are purely damaging.

After the buzzer

The determination of benefit or harm from an ego seems to fall more on the athlete's ability to separate themselves from the actual outcome or actions during the game.

The ability to rally is essential in a good athlete, and this is where ego can at times get in the way, as it is less grounded in reality than confidence.

"Ego is your perception of yourself having a detrimental effect on your goals," says MRU Cougars men's basketball head coach Josh Mullen.

Mullen looks at confidence as grounded in reality, rooted in belief in oneself based on work ethic or experience. Confidence, in other terms, is a growth mindset, or a key part of it.

When talking about extremely successful teams and athletes — some who went on to play professionally — tremendous confidence is evident.

"The best teams, the players, are incredibly comfortable in their own skin," Mullen says.

Mullen emphasises how the mindset needed to play well and to believe that "no moment is ever too big" expands on the necessary conviction in oneself.

In the society we know, it is rare to hear and see an individual refusing limitations. Ego can also be a tool, something to use as a shield.



Zlatan Ibrahimovic is commonly referred to as one of the most egotistical pro athletes, commonly comparing himself to a god. Photo courtesy of GOAL / Facebook

"It could be hiding a fear of failure, especially when winning becomes tied to your identity," says Tims.

Humanising very successful athletes can be a reminder that the media is often one-sided in comparison to the actual story.

The division

This is where the distinction can be made: ego will not recognise personal limitations and boundaries, while confidence will. Confident players may be comfortable in one position, but understanding another teammate's approach is stronger in certain scenarios, stepping out to contribute to the overall goals.

Ego would more likely convince the athlete to step in at every moment, holding an unrealistic perception or desire that they must always be the champion.

There is a broad range of characteristics that can come with both ego and confidence, and raises the consideration of the balance between arrogance and humility.

To perceive all athletes as egotistical would be rooted in complete misunderstanding and unfair generalisation. However, that is certainly not to say there are some who have been inflated by the attention and triumphs, perhaps negatively representing the sport and competitive culture.

As in any field, there are differing individuals within. Although there may be real patterns that lead to painting the entire group in one way, it is not plausible to do so.

In the future, can these embedded assumptions about egocentrism be reconsidered, with public scrutiny in mind? Or can they be viewed with the reassurance that the reasoning is justified?



Confidence in sports is the ability to recognize room for improvement rather than believing there is no room to grow. Photo courtesy of Tima Miroshnichenko / Pexels

#s

199 yards thrown by CFL Grey Cup MVP and Edmonton Elks quarterback Cody Fajardo to beat the Montreal Alouettes 37-30

17-0, the Victoria Vikes defeated the defending women's rugby champions, the UBC Thunderbirds to claim the 2026 U SPORTS Women's Rugby national title

46 year old Brazilian football legend Ronaldinho Gaucho returns to competitive play with 3rd-tier Italian club Ravenna

52 points scored by Detroit Pistons point guard Cade Cunningham to defeat the Washington Wizards 142-140 in double overtime