

## Confidence in chaos

Fire Academy students were responsible for keeping the area safe by blocking off the accident with cones and keeping crash victims, played by theatre students, and communication students covering the story away from the fire. While the fire was safely set and controlled by professionals, the students still had to work together to put it out and were expected to treat this like a genuine emergency situation.

Photo by Santiago Nunez

## Simulated emergency situation gives TJC students the opportunity to grow practical skills

By Brooklyn Gundling  
Editor-In-Chief

Two cars stand at a halt. Both show damage indicating a crash, but while one car's bumper falls off, the other vehicle starts to catch fire. Passengers call out, checking on their friends to make sure they're OK as the sirens get closer and closer. Fire, police and EMTs rush onto the scene, and take control of the situation according to their training. This was the scene that unfolded at Mike Carter Field April 4 during a mock emergency situation hosted by TJC.



EMT students provide life-saving care for the victims of the mock emergency. When needed, they had Fire Academy students assist them. One goal of the event, according to organizer Adam Palacios, was to demonstrate the fluidity the students must have during an emergency.

Photo by Garrison Nichols

The event was a multi-department effort with students from the Fire Academy, Law Enforcement Academy, EMT Program, Theatre and Mass Communication Department coming together to practice their relevant skills during a simulated emergency.

"We simulated a drunk driver head on collision with another vehicle, and it caught on fire," Christopher Franklin, a Fire Academy student, said. "Police were able to, in a safely manner, talk to the drunk driver and other passengers in the [second] vehicle, and we had other departments like the actors play it out, the different positions, and we had EMS take a few other victims out of the second car and take care of them."

The students were told to treat this like a real emergency, with EMT students providing life-

saving care to theatre students who were standing in as victims. Fire Academy students put out a real car fire. Mass communication students covered the breaking news situation and attended a press conference held by TJC's Director of Public Affairs and Social Media, Whitney Mayfield.

"It was actually our first sort of training with all other departments like police, EMS, even the news, so I guess it was, being our first time, it was a nice lesson to learn to see what it might kinda be like in the real world," Franklin said.

The organizer of this event was Adam Palacios, the director of business and industry partnerships at TJC West Campus. Palacios said the idea came from when he was a mass communication student.

"I actually was in TIPA myself, Texas Intercollegiate Press Association, and I know we had participated in an event every year just like this and so I really wanted to incorporate that aspect of it with TJC," Palacios said.

According to Palacios, the idea was to help students feel more prepared and to learn how to be effective in an emergency, whatever their role may be.

"In our pursuit of excellence, as Dr. Mejia always says, we wanted to make sure that we are providing our students with relevant skills needed to be successful out in society," Palacios said. "So we thought, we need to provide real-life scenarios to where all of them can come together

Simulated emergency continued on Page 3



TJC Theatre students participate as victims in the simulation.

They were instructed beforehand about what injuries they had 'sustained,' giving EMT students the chance to practice their emergency procedures.

Photo by Garrison Nichols

## Timeline of events: What happened with Donald Trump, Stormy Daniels



Courtesy of Seth Wenig at AP

By Brooklyn Gundling  
Editor-In-Chief

Former president Donald Trump and his team entered in a not guilty plea after being indicted for 34 counts of falsifying business records. According to the Manhattan District Attorney's office, Trump allegedly made multiple false business records following a rumored relationship with adult film star Stormy Daniels.

Daniels and Trump met in 2006 at a golf tournament. According to Daniels, she and Trump had an affair a few years later in 2011, though this is denied by Trump and his team. After the alleged affair, Daniels attempted to go to the media, but Trump's legal counsel, Michael Cohen, threatened legal action against her and the reporters. Her interviews weren't released until 2018.

Trump's indictment continued on Page 3



### A lost girlhood



A photo essay highlighting the issue of sexual harassment and assault in the U.S. Full story available on Pages 4 and 5.



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## The trend to end all trends: De-influencing

**Story and Graphic**  
**By Nayeli Carrillo**  
Multimedia Journalist

Deception, stretched truths and overconsumption has plagued the social media atmosphere by creating a need for viral videos in order to promote products. Influencers on social media platforms are no longer trusted by their audiences when they accept brand deals and sponsorships. On the TikTok, video-sharing app, millions of its users have fallen into the trend rabbit hole and added to their online shopping cart. TikTok creators and app users repeatedly use the phrase “TikTok made me buy it;” however, the de-influencing trend has been created to combat it. De-influencing is a beneficial trend shedding light to products that are not necessary by criticizing overconsumption and exaggeration by influencers.

“Whereas ‘influencing’ in the marketing realm means to convince someone to buy something, ‘de-influencing’ is about telling the viewer why they shouldn’t buy something,” Hannah Rosato, TikTok creator, said.

Rosato, a popular de-influencing creator with over 43,000 TikTok followers, began sharing videos about Amazon kitchen finds she believed were not necessary. Rosato kept making videos about products because the idea seemed to really resonate with people.

What resonates more to a person than an algorithm created solely for their viewing?

“TikTok captures even our passive and subtle behavioural patterns to teach its algorithms about us in real time, as we consume videos. These patterns include how many times we let a video loop, how quickly we scroll past certain content, and whether we are drawn to a particular category of effects and sounds, according to lowyinstitute.org. “This hyper-responsive recommendation system allows TikTok users to remain completely passive, if they so wish, while still arriving at an engaging, personalised content feed much faster than on other platforms,” according to lowyinstitute.org.

With powerful AI generated algorithms, each video landing across a person’s For You Page is no accident. When social media advertisements pop up, they almost seem curated to the person and their lifestyle. If an individual is watching a video about a product, then they are the target audience. It is appalling to think of the amount of access that social media platforms have on our personal references.

