



HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

TRINITONIAN



VOLUME 118 ISSUE 13

NOVEMBER 20, 2020

4 **OPINION** Yes, there are lessons to learn from killing your houseplants

7 **PULSE** Black Student Union president reflects on community, experience

13 **ARTS** It's time to stop using the word 'Satanic' to describe music

Why you should run a Turkey Trot

Opinion: The pandemic won't stop my tradition

ALEJANDRA GERLACH | SPORTS REPORTER
agerlach@trinity.edu

Every family has its own Thanksgiving traditions. For a lot of people, that means gathering with relatives and friends or watching the big game on TV after dinner. In my family, that tradition is running a Turkey Trot.

While a Turkey Trot has all the hallmarks of any other road race — a variety of runners, people who show up in costume, a raffle where your ticket is your bib number — the atmosphere surrounding a Turkey Trot invariably feels unique.

In other road races, it is always clear that people are running for something. Whether that something is a personal record, a medal, or a cause, people step up to the starting line with a clear reason for why they are there. And while I think it is fantastic to race with a goal, there is something special about Turkey Trots because, as best as I can tell, the predominant reason for running a Turkey Trot is just for fun.

All of the people at this race woke up early on a Thursday morning to run in weather that is too cold not to wear long sleeves in which they will inevitably sweat through in one mile, and there is no real reason why — other than that, it's fun.

Sure, there will always be competitive racers, but half the people there don't run regularly. There are groups of friends who walk the entire time with tutus around their waists and turkey hats on their heads, and parents with strollers, and that one guy who sprints past you every ten minutes only for you to pass him again because he had to catch his breath.

continued on **PAGE 15**

University takes action on inclusion goals

Implementation team moves forward with task force recommendations

NEHA KUMAR | NEWS REPORTER
nkumar1@trinity.edu

Months after the Diversity and Inclusion task force shared its report with Danny Anderson, university president, Trinity has begun its first steps towards implementing the suggested solutions to strive for. In charge of this effort is the implementation task force, co-led by Kara Larkan-Skinner, Executive Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, and Michelle Bartonico, assistant vice president for Strategic Communications and Marketing.

The implementation team is working to prioritize the initiatives based on feasibility and impact. Using this framework, they hope to identify which recommendations should be carried out first, and reach out to the appropriate stakeholders for their input.

"In some ways, it is just as important to think about what our group is not doing. What we're not doing is redoing the work of the task force. We are looking at every single recommendation and saying based on feasibility and impact, we are going to call all the stakeholders listed in the task force report," said Bartonico. "What we are doing is picking up the phone and saying 'you were listed as a responsible party — is it feasible, is it legal, what kind of impact do you think it [the recommendation] would have?'"

Trinity administrators formed the Diversity and Inclusion task force as a first step in addressing the need for institutional reform amid nationwide conversations about equity and inclusion, brought on by the Black Lives Matter movement's upward momentum this summer. The task force — a group made up of students, faculty and staff — met throughout



The implementation team is co-led by Kara Larkan-Skinner, Executive Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, and **MICHELLE BARTONICO**, assistant vice president for Strategic Communications and Marketing. photo from **TRINITONIAN ARCHIVES**

the summer to produce a report which outlines various recommendations for university reform and a timeline for each initiative.

Two third-party consultants have been brought on to assist the implementation team in actualizing the task force's recommendations. One consultant is currently auditing the executive team of Danny Anderson, university president, with the aim of potentially making space for a Chief Diversity Officer, as per the task force recommendations. The other consultant, Stand By Systems II, is working alongside the implementation team by providing input and training sessions.

"We have been working with Stand By Systems II as individual members of the executive leadership team as a professional development series. The way I think of it is each of us is on our own journey as it relates to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as individuals and as executives for the university. Stand By Systems II is helping us through that journey," explained Larkan-Skinner, "Because they have such a knowledge of Trinity, we brought them into the implementation team as well, so we have been sharing some of the work we have been doing and using them as an extra partner to brainstorm with."

continued on **PAGE 3**

Tigers Against Aramark continue push for contract repeal

TAA continue search for alternative dining service and to further food justice awareness

GLORIA FARRIS | NEWS INTERN
gfarris@trinity.edu

Earlier this October, the student group Tigers Against Aramark (TAA) publicized the demand that Trinity break its contract with the food provider Aramark. After releasing a shared statement and sharing petitions with community members and students organizations, the group began pushing Trinity administrators towards ethical dining solutions at Trinity.

TAA's goal of Trinity breaking its dining services contract with Aramark is based on allegations of the company's unethical involvement in the prison-industrial complex. The movement of students challenging their university to break ties with Aramark is not unique to Trinity; the group cites efforts at other universities as models for their own goals.

At the Oct. 14 Student Government Association meeting, TAA discussed their goals with the student body and Trinity administrators and posed questions and concerns to two regional Aramark representatives in attendance. Two weeks ago, members of TAA sat down with Trinity administrators to discuss the logistics behind breaking the contract with Aramark.

"This meeting was really to continue that conversation, get on the same page with them, to sort of lay out some goals for what we're



First-years **JOHN HAWES** and **SEAN MITCHELL** eating dinner at Mabee Dining hall, an Aramark dining service. photo by **CLAIRE SAMMONS**

expecting and how we hope the administration will listen to our concerns and make a plan for moving forward," said Carson Bolding, senior economics and communication double-major and TAA member.

Many of the logistics that were discussed centered around the financial situation. While the contract is supposed to end in 2023, breaking it off early could result in

financial loss for Trinity due to the nature of the contract.

"I think that, given Trinity's financial circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic, we don't want to make any abrupt losses that could delay any of the construction projects or anything that may contribute to students' wellbeing because, of course, there are trade-offs to be made that

we are well aware of now," said Brandon Niday, sophomore political science and economics major and TAA member.

Despite this difficulty, TAA continues to push for a resolution to their cause.

"Our ultimate concern is making sure that Trinity isn't contracting with an organization that is complicit to the prison-industrial complex," Bolding said. "You have to be able to balance the financials with the ethics, and I believe the ethics should outweigh the financials."

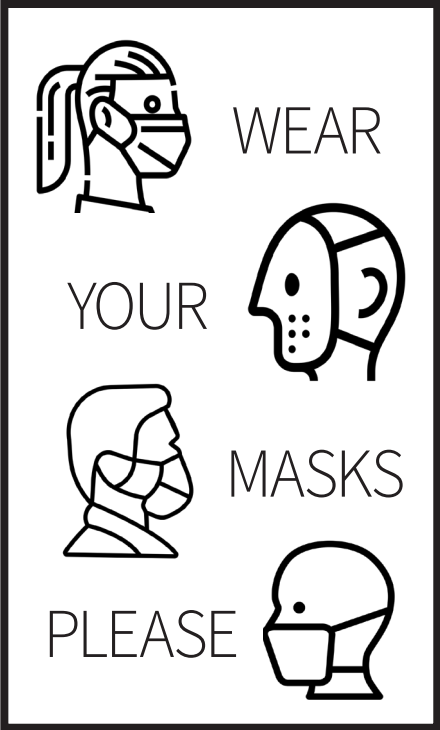
In consideration of possible dining service alternatives, Bolding spoke about the prospect of a self-service dining option.

"We think that there is a lot of potential there in creating a really ethical environmentally sustainable and also economically viable food service option that also benefits the local community," Bolding said.

David Tuttle, dean of students, acknowledged that there were "advantages and disadvantages" to the proposal and that, although he recognizes the students are interested in exploring it, they need more information.

Another option suggested by Judith Norman, philosophy professor and supporter of TAA, was a cafeteria-based dining experience.

continued on **TRINITONIAN.COM**



STAFF

KAYLA PADILLA editor-in-chief
GENEVIEVE HUMPHREYS managing editor
JORDAN JURAN business manager
JESSIE DE ARMAN ad director
DANA NICHOLS news editor
PHOEBE MURPHY opinion editor
MACKENZIE COOK pulse editor
SAVANNAH WAHLGREN arts editor
BRIAN YANCELSON sports editor
KATE NUELLE visual editor
LOGAN CREWS web editor
GRACEN HOYLE assistant web editor

REPORTERS
Neha Kumar, Rachel Poovathoor, Jake Perry, Joshua Anaya, Christian Settles, Gail Hodges Grady, Paige Wallace, Alejandra Gerlach, Carmine Villareal, Victoria Henretty, Isabel Chavez, Mikayla Mullin
COLUMNISTS
Ben Falcón, Mai Vo, Yukiko Yamazaki,
COPY EDITORS
Katy Browne, Nadia Crawford, Ashley Allen, Daphne Tett, Daisy Castillo
VISUAL CONTRIBUTORS
Gabrielle Rodriguez, Ren Rader, Gracen Hoyle
SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR
Ethan Jones
SOCIAL MEDIA STAFF
Ethan Jones
BUSINESS STAFF
Jordan Juran, Jordan Bruce, Wilson Hamilton, Duncan James, Sarah Buss
ADVERTISING STAFF
Jessie De Arman, Paulina Garcia, Sara Tagarot, Gabrielle Rodriguez

KATHARINE MARTIN adviser

CONTACT US

EDITORIAL
email: trinitonian@trinity.edu
phone: 210-999-8557

ADVERTISING
email: trinitonian-adv@trinity.edu
phone: 210-999-8555
fax: 210-999-7034

The Trinitonian [USPS 640460] [issn 1067-7291] is published weekly during the academic year, except holidays and final exams, by Trinity University, One Trinity Place, San Antonio, TX 78212-7200. Subscription price is \$35 per year. Periodicals Postage Paid at San Antonio, TX. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Trinitonian, One Trinity Place, #62, San Antonio, TX 78212-7200.

Student publications under the supervision of the Board of Campus Publications shall explicitly state in each issue that the opinions expressed therein are not necessarily those of Trinity University. The first copy of the Trinitonian is free; additional copies are three dollars each. ©2019. All rights reserved.

Stepping into a new (digital) era of the Trinitonian, for now

We are happy to announce that the Trinitonian has just launched a new website! We acknowledge that our previous website was difficult to navigate and not as pretty as it could have been. Because of this, among other reasons, we decided to make the leap and bring our paper into a new era with a website that feels more like a news website and works well with our dynamic content.

We invite you to take a look and subscribe to our newsletter while you explore our shiny, new site!

Part of this change was sparked by the reality of the times. While some argue that printed papers are phasing out of existence, we disagree — at least on a college campus, a physical copy of the news is beneficial and enhances the experience of taking in information. However, with COVID-19 causing Trinity University’s campus to be more sparse than we are all used to, we came to make the difficult decision

to suspend the printed edition of the Trinitonian. In the future, we anticipate a physical copy to be brought back, but this November 20th issue of the Trinitonian will be the last printed edition for a while.

It is important that we look at this as a positive opportunity. If there is a time to experiment and try new things with our over-100-year-old school paper, now is the time. The new website marks a monumental event in the Trinitonian’s history: the temporary discontinuation of a tangible newspaper. This transition is bittersweet, but was necessary to preserve the paper and continue supporting our staff who pour themselves into their writing and work hard to deliver weekly content.

Thank you to the Trinity community and to our readers, consistent and otherwise, for your continued support and we look forward to sharing this new adventure with you.



If you have any comments or questions, we would be happy to hear from you.
You may be in touch with the Managing Editor **GENEVIEVE HUMPHREYS** at ghumphre@trinity.edu

COVID Snapshot:
Updated 11/18/2020

OVERALL NUMBERS
Test Results to Date: **4,897**
Total # Active Cases: **9**
Cumulative Tested Positive: **26**

DISTRIBUTION

PRINT
Oct. 30: 661
Oct. 22: 669
Oct. 2: 416
Sept. 25: 705
Sept. 18: 632
Sept. 10: 639
Sept. 4: 601

WEB
5,570 page views this week

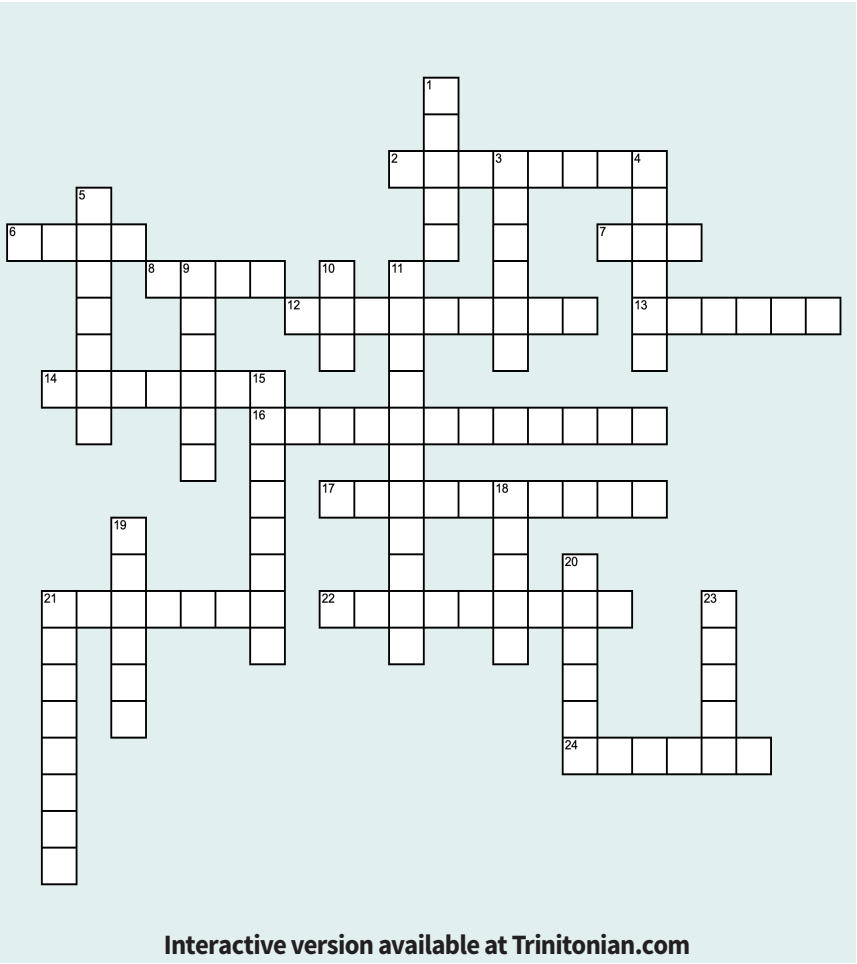
CLASSIFIEDS

WANT TO TAKE OUT AN AD?
Classified ads are free for Trinity students. For non-students, each ad is \$25 for 25 words. Send your ads to **trinitonian-adv@trinity.edu**

