

TUFTS OBSERVER

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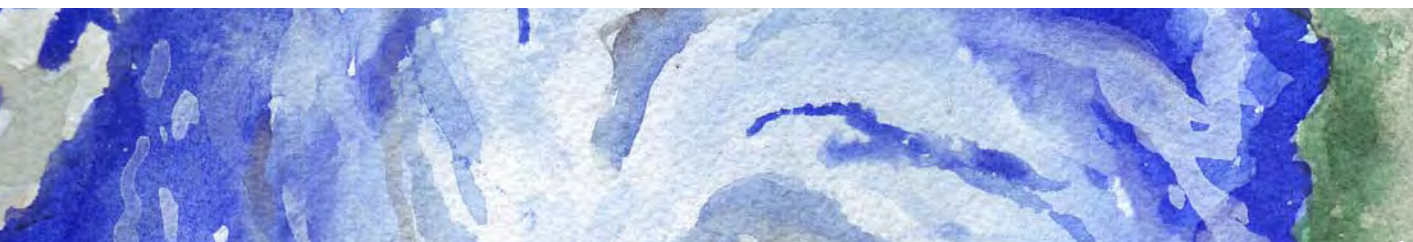
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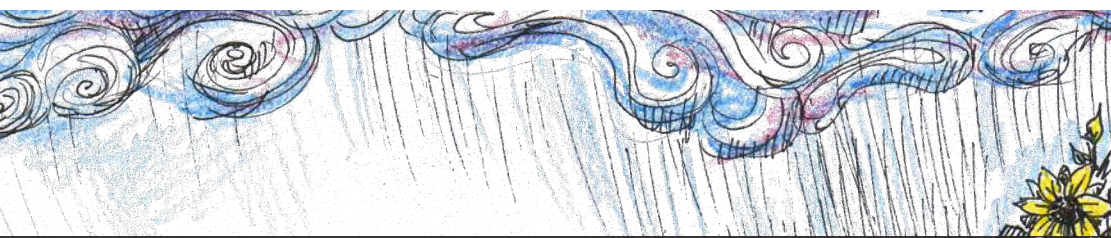
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The *Observer* has been Tufts' student publication of record since 1895. Our dedication to in-depth reporting, journalistic innovation, and honest dialogue has remained intact for over a century. Today, we offer insightful news analysis, cogent and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

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Tufts Observer, since 1895 Tufts' Student Magazine

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CONTRIBUTORS

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Aditi Ashok

Robert Collins

Melissa Feito

Mahlet Meshesha

Chelsea Newman

Arianna Photopoulos

Griffin Quasebarth

Catherine Roseman

Nader Salass

Monica Stadecker

Eva Strauss

Lauren Traitz



IT'S NOT EASY BEING

GREEN

Tufts has grown visibly more environmentally-conscious in recent years. From the phasing out of dining trays and default double-sided printing in the library, to Zero Waste Week and countless more efforts, more students are trying to make a difference when it comes to sustaining our planet's future. At the forefront of this movement is a new kind of eco-awareness. It's called environmental justice, and it fits in with Tufts' identity as a socially and globally conscious university.

According to Tufts Environmental Justice professor Elizabeth Ammons, "Environmentalism is concern about the natural environment, while social justice is concerned with issues of human rights and equity. Environmental justice can really be thought of as those two extremely important movements coming together." The environmental justice movement, which started in African American Southern communities in the late 20th century, has grown from a grassroots movement to its current status of international activism and policy work. Ammons says that what is especially important in terms of the movement is thinking about which groups of people are most seriously impacted by environmental degradation and damage. Research has shown that the hardship falls disproportionately on people of color, women, and those with low socioeconomic status. For example, the poorest residents of Brooklyn are feeling the worst effects of Hurricane Sandy, due to the inherent inequality in infrastructure and access to resources. Here, we see how environmental activists could also be concerned with social justice.

Tufts has long emphasized active citizenship and combating injustice around the world, and actively working to improve the health of the planet has been a global agenda for many years. In a 2008 spotlight on green colleges, environmentalist blog Earthwatch posted that Tufts has "long been a leader in sustainability—back before

many people even knew the definition of the term... Tufts' environmental efforts are nearly too numerous to name." However, there's a sense that this effort has become even more of a priority in recent years. Student environmental activist Claudia Tajima commented, "I've noticed a shift at Tufts in the four years I've been here, especially with the new administration. They're placing a focus on sustainability, and we're accepting the fact that we're an institution with power that can make a change."

Recent changes at Tufts have been varied, and often include an element of environmental justice. For example, through the Eco-Rep program, which was started in 2001 and reinstated in 2010 after a hiatus, each dorm or group of dorms has a (usually live-in) student expert on sustainability. In addition to organizing events to get their message out and taking charge of campus compost bins, the student Eco-Reps receive extensive training, which includes lectures on how social justice and environmentalism are interrelated. It's important to note that the Eco-Reps aren't just volunteers—they're paid by the university for their work. Tufts is dedicating money to ensure the presence of student leaders in environmentalism and experts on environmental justice.

Other than the Eco-Reps, plenty of students are also environmentally involved. Under the umbrella organization of the Tufts Sustainability Collective, many student activism groups work outside of classes to clean up both the environment and the policies that support it. On-campus efforts include Tom Thumb's Student Garden and the Sustainable Action Squad, which works on making small changes on campus that make a big difference. Food for Thought discusses contemporary food issues every week, while Green Team teaches environmentally related lessons in local schools. Finally, Students for a Just and Stable Future is a statewide student-led organization dedicated to achieving 100% clean energy in

Massachusetts by 2020. While these groups have different purposes, they work to serve one goal: to make an impact on and in our community, both on campus and in the surrounding area.

This goal extends into our classrooms and lecture halls. Tufts offers an Environmental Engineering track, an interdisciplinary minor in Environmental Studies, and a minor in Urban Studies through the graduate Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning. This upcoming semester, courses are available on environmental justice and literature, climate justice, and environmental politics. As is fitting with Tufts' global focus, most of these classes and programs discuss environmental issues from all over the world. In addition, the final project in these classes is often a work of social action, which has sometimes caused real change on our campus. Over the past two years, Professor Ammons' Environmental Justice class has conceived, designed, and carried out social actions that have led to the removal of plastic bags from Hodgdon and to free-range meat options in the dining halls.

These recent environmental efforts reflect a trend: because most of the activism by students takes place in the local sphere, there's a disconnect from Tufts' global institutional focus. The 2012 Common Reading is another example of this incongruence. Each year, the Tisch College selects a book through a nomination process, and then mails a copy to every entering student. Topics in recent years have ranged from Hurricane Katrina, to remarkable men and women's personal philosophies, to immigration. Generally, the book is involved in orientation to some extent, and its themes run throughout the academic year. Although other books have addressed the environment and injustice to a certain extent, none match the textbook-like depth of *The Story of Stuff*. For the class of 2016, this book, sometimes controversial in the envi-

environmentalist community due to its radical anti-consumerism stance, was their introduction to Tufts. Freshman Moira Lavelle explained, “I found the premise of the book intriguing, and the overarching argument is certainly a cornerstone of my beliefs, but it was the first book for school I have ever not finished in my life. I care a lot about the environment, but the book didn’t offer any solutions. As a student activist who wants to make a difference, that was particularly frustrating for me.”

But the book’s environmental focus is one more thing indicative of Tufts’ growing emphasis in this area, and it’s not just the people on our campus who contribute to the environmentally-conscious environment. Through various programs over the course of each academic year, Tufts brings in experts in different fields, many of which are related to environmental justice. In October, the Freshman Class Council organized an event in which Annie Leonard, author of *The Story of Stuff*, visited to speak. The Environmental Studies Department has the “Lunch and Learn” lecture/discussion series, and recently brought in Eugene Benson, a lawyer who directs an Environmental Justice Legal Services program and represents community-based groups in lower income communities and those of color, working to protect and improve their environments. Hillel’s 2012 keynote speaker for their annual Moral Voices lecture is Eric Schlosser, investigative journalist and author of the bestselling *Fast Food Nation*, whose topic of over-consumption is similar to *The Story of Stuff*. Incidentally, although the Moral Voices theme this year is food justice, it was environmental justice in 2007. These guests, with the exception of the community lawyer, echo the administration’s international perspective on environmental justice.

We used to think that being green was just a trend. Today, it’s becoming a way of life, especially on our campus. Many separate players are each working on their own projects, and these different tasks are representations of Tufts’ rising environmental and social conscience. Despite our productivity in recent years, however, there’s still

more to be done. The problem: even though we all coexist (mostly) peacefully here on the hill, when it comes to sustainability and active change, it seems as if every activist has a different goal. This is evident in the perspectives of Professor Ammons and Tajima. While Tajima “always wants more environmental justice on campus and in the community,” Ammons says that we instead need to focus on the more international aspects. Grassroots activism can create change on campus, with the support of the administration, but sometimes it feels like authorities on campus are more focused on the global aspects of environmental justice, rather than the local. Where should the main focus of our environmental justice ef-

TUFTS IS A BUBBLE WHERE OF ENVIRONMENTALISM AND SOCIAL JUSTICE THRIVE, BUT WE SHOULD ALSO INCORPORATE ANOTHER PART OF OUR IDENTITY: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE.

orts be: our community or our entire planet? This is something to consider.