According to bigcommerce.com, social media advertising is the most efficient and effective way to reach a target audience and turn them into consumers. In 2022 approximately 230 billion U.S. dollars were spent in social media advertisement according to statista.com. An issue that is clearly represented when discussing the impact of influencers and advertisements is overconsumption.

“Overconsumption is at the root of the planet’s environmental crisis. One solution, proposed by author JB MacKinnon, is that we should simply buy less,” according to theguardian.com.

Rather than being influenced to buy an item because of a video, a person must first evaluate. An individual must decide whether they needed the product before seeing the video, if other reviews support the influencers claims, and if the



**De-influencers fight overconsumption by calling for individuals to think more about what’s being advertised to them. They encourage consumers to look into the products being shown to them rather than taking someone’s word for it.**

influencer gains anything from raving about a product.

“I think that overconsumption is a huge problem. It’s a hard one to tackle because I think the main driver of the issue is capitalism and the constant demand for growth and profit in this country,” Rosato said. “I think in order to have meaningful discussions about overconsumption, we have to strike a balance between putting responsibility on individuals and systems. It’s an issue with a lot of nuance.”

With more and more influencers promoting the de-influencing trend, rejecting overconsumption and encouraging transparency, multiple industries and TikTokers have been criticized for partnerships.

“I think that at this point in time there are certainly many influencers and brands using deceptive tactics in their

advertising. It’s an unfortunate reality that has come from the super-fast trend cycle and the strong push to put out products,” Rosato said. “I think influencers have a responsibility to choose their brand partnerships more selectively, and I think brands need to be more patient with influencers and creators and allow them to give their honest opinions of products. Consumers are tired of being pushed products that they can’t trust by people they don’t trust.”

Social media users should pay attention to advertisement techniques and listen to de-influencers. Not all products that have gone viral truly work as they are advertised. Do not give in and add items to your online shopping cart. Be conscious of the difference between a need and a want.

## Overusing the term obsessive-compulsive disorder impacts those who struggle

**Story and Graphic**  
**By Asia Johnson**  
Multimedia Journalist

You’re watching a video of someone cleaning their house from top to bottom, inside and out because “they have to.” They say it’s the only way they can function. Because of this constant inclination, they may think they have obsessive compulsive disorder... but this may not be the case. Many people label themselves as having OCD because of their nagging desire of wanting things organized and perfect. I’ve seen TikTok POV’s, memes and tweets about how apparently the majority of the social media presence has this

disorder. Many people fail to realize that OCD is not perfectionism.

“OCD is a mental health disorder that involves repeated, unwanted thoughts or urges that cause a person anxiety. In order to reduce that anxiety, the individual performs a compulsive action or ritual — sometimes, one that isn’t necessarily related to the fear or anxiety that they’re trying to overcome,” according to Cleveland Clinic.

Having OCD affects one’s thoughts and behaviors. Their uncontrollable thoughts urge them to repeat an action over and over.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, common compulsions include: compulsive counting, excessive cleaning, constantly checking on things such as if a door is locked and more.

Some can conclude that they identify with these compulsions and falsely label themselves as having this disorder. But there is a major

difference between perfectionism and having OCD.

With OCD, completing certain tasks a certain way isn’t “satisfying” as some perfectionists may claim. The thoughts and urges that OCD brings carries much anxiety, which does not go away until the urges and thoughts are satisfied.

“The main difference [between OCD and perfectionism] is whether true obsessions are present. There is something called obsessive-compulsive personality disorder that is more like perfectionism than actual OCD is,” said Rebecca Olson, psychology professor at Tyler Junior College. “People with OCD are preoccupied with perfectionism. You might say they have really high and rigid standards for mundane things. So their behavior seems compulsive but they lack the major anxiety caused by obsessive thoughts.”

So why does the majority think they have OCD when they don’t? There are plenty of reasons for this.

Firstly, society fails to educate themselves on certain topics before vocalizing their opinions. It’s one thing to consider having a mental disorder. It’s another when you consider this and don’t verify it with a medical professional. People take vague descriptions commonly found on the internet and social media, and mistakenly diagnose themselves.

An example from UnHerd said TikTok user Conner DeWolfe, who has a major following, shares their experiences as someone who has ADHD. Although this user may actually have ADHD, it has introduced a situation of suggestibility, which is when someone copies the behaviors they’ve been exposed to.

“Just the belief that you have OCD can actually change your behavior. And if it does, then you have given yourself the burden of disordered behavior,” Olson said.

Without any research, context or speaking to a psychiatrist, people take these generic comments found on social media posts and believe they are experiencing the same thing. This is a problem because it promotes a lack of research and blatant ignorance, which desensitizes people from what those who have mental disorders go through.

**The Texas Youth Helpline provides free and confidential services to youth. Call or text 1-800-989-6884, or visit their website: [dfps.texas.gov](https://dfps.texas.gov).**

Imagine actually having a mental disorder and many people around you claim they have the same thing because of information they received from the internet. It would make you feel like you’re not alone, right? But in reality only a few actually know what you’re going through because a false sense of community has been created.

