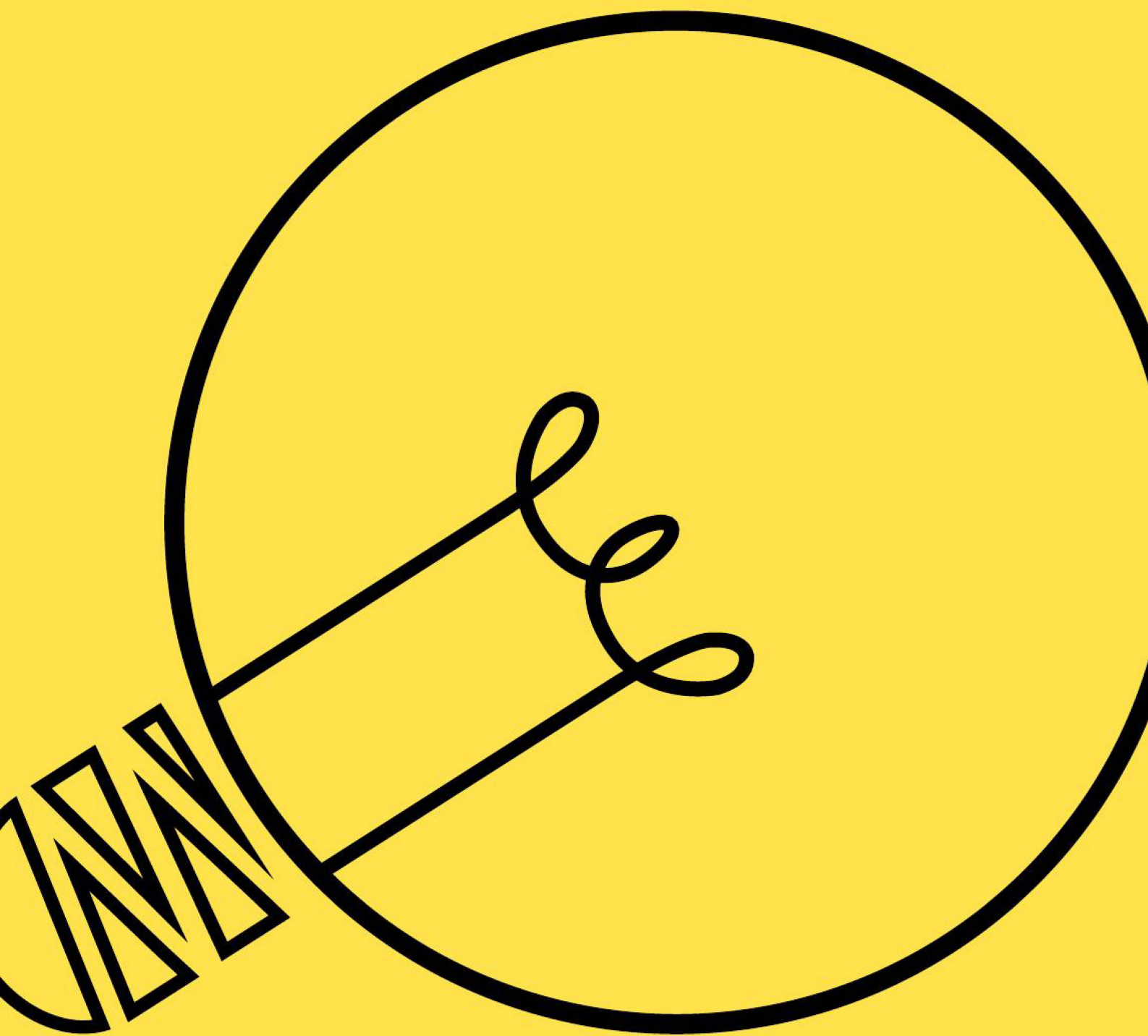


# S T I N G



Creator Spotlight  
Features 12

Nights Owls vs Early Birds  
Lifestyle 18

SOMA: A New Kind of Horror  
Games & Tech 26



## EDITORIAL BOARD

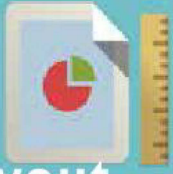


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# STING

Student Lifestyle Magazine



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## FOR THE STUDENTS. BY THE STUDENTS.



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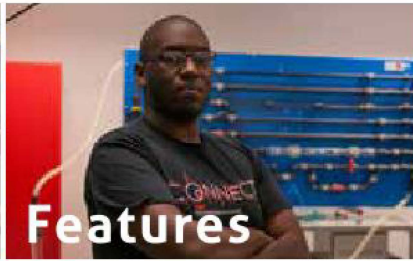
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The Sting is Kennesaw State University's monthly student lifestyle magazine, and a part of KSU Student Media (KSUSM). As a student lifestyle publication we take the responsibility in engaging in conversations that build student engagement as part a community, and not just a university.



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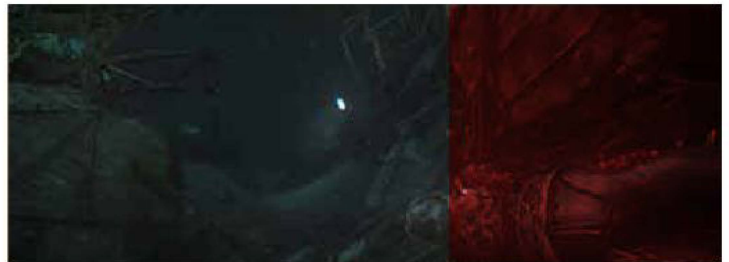
Lifestyle 18



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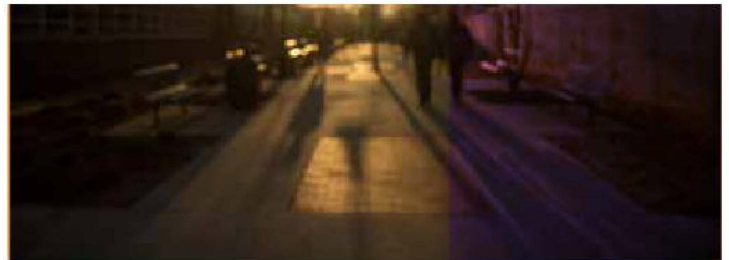
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# DESMOND HILSON JR

EDITOR SPOTLIGHT  
by Alain Santos

Desmond Hilson Jr. is the Editor in Chief for The Sting. He is a New Media Arts Major in his Senior year, and will be graduating in Spring 2016. Desmond loves to explore life, art, and photography. He also enjoys drawing, creating short films, and listening to music. Desmond is an extremely passionate person, and as Editor in Chief, oversees everything with The Sting. He loves chasing and accomplishing his goals. As the face and image for The Sting, Desmond is always looking for opportunities to keep the Sting moving forward.

