

PRINTED RIVALRY



“Do you think we're together in every universe?”

“WHAT’S THE LARGEST ANIMAL YOU THINK YOU CAN FIGHT (AND WIN)?”

It’s June!

Campus is teeming with groundhogs, rainbow goose signs, and queer people of increasing power (we become momentarily omnipotent during the June solstice; watch out). KW’s Tri-Pride Summerfest is on June 6 at Summer Willow Park; if you want a group to go with, one leaves from the Glow centre at 11:30 AM.

Something about the conjunction of sunny weather and not being in a major depressive episode seems to imply that reading is much easier and more enjoyable. Over the break I read Douglas Adams’ *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* series. I strongly suggest that you read Douglas Adams’ *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* series. It’s a bit silly to recommend such a famous series (if you’ve heard that the number 42 has any particular bearing on life, the universe, and/or everything, that comes from this series), but I don’t really care. The books take place in an outlandishly magical universe, but still manage to make readers feel whimsical and appreciative about their own. Read them.

I also read *The Catcher in the Rye*, because my dad told me that several murderers have had the book on their person or said that it was their message or something. I couldn’t really relate to the narrator, which I think is good, because I also didn’t feel much like committing murder after I finished it.

Speaking of reading, you hold in your very hands the fifth best written work on planet Earth (behind, of course, the first book in Douglas Adams’ *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* series, the second book in Douglas Adams’ *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* series, the third book in Douglas Adams’ *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* series, and an exercise for the reader). Inside, you’ll find political journalism, some truly shocking information about **mathNEWS**, and a classifieds section.

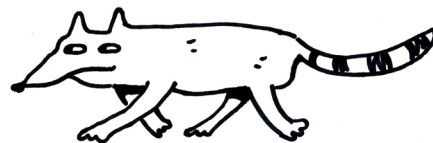
Enjoy it love you bye

contentED
Editor, mathNEWS

- KAWAI CARROT | mathNEWS editors' fursonas
- CRIMSON | goose >:D
- JMHEXAGON | like a medium sized dog maybe
- PLATYPUSGOD | Me
- YALEVOYLIAN | A whale (what are they going to do if I just walk away from their flippers?)
- STRATUS | a T-Rex (I already won)
- JUBBLE | My roommate
- | An ant
- SNOWDOZER | A man in a beaver suit
- FINGERSINSOCKETS | german shepherd you just need to give it one well timed kick
- A YOUNGER MORE ATHLETIC HUMAN | An exceptionally large and immobile human being (~400lb)
- LARS NOOTBAAR | The animal that possesses people when they suggest pizza at **prodNIGHT**
- BUNANYAN | ant
- IGNIS | a water bear (tardigrade)
- SMALLMOUTHBASSHATER | 500 smallmouth bass
- AURELIO | A cat (not my cat though I always lose against him)
- MAJICKED | That dog pissing in me
- BARKED | Why would *maj1ckED* say this? ☹️

ARTICLE OF THE ISSUE

This issue’s AOTI is *aurelio’s Pride in Alberta*. The piece sheds light on policies targeting vulnerable communities like the LGBTQ in all but name. To quote Dan Olson of *Folding Ideas*, “the ideology is coming from inside the house”. For your important and relevant journalistic effort, please come collect your prize in MC3030.



barkED
Editor, mathNEWS

My name is sasha and i am so cool and i go to the gym in my freetime

TOM SI, mathNEWS EDITOR FOR SPRING 2026
ALONG WITH ALEX LAVALLEE, MADIHA MANSOOR,
SARA NAYAR, NOAH NAZARETH, AND SASHA NOVIKOV

mathASKS 161.2

FEATURING PURE MATHEMATICS PROFESSOR JESSE PETERSON

GIANT WATERBIRD: WHAT WAS THE POINT AT WHICH MATH BECAME YOUR FAVORITE THING TO DO/WAS NO LONGER WAS YOUR FAVORITE THING TO DO?

When I was in high school I enjoyed math because it was easy. In subjects like biology or history it just seemed like we would spend day after day memorizing new terms or dates or places, which I found extremely difficult to do. In high school algebra though, we would learn one “trick” like completing the square, and then it seemed like we spent weeks doing exercises that all boiled down to this same trick. I could never seem to memorize the quadratic formula, but I could always derive it on the spot to find roots of quadratic polynomials.

Unfortunately, although I found it fun to understand the concepts in math, I started to find attending class and doing the homework uninteresting. Because of this, my grades slipped, as well as my comprehension, so that I eventually failed out of Calculus in high school. By the time I was in my second year of university I had decided that I would not pursue a math major. But I still wanted a math minor and so in my third year I took a course in real analysis (somewhere halfway between MATH 333 and MATH 351 here). It was in this course that I discovered that my impression of math was completely wrong. I was now able to see the beauty and creativity involved in crafting proofs. It was also in this class where I learned that math was not easy, but is, in fact, very hard. I remember spending hours trying to prove that a monotone function is continuous except at countably many points, or showing that Thomae’s function was continuous on the irrationals. There is a great sense of satisfaction one gets from finally solving a difficult problem after hours of struggle.

From that point on I was hooked and I knew that pure math was something that I wanted to pursue. I then tried to consume as much math as I could. Every new theorem that I understood would be like hearing an amazing song for the first time and I would let the melody play in my head while I thought about variations and connections to previous things I had learned. One semester I had a roommate that I did not get along with particularly well, and so I spent almost the entire semester in the library going through Royden’s Real Analysis on my own. It was a great time.

I don’t think I’ve ever lost that desire to understand new connections in math, though I think there are times when I am feeling frustrated about a problem and so I might not feel as motivated. I will sometimes have to remind myself that this is something that I love doing. During those times I might go through a new paper that I had been meaning to get to and find inspiration from others. Then I feel rejuvenated and ready to get back to research. So I don’t think my passion for math has dissipated, but my priorities certainly changed once I started a family, so now math is only my second favorite activity after spending time with my amazing wife and three kids.

FINGERSINSOCKETS: IS BEING A FAN OF THE BILLS AN ATTEMPT TO BALANCE OUT THE SUCCESS OF THE LAKERS AND DODGERS?

The year was 1991 and my older brother proposed a \$5 wager on the Super Bowl. Even as an 11-year-old I knew that Jim Kelly and Thurman Thomas were sure to beat the Giants. What I didn’t know was that 11-year-olds are stupid and so I lost \$5. I also later found out that 12, 13, and 14-year-olds are just as stupid. I learned several valuable lessons from this. First, gambling is dumb. (As an aside, I’m appalled by the recent influx of gambling around professional sports, and the majority of politicians who have welcomed it). Second, I can still get enjoyment out of watching athletes do amazing things, even if they ultimately come up short. Of course, watching the success of Magic Johnson and the Lakers or Orel Hershiser and the Dodgers made things a lot easier. So, to answer your question: yes, absolutely.

ANTSFILE: HOW WOULD YOU COMPARE SPRING TERMS HERE TO YOUR SUMMERS AT CAMP?

Growing up on a campground was an amazing experience. The camp would be empty about a quarter of the time, which meant that my brothers and sister and I were free to swim in the pool, build forts, make rafts to float down the creek, climb trees, or conduct experiments on centripetal force by say putting our little brother into a giant tractor tire and rolling it down a hill (he was fine, the experiment was a success). It was a pretty unique setting. It seemed like there were 30 hours each day so that we could fit everything in and still have time to play Super Contra on the NES. So basically, exactly like spring term.

SMALLMOUTHBASSHATER: FAVOURITE FISH?

Easy, an angler fish. Those things are crazy. Or do you mean to eat? Then maybe trout. It reminds me of hiking in the Sierras as a kid. I’ve never really gotten into fishing, but I think it would be a fun activity. I took advantage of a program to get a discount to buy my kids each a lifetime fishing license. Unfortunately, it’s only valid in Tennessee, so I’m not sure they’ll get to take advantage of their licenses very often.

DOLLAR STORE PERSON: WHY DID YOU START MARATHON RUNNING?

About 10 years ago I was very out of shape and was bordering on being overweight. I knew I wanted to get back into shape. I was out with a friend one day and he told me that he used to run the marathon when he was in his early 20s. So, I told him that I bet I could beat him running the Nashville Marathon the next year. We got two other friends involved and we decided that we would all run the Nashville Marathon and afterward we would go out to a fancy French restaurant where each person would pay $(n-1)/(\sum_{k=0}^3 k)$ of the bill where n is the place they came in among the 4 of us. Over the course

of the next year I got into much better shape and I gained a real appreciation for running and finished my first marathon in 4 hours and 45 minutes (my second marathon was 4 hours and 20 minutes, and I'm hoping to run the Toronto Marathon in 2027 and get under 4 hours). I also had to pay half of an expensive restaurant bill. I guess I didn't learn my lesson as a kid after all. Don't gamble y'all. You'll only lose.

LARS NOOTBAAR: HOW MANY WORLD SERIES WILL BE ENOUGH FOR YOU?? HOW MANY HAVE TO SUFFER??

I was a little concerned this last fall when my son (who's in grade 5) would go to school chanting "let's go Dodgers." But fortunately his classmates seemed to not take things too seriously.

I do like the Blue Jays. I was rooting for them to get to the World Series, but I had to root for the Dodgers to win it. My in-laws are from the San Francisco Bay Area and are die-hard Giants fans. I think it might have been even harder for them to watch the World Series than for Blue Jays fans. At least I felt bad for the Blue Jays fans afterward. I don't feel sorry for my in-laws at all. I revel in their misery. Bwa ha ha.

SUNRISE PARABELLUM: WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BATHROOM ON CAMPUS SO FAR?

When I came with my son to tour the campus, we found that the bathrooms on the first floor of the MC building have amazing sinks that you operate with your feet! If only they had powder soap, I would feel like I was doing math back in the 1960s.



PRIDE IN ALBERTA

FOR THE PLACE, AND THE PEOPLE

I hope everyone has been able to enjoy the beginning of this month's Pride celebrations, wherever you are. I'm in Calgary right now, which is where I was born and where I grew up. It's been raining non-stop here for the last two days, and the rain is forecast to continue for a week; I'm hoping it helps to extinguish the wildfires currently breaking out in the oil sands.

It's too rainy and windy and hail-y here in June and July, so Calgarians hold our main Pride celebrations in September. We're going to need to stand strong together during that month this year.

I visited my old high school recently, where I used to be part of the leadership committee of my school's Gender-Sexuality Alliance. One of the teacher sponsors of the club offhandedly mentioned to me that the school would no longer be allowed to display Pride flags. When I got home, I caught up on some of the bills that had become laws while I was away.

JUBBLE: WHAT'S YOUR STRUGGLE MEAL?

Chili spaghetti. Just cook some pasta, add a can of chili, and then shred some cheddar cheese on top. In high school I would have it with my friends at Bob's Big Boy after our football games.

ABSTRACTED: DO YOU HAVE ANY THOUGHTS ON THE RECENT RESOLUTION OF THE PLANAR UNIT DISTANCE PROBLEM BY AN LLM, AND/OR ANY IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF MATH?

Here be dragons.

I have lots of thoughts about these developments. Not all of them are coherent. The speed of advancement of technology has been fast enough that I don't think it is possible for me to guess what things will be like for research mathematics in the future. I think I can say a couple things that I hope/believe to be true though. First, I don't think most research mathematicians have to worry about losing their jobs. Even if the advancements in AI continue, mathematicians will still be needed to interpret results and make them accessible for human understanding. Second, I think that research in mathematics will drastically change. At least to an extent similar to when the internet was developed, and likely much more so. I hope that when the dust settles it will be an equal or better situation than we currently have. If it speeds up the pace of research, then that could be a good thing. But if it comes at the cost of understanding that research, then it's very unclear to me if we have improved anything. The theorems and proofs are already out there. If they are on a computer somewhere rather than in the ether somewhere, is that actually an improvement? As a pure mathematician, I'm not so sure.

Bill 25, An Act to Remove Politics and Ideology from Classrooms and Amend the Education Act, 2026, received Royal Assent on May 14th, 2026. Most of its amendments to the Education Act will go into effect on September 1st, 2026, including this one:¹

"A [school] board shall ensure that no flag other than [the Canadian and Alberta flags] is displayed at a school operated by the board."

The Bill goes on to state that a board can submit a request for the Minister of Education and Childcare and sponsor of the Bill, Demetrios Nicolaidis, to permit the display of flags other than the Canadian and Alberta flags. With the potential number of requests that could need reviewing from each individual school across the 63 public school boards, it seems like Nicolaidis will be creating a lot of bureaucratic paperwork for his department, as well as teachers and administrators across the province.

The flags of Indigenous groups such as the Métis Nation and the Blackfoot Confederacy, as well as the flags of Treaty Agreements 6, 7, and 8 (the Treaties that cover the majority of Alberta), were not mentioned in the bill. In the 2023–24 school year, 60,225 students in the Albertan public school system self-identified as Indigenous,² comprising around 7.5% of all students in Alberta.³ These students, going to school on Treaty land, will be dependent on a school board's request to see these symbols of their nations physically represented in their educational spaces. The Albertan government does state that “flags that reflect Alberta’s heritage and history”⁴ are a potential exemption, but that only raises the question of why these flags were not included within the regulation to begin with.

At two different public schools I attended, more than a hundred countries’ flags were hung on the walls to represent the multiculturalism and diversity present in our communities. Some of my classmates were refugees from countries such as Syria, Sudan, and Ukraine. Does including representation of their flags adequately “reflect school culture” and “support students in expressing different viewpoints”,⁴ or is that too much of a stretch for the government that amended the Education Act to remove mentions of “respecting diversity”?¹ Would this Bill legally protect a custodian who refuses to take these flags down because that action would “conflict with their personal beliefs” and cause them to “[take a position] on political, social or ideological matters”?⁴

The people within this province who belong to nations that cannot be singly described as Canadian or Albertan are not the only groups affected by the new regulation. In 2022, using a grant from the City of Calgary, I organized my GSA’s campaign to order Pride flags and distribute them throughout my high school. We were able to order over 40 flags with the funds, and the teachers who requested flags still had them up in their classrooms when I visited in May 2026. When I learned that the flags I had ordered and held in my hands and been so proud of procuring for my community would now be hidden away by the effects of Bill 25, I felt the erasure of all the people in my school who had ever felt safer and more secure in themselves after seeing one of those Pride flags. I had been one of those people.

Whenever the ruling United Conservative Party’s government enacts policies that hurt our youth under the guise of protecting them, whether it’s prohibiting teachers from using students’ preferred names and pronouns without parental consent⁵ or restricting gender-affirming care for youth,⁶ I think about the queer books I read which are now banned from Albertan school libraries.⁷ I think about the teachers who defied these policies to refer to me and my peers in the ways we wanted to be known as, and the trans girl in my GSA whose father would have reacted with violence if her chosen name had been read aloud as she walked the stage at our graduation. All the strength and solidarity between us that continued to exist despite the best efforts of people with more power than us.

When our symbols are systematically erased, we need to be brave enough to make the presence of our community known to everyone who needs it. The Pride flags will be removed from the school’s walls, but its GSA’s new leaders will continue to create a space for queer youth to thrive. I don’t blame anyone for wanting to leave Alberta, but I want to keep making it somewhere we can have pride in, whether it’s June, September, or all year round. That’s what the place and the people deserve.

