

The West Georgian

Est. 1934

Budget Crisis Rocks UWG



Things get heated as the university's budget cuts result in on campus protests.

Pow-Wow Celebrates Native American Heritage

Imani Feagin

Contributing Writer

The Native American Festival and Pow-Wow is the largest Native American gathering in the state of Georgia and it focuses on the sharing and the importance of the almost lost native culture in honor of Native American Heritage Month.

Held at Stone Mountain Park, this festival is open to the public and attracts thousands of people from across the country every year who are either celebrating their heritage or who are eager to learn more about the culture through music, dancing, crafts and artifacts, traditional cooking and storytelling. This four-day event is one of the few ways that different Native American communities can come together and honor their cultures.

“People think it’s like a show, but it is not a show. What this event is, is people coming together in way of expressing their inner self, their culture,” said John Standingdeer of the Native American Pow-Wow committee.

At the event, one will see that most of the individuals present are in traditional native wear from head to toe. The Pow-Wow also contained a constant beat of drumming in the air, which is what you would see people dancing to throughout the event. Visitors got the chance to experience the important role of dancing, drumming and music in Native American Culture and also got to witness tribal dance and drumming competitions.



Photo Credit: Imani Feagin

“When we are dancing, we touch the ground with each beat,” said Standingdeer. “We’re matching that beat. We become one in the dance and that is the sacredness that people don’t seem to understand and don’t really think about.”

Aside from the musical aspects of the Pow-Wow Festival, guests get the opportunity to learn traditional and ancient skills such as open fire cooking, pottery, flintknapping (the shaping of a flint stone to produce stone tools or to produce stones for building walls and flushwork decoration), and bow making.

There was also an area where people were seen exploring and crawling in and out of tipis in order to get the feel of what it may have been like to live in one. In addition, throughout the festival in the park, many small market-like booths were set up where Native American and Native American inspired artists and craftsmen have their products for sale and even demonstrate the skills and steps that it took to make their products.

The Native American Festival and Pow-Wow is an amazing experience not only for those who are of native culture but also for those who want to know more about the culture and want to participate in something spectacular. It is one of the few ways that native people come together at large and celebrate their heritage.

Doctor Sleep is now in Theaters

Logan Landers

Contributing Writer

After 39 years of waiting, fans of the horror classic *The Shining* have finally gotten another great addition to the franchise. After being promoted since September of 2018, *Doctor Sleep* had a lot of questions to be answered and had the daunting task of following such an iconic film.

In *The Shining*, Jack Torrance and his wife, Wendy, and son, Danny, stays at the Overlook Hotel. After a while, Jack becomes deranged and starts to lose his sanity. Meanwhile, Danny begins to see supernatural beings. A worker tells Danny at the hotel that he has a gift called the shine which allows him to see these apparitions.

Director Mike Flanagan, who has an impressive track record of good content such as the hit Netflix series *The Haunting of Hill House*, is at his peak during this film. Flanagan and his team did a great job with the gorgeous cinematography and an eerie soundtrack throughout the film that left viewers on the edge of their seats throughout.

Taking place in 2019, the film centers around a grown-up

Danny Torrance who is dealing with traumatization from his childhood. Becoming an alcoholic like his father, he drinks to suppress his powers. Eventually, he receives help, and his powers come back stronger than ever. Alongside Danny is a girl named Abra Stone who is also capable of having powers and who is the main target for the villains in the film.



Courtesy of *The Shining*

The antagonist of the film is a group known as *The True Knot*. They are on a hunt to find anybody who has the shining powers and take them away by any means necessary. Like a majority of Stephen King film adaptations, *Doctor Sleep* is a psychological masterpiece. For those who enjoy a thought-provoking film that leaves the viewer exiting the theater with dozens of questions, this film is just right.

After its release on Nov. 8, the box office sales for the film have been a slight disappointment despite the film being a great film to watch. The main reason for the low box office numbers is due to the lack of promotion for the film. Many critics and fans of the film say that they just so happened to stumble across the trailer and became interested. With film franchises such as *Avengers* and *Fast and Furious* constantly promoting their movies, *Doctor Sleep* was rarely seen across many platforms.

This film adds to the already vast amount of solid films to come from a Stephen King book adaptation, which plays out excellent on the big screen. After overcoming a shallow attempt at marketing and being in the same universe as one of the most iconic films of all time in *The Shining*, *Doctor Sleep* still is an excellent movie for any psychological horror fans.

