NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEG

WHITE PINE PRESS

We hew to the line; let the chips fall where they may.

Home Nurse Benefits From Futures for Frontliners

Micah Mabey
With the COVID-19 pandemic still in full swing, we're seeing a lot of help going out to frontline workers: the nurses, grocery store workers, food workers—the list goes on. They all deserve the praise, too. They're putting

their lives on the line so that we don't have to.

One of these assistance programs started April 29, 2020. Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced a state scholarship program for essential workers called "Futures for Frontliners." The program allows essential workers who worked during the Spring 2020 COVID-19 shutdown (April 1–June 30, 2020) to attend community colleges tuition free. To qualify, applicants were required to have worked at least part-time for 11 of those 13 weeks and have filed an application by Dec. 31, 2020.

The inspiration for this program was derived from a similar World War ll program that supported returning soldiers with educational opportunities. Futures for Frontliners will also help Whitmer's "Sixty by 30" initiative (sixtyby30.org). This is a state-wide goal she set back in February 2019 to increase the number of working-age adults who have a skill certificate or college degree from 45% to 60% by 2030 in order to increase economic growth and make the state's workforce more appealing.



Barry, seen here in the Watershed Science class, is working toward a degree in Freshwater Studies.

While Northwestern Michigan College has seen a 15.2% drop in enrollment this spring semester, this is the first semester the scholarship has been utilized. There are a total of 470 Frontliners currently enrolled in the scholarship program; 180 of these students weren't taking classes last semester.

One of these applications came from Falechia Barry, a home health aid in Grand Traverse County. Through the Futures for Frontliners program, she's now a Freshwater Studies major.

"It's not easy being a home health aide," she said. It's Barry's job to work with her clients—administering medication, bathing them, and helping to transfer patients from beds to wheelchairs, grocery shopping, cooking—basically acting as an extra set of hands and feet. She notes the low pay and added work from the intense COVID procedures as additional burdens she must carry right now, along with the general stress over the pandemic. "I am not afraid of



Falechia Barry, home healthcare worker, on the day she was accepted into NMC is a Futures for Frontliners scholarship recipient.

COVID affecting me but I'm scared of bringing it to my weak loved ones since I am the only person in and out of their place."

Despite the extra struggles she has faced as a frontline worker, Barry keeps an eye toward the future. "I had already started taking classes by the time Frontliners came along," Barry explained. "My first semester I had taken four classes and just about lost my mind. I didn't realize how much of me it was gonna take before getting into it."

Barry dropped out of high school at age 14 and later completed her GED in 2018. These first few semesters have been tough as she tries to discover the balance of work, personal life, and being a new college student with loads on your plate every day after class. "It's a lot of just going until you pass out," she laughed.

When Barry's laptop broke in the middle of finals week last semester, it was the support from her Frontliners money that helped her get a new one so that she could finish up the classes that she'd been working so hard on. "Getting used to computers has been extremely hard," she said. With all of the programs that she has to learn for her specific major, as well as the NMC homepage and student websites, it's easy to see how someone new to it could get lost. But Barry is barreling through, and rediscovering herself through it all.

"I'm able to know how much money I have, and I can know how much I have coming in," Barry explained. It makes things—like needing to run out and buy a new laptop on the fly—a bit less of a complete panic. "I have this money from Frontliners that will help me,' I think." However, Barry notes that the scholarship funds cannot be used to cover the additional fees for those "out of district" like herself, a restriction that feels to her "a little unfair."

Without any previous higher education, Barry wasn't sure what exactly she should expect with getting back into the scholastic system. Life filled with four classes and two jobs didn't feel healthy. "I was working two jobs, but with Frontliners and [a] Pell Grant, I was able to drop down to one job."

Now, settling in, Barry is looking to the future. With only two classes, and enough coming in with help from NMC and the Futures for Frontliners program, she finally feels like she can breathe again.





Duet, a sculpture created by Suttons Bay artist Robert Purvis, was installed at the entrance of the Parsons-Stulen building in 2001. The sculpture's imagery combines the internal forms of helicopter blades and wings of flight. It symbolizes the work of John T. Parsons and Frank L. Stulen in developing the first numerical control (NC) system, the precursor to modern computer numerical control (CNC) systems. Pictured here is a model of the final sculpture.

NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE

WHITE PINE PR

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Biden Unveils Higher Education Plans

Kathryn DePauw
The inauguration of President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., on Jan. 20 carried with it many possibilities for the future of NMC and its students. The Department of Education announced on his first day in office that students would have another nine months of reprieve from student loan payments. They did so at the request of President Biden, and it will provide financial relief as the country still struggles with the COVID pandemic. Borrowers will not have payments due until the order expires on Sept. 30.

While the days under the Biden administration are still few, he has proposed many policies that could impact community college students if implemented.

During his campaign, Biden promoted a slew of higher education policies. Improving the outcomes and making it more affordable were his main priorities. According to his campaign page, "earning a degree or other credential after high school is unaffordable today. For others, their education saddles them with so much debt it prevents them from buying a home or saving for retirement, or their parents or grandparents take on some of the financial burden." He adopted a proposal during his campaign, initially pushed by Senator Bernie Sanders, to make public colleges and universities tuition-free for those earning below \$125,000. He also stated the intention to double Pell grant amounts, reduce student loan payments, and create a program that forgives the student loans of public servants.

Even during the campaign his website had fully fleshed plans, with a large focus on community colleges. Biden's website states that, "Part of what makes community colleges so extraordinary is that, working with limited resources, they have figured out how to provide a high-quality, cost-effective education to students often juggling additional responsibilities, such as jobs or childcare." Many of the proposed policies look beyond providing funding and attempt to address these major roadblocks for low-income students of all ages.

One of the more ambitious policies proposed is a debt-free two-year community college education. The federal government would cover 75% of the cost, with the state providing 25%. Then-candidate Biden also proposed providing grants to these colleges to improve support systems like advising and job placement resources, opening up financial resources students receive so that they can use them for expenses beyond courses and books, and also suggested financial incentives to the states to provide more "wrap-around" support services. These services would address outside hurdles students often face and could include things like transportation, childcare, mental health services, or tutoring.

Biden's focus on education, and particular attention to community colleges, may be driven in part by his wife, Dr. Jill Biden. She has a doctoral degree in Education and has been a community college professor for 25 years—and plans to continue teaching English at Northern Virginia Community College while serving as First Lady.

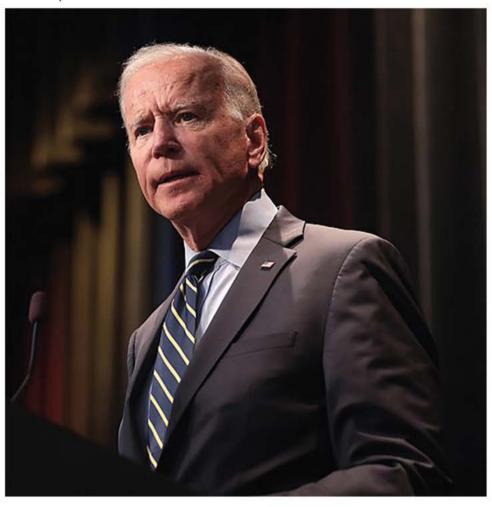
President Biden also has a long history with addressing sexual assault and Title IX protections for students, important issues on campuses around the country. He wrote the 1990 Violence Against Women Act and led the Obama administration's "It's On Us" campaign, the grassroots movement to address sexual assault on campuses, where he visited colleges promoting awareness and advocating for prevention strategies. This program focused on getting all students, with a special focus on young men, involved in addressing sexual assault.

Biden has previously vowed to reverse the Title IX policies put in place by former Education Secretary Betsy Devos. These policies limited what constituted as "sexual harassment," which sexual assault cases institutions needed to investigate, and required a live hearing where the involved parties could question and cross-examine each other. Reversing these policies could take years.

With a global pandemic and domestic tensions, it is unclear when, if, or how any of his proposed policies would be implemented. In the near future, there may be more support for less expensive community colleges, which could play an important part in the economic recovery.

