



The Sundial

Issue 3 | Fall 2023

Cost of Living
LA's Problem

CSU
Fees Rise

Hollywood
on Strike
SAG-AFTRA
CSUN Impact

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Cover photo by Rodrigo Hernandez

Letter from the Editor



Dear Sundial readers,

This third issue of the Sundial's magazine has stories related to the current state of the economy. It is a topic some students know everything about and some students know nothing about. All you hear nowadays are how there are no jobs available, the current wages people are making are not nearly enough to get by, and basic necessities are just too expensive. Bills are piling up and debt is drowning people. With people going on strike every day, losing their jobs or being evicted, it is hard to think about life after college and if it is possible to be successful. It is important to stay up to date on key events that are happening around us so we understand our economy.

I believe covering these stories will help us prepare for what is to come. As a soon-to-be college graduate, my biggest fear is not being able to find a job with my degree and falling into crippling debt. Learning the history of the economy's fluctuation and the impact on the population is helpful to navigate current events. It is good to see you are not alone in your fears and people who experienced similar problems persevered.

The following stories address the recently approved momentous tuition hike, ongoing strikes, and on-campus programs offering assistance. The stories highlight our community's perspectives amidst the increasing price of living and lack of jobs. CSUN offers services to students to alleviate economic stress so we can focus on our studies.

I hope these stories help you understand our economy, make you feel connected to others around you, and offer a sense of comfort knowing you are not alone in your worries.

The Sundial

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2003

Roommates settle in new apartment

By CELINE RAMILLON
Roommates who moved into her apartment in May...

Who finds herself sharing her room with more than 50 former roommates of the apartment, including her...

chose, leaving major damage to the top-floor units and attic in the east tower portion of the complex...

Trustees raise tuition by 30 percent

By NIKKI SWINK
The California State University Board of Trustees voted July 16 to raise tuition for all California State University students by 30 percent...

ness Michael Hale spoke to the Board and called for all students and faculty to strike in protest to the increase...

Skills, hands down



Gabriel Marjo, member of the Capoeira Club, showcases a handstand at freshman orientation last week...

2014

Best of CSUN 2014. You voted, now read the results. WHO MADE THE GRADE WITH THE CSUN COMMUNITY? LOOK INSIDE. DAILY SUNDIAL. CSU STUDENT FEES UNSUCCESSFUL. Students from various schools in the California State University system rally against proposed student success fees...

The CSU Board of Trustees approved 30% tuition increase to accommodate \$345 million in state budget cuts. Tuition was \$1,572 and rose to \$2,046.

"It's us, the students, regular people who end up paying for it"

Oriel Maria Siu
Associated Students Vice President, 2003

Students' protested potential fee increases at the CSU Chancellor's Office in Long Beach. Campuses were approved to increase their student success fees, prompting student retaliation.

"To be in agreement with these fees is to lack creativity..."

Edgar Ramos
CSUN Student

STUDENT AID INCREASES IN CALIFORNIA

The amount of students applying for financial aid has risen both statewide and at CSUN according to recent data

Illustration of a hand holding a stack of money labeled 'FINANCIAL AID'. Silhouettes of students with their arms raised in the background. Text: ARACELI CASTILLO AND TEXAS...

2014

Financial aid applications from CSU freshman peaked after a six-year-long 74% increase.

"There are just more students who need aid, more people applying to college, and more students taking advantage"

Armenka Khashmanyan
Assistant Director of Financial Aid, CSUN

Waging War

Incomes are Rising, So Why is it Harder Than Ever To Live in Los Angeles?

WRITTEN BY EDWARD SEGAL
INFOGRAPHIC BY EDWARD SEGAL

Five-dollar coffee, \$6-a-gallon gas and \$300-a-month groceries have become the norm for many Angelenos over the years. While the price of these necessities of life continues to grow, people's wages only slightly increase, forcing many residents to work multiple jobs to afford living expenses.

The cost of living in Los Angeles is 49.1% higher than the national average, according to CNBC, which factored in housing, utilities, groceries, transportation, health care and miscellaneous goods or services. It found that only five cities are more expensive to live in than LA, two of which are in California. Orange County is 50.3% above the national average, and San Francisco is 69.9% above it.

The cost of living in LA rose 3.2% in 2023, mainly because of the high cost of food, housing and transportation. Back in October 2020, it dipped below 1% before skyrocketing 8.6% in July 2022, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In December, LA tied Hong Kong for the fourth-most expensive city in the world to live in, according to Spectrum News.

The average rent for a one-bedroom apartment here is \$2,296 per month, which equates to \$27,552 per year, just over half the median income in LA.

One of the main reasons housing costs have increased is the shortage

of housing itself. According to Scott Weiner, a California Democrat on the Senate Housing Committee, California's population grew from 15 to 40 million over the last few decades, while housing production dropped by two-thirds.

"We basically stopped building housing about 50 years ago, and while there have been periods where we built more housing, it has generally been declining," Weiner told KTLA5.

The cost of living in Los Angeles has increased, but wages have not risen to accommodate the growth.