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All letters must be signed and include a phone number and mailing address for verification purposes. Letters should not exceed 350 words and should be submitted by 5 p.m. the Friday prior to publication. Editors reserve the right to edit for style, content and length.

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Budget Crisis Rocks UWG

Brittany Shivers

Contributing Writer

UWG students lined the walls of the Campus Center Ballroom and held protest signs on Nov. 11, during an open forum meeting regarding the university's current budget crisis and proposed faculty cuts of first and second-year hires via non-renewal letters.

The open meeting came shortly after a closed meeting of the Faculty Senate on Friday, Nov. 8. UWG interim President Dr. Micheal Crafton and interim Provost David Jenks issued apologies for the "confusion" and "miscommunication" surrounding the budget crisis at both meetings.

"In the future, I pledge all my efforts in being as clear and transparent as possible, and I promise I will do better," said Crafton. The university is pointing to a decline in enrollment of approximately 500 undergraduate first-year freshmen this academic year as the reasoning behind the budget cuts and the issuing of non-renewal letters to an undisclosed number of faculty.

"There has to be a focus on enrollment and enrollment strategy in order to turn this picture around," said Tracy Cook, Executive Vice Chancellor for Fiscal Affairs at the University System of Georgia (USG). USG receives \$2.6 billion in state funding and those funds are allocated across 26 institutions to support the teaching mission at each institution.

UWG is one of those institutions and received 32.27% of its funding from state appropriations totaling \$67.4 million for the fiscal year 2020. The second-largest portion of the institution's budget comes from tuition totaling \$64.3 million. The overall budget for the fiscal year 2020 totals \$208 million. So where is all this money going? Many students may ask why the institution is putting up new signs and building new buildings when the jobs of professors are hanging in the balance, but Cook says it is because there are "distinct sources of funding that cannot be commingled."

One of the major concerns for students going into the meeting was that the non-renewal letters meant their professors were getting cut. Crafton clarified that a non-renewal letter is not a termination but a precaution stating that a teaching contract for the next academic year was not guaranteed. Despite these statements, some professors felt that the specific wording of the letter did indicate a guaranteed termination.

According to the American Association of University Professors Leader, Matt Franks, the non-renewal letters that were given to professors, read as follows: "As the authorized representative of Interim President J. Michael Crafton and pursuant to the policies of the Board of Regents, I am writing to advise you that no new employment contract will be offered to you for the 2020-21 academic year. The 2019-2020 academic year will, therefore, be a terminal one. I wish you personal and professional success in the future.

Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs" Other professors felt that there was not clear communication before the non-renewal letters were given. "It was done abruptly. Our deans and our chairs were not properly notified, so we did not see this coming," said Robyn Hicks, Mass Communications assistant professor.

"We were told that we were in a hiring freeze which means that no new people are coming on, no new lines are being created, but we thought if you were here, you were safe. That is not obviously the case." Some UWG students feel that there already is not enough staff to cover certain departments and that cutting staff is not going to help future enrollment numbers. "I already know that the Art department is understaffed," said student protestor and UWG junior, Alanna LeBlanc. "They can't expect more students to want to enroll here if the school's not even offering programs that they need."

This concern is especially real in the Mass Communications Public Relations department, where two of the three PR professors, assistant professors Kelly Williams and Taylor Bryant, received letters of non-renewal. "Our students are already constantly seeking overrides into our courses," said Williams. "Without Professor Bryant and I to help the course load, Dr. Cole, though she is an amazing mentor and talented professional and professor, will be overworked trying to cover one of the largest concentrations." Other students fear that the faculty cuts will have an even more drastic impact.

"A lot of professors are here on a work visa, so if they lose their job, they are going to get deported, and that's already an issue we have out here is people getting deported for no good reason," said student protestor and UWG freshman, Justice Lee. One of the things that will be impacted most by faculty cuts is diversity, according to Hicks.

There is currently a diverse faculty at UWG and also a diverse student body, and by cutting faculty diversity, underrepresented student groups may not choose to attend UWG, furthering the enrollment issue. The biggest frustration amongst professors is that there has not been much tact or communication throughout this entire budget-cutting process. Hicks does not understand why she, as a second-year hire, did not receive a non-renewal letter but her colleagues did.

