CRESCENT

MAGAZINE



NOVEMBER 2026

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CRESCENT MAGAZINE

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AUTHOR'S NOTE:
THIS ARTICLE CONTAINS REFERENCES TO SEXUAL ASSAULT. IF YOU OR A LOVED ONE ARE A SURVIVOR OF THIS CRIME, RESOURCES WILL BE PROVIDED AT THE END. **PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.**

THE AFTERMATH OF CORNELL

UE Officials Address Campus Sexual Violence

By Cooper Vaught

EVANSVILLE, Ind.–[OCT. 2026]–With the Cornell University case lurking in everyone's mind, thousands of students and staff are beginning to question their own universities and ask one question: what are they doing?

For those who are unaware, Cornell University is under a lot of fire and criticism at the moment. This is because of the way they handled an alleged gang rape incident. In October 2024, 7 members of Cornell's Chi Phi fraternity allegedly drugged and gang-raped a woman by the pseudonym "Jane Doe." They allegedly posted about it in the fraternity Snapchat group, consisting of 50+ members. After the incident occurred, Doe went to the police, and the Chi Phi chapter was temporarily suspended. It was only brought back to light in 2026 when Doe decided to press charges against Cornell & the 7 alleged rapists.

This situation has not only offended and hurt survivors of assault, but has additionally caused worldwide anxiety. According to RAINN, roughly 1 in 8 students (~13%) experience sexual violence during their undergraduate years of college. Universities around the world are responding to this event because of the uproar, including the University of Evansville. President Pietruszkiewicz (Prez P) sent an email at the beginning of October about the uproar over the Cornell University case. He said that "when concerns and allegations are raised on our campus, we take them seriously and follow the policies and processes established to address them." UE students are in on this call to action, with many taking part in the National Campus Take Back the Night Rally. This event took place on November 1st, when campuses across the country sent out a message to end campus rape culture. Survivors from all walks of life came forward with their stories of sexual violence, promoting that more needs to be done regarding rape culture. Additionally, Prez P, Andrea Hughes (the Coordinator for SafeSpace), and Annie Sills (the Director of Institutional Equity and Title IX Coordinator) have tackled some questions of concern regarding sexual violence on campus. This is what they had to say.

The "I Am Jane Doe" movement is a big call-to-action event going on at this time. For those who are unaware, it's like the "Me Too" movement: many people are trying to protect Doe's identity by coming forward as "Jane Doe," so hundreds of thousands have done so. Annie & Prez P both spoke in positive terms of this movement. Annie Sills claimed that "Any movement that brings attention to sexual violence and is moving to bring attention to the topic is important." She additionally hoped the movement would morph into conversations about healthy



relationships, consent, and prevention. Then, there was the question of what the University of Evansville & all it's associated parties are doing to ensure nobody at our campus is assaulted, harassed, left without justice, or turned away. Mrs. Sills answered this in many parts. To ensure nobody at our campus is assaulted or harassed, she spoke on Project SafeSpace, writing, "This initiative brings advocacy and prevention programming to the campus specifically about Dating and Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking (DVSAS)." To ensure nobody is left without justice or turned away, she wrote that "In the Office of Institutional Equity and Title IX, an individual is always afforded the opportunity to share their experience and receive support and resources… We can ensure that we have a transparent, fair and equitable process that someone can choose to use to reach the justice that they are looking for."

Another question was if any changes or adjustments have been made regarding how reports are handled within our campus. Mrs. Sills & Prez P say there have been no changes made, with Prez P writing, "In consultation with national experts on best practices, we believe our existing procedures remain appropriate – and we will continue to follow those established processes while continually looking for ways to improve prevention and support."

> **"WE EACH PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN ENSURING THE SAFETY OF OUR STUDENTS AND CAMPUS COMMUNITY."**
> Prez P, UE President

Moving into personal messages, they were asked if there's anything they'd like to add regarding potential survivors with any doubts or anxieties to report. Andrea handled this question, writing that "It is important that individuals know that support and advocacy resources are available, that their concerns are taken seriously, and that there are opportunities to contribute to efforts aimed at strengthening campus safety." She additionally spoke on how we must keep working to "promote awareness, improve prevention efforts, and ensure that our processes and partnerships remain responsive to the needs of the campus community."

Regarding closing statements, everyone equally made a call to widespread responsibility, along with our collective role of prevention. As Prez P said herself, "We each play a critical role in ensuring the safety of our students and campus community. I hope you know that at UE, we genuinely care about your wellbeing. If something does not feel right, if you or someone you know are struggling or need help, there are people who are ready to listen and help."

RESOURCES: With this in mind, there's one summary we can make: the University of Evansville has several resources, with staff who are very involved in the wellbeing of their students and peers.

For Project SafeSpace, you can reach out to the program coordinator, Andrèa Hughes. Her phone is 812-488-5823, and her email is ah193@evansville.edu.

For any form of counseling, the University of Evansville offers free counseling services to all attending students. You can find any information for this (form completions, contacts, etc.) at https://www.evansville.edu/counseling

If you're looking for some **off-campus sources**, there is a list of organizations:

- **Holly's House** (812-437-7233 or advocate@hollyhouse.org), which provides advocacy to non-residential survivors.
- **Albion Fellows Bacon Center** (812-422-5622 for domestic violence or 812-424-7273 for sexual violence), which is another victim advocacy center along with a shelter.
- **RAINN** (1-800-656-4673), which is the national sexual assault hotline.



Erika S. Stogsdill
University of Evansville, PsyD in Clinical Psychology Program
April 2025

Evansville City Council
1 NW Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
Civic Center Complex, Room 314
Evansville, IN 47708
citycouncil@evansville.in.gov

Dear Members of the Evansville City Council,

My name is Erika Stogsdill, and I am a proud Mexican-American student attending the University of Evansville to obtain my PsyD in Clinical Psychology. I am writing to request your support for the creation of bilingual leader development programs, as well as additional support for advocacy organizations aimed at supporting Latina's in Evansville. The Hispanic population in Evansville, like the rest of the nation, is growing and will continue to grow.

As someone who has personally navigated the challenges of being bilingual in the workforce, and witnessed similar struggles faced by my mother and other Latina women, I know firsthand how language, culture, and identity can be both a significant strength and a source of increased demands in the workplace. In too many workplaces, bilingual women are burdened with extra responsibilities such as translation services without additional pay or recognition. This is a matter of systemic inequality, and it is important with the growing number of Hispanic women getting an education and entering the workforce, that we are a part of the change.

It is important that we take this opportunity to lead by example. With attention to this matter, we can provide opportunities that will reflect the strength and diversity of Evansville. Opportunities at this level will mean that more Latina women, through equity and inclusion, will not only have a seat at the table, but also a voice in shaping the future of our city. Changes like these at the local level are vital to influence positive changes at the State and even Federal level. I hope your care and attention for citizens of Evansville can be extended to represent individuals of diverse backgrounds.

Despite rising rates of education and workforce participation, systemic and cultural barriers continue to block leadership opportunities for Latina women. In addition to this, several resources report the wage-gap issue in America has a significantly disproportionate effect on Hispanic women, as we make an average of $.58 for every dollar a man in America makes, regardless of experience or education level. As a bilingual Latina woman, I've personally experienced and witnessed the exploitation of language skills without fair compensation or advancement. Our community deserves better. I urge the Council to invest in bilingual leadership programs and collaborate with Latina-focused advocacy groups to ensure that these women are not just included in our workforce but receive the necessary support to thrive within it.

Your time, attention, and care for the citizens of Evansville is greatly appreciated. The decisions made at the local level are vital for creating a space that represents the equity and inclusion we want to see in Evansville, and eventually, also at the State-level. I urge you to consider providing your support for these programs and advocacy organizations. Your support would be greatly appreciated by the Latina community in Evansville.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Best regards,
Erika S. Stogsdill

LONG LIVE
THE APOTHEOSIS:

The Guy Who Didn't Like Musicals and the Remaster That Traveled Far

By Kaitlyn Heath



STARRING

Jeff Blim - Sam Sweetly
Jaime Lyn Beatty - Charlotte
Corey Dorris - Bill Woodward
Lauren Lopez - Emma Perkins
Jon Matteson - Paul Matthews
Joey Richter - Ted Spankoffski
Will Branner - Professor Hidgens
Mariah Rose Faith Casillas - Melissa/Zoey/Alice

StarKid Productions is an independent theatre group on YouTube that have been performing since 2009. Some of their earlier musicals include shows like Twisted, The Trail To Oregon, A Very Potter Musical, Holy Musical, Batman!, and FireBringer. Over the past several years, the group has gone on to create fifteen full length musicals with many of them consisting of parodies. They have also performed comedy skits in Chicago, topped Billboard charts, and traveled the world for fans and their craft.