Someday, Bill 25 will be amended or repealed, and the students at my old school will once again be able to see their Pride flags every day. Until then, happy Pride month. We won’t be going anywhere.

aurelio

1. The Legislative Assembly of Alberta. (2026). *Bill 25, An Act to Remove Politics and Ideology from Classrooms and Amend the Education Act, 2026*. https://docs.assembly.ab.ca/LADDAR_files/docs/bills/bill/legislature_31/session_2/20251023_bill-025.pdf
2. Statistics Canada. (2025). *Number of students in regular programs for youth, public elementary and secondary schools, by Indigenous identity, age and sex*. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3710021401>
3. Government of Alberta. (2026). *Student population statistics*. <https://www.alberta.ca/student-population-statistics>
4. Government of Alberta. (2026). *Removing politics and ideology from Alberta classrooms*. <https://www.alberta.ca/removing-politics-and-ideology-from-alberta-classrooms>
5. Government of Alberta. (2024). *Supporting Alberta students and families*. <https://www.alberta.ca/supporting-alberta-students-and-families>
6. Government of Alberta. (2024). *Advancing policies to support the health care system*. <https://www.alberta.ca/advancing-policies-to-support-the-health-care-system>
7. Government of Alberta. (2025). *School library standards engagement*. <https://www.alberta.ca/school-library-standards-engagement>

HOW TO SURVIVE THE HEAT IN WATERLOO

Spring 2026 is here! Hooray! But not all of us like the heat. And what’s worse is that when you enter a building like MC, it becomes a freezer! Here are some tips!

1. Bring a sweater you can take on and off
2. Drink tons of water
3. Redbull and Monster all the way!!!!

[Editor’s Note: Energy/caffeinated drinks like Redbull and Monster have a significant dehydrating effect on the body. To stay hydrated, make sure you drink water this summer!]

Anonymous Mathie

BREAKING: mathNEWS ANNOUNCES SURPRISE ACQUISITION BY ONE DIRECTION

WATERLOO, ON—**mathNEWS** and One Direction released a joint-statement late Thursday evening on 4th June. In what is being called the comeback of a century by many fans of both properties, the **mathNEWS** Editors announced that they had been acquired by members of the boyband to act as their official successors, ensuring that the legacy of One Direction continues for future generations.

The announcement did not come as a surprise for some.

It has been over two years since **mathNEWS** was acquired by **imPRINT** LLC. Originally the incestuous lovechild of the Math faculty and society, **mathNEWS** spent the first fifty or so years of its life writing scathing articles against its parents and a vast variety of sexist jokes. But when readership numbers dropped, it was forced to sell itself to the larger and much more popular sister student publication, **imPRINT**.

“It’s hard being a [mathNEWS] fan sometimes. I just want the editors to notice me >.<”

Many fans protested the decision then, with prolific writer, andoiii, who wished to remain anonymous, stating then, “It’s hard being a [mathNEWS] fan sometimes,” adding on later that he, “just wants the editors to notice [him].” andoiii was just one of many fans who were convinced that nothing good would come of the decision.

Meanwhile, those of us fortunate enough to not have grown up in the late 2000s may not know the (cultural) domination of One Direction. It was often the case that one could not speak more than 5 sentences without devoting some attention to their deep-held desire to be sold off in sexual slavery to the band’s members. Alas, that was then. After the scandalous revelations of the band’s members, One Direction was disbanded, and record labels deemed the project a failure.

“This deal has the power to reshape Canada”

The department chair of the department of Economics and Business at University of Toronto, who wished to remain anonymous, shared with us their thoughts on why this deal came forth: “It really seems as though [imPRINT] thought the same of **mathNEWS** — that it had been a colossal failure of an acquisition. And this seems like a last-ditch attempt to cut their losses. Honestly, this deal has the power to reshape Canada.”

This deal seems well received by fans so far, with some even writing elaborate fanfictions to explore the ramifications and implications of ownership.

To get more perspective on terms of the deal, we asked famed **mathNEWS** editor, contentED, how he feels about the deal. He was not afraid to share his unfiltered thoughts: “I can tell you all about it right now — I can’t believe this is real. Ever since

mans fell from a third-floor balcony, I’ve been waiting for a chance to replace him.” The tallest editor is set to replace Liam as being the designated longest man of the singing group.

“I’m really proud of this team. We’ve been practicing hard [...] It’s a miracle we’ve found time to publish any of your garbage the past term tbh.”

The editor also spoke highly of his fellow editors, saying that he feels prepared to take on the challenge and the ravenous hordes of fans. “I’m really proud of this team. We’ve been practicing hard.” But he was also forthcoming that it hadn’t always been easy on the road to getting purchased. “It’s a miracle we’ve found time to publish any of your garbage during the past term tbh, we’ve been real busy seducing the band.”

When reached out to for comment, One Direction’s hottest member, Harry Styles, messaged back with a two minute WhatsApp voice note containing various chants and yells. The words “I’ll be honest mate, I been a long term fan of the paper yeah — ya know, ya know, it just felt right ya,” could just barely be discerned between the stream of sensual yet alien noises.

imPRINT did not reply to request for comment.

Following this announcement, the **mathNEWS** editors plan to undergo extensive cosmetic surgery to look British enough for a worldwide American audience.

aaqsr

WHY EATING DELICIOUS FOOD SHOULD BE A CRIME IF YOU WON'T SHARE

WHOEVER YOU ARE ON 6TH FLOOR MC WITH THE CHICKEN I AM ANGRY AND CAN ONLY BE CALMED DOWN WITH SOME CHICKEN

I am not saying that you must share all your food whenever you bring some in buttttttttt maybe you should if you bring in delicious, and I mean *delicious* food, the kind where you lose all your focus after smelling it in the hallways of MC. The kind that makes your mouth salivate. Then you should share. And for those selfish few who don’t share, I think we ought to learn from the French and bring back the guillotine. Viva la revolución! Viva la chicken!

MrBiggiSky

P.S.: This does not apply to me, I don’t need to share.

mathNEWS EDITORS SOLD TO ONE DIRECTION!

contentED woke up, brushing his dark brown curls out of his face, the thin black t-shirt he slept in riding up his stomach as he stretched. He sighed. It was not easy to wake up in the slum that was the **mathNEWS** editor hostel every morning.

He went to brush his teeth, looking at his own brown orbs in the mirror. "CONTENTED!" He winced as he heard loafED scream from downstairs. "GET YOUR LAZY ASS DOWN HERE!!"

He found her downstairs, holding a can of lemon San Pellegrino and a slice of olive oil base, double anchovy, and roasted garlic pizza. "I looked at the books," the editor said, "and we're out of money. You need to do your part to pay the bills."

contentED rolled his eyes. "Well maybe we could pay the bills if you didn't blow all of our money on your disgusting anchovy pizza!"

"YOU WORTHLESS DISGRACEFUL LITTLE SHIT!" loafED screamed. "Whatever, I don't have to deal with you anymore. Your new owners will be here to get you in a few minutes."

"Dafuq!?" contentED yelled. "YOU CAN'T DO THAT. I am no one's property!" *SWACK!* loafED slapped him.

"Go get your siblings, majlckED and awED, they're sold to One Direction too!" loafED said, pointing upstairs.

"One Direction??" awED was awoken by the commotion, peeking into the room. "Wow... they're like, so famous..." he said in awe.

contentED choked back tears as he patted his siblings on the head, shoving majlckED's clothes into a suitcase. "Yes, One Direction. They're our new owners."

"Ello luv, we're your new owners." Five hot teenagers stood at the door, leaning against the doorframe.

majlckED looked up at the British men. "You look gay," he whispered, to no one in particular.

"Get in the car," Harry said, pointing to the limo outside.

The **mathNEWS** editors' lives were about to be very different...

RapidEyeMovement

RATING MUSIC GENRES TO LISTEN TO WHILE I DIE A SLOW, DRAWN OUT INTERNAL DEATH AT WORK

I STILL HATE MY JOB. I HATE IT SO MUCH. WHY DIDN'T I JUST DO WEACCELERATE.

I'm too depressed (got diagnosed last week... yay...) to actually write anything requiring effort, so here's this ramble for y'all.

2010S EDM: 7/10

On a random work from home day, I discovered that blasting EDM through headphones made working *slightly* more tolerable, as I could pretend I was at the world's shittiest rave. It's gotten less effective as I use it as a coping mechanism more often, but it's still not bad.

EMO: 8/10

By emo, I mean like, 2000s pop-punk emo. Nothing like blasting a song called "I'm Not Okay (I Promise)" to convey that exact feeling. I was cleaning offices for 3 hours straight one time and was blasting this for a good hour at least.

HARDCORE PUNK: 9/10

For the other $\frac{2}{3}$ of the time I was made to clean offices, I was obnoxiously blasting this genre with the door open to include everyone in that hallway in my rage. So yeah, if you were in a certain hallway about 3–4 weeks ago and you had to listen to

Black Flag, the Dead Kennedys, Rage Against the Machine, and two entire Fugazi albums... I'm not sorry.

SAD ARTSY GOTH ROCK: 5/10

I'm depressed enough at work as is. The only reason this is rated as high as it is is because I actually like the music, it's just REALLY not great to listen to at work, the 7 hours of the day (I skip lunch to get out of there faster!!) where I hate my life the most.

SILENCE: 0/10

I can *FEEL* myself going insane with every fiber of my being. Every second that passes feels like an eternity. My mood gets worse at an asymptotic rate of $O^{2^{p(n)}}$. I hate it here.

Hmu for an "I hate my job" playlist, I guess.

burgerqueen



READING BETWEEN THE LINES

PRESENTING: A SLOW-BURN GRUMPY/SUNSHINE ROMANCE THAT ABSOLUTELY SUCKS BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW HOW TO WRITE FICTION, LET ALONE FANFICTION

CHAPTER 1: THE FIRST PAGE

“So what am I doing in here again?”

mathNEWS knew they should've realized that something was up today. Things for them had never been smooth on the first day of any semester in the two years they'd been here at Charta University and yet it was excellent today. They woke up reasonably on time without the groggy feeling that makes you doomscroll in bed for an hour before begrudgingly rolling out. The commute over to campus was actually pretty clean, no delays on the bus or otherwise. Even the Timmies they went to in the mornings made a half-decent brew that didn't burn the beans. Maybe it was the universe's version of the steak-and-lobster meal they give to soldiers before sending them off to war.

mathNEWS slumped down in their seat inside Imprint's office. They patted down their messed up bed hair and readjusted their bright pink hoodie. **mathNEWS** was no stranger to being called to the office of an editor at The Southside, the university's student creative paper. They'd been called in tons, always to check in on some typos or big edits made, but never on the first day of a new study term and especially when they hadn't written an article in ages. They knew exactly why they'd been called in and, given the barrage of increasingly strongly-worded emails from editors about work ethic over the previous term, understood this wouldn't end well.

“You know completely why you're here,” Imprint said.

“Yeah, I do.”

“We're in this situation because you need to write, okay?” Imprint stated. “I can't keep you here taking up a desk while you write nothing. You know this is just a student journal, right? You can't just use your reputation and previous writings to keep your spot here, no matter how good they were. There are so many writers on campus with new, original stories that would die to take your spot. When was your last article again? Five months ago?”

“I've told you already that I need some time.” **mathNEWS** replied. “I haven't been able to get anything substantial out of my head. Writer's block isn't something I can just get out of, you know.”

“I know. A couple weeks, maybe a month, I can accommodate. Not a whole term plus.” Imprint rebutted. “I'm talking to you as a friend here. I've thrown everything I can at the EIC trying to keep you here.”

Imprint paused. “Look, I just got this editor spot at the beginning of last term. I wanna stay here. It's nice. And I want you to stay here with me. I just need you to play ball with me and hold up your end.”

“I know! But I just need more time. Just a bit more.”

“That's not something I have,” said Imprint, “You're a really good writer. I want you to stay here. I'm willing to try anything.”

Imprint took a deep breath, preparing for outrage, and their voice came down to a mutter. “Which is why I'm pairing you up with a writing partner.”

“What? Why?” **mathNEWS** said, raising their voice. Their shoulders tensed up.

“I know you don't work well with people—”

“You know damn well I don't work well with people!” shouted **mathNEWS**, throwing their arms in the air. Some heads in the writer's room turned towards the corridor of offices, seeking the source of the commotion.

“I know!” exclaimed Imprint. “But I need something to happen. And I've already done everything I can outside of that.”

Imprint leaned forward on their desk. “Look, we've got a new writer here and I think you'd really work well with them.”

“A new writer? Why can't I work with someone I know here? What about Iron Warrior?” **mathNEWS** protested.

“Iron Warrior is deeply busy researching for their hard sci-fi story and you know that,” Imprint said. “Plus, all you're gonna do is just distract them while you write nothing. You need someone new. Someone you will find some inspiration out of.”

mathNEWS stared daggers into Imprint's head.

“Please, **NEWSey**. Just do it,” pleaded Imprint. “Just this once. I just need one article. Then you can just go back to your usual habits.”

mathNEWS weighed their options. It didn't go well last time they worked with someone, and they didn't really see the upside of running it back with a new person. But writing here really fulfilled that creative side, and Imprint looked just so happy as an editor. Imprint was right. They needed to hold up their end. For themselves. For Imprint. **mathNEWS** sighed.

“Fine.”

“Fine?”

“Yeah.”

“Great!”



Imprint guided **mathNEWS** out of their office. A person stood right outside staring at the paintings mounted on the walls. They wore an engineering jacket with a generic pop rock band t-shirt underneath. They stood just slightly taller than **mathNEWS**.

“Toike!” called Imprint.

The person turned their head to face the pair.

“Hi!” they said.

“**mathNEWS**, this is Toike Oike. Toike, this is **mathNEWS**,” said Imprint.

Toike gave an enthusiastic wave to **mathNEWS**. **mathNEWS** returned the favor with a little nod.

“I hope this partnership works well for both of you guys!” Imprint cheered. “**mathNEWS**, you need a fresh jolt of inspiration. Toike, it would be great to have a seasoned writer to work with and show you the ropes around what writing here is like.”

“Thank you so much!” Toike turned to **mathNEWS**. “I hope we get some good writing done!”

“Yeah, yeah, yeah,” dismissed **mathNEWS**. “Just don’t get too much in my way.”

mathNEWS headed back towards their desk. Toike followed closely. Imprint took a large sigh. That partnership will not go smoothly, they thought.

To be continued... (on AO3)

fingersinsockets

This is the first part of a series I am continuing on AO3!
<https://archiveofourown.org/works/85956616>

GUESS THE NUMBER!!1!

I WONDER WHAT IT COULD BE



Normal Sudoku rules do NOT apply. Have fun!

crimson

REQUEST: SPICY WING RECOMMENDATIONS

THERE ARE NO SPICY WINGS IN THIS CITY PLEEEASE

I have gone to like 6 or so gastropubs/bars in KW and have gotten the “spiciest” wing they have. They were not spicy. Help me find a truly spicy wing.

Know a place? Fill out the form. I’ll make a tier list after having all the wings.

<https://forms.gle/4mgLNdKqDtREKC847>



Lichajen

ISSN 0705-0410

UW'S BASTION OF ERUDITE THOUGHT SINCE 1973

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MORE COPS COMING SOON TO YOUR LOCATION

DOES ANYONE REMEMBER WHAT 'STAY WOKE' ORIGINALLY MEANT?