"We're asking for transparency in the process and that has not been given," said Hicks. "We're also asking for a shared governance of how these decisions get made, and we're not really sure as to what the criteria was in making these decisions to begin with." Crafton said there is a pledge for future meetings regarding budget and faculty cuts but "no plan."



Photo Credit: Brittany Shivers

An International Perspective on the First Moon Landing

Allison Lee

Contributing Writer

There was a panel discussion held on the events surrounding the first moon landing in 1969 by speakers Dr. Elaine MacKinnon, Emily Hunt, Dr. Larry Rivers, and Larry Stevens on Nov. 4 in the Humanities Building at UWG. Discussion was centered around the Soviet Union's influence on space travel, African-American views at the time, music about the moon and the counterculture that formed with the youth during 1969.

"In 1974, the Soviets canceled efforts to land a man on the moon," said MacKinnon. "Why did the cosmonauts not land on the moon?"

She went on to explain that the Soviet Union did not have an equivalent to NASA and was not as organized as America in its efforts. The Soviets sent several animals into space and achieved the first human spacewalks, but chose to leave the moon alone. MacKinnon concluded her speech by pointing out that the Soviets still made many contributions to space exploration even though they did not land a person on the moon. "We see more parallels to the West African sensibility of the moon," said Rivers.

Rivers talked about the moon and what African Americans thought about the moon landing during 1969. He said that many African Americans were poor at the time and thought that the U.S. could spend money on fixing that issue instead of the moon missions. Rivers made it a point to talk about the first African American woman to work with NASA, Katherine Johnson. She helped to see Neal Armstrong and his crew home from the moon mission which showed just how instrumental African American influence could be to space exploration.



"The moon, the sun, the stars, and astronomical charts project a sense of hope and continue to remind us how influential space was to artists at the time," said Hunt.

She spoke about how music affected people during 1969 and how it expressed their emotions about space travel. Many songs, such as Space Oddity by David Bowie, talk about the thrill of traveling to other places and how it would be in space.

She presented segments from a few other songs to show their impact and to give everyone a feel of the sound of that era. Hunt wanted to drive home that people were afraid for the human race at that time and caught up in the problems of our world which is why they were looking for a way out to find more hope for earth. "This is the kind of environment that a counterculture, as it were, would flourish," said Stevens.

Stevens gave his speech about the University of West Georgia in 1969 and how they felt about the events going on in the world. This counterculture that he talked about presented itself when UWG hired on more forward-thinking individuals

to its staff. However, he stated that it was a rather small presence at UWG. Stevens mainly just wanted to cover the other parts of what was going on in 1969, such as the Vietnam War. He wanted to explain how chaotic it was before the moon landings and afterward.

After the panelists had finished with their speeches, they took questions from the audience. Some people asked about professors at UWG and talked about how they lived through some of these events. Others asked about why the

Soviets did not apply their knowledge to landing someone on the moon. When looking at the moon landing in 1969 and the events surrounding it, many conclusions can be made about the mindset of the people at the time. All in all, they were looking for a better future because the events that were happening on earth were not quite what they had hoped for.

Hollywood's Biggest Stars Collide for The Morning Show

Emily Conklin

News Editor

Apple TV released its newest show, *The Morning Show*, that encompasses an array of touchy subjects, such as the #MeToo and #whatnow movements and an insight as to what it is like to be a morning show host on one of the most popular television networks in America. The first three episodes were dropped on Nov. 1 and the other seven will be released one by one each week. The show stars include Jennifer Anniston, Reese Witherspoon and Steve Carell.

The first few scenes of *The Morning Show* exhibit the pain and suffering that the main character Alex Levy has to go through. Alex, who is played by Jennifer Anniston, has to give a difficult speech to the viewers of the show. She announced that her partner Mitch Kessler, who is played by Steve Carell, had been fired for sexual misconduct. Levy was an amazing actor as she was truly almost brought to tears as she was saying these horrible things about her co-host of 15 years.

The emotions and the amount of thought that the producers of this new show put into this particular scene truly captured the pain that Levy was feeling. This scene alone pulled enough on the heartstrings to make one want to shed a tear or two for those who were involved.

