killing me sloth-ly

by stacey brandt

The idea that smoking causes cancer is widely accepted today, but fifty or sixty years ago this was considered radical—an unproven medical ideology that only applied to women who were nursing, pregnant, or planning to become pregnant. I’m not sure if they were taking the “Save the women and children!” approach like in Titanic when they were deciding who got to go on the lifeboats, or if they were thinking, “Women are clearly weaker, therefore more susceptible to virtually any medical complication.” Either way, the idea that a cultural fad could cause medical complications in the just-distant-enough-to-ignore-it future was slid under the rug countless times until people began to realize that it’s abnormal for someone who doesn’t work in a coal mine to be hacking up black phlegm. In short, behaviors like smoking, which we now acknowledge as almost undoubtedly lethal or extremely detrimental to our health, were at one time recognized as just plausibly unfavorable. So, even in light of the incredible scientific and medical advances of the past century, I can’t help but believe that certain behaviors today, behaviors that have become an integral part of our daily lives, will prove in the just-distant-enough-to-ignore-it future to be quite harmful to our wellbeing and may, in the worst case, lead to death.

With a mostly intuitive, quasi-scientific basis for my argument, I will list a few of today’s behaviors to which I myself have become accustomed that I believe will have the most negative impact on the future health of our generation.

1. Consuming diet/low calorie beverages in place of water: Just saying, if you need to consult a high school chemistry textbook to figure out what half the ingredients in your Vitamin Water Zero or Diet Coke mean, they’re probably not doing wonders for the inside of your body. For example, the common dietary chemical phenylalanine: “What the fuck is that and why is it in my soda?” I ask myself passively as I gulp down my diet drink. Water doesn’t taste good enough, so, like a flat-chested girl aspiring to be a Playboy bunny, must we artificially enhance it? That’s not right! I predict that chemicals in diet drinks will ironically cause metabolic malfunction, and we’ll all become overweight in the end anyways.

2. Wearing headphones to effectively simulate the noise level of a rock concert: Think your grandfather has a hearing problem? Well, imagine if he had been jamming out to Louis Armstrong in ear buds that project sound about ten decibels louder than a phonograph and directly into his eardrum. He’d probably be completely deaf by now. Your music is too loud if it transmits sound outside the headphones, so that everyone across the room can hear, word for word, the intro to “A Milli” down to Lil’ Wayne’s ridiculous laugh. I don’t think human ears have evolved for that kind of sound unless early cavemen had baby pterodactyls constantly screeching in their ears.

3. Local dieting: For example, the common diet means, “in the light of the incredible scientific advances of the past century, I can’t help but believe that certain behaviors today, behaviors that have become an integral part of our daily lives, will prove in the just-distant-enough-to-ignore-it future to be quite harmful to our wellbeing and may, in the worst case, lead to death.”

...read the rest on page 6

teach what you preach

by leonard bartenstein

I believe we go to one of the most open-minded schools there is—people accept you for who you are, however you are. It doesn’t matter if you’re gay, or straight, or religious, or not, or if you are smart or dumb, none of that matters. What really matters to the people at the University of Vermont is whether or not you are a total asshole.

Twice last week, a woman came to the UVM campus and stood between the library and Davis Center, spotting what she perceives to be the holy words of God: that being homosexual is a sin, and that all of us at the university are going to hell because we condone this type of behavior.

Well, let me further divulge into a few of her examples of God’s holy words. Let’s start off by noting that God never said (ever) that loving someone of the same sex was wrong. The closest He ever got was in Leviticus, when the Bible reads: “You shall not lie with a man as with a woman; such a thing is an abomination” (Leviticus 22:18).

As far as I’m concerned, I don’t think anyone goes around trying to stick their penises into other men’s vaginas, which is what “laying with” means in the Bible (remember, holier-than-thou friends, who we’re dealing with – I’m not even going to get into the kinky stuff). So, as far as that passage is concerned, there’s nothing to worry about. It’s pretty hard to find a vagina on a man (though you could if you looked hard enough, but I’m going to go with the binary to make this argument easier to explain), so you shouldn’t have to worry about abominating-ly lying with a man as you would with a woman. Once you think about that passage in this way, you realize that this, and the rest of this passage of Leviticus, is just a friendly reminder. Twice last week, a woman came to the UVM campus and stood between the library and Davis Center, spotting what she perceives to be the holy words of God: that being homosexual is a sin, and that all of us at the university are going to hell because we condone this type of behavior.

...read the rest on page 7

get inside me:

ski pass reviews by marilyn mora

chacos vs. crocs by amy dorfman and frances lasday

...read the rest on page 7
Dear Cat Lady

I've never shared a room before, and I knew I would have some things to adjust to, but this is a little ridiculous. I know it's against the rules, but my roommate brought her guinea pig to school with her. I love animals, so I said it was okay... but I think it has fleas, and I'm afraid it's going to spread to our entire room. I don't want to get her in trouble, but I don't want my stuff getting infested! Some advice, before I find bugs in my clothes?

