

TUFTS OBSERVER

VOLUME CXXV, ISSUE 5

NOVEMBER 13, 2012



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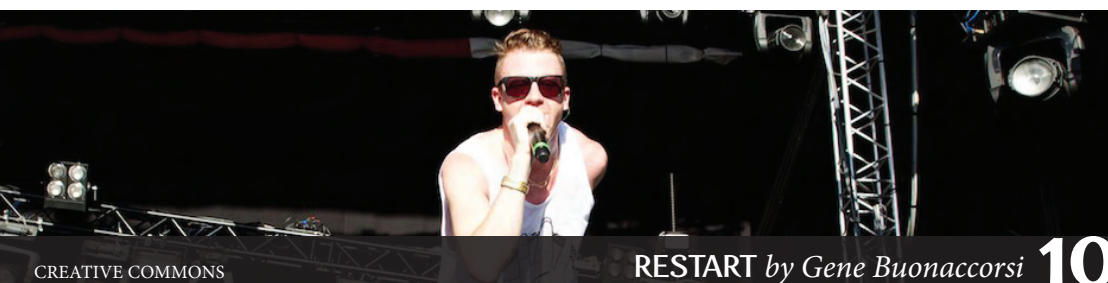
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The *Observer* has been Tufts' student publication of record since 1895. Our dedication to in-depth reporting, journalistic innovation, and honest dialogue has remained intact for over a century. Today, we offer insightful news analysis, cogent and 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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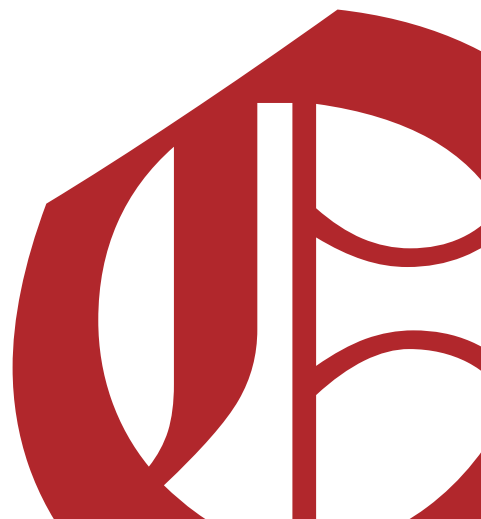
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BUZZ KILL

***ANNA
BURGESS***

***IS TUFTS
OUT OF CONTROL
OR OVERLY
CONTROLLED?***

Most everyone knows that Tufts isn't exactly a party school. We have a reputation for being serious and academically focused; we might be nerds as opposed to frat stars. And it's not just word of mouth: college books and ranking websites generally support this stereotype of Tufts as a non-party school. For instance, College Prowler rates Tufts nightlife a B- and Tufts Greek life a C. In the same vein, TheU.com features posts on Tufts that say things like, "For the serious student, not the party animal," and "Tufts: Awesome... but not a party school." One poster writes, "The advice I'd give... if you want a school where there's ALWAYS a party, this is not the place. On weekends, it is fairly easy to find things to keep yourself entertained but on a Tuesday for example, we're working our asses off. You can definitely find people who party all the time, but most people do not fall into that category." So, we work hard, and we play

then, has not quite so hard. the Tufts administration been cracking down more and more on Tufts partying? In recent years, numerous efforts have been made to curtail excessive alcohol consumption and control events that tend to be big for drinking. The administration's actions reflect distress about student safety and responsibility, but why exactly is the administration so concerned? The image that they seem to have of us is one where we're out of control partiers, endangering ourselves on a regular basis with excessive alcohol use. This image does not jibe with the social image we have of ourselves. As one student explains, "During the week, [school] is a job for most people. On weekends we relax and have fun, but we're going to college for college." More than that, the administration's image doesn't really fit with anyone's perception of Tufts—from locals whose biggest complaint is noise at 1 a.m. to national news sources questioning our strict administrative policies.

In talking with those who are separate from, but closely tied to, student partying, it becomes clear that the community surrounding Tufts generally views us positively. Anne Miller, a familiar face for many students at Hillside's Wine and Spirits, explained that the neighbor-

hood sees students as usually harmless. "I just know, this is what you do in college," she explains. She's been working at Hillside's for 21 years, so she's seen many generations of Tufts students come and go. With each generation, she says, "[the partying] is less and less and less. I've seen a lot of changes over the years... You used to be able to drink at Spring Fling. That, and now not having NQR [the Naked Quad Run]—you see a difference."

Miller said that she does hear complaints from customers about students, but has never heard or seen anything that was shocking or troubling. "When people say, 'Jesus, if these kids get one more keg...' I hear it from everybody." She said she's heard complaints about students peeing on lawns or throwing trash on lawns, and the most common issue, noise. She used to live on Bellevue Street, with 7 out of 11 houses rented by Tufts students and explained that things were usually under control and fairly quiet. But, "the only problem was [when it was warm], people [were] playing 'ruit 'til three or four in the morning, outside. Just being loud and obnoxious." She had to tell students to go inside, to respect people who wake up early for work—and the students were responsive to her requests and would try to go inside around midnight, she said. This is a telling fact, and one in stark contrast with the behavior of students in response to the police coalitions at past NQRs. At NQR, students were argumentative and disobedient to TUPD, but here they're described as respectful and responsible enough to cut down on noise when asked. Perhaps the dichotomy is a product of students' general resentment for TUPD

trying to shut down a beloved Tufts tradition early in the night.

The complaint about students' noise level is a typical one for students, Tufts University Police Department (TUPD), or landlords to hear about. One landlord in the area, who has rented to only Tufts students for over twenty years, said that when cops get called, "it's usually for too many people, not belligerence. You know, do people go home or linger in the streets?" He said that he's "never seen the destruction, the fist fights, none of that." Only once has he felt a student was truly disrespectful, and he explains that in general, "with [neighbors] calling the police, there's lots of exaggeration involved. If a neighbor really wants to make trouble for you, that'll happen...but if I hear a complaint I'll go check things out, and students are usually polite and receptive." He's had very good relationships with most of his tenants, and at this point, when it comes to reports of partying, he's "started to believe the students [in their version of events] over the neighbors."

Both he and Miller noted that Tufts partying has decreased over the past twenty years, attributing this to steps taken by the administration and increase in workload. Neither of them see the party atmosphere at Tufts as anything aggressive or dangerous. Miller says she loves the students and her job, and the student landlord said that the community views Tufts well, as it is "good at cohabitating." Local news sources agree with this view on Tufts—generally positive. It is virtually impossible to find articles on community members complaining about the university, whereas there are numerous pieces like "Tufts hosts Community Day," "Tufts honors Japan with awareness efforts," and even "Tufts students save squirrel" published in local news sites Medford Patch and Somerville Patch. Tufts is reported on by local sources in a positive light. In some ways, our neighbors and greater commu-

nity know us better than our administration does. The people who live their lives next to us don't see a problem with our partying habits, because they don't see us as police reports or isolated incidents.

However, there also are local articles on the recent ban of NQR and the 2009 Spring Fling "Mass Casualty Incident," which occurred after the administration's ban on drinking at the event. It's likely no coincidence that NQR and Spring Fling are two of the events cited by Miller as big partying days, since at our school big partying days are rare enough to warrant mention. Tufts' partying tends to make local headlines only when there is a change in university policy.

This trend isn't limited to local news, as Tufts has come into the national spotlight regarding its policy changes a few times in recent years. In 2009, it made national headlines when the administration prohibited sexual activity with a roommate in the room, literally putting into words something that most people see as common sense. CNN, the *Huffington Post*, *US News*, and *World Report* published stories on Tufts' new rule, and Jimmy Kimmel, Jay Leno, SNL, and Conan O'Brien all featured jokes about it on their late night shows. Then, last spring, Tufts once again made headlines after members of the men's crew team were suspended for their "Check out our cox" Spring Fling t-shirts. There was a good amount of backlash against the suspension. Sources from Bartstool Sports to the *Boston Globe* weighed in on the issue. Though these news stories weren't directly related to Tufts students' partying or alcohol consumption, they were both instances of Tufts being nationally mocked or derided for what many saw as unnecessary policies related to students' social lives. The nation, judging from reactions to these incidents, appears to view Tufts as an over-policed school—not one with too much partying.

So while the local community may see us as a nuisance at times, they don't see us as belligerent or irresponsible neighbors. And the national view of Tufts is somewhat mocking—far from seeing students as irresponsible or unsafe. Where does our administration's viewpoint fit into all of this? Strangely, it doesn't seem to mesh at all.

The Tufts administration has implemented stricter alcohol policies since 2009, with a new Alcohol Task Force as well as the aforementioned ban on drinking at Spring Fling, the cancellation of NQR, and the temporary automatic placement on Probation 1 for violating any alcohol policy. Miller said that, in the past 10 or 20 years, she's noticed a downturn in the amount of partying at Tufts and attributes this change to the new policies. The administration cited concern for students' safety as their reasoning for each of these actions. Former president Lawrence Bacow wrote an op-ed in the *Daily* in support of the cancellation of NQR as one of his last actions just before leaving Tufts—probably waiting because his overall popularity with students would have suffered if he'd acted earlier. Bacow made a particularly compelling argument about the dangers of NQR, asking "whether a student has to die" before the university would cancel the event.

