



# the water tower.

## uvm's alternative newsmag

volume 14 - issue 5 - tuesday, october 1, 2013 - uvm, burlington, vt

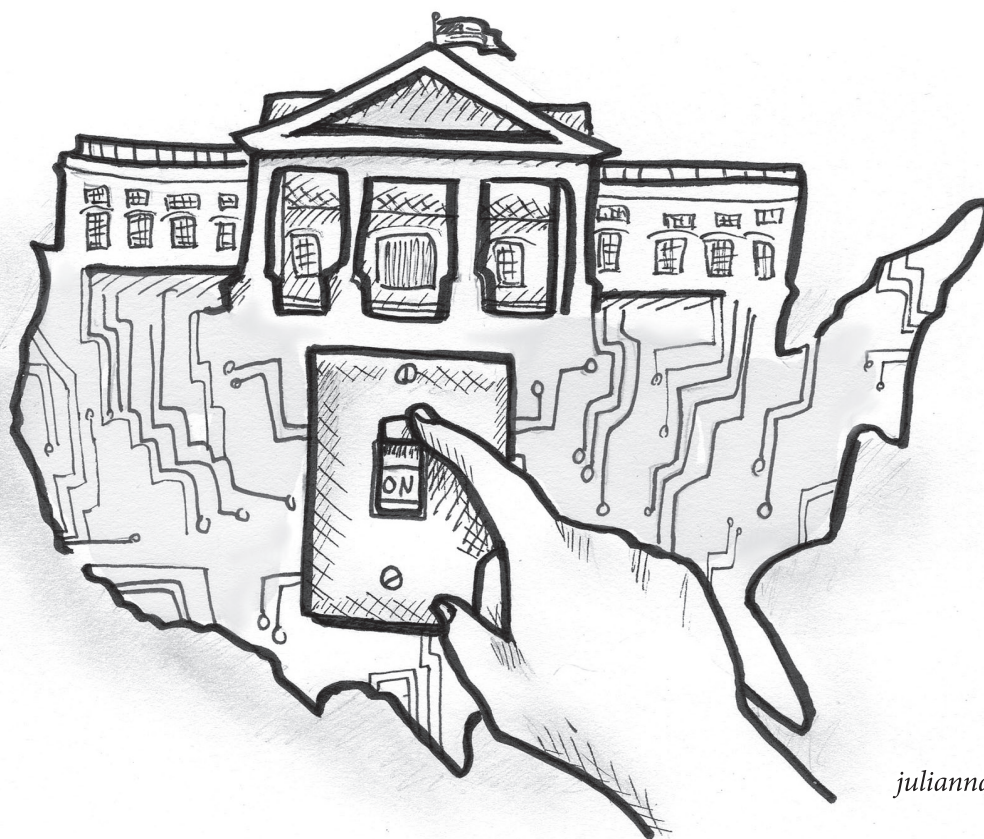
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### american anarchy: inside the government shutdown

by nickpatyk

Stop the presses! And trash collection. And permit processing. And stop giving out federal loans, too. Oh, and while we're at it, let's close the national parks. And if you're one of the "non-critical" federal employees making up about two-thirds of the federal workforce, you've got yourself the equivalent of a snow day—you're on furlough. But you don't get paid. That's quite a chunk of operating power we're losing. In terms of Social Security, payments would most likely continue to be sent out, as this service is not subject to yearly funding by congress. However, all non-essential military, FBI and CIA personal face furlough time. If their work isn't deemed to be "critical to national security," it seems the government will continue functioning without them. But why should something this drastic ever have to occur?

Let's look at the facts. If the president and Congress can't agree on how to finance the national budget by September 30th, the government will cease all but essential services, which means police services, necessary armed forces, the national post service, and tax collection all continue. But why can't



julianna roen

Washington come to an agreement?

At the center of the stalemate is the Protection and Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare—the controversial healthcare reform bill requiring all uninsured Americans to purchase some form of health care, with lower-income-bracket families receiving subsidies from the government.

**If the president and Congress can't agree on how to finance the budget...the government will cease all but essential services...**

Essentially, the Republican-controlled House wants to defund Obamacare, and the Democratic-controlled Senate would prefer to see it implemented quickly. Chris Chocola, president of the conservative, anti-tax Club for Growth, said Obamacare

is "one of the biggest assaults on individual liberty in history [and] stifling economic growth." Thus, Republicans seek to delay its rollout for as long as possible.

Yet regardless of political agendas, a government shutdown is considered undesirable. On Wednesday, September 25th, the U.S. Senate voted 100-0 to move closer to passing a temporary funding bill that would avert the shutdown. Though Republicans seek to delay the enactment of Obamacare, their goal would not actually be aided by a government shutdown. Because the funds have already been set aside for the health care policy, it goes live on October 1st regardless of whether the government is fully operational or not.

But why should we even care about a shutdown? I mean, who the hell needs a government, anyway?

... read the rest on page 3

### the primest real estate campus nap spots and where to find them

by marilynmora

I slept with a stranger on the 3rd floor of the Davis Center.

It was, needless to say, delicious. We left the bookstore at the same time; our footsteps fell in sync as we both headed in the same direction. I glanced over and our eyes locked; we both knew what was up. We ducked quickly into the little alcove off to the right and we both headed straight for the couch. I slowed down. Faltering, I gave him the once-over. Stubbled face from days gone without shaving, wrinkled and stained plaid shirt like he had left his house in a rush and put on the first thing he found, dark, deep-set eyes, with such intensity, such hunger, like he needed this badly, so I conceded and I let him have it.

We tossed our backpacks to the floor and while he threw himself on the couch I ambled over to the plush red chair and settled in. He fell asleep instantly. Sprawled out on the couch, I could see more clearly that this student was much more sleep deprived than I. Silently congratulating myself for being the better person and just letting him have the couch, I finally managed to find a comfy position to nap in; and soon enough we were both dozing away.

With the semester well underway, finding the time to manage my social life and increasing schoolwork is difficult at times. Do I spend three hours doing homework or do I go to this awesome concert instead? Why not both!? First concert, then homework! Perf!

By the time I finally roll back into my room after a night of revelries to get some schoolwork done, it's morning and I'll probably be running on very, very little sleep the next day. That's why napping is so important to me. Yet, with the air getting chillier and the sun being a little less friendly with its nice, warm rays, napping places are in short supply. Lacking grassy beds to lay on, I'm not going to hike back to my room to fit a nap in. So here's a list of some awesome indoor spots to get your napping on:

The Davis Center has a bevy of nooks and crannies that are perfect for napping. The best ones, though, are on the upper levels, away from the bustling bottom floor.

... read the rest on page 4

get  
inside  
me:

origami fight club  
by wesdunn

oh snap  
by sarahshields

american apparel  
by staceybrandt  
and lauragreenwood

aaron carter!  
by juliano roen  
and zackpensak

# the best news team inbox in the universe.



## the shit list

with jamiebeckett

**Ticks:** These blood-sucking fiends are everywhere, ready to ambush you and give you Lyme disease at a moment's notice. They lurk in the grass, waiting to climb up your socks and hairy legs searching for the ideal spot to latch their nasty little teeth into you. The hair-raising sensation you get when you notice a tick is on you only gets worse if you find a target-shaped bite mark after. For this reason I cannot wait for the blistering cold to wipe out all these parasitic motherfuckers.

**Height:** Who knew you needed to be six-foot-four to see Griz last Saturday? Between the tall bros with their caps tipped up and those couples whose faces were glued together, I had trouble getting low with shawty. Granted, shawty wasn't wearing the Reeboks with the straps, but some nice four-inch biddy boots that put her at at least six-two. Being unable to see anything besides the sweaty, intoxicated interactions of my peers, my first Fallfest experience ended shortly after I watched someone boot all over the dance floor.

**The Early Bird:** You know that person who shows up ten minutes early to your eight-thirty, went for a run and had a stellar breakfast containing whole grains, all before you drag your ass out of bed? Yeah, fuck that guy. Not only does he kiss the professor's ass before lecture but he also snags a seat next to a cute girl. It's not that I actually hate morning people, it's that you have to let me drink two cups of coffee before you can reasonably expect me to be a functioning human being. ■

## Dear Cat Lady,

I love film, and my favorite movies might be the most important things in the world to me. Well, besides the girl I've been seeing. The only thing is, she can't seem to stand watching movies together. Twenty minutes in, she always complains of a headache and wants to go do something else. We're planning a date next weekend and I really want to end the night with *The Last of the Mohicans* because it's my favorite film of all time (if I were forced to pick just one...) but I'm worried it'll be awkward if she doesn't have a good time. I don't want this to come between us, because she's really great and also I want to continue to see breasts in real life, not just the Internet.

Sincerely, The Last Mohican

## Dear Lonely Mohican (I paraphrased)

I think the real question here is whether the movies are the issue, because there are plenty of reasons films aren't everyone's thing. Some people prefer books or music, or just can't sit still for that long, or they fall asleep, or they're of the more simple-minded persuasion and can't take all the new plotlines. So are there things your girlfriend *does* like to do, or does she mysteriously get a headache twenty minutes into *every* date? And beyond that, is she really bored with you or just a hypochondriac? You're gonna need to buck up and ask some questions here, because it seems your differing feelings towards movies are already starting to come between you if you're this worried. Maybe explain to her how important this particular film is to you, and if she can't make one exception for you...? That's your call. If nothing else, all the free movies and porn in the world are—well, you know where to find them.