CORRECTIONS

Spot a correction? Let us know!
trinitonian@trinity.edu

Autumn Themed Crossword Puzzle



- ACROSS**
- 2. Autumnal sport beloved to most, especially middle-aged dads
 - 6. Netflix competitor, comes with Spotify premium
 - 7. Cured pork liked by Ponyo
 - 8. Finland, Antarctica, and Alaska are this
 - 12. Spooky day
 - 13. Yuletide beverage
 - 14. Garfield, Tigger, Simba, and Fern are these
 - 16. Day where people feast
 - 17. Horn of abundance
 - 21. Fall staple vegetable, used in pies and lattes
 - 22. Ocean Spray product; made into sauce, jam, and pie
 - 24. Happy Gilmore’s initial sport
- DOWN**
- 1. Famous fall color, darkened orange
 - 3. This bird suffers the most during Fall
 - 4. These change colors in the Fall and evoke emotional warmth
 - 5. Grunge attire
 - 9. Popular Fall color, also a fruit
 - 10. “Yawn, time to hit the ____”
 - 11. Day of both Wall Street Panic and day of nationwide spending
 - 15. Delicious spiced bird filling
 - 18. Autumnal drink typically created from apples
 - 19. What does Ohana mean?
 - 20. Circular garland comprised of ornaments, flowers, or evergreens
 - 21. They established Plymouth Colony in 1620
 - 23. Symbol for knowledge and temptation

Unidentified individuals knock on student doors

Students express concerns about safety and having their names on residence hall dorms

DANA NICHOLS | NEWS EDITOR
dnichols@trinity.edu

Just after midnight on Nov. 11, the Residential Life Office received a report that two unidentified men were knocking on the doors of residents' rooms in the area of Calvert Residence Hall, looking for someone named 'Maddie.' Multiple women living in the residence hall reported the incident to their Residential Assistant (RA), some student accounts claiming that the men were only knocking on women's doors.

For Sophie Radi, first-year, a knock came to her door at 12:30 a.m. as she was getting ready, which she assumed was from her suitemate trying to get in through her room.

"When I looked through the peephole, it's pretty blurry, so I just saw someone sitting on the ground and thought, 'Okay, that must be her.' When I opened my door, it was just some random guy sitting on the ground, and then he pointed to the left and another guy walked by. The guy who walked by was the one who was talking to me the whole time. I tried to stay far because they weren't wearing masks," said Radi. "So the guy is talking to me, he says, 'Are you Maddie?' I said 'no' and he said, 'Do you know where Maddie is?' I said, 'No, but I know for sure that there's no Maddie in this residence hall.'"

Shortly after, students let their RAs know of the incident, who then conducted a sweep as per procedure. Radi sent a photo of the men as they were walking away from the residence hall to the class of 2024 GroupMe chat, which was talking about the incident and different students' interactions with the unknown visitors.

"They were talking about you know, 'If you hear people knocking on your door, don't open it,' and this was around you know 12:30 or midnight. First of all, there shouldn't even be people, you know, knocking at that hour, but on top of it, there's so many other factors you're putting in here. I mean, you could say if they were someone's guest, well there's COVID," said Steven Cox, first-year and SGA senator. "... Nobody recognized them, I guess, and obviously you can't tell from the picture but they think it was someone from off campus."

Trinity applying task force recs

continued from FRONT

Bartonico noted that while the university is not currently searching for a Chief Diversity Officer, by auditing the President's administrative team, the consultants hope to find ways to build Diversity and Inclusion leadership within the executive group.

"What they are helping do is audit President Anderson's administration to say 'are too many people reporting to you? Do they have the right portfolio? Could things be hammered out differently to make room for a CDO?' The intention is to have the audit so that it makes room for a CDO, but they are not a search firm," Bartonico said.

While students served as members of the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force that met over the summer, thus far, the implementation process has been managed by the administration. This has led some to consider the role students should play in the implementation of the task force initiatives.

"This is something we as TDC have talked about, because right now they are prioritizing based on feasibility and impact, but there's not really a direct student line to that. It's a tricky balance between getting student input and burdening students who are supposed to be students and not working on huge university

responsibilities. But at the same time, if we are determining what is most important to the community, students are a part of determining what that is," said Gabriella Garriga, senior economics and sociology double-major and task force member.

Various accounts of the incident were shared in the report to Residential Life as well as in last Wednesday's Student Government Association meeting and online on both the TU Parent Facebook page and class of 2024 GroupMe chat. The identity of the two men remains unknown to Residential Life.

"We've discussed the need for some enhanced messaging to residents about the fact that we're an open campus, and the need for all of us to be aware of our surroundings," wrote Rachel Boaz-Toppel, assistant director for Residential Education, in an email interview.

"The students did the exact right thing by reaching out to their RAs. If there's a concern about safety, students can always go straight to TUPD as well, since they are the trained professionals we all rely on for safety concerns."

For some students, last week's incident shone a light on potential safety concerns.

"Honestly, I wasn't that concerned before. I mean, I had a little bit of a concern, just knowing that I was in an outdoor dorm and that people didn't need cards to get to my door, but I was never scared to walk to my room at night or anything like that. I usually just lock my door with the deadbolt lock when I go to sleep and stuff like that," said Radi. "So I mean, this instance, it wasn't scary in the moment, but after hearing that they were only knocking on girls' doors — I am a little more aware when I'm walking around at nighttime, and sometimes I FaceTime my friends when I'm walking to my room by myself, or something like that."

One of the greater areas of concern was brought up by Cox at last week's SGA meeting: The hanging of student names on the doors of their residence.

"I think definitely something that would help mitigate a little is taking the names off of the doors, because to me that seems like your RA is the only one that really needs to know where you are or where your dorm is. They have the information for that and otherwise, you know, I think if you're trying to preserve privacy, in some senses it would be better not to have that, especially in those open-air dorms," said Cox.

"For this same reason, probably decades ago, we stopped putting up last names and

responsibilities. But at the same time, if we are determining what is most important to the community, students are a part of determining what that is," said Gabriella Garriga, senior economics and sociology double-major and task force member.

According to Zhaoxi Liu, communications professor and task force member, the focus on institutional change is key to ensuring lasting impact.

"If you look at our recommendations, we have basically considered recommendations from all stakeholders — students, alumni associations, faculty and staff, and of course administrators. When we were making recommendations we also considered every aspect of university operations. I know to achieve that it's important to tackle the institution, the structure. It's not just one event or one training, one club, one dialogue — we have to do it in a systematic way," said Liu.

Ultimately, through continued collaboration and structural change, students, faculty, staff, and administration hope to achieve a more equitable and diverse future for the university.

"I think we are heading in the right direction, sometimes it could be two steps forward, one step back — it happens, and I totally understand the frustration. I myself can get frustrated, as well. But what encourages me is that we are heading in the right direction and we have the ultimate goal, which is to achieve intentional inclusion. Our goal is clear, and we are heading towards that goal, and that to me is very encouraging," Liu said.



Pictured are the two men who were knocking on doors in Calvert Residence Hall at midnight on Nov. 11. photo by SOPHIE RADI

then names altogether," wrote David Tuttle, dean of students and associate vice president for Student Life, in an email interview. "But students would post their names and then after a while, I think it just became custom again."

The hanging of nametags, however, is meant to do more than just label student rooms — they're also meant to create a sense of community and belonging.

"Name tags are used as a community building tool. It's important for a sense of belonging that when students, especially first-years, arrive on campus they see their name on their door, and know that this is their space. RAs work hard to make sure that each student's name is on the door as they want their name shared," wrote Boaz-Toppel. "At the start of next semester, we'll make sure that residents know that they are welcome to take down their door tags if they'd rather not have one up. This has always been the case, but we could be more explicitly clear that students have complete agency around keeping them up or not."

It is not confirmed whether or not any change will be made to the name tags in residence halls in the near future.

"I was at the meeting as the SGA advisor and followed up with Residential Life staff but didn't learn anything new. The director and I discussed whether or not nametags should be posted on doors. At the SGA meeting, I think the inference was that this is how the two people determined which doors to knock on," wrote Tuttle. "We talked it through, and Res Life will discuss in the future. It is helpful to have these names up for our students, and I would hate to see one report lead to changes, but they will discuss."

"We've discussed the need for some enhanced messaging to residents about the fact that we're an open campus, and the need for all of us to be aware of our surroundings. The students did the exact right thing by reaching out to their RAs," wrote Boaz-Toppel. "If there's a concern about safety, students can always go straight to TUPD as well, since they are the trained professionals we all rely on for safety concerns."



FROM THE EDITORS' DESK

We've made it this far, but how did we do it?

Well, here we are, the last issue of the semester. We can hardly believe we've made it this far. It's been such a strange time to be students, and an even stranger time to be editors of the paper.

In March of this year, we received a phone call from our advisor Katharine Martin that offered us the positions of Trinitonian executive editors. We were overjoyed, of course, but we had no idea that being editors our senior year would be so drastically different than what we envisioned. We haven't allowed ourselves to grieve everything we had planned that just couldn't be. We suppose this editorial is us doing just that.

To us, the mere thought of not hosting story idea meetings, otherwise known as SIM, in the newsroom, seemed so disheartening that we tried to bury my feelings about it in the back of my mind. Both of us had such exciting plans for the newsroom. We talked about what color we were going to repaint the newsroom and how we wanted new chairs for our section

editors to use on production nights. We had the idea of us putting a mailbox in the newsroom where we could all leave affirming notes and cards for one another. "Let me know if I'm being too kindergarten-y with our staff," one of us recalls. We were going to split the different rooms in the Tigers Den to accommodate different needs of our staff. We had so many plans, and up until recently, we've been resentful that we weren't granted a typical editor experience.

We had so many plans,
and up until recently,
we've been resentful that
we weren't granted a
typical editor experience.

Now, we are months into producing the Trinitonian, and it's still really hard

to accept that we are all so far apart. We feared doing the Trinitonian remotely, not because we couldn't handle it, but because in our heads, we couldn't imagine our staff being a community as we knew it. In these past few months alone, we have learned just how wrong our assumptions were.

Every week we are amazed at the perseverance and passion the Trinitonian staff displays. Something as simple as proof-reading their stories every week makes us feel like we're in the newsroom together. Reading is like having a conversation with them. Week after week, we have pushed forward as editors because our staff keeps us together, they motivate us to keep pushing forward, even when we encounter stressful situations, which is every week. Our readers make us happy too, people who have engaged with the Trinitonian in any form: thank you. Without you and your amazing support, managing the Trinitonian during a pandemic would be a lot more difficult. So thank you for supporting student journalism, it means the world to us.

So your houseplant died, now what?



DANA NICHOLS
COLUMNIST
dnichols@trinity.edu

Killing your houseplant doesn't make you a bad plant parent.

When I packed up my room in Prassel this March and came home, my 60 houseplants came with me. After unpacking everything at home and tucking my storage boxes into the corner of my room, I turned to look at the three storage tubs of plants that I had yet to unpack. Where would I put them? My room has one window, the neighboring house and trees blocking a good amount of sunlight from reaching my room. Would they even get enough light to make it through the spring?

The answer? It's complicated. Of the 60 plants I brought home in March, only about 30 made it to May. Inconsistent sunlight paired with my bout of extreme stress and depression didn't bode well for my plants, who needed care that I was not able to provide myself, much less them.

It's pretty depressing to take three or four plants at a time to your backyard to dump their shriveled-up remains into the compost and clean out their pots, over and over until all 30 or so carcasses are cleared from your room. It's especially depressing when they all meant something to you at one point and served as a symbol of your growth over the past year.

We're told that death is final, and it is. But the death of your houseplant, whether it be a succulent you picked up at the Pearl's farmers market or a vining pothos you bought from HEB, doesn't mean that you're a bad plant parent. It doesn't mean you can't go out and get another plant, or that you're incapable of keeping plants alive.

As seemingly minuscule as a plant — alive or dead — may appear to some, I have heard from many friends over the years that they "just don't have a green thumb," or that they "kill any plant that they touch." This simply isn't true.



DANA NICHOLS enjoys taking care of her houseplants. Pictured here is the Monstera Siltepecana plant. photo by **DANA NICHOLS**

So much about plant care — or plant parenting, which is more fun to say — is about taking care of yourself first. When I have been at my lowest point, my plants have been too. During the weeks that I find myself feeling down and tired, my plants' leaves are drooping and limp, begging for water; the times when I become so fatigued that I just want to curl up in a ball and sleep, my plants' leaves are curling in too, due to lack of sunlight and nutrients.

It's okay if your desk-mate houseplant or succulent dies. It's also okay if half of your 60 houseplants die. You're not a bad person for killing your houseplants.

I know that the things we get in the hopes that we will fuel its growth and tend to it, like a plant, are meaningful to us, and it can therefore hurt to watch them die or go uncared for. Trust me, I bought my first succulent after my grandmother died and named it after her, just for it to die three weeks later — not a great move on my part and not something that I recommend anyone else do.

