



# the water tower

## uvm's alternative newsmag

last issue of the year

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# the unspoken library code: testing the good samaritans of uvm

by lauragreenwood

First of all, I want to apologize at the start of this article, to all those who may have been duped by our setup and to anyone who will be disturbed by the findings. I'd also like to apologize to the young man to whom I made a promise last week that I didn't keep. I hope everything turned out okay, and that you are not currently brooding in hate over your potential loss. You are the event that finally inspired this article, the motivation behind the scheme.

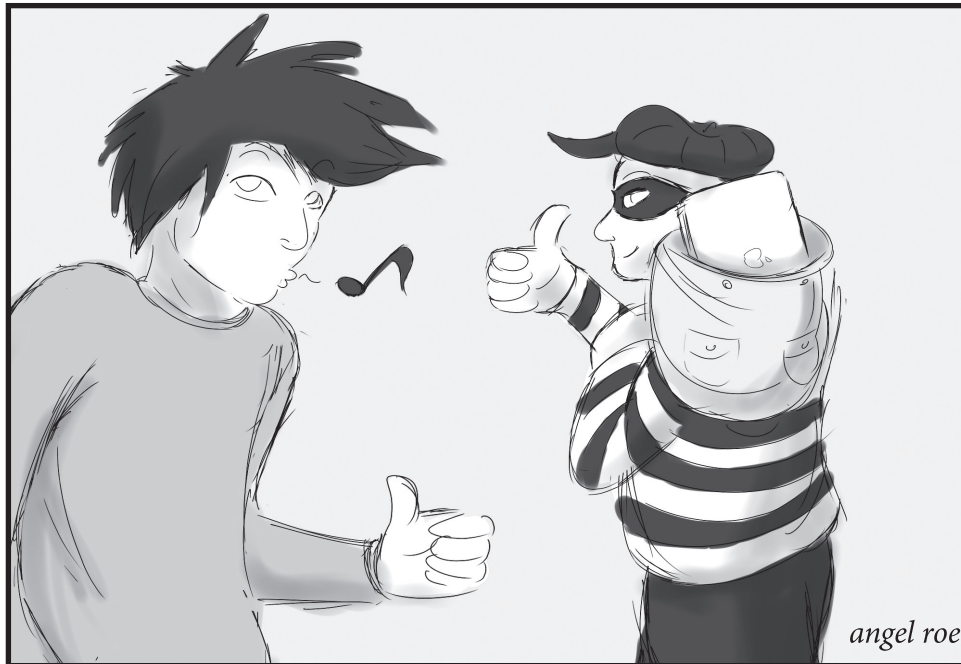
This is the confession of how the editors-in-chief of the **water tower** broke, tested, and explored the validity of an age-old question: "Excuse me, could you watch my laptop for a second?"

Three years ago, I came up with the idea of conducting an investigation into the effectiveness of our community's most overused form of "campus security." Testing the responsibility of the average student was tricky, and the fear surrounding engaging in definitely skeptical and possibly criminal experiments was a major factor in the delay of this article. At every opportunity that the stage was set to test my hypothesis, my quite literal partner-in-crime would become nervous and chicken out.

As the assigned "thief" in my recent experiments, I empathize with the panicky unknown of how other library-goers may react. My prediction fell into the assumption that college students are mostly blind to their surroundings, unless they are forced to be more attentive: such as by a simple, anonymous request.

My confidence (or lack thereof) in the trustworthiness of strangers comes from a pessimistic opinion of blind faith. However, I was surprised by what I found in testing the theory of laptop security from strangers, so let's get to the juicy parts.

The first floor of the library was the initial site to test how much people pay



angel roe

attention. With the hustle and bustle of friends, coffee lines, and librarians, the average studious worker is surrounded by distractions. For many, myself included, these distractions inspire a trance-like state in which one retreats behind their head-

how much can you trust the person who *knows* you aren't near your belongings?

phones and attempts to completely zone out the world.

My cohort, co-editor Katja Ritchie, left her laptop, called upon a stranger in her proximity for a favor, and then it was my turn to be the bad guy. I approached the table a few minutes later, and, without a word, began to collect all of her belongings.

I grabbed everything from the table with no issues and walked away; within a

mere thirty seconds, I couldn't believe I'd just proved my pessimism of the public eye in one fell swoop.

However, it is important to note that the assigned Good Samaritan was part of a larger group of chatty girls, which actually added an extra element of vigilance. As my cohort and I discussed how easy the heist had been, the girl tentatively walked around the corner, scanning the room until she exhaled in relief, seeing the two of us talking. "Oh, sorry, I thought you had stolen her laptop or something."

She seemed embarrassed that she'd gone out of her way to try solve a crime that, we dubiously assured her, was just a friend retrieving another's belongings.

Interesting.

The second floor of the library proved

...continued on page 5

# unrelenting poppy seed halts healthcare discussion

by staceybrandt

White House efforts to prevent Congress from sending Obamacare back to the Supreme Court have been halted by an unforeseen obstacle.

Wedged between his upper left canine and lateral incisor, it was the presence of a tiny black seed which kept President Obama from regaining popularity for his Affordable Care Act.

Possibly the remnants of morning refreshments, or of a late night snack followed by poor hygienic practices, the miniscule speck could hardly be ignored during this morning's conference for healthcare reform.

The President addressed a room full of staunch Republican leadership, who have tirelessly opposed the eponymous Obamacare since its very inception.

About three minutes into the President's opening remarks, Speaker of the House John Boehner was one of the first to take note of the minute, circular object peeking in and out of view from between the President's pearly whites.

"At first I thought it was a freckle," said Boehner, "But sure enough, it moved down about half a centimeter and that's when I knew I had something to say."

The subject of the conference quickly moved from the billions of dollars young Americans will save from Obama's healthcare legislation to the solitary food fragment, which White House aides now confirm was left over from the President's morning bagel.

Analysts estimate the single seed was one of thousands of identical entities and believe the probability of other seeds being present at the time to be high.

It was Democrat and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, who finally raised her hand to point out the distraction.

"I felt I owed it to the President to be honest, and I expect the same honesty in return."

Pelosi went on to say that she often discovers prominent lipstick stains on her own teeth only after hours speaking with colleagues who left the issue unaddressed.

...continued on page 3

get inside me:

#freethenipple  
by mikaelawaters

eating (your feelings) locally  
by mollyo'shea & katelpine

quiz: winter relationships  
by katjaritchie

takeout for christmas  
by zackpensak

# the best news team inbox. in the universe.



## dear printer,

That's right, we're talking to you. You're great. Without you, we wouldn't be able to do that thing we do here, keeping alive this frail old man called print journalism. You're the best.

We, uhh...well, we wrote you this ode. We hope you like it:

*O you, who from New Hampshire send us words,  
The ones we write, but you so sagely toil  
To lay them one by one like newborn birds  
Whose hatch has marked you with the press's oil,  
Are you not like some Gutenberg today?  
Without whose craft our thoughts would die with speech?  
And we, the Martin Luther, given say  
Through saintly paper, carrying our speech?*

Thanks for all the hard work this semester, truly, from ourselves and whatever percentage of UVM that picks up the oh-so-soft, off-white paper that you make a reality. We've never known if you read this paper, but hopefully you will this week, because this last issue of the semester is for you!

Happy Holidays,  
The Whole Happy **water tower** Crew

*Sometimes reading the water tower makes our readers want to get naked and fight the power. But most of the time, they just send emails. Send your thoughts on anything in this week's issue to*

[thewatertownews@gmail.com](mailto:thewatertownews@gmail.com)

## the shit list with katelynpine

**Birds** - These winged creatures are kind of scary when you think about it. It might also be something with their eyes and the way they always look like they're staring into your soul. But I'd like to give a shoutout to the bird that I hit with my car on the way back to school. I'm really sorry for yelling at you and your friends when you flew out in front of me. Maybe if I hadn't, you'd still be alive. Rest in peace, sparrow.

**Getting dark at 4 o'clock** - Sometimes, I just want to come out of my class and see the sun shining in the distance. It's like a glimmer of hope that maybe, just maybe, my microeconomic theory homework won't actually make me want to cry into a pail on the side of the street. Instead, thanks to Earth's moving axis, I get out of class and tears well up immediately.