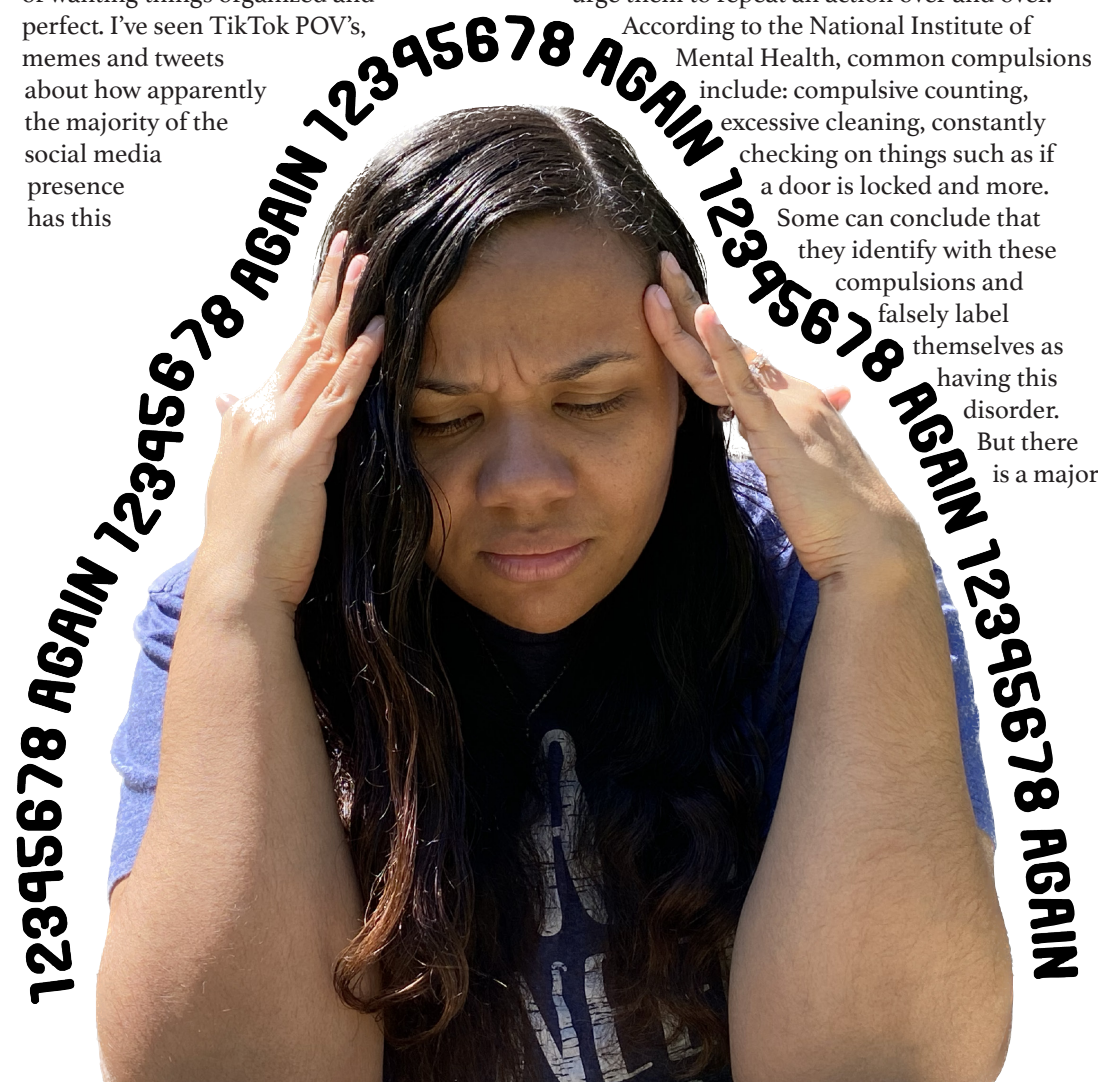
This is not to dismiss anyone who suffers from any disorder or may think they do. This is to spread awareness of the fact that just because words behind a screen tell you common symptoms of something doesn’t mean you have it. Disorders and illnesses shouldn’t be “trendy” or glorified.

“Like some other psychological disorders, it seems like OCD has become a bit glorified recently, as though having the disorder comes with a badge of honor or makes someone special. Anyone who actually has it will tell you what a terrible burden it can be,” Olson said.

And let’s say you may actually have OCD. You’ve identified with symptoms and you label yourself. Now what? You’d still need to see a psychiatrist so you’re officially diagnosed and can receive the proper treatments.

A psychologist or a psychiatrist, probably not a general physician, for an evaluation. If they truly have it, it’s important to get treatment,” Olson said.

So yes, you may like to clean your house inside and out, top to bottom, but that does not automatically mean you have OCD. Seek medical help before you label yourself.



According to adaa.org, about 2.5 million adults suffer from OCD in the U.S. A common compulsive behavior found in those with OCD is counting.

## Trump's Indictment: What happened, what's next

Continued from Page 1

Following his nomination in 2016 for president, Daniels claims she was offered hush money in the amount of \$130,000 by Trump's team. The money came out of Cohen's pocket, which was repaid by Trump. There is no law against hush money or making a payment like it, at least not in the U.S. However, these payments were allegedly marked as business expenses, according to the Manhattan DA's office.

Trump gets sworn in as president of the U.S., and a few months later, Cohen gets in hot water with the FBI over payments made to two women, Daniels, and former Playboy model Karen McDougal. Trump denied any knowledge of these payments. Cohen was given three years in jail after pleading guilty to eight charges of tax fraud, excessive campaign contributions, illegal corporate contributions, and making false statements to a financial institution.

The Manhattan DA's office subpoenaed Trump's financial records in relation to Daniels and McDougal, and later asked for tax returns dating back to 2011. These tax returns were not just from Trump's personal finances, but the returns from his company as well.

Trump's team attempted to block the subpoenas, but they were held up by the supreme court. The Manhattan DA's office received his tax records in February of 2021, shortly after Trump left office.

A few months later, Trump's organization was indicted on criminal charges.

A grand jury was put together to investigate the payments made to Daniels and McDougal. Trump was asked to present a case to the grand jury, though he and his team declined. The grand jury then indicted Trump March 2023.

While allegations of fraudulent conduct at Trump's organization have been around since his presidential nomination in 2016, some feel that this indictment happened quickly.

Mark Owens, assistant professor of political science at UT Tyler, explained in an interview with KLTU, that while it may feel like a surprise, these past few steps by the Manhattan DA were carefully planned and expected.