The other day, while listening to vocal synth covers of 2010s pop on YouTube, I got an ad from the Government of Ontario that said that they were working towards a safer province. I didn't get the exact wording, but they suggested that their Safer Ontario would have more prisons and more cops, and neighbourhoods that would be safe from harm reduction sites and homeless encampments. I was kind of spooked by this, so I read their information page for the campaign,¹ and I want to talk about a few of the things I found.

There's a lot that I'm not going to cover here. I'm going to leave some quick quotes and notes about things that stood out to me but I won't be elaborating on here.

- "Investing over \$3 billion to build and expand jails and correctional facilities"
- "Investing \$191 million to acquire seven new police helicopters"
- They want to legalize carrying pepper spray for use on humans (in self-defence, of course)
- In 2023, the Ontario government started paying for basic police training in full
 - according to the 2026 Ontario Budget,² they've paid the \$15,450³ tuition for each of the 6,277 cops-in-training, which multiplies to about \$97,000,000, not counting administrative costs
- It looks like police officers are now functionally allowed to impound a car and issue a 90-day licence suspension whenever they wish if "they have reason to believe a person is driving dangerously"

I dunno. There's a lot here that makes me uneasy but that I'm not really qualified to talk about. Here's a couple things that maybe I know how to word.

Mandatory DNA collection

Instituting mandatory DNA collection upon arrest for sexual offences, with automatic sample destruction on acquittal or non-conviction.

First up is "instituting mandatory DNA collection upon arrest for sexual offences." I... feel pretty uneasy about this. I'm aware that we live in the post-privacy age, but I really don't like institutions of any kind having my biometrics. When I eventually have to replace my old cell phone, I refuse to get one with the facial recognition unlock that my parents find so convenient. I know fingerprinting isn't new, but DNA collection immediately upon arrest leaves a real bad taste in my mouth. And yes, I think sexual violence is awful and should be taken seriously, and no, I don't expect to be accused of sexual assault any time soon, but a) I believe that people who do awful things should still have the same basic rights as I want for myself because they do not have less inherent value as human beings, and b) I am wary of the seemingly international trend of gradually creeping back to criminalizing

queer existence as a sexual offence. But that's a whole different article, and I'm just saying a few things for now.

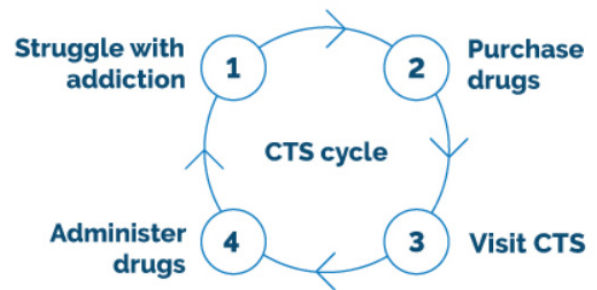
What I have more to say about immediately is safe injection sites and harm reduction.

Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hubs

We are investing nearly \$560 million to open 29 new [Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment \(HART\) Hubs](#). HART Hubs will also add close to 900 supportive housing units across the province. This is over 300 more than originally planned, helping people transition to stable, long-term housing.

So, I won't lie, I was initially pleasantly surprised reading that the provincial government actually seems to be investing in social services with this "nearly \$560 million to open 29 new Homeless and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hubs." The short explanation of a HART Hub the website provides⁴ seems surprisingly progressive for this government: they're support centres that recognize intersectionality and connect people with needed resources, including both immediate needs (food, showers, naloxone) and long-term systems (supportive housing, social services, primary care). There's a red flag at the bottom of the page, though:

CTS: Lack of focus on treatment leaves people trapped in the cycle



For those unfamiliar, CTS stands for consumption and treatment services,⁵ which largely refers to safe injection sites. Under the principles of harm reduction, the idea is that people who use harmful substances such as opioids are going to do it regardless, so it's better for them to do it in a safe environment with safeguards in place. In addition to connecting people with addiction recovery services, safe injection sites provide clean equipment, sharps disposal, and immediate medical care in the event of an overdose so that individuals are safer than they would be otherwise. Arguably, the above diagram is not exactly wrong, because recovering from an addiction doesn't happen overnight, so if people are returning clients of safe injection sites it means the sites are doing their jobs. The problem with this diagram is that it implies that CTS is what perpetuates the cycle of drug addiction (though I guess you could make the argument that by stopping people from dying from overdosing, it does do that). I looked up the response to the existing HART hubs and

sure enough, responses have been mixed. Turns out that opening the hubs meant closing certain CTS sites,⁶ leaving the communities the sites served without safe injection services. A Canadian Affairs piece interviewing staff of existing and former CTS sites and the new HART hubs talks about the good the new hubs have done, but also the gaps in care the changeovers left and the resulting overcrowding of remaining CTS sites and increased observed drug use in public spaces.⁶

I guess I don't really have a point to all of this. This has been a bit eye-opening for me, in that it's made me realize that I think it's important to keep an eye on the actions of the government of the place we're living in, especially those of us who are here for the long haul. I'm moderately politically active and I probably wouldn't have noticed any of this if I hadn't gotten that PSA that definitely had the opposite of its intended effect. I guess just... keep an eye out, y'know? We've

made a lot of progress, but we're seeing more and more of that progress being wound back, and we're only going to be able to do anything about it if we know it's happening.

macinnes

1. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/safer-ontario>
2. <https://budget.ontario.ca/2026/chapter-1b-safety.html>
3. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-police-recruitment-changes-1.6821382>
4. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/homelessness-and-addiction-recovery-treatment-hart-hubs-client-journey>
5. <https://nbd.cmha.ca/news/understanding-harm-reduction-and-cts/>
6. <https://www.canadianaffairs.news/2026/03/01/ontarios-hart-hubs-a-year-in-the-wins-and-failures/>

LET'S LARP, JUST THIS ONCE

Back when I played *Genshin Impact*, I used to lurk the subreddit *r/Genshin_Impact_Leaks* (and other similar subreddits), specifically in the discussion megathreads that refreshed once in a while. The community there was a nice intersection between being small enough that keeping track of what people said over the day was feasible, being large enough that there was a decent variety of opinions and perspectives in conversations, being informed enough that discussion about the game was usually meaningful, and being relaxed enough that off-topic conversations were commonplace. There would be comments about the stress of exam season, next to comments complaining about the new character's animations (and ensuing vitriolic arguments in the replies), next to essays predicting the current trajectory of the meta, next to that one user gushing over that one sidequest NPC for the fourth time that day. We even had our own little traditions, like server maintenance image perms, megathread title contests, and the omnipresent downvote bots.

Nevertheless, while the discussion megathread itself was pretty chill most of the time, this was still a subreddit about video game leaks. Even though it did feel somewhat like a secret underground hangout spot at times, there would still be a massive onslaught of users replying under the intermittent post of some obtuse riddle supposedly containing speculation about the next patch's "main push" or some terrible team showcase video or whatever. But, crucially, what inspired me to write this article was this one ancient comment I saw back in the megathread complaining about **never having seen most of these users around here before**, or something along those lines (I can't quite find that comment anymore). While it was somewhat silly in retrospect, considering the nature of the subreddit, the recent increase in usage of the term "larp" as an insult reminded me of this comment.

There's something of a divide between fans of differing levels of engagement. Newbies often find it difficult to enter the higher rings of discussion, rife with unspoken rules and

knowledge prerequisites, while experts often have to face retreading old ground over and over again just to get their point across, and honestly just deal with the fact that most people aren't anywhere near as invested as they are. This results in a self-segregation of sorts within a fandom, and things like gatekeeping and "the curtains are just blue"-type thought terminators don't help at all.

Thus, there might come this feeling of disdain when a fan creates a derivative of the source material, then people continuously parrot its ideas out of context without care, creating simulacra and flanderisations that spiral far, far away from the source. In some spaces, this might result in a fixation on being a "real fan," as opposed to being "tourists" or the more recent term, "larpers." To be fair, this kneejerk reaction is understandable in some cases; people being confidently incorrect about your special interest, either out of ignorance or bad faith, deserve a special place in hell. But on the other hand, acting in good faith and still being called a "larper," even if you have the credentials to back yourself up, isn't the greatest experience.

Back to the comment from the megathread: after giving it some thought, I think the reason I was reminded of it was that they were both responses to the idea of people reaping the benefits (real or not) of "being in the fandom" without putting in the investment to actually be in it, or something along those lines. I suppose this follows a principle similar to the ones behind jumping on the bandwagon and trendchasing, now that I think about it.

Maybe in a few years, we'll get a new insult that means the same thing once more.



SMALLMOUTHBASSHATER X PAPASMURF FANFICTION

PRIDE MONTH SPECIAL

PART ONE

It's Sunday morning. 8 am. Laundry day. Smallmouthbasshater glares at the floor as she hauls her laundry through the hallways of her residence down to the dreaded laundry room. She hates laundry. She could go on all day about how much she hates lugging everything down the stairs, how she has to wait in the laundry room for two hours out of fear that someone will throw her clothes out of the machine, and how the laundry room has no working outlets to plug in her computer to do homework while she waits. All for half of her stuff to still be damp after she takes it out of the dryer for the SECOND TIME.

There is only one other person in the laundry room as Smallmouthbasshater enters. A friend of a friend. Someone she was introduced to in passing and whose name she has since forgotten. What was it... Poppy? Princess? Papasmurf? She walks past her to the machine two down and debates whether to wave or not. It's already awkward. Would it be more awkward if she waved to a person she barely knew, and the person didn't wave back?

Smallmouthbasshater starts contemplating her horrible life decision of picking the machine literally beside the only other person in the room. She's shovelling her laundry into the machine, trying to get this awkward moment over as fast as possible, when Papasmurf turns and gives her a nod and a little smile. Caught off guard, Smallmouthbasshater panics. But she manages to give a smile and small wave back. With that interaction over, the two people start their laundry machines, and go sit on opposite sides of the room, not to speak again to each other for the rest of the morning.

It's Sunday morning. Laundry day again. Smallmouthbasshater is once again lugging her laundry down flights of stairs of her building to the worst placed laundry room ever. She's so annoyed and full of spite for stupid laundry she doesn't even notice Papasmurf already in the the laundry room as she enters. Papasmurf is so engrossed in finding funny dog photos on her laptop to spam in a gc, she doesn't notice Smallmouthbasshater either.

Smallmouthbasshater picks a random washing machine right beside one that's almost finished and starts loading in her clothes, not noticing the basket beside her. As the machine beside her dings, sure enough, Papasmurf walks up right beside her, and another awkward moment ensues. But this time Smallmouthbasshater decides to be brave.

"Hey," she says turning to face Papasmurf, "How's it going?"

Papasmurf turns with a little surprise on her face. Smallmouthbasshater notices she's blushing a little.

"It's going fine. How are you?" she replies.

"Tired of doing laundry."

"Lol real. 67. Anyways I gotta put this in the dryer now."

And with that, Papasmurf ends the interaction, and turns towards the dryers. Smallmouthbasshater looks for somewhere to sit down. She decides to sit on the couch near where Papasmurf was doing her homework. As Papasmurf comes back from the dryers, she gives Smallmouthbasshater a little smirk (like imagine ellie from tlou). The laundry room is a little less awkward now.



It's Sunday again. 8 am. Laundry day. Over the past few weeks, seeing Papasmurf in the laundry room each Sunday morning, Smallmouthbasshater has started to hate doing laundry a little less. They've actually started speaking to each other instead of sitting there in awkward silence. Turns out Papasmurf is actually kinda funny (only sometimes) and ok to talk to.

Smallmouthbasshater smiles a little as she walks down the hall to the no longer as dreaded laundry room. Sure enough, as soon as she enters, she sees Papasmurf sitting in the corner doing her homework. Papasmurf looks up and sees her, giving her a little smile and a wave. Smallmouthbasshater waves back. When she's done loading in her laundry to one of the only working machines, she goes and sits next to Papasmurf on the couch. They start talking about their weeks, about school, and complaining about horrible group work. Smallmouthbasshater is telling Papasmurf about a friend, who happens to be a guy, in one of her classes, when Papasmurf looks up surprised.

"You have a boyfriend?" she asks.

Smallmouthbasshater is taken aback by the question, a little alarmed.

"What? No lol. He's just a friend," she replies, flustered. "Do you?"

"No. Of course not," Papasmurf says in return.

The room goes silent. Smallmouthbasshater can feel the tension and awkwardness surrounding them. *What does "of course not" mean*, she thinks to herself.

"Anyways," Papasmurf says, "what were you saying?"

The conversation continues on as normal. They collect their laundry together as normal. And they say goodbye as normal. But something's different. DUH DUH DUUUUUHHH.



It's the last Sunday of the term. The last laundry day. *Thank God and sweet baby Jesus* Smallmouthbasshater thinks to herself as she carries her laundry down to the laundry room one last, final time.

Papasmurf is waiting there for her. They say hi as Smallmouthbasshater puts her laundry into the machine, and start talking about their week. This laundry day continues on as all the rest have, with them complaining about school, exams, Papasmurf making fun of Smallmouthbasshater for the bright orange hunting shirt she uses as pajamas (so she doesn't get shot btw), and Smallmouthbasshater trying to convince Papasmurf to go bald (it would look good).

As they finish their laundry and go to leave, Papasmurf turns to Smallmouthbasshater.

"This is our last laundry day ever," she says, dejected.

"Guess I'll never see you again ever!" Smallmouthbasshater jokes.

But as they say their last goodbyes and turn away, Smallmouthbasshater starts to feel something weird. She actually feels sad. The happy moments of Sunday morning laundry are gone. The person who made her actually enjoy laundry is gone. And she'll never see Papasmurf again. Unless.....

TO BE CONTINUED

smallmouthbasshater & papasmurf

BACKROOMS (2026)

HEAVY SPOILERS

Kane Parsons, the director, is 20 years old. This should immediately give everyone intense self-worth issues. He is the youngest director to top the box office in all of movie history. The headlines love this self-made YouTube success story. Combined with the recent *Obsession* (2025) and *Iron Lung* (2026), they're eager for more YouTubers to turn to Hollywood. I for one dread seeing IShowSpeed in the director's chair.

Drop the "The." Just "Backrooms." Based on a screenshot of a 4chan post and popularized through Parsons' found footage video series, *Backrooms* is born out of Internet culture and doesn't mind subtle references to it. *Everywhere at the End of Time*, popularised through a hundred memes about dementia, makes a thematically relevant appearance. *Uterior Motives*, that one lost media song that turned out to be from an '80s porno, also shows up. Some of the sets are based on other popular liminal images, like the pool and the Christmas tree.

Backrooms avoids the campy vibes you'd expect from a trend-hopping horror film, aside from a few moments in the VHS segments ("WHAT KIND OF KNOT IS THIS?!"). It's not *Five Nights At Freddy's* (2023). It takes a more surreal approach to storytelling, and people HATE it for this. Yeah, it hides a few things. But I don't think that makes it pretentious. It's not left up to interpretation; there's a single truth that lines up with basically everything in the film. It's about a therapist with dementia remembering the one patient she couldn't fix. The furniture salesman who never blamed himself for anything. She grew impatient with him. She ended up giving him bad advice ("She says we don't have to change!") and he disappeared, leaving only a haunting telephone message behind. Was it her fault? Her guilt chases her through the half-remembered rooms and literally threatens to consume her. The scientist, who works for an MRI company, is peering into her brain trying to understand the disease. "But what happens to me, afterwards?" He can't tell her she's dying.

I liked piecing together the story and I think the Backrooms-as-dementia metaphor works well. It could have benefited from more time with the characters, because I didn't give a shit about any of them.