Sincerely, Reluctant Roomie

Dear Reluctant Roomie,

Some advice: tell someone! You seem like a really easygoing and nice person (nicer than most if you let your new roommate bring her oversized hamster into your sleeping space against school rules), and you don't want to make a bad impression or cause trouble right off the bat. I get that. But at this point, this directly concerns you—fleas? Fucking disgusting. All bets are off; I'd take this straight to the RA. Pets aside, a good rule of thumb for roommate living: they might bother you, and you'll both invade each other's business in various ways all year. Don't be afraid to confront them if something is really in your way; you're in an obscenely small living space and you both have to deal. Furthermore, you know what it feels like when things are really beyond your control (right: it feels sort of like ten million tiny fucking flea bites). Trust your gut, and take this shit to the people in charge.

Claws are coming out! – Cat Lady

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

Drunk housemates: Do you have a problem with your current living conditions? Is someone not doing their dishes or their stuff is spread out everywhere? I have a solution for you. First bottle up all the negative feelings you may be harboring and wait for both you and your roommate to be wasted. Then, when the timing is right, suddenly accuse them of their wrong doings and begin a “civilized” conversation. If done correctly, multiple friends will have been dragged into the middle of it and the disagreement will be settled after someone breaks down and begins crying.

GTAV: In pursuit of the elusive five-star showdown, no homework has been attempted in days. This shiny new toy, that has made billions of dollars since its release last week, is the perfect time warp for whoever is looking to forget about their exams next Friday. Keep calm, hit the bong and play GTA all night long.

iOS7: Maybe it’s just me being sick and tired of Apple trying to make every release they have—no matter how big or small—seem like the next coming of Christ, but it’s been all of a week and I’m done hearing the iPhone junkies rant and rave. Whether you love it, or hate it, the fact of the matter is that the only person who really cares about you having iOS 7 is you.

It’s me again, when the timing is right, when the timing is right...

Bruce Bennett, an expert from the Rand Corporation, on his company’s newest report on the imminent collapse of North Korea. The report cites increasing political instability, friction between the populace and military, chronic famine, and horrific social oppression, though remains silent on the potentially destructive introduction of Dennis Rodman.

It is more a matter of ‘when’ than ‘if’ it will occur.

— Bruce Bennett

Anna Wardly, to the BBC on her historic solo swim around the Isle of Wright. The BBC article suggests that Ms. Wardly’s success is derived entirely from her consumption of carbs and sweets at meal intervals during her swim, because all her training, soul-rendering effort, and astounding dedication apparently mean nothing in the face of miracle calories.

I have all sorts, like pasta, rice pudding, chocolate mousse, Percy Pigs, tea cakes...

— Anna Wardly

Our generation stands at a crossroads. With sincerity and humor, we strive to make you reexamine, investigate, question, learn, and maybe see your pants along the way. We are the reason people can’t wait for Tuesday. We are the water tower.
Hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking”, is the incredibly destructive process used to remove natural gas from the shale bedrock in the ground. Although fracking and natural gas are labeled as “clean energy sources”, really it should be labeled as “a cleaner energy source than coal” (which really isn’t saying much). Fracking is not a step in the right direction: if anything, I would argue that it is a step back in the creation of our sustainable energy future. Natural gas is gas for a reason—an alternative energy source, it is a buffer for our ever increasing oil dependence on the Middle East—that is all. Fracking sucks for a lot of reasons, but the negative impacts are never talked about because the practice is being “green-washed” as being an alternative to “dirty” fossil fuels. “Green-washing” is the false advertising of how “good for the planet” a certain product is. This practice in no way a good thing when it comes to the severely detrimental when it is done on a large-scale campaign, such as the branding of “clean natural gas” or “clean coal”, neither of which exist.

Just the consequences from the process of fracking should be enough to show us that it is clearly not a good solution to our energy needs. There are $500,000 active gas wells in America today. It takes 72 trillion gallons of water, and 360 billion gallons of chemicals to get natural gas out of those wells. Billions of gallons of those chemicals leach from the ground water into our drinking water. In Pennsylvania, where there is a higher rate of fracking, 81% of shallow water wells near fracking sites were found to be contaminated. This is our drinking water, people! Who fully other states will follow.

In the past couple months, the topic of fracking came back to the green mountain state when Vermont Gas Systems, Inc. began the planning stages of a major gas transmission pipeline. You would think that in a state that has banned fracking, the infrastructure to implement the transport of natural gas by fracking would also be banned. But no, the issue is currently in hot debate.

On September 10th, testimonials were given to the Public Service Board on the proposed costs of fracking. The board has the ultimate decision-making power to grant or deny the approval of the pipeline, and should make a decision by the end of the year. The testimonials were not meant to determine the final decision, only to gather information on public standing. A lot of the effort to ban fracking in Vermont came from the Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG), an organization dedicated to giving a voice to Vermont’s public on issues such as the environment and public health. In a statement made by the Executive Director of VPIRG last week, the people of Vermont oppose the gas line to Middlebury because after outlawing the dangerous, dirty process as a state, “we shouldn’t pretend that it’s suddenly acceptable just because it’s coming from Alberta [Canada].” The people of Vermont do not want fracking here, so why on earth would we allow the process to pass through our state?! This contradiction has caused quite a stir amongst the movers and shakers, who, like me, understand how awful fracking is, no matter where it is done. That is why nearly 200 people, including 25 UVM students, showed up to the rally on the 10th.

