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Georgia Graduates Rethink Pharmacy **Careers Amid Opioid Crisis**

Breanna Tillie Editor-In-Chief

So far in 2025, both the University of Georgia and Kennesaw State University have received grants worth over a million dollars each to combat the opioid crisis. Nearly two months have passed since Victor North, 70, was arrested in Carrollton for operating an opioid pill mill out of his home. Authorities seized over 1,700 opioid pills during the arrest. Most recently, Publix has faced allegations of carelessly dispensing opioids and is now the subject of a lawsuit filed by Cobb County.

Amid growing public discourse about Georgia's opioid crisis, the ongoing controversy has made some recent college graduates in the state hesitant to pursue careers in the healthcare field.

"I was considering pursuing a career in the pharmacy field," said recent Georgia Highlands graduate Leland Moore, who earned a degree in Health Professions. "I'm not sure about it anymore. I've been following what's been going on with the painkillers and it's wild."

According to the Georgia Department of Public Health, the total number of opioid-involved overdose deaths in Georgia has increased from 2010 to 2022 by 302%. In fact, according to The Jason Foundation, of the 2,493 drug overdoses that occurred in Georgia in 2021, 72% were due to opioids.

pharmacy anymore," said Moore. preventive approach to medicine "I saw a documentary about some should be taken. young people who died because the without checking everything and they ended up getting hooked on the meds. The families were devastated and it

was hard to watch."

The Jason Foundation also reported that a significant number of the opioidrelated overdoses were suicides. This may be due to the helplessness and hopelessness that accompanies addiction.

"The idea of dispensing meds that might fuel someone's addiction makes me feel weird," said Moore. "I know most pharmacists are good people but I don't want to be part of the issue."

A documentary titled, Prescribing Death: Inside America's Opioid Crisis, was released on YouTube on March 20. The documentary discussed how many individuals sought painkillers for genuine relief from bodily pain, unaware that their bodies would become so dependent.

"It's insane how someone can go to the doctor for a sprained knee and end up an addict at the end of it," said Moore. "It really makes you think about judging people who struggle with that."

Shockingly, Moore also has observed how prescription drugs transform into street drugs which are easier to access, but incredibly dangerous.

"Your body develops a tolerance to those drugs," said Moore. "People want higher doses to get the same feelings back. That's why I'm rethinking the pharmacy career. I don't want to feel like a middleman."

Ultimately, Moore and many others "I don't really want to work at a are wondering if a more holistic and

"I'm really passionate about health," pharmacies kept refilling prescriptions said Moore. "Pharmacy is reactive to problems but I think an overall healthy lifestyle is the biggest and most important part of health."

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Photo courtesy of Stock Photos

Ingram Library Works to Find Balance Between Physical and Digital Resources in a World so Dependent on Technology

Abbie Klein News Editor

In the past decade, libraries have gone through a major shift with the introduction and evolution of technology into education and leisure. The University of West Georgia's Ingram Library is no exception to this. Blynne Olivieri Parker, Dean of Ingram Library, has dedicated her career to finding balance between protecting physical media and also accepting the evolution and prevalence of technology into the university's system.

"Being a library, it is really a hybrid world. It is the practice of students and sometimes easier for students to access these information resources online, and that has really been a lot of the focus is to augment those databases, those electronic journals, ebooks for students and for teaching," said Olivieri Parker. "Educational technology can be a very particular term that's used in educational settings so what I'm really advocating for is tools like AI to complement and augment the research process,

"In libraries, ever since the invention of computers we have been leveraging those tools to help facilitate student research... Leveraging whatever the tools are of the day that best help facilitate student knowledge and research is definitely my approach," continued Olivieri Parker.

Colton Campbell, Assistant Vice President for University Communications and Marketing, is also working diligently to make technology accessible and usable for all students in the community.

"[Technology] is definitely rapidly evolving and as a university we are a state entity so we kind of have to work within guardrails of technology that we want to make sure it's safe and accessible to everyone," said Campbell. "We work a lot with the American accessibility act, ADA, to make sure that people who are blind or who are deaf or hard of hearing still get to utilize our website, our social media pages, our on campus digital experiences, so they don't miss out on anything just because of their disability."

Recently, Ingram Library was questioned by a lot of students on where their priorities lie when it comes to upholding online resources over physical resources.

Both Olivieri Parker and Campbell reassure students that their intention isn't to erase physical media but to grow alongside ever evolving technical resources.

