

Infusion



**LATINX STUDENTS MOVE
MOUNTAINS AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

**REFLECTING ON UGA'S
FIRST-EVER MULTICULTURAL
"BIG 3 IDENTITY COLLAB"**

**AMERICAN FASHION
BLOSSOMS FROM
EVERY COUNTRY**

**BLACK WOMAN
SUPERHEROS**

**LIL NAS X IS RESHAPING
THE MUSIC INDUSTRY**



FROM THE EDITOR



To prosper is to grow and flourish. In the year of 2021 we have grown. We have accomplished self-growth and learned to adapt as our surroundings change.

We've grown in spite of new, old and persistent challenges. We've learned to take better care of ourselves and to be conscious of those around us. To maintain this growth we must remember to be gentle with ourselves and remind ourselves that life is a tumultuous journey that contains setbacks. Although there are setbacks there is also light at the end of the tunnel.

There are things to look forward to. If you can't find those things, make them yourself. Look forward to the little things that make life better like your favorite meal, a nap, a workout session or whatever thing that makes you happy even if it's for a minute. Make opportunities for yourself by putting yourself out there and doing things that make you feel a little nervous or hesitant. You never know what will happen unless you try and you'll always learn something from a new experience.

Experiencing new things, becoming more in tune with your body, using your voice and looking at life with a more positive outlook is how you experience growth. It is how we prosper.

Here is "Prosper", the fall 2021 issue of InfUSion Magazine.

PROSPER.

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INFUSION MAGAZINE FALL 2021

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IN-PERSON VS. ONLINE



Only a few students were on the University of Georgia's campus last semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which made online class and hybrid classes the primary way people attended school. Now, football games are back in full swing, dining halls are once again allowing self-service and classes are fully in-person after the announcement that the university would return to normal. This regular semester is exciting to first year students, but some upperclassmen like Lin Hervey have experienced stress from this complete return to standard operation.

Hervey, a fourth year public relations major, had trouble finding a rhythm when she returned to college Fall 2020 after taking a

Adjusting to a New Normal after a Year of Online Classes

break. She had to adjust to being back in school as well as adjust to online learning.

"I had kind of figured it out, gotten the method down, and had one of the best semesters I've ever had in school being online last spring," she said.

However, now that the university has returned to normal and resumed in-person classes, Hervey says that even though the course load is not hard, she has not been able to "quite find [her] rhythm," and this along with other factors caused stress.

This transition has also caused her stress from a social standpoint.

"Having to get dressed and present myself and wanting to present my best self every day in class is just an added stressor," Hervey said.

Hervey even has an emotional support animal that now experiences separation anxiety from her being gone.

"It's not just the change in the stress on me, but also on her that has been a lot to deal with," she said.

Similar to Hervey, Alleyone Monsanto, a fourth year fashion merchandising and advertising double major, says that the workload and classes are not the problem for her. Monsanto said that the sudden return of students to campus was anxiety-inducing.

"Just on the main areas of campus, there are so many more people than I was used to seeing last year; it was really hectic, and it caused anxiety for me," Monsanto says.

The increased number of people



was exceedingly stressful for Monsanto due to the ongoing pandemic and decreased guidelines.

UGA abandoned most guidelines this semester including the 6-foot social distancing guidelines and mask mandate from the Fall 2020-Spring

2021 semester. The university still encourages mask-wearing inside buildings, but these guidelines are not enforced due to USG policy. The Transportation Security Administration requires masks on all forms of public transportation including buses, but this is not mandated either.

The university also encourages students to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, and professors are individually requiring masks in class. However, Monsanto is not just worried about COVID-19, but about other types of sickness like the common cold.

“People are coughing and hacking, it sounds like they’re sick that are showing up,” Monsanto said. “They don’t always have masks on when they do, so even if it’s not COVID that still scares me.”

Last year, most of her classes were hybrid, half online and half in-person, and she had a few classes that were completely online, so there was less of a chance of getting sick. She said that the times she had to be

in-person varied per class, yet she had a choice of attending in-person everyday.

Because of these stressors, both students would like an option to attend class online, something they both enjoyed last year.

Hervey said that online classes allow her to go at her own pace whether that is learning or catching up on missed material, and she preferred the more individualized work during online classes. Monsanto liked the optional attendance where she could choose whether to attend in-person class if she needed extra help without having to make office hours especially because of her involvement in extracurriculars such as an internship and campus job.

But other than enjoying online classes, both students recognize that offering online classes would help others dealing with mental health, sickness or just regular student life.

Monsanto said that it should be offered to give options to those who

might have disabilities or more debilitating anxiety.

“I think they should have a Zoom link if you are just not physically or mentally able to participate in-person,” Monsanto said.

Hervey said that one of her classes already has a Zoom option, which is beneficial for those sick or out of town.

“I think it would be great if professors kept that option open, and I think we’re headed in that direction,” Hervey said. “I think a lot of people want that.”

by brianna smith
graphics by jordan campbell





MULTICULTURAL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

The Office of Multicultural Services and Programs works to create an inclusive campus environment by supporting the development and affirming the overall experiences of all students, particularly multicultural students. We envision a University of Georgia that honors the identities, perspectives, and worldviews of our entire community in a way that advances social justice and an institutional way of being that models inclusiveness for all students, faculty, and staff.



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by brianna smith
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How Tighter Hair Textures Experience
Discrimination

“Nappy.” “African-American hair.” “Bad hair.” “Unruly.” “Untamed.” Historically, these terms have been used to describe tighter hair textures. More specifically, it refers to type 4C hair. Briana Monique, a Biracial beauty and lifestyle youtuber, recently used some of these terms to describe her African-American mother’s hair.

In a recent video titled, “Vlog|Crashed my Luxury Car + Going Out with W/ Friends In Atlanta + My Everyday Life + More|Briana Monique,” Monique said that she was blessed with her texture, which is looser, and that her mom has “African-American hair” and “naps.” She said that her mother tells her that she is lucky. After facing backlash on social media and YouTube, Monique removed the clip from the video and turned off its comments. She even issued an apology to women with type 4C hair.

However, this discrimination against 4C hair goes far beyond Youtube; even hair stylists are refusing to accept clients with this texture, oftentimes asking clients to blow dry or straighten their hair before styling and charging extra for the services performed on their hair. This issue shows that texturism is still rampant in 2021.

A History of Hair Trauma

4C hair is a hair texture that has “tightly coiled strands” and “a very tight zig-zag pattern,” according to Allure. This classification is based on Andre Walker’s, an Emmy award winning stylist, hair typing system that identifies four hair types and subtypes within each category. Walker created the system in order to help women decide the best way to care for their hair, but it ended up dividing women instead.

Texturism is the idea that looser curl patterns are more desirable than tighter, kinkier curls like 4C hair, a concept that developed during slavery.

According to Dr. Afiya Mbilishaka, an assistant professor of psychology at the University of the District of Columbia, 4C hair was not regarded as derogatory names in traditional African communities since people had the tools and materials needed to style and take care of their hair, as cited in an article on Bustle. In fact, these communities believed tighter curls were linked to the heavens as their hair grew upward.

After the Transatlantic Slave Trade, Black people in America lacked the tools needed to

take care of their hair, losing hair practices. Slave owners would dehumanize slaves and compare them to animals, thus associating their hair with fur or wool. People only had access to grooming equipment like horse brushes to care for their hair.

Texturism is inextricably linked to colorism, the idea that lighter skinned individuals are better than darker skinned individuals. People with looser curls who were sometimes mixed-race were typically deemed as house slaves, as their hair type indicated whiteness.

After slavery, the Tignon Law forced freed Black women to wear a head scarf as a way to signify they were part of the slave class. This led to the idea that “proximity to whiteness” was standard for beauty and higher status in society, as even hair tests were required for entry in some places like white churches and sororities.

Despite these practices disappearing in modern times, the trauma from dehumanization still exists today and plays out as texturism.

“Your Hair is too...”: Texturism Within Salons

Neilla Cadet, a first year accounting major with 4C hair, said she experienced texturism multiple times from stylists that charged her for not blow drying her hair because of her hair type.

“It’s a way that you’re saying that you have a problem with my hair type, you’re not saying it directly, but kind of for me in a way,” Cadet said.

On two separate occasions, she went to a stylist to get feed-in cornrows and another time to get knotless braids. For both appointments, the stylists’ website told her to blow dry her hair prior to the appointment. When she didn’t show up with blow dried hair, she was “charged an extra fee on top of what she had to pay because of her hair type.”

Cadet also said that some stylists have indirectly made comments about her hair type. Sometimes she would want to try new hairstyles and would often hear “I don’t know if you’ll be able to” or “she cannot do it on her” or “No, because your hair is ..., I unfortunately cannot do that.”

“Sometimes, I’m like ‘wow, I didn’t think there’s a problem with my hair,’” Cadet said. “I comb it without a problem.”

Cadet said hearing the comments and being required to blow dry her hair prior to appoint-

**“You’re just not educated enough”
- Neilla Cadet**

ments sometimes brings her down and makes her feel different.

“It kind of brings you down, and it’s like I wish I had curly hair, I wish my hair was softer, I wish my hair was this...because it’s not even more so about paying the money,” she said.

Cadet actually struggled with embracing her natural hair after some incidents. She rarely wore her hair in its natural state, and mainly wore wigs and weaves. When she did wear her natural hair, she bought different products to make her hair curl more. She even relaxed her hair in order for her hair to be straighter.

Although hearing comments does not affect her anymore, Cadet said that hairstylists should learn and be able to do different types of hair and not just a specific hair type.

“Hair Stylists, you take care of hair so therefore, it’s like okay this is what I do, I love hair. It shouldn’t be I love curly hair or straight hair, it should be “I love all types of hair, and I’m willing to explore everything.”

