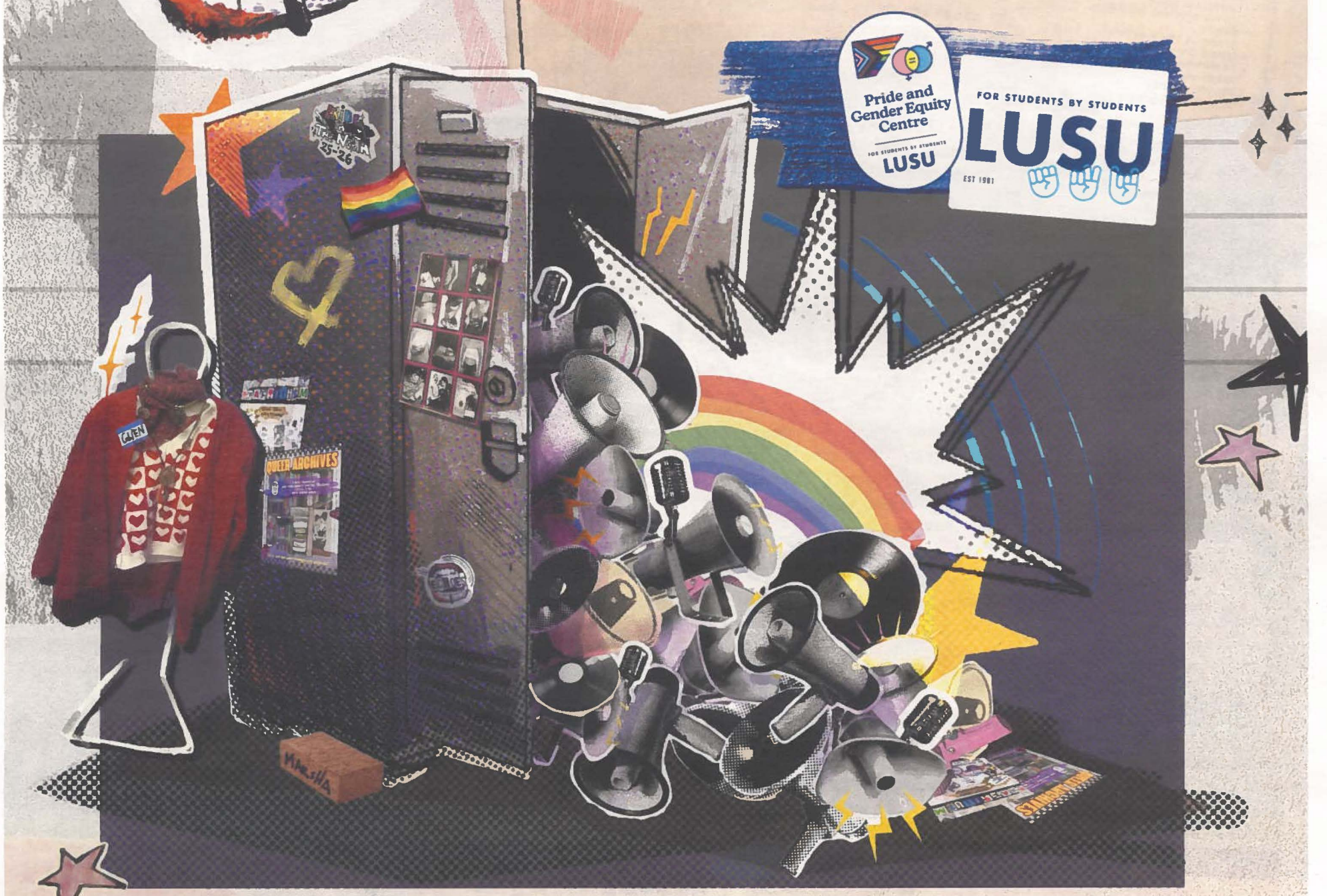
ECHOES

A space to Echo the Queerness of present, past and future. This paper is here for you to write on, to draw on to hold and to go back to when the physical presence of community may feel far away. This is for those who have something to say, something to show, and the time to listen.



Land acknowledgement

"Echoes" is created and shared on the traditional lands of many Indigenous Nations. We acknowledge that Thunder Bay is located on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Anishinaabe peoples, including the Fort William First Nation, signatories to the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850.
We also recognize that Orillia is situated on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, including the Chippewas of Rama First Nation, and is covered by the Williams Treaties.
As a Queer publication rooted in community, "Echoes" recognizes the ongoing presence, resilience, and sovereignty of Indigenous peoples, including Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer communities whose voices have long existed despite colonial attempts to silence them. We commit to uplifting these voices alongside Queer communities, and to fostering a space grounded in respect, accountability, and solidarity.

This acknowledgement is not only a statement but a call to action: to listen, to learn, and to support Indigenous peoples through actions and initiatives.

ABOUT US

The pride and gender equity centre combines two existing lusu centres: pride central and the gender equity centre. Now operating year round, the new centre will strive to foster a safe, collaborative space and strengthen solidarity between work around 2SLGBTQIA+ justice and gender equity and justice. we host a variety of events throughout the year, such as:

- pride socials
- clothing swaps
- take back the night
- trans day of remembrance
- international women's day
- pride in the north
- trans day of visibility
- feminisms at the lakehead
- movie nights
- and more!

GET IN TOUCH

PRIDE

UC 0019
PRIDE@LUSU.CA
@LUSU.PRIDECENTRAL

GENDER EQUITY

SC 0020
GEC@LUSU.CA
@GEC_LUSU

Pride and Gender Equity Centre
LUSU

welcome to the

PRIDE & GENDER EQUITY CENTRE

PRIDE in THE NORTH '25-'26

Did you know?

When you reach out to our HelpLine you're always in touch with a real person! Our peer support volunteers are real 2SLGBTQ+ youth who are there for you 6 days a week!



You can reach our HelpLine by text at (647) 694-4275 or chat online at youthline.ca.

Sunday to Friday, 4:00 pm - 9:30 pm EST

youthline SINCE 1994

Help when you need it.

9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline

9-8-8 toll-free 24/7 988.ca

PEER SUPPORT

The pride + gender equity centre offers several weekly peer support groups throughout the year, including queer peer support, trans peer support and survivors' solidarity peer support. Each week, students can engage in discussions on various topics, find resources, and mutually empower each other within a confidential and respectful environment, all while fostering a profound sense of belonging on campus. find the current peer support schedule on instagram, or send us an email!

GWEN'S CLOSET

Gwen's closet offers free, gender-affirming clothing for trans + non-binary students. visit uc 0019 any time during centre hours to browse our current selection of clothing + take what you need! We have a fitting room to try clothing on and alternative options if you are unable to bring the clothing home. looking for a specific item? Scan the QR code to fill out our item request form. Interested in donating? Send us an email!

RESOURCES

- BOOKS, DVD & GAMES LIBRARY
- RESOURCE LIBRARY
- MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS
- SAFE SEX SUPPLIES
- GREAT COMPANY
- AND MORE!

BE THE REASON SOMEONE IS HEARD.



HELP SUPPORT QUEER AND TRANS YOUTH.