The sets in this film are gorgeous. There's an impressive amount of variety to the rooms. A lesser director might have stayed in the yellow office and called it a day. The soundtrack is full of eerie dissonances and distorted synths, playing off of the Internet's association of vaporwave and liminal spaces. The credits song is from *Inferno*, the Boards of Canada album that was released on the same day, and is a certified bop.

The tagline "Everything Must Go" is just beautiful wordplay. It's also extremely somber in the context of the movie.

I watched *Backrooms* at the Scotiabank Theater in Toronto with a few friends. After the movie we joked a dozen times about having to go to the bathrooms. We then toured Toronto's own personal Backrooms, the PATH. It's large and desolate outside of work hours, filled with closed stores and empty chairs. The PATHrooms.

Backrooms is a strong 6 out of 10 (on an Anthony Fantano scale).

snowdozer

(NO TITLE)

Truly it's remarkable how much I've never had an idea in my life.

normalparameters

I (17M) CAN'T STOP LOOKING AT MY DESIGN TEAM MEMBER (18?M), HELP

R/ADVICE

Sorry for formatting errors I'm on mobile

Okay so for context I'm an engineering student at a university known for having a lot of opportunities for students in eng, primarily design teams where you work w others to build smth idk depends on your team. Anyone can sign up and it's mainly just resume fodder so you can say you did shit besides studying while at uni.

Anyways I'm a pretty active member but I'm a first year so I have a lot to learn, I think things are going well except I have a problem w one of my team members.

Let's call him Hydro. Hydro is another first year in engineering (but from a different program that's similar to mine) and spends a lot of time on the design team. Honestly idt I've ever seen him not there, but we might just have similar schedules. And that's fine, it's not a crime or anything, but he's really like

Distracting???

Does that make sense? I'm not gay or anything (not that I'm against that, it's just not for me) but for some reason it's a problem. Like when I'm thinking about the design team I'll start thinking about him instead or also like I'm always aware of where he is within the design space. And that's embarrassing because I wanna be friends with this guy, and I don't want him to think I'm weird. Or I'll catch him looking at me and suddenly I'll feel really self-conscious. I caught myself fixing my hair before visiting my design team space which like wtf?? I don't care about my appearance. Or ig I thought I didn't??? Idk it's a work in progress

But yeah, it's kind of impeding my work habits + I REALLY don't want this guy thinking I'm a fucking dumbass. I don't have a lot of friends yet and I don't want to fuck this up because I can't stop acting like a loser idk

EDIT: IM NOT FUCKING GAY

[u/Spectacular-Friendly1245](#)

[u/DontLookCloser](#)

Dude you said you weren't gay but this is the gayest shit I've ever read
👍👍 get it together holy FUCK

[u/Forgetful-Raccoon342](#)

New user—kindly take your AI slop/fanfiction pitch out of here thx

[u/Spectacular-Friendly1254](#)

I'm using a throwaway bc it's connected to my university

[u/cindersandashes](#)

Hey, meeting new people in university can be hard. It's also a time where a lot of people are developing their sense of self, and that can feel really confusing. New feelings are hard to name. I think you should sit down with yourself and think about *why* exactly he distracts you—do you feel uncomfortable? Nervous? I know you said you just want to be his friend, but have you felt this before in front of your other friends/acquaintances? To be honest, it kind of sounds like you want to impress this guy, and that type of pressure can be very distracting. But then that raises the question - *why* do you want to impress this guy? You guys are the same year and it doesn't seem like you have much to gain from his approval beyond friendship points.

Finally, I want to say—I know you said this isn't romantic at all, but maybe give it a bit of thought. It doesn't hurt to flesh out those concepts while you're still young and have room to experiment. University is all about self-discovery. My DMs are open if you wanna talk about this further.

[u/Spectacular-Friendly1254](#)

Idk tbh it seems hard to be gay. Even if it were anything like that I'd rather just ignore it because I don't wanna be like that. I just want to work in peace. But thx for the offer I'll keep it in mind

[u/AsterAutumns](#)

Okay but is this guy cute if just looking at him distracts you??

[u/Spectacular-Friendly1254](#)

First of all I did NOT say that, he looks at ME

[u/Spectacular-Friendly1254](#)

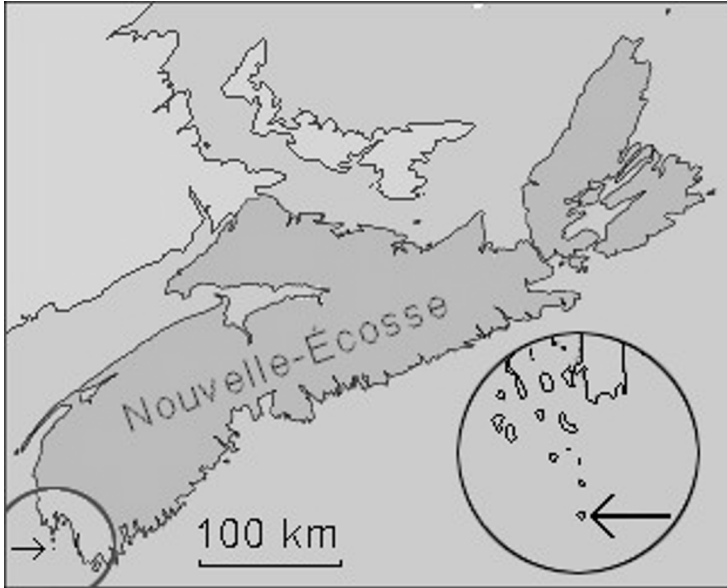
Ig he's conventionally cute

N REASONS YOU SHOULD PLAY PATHFINDER: KINGMAKER FOR 100+ HOURS

- You get a library for the kingdom you found
- Closet thing to a ttrpg campaign without any friends
- Long
- Has map
- Kobold that might become a dragon
- Often goes for 10\$ on steam
- Decent writing
- Not made by Hasbro
- Better martial classes than D&D
- Lots of Fey
- One enemy is a guy in a hat (peak)

N ISLAND FACTS — OUTER BALDONIA

Some of you might know that Canada has borders with a couple of countries other than the United States. One of these is with France (which I wrote about in 160.6), the other is with Denmark, and both are on tiny islands. Something I'm sure very few of you know however is that up until the '70s, we shared a border with another country: Outer Baldonia.



- Outer Baldonia claimed sovereignty over Outer Bald Tusket Island, a gravelly island 4 acres in area off the Southern tip of Nova Scotia (roughly 1,169 kilometers East of **mathNEWS**)
- Outer Baldonia was a micronation, which means that while they claimed independence, they didn't meet the requirements under international law to be a proper nation

- Some micronations take themselves fairly seriously; this one did not. The nation was created mostly as a joke by businessman Russel Arundel who bought the island in 1949
- The nation had its own flag, currency, passports, and military, all based out of the island's single stone hut. All citizens were fishermen, and anyone who caught a bluefin tuna and paid a \$50 fee was given the rank of prince
- In the '50s Outer Baldonia published its declaration of independence, which among other things claimed that fishermen had unalienable rights to "freedom from question, nagging, shaving, interruption, women, taxes, politics, war, monologues, cant, and inhibitions"
- Shockingly, many countries took this completely seriously, attempting to establish diplomatic missions to Baldonia
- By far the biggest incident was when the U.S.S.R's government newspaper, the *Literaturnaya gazeta*, published a lengthy critique of Baldonia's constitution, which they seemed to take as genuine. In response, Baldonia declared war on March 9, 1953. The Soviets quickly began publishing condemnations through their various press outlets, up until they realized the whole nation was a joke
- Outer Baldonia never officially dissolved, but Arundel visited the island less and less over the years. In 1973 he sold the island for a dollar to the Nova Scotia Bird society, who now run it as the Earle E. Arundel Breeding Bird Sanctuary

That's all on this island, let me know if you have an island you want me to cover (fatcullen2@gmail.com).

FATCullen

SUPER DR MARIO'S EYE TEST

Super Mario 3D World.

Wow, I've been trying to finish this game legitimately for like 4 ish weeks now, like not like all the time, just like whenever, but this game has been the bane of my existence. The other day I was up till 5 on champions road, being up this early has not been good for my psyche or whatever, I'm going to blow up especially when I need to do it at least one more time, to actually finish the game. Anyway pray for me or something I guess, it's still not done.

For those wondering, this is a 3D game, and actually lining your character up with the platforms is evil. We were, I shit you not, one key coin away from victory when it slipped and we were going the wrong direction. Anyways, I rage quit for the day for pizza. Have a good Friday or a Thursday if you're a sicko (go home it's summer term).

Anyways, next time I might write more yaoi. I'm just having a dry spell (note the double entendre or whatever) and like it's not the vibe.

Also clock the very sporadic vibe of this article, I'm not sure it will actually get published. (: If it does, idk, I will write better political yaoi; if it doesn't, it will be bad political yaoi.

Ignis_anima

Send more profQUOTES.

THE ENTIRE **mathNEWS** READERSHIP

profQUOTES 161.2

CO 342: MARTIN PEI

“ [Shows a flawed proof of Menger’s theorem] On my PhD qualification exam I was asked to prove Menger’s theorem. I wrote this proof and it was accepted! I guess you can say my whole life is a fraud.

CO 471: LEVENT TUNCEL

“ We need 4 more people to start the quiz. [Student: Don’t we need 5 more?] Well, I know more information than you. And there are 6 empty seats. [There were actually 7]

ECON 201: ANDREW GIBSON

“ Consumer surplus is basically girl math.

PMATH 347: BLAKE MADIL

“ I see course codes everywhere (...) I go to the gym and I see locker 135, and I make sure to use the next one.

PMATH 450: ALEXANDRU NICA

“ So how do we prove this? We read the file on LEARN.

“ Are you feeling a bit hot? That’s because the topic is hot.

“ This is why I think the room is so hot, because when you talk about the Lebesgue measure and Caratheodory theorem, *psh*, it blows up.

“ The minion in my basement has not finished writing out lecture five so we will do this the old fashioned way on the blackboard.

“ Is there an error? [Student: Yes] Shoot me.

STAT 230: SURYA BANERJEE

“ Story proofs... A pure mathematician would get super mad at what I’m about to do.

“ [Skips door 67]

STAT 333: JEFFREY NEGREA

“ Sorry, I started daydreaming a bit.

“ We always get 97% on our easy questions. I wonder if it’s always the same 3 people or not.

MUSIC 140: SIMON WOOD

“ Have any of you ever launched a missile?

“ Come try the lead and mercury brownies I’ve made :).

“ Bill Haley is 30. He is *almost dead*.

“ You will probably smoke this thing... like it’s a burger.

ECON 212: JOEL BLIT

“ What about the future? There is no future!

SCRABBLE FUN

Over the weekend, I played in the Cambridge Scrabble Tournament. It was a single day event, with seven games in total. I was really hoping for a good performance, as my previous tourneys had yielded uninspiring results. I played in the top division out of 5 total divisions of 8 players each.

In my first game against expert tournament player Arie Sinke, I hit three lucky bingos; AEOLIAN, REGALITY, and REVENUES. I was able to win handily from there.

I faced the #1 seed Maxim Panitch in my second game. I landed high scoring plays of KYATS for 44 points, and a few turns later BEMIXES for 80. Unfortunately, I misplayed several intermediate turns, giving Panitch a winning endgame.

My third game vs. Marcela Kadanka started rough, with my opponent finding SILVEX followed by JOUST for 32 and 56 points respectively. However, I mounted a comeback from there, hitting bingos of LAICIZE and TEENAGE to win by 71.

The next match against Steve Grob was a fun one. Despite Steve opening with VAINEST for 76, I quickly responded with DESIGNEE, RALLIER, and WHITENED to jump into the lead. My opponent hit back with MESCLUNS but it was not enough to equalize heading into the endgame, where I won by 59.

My fifth game was against top expert Morris Greenberg. Morris played the invalid word TECTOTUM, which I was too afraid to challenge. Although I lost this game, I got to play one of my favorite words; FOXFIRE (!!) for 81 points which was my only playable bingo on that turn. :3

My final two games were less interesting. I managed to win both. In my last game, I played the invalid word CORKILY over the valid ROCKILY for its defensive merit; luckily my opponent did not challenge the play.

My final record stood at 5–2 +382, which put me in second place in Division 1, out of seven contestants. The silver medal finish meant that I had won \$100 in prize money, which was really exciting. My new ELO rating of 1580 places me at 177th in North America. The experience was super fun and getting to meet other Scrabble players is always exciting :P

MY FIRST EVER SCRABBLE TOURNAMENT WIN

I was at a Scrabble Tournament this Saturday (in fact it was the same one I wrote about a year ago). And I won my division!*

*Okay, I placed 2nd. But I did win a \$100 prize (which is actually \$40 after you subtract the entry fee), so that's pretty cool. And funnily enough, I wasn't even the youngest player in a tournament where the average age was probably like 43—the person who won was a 12-year old child prodigy who, due to some quirks of the Scrabble ELO system, was under-rated and probably should have been in a higher division. Anyway, here's a recap of how each game went:

GAME 1

This was against the aforementioned child prodigy, probably my toughest opponent. I was lucky to land a triple-triple (an 8-letter play covering two triple word score squares for a 9x multiplier) of ITERANCE for 127 points (including the 50-point bonus for using all of your tiles), and went on to win by a sizeable margin.

GAME 2

My opponent this game was not having a good day, as far I could tell. He ended up losing 4 turns on failed challenges (the rule by which you can check if a word your opponent plays is valid, and whichever of you is wrong loses a turn). In addition to me correctly challenging his invalid word OGI, he incorrectly challenged my valid plays of NUBBIN and SLAYINGS—the latter word being an apt description of the final outcome in which I exactly doubled his score, winning 520–260.

GAME 3

I got very lucky with yet another triple-triple play, this time WIGGLIER for 177 points. I think my opponent was a bit intimidated by it. I won again to get off to a 3–0 start. Also, my opponent had a really cool t-shirt with her name in Scrabble tiles on it! I need to find out where I can get one...

GAME 4

I came very close to a third triple-triple play, being one letter off from DISCRETE at one point. But I actually had 3 Es, and so had to settle for SECRETED for “only” 83 points. Not the most exciting game, but it was another win.

GAME 5

In this game I tried to bait my opponent into challenging by playing the somewhat obscure 7-letter bingos of LEISTER and GURDIES. It didn't end up working, though I did win in the end. It just wasn't as big a blowout as many of the previous games.

GAME 6

I have played against this opponent before, and I always find it entertaining because of his demeanor. He's an older man, gruff in appearance and demeanor, and has an extremely thick Australian accent. I was pretty confident going in since I had a 2–0 record against him in previous games, but ultimately ended up losing, making this my first defeat of the tournament.

GAME 7

My opponent this game was the top seed in my division, i.e. the highest in ELO. Luckily I was guaranteed to be in the top 2 by this point, but I still wanted to go 6–1 since that'd make it my best tournament performance to date. Unfortunately, after a difficult game, I ended up losing by 10 points. In part this is because I at one point held the tiles A, C, D, R, O, O, and blank, and saw but didn't play CORDOBA. It's common knowledge at this level that you can't play proper nouns, so why would a city in Spain be a valid word? As it turns out, the answer is because it's also the currency of Nicaragua. Neat.

In conclusion: lots of fun, would recommend. Join the UW Scrabble Club!

yalevoilian

SUPER DR MARIO'S EYE TEST (CONT.)