One of the greatest lessons I've derived from plant care is: In order to take care of those around you to the degree that you wish, you must take care of yourself as well. Taking care of yourself doesn't mean that you have to feel great; it's okay and normal to have bad days, weeks and months. What it does mean is learning to be patient with yourself and to not set unattainable expectations, like that you'll be able to keep your first-ever plant alive for years and years. Taking care of yourself means being kind to yourself, especially when you are experiencing feelings of self-doubt or facing challenges, whether they be mental, physical or academic.

Having a seemingly natural green thumb is great, but it's also okay if, as the seasons (or weeks) change, your green thumb turns into a 'brown thumb.' You wouldn't expect your friend to be perfectly happy and healthy every single day, so don't expect that of yourself either. And sometimes, that means that you kill a houseplant or two — or 30.

Dana Nichols is a junior sociology major.

WANT TO
SUBMIT A
COLUMN?
here's what you
should know.

letters to
the editor

Share your quick reactions to Trinitonian coverage and opinion columns. Send 300 words or fewer to the head editors and Phoebe Murphy, opinion editor, at pmurphy@trinity.edu. She or Kayla Padilla, editor-in-chief, will be in touch as soon as they can.

guest columns

Can't keep it to a few hundred words? Pen a guest column and let your views be known. Please keep it between 500 and 700 words, and give us time to prepare. If possible, submit by Sunday at noon to be in the Friday edition of the paper. Email it to opinion editor Phoebe Murphy at pmurphy@trinity.edu.

please note!

The Opinion section editor and the Trinitonian copy editors will fact-check your work and edit for clarity, legal concerns, grammar and style, but we will not alter your argument. Also, please include your graduating year and major or your position at the university.

FORUM

When you see this "forum" stamp, know that you're reading community voices. The Trinitonian is a public forum for Trinity students, faculty and staff. All guest columns are unpaid and do not represent the views of the Trinitonian. Want to join the forum? Here's how to start a dialogue and have your voice heard in print and online.

“The Hunt” for better political satire in film



Regardless where you personally lie on the political spectrum, I think we can all agree that the gap between the left and right is incredibly large. Partaking in a political conversation nowadays is almost like walking into a minefield. There tends to be so much anger, hatred and other such extremities when there doesn't need to be.

And that's what 2020's satirical and darkly comical action-thriller “The Hunt” tries to satirize ... and somewhat succeeds at? Kinda?

“The Hunt” was directed by Craig Zobel and written by Nick Cuse and Damon Lindelof. The film follows a group of strangers who wake up to find themselves being hunted by elitists. Sounds like a standard thriller so far, right?

Well, here's the thing I failed to mention. Despite the film premiering in 2020, it was initially supposed to be released back in 2019 but was delayed in the wake of the mass shootings in Ohio and Texas. At that point, it was shelved indefinitely, but then later in 2019, “Joker” was released. Despite there being many people complaining about its violence (which makes me think that the people complaining have never even seen a rated-R film before), it received the most prestigious award at the Venice Film

Festival, two Academy Awards and over \$1 billion worldwide, making it the highest-grossing rated-R film of all time and the first rated-R film to make over a billion dollars.

So with that success, “The Hunt” would fit right in! Right?

Unfortunately, not exactly. First of all, “Joker” wasn't taking shots at any political parties in particular, and instead, it was more of an “eat the rich” sort of thing. “The Hunt” very explicitly pits rightists and leftists against one another. The strangers who are being hunted throughout the film are all supposed to be representative of the people who are very far to the right, whereas the elitists hunting them are incredibly liberal. Plus, more people took some sort of personal offense to this film than they did with “Joker.” Liberals were angry that the film seemed to paint them as villains, whereas Republicans felt that the film was criticizing their political views.

The problem is that the film is more of a satire about this divide, and it's as if people don't understand the idea of people taking the centrist point of view. Some people don't take sides, or at least they aren't at the very end of either side of the spectrum.

But that being said, there is a huge problem with “The Hunt” when it comes to its attempts at political satire. The film just lacks an overall sense of self-awareness and/or subtlety, nor does all of it necessarily feel like it should be in an action-comedy. The film's action is great, as is (most of) the comedy, and I do really appreciate the fact that the

film almost takes the South Park approach in the sense that it makes fun of absolutely everybody (including the group of people that the creators themselves identify with), but it just ... doesn't necessarily work when there are really cringe-inducing lines of dialogue, such as, “I'm playing an Arab refugee, and I identify as white. I think that's problematic too, in some way” and “Don't First Amendment me.” They just don't feel right in this sort of movie.

And what's bizarre is that co-writer Damon Lindelof demonstrated in 2019 that this sort of thing can work after all. He had released the HBO miniseries “Watchmen,” which served as a sequel/companion piece to Alan Moore's graphic novel of the same name. The perfect way to view these properties is to recognize the political stances being taken. With the graphic novel, the protagonist Rorschach is essentially an amalgamation of far-right politics during Nixon's presidency during the '70s or '80s (note that the graphic novel takes place in an alternate reality where Nixon didn't resign after the Watergate scandal). Now in the miniseries, the United States has moved too far to the left, as police officers are now forced to request explicit permission to discharge their weapon. In the first episode, this ends up getting an African-American police



illustration by GRACEN HOYLE

officer shot by a white supremacist when he spends too much time trying to get his gun ready, so when you read the comic and watch the miniseries one after the other, the political stances come to a head, ultimately exposing the problems of being extreme on either side.

As a centrist myself, I do see the need to be a bit more mellow regarding specific topics, and I really love how media is starting to finally represent that. Unfortunately, it could really use some tweaking.

Om Dighe is an undeclared first-year.

Be like me ... be a poll worker for the next election!



On Nov. 3, I was an Election Day poll worker. It was an interesting, rewarding and pretty lucrative job. Here's how it went and why more college kids should start being poll workers.

Historically, poll workers and other election officials are typically older retired citizens. This is mostly because they are able to be at the polls for the entire day when other people can't take that kind of time off or have other responsibilities. Poll working wasn't something that was really on my radar before, but luckily, the sociology and anthropology department sent out announcements saying that Bexar County was looking for poll workers, especially young poll workers. Poll workers come into contact with a lot of people all day; with

COVID-19, this is pretty high risk, so many counties were trying to get younger people to help mitigate the danger posed to older workers.

There are three positions you can apply for: presiding judge, alternate judge and election clerk. Judges make more money than clerks and have more training and responsibilities. Since this was my first time doing anything like this, I just stuck with the election clerk. The application process was straightforward; it only asked for basics like a street address, DOB, contact information and voter registration number (you must be registered to vote to be an election official). The only slightly unfortunate thing is that you must print and then mail out the application. I hate to say this, but this almost stopped me and might stop other younger people, but do it.

After I submitted my application, I got an email in September giving the position's details: The election clerk pays \$15 an hour, and you work from 6 a.m. to 7 or

8 p.m. depending on which station you work at. I was done around 8 p.m. after getting everything cleaned up. The county also offers training sessions that tell you everything you need to know to be a clerk.

The training session is about two and a half hours, but it went by quickly since you are taking notes, actively setting up equipment and running through potential scenarios. The training is super important and makes working election day much easier, so make sure you go.

On Election Day, when it says all day, it means all day.

I showed up at my station at 6 a.m. along with two other clerks, an alternate judge and a presiding judge. The judges run the show and are the people you go to when there are any issues or questions. Six a.m. to 7 a.m. was all about getting the polling station set up. This meant getting the computer out and functioning, moving tables around to hold the actual voting equipment, hanging up signs, getting all the safety equipment out like the plastic shields, and taping the six-feet-apart markers. There are folders outlining how to do all of this, but the training made the process much quicker and smoother.

Then voters started coming into the door at 7 a.m. As a clerk, I just made sure they had the proper forms of ID and that they matched the picture on their ID, and then scanned or looked them on the voting system to ensure they were registered. There were a couple of issues throughout the day, with someone not coming up in the system, but the other clerks and judges were very helpful and cleared up the situation if needed.

Make sure you bring A LOT of food. You should pack for an entire day of eating. Everyone brought coolers, and I made enough food to last me the whole day. Depending on how busy your station is, you may have time to go out and get lunch, but I would pack like you won't be able to



illustration by DIEP HOANG

leave. The polling station closed at 7 p.m., but there is a lot of cleanup involved, so I didn't leave until 8 p.m. You have to pack up all the equipment and then carefully make sure you get all the voting data and forms put away correctly to ensure that every vote is counted.

My polling station was very slow — we only had about 75 people show up the entire time — so I would also recommend bringing some books or even homework to do if you get placed at a slow station.

The other poll workers were really friendly and interesting people, so it was pretty fun spending the day with new people. Overall, even though it was a slow day, it was really rewarding. I enjoyed becoming more informed about the voting process and partaking in an essential aspect of our democracy. It also doesn't hurt getting some money in the process, so please, next time there are elections, think about applying to be a clerk.

Paige Wallace is a senior anthropology major.

THE MELLON INITIATIVE

2021
SUMMER
RESEARCH
INFO

Find out about our paid
Summer Undergraduate
Research Opportunities
in the Arts & Humanities!

Student Info Session
October 28, 2020, 4:00 to 5:00 PM
ZOOM Meeting ID: 988 9996 1683
Password: MellonSURF

bit.ly/MellonInitiative
MellonInitiative@trinity.edu

Tips + tricks for staying sane during finals week

Trinity University students and faculty weigh in on ways to care for your mental health

ISABEL CHAVEZ | PULSE REPORTER
ichavez@trinity.edu

Advice From Students



“Have a dance break (extra points if it’s to the Hip Hop Harry dance circle music),”

Adeline Baumbach, sophomore

Take a second to catch your breath. You’ve endured a lot in 2020, and now you’ve made it to the end of this weird, emotionally draining semester. Look at you go!

The only thing standing between you and the 101 quarantine hobbies you’ve already forgotten about by now is finals season. Staying in touch with yourself and your personal needs is critical to get through this particularly difficult finals season.

When was the last time you had a real meal? Have you had enough water today? Did you get enough sleep to be able to focus on work later? While everyone deals and copes with stress differently, here are some words of wisdom shared by students, staff, and faculty about self-care during finals season. Take what you need!

“I recommend everyone to wake up everyday and play your favorite music (mine’s reggaetón - Bad Bunny), clean your room/dorm, and make your bed so that you have a really fun and positive start to your day,”

Thomás Peña, junior

“Yoga with Adrienne! I love love love her, it’s totally free, hundreds of different videos for different emotions/occasions (to deal with stress, sleep, to wake up, etc). She’s helped me through the toughest times of the last 3 years, and is a warm, comforting, funny, uplifting presence. I can’t recommend her enough! Done wonders for my mental health and yoga practice.”

Natalee Weis, junior



“Yoga, painting, meditating, taking care of our plants, and petting Fern the Trinicat!”

said Claire Carlson, senior

Advice From Faculty + Staff

Dr. Dania Abreu-Torres, Associate Professor of Modern Languages and Literature

Play comforting music in the background. If you like a song, stop and dance or sing out loud.

Work very hard during the week (use a planner!), then take the weekend off. If needed, work a bit on Sunday afternoon.

When on break, enjoy every minute to the fullest. The work will get done when you are back at it.

Elske Membreño-Zenteno, Center for International Engagement

I take a walk every day with my dog while listening to either a podcast or an audio-book. Sometimes I even take two; one at the start of the day and one at the end.

I always have a “easy read” book, usually a novel, on my bedside table.

... and I take deep breaths! Work, homework, classes, tests, are not going anywhere, so if you need to step away, do so!

Dr. Rocio Delgado, Associate Professor of Education

One of the things I do every once in a while is to set limits for the amount of work that you do in a day. Lately, I’ve been trying to get off the screen by 8 pm no matter what. Set timers to balance the amount of work, 10 minute rest, then work some more.

Y no ver muchas noticias. I have the habit of reading the New York Times that I get in

my inbox at the beginning of the day, then listen to the news again on the radio on my way to work, and that’s it.

I also try to go to bed early (or at least at the same time every night) and get up early when there’s peace and quiet around the house to enjoy some ‘me’ time. I think setting up routines and sticking to them helps.

Dr. Rita Urquijo-Ruiz, Professor of Modern Languages and Literature

I strongly recommend that you carefully read every class syllabus and make a plan. You should also meet with your professors, tutors, and/or the TLC [Tiger Learning Commons] to make sure you’re prepared.

There is a big temptation to sleep little, eat “comfort foods,” and have some “energy drinks” to get you through, but try to avoid these actions; do the opposite. Try to sleep about 7 hours, eat at least a salad a day, and avoid sugary beverages. If

you’re privileged enough to be healthy and young, your body is usually resilient and tends to help you recover quickly, but try to not abuse it.

During finals, and always, be kind and gentle to yourself and others. Rest, hydrate, surround yourself with a supportive community, and ask for help. Wear your masks properly and tightly at all times and everywhere. We’re almost there, dear Tigers! Buena suerte/ Good luck!

Courtney Balderas, Director for Student Diversity and Inclusion

Intentionally create time and space for yourself to decompress mentally no matter how stressed or pressed you are for time. In order to center myself, I walk away from my work space, typical study space, or the computer and move somewhere outside or at least by a window. I then intentionally “turn off” the

noise by focusing my mind first on something happy and slowly let that slip into a calming meditation of silence (mental silence). Do this again for as long as needed. I end with a practice in gratitude and reflection on carefree times when I did not feel strained and remain mindful of keeping focused on a positive mental stream.

Q&A with BSU President Kirsten Iyare

Black Student Union President speaks on community, student life and paying it forward

KAYLA PADILLA | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
kpadill1@trinity.edu

Can you give us some background about your participation and roles in BSU before becoming president?

