hail coffee
full of grace

by mikaelawaters

Forgive me, UVM, for I have sinned. After four years in a Catholic high school and a subsequent vow to never again participate in organized religion, I confess to believing in a higher power. Dare I say it? After suffering through countless masses, endless religion classes, and a complete memorization of both the Hail Mary and the Our Father in Latin, I confess to having a different religion. This religion, powerful enough to seize my heart and bring me back into the fold, is Coffee.

As definitively sacrilegious and unquestionably absurd as this confession may sound, my relationship with coffee conforms to the basic structure of conventional religion. According to a compilation of online sources (I will use the “honor system” as a substitute for citations), religions share eight core elements: an ancestral history (a story), the belief in a supernatural power, a mode of worship, a place of worship, a system of rituals, the belief in and a mode of salvation, the belief in the holy/sacred, and a specification of sinful acts.

As is necessary for any legitimate religion, I give you a bad ass story—Kaldi and his dancing goats. One day, in the highlands of Ethiopia, Kaldi noticed his herd especially giddy and frolick-prone after nibbling some red “berries”. Dutiful as always, Kaldi reported this observation along with a few samples to a monk in a local monastery. Not yet a believer, the monk was kind of a dick and just threw the berries into a fire. But, from the flame came the magnificent aroma of roasted coffee. Upon experiencing the soul awakening smell, the monk fell to his knees in reverence and subjugation to the immense power (not really, but go with it). Raking the splendid beans from the embers, he ground them into hot water and birthed the fated first cup of coffee.

As demonstrated by the monk’s spiritual awakening, coffee is a supernatural person may turn to that which is phenomenal—a friend, a father, a savior. Jesus may have performed miracles, but coffee itself is a goddamn miracle. It’s happiness, love, comfort (and maybe sex?) all in a mug.

The method of worship in Coffeeism is consumption. This act can be performed anywhere, but the primary and official place of worship is the café. It is here that like-minded believers can gather to pay homage to the glorious nectar in unity. This worship is observed ritually through the making and drinking of coffee. There is both the ritual of timing (the morning, mid-morning, afternoon etc.) and the ritual of creation (the adding of the cream, the methodical stirring of the two together etc.). The ritual is performed with such frequency not because we are addicts and the situation is beyond our control (I totally don’t have a problem...), but in an attempt to reach an enlightened state, ...

... read the rest on page 6

Russia has been in the news quite a bit lately. Allegations of skull-duggery at the recent G-20 conference, a hardline stance against UN intervention into the humanitarian crisis in Syria, an uncharacteristic embrace of NSA leader Edward Snowden, and a flex of military muscle in the Arctic have combined with many other episodes in recent years to elevate tensions between Mother Russia and her capitalist cousins. The house Stalin built has likened itself to that kid in your neighborhood who is always getting in trouble—whenever the name comes up you wonder what sort of half-witted shenanigans have irritated the community this time. More recently, probably since mass protests erupted in Moscow over allegations of election fraud in December 2011, Russia has been throwing a hissy-fit of global proportion.

In September, the Russian Navy arrested 30 people at gunpoint aboard the Dutch-flagged ship “Arctic Sunrise”. Those arrested included the crew, two reporters, and Greenpeace activists protesting Russian drilling in the Arctic, two of whom attempted to board an oil rig. Russia charged the 30 with piracy, which carries a maximum sentence of 15 years imprisonment. Despite calls by the Netherlands for the activists’ immediate release, and assertions by the international community that Russia is bound by treaty to cede jurisdiction to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, the arrestees are still stuck in the Gulag, a notoriously harsh Russian prison system.

In more recent news, Pussy Riot, the punk rock band known internationally for their good looks, firm anti-Putin political stance, and provocative band name was back in the headlines last week. Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, last seen throwing up the deuces in the defendant’s cage and currently serving a two year prison term for “hooliganism motivated by religious hatred” after filming a music video entitled, “Punk Prayer—Mother of God Chase Putin Away” has been transferred to a penal colony in Siberia after complaining about her harsh treatment in prison. The tropical Siberian winter will surely help cure Ms. Tolokonnikova’s health ailments—after all, it proved to do the trick for countless political prisoners before her.

... read the rest on page 3
Dear Writers,

Lauragreenwood and julianaroen,

As the library liaison to the Honors College, I read your recent water tower essays with great interest. Your thoughtful essays, including the constructive criticism, are valuable to helping the Honors College improve the student experience. Thanks for taking the time to share your thoughts.

Best wishes,
Patricia Mardeuz
Library Associate Professor

Hey water tower guys!

I read November 5th's article on Furries and I gotta say, marilyn mora, I love you! XD Being one of those less than 10 furries at UVM, I'm glad someone finally understands and even chose to write about us! Needless to say, I have the article hung up in my room! Thanks for being awesome!

Your fuzzy friend,
Jay Rodrigues

Dear Readers: Thanks for your continued support of the water tower! We love all your quips, quips, queries and concerns, but it's letters like this that warm our little hearts and make us feel like we got it right.

Forever wanting you so bad, the wf Editorial Staff.

Sometimes reading the water tower makes our readers want to get naked and fight the power. But most of the time, they just send emails.

Send your thoughts on anything in this week's issue to thewatertowernews@gmail.com

the water tower.

uvm's alternative newsmag

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Special Thanks To
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“As students’ use of social media is growing, there’s a whole variety of ways that college admissions officers can use it... We have chosen to not use it as part of the process in making admissions decisions.”
-Beth A. Wiser, University of Vermont’s Director of Admissions, comments on the use of social media and other digital information as consideration towards admission. While some admissions officers may use social media info, it is considered by some to be controversial because of the uncertainty of authenticity in certain cases.

