

the water tower.

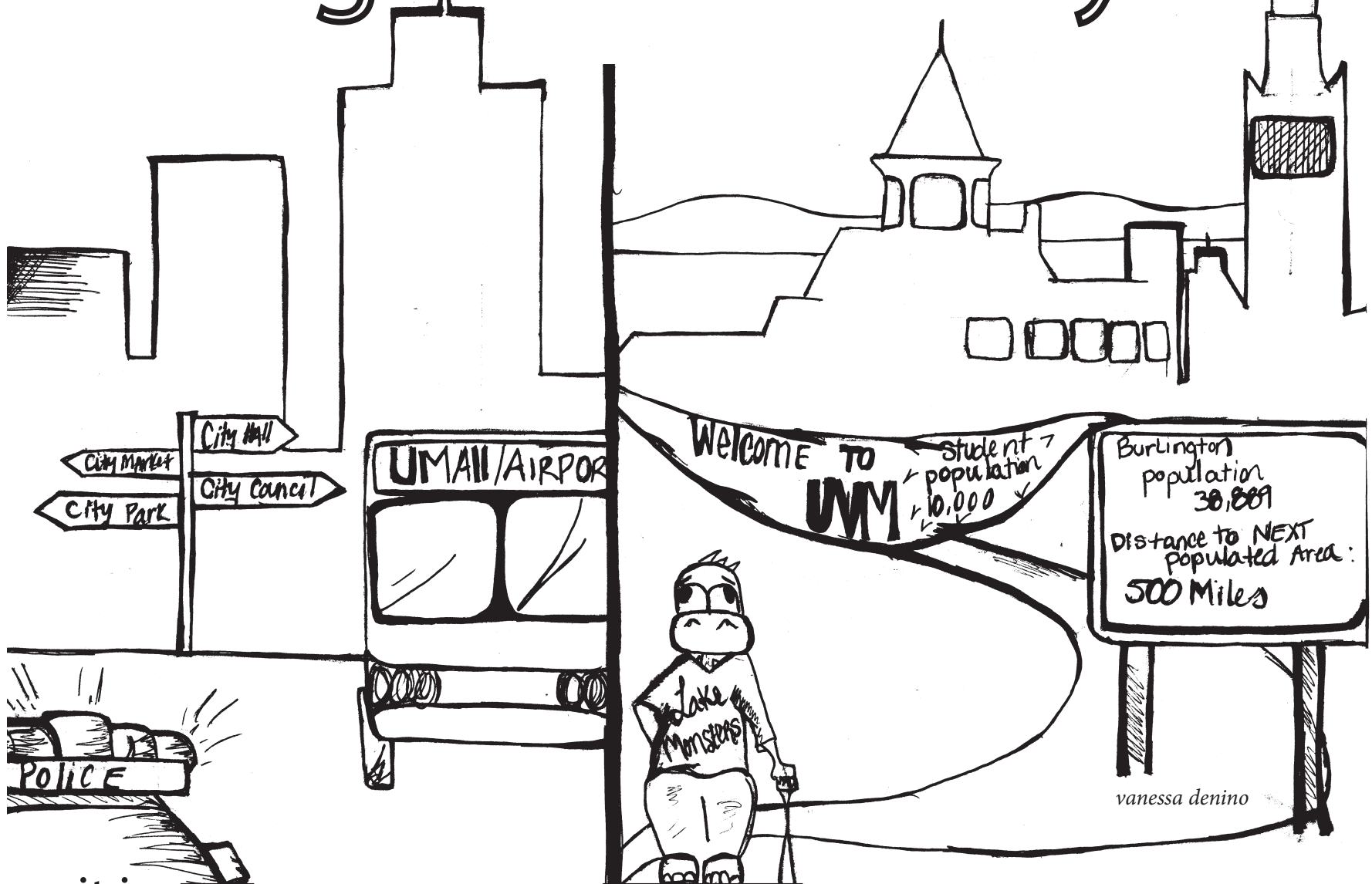
uvm's alternative newsmag



volume 6 - issue 11 - tuesday, november 17, 2009 - uvm, burlington, vt

who are we kidding?

burlington isn't really a city



yes it is

by emilyhoogesteger

Burlington is a city. It has a City Hall, a City Park, and a City Council, and we all know names never lie (with the exception of suburban housing tracts called Mountain Valley Circle or River Forest Desert Lane). It may not be New York, Boston, Los Angeles, or even Portland, but ours is a bona fide American city and we're proud of it. As any good Burlingtonian (Burlingtonite? Burlingtoner?) knows there is a lot more to citydom than a sprawling metropolis and eight lanes of taxi cabs.

First off, Burlington has a public transportation system. The CTA buses can be seen all over town on a pretty regular schedule, and lots of people use them – from families and grocery shopping grannies to drunken college students and sketchy guys who slowly inch closer to you over the course of the ride. Like most cities, Burlington relies on public transportation to keep its streets from being crowded with cars, as well as to get its citizens to places like the mall (cities have malls!), the bank (Citibank or Fairlyargetownbank?), and the independent movie theater (you definitely wouldn't find one of those outside of an urban area). Burlington also plays host to four colleges or universities, at least two of which you have probably heard of (UVM and Champlain College). The fact that it is able to house all of those students while still maintaining an identity that isn't "College Town, USA" means that there is a lot more to Burlington than we think.

You can hear sirens at least eighteen hours a day here, there are always lights on somewhere, and it's possible to go out in public without seeing anyone you know. Burlington has a mayor, which only happens in cities, and we haven't met him, which means he's probably a legitimate public official elected on the basis of policy, not just some guy who got handed an office because he's friends with everyone in town. Burlington has city planning: Church Street is a pedestrian mall, which means not only that there are enough people here to justify giving them a whole street, but also that there are enough cars here to bother banning them. Burlington has class: There is more than one decent place to take a date for dinner. Burlington has culture: Bands come here to perform, and they aren't called "Hillbilly Bob's Down Home Corner Store Banjo-Playing Cow-Tipping Bluegrass Trio," either.

But what really makes Burlington a city is that people have heard of it. People outside of Vermont know about it. People who aren't from New England, don't ski, and don't care about fall leaves or the 1960s know about it. Heck, even people from out of the country have heard of it (Thank you, Canada). Burlington is the biggest city in Vermont. If it's not a city, then Vermont has no cities at all. And that, my friends, would be embarrassing. ■

no it isn't

by macsmith

Let's get one thing straight. Burlington is at best a large town. It is the largest town in Vermont, but that alone doesn't make it a city, as many suggest. Burlington is home to many people from very small and rural places in Vermont and other states, so they are going to naturally be inclined to think that any place with more than one "general store" and "bar" to be a city. Seriously. Burlington is a nice place to spend a weekend (or get a college education), but if you find yourself here for any other reason, it's probably because you're on your way to or from Canada. But don't take my word for it. Let's look at a few things that define cities.

Population is a good indicator of what makes a city. Burlington has a population of 38,889. This is less than other notable American suburbs like Brookline, Massachusetts (54,809) and Mount Vernon, New York (68,321). In any other context, Burlington would be a cute town right outside any real major city.

There are a few nice restaurants, a few places to shop, and a music venue. But it's easy for people to get this confused with a real city. Look at the rest of Vermont. If you live in this state, you either live in Burlington or the middle of nowhere. Not being in the middle of nowhere doesn't make Burlington a city.

Sports team? One thing that defines American cities is a sports team. Even Columbus, Ohio has the Blue Jackets. Burlington is home to the Lake Monsters, a class A affiliate of the Washington Nationals that uses UVM's facilities. That's fine, but can Burlington actually handle having a real professional club of any kind? If you got everyone from Burlington to go to one game, you might be able to sell two thirds of tickets for any modern sized arena.

Let's not forget the other major factor that defines Burlington: The University of Vermont. What kind of place would Burlington be without UVM? People underestimate the fact that there are 10,000 kids here, many with a never-ending supply of parents' money to spend downtown. The houses are shitholes and the rents are ridiculous. But if you can't afford it, a Burlington landlord will surely find 10 other people who can.

Is Burlington nice? Of course it is. I love Burlington. But let's not blow it out of proportion just because it doesn't resemble any other part of Vermont. Most of you who believe Burlington is a city are going to graduate and move to Boston, New York, or any other place where jobs, nightlife, and 24-hour Vietnamese take-out are more plentiful. If you're having trouble coming to grips with "city life" in Burlington, you may be in for a very rude awakening. ■

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me

news
political lingo 101
by briancofill

reflections
hold on to your
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by georgeloftus

créatif stuffé
laying low
by bridgettrec

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inbox

this is no joking matter

Dear "Editor,"

Last week's front page article advising people to sneeze in each other's mouths is not only deplorable, it's irresponsible journalism. I thought you guys strived for a higher standard than that. Some people actually have Swine Flu, and it's terrible because you can't smell or taste anything and your nose is always gross and it's just not funny, ok?

