

TUFTS OBSERVER

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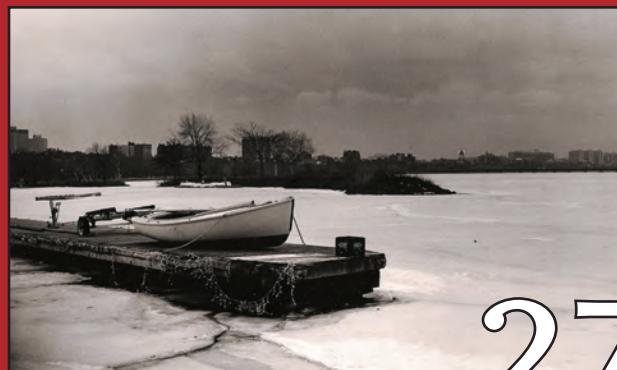
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The Observer has been Tufts' publication of record since 1895. Our dedication to in-depth reporting, journalistic innovation and honest dialogue has remained intact for over a century. Today, we offer insightful news analysis, cogent and diverse opinion pieces, creative writing and lively reviews of current arts, entertainment and culture. Through poignant writing and artistic elegance, we aim to entertain, inform and above all challenge the Tufts community to effect positive change.



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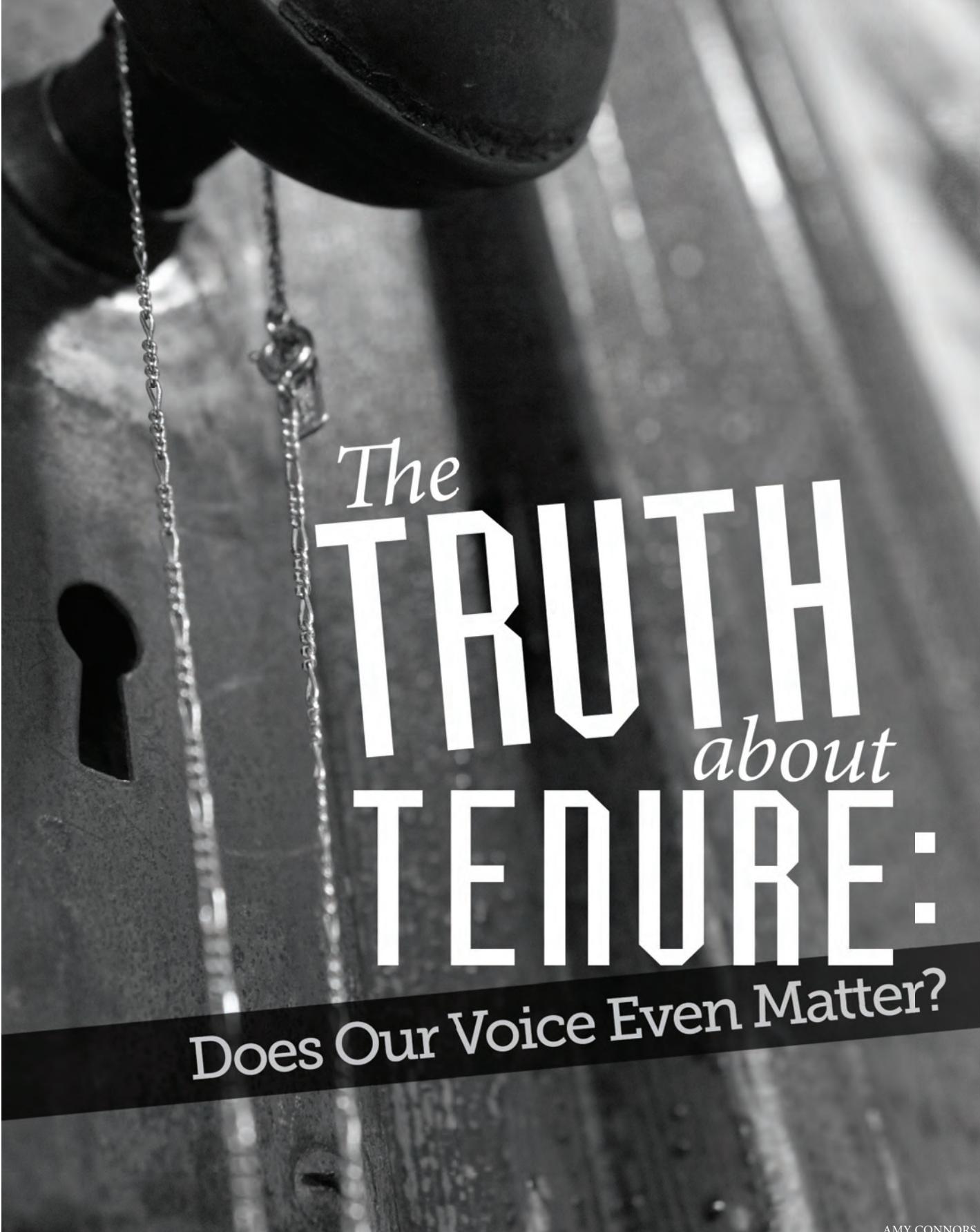
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Since
1895



FEATURE



The
TRUTH
about
TENURE:
Does Our Voice Even Matter?

AMY CONNORS



MOLLY RUBIN AND KATHERINE SAWYER

From the moment a professor starts teaching at Tufts, he or she has the option to pursue a tenure track. This track, designed to bring prestige and greater academic integrity to each department, stipulates the amount of research, number of articles written, and number of papers published a professor must have before he or she can be considered for tenure review. From day one, a professor is focused on gaining that tenure spot, contractually, and not necessarily focused on improving the quality of student life in the classroom. Especially in light of the recession, a lot of us are beginning to question whether or not a system designed to keep professors stagnant after a certain point in their career is really helping the student population.

The process of gaining tenure seems foreign and mysterious to most students, yet it affects our everyday lives, our ability to learn, even the career paths we might choose. Our teachers are extremely important to our development as intellectuals, and as adults emerging into the world. We are shaped by what we learn. This begs the question, though: why don't we have a greater voice in the tenure process? Why does this process lack a real transparency within the student body? How can we find out and how do we know the information we're receiving is reliable?

A yearly committee made up of the provost and six tenured faculty members from different departments within the

university reviews tenure at Tufts. All tenure cases go before this committee, who vote on whether or not a candidate will receive tenure. Though the system was designed to be apolitical, it stands to reason that this committee is composed of professors with their own prejudices and beliefs concerning their peers, making the process much more subjective than it should be.

Tenure started as a way to ensure freedom of speech and promote academic inquiry on campus. It was a process that really became common practice in the 1950's as the returning GIs graduated college and flooded the academic community. This occurred concurrently with McCarthy era communist hysteria, which made it necessary for universities to demand loyalty oaths from their faculty. Similarly, professors saw the need for freedom of research without worrying about whether delving into their area of specialization would suggest they had communist sympathies and result in their dismissal.

With the Red Scare just a chapter in our US history books and the Cold War decades over, the concept of tenure seems less like a necessary oath of loyalty and more like an excuse for university faculty to fall into the cliché of professorial apathy (recycled syllabi, TAs teaching lecture, outdated teaching styles, etc). One argument is that tenure protects faculty members that are politically unpopular from unfair

termination. Professors who research unappealing topics, who are known for harsh grading, or who cause waves within the department as a result of their ideas are granted a certain security with the tenure process. This, however, seems like ensuring the security of a minority at the cost of the academic experience of an entire generation of students.

Although any student can understand the concept of tenure and the basic requirements Tufts faculty must fulfill in order to be considered for review, truly understanding the process of tenure here at Tufts is not made readily accessible or clear to the student body. There is an obscure document that exists online called Statement #11 Tenure and Promotion Process that outlines the entire process a professor must go through to receive tenure. If someone were to find this document, read, and comprehend it, they still wouldn't truly understand what role the student plays in considering which professors will gain tenure. This, we feel, is a huge problem.

One area of tenure at Tufts where students are actively involved takes place through the Tufts Community Union (TCU) Senate Education Committee. These students receive a list of all candidates who will be reviewed for tenure in the next academic year from the Secretary of the Faculty. The TCU Senators review and summarize commentary and data on



FEATURE

the candidate's teaching and compile a report for the Department. These students at least have a peripheral knowledge of who is being considered for review, but at the end of the day don't offer any input or opinions of their own.

Some individuals do get to offer opinions on the candidate, but these are primarily related to research and seldom written by undergraduates. The candidate and his or her department work together to compile a list of students who will provide letters of evaluation. These typically include students with whom he

encourage professors to maintain ratings of 3.5 or above from the students in their classes, and disregard almost entirely the handwritten comments on the back of the form. Arguably, it is hard to summarize individual comments in a concrete way, but by reducing professors' impact to a number from 1–5, we also reduce the ability to laud professors who are truly making a unique impact.

According to the 2010-2011 Tenure and Promotion Committee, "Faculty, whether or not they have tenure, are reviewed each year on teaching, research

"WHY DON'T WE HAVE A GREATER VOICE IN THE TENURE PROCESS?"