Tufts prides itself on sustainability and active citizenship in general, and in the dawning era of environmental justice, there’s a chance for change on a larger scale. However, this cannot happen without collaboration between student activists and the institutional structure. We don’t necessarily all need to have the same goal, but a cooperative community with a common perspective can accomplish more, and with more efficiency. At this point, it’s probably unrealistic to expect Tufts students to make a global change when it comes to environmental justice. We’re still learning; that’s the point of a university. But we are in a place that is ideal for learning about these topics.

Tufts is a bubble where environmentalism and social justice thrive, but we should also incorporate another part of our identity: a global perspective. It might seem eas-

ier to only think about the smaller changes we can make to fix the way we do things, but it’s more important to think on a bigger scale. “The real question is: what are we in the privileged world willing to change for the health of the planet?” Ammons asks. That’s why, even though our student activist groups affect positive change in the community that surrounds us, we should continue to study and hear from experts about change on a global scale. It’s important to think about environmental justice as it affects the whole planet, even if we can only actively improve the situation in our own backyard.

Despite their short-term differences, Ammons and Tajima share a vision of an environmentally just world and how we’ll eventually get there. Ammons said, “Our educational system is really excellent at helping students see what’s wrong in the world, but often we just stop. We overload students with the world’s problems. My own view is that it’s also our responsibility as educators to show how to address those problems.” Tajima added, “If I wasn’t an idealist, I couldn’t be an environmental activist.”

Student activists are already making change in our community, while our administration and faculty maintain a global focus with concrete strategies for change. With more practice and a coherent vision, Jumbos will be better prepared to apply environmental justice ideas to life after the hill. Like Leonard of *The Story of Stuff* says in her documentary, “[Changing the world] is already happening. Some say it’s unrealistic or idealistic, that it can’t happen, but I say those that are unrealistic are those that want to continue with the old path. That old way didn’t just happen... People created it, and we’re people too. Let’s create something new.”

In this day and age, environmentalism without social justice is missing a key aspect, especially at a school known for its global perspective. As Tufts’ more recent efforts have shown, the most effective and powerful path for the green movement is environmental justice. 

BERT KAUFMANN



Last week's article, "The Notorious Art of Storytelling" by Nader Salass from Issue 5 was a powerful and well-written defense of rap music. It highlighted the much overlooked principle that rap itself does not degrade American society but rather reflects an already degraded society, while also emphasizing the cultural and musical aspects of rap that make it so appealing. Despite the many strengths of this article, it falters

by paying mere lip service to the rampant sexism and misogyny in rap music.

As a woman who has listened almost exclusively to rap music for the past 10 years, I often grapple with the role of sexism and women in rap music. Rap did not begin as an inherently sexist genre. In fact, the executive producer of the first commercial rap song, "Rapper's Delight" by the Sugar Hill Gang, was Sylvia Robinson, a woman from Harlem. However, the rise of West Coast gangsta rap such as N.W.A., 2Pac, and Dr. Dre popularized misogyny and sexism as a form of gang violence that was perpetuated through rap in late 1990s and early 2000s. As these themes were popularized by these artists, sexism and misogyny have taken a life of their own in rap music, and are now perpetuated by mainstream record labels. To claim that artists such as Kanye West and Childish Gambino are "progressive" rappers who help dismantle the racist images of black people in rap music is misguided. This argument ignores the blatant discrimination and hatred in their music that contributes to the negative and false image of black

men as "thugs" who objectify and abuse women that is already present in rap.

Kanye and Jay-Z's glorious *Watch the Throne* acknowledges the horrible institutional racism blacks in the United States experience and calls for an end to "black on black murder," but it does nothing to halt sexism. Instead, the album has a song titled "That's My Bitch." Kanye was also recently featured on 2 Chainz's "Birthday Song" rapping about how he deserves a threesome rather than a sweater for his birthday. Gambino's misuse of women is perhaps worse because it is combined with racism. In "You See Me," Gambino raps, "Forget these white girls/I need some variation/Especially if she [is] very Asian." This essentially reduces women to objects that should meet his whims based on the color of their skin. In order to address the racism and violence that perpetuate negative stereotypes of rap music, artists must also address the misogyny that accompanies it. Unfortunately, Kanye West and Childish Gambino have shown no such progress.

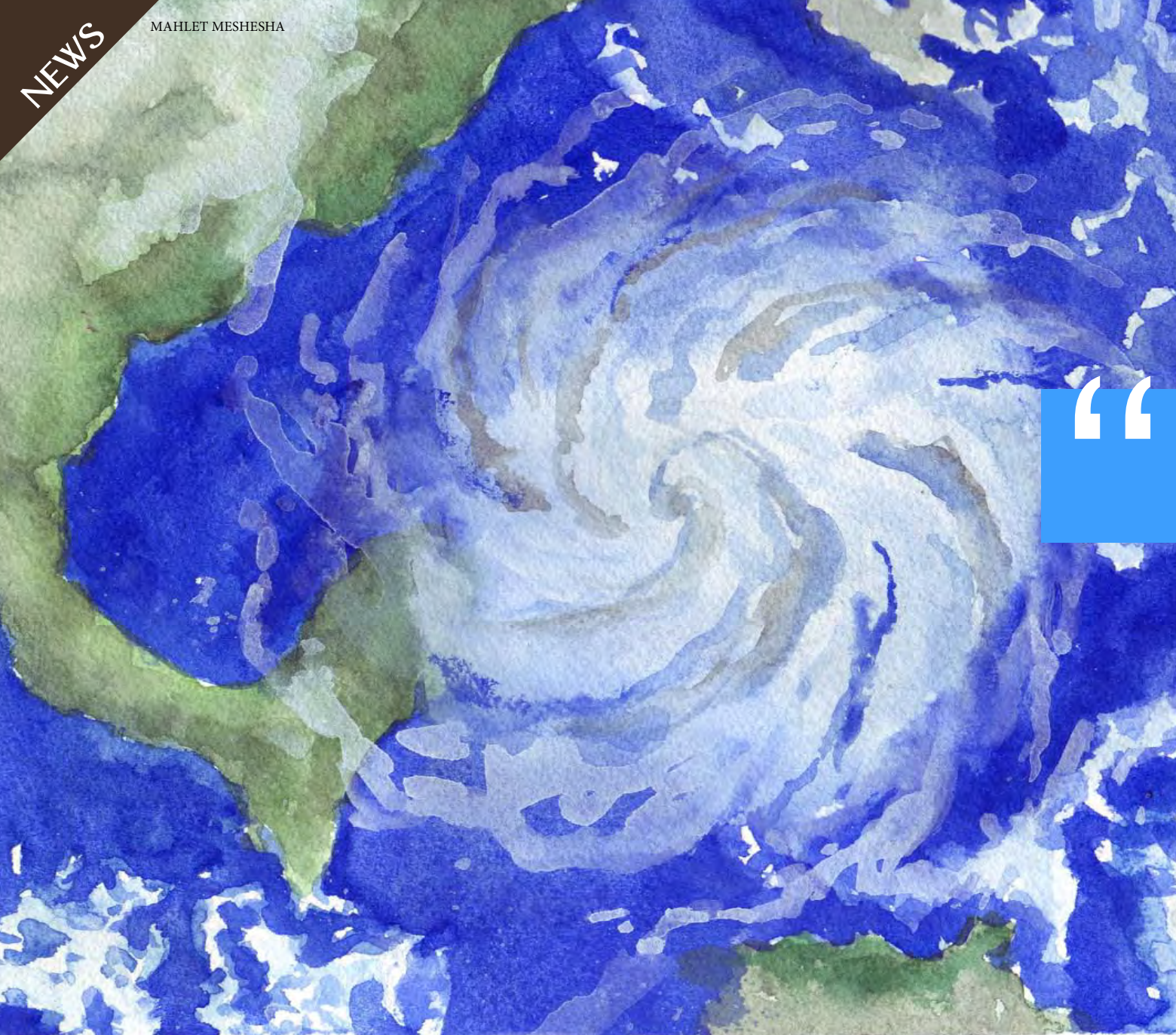
— Catherine Roseman, Class of 2014

the feature CONTEST

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SUBMIT YOUR PIECE TO BY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2
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WINDS OF CHANGE

BY MOIRA LAVELLE

The Internet was flooded with images of New York City streets completely underwater. The subways were subjected to more damage than they have ever seen in their 108 years of operation and closed completely for one of the first times in history. Hurricane-force winds swept the east coast and power outages shut down entire communities. Governments from Massachusetts to the Carolinas declared states of emergency. The rest of the country watched as Hurricane Sandy—occasionally referred to as the “Frankenstorm”—devastated much of the East Coast. And, for the first time in a while, people were scared. Here were the consequences of climate change that had been predicted. For the first time in a while, climate change once again seemed real.

“Global warming” was an important buzzword during the 2004 and 2008 elections. There was a lot of talk about clean energy and hybrid cars. However, during the 2012 election season it seemed as if climate change and the environment were non-issues. Over the course of the three presidential debates, climate change was not mentioned once and neither of the presidential candidates provided detailed plans regarding their climate change policies. President Obama mentioned “green jobs” on occasion, but the pundits and politi-

Similarly, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo spoke about the need to contain the rising sea levels that contributed to Sandy’s power and devastation. The governor announced that New York City was considering a network of surge barriers and a levee system as a stop-gap measure, but emphasized that a long-term solution was needed: “Climate change is reality. Given the frequency of these extreme weather situations that we’ve had—and I believe that it’s an increasing frequency—for us to sit here today and say this is a once-in-a-generation [problem] and it’s not going to happen again, I think would be shortsighted.”

