



# the water tower.

## uvm's alternative newsmag

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

### mind the gap

by franceslasday

### the woes of a *gap year kid*



liz stafford

I spent the last nine months of my life living in Israel. While I was there, I took classes, volunteered, made the most amazing friends that I ever had, and did a whole host of generally silly things. Most importantly I put myself a whole lot of time and space away from my naïve High School mentality swapping it in for a slightly less naïve, year older brand of mentality- it's the new model.

When I arrived at UVM, I was nervous, like anybody else entering college would be. I thought to myself, Frances, you have been away from home for a whole year now, you can totally do this. I told myself all sorts of things like that as a kind of mantra as I tried, and failed, to fall asleep the night before move in. However, what I never expected was that people would be so confused by me. Whenever I mentioned that I was a gap year student an entire barrage of questions would come

spewing out of nowhere.

The most common question I have been asked is, "Wait, so how old are you?" For some reason, people are not able to grasp the concept that although I did not move up in grade, I still got a year older.

**For some reason, people are not able to grasp the concept that although I did not *move up in grade*, I still got a year older.**

If delaying your grade in school kept you from aging, no one would ever graduate because everyone would want to stay 21 forever.

This question often stems off into other questions like, "So does that make you a freshman?" or "Does that mean you're a transfer student?" To which the answer is; kinda. I have enough credits to

be a sophomore, or a transfer student, but I have never been to college before. "I'm a freshman this year, but I will be a junior next year," I often reply, trying to make it easier for the person—who clearly has no idea what I'm talking about—to understand. I usually only get blank stares back in return, at which point I attempt to change the subject to how beautiful Burlington is.

The next shock I had when arriving at UVM was the loss of independence that I felt. Throughout my gap year program, I lived in apartments with roommates and received a monthly stipend to buy groceries. We were responsible for cooking all of our own meals. Learning to cook and being responsible for my own budget were things that made me feel independent and free. Now, being in the dorms, and being forced to go on the freshman mandatory unlimited meal plan is quite an adjustment. I miss the family style dinners,

... read the rest on page 7

### #syria what the shit is happening

by emmieheadrick

#Syria is a trending topic on Twitter, which means that it's time for all of us to get our acts together and learn about what the frick has actually been going on.

For the past few decades, freedoms for Syrian citizens have been very limited. Under the control of the Ba'ath party, Syria was placed under emergency rule from 1963 - 2011. That was 48 years of people living under what was essentially a dictatorship, with no ownership of their basic human rights. When Bashar al-Assad came into presidency in 2000 there was hope that he would bring the country back to a more democratic system, but that didn't happen. Nevertheless, Assad was reelected as president in 2007 because the Ba'ath party was the only legal politi-

**"A few slanders to the government were graffitied onto some buildings, and so began the Syrian Uprising."**

cal party in Syria, and thus Assad was the only candidate on the ballot, giving him an easy 97% of the vote. Naturally, this pissed off the Syrians that were opposed to the Ba'ath party and, one revolutionary night in 2011, some of those teenagers happened upon a few cans of spray paint. A few slanders to the government were graffitied onto some buildings, and so began the Syrian Uprising.

The graffiti done by those hooligan kids was the catalyst that brought us to where we are now, because everything about this entire conflict has been dealt with poorly from day one. Those fifteen kids who chose to speak out against their government were brutally tortured, and some killed. If the ruthless harming of children is where this conflict started, we really should not be surprised by how much, and how quickly, it has escalated.

Throughout the Spring of 2011, small protests sprung up around the areas of Daraa and Damascus. The Syrian army responded to these relatively peaceful

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# the best news team in the universe.



## inbox

Dear readers,

Last week we gave you a pass on writing us angry letters, as it was the first issue of the year. This week, though, we're disappointed in you guys. We want you to feel passionate, angry, volatile feelings upon reading our paper. And then we want you to tell us exactly how you feel.

In short, readers, we know that you don't actually want to see letters from us every week. We know that you have opinions on what we've printed and we want to hear about it!

So we're challenging all of you to write to us. Tell us what you think of the paper, be it good, bad or ugly.

Looking forward to the angry letters!  
Sarah and Cait  
Co-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

thewatertowernews@gmail.com

## the shit list with mikestorage

**USA "Soccer"**— The USA national soccer team lost 3-1 to Costa Rica on Friday night, ending a 12-game-qualifier win streak. This makes USA's record in Costa Rica 0-8-1, a horrendous away record. Not only did they lose, but the only US goal was scored on a penalty kick, they managed to surrender two goals by the tenth minute, and our star midfielder injured himself before the first minute of play. A win in this match would have secured our country's spot in the World Cup next summer, but shit, we couldn't take care of business. The top three teams in the hexagon qualifying group make it (currently USA, Costa Rica, and Honduras), but Mexico is right on the doorstep at fourth place. There are three qualifying matches remaining, including USA vs. Mexico this Tuesday.

**Colin Kaepernick**— People will not shut up about the 49ers quarterback. I heard over the summer someone saying he's going to be one of the best QBs in the history of the NFL. Fuck that, this guy hasn't even started a full season yet. Not to mention his team is absolutely stacked. Give any QB an unstoppable defense and Frank Gore, and they'd be good too.

**App Updates**— I never update the apps on my iPhone (right now there are 38 waiting), and for good reason. There are never any updates worth getting. Someone even told me when they tried to update their Blackboard app, it ended with them having to pay money because the app magically became a paid one. Screw that, I like my apps the way they are. Except Facebook, that shit just sucks. ■

## the news in brief with dannissim

**"The increased use of e-cigarettes by teens is deeply troubling...Nicotine is a highly addictive drug. Many teens who start with e-cigarettes may be condemned to struggling with a lifelong addiction to nicotine and conventional cigarettes."**

— CDC Director **Tom Frieden** reacts to findings from the National Youth Tobacco Survey. Between 2011 and 2012, the percentage of middle and high school students who have used e-cigarettes more than doubled.

**"They took her to their madrasa, the Al Jihad madrasa, in Sarrai Kala village...She was shot 25 times. We don't know why she was killed."**

— **Dawlat Khan Zadran**, the provincial police chief of the Pak-tika province in Afghanistan, lists the details of author Sushmita Banerjee's murder. She is known for her book, *Kabuliwala's Bengali Wife*, which is an account of life under the Taliban. Banerjee was sentenced to death 18 years ago by militant leaders for refusing to wear a burqa in public, however, it is unclear what transpired during the evening of her murder.

**"Instead of leaving this up to TEPCO, the government will step forward and take charge...The world is watching if we can properly handle the contaminated water but also the entire decommissioning of the plant."**

— **Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe** addresses the new plan by the Japanese government to handle the radiation leaks at the Fukushima nuclear power plant. Over the next two and a half years, they plan to spend \$320 million on an "ice wall" and \$150 million on an improved water treatment system. These systems hope to eliminate the radioactive contamination in the water.

**"It's difficult to communicate with your spouse when you're under so much scrutiny from both sides, and I think we both have been fighting for our own individual struggles to be heard by each other, and that's been difficult."**

— **Shellie Zimmerman**, George Zimmerman's (ex) wife talks about her strained relationship with her husband during the trial process. On Friday, she filed for divorce, stating several factors stemming from the high-profile nature of the trial.

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New writers and artists  
are always welcome!  
**Weekly meetings**  
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**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: Dennis Rodman to return to North Korea...can he just stay there this time?+++ low turnout in Moscow elections, no one surprised+++ wrestling reinstated to Olympics, cause yeah ■

## a bigger fish to fry: the rise of nokrosoft by dannissim

art by rachael taylor

When you don't want to build something from scratch, what do you do? Just buy it. For \$7.2 billion, Microsoft has acquired Nokia's devices and services unit, which includes both their array of Windows phones and their low-end phones aimed at sales in developing countries. This marks yet another aggressive step by Microsoft to dive further into the hardware business. In a WT issue last spring, I introduced Windows 8 and Microsoft's surge into the tablet business. This acquisition leaves no doubt that the Redmond-based company is unhappy with its mobile market share and would like to change it.