Student loan forgiveness, which has become a more mainstream idea in the past year, could also impact the financial futures of many borrowers throughout the country. Back in November 2020, Biden stated, "They're having to make choices between paying their student loans and paying their rent...It should be done immediately."

With an equally split Senate, it is likely that Republicans will still have some influence over any higher education policies Democrats put forward. But with the administration setting it as a high priority, changes are likely coming to both students and education institutions around the country.



Safe Harbor Helps During Pandemic

Randi Upton
Staff Writer
Staff Writer
Staff Writer
People are still self-isolating and trying to live as safely as possible at home. However, our most vulnerable population—the homeless—don't have the ability to hunker down in a safe and warm home. Their option is to go to a shelter, where social distancing ranges from difficult to impossible.

Safe Harbor is a shelter here in Traverse City that gives a bed for up to 80 people a night, offering a warm shelter from evening until morning when the weather is coldest. Breakfast typically is served at Central United Methodist, but due to COVID restrictions, breakfast is served at Safe Harbor instead. Tents have been put up outside of the shelter so that more people can get warm while still social distancing.

Guests staying at the shelter sleep on mattresses with plastic sheets, with curtains around them to limit exposure. Everyone wears a mask unless sleeping, and has their temperature taken before entering the shelter. Any guests with symptoms of COVID are isolated in a room that used to be an office until other lodging is found for them. No one with COVID symptoms is allowed to spend the night at the shelter.

In addition to the homeless population being especially vulnerable to a disease that is taking away some of the minimal comfort they once had in the shelter, the virus also affects the Safe Harbor's volunteers. Most of the volunteers are elderly and have underlying conditions themselves; many of them retirees wanting to give back to the community. Safe Harbor usually runs on a skeleton crew as it is, and now volunteers have dropped significantly.

With the increased challenge in caring for the homeless community and volunteers not able to step up as they have before in the past, Safe Harbor continues to struggle. Even with the opening of extra tents outside and a few spaces being made available to people during the day, many of the amenities once offered by local churches and services are not available. This search for safety and resources throughout the day subjects the homeless community to the cold weather and chance of exposure to the virus.

Safe Harbor is running a day shelter in the extra tents outside from Monday through Friday, 8:15am to noon. This still leaves a large window open from when guests can check into the shelter at night. Mike McDonald, chair of Safe Harbor, has stated that while they do not have the resources to run a day shelter on their own, the combined efforts of the local community has made those few hours of relief available in the morning. Only 28 people are able to eat at a time, rotating out through the tents as needed.

To anyone interested in donating or volunteering, go to gtsafeharbor.org.

Nissley Pushes Through Difficult First Year

Emily Slater The honeymoon phase lasted exactly 73 days.

Staff Writer Dr. Nick Nissley became NMC? Dr. Nick Nissley became NMC's newest president on Jan. 1, 2020, and immediately got to work integrating himself into the college and broader Grand Traverse community. His first few weeks saw more than 100 events that ranged from board meetings to student art receptions, community open houses to NMC trivia night at the local pub. His Facebook page was filled with these moments, along with pictures of local hiking spots he explored on the weekends and the TC foodie scene he was getting to know.

"It was the truest sense of a honeymoon. I was new to the college and I got to be wide-eyed and take it all in," Nissley told the White Pine Press.

On March 13, 2020, only 73 days after he started the job, Nissley went from wide-eyed newcomer to president of a college navigating a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic. The school moved classes online and closed campus. A self-proclaimed possibilitarian and servant-leader, Nissley placed great importance on getting to know and understand the school and students he had taken on. He encouraged students to stop and introduce themselves if they saw him on campus. But suddenly there were no opportunities for spur-of-the-moment student introductions, no chance of rubbing elbows with faculty or community members while grabbing coffee. That disappeared nearly overnight.

So, barely two months into a new job in a new state, Nissley did what most people had to do last March—he pivoted. "We could barely see a hundred yards in front of us," he said, referring to the uncertainty that accompanied the virus and subsequent shutdowns last spring. The college needed to focus on short-term goals that could become stepping stones to NMC's long-term sustainability.