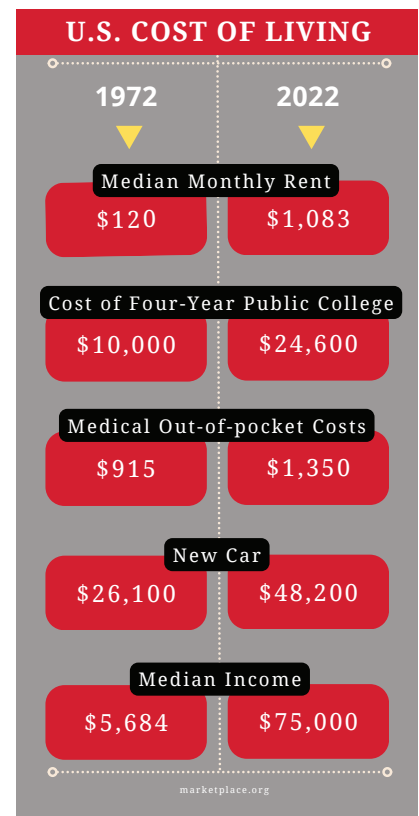
According to Financial Planner LA, the median income in LA is just under \$50,000 per year. That is \$25,000 less than what it takes to be able to afford more than just the necessities. The minimum wage in LA County is \$15.50 per hour as of July 1, 2023. The LA Almanac reports that rent for a one-bedroom apartment in LA County would take up two-thirds of the income of a person making minimum wage.

In 2014, the minimum wage was only \$9 per hour. It steadily increased since, reaching its current amount of \$15.50 per hour.

The November 2024 ballot will feature an initiative to increase the minimum wage across California to \$18 per hour. If the initiative passes, the minimum wage would reach the target amount by 2026.

Ruben Martin Johnson Garcia, a creative artistic director who has experienced homelessness, believes it's not too late to make LA a cheaper city to live in.

"We're at a turning point," Johnson Garcia said at the Skid Row Museum Exhibit. "We can either build million-dollar condos, or we can build affordable housing."



Affordable Eating

Freshly Prepped Meals on a Budget

Affordable
Recipes

Page 16

WRITTEN BY GABE DUARTE
PHOTOGRAPHED BY EDWARD SEGAL

If you ask a student on campus about what they eat on a daily basis, they might joke and say that they survive on Cup Noodles.

For a number of students, there is some truth to that. According to a Health Affairs survey, 30% of college students faced food insecurities. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 30% of college students faced food insecurities, showing that it is a real issue college students face. There are, however, options both on and off campus to help relieve this issue.

One resource students can utilize is the Food Pantry, located in Laurel Hall, right next to Sagebrush Hall on Plummer Street. Students in need can visit once a week and go home with a bag of groceries at no cost. In the bag of groceries, students typically receive canned goods, pasta noodles, pre-packaged chicken, and an assortment of other items.

Grocery prices have gone up considerably in the last couple of years. According to the Economic Research Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the annual food price increase was about 2%, but during 2021-22 it skyrocketed to 11%.

With how expensive groceries have become, students have to become more cost-conscious and creative, but it is still possible to cook tasty meals—even on a budget.

Not all groceries have to be expensive, nor do they have to all come from the same predictable stores. Local farmers markets are an excellent source of fresh produce for an affordable price. They offer locally-grown fruits and vegetables for lower prices than average chain supermarkets. On campus, the CSUN Farmers Market is every Tuesday from

10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on East University Drive and Cleary Walk East, just west of the University Student Union. Off campus, the Northridge Farmers Market happens every Wednesday night from 5-9 p.m. at the Northridge Fashion Center Mall.

Another place to get affordable groceries is Trader Joe's. Trader Joe's is a staple of Los Angeles grocery stores with low prices on many pre-packaged meals that don't require too much cooking. They also have a selection of frozen meals, including chicken fried rice, burrito bowls and their famous orange chicken, all under \$5.

Budgeting is also a useful tool for saving money while grocery shopping. Overspending can be avoided by going into a grocery store with a plan for getting what you need under a budget of how much you can spend.

Meal prepping is a great way to use groceries efficiently. Preparing meals at the beginning of the week and storing them in reusable containers makes eating simpler. It is also an easy way to make sure meals are nutritious and delicious.

We are fortunate to live in a time when we do not have to open up a recipe book to see how to cook something. Social media, especially TikTok, can show anyone how to cook thousands of recipes, ranging

from simple to more complex ones.

With that in mind, check out the simple recipes on [page 16](#) that use ingredients you can find from any of the places mentioned, including the CSUN Food Pantry, Trader Joe's, and both of the local farmers markets.



Photographed by Julie Santiago



TAKE A HIKE

CSU Board of Trustees approves tuition increase

WRITTEN BY ASHLEY SANCHEZ

PHOTOGRAPHED BY TRISHA ANAS

The California State University Board of Trustees unanimously approved a tuition increase proposal on Sept. 13, 2023.

Students are against the proposal because it would make higher education harder to obtain. The increase in tuition will affect nearly 460,000 students attending CSU's 23 campuses, according to the Committee on Finance.

The CSU system is currently in a \$1.5 billion deficit, for which the CSU Board of Trustees was recommended various solutions to help resolve. The campuses cannot afford to operate and properly serve students in their current financial state, according to the Sustainable Model Workgroup.

"If we do not do this, we'll go through reserves and start cutting jobs and faculty and staff, cutting courses and diminishing the opportunity we have created," said trustee Jack McGrory.

If the CSU system continued with an underfunded budget, it would also need to cut funding from programs,

reduce student services, and freeze employment wages and building projects.

Tuition has remained flat and has only increased once in the last 12 years, according to the Sustainable Model Workgroup.

Steven Relyea, CSU executive vice chancellor and chief financial officer, presented the tuition increase proposal.

The accepted proposal suggested increasing tuition annually by 6%, starting fall 2024. The proposal projected that an estimated \$148 million will be generated by the 2024-25 academic year and \$49 million will be allocated to the State University Grant program, which provides financial aid support for students.

The proposal also projected \$860 million will be generated over five years and \$280 million will go to the State University Grant program.