“You asked me a question back in May and you can repeat that question. Yes, I have smoked crack cocaine. But no, do I, am I an addict? No. Have I tried it? Probably in one of my drunken stupors, probably approximately about a year ago.”
-

“I have lots of clients that come here and say, ‘I want to look like that mannequin.’ I tell them, ‘O.K., then get an operation.’”

Venezuelan shop owner Yaritza Molina comments on customer feelings towards a new type of mannequin that has grown in popularity. The mannequins, who feature a more prominent bosom and other accented features, have been altered to reflect a rising rate of plastic surgery among Venezuelan women.

“We estimate 1,000 people were killed in Tacloban and 200 in Samar province.”

Gwendolyn Pang, secretary general of the Philippine Red Cross, discusses estimated death tolls suffered after Super Typhoon Haiyan devastated the country. Locals estimate the death toll to be closer to 10,000 with close to half a million people displaced from their homes.

“This is not an easy decision, yet consumer demand is clearly moving to digital distribution of video entertainment.”


The water tower is uvm's alternative newsmag and is a weekly student publication at the University of Vermont in Burlington, Vermont.

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The wt. is a uvms alternative newsmag and is a weekly student publication at the University of Vermont in Burlington, Vermont.

Our generation stands at a crossroads. With sincerity and humor, we strive to make you reexamine, investigate, question, learn, and maybe pee your pants along the way. We are the reason people can’t wait for Tuesday. We are the water tower.
how to lose friends and alienate the globe

Espionage and the NSA

by annahill

What do you think of when you hear “NSA?” Edward Snowden? Conspiracy? The United States? Or simply, “What the hell is that?” Regardless of your reaction, you should know that the NSA leaks aren’t isolated to our own country—it’s an issue our entire globe is facing. In recent weeks, more confidential NSA files have been offered up through varying sources, and they have all lead to the same conclusion: Global surveillance is a widespread problem that must be addressed. Many political figures around the globe have been speaking out about intercontinental spying and regulation of communications—and let me tell you, they are not happy. Breaches of trust, strained intercontinental relations, and serious invasions of privacy are only a few of the topics being stirred up in relation to the leaks. So let us take a global sampling of what’s been going down behind the scenes.

Russia: Here we check up on former NSA employee, Mr. Edward Snowden himself, currently living in Moscow, Russia with a newly-acquired website maintenance job. On November 4th, German news magazine Der Spiegel received a letter written by Mr. Snowden about his NSA leaks and the future of global surveillance. In his letter, titled “A Manifesto for the Truth,” he stresses how his actions were not meant to bring about change. According to Mr. Snowden, despite the U.S’s NSA and the U.K’s equivalent, the GCHQ, being the world’s worst offenders of spying, every country must address this issue. “Mass surveillance is a global problem,” he stated. “It needs a global solution.” Regardless of the U.S. reaction to Mr. Snowden’s illegal activities, he believes he has done the right thing as both a former NSA employee and as a U.S. citizen.

France: U.S. relations with France have been shaky as well. Recently, French newspaper Le Monde published an article about alleged U.S. surveillance, claiming the NSA record- ed 70.3 million of France’s phone calls in a 30-day period between December 2012 and January 2013. Specific phone numbers were tracked and targeted for recording, while text messages were supposedly recorded based on certain keywords. Although U.S. officials have refused to comment on any allegations, French foreign minister Laurent Fabius has summoned various U.S. ambas- sadors to France to come clean about the accusations. Mr. Fabius believes that, based on the extent of the collection, nearly every French citizen using a phone could have been monitored. French Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault has expressed great con- cern over the spying, even telling French offi- cials to stop using their own Smartphones to communicate any important informa- tion. The PM says the U.S. had “no strategic justification, no justification on the basis of national defense” to record the calls and texts of an allied country.

Germany: Lately, German Chancellor Angela Merkel has been squaring off with President Obama. Der Spiegel, once again, published a report stating how Merkel’s personal cell phone conversations have been monitored for years; up until June 2013, Pres. Obama had called Mrs. Merkel to assure her that her calls were not being moni- tored and would not be in the future—but what about the past? The report claims the monitoring began in 2002, three years before Ms. Merkel even became Chancellor. Mrs. Merkel has called the actions of the NSA and of the U.S. government a “serious breach of trust” between allies. After the leaked article was published, Mrs. Merkel called Pres. Obama to confront him on the basis of the allegations. On the phone, she gave him no other option for the future other than a “contractual basis on the activi- ties of the services [of the NSA] and their cooperation.”

Vermont, United States: Even here in Vermont, political officials are fighting back. Most recently, Senator Patrick Leahy has spoken out about the NSA’s ability to keep their secrets secret. Accord- ing to him, if a 29-year-old contractor cannot be trusted to keep secret U.S. files safe, how can the NSA? “[The NSA] can’t keep our secrets and shouldn’t have them,” the Senator said on No- vember 4th on live broadcasting. Sen. Leahy has blatantly rejected the idea that mass surveillance keeps Americans safe, an idea our government has been showing down our throats for the last decade. He has even pointed out how the Admin- istration has failed to identify a single, specific ter- rorist plot prevented by their global surveillance. Despite admitting that Edward Snowden has been the key lawbreaker in the situation, Sen. Leahy truly blames the NSA itself for the leaks. After all, he was the bumbling idiot that hired an ethi- cal guy to work at the U.S.’s most shady govern- ment organization.