A top priority of student and campus safety made way for a fall semester that, while looking different than in past years, saw only 18 COVID-positive cases from campus exposure. No fulltime faculty were laid off and students saw no price increase in tuition, which Nissley credits to NMC's Board of Trustees. And in a time of great economic uncertainty, the NMC Foundation saw its second highest number of gifts in its history-more than 1,300 gifts were received between April and June of last year.

"That's when everyone was experiencing the greatest pain and what did our community do? They came out and supported our students more than ever," Nissley commented, explaining what a morale boost that moment was for him. "I'm getting fueled by the community that is so incredibly kind, generous, supportive. And if I wake up every morning and I have stories like that, of how the community is supporting our students, that gets me waking up every day.'

And though he is unlikely to bump into many students on campus this year, that doesn't mean his level of NMC community interaction has lessened any. "I'm probably doing more engagement now with the students than I did before [the pandemic], but it's via Zoom," said Nissley. He regularly visits with classes online or in person, if the situation allows.

He keeps a note taped to his computer, on it written, "Push through it. One step a visit he made to Kristen in Nov. 2020. Salathiel's EDU100 course at

President Nick Nissley, right, presented at a time. Take action." It's a Manufacturing program student Richard Cluff motivating reminder from with his award as NMC Apprentice of the Year

the end of 2020. Students presented their final projects in which they laid out their blueprints for succeeding in college, and in them Nissley was struck by the ripple effect they might have. "This is a plan!" Nissley commented, referring to the notes he took during the class and later stuck to his computer. "These are profound lessons! It's not what we're going to do after the pandemic, this is what students are doing right now to get through this."

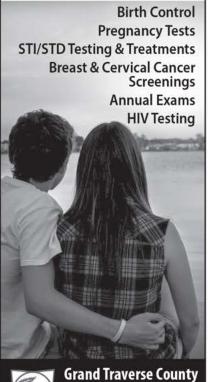
"Our students have grit and resilience like no students I have ever met," Nissley said. "I think this generation of students is going to be looked back upon because I think this generation of students is going to do some of the most amazing stuff that we've ever seen in our life. Because they have weathered one of the biggest storms of any generation."

While Nissley is insistent that NMC not wait until the "post-pandemic" timeline to take action, he still eagerly looks toward the future. "I'm looking forward to getting through this so we can see what these students are going to be doing."



President Nick Nissley, right, visited Traverse City start-up Promethient last summer. Engineering Technology graduate Jordan Colvin, center, shows how NMC can serve as a talent agency for the regional entrepreneurial ecosphere.

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TC Film Fest Hosts "Christmas Surprise"

Chelsea Cooper During the last week of 2020, the Traverse City Film Festival (TCFF) announced that they had a Christmas surprise. After being canceled earlier in the year due to the pandemic, the film fest, as it is locally known, will join the many other events and festivals around the world that have gone virtual.

The "Virtual State," described by TCFF founder and president Michael Moore as a virtual cinema, is "something new and something fresh." Movies he personally curated have the same level of consideration as the in-person festival, the very best of first-run American independent and foreign films—fiction and nonfiction alike. Films that Moore deems good enough for the festival are "always entertaining and occasionally challenging. Just like we've done it for 16 years."

