



# the water tower.

## uvm's alternative newsmag

volume 14 - issue 1 - tuesday, september 3, 2013 - uvm, burlington, vt

uvm.edu/~watertwr - thewatertower.tumblr.com

## let's clear the air here

by katjarichie

Students smoking cigarettes on the steps of the Bailey-Howe library are as quintessentially "UVM" as watching sunsets from the Williams fire escape, and as commonplace as a plastic water bottle—and now, like both those scenarios, it seems to be a thing of the past on campus. Walking to class last Monday, I looked up to see the front of the library swathed in an aggressively pert shade of blue, with a table manned by two staff members brazenly spray-painting stenciled tobacco facts all over the steps and sidewalk: did you know that "secondhand smoke contains 69 chemicals known to cause cancer?" Could they be serious? But not ten minutes later, a student was physically directed off the steps, half-smoked cigarette in hand.

I met this change to campus prepared with every fiber of my being for an argument: who does our pampered and over-educated administration think they are to regulate our open air? What level of detached yuppie-dom were they on to think they could tear an entire decidedly hip and liberal student body from their hand-rolled Spirits? My head reeled immediately with counter-attacks in the clear monotone usually reserved for coffee-shop-asshole political debates. My game face was on.

I started out cynically reflective of the holier-than-thou run around that, initially, I received. At first, I heard a lot of talk about "image" and that a smoker was not the "proper" face for UVM. Like many of my peers, I was quickly skeptical that the university cared a lot more about the outside of its public buildings and appearance



liz stafford

than the withering, blackened lungs inside the individuals. Pensively, I wondered if this was a sneaky beginning to an impending campus-wide cigarette ban. The reach of the campaign seemed to depend

I should have figured that the *chosen strategy* of a group of librarians would be to *kill 'em with kindness.*

on who I talked to—most people seemed to only care about entering and exiting the library without having to breathe smoke if they didn't want to, but some saw a bigger future. Perhaps the furthest vision for the project belonged to the 13-year-old daughter of UVM's head of custodial staff, volunteering her very own time out of a simple and endearing love for nonprofit work and a fresh-faced hope for a smoke-free public. This was the kind of benevolent naiveté that makes your lighter like a rock in your

pocket and want to dart for an exit to continue being a less-than-upstanding citizen in peace.

It was rather by chance that my aggressive front towards the campaign was ultimately dismantled. Wondering exactly how much the university spent on the clean, professional banner and stacks of anti-smoking literature, I was directed to Nancy Bercau in the Dean's Office in the library. As spearhead

of the "Let's Clear the Air" project, she was extremely candid and transparent in the intention of the campaign. As it turns out, the whole shebang really has nothing to do with anyone or anything further than the steps of Bailey-Howe, and it was never intended to.

I should have figured that the chosen strategy of a group of librarians would be to kill 'em with kindness.

UVM spent about five thousand dollars on the project—banner, literature,

## heroes are for comic books: the *snowden* *snafu*

by benberrick

In May, Edward Snowden, a then 29 year-old employee of NSA defense contractor Booz Allen Hamilton, rocked the American public with information about PRISM, the covert and nearly-omnipotent internet surveillance program. While few were surprised that such a program existed, the sheer volume of data monitored and the extent of the program's reach is stunning.

During the first week after Snowden's leaks were published in *The Guardian*, NSA and government officials attempted to

*"the sheer volume of data monitored and the extent of the program's reach is stunning."*

implement some kind of damage control. They assured Americans that only the existence of telephone exchanges and Internet history were being recorded and that only those pieces of data linking individuals with known threats were being monitored. However, as the months have crawled on, more oversights, oversteps, and disturbing powers have come to light. Additionally, despite all of the "protective" monitoring, Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev still managed to orchestrate the largest domestic terror attack since 9/11, bringing the simple effectiveness of the NSA's monitoring into question. As we stand now, the NSA and the Obama administration have come away looking untrustworthy at best, and at worst, laughably big-brother-esque.

Given the importance of these leaks, it is hardly surprising that Snowden has been nothing if not a divisive figure. By effectively forcing the declassification of PRISM and the NSA's other communication monitoring systems, Snowden has challenged the government's right to secrecy—effectively making a statement that no government data itself is safely clandestine. The major issue this creates falls along

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inside  
me:

solitary in burlington  
by rebecca laurion

what the world taught me  
by phoebefooks

miley cyrus  
by mike storage

yeezus  
by dylan mccarthy



# the best news team inbox in the universe.

Dear **readers,**

Volume 14. 14 semesters of writing, drawing, antagonizing, and putting it to the man, all while somehow managing to avoid breaking any major laws.

None of that is easy, but thankfully we have a rocking staff, including some new faces! We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest editors Mike Storace, Dan Nissim, Rebecca Laurion, and Stacey Brandt. As bad as we wanted them though there's someone else we want so bad-you.

Whether you want to join our dysfunctional family, are a dedicated reader returning to us for another year (we love you by the way), or a new reader just learning about us, we want you all so bad. Without you, our readers, there wouldn't be much of a point in us putting a paper out each week. We would probably do it anyway, because we like to see our names on things, but it would get boring really quickly. So thank you, readers, for giving us the inspiration we need to keep going. Thank you for picking this paper up every week and giggling at what we write/draw.

As we embark upon this new year, our seventh as a publication, we hope we here at **the water tower** can continue to make you question, wonder, argue, fight and giggle. Cause in the end, that's what we do.

To many more Tuesdays,  
Cait O'Hara and Sarah Perda  
*Editors-in-Chief*

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

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## the law in brief with coleburton

### Vermont Bill H.200

Decriminalizes up to an ounce of marijuana or up to five grams of hashish, a form of pot more commonly found at UVM in "wax" or "oil" forms, went into effect on July 1st. This legislation establishes getting busted with less than an ounce of pot as a ticketable offense, similar to a speeding ticket or underage drinking citation from one of the fine officers of BPD. What it doesn't do is remove criminal charges for those supplying, dealing, or even simply owning a plant. Additionally, H.200 does not protect you from any charges brought up against you if you are caught driving under the influence of cannabis. Also, any municipality that wishes to regulate public consumption of marijuana has the right to do so. This summer has seen Vermont join fifteen other states (including my home-state of Ohio, oddly enough) in decriminalizing non-medical marijuana.

### Oh NY...

Mayor Bloomberg's sugary drink ban was not allowed to go into effect on March 12th because of pending lawsuits. This summer the appeals court process concluded that the law was an illegal overreach of executive power. This marks a legislative setback to the NYC Mayor's agenda of health programs, which is already hampered by the simple fact that people often choose to be unhealthy. For example, the practice of displaying calorie counts does not always influence consumers to take the lower calorie items.

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

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#### read the wt.