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

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UVM Art Department Digital Lab

the shit list

with macsmith

Sarah Palin Self-proclaimed "Rogue," Sarah Palin's new book hit the shelves this week. The former Alaskan governor has been praised for her excellent work paving the way for new policy. Critics especially liked her extensive use of words that are more than two syllables. The only detractor from this otherwise stellar piece of non-fiction was the fact that she ran out of purple crayon in the fourth chapter, and had to write it in yellow, which nobody can read.

President Obama The President is catching some flack for once again bowing to a monarch. This time, it was the Emperor of Japan. He's going to get some serious criticism from the Right, and I couldn't agree more. When is Obama going to stop ignoring customs and traditions when he's in other cultures? He can't just show "respect" to other figureheads. It demeans us and makes us look more socialist every day.

Thanksgiving Does this holiday still exist? I couldn't tell from all the Christmas commercials. Maybe we can just have two Christmases? Holy crap...let's do that instead.

UK New figures show that 30,000 people in the UK still watch TV in black and white. Do they really wonder why their empire fell or are they actually just pulling our legs?

2012 This end-of-the-world movie was released in theaters this past weekend to the adoration of millions despite horrible reviews (38% on rotten tomatoes). After further investigation, the **wt.** discovered that people only went to get over the hangover still lingering from Transformers 2.

sportsblink

with michaelcieslak

LeBron James has been a dominant force since his induction into the league in 2003. He was dubbed "King" before playing an NBA game. Finally, we are getting some humility from the man. In his short career, LeBron has worn both numbers that Michael Jordan did. But recently, in an attempt to retire #23 from basketball in honor of MJ, LeBron has said he will wear #6 next year when he is playing for the Knicks. At least, that's the vibe I'm getting from the serious "bromance" between the Knicks and LeBron. Not just the Knicks but the whole damn city, you can't count the times LeBron's rocked that Yankees hat. Can he not wait one more year? It's like putting on a condom *before* you go to your girlfriend's house--unnecessary, just wait, dude.

In the **Bengals-Ravens** game, **Chad Ochocinco** jokingly went up to the ref during a challenge and "bribed" him with a one

dollar bill. The NFL responded with its own knee-slapper, a \$20,000 fine. **Roger Goodell's** comments on the matter: "WOAAHHH, GOT YOU GOOD, YOU FUCKER!"

Derek Jeter is going to be shot in the leg in 2010. At least he will on film, as he makes an appearance in a movie called *The Other Guys*, which will feature the acting of (ah-hem): **Will Ferrell, Mark Wahlberg, Samuel L. Jackson, The Rock, Paris Hilton(!?), Eva Mendes, and Michael Keaton.** It's the perfect role: Jeter will be right at home with some of the most overpaid people in the world.

Also, **UVM Women's Hockey** needs some recognition. They are 5-6-0, but at this point last year they were 2-8, en route to a 7-25-2 season in which they scored only 57 goals. This year they already have 21.

the news in brief

with paulgross

"I fully expect to direct the prosecutors to seek the death penalty."

-Attorney General, **Eric Holder**, on the upcoming trial of Khaled Sheik Muhammed and four other 9/11 co-conspirators. These are the same conspirators that have been waterboarded, sleep deprived, put in stress positions, and otherwise abused by American authorities. Now we're going to kill them. But it's ok, 'cause we're Americans and they're terrorists...

"[We found] a dozen two-gallon buckets of water."

-A **NASA researcher**, declaring that water has officially been found on the moon. Coca-Cola has plans to open up a bottling plant there ASAP. (juuust kidding)

"We want everyone in this country to be treated equally."

-Turkish Interior Minister, **Besir Atalay**, on the announcement of a plan to make concessions to the Kurdish minority with whom the Turkish have been in conflict for some 25 years. Among the concessions being made is the right to speak Kurdish in public, and assemble in Kurdish groups. The release of the Kurdish leader from prison, however, has not been discussed.

"I was defending my wife and child."

-**Mike Tyson**, who decked an over-aggressive cameraman at least four times, causing him to get five stitches. Poor cameraman. And no surprises, Mike "If I saw her today, I'd rape her!" Tyson is still a big douche.

"I would be honored to visit those cities at some point in my presidency."

-**Barack Obama**, when declining an invitation to witness the destruction an atomic bomb can cause in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. No sitting President has ever made the visit. Earn your peace prize, Barack.

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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Or send us an email

Our generation stands at a crossroads. As we walk through a world ever connected to a thunderstorm of news and reflection, we risk losing the ability to think for ourselves. **the water tower** is for us non-thinkers. We provide witty and sometimes outlandish opinions so that you don't have to come up with them yourselves. We can't promise that you will agree with everything that we say, but you will respect the tenacity we have to say it. Every once in a while we will generate something that is truly thought provoking. We are the reason people can't wait for Tuesday. We are **the water tower.**

political lingo 101

by briancofill

The healthcare bill has passed in the House and is coming up to the Senate now. To understand the bill, as well as the media analysis, you'll need some sort of code to decipher what the pundits are saying. As always, we're here to help:



hannah cohn

Earmark No, it has nothing to do with ears. It's piece of legislation that is added to a bill by a congressperson that diverts money away from the bill to additional legislation. It's a real sleazy thing to do, so naturally, many politicians do it. Earmarks are the reason why bills, like the healthcare one, are 1,500 pages long.

Pork Not "the other white meat." Pork refers to an earmark that a congressperson adds that will bring money directly into their district to be used for projects. This is also extremely sleazy. Politicians do this so that they can say to voters, "Hey, look what I did for you! Re-elect me!" What the voters don't know is that the project in their district, for example, a bridge in Alaska, was paid for with money from taxpayers all over the country.

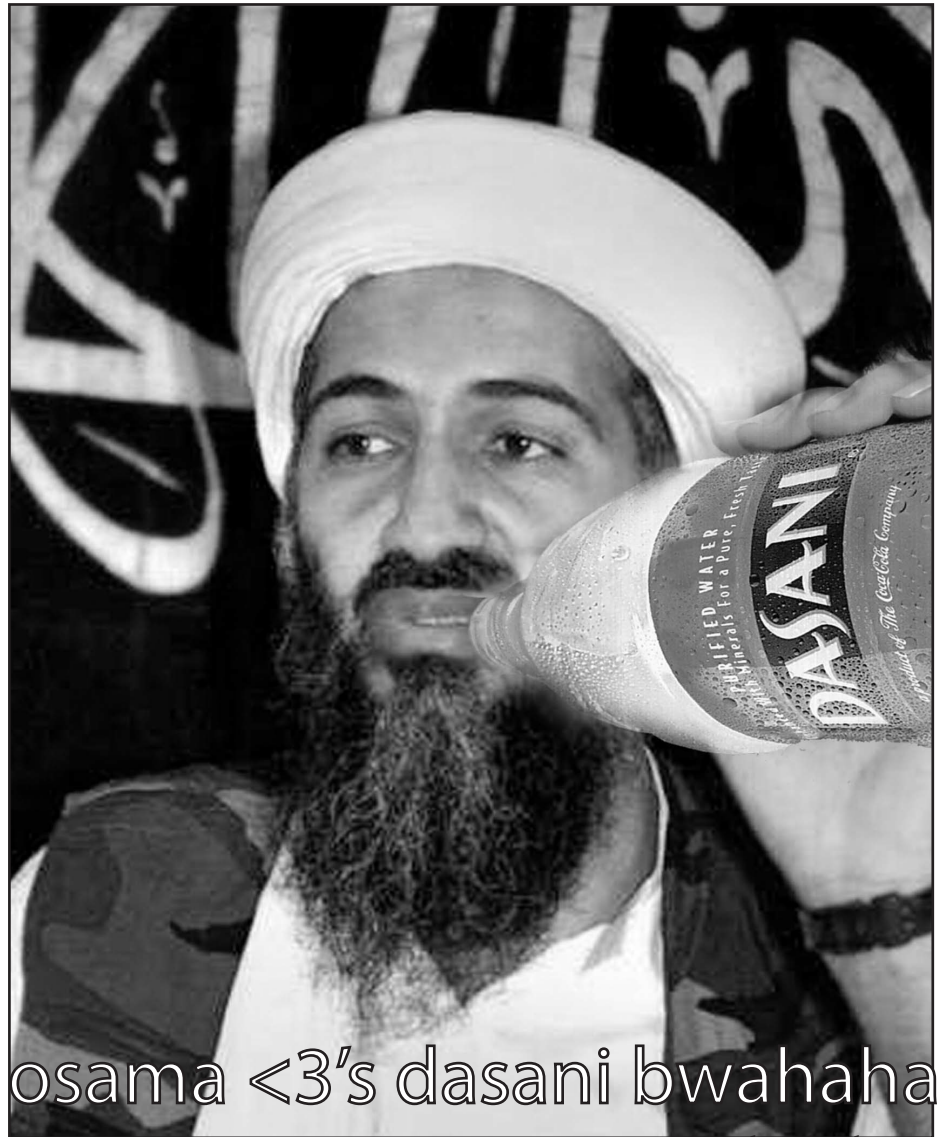
Christmas Tree No, it has nothing to do with evergreen trees. The people who come up with these names just lack creativity. A Christmas Tree, in this context, is a bill that has been filled with earmarks. The bill is the Christmas tree, and all of the earmarks are ornaments hanging off it (a lame analogy).