The CSU budget prioritizes student success and faculty and



Screenshot CSU's Board of Trustees meeting in September 2023 to approve a tuition increase. Courtesy of The CSU System website.

staff conditions, according to the proposal. The importance of the accessibility of financial aid and the modernization of campuses was stressed in the operating budget plan.

In the meeting, the CSU Board of Trustees elaborated on how tuition will increase over the next five years. Tuition will increase annually at a steady rate for all students from 2024-25 to 2028-29. At the end of the academic year of 2028-29, tuition rates will stop rising at \$7,682 until the Board of Trustees takes another action.

“We know that’s going to negatively impact 100% of our students and, in fact, damage most severely our more vulnerable students, so I want to say that,” said trustee Lillian Kimbell. “I am going to vote for this tuition hike and I understand it’s going to hurt a substantial amount of students.”

Students’ point of view

Outside of the meeting, hundreds of students from different campuses were joined by the California Faculty Association chanting to be let inside. Students from the California State Student Association arrived in Long Beach for the CSU Board of Trustees meeting to speak out during the public comment section.

Several members of CSUN’s Associated Students expressed their disapproval of the tuition increase to the CSU Board of Trustees. The president of CSUN Associated Students, Paige



Top left: People protesting CSU tuition hike.
Bottom right: People protesting the increases.

Hajiloo, voiced her opposition.

“Higher education is a pathway to social mobility and increasing tuition limits access to this essential opportunity,” said Hajiloo. “Raising tuition increases burdens students with substantial debt, discouraging them from pursuing degrees or focusing them to take an overwhelming financial obligation.”

Another CSUN student perspective at the meeting was from Joshua Gallardo with Students for Quality Education.

“It is not our job to fill the budget gaps that you cause because of your mismanagement,” said Gallardo.

Take a Hike
Continued on page 17

THE HOLLYWOOD STRIKE

CSUN film students' futures amidst picketing

WRITTEN BY CLAIRE BOECK

PHOTOGRAPHED BY RODRIGO HERNANDEZ

Jan-David Soutar is an experienced actor with nearly 20 years of work. He is a screenwriting major at CSUN who expects to graduate in the spring. He is the current president of the Cinema Club, but his life hasn't just been made up of a series of highs. It is common for lesser known writers and actors like Soutar to be exploited and underpaid by film and television studios.

Over the years Soutar has experienced many obstacles. In 2013, he even experienced homelessness.

"Probably one of the lowest parts of my life, and it wasn't because I was doing anything stupid," Soutar says. "I just couldn't make money. As an actor, you go through dry spells... you're living for every single role."

The 45-year-old actor has been a member of the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) for 10 years.

SAG-AFTRA voted to strike on July 17, emboldened by the Writers Guild of America (WGA) and their recent strike, which started just weeks prior. It was the first time both unions have gone on strike at the same time since 1960.

This strike means 160,000 actors will not work until the big studios and producers agree to the union's demands. Soutar and his colleagues want higher pay, increased job stability and most importantly, adaptations for working with streaming services and protections against the world's new big baddie: artificial intelligence.

"Writers are facing the most comprehensive assault on compensation and working conditions that they have seen in a generation," the front page of WGA's strike website read during their strike. "The studios have taken advantage of the transition to streaming to underpay entertainment industry workers, including writers in every area of work."

SAG-AFTRA's website held a similar message.

"Here's the simple truth," it read. "We're up against a system where those in charge of multibillion-dollar media conglomerates are rewarded for exploiting workers."



Jan-David Soutar, CSUN Cinema Club president and SAG-AFTRA member, marches along Olive Ave in front of Warner Bros. Studios.



Jan-David Soutar talks with comedian, actress and CSUN alumna Tanjareen Thomas about a possible guest appearance for the CSUN Cinema Club.

WGA announced Sunday, Sept. 24, that they had reached a tentative agreement with Hollywood studios, with the new terms being called exceptional. Their strike officially ended Wednesday, Sept. 27. Meanwhile, the actors remain on the picket lines.

For the next few months, or even years, the future of the film industry is at stake. Writers and actors are fighting tooth and nail to preserve this line of work as a main source of income, instead of just a hobby or a side hustle. CSUN film students who want to make movies should be watching closely. Their careers depend on it.

Now, Soutar is sitting in a booth at Emlé's, a Mediterranean American restaurant within walking distance of Manzanita Hall. A half-eaten plate of eggs Benedict sits in front of him, a latte in his hands. "I worked for some really interesting places as an actor," Soutar reminisces. "I worked for the CIA. I worked for the FBI... I was a spokesperson for their in-house training videos."

If you are not a millionaire movie star or a top-bill writer, the industry is rough, especially in Los Angeles. Gigs are few and far between, competition is high, and rarely is anyone paid what they are worth.

In the days of broadcast cable, a TV show could have 20 or more episodes. This gave writers and actors guaranteed work for a longer period of time. But today, a season of a typical

show debuting on streaming services may only have six to 10 episodes. That means less time working, less time with financial security, and more time looking for the next gig.

Soutar lived out of his car with his dog for a year before managing to pull himself out with the help of his friends and move to Eagle Rock. Now that he is in school, federal grants have been keeping him afloat, but the future still feels unsteady. Todd Holmes, a professor of entertainment industry management at CSUN, says the "gig economy" that most of the industry relies upon is unsustainable and leaves many workers stressed and lacking job security. Most of them are used to picking up side jobs to pay the bills.

"The vast majority of writers and actors are almost paycheck to paycheck," Holmes says. "And you might have a great show that you're on, or get on a great film — and sure, that can sustain you for a while — but then you have to look for the next thing."