Let's first discuss the particulars of the deal. For \$7.2 billion, Microsoft isn't buying the whole of Nokia; they are just purchasing its phone business and leasing rights for Nokia's location services. Thirty-two thousand employees will transfer from Nokia to Microsoft, the most important being Stephen Elop, the now former CEO of Nokia. Elop is currently the Executive Vice President of Devices & Services at Nokia, and will transition into a management role at Microsoft. Additionally, he is a major candidate to take control of Microsoft once the current CEO, Steve Ballmer, resigns in a year. Meanwhile, I've only worked at a day camp...shit.

So, why should you care? At UVM, Android and iOS count for a vast majority of the smartphone market share due to the familiarity of the devices and loyalty to a specific operating system. That being said, the Windows

Phone is in no way significantly inferior. In fact, many of their products are excellent options, with brilliant, large displays and advanced camera systems great for sending and receiving Snatchchats and their illicit messages. What Microsoft hopes to do in buying Nokia's phone division is bridge the innovation gap. Nokia became a major partner of Windows Phone in 2011, but the process of communicating between two companies ultimately hampered inno-

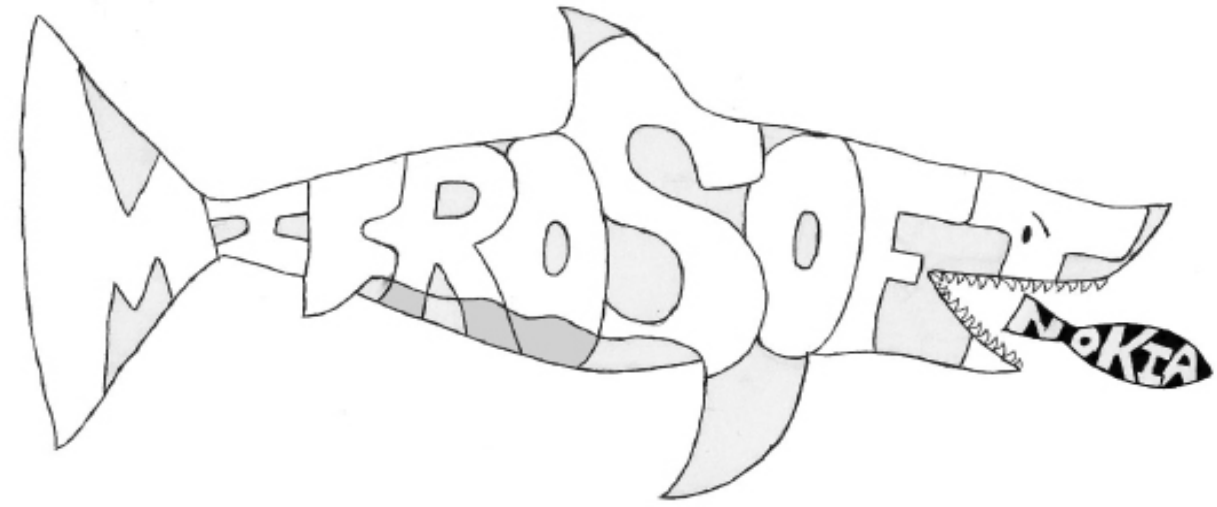
services. The Windows Phone operating system already works well with Windows 8, but now Microsoft has to make integrating their additional devices a no-brain decision when purchasing a Windows computer.

Microsoft, along with the other major phone manufacturers, hopes to be on the forefront of what's next. A noticeable emerging trend is the "smartwatch", a companion wristlet with varying functionality. From controlling calls and music, to even taking photos with the device (seen on Samsung's Galaxy Gear), smartwatches are working to provide a new level of innovation. Honestly though, this seems like a momentary distraction from the current conundrum: what's left to innovate? We've seen 4G, large pen-displays (can anyone say, "phablet?"), video-calling, and wireless interaction, but why should we buy a new phone every two years? Yes, it's always cool to buy the new iPhone, but how much longer can they keep up this ruse?

Microsoft: I am very proud of your big-boy acquisition. I'd like to make a specific prediction, but the mobile market can be a real bitch—in case you all forgot, owning a BlackBerry was cool five years ago, and now their devices are irrelevant

to the point where they've now relinquished their claim to third place in the mobile market share. All I can hope is that this means there will be more quality Windows Phone devices; this will not only bode well for Microsoft, but it will bolster competition as well. Be on the lookout for the acquisition's ensuing innovations, and in the meantime I'll still be waiting for holograms. I might be here a while. ■

Now all under one roof, Microsoft hopes to bring more competitive devices to the market. Personally, I believe it comes down to device integration. What made the iPod such a titan in its time was that it worked flawlessly with iTunes. It doesn't hurt that their devices are sexy as fuck and can double as a cake knife. Apple then expanded with the iPhone and iPad, each new device working seamlessly with all other Apple devices and



## SYRIA -continued from page 1

protests by quietly kidnapping and torturing the civilians that were causing issue for them, resulting in hundreds of deaths right from the start. A lot of lower ranking soldiers started leaving the Syrian army out of refusal to carry out the mass killing of civilians that they were being demanded to do. Many of these soldiers then decided to band together with the protestors to form more organized fighting groups, and soon a legitimate rebel army was formed. Now that the protestors had weaponry, organization, and more numbers on their side, there was no stopping them from fighting back against the Syrian government. The rebels' peaceful protests were quickly replaced by fighting fire with fire, and in the blink of an eye, Syria found itself in the midst of civil war.

Between the rebels, the soldiers in the Syrian Army, and the shit ton of innocents who have been caught in the crossfire, over 100,000 people have been killed since this war began a little less than three years ago. Based on the Syrian Government's August 21 attack of chemical weapons that killed 1,400 innocent citizens in one fell swoop, it's not looking optimistic that this conflict is going to calm down anytime soon.

So, now for the question that everyone everywhere has been asking all of the time – If this shit has been going down for the past three years, why do we suddenly care about it now, and what is the United States planning on doing anyway?

The use of chemical weapons was really a game changer in America's attitude towards intervening the situation. Under international law, the use of chemical weapons is one of the biggest no-no's that there is. It has been mutually agreed upon since the 1925 Geneva Convention that there should never be any need for any government to gas out their civilians, and thus the weapons have been internationally banned. The fact that Syrian Government just completely ignored this long standing agreement because they felt like a mass killing of innocents was something that really, really needed to be done is very alarming, and isn't exactly something that a country should be able to get away with scot-free. It would be bad news if a chemical weapon trend was started across the globe. This is why Obama is feeling like maybe we should do something about the situation.