B/H Library - 1st Floor  
**Davis Center** - 1st Floor Entrance

**Davis Center** - Main St. Tunnel  
L/L - Outside Alice's Café

**Old Mill Annex** - Main Lobby  
**Waterman** - Main Lobby

**Williams** - Inside Steps  
**Online** - [uvm.edu/~watertwr](http://uvm.edu/~watertwr)

#### join the wt.

New writers and artists  
are always welcome

**Weekly meetings**  
Tuesdays at 7:30 pm

Chittenden Bank 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.**

news ticker: Did anyone see the VMAs? I can't believ Miley showed that much ankle.+++ How 'bout dem Pats? Now they're left with half a TE and without Jesus' favorite QB.+++ Guten tag, dog. ■

## battlefield egypt: the fight for a nation

by dannisim

Armies are not clashing and bombs are not falling, but make no mistake – there is a battle going on over the future of Egypt. This battle not only has major implications for the people of the one of the most powerful Arab countries, but for the region as a whole. Since the widely supported July 3rd overthrow of Mohamed Morsi, the democratically elected president, the country has been in a state of imbalance with over a thousand deaths in the streets and a call for martial law. To understand the issues fully, let's take a look back to the circumstances that allowed Morsi to rise to power:

### Arab Spring: The Overthrow of a Tyrant

The start of the Arab Spring was a major milestone in Middle Eastern politics; in late 2010 and early 2011, scores of people flooded the streets to call for the removal of unjust rulers and changes in policy. Egypt's popular and military-backed revolution led to the removal of 30-year president Hosni Mubarak, leaving hundreds dead in the wake of conflict. The constitution was suspended, Parliament was dissolved, and the country came under the military's interim control.

On June 30, 2012, Mohamed Morsi was inaugurated as the first democratically elected president in Egypt's history. Morsi won under the banner of the Freedom and Justice Party, an organization that has close ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, a multi-faceted (religious, social, & political) Islamist movement. During his time as president, Morsi was criticized for creating a government that was not inclusive of other voices. Morsi aligned heavily with the agenda of the Muslim Brotherhood, replacing Mubarak-era bureaucrats with members of the Brotherhood. The economy was sinking and domestic security was scarce with rape and violence in the streets. A major red flag was Morsi's attendance at a rally on June 15th that called for holy war in Syria.

Tremors finally led to an eruption on June 30th, 2013, as anti-Morsi protests swelled the streets. At the behest of protesters, the military gave Morsi a 48-hour ultimatum to meet their demands. The ultimatum was refused, and Egypt's military swiftly moved in to remove the president and establish an interim government.

### Two Months & The Death Tolls Rise

The Brotherhood established camps on the streets in Cairo, vowing to stay until Morsi was reinstated. Protests erupted on both sides, and many were killed in the streets. What started as non-violent protests by the Brotherhood soon erupted into violent action. The bloodiest day of confrontation was August 14th when authorities raided two of the major camps in Cairo. Over 600 were left dead – marking the deadliest day since the 2011 Egyptian revolution. Much can be said about protests staged at the camps, but the military deserves the majority

of the blame for this day of violence. In the wake of these events, Egypt's interim government called for a month-long state of emergency, which grants them power above the law.

### The World Reacts

First, let's look how the United States stands on the issue: while President Obama spoke out against the violence that erupted on August 14th, the U.S. government has been careful not to call the military-led overthrow of Morsi a "coup." Doing so would hurt relations with Egyptian military leaders. It would also affect the \$1.23 billion dollars in military aid the U.S. currently provides. Even though Egypt relies on such aid, the Egyptians control a much more valuable asset: the Suez Canal. More than 4% of the world's oil traffic as well as 8% of all seaborne trade go through the Suez Canal. It is also a crucial shortcut of U.S. naval traffic—without the use of the canal, the U.S. Navy would have to travel around the Cape of Good Hope, which would greatly affect military movement.

As for other Middle Eastern countries, the crisis in Egypt poses a major threat in the region. Those who support the military intervention include Israel, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). These countries are in favor of the stability the transition can provide, but also the opportunity to weaken or even dissolve the Muslim Brotherhood. A coalition formed by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Kuwait have pledged to give the new government \$12 billion and even more if the U.S. decides to cut its aid to Egypt.

Iran and Turkey both stand against the military overthrow. Although Iran, a Shiite led government, and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, a Sunni led organization, fall on opposite ends of the classic Sunni-Shia conflict, Iran would like to use the Brotherhood's standing to further its policies. If Iran had its way, it would see the Brotherhood used to destabilize Saudi Arabia as well being used against Israel, one of Iran's central rivals.

### What the Future Holds

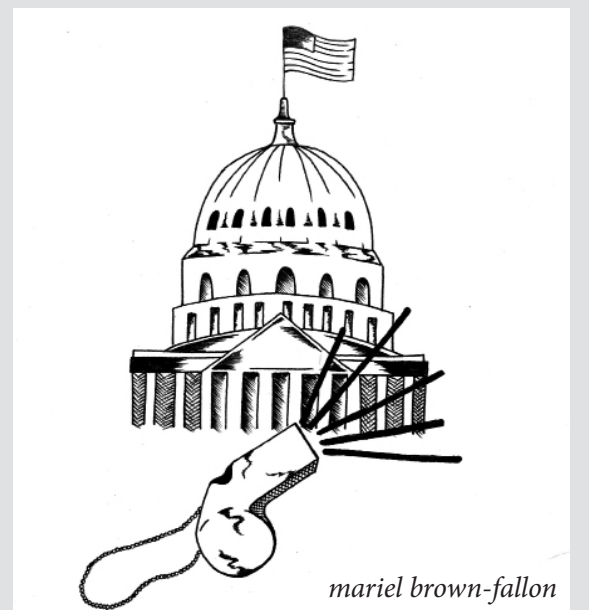
As we've grown used to these past few years, it is unclear what the future holds for Egypt. The country has fumbled with its first attempt at democracy and who's to say it won't happen again. While it is true that Morsi got out of line, it is clear that the true power does not lie in the government – it lies in the streets. The Egyptian protesters gather with a purpose unmatched throughout the world. The people clearly have an itch for voicing their opinions; the important thing going forward is to establish an appropriate forum for opinions to come into action. During the Mubarak-era, there was no such thing as an open political forum, so the people will continue to learn. This may yield a democratic government or it may not. The important thing is that the fleeting stability is maintained in an already unstable region.

## NSA - continued from page 1

government needs secrecy to create more effective ways of protecting us, or do you think that it simply cannot be trusted to not abuse personal information that it has no business accumulating in the first place? With more details coming to light about NSA employees checking up on old lovers' emails and the investigations of contacts two or three times removed from

lier leaks of Bradley Manning in 2010, future information releases might, though motivated by pure and admirable intent, result in deaths or serious political damage to US foreign relations.

I can say with resolve that I do not believe that Snowden deserves to be considered a traitor. There are no reasons yet apparent that his motives in releasing this information



mariel brown-fallon

potential threats, it is hard not to drift toward the latter opinion. The central issue, I think, is that we demand that our government be proactive in defending us, while our legal system is, by principle, necessarily reactive. This kind of cognitive dissonance creates the kind of outrage at a program that, if it had been more clearly explained and more strictly policed, would not have spawned such strong feelings of betrayal.

What to make of Snowden then? Is he a hero who brought sinister injustice to light, or a traitor who seriously compromised the security of our nation? On the one hand, the serious overstepping of regulatory measures that were supposed to control the NSA's monitoring program definitely warranted public attention. Without serious pressure from the outside, the legislative and executive branches would have no incentive to curb abuses of power within the security community. On the other hand, Snowden set a very dangerous precedent: that one man should and can have the power to declassify information based on his objection to it. While Snowden's motives were supposedly pure what kind of message would letting his actions pass unexamined send to others in those government structures where secrecy is vital to our nation's stability and international interest? Like the ear-

ner derived from anything other than a moral and political disagreement. Certainly, there is nothing wrong with calling out and criticizing serious governmental overreach. I can also say, though, with some confidence, that he is not a hero. His leak was criminal and damaging to the certain degree of trust we must have in our government. By releasing the information and running —first to Hong Kong and now to Russia— rather than standing to answer the charges against him, he has placed himself above the law and refused to answer to the very people whose freedoms he believes he is protecting. He is man whose actions defy our normal dichotomy and reside in the morally grey area which leaves us uncomfortable and unsatisfied. Why should we even be so concerned with the legacy of a man whose impact has not yet been fully felt? Hindsight may be the only way to accurately gage the worthiness of his actions.