I couldn’t make the hearing, but I am completely against the Vermont Gas Pipeline. I am writing this article to describe my opposition to the pipeline and give voice to the many other students who also oppose the pipeline. UVM students are tabling, having people sign petitions and struggling to have their voices heard, so what are you doing? Only we, the people, can intervene to ensure that this does not determine our sustainable future.

Do you think it’s a bad idea to develop a pipeline that will increase Vermont’s dependence on fossil fuels? Concerned that poisonous chemicals will leach into your drinking water? It’s not too late to let the Public Service Board know. Go to www.vpirg.org/fracking/ to sign the petition. It is our water, our land, and our health. I promise you, go and give a frack, do you? Let your voice be heard.

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**update:** the latest in the *burqa ban bandwagon*

Let’s pretend you’re a Red Sox fan moving to New York City, and your move happens to coincide with a big win at Fenway. You're feeling particularly proud, and you decide to wear your Salty jersey out and about on the town. As you go sightseeing in Times Square, you are promptly stopped for having the audacity to wear a Red Sox jersey in Yankee Country. The police do not care if you’re a New York resident originally from the Red Sox Nation; they assume that since you moved to this state, your culture changed—just because other parts of European nations have outlawed burqas does not mean it is any form of problem-solver. While Ticino is teetering on the edge of a bridge, would you do it too? The argument seems silly, but its logic holds up—just because other parts of European nations have outlawed burqas does not mean it is any form of problem-solver. While Ticino is teetering on the edge of this ban is questionable at best, but it is the ethical issues surrounding it that are even more alarming. Regardless of their religious, cultural or political beliefs, no one group should have the right to dictate what another wears on the basis of facilitating integration. The more bigotry our world accommodates, the more desensitized we’ll become to issues that should undoubtedly raise red flags to us. Banning cultural fashions is just the tip of the iceberg, my friends, and the last thing this world needs is the domino effect this could spark.

When I used to justify bandwagon behaviors to my parents with the “everyone is doing it” excuse, they always retorted with, “if so-and-so jumped off a bridge, would you do it too?” The argument seems silly, but its logic holds up—just because other parts of European nations have outlawed burqas does not mean it is any form of problem-solver. While Ticino is teetering on the edge of that bridge, I truly hope they don’t make the leap; leaders are far more respected than followers.

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**what the frack?!?!**

by franceslasday

why fracking sucks and everyone should hate it

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**by sarahperda**

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Jihad, world hunger, and perhaps even lead to a cure for cancer. I’ve always been an advocate for the power of fashion, but I have admit that this guy is putting me to shame.

To justify what comes off as targeted, anti-immigrant sentiments, Gharimbelli’s minions in The Swiss People’s Party claim that banning burqas and the like will aid the country in successfully integrating foreigners. Here at UVM, we understand better than anyone that homogeneity is the key to building a strong community. After being part of the Canadian community for the past three years, the thought of residing in a cultural melting pot gives me anxiety, so it’s easy to understand where the Swiss People’s Party is coming from. You should try to get comfortable with the “uncomfortable” when you can legally bind people to behave just like you.

In short: what the fuck? The legality of this ban is questionable at best, but it is the ethical issues surrounding it that are even more alarming. Regardless of their religious, cultural or political beliefs, no one group should have the right to dictate what another wears on the basis of facilitating integration. The more bigotry our world accommodates, the more desensitized we’ll become to issues that should undoubtedly raise red flags to us. Banning cultural fashions is just the tip of the iceberg, my friends, and the last thing this world needs is the domino effect this could spark.

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waitin’ for the winter wonderland:
ski mountain reviews

Shhh, can you hear it, UVM? She is coming, my friends, the clandestine whispers of winter are in the air, and if the Al Gore gods shine upon us, then these green mountains will soon be dusted with sweet white powder.

For some, this may signal the beginning of your Howard Hughes period. Kleenex box forts, unclipped toenails, pale winter pudges spilling out from under your comforter. Your roommates will begin to notice the unmistakable stench of your winter stagnation. They’ll try to coax you out of bed, but you’re not budging.

For the rest of us, winter is our jam. We forget about everything. Exams, classes, work—WHAT ARE THESE THINGS? WHO THE HELL CARES, THERE’S A MOUNTAIN WITH SNOW OVER THERE. Being addicted to the white stuff it’s the only thing we’ll be focusing on for the next couple of months. #sorrynotsorry. So for those of us that are new to Vermont (hello, my baby Catamounts!) here’s a brief review of some local mountains:

**Stowe** is known for being a quaint, little affluent town. That spills over into the mountain life. Stowe is snobby. The college season pass is $399 (which I sure as hell don’t have), making it one of the most expensive little tricks around. Everything is overpriced. The parking lots are constantly filled with out-of-state license plates because those are the only people who can afford to ride there. Bearing that in mind, Stowe does get consistent snow year to year. An hour away, the trails are long, fast, and some of the steepest around. If you can swing it, Stowe is one luxurious, resort experience. But, consider that you’ll be shredding with the 40-year-olds (and older) crowd up there.