Go get em, tiger! —Cat Lady

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](mailto:thewatertowernews@gmail.com)

# the news in brief

with benberrick

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### Special Thanks To

UVM Art Department Digital Lab

**“The mesmeric performance by the #Westgate Warriors was undoubtedly gripping, but despair not folks, that was just the premiere of Act 1.”**

- A tweet from the **Al-Shabaab** terrorist organization commenting on their attack in a shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya. The Somalian terrorist group had allegedly rented a small shop within the mall and had been planning the attack for at least a year.

**“Because the jury instructions on self-defense were fundamental error, we reverse the conviction.”**

-The ruling from a **three-judge appellate panel** in Florida regarding Marissa Alexander's case. Alexander was sentenced to 20 years in jail for firing a gun to fend off her allegedly abusive husband. Alexander was unsuccessful in using Florida's controversial “Stand Your Ground” law in her defense.

**“Today, somewhat surprisingly, we were contacted by them to say that President Rouhani would like to speak to President Obama on the telephone on his way out of town, and we were able to make that call come together and it was a constructive conversation.”**

-National Security Advisor **Susan Rice** comments on call between President Barack Obama and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. This marks the first direct conversation between the leaders of these two nations since 1979. The hope is that the U.S. and Iran will be able to reach a deal over Iran's nuclear program.

**“Everything started hitting me, flashbacks, to the minor leagues and the big leagues, to this moment. I was bombarded with emotions and feelings I can't describe...I knew it was the last time.”**

-Yankees closer **Mariano Rivera** reflecting on his last game at Yankee Stadium before retiring from professional baseball. Rivera is the all-time leader in saves and will be remembered as one of the greatest relief pitchers in the history of the game. He has been on a goodbye tour of sorts, receiving tributes from many of his opposing teams, including the Boston Red Sox.

**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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*New writers and artists are always welcome*  
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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.**

# it's apple season!

by dannissim

## hands-on with the new releases

Another fall, another iPhone release. This season, however, Apple featured not one, but two new phones. Over the release weekend, Apple sold 9 million iPhones, a new launch record. Prior to last Friday's release, Apple let loose its latest mobile operating system: iOS 7.

iOS 7 marks the biggest change Apple has made in its mobile platform in years. The obvious change is in the aesthetics: everything is flat. With new icons to boot, iOS 7 is pretty as fuck. Other than some issues figuring out multitasking, my experience has been extremely positive. iOS 7 is snappy, with no glitching or lagging. Some users have complained of reduced battery life and reduced life expectancy—oh wait, that's what doctors say about smoking. The only thing that has really bothered about iOS 7 is the response from the public, specifically on Facebook. The most irritating comments I have seen thus far are the good ol' "iOS 7 you have changed my life!" ones. I shit you not; this is one of many hyperbolic Facebook statuses that have been littering my wall as of late. My thoughts: 1) What the fuck do you actually know about mobile operating systems? and 2) if it has legitimately changed your life, your life must really, really suck. For any new software launch there may be some bugs, but I believe iOS 7 has been a huge success for Apple thus far.

For those of you who live under a rock, the two new phones Apple released are

dubbed the iPhone 5c and 5s. I tried out the iPhone 5c first, which comes in an assortment of colors: blue raspberry Airhead, banana Laffy Taffy (eww), marshmallow, green apple Jolly Rancher, and triple cherry

bathroom to clean the jizz out of my pants. Yes, I love Apple products and will continue to overly praise them, but do not let that distract you from the truth: the iPhone 5s is Apple's best phone to date. Updates in-

toe if you're into that sort of thing.

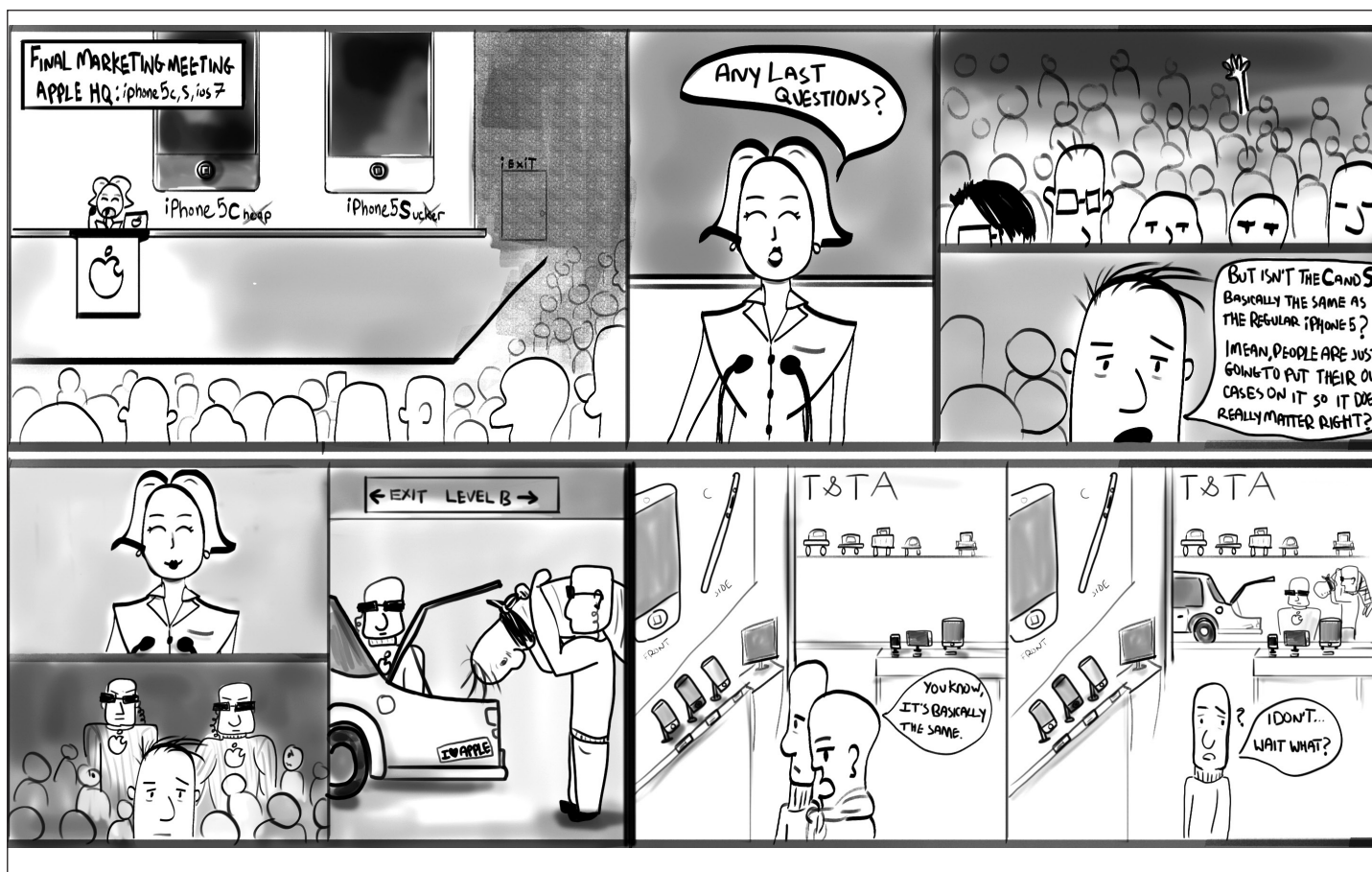
Now the answer you've been waiting for: should I buy one of the new iPhones? Answer: hell yes. However, if you can't swing the investment right now, there are

many other great phones out there. I think the new iPhones are great by both design and functionality standards, but if you're not into iOS then this isn't going to change your mind. Android is great (I myself have a Samsung Galaxy Note), and Windows Phone also has some interesting options. The only no-go: steer clear of Blackberry. Assuming you've seen the news lately, you know that if you don't fucking innovate, the people will kick you to the curb.

As Apple strikes again with another sell-out launch, I am left pondering what has become of the company. Apple once catered their products to the creative and

yin yesko

stood against the man. Now Apple has abandoned that position to perfect the corporate machine: let's make as much money as possible. Yes, first and foremost they are a business and turning a profit is the goal, but this is no longer your father's Apple with the Mac II and Macintosh. This is the Apple where people wait in line for days, and for what? A phone or a computer. They're still making the best products, but they've abandoned what set them apart. ■



Trix yogurt. For a plastic phone, the 5c is one of the sturdiest I have ever encountered; it helps that the polycarbonate backing is steel-reinforced. The 5c features an improved processor as well as an improved front-facing camera. The iPhone 5c will replace the 5 as the low-cost model, retailing at \$99 and \$199 for the 16 GB and 32 GB versions, respectively.