"Typically, in any legal process these things are actually telegraphed, and people get notice of what is going to happen," Owens said. Trump surrendered himself to the DA's office April 4, and entered in a not guilty plea the next day during his arraignment.

The defense has been given until August to file motions with the court to dismiss any charges, cases or to make requests like a change of venue, for example. After that, the trial date will be set.

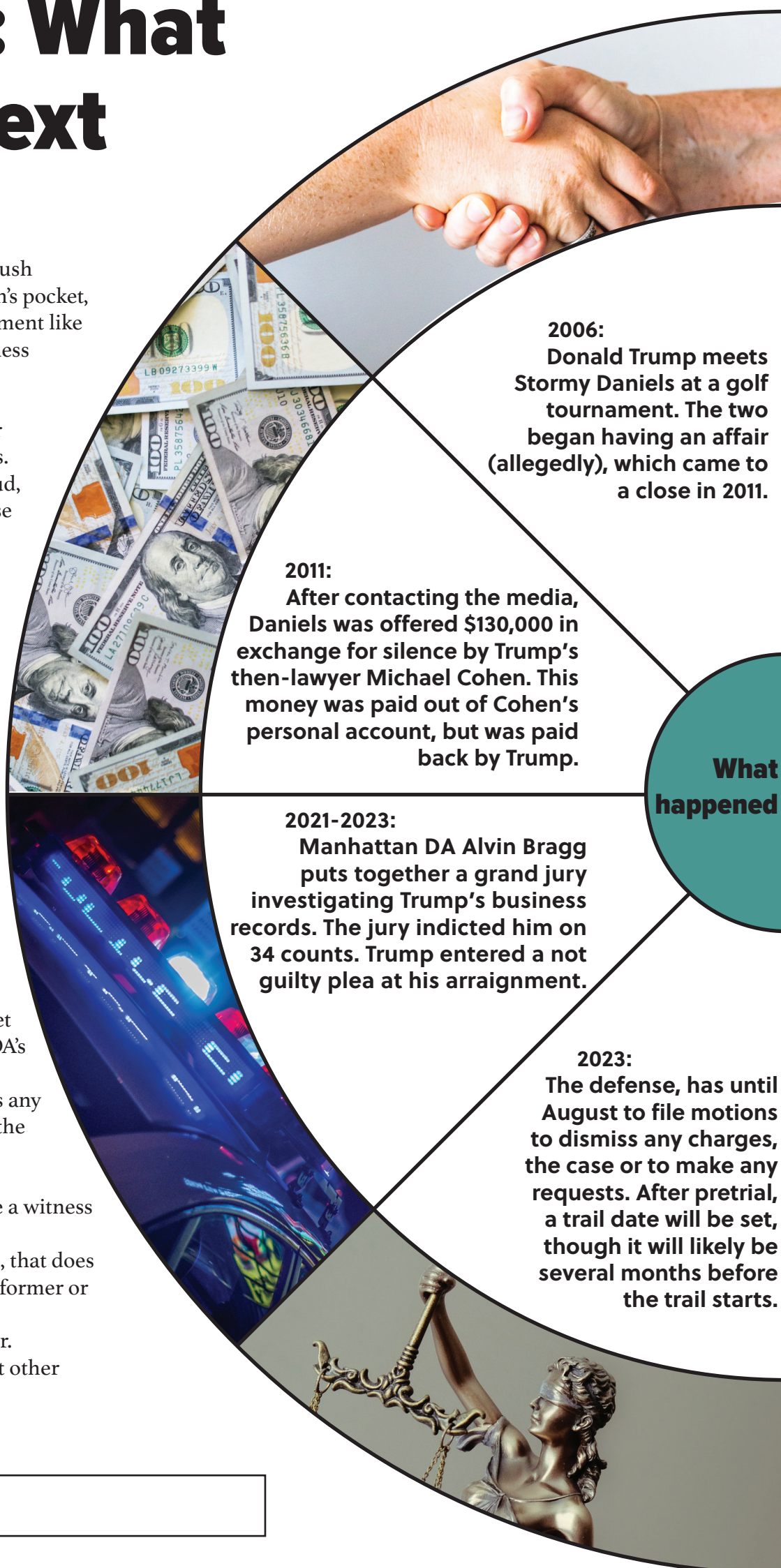
This case is not expected to go to trial until next year.

Cohen is mentioned in two of the counts against Trump, and he is expected to be a witness for the prosecution during the trial.

Despite being the first U.S. former president to be officially charged with a crime, that does not necessarily mean he cannot run for president in 2024. There is no law barring former or current, alleged or convicted individuals from becoming president of the U.S.

"History tends to show us that it might not matter; bigger things are gonna matter.

People are gonna think about the economy. People will continue to think about other leadership," Owens said. "He's a name that people know."



The following resources were helpful in researching this article:  
The Washington Post, The Washington Examiner, USA Today, CBS.

Photos Courtesy of Unsplash.com

## Simulated Emergency: Multiple TJC departments work together in order to enrich student learning, give hands-on experience

Continued from Page 1

and they can collaborate but they can also make sure that they understand the chain of command, they understand who they are supposed to report to, what that response looks like and so we decided a mock emergency would be the most encompassing event for us to do to make sure we can get as many departments involved as possible," Palacios said.

**EMT students show Fire Academy students how to perform certain first aid measures on victims of the mock emergency. While each group had skills of their own to refine, there was also room to demonstrate and teach when needed.**

Photo by Garrison Nichols.



The event was almost completely run by the students of each department. The instructors present were able to give information, directions and aid when requested, but mostly stood back and allowed their students to work through the problems by themselves. For Fire Academy student Philip Adkinson, this helped him feel more confident in his training.