CLIMATE CHANGE IS A REALITY.

For us to sit here today and say this is a once-in-a-generation [problem] ... would be shortsighted.

cians were more concerned with the lagging economy and rampant political partisanship.

Yet the “Frankenstorm” appeared to have frightened people into changing dialogue. There is no conclusive evidence as to whether the storm was directly caused by climate change or not, but scientists point to rising sea levels and increased ocean temperatures that have resulted from human emissions of green house gases. Jonathan E. Kenny, a professor of chemistry at Tufts University, is a working member of the Tufts University Climate Change, Climate Justice Initiative and has spent time studying pollution in groundwater and calculating the effects of greenhouse gases on global climate. Kenny commented that he believes that Hurricane Sandy has significantly shifted dialogue regarding climate change in the legislative sector. “The first indication of this is the leadership of individual political leaders, such as Andrew Cuomo, Michael Bloomberg, and Congressman Ed Markey in speaking out on the subject. Eventually this leadership will

be taken into legislative halls as the people will demand that government must do a better job of protecting us from disasters.”

After Sandy left New York in the dark and with billions of dollars in damage, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, an independent who had previously stated that he would not endorse any candidate, and Chris Christie, the Republican governor of New Jersey, both came out in favor of President Obama. Bloomberg stated that he believed the president was the best man to combat climate change and emphasized the importance the issue would have in our country’s future. In his third term as mayor of the country’s largest city, Bloomberg has considerable sway and his focus on climate change is an important indicator. If Bloomberg advocates for better climate change policy, it is likely that climate change will once again become a topic of discussion.

This sentiment was echoed by many others across the country, including Massachusetts Representative Edward J. Markey, a Democrat who is chairman of the House Committee for Energy Independence and Global Warming.

While climate change is once again becoming a part of the dialogue, this does not mean it has gained enough traction to become a cornerstone issue. In an election year, it is hard to ignore the sluggish economy or a country deeply divided on how to deal with it. President Obama commented in his first press conference after the election and Sandy, “There’s no doubt that for us to take on climate change in a serious way would involve making some tough political choices. And understandably, I think the American people right now have been so focused, and will continue to be focused on our economy and jobs and growth, that if the message is somehow we’re going to ignore jobs and growth simply to address climate change, I don’t think anybody is going to go for that. I won’t go for that.” This begs the question: if and when will climate change become a priority?

Katie Segal, a co-director of the Tufts University Sustainability Collective, asserted that, although it is important that President Obama is once again discussing climate change through initiatives such as a carbon tax, it cannot be a second-string issue. She explained, “Yes, there are more imminent issues like the economy and job creation, but we must find a way to solve these problems concurrently.”

“I believe a shift in discussion is absolutely necessary,” stated Professor Kenny. “The moratorium on climate change during the recent presidential election was an insult to both our intelligence and our best interests. Unfortunately, leadership on this subject has been missing for so long that we need to focus both on prevention and adaptation. As predicted, the effects of climate change fall most heavily on those least equipped to deal with them, e.g., the homeless in New York in the aftermath of Sandy.” Kenny concluded: “Successful policy must be based on justice.”

BY MEGAN WASSON



ORDERING THE COURT

Obama may have the opportunity to be the first president since Reagan to appoint three Supreme Court Justices, but there's a chance he'll end up making the court even more conservative. Legal scholars Lee Epstein and Andrew Martin have already crowned the current Supreme Court the most conservative court since the anti-New Deal court of the 1930s. Excepting the court's recent 5-4 vote in favor of the Obamacare legislation, the court has been markedly conservative since 1970 and become even more right leaning in recent years.

The Huffington Post wrote in November that there are four justices that may retire in Obama's next term. Ruth Bader Ginsburg (D) is 79, Stephen Breyer (D) is 74, Anthony Kennedy (R) is 76, and Antonin Scalia (R) is 76. Ginsburg and Breyer were appointed by Clinton, and Kennedy and Scalia by Reagan. Ginsburg is the most likely to retire; at 79, she is the oldest justice on the Supreme Court, and has already been diagnosed with cancer twice. Kennedy and Scalia, both 76, are also likely candidates for retiring in Obama's second term.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg is known as one of the most liberal judges on the current Court, especially on issues of abortion, sexual equality, and international law. In an interview with *The New York Times* in 2009, when asked about the government's role in abortion, she answered, "The government has no business making that choice for a woman." A *Times* article in 2009 revealed that Ginsburg believes the US Supreme Court should turn to international law for inspiration, believing that Supreme Court rulings in other countries can provide valuable insight into the American legal system. More conservative justices, in contrast, believe in strict, context-based interpretation of American law.

Anthony Kennedy and Antonin Scalia demonstrate conservative perspectives. Kennedy seems to be more of a conservative libertarian, making decisions on a case-by-case basis instead of conforming to a partisan ideology. He voted to mandate that parents of minors

be informed of abortions in *Hodgsons v. Minnesota* (1990) and has also voted to uphold laws criminalizing partial birth abortion. In terms of gay rights, he swings moderate to conservative, voting to allow the Boy Scouts to ban gay members from being scoutmasters in 2000.

Scalia is perhaps one of the court's most conservative justices, a vehement federalist and an originalist, believing that the Constitution should be interpreted exactly as the Founding Fathers wrote it. In 1992, Scalia wrote a dissenting opinion on *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* in which he stated that there is no constitutional right to abortion and that he strongly believes that *Roe v. Wade* should be reconsidered.

During the presidential campaign, neither Romney nor Obama focused on potential Supreme Court appointees. The president's ability to potentially nominate as many as three new Justices was used more for fear mongering than as a campaign platform. In August, Obama argued that Romney's potential appointees "could tip the balance of the court in a way that turns back the clock for women and families." Later, in October's *Rolling Stone*, Obama said, "Typically, a president is going to have one or two Supreme Court nominees during the course of his presidency, and we know that the current Supreme Court has at least four members who would overturn *Roe v. Wade*. All it takes is one more for that to happen."

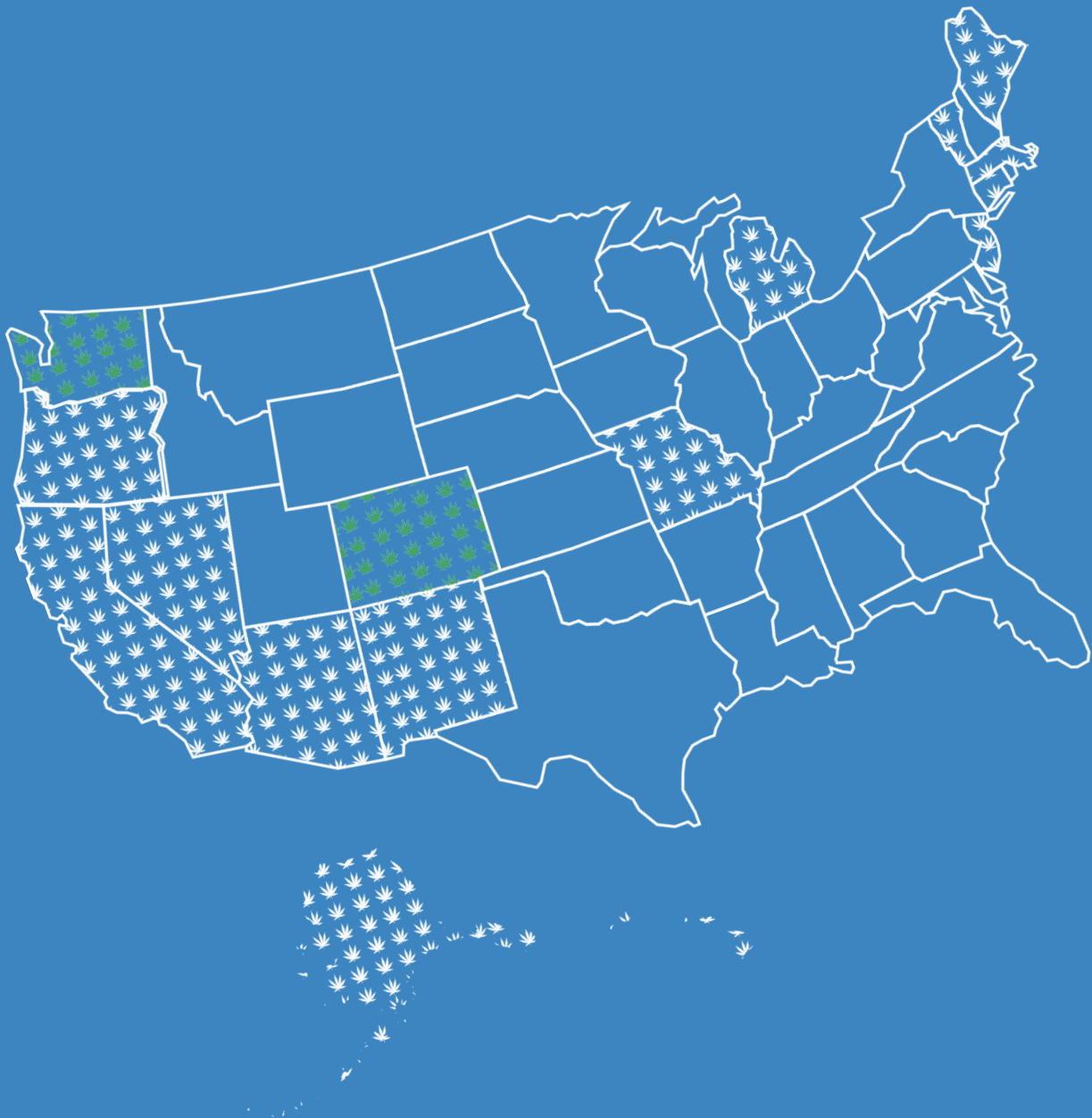
During his last term, Obama appointed two Supreme Court Justices, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan. Sotomayor and Kagan are both considered fairly moderate liberals on the court, but neither had an easy path to the bench, what with the Senate's narrow Democratic majority. Sotomayor was confirmed

68-31 in the Senate, and Kagan was confirmed 63-37. In contrast, the Democratic congress that confirmed Ginsburg in 1993 voted her in with a 96-3 tally.