This is how I feel about Smuggler’s Notch: Ugh. It is the quintessential Vermont family mountain. FAMILY MOUNTAIN. It’s always inundated with annoying family ski groups with their dumb matching winter parkas. Nothing about Smuggs is challenging. The lifts are slow, the lodge is small, and being on the backside of Stowe, it gets all of the wind with none of the good snow, thus creating Ice Mountain most of the year. Foolishly, one day last year I found myself on Smuggs. Randomly while skiing, two tree roots suddenly interrupted my path, poking out right in the middle of a trail. By the time I saw them, it was too late, and—not only did I fall hard—I ended up smashing my most favorite sunglasses. Shut up, they were a gift! Dolce & Gabbana! The most fanciest thing I’ve ever owned, and now they’re gone (still sobbing). Seriously, ugh.

**Bolton** is like Smuggs, except a lot more decrepit and a lot tinier. It’s never overcrowded because there’s not a lot there, but it is the only mountain around to offer nighttime skiing. Bolton is like the Cup Noodles of mountains: not much substance, very cheap, and convenient, but do you really want Cup Noodles?

**Jay Peak**, when you’re good, you’re good, and I fall head over heels for you every time. But those cramped weather days, you are the worst, and I will avoid you like I avoid that downtown pizza boy who I once unabashedly hit on when I was feeling a bit too friendly (I badly miss the pizza but I can’t go back in there). It is closest to the Canadian border, making the commute ridiculous, but it is a huge mountain that you will never get bored at, and hands-down has some of the best snow and glades in the state.

Sugarbush tourists are always commenting on its beautiful woods and views, but unless you’re going to pull a Bob Ross and throw up an easel while you’re out there, who the hell cares? Sugarbush is great though, because it’s geared towards young people. The people that work there are some of the most down-to-earth, chilliest people I’ve ever met. On top of its awesome vibe, it has a lot more trails for intermediate and advanced runs, the high speed quads makes it easier to get a ton of runs into a day, and it has awesome terrain parks with unique features that you really can’t find anywhere else. Sugarbush is fun, go get it.

**Killington** is a beast. It is a wilderness so ridiculously huge that you will never get bored. It has everything. A downside to this, though, is that it is always crowded. Always, especially with French Canadians, so if you have some French linguistic skills you want to practice, head on over to Killington. Another negative is that the trails can be very confusing. They are not well-marked, and they intersect one another often. This makes it really easy to end up on a trail you shouldn’t be on. One of my first times snowboarding, I found my beginner trail quickly switch into a much more advanced-level trail. There was no help in sight (if you ever need help, ski patrol, whatever, avoid Killington) so it looked to me like I had two options: either unstrap my boots and walk for miles down, or ride my snowboard like a little sled. I chose the latter. I got my first and so far only case of frostbite that afternoon, and today I have these off-colored, grayish-mauve scar patches right above my bum. So that’s Killington for me, it’s ridiculously overwhelming, sometimes in a dangerous way, but it did contribute to my awesome nickname, Patches, so there’s that.

There are a lot more mountains out there that warrant reviews but for now here’s something to get you started. Sugarbush and Jay are where it’s at, but find out for yourself—get out there, be young, have fun, and explore!
The University of Vermont is located amidst the scenic hills of the Green Mountains, right up the street from the glorious Lake Champlain, and across the lake from the wondrous Adirondacks. This location provides students with miles of hiking trails, rock walls to scale, and lakes and portages to traverse with canoes. And that's wonderful, because many UVM students are known for their love of and commitment to the outdoors, for going to climb that mountain “in between” classes, and for their magnificent Outing Club.

What is the UVM Outing Club, you may ask? For those of you who live under a rock, it’s the student body’s way of exploring their natural surroundings through peer-led trips throughout the academic year. Their website states that “The mission of the University of Vermont Outing Club is to provide affordable wilderness trips, instruction, leadership training and certification opportunities for students.” Who wouldn’t want to be part of such a gnarly-sounding club? That’s the problem—everybody does.

The club is so popular among the student body that it’s easy to get lost in the crowd and not get on a trip. To register for any of the trips offered throughout the year, you must attend the first club meeting. There, they present the trips offered, and then set the room free. Organized chaos ensues as everyone makes a mad dash for the lists, trying their darndest to lock their place on to one or two trips (if they’re lucky). The really committed students arrived early, taking the chance to stake out their spot next to their preferred list…but how do you know if you want to try something new before hearing the presentations?

I spoke to one freshman that said she was able to sign up for three trips, but that’s not always the case. “[I] was lucky because it worked out in my favor” she said, “I don’t think it’s a good way to go about it.” There are many people, namely freshmen, who either didn’t hear about the meeting at all, or couldn’t make it for one reason or another. For example, I was home for Rosh Ha-Shanah and therefore couldn’t attend the meeting. My best bet now is to sign up for the listserv and wait for a spot to open up on a trip. But am I supposed to cancel all my plans I’ve since made because I was given the privilege of going on the trip?

It is understandable that the Outing Club caters to a big school, and trip sizes need to be limited. But how are we supposed to partake in outdoor activities with no car, and no trailhead or river within walking distance of public transportation? Freshman Tony Mc-Brien shares in my grievances. She said she was, “frustrated and disappointed with the inaccessible trips. People came to this school who liked the outdoors, and the Outing Club was advertised as something everyone does, but how can we be a part of that if we can’t get in?”

