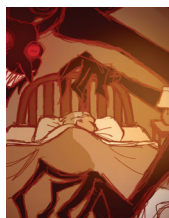




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# Purple Press

Volume #23, Issue #2

December 16th, 2022

## Behind J.K. Rowling's controversy

*The author of the Harry Potter series has faced backlash for her harmful statements on Twitter*

**Galadrial Barrett**  
Staff Writer

It began with simply liking tweets. From there it slowly ramped up into full blown arguments on Twitter and J.K. Rowling publishing a 3,000-word essay explaining her point of view. Now, Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter

series, has been under fire for her opinions on transgender people.

It all goes back to 2017, when Rowling liked a tweet that was linked to a transphobic article. The tweet referred to trans women as "men in dresses." Rowling initially claimed that she had swiped

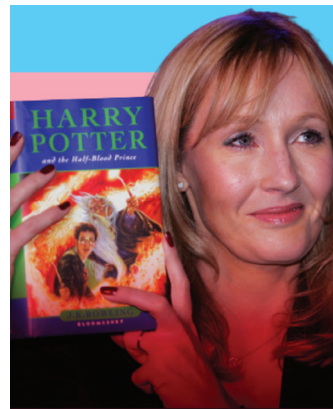
the "like" button by accident. Then, on December 19, 2019, she expressed support for researcher Maya Forstater, who was fired from her job for posting tweets that were transphobic.

In June 2020, Rowling posted a tweet making fun of an article using the phrase "people

who menstruate." After this she began to be labeled as a "TERF," or trans-exclusionary radical feminist. In June of 2020 Rowling wrote and posted the aforementioned 3,000 word article addressing this and explaining her reasoning. ("So I want trans women to be safe. At the same time, I do not

want to make natal girls and women less safe. When you throw open the doors of bathrooms and changing rooms to any man who believes or feels he's a woman then you open the door to any and all men who wish to come inside. That is the simple truth.")

How are actors from the Harry Potter movies responding to this? Daniel Radcliffe, the actor who played Har-



Elizabeth Hallanger

J.K. Rowling, 9

## OWL seniors march to the mailbox



Rebecca Palmer

Seniors Maleah Young and Gabby Her enter the auditorium to the cheers of their classmates (left). The class of 2023 poses outside of school (right).



Rebecca Palmer

### Huge crowd on hand to cheer on the class of 2023

**Meara Gunderson**  
Staff Writer

On Friday, December 9th, Open World Learning's senior class participated in the annual college march.

After last year's march was compromised due to COVID-19 restrictions, this year's event returned to its

normal format. The event began in the auditorium, where a large crowd of students and parents gathered to hear speeches from district officials, parents, community members, and students. Crews spent the week before the march preparing posters for their seniors and cheered them on loudly

both during the assembly and afterwards along the march route.

Once the speakers were finished, each member of the class of 2023 stepped up to the microphone to announce which colleges and universities they had applied to and been accepted to.

Following the ceremony, all of the crews left the auditorium and lined up along Humboldt Avenue all the way up to the turf field. The seniors and many parents marched the route cheered by students holding colorful signs. The seniors returned to school and spent the afternoon at a luncheon with their families.

The college march, is a na-

tionwide event for schools in the national EL Education network. The event is designed to highlight the focus on ensuring that every senior at an EL Education school should apply to and be accepted by at least one college or university.

"It felt kind of surreal to be up on the stage after so many years of being in the audience," said senior Nick Streng,

## Elon Musk buys Twitter

*The future of the global app remains in limbo*

**Lillie Eiken**  
Staff Writer

"I was skeptical before, but after seeing his management skills in action I think letting Elon Musk oversee the migration of Earth's wealthiest people to Mars is a great idea," tweeted user Jesse von Doom on November 14, 2022, amid people panicking about the dubious future of Twitter.

Twitter is one of the biggest social media platforms, and is considered to be one of the most politically relevant. Twitter's future, however, is terribly uncertain, because of Elon Musk's purchase of it on October 27, 2022. Twitter may collapse because of bankruptcy, or because of an emergency, such as a server malfunction, that they're now unequipped to deal with.

Musk, on November 18, sent out an email saying that employees could either reply and agree to be part of "Twitter 2.0," a new and "hardcore" version of the platform, or leave. Around 1,000 employees left. Before Elon Musk took over, Twitter had around 7,500 full time employees. Now, it's working on a skeleton staff of 3,700. Those employees are expected to work overtime and conform to extremely demanding deadlines. Some employees have taken to sleeping overnight at their workplace.

## Spanish students learn language and creativity

*Butterflies that adorn the hallway outside Tim's room teach language learners the revision process*

**Connie Van Genderen**  
Staff Writer

You know, OWL would make a good horror movie set. Creepy old hallways, Clara creeping around every corner, and large butterflies watching you.

Come to think of it, where did all those massive butter-

flies even come from? They're so strange: flying bread, marshmallows with wings, an elephant head, wings made from space or citrus fruits, and even Minions.

The three-foot wide butterflies outside of Tim's room aren't part of a horror scene, rather they're part of one

teacher's long-running art project.

For the last five years, Spanish teacher Tim Leone-Getten has been doing a project called Austin's Butterfly. The project is done by Spanish 4 and 5 classes every other year. They go through the whole process of revision, from brainstorm-

ing to final draft. "As part of the project, Mr. Duarte has invited other artists to send him their own butterflies that he can integrate into the mural in Mexico," reads some of the information you can find on a description outside Tim's room.

What you might not know is that the butterflies in the hallway are the rough drafts of the students that have made them over the years. "So what we see out in the hallway is their rough drafts, the second version is on a thicker canvas and can be sent to Hector Duarte, a Mexican-American mural artist, and when he

brings them down to Mexico each year he can incorporate them into his mural," said Tim.

The actual finished butterflies were made on fancy canvas, driven to Chicago, and given to Hector to add to the mural, "so that they would be basically suitable to be outside," said 11th grader Hiroko Zeleke, who participated in the project last year. The project focuses heavily on the revision process; the students go through multiple phases of revision, from brainstorming to final draft. "I think it was a good way to combine language

Butterflies, 3

Twitter, 5





## The Purple Press

OWL's longest-running student newspaper was founded in 1995. This collection of events and news is compiled in Leo's Journalism classes. This is the 23rd year of the Purple Press.

### Adult to Blame

Leo Bickelhaupt

### Editor-in-Chief

Willa Campion

### Writers

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Joseph T Schwartz  
Remy Short  
Nick Streng  
Connie Van Genderen  
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Kai Walker  
Grant Weylandt

# Dude's got mad skills

*Danny MacAskill, trials rider, is taking over the world stage*

### Kai Walker

Staff Writer

Danny MacAskill is a 34 year old Trials biking legend from Dunvegan, UK. He has pulled off some of the most insane tricks on a BMX-like bike and is one of the most well known trials riders in history. He is on the Santa Cruz Bicycles cycling team, is sponsored by Red Bull, and is about to enter his 14th year of riding professionally.

Danny's first video that got attention was him just riding in Edinburgh. The short film was filmed by Dave Sowerby, taking almost two months to make. It was posted to YouTube in April 2009 and got millions of views. The video starts with one of the craziest tricks of Danny's whole career, Danny riding across the top of a pointed fence. It shows him failing on his first attempt, which works perfectly for the sad start to the song, "The Funeral" by the Band Of Horses, but as soon as he lands the trick the song starts a guitar solo and goes into a series of crazy tricks.

Danny could tell trials riding was for him. He quit his job as a mechanic and started making more and more videos, eventually becoming an internet sensation. He soon was featured in a music video by Winter Hill by the Doves. The video shows a group of young people mesmerized by Danny and start chasing him like a game of tag. Some of the group start to stop from exhaustion, Danny doesn't stop and they keep chasing him. He does tricks like 180's, 360's and endos while the group chases him. They finally stop on top of a building and stare at Danny, he rides away and they cut to the moon in the clouds ending the video.

This was only the beginning. Danny appeared in three films in 2010 and 2011. The first film was produced by Red

Bull Media House and was named Way Back Home. It was set in Edinburgh Castle, North Berwick, which coincidentally is in Scotland. The second film, in 2011, was filmed in Cape Town and was a promotional video by Leica Camera. He puts down crazy tricks like tailwhips, 180's, 360's, and endos to fakie.

The third film was for Cut Media and called Industrial Revolutions because of the set of him on abandoned iron works. He doesn't disappoint with his creative tricks inside and outside of the buildings. Like the "Winter Hill" song, the video was made for the song "The Wolves" by Ben Howard, and directed by Stu Thomson. But maybe one of his biggest achievements would be him creating his signature frame that they named "Inspired Skye" which he rides in the Industrial Revolutions video.

Then a year later, in 2012, Danny performed in the movie Premium Rush as a stunt double. In 2013 he was invited to Taiwan on a sponsorship deal from Lezyne to film a video called "Danny MacAskill in Taiwan". But that summer he released a project with Red Bull House Media that took over 18 months to film. It was called Imagine and received over four million views in the first three weeks, but now has over 93 million. The vid-

eo cuts to a kid playing with a biking mini figure jumping over blocks and launching off of ramps. The camera cuts to Danny where he starts recreating the tricks the kid was doing with the minifigure. He builds different obstacles with blocks, cards, dice, and colored pencils bigger than Danny himself. The video ends with the kid being scolded by his grandmother for playing with his toys instead of drinking his tea.

After Imagine, Danny published one more film named Road Bike Party 2. The film was created with GCN (Global Cycling Network) also featuring Martyn Ashton and Chris Akrigg.

Then in 2014 Danny published four videos, setting his personal record for most videos in a year. The first film was Epecuen set in Epecuen, Argentina and released in May. The film has a backstory of how the city was abandoned and then shows Danny hopping around the abandoned city. The second film was Danny MacAskill at the Playboy Mansion set in Los Angeles, USA released in July. The video shows him doing tricks around the mansion doing tricks all over the huge mansion.

In the third video is called The Ridge and is set in Cuillin Ridge, Skye filmed with Cut Media released in October. He starts by rowing to the foot of a mountain, he unloads his bike

Macaskill, 3



Off Road.cc

Danny MacAskill leaps off a ledge in San Francisco.



Purple Press Staff Photo

Tenth grader Danny Hobday bites his first place medal.

# Minnesota Superior U17 win YCC title

*10th grader Danny Hobday was the boys team's second highest overall scorer*

### Theo Kimball

Staff Writer

On August 11, 10th grader Danny Hobday's team, Minnesota Superior, won the U-17 boys national frisbee title at the Youth Club Championship tournament in Blaine, Minnesota.

The team has a three step tryout process, including minis, a conditioning test, then finally drills and a game on the full field. There were three different tryout sessions and about 60 people who tried out for the 20 person team. It was Danny's second year on the state team, which took second last year.

In the tournament, you are placed in a pool with four other teams, and the pool games take a day and a half. Playoffs are on the second day. The top two teams advanced to the knockout round, similar to the FIFA World Cup.

There were about 25 teams in the tournament total. The semifinal game and championship game were played on the third day. Danny's team played eight games in total. By the third day, Danny said he was pretty fatigued. "You just gotta keep pushing."

Danny was happy with

his performance, leading in points for D line (defensive line), and coming second in overall points. According to Danny, their 2-3-2 zone on defense was unstoppable and forced easy turnovers that led to easy points. Zone is where players don't guard each other individually, but instead play their own roles throughout the field, mainly defending zones on defense. A 2-3-2 refers to the number of people in each role, with two people marking the player with the disk, three playing the middle of the field and another two deep.

Winning the national championship was a big accomplishment for Danny. He said one of the benefits of this title is that he has something that none of his many frisbee-playing siblings have ever done. "After the championship I think I have a one-up in a family frisbee argument," he said.

Ultimate frisbee is a very accessible game for new players, and while fall league is over, there will be another season in spring. When asked about his advice for new players, Danny said, "Just lay out, I promise the ground doesn't hurt that bad."

# OWL welcomes new staff member Elizabeth

*Elizabeth is a part time Spanish teacher, former student of Grant*

### Claire Ales

Staff Writer

If you were in Grant Bou-langer's Spanish class last year and are now in Elizabeth Drobinski's class, you probably notice some similarities. They both teach without desks, and use stories to help kids learn Spanish. Well, that's not a coincidence - Elizabeth was Grant's student when she was

in 8th grade.

Elizabeth graduated from St. Cloud State University with a major in Spanish education and a minor in entrepreneurship. Elizabeth decided to major in Spanish education because she wanted to study abroad and learn a second language. She also just enjoys learning languages. She studied abroad in Spain for a

month and a half. "My favorite thing about studying in Spain was the architecture. I could see so much more detail in the stone. Also, the food. Really good croissants and hot chocolate," Elizabeth said.

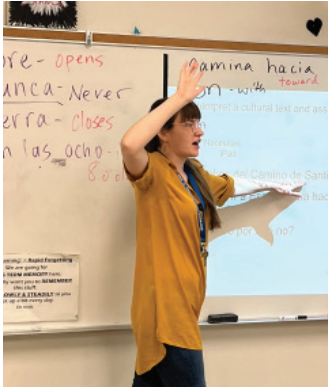
Elizabeth grew up in Oakdale. She went to Tartan High School and Skyview middle school where she took her first Spanish class in 8th grade with

Grant. This is Elizabeth's first year teaching in Saint Paul. Before coming to OWL, she taught at a charter school in Northeast Minneapolis and was a substitute teacher two days a week for grades K-8.

In the afternoon everyday Elizabeth teaches at Johnson High School. At Johnson she teaches Spanish 1 and 2. When she is at OWL she teaches

Spanish 2 and 3.

One of Elizabeth's favorite things about OWL is the community. She enjoys how close-knit the school community is. "One of my favorite things about being a teacher is connecting with students - whether it is about something silly or about hopes and dreams for the future. I think community is so important so I'm glad to see such an inclusive and



Purple Press Staff Photo

Elizabeth, 9 Elizabeth teaching a class.

# A brief history of the Purple Press, past and present

### Grant Weyandt

Staff Writer

The Purple Press was created October 12 1996 by English teacher Leo Bickelhaupt. He made it because he wanted a class for the students to learn and publish their own newspaper. After he finished college he wrote for the Minnesota Daily and he also worked for his high school newspaper.

The Purple Press has many steps to producing the school newspaper. When students first join the journalism class in 8th grade or later they start as "rookies," while the students who have taken the class before are "veterans". The rookies go through 2 learning targets on news and feature stories. While the rookies are working the veterans have chosen their stories from a list or thought of

one on their own. The rookies don't usually put a story in the purple press until the 2nd issue.