The 113th Congress, which will begin sessions on January 3, has a Democratic Senate, 55 Democratic and 45% Republican. Justices are appointed through a floor vote in the Senate; with a Democratic majority, it seems as though Obama would have no trouble pushing through a liberal justice. However, given the intense criticism both the Republican and Democratic parties received during the campaign for their stubborn partisanship, it seems likely that Obama may push for a more moderate nominee in order to bypass a drawn-out and bloody confirmation process. He would have to pick a nominee that appeals to both parties: a moderate liberal like Kagan or Sotomayor or a centrist like Kennedy.

Given that the Supreme Court is already markedly conservative, the replacement of Ginsburg with a centrist or a moderate liberal will push the court further to the right. Replacing Kennedy or Scalia with a moderate liberal or a centrist will either keep the court equally conservative or perhaps push it further to the right, if a more conservative centrist replaces Kennedy.

What does this mean for the American public? Essentially, the Supreme Court is already very conservative; despite Obama's reelection, the court is probably not going to be more liberal in the near future. Key pieces of liberal legislation, like *Roe v. Wade* and *Regents of University of California v. Bakke*—a case that established a legal basis for affirmative action—could be overturned. Likewise, more conservative decisions could be enacted in the coming years. The appointment of new Supreme Court Justices, while not as attention-grabbing as Obama's reelection or the polarization of the House and the Senate, could have dramatic and lasting effects on the lives of the American public. ☐



NOT YOUR GRANDMA'S WEED POLICY ● BY JUSTIN KIM

COLORADO AND WASHINGTON JUST BECAME AMERICA'S AMSTERDAM.

On November 6, voters in Colorado and Washington passed state ballot measures legalizing the recreational use of cannabis. For the first time in American history, adults 21 years of age or older can now legally procure and use small quantities of marijuana in their state. While this is widely seen as a momentous victory for the legalization movement, a cloud of doubt remains for its future. According to federal law, marijuana is still considered an illicit drug be seen that way, despite what state law may say. And as of publication time, it is still unclear the federal government's reaction will be. how the federal government's law will reconcile with individual state law.

A return to one of the most ubiquitous debates in American politics—state rights—seems inevitable. Should the federal government be able to infringe on the sovereignty of individual states? What if the initiative were passed through the democratic process by a majority of the popular vote? These questions will undoubtedly emerge when deciding the fate of Colorado and Washington's new legislations.

The Obama administration and US Attorney General Eric Holder have not yet made any public statements regarding Colorado and Washington's new legalization status for a reason. They know that they risk wading in precarious waters and must tread very carefully. The role of federal government was a prominent issue during the recent election and still sparks debate at the drop of a hat. Backlash will be inevitable, regardless of what they decide to do.

States have been gradually liberalizing their policies regarding marijuana for years now. Medical marijuana is currently legal in 18 states—which now includes Massachusetts—and many others have taken steps to reduce and remove penalties for small amounts of cannabis. In addition, according to a Gallup poll in 2011, half of the American population is in favor of legalizing the use of marijuana, and with good reason.

The legalization of cannabis would be beneficial in numerous ways. First of all, it would save money because authorities would no longer have to monitor illegal activity that is often associated with marijuana use. It would facilitate the eradication of illegal distribution of marijuana and the creation of a legitimate market that would translate to taxes for the government, which we sorely need in this horrific economy. Public safety would also be much improved and the birth of an entirely new legal industry would create a workforce capable of reducing the high unemployment rate. Marijuana producers, distributors, software companies, hydroponic suppliers, and even accounting firms would all benefit from this new market.

According to the National Cannabis Industry Association, Colorado's medical marijuana market alone has had over \$180 million in sales and has created more than 4,200 jobs since 2010. The growth of small businesses and increasing employment were both platforms the Obama campaign depended upon time and time again during the recent election. This seems like a rather significant opportunity for the administration to follow through with its promises.

But for many, a significant reason to legalize cannabis is the ideological principle of freedom. People want the right to enjoy a substance that many consider to be largely harmless—and most definitely not as toxic or addictive as alcohol or tobacco. The fact that these measures were passed by popular vote indicates that this right is clearly what a significant portion of our population wants predicated on the notion that this is what the people in general want. Denying the voice of the people, as we have learned, tends to not bode well for the federal government.

While many people can have a tendency to exaggerate the therapeutic effects of marijuana, their claims are hardly baseless. Cannabis is widely used to treat insomnia and nerve damage, ameliorate nausea symptoms, increase appetite for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, and alleviate the psychological horrors experienced by post-traumatic stress disorder victims.

This is not to say that there are no issues that would come with the approval of these more lenient measures. New legislation would need to deal with associated problems that will unquestionably arise. For example, how would driving under the influence of cannabis be regulated? What would the legal limit permitted be?

But the most pressing issue is that the federal government is failing to alter its policies to adjust to the ongoing metamorphosis of states' views on cannabis. Its punitive stance on the drug has long been outdated. For example, under the Controlled Substances Act of 1970, marijuana is considered a Schedule 1 substance, which means that it has no medical benefits and is supposedly as addictive and harmful as drugs such as heroin among many other drugs.

Once upon a time, alcohol was completely illegal in the United States. The Prohibition Era of the 1920s and 1930s fostered a culture of black market activity while miserably failing to reduce the rate of alcohol consumption itself. From an economic standpoint, the federal government essentially invested taxpayer money into monitoring "criminal" behavior (drinking) while losing millions of dollars in taxes collected from legal alcohol sales. When Prohibition did end in 1933, policies regarding alcohol varied state-by-state—an example of state sovereignty that continues to this day.

While the situation with alcohol was not identical to the one we face today with marijuana, it presents an interesting historical parallel. The federal stance on cannabis is an archaic one, and the next move for the bigwigs in DC is to conduct a holistic and comprehensive review of its drug policy. Colorado and Washington have provided an opportunity for the federal government to move away from its traditional tendency to suddenly become reticent when discussing marijuana laws. Its current system has little political or factual justification, and the least the government could do is provide scientific research that indicates marijuana is in fact as harmful as it says it is. But most importantly, the federal government needs to realize that change is inevitable, and can even be a good thing. The people have spoken, and it would be wise to listen to their words. ☐

A VERY SHORT STORY NOT ABOUT A LOBSTER

BY SAM FRIEDENSOHN

"You can't cook lobsters in the microwave."

"Yes, you can."

"Is it true that they scream when you cook them?"

"I don't know. Probably?" my cousin replied.

"Shut up and watch; maybe you'll learn something," my much older sister interjected. She stood behind the high kitchen counter; I had to stand on my toes to see what she was doing.

There were dark bags of unused sleep under her eyes after driving back from Maine all through the night before, bringing with her nothing but this doomed lobster. The Labor Day morning sun was shining; it came in through a closed window and turned her bleached hair white. This summer was the most I'd seen of my sister in four years. She looked older—like an adult.

We watched without speaking as she picked the lobster up with bare hands and carefully placed it, the creature lazily struggling, into a clear microwave-safe plastic bag. She removed the rubber bands from its claws and used them to seal up the bag's open end. She said it was the poetic thing to do. She set the microwave's timer for nine minutes.

"Au revoir, lobster."