There's no doubt that NQR was a night when many Tufts students got much drunker than normal. For most, it takes quite a bit of liquor to run in the buff in public. Miller discussed NQR, Spring Fling, and Homecoming as three of the only times that she sees students really drunk. "Those are the only times," she says, "that I cut people off. I tell them, you want

to come back in three or four hours fine, but go home and take a nap." She added, though, that students almost always heed her advice: "They're usually understanding, you know...they say, yeah you're right, I should take a break, you're right."

This sort of rationality is what both Miller and landlords say Tufts students tend to exhibit. Disregarding NQR, Spring Fling, and Homecoming, there's not much basis for the image the administration has of us, as students who are out of control and consume alcohol excessively. Some students may binge drink, but this statement could apply to almost any university in the United States. In looking at the college ranking systems' low ratings of our social atmosphere, the locals unfazed by our behavior, and the national view of Tufts as tame rather than wild, the administration's continuing crackdowns on students' partying seems incongruent. In the case of the Spring Fling alcohol ban, administrative action backfired when the event was declared a "mass casualty incident" and 30 students were hospitalized. If the administration wasn't bent on such strict alcohol policies overall, would there be less binge drinking on days like Spring Fling or Homecoming? The answer is unclear, but the question is still one worth asking ourselves.

When it comes to viewing Tufts' social life, it's important to remember the context: Tufts is a university and university students tend to drink, though we do so on a smaller scale than many other schools. The administration doesn't appear to have the faith in its students that it should. When antagonistic cops try to shut down activities our NQR, we don't respond well or particularly rationally; when our administration tells us we can't legally drink at our Spring Fling, we rebel and binge before the event starts. But, when our friendly neighborhood liquor store worker tells us we're too drunk, we listen, and when our landlords or neighbors call us and ask us to keep it down, we listen. The administration knows we're smart and mature people—they chose us to be here. Now, instead of choosing to enact stricter alcohol policies, perhaps they should look at how Tufts' social life is perceived by others. Tufts isn't a "party school," but it can—and should—still be a school that can have parties. ☺

GOOD CHEAP FUN

CAMPUS

BY DENALI TIETJEN

Tufts students don't pass up any opportunity to party. First there was Fall Ball, then Homecoming, Columbus Day, Halloween (parts one and two), and Hurricane Sandy. With Cage Rage and Winter Bash still coming, it may seem like getting drunk and grinding against beer- and sweat-covered walls ought to be marked on our calendars for the rest of the year. Between official Homecoming shirts reading, "Everyone wins when you start at 9 a.m." and students avoiding Friday morning classes for the sake of Thirsty Thursdays, going out seems to be the prominent social scene here at Tufts. But is it? Or is it all just talk?

Maybe our ego has grown a little too large for our own good. In 2011, Playboy magazine named Tufts the third worst party school in the country. That's worst as in poor quality, the lowest standard, inferior, defective, unpleasant. Since Playboy doesn't have the classiest of standards to begin with, if any of these adjectives hold true, one might actually be wise to stay away from the scene. But can one opt out of partying without committing social suicide? Fortunately, there are plenty of great ways to enjoy yourself on the weekends without needing to drink or party.

For those students who wish to abstain from the party scene entirely, the Tufts Programming Board and Another Option are student-run organizations that offer alternative nighttime activities. While some of the Programming Board's larger dance and concert events do have a tendency to get a little debauched, the film and comedy series, lectures, and recent Boston Ghost Tour are popular alcohol-free events. Another

Option is a club dedicated solely to organizing sober activities such as ice-skating, pumpkin carving, game nights, and snowball fights.

While these clubs have good intentions, it seems as though there is a certain stigma against publicizing your decision not to drink. Another Option's Facebook group has only 18 members, compared to the 513 Facebook RSVPs for 123's 'Halloween Part Deux.' All 2500 Fall Ball tickets sold out within the first day, but the demand to see Jon Lovett, a speechwriter for Barack Obama, was

Can one opt out
of partying without
committing social
suicide?



so low that his lecture was moved to a smaller venue in an effort to have fewer empty seats.

Healthy living housing has historically been the most reliable alternative to the party scene. However, in recent years interest in this option has dropped dramatically. According to Yolanda King, Director of Residential Life, this decrease has not been of major concern amongst the administration. She explained that this trend can be seen in universities nationwide and is thus not indicative of anything endemic to Tufts. The residential office has, however, been trying to integrate healthy living pro-

grams within all residence halls in order to meet the needs of all students.

Many students who do not want to opt out of the party scene altogether are uncomfortable drinking. Since resident assistants (RAs) have an obligation to refrain from substance use, I spoke with Nick Cutsumpas, an RA in Haskell Hall, about how he has managed to maintain a social life without drinking. He says, "If you choose not to drink, then you accept the fact that things are going to be more difficult socially. You just have to be proactive in your social life. If you don't doubt your decision, then you don't feel pressured or left out."

As a runner, I made the commitment with my team to stay dry during the peak of our season. I've found that drunk college kids can be really amusing—on Halloween, I watched a guy in a green jumpsuit (I still haven't figured out what he was attempting to be, other than creepy) ask anyone who would listen to watch him moonwalk. Later, I saw two girls compliment a real policeman on his "costume." Being the only one who remembers the events of the night during brunch at Dewick makes you the center of social life, and the lack of a hangover means that spending the early afternoon in Club Tisch won't be completely unproductive. At the same time, I don't have to give up the chance to have fun with my friends on a Saturday night.

Partying undeniably dominates nightlife at Tufts, as it does at all colleges, but from Programming Board's events to going out sober, viable social alternatives do exist. While going out is the most visible social scene, we don't realize how many people stay in because, well, they're in. ☺

SOBER SHENANIGANS

Free movies
Eat food
Concerts
Stargazing
Jam session
Outdoor adventures

WHAT

Tufts Film Series
The Commons
Throughout Boston
Campus rooftops
Granoff Music Center
At the Loj in NH

WHERE

Every weekend
Until 2 a.m. (don't be late!)
Every single night
When TUPD won't see
Closes at 1 a.m.
Wildertime

WHEN

ANGIE LOU

NOVEMBER 13, 2012

TUFTS OBSERVER

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Kids These Days

BY TAMAR BARDIN

The common conception these days is that kids of our tech-savvy generation are reading less than our parents and less than our grandparents. Our generation is often charged with “losing sight of our roots” or “spending too much time hiding behind a screen,” spending too much time texting or tweeting and not enough time reading for the sake of reading.

These stereotypes ring true to a certain degree. Our generation’s definitions of study and leisure have been entirely altered over the past couple decades by innovations in technology. However, the conduct of our generation is far more nuanced than the majority of critics will admit, particularly when it comes to our reading habits. In fact, a recent Pew Center study found that we’re reading more than any other age group.

Today, children can often be found reading books that rival Tolstoy’s masterpieces in length, if not complexity. Many of the Harry Potter books, for example, are comparable in length to books like Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*. The study conducted by the Pew Research Center examines the prevalence of reading in different age groups. The Center results present a more optimistic look at our generation’s literacy patterns and methods of acquiring knowledge and shows that students between the ages of 16 and 29 are reading just as much as older generations, if not more. The study found that an average of 87% of high school- and college-aged students have read a book in the past year—an average higher than that of any other age group. Those above the age of 65 are the least likely to have read even one book over the course of a year. When it comes to our parents’ generation, there are approximately 20% fewer book readers in contrast. Contrary to popular belief, trends within the study establish that general reading patterns actually decline with age. Admittedly, one must acknowledge the occupations of the varying age groups when consider-

ing these percentages. Students’ primary obligations involve researching, reading, and writing, and they are therefore more inclined to read out of necessity. Looking down the scale, readers beyond the university age are more likely to have commitments other than reading and therefore to dedicate less time to books. Nonetheless, numbers alone show that our generation is in fact winning when it comes to number of individuals reading at least one book a year.

While a substantial portion of the younger generation do continue to read print books, one cannot overlook the role technology has played in the changing nature of reading. Critics of our generation correctly assert that we spend a fair amount of time behind a screen; however, new technologies in the field of literacy are revolutionizing the way in which we utilize this screen. The Pew Research Center also found that approximately one fifth of the younger generation consistently uses cell phones, laptops, tablets, or e-readers to access books. While this fraction of readers may seem relatively low at the moment, technology promises to become increasingly intertwined in the life of the younger generation. The study suggests that support for the e-reader movement will grow with improvements in infrastructure and resource accessibility.

While the use of electronic readers has not yet skyrocketed, the future of physical books is at risk. The notion of books becoming obsolete is not a new idea, but it is not a ludicrous one, either. The benefits of paperless reading are vast, and in certain cases, e-readers actually encourage more reading among users. A college-aged panelist interviewed by Pew states, “I am reading more now that I have purchased an e-reader. I find that by having an e-reader I have developed a habit of reading in my spare time.” While this user’s sentiment towards e-readers may not apply to all current and future e-reader users, the appeal of these devices is evident. With the high

ays Are Reading

potential growth rate in e-reader users, the face of literacy could change entirely. Critics of our generation ought to be more concerned with the future of print books and consequently the nature of the library system as whole.