The Morning Show also sheds light on all of the issues and problems behind the scenes of the newscast. Not everything is perfect as it always seems to be when the camera is rolling. The creators of this show wanted to exemplify that there are a ton of people who are furthering their careers by simply being pretty and gaining the most followers for the show.

Reese Witherspoon, who plays Bradley Jackson experiences this first hand when she is not chosen for the

evening news for her station. Her producer tells her that the other anchor deserves it more because she is more popular with the crowd. The producers of *The Morning Show* emphasize the idea that Jackson does not get this position as she tells the truth too fiercely and the viewers do not appreciate that.

Another topic that the producers focused on and did an amazing job with was the fact that women who are put into this situation in regard to sexual harassment are not alone. Mitch Kessler was framed correctly for his actions and this is something that should be as strictly enforced in real life as it is in this television series.

Overall, the producers did a great job with this new television series for Apple TV. The focus on interesting and difficult topics to speak on nonstop while also adding in good narration and visuals is something that most producers lack in at some point in their show, but so far, the producers for *The Morning Show* are very well backed up and supported in their work.



Photo Courtesy: ABC

NEWS

The Perfect Cheesy Christmas Flick

Olivia West

Contributing Writer

Everyone has a soft spot for Christmas rom-coms, and the movie *Last Christmas* is no exception. With very lovable and familiar faces in the cast, a George Michael themed soundtrack and a predictable plot, this film has all of the ingredients for a perfect feel-good Christmas movie. Although all of the main points are there, something about the film seems to fall short on-screen.

The film is about our protagonist Kate (Emilia Clarke), who works as a retail elf in a year-round Christmas store. She spends most of her spare time drinking at a bar, having random hook-ups, and ignoring her family's calls. Kate has the true Scrooge spirit during the holiday season, which is a big contrast to her love interest, Tom (Henry Golding). Tom is an extremely optimistic guy, always encouraging Kate to start 'looking up' more in her life to see the bright side of things.

Although he's very encouraging of Kate to get better, he constantly disappears for days on end. When Tom goes on his disappearing act, Kate turns to her family, who have just as many problems as she does. Her parents constantly argue, her dad (Boris Isakovic) took up taxi driving in an attempt to get out of the house, her mom (co-writer Emma Thompson) suffocates people with her constant critiques, and her sister (Lydia

Leonard), is a successful lawyer who is unhappy. The film has a lovable cast who holds a good hand of talent, but the film falls short due to the plot and delivery. The film's big plot twist is very predictable, not leaving many viewers surprised at all.

Mostly anybody could take a wild card guess and nail the ending of this movie. The twist doesn't give the audience any sort of solid closure, the audience is left to question and wonder about what is going on.

Unlike the warm and happy feeling Christmas movies usually, give off, *Last Christmas* just left viewers confused and slightly angry at the end. Because of this, the happy-go-lucky Christmas spirit ending seems forced, like the audience is being spoon-fed the last act. The movie also tries to bring attention to more serious topics such as homelessness, Brexit, immigration and homosexuality, which feel extremely out of place at some points.

The issues are never talked about seriously, just sprinkled in at random moments in the film. There's not a serious conversation around any of the topics, so they feel out of place compared to the rest of the movie.

This doesn't mean the entire movie was awful, it still had its laughable moments, mostly because of the jokes we hear from Kate's Yugoslavic mother or her boss at the Christmas store (Michelle Yeok), who calls herself Santa. The endearing cast provides an element of lovability for the movie, making the audience hope for a great movie. Despite the cast and the laughable jokes, something about *Last Christmas* just falls flat. Although it's not the best, it will fit in well with the Hallmark movie marathons.

Zombieland Comes Back for a Double-Tap

Olivia West

Contributing Writer

Ten years after the original, *Zombieland: Double Tap* brings back the old characters the audience loved plus some new ones for this exciting sequel. The goofy humor that filled the first movie is still apparent in the sequel, although it's hard to beat the original 2009 film.

Zombieland: Double Tap opens up with all of the known characters taking refuge in the White House a decade after the first movie was released. The crew has managed to stay safe this entire time, now living in their zombie-proof mansion and doing whatever they please. Although everything seems perfectly fine for our favorite zombie killers, there are a few issues they have to try and overcome.