Russia—continued from pg 1

Putin wasn’t raising global awareness of his personal badassery by wrestling bears, helping lost migratory birds find their way, kicking some ass in Judo or hunting tigers, the former head of the FSB (descendant of the KGB) was busy consolidating the power of the Russian executive branch. Putin significantly reduced the author- ity of the 86 subnational governments in relation to the Kremlin of which he is in charge, and also weakened the legislature which previously could have prevented him from being a douche by executive decree. Compensating for something, Mr. Putin? The United Russia political party, founded by Putin in 2001, has held a con- sistent majority in the Russian Duma due to Putin’s perceived role in the economic improvement in the 2000’s (and maybe some election fraud, as those protesting in the streets of Moscow following the last election would allege). Putin and United Russia have capitalized on increasing global prices for Russian natural resources, as well as instigated a brutal crackdown on opposition and dissent to maintain control. In the current model of the inter- national system, the right of sover- eigns to exercise control over the resources in their country’s boundaries is universally recognized and presents a paradox in terms of actual human welfare. On the one hand, resource wealth can make a coun- try’s citizens wealthy and prosperous. On the other, a malicious autocrat can harness those resources and use the wealth to oppress his subjects. This is known as the “resource curse,” and is usually discussed in the context of dictatorships in countries with underdeveloped, resource centric economies. It seems, however, that this illustrious group can now include Putin’s Russia. Putin has recently demonstrated a tendency to distance himself from the actions of the Russian state when those ac- tions are controversial. This can mean one of two things. The first possibility is that he actually is not in control of important decisions which impact Russia’s relation- ship with the world, in which case all that consolidation of power and his sore fingers from the Medvedev puppeteering act were for naught. If that is the case, Putin has created a monster that he cannot con- trol and shattered Russia’s hopes for true democracy in the near future without even getting absolute dictatorship out of the deal. The second possibility is that Putin is simply bullshitting the international com- munity while pandering to his narcissism and promoting his image as a benevolent leader at home. Remember, this is the same dude that stole Robert Kraft’s Super Bowl ring, and therefore should never be trusted. Ever. We know you’re still a little upset about that whole collapse of commu- nism as a social order and economic system, my good sir, Russia? Stop being a dick.
around town.
the scene you haven’t seen
burlington’s not-so-secret nightlife
by marilynmora

What’s good UVM? Lemme tell you, Burlington’s nightlife and music scene. Happenings are happenin’. It seems like every night there’s an amazing show, and even when the choices can be overwhelming and sometimes you just don’t know where to go. While each happenin’ does draw in its own crowd, there’s still the general feel and aesthetic that goes along with a place. Simply put, different venues cater to different people. With that in mind, if you’re unfamiliar with Burlington’s night scene, here’s a brief review of each one and the crowd that can be found there.

If you’re feeling particularly laid back, I suggest you head over to The House That Phish Built, aka Nectar’s. Nectar’s, located on Main St., has the chilliest atmosphere of all the venues in Burlington. While it does feature a variety of music (Sundays: Reggae night, Mondays) it mainly caters to the Deadheads and Phish fans. Who are these people, you ask? These are people who love music, especially jam bands. They’re so focused on the music that everything comes second. Little thought is put into how they dress, or present themselves, because it’s all about the music. It’s a very “come as you feel” vibe. So if you’re frontin’ some wild, overrun hair, cause it’s all about the music. It’s a very “come as you feel” vibe. So if you’re frontin’ some wild, overrun hair, cause it’s all about the music. It’s a very “come as you feel” vibe. So if you’re frontin’ some wild, overrun hair, cause it’s all about the music.

Another adventurous place to head to is Signal Kitchen. Located in the alley behind Skirack on Main Street at the corner of Pine, Signal Kitchen is a hole in the wall, elevating it to underground-cool status already. It’s currently under renovation, but in the short time that it has been open it has definitely catered to the young UVM crowd. If you wanna party with college kids (I’ve honestly never seen anyone there older than 25), then throw on your best tie dye and flannel and head on over. They’re always featuring up-and-coming new artists, and they even work with UVM’s radio station to present local bands, including UVM’s very own Bible Camp Sleepovers. The high likelihood of seeing someone you know also lends to its very Cheers-like atmosphere.

On the days that you wanna rise to the occasion, dress up, drop the beat and bump all night, you have four options: the 1/2 Lounge, Red Square, Rasputin’s, and Metronome.

Red Square, located right on Church Street, is a fine dance club, but it’s rather small and always over-crowded. It mainly plays modern pop, which definitely caters to the younger crowd that can be found there, but because of that it also attracts creepy old men. If you’re not feeling too cute, I suggest you head to Red Square. Boost your self-esteem by having one of your dad’s coworkers buy you drinks all night, then you can duck out on them by quickly escaping through the side door.

Metronome is right above Nectar’s. It’s never overcrowded, but it, too, is filled with the older crowd reminiscing about the lost 80s or 90s. Metronome is low-key. If you don’t have a lot of energy to party but your friends are dragging you out, head to Metronome. The bar is never crowded and if you do find your mojo, then it’s a fine place to dance.