Public Option The part of the healthcare bill that is the most controversial. It would create a government plan that would compete with private health insurance prices for people who can't afford said prices. Why is it controversial? Some politicians don't think poor people deserve healthcare, I guess. Darwin would be pleased.

Filibuster The opponents of the bill in question (in this case, all Republicans and conservative Democrats) vote to extend debate about the bill, delaying or totally preventing an actual vote on the bill. Sixty senators are required to vote against further discussion to prevent this. But how can they just continually debate about the bill, you ask? Strom Thurmond filibustered for almost an entire day over civil rights legislation back in the 1960s. He tied a jar to his ankle and attached a tube so he could pee. This defines "messy politics."

Bipartisan This is when both parties put aside their differences and agree. Obama desperately wants "bipartisan support" for this bill so it can gain credibility. This is why he has become obsessed with the support of Maine Senator Olympia Snowe, the one Republican who voted for the preliminary bill in the Senate Finance Committee. Either that or he just has a really creepy crush. ■

exclusive bin ladin photo released to the water tower following vstep's byob day



mac smith and emily schwartz

the assault on women's repro rights

by katedonnelly

November 7th, 2009 was a historic day. The House finally passed the health care reform bill, guaranteeing insurance

coverage for all, by a margin of 220-215. While this was a huge victory for millions of uninsured Americans, it was also a huge setback for Roe v. Wade and women's rights. Unfortunately for American women, the bloated bill contains the Stupak/Pitts Amendment, which prohibits federal funding for abortions. It also bars anyone getting federal health subsidies from purchasing private insurance policies that include abortion coverage. That has the potential to shut out thousands of women from having a choice about their bodies and their lives.

Liberals have done a great job of fattening and complicating this bill to appeal to conservative members of congress. Yet they have compromised their ideology in the process. Liberals need to be strong advocates for women's rights because we sure as hell know that conservatives won't be.

The Catholic Church has also butted in, and lobbied to prohibit abortion funding in this bill. Richard Doerflinger, associate director of pro-life activities for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, stated, "We want to see people who have no health insurance get it, but this is a sticking point. We don't want health care reform to be the vehicle for mandating abortion. The church can't accept a public plan that covers abortion." Whatever happened to the separation of church and state?

On January 22, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court, in the famous Roe v. Wade decision, stated that the "right of privacy...founded in the Fourteenth Amendment's concept of personal liberty...is broad enough to encompass a woman's decision whether or not to terminate her pregnancy." Women have a constitutional right to reproductive services! The Stupak/Pitts amendment infringes upon women's most basic right to privacy.

This isn't just theoretical when the state chooses to prohibit abortions. Women die. That is a fact. The Guttmacher Institute's (a pro-choice reproductive think tank) research found abortion occurs at roughly equal rates in regions where it is legal and regions where it is highly restricted. Whether it is legal or not, women will continue to choose to have abortions anyway. The research also concluded that restricting women's access to repro rights leads to illegal, unsanitary, painful, and unsafe abortions. This results in the death of 70,000 women a year.

The Stupak/Pitts amendment makes American women less healthy, less safe and less able to exercise their constitutional rights. And as for you boys, don't think that this is just a women's issue. If the über-religious-conservative base continues to lobby to limit our sexual rights, just how long will it be till they come after yours? How long will it be till they limit your access to contraceptives and Planned Parenthood trips? ■

"the amendment makes women less healthy, less safe, and less able to exercise their rights."

edit/undo

Thanks to reader Katie Oja for pointing out that Sarah Palin's grandson is not named Trig nor does he have Down Syndrome, as we wrote in last week's issue. Mrs. Palin's grandson is Tripp, not Trig. It is kind of confusing though, since the two were both born in 2008 and both have weird Alaska-ey names.

democracy in afghanistan

by bsage

So the citizens of Afghanistan will not get the second election that they desire and deserve after all. Instead, candidate Abdullah Abdullah, who finished second in the fraud mired first round of elections, decided to pull out of the run-off just days before it was supposed to occur. Abdullah said that his demands meant to ensure a fair election had not been met, and that given the circumstances, a run-off "might not restore the faith of the people in the democratic process... I thought it would be in the best interests of the country if I decide not to participate." Abdullah added that he felt the Independent Election Commission (IEC's) declaration that a run-off should occur was enough to restore the Afghan people's confidence in their democracy, and that he felt the country would be more unified if there was not another highly contested vote. A day after Abdullah dropped out, the IEC declared Karzai the winner of the election.

Whether Afghan unity is Abdullah's true goal remains in serious doubt. Just two days after Karzai was declared the winner, Abdullah declared his victory "illegal" and said emphatically that he has no interest in holding a position in Karzai's cabinet. In a final jab at Karzai and his regime, Abdullah stated that "such a government which lacks legitimacy cannot fight corruption."

While I agree with him, Abdullah should not have dropped out if this is how he felt. His decision left the corrupt Karzai as the only option for Afghanistan and his actions just days later certainly seem aimed at undermining support of the new administration. Whether Abdullah is just venting his frustration, has plans to run for president in the next election, or even wishes to overthrow Karzai's government remains unclear. Regardless, his decision to drop out was not "in the best interests of the country," as he claimed at the time, and the Afghan people are now left divided and with a president whose election has actually been shown to be illegitimate, a true disaster for their fledgling democracy.

So what is next for Afghanistan? Well, to begin with, President Karzai will be under incredibly scrutiny throughout his final five year term as president, both from the west and his own people. His new administration should be filled with officials across the political spectrum, all of which must be skilled at their job and moral in their decisions. This is the only way that Karzai's government will be able to shake the stigma of corruption and to gain the confidence of the people which it does not currently have.

Furthermore, the Afghan government must take the initiative to become the main force in establishing security and safety throughout the country, with the western military personnel serving only as a supplement in fighting the insurgent forces. President Obama is currently considering whether to send 40,000 more troops to Afghanistan, and while the extra soldiers would almost certainly help increase stability, it would be due to a foreign power's military might rather than Afghanistan's own ability to control affairs within its borders. Furthermore, Obama will certainly face considerable criticism if he decides to send the troops. Sacrificing the lives of American soldiers is never an attractive option, and the idea of doing so in order to support and protect a government which has so clearly undermined the ideals of democracy contradicts the very mission which the United States is trying to accomplish in Afghanistan. To send the troops would be a highly hypocritical decision, and one which could tarnish Obama's political legacy forever.

Whether the troops are sent or not, Hamid Karzai, who has often shown himself both corrupt and selfish, is still the leader of Afghanistan, and his final five years in office will be vital in determining the direction of the country's future. ■

news ticker/wtfxup with men who stare at goats?! lsd-eggs? come on! /ms. california calls larry king "inappropriate" on tv (unlike her hawt sex vid)/tell yo momma last night was fun

reflec

group pr

by ginamastrogiacom

What is it about working in a group that brings out the worst in people? Someone who seemed so nice and normal only weeks ago in that dreaded lecture hall room, suddenly has acquired the horns and overall magenta glow of some Satanic beast in a sweater set?

Do I sound like a woman scorned?

It's usually your least favorite class, or your worst subject - the professor looks around and jauntily declares, "Group up!" as if this were not similar to suggesting that I pummel myself in my own face.

The mad scramble begins. Suddenly the whole class is holding neon labels, "slacker", "nagger", "that kid who I didn't even know was in this class until this very moment that my life depends on picking someone who is not annoying and normal."

Heck, I just wanted to work with people who smell like they've seen the inside of a shower at least once this week.

Oh contraire. Weeks later, we're plugging along and only the typical problems have come up, i.e. not everyone can meet at the appointed time, someone's contracted the swine, etc. Then, BLAM! The disagreement. It starts out small, just different views on some part of the project, a communication error - A.K.A. someone's becoming a DICTATOR!