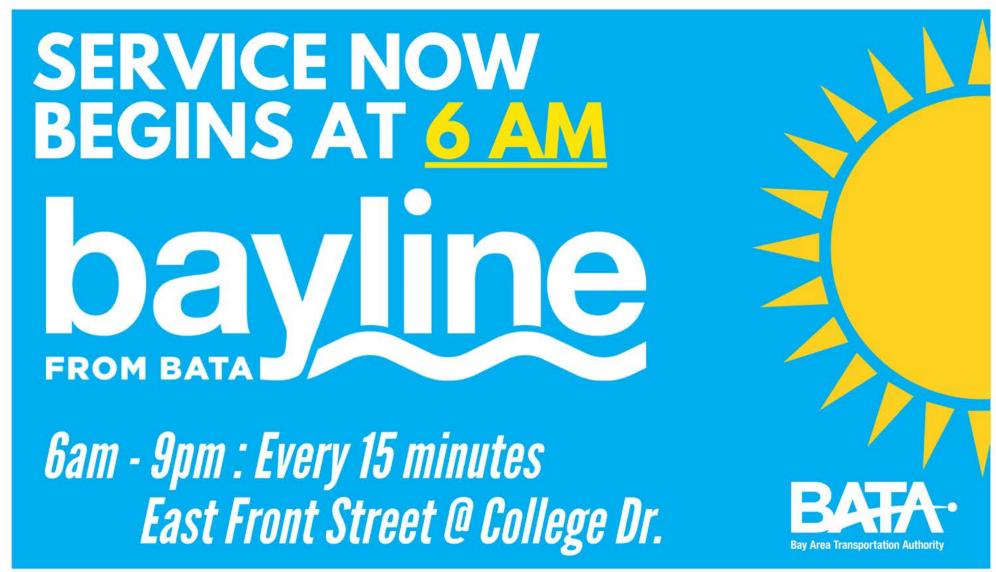
This virtual film festival is a culmination of months of planning and ingenuity, partnering with other film houses around the country to create a way to reduce streaming costs while also raising funds for the festival and its filmmakers. Every Friday, the Virtual State will offer three or more new movies with insightful descriptions written by Moore, with added opinions and takeaways. This will coincide with online discussions Moore would like to host to keep the magic and the connection of the film festival alive. The TCFF Facebook page will also announce when discussions will be held with selected filmmakers, an added bonus of the Virtual State

that Moore hopes will give us a chance to feel like we're still watching these movies together.

We are all familiar with streaming movies and television into our homes, especially this past year with Governor Whitmer's Stay Home and Stay Safe order. The Virtual State is determined to keep the process simple, stating, "it's a state-of-the-art streaming process that's so easy, you probably don't need instructions."

There are two things that are important to know when getting ready to stream your first movie. First, you will need a new member code to get your first movie at a 50% discount rate. You can find this code on your initial visit to the Virtual State home page. Second, you'll be asked to create a new account the first time you rent a movie on the streaming site. These requirements apply even if you're already a State & Bijou Member or Friend of the TCFF. If you require assistance, there are step-by-step pictures included and there is also a helpline telephone number to call or text that will be answered by a graduate of Traverse City Central High.

Finding "Just Great Movies" is the TCFF motto this year, and it has worked hard to bring us a pandemic-proof way to still enjoy one of Traverse City's favorite events. To browse this week's selection, visit state.athomearts.org. In the words of Michael Moore, "one great movie can change you!"



Mindfulness Exercise for Stressful Times

Hannah Krohn Staff Writer Feeling anxious? Reducing anxiety through exercise is all about doing the opposite of what your body would do in a fight or flight situation. Start by sitting or lying down. First, spread your fingers as far apart as possible while resting your arms on your legs or beside you. At the same time curl your toes, put your tongue between your teeth, and turn your head to the side any amount you wish. Keep your eyes open or closed, whichever feels better for you. In this position, take four deep breaths while thinking about what you are grateful for.

Tips to make the exercise more effective:

- It is best to do this exercise multiple times during the day, not just when you are anxious.
- When you take a deep breath do it in and out through your nose.
- I found if you do the exercise multiple times with the same song playing in the background, you will probably feel calm and happy whenever you hear that song.
- I find doing the exercise twice, once with your head turned each direction, works well.

Book Review: "Bridge to Terabithia"

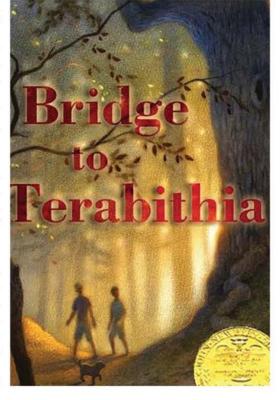
Randi Upton
Staff Writer
Throughout my whole life, everyone has talked about how sad this book (and movie) is. Sitting alone in quarantine, I decided to get a copy of it and read it. I don't know how I managed to get through my 34 years never reading it, and having no idea what it was about, but needing some good old sadness in my life. The book is decades old, but a warning: spoilers ahead.