The Purple Press name was created on a vote in one of Leo's first newspaper classes. One of his students wanted the newspaper to be called the Purple Press and it won. There has not been another vote since.

There are eight Purple Press issues a year and they are released once a month. Leo said,

"One issue a month is plenty of time and a reasonable goal." He says there needs to be a schedule for the newspaper to be viewed as a "respected institution." When there are not any deadlines the students become slower and it shows how important the deadlines are with the issue production.

In 2017 the format changed to look much more professional. The font changed, the

way that the words were laid out changed, the size of the paper became larger, and picture quality improved. Most of these changes were the result of a design class Leo took through Kent State. "The class changed the way I look at newspaper design."

The Purple Press always goes through a format and layout process. Leo never does the layout and instead has a stu-

dent editor for each year that he helps and they work together to find the best format for the newspaper. The students take roughly 4-8 hours total to format the entire newspaper into one issue ranging from 6 to 14 pages. The current editor-in-chief is 11th grader Willa Campion. Some of the other recent editors are former OWL students Paloma Leone-Getten and Grace Bellamy.



# Senior Spotlight

Ian St. Louis



**What pronouns do you use?**  
She/they.

**How tall are you?**  
5' 2" or 5' 3"  
**What's your favorite book?**  
Thorn Hill

**Who's your favorite senior?**  
Daniel Meekin

**What is your favorite video game?**  
Elden Ring

**What extracurriculars do you plan on getting involved in at OWL?**  
Theater

**What pronouns do you use?**  
He/him.  
**How long have you been at OWL?**  
Since 6th grade.

**What are your plans for next year?**  
Hopefully college.

**What's been your favorite class in high school?**  
AP Computer science.

**What extracurriculars are you involved in?**  
None.

**Favorite field work experience or school trip and why?**  
DuNord. It was a lot of fun and there were great team building activities.

**If you had a walk up song, what would it be?**  
Take Me Out by France Ferdinand.

# That One Little Kid

Lila Brandtjen



Purple Press Staff Photo

## Butterflies dominate the hallways near Tim's room.

**Butterflies, 1**  
and art,” said 11th grader Willa Champion.

Before the mural, Hector Duarte’s hometown was dying; they were shrinking in population and the town was fading. Hector started to create a mural there, a mural that would eventually bring the town back to life. When he made his mural there the town started to attract tourists and the town started to grow again.

Nine years later, Tim had his class read this book, La Calaca Alegre (The Happy Skull). In this book there was an artist, Hector. He had made many murals in Mexico and Chicago and the book talked about the mural he did in his hometown, where he would make butterflies. They are all over the town.

“Hundreds of people have done this and so we decided to take part as well,” said Tim. The thing that’s so interesting about this is that he would let other artists contribute. He would take people’s butterflies that they made and would

make them a part of the mural. This sparked the idea in time to contribute to this project by having his students make their own butterflies for the mural. Every other year, when Tim does this project, he takes the butterflies, drives down to Hector’s studio in Chicago, and then Hector flies them down to Mexico to add them to the mural.

But why butterflies? “He felt it represented his life,” said Tim. Like the monarch butterflies, his life is split between Mexico and Chicago, like the migration of the monarch butterflies.

“It’s kind of a nice thing because when they come back they can say ‘oh, there’s my butterfly!’” said Tim. “It definitely adds a lot of color to the school,” said Willa.

Every other year they add more butterflies to the wall. At first Tim thought that he would just take them down and replace them, but then the other teachers convinced him that he should just add more. One day, the entire school could be covered in butterflies!

# Controversies and upsets dominate the World Cup

*The tournament in Qatar has been unlike any other FIFA games*

**Bennett Vaughan-Fier**  
Staff Writer

The World Cup is well underway by now, with the first two rounds done and the last part of the tournament already started, however throughout the first two rounds there have been quite a few upsets.

The first and one of the biggest upsets was Saudi Arabia beating Argentina in the first game. Saudi Arabia was ranked low at number 51 and Argentina was number 3. However, many of the teams in the Middle East and Africa do not play as much as European or American teams.

The second upset was Belgium losing and not making it through the group stage. They originally beat Canada, however, they then lost to Morocco in the second game and then tied Croatia in the third game, and because of Croatia’s and Morocco’s wins, Belgium did

not move on.

Another big upset was in group D. France was set to win the whole thing. However, they got cocky and decided to bench Mbappe for their final game and they reaped the consequences for that, as Tunisia would score and win. There were a few smaller upsets, like Costa Rica’s win over Japan and Japan’s comeback over Germany, which contributed to Japan moving on and Germany not. However, to Germany’s credit the group was a very competitive one. Another small upset was Denmark’s loss to Australia and their inability to qualify and get past the group stages.

For this year I would say that the easiest group has to go to group A, with Qatar’s automatic qualifier, and Senegal and Ecuador’s current teams, The Netherlands got two wins and a tie to clinch first place, and Senegal snuck their way

in with two wins and a loss. Group B was a relatively hard group -- not the hardest, but a very competitive group nonetheless England were projected to win it and they did by a good margin, clinching their 1st place easily with two wins and one tie. USA moved into second with two ties and one win.

Group C was one of the most competitive groups. Argentina was originally projected to win and barely did after their surprising loss to Saudi Arabia in the first game and ended the round with two wins and a loss, and Poland barely snuck into second place with one win, a loss, and a tie.

In Group D, France was predicted to win their group and they did. Australia took second with a record of two wins and a loss.

Group E was relatively the most competitive group in

the World Cup this year, with teams that were all near the same skill level, and even in the last game the standings were shuffling based on the score. At one point almost every team had qualified, and every team had a loss and a win. However, in the end Spain and Japan were the ones to move on.

Group F had some interesting teams, in this group Belgium was set to win, however, they underperformed immensely and Canada had its first appearance in 36 years, and didn’t do very well, because of this it allowed Morocco to upset the group and take first place, with Croatia sliding into 2nd. Group G was a regular group, Brazil was set to win and won easily, with only losing once, they claimed first with a record of 2 wins and a loss, Switzerland took second with a record of 2 wins

and a loss. Group H was a less competitive group, Portugal breezed through the group, winning twice and taking a loss to South Korea, Portugal ended up taking 1st place and South Korea took 2nd with a record of 1 win, 1 tie and 1 loss.

The World Cup this year has had many controversies, the first being is its location in Qatar. Qatar has been known for many Human Rights abuses, just for the building of the new city, stadiums, and the new infrastructure there have been estimates of hundreds and even thousands of deaths connected to the construction of the World Cup.

Many workers have also confirmed that they were forced to live in certain houses and were subjected to strict rules during their contracts, with some workers never receiving their full pay or any paycheck at all. Qatar is also known as one of the least free

countries, with strict control over the media, and strictly forbidding intimacy if not married. They also forbid homosexuality and homosexual behavior.

Because of these investigations on human rights abuses and their laws, many have speculated that Qatar was chosen by basically bribing FIFA to let them host, this is especially clear now that the former president of FIFA has been accused and is under investigation for fraud and corruption. These corruption accusations directly connected to the hosting of the 2018 World Cup in Russia and the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Another controversy is the political tension between Iran and USA that started when the US displayed the Iranian flag with the islamic symbol gone in support of the protesters, this caused Iran to call for the US to be kicked out of the tournament for their actions.

**Macaskill, 2**

and starts riding up the mountain and does trials, when he gets to a steep section he starts hiking with his bike over his shoulder. Once he gets to the top he stands on his bike for his action. It cuts to him biking down on a trail and he finally gets back to the shore. Then in November Danny did a stunt for Microsoft’s Cortana, on the River Thames. The stunt involved a loop to loop

and Danny linked together tricks before and after the loop to loop.

In 2015 Danny did a short film with fellow trials riders Fabio Wibmer, Duncan Shaw and Ali Clarkson called Drop and Roll. Then in 2016 Danny did two more films but one released in October was a mountain biking video called A Wee Day Out. It shows Danny riding a train to a small town and he does some trials tricks but on a mountain bike. He does

lots of unseen tricks that are creative and different to his other videos. One of them was him laying on his back with his bike and flipping backwards off of a big drop. It is one of his most popular videos with Red Bull with its current views being 41 Million with 530 thousand likes. He released another five videos between 2018 - 2022 and they just keep coming.

Over his 12 year career Danny has pioneered the sport

and inspired a whole new generation of riders. He has one of the most successful careers in the sport and will go down in history as the best trials rider ever. Some videos I recommend to watch are Danny MacAskill’s Gymnasium, and Inspired Bicycles. You can also look at his social media accounts, they show shorter less edited clips of his tricks and his style.

Google Danny Macaskill—you won’t regret it.



Red Bull Content Pool



# Nation and world

## Current State of the Supreme Court

*As our nation’s highest court becomes the center of a national debate, here is a staff writer’s opinion on the state of our government and more*

**Aanen Kulseth**  
Staff Writer

It has become clear that our government is failing to function. A battering of social norms and an increasing partisan divide has led us down a dark path. To put it simply, our government does not administer the will of the people. Our institutions are either ineffectual or unpopular to the vast majority of Americans. On the surface it may appear that we are in a “crazy time” that has led to some hiccups in our current system, but the problem is deeper than that.

For evidence of this one need look no further than the Supreme Court. The Court is currently in a state of a conservative supermajority. Whatever your political beliefs, it is hard to deny that this does not represent our closely-divided nation. This unrepresentative situation was created by the political machinations of Republican Senator Mitch McConnell while he was the Senate Majority Leader. Mc-

Connell and his colleagues held up many federal judicial appointments during Obama’s two terms– and most cynically, they barred President Obama from filling the vacancy left by Justice Scalia’s passing.

This allowed them to fill not only that vacant position, but two others that subsequently arose once President Trump was elected. While this was an effective political move, it is hardly admirable given the purportedly non-partisan role of the high court. This is an inherent problem in our governmental system. Is the job of an elected official to represent the interests of those who voted them into office, or to do anything one can to stay in power? While this question is not unique to America, our specific form of government combined with our current state of toxic partisanship has led to this flashpoint.

For example, even controlling just one branch of the government–or just 41 votes in the Senate, a party can stop

most legislation and lead to a reduction of public faith in the governing party–all to the benefit of that minority party. Gridlock, rather than collaboration, rewards the out-of-favor party. Simply put, our governmental system was not designed for—and strains under—the power of political parties. Officials were meant to all carry their own opinions on legislation and administration. But parties formed extremely quickly, which is unsurprising given that a political party is a sure-fire way to ensure your crucial bill is passed.

This gridlock in Congress has now led to an alternative path to advance political agendas—the Supreme Court. The Court was not meant to create policy, but simply to settle disputes through interpretation of the Constitution and laws passed by the Legislative and Executive branches. That is no longer the case. In 1925, Congress granted the Court the ability to decide which cases they were to take on. This

was a crucial step towards the Court’s eventual slide from its intended purpose, though it was not the sole factor. That decision, combined with numerous checks to the benefit of the minority party, coupled with an increase in our country’s political polarization has led us here. Now, the Court– with its immense and unchallengeable authority—is currently used by the Republican party to enact conservative policies and dismantle liberal ones, even as public opinion in the country swings the other way. Control of the Supreme Court has become the top priority.

This leads us to today, where we have a Supreme Court that, with the Dobbs vs. Jackson Women’s Health Organization decision, overturned the right to abortion, a right that many Americans have come accustomed to and that roughly 61 percent think should be legal. But this is not all, the Court has also exerted their authority over gun control and envi-

ronmental protection, and has expressed interest in revisiting the rights to contraception and same-sex marriage.

Are there solutions to the overly powerful and legislative Supreme Court? Probably. One example is to do away with the lifelong term. How about staggered 18-year terms for each of the nine justices, with a justice stepping down from the bench every two years in order of seniority? Under this scenario, each President appoints at least two justices, there’s no push to nominate young hyper-partisan judges to serve for decades, and an immediate reduction in the politicization of the Court. Will this, or any other sane measure be undertaken? Probably Not. And that’s because even a necessary change like this is almost impossible to enact. Our entire government would need a restructure in order to pass something as big as completely overhauling our most important judicial offices.

Another solution would be

to make Justices elected officials—as they are at the local and state level. But again, this would be very difficult to pass, and given the power of the Supreme Court, make them akin to mini-presidents. Would this be more fair? Maybe, but it’s far from certain. It would certainly give more control to the people, but the real problem of having a Court that sets policy would remain. That was never intended to be the purpose of the Judicial branch.

A functioning Legislative branch would certainly reduce the pressure on, and power of, the Supreme Court as a policy-making body, though change is unlikely due to the myriad checks that prevent large-scale change. Which brings us back to the start—our non-functional system. Our Supreme Court in its current form, is a symptom of a greater systemic problem—one that will lead to further division as it is used to push policies unrepresentative of the will of the people.

## Reproductive rights in the U.S.

**Alva Healy**  
Staff Writer

What do California and Kentucky have in common? They both voted to protect women’s rights.

With the election passed, many people had mixed feelings about the results. Here in Minnesota, liberals breathed a sigh of relief now that almost all of the senate and house seats, and the governor are Democratic. Minnesota flipped the House and Senate to Democrat, which is a big accomplishment. Minnesota has a large Republican population in the suburbs and rural areas, so to have almost all of the seats filled with Democrats was a surprise.

But for other states,

the same cannot be said. This election, most states stayed well within their normal political party, voting mostly for incumbents. Most of the red states voted red, and vice versa for the blue states.

One issue that brought mixed voting results this election was reproductive rights. This can mean many different things for reproductive rights in America. This can mean, in the future, either nothing will change or everything will.

Most states elected predictably, but some, on the other hand, have election results that piqued my interest. Arizona and Maryland both had Republican governors, but this year, they both elected Democrats.

Maryland is a very purple state, referring to when a state is both red and blue, which has elected a multitude of Democrats and Republicans, so it is not as surprising as Arizona, which is a state that is usually voting red.

Maryland elected Democrat Wes Moore to the office of governor. The last governor was not able to run, because of a term limit. In Arizona, which has had a lot of coverage in the news, Democrat Katie Hobbs has had the most votes and was named governor, even though Republican Kari Lake denied the results.

I also wanted to talk about Kentucky and Montana, which were two of the five

states that had abortion on the ballot. All of the states voted to keep abortion protection.

These states interested me because they are also generally red states, like Arizona. But both of them voted to keep abortions.