"The documents that were in that dumpster that students were going through were particular things, they were government documents," said Olivieri Parker. "We do focus on refreshing our physical collection so that we have the most relevant information resources for students.

"If we are calling out outdated items from the collection where we have a refreshed alternative content to best serve that academic area, any book in the library like that is state property. So we go through a surplusing state procedure and those books are eventually made up for sale through the state of Georgia. So what was in the dumpster was a particular type of government documents for which the protocol at the state level is to discard them," continued Olivieri Parker.

The internet has the ability to hold more information and records than a physical library can, so it is important for Ingram Library to know when to keep and when to let go of some documents that aren't the most useful for current students.

"Fortunately we have our phones and our laptops and everything where we can still save a vast majority of these materials and still be accessible for everyone," said Campbell

"Some of those [documents] that are produced by government entities they're issued every year and so we don't need to keep a 1980ish government... guide that would be so outdated when obviously that... content is still available online," said Olivieri Parker.

Other student and faculty concerns have been focused on waste that the library and other university programs are contributing to.

"That's definitely top of [my list] for our facilities and development and sustainability department and they're always looking for ways that we can reduce the waste, you know just working on a college campus there's going to be things that have to be thrown away but making the most conscientious sustainable approach to them is always top of [my list]," said Campbell.

"Whenever we're looking at

discarding a particular physical item it is actually available on a list and it is reviewed and if there is another institution in the southeast area that needs that title or wishes to have that title, maybe they're looking for a complete set or something, there is time for them to contact us and we send that item onto them, so discard is kind of that last option," said Olivieri Parker.

Olivieri Parker has a history and passion for working with archival and rare pieces and knows how important it is to maintain certain aspects of history through physical books, but also puts an emphasis on how most literature in modern publishing isn't dependent on its physical shape to get information.

"There's some things that simply can't be replicated in digital form very well," said Oliveiri Parker "I used to administer special collections that had both rare books and archival materials and while I digitized a lot of archival materials, particularly those high use things related to university history, there is something in the actual artifact of an archival item that in itself provides a bit of history. So if you're looking at a letter written between Carroll county residents in the 1920s or 30s, that handwritten letter itself might carry some information that gets lost when it's digitized, like the quality of the paper, or there might be an odor attached to it that helps tell a story.

"There are definitely some students that have higher comfort level with books and our... physical collections represent those academic areas that we serve on campus and we have a wonderful print browsing collection as well," continued Olivieri Parker.

Ingram Library is constantly evolving and restructuring to keep up with our changing world. Its main focus is keeping their resources best suited for students, faculty and community.

"It's always looking for those new and evolving technologies and who we can leverage to help UWG," said Campbell. "The items that are here want it to be useful, usable and most importantly used."



Feature

Justyne Lobello Works to Create a Powerful and Meaningful Legacy for Her Son With Help From the Minecraft Community

Abbie Klein News Editor

Justyne Lobello Works to Create a Powerful and Meaningful Legacy for Her Son With Help From the Minecraft Community.

On November 22, 2023 Justyne Lobello's world was turned upside d own when her son, Kevin, was diagnosed with Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG), a rare and fatal form of pediatric cancer.

"[DIPG] is a long string of words that is the name of the tumor my son had. It basically means that it's both contained and not contained," said Lobello. "It's very specifically in the pawns of the brain stem which is the bulbous part at the top of the brain stem, and there is no cure.

The condition is always fatal and the two year survival are is less than 10%. Kevin lived sixteen months and one day after diagnosis, and it was a very difficult journey for our family." continued Lobello.

Kevin was born in Macon, Ga in 2015 and was a completely normal kid before his diagnosis just eight years later.

"He was incredibly smart, it was almost scary... he was also just really empathetic and caring, he loves animals," said Lobello. "Whenever I would get upset I would try to hide somewhere so he didn't see me but he would come and say 'Mommy everything's gonna be alright' and he was like 2 years old."

"He was always a character; everything he did was eccentric," continued Lobello.

Since Kevin's passing on March 12, Lobello has made it her mission to build a powerful legacy around her son and bring awareness to DIPG in hopes of someday finding a cure.

"I think that if you do something innovative for DIPG other cancers will be a lot easier to cure as well," said Lobello.

DIPG is a form of pediatric brain cancer that affects children between the ages of 5-11. DIPG accounts for 10-15% of all pediatric brain tumors and is always fatal. Due to its location in the brain, DIPG tumors are inoperable and difficult to treat.