My favorite place is the 1/2 Lounge. Often overlooked, if you’re going out to get hammered and belligerently drunk, head to Red Square. Boost your self-esteem by having one of your dad’s coworkers buy you drinks all night.”

weedin’ them out
by davidanderson

Full Tank is located at 150A Church Street, but I’m sure that everyone reading this had the location of every head shop memorized by their second week up here. I was personally in this shop the other week, and the woman behind the counter was very friendly and helpful, regardless of the fact that I asked her to point out the cheapest items she had. Full Tank has a very nice selection, although they are smaller than a few of the other shops around. I like them for their price range; you can get something cheap, high-end, or really classy — but pricey glassware is just asking for a night spent desperately looking for super glue after your hammered friend “just put it back gently”. I think my favorite part of Full Tank is the little things they do, specifically that there’s only one or two boxes full of stupid blacklight posters crowding the whole area (compared to the poster mazes some places have). But we should also deal with the elephant in the room here; Full Tank is pretty sketchy. It’s really just a small, dark basement; compared to the many of the other well lit and brightly colored smoke shops in the area it does look a little shabby. All the good vibes and polite service in the world can’t cover the smell of incense caresses your nostrils. Right away, you can see the tapestries, posters and other items for sale. Walking around the shop, you come across the cornucopia of pipes, glass pipes (by local artists), hookahs (and shishas), and vaporizers. Whether you’re looking for a bowl, a bong, a bubbler, a vape, or anything actually, this place has it.

The price can range from a simple piece that is roughly $20, to a leading brand-name piece that’ll set you back a couple hundred, but is totally worth it. As “the tobacco shop with the hipster vibe” you really can’t go wrong with a purchase here. Customer service is great, and you can even enter a free monthly raffle to win items up to $200. A quick, direct walk downtown, the place is my go-to in buying any implement that will help me “view the Aurora Borealis.”

Rasputin’s is disgusting; it’s the porta-potty of clubs in Burlington. It smells like a used diaper filled with Indian food and smacks of nonconsensual sex. The crowd there ranges from 16 and Pregnant to sad, middle-aged men who could fill the Charlie Sheen role in Two and a Half Men. ‘Spudites will let anyone in, no matter how drunk they are. So if you’re going out to get hopped up and belligerently drunk, head to Rasputin’s, they’ll have you.

northern lights
by colinwalker

Perhaps it’s because I bought my first piece here that I have some loyalty to this place, but Northern Lights is my favorite head shop in town. With the green siding and giant flag that reads “OPEN,” I saw it only as a strange building that I would jog past until I gave it a closer look. Right smack on Main Street, the place is my go-to in buying anything that will help me “view the Aurora Borealis.”

Once anyone steps inside the small venue, the chime of a little bell and a greeting from a vendor welcome you inside, as the smell of incense caresses your nostrils. Right away, you can see the tapestries, posters and other items for sale. Walking around the shop, you come across the cornucopia of pipes, glass pipes (by local artists), hookahs (and shishas), and vaporizers. Whether you’re looking for a bowl, a bong, a bubbler, a vape, or anything actually, this place has it.

The price can range from a simple piece that is roughly $20, to a leading brand-name piece that’ll set you back a couple hundred, but is totally worth it. As “the tobacco shop with the hipster vibe” you really can’t go wrong with a purchase here. Customer service is great, and you can even enter a free monthly raffle to win items up to $200. A quick, direct walk downtown, you can soon easily be on your way up without any hassle. Honestly this thing is falling apart, but really setting it up is only a matter of time entirely. It’s really the understanding one has with others that when you say that you’ve gotten your merch at Northern Lights, they respect it and know it was a good purchase, and you feel it too. That’s what makes this place stand out, and gain loyalty from customers.
“but some of my best friends are black!”

VeM’s diversity problem

by caio’hara

Diversity at UVM is a tricky subject. On one hand, UVM is still a predominantly white campus (if you doubt me, look around the next time you’re walking to class in the middle of the day). On the other, the university emphasizes diversity and our awareness of what is and is not (in theory at least) tolerated. Well, you have to take 6 credits in certified diversity courses before they’ll hand you a diploma. On paper, everything looks so good. It’s not until you look at how it actually plays out that things get a little fuzzy.

UVM first adopted a Six-Credit Diversity Graduation Requirement (no, really, that’s the title of the document) in April 2006, to be put on trial with a three-credit requirement for the incoming fall class. By the time we all got here, the D1/D2 program had become tried and true. Well all heard about them, knew we would have to take them, and, in some odd sort of communally-brainwashed sort of way, we all seemed to dread them. Sure, I’d met some people who had enjoyed them, but I felt like it was rare that I ever heard about someone taking something away from them in the long run.

I took my D2 last semester and I’m taking my D1 now. Both courses are informative and interesting, and discuss a lot of topics you wouldn’t necessarily think about on a daily basis. My D2 (Intro to Comparative Religions) forced me to examine how religions work. In essence, we tried to puzzle out some of what exactly makes something a religion and how the parts of the whole came together to create something greater than it seems. But it was from an analytical, almost clinical standpoint. It was more about the differences in the religions themselves, not the issues that have arisen in a world full of people who all believe in different things. There was a lack of connection between what I was learning about and the community and world around me. There was a human element missing, a lack of true understanding of the emotions and convictions religion often instills.

My D1 (Con Law; Civil Rights) examines civil rights in America for all classes of citizens, how the laws of the nation have changed and been shaped by shifting popular opinion, and the continuing battle about who does and does not deserve protection. It’s an interesting concept to think about as someone who has moved in their day to day life with the privilege of being white and middle-class. There are friends, family, and people you see walking around every day who haven’t had that advantage; people who go about the world not knowing that they are being judged because of the color of their skin, or their religion, or their choice in partner (or no partner)!. For all my griping about having to take another diversity class on top of my already-busy schedule, I have to say, this one, at least, has served its purpose.