If we’re being honest, I’m just a jealous freshman who wishes she had her name on one of those coveted lists. I am, however, frustrated with the trip signup process, and the inaccessibility to the outdoors without the aid of the club. Many students have expressed interest in school-sponsored shuttles to and from trailheads. They would provide transportation to the mountains just like in ski season, but without the guided and instructional part of the trip. Another option includes the CarShare Vermont program. It is a great option as a form of personal transportation. UVM actually covers its students membership fees for the first year of service. Once approved by CarShare, students 18 and over can rent a car for $65 a day, or $5.50 and hour (plus mileage).

The UVM Kayaking Club can be a spectacular alternative to the Outing Club trips. They offer instructional pool sessions twice a week (Sundays and Tuesdays), and the instructors are always looking to fill their cars with students eager to eat shit (it’s harder than you think to stay in your boat!) on some nearby white water. Although our campus is beautiful and downtown Burlington is great, seeing those views of the mountains from the amphitheater next to the Grundle or the lake from Main Street just reminds me how big my itch for the outdoors is. And right now, it’s an itch I can’t scratch.

To those of you who feel personally offended by the fact that we don’t have cable this year, especially to the anonymous student in a 200-person lecture of mine who went on a rant about how watching a Pats game two hours after it ends is “absolutely worthless”: grow up and get over it. As a first-year student, it is not too unusual for me to partake in a conversation with a fellow freshman regarding their feelings about UVM so far. Many freshman that I have talked to share the same thoughts as me about the school: the classes are fine, Burlington is awesome, and the Grundle lives up to its name. However, the bitching about the lack of cable, and how the school’s promise that replacing cable with free TV sites. Whether you are catching up on Breaking Bad (projectfree.tv) or need a place to watch the Patriots lose to the Giants in the Super Bowl, again, (firstrowus.eu), there are sites for all. Who needs cable when we can get our TV from some sketchy Russian dude who, according to his ad selection, REALLY thinks we should invest in a new pair of jeans from Old Navy.

There is some irony to this whole situation. After the unidentified boy in my class finished his testosterone-driven rant, the response from the professor was that she understands his anger; however, the money saved from getting rid of cable went towards getting a faster Wi-Fi for the school. Maybe UVM should get rid of another thing soon, because the soccer game from my illegal free TV site is still taking forever to load.
live for the pregame

The party isn’t promised

by vanessakahn

There’s a reason I shouldn’t hear the word “pregame.”

No, this isn’t about the stress of deadlines and

fear of not meeting everyone’s expectations; it’s

about the memories of alleviating anxiety

due to a pregame principle I hold to,

that I adore my normal spawning ritual, allow me to explain. I love
cuddling as much as any college female. Human contact. Objectless. Promises of a
to be intimate in the morning—it’s all good stuff. But when you cram two scarily

tall people into a very small bed, the only thing you think of is sex and

what your future boy and blaming it on her

ditching this date for another

(a date that I wouldn’t mind

that never lasted through the

of dresses that never actually

jeebies and evokes memories

/T_h

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In the culture we live in, people are immediately judged by what they are wearing. Throughout time, rivalries have come and gone: Easy Mac or Ramen, Capulets or Montagues, Snickers or Twix, and Star Wars or Star Trek. Despite their infamy, no rivalry has been as intense, brutal, or disputed as much as the Chacos versus Crocs debate. With the intent to give the argument accredited backing, we have summarized and consolidated the most disputed news in today’s footwear.

**Hikeability**
Clearly the Chaco wins. With its Vibram sole and supportive, sporty straps, your foot stays in place as you propel your way up that mountain…or up Main Street. In a Croc, your foot would slip right out and you would be lagging behind your group of bros trying to get your shoe back on. Nobody wants to be that guy. Nobody.

**Showerability**
Crocs. Obvi. Who would wear Chacos in the shower? Answer: nobody. The straps stay wet for hours, and who wants to undo their footwear after a nice relaxing steam? Also, who wants to deal with suds from your organic biodegradable conditioner getting stuck in that Chaco strap? It might make your hair silky smooth, but it would leave you walking around in a slimy shoe for at least a week.

**The Coolness Factor**
I’m sorry, Croc-fanatics, but Chacos have to take the cake on this one. I mean, walking around with pieces of colored rubber on your feet is pretty sweet, but nothing beats the aesthetically pleasing, sporty, comfortable swag of Chacos.

**Accessorizing**
Got a favorite sports team, animal, flower, country flag, school subject, food, Pokemon, bug, reptile, amphibian, letter or hobby? There is a Jibbitz for that. Crocs are definitely easier to accessorize than Chacos. With literally hundreds of thousands of Jibbitz combinations, your only limit is the amount of holes you have.

**Versatility**

**Design**
You have to give the designers of Crocs credit; they know how to draw outside the lines. With a shape somewhere in between an eggplant and a moon boot, this oddly shaped footwear is the reigning champion of the “what can you make out of this” game.