Suddenly I've become Gretchen Weiners in Mean Girls - "We should all just stab Caesar!!!"

"okey-dokey, ho

by georgeloftus

As I'm sure some of you have noticed, Thanksgiving break is coming up, which, most importantly, means a day where all you do is eat. I know that turkey usually ends up hogging the spotlight, but the food I have a real stomach-boner for is potatoes, hands down. I love potatoes. Like everyone else, we all have that one kind that we go ape shit for, but which one's the best? Is there a best? (Spoiler Alert: Yes.)

5. **Tater Tots:** Don't be stupid, you're home; eat food that's too much of a pain in the ass to make on your own, not something you throw on a bake sheet for 20 minutes. Seriously, you're an idiot for thinking these belong at a Thanksgiving table. I have them every year and I think it's a waste of prime dinner table real estate, but my 27 year old brother would cry if we didn't have them, so whatever. If you're going to invite Ore-Ida to dinner, at least get some curly fries. Just because we already got into college doesn't mean we should stop shooting for the stars.

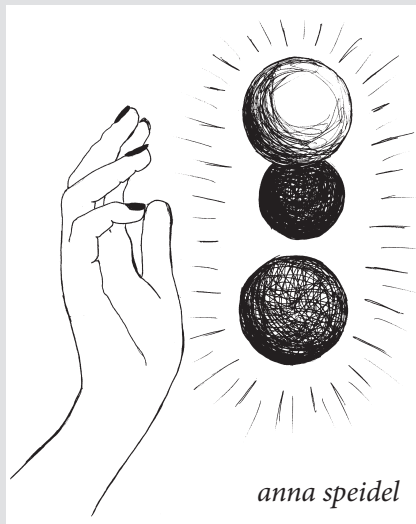
4. **Potato Pancakes:** Maybe I'm an idiot, but these are hard to make. They require dedication, patience, and a shit-ton of butter. Even when I do my best, they break apart on their way from the plate to my mouth and make my lap look... like I spilled greasy potatoes on myself. These are experimental, so whoever is wearing the pants in the kitchen is thinking out-



clubbin'

with cassiejenis

the juggling club



Once upon a time in a strange faraway land... well, in Canada, there was a beautiful little... alright fine, I was a seven year old brat.

Anyway, my gramps was so concerned about my lack of hand-eye coordination at seven, he bet me a dollar I couldn't throw a ball into the air and catch it one-handed 100 times without dropping it. It was a standing bet all summer long. Should have been a cash cow, right? Guess how much money I made that summer?

Three dollars. I know. Seriously. Please continue making fun of me.

However, after twelve long years of humiliation, I have decided that really, that's pretty sad. So I went to Juggling Club on Monday.

"The juggling club is seriously a circus minus the elephants."

Honestly, they should rename it Run Away to the Circus with Justice and Skippy Club because that's pretty much what it is. My instructor was Justice, who immediately put me to work throwing and catching one handed - my arch nemesis - and get this - throwing and catching two balls at the same time.

If you think that's hard enough, try doing it when everyone else was flipping stuff around and all you hear is fwip fwip splat (that's my ball hitting the ground because I'm busy watching Skippy catch primary colored hoops) fwip fwip splat (Nat's juggling fabric) fwip splat (How many pins is that??). I seriously just sat on the ground at one point to watch everyone else - fwip fwip fwip fwip (no splatting, notice?).

Apparently, there's also a bunch of different types of juggling. The "standard" type I was learning is called the cascade, which is basically a crisscross with a ball in each hand and one in the air at all times. Then you can add different tricks and stuff, like juggling with another person, doing fancy things with your hands, getting more balls, using dangerous objects, etc. I don't really know 'cause Justice was trying to explain while Skippy was doing something that looked one step away from setting his pins on fire. Seriously, these people could probably juggle me.

The juggling club is seriously a circus minus the elephants. And although Justice said I'm getting pretty good with two balls in my hands (that's what she said), and everyone there is really good at explaining the concepts, go with your catching skills down. It will be a lot easier to watch.

4 P.S. - Seriously, I was there for an hour and I think I caught it less than half the time. ■

i think therefore... who the hell knows?

by mollykelly-yahner

How do you know you exist? Silence looms for a while. It is 4:05pm on a Monday and Professor Sugarman has stumped the 30-plus students in his Meaning of Life class. I can sense people's caffeine buzzes and good night's sleep slipping away. I gaze outside towards the incoming rain clouds in order to look extra contemplative. Other students search frantically through their notes in case they missed an essential part that explicitly states the answer.

Sugarman restates the question. "What confirms your existence?" Maybe it is as simple as waking up and breathing in the new day or hearing the sweet symphony of a bird's song. Some of us may turn to contemporary scholar Richard Dawkins who sees us as "survival machines," or to Albert Camus who discusses how "existence is an act of rebellion."

These "brilliant" guys obviously do not understand how for us college students there are some clear times when we truly exist.

Holy crap, it's cold as fuck.

You can feel the hair in your nostrils freezing. The skin around your knuckles is hardening even though you've applied globs of lotion. The cold is sneaking through your long underwear, tickling your legs with frigidness. No matter where you're from, the struggle through the long, relentless, unforgiving Vermont winter tests your badass strength to fight off the wind chill, snow, and sub-0 weather conditions. When your partially dried hair freezes into a stiff icicle and you can no longer feel whether or not snot is dripping down your chin, then you know you are living.

The Morning after

Ever wake up in the morning in bed with a stranger? If you don't know you exist *then*, something is wrong with you. For those of us who have been in this situation and experience it often...there is an incredibly unique awkwardness that ensues. Are you bound to talk about your lives and your favorite breakfast food? Or do you flee from the door the second you're awoken by the thumping around of roommates? Just hope you don't leave anything in order to avoid future encounters.

Being broke

Where does your money disappear to when you go to college? After a concert, bus ticket, crappy handle, and guilty pleasure cookie, your account balance is

skimming the bottom. Do you get a job to have spending money, or do you prefer having an actual life where you can do your work and bond with your friends? Then there is the whole dependency issue in terms of your parents. Do you build up a debt to them so you can enjoy the festivities of your jobless college experience? Or do you live stingily off the money from your summer job? It is like the sock thief that lives in your laundry room, appearing in less and less amounts though you swear you had more.

Slide, shuffle, or pause?

Figuring out how to pass by all the people traffic is like entering a live game of Pac Man. Weren't we supposed to learn these skills in the confined hallways of high school? Whether it's confusion over who is holding the door versus who is walking through, if the bikers have the right of way or long boarders, the strange spastic movements that surround these encounters are omnipresent and awkward. These moments show that we are all existing at once and navigating around each other.

Bad Dancing

You walk into a party and suddenly see someone who seems to be having a seizure. Oh shit, no, this victim is just rhythmically challenged. Do you intervene and do damage control or watch in anticipation? Shit, what if you get stuck dancing with this rhythmically challenged freak show? During this interaction, you are truly aware of your existence because of the shock that results from witnessing these horrible, convulsive movements.

Uncomfortable teachers

Last week one of my professors discussed how a man "cannot just pull out his dick and swing it in your face." My education is worth every penny. What the hell are you supposed to say when professors take such a turn in a class discussion? Awoken by the shock and intrigue, your brain remembers how to process thoughts. Do you laugh at their strange jokes or feel embarrassed for them? Let's just hope this aspect does not affect our participation grade.

Forget overly complex philosophical explanations; in the last five minutes of Sugarman's class I am still racking my brain for some epic realization. Yet all that comes to me is a hard decision many college students deal with: Do I want to get the black bean and cheese New World flat wrap or the City Market buffet for dinner? ■

misquotation of the week

"Don't even think about touching that apple cider! I'll tickle you silly!"
- Andy Warhol



Andy Warhol

kelly macintyre

otions.

rojects

ne seventh circle of hell

To make things worse, we've got a Blackboard blog. These blogs as a means of communication were created by some minion of the Devil so that group members can instigate icy cold feelings in one another without making actual face-to-face confrontation necessary.

It's at this point, I feel I should take some deep breaths...

Moral of the story – if you want to retain a shred of your soul and life (because let's face it, at this point you've lost control to the Group Tyrant.) DON'T

WORK IN A GROUP. Think of an excuse, find a reason to stay solo or limit your number to two, and choose wisely. It's best to remember that every bitch will come with a snarky cardigan. This is a hard and fast fact. You originally befriended them because they were such a chatty Kathy with you? Well that gaping hole in their face will soon be used to take your academic freedom! (Note – there may or may not be flames surrounding this individual or the hounds of Hell at their side. These are surefire indicators.)