"I liked it because we've never really practiced getting off [the truck] and as a team doing stuff. Usually, we kinda go over stuff once," Adkinson said. "I'm real big on repetition because it gets me comfortable with the situation. So that helped me a lot cause it makes me more confident to go out there and know what to do and how to do it cause I've seen it and I've done it."

Franklin echoed his peer, saying he feels more comfortable in his skills after the event and hopes to do more in the future.

"[I] absolutely feel more prepared and would love to do even more stuff too," Franklin said. "Practice makes perfect."

Overall, the event was marked as a success by the students and instructors alike, with Palacios commenting on the work each department did to make the whole thing work.

"I thought it was amazing. Our drama students did an amazing job. It was very realistic and at some points I even got, you know, kinda scared and I was like 'OK this is this is real life,'" Palacios said. "I love the cohesiveness but then also acknowledging that there is fluidity in all kind of response



**Theatre students participated as both injured victims and an intoxicated driver. This student gave Law Enforcement Academy students a chance to practice maintaining control in a chaotic environment.**

Photo by Garrison Nichols.

EMTs as they were trying to perform life saving measures for some of the victims," Palacios said. "You saw our police there responding walking on the scene helping our personnel as well. And that's how I think any kind of emergency response should be; everyone should work together and try to save as many victims as possible."

Both students and instructors are excited to continue doing mock events, and hopefully add more departments to get as many students involved as possible.

"I think everything went great," Palacios said. "The only thing I hope is that we continue this program or this scenario, and that we also continue to grow on it and try to involve more departments down the road and continue to ensure we're offering development skills to all of our students to be successful."

scenes, and our students kinda have to understand that."

While the event was carefully planned by each department to ensure the safety of those involved, adding all the departments together at once still made for a bit of chaos. Chaos that, Palacios added, simulates real emergency situations very well.

"What I was very happy to see was that when push came to shove, everybody started working together. You saw our fire personnel working with our

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Anonymous,  
just 15.



“As my barely teen self begged for male attention from her crush, his friend saw an opportunity and took a piece of my innocence that I will never get back. The only thing that was on my mind at that moment was getting caught because I had invited a boy over without my mom knowing. My crush got what he wanted and took off to get some food, while clueless me was forced to entertain his friend. What seemed like the longest 30 minutes of my life ended with the only thing on my mind being oh God, what just happened? What did he do?”

## A lost girlhood

Story and Photo Illustrations By Abby Smith  
Social Media Manager



Grace Smith,  
just 16.

“It was such a nice day. I was active and fit. Holding my body to a high standard, I decided to go for a jog, something I’ve done a few times. I was stopped by a truck, a bearded man, and a dog interrogated by a stranger. What was I doing? What was my name? Where did I stay? Do you wanna pet my dog? Just come here for a second. My heart was pounding more than it ever had on a run. My body screamed at me to fly, so I ran. He watched me run, telling me to come back. In the neighborhood I grew up in, in a beautiful place hidden away by the comfort of trees, I never felt safe again.”



Heather Smith,  
just 10.



“You should really be able to trust your family. I was 10 and hanging out with my 13-year-old cousin in my room. We have done this a million times, but this day, it was different. He kept asking questions about boys and if I had ever been kissed “No, of course not, I’m 10,” He laughed, so I thought OK, that’s over. So I got up to get something out of my closet; when I turned around, he was there. He had the door blocked and said, “If you want out, give me a kiss.” I said no. He wouldn’t move, no matter how hard I pushed. The laugh he made still gives me chills when I think about him. God must have heard my pleas to let me out because my mom came to the door and told us dinner was ready. Till this day, I still wonder what would have happened if my mother wouldn’t have come to the door.”

## 68 seconds

### Prevalence of sexual assault should not be normalized

**By Grace Giles**  
Multimedia Journalist

One sexual assault occurs every 68 seconds according to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network. Rape culture is rapidly becoming normalized, perpetrators are getting away and victims are being silenced. As sexual violence gets normalized it becomes accepted as a natural part of society, but sexual assault is not normal and should not be normal.

College students fall into the age group, 18-24 and are at the highest risk of experiencing sexual assault, according to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, or RAINN. It is essential to realize 13% of all students experience rape or sexual assault through physical force, violence or incapacitation, according to Samantha Kauffman, sexual assault counselor at the East Texas Crisis Center. The question we must ask ourselves is, why is this so normal?

#### ONE.

Sexual assault has become normalized due to lack of consequences. Perpetrators are walking free and victims are being oppressed.

“Social norms that condone violence, use power over others, traditional constructs of masculinity, the subjugation of women, and silence about violence and abuse contribute to the occurrence of sexual violence. Oppression in all of its forms is among the root causes of sexual violence,” according to The National Sexual Violence Research Center.

Because if people do not have to take responsibility for their crimes, they will continue to commit them.

The media plays a part in rape culture and victim blaming has become common. Victims often blame themselves because everyone else does. “There’s a lot of rape culture in the media, a lot of victim blaming, and I think it’s just important for students to know that it doesn’t matter how you’re dressed, it doesn’t matter anything like that, if you are assaulted it is not your fault. You didn’t deserve it and there are resources available to help you heal,” Kauffman said.

#### TWO.

Victims of sexual assault often do not get justice. Out of every 1,000 sexual assaults, 975 perpetrators will walk free, according to a study done by RAINN.

These statistics may not seem local; students may feel like these numbers don’t directly affect them but, in 2022, there were five reported sexual assaults on Tyler Junior College campuses, according to the 2022 Clery Report. The Clery Report is a document colleges are required to give to the public. This report shares crime statistics on campus.

As much as students wish this statistic didn’t include them, they are all at risk of becoming a victim of sexual assault. “We do know that college students 18-24 are three times more likely to experience sexual violence compared to all other women,” Kauffman said.

