by coleburton

One day in early spring of next year, you get what you believe to be the common flu virus that annually infects so many people. The symptoms began a few weeks after you returned from the Ski and Snowboard Club's spring break trip that involved a layover in a major metropolitan center: an airport full of international departures and arrivals. It begins with a slight fever, the occasional headache, and pain across the body. You feel like shit, but believe that you'll soon get over it as always. Unfortunately, after another few days you suddenly realize blood is evacuating your body, from your eyes, nose, and any other orifice you'd rather not mention to your friends. On top of this, you experience excreting amounts of pain, vomiting and diarrhea. At this point, you know you can't avoid the doctor's office but after explaining the symptoms over the online appointment system a red flag is raised in some bureaucrats office. Suddenly, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has quarantined your dorm, questioned your friends and roommates, and given the bad news. Unequivocally, you have the dreaded Ebola. A virus with varying mortality rates of 40-90%, a two to four week incubation period before symptoms show where you can infect others, and effective vectors of infections (all bodily fluids— even sweat— contain the active virus).

Although many can survive Ebola with proper nutrition and healthcare, the U.S. medical system lacks the necessary supplies and personnel to combat a large scale outbreak on the continent. This is even more likely if it originates in a high population density area and thousands come into contact with infected persons within the incubation period when it shows no symptoms or only those mirroring the flu. Quarantining hundreds of thousands in some urban areas would prove almost impossible, let alone if a metropolis like New York City or Los Angeles became its epicenter. The government would probably initiate martial law, a police state would ensue, and untold horrors could easily occur as paranoia grips the public, military and government.

From the onset, the current Ebola outbreak has been a numbers game. As of August 31, the CDC count of confirmed or suspected cases sits at 3,707 individuals infected, with 1,848 suspected deaths. This may seem retively small and only a problem for undeveloped countries in West Africa, but the truth is that these numbers dwarf all previous Ebola outbreaks combined and the CDC believes that the actual number of infected has the potential to reach upwards of 20,000. Furthermore, the spread of this Ebola strain follows an exponential growth curve. Some assert that by this time next year hundreds will be among the infected, and with the nature of modern voluntourism and general global travel patterns, cases will inevitably begin popping up around the world.

what the wt?

Howdy folks! Instead of just making fun of other people's work with our condescending comments— like books, movies, your mom's hair cut— we thought we'd take a shot at actually reviewing things for this issue. We begin here with a commentary on disabled super heroes and move over to the Reflections section with reviews on the wearable technology trend, George R. R. Martin's newest book, and the film "Boyhood". We loved, we laughed, we cried, and we judged to bring you all reviews on things you didn't even know you cared about until now! Agree or disagree, here's what the wt thinks.

disabled superheroes and why hawkeye is really important

by leonardbartenstein

Think about the major superheroes. From DC, you have Superman, Batman, and Wonder Woman. From Marvel, you have Iron Man, Captain America, the Hulk, Thor, Black Widow, and Hawkeye. Then there's Spider-Man and the X-Men. Out of all of those heroes, how many have a disability consistently, throughout their series? One. Professor Xavier, who is wheelchair bound after being shot in the spine, is the only mainstream superhero with a disability in any of those superhero outfits. This is highly disproportionate to the general population, which shows one fifth of the population having a disability. There is an issue of representation here. Why is it that those with super abilities are suddenly rid of disability (I'm looking at you, Captain America)? This lack of representation runs contrary to the real-life fact that there is nothing inherently bad with having a disability. By failing to represent people with disabilities as super heroes, the pinnacles of goodness, justice, and defenders of the people, people with disabilities are separated from this goodness, and distanced from the idea that they can be good. The few instances of representation in comics of those with disabilities includes Charles Xavier, as well as the Oracle, the Winter Soldier, Daredevil, and the Ravager. There are more, of course, but they require a good amount of digging or knowledge of comics to find out about.

This is why it is so important that Hawkeye, a well-known and popular avenger, is now canonically deaf. In "Hawkeye #15", Hawkeye was stabbed in...
Dear readers,

Guess who’s back, back again. Thanks for checking out our second issue! Curious about the WTF? We’re meeting again on Tuesday, September 23 in the Jost Room, Davis Center 4th Floor at 7:30pm. Meet the staff, share some ideas, and find a home for your words and your art!

Still can’t get enough? We publish everything we can’t get into these 12 pages at The Spigot, thewatertower.tumblr.com. Check it out for all new stories and artwork!

Kisses,

the water tower.

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

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Dear the water tower readers,

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International Book Orders: Because I’m not a fucking idiot, I opt not to pay $20 at the UVM store for a paperback book worth $2 on the Internet. However, things get more complicated when foreign language classes necessitate those shitty paperback books written in said language, thus leading to Amazon orders from weird online vendors across the pond. 7-12 business days, mon cal. Shit takes eons.

Old People: While acknowledging the inherent value in respecting your elders, I’m sorry, y’all are crotchety as hell. No, grandma, you can’t “call and reserve” a spot at this coffee shop ahead of time so you can hover over the same cup of Earl Grey for six hours, waiting for death or whatever you need to do at the same hand-selected table for half the day.