Personally, I believe that Snowden himself put it best. In an interview with the South China Morning Post during his unofficial asylum in Hong Kong, Snowden said simply, "I'm neither traitor nor hero. I'm an American". Perhaps we all need to decide for ourselves what being an American truly is. ■



# around town.



## the *solitary soul's* guide to burlington

by rebeccaaurion

*Making friends and sharing awesome memories is one of the best aspects of being in college, especially in Burlington where an adventure is never really too far away. Restaurants, shows and the great outdoors are literally surrounding our campus, perfect for grabbing some dorm mates or that Global Studies major you've had your eye on and having a great time. But, what if that's not really an option just yet in the semester for you? Maybe you're a first year who hasn't really made a core group of friends yet. Maybe being around large groups of people makes you uncomfortable and anxious and you'd rather be your own wolfpack without the purse. Sorry, Alan, saichel.*

*Week of Welcome makes it really easy to get out of your dorm room and get to know the campus or try something new. But now that it's the second week of the semester, you may be wondering what to do now that a steady stream of highly advertised events on campus isn't readily available. Take it from someone who's had more than one weekend left to her own devices. There is plenty for you to do, and tons of awesome times to be had. And no matter what your situation is, believe me, wanting some alone time is perfectly acceptable. So do yourself a favor. Check out some flyers downtown or look up events online that interest you. And if you can't find anything that speaks to you, consider some of these tried and true favorites.*

### Thrift Shopping

If you're one of those people who can't buy clothes without consulting eighteen of your friends, skip this one. But buying clothes on the cheap without having to answer to anyone about how much money you're spending or that yes, you really do want a sequin vest feels totally liberating.

Try out the Shalom Shuk, Battery St. Jeans, Downtown Threads or good ol' Goodwill.

### Sporting Events

Even if you're not a sporty person, consider giving it a try. The energy of the crowds may seem intimidating if you're shy, but the enthusiasm and energy is infectious, and soon you'll find yourself shouting at the teams, whether or not you actually know what's going on. Even if you aren't in a group, you'll feel in the group. And maybe you'll spot a hottie from one of your classes, so next time you see them, you can start a conversation.

Do it local with Lake Monsters games or check out field hockey, soccer or intramural battles.

### Restaurants

In case you haven't noticed, Burlington has a fuckload of places to eat, so there's really no reason to not find somewhere to tickle your tastebuds. Spend a day trying small samples from a few different spots until you fall in love. Or just spend a Saturday morning at the farmers' market behind Church Street feasting on organic foods. Personal recommendation: track down the maple lemonade. Don't ask, just do it. This is your mission, should you choose to accept it.

### Book Events, Lectures and Workshops

Want something quieter? Phoenix Books downtown has local authors come in and speak about their work, and different coffee shops and bars downtown feature local bands and musicians. And while we're on the subject of coffee shops, they're a great place to get some work done. Get a laptop or a book and your beverage of choice and hang out for awhile. Finish that paper, do some crowd watching, whatever you want.

I personally recommend Muddy Waters for this, and not just because of the Muddy Shakes. Never been? Just walk inside and see what I mean. The shop's rustic feel is totally unique, and you'll definitely want to stay awhile. Want to stay on campus? Check out a lecture or speaker in a subject you've maybe never even considered looking into. Go to one of the workshops by the Women's Center or Active Minds, or even attend a dance class by SASS. Get out of your comfort zone a bit. That's what college is all about. You never know what can happen if you don't give things a chance.



### Going to the Movies

Regardless of the stigma of seeing movies alone, sometimes it's seriously worth it. Think about it: you get to be entertained and disappear into another world for a few hours without your friends chomping on popcorn right in your ear or hissing questions at you under their breath. And you can sit wherever you want! Your significant other adores the back row, but you want to break your neck in the front? Go for it! And no compromises on food or which movie you see. It's all about you, and the two seats you're taking up while stretching out your legs. The Roxy plays cool indie movies, action flicks and comedies at a discounted rate for students, and sometimes free tickets are available right here on campus. And who doesn't love saving money?

Sit back and relax at The Roxy, Palace 9, Majestic 10 or Essex Cinemas.

*I'm sure you get the idea. Not everything about college life or even life in Burlington has to be experienced with a big group of friends. And don't let your singlehood or shy nature get in the way of having the college experience you've always wanted. Go out there, get involved in clubs, groups or whatever interests you. If you're having fun and putting yourself out there as much as you can, you will make friends and—better yet—some awesome memories. ■*

## happy hour week one: *orange* is the new black

by rebeccaaurion

*Hello there, lovely readers. After a brief hiatus, Happy Hour is back in action! Every few weeks we'll present to you yet another way to "rehydrate" in the best of ways. As always, make sure to keep it classy and be responsible kiddies no matter how much viewing fun you have. Don't forget your AlcoholEdu lessons that "(insert high percentage) of UVM students switch between non-alcoholic beverages while drinking" or the nagging voice of your parents in the back of your head reminding you that they pay your tuition, "so don't do anything stupid".*

*This week, to start off the semester, we're all going to prison. If you haven't heard of Orange is the New Black, and let's face it, enough people have been blowing up Facebook and Tumblr about*

*it that you have no excuse, here's your chance to check it out.*

*A basic rundown to get you interested: Piper Chapman is sent to prison for smuggling drug money for her ex-girlfriend ten years ago, and the series depicts her misadventures in a women's prison. The show is based on a real life memoir of the same name, which should deeply concern you when some of the shit on the show goes down. And while there's definitely a ton of gross moments (peeing on floors, painting someone in blood, tampon sandwiches) the humor and variety of characters was enough to draw me in. Though those elements might be a bit lost on you if you're plastered. It'll give you an excuse to rewatch it pre-season 2.*



liz stafford

Drink when:

- There's a flashback to someone's life before prison (Only the first one per character per episode counts. Trust me, you'll be on the floor ten minutes in if you go for every time)
- Drugs are passed around like they're a freebie on Oprah.
- Sexual tension between Chapman and Alex
- Sexual tension between you and Alex.
- The less-than-Sonic screwdriver shows up.
- Prison sexytimes!
- Pornstache is the most vile person on the planet.
- Chapman changes her mind yet again about her opinion of Alex
- You're pretty sure you'd be better at prison than Chapman
- **Finish your drink:** Someone gets it in their head to kill Chapman. Again. (I'm looking at you, Pensatuckey) ■

## ask the *cat lady*

*This year, the water tower is bringing back an old favorite. If you've got a rant, a rave or a burning question, send it our way and look for your answers right here every Tuesday.*

Dear Cat Lady,

I'm not quite 21 yet, but a whole bunch of my friends are. I feel like I always get left behind after the pregame once they all go to the bars. So, I've been trying this whole facial hair thing to try and appear older. The results have been patchy and scratchy, but I'm nervous if it'll get me into the bars. Do you think this tactic could work downtown or am I just setting myself up for a very hairy situation?