By the time treatments like chemotherapy reach this part of the brain blood and spinal fluid filters out too much of the medication to effectively shrink tumors. While there is still research that has been done to figure out ways to help treat DIPG, the research is mostly targeted towards prolonging life and focusing on quality of life rather than treating the cancer.

"You can't operate on DIPG... here in America they are too concerned

about damage so they don't typically do biopsies," said Lobello.

"The other thing about DIPG that is very difficult when you're trying to figure out what could've happened is that it is random," continued Lobello. "There are no current genetic or viable factors that could've caused it, it seems to be very random.. So it can really happen to any child."

In the world we live in, medical tests like MRIs are not part of a normal doctor's check up, so it is rare that a brain tumor can be caught in the early stages. When a type of cancer like DIPG has no known causes it becomes even scarier.

"He never was sick," said Lobello.
"He was always a very healthy child, very smart and it happened to him."

Lobello described that the summer before her son's diagnosis his personality and demeanor seemed off, but there were no other alarming signs that could point towards cancer besides irregular movement in his left eye that Lobello hoped could be fixed by an optometrist.

"I just noticed that he was more, I guess muted in his personality," said Lobello. "He was always a very active child... he just started to get more tired more often... around August when he started school we noticed his left eye started to move to the center of his face and that was the most obvious symptom."

As time went on Kevin's symptoms worsened and around Thanksgiving Kevin had received the diagnosis that every parent dreads.

"[Kevin's Dad] called me when I was in the car with my family and told me that he was taking Kevin to the hospital, he [looked] like he's had a stroke on his right side, and we got the diagnosis the next day," said Lobello.

Doctor's advised Lobello and her ex-husband to take Kevin home to enjoy the holidays before starting treatment after Thanksgiving.

"He went to radiation, we put him on an immunotherapy drug with a combination of chemo after that," said Lobello. "He got reradiated November of 2024... and that kept him alive till March."

Eventually, the treatment plan stopped working and the chemotherapy began to make Kevin extremely sick, so the tough decision was made to stop his treatment to maintain his quality of life.

Less than two weeks before Kevin's passing, the opportunity arose for Kevin to see A Minecraft Movie in an early screening. As a rampant Minecraft fan, Kevin's family was worried he would pass before the movie's release in April. One of Lobello's friends who has worked as a snake wrangler on TV show and movie sets made a post on Crew Stories, a social media page full of behind the scenes film crew, to see if there could be a way to let Kevin see the movie early.

"She made it her mission to get somebody's attention," said Lobello.

Within 12 hours the Director of the film, Jared Hess was on the phone with Lobello making it happen. Kevin got to see the movie on March 1 with Sebastian Hansen, who plays Henry in the film, and spoke to Jack Black and Jason Momoa, the stars of the film over video chat before and after his private screening.

"There is no better thing you could've done for a child at the stage he was at with his diagnosis than bring him hope," said Lobello.

Kevin was also showered with Minecraft merch and toys from companies like Mojang Studios, Lego and Mattel, but the support didn't end there. On March 4, Lobello posted a video on Instagram showcasing Kevin's experience seeing A Minecraft Movie and it immediately went viral. The Minecraft community along with the internet in general showed an outpouring amount of love and support for Kevin and his family.

"I just said 'I am forever grateful #minecraft' that was it, I didn't make a lot of hashtags there was no catalyst for it going viral except for a few of the right people found it and started commenting," said Lobello.

Lobello shared stories that highlighted Kevin's joy in experience with the cast of A Minecraft Movie as well as what it meant for him to have this send off.

"That first call he had with Jack [Black] and Jason [Momoa], and they were just talking about breakfast food and Jack [Black] mentioned something about a breakfast burrito, and he was like 'yeah my dad like breakfast burritos' and then they started talking about this scene in the movie... and he was laughing so gutturally that he could barely breathe and his laugh was always really infectious," said Lobello.

The traction and support that was gathered from Lobello's viral post has helped drive her to create a meaningful legacy to help raise awareness for DIPG. She created a website, forkevin. org, that shares information about (Continued on Page 3)

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Breanna Tillie

Editor-in-Chief

Abbie Klein
News Editor

Kenady Graves

Cindy Martinez
Feature Editor

Kailie Bridges

Copy Editor

Webmaster

Maria Mendes
Social Media Manager

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John Sewell, Ph.D.