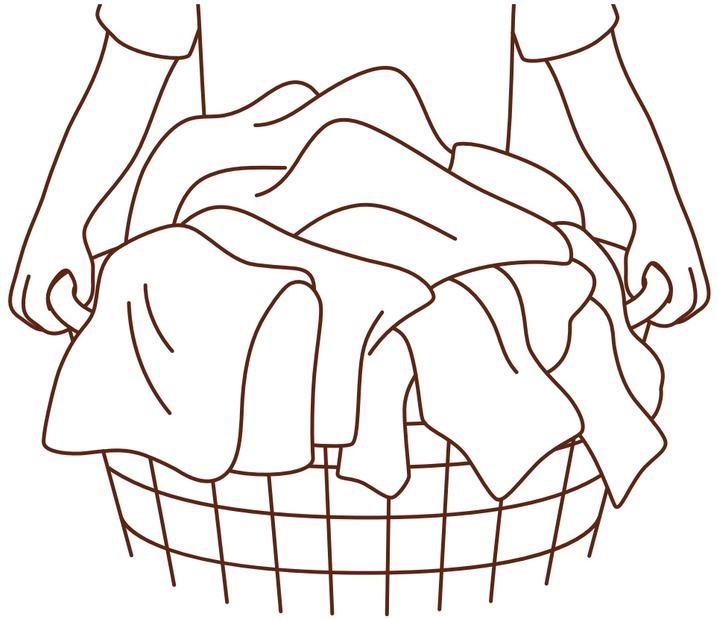
Among many of StarKid's projects, one has become the starting point for an entire universe that would be revisited among several musicals – The Guy Who Didn't Like Musicals. The original Sci-fi Horror Comedy came to YouTube on December 24, 2018, and was directed by Nick Lang with music and lyrics by Jeff Blim. The story follows Paul Matthews, an average office worker in the fictional town of Hatchetfield, who has always despised musicals. When an alien meteor hits the town and infected citizens turn into musical zombies, Paul, His crush Emma, and several of his colleagues all must fight through it all to save humanity and not join the hivemind while handling their own personal troubles. The original musical was a big hit when it first released, with the YouTube release having roughly ten million views (as of when this article was written). Dead Meat, a team usually known for their analytics and kill counts on Horror films, ended up covering it in a video of their own (Hosted by James A. Janisse) and brought more people to Starkid's massively growing fanbase as well.

On top of the massive amounts of success that the original show had back in 2018, The musical's remaster was revealed to the public on April 21, 2025, via a teaser for their Kickstarter, which quickly surpassed its goal. The performances in Los Angeles occurred roughly towards July – August 2025, and on March 14th, StarKid productions themselves announced that the musical would be going to West End in the Apollo Theatre located in London. From May 14-30th of this year, the show had the run in London, with a rentable pro-shot. The remastered musical released the digital download on May 1, 2026, and released on YouTube July 4, 2026.

Direction changed for this remaster of the musical. Lauren Lopez, who played Emma, also stepped up to direct the remaster of the musical. In terms of changes, some of the cast also changed, with multiple people having now played the character Professor Henry Hidgens (Will Branner in Los Angeles and Iván Fernández González in London). While the original musical was just under two hours, the remaster ended up being about two hours and thirteen minutes (in terms of the YouTube release). Some songs, like the opener for example, also had a few extra bits added to them. The opening number had an extra dance break ("The Guy Who Didn't Like Musicals"), one song had someone "floating" ("You Tied Up My Heart"), one song towards the end had more dialogue in between the chaos of the moment ("Let it Out"), and one song had a new outlook to it, with the new cast playing Henry Hidgens having their own spin on the character and the song ("Show Stoppin' Number"). A fresh take on all of the songs was interesting to see, with a different flare, but the same chaos that people loved. There were also more connections in the background to the overall universe that the show was a part of – Background characters being familiar characters and an oddly recognizable boulder – that caught viewers' attention and drew connections for fans who know the stories.

Even after the remaster and success, StarKid continues to succeed with their other projects. This past spring, they announced their musical Tomb Quest – A Dungeons and Dragons themed musical that centered around a group of friends revisiting their high school Dungeons and Dragons campaign after one passed away. They performed it in Los Angeles this past summer, with a YouTube and Digital Download release date still to be determined. Back in September, the group also revealed that Nerdy Prudes Must Die (another big musical in the Hatchetfield series) was going to have a West End tour of its own happening next Spring. Speaking of Hatchetfield, the group also stated that a full length episode based on their web series (Initially performed during the pandemic over zoom) that centered around the town was coming just in time for the Halloween season.

Aces Makes Friends



How did you meet your college best friend, or your college friend group? I am willing to bet money that it was not knocking on random doors through Moore Hall, the night before classes started in 2023, with your dad's poker set that was passed down to you from when he was in college, asking whoever opened the door if they wanted to play Texas Holdem in the basement. Was I right?

My roommate and I had finally come to terms that we were college students and are starting to get old. We both disliked high school for similar reasons; however, we were opposite people. She was shy, kept to herself, very down to Earth, but a go with the flow kind of girl. I am extremely outgoing, slightly loud, and very much a people person who needs to constantly be doing something. But this city and school was a new life for us. I remember telling my roommate that we were not going to be boring and leave Moore Hall just to go to classes and Ridgeway. I dug out my dad's poker set he had given me from under my bed and looked my roommate square in the eyes and demanded we go make friends.

We worked our way around the dorm, knocked on doors, and invited whoever answered to play poker with us in the basement. One turned us down due to practice, another said he was meeting friends from New Hall but redirected the three of them to play poker with us instead, and the last one skipped practice to learn the beautiful art of gambling. While our group was in the basement, someone walked by with a full laundry basket in his hand, did a double take, then came back and asked to join. Obviously we said yes, but my roommate and I giggled in confusion, because why in the world is someone doing laundry when we have lived here for three days? This group of eight became best friends very quickly. My roommate and I had the designated 'hangout room' where we were all practically inseparable. Now that I am a senior, I am accomplished and proud to say I am living with several of these friends, and they will stay my best friends for life. Dear freshmen, please get out of your room and find odd ways to make friends. You will have the best 'first time meeting' stories to share many years from now, like me.



By Morgan Harter

The Power of Connections

By Morgan Harter

I am a senior at the University of Evansville, and at this point in my academic career, the school allows for students to live off the main campus. My best friends and I have talked about living together since freshman year, and I am currently living out that dream with all of them. However, there has been one issue for us – our landlord.

Take a moment and think back to the start of our semester. Do you remember how the temperature never declined and consistently stayed at or above 80 degrees for months? We are approaching the start of November, and our atmosphere is finally giving us tolerable weather. For those who live in a dorm, in a townhouse, or even in one of the fraternity houses, you typically get to decide what temperature the thermostat stays at. However, when a group of five lives off campus, in a house that was built before the University existed, there will obviously be issues with the AC unit and furnace. Add a landlord to this mix who neglects and ignores all five tenants and the three moms who also got involved - the result is a house that has no working AC or furnace for over a month, with an average inside temperature of 91 degrees. These living conditions are unsuitable, unstable, and causes genuine fear of a potential housefire due to the extreme heat, or pipes bursting during the harsh winter season in Southern Indiana. The issue is not living in an old house; the problem is a landlord who ghosts eight people who contact her daily and refuses to converse back or provide any clarity of when the issue is getting fixed. After four and a half weeks of empty conversations, I decided to stoop to a level of involving a couple politicians.