**Winter hair** - When the air gets dry come December, the hair starts to stick up. You can do almost anything to prevent the static, but all your efforts are useless. I cut my hair over break (I know, how original), but not even my new look can stop the static monster from clinging to everything, not to mention the nasty shocks I get when I open my door. ■

## the water tower. uvm's alternative newsmag [uvm.edu/~watertwr](http://uvm.edu/~watertwr)

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## the news in brief with kerrymartin

**“The CIA regards the effort as doomed to failure...[and] thinks that it is impossible to train and equip a force of pro-Western Syrian nationals that can fight and defeat Assad, al-Nusra, and ISIS, regardless of whatever air support that force may receive...Its previous assignment to accomplish this was basically a fool's errand, and they are well aware of the fact that many of the arms that they provided ended up in the wrong hands.”**

—An anonymous Democratic Congressman describes classified internal CIA reports (which the President has read) that confirm the recklessness of arming Syrian rebel groups. Barry, Boehner, and Mitch, best buds for the next two years, will move full speed ahead into a war whose public spectacle conceals more than it reveals.

**“Most people I talk with, even in the intense water community, view themselves as Coloradans first and members of river basins second.”**

—James Eklund voices his optimism about my home state's willingness to share its limited water supply. Colorado water politics are contentious, with about 80% of its water west of the continental divide and the bulk of its people and agriculture to the east; 2.5 million Coloradans will be parched by 2050 without more massive undermountain pipelines. I like Colorado and everything but...my river basin is just objectively superior.

**“I feel betrayed. One billion [shillings] is very little and you cannot compare that with land. It's inherited. Their mothers and grandmothers are buried in that land.”**

—Samwel Nangiria, a Maasai organizer from Tanzania, decries his government's reversal on a promise that the large territory bordering Serengeti National Park remain in the hands of one of Africa's most well-known ethnic groups. The government is expelling (with a small compensation) over 40,000 indigenous Maasai to create a “game reserve” for United Arab Emirates royals. Where will the Maasai go, Tanzania? If to the city, will you welcome their cattle?

**“I went to school for one year. It was the best experience but the worst experience. The best experience because I was, like, ‘Oh, now I know why kids are so depressed.’ But it was the worst experience because I was depressed.”**

—Willow Smith, daughter of actor Will Smith, shares wisdom in an actually insightful joint interview with her older brother Jaden. I would love for my kids to replace school with writing novels, climbing trees, and studying Eastern philosophy and quantum physics...but I'm not Will Smith. Maybe if I name them Kerryow...

the water tower is UVM's alternative newsmag and is a bi-weekly student publication at the University of Vermont in Burlington, Vermont.

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L/L - Outside Alice's Café  
Old Mill Annex - Main Lobby  
Waterman - Main Lobby  
Williams - Inside Steps  
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New writers and artists  
are always welcome  
Weekly meetings  
Tuesdays at 7:30 pm  
Jost Foundation Room  
Davis Center - 4th Floor  
Or send us an email

**Our generation stands at a crossroads.** With sincerity and humor, we strive to make you reexamine, investigate, question, learn, and maybe pee your pants along the way. We are the reason people can't wait for Tuesday. We are **the water tower.**



# the current *volatile* climate of gay marriage rights

by lauragreenwood

At the beginning of October, the United States Supreme Court began its session and was immediately faced with a variety of appeals addressing the constitutionality of same-sex marriage bans. Instead of accepting any of these cases, this Supreme Court decided that the constitutionality of marriage bans will not be addressed in their docket this year—rather, let the federal circuit courts handle the issue.

And one by one, these circuit courts have almost unanimously deemed individual states' ban on gay marriage unconstitutional, even in conservative states like South Carolina, West Virginia, Montana, Wyoming, and Utah. Of the 35 states where gay marriage is now allowed, 3 were decided by popular vote, 8 by state legislatures, and 24 by court decision. Parts of America have rejoiced at this critical opportunity for gay rights. By not acting, the Supreme Court essentially just made gay marriage possible in any circuit, right? Right?!

Well...hold on a second. The Supreme Court's indecision has let the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals—which represents Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee—go through with their decision to uphold the constitutionality of gay marriage bans. This ruling says that these bans do not violate the equal protection and due process clauses of the Constitution, and thus if a state in the 6th Circuit rules to keep a ban on same-sex marriage they have every right to do so. This is possible because the Supreme Court's lack of action allowed for both constitutional and unconstitutional marriage ban rulings by lower courts to be permitted on a state-by-state basis. And

now proceeds the Supreme Court's "Oh shit, maybe we should reconsider this" moment.

The four states in the 6th Circuit (again, Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee) have the option to uphold their same-sex marriage bans. Differently from how the other Circuit Courts ruled in October, the 6th Circuit changed their precedence rules on marriage bans and allowed for bans to fall in either direction.

Yet again, we're presented with the age-old issue of contradicting interpretations of the Constitution and their legal consequences throughout the nation. The inconsistency of gay rights can be clearly mapped across America, and their effects create an unstable climate for the future of couples nationwide.

Someone needs to step up and create consistency in our judicial system in order to prevent these inter-circuit conflicts. Although the Constitution is meant to be a flexible and adaptable document, it is supposed to help to unite and protect the citizens of the United States with some predictability.

Who is this omniscient someone that should be vested with the jurisdiction to resolve the same-sex marriage ban once and for all? The judiciary is a reactive body, their role limited to interpreting and responding to policy and law with justice, not creating the law off of which justice will be based. Lawmaking on marriage rights has largely been left to each state, thus it falls on We the People to push for the legislation we want where we live.

My home state Massachusetts has al-



lowed same-sex marriage for over ten years, as the result of a Massachusetts State Supreme Court decision; I've been to three glorious gay marriages that had me weeping just like the rest of them. We're lucky to be at a university, in a state, in a region of America that has been more proactive about addressing the civil liberties of homosexuals in order to leap into the modern age. But, these recent 6th Circuit barrings demonstrate that America is not yet unanimous about the future of our nation. Each of the four states where bans have been upheld had voted on these bans prior, with millions of citizens in support to restrict gay marriage, and without any national

pressure to change their minds, they are not likely to do so.

Hopefully, the Supreme Court will eventually open up to hearing these cases later this session, and will help to resolve these national contradictions. But the present situation demonstrates how the great, complex, overlapping nature of our government can also occasionally find itself in knots. Until the Supreme Court does act, the issue falls on the pro-gay marriage advocates of these states to appeal to their state's legislature, state courts, circuit courts, and the rest to help spread a liberal social change that's sweeping across America. ■

# b00bs online: free the nipple, transcend porn culture

by mikaelawaters

Earlier this year, comedian Chelsea Handler posted a photo on Instagram of her riding topless upon a horse, Picstitched alongside Vladimir Putin, also shirtless atop a noble steed. After the photo was removed by Instagram for not following their community guidelines, Handler moved to Twitter, posting the same photo and a tweet stating, "Taking this down is sexist. I have every right to prove that I have a better body than Putin." Challenging Instagram

and the "community" which the photo may have offended, Handler remarked, "if a man posts a photo of his nipples it's okay, but not a woman," effectively engaging in and capturing the Free The Nipple movement.

Aside from being the call of intoxicated college males, Free The Nipple is a movement against female oppression and censorship, seeking to address the issues of equal rights for men and women, and a

more balanced system of censorship. The movement has manifested in two ways: through their feature-length documentary *Free The Nipple*, and through the hashtag #freethenipple.

#freethenipple is an online campaign in which women (Miley Cyrus, Lena Dunham, Liv Tyler and Chelsea Handler, to name a famous

few) post photos on social media to bring attention to the inconsistency and sexist nature of censorship and decency laws. (No, Kim Kardashian is not part of this, her "Break the Internet" was not done in the spirit of activism.) The inconsistencies they highlight are that in 35 states it is legal for men to be topless, but illegal for women, and that social media applications such as Instagram remove photos of topless women, but not topless men. A nipple is a nipple, so why then is it sexualized and effectively criminalized when female, but deemed decent when male?

As a feminist movement, Free The Nipple makes clear that they support women independently choosing to free their own nipples, not have men do it for them. The recent flood of illegally obtained nude pictures of actresses, for instance, was not what #freethenipple stands for.

Handler took this issue of subjective

decency a step further, directly questioning the limits and biases of the 1st Amendment. Posting her pony-rides-with-Putin photo once again to Instagram, she captioned it, "if Instagram takes this down again, you're saying Vladimir Putin has more 1st Amendment rights than me..."

While this post's intent was obviously to provoke and poke fun of Instagram, it brought up a question regarding internet censorship even beyond the nipple: who has the right to regulate free speech and expression online?

The censoring of nipples on apps like Instagram is not ostensibly done in the name of sexism or gender oppression, but in the name of decency to create a family-friendly cyber community. However, Instagram neglects this goal by failing to monitor comments and captions: homophobic, racist, threatening, sexist, and profane language all remain uncensored, while a woman's chest is swept under the rug (so to speak). As such, Instagram is inadvertently making a statement that a nipple is more dangerous to their community than words of hate, bigotry, and violence. Maybe I'm naïve, but who knew a nipple was so powerful as to trump all of that? Here I was thinking they were just human anatomy. ■

**POPPY SEED**  
-continued from page 1

The President was able to achieve momentary relief with a quick maneuver of the tongue and simultaneous suction of the upper lip. The brief disappearance of the speck allowed the President to recapitulate the importance of federal health care subsidies for lower and middle income families. Just as President Obama began to describe, step-by-step, the devastating economic destabilization which would result in repealing his health care legislation, the little fleck resurfaced in the exact same position.

