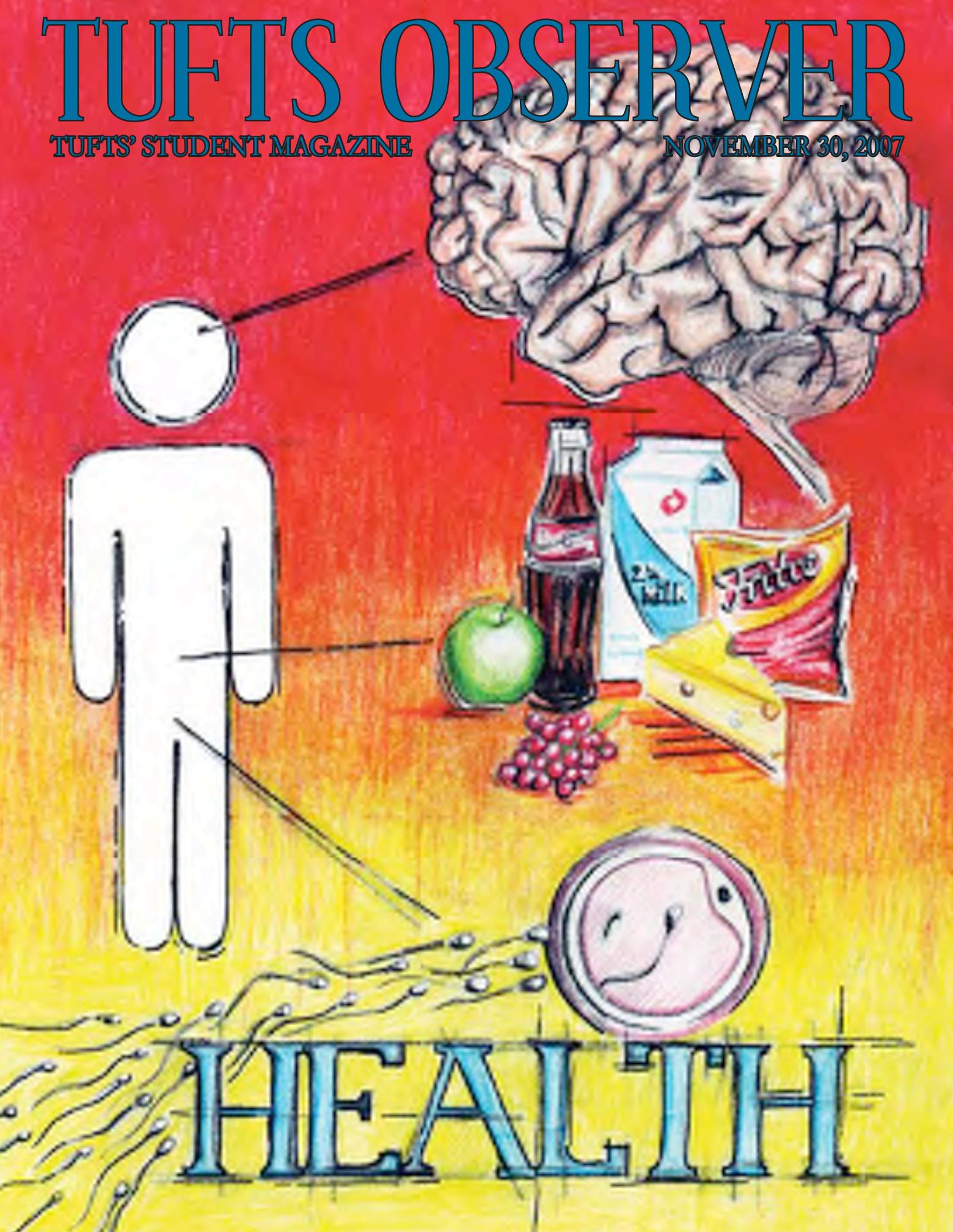


# TUFTS OBSERVER

TUFTS' STUDENT MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 30, 2007



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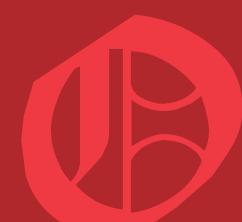
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The Observer has been Tufts' weekly publication of record since 1895. Our dedication to in-depth reporting, journalistic innovation, and honest dialogue has remained intact for over a century. Today, we offer insightful news analysis, cogent and diverse opinion pieces, and lively reviews of current arts, entertainment, and sports. 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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# Here's to Your Health

BY DUNCAN PICKARD

**T**he U.S. government recommends that college students get an hour of exercise a day as part of a balanced fitness routine that includes cardio workouts, strength training, and stretching.

That doesn't seem too hard either: one hour out of every 24 devoted to your health? But, of course, it's not that easy. Excuses abound. "I don't have time, the gym is too far away, I'm too tired."

Tufts recognizes these challenges. The Friedman School of Nutrition recently conducted a study to find out how college affects students physically over four years. President Bacow summarizes the findings in a promotional video for the University: "College is bad for your health."

To his credit, he's tried to fix that. The new athletic facility will go a long way in attracting students back to campus with facilities that won't predate World War II and will be cheaper than the Boston Sports Club in Davis.

In the meantime, he's started the President's Marathon Challenge to encourage students to discover the joys and benefits of running while helping the community. But what if you don't want to run 26 miles just to trim down your waistline?

Another viable but under-utilized

program is free through athletics: five personal training sessions. Students who sign up will get a one-on-one consultation with a licensed trainer who, at the end, will develop a personal training routine to help with cardiovascular health, muscle toning, weight loss, or whatever your specific needs are.

But that's only part of the problem. Health risks on a college campus are as abundant a foot fungi in a freshman dorm. We can all take steps to make ourselves healthier at Tufts, from watching what we eat to exercising more, from getting a flu shot to wearing a condom.

The *Observer* conducted two surveys to gauge student healthfulness in bed and at the dining halls. The results are to be found in the following pages.

This week, we hope to make everyone more aware of ways they can protect themselves during their college years. We will explore the issue of health through three articles that focus on different aspects of student life. In the first, on the following page, Andy Sayler explores the sex life on campus and the health implications of the hook-up culture. He also lists resources available to people who are in a situation that might compromise their health after sex.

Steve Gershman and Hai-Jung Kim investigate the psychological fac-



ERIN BALDASSARI

tors involved in our food choices (page 8). Why do we eat what we eat, and how can we conquer our subconscious to help lose weight?

Charles Cushing takes a look at mental health at Tufts on page 11. He explains how school can affect a student's state of mind, and where students can find help for their psychological problems.

The aim of these three pieces is to help us all navigate the undergraduate experience and make us aware of our well-being, both physical and mental. ☺

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Visit our website for features and news stories, reader forums, and more juicy details about the magazine and staff positions.

# Health and the Forbidden Fruit

## Balancing sex and safety

BY ANDY SAYLER

**S**ex: that illustrious fruit by which we were (almost) all conceived; that pleasurable act in which many of us partake; that pesky complication to an otherwise simple world that brings with it a slew of health-related concerns. However you prefer to think of sex, the fact is that many of us are already sexually active. It is thus essential that everyone have a firm understanding of the health and wellness factors surrounding sex, both physical and mental.

"Sexual health is part of basic health," says Nikki Bruce, a spokesperson for Tufts VOX. "It's just as important as remembering to floss or getting your flu shot." Her point is an important one for the Tufts community. In a recent *Observer* survey [see gray boxes on pages 5 and 7] of 42 students, 50 percent of freshmen and 86 percent of seniors surveyed said they were sexually active. "[We must] treat our sexual health with respect and responsibility," Ms. Bruce says.

While many Tufts students are sexually active, it is by no means a requirement. An anonymous male senior explains his reasons for abstaining from sex: "I feel no rush or pressure to [lose my virginity] because I know that it will be exponentially greater with that one special person or people, over time. Nothing religious is holding me back and I'm not waiting for marriage, just the right person at the right time. I feel a little uneasy when my guy friends tell me their accounts, but am also reassured when they tell me, 'It was alright' or my female friends say, 'My first, it was alright, you're not missing

out on anything. It's nothing special.'"

For those that chose to be sexually active, however, new challenges present themselves. While some may yearn for the days when sex was mysterious, exciting, and without burden, there is no reason why maintaining one's sexual health should be a tradeoff for the pleasurable experiences sex offers. "Being sexual can be a beautiful thing," Ms. Bruce says — but we must always bear in mind the responsibilities necessary to maintaining a healthy sex life.

### Put Up or Hook-up?

While the prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), pregnancy, and sexual violence are imperative to one's sexual health, the ways in which one chooses to be sexually active have a major impact on both the mental and physical well-being of each sexually active individual. At the forefront of college sexual relationships is the hook-up, one-night-stand culture. While Stacey Sperling, a physician at Tufts' Health Services, doesn't think hooking up is "as prevalent as the media would make you believe," she agrees that "it's certainly more prevalent than previous generations." The *Observer* survey found that, of the sexually active, 30 percent of freshmen and 42 percent of seniors had had sex under the auspice of the hook-up. In both freshman and senior populations, males were significantly more likely to hook up than females.

Yet despite the large number of



students who are hooking up, few students seem to feel satisfied by sex within the context of the casual "hook-up." Of the sexually active, 100 percent of the freshmen and 79 percent of the seniors said that they preferred monogamous romantic relationships over hooking up, "friends with benefits," or a monogamous sexual relationship.

This ideal is shared by the majority of sexually inactive students. 90 percent of sexually inactive freshmen said they would be most comfortable becoming sexually active in a monogamous romantic relationship; 66 percent of sexually inactive seniors agreed.

### Empty, Pathetic, and Destructive

Dissatisfaction with the hook-up culture was echoed by many of the students and professionals consulted for this article. Lara Levi, the *Tufts Daily* sex columnist, called the hook-up culture "pathetic" and described it

### FYI

For a complete list of common STIs, their associated tests, and test pricing, consult the Health Services webpage: <http://ase.tufts.edu/healthservice/sexhealthSTIchart.htm>.

For more information on how you can help cut down on sexual assault and relationship violence, visit PACT's website at <http://ase.tufts.edu/womenscenter/pact.aspx>.

as "a game where you go out, hook-up, and don't talk to that person afterwards. Hook-up culture plays on insecurities. You don't have the self-esteem to demand better, to ask for exclusivity."

Dr. Sperling agrees. "I think sex should be fun," she says. "It should be fun and spontaneous. You don't need to only have sex with people you're going to spend the rest of your life with, but, on the other hand, I think this hook-up culture is very scary.

I think it's scary and sad.

I think that it removes sex from being an intimate, meaningful experience." Dr. Sperling sees many students who "got drunk, hooked up, and were not so happy about it in the morning."

One anonymous freshman male says that he had recently come to the "realization that the hook-up culture is so empty and routine." He continues: "It really transforms people into sin-

gropes each other on the dance floor for forty-five minutes and then leave to hook up."

### The Alcohol Factor

The campus hook-up culture thrives on the use of alcohol by students. Senior males reported having been under the influence of alcohol during about half of their sexual engagements over the previous year.

For senior females, this number was lower but significant.

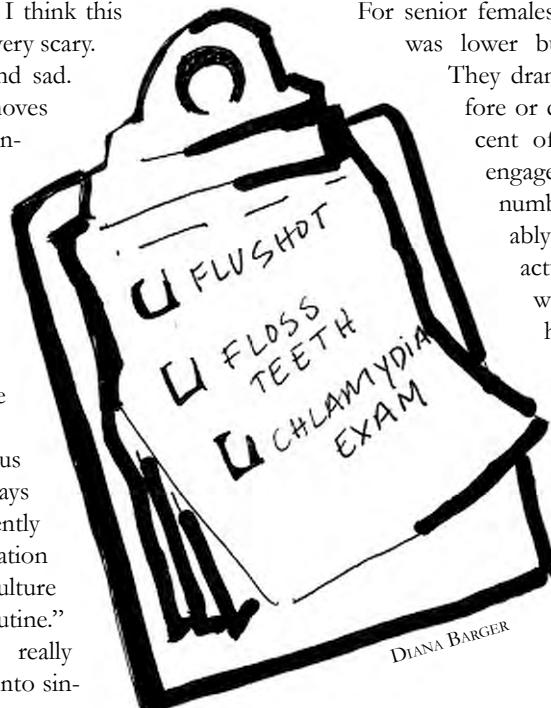
They drank alcohol before or during 20 percent of their sexual engagements. These numbers are probably lower than actual numbers within the hook-up scene; the aforementioned statistics include students in long-term relationships where the use of alcohol during sex is tra-

hooking up is part of the greater problem of alcohol abuse on the Tufts campus. "To have six to ten drinks in the course of an evening, to me, seems abnormal," she says. "It seems like that's because you want to get drunk. You're not using alcohol as a social lubricant, you're getting shit-faced, as we say. How do you put a stop to that?"

Ms. Levi writes in her column that "alcohol in college is detrimental to relationships." The anonymous freshman described it as "getting drunk, meeting drunk girls, and trying to score." Mr. Roura asks, "Don't you enjoy sex when you're sober?" Would it be a stretch to say that the hook-up culture would simply not exist if not for the availability of alcohol?

### The Physical Collateral

The substitution of hooking up in place of more satisfying forms of sexual relationships poses a clear and present danger to one's emotional well being. But aside from emotional damage, the hook-up culture, especially when accompanied by alcohol, has the potential to cause serious physical problems. Andrea Northup, president of Public Health at Tufts (PHAT), tells the *Observer* that "any situation where people are engaging in risky behaviors (casual sex), especially when impaired by drugs or alcohol, is a recipe for a serious public



**"Sexual health is part of basic health. It's just as important as remembering to floss or getting your flu shot."**

gle-serve sex objects and nothing more. It's all good until you realize you aren't dealing with something inanimate. You're dealing with people." He feels that the net effect of the hook-up culture was to prevent students "from seeing the beliefs, ideas, and beauty we all possess."

Mariel Montuori, a senior, feels that the hook-up culture is preventing healthier forms of relationships from developing at Tufts. "Dating is something that just doesn't happen much," she says. "Most of the time people will meet through mutual friends and end up at a party where they

ditionally significantly lower than it is for students in casual hook-up relationships.

Senior Jaime Roura asks: "Why do you have to get wasted to hook up?" When considering the general dissatisfaction the student body feels with hooking up, the use of alcohol in such situations is not surprising. Could it be that, intrinsically, students are not okay with hooking up? Is it only through the relaxed inhibitions provided by the influence of alcohol that students are able to mask their inner feelings and engage in the hook-up culture? Dr. Sperling feels the use of alcohol as a facilitator for

health issue."