“You’re just not Educated Enough”: Combatting Texturism

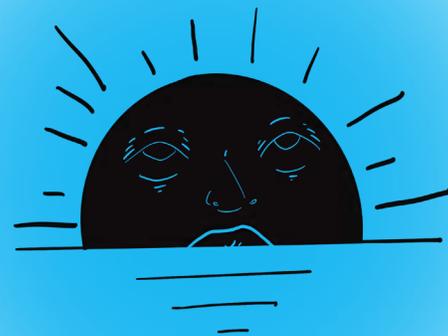
Although there still is trauma from slavery that affects how the

Black community and other communities see our hair, breaking the generational curse of self-hate would help combat texturism. Breaking the curse includes not speaking negatively about tighter hair textures, not praising one type of hair and learning how to properly take care of hair. Doing this especially around younger generations can help instill that their hair is beautiful and doesn’t need to be changed.

Education about texturism can also help. Youtubers like IamEloho, Queen Chioma and Mayowa’s World all speak on common Black issues including instances of colorism and texturism to help educate about the effects of it and why certain hair types should not be discriminated against.

Even companies are creating product lines specifically for type 4C hair, which is often overlooked in the natural hair community. 4C Only is a brand dedicated to making products exclusively for 4C hair. The brand sells shampoo, deep conditioner, leave-in conditioner and styling cream.

Even though texturism may not be completely gone, the effort taken to educate is a step in the right direction.



by *anna van eekeren*
layout by *lin hervey*
& *jordan campbell*

REFLECTING ON UGA'S FIRST-EVER MULTICULTURAL "BIG 3 IDENTITY COLLAB"

resurfaced. After all, how could I not feel isolated and subject to potential prejudice when 68.7% of undergraduate students resembled the dominant race and merely 11.91%, albeit scattered throughout campus in designated, university-implemented groups – without which marginalized peoples would lack a space and voice entirely –, looked like me (UGA Fact Book).

Unsurprisingly, this alienation is universal among minorities and is reflected in UGA's Fall 2020 demographics. According to the UGA Fact Book, African Americans constitute only 7.11% of undergraduates, Hispanics 6.9%, and multiracial 4.25%, with Native Americans comprising just .06%. It's these glaring statistics that drove me, and many others, to seek support from various interracial and inclusive affiliations that enable individuals to convey

pertinent issues and exhibit eclipsed and misrepresented stories.

As such, on Oct. 13, 2021, I attended UGA's first-ever "Big 3 Identity Collab" – a joint conference between multicultural organizations Asian American Student Association (AASA), Hispanic Student Association (HSA), and Indian Cultural Exchange (ICE) addressing diversity, culture, and identity—in hopes of gleaning some solidarity.

The hour-long event featured traditional foods, presentations regarding challenges, and icebreakers that depicted similarities among ethnicities. These statements ranged from light-hearted declarations such as, "stand up if you've ever gotten lost on campus" to more grounded matters: "stand up if you've ever been stereotyped based on your cultural identi-

Despite growing up in America, I've never felt like I've belonged, having been adopted from China at eleven months and raised by white parents – a concept more foreign to my myopic peers than my distinct eastern appearance. As a child, I struggled to relate to others and dreaded public interactions involving my family, as these left me riddled with misdirected embarrassment and ingrained with a burning, innate

desire for expressivity, diversity, and acceptance.

Coming to UGA – a predominantly white institution (PWI) in the south – amid escalating racial tensions and civil rights movements such as Black Lives Matter and Stop Asian Hate, I feared I'd be a glaring token of color amongst a swarming sea of whiteness – a drifting scarlet ibis amidst a hurling blizzard – and the familiar traces of displacement I'd gradually shed

ty," which had nearly everyone, including myself, on their feet.

AASA brought rice crackers and focused on the impact of collectivism—an ideology common in eastern nations like China or Japan that stresses community, selflessness, and interconnectedness rather than independence and individual desires apparent in Western countries like the U.S. or Great Britain—on forming one's societal, familial and internal identity, as well as the influence of the model minority myth on Asian American mental health and perception.

ICE provided Indian biscuits called Parle-G and highlighted feelings associated with displaying one's attachment to their background within the confines of white America. Meanwhile, HSA offered concha, a sweet bread, and stressed the

adverse effect of traditional gender roles embodied in the terms machismo, aggressive toxic masculinity and marianismo, imposed femininity and purity, on the Latinx body.

An underlying theme emphasizing the importance of community, mental health, and “taking up space” in an individual’s environment unified the groups, resulting in massive applause for each.

Afterward, I spoke with presidents Annie Li of AASA, Emelynn Arroyave of HSA, and Anusha Jain of ICE, on their experiences at UGA and advice for incoming people of color (POC) students. Our conversation over shared hardships of assimilation, heritage and identity proved both comforting and solemn and we managed to, in a trained fashion molded from years of practice, brush aside our collective trauma with pained laughs and deflective jokes reminiscent of those who diverge from social standards.

We parted, and I thanked them for their inspiring features, their impassioned words and hardened resistance resonating with me, igniting a searing flame that blazes inside many minorities, empowering us to transcend societal restrictions and incite a more liberal and egalitarian future.

INTRO



WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO JOIN YOUR CLUB AND HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR INVOLVEMENT?

Emelynn:

Initially, I didn’t feel like I could find my place here. I remember going on a tour and telling my dad afterward that I didn’t see a single Hispanic person on campus. Before coming to UGA, I would go on Instagram and look at the #UGA23 tag and try to find Hispanic-looking people, which is how I discovered HSA. As soon as I arrived on campus, I knew that was the one thing I wanted to join because it was really important for me to feel that connection to my culture and have people who understood my experience. That’s why I joined HSA—to have that community where I don’t have to explain myself to others because we share a similar upbringing.

Annie:

I really wanted to join AASA because I wanted a community where you can be yourself and you don’t have to explain your background. It’s already terrifying going into college, and since my senior year was robbed due to Covid-19, I was extra nervous coming in as a freshman. I just felt that by joining AASA, I would feel more comfortable because I could fit in more easily as I wouldn’t have to justify my background.

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF DIVERSITY AND HOW OR WHY DO YOU THINK DIVERSITY IS IMPORTANT?

Anusha: Diversity is being able to peer into a crowd and view people who not only look like you but also don’t. It’s seeing people who share the same experiences as you as well as being able to learn and explore different cultures, religions, identities, etc. That’s why it’s central to me. I don’t want to live in a world where I only know one type of individual or experience.

WHAT FACTORS HELPED SHAPE YOUR IDENTITY?

“I think that if I didn’t have that connection, or consciously didn’t make that decision to remain rooted to my culture, I’d probably lose it.”

~ Emelynn Arroyave

Emelynn: Going away to college and leaving your family and home behind, it’s easy to treat your origin as ‘out of sight, out of mind’. For me, consciously trying to maintain an attachment to my heritage, whether that’s calling home or cooking a Colombian meal, is what helped me stay tied to my ancestry and Latinx identity. I think that if I didn’t have that connection, or consciously didn’t make that decision to remain rooted to my culture, I’d probably lose it.

“I don’t want to live in a world where I only know one type of individual or experience.”

~ Anusha Jain

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES REGARDING DIVERSITY AND IDENTITY YOU FACE AS A STUDENT AND IN THE WORKPLACE?

Annie: The main thing is that they're so many different things going on in your life, such as new environments, friends, class structures, and coursework, so everything feels very chaotic. Technically, this is my first in-person year, so it's been hectic adjusting. The biggest issue I have forming my identity is taking everything into account and trying to process what's occurring around me and incorporate that into who I am, which is something we've discussed tonight – having to balance both your home and American culture. It's such a common struggle among children of ethnic parents because you always have to find that middle ground where you are American enough, but also cultured enough, and it's a very, very blurred line right now and something that's difficult to navigate.

Because of this, we wanted to do the collaboration to discuss identity specifically, as we thought that all three respective ethnicities could bring monumental insight.

IN YOUR PRESENTATION, YOU DESCRIBED COLLECTIVISM REGARDING CULTURAL OBLIGATIONS, VALUES, AND TRADITIONS. HOW DOES COLLECTIVISM IMPACT YOU CURRENTLY?

Anusha: I think the most interesting and eye-opening aspect of today's collaboration was finding out how much connects us, as it's not only my group struggling. It's all the POC communities grappling with this identity crisis of attending and trying to fit into a PWI while also making space for yourself and your culture. It's insane that ethnic students comprise only 30% of UGA's demographic body, and our conversations of identity, culture and mental health demonstrate just how pressing these subjects are, as they intersect and represent collective struggles minorities face.



UGA

"Instead of minimizing yourself or blending in and assimilating, own that environment and declare: I am a woman of color. I am going to be myself and take up my space."

~Emelynn Arroyave

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE MOST CHALLENGING ASPECT OF GOING TO A PREDOMINANTLY WHITE INSTITUTION (PWI) SUCH AS UGA? HOW DO YOU FEEL CONNECTED TO UGA AND TO OTHER STUDENTS? DO YOU FEEL AS IF YOU BELONG AT UGA AS A WHOLE?

Anusha: I don't want to sound negative, but I think we've all had to force ourselves to belong here at UGA. We joined these organizations to make us feel like we have a place – to see people who resemble us and who've gone through similar things – just to exist in this institution. I'm not sure what I would've done at a PWI if I didn't have ICE to provide support and a community.

Emelynn: It's also creating your own space in a situation where you might be the only person of your ethnicity. Instead of minimizing yourself or blending in and assimilating, own that environment and declare: I am a woman of color. I am going to be myself and take up my space. I think that's significant.

Annie: By assuming leadership positions, the three of us have gone out of our way to do this, as we can directly impact our community, which is essential as student leaders.

AS STUDENT LEADERS, HOW COMFORTABLE ARE YOU DISCUSSING RACE-RELATED TOPICS WITH YOUR PEERS? HOW OFTEN DO YOU HAVE THESE DISCUSSIONS?

Annie: I frequently engage in conversations regarding diversity and inclusion, as it's an extremely pertinent topic for myself and in general. We wanted to take this opportunity to highlight these difficult matters such as the mental health of POC students, and I really encourage my friends, peers, interviewers, and others to address these heavy subjects.