DONATE TODAY.

DONATE AT:
youthline.ca/donate

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LOUD WOMEN COLLECTIVE
EST.2020

Pride and Gender Equity Centre
FOR STUDENTS BY STUDENTS
LUSU

THUNDER BAY COUNSELLING



24/7 Help is Available

IF YOUR SAFETY IS AT RISK, PLEASE CALL 911 RIGHT AWAY

IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

CMHA Thunder Bay Crisis Response Phone Line
1-866-888-8988
807-346-8282

Suicide Crisis Helpline
988
988.ca

FOR INFORMATION ON SOCIAL, COMMUNITY, HEALTH, AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

211 Ontario North
211
211north.ca

FOR HEALTH ADVICE

Health811
811
health811.ontario.ca

FOR STUDENTS BY STUDENTS
LUSU
EST 1981

IDENTITY TATTOO & PIERCING

LAVA PRO GRUNGE



THE LOUD WOMEN COLLECTIVE IS A QUEER FEMINIST BOOKSTORE THAT SHOWCASES RADICAL READS, UPCYCLED FASHION, AND LOCALLY MADE GOODS.

SUPPORTED BY VOLUNTEERS FROM THE COMMUNITY, FREE WEEKLY MEETUPS AND EVENTS ARE HOSTED JUST OUTSIDE THE SHOP IN THE "FRIENDZONE."

THE LOUD WOMEN COLLECTIVE IS LOCATED INSIDE GOODSCO MARKET ON RED RIVER RD.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA TO STAY UP TO DATE

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THE FRIENDZONE



The Walk-In Counselling Clinic provides quick access to single-session counselling services to people of all ages, on a first come, first served basis, at no cost to the participant.

Talk to one of our professional counsellors.

Wednesdays 12 noon-6:30pm (no clinic 5th Wednesday) at the following locations:

1st & 3rd Wednesday Each Month
Thunder Bay Counselling
544 Winnipeg Avenue

Both locations open to all ages.

2nd & 4th Wednesday Each Month
Children's Centre Thunder Bay
283 Lisgar Street

To call-in, dial: 807-700-0090 Services en français disponibles.

Children's Centre Thunder Bay · Ontario · COUNSELLING · tbayounselling.com

ECHOES

ECHOES 2

WHO GETS TO BE SEEN?

ID Barriers and 2SLGBTQI+ Life in Northern Ontario

Chris Sanders, Department of Sociology
Kristin Burnett, Chair of Indigenous learning

For many people, showing personal identification is a routine, forgettable part of life. You show your health card at a clinic, your student card on campus, or your government ID at a pharmacy, a bar, airport, or bus station. Most of the time, this interaction is quick and uneventful.

But for many 2SLGBTQI+ people—especially trans, non-binary, and gender-diverse folks—ID can be a source of stress, vulnerability, and exclusion. When names don't match, gender markers feel wrong, or documents are inconsistent, something that should be simple becomes complicated, exhausting, and sometimes unsafe. In our rural neck of the woods, these challenges are often intensified by geography, limited services, and fewer local supports.

As a someone who researches personal identification barriers in this region, I've seen firsthand how rigid ID systems can quietly but powerfully shape queer people's lives. Sociologists describe these systems as taken-for-granted everyday practices—social arrangements that feel so normal and routine that we stop noticing them—that is, until you or someone you care about is excluded from them.

Some of you will already be intimately familiar with this issue. But for those who are not, I hope you'll allow me a few minutes to explain why ID matters, how our current social institutions fail 2SLGBTQI+ people, and what we can do—on campus and in the Thunder Bay community—to make things better.



Why ID Matters More Than We Think

In Canada, personal identification is required to access almost everything: healthcare, education, employment, housing, income supports, travel, and even basic financial services. Without the "right" ID, every interaction can feel like a potential barrier.

At the centre of this system is the birth certificate. In the ID research that I do with my Lakehead colleague Dr. Kristin Burnett, we describe the birth certificate as a "foundational document." It's the record that sits at the center of a web of interconnecting documents that make full participation in everyday life possible. Health cards, passports, banking, driver's licences, student records, and many other forms of identification all trace back to the information recorded at birth. When that foundational document becomes difficult to change or does not reflect who someone is, the effects ripple outward across daily life.

For trans and gender-diverse people, ID is not just about paperwork. It's about recognition, dignity, and safety. Being forced to present ID that doesn't match your name or gender expression can lead to misgendering, invasive questions, suspicion, or even denial of vital services like healthcare, banking, and education. Imagine every interaction involving ID feeling like a potential argument about your own identity.

Over time, this can lead people to avoid situations where ID is required, even when those situations involve essential care or opportunities. Sociologists describe this as *anticipatory exclusion*, or avoiding social institutions because past experience or shared knowledge suggests that engagement will be risky or harmful.

The Challenge of Name Changes

Legal name changes are often described as straightforward, but the reality is far more complicated. The process typically involves multiple steps, fees, confusing forms, and providing documents that may be difficult to obtain, and it can take months to complete. For young people, this may also require navigating hostile family circumstances, financial constraints, or gaps in documentation from earlier in life.

Even after a legal name change, the work isn't over. Every institution—banks, schools, employers, health systems—has its own process for updating records. Until everything is changed, people are left with mismatched documents that can cause problems at every turn.

For trans and non-binary people, this can mean:

- being called the wrong name in class or on official correspondence
- having to explain yourself repeatedly to classmates, staff, or service providers
- feeling exposed or "outed" in situations where privacy should be assumed

In smaller communities, where anonymity is limited, these moments can feel especially uncomfortable or risky.

Gender Markers and Misrecognition

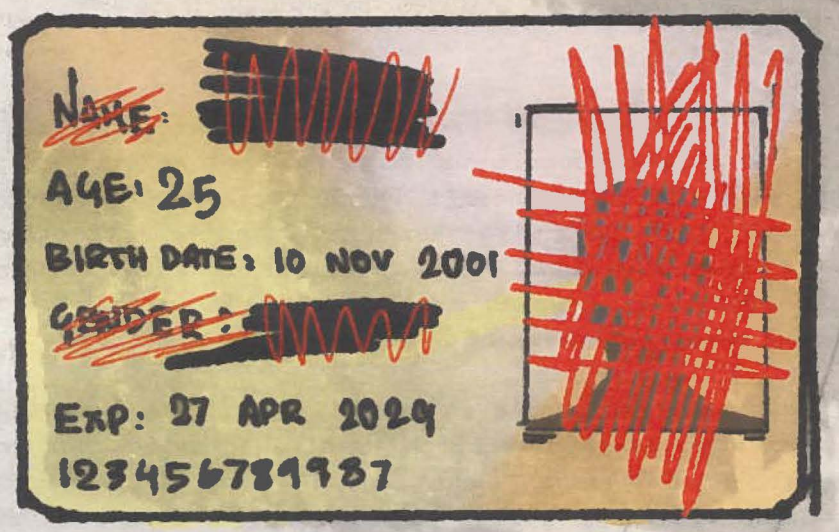
Gender marker changes can be even more complex. While some progress has been made in recent years, policies still vary across provinces, federal systems, and institutions, and requirements can be confusing or poorly communicated.