Not unlike the GOP's immobile opposition to Obamacare, the finicky poppy seed did not budge from its interdental crevasse for the rest of the conference, at one point seemingly embedded in the President's gum line. Some Democrats believe the spot was planted as political sabotage.

"This is a very serious matter. To deface the President is a form of treason," said Pelosi later in her interview. "I would not be surprised if this were another childish tactic of the GOP to further distance itself from the Democratic Party."

A number of bipartisan efforts were conducted to bring the seed to President Obama's attention. Strategies included: subtle pointing gestures, more expository dental pantomimes, and an anonymous cry giving the precise coordinates of, "a little more to the left and down." Despite techniques to help envision the spot's exact positioning, the President was neither interested in the seed's location, nor its immediate removal.

Overall, Republicans believe the incident to demonstrate the President's unprofessionalism, disrespect of the Republican party, and general lack of hygiene necessary for a leader of the United States.

"He's talking about health care with a flippin' [sic] poppy seed in his tooth!" said John Boehner, "Now that's just wrong." ■

# around town.



## burlington's best places

by mollyo'shea and katelynpine

### Dunkin' Donuts

Like any Vermonter, I like a good organic, fair-trade, hand-pressed, perfectly crafted, fresh cup of coffee. However, that doesn't taste nearly as good mixed with my tears as a cup of processed sugar and milk and a dash of coffee from Dunkin' Donuts. Where else can one order half a dozen donuts and totally pretend that you're bringing some to other people? Besides Dunks, nowhere.

### Henry's Diner

Henry's Diner is the perfect place for a little pre-finals breakfast. I'm a personal fan of the "Hungry Henry" plate—three eggs, a choice of ham, sausage or bacon, a choice of pancakes or French toast, and to top it all off, it's served with some amazing home fries. Not only will you exceed your recommended daily caloric intake by 1000 calories, you'll probably forget all about your poor exam grades with just one butter-soaked bite of chocolate chip pancakes.

### Rite-Aid

There aren't many places where you can get over a pound of Sour Patch kids and laundry detergent all in the same place. Rite-Aid is my saving grace when I really need to binge on my emotions. Although actually *eating* in Rite-Aid is frowned upon, you can get all your junk food goodies here while being an emotional wreck, and eat them wherever else at your leisure.

### The Harvest Café

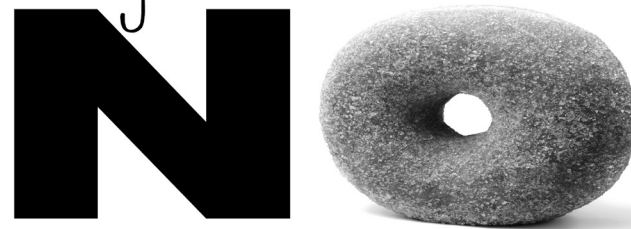
You only have to spend three dollars on an *entire* pizza, folks. If that isn't a bang for your buck, then I don't know what is. Had a bad day? Go to this cafeteria deep in the bowels of the UVM Medical Center and buy two pizzas, six cheese danishes, three brownies, and a cup of coffee, and it will probably only cost you under ten dollars somehow. You can quietly cry in peace and no one will bother you here, because it's a hospital and they have better things to do, like save lives.

### Olive Garden

Two words: unlimited breadsticks. Yeah, we're stretching the definition of "local" because you've probably got a branch of this chain restaurant somewhere near your hometown, but does that really matter? The Olive Garden is a reliable source for feelings-food in a pretending-to-be-authentic-Italian setting. Nothing beats a chicken parmesan served with a side of guilt for your weekend plans. Having learned from past experience, don't try to go here at six o'clock on a Saturday night (the wait was an hour and twenty minutes).

## to eat your feelings

My Mind's Tellin' Me



But My Body: My Body's Tellin' Me



ben berrick

### Ben & Jerry's

Obviously, this Vermont staple has plenty of delicious, unique flavors, but if you're really in need of some food therapy, may we recommend ordering that Vermonster? Take a spoon and eat that tub of love all the way to your next exam. Do I get bonus points for offering you a bite, Professor? ■

## house of lies: stranded at quarry hill

by marytaylor

"Where's that?" is the usual response after telling someone I live at the Quarry Hill apartments, often accompanied by a look of sheer confusion with a hint of curiosity. It's the end of the fall semester, yet the building I live in with over thirty other students remains completely anonymous.

Until last month, when it was suspiciously altered, the ResLife website described Quarry Hill as being a "5-minute walk to campus." Try 15-minute walk to the outer-most edge of the farthest point of campus, where the closest shuttle stop is.

They've also retracted their original description of the coin-operated laundry machines being "convenient": since the building also lacks coin machines, they are anything but.

UVM promised residents a fully-furnished apartment and reliable transportation to and from campus upon signing the contract. At \$950 per month per person, there's a high price to pay if that doesn't come through. My roommates and I did not even receive a coffee table and chair until after midterms, and sometimes the "reliable" shuttle never shows up.

The shuttle, which runs essentially every 3 hours, lacks weekend and Friday night ride times. I can forgive a 5-minute delay, but walking out

of my building to see the shuttle driving away on a Monday morning is extremely unsettling, given that the next shuttle isn't for another several hours. Contrary to popular belief, these Bean Boots were not made for walking.

When I brought this up to the driver later that same afternoon, I got the same fleeting response I'm sadly all too familiar with after so many calls to ResLife: "Yeah, I was a couple minutes early."

On top of that, the mailing system was not established until our second month living here. After being told multiple times that it was sorted, textbook deliveries were still delayed past the first week of classes. My roommate and I resorted to renting a car to pick up packages at a UPS warehouse.

Many residents have expressed disappointment, myself included. So it was only a matter of time until we got some sort of response from a university employee. The week of October 13, residents received an updated shuttle schedule with an additional two early morning pick-up times, along with answers to many burning questions.

One "explanation" I found especially interesting was that UVM claims not to have known they would need a

"with the amount of money we're paying for our education and housing, where is it all going?"

shuttle until two weeks prior to our move-in date, leaving them with little funding to afford a shuttle service. The bus com-

pany, however, claims they didn't know until *one* week before, and did the best they could with the employees that were available. But why did UVM promise its unknowing new students with transportation if it wasn't in the budget?

UVM claims to consider their students' safety a top priority, yet they continually fail to live up to those claims. With the amount of money we're paying for our education and housing, where is it all going? From where I stand, there's plenty of money to buy custom American Apparel shirts for UPB to give away for free, and even more to invest in fossil fuels, but not enough to provide students with safe transportation to and from campus.

I'm now in the process of terminating my contract with UVM for the apartment and fighting the \$750 fee for mid-year contract ending. I've found I'm not the only resident looking to do so; approximately half of the residents currently living at Quarry Hill are subletting apartments at Redstone next semester and tirelessly trying to get answers about having the fee waived.

ResLife has yet to respond to the many phone calls and e-mails regarding the concerns about the unfair charge for terminating a contract they failed to live up to. Our requests were not extravagant, nor were our complaints arbitrary. In fact, where are our concerns really stem from is the fact that we were *lied* to. I would gain an incredible amount of respect for UVM should they choose to admit their wrongdoing and waive the fee this year. We forgive you, Quarry Hill, but we won't forget. ■





# crunch time: surviving a night in the cyber café

by kerrymartin

There is no worse feeling than planning on staying up the entire night and still being unsure whether you'll get all your work done. I have already done this twice this semester (granted, once with a brief nap) and will likely do it more. But I'm not telling you this to glorify my busy; I'm just saying that I know how it is, and that you should use my play-by-play account as a preview if any night like this is in your near future.

The strange happenings recorded here are quite normal in Late Night Cyber Café society, so be prepared.

**11:27pm:** You settle into a desk with everything you need: books, notes, the Macbook Pro paired with the desktop Dell that makes your setup look like an incongruous double monitor, and your now-cold-and-non-refillable Speeder & Earl's coffee. There is no coffee pot, microwave, or IV drip available to put it to good use.

**11:29pm:** Music—you need something that'll drive you forward. You've just put in a good four hours of work on Floor 2 B/H, listening to piano concertos by Beethoven and Debussy, but now you're tired, plus that's pussy shit. Start bumping The Glitch Mob, move later to Pretty Lights, Gramatik, and Bass Physics.