The main character, Jess, is poorly treated by his family, to the point that it almost

seemed comical. His teenage sisters do whatever they want, spending money their parents don't have, while Jess struggles every day to keep the farm running. Jess is in the fifth grade, so he is roughly ten and holding the household together.

He makes friends with the new neighbor, Leslie, who beat him in a race at school. Both lonely children, they create a whole fantasyland in the woods behind their house called Terabithia. They make themselves king and queen in an effort to have control over at least one aspect of their life. Childhood stuff happens, but the ending is so incredibly sad.

One day while Jess goes on a trip with a teacher, Leslie goes to Terabithia alone. Leslie dies in a horrible drowning accident, and Jess comes home from a fun-filled trip to find the devastating news. I did not cry at this part, no. I didn't cry when his distant, and even mean, family is suddenly supportive, besides his



annoying teen sisters who I would have been fine with leaving the story at any time. His father is as supportive in Jess's mourning as anyone could be. His mother made sure he was eating.

I didn't cry when the funeral happened, as Jess struggles to realize that Leslie was gone and not coming back. The ending was a real punch in the gut: Jess takes his little sister, May Belle, to Terabithia, building a bridge across the creek that Leslie drowned in. At the very end of the story, Jess names the young girl the new Queen of Terabithia, and tells her that all the subjects are coming to greet her.

And that was the end. At this point I was sobbing, for Leslie's memory lived on in Terabithia. In a world of struggle and suffering, where we all may not know what happens next, hopefully we all find our own Terabithia and be able to live in child-like wonder.

What the Tech?!

Misinformation. Disinformation. What is Real?

Lisa Balbach With all the information at our fingertips these days, how can you tell what is real and what is fake? How do you know if the information you are reading is correct and truthful? How can you avoid falling victim to disinformation campaigns? How can you avoid spreading disinformation yourself?

Misinformation and disinformation are similar because both include incorrect information; however, their intent is different. Misinformation is an honest mistake. Occasionally, I will read a retraction in a paper that corrects misinformation in a previous issue. The paper is trying to correct an honest mistake and they are owning up to it.

Disinformation is the deliberate spread of lies to a target audience. I see a lot of this on social media. When people believe and share disinformation on social media, it perpetuates the problem. Pretty soon, more and more people believe the disinformation is real because they have read it in many different places.

We have all heard about fake news, but we have not heard much about what to do about it. How do we combat disinformation campaigns? Our best defense is to become critical readers and critical thinkers.

Here are a few things you can do to discern what is real from what is either fake or sensationalized:

- 1. Look at the source of the posting. Is the source reputable? Have they been in business a long time? Have you heard of them before?
- 2. Read articles and see if the headlines reflect the content of the article. If the headline does not accurately reflect the content, then you need to ask yourself: why? If the headline is deceptive, do you believe the article is credible?
- 3. Look for social media disclaimers. Ask yourself, do I really want to take time to read this when there are issues with the information being presented?
- 4. Think about how the post makes you feel. If an article makes you angry or upset, you should double check the accuracy of the information in it.

If we do not buy into disinformation, it cannot propagate and spread. The key is to think before we share so we become part of the solution instead of part of the problem.



TV Review: "Bridgerton"

Ann Hosler Netflix's new "Bridgerton" historical romance series has captured the worlds' heart with its diverse and expansive cast of characters, exquisite ballrooms, carriages, fancy dresses, and even glimpses of Queen Charlotte. Oh, and sex. A lot of sex. (It's tastefully done, but if you have an aversion to seeing sex scenes, this isn't the show for you.)

As of early January, an estimated 63 million viewers have watched "Bridgerton," ranking it as the fifth most popular original release on Netflix. The first season of the show is based off of the first book in Julia's Quinn's "Bridgerton" series titled "The Duke and I," which originally released in 2000 and hit #1 on the *New York Times* Bestseller list, 21 years after its initial publication, on Jan. 17.