It should come as no surprise that there's a direct connection between the number of sexual partners one has and the likelihood of contracting a sexually transmitted infection. Thus, as the hook-up culture promotes maximizing the number of one's sexual partners, it also maximizes one's likelihood of contracting an STI.

The fact that alcohol is so pervasively tied to the hook-up scene also doesn't bode well for one's physical health. The probability of condoms and other forms of birth control being properly used during

any form of sex drops when one is under the influence of alcohol. This, of course, also raises the likelihood of contracting an STI or causing an unwanted pregnancy.

Ms. Northup sees "efforts to shift college students away from the awkward and socially unproductive hook-up scene to more fun, meaningful and memorable social outlets as a way to tackle the STD issue as well as improve the social and mental health of Tufts students." At the very least, it is evident that the hook-up culture is capable of inflicting more than merely emotional harm.

On occasion and for certain people, casual sex may work out fine. But the pervasive presence of the hook-up culture as one of the primary forms of sexual relationships on campus can be seen as troubling. The fact that it still occurs even when most students find it very unsatisfying, and when almost all students would prefer more meaningful relationships, is perhaps even more troubling. The hook-up culture can clearly be detrimental to both one's emotional and one's physical sexual health.

### The P-Word

Hooking up aside, the most relevant negative consequence of sexual activity for Tufts students is the risk of becoming pregnant, at least, that is, for females. Eighty-three percent of freshman females surveyed ranked pregnancy as the number one potentially negative consequence of sex.

Fifty percent of senior females replied the same. In a classic and somewhat questionable disconnect between the male and female psyches, zero percent of freshman males believed pregnancy was the number one negative consequence of sex, opting instead for STIs (c'mon, guys). Fortunately, senior males seemed to be more in touch with their female counterparts, as 60 percent named pregnancy as their first concern.

Few college students are interested in becoming pregnant, but many wish to be sexually active. Thanks to 20th century medicine, this is not a difficult feat to accomplish. Condoms and hormonal birth control methods like the Pill seem to be the Tufts pregnancy prevention method of choice. Over 75 percent of all students surveyed reported using condoms for

birth control while over 65 percent reported using hormonal birth control. Since condoms are 98 percent effective when used correctly and most hormonal methods are over 99 percent effective when used correctly, it would seem that the Tufts population has the issue fairly under control. Both condoms and hormonal birth control options are available via health services, and the health practitioners there are no strangers to answering questions about birth control. "Many kids come to me for birth control," says Dr. Sperling. Condoms are freely available in the lobby and females may schedule an appointment to evaluate their hormonal birth control options.

### STIs and You

Like unintended pregnancy, the risk posed by sexually transmitted infections is not to be taken lightly. On this front, luckily, many students are fairly well informed. Both freshman and seniors surveyed by the Observer ranked the adequacy of their sexual health education just above an eight on a scale of one to 10. Only about 30 percent of the sample were educated in abstinence-only or abstinence-promoting curriculums.

Interestingly, there was no correlation between students who attended abstinence-centered programs and their level of sexual activity. It thus appears that most Tufts students have studied STIs and their associated risks at some point during their sexual education. That said, there still is room for improvement. While many students are aware of the risks posed by STIs, few sexually active students undergo testing for common STIs on a regular basis.

Dr. Sperling says that the federal Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has now recommended that everyone who is sexually active have a HIV test with their physical exam. Additionally, health services "certainly makes it clear that women should be coming in for annual GYN exams," Dr. Sperling added. During these exams students are often tested for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia. Despite these recommendations for regular STI testing, only 33 percent of sexually active freshman females and 25 percent of sexually active freshman males reported being tested for STIs on a yearly basis. The outlook improved only for females over the course of four years at Tufts; 43 per-

## Survey Results Freshmen

Are you sexually active?

Female: 46%

Male: 57%

Total: 50%

How many times during the previous year have you engaged in any form of sex (oral, vaginal, anal, etc.)?

Average Total: 17+

Average Female: 23+

Average Male: 8.8+

How many times during the previous year have you engaged in any form of sex under the influence of alcohol?

Average Total: 3.0

Average Female: 4.7

Average Male: 0.5

For what percentage of relevant sexual experiences have you or your partner used a condom?

0% Never

22% Infrequently

0% Sometimes

22% Often

56% Always

What forms of contraception have you and your partner/s used?

20% None

90% Condoms

80% Hormonal (pill, patch, etc.)

0% Other

How often are you regularly tested for STDs/STIs (for preventative, not reactive, purposes)?

70% Not Regularly Tested

0% After Changing Partners

0% Monthly

30% Yearly

Is there specific reasons why you have not yet chosen to become sexually active? (check all that apply)

10% N/A

10% Religious Beliefs

30% Personal Beliefs

70% I have not yet met the right partner

10% Other

cent of sexually active senior females and 20 percent of sexually active senior males reported being tested for STIs on a regular basis.

### STI Testing at Health Services

The disconnect between STI education and STI prevention indicated by the above numbers has an easy remedy: make an appointment to get tested, today. For those not aware of the fact, Health Services is fully equipped to perform any necessary STI testing. "The most common tests we do are Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, herpes, and HIV," says Dr. Sperling, but "we can test

with a health services professional. This is to help the student to determine which STIs he or she should be tested for. While one could be tested for every STI in the book, this would be most often unnecessary and always expensive. Depending on the student's history, symptoms, and wishes, she or he and the physician decide which tests to have performed. The most common tests for students exhibiting no external symptoms are HIV, Chlamydia, and Gonorrhea. For men, these tests involve no more than heading downstairs to the lab to have blood drawn and to submit a urine sample. For women, in addition to

er preventative STI testing, this cost can usually be forwarded to a private insurance provider. If, however, a student's insurance does not cover the costs, or if he or she wishes to insure that STI testing never appears on any record, the student has the option of paying the costs of the tests out of pocket. The HIV test costs \$20, while Chlamydia and Gonorrhea tests cost about \$42 each.

STI testing is readily available at Health Services and any sexually active Tufts student should take it upon himself/herself to undergo regular testing. While regular STI testing goes a long way toward

insuring the well-being of one's sexual health, a significant component of STI prevention lies in barrier sex protection. It is unlikely that one will ever be able to guarantee whether or not every sexual partner they have is "clean" of STIs, even if 100 percent of all sexually active students were being tested on a regular basis. For that reason, a condom should always be used when having sexual inter-



for everything." As part of the research performed for this article, the author and contributor underwent STI testing at health services. The process begins with the scheduling of an appointment in person or over the phone. For women this appointment can be part of a 45-minute annual GYN exam or scheduled purely for the purpose of STI testing. For men a 15-minute STI testing appointment is all that is required. Appointments can easily be scheduled within a week after contacting Health Services.

The STI testing appointment begins with a private one-on-one consultation

the blood and urine tests, a pap smear is also commonly performed to check for HPV and other risks. The HIV test performed at health services is a rapid test, meaning that results will likely be available within twenty minutes.

The cost of an STI consultation and testing appointment are covered in the student health fee, paid by all Tufts students at the beginning of each semester. For students with the Tufts student health insurance, the cost of the lab work is also covered. Students with private health insurance are billed for the cost of the lab work. As most health insurance plans cov-

er course, for both STI and pregnancy prevention purposes.

### HPV and the Gardasil Vaccine

HPV (human papillomavirus) is one of the most widespread STIs. Dr. Sperling estimated that 80 percent of the American population is infected with some form of HPV. The various strains can cause everything from normal warts to genital warts to cervical cancer. This link to cervical cancer is what makes HPV a great concern within the realm of sexual health.

Traditionally, HPV transmission is difficult to prevent. Condoms cannot com-

pletely block HPV transmission, as any form of skin to skin contact is enough to infect a partner. Additionally, HPV is almost only tested for after a woman receives an abnormal pap smear result, and it is not tested for in men. While not at risk for cervical cancer, men act as carriers of the virus. Today, however, a new option is available to women who wish to protect themselves against the four strains of HPV most closely associated with cervical cancer: the Gardasil HPV vaccine.

The vaccine, supplied in a series of three shots, is available to women under the age of 26. It has been heavily recommended by many health professionals since its release; Dr. Sperling feels that "women on this campus have been extremely responsible about seeking out information on Gardasil and getting the vaccine." Eighty-five percent of Tufts freshman females surveyed have received or begun receiving the HPV vaccine, compared to 63 percent of Tufts senior females. While these numbers allow room for improvement, they show that many women at Tufts are aware of the vaccine and the protection it offers.

Some medical professionals were hesitant to recommend the vaccine for large scale use immediately after its release, due primarily to the lack of information available on the possible long-term side effects of a new drug in such a large population. A year later, no unexpected effects have been reported, and most have accepted the high effectiveness and low risk suggested by Gardasil's clinical trials. Health Services highly recommends the vaccine to female students, and almost all insurance companies cover the cost of the vaccine.

### **Sexual Assault and Prevention**

Another major facet of sexual health is sexual assault and relationship violence. Most statistics indicate that 25 percent of all women will be sexually assaulted while in college and 12.5 percent will be raped. As part of the effort at Tufts to combat sexual violence, a new student group, PACT (Prevention, Awareness, and Consent at Tufts), was formed this year.

Caitlin McDowell, a member of PACT, says the group is currently working to "break down" the myths surrounding sexual assault. She brought up the common misconception that rape is commit-

ted by strangers, saying, "Nine times out of ten it's committed by people that you know." PACT is also working on implementing "bystander-training," to teach students the appropriate ways to intervene when they feel a friend is in danger of becoming victim to relationship violence. Ms. McDowell also explained that PACT was working to support a sex-positive culture at Tufts by providing students with the means to talk about sex. Most students "don't have the vocabulary to talk about sex in a healthy way. Is it okay to say, 'Oh, I'd really like a blow job?' How do you negotiate that without sounding creepy?"

Formerly a major resource for victims of sexual assault at Tufts was the phone hotline SSARA. The hotline has been shut down due to underuse and students are now being referred directly to the Boston Area Rape Crises Center hotline which has Tufts-specific info.

The role of alcohol in sexual assaults is another major education avenue that PACT is pursuing. "The number one facilitator of sexual assault is alcohol," Ms. McDowell said. "In Massachusetts, if you are incapacitated by drugs or alcohol, you are not able to [legally] consent to sexual relations." Many people are under the misconception that the use of "roofies" is the most common date rape drug. While Dr. Sperling says that she does see patients who have been "roofied," she sees it infrequently. "The number one date-rape drug is alcohol," she says.

### **The Beautiful Thing**

Sexual health is an incredibly important part of one's holistic health. Whether it is STIs, sexual violence, or hooking up in place of meaningful relationships, endangering one's sexual health puts the body and mind at risk. Fortunately, staying healthy while being sexually active is not difficult. Use condoms, get tested for STIs on a regular basis, work for the prevention of sexual violence, and always be in touch with what you truly want from a sexual relationship. In these ways one can insure sex remains the "beautiful thing" that it has the potential to be. ☺

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*Olivia Saucier contributed reporting to this article.*

## **Survey Results Seniors**

Has the majority of your formal sexual health education promoted abstinence as the best or only form of contraception?

27% Yes

73% No

On a scale from 1 to 10 (poor to excellent), how adequate do you feel your access to sexual health education and/or services is on and around the Tufts Medford campus?

Average Female: 8.4

Average Male: 9.5

How many sexual partners have you had?

Average Total: 3.4

Average Female: 2.6

Average Male: 5.6

At what age did you become sexually active?

Average Total: 18

Average Female: 19

Average Male: 17

What do you feel is the most relevant potentially negative consequence of sexual activity?

53% Pregnancy

32% STDs/STIs

11% Emotional Harm

5.3% Other

Have you ever used any of the sexual health services offered by Tufts health services?

53% Yes

47% No

On a scale of 1 to 10 (none to extreme), how pressured do you feel to become sexually active?

Average Total: 7.7

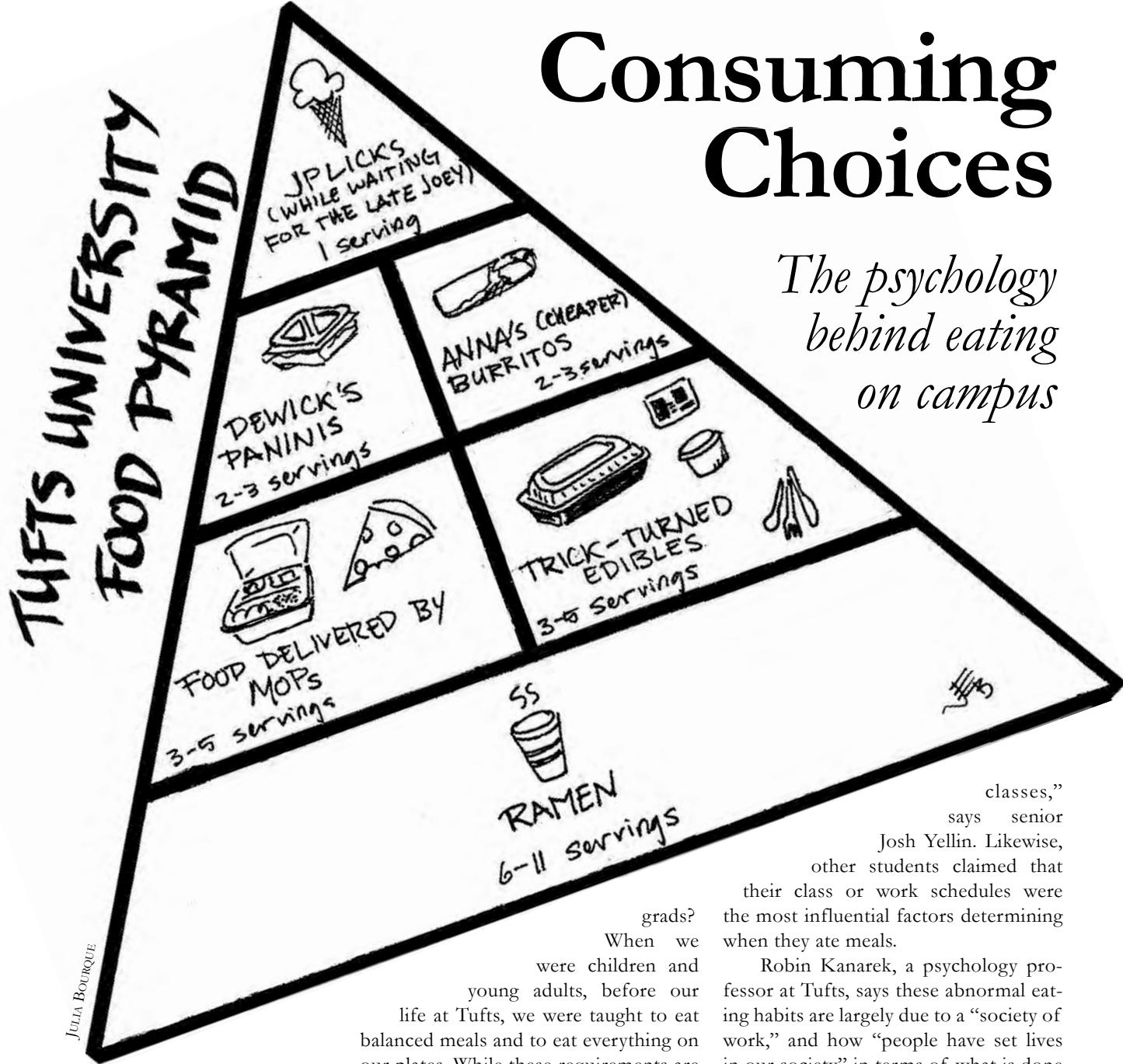
Average Female: 6.5

Average Male: Not significant

(Females Only) Have you been vaccinated HPV?