Some people prefer Macs, some pick PCs. Some people like Androids, while most cradle iPhones. Some people like the top, and others like the bottom (of bunk beds…). And, clearly, some people like Crocs, and others prefer Chacos. Both have a range of good and bad qualities. Regardless of what you ultimately select, just remember that your footwear doesn’t define you; it’s how you use it.
trash. ear

i want you so bad

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

You feel cold to the touch, but tonight I crave you so much.
You are typically clean and always so smooth, unless you're stained with the scent of vermouth.
When I need you most, I have to ask the host.
Fortunately you're always there, even if someone holds my hair.
I need you my pearly whites, on my Porcelain nights.
I dare not cheat on you my dear, sinks easy clog and easily smear.
I have to ask the host.

When: All weekend long
Where: el baño
I saw: a porcelain princess
I am: hung over

You are the summer of my life, complete
With all that does accompany that time:
Both beauteousness and fearsome power compete,
At times both lovely and as harsh as time.
Much like the sun you nurture all my best
Until I do become both full and bright,
And beg you silently not to leave me, lest
I perish and wither without your light.
Most all the time you're full of dazzling life,
I perish and wither without your light.
And it hurt to pass you by.

When: Freshman year, 2011
Where: Outside Votey
I saw: A hipster with a mohawk
I am: A tattooed lady

I never had a thing for gin-gers,
But boy, you've caught my eye
I saw you and got itchy fingers
And it hurt to pass you by.
I won't beat around the bush,
Your hipster vibe makes me crave more.
Wrap those tattooed arms around me,
Throw those skinny jeans on my floor.
My taste has sometimes led astray,
You feel cold to the touch,
I am: Salivating

A warm summer day, two years past
you first caught my eye.
Those skinny jeans, and your ass
I couldn't pass you by.
Summer ended, my things were packed
to Vermont I went!
Against me, I knew the odds were stacked,
but my desires were transparent.
I knew I had to find you,
amongst this sea of men.
I had not a single clue,
except I knew you weren't a “Ben”.
Luck was with me that full day,
and you asked me for a light.
Fingers crossed, you weren't gay,
Cause that's too much fight.
A call, a kiss and I was yours,
in ways that kind of scared me.
Past cloud nine, my heart soars,
you and I will always be.

When: Every so often
Where: Around
I saw: A tattooed dreamboat
I am: not hip enough

Our eyes met then and sparks they flew
At least I hope they did.
I'm sure my thoughts were quite see-through,
I just can't keep them hid.
Oh all the things I'd do to you,
If you felt how I hope,
I'd explore your nethers just like ole' Indy,
and leave you proper soaked.
I usually am not this rude,
I'm sorry if I'm crass.
But like the muses did that Shakespeare dude,
I'm inspired by your ass

When: All too frequently
Where: Anywhere with yoga pants
I saw: The most amazing ass
I am: Salivating

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

Guy 1: We're total losers.
Guy 2: I know.

By the Flying Diaper:
Guy 1: That's bat shit crazy.
Guy 2: I believe the proper term is guano insane.

UHEIGHTS SOUTH:
Sexied Roommate: I want to do work, but SOMEBOY
thinks my room is the fucking honeymoon suite.

ATHLETIC CAMPUS:
Hungover Gentleman: I'm eating Grundle for whatever the
fuck meal it is right now.

thing. remember to check out the overflow
on the blog!
thewatertower.tumblr.com
The hostility present among the crowd at the Starfucker concert was, quite frankly, shocking. Basic concert etiquette, such as not having full conversations over the music, not coming into and leaving the pit whenever you please (frequently in the middle of a song), and not grinning (only appropriately at like, a goddamn high school dance or Red Square)—it was just not present.

Though they might have lacked some serious manners towards their fellow music-loving man, all the shitty concert-goers shared one totally radical thing in common: they were huge fans of Starfucker, and became appreciators of their openers (except for me, who knew Small Black and arrived early specifically for the purpose of dancing to “Photo-journalist” and “Hydra” and fangirling in front of their merch table with their sweaty lead singer). And because of this, I can forgive them for all of their glaring flaws (except for the three douchebags who tried to grind on my ass without warning. I hope your dicks drop off, leaving only an awkward, meaningless sack of balls.)

Feelings, for those of you who are curious, is a one-dude New Wave band from Portland, Oregon which I genuinely thought was just a mediocre stand-up comic at the beginning of his set: forever was he telling really terrible jokes about gas station food. But once he started playing his track, laying down some beats, and putting the microphone literally all up in his mouth, we were grooving—heads bobbing and feet tapping. Highlight that I particularly appreciated: “Deanna,” which he said was a song about one of his exes. “It was a bad break-up,” he admitted, to loud “aww”s. “No, no, it’s fine, it’s better this way. She was bad for me. We were bad for each other. But I always wanted to write a song where I just like, repeated a girl’s name over and over.” He left the stage to louder cheers than I’ve heard for an independent opener in a long time. Check out his Bandcamp and buy his album for $1! Support this guy so he doesn’t have to depend on his comedy for a living and consequently starve.