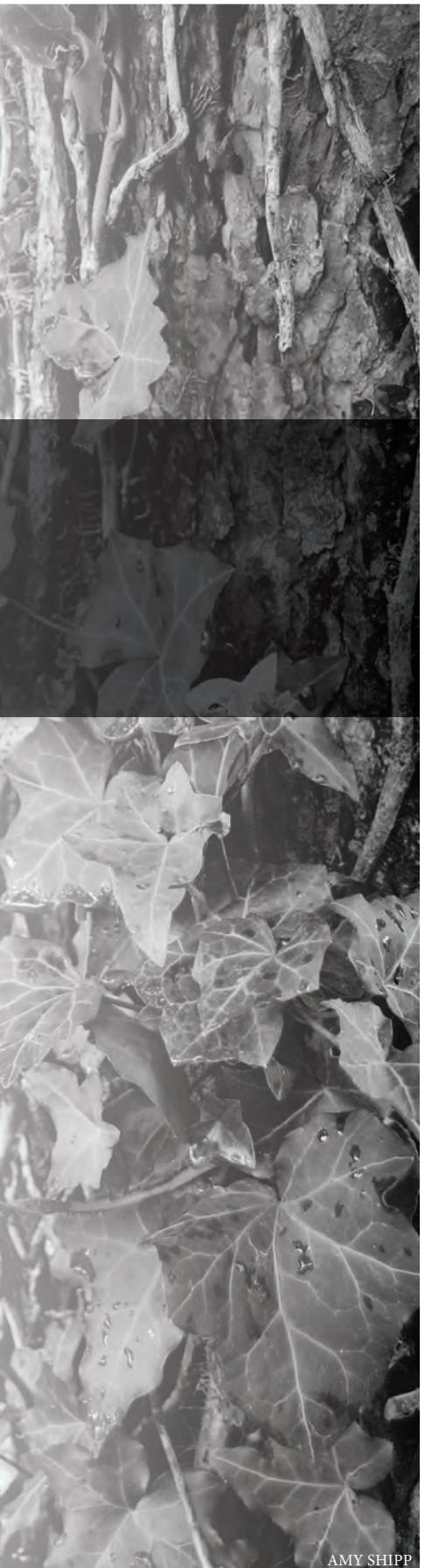
or she worked closely in one-on-one or small-group settings, such as PhD advisees, master's thesis advisees, senior honors thesis advisees, Summer Scholars, lab and research collaborators, participants in directed performances and creative projects. The candidate also seeks letters from senior scholars in his or her field from prominent research universities. These letters are meant to "assess the candidate's scholarship and research," according to Statement #11, so they are understandably written by individuals who have worked closely with the candidate. Still, where do we come into the picture? We, the masses who will mostly likely not interact closely with the professor. We, who value good teaching above "scholarship and research."

Enter in-class evaluations. We fill them out at the end of every class, every semester. In order to evaluate the student response to certain professors, students rate the course and professor on a scale of 1-5 on a scantron form, which each department compiles as a quantitative way to evaluate a professor's performance. What this loses, however, is the qualitative aspect of teaching. Departments strongly

and service for that year and their salary is set by the Dean based on that review." That review includes (but is not limited to) the teaching evaluations for that year.

This is our voice in the tenure process. Is it an accurate one? What about those students who so abhor a class that they stop attending— their voices are never heard. What about those students who don't put any thought into the evaluations, or those that try to flatter professors with their rankings? Are once-a-semester handouts really enough to evaluate our perception of a professor's teaching?

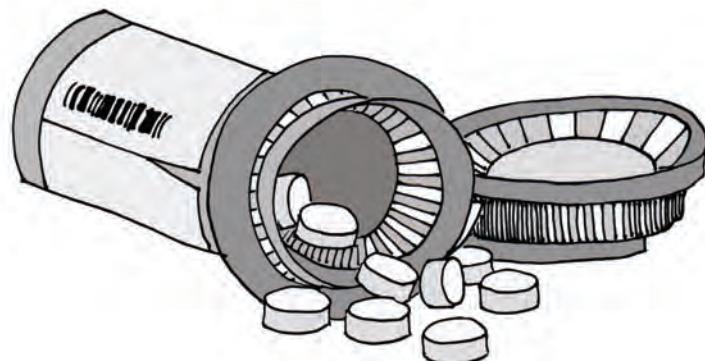
According to the Committee, teaching is a very important consideration in the decision for tenure. "No one receives a positive vote on tenure from the committee unless he or she has proven that he or she can teach reasonably well, that he or she can do that consistently and that he or she has an expressed interest in teaching," the committee said. This phrase, "reasonably well," is not defined and has no clear parameters. If professors are only expected to live up to the vague standard of "reasonably well," why should we perform any better? ☀



AMY SHIPP



PRESCRIBED ADDICTION



BY LAUREN JAYSON

Think of a heroin addict—pale, gaunt, strung out. This may be the stereotype, but it's by no means the rule. As prescription opiates become heavily prescribed to those suffering from terminal illnesses, more and more former cancer patients are turning to street drugs like heroin to find the same high.

A typical cancer patient suffers through months of pain. When his doctor administers Oxycontin or Vicodin to help, no one thinks twice. While the patient is lying in a hospital bed, no one worries about the fact that this patient is taking an incredibly addictive drug. Because of the painkillers, the patient will make it through the night. However, recovery from cancer now means overcoming severe addiction to opiate street drugs, too.

The prominence of drugs in today's society reflects the amount of power that a drug can hold in the treatment of diseases and also illustrates the power that the influence can acquire in the wake of an illness. Oxycontin may have saved this patient's life, but the lives ruined as a result of drug addiction are devastating, later on. This patient's story is more common than we may think.

From Fentanyl to Oxycontin, doctors prescribe a wide range of drugs in an effort to ease the suffering of

their patients. Because of this, drugs introduced into the patient's life for purely medicinal purposes can become deadly vices. Since the '90s, prescriptions for opioids—a category of drugs used in treatment of serious pain—has increased by a factor of 10. While these addictive pills are intended for serious medicinal use, the casual way patients consume them is a major problem. Schedule II substances need a written prescription from a doctor, but Schedule III's require no more than a phone call. Vicodin, a wildly addictive Schedule III drug, is only a phone call away.

Doctors do not consider the risks of addiction when they prescribe these life-saving drugs. If a patient faces a life-threatening condition, they figure, what's the harm in alleviating their pain? Sadly, many doctors don't see their former patients scoring hard drugs on the street to feel that same sense of elation.

With such easy access to prescription drugs, there are countless avenues to addiction. For most patients, the slow weaning off of the drugs as they recover creates a blurred line between treatment of disease and subsequent reliance on pills.

"Contrary to stereotype, the people most at risk in this epidemic are not the usual pill-popping suspects—the dorm rats and users of street drugs. Rather, they're so-called naïve users in the 35-64 age group—mostly baby boomers, with their aching bodies and their long romance with pharmaceutical chemistry," a *Time* article on the subject reported.

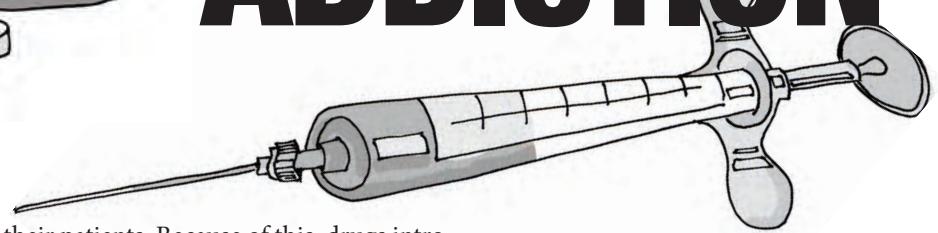
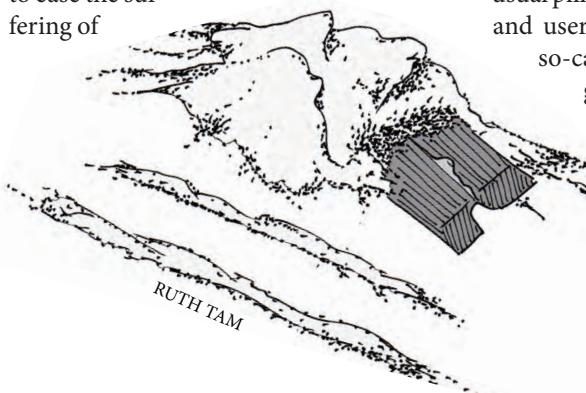
Many blame parents and celebrities setting bad examples for their children for the high percentage of teenage prescrip-

tion drug addiction. Only small portion of kids use Vicodin, however, because of its presence in the medicine cabinet. The reality can't be escaped that a growing number of people are addicted to drugs because their doctors prescribed them—these drugs were the key to their survival at the time.

So where is the line drawn between addiction and treatment? Society draws one that can often be misconstrued, but is clear in one sense—when the patient is taking Oxycontin because he has cancer, it is considered a positive thing to do. As soon as that cancer patient leaves that hospital and is taking Oxycontin because they *can't stop*, that's when we find ourselves in the middle of a huge problem. The individual is no longer a cancer patient in the eyes of society; he's become an addict. Life for an addict is much different than life for a cancer patient. Societal treatment of an addict is not characterized by pity, kindness, and a genuine sense of altruism. It is characterized by disdain, disgust, and a generally condescending attitude.

For the patient, however, where is this line drawn? Does he risk a life of addiction and pain to temporarily relieve his cancer pains? Does he even have another option? Where does this individual find that delicate balance between taking Vicodin because he is a cancer patient, and taking too much Vicodin because his body is so desperately craving it? In this slippery slope to drug addiction, the lines are blurred and the answer may not always be black and white. ☠

Lauren Jayson is a freshman who has not yet declared a major.





NATIONAL



BY ANNA BURGESS

Eighteen-year-old Rutgers University student Tyler Clementi was a sweet introvert, a redhead, a gifted musician. And, as the entire nation is now painfully aware, he was gay. Thanks to a prank by his roommate that got way out of hand, the issue of Tyler Clementi's sexuality is now more notorious than he ever could have anticipated. The roommate, 18-year-old Dharun Ravi, decided that it would be funny to set his webcam to record Tyler's sexual acts, unbeknownst to Tyler himself. Ravi and Molly Wei, another Rutgers freshman held responsible for the prank, planned to stream the feed of Tyler live from Ravi's webcam. Ravi informed friends of the feed via Twitter, saying, "Roommate asked for the room til midnight. I went into Molly's room and turned on Molly's webcam. I saw him making out with a dude. Yay." Ravi and Wei proceeded to stream an illegal video transmission of Ravi and Clementi's room.