The first time I held the iPhone 5s in my hands and circled my thumb around the new touch ID sensor, I had to go to the

clude new and improved flash, improved camera with 120 fps slow-motion capture, the touch ID sensor, and a 64-bit processor. I won't get into the specifics of the implications of such a beauty, but the 64-bit processor is like the one in your computer and it is one efficient motherfucker. This means improved loading speeds as well as improved battery life. As for the touch ID sensor (fingerprint scanner) I was unable to personally test it, but reports say that it is extremely responsive and can even scan a

### SHUTDOWN -continued from pg 1

A shutdown would be a sort of an extended snow day for school kids—the department of education would be out of commission. And who needs national parks? I'm fine staying home watching Youtube videos for however long it takes for the boys in Washington to figure out their problems. Additionally, in D.C., trash collection would cease, as this service is dependent upon the operation of the area's municipal government. But garbage piling up on the streets could be cool too—haven't you ever wanted to just dive into piles of trash? I know it's one of my lifelong dreams. Off to Washington I'd go. But all satire aside, there is one very big reason to be torn up about this: about two-thirds of the federal workforce would be on furlough without pay. That's a lot of people who would suffer the anxiety of not knowing when their next paycheck might come in.

While it is tough to predict the potential length of the proposed shutdown, the best way to come close would be to examine the greatly varying terms of the seventeen previous shutdowns since 1976. The longest came in 1995-1996, lasting 21 days. There were also six during the 1970s, all lasting longer than eight days, and even a single day shutdown in 1982. Upon examining these glimpses of the past, it seems we are no closer to predicting our current shutdown's length. Essentially, the length depends solely upon how quickly congress can agree upon a functional budget.

But what sucks about a government sick-day is that we still get taxed! Come on! Taking away all those services but still requiring the fees? That doesn't seem right. And what is this Obamacare issue? It doesn't even seem to matter what happens with the shutdown – Obamacare is leaving the drawing board and coming to life regardless. The question shouldn't be whether or not this government will be shutdown. The question should be whether or not it should even have a chance at continuing. By no later than October 17th, the U.S. will exhaust its borrowing capacity having only \$30 billion in cash. What happens then? ■

# around town.



burlington's best kept secret:

## origami fight club

by wesdunn

I feel like the time has come, and I need to share the experiences that I've had at a hole-in-the-wall bar down on Pine Street. I've never been able to find it when I've been looking for it specifically, but on nights when I've happened to be wandering, it suddenly appears somewhere around Leddy Park near the chocolate factory. The fact that nobody seems to know what I'm talking about when I bring it up is seriously vexing me, so I figured I should throw the details out here.

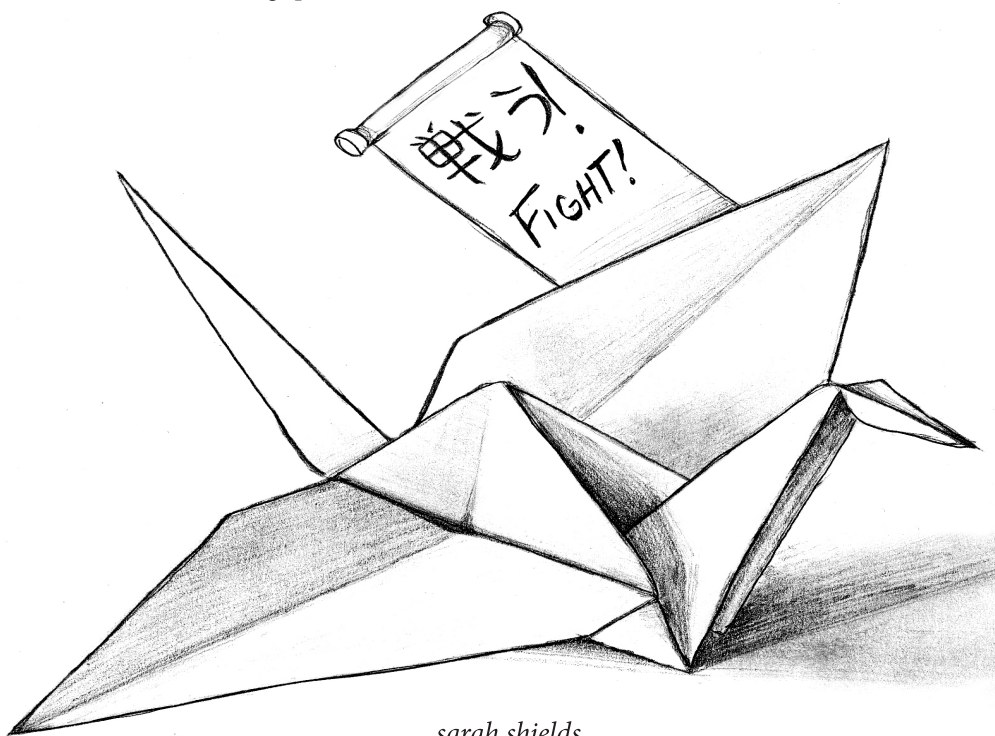
On the first night, I saw the Japanese characters, glowing dimly in the back of what otherwise appeared to be one of those sketchy gravel parking lots on the south part of Pine Street. Why the fuck not, reasoned my less-than-sober mind, and soon I found myself walking through the doors into another world.

I could see clearly, but the light was dim, effervescent even. Paper lanterns were suspended around the spacious, low-ceilinged room. Hushed voices rose to my ears, speaking carefully, calmly—no bar-room chatter here. The steady flow of discourse was filled out with a shuffling noise that at first I couldn't figure out. As my eyes adjusted, I saw the scene with more clarity.

The main feature of the space was a large bar of polished wood with plush stools lined up along it. The rest of the room featured low tables with people sitting cross-legged on pillows scattered about the floor around them. People from all walks of life seemed to be present in the bar: the exhausted housewife, the ascending twenty-something, the sage old man, the precocious pre-teen, and more than a few Yakuza fellows.

I finally realized, as I scanned the bar, what the shuffling noise was. Everyone

was—in between sips of sake and tea—folding paper. I watched as a pigtailed teenage girl put the finishing touches on a T-Rex. Looking across the room, I saw a balding man in a suit building a string of cranes from a single sheet, each connected to the other at the wingtips. I took a breath,



sarah shields

hesitating for only a moment, and then plunged in. Soon I was sitting with a few of the Yakuza, with one patiently walking me through the steps of making a frog.

I lost track of time, but somewhere into my 5th cup of sake, I started picking up on a shift in the tone of the room.

I can't describe it other than that the air felt thicker; a thread of tension had weaved its way through the crowd. Suddenly, I heard shouts, followed by a crashing noise across the room. I looked over in time to see a teacup arc gracefully through the air and shatter across the bar. Like water down a drain,

We were massed around what at first seemed to be a fight. Well, it was a fight, but something was different. I did a double take. Then a triple take. A grey-haired old man and the pigtailed girl I'd seen earlier were wrestling, trading kicks and punches, shouting, cursing... and folding. She was making some sort of flower, and he was working on what could have been either a dog or a horse at that point. Each was trying to complete their project, while simultaneously doing their best to disrupt their opponent. I watched as the girl added a few petals, curling the tips delicately, then whirled swiftly around and delivered a roundhouse kick to the old man's chest. He cried out and fell back, motionless on the gravel. The girl, fingers still working, bent to examine her foe, who proved to have been playing dead, springing back up and kicking out her legs. This contest went on for what must have been 5 minutes. Someone handed me another cup of tea at one point. Finally, the girl landed a hard gut punch and pounced as the old man fell, tearing at his fledgling horse. When the gravel dust cleared, she stood above him, holding up a lovely six-petal flower as bits of the old man's paper fluttered down around his vanquished frame.

Every night I've gone since, the same thing has taken place, with contestants sparring and folding. I've been practicing both my fighting techniques and my folding skills; I can do a crane with my eyes closed now. Soon it might be me in that circle of death and glory that forms each night outside Burlington's only full-contact origami bar. ■

everyone in the bar started to pour out into the dark parking lot. I was shoved roughly to and fro, but managed to keep my footing, finally coming to a halt on the edge of a human circle that had formed around the dim light cast into the lot from a lone, flickering street lamp.

### NAPS - continued from pg. 1

My favorite place (mentioned at the beginning of this piece) is the D&E Unity Lounge. Located right across from Henderson's Cafe, if you're not looking for it you will miss it. It is a recess of peace and tranquility. Two velvet red chairs and one soft bouncy couch make it the perfect hidden spot to get a great nap in. A balcony overlooking the atrium of the Davis Center allows the muddled noise to drift in making the perfect indistinct background sounds to lull you off to sleep.

Of course, if you're the type of person that needs absolute silence in order to hit the ZZZ's then I highly recommend taking a quick trip over to Billings. Billings is a dusty old building that never seems to have anyone around. With a monastery-like atmosphere, it feels sacrilegious to even think about making any noise in there. The lovely little study nooks built into the walls create

the perfect environment for your own private napping corner. Bring a sweater to roll into a lil' pillow and hit that table hard with the much needed sleep you deserve.

Now, as we all know, the third floor of the Bailey/Howe is for serious people only. So nappers take heed: if you venture up there you must respect the seriousness and silence of the situation. When you find the worn out couch on the right side of the floor make sure you find a comfortable position to sprawl out in and stick to it. The serious studiers around do not want to hear you thrash wildly about as you look for the right combination of legs-draped-over-chair. And, if you snore, you're in the wrong place—get out of there. Maybe head to the bottom floor to the couch found to the right of the entrance. Since it's on the bottom floor, you won't worry about the noise you make snoring, and the best part about this

couch is that it's surrounded by glass windows! You can feel the fantastic sensation of the sun's rays warming your cheek as you fall asleep.