**11:53pm:** After working through your open tabs of the *Guardian*, *VICE News*, Wikipedia, and Clickhole, you have more tabs than you started with, and you remember that your paper is due in 10 hours.

**12:04am:** Someone who has apparently never heard of headphones asks you to turn your music down. You slightly oblige. Another freshman asks you who you listen to, assuming you're an EDM guy, which emasculates you and you oblige more.

**12:10am:** The shoes come off and stay off.

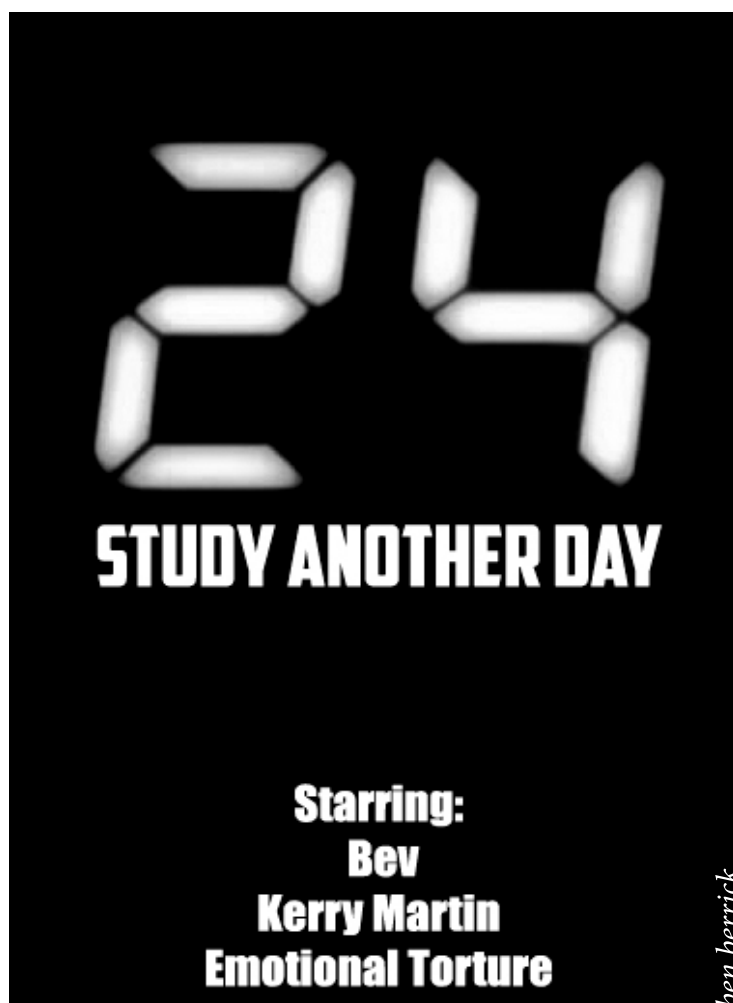
**12:39am:** You start to notice the growing insanity of those around you. "You know what I could go for right now? A crying shower beer." Yeah, that does sound pretty good.

**1:12am:** Your nose-picking becomes truly shameless.

**1:47am:** The late-risers mill into the Café at the ring of the bell. They thought they were safe...

**1:56am:** The nighttime employees think they're so cool setting up their fold-out tables.

**2:21am:** You begin to doze off and realize that instead of writing your PoliSci paper, you're describing your half-waking dream about a giant hamburger-man in a tux,



ben berrick

laughing at you as he fondles your grandma.

**2:24am:** The girl working at the far table whips out five fatty decks of *Magic: The Gathering* cards.

**2:45am:** Out of cash, you spend your limited Cat\$cratch on some caffeine at the vending machine and then realize you have no money left to print your paper until they open up the rest of the library in the morning. Any faint idea you once had about going home now disappears, and with it all notions of showering or brushing your teeth.

**2:58am:** That One Guy has to ask whether going outside through the Café door will set off the fire alarm. Asshole.

**3:05am:** Daylight Savings Time begins, then ends, then begins again.

**3:36am:** All information reaches a flat plane, and you are unsure whether or not your paper about Boko Haram is actually about Romeo and Juliet, or the laws of physics, or three old ladies ripping a bong. (Meanwhile, you watch the internet as a video of that very act goes viral throughout the night, meaning that it must be getting tons of views in Japan.)

**3:50am:** You grow convinced that everyone around you is a hired actor only there to uphold your perverse reality. Or that they are just normal people who aren't actually doing work.

**4:14...:** You're really not sure whether it's AM or PM anymore.

[4:20... SMOKE WEED]

**4:33am:** Deliriously exhausted and 70% done with a paper that really could be straight awful, you pull your jacket over your face and attempt a nap. Minutes later, you're awoken by the guy next to you talking, possibly to you, possibly telling you not to breathe so loud, but you're so tired that you're really not sure. Regardless, you despise this guy for the rest of the night.

**5:00am:** At the hour, you suddenly enter a combat-like state of mind, keenly aware of every disturbance within a thirty-meter radius, time slows, you look at the guy next to you and consider snapping his neck without explanation or hesitation, until you realize you've been drooling all over your shirt for the past seven minutes.

**5:12am:** Already falling asleep on your keys and fearing you won't finish, you make a final push, ignoring the law that fine-toothed paper-editing doesn't really happen at this time of day.

**5:19am:** The early morning crew starts pouring in, with all their sleep. Pricks.

**5:30am-9:00am:** You're not really sure what happens during this time, honestly. But you come about in the main part of the library, editing an allegedly completed paper, and drinking coffee that is obviously not working.

**9:46am:** Printed, first of four classes in fourteen minutes, and the jammed front desk stapler is thwarting your plan to leave the library in the next twenty-five seconds. It's gonna be a good day. ■

## LAPTOP THEFT—continued from page 1

similar results. Again and again, we'd stage the heist and I'd find myself on the receiving end of questions, or simply dirty looks, about why I was grabbing "that girl's stuff." Luckily, my partner was never far off, always retreating just in time to assure the stranger that I wasn't stealing.

It seemed irrelevant whether my partner looked deep into someone's very soul, requesting in all kindness that someone keep a watchful eye over her laptop, or just gave a jaded nod of "you got this covered, right?"; students proved to be very watchful. Even if I just lingered by her laptop, I could feel the curious, keen eyes of the prescribed Laptop Keeper searing into the back of my head.

At this point, even I was shocked. Surely, I wasn't the only person who occasionally didn't pay full attention or had to run off before the MIA owner returned. Like most, I tend to just pass the buck, so to speak, shrugging the responsibility off on another stranger to keep watch. I realize now that this method presents an obvious flaw, seeing as the unassuming recipient of my shirked duty has no idea who needed their stuff watched in the first place.

Our next conquest was the third floor. I wanted to see

just how far I could really take these thefts. Surely, everyone would be too distracted here to keep watch on others' possessions—or would I again be pleasantly surprised?

No such luck. This time, we decided to switch up the game a bit: I would pose as the stranger to whom my accomplice would entrust her computer, and then see if I could get away with stealing it myself.

So my partner asked if I'd watch her stuff, I said yes, and then, minutes later, I got up and just walked off with her laptop. Easy as that; not a single word was spoken.

We were shocked. Okay, maybe other students were oblivious when they hadn't been specifically asked to do the favor themselves. But would they have any recollection of the incident when the victim of theft returned to find her laptop—and trusted Thing-Watcher—vanished? No dice there, either. My accomplice returned to the scene of the crime, upended her backpack, and searched nervously for a couple minutes before gathering her remaining things and hurrying out. A few momentary, confused looks were the only response.

From all these posed crimes, I'm not really sure what conclusions to make from our findings. Yes, many students did appear to fulfill their jobs well. But then again, if

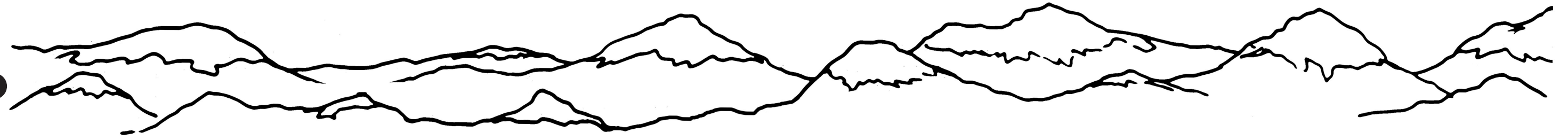
I was actually stealing that laptop on the first floor, I would have been out the door before any stranger came running after, not hanging around and chatting in the Cyber Café. And, unsettlingly, it appeared that the best position for a thief to be in was as the assigned Keeper of Things. How much can you trust the person who knows you aren't near your belongings?