IN LIGHT OF THE ATLANTA SPA SHOOTINGS AND OTHER ASIAN-BASED HATE CRIMES DUE TO COVID-19, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE ATMOSPHERE IN A PWI, SUCH AS UGA?

Annie: That was an especially tragic time for us and is something we're still gradually processing. UGA has actually been quite understanding, as various professors have reached out to us with their support. Moving forward, we must be more sensitive and take that into account as we heal together.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI)

HOW DO YOU PERSONALLY CHALLENGE STEREOTYPES AND PROMOTE EQUITY AND INCLUSION?

Annie: I stepped into the role of President of AASA from Freshman Chair because the previous two presidents were men and someone had mentioned that they didn't believe women were as strong and reliable, which enraged me and prompted me to run. I was like, You know what? Let's act. Let's do something. Well, we've broken all the AASA records this year, so I have told them otherwise.

WHAT CAN STUDENTS DO IN RESPONSE TO MICROAGGRESSIONS, ESPECIALLY IN SITUATIONS INVOLVING TEACHERS OR ADMINISTRATORS?

*"I want to emphasize that you can always take action."
~ Annie Li*

Emelynn: It's really easy to feel hopeless and helpless on this campus, so seeking support from your community and having people that understand you is valuable and

ORGANIZATION

HOW DO YOUR ORGANIZATIONS DEFINE DIVERSITY? HOW DO YOU PROMOTE LEARN-

ING ABOUT YOUR HERITAGE? WHAT ARE WAYS STUDENTS CAN GET ENGAGED AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR CULTURE?

Annie: AASA serves as an umbrella organization for the rest of the Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) identifying associations on campus that advances and enhances diversity through various programmings, such as general board meetings (GBMs) focused on culture or the APIDA Night Market, which is occurring this November. For the market, we've asked 14 APIDA-identifying clubs to convene and teach students about their respective heritages by selling food and engaging in traditional performances.

WHAT'S IT LIKE HAVING A DIVERSE, NICHE COMMUNITY AT UGA? HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO HAVE THESE CONNECTIONS?

Annie: It's really crucial to foster and bring different ideas to light because, although we can relate to many similar scenarios, we're also unique. Considering multiple elements is pivotal to diversity and truly betters you as an individual.

Anusha: I think that the most amazing thing about each of our organizations and communities is that they are diasporas. There is no one definition for Asian American. There is no one definition for Hispanic. And there is no one definition for Indian either. It's an integrated blend of factors, where every day I'm learning something new, and I think that's fundamental to diversity – appreciating other cultures and embracing them and your own.

beneficial.

Annie: Last year, AASA sent out a list of grievances holding a staff member accountable who, despite working with his colleagues for several months, couldn't discern between two board members. I want to emphasize that you can always take action, and we really do encourage that on AASA's behalf.

HOW HAVE YOUR VALUES AND BELIEFS IMPACTED YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR CLASSMATES WHO MAY THINK DIFFERENTLY THAN YOU?

Anusha: Being a part of Multicultural Services and Programs (MSP) and an ICE board member for 4 years, I've definitely grown from my experiences and am much more open-minded than before, having learned a lot about different cultures and myself as well as having interacted with diverse individuals.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

*"Make this space your space."
~ Anusha Jain*

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR INCOMING UGA STUDENTS OF COLOR?

Emelynn: We encourage you to join our organizations but realize and understand many minorities don't. Regardless, keep that connection to your culture. Don't let it disappear or make you feel any less than who you are. Take up your space and find a support system, whether that be an MSP group or something else.

Anusha: Like Emelynn stresses, make this space your space. Really voice your opinion. Go out and join all these amazing organizations here on campus like ICE, HSA, AASA. Find your community and place in this institution and become a voice for others and yourself. I think that's paramount for incoming POC freshmen.

*Interview has been edited for clarity and concision.



Pride Center

Student Affairs

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

The mission of the Pride Center at the University of Georgia is to foster an inclusive, informed community for LGBTQ+ individuals through collaboration, education, and advocacy.



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The Impacts of COVID-19 on International Student Life at UGA

by: Viktoria Kangas
layout by dani diaz

Students from all around the world come to the University of Georgia with different cultures, customs, and practices. During COVID-19, many people were faced with challenges such as being stuck in their dorms, being sent home or not having the ability to see friends and family for long periods of time. Everyone's journey is different, and the hardships experienced by international students are especially unique. Hearing about their perspectives can help give insight on a different point of view on the pandemic. We interviewed a few UGA students from around the world to tell us about their stories during the pandemic.

Sulaiman Owodunni, a UGA Student from Nigeria, was asked about the difficulty of being away from home and his time being an international student during the pandemic. He said, "For me going away from home has always been a normal thing. I did my undergrad away from home. Coming to UGA during the pandemic wasn't really bad but the problem was meeting people in general, which I believe every new

student was facing." For many, finding that point of communication with others at a time of isolation is difficult, while for others like Madi Imperato, it is a way to feel comfortable and connected.

Madi Imperato, 20, is a third year student studying personal relations. She grew up most of her life in the Cayman Islands until coming to Athens, Georgia for college. Imperato came on her own, "I learned to be very independent very quickly." said Imperato. Pre-pandemic she saw her family more often, with just a 2-hour flight, compared to not being able to visit as often as now. Her entire family lives on the island and the last time she visited home was Christmas last year. Since the start of the pandemic the borders had been very strict and they were closed at the time, but she did go home to see her family. Madi tells how strict the government was compared to other countries and how she had to quarantine before being let into the island. She said people including herself had trackers on them in the house they were quarantined at, and even staying

with her family there, there were many strict rules to follow. At times not seeing family can cause homesick feelings but Madi kept in touch as much as possible to help.

Madi Imparato said that coming from the island has made her a much less stressful person and that she kind of just goes with the ebbs and flows of life. Life on campus has fortunately been helpful for her by having sympathetic teachers who were accepting of her situation and a supportive group of friends who were there for her in times of need. Imparato felt like life was certainly different on the island where people are much more laid back than people in Georgia. With all of these challenges and victories through the years of the pandemic, Imparato feels good being here at the university and is excited to finally be able to go home for Thanksgiving.

Finn Jun, a fifth year student at UGA, is from a town close to the Hong Kong metropolitan area. Jun is far from home and has not seen his family in over six months but they make up for lost time by FaceTiming everyday. His family is back at his hometown being taken care of by his older sister, while he finishes school in Athens. He talks about how the one thing he wishes he didn't miss out on is the traditional mooncake festival in China. Him and his family gather at a table to eat lots of food like on Thanksgiving. He says, "I do get a little homesick, but it's not too bad because I have so many friends here that got my back, so I feel blessed." Jun talks about what helps him take off the edge when he misses home like playing intramural soccer with some friends and going every Friday to the International coffee hour to meet new people and socialize.

Jun opens up about the struggle the pandemic has put on him academically when everything went online. He tells about how he had to go

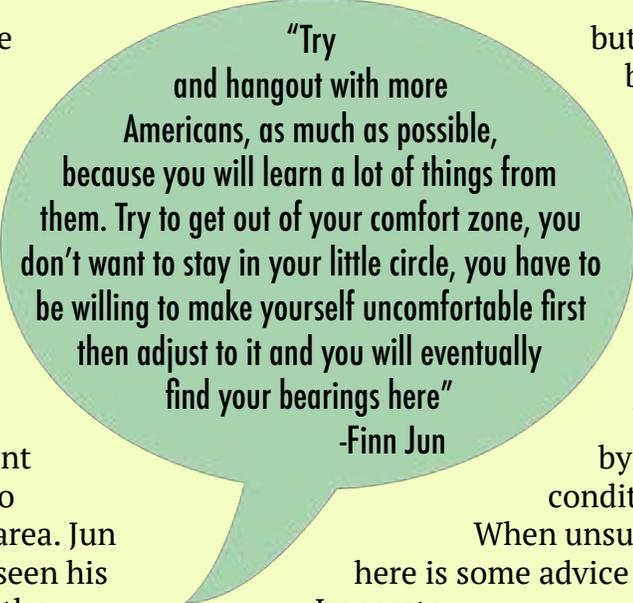
back to Hong Kong and how he had to take his classes at three in the morning. He said that due to COVID-19 and his difficult conditions of doing class are the reasons for him flunking some of his classes and needing to return here to finish those classes. He had to come back to Athens to take in-person classes and work to independently support himself financially. As he speaks bravely

about his journey of the pandemic he does say "I was so tired of taking online classes but now being in person is really good" said Jun. Many may or may not relate to the people's stories above but now the challenges faced by many international students can be seen by the community.

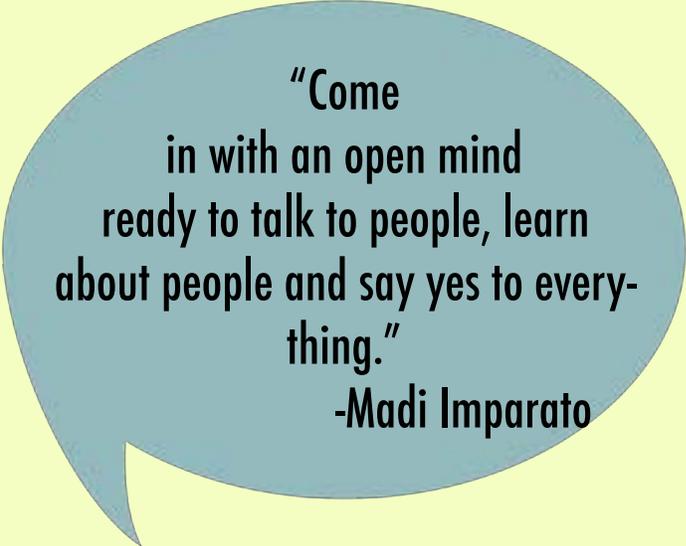
People from all around the world come to the University of Georgia to study and experience life. Recently all students have been impacted by COVID-19 due to the conditions we must endure.