Maybe you don't want sun though; maybe you need pitch black to get some shut-eye. If that's the case, head on over to the backside of the Ira Allen Chapel. Right below Cooks Common is a series of empty hallway mazes and forgotten offices. Located right across from a dated "telephone room" there's a nice obscure patch of blue comfy chairs shoved to the side. Poorly lit, this unvisited hole in the wall is so off the beaten track that I guarantee you no one will find you to bother you. Kind of creepy, but hey, you need that nap! ■



# the (not so skinny) scoop on soyo froyo, yo

by lizstafford

I wouldn't say that I'm huge "froyo" fan. I can appreciate that it's a healthier alternative to ice cream, but nine times out of ten, I will forget about my growing waistline and down a pint of good ole Ben & Jerry's. However, being the health conscious individual that I am, I decided it wouldn't hurt to go explore the ever-expanding world of frozen yogurt. As I tend to shy away from chain establishments, I sauntered on down to independently owned SoYo on Pine Street.

Before we go any further, you should know that this place is not a self-serve frozen yogurt shop. Instead you tell them what you want and they serve you. I know, it's a crazy concept, this non-self serve froyo, but that's what they do. Thankfully, that means that you don't pay by weight, unlike establishments like Orange Leaf, so go ahead and choose those dense heavy toppings you've been avoiding. Also, there are only four different flavors including original. Granted, they're delicious and they do change every week, but don't go in expecting a wide array of flavors. Instead, expect a small, delicious, handmade batch of Apple Cinnamon or Nutella. Don't worry though, the topping choices are quite good so you'll still get to cover that entire swirl of healthy yogurt with a layer of sugar and chocolate sauce. However, if you are one of the few insane people who prefer something healthy atop your froyo, SoYo has a great selection of fruit.

I figure I should mention that many of the ingredients they use at SoYo are produced locally. So, if you do choose to go the healthy route, you can drop a bunch of locally grown raspberries on top of your creamy dessert. And all that dairy in your SoYo froyo? It's fresh and local too. The best part is that, when you're done eating all that healthy local VT goodness, you can compost your leftover trash.

**"No, it's not Ben & Jerry's, but it's just as Vermont-tastic and definitely just as *delicious*"**

So basically, this place is the wet dream of any froyo crazed UVMer.

If composting and deliciousness were not enough to persuade you to check out this fro-tastic establishment, maybe their cow mural will. As an Art History minor and cow appreciator, I was pleasantly surprised by a whimsical and utterly adorable blue cow painted on one of the walls at SoYo. If they started selling prints of that cow, I'd sure

as hell buy one.

In the words of Hannah Montana, "nobody's perfect" and neither is SoYo. The place is great if you're not too picky, but the lack of flavors does mean that that one picky-eater in your friend group is going to be bitching all night about how none of the flavors were pleasing to their highly selective palate. Also, the compostable wooden spoons they have are unpleasant. They look pretty awesome, but they don't feel so awesome on your tongue. And SoYo is not around the corner. If you think Church Street is far away, SoYo is further. It's about 2 miles from campus, in a car that's about 10 minutes. However, we're college students and cars are hard to come by so, more often than not you'll probably have to walk and walking 2 miles takes more like 40 minutes. So, to get there and back, not including the time you spend within SoYo's doors, is about 80 minutes; ain't nobody got time for that!

So yeah, SoYo is a tad far to walk to from campus, but if you're really into cow art, frozen yogurt and/or identify as a "locavore" I recommend you make the trek. I personally coaxed a friend to drive me. And if you don't know anyone with a car well at least you have the chance to burn off all those froyo calories on the way back. So get off your asses and go walk down to SoYo before the weather gets too Vermont-y. No, it's not Ben & Jerry's, but it's just as Vermont-tastic and definitely just as delicious. ■

# happy hour: *dr. who*

by rebeccaaurion

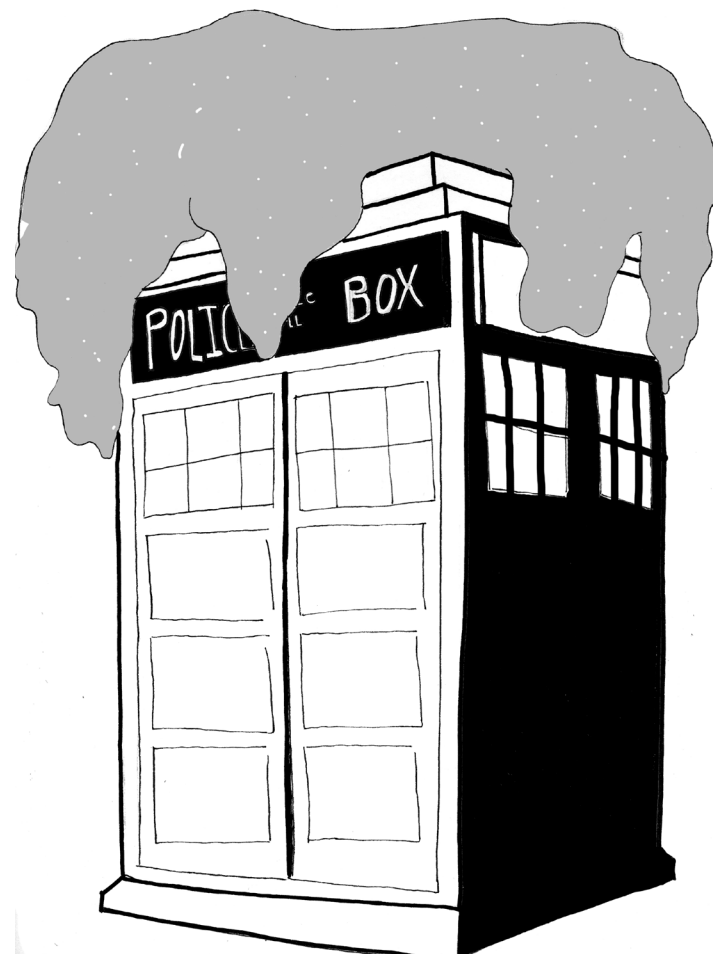
*First off, if your first impression upon reading this week's show title is "Oh god, not another one of those nerdy-ass people," then you can fuck right off. Doctor Who is not only the longest-running show in history, but it's one of the best. Seriously. Aliens, time travel, the occasional romance and enough tears to sink the Titanic all over again; this show's got it all. Now, for this game, I'm basing it only on the New Who episodes: Eccleston (Nine), Tennant (Ten) and Smith (Eleven), to clarify. I wrote this game in mind that you could play it with any of these three doctors. But as always, keep it classy, keep it safe, and Allons-y!*

#### Take a drink:

- Something goes wrong with the Tardis (again)
- The companion gets into trouble (again)
- You have no freaking idea what's going on with the plot, but you're still invested
- A person you vaguely remember from your 10th grade History textbook shows up.
- You can barely handle the sassiness (mostly works with Nine and Ten)
- The Doctor uses science/technical terms you're pretty sure don't exist in the real world.
- An actor from Harry Potter shows up
- Someone you love dies.
- "WHAT THE FUCK" plot twist.

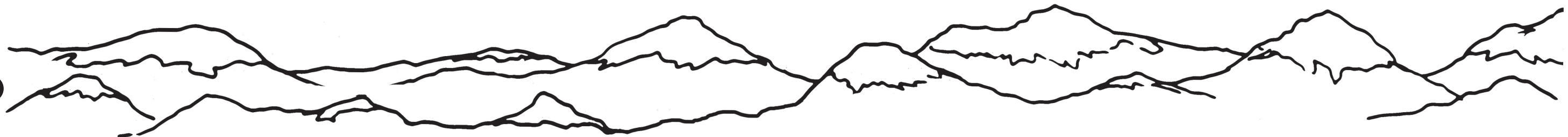
#### Finish your drink:

- "Fantastic!"/"Allons-y!"/"Geronimo!"
- Someone asks, "Doctor who?"! ■



ben berrick

# reflections.



## oh, snap! the app we *love* to *hate*

by sarahshields

Do you ever look back on your most recent embarrassing moments and get thwacked by a mountain of social anxiety and fear of the future? That was me at 2:17 yesterday morning as I realized that someone had just taken a screenshot of my Snapchat.

For the most part, I am a big fan of sending ugly faces on Snapchat. The majority of my friends also participate in this ritual, and we send our facial distortions back and forth from Vermont to New Jersey to England. It can be fun—until someone breaks out the screenshots. Maybe I'm just technologically inept or maybe my friends just have unusually talented screenshot abilities, but I absolutely cannot seem to master the technique. And every single time I see that someone has managed to immortalize my neck rolls, my soul begins to look more and more like a dead tulip bulb, complete with garish lighting and a Band-Aid. I say that, and then my hypocrisy emerges as I continue to attempt to screenshot anything and everything I can. You can't blame me, really, especially when the picture I wanted to save was the most adorable good night message you could possibly ever see—added to the fact that it was sent by a cute boy, and I almost passed out. No wonder my attempts have been to

no avail.