Most people are intimidated by elected officials; however, I can assure you that these people have been elected for a reason – they are here to help, and there is no reason to hesitate to ask for their help. I contacted State Representative Tim O'Brien, and State Senator Jim Tomes, both politicians I can call a friend. The conversation with each of them were filled with apologies and genuine concern for our living conditions. Both politicians requested I send our home address, the landlord's name, and phone number. They both told me that they would help and get the issue resolved. Just 48 hours following those phone calls, I had come back to my house from fall break with a brand-new AC unit and furnace. Just two weeks later, I attended a political dinner with O'Brien and updated him on the replacements. He looked at me with a sense of accomplishment and relief, then said "I wonder who called her!" and followed up saying "I'm glad I could help y'all out." While it does help I know both politicians on a personal level, it does not change the fact they are still representing us and are fighting for us. If you are having issues with your own neglecting landlord, call O'Brien and Tomes' office - they have your back!



Office of Jim Tomes

200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
1.800.382.9467
317.232.9400

Office of Tim O'Brien

200 W. Washington St.
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RESIDENT EVIL:
Do Fans Deserve Poor Media?

By Mia Gallagher



On September 18th, one of my most anticipated films of the year was formally released, the film in question being Zach Cregger's *Resident Evil*. This was my first time seeing Cregger's work, I remember seeing the trailer for *Barbarian* back in 2022 and the trailer for *Weapons* back in 2025. Unfortunately, I haven't seen either of them yet, even after hearing several of my friends rave about Cregger's work. I have, however, seen the main actor Austin Abrams in several of his movies and most of the time an actor I like is enough to seal the deal to go and see a movie for me. This time though, their names are tied to a movie based on one of the biggest horror game franchises of all time. Hey, no sweat, right?

The Resident Evil franchise made its debut back in 1996 with the first game, which follows two characters named Jill Valentine and Chris Redfield as they (separately!) explore the creepy Spencer Mansion. This debut essentially defined the survival horror genre for the time. Games like *Devil May Cry, Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare,* and *Dead Space* all took inspiration for their later games. *Alone in the Dark* particularly sticks out for the fact that the first game is actually what inspired the camera angles in the first *Resident Evil* game, a true full circle moment. Of course, the horror survival is what draws so many in, but for me, the message always was one of my favorite things. At their core, the Resident Evil games critique the corruption of larger corporations and their, along with the government's complicitness in atrocities like bioterrorism and how it, eventually, calls on relatively normal civilians to stand up to help. A hallmark trait of most of the characters from the games is that they started out as normal people– Leon starts as a rookie cop, Chris was ex-Air Force before joining S.T.A.R.S and his sister? Just some random college girl. There is something reassuring about seeing normal people be thrust into the most horrid situations and somehow still survive despite it all.

But the movie. Oh boy. The announcement of this movie is not the first of its kind. Several Resident Evil movies have been made, CGI and live-action respectively. The CGI ones are not the ones that receive complaints, that's in store for live action. In the early 2000s, Paul W.S Anderson decided he was going to tackle the franchise and grant the public the first installment of his live-action Resident Evil movies starring Mila Jovovich. Truth be told, it didn't go over very well, with a whopping 36% on Rotten Tomatoes and a 2.9/5 on Letterboxd, it is safe to say fans weren't thrilled. The installment ended in 2016, only for a rebooted movie to be released in 2021 (safe to say it didn't do so well either.)

So, because of this, after years of fans complaining that the Anderson *Resident Evil* weren't accurate to the lore and took too many liberties, one would think fans would be thrilled to have a movie with a director who at the very least played the games. But alas, one hopes too hard in this day and age where everything is "slop" even before it releases. I am not going to harp and say that you aren't a real Resident Evil fan if you didn't like the movie, to each their own by all means. But look, critiques of the movie and claims that it was bad were appearing before the movie even released. It got so bad that Cregger eventually came out and said that this was the last franchise movie he would be doing.



So here's the thing, is it fair to say that fans don't deserve this movie? That we should be stuck with the inaccuracies of the action focused, lore breaking Anderson ones? I love the Resident Evil franchise, and yes, I even kind of enjoyed the live action movies, but to go as far to call this movie "a regular zombie movie with Raccoon City and the Resident Evil name slapped on it" seems a little disingenuous to a director who plays the game. I do truly believe that most of the complaints like the one mentioned above stems from the fact that there are no legacy characters in the movie.

Legacy characters are a sore topic with Resident Evil fans these days, how many more games can possibly be made with Leon Kennedy, right? Honestly, the complaint I see the most is actually about Ada Wong, which is interesting considering there's only been a DLC where you fully play as her the entire time, but I do fear that opens another can of worms about the people in the fandom that I don't have the time to discuss. Essentially, somewhere along the way, Resident Evil for many, became more about the characters than about the gameplay and the message. Now, unfortunately, I do think it is unrealistic to want every piece of RE media you interact with to have characters that have been around forever. Change is good in a franchise that has been around for 30 years now, and with CAPCOM being rumored to start moving away from their legacy characters, Cregger's movie offers a fresh interpretation of the franchise, with a new character, without losing aspects that make the game the game.

It's rare to truly feel like a video game movie understands at its core how ridiculous the game is, but it's something that it feels Cregger hit right on the nose and took off running with it. To be honest, one of my favorite scenes is when Bryan is being chased by one of the infected. The scene is set around a car, where he is essentially running in circles while he's frantically trying to get his gun to work. That moment felt like it was ripped directly from how people play the game, I have frequently moved my character in circles in an effort to not die when trying to reload. With the complaint of no legacy characters, it's important to note that this movie isn't about a feature protagonist, Bryan is by no means a character you would play the game through. A key feature of the games are the notes and files left behind by NPCs for the protagonist to find. Of course Bryan isn't the protagonist, this is a story about an NPC. So do fans really ever "deserve" their poorly adapted media? In cases like this I would argue yes. It's hard to think positively about a fandom that consistently shows that, no matter what they're given, they will complain. It continues to be frustrating to lose out on good media because of backlash happening before anything releases and I wish I was able to say that this phenomenon is exclusive only to one fandom, but it's pretty obvious that it isn't. As a fan, I understand wanting a good, faithful adaptation, which I'm not saying Cregger's isn't, I thoroughly enjoyed the movie, I understand wanting to see a franchise you love on the big screen. However, from a creator standpoint, I completely understand that it's hard. It needs to be new enough that people won't complain that you're retelling a story, but still close enough to the source material for people to not be mad it's new. It's a hard line to walk and the culture around adaptations is incredibly harsh. I, as stated, thoroughly enjoyed Cregger's adaptation, I even saw it twice and I am relieved that it is doing so well even with the backlash it faced before it's released (even with the backlash it's getting now).

I try not to make the case that fans deserve bad media, but I think it lends itself to how severe social media has gotten over the years. If you give people an audience, they are almost always guaranteed to complain.

Role of Outreach

"I was, and am, convinced of the moral and academic necessity of sharing scientific work to the fullest possible extent with the man in the street and in the field."

- Sir Mortimer Wheeler, 1955

By Jerri Notestine



This past summer I was fortunate enough to attend field school, as many students interested in archaeology do, in Redondo, Portugal. During the month I attended, there were several opportunities to visit museums, cultural heritage sites such as Portuguese castles, see several Roman ruins, and see a ceramic shop on nearly every street of the town, selling traditional Redondo-style pieces! The amount of history and heritage that was constantly present was incredible to witness as all of it was in some way a part of Public Archaeology.

Public Archaeology, or archaeological outreach, focuses on bringing knowledge of history and archaeology to the public. While in Portugal, I had the lovely opportunity to interview local archaeologist and Cultural Resource Officer of the Municipality of Redondo, Portugal, Mr. Rui Mataloto, specially about Public Archaeology. Mr. Mataloto's definition of Public Archaeology stated that it comes together from research and conservation, and "should be our [archaeologists] commitment to the community […] to provide explanation and narrative of what we are doing." Transparency in research is necessary, specifically with the larger group deemed "the general public" (Mataloto). The goal ultimately is for people to know about the research being conducted and what the results mean to them, and truly I don't believe any academic professional disagrees with that fact. But interacting with the public by means of archaeological knowledge is a broad overview, especially as it is a rather new term for the work being done.