People who survive sexual assault are left with much more than physical pain. “Survivors of sexual assault can experience some PTSD symptoms – they might have trouble sleeping, they might get anxious, they might struggle in school, they might isolate themselves from others or get depressed,” Kauffman said.

#### THREE.

TJC tries to accommodate for students who suffer from the side effects of sexual assault, through Title IX of the Education Amendments which states “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...”

Under Title IX, discrimination on the basis of sex can include sexual harassment, rape, and sexual assault. It also can include dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, according to the TJC website.

TJC has emergency phones placed in two locations at the main campus. These phones immediately alert campus police that there is an emergency requiring their assistance. TJC also has a way for victims and witnesses of sexual violence to report the incident anonymously. To anonymously report an incident, search “anonymous sexual assault reporting” on TJC.edu.

Victims of sexual assault are also able to seek help from the East Texas Crisis Center. “You are not alone, it is not your fault and we are here to help,” Kauffman said.

#### FOUR.

**One sexual assault occurs ever 68 seconds. In the amount of time it took for you to read this article, four sexual assaults occurred.**

### Anonymous, just 17.



“Seventeen. The age of new beginnings, focusing on myself and what the future holds. Feeling grown but still underage. I knew what I was getting myself into with the pathway I paved, the parties, the alcohol, the music, but most importantly, the boys. Flirting is fun until no doesn’t mean no anymore. One drink turns to two, which leads to many more. That was the night I realized what it felt like to not be in control of myself anymore. My body being held down, my tears running down my face. But he was drunk too. Did that make it OK? Did it make it OK that when I awoke the next morning, hurt and confused with my clothes on backward but he told me good morning? Did it make it OK that he said I ‘wanted it’ but couldn’t remember the entire night? It was not OK. It was not OK when he told me he was taking care of me all night. It was not OK when he told me I said “no,” but he thought I was joking. It was not OK, and it will never be OK. No means no, no matter what.”

This photo essay was made to highlight the issue of sexual harassment and assault in the U.S. Each woman tells their story in their own words and how it impacted their lives moving forward. Disclaimer: The DrumBeat was given permission by these women to use their photos, names and stories in this way. Some have chosen to remain anonymous for this article.

**CROSSWORD**

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## THEME: ANATOMY 101

### ACROSS

1. Emir, alt. sp.
6. Comic book cry
9. \*One of 27 in hand
13. Dhaka, formerly
14. Half man, half goat
15. Pressure ulcers, e.g.
16. Type of wrap
17. Old fashioned "before"
18. Do like ivy
19. \*Smooth, skeletal or cardiac
21. \*"Gray's \_\_\_\_"
23. Gardener's tool
24. Detected by olfactory system
25. Acronym-named sandwich
28. Sore throat voice
30. Retires from military service
35. Steak option
37. Place at angle
39. Double, in French
40. \*Certain apple's namesake
41. Fork pokers
43. Heavy metal's Quiet

44. \*Pelvis bone
46. \*Hardened keratin plate
47. Wedding promise?
48. Mandela
50. \*Part of eye, not flower
52. Tokyo, formerly
53. Alpine transport
55. Cuckoo
57. \*Vein to "go for"
61. \*Cell body, axon and dendrite
64. Use the other side of pencil
65. Caviar alternative
67. Mafia's top dogs
69. "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft \_\_\_\_"
70. Fuss
71. Modern correspondence
72. Opposite of want
73. Japanese currency
74. Pep gathering

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### DOWN

1. Annoying pop-ups
2. "Yes, \_\_\_\_!"
3. Beige
4. E-wallet content
5. Resentment
6. Musketeer's sword
7. \*Smallest bones location
8. Work the dough
9. Diamond in a cutting tool
10. "Wonderfilled" cookie
11. a.k.a. Indian Lilac
12. Grammy of sports
15. Like a Haunted Mansion visitor?
20. Minimum
22. Endorsement
24. Alfresco
25. \*It contains cerebellum and parietal lobe
26. Big Dipper shape
27. Hiker's path
29. \*Largest organ
31. Fogginess
32. Speak one's mind

33. \*AB+ or B-
34. Vigorous fight
36. Outback birds
38. Dam-like structure
42. Snail trail
45. Like certain Cr, e
49. Giannis' league
51. Cup holder
54. Orderly arrangement
56. Popular movie genre
57. J in B. J. King
58. Serve as motive
59. Em's and Dorothy's last name
60. CPO, in auto industry
61. Glowing gas
62. Iridescent gem
63. Byproduct of wool combing
66. Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem
68. Canny

For puzzle solutions, visit [www.thedrumbeat.com](http://www.thedrumbeat.com).

## Editorial: Racebending and the GOOD it brings to media

Story By Santiago Nunez  
Entertainment Editor

Diversity is thrown around in the entertainment industry as a buzzword. Whether it's preceded by "forced" or "more" is up to the person writing it and what company is publishing it. The term "racebending" is also thrown into the mix when discussing roles people of color play in movies and shows Hollywood produces. The term gets lambasted by some who claim it's unnecessary, but in reality, it should be seen as the bare minimum.

In an essay for Harvard Educational Review, Drs. Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, a professor at the University of Michigan School of Education, and Amy Stornaiuolo, the chair of the Reading, Writing and Literacy program at the University of Pennsylvania, define racebending as a "process by which people reshape narratives to represent a diversity of perspectives and experiences that are often missing or silenced in mainstream texts, media, and popular discourse." Racebending is interpreted by them as a tool to combat a lack of diversity by shifting previously created characters to better represent minority groups and I have to agree. Characters whose identities as white people do not significantly impact the stories, can be easily racebent and provide characters that can be seen and related to by marginalized groups. It is an effective tool in helping close the gap between desired representation and reality.