So screenshots suck. As does the insane amount of time some Snapchats take to load and send. Honestly, I think I have gotten spoiled in my dorm because for some reason we have really fast Wi-Fi, but whenever I venture into the outside world I find it very frustrating to hold Snapchat conversations (if that even counts as a

*"someone has managed to immortalize my neck rolls, my soul begins to look more and more like a dead tulip bulb"*

thing). For instance, I spent this summer suffering silently through painful Internet speeds as my brother ate up our neighbor's bandwidth torrenting anime episodes in glorious 1080p. My Snapchat taunted me with never-ending "Loading..." signs, or if I tried to send videos, they would be "Pro-

cessing..." for the next three hours. Anticipa-tion.

The labels that are put on all of the pictures ("Sent," "Delivered," "Opened") drive me up the wall, but only when I can see that someone has opened the picture and then not responded. It's like when you send a text message, and then you can see that they've read it but then not bothered to take the ten seconds needed to type a simple "sure dude." It takes even less time to snap a picture and send it back. How do I fully illustrate my reaction in these small characters we call text? Annoyance. Lots of annoyance.

Snapchat is also disgustingly easy to use in class (when you can get the Wi-Fi, which, on campus, is in the atmosphere like clouds of joy). I end up messing around with my phone when I'm supposed to be tuning in to a two hour lecture on regression analysis or ancient Etruscan religious imagery. Where would I be without my phone? Probably with higher grades than I have now, honestly.

So I suppose I'm left in a love-hate relationship with this app. I like it too much to delete it, but hate it enough to write an entire article about its various failings. And that, my friends, is another brilliant and enlightening update brought to you by your resident sloth. ■

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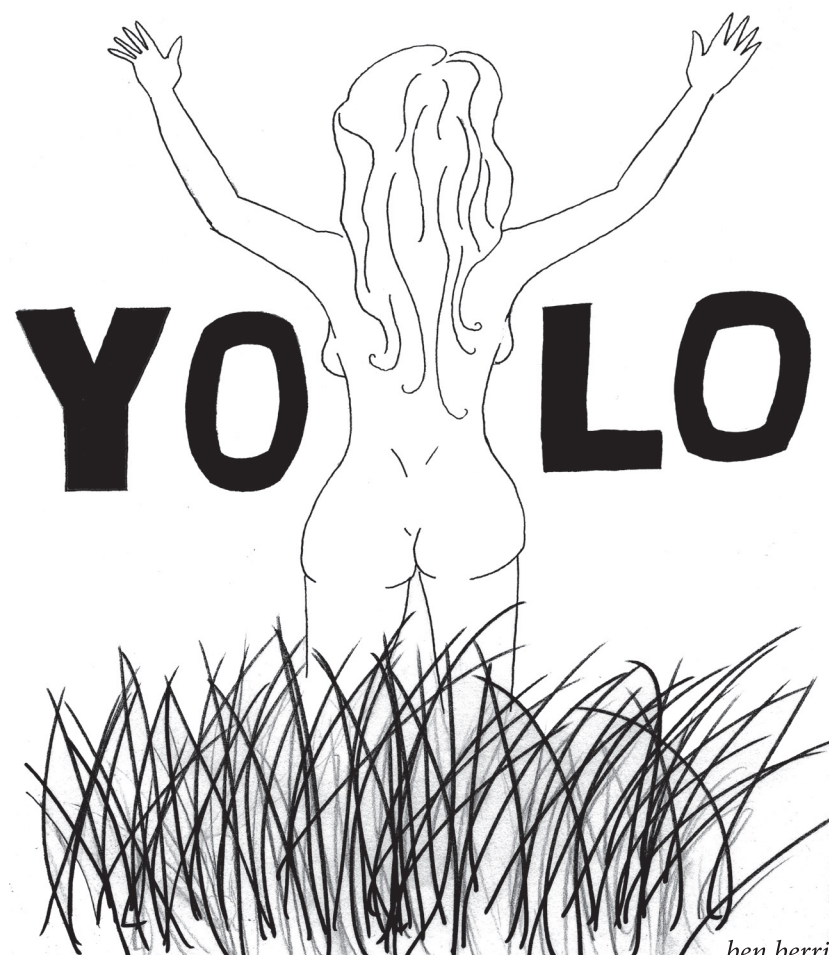
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## in *defense* of...



ben berrick

## #sorrynotsorry

by carolynlawrence

YOLO. You only live once. Everyone who has listened to the radio has heard of this phrase originally coined by Drake in his song, "The Motto." When the song first came out, some loved YOLO, like Zac Efron and his silly YOLO hand tattoo, and some hated it like most of the general public. Personally, I was always indifferent. I didn't need some phrase to tell me how to live. I already knew how to live. But then I studied abroad in New Zealand last semester and I needed justification to streak alone through a field of cows while my kiwi friends watched and cheered on the night of the UVM Naked Bike Ride. The answer? YOLO.

"The Motto" was extremely popular while I was in New Zealand, and all the kiwis I met loved YOLO as a result. I knew my friends back in America would punch me in the face without hesitation if I came back saying it, but I couldn't resist. I embraced and loved (and still love) YOLO!

Want to do the Cotton-Eyed Joe in the middle of a bar by yourself? YOLO. Jump in a 42-degree

glacial lake on a mountaintop? YOLO. Eat an entire carton of Ben & Jerry's? YOLO. Do a keg stand? YOLO. Rap-battle with Kingbread? YOLO.

But for real, YOLO is great (even if my sisters started a YOLO jar and made me put a dollar in every time I said it). It's a license to take (not dangerous) risks that you normally wouldn't. Life is about balance, and this

*"want to do the cotton-eyed joe in the middle of a bar by yourself? yolo."*

state and this university have so much to offer that you shouldn't spend every day of every weekend holed up in the library or whatever other dark, depressing corner you choose to write your papers and lab reports in.

We really only do live once. Hell, we only go to college once, and we do so in a damn amazing place. Embrace what we have. Go hike a mountain. Mansfield,

Camel's Hump, Abraham, Hunter Mountain, and Sterling Pond are all fantastic hikes that are only about an hour away from Burlington. Enjoy fall and go pick some apples at Allenholm or Shelburne orchards. Rock climb at Smuggler's Notch. Mountain bike at Saxon Hill in Essex. Or even just go for a bike ride along the lake or shop downtown.

Talk to that dude/chick you've had your eye on (or, even better, write them an embarrassing I Want You So Bad). Sing Backstreet Boys karaoke. Join the Tae Kwon Do Club. Hug a tree. Shave your head. Don't hold back and live the life you have the way you want.

Stop caring about what others think and scream YOLO from the top of Williams as you watch the sunset, in the middle of Cook Commons, even in the face of the diggeridoo man down on Church Street. Spread the love of YOLO! I've taken this underappreciated phrase to heart and I've never been happier. I urge you all to do the same, give no fucks, and make the most of the time we have here in Vermont and wherever else you end up. YOLO. ■

## public shame #67: eating (a snacking snafu)

by mikaelawaters

Close your eyes and allow me to paint a picture: It's the second floor of the library and all the little Catamounts are hard at work. Computer keys are being pressed with fervor, textbook pages are being flipped with zeal, ink is passionately being poured from pen to paper, and parents sigh in relief as tuition dollars seem justified and their early retirements once again become a possibility (thanks, of course, to the earning potential associated with that computer science degree they pressed on you). The scene is idyllic and possibly enough to restore faith in the American higher education system.

Now turn your attentions to the study chairs on the right hand side. Here, you will find me. And while everyone else is pursuing academic improvement and achievement, I am just trying to free my damn cookie from the loud, plastic prison in which it helplessly awaits. Every time I attempt to open the packaging, the \*obnoxious sound of crinkling plastic\* engulfs the entire floor. Thus, I'm stuck between the proverbial rock and a hard place (shout out to my boy Odysseus).

I've been studying econ for three hours and, convinced that I'm still going to fail the test, the buttery, chocolaty goodness of the mass-produced Sodexo cookie is this only thing I understand. But every time I make a move to open it, the whole fucking floor is alerted of my weak willpower and vulnerability. The issue isn't that I care about disrupting the people around me, it's the shame I feel when everyone looks up after the \*obnoxious sound of crinkling plastic\* and stares. So now that I've once again embarrassed myself on a public scale, we arrive at the topic of this article – the shame of public eating.

College poses two problems for a person's eating routine: a lack of time and an abundance of people. And much like cutting, things often don't go as planned. Using my cookie consumption as a guide, let's take a walk through some of the food faux pas of public eating.

**The "Five Second Rule":** Eating on the go almost always results in a "man down situation." When alone, it's no biggie. No one saw and you are free to reunite the lost piece with the rest that's already safe in your belly. In public, the game has changed. Do you try to pick it up? Is it weirder to just ignore it and brush the lone cookie crumble into the side of the chair cushion? (Is that litter-



winy kwong

ing?!) The only thing clear is shame. Not only did you drop food, but other people saw. Worse than that is the realization of how irrationally sad you are over one lost chocolate chip, and that if all these people weren't here, you'd totally be game to eat food off the floor. (I did drop the cookie, and I did eat it).

*"if all these people weren't here, you'd totally be game to eat food off the floor. (I did drop the cookie, and I did eat it)"*

**The "Look Away":** Food makes life better. Failed a test? Eat a brownie. Significant other dumped you? Entire bag of trail mix. Too drunk and too sad? Big Daddy's delivers until 2 am. The question isn't if food will make you feel better, it's what will you choose to eat? But college life does not allow you the space to try to literally eat your feelings. Here, your plethora of deep and conflicting emotions are broadcasted to the public, leaving you internally sobbing, "look away!" as you dive into the cookie.