Abortion, 9



Center for Reproductive Rights

## Women’s rights in Iran

*How Mahsa Amini became a symbol of hope, resistance, and change for all women in Iran*

**Claire Hulson**  
Staff Writer

On September 13th, as Masha Amini stepped off the train with her brother, Ki-arash Amini in Tehran, the capital of Iran, to visit family, she was taken by the Morality police for wearing her hijab “incorrectly.” The morality police took her to a very popular “re-education center” more broadly known as a detention camp, that almost every woman in Iran has been to, to get things like lessons on clothes, hijabs, and how women in Iran should act. But these “lessons” were the least of what happens in these detention camps, much more commonly women get fined or beaten staying anywhere from days to weeks to months.

But after just three days Masha’s stay was ended as ambulances rolled in, breaking up the crowd of families waiting for their daughters, sisters, and mothers to be released, hoping they weren’t for them but unfortunately for Ashkan Amini it was. On September 16 Masha’s beaten and bloody body was rushed to the hospital where she eventually died the same day.

There have been endless amounts of controversy about her death including the Irani-

an government starting speculation of her having a heart attack by putting out a video after days of backlash, of her walking across the room and collapsing while in the detention camp. Now while approximately 0 people believe this video over the photos of her that were released by the family of her sitting in a hospital bed, beaten with blood streaming out of her ears, it’s still immensely concerning that the Iranian government is trying to cover it up.

Her death along with the constant speculation has caused outbreaks all over Iran and all over the world. Over 14,000 people have been arrested and around 300 people have been killed in these month-long protests. “Someone’s crime was dancing with her hair in the wind. Someone’s crime was that he or she was brave and criticized ... 44 years of your government. It’s the year of failure.” said Toomaji in one of his popular Iranian songs, just a couple weeks from being arrested by the Iranian government and barred from performing concerts in all of Iran. After his arrest, Toomaji stated in a song “We will come to the streets, every day and night until Iran

Iran, 5

## Polarization in American politics

**Aria Kulseth**  
Staff Writer

After a recent, and once again very close election, now would be a perfect time to talk about the growing polarization in our politics.

Polarization is the separation of two contrasting groups that are set in their extreme beliefs and opinions. Polarization isn’t a new thing in our country’s politics. While partisanship has been part of the American story through much of its history (we did have a Civil War after all) much of the twentieth century saw a reduction in polarization.

In the 60s and 70s regularly, voters would often vote for the opposing side if they

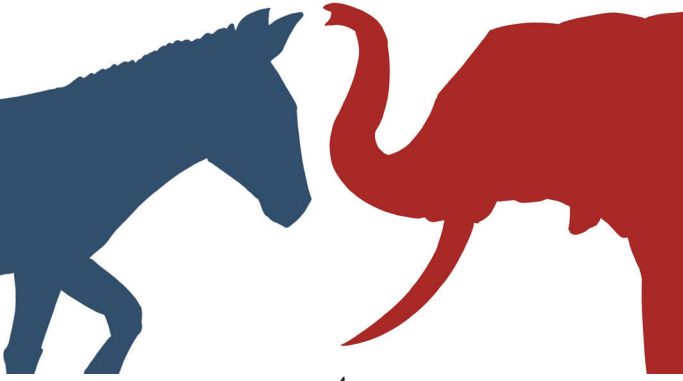
believed in some of their policies, but since the 90s there has been a growing divide between the two parties. Over the past 30 years, people have become unmovable and are willing to stand with their parties and beliefs no matter what— and a big part of this is because of partisan sorting.

Partisan Sorting is tying other parts of your identity to politics—eventually everything is tied to politics. People are increasingly choosing to interact with people who agree with their political values while blocking out those that don’t. We’re now picking neighborhoods, schools, and even sports teams based on political values.

So what causes this to occur? “With the rise of Fox News and right wing talk shows in the 90s (and to a much lesser extent, left-leaning media like MSNBC) polarization became much worse,” said OWL parent Radd Kulseth. “There was no longer a common under-

standing of shared facts. Rather, people got their version of the ‘news’ from these echo chambers, which basically just affirmed their views. One’s political views became part of their identity. And this became even more pronounced

Polarization, 9





# How do apps make money?

*The answer may be shocking to some: off of user’s private data*

**Wyatt Kessler**  
Staff Writer

Most everyone knows of or has social media. The concept of it is smart, simple, and some of the time helpful. Many of us spend hours and hours scrolling and sending things to our friends and family. They link/connect you to others similar to you and personalize your feed to update you with your interests. All social media apps are free, however, they are used globally and are extremely popular. On top of that, most if not all don’t have any in-app purchases like other apps and games do, but are twice as used.

This begs the question of how they make any money. Not only do they have to somehow make these apps profitable, but have enough money to buy the data needed for all the posts. The most common answer to the question that you would get is advertising; Photos, videos, etc. that were sponsored by what you’re browsing. This is borrowed from the approach used

by newspapers and magazines, which rely on advertisements in their publications to cover most of the cost. For example, in your Instagram feed, every 10-15 or so post will be an advertisement for something like a vacation house, some skin lotion, or anything marketable that you can think of.

But social media is different from the newspaper. It’s possible to track the users based on what they frequently click on and like or even the exact amount of time they view something. This is just one thing that makes social media so popular and is the reason that in total social media companies amassed \$153 Billion in total in 2021.

It can’t just be that simple, though. The way social media companies target advertisements to you is more than just looking at what you click on and personalizing it. In some cases like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, they not only track what you look at on their app but sell it to data collection companies who then sell that to third-party com-

panies to target ads toward you. For example, if you’ve been using media recently, the world cup is very popular. This is horrible in terms of privacy, because the things you search and click on may just be related to your state, city, or even your school. If you were to like a few videos, you may see even more videos of it in your feed and eventually get an ad about something soccer-related like goalie gloves or cleats. This makes for a large portion of their profit simply because of how popular these apps are. This sounds like it’s scandalous and illegal, but in most cases, if not all it is not illegal. They are required to have a way to let you know, otherwise, they cannot legally do it. In the

worst-case scenario, you could be browsing about things that are only local (like accounts dedicated to the school you go to) and that’s the information that is looked at and sold. But, for most, this practice of making money from these apps is bad for them just due to being cautious about their privacy.

If you don’t want these companies selling your data, you can try to find settings on whatever social media you use to turn off personalized ads. If the app has this feature, it is usually found by going to privacy settings in settings. This is an available setting on Google, Apple, and Android (This may not work directly on social media apps, but it will stop those specific companies



**Iran, 4**  
is freed. The streets are ours, we will take them back from you,” and they did just that. Women and protesters all over Iran have yet to show any signs of stopping and it looks to be a

long fight.  
After the recent World Cup loss to the USA, Iranian protesters swarmed the streets in celebration. “I’m a passionate supporter of Iran but today unfortunately I can’t be a sup-

porter of the national team because of the current situation going on and the government trying to using the game as a platform to buy credibility and to show that everything is normal (with) what’s going on

in Iran,” said Iran football fan Farshid. While this is a win for the Iranian people, some of the Iranian national team players who did not sing the national anthem said their families received imprisonment warnings.

**Twitter, 1**  
Many important engineers have been fired. Some former engineers who have recently left were the only people who knew how to work certain aspects of the platform, which means that the company no longer knows how to deal with many semi-common problems. And a lot of behind the scenes code that is either for emergencies or because it does less noticeable stuff, like two factor logins, has been deleted because it’s “bloatware,” as Musk tweeted.

Some advertisers, like General Electric, have left Twitter due to Musk’s uncertain management style. Twitter gets a lot of money from companies paying for ads on the site, and that source of income has decreased in profit as companies flee. That’s one reason why Musk now wants people to pay for Twitter, a platform which was previously free. He’s introduced programs in which users paid for features of the site.

One of these programs is the blue check program, called Twitter Blue. This allowed users to pay \$8 for blue checkmarks formerly used to tell that an influential person was actually themselves, like letting people be sure that an account of a US Senator was actually run by that senator. When the blue check marks were changed to be a paid-for feature, they were quickly used to create parody accounts. The many accounts pretending to be Musk happened to be taken down the fastest.

One person, who parodied the pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly, caused Eli Lilly

to lose billions of dollars in stock because it said insulin was free now. Insulin is a life saving and expensive drug used to fight diabetes that Eli Lilly makes a lot of profit off of. Some people who saw the tweet, believing that insulin is overpriced and could be sold for much less, made the value of Eli Lilly stock drop because the company would lose money if it were sold for less, and so stockholders would make less money. Lilly then threatened to sue Twitter.

Twitter Blue was removed soon after. Musk said on his

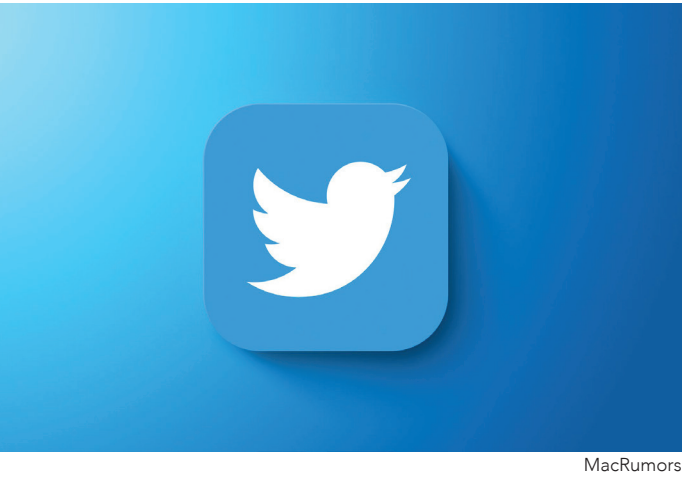
saying that “comedy was legal now.”  
That tweet references Musk’s campaign to introduce free speech values to the management of Twitter. He ended the ban on COVID misinformation and allowed accounts that had formerly been banned for it to come back to Twitter. He’s also allowed Donald Trump to come back. Hate speech has also increased on Twitter as Musk relaxes rules against it.  
Musk has also tweeted that, “Apple has mostly stopped advertising on Twitter. Do they

in a retweet that reads, “Did you know Apple puts a secret 30% tax on everything you buy through their App Store?” Musk later met with Apple CEO Tim Cook and reached an understanding that Twitter would not be removed from the App Store.

Musk’s decisions were partially driven by polls he ran on his personal account, rather than the official Twitter one. This gives him the feeling that Twitter is democratically run, when it clearly isn’t. If it were, Musk would not own Twitter.

Many users, especially people who sold things on Twitter, panicked at the potential of their online communities disappearing. Online communities on Twitter have helped authors market their books, helped artists find an international audience, and have helped many find a community. One other good thing that people found on Twitter were the fast (and sometimes wrong or misleading) news updates in real time.

Some of those people, in their premature panic to find a similar site, created accounts at sites like Mastodon and Tumblr, causing many to believe that a mass Twitter migration would lower the site’s popularity. That hasn’t happened - yet. Twitter has not suffered a widespread collapse. Many experts say that it probably will collapse many times and be brought back before either disappearing for good or having the majority of the user base leave. For now, it’ll keep chugging along, spewing parts out along the way.



MacRumors

personal account that it may be relaunched once it was harder to impersonate people using it, and that there may be different color checkmarks for organizations versus individuals.

Along with parody accounts, many users took to joking about Twitter collapsing. Some of these jokes were flagged for harassment, when the only person insulted was Musk in particular. This is despite Musk’s tweet soon after he officially owned Twitter,

hate free speech in America?” This is despite the fact that many advertisers are leaving because of the poor management of Twitter, not because they hate Musk’s claimed free speech values. Free speech in America means that corporations and people have the right to support things they want to support, which means that Apple was actually exercising “free speech,” in a way.

Musk reveals more of his mindset that businesses functionally act like governments



## The cult of America

*Were the founding fathers so revolutionary after all?*

**Wyatt Hanson**  
Staff Writer

There is no denial that the government of America is flawed, every time a law, rule or regulation has been changed it has been met with controversy. This is in large part caused by the deification of the founding fathers of America, since 1776 those involved in the founding of America have been treated as messiahs for their “revolutionary” ideas.

Slavery, an atrocity and leading cause of the “American Revolution”. As England turned the corner on the French and Indian war (or the seven years war fought in 1756-1763) the English coffers ran dry. The English logic was to tax the colonies they fought so hard to protect. The Americans spiraled into chaos as taxes were implemented leading to the Boston massacre and the Boston tea party.

These were the acts of citizens sick of losing their wages to an island across an ocean. The large land owners sought to take advantage of this discontent and supported their endeavors when war broke out.

The large landowners called a congress to decide the course of action. As England was moving toward ending slavery so they would get more taxes from former slaves, the southern slave owning states sided with independence rather than reintegration. The revolution that is the namesake of this period was that America would have independence rather than extended privileges.

America gained their independence and was free from the “tyranny” of England and they forged a constitution so that all of the white male landowners could keep their power. The constitution is filled with loopholes and ways for those with land and money to get and keep power. The electoral college, for one, was made to be a compromise between popular vote and wealth voting. The landowners systems of popular voting would leave open the possibility of an actual democracy but they needed some kind of way to justify their rule thus a electoral college that lets there be sets of points in elections and popular ballot voting.

The way electors are sent can be changed to whatever, random draw, richest people in the state, etc. the government was made to keep the rich in power. After the revolutionary era politicians revered

the founding fathers as a group of messiahs with the constitution acting as their commandments from god.

The only major reform to the government was the banning of slavery and upwards of a million american died in a civil war where states left the union. Imagine if in England the issue of Brexit led to Scotland and Wales leaving the UK and England fighting a war to get them back.

Slavery is morally indefensible by modern standards and even by 19th century standards. Slavery is a spawn of greed the arch sin of america. There are many immoral things, too many to list but all have one of three common roots: greed, fear, and lust. Greed grew out of hand in the america of old leading to deaths of 3.2% of americans.

The greed of the rich affects the lives of the working class. This is not to say that capitalism is bad and the other extreme is right, it is to say that a cult has arisen among the politicians and Uber rich. A pseudo religion with the founding fathers their gods, greed their virtue and the constitution their bible.

Greed is morally indefensible, causing your fellow human pain for the growth of a surreal concept. The politicians of today are no different than the politicians of the past, they are being legally bribed with lobbying, they are protecting their own interests rather than those of the people and are complicit in the rotting of America by corporations and the rich.