That was September 19. On September 22, at around 8 pm, Tyler posted what would be his last Facebook status: "Jumping off the gw bridge. Sorry."

Unfortunately, and as horrifying as it is, Tyler's story is not an anomaly. Since the beginning of September, six teenage boys have committed suicide because of harassment they endured for being gay. Seth Walsh, Billy Lucas, Raymond Chase, Asher Brown, and Cody Barker all gained similar notoriety to Tyler, a tragic notoriety that could have been prevented.

According to family, friends, and classmates, almost all of these boys reported stories of bullying by peers or classmates. A friend of Seth Walsh lamented, "People would say [to Seth], 'You should kill yourself; You should go away,' 'You're gay, who cares about you?'"

Billy Lucas was similarly ridiculed and tormented in school. One of Lucas's friends, Nick Hughes, said that, "[Billy] was threatened to get beat up every day... he would try to [defend himself] but people would just try to break him down with words and stuff and just pick on him."

Another one of the boys, 13-year-old Asher Brown, had been teased and bullied so much that his family complained to his middle school and demanded that they do

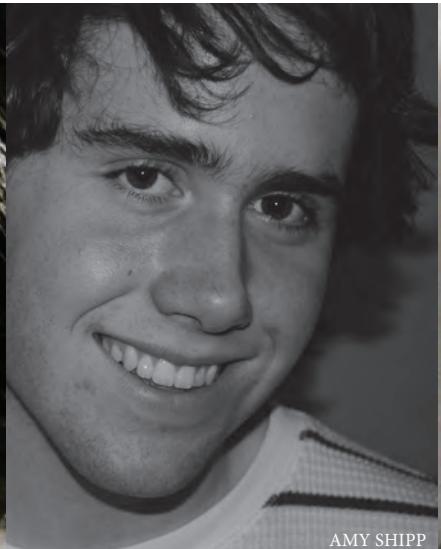
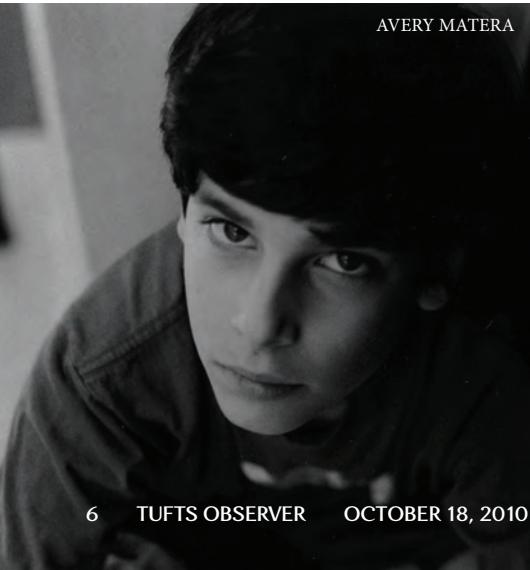
something. Regardless of whether or not the school took action, Brown shot himself on September 23.

In the wake of these six suicides, the bullying of LGBT teens has become an issue at the very forefront of our nation's consciousness. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan spoke out regarding the suicides, calling them unnecessary tragedies. Duncan implored, "This is a moment where every one of us — parents, teachers, students, elected officials and all people of conscience — needs to stand up and speak out against intolerance in all its forms."

The Rutgers University community has also come under close scrutiny, as it provided the backdrop for Tyler's tragic end. In the days following Tyler's suicide, both the college and state community have taken action to make sure no one else has to suffer as Tyler did. Lawmakers in New Jersey are now proposing harsher penalties for privacy invasion, while Rutgers students are speaking out in memory of their peer.

New Jersey state senator Shirley Turner has drafted a bill concerning stricter privacy protection laws, which would raise the maximum fine for privacy invasion from \$15,000 to \$150,000 and increase the possible prison sentence from three to five

AVERY MATERA



SAMAN NARGUND

AMY SHIPP



Love) Your Life *Clementi and the tragedy of LGBT suicides.*

years, to five to 10 years. Turner stated that regardless of Clementi's roommate's motives, "what happened on Rutgers University's campus was a crime...we need to send a clear message that we're not going to take this lightly."

The national reaction to Tyler's suicide has focused less on legal action and more on counseling and support services for those facing similar problems. One national campaign is the It Gets Better project, a YouTube channel recently launched by columnist and gay activist Dan Savage. The It Gets Better project features hundreds of videos from gay adults, each telling their own stories about challenges they have faced and overcome. The videos include those posted by actor Zachary Quinto, the cast of Broadway's "Chicago," pop singer Kesha, a gay cop and gay marine, comedian Kathy Griffin, and countless other contributors with messages for struggling teens.

One celebrity who has been particularly vocal about this issue is Glee singer and actor Chris Colfer, who is openly gay. "It is vital that [gay teens] know that there are people out there who care, and can help," said Colfer in a PSA, "I know what it's like to be bullied and teased every single day. And I know that it may seem like there is

no chance of happiness left, but I promise you there is a world full of acceptance and love just waiting for you to find it."

The question then becomes *why* Wei and Ravi decided to broadcast Tyler's private life to the student body. As much as organizations like the It Gets Better Project are trying to dispel myths about homosexuality from the public, there is no escaping the fact that it is still regarded with a certain taboo by the mainstream media. The nydailynews.com article about Tyler Clementi refers to Clementi's sex with another boy as a "tryst," a "liaison," and a "rendezvous," conjuring up images of forbidden scandal. Many MTV and VH1 reality shows portray the homosexual community as a form of entertainment, such as Tila Tequila making men *and* women lick whipped cream off a slip and slide in the name of love. So, with the media regarding the homosexual community as popular means of amusement, it's no wonder Wei and Ravi thought that gay sex would be a form of entertainment. The responsibility for this tragedy does not just lie in the moronic choice of two Rutgers freshman, it lies in the environment that shaped them.

With the publicity surrounding projects like the It Gets Better project, hope-



REBECCA PLANTE

fully a tragedy such as these suicides will never have cause to happen again. Many of those mourning Tyler expressed the hope that things will improve, that teens will feel safe expressing who they are, that the torment many gay teens endure is only temporary. But at the same time, we have to live with the terrible regret that nothing more was done for Tyler. One boy posted on the group's wall, "Your last words on Facebook will forever stay with me: 'jumping off the gw bridge. Sorry.' I'm sorry too," he writes to Tyler. "I'm sorry that someone wasn't there to grab hold of you on that bridge and not let you go; To tell you that everything will be alright, that things will get better, and that we love you." ☺

Anna Burgess is a sophomore who has not yet declared a major.

JESSICA MADDING



AMY SHIPP





Why Don't You Blog About It?

BY LAURA MORENO SARAGA

As newspapers and magazines move into an exclusively online world, blogs are becoming an easy way to reach large audiences. Blogs provide a refreshing dose of uncensored thoughts, as opposed to the highly edited content of various news sources. Whether they deal with politics, fashion, or travel, blogs offer organically honest opinions on a wide array of topics.

Blogs have come a long way. Most of us can remember the basic interface of our ancient Livejournal and Xanga pages; blogs can now do so much more. Blogs are versatile—they can focus on gaining readership in a specific audience niche. Bloggers have varied intentions, but they all have one thing in common: a desire to be read. Similarly, readers are turning to the opinions of their blogging peers, steering away from the traditional reactionary media model of reporting.

There are many bloggers who have gained massive attention and fame as a result of their innovative and entertaining blogging. Fourteen-year-old Tavi Gevinson is a well-known figure in the fashion world thanks to her blog, "Style Rookie." Gevinson's blog gained national attention for the first time about two years ago, when a *New York Times* staff writer decided to write a profile on the unique and fashion-crazed girl from Chicago. Once Gevinson made the news, her blog's readership skyrocketed. With the constant addition of new blogs to the blogosphere scene, a blog's impact may rely on whether it gets picked up by a news source. Luckily, news outlets themselves have started blogging as a way to quickly inform their readerships on up-to-date news. It is not so much that blogs are replacing official news websites; rather, the two are learning to complement each other, as they move into a necessarily symbiotic relationship.

As the current generation of recent college graduates (and casual bloggers) move on to the real world, blogs are becoming increasingly acceptable as an informative source. An appealing aspect of blogging is the blog's ability to reach niche-like markets of people who are looking for information on very specific topics. Take Silvana Roiter, for example. Roiter is a Tufts alumnae and a habitual blogger. Through her blog about strategic job-hopping and serial entrepreneurship, Roiter hopes to "inspire and empower readers around the world to create, follow and succeed in their own terms." Today, her blog has between 4,000 and 6,000 readers. Roiter takes her job as a blogger very seriously: "It's great to feel a commitment," she said. "I have a silent contract with my readers. We made a pact. I write—you read."

Similarly, Georgetown graduate Ruben Rais takes on the role of informing a young generation of Jews worldwide by writing the left-wing political blog "ReJewvenate." As Rais spends a year in Israel gaining a closer look at the Arab-Israeli conflict, he hopes that his blog will make an impact. "The goal is obviously to try and reach a larger audience," says Rais.

For other students at Tufts, blogging is usually a lot less serious and a lot more fun. Kate Nye and Axel Tonconogy have both decided to start blogging while they are abroad for two semesters. Both travel blogs have a slow and airy feel to them, allowing friends and family to catch glimpses into the life each blogger is leading abroad.