Before becoming Editor in Chief, Desmond started small as a video production assistant. Desmond was very interested in showcasing his video production skills with The Sting. While having no real intent of becoming Editor in Chief, Desmond's predecessor, Randy Brown Jr., eventually pushed him into the Managing Editor position.

As Managing Editor, Desmond dove into the heart and inner workings of the Sting. After a few semesters of being on staff as Managing Editor with The Sting, Desmond witnessed something. While being part of that staff, Desmond noticed that the people

around him had something to accomplish and worked at it. Being Managing Editor put Desmond in a position that inspired him to not let The Sting become stagnant and static. He knew that he wanted to be the driving force that kept The Sting moving forward.

Desmond's position as Managing Editor became the catalyst for his journey to becoming Editor in Chief. Now, as Editor in Chief, he is responsible for overlooking every aspect of The Sting. He acts as a liaison for The Sting, student body, and faculty of the University. As Editor in Chief, Desmond gives The Sting and its staff a sense of direction and is always there to support and lead his Editorial Staff.

Being Editor in Chief, Desmond believes he brings in progress, unwavering dedication, and flair to The Sting. Because of this, he is always thinking of innovative and progressive ideas, Desmond also brings in a wealth of leadership which he applies by working closely with his Editorial staff. Being the man with the iron fist, Desmond is Kennesaw State University's first Editor in Chief for The Sting under the "New U" and will always strive for the unexpected.



**ALAIN  
SANTOS**  
EDITOR SPOTLIGHT  
by Desmond Hilson Jr

On the average day you can catch Alain Santos either trading volleys on a ping pong table or hanging out with his friends eating his favorite food-- SUSHI! Never the guy to be negative, Alain always carries his positive vibes around campus. You might find yourself spotting him multiple times in a day due to his heavy involvement on campus. Not only is he the Photo Editor of The Sting he is a Resident Assistant, and a member of the Table Tennis Club on campus. Even though he finds himself being very busy on the daily with his campus involvement it never brings him down because it's something he enjoys.

As Photo Editor, Alain is responsible for the photos that you see throughout our publication. Whether he's the guy behind his Nikon DSLR camera, or managing his staff of photographers he always has his eye on the prize. His journey in becoming the Photo Editor started with his hard work for the past year and a half as a staff photographer. The quality of his work, his drive to learn more, and be involved is what led me to extend the invitation to Alain to become our Photo Editor.

Alain sees being the Photo Editor for The Sting as being the "school photographer". He's always at events snapping photos of the moments and capturing the emotions around campus. He looks back at other photos that previous photographers have taken at SPSU/KSU and thinks it's pretty cool that ten years from now someone will look back at his photos to see apart of the university's history.

Alain says he adds diversity to the staff because he's not White or Black; he's Filipino. He thinks being the other Asian on our team is pretty cool. Starting off on his college journey as a freshmen he wasn't that much of a social butterfly. It didn't take him long to realize that spending all your time in your dorm room sucks. Now he's a very social person and he brings a lot of energy to our staff.



## GYWNNETH SHIPLEY

EDITOR SPOTLIGHT  
by Xiao Li

"Gwyn, I have articles up on...", "Gwyn, I upload the articles...", "Gwyn..." People always call her, because Gwynneth Shipley is the Lead Copy editor of the Sting. She is the person who fixes things and prove points. Gwynneth is not only the copy editor, she is an amazing person.

Gwynneth is a senior majoring in English and Professional Communication. She is a professional writer, and a content creator. Gwynneth started work with Sting on Newspaper Practical class. She likes Sting a lot, and wanted to get involved more. Gwynneth becomes a copy editor because she likes to help people's article looks better. She does. Every article you read from Sting went through Gwynneth copy editor, including this one. Gwynneth wrote lots of amazing articles for Sting, and has many good ideas to help other's writing. Gwynneth has the talent to handle the words. She is the person who

work effectively and perfectly done every detail.

There is a fun little story about how she takes this picture. Gwynneth is a cat person. She has a generous fluffy cat. At that time, she had no idea how to take the photo, and don't look like stupid. She walks around and find the garden that usually feed the cats. This is a beautiful screen in the fall after raining. This is how the pretty picture come from.

Gwynneth wants help more writer improve their work and publish, and she wants to continue her career in publishing or radio broadcast. She wants to help Sting's article have the united and special style. She is the person help Sting's articles stand out. She is a digital media producer, judgmentalist, Atlanta native, world traveler, coffee addict, cheese enthusiast, feline life coach. She is amazing Gwynneth.



# XIAO

# LI

**EDITOR SPOTLIGHT**  
by Gwynneth Shipley

Xiao Li is the Web Editor for The Sting. This means she is the backbone of the website, and that's no exaggeration. As The Sting makes moves to bulk up the amount and the quality of its web content, Xiao is behind the major changes you will be seeing in the future.

Xiao came to The Sting via the Newspaper Practicum course offered on the Marietta Campus. The class gives you a chance to try out every aspect of working for The Sting, including hard news writing, soft news writing, photography, layout design, and web design. It is often the place where editorial board members are recruited, as was the case with Xiao.

A passion for web design led her to The Sting, but Xiao came to Georgia, and our university in particular, for the Technical Communication program. This will be her second degree. Her first is in English translation from the

North China University of Technology before coming to the U.S.

Using her design, English, and communication skills, Xiao has what it takes to make The Sting website great. She is an incredibly creative and talented with visual design and hopes to continue building her coding skills, wherever the future takes her.

While she has done a ton in terms of web production and archive integration, Xiao will have to leave The Sting just as she hits her stride with our new KSU powered site. She will be graduating in December and moving to conquer other web sites. This means her position will be opening up for the Spring 2016 semester. Considering Xiao helped pave the way for The Sting's new direction. All are welcome to apply, but you'll have some pretty big shoes to fill.



# CAYLA HOWARD

EDITOR SPOTLIGHT  
by Gerron Green

Animal loving bookworm Cayla Howard has been the Lifestyles editor for The Sting for the past year, she's also a senior New Media Arts major with a focus in writing for digital media. Cayla has always been a lover of literature. In her formative years she won essay and poetry contests at her local schools. Last August Cayla started taking the newspaper practicum class at SPSU and started writing for the Sting. She found she really enjoyed it and wanted to be apart of it.

When the sting started hiring new editors she jumped at the chance and was chosen as the new Lifestyle editor. There she wrote pieces discussing the day to day lifestyle of students, such as Swipe Left or Swipe Right, about the Tinder dating app, and Caffeine: The Monster under the bed, discussing how caffeine can give students nightmares and affect their sleep.

In her spare time Cayla enjoys reading fantasy literature. Her favorite book series is Harry Potter, but she's a lover of all things fantasy; magic, dragons and the like. Her spirit animal is probably a unicorn.

Cayla is also an animal lover, she has a cat named Fizzgig who she calls her best friend. She feels like she relates better to animals than people. Cayla is also a vegan. A year ago she did a study on the vegan subculture and had to become a vegan for a month. She found that she agreed with their philosophy and never went back. She also doesn't like candy.