Hair Growth: I’m crawling out of my skin trying to maintain the self discipline to not hack it off or dye it a stupid color again, yet after a year of patiently waiting I can’t even pull off a biddie-worthy topknot or side braid without strands coming loose. Meanwhile, everything, shall we say, south of the border, requires constant weed-whacking to stay about as tame as the Amazon rainforest. In case anyone was wondering, smooth legs and flowing mermaid tresses are, in fact, apparently too much to ask. TM? Get your own shit list.

Mint Oreo Ice Cream: You sweet, seductive bastard. I just can’t quit you. My mind, my blood pressure, and my skinny jeans are telling me no...but my hypothermic, bloated body is telling me yes.

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The owner of the house gets involved, and he probably wished he hadn’t. At this point, he’s up against nearly the whole Palin tribe: Palin women screaming. Palin men thumping their chests. Word is that [daughter] Bristol has a particularly strong right hook, which she employed repeatedly.

-Amanda Coyne, a blogger on Alaska politics, replaying the drunken brawl that Sarah Palin and her family reportedly instigated at Todd Palin’s 50th birthday party. For more content like this, look pretty much anywhere.

“Did he just stroke his box?”

- An anonymous young British boy watching a Buckingham Palace guard. The guard has caused uproar in England for, while pacing the grounds with that famous Buckingham guard discipline, doing little spins, walking in slow-mo, stroking his box. The Queen is stroking her box just watching him.

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“We are fixing a 350-year old mistake—Ukraine is Europe. It is shame, this agreement sealed with blood. But that was choice, that was price of independence.”

-Arseney Yatsenuk, prime minister of the Ukraine, justifying recent laws to his country’s Parliament, known as Rada. The Ukraine-Russian conflict has simmered down but not stopped, and new symbolic deal between Ukraine and the EU was struck under Putin’s auspices. He’s a slippery fucker, he is.

“This year there will be a different look and feel to the operation, very much focused with local officers and less reliance on mutual aid.”

-Richard Berry, Assistant Chief Police Constable in Gloucestershire, England, commenting on cutbacks in his community’s annual badger cull. In theory, it’s part of a four-year pilot program to humanely cull the badger population by 70% to reduce TB in cattle. In practice, it’s Der Wind in den Weiden, von Josef Mengele.

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the news in brief

with kerry martin

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no true scotsman: the pros and cons of scottish independence

by zacharynabors

Thursday, September 18th, every true Scotsman (and woman) over the age of 16 (excluding convicted prisoners of war) will vote “yes” or “no” to the referendum on the much-revised and hotly debated question: should Scotland be an independent country? While Scotland and England have a relationship that dates back many centuries, they officially came together as the Kingdom of Great Britain with the Acts of Union in 1707. Now, 307 years later, its citizens are deciding whether to remain in the United Kingdom, or to become an independent nation. The votes are in and the ballots are cast, but here’s some insight into what the secession debate brings to the table for Scotland.

To say there’s been much debate on this question would be an obvious understatement. Many high-profile Britons have already tossed in their £0.02 on the issue, on both sides of the coin. In 2008, Scottish native Sean Connery vowed never to return to his home country until it became an independent state, and donated £1 million to the Scottish National Party, a center-left political party campaigning for the country’s independence.

Some were not as optimistic about Scotland’s future as a standalone nation. Sir Paul McCartney announced his support of the “Let’s Stay Together” campaign from his home city of Liverpool last month, an organization aimed at keeping Scotland in Great Britain.

But what exactly are the pros and cons of Scottish independence? One of the most jarring cons is that Scotland, as of early September, still wasn’t sure what currency they would be using should their bid for independence succeed. Two recommended options include keeping the British pound sterling or switching over to the Euro, the official currency of the European Union. If Scotland attained a status similar to that of Austria, however, they would have to re-apply to join the EU, NATO officials reported, leaving that second option to be a toss-up.

Many prominent English political parties also declared that Scotland would no longer be allowed to use the British pound after leaving the UK. Scotland is thereby left in a dangerous and confusing situation, especially in the midst of an economic recession, and there would continue to be much debate over the division of the British debt, how much Scotland should pay, and so on.

An increasingly risky option for the nation would be to adopt its own currency, which would allow Scotland to retain more economic freedom, but would lead to “the large transitional costs associated with setting up a new currency,” according to JP Morgan economist Alex White in an interview with The Guardian.

On the other side of the (Pound? Euro? Whatever, they’ll decide on that later) coin, pro-independence supporters (also known affectionately as “yesers”) point to the North Sea, where they feel Scotland could pull in a fair amount of revenue from the oil found there via drilling, which would also theoretically create jobs and bring in extra tax revenue for a fledgling independent state looking to prosper right off the bat. In 2013, around 866,000 barrels of oil per day were produced from the depths of the North Sea, the tax revenue of which would mostly go to Scotland, based on an agreement between Scotland and England established years prior. Many feel that an independent Scotland will be able to create legislation about its economy and government that will be “based on its own priorities,” according to the Scottish referendum official site; those who care the most about Scotland will be making its decisions, rather than “outsiders.” And of course, many supporters of the so-called “Yes-movement” wish to simply establish a cultural identity of their own, separate from the United Kingdom.