Therefore, we must look at the different ways Public Archaeology is practiced. According to Key Concepts in Public Archaeology, there are at least 7 types of Public Archaeology, with room for many more to follow:

1. Archaeologists working WITH the Public. This can be community and heritage archaeology, sometimes run by museums, universities, or commercial units.

2. Archaeology BY the Public is often closer to home, and includes your local archaeological societies, such as the Indiana Archaeological Society, flint-knapping interest groups, online discussion groups, or independent researchers.

3. Public Sector Archaeology is primarily involved with the local government and will carry out Heritage or Cultural Resource Management (HRM or CRM).

4. Archaeological Education, whether informal or formal, is the overall learning about what archaeology is, specifically in the ancient world, in schools, museums, public libraries, or online!

5. Open Archaeology can be publicly accessible sites, perhaps with viewing platforms, video recordings, guides, or other materials.

6. Popular Archaeology puts the study into the lens of pop culture! Your favorite shows, books, content creators, and even music can be a part of archaeology!

7. Academic Public Archaeology focuses on "the study of archeology in its economic, political, social, cultural, legal, and ethical contexts". If you've seen one of our professors give a lecture outside of class, it would likely fall under this umbrella. (Moshenska 6)

But by no means is this an extensive list, and some projects may even be part of multiple categories! The point is there are several ways to practice Public Archaeology, but we must think about the focus.

During the interview, Mr. Mataloto stressed the importance of community being involved with archaeology, specifically the smaller, more immediate communities. This way, people can almost immediately build a strong bond with history and archaeology, and it also keeps our field in check. "Who is archaeology for?" (Mataloto) is important for professionals to continue asking themselves, especially considering that, in the past, archaeological evidence has been misconstrued to support nationalist ideologies, political agendas, and distort identities of entire groups. However, when the immediate community is involved, the research archaeologists do is less likely to be manipulated and it allows people to become a part of something bigger, however they may wish to. I personally think just the connection to people around your community would provide an overall social benefit in a time where many people feel lonely, isolated, or constantly fighting technology. A sense of community that actively fights misinformation just by being involved is exactly what makes Public Archaeology so important to the people.

Of course there are large Public Archaeology projects around the world, mostly settling in the tourism department. Many archaeological jobs reside in tourism, and for a discussion on Public Archaeology, it is important to understand the impacts tourism has on its own local communities. While it is widely known that tourism can stimulate local economies, and some even rely on the revenue that tourism brings in, it should also be understood that it disturbs local people, violates their environment through pollution, congestion, and littering, and causes dramatic increases in the cost of living for more "touristy" areas (Leahy). Archaeologists do indirectly profit from this as many make their living in this industry or contribute to it. Because it is such a big part of encouraging people to engage with archaeological material, it should be noted that reflection seems in order.

What is increasingly important for Public Archaeology is how the rest of the field relies on it without much effort going into it, besides what has already been established. If there was no way for anyone in the public to learn about archaeology and history, there would likely be no reason for anyone to want to study it, and if there was, we come back to our point on manipulation of archaeological research to fit personal agendas (Mataloto).

"Furthermore, it may be urged that unless a larger section of the British Public [takes interest] out scient will be handicapped […] and find difficulty in obtaining state or other financial assistance for research. It is therefore of the utmost importance to the council to promote archaeological studies in general education" (Dobson et all 1944, as referenced by Don Henson 43).

Humanities rely on the public, and the public relies on humanities. Without one, the other has a crutch, and when one is suffering, both struggle. It's more than just finances for research and general interests secures that; it's about what archaeology provides to the public. Discovery and interpretation influence a community to be curious, to seek knowledge about the increasingly important world around them and thus think critically about it. As fluffy as that language might sound, the implications have always been dire to day-to-day life.

So, if Public Archaeology is so important, why haven't there been more resources invested in it (said every archaeologist ever)? Truthfully, it is part of a question of finance, and part who should be doing the work. The outcome we hope to achieve is possible, according to Mr. Mataloto "but it takes time, and we need to move faster to incorporate the public". But archaeology is a slow process that can hardly be expected to speed up. When left up to professional academics, it's difficult to spread the word. The Ivory Tower is simply too tall and daunting for most (Abramitzky et al), so then what is the solution? "Archaeologists are not the best people to do public archaeology" says Mr. Mataloto, and thus begs the question: Who is? Do we as a field focus on our local communities instead so the professional archaeologist can be better public archaeologists? Or do we look at the addition of science communicators in a more professional way? In this setting, what is the role of the traditional archaeologist?

I do not have the answers, far from it really, as these questions may uproot systems we are set into, but I do know that nothing good ever came easy. The field of archaeology is due for some reflection if it wishes to stick around, and I strongly encourage professional archaeologists to begin this uncomfortable process.

Arthur's Seat:
Where Fire, Ice and Legend Meet

By Chance McDowell

Rising above Edinburgh, an ancient volcano holds secrets of a prehistoric landscape and Scotland's legendary past. Arthur's Seat rises 251 meters above sea level, its rugged slopes overlooking the city, the Firth of Forth and the distant hills beyond. Today, it is a favorite destination for walkers and visitors, but beneath its grassy summit lies a story that began hundreds of millions of years before Edinburgh existed.

Arthur's Seat is more than a hill. It is the remains of an ancient volcano, a geological monument shaped by fire and ice, and a place whose mysterious appearance has inspired centuries of myth and speculation. Its name evokes the legendary King Arthur, while its rocks preserve a history older than any human story.



BORN OF FIRE

Around 340 million years ago, during the Carboniferous Period, the land that would eventually become Scotland lay much closer to the equator. The climate and landscape were vastly different from today's, and volcanic activity was transforming the region. Molten rock rose through the Earth's crust, erupted onto the surface, and spread across the surrounding landscape. Over time, these eruptions built the volcanic complex that would become Arthur's Seat. Lava cooled and solidified into hard rock, preserving evidence of the powerful geological forces at work beneath the ancient landscape.

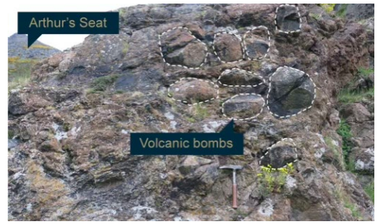
But the volcano's story did not end when its eruptions ceased. Over millions of years, erosion gradually wore away the softer surrounding rocks, leaving more resistant volcanic material exposed. Later, during the Ice Ages, enormous glaciers moved across the landscape, carving valleys and reshaping the hillsides. The resulting landforms give Arthur's Seat its distinctive profile, while nearby Salisbury Crags reveal further evidence of the region's volcanic past.

The landscape we see today is therefore the product of two opposing forces: the heat and violence of volcanic activity, followed by the slow, relentless work of ice and erosion. What appears to be a natural hilltop is a surviving fragment of a much more dramatic ancient world.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF A NEW WAY OF THINKING

Arthur's Seat also played an important role in the development of modern geology. During the eighteenth century, Scottish naturalist James Hutton studied the rocks around Edinburgh, including those at Salisbury Crags. At a time when the age of the Earth was still widely







misunderstood, Hutton argued that geological processes operated over immense periods of time.

The relationships between different rock layers helped him demonstrate that landscapes were not created in a single moment. Instead, processes such as erosion, sedimentation, heating, and the movement of molten rock continually transformed them. Hutton's observations contributed to a revolutionary understanding of geological time. He argued that the Earth was far older than many people had imagined, with its history recorded in the rocks beneath our feet.

In this sense, Arthur's Seat offers two very different kinds of perspective. From its summit, visitors can look out across a modern city shaped by human ambition. Below, the ancient rock tells a story of planetary change stretching back hundreds of millions of years.



A KING BENEATH THE HILL?

Yet geology explains only part of Arthur's Seat's appeal. Its name opens the door to a much less certain history, one shaped by legend, folklore and the enduring fascination with King Arthur.