According to National Research Group, a company that provides data and counsel relating to the entertainment industry among other things, 3 out of 4 Americans say content is representative of different cultures or people is a factor when choosing what to watch. Additionally, 91% of Americans believe content/media has the power to influence society, according to National Research Group.

These two stats in conjunction tell us the American people want representative stories because they believe they have the power to improve society's cultural exchange and acceptance of cultures different from our own. So, when a white character is racebent to be more representative, they are not being changed in a way that will negatively impact the story, they are being changed in a way that will positively impact the way minority communities feel and the way American viewers perceive the show.

Racebending should not be confused with racial capitalism, however. While I am a supporter of racebending, I am wary of racial capitalism. In an article for Harvard Law Review, Nancy Leong, the professor of law at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law, defines racial capitalism as "the process of deriving social and economic value from the racial identity of another person." While racebending is well intentioned in nature, racial capitalism is just a means of extracting profit out of people of color by using their faces and labor to benefit white institutions. A common example of racial capitalism is university brochures or flyers for a work environment at a job inserting images of people of color when levels of diversity are low or nonexistent to make it seem as though they do exist or the institution cares about representation to unsuspecting applicants. Meanwhile, an example of racebending can be seen with Selina Kyle/Catwoman in 2022's "The Batman." Historically, Selina Kyle has most often been depicted as a white woman, both in comics and in media, but "The Batman" had Zoe Kravitz, a Black woman, play the character. The character fits the criteria for a good racebent character, a historically white character whose identity as a white character has no significant impact on her as a character other than the fact that she is white. The movie then had a scene where Selina Kyle, dressed as Catwoman, calls out Batman for not acknowledging the significant privilege he has as a rich white man and judging her for her actions as a thief without understanding her socioeconomic conditions. Racebending Selina Kyle made the movie representative with fleshed out character motivations, and it helped in creating the narrative of the film.

There are also scientific arguments to be made about the positives of racebending. "It is important to see characters that look like you, I really think there is a true benefit to that, especially when it's a totally fictional character it's even more important to see someone that looks like you, because in fantasy stories, it's so rare to have diversity," said Cory Howard, a TJC psychology professor. Howard said in most fantasy worlds like "Lord of the Rings," "Star Wars" and Harry Potter, there is a lack of diverse characters, and for viewers of color, it can be disheartening to see the biggest and most sprawling franchises have little to no characters of color, it can give them a sense of invisibility. "Backlash to changing established characters might make viewers think that they're less than the original, that's something, unfortunately, a lot of minorities have felt their whole life and have been told their whole life. That really, kind of submits



Professor Howard never shies away from reiterating that representation matters for all marginalized groups. Howard tries to improve his ideas of representation by analyzing biases he may have, often questioning if his beliefs are tone deaf while consuming media.

it home of like, even in this fictional universe, you're still not worthy of that," Howard said. Howard brought up Captain America and the negative reactions some people have to the mantle being passed on to a Black man in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. When viewers see a negative reaction to such a change, it can create a sentiment of inferiority within them, that whiteness in characters is and always will be the standard. Racebending comes under hot water for even more reasons.

There are two common arguments against racebending. The first argument is that new characters of color can be created instead of having to racebend white ones. The simple answer is that those two are not mutually exclusive. Why would only one need to be used when both can be effectively rolled out at the same time? The implication of this argument is that there is a maximum amount of diversity. The second argument commonly used is that if characters of color were replaced by white characters, there would be much more backlash, so racebending is wrong. The matter of fact is racebending and whitewashing are different things. Whitewashing decreases diversity and is actively against characters of color whose identities are more often than not pivotal to their character, while racebending increases diversity and changes characters whose whiteness doesn't impact the character massively.

Racebending should be considered a fundamentally good practice for the reasons I have laid out. It increases visibility for minorities, creates more fleshed out characters, invites viewers to relate to the characters they see, separates itself from the profit driven racial capitalism, and Americans generally want to see more diverse stories told on screen.



Photos courtesy of Fandom

### Joel Miller

Joel was originally portrayed as a white man in the game "The Last of Us." The HBO Max show of the same name cast Pedro Pascal, a Chilean-American actor, to play Joel. There were some who were upset at the casting due to the deviance from the source.



### Spider-Man

Miles Morales and Peter Parker are often the subject of debates centered around race and white characters. Some argue Miles can never be Spider-Man because Peter Parker is the sole owner of the title and Miles is just forced by diversity quotas.



### Selina Kyle

Selina Kyle's backstory has been tweaked a few times to make her either Hispanic or Black, but most associate her with being white. When she was depicted as Black woman in 2022's "The Batman," many fans stated their displeasure despite aligning with the source material.

Photos courtesy of Fandom

## TJC art professor doubles as part-time writer for local magazine

Story and Graphics By  
Santiago Nunez  
Entertainment Editor

Service to the art community doesn't have to end when one leaves the doors of TJC. Some are constantly trying to put more artists out there in any way they can. Derrick White, a TJC art professor and Art Department chair, writes a monthly article for EGuide Magazine, a Tyler based publisher that highlights interesting events or people in the area. White uses his articles to showcase local artists or art related events in an effort to bring exposure to both the artists' works and the places people can view the works on a more personal level.

"One of our adjunct professors, her sister-in-law, is the publisher of EGuide Magazine. It's an events guide here in East Texas, and she was writing for EGuide. She did an article on me back in 2014. But she also had three small children at the time, and she became too busy to continue writing. And so she asked me if I wanted to take it over. And so I took it over on a temporary basis to see if I would like to do it, and so I've been doing it on a temporary basis for the last nine years," White said.

Originally, White was helping a friend out

and keeping their work alive, but it became more of a personal mission to him. According to the EGuide Magazine website, White's first article for the magazine was published in Oct. 29, 2014 for the November issue of the magazine, meaning White is coming up on nine years next October.