Sincerely, Underage Bro

Dear Underage,

You're adorable, and I'm sure you look super grown-up with your three-day stubble, but in a word: no. Getting left behind by your older friends is an unfortunate fact of pre-legality. You can't have more than a couple years left, so you have a few options. You could try to convince your friends to throw a house party rather than going out, which is your safest bet. I wouldn't condone trying to cheat the system, so proceed with sneaky booze-transport tactics and sketchy identification at your own risk, and don't say I didn't warn you.

Good luck, kitten—Cat Lady ■



ben berrick

## SMOKING -continued from pg 1

t-shirts, buttons, stickers, and other accoutrements. "This is money that was already in our project fund for the library," Bercaw emphasized. "This is money that in no way affects students, doesn't take away from anything involving the students—that was extremely important to us."

Bercaw spearheaded the project this year after the complaints that mattered the most reached an all-time high. I took a second to pull my head out of the sand at that one, realizing the core of the campaign. Sure, students might have to wave away a puff of smoke every now and then, but who's really gonna hang around, entering and exiting the library all day long? Oh yeah—the staff.

UVM is not trying to pry the Marlboros from our

hands; in fact, the administration has little to do with the project—the library basically went ahead with it themselves, forfeiting their Advil-and-tissue fund for winter finals in the process, a move equal parts ballsy and totally adorable. The librarians just want a pleasant work environment and to come home every day without smelling like cigarettes. "For years, we've been saying there's nothing we could do about it," Bercaw explained, "so this year, I decided to try something. After a week, we turn it over to the student body—will it continue? I don't know. We can't make you do anything; we can't enforce it. We just had to try it."

No one can speak yet to the long-term effectiveness of the project—it's likely the smoking barrier will eventually be infringed upon, but Bercaw is mostly pleased to

see people care, about anything. "This project means so much to me because of how damn smart you all are, and that I get to talk to you every day. You guys have challenged this, and challenged me, and that's great. You're students; that's what you should be doing."

All told, there's no battle of "smoking or non" happening on campus. "Clearing the air" has started dialogue and sparked some awareness of our actions, if nothing else—and that's something we have no excuse not to continue, with or without a cigarette in hand. ■



# reflections.

## welcome to college...*now don't overthink it*

by lauragreenwood

College has forever been labeled as the “greatest years of your life,” years that swallow you up in a whirlwind of classes, flings, friendships, adventures, etc. and spit you out as an adult. As we are still in our first weeks of either your first year or just another notch on the ol’ college belt, it is easy to catch the infectious excitement of finally “living it.” But what exactly is “it,” how do you know if you’re really living college to your fullest potential? Have you attended enough parties yet to claim you’re having a blast? Has your Facebook amassed enough new friends to assert you’ve met lots of new people? Unfortunately, a lot of these superficial checkpoints completely consume our minds; they add a load heavier than your new textbooks as to how you quantify the quality of your college experience.

It’s easy to be caught up in feeling that maybe you haven’t joined enough clubs, or to wallow over the little voice in your head that tells you everyone you met doesn’t have best friend—or even regular friend—potential. My belief: you’re being too hard on yourself, cut yourself and your peers some slack, and change your perspective.

My first day of college as I sat in the endless line of cars on South Prospect St., I truly believe I experienced my first panic attack. I remember saying statements like, “I can’t wait for classes” and “You guys really don’t need to stick around” to my parents, all the while thinking, “What the fuck have I gotten into.” My façade of cool, collectiveness was such a defense mechanism to ward off the genuine feeling of not being able to do this whole college thing. Heck, I had great friends at home, I’d always been told I was smart, I had a ton of ribbons and placards on my walls acknowledging these facts, so why give any of that up and get back on the bottom of the food chain in a foreign for-

est? However, my parents still had their foot on the gas and since my future residence was less than a mile away, the option of forgetting UVM had ever been a thing was not really an option. I plastered on the smile, continued my excited ramblings and counted my blessings that all would be well.

And it was...kind of. In my mind, I went through

**“In fact, no matter the class, gender, or amount of participation on campus, EVERYONE feels *a little* inadequate”**

the refusal of feeling like I was lame, the acceptance that maybe in fact I was, the denial that anyone would ever find me funny, and the eventual realization that everyone else felt the same way. In fact, no matter the class, gender, or amount of participation on campus, EVERYONE feels a little inadequate—like they haven’t done it all at college or met their lifelong companions. Since we are all still fresh products of puberty, these social anxieties are what come most naturally. But alas, complaining and wallowing have always been easier than initiating proactive change.

I joined two clubs right off the bat, but even two years later sometimes I think I’m not doing all the “right” activities to best advance my future career. I love my friends, but still wonder if my undiscovered soulmate might be hanging around some corner of the school I haven’t explored

yet. It took time, but I really think that UVM is the best college because it generates this doubt. That may sound weird, but really I’m glad that this school is big enough, overflowing with resources, and swarmed with so many different kinds of people that I can seriously doubt after two years that I haven’t experienced enough.

So we all have doubts, but what defines us is how we manage these feelings and come to terms with ourselves. College is designated as the “greatest years of our lives” because it is when you truly get to do some soul searching, decide what is most important to you and only you, and stick by your laurels proudly. Instead of alienating or depressing yourself with self-criticism, reach out and find others who feel the same. Freshmen to seniors, we’ve all felt like maybe UVM wasn’t right, maybe you aren’t right, maybe your friends aren’t right, but it’s our most important task in school to use these doubts as guiding principles to develop.

College is not all “happy happy joy joy,” sometimes it sucks but that’s life! If it’s your first time at UVM and you’re feeling like shit cause your roommates are dweebs, your classes are impossible, and your future seems unobtainable, realize you’ve just begun. If you hate something, change it. Your friends now aren’t fixed; fuck, nothing really is fixed even by your senior year. Without sounding like an absolute Groovy UV, my mantra now is just to be free-flowing and not get too wrapped up in the pressures from anyone; four years from now I’d hate to look back and think that these years weren’t great because I didn’t let them be. ■

## what the rest of the world taught me about america

by phoebefooks

No, I did not spend my summer traipsing across Southeast Asia amongst a herd of young, hip, and fashionably poor travelers in some sort of fanciful mission to “find myself”—highly publicized of course through a spree Facebook muploads. No, instead my Ray-Bans, my smartphone , (the essential tools of any wayward 20-something), and I decided to stay close to home this summer and kick it working and living at a family resort on Lake Champlain called, The Tyler Place.

The Tyler Place, a five-star, highly acclaimed family resort is visited by America’s rich and subtly famous. Over the course of the summer I gawked at CEOs of well known companies, US senators, even a writer of a popular TV show (sorry, I can’t give too much away), and without a doubt countless doctors, lawyers, and bankers. Though, the real cream of the crop was not the guests at this resort, but the staff.

Representing each and every continent on this Earth, The Tyler Place employs a staff of roughly 100 20-somethings. Now I don’t intend to endlessly boast about getting drunk on the regular with Australians and Colombians and Brits (and Bulgarians and Hungarians and Mexicans and... okay I’ll stop), but rather I’d like to share with you what I learned from this motley crew of foreigners, because I believe they taught me more about America than America has ever taught me itself.

### We’re Excessively and Unabashedly Patriotic

Driving down VT Route 7 this summer, you may or may not have noticed that the state of Vermont decided to place American flags on every single telephone pole along a decent 50-mile stretch of the major thoroughway. I’m sure there are other flags on other Vermont routes as well, not to mention the plethora that fly from buildings and homes ubiquitously, especially during the weeks that surround July fourth. All my foreign co-workers commented on the sheer “creepiness” of our obsession with the good ol’ stars ‘n stripes. I guess this was a phenomenon I’d just become desensitized to... well, I guess every telephone pole from Swanton to Shelburne does sound like a bit much, does it not?