Cayla feels like she adds her great sense of humor to the Sting staff. Her articles are at times tongue and cheek and feels that if she can put at least one funny comment in an article then it's a win. She likes to think she has a positive outlook on everything and can't wait to see what the future holds after graduation this December.





# GERRON GREEN

EDITOR SPOTLIGHT  
by Cayla Howard

Gerron Green has been The Sting's Features Editor since last Fall. A former editor at his previous university's publication, Gerron learned early on in his academic career that he enjoyed writing—about people, movies, and the latest technologies. As the editor for The Sting's Features Section, he is—naturally—a people person. Easy going and friendly, he has always enjoyed learning about new people and their backgrounds—their stories. On the subject of feature writing, Gerron confides, "I like getting to know people, like knowing what their story is. Why they do what they do. What makes them tick." His job as the Features Editor is to tell these stories by capturing people's personalities and translating these individual stories onto paper—not an easy feat.

Always the go-getter, Gerron remains focused on his future and describes himself as being, "Mainly driven by work." This ever curious and goal-oriented editor is constantly learning something new. "I know that sounds kind of boring, but most of what I do is for my eventual career." Gerron is a Computer Engineering Technology major with a passion for consumer

electronics—cell phones, laptops, graphic cards, and the latest gadgets. In high school, Gerron ran his school's radio station, the technological side of it, and fell in love with it. This love of technology is what propelled Gerron into college to chase his dreams. Driven in everything that he does, Gerron remains continuously occupied by either his studies or work.

On the rare occasion that he has down time, Gerron can be found researching the latest technology trends, hiking, reading, or purusing local comic book stores to add to his comic book collection, which mainly consists of Batman comics. Gerron ventured into his first comic book store at the age of ten and he was completely hooked on these small, colorful comic magazines. His current favorite character: Nightwing, a hero with a dark past. Unsurprisingly, our Features Editor's favorite superhero changes depending on how the characters' stories are currently being written.



## MATT DINOFF

EDITOR SPOTLIGHT  
by Carson Long

Matt Dinoff, a New Media Arts major in his senior year, has been the Games and Tech Editor for the Sting since January of 2015. Him and his writers produce consistent high-quality content about new video games and emerging technology every month. Behind Matt, he has a team of writers who he works with to pump out features on events like E3 and the Google Press Conference.

At an early age, Matt found his escape in video games. Super Smash Bros on the Nintendo 64 was the first game to grab his attention and pull him into the world of video games. As these video games have developed and evolved, Matt has been following them with an eager mind. It's this love for the world of videogames that brought Matt to the Sting to write articles.

What started as a hobby turned into a job when the Games and Tech Editor position opened up and Matt decided to take a chance and apply. Matt brings a new and knowledgeable look to the Sting's Games and Tech section that is easy for the students of KSU to relate to. He tackles the tech side of his section too,

reporting on many events and conferences as they come about. Many of his game reviews can be found in the magazine after he takes the games through a rigorous rubric that he has created.

He has had the opportunity to reach out to major game developers like Ubisoft and Hi-Rez Studios and talk to them about their games. Some companies have even sent games for him to review! When Matt isn't writing for the magazine, he can be found bouldering, playing video games, and even participating in creating a game! Matt is a voice actor for the in-development game Raven Immolation, tentatively scheduled to come out in the next year for PC and Xbox. He enjoys playing MOBAs like Smite and League of Legends, as well as Rock Band with his friends!

Matt is a friendly guy who can get along with nearly anyone. If you happen to run into him, he'll always greet you with a big smile. If you choose to talk to him about video games just be forewarned, you might be there for a while. Look out for his content in the magazines and don't miss the chance to meet the man behind the words before he leaves and graduates in May.



# CARSON LONG

EDITOR SPOTLIGHT  
by Matt Dinoff

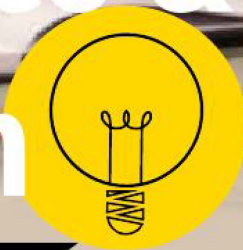
Go Go! Fight Fight! Win! Carson Long is the current Sports Editor for the Sting as well as a Technical Communication major. He loves to write and wants to write for a living. While he's not buried in a google doc or scratching away with good ol' pen and paper, he is practicing playing guitar or rehearsing with his new band the Wake Up Kids, a band. He grew up playing sports since the young age of four, when his parents signed him up for Tee ball. He learned to love the pressure of being on a team and performing when he needs them most. Carson has been playing sports for 14 years including: baseball, tennis, fencing, and basketball. While his favorite sport to play is baseball, his favorite sport to watch is football.

He turned his love into his music. He was drawn to music by his own choice. He listened to music he loved and led him to creating music and has travelled around Georgia touring with a previous band called The Roadside. Carson loves to practice, the struggle of learning a new riff. Music is his escape and sports are his love.

He became the sports editor because he wants to write for a living and notes: "...the more you do it, the better you get..." Carson felt 'at home' in this position and strives to create unique content that he could be proud of making and hopes that his readers enjoy is writing.

He wanted to create a new perspective to the issues of sports as it pertains to Kennesaw students and the Owls' sports program. He's been immersed in a sports culture for a long time and even manages a concession stand at the acworth baseball fields.

# Creator Spotlight: Jake Reeves & Derek Willingham



▶ by Gerron Green

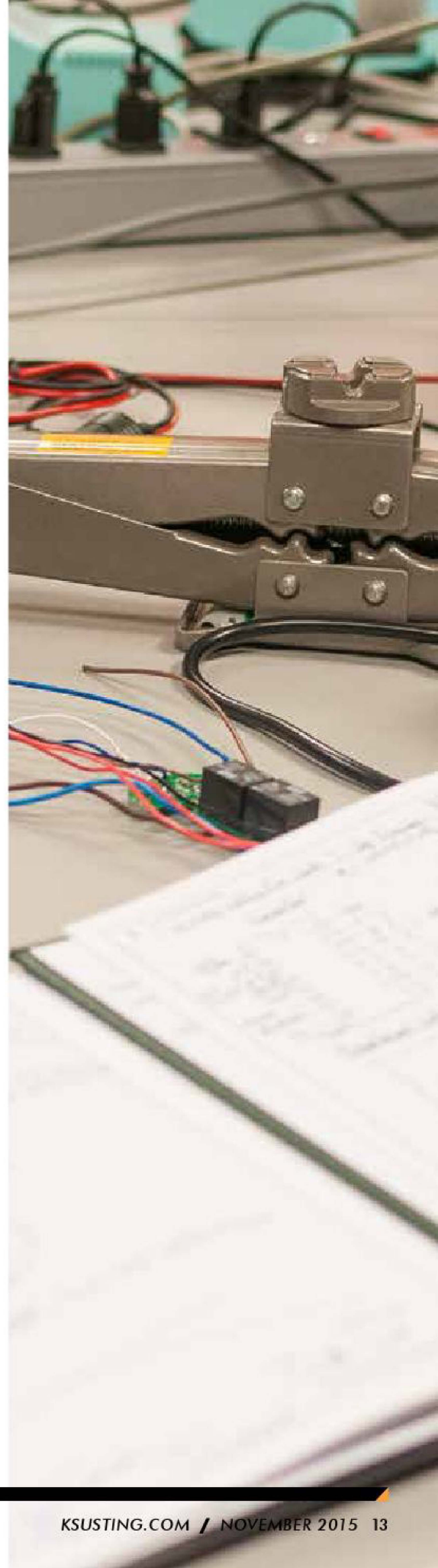
“This semester we had the privilege of not only building a class project, but a project for a client outside of school.”