Even when changes are legally possible, frontline staff may not be familiar with updated policies. This can lead to delays, incorrect information, or refusal—forcing individuals to advocate for themselves again and again. This is a classic example of systemic discrimination: inequality that results not from individual bad actors, but from how laws and everyday institutional practices are implemented.

For trans and non-binary people, incorrect gender markers can affect:

- access to healthcare
- job applications and background checks
- travel and border crossings

These are not abstract issues. They shape people's willingness to seek care, apply for opportunities, or participate fully in community life.



Why Northern Geography Makes It Harder

Living in Northern Ontario adds another layer of difficulty. Administrative services are often centralized in larger cities, meaning that accessing ID services may require long travel, time off work or school, and additional costs. Online systems, while helpful for some, can be inaccessible or overwhelming for others.

There are also fewer local supports. Legal clinics, advocacy organizations, and ID-navigation services are limited, especially those with expertise in trans and gender-diverse issues. In small communities, privacy can also be a concern, with people worrying about being recognized, judged, or misunderstood when seeking help.

The Everyday Impact on Queer and Trans Youth

For queer and trans youth, these barriers can shape key moments in life: enrolling in school, applying for jobs, accessing healthcare, or securing housing while attending university. When ID doesn't align with who you are, it sends a powerful message about whose identities are recognized and whose are treated as exceptions.

Over time, this can affect mental health, sense of belonging, and trust in institutions. These are not individual failures. They are systemic problems created by social systems and social institutions that were never designed with trans and gender-diverse people in mind.

What Can Be Done: Practical Paths Forward

Fortunately, change is possible, and it doesn't require reinventing everything.

At a policy level, governments can:

- streamline name and gender marker changes
- reduce or eliminate fees
- ensure consistency across systems

At the community level, institutions can:

- train frontline staff on inclusive ID practices
- allow preferred names and gender markers in internal systems
- provide support navigating ID changes

Lakehead and the Pride and Gender Equity Centre already play a crucial role by offering information, support, and advocacy to students. Expanding these efforts, and recognizing ID access as a queer and trans issue, is an important step.

For students, it's also important to know that local supports do exist. The Thunder Bay ID Action Group (www.IDaction.ca) is a community-based initiative that helps people—especially those facing multiple barriers—navigate name changes, gender marker updates, and other ID challenges. Students can reach out for support themselves, connect friends or family members to the service, or help spread the word through campus and community networks.



Why This Matters

I hope you'll indulge the academic side of me for a moment. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu keenly observed that systems like ID function as part of the invisible infrastructure of daily life by quietly shaping what we can do, where we can go, and what services we can access. For people with stable ID, this infrastructure remains mostly invisible. For those without it, everyday activities become exhausting bureaucratic struggles.

This is the reality faced by many trans, non-binary, and gender-diverse people. ID is not just paperwork; it's a gateway to participation, safety, and recognition. When ID systems work well, they fade into the background. When they don't, they shape lives in profound ways.

For 2SLGBTQI+ people in Northern Ontario, improving ID access is about dignity, inclusion, and the ability to move through the world without constant explanation or fear. By talking openly about these issues, supporting one another, reaching out to your MPs and MPPs, and pushing our social institutions to do better, we help create a community where everyone can be seen for who they are. And that work matters. A lot.

Writing as a Tool of Survival & Queer Liberation

By Sophie Kuhn

To Be Read at the Opening of Q.P.S. Meetings

"... when we speak we are afraid
our words will not be heard
nor welcomed
but when we are silent
we are still afraid

So it is better to speak
remembering
we were never meant to survive."

— Audre Lorde, an Excerpt from A Litany for Survival



Audre Lorde names what many of us learn early: fear is not a failure of courage, it is the condition we are born into.

To be queer is to move through a world that was not built with us in mind, a world that asks us to shrink ourselves. When we inevitably ask ourselves, *"am I going fucking crazy?,"* the answer is almost always no.What we are experiencing is the friction between our vastness and a system too small to hold us, a human experience in response to inhumane treatment.

Capitalism and colonialism demand legibility.They want us categorized, optimized, and made productive, if not efficient.The gender binary is a tool of that demand. To be a queer feminist and marxist is to resist the lie that we must be comprehensible to be worthy. Our bodies, desires, and imaginations exceed the boxes offered to us, and that excess is not a problem to be solved.It is power.

So we turn to art. To language, drag performance, zines and self expression.To the places where meaning is allowed to be slippery, emotional, and unfinished. Performance, media, poetry, and stories are not indulgences. They are lifelines in which being reflected back to ourselves as queer people is often the difference between erasure and survival, between isolation and knowing we are not alone.

Which brings us, inevitably, to the question:
what does Dead Poets Society have to do with us?

On the surface, very little. A group of white, wealthy (straight and cisgender???) boys at an elite boarding school reciting poetry while lamenting that their parents don't understand them. It is fair to roll our eyes.

Many of us are not grappling with abstract existential dread; we are grappling with student debt, precarious housing, underpaid labor, xenophobia, and the ongoing violence of being queer while witnessing the death rattle of capitalism. We are asking whether we can afford groceries, whether we will be safe at work, whether the future is even something we are allowed to imagine.

But beneath the privilege of the setting is the real thought experiment: what happens when people are invited to claim their inner lives in a world organized around obedience, structure and forcing the human soul into a predestined future, seemingly decided upon birth? Dead Poets Society speaks to what it means to name desire, to refuse silence, and to speak even when the cost is real. It is about survival and creating spaces in which the human spirit can flourish.

Poetry has always belonged to those on the margins, but so often literary spaces have been occupied by old, rich white men (or stolen from their wives).

For queer people, for feminists, for anyone whose history has been erased or rewritten, or dismissed and rejected, writing is a way of making ourselves undeniable. It is how we claim our feelings when the official record says we never should have existed. It is how we survive systems that rely on our silence.

Audre Lorde and Dead Poets Society, although seemingly worlds apart, reminds us that isolation will not save us. Neither will assimilation. What sustains us is finding community and language for the brave, trembling act of saying this is what it feels like to be me and having someone answer, me too. It is the acknowledgement that others may never understand what it is to be us, and that we must seek to understand and be understood regardless.

So I invite you all to become members of the Q.P.S.

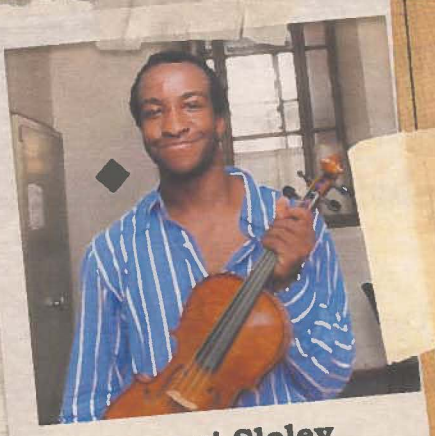
To write badly and bravely. To tell the truth even when it makes us flinch.. To find the courage to read our words aloud in spaces which make our tenderness feel safe. To dance, create zines and fail spectacularly.