### We recycle!

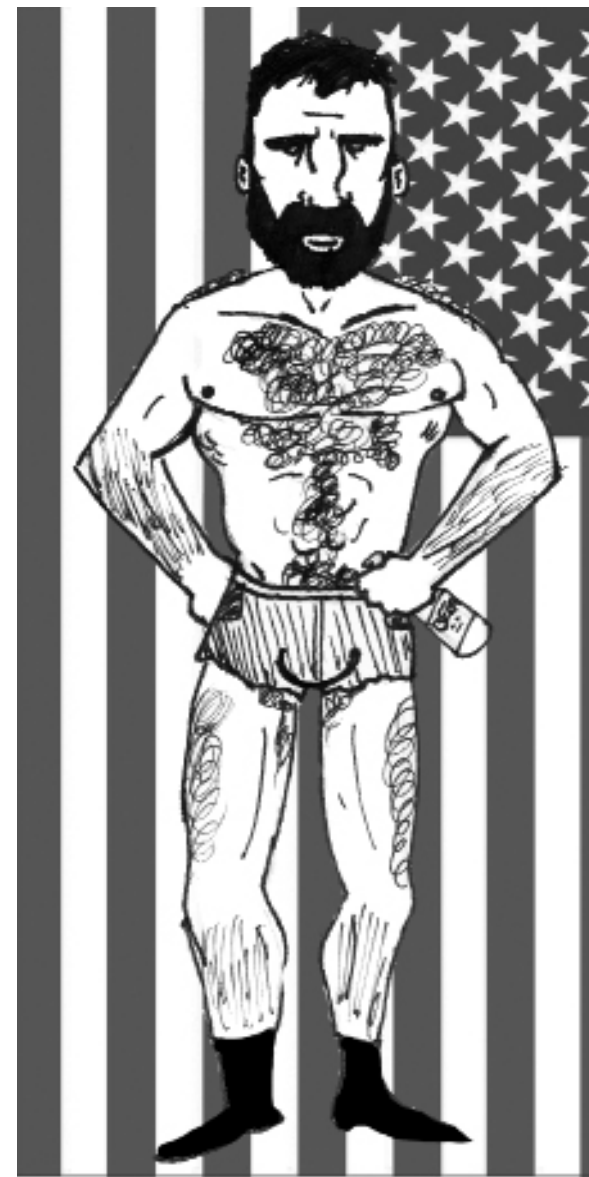
Again, maybe this is because I’m a UVMer but I could not believe my European friends when they told me that people elsewhere in the world really don’t recycle as much as Americans do.

### We love armpit hair

I never mentioned this before, but at Tyler Place I worked in the dining room as a server. Ooh look at me. Anyway, the servers and I eventually enacted our own summer-long game of Truth or Dare, which was an absolute blast—butts were touched, secret crushes were confessed, but when I dared a non-American to cut off all of his armpit hair on the spot, he furrowed his brow, lifted his sleeve, and showed me his already bare pits. Heck, he was probably more freshly shaven than I was at the time!.

### We’re Giant Sluts

Getting your mack on in some dark corner at a party? To Americans, sure, why not? But to many non-Americans, sloppy drunken public displays of affection, are a sure fire sign that you can’t handle your booze and are probably not going to remember that those hickeys on your neck actually appeared before you and your special friend even made it home last night. My Polish friend explained this to me and I tried to imagine her perspective by exaggerating my own—in other words, the way she would view two people getting frisky at a party would be like the way we slut shame those kids who actually managed to get it in on the dance floor at our high school proms (that wasn’t just at mine, right?)



### We’re actually relatively very accepting of the LGBT community

Growing up in Virginia, I was pretty ashamed to come from a culture that ignorantly tossed around the word “faggot” like ain’t nobody’s business. Maybe it’s because now I’m in Vermont, or even New England, but I’ve become unaware of the homosexual sanctuary that America actually is. Sure, each and every state hasn’t legalized gay marriage \*yet\* but we’re a heck of a lot better off than Hungary, whose citizens shudder at the thought of a same-sex couple. Which isn’t to say I didn’t meet some utterly dope Hungarians this summer, just acceptance of other sexualities simply isn’t part of their culture. ■

## making the cut: back-to-school hair trauma

by staceybrandt

It’s that time of year again: back to school haircuts. If you find haircuts to be a completely emotionless experience because “it’s only hair” and it will “always grow back,” then you are my mother and should stop reading here. I’m the first one to admit I have an emotional attachment to my hair. It’s the thing that kind of sets me apart from people with other colored hair. Also, my hair is like the pet I never had: I brush it and wash it (on occasion) and then show it to my friends and let them play with it. Every so often, like a domesticated animal experimenting with its natural instincts, my hair acts out and this constitutes a “bad hair” day. In that case, I just spray it with chemicals and it calms down (That’s how my parakeet died).

Every time I walk into the hair salon, I am filled with bright optimism and the smell of extravagant shampoos which intoxicate me to the point of delusion. Though the atmosphere never changes, I believe that somehow the experience will end differently than my previous visits. There’s always a smiling, old lady in the chair with short-ish hair that is wet, matted, and basically transparent. The hair dresser is saying how great the lady’s ghost-hair looks because platinum is very chic these days. Then there are the tabloid magazines neatly stacked in ten different areas to remind me I haven’t lost weight or had a baby recently, so there’s really no way I could be happy.

Finally sitting myself in the chair, I inform the hair dresser I would like my hair trimmed just enough to make it healthy and remove all the dead ends. As usual she informs me that if she removed all the dead ends I would be bald because my hair contains about as much moisture as dreadlocks. A negotiation ensues: she’ll say “how about six

inches” then I squint and say “how about one” while sliding her \$10 tip onto the counter. Then I exclaim “I won’t go higher than three!” before settling for four inches off and proceeding to scrutinize each piece of hair that falls to the floor as my life slowly falls apart.

Just to be on the same page, we all know haircuts never end up like Anne Hathaway’s did in *The Princess Diaries* when the two haircut assistants pull apart the “before” pictures to reveal an impossibly stunning new look. This does not happen because 99 percent of haircuts are not part of a greater makeover and 100 percent of the time you are not a princess. You are not a princess no matter how many articles of clothing you owned from ages 3 to 8 that dubbed thee “PRINCESS” in sparkly letters, no matter how many teary-eyed formals your mother stopped nagging you to say, “Honey, you look like a princess,” and no matter how many Disney princess songs can be found on your most played playlist entitled, “Yeah, I’m a Bad Bitch Princess.” I’ll stop documenting my adolescence, but you get the picture.

After a slew of butcher-like motions that go on for what seems like hours, the hair dresser says “OK, I think we’re done”. Though it seems a little late for corrections, she pulls both sides of my hair down below my chin for purposes of art and symmetry. I still cannot properly assess the damage because I’m cloaked up to my neck in the huge, black hair-shield/poncho, but my head seems to weigh significantly less than it did an hour ago, which is not a good sign.