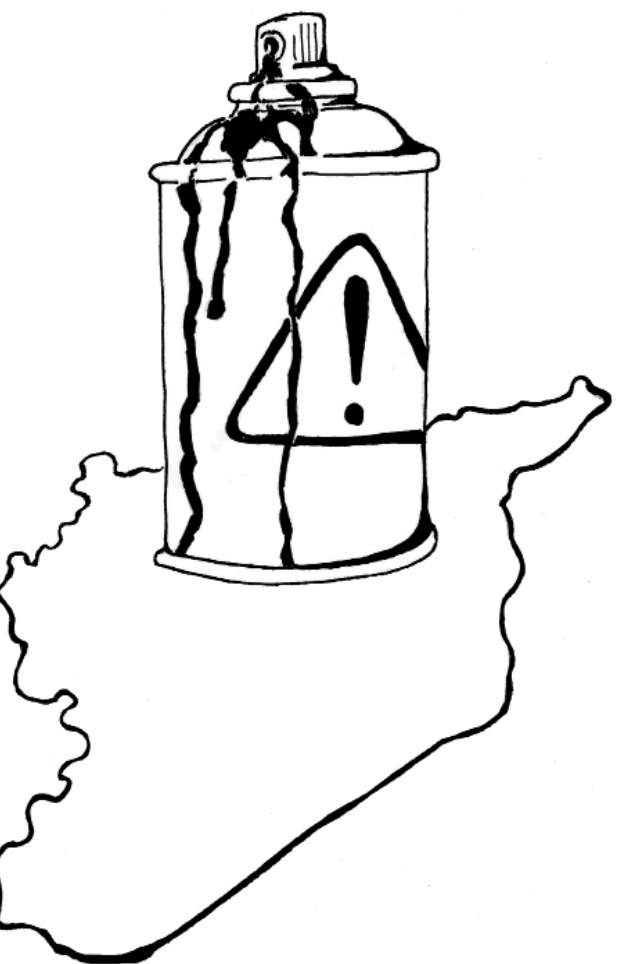
The Obama administration is proposing an air strike on Syria as a way to deter the Assad regime from any

further attacks on civilians. To clarify, we are not talking about a ground invasion on the country. Obama has said that his plan will not result in any American casualties.

However, even with immediate American casualties aside, there are so many other things that could go wrong should we go ahead with an attack on Syria. To name a few, there could be more civilian casualties in Syria, chemical weapons could fall into the wrong hands, or Syria and its allies could fire an attack right back at the United States. Russia is one of Syria's strongest allies, and they are not letting any United Nations action go on inside Syria. The United States would have to go around the UN in order to air strike, and thus we would have to do it completely alone. Syria also has China and Iran standing by it, and between these three countries, it seems very improbable that the United States can get in and out of Syria without any serious damage happening.

Fighting violence with violence needs to stop being seen as a solution, because it's just not working. As a globe, we need to stop taking the easy way out through means of guns and bombs and wars, and we need to start working together to find a new way to resolve conflict. I realize that it's easier said than done, and also that what I'm saying is incredibly cliché, but I'm okay with it because just saying things won't hurt any more people, and maybe if enough people keep saying things about this change, one day we will actually make it happen.

If the conflict in Syria is an issue that you care about more than just retweeting an article can show, there's an event that's happening on campus at the end of September that gives you the opportunity to show it. The Community for Artistic Development with support from other Living/Learning programs is hosting "StirFryday Art Wok for Syria", an art walk focused on themes surrounding the complexities of the situation in Syria, and the difficulties and emotions surrounding conflict in general. It will be a really cool, really informative event, but student art is needed in order to make it happen. If you want to be involved by submitting a drawing/painting/poem/essay/song/sculpture/etc, get in touch with Kevin Bloom pronto – ktbloom@uvm.edu. Your voice has power in this discussion. ■



art by emmie headrick

# around town.



## labor day with *john mulaney*

by **elkarren**

A few minutes into the Labor Day set of seasoned comedian John Mulaney he took a brief pause, toasted his drink to the audience, and nervously whispered, “Fuck, I hope this goes well.” This was in response to the high expectations that he knew he had to meet. While his hilarious opening act set the bar high, his true challenge for the evening was besting comedy veteran, and SNL star, Seth Meyers, who had provided UVM with a brilliant performance at the 2012 Week of Welcome. However, he exceeded expectations, making his own wit shine as brightly as the thunderstorm crackling outside the windows.

After quickly getting a feel for the eclectic taste of the Vermonter crowd, Mulaney delved into a comedy routine that entranced and enraptured the audience. He seamlessly worked through several topics, referencing his newfound relationship to that of John Lennon and Yoko Ono, his and his mom’s adoration for Bill Clinton, and the meanest, but greatest, acts of parenting his father ever used.

Interspersed between the bouts of hilarious comedic anecdotes, he took shots at the crowd, questioning everything from the naming of Rutland to the veterinary actions of horses and sheep. In his heckling of the crowd, he appeared to be learning from the students, gaining information about how to properly shave a goat, the “qualities” of the Rutland Wal-Mart, and the environmental state of Lake Champlain.

The New York City native seemed very interested in “Vermont” culture, noting his desire to come here ever since “doing mushrooms and listening to Phish as a high-school student.” He then proceeded to talk about how he took a trip down to Church Street earlier in the evening and hoped to run into Phish in Panera Bread. Also, he played at the fact that Champlain sounds mysteriously similar to a drunken girl saying champagne, before delving into questions about UVM’s marijuana culture. Lastly, he expressed his interest in all of the old liberal couples, walking hand in hand out of Ben and Jerry’s and into their bumper

sticker-assaulted Volvos. To this sight, he could only shake his head and think of the cursing prostitutes in the place he called home.

Mulaney rose to prominence in early 2012, when his comedy special “New In Town”, premiered on Comedy Central. While this was his first breakthrough into the stand up comedy scene, he was already a well-known figure in the background of the comedy world. He initially cut his teeth in the entertainment business as a writer for Saturday Night Live, where we worked with Bill Hader, and was responsible for creating many of the Weekend Update segments. At one point during the show he noted his roots in entertainment, passing the snarky comment, “Wow, the Davis Center on a Monday night before the sun goes down...this is the big time” to himself.

For a crowd that was relatively unfamiliar with his stand up, he proved his ability. And to the small minority of the crowd who were familiar with his comedy, he provided a completely different and thoroughly entertaining set. During his hour on stage, he only recycled thirty seconds of jokes from his Comedy Central special, before turning the old topic on its head and spinning it in a completely different direction. Instead of telling jokes about Home Alone 2, Delta Airlines, and providing the crowd with hilarious drinking stories, he provided brand new comedic bursts tailored to the college crowd. A perfect example of this was his questioning of the crowd about UVM’s no hamster policy, which he found too be ridiculous, but socially acceptable. Acts like this show the versatility of a veteran comedian and progression in the comedian’s life and comedic tastes. In his hour performance, he provided such a wide breadth of material that everyone could resonate with one of his jokes. Many a time it was the awkward stage presence that he used that made the jokes so much more than they initially were. By this show, it only highlights the fact that Mulaney’s career is only going to get better, and we would be thrilled to have him return to our stage anytime that he can. ■



winny kwong

## the problems with meal plans

by **brirubin**

As you may know, UVM recently made it mandatory for all first-year students to purchase an unlimited access plan. As a freshman, I highly disapprove of this decision.

As described on the dining services website, the thought process behind this is as follows: “So rather than budgeting your meal plans, you can focus on getting acquainted with UVM, your classes, getting involved and eating with friends and hall-mates”

This reasoning is a bit suspect, as it is centered on the assumption that us UVM freshman are too incompetent to feed ourselves. It suggests that if we were to be on the points meal plan, we would not have any time to do anything other than think about how we are going to budget our points. Our grades would suffer, we would not be able to sleep, we would not have time to engage in basic hygienic procedures or involve ourselves in any clubs or activities, and zero friendships would form. Essentially, we would live our lives in fear of running out of points.

Granted, UVM is not being completely irrational —working with a budget is something that is not easy for everybody. However, it is an extremely important life skill. It is probably safe to assume that most if not all freshmen have some experience budgeting and managing finances. For those whose financial management skills are not up to par, the Points plan could provide real world practice with minimal risk- although some people may run out of points and need to add more, that is not the end of the world, and nobody will starve.

Alas, although in the eyes of my institution of higher learning I am merely a fragile and inexperienced freshman, I have formed a few opinions on why meal plans are stupid. I organized my thoughts regarding these opinions during my free time, which would exist regardless of my meal plan.