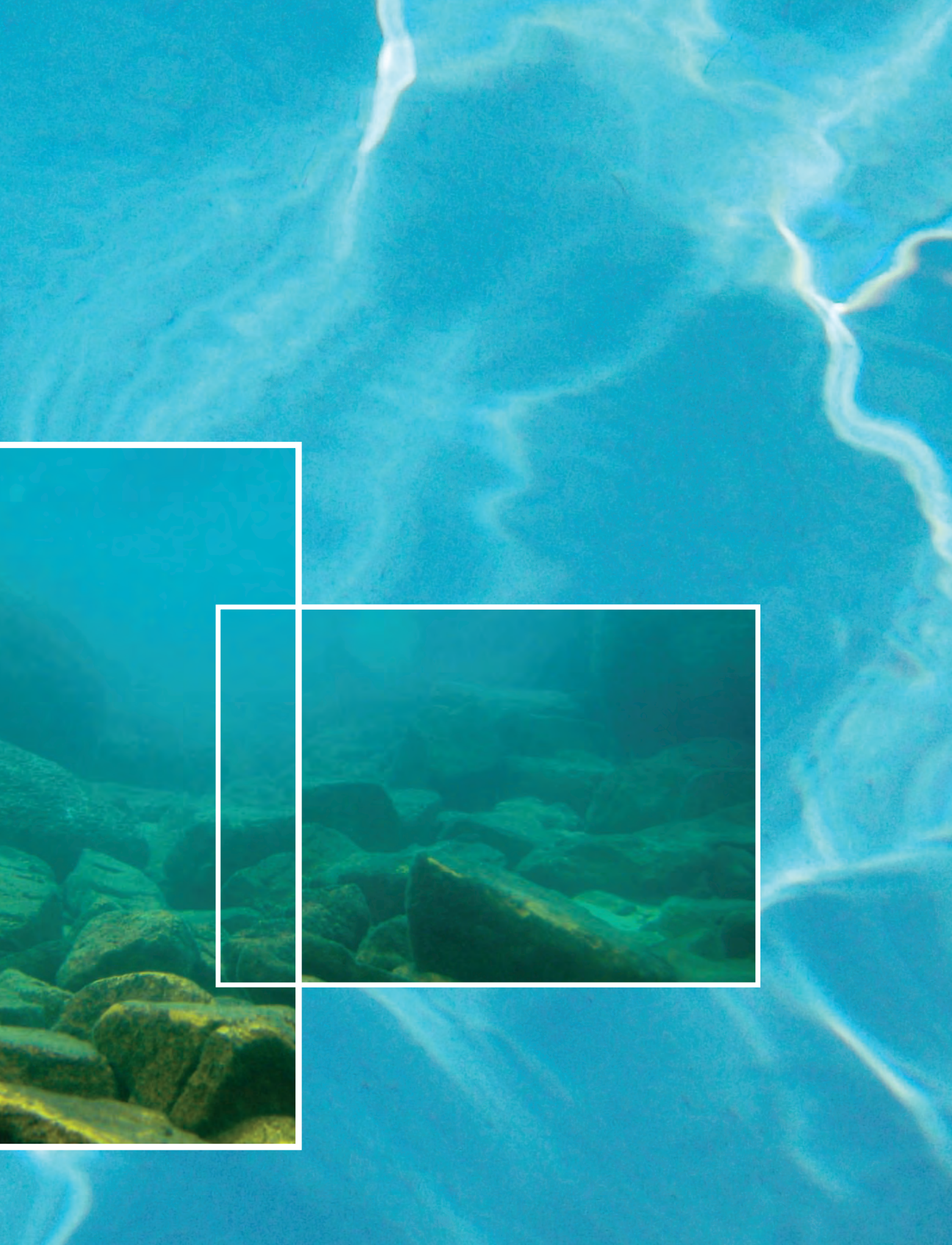
We didn't speak then, waiting in silence as the alien-looking thing rotated and began to turn pink in front of us. None of us even breathed, we were too busy trying to listen. 🦞





H_2O







BACKGROUND: NICK PFOSI
BOX: CONNOR CUNNINGHAM

Neither Beautiful nor a Bird

"Imagine you are a beautiful bird. A big, beautiful bird."

I was not beautiful. I was not a bird.

And yet there I was at the splintered crack of dawn, listening to a long-haired, long-skirted woman lead a meditation. We were cross-legged in an ashram's temple of exposed wood and polished shrines deep within the Rockies' pines.

A year earlier I did not meditate and probably thought that Sanskrit was a type of Indian food. I was a college girl intent on achieving *success*, which at the time meant straight As and 6 minute miles. But through a murky series of unfortunate events, I found myself out of school and on a "spirit journey," so to speak.

The days at the ashram were filled with chants, meditation, and work; work kept the community afloat. "Before enlightenment, chop wood and carry water," they said. "After enlightenment, chop wood and carry water."

There was a guru who visited sometimes. He wore bright orange, had a big smile, and looked like Santa Claus. The yogis bowed to him in the temple and danced around his armchair waving small mirrors and peacock feather fans. His wife was a high school teacher. That was all I knew for sure about the guru.

At breakfast one morning I leaned towards the man sitting across from me. "So," I said, "is there a book somewhere that I could read about how to meditate better? I try really hard but I don't think I'm getting anywhere."

His eyes grew wide, and he set his fork down on the table. "Don't *think*." He laughed for a moment, and then continued to eat his scrambled eggs.

I intended to cloister myself at a New Age nunnery, but to my disbelief, the ashram was not a good place to hide from problems. The yogis claimed that the place's intense psychic energy sped up everyone's karma, magnifying destructive patterns and exposing our most tender vulnerabilities. There were beautiful, tempting meals, and a bowl of chocolate always sat on the table. If you were not fat pre-ashram, you would probably be fat post-ashram.


There were boys. In particular there was one beautiful, enticing boy, a yogi, who always sat next to me at the table. He had hazel eyes and did yoga and only sang Bob Dylan songs.

He asked me how I was feeling during lunch. I shrugged and looked at the mountains.

His mild persistence and utter unflappability bewildered me. "Baiting-the-yogi" became my hobby of choice; how far could I push him? I wanted to prove to him that I was crooked and hollow, or at the very least terribly annoying. But every obnoxious remark that darted out of my mouth crumbled into dust at his feet. It was like picking a fistfight with Gandhi. I had no choice but to surrender.

One night at meditation we had a new teacher. "Breathe in like it is your first breath," she said. "Feel it wash over your forehead and flow into your heart."

I didn't believe in karma or gurus or sacred energy, but I could believe in this. In breathing in and breathing out. In starting over and letting go. "It's like taking a bite of food and tasting it like you've never eaten before," said the teacher. "It's like chewing slowly and hearing rain on the roof. In this moment, this exact moment, everything is new."

"Come to my tent," the boy finally said to me. I nodded and walked with him into the woods, as if it was my first time. 

— by Diane Adamson





OPINION

311

the morning after

BY NICHOLAS WHITNEY

I woke up on Wednesday, November 8 to the ringing of my alarm and a re-elected president. I went to slam the snooze button and ended up looking through the photos that I had taken the previous night. There's a picture of my friend coloring Minnesota blue; her grin stretches to both ears and her eyes exude the pride she has in her home state. There's a photo I took of a group of my friends erupting with joy upon Elizabeth Warren's triumph—their faces alive with the realization that their volunteer work had paid off and their hands waving high in the air. There's a video I took of everyone in Hottung Café chanting "four more years"—a chant that reverberated through the Campus Center, full of life and full of joy.

It doesn't take much data analysis to conclude that this November's election was a big night for liberal voters. President Barack Obama won. So, too, did Elizabeth Warren, beating out Republican Scott Brown in a heated senate race. Warren's win contributed to the Democratic Party's now 10-seat majority in the Senate. The legalization of marijuana occurred in both Washington and Colorado; medical marijuana was legalized here in Massachusetts. In Minnesota, a constitutional amendment was voted down that would have defined marriage as only between one man and one woman. In Maine, Maryland, and Washington, the traditional definition of marriage was redefined by popular vote.

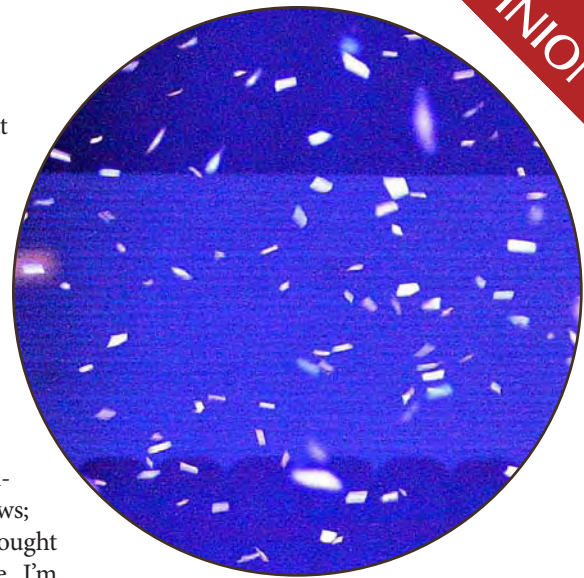
If anything, though, this year's election proved that half of us have evaluating to do and the other half of us have some reevaluating to do. It's no secret that the Republican Party was, by and large, defeated in this election by a considerable margin. It's time for the Republican Party to deconstruct its static social platforms and make way for a new generation of younger conservatives who aren't stuck in a rut of medieval values. If the party can't do this—if it can't make itself more compatible with this gradually liberalizing country—I can't see it staying afloat. Structural changes to the party won't be easy, and I imagine it will be met with strife, but, whether the elephants like it or not, they at least have to concede to the idea that change

is necessary, if not the only thing that will save them.

Republicans already made the wise step to not re-elect—I'm sorry, but—idiots like Todd Akin, who made the now notorious comments about "legitimate" rape. That's a really smart and solid first step in gaining back the favor of the country, but it's not enough. The party needs to find a way to bridge the polarizing generational gap created primarily over disagreement in social views; this fundamental separation has brought the party to a fairly visible stalemate. I'm not talking about the Republican Party as a whole when I suggest these courses of action—of course representatives like Todd Akin don't reflect the values of the majority of the party; of course not all members of the party share ultraconservative social values—but it's at least a noticeable trend that needs rectifying if we're to have a working bipartisan system.

Democrats and liberals, have some evaluating to do, as well. It's time to drop the party hats, noisemakers, and fireworks and think about how the next four years will go in terms of institutional social changes. The problem that liberals can and will run into is a lack of pragmatism moving forward. Just as I think the Republican platform should align to more contemporary social views, Democrats have to be wary that the country as a whole won't change in one day—hell, it won't change in four years. It's going to take time and it's going to take a rational, systematic approach. This involves not chastising Obama because he won't support a same-sex marriage amendment on a federal level—of course he won't; it's explicitly a state's right and the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) will likely soon be ruled unconstitutional for that same reason.