My haircut ends up looking great- shiny, voluptuous, movie-star sleek, but this fantasy is limited to the salon

and the next day it’s way too short and does a weird curl thing at the bottom. It’s like when you try on a shirt in the store, and the dim lights make you look good and kind of edgy, but at home you realize that in regularly lit environments your left nipple shows through. Let’s put it this way, my haircuts are never drastic enough for my guy friends to notice except for the one who secretly likes me (Brian). My self-image is always skewed for a couple days until I arrive at school and realize I should start focusing more important aspects of my life like what I’m going to wear the first day. ■



ben berrick



# fashion five-oh.



## in defense of miley cyrus

by mikestorage

People have been giving my beloved Miley a lot of bad press ever since her performance at the 2013 VMAs. From a fashion point of view, Miley's rendition was eye-opening and impressive. She has been a fashionista ever since her days at Disney, and as a blossoming adult, she has cultivated her look with a beautiful touch. This is most noticeably revealed in her sassy new blond 'do. What an empowering decision taken by an impressive woman! Miley is taking strides by daring to express herself in a variety of ways and inspiring others to take risks. In case you never got the memo, she's our age; yes, Miley is a former Disney pop princess, but she's done some growing up in the last couple years. Her hair makes her look older and acts as a reminder that she's not 12 anymore. In hoping to shrug off her status as a child, Miley has taken bold new steps to express her maturity.

Miley has truly broken new ground. At the VMAs, she showed us who she really, truly is: a diva. With such a coordinated dance routine, all

critics can reserve a place for her in the future of terrible pop music. She has catapulted herself to Beyonce status. Let's put the music aside, however, to look at the amazing fashion expressed by this woman. Miley rocked two outfits in one performance! Not only did she wear an exquisite one-piece teddy bear bathing suit with its tongue sticking out, but she also wore a two-piece flesh-toned bathing suit. What inherent fashion sense!"

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Now let's be honest, who doesn't love teddy bears. Miley and her crew have expressed the deeper longings in all human beings. We all possess the inherent desire to stay young. There have been countless songs and litera-

ture devoted to the subject, and death is the strongest fear in everybody. Although some have the desire to grow up, most reach a certain age where they long for youth. The backup singers and dancers boasted pink, brown, and white teddy bear costumes which helped to encapsulate the youth of the generation that Miley is singing for. She combined the search for maturity and the longing for youth perfectly with her dance, costumes, haircut and lyrics. A stellar performance from start to finish.

Also, Robin Thicke's zebra suit was damned impressive. Props to you sir. Also, did you know Thicke has a wife and son. Watch yourself with those younger ladies.

I'm sure this stunt will improve Miley's career, most noticeably in the show Two and a Half Men. Now that Charlie Sheen has left the cast, Miley and Ashton Kutcher need to improve their performances to force the show forward into superstardom. ■



julianna roen

# style spelled G-O-S-L-I-N-G

by dannissim

I am just going to come out and say it: there is no man smoother than Ryan Gosling. The guy could wear a garbage bag shirt with cardboard shorts and pull it off without a hitch. There exists no shirt on Earth that he could not make cool as he continually sets new trends and raises the bar in men's fashion.

Over the years, Gosling has graced the red carpet with his immaculate fashion sense, which is best exemplified by his outfits at the Cannes Film Festival in 2011. Gosling came to promote the premiere of his latest film, Drive, and was a knockout on the red carpet. While most men arrived in the standard black tux, Ryan commanded the carpet with a custom, powder blue tuxedo by Salvatore Ferragamo. For his photo call, Gosling wore a navy blue pajama-style

shirt with white piping along with a pair of white pants. He came back with another eye-catcher for the closing ceremony: a maroon tuxedo with black, peaked lapels.

Gentlemen: if you aren't already taking notes, you should start. While the ladies are busy

one with a pair of sunglasses and pants (not shorts), 2) the henley: you better have a chest that you're proud of, and 3) the V-neck t-shirt: crew necks are for guys who play it safe and want to be pencil pushers; if you want to show everyone that you are in command,

the V-neck should be the staple of your look.

I could go on ad infinitum about all the little nuances of Gosling's look, but there is still one key piece that I have not highlighted. If you read my article about men's fashion last winter, you would remember how critical it is to have a pair of solid sunglasses. Gosling likes to rock Ray-Ban Wayfarers (I sug-

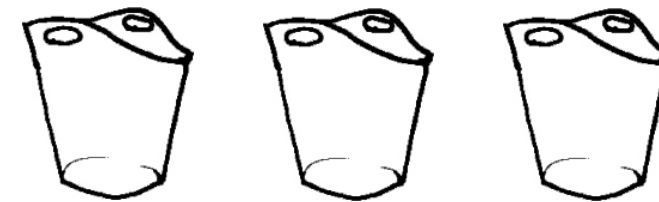
gested them as well), but you are not bound to one style. All that I ask is that you invest in a quality pair that you feel enhance your look. Don't buy schlocky sunglasses; they will only bend and break, and I will say, "I told you so." I am saddened by the lack of

care some men take in their day-to-day look, but Ryan Gosling gives me hope of a brighter future where GQ will no longer be optional reading. ■



julianna roen

# trash.



## i want you so bad

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

Last year, I played a crazy Southern belle And you played my foil. We learned that you can always depend on the kindness of strangers! (But it's better if you sing that line) I thought you were the cutest boy, like...ever. But I never see you no mo'. Can we be little friendlies again? **When:** Last Semester **Where:** Royall TY-TY **I saw:** A man **I am:** A woman

Remember when I met you and followed you around during the Candlelight Induction Ceremony? I found you fascinating. And you are. I feel like an imbecile next to your brilliance, yet every moment in conversation with you is [masochistic] bliss.

Maybe one day I'll stop following and lead us into something amazing. **When:** most days **Where:** UHN **I saw:** A woman **I am:** A woman

hey there i saw you a few times, i'd say 5 times. you look beautiful, you are great. i can't explain, but... i'm in love with you. thanks for not noticing **When:** this month **Where:** at school and at partys **I saw:** greatest guy on earth **I am:** that little girl

We see each other everyday And that one shower was electric You give me butterflies in my chest... ...or an arrhythmia Either way, my heart flutters for you I like the energy between us You are so incredibly beautiful Love you always **When:** Every day and Night **Where:** "Our" Room **I saw:** A Princess **I am:** Your Prince Charming

neon paint on your body. you make me feel oh so naughty. i've wanted you for sooo long. but loving your "sister" is soo wrong. perfect body. perfect lips. you make me wanna swing my hips. hiding my love is such a job. because all you do is make me throb. **When:** all the time **Where:** every where i go **I saw:** neon beauty **I am:** booty poppin blondie

Alright, so here's the deal I really just want you to know how I feel We sit here in class As the minutes tick past And I swear to god it feels real There's those times when you smile And it took me a while But I'm starting to think it's for me You're cute and you're blonde An infatuation you've spawned All I want is for you to show me it's real Update, we met at Mack I was the one lookin' for a candy painted 'Lac Now here it is, my secret is out Class is coming to an end So I'm not going to pretend That this isn't a little bit urgent So if you know what this implies Or the next time we lock eyes Just know that I want you so bad. **When:**Monday/Wednesday **Where:**Listening to Pablo **I saw:** Cute Blonde, Beautiful Smile **I am:** Still looking for that Cadillac

I first noticed you on the internet your youtube videos are something I can't forget Seeing you in the patty lounge seems to be the trend. we should be "lovers and best friends". **When:** sometime last week **Where:** Patterson Hall **I saw:** a classy dude **I am:** a big fan