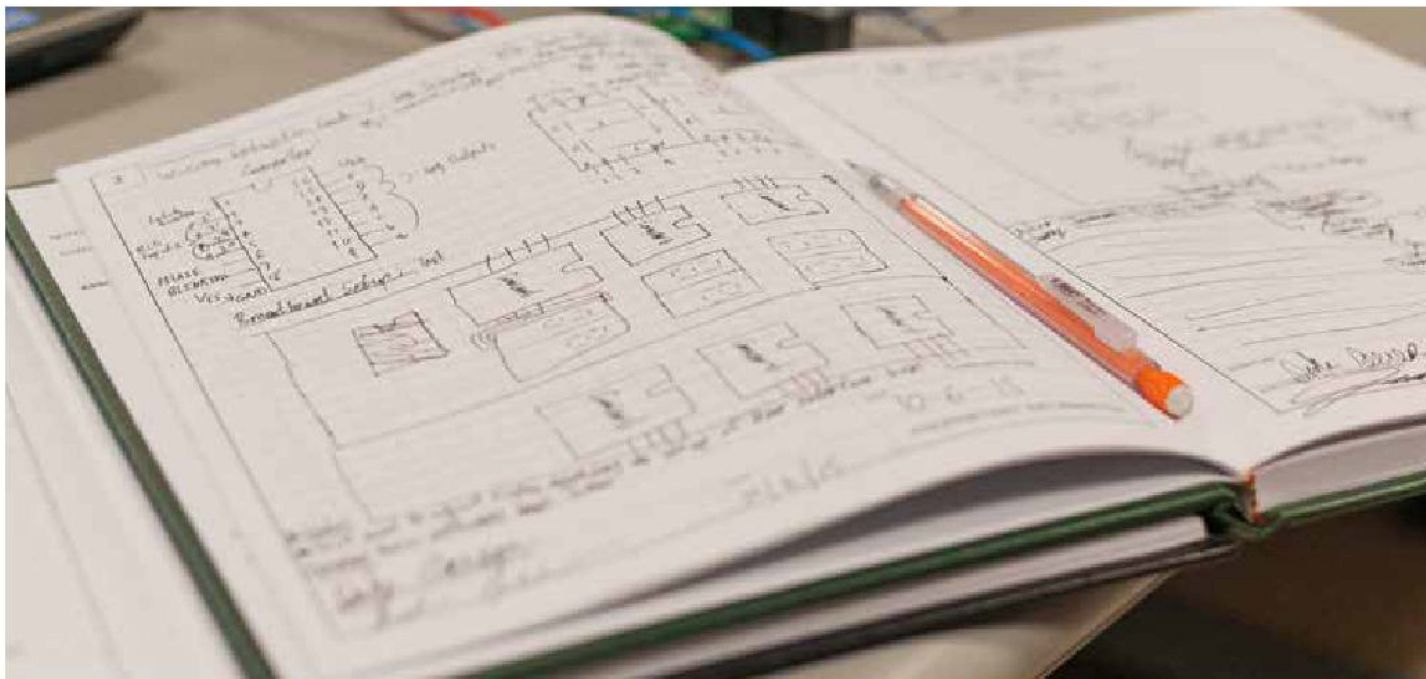
November has come again and that means a few things, Christmas decorations popping up too early, fights on black friday and ECET students flooding the digital labs. A little known tradition on KSU's South campus is the ECET right of passage known as Digital III. In this class students are tasked with one thing. Create something using the knowledge they've gained from their previous courses. Though the assignments change every semester one thing remains consistent, they're incredibly difficult. The Sting caught up with a group of students currently working through their Digital III project: Jordan Clark, Jake Reeves and Derek Willingham, and spoke to them about their current project, the amount of work it takes to put out the quality work they do and the advice they'd give young students just entering the program.

**Sting:** So can you tell me a little about what you guys are doing?

**Clark:** We are building an Exercise machine for Digital III. This semester we had the privilege of not only building a class project, but a project for a client outside of school. The project is a training machine that you use to practice solemn skiing, the kind of skiing you do with one ski. It will consist of three parts that we separated for each of us to work on. There is a motor, a UI and a display portion. It revolves around a scissor jack and programming the jack to raise up and down at different intervals at different times, also being able to set it and reset it. Basically the whole nine yards. My part of the project is the motor control part. I'm dealing with all the load and rest cycles and how far the jack is going to raise and then lower itself back down. Jake's portion of the project is actually the display and he can tell you more about that.

**Reeves:** The user, or the person that's working out, is going to set certain specific durations, for the weights or the rest duration so the scissor lift can take off or put on more weight so the user to rest or workout. Also the amount of cycles that goes by, basically that's the time the exerciser will actually push down to support himself or herself. My part of the project will be getting signals from the motor part which is Jordan's portion and Derek's part, which is the User interface. ➔





The User interface will basically be buttons on our control box, and every time a button is pressed Derek's UI will send out an electrical signal to my portion of the project and that will increment, make a number go up by one, or decrement, make a number go down by one until the user sets the number to what he or she wants it to be.

**Clark:** To elaborate a little more on Derek's part. It will be what you actually see, what's basically called the user interface. The person using the machine will be able to set and preset values and (Jake and I) will be doing a lot of the work behind the scenes. Derek's part will be a wireless remote to send different signals to the control box which and we'll have a different device in there to control the project. He'll also have to work a lot with Jake on the LED displays. It's pretty simple over all.

An important part is all the electronics we're using. We're using different circuit boards and a lot of the electronics are specialized parts we find but sometimes you have to sometimes we have to design the

components from scratch, which takes some time but sometimes you have to do what you have to do.

**Reeves:** Also part of it has been reverse engineering, because for the scissor jack we had to split apart the wires because the client bought the scissor jack himself and sent it to us and we had to split it apart and figure out exactly what exactly each electrical wire did.

**Clark:** Our finished project should be done at the end of the semester.

**Sting:** How time consuming is this for you guys?

**Clark:** It's pretty time consuming, any project class will be pretty time heavy. We spend a lot of time in the lab, the majority of your time is trouble shooting and learning how to use new parts that you've ordered. I would say we spend four hours a week at the very least, but sometimes it's 8 hours a week that you put into just the lab.