Nye's blog "Mail Box" was created as a means for mass-communication, a "mechanism for stylized mass-emails to my family and family friends interested in hearing updates about my time abroad in France." For Axel Tonconogy, who is currently abroad in London, the idea of creating a blog sprouts from his passion for writing. In his blog "Censor this Thought," Tonconogy exposes sentiments about the world around him.

For people out there looking to start their own blog, Tufts offers a convenient option: an integrated, online blog collection called "Tufts Roundtable Commons," where Tufts affiliates have an opportunity to expose their blogs. The website resembles a news site, yet it consists entirely of different Tufts blogs arranged into grouped topics. According to co-founder and current president of the website, Shabazz Stuart, the intention of the website is to "make the process of sharing ideas easier through blogging." Although the website currently encapsulates only about 100 bloggers, Stuart hopes to see this number increase over time, stressing that the website is "a great way to see the vibrancy of the campus."

Our generation of smart phones and wireless Internet makes blogging so easy and simple that blogs can literally be updated within seconds. As we—those who can't *really* remember what the world without Internet was like—grow older and move into the real world, blogs will continue to grow, both in popularity and in relevance. It is hard to say whether or not blogs will become a more standardized form of mass communication and will replace official news sources more completely. Probably not, but as the lines between blogs and news are blurred, it becomes increasingly clear that blogs are here to stay. ☀

Laura Moreno Saraga is a junior majoring in English.

NATALIA JESSEN-PETERSEN



DRINK AND BE MERRY*

BY ERIC ARCHIBALD

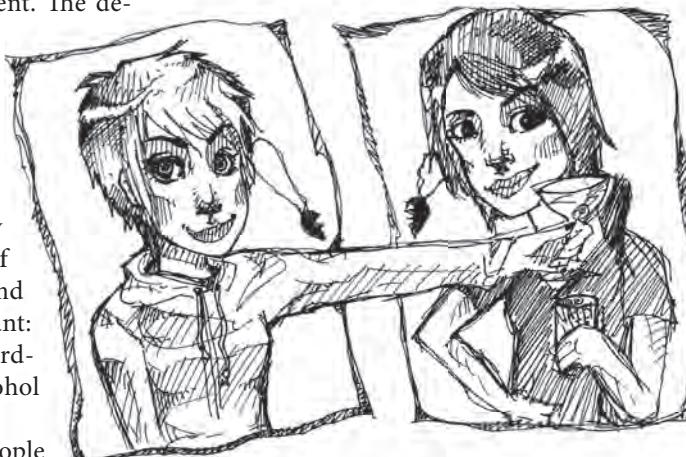
To anyone who goes to college, has ever gone to college, or, really, has heard of college, it's fairly well-known that federal laws pertaining the use of controlled substances are not always followed as strongly on college campuses as they are in what many call 'the real world' (read: what we all eventually have to become a part of). In the real world, people write articles discussing lowering or maintaining the drinking age for a variety of reasons, including the results of studies of brain chemistry and physiological development. The debate rages on. Let's—while we still can—forget about that desolate place they call the real world. Let's forget about charts and statistics. Let's forget about the greater societal, economical, (any sort of -al) implications of the drinking age debate and look merely at what's important: how do the current laws regarding the consumption of alcohol affect us?

Who is us? Us. As in people reading this. As in people at Tufts (along with, of course, the broad and diverse base of *Tufts Observer* readers all over the world).

Let's get this part out of the way: the age of twenty-one, as relates to us, doesn't refer to the age at which you start drinking alcohol, the so called "drinking age." In our case, the drinking age is personal. For me it was sophomore year of high school. For others it was their senior year. Others have been pounding

bourbon since the tender age of twelve (...maybe). In our eyes, the "drinking age" and the age of twenty-one are two distinct and separate things, (even if TUPD may disagree). Suffice it to say, the legal drinking age has not prevented people from drinking alcohol.

If, on a college campus like Tufts, people can generally choose when and if they want to drink alcohol, what relevance does the federally mandated age bear? It's simple: you can go to a bar once you're twenty-one (pub, club, Vegas, winery, distillery, etc.), and not a minute before. As college students, our problem



with the drinking age is not that it prevents us from drinking, but that it essentially bisects the college population. It turns the population into the haves and the have-nots, the haves (as in 'having a legitimate ID') and the have-nots.

Of course, it makes sense to have laws that prevent certain people from engaging in dangerous activities. I understand why the government doesn't permit just anyone to drive a car or serve on a jury. Maturity and experience are required for many activities. What is odd to me, though, is the arbitrary nature of the legal drinking age. At 18 we all became trusted to vote in the presidential

election. We were deemed old enough to be put in federal prison for our crimes. In almost all respects we've been deemed old and responsible enough to have many responsibilities and expectations thrust upon us. Yet, evidently, we're not mature enough to drink.

I assure you that I wish to do more than lament my own young age. Are there any graver implications associated with the current drinking age as pertains to college students? Every year news programs are flooded with stories of underage college students having fatal interactions with alcohol. Often these stories are accompanied with accounts of friends and acquaintances too afraid to call for help because of the legal consequences they will incur for their intoxication. Is it possible that some of these students would have sought help if their alcohol consumption had been legal?

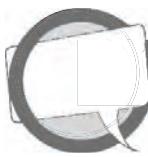
It may be unclear whether there are benefits changing the laws regarding drinking, but what officials must understand about the situation is that the law does not affect consumption of alcohol; it affects the location and, perhaps, the safety of the drinking.

In my opinion, the drinking age serves to segregate a population of peers into two sides based on an arbitrary age. The Amethyst Initiative (amethystinitiative.org) is a group of college officials from around the nation that agree that the age of twenty-one is not working at their institutions. Larry Bacow has signed this initiative, which does not propose a specific solution to the growing problem of alcohol abuse around college campuses, but merely states, "twenty-one is not working."

It's safe to say the debate will continue for now, but to me, and many college students and administrators, it's clear that the current laws and policies are not serving their purposes, but rather are serving as roadblocks to unity and consistency across a campus as well as posing larger threats to general safety and well-being. ☺

Eric Archibald is a sophomore who has not yet declared a major.

*** or fined if you're underage**



A Silenced Majority

BY MICHAEL BENDETSON



Americans may not agree on much, but they appear to agree on two important points. First, that the United States is facing serious challenges. Second, that our legislators are simply not up to the task in dealing with them. While the media spends a great deal of time examining the former, America cannot and will not solve any of these problems until it confronts the latter. Rarely in our country's history has there been such a disparity between the greatness of our problems and the weakness of our legislators. A country that prides itself on the innovation and entrepreneurship of its people seems so far removed from the ineffectiveness and impassiveness of its government.

As economists warn against the danger of a monopoly of industry in distorting and destroying an economy, our two party monopoly on government is causing similar effects on our political system. The problem is not so much in having a two party system, but rather in allowing the extremes of these parties to determine our candidates on the ballot. A small minority on both sides of the political spectrum is forcing an independent and moderate majority to select candidates significantly distanced from their preferences. The problem begins with a system in which ideological bases on the left and right are the most active participants in primary elections, even as these bases are far more radical than the electorate as a whole. Quite often the candidates who win primary elections are far more radical than general election voters want. Although this phenomenon is by no means new, this election cycle has seen an exponential growth in the politics of extremes.

While this year's focus on an ideological insurgency in our nation's primaries has been with the Republican Party, the Democratic Party witnessed a similar situation in 2006 and 2008 with such nominees as Ned Lamont and Al Franken. Last May, Pennsylvania Democrats handed moderate and experienced Senator Arlen Specter a resounding defeat in favor of a stronger liberal. However, the GOP in 2010 is proving to be a perfect case study in how our country is being denied able leaders by the two largest special interest groups in Washington: the Democratic and Republican Parties. As independent voters voice their frustration over the failures of the current administration and its party, they are forced to choose an alternative that seem to many to be an extreme.

With a meager presidential approval rating of 47% and a congressional approval rating of just 21%, Americans are clearly disappointed with the Democratic Party and are seeking a change. However, many of the Republican candidates that are being selected are offering a radical transformation instead. One has to only study a handful of states and their partisan primaries, to watch the victory of ideology over moderation. In Alaska, Tea Party favorite Joe Miller defeated incumbent Senator and member of "the Republican establishment" Lisa Murkowski. Mr. Miller's platform includes that of eliminating the federal minimum wage, the Department of Education, and any United Nations funding. Despite a respectable conservative record in the Senate, Ms. Murkowski failed the true conservative litmus test with her support for abortion.

In Kentucky, Rand Paul "carried a message from the Tea Party" with his resounding defeat of Kentucky Secretary of State Trey Grayson in the Republican Senate primary. Despite support from Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Grayson failed to live up to the conservative litmus test with his support for climate change legislation. Meanwhile, GOP Senate nominee Rand Paul has advocated a platform of eliminating the Federal Reserve and calling into question the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

In Utah, where Republican incumbent Senator Bob Bennett was defeated (by two candidates) on the far right, to Congressman Mike Castle's loss to the Tea Party in Delaware, the ideologues of the Republican Party are making their voices heard. This is, in essence, the failure of our election system. The "Silent Majority" of moderate Americans has no voice in their choice of candidates. While campaign finance legislation in the past has been designed to create a political system more connected with voters, it does not delve into the root of our predicament.

The problem is not so much the influence of money on candidates, but rather the candidates themselves. A new system has to be set into motion that allows those who lay in the middle of the political spectrum to choose their options, as opposed to candidate selection by the extreme ends of the right and the left.