My first year at Trinity, I, like all the other first years, was bright eyed and bushy tailed. I swore I knew myself and I could take on any challenges being a minority at a PWI would bring me. I remember thinking I would fit in with everyone, and all the kids were so nice. For the most part, this was true. It wasn't until I talked to a senior at the time and she told me this school isn't for black women. I was like what are you talking about? I have friends we are having fun. I love it here. Literally after that conversation with "Amber" I saw a shift in the way I saw the school. I became depressed. I had known Stacey, and she prompted me to join the BSU and the president at the time took me under her wing. I worked on committees and moved up to an executive position my sophomore year. Junior year I got news of the departure of my best friend Kezia, and I felt helpless. I was elected vice president that year but I was truly struggling, mentally, emotionally and academically, so I stepped down from the position believing I did what was best for me. When election time came again, I thought the BSU community wouldn't welcome me back, so I was hesitant to run for president. Coming back was the best decision I have ever made in my 4 years at Trinity.

What role has BSU played in you finding a community you can feel comfortable in, and how has this inspired you to create a community for incoming first years and beyond?

Being a first-year, I remember telling myself, "Oh I don't need that. I could find friends on my own and essentially running away from the black community." I'm a very awkward person—I may seem outgoing and friendly but inside I'm stammering to find the right words upon meeting someone. Spring semester sophomore year is when I found that community. Towards the end of fall semester I felt alone, I was rejected from being an RA, undeclared major, and my friends it felt like they didn't understand me. I was the only black one in the group, and while we still remain friends, I was happy to find people who get me. I was having an identity crisis, and I needed a home away from home. BSU was that for me. I know how it was for me freshman year so I strive to make everyone feel welcomed like I did. Having a group of friends to support you, especially as a minority is so important. This year Triniti Lemmons and I along with Jeremy Boyce created a network for students who wanted to see other black students. I would say it was a success. A year prior, I made it a priority of mine to work with Summer Bridge students so the students of color there also had a friendly face to refer to. I got the nickname Mama K after a while. I started paying it forward making sure that what ever invitation is extended to me I extend it to everyone else. Whatever knowledge I have about classes, jobs, financial aid programming I have to share because it's not just me. I am not the only black student, female student, undeclared students, pell grant or low income student, first gen student. I do it because I don't want them to go through whatever i had to endure, i want it to be better than when I left it.

What role did Alli, previous DIO director, play inevents like MLK month, and how are you hoping the new director can help you all continue to thrive?

Alli was the BSU advisor my first year on board so we were able to see her often. MLK week was something the University and the Diversity office always headed from my understanding. BSU has nothing to do with the programming. Alli was chair and invited students and faculty to help, seeing as she had no additional help. That week is built off the



Trinity seniors and alumni (left to right) JESS JENNINGS, KIRSTEN IYARE, KEZIA NYARKO, KHAANIYA RUSSEL, and TRINITI LEMMONS stand and celebrate together at an MLK month event in early 2019. photo provided by KIRSTEN IYARE

backs of unpaid students who, like Alli, worked tirelessly to make sure everything went smoothly. Again Alli was our advisor, and because of that we had a relationship with the DIO. Our new Advisor, Dr. Becker has been giving us all the help we need at this time. If I am honest we are thriving on our own. Speaking for myself, I have done very well as president, I have grown a lot and even gained confidence to challenge others (Administration, Professors, etc.) when I feel we are being unheard. I am confident that the new director will benefit the next BSU president and other cultural organizations, but I got this.

How have you adapted your events and outreach during COVID-19?

We are mainly on Zoom. My goal as president this year was to make sure we remember we are students first. A lot of us have multiple identities that we can not turn off. We are athletes, STEM majors, entrepreneurs, Black, LGBTQ+, low income, and most importantly, human. I told eboard (pre-corona) this is the year we start working with the university meaning if they are having programming that fits our identities let's promote that. Let's work with TULA or ASA or IPC and go to their events. Cut down meetings because we have a licensed therapist that is now full time at Trinity that holds For Us By Us meetings where we can truly talk about anything that directly affects the black community or the black Trinity community. So far, it's been great, we hop on Zoom and have open forum discussions or game nights. We have an upcoming holiday party that will be virtual but we are also sending out gingerbread houses for a contest. It has been hard for my social chairs especially, but they do great work. I am very grateful for Joy Patterson, Ethan Moore and Kristian Adams because without them, BSU wouldn't be able to have programs to promote fellowship— in this time we need it the most.

What has being president during COVID-19 been like? And did you anticipate it would be this way your senior year?

Senior year is not like the movies, let me tell you. Being at Trinity and being friends with seniors every year, I always looked forward to the traditions. I finally turned 21 and I was like they always have like the happy hours for seniors that'd be cool. I know they had the tower climb again, and people would be taking senior pictures at the fountain. I miss the football games the most. My friends and I could not wait to support our senior athletes. Track, soccer, football, they were very important to

wanted to implement new programs like the one Kezia Nyarko and I came up with called Fountain Fridays. I wanted to implement Study with BSU and Eat with BSU as initiatives for STEM and other majors who aren't able to attend meetings a way to still feel apart of the community. COVID has made me re-structure my presidency and where I was angry before, my support group helped me realize there are things I cannot control. I accept that. This year BSU got enough donors to put us in 2nd place in the 1869 challenge. I am proud, and because of that the focus became gaining enough money for future programming. These young adults deserve what the other kids are receiving. They deserve food trucks and water slides and guest lecturers and conferences.

Is there anything you'd like to say to students who may be too shy to reach out to BSU, or have considered joining?

The BSU is an organization meant for those interested in fellowship with black individuals, black conversations and black culture. We want space to ourselves yes, but if you are someone who wants to uplift black voices, speaking to you Non BIPOCs, you are welcome. Do not, however, tell us how to think or act just exist with us. Do not hesitate to come to a meeting, I encourage you to come to at least one in your college career. My favorite one so far and one I would highlight as a must is a discussion we did with ASA on the difference between African, African American and Black.

For black students, we are here for you whenever you are ready for us. We love you and we see you.



Going Gourmet: carrot and squash soup to warm you up

This soup tastes, smells, and looks like fall while being the perfect trial-and-error recipe for the simple chef



GENEVIEVE HUMPHREYS
MANAGING EDITOR
ghumphre@trinity.edu

Disclaimer: This is a recipe that I have never made myself, but I have observed the process many times. My job was to taste test and provide feedback while the recipe was being perfected over several soup seasons.

What is great about a soup is that you get to throw in your ingredients and walk away for a while. It is perfectly flexible to your schedule and your Zoom appointments, making it ideal for a college student or a professor who needs to be able to step away from the kitchen. Another beauty with soups in general but this recipe in particular, the amounts of things you toss in do not have to be precise like baked goods.

However, because of this extreme flexibility, I do not have a clear recipe for you to follow. I am passing along vague instructions that my dad sent, so bear with me and let's imagine what these amounts mean together. Some ingredients are amount-less, but this is the exciting part; you can sample throughout the entire process and get experimental!

- Ingredients:**
Cubed squash (approximately 4 pounds)
Carrots (approximately 1/4 the amount of carrots as squash)
Butter
Water
Veggie or chicken broth
Fresh, chopped ginger (peeled and about the size of 2 of your thumbs)
A clove or two of garlic
Chile and paprika are optional
Garnish (mint and/or chive, sour cream)

To start off, pull out your biggest stock pot apparatus and slap it on the stove. You are going to want to melt your butter in the bottom of the pot. Be generous since you will be filling up the pot. Let's assume that you are planning to serve 10+ people or meal prep for a couple weeks. I am used to this being stored in the freezer for a good while because there's so much. Really, it is about the texture of the soup at the end. You will want it pretty thick but not jiggly. Now back to the instructions. Throw in some of your squash, so the bottom of the pot is almost covered. Start to caramelize the squash. This will add some warmth and depth to the flavor profile. **chef kiss**

When your layer of squash is caramelized (softening and browning on the edges), dump in the rest of the squash and your carrots. Only add 1/4 the amount of carrots as you added squash, otherwise, there will be too much carrot, and it isn't as tasty. Your stock pot will be pretty full at this point. Fill the pot with water and broth (chicken or veggie). There's not really a ratio here to provide. Something tells me that it should have more water than broth, but that is a total guess. **shrug** A nice touch to make it more of a seasoned soup and not a veggie smoothie is the fresh ginger. Peel and chop about two thumbs worth. I have small thumbs, so I might add another couple chops, but I would not recommend that if you've been called "gigantor-hands" in the past. That recommendation is said with love, but too much ginger thumb will overpower the soup for sure. Throwing in a clove or two of garlic at this stage is also a good addition.

This is the part when you can walk away, attend a Zoom class, clean your room, do both at the same time (well...maybe not that last one). Let the soup simmer until a fork can poke through the carrots, but they

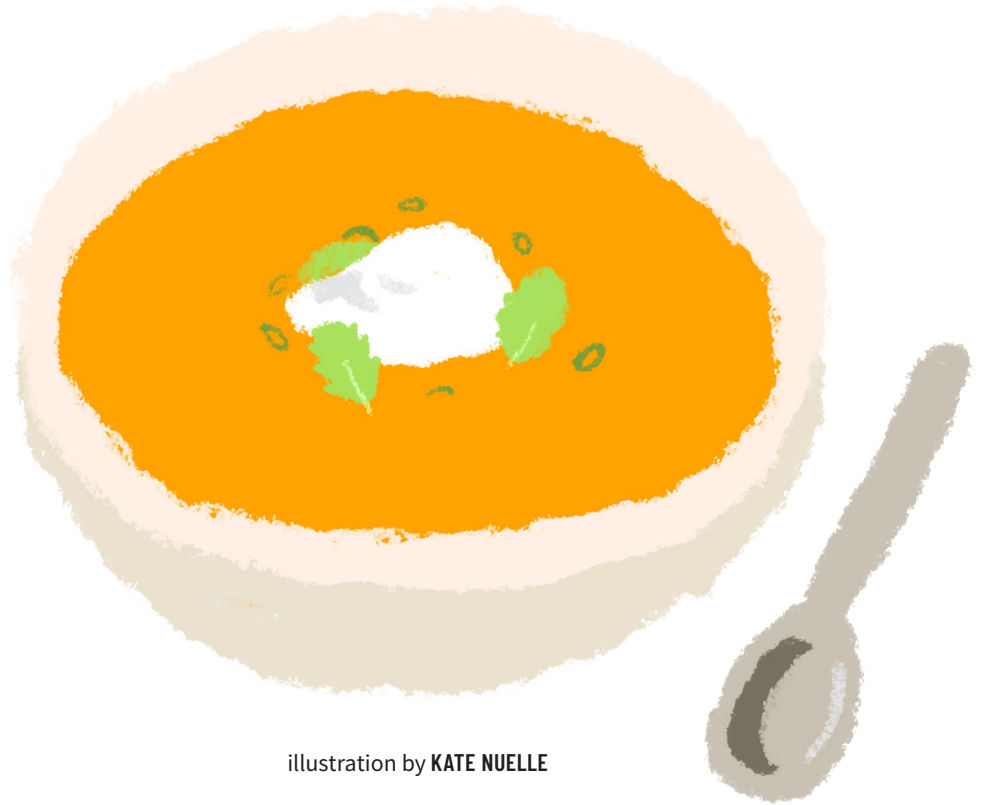


illustration by KATE NUELLE

should not be mushy. The time to simmer is about 20-30 minutes. You can probably let it sit for an hour, but not much over without risking extra mushy carrots.

After this part of the process is where you need a special tool: a stick/emersion blender. It makes it super easy to blend the softened veggies while they are in the stock pot. I would recommend investing in a super basic one because it is a practical purchase, but you could theoretically transfer the contents of the pot into a blender. Blend time!

After this point, your soup should be

good for eating or additional doctoring. If you plan on serving it up to friends, you might want to make it the day before so all the flavors can meld, and you are happy with it.

Serve up your carrot and squash soup. Add some mint, chive, and even a dollop of sour cream. Enjoy!

Genevieve Humphreys is a senior marketing and art history double major.

CLOSER
THAN
EVER

Closer Than Ever is sponsored by ORDERUP

OPEN FOR BREAKFAST FROM 7-11AM - 7 DAYS A WEEK!

ORDERUP.
NEXT LEVEL STREET EATS

000 @ORDERUPSA 999 E BASSE RD #193 210-824-9600 ORDERUP-SA.COM

No matter where we are

we always see

the same moon.

Home for the holidays, and quarantine too, what to do?

Some students are heading home, other students have been home since March



Most students will be going home for the holidays, but what about those of us who have been home long before the winter break? In a way, we’ve already been through the initial excitement of being at home, and have now run into monotony in our daily lives. How do we assure that this break doesn’t become a repeat of all our the previous months? Below, you’ll find a few ways to get into the holiday spirit, safely, of course.