**Reeves:** Digital III is almost a rite of passage into the real world.

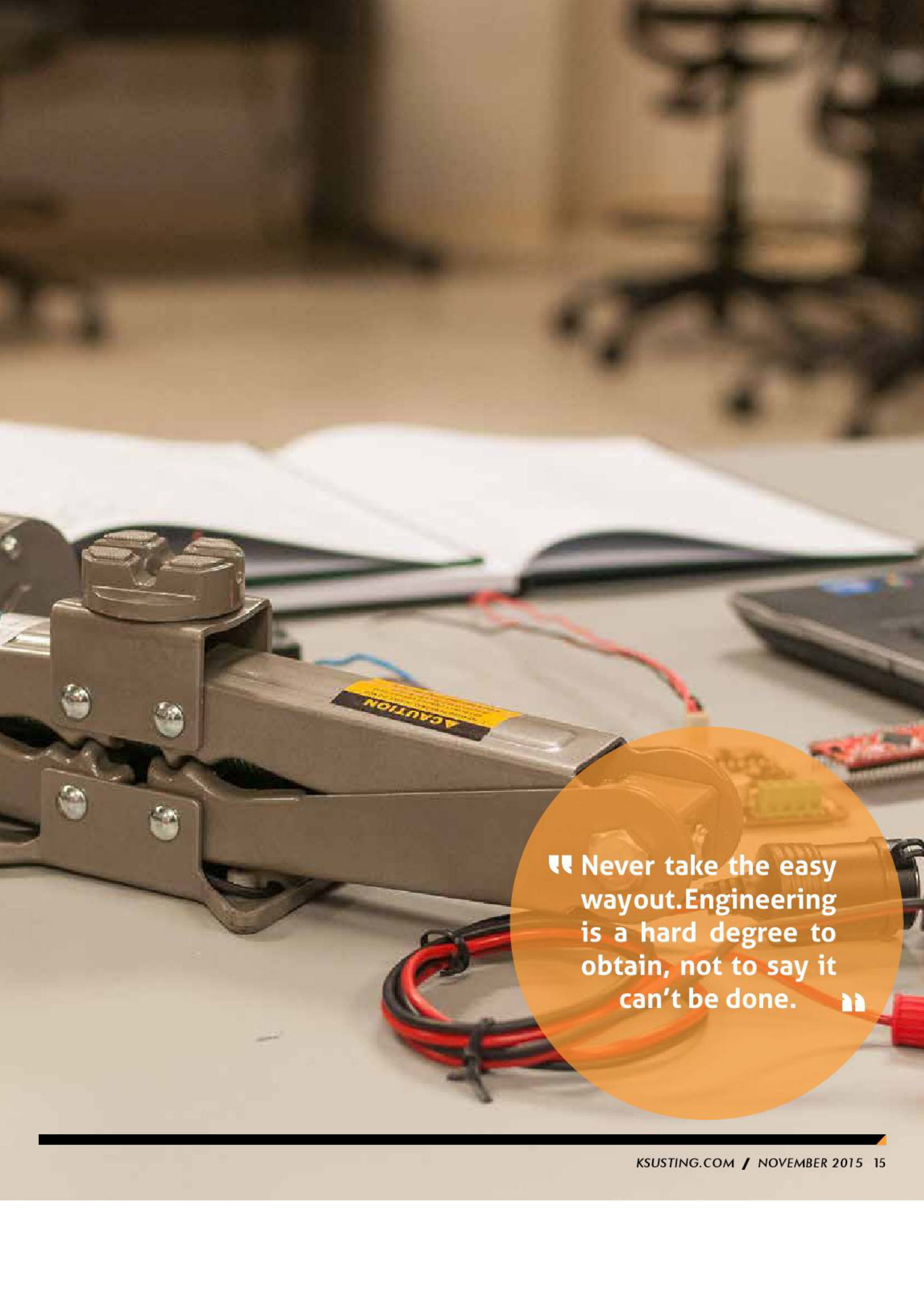
**Sting:** What advice would you give

to ECET students who are reading this?

**Reeves:** No people older than you so they can give you good notes to look over and get to know your professors well.

**Clark:** Never take the easy way out. Engineering is a hard degree to obtain, not to say it can't be done. Don't try to weasel your way through the beginning classes and try to build a good foundation and always try to seek out advice from older students, they'll always be able to help you out.

**Reeves:** If you don't have your background knowledge, basically if you kind of cheated your way through design fundamentals circuits one and digital one you're really just hurting yourself. If you don't learn this stuff now, everyone will expect you to already know it later. If you come back later on as a senior and ask "how does an and gate work" or "what's a voltage divider" people are just going to look like you like, really man? You really would just be cheating yourself.



“ Never take the easy way out. Engineering is a hard degree to obtain, not to say it can't be done. ”

# Creator Spotlight: Joseph Lorren

▶ by Joseph Lorren



They say that cartoons are for kids, but who's making them? Adults, that's who. And take a look at any cartoon anywhere; shocking, isn't it? Those "kid-things" are rife with adult stuff, especially the ones no one ever thought twice about (cough SpongeBob cough). There's a student on campus doing the exact same thing, blurring the lines between the "child" and the "adult": Joseph Lorren.

You'll recognize Joseph in one of three ways: his almost comically overstuffed backpack (70% full of drawing materials), his "I pooped today" t-shirt, or his incessant habit of drawing cartoons wherever he squats in-between classes. Ask him what he's doing, and he'll tell you one thing and one thing only, "uhh, drawing?"

Press him a little further at your own expense, because once you open his usually sealed mouth, it'll never shut up again. Webcomics

this, webcomics that. Here a webcomic, there a webcomic; webcomics, webcomics, webcomics. Or something like that.

It happens in class, too. If he ever has to participate in class discussion or present a project, it's always about webcomics. In his Media and Narrative class, he made a twelve-page webcomic in 48 hours. In Media Theory and Practice, which focused on the art of the comic, Joseph was the leader of the pack, experimenting with ideas, layouts, and concepts no one else dared touch.

Though it wasn't always like that; Joseph hit hard times in his freshman year of college. There, his first art professor gave a brutal yet honest critique of his final project, which was, surprise, surprise, a comic. Several months of depression, career questioning, and artistic drought followed, but, by some twist of fate, he returned to the drawing

board after almost an entire year.

Fast forward three years. Joseph now makes professional-quality comics and tells of his many failures along the way to whoever will listen. He says the only reason he draws is because he "never grew out of it as a kid," and, when you question his artistic proficiency, he says something to the effect of having made "every mistake you can possibly make with comics. So there's a good chance I halfway know what I'm doing." He puts special emphasis on halfway, implying that he knows he still has a lot to learn.