A constitution has never had a amendment repealed, not after prohibition, not after slavery and not after 12,000+ have died from fire arms each year. The government has fend emmental problems from the education system to the foreign policy administration.

The only way for our country to truly move forward is to reform the constitution and almost all parts of the government at a fundamental level. But before any of this can be achieved the two party system must be ended. The two party system time and time again divides the nation leading to further polarization and even civil war.

As the election comes to a close, districts in Arizona refuse to certify the election, our democracy is under threat, and the only hope for a better future is fundamental government reform.



# The holidays are here

## Which Christmas treats are best?

### Hot takes on cool treats

**Danny Hobday**  
Staff Writer

It's that time of year again... lights on the trees, snow on the ground, nonstop shopping, and best of all, delicious treats. There are so many great holiday sweets, but which ones make my cut?

When you think of Christmas one of the first things that comes to mind is candy canes. In fact, 90 percent of all candy canes sold in a year are during the holidays. The minty striped candy is many people's favorite but I really don't see why. I think candy canes are alright, but I wouldn't go as far as great. When I have a candy cane usually it's not even for the taste, it's so that I can make a super pointy tip with the end of it. The taste is just mint—which isn't bad—

I'd just rather have a small circular mint instead.

Next on the list is eggnog. Eggnog has been around for a very long time. Even George Washington had his own recipe for it way back in the day. This isn't as popular, but I enjoy it. Every year my mom buys eggnog around the holidays and I'm usually the only person who drinks it. I will say it can get a bit strong sometimes though. Usually I can only drink a mini cup of it at a time or it gets a little nasty. The cinnamon in it is so good and when you're wrapped up in a blanket watching a movie it hits the spot. It has a nutmeg kind of flavor and a hint of rubbing alcohol. The thickness and texture is where a lot of people say no thanks to it, but I enjoy that too.

Another classic holiday treat is the peanut butter Hershey's Kiss cookie. This has got it all. It is a homemade cookie but it's fairly common. In my opinion it's up there as the best cookie period, including all the others, not just holiday cookies. I love pretty much anything peanut butter, but these take peanut butter to a whole new level. The texture, classic peanut butter taste, and then all of a sudden there's a Hershey's kiss on top!! Game changing. If you haven't had one of these you're missing out and I highly recommend you do as soon as possible.

If it's a cold winter day with snow on the ground and you come in from outside, what's the thing you want the most? Hot chocolate. But not me, I don't really enjoy it. The first chocolate drink is believed to

have been created by the Maya around 2,500–3,000 years ago, and a cocoa drink was an essential part of Aztec culture. I think it's alright but I'd rather have a lot of other drinks. I think the hot part of hot chocolate is really good and makes me feel warm and cozy, but the chocolate part isn't typically appealing. Usually hot chocolate is hot water with a hint of chocolate in there. I definitely don't judge or blame you if you like it but if you buy it somewhere like a coffee shop, then I think there are a lot of better options.

The last treat is Fudge. A fun little fact about the name fudge is that it is believed to have gotten its name when an American baker "fudged" his batch of caramels. To be honest I couldn't really think of another classic treat and



Treats, 9

## Why Thanksgiving can't beat Christmas

**Remy Short**  
Staff Writer

It's that time of the year again, 'tis holiday season! Soon, homes will be decorated with bright string lights and cartoon inflatable Christmas characters. But, wait a minute. What about Thanksgiving?

As November starts, the holiday season begins. Businesses start marketing products, and people get into the 'holiday spirit'. The holiday spirit is primarily for Christmas, not Thanksgiving. Every year, Christmas seems to be the star of the show.

Even though Christmas is the favorite holiday for many worldwide, I begin to wonder why so many enjoy and look forward to Christmas, rather than Thanksgiving. Especially with all the Christmas cheer online.

Through some research, I discovered that holiday activities and sports seem to be fairly popular, especially these listed. They include things such as; sledding, skiing, making gingerbread houses and other holiday treats, visiting relatives, and ice skating. Obviously, there is more, but these seem to be people's favorite activities.

Christmas is also an important part of the Christian religion, December 25th traditionally being the day that Jesus was born. On this day, people who practice the religion go to church in order to worship.

Decorations also play a part in Christmas. Cities and towns often decorate for Christmas, by hanging up string lights with an array of colors throughout the streets and on any surface the lighting can cling to. Some locations even set up large Christmas trees,

fully decorated with large ornaments and colorful lights.

Moving on from Christmas, what makes Thanksgiving interesting?

To start off, the general aspect of Thanksgiving is that it is celebrated in order to be thankful for everything that one has achieved over their life. Things like family, food, and friends are some of the things people are thankful for during Thanksgiving.

Along with being thankful, Thanksgiving is when people get together with family and enjoy a large meal for the entire family. The meal usually is home cooked, and some of the most iconic foods served are; turkey, potatoes, vegetables (most often green beans), pie, and bread rolls.

There are also Thanksgiving events, like the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, which is the biggest event. It is hosted in New York City where people gather to watch the parade, many coming from other states and even countries.

Large balloon characters march down the street, along with marching bands and performers. Operational floats decorated with characters and people dressed up in costume are also part of the parade. The floats are themed to cartoons, shows, brands, and more. The performers on the floats entertain the crowd, and it truly is a sight to see.

So, what specific reasons cause Christmas to be the favorite when compared to Thanksgiving? It seems like there are a lot of reasons to look forward to either.

First of all, one that I can relate to is that students particularly enjoy Christmas because of winter break. On

Thanksgiving, you get two days off in Saint Paul public schools. On winter break, you'll get two weeks off. The break is a great time to relax after hours of learning in school. It's pretty clear why students would prefer winter break over Thanksgiving break.

Second, people are more eager to celebrate Christmas because of all the festivities such as; visiting Christmas light displays, crafting gingerbread houses, and setting up a Christmas tree. Many also get together with family, which is an important part of the holidays for numerous families and friends alike.

Children are particularly fond of Christmas because they will excitedly anticipate the morning of December 25th, so they can wake up and see what presents Santa brought them. And, who doesn't like presents?

Third, many people celebrate traditions. Many have unique traditions, and others celebrate more common ones. For me, me and my family each open one present on Christmas Eve, and then open the remaining gifts on Christmas Day. I have observed that through some

Chirstmas, 12



## Snow and ice: coming soon to a street near you

**Sir Nakhai Guy-Cornelious**  
Staff Writer

Do you like frostbite? Do you like slipping and falling on nothing? Well, you have no choice if you live in Minnesota. In this article I will be reviewing the characteristics of the snow and ice that we all love on a biased scale of 1-10.

Starting off with the bad things about snow and ice, the temperature when it snows and water freezes needs to change. The temperature has to be below or at 32F degrees for it to snow. That is kinda cold and that means we will only get snow when it's nat-

urally cold out, but I need it most when the sun is melting everything in its path in the summer so I'm taking off a point there. Then on top of that, since it's already 32F degrees out, I'm already cold and touching it which only makes it worse so that's points off. Frostbite and people freezing to death is also not good, so even more points off. Then if it's really snowing, everything just does a Micheal Jackson and turns white. And side note for all the people that eat snow, SNOW HAS POLLUTION in it so it's not wise to eat it.

I was going to give it points

for snow days. . . but those days are more dead than Fall Guys. And for water to freeze, it needs to be at the same temperature as snow, which causes so many problems. Since it needs to be at the same temperature as snow to fall, snow that has ice in it exists. This is a true story. I got out of school and walked home with kids who lived by me and we randomly decided to have a snowball fight with day-old snow -- BIG MISTAKE. The first snowball hit my face and it would be great if it was nice fluffy snow, but no, it was rock hard ice in

Snow and Ice, 6

## The top hits of Christmas

**Liam Nowatzki**  
Staff Writer

The Christmas Spirit. Some would describe this as the feeling you get when December comes around, the snow on the ground and the lights up on the tree. Others would describe it as a capitalist trap to get people to buy more stuff than they actually need. But one thing that's hard to argue is the music.

Whether it's being played the second it hits midnight on November 1st at your local target or on a vintage record player while you and your family drink hot cocoa and put a Christmas tree up. Many people, including myself, would argue that Christmas music is one of the most

important elements of the Christmas season. That is why I've decided to rank the top Christmas songs with the help of my fellow OWL students.

In the 5th spot we have "O Tannenbaum." O Tannenbaum translates to English as Oh Christmas Tree. The modern lyrics were written in 1824 by the composer Ernst Anschütz. The song was based off of the 16th century Silesian folk song by Melchior Franck. The song was featured in A Charlie Brown Christmas which is where most of its popularity with today's generations comes from. This classical music piece has beautiful piano and peak composition.

In 4th place is "Feliz Navidad". "Feliz Navidad"

is a Christmas song written by the Puerto Rican singer-songwriter José Feliciano. Feliz Navidad translates to "Happy Christmas". Feliciano has said in interviews that he wrote the song while feeling homesick on Christmas. This song is great as it is one of the most popular Spanish Christmas songs in the USA and is a nice mix of a chill guitar song and an upbeat pop song.

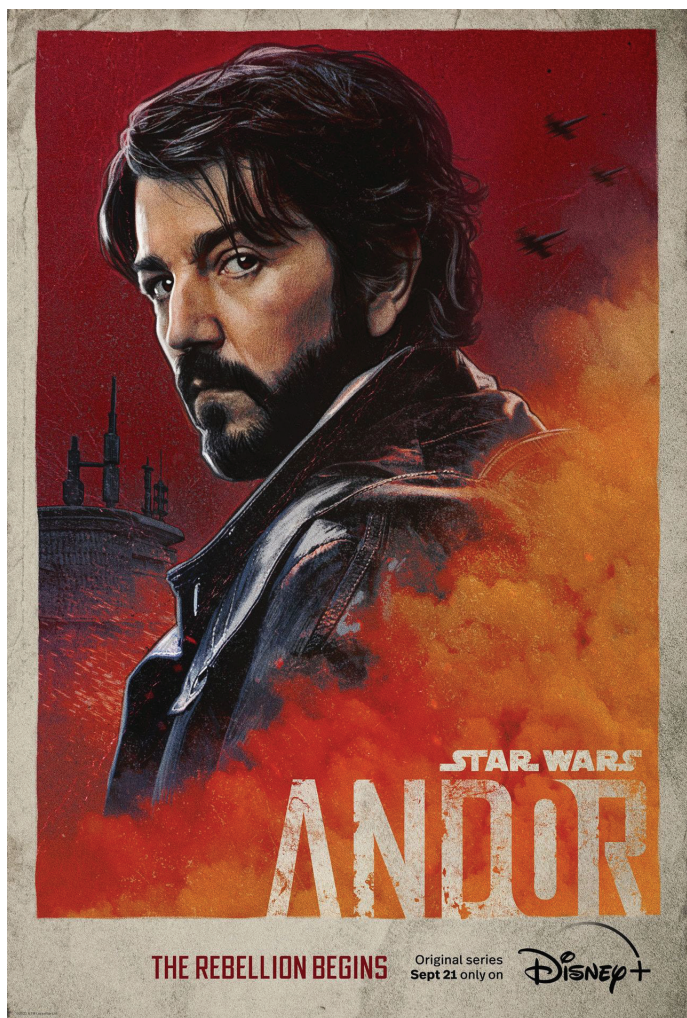
In 3rd place is "Jingle Bell Rock". The song was first released in 1957 by Bobby Helms. The song originally peaked at No. 6 in the Billboard Best Seller and after being featured in the 1996 film Jingle All The Way it was in 60th place on the Billboard

Chirstmas, 12





# Reviews ‘n’ stuff



## The best of the Star Wars galaxy is here

*Andor successfully captures the ‘visual language’ of Star Wars*

**Nick Streng**  
Staff Writer

What if I told you that a TV show about Cassian Andor - that one side character in Star Wars that barely anyone talks about - became one of the greatest stories ever told in the entire history of the saga?

Enter Andor, the latest entry in the now long line of Star Wars Disney+ series. With Diego Luna in the lead role as the titular character Cassian Andor, who made his first and previously only appearance in the spin-off film Rogue One: A Star Wars Story (2016), it serves as a prequel to said film and is intended to run for two seasons. The first season of this show ran from September 21st to November 23rd and consisted of 12 episodes, following Cassian's story five years before the events of Rogue One. Yep, it's a lukewarmly anticipated spin-off to a spin-off that was already met with lukewarm reception. So I'm sure you must now be wondering, "okay, what kind of hyperbolic, overaddicted-to-Star-Wars, get-a-life doofus would ask for THAT?"

Well, I'll tell you who: me. For almost six years now, I've carried the somewhat controversial opinion that Rogue One is the best Star Wars movie - yes, even better than Empire Strikes Back. Go ahead and yell at me, I don't care. I love this movie with all my heart, so when I heard that they were gonna make a prequel show about one of its leads, I was

just like, "Woooo! Took them long enough! Sign me up!" and went in with insanely high expectations. However, I know that a lot of people have had no excitement for this show for various understandable reasons. Star Wars has been in a bit of a funk recently with all their latest shows having only caused further divide in an already thoroughly divided fanbase, and the fact that Cassian is a generally obscure character further deflected any anticipation.

But none of that matters, because right now I am here today to tell you all one thing: do yourself a favor and watch Andor. Speaking as a lifelong fan of Star Wars, I would not hesitate to say that this is currently their best TV show to date and it stands toe-to-toe with even the very best the franchise has ever had to offer. I have watched just about every single piece of Star Wars media to ever exist, but almost none of them have reached the same level of phenomenal craftsmanship as Andor's first season. And nobody - not even I - could predict just how good it was going to be.

Andor is created by Tony Gilroy, a screenwriter and filmmaker previously known for overseeing an extensive behind-the-scenes reworking of Rogue One, and whatever he did to change the movie appeared to be enough to give him a writing credit and convince Lucasfilm to reach out

**Andor, 10**

## The latest on Netflix

*A guide of what to watch over the long break*

**Lucy Annis-Bercier**  
Staff Writer

As our 17 days of winter break approaches, there is a high possibility you will find yourself scrolling through a streaming service of your choice in search of something new to watch. We also know Netflix has a reputation of their creations being a hit or miss. With this in mind, I have featured three newish movies and TV shows on Netflix that look the most promising for your viewing pleasure. I haven't watched any of them yet and will be judging purely based on how good they look. I have also listed a few new seasons of TV shows that might have slipped under the radar for you to catch up on.

Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery: The most anticipated movie on this list, in my opinion, is Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery. If you haven't seen the first movie (Knives Out), I highly recommend you do because it was an extremely memorable film. With the success of the first film, it only makes sense there would be some anticipation for the second one.

If you like smart mystery/crime movies, you should put this one on your list. The movie follows a group of friends who go on an expensive getaway on a private Greek island. After a murder occurs, Detective Benoit Blanc (who was featured in the first Knives Out) is put on the case. There will be all new characters who find themselves wrapped up in

this Knives Out murder mystery during their vacation.

The movie features an all-star cast such as Daniel Craig, Outer Banks star Madelyn Cline, Jessica Henwick, Kate Hudson, Edward Norton, Kathryn Hawn, Ethan Hawke, Janelle Monáe, Hugh Grant, Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Leslie Odom Jr. This Knives Out sequel is directed by Rian Johnson (the director of the first Knives Out) who has directed other notable films such as Star Wars: The Last Jedi, Rogue One: A Star Wars Story, and his directorial debut, Brick. With a PG-13 rating, Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery would be great for a family movie night. It's already out in theaters but will be streaming on Netflix on December 23rd.

Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio: One thing I didn't expect out of the film industry coming into 2022 was THREE Pinocchio feature films but here we are. I am referring to Pinocchio: A True Story (released in Russia along with an

English dub), the live-action Pinocchio starring Tom Hanks as Geppetto, and the newest, Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio. While I'm not entirely sure the world needed another Pinocchio movie, I believe this is the one you're going to want to give your attention to. It is undoubtedly going to be the best Pinocchio adaptation released this year mainly due to the fact that it was led by Guillermo del Toro (directed Academy Award winner for Best Picture, The Shape of Water). I believe he will take a bleaker approach to this adaptation and it will result in a more emotional, layered movie.

Here's what I know about this film: it's a stop-motion animation which, in my opinion, makes the movie a lot more visually interesting. The cast includes well-known names such as: Evan McGregor, Finn Wolfhard, Tilda Swinton, Cate Blanchett and Christoph Waltz and Pinocchio is voiced by young actor Gregory Mann. It's also a musical just like the original movie so

it seems there are many interesting components added to this movie. In case you don't remember, the premise is that a man wishes that his wooden puppet was a real boy and the next day his wish is granted. It is a rather interesting storyline so I can understand the desire to keep remaking it. The movie is rated PG and it's out on Netflix now.

Wednesday: Directed by Tim Burton and starring rising star Jenna Ortega, (who has made a name for herself in the horror/drama genre with roles in: Scream 6, X, The Fall-out, You, Studio 666, and The Babysitter: Killer Queen) this new comedy horror series has caught the attention of many Netflix watchers. It has become the most watched Netflix show in a week. We all know and love the Addams family and have especially grown fond of Wednesday Addams, the daughter of Morticia and Gomez Addams. She is an iconic female character and I think she is the best Addams for a series to revolve around. We all know what filmmaker Tim Burton is capable of (directed celebrated films such as The Nightmare Before Christmas, Corpse Bride, Beetlejuice and Edward Scissorhands) and if anyone should be given the keys to The Addams Family, it's him.

The eight episode series follows Wednesday after she is expelled from her high school and is enrolled in Nevermore academy, a school for



Wednesday is a new adaptation of the Addams Family.

**Netflix, 9**

## Falling for Christmas is a classic

*This holiday movie stars Lindsay Lohan & Chord Overstreet*

**Mi Paw**  
Staff Writer

Remember the star who played Cady Heron in Mean Girls or Anna in Freaky Friday. Well now she's back. Lindsay Lohan, famous for her works in Mean Girls, Freaky Friday and the Parent Trap is making a comeback as a rich girl with amnesia. Starring alongside her is Chord Overstreet, famous for his role as

Sam in Glee.

Falling for Christmas, directed by Janeem Damian, with the cast starring Lindsay Lohan, Chord Overstreet, George Young, Jack Wagner and Olivia Perez. The filming took place in Utah. Lindsay talked about doing her own stunt for the first time in this film and how fun and exciting it was. In a short interview, Chord revealed that some-

thing he learned about his co-star Lindsay Lohan is the fact she can't bowl and is a big card gamer.

This movie is about Sierra, a heiress of a well known hotel, who is newly engaged. While Jake, the owner of a ski resort, is in trouble because his business is about to shut down. On a skiing trip, Sierra encounters an accident that leads her into having amnesia. She was found by Jake and taken care of by his family.

My overall impression of

the movie was that it was average. The plot of the classic rich spoiled girl loses her memory and is taken in by a potential love interest and has to adapt to everyday average life, which is a remake of the 1987 rom-com, Overboard. She struggles with the average housework at first, like changing bedsheets. Everytime she tries to cover the mattress the ends of the sheet that covered the mattress would pop off leading to her being swallowed by the sheets.

**FFC, 12**

## Family friendly seasonal movies

*These holiday specials are favorites among all age groups*

**Kate Houle**  
Staff Writer

"This is Christmas. The season of perpetual hope," says Kate McCallister in Home Alone. And for many people this hopeful season starts with one thing: movies.

Though you might put up your decorations the moment Halloween ends, or start listening to Christmas carols

months in advance, it's not really the holidays until you curl up around the TV to watch some Christmas movies. It's an experience almost everyone has a memory of. Many households make a tradition of watching their favorite films every December. I've collected the best kid-friendly Christmas movies, and sorted them into three categories; vintage

classics, fan favorites, and recent films; so you too can enjoy this classic holiday experience with your whole family.

First up, vintage classics. These movies are usually less well known among younger people, but gave birth to Christmas movies as we know them. Made around the 1940s-50s, these films are much older and are often filmed in black and white, or are very simply colored. They capture the essence of past

Christmases, and are very focused on family values and belief in the holidays.

In these films the age old question is brought up often: is Santa Claus real? The 1947 film Miracle on 34th Street, available on Disney+, seeks to answer that question in a state court, with Macy's hired Santa Claus actor, Kris Kringle, at the forefront of the case. The most popular Santa the department store has ever had, Kris is trying

**Christmas movies, 10**



# Midnights is a masterpiece

The new long-awaited album from Taylor Swift revisits her past

Gabby Govrik  
Staff Writer

Listening to the long-awaited album, *Midnights*, from Taylor Swift is definitely a good idea. Like now—play the album while reading this article. It’s been two years since the surprise release of *Evermore* and *Folklore* and four years since the release of *Lover* which for many Taylor Swift fans like me, feels like too long to listen to her albums on repeat. The release of *Midnights* on October 21st saved the day and has been playing non-stop in my ears the past couple of weeks.

The announcement of the album at the VMAs, two months before the release date, caused chaos for many Swifties (Taylor Swift fans). She created short videos which she titled “Midnight Mayhem” in order to get an audience and create buzz around the greatest thing coming. However, many people feel disappointed and upset with the new album as it shys away from her old work and doesn’t relate to her recent albums like *Folklore* and *Evermore*. Taylor is a known story teller in her music and she finds many ways to connect to different experiences in her life and others. Her music is often relatable while fun which offers more of an excuse to listen to it. For me, I enjoy listening to music that matches

how I’m feeling and Taylor has many different categories and genres that relate to different emotions.

Throughout the review I plan on discussing some of the songs and the album a whole. I can’t promise to not have biased thoughts and similar opinions as others, especially from what I already found on twitter. Thirteen songs is a lot to review individually so I’m going to focus primarily on four that I feel are very significant to the album and the buzz around it. Though I’m reviewing an album by Taylor Swift, I’m most definitely not her biggest fan and have just recently really fallen in love with her newer albums, specifically *Folklore* and *Evermore* and even *Lover* and *Reputation*.

The first track on the album is called *Lavender Haze*. Imagine a teenage girl, sitting on her bed at 10:59 getting ready

to reload Spotify which then proceeded to crash. At 11:02, two minutes after the album was released, it finally started working and track one started. Let me start off by saying two words, the beat.. The song really gets you in the mood for the album as it’s poppy and not too crazy or too tame. It definitely is not one of my favorite songs on the album, but I still will gladly listen to it. Which leads me to my rating: 7.5/10. The song is nice, it isn’t anything too special or too dull and unocitable.

Now for a song that I was most excited to listen to but let down once I heard it—*Snow On The Beach* (feat. Lana Del Rey). The first minute of the song was pretty good and had a few little snippets of Lana’s voice, but after that minute I just kept waiting and waiting for Lana Del Rey to actually sing something on her own

other than just making noises quietly in the background. The more I listen to the song the more I get kind of bored of it, like it’s just background music in my ear rather than something that I focus on. Listen, I understand that songs are supposed to repeat themselves but she just keeps saying snow on the beach over and over again that I just get sleepy listening to it. The song isn’t terrible, but it didn’t live up to my expectations which is why it’s getting a 6.5/10. If you enjoy listening to music while getting ready for bed or falling asleep I would recommend adding this to your playlist.

Let’s dive into the 3AM edition of the album which includes seven more songs that weren’t added to the official release/album. My favorite of the songs is *Paris*. I like it so much that I believe it should’ve been added to the official album (it’s really that good). The song is definitely something that could’ve been a part of *Lover* but it still fits in beautifully with the rest of the *Midnights* album. The song is fun and energetic and adds a nice balance to all of the songs on *Midnights*. This song most definitely deserves a solid 8/10. I love it. It makes me happy. Nothing more, nothing less.

Mastermind is one of the

Midnights, 12



IMDb

## Bowie: Moonage Day Dream

New film examines the famous artist’s legacy and impact

Aanen and Aria Kulseth  
Staff Writer

For a good while now, the two of us have taken up collecting vinyl records— The Beatles, The Stones, Bob Dylan, The Velvet Underground, and many others. But the most important to the both of us has to be our David Bowie collection.

Bowie was very influential for a variety of reasons, but his first major accomplishment was kickstarting Glam Rock as a genre. He would then gain a reputation for being a musical shapeshifter, stemming from his magnificent ability to switch genres and full styles of music extremely quickly. Where it might take another artist a decade to change their style of music, Bowie could put out something completely different on a yearly basis.

While growing up, we would often listen to some of his major hits like “Starman,” “Changes,” and “Under Pressure,” but the first full Bowie record we ever listened to, and then promptly purchased, was his masterful album, *Hunky Dory* (1971). Since then, we have managed to acquire almost all of his studio albums, with several bits of his live work sprinkled in between. Now you can imagine our excitement when we discovered that a film about the life of this musical genius was to be released in theaters.

The film, *Moonage Daydream*, is directed by American filmmaker Brett Morgen. It is not done in the style of a “typical” documentary, instead possessing a unique and personal feeling. This largely stems from the fact that it has no narrator other than Bowie, which is creatively done through a splicing of interviews, concerts, and voiceovers. The quality of this narration is excellent, managing to fully provide a cohesive story, in tandem with a truly entertaining and unique experience.

The focus of the film is primarily on his career shortly after the release of *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust* and the *Spiders from Mars* (1972), Bowie’s first major successful album, and a defining record

of the Glam Rock era. From there, the film goes through the course of his musical life up to his death in 2016. It showcases the highs and lows of his career, specifically the loss of inspiration in the 80s, and his musical rebirth near the end of his life. But its main overarching theme is that of a discussion of death, mortality, and the meaning of life. The film elegantly portrays his attitude towards death, and gives a strange sense of the journey of a person’s entire life.

As for our opinion on the film, we have next to no complaints, with our only criticism being that it did not devote enough attention to his debauched “Thin White Duke” period of 1976. Occurring while he was in Los Angeles, it was essentially Bowie being driven to near madness after subsisting on nothing but red peppers, milk, and a truly enormous amount of cocaine—so much so that he had no memory of recording one of his albums, *Station to Station* (1976).

The film goes over the period, albeit briefly and without providing full context for the situation. This was odd, as the period was extremely important to the grand scheme of his career. It nearly killed him, and led him to escaping his drug fueled life in Los Angeles in favor of a cleaner lifestyle in France, Germany, and Switzerland. This time in Europe eventually led to the creation of the *Berlin Trilogy*, an experimental set of albums that strongly affected his view towards life, as well as contributing to his reputation as a musical shapeshifter. Other than that, the film does a stellar job and paints an excellent picture of the life of David Bowie. It showcases the world through his eyes, which is done with an explosion of color and sound, in some cases making the world feel almost like a blur.

All in all, we can say that the film beautifully and colorfully captures Bowie’s musical genius, as well as his attitude towards life itself. *Moonage Daydream* is a true tribute to David Bowie’s legacy.

# Actor profile: James Dean

*“If I had one day when I didn’t have to be all confused and I didn’t have to feel that I was ashamed of everything. If I felt that I belonged someplace. You know?” - James Dean as Jim Stark*

Olivia Bilek  
Staff Writer

James Dean was born James Byron Dean in Marion, IN on February 8th 1931. At the age of five Dean’s father moved the family to Santa Monica, California, in order to become a dental hygienist. Dean was very close to his mother and according to Michael DeAngelis, she was “the only person capable of understanding him”. When Dean’s mother died of cancer when he was nine years old his father, incapable of caring for him, sent Dean to live with his aunt and uncle on their farm in Fairmount, IN.

Dean attended Fairmount High School and was an ex-

ceptional student and athlete, playing on the varsity baseball and basketball teams.

As a teenager Dean became interested in motorcycles. His first motorcycle was a 1946 Whizzer that his uncle bought for him when he was 15 years old. His second bike was a 1947 Czech (CZ) 125cc which he rode to school everyday, eventually he traded his CZ for a Royal Enfield while visiting his family in Fairmont. Later he traded his Royal Enfield for a 1952 Indian TT Warrior while living in New York City. When Dean moved to Los Angeles in 1954 he purchased a Triumph T110 650cc, which he later traded for a new 1955

Triumph Tiger 500cc, his last bike.

After graduating in 1949, Dean moved to California to live with his father and step mother and attended Santa Monica City College and majored in pre-law, but eventually transferred to the University of California and switched his major to drama, which caused him to be estranged from his father. In early 1951 Dean dropped out of UCLA and moved to New York City to pursue a full time career as an actor.

Dean’s first television appearance was in a Pepsi Cola commercial in 1950, He also had several walk-on roles in

Fixed Bayonets! (1951), Sailor Beware (1952), and Has Anybody Seen My Gal? (1952). He also appeared in several episodes of various television series such as Kraft Television Theatre, Robert Montgomery Presents, The United States Steel Hour, Danger, Omnibus, and General Electric Theatre.