"It's been fun; I really enjoy it. I love to promote the visual arts in East Texas. I think they go underrepresented a lot of times," White said. "You know, there's a lot going on in our community that a lot of people don't know about and one of the main things is the visual arts, and the exhibits, and the events and the opportunities for people to not only see and experience but also collect and buy and support these visual artists that we have in our area."

White tries to hone in on local events and artists because he believes those artists should be able to make a living anywhere without having to move to a big city in order to keep the lights on. He hopes his work can help be the difference for an artist trying to decide between trying to make it somewhere they are already comfortable and moving away in an attempt to have more reach.

"He's really an amazing writer; he can make anyone sound interesting. He's a creative writer just like he is in his artwork, just amazing,"

said Paula McDermott, a TJC art professor. "I love reading his articles about the local artists and local events."

There are times where White interviews other TJC faculty because he finds immense pride in the art faculty being professional artists. White isn't just helping former and current TJC students, he also tries

to get people to explore the work of TJC professors and staff.

"It's not a hard and fast rule but it's kind of a restriction I put on myself, I try not to write about current students. I want to write about students after they've left TJC and hopefully have gotten at least their Bachelor of Fine Arts degree," White said. "I like to focus in and spotlight students that are staying in the area and staying committed to visual art."

The importance of exposure and a strong resume are not lost on White, as he actively attempts to find young and promising student artists to feature. White has made exceptions in the past. Sometimes there are certain students who just captivate White with either their raw talent or their ability or contribution to the arts who haven't left TJC or who haven't attained their degree yet. Another form of exception is when White covers events.

"I attend a lot of art events and art shows and art festivals, like Edom Art Festival and different things like that. So, I try to network and learn about and meet and greet other artists and take their business cards. So, I keep a running list of different artists I'd like to feature at some point, and that list just keeps getting longer. So, you know, until I can't write anymore, or I run out of artists, I'll just keep going," White said.

White's ambition and determination is fueled by a list of connections with other artists that is constantly growing. The events bring in new artists every year, so instead of having to seek them out individually, White has places full of talent he can scout as well as the event itself being an option to cover.

"I have a series of about 10 questions that I asked the artist or people that I'm interviewing, and it just gives me some insight and understanding of who they are and what their creative process is," White said.

Unlike White's strategy of going with the flow whenever he is making his own art, White has a concrete plan of questions to ask whenever he is interviewing someone. He talks about the artists' history with the subject, how they got into making art, what art means to them and even some of the uglier sides of art such as frustrations and fears about their career.

"The most common frustration with art making is time, time and space. Especially for aspiring visual artists that leave school, because



Paula McDermott (standing left) and Derrick White talk about upcoming events during a weekly Art Club meeting. This meeting was centered around Art Prom, an event for Art Club members meant to recreate a high school prom with an artsy twist.

they no longer have access to some of the tools and equipment like maybe a kiln, if they're a ceramic artist, you know, they go home and live in an apartment, they don't have a place to spread out and do their painting or ceramics or what have you. So, time is a big issue that can be an obstacle in creating art, space is a big issue. And then I'd say probably on the list of top three, the next one will probably be resources or money," White said.

Art is equally as relaxing as it is frustrating according to White's interviewees. They talk about the hardships of setting time aside to create new works that are directly linked to the resources they have and the money spent trying to make it. Additionally, one artist may find themselves with time and money, but White said without space and resources, the other two factors they do have do less for the artist.

"I'm not a journalist. I don't even consider myself a writer necessarily. I just consider myself a promoter. I want to promote the visual arts that we have in East Texas," White said. "I want to promote these artists and give them an article that they can send to potential collectors and clients and people that are interested in their art and learning more about them. And hopefully, it's something they can add to their resume or you know, their website or what have you. To help people learn more about them and the art that they make."



Derrick White, who works as a temporary writer for EGuide Magazine and a full-time professor, keeps his office full of his own art as well as others' art. White cherishes the opportunities he gets to bring exposure to young artists.

## ACTIVITIES

**TJC ACADEMY OF DANCE: "CINDERELLA"**  
14 - 16 | ROGERS PALMER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

**WORDSHOP: WRITING MADE FUN**  
17, 3 P.M. - 4:30 P.M. | JENKINS HALL J1109

**INTERNATIONAL DAY**  
18, 9 A.M. - 3 P.M. | RSC APACHE ROOMS

**THUNDERDOME ART COMPETITION**  
26, NOON - 3 P.M. | JENKINS BELL TOWER COURTYARD

**TJC THEATRE PRESENTS: "METAMORPHOSIS"**  
26 - 29, 7:30 P.M. | JEAN BROWN THEATRE

**HISTORICAL FILM: "CASABLANCA"**  
27, 4 P.M. - 6 P.M. | JENKINS HALL J1109

## MUSIC

**GUEST ARTIST MASTERCLASS/RECITAL SFASU FACULTY BRASS QUINTET**  
18, 7:30 P.M. | ORNELAS CENTER BAND HALL

**JAZZ ENSEMBLES SPRING CONCERT**  
21, 7:30 P.M. | WISE AUDITORIUM

**SYMPHONIC BAND SPRING CONCERT**  
22, 7:30 P.M. | WISE AUDITORIUM

## SHOWCASES

**JOURNALISM PHOTOGRAPHY SHOWCASE**  
18, 11 A.M. - 2 P.M. | VAUGHN LIBRARY LAWN

**THE HONORS RESEARCH SHOWCASE**  
20, 11 A.M. - 1 P.M. | RSC

**SPEECH AND DEBATE SHOWCASE**  
24, 4:30 P.M. | RPAC RECITAL HALL

# Wednesday April 26th



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