Advisor

Brandon DyerGraphic Designer

Justyne Lobello Works to Create a Powerful and Meaningful Legacy for Her Son With Help From the Minecraft Community (Contd.)

Abbie Klein News Editor

Kevin's story along with information and resources on DIPG support and research.

"The biggest issue with DIPG or any rare disease is that people don't talk about it because it's rare," said Lobello. "There's not a lot of funding for it because it's rare, in medicine you always want to tackle the things that are affecting the most people, it's just standard practice. Since 1962 all pediatric cancers had at least a 46% survival rate of 5 years or more, except for DIPG."

In the website Lobello highlights what awareness means for DIPG. Some of that includes bringing in donations to research and free marketing so nonprofits can spend their funding towards research instead of marketing.

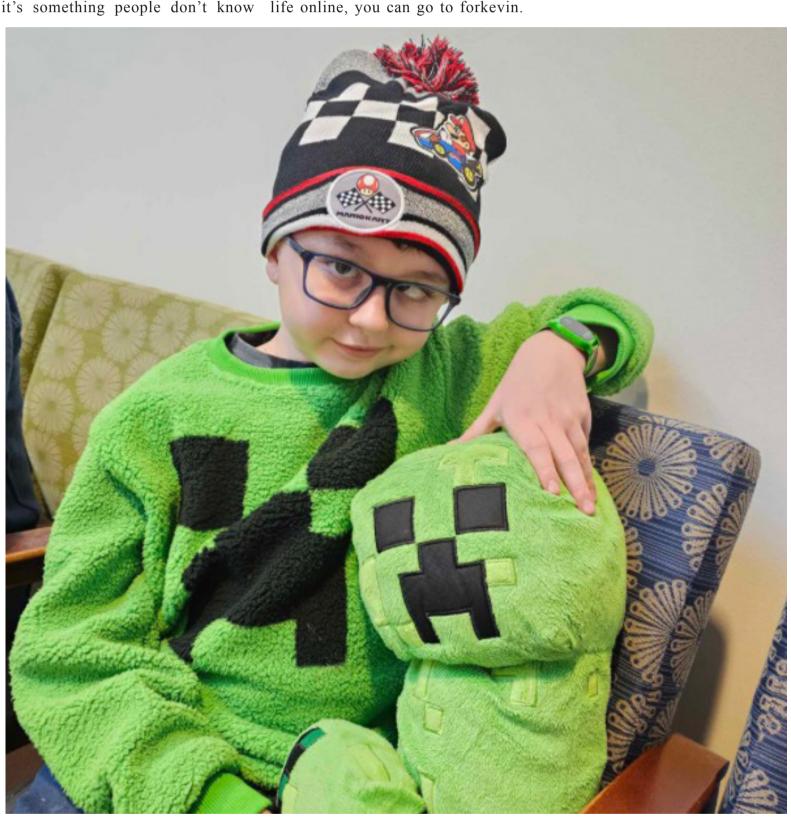
"A lot of people think awareness is a dirty word but it's not when it's something people don't know about," said Lobello. "What needs to happen is there needs to be awareness of the disease because even though it's rare it is literally random, it can happen to any child at any time and the symptoms you look out for are minute until they're not."

Lobello hopes that people will join Kevin's celebration of life which will be live streamed on April 12. Lobello is in the process of trying to get Minecraft streamers to stream at the event to highlight Kevin's love for the game. Whether one likes Minecraft or not, everyone is encouraged to tune in to not only celebrate Kevin but to raise funds and awareness for all children who are currently suffering or have suffered DIPG.

"I would love for as many people as possible to join the celebration of life online, you can go to forkevin. org and sign up for free," said Lobello. "The more people that go on there, they're gonna want to sign up for the newsletter, I can update them on DIPG awareness and research and anything that is raised is going to ChadTough."

With the power of the internet, global communities like Minecraft can work now to create legacies and form legends that last long after someone is gone.

"That whole community just really cares about their players and I just had no idea that this would happen, I'm really glad it did because now I can know that my son, even though he's gone, he's still making such an impact and that means a lot to me as his mother because it's like he's not gone," said Lobello. "His presence will be felt forever."





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Arts and **Entertainment**

Technology Meets Humanity: Electric State, Where Humans and Robots Coexist

Arrianah Jones Contributing Writer

The 2025 film, Electric State, transports audience into a futuristic society where bilocation and robots are a reality. In this world, bots are created to serve people, taking on everyday tasks like mail delivery, working as store clerks, and even cutting hair. But when the bots grow tired of the roles they've been assigned to, they rebel, and a war breaks out between the bots and humans.