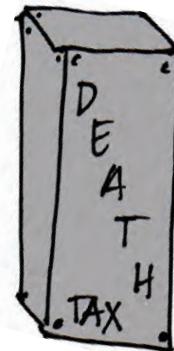
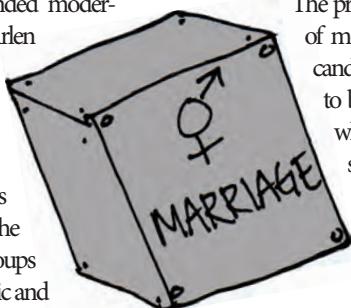
Much conversation and debate has emerged concerning California's recently passed Proposition 14 or the "Top Two" Primary Law. One can only ask how a state so far in debt that the Feds have contemplated bailing it out can possibly offer any good advice to the nation. However, the old weightlifter and movie star governor is on the right track. Under this new law, California will dispose of the old primary system in favor a "state primary." All candidates, regardless of party association, will be placed on a single, consolidated ballot. The two candidates that receive the most votes will be placed on the final ballot. Thus in Democratic or Republican leaning districts, the election day ballot will consist of two members of the same party. This will allow the electorate as a whole, rather than the constituency of a single party, to determine the outcome.

Both the Democratic and Republican Parties have proven to be outspoken critics of this law. However, even Speaker Nancy Pelosi could not convince her fellow Californians to reject the measure as it passed with 54% of the vote. Ironically, both parties voiced concern over the negative implications for

third party candidates under this law. Yet, one has not seen any of this empathy over the course of the past several decades, where both the Republicans and Democrats squeezed out third party candidates during debates in congressional, senatorial, and presidential campaigns.

While California has garnered much attention with this law, they are actually the third state to enact a "Top Two" primary system. Although the 2010 election cycle has proven that our current political system is broken, it has also demonstrated that a "Top Two" primary system is a viable alternative. In Washington (a "Top Two" state), we are witnessing a heated November election not between two extremes, but rather a battle in moderation. The incumbent Democrat Patty Murray is facing a difficult challenge from Republican candidate Dino Rossi. Mr. Rossi represents a seemingly endangered species, a moderate Republican nominee for Senate. On the first ballot, he faced an ideological Republican opponent in Tea Party candidate, Clint Diddier. However, instead of being forced to defend his record to the far right and potentially lose his nomination, Mr. Rossi was allowed to let a moderate majority in Washington evaluate his positions. The result is an election between two candidates who better reflect the ideological leanings of the state.

As Albert Einstein noted, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." We continue to use a broken election system, and with each cycle, we still hope for a better outcome. This country is being confronted with unprecedented problems, and we need the right men and women to address them. Americans possess the capacity to distinguish and select the best candidates to serve, but the electoral system is not offering them legislators eager to achieve consensus for the sake of progress. Candidate selection is hardly a glamorous issue, but if politicians prove themselves willing and able to confront a flawed electoral system, we would be better poised to tackle the pressing issues of our times. ☠





Seminal Advice

by Sophia Boudoir

doms were proportional to the consistency of condom use." Moreover, sexually active females who didn't use condoms seem to have developed something of an emotional dependency on sperm—according to Gallup and Burch's report, the depression scores for these females "went up as the amount of time since their last sexual encounter increased."

Why would women who don't use condoms be less depressed and less likely to attempt suicide? Why would they be consistently more depressed as more time elapsed since their last "dosage" of semen?

According to the researchers, there are properties of semen that may help to alleviate depressive symptoms. As we all learned in high school biology, semen is not the same thing as sperm—less than 5% of semen is actually composed of sperm cells, and the count decreases with age. So what is the rest of the sticky mess made of? Many things, as it turns out. According to an article published by Jesse

Bering in Scientific American, semen includes prolactin and thyrotropin—both natural antidepressants, estrone and oxytocin—which elevate mood, and even serotonin, a neurotransmitter well-known as an antidepressant and one of the chemicals most often manipulated in anti-depressant medications.

Taken as a whole, the data seems to suggest that women who are regularly inseminated are happier than women who aren't, and that this is a factor of the chemical properties of sperm, which seem to be anti-depressant in nature. Though some will scoff and say that this is just a correlational study, that it might be the case that females who were more comfortable admitting their lack

of condom use share personality traits that make them less susceptible to depression. However, the researchers anticipated this and accounted for these confounds. Firstly, they stressed that the survey was anonymous, so participants had little incentive to falsely represent their sexual behavior. Secondly, they statistically controlled for other possible influencing factors, including if the females were in relationship status and if so, what the duration of the relationship was. They also controlled for whether or not the participants used oral contraceptives. Lastly, in order to ascertain that the presence of semen, not the act of sex itself, was causing the difference in depression scores, the researchers did two things. They controlled for the frequency of sexual encounters, to make sure females who were having more sex were happier. They also compared the depression scores of females who were having regular sex with condoms to females who were not having sex at all, and found that the scores were no different, leading to the conclusion that "it is not sexual activity per se that antagonizes depression."

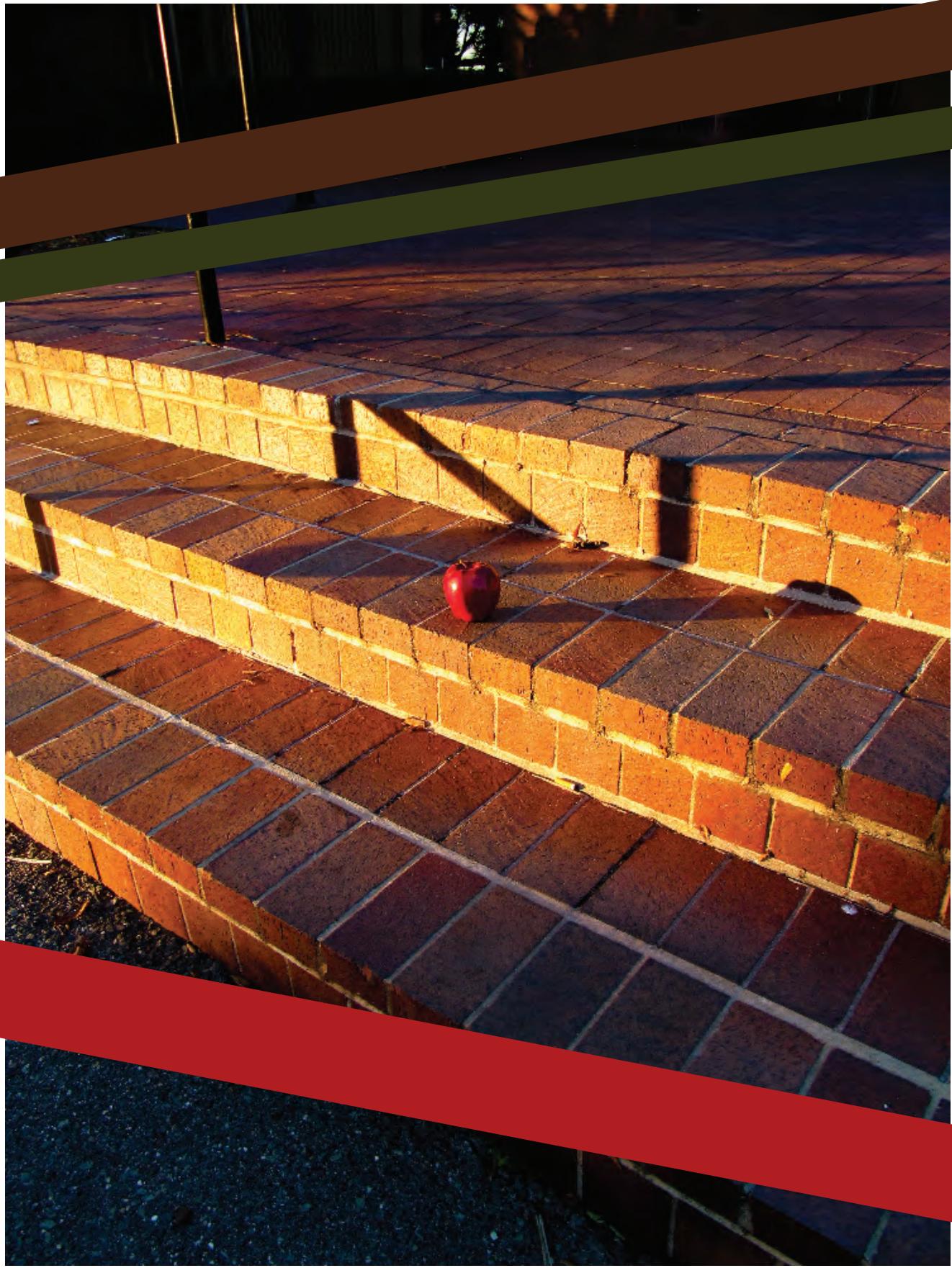
Despite all this, one might argue that those females who regularly have condomless sex are those more inclined to high-risk behavior, and it may be something about this risky attitude which makes them less susceptible to depression. However, according to Tiffany Kary, writing for Psychology Today, "studies have found no correlation between

Properties of semen may help to alleviate depressive symptoms.

high-risk sexual behavior and lower rates of depression."

All things considered, it appears that there is a direct link between the amount of sperm in a woman's body and her happiness. This does not mean everyone should throw away their condoms and have unprotected sex with everybody they cross paths with. But it may be something to consider if one is in a committed relationship, both partners are STI-free, and another reliable form of contraception is being used. Don't kill me, Health Services, but it could be that girls are just happier with semen inside. ☺









CATHERINE NAKAJIMA



Istanbul'lu

a turkish delight in teele square

BY KYLE CARNES

Istanbul'lu
237 Holland
St. Somerville,
MA 02144

Recommended: Sultan's delight, all Tapas, Tavuk sandwich

Prices: \$3-25
All major cards accepted

Hours: 10am-10pm,
closed Mondays

What do Kylie Minogue and Istanbul'lu have in common? Nothing, but she must have been well liked by the staff at the newest dining addition to Teele Square, since her music played throughout dinner. It was a great indicator of the atmosphere at this traditional Turkish bistro, which doesn't take itself too seriously.