In 1953 director Elia Kazan was looking for an actor to play the emotional role of Cal Trask in the film adaptation of John Steinbeck’s 1952 novel *East of Eden*. Kazan wanted to find “A Brando” for the role of Cal and screenwriter Paul Osborn suggested Dean, who was a relatively unknown actor at

James Dean, 10

# What’s up with the Twelves?

Roman Rufi  
Staff Writer

The Timberwolves aren’t doing that good right now. But I think the problem isn’t the skill, it’s the chemistry and work ethic of the players.

The Wolves need to work on their chemistry because people when you watch the wolves it seems like Rudy Gobert and Karl-Anthony Towns don’t work together and it looks like they are doing their own thing. But this might also be because Gobert and Towns haven’t had much practice be-

fore the season because Towns got sick and he lost 20 pounds so they are still adjusting. They also need to be better at rebounding because that was their weakness last year and aren’t doing well at rebounding. There was a play when the wolves went against the rockets the first time Anthony Edwards was just standing there not contributing much. And Edwards needs to get more in shape.

The Wolves are just getting a bad start because their starting point guard D’Angelo Rus-

sel isn’t playing that good but he has been getting better. So if the Wolves work on chemistry and find a play that works with all the players they will get better throughout the season and will be better next year. They also need some good veteran leadership because Karl-Anthony Towns isn’t a good leader and needs to work on his leadership.

The two stars in Gobert and Towns need to find a way to be able to work on the court together, because right now they don’t work together that well.

Another problem is D’Angelo Russel because right now he isn’t playing that well but he is getting good assists and that’s one thing that’s been good for them. One great player is Jaden McDaniels because he is a really good defender. In their game against the Pacers Jaden McDaniels was defending well against Tyrese Halliburton he kept him only at 10 points but Halliburton got 14 assists.

The Wolves have now faced a new problem with Towns being out. Towns got injured

Twelves, 9



J.K. Rowling, 1

ry Potter, spoke out against Rowling, saying, “While Jo is unquestionably responsible for the course my life has taken, as someone who has been honored to work with and continues to contribute to the Trevor Project for the last decade, and just as a human being, I feel compelled to say something at this moment. Transgender women are women. Any statement to the contrary erases the identity and dignity of transgender people and goes against all advice given by professional health care associations who have far more expertise on this subject matter than either Jo or I. According to The Trevor Project, 78% of transgender and nonbinary youth reported being the subject of discrimination due to their gender identity. It’s clear that we need to do more to support transgender and nonbinary people, not invalidate their identities, and not cause further harm.”

Evana Lynch, who played Luna Lovegood, said, “I think it’s irresponsible to discuss such a delicate topic over Twitter through fragmented thoughts and I wish Jo wouldn’t.” And Rupert Grint, who played Ron Weasley, wrote in January 2022, “I liken J.K. Rowling to an auntie.

I don’t necessarily agree with everything my auntie says, but she’s still my auntie. It’s a tricky one.”

In contrast to some of these opinions, Jason Isaacs, who played the character Lucius Malfoy, said, “She has her opinions, I have mine. They differ in many different areas, But one of the things that people should know about her too -- not as a counter-argument -- is that she has poured an enormous amount of her fortune into making the world a much better place, for hundreds of thousands of vulnerable children, through her charity Lumos. And that is unequivocally good.” Robbie Coltrane, the actor who played Hagrid, said in defense of Rowling, “I don’t think what she said was offensive, really. I don’t know why but there’s a whole Twitter generation of people who hang around waiting to be offended.”

The actors are not the only people speaking out against Rowling. GLAAD (or Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation), a non profit organization committed to helping the LGBTQ+ community, responded to Rowling’s earlier support of Maya Forstater, the researcher that lost her job. Rowling tweeted, “Dress however you please. Call yourself

whatever you like. Sleep with any consenting adult who’ll have you. Live your best life in peace and security. But force women out of their jobs for stating that sex is real? #IStandWithMaya #ThisIsNo-tADrill.”

In a post responding to this, GLAAD said, “@jk\_rowling has aligned herself with an anti-science ideology that denies the basic humanity of people who are transgender. Trans and non-binary people are not a threat to women, and to imply otherwise puts trans people at risk.” GLAAD also pointed out that fan organizations such as Mugglenet and the Leaky Cauldron have also been speaking out.

On July 1, 2020, the Leaky Cauldron said, “As this fandom enters its third decade, J.K. Rowling has chosen this time to loudly pronounce harmful and disproven beliefs about what it means to be a transgender person. In addition to the distaste we feel for her choice to publish these statements during Pride Month—as well as during a global reckoning on racial injustice—we find the use of her influence and privilege to target marginalized people to be out of step with the message of acceptance and empowerment we find in her books and

celebrated by the Harry Potter community.”

Rowling sparked more debate when on August 16th, she and Joanne Harris, author of Cocholat, began an argument on Twitter. It started over the reaction to death threats that Rowling received, and soon escalated into an argument over their personal beliefs, and their position on transgender rights. This began when Rowling expressed sympathy via Twitter for Salman Rushdie, the author of the Satanic Verses, who was attacked because of the topic of his writing. Rowling then received threats saying that she was next. On August 16th, Joanne Harris posted a poll asking authors if they have gotten death threats before. People accused Joanne of being flippant about the threats and Rowling said she was startled to see the poll. Later, Rowling said that she had not received any sympathy from Harris for the threats and went on to say that Harris has consistently failed to support female authors who disagree with her opinion on gender.

Harris responded by saying, “I’ve always said loud and clear that I condemn threats of any kind, to anyone. That goes for people whose views I disagree with as well as those whose views I share.”

How is this affecting Rowling’s overall success and popularity? Well, first of all her reputation itself has been affected. When Stephen King, author of The Shining, shared his opinion about what she had said, Rowling deleted an earlier tweet of hers that had praised King after King tweeted his support for trans people saying “Trans women are women.” Rowling even stopped following him on Twitter.

In addition to arguments online, Rowling has sparked controversy through her recent publications. In September of 2020, her book Troubled Blood was published under her alias Robert Galbraith. The book is the fifth in a series, a mystery novel with a cross-dressing serial killer. Mermaids, a UK-based charity which supports transgender children and their families, said, “As a children’s charity, we are bearing witness to the very real hurt felt by young people who once saw Ms. Rowling’s fiction as a place of comfort, friendship and escape. The author recently expressed support for trans people’s right to live free from persecution. Her latest book might cause those still enjoying her books to question that sentiment.” After the release of this book the hashtag #RIP-JKRowling began trending on

Twitter because people believe that the author is killing her own career with her views.

How are these opinions affecting readers of J.K. Rowling’s books? Some fans of her writing have ceased supporting Rowling. Librarian Caryl Mousseaux said that student interest in the series seems to be declining following Rowling’s comments, and that students and other readers may have stayed interested in the books if she hadn’t said those things. Tenth grader Emilia Johnson said, “I tend to avoid buying Harry Potter things to avoid contributing money to her.”

When asked if it’s hard to read books by Rowling, knowing what she thinks, 9th grader Halie Karre said, “Not really, I’ve sort of separated the art from the artist.” Tenth grader Hana Ninow said, “It just makes it feel weird because Harry Potter was a fictional world where a lot of people, including queer and trans people, felt accepted and seen. Knowing now that JKR is transphobic makes it feel like she didn’t intend for that to happen, and it just makes everything feel weird and like the characters she wrote weren’t meant to be accepting.”

Elizabeth, 2

supportive community here at OWL,” she said.

Outside of school Elizabeth enjoys cooking, watching YouTube videos about food, and running. One of her specialties is homemade marshmallows. She says they are easy to make: “It’s whipped egg whites, sugar, sometimes gelatin. You pour a steady stream of molten sugar into a stand mixer and it just whips. Then you let it sit and it’s a marshmallow!”

A fun fact about Elizabeth is that she is very proficient at Duolingo! She first started learning a language on Duolingo when COVID-19 hit. She used it as a way to track the number of days that we had been in lockdown, but then stopped doing it because the lockdown was pretty much over. Elizabeth then started a new Duolingo streak after the lockdown. It is currently at 365 days and counting.

Abortion, 4

All of these states, save for Maryland, have very Republican roots. But they all voted, one way or another, for very Democratic things. I found this surprising, because we are all sticking very close to our parties ideals these days, so to find red states voting blue was

Polarization, 4

when Obama was elected.”

So how can we combat Polarization? Well, I think that there is no direct answer to that. As we’ve seen with the COVID pandemic: something that should have brought our country together just divided us further. Instead of coming together as one, we blamed each other for the problems that were occurring, and split even more. Even after Joe Biden won the 2020 election, a majority of Republicans still believed Trump was the true winner. Trump opened the doors to denying the results of legitimate elections, some-

a shock.

Overall, the results are very mixed, which satisfies no one. Democrats won the Senate, Republicans won the House, and so far, nothing groundbreaking has happened. I do think, however, that soon enough, states will start to change laws based around abortion.

thing that had never happened before on this scale.

Because of COVID and the 2020 election, we’re in a tough spot as a country, and I think that reversing that division is going to take a long time, if it can even be done. It’s naive to think that there is a simple solution to polarization. It’s been increasing since the 1960s. And now with hyper-partisan news outlets and the amplification of social media, it’s extremely difficult to see how Americans can find common ground. People seek out the sources that feed their biases.

Treats, 6

I asked a couple people and they were on the same page with fudge as the last one. Not everyone has fudge every year around the holidays, but If you do you know how good it is. If you thought I liked the peanut butter cookies, they are nothing compared to my aunt’s peppermint fudge she brings to Christmas every year. The chocolate is soooo good and the mini peppermint shards inside make it in my opinion the best holiday treat and close the top of the best treats all around.

The holidays are here and I know I’m definitely going to be eating a lot of these treats and many more. I would definitely recommend any of these treats, especially the peanut butter cookies and the fudge and if you take away one thing from this article.... it should be that smaller mints are better than candy canes.

Snow and Ice, 6

the snow. PAIN.

Snow and ice makes life harder for no reason at all. First off, you have to shovel snow every time it snows unless it magically gets warm. Second, if you don’t want to break your back slipping on ice you have to put down salt. Third, every time you go outside you must layer up and probably be smart to check the weather. Fourth, every time you get in a car you have to trust the driver with your life because the car can spin out at any time. Fifth, you have to walk with full control when there is ice on the ground, unless you like slipping, you do you. Sixth, you gotta make sure you don’t get lots of snow in your shoes wherever you go. Seventh, if you have to be somewhere there’s a higher chance of you being late then normal. Eighth, snow just kills cars for fun somehow.

But even though snow causes all of that it’s still the best thing that falls from the

sky. When it snows and the temperature drops even more it’s gonna be a little icy, but if it rains then freezes, the outside turns into a slip and slide without the fun. And have you ever heard how hail sounds falling from the sky? Hail could be a boss fight and it would never lose. But even better snow makes the area where it snowed look like a winter wonderland. And even ice isn’t all bad because it is also kind of funny to see those videos where people are slipping on ice. And it’s also very funny to see a different city go into lockdown because it got one inch of snow. And all the activities you can do, like a snowball fight with FRESH SOFT SNOW, is also great. So in conclusion, after going through good and bad it’s an 8/10. It’s just too good.



Michigan State University

Netflix, 7

outcasts by her parents. She then discovers she has a new power which could help solve a murder mystery. It’s hard to replace the iconic cast of the 1991 Addams Family, they do a pretty good job replicating the original cartoon characters created by Charles Addams. With Catherine-Zeta Jones as Morticia Addams, Luis Guzmán as Gomez Addams and Isaac Ordonez as Pugsley Addams.

I have seen a few clips of Jenna Ortega’s take on Wednesday Addams and she brings something so compelling to the role that it’s mainly the reason I want to watch it. It’s challenging to follow in Christina Ricci’s footsteps because of her iconic role as

Wednesday in the 1991 Addams Family but I believe with Tim Burton’s guidance and Jenna Ortega’s talent, this series will quickly become a new fan favorite.

New Seasons: There are many new seasons of TV shows coming out around this time of year and it can be hard to keep up. Here is a list of a few popular Netflix shows that have released a new season that you might have missed or will be releasing a new season soon for you to keep on your radar. Big Mouth: season 6 released October 28th. The Crown: season 5 released November 9th. Dead To Me: 3rd and final season released November 17th. The Great British Baking Show: Holidays: season 5 released November 18th. Too Hot to Handle: season 3

released December 2nd. Emily in Paris: season 3 premieres December 21st. Alice in Borderland: season 2 premieres December 22nd. You: season 4 part 1 premieres February 9, part 2 premieres March 9.

If you recognized any of those TV titles from your viewing history I recommend taking some time over the winter break to catch up or maybe use my suggestions to start a new show or movie. Happy watching!



iMore

Twolves, 8

while the Wizards were on a fast break after Edwards was going to the basket and Bradley Beal got a steal. The Towns fell and couldn’t get up without help but luckily it was just a strained calf muscle. Since Towns is one of the Wolves best players this is a major stepback because now they have to rely on their other stars to step up and score more. Towns expected to come back in 4-6 Weeks and he will come back in January. But this might be an opportunity for the younger player on the Wolves and for them to shine. But with Towns out there is no doubt that the Wolves will lose more games, but we have seen crazier things happen like the Utah Jazz doing good this sea-

son.

After the Town’s energy we have now been able to see the Wolves young talent shine in these games without Towns. The Wolves first game without Towns was against the Memphis Grizzlies and they won. This was very surprising because they have Ja Morant a MVP Canidate and Jaren Jackson a really good young and upcoming player. And they also have a really great bench, but we still came out with the win. While Edwards got 29 points and Jaylen Nowell got 24 off the bench. And Russel getting 15 points and 10 assists. This was a big win and might spark something in our players and we might start winning more.

If the wolves keep losing I think they should trade Gob-

ert or adapt the roster better around Towns and Edwards or even Gobert. But they just need to find out a good game plan and stick with it. They might also want to trade Russell but he has been looking better recently. They should try to develop Edwards more because he’s a great player with so much potential and can be a 25+ points per night scorer and can get five rebounds and five assists.

The Wolves should start building around Edwards and try to build a good roster for him. Because the top three wolves players ever are all big men Kevin Garnett, Karl-Anthony Towns, and Kevin Love. And I think something new in a league of 3 point shooting for the Wolves might be a good decision.



James Dean, 8

the time.