To read the words written by our ancestors, and to remember our queer siblings who are no longer with us. To see the poetry in our bodies and existence.

Because
perhaps we were never meant to survive
if survival means to make ourselves small
perhaps we were meant to do more than survive.
to create.
to shout, in spite of it all,
We are still here.



My Lived Experience as a Black and Queer Musician in Classical Music



Amani Sloley (He/They)

This essay shares my lived experience as a Black and queer musician in classical music, exploring the challenges of navigating exclusion and my work advocating for emerging and diverse voices in the field.

My name is Amani Sloley. I am a Black and queer violist, composer, and arts worker, and a graduate of the Lakehead University music program. While I cannot represent all Black queer musicians, I share my own lived experience. Often, I have been one of the only people of colour in the orchestras and ensembles I have played in. That experience has shaped my artistic identity and inspired me to work toward a more open, inclusive classical music field.

Classical music is described as universal and above identity or politics, but for Black and queer people, this is not true. Concert halls have hierarchies and unspoken rules that exclude people like me. Being Black and queer in this field means constantly navigating a tradition built around white, cisgender, straight, European norms. Not fitting those norms makes you both highly visible and invisible.

During my studies at Lakehead University, few students or faculty in the music program were people of colour, and I found myself rarely reflected in the music and textbooks we studied. For the final two years of my degree, I served as President of the Lakehead University Music Association (LUMA), where I worked to create a welcoming space for students who felt overlooked or excluded. In my third year, frustrated by the absence of Black history and discussions of racial inequality in my coursework, I wrote an undergraduate thesis titled *"William Levi Dawson and the Racial Disparities in the Classical Music World."* That project taught me just how deeply injustice is embedded in the classical music world and to question the canon rather than accept it uncritically.

After graduating from Lakehead, I joined the Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra (TBSO) and was very excited to work in a professional setting; however, many of the same barriers remained. In this public-facing role, I experienced microaggressions that made it clear that professional success did not guarantee safety or belonging. Outside of these establishments, I began reading more queer literature to fill gaps left by my education. Books such as *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson and *Queer Blues* by Darryl W. Bullock helped to affirm my identity and to better understand myself beyond traditional music spaces.

Composing contemporary music became a key way for me to explore and express my identity. It allowed me the space I needed to write about my own experiences, even if it isn't expressly stated in my program notes. I also found a strong sense of belonging outside Canada; Studying and working with international musicians in Italy helped me build meaningful connections and friendships with people from around the world.

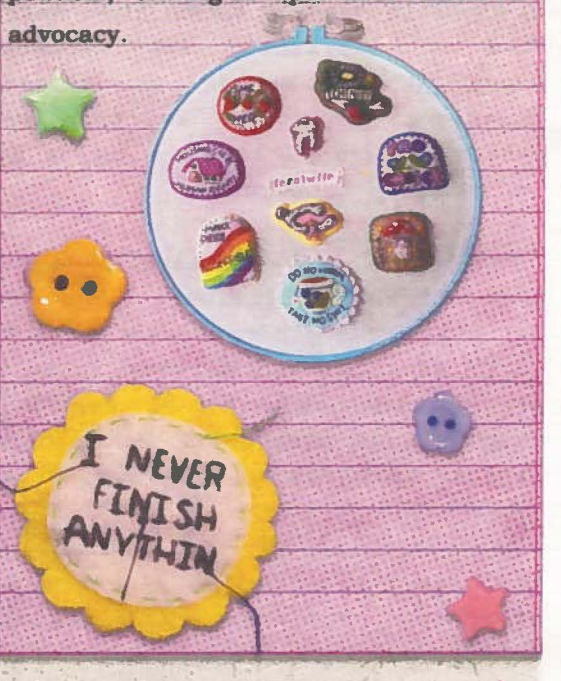
As someone still emerging in this field, I have dedicated my work to uplifting diverse voices and supporting queer artists of colour as we enter a field that often resists change. Supporting emerging artists is essential to the future of classical music. This belief led me to found *Composers Canvas*, a grassroots organization focused on creating our own table for new talent and building a supportive, inclusive community.

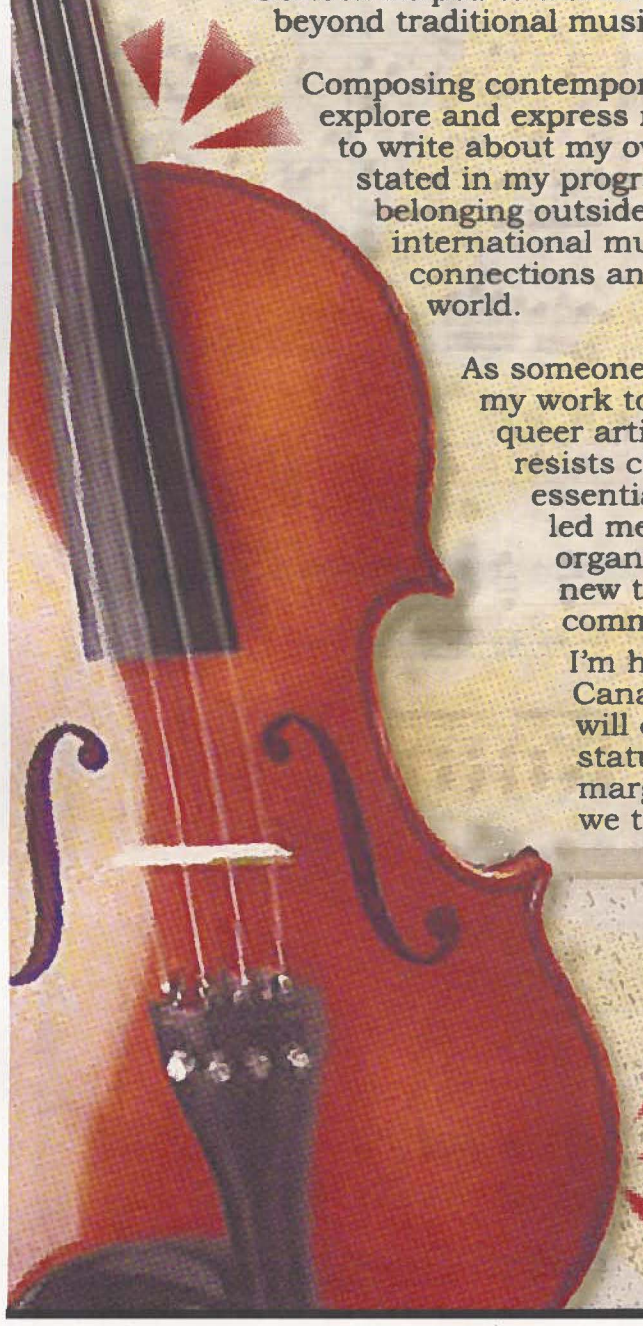
I'm hopeful for the future of classical music in Canada, but until we start to see some change, I will continue to push, challenge, and resist the status quo so that black, queer, and all marginalized voices can take up space and know we truly belong.