In a seeming paradox, the UVM approach to greater appreciation for diversity feels detached. The university admits that, “Achieving a visible or statistical diversity is not sufficient. The University of Vermont should do whatever is necessary – policy formulation, education, allocation of resources, community dialogue – to ensure that inclusion is a reality of campus life.” Think about it for a second. Yes, we’ve all been told how in the world I’m moving on to, not the one we’re trying to leave behind. Give people the freedom to openly discuss the events and happenings in our world without fear of repercussion or misunderstanding. We’re young; we still have time to unlearn the stereotypes and prejudices we’ve consciously or subconsciously picked up in our relatively short lives. Talk to each other, listen to the stories and find the common ground. Look beyond the classroom.

The megabus crackdown

by wesdunn

On November 1st, Megabus posted a service advisory explaining that UVM had asked them to GTFO, so to speak. “Until a longer-term solution is found,” the brief said, you’re gonna have to catch the bus down at the parking lot behind the Doubletree Hotel, 1117 Williston Road, South Burlington.

This wasn’t really an abrupt decision. Last year, UVM was pissed because people were waiting for buses inside Jeffords, and those buses were blocking staff access as well. Then in early March of this year, there was a massive drug bust, exposing the fact that traffickers were running a lot of cocaine and oxycodone up from New York City to Vermont using the cheap transport Megabus offers. The drugs weren’t intended for UVM students or even Burlington really, it was just the quickest, cheapest way to get into Vermont. In busting up this source, authorities hoped to be drying up the flow of drugs from New York into Vermont. All in all, over 70,000 dollars worth was confiscated.

At this point, Megabus was on pretty thin ice with UVM, as evidenced by their being moved to a “temporary” location behind Harris/Millis. Then, in the last week of October, there was another cocaine bust when the bus from NYC left off in Burlington: pretty much the last straw for UVM.

What do we do now? Nevermind the fact that our cocaine supply has dried up; the bus now lies on the other side of the highway bridge south of campus.”
reflections.

the belfry

dave v. david:
the appellation of my i

by davidanderson

"Which name do you prefer?" As someone who overthinks everything, these five words have haunted my dreams since I was young. I have always had a tough time deciding between my two possible names (David and Dave), and my indecision was only amplified by excessive readings of *The Importance of Being Earnest* in my senior year of high school. It's a tough situation as it's not a scenario with any clear winners. I'm sure many of you can relate or have shared my concern regarding nicknames.

There are many different kinds of nicknames; there's the standard Last-Name-is-Now-Your-First-Name, practiced in high schools and sports teams across the country. On the other end of the spectrum, there's the "Embarrassing Situation Frozen in Time" derived from something you did in grade school which followed you into high school. These tend to not linger as long in college as everyone is on an even playing field of drunken embarrassments. My embarrassing nickname was Pigpen, assigned to me by none other than my fourth grade teacher—damn Catholic schools. Then there's the "good" nicknames, ones you receive from doing things you might actually be proud of. Other nicknames are more basic, just simple alterations to one's original name. Many nicknames just chop off an ending (Robert to Rob) or add an "ee" sound (John to Johnny). These combinations are easily interchangeable; the lucky ones with these names effortlessly switch between the two. David to Dave both drops a syllable and adds a completely different vowel; it's a whole different ballpark. This means it's both impossible to use both forms of the name and it presents intense ideological problems as to which one should be used.

Each name brings its own pros and cons to the table. David inspires confidence as much as he turns heads and Dave will make you laugh and always has "you can trust a david to get the job done, whereas dave is probably too busy crushing cold ones"

time every month, but Dave has never listened to "the man" in his life, and besides he needs money to fix his damn motorcycle. David performs classical piano for charity. Dave brings the house down every Friday night at open mics with his ska band (he plays bass). I could literally make these up all day, but they probably stopped being funny after the first couple.

What I'm saying is that for whatever reason, I can't help but thinking that even a small difference can imply something different. People say first impressions mean everything, and a name is the first thing two people will probably learn about each other. Do other people think like this? Almost definitely not. Why do I think like this? It probably has something to do with my fourth grade teacher making me write David in courses because "Dave sounds like a name for a slob." (I really should have been reprimanded for this.) Regardless of whether or not you think I'm completely insane after reading this, I am bringing up an important point: nicknames are part of how we're perceived and we should be careful of what exactly our nicknames imply to people just meeting us or even what they reinforce to our current friends.

I don't do selfies. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm a very narcissistic, petty, and self-involved person just like the best of us who like to play it off as confidence. Yet for whatever reason, whenever I extend my arm and turn the camera in the direction of my face, my hands will automatically come alive, let go of the camera, and come flying back to punch me in my own dumb face. Lemme tell you, I pack a mean punch.

I will say that I appreciate the history of the selfie and I completely understand why they exist: people need a nice picture to front with. Back in the day, English aristocrats would commission flattering oil paintings of themselves (some of the earliest selfies around). Caesar was the first Roman to put his profile on the Roman coin, ensuring that his selfie was seen by all. That's some confidence right there. After that, Kodak cameras appeared on the scene, and in 1914 Princess Anastasia became one of the first teens to take a mirror selfie of herself, which she later mailed to a friend.