"If all your interest is chasing a gig, then you're going to wind up being a very transactional actor, which is not my vibe," he says. "Some people really care about money. Some people are really, really dedicated to money. I am way more about the art than I am the money, which is probably to my deficit."



From left, actresses Cyрина Fiallo, Jessica Marie Garcia, Victoria Moroles, and Natalie Morales group together for a photo.

Even Soutar's friend, who is a talented and notable actor, struggled for work before the strike.

"He was praying for a job overseas because he can't work in America," Soutar says, taking a sip of his latte. "Talent and name only gets you so far. You still got to pay your bills. And that's the issue that we've got right now, you've got people that were working steadily but couldn't pay their bills."

Holmes says the conditions are so bad, it is likely the industry could lose some people permanently as they transition to other, more stable work. To combat this, the unions are asking for higher wages to combat inflation and an increased minimum amount of time that workers can spend on their projects.

Residual checks are another sticking point. They're like royalties, where writers and actors receive money every time their work is aired on TV after their original release.

But if your show is not "Friends" and your movie is not "Titanic," good luck getting enough to live off. One day, Soutar received a residual check in the mail for his work on the show "The Banshee." He earned a grand total of 63 cents.

Streaming services also make it a lot more complicated. Movies and shows are not run, but can be replayed by individual viewers and subscribers at any time. Because of that, the calculations to determine how much writers and actors earn from streaming are far more confusing.

Jon Stahl, a screenwriting professor at CSUN, said major streaming services are not transparent with their numbers,

which makes it hard for writers and actors to know if they are being paid fairly. The unions are trying to negotiate simpler rules that pay writers and actors each time their work is streamed.

"The streamers are not forthcoming to the writers [and actors] in terms of how many people watch these shows," Stahl says. "So there's no way to check how many eyeballs are watching a show that's on a streamer. And therefore, the residual checks are suspect."

And what about artificial intelligence? Its looming silhouette grows in the distance with every passing day.

Soutar leans forward in the restaurant's booth. "They're trying to make actors even more of an avatar than natural acting... scanning people head to toe so that they can then use them later as background, wherever they want, without their permission."

He is talking about a real proposal that, according to their chief negotiator, Crabtree-Ireland, SAG-AFTRA received from the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP).

This outlined their desire to scan background extras, pay them for one day's worth of work, and then hold on to their digital likeness to use in all future projects, in perpetuity, without consent. AMPTP has denied these claims, saying an actor's digital likeness is only valid for the movie or project in which they're employed.

"That's gross," Soutar says. "That's absolutely gross."

Writers are also affected by AI. In a grim future, Hollywood studios may use the technology to completely generate an entire script, perhaps hiring only one or two writers after the fact to polish the machine's work. But for work the studios deem less valuable, like brainstorming ideas or writing for commercials, real humans might not be involved at all.

"No human writer will ever write the first draft again, which is the one that they usually get paid the most for," says Patti Carr, a television writing professor at CSUN. She also previously served on WGA's Board of Directors.

Stahl says unions are trying to install protections to avoid a worst-case scenario because they expect the studios to use the technology to save money, even if it results in a worse product.

"It's impossible for a machine to write something with heart. Machines don't have hearts," Stahl said. They don't feel emotions... but here's the issue — would that stop the studios from using AI generated material anyways? We think not."

It is just plain corporate greed, Soutar thinks.

"Think about it this way," he said. "If you're a company, and your goal is your bottom line, and your only loyalty is to your stockholders and there's a thing out there called ChatGPT that says it can write a script for you, you're gonna ask it to write a script, and you're not gonna bother with any writer that has a personality."

Except for AI, none of these problems are new. They have been slowly building by growing more and more threatening over the years. Writers and actors' livelihoods reached a breaking point when the unions voted to go on strike.

Studios have been holding on thanks to finished projects they already had in the pipeline, like "Oppenheimer" and "Barbie," both of which were blockbusters that generated a ton of cash — but that well is drying up. No writers and actors working means nothing to release. There's no income.

"You gotta keep putting things into the system if you wanna continue making money,"

Todd Holmes
CSUN Professor

He recently reported to CNBC his estimate that California's economy lost nearly 3 billion dollars in the first 100 days of the strike.

It has been tough to hold out for so long. Striking workers still get access to income through strike funds, which have been beefed up thanks to generous donations from big industry names like Seth MacFarlane, Steven Spielberg, and Vince Gilligan. However, they're still out of a job for the foreseeable future.

It's a war of attrition to see who can suffer the longest, the workers or the studios. And the anxiety is bleeding through to students.

Holmes holds discussions in class about the strike. He says his students often ask him, "Are there going to be any jobs when I graduate? Am I cursed?"

While WGA has reached the end of their strike, SAG-AFTRA is still fighting. But Soutar is not worried. He sees the world partaking in an incredibly rich pro-union movement. But one thing lingers in Soutar's mind: will the next generation of filmmakers be prepared to fight, just as the current generation has?

"I'm more concerned that there will be complacency in the fight for labor rights," Soutar said. "I'm always worried that they won't appreciate how hard this work was. And then when they need to do it, they won't know where to start, because the foundation has been eroded by corporate lobbyists or something."

Soutar offered parting advice to worried, anxious and concerned CSUN students who are fretting over their film futures.

"It's really, really crucial to put yourself out there with other people that are striking to form solidarity, because you never know when you're going to run into somebody," he said. "And you're like, 'Oh, wow, we met on the strike. And now you're interviewing me for this position.'"

No matter what happens, he says to not sweat it. At this age, growth is inevitable. Things will adapt and evolve, both the industry and ourselves.