Well, enough about him; surely you want to see some of his comics. If you ever stumble across MSPToons in your travels, that's him. I'd recommend his journal-comic, "Rather FluffyWaffles," and if he'd ever get off his lazy butt and start updating his long form story-comic "Tinge," I bet it'd be pretty cool, too.



I get to school two hours early for two reasons.

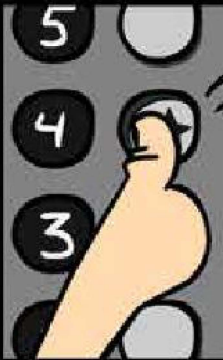
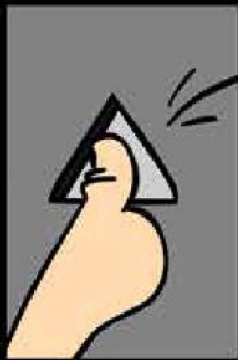
One: I suck at parking and don't wanna hit other people's cars.

Two: I'm an idiot.

I park at the bottom of the parking deck for convenience, but one morning I was too tired to take the stairs.



6:45 AM



I haven't used the elevator since.

# NIGHTS OWLS

Spring classes will be upon us shortly and another year is coming to a close... are you ready? As much as I've always hated the phrase "the early bird gets the worm," there's a small—or rather large—nugget of truth in that. If you don't swoop in and snag the classes you want, someone else will. Which classes do you want and at what time? It's hard to figure out which classes work for you, but if you figure it out later rather than sooner—all the good class openings will fly right by. There isn't any "perfect" class time, it all comes down to which classes are offered when and your personal schedule and lifestyle habits. Happy hunting—class hunting that is! ▶ by Cayla Howard

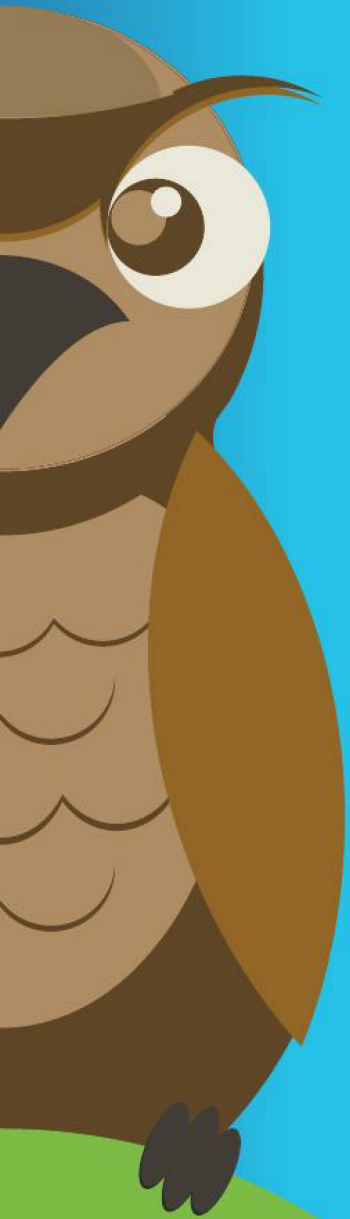
## Night Owls

Mid afternoon classes, in my opinion, are perfectly ideal. The only real con is that they're in the middle of the day so they can make scheduling and planning kind of a hassle. However, if you like sleep and you have to work nights, this time of day for classes is perfect. Personally, I prefer night classes as they allow me to work a normal day job. If you're like me when it comes to classes, the later the better. I like being able to wake up, work, attend class and still have a weekend to conquer. The downside to later classes is that, well, get used to missing dinner time! Of course, you'll still eat, just at an earlier or later time than you're used to. It can also become very tiresome taking later classes, if you've had a busy day. The day's winding down and maybe you're exhausted, but unfortunately... class.



VS

# EARLY BIRDS



## Early Birds

Early classes are not for the faint hearted. One of the biggest mistakes freshmen in college make is thinking that since they've already been in school for 12+ years and are already used to waking up early that it'll be easy taking an 8 am class. Wrong! It's not an easy adjust, being on your own for the very first time. You have to be a certain type of person to take those super early morning classes—a morning person. To make it out of bed each morning, you have to really care about the class you're taking or else you'll end up hitting the snooze five or six times before deciding you'd rather sleep in instead. The upside to morning classes: once you're done, you have the whole day ahead of you still! Morning classes are ideal for people who want to wake up, go to class, and still have the day ahead of you. The downside—commuting. If you live on campus, awesome. If not, be prepared for morning weekday traffic. It can get ugly.

# Don't Fall Into Depression

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▶ by Jonathan D. Lindsey

**Reprint: October 2015**

Reprint to show correction of by line.



**M**y favorite time of year is autumn. Fall is the time of the older, wiser individual. It's a strange relationship I have with this time of year, as the change of season brings about seasonal depression. The bittersweet feelings of looking back at times past are affected by the knowledge of the year coming closer to an end. It's no wonder so many people in higher latitudes suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Still, there are coping mechanisms that you can adopt to not let the shorter, colder days spent inside from bringing you down too much this fall.

#### **Go outside!**

I realize that not everyone enjoys the cooler weather, but throw on a jacket and some warm, fuzzy socks and go for a walk. You might not be soaking up the Sun for your vitamin D3 production, but being able to get fresh air will go a long way to helping you feel better about the Winter. Also, the walk serves a twofold purpose as it's no secret that many studies have directly linked exercise with increased levels of various "feel-good" chemicals that our bodies naturally produce. If vitamins are your thing, then ensure you're getting good D3 intake during Winter in lieu of showing skin.



# Shiny Suits and Flashy Powers Have Invaded Our Minds

► by Matthew Canada

A man makes an iron suit, gives it artificial intelligence, and proceeds to fly around, stopping criminal activity. This is the fantasy of the modern-day hero.

I love Iron Man and I was ecstatic when I found out that superhero movies were taking over theatres everywhere. It wasn't until just recently that I started to analyze how this might affect the audience viewing them.


Thinking back to when I was a child, and the movies that consumed my time and thoughts -

heroes like Disney's Hercules, and Mulan lived within my T.V. screen as I marveled at their epic journeys. I can see similarities to the superhero movies of today and that these movies affect children and consequently, society on a whole.

There is a conditioning that happens as the heroes of these scripted scenarios live out their repeated, fantastical lives. The audience begins to understand and define what a hero is differently than they had before. Where once, a loving father taking his son to their favorite team's sporting

event was considered a model of heroism, now seems somewhat lack luster. Police officers, firefighters, good fathers and mothers, and other everyday heroes have taken a backseat to imagination and fantasy.