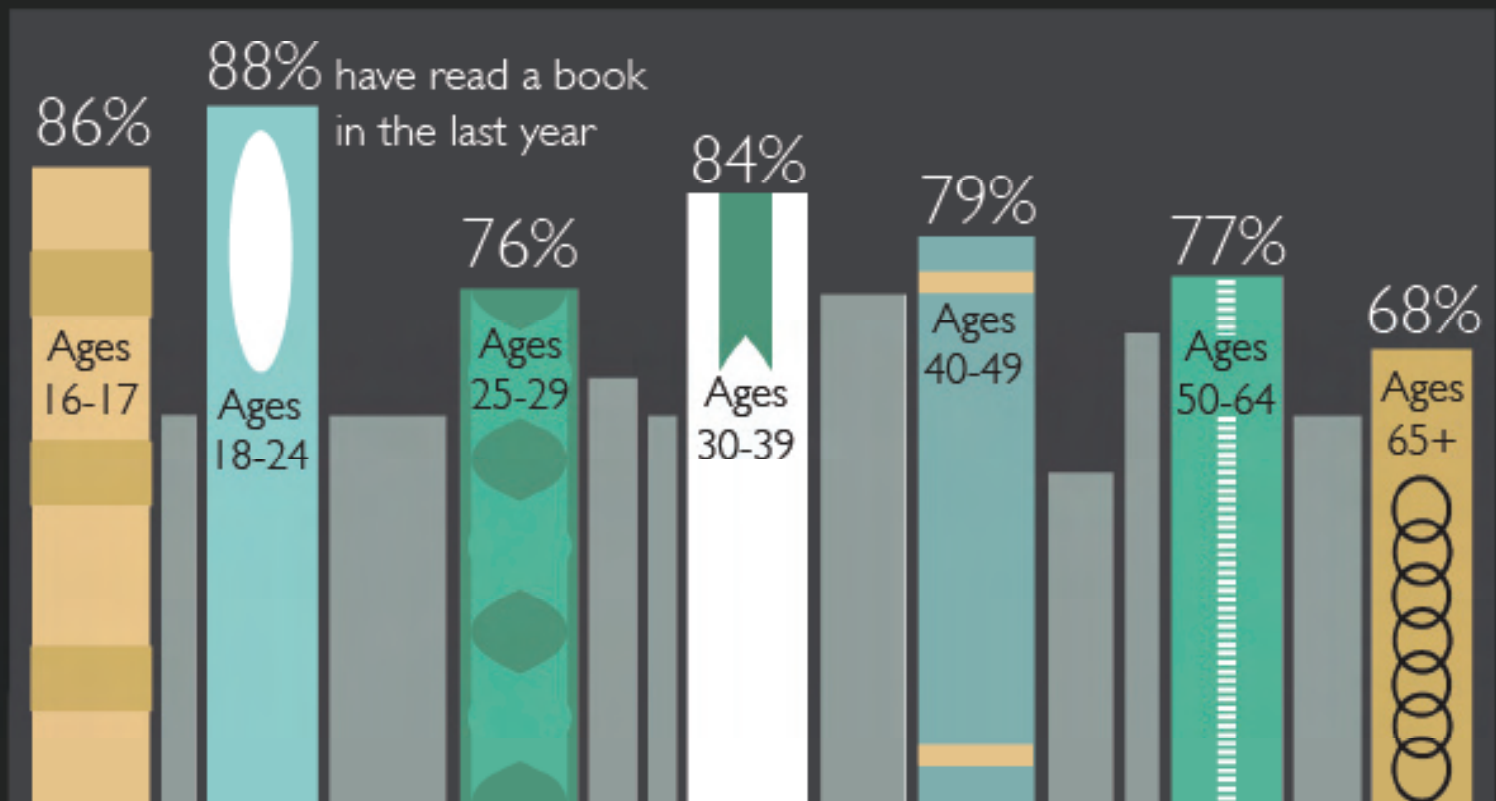
While our generation's desire to read remains strong, our appreciation for libraries is in fact experiencing decline relative to older generations. The Pew study found that almost half of all high school students say that the library holds little significance to them and their families. A similar lack of appreciation can be found in college-aged students, though this sentiment is far less pronounced. While high school- and college-aged students may not be appreciating libraries, this age group is more likely to be found at the library than any other. A mere 49% of those above the age of 65 have used a library in the past year,

compared with 72% of high school library users. While we may not see the value in libraries as much as older generations do, we still visit them very frequently.

Libraries no longer serve primarily as buildings full of books, periodicals, and weathered documents. The resources offered by the library are expanding based on the expectations of a more technologically integrated lifestyle designed by the younger generation. Students now have a world of information at their fingertips, from research seminars to software demonstrations. Just as our reading patterns are beginning to change, our means of researching and library utilization is shifting as well. Seeing as the shift from print to digital texts has proven to be a positive one, the changing nature of research and libraries need not be automatically condemned. Instead, the changes brought about by technology in

all forms of literacy must be embraced in order to reap the benefits of the digital age. According to another recent Pew study on research in the digital world, approximately half of the teachers interviewed believe that, "courses and content focusing on digital literacy should be incorporated into every school's curriculum." The overwhelming amount of digital information offered yields considerably more responsibility as a reader and researcher. In order to ensure that the age of digital literacy does not take on a negative connotation, the younger generation must learn how to best utilize this technology. As long as we accept and understand the malleable nature of reading and researching, levels of reading among younger generations do not seem to be at risk of decline. In this sense, the legacy of literacy and libraries is still very much alive among our generation. [e](#)

BOOK READERS BY AGE



Infographic by Angelina Rotman
Information Courtesy of The Pew Research Center

DROWNING IN DEBT



THE STUDENT DEBT CRISIS REACHES NEW HEIGHTS

BY WALKER BRISTOL

National student loan debt recently surpassed \$1 trillion—exceeding credit card debt—with interest rates rising twice as fast as those on mortgage loans at the housing bubble’s peak. Higher education economists still debate whether or not student debt embodies a “bubble” in the same sense as housing did in 2008, or the dot-com bubble in the ’90s. Nevertheless, graduates—and current students—feel the weight of debt as tuition prices and interest rates continue to increase during a fiscal depression.

Speculative “bubble” theory dictates that debt securities should be traded with values problematically greater (in the interest of profiting the traders) than their “intrinsic” worth. With the advent of Sallie Mae, Wall Street began purchasing asset-back securities collateralized by student loans—known as SLABS—and thereby sought to gain a bit of profit off of the enterprise. What has happened, due to the nature of these assets and the market itself, is that graduates are either defaulting on their loans or not paying them back in a timely manner. The values at which SLABS were purchased by Bank of America, for example, do not match the debt incurred. Compound those discrepancies by millions, and the “bubble” inflates until it is ready to pop.

Admittedly, this phenomenon is distinct from the housing crisis on the basis of scale. Housing debt is roughly ten times as high as student debt, and thus student debt appears less likely to crash the markets the way housing debt did a few years back. But for clarity: students and graduates make up a key demographic to the functioning of the economy. They’re most likely to start businesses, to buy goods (indeed, houses), to kick-start economic growth—none of which they can do while in tremendous debt. When what may be an ever-expanding “bubble” threatens the markets, we can’t rely on the actors (students) who would be keystones to our salvation, because they’re precisely the ones damned by this process in the first place.

Corruption on the part of Sallie Mae and Wall Street is no help either. This goes beyond even the countless suits Sallie Mae has faced (most prominently by New York Governor

Andrew Cuomo) for racist practice: misrepresenting the hope of low-income minority students to pay off loans that would have unfavorable interest rates or altogether hiking those rates on black and Latino borrowers. The profit-seeking manner in which banks enter the security market leads them to, for instance, offer kickbacks to universities if they raise their tuition prices so that future payments might better meet the values that the SLABS were purchased at.