There are two main reasons why the unlimited access plan is considered by many to be undesirable. The first of these reasons is simple: the food is not good. The second reason has to do with convenience regarding hours and locations. With the exception of the Grundle, which is open until 1:30AM only three days a week, all of the unlimited dining locations close at or before 8:00PM. This does not work for a lot of students, myself included. Additionally, nowhere is open on weekends before 10:00AM, inhibiting early risers’ ability to consume the most important meal of the day at the time at which it is intended to be consumed. This campus is large, the shuttles are flighty, and people are hungry.

While many would agree that the Points plan is superior to the alternative, it is flawed in that it does not make economic sense. For \$1779, students receive 1366 retail points plus 25 meals per semester. After some basic calculations, it becomes apparent that these meals cost \$16.52. Paid for with points, breakfast in an unlimited dining hall is \$6.35, lunch is \$10.20, and dinner is \$10.95- thus, purchasing a points meal plan is a lot less cost efficient. Furthermore, purchasing a Points meal plan is the logical equivalent of buying a gift card with an expiration date as opposed to simply spending money at a store when necessary.

There is no benefit to paying for your food with

“this reasoning is a bit suspect, as it is centered on the assumption that UVM freshmen are too incompetent to feed themselves”

points. A point is a dollar. Points are dumb. Unlimited access plans are inadequate. Food is important, we are all hungry, and the options are not satisfying. ■



olivia numa

## need a lift? a modest transportation proposal

by **wesdunn**

There’s a lot of money at UVM. It pours in from out-of-staters, investments, the government, and this year, a lot of it will certainly come from the alcohol and drug fines: I honestly can’t even fathom how much. Though The Cynic has speculated the amount to be somewhere around 300 million, the actual numbers are definitely up for debate. Either way, it’s the kind of money that college kids never see. What, you might ask, ought we spend all this money on? Professors’ salaries? Facilities? This would certainly seem to be the way to go. But seeing as we’ve already dropped close to 200 thousand on a new marble sign, replacing the UVM shrubbery, I’m going to go ahead and assume all the important stuff has already been addressed.

All the important stuff, that is, except for one thing, and the fact that this issue hasn’t been addressed yet is one of UVM’s biggest oversights. The situation’s even worse since the student body remains silent. But this ends now. Someone has to speak up for what we’ve all been thinking: Why the fuck is there not a ski lift from downtown Burlington to campus?

Right? Right! You’re at the farmer’s market. You’re done with that basement party. You’ve gone down to watch the sunset, or you live off campus, whatever: You are at the bottom of the hill. UVM is not.

In normal circumstances, if you want to get back up to campus, you’re going to have to shlep up the hill or take a bus. Both of these options are bullshit. Why can’t we just take a lift up the hill? It’s probably less energy than a bus, I don’t know. It’s

definitely cooler. And it would run all the time.

Let’s get technical here. It would have to be a gondola; an open chair would be a Darwinian disaster waiting to happen. I mean, we could have netting or trampolines under the lift the whole way, but come on: that would be ridiculous.

I’m thinking it could start near the ECHO center, and go up Main Street to the circle between Jeffords and the Davis Center. You would swipe your card to get on, same as getting into your dorm. It would definitely have to feature bike racks, because it’s lovely to bike downtown, but a day’s workout to get back up. And fuck it, ski and snowboard racks too.

It would have pretty lights at night. This would satisfy both the legal concerns of the aviation folks in the area and us college students, who in many cases have responded to the stress and responsibilities of our daily lives by being a lot like five year-olds on our down time. Speaking of which – couches? Speakers for radio or to hook an iPod up to? Why not!

No more waking up the morning after wondering who did what to your calves. No more waiting for the bus as your boogers freeze inside your nose. A lift would mean convenience, comfort and class. Think of the fun! Think of the (entirely platonic) sunset watching opportunities! It’s time we got serious about how UVM is spending its money. If it means President Sullivan will have to start bathing in fives instead of twenties, I believe that’s a sacrifice we should make. The movement for the ski lift starts now. ■



marilyn mora

## happy hour week two: hannibal

by **rebeccalaurion**

Take a drink:

- “This is my design.”
- Will looks happier with a dog than with any human.
- Bambi’s creepy uncle stalks Will.
- Scully shows up. (If you don’t know what I’m talking about here, get out of my face)
- You can’t wait for Freddie Lounds to be sautéed.
- Will hallucinates Hobbs.
- Cannibalism puns no one understands.
- You can’t tell if Hannibal wants to eat Will’s liver or his face.
- The show quickly devolves into “My Two Dads.”

Finish your drink:

- A murder gets solved, even the little ones.
- Hannibal hosts a dinner party featuring “I Can’t Believe it’s Not Pork.”
- Every time you think: “Hey, this cinematography looks just like Kubrick.”



# reflections.

## the end is near!

### a review of summer's finest film

by annahill

This past summer I scouted out several movie theaters in my native DC area to test the waters of the 2013 summer blockbusters. After consuming nearly my bodyweight in crappy popcorn and blue Icees, I was left with this gem: *This Is The End*. If you're anything like me, you can't resist a movie with hilariously gory celebrity deaths, teenage-level masturbation jokes, and more drugs than a Red Hot Chili Peppers gig—This Is The End has got it all.

*This Is The End* stars best buddies and classic Hollywood duo Seth Rogen and Jay Baruchel and tells the story of their hoped for bro-out weekend in L.A. Their hellish experience begins with a party hosted by professional douche, James Franco; despite having Rihanna, Emma Watson, a coked-out Michael Cera and more in attendance, Seth's friend Jay feels isolated due to his B-list celebrity status. But when the sky breaks open mid-party and fire and brimstone hail down on Earth, status no longer matters and many celebrities are (thankfully) massa-

cred. All who appear to remain are Seth Rogen, Jay Baruchel, James Franco, Jonah Hill, Craig Robinson, and their idiot pal Danny McBride. They all have their own theories about the recent hellfire outside, but Jay comes to the most haunting conclusion: the Apocalypse has begun. The guys pass the next few weeks by taking copious amount of ecstasy and smoking pot, as well as filming a sequel to the popular film Pineapple Express—sounds like the life, right? But reality gets a bit tougher for the fellow survivors as things begin to go seriously wrong: Emma Watson robs them blind of their supplies one night, while Jo-

**"this is the end may appear to be a stoner movie about a bunch of idiots and the end of the world... that is exactly what it is"**

nah is violated by a Hell-demon and becomes possessed. Those who are left begin to fight back against the apocalyptic monsters, but realize how futile their mortal efforts really are. Danny McBride eventually turns to the dark side, abandoning his former friends for a life of cannibalism and anarchy. As all hope seems lost, the remaining cast realizes they can in fact be saved from eternal damnation on earth: by sacrificing themselves for the safety of one another. While some of the less fortunate members of the group meet their gory fates, Seth, Jay, and Craig are able to make it up to the heavenly gates. In Heaven, they are greeted by a life of lavishness, a tribute from the Backstreet Boys, and everything else their hearts desire.

Although *This Is The End* may appear to be a stoner movie about a bunch of idiots and the end of the world...that is exactly what it is. The maturity level of humor throughout the movie may appear low, but lends itself to some hilariously original jokes about dicks, drugs, and Michael Cera. Thematically, the film could be perceived as deep: the cast members truly begin to appreciate loyalty between friends and true bravery as the world crumbles around them. On the other hand, living life to the fullest and partying uncontrollably seem like better things to do when the end is near. Both the soundtrack and special effects are top notch, while the cast of absurd actors leaves the viewer wanting more—a sequel, perhaps? As one of my newly favorite movies, I would recommend *This Is The End* to anyone who is looking for an excuse to smoke a bowl, grab some munchies, and have a good laugh. ■

# app of the week: duolingo!

by phoebefooks

I used to play Candy Crush. I used to occupy my hour long work breaks seated in a hungover stupor, cup of mediocre coffee in one hand, iPhone in the other, flipping around god damn jelly beans to literally no avail. The blatant lack of productivity made me hate myself. I hated the pointlessness of the game, its creepy soundtrack, and all the sickeningly bright colors that somehow allured me to occupy my dull moments with their so-called entertainment. This was a dark period of my life, but it ended when I discovered DuoLingo.