Directed by the Russo brothers—famous for their work on Marvel's Captain America and Avengers films—this movie combines intricate an plot, comedic relief, and cutting-edge special effects that create a thrilling and immersive experience. The film not only entertains, but leaves a lasting impression on its audience, and offers a unique outlook on the rise of Artificial Intelligence.

The film has a well-known cast, featuring actors like, Anthony Mackie, Caesar Flickerman, Ke Huy Quan, along with Stanley Tucci and Giancarlo Esposito, who portray the antagonists. Lead actors Millie Bobby Brown—best known for playing Eleven in Stranger Things—and Chris Pratt best known for playing Peter Ouill in the MCU starred as Michelle, troubled teen, and Keats, an artifact smuggler. Their well-known roles brought a unique dynamic to the film, enhancing the depth of their characters, and making their journeys both engaging and impactful.

The movie did have a bit of a complex plot, but at just over two hours, the writers executed it effectively. It is difficult to pack a lot of information into a film without losing the audience, yet this story kept the audience engaged.

Michelle and her brother Christopher—played Norman—were Woody involved in a tragic car accident that killed both their parents. At the hospital, Michelle was told that Christopher had died, when in actuality, he was kidnapped by a facility called Sentre. Ethan Slate (Tucci) intended to use Christopher's brain power his Neurocaster, system that makes bilocation possible, Christopher is one of the smartest individuals on the planet.

Michelle doesn't uncover this information until years later, when Christopher shows up at her foster



Photo courtesy of Netflix

dad's house as a robot, claiming to be him. This revelation shakes Michelle to her core—sending her on a journey that forces her to confront the truths about the past.

There are a lot of moving parts to this plot, but every piece of information was delivered just when the audience began asking questions, and by the end, everything fell into place.

In addition to keeping the audience in the loop throughout the film, there was an effective of comedy. The use well-timed, humor was offering moments of relief without diverting from the scene's intensity, which created a well-balanced, and enjoyable viewing experience.

An example of this humor occurs early in the film when Michelle and Keats first meet. Michelle had followed Keats into his lair, which used to be a mine, but hadn't realized she'd been trailed by the "Butcher of Schenectady" The (Esposito). group, including robots Herm (Mackie), and Christopher had to escape and planned

to take a minecart.

When they reach the cart. the audience watches Keats shuffle through nearly ten different keys on his keychain to find the right one. This moment is both funny and relatable, as many people can identify with the frustration of carrying a variety of keys for different reasons, making the scene all the more endearing and grounded.

Michelle, Herm. and Christopher are seen yelling, and scolding Keats until he finally unlocks the cart and jumps in with the rest of them. However, by the time the cart started moving, the Butcher of Schenectady had caught up, and blasted them out of the cart with a laser gun. The sequence blends tension with comedic timing, keeping the audience both on edge and laughing.

The reported budget for the movie was \$320 million, making it one of the most expensive films ever made. This is evident in the robots and combat scenes, feature highly detailed animations.

where the bots

as walking, were intricately designed to resemble real machinery, while their facial expressions mimicked that of humans. For instance, one robot adjusted his glasses (which were actually embedded into his metal). while another shed tears.

The combat scenes were equally as detailed; set in a futuristic society, most of the weapons were just as advanced as the world. included These laser and stun guns designed specifically to target bots. The special effects team did an excellent job of making these weapons appear both believable and real, utilizing color, sound, and design to enhance their authenticity.

Overall, the movie excelled in every aspect, with talented actors, a complex yet engaging plot, effective comedic relief, and top-tier special effects. It delivered an experience that brought both tears of laughter and sadness, ultimately leaving you feeling inspired. With the oncoming rise of AI, this film is a must-see and arguably deserves an A

Their movements, such

Netflix's Adolescence is Provocative, Innovative, Spellbinding

Logan Bradd Contributing Writer

Adolescence, the four-part UK psychological crime thriller, is currently the most trending TV show on Netflix—and for good reasons. The genre defying show is about a 13-year-old boy who has been convicted of killing a teenage girl of the same age. Adolescence has gotten a ton of attention worldwide for its study on the dangers of toxic masculinity on adolescent boys. It has been shown in certain schools in the UK and there have even been calls by the creators of the show to air it in the British Parliament. Adolescence is innovative for its cinematography, its acting and its message.