A storefront eatery with about ten tables, all cafe-style and jam-packed together, Istanbul'lu is not somewhere my date or I would call very romantic. You can literally rub elbows with the other patrons.

After a little consultation from the open and friendly staff, we ordered a round of Turkish Tapas (\$4-8) – traditional appetizers of hummus, Dolma (grape leaves), in addition to bread and a red pepper sauce, all of which were delicious. The Tapas were spot on Mediterranean starters, the flavorful Dolma coming with fresh tomatoes and a dollop of Turkish yogurt, the hummus a standard yet well done option. The



standout was the red pepper sauce that was provided by the house; it was slightly spicy, tangy, thick, and matched perfectly with the hummus.

Undoubtedly, the best part of Istanbul'lu is the food, like Sultan's Delight (~\$15) slow roasted lamb floating atop a sea of pureed eggplant and topped with more Turkish yogurt, an incredible and very hearty meal. On the lighter side, there is also a wide selection of sandwiches. A standout is the Tavuk (\$7), a juicy chicken breast with leafy greens, and you guessed it, more Turkish yogurt, placed between two fresh pieces of crunchy bread. The sandwich was delicious, something I wish I could get at Dewick...

The only "misses" of the night were the dessert and drinks. Upon a suggestion, we ordered Ayran, a yogurt based drink that was questionable at best, and a shredded Philo dough roll filled with caramelized pistachios. The overly salty and bitter milky drink did not help the dry "mini-wheat" style dessert, which seemed like the only item we received that wasn't freshly prepared.

Overall, Istanbul'lu delivered yet another unique dining experience in the Teele/Davis area. With its bright décor, eager to please staff, and great food, it's an easy recommendation to the foody population of Tufts. I would suggest a lunch time trip or a weekend jaunt to this small Turkish Bistro. ☺



OFF CAMPUS

LOLZ @ the Wilbur Theatre

by Ruth Tam

STEVE RHODES



Just a couple blocks south of the Park Street T stop lies the historic Wilbur Theatre. Built in 1913, it serves the city as the prime venue for the nation's top comedy acts. Here's the rundown of this season's top performances:

OCT
18

Margaret Cho, \$55

Margaret Cho encompasses so many demographics. Other comics might find it hard to cover so many opinions and personalities, but it works for Cho. Her act ranges from political jabs to ethnically charged monologues to X-rated LGBT humor. Cho's new tour, "Cho Dependent" will probably hit all those targets and more. Boston, get ready for some Cali sass.

OCT
22

Gallagher, \$25

In the first sentence of this guy's Wikipedia biography, it says Gallagher is "most popularly known for smashing watermelons as part of his act." Delicious.

OCT
27

Demetri Martin, \$34

If you watch "The Daily Show" like every other liberal-minded American, you may have seen Demetri Martin on the show's recurring segment "Trendspotting." Besides his work on "The Daily Show," Martin is also known for his Comedy Central sketch-variety show, "Important Things with Demetri Martin." It's like the "Drew Carey show", but for cool people!

NOV
06

Kevin Hart, \$39

This guy has been in Epic Movie AND Extreme Movie. So he's funny x 2.

DEC
12

Joan Rivers, \$32

Lately, the comedic legend, Joan Rivers, has been bobbing around the entertainment circuit, riding the wave of "Joan Rivers: A Piece of Work." The summer's funniest documentary painted a picture of Joan audiences hadn't seen before. She was filmed as a victim of compulsive plastic surgery and a vulnerable picture of disparity, but above all, a flat-out riot. Rumor has it, her show in December will be, too. ☺



CHELSEA BROWN

TALLEST MAN ONE EAR

The Tallest Man on Earth, an intentionally ironic stage name for Sweden's nymph-like Kristian Masson, came to Somerville theater on October 1st to the delight of a packed crowd of happy hipsters. As expected, he delivered a mind-blowing show with no more than himself, a chair, and a few amazing guitars. And a Stella for hydration.

A review of the Tallest Man is not complete without a comparison to Bob Dylan, so I'll just get it out of the way. The guitar-plucking virtuoso is famous for his raw vocals and soul-smashing lyrics. Like Dylan, Masson nails a kind of forlorn restlessness that is both youthful and world-weary. He winks at this association in some of his songs, like in the galloping ballad, King of Spain, when he declares,

*And I wear my boots of Spanish leather
Oh while I'm tightening my crown.
I'll disappear in some flamenco
Perhaps I'll reach the other side.*

"Boots of Spanish leather" being a reference to a song on Dylan's 1964 album, *The Times They Are A-changin*. But in contrast to Dylan's deadpan style, Masson possesses the winsome charm and staggering eloquence of a modern-day troubador.

Endearingly bashful, yet bold and quick-witted, Masson had the audience at the Somerville audience in the palm of his hand every second of the show. Given than his lyrics are so abstract, I was at least left salivating over the intimate morsels of inspiration he imparted.

A Tallest Man breakup song does not follow the whimpering script of a Ben Harper number, but instead strikes you in the gut with lyrics like the following from "Love is All":

*And now spikes will keep on falling from the heavens to the floor
The future was our skin and now we don't dream anymore
No, we don't dream anymore*

Though seemingly nonsensical, his non-sequiturs are perfect for the task. When have love and breakups ever made much sense, after all? Masson seems both amused and heartbroken by the transience of life: of friends around kitchen tables, of aimless road trips and impossibly starry nights.

*Let us float in the tears
Let us cry from the laughter
When it's not for some sake
And the city's not near*

In case you were wondering, ladies (and gentlemen, for that matter), Kristian Masson is very much taken. He sang his last song in a duet with his exquisitely adorable fiancee. I was surprised the top floor of the theater didn't collapse from the weight of the audience's collective swoon.

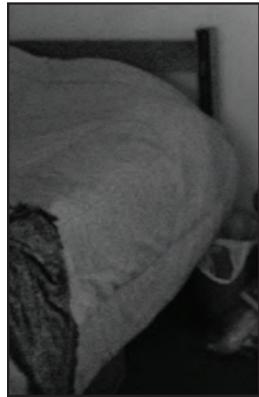
Speaking with him after the show, I was bowled over by his sincerity and unthinkable depth of modesty. He expressed his appreciation for the supportive audience, his desire to share the music he loves so much, and to "just do the best [he] can." But the life of an itinerant musician is a tiring one, with his rustic home in Sweden ever-beckoning his return. Luckily, a few more American audiences get to experience his humorous commentary and wrenching cri de coeurs before he retreats to his native North Pole. ☺

*Freshman Reflections:*

A Place to Call Home

BY NICOLA PARDY

I moved into my *dorm* at Tufts in a distinctly haphazard way. I say distinct, because I think most college freshmen approach *move-in* day the same way I did: with the *jittery* enthusiasm that is ultimately *responsible* for the chaos of the transition. For most first-year students, the move to college is the first big step away from *home*, and the prospect of *creating* a *new* life and a new home at university is, well, pretty exciting.



CATHERINE NAKAJIMA



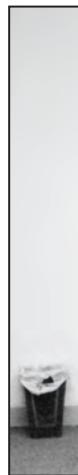
Things get messy. Cars, minivans, and rent-a-trailers packed with boxes upon boxes of clothes, towels, and bed linens line campus streets. Televisions, laundry hampers, and miniature ironing boards are stuffed into every nook and cranny of trunk space. And these are just the “essentials.” What about all the posters, rugs, lamps, books, DVDs, photo frames, and other miscellaneous personal items that go along with creating a comfortable living space? As we go through the transition of moving from house to dorm, we bring as much of our homes with us as we can physically fit into a given number of plastic bags and cardboard boxes. We seem to think that by surrounding ourselves with the physical manifestations of our past lifestyles, our dorm rooms will somehow transform into small-scale versions of our old living environments. Why do we do this? Is it really possible to condense our old concept of home into a 12’ x 15’ dorm space?

To a certain extent, I guess it is. I have all the things I could ever need to feel comfortable here. Photo collection of friends and family? Check. Childhood teddy bear? Check. Abundant and steady

ruse through the newspaper at the breakfast table. We agreed that dorm life is not and will never be the same as living in a house with a family. The concept of property is different. Could you imagine your parents inviting guests over to sit and socialize on their bed for a bit

before dinner? Sounds odd enough, but it’s exactly what we do here. Our living spaces aren’t really designed for a lot of the usual activities we do at home (like having guests over) so we try to come up with the most creative alternatives to make up for the changes. As a result, public domain merges with private. Our beds become coffee tables, and our desks become kitchen countertops. The concept of privacy in college dorms is different too. Ever attempted to take a nap in college? Try it. I guarantee it will be the

and unpredictability to the place that I find completely enlivening. While the implications of this, of course, can be dangerous—the home/school division that was so clearly defined in high school has now become blurred, and our decisions as individuals, students, and social college kids, have more weight than they’ve ever had before—I think dorm life prepares us better for change. Through the unpredictability of dorm life, we develop a readiness for change that allows us to better adapt to the impromptu nature of



CATHERINE NAKAJIMA

Public domain merges with private. Our beds become coffee tables, and our desks become kitchen countertops.

supply of Nutella and peanut butter? Check. Kind of unnecessary but totally adorable French bulldog themed calendar that makes my desk an infinitely happier place? A definite check. But despite these little fragments of familiarity, establishing a feeling of home in the dorm is still a work in progress for me. This is not to say that I’m lacking any feeling of comfort or security in this new lifestyle, it’s just that everything that once constituted what a home can mean has sort of shifted beneath my feet.