Four or more will officially wreck the rest of your time in class. Because now that you've all passive-aggressively sniped at each other, it's like waking up to someone you don't want in your bed the next morning – at every single class. Really that's all I'm looking to do – get out of this academic one night stand as painlessly as possible. How to extricate myself before Winter Break and the end of this project? It seems impossible. I'll be the girl on Tuesdays and Thursdays who reeks of shame from now until December 18th. The joy. ■

lauryn schrom



Because if I didn't like said group member avoiding the problem by being bossy through suggestion (THE WORST KIND OF BOSSINESS) in person, her avoidance of looking at me at all while doing it makes it so much better!

So what is it about working in a group that automatically makes some people feel like they're the second coming? I moved away from home already to avoid being babied, the last thing I want at college is someone my own age and height telling me what to do.

ld on to your potatoes, dr. jones"

side the box. When Albert Einstein said, "To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle, requires creative imagination and marks real advance..." he probably wasn't talking about a potato dish... but he could have been.

3. Potato Salad: Light and delicious when you don't think about the ingredients, potato salad isn't that hard to make, and you can avoid feeling guilty eating it because technically it's a salad. This is more of a summer dish, so having it implies fond memories of July and picnics. If you have this at your table, it means you either recruited your 10 year old brother to make it look like you're contributing, or you trusted your 75 year old grandmother to mix eggs, mayonnaise and potatoes the right way. Trust me, there is a wrong way, but more times than not it's worth the risk.

2. Baked Potatoes: Minimal work, minimal worry, baked potatoes are the second best reason to have plenty of sour cream in the house. Decorate them with cheese and bacon, and you're set. Sure, they're lazy, but have you eaten one lately? They're fucking delicious. They taste shitty cold, and no microwave does them justice, so if these are out, they are going to get eaten. It's a big commitment, so take it slow, and remember: less is more... except in regards to butter. If you're not drowning your potatoes in butter, you're

failing.

1. Mashed Potatoes: The best. There's a reason mashed potatoes are the first dish you think of in terms of Thanksgiving. They epitomize comfort food through and through. Served up lumpy shows a dignified wisdom, while serving them smooth and creamy is like serving warm baby food. This distinction separates the boys from the men, and the girlies I won't acknowledge from the girlies I'll marry. If you find yourself with more than one serving of these, you'll be filing for AARP the second you can, and you'll be club champion of shuffleboard before too long. This is the comfort food that other comfort foods would eat if they could. Lumpy mashed potato eaters? I love you.

There's nothing inherently wrong with school food, it's just on the wrong side of spectacular and there's something oddly sterile about every food place on campus. The gloves, the aprons, all of it; it gives a vibe of mass production and indifference towards you, the consumer. Be honest, you can taste it when the chef didn't put love in your sandwich at the Marketplace. But, there's something endearing about nibbling on leftover tater tots with a sink full of dishes and a stomach full of pumpkin pie, and there is most definitely love in a bowl of lumpy mashed potatoes. ■



the orange glow

by moniquesetz

The Orange Glow. What is it?

- A: A Billy Mays tribute?
- B: A provocative hipster band that adores hardwood floors?
- C: A carrot top phenomenon?
- D: Some heady dank vegan orange glow muffins? Local and organic, please!
- E: Tanning Beds?
- F: None of the above.



danielle vogl

The answer is F: None of the above!

It's a radioactive hue that floats around your body, much like a neon glow. Orange Glow is more contagious than the swine flu. This disease is so easily spread that you simply walk by a contaminated individual, and smell the putrid scent of chemical, orange crap then holy shit, you've got a case of the orange glow.

A little history lesson for you orange fiends: the disease originated in Germany. The entire beer stock suddenly evaporated, and as a result Germans began making carrot wine. Carrot wine prospered, turning the German people a hue of orange from consuming a multitude of beta-carotene. This au-natural look traveled over to the United States in a bucket of spoiled carrot wine, where it manifested itself as a mold that stuck to the inside of your lungs and spread throughout your blood stream, providing you with an unhealthy orange glow much like jaundice. Now, the air born disease is unstoppable; but there are some individuals mimicking the orange glow by spraying their bodies with carrot juice every night.

In reality, there is no existence of the tainted carrot wine disease. Instead, there is the world of fake tanning and tanning beds. Tanning beds were a complete accident. It all began when one individual by the name of Friedrich Wolff who created a bed of UV lights for people who needed an increased dose of Vitamin D. Unfortunately, tanning beds have become a

source for poor choices. I know summer has been swept away with the blustery, howling winds from Lake Champlain, but is it really necessary to provoke cancerous cells by lying in a bed of UV rays? Think of it this way, you are going to end up looking much like a golden raisin at the age of 35 if you keep up the daily spree of luxurious tanning. Also, it's totally deteriorating to your bank account, and come on, who couldn't use a couple extra bucks these days?

On top of the tanning bed phenomenon, there's fake tanning for those of you who would like to avoid direct carcinogens. I would much rather stain my skin with beet juice and henna than walk around with highlighter orange palms, and imitation sun spots on my body from the pooling of the dye. I understand that living in rugged Vermont takes a toll on your sun-kissed faces, but there are other ways you can attain this wholesome look. For example, work outside on a farm or landscaping for the summer: You may endure sunburn and ridiculous tan lines, but at least you'll have that long-lasting tank top burn for the rest of your natural born life. Maybe you'll pick up some more green-environment-friendly tips. On the real, though, think about what you're putting on your skin and into your blood stream the next time you crack open a tanning booth door or L'Oreal's fake tanning solution. ■

top 5 dining halls on campus

5. The Grundle
4. The Grundle
3. The Grundle
2. The Grundle
1. The Grundle

the existential wt

There is a preponderance of left handed water fountains on campus. Maybe the school wants left handed people to feel special. Or they got them on discount.

trash.



i want you so bad

someone on campus catch your eye?
couldn't get a name?
submit your love anonymously
uvm.edu/~watertwr/iwysb.html

Back row cohort, you sit across the aisle and we make eye contact constantly; you have a great smile and I like your assets. If you try talking to me, I'm liable to be very interested. And I know I really seem to get this accounting stuff...but I could use a study buddy.

When: BSAD60 TR
Where: kalkin 110
I saw: a man
I am: a lady

you told me i was beautiful even though you didnt know me
it made my night
tell me more about my eyes
ps. loved your flannel

When: last week
Where: the marche
I saw: A man
I am: A woman

You're really cute,
I have to say.
I just wish you didn't like
"Party in the USA."

When: Last Saturday (11/7)
Where: Basement at some random fucking party
I saw: a woman
I am: a man

i see you in davis mon, wed, fri. avec your bros
i see you riding bitch on a motorcycle
i like riding, but not bitch and not a motorcycle
I heard you have bunk beds, do like top or bottom?
Ill be waiting for the answer in the mansfield room

When: every mwf
Where: mansfield room, davis
I saw: steelers sweater man
I am: your dream girl

the ear

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

In the library, (while some girl asks for a coffee refill in the ubiquitous glass jar):

Bro: I swear to god, these hippie chicks would drink my piss as long as I served it to them in a goddamn mason jar.

Outside of Lafayette:

Guy on cell phone: Hey, where are you? (pause) How the hell am I supposed to follow you if I don't know where you are!!!

In Tupper:

Guy: This underwear is tight fitting enough so people can tell that I'm circumcised.

Outside of WDW:

Girl: I want that moon right now...in my mouth...

In Jeanne Mance:

Girl: If I had my way, I would shower all day. Errr Day.

On Redstone Campus:

Guy: She doesn't sleep around as much as the others do.

Near Hamilton on Redstone:

Girl: This whole committment thing, I need to get better at it.

On Church Street:

Older Guy: Why does he get to call me a bigot if I can't even call him a queen?

the water tower beardvember competition



Boys will become men. Faces will become itchy. Girlfriends will become grossed out. But come November 30th, four little-known UVM students will be made infamous, as champions of the third annual water tower beardvember competition. Gentlemen, put down your razors!

Simply stop shaving for a month, and at the end of November, send a picture (**before and after shots for bonus points**) to thewatertowernews@gmail.com for a chance to get your hairy face in **the water tower** under one of the following categories:

The Wookie Award So much hair, even Chewy would puke a little in his mouth.

The Scraggles McGee Award Patchier coverage than the wireless network at Bailey Howe.

The Captain Redbeard Award Get back at everyone who called you firecrotch freshman year.

The Curious Growth Award New this year, for those who don't need a razor to have naturally sculpted facial hair.

eats. oy vey, what a deli!

with brittany marom
and katerandall

What happens when the small town of Burlington starts serving big city meats? Burlington only gets better. Watch out you organic foodies, **Sadie Katz Deli** is the next big thing in Burlington. The owners of Three Needs opened this Jewish-style deli in February 2008 in

place of the outdated Oasis, and since it has continued to get busier. What's their secret? They get their meat from State-National Brand in Albany, smoked salmon from Brooklyn, and their bread from the Certified Bakery in New Jersey, which are all the same companies that supply food to the one and only Katz's deli in Manhattan.