We have to contextualize Obama's policies not on an individual level, but within the framework of the whole nation. Yes, liberals can and should keep pushing for social change; if anything, this election proved what good comes of doing that. But change is never going to happen overnight—we legalized same-sex marriage in three more states, but we still have 80% of the country to go. Push, scream, shout, yell, but be systematic and do it with ra-



tional, obtainable goals. Nothing good will come of doing otherwise.

But reevaluation of our respective political platforms is for naught if we cannot at least try to actively engage in bipartisanship. Right now, we don't have a two-party system. It just doesn't exist. Sure, we act on the myth that we have a grand system that balances itself out, but we absolutely don't and to say we do implies ignorance. Instead, what we have is an unbalanced, uncooperative system that—on both ends of the spectrum—nearly flat-out disregards what the other side is trying to say. I was completely furious during the debates when one candidate would speak and the other candidate would either interrupt with what they thought was the superior assertion or just sit there and smile or laugh condescendingly. That achieves nothing; it's arrogant, childish, and representative of our partisan system as a whole. We're a divided nation and that would be fine if we could at least give each other, for one second, the time of day.

Be passionate about your views, be angry about injustice, be outspoken about what you want done—but for the sake of the country, and consider the other side of your argument. Consider that, for each one of our opinions, there are hundreds more to be considered. These next four years are a great opportunity for reevaluation; it's not going to be easy, but it never has been and it never will be. It's necessary, though, for the progression of our nation, its strengths, its weaknesses, its well being, and its people. ☺

Old Scho MODERN

MONICA STADECKER

Passing the intersection of Boston and College Ave, into the unassuming brown brick of Curtis Hall, through the empty lobby, past the key-card enabled door, and up three flights of narrow stairs, you start to hear the faint sound of music. Perhaps it's the latest pop jingle, a golden oldie rock classic, or a smooth and synthesized vocal dance track. Whichever the case, you are standing on a small landing with a colorful, sticker plastered door in front of you, muffled tunes escaping from within. You've arrived at WMFO.

But wait, what does that stand for? Besides sounding like a new band's acronym, WMFO is actually the name of Tufts' very own 24-hour live radio station, operating on the 91.5 FM frequency. This is a station featuring students and locals alike on a freeform format, broadcasting and recording their voices, thoughts, and passions all from within the space of a station full of narrow corridors and vivid wall decorations. "WMFO being 'freeform' radio provides a great place for self-expression by the members of the Tufts community," says DJ Amy Kim. "It's a celebration of diversity and individuality from students as well as DJs from different backgrounds and occupations."

Freeform radio is a vague name for a medium, but its central idea is simple. There need not be a concept to any show; DJs are free to explore any topic or genre

they feel is appropriate on a weekly basis. Anything goes, except for the Three Golden Rules of Radio: Don't be drunk on the radio, really don't be drunk on the radio, and don't pretend to be drunk on the radio. Also, for legal reasons, never swear. Besides those restrictions, WMFO is a laid back atmosphere where participants talk, play music, and generally just have fun.

"I do a show with two other people, so we usually split it into three sets," explains another WMFO DJ, Deena Alexander. "This works out since we all have similar, albeit not the same, musical tastes and can have jam parties in the studio." Although no concept is required to host a show, this certainly doesn't mean there aren't any themed shows. Themes range from "Music You Might Otherwise Miss" to "Strictly 80s," or "Art Haus Show," "Celtic Dawn/ Between the Worlds," and "Ludwig van BEATHoven." Although many DJs play music from their personal collection, WMFO keeps a huge musical library spanning a range of eras. The student-run music department receives and screens all music from the latest big name albums to modest demos from local artists, ensuring the diversity of tunes in the station. WMFO doesn't limit itself strictly to radio productions, however. The station also hosts a student-run record label named "On the Side Records" which provides recording opportunities for local artists and bands.

On occasion, these bands have even played live on-air sets from the studio.

Stepping into the station is itself an experience. Situated in what is essentially one decked-out hallway, the third floor studio branches off into small rooms and studios from its main vein. Every inch of the studio is covered with photographs, paint, drawing, and graffiti. The entire floor is a canvas for the DJ community's creativity, cataloging moments in time through the years. Sagging couches and mismatched chairs are dotted throughout the studio, and wooden shelves housing decades worth of cassettes, CDs, and vinyls line the walls. The station has character, and is maintained by a lot of heart.

Scrappy but resilient, WMFO has survived the very worst throughout its lifetime. Its first incarnation was a small group of students in 1956 who used old military equipment, but it was swiftly shut down. In 1967, the station resurfaced—only to be closed a couple of years later when students hooked up equipment to MBTA commuter rail connections in order to widen their broadcast scope, turning the rail into a massive underground antenna. It was again re-opened in 1971 under the contemporary name WMFO, now using the freeform format. The Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun" was the first song played. In 1977, a fire consumed all of the building and destroyed the majority of the station's

BY MELISSA FEITO

ol Radio for AIRWAVES

vinyl. However, true to its 24-hours-a-day spirit, the station was back on the air within six hours.

What does the future hold for this station? With online and digital media platforms consuming everything we consider traditional, some think radio as a medium is in trouble. Yet, with the creation of social media and online streaming capabilities, radio has never been so widespread. DJs often use Facebook and blogs to promote their shows, and listeners can easily tune in via a

traditional radio or connect through the WMFO website at any time of day, all day long. As a DJ, I can attest that my own high school friends listen to my show from all over the country. And Kim says that her parents support her all the way from her home of South Korea, where her show airs at 3:00 a.m. “I think that the Internet is doing to TV what TV did to the radio, but radio survived that, so I don’t see why it wouldn’t survive the Internet,”

Alexander remarked. “More people can listen now, as streaming

isn’t hindered by geography. However, I also think new things being done with radio are brilliant, like what NPR has done with RadioLab.”

Most importantly, WMFO is always looking for more people to join its ranks. The station is an ever-changing animal, where new ideas and programs are constantly encouraged and made into reality. Becoming a DJ is an incredibly simple process: just two training sessions and a quiz can grant you one whole hour to broadcast yourself to the planet. Besides being a DJ, students and community members can easily get involved in administrative departments like Music or Operations. But any student involvement helps contribute to the cultural identity of Tufts and the Medford-Somerville area in general. All you need is something to say and something to play. “Freeform radio is an avenue of communication open to basically anyone, which I think is massively important. Everyone should get a chance to be heard,” Alexander declared.

So no matter who you are—student or local resident—whenever you tune into 91.5 FM, remember that your listening pleasure comes from a group of amazing and different people broadcasting from a cramped, splashy, special studio on the third floor of Curtis Hall, perched at the corner of Boston and College Ave. 📻

“Freeform radio is an avenue of communication open to anyone.”

VEGGING OUT

BY ADITI ASHOK

JENS DAHLIN

Green salad, plain tofu, fruit smoothies, soy protein, wheat-grass germ. Hippies, hipsters, eco-freaks. These are all associated with veganism and vegetarianism, whose cultural impact have exploded in recent years.

Although vegetarians and vegans were once considered a subset of a population comprised of hippies and people with strong religious convictions, both vegetarianism and veganism have become much more prevalent in recent years. A telephone survey conducted by Harris Interactive through the Vegetarian Resource Group in 2011 revealed that the number of vegans in the United States has doubled since 2009, and that 5% of Americans pursued wholly vegetarian diets. Veganism has transformed from more than dietary restrictions into a cultural phenomenon, with people choosing the vegan lifestyle for many different personal reasons.

There is a distinct difference in the diets of vegetarians and vegans. While vegetarians avoid meat but still consume dairy and eggs, vegans eliminate any sort of animal product from their diet. The lines of each dietary choice blur and vary in various ways, creating a variety of subcultures—pescetarians eat fish in addition to a regular vegetarian diet, for example, and freegans pursue a diet of eating only locally produced food. These labels mainly inform dietary restrictions, but they are also often used to denote cultures that emerge around those choices. The semantics of each culture vary, but the underlying idea is the same: to minimize consumption of animal products.

People choose to follow a vegetarian or vegan diet for a variety of reasons. One of the more common motives is ethical concern. Those opposed to the slaughter of animals turn to vegetarianism or veganism out of moral opposition to the consumption of meat or animal byproducts. On the more serious end of this spectrum, some take their moral principle outside of the realm of food, going as far as avoiding the use of animal products outside of the food realm, such as leather.

Many also subscribe to vegetarianism or veganism for health reasons. Studies have shown that vegans have lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels and a decreased risk for cancer, heart disease, and diabetes than meat eaters. In an interview

with US News and World Report, Vandana Sheth, a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association, said that vegan diets are healthy and appropriate for people at all stages of life. For example, vegan diets are much higher in fiber than conventional diets, and have been shown to aid in weight loss and lowering individuals' body mass index.

In addition, several religions and cultures also promote vegetarianism or veganism in their tenants. For example, Hindus refrain from eating beef because cows are considered sacred and Buddhism prohibits all killing in its First Precept.