The election spoke for itself, and Scotland voted to stay a part of the UK: God save the Queen! However, as of September 9th, the polls were too close to call for sure. Overall, male voters were more likely to agree to secede than women, and voters under age 55 were also more susceptible to vote “yes.” A recent poll, conducted by the New York Times from September 2nd to September 5th (with a sample size of 1,084) showed approximately 47.4% planning to vote “yes,” and approximately 45.1% voting “no,” leaving around 7% undecided. In my opinion, Scotland has every right to declare secession, although they should ensure that they aren’t making a hasty decision based on pure nationalism. It’s a truly historical moment, regardless of what side you choose to support. Ultimately, however, the people of Scotland are the ones who have to live with their decision—and so it remains that the Highlands are still one with the UK. Now, who’s gonna break the news to Nessie?
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To say there’s been much debate on this question would obviously be a gross underestimation. Many high-profile Britons have already tossed in their £0.02 on the issue, on both sides of the coin. In 2008, Scottish native Sean Connery vowed never to return to his home country until it became an independent state, and donated $1 million to the Scottish National Party, a center-left political party campaigning for the country’s independence.

Some were not as optimistic about Scotland’s future as a stand-alone nation. Sir Paul McCartney announced his support of the “Let’s Stay Together” campaign from his home city of Liverpool last month, an organization aimed at keeping Scotland in Great Britain. McCartney wrote several of his most critically-acclaimed songs at his ten-room farm in Scotland, including “The Long and Winding Road” and “Maybe I’m Amazed,” and spent time there with his wife Linda after the breakup of the Beatles in 1970. Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling has also vehemently opposed to Scottish independence, warning that extremely experimental treatments consisting of two hundred experts concluding that a “strong, robust and united” UK was important, but decided that the question was, in the end, “up to the people of Scotland.” Groundskeeper Willie could not be reached for comment.

Many Scots also point to the “[Ach,] if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it!” argument: they feel they have been doing just fine in the UK, one of the world’s most powerful, richest and influential unions, so why risk losing that?

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You may have seen some of your more culturally astute classmates sporting a bubbly logo recently – stickers and hoodies that read “POWE”. Surely, you wondered, “what do these people know that I don’t?”

Powe is a new snowboard company started by several UVM seniors. I sat down with three of the founders recently to ask them about what they’re up to, and one of my first questions was about what makes them stand out in the crowded market of the snowboarding world. What made them think they could make this work?

I quickly found out that these guys are not messing around. From their overall mission to the smaller details, Powe is going where no snowboarding company has gone before. Though they’re quick to point out that the term “environmental” is really vague, their philosophy is centered around a concern for achieving sustainability and respecting the mountain environment that makes snowboarding possible in the first place.

It begins with the boards themselves. After breaking at least four boards each last winter, the founders took note of what worked and what didn’t, and decided to intentionally make the best board they could, finding a custom builder way off in the land of Wisconsin. In designing this dream snowboard, they took things a step further – trying to get away from plastic and carbon fiber materials. The resulting boards will feature hemp topsheets, bamboo sidewalls, poplar cores and a biorein epoxy. The first batch of forty are coming out next month.

The folks behind Powe are creating an entire lifestyle for snowboarding, which means they didn’t stop at just the board design. Another major aspect of their operations will be to coordinate children’s environmental education programs – getting kids out on the mountain to learn about what exactly they’re shredding past. And not just the ones that can afford it. “The number one thing I hear from people about snowboarding is, ‘Oh yeah that’s really cool, but it’s such an expensive thing to do,’” one of the founders explained. With that in mind, the company will be aiming to make the snowboarding experience possible for kids who couldn’t otherwise afford it. They’re also hoping to extend this to seniors at UVM who have stayed away from the mountain for financial reasons.

This ties in pretty well to another crucial aspect of their philosophy – building an open, fun community around snowboarding. The way they see it, winter is long, and you’ve got to find a way to keep your spirits up. It’s hard to argue against zooming down the mountain to learn about what exactly they’re shredding past. And not just the ones that can afford it.

The coolness doesn’t stop there. Two of the founders I talked to were in Environmental Studies, hence the eco-themed ethos of the company. Another is an Art major, and he’s turning his talents onto the aesthetic aspects. His job is to crank out original designs for all of the snowboards, since the idea is that they’ll each come in only limited batches. Therefore, once a design is sold out, it will be gone entirely until a new design is drawn up to replace it. As one of the founders explained: "I have this awesome board that’s like, my baby, and I go to the mountain and there’s 50 squids riding the same board..." With Powe., riders can rest easy knowing that their boards are truly unique.