DuoLingo is an iPhone game just like Candy Crush, but its objective, instead of being nebulous and about as pointless as Smirnoff Ice, can actually be rather self-filling. DuoLingo helps you learn French, Spanish, English, German, Italian, Portuguese, or any combination of the aforementioned, including all of 'em if you're feeling ambitious. Additionally, you can set the app to teach you one language through another.

Heck, why not learn French in Spanish? Each language is taught through an extensive amount of lessons and levels so you'll never run out of playing time until you've got a really proficient base understanding of the language. Each level contains different chapters—colors, plurals, and possessives, to name a few—segmented into lessons that you must master before moving on. If you're already a language pro, you can choose to test out of a chapter and catch up to your skill level.

In addition, there is also a social as-

pect to the app; you get to create your own profile, fit with a username and photo, and then earn coins as you pass levels to see how you stack up against your friends. The other social aspect of the game is sharing with your friends the hilarious, arbitrarily created sentences that DuoLingo often has you translate (i.e. "The bread is evil," or "No, the egg is mine.") I can't tell you how many times I've had to whisper into my phone, "Tu est un mauvais garçon." For my own shits and gigs I'll let you enter that one in on Google translate on your own.

I've felt a lot better about myself oc-

cupying my free time with DuoLingo than I did during the Dark Ages of playing the Candy Crush saga. DuoLingo helps you work on your multi-lingual capabilities in virtually any setting outside the classroom—not to mention the logo is a cute green owl as opposed to Candy Crush's creepy little clown man. If you're looking to perfect your Spanish grammar, hone in on a skill you haven't practiced since high school, pick up Portugese to help you hit on that exchange student in your dorm, or just learn German in Italian for the heck of it, download DuoLingo! Add me as a friend—pheebs—and begin. Good luck! (Buena suerte, Bonne chance, Viel Glück, Buona fortuna, Boa sorte). ■

**"the other social aspect of the game is sharing with your friends the hilarious, arbitrarily created sentences that duolingo often has you translate"**

I've felt a lot better about myself oc-



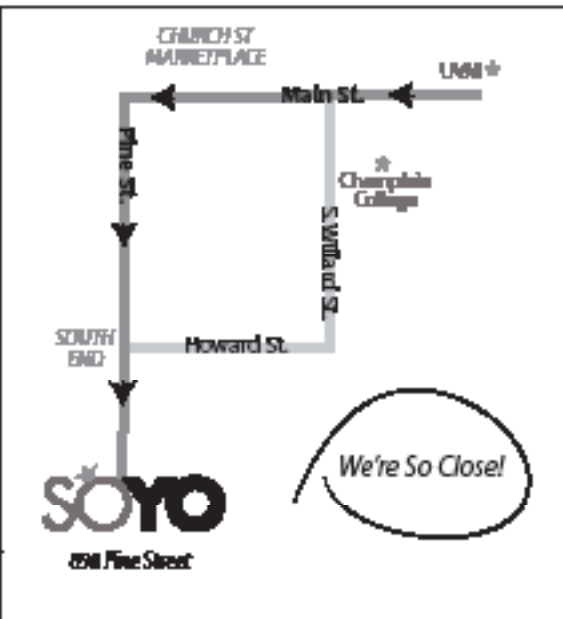
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# it comes in a box...a friend in *franzia*

by mikaelawaters

For those of you who are not acquainted with the name 'Franzia,' take a good look at what you are doing with your lives. For those of you who have heard of it and are judging this article based off of pre-conceived notions and stereotypes of trailers and a husband named Earl Ray, you're probably spot on. For everyone else who has basked in the glorious nectar bestowed to the mortal man through a twist spigot encased in the finest cardboard known to all of humanity, I, and all of America, salute you. Come and join me in propagating an invention more revolutionary than fire, more convenient than sliced bread, and more indispensable to modern living than the flushing toilet. Ladies and gentleman, I present to you boxed wine.

From a purely practical standpoint, boxed wine is your best alcoholic option. Cradled in a thick plastic bag and then tenderly encased in cardboard, boxed wine eliminates the fear of shattering associated

with traditional wine (and other glass bottled beverages). Drop it on the floor. Punt it across the room. Slap the bag in a fit of passion – the mellifluent contents remain unscathed. It is also good for six weeks once open. Although I highly doubt it'll take you that long to finish, boxed wine gives allows you the option. Unlike bottled wines that oxidize and go bad quickly, the last sip will be as fruity and sweet as the first over a month ago. It should also be mentioned that alcoholism is expensive, especially in college when it's cool. A whole box is equivalent to

around five bottles of wine and runs ya only sixteen dollars – screw coupons, drink Franzia.

Boxed wine also offers you a level of class that other beverages simply can't. From the opening of the cardboard seal, to the filling of your thermos (disclaimer: boxed wine is best enjoyed in a to-go mug), peers and bystanders will be impressed as you comment on the fruity overkill and sweet aftertaste that marks the flavor experience. When forming your judgments, also take into account the potential for community building

**"an invention more revolutionary than fire, more convenient than sliced bread, and more indispensable to modern living than the flushing toilet"**

associated with mass containers of alcohol. While it is entirely possible for a single person to finish a box in one night, for the sake of your liver and dignity, not recommended. Instead, beckon all around to grab a mug and fill er' up. You'll instantly make friends.

Lastly, for all you granola-munching vermonsters out there, you may be interested to know that boxed wine boasts a much smaller carbon footprint than bottled wine and produces 85% less landfill waste. Being 50% more carbon efficient than 750mL bottles, it is your duty, nay, obligation to the environment to drink boxed wine. So go forth, good people of UVM, and join the revolution. Open boxes. Slap bags. Turn spigots. Unite, on a mission to change the world, one five-liter box at a time. ■



ben berrick

## GAP YEAR - continued from pg 1

I miss cooking, and I really miss being in control of my own food. Let's face it, I already gained the freshman 15 last year, so I'm basically a pro. I am terrified that with my loss of independence in food choices, I will add the gap-year-first-year-student 15 to the already extra pounds.

Every freshman has some time when they feel lonely at school before they start to make friends and I feel like this is doubly hard for gap year kids. Not only do

I severely miss my friends that I lived with over the past year, I now have to start the process all over again. Making friends is also made significantly harder by the fact that I cannot stop talking about my experiences from the past year. There are times when I have to physically restrain myself from telling another, "this one time on my gap year program..." story. C'mon Frances, I think, don't be that guy, don't be that guy, don't be

"Well, that's cool, but this one time on my gap year I was trekking out of this huge canyon, and we only just barely got out in time before a major flash flood that would have killed us"

At the end of the day, I am still going to get just as lost as any "straight-out-of-High-School-freshman" when I'm walking around campus. I will still be in introductory courses, and most importantly, I will still be part of one of the large groups of first years that walks

around drunk on Friday nights looking for a party. That is really the biggest week of being a gap year student: realizing that even though I had a year of life changing, growing up experiences, I am still very much a freshman. ■

# fashion five-oh.



## midcalves: an *adventure* in sock apparel

by marilynora

Folks, I ask you: what is the sexiest part of a person? Those sparking eyes? That 100-watt smile? Or, is it their amazing personality? Well, clear your heads of such nonsense, because all of those answers are wrong! Let me direct your attention to those sexy calve muscles. Oh yeah, everyone loves those elegant legs. What better way to highlight this beautiful feature than with a mid-calf sock?

“But wait!” you say, “My calf muscles are my most beautiful feature! Why would I want to cover them up with socks that only tools wear?”