"This too shall pass."



A sign held by a protester.

Cantando

WRITTEN BY OUANESSA NANA



Money Trees
Kendrick Lamar

Kendrick Lamar grew up in Compton, where he faced poverty and channeled his energy into music. His 2012 triple platinum and Grammy-nominated album "Good Kid, M.A.A.d City" featured lyrics about the pervasiveness of economic disenfranchisement. The album track "Money Trees" featuring Jay Rock explores the youthful fascination with money. "A dollar might turn to a million and we all rich," chants Lamar.



9 to 5
Dolly Parton

Country music icon Dolly Parton grew up impoverished in Tennessee. Parton sang in church and made it to the Grand Ole Opry by age 13. One of Parton's signature songs, "9 to 5," is about equal rights and pay for women in the workplace. The song and film it accompanied were named after 9to5, an American association founded in 1973 aimed to protect working women and families.



All Things Go
Nicki Minaj

Born in Trinidad and Tobago, Nicki Minaj grew up in an unstable household due to economic strife and her father's addiction. "All Things Go," the opening song of her 2014 album "The Pinkprint," explores how fame and money have affected her life and relationships. "Cherish these nights, cherish these people," says Minaj in the first verse. "Life is a movie, but there will never be a sequel."



Make it Happen
Mariah Carey

Mariah Carey grew up in New York with a mother working multiple jobs to support them. Carey sang from a young age, which eventually blossomed into her decades-long career. "Make It Happen" is the fourth song on her sophomore album "Emotions" and lyrically illustrates her perseverance. "If you believe in yourself and know what you want, you're gonna make it happen."

Matador Marquee

WRITTEN BY SASHA ALIKHANOV



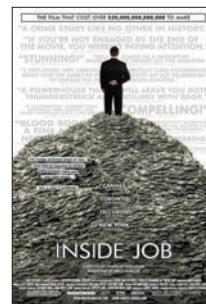
"The Dust Bowl"

is a 2012 documentary that details the consequences of the catastrophic dust storms and severe drought on the North American prairies during the 1930s. The Dust Bowl displaced farmers and laborers, leading to a larger migration to California than the 1849 gold rush. These displaced people were perhaps the most devastated of the '30s by this disaster and the simultaneous Great Depression because they lost their land, work and stability.



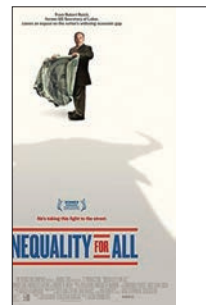
"I.O.U.S.A."

is a 2008 documentary that breaks down the root causes of the national debt. The film covers citizens spending outside of their economic means and the imbalance of imports to exports in the U.S. It offers scaling back government funding and raising taxes as solutions to reducing the debt. With a January release, the film predates the economic crisis that happened later that year.



"Inside Job"

is a 2010 documentary that retrospectively analyzes the economic crisis of 2008. The film addresses the 1980s origins of the crisis, its effects and who was accountable. Despite the impact on American citizens, the executives of insolvent companies tied to the crisis retained their wealth. The increased rate of unemployment and propping up of the upper class set the scene for significant and persistent economic issues in the country.



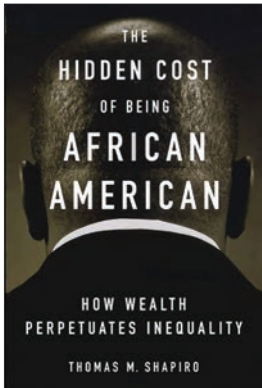
"Inequality for All"

is a 2013 documentary that examines the widening wealth gap in the U.S. The film follows the experience of former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich, with his narration of events and economic issues. Reich, through experience and statistics, makes an argument for a government that serves people of all economic classes, rather than the current status quo of inequality.

Book Club

WRITTEN BY NANCY CRUZ

Systemic poverty has and continues to dramatically impact people of color. Martha D. Escobar, a Chicana and Chicano studies professor at CSUN, understands society was intentionally designed to maintain wealth within the white upper class. Escobar received her doctorate in ethnic studies from the University of California, San Diego. She is currently serving as the executive director of Project Rebound, a program that supports the reintegration and education of formerly incarcerated individuals. “The books that I recommend are in relation to Black folks,” said Escobar. “Capitalism really developed in relation to slavery, and that’s the root.”

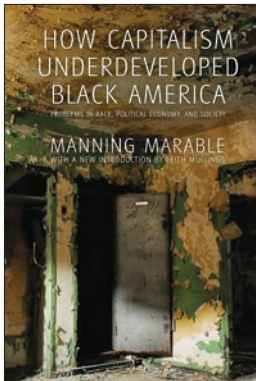


“The Hidden Cost of Being African American: How Wealth Perpetuates Inequality”

by Thomas Shapiro

“The Hidden Cost of Being African American” analyzes the long-lasting effects systematic racism has on Black families. Shapiro explains that racial discrimination perpetuates the cycle of poverty, which allows racial inequality to persist. He further explains the correlation between generational wealth that white middle-class families hold and how the lack of this keeps oppressed groups in a cycle of low economic standing.

“It really shows how wealth, the accumulation of wealth, has been structured into society and racialized,” explained Escobar. “Really showing how economic inequality, especially gaps and wages have been racialized and how society has organized itself to ensure that is the case.”