The origins of the name remain disputed. Popular tradition links the hill to the legendary British king, imagining it as a place from which Arthur surveyed his kingdom or, in some versions, a resting place where he lies waiting to awaken. The association is moving, though no conclusive evidence suggests the hill was named after the king. Other explanations suggest that the name may have linguistic roots in older Gaelic or Norse traditions. Proposed interpretations have linked it to a high place, a strategic position, or even the Norse god Thor. However, these explanations remain theories, not established facts.

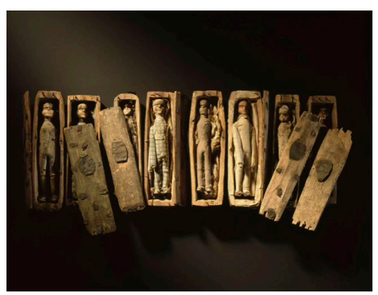
The uncertainty surrounding the name only adds to the hill's atmosphere. Its commanding position above Edinburgh makes it easy to understand why people might have imagined powerful figures inhabiting or watching over it. Long before modern visitors climbed its slopes for exercise or panoramic views, the landscape was already a place of human activity and significance.

Archaeological evidence reveals ancient settlement, including hillforts and agricultural terraces, showing people lived and worked here thousands of years ago. The remains of these structures remind us that Arthur's Seat has been more than a natural landmark: it has also been a place to inhabit, defend, and interpret.

MYSTERIES IN THE LANDSCAPE

One of the hill's strangest stories emerged in 1836, when a group of boys searching for rabbits discovered a small cave containing seventeen miniature wooden coffins. Each held a tiny carved wooden figure. Now preserved at the National Museum of Scotland, the objects remain an intriguing historical mystery. Their purpose has never been conclusively established. Suggested explanations have included symbolic memorials connected to the notorious murderers Burke and Hare, as well as ritual objects or other forms of commemoration. The truth remains uncertain, leaving room for speculation.

The coffins seem to capture something essential about Arthur's Seat. Even in a landscape that scientists can explain through geology and archaeologists can investigate through physical evidence, unanswered questions remain. The hill encourages people to look for stories in its caves, rocks, and hidden corners. Perhaps this is why the association with King



Arthur endures. The legend does not need to be historically proven to shape how people experience the place. Its dramatic silhouette, ancient foundations, and commanding views offer the perfect setting to imagine a world where heroes, gods, and forgotten histories still linger.

A PERSONAL JOURNEY: EXPERIENCING ARTHUR'S SEAT

While studying abroad at Harlaxton, I was given the terrific gift of traveling to Edinburgh, Scotland, for fall break with my father. We had both heard about Arthur's Seat, but neither of us knew the backstory or understood its significance. While walking along the Royal Mile, we stopped into a local jewelry store and spoke with the owner. She asked us about good places to hike in the United States, as she loves the UK's outdoor scene but wants to travel more. After we gave her advice on where to go, she suggested we hike up Arthur's Seat, saying it would be an "easy and less than 800-step hike." We probably shouldn't have taken advice from a seemingly professional hiker, but we made it up the mountain regardless, and it was certainly worth the breathlessness and muscle pain.

A LANDSCAPE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

Arthur's Seat exists between fact and imagination. Its volcanic origins are written into its rocks, while its human history survives in archaeological remains and objects whose meanings are not always clear. Its connection to King Arthur may never be fully explained, but the legend has become part of the landscape's identity. To climb Arthur's Seat is to move through several layers of time at once: from the deep geological past, through the lives of ancient communities, to the stories people continue to tell today. The city spreads out below, modern and ever-changing, while the hill remains a reminder of forces and histories that stretch far beyond human experience. Its greatest mystery may not be whether a legendary king once stood on its summit, but why this ancient volcanic hill continues to capture the imagination. Perhaps the answer lies in the landscape itself, where fire, ice, history, and myth meet.

> "Arthur's Seat exists between *fact and imagination*."









1. My father and I at the top of Arthur's Seat
2. Photo by Chance McDowell
3. Photo by Marc McDowell
4. Davies, Gareth. *St Anthony's Chapel, Edinburgh*

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Kaitlyn Hicks
University of Evansville, PsyD in Clinical Psychology Program.
April 2026

Office of Governor Mike Braun
200 W Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Mike Bruan and Indiana Senate members,

I am writing to request your support for the protection of LGBTQ individuals when it comes to mental health services. Indiana has passed Senate Bill 350, which prohibits local governments from enacting their own bans on conversion therapy. This legislation allows for conversion therapy to be practiced statewide and does not restrict mental health professionals from offering these services. Protection for these individuals is pertinent and calls for a revision of Senate Bill 350 to correct the outdated discrimination that this community is currently facing.

Conversion therapy is a discredited, harmful, and unethical practice that attempts to change a person's sexual or gender identity. The fundamental premise of this treatment is that being a part of the LGBTQ community is wrong, abnormal, and should be pathologized. Being queer is not a mental illness and should not be treated as one, nor should professionals continue with unethical practices that consist of trying to change one's sexual or gender identity. Conversion therapy is not evidence-based and holds no validity in its framework. Instead, cruel interventions have been thrust onto LGBTQ youth and adolescents to generate heterosexual arousal and improve heterosexual skills. Many of these behavioral interventions were aversion-based to try to control arousal by punishing homosexual desires through covert interventions such as electric shocks, threat of beatings, nausea-inducing liquids, as well as utilizing relapse prevention methods like beauty therapy for lesbians and sport programs for gay men. Hoosier values center on community, fiscal responsibility, and integrity, as well as key principles including faith, family, neighborliness, and personal accountability. Allowing conversion therapy to continue unchecked by state laws not only violates these values but also undermines everything that Hoosiers truly stand for.

Merely advising mental health professionals not to engage in conversion therapy is inadequate, and there must be legal protections for the LGBTQ community. This is due to conversion therapy being conducted secretly; it is typically never advertised to the general public but instead comes about in covert conversations between religious officials, families, and mental health practitioners. While conversion therapy is not advertised to the public, many different terms are used in place of conversion therapy. These terms are gender exploratory therapy, reparative therapy, ex-gay therapy, sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE), and gender identity change efforts (GICE). Creating legal protection not only protects the most vulnerable but also protects those who are unaware of these new name changes to conversion therapy.

The only consistent outcomes of conversion therapy are internalized homophobia, developing mental health disorders, and an increase in suicide risk. Conversion therapy is fundamentally an expression and experience of rejection. These individuals are taught that who they are inherently wrong and must fix who they are. Conversion therapy has never turned a queer person straight; it instead makes them vulnerable to increased pathology, lower education status, lower economic status, loss of connection to community, substance abuse, damaged familial relationships, self-blame, guilt, and shame. This practice wreaks havoc that will leave consequences that will last a lifetime.

Affirmative care should be the priority when mental health professionals are treating clients and is the backbone of many evidence-based practices. When one adult accepts a young person as LGBTQ, their suicide risk is decreased by 40%. If there is a person in need and is reaching out to a mental health professional, the professional, at least, must be that one accepting person. There are many other states that have done their part to protect vulnerable populations, and it is time that Indiana joins them. Allowing conversion therapy to continue is dressing up suppression as treatment and hoping nobody asks about the person underneath.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,
Kaitlyn Hicks

Don't Forget About the Little Guys!

Artists to Watch

By Heidi McCombs

From artists who have been around the block but are only recently on the rise to those just getting their start, there is so much great music to listen to. It can be refreshing to step away from your usual rotation occasionally, to try something new and expand your playlist – **This month, I'm spotlighting four queer artists worth a shot.**



Riley! | Midwest Emo

Hailing from the Rio Grande Valley in Texas, Riley! is comprised of guitarist and vocalist Ryan Bluhm, bassist Kris Gallardo, and drummer Cesar "Izzy" Izaguirre. The band is named after Bluhm's cat, who is also featured on the cover of Keep Your Cool. Their recent EP To Live and Die in the American South is a deeply emotional and feature-packed listen. I was personally introduced to Riley! by their collaboration with Eric Egan, the frontman of Heart Attack Man (another criminally underrated band that I love). From To Live and Die, I explored the rest of their discography and fell in love instantly. They explore themes of loneliness, queerness, loss, mental health, and heartbreak, often utilizing punchy drumlines and both melodic and raspy vocals. Riley! are frequent collaborators with other names in the Midwest emo and pop-punk spheres, sending them out into other spheres. Their sound blends the basics of Midwest emo with hardcore, punk, and pop influences that create something unique that will cement their place in the genre.