I realize selfies are necessary because sometimes getting the perfect photo of yourself is not the simplest task. I mean, I guess you could ask your friends, but then how would the conversation go? "Hey Becca, you wanna spend the afternoon taking photos of me!!?" That would sound selfish, of course, and selfishness is just so not you. You're sensitive. You have a deep, troubled soul that not even Becca knows about.

COFFEE RELIGION: continued from page 1

While Buddhists believe that meditation is the key to enlightenment, coffee drinkers aver that it is, in fact, caffeine.

Just as in most other religions, Coffee-ists harbor beliefs in the holy, the sacred, and the sinful. Holy is the perfect cup of coffee—allusive, but a symbol of true divinity when found. Sacred is the coffee plant, mother to our father bean. And sinful is known through the two main commandments: Thou shall not brew the ambrosia too weak (Sodexo be damed), and thou shall not ravage its purity with sugar and chemical flavors (Thus, Frappuccinoism is a completely alternate religion).

So keep your bibles and your prayer cloths, and Alpha Chi, stop trying to convert me in the Davis Center. My soul is already being saved, one stamp at Hendersons at a time.
This generation has a fine appreciation for the badonkadonk. Twerking is the latest dance trend. Kim Kardashian, Nikki Minaj, JLo and their butts have become huge pop culture figures. Yet when Sir Mix-Alot shouts “baby got back!”, I’ll respond with a “meh.” I don’t care how close of friends we are, unless we’re at the beach, I don’t want to see that booty.

Nor am I prepared to see it. There I am scrolling through Instagram during breakfast, “Oh that’s a nice shot of the lake, oh you played frisbee with your dog yesterday, oh “chokes on apple” okay that’s your ass...” Please don’t butt into my day like that, it’s the morning, I just want to see cartoons. So you have some big assets, that’s nice. I’m actually really happy for you because there are far too many pancake butts around. However, if selfies are considered the conceited inflated view of oneself than selfies are the newest, cheesiest level of attention-whoring, and it’s just not something I’m willing to get behind.

Then there are the bastardizations from which the selfie has spiraled. There is the duck face selfie, the bathroom selfie, the crying selfie, the dressing-room selfie, the crying selfie, which the selfie has spiraled. There is the duck face selfie, the butts selfie. From what I can gather, Heidi Klum sparked this trend in early July when she posted a pic of her sunburned backside on Instagram. Last week Kim Kardashian started a media frenzy with a gratuitous shot of her derriere, and since then mass imitators have followed.

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highlight reel.

UVM hockey in all its glory

by Zack Pensak

My friends and I were counting down the days until we could get the tickets. I mean, who wouldn’t want to see UVM play the number two school in the country, Notre Dame? We were in line just as the clock struck 9 AM last Monday morning, before only a few fans more dedicated than ourselves. Now, for most games, you could say that we were being overzealous, making sure we get our tickets immediately when they went on sale for students. However, this was a big game, especially with Notre Dame being a newly inducted member of the Hockey East. Once I finally got my hands on that ticket, I exhaled a sigh of relief. Sports had returned to my life.

I went to a high school that was extremely centered around sports by season. There was always an undying support system for each sport, regardless of how well the team was doing. Of the many different teams Staples High School has, soccer was the one that people were most passionate about during my four years there. Every home game, people would pack “The Hill” in preparation for what always promised to be a good game for the Wreckers. Soccer is a very interactive sport for a fan, as the players and referees are completely within shouting distance. My freshman year in high school we were state champions, my sophomore year we again went deep into the state tournament. My junior and senior year we were runners-up, and junior and senior year we again went deep into the state tournament. Coming to UVM, I was excited for the soccer season this fall. With the absence of football, soccer is the only men’s fall sport, so I expected the atmosphere to be buzzing at the home games. However, I was a bit disappointed at my first soccer game here. Not only were there only a few people there, but the fans were perpetually silent throughout the game. There were no chants or words of encouragement being yelled toward our players; just some murmurs about how somebody was in disagreement with the ref over a certain call. The game was lacking the energy I desired, an energy that I finally found at the hockey game this past Friday.

Walking into the Guttersnake Fieldhouse instantly put a smile on my face. The student section was completely full and, ten minutes before the game had even begun, the fans were yelling a non-stop, rhythmic chant of “U-V-M.” The supply of thunder sticks made the noise even more deafening. As the game progressed, the decibel level in the student section seemed to stay at a very constant, near ear-splitting, level. Whether it was the classic UVM chant, the ever-present yell of DEFENSE (clap, clap, clap), or even a few more tasteful cheers, there was always something being shouted from section 12.

When I first heard the “Fuck the Irish” chant coming from the back of the student section, I wasn’t sure if it was exactly kosher to yell. Of course, Notre Dame is referred to as, “The Irish”, but nonetheless, some people may think that is over the top (like the adults and children present). However, everyone joined in upon hearing it and, as I have no Irish heritage and therefore no reason to be offended, I joined right in. Although that was funny, my personal favorite was the chant immediately following our two goals. When Steven Summerhays, the Notre Dame goalie, turned around to get some water and calm himself down, the entire section pointed at him and yelled, “It’s all your fault!” There is no better way to get in the head of the lone shot stopper for a team than to place all the blame upon his shoulders. If that’s not school spirit, I don’t know what is.