63% Yes

38% No



JULIA BOURQUE

BY STEVE GERSHMAN AND  
HAI-JUNG KIM

Freshmen fear the 15. Most Tufts students make conscious efforts to stay healthy and in shape, but people act differently when they are able to eat as much food as they want, whenever they want it. Why does this happen? What are the roots of eating decisions and how do they apply to Tufts under-

grads? When we were children and young adults, before our life at Tufts, we were taught to eat balanced meals and to eat everything on our plates. While these requirements are not necessarily bad advice, they prompt us to base our eating habits on more than hunger. Students develop eating routines, schedules, and conveniences, and some find it difficult to break that mold.

#### Food on a Schedule

A vast majority of students interviewed in an *Observer* survey set times for eating meals. In addition, many of them provided unprompted insights into their behavioral patterns. "I eat lunch around 12:30 and dinner around seven depending on

# Consuming Choices

*The psychology behind eating on campus*

classes," says senior Josh Yellin. Likewise, other students claimed that their class or work schedules were the most influential factors determining when they ate meals.

Robin Kanarek, a psychology professor at Tufts, says these abnormal eating habits are largely due to a "society of work," and how "people have set lives in our society" in terms of what is done at what times. In deciding when to eat, students maneuver around classes, part-time jobs, studying for tests, and extracurricular and other activities. Additionally, most students prefer to wake up as late as they can without sacrificing their commitments. Since eating breakfast is not considered a commitment, the majority of students surveyed said they eat only two meals each day. Every person who responded that he or she eats fewer than three meals a day also refrained from eating in the morning. However, breakfast is considered by medical pro-



*This freshman at Drexel surveys the nutrition facts before choosing his meal.*

fessionals to be the most important meal of the day since it restores the glucose levels and essential nutrients necessary for the body to perform to its potential.

Prof. Kanarek provided a glimpse into a working person's life as being even more stringently regulated in terms of eating times. "Get up, go to breakfast, work, lunch at meetings," she says, noting that "dinner varies more than other meals." She contrasted this routine with

therefore, on the society in which they live and on their schedule. Because students are generally busy with classes, homework, errands, and extracurricular activities, they tend to eat infrequently and have large meals at the buffet-style dining halls.

#### **Food and Society**

If eating is affected by society, it's also a social event. A step into one of the din-

ing halls shows how closely tied eating is to human interaction. Scientific studies have explored this relationship, such as one by researchers from the University of Georgia involving people eating alone and with others. In general, people eat more when in groups, especially if it

is a group of people they know. Prof. Karanek explains, "You're going out to dinner with people who you don't really know and you want dessert. But if they don't want dessert, you may decide not to order dessert because you don't want to look like you're eating too much." She also points to the emotional ties people hold with food. "People remember holidays as a child and the foods they ate," she says. "When you're sick,

## **"The freshman 15 turns out to be the freshman five. Most people lose it before graduating."**

eating patterns she observed in Africa. She studied a group of Bushmen — indigenous people of the Kalahari Desert — who "didn't go to work, but ate much more often than we do [and] in smaller proportions."

People's snacking habits depend,

ing halls shows how closely tied eating is to human interaction. Scientific studies have explored this relationship, such as one by researchers from the University of Georgia involving people eating alone and with others. In general, people eat more when in groups, especially if it

there's chicken soup, which becomes linked to the feeling that someone is taking care of you." While chicken soup has nutritional benefits, the sensation of feeling better caused by eating chicken soup is more psychological than physiological.



*The pizza lineup at Dewick — not always the most healthy — is the default dinner of many students when the nightly special disappoints.*

There is an additional evolutionary basis to eating in groups. Prof. Kanarek conducted a study with foods that smelled different. In her experiment, a rat ate a food that smelled like licorice or basil, while another rat stood watching. The rat that saw another rat eating licorice was more likely to eat licorice. Likewise, the rat that saw another rat eating basil was more likely to eat basil. Through observation, the rats learned something about each food and found out whether it was safe to ingest.

The study exemplifies the psychological term “mere exposure effect,” in which simply sensing a person or thing brings it to the forefront of one’s mind and therefore is more familiar and often consequently more desirable. The idea that choosing to eat one thing over another as a matter of life or death is far removed from our daily reality. But the next time we decide to eat ice cream after watching a friend eat ice cream, it is interesting to note that there may be millions of years of survival at play.

#### **Food is Everywhere**

Between Dewick, Carmichael, and Hodgdon, a Tufts student is never far

from food and thus always exposed to it, prompting people to eat frequently. Dining hall food, as well as food from restaurants that deliver to campus, is simply convenient. In addition, many students have stockpiles of food in their rooms. People eat not only because they are hungry, but also to quell emotions, to procrastinate, and to be social.

When choosing what types of food to eat, students have very different criteria for deciding. In general, students seek variety and balance in their meals. Physiologically, this desire stems from the body wanting to acquire more of the vitamins and minerals that it needs to work efficiently. Psychologically, people simply get bored of eating the same thing. Prof. Kanarek brings up a Penn State study that shows the effect boredom has on eating choices, and the concept known as sensory specific satiety. “Let’s say you’re having meatloaf for dinner,” she says. “When you’re really full and can’t eat anymore, then you get the dessert tray. When you are full from what you’re eating, you’re more likely to eat something different than what you have been eating.” Simply seeing the dessert tray may make you realize that you

are not full, and that you want another type of food. For this reason, waiters at many restaurants bring a dessert tray to the table after the entrée to elicit this psychological response.

#### **The Fifteen**

As for the freshmen worried about an extra 15 pounds, Prof. Kanarek attributes such preoccupations to “the initial availability of food, and the staying up and eating.” She warns especially of the time after Thanksgiving break when students study for finals. The worsening of eating habits during finals emanates from many factors. Many people eat to relieve stress, while others use eating as a form of procrastination. Also, since some parents condition their children to use food as a reward for listening or completing an action, some students use food as a motivational force for various endeavors, namely studying. Despite these factors and the excess of eating that often arises around finals, Prof. Kanarek expresses faith in the students at Tufts, believing that in the long run, “the freshman 15 turns out to be the freshman five. Most people lose it before graduating.” ☐

# *The* Brown *and* Blues

BY CHARLES CUSHING

**Y**our history assignment is depressingly long. You're depressed that the days are so short and the sun is setting so early. And nothing depresses you like the prospect of another chicken patty lunch at Dewick. All in all, you're feeling pretty down. But even if everything at the moment seems "depressing," you're not necessarily "depressed" — at least, not in the clinical sense.

Depression is a broad and multi-faceted subject. Everyone has days when they don't feel like themselves — it's only human. The challenge for psychologists, doctors and researchers is to determine when "the blues" have crossed the line and become the psychological disorder known as depression.

Depressive disorders, as the afflictions are formally known, all have several characteristics in common. They are persistent — whereas a "bad mood" may pass within a few hours or days, untreated depression can last for weeks, months or even years. A person suffering from depression, try as he might, is usually unable to "pull himself together" and recover, a frustrating feeling that often exacerbates the condition.

Depression is also usually characterized by an intensity that is sufficient to cause disruptions in a person's day-to-day life. Apart from these similarities, the various triggers, symptoms, and treatments of



depressive disorders are extraordinarily diverse.

### **When Sadness is Nice**

An anonymous Tufts freshman describes how he feels when he is depressed: "I constantly feel doubt and helplessness. I feel like I have more negative thoughts than others. I wouldn't classify it as sadness. I think sadness would be nice. Sadness seems to imply an ability to reach happiness."

No number of descriptions, no matter how accurate or eloquent, can truly convey the feeling of depression to a person who is not depressed. Depression elicits such extreme emotions (or in some cases, such extreme lack of emotion) that even people who have experienced depression but recovered sometimes have difficulty remembering or sympathizing with the feelings of their former, depressed selves. By the same token, people with non-depressive psychology often are simply unable to relate to the depth of the sadness a depressed person is experiencing — the

saddest sad that such a person can imagine is still nothing compared to the sadness felt during clinical depression.

The impossibility of true empathy for depressed people is one contributing factor to the stigma that surrounds depression in our society.

### **The Stigma**

It's no accident that 80 percent of depressed people are not currently receiving any treatment, or that 41 percent of depressed women are too embarrassed to seek help, according to a National Mental Health Association (NMHA) survey and the 2003 National Healthcare Quality Report, respectively.

While college students tend to wear their stressful and sleepless lifestyles as a badge of pride, depression is far from glamorous. In fact, by many accounts depressed people are stigmatized and the word "depressed" is used as a pejorative. A number of reasons have been suggested for why this is.

First of all, society in general does

many things to perpetuate stereotypes about mental health issues. The images with which depression is often associated — self-injury such as cutting, suicide, psycho killers or disgruntled stalkers — are considered “mental illness” along with depression.

An information packet released by the Mayo Foundation for Medical Educa-

medical condition but rather something that results from your own doing and your own choices. People may blame you and think your condition is ‘all in your head.’ They may think that mental illness is an indication of weakness or laziness, that you’re a ‘moral failure’ or simply ‘can’t cut it.’” This simply is not the case, since depression is usually triggered by things out-

itself in two equally-common ways. “One of [these] is the sad presentation,” she explains. “What you usually think of when you imagine a person who is depressed. Such a person cries easily, they may have trouble sleeping, trouble eating, trouble taking care of themselves...they may have trouble concentrating, getting their work done, but basically, they’re crying a lot and

## “Some people are not interested anymore, not doing things they usually like. **That is also depression.”**

tion and Research (MFMER) explains that “mental illness remains the butt of jokes in popular culture. Negative portrayals of people with mental illness fuel fear and mistrust and reinforce distorted perceptions, leading to even more stigma...this perception is often inflamed by media accounts of crime...some people also believe that those with mental illness are less competent, unable to work, should be institutionalized or will never get better.”

It is easy to fall into the trap of stigmatizing those with depression. The ideas of cutting and suicide are indeed troubling, and can be extremely uncomfortable for most people to think or talk about. Leading the stressful or challenging life you probably do, it’s difficult to sympathize with depressed people: their lives don’t seem any harder than yours, so why should you pity them? Why do they deserve coddling and special treatment, when you yourself cope with life just fine? In fact, many depressed people hold their depression against themselves.

The same anonymous student describes the worst part of being depressed as “wanting to cry, but not being able to. Knowing that sitting there on your bed wanting to cry is the most pathetic thing. Knowing that complaining about depression is even more pathetic.”

Many people do not realize that people with severe depression or other “mental illnesses” literally cannot do anything to help themselves, just as a person with a fever (a “physical illness”) is incapable of voluntarily bringing his temperature down.

“To some,” continues the MFMER packet, “‘mental’ suggests not a legitimate

side of the victim’s control and governed at least in some part by biology.

Still, according to NMHA, 54 percent of people believe depression is a personal weakness.

### **The Many Faces of Depression**

“Depression has many faces,” says Tufts staff psychologist Julie Jampel. There are several different categories of depression, each marked by certain symptoms having different physiological causes:

First, there is dysthymia, a mild but long-term form of depression which, to meet the clinical definition, must persist for more than two years.

Many people find that their moods are heavily influenced by the time of the year, becoming more prone to depression in the winter. This is attributable to seasonal affective disorder (SAD), which affects more than four million Americans each year, according to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). A less common form of depression is manic depression, or bipolar disorder.

Some believe that there is one more, as-of-yet unnamed category of depression — one mild enough to often go undiagnosed, but still potent enough to be considered pathological. This type of depression might arise as a result of some stressor, such as an upcoming deadline or a relationship gone awry. These are characterized by a self-critical or low mood or a sense of inadequacy.

What kinds of depression are prevalent at Tufts? Ms. Jampel says that, while there is no archetypical “depressed Tufts student,” depression on campus manifests

not functioning well.” This can be triggered by a specific event, like a breakup or a tragedy in the family, or it can simply be caused by an amalgamation of environmental stressors.

“Another way depression looks on a college campus,” Ms. Jampel continues, “is that there are people who are unmotivated and uninterested. So it’s not like they’re sad, it’s not like they’re crying. But, maybe they used to enjoy their studies, and they had things that they do, they liked being with their friends, and they’re not that interested in things anymore. They’re not following through, they’re not making plans, they’re not doing things they usually like — stuff like that is also depression.”

Although the Tufts counseling service does treat people with bipolar disorder, these cases are rare. Statistics for how many Tufts students suffer from the various depressive disorders are not available; however, the school is currently conducting a study called Healthy Minds on Campus, which should yield more detailed information. Nationwide, NIMH reports that in a given year 9.5 percent of the adult American population, or about 20.9 million people, suffer from a depressive illness.

### **The Chemistry of Depression**

How does a person get depressed? Despite a large amount of scientific research in the field, the exact physiological reasons are still unknown. Tufts psychology professor David Harder explains: “It’s not so clear what the brain mechanisms [that cause depression] are. There are certain activation patterns that people have noticed that seem connected with depression, but in

other studies they often aren't replicated... generally, though, there seems to be some deficit or a lower level of activity in the serotonin transmission pathways."

Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that is known to cause mild excitability and happiness when released in the brain. (In fact, there is speculation that the reason so many people love chocolate is that it contains high levels of serotonin). Many experts believe that a lack of serotonin is at the root of depression. Again, the exact mechanism is unclear. It could be that certain people have less serotonin available in the first place, and are thus more prone to depression. Alternatively, it could be that serotonin is not released as frequently or does not stay in the synapse as long as it should. The human brain contains serotonin receptors all throughout, so the pathways causing depression may not be confined to a specific locality of the brain like many other mental disorders.