Adelle Melanson/Feral Wife (She/Her)

Adelle is a felt artist and dedicated trinket enthusiast. Embracing the self-appointed title of "Feral Wife", she found solace in her art during maternity leave. Adelle is an alumni of Lakehead's Social Work Program with a minor in Women's Studies and has integrated her career and love for social justice into her art.

Her creations often tackle social justice issues, occasionally deemed "too political," serving as a powerful vehicle for advocacy.







The story of the Male Mailman - Alex Taggart (They/He)

There once was a male mailman, who had a male mailman. The male mailman's male mailman delivered the male mailman mountains of mail. The mail the male mailman delivered the male mailman was usually not malicious, but today the male mailman's mail was most definitely malicious. The male mailman's malicious mail delivered by the male mailman made the male mailman scared. The malicious mail claimed the male mailman wasn't really male or a man. This made the male mailman mad. How could someone think the male mailman who delivered mail to male men was not a male man himself?! Just because the male mailman had long hair, and wore flowy dresses, that didn't stop him from being the male mailman the male mailman is.

The male mailman told his male mailman friend about the malicious mail.

The male mailman said, "Hey male mailman friend, the mail you delivered to me maliciously made me seem like not a male mailman!"

"Oh no male mailman, I'm sorry someone wrote you malicious messages for mailmen to send you in the mail" the male mailman's friend responded. As the male mailman's male mailman friend said this, the male mailman's male mailman friend wondered: If the male mailman isn't male, then am I a male mailman too? How much more male does a male mailman need to be to
be considered a man? And even if a mailman isn't male couldn't they still be a mailman and a man. So how can someone be so maliciously superficial to not see the male mailman as the male mailman the male mailman is?





nick of time - Ella Langevin (They/Them)

had no ambition for greatness
no expectation no game
palms forever empty and graceless
nothing to hold onto, nothing to lose

heart smooth and unrequited by choice
void of lumps and scars and bruise
blank and scraped map, noiseless
and then it sang when you came

couldn't speak couldn't breathe or start
i met you in the nick of time
what i mean is, time nicked me and my heart
it bled a slow drip like honey

honey, i love the texture of my love
won't rescind that iron grip, can't pay me money
i'll cherish what i had childishly dreamt of
call it gluttony or sin or crime

skin of black bloomed to cherry red
might've died if i could just get a sign
without warning i fell and had a friend
and i was in your hands like putty

lungs bereft of air, brain was brainless
i was scared i might not meet anyone who wasn't faceless
your clear voice popped my ears, thank god and god love you
my sweet who dried my tears

our eyes met, heads turned on a dime
landed on two feet already intertwined
spoke without words, completed the climb
i. met. you. in. the. nick. of. time.

I met you in the nick of time

don't want to be dramatic but i felt like
i was dyin'
depth in the madness so deep you wouldn't
find me cryin'

two and a half years alone chewing my
cheek with my dullen teeth
mind in the back seat letting anything else drive
taken by sharp corners, tongue in the sheath

heart mossy and veins overgrown like vines
foolishly offering olive branches no one would eat
blooming flowery red from the neck every time
someone pricked me in ways discreet

to wax poetic is not a waste of a rhyme
i'd tell you always if my lips would let me start sometime
that you gave me the self destined to be
mine
i met you in the nick of time

down in introspective purgatory the body almost
followed
'cause i thought the old god was omniscient and
hallowed,
wanted to please her though she only gnawed at
me, faith hollowed
took me to her acid lake of insults and said
"swallow" and i swallowed
washed my hands at her altar till my skin was
yellowed
stepped to turn my back and the halt orders
were bellowed

you showed me real love and i
i couldn't help but pine
made me want to go to school in the morning
gave me faith and taste sublime
all of this to say, my friend is divine
i met you in the nick of time

didn't know i could feel alright when i
spoke
thought the ease of it was just for
childish folk
didn't know i could be freed of being
thought of as a joke
your eyes were a mirror and from the
nightmare i woke

since that time i now sleep untroubled
because we know each other well and the bond
has doubled

red string on your finger and mine
talking to you is a precious passtime
can you feel me tug my heartstrings, and
do you know why?
you've righted my mind and make me feel
high
i met you in the nick of time



GALLERY ST



"THIS IS NOT A

Artworks by
KIRA TUOMI
(SHE/HER)
STUDENT







LUX FAVREAU
(SHE/THEY)

EMBRACING DESIRE, 2025

Acrylic and embroidery on canvas



ARUSA BINTE AHSUN
(SHE/THEY)

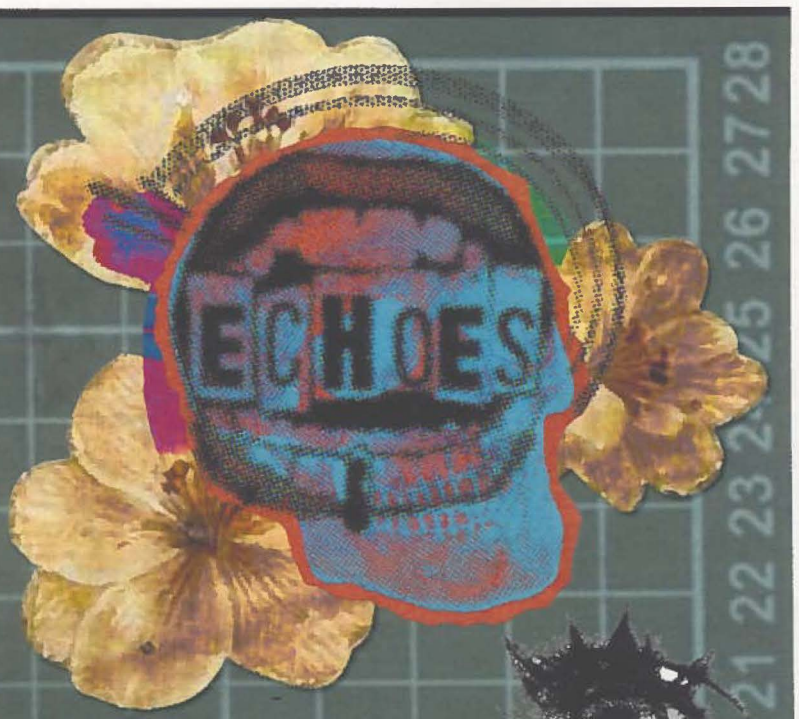
SELF ACCEPTANCE, 2026

DIGITAL ART ON PROCREATE

PROTECT QUEER ART

Cipher Poem Challenge - by Tarmis

I ask the readers of this poem to decipher its true meaning.
It is composed of 13 lines in total and shares a story.
I encourage you to use logic, guesses, random hypotheses or even just the pure chaos your mind can come up with.
Attempt to solve it in solitude or with friends and treat this poem as something to re-connect with the thrill of the unknown rather than the fear of it.
I hope you enjoy reading.
- Tarmis
Think you solved it? Email ruaktarmis@gmail.com.