Eating vegetarian or vegan is also more eco-friendly, as many green activists will be quick to attest. By consuming less animal meat, an individual's carbon footprint is significantly reduced. Not only does the processing of meat take up energy in itself, the amount of arable land used for producing grain and the use of fertilizer with nitrous oxide intensifies the greenhouse effect. For those vegetarians and vegans concerned with sustainability, their dietary changes helps reduce resource consumption.

There is also a subset of the population practicing vegetarian or veganism to be "trendy." Ultimately, this fad is deeply tied to many of the cultural stereotypes induced by veganism. Vegetarianism has become so prevalent that some might consider it a fashion statement. Vegan and vegetarian restaurants have become more commonplace around the country, particularly in cities with a younger population. Locally, True Bistro is a popular vegan food and drink restaurant that opened two years ago, located just a short walk from campus. On a larger scale, celebrities such as Carrie Underwood and Russell Brand publicly announcing a switch to veganism has supported its increased media presence.


The cultural trend may be a point of division for the vegan and vegetarian movements, however. Sophomore Nate Matthews believes that while vegetarianism can be considered a trend, veganism still has a certain stigma attached to it. "In my high school and at Tufts, there's definitely a large vegetarian community, so I often get shared smiles of solidarity with people when we realize neither of us eats meat," he explains. "When people realize

I'm vegan, though, they usually scowl and say, 'Why in the world would you do that to yourself?'... So I would say trendiness is probably a factor in making people go vegetarian but not in making people go vegan."

Going vegetarian or vegan has become more than just a dietary choice—for many, it is part of their daily culture. Websites, groups, and clubs dedicated to veganism have sprung up over the last few years, uniting those who choose to forgo animal products in their diets. Vegan cookbooks are becoming commonplace and classic recipes have been adapted to substitute soy instead of meat. Bumper stickers and

THE SCENE IS CHANGING—MEAT IS OUT, GREEN IS IN.

slogans supporting the culture have also grown in popularity, such as "Animals are friends, not food," and "I think. Therefore, I am vegan," among several others. The movement is gaining so much momentum that it has almost reached the point where eating vegan or vegetarian is a "cause". Celebrities who switch to vegan diets are heavily publicized in the media, and the rising number of consumers at Whole Foods, vegan-centric restaurants, and other similar establishments fuels the growth of vegan culture as it permeates society.

Whether it's to follow a trend, shed a few pounds, or go green, the number of vegetarians and vegans is rapidly increasing, and society has become more aware of that growth. The scene is changing—meat is out, green is in. 

A Secret Garden

TUFTS' NEWEST ENVIRONMENTAL VENTURE

By Nader Salass

When walking near Lewis Hall or grabbing meals from Hodgdon, most Tufts students wonder about the seemingly endless construction that lies behind those large green fences. These obstructions, while inconvenient to many students' daily lives, are the results of a necessary environmental planning effort of which most Tufts students are unaware.


Rain gardens are becoming increasingly important due to changes in the local environment. Over the past thirty years, the local atmosphere has retained four percent more moisture in the air. While this may not seem like an impressive figure, it has resulted in significantly higher volumes of rainfall during storms, and higher volume makes it difficult for the soil to absorb the water at a fast enough rate to prevent large amounts of runoff. Excess storm water, which is typically full of toxins like pesticides and hydrocarbons, can cause sewer system overloads, erosion, and the pollution of natural waterways. Recently, this issue has overwhelmed the water drainage systems that the Medford and Somerville municipalities have developed to manage storm run-offs. Both towns have expressed growing concern about the consequences of the large amount of storm water drainage leaving the Tufts campus. The rain garden will work as a ground filtration buffer, absorbing excess storm water and its pollutants.

The downhill rain garden is the school's first active step towards aiding the local water drainage systems. Director of Facilities Services Bob Burns and Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning professor Scott Horsley have been collaborating to create and expand the rain garden initiative. Horsley, an expert on hydrology, planned the design and specifications of the rain garden. Meanwhile, Tufts' Facilities Services department has helped fund and develop the project. The department plans on developing more of these systems across the campus. Once constructed, the facility plans on installing a placard, educating observers about the environmental implications of the system.

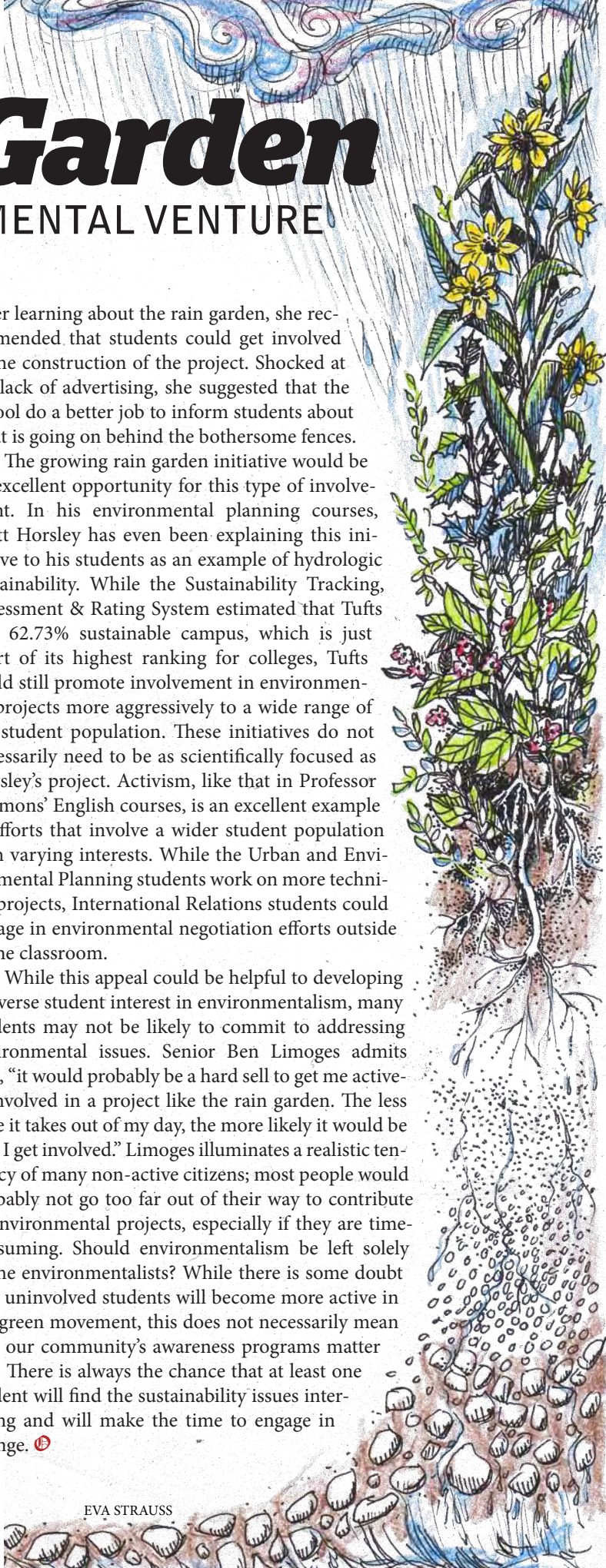
While the rain garden serves a clear environmental benefit, there is very little student awareness about the project. Most students on campus are not at all conscious of these specific efforts for environmental sustainability. For example, sophomore Kyle Volpe believes that it is simply part of the school's desire to "beautify our campus." Freshman Betsey Kirkland mentions that she "had no idea about the project" and that "despite the construction, she never wondered what it was all about."

After learning about the rain garden, she recommended that students could get involved in the construction of the project. Shocked at the lack of advertising, she suggested that the school do a better job to inform students about what is going on behind the bothersome fences.

The growing rain garden initiative would be an excellent opportunity for this type of involvement. In his environmental planning courses, Scott Horsley has even been explaining this initiative to his students as an example of hydrologic sustainability. While the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System estimated that Tufts is a 62.73% sustainable campus, which is just short of its highest ranking for colleges, Tufts could still promote involvement in environmental projects more aggressively to a wide range of the student population. These initiatives do not necessarily need to be as scientifically focused as Horsley's project. Activism, like that in Professor Ammons' English courses, is an excellent example of efforts that involve a wider student population with varying interests. While the Urban and Environmental Planning students work on more technical projects, International Relations students could engage in environmental negotiation efforts outside of the classroom.

While this appeal could be helpful to developing a diverse student interest in environmentalism, many students may not be likely to commit to addressing environmental issues. Senior Ben Limoges admits that, "it would probably be a hard sell to get me actively involved in a project like the rain garden. The less time it takes out of my day, the more likely it would be that I get involved." Limoges illuminates a realistic tendency of many non-active citizens; most people would probably not go too far out of their way to contribute to environmental projects, especially if they are time-consuming. Should environmentalism be left solely to the environmentalists? While there is some doubt that uninvolved students will become more active in the green movement, this does not necessarily mean that our community's awareness programs matter less. There is always the chance that at least one student will find the sustainability issues interesting and will make the time to engage in change. 

EVA STRAUSS



THE HOT BOX

Tufts' Students for Sensible Drug Policy

By Lauren Traitz

On election night, November 6, 2012, Tufts Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP) was one of the many groups present at the Experimental College board's Election Night Extravaganza. Tufts SSDP tabled to provide information about ballot initiative #3, which legalized medical marijuana in Massachusetts, and to discuss the effects of marijuana legalization bills throughout the country. After perusing the tables, Dean Gould approached SSDP and asked us: "What do you think a sensible drug policy looks like?" We had conversations like this throughout the evening, both with people that sought us out and with those who had never even heard of us.