It all starts with children. As younger generations begin to fill the seats of these theatres, they become desensitized to the everyday hero. People that might have once inspired them, such as their parents or the police officer that protects their community, begin to look less appealing

A stylized, abstract graphic of an Iron Man helmet, rendered in shades of red, yellow, and gold. The helmet is composed of various geometric shapes and is set against a background of overlapping, semi-transparent colored polygons in shades of pink, orange, and teal. The overall style is modern and graphic.

compared to the man in the iron suit. Children dream of becoming something that does not exist, only to be disappointed by what the real world has to offer. It is the children of this generation that become calloused to the real world, stop aspiring to become the everyday hero, and in bitterness, they forget to recognize those that deserve to be celebrated.

The result? A cynical community that forgets the importance of caring about the small, but crucial responsibilities - such as a parent going to a child's practice, police

officers that stop in a neighborhood to talk with the children, and similar day-to-day activities that can make a difference in the lives of others. There has been a shift in the expectation and definition of what makes a hero, and with that shift comes generations who are blinded to the daily process required to become something truly great.

The argument could be made that these types of fictional movies are what cause people to dream, and to hope for more. However, it is the dreams that these films inspire that detract from the beauty of the real-

world. It is important to enjoy what the imagination can create, but to also be grounded in real world truth. Be encouraged to dream and to want more, but also see the importance of consistency and hard work, of loving other people and celebrating the everyday heroes of the world. The man in the iron suit is a marvel of imagination at its best, but there are other heroes that need to be noticed, and it takes an awareness of expectation and how culture defines a hero in order to do so.



# The Martian: Making Science Cool Again

► by Jordan Dollar

**R**idley Scott's *The Martian* is a tremendously enjoyable film that manages to hold the audience in thrall while dispensing with so many usual tagalongs that we've come to expect from modern sci-fi. There is no gratuitous violence or drama, nor clichéd villains or love interests. No, what makes *The Martian* so enjoyable is its straightforward narrative, which presents you with an immensely charismatic botanist of a protagonist and assails him with obstacles, all the while gripping you tightly for the ride. The setting is gorgeous, the soundtrack is on-point and pretty humorous, and the dialogue is not only witty but believable. But the strongest characteristic of the film has to be in its themes. We're told a tale of human tenacity and ingenuity as we see the character of Mark Watney struggle to survive in the desolate and harsh landscape of Mars as the rest of the world looks on from home, cheering him in his successes and mourning his failures. This extends to the theater audience as well, and by the end the effect is evident; we all wanted to be astronauts again.

Because this isn't a story about fighting the bad guys or saving the planet. Bruce Willis doesn't need to sacrifice himself, Will Smith throws no punches, and no deadly alien stalks the characters within the confines of their own spaceship. This is a story about NASA, and I think that's just grand. Since Neil Armstrong first stepped on the Moon, public

interest in space travel has sadly begun to dwindle. While kids still dream of becoming doctors or musicians, the career of an astronaut has steadily become less and less appealing. Perhaps it's because of budget cuts, or because there are now no Soviets to compete with, but more and more people criticize the need for NASA at all. While it took eight years for America to successfully send a man to the Moon, it will be 2035 before Project Orion does the same for Mars, and that plan is already subject to change.

No, what movies like *Interstellar* and *The Martian* are accomplishing is far more important than what the box office tells us. The characters are actually able to discuss things like the components of water and nitrogen without some macho protagonist ever demanding that they "speak English, please." The story, impressively researched, manages to make things like Botany not only interesting but easy to understand, which deserves praise in and of itself. Throughout the film, the message is really quite clear; Science is cool. Here are charming, handsome scientists doing amazing things on screen. There are no lab coats or nerdy, oversized glasses. These movies are showing the world that becoming an astronaut is not hopeless or unnecessary, but really quite awesome. That, I think, is the greatest strength of *The Martian*. Despite our hero being trapped on a barren, inhospitable planet 140 million miles away, the rest of the world not only looks on, but actually cares.



# Get the Band Back Together: Rock Band 4

► by Matthew Dinoff

**B**uild your own band, get outfits, get a van, rock the world! That's right Rock Band 4 is back, so break out those plastic drum kits and guitars, warm up your vocal cords and practice those drum rolls. Live your dream!

Made by Harmonix, the latest installment of Rock Back returns to its original gameplay. Grab your guitars and drum kits and mics and pay a whole new setlist. Start a band with your friends and rock the world. In this Rock Band along the way of your world wide tour you can choose between going with the 'fashion mogul' who found you on a blog, or go it on your own to gain more fans instead of money. Bands will choose between these choices and decide whether they want their band to get more money, or more fans along their rise.

The in game set list consists of over 60 songs, from bands like Aerosmith to Foo Fighters and even a

song by the rock king himself, Elvis. While the in game set list is enticing for new players to the series, Harmonix has said that players will be able to export their song they've already bought on previous next-gen systems into Rock Band 4. Along with that, players could get exclusive pre-order songs depending on where they pre-ordered the game from: Amazon.com, digitally on PS4, and digitally on Xbox One.

And on top of all of those options for songs, Harmonix has said all of their previous DLC will be available, pending on if they can get the music rights to the songs. Players will have over 1,700 playable songs to choose from not including the weekly dlc Harmonix will be putting out.

The peripherals themselves has not changed much; however, upon release there were reports of the bluetooth guitars dropping out of songs, as well as the drum pedal not picking up notes in some of the fast



Publisher: Harmonix  
Released: October 6, 2015  
Platform(s): PS4 and Xbox One

'double pedal' passages in some of the songs as well as some notes in drum rolls not registering and dropping players' note streaks. However, Harmonix, in combination with Mad-Catz, the creators of the Rock Band peripherals have listened to the fans of the game and have released a few patches to help lessen the dropped notes and fix other small problems with the game and peripherals.

As far as visuals go, not much has changed for the Rock Band series. Notes still come at you on the track. The fans have gotten upgraded models and animations along with you and your band mates rocking out on stage. A cool addition to the series is the freestyle guitar solo. Where instead of playing the solo in the song note for note. Rock band takes your strums and button presses and makes your own guitar solo.

Overall, Rock Band 4 is a solid addition and revival to the rhythm gaming genre.

# SOMA: A New Kind of Horror

▶ by Jordan Dollar

For many of us, horror games have slowly begun to replace their movie counterparts over the past decade. It's considerably more enjoyable to pass the controller amongst friends in the comfort of your own home where you can laugh loudly, eat your own snacks, and take breaks during those more frightening of moments. Youtubers now make a living off of uploading their reactions to these particularly immersive scares online, granting these games extra publicity and breathing life back into the horror genre. Unfortunately, this has also lead to the market being flooded with cheap, carbon copies of more successful brands that make it difficult to find true quality. Luckily for us, today's topic does not fall into that category.

Frictional games, famous for such popular titles as Amnesia: The Dark Descent and Penumbra, have once again returned to the front of



4.5 / 5

RATING





the horror genre with SOMA. Placing you within the darkest depths of the ocean floor, SOMA sets its pace not only with a new, terrifying location, but also with what will gradually become a deeply unsettling story. The narrative routinely tackles disturbing concepts, constantly testing the player with moral dilemmas that will leave you questioning what truly makes us human. Unlike most horror games, SOMA rewards the player not with cheap jump scares or repetitive chase sequences, but with a sense of genuine fear that leaves you afraid as much for your spiritual self as for your physical.