Small Black is one of the more excellent chillwave bands active at present-day. Associated with the hip Jagjaguwar label (featuring such bands as Bon Iver, Volcano Choir or Justin Vernon. Does Ambient Music, The Cave Singers, and Unknown Mortal Orchestra) and based out of Brooklyn, they’re capable of taking the evocative airiness of their records and making the gentle heartbeat pulse in the background come to life, giving the pleasantly surprised people—and the sweaty lead singer—something to seriously dance to. I’d been hyping up their music to my friends all night, and Ethan could not stop telling me throughout their set how good he thought they were. “I’m surprised! I didn’t know a random opener could be that good!” I put

This is my favorite song of theirs, and damn, they did it justice.

As for Starfucker’s set? Dancing bears. Crowdsurfing astronauts. Neon streamers. Glow-in-the-dark balloons. Gumby. If you feel like it’s all over now, make the gentle heartbeat pulse in the evocative airiness of their records and making the gentle heartbeat pulse in the background come to life, giving the pleasantly surprised people—and the sweaty lead singer—something to seriously dance to. I’d been

were at the Terminal 5 show in New York like I was (I’m a little obsessed): blow-up dolls. While Starfucker is immensely faithful to their recorded works, it doesn’t mean that they don’t amp them up times a million when they’re on stage. These dudes mean business, and their business is fun. Their music, written and composed primarily by lead singer Josh Hodges, is, quite simply, music to dance to, even when the concepts behind their songs are as potentially depressing as death. To quote James Murphy: “if it’s a funeral, let’s have the best fucking ever.” Live, they carry this vibrancy, energy, and buoyancy to the stage that you can only dream of when you’re listening at home. And though they stay relatively focused on the task at hand, providing little commentary and ripping through song after song so you can fully freak out, their entourage (as well as the festive decor) gives you an idea as to their mentality towards their music. Just like at Terminal 5, I left sweaty and delighted, and just like after Terminal 5, I had virtually no voice the next morning after having screamed along to “German Love,” “Bury Us Alive,” “Julius,” “Astoria,” “While I’m Alive,” “Rawnald Geronimo.”

Highlight: all of the songs, are you seriously going to try to make me pick?! The best part of the night was having the gavenport to (literally) run after Mr. Hodges himself and ask him for the opportunity to be, as to their mentality towards their music. Just like at Terminal 5, I left sweaty and delighted, and just like after Terminal 5, I had virtually no voice the next morning after having screamed along to “German Love,” “Bury Us Alive,” “Julius,” “Astoria,” “While I’m Alive,” “Rawnald Geronimo.”

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The old man's hand shot out to stop the young girl's momentum as she teetered on the edge, overlooking the void below. The blackness gaped at the pair like a hungry mouth waiting for its next meal.

"Easy there, Lisa." The old man's voice shook, belying the fear he was trying not to show. "Don't want to fall off."

Lisa seemed to study the grass underneath their feet for a moment. It ended inches from where they stood to drop off into a blackness so thick that dust and pollen disappeared moments after crossing over the edge. Behind them lay the bright sunflower fields that marked the edge of the Earth. Beyond that lay the city Lisa and her grandfather called home.

The little girl looked up at him. She seemed to grow bigger every day, but Lisa looked as impressively small as he felt right now, here, on the precipice of their universe. "What happens to them, Grandpa?" Her voice was small yet unafraid, as only a child's could be. She couldn't possibly understand the magnitude of what lay before her, though she begged to come here for her birthday. And he, her grandfather, loved her too much to deny her this one thing, despite his own trepidation. This cliff near their home was the last place on the planet that hadn't been sealed off by a wall to protect the people. But of course that didn't stop some. "The ones that jump," she continued. "Where do they go?"

He sighed. Trust Lisa to ask the question scientists decades older than her had spent their lives trying to answer. He'd spent enough of his own time obsessing over the answer after his brother had gone. Jumping off the edge of the world had become the most popular form of suicide over the years, once people had realized that if someone jumped, they weren't seen again. And so the petitions for the wall had begun, leaving this small gap in front of them as the only way off. But people still found a way, with enough determination, and families still mourned the missing. The old man thought it was all rather useless, these attempts to stop the suicides. No one blocked off the lakes or rivers because people sometimes drowned in them. The ones that wanted to stay on Earth did, and nothing was going to stop the ones that didn't. Simple as that.

"No one knows, sweetheart." He adjusted the grip on his cane, knuckles tightening as his mind wandered back to that fateful day, he couldn't look at it. "I lost my brother to it, when we were about ten years older than you are now."

He thought that answer would satisfy her, but the way her face brightened at his reply said otherwise. "But that means he's out there!" she cried in delight, turning back towards the darkness. "We can go find him, and then you'll be happy!"

Had he been a young man, he would have been able to catch her, stop her, take her home and make sure she never came towards the sunflower fields again. But she was too young and too spry as she raced ahead of him to the void. His chest heaved, breath wheezing from his lungs as he stumbled after her. His hand reached out to grab hers, catching briefly, a few yards away from where he would lose her. He pulled, but it wasn't enough, and she dashed ahead, leaving him to collapse onto the grass. He watched, helpless as she turned to face him, feet perched on the ledge.

"Come on, Grandpa!" she called out. "We can do it!" Reaching her arms out to him. "Both of us!"

"But aren't you a little bit curious?" "That's not the way to answer a question, Grandpa." "Why are you so scared of it, Grandpa?" she asked after a minute.