Bingo. Unfortunately, mid-calf socks are historically associated with tools. You know the type, the jockey boys that in theory nobody really likes. But let me assure you, the mid-calf sock is one thing they got right. No longer are mid-calf socks just for those who play (douche) sports. They are happening!

Ankle socks make your legs look stupid; the mid-calf socks are a beautiful tease that everyone should be wearing. Midcalves reveal the perfect amount of leg, enticing the viewer for more, while simultaneously not leaving too much to the imagination.

My friend Ethan argues that “mid-calf socks are for people that want attention, and that’s never cool.” Here’s the thing though, we all want attention.

That’s why I have a million buttons on my backpack (please ask me about them, I want to tell you about each and every one of them!) It is also why there are theater majors. It also explains that one person in your class who always raises their hand and relates anything, anything, back to

their own life. We get it, you think you’re amazing, STOP TALKING ABOUT YOURSELF. SHUT UP. We all want attention, and socks are just one way to show off without being too annoying.

Socks are an important often undervalued part of an



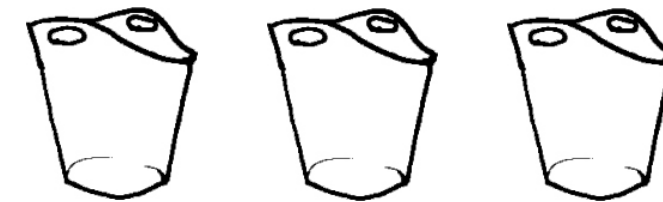
stephanie horn

outfit. Most people put all their style emphasis above the knees. Let me tell you, you’re doing it wrong. Socks rock, and they come in a variety of shapes and colors. A good sock should be comfortable, functional, and add some punch to your ensemble. The mid-calf sock hits all three

points. They’re comfy and are the perfect length for styling reasons alone. They usually come in unique and interesting patterns, which is a huge advantage. Colorful socks brighten everyone’s day! Perhaps your thinking, “But I’m not confident enough to wear such colorful socks,” or “I’m not athletic at all, I shouldn’t be wearing them, it would be a lie, do you want me to lie?!”

Let me tell you my friend, yes you are confident enough! When you throw some colorful mid-calves on you will be filled with confidence as you strut down the Davis Center walkway. Even if you’re not athletic, the mid-calf sock is a good sock. A little deception is never a bad thing. Paired with some shorts, your mid-calf sock will make you look aglow all healthy and fit (sorta), and nobody will know you just finished a Netflix marathon. An additional benefit of the mid-calf sock is that they are surprising good at staying up on their own, and, unlike the ankle sock, they will never get lost in your shoe. How annoying is it when you have to stop, untie your shoe, and pick your goddamn sock from underneath your heel? Your troubles are over. During the autumn and winter months they’ll be your cozy best friends, and during the summer you won’t wear them, because who the hell wears socks during the summer? Seriously, quit that. ■

# 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)

You kept moving in as the class arrived I nodding my head, being sleep deprived. Along with your notes, you were sketching “Starry Night” Your foot rubbed on mine, it was quite a delight Our bodies kept nudging on accident I suppose On my notebook I struggled to lay in repose. But when energy came back into my being I sat up and suddenly began seeing Your hair was so soft, blond, and fluffy You looked put together and not at all scruffy The nape of your neck, so soft and bitable The tone of your body proves that you’re able. Before all I sensed was the warmth of your skin And the sent that you wore made me want to get in. I hope I sit near you again during next class, And later maybe hang out on the grass. **When:** 9:35 Wednesday **Where:** Ruggles’ Chemistry Class **I saw:** My Prince Phillip **I am:** Sleeping Beauty

The cheese inside you is oozezy and great I’d love a Shelburne on my plate. All local veggies, and local cheese I like my bread extra crispy please. All volunteer based, everyone’s welcome to grill up some sammies (here’s a rhyme: shmelcome) The grilled cheese from FeelGood cannot compare to anything else of a similar fare. Ending world hunger with all the proceeds, You truly do cover all my main needs. **When:** Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday (11-3) **Where:** Davis Center Tunnel **I saw:** A sexy grilled cheese sandwich **I am:** In love

Beautiful brunette who seems to have it all not that I know you, but I wish I could call. I see you all the time, passing from class to class. Not to be too blunt, but damn girl that ass! Just the other day I noticed you in the Redstone store Confident and smiling, I want to know you more I’ve heard you are a sorority girl Take me to formal and I’ll give you a whirl I’ve asked around, heard you’re in Simpson. Show me up to floor 3 and let the fun begin **When:** almost erry day **Where:** my fantasies **I saw:** A pretty lady (caps intended) **I am:** dtf

# 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)

UHN

*Girl 1:* Wingardium Leviosa  
*Girl 2:* Avada kedavra!  
*Girl 1:* Accio A+  
*Girl 2:* Avada kedavra!  
*Girl 1:* Is that the only spell you know?

**The Davis Center**

*Future first lady:* My goal this year is Connor Daley. I could see myself as the First Lady type

**Outside Billings**

*Girl 1 to Girl 2:* ...and everytime he did something I would write it down so I could bring it up in our next fight.

**Outside Bailey Howe**

*Dude 1 to Dude 2:* but if they make the campus smoke-free, how are we going to smoke our weed?

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

# fork it over.



## (not so) fancy feastin’: uvm’s most common eating habits

by sarahperda

**Vegan/Vegetarianism**

If this has been your lifelong eating habit, then kudos; if you weren’t a vegan or vegetarian prior to coming to UVM, then there are two possibilities: 1. you’re on the Skinny Bitch Diet (which again deserves some serious kudos), or 2. you’re just dabbling in the behavior to be more UVM-y. Should the latter apply, you likely bear a closer resemblance to Leo from That ‘70s Show than someone who has the money to blow on \$15.00/lb kale from City Market. Chances are you enjoy fraternizing with those spearheading the socialist brigade often found on Bailey-Howe’s steps, and you feel they raise valid points. Not a socialist? Then you’re the environmentalist UVMer who smugly consumes the food found only at the lowest trophic level of the food chain. When you find yourself craving a good old-fashioned drunchie meal from Wings Over Burlington, you opt for Chik’n fingers post-doochie instead and relish in your anti-GMO superiority. Eventually you’ll come back to the dark since and start snacking on hot dogs or bacon again, but for now you’re sticking it to the man and you’re damn proud to be doing so.

**Sodexoism**

Sorry, first years, but this strictly applies to you guys. You came to this school bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, and cutely assumed the rations here would suffice whilst being away from home. Hell, maybe you were excited to have the unlimited meal plan forced upon you because you were so optimistic about the cuisine this fine institution had to offer. I’m sure eating at a place dubbed “The Grundle” seemed funny at first, but things start to become less amusing once you realize you’ll never be able to be in excess of thirty feet away from a restroom again. Best of luck, young guns, you’ll never whine about mom’s cooking ever again.

**863ToGoism**

The polar opposite of the Sodexoites, this crew is absolutely appalled by what we call “food” on this campus, thus they outsource their need for sustenance to those who can deliver it to them. Should you fall into this category, your meal plan is 100% wasted on you since you’ll go to Simpson Fine Dining maybe once, and your credit card bill solely consists of delivery fees and tips. When your parents scold you for spending so much money on off-campus food, you will craftily find out which vendors take Cat\$cratch, and continue to avoid all things Sodexo for your UVM career. Rock on, betches, I was one of you too.