CHANGE YOUR ROOM LAYOUT

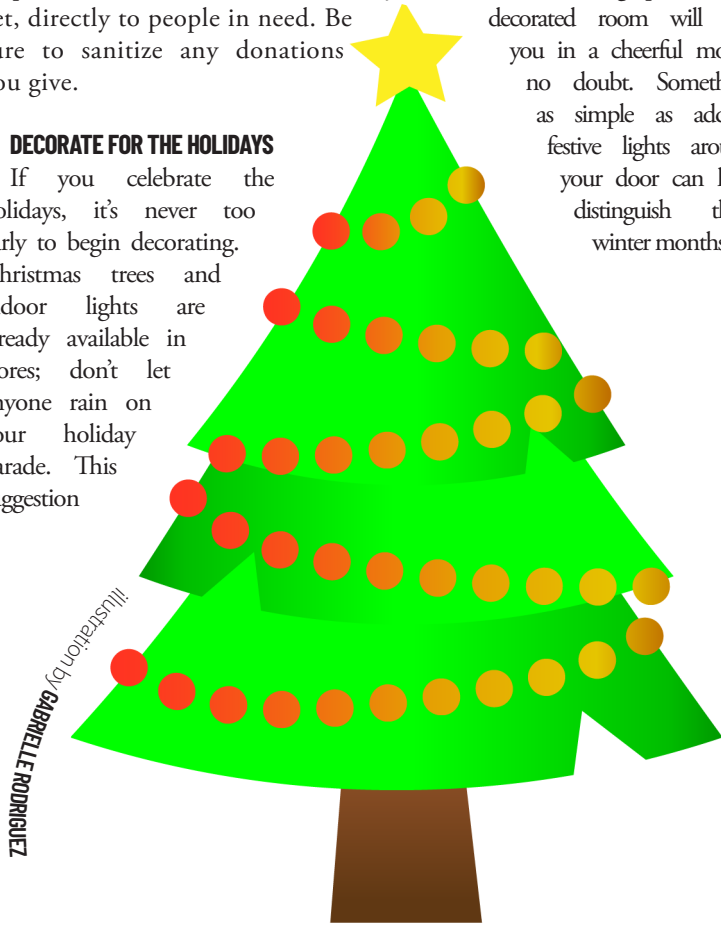
We’ve been in quarantine so long, I’m sure we’re sick of seeing our same old room layout. We often don’t need new furniture to make our room look brand new, moving furniture around is enough to make you feel like you’re waking up to a refreshing environment. If you’ve had the same furniture placement since March, changing it up may help you get out of the monotony of

everyday life. If you’re feeling too cluttered or overwhelmed, you can donate some of your belongings to places like Goodwill, or better yet, directly to people in need. Be sure to sanitize any donations you give.

DECORATE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

If you celebrate the holidays, it’s never too early to begin decorating. Christmas trees and indoor lights are already available in stores; don’t let anyone rain on your holiday parade. This suggestion

could work well in tangent with changing your room layout: clear out some space for a Christmas tree or any other decoration you have in mind. Waking up to a newly decorated room will put you in a cheerful mood, no doubt. Something as simple as adding festive lights around your door can help distinguish these winter months.



DEVELOP A DAILY ROUTINE

By now, if you haven’t developed a daily routine, every day can feel empty and boring. When people suggest making daily routines, they often suggest developing some extravagant schedule that will magically help you get your life together. From one day to the next, you’re supposed to turn your life around and abide by a set of routines you’ve never abided by before. By making an elaborate schedule for the next day, you’re just setting yourself up for failure.

So how do we develop a routine without overwhelming ourselves? It’s simple. Set one or two goals to stick to for a week, and for the rest of the day, do what you would usually do. Adding one or two routines, from one day to the next, is manageable and realistic. It’ll help you cement a part of your day, and as time passes, you can add another action into your day and so on.

COMMIT TO YOUR HAPPINESS

With the presidential election still in the headlines, these last few weeks have been stressful beyond compare. Many prepared

a solid plan for election week, including cooking meals for the week, turning off the news after a certain hour, and checking in with friends and their well-being. It seemed people, including me, were really intentional about taking care of themselves. It got me thinking, what if I started being more intentional about my well-being more often. Why am I only allowing myself to be cared for one week out of the whole year?

BE SURE THE HOLIDAYS ARE JUST THAT, HOLIDAYS

After news that our spring break week was canceled, and instead the days sprinkled throughout the semester, many were concerned that those days off would become yet another work day, instead of a break. Be sure that this year’s holidays are just that, holidays. We’ve endured such a difficult year, and we deserve many, many days off to be with ourselves and relax.

Kayla Padilla is a senior English and anthropology double-major.

A student’s guide to gift-giving this holiday season

With COVID-19 restrictions still in place, gift-giving will be less traditional in 2020



Regardless of budget, there are still ways to give your friends thoughtful holiday gifts.

The days of being able to exchange gifts with friends while sitting on a dorm room floor the week, before winter break, are behind us, replaced with virtual holiday celebrations over Zoom or mere “Happy holidays” text messages. While you may be apart, there are still methods of celebrating the holidays with friends, including ways to exchange gifts with loved ones, regardless of your budget.

Send some snail mail (\$0-\$5)

Writing and putting together letters to my friends is an activity that’s come to bring me solace over the past eight months. What started as me writing short notes turned into me painting — sometimes hand-making — envelopes and cutting clippings from newspapers and magazines. Regardless of whether writing letters to friends is a one-time event or becomes a part of your weekly routine, the recipient will appreciate the thought and effort behind the holiday greeting. Buy festive cards from the store, create your own, or just use some lined paper: there’s no wrong way to let your friends know that you’re thinking of them this holiday season.

Plan a movie night (\$0-\$5)

Use Teleparty (formerly known as Netflix Party) to stream a movie

together and chat — everyone has to have an account with the streaming service to participate, but Teleparty is now compatible with Netflix, Hulu and Amazon Prime. Not everyone in your friend group has an account? Hop on Discord, make a server, and have someone with an account screen share the movie for everyone to see. Is it legal? No, but it is fun. Keep in mind that Macs can’t stream audio on Discord (thanks to an issue with system permissions), so someone with a PC will have to be in charge of screen sharing.

Make a donation in their name (\$5+)

As the pandemic approaches a height in its second wave, leaving many out of work and worsening living conditions for already-marginalized groups, it is as good of a time as ever to donate to local organizations giving back to your communities and individuals in need. Plus, donations can easily be made online and from anywhere, making them a great gift to give to far-away friends. Just ask your friend what organizations, movements or individuals they are interested in donating to and give back in the name of the holiday season.

Have a local business deliver a gift (\$15+)

Many local businesses are now offering curbside and delivery options as a result of COVID-19 business occupancy limitations, so why not support a local business while showing your friend some love? This option is likely most available if your friend lives in a big- or medium-sized city or town, but it does not hurt to

peek around, regardless. Look for local bookstores, plant nurseries, bakeries and gift shops, many of which are offering local delivery — sometimes even for free.

Order them a personalized subscription box (\$25+)

There’s pretty much a subscription box for anything nowadays: books, cheese, wine, face masks, video games and whatever else you can think of. Gift your friend a one- or three-month subscription box dedicated to something they love, and you won’t have to worry about putting together the perfect gift: they’ll do it for you. Keep in mind the current issues with shipping speeds through the USPS as you start your search, especially if you are thinking of ordering a box containing perishable goods.

Dana Nichols is a junior sociology major.

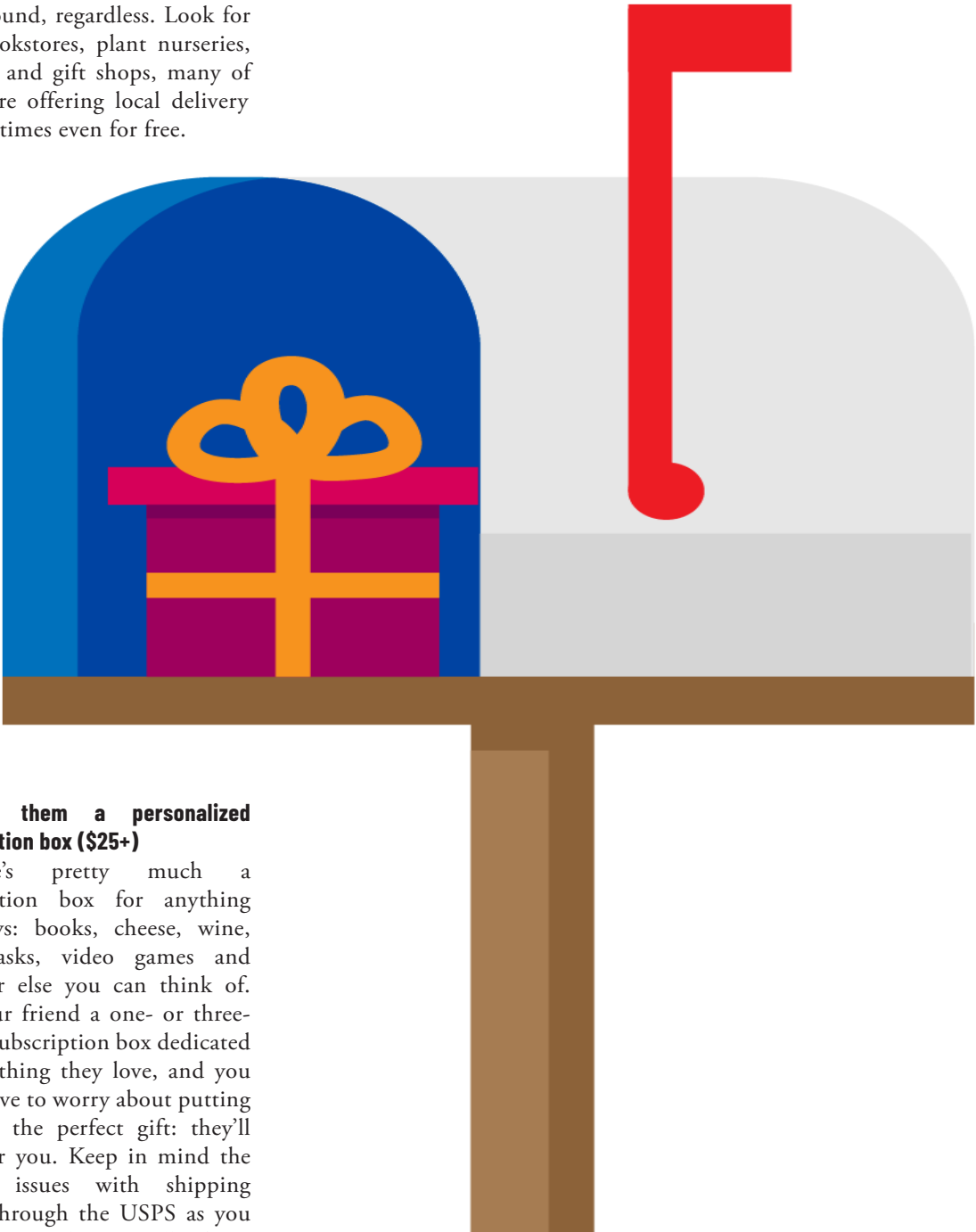


illustration by GABRIELLE RODRIGUEZ

A gift guide for the broke student

From stocking stuffers to gifts for the bookworm in your life, here’s how to navigate Christmas

ALEJANDRA GERLACH | COLUMNIST
agerlach@trinity.edu

With the holidays approaching, we all feel the inevitable stress of gift giving looming over our heads. It’s even worse for us broke college students, so here’s some tips for shopping on a budget for everyone on your “Nice List.”

FOR STOCKING STUFFERS

There are a certain assortment of gifts that you can give to almost anyone. Stationary, candles, fuzzy socks, wine tumblers, and mugs are all fantastic gifts that you can give to pretty much anyone. The best part of giving stocking stuffers? They’re cheap.

You can find great stocking stuffers for five to fifteen dollars in the Target bargain bins. The margin bins are an especially great place to find seasonal items, which is great for a White Elephant gift exchange. Another place to find great deals on an assortment of items is Five Below. The store carries a surprisingly wide selection of items—all of which are under five bucks—including fuzzy socks, a graphic t-shirt collection that has a few hidden gems, and collection of coloring and puzzle books.

FOR THE SOCIAL BUTTERFLY

With social distancing and quarantine, 2020 has been a hard year for extroverts. The holidays are a time of hope and

looking forward, so a great gift for the social butterfly in your life is something they can use when it's safe to be in big groups of people.

Target carries a variety of party games for less than 20 dollars. Everything from the classic Cards Against Humanity to games based off of their favorite sitcoms. These games are a great way to celebrate the holidays with family and friends.

FOR THE BOOKWORM

When shopping for the bookworm in you life, chances are your first instinct is to go to Barnes and Noble. While there's nothing wrong with Barnes and Noble, when your gift shopping on a budget, I'd recommend Half-Price Books to get more bang for your buck.

Half-Price Books is super convenient. Using their website, you can shop by price or by genre, and get those items shipped straight to you door. Or you can take the bookworm to the store with you and watch what they gravitate toward on the shelf, so they essentially do the shopping for you in addition to some quality time. Half-Price Books also is a great place to shop for CDs and vinyls for the vintage lover in your life.

FOR A PERSONAL TOUCH

If you're looking for a gift with a personal touch, I'd recommend looking on Etsy. On their website, Etsy offers holiday sales and many items, like personalized




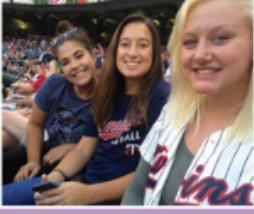


illustration by GENEVIEVE HUMPHREYS

jewelry, that are far more affordable on Etsy than they would be in a store. Gift shopping on Etsy is also a wonderful way to support small businesses and artist that have been impacted by the pandemic. The one caveat: check your shipping dates and get your shopping done early to make sure your gifts arrive in time.

Another easy way to add a personal touch to a gift is to make it yourself. Putting together a photo collage or a

scrapbook is a classic, but simple way of showing someone how much you care. Try highlighting some of your favorite memories with that person, or consider making a scrapbook of all the places you plan to go when social distance restrictions are lifted. It doesn't have to be perfect. The thought and effort you put into the gift is what really counts in the end, and it's what differentiates between a good gift and great one.





Annie,

We are so happy to share in your excitement as you graduate from Trinity University! We are always proud of you and the incredible young woman you have become! The road wasn’t always easy but you persevered with courage and determination. As you begin a new chapter of your life, we wish you all the best, and know we are here, cheering you on from the sidelines! Congratulations, Annie, We LOVE you!

Forever your biggest fans,
Dad, Mom, Steppie, and your whole family

From the Trinitonian: Stay home, stay safe

We are in a deadly pandemic, you know that. It is crucial that we do not visit others outside of our quarantine bubble during the holidays. Children, teens, young adults, and the elderly will die at much higher rates these next few months because people will inevitably gather, avoiding any warning from the Center for Disease and Control (CDC), and their local officials.