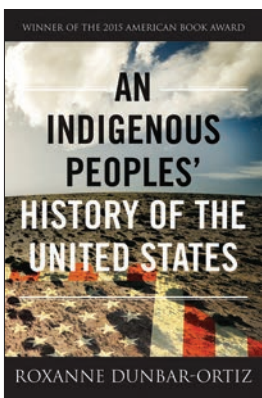


“How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America: Problems in Race, Political Economy, and Society”

by Manning Marable

“How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America” exposes the connection between capitalism and the discriminatory policies implemented to oppress Black communities in all segments of society. Marable explains that the criminal justice system was structured to racially discriminate against Black Americans leading to mass incarcerations and ultimately the lack of employment due to a criminal record. She concludes by stating that this cycle was deliberately created to ensure communities of Black Americans would not achieve real freedom.

“Looking at the relationship between capitalism and race and the way that society has structured itself,” explained Escobar. “One, in relation to anti-blackness, and two, has tied wealth to whiteness.”



“An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States”

by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

“An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States” talks about the killing and displacement of Indigenous people. Dunbar-Ortiz directly condemns the American government and claims its principles and policies were founded on the blood and stolen land of Indigenous people to ensure power and dominance.

“The book is significant because it demonstrates the role of land displacement and genocide against Indigenous people for the nation, which became racialized as white, to build itself and the wealth that white folks have today,” explained Escobar.

Escobar concluded by emphasizing the correlation between the cycle of poverty and people of color who experience it.

“It is a very violent country. It is not an accident that we have such an unequal society financially, economically,” said Escobar. “We structured it and the structure has been very violent.”

Affordable Recipes

Continued from page 7

Chili Chicken Taquitos

Ingredients

- 1 can chili beans
- 1/4 of pre-packaged chicken
- 4 mini tortillas
- 1/2 cup of cheese
- 1 quart olive oil

Recommended seasoning

- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper

Directions

1. Pour the beans into a saucepan with heat on low and stir for about 8-10 minutes
2. Put out the tortillas onto a flat surface.
3. Take out chicken and season if desired.
4. Put cheese, chicken and chili beans into mini tortillas.
5. Roll into taquitos.
6. Pour oil into another pan and fry the taquitos for 3-5 minutes until desired crispiness.



Spaghetti Bolognese

Ingredients

- 1/2 red onion
- 1/4 red bell pepper
- 1/4 of a green bell pepper
- 1/10 can tomato paste
- 3/4 pound of ground beef
- 1 can of crushed tomato
- Spaghetti noodles
- 2 teaspoons olive oil

Directions

1. Dice the red onion and bell peppers.
2. Sauté the vegetables with oil in a pan for about 2-3 minutes.

3. Add tomato paste into the pan and mix well until not chunky anymore.
4. Cook spaghetti noodles with boiling water in a large pot for 7-10 minutes.
5. Add in ground beef and cook until about 80% done.
6. Add a can of crushed tomatoes and stir until not chunky.
7. Add cooked noodles to the pan and stir.



Breakfast Parfait

Ingredients

- Greek yogurt
- (Fruit of your choice)
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup strawberries
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 cup granola

Directions

1. Grab a bowl and add yogurt.
2. Add in fruit of choice.

3. Stir yogurt and fruit.
4. Add in honey. It doesn't have to be just a tablespoon; add until the desired sweetness is reached.
5. Stir honey into yogurt.
6. Pour granola in. Again, it doesn't have to be one cup, add as much as desired.
7. Stir granola into the yogurt.
8. Enjoy!





Some students expressed skepticism of the CSU budget's application due to salary increases. Since 2020, several campus presidents and chancellors have received salary increases of almost 30%. The highest-paid president is that of California State University, San Diego, with a \$533,148 annual salary, and the lowest-paid president is that of the California State University Maritime Academy, with a \$349,746 annual salary.

“You’re acting in complete disregard to the struggling students that you should be serving”

Joshua Gallardo
CSUN Student

Students’ issues with financial issues

Nearly 60% of all enrolled undergraduates have the full cost of tuition covered by grants, scholarships or waivers, according to the Institutional Financial Aid Programs Report.

However, 38% of students graduate with an average debt of \$17,479.

During 2021-22, 38% percent of CSU bachelor’s degree recipients took out loans to help pay for college, according to an analysis of CSU bachelor’s degree recipients by the Cal State Student Association and the Institute for College Access and Success. The students who took out loans garnered an average debt of \$15,200 to \$24,000.

In terms of demographics, Black bachelor’s degree recipients are the most likely to incur debt, according to the analysis.

To cover the cost of college and other living expenses, low-income students need to work at least 20 hours a week, but working more than 15 hours a week can hinder academic ability by depleting energy to focus, according to the analysis.

The goal of the tuition increase is to bring stability to the system’s budget and help pay for academic and financial services, but it has been ridiculed by students and associations across the campuses. As tuition rises, some students feel unsure about their academic futures.

“You’re acting in complete disregard to the struggling students that you should be serving,” said Gallardo.

I did not intend to have any difficulties with my supervisor.

“Good morning, doll.”

I hate him. He’s a creep and I can hear him speaking to her, my cubicle neighbor. I hate that I can hear everything that wrongfully exists in the world, and hate that I can envision the congo-line of ants making their way to the complimentary danishes in the break room, as there is a known ant issue in the office. I need just a few, but it’s still too early. It’s best to wait until an appropriate time, like lunch.

“Morning, my angel.”

My body nearly convulses at the sound of his voice being directed at me. I look up and over my cubicle wall, my hunger strangely growing. I want nothing more than to escape.

“My name is Isis.” I retaliate and his eyebrows playfully raise at me. He’s intrigued and embarrassed, maybe. “I told you yesterday.” He chuckles at my response, walking away to breathe down the scalps and breasts of others.