When unsure about life here at UGA here is some advice from Finn Jun and Madi Imparato.

Advice from Students:



"Try and hangout with more Americans, as much as possible, because you will learn a lot of things from them. Try to get out of your comfort zone, you don't want to stay in your little circle, you have to be willing to make yourself uncomfortable first then adjust to it and you will eventually find your bearings here"
-Finn Jun



"Come in with an open mind ready to talk to people, learn about people and say yes to everything."
-Madi Imparato

¡Si Se Puede! Latinx Students Move Mountains at the University of Georgia



Attending a prestigious school like the University of Georgia (UGA) comes with hard work and dedication, but for Latinx students, it also brings a plethora of experiences from breaking toxic generational cycles to finding the right group of friends.

According to UGA College Factual's 2021 Diversity Report, out of 38,920 students, the Latinx community makes up 6.4% of the school's population—which is approximately 1,815 students.

In Georgia, the demographic of the state, according to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau, lists 52% of the population being white whereas 9.9% of people are Hispanic or Latinx. This means nothing for the 68.6% of students at UGA who are white, but it means everything to minority groups.

"UGA doesn't do enough to encourage and support Latinx students to come here," says Alma Liset Cruz-Luviano, a Mexican-American journalism and sociology double major at UGA, when asked about the low percentage of Hispanic students. She adds, "Due to having to work hard and being in survival mode for most of their lives, our parents don't know how to support their children emotionally, much less academically."

This is a predominately white institution, which can be attributed to the fact that it was the first public university established in the US. Old Southern beliefs and values are deeply rooted in this facility, even having buildings named after racist figures like Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, LeConte Hall and Baldwin Hall just to name a few.

Walking through the hallways of these buildings is uncomfortable for Latinx students and people of color as a whole. It is a constant reminder that the school is not always on the side of marginalized communities.

Making a home out of a place that does not feel warm and inviting becomes hard for students of color. This is why Latinx students have created organizations like the Hispanic Student Association to create a nook where the community feels accepted and secure.

If walking through blatantly prejudiced hallways is not enough, the Latinx community has been hit hard with dehumanization through stereotypes and instances of racial discrimination. This could be seen especially in 2016 when they were called criminals, rapists and killers on top of many other offensive terms during the presidential election.

Although racism towards Hispanic and Latinx people have been brought to light more in recent years, it is nothing new to the ones who have had to endure hurtful words and rejection from society based on their race and ethnicity.

According to Pew Research Center, Mexico is the top origin country of the U.S. immigrant population. This brings the most recent count for hispanic population in the U.S. to 58,838,000. Out of this number, 12% of foreign-born Hispanics and 20% of U.S. born Hispanics have a bachelor's degree or more.

"I think oftentimes when Latinx people migrate to the States they feel as if they are not worthy of equal opportunity," says Priscilla Lozada-Aguayo, a Puerto Rican and

American health promotion and behavioral medicine major at the UGA. She adds, "They are more likely not to attend higher education institutions."

Immigrants of Latinx origin coming to the US aids in breaking many taboos of Hispanic culture. Working and not going to school are assumed to be the normal, but first-generation students are flipping the narrative.

Unfortunately, this all comes with a cost as barriers in educational opportunities for Hispanic students are common. Whether this be because of the lack of economic or social resources many other students receive, it creates disadvantages that grow into deeper rooted issues.

Growing up in this kind of environment is difficult and these preconceived notions can be harmful to a developing mind. Children's physical and mental health gets put at a risk in which they grow to have poor self-esteem and bodily stress; all of this adding on to the grueling ascent of moving generational mountains.

"Our parents only had the space to provide basic needs and with those needs met on our ends, we look for more but our parents can't do that," says Cruz-Luviano. "Without support, how is a child supposed to believe in themselves and shoot for the stars?"

Both Cruz-Luviano and Lozada-Aguayo say that there is a prominent sense of needing to prove oneself at such a reputable university as a Latinx student. They feel this with peers, professors and even department heads especially when there are choices the institution can make that can so easily implement students of color, but they choose not to.

Despite having the feeling of the world being against them, the Latinx community keeps on trudging. There are dreams to fulfill and future generations to make way for.

The understanding of having the privilege many others do not have of going to school is not lost in this generation of Latinx students. They are working hard to represent their culture and pave the way for their future people.

"I think the biggest thing I can do for younger generations is show them that if I can be successful and happy, then they can too," says Lozada-Aguayo. She also moves forward every day by remembering why she goes to school, saying, "the largest thing that motivates me to study is reminding myself that one day I am going to be living my dream life with my dream job."

For Cruz-Luviano, her family is her primary factor of motivation, she explains, "My parents have worked in the fields, in factories and in warehouses all for me to have a chance to succeed. With the hard work ethic they've instilled in me, I've been motivated to be a good student and now, journalist."

This is a position many Latinx students would not be in without the help of their parents or caregivers. Numerous of them are the ones that came here with nothing, but gave their loved ones everything.

¡Si Se Puede! Estudiantes Latinos Mueven Montañas en la Universidad de Georgia



Asistir a una prestigiosa escuela como la Universidad de Georgia (UGA) conlleva arduo trabajo y dedicación, pero para los estudiantes Hispánicos, también brinda una gran cantidad de experiencias, desde romper ciclos generacionales tóxicos hasta encontrar el grupo de amigos adecuados.

Según el Informe de Diversidad 2021 de UGA College Factual, de 38,920 estudiantes, la comunidad Latina representa el 6.4% de la población de la escuela, que es de aproximadamente 1,815 estudiantes.

En Georgia, la demografía del estado, según la Oficina del Censo de los EE. UU. Más reciente, indica que el 52% de la población es blanca, mientras que el 9.9% de la gente es Hispana o latina. Esto no significa nada para el 68.6% de los estudiantes de UGA que son blancos, pero lo significa todo para los grupos minoritarios.

“UGA no hace lo suficiente para alentar y apoyar a los estudiantes latinos para que ingresen a dicha institución,” dice Alma Liset Cruz-Luviano, una México-Estadounidense que obtuvo una doble licenciatura en periodismo y sociología en esta prestigiosa universidad, cuando se le preguntó sobre el bajo porcentaje de estudiantes Hispánicos. Ella agrega, “Debido a tener que trabajar duro y estar en modo de supervivencia durante la mayor parte de sus vidas, nuestros padres no saben cómo apoyar a sus hijos emocionalmente, y mucho menos académicamente”.

Esta es una institución predominantemente blanca, lo que se puede atribuir al hecho de que fue la primera universidad pública establecida en los EE. UU. Las creencias y valores del viejo sur están profundamente arraigados en esta instalación, incluso con edificios con nombres de figuras racistas como Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, LeConte Hall y Baldwin Hall, solo por nombrar algunos.

Caminar por los pasillos de estos edificios es incómodo para los estudiantes latinos y las personas de color en general. Es un recordatorio constante de que la escuela no siempre está del lado de las comunidades marginadas.

Hacer un hogar de un lugar que no se siente cálido y acogedor se vuelve difícil para los estudiantes de color. Es por eso que los estudiantes Latinos han creado organizaciones como la Asociación de Estudiantes Hispánicos para crear un rincón donde la comunidad se sienta aceptada y segura.

Si caminar por pasillos descaradamente prejuiciosos no es suficiente, la comunidad hispana se ha visto muy afectada por la deshumanización a través de estereotipos e instancias de discriminación racial. Esto se pudo ver especialmente en 2016 cuando fueron llamados criminales, violadores y asesinos además de muchos otros términos ofensivos durante las elecciones presidenciales.

Aunque el racismo hacia los Hispánicos y Latinos ha salido a la luz más en los últimos años, no es nada nuevo para quienes han tenido que soportar palabras hirientes y el rechazo de la sociedad por motivos de raza y etnia.

Según el Pew Research Center, México es el principal país de origen de la población inmigrante de EE. UU. Esto eleva el recuento más reciente de población Hispana en los EE. UU. A 58.838.000. De este número, el 12% de los Hispánicos nacidos en el extranjero y el 20% de los Hispánicos nacidos en los EE. UU. Tienen una licenciatura o más.

“Creo que muchas veces, cuando las personas latinas emigran a los Estados Unidos, sienten que no son dignas de

igualdad de oportunidades,” dice Priscilla Lozada-Aguayo, una puertorriqueña y estadounidense con especialización en medicina del comportamiento y promoción de la salud en UGA. Ella agrega: “Es más probable que no asistan a instituciones de educación superior”.

Los inmigrantes de origen latino que vienen a los Estados Unidos ayudan a romper muchos tabúes de la cultura Hispana. Se supone que trabajar y no ir a la escuela es lo normal, pero los estudiantes de primera generación están cambiando la narrativa.

Desafortunadamente, todo esto tiene un costo ya que las barreras en las oportunidades educativas para los estudiantes Hispánicos son comunes. Ya sea por la falta de recursos económicos o sociales que reciben muchos otros estudiantes, crea desventajas que se convierten en problemas más arraigados.

Creer en este tipo de entorno es difícil y estas nociones preconcebidas pueden ser perjudiciales para una mente en desarrollo. La salud física y mental de los niños se pone en riesgo en el que llegan a tener baja autoestima y estrés corporal; todo esto se suma al agotador ascenso de montañas generacionales conmovedoras.

“Nuestros padres sólo tenían el espacio para satisfacer las necesidades básicas y con esas necesidades satisfechas en nuestros extremos, buscamos más, pero nuestros padres no pueden hacer eso”, dice Cruz-Luviano. “Sin apoyo, ¿cómo se supone que un niño crea en sí mismo y apunte a las estrellas?”

Tanto Cruz-Luviano como Lozada-Aguayo dicen que existe un sentido prominente de la necesidad de demostrar su valía en una universidad tan respetable como estudiante latino. Sienten esto con sus compañeros, profesores e incluso con los jefes de departamento, especialmente cuando hay elecciones que la institución puede tomar y que pueden implementar fácilmente a los estudiantes de color, pero eligen no hacerlo.