So a snowboard company, based in Burlington, respecting Mother Earth, that turns out awesomely built and designed boards? Fair enough. If you’re curious about how to get in on the action – they won’t be hard to find. They’re closely involved with the Ski and Snowboard Club, and will be at all the rail jams this winter. They’re also looking for riders to feature in a promo video, as part of a larger effort to expand their brand around the Northeast. But mostly they just want people to get excited about and involved in snowboarding. So whether you’ve scheduled all your classes on Wednesday to maximize time on the mountain or have never so much as considered sliding through snow on a plank, Powe. snowboards is a company you’re going to want to keep an eye on.
Following the hype and appreciation of the return of the Otis Mountain Get Down Festival in Ellizabeth-town, NY last year, I purchased my ticket ready to have this festival be my first. The succinct Otis Mountain website was mysterious, only releasing little tid bits of history and information about what to expect for this recently-revived festival in the woods on September 12th to the 14th. The modesty of their site exuded the idea that was makes Otis Mountain so great was something that couldn’t be really captured or冷冷ly advertised. I was intrigued by Otis Mountain so great idea that was makes their site exuded the mystery and mystique of the festival. I was excited for the weekend and was ready to have a great time with some awesome music.

With set-ups like a fingerpainting spot, a homemade “beach”, a communal lean-to for grilling, and an enormous, central “OTIS” sign up the hill, the mini ski resort was transformed into a quaint, rustic haven for festival-goers. Hidden throughout the grounds were beautiful hallways of sticks and twinkling, ramshackle railings. It was the quintessential modern day hippie-ster Instagram-worthy festival. Seriously, look at the #otismountain hashtag on Instagram; it’s overflowing with those perfectly-positioned photos that you feel guilty not liking.

For as beautiful as this festival was, I couldn’t help but notice there were some aspects of the festival that seemed less emphasized: mainly a first-aid tent. Because it was private property, there were no police officers or security blatantly present – I’m still not sure if this made people more well-behaved. But it really bothered me that the presence of security and safety was not made more obvious. The weekend was cold. College kids were belligerent. There was no cell-phone service. When I saw someone get injured by the fire, you couldn’t help but notice the moment everyone thought “Uh…where do we even bring this bleeding kid?” Call me a mom if you please, but first-aid services should have been more apparent or at least more clearly designated. As they say, it’s all fun and games until a lighter blows up into some kids face.

Though, Otis Mountain Get Down really does deserve ample applause for coordinating such an amazing music event. Because there were no million-dollar musicians present, the art was accessible and heartfelt. Each of the musicians genuinely thanked the fans for coming out and most expressed their excitement that the weekend was a pure joy. With two stages and one DJ nook, Otis Mountain provided a venue for every type of music lover to appreciate. My personal favorite performances were Gang of Thieves, Midnight Snack, Linguisytic Civilians, and—my newfound, one-man-band love—The Suitcase Junket. Some musicians were Burlingtonians, some New Yorkers, but all had that local, down-to-earth connection to the fans that complemented the aura of the Get Down wonderfully.

Overall, Otis Mountain Get Down wholeheartedly deserves their five-star reviews. There was just something about that venue, those musicians, and the people that made you feel like you were at home. No matter the rain or cold, I never felt uncomfortable at Otis Mountain. It was the kind of festival where everyone knows each other and welcomes them into their tent to share good times. My only regret is that, in my senior year, happenstance might not put me in the right place to ever make my way back to Middle-of-Nowhere, NY for this festival. It might be the end for me, but I’d advise every other student to make sure they don’t miss out on this opportunity to get in touch with your local music community and go wild for a weekend before graduation.
With Apple’s announcement of its first step into the wearables market, the Apple Watch, I stopped to look at comparable offers to the Apple Watch. It didn’t take me long to see that, although the Apple Watch has some great features, it has a lot of room for improvement.

Firstly, the Apple Watch can run through some apps, but their core functionality is crippled. The Apple Watch can only run through some apps, but their core functionality is crippled. This is due to the fact that the Apple Watch is not a full-fledged smartphone, but rather a smartwatch designed to work in conjunction with a smartphone.

One of the biggest downsides of the Apple Watch is that it cannot make calls, send text messages, or run many of the apps that a smartphone can. While it can be used to check emails, send messages, and even make phone calls through a Bluetooth connection, it is not a replacement for a smartphone.

Despite these limitations, the Apple Watch has some great features. It has the typical Apple design – smoother and sleeker than most other smartwatches on the market. It also has a wide range of fitness and activity tracking features, including heart rate monitoring, sleep tracking, and even golf course tracking.

However, the Apple Watch is not without its flaws. It is not as powerful as some of the more expensive smartwatches on the market, and it does not have the same level of customization options. Additionally, the battery life is not as good as some of the other models on the market.

In conclusion, the Apple Watch is a great device for those who are looking for a smartwatch with a wide range of fitness and activity tracking features. However, it is not a replacement for a smartphone and should be considered in conjunction with one.