You were standing there looking fucking hot Waiting for your cone while I was not I'm not gonna lie, I was staring A blue t-shirt and white baseball cap you were wearing I wish I could have at least gotten a name Perhaps you're interested in having a new flame? Please reply to me soon All night we could spoon We could potentially share a cone If you would only let me call you my own **When:** last week **Where:** ben & jerry's @ the dc **I saw:** a hottie with a body **I am:** enamored

I like that green bandana you wore, damn! I just wanna make you sway, I can imagine you walking through my door, can you, will you come my way? Because for you, I wanna be that hombre. **When:** Yesterday **Where:** Davis Center Marketplace **I saw:** A real woman **I am:** Mexico

Every Tuesday and Thursday Morn I see you, but I'm always torn. The way you squeeze those tomatoes gets me going I always make sure my big breasts are showing. Oh Salsa Man you have my heart I'm just waiting for a conversation to start. You give me butterflies, every time you cut those chives And that sour cream would make me scream. Oh brave Salsa Man come to me I swear I wont let you down, you'll see... **When:** bright and early **Where:** New World **I saw:** The Sexy Salsa Man **I am:** The Salsa Lover

# ear

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

**Ampitheater**  
*Descriptive Freshman Girl:* It's like teenagers in a crockpot.

**DC Tunnel**  
*Guy:* What's your areola? Is that in your butthole or you eyeball?

**Outside the Davis Center**  
*Girl One to Girl Two:* Boy-Thing... I'm really disturbed by that title, but sometimes it's useful.

**Waterman Green**  
*Hungover Bro:* I'm about to face plant on the sidewalk. My tongue feels like a potato chip.

**Athletic Campus**  
*Bro to Group of Bros:* I thought it was a quality vagina actually.

**Central Campus**  
*Guy to Group:* We have Ritalin... and something like Ritalin going around.

**Lone Rock Point**  
*Guy:* I used to dick around so much sophomore year of high school, but then I realized that's no way to treat people.

**Outside the SGA Offices**  
*Girl:* I'm just gonna keep eating. It's like when you're drunk and you just keep drinking so you never get hungover.

**4th Floor of the Davis Center**  
*Girl One:* Well, we've had sex before but I usually pretend it didn't happen. *Girl Two:* I said that the first four times I lost my virginity.

**BH Library Steps**  
*Girl on Cellphone:* Yeah, the woman called her 'the girl who wanted to make vaginas happy'.

**SGA Office**  
*Girl:* Yeah, I haven't told anyone this but like... I hate kids. I HATE them. Like... I really hate them. I really don't like kids. I really don't like them. *Guy:* Yeah.. I wouldn't tell anyone that.

**Hamilton**  
*Guy:* We're about to get spiritual up in here!!

**South Williams Street**  
*Lax Bro:* I need to finish my alcohol education class to-night before I get too wasted.

**LaFayette**  
*Girl 1:* I want to read Harry Potter again before Thursday. *Girl 2:* Are you kidding? I have it down pat! I could pass a final on that shit.

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



## yeezus, summer's strangest album

by dylanmccarthy

Over ten years into his career as a rapper, Kanye West has evolved into a pop culture force of nature. After many heavily publicized outbreaks, he's become predictably unpredictable—a perpetual wildcard. That being said, *Yeezus* was the last thing anyone expected as a follow up to the incredibly well received *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*.

For starters, I'm not even comfortable calling *Yeezus* a rap album, let alone a Kanye West album. Genre-wise the album is all over the place, but it's far more closer to the industrial music Nine Inch Nails and Marilyn Manson were putting out in the early 90s than anything from Jay-Z or Jamie Foxx.

When this album dropped it received unanimous praise from just about every major source of music criticism out there, many going as far as calling it his very own *Kid A*. For non-Radiohead fans, calling an album a particular artist's "Kid A" means that the album in question is a major stylistic break from the artist's previous works; furthermore, upon reflection, it is the artist's deepest work. Well, *Yeezus* is certainly a major break from anything else in Kanye's discography, but anyone who tries to tell you that *Yeezus* is Kanye's "deepest" work is blowing smoke up your ass.

When I first picked up the album I made it four tracks in and didn't come back for a month. That may not seem like such a bad thing, after all there are plenty of albums that take some time to grow on you. However, Kanye is far and away my favorite post 90's rapper and—other than *808s & Heartbreaks*—everything he's touched is gold in my book. I could go on and on about how the mere existence of *Yeezus* makes no sense in the scheme of Kanye's releases, but let's get onto the album itself.

"On Sight" is the only way that *Yeezus* could begin because not even a second passes before any and all hopes of *Yeezus* being *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy: Part 2* are thrown out the window. "On Sight" sounds nothing like any Kanye West track that came before it, and it's one of the few tracks that actually pulls off the strange "post-dubstep-acidelectro-industrial-rap" vibe *Yeezus* is going for. The abrasive "computer noise," only instrumental section melds with Kanye's "yell rapping" that we all know from "Niggas in Paris" perfectly. Even if you're against the dramatic stylistic shift, you can't deny Kanye's masterful production.

"Black Skinhead" is one of the best Kanye West tracks, period. Thousands of MCs spend careers trying and failing to reach something like this, but Kanye's done it within albums and albums. It does a wonderful job of melding the idea of unease with catchy as hell lyrics, as employed on *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*'s lead single "Monster." While "Monster" is a far more accessible track, "Black Skinhead" does away with guest verses and the unshakably

goofy Halloween vibe of "Monster" and lets Kanye's determined insanity do all the work. Just the way he sets up the hook gives me goosebumps. The entire beat cuts off for just a few seconds, but then monstrous drums come in as Kanye sums up his entire life story in three lines: "I've been a menace

things get horrible in *Yeezus*-land and "I Am a God" is as bad as it gets. Kanye's production is still something to appreciate, but—for someone who has shown us time and time again that he can rap about his inflated ego with both humor and honesty—"I Am a God" is just embarrassing. Just

to throw in the latter part of the song produce little more than unintended laughter for Kanye worshippers and haters alike.

Most of the midsection is shockingly forgettable for a Kanye West album, especially since if you've made it four tracks in and it's apparent how different he's trying to sound. "New Slaves" and "Hold My Liquor" are similar in that the majority of each song is meh at best, but are saved by an incredible transition in the last minutes of each song. Kanye's been rapping about this surface level kind of oppression since *The College Dropout*, and "New Slaves" does nothing to move the argument forward. Considering how hard he's trying to be different on *Yeezus*, you'd think he'd try to rap about something he hasn't been talking about for nearly a decade. It's a shame the lyrics are so shallow, because the commitment and intensity in Kanye's vocals are really amazing here.

"Blood on the Leaves" is another high point. I'm not quite willing to call it a ballad, but the presence of some kind of story is a nice change of pace. Kanye hasn't sounded happy once on this album so far, so it's no surprise we're getting a fragmented story of betrayal and divorce. The sampling here is fantastic, bits of Nina Simone's "Strange Fruit" mashed in with a dash of TNGHT's "R U Ready" help make this the first truly catchy song on the album.

If you can slug through "Guilt Trip" and "Send it Up," you'll get a real treat. I'll admit that I was ready to stop the album before giving the last song a chance, but I'm all too glad I held out. Album closer "Bound 2" is the most "Kanye-sounding" track on *Yeezus*, and easily my favorite track on the entire album. "Bound 2" actually sounds like the next logical (and goddamn fantastic) step after his work on *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*. Hell, it could even fit in on 2007's *Graduation*. "Bound 2" ditches the shock value prevalent on most of *Yeezus*'s songs and shows the Kanye we all fell in love with back in '04 ("Jesus Walks" was EVERYWHERE in middle school) is still around. Sure, Kanye spits some disconcerting lines like "When a real nigga hold you down/ You supposed to drown," but he proves that he can still rap intelligently in the next minute: "Close your eyes and let the word paint a thousand pictures/ One good girl is worth a thousand bitches."