We emerged victorious that day, a nail-bitter that ended in a 2-1 win for the Catamounts. As I left the stadium with my friends, we all gushed about how exciting it was, and how much we wanted to continue going to as many games as we could. The next day, with a marathon of It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia playing in the background, my friend Ben and I made individual notecards for each player on the team. We spent a good portion of the day strengthening our knowledge of the team, determined to become hardcore hockey fans. Some would say that we are being crazy and a bit too into it. I would say that we have a bad case of UVM hockey fever.

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Fashion five-oh.

The spray, the can, the wardrobe: hope lost for the future

by Laura Greenwood

There are only two instances in my life when I felt I come anywhere close to lacquering on my clothes. One would be the Naked Bike Ride. The other would be that time my freshman year of high school when I tried to put on my 5’2” friend’s winter formal dress. The contexts were completely different, but both times made me reconsider keeping Nutella as a live-in bedmate and made me accept that there are certain conditions to clothing that cannot be ignored. As we dive into the topic of spray-on clothing I want us to focus on the unlikely pairing of futuristic designers trying to meld Science and Fashion, antonyms in every pop culture setting, do not mix, and there is no good in the future for our wardrobes if the two become too closely engaged.

Ten years ago, aerosol enthusiast Manel Torres founded a company called Fabrican, dedicated to expanding the market of spray-on clothing (prior to Fabrican, this market included only Marvel comic female superheroes and post-pregnancy yogalates’ pants). Torres’s ‘aha’ moment for his non-stick wear came from, “When he went to a friend’s wedding and saw someone getting sprayed with Silly String”. Whoa, pause. The future of fashion, according to this guy, came from Silly String. The only things that ever come from Silly String are horribly played out innuendo-laden admonishment from my mother. I understand how the entire Sci-Fi genre has made it seem as though we are destined to end up in latex-like clothing, but it really bothers me to think the timeline of this trend all began with Silly String.

As I sit and scroll through Torres’s creations, I’m left a bit confused. This chemistry-founded clothing line is created using a liquid polymer blah blah, and dries on like a thick layer of Elmer’s Glue. Often his creations are highly couture and require additional wiring to act as a structural base, but Torres’s end goal is to create every day, wearable clothing. So yes, that means your peel-able bodysuit can be washed, rework, or melted down and recycled. I can’t help but shake my head. I love clothes and can’t imagine never feeling soft cotton or a knit sweater again. I love science and innovation; double-stick tape changed my life. But beyond a few special circumstances, like medicinal applications or astronaut underwear, I really don’t understand why fashion needs to come from a can. It bothered me enough when cheese became sprayable, so why would I want my tank top to be as well? Aerosol cans are proven to be absolute shit for the environment and dumb, desperate stoners from our youth. Imagine the crumpled-up sweaters huffers would be coughing out! It’s all just too much. Go ahead and explore what a new clothing material can do, but don’t try to create the end of a need for all other fabrics.

The only people who should look forward to the prospect of spray-on clothing are gym owners and anime fanatics. I think I speak for the rest of us when saying that I’d gladly stick with my current wardrobe, thank you very much.

by Barry Guglielmo
I think we both know it
even if I never show it
I'm totally transfixed
dreaming of being kissed
or nibbled on the neck
I love the way you hit the deck
I love the shirts you wear
the way you do your hair
so luscious, flowing everywhere
like you really don't care
like you really don't know
how fucking hot you are
how every time you fix me with that stare
I need to change my underwear.

So stop drawing flowers
and let me in your bed;
draw me instead.

When: Sometimes
Where: Book House
I saw: A fetchin' Tibetan
I am: Everyone, anyone

You tempt me from afar, most every day
I would embrace you more, but I fear to stay
The business is booming, the place is hot
I want you so bad, in your usual spot
Here in my hands, keeping me warm
With you by my side, I'll weather any storm.

Come back to me soon, don't stay long
Please don't make me, hafta write a love song.

When: Everyday
Where: Everywhere
I saw: The best lattes ever
I am: In need

You've got me staying up too late
I'll admit that I can't concentrate
Midterms that I love to hate
Looks like that'll have to wait
Anticipating every date
Make me wanna celebrate
Feels like I hallucinate
Each touch, it's got me in a state
Of bliss, make my heart palpitate
You're the best kind of twist of fate

When: MWF
Where: Cyber Cafe
I saw: The light of my life
I am: Enamored

Heard something funny while walking
to class this week? Too shy to approach
that hottie from your psych class?
Let us help! Submit to The Ear and
IWYSB at
http://www.uvm.edu/~watertwr/

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tunes. comeback kid? the return of gambino
by elikarren

In a year filled with epic releases from some of the biggest names in hip-hop, could it be possible that the independent underdog produces the album to steal the show? It certainly is. Macklemore and Ryan Lewis showed us last year with The Heist that, with a strong enough backing, any underground artist could be thrown into superstardom. But, will Donald Glover; the comedian, actor turned introspective rapper, be the next underground hit to steal the show?

Childish Gambino, the rapper pseudonym of Glover, came back onto the scene earlier this month, releasing a short film clip to his YouTube page to break a year-long silence. The video, which clocked in around a minute and a half, showed nothing more than Glover giving an unsettlingly macabre stare to the camera as he floats underwater in a swimming pool. Throughout the video, a song, which was later found to be a promotional freestyle entitled “Y aphet Kotto,” harmonizes the odd scenery. Within hours of this video’s release, fans were so hungry and enamored that Gambino decided to indulge them in the whole song, pasting it onto his Soundcloud.