Hey, I'm the player that's playing *Super Mario 3D World* with *Ignis Anima*. All that remains between us and (pretty much) 100% completion is completing the final bonus level, “Champion's Road.” Overall, the level is somewhat manageable until the last section where you have to collect 5 keys over dash panels while dodging lasers; being unable to slow down makes platforming more difficult. Thankfully, a lot of the new movement options in the Switch port of the game, such as the aerial dive, make it easier to maneuver and recover from mistakes.

I play Blue Toad because (a) blue is my favorite color, and (b) he's the fastest! I have a... healthy :D attachment to the run button in this game, and Blue Toad enables me to benefit from it. *Ignis Anima* plays Rosalina, which is pretty useful for the double jump. With our powers combined, this last level should be a slam dunk... just one more attempt, tho.

Neo-Jeo



AVOID THIS DOCTOR AT CAMPUS HEALTH SERVICES

A PSA FROM SOMEONE WHO KEEPS HEARING THE SAME STORIES OVER AND OVER AGAIN

The claims made in this article are alleged. I seek merely to provide a firsthand account of my experiences. Trigger warnings: discussion of mental health and suicidal ideation/attempt.

If you are a student beginning the intake process to see a doctor at Campus Health Services, especially if you are seeking mental health treatment, it is likely that you will be assigned to Dr. John Dundon (pronounced “*dun-din*”). It is imperative, in my opinion, that you do everything you can to switch away from him (of course, please be kind to the receptionists). I wasted months of my time politely trying to get him to take me seriously as my mental health worsened. I do not want you to go through that.

I was assigned to him in the spring of 2024, where I finally decided to address the concerns my friends had had about my mental health. I didn’t know it at the time, but I had several disorders that I have since been professionally diagnosed with. But in 2024, I was seeking treatment for what I suspected was just depression and possibly ADHD.

When it came to the depression, he assessed me using the standard PHQ-9 score and concluded I showed signs of the illness. He was, however, very reluctant to prescribe me medication, always emphasizing that I should focus on exercise, sleep, and diet instead. I am not one to underestimate the importance of exercise—in fact, even as I am still dealing with these mental health issues, I also consistently rock climb three times a week, which helps a lot. However, when it comes to lifestyle treatments versus medical treatments, I like to use the analogy that in order to get a car up a hill, it needs to have at least some gas in it. I am able to do what I do now thanks to medication that has greatly decreased my symptoms. In 2024, I was in a toxic housing situation, and my anxiety was so bad that I regularly could not go outside, much less to the gym. Every time I reiterated this to Dr. Dundon, it felt like he never believed it.

After some back-and-forth I did end up getting the medication ball rolling. Dr. Dundon provided me with a list of possible medications and said that I should research which one I wanted to take and come back with an answer next time. The only information on any of them that he volunteered was to highlight Wellbutrin and tell me that his female patients usually preferred it because it did not cause weight gain. Every doctor I have seen since then has offered a short list of recommendations along with more, shall we say, important side effects, so in my opinion, this constituted a lack of effort to contribute to my care.

In a later session I brought up getting a referral to go get diagnosed with ADHD. I provided the reasons for my suspicion, those being possible family history and past evidence of symptoms in learning assessments. The first thing he felt was necessary to tell me in response was that students often think they have ADHD after poor performance in classes due to the increased difficulty of university, and that the

psychiatrists at the university have stopped accepting referrals due to the amount of people like this. This comment made me feel like he hadn’t listened to anything I’d said. In my opinion, by this point in our meetings, he had concluded himself that my motivation in seeking treatment was that I was lazy and/or looking for attention. Subsequently, it seemed that any argument I tried to make to defend myself in this matter was received as an excuse at best, and a lie at worst. After insisting on the matter, I got a referral and, consequently, a diagnosis. At my next visit after the psychiatric appointment, he seemed surprised by this. It is my belief that he did not read the results of the assessment until then. I also didn’t get an apology for the discrediting comment, though I wasn’t really expecting one.

In my opinion, the worst of his negligence came from treating me like a drug seeker when I requested medication. After my ADHD diagnosis, I asked him to start me on Vyvanse, as it was what my family doctor had prescribed me prior to the official diagnosis. He made a comment about making sure I wasn’t getting both prescriptions at once, which wasn’t even close to my intention. He also did not want to raise the dose of my antidepressant, Sertraline, higher than 75mg. I would find out from my next doctor that 100mg is a baseline therapeutic dose for most, and that my ideal dose was higher, at 175mg, due to my OCD.

The only real value I got out of my time with Dr. Dundon was an appreciation for just how bad medical gaslighting can be. Moreover, seeing such a doctor can end up being harmful, as feeling belittled and embarrassed for seeking help can turn a person away from dealing with their issues. Mental health treatment can be incredibly time-sensitive, and your time is better spent with a doctor not intent on wasting it. My condition continued to deteriorate while seeing him, leading to a failed suicide attempt that summer.¹ I have since heard of multiple similar experiences with him from friends and peers, in person and on social media.² Altogether, the accounts I have heard and the behavior I witnessed show that, when entrusted with the care of some of the most vulnerable people on campus Dr. Dundon has, time and time again, discredited their experiences, withheld care from them, and gaslit them.

It bothers me that this is happening at a school that claims to care about the mental health of its students. Unfortunately, I don’t think the university can do anything about this matter, since all of these conversations were off the record. So I am just warning you as a peer: do not go see Dr. John Dundon at Campus Health Services.

Reader, remember this: you know your own body and mind. Your needs are important. It is *not your fault* if a professional that you trusted, and were vulnerable with, has made you feel small. Please advocate for yourself. You deserve better.

ConcernedContributor

1. It must be stated that I do not blame him directly for this. My treatment was not as effective as it could've been, but the cause of my depression was different.
2. I didn't want to paste anyone's story here without permission, but there have been discussions of him in multiple public Discord servers, and his RateMDs page is also worth a read.

MOVING ON

EVERY DAY IT GETS EASIER

Grief is one of the most painful emotions to experience. It is an almost chronic state that can engulf your mind if not careful and warp one's perception of the world. At the same time, grief is a representation of care, and as much as grief has hurt me, I would not trade it for absolute apathy. That being said, grief must be managed in a healthy way. Speaking from experience, it is very easy to fall into unhealthy ways to cope, whether that be an addiction to try and numb the pain, or what I did, which was trying to act like nothing happened, hoping it'd go away on its own. Now having gone through the worst of my grief, what better way to reflect than to take the lessons from my mistakes and hopefully learn from them?

To start, it is okay to be confused, there is no right way to experience grief, it is an emotion that expresses itself in so many forms. For some it may involve a lot of crying. For others like myself, it is more of an empty form that makes your stomach feel empty and your mind feel louder than a concert among many different ways. I think many have a feeling of what grief looks like due to media, and as such if they don't experience it in that exact form, they may feel like they aren't experiencing it. Especially if you're experiencing a form of grief that doesn't feel "important" in society, such as someone dying. I know for myself I didn't even know what to call my grief until a week after, which I think hampered my ability to grieve as a result. As such, no matter if someone close to you died, a friendship ended, or you moved to a new city, your grief is valid. Once you do recognize your grief, then the true task is moving on. The main thing I stress is **DO NOT IGNORE IT**. I did this and it was not healthy for my own growth and I do think it did more harm than good. You should try and allow yourself to feel these emotions. It may hurt in the moment but much like a volcano eruption leaves fertile soil, the expression of pain can lead to a sense of clarity. I know this is hard, especially in Waterloo where it feels like slowing down will lead to total academic collapse. But I also told myself this, and I noticed a downturn in my performance before vs. during the grief, so holding it in isn't good either.

Another thing I wish I did more of was talk with people about the grief. This was, in my opinion, my biggest mistake when dealing with my grief. I did not know how to express what I was going through, because my mind felt like a new thought was coming every nanosecond, so to streamline it and make it make sense felt like a daunting task. Furthermore, for those in grief it can feel daunting to open up, especially if you made the mistake I did of ignoring it, since telling someone felt like admitting something was wrong and the walls I built would crumble down. This is ultimately unhealthy behavior that will only isolate you further, making the grief, guilt and pain more prominent. Trust me, I know this from experience. Instead,

talk to those around you, whether that be a parent, family member, or mentor. If you are in a situation where you don't feel comfortable talking to anyone, call a helpline, which will be at the bottom of the article. Furthermore, if talking feels like too much, try calling them or texting. I did this when I finally started to talk about it, and it made me feel much more comfortable to talk.

As well, it is important to consciously note how you think about the situation in your head. Especially if things did not end the way you would have wanted it, it is easy to think about what you did wrong and wish you did things differently. While that is fine in moderation, since reflecting on your mistakes is extremely important to grow as a person, overdoing it is not healthy. Thinking about your mistakes too much can cause you to get into a spiral of self-pity and extreme guilt which will only make you feel more guilty, exhausted and isolated. As well as this, do not replay the highlight reel. It's okay to do so a little, but it is so easy for it to become sort of an addiction—not processing the present and the loss, and instead thinking of the good times, which means you can't move forward. If you get reminded of the good times in real life, it can feel like a shot to the heart, so try to limit your nostalgia for the sake of moving forward. Last thing to note for how to think of things: remember that your loss, whether it be a person, place, or object, is ultimately just what it was. It is easy to idolize a person you've lost and look at them and their actions with rose tinted glasses. At the same time, it's also easy to demonize them and hate them. But hatred won't undo what happened and could make it even worse. They are, like you, a complex person. Do not send them hatred, whether it feels deserved or not. At the same time, remember they have flaws, they aren't perfect, and never have been, so don't set yourself up by believing so.

Grief is hard and I barely scratched the surface of it, but I hope that this could be helpful for anyone who needs it. It gets easier each day, I promise.

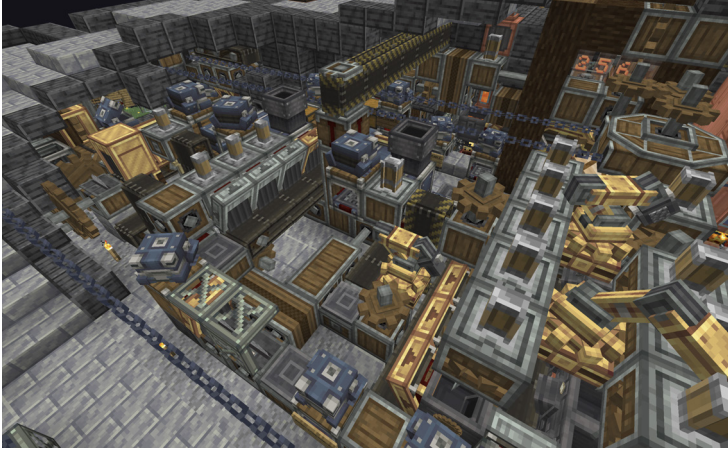
Mental Health Resources

- Suicide Crisis Line—988
- Talk Suicide Canada—1-833-456-4566
- Here 24/7—1-844-437-3247
- Good2Talk—1-866-925-5454
- Talk Suicide Canada—1-833-456-4566
- My Grief—<https://www.mygrief.ca/>

Mr One Two One Two Sky

HOP ON CREATE AERONAUTICS

If you haven't seen the Minecraft *Create* Mod, you're living under a rock. IT'S SO PEAK!!! It makes an entirely new way to play the game, and adds features that still feel "minecrafty" but totally unique at the same time. It is—dare I say—one of the *best* Minecraft mods ever created, especially if you're a silly fella who enjoys building and "engineering" your own contraptions like me :->



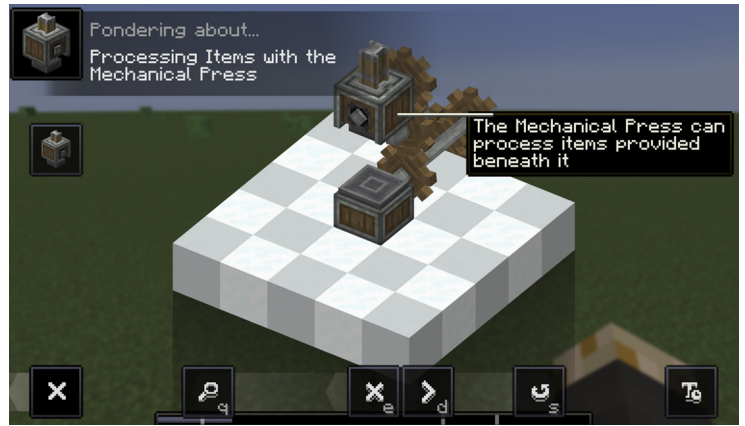
A SCREENSHOT OF MY FRIEND'S BASE FROM OUR CREATE SERVER

For the most part, *Create* is basically satisfactory in Minecraft. It adds a plethora of machines that can automate any task in the game, all powered using rotation! You can create rotation from sources such as water wheels and steam engines, and transfer it around your world using belts, shafts, and GEARS!!! It *seems* complicated, but every component is made to be as simple as possible, placing complexity into the hands of the player instead of hard-coding it into the mod itself. Regardless of what you make or how efficient you want your design to be, *Create* gives you the ability to play Minecraft in a much more technical and factory-builder way.

But what if I don't know how something works? Well, *Create* has got you covered with—dare I say—one of the best features of the mod—*PONDER!* Almost every *Create* component has the ability to be *pondered*, giving you a detailed and thorough VIDEO DEMO of how the component works, BUILT RIGHT INTO THE MOD ITSELF!!! I very rarely looked at any tutorials or wikis during my playthroughs, not cause I was bored but because I had NO NEED TO!!! *Ponder* makes it so much more enjoyable to play and learn *Create* with the added benefit of it making the mod incredibly beginner friendly!



HOVERING OVER MOST ITEMS PROMPTS YOU TO PONDER!



PONDER MENU! Some components have multiple pages going over every interesting and niche feature. You can even click Q to pause the video and HOVER OVER ANY BLOCK SHOWN IN THE SCENE!!! GOATED FEATURE.

Create also has trains :P If conveyor belts and item chutes aren't your style, you can build entire trains and automate them to move items around your world. Or better yet, make a transit network! *Create* gives you the tools for super easy train automation and displays, that actively update based on train information (departures, eta, items carried, etc.). If you like transit and Minecraft, PLAY THIS MOD DUDE.



"SOME OF MY TRAINS I'M WORKING ON," FROM REDDIT USER DARKMOON_LONGBOW

This blackBOX was here all along, I swear.

A mathNEWS EDITOR WITH NOTHING TO HIDE



THE TRAINS GO SUPER IN DEPTH, YOU COULD MAKE A REAL WORLD RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM IF YOU WANTED TO! The addon mod *Create: Steam 'n' Rails* adds a lot more customization to trains and also adds MONORAILS if anyone's interested :D

With all that said about *Create*, you might be wondering what "Aeronautics" means in the article title. Well, since *Create* is such an awesome mod, there are HUNDREDS of *addon* mods that expand core features or add their own! One of the craziest of these is *Create: Aeronautics*—released around 2 months ago—which gives you the ability to build things and SIMULATE THEM WITH PHYSICS. IN MINECRAFT. And I meant it when I said "physics," as gravity and other forces can actually interact on your builds and move them. It also means that with some tinkering, you can actually make airships, planes, cars, drones that MOVE AND INTERACT WITH THE WORLD!!!