Much of the scientific investigation of depression has been directed at discovering what triggers it in the first place. Psychologists have come up with a number of theories. It is not too surprising that tragic or negative events in a person's life — a tough break-up, the death of someone close, academic difficulty — can trigger depression.

But these triggers don't account for all of cases of depression. As it turns out, anger may be another factor. The anger hypothesis was formulated in the days of Freudian psychology, according to Prof. Harder. It fell out of favor shortly thereafter, and has remained more or less unexplored until recently.

"When people squelch their anger [they] can essentially keep it unconscious, and aren't really aware that they're feeling it. It becomes clear after a while that they may be much angrier than they first think. And it's usually anger at someone who's important to them emotionally," says Prof. Harder. "A lot of self-criticism, the low self-esteem, the sense of inadequacy, seems to be fueled and maintained by taking the anger and turning it inward." This may be especially common in a society such as ours, where there is not much tolerance for anger or recourse for people who are feeling angry.

Another theory predicts that one's conscious thoughts can create a depressive state — that is, by thinking pessimistically,

the brain might alter its chemical physiology to match these thoughts, and in doing so trigger depression. Yet another theory suggests that *emotions* govern the cognitive function, so that, according to Prof. Harder, "if somebody suffers a terrible disappointment and feels badly about that, then they'll start thinking pessimistically and their physiology will slow down and show...a lack of serotonin activation."

There is a chicken-and-egg problem intrinsic to this: Which comes first? The emotions? The cognition? The chemical distributions in the brain? "We don't have a final explanation," says Dr. Harder.

### Search and Destroy

This past October 17 brought with it the Tufts Counseling and Mental Health Service's (CMHS) annual free Mental Health Screening Day (part of the National Depression Screening Day affiliated with the national College Response organization). Those who chose to attend — some fifty

students this year — were welcomed with popcorn, a choice of body or foot massage, free goodies, and enough pamphlets to fill a library.

After completing a brief questionnaire about recent thoughts, habits, and feelings, participating students were then treated to a ten-minute consultation with one of Tufts' staff therapists, who could recommend a course of action based on the questionnaire and a conversation. Even a person not suffering from depression would find the experience both reassuring and informative.

"Reassuring and informative" is exactly the image the Tufts health service is trying to project. Depression is a big, growing, problem on university campuses across the nation. Fortunately, depression is also a relatively easy ailment to treat. Through therapy, medication, or a combination thereof those suffering from depression can almost always be helped, according to NIMH. The difficulty lies in

## Seeking Help

**What if it's not an emergency but I'm really upset?** At times of distress that do not reach the level of a crisis or emergency, there are several things you can do to help you cope with and reduce your distress. Here are a few suggestions:

**Write in a journal. Talk to a friend. Practice relaxation techniques. Listen to soothing music. EXERCISE OUTDOORS. Meditate. Take a "mindful" walk. Watch a movie.**

**During Regular Office Hours** From 9 AM – 5 PM, emergency services can be contacted through the CMHS front office at 617-627-3360.

**For After-Hours Emergencies** The counselor-on-call can be reached through the Tufts University Police by calling x73030 from a campus phone or 617-627-3030 from off campus or a cell phone. Give the dispatcher your name and the phone number at which you can be reached, and the counselor-on-call will get back to you as soon as possible.

**What is a Mental Health Emergency?** If you, or someone else, are having thoughts of suicide, impulses to hurt yourself or someone else, severe mental confusion or disorientation, or if you have just been a victim of violence or assault, contact emergency services immediately.

getting depressed students to come forth and seek help in the first place; the annual screening day is just one such program at Tufts that is designed to make that process a little easier.

Tufts mental health services sees about 1,000 students per year, not including outreach efforts. The American College Health Association estimates that every year, about one third of all college students suffer from depression so severe that "it is difficult to function" at least once in the year. For students on campus who are feeling depressed, Tufts counseling is ready: the provider to student ratio is actually higher than what is recommended by the International Association for the Accreditation of College Counseling Services.

So what happens when a student goes to CMHS for treatment? How does a person actually make the transition from depression to happiness? The main goal is to offer assessment, helping students identify the specific nature of their troubles. A student can go to health services and talk to a counselor, who can then help the student lay out the best course of action for dealing with his or her issue. In some cases, a student will have a problem that can be treated quickly, and in these cases CMHS will offer focus treatment — up to eight meetings tackling the crisis head-on. For those needing long-term services, the goal is to get the student stabilized at Tufts, then find off-campus resources to help them continue their treatment.

Ms. Jampel explains the role of a counselor during therapy: "What we try to do... is instill hope, and let them know that there are effective treatments, and that they don't always have to suffer this way. We can help inform them about depression and what it looks like so they can recognize more of their depressed self for what it is."

### Drug Treatment Options

There are, of course, situations in which therapy doesn't work, and it is in these situations that a student may be prescribed antidepressant medicine. Tufts has a prescribing clinician to handle this.

Antidepressant drugs are not without their controversies. On one hand, they of-

ten bring about positive results in patients much faster than therapy. However, various complaints have been leveled against them, ranging from claims of negative long-term side effects to questions about the ethics of changing a person's mood.

According to Prof. Harder, "medication tends to be helpful in 70–75 percent of cases, but that is of course not everybody." In the long run, he says, psychological interventions such as therapy may work better than medications, but (in the people for whom they're going to work at all) drugs work faster. Therapy has the added advantage of giving a person a bit of resis-

the information voluntarily, Tufts does not receive any information about the mental health or history of its applying students. Even if it did, to discriminate on the basis of this information would violate the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act.

According to Dickens Mathieu, the University counsel, the administration "is currently discussing background checks as a general subject matter, but no decisions have been made to change the current policy, which is not to conduct background checks on undergraduate applicants."

Thus, the task of identifying a mentally unstable or potentially homicidal student falls onto his peers, professors, and mental health counselors. Of course, one of the problems in the Virginia Tech case was that the shooter didn't have many friends, so there was nobody to notice signs of a worsening condition.

This problem is inherent to the college environment: Since students are away from friends, family, and others who have known them for a long time, abnormal behavior often goes unnoticed. For many, one of the joys of college is the lack of structure — fewer academic requirements than high school, more social freedom, and most

importantly, no parents or principals breathing down your neck. But this lack of structure also makes it very easy for a person to slip between the cracks, avoiding normal social contact and being subject to self-perpetuating isolation.



Doctors may recommend antidepressant medicines.

tance to future depressions. Therapy and medication can be used independently or in conjunction, at the discretion of the psychiatrist (or whichever clinician is treating the depressed person).

### Controversies

The question every college was faced with in the wake of the Virginia Tech shootings was, "How do we prevent something like this from ever happening at our school?" Earlier this year, President Larry Bacow formed a committee to re-evaluate campus safety. One of the achievements of this committee was the Send Word Now program, which now has more than 15,000 subscribers who can be instantly notified by phone, text message and email in the event of an emergency.

Then there is the matter of identifying students who may be at risk for violence. Unless an applicant to the school supplies

### What You Can Do

If you're ever feeling depressed, the most important thing is to not blame yourself for not being able to "get over it." Find someone to talk to. Tufts counseling and mental health services might be a good thing to look into. Says Julie Jampel, "The most important thing for people to know is that, we're here — we truly are here, and that even if someone is depressed and recognizes it, even if we're not the final stop we're a very good first stop." Occasionally, students feeling depressed will make their first visit with a friend — this is completely acceptable and often very helpful. ☺

# TICKER TAPE

Bite-size news you might have missed since our last issue.

## It's a Wrap

**B**oloco has triumphed over Pizza Days to become the newest option on Tufts' Merchants on Points System (MOPS). Students chose burritos over pizza in a TCU Senate survey run by Scott Silverman, a sophomore. Boloco has said that it will be able to deliver by the end of the semester.

## It Pays to be a Nerd

**T**he Verizon Foundation recently awarded \$10,000 to Tufts professor Karen Panetta and her team of "Nerd Girls" to help fund their outreach programs, which are designed to interest young women in engineering. Dr. Panetta described the "Nerd Girls" to the *Daily* as "an engineering group that does research and works with industry professionals to develop projects to solve real world problems."

## Korean Language Sought

**T**he TCU Senate is working to bring Korean language studies to Tufts. Financial burdens as well as a lack of space on campus are roadblocks to creating a reasonable program. Yin Lin, a freshman senator, is examining the possibility of getting a grant to fund the project, including some from the Department of Education that focus on funding the study of languages that could be pertinent to maintaining national security in the future.

## She's a Hot Mom, Too

**T**he TCU Senate will offer this year's Light on the Hill award to Meredith Vieira '75, a former English major and current co-host of the *Today Show*. "Meredith is one of the most recognizable people in American media today," TCU President Neil DiBiase told the *Daily*. "She's also demonstrated a commitment



to Tufts by being the face of our capital campaign."

## OSA Admits to Embezzlement

**J**odie Nealley was dismissed from her post as director of student activities on November 9 after she was caught and admitted to embezzling funds from the University. As auditors scour the books of accounts under her control — including the student activities fee — the University claims over \$300,000 is unaccounted for. The case has been referred to the Middlesex County District Attorney.

Bruce Reitman, dean of student affairs, said that his office will make sure that no student groups or events will be financially impacted by Ms. Nealley's actions. The University will reimburse all accounts found to be shorted money.

University officials believe that, although Ms. Nealley worked here for over a decade, the majority of the embezzlement occurred in the last fiscal year. According to the *Daily*, Ms. Nealley potentially faces up to five years in prison, or two years and a \$25,000 fine, although she may be indicted on more than one count.

— Compiled by Kate Schimmer

## TCU Watch

The next Senate meeting will be held at 7 PM on December 12 in Sophia Gordon Hall. Leah McIntosh, executive administrative dean of Arts and Sciences, will speak.

### From the November 12 meeting:

**T**he Senate debated and passed a resolution calling on President Bacow to include student representation on the newly created faculty committee on freedom of expression. He responded by allowing one undergraduate student onto the committee: the TCU president.

**S**enators are looking for student volunteers to serve on the newly created task force on social life. The task force will meet biweekly to address different issues relating to the campus social scene.

**T**he Senate will hold open forums in freshmen dorms on November 27 and 28 at 9:00 PM in the lounges in Tilton and Miller Halls.

# Sexual Healing

**U**niversity administrators around the country no longer take for granted the physical and mental well-being of their undergraduates. From deranged students acting on violent fantasies to individuals succumbing to the stresses of academic life, maintaining a healthy and happy student body is no easy task. Nonetheless, the most prevalent health issue on campus, the sexual activities of undergrads, remains the most difficult to address. The *Observer* wishes to see sexual health take its proper place alongside physical and mental health as an integral part of the administration's strategy to ensure the continued vitality of the student body.

A recent *Observer* survey demonstrates the degree of sexual activity at Tufts: 50% of freshman and 86% of seniors surveyed declared themselves sexually active. The "hook-up" culture that permeates most universities, with many couplings occurring only after a brief courtship and copious amounts of alcohol, only complicates the issues university health officials must address. Mentally, one-night stands leave both parties dissatisfied, and in some cases embarrassed, about decisions made the night before. Physically, the effectiveness of contraceptives decreases as alcohol and other substances impair motor functions, and a decline in monogamous sexual relationships means that sexually transmitted diseases have more opportunities to spread. Most importantly, a hook-up culture mixed with alcohol, the number one date-rape drug, poses greater risks of sexual assault.

Despite the dangers that arise when partaking in sexual activity, the administration must not allow the development of a mindset that demonizes sex as a risky or inappropriate exercise. As Dr. Stacey Sperling of Health Services correctly acknowledges, sex should be a fun, enjoyable experience for those who choose to seek such relations. Whether the administration would like to recognize the current state of affairs or not, Tufts is a sexually active campus. That said, even with the sexual experience of some undergraduates, most Tufts students do not have the necessary skills to talk about sex in an appropriate manner with their partners. While it is essential that students understand the risks involved and learn the rules of consent, articulating ways to improve an already budding sexual relationship could also have great importance. Providing avenues for students to learn aspects of maintaining a healthy sexual life, with communication between the two partners stressed, would be one way to encourage fun and safe sex. The University could also place greater emphasis on getting tested for STDs: unbeknownst

to most students, Health Services possesses all the necessary tools for detecting STDs, and scheduling an appointment is no difficult task. Developing an atmosphere where students feel as comfortable getting an HIV test as they do receiving a flu shot would further promote healthy sex.

By no means should any program portray sex as a necessary condition for a fulfilling college experience. Abstinence remains the most effective form of birth control and STD prevention, and students who choose this lifestyle should not feel ostracized. The underlying assumption of health policies on campus, however, should not be that most students are abstinent, because that perception does not conform with reality. Rather, encouraging those that are sexually active to respect boundaries, communicate, and get tested augments the health and safety of students on the Hill by making certain both active and non-active persons understand appropriate sexual behavior.

Sexual health contributes as much to the welfare of students as its physical and mental variants. Ensuring that undergraduates have the necessary tools for engaging in safe and enjoyable sexual activity should be a top priority in promoting the general welfare of the student body. The sexual lives of students may be a private manner, but that does not mean the University should feel unable to maintain a positive sexual environment on campus. ☺





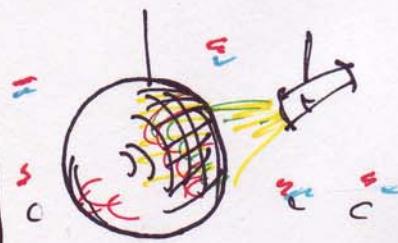
The joys of sex must be balanced with an awareness of the risks involved. See page 3 for more on sexual health at Tufts.

TREY KIRK



\* DOES NOT PROTECT FROM DRUNKEN REGRETS

HOLD ON TO THAT ROOFIE MAN,  
THE OBSERVER SAYS BOOZE IS  
THE NUMBER 1 HOOKUP DRUG.





ERIN BALDASSARI

# A Public Service Announcement

BY JAZMIN ALFORD

**A**h...freshman year... a time that signifies independence, payoff for all of our hard work in prior years, and best of all, freedom. Freedom to eat what we want, say what we want, and play how we want. That being said, we should probably talk about the most common

## "College is not an excuse to hump anything with legs"

game in the college world. You guessed it... SEX. For those of you who don't already know, college just happens to occur in the midst of our sexual peak, making college the foundation of the average person's overall "sexperience." Let me warn you, however, that this is not all fun and games (just 95% fun and games). High school sex and college sex are two completely different ballgames. There are rules here, people. They may make the difference between sexual enlightenment and sexual catastrophe. These rules are as follows...