6/9382466PBBOWSOURFAPRGERRCAMIETNLHGAEISN
6/5447566NDPMGNAAURAKRTRETEKHMEUDUNRRES
5/85.10.58DAWSEANOWTZGREEZESERLLHTNIIINPTGPYED
5/46267MLTSHUIOIASSLRTTEMENONTNY
7/67727555SGWAACSAOISNYTCDTCCORDHILPEEEEESDSRNSST
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5/938777PBETSOUXHERGPRACLOSEOUOLRGNAEHSIDN
6/3582466ASBOWSNTRFAPDIERRLAMILTNHGES

Predatory - Kamryn Woloschuk

This collection is a work-in-progress titled "Predatory". After watching a certain 2022 film, I was confronted with the complicated relationship between joy in representation, and the question of if all representation is good representation. The film is beautiful, however, the intense main character could be described as a predatory lesbian.





Queer people have frequently been depicted as predators and villains in popular culture, and only in the last couple decades have we been shown in any kind of flattering or heartfelt light. After viewing the film, I had to question why the creators of the film chose to tell this story, and what my own relationship to the concept of the predatory queer looks like. After all, much of photography does rely on elements of voyeurism and perversion. When my friends invited me to their home to shoot portraits of them, it was an act of vulnerability that resisted the predatory lesbian trope and the predatory nature of photography. While taking the portraits, I encouraged the subjects to challenge the camera with tenderness.

You can find the rest of this collection on Kam's site here: kamrynwoloschuk.com/predatory



Photograph taken in Dhaka city, Bangladesh by Arusa Binte Ahsun

"MORNING DOGS"

Bushra Khan (They/Them) - Student

The morning dogs
have had their fill

tongues blackened with ash

beards stained with henna

Their gaping maws salivating for the taste of a bullet-

Gunpowder green

Arsenic numb

Named by hunger

Forsaken by *Allah*

In this godless land

Where we lost our names

To broken jaws and gnashing teeth

The darkness stole what remained

Leaving shape, without form

We were hungry



bellies scraped empty of milk and honey

But you denied us still

The wild dogs have festered and bred

I lay before you,

Defanged

At your mercy

Mother-you said *heaven lies at the soles of your feet*

I am awake now

The less I know/the better

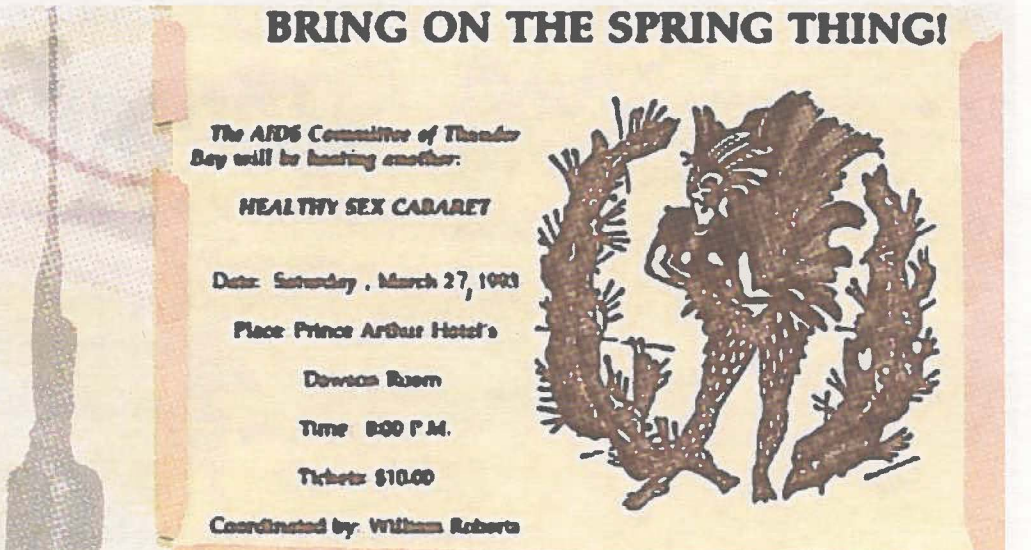
I wrote this poem in 2018 on a visit to my family's homeland of Bangladesh, where my father had taken me to see what was at the time, the world's largest Rohingya refugee camp. Coming to grips with what I saw as the lived realities of genocide and apartheid, I felt fragmented by what I witnessed. Scenes of deep, rich, vivid culture interspersed with cruelty and displacement, these people were left abandoned by two nation states, left to die without care or regard for human life. In writing this, I questioned myself constantly-was this exploitive in its gaze, or art as a testament of lived memory? I sat with it for years, not sharing publicly due to this fear, until I presented it recently in a writing group. My peers had shared that if I had not explained the context, they would have believed it was about Gaza. This poem is special to me, because it hammers home to me the continued significance of art as cultural artefact. It is not suffering alone we must remember, but that the spirit of liberatory praxis lives within art as a practice. Art transcends time, space, memory, and inspires our collective imagination. To make art is to envision a better world out of a love for humanity, to bear witness and not turn away from our enduring present. I humbly submit this piece for your consideration.

The Healthy Sex Cabaret: A Night of Entertainment and Education

By Joshua Wetendorf (He/Him)

The Healthy Sex Cabaret was one of the most distinctive public events ever organized by the AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay. It began in 1988 at Little Finn Hall on Bay Street, combining performance, humour, and public health education in a format that was both inclusive and accessible. The organizers wanted to encourage people to talk openly about safe sex and HIV awareness during a time when those conversations were often difficult or avoided altogether. By the following year, the cabaret had already developed a strong reputation for its lively and unconventional approach. In the committee's newsletter, it was described as bawdy, coarse, sensitive, and healthy. Audience members were promised an evening of skits, music, and refreshments that would include what the organizers playfully called "condomints." They were also warned that the show featured strong language and adult content. Beneath the humour and energy of the performances was a serious goal to promote safety, respect, and understanding through art and conversation.

During the early 1990s, the cabaret expanded in both scale and ambition. It moved from small community halls to the Prince Arthur Hotel, where large audiences filled the room each year. The program brought together local and visiting artists who shared the stage for a mix of music, theatre, and comedy. Regular performers such as Dr. Bill, Kim Erickson, and Desert Norm Sponchia became familiar to audiences, and their blend of wit and sincerity gave the show its distinctive tone. The popular Tiny Sex Theatre skits and the interactive Sexperts panel encouraged laughter while addressing fundamental questions about sexuality and health.
The 1993 cabaret was remembered as one of the most successful editions of the show.



An advertisement for the 1993 Healthy Sex Cabaret in Thunder Bay.

Coordinated by William Roberts and hosted by Dr. Bill with his nurse Cloris Labeea, the evening featured a wide range of musical and theatrical acts, including the Pointless Sisters and several local musicians. Desert Norm Sponchia performed original songs with titles that reflected the event's playful but purposeful approach to health education. A review in the committee's newsletter described the production as an exemplary show that left audiences eager for more. The cabaret remained a highlight of Thunder Bay's cultural calendar throughout the mid-1990s. In 1994, the theme "Dr. Bill's Waiting Room" transformed the stage into a mock doctor's office filled with music and satire. By 1996, the event had grown large enough to run for two nights and featured some of the region's most talented performers. Smaller bar-based cabarets followed, where volunteers and artists combined entertainment with harm reduction and safe sex education.