The memory of his twin's note left on the kitchen table came back to him. To this day, he couldn't look at it. "I lost my brother to it," he said quietly. "When we were about the same age..." "LISA!" he cried as she disappeared, the gaping mouth swallowing her whole. He wasn't sure how long he lay there. Minutes, hours, it was all the same. Dirt became mud underneath his face, and he dug into it with wasted hands. Bright blue skies grew dimmer and the air grew colder. He was about to get up, his knee beginning to throb from landing wrong as he'd fallen, when he heard the voice.

"Grandpa? Where are you?"

His head shot up, and without another thought to his knee, he scrambled to his feet and raced towards the dark with energy he'd long since thought he'd grown out of. Whether he was going mad or Lisa was truly alive, it didn't matter. He had no choice. He couldn't do it for his brother, but he could do it now. Lisa was all he had, and he was all she had. He couldn't leave her to face the darkness alone. His feet left the ground, and he jumped in after them.

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The end of the world

by rebecca laurion

You could have gone off into the dark, you could have—" His voice cut off and he covered his mouth with a hand at the look of sadness that Lisa had on her face, like she'd disappointed him. And she had gotten enough disappointment from her mother before her death a year ago, leaving him as her sole caretaker. He joined her on the grass as his knees nearly gave out underneath him. His shoulders shook and his vision blurred. "I'm sorry, Lisa," he said, subdued. "You just scared me half to death, that's all. I didn't mean to yell at you, please don't look so upset. Grandpa didn't mean it, I promise."

Lips turning into a frown of worry, she scooted over to him, wrapping her tiny arms around his neck. "It's okay, Grandpa;" A small hand patted his head. "We can go home and then you won't be sad anymore."

Taking a deep breath, he nodded and stood. With his granddaughter's hand in his, he led her away from the darkness and back through the field where she would be safe. "Why are you so scared of it, Grandpa?" she asked after a minute.

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oven on

by natalie akel

The mother lost
Her daughter
When she saw her peek open
The restaurant bill
And slip the 7 dollar tip into her pocket.

The mother said nothing.
But
Each time she leans in
To water flowers in the living room,
Or folds her daughter's socks inside out
And into each other,
She thinks,
Does this make her
Less or more
Of a child?

The mother sprinkled why,
Why, why on each night's family dinner.
The dinners were
She was always the last to sit down,
To the left of her husband,
Who always sat at the head of the table,
But never served himself.

Would the daughter take her tips?
The ones that were never
Received after thanksgiving dinner,
Or Tuesday night dinner, for that matter.

That night, once the dishes were stacked
One on top of the other,
After she cleaned the forks less,
And the knives more,
She pet the dog quite mindlessly.
We all love concerts but sometimes the other people there ruin it for you. OK, if you are me, it's not sometimes but all the time. So after being disappointed for the last time, here are the new guidelines for concert going. Follow them or die.

Section A—These are your hardcore fans. They know every lyric and they like to use their elbows when getting to the front. If you choose to be in this section, you must be willing to end the night drenched in other peoples sweat, down a shoe, and with a couple bruises. However, some people enjoy this form of concert going, as is their right. They get the front section because they believe if the performer does not see them, they did not have a good time. The average density is two people per square foot.

Section B—This is your more casual fan; they like the band and bob along to the music but don't want the fear of being trampled. This section is also for people who like to dance without arms or with their hands occupied with a beverage. *Note: the beverage they are carrying is mostly in their cup and not on the people around them. **Note 2: If they have drunk a lot of the beverage, then a lot of the beverage in their cup will probably end up on the people around them. So to cut through the cryptic notes, no severely drunk people in section B. It will ruin everyone's time but the drunken assholes. There is limited touching in this section. Average person per square foot: 0.5.

Section C—This is where the drunken assholes are. They are grouped together so they can get into fights with people who actually want to fight and are too blitzed to pay attention to what is going on the stage so they aren't going to be disappointed anyway. Also, in between section B and C are a few volunteer martyrs who keep the drunkies from creepin' in to section B. The average person per square foot in this section increases as the night goes on and more and more beverage is consumed.

Section D—I consider these people worse than the drunkies; the talkers. They are still not the worst (that's for later you little bun-buns), but they still have an amazing power to ruin your night. These are the people who don't want to be there and were dragged there by their friends, like to comment on everything, or are just plain assholes. Either way, they deserve to be as far away from the stage as possible, but I understand their right to be in the same room as the stage, so they get the back of the room. Hopefully this section has zero average people per square foot but that's just silly idealism.

Section E—Finally we get to section E, the worst of the worst. These people are so bad they must be kept in a different room with the door closed. These are the people who fucking make out during a show. It's like, OK, I know you're in love but c'mon, don't stand in front of me and slobber over each other for two whole hours. Am I the only one who finds this gross? This room will be off to the side with no windows so no one has to witness the awkward meshing of two peoples' faces. In a perfect world, this room would be locked on the inside with no ventilation so they all die like they rightly deserve to. But, alas, the world is not perfect and I understand a venue's hesitation at depriving some of its customers of oxygen. However, I do believe a separate room is not too much to ask. That way I can crop-dust it every so often just to let the people in there know what I think of them. I don't give a shit how many people per square foot are in this section as long as I don't have to see or hear them.