### Rule #1 — Thou shall be mindful of one's roommate

Now I know that this rule may seem pretty basic, but you would be surprised at



the mortifying roommate encounters that have occurred. For a lot of Jumbos, this is the first time that they are sharing a living space with another person. Therefore, it is not hard to believe that awkward situations arise when living with a total

stranger. You and your roommate may avoid some conflict if you have a heart-to-heart beforehand. I know this sounds kind of corny, but in a perfect world this may work. On that note, it is far from a perfect world, so maybe I should let you in on some things. It's never OK to masturbate while your roommate is sleeping. Likewise, your roommate does not want to wake up

### in the middle of the night to you and your girlfriend or boyfriend practicing your baby making skills. If your roommate wanted to see things like this up close and personal, he/she would rent a Jenna Jameson video. If you plan to get it on, please let your roommate know in advance so that he/she can make alternate sleeping arrangements.

It wouldn't be right if I didn't give a minor warning about what to do when things go wrong. Like I said, this isn't a perfect world...roommate bloopers do happen. So just few words of advice: bring a pair of headsets just in case your roommate takes a risk while you're "sleeping," bring an air mattress in case you are sexed, and never enter your room if there is a sock, rubber band, or any other foreign object hanging from your doorknob.

### Rule #2 — Thou shall select and protect

I'm not trying to sound mom-ish, but you need to be careful about what you do and whom you do. Not to scare anybody, but college campuses are breeding grounds for all types of sexually transmitted diseases. Make sure you know what you're getting into before you take your clothes off. You never know where people have been, and since most people don't walk around with "I have a sexually transmitted disease" tattooed on their forehead, you should be selective when choosing partners. So use condoms and ask questions.

### Rule #3 — Thou shall not ruin one's reputation

In support of Rule #2, this rule insists that you be selective when choosing partners for your reputations sake. College is not an excuse to hump anything with legs (or

things without, depending on what you're into). People talk, and you don't want to be "that person." Don't get me wrong, college is the perfect time to experiment; however, it's wise to seek out quality in sexual experiences rather than quantity of sexual partners. If you fail to heed this advice for any other reason, then at least take note of the fact that Tufts is a very small community, and reputations spread easily. So if you don't have any other reason to slow your role when it comes to sexual partners, just remember that an outrageously fun and exciting experience can leave you extremely bored for the rest of your college sex career. Once you've conquered the first set of rules and you think you're in the clear, you soon learn that the games have just begun. No longer are we plagued with the confusion that comes



along with senseless sexual activity, for we are destined to graduate into the...should I dare to say it...serious relationships. It is at this point that we try to add some type of romantic aspect to our situation to mask our overall horniness.

Oh college. We're young and dumb, and we all violate the rules even when we know we shouldn't. But hey, you can't become old and wise if you're never young and crazy. ☺

*Jazmin C. Alford is a junior majoring in Psychology.*

# Carpe Scientiam: Why Classics at Tufts is Still Important

BY NATALIE POLITO

*Quam multas nobis imagines — non solum ad intuendum, verum etiam ad imitandum — fortissimorum virorum expressas scriptores et Graeci et Latini reliquerunt?*

-Cicero, *Pro Archia*

The largest college within Tufts is the College of Arts and Sciences, which currently enrolls about 4,600 undergraduates and 1,000 graduate students. Tufts enjoys the reputation of a prestigious liberal arts school that professes to endorse a liberal arts education. This requires that

authors like Caesar, Cicero, and Virgil was considered a major part of the academic vocabulary of an educated person. But Latin began to decline in the 20th century, and in the year 2000, only 1.3% of American students were learning Latin in public high schools, with over 30% of students studying Spanish (figures from Draper and Hicks, 2002).

Of course, I acknowledge the fact that times have changed. Our country is a very different place than it was a century ago — wars, policy changes, and global influences have certainly had a major impact on education in America. Our fiber

that strives, in a way, to save the world.

At the same time, however, I wish we could recall the roots of a liberal arts education, because humanities and the arts are firmly rooted in an understanding of the Classics and antiquity. When we sign up for a liberal arts education, we're signing up to acquire knowledge, and perhaps when we are completing our foundation requirements, we should bear in mind the foundations of a liberal arts education. Without a working knowledge of the Classics, students fulfilling the language requirement might forget that the romance languages all stem from Latin, and biology majors might have a difficult time memorizing the Latin anatomical terms. English majors might miss allusions and metaphors that would enhance their appreciation and understanding of the work they're studying — for how can you truly appreciate Joyce without knowing who Daedalus and Odysseus are? How can you appreciate Shakespeare's histories without at least knowing who Titus Andronicus and Julius Caesar are?

In all this, I am attempting to demonstrate the integral role that philology plays in the realm of education. And it's a little known fact to some that Tufts is a pretty good place to study Classics. Some of our recent endeavors include two major archeological digs — R. Brice Hitchner, chair of the department, just completed his first season on a dig in the French Alps, and Emma Blake, assistant professor, completed her second season on her dig in Sicily near Marsala. Both of these digs are potentially groundbreaking (no pun intended) — they both serve as studies of the interaction between cultures in the Ancient Mediterranean and the French Alps. Hitchner's dig is in Embrun, France, possibly near where Hannibal famously crossed the Alps with his elephants in the Punic Wars. His site is being endorsed by *National Geographic*, and his colleague on the excavation, Mellon Fellow Dr. Maxence Segard, will be teaching a class this spring on the archeology of the French Alps.

On campus, the annual Balmuth Lecture Series has served as way for the department to reach out to the greater Classics community. A distinguished



each of us complete various “foundation” and “distribution” requirements, set in place so that we become acquainted with the important areas of inquiry: the humanities, the arts, the social sciences, the mathematical sciences, and the natural sciences. Interestingly enough, most of these areas of inquiry are etymologically linked to the Latin verb *scio* (“to know”) — because, in a liberal arts education, we are acquiring knowledge.

In the history of a liberal arts education, there are cornerstones. Traditionally, Classics has always been one of them — it used to be an integral part of one's academic career, and in fact, in the beginning of the 20th century, more than half of all students in America were studying Latin. A reading knowledge of

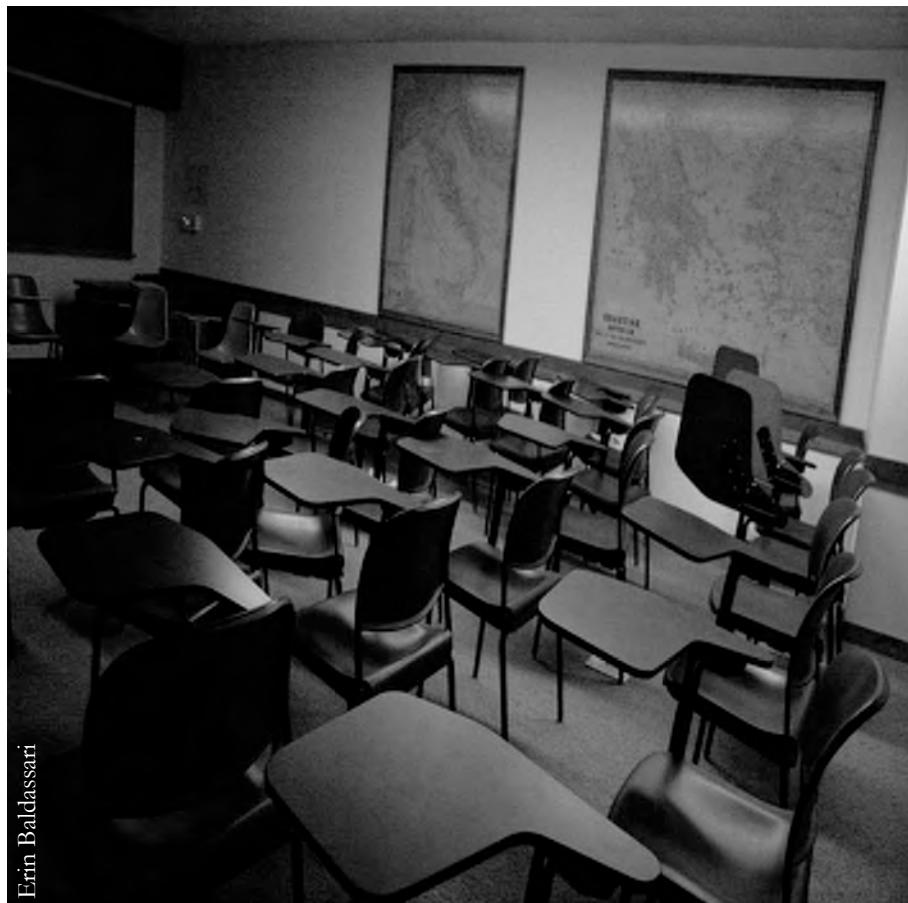
as a country is far less homogeneous than it was in 1905, when 56% of students were studying Latin, and we have adapted to the changes. In doing so, we encourage students to be practical and choose majors that will be useful to them in their futures. But I contend that a Classical education is practical and useful, and it should be given importance in the realm of higher education — especially at Tufts.

From what I can gather, “global citizenship” is the main tenet of a Tufts education. We are known as a school that has produced dozens of Fulbright scholars, that sends 40% of junior undergraduates abroad each year, and that encourages an understanding of the global community. This is certainly a noble image to project — I'm proud to be a part of a university

scholar is selected to give a four-part lecture series on a topic of their choice in an attempt to give modern relevance to the Classical world. Interestingly enough, after the Classics department started this recent tradition, the Political Science and Physics departments modeled their department lectures on the Balmuth Series. These are published lectures, and they draw colleagues and students from other colleges and universities to Tufts. This year, the highly anticipated series will feature Elizabeth Fentress, vice-president of the International Association of Classical Archeology. Her lectures will take place from February 25 to 28, and are expected to draw acclaim from the Classical community. Moreover, in April, Tufts will be hosting Helen Evans, curator of Byzantine art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The Tufts Classics and Archeology Department is also renowned for Perseus, a digital library filled with translations of Classical texts, online exhibitions, and various reference and dictionary works. The site, administered by Professor Gregory Crane, is known throughout the world. It is used not only in higher education, but also at the high school level. In fact, had I not used Perseus in preparation for my Latin AP exams in high school, I never would have heard of Tufts in the first place, and I never would have applied. The website is excellent advertising for the University, but it is hardly ever mentioned in any of the University press releases or bulletins. I know there are other students at Tufts like me, who researched Tufts initially only because of its association with Perseus. And Perseus is not the only cyber P.R. for the university associated with the Classics Department: Peter der Manuelian's Giza Archives Project is gaining recognition as one of the most innovative interactive web pages for an archeological site. It is a joint project through the Museum of Fine Arts, and is a catalog not only of artifacts found at the Giza pyramids, but also of archeological journals and other texts associated with the site. Both Perseus and the Giza Archives Project are currently expanding and constantly gaining recognition for Tufts in the Classical community.

For being a relatively small department, the Classics and Archeology department is



Erin Baldassari

clearly doing big things. At a university that as of late seems to emphasize the more scientific aspects of a liberal arts education, it would behoove the Tufts community to reconsider the importance of Classics in higher education. It's relevant to almost any path of study: according to the Association of American Medical Colleges, students who major or double-major in Classics have a better chance of acceptance at medical school than students who major in biology, microbiology, and other branches of science alone. Classics majors also have the highest success rates in law school, far ahead of political science and economics majors. And the final nail in the coffin of the misconception of a Classics major: we have some of the highest scores on the GREs (Princeton Review).

So, in conclusion, I am not trying to persuade you to change your major to Classics. I do, however, implore you to consider the importance of this department here at Tufts and in the greater academic community. It seems easy to write off Latin as a dead language and Classics as an impertinent field of study, but it is truly a foundation of a liberal arts

education, and it is relevant in almost every field of study. Regarding the Cicero quote at the beginning of this article, it translates to "How many portraits, images vividly drawn not only for contemplation but for emulation, of the bravest men have been left to us by Greek and Latin writers!" (Pro Archia, 14. 178-180). The fact that we still have an abundance of remnants from the Classical world is emblematic of its importance and continued relevancy. As Horace writes in his Odes, his poetry is "a monument more lasting than bronze" (Ode 3.30) — we should take these lasting monuments and acknowledge them, because in and of themselves, they are a monument to the humanities and a liberal arts education. Other majors are valuable as well, and some may seem more practical or trendy than Classics, but hardly any of them would hold any water without their roots in ancient Rome, Greece, and Byzantium. And in the end, if we're acquiring knowledge here, shouldn't we know where it came from? ☺

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Natalie Polito is a sophomore majoring in classical studies (*can't you tell?*)

# Abraham and Everything Else

## "A whimsical musing on the supreme origin of existence and divinity"

BY WILLIAM RAMSDELL

In the beginning there was God. Or light. Maybe even both, but without a doubt, there was something. This is

down on finer points and fun facts of the *Three's Company* of monotheism thus far.

As the apocryphal story goes, Adam and Lilith were a happy couple, but she wouldn't submit to him during sex so she was banished, becoming the queen of demons and leaving room for Eve to stain those of us born from a uterus in original sin. I, personally, am a test-tube child and therefore consider myself only peripherally stained in eternal damnation. Adam and Eve's kids intermarry and inbreed for few thousand years and the result is humanity as we know it today. Darwin: that misguided soul.

agree on, becomes the namesake of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam the Abrahamic religions. Next up is Moses. He can part water, summon pillars of ionized materials, and possesses a tremendously respectable beard. He goes up on a mountain in the desert, talks to a shrub, and when he gets back, his people have presumably discovered forge and bellows and subsequently smelted golden livestock. The result: Judaism.