As soon as it hit the web, fans went wild. His Soundcloud and YouTube pages were flooded with every underground music website instantly thrust him to the top of their webpages. Fans were enamored with the mystery of his return and the refreshingly introspective lyrics that flew from his mouth. Furthermore, this mystery, fans found, was that Gambino deleted all of his past music from his Soundcloud, essentially restarting his career. They were only left with the versions and insecurities on his Instagram.

Gambino’s new songs had top music blogs...slobbering over his genius.

So, if a heartfelt rap album is what you’re looking for to keep you warm this winter, look no further than Childish Gambino’s The Heist. Then, a few days later, Gambino responded by breaking down the team on his new album and the flood-waters of beautiful beats, astounding rhymes, and an unfiltered flow splashed through, being streamed onto every available computer that hipsters or hip hoppers could find. Gambino’s new songs topped music blogs, including The Kollection, Socovibe, Pigeons and Planes, and Pitchfork Media, slobbering over his genius. The two songs, “3005” and “Worldstar,” show his versatility from a soul singer to an aggressive rapper. Also, they came with the announcement that one of his fears had been assuaged and that his sophomore album Because the Internet would be released by Glassnote Records on December 16th.

So, if a heartfelt rap album is what you’re looking for to keep you warm this winter, look no further than Childish Gambino’s The Heist. After warming up the crowd with his previous attempts, it seems that this will be his time to make a buzz in the hip hop world. Sources are showing that he is aligning himself with his protégé, Chance the Rapper, on this album; the pair of them already being put together on Chance’s hit, “Favorite Song.” However, if an album of angst and self-acceptance isn’t what will be floating your boat this year, I hear Eminem has something coming out in a few weeks. But I know for me, and several other eager rap fans, this album may be the one thing saving us from going crazy once finals week comes around.
sounds of the woods
by bethziehl

I turned on the light beside me to illuminate the pages of my book that were growing dim in the failing light. It was so peaceful in the log cabin, just me and the night sounds coming in through the window. I absorbed myself in the book, finally free of so many worries now that summer had arrived. I welcomed the hot and muggy air that encompassed me.

As I read through the pages, I began to realize that the sound I thought was coming from the other nearby cabins was not coming from them at all. I continued reading, figuring that I must be imagining the sound of an electric guitar coming from the woods. But the sound grew louder and I couldn’t ignore it any longer. The melodious chords drifted in through my window, seeming to beckon me outside.

My curiosity got the best of me and I went to search out how these sounds could be coming from deep within the woods. I grabbed a flashlight and wandered barefoot between the trees, following the music. It was farther away than I had thought and I worried about getting lost.

Finally, I came upon the origin of the sound and it was just as I thought: There was a boy, guitar in hand with his cable plugged into the ground. I hid behind a tree trunk, peering around to look at him. A firefly glowed beside my cheek and flew to join the other fireflies glowing around the boy. They seemed drawn to him just as I was. I didn’t question how his power source could be the ground. This was magic.

The forest was abuzz with an inescapable energy, radiating all around. I moved away from my hiding place by the tree and sat down in front of the boy. Each strum sent vibrations through the ground, leaving me speechless. He didn’t seem to notice me; he just kept playing, blissfully. His sounds were gentle almost, unlike any sound I’d heard from an electric guitar before. I found myself laying my head down gently on the forest floor, dozing as I listened.

When I awoke, nothing was the same. Nothing was there but me. Even my flashlight was missing. I sat up and looked around, utterly confused. Had I dreamt it? Was he real? Maybe I had slept walked out here. I stood up to find my way out of the woods and realized that I didn’t care. Real or not, I had experienced something special.

slipping love
by colburton

One slips across the floor,
While the other whips contrails in heavy air,
reshaping moist atmosphere.
The two work with the other members in tow,
directing that subliminal whole to and fro.

Pad, pad, pad; these steps echoed in strands
which swing and flow with an energy all their own
An intricate whole contains the home
of a burning cage,
for a golden core,
filled full of love,
But with no place to flow.
Its counterpart is made of impenetrable stone,
cold and jaded, it lies beyond walls
contrived for seclusion.

It composes its own winter to stave off the warmth.
This foundation of frost requires that molten essence
to melt to its core,
bringing passionate fire
that burns away the barriers.
It needs this to survive,
or its ember will suffocate under
that self-imposed winter.
graphs, mothafucka

When courses are posted I always get excited, thinking next semester is always going to be so interesting...

...But then I always remember, interesting tends to mean hard.

Why do I do this to myself?

This graph depicts how much I am grasping the content of a course as we go along in a semester. As you can see, I understand each course as a sinusoidal function of time, but each one is phase shifted from the next so I never have a full grasp on all of my courses at the same time. Fun.

This graph is called The Harrison Projection as its inventor, Harrison Gessow, is fond of the pet name Harrison. What a coincidence. Anyway, this graph shows what happens when you are subjected to more than the normal amount of grandmas. At first, one grandma is pleasant, but as soon as you get past two grandmas you are entering creepy territory. However, after extensive testing by David Westfield, an anomaly was found showing that as you move from 27 to 28 grandmas there is actually a slight decrease in the amount of creepiness. Neat.

This graph is pretty self explanatory (and pretty common, I guess). When I start talking to a girl they seem to like me but I have this impulse where right around the 40 second mark (yes, I have timed this) I start making jokes at their expense. Most girls don’t seem to like this. I wonder why...

This graph is going to make a full length film and release on YouTube for free. Yay. I guess this isn’t really a tip... Oh, well. Freedom.

Why do I do this to myself?

This week’s back page has been brought to you recently spayed cat: Awww... she’s so sleepy