ESSENTIAL TRACKS: 777, Roll for Initiative, Fight Milk!



Mannequin Pu*y | Punk / Indie-Rock**

Formed in 2010 and still going strong, Mannequin Pussy is comprised of Philadelphians Marisa "Missy" Dabice (vocals, guitar), Kaleen Reading (drums), Colins "Bear" Regisford (bass, vocals) and Maxine Steen (guitar). The genius of the band's name is in the contrast between its parts; Dabice mentions the former being "sterile, plastic, devoid of a realness" while the latter is "used mostly as an insult, to insinuate weakness or submissiveness, as well to infer sexuality." Elements of rock are certainly present in their sound, but the punk influences are not subtle. Dabice's vocals are powerful and cathartic, and their songs are often hard and fast, spanning only a few minutes. I Got Heaven (2024) is the band's most recent full-length release and (in my opinion) crown jewel, spanning a short thirty minutes but functioning extremely well to showcase their musical talent. It's loud and fast with a fuzzy, faded edge that makes the whole thing dreamlike and fun to the last second.

ESSENTIAL TRACKS: Loud Bark, Romantic, Control



James the Seventh | Alternative Pop

Bethany Latham, known as James the Seventh, pushes the boundaries of pop and experiments so heavily that it's difficult to place her into a box. Before her time as a self-taught musician, she was a pre-professional ballet dancer. Her injury and the resulting surgeries pushed her into the music scene, where she writes and produces her own material. Her name comes from her family history; her father is the sixth in a line of Jameses. Her EP "Science" released earlier this year and contains seven tracks that do well to showcase her sound. It is slightly more experimental vocally than some of her previous releases, leaning into raspy and humorous sounds. Her visuals are nothing to sneeze at, either. In an interview with The Luna Collective, Latham mentions how her background in dance and especially her healing process influence how she creates visuals for her music. Even as a smaller artist, she carefully crafts an aesthetic that is difficult to find elsewhere.

ESSENTIAL TRACKS: Race Car Driver, Trauma Olympics, Crumble



Wet Leg | Indie-Rock

Originally a duo, English rockers Wet Leg were founded in 2019 with guitarist/vocalist Rhian Teasdale and guitarist Hester Chambers. In 2025, their second studio album Moisturizer saw the addition of Josh Mobaraki on guitar and keys, Ellis Durand on bass, and Henry Holmes on drums. Their band name is a jab at tourists (who had a "wet leg" from the boat across the Solent, the strait between mainland Britain and the Isle of Wight where the band comes from). Teasdale's vocal stylings are unique and so varied – no two tracks are the same, there's no rut to fall into. The group received a huge recent boost in popularity with one of their songs being featured in the explosively popular 2025 Crave series Heated Rivalry, though they certainly were not unknown prior to this. Their deluxe release of moisturizer released earlier this year, including a few bonus tracks alongside some remixes and acoustic versions recorded at The Village Studios in Los Angeles.

ESSENTIAL TRACKS: Mangetout, Chaise Lounge, Jennifer's Body

If you enjoyed my recommendations, consider tuning into my shows on Fireside Aces Radio where I run Side One (pop-punk, hardcore, alternative rock) and Homegrown (country, americana, folk).

fireside.evansville.edu

The Study Abroad Diaries: Places I Would Recommend Going (so far)

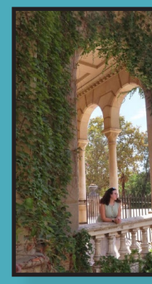
By Rachel Hoke



I have gotten through the first half of my semester here at Harlaxton. I have been able to travel to so many amazing places. I thought I would rank them out of ten, so those studying abroad in the future can decide if these are places they want to visit too!



Cardiff, Wales 8/10
I love Wales. Cardiff was very walkable and has a castle in the middle of the city that you can go visit. The city wasn't that crowded and had lots of great shopping and food places. I loved visiting Cardiff Castle. The interior was beautiful, and you could walk inside the castle walls and explore an old bomb shelter. However, the highlight of this trip was St Fagans National Museum of History. This is a free open-air museum that has over 40 historical buildings and other sites for you to explore. You learn a lot about the history of Wales through these buildings.



Barcelona, Spain 7/10
Barcelona is a great place, but it is very busy and touristy. There are a lot of things to see, but require you to get tickets ahead of time. I really enjoyed going to a beach right outside of Barcelona. It was less crowded than the beaches in Barcelona can get, and was very scenic. I think this is a great place to go if you like nightlife activities and going out. There are of course, other things to do and see, but Barcelona is known for its nightlife.



Stourhead (in the National Trust in the UK) 9/10
This is the most beautiful place I have ever visited. You may know this as one of the filming locations of the 2005 Pride and Prejudice movie. The Temple of Apollo was used as the location where Lizzie rejects Darcy in the pouring rain. You have to get a bus to Stourhead through Wiltshire Connect, but it was overall very easy to plan. I deducted one point for it being in a very remote area, but if you follow the instructions on the website, you should have no problem getting there. There are multiple buildings and a house you can visit on the property, as well as a few shops and places to eat. In the center of most of the attractions is a lake. The views were absolutely stunning. I came to see the Temple of Apollo and live out my dream of becoming Lizzie, but the rest of the property was just as worth visiting.



London, UK 10/10
This has easily been my favorite weekend of the semester so far. There is so much to do in London. There are great museums, great food, many sightseeing spots, shopping, theatre, and a great nightlife. My recommendations for London are going to an adult ball pit place and doing the Harry Potter London Studio Tour. There is something for everyone in London!



Chatsworth 10/10
This is also a filming location of the 2005 Pride and Prejudice movie. The grounds of this place are huge, and there are so many things that you can see. The gardens are absolutely beautiful. The inside of the house is also great. The souvenir shop also has lots of unique gifts.



Eyam 6/10
I really like Eyam (the plague village), but that is mainly because I had to read a book about it for one of my classes. I took off points because there isn't much too much to do. If you aren't invested in the story of Eyam, this might be a place to skip.



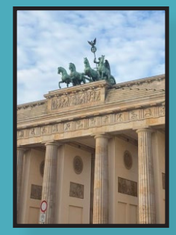
Highclere Castle 7/10
This is the Downton Abbey filming location. This was a fantastic place to visit! I love the show, so I loved getting to see the rooms and places they filmed on the grounds. I went during a literary festival, so the hassle of getting to Highclere was very much worth it. If you plan to only do a tour of the rooms, it might not be worth the cost of travel. You also cannot take photos inside Highclere, since it is still being used as a home. If you are a big fan of the show, I would consider going here!



Amsterdam, Netherlands 9/10
I loved Amsterdam! You can wander along the canals for a long time and never get tired of the views. The city was beautiful, and I highly recommend doing a boat tour of the canals and learning some of the history of the city and why the buildings look the way they do. There are lots of fun things to do, but there is also a lot of history.



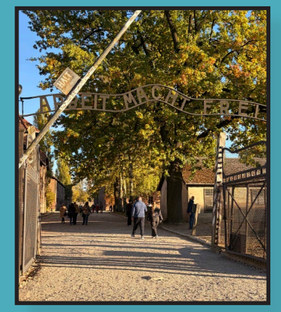
Anne Frank House 10/10
I had to highlight the Anne Frank House on its own. This is a must-do experience if you are interested in WWII history or have ever read her diary. It was surreal to walk into the Secret Annex and see the places that were described in her diary. I cannot describe the emotions that I felt, but you need to experience it for yourself.



Berlin, Germany 9/10
I absolutely loved my time here. I thought this was the perfect mix of history and fun. Germany acknowledges their past in a way that seems very thoughtful. Seeing the Berlin Wall in person, as well as Checkpoint Charlie, is an indescribable experience. Seeing history that happened in our parents' time was a sobering experience. I was also there during the Festival of Lights, which was very cool to see!