The fake-relationship-turned-real-love story of Daphne Bridgerton (Phoebe Dynevor) and the Duke of Hastings, Simon Basset (Regé-Jean Page), takes the viewer on a roller-coaster ride through the trappings of 1800s England high society, from arranged marriages to propriety to duels to the importance of one's lineage.

I read Quinn's "The Duke and I" (quickly followed by the remainder of the series) back in 2015, and re-read the first "Bridgerton" book the week before the show launched to refresh my memory. Having followed show updates on social media throughout 2020, I was aware that the material would not be completely faithful to the book, that there would be modern tweaks and a diversity infused into high society that simply didn't exist in England two centuries ago.

The show absolutely delivered, especially with the diversity: Queen Charlotte is played by Black actress Golda Rosheuvel (historians contend that the queen was mixed race), which allowed the showrunners to work in how the Black community obtained high standings in their fictional English society. The dresses have modern flair, and even some of the classical songs in ballroom scenes are actually modern songs reimagined into classical ballroom dance music.

For me, changes like this are fine in the transition between a book and TV—as long as we're getting the core plot and it's entertaining, then the creators did their job well. Not all reader fans of the series felt the same. I saw comments from fans who refused to watch "Bridgerton" simply because one or more characters didn't look as they envisioned they should, as well as fans who watched and vociferously complained about every little deviation from the book's plot.

Two subplots were introduced in the TV show that don't appear at all in the

book: one subplot involving an illicit romance between Daphne's eldest brother, Anthony, and an opera singer, and a subplot involving a major secret that the Featheringtons' (neighbors of the Bridgertons) cousin, Marina Thompson, is harboring. Anthony's subplot seemed to be more filler and made him act out-of-character compared to his characterization in the books, whereas Marina's subplot was a clever way to introduce characters and a story that will involve one of the later Bridgerton sibling romances. These additions did something essential for TV viewers: they provided a much more engaging story experience compared to what the result would have been had the show been 100% faithful to the book (because who actually wants to watch Simon and Daphne ignoring each other for two months?).

Most importantly was the core plot of Simon and Daphne's relationship. They begin as strangers, who become friends that concoct a fake courtship to ease both their circumstances in society: Daphne starts getting attention from better suitors and Simon has less women pawing over him. Simon doesn't want marriage and children, while Daphne wants it all. They're quite happy helping one another until something new and unexpected gets in the way: love. The pair struggle through the trials of a real and unexpected relationship with each other. All the riches in England (which I imagine Simon has a lot of, his houses—yes, plural—are ridiculously huge) doesn't make the journey any easier for Simon and Daphne.

Accompanying each episode are narrations from a gossip writer, known only as Lady Whistledown, voiced by Julie Andrews (who does not appear on screen). Whistledown keeps tabs on everything in high society and has no fear of dragging someone through the mud (or, occasionally, praising them). Her rumors propel some of the plot and even become an obsession of Queen Charlotte. Unlike the book series, which doesn't reveal Whistledown's identity in "The Duke and I," viewers get the satisfaction of discovering who she really is during

the final episode of season one.

In the end, despite all the glitz and glamour and sex and rumors and fighting, historical romance is known for its theme of love overcoming the odds, resulting in a happily-ever-after. The characters discover who they are and who they want to be, and for each other, they become the best versions of themselves. It's a theme that is echoed in the real world, in our dreams and desires for our own happily-ever-afters. It's a theme of hope that we all desperately need right now.



Yes, We're Open!

Craig Hadley Yes, the Dennos Museum is open. While the pandemic has Dennos Museum Center changed our regular hours of operation, we're still here for you, Sunday through Thursday, 11am–4pm.

And we're free for all NMC students.

Do you need a quiet place to study with wireless internet access? Or maybe a break from classes or work? It might surprise you, but your NMC student ID gets you a LOT of perks, including FREE admission to the museum and a discount at the museum store.

So, the next time you find yourself on campus, I hope you'll consider stopping by. Our friendly staff is here to answer questions, provide advice for aspiring arts and nonprofit professionals, and can offer volunteer and internship opportunities if you're looking.

On behalf of the entire Dennos team, we hope to see you at your campus museum soon!





Animal Groups

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