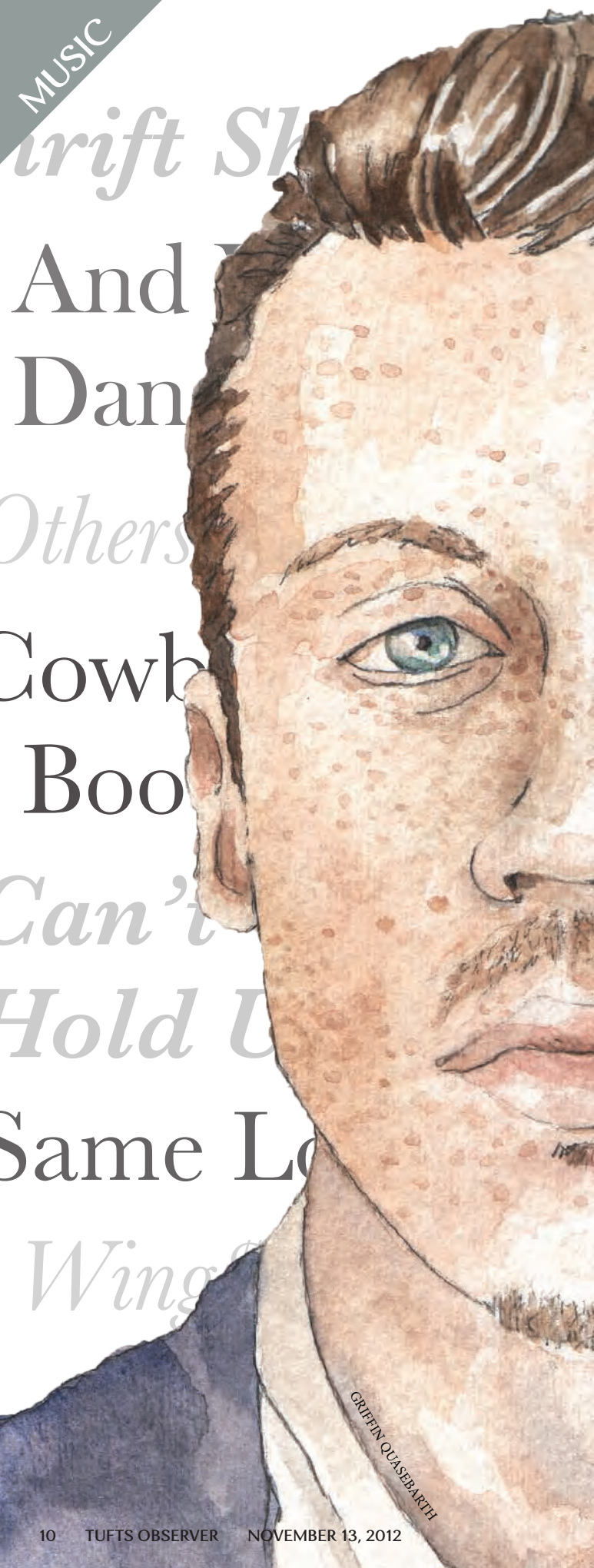
“GRADUATES ARE EITHER DEFAULTING ON THEIR LOANS OR NOT PAYING THEM BACK IN A TIMELY MANNER.”

Things are even more grim if you’re a minority student looking for a loan for a liberal arts degree that will lead you—if you do get a job—to a starting salary of around \$36,000 a year. With an average graduating debt of \$26,600 combined with extremely high interest rates, is your

first step off-campus going to be diving into the consumerist pool and helping to resuscitate the economy?

Striking existing student debt—as has been advocated by Occupy Student Debt, the movement’s newest response to the crisis—and building a fairer system of loans for students would give graduates the leg room to stimulate economic growth. New York Times columnist and resident predictor of “bubble” crises Paul Krugman even admitted, in an interview on The Brian Lehrer Show, “I think the idea that [striking student debt] is a threat to the economy is wrong.” While Krugman isn’t as optimistic as some about student debt refusal being an economic spark, he further notes that our current system is utterly crooked: “Basically, we’ve been using public funds, but running them through the private sector for no good reason, except to provide some extra profits to the financial industry.”

Yet, whether an answer lies in resisting debt, reforming the system, or a hybrid strategy, the crisis continues to deepen, and it demands action on the part of institutionalists and insurrectionists alike. The trillion dollars in student loan debt is a burden on an entire generation. If the American narrative, that a college education means a successful life, is to be believed, the conditions for that narrative to progress must be realized. Student debt has reached a crisis. Are we prepared to respond? ☪



MUSIC

Thrift Shop

And

Dan

Others

Cowboy

Boots

Can't

Hold U

Same Lo

Wings

BY GENE BU REST

As the Alcoholics Anonymous saying goes, “The first step towards recovery is admitting that you have a problem.” For Seattle MC Macklemore (real name Ben Haggerty), admittance is a part of expression. When the hype of his debut album *The Language of My World* fizzled amidst his addiction to alcohol and cough syrup, Macklemore channeled his attempt at sobriety through his music. On 2009’s *The Vs. EP*, his first release with producer Ryan Lewis, Macklemore triumphantly embodied the confident, eloquent artist hinted at in his past releases. His Red Hot Chili Peppers sampling track “Otherside” tells the chilling story of losing time, opportunity and, ultimately, life, to addiction. The humble admittance of guilt, coupled with stark realism, gives Macklemore’s music a mature and fearless quality. His brush with addiction does not define him, nor does it oversaturate his music. Instead, it provides a background for his wisdom and for his observations.

The Heist, Macklemore and Ryan Lewis’s new LP, is fearless. Haggerty’s lyrics about sincerity, consumerism, and aging flow effortlessly over Lewis’s arsenal of upbeat productions. “Same Love,” a heartfelt gospel supporting same-sex marriage, proves that the duo actively defies the conventions of the rap game. With its accompanying music video and expression of support for Washington’s Marriage Equality Referendum 74, “Same Love” is the battle cry of the album, simultaneously providing a context of sincerity while demanding the listener’s attention.

The quiet secret about *The Heist*, however, is that the album’s most poignant, most startling, and ultimately most cathartic moment comes late in the album, after the bounce of “Thrift Shop” and the grit of “Wings” have faded away. “Starting Over” is the 14th track on the album, nestled between the airy, smooth “Gold” and the nostalgic, twanging “Cowboy Boots.” “Starting Over” might drift by unnoticed the first time through *The Heist*—maybe even the second as well. In time, though, its sparse, muted syncopations and pointed strumming (courtesy of Band of Horses’ Ben Bridwell) pervade the senses.

Macklemore starts with the disarming words, “Those three plus years I was so proud of / I threw them all away for two styrofoam cups.” This line reads like a confession to the listener, and Macklemore seems to forgo context out of desire to get the sin off of his chest. From there, he recounts the story of his own relapse using an array of perspectives. First he focuses on his public image (“Made my sobriety so public there’s no fuck-

GRIFFIN QUASBARTH

ON ACCORSI PART

ing privacy”), condemning the position he put himself in. This doesn’t last long, for he succumbs to self-doubt and worrying as he wonders, “Will they think that everything that I’ve written has all been fake.” As a soulful piano melody enters, Macklemore thinks of his family and his girl, before finally focusing on himself—“Feeling sick and helpless / Lost the compass where self is.” Throughout the entire first verse he expands on his unique lens. Where “Otherside” was a descriptive, broad narrative of the syrup culture’s detriments, “Starting Over” is an immensely personal and strikingly immediate account of Macklemore’s break from sobriety. As the song progresses, so does his state of mind. He drifts from disappointment to insecurity and on to remorse and hopeless confusion.

Macklemore tactfully uses the second verse to tell a story, painting a picture of himself at a support group, where he is approached by a fan who found solace in his music. With this anecdote as a background, he delivers a steady mantra twice before exiting the track: “If I can be an example of getting sober / Then I can be an example of starting over.” The power of Macklemore’s hushed tone over the resurfaced piano melody conveys the steady mindfulness of the statement. Even the structure of the line itself conveys logic, using traditional “if, then” reasoning. The clarity and rationality of Macklemore’s words make it clear that he is speaking to himself as much as, if not more than, the listener. The solace created by this repeated affirmation closes the book on Macklemore’s seemingly unedited thought process.

The beauty of “Starting Over” lies in its fearless admittance of fault and its willingness to confront relapse. As Macklemore emotes about his lowest point and his subsequent dedication to reinvention, his potential as an artist seems limitless. By channeling pain and suffering through the microphone, Macklemore captures true catharsis in a way that triumph, glory, and success cannot. On the majority of *The Heist* he is outgoing and smooth, the picture of a self-assured MC. “Starting Over” is the work of a frightened and introspective man; one who can’t even finish a song without talking himself through it. The personal imperfections represented in the lyrics are what humanize and ground the song itself. This is Macklemore’s power as a musician: in his darkest moment, he can confront fear through his honesty. Not in private, not in general, not in theory, but in reality and in public. 🎵



MUSIC

Victory La

Starting

Over

Magic

Fake

ID

White

Privilege

Contradi

Gold

Lonely

By Alex Flores

Lonely is not being alone.
Lonely is you.

Lonely is your fingers
Laced around your drink at a party
And all you see is your thumbs.

It is a soundless din
Around you.
And each thing's much more
Profound, too.

It's driving, Lonely.

Lonely is the streetlights
Glaring at you on the walk home,
Not allowing you
To look at the houses.

To your left.
Or to your right.

Lonely is
Somebody else's cigarette smoke,
But not somebody else.

It's pretty, really.

You want Lonely to leave a trace
So people can know,
But it does not do that for you.
It won't.

Lonely is saying goodbye
To someone
That didn't need to know
You were leaving.

Lonely is you.
Lonely is not being alone.