Kraków, Poland 7/10
It was very easy to get immersed in the culture of Poland. You can find Polish cuisine everywhere, and there are a lot of cool sightseeing places. I was there during a festival, and the market was a fun experience! There is also a lot of history here. You can visit a memorial at the site of a former ghetto and learn about how WW II impacted the population of Poland.



Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau 10/10
This was a life-changing experience. No words can describe how it felt to stand in a place where so much pain and suffering occurred, but it is a place that should be visited so that no one forgets that no human deserves to be put into a camp.



Photo | Maeve Doyle.

The T-Hut

by Alexandra Hicks

Have you happened to be outside of Ridgeway on a Wednesday afternoon and wondered what the people in the orange fence are up to? Well, I will tell you exactly what we are doing; archaeology. Archaeology is a discipline that analyzes what happened in the past through what they left behind like a big historical puzzle. Archaeologists look at fragments of pottery, the color of dirt, animal bones, charred plant remains, or any other kind of historical or ancient trash you could think of to tell the story of a site (a location with artifacts) we are interested in.

I am in Archeology 240, also known as Field Techniques, and in this class, we get to excavate (or digging to find artifacts) on campus (this is really special, we are the only school in the U.S. with an on-campus excavation site) led by our knowledgeable professor, Dr. McKay. But what are we digging for? While you wouldn't know just from walking past, within the orange fencing was the location of a building that was on campus from before the purchase of the land for the University (so around 1919 when the university moved from Moores Hill, Indiana to Evansville) until 1971, when the building was demolished.

When the structure was first built, the plot of land that became our school was a farm. We have limited details about who owned the land and what they used the structure for. By 1923, the three-room cottage we are looking for had been transformed with the help of the YMCA and YWCA into the first location to get food on campus as well as the first dedicated event space for students. When classes finally moved to Evansville in 1921, Olmstead, the first building on campus, did not include a cafeteria, so students had to go off campus for meals. The Tea Pot Inn, as the building was formally called, or the T-Hut as students had nicknamed the building, by 1926 was small but mighty and boasted two rooms for the YMCA male students to meet and have events, and one room, the tearoom, for YWCA women was decorated with fine Japanese tea-ware, complete with electric lights.



Photo | Maeve Doyle.

And importantly for students, the tearoom served food (although male students had to be accompanied by a member of the YWCA to enjoy the food originally). The food options improved as the preparation was later transferred to home economics courses, allowing students to have hands on learning opportunities just like we try to stress at UE today. By 1947, the tiny three-room house with a staff of 19 was serving 1,800 students a day and the building was also expanded to have a popular jukebox room. However, the building's importance to students was about to diminish as SOBA was built in 1948 and contained a proper cafeteria. By 1951, our excavation site began to become a temporary home for university departments in search of a better location. First, it was occupied by the music department, and then in 1962 the business department, in 1969 it held nursing, and finally, in 1971, the farmhouse/T-Hut/office building was demolished.

Now archaeology students are hoping to find some trace of all the meals, meetings, and memories that this building left behind. We hope to answer questions about the space, like what was the exact use before the school bought the building? And can we determine how the building was demolished? Is there some indication in the artifacts, rocks, and soil of the original footprints and several renovations? Since this excavation affects your green space and since the building was an important part of students' experience in the past, we are interested in what questions the student body might have. We would also love to share what we are up to. Don't be afraid to walk up to the fence and ask us a question or take a quick look at our poster we set in front of the site to learn more.

the bugs, the corpse

By Emma Anne McCombs

Let not yourself fear the threat of death,
for it welcomes you back to the ways of your past.
When the bugs find your skin and chew on your corpse,
they find pits of the earth that are part of your spore.
Your fingertips of layered pine, veins of fresh streams,
the softness of your brain like the moss on a tree.
They will explore your rotting corpse
like the parts of Earth that it is,
with your irises like crystals inside of a cave
and your arms made from broken limbs.
Death does not want you in means of a scare,
it wants you because your soul belongs there.
In the soil of the earth and the grass of greens,
on the waters of its surface and every depth beneath.
It welcomes you back home to the earth you once roamed,
when you were still an element of something unknown.
Do not fear death's pulling, for it wishes you well–
let it return you home to Earth's loving shell.

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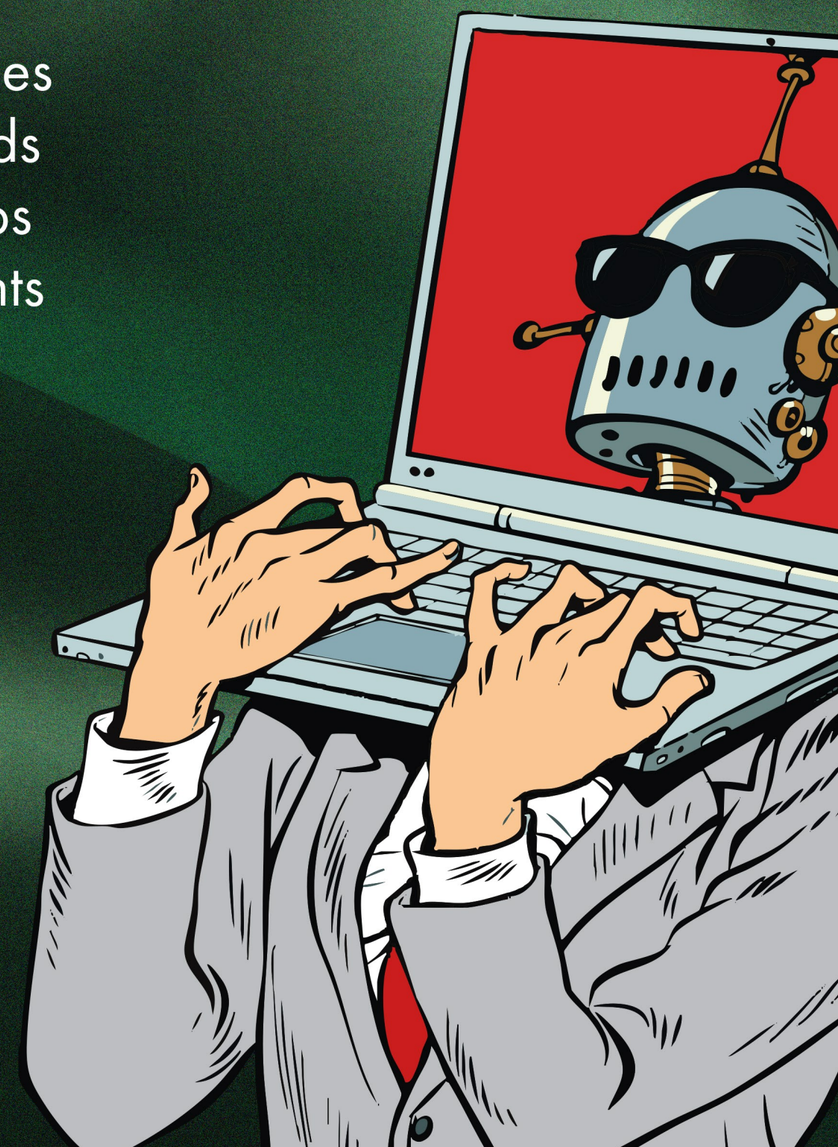


MORTON
DESIGN COLLECTIVE

Cheering for Aces, but Who is Cheering for Them?

By Kara Bonifer

They cheer on the sidelines, represent our school, and support our teams, but are they getting the same benefits as other athletic programs? Is the Spirit Squad being left out?

At the University of Evansville, the spirit squad goes to all the men's and women's home games. They also spend long hours and late nights practicing but what are they getting back. On March 5, 2026, the University of Evansville announced a significant apparel partnership with Nike and BSN Sports. The partnership stated, "Nike, the global leader in athletic apparel, footwear, and equipment, will continue as the exclusive outfitter for all 17 Purple Aces athletics programs and the University's spirit squads." Yet the spirt squad has yet to see new uniforms, bows or anything from the partnership. When I asked one of the dancers what she thought of the uniforms, she said "We could use new ones, they are all so old, and everything that we need to wear for practice are so old.

And two of my bows are being held together by safety pins."