A pesar de tener la sensación de que el mundo está en contra de ellos, la comunidad Latina sigue avanzando. Hay sueños que cumplir y generaciones futuras a las que dar paso.

El entender el privilegio que muchos otros no tienen de ir a la escuela no se pierde en esta generación de estudiantes Latinos. Ellos están trabajando duro para representar su cultura y allanar el camino para futuras generaciones.

“Creo que lo más importante que puedo hacer por las generaciones más jóvenes es mostrarles que si yo puedo tener éxito y ser felices, ellos también pueden,” dice Lozada-Aguayo. Ella también avanza todos los días al recordar por qué va a la escuela, diciendo: “lo más grande que me motiva a estudiar es recordarme a mí misma que un día voy a vivir la vida de mis sueños con el trabajo de mis sueños.”

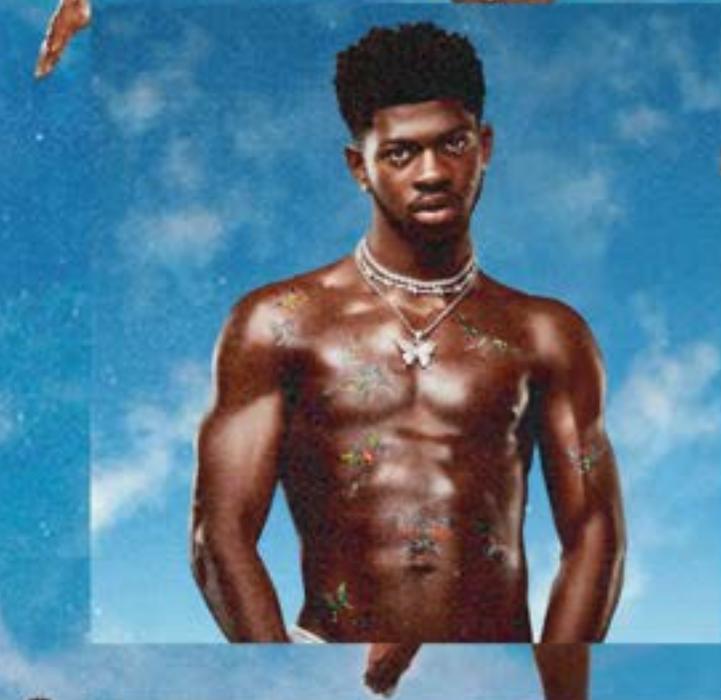
Para Cruz-Luviano, su familia es su principal factor de motivación, explica, “Mis padres han trabajado en el campo, en las fábricas y en los almacenes, todo para que yo tenga la oportunidad de tener éxito. Con la ética de trabajo duro que me han inculcado, me ha motivado a ser un buen estudiante y ahora periodista.”

Esta es una posición en la que muchos estudiantes latinos no estarían sin la ayuda de sus padres o cuidadores. Muchos de ellos son los que vinieron aquí sin nada, pero dieron todo a sus seres queridos.

ENTERTAINMENT



MONTERO ALBUM REVIEW



by jess l'hommedieu
layout by jordan campbell

This year brought us so much music, notably the highly anticipated full-length debut album by Lil Nas X. The 22-year-old Atlanta native's album *Montero*, named after himself - Montero Lamar Hill, is clear musical and self-growth from the June 2019 EP *7*. He has come a long way since "Old Town Road", otherwise known as the \$30 beat Lil Nas X turned into the longest running #1 single in the history of U.S. music.

Upon coming out after the release of his EP, he has made it clear that he isn't your average pop star; he is a Black, queer man who isn't afraid to genre bend and be unapologetically himself between his lyrics and ability to connect to his young peers. I find myself invested in Lil Nas X as a human; it feels like this could be a friend of mine rather than an out-of-reach celebrity.

While he has received plenty of controversy from conservatives, the amount of love from the young queer community triumphs it time and time again. From kissing a man at his BET award performance to his racy "Call Me By Your Name" music video, he truly shows what it is like to see a successful Black gay man living his best life.

Montero is a pop-rap album about the intersection of being queer and famous. Lil Nas X tackles his family problems, insecurity, and being in the closet through his lyrics. "Tales of Domini-ca" is a truthful ballad about his home-life problems, but it also provides a look into his ambition with "Hope my little bit of hope don't fade away." Pop-rock banger "That's What I Want" is about finding that person, in Lil Nas X's case "a boy who can cuddle with me all night". Being honest about his struggles and relationships with relatable lyrics further strengthens his connection to his fans.

The features include long-time music legends Elton John and Miley Cyrus, as well as some of rap's current dominators, Doja Cat, Megan Thee Stallion, and Jack Harlow. The production is equally astonishing, including Kanye West producing "Industry Baby". It's not everyday that an artist's debut-album has such big names attached to it, proving Lil Nas X's flight of success in just two years.

The first half of the album is full of upbeat, dance-worthy bops, as opposed to the second half full of heartbreakingly poetic lyrics tackling topics like death and self-doubt. "Scoop"

(ft. Doja Cat) is a radio-worthy pop-rap song about getting your body fit and being in the spotlight, while "Void" gives insight to the low points of his life with, "I'd rather die than to live with these feelings, stuck in this world where there's so much to prove".

The versatility of genres on this album are absolutely noteworthy. The energetic rap "Dolla Sign Slime" (ft. Megan Thee Stallion) completely contrasts "Life After Salem", the grungy, pop-punk, guitar ballad anthem (that definitely deserved a Willow feature).

My personal favorite off the album is rock-pop bop "Lost in the Citadel", which tackles a toxic relationship nearing its end. "Sun Goes Down" is the perfect letter to his younger self and an anthem for the queer kids struggling to find themselves a place in this world, with "I know that you want to cry but there's much more to life than dying".

He writes about the pressure of having to shrink himself into a masculinity that doesn't fit his definition with "Dead Right Now" and the struggle to pursue his career with disapproving parents. "One of Me" (ft. Elton John) further pushes his struggle with self-doubt, such as being called a "gimmick" for being his meme-loving self.

Montero is an equally bold and vulnerable piece of work. This album is an emotional roller-coaster full of angst and honesty. Simply put, this album is engaging front to back. I'm so happy to see Lil Nas X place his sexuality front and center in his career and be himself without remorse.

He closes the album beautifully with "Am I Dreaming" (ft. Miley Cyrus) with powerful lyrics such as "Never forget me and everything I've done", thinking of the possibility his success will come and go and reminding his fans that he was here. I hope he is here to stay.

Lil Nas X proves once again that he will not be put into a box of any sort in regards to his music or sexuality. He has been an inspiration for both the Black and gay communities, proving his take-it-or-leave-it mentality by putting authenticity at the forefront of his career.

CLB VIEWERS DONDA

by kathy romero

illustrated by aryanna brown

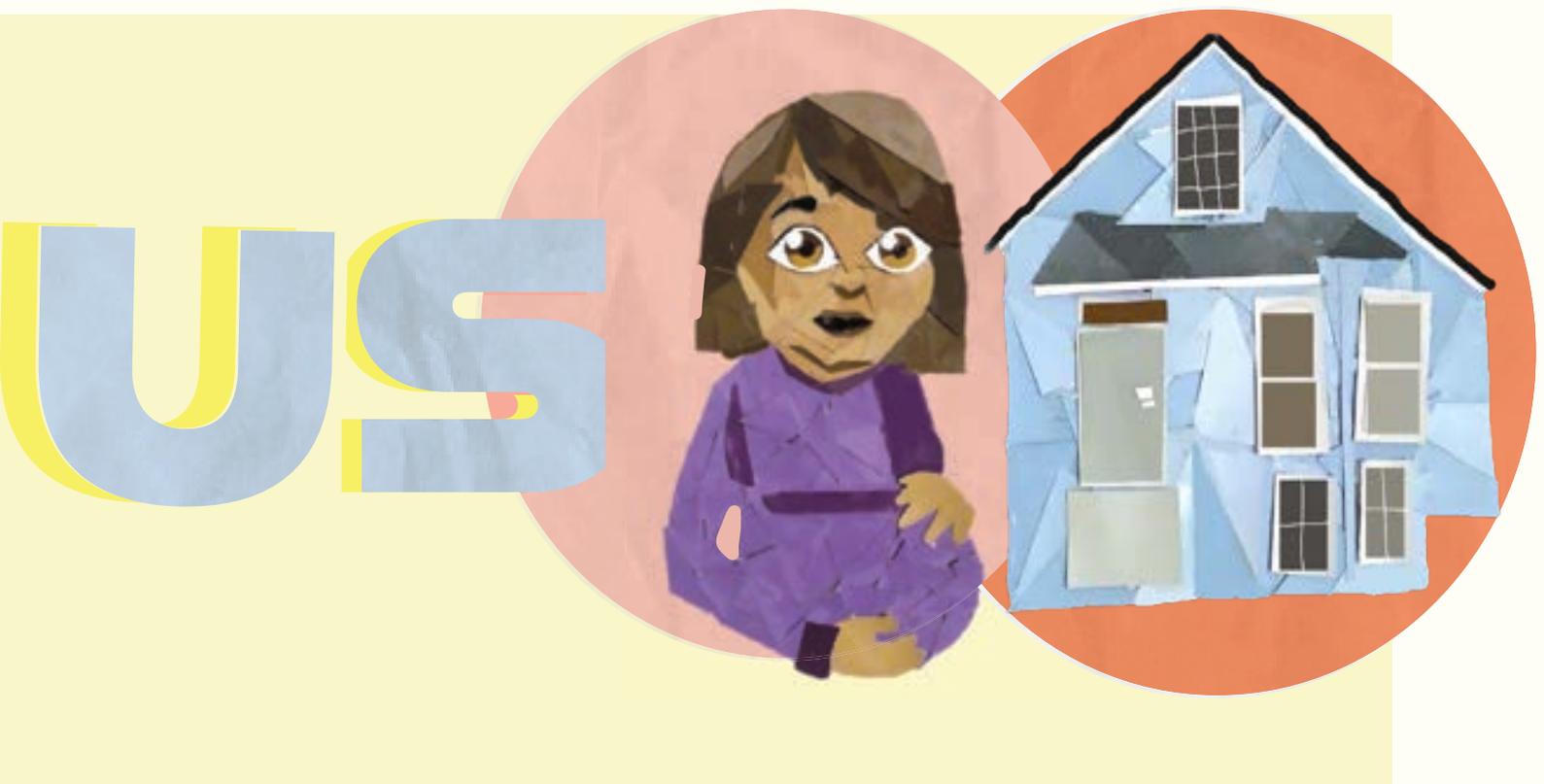
In the late summer of 2021, two of the biggest faces of the rap industry released highly anticipated albums: Drake's *Certified Lover Boy* and Kanye West's *DONDA*. Drake and Kanye have both been teasing fans with these projects for months on end. Besides releasing mixtapes and demos from his early career, Drake's last album appeared in 2018 with *Scorpion*. Meanwhile, Kanye's previous album was *Jesus is King*, released in 2019. Needless to state, fans of the two have waited anxiously for new music.