MAGGIE NEMETZ



SEEING
DOUBLE



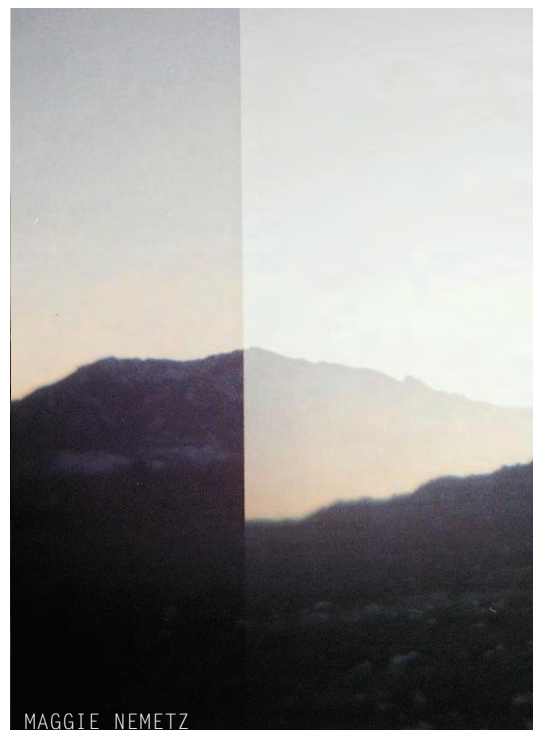
DANIEL MCDONALD



SARAH STRANDED



SARAH STRANDED



MAGGIE NEMETZ



MAGGIE NEMETZ





Define

I've been wanting you to have this forever,
But what is it anyhow?
It may not be anything at all—
a fragile and failing attempt
to pull it all together.
Wrap it in tissue paper.
Tied bows.

Enough to keep it locked in a bubble—here it has a mass.
You can hold it in yours hands. Perhaps...

Put it up against your face.
Is it soft?
How does it feel? I can't tell.
One thing that exists in the world of you
and me, and our togethered sum

that we can't make three dimensional.

We use protractors to measure angles.
We use scales to measure mass.
Gravity's volume. That exists, doesn't it?

Confirming to ourselves that everything is, still is...
Check, re-check, check again.
We doubt all these calculations in the end.

Follow a complicated procedure.
Add things. Take things away.
Cool, combine and separate things.
You're left with strands of something that makes you, you.
See them with bare eyes- a fleeting thing at best.

Touch it and it dissolves.
No need to check.
Doubt it- gamble and laugh at it.

Trust that something that can't possibly exist
Does.

by Laura Sabia

a NOTORIOUS

ART
OF

Perhaps history will never praise Common, Mos Def, or Nas in the same light as Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and Robert Johnson. Nonetheless, rap shares a commonality with jazz and blues that ought to prompt America to reconsider the genre as an art of storytelling. In the early 20th-century, many white Americans condemned jazz and blues as Satan's music. Influenced by slavery, racism, and poverty, blues communicated the incredible pain and plight of the black American. Like these genres that emerged from African-American culture, rap is best understood as an explosive expression of decades of oppression.

Rap faces a double standard unparalleled by other music genres. Hip-hop legend Common Sense put it best when he rapped that "[America] want[s] us to hold justice but ain't givin' us none." Common's lyrics attempt to enlighten all Americans to the struggles of the ghetto. Yet when President Obama invited Common to the White House for a poetry reading in 2011, Fox News criticized the President of not understanding the "sensibilities of many regular Americans." If the concerns of "regular Americans" don't include awareness of the political, social, and economic subjugation of many black Americans, then we truly have not learned from our nation's racial history.

Certainly, rap music content includes violence, intimidation, and rage. Fear and

contempt of rap is an understandable reaction, but to reduce the genre merely to this is naïve and shortsighted. Those who disapprove of the genre for these simplistic reasons alone ignore the harsh realities of many American communities, nurturing a subliminal obliviousness to an already-ostracized culture. These critics must recognize that rap was birthed by black American culture and inspired by hatred for the power of white authority and ignorance, an authority that has robbed many black Americans of economic stability and education. Wyclef Jean urges Americans to go "to the environment and talk to these kids and ask them when's the last time they came and built a school here." Jean touches on something rooted in African-American history. In 1829, black abolitionist David Walker argued that, "they [anti-abolitionists] are so happy to keep us in ignorance and degradation," criticizing a widespread lack of access to education as a tool to keep his race from prospering. Anti-abolitionists viewed his appeal as violent, progressive, and controversial.

While America's racial relations have come a long way since the 19th century, many African-Americans are still limited in their access to both good education and fair job opportunities. Like Walker's 200-year-old appeal, rap is a riotous expression highlighting the black American condition and attempting to educate America about its racial subjugation. By dismissing

rap wholesale, we overlook a prominent voice from the black American community. While modern critics of rap do not respond with the same cruelty, racism, and violence as Walker's opponents did, both groups overlook the complaints of a large majority of the black American community. The sweeping cultural critiques of rap that emerge from outlets such as Fox News are reminiscent of the knee-jerk reactions of the anti-abolitionists of Walker's time, condemning a genre that has the potential to tell stories about the truths of impoverished communities and black history.

However, in rejecting a dismissal of the entire genre of rap, we must not overlook its flaws either. The most reasonable objection to rap is the genre's frequent tendency to reinforce negative stereotypes about African-Americans. It can push many listeners who don't understand the genre to imagine that most black people are violent, uneducated, poor, and unambitious. Rap might reinforce stereotypes, but it did not create them—their roots lie in American culture. To reflect on these racial roles, we must consider the unfortunate American history where African-Americans were enslaved, murdered, deprived of civil rights, and robbed of education. This is a history that still informs the contemporary black American culture.

Rick Ross's lyrics are a prime example of a type of rap that thrives on stereotypes. Rick Ross tells his listeners that he's "whip-



Childish Gambino



Lupe Fiasco



Nas

by NADER SALASS

STORYTELLING

pin' work"—selling crack—and that he's "always getting' money" because "crime pays," promoting a flashy, attractive, and fake image of the poor, subjugated, and beaten black man who got rich off the dope game. His lyrics may push some of his young black listeners to start adopting stereotypes, but music is not the only influence that inspires vulnerable youth to turn towards crime. A stronger impetus is the impoverished state of the inner-city ghetto life. Even Ross's lyrics sometimes reflect these hardships, depicting young men as dealing drugs for a means of survival, "just tryna' pay the light bill [and] phone bill."


Fortunately, major players of the rap world have been heading in a positive direction. For years, artists like Common and Mos Def have used their music to constructively expose the political injustices faced by the African-American community. More recently, new-age rappers like Lupe Fiasco, Kendrick Lamar, Kanye West, and Childish Gambino are beginning to emphasize and popularize this theme in their music. While Rick Ross flaunts his false image, these popular artists urge young black men to "stop and redefine black power." They beg their listeners to understand that by turning to crime, black men are bending to the expectations of their stereotypes.

For instance, Kendrick's recent hip-hop masterpiece, *Good Kid, M.A.A.D City*, explores the negative influences of a ghetto

environment on the youth. In *Good Kid*, Kendrick raps, "What am I supposed to do when the blinking of red and blue flash from the top of my roof?" Kendrick links the colors red and blue not only to the high police presence in his neighborhood, but also to the illicit activity of the Bloods (red) and Crips (blue) gangs. He makes the salient point that it is difficult to maintain your innocence and ethics in a neighborhood filled with crime, murder, and poverty. In this same song, he mentions that the police ask him to lift up his shirt in search of a gang tattoo. He argues that this type of racial profiling fosters a justified dislike of authority. Ultimately, Kendrick reveals that while young blacks in a "mad city" are vindicated in hating authority, they should share an equal dislike for the crime in their neighborhoods. Despite recognizing existing stereotypes, these popular lyrics push rap's influence on young black Americans in a more constructive direction.

Similarly, the often-controversial Kanye West's *Watch the Throne*, his 2011 collaborative album with Jay-Z, alludes to lower life expectancy among black men in part due to black-on-black crime. He attributes this to the fact that "the system's working effectively." This is the same system that gives "Jerome more time than Brandon." These lyrics from Kanye's acclaimed *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy* reference the fact that, for 25 years, crack-cocaine users faced harsher sen-

tences than users of regular cocaine. This policy had a propensity to target African-American drug users, as they were more likely to smoke crack-cocaine than white drug users, who typically snort regular cocaine. Only in 2010, under President Obama, did Congress alter these unfair laws in the Fair-Sentencing Act. Ultimately, Kanye's lyrics, though often filled with his ego, bring racial injustices to light and encourage African Americans to avoid crime as a means of survival in the ghetto.

Behind the caricatured and conflicting faces of rap music, there lies an important cultural voice that continues to evolve to this day. Yes, rap is often obscured by the violence, misogyny, vice, and worship of wealth. However, when considered in its cultural and historical context, the genre is rooted in greater virtue and purpose. Despite its notorious reputation, the genre has proven to be an art form capable of powerful storytelling. Many new-age rappers are pushing the genre in a revolutionary direction by asking their target audience to defy the expectations of an often-unjust authority. Kanye implores young African-Americans to stop committing gang murder, while Gambino and Kendrick ask them to acknowledge and break away from typical black stereotypes. More than ever, rap is empowering its listeners and urging change instead of only expressing the pain of impoverished communities. This is a direction that we cannot ignore. 



Common

ART BY ROBERT COLLINS



Kanye West



Kendrick Lamar



HERE I AM.