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**Reflections on the Apple Watch: A World of Trouble**

James Cohan

This was my first time using an Apple Watch, and I was thrilled by its capabilities. The watch is capable of doing a lot, from tracking your health to playing music and even making phone calls. But there are some downsides to this technology.

One of the biggest issues with the Apple Watch is its battery life. After a few hours of use, the battery begins to drain quickly, and it can be hard to find a charging station when you need one. Additionally, the watch can be quite expensive, and it may not be worth the investment for everyone.

Another issue with the Apple Watch is its compatibility with other devices. While it can be used with an iPhone, it cannot be used with an Android phone. This limits the potential user base for the watch.

Despite these issues, the Apple Watch is still a great device. It is a great example of how technology can improve our lives, and I am excited to see where it goes in the future.

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**The World of Wearables:**

by damisinsin

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Despite these limitations, the Apple Watch has some great features. It has the typical Apple design – smoother and sleeker than most other smartwatches on the market. It also has a wide range of fitness and activity tracking features, including heart rate monitoring, sleep tracking, and even golf course tracking.

However, the Apple Watch is not without its flaws. It is not as powerful as some of the more expensive smartwatches on the market, and it does not have the same level of customization options. Additionally, the battery life is not as good as some of the other models on the market.

In conclusion, the Apple Watch is a great device for those who are looking for a smartwatch with a wide range of fitness and activity tracking features. However, it is not a replacement for a smartphone and should be considered in conjunction with one.

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**Reflections on the Apple Watch: A World of Trouble**

James Cohan

This was my first time using an Apple Watch, and I was thrilled by its capabilities. The watch is capable of doing a lot, from tracking your health to playing music and even making phone calls. But there are some downsides to this technology.

One of the biggest issues with the Apple Watch is its battery life. After a few hours of use, the battery begins to drain quickly, and it can be hard to find a charging station when you need one. Additionally, the watch can be quite expensive, and it may not be worth the investment for everyone.

Another issue with the Apple Watch is its compatibility with other devices. While it can be used with an iPhone, it cannot be used with an Android phone. This limits the potential user base for the watch.

Despite these issues, the Apple Watch is still a great device. It is a great example of how technology can improve our lives, and I am excited to see where it goes in the future.
by lynnekeating

4 minutes and 48 seconds left: The Vermont Catamounts score again, capping off a 2-1 win in the men’s soccer game against St. Francis this Sunday on Virtue Field. Some attribute this win to the long hours of pre-season, unbearable buckets of sweat or the grueling Saturday morning practices; but they’re all wrong—this win is attributed to their accessories.

The first soccer game in history focused on only using a ball, made out of a pig or cow bladder. The players had an overflowing passion to play, even though they had to deal with using an irregularly shaped, unpleasantly heavy, and anything but aesthetically pleasing bladder of a ball. One bladder-soccer-ball, twenty-two players, and two goals: that was it.

Coming back to today’s game, the requirements to win demand ostentatious embellishments from flashy uniforms, to unique hairstyles.

Sitting in the stands, my eyes follow the dancing skittles that swerve along the turf field. Hot pink, neon orange, lime green, bright yellow; the competition of having the best cleats alone distracts me from the actuality of the game. Since when did our soccer players become shoe addicts? Why do they need to flaunt such wild colors? Do they think they are better players because of their shoes? These obnoxious colors contrast with an all-white uniform that reminds me of karate warrior garb. I wonder how much trouble they would encounter for wearing crazy patterned color underwear.

Mesmerized by the lusc long locks breathing through the wind, I watch the players race across the field. Does the hair ever get in their eyes? If it were me instead, my hair would be sweaty, gluing itself to my eyelashes, blinding all of my abilities to defend the goal. This is why I prefer the far more functional buzz cut, even though it does not appear as luscious as the other hairstyles. Other teammates spend hours before the games focusing on their hair gel. AKa additional goo, giving the hair extra support it needs. Some fashion the headband look, which is a great fastening method without all the chemicals. Hair preference has become essential for this sport: it would be a crime if you brushed it off. This “look” is not just with soccer, it is seen from men’s basketball to the women’s equestrian team.

Athletics have become material dominating, going beyond the necessities to seemingly amplify performance.

“Keep working blue”, a proud mother for St. Francis shouts. Little does she know that these uniforms are more than just a shirt color. If you catch a soccer player standing, which is peculiar, you can see tiny details and symbols that must have taken months to design and construct. A few specially designated players even have the honor of wearing “Captain” patches on their sleeves, which are supposed to stand out to the referees, but to them it symbolizes years of hard work and dedication. Instead of just being a good soccer player, you need a patch to officially define your “goodness”.

The obsession with having the latest and the greatest accessories has obstructed the love of the game. Even the field itself is accessorized. Plastic, fake grass, doused in black pellets trying to replace our enriching soil goes by the name, “turf”. Soccer used to only require a patch of grass, but now this turf is mandatory if you want the game to be taken seriously... I mean it’s easier to run on turf anyway. Virtue Field has soccer lines, lacrosse lines, and field hockey lines; it’s hard to focus on what lines pertain to you. Then to top it all off, right smack in the middle of the field, a Catamount is leaping over a “V” for Vermont. We can no longer have a field. It has to have plastic grass and a picture to entertain the crowd during the game.