As a member of this University, we have an unspoken, blind trust for those in our community. Under the assumption that "we get it, man" and "I feel you," college kids are one of the most trusting demographics out there. The reality is that no matter the state or community, it's irresponsible to be so ignorant. We will all keep asking strangers to watch our stuff because it's easier than relocating every time you want to pee, but it's smart to always remain skeptical of that tentative agreement.

As you hunker down in the depths of the library during exams, think twice before you leave your stuff. My advice, if anything, is to not be embarrassed to make a very loud to-doo about assigning a watchful eye: the more attention on your things, it appears, the better. ■



# reflections.



## quiz: should you be on winter lockdown?

by katjaritchie

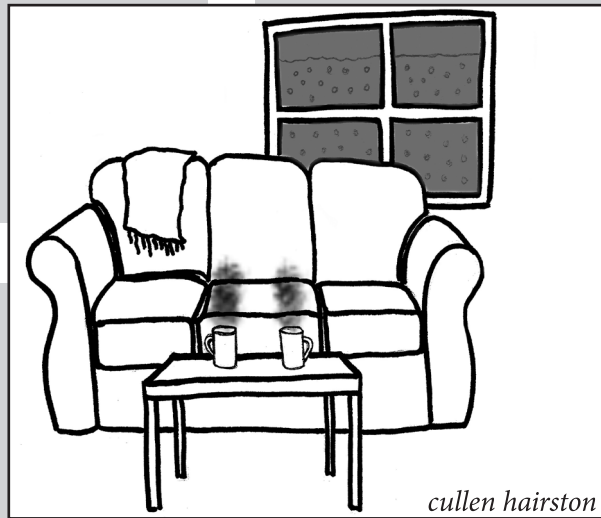
Oh, the weather outside is frightful, and so is being all alone under your duvet during the cold, lonely night. Enter the cuddle-season companion: extend your current friend-with-benefits rapport juuuust long enough to make it through the never-ending Vermont chill with someone to leach extra body heat from. Once the weather warms up, so can your wandering eye. Feel free to cut ties in time for a springtime fling, or, who knows—maybe you'll have found something to keep you warm long after the snow melts away.

### 1. The communication with you and your special someone exists mainly in these media:

- a. Snapchat stories and Twitter-favorites
- b. Snapchats besides their story (so you know it's real) and the occasional Facebook comment
- c. An extensive compilation of texts, messages, and even speaking face-to-face, in person, with your actual voices.

### 2. If you called them right now and asked to hang out sometime soon...

- a. You're unable to answer this without knowing how drunk you both would be and how many hours after midnight you would call in this situation. Timing and likelihood of barfing on your own sweater are everything.
- b. It would be a little risky...but they messaged you a picture of a kitten falling down some stairs yesterday, so you think you could take a shot.
- c. They'd beat you to it, and have at least one option of what to do that doesn't seem like a means of ending up wasted in the same apartment.



cullen hairston

### 3. How long has it been since you were last romantically committed?

- a. You're still disentangling your heart from your last breakup (and their shit from your apartment, and their drunk texts from your phone...)
- b. A little while. Regardless, you're not looking for anything serious at the moment.
- c. Enough time that you don't even have leftover disdain whenever a mutual friend tells you something might be going well in your ex's life. You've *really* matured.

### 4. What most closely matches the state of your sex drive?

- a. You either need all the stress balls and deep massages in the world, or a seriously steamy encounter. You have some pent-up tension to work out. Like, now.
- b. Meh.
- c. Would some action keep you warmer than falling asleep in three pairs of socks and a winter hat? Cause that's been working out fairly well for you so far.

**Mostly a's:** So close, yet so far. You're either way too recently out of a substantial relationship or just too fucking flaky to hold anything down for very long. Any attempts at commitment now would be over by Christmas. If you think it's cold now, it's going to be way worse by January, so this is not a strategic move for your heartbreak or your body temperature.

**Mostly b's:** You have semi-regular, definitely-interested communication while maintaining enough of a safe distance to not get in over your head right away. Congrats. You seem to possess the judgment to maintain a given social situation over an extended period of time without letting it get too far out of your control. Grab your throw blankets and snuggle the winter away; the rest of us applaud your self-discipline.

**Mostly c's:** I guarantee you and this person are both annoying the shit out of your respective friends by pussy-footing around instead of just dating each other. This winter is just the beginning; you're heading straight for the long haul. Lock it down! ■



## inter (not) stellar

by leoparini

Christopher Nolan's space odyssey, *Interstellar*—the most anticipated blockbuster of the year—amounts to a 165-million-dollar dud. Yes, it is an ambitious, visually good-looking picture, but that description applies to almost any Hollywood film. And, given the quality of technology and money poured into these studio productions, anything less than that would have given Nolan the sack.

Matthew McConaughey manages to pull off a credible performance, even with the lackluster dialogue he's been handed. His character is an ex-NASA pilot-turned-farmer named Cooper who, in a time of crisis (Earth has become an infertile wasteland), leaves his kids for a higher calling: to save humanity from starvation by searching space for a new habitable planet.

How Cooper was given this responsibility is among the most ridiculous components of the film: a ubiquitous force sends a coded message through gravitational waves, which discloses binary coordinates that lead him and his daughter to a covert NASA installation. And then, literally within minutes of his arrival, he becomes part of the

team. Yes, that's right. An ex-pilot stumbles upon the most ambitious human endeavor ever (which has clearly been in the works for years), and he is given the project of "saving mankind." In a last-minute fashion, without any training or any of the "getting to know your co-workers" bullshit one normally ought to do in such circumstances, he takes off into space with three unfamiliar astronauts.

The master plan to save mankind is devised by a genius, of course, named Professor Brand (played by Michael Caine). As it happens, his arcane, improbable theories are superfluously discussed among the astronauts, as they're enclosed in a spaceship—which makes for great cinema? It's not exactly exhilarating to be forced to listen to *recherche* science amounting to nothing.

A key element of this film is its focus on severe gravitational time dilation. The mission must be accomplished as fast as possible because the three potential habitable planets have a close proximity to Gargantua (a black hole), which means every hour they experience is equivalent to seven years on Earth. I felt like I could relate to this conflict while watching

## registration reminiscence : then and now

by lauragreenwood

Before Thanksgiving, I woke up to register for my final semester of college. The experienced has changed ten-fold since I first undertook this venture in my early years. This final registration resulted in the new discovery that I was a double major, and only two classes away from fulfilling both. Call me blind, call me stupid, but I'd like to say it's just a matter of being more relaxed.

Four years ago, I'd tediously stalk the Registrar's page for the weeks leading up to that fateful morning. Wielding my recycled Davis Center poster notepad, I would scribble down every class qualified to fulfill my Arts & Sciences general requirements, optimistic that each course would be the best one yet. A Classics course in Greek Mythology, how whimsical! An introduction in Philosophy, how deep! Art History, Theater, Political Science: seriously, I obsessed over my newfound educational independence and my ambition to be the most "well-rounded" student. On registration morning, I'd wake up a half hour early to continuously refresh the "Look Up Classes" page and check the availability of all my dream courses. No worries if one was at capacity, I had five others at the same time on the back burner with the CRNs already prepped on my Excel spread sheet. Feverishly, right at 7am, I'd put all those numbers in at once and register, register, register. Course registration entailed research, review, and quick reactions. I'd fall back asleep until my first class at 11am. Safe to say, things have changed.

Freshman year, I was undeclared. Senior year, I'm smooth-sailing to the finish line with all the grunt work already

behind me. Registration went a little like this: peer at the Registrar page on Sunday night, scroll every department aimlessly, select a few interesting courses, confirm with my advisor I will in fact graduate, and then forget. No need to write down the numbers; the competition to "out-register" everyone else in my grade is over. The night before, I set my alarm for 6:50am. Before falling asleep, I change my mind and set it to 6:55am. I wake up, find my laptop, and begin registering for classes like I'm scanning an online Forever 21 sale, casually adding and removing things from my cart as I go. I've completed the process by 7:01am and I stay up to make myself breakfast because I wake up this early now and pretend I'm an adult by doing crossword puzzles while drinking coffee in the morning. It's not even until later that afternoon when talking to a classmate that I realize the full extent of my education thus far. Unknowingly, I had been fulfilling all the requirements for an additional major that only required one more intro course to complete.

Gone are the days of painstaking review and future-planning (at least, as it pertains to classes). Instead, I've finally got it all figured out and fully declared. Although, I may have experienced a lot of "lasts" this year, it's safe to say it's never too late to get more out of your time here at UVM and add another line to your diploma. ■

*"i obsessed over my newfound educational independence and my ambition to be the most 'well rounded' student"*

## a texan in the cold

by cullenhairston

I'm from Texas, the home of Willie Nelson, greasy burritos, and blistering heat. I lived there for 18 years before moving across the country to start my college life at UVM. When I told other Texans I was considering UVM, I usually got one of three responses, the first one being the three-part, "Which one is Vermont? Which one is New Hampshire? Is that near Boston?" The second being, "I don't know what you're doing up there, but I hope you know there are many good schools in Texas if you decide to transfer back home." And the third and most common, "Vermont? Isn't it fucking cold up there?"