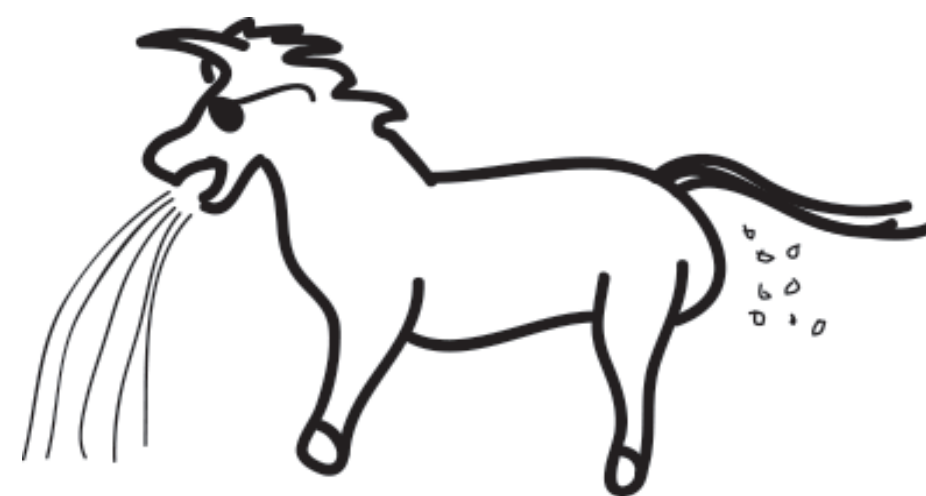
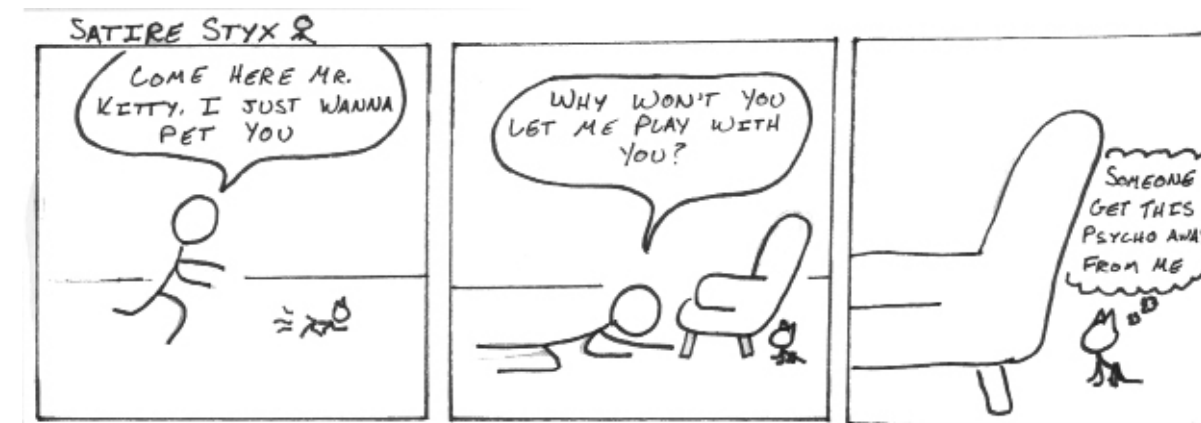
**FoodTruckism**

This applies more to upperclassmen because we all become poor the instant we leave the dorms. Since we lack the luxury of UVM Monopoly Money once we move off campus, we have to learn the art of frugality. The best way to practice: the food truck diet, a crafty combination of fasting and feasting. Our first attempt at sustaining ourselves is always scouring out opportunities to inhale free food on campus. Are we all dedicated members of the Portuguese club? Not quite, but you can bet your bottom dollar that we and our tupperware will be their proudest members when they serve up free Feijoada! When we can’t find campus freebies, we reluctantly cough up the few pennies we have to rub together at University Drive’s food bazaar. Sure, we could drive to the store, buy groceries, prepare meals ahead of time and then tote them to campus, but why would we do that when we can stroll ourselves to a UVMers version of Meals on Wheels and get pizza for breakfast for a measly dollar fifty? Is that disgusting? Absolutely. Do we care? Nope. #college. ■

# cat litter.



collincappelle and benberrick



Did you know hungover unicorns throw up Rainbows and shit Marbles?... No?... Well, now you do. Also, did you know Dracula hates all the formality. He really hates it.



## machines and mandolins by staceybrandt and other weird musical combos

To conceive that a hybrid of honkytonk and electronic music could sound even remotely “normal” or mainstream is laughable at first. Of course, people often laugh at genius before it is approved by the masses. So when I came across the new Avicii song, “Wake Me Up” I was prompted to ask not who, but what it was. It is folktronica, a rather counterintuitive, yet brilliant, musical portmanteau that meshes folk twang into dub-step beats. Avicii’s track has caused a stir not only in EDM scene, but around the world as it has exploded into an international hit.

Naturally, I always get a little jealous of other people’s success. I would like to be famous someday and I am always open to new ways to fulfill this dream. As becoming a late night talk show host with a drinking problem who doesn’t have to remember material because it’s all on index cards is already being handled by Chelsea Handler, I believe the next easiest thing is to come up with completely bizarre combinations of music that together will sound miraculous. I have done just that, though I haven’t yet put my ideas on index cards.

### Soulka (soul+polka)

Does anyone else think Aretha Franklin’s “A Natural Woman” was just missing something? I mean it did OK on the charts, but I think it could have really benefited from the joyful reiterations of the accordion. Think about how much life and passion would be created if the powerhouse voices of legends like James Brown came into an environment with endless quantities of beer and people dancing around in lederhosen.

### Blue Class (blues +classical)

Sometimes people are put off by blue grass music because it sounds too red-neck and red necks are supposedly uneducated, so by transitive property while listening to blue grass you become an unintelligent hillbilly person. I happen to enjoy blue grass and do not enjoy this stigma, so I propose that it is married to the genre of music which is considered to be the pinnacle of sophistication: classical. There is no reason that a banjo player should not be getting down to Bach or, for that matter, a symphony orchestra busting out “Wagon Wheel” with a chorus of every drunk college student within ear shot.



barry giglielmo

### Ship-hop (pirate music +hip-hop)

While shanty songs never totally caught the wave of mainstream music, hip-hop dominates the current market, influencing language, fashion, and the way everyone thinks they’re a bit more gangster than they really are (\*\*cough\*\* Miley Cyrus \*\*cough\*\*). But pirates are arguably just as, if not more, G than today’s hip-hop artists as their street cred (or should I say, sea cred) is unparalleled. I mean, they have swords which are inherently cool and pirate battles, unlike Twitter battles, involve actual death. The two genres would combine effortlessly. Pirate culture even follows the same lewd themes prevalent in hip-hop today such as alcohol, violence, and women- though I’m pretty sure “Yo, ho, ho!” would not translate directly into today’s vernacular.

### Reggae Shmeggae Oy Vey! (Reggae +Klezmer Musice)

Just think of a Jewish man with a large beard and a prayer shawl who also rocked dreadlocks and a Rastafarian beanie. The singer Matisyahu gets pretty close to my vision of the whole Rasta-rabbi style, though, I imagine the reggae sound mixed more with the traditional clarinet, violin, and flem-inducing vowels. Shabbat dinner meet Ziggy Marley. Ziggy Marley, please mellow out my crazy Jewish mother. ■

## summer’s musical mistakes by dylanmccarthy

**Thom Yorke and Nigel Godrich attempt to make a statement by pulling their music from Spotify, no one notices.**

If you want to spread a message, do something people will care about. It’d be one thing if all of the sudden every Radiohead album just up and disappeared from the popular ‘mostly free’ music app, but the last thing anybody cares about is the loss of the two lukewarm-at-best Thom Yorke (mostly) solo albums The Eraser and Amok.

**No updates on DMX covering Miley Cyrus’ “Party in the USA.”**

Seriously, howperfect would that be? You can totally hear DMX’s gravelly voice singing the teen anthem, yet it’ll probably never happen.