This gave SSDP an opportunity to illustrate that our movement is more than just an advocacy group for the right to smoke weed; it is a community of accepting individuals who are eager to discuss and work on this issue with anyone who expresses interest. The focus of Tufts SSDP is drug policy reform and education, although specific interests, opinions, and goals vary from member to member. SSDP members agree that we are in need of drug policy reform grounded in scientific fact and personal autonomy, rather than political gain. But we don't all agree on the most sensible solution to this problem.

The openness of the Tufts SSDP community is evident here, as any and every perspective is welcome. Sophomore George Aquila, a member, describes SSDP as "an open forum for free thinkers, curious skeptics, and activists alike." No matter where you stand on this issue, SSDP can supply a stage for the discussion. Furthermore, we aim to make this knowledge accessible to the Tufts community as a whole. If you thirst for a greater understanding about drug use and abuse or the implications of a war waged on substances, we'd love to talk to you.

While Tufts SSDP is interested in discussing drug policy issues at the national

and state level, we also advocate for policy reform at Tufts. Our most developed project has been the effort to decriminalize marijuana on campus, aligning Tufts' policy with Massachusetts state policy. In 2011, after a resolution sponsored by Tufts SSDP was passed through the TCU senate, Tufts altered its disciplinary code so that students now receive only a warning for their first alcohol or marijuana offense. While this was a victory, we have not stopped there. Our next

OUR
MOVEMENT IS
MORE THAN JUST
AN ADVOCACY
GROUP.

goal is the removal of all disciplinary action for students possessing less than an ounce of cannabis, making it impossible to receive a mark on your permanent record for this non-criminal offense.

Marijuana reform is a key feature of SSDP's policy focus, but it is important to clarify that our club is concerned with sensible policy for all drugs. We don't focus on any one drug or reform strategy specifically. Tufts SSDP encourages open discussion related to an array of relevant issues, including marijuana legalization, the drinking age, Good Samaritan laws, study drugs, psychedelic drugs or prescription pills, as well as the implications of the current policies in place. If you're interested in a specific aspect of drug policy reform, whatever it may be, you can

find in SSDP a group of individuals ready to talk about what should be done and willing to do something about it.

Policy reform is not the only way that a Tufts student can support SSDP and be a part of this movement. For example, we hosted an open mic night last semester and donations went to a non-profit organization called All of Us or None, which advocates for the rights of ex-criminals. Being in SSDP means being the kind of activist you want to be. That may mean having a conversation about the War on Drugs with your friends and family. It could also mean performing in a show that raises awareness of the implications of the War on Drugs, or working on spreading drug education by providing information that helps people party safe and stay sensible about what they put into their bodies.

Whether you want to come to a few meetings, participate in social events, or dream of being a drug policy crusader some day, the Tufts chapter of SSDP would love to meet you. Even if you disagree with us and are interested in spirited debate that could leave both of us more informed, hit us up. We'll be in Eaton 201 Tuesdays at 9:00 p.m. We look forward to seeing you there! ☕



CONVERSATION

BRETT PLUGIS TALKS RESPECT, HURRICANE S

BY CLAIRE MCCARTNEY



Brett Plugis is at ease talking about the unwavering power of the sea. “The ocean’s going to do what it wants to do,” he explained soberly. “If it wants to keep you down there for another 30 seconds, it will,” he said as he described the common and uncomfortable experience of getting caught in the turbulence of a wave gone wrong. “Even when you open your eyes, you can’t see which way is up or down, and sometimes if it slams you down to the ground everything is completely black.” He seemed relatively unfazed by this less than pleasant aspect of his favorite pastime, though. “It doesn’t bother me too much. You just have to keep trying.”

Brett, a senior, is one of a few dedicated surfers on Tufts’ campus. Originally from Bedford, MA, he learned to surf the way many do—at a young age and from his dad. “My brother is two years older than me so it was great to go out with them and just

learn. I didn’t get really serious until I was older and got my license,” he said. He now teaches surfing during summers at Cape Cod and recently made a five-week trip to Costa Rica where he “made a lot of friends with the hippie ex-pats living there,” and, aside from a close run-in with some eight-foot crocodiles, he experienced “the best surfing” of his life.

These days, Brett wakes up at 4:00 a.m. to make the drive to nearby surf spots with the most reliable waves—usually in New Hampshire or Rhode Island. Rising early reaps benefits beyond making it back to class in time. “If you get out early as the sun is rising, the winds are calmer and there’s no one out there,” he explained. When the swells are good, Brett catches waves five days a week.

Like many surfers, Brett saw opportunity in the mayhem of Hurricane Sandy and, despite safety warnings, made his way to the beach as the storm barreled toward the shore. “These storms come through, and I just stop doing school for a little bit,” he said, laughing.

The hurricane showed up the day after his birthday—“Hell of a present!”—and he headed straight to Rhode Island to camp out with friends in anticipation of unusually large waves. “We built a bonfire and would surf for a couple hours, then hang out on the beach for a little from 8:00 a.m. until it got dark. It was the best swell the Northeast has seen since last winter, so we were all pretty excited. While the Northeast has some of the best point breaks and rock-reefs on the eastern seaboard, we don’t get large swells very often, except in the win-

ter. It’s especially rare to get a swell that has such a perfect combination of swell, wind direction, weather, and water temperature. Sandy was quite a treat in that respect.”

In spite of his satisfaction with the swells, Brett noted the tragedy of the storm. “While that Sunday was unquestionably the best day of my entire year,” he said, “I felt awful on Monday when I saw all the destruction that the storm brought to the Mid-Atlantic, almost to the point of feeling guilty. Regardless, I don’t think I stopped smiling for a solid week after that storm rolled through.”

“You’ve got to give
respect to get
respect.”

Topping the list of reasons Brett loves to surf are the guarantee of a clear mind and the opportunity for true self-expression and solitude. “The best thing about surfing is that no one can tell you what to do when you’re out there. You’re doing it for you and no one else.” He also stressed that while kids are the fastest learners, one can get started at any age.

“I taught a 68-year-old woman how to surf this summer, and she got up on the board three or four times during the lesson. So it’s really never too late, as long as you’re in good shape and willing to go through the trial and error of it.” He recommended

WITH A SURFER

ANDY, AND THE FUTURE OF SURFING AT TUFTS

PHOTOS BY ARIANNA PHOTOPoulos


that beginners take just one lesson and beyond that, watch and repeat. His only surf idols are his friends; according to Brett, there is no greater way to improve than to surf with people who are better than you and can provide new inspiration and energy.

He hasn't had much trouble with the localism and territoriality often associated with hardcore surfers. "It's all about respect," he explained. He described an incident with a local who was giving him a hard time for dropping in on waves that he considered his. "I'm awesome, so I just surfed the shit out of it. Afterward he ap-

proached me and said he was a local surf shop owner and told me to come by and get a free shirt because he liked my style. If you go out there and obviously know what you're doing—people give you respect. [But] you've also got to give respect to get respect."

Brett has found a small group of Tufts students who share his passion for surfing, but said, "There isn't enough surf culture at Tufts. We thought about starting a club because then we could get funding for a van and trips to the beach and also meet other people that want to surf. I think there are a lot of people at Tufts that surf back

home but don't have equipment here and don't think it's possible." He explained that if there were a surf club at Tufts, students could overcome this obstacle by pooling resources and sharing equipment.

For the future, Brett has a dream that he'll work until he's in his thirties and then buy some land by the ocean and have his own surfing community. "I think a lot of surfers have that dream," he admitted, and then added that he hopes that the surfing community at Tufts will strengthen in the coming years. His final advice to Tufts students? "Contact me if you want to get in the water!" 





EXTRAS

POLICE BLOTTER

BY FLO WEN

MONDAY
NOVEMBER 12
12:15 A.M.

FRIDAY
NOVEMBER 16
8:45 P.M.

SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 18
12:34 A.M.

TUPD officers were dispatched to Wren Hall for a noise complaint. The culprit was a vacant room with ke\$hian party jams blasting loudly, but the officers were unsure of how they should go about arresting it. The door was unlocked, and out of common courtesy, the officers went inside to turn the music off. When they walked in, they saw a grinder and a water bong, both of which reeked of marijuana. They were confiscated, the music was turned down, and the room was left to see another day.

An unidentified female came in to tell TUPD that she had just hit a parked police cruiser outside the station with her car. The collision made a small dent in the cruiser. As officers moved forward with insurance claims, it was clear she is doing nothing to help the image of Tufts students being indebted to open and honest dialogue. Nor was she helping the image of women being bad drivers.

TUPD officers were dispatched to one of the downhill dorms because of an intoxicated female. When officers asked what she had been drinking, she said she had consumed five shots of tequila and had done a keg stand. With similar coordination demanded by her prior alcoholic feats, she successfully signed the refusal to be transported to the hospital and went to bed for the night, trading in shots for snores and keg stands for night-stands.

SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 18
1:50 A.M.

TUPD arrived at a wild party on Sunset Rd. along with Somerville Police. Approximately 200 people were inside of the residence when officers arrived. TUPD asked to speak with a resident of the house. As it turns out, the person hosting the party had left, overwhelmed by the number of people in his house. The officers couldn't reach him by phone, so they cleared everyone out and secured the residence. The next day, the host of the party heard that it was a great time. ☺





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www.tuftsobserver.org
observer@tufts.edu
@tuftsobserver



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