The first thing viewers of Adolescence will notice is the way that each episode is shot in one take. There is a reason why hardly any shows or movies are filmed this way. Simply put, it's an incredibly hard thing to do. The one-take aspect of this show makes it to where you only see what's going on in the present from a first-person perspective. This is to say that

you, the viewer, are essentially in the room with the characters.

There are multiple subtexts, details and emotions that could only be capably portrayed through this one-take style of filming. It makes the psychological area of the show so unbelievably invigorating because the viewer can understand what the character thinks about a situation after they step out of the room, or during a break in the action—parts that are usually elided in more conventionally filmed shows. The one-take filming is as an asset.

The acting is equally impressive. Take the lead character, Jamie Miller, played by Owen Cooper. Cooper does an excellent job portraying Jamie as a boy who has anger issues, is obsessed with being liked and has an unhealthy power dynamic with his therapist.

The most important part of the show is the way it provokes thoughts about the effects of toxic masculinity on adolescent males. Through the

school scene in the second episode, the therapist scene in the third, and the interplay with Jamie's family in the fourth, we get myriad reasons why Jamie is the way he is: His middle school is not a very good one. His peers are bad influences. He is overly concerned with being popular. We see time and time again how Jamie is obsessed with his father's attention, or lack thereof.

The main area of focus, however, is influence on the manosphere online. Perhaps there is too much focus on the influence of the manosphere, even.

Jamie's environment, while not perfect, is relatively normal for a child in the present day. While "normal" doesn't mean good, it does mean that Jamie is definitely an anomaly in the fact that he killed someone. The power dynamic and the messed-up nature of his brain doesn't quite align with his environment. But saying that his participation in the manosphere is the sole



Photo courtesy of **Netflix**

cause for his antisocial behavior might be giving the manosphere a little bit too much credit.

The manosphere is definitely a toxic area that can indeed yield a huge net negative for young boys. And that's something that absolutely needs to be addressed. But the implication that a child with a mostly decent upbringing can become a murderer just from diving way deep into that sort of online discussion is a perhaps a stretch—or,

at best, so unbelievably rare and that it shouldn't become a realistic fear for parents.

So, although the message of the show might be somewhat overly alarmist, Adolescence is nonetheless a triumph. For the one-take format and the incredible acting, this provocative show deserves huge applause.

Live-Action Snow White Criticized for Production Quality and **Character Changes**

Kailie Bridges Copy Editor

Snow White (2025), released on March 21, is the live action film starring Rachel Zegler, who plays a princess that is set to free her kingdom from the Evil Queen. With the help of seven dwarves and a charming thief, they protect her on the journey.

Audiences were heavily disappointed by the release of Snow White (2025) due to its poor production quality, controversial casting, and negative publicity surrounding the lead actress. Fans argue that the main stars fail to embody the personality of the characters on-screen and the acting is subpar. After actor Peter Dinklage's negative remarks on Disney's original choice to cast real dwarves--referring to it as them going "f-ing backwards"--Disney decided to CGI animate them leaving mixed

reactions from fans. Critics also argue that this film misses what the original

Snow White captured in its 1937 animation release, such as Snow White's characterization. In the original, Snow White is portrayed as a youthful girl who's best known for her kindness and purity. In contrast, the reboot, Snow White represents a more powerful, independent trope that drops the helplessness she once had. Her backstory is also rewritten for the reboot, explaining that she earned her name after surviving a traumatic snowstorm. A troubling aspect about her character in the reboot is that she underwent little character development. From the introduction, she has established confidence within herself, so by the end of the film where she had to confront the Evil Queen, her heroic confidence wasn't impactful because that bravery isn't new to

The costume and set design are lackluster as well, with outfits



looking like costumes love interest, Jonaand scenes monochrothan. matic. Segments of The son of the prothe film had choppy editing due to the film being shot twice and re-edited with Zegler's accent being

inconsistent. The

bandits provide little

to no purpose, and the

film did not take a lot

of time to develop the

connection between

Snow White and her

ducer made a post on Twitter exclaiming the film's poor reception was because of Zegler's comments about her take on Prince Charming. Her take on Prince Charming suggested he was a stalker and that Snow White was too independent for him.

Photo Courtesy of Disney

Zegler projects a bold personality onto Snow White throughout the interview which goes against how Snow White was written originally. With how groundbreaking Snow White (1937) was for being the first animated, it is unfortunate the reboot was done so poorly.