People won't get to see their children grow up because of COVID, and others won't get to accompany their loved ones in their final moments. This has already happened, is happening, and will spike in November and December.

No small gathering is safe enough, no matter how many precautions people have taken, they get COVID-19 anyway. Why? Because now more than ever, it is rampant and vicious, destroying lives. COVID doesn't care if you miss your family members, or you tried your best to be safe. Right now, we need to stay home. We cannot put those around us in danger because we are tired of quarantine.

You may be upset about not being able to gather, but right now, we need to be thankful that those


we love are alive, and hopefully, healthy. So many people will spend the holidays grieving because their parents, siblings, or children didn't survive COVID-19.

There will be more holidays, there will be more Christmas feasts and traditions. It just can't happen this year. When people try to defy the pandemic and pretend things can be normal, that's when it gets them. The pandemic is raging, and I ask of you not to gather this Thanksgiving, or Christmas.


If it means we get to be healthy and live, giving up the holidays is hardly a price to pay. Again, no small gathering with people outside of your bubble is safe enough. It takes one gathering, one interaction, one slip up and your life is no longer guaranteed. Hundreds of thousands of Americans have died, and these next few months, that number is going to spike so much. People will be spending their holidays in the ICU, or Facetiming their loved ones to say their final goodbyes. Do you want to spend your holidays in an overcrowded hospital, where others are grieving just like you? Do you want people to grieve for you? Do you want to see the people around you grow and develop as human beings?

The holidays are Among Us once again

The popular online game has proven to be a great way to spend time with friends



DANA NICHOLS
COLUMNIST
dnichols@trinity.edu



KAYLA PADILLA
COLUMNIST
kpadill1@trinity.edu

So the holidays are Among Us once again, and we are still in quarantine. In the past few months, we, like many, have been searching for ways to stay in contact with our friends and family that doesn't require in-person interaction. Our answer, the wildly popular, highly entertaining, free online game, "Among Us."

What started out as a small iMessage group chat of eight friends — titled "among us rats" — soon hosted over a dozen members, spilling over to the point where we made a Discord channel to send out game codes, voice chat, and add friends that we made in online games. Some of us grew up playing video games (Grand Theft Auto, anyone?) while others have never held a game controller in our life; regardless of our prior experience, Among Us has provided an easy way for us to keep up and chat despite the physical distance between us.

Once you get the hang of it, the game is pretty simple; if you've played Mafia, you have a leg-up. All it takes is at least five people to play (max ten). Before the game

begins, one-to-three people are secretly assigned the role of 'imposters,' and tasked with killing the others, known as 'crewmates.' Imposters have to kill enough of their crewmates before the crewmates finish various assigned tasks to repair the ship, or else they lose. The opportunity to rival against your friends in the name of fighting for survival is pretty enticing.

When a crewmate comes across the body of their murdered friend, they can report it — that's when the real fun starts. As we've kept playing over the months, unspoken alliances have come and gone between (or perhaps among) us, prompting the eager ganging up on and blaming of certain friends due to their always being "sus" (aka me, Kayla).

Whoever gets blamed gets ejected from the ship, becoming a ghost and now able to watch their friends be murdered or complete tasks. Nobody knows who is actually a crewmate or an imposter until the very end, once the imposters have either successfully killed off the crew or the crewmates collectively finish their tasks.

Most of us don't have our real names accompanying our character, further lending to the chaos that takes place. You can be as silly as you want: In fact, when all of us play, we often have similar usernames that confuse the other players we don't know in real life: Paddington, Saddington, Gladdington, and if you're a comrade, Comraddington! Lots of preteens and children play this game, so we try to keep it as PG-13 as possible.

So, how did this silly online game bring us together, when so many other multiplayer



KAYLA PADILLA and DANA NICHOLS enjoy playing the online game Among Us with their friend group. image by KAYLA PADILLA


games exist? What feels so enticing about this game, as dramatic as it may sound, is that we are all allowed to be in the same room, as we would pre-pandemic. Sure, you can Zoom call your friends and technically be in the same "room," but in Among Us, there's no having to keep up appearances. Even within the game, we are able to form foolish inside jokes and laugh with one another over the events of the round. We are all just little minions, only distinguishable by the colors and hats we choose for our characters.

Among Us makes it so that meeting up with our friends can be done without having to change out of pajamas — a pretty big draw in the era of sweatpants' comeback. We're all in the same lobby and have our real-life personalities, just in different, three-foot-tall bodies. If one of us is ever not attentive in class, you know why. Just ask for the game code.

Dana Nichols is a junior sociology major. Kayla Padilla is a senior anthropology and English double-major.

The issue with “Keep the Christ in Christmas”

Christianity is about acceptance, judging non-believers only leads to division



LOGAN CREWS
COLUMNIST
lcrews@trinity.edu

We're venturing further into the holiday season, and the signs are everywhere. Car commercials complete with giant bows on the hoods, bells added to every company's jingle, and storefronts decked out with lights and "sales" meant to drain your pockets. It's no surprise to anyone that Christmas is highly commercialized in America. Some Christians, however, fight against this with the phrase, "Keep Christ in Christmas." I am not one of those Christians.

I recognize that might be controversial to say as if I'm not actually adhering to my faith. Let me be clear and say that Christ has not left my Christmas. I still go to church with my family on Christmas Eve, light the Advent candles and believe the "reason for the season" is Jesus' birth and the hope that it brings into the world. But this is my Christmas. It's not everyone's.

A 2017 Pew Research Center survey found that 90% of Americans celebrate Christmas, but only 46% said they celebrate for a religious reason. So, if not the birth of Jesus Christ, what are non-Christians celebrating on Dec. 25?

Here is where we, as Christians, can go wrong. Especially those who act like they've been violently accosted when the Starbucks barista hands them their coffee with a "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas." Just because Jesus isn't the reason for someone's Christmas celebration doesn't mean everything Jesus stands for is gone. Besides the capitalist takeover of Christmas gift-giving, Christmas is still a season of charity, love and gratitude.



illustration by GENEVIEVE HUMPHREYS

Whether we get these from the Bible or a secular holiday tradition like watching "The Polar Express" shouldn't matter.

There are worse things happening in the world today than non-Christians celebrating Christmas, and frankly, the conservative Christian outrage over the loss of Christmas never seems to rear its head at actual issues like the epidemic of violence against Black transgender women or family separation at our southern border, to name a couple.

To a certain extent, I don't care about the "Keep Christ in Christmas" discussion

because it seems like such a non-issue. That is until I comprehend that fellow Christians truly think we're losing Christmas as if we don't still have a death grip on society.

There's a false narrative of new-age Christian persecution, which includes believing gay marriage is a slight to religious freedom and that bans on in-person church during the pandemic aren't to protect the health of congregations but instead to suppress Christian worship. The thought that we could somehow lose control over Christmas only feeds this narrative. It also reveals a toxic superiority

complex: that somehow, only Christians can experience true happiness, hope and goodness. That these things can't possibly be present during the holiday season for anyone else, and if they are, then they're found in the wrong way. We may mask concern over a secularized Christmas as wanting everyone to be saved by believing in Jesus Christ instead of Santa Claus, but this is just judgment, and if there's one thing all Christians should agree on, it's that judgement is the wrong path to take.

A hyperfixation on supposed acts of persecution as small as atheists sitting around a tree with pretty lights keeps us from recognizing Christian complicity in past and present injustices. Western Christianity is responsible for a violent white savior complex that results in missionaries perpetuating a cycle of short-term aid without true biblical justice, sometimes at the expense of human lives. According to the Associated Press, Donald Trump's tremendously un-Christian campaign for re-election just won over about 80 percent of white evangelical Christian voters. On a smaller yet important scale, public schools in America still don't have days off for all non-Christian holidays, drawing a very firm line in the sand to separate normal from other, but please, let's worry about losing our grip on Christmas as we simultaneously force it upon everyone.

Truly keeping Christ in Christmas means letting others keep Christ out of theirs. It's choosing a position of love that understands instead of trying to control. We should aim to share Jesus through kind actions, not by gatekeeping a holiday. The closer we come to this kind of love, the closer we'll get to Jesus.

Logan Crews is an undeclared sophomore.

Trinity Music Department plans for virtual holiday performances

Contrary to previous years, Trinity’s various music ensembles prepare recorded pieces for the holidays

CARMINE VILLARREAL | ARTS REPORTER
cvillarr@trinity.edu



JOSEPH KNEER conducts the orchestra’s rehearsal.
photo by KATE NUELLE

Although Trinity University’s music ensembles traditionally hold Christmas concerts, this semester has posed many roadblocks in being able to conduct traditional Christmas concerts. Many of the music department’s ensembles are not holding one due to both the volume of

members required to successfully hold an in-person Christmas concert and the logistical and technological challenges accompanying virtual synchronization. Luckily, the music department’s Christmas spirit is being maintained as best as it can. Through much adaptation and creativity, the Trinity Symphony Orchestra, Handbell Ensemble and choral program are going to be holding virtual Christmas concerts. Dr. David Heller, chair of the music department and assistant professor of music, detailed the department’s standing on the safety of performing this semester and plans.

“We’re limited in the number of people who can be in the building. The Christmas concert involves over two hundred performers and then your audience is severely cut since we’re not allowing anybody coming in from off-campus. The second thing is the students are gone since they leave Thanksgiving,” said Heller. “We are offering virtual Christmas events instead. We are doing a virtual Christmas Vespers, which is the big service in the Chapel of Lessons and Carols involving the choir, me and some other faculty members. The handbell ensemble created a Christmas program.”

The Handbell Ensemble put together a 30-minute Christmas program that will be going out over the Trinity website next month. Ethan Jones, a senior and student assistant, shed light on the way the members had to adjust the way they rehearsed given the need for physical distance and other new requirements.

“Rehearsals this semester were challenging sometimes because we had to change so many things. We had rehearsal twice a week in Laurie

Auditorium to prepare to record our Christmas concert, and we featured not only bells but flute, organ and percussion. Usually, we all share bells and play them right next to each other, but staying 6 feet apart meant we had to use our ears more when performing as we had to listen to each other more closely,” said Jones.

Senior Kyana Saidi-Nejad, who has been in the Chamber Singers for all four years, elaborated on the choir’s setup for the Vespers Program, which consists of the well-known carols “Away in a Manger” and “Silent Night.”

“For the recording, the chapel was dressed up the way it would be. There are poinsettias and candles all over. We got to hear some of the chaplain’s readings. We have been practicing in various locations, but it was our first time together in the chapel,” said Saidi-Nejad. “Though we have been rehearsing together in person, most recently, in the Northrup Garage — masked, 15 ft apart and for very brief periods — it was our first time making a recording together in person. It was definitely a learning experience.”

Both Saidi-Nejad and Jones, seniors who have witnessed firsthand the impacts of the drastic changes this semester, expressed their appreciation for having the privilege of performing in whatever way possible.

“Dr. Seighman reminded us the day of the recording that we are doing this for the people at home, to give them comfort and warmth, and let them enjoy an annual tradition and have comfort from that. He has been really vocal, especially this semester, about showing us that he cares and is compassionate towards each of us,” said Saidi-Nejad. “He worked really hard to find the best

way to do this and has constantly tried to adapt what we do to make it the best for all of us.”

“It was really inspiring to know that we were able to accomplish so much during such a stressful and unforeseen semester. We were able to make magical music with each other and experience what we as musicians had been missing during the quarantine,” said Jones.

Wind players in the orchestra play in face masks.
photo by KATE NUELLE



Harry Styles’ Vogue cover is just the start of dismantling gender norms

An opportunity to educate on gender non-conformity

SAVANNAH WAHLGREN | ARTS EDITOR
swahlgre@trinity.edu

This past week, Harry Styles made history by being the first man to be featured on the cover of Vogue. However, what has most people talking is what Styles wore: a dress. As much as I would like to think that a man wearing a dress isn’t a big deal in 2020, this creative decision has produced mixed opinions. Of course, there are those who believe that men shouldn’t wear dresses or traditionally feminine clothes. Others came to Styles’ defense and applauded him for his bravery. Personally, I fully support Styles’, or anyone’s, choice to cross gender boundaries, and I think that this cover is a step in the right direction when it comes to opening the mainstream public’s eyes to gender non-conformity. But I think it is equally important to acknowledge the privilege that Styles’ has as well as the reality that gender non-conforming people face in today’s world.

To make myself perfectly clear, I am in full support of the Vogue cover. The only way that more people are going to become accepting of gender non-conformity is through exposure, primarily through media. Steps like this are necessary. I also still think that this was a brave decision on his part. He had to be well aware of the backlash he could receive from this decision, but he decided to move forwards with it anyway. Styles also wore the work of genderfluid designer Harris Reed during the photoshoot, which is another huge achievement that I don’t think many people are aware of. I simply believe that while we celebrate this step, we must also use this opportunity to educate ourselves about the challenges faced by gender non-conforming people even in today’s world.

It’s first important to acknowledge the privilege that Styles has that allowed him to be

able to express himself in this way. As a white, wealthy, cisgender man who is conventionally attractive, he is able to get away with more when it comes to deviating from gender norms. As a society, we tend to praise gender non-conformity, or any breaking of established social boundaries, only when it is done in a very specific way by a very specific type of person. The way that Styles dressed on the Vogue cover is the same style of dress that gets many transgender and gender non-conforming people, particularly those who are BIPOC, harassed and too often killed.

According to the Human Rights Campaign, 2020 has been the deadliest year for transgender and gender non-conforming people since the organization began to track violence against this group in 2013. So far, at least 36 transgender or gender non-conforming individuals have been murdered, and most are Black or Latinx transgender women. As we talk about Styles’ Vogue cover, it would be a great opportunity to discuss the very real struggles that the average person faces when they dress or act outside of gender norms.