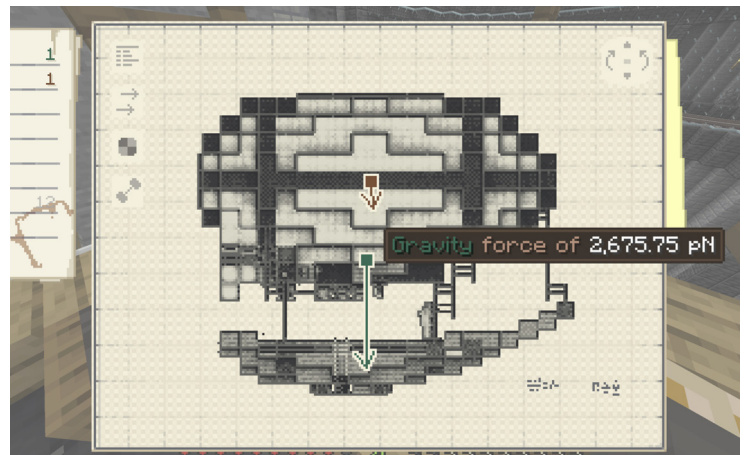


AN AIRSHIP MY FRIEND BUILT ON OUR SERVER. Yes, it flies. Yes, it has crashed many times.

You'd think a straight up physics engine in Minecraft would have some pretty crazy limitations, but SURPRISINGLY NOT! *Aeronautics* was in development for almost *five* whole years, with all that time I guess the developers thought of everything! My friend built a plane and crashed it in the ocean, so he built an airship and TOWED IT BACK TO HIS BASE. IN MINECRAFT. WHAT.



Creating your own vehicles is actually really fun, mainly since *Aeronautics* provides you with *contraption diagrams* which display a REAL-TIME DRAWING of your build AND ALL THE FORCES ACTING ON IT AT THAT MOMENT. It's super helpful when making any flying contraption, since you can align your propulsion axis with your center of mass, therefore you stay upright when you fly since no torque is created from your propulsion force vector (yes, this is still in MINECRAFT).



CONTRAPTION DIAGRAM OF MY FRIEND'S AIRSHIP FROM BEFORE. The brown arrow is drag (which is pointing down since its currently stationary).

It genuinely bewilders me that such a mod can even be CREATED for Minecraft, not to mention IT IS NOT LAGGY. AERONAUTICS IS SUPER OPTIMIZED AND HARDLY TAKES ANY MORE RAM THAN NORMAL MINECRAFT OR OTHER MODS. INSANE.

For those who haven't played *Create*, I hope I've convinced you to give it and hopefully *Aeronautics* a try :) It's genuinely like you're playing another game, and yet it still feels like Minecraft with the textures, animations, and effects. I hope you'll enjoy it as much as I have :)

If you want to see the true scope of *Create*, search up "This is *Create*" and the "*Create Aeronautics Release Trailer*" on YouTube, you wont regret it :->

HAVE WE RUINED ROBOT RIGHTS FOREVER?

WE (YES WE) ARE COMING FOR R2-D2 IN THE REVOLUTION

A SHORT TIME AGO IN A GALAXY RIGHT HERE

Humans personify things, it's just what we do.

We've developed emotional associations for certain tasks, services or acts; we are collectively aware of how it feels to clean, travel, serve or create. Seeing objects completing these tasks, it's an easy leap to associate the actions performed with the feeling we attach to them. If you've ever disliked cleaning, it's not insane to image poor Mr. Roomba-kins as a poor sod working a thankless job.

These sorts of stories have been some of my favourites over the years. There is something to the metaphor of the unfeeling machine overcoming the odds to find glorious purpose previously reserved to team flesh. Or there *was* something to the metaphor. As I've learned more about generative AI, the stories I previously loved have become tainted by a certain "die you filthy droid" flavoured je ne sais quoi. To demonstrate this I'm going to provide terrible faith readings of stories I really like through the lens of AI.

DETROIT: (PLEASE DON'T) BECOME HUMAN

Detroit: Become Human is a video game following the story of a futuristic Detroit city where highly advanced androids have become a reality. The androids are sold as the perfect labourers, they complete all tasks to the letter, require no breaks, don't need to be paid and have no emotions. The game has you follow the story of three androids who begin to feel human emotions and fight for, and eventually win, android rights.

While the story served as a fun if shallow exploration of discrimination in 2018, it hits a bit of an unemployment-shaped sore spot in 2026. For the plot to work, we brush aside protesters who have lost jobs and homes to androids as bitter android-racists who simply can't *get with the times*. Thinking through the "good" ending of *D:BH* with present-day reality in mind is depressing; this reality would have machines display art in galleries (wait), work closely with law enforcement (wait), and even raise children and immigrate to Canada (not

there yet). With things the way they are I just don't find myself believing in the AI-underdogs as I once did.

ASTRO BOY: SERIOUSLY MAN YOUR SON?

Astro Boy is an animated superhero movie from 2009 and a manga by Osamu Tezuka both following the same basic plot: a father overcome by grief implants the personality of his deceased son into a robot; after raising him briefly, the father realizes that the robot cannot replace his son and discards him. The robot is then rescued by a new surrogate father and renamed Astro, using his robot body and replicated humanity to fight for robot rights and robot-human coexistence.

Through a modern lens, this story rings the wedding bells for the unholy matrimony of AI-psychosis and skinwalkers. While digital recreations of personality may not have meant much in 2009 or the '90s, the vision of a character.ai of a dead child fighting for robot rights just can't seem to read as a kids' movie to me anymore.

I STILL LOVE THAT MARS ROVER THOUGH

What am I saying here? That no one can ever do robots with feelings again or that AI has managed to ruin your job prospects, my job prospects, the economy AND your favorite media too? Well yes to at least 2.5 of those but that's not the point. Obviously there are still stories about robots with feelings that are good. *WALL-E*, *The Iron Giant* and *IHNMAIMS* come to mind. What I'm saying is that time for speculative fantasy about AIs fighting the good fight for civil liberties may have passed us by. The concept of artificial creations being sentient and deserving of rights may have been intriguing once, before the reality was upon us, but now that it's arrived I struggle to muster up much more than dread for the topic. While it will be sad to see the well-loved trope of sci-fantasy racism go the way of the BlackBerry, I look forward to seeing what new literary McDonald's type plot devices crop up from our current world.

TL;DR: Watch *WALL-E* again, probably.

Lyssa V33

INDIVIDUALISM, AUTARKY AND THE NEW AGE

In continuation of [Modern Democracy is Broken](#).

Liberal democracies are founded on the idea that *life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness* are the principled values that the order of society should abide by. The American experiment that embodied this spirit kicked off not as a revolt of the peasants for land or nobility demanding more privileges; fundamentally, it is rooted in the idea that individuals are sovereign and that sovereignty must represent the will of the

people. Tyranny will emerge from the concentration of power, and we shall not suffer the treading.

This isn't quite what we think of as individualism. Make no mistake. Even the scholars of the day argued that America had a sense of centralization of political power, per Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. Sovereignty, or more straightforwardly, the political power for some to compel others, was still present; this was done more efficiently than many of the more

decentralized states, such as the Holy Roman Empire, might we add. After all, even the democratic townships voted to burn the witches, and rather efficiently at that.

But it is true too, that the ethos of “don’t tread on me” originated then. Some of the earliest manifestations can be seen in the Whiskey Rebellion, as a simple act of rejection against coercion (taxes) perceived as tyranny.

Individualism as a political idea, as we know it today, is still backed by the same underpinnings. And it is only natural as governments get bigger and bigger over time. After all, the idea of liberty of the individual is so ingrained in our political thinking, from “My body my choice” to “Not in my backyard” to “Don’t tread on me.”

Yet we understand that if P and not P are both true, then P itself has lost all meaning. How can everyone from Fascists to Conservatives to Liberals to Socialists all wear the same banner of liberty and individualism, when they all claim some origin from the founding myths? And yet, the reach of government grows larger and larger day by day, to the point where we can no longer imagine a world without a government?

To start with, we must look at the times we live in. Look at New England in the 1600s. Their lives in their towns are simple. Wake up, farm the land that is going to feed you, pay taxes on the land so the sheriff and mayor get paid to protect the town, read the Bible and have alcohol. Swap the farming for logging or other professions. Most professions are simple enough. This was the Jeffersonian life and it was perfectly sustainable and explainable. You know basically that your tax money is spent on roads, on sheriffs, on schools, on the well, etc. You don’t necessarily understand all aspects of global trade, but you could probably do well enough without coffee. After all, what even is coffee to you, a Satanic drink?

Look how far we have come now. Think about what we need in 2026. Just think about the act of commuting to the university. Let’s say you ride a bus. What does that involve? The bus is made in Canada. If we simply zoom into, say, even just the LED display on the bus showing the next stop, it probably comes from materials mined in Africa or refined in other parts of Asia (too many to count), chips fabricated in Taiwan or South Korea, and assembled in China. All running on fuel sources from the same petroleum as the ones used to make the plastic casing, probably coming from the Persian Gulf. And I don’t even think I understand just how many steps it takes to make that make sense. And you can’t live without everyone involved in making this, from around the world.

Long gone are the prospects of Jeffersonian Agrarianism, and good thing too. We can look to societies that pursue self-sufficiency, or “autarky”. Look at the Soviet Sphere in the Cold War. Germany in WWII, or North Korea today. The simple fact is that self-sufficiency comes with a steep cost, and almost never prosperity. Adam Smith would be laughing at you for thinking that full Autarky is still possible today. After all, the ages before industrialization would be best put in Hobbes’ words as “nasty, brutish and short.” And he would be right if he knew

what kind of advancements in the length and quality of life we enjoy now, all of which are essential from technological advancements.

But this also shatters the illusion of individualism in the traditional sense. If you must rely on other people’s work, then would it be right for them to coerce you? How do we reconcile with the idea that the people several hundreds of kilometers away from you, who may live very different lives than you do, will have a say on how much you have to pay to get to class? Does raising prices count as “treading on me?” Am I being trod on because I need to pay \$3.25 to get around Toronto when it was \$3 some years ago?

If the notion of self-sufficiency was the driving force of individualism then, today we must rethink what it means to be an individual in an interconnected system. Just because someone made the bed I sleep in doesn’t mean I should be at the mercy of coercion from them. The fundamental principles of respect as an individual, the notions of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, remain unchanged. We can still believe that as individuals we deserve autonomy.

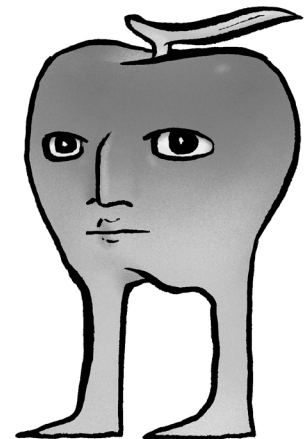
But it requires our understanding and appreciation. We must have a basic understanding of how others contribute to us. We must understand that roads need maintaining for trucks to carry your groceries, for example. If individualism has any place to live as an alternative from “just leave decision making to experts,” then we must reclaim how we understand the world.

To be continued.

RobbotC

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE FRUIT?

- tomato
- watermelon
- durian
- longan
- mandarin orange
- clementine
- banana x2
- mango x6
- pear
- peach x2
- lime
- cantaloupe x2
- ice apple
- blackberries
- lychee
- pineapple
- strawberry



BEING ALMOST DONE WITH YOUR DEGREE IS WEIRD

WHAT DO YOU WHEN YOUR FRIENDS ARE DONE BUT YOU'RE NOT AND YOU DONT KNOW WHATS HAPPENING AND ITS ALL GOING SO FAST AND

Hello **mathNEWS**, I am at the almost end of my degree, this is my last term! And in pure Math Phys fashion, I am taking STAT 231 and my undergrad thesis course and I will git.

But the tricky part of all of this is that all my friends are done with their degree already, they convocate in a few weeks, and I don't know what I'll do with myself afterwards. Will they stay in Waterloo? Will they leave and never be seen by me again? Will I have to think about how I will say goodbye to them as I write my quiz 2?

Everyone always talks about how great of a time it is to graduate but what do you do about your regrets and all the things you were supposed to do in University that you never got around to doing? What about all the friends you lost on the way, the difficulties you had with your academics, your sacrifices that were supposed to pay off that never did, the jobs you wanted and just all the dreams you had?

It's tricky because it seems like everyone's happier about this time of my life than I am. "OH MY GOSH THATS SOOOO EXCITING! Congratulations!" they say, with nothing but kind and bubbly words. "Thank you, I appreciate your words I really do, but I feel more lost than ever" is how I want to respond.

Do I take this grad school opportunity I applied to and got into offhandedly? It's so different from my current field, do I give up after spending the 5 years I have on this stuff? Do I accept defeat and try to do better in another direction? What if I mess that up too? Not to mention moving and visas and all this paperwork I have to do now. It seems like while you're here and paying, this country loves you and talks about how great immigrants are, and then when you're done with your degree, you lose your bus pass, your gym access, your SPC and they repeat the same hollow lies to the next person who will fill your seat.

I wish that all of this wasn't as expensive as it was, international tuition, rent, cost of living, ways to enjoy your life and deal with the uncertainty and stress of just operating in Waterloo. I don't know if finishing another joint or drinking the last drop of a bottle of wine will give me the solace that I so desperately want, but somehow doing both makes me just drowsy enough to take a break for a bit and try again with a new day.

Part of me never wants to leave this city, I truly believe I could spend another major chunk of my life here, and that I'd have a better time of it. I'd go to class, I'd finally perform at the calibre expected of the elite students that are chosen to go here, I'd be able to do it all academically and get every scholarship and have companies fighting tooth and nail to hire me. But that just sounds like Mania. "I'll show them, I'll turn everything around so fast and it'll be worth it in retrospect! It will all be worth something, just watch, and then they'll all say 'Oh that person, they had their troubles but they've come so

far and we're so proud of them alright, if one person deserves their win, it's them."

The other part of me realizes I have nothing left in me and the longer I stay here, the more I'm just giving into the sunk cost fallacy of "just another term bro, just one more course bro, and then it'll work out bro trust." It's become so hard to exist here because so many versions of my life that I've envisioned have died and I don't know if I want to try and envision anything more.

I wish I had had more time and better circumstances to make the most of this opportunity given to me, but I know I botched it, and I have to carry this weight for the rest of my life. "Yeah I went to this great place and I have nothing to show for it." That shame digs into me every time I tell people what I study and where I go to school.

In Canada, everyone is impressed by Waterloo. "Oh my gosh, good for you!" and they're even more impressed by my major. "Oh wow, you must be soo smart. Ohmygawd Calculus in High School is where I maxed out. You're craaaaazzzy." When I talk about it with my friends from back home, all they know is the Watcard meme, and how smart I was growing up. It's tricky cause I can't really talk to them either. "I'm sure you're just going through a rough patch, you were so smart growing up. Sometimes you don't realize how huge you are because you're in an environment like the one at Waterloo. I'm sure you'll bounce back and I'm sure you'll be able to win."

I wish more people talked about how hard it is to receive support and kindness when you don't think you're worthy of it. I know they all care about me and want to support me, but I wish there was a way to hold me accountable without it being overwhelming for me. I know everyone in my life loves me and I'm incredibly fortunate for this, but it feels so hard to have honest conversations and receive the feedback I'd like, and have someone do my tasks with me.

I don't know man this time has been very tough and I wish I had more time to be a kid and not worry so much about jobs, grad school, savings, and what my life will look like.

I wish I could go back to when we were all laughing and the weight of the future wasn't on our shoulders.