She also stated that everything they use is handed down by past spirit squad members. This



is not fair to the spirit squad. While other athletic programs are benefiting from the new partnership, the Spirit Squad is still relying on outdated uniforms and hand-me-down practice gear. Part of the partnership was given to the softball team. The softball team received new gloves, hats, belts, shirts and other gear. This is great for the softball team, but it raises questions on why the spirt squad hasn't received similar support for their team. When I asked members of the spirit squad how the condition of the pom poms is, one girl said,

"they are similar to Halloween costume pom poms, they are kind of plasticly and worn out."



Another factor that was brought up when talking to spirit squad members was how late their practices are. They practice on Tuesday's and Thursdays from 8 to 10:30pm. This is very late compared to other athletic programs practice times. However, this was said to be the only time they are allowed to practice. Practicing from 8 to 10:30pm can create challenges for members to have time for homework and get a good night's sleep before they must get up early in the morning for class. For members of the spirit squad, being part of the team means a commitment of time and energy. With attending games, late practices and balancing schoolwork, members dedicate a lot of their time. They deserve to feel valued. The issue is not simply about having new uniforms or new bows, but about having good equipment that is in good condition and making sure the team feels that their contribution to our school is valued. The team plays such a huge role at the University of Evansville. Their presence helps bring energy to every game and shows the support the UE Aces have. Their support for the men's and women's basketball team means so much, and it is time that we support them.

What is UEreads and What Purpose Does it Serve?

By Brendan Mofield

Over the past month I've been working for a program called UEreads. A student teaching program where you assist with an after-school program at an elementary school inside of the city. It's honestly been incredibly fun getting to work with kids; I used to work in a hotel, and this isn't all that different–the biggest difference is the kids laugh at my jokes! Now, I'm not a trained teacher, and I don't plan on becoming one. Which raises the question on why I chose this in the first place because after all there are easier and more flexible student jobs out there. The reason why I chose this over something else is because it's fun to talk to these kids, along with being a great way to sharpen my own communication skills. You shouldn't apply the words, "competent communicator," to yourself until you've taught a group of rowdy kids how to play checkers. Watching the students understand it while getting incredibly competitive brought a smile to my face.

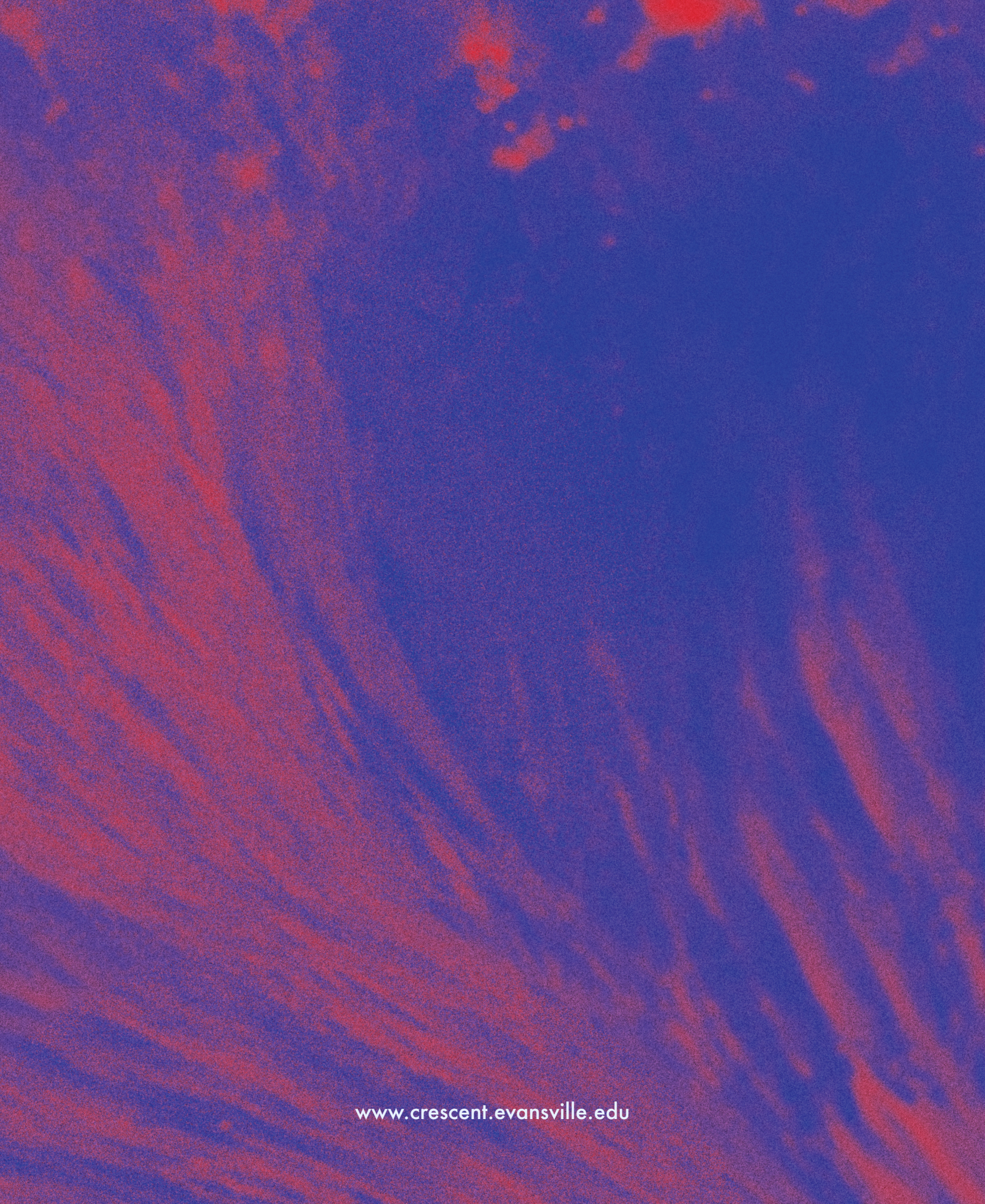
A question that was on my mind when I started the program, and a question I'm sure you may be asking yourself: is what we're hearing about elementary school students true? If you're not familiar, there's been a major panic in this country over our children getting lower and lower test scores since 2012. Along with that, if you're on social media, a lot of teachers are coming out and saying that students are comprehending less every year. This is somewhat true; most statistics reveal that students who started school during the COVID-19 pandemic are getting much lower test scores than those who didn't. If you entered any level of school over the pandemic, then you're expected to have lower test scores than students who started once the lock-down was lifted. Since I'm not spending every second of the day with these students, my opinion is only worth so much; however, I can say that their education has been slowed down. Things that I remember getting as a kid, they are struggling with, stuff like differentiating between lowercase and capital letters. Not just the ones which are incredibly similar like Ss, Oo, Yy, and Pp, but all letters of the alphabet. There's a lot of basic stuff that the kids I help tend to struggle with like following basic directions as well.

The more I think of it the weirder it gets, none of the kids are mean, they never seem to be ignoring the directions. It seems to be more of a slip of the mind when they do something they weren't supposed to do instead of an active will to rebel.

There is a silver-lining though, because despite the kids I help seeming to fail at a lot of the expectations which are set up for them, they're all very good at communicating with each other. Like, they seem to naturally go out of their way to help each other. Including each other in games they play and showing more confused cohorts how to do something if they seem confused. If you're describing a game to them, they'll all eventually understand it, no matter how complicated it is. Which makes it seem to me that they aren't stupid or have something fundamentally broke, but just missing something. Once that certain something gets put into place, things won't end up as bad as some pessimistic people think. Things are in the process of changing for the better, test scores are back at the standard level. And if you want to continue seeing change, then it requires action, and no matter how many bills get through, only so much can be done to help those who are already missing something. Which is why programs like UEreads are so important, it's a way to help those kids who need our help.

If you're interested in applying to UEreads, then please do. Applications are accepted at the beginning of each semester, email them to Elaine Freels at ef97@evansville.edu. When I say to apply if you're interested, I mean it, your major doesn't matter. I'm majoring in Creative Writing and Computer Science and was still hired on.





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