**The "Incoming":** How to approach eating in public is stressful. Trying to maintain

both your dignity and your manners, questions arise like which side do you start eating on (i.e. a burrito – if anyone knows the answer to this, please contact me immediately), how much can you put on the fork and still be able to chew normally, and how large of a bite to take. After staring down the food in question, most people disregard all internal conflict and plunge in way too ambitiously – I call this the "incoming." The issue with this tactic is that, without fail, not all the food will fit. The consumer is left with stray pieces sticking out of his or her mouth – the burden of trying to chew it all – and a few bystanders staring in horror and disgust.

For all those wondering, I did manage to get the cookie unwrapped (very loudly) and I did then proceed to eat the whole thing. If you are still wondering, I also ate fallen cookie off of the chair cushion, tried to transfer my academic anxiety into a food product, and forcefully attempted to stuff the whole thing into my mouth in like three bites. Needless to say, I felt (and still feel...) a whole lot of shame. What used to be a joyous experience (eating), college has turned into a hotbed of social anxiety and self-doubt. Thus I present the SNAFU of public eating – Snacking Now Absolutely Friggen Uncomfortable. But lets be honest, this isn't stopping anyone. ■

# fashion five-oh.



## This Land Was Made For You and Me (and Your Clothes)

by staceybrandt and lauragreenwood

*An old American adage may claim that “clothes don’t make the man”, but can clothes make a nation? American Apparel, sporting our nation’s name in its title, stands out as one of the few companies who have taken the idea of the American Dream and expressed it in style to the extreme. We flesh out American Apparel further (yeah, really, you thought you already were getting maximum flesh with them) and pick apart exactly what the apparel of America is or is being portrayed to be. If you are wearing their cottony softness right now, you may want to shield your tag from the truths to come.*

### Nipples

True to a fault, the real icons of American Apparel are nipples. No matter the tank top, bralette, or bikini top one might bear, the store has made sure to allow little to no fabric to interfere between your breasts and the rest. As a girl who doesn’t shy from negligée for those power days, nipple exposure is something I’m not afraid of, but—like all simple pleasures of life—moderation is key. As erect emblems of our country’s clothing line, I’m not sure exactly why American Apparel is always encouraging nip-slippage. Walking around the store, I often find myself perplexed at how a seemingly innocent storefront transforms into the X-rated, adult section of Good Stuff so rapidly and unannounced. Maybe the head designer just artistically interpreted our national anthem America “the land of the free” a tad too seriously for casual wear.

### Simple

The key to any well-balanced wardrobe are the basics, and at American Apparel you can get basically the same shirt in over twenty colors and fifty minor style adjustments. They throw in the occasional pattern to spice it up, but truly the company has formulaically designed clothing conformity. Fuck diversity or individuality; let’s blend that melting pot real well until only minor divergences from the norm are visible and only a few hemlines are cool. I will use the example of the multicolor, spandex ballerina-esque dress. Mentally scroll through your newsfeed or think back to Halloween, Spirit Week, or semi-formal event photos. Ladies, I know you’ve seen it (or even worn it) and, fellows, you know you’ve done a double-take if for no reason other than it’s shiny and soft. A simple enough dress, fitted on the chest, A-line skirt, three inches too short, fabric that shines from sea to shining sea. Fuck that dress. All at once, teenage girls flocked to American Apparel to purchase this dress and don their acute fashion sensibility. Flattering enough, but that dress lacks character, flair, and dammit, an appropriate length! But avail, American men, women, adults and teens eat those simplistic styles up because in corporate gods we trust our individuality (or lack thereof).

### Accessories

American Apparel has a multitude of accessories ranging from moderately functional to ostentatiously decorative to ironically non-functional. Here are a few.

**Bi-“faux”-cals:** These are glasses with non-prescription lenses that, due to glare and smudging, actually impair your vision. Because sometimes your vision needs to be humbled, you’ll hear comments going around like “I hate her, her vision’s perfect!” America really rocks at reversing and glorifying a person’s weaknesses—yay, everybody gets a trophy...and glasses!

**Old-timer Watches:** On the functional end, we have an array of watches that seem to have been recovered from a desk drawer that hasn’t been opened since 1952. These watches are only semi-functional, however, because the time is constantly projected on our phones, laptops, etc. Also, I’m not even sure if I can read clock hands anymore.

**Mini-top-hat Headband:** I have actually seen baby monkeys wearing this accessory, except for baby monkeys it is not a mini top hat—it’s just a top hat. This cranial decoration is pseudo-classy, kind of like America in general.

**Fanny-Packs:** Functional for both carrying small valuables and making you look like a mom, if you think fanny packs were ever or will ever be considered cool, you’re probably wearing one at this very moment. The economic prosperity of America in the early 90’s will not reemerge because people start wearing fanny packs again, but American Apparel believes it’s worth a try. If you’re interested, the only appropriate social situation for wearing a fanny pack is at the zoo.

### Website

The internet presence and overall message of American Apparel are what really confuse me. The first time I took my shopping curiosity online back in middle school, I remember abruptly becoming flushed in the face and shutting off the computer for fear my parents would assume their little girl was now a porn addict. But hey, sex sells, doesn’t it? However, the company has concocted a perplexing combination of corporate morality, capitalist globalization, national pride, and nudity. It’s really brilliant how just one store has so artfully conglomerated an idyllic and prosperous American business that does no wrong. Hell, they’re so proud of this multifold marketing lovechild that their daily stock market values are fucking published online. God bless success where you can have your winnings on display alongside your sexual supremacy.



liz stafford

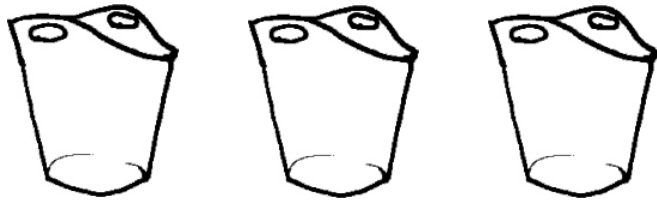
### Price

*[Patronizing parental chuckle]* This one is too easy. It seems in America, and quite abundantly in Vermont, that there exists a large population of wealthy, dare I say over-privileged, youth who would like to fit in with the lower-class population to appear “edgier.” They accomplish this by wearing hobo-inspired outfits that come at extreme costs. Noticing this trend, American Apparel constructed an ingenious business model that goes something like this: sell grandma sweaters for \$75, worn-out looking white v-neck t-shirts for \$30, and giraffe-print leggings for \$50. They are making bank off of merchandise you can find at a yard sale.

### Customer service

American Apparel employees are resoundingly ambivalent to what you purchase at the store, and they kind of have to be. No matter how much the cashier’s inner fashionista yells “Don’t let her buy that! It’s heinous!” they must remain composed and pretend like a spandex maxi skirt with a slit is a casual article of clothing. In addition, employees may be apt to provide impromptu fashion advice while ringing you up. For instance, I had one cashier recommend that if I found my scarf to be too heavy around my neck to cut it in half and make two scarves. Yeah, I just paid three million dollars for your scarf and now I’m going to destroy it. Good idea; I’ll sell the other half of the scarf at a yard sale.

# 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)

so this one time at a bar,  
you bought me a PBR,  
it was kinda fancy,  
so we got a little dancey.  
we talked for a little while,  
and I quite liked your smile.  
I liked your lisp too,  
so on we danced in the room of blue.  
you told me you climb sometimes  
so here I am making these rhymes.  
then you said you like the snow  
so drunk me was like, back to yours we go.  
we had some fun that night,  
and then came the morning light.  
it was early when I ran away,  
but I kinda wish I chose to stay.  
being a UVM grad  
you may not remember iwantyouso bad  
but you seemed like a cool dude  
and I'm not trying to be rude  
but hey I just met you  
and this is crazy  
but here's my embarrassing poem  
so call me maybe?  
**When:** labor day  
**Where:** red square  
**I saw:** a snowboarder  
**I am:** a terrible dancer

Not knowing where to start with you,  
we've been friends for a while now,  
but as time goes by,  
I realize now, you're not all that I once thought.  
Funny, witty, quick to catch on, not a thing I've seen you  
can't do,  
but when it comes to friends and finding that girl,  
you're always a step behind.  
Twiddle your fingers, try to find the next step,  
but in the end, you'll be stuck without a King on your  
board,  
and then where will your plotting go, your giant-sized  
steps?  
A board with no King, a King with no Queen, whatever  
will you do?  
**When:** Here and There  
**Where:** Everywhere  
**I saw:** Confidence  
**I am:** A Fool

You carry yourself with such grace  
I can feel my heart race  
Your eyes pierce through my soul and light my inner fire  
I want to grow old together and retire  
You're more than just a woman to me  
Can't you see what we could be  
I would write songs and silly poems like this  
And plant upon your lips a soft kiss  
You make me want to be more, do more  
And when you are not near my heart sinks to the floor  
For now my love can wait  
But I know our love is fate  
**When:** All day long  
**Where:** Love does not have a where  
**I saw:** A true lady  
**I am:** A true gentleman