For those of you who are not aware of the oldest delicatessen located on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, Katz's has been open since 1888 and is considered a true delicatessen because it is the only place that still carves all its pastrami and corned beef by hand. State law in Vermont forbids restaurants here to carve their meat by hand, but it is cut fresh to order for every sandwich.

This boxcar deli screams New York; not only are their meats New York noteworthy, but so are their bagels! Sadie Katz imports their bagels from the number one bagel factory in Manhattan: H&H bagels. Don't feel pressured to sit down at the adorably retro counter to enjoy your bagel, you can order it to go and still fulfill that craving without having to pay tip (although they would appreciate and deserve it). The most noteworthy aspect of Sadie's is that even after importing quality meats and some of the best bagels in the country, the menu is still very reasonably priced! Bagels range from \$1.50 to \$3 and the sandwiches start at \$6.25 and go up to \$9.50 for the triple-deckers that are so chock-full of fresh



greg jacobs

cut meat they could suffice for both lunch and dinner. The meat specialist, Andrew, recommended the corned beef and pastrami triple decker sandwich which is served on rye bread with cole slaw and Russian dressing which was

very hearty and filling. In place of a breadbasket we were given a pickle platter with semi-sour and sour pickles from United Pickles in the Bronx, both of which were crunchy to perfection. The sandwiches also come with a choice of potato salad, cole slaw, fries, or potato latkes on the side; the serving of fries is substantial, and the potato latkes are just like your aunt used to make at Hanukkah parties. OY VEY!

The only downsides to Sadie Katz are that they're only open until 4 on Monday through Saturday and 3 on

Sundays, and the interior of the restaurant only has 5 booths and 12 counter seats. When you enjoy dining at their counter, the décor of the restaurant resembles an old school 1930's industrial art deco diner, with an open sandwich and deli section. This delicatessen is adult and family friendly, and the staff is welcoming, energetic, and prompt. If you have any questions about the history of the restaurant the staff is very informative and they go out of their way to make you feel like you're in a genuine, New York delicatessen. We give Sadie Katz Delicatessen **four and a half W's** because once you step into the stainless steel boxcar restaurant, you're not only served delicious, heartwarming Jewish food, but your dining experience becomes a time warp that takes you out of Burlington and brings you back to vintage New York on the Lower East Side. ■



advertisement

MASSAGE NIGHT!

Hosted By Student Athletic Medicine Society

WHERE: Rowell Lab 003

WHEN: November 19th from 5-8 PM

15 minutes - \$10

30 minutes - \$15

CASH (for exact change please!!) AND CHECKS ONLY!

Walk-ins are welcome, however, you can pre-register by emailing sams@uvm.edu ahead of time!

Massages will be given by current UVM Athletic Training Students and all proceeds will go towards transportation, registration fees, parking, & food for the Eastern Athletic Training Association Convention in Boston in January 2010.

VANTAGE POINT

UVM's Literary and Visual Arts journal

is now accepting submissions
for the Fall 2009 edition

Please send your
poetry, fiction, essay, paintings, photographs
as attachments to

vantagep@uvm.edu

créatif stuffé.



Feeling a little *créatif*? Wishing *Vantage Point* was published more than once a semester? Well now you can submit your creative writing, short stories, poems, drawings, black and white photos, and any other *créatif* things to the water tower's new section, **créatif stuffé**. Send your submissions to thewatertownnews@gmail.com by Tuesdays at 4:00.

the ghost part 2

by laurynschrom

Tarquin Speare showed up at Lucy's Residence Hall at seven sharp the following evening, as translucent and pale and handsome as ever. She dumped a bucket of chalk dust over his head upon his arrival, which caused his features to appear slightly visible; it also caused him to ripple the air as he moved so that he was just visible to those around him but not enough to make anyone notice unless they looked very hard. Outside her room he slipped her a fifty-dollar bill to cover the cost of the restaurant he was intending to take her to while she carefully fixed a Bluetooth device in her ear, so as not to appear as if she were talking to herself over a solitary candlelit meal at some dining establishment.

"What, no flowers?" she asked him as they left for downtown.

"Don't be sarcastic, I couldn't; they're too heavy for me to carry. The glass kept slipping through my fingers. I got you a whole vase-full. Plus the vase. I suppose I was too nervous to summon the strength—"

"Oh. I'm sorry," Lucy said.

An awkward period of silence ensued, during which they crossed the street and boarded a city bus. Tarquin kept walking through people, which was something he never did. It did get a laugh out of Lucy, though, as she saw the whole groups of people left twitching uncomfortably in Tarquin's wake.

They stopped at a local sushi bistro where Lucy got California Rolls and a large root beer. Tarquin found himself beginning to feel increasingly nervous; he was not making any positive impression on her, much less any impression at all. Then Lucy spoke, lowering her voice, trying to sound as if she were on her Bluetooth in the middle of a private conversation.

"You, know, I never asked," she said. "But how did you die?"

"That's a pretty interesting subject for a first date," Tarquin replied. "But trust me, it's not all that exciting."

"Of course it is; come on, tell me! You've been taking advantage of your death for years, at my expense; the least you could do is tell me how you died. As an apology of sorts."

"Ugh—only for you. Okay, I was hit by an automobile."

Lucy's face fell.

"What were you expecting, arsenic?" he asked. "You've seen the city at rush hour."

"I know, but death by jaywalking? That's so silly!"

Tarquin's face went a little more opaque than it had been. If she found out the truth, he would be a dead man. Figuratively, of course, because he was already dead. It was not that Lucy would mind knowing what really happened to him; she might even think it was funny. But his killer would mind Lucy's knowing; and, since she was often motivated by anger, her ghostly abilities to wreak havoc with things such as heavy objects were much stronger. Tarquin couldn't risk that; he didn't want Lucy to come to any harm.

Then, barely a few minutes after he thought this, his worst fears came true.

As Lucy was dissecting the last of her California Rolls, she noticed Tarquin's face go completely white; in fact, so did several of the other diners, briefly, but still causing them to choke on their spicy tuna in shock. She whirled her head round to see what he was looking at with such horror, but he only needed to utter one word to let her know what kind of trouble they were in.

"Hilda!" he rasped. "Hilda Van Heusen!"

For there she stood, untreated eczema and all, a wizened, toothless old crone with wispy hair and no brush to fix it with in her coffin. Lucy, after having known Tarquin for years, would never have believed it possible, but it turned out that Hilda Van Heusen was the very caricature of a ghost.

"Tarrriiiiiin," Hilda crooned. "YOU pppromissed. YOU prrrromissed mee!"

"I didn't! No I didn't! You hit me with a car first!" Tarquin shouted in response, causing the glasses on the table to rattle. Lucy noticed that the other people in the restaurant were looking in her direction awfully closely now.

"Wait, she hit you? With a car?" Lucy asked. "Is she the one who killed you?"

"He wouldn't go out with me!" Hilda snapped. "So I died of a broken heart!"

"You were friends with my grandmother, you crazy old lady!" cried Tarquin, standing up (his chair flew back as he did so, causing a fit of absolute panic in the restaurant; several diners even got up and bolted for the door, leaving their fake fish and unpaid checks behind).

"Ooh, I hope that Model T hurt," Hilda returned, taunting.

"How old was your grandmother?" Lucy asked Tarquin, trying to keep things friendly, even though it was already a lost cause. Her Bluetooth was lying on the table, completely forgotten, and people were looking at her as if she'd just gone round the bend and begun to indulge in witchcraft.

"Eighty!" he cried, "and SHE'S ninety-one!" He pointed to Hilda in frustration while the older ghost plucked three heavy water glasses from a nearby waiter's tray and repeatedly broke them over his just-visible head, causing the last of the chalk dust to wash away out of the air and leave the two ghosts invisible.

"You little rat!" cackled. "I'll wind you round the ceiling fan!"

"Uh—check please!" Lucy cried, "Can I get the check?"

But there seemed to be no point in asking; the restaurant had descended into complete chaos. One of the waiters could be seen, passed out, lying in the lap of a harassed-looking elderly woman in a pantsuit; businessmen were fleeing, leaving their briefcases behind; and several waitresses were screaming in supersonic tones at the spectacle of flying glasses that Hilda had begun. To top it off, Tarquin and Hilda were still arguing, so, Lucy, harassed and frustrated, stood up, shouted, "That's enough—I'm leaving!" and left in a huff.

We are certainly not perfect for each other, Tarquin and I, she thought, as she stepped out into the cool night air. So much the better for Hilda!