There is also, of course, the overall issue of lack of representation when it comes to gender and gender expression in the entertainment industry. Transgender and gender non-conforming actors and stories are still almost completely absent from media, and that absence is significant. It is significant that not all kids can see themselves represented in their favorite shows or movies. It is significant that when stories about being transgender or gender non-conforming are told, they are tragedies. Like I said earlier, Harry Styles’ being featured on the cover of Vogue while wearing a dress is a huge step in the right direction, but it is also important that we keep in mind all that we still need to fight for.

\$

GOOD AT

\$

PERSUADING?

Get Paid For It

\$

Sell

\$

advertising

\$

for the

\$

Trinitonian.

\$

trinitonian-adv

\$

@trinity.edu

\$

It’s time to stop using the word “Satanic” to describe music

What most people don’t understand has been synonymous with Satanism for far too long now

JORDYN GUZMAN | ARTS INTERN
jguzman2@trinity.edu

It’s no secret to anyone that I was an emo kid when I was younger. Hot Topic was my second home, and taking off all of my black, silicone wristbands before PE in seventh grade was nothing less than frustrating. That being said, this, paired with the fact that I was raised on classic rock, has resulted into the music I love today. In short: Marilyn Marilyn Manson mixed with Fall Out Boy, a hint of David Bowie, and an expanse of questionable metalcore bands are mainly what my Spotify playlists consist of. Depending on who you ask, these Spotify playlists could be “the work of the devil.”

“The entirety of the moral panics were based on fear-mongering and blame shifting. Because of this, secular Satanism was an easy target considering how small it was, and still is, compared to more mainstream religions.”

Though I love my music taste as much as anyone loves their own, a lot of people do not like my choice in music. In all reality, it doesn’t bother me one bit. Different things appeal to different people, after all, and if that means hearing someone scream into a microphone isn’t your thing, then that’s cool. I can respect that. However, the one thing that does irk me and cause sighs of irritation is the discounting of music because it is deemed as “satanic” by popular religions. I have always been curious about different religions. So, naturally, when I learned about modern day Satanism and how it has positively



illustration by GRACEN HOYLE

influenced society under The Satanic Temple, I was a bit dumbfounded, to say the least. Basically, it is centered around beliefs that are similar to Atheism, but they view Satan (who is visualized as Baphomet, a pretty cool goat-headed being with angel wings) as a symbol of liberty, self-governance, and as an adversary to institutionalized concepts of religion and society as a whole. But, let me reiterate, they do not believe in the existence of an afterlife, a god or any kind of ruler of the underworld. Not surprisingly, this translates to absolutely no stereotypical sacrificial rituals or worshipping of the Devil, as this would go against the entire premise of Satanism. They view the concept of Satan objectively; he is a free-thinker. Also, The Satanic Temple fight for separation of church and state, LGBTQ+ rights, and they advocate for abortion rights. Frankly put: I am a big fan of that concept.

This is why I have an issue with the labeling of music as satanic as some sort of insult or as an attempt to undermine the quality or merit of the art. Though in modern days there are only occasional flourishes of “Satanic Panics” in the music scene, there was a time where huge numbers of people were genuinely scared of rock music and felt that kids should be protected from it at all costs. Concepts of sin, the occult, and alternative lifestyles were thrown around as the byproduct of supporting artists like Marilyn Manson, Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath. Though the concept of “theistic Satanism” cannot be discounted in its entirety, nor can the idea of some rock singers engaging in theistic forms of Satanism or Luciferianism, there has been little to no evidence of an organized resurgence of it. The entirety of the moral panics were based on fear-mongering and blame shifting. Because of this,

secular Satanism was an easy target considering how small it was, and still is, compared to more mainstream religions. Rock music was picked apart by religious conspiracists who claimed that if you played a song backwards or rearranged the lyrics, you could find a “Satanic” message. Artists such as Def Leppard, Queen and even The Beatles were thrown under scrutiny for alleged subliminal messaging that would somehow get every listener involved with the occult or cause the angsty youths of the time to be in league with the devil. Concerts were canceled or banned by state governments, stores refused to sell albums because of expletive lyrics or the album art, and far-right protesters did anything they could in order to fulfill their own bigoted and individualistic beliefs even if it was to be done at the expense of an entire subculture.

“People fear what they think they know about the unknown.”

This brings me to my main point: people fear what they think they know about the unknown. Plus, to the dismay of the narrow-minded, modern day Satanism does not fit the context that it is assumed to be in by the majority of people. So how can the issue of undermining Satanism and rock music be fixed? Education is one of the largest factors. This is because, when one manages to shove past their biases, there are lots of cool things to discover — to my secular friends, you may identify with Satanism without even realizing it. At a more basic level, simply acknowledging the fact that there is more than one religion that exists in the world and that, shockingly, they may not believe in the same thing or worship the same deities helps put bigotry into perspective. Differences don’t equal evil. Or, if all else fails and someone just can’t find the willingness or motivation to educate themselves, they could at least find a new insult. “Satanic” is getting boring.

For the Record: Mom Rock’s “I Wish Every Day Was Today”

From basement shows in Boston, Mom Rock’s alt-rock sound packs a punch on their new album

CHRSTIAN SETTLES | ARTS COLUMNIST
csettles@trinity.edu

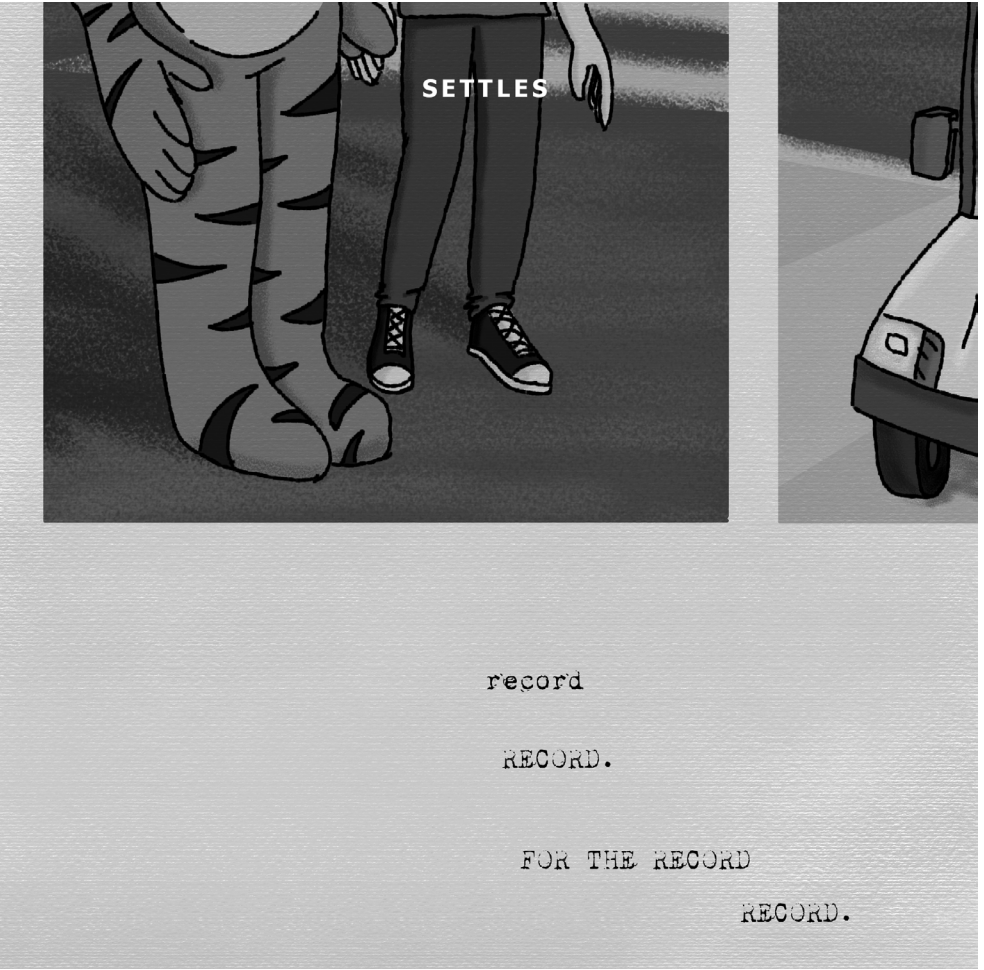
For the record, “We’re in it for the moms and basement gigs” could be one of my favorite band tag lines ever. And no band does that tag line suit better than the Boston-based alt-rock quartet Mom Rock. Since forming in 2018, Mom Rock has amassed a following in the Boston music scene and have gained traction on streaming platforms with close to 40,000 monthly listeners, over 500,000 plays on their top track and more than 1,000,000 total streams on Spotify alone. The group has released 7 singles since 2019 and most recently their first project, “I Wish Every Day Was Today,” a 4 song EP that arrived on October 30th, 2020. The band’s members — Curtis Heimburger (acoustic, vocals), Josh Polack (guitar, vocals), Wilson Reardon (drums), and Tara Maggiulli (bass, vocals) — combine forces to produce upbeat, punchy rock music that nods to influences of Weezer, The Talking Heads, and Catfish and the Bottlemen. One look at Mom Rock’s Instagram account tells you all you need to know - their funky style of monochrome outfits and makeup is infectious and fun - just like their music. “I Wish Every Day Was Today” comes in at just shy of 11 minutes of music but is action-packed from the start. The lead song “White Funky Groove” plays as a short and fun intro that tells a story about dreaming

of a dance with someone special. The first half of the song begins slowly with ambient background noise and a soft acoustic guitar. However, the tempo of the song quickly picks up as it coincides with the lyrics “And as the tempo got faster/My heart matched the speed/But then I woke up to find/It was all just a dream” that bring in the second half of the song flooded with high energy eclectic guitars and drums. The second track “I Am the Same” follows with a similar build-up. Harmonious vocals and a heavy electric guitar riff create a catchy rock tune that speaks about people changing (or not) over time. “You should be pissed you didn’t change/Another year you are the same/Woah, Woah/And I would wait twelve months to the day/To say the same shit that I always say.” Track 3, “The Afterlife” opens with a catchy bassline and gritty vocals that have you on your feet and nodding your head along right away. The EP closes with “Xylophone” the song that I think best displays the band’s heart and energy. Reminiscent of ‘80s/’90s rock and roll “Xylophone” is not only extremely fun to listen to but also helps raise awareness for the houseless crisis as the song was inspired by an interaction with a houseless person. All in all, Mom Rock’s “I Wish Every Day Was Today” is an excellent EP that will give alt-rock fans some great new music. Every song features something a little different and puts the band’s talents on full display.

Along with their music, Mom Rock’s overall persona and vibe is hard not to get behind, and I am looking forward to seeing where they go from here. If they continue to create

music like this, something tells me they won’t be playing basement shows in Boston for much longer.

illustration by GRACEN HOYLE



The problem with Sesame Street’s approach to anti-racism

“The Power of We” and how difficult topics are shared with children as a means to educate in Elmo’s World

KAYLA PADILLA | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
kpadill1@trinity.edu

Last month Sesame Street aired an episode titled, “The Power of We,” meant to teach children about anti-racism. The half-hour episode begins by defining racism and goes through a series of racist incidents between the muppets. Though I was initially excited, because they so explicitly mentioned racism, I was disappointed by what the anti-racist conversation didn’t mention, but instead, alluded to.

Sesame Street has always been at the forefront of important issues. In the 1980s, a blind muppet named Ari taught children what it was like to navigate the world as a blind person. In 2002, Kami, an HIV positive muppet, was introduced in the South African version of Sesame Street in order to reduce stigma around HIV-positive people. In 2017, a four-year old puppet with autism was introduced as part of the show’s “Sesame Street and Autism: See Amazing in All Children.” It wasn’t surprising to hear that this timeless children’s show was choosing to talk about anti-racism. Though some parts of the episode discussed racism explicitly, there was one segment in particular that completely and blatantly catered to white comfort.

The segment goes something like this: A Black muppet begins singing about racism in a song titled, “How Do You Know?” The 8-year-old muppet, Tamir, sings to Elmo, “Hey, Elmo, how would you feel if I said, ‘I don’t like you ‘cause I don’t like the color red?’” Elmo responds to Tamir’s question

with, “Elmo wouldn’t care what you said ‘cause Elmo is proud, proud to be red!” The song concludes with, “Speak up. Say something. Don’t give in.”

There are several issues with this scene, but let’s start off with the most obvious. I naively presumed that Elmo was going to

supremacy and white comfort by avoiding the topic of anti-Blackness, and completely undermining the weight of systemic racism, so much so that they believed a red puppet would serve as an appropriate vessel to discuss real children’s experiences with colorism. Even worse, this scene between

them that the terms ‘people of color’ and ‘Black’ are inseparable and therefore exist as a monolith that live through the exact same discrimination. It teaches children that their experiences are not a result of the system working against them, and by understanding Elmo’s imaginary discrimination, they are able to understand real-life anti-Blackness and racism.

Children don’t need a red muppet to stand in place of characters who look like them. They are capable of understanding racism as it affects them in real life. For a show that prides itself on diversity and having difficult discussions, Sesame Street failed children of color.

Sesame Street’s attempt to talk about anti-racism is proof that real-life issues and make-believe environments intersect. In this episode, it was evident that the writers of the much adored Sesame Street couldn’t recognize how white supremacy was preventing their episode from creating a productive conversation. Children don’t need Elmo as a vessel for their trauma, they need adults who take them seriously enough to openly talk about social issues that affect them.



illustration by GRACEN HOYLE

talk about racism and anti-Blackness that Tamir endured, because you know, Elmo is a red muppet. Instead, Tamir was the one asking Elmo about a hypothetical situation where Elmo would be discriminated against because of his skin color. Tamir’s line is another version of, “I don’t care if you’re Black, white, purple, red;” a line which is used by people who refuse to acknowledge the consequences of systemic racism, but instead merge all racial identities into one.