The goofy Columbus (Jesse Eisenberg) and sarcastic Witchitaw (Emma Stone) have been together ever since the first movie and Little Rock (Abigail Breslin) craves to leave the mansion to meet friends her own age, which is hard to do under the protection of fatherlike Tallahassee (Woody Harrelson). The girls eventually find themselves at a breaking point, leaving the mansion and trying to make it on their own without Columbus or Tallahassee, which is where the movie starts to pick up.

While the crew is having their conflict inside their zombie-free walls, problems out in *Zombieland* are starting as well. Our narrator Columbus explains to the audience about the three different types of Zombies: the Homers, which are extremely dumb and useless, the Hawkings, which are very smart and calculated, and the Ninjas, the quiet and deadly

ones. Although our characters think they have a grip on the zombies, a new one is introduced through the film.

A new type of zombie that has evolved to be stronger, faster, and harder to kill. We have to see our characters trying to maneuver their way through this brand new zombie-ridden world. The returning cast all did a great job of bringing back the same energy that the original *Zombieland* had. The cast was full of energy and excitement, the new faces even being up to par. Our fresh faces for this sequel are airhead Madison (Zoey Deutch) and the tough Elvis-loving Nevada (Rosario Dawson).

Both characters were funny in their own ways, but Madison was one of the highlights of this sequel. Madison's character is a daft blonde who made it this far in *Zombieland* by living in the freezer of a frozen yogurt store. Her goofy and brainless jokes were an audience favorite and brought back the goofy spirit of the first film. Although her character is the stereotype of the early 2000's dumb blonde, Deutch makes the character likable and hilarious, making the audience forgive the movie for the overplayed stereotype.

There was no way this sequel could compare to the 2009 cult classic. But with the bar being pretty low, *Zombieland: Double Tap* captivated the audience once again with the same characters that drew us in for the original. For a sequel that didn't necessarily have to happen, *Zombieland: Double Tap* brings returning fans a new and hilarious sequel that will be sure to knock them dead.

ENTERTAINMENT

Kanye Takes a New Spin with Jesus is King

Samuel Okodua

Contributing Writer

Kanye West is an American rapper and record-maker that has produced nine studio albums during his career, which started in 2004. Seven of his studio collections have reached platinum in the United States. Kanye's predominant career has made him a household name.

His latest project entitled *Jesus Is King*, is technically a rap album but gives off a gospel vibe. The idea of *Jesus Is King* was created because of Kanye's newfound devotion to Christianity. The lyrics on Kanye's latest album is about keeping pace with what he accomplished a year ago with *Ye*, to the extent of the ratio to quality and cringe-inducing lyrics. On the song, "Closed on Sunday" Kanye says, "You're my Chick-fil-A." This bar gives a genuine message about the drawback to popularity an undeserved irrationality.

Jesus Is King's secret weapon is one Kanye has employed before in songs like "Two Words," "Bring Me Down," and "Ultralight Beam." He can wield a harmonic chorus of voices like no one has ever done before. "Every Hour" opens the album in the middle of a performance by West's Sunday Service Choir. The next song starts off on a

slower tempo inspirational talk by Kanye followed by a string of hallelujahs.

"Everything We Need" adds Ty Dolla \$ign, who delivers inspirational lyrics about a passing night storm, bouncing silky harmonies off himself. "Water" sends voices careening around the mix like a school of fish. Kanye, who excels by adding friends with varied skillsets into exceptional teams, is uplifted by singers hitting the notes he can't.

One of Kanye's flaws on this album is that he did not rely extensively on the choir and developing *Jesus Is King* into more of a complete gospel album, at the expense of being quite as much of a typical Kanye record. Only a few tracks here even break the three-minute mark, and even then Kanye often seems to be scraping the barrel for lyric ideas.

Overall, Kanye's new spin on his music has been tasteful, to say the least. This album has not received as much attention as his past albums. With that being said, *Jesus is King* sold over 264,000 units during its first week of sales. This number is low for Kanye but is still very good.



Photo Credit: Samuel Okodua

First Year, Good Times: A Freshman's Perspective

Sam Okodua

Contributing Writer

Freshman year of college is filled with new experiences, fun times and a lot of laughter. It can also come with a lot of emotional drama and stress from all the newly found independence. Every first-year student has their take on it, but generally, a freshman's college experience is determined by what type of person they are, and by the people they surround themselves with.