Both projects were heavily promoted, though in separate ways. Kanye announced *Donda* as early as May 2020, and continuously posted on social media the release dates and album artwork for a year before finally coming through on his word in July 2021. Kanye fans were far from surprised, as dropping albums years late is the norm for Kanye. He announced his listening party event for July 22 at Mercedes Benz Stadium in Atlanta. In support of Kanye, other rappers such as Pusha T and Tyler the Creator, who collaborated on *DONDA*, promoted the listening party days before it was set to happen via Instagram. Kanye continued the hype on social media after the Atlanta listening party. He hosted a listening event in Chicago at the Soldier Field Stadium on August 26th as well.

In contrast to Kanye, Drake surprisingly announced on August 27th on an ESPN radio show that *Certified Lover Boy* would drop a few days later on September 3. Meanwhile, *DONDA* still hadn't been officially released on streaming services, though fans expected the drop any day after the listening events.

Following Drake's announcement, he targeted multiple metropolitan cities with billboards that were meant to catch the attention of each city's hip hop listeners. For example, in New York City, Drake's billboard to promote read, "HEY NEW YORK, THE GOAT IS ON CLB", referencing Brooklyn-born rapper Jay-Z. Meant to highlight the upcoming album's features and their respective hometowns, the billboards are facetious. In Atlanta, the billboard read "HEY ATLANTA, SLIME, PLUTO, SAVAGE, AND BABY ARE ON CLB".

Drake also promoted CLB by choosing a "meme-bale" album cover which features emojis of 12 pregnant women with different skin tones wearing different color tops. The design allowed for celebrities and companies to make their own interpretation as a joke. Companies like Adobe and Crocs' interpretations took off to twitter, promoting the album to a wide audience. Lil Nas X even posted his own CLB with 12 pregnant men instead of women.



Most hip hop fans speculate the close release dates of August 29 (DONDA) and September 3 (CLB) were calculated. The rivalry between the two has been evident, though devoted fans of both would argue there is in fact no debate and one is clearly more talented and influential than the other. The two haven't always had beef with each other. Back in 2009 and 2010 Drake and Kanye posted praise for each other online, and Kanye even produced "Find Your Love", one of Drake's early hits. It is difficult to pin down when the beef began, but subtle digs at each other are noticed in interviews beginning in 2013 and continuing on. In January 2016, Drake released "Summer Sixteen" on which he made a dig at Kanye rapping:

"Now I got a house in LA, now I got a bigger pool than Ye...And look, man, Ye's pool is nice, mine's just bigger's what I'm saying."

When asked about the line shortly after, Kanye responded: "I have three pools." Then years later Kanye released "No Mistakes" on his 'ye' album, which featured lines many considered a response to Drake, including: "Calm down, you light skin."

Fast forward to the releases and reception of DONDA and CLB in the present day, and it seems on social media everyone is comparing and deciding which is better. However in terms of number, Certified Lover Boy raked in over 430 million audio streams in just three days, while DONDA took over a week to reach 423 million, so it only topped the Billboard charts for a week before CLB took its place. But DONDA set plenty of records, including most first-day Spotify streams with over 153 million, topping Drake's previous LP Scorpion. A few days after that though, CLB reclaimed Drake's crown on Spotify and Apple Music. Ultimately Drake and Kanye remain kingpins of rap and any project they release will gain support of devoted listeners and attention from the masses.

A collage of three women's faces, each wearing a white lace headband. The faces are arranged in a triangular pattern. The top face is looking upwards and to the right, the bottom-left face is looking forward, and the bottom-right face is looking forward. The entire image is overlaid with a gradient from pink at the top to purple at the bottom.

BEAUTY

FASHION

JUSTE WANNNA
BE NAEURAL



by alma hernandez
photographs by viktorija kangas



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American Fashion Blossoms From Every Country

by: mennah abdelwahab

The Met Gala is a night of glitz and glam, featuring everything from Cinderella-esque ball gowns and classic black suits to head-to-toe black ensembles and angelic headpieces.

This year's theme, "In America: A Lexicon of Fashion," explored the history and future of American fashion. As stars and designers shared the meaning behind their looks, they showcased the role that numerous cultures have played in influencing American designers and fashion trends.

Numerous attendees strutted down the gala's red carpet in ensembles inspired by their own heritage. Quannah Chasinghorse, an Indigenous model with ancestry in Hän Gwich'in, native to Canada and Alaska, and Oglala Lakota, native to South Dakota, adorned her shimmery golden dress with Navajo-inspired jewelry.

Though Chasinghorse's ancestry does not trace back to the Navajo Nation, she was raised in a Navajo Nation reservation in Arizona for a portion of her life. The jewelry strewed turquoise gems across her neck and down her ears, showcasing a pillar of Navajo fashion.

Turquoise symbolizes happiness, luck and health in Navajo culture, and its use is often limited to ceremonies and religious rituals. The various colors that stream through the turquoise stone are seen as representations of the natural world.

In the 1970s, America assumed turquoise jewelry into mainstream fashion, inspired by Navajo jewelry, though little recognition was given to the jewelry's origins. Turquoise gems, whether real or imitation, remain a feature of jewelry today, and with it the lack of recognition of the gems' origins.

In other words, the cultural appropriation of in-

igenous culture continues. Culture appropriation describes, "the taking over of creative or artistic forms, themes, or practices by one cultural group from another."

The fashion industry has recently come under fire for cultural appropriation, particularly when Western brands adopt fabrics, patterns, and styles from other countries' cultures without acknowledging their origins. This appropriation often features a power imbalance, where Western brands with immense resources, take from communities with far less power.

The celebration of one's culture should be encouraged and praised. The taking from a culture that is not one's own should be done with the utmost care and recognition. Designers and individual wearers must consider whether they are dishonoring or minimizing the importance of the cultural article by adopting it.

CL, a South Korean artist, showcased her culture through a redesigned Korean hanbok. The hanbok traces its origins to 57 BC and has gone through numerous iterations throughout history. Generally, a hanbok consists of a jeogori or jacket, with a chima or skirt for women or a baji or pants for men. Traditionally, hanboks feature shiny fabrics and vibrant colors and are reserved for special occasions and holidays.

Modern takes on the hanbok infuse the tradition-laden attire into a more practical and easy-to-wear ensemble. Blackpink, a world-renowned K-pop band, brought global attention to such modern takes in their music video for "How you Like That," which featured cropped jackets and printed bottoms reminiscent of traditional hanbok silhouettes and patterns.

While modern takes on the hanbok have been designed and worn by Korean designers and fashion stars, its mass production also runs the risk of overlooking the influence of Korean culture in clothing items, particularly shirts and pants influenced by the hanbok. Brands like Leesle, Coreano, and Dailyhan and designers like Bellahanbok draw on their culture in their designs.

In the convoluted network of the Internet, however, the cultural influences that inspire their creations are easily lost. The onus then falls on wearers to look into the brands they are wearing, and the influences that inspired the designers to recognize the role that culture plays in their designs.

Another notable feature of CL's modern take on the hanbok was its use of an American staple, denim.

Though denim is often thought of as an American fabric, its origins are in Nîmes, France. Originally called serge de, which literally means "a sturdy fabric from Nîmes," denim is the anglicized version of the French name, drawing on the words "de Nîmes." During its thriving 18th and 19th-cen-

ture textile industry, France imported its fabrics across the world, including the United States.

In the mid-1800s, businessman, Levi Strauss, would come to use the fabric to create the iconic Levi's blue jeans. Denim fabric eventually became a staple of American fashion, moving beyond jeans to create jackets and dresses. At the Met Gala, Lupita Nyong'o and Kenneth Nicholson graced the red carpet with floor-length denim dresses, while Ben Platt wore a denim jacket with blue jeans, and Leon Bridges festooned his black top and pants with a fringe-embellished denim jacket.

Though France does not necessarily lack power in respect to America, the absence of recognition of denim's origins has served to harm local French tailors, who struggle to maintain the tradition. Today, many continue the practice for the sake of attracting tourists, not necessarily for selling the fabric. This shift in practice is reflective of power lying with richer tourists rather than the originators of the denim fabric.

In addition to the fabrics, the silhouettes of the night were also influenced by various cultures. Sophia Roe's caftan style dress reflected the endur-



ing influence of the Middle Eastern and South and Central Asian-style dress in American fashion. The caftan is a long and loose-fitting dress often with long and wide sleeves and made with lightweight fabrics, a byproduct of the hot summers and modest cultures it originates from.

While Westerners first came into contact with the caftan through trading in the 19th century, it was often seen as an exotic artifact of the “Orient.” However, in the 1950s and 60s, Western designers adopted the caftan silhouette in high fashion, and by 1966, Vogue considered the caftan an essential dress for fashionable Americans. Despite its rise in popularity, little recognition of the caftan’s origins was given. Today, the caftan silhouette has not only shrouded the bodies of the rich and famous on the red carpet, but also vacationing Westerners on beaches across the globe.