*I think we can all agree that’s good to be back. Sure, we have to type up the occasional paper or have our souls siphoned in lab, but midterms are still a few weeks away. In the mean time I know I’m not the only one fantasizing about the great list of upcoming shows in Burlington. We’ve got Badfish, The Casualties at Metal Monday’s, Blitzten Trapper, and motherfucking Bill Cosby just to name a few. But as we move forward into our fall listening routine, let’s not forget these musical blunders of summer 2013.*

**The most talked about thing in music this summer was Miley Cyrus at the VMAs.**

You can’t look at a single music website without reading some pseudo-funnyreview of Ms. Cyrus’ performance. How the hell can so many people care that some young pop star was dressed like Cynthia from Rugrats and acting all slutty and mollied up? It’s time to move on.

**Confirmed that Miley Cyrus has teamed up with Kanye West to remix “Black Skinhead.”**

Are you fucking kidding me? One of the few great tracks off of Yeezusgets a Miley remix? How about Billy Ray Cyrus? THAT would be something worth listening to.

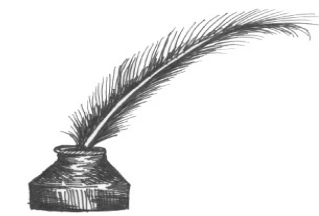
**Jay-Z released a new solo album *Magna Carta... Holy Grail*.**

At a certain point enough is enough, and if we’re being honest that point was the day after the release of The Blueprint in 2001. Jay-Z was pretty fantastic on 2010’s Watch the Throne, but it really isn’t hard to go album as Kanye West’s sidekick. Magna Carta feels more like a dictator addressing his unwilling subjects and with the amount of money Jay-Z has he could easily overthrow a weaker nation.

**The only song played off of Daft Punk’s R.A.M. all summer was fucking “Get Lucky.”**

I really, really like Daft Punk. I’ve been an avid fan since seventh grade and could hardly wait for the release of R.A.M. Hell, I actually really like “Get Lucky,” but with all the hype surrounding the album’s first single, “Get Lucky” was overplayed before it was even officially released. R.A.M. has so many radio-worthy tracks such as “Instant Crush” and “Give Life Back to Music,” but it was “Get Lucky” ad infinitum all summer long. ■

# créatif stuffé.



by natalieakel

Is beating right now.  
This is for the lonely.

For the man you see waiting for the bus  
And wonder,  
‘Who will show up for his funeral?’  
I think the pews will be empty,  
Just like his eyes when he looks at  
His watch and realizes  
Today will be the same as tomorrow.

For the exception of  
No child left behind,  
A classroom where he isn’t another face  
But another project-living  
“He’s not my responsibility.”  
He will leave school and walk on sidewalks  
Where blood stained concrete is  
Past, present, and not yet known, but his future.  
He will walk past the very tall lamp post  
And find his way to a bench.  
He’ll sit next to the man  
With the sullen eyes.

For the girl who lays on her side,  
She doesn’t fall asleep because she  
Refuses to close her eyes.  
She stares at the door knob,  
She listens for the footsteps,  
And trembles when she hears them coming.  
She hides herself under her stained blanket;  
He said he would kill her if she screamed,  
So she never screamed.

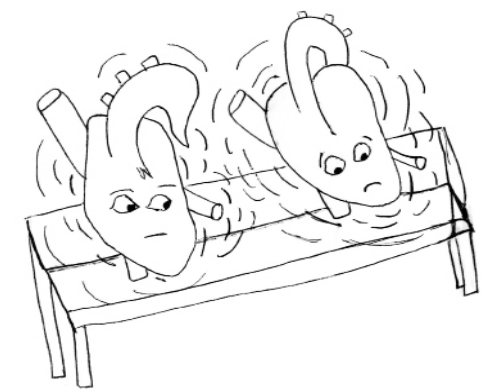
For the neglected,  
The people who will never be  
Resurrected so they lay low instead,  
And for the people who just  
Don’t know what direction  
They should be led.  
For the people who go over and over and over  
The words that should have been said,  
And they write them down hoping  
Someone will read them

And ask, ‘Are you okay?’  
But no one even knows  
They keep a book of  
What is cluttering their head.  
This is for the strugglers,  
The never had a chancers,  
The happy-go-luckys that got lost along the way,  
And the recruiters of all these people  
To make them feel a little less alone.

They’ll ask them to join their cult;  
It’s nameless, and there are no meetings,  
But you can go to them if you know where to find them.  
And nobody knows where to find them,  
So eventually the members stop looking  
And wait to be called  
And they are never called,  
But they keep their phone lines going  
And always pay the bills on time.  
And in this cult, you do what you’re told  
And you don’t like what you are told  
But you do these tasks anyway,  
Keeping your back straight the entire time.

And in this cult,  
You form,  
Combine, and react  
With the other people  
Until you can barely recognize  
Yourself from the person to your left,  
And you’re happy.  
You don’t know why, but you are.  
You’re just as clueless  
As the person to your left  
And that comforts you  
Until you realize  
The person to your left has left  
And in your right mind,  
You want to follow him or her,  
But you couldn’t find them even if you tried because  
They looked the same as you.

This is for the lonely.  
Everyone’s heart is beating right now. ■



frances lasday

## battles

by bethziehl

Blow by blow,  
your words hit me.  
I think my armor  
strong enough,  
but you strike  
my vulnerabilities,  
my insecurities.  
I don’t think  
you know the  
damage you do.  
I play it off,  
but I am  
internally bleeding.  
I am no match  
for you.  
I stand there  
and take it,  
wishing I could  
somehow strike back.  
Our armor is different.  
Yours like steel  
and mine merely nickel,  
something I have  
yet to upgrade.  
My jabs barely  
scratch you.  
I am left the  
one injured  
and I must  
heal myself. ■

## at the gorge

by bethziehl

He walked down the trail and emerged into a clearing where the remains of an old wooden bridge crossed a large gorge. Swift water moved below, churning the dark colors. A girl with long black hair stood, looking down into the gorge, her hair swirling around her in the breeze. A fine mist hung in the air between the hemlock trees. He stepped onto the end of the bridge hesitantly.

“What are you doing?” he asked.  
“What do you mean?”  
“I mean, what are you doing standing on the edge of this bridge?!”

“I’m living.”  
“Really? ‘Cause I’m worried that you’re going to jump.”

“I’m more worried about you,” she said.  
“Why?”

“Because your life is in far more danger than mine.”  
He gave her a look of extreme confusion as though he thought she must be crazy, so she continued to explain.

“This isn’t real, you see. You’re dreaming. I could jump off this bridge and nothing would happen. Nothing would happen to you either and yet, if I pushed you off the edge, I’m sure you would be afraid.”

He looked at her, still bewildered. She took his hand and led him off the other side of the bridge to a place along the bank where they sat and she held his hand in her lap.

“What are you so afraid of, Logan?”

He ignored her question, stuck on what she had said moments before. “Why is my life in danger?”

“Because you’re afraid,” she said.  
“I am not,” he said, offended.

She tried a different tactic.  
“I see the way you look at the water, as though if you were to touch it, it might reach out and grab you with mighty hands and pull you under.”

She waited for him to say something in response, but he was silent, looking down at the ground.

“What if I could tell you what was ahead of you in your future? Would you want to know?”

“No,” he said, without giving it much thought. He was too caught up in his own mind. “Have you ever experienced the feeling of drowning?” he asked. “Drowning, like you know how to swim, but no matter what you do, you’re never going to be able to get a breath?”

“No, I haven’t.”

“Even just the idea of it makes my heart race and I can’t breathe. One slip and you fall in, y’know?”

“Is that it then?”

“What do you mean is that it? I don’t want to drown and die,” he said, taken aback.

“I’m telling you that you won’t though. There’s people here to help you.”

“Why should I believe you?”  
“Come, let me show you.”  
“Are you crazy? You’re just going to push me in!”

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