Some say soccer requires the least amount of materials, but it’s hard to believe after analyzing this game. From the hair, to the shoes and shin guard tape patterns, the attempt and options to stand out are endless. Maybe all this singularity through these various items is mainly there to help their mothers identify their soccer-star-son.

———

Cullen Hairston

Fork it over.

the bunny bids goodbye

by jessebaum

Fuck Monsanto.

That seems as good a way as any to start an article about the increasing corporatization of food (Get excited!). Last week, General Mills (Genetically Modified and Generally Malicious) bought Annie’s Homegrown, of Annie’s Mac fame. The acquisition set General Mills back about $820 million.

In fact, most Marche veterans (if you have ever been a part of the thrity-Thursday through closing time Saturday crush on turnt people, then you are one of these people) have a favorite Annie’s delicacy.

However, that’s too bad. You are now forbidden from buying their delicious food (and even their graham crackers are far better than The Leading Brand’s) unless you want to give your money (or hard-earned points) to the giant food conglomerate.

To assuage the fears of those of you that survive on several boxes of Annie’s pasta a week, rest assured that the actual products you are consuming are not likely to change. After all, Ben and Jerry’s still tastes great, doesn’t it? (Mmm... Unilever). But at the same time, Annie’s is now a part of something much larger—a company with enormous energy demands, that relies on conventional, non-sustainable, agriculture and all of the petrochemicals and social and environmental baggage that come along with that. The acquisition represents the general trend of large companies buying up smaller, natural food brands (such as Kashi, owned by Kellogg) in order to profit from the organic craze while carrying on with business as usual.

One of the problems with this is that as large companies infiltrate the organic, non-conventional food niche, the rules change. As organic food has gotten more popular and grown in market share, the list of chemicals, additives and stabilizers, emulsifiers and other junk that you can add to food and still have it be “certified organic” has steadily grown. There are organic orees, hostess-style cakes, organic cheese-its. Big Organic, as Michael Pollen calls it, mirrors what the organic movement in the 70’s sought to correct. But you knew that already—without that framework and philosophy, Annie’s never would have existed at all.

With that in mind, maybe this buy-out was the next logical step in Annie’s evolution. Nevertheless, it’s hard not to mourn when another independent food supplier essentially bites the dust. So don’t be fooled. Annie’s isn’t a bunny anymore. More like a bullying, scary dude wearing bunny ears.

1 Eden Foods (despite some dubious politics) is one of the largest remaining independent organic foods companies, however other large names such as Amy’s Kitchen (the canned soups and beans) and Organic Valley also remain independent for the time being. Stay tuned.
trash.
i want you so bad

someone on campus catch your eye?
couldn't get a name?
send your love anonymously

uvm.edu/~watertwr/iwysb.html

Time goes by,
The clock ticks and it tocks.
I must say you are pretty dam hot!
I'll see you around and we will exchange a few words.

LOVE, excited eye contact melts my heart like a turd.
There are a few things that I know to be true.

Read on, and I will tell them to you.
My friends are all Charleses,
But we have a good time.

Sitting next to you in class
Could be distracting for a guy.
GC this one goes out to you,
You are fresh as fuck and an OG, true.
Smart, pleasant and personable,
The list goes on and on.
But I don't know you too well,
Let's hang.

When: On occasion
Where: Red Rocks
I saw: A lovely lady
I am: A distracted, procrastinating and aspiring entrepeneur

Last year you asked me on a date
With fear I hesitated,
I hope it's not too late.
I keep thinking about what we could have been.

Because you do in the future I have hopefully forseen.

We've been drunk every weekend
On vodka, whiskey and wine
And each time my feelings have only deepend.
So open your eyes to see what we could be.

Please give us a second chance for me.

When: Everyday
Where: In my dreams
I saw: A second chance
I am: A second chance

Cook Commons
Excited freshman girl: ...And I was like, “Do you even go to UVM if you don’t have stickers on your water bottle?”

Outside Harris-Millis
Girl talking about Canterbury Tales: The inn keeper made it a round trip rather than a linear pilgrimage, so it was kind of like a road trip.
Friend: A medieval road trip?
Girl: Y ay! Verily!

UHeights North Hallway
Guy to friend: You’re gonna shake my ass? I’m not quite sure that’s how it works.

Davis Center, 1st Floor
Dudebro: My dad was way cooler than my mom though.
He was close with Audrey Hepburn and stopped the war in El Salvador.

Outside Living/Learning B
Girl: I’m telling you, I’m the perfect third wheel.

South Willard Street
Girl to Group: When I was younger, we’d take BB guns and shoot the bunnies.

Outside Alice’s
Girl: I guess I can be kind of bossy sometimes.
Guy friend: Are you like a dominatrix or something?
Girl: No! Stop talking!