The normalization of the caftan in Western fashion strips the garment of its cultural richness. In fact, Sophia Roe attributed her look to disco-era fashion. Though the disco era may have popu-

The taking from a culture that is not one’s own should be done with the utmost care and recognition.

larized the garment, it definitely did not create it. Garments such as the caftan illustrate the rich culture and history of the Middle East and South and Central Asian countries. The erasure of this cultural context, therefore, feeds into narratives about Middle East and South and Central Asian countries as poor societies with little to offer. The reality is not that they have little to offer, but that those with power have taken from them without acknowledging these societies’ contributions.

Though the jewelry, fabrics and silhouettes of the Met Gala celebrate the diversity of America and American fashion, they also showcase the long history of America’s ignorance towards the contributions of various cultures in modern fashion, and, more broadly, every aspect of American life. A turquoise ring at a local Claire’s or caftan vacation dress at H&M may seem unimportant, but they are, in fact, a reflection of the interconnectedness and interdependence between Americans and the rest of the world.

Failure to recognize these influences ignores

and erases the contributions of Americans from a variety of backgrounds to life today. The fabric of American society today stitches together influences from around the world, but when this influence is ignored, the presence of Native Americans, Asian Americans and Americans from different backgrounds is overlooked. This is not just exploitative, but actively harmful to marginalized communities who face pressures to assimilate to Western society while Westerners actively appropriate from their cultures. In an age where marginalized communities are often sidelined, consumers must educate themselves to understand how “American” fashion comprises a variety of cultures whose members deserve to be recognized and celebrated for their contributions to the society Americans know and love today.



BEST THRIFTING SPOT IN ATHENS

by lucy marie freda bertsch
photographs by averi caldwell

Thrifting is an amazing way to recycle clothes and get really cool and unique pieces which may be considered hidden treasures. Over the years, my wardrobe has become filled with previously owned items that have found a new home and are very loved. When I moved from Atlanta to Athens, I just had to check out the thrifting and consignment spots. Thrift stores take in used clothing and sell it at a cheaper price while consignment stores pay for their merchandise either up front or when an item sells. Below are some of my favorite places:

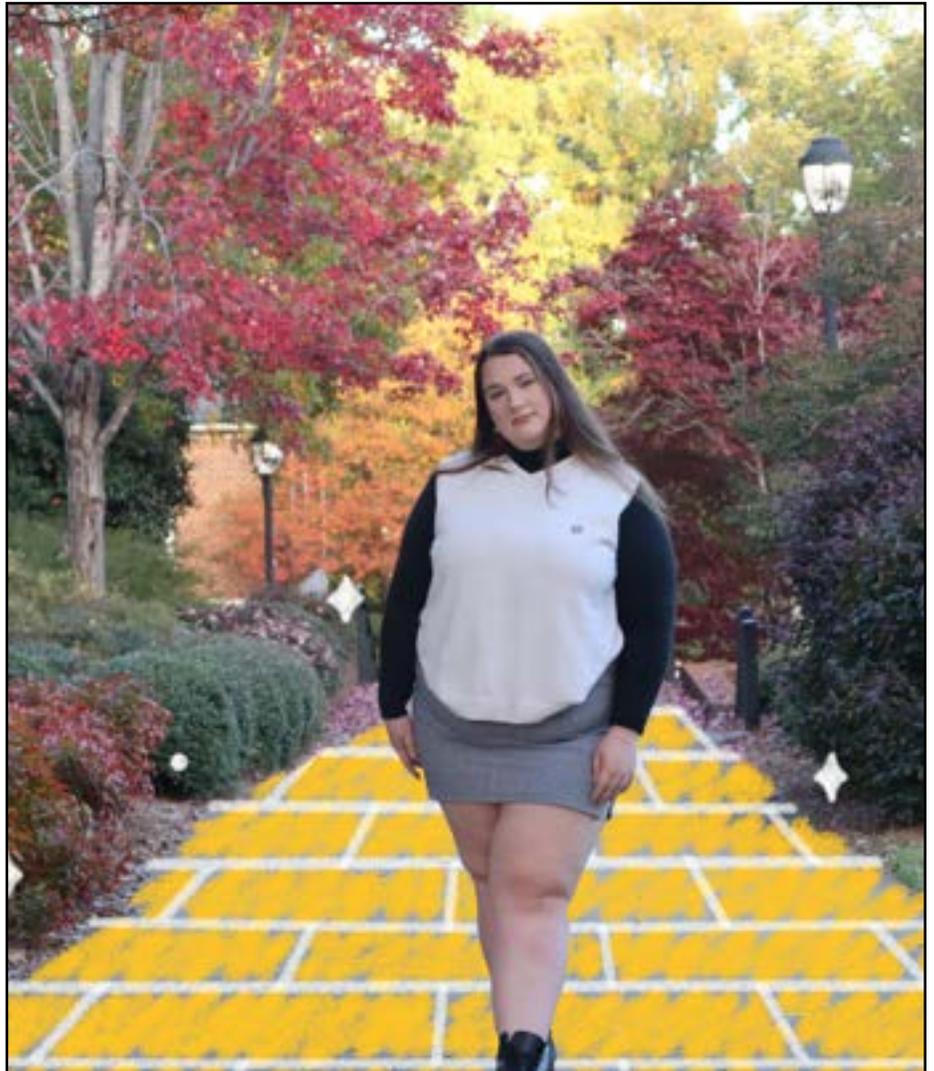
America's Thrift Store

This place has an amazing, organized selection. Upon walking in, you may feel slightly overwhelmed, but don't worry. Everything is categorized by size or function, such as holidays, making the thrifting process much easier. The most exciting month is October because they have Halloween costumes. There's a large variety of previously used Halloween costumes that range from toddler sizes to adults. Even the household items and furniture are typically in good condition. Be warned though, you might spend your entire day here!

Instagram: @americasthrift

Athens Habitat Restore West

While this store has the smallest clothing selection I have ever seen, it contains unique gems. It also has an extremely large furniture and household



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item selection. The people there are very nice and it is usually never busy. It's an easy stop that won't take up your entire day, but is definitely worth a visit!

Instagram: @athenshabitat_restores

Goodwill (Atlanta Hwy)

As most Goodwills are, this place is huge. The dress selection is amazing. I have always found at least two or three amazing pieces. The jean selection is incredible and has a ton of variety. The mass of clothes can be a little daunting, but if you're a pro-thrifter I recommend spending the day here!

Instagram: @goodwillintl

Salvation Army Thrift Store

For some reason, the Salvation Army always has the best t-shirt selection no matter what location you go to. If you're in need of a couple funky t-shirts or game day gear, I suggest hitting this place up!

Instagram: @salvationarmyus

St. Mary's Auxiliary Thrift Store

Because of its size, this thrift store is probably the easiest thrifting experience you could get. The selection is small, but very easy to look through. The style is mostly geared towards older individuals, but I would still recommend taking a peek; there might be a small treasure in there! The only way I could explain the energy in this store is playing dress up in your mother's closet, but in the best of ways.

Instagram: @stmarysthift

Consignment stores:

Dynamite Vintage

Vintage is always on the more pricey end, but Dynamite Vintage contains really cool and quality pieces at a pretty good price. The store is a little smaller, but has a really good costume party selection and graphic tees.

Instagram: @dynamiteathens

Agora Vintage:

Do you want luxury items by Louis Vuitton, Prada, Celine, and more? Agora has all of these items ranging from handbags to clothing. Although the price is still pretty high, if you are looking for luxury at a decent cost then this place is perfect. The selection of items is limited since the items are luxury, but the overall shopping experience is easy.

Instagram: @agora_vintage

Cillies Clothing

If you're looking for the most unique and funky pieces of clothing, Cillies is the place to go. Their selection ranges from funky sunglasses to decorative coats. Seasoned thrifters should check it out, but I do not recommend it for first-time thrifters since it can be overwhelming.

Instagram: @cilliesathens

Plato's Closet

While Plato's can be a little more pricey than the typical thrift store, they have an amazing selection. I recommend checking out the jean shorts and coats collection. Most thrift stores lack in the jean shorts department, but Plato's is always jammed packed with a variety. The store is usually very busy, so go during a weekday for a more enjoyable experience. My biggest tip is go to consignment stores (like Plato's) after you have been to all the thrift stores, so you'll spend less money!

Instagram: @platosclosetathens

OPINIONS



A photograph of Lil Nas X wearing a voluminous, multi-layered pink tulle outfit. He is looking slightly to the right with a serious expression. The background is a dark, dense green hedge. The text 'LIL NAS X' is overlaid in three lines at the top: white, light pink, and dark pink.

LIL NAS X
LIL NAS X
LIL NAS X

**RESHAPING THE
MUSIC INDUSTRY**

Lil Nas X roared into the spotlight in 2019 with his hit single “Old Town Road” and from there he has only gotten bigger and better. After the release of his first hit single, many people saw Lil Nas X as a one-hit-wonder, even saying he wasn’t going to have a career after 2019. But boy, were they mistaken.

Since then, Lil Nas X has been breaking many barriers and changing the music industry for the better. To put it plainly, he is unapologetically himself. He is not just his true self on social media, where he posts and responds to fans in whatever way he wants, but it flows right into his music and the way he markets himself.

When Lil Nas X came onto the music scene, he immediately started to change the way the music industry works. Not only did he rise to fame by using the internet and social media, but once his hit “Old Town Road” was taken off Billboard’s Hot Country Charts, he fought to make sure it was put back on.

Billboard chose to remove the song because they believed that it did not embrace enough elements of today’s country music. The decision caused controversy, especially since country music is considered an overwhelmingly “white” genre. People also pointed out that several white country artists, like Sam Hunt, have used elements of hip-hop and rap in their songs, and their music has never been removed from the country music charts.

In June of 2019, Lil Nas X came out as gay, assuming his place as one of the few openly Black queer musicians in the industry.

The music industry has a history of homophobia that still lingers today. In July, rapper DaBaby made homophobic comments at the Rolling Loud Miami music festival, which were met with a lot of backlash on social media.