Taylor Johnson is a freshman here at UWG, and at the beginning of the semester, she said that her first month of college was "Alright, but I was homesick a lot." Johnson's emotions toward her first-month experience changed dramatically over the semester.

"After the first month, I started to meet new people and came out of my shell a little," said Johnson. "I became less homesick and really started to enjoy UWG."

The new friendships that she gained at UWG allowed her to have fun and find comfort in a new environment.

Analise Gilbert is a freshman at UWG, and she joined the sorority Alpha Xi Delta at the beginning of the semester. Gilbert believes that her sorority has been very influential and helpful these past few months.

"Alpha Xi Delta has given me so many opportunities that I didn't expect," said Gilbert. "I love all my Alpha Xi Delta girls, and we'll be sisters for life!"

For some first-year students, this first semester of college has been challenging.

"This semester was really hard for me. It was hard for me to stay focused and prioritize my schoolwork over hanging out with my friends," said James Nicholas, Freshman at UWG. Nicholas plans to do better next semester and focus on his schoolwork more while maintaining his friendships.

"I had to get a job this semester, and it was very difficult to manage my time between having my job, hanging out with friends, and doing my schoolwork," said Jordan Baldwin, Freshman at UWG.

Balancing their personal lives and their schoolwork was not the only thing some of the freshmen had issues with. "The police presence on campus was irritating," said Baldwin. "I know they are here to protect us, but it gets annoying when they keep pulling me over for meaningless tickets." Some of the freshmen believed that the police presence on campus was over the top.

"I feel like the police are against the students having a good time on and around campus," said Tehya Allen, Freshman at UWG. "Especially around homecoming, it just seemed like they were pulling people over for fun." All in all, the freshman's perspective on their first semester had some pros and some cons. They are all excited about this new and exciting chapter in their lives.

LIVING WEST

UWG considers FERPA a High Priority for its Teachers and Students

Katelynn Johnson

Contributing Writer

A professor receives a phone call from a local investigator asking if he can verify if his student was scheduled for a class on a specific day and time. The investigator explains he is involved in an investigation with this student and would like this information. Is the professor legally allowed to give this investigator information?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) that governs access to educational information and records by the public such as investigators and police officers, helps protect not only students but teachers as well. Teachers cannot give out disclosed information about students to law enforcement unless there is a warrant or court order, under the FERPA Act. FERPA protects teachers' and students' personal information.

"I think FERPA is a great federal law," said Angela Tom, a parent of a UWG student. "Once students become adults, they choose to go to college and therefore their grades are their own private information."

Teachers' and students' educational protection has always been a high priority for UWG. Once a student turns 18 or has begun a postsecondary education, all rights transfer to the student.

College professors are not allowed to give parents grades or insights on students unless written consent has been submitted or the student is claimed as a dependent. Directory Information, which is information that is considered not harmful or invasive, may be given out to parents. This includes

student participation in activities or sports, degrees, honors or awards, and the most recent school attended.

"At the collegiate level I think FERPA is a good thing," said Professor Dave Ayers of UWG. "I believe that the grades a student makes is not the business of anyone that the student does not want to share with."

Academic advisors at UWG can see students' grades for professional purposes. Advisors are professionals used to help lead students in a positive direction during their college careers. Many advisors at UWG are trained on how to handle situations that could possibly violate FERPA.

"When I was receiving my Ph.D., I was glad to have a law that protected me from releasing my grades," said Ayers. "Not that I made bad grades, but it was reassuring to know there was a policy in place supporting my decision."

UWG helps students protect their educational privacy by guaranteeing their right to inspect and review their educational records, and to be able to have control over the disclosure of those records.

UWG also would like for anyone to fill out a release from the student to obtain directory information. Many tips for teachers and students can be found on the UWG website, on FERPA, FERPA forms, and tips on what would be considered a violation of FERPA laws. "Before FERPA it was a common practice to post grades publicly," said Ayers. "UWG has done a great job at making sure teachers know these laws, and also letting students know their educational rights."

UWG Brings Forth History of Racial Inequality

Kimberly Wooten

Contributing Writer

The American Democracy Project hosted an event called 13th: The History of Racial Inequality in the United States on Nov. 7 in Bonner Lecture Hall. The event was held to raise awareness about the history of inequality in the United States. During the event, the Netflix documentary 13th was shown. The documentary showed scholars, activists and politicians analyzing the criminalization of African-Americans and the United States prison boom.