He must perceive me as a “feisty-sapphire,” grouping me into his collection of other women that reside in the crevices of his ill mind. I want to remove the smug look from his face. I need to eat in the break room. Although I am able to ignore his words successfully, I am never able to get over his unpalatable appearance. The manner in which his tie hangs loose and how his button-up shirt is wrinkled irks me. And the rage that is born within burns the calories of everything I’ve inhaled the days before. I become increasingly hungry.

The sound of my blocky keys washes out the overbearing noises of water-cooler banter and other chat from nearby cubicles. Certainly, I can wait just like each day. 12:30 pm is the appropriate time to eat, even if the light overhead is reminiscent of buzzing beetles from Zanzibar, or maybe the round-bodied rhinoceros beetle that can punch its horns into the eyes of the perverted. It is impossible to continue my report, my mouse wanders to another tab yet again.

LUNCH BREAK

I scratch the side of my neck between bouts of typing just to ease the hunger-itching. My eyes shift to the clock widget in the far right corner of my computer screen: 11:43 AM. I scratch my thigh with my nails, my neck has become slightly sore from touching it too much. I can hear the congo-line of ants approaching the danishes. I can’t have my meal ruined; cross-contaminated food is the worst thing next to my supervisor.

Pushing myself out from my desk, I stand up and begin making my way toward the breakroom. I keep my eyes on the ground to avoid any wandering pairs. At last, I make it past the threshold. The blinds are covering the glass windows, just as I like them. I can’t be seen in my state of famine.

“Good, good,” I quietly mumble to myself. It appears that the ants have not touched the danishes. I turn my head to look around and check if the break room is empty. It is a personal rule, or maybe, a ritual, to not eat around any of my coworkers; it would be rude.

I bend down to the counter, holding the pink-colored box of pastries. Before I can appreciate the sight, I begin digging in. My tinted lips press onto the cool surface and begin slurping aggressively. Claw clip styles keep my curly hair from spilling into meals; it is etiquette. Each black ant, one by one, erase into my cavern. I chew a mouthful of them and slurp each and every last one until they all disappear. I feel bad of course, smacking my lips like an animal. I would have wiped down the counter, but then I would have sprayed some of the ants with cleaning solution and that terribly ruins a meal.

“Is your salary not enough for you to eat breakfast at home?” My supervisor chuckles, his voice clearly coming from behind me. Familiar chills rise up and down my spine from my position: face down on the counter and eating ants. He continues, “I can see if you can get a raise, but you would have to prove it, you know?” Of course, he is too perverted to realize I had just finished eating ants.

Written by Jaine

I have no reply, and I have swallowed all of the ants whole. My shoulders twitch and convulse violently; I am still hungry. It seems that I have miscalculated the number of ants that would be in the break room, and it seems that my supervisor's comment elicited a violent response from me. As I said, it is a rule to not eat around any of my coworkers, as it is rude.

Within seconds, I turn around and hold my supervisor by the shoulders, my nails sinking into his cheap blazer that covers his un-ironed shirt. I latch onto the side of his face and bite down viciously. I thought I could stop after one bite, but I cannot refrain. His filthy self is enough, it is exactly like a larva revealing itself from under a muddy rock. I am a rhinoceros beetle in combat, unstoppable— and oh, I gnaw his flesh off relentlessly, he cannot even release a scream.

His blood spills violently down my chin as I bite the rest of his face off. Initially starting from the jaw, I successfully ripped apart each and every muscle that held his face together. From the peeling of peach-fuzz skin to the revealing of over-ripe and rotting fruit, his face was gone. By the time I finished pushing my canines through his cheekbones, eye sockets, and other miscellaneous human facial anatomy bits, his body had fully collapsed down to my heels.

It's a different taste from bugs, human flesh that is. I wouldn't have it again, it's horrible. Of course, I now understand that eating my supervisor's face off does not make for a very trustworthy statement. One thing that I will critique about eating humans is that they are not pure, and are very messy. One can feel the wrongdoings within their blood, and I am left covered in it from my chin and down to my blouse.

"Shit, shit, shit!" My rampage and rebellion suddenly end.

I stuff his decapitated body into one of the large cabinets that hold cheap party decorations. He's

Illustration by
Kevin Silva

heavy, and a limp body makes things much more difficult. Running to the sink in the room, I wash myself down and unbutton my blouse before stuffing it underneath my pencil skirt. My tank top is not stained, luckily.

Eating bugs provides me plenty of protein and forces me to act on my feet, as being caught with a strange meal makes for awkward encounters. I reach for the roll of paper towels and wipe up the spills of blood while simultaneously spraying bleach. I open the cabinet where I stuffed my supervisor's body and douse him with bleach as well, just to subdue the rich scent of iron and overall stench. I take all of the used paper towels and cleaning bottles, which I stick down into my taut pantyhose.

Surely, there are mistakes in my track. Acting on impulse left me with no choice but to eat him. I repeat this to myself as I leave the break room with my exposed chest and shoulders. For once, there are no strange comments. But my stomach is swollen, bulging with discomfort. I have eaten too much, but eating him alive had to be a good idea, for the greater good of the other women in my department. He didn't do any work either, everyone's work can go without micromanaging. He offered nothing but sleazy comments and discomfort— something good was done! I did something good, surely, yet my stomach continues to pain me.

My gait is strange on the walk back to my desk. I've never maneuvered around with a wad of bloody paper towels and a singular bleach bottle in my tights. Walking with a blood-soaked shirt stuffed up my skirt did not make the situation any better either. It was as if a cheap menstrual pad meshed with toilet paper was left on for 3 days to expand and hang from behind my ass.