It would be much later at night when she got home, however, that Tarquin surprised her. A note and a shoebox sat on her desk, the note apologizing and saying fondly that they would "have a better date next time."

She opened the box, which turned out to be filled with Hersey's Kisses—her favorite. "The kisses I didn't get to give you—literally," a message written on the inside said.

Damn nineteen-twenties guys, Lucy thought as she pulled her quilts over her head. If his penmanship hadn't been so beautiful, she might not have believed him. ■

laying low

by bridgettrecro

It extended deeper than just on the outside, with bodies.

I wonder: Is it even possible to love something, a moment, so much but feel nothing for who it's with? I should have driven home to that beautiful house, down that handsome grey street, smiling and tearing up, and my insides would tighten up, and my tongue would swell and my face would redden, and my nerves, my bundles and bundles of heavenly little nerves and veins and all their systems should've taken notice too.

But things felt different, I didn't have that tether this time at all, I had nothing standing in the way between my body and his body. But still I said nothing. I revealed in it because it felt so sweet and good and perfect, perfectly simple and casual. Casual. Was there anything wrong with that? I mean, honestly, is there anything wrong with not loving, with not feeling anything for once, but just wanting that moment back so badly?

The afterglow was sitting in the backseat of the car and sitting on your lap and looking right into that blue abyss. And laying low when cars passed by at 1 A.M. in our summer suburb. And the way you parted my hair and the way you smelled! I really could have melted right there. The way you smelled was the most important, and I just remember it so vividly, I mean. I could compare that moment to anything I've seen in some obscure indie movie or heard in a Morrissey song.

I mean, who would have thought: you-- me? I loved IT but I don't love YOU and I don't think I can ever love you; who are you, even? Who are we, and what are we still doing with each other? Seriously, if I don't love you, then why do I keep obsessing and thinking about it all the time? And I know I don't feel any kind of lust or passion for anyone else that I've known since you. But there's just nothing there. I mean, I could say it's there and I have said it was...but it was a complete ghost.

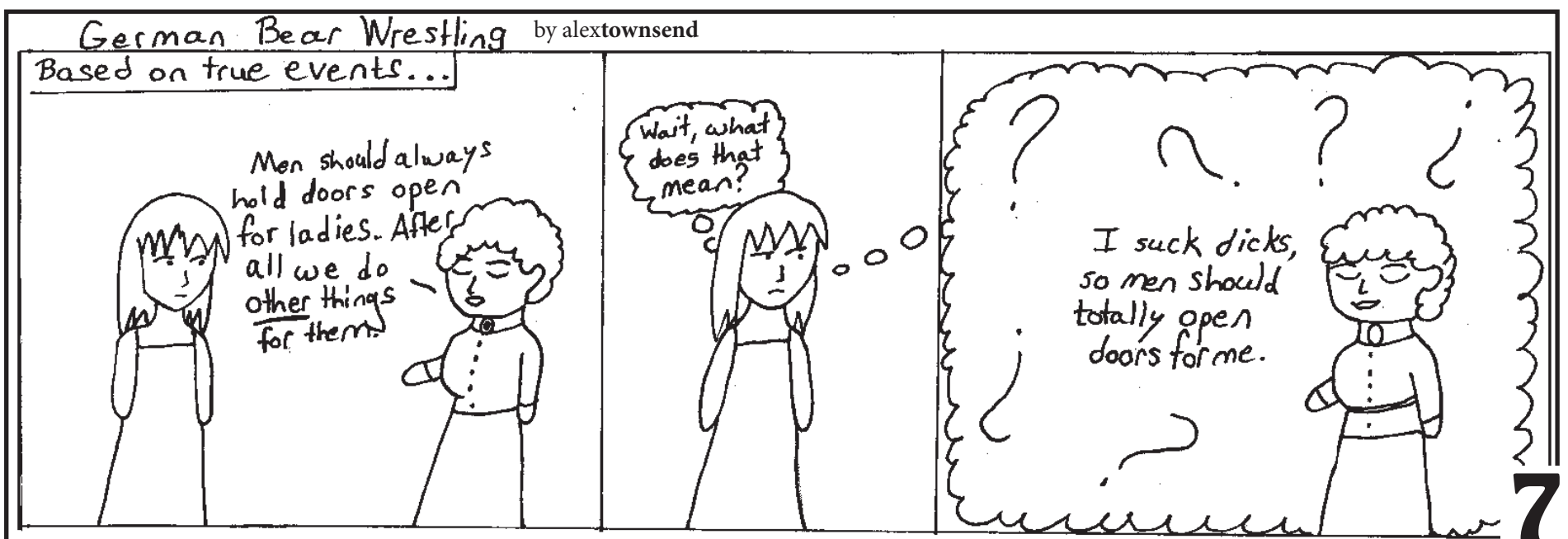
Is there a ghost? Am I imagining things? Because you're not here and I feel nothing-- except to duplicate that moment, but maybe it was the moment before everything changed and fell to nothing and fell to something just broken and physical but I still just felt that weird sense of admiration, affection, like I wanted to protect you, even though you wouldn't protect me. Would you? How do you really feel about me? I just know that how I feel could change if I knew.

(But for now I'll pretend it's not real and it was just that ghost playing tricks on that small space between us.) ■

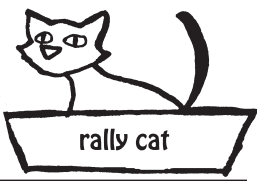
untitled

by julietcritsimilios

I see you over there picking out a song, Wondering if your choice is right; if they'll dance along. I eye you over my frothy beer-filled red solo cup You put on Barbie Girl and I wonder, "What the fuck?" But as the crowd grows more and more displeased You fuss and act anxious, but still you look so steezed. You play it safe and put on an '90s classic That's when I knew that I just had to have it. I dance to your poppy beat, hips shaking to and fro We lock eyes as I dance, and that's when I know You totally want it, and there's nothing else to say I know I'm gonna get with this basement party's DJ. I'll dance all night to each and every song If music be the food of love I'll play on and on and on.



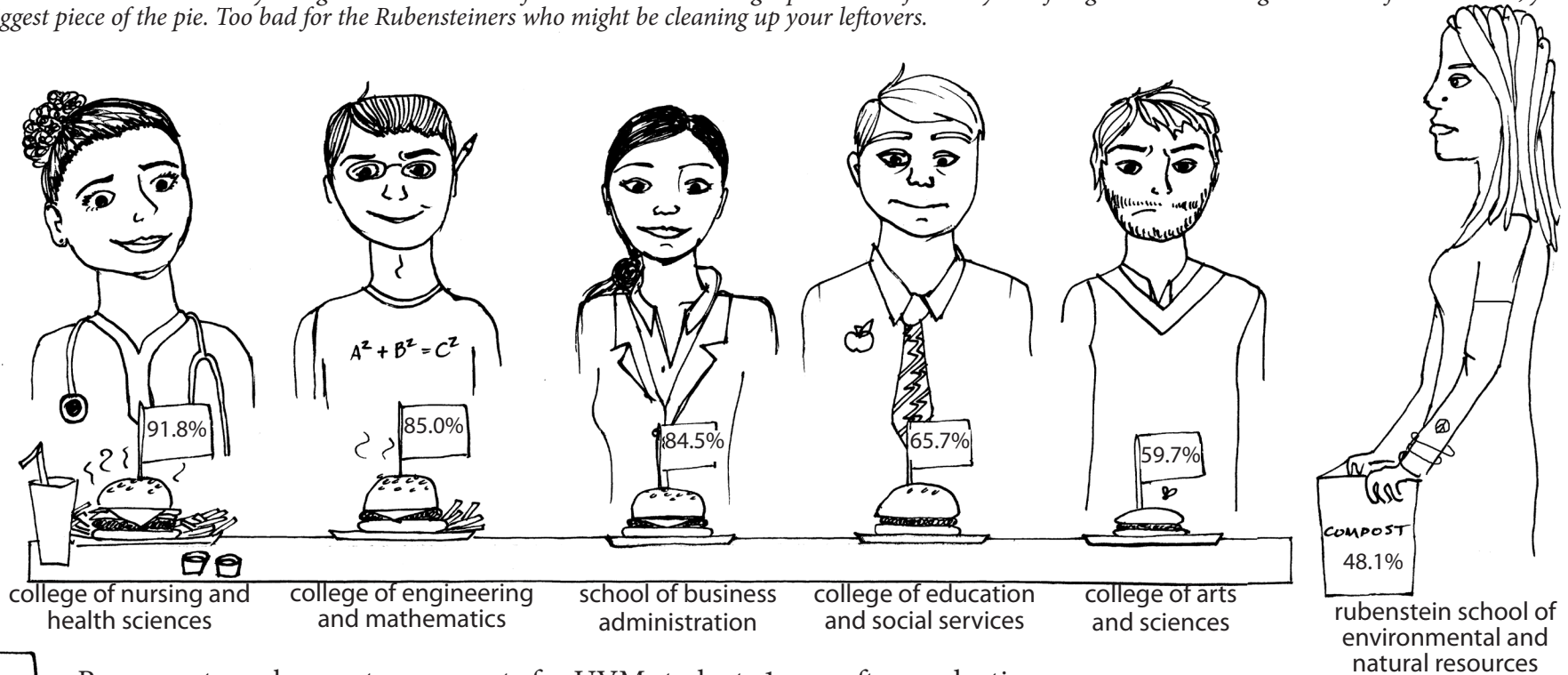
cat litter.



cat litter:
by lea mclellan and max bookman
artwork by kelly macintyre

who's eating the best after college?