Davis Center, 3rd Floor
Fiscally minded youth: Well, my dad won’t be too happy about it, but that’s because he’s paying for it.

Bailey/Howe Basement
Son of liberty: I carry my pocket constitution with me everywhere. You know, in case the cops try to get me. I can pull out my rights without memorizing them.
Communist comrade: Dude, the police aren’t going to sit there while you skim your pocket constitution.

Bailey/Howe
Academic dude: I wasn’t good enough at math to be an engineer, and I wasn’t good enough at science to be a doctor. So that’s why I chose business.

remember to check out the overflow on the blog!
thewatertower.tumblr.com
Have you ever flipped on the radio and heard a song and just thought, “God this is awful”? Well I probably weren’t alone. Chances are, many other people would have also found that song repulsive. But how come you found it so tasteless, and why am I claiming that many people experience the same problem? You say, “Well it simply didn’t sound good, and everyone likes music that sounds good,” but what does sounding good really mean?

Look at mainstream music. I’m talking about big timers out there like Snoop, Swift, Nickelback, Miley Cyrus, and Coldplay. What is it about them that makes their music so savory to a majority of people? The answer is that our ears find sounds at certain frequencies and patterns to be most pleasant. That being said, not everyone has the same taste in music, but generally the pleasure centers of our brains start going haywire when a certain tempo or pattern is achieved in the music to which we are listening. Looking at the popular artists’ albums, you’ll notice that most of their music is not just written by the artist whose name is plastered all over the front, but by a heady list of people you’ve never even heard of before. Lady Gaga’s “Applause” was written by Lady Gaga herself, Paul “DJ White Shadow” Blair, Dino Zissis, Nick Monson, Martin Bres, Nicolas Mercier, Julien Arias, and William Grigahcine. But how come so many people are needed to write just one song? Well I hate to burst your bubble, but these people you’ve never even seen or heard of have been paid to manipulate you. Many of them have fancy degrees in sound mixing, acoustics, otolaryngology (the medical study of the nose, throat, and ears), and any other field you can think of that deals with how your ears hear. They have capitalized on that certain range and pattern of sounds that are pleasurable for you. This is something akin to a negative sign. After all, they are providing a service for you: producing music that you enjoy listening to.

But there is a reason why you enjoy these songs. Let me give you some examples. For those of you who have heard “I’m Coming Home” by Diddy and at least moderately like the song, chances are it’s either because you can relate to the lyrics, or because you enjoy the chorus. Same thing for Jason Derulo’s “Whatcha Say”. There is a reason why the part of the song that is repeated the most is what is repeated the most: it has hit the sweet spot of musical soundness. A good song that demonstrates a clear transition from musical soundness to something that just doesn’t sound very right is OneRepublic’s “Good Life”. The song starts out with pleasant drumming and a cheery whistling before hitting the chorus. After the first two lines of the chorus, “Oh, this has gotta be the good life, this has gotta be the good life,” the song continues with the same musical notes instead of shifting down an octave (getting lower) as the thought concludes. What I am saying is that when you start singing, “This could really be a good life, good life,” there is something off about the music. Had “this could really be a good life, good life,” ended at a lower note, I might not have noticed anything wrong with the song, but it didn’t, and once the pattern was broken, the chorus became a massive train wreck. Does that mean I hate the song? No.

Now how do I (and probably you as well) determine whether a song that is not musically perfect is bearable, aka a good song? It’s quite simple actually, and we usually do it quite unconsciously. Using the cost/benefit analysis of economic theory, we determine whether the enjoyable/beneficial parts of songs outweigh the costs of those one or two not-so-great parts. The cost of Bob Dylan’s up and down voice in “Like A Rolling Stone” does not outweigh the melody and the hooks of those one or two not-so-great lines after “There’s no going back in Katy Perry’s “Dark Horse” are a big turn off for me. They just aren’t part of the pattern of music that is pleasurable sound-wise to me.

Many popular mainstream songs make use of the same 4 chords, but so that they could all be combined to make a song that would be pleasurable to listen to because it would make sense. Now you’re probably thinking to yourself, “1. Why am I still reading this crap? and 2. Well this nut job writer who just wasted about five minutes of my life that I’ll never get back just claimed that he can combine a lot of mainstream songs and make a single song that sounds good. Make him prove it.” My response is to listen to “4 Chords” by The Axis of Awesome. Please. Take another 5 minutes of your time and listen to the song. I promise it will blow your mind. But as you go into the future, I hope you notice more about the music you find pleasurable, and share in the hope that one day we won’t have to apply the cost/benefit analysis to music because songs will be 100% pleasurable to your ears.