The Jewish people are pretty low-key, despite this peculiar start. They do well at most things they try and, ironically, aren't too into xenophobic genocide. Granted, they literally worship a wall, but whatever. As it happened, God's attempt at talking via bush proved slack-job and it would seem that weather conditions and faulty fauna precluded 100% of the message from getting across. Perhaps the fumes of whatever native herb, once incinerated, muddled his whits. A couple hundred years later, though, God gets motivated to update "the word." You know, about how to more perfectly worship him, nothing about...I don't know, Germ Theory? So Jesus comes on the scene. He's pretty social, rolls 13 deep, good with the ladies depending on your stance on *The Da Vinci Code*, and is the Son of God; definitely

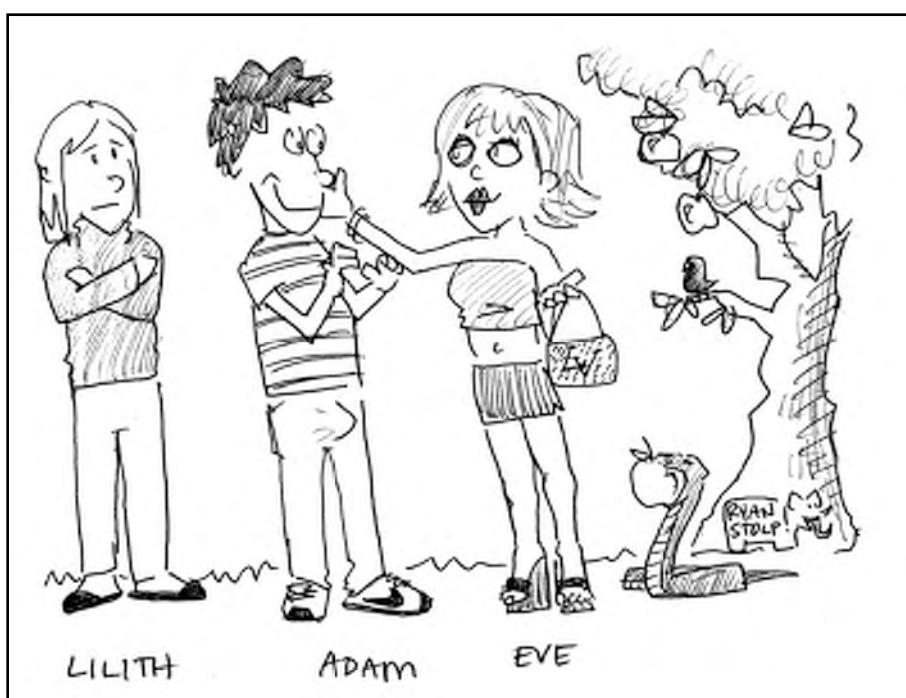


the extent to which we, as a species, can agree. Plenty of people think God was here in the beginning, and I think Atheists can probably band together to agree that there was at least "stuff" around that at some point began to constitute life. It's a grand consensus of human comprehension, is it not? *"In the beginning there was... something."*

God seems to know what he's doing though. I mean, 11 dimensions of vibrating super-strings, a universe filled with mysterious dark matter, and only one populated planet out of the countless of billions while the actual substrate of space itself is expanding? Talk about specificity. I don't think 11 dimensions and 6 "flavors" of quarks screams "natural order of things" and I think Occam would agree.

Are we really expected to accept that God constructed everything in so aberrant a form? Fortunately, we have religion to clear up all of those frustrating peculiarities. In a world awash with silly science and laborious logic, it is a comfort that religion is here to make everything simple, so here is a run

Abraham lives in the desert for 300 years and, since he's one thing everyone can



a superior communication medium, having a vocal box.

Sadly, however, The Man keeps Jesus down, but he goes out in style. He blows off Satan, saves humanity, re-ascends to heaven, reminds everyone to have a drink on Sunday, and that's all she wrote, right? Wrong.

Despite all that "don't worship me, just follow my lead" business, we, 200 A.D.'s best and brightest, are relatively sure that Jesus was just being modest. Henceforth, I'm thinking: Complete Torah makeover disregarding any semblance of translationary accuracy, an arduously boring sequel, an elite religious authoritative body, and we've got Abraham's v2.0!

Clearly the idea was a hit. Christians seem alright with just dumping more rules on an existing religion and calling it their own, and the Jews just want to do their thing. Of course there are those times when Christians slaughter people for silly reasons, but who are we to judge? Your culture rapes virgins for good luck? Can't judge. Your religion sacrifices people? Can't judge. Your religion demands infidel genocide? Simply not our place.

Q: But which texts are going to comprise this arduously boring sequel, or, rather, the New Testament?

A: The Counsel of Nicea of course. Run by the Romans, there should be no conflict of interest what so ever...

Book by Jesus' wife? Out. Book by the violent apostle who wanted her exiled? In. Book entailing Jesus' youth? Out. Book of "Revelations" depicting apocalypse by alien-space-locust-filled asteroid called Wormwood written by John in a brain fever?...Definitely in.

Hold up...This guy from yet another boondock desert just got a visit from God. Muhammad, thank God, I mean thank Allah, was God's (Allah's) vessel for another revelation. Jesus' work got cut a little short apparently, and he forgot to mention that his real name was actually 'Isa. It seems that God was also a little unclear about the fact that Jesus/'Isa is actually Allah's slave and that he will be a witness on judgment day. Jesus will be working the "Jews and Christians" kiosk, condemning all of his own followers, and for some bizarre reason, the Jews to eternal damnation. Ironic, eh?

Fortunately, where the Christians' greatest triumph was the invention of beer, the Muslims are one step ahead. Not only did they figure out that wearing 60 lbs of wool in the scorching desert was a brilliant fashion statement, they finally got the real edge on those condemners of men's souls: women. Or was that Arab culture's influence? At any rate, with Jesus/'Isa and Abraham on Muhammad's side, and the Qur'an pilled on top of those other 2 books, how can the Jews and Christians possibly deny Allah?

But it looks like the people on all levels



of this teetering tower of tiered religious 1-uping are sticking to their guns. Funny thing is, the guns seem to change. Islam used to be the most homosexually friendly of the three, though now Pres. Ahmadinejad assures us that not a homosexual exists in all Iran. Even the Vatican finally had to admit that purgatory was a prank, although I prefer limbo to Papal condemnation of condom use in Sub-Saharan Africa happily contributing to the AIDS pandemic, but that's only my op-ed opinion.

So God says "you, that one chemical bag (human) on that one rock (Earth) in an ocean of stars (universe), on this radial degree of your rotation around the gravitational center of your rock's orbit (Friday), you may not chemically break down (eat) this variety of organism (fish), otherwise, Hell. Amen." Right.

Just because Newtonian physics works pretty well around the house, filling the universe with conveniently placed dark mater to equalize the equation makes about as much sense as the convenience of God's secrecy and shyness. Everything came from somewhere, "it always was" doesn't do it for me, but I will never abandon reason. Or humor. ☺

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William Ramsdell is a sophomore and has not yet declared a major.



# The Low-Down on Going Down-Low: Part I

BY CAITLIN McDOWELL

For many, college is the first opportunity to openly explore their sexuality and expand their experiences. We don't seem to have any trouble embracing that fact; that "Places to Have Sex On Campus" is a Tufts Top Ten category is a sign that acknowledging our sexual habits is hardly taboo. But if we can talk openly about "hooking up" — an undefined cloud of casual sexual acts — why do we get so hung up talking about oral sex?

We've started the discussion, but I feel we're far from answers. If oral sex is so "popular," why are many partners uncomfortable with it? Why is a man's desire for blow jobs a publicly recognized fact, but a woman's request for reciprocation still a bit "edgy?" Well, maybe that's because we haven't found innocuous slang for it yet — can anyone really say "cunnilingus" without thinking of an exotic bacterium? I can't. But, seriously, what makes oral sex a disconcerting topic?

On one level, it's simple: Our gonads (being "sex organs") are tied up in our minds with sex and little else. Our mouths, on the other hand, are an essential part of the everyday — expressing our opinions and moods, eating the food and breathing the air we need to survive. By comparison, your penis or vagina is bound to feel a little impersonal, as familiar as you may be with it, and using your mouth to pleasure your partner might feel less "casual" than you first thought. Ironically, oral sex can feel impersonal too; the practical logistics of putting your mouth between your partner's legs means your face and most of your body will be obscured. That setup can make it very easy for the pleasured party to dissociate the sensations away from the person responsible — namely, you.

Maybe it's that confusion of the act's significance or the physical positions that contribute to the perceived power differential in oral sex. The feeling, whether you believe it or not, is that one partner is entitled to pleasure, and the giver should be grateful for the honor to pleasure the

recipient. Think I'm wrong? Try this on for size: What if President Clinton had been busted for licking intern Monica Lewinski's clitoris? I wish I could honestly say who was doing what wouldn't make a difference in public opinion, but I can't.

Still not convinced there is bias? Take a minute to look at how we talk about this stuff: while we "have sex with someone," oral pleasuring becomes "getting" or "giving head," as though the pleasure was an object



rather than a shared experience. And why does taking tests "suck" and writing papers "blow," if oral sex is so pleasurable? It's because when you say "that test sucked," you imply "that test sucked me" — putting it in a submissive and undesirable position. Obviously, it isn't meant literally or even figuratively, but that slang's origin lies in the perceived inequality of participants in oral sex. ("Fuck you" falls in this same lexicographic paradigm.) So, the next time you want to express your dislike, take a moment to look closely at what stereotypes you're supporting, okay?

Let's try an example: You hook up with your friend Casey and head back to your room to make out. You're still not sure how

you or Casey feels about your relationship, but the kissing and heavy petting feels good. As you're getting into it, though, Casey puts a hand on your head and pushes you between his/her legs — indicating for you to suck his penis/her clitoris. How do you feel? Without discussing it first, you don't know if Casey cares more about the pleasure or who's doing the pleasuring, and whether he/she will pleasure you in return. And that, more than being on your knees, is a very uncomfortable position.

But then why is oral sex so popular? Because we use our mouth every day, it is one of the most finely tuned muscle groups in our body. There just aren't many activities that require the same amount of practiced control over your pelvis (besides intercourse). And, as a result of all that "everyday" activity, pound for pound, your tongue is your strongest muscle anywhere. Thus, oral stimulation can be very precise, controlled and powerful.

We have this idealized notion that partners' pleasures peak simultaneously during intercourse — which, as almost anyone who's had sex can tell you, is a difficult feat of timing. Stimulation during sex can be haphazard and chaotic — each partner's sensation of pleasure makes it more difficult to please the other. Think about yourself near orgasm: are you in the best position to gyrate your hips, pulse your fingers, or trill your tongue in just the right way to pleasure your partner? That's why dividing up the tasks of pleasuring and being pleased can be much more satisfying than mutual stimulation — especially if you or your partner has trouble reaching orgasm. Blowjobs and handjobs can be very personal experiences when you realize your partner is specifically pleasing you, not scratching an itch — which is why eye contact and verbal expressions of pleasure are so moving.

By now, you're probably thinking, "Okay, I get it: oral sex can be great but also awkward. What can I do about that?" Keep an eye out for tips on how to make oral sex more satisfying for you and your partner in next week's *Observer*. ☺

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Caitlin McDowell is a senior majoring in physics.

# Peeling the Onion: Introspective Food for Thought



TREY KIRK

BY MARK PAGLIA

This past autumn has seen the publications of several noteworthy memoirs, authored by figures such as Clarence Thomas and Valerie Plame. The most controversial of these memoirs, however, is almost certainly *Peeling the Onion* by renowned German writer Günter Grass. In it, the Nobel laureate details his childhood and his path to becoming an artist, pausing in the middle to expound on his greatest confession—Grass, long considered to be a voice of morality for postwar Germany, served in the infamous Waffen-SS unit in the dying days of the Nazi regime.

Unsurprisingly, Grass has been both harshly denounced for his deception and stoutly defended for his honesty. Regardless, any issue of whether or not Grass should have revealed his military service is overshadowed by the question of what exactly led him to join the Waffen-SS to begin with. Throughout the memoir, Grass continually denies any simple explanations as to why he volunteered for military duty, leaving

both reader and author with more questions than answers. The truth that becomes central to the book is that there are no comprehensible answers to explain the Nazis and the Holocaust, least of all for Grass himself.

Grass's life story begins with his childhood in the German city of Danzig between the two World Wars. The son of a grocer, the young Günter Grass grows up through a series of childhood exploits, all overshadowed by the growing and unquestioned militarism that gradually becomes a given part of life in Danzig. When Adolf Hitler became the German chancellor in 1933, Grass was not quite six years old, and by the end of the war he was just pushing 18. While it might be tempting to conclude that a youthful naïveté led

Grass to enter the army, he dismisses such possibilities.

The image that emerges as Grass enters adolescence is that of a young man yearning to leave behind the boring life of a grocer's

*Peeling the Onion* is in equal parts the memoir of a writer, a student, a soldier, an artist, a criminal, and a moralist, each distinct and yet all the same.

son and pursue adventure. Grass recognizes that such teenage angst and wanderlust cannot fully explain his decision to lie about his age and join the army, and he harshly rebukes himself for much of the memoir over this seemingly inexplicable decision. Still a teenager, Grass is unprepared for the realities of war, noting sardonically that he was, at the time, more concerned with “a futile battle against pimples.” What follows is an account of his brief military service in the final year of the war, most of which is spent running away from the advancing Soviets and narrowly evading bullets and bombs. After months of scurrying around battlefields without actually fighting, the young Grass is unceremoniously captured

and sent to an American prisoner-of-war camp. It is here that Grass claims that he first received evidence of the full extent of the Holocaust, though he admits that he already knew about the existence of concentration camps, if not the horrors that occurred within them.

Although World War II is central to the memoir, the war is over by the midpoint of the book. What follows is an account of Grass' struggle to find a place in a society completely upended by fascism and warfare. The remainder of the memoir shows Grass as a fledgling sculptor and writer, and it is in this section that the narrative unravels and loses its focus. After so many pages centered around the war, the second half of the book is a picaresque account of postwar boarding houses, as Grass recounts scattered episodes along his path to becoming a writer.

If there is a single theme running throughout the memoir, it is an analysis of memory itself. The title of the book comes from Grass' metaphor that memory is like an onion, with many layers that must be delicately peeled off in order to reveal

further layers below. In addition, Grass frequently alternates between presenting his

story in the first-person voice and the third-person, referring to his former selves as “the smoker,” “the artist,” “the soldier,” “the non-smoker,” and many other labels. This reveals, perhaps, the reason why Grass cannot understand his own past actions; for while the teenager who joined the Waffen-SS was also Günter Grass, he is different from the aged writer of the same name, but the boundary between the two is impossible to locate. *Peeling the Onion* is thus in equal parts the memoir of a writer, a student, a soldier, an artist and a moralist, each distinct and yet all the same. ☀

*Peeling the Onion* is available at the Tisch Library, as well as at most major bookstores and online retailers.

# Contemporary Intrigue: An Evening at the BCA



BY JAN MCCREARY

This past weekend, I traveled to the South End to visit the Boston Center for the Arts.