That's not to say there aren't threats within the game of course. You will be repeatedly beset by robotic monstrosities, created from a twisted blend of human and circuits that will pursue you in their rage and confusion and yet, leave you feeling oddly sympathetic. The puzzles are intuitive and challenging if some-

times frustrating, and the voice-act-scare-fair. While I'm not sure I will ing is of the highest quality. Many ever put myself through the game's times while playing I would momen-rigorous storytelling again, I am very tarily forget that I was not dealing glad that I did so in the first place, with real people, often worrying forand would recommend SOMA to the safety of these virtual faces andthose gamers who have ever been feeling grief at their inevitable passleft wanting more from modern ing. It's because of this connection horror. to the characters and haunting story of SOMA that players will yearn not Released: September 22, 2015 Publisher: Frictional Games Platform(s): PC and PS4 for action sequences but instead for the at-times philosophical dialogue, which repeatedly asks questions of us that we simply can't answer.

Upon completing the game I had to step away from the screen for a bit. Not because I was unsatisfied or frustrated with the ending, but because of its sheer impact. SOMA's narrative had left me feeling slightly shaken and deeply unnerved. It truly is an original exploration of thought that masquerades as a venture across the sea floor, hiding poignant writing and tragic characters behind what at first appears to be just another





# The Legend of Style: Link's Fashion Faux Pas

► by Zachary North

In the latest addition to the Legend of Zelda franchise, Link goes on yet another adventure to save the world; however, this time he's in it to protect the beautiful lives of fashionistas everywhere.

*The Legend of Zelda: Tri Force Heroes* is a puzzle adventure game for the Nintendo 3DS. For anyone unfamiliar with this franchise, the main objective is for the player to traverse many different lands and dungeons, solving puzzles and traps in order to progress through the game. The story behind this game is that Link is journeying through the fashion-savvy kingdom of Hytopia when a witch puts a curse on the princess, forcing her to wear an ugly skin suit that can't be removed. This puts the kingdom in terror, as now everyone is afraid of going out in their stylish threads, lest they also be put under the witch's curse. Luckily, legend has it that three legendary warriors can put a stop to the witch's plans, all of which



# 3 / 5

## RATING



*Release Date: October 22, 2015*

*Publisher: Nintendo*

*Difficulty: Variable based on players*

*Replay-ability: Maybe*

happen to be three different colored Links.

Cheesy plot aside, *Tri Force Heroes* plays just like any of the other Zelda games on handheld consoles. You move through the game in a top down view, and the fighting mechanics are essentially the same. There is one big difference that ruins the game for me. In order to fully experience the game, you have to play with three players. That's right, not one or two, but three. This odd number is used in the game via the totem mechanic, where the three Links can stack on one another to reach places they couldn't reach individually.

Here's where I have a problem: *Four Swords Adventures*, a Zelda game for the Nintendo GameCube and Game Boy Advance that allowed for up to four players, could be soloed just fine without any problems; *Tri*

*Force Heroes* requires that you use three Links even if you are playing solo. The single player mode forces you to keep track of Link and two clones called "Dopples" that you have to constantly switch between in order to get through any dungeon. After the first couple of areas, this task immediately becomes tedious and heavily slows down gameplay. The multiplayer isn't much better, because you have to have exactly three people that you are playing with either online or locally that you hope can work together to solve each puzzle; the online is made even more tedious by the lack of vocal communication.

There is a very cool mechanic that this game used where Link can swap outfits and get different abilities based on what he is wearing. In order to get the outfits, you need to collect materials from the dungeons to make them. Sadly, this also

becomes tedious because you can only get one item per dungeon run and the choice is random each time. I can't count the number of times I've been unlucky enough to get the wrong material after clearing a time-consuming dungeon.

Overall, this game has a lot of places where Nintendo dropped the ball. They could have easily made the game a lot better by tweaking the solo mode and removing "Dopples". The forced requirement of three players is unnecessary and the random item chance is terrible when you are trying to make new equipment. Don't get me wrong, this game is fun when you have a team of three, reliable people playing, but otherwise it's a nightmare that probably should have had more thought placed in its design and playability.

# Concussions: The Life Changing Injury We Don't Talk About

► by Carson Long

Concussions are one of those sports injuries that we all hear about and shrug off. It seems like such a common injury that it can't be that harmful, right? Give an athlete a few weeks and they'll be right back to playing their game. Football players bash helmets against each other every play and always seem to bounce back from these "minor concussions". I want to dispel some myths about concussions and talk about how serious they really are.

A concussion is a brain injury. There is no such thing as a

"minor" brain injury. Medicenet.com defines a concussion as, "a traumatic injury to the soft tissue in your brain." No matter how it happens, this is an injury that damages your brain and must be considered serious. Seems like common sense, doesn't it? In reality, a 2014 report done by ESPN claimed that "only 1 in 27 concussions in college football are reported." This statistic is staggering, especially considering that these brain injuries carry potential life-long effects.

A prime example of the long-term effects of concussions

can be found in an ESPN story that broke last year about 22-year-old Kosta Karageorge, an offensive lineman for the Ohio State Buckeyes who committed suicide after he left a note for his mother that "concussions had his head all messed up." Unfortunately, there are many similar stories to be read regarding athletes committing suicide after the effect concussions have had on them. Obviously this is a tragedy, but it is only one side of the spectrum. You might have heard of the numerous lawsuits by former NFL stars against the National Football League. The reason behind these



lawsuits stem from the recent focus on CTE (Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy), a terrifying degenerative brain disease which has been contributed to repeated concussions. Does a "minor concussion" sound so harmless now?

You might be thinking, "Yeah, concussions are bad, but these are NFL players who are trained to hit hard. That only happens in the big leagues." Unfortunately this is incorrect, as a majority of reported concussion come from high school sports. According to HeadCaseCompany.com, nearly one in five high school athletes will receive a sports

concussion during the season with the majority of the injuries coming from high school football.

One of the most terrifying aspects of a concussion won't affect you until after your recovery. Those who suffer a concussion are more susceptible to repeated concussions. In fact, according to the website mentioned above, 33% of high school athletes who receive a sports concussions will report two or more that same year. Does this not shock anyone else? These are high school students. These are teenagers whose brains are still developing and are risking their future development

over a sport that doesn't protect them or insure them if they were to get injured. The future of our nation are risking their minds for nothing more than bragging rights.

Many new methods are being tested to reduce concussions across all ages and sports. New technology and equipment are being developed to protect the minds of child athletes and professional athletes alike; yet, the technology needs to develop faster to protect our players. The brain is a fragile organ. We can't afford to risk it.

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