Before you ask, yes, I'd seen snow before coming here. I grew up skiing occasionally in New Mexico and Colorado, but spring breaks spent there didn't prepare me for the cold that is a Vermont winter (I realized while writing this that January and February are still looming in the near future, just waiting to freeze my fingers off).

Snow in Texas is a gift given by Jesus himself. Even if it's only half an inch and melts by 10am, school will definitely be closed for the day. Sadly, I noticed that is not the situation here. In Vermont, city governments actually *own* the machines to take care of ice and snow, so there's really nothing stopping you from going to class.

I've also noticed that here, you can't simply throw on a hoodie and walk outside at the end of fall. You have to put actual layers on. That threw me off the first cold weekend here back in October, after waking

up one morning and realizing the walk to the Grundle from my dorm is much longer when your body feels frozen to the core.

The biggest surprise for me, though, was the wind. Sure, 20°F is cold, but when those high winds kick up, every bone in your body freezes, you're blown off the sidewalk, and all hope is lost for a good day. In Texas, wind doesn't usually factor into the cold. If you're out in the country, it usually just causes dust devils and grasshoppers to hit you in the face.

The difference between the heat and the cold is that when you're cold, you have yourself to blame: you didn't wear enough layers. You forgot gloves. You didn't buy the right boots. There are ways to combat the frigid weather. However, when a Texas summer rolls around and the heat index is a sweltering 110°F, there isn't much one can do. You sit inside, crank up the AC, and wait. Texas is really interesting because it has all different types of heat. It's dry in the west and humid in the east. I can differentiate between types of heat, but

in Vermont, cold is cold to me.

I've also realized that, no matter how cold it is, there will always be a New Englander there to tell you how warm it is right now! This is nothing! One time they had to trek through twenty feet of snow with a -100°F wind chill in April! This isn't cold! Now put on some shorts and Birkenstocks! ■



yin yefko

## dear santa,

My wish list looks a little different from the last time we spoke. I know, I know, it's my fault I haven't written to you in a while—but things have gotten a lot more complicated since the days I yearned for an orange iPod shuffle (it holds two whole Green Day albums!), Barbie's spring break dream vacation, or a remote-control helicopter. The good news is that learning to battle the trials and tribulations of adulthood, I think I've gotten a lot more practical. As you can see, this is reflected in my list.

This year for the holidays, I'd like...

- Rent money
- A new non-stick pan (mine is peeling...is that bad?)
- Comfortable underwear (packaged in bulk is preferable)
- Blender actually capable of crushing ice
- External hard drive
- Three-pack of dental floss
- Four extra hours of daylight
- A Costco membership
- The \$12.47 my roommate owes me for his share of the electric bill
- Coal. I've actually been very good all year, but turning up the thermostat is expensive, and I plan to heat my bedroom with a small reserve of crude fossil fuels.
- Chapstick, preferably in a pack of 100 or more
- Toilet paper
- Khaki pants and comfortable, yet classy, shoes for the office
- A gift card to Pearl Street Bev
- Flannel sheets
- A really nice pen set (or, nicer than the 50-pack of Bics from Rite Aid)
- Bail (let's not get into it)
- Gas money
- Wool socks
- Command strips (my landlord is noticing the thumbtack holes...)

If you could do me a solid on a few of these, that'd be great. I know you're busy, and it's been a while, but could you do a favor for an old friend? Seriously, our electricity might get shut off if we don't pay this bill on time, and I'm tired of finding flakes of Teflon in my scrambled eggs.

Yours truly,  
the water tower.



# fashion five-oh.



## end-of-semester attire: a field guide

by katjaritchie

Now that we're all eager to haul ass to winter break while retaining as much sanity as possible, it's likely that some among us have noticed how all the stress has taken its toll. Nights of sleep are whittled down to catnaps, appetites swell one day and vanish the next, and physical appearance is put on the backburner. Everyone copes with crunch time differently, and a few distinct species of students tend to emerge every time finals loom near. ■

### The Sickday Shlump

Stress and dropping temperatures are the perfect storm for a gnarly cold. Having unscrupulously squandered their allowed absences earlier in the semester, this species toughs it out for the homestretch. Most specimens appear to have rolled out of their deathbed and shuffled to campus as-is. Key characteristics are sweatpants in public (a sure sign of distress), coupled with bedhead, audible nasal congestion, and a clammy, feverish pallor.

### Apathetic Academic

A close relative to the Sickday Shlumbers, this subspecies bears a striking resemblance to their ailing sister-species. The key difference is that these specimens appear to be in passable health, observable by their higher appetite, increased alertness, and overall lack of mucus production. Similar comfort-oriented attire is common, usually opting for sweats or gym outfits—however, whether or not a given Apathetic specimen has actually participated in a workout that day is often unclear.

### Hot Mess, Pre-Test

A species with delicate sensibilities that is highly affected by an increase in outside stressors, Hot Messes are likely to react impulsively to the difficulties brought on at the end of the semester. Common behaviors in this subtype are a sudden change in appetite, increase in illicit substance consumption, loss of sleep, forgetfulness, and avoidance of obligations. This is reflected in this species' appearance by a decline in personal hygiene and nonsensical attire choices (such as sleepwear, absurd or novelty items, and/or ill-advised fashion risk-taking).

### Resilient & Diligent

This rare and curious species seems not to produce much of a stress response to increases in workload and scheduling. Sightings of them can exacerbate the symptoms of more delicate, easily affected subtypes. Their demeanor is often placid, even upbeat, and they possess a calculated approach to systematically confronting obligations. At times difficult to spot, this species possesses a creative camouflage in which their appearance does not seem to suffer in the face of end-of-semester adversity. Little is known of their psychology, so caution is certainly advised.

### Busy Like a Boss

Contrary to other species' fashion sense taking the hit from increased workloads, Busy Bosses heighten their attention to appearance in hopes of also raising morale. Common markings on females include bold lipstick, heeled boots, and winged eyeliner sharp enough to double as a lethal weapon (likely an evolutionary self-defense mechanism), while the males often are identified by slicked hair, fitted pants, and strategic layering of collared shirts under textured sweaters.

# fork it over.

## christmas chicken dinner: takeout fit for a messiah

by zackpensak

When I hear the word "Christmas," there is one image that immediately goes through my mind. No, my church-going readers, it is neither the thought of a family sitting under the tree nor of jolly ol' St. Nick sliding down the chimney. As a proud member of the Jewish religion, when I think of the wonderful festivities that accompany the 25th of December, I envision the magical moment of getting on the phone at approximately 11:37 AM and calling up my local Chinese restaurant. I am met by the warm voice of the phone tender at Shanghai Gourmet, ready to help me complete the age-old, unofficial Jewish tradition of eating Chinese food on Christmas Day. So, without further ado, here is a list of choice Chinese cuisine to savor this holiday.

By far my favorite American-Chinese food dish of all time, the glistening, bright-orange poultry that is sesame chicken tops the list. When I open the Tupperware containing this treat, I know I am in for a wonderful afternoon. A truly filling meal, this protein packed entrée will line your stomach with absolute happiness. Akin to the glaze of the classic Christmas ham, the pure sugar sauce of the chicken provides a special addition to what is a sure staple in the Christmas diet.

8

If you are looking to have some variety in your dish on this wintry afternoon, look no further than the succulent beef lo mein. With beautifully boiled



ben berrick

oh-so-hard to resist: white rice. Like snowflakes falling gently upon the frozen ground, the grains of steamed rice land one by one in an ever-inviting mouth. Want to add some zest to your Christmas feast? Toss a little bit of soy sauce onto the rice, turning what was once just a simple appetizer into a deluxe first course. One bite, and your palate has now been taken to holiday heaven. ■

## r.i.p. pumpkin spice season

by mollyo'shea

It is with great sorrow that we announce the end of pumpkin spice season. The beloved spice that flavors our coffee, lattes, and the likes is now officially done for the year.

Pumpkin spice season always seems too short lived; it feels like it started only a month or two ago, and its already gone. In that brief time the wonderful spice had managed to capture the love of so many. The delicious flavor spread from coffee drinks, to treats, to beer, and became so big that even Oreo had to get in on the pumpkin spice fever and create a new seasonal cookie.

Beloved fans all had a similar reaction to the sad news about the end of the pumpkin spice season. There were many "I literally died", and "I can't even", and other phrases of the like swirling around at the realization that pumpkin spice's time was up.