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shady aftermath:

by kerrymartin

If you listen to 50 Cent’s debut album Get Rich Or Die Tryin’ (2003), he invites you, perhaps even drag you against your conscious will, to enter and embrace the man at hand. This pulling is already evident in the album cover: from each edge, cracks in a glass window spiral into the focal bullet hole, which frames the cover’s centerpiece, the diamond-studded cross 50 wears on his bare, chiseled chest. Without the bullet hole, you would never notice the thistle vest between 50 and you, and the center of focus would not be the cross but the cold stare on his well-shadowed face. It is because 50’s been shot (and yes, he was shot quite right is OneRepublic’s “Good Life”. The song starts out with pleasant drumming and a cheery whistling before hitting the chorus. After the first two lines of the chorus, “Oh, this has gotta be the good life, this has gotta be the good life,” the song continues with the same musical notes instead of shifting down an octave (getting lower) as the thought concludes. What I am saying is that when you start singing, “This could really be a good life, good life,” there is something off about the music. Had “this could really be a good life, good life,” ended at a lower note, I might not have noticed anything wrong with the song, but it didn’t, and once the pattern was broken, the chorus became a massive train wreck. Does that mean I hate the song? No.

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by jeremypustilnick

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10 week and over 8 million copies since, making it six times platinum and the fourth highest-grossing rap album of all time, losing the Grammy for Best Rap Album of 2003 to the highest grossing rap album of all time by quirky rap duo OutKast. That’s how his single “In Da Club” broke Billboard’s record for most-listened-to on radio to six weeks in a row.

Curtis Jackson never had it easy. Raised by a young, single, lesbian, coke-dealing mom in the poorest neighborhood of Queens until she overdosed when he was eight, he moved in with his grandparents and started selling drugs a few years later when he wasn’t amateur boxing. He spent some time in a correctional facility and never graduated high school. Just as his rap career was about to take off, he was shot nine times, including in the chest and face, and spent five months recovering. It only postponed his success. He’s doubtless impressive, making it that much easier to fall for the 50 Cent mythology. He pulls you in, he makes you see, he makes you love. And while his authority is never compromised, he also gives you exactly what you’re looking for, without shame or fanfare. If you just look at his later album covers, you’ll see he could never quite do it as well again.
You hold your breath  
When walking past steaming street vents.  
I love that mist,  
The oil by the curb, the sweat on your shirt  
Cracking open paint cans.

We had fished for people  
Wanted their names,  
Their addresses and phone numbers –  
Email worked too.  
Mostly we wanted their affirmation.

Saying “stop” cost too much  
Not even Monopoly would want our currency  
Maybe they actually arrived,  
But I imagined a dark room where our petitions  
Weren’t even recycled.

So we acted locally.  
First I keyed my manager’s Mercedes  
From the passenger door to the gas tank.  
I made dinner from our “vacant” lot garden  
A fine salad, and the other tenants asked  
Why I’d harvested it all at once

The best answer:  
That is how things work  
Their ultimatum, more inclusive than they thought.  
There is so much room left by the word “how”  
This, this here, this is how things work  
My rent was unpaid  
My walls were unpainted  
In debt for being rear ended by a Mercedes,  
I had to leave, but we are not invisible,  
You said, let’s leave marks.

You pressed me up to the dripping red paint  
And I let you kiss me.  
It felt so good, so clearly good  
To let someone do something to me  
Before they did it.

large group of his cronies were there, making the drugs in the drug den. A shot was fired from a gun that was held by one of the drug traffickers. From there, Daverson couldn’t tell what was even happening, because things were going faster than that guy who jumped out of the spaceship and freefell to earth went—his air speed velocity, when adjusted for wind resistance.

When the drug-dust settled like that hot chick who ended up with Macaulay Culkin, and when all was said and done, the only one left standing was Daverson himself, standing alone. On the floor beside him, with twenty-seven bullet holes in his chest area, Chuck gasped for breath, blood choking his throat. Grant knelt down next to him. “Greenleaf, stay with me, you can do it, come on—”

“I’m going to that great big backstage of a Dave Matthews concert in the sky…” He gasped. Daverson held his hand tight, clutching it between their chests.

“You don’t give up on me, rookie…” he said, but it was too late. He was already dead. A single morose tear found its way down Grant’s mauveLin face, following his cheek like the Colorado River flows through the Grand Canyon.

His face was wet again, a month later, when he stood in the rain, a little removed from the grave, collar turned up, hat pulled down. The water was from the rain, not from his eyes, because his heart had already grown cold, like a cup of coffee left on a desk all day, forgotten. The higher-ups had seen what had happened and blamed Daverson, because he was supposed to bring in anyone not Rachael Valencé who was in on her ring and question her. Now that they were all dead, there were no witnesses.

Daverson was asked firmly but politely to leave the force. He turned and left the funeral as

You said, let’s leave marks.

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The bushes are coming back and you can be the writer.
E-mail ideas to thewatertowernews@gmail.com

Sadly Pia is no longer with us so she can no longer be the inspiration for the back page. She's not dead, she just moved to Boston, instead lyrics from songs will now be the inspiration for the back page.

The bushes are coming back and you can be the writer.
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This issue was brought to you by:

“So write a song without a hook. Remember why you wrote songs in the first place”

- It Ceases to Be ‘Whining’ If You’re Still ‘Shitting Blood’ by, Bomb the Music Industry