A small squelch is heard as I sit back down at my desk. I'm horribly embarrassed by the turn of events today. Now, I have to leave work early. I'm quick with excuses, however. I email HR that I have an emergency with my mom or some other family member who lives out of state. I soon forget the lie that I typed, my stomach struggling to digest the foreign parts of my supervisor. I pack my shoulder bag with my belongings before standing up again. I make one last awkward walk to the elevator, inching and dragging my heels along the floor.

Certainly, I did not intend to eat my supervisor.

FROM CSUN'S HEART

WRITTEN BY ANTHONY VASQUEZ

CSUN with a HEART is a program that aims to provide students with assistance and essential information about university resources. HEART is an acronym that represents the program's mission in "addressing hunger/homeless and emergency needs with assistance and resources together."

CSUN with a HEART strives to eliminate barriers to students' success by connecting students to different organizations and outreach programs that provide basic needs.

All of this is done through the California State University's Basic Needs Initiative, which focuses on supporting students inside and outside of the classroom. The initiative aims to lessen the effects of acute basic needs insecurity, while avoiding any judgment in cases where a student's life or education is impacted due to the lack of support. They offer a range of resources that can be accessed through the CSUN website, where students are guided through components of the CSU Basic Needs Initiative.

One resource highlighted on the CSUN with a HEART's website is the CSUN Food Pantry. The food pantry is located in Laurel Hall, opposite parking lots D6 and E6, and provides students free food weekly. Students can access the pantry with their CSUN ID.

If students need further assistance, they can connect with CalFresh Outreach. The outreach program provides students with financial aid that is intended to help buy fresh groceries. Students can connect with the program by setting up an appointment with an outreach advocate through the website's "BookMe" profile.

CSUN with a HEART also connects students with housing assistance. It helps students navigate through several forms of housing assistance by



The University Student Union building. Photographed by William Espinosa.

providing them with their Housing Stability Support application.

The responses to the application are used to tailor the assistance to the student. For example, the CSUN Temporary Emergency Housing program assists students in finding long-term housing, and they provide students with a temporary space within on-campus housing for a maximum of 20 days.

CSUN with a HEART also aids students in need of financial assistance in rental or student housing costs. They do this through emergency housing grants that students can access by contacting a housing stability care coordinator.

They can also assist students with other forms of financial assistance, which students are eligible for if they provide a reason for urgent financial assistance with supportive documentation. CSUN with a HEART directs students to the financial aid and scholarship department to find more available support.

CSUN with a HEART also connects students with specialty financial assistance, such as the Student Veteran Emergency Relief Fund, which is only accessible to veteran students. Students can find additional information at the Veterans Resource Center in the


University Student Union.

CSUN with A HEART leads students to on-campus services for their mental and physical well-being. Students can exercise at the Student Recreation Center, relax at the Oasis Wellness Center, and find medical services at the Klotz Student Health Center.

Finally, CSUN with A HEART connects students to communities of support. Students can get involved with organizations like the Central American United Student Association and Revolutionary Scholars. They can also find camaraderie on campus at places like the Black House, the Glenn Omatsu House, and the Pride Center.

These organizations are all targeted to students with individual identities and different backgrounds, but there are also general support programs that are offered for all students. One of these programs is Matty's Closet, which provides students with access to professional attire. Matty's Closet, located at the Career Center, provides new and gently used professional clothes as well as style tips to any student with an appointment.

All of the services CSUN with A HEART connects students to can help students navigate their education. More resources can be found at CSUN with a HEART's website via virtual appointment.



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YOU DECIDE
WHERE THEY
TAKE YOU.

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while pushing your abilities to the next level.

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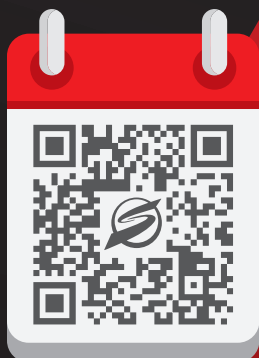
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UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION
 WHERE MATADORS BELONG

MAXIMIZE YOUR MATADOR EXPERIENCE AT THE USU!

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- ▶ East Conference Center
- ▶ Games Room
- ▶ HEAL Project
- ▶ Northridge Center
- ▶ Oasis Wellness Center
- ▶ Pride Center
- ▶ Reservations & Event Services
- ▶ Student Recreation Center
- ▶ USU Board of Directors
- ▶ USU Programs
- ▶ Veterans Resource Center

AND YOU!



SCAN THE QR CODE TO
 VISIT THE FULL USU
 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Events subject to change



FEATURED EVENTS



Oasis: Healing Tones
 Experience the rejuvenating
 power of sound. Register today!
 📍 csun.edu/oasis/programs



Pride Center: Coffee Nights
 Tuesday, Oct. 24: 5 – 7 p.m.
 📍 Pride Center



**VRC: Learning Resource Center
 Take Over**
 Tuesday, Oct. 24: 5 – 7 p.m.
 📍 Veterans Resource Center



Computer Lab Tech Tips: Illustrator
 Wednesday, Oct. 25: 1 – 2 p.m.
 Friday, Oct. 27: 3 – 4 p.m.
 📍 Computer Lab and Zoom



**DREAM Center: Employment
 Based Immigration Relief**
 Thursday, Oct. 26: 2 p.m.
 📍 Zoom



Noontime Concerts
 Thursday, Oct. 26: Noon – 1 p.m.
 📍 Plaza del SOL



Mystic Evening
 Friday, Oct. 27: 6 – 9 p.m.
 📍 Northridge Center