Your pick up line is what really got me hooked,  
It wasn't even something about how I looked  
You asked if I held vice presidential standing  
In the most esteemed club bearing Kalkin's branding.  
Even though I've heard better, the effort was cute  
It was just enough to stop me from giving you the boot.  
Though the details of that night remain a little blurry  
And I left the next morning in a still-drunken hurry,  
I still hope that you read this, or I'll be a little sad  
Because then you'll never know I still want you so bad.  
**When:** seenya night  
**Where:** Sputies  
**I saw:** Sir Charles  
**I am:** captivated

Why can't you appreciate that I am different?  
What can I do for you to notice me?  
How can you surround yourself with such blah girls  
And act so nonchalantly?  
I'm so much more fun, alive and deep  
Than anybody you acquaint yourself with.  
Yet, you spend your time with those who are asleep  
And those who are afraid to live.  
I should move on from you and your apathetic life,  
Give my heart a break from all of this shit,  
Yet when our eyes meet and your smile ignites  
I hit my head on the wall because I don't want to quit.  
I know you are unsure and hesitant as fuck  
And that you are ready to experience something new  
But if what you really seek is a fulfilling relationship  
Just wake up and see me offering you something beautiful  
and true.  
**When:** always  
**Where:** around  
**I saw:** a tall dude  
**I am:** hopeful

Your nickname is that of an American brand  
It's not Ford, it's not Chrysler, those are far too bland  
You represent a car much cooler than a Jeep  
You're more of a hot-rod, and I hear you "run deep"  
For years I've admired you from afar,  
I heard through the grapevine you fuck like a porn star  
If you're looking to put the rumor to rest  
I'm willing to put your rep to the test  
Meet me on the dance floor (you know our spot),  
It's about time for things to get hot  
**When:** always  
**Where:** the dungeon  
**I saw:** a former fratstar  
**I am:** your biggest fan

You look like you come from the Jersey Shore,  
But it only makes me want you more.  
You're the tallest soccer player I've ever seen,  
And your spiked, gelled hair has a glorious sheen.  
I want to slather your bronzed body in oil,  
You bring my temperature to a boil.  
Your big diamond earrings are totally sweet,  
Every time you walk by me my heart skips a beat.  
I want to dribble your soccer balls,  
You make my downstairs like Niagara Falls.  
Text me sometime and we'll get unclad  
Oh #15, I want you so bad.  
**When:** all the time  
**Where:** Virtue Field  
**I saw:** an italian StAlLion  
**I am:** a poliSh Pony

It was at first sight for your tall, lanky frame  
Not to mention that shaggy, brown mane  
Your quick, bookish wit only kept me enticed,  
But if I made a move we'd both pay the price.  
You rock "hipster-prof" style, as you've said before,  
I see tweed and sweaters and only want more.  
Although I'll never act on it, you drive me mad  
Shakespeare hasn't got words for how I want you so bad.  
**When:** sometimes  
**Where:** English  
**I Saw:** my bad-teacher fantasy  
**I am:** keeping my mouth shut

# 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)

## Crossing Main Street, 10AM

*Girl 1 to Girl 2:* And the weirdest thing to think about is,  
like, God is WATCHING you have sex. Like...weird, right?

## Cook Commons

*Creative Girl:* Would you, like, rather live inside a kanga-  
roo pocket, or would you rather have your OWN kanga-  
roo pocket?

*Dumbfounded Jock:* What?

*Girl:* Think about it. Like, you could effectively be a kan-  
garoo.

*Stoned Friend:* Man, that would be so hot.

## Simpson Dining Hall

*Boy:* Dude, I was so deep in the friendzone. she made me  
her brother on Facebook.

## Davis Center Pool Tables

*Someone:* Today I had the Dim Sum woman for lunch.  
Well I didn't have her...but I had her buns and her dump-  
lings.

## Green House Hallway

*Dazed and Confused Kid:* Why do we even celebrate  
Thanksgiving? That's like, an Indian holiday.

## Cook Commons

*Girl 1:* Hashtag manchild

*Boy 1:* Dude, not true.

*Boy 2:* Hashtag so true

## Outside UHeights

*Distressed Man:* I've been hooking up with a Republican.  
*Distressed Man 2:* How did you not know? Have you been  
tested?

*Distressed Man:* (Sigh)

*Distressed Man 2:* Seriously, is your dick Republican now?

## Living and Learning Dorm

*RA:* Hey guys, we could hear you downstairs...

*Steadfast Gentleman:* I will NOT be silenced!

## Fireplace Lounge

*Girl:* If JK Rowling dies, I'm going to lose my shit.

*Boy:* IF?

## L/L-C Lounge

*Girl to Guy:* Your penis is a bit more useful than your  
fingers.

## Mercy Hall, September 28th 2:15 am

*Guy:* I suck a dick once in a while, but that doesn't make  
me gay!

## Living and Learning

*Bright-eyed English Student:* Reading is a collaborative ef-  
fort! We need to examine metaphors!

*Jaded Nursing Major:* The curtains. Are. Fucking. Blue.

## Outside L/L

*Bespectacled Hottie:* I think he said 'Dump him in the  
bathtub, or duct-tape him to a chair'.

*Cute Friend:* He said something more about the bathtub.

*Hottie:* I don't even know.

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





## aaron, oh aaron

the *male+female* perspectives on carter's comeback



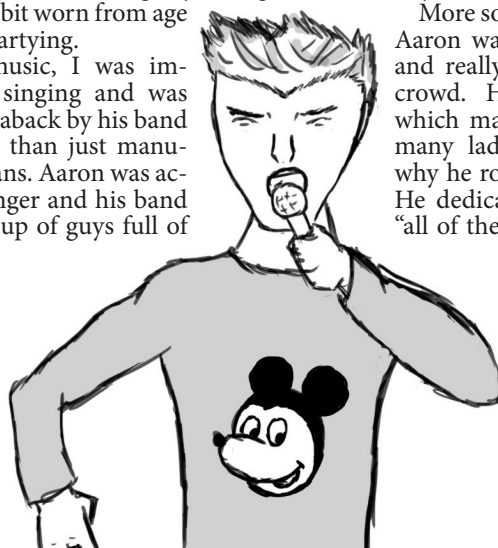
by julianoeroen

Aaron Carter. Now that's a name you probably haven't heard in a while. The man is back, though, after an eight year hiatus. Why did he come to Vermont? That's a question I ask about a lot of big names stopping by the land of the Woodchucks. Since I was anticipating to see some washed-up has-been perform in front of a small and bored audience, seeing Aaron Carter at Higher Ground was much better than I expected. About 100 people were at the show, complete with its fair share of hyperventilating females, including myself, and a good proportion of males.

What surprised me the most about the concert was the amount of energy that Aaron exuded. He came bursting onto stage in in a Mickey Mouse pullover with a Shaquille O'Neal jersey underneath, complete with vigor and a genuine sense of appreciation for his audience, making the overall experience much more fun. He looks

exactly the same as he did eight years ago "Get Lucky." only taller and a bit worn from age and inevitable partying.

As for the music, I was impressed by his singing and was especially taken aback by his band who were more than just manufactured musicians. Aaron was actually a good singer and his band was a funky group of guys full of soul. He balanced the set with a variety of his old hits from the early 2000s such as "I Want Candy" and modern covers of songs such as "Blurred Lines" and



christopher schneider

More so than being a good singer, Aaron was an excellent performer and really knew how to work the crowd. He was quite charming which made it easy to see why so many ladies gawk over him and why he rose to be as big as he was. He dedicated one of his pieces to "all of the pretty girls" in the audience and would often reach out his hand where a sea of longing arms flocked to greet him.

Not having been to a concert in several years, it was amazing to see the difference in concerts from four years ago to now in terms of the use of

cell phones. Dozens of phones were poking out of the crowd to take photos and videos of Aaron, which made the concert seem somewhat ephemeral and less meaningful. He embraced this fad wholeheartedly, though, and grabbed random phones from the crowd, filmed himself performing then tossed them back to their owners.

Although the show was short (lasting only an hour), seeing Aaron was overall entertaining. What's impressive about Aaron is that unlike most child stars who try to change their image in the music industry as they grow older, Aaron has been able to remain relevant by relying on his older songs which originally made him famous. He admitted to the audience that it's been hard to make a comeback due to a lack of support, but despite such hindrances, he's still trying to make his dream happen. ■

by zackpensak

All I wanted was for him to acknowledge me. Just a simple point or wave would have left me bragging to all my friends that I made eye contact with the legendary, ageless, ten-years-past-his-prime Aaron Carter. That was all I wished for when walking into Higher Ground Thursday night. But Aaron Carter, or AC as I can now affectionately refer to him, gave me far more than I could have ever imagined.

The concert took place in the smaller of the two Higher Ground showrooms, meaning that even though we got there five minutes before Aaron took the stage, we were still only about twenty feet away from the stage. The first indicator that it would be a good night was the fact that Aaron ran on stage wearing a Mickey Mouse sweater. I don't care what your feelings are about Aaron Carter's music—that part is irrelevant—what matters is that you can't be hating on Mickey Mouse, so right off the bat AC won the crowd over.