Though this episode was meant to be about anti-racism, Sesame Street caters to white

Tamir and Elmo feeds into the notion that Black people are supposed to be strong for everyone else around them, without ever receiving comfort themselves. It fetishizes the notion of renewable Black strength and power, all for a silly hypothetical that has no consequences in the real world.

Black children had their experiences invalidated and undermined by a red muppet named Elmo, but more at fault are the real-life people who chose cowardice over being honest with their audience. What else does this segment teach children? It teaches

Kayla Padilla is a senior english and anthropology double major.

Autumn Word Search

A F G Y I G G G H T H P V C N
B H Z Q M K N O O A I Y Z Z U
B E V Y D W C I Y U L F C O P
C M O O N K Z R F E R E D Y E
N Y Z U E S I V R F U D S P A
Q O B Y N D S R V C U M P D R
L L A E E I I P H X I T E A S
N H W P R U K E I R A Z S C I
R B I O Q M S P G D I A V O G
Q E O S W T O L M A E D G R T
V C Y N N O I N M U A R E N L
Q Q R U F P R U D R P D S W I
S I T I Z I C C R A I E T P U
Q S I V S I R T W C Y Z O C Q
W H E A T P A E T S E V R A H

- WORD LIST:
- ACORN
 - BONFIRE
 - CHESTNUTS
 - CIDER
 - COZY
 - CRISP
 - CROW
 - CYBERMONDAY
 - GOURD
 - HARVEST
 - HAY
 - HAYRIDE
 - HOCKEY
 - MAIZE
 - MOON
 - OWL
 - PEARS
 - PIE
 - PILGRIMS
 - PUMPKIN
 - QUILT
 - SPIDERS
 - SQUIRREL
 - STUFFING
 - WHEAT

Alternative ways to safely engage with American football

Opinion: Football doesn't have to mean putting others at risk of contracting COVID-19



KAYLA PADILLA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
kpadilla1@trinity.edu

With the holiday break kicking off to a chilly start, people who celebrate traditional American holidays are beginning to prepare for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Around this time, people typically travel to visit their loved ones and spend time together, as well as contribute their own dishes to make one big feast. There's no denying that Americans love their football in November, as they have long embraced American football around Thanksgiving time, whether it be playing at home with family or attending National Football League (NFL) games.

This November and December, though, I hope those who don't need to travel, don't travel. Though we are all exhausted from living in quarantine and isolation, meeting up with others and possibly catching or spreading COVID-19 simply isn't worth the risk. So what are some ways to engage with football without putting people outside of your quarantine bubble in danger? Whether you're a gamer, an NFL superfan, or an athlete, there are several COVID-safe ways to watch, play, or cheer on your favorite team.

FOR THE GAMERS

One of the first games I learned to love on the XBOX 360 console was Madden 13. As the title indicates, the version of Madden I've played

was released in 2013. The original version of the game, however, was released in 1988 and named after John Madden, former head coach of the NFL's Oakland Raiders and a renowned sports commentator after his coaching career. Now, if you're an avid Madden player, I know you're wondering why in the world I'm still playing Madden 13 when newer versions exist. My response to you is simple: if it isn't broken, don't fix it. Madden 13, thus far, has fulfilled all my Madden needs. Besides, I get to live in the past. If I play as the Dallas Cowboys, Tony Romo is still the quarterback, Dez

Bryant is catching all of my Hail Mary's and Jason Garrett continues to applaud the team despite them losing by a large margin. If you're a Dallas Cowboys fan, you can finally live in an alternate reality where the Cowboys don't disappoint their fans by throwing interceptions or calling ridiculous plays.

Anyway, what makes Madden so fun is that it's deeply realistic. The players look like their real-life counterparts, the plays are smooth, and the commentary is made by real sports commentators like Jim

Nantz and Phil Simms. You can also select whether you want to play at a Rookie-level, Pro, All-Pro, or All-Madden. The field is your oyster, or however, the saying goes. Of course, if you're not frozen in time like me, you'd most likely only be able to purchase the newer versions of Madden. Don't worry, though; the newer versions are in HD quality, have updated players and are available for consoles like the XBOX 360, PS4, and Microsoft Windows.

Maybe you feel that the Madden series is a bit too professional for your liking, and you want something more casual. I have another football video game recommendation for you: Backyard Sports: Rookie Rush. This game can be played across consoles, but like Madden, I play it on the XBOX 360.

In this game, the football players are children in unmarked jerseys who play in what looks like a high school football stadium. The yard lines are fading, the field looks old, and the players look like average people. It's a game that feels real and homely, like the kind you'd be able to have with your friends were it not for the pandemic. Despite the casual gameplay, you'll still have the opportunity to choose plays similar to those in Madden: Hail Mary's, running plays and short passes. It's an overall enjoyable experience, one you won't regret.

continued on **PAGE 16**

illustration by **KATE NUELLE**



Don't stop your Turkey Trot

continued from **FRONT**

And yes, some Turkey Trots raise money for a cause—like the San Antonio Food Bank Turkey Trot—but unlike other races designed to raise money, the majority of participants aren't people on fundraising teams. So if you're not a runner and you aren't fundraising, at the end of the day, it'd be easier to just donate the money you spent on the race entry fee directly to the organization itself.

So if people aren't running (at least, not primarily) for the competition or for the cause, the logical conclusion is that they're running for fun. That is why I run in Turkey Trots. I love the atmosphere of the race. I love seeing friends in matching shirts helping each other fasten on their bibs. I love how everyone cheers when the man who comes first in the 65+ category gets his medal. I love the feeling of accomplishment I get as I cross the finish line entirely out of breath and the satisfaction I feel later at dinner when I put an extra roll on my plate because I earned it.

So imagine my disappointment this year when I found out that my local Turkey Trot would be virtual because of the pandemic. Virtual races have been a solution for a number of annual Turkey Trots, including Trinity's 53rd Annual Turkey Trot. The virtual trot allows people to run, walk, or jog the course distance without the added worry of social distancing or wearing a mask. Some virtual races, like the San Antonio Food Bank hosts, are choosing to operate on the honor system while others, like Trinity's, require runners to submit proof in order to get a participation prize.

Virtual races are a logical solution to the problems posed by large-scale in-person races in the time of a pandemic. And while not all Turkey Trots are going virtual, my personal participation will be limited to a virtual race.

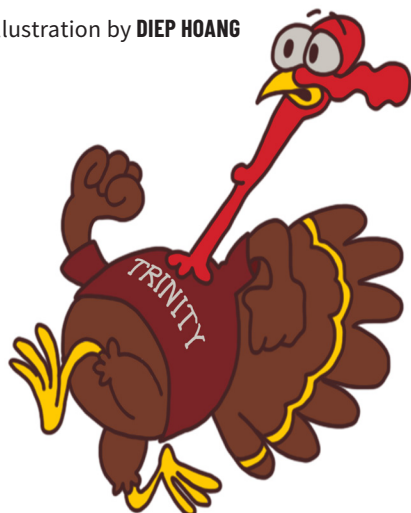
I still plan to participate in a Turkey Trot this year, even if it means I won't get to enjoy all of

my favorite parts of the experience. Specifically, I will participate in Trinity's Turkey Trot because I'm a college student who doesn't want to pay a registration fee.

In thinking about the community and atmosphere that won't be present when running around my neighborhood, I'll admit I wondered if it was even worth it. Eventually, I came to the conclusion that it is.

The fantastic thing about Turkey Trots is that you do it for fun, and you do it in whatever way makes it fun for you. The pandemic doesn't have to change that. If I want community, I can put on a mask and invite a friend to walk the distance with me. If I want the fun atmosphere, there's nothing stopping me from putting a turkey hat on my head. So whether I am running in person or by myself in a virtual race, I am going to participate in a Turkey Trot this year. No pandemic is going to keep me from the satisfaction of eating an extra roll with the knowledge I already ran off those calories. And if you are considering running in a Turkey Trot this year yourself, I'd encourage you to do it too.

illustration by **DIEP HOANG**



We're excited for what awaits you, our golden boy.

Love, Mama, Papa and Catie

Student-athletes look back at unique fall semester

Practices, training continued despite lack of games or traditional seasons

GAIL HODGES GRADY | SPORTS REPORTER
ggrady@trinity.edu

From wearing masks during practice to training within smaller pods and social distancing in the Bell Center, sports at Trinity have looked very different this fall. No games were played by the Tigers this fall, but teams were still able to participate in practices and trainings throughout the semester.

With spring on the horizon, there is hope for games across all 18 sports at Trinity. In order for that possibility to become a reality, student-athletes and coaches have had to make major adjustments to stay safe while still getting in practice. Andre Gebhardt, a first-year on the football team, explained that having the season canceled and being limited in practice activities was frustrating even if understandable.

“The [semester] went well overall. It was a little frustrating being restricted in what we could do as a team, but the coaches made sure we kept our masks so we could play,” Gebhardt said.

Santiago Bohlmann, who is also a freshman on the football team, stressed that the team has been doing everything possible to stay safe.

“We’ve been following all the rules that we’ve been told as a team. We’ve been taking care of ourselves,” Bohlmann said.

Harris Good, a junior on the football team, is thankful for the opportunity to even play at all with everything going on around the country.

“It’s definitely been weird with football being a contact sport and is having to spread out so much and follow all the other COVID guidelines, but I think it’s been a lot of fun getting back on campus and playing with all my teammates. I’m glad we got the opportunity to practice, even if it was limited this fall because a lot of schools in the conference

couldn’t do anything.”

While football and other sports didn’t get to play games against other schools, that could soon be changing. The Southern Athletic Association (SAA) and the Southern Collegiate Athletic Conference (SCAC) are currently finalizing spring schedules. Nothing is official yet, and plans are subject to change based on how the pandemic progresses, but there is optimism across campus, according to freshman football player Cole Monaga.

“Our coaches and trainers have done a great job making a protocol for us to follow, which has allowed us to keep practicing all semester, including some live team scrimmaging this week. It’s been great to be able to play football despite everything that’s been brought on from this pandemic, and I think we’re all pretty excited for the upcoming spring season,” Monaga said.

While fall sports like soccer, football, and volleyball felt the suspension of games this semester the most, winter sports like swimming & diving and basketball have yet to compete either. Mary Doyal, a junior on the swimming & diving team, shared her gratitude for a fall semester that went well despite the many challenges presented to all teams at Trinity.

“Fall training was the best it could’ve been, and I’m so thankful we got as much pool time as we did. Training has been great so far, and the team is very excited about next semester,” Doyal said.

As plans for spring seasons continue to be developed, keep a close eye for any updates, perhaps over the next few weeks. According to Justin Parker, schedules could be released by Thanksgiving. Until then, practice is all the Tigers can do as they dream of a competitive and safe spring.



TOP: First-year Ellie Catron leaps a hurdle on the track. Track & Field hopes to have meets in the spring.
BOTTOM: The football team practices in the morning. The Tigers may get to play a shortened spring season after all of their fall games were canceled due to health concerns arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.
photos by KATE NUELLE

Staying safe while still enjoying holiday football

continued from page 15

PLAY BALL WITHIN YOUR QUARANTINE BUBBLE

I’m assuming most of us aren’t quarantining with twenty-two other people who are linebackers, quarterbacks or receivers, so how can we play football or football-adjacent games when we only have 4-5 people in our bubble? One of my favorite games that involve a football, but doesn’t require as many players, is a game I know of as “Bulldog.” So what’s Bulldog, and who is the bulldog?

Essentially, 1-2 people are the Bulldogs who stand at midfield, and the rest of the players start at the end zone — or whatever end zone you have at home, whether it be the end of a street or the end of your yard. The game goes like this: when the bulldogs yell “START,” the rest of the players have to try to reach the other end zone without the bulldogs tackling them or stealing their football. If the people reach the end zone, they win that round. Of course, if the game involves children or you just don’t feel like developing a concussion over a game you read about in an article, you can always play tag or flag bulldog, where the bulldog simply has to touch you or pull your flag.

WATCH THE NFL GAMES – FROM HOME

There once existed a time when we could attend NFL games without wearing masks and unknowingly spit on each other when our team fumbled the ball. No more. Though technically, you can attend some NFL games in-person, it’s best to be cautious to the highest degree. Watch NFL games from your living room: it’s safe, it’s fun, and you don’t

have to pay \$16 for a lemonade drink that tastes like water.

This year, there are three games happening on Thanksgiving:

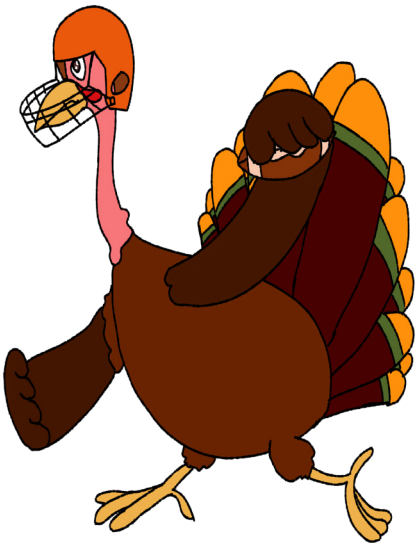
12:30 p.m. ET: Houston Texans at Detroit Lions, CBS

4:30 p.m. ET: Washington Football Team at Dallas Cowboys, FOX

8:20 p.m. ET: Baltimore Ravens at Pittsburgh Steelers, NBC

Seriously, football will still be here once COVID-19 settles down. It’ll return to normal within the next couple of years, but for now, putting others at risk for a few hours of fun just isn’t worth the illness and death that will result from our carelessness.

illustration by GRACEN HOYLE



Alanna,



You did it! You met some obstacles along the way but you persevered and you finished strong. We are so proud of you and your accomplishments.

We love you,
Mom, Dad, Jordan, Lauren and Polo