Only a ten-minute walk from Copley Square, the BCA is an artist village nestled within a residential neighborhood of brownstones, providing a welcome relief from the nearby skyscrapers and bustling traffic. Indeed, Tremont Street is full of numerous BCA-sponsored events and attractions that can turn any urban evening into an intimate exploration of art and culture.

While visiting, one might consider exploring the BCA's performing arts scene. The Boston Ballet's production of *The Nutcracker* will make its debut on November 29, and the show runs well into the Christmas season. The BCA also offers a range of independent plays and musicals performed by local theater troupes. Currently, the SpeakEasy Stage Company is performing *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, a who-

dunit musical based on a dysfunctional Victorian family.

But perhaps the easiest and least expensive way of enjoying the BCA's thriving arts scene is by visiting any number of its permanent galleries of

have been more different, they both contributed to an air of urban trendiness and progressive style that sets the Boston Center for the Arts apart from most other local attractions.

## The Boston International Fine Art Show at the Cyclorama

The Cyclorama is a multipurpose venue whose expansive circularity and high ceilings are ideal for accommodating a large crowd eager to appreciate the works of the Boston International Fine Art Show. The room was sectioned into booths, each showcasing the paintings of a particular American or European art gallery. By the time I arrived, the evening's festivities were already in full swing as middle-aged socialites in black cocktail dresses and stiletto heels perused the selections with champagne in hand.

The styles of the paintings ranged from contemporary realism to impressionism, and the subjects from New England landscapes to European kings. Some of the works seemed to reflect the classic tastes of the upscale crowd



contemporary and traditional art. I attended the Boston International Fine Art Show at the Cyclorama, and a contemporary art exhibition at the Mills Gallery. While these events could not

that dominated the event. Blazer-clad gentlemen congregated near booths that showcased marine art from Maine and oil canvas depictions of sunsets in Connecticut woods.

However, many of the paintings embodied the progressive style and message the BCA's galleries are known for. Karen Hollingsworth's "Afternoon Light," from the Wynne-Falconer Gallery in Chatham, MA, offered an interesting look at seclusion and confinement. It depicted two chairs whose varnish remained unpenetrated by the sun's rays because they were wrapped in white sheets resembling straitjackets.

Such thought-provoking images made it clear that the Boston International Fine Art Show was far more than a social gathering of elites, but rather, a sincere expression of artistic inquiry.

### Contemporary Art at the Mills Gallery

The contemporary concepts highlighted in many of the Cyclorama's paintings came full circle at the Mills Gallery. The Mills' artists also introduced innovative ways to express these ideas, as the works moved away from the traditional medium of paint and canvas towards fascinating uses of paper, fabric, and even Scotch tape.

Rosana Castrillo-Diaz's untitled display of transparent tape consisted of hundreds of pieces of looped tape stuck together to form a series of organic shapes resembling bath bubbles and sea turtles. Also featured was a mural-sized depiction of numerous farm and cityscapes drawn with a thin

black marker and draped with multi-colored yarn that seemed to mark the interconnectedness of the world.

The menagerie of attendants further accentuated the unique personality of the event. Fifty-something patrons draped in Stevie Nicks-like dresses mingled with college students in Converse sneakers and neon hair, and many migrated to a room in the back of the gallery.

There, both generations enjoyed several short films. My personal favorite featured a series of pencil-sketched portraits of diverse characters. After each figure appeared on the screen, something embarrassing about them was revealed. A portrait of a young woman followed with this text: "She has the most delicate neck and the finest moustache." Truly, at the Mills Gallery, contemporary art was elevated to a new level of intelligent creativity and fun.

After dinner at one of the many cafés on Tremont Street, I forced myself back into the frigid New England air and walked towards the T. But as I looked back at the BCA's brightened street lamps and tranquil brownstones, I knew that I would soon return to experience another night of intriguing art. ☀

*The Boston Center for the Arts is accessible by the Green Line to Copley station. The Mills Gallery is open Wednesday through Sunday, from noon to 5 p.m., and opens until 9 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Image on top left: Karen Hollingsworth's "Afternoon Light" at the Boston International Fine Art Show. Courtesy of Wynne-Falconer Gallery.*

The menagerie of attendants accentuated the unique personality of the event. Fifty-something patrons draped in Stevie Nicks-like dresses mingled with college students in Converse sneakers and neon hair.

## ARTS THIS WEEK

### TUFTS:

Friday, Nov. 30, *Cabaret*, Balch Arena Theater, 8:00 p.m. Set in the 1920s, a young American writer in Berlin seeks escape in a club. Presented by Torn Ticket II. Tickets \$7 at the Cohen box office.

Saturday, Dec. 1, *S.o.C. Presents: "evolution."* Cohen Auditorium, 8:00 p.m. Come watch Tufts' hottest hip-hop/jazz dance group perform in its fall show. Tickets \$7 at the Cohen box office.

Sunday, Dec. 2, *Essence Winter Concert: "Hot Chocolate,"* Alumnae Lounge, 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$6 at the Campus Center Info Booth.

Thursday, Dec. 6, *Tufts Composers with X-Band*, Distler Hall, Granoff Music Center, 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Featuring cellist Jason Calloway and guest artist X-Band. Free event.

### BOSTON:

Friday, Nov. 30, *No Child*, Loeb Drama Center, Harvard Square. Presented by the American Repertory Theater, *No Child* is a humorous look into the New York City public education system. Through Dec. 23. For information on show times and tickets, see amrep.org/nochild.

Friday, Nov. 30, *The Nutcracker*, The Opera House. Presented by the Boston Ballet, tickets start at \$30. Through Dec. 29. For more information on show times and tickets, see bostonballet.org.

Saturday, Dec. 1, *24 Hours: Medicine Wheel 2007, Water Bearers*, Cyclorama, Boston Center for the Arts. Artist Michael Dowling's annual participatory public art installation in honor of World AIDS Day. For more information, see bcaonline.org.

# INTERRUPTIONS

## BITCHIN': *What pisses you off?*

**"Why does it always seem like I have almost all of my exams on the first day, then one exam on the last day of exam week? Way to ruin my winter break, yo."**

I have a solution to your problem — you see, you're presupposing that you would do better on your exams if you actually took them. I beg to differ. If you're going to fail either way, why even bother? Go home before taking any of your exams! That way, everyone will win: You'll get to bust this joint right quick, the rest of us will be able to study without you distracting us with your constant complaining, and your teachers won't even have to grade your disgraceful Blue Books that have a tendency of becoming Red Books after you touch them. I can't, however, speak on behalf of your family, who may be bummed out at the prospect of your lazy ass showing up on their doorstep a week early.

**"I'm categorically afraid of naked people, and it's suppressing my rights as a gymnophobist [a person who has a fear of nudity] to have NQR on the Quad. Can we do something about this?"**

Before you go suing the school for allowing this blatant show of indecency to go on year after year, take your pants off. Feel the cool air between your legs. Jump up and down a few times! Feels good, no? Being naked is one of the best things you

can do for yourself, and may or may not be one of the worst things you can do for everyone around you. If this exercise in self-discovery wasn't enough to make you empathize with ev-

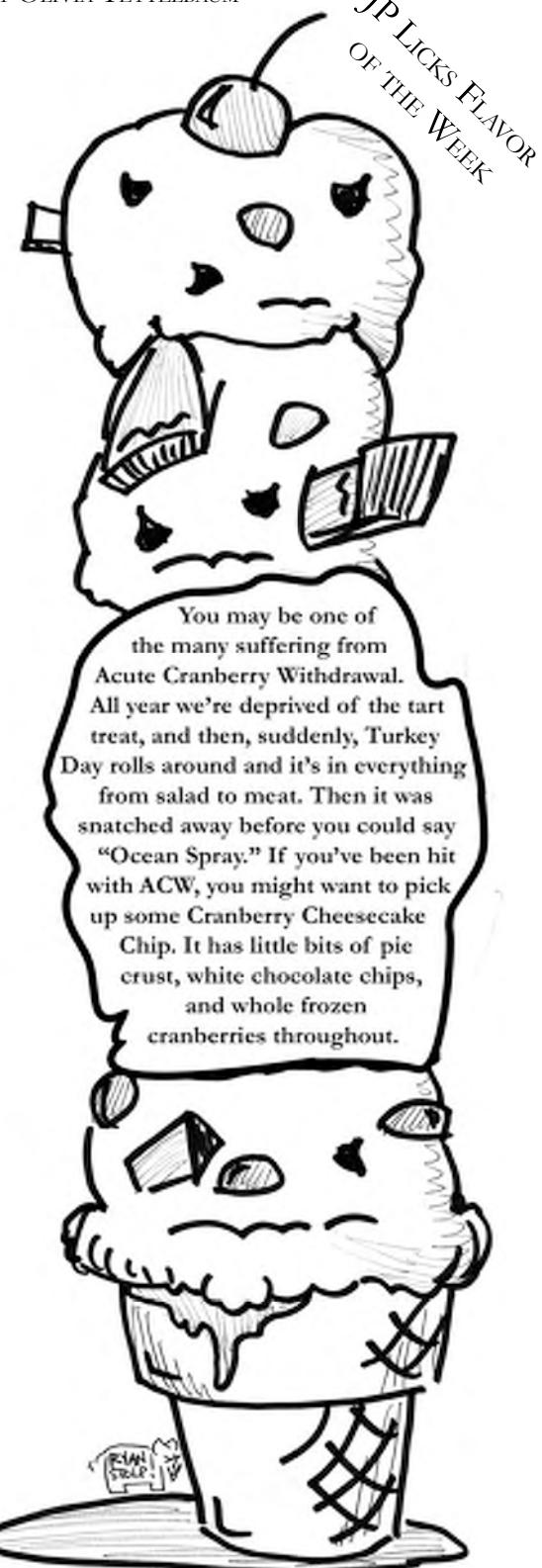


eryone participating in the nighttime quad reception, take your exams. If they don't make you want to strip down to your skivvies and run around in below-freezing temperature, you aren't working hard enough. Better yet, leave. Forever. We don't need you or your phobias anywhere near our institution of higher learning.

**"It's that time of year again when the dining halls use up all their leftover food before winter break. Leftover peas in every dish at Carmichael and Dewick? Sounds great! NOT."**

Well I'm sorry if our dining selections are not up to par with the high standards your cultured palette impresses upon you. Maybe you'd like something better, like some filet mignon, caviar, or a wheel of brie? Heaven forbid we forget the Grey Poupon! Before you go demanding fresh, gourmet delectables, look down at yourself. Chances are you could probably use a few more peas and a few less pizzas, if you know what I mean.

BY OLIVIA TEYTELBAUM



# Dine With Dick

BY GEORGIA RANES

You're in a regular run-of-the-mill American restaurant. The room you're in is overcrowded and under-lit. The restaurant is filled with the unpredictable, intermittent cries, shouts, and bursts of laughter of dozens of simultaneous conversations all trying to be heard over one another. The waiter serves you with a scowl of displeasure and a sarcastic comment along with each course. Yep, just your average American restaurant. Well, except for the tiny detail that there's a balloon tied to your hair that reads "I've been ridden more times than a Greyhound bus," while your neighbor is wearing a huge paper hat that reads "My thong is on backwards and I like it."

Okay, maybe not so average.

But it's a common scene at Dick's Last Resort Restaurant, where waiters throw tantrums, refuse to serve food on plates, and make customers get up and get their own menus. At Dick's, Boston accents are common, yet water glasses are not. Water is served in a large bucket for the table to share, and instead of pre-meal bread, communal French fries are served. Waiters rudely order customers around, stand on tables, shout, and essentially control the meal; so if you're up for anything, this is the place for you. But if you have a fragile disposition and are easily offended, you should probably go to Applebee's instead. The waiters can be quite insulting, and if you're not in the right, lighthearted kind of mood when you go to Dick's, the night could become disastrous. Take comments with a grain of salt and sit down ready to laugh and have fun.

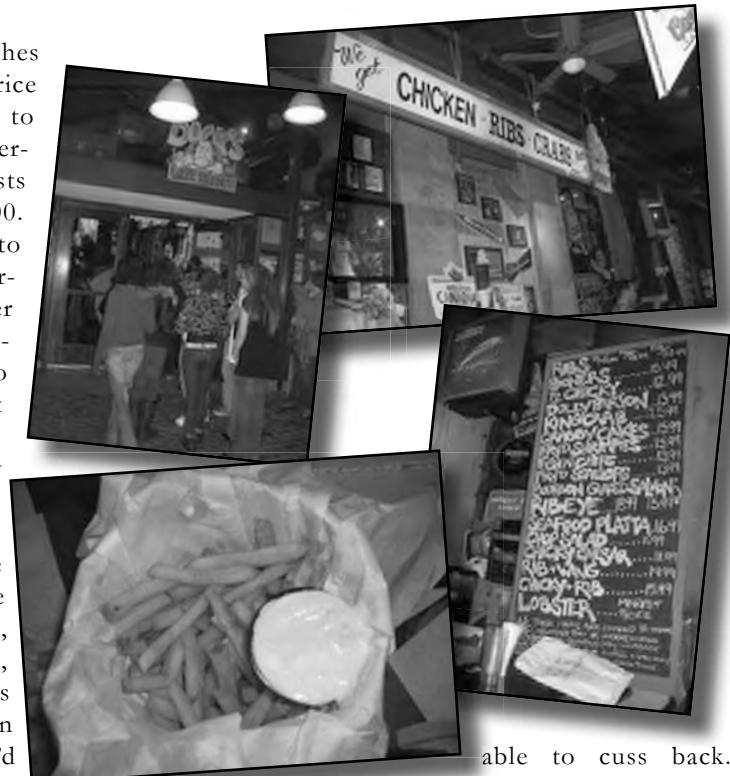
You should also be prepared to spend a bit of money. Although the meals are reasonably priced according to the often pricey Boston standards, for penny pinching college students the meals can be a real income drain.

With the dishes ranging in price from \$11.99 to \$25.99, the average meal costs around \$16.00. Don't try to skimp by ordering an appetizer and a few meager meals to share amongst a group; Dick's requires every person at the table to order a meal or else they'll refuse to serve you, and in my case, our waitress didn't mention this until we'd already ordered an appetizer.

Overall, for the amount of money you pay, the quality of food served is pretty average.

Although the menu at Dick's is filled with creatively suggestive dishes like Pork Bonerz, Ride'm Cowboy Rib Eye, and Love Me Tenders, what's actually served is very nondescript. Despite the clever names, most of the dishes taste like anything from any other family chain restaurant. The only dish that particularly stands out is the "Ribs N' Wings Bucket." It's the most popular dish, along with any of Dick's other rib dishes. Though the food is nothing to rave about, it's presented in an interesting and clever manner. Because most dishes are served without plates, the food is piled onto thick paper atop metal buckets and spittoons, which makes eating the food a bit of a challenge.