Kanye's created three career highs with "Black Skinhead," "Blood on the Leaves," and "Bound 2." At the end of the day, these don't make up for the forgettable "different" tracks or the unsettling vibe of Kanye actively trying to be as crazy as possible, instead of just being himself (which is albeit naturally crazy). Once you get over *Yeezus*'s gimmicks there's hardly anything left to fawn over. However, that being said, I'm certain Kanye's next album will be fire because it's obvious the rap genius is not finished yet. ■



julianna roen

for the longest/ But I ain't finished I'm devoted/ And you know it, and you know it."

Possibly the greatest thing about this song is that it sounds almost exactly like "The Beautiful People" by Marilyn Manson. I wish it wasn't true, but it's pretty amazing that it is. The guy who spawned such traditional rap classics as "Slow Jamz" and "Gold Digger" many years ago has practically become his own absurd hybrid genre.

All's not well in *Yeezus*-land, in fact

an album ago he deconstructed and even kind of apologized about the scope of his ego on 9-minute long "Runaway". Shit, just a track ago he did a much better job of this. "I Am a God" just sounds like Kanye ran out of ideas and created the blandest kind of shock value charged by the lamest lyrics: "I am a god/ So hurry up with my damn massage/ In a French-ass restaurant/ Hurry up with my damn croissants!" Lines like that, and the outright screaming he decides



## the summer my name i changed late in the library

by bethziehl

Standing on the dock with my lifeguard tube wrapped around my body and the hot sun beating down on me, I couldn't help but let my mind wander as the campers splashed around in front of me. I watched them and I counted them, but the hour and a half grew lengthy, and I had to think of things besides the hot sun or annoying kids to keep my sanity.

My mind settled on the camp name I had chosen for the summer and been called for the past three weeks. I'd never given much thought to what kind of name I would want for myself besides the one my parents gave me. When I began work at camp, I was faced with the decision to choose a name for myself. A food item, a character, an adjective, an object. I chose something simple. It wasn't the most creative, but it fit me and I could tolerate kids whining the name all the time.

"Willow! Willow!" a young child said.

"What?"

"Willow, I found your rock."

"Awesome!" I said, with as much enthusiasm as I could manage, just as I did every single time they found my rock which was at least once every five minutes.

The majority of the swim time kids spent diving down to find giant rocks that counselors had written their names on or attempting to catch fish with nets. Both could be quite amusing to watch. Today, it was not. Today, I was only aware of every second slowly ticking by. I tried my best to stay alert.

Every once in a while, one of them would give me a heart attack as I watched them dive down to the bottom to retrieve a rock, only to surface a long time after. A part of me wished one of those giant rocks might drown them just so I would have something to do. Not really, but hey, anything to make the repetitive "Willow, I found your rock" subside.

The sun began to sink lower as afternoon faded toward night and the water was illuminated with a warm glow. Something about the image before my eyes struck me. While there were certain things I resented about my job, there was something to be said about being a part of a kid's summer camp experience. Going to camp is so classic and rustic. There's nothing quite like spending time on silly yarn crafts, drinking bug juice, or swimming in a pond. These kids were here to make memories. Watching them made life seem so simple and I wished that I could be one of them.

Sometimes I did feel like one of them. We had theme days at camp, but I didn't always follow them. Usually I'd just do my own thing like wear a silly fish hat. Camp was the perfect excuse to act like a kid again. I knew the hat looked ridiculous, but I also knew that the kids loved it and it'd be something they remember. I try not to take my job too seriously.

The things that came out of the kids' mouths really made me laugh sometimes. You'd think kids are making jokes on purpose, but they are perfectly serious. A recent favorite was, "Are there fish in here? I've heard of them, but I've never seen one" Seriously? Do these kids never leave their house? Another: "What's your husband's name?" "I don't have a husband." "But what's his name?"

There were days in particular that made lifeguarding seem like something special. When storms hit, the lifeguards would hide out in the boathouse to avoid being trapped in a stifling, small building with over eighty children. Those days were my favorite. Sometimes after a heavy rainstorm, steam would rise off the water, up around the metal docks like a fog and make the pond look eerie, but calm.

"Willow." "Willow." "Willow!" "Watch me do this." Just as well, my daydreaming was over and once again I was on duty, not that anyone had excused me, but it's not like any of them were going to drown.

I thought maybe it'd feel very strange to be called something other than my given name for the summer, but instead, it empowered me. My new name gave me a new identity and with it, the freedom to be whoever I wanted to be. I was still me, but unleashed. It did take me a while to get into my groove, but when I did, I felt in charge and confident. Each day I drove into camp, I left some of my introverted side behind and I could speak as loud as I needed to or be as silly as I wanted. The kids didn't judge like adults do and I liked that. When I went home at the end of the day, I could still be myself and recharge in a quiet place. It was the best of both worlds that summer. ■

by bethziehl

My fingers graze the edge of the desk,  
Following the distinct grains of the wood.  
My concentration has diminished,  
My will to work grown weak.

It has become dark outside.  
The overhead lights bask me  
In miserable fluorescence.  
My eyes burn as I read  
Pages of text from the glow  
Of my computer screen.

Torture, I think. Torture.  
My finger slips off the corner  
Of the desk, falling to my lap.  
I turn to look out the window  
Where other worn out souls  
Walk by the library.

My hand reaches to my laptop  
And flips the screen down.  
No more.  
No more, for now. ■



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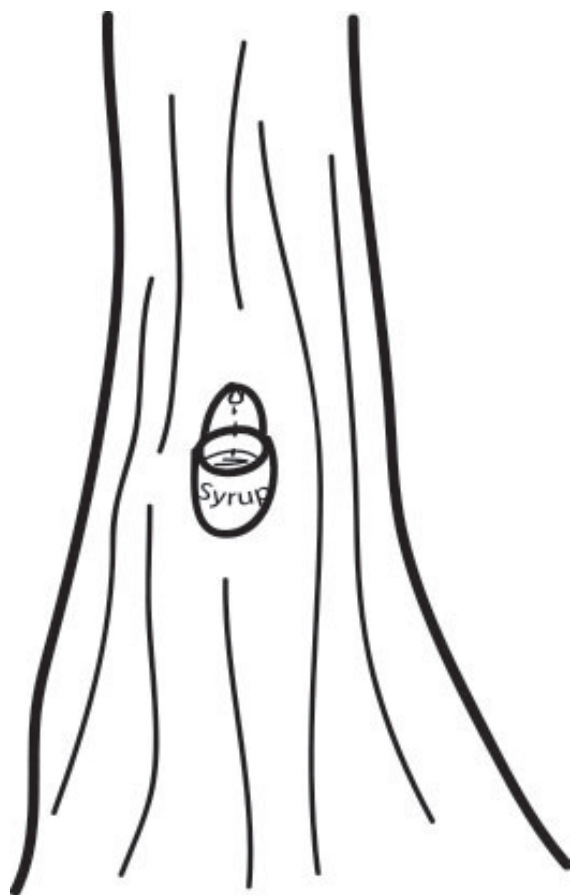
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