Much of Dean’s performance in East of Eden was unscripted, including a scene where Cal’s father, played by Raymond Massey, rejects his gift of \$5,000, which Cal earned by buying a small share of beans, instead of running away from his father as it said in the script. Dean emotionally embraced Massey, crying, getting a shocked reaction from Massey. Kazan kept it in the film.

Dean’s performance in East of Eden foreshadowed his role as Jim Stark in Rebel Without A Cause. Both characters are angst-ridden and misunderstood outcasts, desperately craving approval from their fathers. Both performances also mirrored Dean’s real life relationship with his father.

Dean signed a six-year, nine-picture contract with Warner Brothers for \$1 million in 1955 but was cut short

after only three films.

After East of Eden, Dean got a leading role in Rebel Without A Cause in 1955, the film was popular among teenagers because it had an accurate representation of teen angst. He played Jim Stark, a troubled teenager who moved to a new town with his family after being expelled from school. He befriends Plato, played by Sal Mineo, a disturbed classmate. He also falls for Judy, played by Natalie Wood, after her boyfriend is killed in a game of chicken with Jim.

After Rebel Without A Cause, Dean wanted to avoid getting type casted as a rebellious teenager, which is why he took on the role of Jett Rink in the 1956 film Giant, he starred alongside Elizabeth Taylor and Rock Hudson. The film is about a wealthy Texas rancher, Jordan “Bick” Benedict(Rock Hudson), who travels to Maryland to buy a horse but ends up falling in love and marrying Maryland socialite, Leslie Lyn-

nton(Elizabeth Taylor). Jett Rink, a ranch hand, becomes obsessed with Leslie, which makes Bick jealous.

Giant was Dean’s last film. In his last scene, Dean was supposed to make a drunken speech at a banquet, he wanted to make the scene more realistic by actually being intoxicated for the take but due to the amount of mumbling the director, George Stevens, decided the scene had to be overdubbed by actor Nick Adams, being that Dean died before the film was edited. This scene was nicknamed the ‘Last Supper’ because it was Dean’s final scene before his untimely death.

Dean received a posthumous Best Actor Academy Award nomination for his role in Giant at the 1957 Oscars. After Giant Dean was set to star as Rocky Graziano in the 1956 film Somebody Up There Likes Me, but following Dean’s sudden death the role was given to Paul Newman.

In 1954 Dean became interested in Motorsport. After filming wrapped on East of Eden he bought a 1953 MG TD sports car, which he later traded for a brand new 1955 Porsche Speedster. He competed in a professional event in Palm Springs in which he won first place in the novice class and second place in the main event. A month later Dean raced in Bakersfield where he won first in his class and third overall.

Dean’s final race was in Santa Barbara, May 30th, 1955, but he was unable to finish due to a blown piston. Dean’s racing career was put on hold when Warner Brothers banned him from racing during the production of Giant. After he finished shooting his scenes he decided to trade his Porsche Speedster for a Porsche 550 Spyder, and enter in an event scheduled for October 1-2 1955.

On September 30th 1955 German Porsche mechanic

Rolf Wütherich encouraged Dean to drive his Porsche from Los Angeles to Salinas, CA, to the Salinas Road Race to break the car in. Sometime around 3:30p.m Dean was ticketed for speeding. As he was driving westbound on U.S Route 466 near Cholame, California, a 1950 Ford Tudor was heading East, the Ford made a left turn onto Highway 41 heading north, ahead of the Porsche.

He was unable to stop the Spyder in time and slammed into the passenger side of the Ford, causing Wütherich to be thrown from the Porsche, while Dean was trapped in the car with numerous injuries including a broken neck. The man in the Ford only suffered minor injuries. Shortly after an ambulance arrived and brought them to the Paso Robles War Memorial Hospital. Dean was pronounced dead on arrival. He is buried in Park Cemetery in Fairmount, IN.

In my opinion all three of James Dean’s film’s are equal-

Andor, 7

to him when they decided to pitch a show about Cassian a couple years later. Gilroy initially went on record saying he had no interest in doing any more Star Wars-related work, but after seeing what the original plan for Andor was, he came up with a radically different approach that was eventually adopted by the studio, earning him the role of showrunner.

“Radically different” may even be an understatement, because Andor is truly unlike any other Star Wars story I’ve ever seen before in terms of tone, pacing, story, you name it. The premise may seem familiar at first glance, that of rebels coming together to fight the Empire, but Gilroy and his team turn it on its head and

present it in a fascinatingly complex way. Andor aims to explore the birth of revolution, following Cassian’s life before he joined the Rebel Alliance to see exactly how and why he was motivated to become a force for good, and turns him into a far more complicated and engaging character than he was in Rogue One. What makes Cassian’s journey in this show so interesting to me is how realistic, genuine, and sincere it feels. Originally characterized as a devoted member of the rebellion who held their orders in the highest respect in Rogue One, his past self is a cynical thief who wants nothing to do with their cause, only to survive and evade the Empire, a regime that endlessly threatens to turn his life upside down. The slow pace of the season allows for

a lot of focus on Cassian as a character and it takes its time to build up his eventual decision on whether he’d be willing to sacrifice himself for a cause. Being a rebel isn’t treated as a great bold choice that will make you a beloved hero, it’s shown to be a serious and dangerous choice where you may never get any recognition or gratitude, and lay down your life to make a better future for others.

Tonally, this show stands out even further with its uniquely grounded perspective, diving as deep as it can into the journey of every character to make them all feel so real and human - even focusing intensely on those affiliated with the Empire to showcase their motivations. The show is also very unapologetic with its political themes, explor-

ing the inner workings of the Empire as well as its ruthless oppression to present a scathing commentary on the horrors of fascism and draw many connections with important real-world issues including racial profiling, police brutality, and the exploitation of indigenous people. It emphasizes just how difficult it is to stand up and fight back against the Empire, but also illustrates how hope is able to shine through when people come together and this makes for a very compelling and engaging story.

In addition to the brilliant writing, the amount of love, care, and passion put into making this show is truly astonishing. All twelve episodes are amazing in their own right, with not a single misfire to be found in any of them. The directors do so well at captur-

ing the visual language of Star Wars, yet at the same time always pushing its boundaries with their own creative decisions, enhanced greatly by the outstanding production design contributing to the engrossing atmosphere. Nicholas Britell also composes an incredible musical score just as bold and expansive as the show itself, fulfilling the impossible task set before him of living up to the franchise’s rich history of iconic music with ease. And everyone in the ensemble cast brings their A-game and acts their hearts out, no matter how big or small their role may be.

Andor stands out from every Star Wars series in nearly every respect in the best way possible, and as much as I enjoy shows like The Mandalorian or The Clone Wars, their simplistic and overly nostalgic

ly great but if I had to choose one it would be Rebel Without A Cause because it showed the tension between teenagers and their parents and how they fight for their approval and understanding and it was just a really well made film. I think what made James Dean such a great actor was how he became the character’s he played. He was an extremely good method actor, maybe even too good, he got very into the character as if it were him. Also how he saw aspects of his own life in these characters and used it, such as being estranged from his father and his mother dying when he was young. I decided to write about James Dean because he is my favorite actor and also because I relate to him in a lot of ways, also to his character’s, and I also just think he was a really interesting person.

Christmas movies, 7

ing to steer customers away from spending ridiculous amounts of money for a holiday that’s all about love. His mission is intertwined with a young girl named Susan, who was raised not to believe in fairy tales. Kris tells Susan and his boss that he is the real Santa, leading to his sanity being questioned in court, and he has to legally prove that Christmas is about belief, not facts. Hard to explain, but easy to love, Miracle on 34th Street is a hopeful tale about the world’s love for Santa Claus, and might just reinforce your belief in him. 8.5/10.

Another musical classic is White Christmas. Made in 1954, and currently available on Netflix, the film stars Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney, and Vera-Ellen Dean Jagger as performers trying to put on a show around Christmas time. Former army soldiers and now famous Broadway producers Bob and Phil fall in love with sister act Judy and Betty Haynes, and decide to follow the sisters to their next performance, which, to their surprise, is at an inn run by their former army general. As the four impatiently wait for the snow that has yet to fall in the Vermont town, they decide

to raise money for the inn by putting on a show on Christmas Eve. Filled with countless memorable song and dance numbers, White Christmas is a classic musical movie that earns a rating of 7.5/10.

Our second category is fan-favorites. If you haven’t heard of these movies, you’re severely missing out. With some of the most famous visuals, quotes, and music in Christmas movie history, these films are very popular and often instantly recognizable. These movies try to capture the spirit of the holiday season through their jokes, fun visuals, and uplifting themes, and have been loved by audiences for many years.

A prime example of this category is Elf (2003). Directed by Jon Favreau, Elf follows Buddy (played by Will Ferrell), a human who was raised by Santa’s elves. Buddy sets off on a quest to New York City, trying to get his biological father off the naughty list. Buddy struggles to make sense of the bustling city, as no one seems to have the same appreciation for Christmas as he does. With the help of his love interest Jovie, step-brother Michael, and the many other friends he’s made along the way, Buddy tries to restore Christmas spirit in a city that’s lost all its holiday cheer. Filled with smile induc-

ing scenes, and hopeful messages, this movie is a must see. Though a lot of the jokes make you want to wince more than laugh, Elf is overall a great film that fills you with joy. Available on HBOMAX, Elf gets an average rating of 6/10.

A classic in its own right, Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol, has sparked many different movie adaptations over the years. The most kid friendly version of the story is The Muppets Christmas Carol, available on Disney+. The large, colorful Muppets play most of the main characters, with the exception of Ebenezer Scrooge (played by Micheal Cain), a pessimistic businessman who doesn’t care for Christmas. On Christmas Eve, Scrooge is visited by three spirits who lead him through his past, present, and future, trying to restore his empathy and Christmas spirit. With some amazing songs written by Paul Williams, The Muppets Christmas Carol is a puppet filled introduction to a classic, sure to be a hit among the whole family. 7.5/10.

“Merry Christmas, ya’ filthy animals!” Considered one of the best Christmas movies ever, Home Alone is a humor filled story about a young boy who’s left in his house alone during the holidays. Eight year old Kevin McCallister is

often forgotten about in his huge family, which comes to a breaking point after he’s accidentally left behind when his family goes on a Christmas vacation to Paris. When burglars start casing the house, Kevin has to grow up fast and figure out how to protect his home. Starring a ten year old Macaulay Culkin, the Disney+ film is a rambunctious, fun-filled, holiday extravaganza that you can’t miss. Home Alone is a solid 8.5/10, and you’ll surely be laughing about it long after the credits roll.

One of the most quotable Christmas movies ever, A Charlie Brown Christmas (1965) wraps up this category. Technically a TV special, running at only 25 minutes long A Charlie Brown Christmas was written by Minnesota native Charles Schultz, and was based on his iconic Peanuts comics. Charlie Brown is feeling down in the dumps about the popular holiday, and is tired of the commercialization surrounding it. Self proclaimed psychologist Lucy invites him to direct the annual Christmas play, but the group’s excitement only lowers his spirits even further, and he goes out on a solitary search for the meaning of Christmas. Simple and sweet, A Charlie Brown Christmas is available on Apple TV, and is sure to get you in the holiday

mood. 8/10.

Finally, we have the recent films. Made in the past 5 or so years, these movies are more targeted to current audiences. With a lot more visual effects and modern influences, these films are much more unique in the way they view the holiday season, and are trying to introduce some new narratives we haven’t seen before. It’s hard to compete with the classics, but these movies are filled with Christmas cheer, and are sure to connect with audiences who are just starting their Christmas movie journeys.

A film that encapsulates this category perfectly is Netflix’s Jingle Jangle; A Christmas Journey. The steampunk Victorian-era musical movie, starring Forest Whitaker and breakout star Madalen Mills opens with toy-shop owner Jeronicus Jangle inventing one of the most remarkable toys ever made, a sentient dancing doll. However, the doll is stolen by Jeronicus’s underappreciated apprentice, who uses the invention to create an empire of his own. Many years later, Jeronicus’s toy-shop is falling to ruin, when his granddaughter Journey comes to visit for Christmas. Journey is an inspiring inventor herself, and urges her grandfather to reclaim his destiny, setting them off on the adventure of a life-

visions of Star Wars just can’t hold a candle to the immensely ambitious and thoughtful storytelling in this one. Aside from a few extremely small nitpicks, there is absolutely nothing holding me back from rating season one of Andor a 10/10 and strongly recommending it to literally everyone. Even if you’re someone who’s extremely Star Wars-fatigued by the recent shows, or have barely even seen Star Wars in your life, I promise you that this is worth a watch and it only gets better and better as it goes along. Tony Gilroy and his team have proven themselves to be truly exceptional storytellers for Star Wars, and I cannot wait to see what they do next.

time. With amazing costumes, dancing, and songs, Jingle Jangle is a movie you won’t soon forget, with a 8.5/10 rating.

Last but certainly not least, we have the animated film Klaus. Available on Netflix, Klaus follows spoiled irresponsible postman Jesper Johansson. To teach him a lesson, his father has sent him to the gloomy town of Smeerensburg, which is ruled by two families who are constantly fighting. Desperately trying to get away from the conflict, Jesper travels to the furthest edge of town where the peculiar woodcutter Klaus lives in solitude. The struggling postman stumbles upon the lonely man’s barn full of children’s toys and hatches a plan to get out of town, and stop the families fighting. The only problem is, he has to get Klaus on his side. Beautifully animated, and hope inspiring, Klaus is a must see movie, with a high rating of 9/10.

So there you have it. These eight holiday movies are some of the best in the wide array the film industry has to offer. Whether you’re watching by yourself or with your family, sitting down to watch some Christmas movies is a perfect way to get in the holiday spirit. Did your favorite Christmas film make the list? What did I miss? Happy watching!



# Wishing for Coal: a cautionary tale

**Joseph T Schwartz**  
*Staff Writer*

Snowflakes drifted down from the sky light as a feather, the slow, lofty breezes blew them from side to side before they finally came to rest upon the already snow-covered ground. Children ran up and down the street, they built snowmen, and had snowball fights. Their bubbly laughter carried through the air. Parents stood outside their houses with coffee cups in hand and watched their children play. No cars were on the roads; no one had to go to work.

It was Christmas. Everyone was happy in this little town off in the middle of nowhere. All except one elderly man on Merrillyn Road. He sat in his house with shades drawn and burnt up cigarette after burnt up cigarette in his dirty, single floor house. He tried desperately to ignore the sounds of Christmas joy that came from just outside his house, as he did every Christmas.