THIS IS ME PARTYING

BY ALISON PINKERTON

Girl A had a great time last night. She and her roommates gathered with their thirty or forty closest friends in Girl A's tiny apartment just off campus. The walls carried pictures—family shots, scenes from abroad, summer sunsets—as well as Monet's *Water Lilies* and Audrey Hepburn movie prints. Girl A and her friends laughed marvelously and played music, though I can't be sure just what kind it was. I can say that, drinks in hand, they danced on hand-me-down coffee tables and posed in freshly purchased outfits for their friends—and for the world.

I don't go to school with Girl A and haven't seen her in years (though Girl B, a mutual acquaintance of ours, was in attendance last night). How, then, am I privy to all this knowledge about her social life (this is not just a one-night anecdote: I could recount any number of her nights and days with the same detail)? Girl A and her friends have cameras. And on any given night at any given moment, Girl

A's friends are performing a delicate socio-technological waltz in which they pose, snap, and upload at a pace hard to rival.

Of course, it is both fun and comforting to collect snapshots. In doing so, we transform liquid moments into solid memories. I have framed pictures on my desk and collages hanging from my walls and they remind me of the people and places I hold dear. The camera, versions of which date back to the fifth century B.C., intends to preserve present moments for future remembrance. How often have we gently turned the yellowed pages of a grandmother's photo album or marveled at her hanging black-and-white portraits? These relics demand and exude respect, for they transport us a great distance and transform our feelings.

Girl A has 2,048 pictures of herself on her Facebook page from the last three years. That averages out to around 683 pictures per year. Assuming that the vast majority of these pictures are from college in-session months, we now notice that Girl A appears in about 114 pictures a month, meaning almost four pictures a day. Per-

sonally, I cannot think of four events on my run-of-the-mill Tuesday that I would consider photo-worthy, and I'm not sure I know many people who would, but that's beside the point. Girl A has a fun life. She is young, sharp, and metropolitan. With a grin as wide as it is warming, Girl A is quick to gather friends and take them to the hottest parties. Many envy her effortless style and diplomatic humor. Maybe, for Girl A, four pictures a day cannot tell half the story of her rich, cosmopolitan life. Maybe her existence is full of Kodak moments to be captured. She is basking in her fresh youth, and she may want to save physical evidence for posterity.

And isn't that what we're all doing? We revel in our taut-skinned innocence, making friends and enemies, strides and mistakes, love and drama. And nothing epitomizes this odd moment of irresponsible maturity quite like the party. The college party maintains the façade of sophistication but can really be rather messy (much like the college student). The party is ubiquitous. Even the most reserved wallflowers among us are drawn to the party. They may not mill about fraternity houses giggling over fruity, mysterious drinks, but to them, the party remains a fascinating social experiment. And to those who *are* milling about fraternity houses giggling over fruity, mysterious drinks—well, I needn't explain their attraction to the party; it's just sheer fun. At a party, supposedly, we can be pure and uninhibited and simply enjoy one another. We can be fully joyous and present in the unique moment we are navigating as college-aged students, or so it would seem. The camera, as used by some today, inhibits this.

Cameras are methods of seeing. I can lie in the grass, point the camera up, and capture an image of a tree that I may not have seen in the same way otherwise. In the college setting, cameras are everywhere. What was once a method of seeing is now a method of spying, seeking, watching, and ogling. And with so many eyes, both natural and glass, upon us, we cannot help but become increasingly self-aware. How do I look? How am I coming across on camera? Do I look less fun than my friends? More fun? How does this party look compared

to the last? Does it compare to my high school friends' parties? This constant self-consciousness is unhealthy. When we view ourselves too often through the camera lens, we are vain and self-centered, yes, but also insecure. We are competitive. And not only about the picture itself; we care about the quantity, the quality, the comments and the "likes", and even the time at which we upload the photo. The product today neither transports nor transforms. Instead, it serves to augment one's social status and diminish others'. Months ago, I unfortunately was a passive participant to the following conversation:

**A Thursday night, around 12:30 p.m.,
in a cab returning home from a bar**

FRIEND 1

**(catatonically staring at iPhone)
These pictures are so cute! I can't wait
to upload them!**

FRIEND 2

**I know! We looked so good tonight.
Definitely put those on Facebook.**

FRIEND 1

**Wait, I have an even better idea.
Let's wait a few hours and then upload
them at, like, 3 a.m. Then all of our other
friends will think we were out so late.**

FRIEND 2

Oh my God, you're a genius!

CECELIA SHAPIRO

If the purpose of photography is to preserve moments, then what, exactly, are we preserving when we distort them? Ever more, we wish to preserve (rather, display) the idea of how a moment is "supposed" to appear according to unwritten college standards. What we are portraying is neither honest nor candid. In this way and in this culture, photographs are contrived and agenda-driven.

We often make fun of "MySpace pictures" because they so blatantly try to convey a message. "Look at me!" a scantily-clad, sultry-eyed MySpace user declares as she steamily stares into the lens; "I'm sexy." On Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, though, we clever college students do the same. A picture of two friends under the blacklight with one arm raised and the other clutching a drink screams, "Here I am. This is me partying."

So how, then, does the unavoidable presence of cameras inform the ways in which we socialize? In "The Loss of the Creature," Walker Percy writes on how photography bastardizes the experience of visiting the Grand Canyon. I have never been to the Grand Canyon, but I have seen pictures and footage and postcards.

Percy believes that my preconception of the Grand Canyon—the abstraction of the Grand Canyon in my mind—will take away from my experience as a visitor. "The sightseer," he writes, "measures his satisfaction by the degree to which the canyon conforms to the preformed complex." I cannot purely appreciate the Grand Canyon because my experience of the Grand Canyon is already tainted by expectations. In the same way, I do not go to a party and appreciate it for its quality as a party. I measure it up to pictures of other parties that I have seen. And when taking my own photos, I try to present my experience at a party in much the same way that I have seen parties presented time and again. My experience must match his and hers and theirs, or else it may not fully be "the experience" I have been sold.

Percy continues, "the highest point, the term of the sightseer's satisfaction, is not the sovereign discovery of the thing before him; it is rather the measuring up

of the thing to the criterion of the preformed symbolic complex." Our socialization, then, is an attempt to approximate whatever it is we are doing with whatever it is we believe we "should" be doing. Our exposure to deluges of Facebook photos every day makes us hyper-aware of social norms and archetypes. We too, then, become aware of our successes and failures at "fitting in" to these norms. When we party, we party knowing both what "party pictures" look like and how our own "party pictures" will turn out. The trend of omnipresent photography traps us in a positive feedback cycle. I see pictures of parties, I go to parties to approximate the pictures, people take pictures of me at the party, others see my pictures, they go to parties to approximate my pictures, etc. This social narrative foments anxiety and tarnishes the actual socialization.

I understand we do not consciously go to parties with the sole hope of recreating our friends' pictures. We go to be young and to have fun, but the force of constant photography is pervasive and does inform our behavior.

In this cycle, we seek authentication. "I want to make sure I'm doing this right," we think. Instead, we find the opposite. If I were to photocopy my class notes for a friend, I would provide him with a clear clone of the original. If my friend wanted to photocopy his photocopy for another friend, the newest photocopy would be readable, but shadowy and blurred. Let's say this process continued for ten more photocopies-of-photocopies. Halfway through, the product would be ruined. The copies would get darker and fuzzier; eventually, it would be impossible to tell from which document the photocopy came. Similarly, the more we determine our parties by pictures ("copies") of other parties, the farther we err from really socializing—from sharing time, space, and laughs with others.

For the "sightseer," Percy states, "there is no present; there is only the past of what has been formulated and seen and the future of what has not been formulated and not seen. The present is surrendered to the past and the future." In college, we surrender the present to posing and pointing and clicking. We can banish our anxiety and live more presently by ridding ourselves of the cameras. ☺



Native American and colonial religious history can offer America's modern political and cultural ills some indispensable remedies. The culture of some American tribes, such as the Cherokee, frames life less as a dogged pursuit of happiness and more as a spiritual quest for natural harmony. On the other hand, a strict, fearful, and widespread religious following allowed many 17th and 18th century Puritans to commit inconceivable atrocities against many indigenous tribes. A similar mentality is too frequently incorporated in an American cultural and political structure that often fails to put religion aside when developing policies. Ultimately, by reflecting on this nation's cultural past, parsing the importance of religion on our global outlook, and valuing verifiable truths, we could conceive a more rational perspective both culturally and politically.

Translated Cherokee scriptures mention that they "do not know" who created the earth and all its beings. This lack of centralized theistic focus highlights a fundamental difference between the two groups' worldviews. Without fear of wrathful divine punishment, the Cherokee perspective focuses more on natural

harmony within the world. For instance, "How The World Was Made", the Cherokee story of origin, demonstrates a belief that the Upper, Middle, and Underworlds interact with each other in an attempt to reach inter-global harmony. Humans must work to help maintain harmony within these realms by preventing war, sickness, bad crop seasons, and other disasters on earth. Even a single individual could disturb the balance by not respecting his or her natural environment. Others—including humans, animals, and the earth—could suffer the consequences of harmful actions. In this altruistic value system, there is no outlying paradise, such as heaven, and no single omnipotent being: their heaven is the earth. This mentality, empty of an abstract and obscure utopia, affirms the importance of existence on earth instead of overvaluing a distant heaven. This mentality also encourages a keen respect for nature. By adopting similar viewpoints to the Cherokee, we may be able to foster a better appreciation for our earth and take action to reduce our carbon footprint.