The ultimate goal of a university education is getting a job after graduation, right? Well, it turns out that not all colleges and schools at UVM are created equal. **the water tower** broke down by college the success rates of UVM students scoring a permanent job one year after graduation. Congratulations future nurses, you get the biggest piece of the pie. Too bad for the Rubensteiners who might be cleaning up your leftovers.



% = Permanent employment success rate for UVM students 1 year after graduation

tunes.



you don't need balls to rock

by bridgettrecto

Has it become apparent, after many weekends of your college "going out" experience, that you party and pregame to totally different music than you would ever listen to in real life? Are you embarrassed and perplexed by your intense urge to blast songs like "Sexy Bitch" and "Toxic" during your third round of shots? Getting ready for a night out with your girlfriends, you obviously want to listen to upbeat pop music that will get you in the mood...but listening to the Pussycat Dolls and Britney Spears can get a little old. If you're looking for something different that isn't so overplayed and... well, lame, check out some of these ferocious European females who will not only get that alcohol pumping in your bloodstream, but also won't make you seem like an American hobnob.

La Roux— a synthpop duo from the U.K. with fierce lead singer Eleanor Jackson, la roux in French means "red-headed one," and this is one crazy ginger indeed. You can sense the influence of some one-hit-wonders from the Eighties, but their stuff goes above and beyond. It's dance music that's part Uffie and part Peaches; add in some Hot Chip-inspired beats and you've got songs like "Bulletproof," where she proudly declares, "I'm not turned on to love until it's cheap." Other playful-hater songs like "I'm Not Your Toy" boast, "You don't like me, you just want the attention." The beats might get to you if the feminine insight doesn't in "In For The Kill" and "Tigerlily."

Little Boots— Victoria Hesketh was a Youtube sensation from England playing some of her sweet tunes on the piano, as well as a super cool Japanese instrument called the Tenori-on. Now that she's signed, she is all set to be the next Lady GaGa— probably in the U.K. first, but she'll probably hit us soon after. She worked with producer RedOne, a "hit-

maker" who penned GaGa's first single, "Just Dance," and Boots' first single, "New In Town" is obviously taking a page out of that book. While songs like "Remedy," and "Stuck On Repeat" are songs to rage to, there are softer, more thoughtful tracks— see "Not Now." The sexiest song has got to be "Mathematics," where Boots croons, "I'll believe you cause your X is equal to my Y, but equations pass me by"— arithmetic to get down with.

Florence + the Machine— yet another U.K. indie pop band has made a name for itself with tracks like "Kiss With A Fist" featured primarily in *Jennifer's Body* (yeah, I saw that movie. And you should too). Lyrics like "You hit me once / I hit you back / You gave a kick / I gave a slap / You smashed a plate over my head / Then I set fire to our bed" make domestic abuse seem delightfully badass. More thoughtful songs like "Hurricane Drunk" will get to you, just like "Cosmic Love" ("I heard your heart beating, you were in the darkness / So I stayed in the darkness with you"). Her voice is almost perfect (and seemingly familiar), and the emotions are sticky sweet like a catchy Camera Obscura single.

Plastiscines— BADASS French indie rock band (don't worry, it's in English) that will make you WANT to be a bitch. Their most genius track is "Bitch," ("I'm a bitch when I brush my teeth.") featured on what else but GOSSIP GIRL, the number one source for beeyotch friendly jams. Another self-explanatory hit is "I Could Rob You" and "Pop In, Pop Out!" You'll be tapping yo' feet so loudly you'll forget that these girls are only...teenagers?! This Parisienne teeny bopper club is also known as "les bébés rockers." So what if you feel like a pedophile gettin' bizzay to their tunes? You'll be happy you skipped the Pussycat Dolls tonight and stuck to good old underage French fun. Right? ■

shuffle. thanksgiving

with julietcritsimilios

You're finally old enough to talk about politics and surpass the kids table! Pass the turkey, put on football, and get ready for the best food coma of the year. Take that, younger cousins.

Eat Umphery's McGee

Cold Turkey John Lennon *My feet are so heavy/so is my head/I wish I was a baby/I wish I was dead*

Buttermilk Biscuits Sir Mix-A-Lot *Don't make a difference what food you make/use buttermilk biscuits to clean your plate*

Too Much Food Jason Mraz *But it's much too soon to leave this easy life/pass me the spoon/pass the analytical knife*

Irresistible Delicious Missy Elliot *Please don't think I'm crazy/but boy you are supa fine/irresistible delicious/enough to make me lose my mind*

Meat and Potatoes Belle and Sebastian *Invite the neighbors/or total strangers/give yourself a leg up honey*

Love Gravy Ike Turner and Rick James *Open up a packet of my gravy/baby it's burnin just for you child*

Pumpkin Pie Deep Sea Swimmers *I need to marry a girl/whose mother makes pumpkin pie/every Sunday/we'll go for a Sunday drive*

say it ain't so

by jeremyklein

In 1994, Weezer burst onto the scene with their self-titled debut album, affectionately known as the "Blue Album." A classic was born. It was an album that wrapped up all the best parts of the prior fifteen years of rock music into neat, irresistible pop-garage ditties, with lyrics that appealed to the lonely nerd in everyone. The band struck gold again two years later with the release of "Pinkerton," an album that garnered a legendary reputation like the debut, but was decidedly more abrasive and home to frontman Rivers Cuomo's most personal lyrics. Four more albums would follow, "The Green Album," "Maladroit," "Make Believe," and "The Red Album," all of which had bright spots, but none ever managed to do better than just "okay" in the shadow of the classics. Bottom line: If one were to pick the band's twenty best songs, they would, with perhaps a couple thoughtful substitutions, be the ten songs on the "Blue Album" and the ten songs on "Pinkerton."

This fall saw the release of "Raditude," Weezer's seventh LP, and one that was named, for whatever reason, by actor Rainn Wilson (better known as Dwight Schrute from "The Office"). In addition to its curious title, the cover of the album features a dog flying across a living room. And even if you find both the album's title and its cover stupid, they nonetheless provide reason to see what the content of the album will hold, even if it's the type of curiosity that makes people look at car crashes.

Weezer certainly made some curious decisions on the album. The music takes a turn even further toward the center of the pop music spectrum. And though

it has some bright spots, "Raditude" is mostly baditude (couldn't resist). Terrible puns aside, "Raditude" does fail to impress. Cuomo's lyrics are particularly baffling. Songs range from how the girl who was ugly in middle school is now hot ("The Girl Got Hot"), the joys of going to the mall ("In the Mall"), and most importantly, partying ("Can't Stop Partying"). Unlike previous albums where songs had meaning and created some sort of emotional resonance, the lyrics here create songs that seem rather shallow. Cuomo is 39, married, and a father, but he seems to be singing from the viewpoint of himself as a teenager. Or maybe the teenager he wishes he could have been?

Also, curiously, each song has a co-writer. Not in the Page/Plant Lennon/McCartney way, but the hip-hop way, with totally separate artists. The guests range from Jermaine Dupri to Tyson Ritter and Nick Wheeler of the All-American Rejects. "Can't Stop Partying" even features Lil' Wayne rapping a verse, albeit the most uninspired rap verse in the history of mankind. Maybe it's because he's missing his veil of auto-tune, but "Weezy" just sounds plain bored.

Despite "Raditude" being a disappointment, one thing is obvious. Weezer was definitely trying to construct a catchy pop album, which is the really disappointing part. For a band that could once captivate with emotional lyrics and construct music that fits them, it's sad to see them go this route. Obviously Rivers Cuomo is in a different place in his life, which though good for him, has turned out to bad for us as listeners, seeing as he probably won't ever pen an album as emotionally resonant as "Pinkerton." Instead we can only sit, watch, and remember what once was, as Weezer tries again to crack the mainstream market. ■