“Bah! Who do those little brats think they are, making such a racket at this time of day?” the man yelled out to no one in particular as bits of cheap crackers fell from his raggedy gray beard.

The children had just quieted down, not a single scream or giggle sounded from outside his door.

“Finally,” the man sighed to himself, “those darned rats shut up.”

Then suddenly, the children outside started to sing a Christmas carol.

“Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all-” The man jumped from his seat, a deep scowl covered his face, and he stormed his way to and out his door.

“WILL YOU DAMN DEMONS SHUT UP?” he screeched in his regular manner. He did this a lot.

The children scattered, all scared of the old man who had burst from his home and screamed bloody murder at them with wide, blood-shot eyes.

“Good God, Rudolph! Will you ever not be an insufferable grouch bent on ruining everyone else’s day?” one of the dads yelled at the old man from across the street.

“You call me Rudy, god-damn you! Not Rudolph,” Rudolph screamed back; his voice broke a little bit at the word “you” from how much he’d been yelling the past few weeks.

“I’ll do that once you quit being a pain in the rear!” the father retorted.

Rudolph slammed his door shut with a huff and stalked back to his old, scratched-up leather chair, grabbing another cigarette as he plopped down onto it.

“How hard could it be to just say Rudy?” he said to himself.

He had always hated his name, Rudolph. He was always made fun of for it as a kid ‘cause someone always connected it to the little red-nosed reindeer and Christmas. He’d hated Christmas almost as long as he could remember,

though he would never admit to anyone why he did.

It was because he never got any gifts as a kid.

He remembered his first year of kindergarten, the day before winter break. All the kids at school had told him about how they’d got such nice gifts last year and couldn’t wait for this coming Christmas.

After school he’d rushed to get his house prepared for his first Christmas. He made little paper lights, he put a cardboard tree in the corner of his room, he even hung one of his father’s old socks from a nail above his fireplace.

But little Rudolph got nothing. Not a card nor a candy bar. His impromptu stocking hung empty on its nail. As Rudolph grew, he had asked why he got no presents, but was only brushed off by his parents.

Rudolph had kept his hopes up for a while longer than most could’ve, but during his second grade year, he stopped waiting for a Christmas present that would never come.

“I hate Christmas!” he yelled out Christmas morning, the third year in a row of not getting any presents under his tree. So next Christmas Eve, he didn’t make any lights, put up a cardboard tree, and he definitely didn’t hang up a stocking.

But even though he was sure he hadn’t put anything up for Christmas this year, there was a proper stocking hung on the fireplace, made of red velvet and snow white fur. More importantly, there was something in it.

At the bottom of the stocking sat something heavy and round, by the looks of it. With the hope in his heart reignited, Rudolph eagerly stuffed his hand down the stocking— and pulled out a lump of coal. That hope quickly formed into anger, and Rudolph threw both the stocking and coal into the fire.

Never again did Rudolph get a gift on Christmas.

Then during recess, just after that winter break and almost a month after his first and final Christmas gift, a student had made the decision to go around and tell all the little boys and girls that Santa was fake.

That’d made Rudolph realize something, if it wasn’t Santa who gave him that coal, it must’ve been his dad.

“Why? Why would you give me coal after years of not bothering to give me any gifts on Christmas?” he yelled after he bursted into his father’s study.

“Hm?” his father said. “I’m not sure what you mean. I’m sure I’ve told you we don’t bother with something as silly as Christmas. And why would I put coal in a stocking? Simply a waste of fuel. Now off, I’m busy,” he said to Rudolph dismissively.

Wherever it had come from confused Rudolph, but he tried to forget. He tried to ignore that childish hope: that he had truly gotten a gift from Santa. He really didn’t want to believe that, after all this time, the first gift he got from Santa was coal.

Life went on and as Rudolph grew older, he got a job, and he wallowed in his anger towards anything and everything, especially Christmas.

Eventually nearly 70 years later, Rudolph found himself in a town in the middle of nowhere, retired and barely able to afford his little run down house. It was just his luck, of course, that the entire town was filled with Christmas fanatics, children and adults alike.

He wasn’t able to move out - he was just getting on with his pension as it was. So he was stuck with those Christmas-crazed nutjobs. For the past few years, he’d been sitting through December after December, a month filled to the brim with so much “Christmas themed this” and “Christmas themed that” to the point where he wanted to pull his hair out. And they wouldn’t even call him Rudy, they would instead remind



Nox GebbenGreen

him of that wretched reindeer marketing ploy. Rudolph liked to forget about Christmas by smoking; it was a bad habit he had picked up in his twenties.

It was just past dusk and the foul smoke from his cigarette swirled beneath the yellow lamp affixed to the ceiling. Rudolph had begun to believe that maybe, just maybe, his luck was changing for the better; not a single noise had been heard from the front of his house for nearly thirty minutes. He had believed wrong.

A loud thump sounded over his head, which caused Rudolph to cry out in alarm and jump from his worn leather chair.

“Just something falling in the attic,” he told himself and settled back down.

Just as Rudolph got comfortable in his chair, about to take a puff of his cigarette, a gust of wind blew from his room and knocked it from his hand. The cigarette fell from between his fingers and landed directly on his right hand that was resting on the arm of the

chair.

He cursed in pain as the hot end of the cigarette burned the back of his hand and he jumped from his seat. Rudolph sucked on the back of his hand and walked to his room; he was sure he had all his windows shut and their curtains drawn.

But Rudolph was proven wrong as he looked upon his window, bottom half pulled up and the curtains blowing in the cold, night wind. He walked to the window, his brow furrowed in confusion.

“I could have sworn...oh, whatever,” he said aloud as he slammed the window shut and drew the curtains. He was an old man, his memory must not be what it once was.

But he started to think he might be going senile once he looked at the window his chair was facing, which was now open.

“What in the - You know what? I’m done. I’m going to bed,” he ranted to himself as he

to his left to see their whole family step out into their front lawn. Then the family to his right did the same, and the house across the street, and every other house until the whole street was out in the winter cold. Then, Rudolph’s worst nightmare came true. They started to sing.

“Here comes Santa Claus, here comes Santa Claus, right down Santa Claus Lane -” Their carol echoed out through the streets.

Rudolph looked to his right, about to yell at his neighbors, when he was reminded of why he was outside by another flash of light in his right peripheral; this time, it was on top of his neighbor’s house. He jerked his head to the far right in an attempt to see the source of the reflection - but he missed it, only catching the faint sound of chains clinking together.

“Did you see that?” he yelled to his neighbor, “up there - on your roof!”

“Oh dammit, Rudolph, can’t you just let us have our fun?” his neighbor said angrily. “Even this is a new low, trying to scare my kids on Christmas.”

“Don’t worry about it, honey,” his husband said, “I’ll bring him back inside.” He walked over to Rudolph, grabbed him by the shoulder, and steered him back into his house. Rudolph shrugged off his hand angrily, he’s not some pet to be herded, he thought. As he stepped through the threshold of his house, his neighbor cleared his throat behind him.

“Hey, Rudolph, do you need to see a doctor or something? You don’t seem well. I mean, I’m willing to help you book the appointment if you -”

“You want to help me out, huh?” Rudolph goaded. “Two things, bud. One, call me Rudy. Two, shove off!” And with that, Rudolph slammed the door in his face.

The boards under his feet creaked as he walked back to his room, already forgetting the reflections he had seen in favor of being angry at his neighbors. He shut the door behind him as he walked into his bedroom and proceeded to unceremoniously flop onto his bed.

Rudolph sighed as he dug himself into his pillow, making sure he was as comfortable as possible. After a second he flipped over, trying to get comfortable again. And again, and again, and again. For thirty minutes Rudolph tried and tried to get comfortable and fall asleep, but it never came. The sweet embrace of unconsciousness was just out of reach.

He flopped to his left side, and decided to try and focus on his breathing, the length of his breaths, the sound as air left his mouth. But something was wrong. The sound of his breathing didn’t match what he felt as he pushed the air from his lungs. He was confused for a good while, before the realization hit him like a freight train.

The breathing he was hearing wasn’t his.

Rudolph froze in fear. The

breathing he heard was rough and ragged, like a dog panting underneath the dinner table.

Making a plan in his head, Rudolph took a deep breath and turned onto his right, making it look like he was still trying to get comfortable. Slowly, carefully, he opened his right eye, the one closest to the bed, barely a millimeter, wanting to get a look at what was there. Was it a neighbor’s dog? Was it some wild animal that got in through his backdoor? Did a mad-man break in?

When Rudolph’s eyes adjusted to the dark and he finally got a look at who, or what, was there, he had to suppress a scream.

Hovering just inches in front of his face, was something he could only describe as demonic. Its face just barely passed as human, with a hooked nose, sunken cheeks, sharp cheekbones, and a pointy chin with a scruffy goatee. Its ears stuck out from the bushy hair— no, fur, on the side of its head. They were pointed, with tufts of the same black fur coming off of the tips. Large, curled horns stood atop its furry head.

Its mouth was filled with large, pointy fangs, as if all its teeth were replaced by canines. From its spiked maw hung a foot-long, forked, red tongue.

And then there were its eyes. Its eyes were deep bloodred and its pupils were pitch black rectangles.

Rudolph shot from his bed to the door, hoping to get out of his room as fast as possible, away from that thing. He reached out for the door handle, but he never made it. Something shot through the air and around his leg with a crack, pulling him away from his escape and back towards his aggressor.

Rudolph felt clawed hands wrap around his ankles and pull him into the air. As he was lifted he saw its cloven hooves; its black, shaggy fur covering its legs. He heard chains clink together above his head - likely shackled to its wrists, based on the big iron chains linked around its ankles.

Soon he was lifted high enough to look it in the eyes, which would have been impossible if this thing had arms proportional to its body. He got another good look at its goat-like eyes as they looked directly into his. Its mouth then stretched open, cheeks perked up at each cheek in a perversion of a smile.

“Hello, Rudy,” it said.

The last thing Rudolph saw was the bottom of the burlap sack slung over its back before it was drawn closed.

...

A scream sounded from the residence of Rudolph Ryan at 9:34 PM that night, a scream that was loud enough to be heard several houses down. But as the echo faded from the streets and people got ready for sleep after a long day of celebration and joy, no one could find it in themselves to care for the grouch on Merrillyn Road.



Midnights, 8

best songs on the album as it ends the album perfectly and wraps up the message nicely. It's one of those songs that's always stuck in your head and makes you want to just scream the lyrics. It starts out nice and slow but picks up the pace as it goes on, which adds to the mysterious sound it has. Swift always finds some way to convey a message in her songs,

which adds to the intrigue and keeps me invested. In Mastermind she makes it clear that this song is about her career and how she has grown up in the public eye. I believe Mastermind deserves a 9/10 even though it didn't stick out much in the beginning, but the more I listen to it the more I enjoy it. Overall, Midnights is an album that differentiates from her past and focuses on her future. Of course, the album has

songs that aren't so good and some that I will probably never stop listening to, but it still feeds the need for something new (especially from her). I think many people disapprove or dislike the album because it's so different from her past work and sounds like something that you would hear on the radio compared to her favored albums like Folklore and Evermore. But when you think about it, Midnights isn't

too different from albums like Reputation, which also received a lot of hate, and 1989 as well as Lover. Taylor Swift often adds a story element into her songs and album which really shine through and add more interest to her work. The album as a whole deserves an 8/10 because of its diversity between each song while still having the possibility of being pieced together to create a new sound.

After listening to Midnights, and other albums by her, over and over, I've come to the conclusion that Taylor Swift is clearly a musical genius. She always satisfies whatever mood and emotion I'm feeling by creating a beautiful song. In the end, even though Midnights wasn't her best work, it's clear that Taylor Swift is the greatest artist of all time and makes listening to her music a delightful experience.



Taylor Swift  
Midnights was released on October 21st, 2022.

FFC, 7

Another time she was told to put away snow skis but instead knocked over everything. But later on, she gets the hang of things. As the movie progresses she learns the value of family and love. As she spends time with her love interest, something special between them begins but an obstacle gets in the way. This movie is one of those Netflix versions of those classic Hallmark Channel Christ-

mas movies, which was my first time watching one. I thought it was a bit cheesy, a bit cringe at times, I remember a scene where Sierra pointed towards the window and along the line said, "There is a wild hairy beast out there," then after Jake replied to Sierra he just stared at her for a few seconds. There were also moments in the movie where there was an awkward pause. I did enjoy the character Tad played by George Young. He brought comedy relief in the movie

and I like the part where Sierra, played by Lindsay Lohan sang jingle bell rock which was a tribute to the iconic dance scene in Mean Girls. The movie was not bad but also not good, maybe it's just because I'm not used to Hallmark Christmas movies but I don't think it is for me. If you enjoy cheesy, family friendly Christmas movies then this might be for you. If you're looking for action, heavier tone, drama you might want to skip it.

Chirstmas, 6

Hot 100. As the title suggests, "Jingle Bell Rock" is a rock and roll song. It takes inspiration from Jingle Bells, a classic Christmas carol. In 2nd place is "Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree." The song was written by Johnny Marks and performed by Brenda Lee. The song came out in 1958 and sold 25 million copies around the world. It peaked at No.14 on the Billboard Hot 100.

And peaked at No. 3 on the Billboard Christmas Singles Chart. The song is a traditional Christmas rock and pop song. The production on the song is very good as well as the vocals are very upbeat. And finally in 1st place is "All I Want For Christmas Is You" by Mariah Carey. The song was released in 1994 and has now become one of the most well known Christmas songs to recent generations. To this day the song has sold 16 million copies, has over a

million streams on spotify, and has made around \$60 million dollars in royalties. The song was written by Mariah Carey and Walter Afanasieff. The vocals in this song are very beautiful due to Mariah Carey's ability to hit extremely high notes That concludes the list of the top songs. This list was made by OWL students using a pole vote, thank you to everybody who participated.

# Class of '23 march to the mailbox



Rebecca Palmer



Rebecca Palmer



Rebecca Palmer



Rebecca Palmer



Rebecca Palmer



Rebecca Palmer



Rebecca Palmer



Rebecca Palmer

Clockwise from top left: seniors begin the march in front of the school, seniors listen to classmates' speeches, seniors leave the auditorium to high fives and cheers, Rebecca Noecker addresses the class of 2023, Samantha O'Hara Graff gives a speech, Rebecca's crew and Katie's crew wait on the march route with signs, Dani Butler announces her college choices while Sofia Maldonado waits her turn. Center top to bottom: seniors near the end of the march route, Bridget's crew prepares to greet the seniors.