Lil Nas X has even spoken out about homophobia in the music industry, tweeting that many Black male artists are not interested in working with him.

“Honestly, I don’t feel as respected in hip-hop or many music places in general,” Lil Nas X told Billboard. “But these are communities that I am a part of, whether people would like it or not. This is something that I wanted to do because not that my entire album is rap, but there

are rap tracks on my album. I am a rapper. I am a pop star. I am a gay artist. But it’s like, I belong in these places, you know?”

In August, Lil Nas X even surpassed DaBaby as the most-streamed male rapper on Spotify with currently over 58 billion monthly listeners. He also released his debut album “MONTERO” in September with huge success celebrating Black queerness.

“I’m 33, and this Lil Nas X album is breaking my heart...Legit tear up listening to him express his heartbreak about queer love in all its forms (unrequited and reciprocated). I’m glad we’re here now, just wish I had this when I was a teen...” says @the_ocalypse on Twitter.

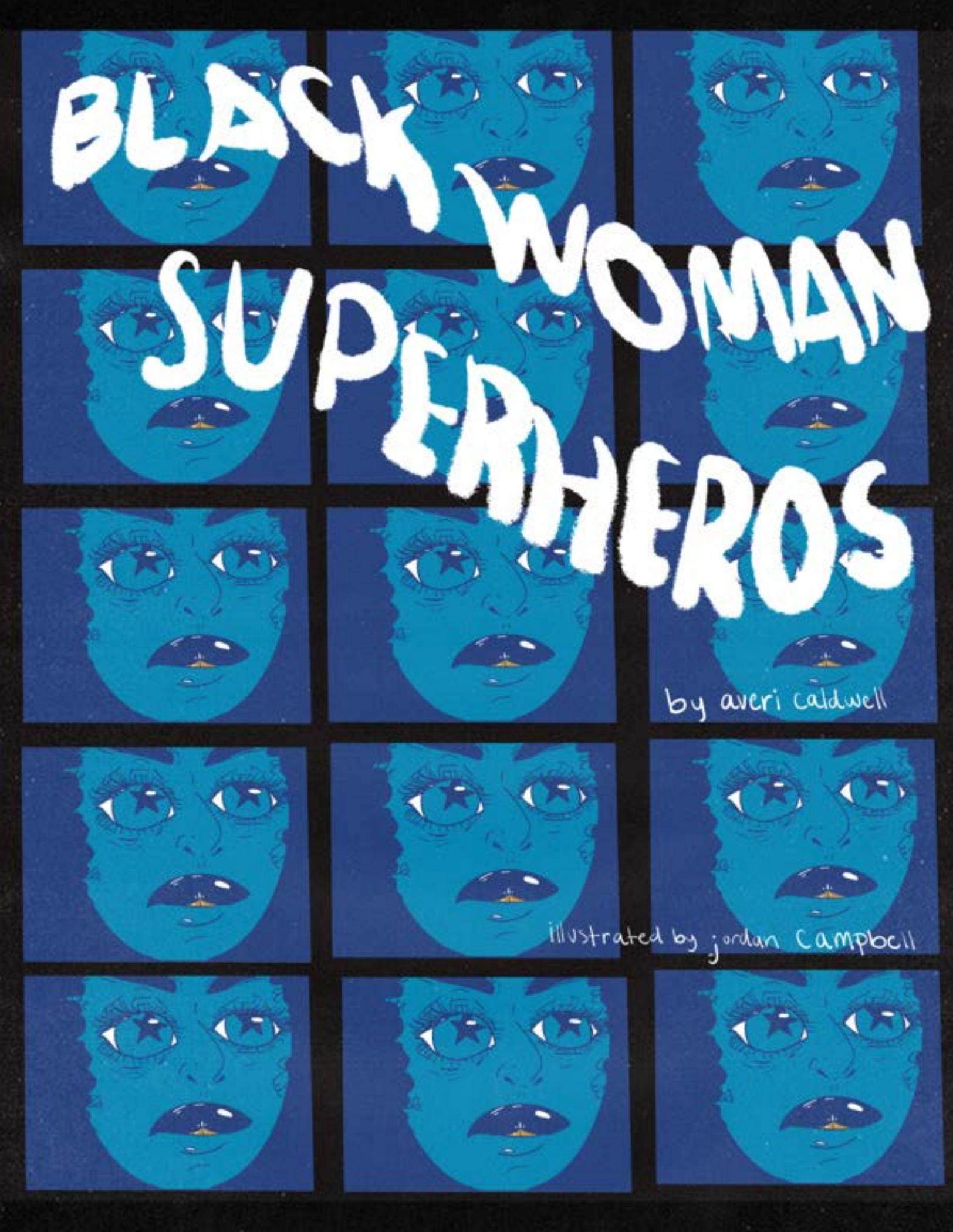
The album features his hit song “Montero (Call Me By Your Name),” which also sparked controversy and conversation when the music video was released in March. The music video includes scenes of Lil Nas X giving the devil a lap dance and strip dancing down to hell, unapologetically being himself.

The list describes in detail what Lil Nas X has done to change the music industry. Not only does he market differently from other artists, but he also does it effectively. To promote his new album, Lil Nas X posted pictures with a fake baby bump on Instagram representing “his baby,” and using the tactic up until the “birth” of his album.

He also had billboards up ahead of the release of his album, with one saying “Do you hate Lil Nas X? You may be entitled to financial compensation” and adding for people to visit welcometomontero.com.

Lil Nas X is still at just the beginning of his career and he has already done so much. We can’t imagine what he will do next, but he will continue to open doors for more Black LGBT+ creators to come into mainstream music and start important conversations.

“Everything lined up for this moment to take me to this place,” Lil Nas X told Time. “Not to sound self-centered, but it feels like I’m chosen, in a way, to do this stuff.”



**BLACK
WOMAN
SUPERHEROES**

by averi caldwell

illustrated by jordan campbell

The concept of Black women being heroes is nothing new. The strong Black woman trope and the notion that Black women are wired to endure hardships without struggle has been woven into American society so tightly that it often exists without notice. Though the concept repeatedly leads to the deteriorating mental health of Black women with many believing they simply don't require much emotional support, it has created a twisted image of the real life superhero. When Black women take hits from society in the form of misogyny, racism and often a mixture of the two, they are expected to shoulder the burden and carry on with life with a smile, the perfect hero. With such high expectations of Black women in reality, why is the presence of Black women in the entertainment industry so shaky?

This presence is twisted in its manifestation in the entertainment industry and constantly under scrutiny from audiences. The ways that certain concepts are presented definitely impact the self image of audiences of Black women. The representation that is meant to empower Black women instead casts a negative light in the face of its target audience through its use in the industry and audience reception.

Gamora, a character from Marvel Comics, is portrayed by Zoe Saldana, an Afro-Latina, in the live-action adaptation of Guardians of the Galaxy. The character has vibrant green skin and red hair. Even with such a distinct look differing from Saldana's natural appearance, audiences often group her in the list among other Black Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) characters.

However, there are many people that instantly reject the slightest inclination that Gamora is Black. In May 2018, Twitter user FPCalabretta said, "Gamora isn't black, the actress who plays her is," in response to comments made about an apparent "race



blem" in Avengers: Infinity War. This problem refers to Gamora's murder in the movie, a problem that can only be addressed with the acknowledgement of the race of Zoe Saldana. With the number of Black heroes in the MCU being so disproportionately low, the aversion from audiences when adding to the already low ranks is disheartening, especially when used to dismiss conversations of representation in films.

Live action adaptations of DC comics have not been exempt from the struggle that comes with attempts for inclusion. Kory Anders, commonly known as Starfire, hails from planet Tamaran. In the source material she and most Tamaraneans are characterized with having orange-toned skin, green eyes and red hair. In "Titans," the live action adaptation produced by Warner Bros. Television, Anna Diop portrays the character. In this version, Diop has green eyes and red hair, yet the orange-toned skin has been forgotten. Instead, Starfire fights alongside her team as an indisputable Black woman.

With the reveal of this decision, complaints from fans filled Twitter. Even comments made by the character's creator, Marv Wolfman, have not been enough to silence the demands for a recast. Wolfman took to Twitter in defense of Diop, stating that he, "could not be happier seeing George [Perez, Starfire's original artist] and my lil' girl get the spotlight she deserves."

Production companies have also played their part in the mistreatment of Black women as superheroes in the ways that they portray these characters. Monica Rambeau is a relatively new edition to the MCU. Her latest appearance was in Disney+ mini-series "WandaVision." In this show, Monica barely has time to grieve the death of her own mother before she performs substantial emotional labor for Wanda Maximoff as she mourns the loss of Vision. Her mother's death is mentioned briefly as exposition and again as a way for Monica to relate to Wanda's own pain. It is used more as



a plot device to be used for and by other characters, as less as a part of who Monica is as a character.

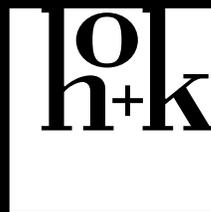
Though the show attempts to paint this as mutual understanding in the loss of a loved one, it sim- ply



plays the narrative of the strong Black woman, the notion that Black women are capable of enduring incredible emotional turmoil without a single teardrop. As Wanda shows her pain in its many facets, Monica remains strong, an unfeeling hero. There is even a moment in which Rambeau prepares to take a bullet for Wanda's children, imagery that probably isn't necessary in today's social climate. Just months after the height of Black Lives Matter protests and general civil unrest around the nation, watching a Black woman go through this assumes the strength of the Black audience member. This is done with

the assumption that these visuals would not invoke negative feelings from the Black audience because of course, they are strong Black women.

As the entertainment industry takes steps in becoming more inclusive, it is important to be critical of the way that these actions are perceived and executed. Fiction mirrors what is thought by society, whether these thoughts are good or bad, conscious or subconscious. Too often, Black women are mishandled in the world of superheroes. Just like other heroes in these worlds of fiction, Black women deserve to don the cape.



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