These smaller events continued the same blend of humour, openness, and community engagement that had made the larger cabarets so effective. In 1999, the AIDS Committee announced that the cabaret would come to an end after more than a decade of performances. Despite that decision, the idea was soon revived. In 2000, the event returned under the title Healthy Sex Cabaret 2000 at the Victoria Inn, featuring local musicians and theatre groups performing on a modest budget to keep the tradition alive. Four years later, the concept reappeared once again under a new name, Spring Sap, which brought together both past performers and new participants for an evening that celebrated creativity, education, and community spirit.

The Healthy Sex Cabaret remains a vital example of how art and education can collaborate to promote public health. It demonstrated that humour, creativity, and collaboration could open conversations that might otherwise remain closed. For more than a decade, the cabaret has helped reduce stigma, encouraged understanding, and provided Thunder Bay audiences with a welcoming space to learn and laugh together. Its legacy continues to reflect the power of performance as a tool for inclusion, awareness, and positive change.

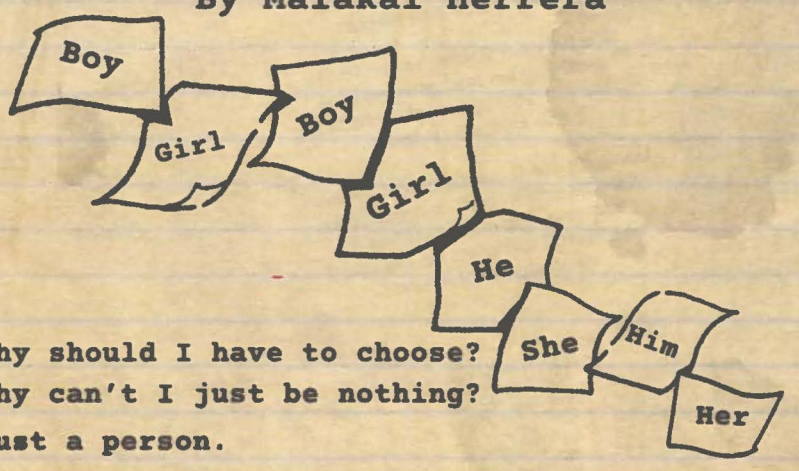


References:

- reACT-Believe Newsletters 1988-2000, 2003

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

By Malakai Herrera



Why should I have to choose?
Why can't I just be nothing?
Just a person.
Why must my soul be represented by this flesh wall that no one can seem to see past?

Too girly to be a boy.
Too manly to be a girl.

And when my loved one looks me in the eye with angry tears,
Demanding where their child is,
I cry back that I don't know.



Because
I
Don't
Know

I don't know why or how or when my own body started to feel like an impostor.
When I realized all the mirrors had always been broken.



I don't remember when I crossed the line.

All I know is I didn't feel like me.
So I clawed my way out.
Blood and tears that have left me scarred.
It's probably why they looked so scared when they looked at me.
I've become a monster.
How can I blame them?
All they see is a butchered version of their little girl.
I hear the pain hidden by the anger.
But what about me?
Why don't they ever think about how I feel about her death?
If only they'd ask, I would mourn with them too.

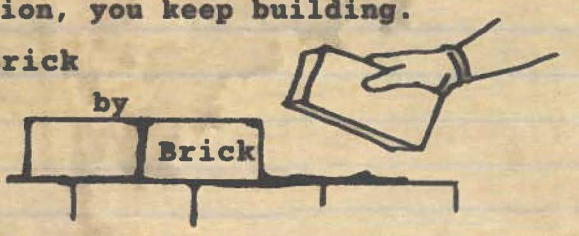


I would cry for the crumbling of the walls we worked so hard to build.
I would cry for the feeling of new terrifying and overwhelming emotions.
I would cry for the life I thought I had.
I would cry for the plans I said goodbye to.
I would cry for the partner I said goodbye to.
I would cry for the dreams I said goodbye to.
I would cry because there was so much destruction, that when I looked around myself all I saw was a warzone of ruins.
I would cry because I have never felt more empty or confused in my life.

I would cry because also, for the first time in my life, I felt...
free

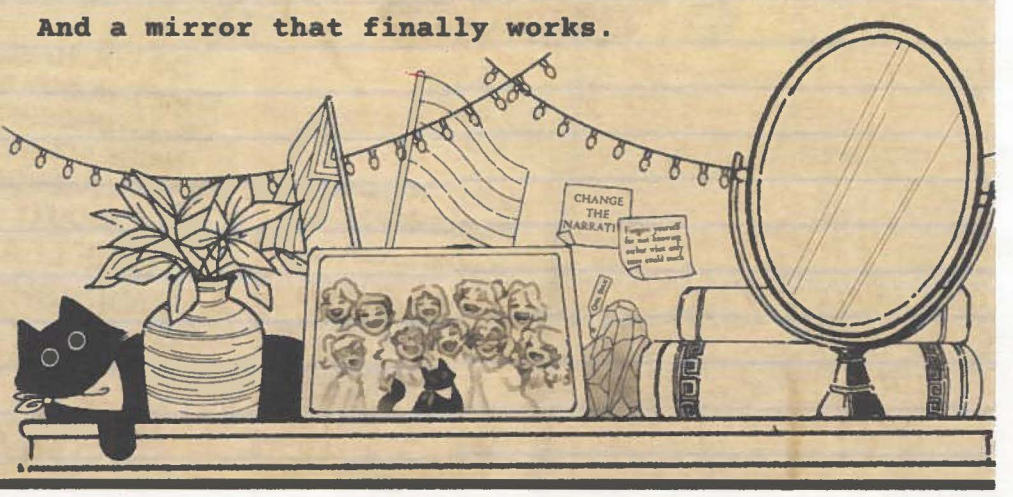
The process has been chaotic and messy and the hardest thing
I've ever had to do.

It took me weeks to build something just for it all to fall apart in the nights when her memory hunted my sleep away.
But despite the setbacks and the fear and the exhaustion, you keep building.



And before you know it,
You have built a home.
A space where everyone feels safe.
A family that loves you unconditionally.
With plants and pictures and flags and lights.
A closet only for the clothes that dress your soul,

And a mirror that finally works.



WELCOME TO THE

PRIDE AND GENDER EQUITY CENTRE

ABOUT US

A SAFER SPACE ON CAMPUS PROVIDING ADVOCACY, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY BY FOCUSING ON ENDING DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

VISIT US!

UC 0019 PRIDE CENTRAL
SC 0020 GEC

SERVICES & PROGRAMMING

- CAMPUS EVENTS
- PEER SUPPORT
- RESOURCE LIBRARY
- GWEN'S CLOSET
- MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS
- SAFE SEX SUPPLIES
- QUEER ARCHIVES
- PEER LED WORKSHOPS

GET IN TOUCH:

PRIDE@LUSU.CA
GEC@LUSU.CA
TEAMPRIDE@LUSU.CA

STAY UP-TO-DATE:

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@GEC_LUSU

FIND US ON OUR UNOFFICIAL DISCORD!

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Help when you need it.
9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline
9-8-8 toll-free, 24/7 988.ca

FOR STUDENTS BY STUDENTS
LUSU

WELCOME TO THE

GWEN'S CLOSET

Gwen's closet offersfree, gender-affirming clothing for trans + non-binary students.