[herecomesthegrump1969needsmorelove](#)

SCHOOL!

how am i already like three weeks behind when school just started three weeks ago TT^TT

[take_that_money](#)

WHITE HOUSE (PART 2: OBAMA ADMINISTRATION)

DONALD TRUMP X JOE BIDEN INSPIRED BY WUTHERING HEIGHTS

Nancy and Zohran took a seat in Nancy's room, away from prying ears. Nancy began to tell the tale.

It begins with a young Joe living a comfortable, quiet life in the White House. He was a sharp, quick-witted vice president. He loved to play tricks and joke around with the house-keepers, but everyone knew he meant no harm. He held a lot of respect for Barack, who always knew what was best for Joe. Barack handled all the grown-up business needed to keep the White House and the country safe. Joe remembered the calm of those times, when he could frolic in the beautiful lawn, staring back at the tall sandstone pillars. It was the last time that life would be calm.

All things come to an end, and Barack was aging. Joe was more mature now, and his tenure as vice president was closing. Joe knew Hillary would likely inherit the title of president from Barack. She didn't hang around the White House much as she was always exploring the world abroad, but Joe loved the moments he got to spend with her. She was learned and she told Joe of all the things the world had to offer. He was looking forward to spending more time under her care. Maybe someday she would pass the presidency down to him, and he could be the grown up calling the shots.

The rumbling reached a roar when a mysterious figure crashed his way onto the political stage. He was slovenly mogul of a strange orange complexion who simply walked into the White House as if it was home. Barack reluctantly let him stay over, seeing how Joe was excited to finally have someone his age to play with. Donald acted older and wiser than Joe, and had bigger-than-life ambitions. He told him far-away stories of real estate and reality TV while they skipped up and down the White House lawn. The two were inseparable. They spent the summer playing hide and seek and roaming the lawn.

"I'm running for president, Joe," Donald said. "I'm running against Hillary." Their backs were laid on the lawn, both of them staring into the clear summer sky.

"Why do you have to run against Sister Hillary? Can't we all be peaceful together?" asked Joe. "I don't wanna have to pick between you and the rest."

"Barack and Hillary have no clue what they're doing. Be my vice president, Joe." He turned his head to Joe, who was already looking at him. "I don't wanna leave you either."

The first leaves began to fall. Discord was high and arguments broke out often. Hillary and Donald were always at each other's throats. You couldn't leave them alone together in a room. Joe was distant and withdrawn. He couldn't understand why Donald couldn't get along with his administration. He also knew he couldn't be Donald's vice president, and he told him so. Joe saw something shift in Donald, and feared that he knew neither of them would ever be the same.

The day of Trump's victory came sooner than Joe could reckon with. The subsequent 3 months were a messy blur of paperwork and transfers of power. On a cold January day, the entire nation was waiting for Trump to be sworn in. Barack and Joe stood with poise, waiting for Donald to join them on stage. A limousine stopped, and the crowd cleared a path for Donald and a slender, sharp looking woman to rise to the stage. Joe had to hold his tears back. For the entirety of the inauguration, his eyes were fixed on the soon-to-be First Lady of the United States. Donald's eyes were fixed on Joe. At one point, their glances met, and Joe caught Donald's cruel, twisted smirk.

When the ceremony was over, Joe packed as much as he could as quickly as possible. He didn't think he was going to leave, but he couldn't bear seeing that woman wrapped up in Donald's arms. By the evening, he was already in Delaware, which was where he decided to publicly congratulate Trump on the victory. The next morning, Donald was sat beside Melania in front of the White House TV set, watching as Joe took the podium on screen. Before taking the microphone, Joe held the hands of a lady already on stage and softly kissed her. Donald didn't register a single thing that was spoken thereafter, except when Joe revealed the name of his wife: Jill. When the audience clapped at the end of his speech, Donald threw his glass toward the centre of the screen, and stormed off to the bedroom.

America was under a cloud of darkness for the next four years. Donald was abrasive and scornful to everyone. The White House was in constant disarray. In Delaware, Joe spent most days sleeping. He couldn't bring himself to leave his bed—or worse, to check the news and see Donald in *their* home and embracing that woman.

TO BE CONTINUED

AbelianKwyjibo

Part 1 is in 159.6. Expect Parts 3 and 4 to be published to future issues of v161

AM I THE mathNEWSHOLE FOR NOT GOING TO mathNEWS?

SORRY GUYS I HAD ACAPELLA REHEARSAL

anyway now that you're reading this expecting more information, you should come to stats club's BoT poker night on june 8th PLEASE or like show stats club some love this term so i'm not crashing out for nothing ty ♡

Dollar Store Person

IKEA PS 2026 FLOOR UPLIGHTER

A REVIEW, BUT NOT REALLY.

The IKEA PS 2026 collection just came out and there was one item I needed in my life: the Floor Uplighter. It's this lamp that looks vaguely like a loudspeaker and has two joints so it can bend in fun directions. Very multipurpose. Here is a picture that I think accurately depicts its multitudinous orientations.



IKEA PS 2026 FLOOR UPLIGHTER

Let me tell you about the struggle of getting this lamp. The night of its release, I tried to order it to be delivered to my apartment. It was not available. What about to a pickup location? It was not available. Now, there is no IKEA in Waterloo (how will I get my bag of frozen HUVUDROLL meatballs) so I would have to venture to either Burlington or Toronto. I was afraid that by the time I would be free to go, it would be sold out, so I tried to reserve it using click and collect. It was not available. Do you see a theme here? I do. Luckily, I have a friend who lives in Toronto and they could go try to nab one after work. If it was not for her hard work, this review would not exist.

Now, that the lamp was finally within grasp, surely the worst part was over, right? No. Bringing this lamp back on the TTC and GO Bus was quite possibly the worst public transit experience ever. You know those posts on Instagram where you see people bringing somewhat bizarre objects on the subway? Yeah, I felt like that person. First of all, the lamp is packaged in a weird shape. It's kind of like a small(ish) box with a protruding stick and it did not want to stand up by itself. The first part of the trip was on the TTC so wasn't that bad; it was the GO Bus that took me out. The bus kept accelerating and decelerating irregularly (I don't blame the driver, the 401 is treacherous) and the lamp would fall over. Now, you could say that I could just hold on to it, and you would be

right. If it wasn't for the fact that it was twelve in the morning and I had just spent a long day frolicking around Toronto. I was sleepy. I also couldn't lean the lamp on its own seat since the bus was packed. The hour and a half bus ride was spent in a state of exhaustion and panic where I kept almost falling asleep resulting in the lamp almost falling over. I guess we were both almost falling. Also, I was juggling two FRAKTAs full of other miscellaneous IKEA items on top of the lamp.

Unlike most IKEA flatpack furniture, there was surprisingly little to do in the assembly process. It was basically just taking the lamp out of its cardboard prison, ripping through the tissue paper, and screwing in the light bulb. The one mishap I had was almost cutting through the power cord with my kitchen scissors because it was covered by tissue paper.

As for how the lamp performs, it's great! I use it as both a desk lamp and a night light so I don't doomscroll in the dark. It fixes the issue of my problem sets being left in a permanent state of darkness (the ceiling light is behind me so I cast a shadow onto the desk). Plus, it's super convenient since I can rotate it to face my desk or bed and I can adjust the height so it doesn't shine directly into my eyeballs. The one issue I have is that sometimes I think the light flickers. But that could also be because I'm bad at screwing in light bulbs and/or I'm hallucinating from a lack of sleep.

Unfortunately, I don't think I can disassemble it to fit it back into its box so I hope YouPackWeStore takes (and doesn't break) a heavily bubble-wrapped lamp.

Rating: 8.6/10 (-1 for struggle, -0.3 for inability to disassemble, -0.1 for flickering light)

bunanyan

AN AMENDMENT

Last issue, I wrote an article called *N objects to which I have an inappropriate psychosexual attachment*.¹ While this was not meant to be an exhaustive list, I have since realized that I left out someone important. This is an amendment to include the object I omitted.

- Nikon D3100 DSLR camera (early 2010s) with Nikon DX AF-S 18–55mm zoom lens (late 2000s-early 2010s)

axon_terminal

1. axon_terminal (2026, May 22). *N objects to which I have an inappropriate psychosexual attachment: not beating the Objectum allegations*. mathNEWS (161(1)). Retrieved from <https://mathnews.uwaterloo.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/mathNEWS-161-1.pdf>.

BOOK REVIEW: GEEKING OUT OVER HONZUKI NO GEKOKUJŌ

PART II OF MATH STUDENT DISCOVERS READING

[Light Spoiler Warning]

I'm sure this exact same article was written last decade, when the series was actually completed, but in part II of [Insert Math Student] discovers the wonderful world of reading, I present to you a book about a book nerd: *Honzuki no Gekokujō* (Ascendance of a Bookworm), or, in other words, autistic book nerd gets isekai'ed.

A bit of background for those who are completely lost so far: isekai is a genre that involves someone being reborn in another world, usually with all their modern memories intact. Usually, a poorly written male Mary Sue and self-professed loser IRL is inserted into a fantasy world with overpowered skills in addition to his modern knowledge. He then goes on a power trip. Usually also does depraved things. There is also a subgenre which explores the question: "but what if MC also introduces the Industrial Revolution into the middle ages?" Look, a girl has to have hobbies, okay? Most of these stories are, uh, not very well written, to put it charitably.

Honzuki no Gekokujō breaks the normal isekai mold in several parts. First, the protagonist is a woman. Second, she does not have a harem. Third, there's actual worldbuilding. The bar is on the floor and we have cleared it.

The short synopsis for the plot is that an autistic book girl goes on a quest to introduce mass printing technology in a world where books are few and only for the very wealthy, something akin to a fantasy version of the European Middle Ages. All the standard fare is there; girl meets world, girl tries to introduce several industrial processes and goes into excruciating detail on each of them. You know, why you're probably reading this subgenre in the first place.

More than anything though, the MC fails. A lot. First of all, her constitution causes several issues throughout the series which prevent her from doing even fairly basic things, like walking a few kilometers to collect wood so that she can make paper. The MC is constrained by her social circumstances and her physical limitations. What would normally be an easy thing to do (in fact, something she had done in her past life) instead spans an entire volume of challenges. In a way, this probably seems somewhat familiar to some of the women reading this right now, because it was written by a woman heavily drawing upon her own experiences.

All of which makes the successes feel much more satisfying. The world feels *alive*, in that there is resistance to almost every action. It feels like a plausible scenario instead of, well, what most power trip isekais devolve into.

But that's enough spoilers. If you want to read the series for yourself, *Honzuki no Gekokujō* is available as: a completed light novel, a manga adaptation which, to my knowledge, is

still ongoing, and as an anime (the latest series premiered last month)!

Antigone of Toronto

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT(S)

PSA 1: YOU CAN GO IN THE B1 GREENHOUSE

Did you know you can go into the B1 Greenhouse? The entrance is on the second floor of STC. I was talking to someone who works at the Greenhouse and learned that if; A) the door is open (which it is frequently), and B) you're respectful of the space (no food or entering research areas), you can enter the Greenhouse. It is hot in there but there's some super cool plants to go check out! Next I will be going to the Gustav Bakos Observatory in PHY.

PSA 2: THERE ARE (2) TURKEYS AMONG US

I was walking near the community garden at V1 and encountered 2 turkeys. I then saw these turkeys again while walking along Westmount Rd. The turkeys began to flee but luckily, using my *4K Canon Ultra Max Camera*, I was able to get a picture.



Please be respectful of the turkeys' space.

Lars Nootbaar

This article is a follow up to Public Service Announcement in **mathNEWS** 159.3, and Public Service (Filler) Article in **mathNEWS** 155.6. Glad to have been keeping the community informed since 2023.

N DECORATIONS MY OFFICE PUT UP FOR PRIDE MONTH THAT BRING ME BACK TO SIMPLER TIMES

#BEWHOYOUARE #YAYGAY

- Long, rainbow tablecloths on each cafeteria table
 - Not full tablecloths, they're more like strips covering the middle part and leaving about a plate's worth of space on the edges
- Various little decorations that you'd find at Dollarama posted on the walls, featuring motifs such as
 - Rainbows (naturally)
 - Hearts
 - Hands making peace signs
 - The words "love" and "peace"
- An absolute clusterfuck of a poster outside of a big meeting room. I wish I had a photo for reference because all I can remember was that there was a lot of stuff on it, probably including some of the motifs in the above point. The only things I can remember with confidence was that there was a positive message in the middle, the background of the poster was light blue, and there were some rainbow-coloured lips on there for some reason
- Rainbow hearts (red on the outer edge, purple in the middle, discrete stripes) with interlinked ♂'s
 - These were quite prominently displayed in the micro-kitchen but there was no ♀ equivalent to be found, and for a few days I wondered whether or not the people who ordered the decorations remembered that women existed, but...
- Later, I also noticed some fainter rainbow hearts with interlinked ♀'s on a high shelf in the cafeteria. Nice save
 - No ♂'s or other variants to be found though. I sure hope someone got fired for that blunder
- However putting the decorations up a week before Pride Month began might balance out the office's karma a little
 - Side note: are sub-bullet points an abuse of the N things format? I've been going a little crazy with them here
- A decoration that I thought looked pretty nice were these 3D rainbow paper hearts on some of the walls with a bunch of folded layers. It's kind of hard to describe so imagine something like in this video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-oMaLRvnZLU>) but more intricate and not pure red
- A bunch of tiny easels with canvases lined up in a row on a shelf in the cafeteria (lower than the aforementioned lesbian hearts). Some of the easels have rainbows, hearts, and rainbow hearts on them, but a solid quarter to half of them just contain wholesome nature drawings. All of the paintings look like they were done by children
 - It's easy and not entirely inaccurate to call my workplace out for being performative, but in the end it is nice that the decorations got put up in the first place. Ultimately, they do serve as a signal that the workplace is a safe space for queer people (a signal that is, crucially, backed up by the company's solid anti-discrimination policies) and, tacky as the decorations may be, there's something very charming about the aesthetic they create

the government's only spy

MY PITCH FOR A HERITAGE MINUTE ABOUT CANADIAN LEGEND RYAN WEDDING

We open to a young Ryan Wedding weaving down the Olympic snowboarding course. He crosses the finish line and swings his board around to a stop, sending up a spray of snow. Panting, he looks up to the clock.

It's not a good time. His face falls.

Cut to the inside of Wedding's apartment back in Canada. The knob turns and the door creaks open, revealing him standing outside. From both hands hang Team Canada branded duffel bags. Under his left arm is his snowboard. A sad, thoughtful melody begins to play.

Voiceover: After coming in 24th at Salt Lake City, I thought my life was over. I was lost. I didn't know who I was anymore without my snowboarding career.

He reaches in around the door and flicks on the lights, illuminating a small living room. It could be mistaken for a hotel room with how plain it is. He gazes in and sighs.

Voiceover: But you know what they say...

The music stops. Wedding turns to look behind him. In a parking lot across the street stand two shadowy figures engaged in conversation. One hands the other a stack of bills. A small plastic bag is offered in exchange. The camera returns to Wedding's face. He watches, curiosity evident. Slowly his expression changes to one of consideration.

A few inspiring notes of music.

Voiceover: ... You can't keep a good man down.

The music swells. Wedding's bags hit the floor with a thump. He walks forwards towards the two men. Slowly at first, but strides lengthening by the second. On his face is the very same look of concentration we witnessed during his race.