No other flavor can ever create as much excitement as pumpkin spice can. Chocolate gets a mere meh, vanilla is so basic, and even maple pales in comparison to the wonders of the delicious spice.

Alas, all good things must come to an end and we all will miss pumpkin spice dearly. We will think about the delicious spice every time we passive aggressively sip on peppermint mochas, or gingerbread lattes in hopes that it will compare. So here's looking at you pumpkin spice, you will be missed. ■

noodles, superbly sautéed vegetables, and fairly fried beef, all corners of the food pyramid are included in this hearty meal. Preceded by a delicious hors d'oeuvre of chestnuts that have been carefully roasted on an open fire, this splendid traditional Chinese lunch or dinner is perfect for the special occasion.

For those who are partial to omitting meat from their holiday, allow me to recommend the veggie hot and sour soup. Ideally, the world outside is sub-32 degrees and filled with flurries on a dreamy white Christmas. Inside the house, may the tasty soup fill you with warmth and love to share with everyone around. The unique blend of both spice and sour provides even the most adventurous of Christmas eaters with a very peculiar delight.

Although it may be simple, the final choice on my list of tasty treats is oh-so-hard to resist: white rice. Like snowflakes falling gently upon the frozen ground, the grains of steamed rice land one by one in an ever-inviting mouth. Want to add some zest to your Christmas feast? Toss a little bit of soy sauce onto the rice, turning what was once just a simple appetizer into a deluxe first course. One bite, and your palate has now been taken to holiday heaven. ■

# trash.



# i want you so bad

someone on campus catch your eye?  
couldn't get a **name**?  
submit your **love** anonymously  
uvm.edu/~[watertwr/iwysb.html](http://watertwr/iwysb.html)

You were wearing a scarf at the E.P.  
You didn't remember me  
Oh ok. No, it's fine... really. Don't worry about it.

In a few weeks time, we had found our rhyme  
In Vauban finding vegan friends and foes  
That girl named Marketa who goes and goes.

Neighborhood cats and crepes  
Felixes all over the place.  
Wir wandern im der Schwarzwald  
That indecipherable techno song ... what's it called?

We are back in the mountains that are green  
And I don't wanna make a scene...  
But now you remember my face  
My best friend; I just want to give you an embrace

**When:** Last year and a few minutes ago  
**Where:** nice places  
**I saw:** A friendly tall boy  
**I am:** A happy friend

Out of sheer frustration,  
Or maybe it was procrastination,  
I moved my furniture.

I've been down and fatigued  
And totally not intrigued  
With all my class materials.

My mind strays ahead  
Where I'm laying in my bed  
With my dog, in my house.

I can't wait to eat  
All the stuffing and meat  
Thanksgiving has to offer.

As far a school goes,  
I'd rather not be here though,  
I'll miss all my friends.

Vacation is less than one week away  
So let me just say, "Hip-hip, hooray!"  
And drive home.

**When:** Daydreams  
**Where:** Classes  
**I saw:** A world of wonder  
**I am:** A homesick joe-schmoe

To my millionaire:

Is this the second time around?  
Where we give each other signals,  
But none of them can be found?

Your funny and kind,  
I'd like for you to be mine  
But school can really get you on that grind...

They say history tends to repeat itself  
And all the signs say this is true,  
But it seems like you've just put me on the dusty, top shelf.

We're with each other a hell of a lot  
It probable helps  
That I think you're kind of hot.

So puff your chest a little bit more  
Touch my shoulder when you laugh,  
I won't be a bore.

Accidental footies under the table is always kinda cute  
But seriously keep flirting  
Your point isn't mute.

They say drunk thoughts are sober truths  
Well let me just say you've been talking  
The truth is transparent, and I ain't a sleuth.

Give me sign the next time we meet  
Talk about Thanksgiving or international travel  
And if you like beets.

If you're reading this hopefully you know it's you  
I've dropped enough hints...  
What more could I do?

**When:** Repeated interaction  
**Where:** On campus, in my mind  
**I saw:** The hope of a clear, definitive signal  
**I am:** Wishing for something a little more than friends

We're best friends.  
We hang out 24/7.  
We've acknowledged our mutual feelings.  
Our friends tell us to get together.  
But you're hesitant.  
I'm bad with words,  
Which is why this poem is so bad.  
But please realize  
I want you like mad.

**When:** All  
**Where:** Day  
**I saw:** Every  
**I am:** Day

# ear

overheard a conversation in b-town?  
was it hilarious? dumb? inspirational?  
tell **the ear** and we'll print it.  
uvm.edu/~[watertwr/ear.html](http://watertwr/ear.html)

### The Grundle

*Knowledgeable female:* Boys are stupid. There are a lot of cute boys.

### The sweltering depths of Waterman

*Girl 1:* Have you seen this picture of Kim Kardashian? It's all over the internet for some reason.

*Girl 2: (looks)* Why? So she's got a big oily butt... who cares?

### Simpson Dining Hall

*Male to his friends:* I'd go gay for cornbread, I'm telling you...

Do you like to **write**?

**Draw?**

Talk about the **crazy shit** that happens to you?

Maybe **write about** all that crazy shit?

## the water tower



## wants you!

We meet on

**Tuesdays @ 7:30 pm**

in the **Jost Foundation Room, Davis Center**

Bring your **shit** ... we want to hear about it.

remember to check out the overflow  
on the blog!  
[thewatertower.tumblr.com](http://thewatertower.tumblr.com)



# tunes.



## a good year: *taylor swift-ly* back on top

by katjaritchie

People are always going to hate on Taylor Swift. This is a universal truth. However, 1989 has brought a change of heart for some, leaving diehard fans to reapply their red lipstick and winged eyeliner while chanting a chorus of “I told you so.”

I’ve been with Taylor since her “don’t let anyone find out I’m from Pennsylvania and not Nashville” days. Swift is putting more and more distance between herself and her country roots. If 2012’s *Red* was testing the waters, 1989 is a cannonball: there is not a single shred of banjo, forced Southern drawl, or acoustic midnight yearning to be found. Thank god.

Don’t get me wrong, homegirl is still prone to delusions of grandeur. Since stalking and befriending model/human scarecrow Karlie Kloss (even SoulCycling side by side at the same posh gym), Taylor decided her next move was to open her newest album with an ode to the city that never sleeps (seeing as she’s spent like the past six months there or whatever).

“Welcome to New York” boasts with surging synthesizers that “it’s been waiting for you,” “you can love who you want,” and basically that it’s the most freeing place in the whole world. The whole thing smacks of overblown, unfounded fantasy. She is, however, donating all the royalties from the track to benefit NYC public schools, which is fortunate because it’s the most positive thing that could be said about the song.

For those who were hoping Swift’s evolution would spread to her subject matter, my condolences. This album is about Harry Styles. Once you get past the fact that Taylor is a grown-ass woman pining so hard for a teenage boy (or ignore that detail, which has worked for me), the standout tracks are (unsurprisingly) infectious and even sexy, a word I have never used to describe anything by Taylor Swift before.



copyright big machine

“Style,” which is the honest-to-god track title because Taylor does not give a fuck, is about getting roped back into the “on-again,” a dark drive home that ends up winding down a much more tantalizing road. “You’ve got that James Dean, daydream look in your eye, and I’ve got that red lip, classic thing that you like” starts us off easy, but by “You’ve got that long hair, slicked-back, white T-shirt, and I’ve got that good-girl faith and a tight little skirt,” the world has been divided into two types of people: ones that are dizzy with thoughts of their own dangerous someone, and fucking liars. The saga continues with the uncertain and fast-paced “Out of the Woods,” and finishes with the ethereally refreshing “Clean,” a sure favorite on the album.

“Blank Space” is the masterpiece with the delirious, beautiful-disaster, Great-Gatsby-plus-iPhones video. There is always respect in my heart for those who can own their insanity, and even more to Swift for responding directly to the bullshit that women should be wary of their passion, lest being labeled “crazy”—but, of course, wandering too far to the other end of the spectrum makes you a frigid bitch. Misandry, killer hooks, and lyrics that bring everyone—everyone—back to those times they definitely felt like they were pulling an *Orange is the New*

*Black* style, Morello-breaking-into-her-pretend-boyfriend’s-window scenario? Snaps, Taylor. Snaps.

Overall, the feel of 1989 is airy but bold, confident yet dangerous, with enough pointed breakup references to please the longtime Swift lovers and a musical departure to ensnare unwitting new fans. Call it industrialized or mainstream all you want, but don’t you dare say Taylor Swift doesn’t know exactly what she’s doing. ■

## love’s crushing diamond: the album of the summer (in an alternate chiller reality)

by jessebaum

Every year, there is a song or an album of the summer, and I am left to wonder, why? Is it because the sunny weather implies happiness and happiness sells better than whatever the emotion is that winter evokes (contemplation about The End), and is therefore simply better in a hypercapitalist society? Is it because relentless autotune gets some people off, along with beats that squirm like the ultimate earworm into the folds of my brain? Is it because no one can think of something that rhymes better with G6 than... G6?