Everything was going according to expectations until the final song: the classic of classics that is "Aaron's Party." Right as

I heard the first few bass lines of the Party, I was immediately lifted onto my friend Connor's shoulders. The reason for this is that before coming to the concert my friends and I each put on a plain white tee

**"what I wasn't expecting was for aaron to look me dead in the eye, extend his arm, and beckon for me get my jorts-covered ass on stage."**

and wrote the names of different AC songs on them. Needless to say, I was "Aaron's Party." I have been on a friend's shoulders at other concerts before, and have received a wave or point, so I was hoping for the best. What I wasn't expecting was for Aaron to look me dead in the eye, extend his arm, and beckon for me get my jorts-covered ass on stage. Holy shit.

The only concern that went through my mind as I lept forward into the air off of

Connor's shoulders was that hopefully the girls in front of me had been getting yolked at the gym, because before I knew it I was crowd-surfing my way to the stage. Luckily enough, the overwhelming density of

the crowd made up for any lack of strength, because I made it to the dreamboat safe and sound. As he pierced my soul with those chestnut-brown eyes and put his arm around me with the chorus approaching, I knew one thing: I was home.

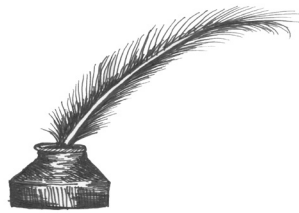
The next five minutes or so consisted mainly of a two things: Aaron and I dancing with my arm tightly around his left shoulder, and me pumping up the crowd while the superstar took center stage. The

only exception to this trend was when the chorus hit for the third time and Aaron handed me the mic as he walked off to the side. Luckily enough for big AC, he picked the right man for the job, because I have the voice of not just one angel, but a whole fucking choir of them. And modesty too.

Now, you must be thinking, wow Zack, that experience really could not have gotten any better. Well, you are wrong! As the song wound down and my euphoria reached a breaking point, the greatest possible thing that could have happened happened. My hero smiled at me, and pulled me in for a bro hug. To quote Urban Dictionary's definition of a bro hug, it is, "an epic hug between brofriends. It's so epic it's awesome, and nobody will ever lampoon a brohug for fear of social annihilation." And just for icing on the cake, as we bro-ed it out, he whispered, "That was a good time man," in my ear.

Obviously enough, while I crowd-surfed back to my friends, I did not feel the hands underneath me; I felt like I was lying on cloud nine. ■

# créatif stuffé.



## my first love by rebecca laurion

I fall in love for the first and only time in my life when I am fourteen years old. She has yellow green eyes, fluctuates between overweight and too thin, and looks at me like I hang the moon. Her name is Baby and yes, I do put her in the corner. Though to be fair, it's more her choice than anything.

I meet her two days before my first day of high school. This summer I am intensely lonely, and am settling it firmly in my mind that it's time to find a companion. Numerous visits to the New Hampshire SPCA yield no results, and I am beginning to realize that I might never find a furry little feline to call my own.

It's the fifth or sixth visit, and my frustration and sadness at the failures so far are reaching an all-time high. My father is with me, and he strolls around one of the rooms where cats run free around scratching posts, cushions and climbing towers. I sit on a bench in the corner next to a tiny little blue bed, ready to cry.

And suddenly there's something on my lap. I look down, and an underfed little lump of black and brown tabby fur settles on my legs, curling in on itself to sleep. It looks up at purrs, paw reaching for my hand, batting it gently in encouragement to stroke its fur; and I'm a goner. I pet the soft fur, amused at the stripe of black down its spine, and jokingly tell my dad this cat has a mohawk. The cat stays on my lap, refusing to move for nearly an hour. We learn her name is Baby, and she is ten years old. Mum meets her the next day, and both she and my father adore her. We take her home that afternoon.

I spend that summer taking pictures of her and cuddling. For an old cat, she acts like a kitten most of the time, just wanting to run around and claw the furniture, pupils dilated in excitement. Any time I settle on the couch, she strolls over to climb into my lap, batting my hand with her paw to get gentle scratches under her chin. It is the best summer of my life, my first with her. Because Baby is exactly what I want: a friend. I can tell her my secrets without judgment, and since I'm beginning high school, there are plenty. She is my best friend, and I love her with all my heart. I can't imagine life without her, without her warm weight against my stomach or behind my knees as I sleep. Dad is infatuated, and holds her against his large belly tenderly. I like to think he held me like that when I was an infant.

Six years later she has cancer. She's lost over 60 percent of her mass and can't keep any food down. Her throat vibrates, but no purring comes out. She can't climb, and every move is painful for her. She won't let my father touch her. Exploratory surgery is offered, but it won't cure her or help at all. And I'll never let somebody cut my girl apart for curiosity's sake.

She vomits every few hours, an awful crying wail a precursor to the orange mess I'm scared to touch. But I hold back my own retching and clean it up every time. Throwing up scares her, and that fear in her eyes makes me want to cry. It is the worst Christmas of my life, this last one with her.

My parents and I denied for a long time that this was the end, until Baby began to make unearthly cries in the

night and sometimes when the sun was up. The vet tells us it's her death cry, and I can't deny what's happening anymore.

It's January 3rd, my father's 54th birthday. I hold Baby's carrier as my mother and I drive the two miles to the vet. Mum's already crying and I'm on my way. Baby is scared and wants to go home, and I promise her that everything's going to be okay, my own voice shaking with fear that I hope she doesn't pick up on.

The next half hour is a blur with a few last brief clicks of my camera phone, until the vet holds down Baby gently. We're allowed to touch her. Dad's hand is on her lower back, Mum's is on her belly, and I'm cupping her tiny head in my palm. She looks so scared. I might have watched the needle go in, but all I focus on is how Baby slumps in our arms, all the tension in her body gone. I watch her yellow green eyes turn a hideous shade of blue that reminds me of the fish on sale at Hannaford's and I nearly vomit. My girl is gone.

The doctors leave to give us a moment. Baby lies on the table in a beige blanket with her face uncovered. I don't remember what Dad says to Baby, but Mum whispers something to Baby that to my poor lip-reading skills looks like "Good girl."

I've never seen my father cry before, and he and my mother hold each other in the corner as I say my last goodbye. I press my nose to her neck, and she still smells the same. I cling to the scent, petting her gently as I move the blanket aside to feel her fur one last time.

"Thank you for finding me," I whisper so only she can hear me. I know she can't, not really, but I want to pretend.

The vet comes back before I let go of Baby and wraps her in a beige blanket, carrying her gently out of the room. Mom holds me as I cry later that night under the covers. I can't bear the thought of sleeping alone. My heart is broken and there's nothing I can do to fix it.

Two weeks earlier I was given a prescription for Clexa, and it's around the time I lose Baby that the buildup in my system is over and the antidepressants kick in. I become numb, which I'm told is normal, but I know I look as lifeless as I feel. I've never lost anyone before, not even another pet. Death has never touched my heart before now, and even though I've read enough to think I know what to expect, I really have no idea.

It takes a long time before I can hear the word of her name or think about her without breaking down. It takes drowning myself in schoolwork to get my mind off of things, and I have the best semester of my academic career because of it, classes dispersed with phone calls to my mother as I sob my heart out. By the time summer arrives it doesn't hurt to think about the cat, the friend that I lost. I know she's not in pain anymore, and she deserves that more than anything. I don't think about the blue eyes as much anymore. In my mind I see yellow-green and I can still feel the purr underneath my fingertips. The photo on my desk, taken moments before she was gone, shows her looking up just to the right of the camera. She looks fearless and beautiful, and everything I always hope to remember. ■

## illusions

by bethziehl

A moment ago,  
you were here  
in this place,  
where the sheets  
are still warm,  
but here no longer.  
We create these  
falsehoods, you and I,  
and for a time,  
I believe them.  
I am fooled.  
In your arms,  
I forget;  
we are nothing.  
Only now,  
with your presence gone  
do I see the truth  
and miss you,  
but not you,  
merely the idea of you,  
of us.  
For now I must  
console myself,  
and find a way  
to fall asleep,  
without you close,  
without your arms  
wrapped around  
my body,  
or your lips  
close to my cheek.  
Now I must  
fall asleep  
before reality  
sets in. ■

# cat litter.



collincappelle

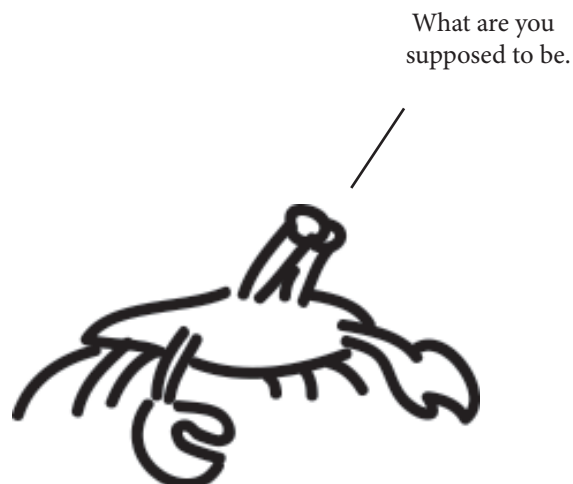


## Tip o' the Week

Buy tickets to go see Chance the Rapper in Montreal... Oh wait, it already sold out. Sucks to suck.



And now for a product of my laziness and lack of creativity



I think I'm supposed to be a convenient waste of space