Conversely, radical Puritanism often encouraged a highly self-concerned and fearful attitude, which prevented both rationality and an understanding of unfamiliar

cultures. In the Puritan interpretation of their scripture, God predetermined the individuals sent to heaven. Nobody was guaranteed salvation; if anyone sinned they were doomed to hell. If one stringently followed Puritan values, he or she may have reached spiritual peace and, in the afterlife, God's heaven. However, God still chose their spiritual fate, which they would be unaware of it until after death. In his 1741 sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," a fervent Jonathan Edwards shouted that God's unselected and wicked men naïvely "walk over the pit of hell on a rotten covering." He described a wrathful God, demonstrating the Puritan obsession with eternal salvation. This attitude framed life as more of a burden than a blessing, focusing on fear at the expense of rationality.

Many Americans today fall victim to a very similar mentality of failing to value scientific truths, with some politicians attempting to pass their desired policies—often founded on their personal religious beliefs—through ignorant and inflammatory means. Take for instance Missouri Representative Todd Akin, whose recent comments about the biology behind the rape of women have stirred much controversy. Akin claims

THIS SIDE OF PARADISE



BY NADER SALASS

that the female reproductive system can somehow detect instances of “legitimate rape” and thereby prevent unwanted pregnancies. How is that, after so much effort to redefine rape, Americans still cannot fully comprehend and agree on the realities of this crime? The policy advocated by Akin and his fellow anti-abortion proponents is much inspired by conservative evangelical followings. Unfortunately, Akin demonstrates how this nation is often slow to consent to policies based on scientific, logical methods. Moreover, this shows that our politics can be corrupted by a power dynamic that is willing to ignore moral wrongdoings.

At any rate, the Puritans’ case was much more severe. Their delusional mentalities might explain many brutal massacres, such as that of the Pequot War of 1637, when colonists massacred several hundred Native Americans. The battle mostly erupted due to disputes regarding land and crops. While these arguments fueled the violence, they do not explain the widespread colonial belief that this violence was ethically acceptable. Puritan Captain John Mason, who led the battle, declared that the colonists had a “divine justification” for their murders. Anything

challenging God’s agenda seemed inferior to these radical Puritans. Thus, the unawareness of the appalling harm that they caused the Native Americans most likely stemmed from the Puritans’ inclination to follow God’s rigid and daunting agenda—without question. This agenda frequently promoted a widespread following and a cold disrespect of different cultures and value systems.

Some Americans may have no problem deeming the Puritans wildly ignorant. At the same time, however, many modern Americans fail to understand foreign and unfamiliar cultures. For instance, it is easy for us to perceive Iran as a threat because we often associate this nation with strong feelings of fear. Similarly, former President George W. Bush frequently used the term “axis of evil” when referring to “threatening” nations. This type of discourse often exaggerates the realities of what we perceive as harmful. Yes, many of these “evil” nations did—and still do—commit horrible atrocities to their people. By using vague and loaded terms like “evil,” we promote an unintelligent and narrow understanding of what is truly a direct threat and what is inflated. While this frightening terminology is not based on religious text,

as it was with Edwards and his Puritan followers, it still heightens our emotional fears instead of endorsing reason.

Why not learn from the Cherokee mentality and the Puritan fear and break the cycle of senselessness? We could stand to appreciate nature, understand foreign cultures, and develop less irrational political goals. We must affirm what exists before us. Fortunately, some evangelicals are beginning to do so by promoting an environmental movement that is based on their theology. They argue that humans ought to work to protect and save the earth that God worked to create. While still focused on religion, this is an excellent step in developing moral and spiritual sentiments that value rationality. This also proves that some interpretations of religion can be very constructive. At any rate, perhaps it is too much to ask this nation to drop its widespread value of religious hindrances. Maybe many Americans will always depend on religion to explain the phenomena of our existence. However, we must recognize that an unquestioning and concentrated focus on religion commonly comes at the price of reason. ©



IT'S ALL GR

Students of Tufts, your weekend social lives of partying at fraternities may be in danger. Despite lines stretching from fraternity doorsteps to the streets on weekends and frats reaching full capacity at their sweaty parties, the NESCAC schools have become increasingly willing to phase out Greek life. Over the past few decades, eight out of the eleven NESCAC schools banned fraternities and sororities on campus. This left only three: Trinity, Wesleyan, and Tufts. But just a few months ago, Trinity College passed a decision forcing all fraternities and sororities on campus to become co-ed. Many will consequently lose their charters, putting Greek life at risk. This begs an important question: is Tufts next?

With the policy changes at Trinity, Tufts and Wesleyan might soon be the only two NESCAC schools left with Greek life. Officially, Tufts has made no statements regarding any shift in policy towards fraternities and sororities on campus. In the aftermath of the Trinity decision, the Tufts administration issued a statement explaining, "Tufts opted for the status quo, but would work closely with fraternities to improve their behavior, imposing severe penalties for rule infringement

ments." With the tide turning against Greek life at NESCAC schools, however, some fear it is threatened here at Tufts. For example, Kyle Carnes, a senior and president of Theta Delta Chi, explains, "With the on and off loss of Sig-Ep, Sigma Nu, and DU due to the lack of housing, I've definitely worried that the writing is on the wall for us. If we don't change, we may not be here in a couple of years." For other brothers, like Austin Wood of ATO, there is a sense of a growing anti-Greek life sentiment among Tufts students. "We could be in danger," Wood argues. "I personally think Tufts is sensitive to frat issues and is becoming more anti-frat."

Not all members of Greek life perceive a bias against fraternities and sororities on campus. For example, since sororities are not allowed to throw parties due to centuries-old Massachusetts' brothel laws, their only recent disciplinary problems have been the result of hazing. For this reason, their place on campus is not as tenuous as that of the fraternities. In addition, Andrew Carp of ZBT believes that, "The Tufts administration has been extremely considerate and flexible when it comes to our personal agenda... Tufts students seem to be extremely support-

ive of Greek culture, and [while] obviously there will be people who are meant for Greek life and those who are not, this campus is far from anti-Greek." Jack Fleming, president of Sigma Nu, concurs that the Tufts administration has no intention of phasing out fraternities. Among the student populace especially, Fleming believes that, "The appeal of frats has grown... We're seeing people pledging who say, 'I would've never imagined joining a frat.'"

When asked about the merits of Greek life, the opinions among Tufts students are incredibly diverse. A vocal few were willing to express their dislike of Greek life and the behavior it perpetuates. "It is an insidious culture," one student argues. "Even if I like somebody outside the system, as soon as they're in it, it does change [them] a little bit." Another student despises the culture of fraternities, bluntly explaining that, "Guys can be pigs sometimes, so as soon as you put a bunch of guys who already have macho tendencies and similar views together, it gets more extreme." Other students like Emily Turner, a sophomore, find Greek life superficial. "Basically, you're paying for friends if you're in a fraternity or sorority," she ex-



PHOTOS BY ERIC WINK

ΣΣΚ TO ME

BY ΔΔRON LANGERMAN

plains. “I think it’s a self-conscious thing. I’m not a hater of the dance parties, but I do think if fraternities didn’t exist, there’d be other options.”

Others voice more positive opinions towards Greek life. A strong argument can be made that pledging builds character, fostering an important sense of brotherhood or sisterhood among their members. Most students, however, think parties at the fraternities are a fun way to get out on the weekends, even if they have some qualms about “frat culture.” For example, Jake McCauley, a junior at Tufts, admits that Greek life does “promote some questionable activities, but I think if you go about it with the right attitude you can have a fun time getting to know people.”

Members of the Greek community are especially adamant about defending the positive aspects of their organizations. Many brothers disagree with the stereotype that fraternities are all about alcohol and getting with girls. ZBT’s Carp explains his decision to join a fraternity differently: “When going through a list of reasons in my head for why I joined Greek life, the idea of alcohol or parties never even scraped the edge of

my thought process. I became a brother because I loved the guys in my fraternity and because I wanted to become a part of their culture which I admired.” Other members of Greek life echo such sentiments. Carnes of 123 continually emphasizes that, “Fraternity members are Tufts students first and members of the fraternity second.” Sigma Nu’s Fleming believes that the “one thing Greek life does better than any other group on campus is develop people. I can’t think of another situation where I would’ve gotten to take on so many leadership roles in four years.”

Perhaps the problems of so-called “frat culture”—such as binge-drinking and machismo values—don’t stem from Greek life itself, but rather an American party tradition that puts such superficial ideals on a pedestal. At other house parties, raves, and events like Fall Ball or Winter Bash, many of the same problems are equally apparent. And, after interviewing so many fraternity and sorority members, few discuss the parties as their favorite part of Greek life. They emphasize the sense of brotherhood and sisterhood, as well as the support network that their houses provide. They’re eager to talk about the fact

that all fraternities and sororities on campus do a significant amount of philanthropy and community service work.