The other day, my roommate and I were talking about how strange it is that we can’t just go home after a long day of classes and collapse for a short nap on the family sofa, or casually amble downstairs on a weekend morning and pe-

most unsuccessful nap of your life. And all this time you thought that napping was a relatively fail-proof activity. Think again, college freshman. The singular space of your room at home is now part of a bigger picture—your “quiet time” and privacy depends on the moods and activities of the greater space.

But, despite the aspects of comfort that are lost during the college shift, I think dorm life adds a new dimension to the concept of home—one that’s perhaps more open, more sharing, and, as I’m sure most would agree, more fun. I love the communal atmosphere of my hall down in Tilton. The doors of my hall-mates’ rooms are almost always open, and the common room is perpetually buzzing with activity. There’s a certain excitement

campus life. This helps us deal with the shift from the set schedule of high school life—the 7:00 am alarm, the 8:30-3:30 classes, and the afterschool activities—to the open, flexible schedule of our college life.

So perhaps the move from house to dorm not only produces a change in lifestyle, but also fosters a change in mentality. Maybe this is why dorm life is seen as such an integral part of the overall college experience: because it causes us to, dare I say it, mature in ways we never could at home. So as our freshman class settles down and becomes accustomed to the transition at hand, allow us to embrace the changes in our living spaces, lifestyles, mindsets, whatever—and eventually come to call Tufts home. ☩



What your first grade teacher *didn't* tell you about **CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS**

"In 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue..."
...and killed between 5 and 8 million people.

BY JESSICA MADDING



ever seen or expects to see." What, then, are we really celebrating on Columbus Day?

Many scholars compare Columbus' actions to those of Adolf Hitler or Heinrich Himmler, the Nazi SS leader. In many ways, the genocides perpetuated by these men are similar: Himmler's slaughter mills killed between twelve and fifteen million people based on their beliefs or ethnic background. Many deaths in both instances were caused by starvation, and unimaginable cruelties were committed. But why is it necessary to make this comparison? Merely looking at the facts of what occurred in Espanola provides enough information to illustrate that crimes against humanity were committed. Yet it seems there is a need to understand Columbus' actions in the context of a genocide we are more familiar with, perhaps because it is difficult for us to digest the truth about a man considered by the United States government to be a national hero. Or is it because this genocide seems distant, having transpired so long ago in what is now another country, affecting a people that no longer exist due to one man's actions?

On October 12, children around the country will be reciting the popular poem whose opening line appears on the opposite page, reenacting scenes of Columbus' arrival in America, and filling in coloring books full of sail boats and treasure. They will go home happy but misinformed, with images of life at sea, untouched lands ready to be discovered, and kind natives presenting Columbus with gifts and welcoming him to their homeland. If you have never heard of Columbus' more sinister actions and still believe him to be an admirable explorer, you are unfortunately among the majority.

When researching elementary school activities for Columbus Day, one that I came across includes a book entitled, *The True Story of Christopher Columbus*. This book is part of a series for those "who have left names for us to honor and revere, who have made the world better because they lived, and who have helped to make and to develop American freedom, strength and progress." In light of the truth I have come to understand about Columbus, this seems a rather disturbing and wildly inaccurate description. Although it is true that Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492, he is not the benevolent hero portrayed in American culture. In reality, as Ward Churchill points out in his novel *Acts of Rebellion*, Columbus instituted a "genocidal model of conquest and colonization" that was responsible for the death of millions of native people and has since been replicated across the globe.

Churchill goes on to explain that after Columbus' initial trip in search of spice trade, he returned to Espanola (modern day Haiti and the Dominican Republic) in 1493 in order to procure riches for the King and Queen of Spain. Over the next three years, he "instituted policies of slavery (*encomienda*) and systematic extermination against the native Taino population." This genocide culminated in over 5 million deaths during Columbus' time in Espanola, and didn't end for many years to come. Perhaps even more disturbing than the sheer loss of human life are the atrocities involved in this genocide. Under the tribute system instituted by Columbus in 1495, every Taino over the age of fourteen had to produce a hawk's bell full of gold every three months, or twenty-five pounds of spun cotton in gold-deficient areas. Those who failed had their hands cut off and were left to die slowly, bleeding from their severed limbs.

Historians estimate that upwards of 10,000 native people were killed in this manner in Espanola alone. Accounts from Bartolomé de las Casas, a Spanish Dominican priest who accompanied Columbus and witnessed his actions, speak of mass-hangings, roasting natives on spits or burning them at the stake, hacking children to pieces and using them as dog feed, and the slaughtering of entire villages. Of his experiences, the priest wrote, "I saw cruelty on a scale no living being has

To native people living in America today, this genocide is not so distant, and it initiated a history plagued by brutality and genocide. Many are familiar with *The Trail of Tears* or the fact that smallpox-laden blankets were once "gifted" to Native Americans. Less well-known is the continued oppression of Native Americans today. Humanity has not yet learned how to treat humankind. Perhaps we are just fueled by the same desires as Columbus in 1492: greed, power, and domination. Or, maybe we have forgotten those instances in history that should teach us to treat our fellow human beings with decency and respect. The only other figure in our history that has a national holiday named after him is Martin Luther King Jr. If Dr. King were here today, would he stand for the celebration of a man whose actions harmed so many?

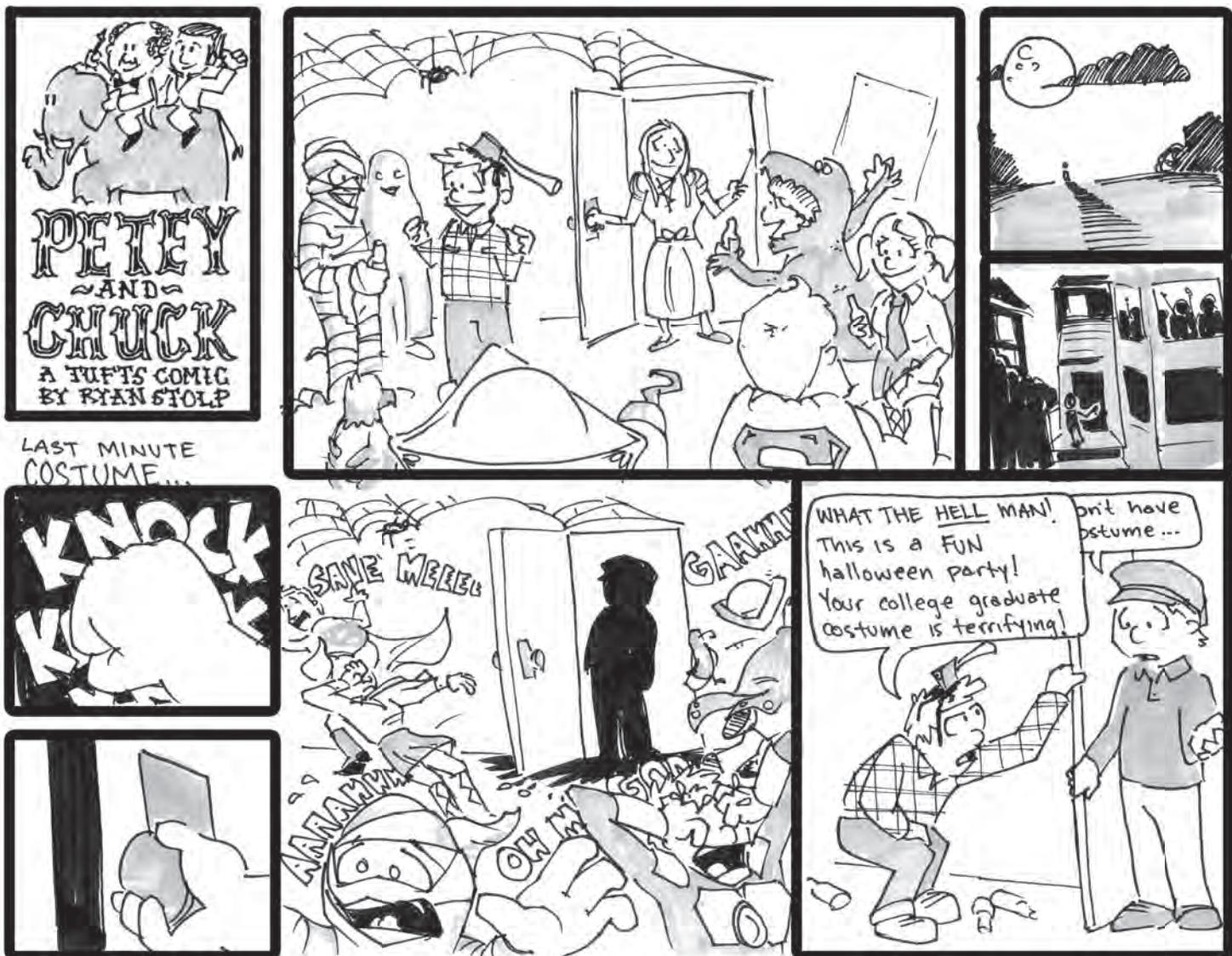
What do we do now? Do we take up arms against this holiday, hold protests, petition the government, make our voices heard and speak for the millions murdered and with those who continue to be affected by the oppressive misunderstanding of Native American cultures? Or, is it enough to spread the truth about Christopher Columbus and make an earnest attempt to educate ourselves about our oppression with the hope of learning from past mistakes? At the very least, we should educate ourselves in the hope that we may finally become a nation that lives up to its founding ideals of equality and justice for all. The last line of the popular Columbus poem reads, "The first American? No, not quite. But Columbus was brave, and he was bright." It seems to me that braver are those who will oppose his actions and speak out against this ridiculous holiday than was a man who eradicated an entire civilization. ☠



HUMOR

bunchofguys

by alyce and malcolm





BY SIGNE PORTESHAWVER

Laverne and Shirley were two Buff Orpingtons, backyard laying hens here on Upland. They weren't particularly strong in character, as it goes with chickens. They were fun to feed dead flies and carrot scraps to and had just enough personality to easily tell them apart. I picked them up one evening from a small-scale eggning and home gardening couple in Tewksbury. The husband caught them easily and I carried them off in a large cardboard box. They were already three and half years old, near the end of their lives and certainly near the end of their egg-laying days. We only got two. Any chicken caretaker would tell you that laying hens going on four years are a poor investment, but then again we knew next to nothing about chickens.