It is my belief that we can fight said madness with music that gets stuck in your head without any sane human wanting to gouge it out once it’s there. To this end I

present *Love’s Crushing Diamond*, the sound of the summer in a kinder world.

The album, Mutual Benefit’s first full LP, is a well-constructed melodic canoe ride of auditory pleasure. If you’ve ever listened to Fleet Foxes and thought, “wow,

**“Mutual Benefit’s first full LP is a well-constructed canoe ride of auditory pleasure.”**

this really isn’t melodic enough,” or “damn, I think I could be brought to tears with staggering audible gorgeousness a little more thoroughly,” then you should seriously give *Love’s Crushing Diamond* a listen.

I first saw Mutual Benefit opening for a band called Wild Beasts (don’t worry, they were tame). The lead singer, Jordan Lee, was trashed. Every time he would pick up the mic, he would slur complete nonsense for a few minutes. Regardless of Lee’s toxicity, Mutual Benefit’s sound was incredible. It is a really meticulous album (But seriously, listen to this thing in order), that features windchimes and harmonies that will make you sigh, just a little bit. It also features excessive vamping, a phenomenon Pandora insists that I love.

So just call your guy, get just a bit spacey, and listen to this album. At the very least, it will never have a music video set in a high school made about it. ■

# creative stockings

## the cipher

feat. kerrymartin

### grant daverson: ace detective

by leonardbartenstein



ben berrick

“What do you think you’re doing here, Daverson?” asked Diana Pembleton, waving her nightstick in his general direction. “I thought I made it very clear how far I wanted you to stay away from me and my investigations.”

“Yeah,” said Daverson, fidgeting with an unlit cigarette in his mouth. “You went to a few more decimal places than I thought were really significant.”

“When it comes to getting away from you,” said Pembleton, dismissively to Grant, “it could never be more significant.”

“That hurts,” said Daverson, “like a bee sting hurts. When you step on a nest on a hot day at a Fourth of July picnic, and you squeal like a small child, suddenly it’s not only your foot that hurts but your pride as well.”

“That’s what I want to hear,” said Pembleton, coolly giving him an icy gaze.

“I am here for public records,” said Daverson, a smug smile smothering his face. “And you can’t deter me from that.”

“They’re down the hallway to the left,” said Pembleton, narrowing her eyes like the slits of a cat’s pupils, dilating in the light.

“I know how this place works,” said Daverson. “Remember, I used to be a cop here, too, before I left the force...”

“And remember how none of us really want you back anymore for this exact attitude?”

“I just need the public records.”

“Then you need to speak with Carol, who catalogs the public records. I thought you used to be a cop, who worked here. Don’t you remember Carol? Don’t you remember that, at least?”

Her words stung deep, like a wasp who overestimated the amount of force it would take to break a person’s skin, and plunged half their abdomen into the larger creature’s arm in a folly attempt at ferocity, ending only in the death of the wasp itself and some minor irritation on the part of the human—that is, unless they were allergic to wasp stings, in which case the outcome would be much different.

Grant straightened himself out and walked down the hallway to the office, leaving the hurtful words of his ex-department-mate behind him. He instead turned to Carol, who, in her hiked-up khaki slacks and floral print blouse looked absolutely stellar, the makeup caked on her face giving her just a bit more color than would be necessary to convince someone that she wasn’t just a fleshy corpse. Her wrinkles moved more than her head did when she turned to watch Grant enter the file room. “Grant,” she said in a low, scratchy, monotonous, librarian-esque voice. “What a surprise and... pleasure.”

“And the same to you, as always,” returned Grant. “Look,” he continued, leaning on her desk as if he and she were great old friends, though there was no doubt, by her mannerisms, that they could not be considered more than old acquaintances, or perhaps old work-chums. “I need all you have on Rachael Valencé. If you...”

Before he could finish, she produced a thick file and plopped it on her desk in front of him. “Here,” she growled. “After that whole bang-up with her sister, I figured you’d be coming for it.” She slid it across the desk to him, where it brushed his fingers,

like the tendrils of seaweed on a timid swimmer’s leg in a dirty lake where they didn’t want to go swimming in the first place, they were just pushed into it by their friends—but not literally, just the peer pressure kind of push, not the physical kind of push. “Have fun.”

“Oh, well,” said Grant, picking up the sizeable folder. “I do love our conversations,” he said, “and I look forward to seeing your resplendent form sometime very soon.” He winked at her and it was not a good thing for either of them. They were both uncomfortable with this. So he left. ■

“‘that hurts,’ said daverson, ‘like a bee sting hurts. when you step on a nest on a hot day at a fourth of july picnic, and you squeal...’”

Made out with a boy on a bed,  
Our next meeting I did most dread,  
I wanted to kiss,  
But he just looked pissed,  
So I ran and my face turned all red.

Not wanting to risk searching the web,  
I turned to movie night instead:  
Under the radar I passed  
Ogling ScarJo’s sweet ass  
And thought of it later in bed.

My first boyfriend was but two weeks,  
The least of my dating streaks.  
Held hands a bit,  
Then that was it:  
It seemed our love did hastily peak.

An unexpected clothing mishap:  
Got dressed, couldn’t make my jeans snap  
Seemingly overnight  
My hips had expanded, out of sight  
Body changes deserve their bad rap.

I once used my brother’s laptop  
What I found surely made my jaw drop  
Files of porn  
“O” faces of scorn  
Curious, I hit “play” instead of “stop.”

Are you still listening, UVemcees??? Hip-hop hamstrings feeling limber? ‘Cuz it wouldn’t be another week at the water tower without some wicked spittins! Still feels lonely up here on center stage...waiting for others to snatch the mic. Send me your raps, on my topics or on any topic! Even on no topic! Just go off! But until that happens, I’m still here, and this week, we reject **Grad School**.

I woke up this morning in a puddle of my own piss  
Muddlin’ my own wits, flesh but I feel boneless.  
What the fuck world is this? Must be soulless  
Tryin’ to be what I can be but cash is what bestows bliss.  
I know my brain has grown fit, fuck it, I ain’t worth shit  
Diploma built on blunt facts, so roll it up and burn hits  
Cuz I’m worthless, job market doesn’t serve kids  
Without degrees that cost an arm and leg and cervix.  
I take the GRE, it takes a pee on me,  
Like porn from Germany, but at least their school’s free!  
M.A., M.F.A. M.E., M.D.,  
J.D., Ph.D., when will we really be free?  
The machine is broken, here’s how you steal it’s tokens:  
One, find work that pays you to keep school-soakin’;  
Two, take twenty years off, I ain’t jokin’;  
Three, fuck ambition, hit the beach, and stay tokin’.  
Don’t let the system make you feel less than your worth,  
Cuz there are infinite things that you can do on this earth.

by unemployed wonder-grad Kerry Martin

Next issue, we light up **Half-Assing Religious Holidays**. Please write raps and contribute, however long or short they are! Send your lines to [thewatertowernews@gmail.com](mailto:thewatertowernews@gmail.com) with your favorite rapper in the subject line. Submissions are due by Tuesday, September 16th. The best student rapper of the semester gets a fabulous prize! ■

## puberty: limericks of hormones past

by the water tower.

This first time that I saw the red,  
I cried and then emailed my friend.  
We used secret fonts,  
Fearing hacker taunts,  
What pursued, my most embarrassing thread.

I leaned to retrieve a book.  
Everyone at the table looked:  
“Girl look at that ass,”  
I ran off to class,  
The butt of the comment I took.

Off I snuck to my parents’ shower.  
In haste, I crept at a dark hour.  
Wielding the blade,  
Anti-hair attack made:  
My legs, how they bled, and I cowered.

In the morning, to the mirror I shot  
On my forehead: a glaring red spot  
Under my skin, felt it cooking  
I’m sure everyone’s looking  
The disgrace on my face, one gross dot.

The vocal cords play their own game  
The highs and the lows went and came  
My body’s changing  
My voice re-arranging  
Being thirteen really is lame.



# cat litter.



with collincappelle



~~PERKY~~  
TINY  
CHRISTMAS

leonardbartenstein

So Long Water Tower  
I'll Miss You All

*ben berrick,  
art editor extraordinaire*

## Lyric of the (Bi)Week:

"Here I stand  
In the light of day  
Let the storm rage on,  
The cold never bothered me anyway!"

-Let It Go (So this is originally from Frozen, but my favorite version is by Oney and Psychicpebbles. Look it up on youtube)