Visit UC 0019 any time during centre hours to browse our current selection of clothing + take what you need!

We have a fitting room to try clothing on and alternative options if you are unable to bring the clothing home.

Looking for a specific item? Scan the QR code to fill out our item request form. Interested in donating? Send us an email at teampride@lusu.ca !

QUEER ARCHIVES

EVERY WEDNESDAY
@GENDER EQUITY CENTRE, (SC0020)
12PM - 1PM
WITH JACOB WOOD

LET'S TALK AND WALK THRO

WITH LILY

TRANS PEER SUPPORT

EVERY TUESDAYS 10:30 AM - 11:30AM
GENDER EQUITY CENTRE, SC 0020

A SPACE TO CONNECT WITH TRANS, NON-BINARY AND GENDER NONCONFIRMING PEERS.

PEER LED WORKSHOPS

FRIDAYS • 2:30–3:30 PM
FACILITATED BY
ARUSA BINTE AHSUN

QUEERS & ALLIES EVERYONE WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE AND LEAD!

WANT TO LEAD A WORKSHOP?
SCAN THE QR CODE TO APPLY

DO YOU HAVE A CRAFT, HOBBY, SKILL, OR A WONDERFULLY NICHE INTEREST YOU'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT?
COME LEAD A WORKSHOP!

GENDER EQUITY CENTRE, SC 0020

QUEER PEER SUPPORT

EVERY THURSDAY
1PM - 2PM
SC 0020

ECHOES

Regular

HOURS

MONDAY TO FRIDAY

10:30 AM TO 4:30 PM

CLOSED ON WEEKENDS

Questions? Email frc@lusu.ca

CHECK OUR CALENDAR FOR REGULAR UPDATES

Our centre may be closed during certain events. Please check the events calendar for hours of operation before visiting us!





WELCOME

OPEN HOURS

MONDAY	10:30 AM - 4:30 PM
TUESDAY	10:30 AM - 4:30 PM
WEDNESDAY	10:30 AM - 4:30 PM
THURSDAY	10:30 AM - 4:30 PM
FRIDAY	10:30 AM - 4:30 PM

QUESTIONS?
EMAIL
ISRC@LUSU.CA

Indigenous Student Resource Centre
LUSU

FOR MORE ON LUSU:
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@LUSU_TBAY

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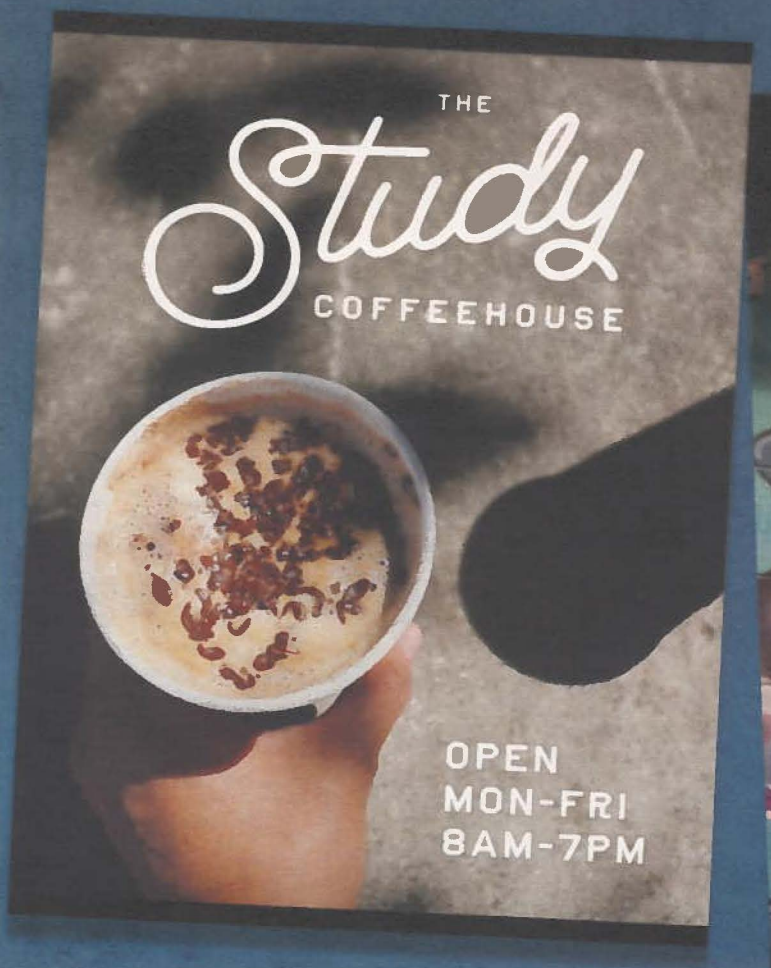
PURCHASE OF $5.00 OR MORE!

RSVP ON THE CLUBS DEN TO RESERVE YOUR COUPON

Food Resource Centre LUSU

DISCOUNT COUPON





THE OUTPOST
Campus Pub

HOURS OF OPERATION

KITCHEN & COUNTER BAR

MON	11:30AM - 4PM
TUES	11:30AM - 11PM
WED	11:30AM - 7PM
THUR	11:30AM - 7PM
FRI	11:30AM - 7PM*

*CLOSE AT 7PM ON EVENT NIGHTS

CANNED AND BOTTLED ALCOHOLIC DRINKS AVAILABLE HERE!

MAIN BAR

MON	CLOSED
TUES	3:30PM - 1AM
WED	3:30PM - 7PM
THUR	3:30PM - 7PM
FRI	3:30PM - 7PM/2AM*

*MAY BE OPEN ADDITIONAL HOURS FOR SPECIAL EVENTS!

*CLOSE AT 7PM FOR SPECIAL EVENTS AND DOORS REOPEN AT 9PM UNTIL 2AM

Pride and Gender Equity Centre
LUSU

ECHOES 15

Pride and Gender Equity Centre
FOR STUDENTS BY STUDENTS
LUSU

Our goal with Echoes newspaper is to be a much-needed space for young, queer students, alumni, and faculty to express themselves academically, politically, and artistically, in a time where queer and gender diverse voices are being silenced and ignored across Turtle Island.

Much like the queer community, this project has experienced adversity: Increased national discrimination, Bill 33 budget cuts, funding deficits, anti-queer legislation, and heighted surveillance. This has reduced the space for Canada's 2SLGBTQIA+ community however, our community continues to resist and make our voices heard.

This newspaper is an echo of our communal call.

Echoes will continue to provide space, knowledge, and solidarity among the queer communities in Thunder Bay and Orillia. We will gladly accept submissions for future editions of the newspaper.

In Strength, In Love, In Community,
Jacob Wood, Parvinder Kaur, Arusa Binte Ahsun, Guinevere Lilith Theodosia, Alexis Natalie Sylvain.

Thank you LUSU for sponsoring Echoes and for creating spaces for community members to come together and grow.

ECHOES

FOR STUDENTS BY STUDENTS
LUSU
EST 1981