Back in Somerville, I flipped the box on its side and the hens fell out and into their unfinished home. We built the coop using scrap wood from around the house and some lumber from Home Depot. My roommate Sara had the artistic vision and my boyfriend Seth the carpentry skills. It came out sturdy enough, and looked great with a fake window and real box of flowers. The next morning we hurriedly fashioned a run while the hens noisily protested against the coop's closed doors. With a final heavy-duty staple we let them out to acclimatize, and split to Whole Foods to buy bulk grains until some better feed came in the mail. It was a hectic first week to be certain.

The hens settled in and I settled into being a chicken owner. I liked their clucking at dusk and was amused that Shirley always got first peck at food scraps. I filled

their food and gave them water and said, "Good morning ladies," when I came to work in the garden. Neighbors and friends were enthralled with the birds and the thought of having backyard chickens only a block from Tufts. Even our landlord liked them, and called Sara and me industrious. We trained the cucumber to grow up the side of the run and the whole set up became a fixture in the backyard. It was hard to remember the garden without it.

Once the sun went down the hens would go into the coop and keep to themselves until the morning. One night around 10 o'clock, Laverne and Shirley started making all kinds of noise, clucking and crowing loudly. I immediately ran down, recruiting Sara and a friend from the kitchen as I went. The hens were out in the run, looking aggressively into the coop. I opened the top to find a big, gray possum staring at me from the top of the milk crate. Adrenaline rushing, we tried pounding the side of the coop with a pitchfork and yelling before propping up the top and spraying the animal with the hose. The possum quickly ran out of the coop, likely the same way it came in, and we all went frazzled back up stairs. We tried to tighten up ship the next day, but to no avail. A week later, Sara found Shirley dead under the coop.

Possums simply slit the throat of chickens and drink their blood, leaving a clean, limp body. I sadly pulled Shirley out from under the coop and into a paper bag. The CDC said we should just put her in a couple of plastic sacks and throw her in the garbage. It felt sacrilegious and was disheartening. We had no shovel to dig her

a grave. Convinced we were terrible chicken owners, we agreed that Laverne should go of our own accord sometime very soon. But it was hard to think about killing her in that moment, or really any moment within the next month.

Then one night I heard a similar disruption to the one that sent me running to find the possum. I bolted downstairs and into the shed to turn on the garden light. The covering to the light socket is metal and sticks out from the wall. In my haste and poor vision I nicked my left ring finger on the sharp metal edge, causing a deep gash that would remain open for weeks. Laverne was fine. I was not. I was filled with moral angst, regret and shame. I knew what I had to do, but I didn't know how. I was scared that I would cause her pain in death. I was angry with myself for not learning how to care for chickens before adopting them. My finger was throbbing and I shook with the first tears of my adult life.

A couple of days later, I did it. Seth helped. It was difficult psychologically and kind of gross, but it was fine. She tasted like a laying hen—lots of fat and tough meat, but made a delicious stock. I was relieved, mostly because I felt compassion for the animal and realized the good in all this. I had developed a respect for and commonality with the bird as livestock, and with the human race as omnivores. Everything was okay and I felt like a better person, eater, and caretaker.

The coop still stands, the run with a hole where I climbed in to grab Laverne. I don't know if I'll ever have the heart to take it all down. ☺



Lines Cast

By Natalie Selzer

There, in slanted light that petered and faded across the beach, a capped man cast his fishing line out across the lake waters. It was May; birds clicked and called from the trees that gathered nearby, but that was all; just the birds and the faint hisping sound of the line casting out. The strand hit the water and they shivered and folded in the wake of the hooked bait.

A family at the shoreline waded in the shallows. They had the flavor and the stance of being new, of being together and united for just a simple short time. Mother clutched the sandy-haired child's arm; he pulled forward to traipse farther, to follow Father smiling into the depths. They played there in the water, the three of them, for a time.

**Tufts - a special place
Vibrant students, teachers, staff
We will miss you all.**

A Haiku | By Larry and Adele Bacow

"Come to the car, Luke! Let's get warm," said Mother.

"Oh, but wait," Father called, "the sun might be coming back. Look at it come from behind those clouds."

"Oh."

"Just look at them, Lucas!" Father called; Lucas looked back, heels still just touching the water as he retreated.

"So you want to stay," Mother said from halfway up the beach.

Father paused and looked up at the faint flicker of sun behind quickly collecting clouds. "No, no," he says, "that's all right." So Mother called to Lucas and took his hand; they walked up the beach. Father sloshed from the water, shook the wet from his hair.

The man down the beach threw the line out again, soft whizzing until it hit the water. And again, the clicking retrograde of the line towed it back into the wound casting on the pole. The birds called and bugs collected on the water, dimpling it with their dance as the light continued to fade. ☯



WINTRY WISDOM

By Evan Tarantino



Jack Frost nips, colors drip and drain. Many have retired into expressive hibernation. But here, art is an evergreen devotion. Minds, toiling endlessly. Churning out thoughts, feeding the artistic inferno. Here, the creative enigma has been cracked. Decoded by the inspiration of young men and women. So gather round the impassioned hearth, gaze into the glowing embers of profundity, and enjoy the warmth of art. ☺



POLICE BLOTTER



A high pressure system of alcohol cases. Don't leave home without an umbrella and TEMS on speed dial.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3
12:35 AM

A quaint and memorable homecoming celebration (did we win?) reached critical mass Saturday evening on Boston Ave. Witnesses reported sightings of anti-guitar demonstrators and the previously extinct, but alive and roaring, Hoffasaurus. Unfortunately, when Medford police arrived in a posse of 8 cars and a paddy wagon, presumably to party, the venue grew to capacity and the celebration had to disperse. The festivities were succinctly summarized by two Freshmen in Tisch library:

Freshman #1: "What a fun party though! Did you know any of the people that live there?"

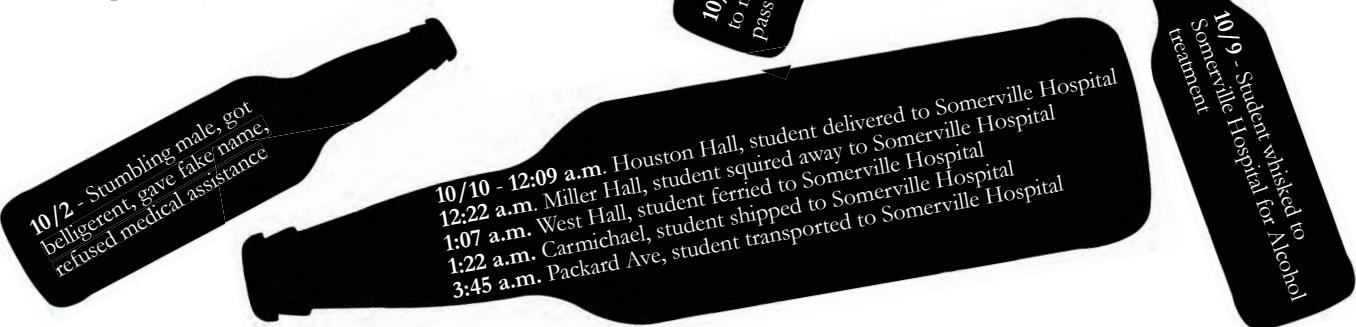
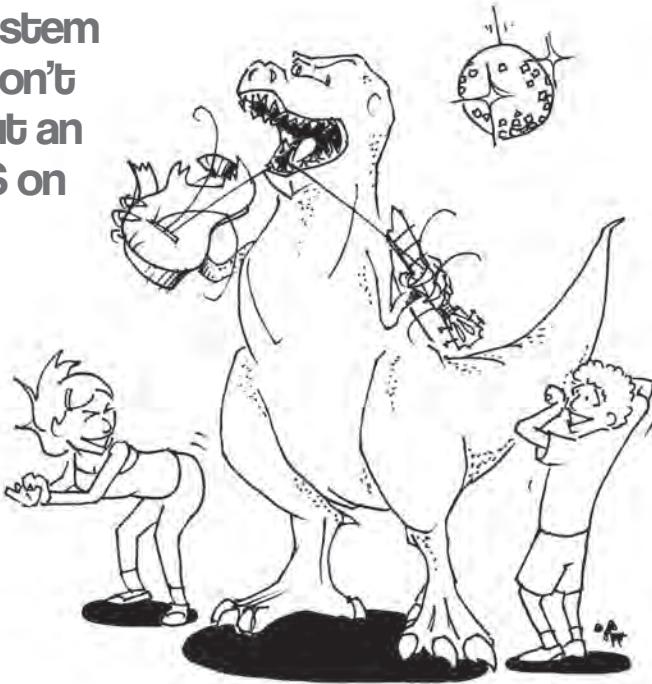
Freshman #2: "No, but I saw some guy break a guitar so maybe he lives there."

Freshman #1: "Oh yeah, I saw that too! I can't believe they just broke an instrument like that!"

Freshman #2: "I know. I'll let you know if they have another party!"

Freshman #1: "Yeah, let me know! Hopefully there won't be as much beer throwing at the next one, I smelled terrible when I got home!"

Freshman #2: "Yeah I saw the guy doing that! Somebody told him to stop and he just roared at him!"



—illustrated and compiled by Ryan Stolp and Avery Matera



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