Before the movie started there was a guest speaker, Kelley Christopher, a professor in the criminology department. She started the discussion mentioning how important it is for our generation to come together for the greater good.

The real topic of discussion was brought up when Christopher brought up the ending of slavery. She went into a more in-depth historical analysis of slavery. She went on to explain the history and meaning of the Black Codes, laws governing the conduct of African Americans. Christopher went on to say that the main purpose of the code was to restrict African American freedom and compel them to work for low wages.

Christopher went on to mention the problems that make the homeless suffer. The homeless are being criminalized by just loitering. "If the homeless have no jobs and do not have a home what are they going to be doing. What do you expect from there if nobody is going to help them," said Christopher. She went on to explain how vagrancy and homelessness correlate.

Vagrancy refers to the offense of a person who has no means of support or domicile while able to work.

State laws and ordinances state that vagrancy laws cover loitering, associating with reputed criminals, prostitution and drunkenness. The punishment is a fine or months in prison.

"We are filling up jails and prisons with petty crimes. Lawmakers have claimed that these laws are necessary to preserve the public order, but it is just a way economically and politically powerful people to exert control over the lower classes," said Christopher. "The rich people are getting rich off of people going to prison."

She went on to discuss the beginning history of Mass Incarceration. The whole movement started with president Ronald Regan. Regan wanted to force family values. Then in the 1980's crack had a really impacted the African-Americans really bad. When this happened he went onto to had a bill made called the Anti-Abuse Act.

"If a person was arrested for having five grams of crack then the person would get five years in prison. This only affected African Americans as cocaine was considered the white man's drug," Christopher said.

The movie went on to explain that there are more African-Americans in prisons than there were slaves. Secondly, the movie had stated that in the Constitution that it is acceptable to hold someone as a slave only if they are a criminal.

"To house one inmate per year who is considered a minimum security threat it would cost \$20,000 per year. It would cost \$60,000 thousand to house a maximum security and death row inmate." Any questions about the program can be directed to kchristopher@my.westga.edu.

NEWS

Husband & Wife Duo take on Creative Photography

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The Carrollton Community is not shy when it comes to creativity. If you look around, you see it in the square on murals, through the people you meet at different restaurants and stores and on the UWG campus.

There is a husband and wife duo known as Indiee Fox that are succeeding at bringing their artistry and their love for photography to life and they live right in our community.

Ben McAdams and his wife Mckenzie are the minds behind the stories they capture and the two are also quite a successful team. They are professional self-taught photographers that are passionate about the people they work with.

"We never knew that our photography business would become what it has but we are so blessed to be able to own a business that is growing into something like this," said co-owner Mckenzie McAdams. "It is something we enjoy, getting to meet new people but most of all making the magic happen with a camera and nature. We are wanderers always ready for the next adventure," said Mckenzie.

They started their business out with a few people and now have reached the masses through their love for depicting real-life love stories through their lenses. "We are a professional wedding photography business and also work with senior portraits and things that hold a lot of meaning to our clients, we love being able to make people feel beautiful," said Mckenzie McAdams.

The duo has shown that they are creatively innovative and have the social media knowledge to match. Ben and

Mckenzie have an enormous following on Instagram with 33.5K people interested in using them as the authors of their love stories and or sentimental life moments.

"Ben and I really love to travel and we get to do tons of that as well as get to know our clients on a deeper level

there is something so purposeful about helping to narrate the life of two lovers or capture the send-off of a senior when they graduate," said Mckenzie. "It is evident that two people like us were bound to make magic with a camera and an eye for quality photography."

This couple is very much in love themselves which makes it simply exciting to see others in love and capture that.

"At the end of the day we want to rest in the fact that the lovers we help pose for their engagements or weddings know how important love is to us, we are obsessed with romance and all things falling for the one and this is why we do what we do," said Mckenzie.

This duo has started to push far beyond their local stratosphere and has been given the opportunity to shoot for destination weddings, as well as in states like California, Utah, and Arizona.

"The naked eye can see so much beauty in the elements around us and it is our job and passion to make sure those pictures of the mind are snapshotted so that they can be seen for years to come," said Mckenzie. "We edit all on our own and we travel to every destination because we know how important it is to be present in every moment."



Photo Credit: Nicole Kirkman