But you don't go to Dick's for five-star food. You go to Dick's for the unique experience of being cussed out by your waiter and being



able to cuss back.

At Dick's everyone becomes a bitch or an asshole, but it's with a crowd, which, as history has shown us, makes being an asshole okay. It's like...the L.A. Riots or the Nazi Party...but that's getting off topic. It's because of this "let loose" attitude that Dick's has been awarded the famed "The Shame O' Boston" since 1993. But all jokes aside, Dick's provides an entertaining twist on the familial meal. Different groups of customers, from bachelorette parties to families, are forced to sit next to each other on long, cafeteria style tables, forcing inter-party interaction. This, along with its crazy antics in dealing with customers, makes Dick's a very entertaining and memorable experience. Come with thick skin and a camera. ☩

*Dick's is located in Faneuil Hall Marketplace (accessible by the Government Center T stop on the green line) in the Quincy Market building and is open for lunch and dinner.*

*All photos by Georgia Ranes.*

# Local Concert Hot Spots

BY JULIE LONERGAN

**T**here's nothing quite like standing so close to the front at a concert that you can see the lead singer's sweat and the bassist's bitten fingernails, the band's scribbled set lists and supply of beer, and the taped-up, scarred stage floor. No matter what kind of music it is, being close to the band completely transforms the experience into a much more personal one. Unlike that drunk guy screaming "I love you guys" from the back, you can actually see the band, watch the chord changes, and follow the singer's lips as they form the lyrics.

Of course, this is only possible if you're close enough to the stage. This is why I love small venues: even though their floors can be quite dirty and grimy, the tickets are cheap, the bands are sufficiently under-the-radar that you can feel indie cool, and you can stand really, really close to the artists. Boston and Cambridge have a great selection of smaller concert venues, as well as a roster of amazing bands, and there is usually a concert to check out every weekend.

The Middle East in Cambridge is a nightclub and restaurant. There are two concert areas, Upstairs and Downstairs, and they both offer the closeness-to-band factor we're after. The Middle East Downstairs is the larger of the two, and if you are stuck in the back it can be hard to see the stage, so get there early enough to secure a spot in the front. Upstairs is more intimate, holding about 90 people, and the stage is somewhat higher for an easier sight line from the back, or from behind that monster tall guy who always seems to end up in front of you. There isn't much to look at other than the band in either space -- bare walls, lots of sound equipment, and wires are the

best you're going to get. Both areas have small bars and room for a merchandise table, and Downstairs has some seating along the walls. You won't really care about these aesthetics, however, because the tickets are so inexpensive. For almost always less than \$20, and often closer to \$10, the Middle East brings a large range and number of exciting musical acts.

The Paradise Rock Club, near BU,



PHOTO BY ALEXANDRA KITTLE

is another great small venue. It's been around since 1977, and has hosted acts such as Television, The Pixies, Joe Strummer, and Blondie. The Paradise has a wide floor area and mezzanine-like seating and standing areas around the sides of the room. Its décor consists of two large columns in the middle of the floor near the edges of the stage, and although they look suitably trendy with black and silver painted designs, they are probably rather annoying to stand behind. It seems to be a general rule that arriving early to concerts at small venues is a good idea, and that is no different here. Luckily, I haven't been stuck behind the columns, but sometimes having to stand around the sides of the stage -- and therefore behind huge amps -- is just as frustrating. Because the floor is much wider across than it is deep, the areas with clear views will fill up more quickly than at

other small clubs. However, the concerts I've seen at the Paradise were great. It may not be quite as intimate as the small Middle East, but it is still small enough to feel accessible.

The Roxy is located in Boston's Theater District, and it fits right into the surrounding area. A marble foyer, purple and silver walls, mirrored disco balls, and an amazing lighting system make for concerts much more dramatic in scope than at the homey Middle East or low-key Paradise. It is comparatively much larger than either venue, but it is still possible to stand right up against the stage, and if you're close enough to the front, the view is incredible. The tickets at the Roxy are also slightly more expensive than at some other concert venues, but are worth the price for the incredible lighting at a show I saw here recently: strobe lights, color spotlights, and a huge flashing sign with the band's name were so much more than I expected for \$25. The Roxy also hosts comedy shows, and has several bars and VIP lounge areas -- it's more like the Avalon or the Bowery Ballroom in New York than the quite small Middle East, but it does host some great indie artists and reasonable ticket prices.

With such easy access to Cambridge and Boston, Tufts students looking for a small, intimate indie concert have to go no further than a few T stops to find musical bliss in unique concert venues. Check out a show sometime this semester — you won't regret it! ☺

The Paradise ([theparadise.com](http://theparadise.com) or 617-562-8820) is at the Pleasant Street stop on the Green Line's B Train. The Middle East ([mideastclub.com](http://mideastclub.com) or 617-931-2000) is about two blocks from the Central T stop. The Roxy ([roxyplex.com](http://roxyplex.com) or 617-426-0121) is about three blocks down Tremont Street from the Boylston T stop.

**Rabboni**

Bitter wind and darkened sky  
 Shadows break the mountainside  
 Golgotha's grin and hollow eye—  
 The day my savior died.

Three crosses for the sinners' crimes  
 Three bodies to be crucified  
 Though he'd arise in three days' time,  
 There now, my savior, arms stretched wide.

Blood, vinegar and wine  
 Streaming down his mangled hide  
 The communion cup and bread divine—  
 The lamb god said he would provide.

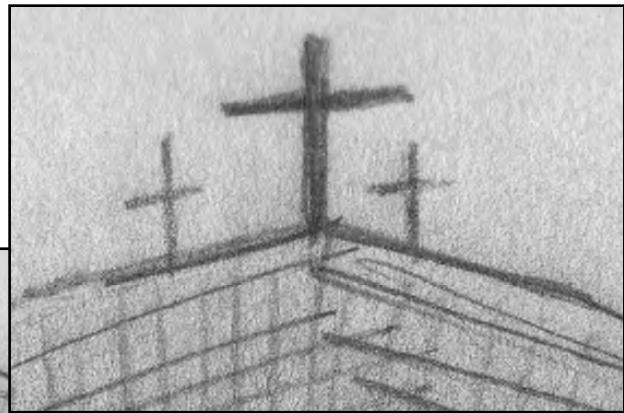
"Elo! Elo!" my savior cried,  
 "Llama sabashthani?"  
 Heavy chested heaving dry—  
 My savior breathed his final sigh.

Looked I upon his pierced side  
 The one I have, to self, denied  
 Asked my Lord—what right have I,  
 To call my savior 'rabboni.'

Trembling earth, forsaken night  
 Silence plagued the mountainside  
 Yet morning broke with gentle light—  
 Heard I my savior's voice reply:

For you, my child, I chose to die  
 Through me you have been sanctified  
 But touch my hands, my scars, my side,  
 Fear not, and know, I am alive!

—BY CHARLES SKOLD



RAFI KOHLBERG

# The Saga of Sol and Murray

BY LAUREN LANSTER

The shock of the lights turning on made his whole body twitch. Sol could feel his heart pounding and cursed the nurse for raising his already dangerously high blood pressure. He loathed her with all of his double bypassed heart. "You know," he began with a snarl, "I'm gonna get outta here. And when I do you'll be out of a job and *you'll*

idle threat. She took the pillows out from underneath him, fluffed them, and placed them at the foot of the hospital bed. To his great annoyance, she adjusted his bed to the most upright position. "Ugh, what a klapste, so damn zlidne," he tried muttering but found himself choked by the six pills she was shoving in his mouth. Before he could swallow the last of them, she was already transferring him to his wheelchair and rolling him into the hallway to mark

in front of him across the hall and yet the man was squinting in his direction. "Sol Goldman?"

"Morning, Murray," Sol said to his walker-bound friend.

"Solly, you're never gonna believe the dream I had," said Murray, looking in his direction but unable to find Sol's face.

"You mean you remembered something? It's a miracle."

"Yeah, I did, Sol, I did. It was

"We was running away, and you, you was rolling outta here so fast on that wheelchair, so fast. And we went and hid out at my daughter's house because she's at her other house in Florida."

be the miserable one!"

"Ah, sí, sí, señor," the nurse responded, clearly not understanding his

the end of her duties.

"Sol, is that you?" another elderly man called out. He was less than five feet

incredible, you'll never believe it," said Murray.

"So get to it, will ya? I'm not getting any younger here."

"Oh, so I dreamt we was getting out of here. You, and me, and Gladys and Bonnie and Ruth and Carl and the Nazi and all of us. We was all getting out of here because we went and we fooled all them nurses. We was running away, and you, you was rolling outta here so fast on that wheelchair, so fast. And we went and hid out at my daughter's house because she's at her other house in Florida. And we lived there and didn't have to wake up at six no more, and there was none of them dumb



RAFI KOHLBERG



RAFI KOHLBERG

nurses. How about that, Sol? How about that?" His eyes glazed over, and he had a half smile on his lips.

Sol's brow furrowed. "Murray, you really thought all of that up? How many escape dreams does that make? It's like you have them every day."

"Yeah, Sol, I do. I think. For the most part. I've had them ever since my daughter bought that house in Florida. They're getting more complicated though. I saw people in it this time. And an escape route."

Sol couldn't help but smile. Getting out of The Palace Retirement Community was his only desire. "How do we do it?"

"We just—" Murray began just as a fleet of nurses came down the hall, scooping up all the wheelchair-bound people and caravanning them towards the elevator while the ambulatory ones struggled to get moving. When Murray got lost in the crowd, Sol couldn't help but think intently about his idea. It bubbled and came to a boil in Sol's head. He would be able to eat foods that weren't denture-friendly. He felt like a volcano about to erupt. Murray had seen the escape, the finish line. Hell, Murray was an assistant military strategist at the end of the War, he was sure to know

a thing or two about planning an escape. Freedom. It was so close. No more non-English-speaking people trying to boss him around. He could stand up and dance, he was so eager. As some nurse wheeled him into the dining room for breakfast, Sol could hardly form the words to ask for a glass of juice. The nurse left him in his usual spot alongside Gladys, his near-deaf tablemate.

"How's my favorite war vet doing today?" she asked in the voice reserved for chain smokers. "You look faklemp."

"Ah, it's nothing," Sol replied, fidgeting with his silverware.

"Oh come on, Sol," said Ruth, the former showgirl who sat diagonally across from him. Her bright white hair made the deep red of her lipstick stand out intensely. "You're not scowling. Something's up."

"It's Murray. He had another dream about getting outta here. This one was for real, he knows how we do it and everything."

"Eet iss all lies, Gold-mon. Murray iss a qvack!" said Karl, the brooding tablemate who sat at the head, his thick mustache completely covering his upper lip.

"You know Karl, that's why they call you the Nazi," said Ruth sardonically.

"Oh? Not because I'm German?" responded Karl.

Sol was oblivious to the conversation as his thoughts wandered again to Murray's plan. He saw that Murray had finally made it to the dining room, khaki pants short enough to expose wool socks. He sat down across the table from a very excited Sol.

"Murray, I need you to tell me how we get outta here," he said, leaning in.

"Sol? Is that you?" Murray replied, squinting again to find his face.

"Yeah, Murray, it's me." Sol could hardly contain his anticipation. "Now tell me how we got outta here."

"Whatya mean?" asked Murray, slowly clasping a glass of water and raising it to his lips..

"Your dream, Murray, the dream you had last night, the one of us getting outta here."

"I don't know what you're talking about, but what a terrible night I had, Sol, just awful. I didn't sleep a wink."

*Lauren Lanster is a sophomore. She has not yet declared a major.*

*Rafi Kohlberg ('10) is this week's featured artist. Rafi has not yet declared a major.*

# POLICE BLOTTER

**Monday, November 12**

TUPD received a report at 5:34 a.m. of a disoriented person banging on the door of a house on Emory street. The resident stated that a Tufts student asked to be let into the house after he drank too much and passed out on the street sometime during the previous night. During questioning, the student was unable to recall the events of the previous night. TEMS was notified, however the student signed a refusal for further treatment.

**Wednesday, November 14**

A student called TUPD reporting that the windshield of his car had been smashed while it was parked in the Hill Hall parking lot. The incident happened sometime between 9:30 p.m. on the November 11 and 11:30 a.m. on November 12. The student reported getting into a fight with another student during the night of November 11, but the culprit remains unknown.

**Friday, November 16**

At 10:32 a.m., students reported seeing the Tufts Daily steal the police blotter from a highly regarded campus magazine. TUPD remains unsure of what precipitated the event, but thinks that marijuana, underage alcohol consumption, stolen car GPS's and campus fire alarms were involved.

**Sunday, November 18**

At 3:34 a.m., Tufts students told a TUPD cruiser that they saw an unconscious male lying at the top of the stairway in Sophia Gordon Hall. TEMS and the Somerville Fire Department responded to the call. When questioned, the male admitted to having taken a few shots and using cocaine earlier in the evening.

**Saturday, November 24**

At 11:37 p.m., TUPD pulled over a car driving without headlights on. The driver (a non-Tufts student) had a suspended license and upon questioning became irate, and began to scream and yell. He was then arrested for disorderly conduct and operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license.

*—Compiled by Molly Posner, with the cooperation of the Tufts Police Dept.*

## COLLEGE BULLETS

### College Class Sizes Increasing

Over the next eight years the number of American college students (already numbering 18 million) is expected to increase by two million. To accommodate the growing number of students, huge class sizes seem inevitable. Currently, popular introductory courses at universities across the country have astronomical class sizes, sometimes numbering into the thousands. At their best, these classes allow many students to see premier professors. At their worst, according to Carl Weiman (a Nobel Prize winner and Colorado University physics professor) the large classes can be detrimental to students' problem-solving skills.

### College Language Classes Boom

Enrollment in college foreign language classes is booming, according the Modern Language Association of America. Such a movement reflects a major push for internationalization on college campuses across the country. Total enrollment, reportedly, has grown 12.9 percent over the past four years. Although Spanish remains the most popular language, Arabic is the fastest growing language, doubling in the past four years. Chinese and American Sign Language also saw significant jumps in enrollment.

*—Compiled by Molly Posner*

### Heard on the Hill

"I think all too often we leave symposiums with a wealth of new knowledge on a particular topic, but not many tangible steps to act on."

Alice Tin (A '10) on November 26, commenting on the goals of the recent Health Disparities & Higher Education Symposium.

PARTING SHOT

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