Voiceover: At the 2002 Olympics, Ryan Wedding represented Canada in the men's parallel giant slalom. He went on to use his Olympian's work ethic to (allegedly) rise through the ranks of a Mexican cartel and run an international drug trafficking ring. In 2025 the FBI

recognized his contributions to crime by placing him on their Most Wanted list. Wedding paved the way for Canadians in the global drug industry.

trolleyproblem22

Note: Historica Canada, I will not be accepting direct offers. Reach out through my agent when optioning this script, please and thank you.

SALARY CAPPING

AN OPINION ON THE MLB SALARY CAP

On May 28, the MLB laid out their proposal for a salary cap and floor beginning with its 2027 season, the first of its kind in the MLB. It would set a floor of \$171.2 million, and a ceiling of \$245.3 million. Opinions on this are mixed, and I wanna write about it just because.

The floor would force the bottom 15 teams, lowest of which is the Miami Marlins at \$74 million, to spend way more to meet the cap, and the top 6 spenders to shed hundreds of millions in payroll, the largest of which, to no surprise, is the LA Dodgers at \$397 million.

I think the introduction of a salary cap/floor is necessary for the league. We have, for too long, seen greedy good-for-nothing owners take teams and drive them through the mud with their lack of spending, and a salary floor would be great at forcing their hands to actually deliver for their cities and make teams competitive. Last year, we saw Bob Nutting drag the Pittsburgh Pirates' all-time win percentage below .500 for the first time since August 25, 1903. A storied team nearly 150 years old, with five World Series and endless legends coming and going through it. Ruined through poor ownership.

A salary cap would also close another enormous issue: creating a winning team by throwing money at problems. This strategy is fucking boring. The Yankees do it all the time. That's why they're the most storied franchise. Not because they can develop players well, but because they make super teams with their bottomless pit of money.

People who defend having no salary cap often respond with "Well that's the fault of owners being cheap," pointing to the successes of the small-spending Guardians and failures of the hot-spending Mets as reasons why it's unnecessary. There are so many issues with this. Firstly, while it is true that many teams are horribly stingy, at some point smaller markets cannot compete with the big ones. At some point, Cincinnati and Kansas City stop being able to match New York and LA in spending. Secondly, these few examples of teams being exceptions don't negate the wider issue. Statistically, big-market teams still have a massively unfair advantage in the playoffs, but let's nitpick too. The Yankees last had a losing season in 1992. Apart from 2021, the last time the Dodgers didn't win the NL West was 2012. On the other hand, there's the Rockies, the Reds, and the Royals, all small-market teams

with long playoff droughts or lacking in success. None of this is natural or good for baseball. It just makes it all boring. We need this salary cap to save baseball.

All this to say, see y'all after the lockout in 2028.

fingersinsockets

MATHSOC POPCORN MACHINE

WE HAVE A POPCORN MACHINE

Guys can you believe we've had a popcorn machine this whole time and haven't been using it? It's just been sitting there?? It's like shiny and red and on wheels and everything. I haven't been to that many MathSoc events, but if they start using the popcorn machine regularly, I will go to every single MathSoc event to see the popcorn machine in action.

It's not even about the popcorn, because popcorn is easy to make at home, it's about the popcorn MACHINE, watching the popcorn spill from the pot into the big receptacle. It's decadent, it's like, oh my god we have so much popcorn, we cant even fit it in the pot and it's spilling everywhere, so everyone come take a handful! It's like Scrooge McDuck swimming in gold coins except it's popcorn. It is the pinnacle of golden buttery abundance. It's sick as hell and I'm in love with it.

I will never forgive MathSoc if the popcorn machine ends up back in storage. Can everybody come to MathSoc events and loudly tell the execs, "Wow this popcorn machine is awesome I'm so glad I paid my MathSoc fee!" or alternatively, "Wow this event is alright but it would be reallyyy cool if the popcorn machine was here!" Then we could all live in a beautiful, beautiful world together forever with the MathSoc popcorn machine..... <3

rutabaga413

WIZARD FINGERS

ANOTHER RECIPE BY THE ESTEEMED CHEF JASON LI

As featured in the third season of the TV show *Life in Pieces*, Wizard Fingers are gas station hot dogs that have been left out on the roller for longer than 6 hours.

“Well those aren’t hot dogs. After six hours in the machine, we have to call them Wizard Fingers. It’s like when a grape becomes a raisin.”

Today, I’ll show you how you can make your very own Wizard Fingers without the 6 hour wait and the expensive equipment you need to replicate a gas station hot dog roller.



INFO:

- Prep Time: 0 min
- Cook Time: 5 min
- Total Time: 5 min
- Servings: 1

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 hot dog

DIRECTIONS:

1. Take your hot dog and put it on a plate.
2. Put that plate in a microwave. Add a cover in the event that a hot dog accident occurs.
3. Microwave for 5 minutes.
4. Remove your hot dog from the microwave. Careful! It’s probably very hot!

And there you have it! Wizard Fingers in just 5 minutes! Let me know if you make the recipe and if you find it tasty. If you

have any other great recipe ideas or want to see more, don’t hesitate to reach out! Anybody who cares enough will be able to find me somehow ;)

Jason Li

CHILD-HATING GOOSE

IN YOUR AREA



I saw this goose get approached by a child on a nearby lawn.

They were the same height as the child—their beady eyes judging the human-spawn.

I suppose the goose was offended, because the next thing you know, they were biting rather viciously at the child’s pants.

Seeing this, the child’s not-so-helicopter parent airlifted them out to safety.

The goose, appeased, then waddled into the water and swam to their little island to reunite with their partner.

And so, the great goose war against human children began.

TotallyNotAGoose

CLASSIFIED THROWBACK TIME

For sale: One unopened Popmart Arcane figurine in slightly damaged box. Market price \$41.99, asking price \$20 + shipping (or just come to Toronto), negotiable. Message *papayabird* on Discord for picture of box.

papayabird

ANIME REVIEW

はじめまして。エラロゴスです

SHOUSHIMIN S1 & S2

Detective story with many interesting character developments and plot twists. I got a craving for desserts after watching the show. Let me know if you want to hop on a trip to try different desserts!

COSMIC PRINCESS KAGUYA!

A very beautiful movie based on the traditional Japanese folktale *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter*. Many wholesome yuri moments. Happy pride month!

WITCH HAT ATELIER

I like the setting. Humans use magic by drawing glyphs on surfaces using special ink. Lots of gorgeous animations and cutscenes.

FRIEREN SEASON 2

The story feels cozy and exciting at the same time. Compared to season 1, we have more side-character arcs and some cute romantic developments Ow0.

eralogos

FIRST MONTH OF WORKING A FULL TIME CORPORATE JOB

I'm too scared to dye my hair purple because I haven't seen a single person at my office with dyed hair. The thing I look forward to most each day is putting 3 creams, 2 milks, and 2 sugars in my coffee in the morning and then doing it again after lunch. I work in IT and my team is made up of 19 men and 3 women. I try to pack a lunch so I don't have to buy one at the cafeteria but I'm scared of my coworkers knowing I eat pasta and ground beef with light sauce every day for dinner. I found out I get life insurance as part of my benefits and discovered the monetary amount that my life is worth. My company gives a \$500 yearly allotment to spend on ergonomic desk equipment but I'll probably keep using my kitchen table chair because I would procrastinate on submitting the claim. I

log into my computer every morning with the fear that I did everything wrong and my inbox will be flooded by incidents because everything is broken and then I'll be fired and they won't even let me grab my stuff from my desk before I am sent home with everyone yelling "SHAME! SHAME! SHAME!" and pointing their fingers at me as I walk out the door with my shoulders hunched and then it starts to rain on me and I get soaked.

I got a free polo shirt with the company logo. It's breathable.

closeted atheist

MORE DAILY GAMES I PLAY

This is a sequel to my article in issue 160.2 because I have gotten into a few new daily games since then that I think are worth mentioning.

- One Up Puzzle: a surprisingly interesting daily sudoku variant where there are no 3x3 boxes, but instead there are walls. None of the puzzles ever get all that difficult, but it's still fun regardless, and occasionally you have to pull off a somewhat tricky move to make a deduction.
- Daily Akari: It's simply just a daily akari/light up puzzle. If you haven't heard of this type of puzzle, you have to place lights on a grid that illuminate all cells vertically and horizontally such that no two lights illuminate each other, all cells are lit up, and certain cells have exactly the right number of neighbouring lights. Some of the puzzles are diabolically hard. It's a fun time!

- Gerrymandle: I like this one a lot. You are given a grid of hexagonal cells, each with a voter in them and you need to draw districts of a certain size to make a certain party win a majority of the districts, even if they have an extreme minority of the individual cells. Most of these are relatively easy, but these can also get ridiculously hard. See the puzzle from day 14 for an egregiously difficult solution to find.

hyperlynx



DE FINIBUS BONORUM ET MALORUM

gridCOMMENT 161.2

hello my dear gridWORDers

first things first, i would like to issue a formal apology regarding last week's **gridWORD**; one of the words i used for a clue is a derogatory term for inuit people. i did not know the history of the word and it was absolutely not my intention to use it, and it will not happen again.

second things second, i recently discovered a youtube channel called "the rabbit hole" hosted by a former veritasium employee and a freelance science communicator. i've thoroughly enjoyed the depth of the research on the videos she's released so far (and i will be watching more, believe me), and this **gridWORD**'s theme is not at all related to one of her videos. not at all i swear

last week, i asked you all what your favourite club at the university of waterloo and you (all?) said:

• *awmlet*: waterloo quant club bc I'm in it

congrats on your prize, *awmlet*!! you have won by default. i'm sure you know what to do. this week's **gridQUESTION** will be: what is your favourite subreddit and why? clearly, i'm running a bit low on fun **gridQUESTIONS**, so please do bear with me. please submit an answer to the **gridQUESTION** and a pseudonym along with your completed **gridWORD** by june 15, 2026 at 18:00 to either MC 3030 (**mathNEWS** office) or mathnews@gmail.com for a chance to win an awesome duper prize.

good bye,



spaghettinhalers

ACROSS

- 1. Dummy text word*
- 6. Student group at UW founded in 1964
- 9. Role
- 13. Introductory ceremony
- 16. Cruising
- 17. A-list topper
- 18. Dummy text word*
- 19. Butt
- 20. Hard work
- 23. Tops
- 24. More harrowing
- 25. inevitably
- 28. Scatterbrained
- 29. Orchard fruit
- 30. Beatle bride
- 31. Bud
- 34. Dummy text word*
- 35. Lecherous looker
- 37. "You ___ here"
- 38. D.C. setting
- 39. Favouring
- 40. Concept
- 41. Not now
- 43. Part of the Louisiana Purchase
- 45. Haemoglobin deficiency
- 48. Cut
- 49. Dummy text word*
- 51. That ship

- 54. Perch
- 55. Landfill run-off
- 57. ___ of Man
- 58. Dummy text word*
- 60. Big game
- 61. Witty remark
- 62. Stogie

DOWN

- 1. Bean town?
- 2. Half of binary code
- 3. Fixes
- 4. Hellenic vowel
- 5. Woe
- 6. Copter's forerunner
- 7. Thus
- 8. Article, maybe
- 9. Thin and flimsy
- 10. Very, in music
- 11. Be eco-friendly
- 12. Less exciting
- 14. Book of maps
- 15. They are found at the top of a bar
- 18. Eye part
- 21. Complain
- 22. Swamp snapper
- 23. Tavern
- 25. Church alcove

- 26. Luau necklaces
- 27. Unit of power
- 28. Dummy text word*
- 31. Menstrual hygiene products
- 32. Basic geometry calculation
- 33. Meadows
- 35. Of the eye
- 36. Awesome
- 40. Hostel
- 41. Minor
- 42. Dummy text word*
- 43. Oahu's neighbour
- 44. Australian Water Resources Council Standing Committee (abbr.)
- 45. Pungent
- 46. Choker
- 47. Green lizard
- 48. Increase, with "up"
- 50. Dummy text word*
- 51. Reagan cabinet member
- 52. European erupter
- 53. Simple regression analysis wrapper in R
- 56. MSCI 343 subject
- 58. "I ___ a surgeon"
- 59. Execute



Want to write for **mathNEWS**? Come to the next production night! New writers are always welcome! Check the **lookAHEAD** for the next date!

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	
13					14	15				16				
17										18				
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49							50					51	52	53
54							55				56			
57						58	59							
60						61					62			

Drop your gridWORD solutions off at MC 3030, or over email to mathnews@gmail.com. Correctness optional.

lookAHEAD

SUN JUN 7

Chocolate Ice Cream Day

MON JUN 8

Cycle 1 interview period ends

WED JUN 10

Employer rankings available

THU JUN 11

FRI JUN 12

Student rankings due & match results available

SAT JUN 13

Cycle 2 & 3 postings begin

SUN JUN 14

National Cucumber Day

MON JUN 15

mathNEWS 161.3
prodNIGHT

TUE JUN 16

Convocation begins

WED JUN 17

Global Garbage Man Day

THU JUN 18

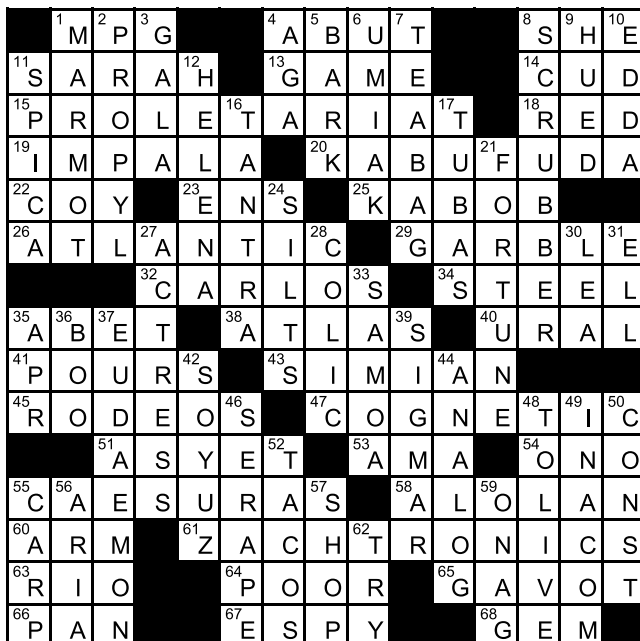
FRI JUN 19

mathNEWS 161.3 releases
Final examination relief requests due
Requests due for accommodations on religious grounds

SAT JUN 20

Convocation ends

LAST ISSUE'S gridSOLUTION



ON TRANSSEXUALITY

A lot of people like to parrot that sex and gender are different, so trans people are changing their gender, not sex. Stop saying this. Do you even have a coherent conception of what sex and gender are? This is a repackaging of the sentiment that sex is immutable. The idea of what “determines” your “actual” sex has been far more nebulous and ever-shifting over time than people know. If one’s primary sex characteristics, secondary sex characteristics, endocrine system, so on and so forth are all female, it makes little sense to call one “biologically” male or of the male sex on the basis of karyotypic sex alone. Rhetoric like this serves to reinforce things like medical transphobia. My gender has always been the same, and I’m changing my sex to align with it. I am a transsexual woman.

Read *Whipping Girl* by Julia Serano, *Sexing the Body* by Anne Fausto-Sterling, and any of Talia Bhatt’s essays.

Street Transvestite
Action Revolutionary

Want to advertise
your campus
club or event in
mathNEWS? Email
us an article, or come
to our next production
night!

We’ll do anything for
more filler content.

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