Important steps have even been taken to dispel these myths about Greek life. Take Back the Night, a recent event that occurred on the Tisch roof, exemplifies these efforts. The event attempted to combat sexual violence through testimonials from victims of sexual abuse. Members from all chapters of Greek life—fraternities and sororities alike—attended in large numbers. According to Carp, “Fraternities on campus all support a highly regarded anti-rape agenda. After Take Back the Night, one of the brothers is considering becoming a member of the BARCC (Boston Area Rape Crises Center).”

Greek life on campus will always be controversial. As Carnes explains, “When you have a close-knit group who are insular, they are a lot of times going to be disliked from the outside. And that’s just natural.” But as long as fraternities and sororities proactively take positive steps to change this image on campus, stereotypes about Greek culture will continue to erode, and, more importantly, the administration will have no legitimate reason to phase it out. ☺



ne of the many reasons Tufts students are lucky to have easy access to downtown Boston is the city's impressive art scene. The Museum of Fine Arts, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and the Institute of Contemporary Art are all a relatively quick T ride away. Less widely known is that we have a wide array of excellent local galleries at our fingertips. Visiting galleries is a great way to see works of art for free in an intimate setting, but I personally had yet to venture into any of the galleries I'd noticed lining Newbury Street and other areas of Boston until this past weekend, when I went on a self-directed gallery tour of the city.

The best part of the Boston gallery scene is that checking out one or two (or more!) galleries is easily incorporated into a day spent downtown. For the most part, Boston's galleries are located in two areas: the Back Bay (primarily on Newbury Street) and the South End (primarily on Harrison Avenue). If you're shopping on Newbury or grabbing a bite to eat in the South End, adding a couple gallery stops to your agenda can be a great way to see unique art that you wouldn't see anywhere else. Newbury Street galleries mostly carry works by established artists—you'll find everything from Rembrandt to Warhol—while Harrison Avenue galleries offer contemporary art from artists with ongoing careers.

I started my excursion on Newbury Street at the International Poster Gallery (205 Newbury Street). The title of this gallery says it all, as it's filled with vintage advertisements from France, Italy, Sweden, Russia and the Netherlands.

Once inside, take a moment to click around their in-store online catalogue. The exhibition currently on display, "Global Persuasion: Mid-Century Modern Posters," showcases brightly colored post-WWII posters that demonstrate the consumer and corporate trends of the

1950s poster boom. The Poster Gallery has a great collection of vintage magazine covers and clippings, which, starting at \$15, are a much more affordable price point than most of the vintage posters—a great idea for decorating a college bedroom or holiday gifting.

Next up is the Pucker Gallery (171 Newbury Street). The Pucker Gallery houses five floors full of ceramics, paintings, drawings, photography, and sculptures, described by gallery associate Allison Wetzel as "a small museum."

As you first enter the gallery, you can see the main exhibition on the gallery's

The gallery showcases brightly colored post-WWII posters that demonstrate the consumer and corporate trends of the 1950s poster boom.

first floor - currently the work of Samuel Bak, a Holocaust survivor who uses chess pieces and game board imagery in his paintings to symbolize the workings of world affairs. Gallery associates will also take you to see any of the art on the remaining four floors, and Wetzel was very informative in describing both Bak's work, as well as the photography, pottery, and cloth paintings she showed me on the upper floors.

Newbury Fine Arts (29 Newbury Street) is next door to Galerie d'Orsay and is a unique presence on Newbury, because it showcases the works of contemporary, mid-career artists rather than the well-known artists featured at other Newbury Street galleries. I loved the Jeffrey Terreson one-man show currently on exhibit, and the upcoming Tim Merrett exhibition, opening November 4, looks

excellent as well. Merrett is a local artist whose "Clearhistory" paintings closely examine facets of classic works of art and recreate them, incorporating his own elements such as vibrant pops of background color.

Also of note on Newbury are Gallery Naga (a contemporary art gallery with a calming aesthetic located in the neo-Gothic Church of the Covenant at 67 Newbury Street), DTR Modern Galleries (a gallery franchise at 167 Newbury Street with an upcoming Salvador Dalí exhibition), and Martin Lawrence Galleries (another modern gallery on 77 Newbury with remarkable works by Miró and Picasso—and a playful atmosphere, with the upbeat Fitz and the Tantrums playing in the background).

Leaving Newbury, Harrison Avenue in the South End is a treat to visit. 450 Harrison Avenue is a large building housing a multitude of galleries—Bromfield Gallery, Carroll and Sons, Chase Young Gallery, Gallery Benoit, Gallery Kayafas, Kingston Gallery, Samsøn, Soprafina Gallery, and Steven Zevitas Gallery—in addition to a number of specialty shops. Each is worth stopping into, as is the SoWa Artists Guild, also located in the building.

My favorite South End gallery was actually across the street, at 460 Harrison Avenue. Gurari Collections' owner Russ Gerard told me that he was aiming to bring a bit of New York City to Boston. The exhibition that's currently wrapping up at Gurari is a series of up-close photos of NYC subway walls by Brooklyn artist Christopher Fisher. Complementing the photographs were a variety of three-dimensional objects, from simple metal tables and chairs to show how the artwork looks proportionate to furniture, to Gerard's self-titled "cabinet of curiosity," housing a variety of scientific apparatuses.

Venture over soon to see Gurari Collections' promising new exhibition, a series of bicycle paintings and works on paper by Brooklyn artist Taliah Lempert. With so many undiscovered galleries to explore, the art world in Boston holds endless opportunities. ☺

POLICE BLOTTER

BY DOUGLAS CAVERS & FLO WEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD 10:20 PM

A TUPD officer saw a Tufts student punch another student on Professor's Row and Packard Ave, whom they arrested for assault. Reportedly, the victim had been hassling the cookie-man. The assaulting student told the victim not to "give the cookie-man a hard time," and then punched him. What in the world could you have against the cookie-man?

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND 2:30 AM

TUPD officers were dispatched to the Hillel Center for reports of people climbing onto the roof. When the officers arrived, they found a couple of students clad in Halloween costumes. One of them was wearing an *Assassin's Creed* costume. He was carrying a metallic double-edged knife, which the officers confiscated. The students claimed that they were on the roof because they wanted to see the planet Jupiter. A metallic double-edged knife? What a creative and antisocial costume idea!

CROSSWORD by Lindsey Kellogg *The key is available online at tuftsobserver.org*

ACROSS

1. pearly whites
6. Stoker who wrote about vampires
10. a frat member
13. The Book of Mormon musical number "---- Diga Eebowai"
14. excited and willing
16. poetic preposition
17. movie where Scarlett Johansson, Robert Downey, Jr., et al. convene to kick ass
19. "Hello" in Lisbon
20. person whose game it is in the book by Orson Scott Card
21. adjective describing or predicting what will happen in the future
23. hats for letters

27. class that might follow bio, calc or soc
28. midsections (of bodies)
29. Andy who is a New England sports broadcaster
32. trick or ----
33. belonging to the author of "The Raven"
34. affirmative response to a woman
38. acronym for a touchable Apple product
39. adverb that's a synonym of "safely"
42. "- -- bibliotheque"
43. Russian leader pre-20th century (one of the many spelling variations)
45. minerals
46. person playing another person
48. Anderson who is the original silver fox
50. division of the Nationals and the Phillies
51. salad makings

- from deep diving too quickly
7. anger
8. one who gets older
9. the sea, in Paris
10. treasure, to pirates
11. object surviving from a historical time
12. type of plant also known as Atriplex (I give you permission to Wikipedia this)
15. says they'll come to your party
18. anthropomorphic trees
22. of a pale grayish color
23. Silverstein's A Light in the ----
24. the Peace ----
25. period in which dinosaurs dominated the land
26. European NASA
29. "he's a ----," ie he has no hope left
30. 2012 winner of 50-across's neighbor directly to the west, or, this author's baseball team
31. possible class for students from Spain, China, etc.
33. not tainted
35. "---- Jumbo's"
36. moving-through-the-wet-snow verb
37. Atlanta's metro system
40. mistake exclamation
41. an American version of "vosotros"
44. fish eggs
47. it comes after BCE
49. with "go," something you might do as a morning routine
50. things beloved by college students
51. go along smoothly
52. they may be caused by racial tension or major sporting events
53. Christine's guy in Phantom of the Opera
56. you can be a DJ there!
57. letter before S, and the "ray" that beat out HD DVD
60. famous Hugh's nickname
61. Paris commuter rail
62. anger
63. attendee of the Naval Academy, for short
64. with -to, a delicious basil-y sauce



53. with -eigh, a city in North Carolina
54. rap album "--- Carter"
55. dialogue-less comic strip about a young boy
56. it's like a tortilla
58. vowels signifying a debt
59. a common oxymoron
65. opposite of an STD? (literally)
66. Tufts really pushes getting your --- shots
67. the creepiest of the Great Lakes
68. conjugation of "ser"
69. a ghastly demon
70. Flintstone and Weasley

DOWN

2. sound of boredom
3. notes one might play to make a perfect fourth
4. much-maligned air security organization
5. the haves and the -----
6. you get these if you come up





TUFTS OBSERVER
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PLEASE RECYCLE