

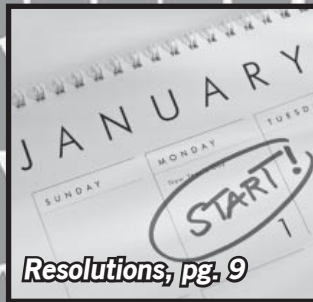
WE · OUT · HERE

the
PAPER

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the paper

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and Community Development
Fordham University
Bronx, NY 10458
paper.fordham@gmail.com
www.fupaper.org // @fupaper

the paper is Fordham's journal of news, analysis, comment and review. Students from all years and disciplines get together biweekly to produce a printed version of *the paper* using Adobe InDesign and publish an online version using Wordpress. Photos are "borrowed" from Internet sites and edited in Photoshop. Open meetings are held Tuesdays at 9:00 PM in McGinley 2nd. Articles can be submitted via e-mail to paper.fordham@gmail.com. Submissions from all students are always considered and usually published. Our staff is more than willing to help new writers develop their own unique voices and figure out how to most effectively convey their thoughts and ideas. We do not assign topics to our writers either. The process is as follows: have an idea for an article, send us an email or come to our meetings to pitch your idea, write the article, work on edits with us, and then get published! We are happy to work with anyone who is interested, so if you have any questions, comments or concerns please shoot us an email or come to our next meeting.

So why come write for us? We are a constantly evolving publication, and have been since 1972. We provide an outlet of expression otherwise unavailable to Fordham students. Writers are free to say whatever they want, whenever they want. We are also pretty cool people, to be completely honest. So please come hang out with us. You'll have a good time, we promise.

our aim

the paper is Fordham University's fully student-run, free speech publication. Our aim is to challenge our writers and our readers: we want to make you think. We provide an outlet for all students to express themselves, whatever their passion may be. Whether it's commenting on a social issue, writing a factual news article, making people laugh with a humor piece, composing a personal narrative, giving advice or ranting about something that makes you feel a certain strong way – we have a place for you. Because of our platform as a free speech newspaper, we tend to push the boundaries of university journalism by talking about important social issues, expressing otherwise silenced voices and opinions, addressing Fordham policy and administration, and starting serious conversations about what is important to our student body. Here at *the paper*, we encourage creativity and uniqueness, spark dialogue and discussion, and foster a community where students are free to fully express themselves.

"Which Crayon Are You?"

Editors-in-Chief

Ali "Tickle Me Pink" Glembocki
Zoe "Laser Lemon" Sakas

News Editors

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Opinions Editors

Elena "Manatee" Meuse
John "Timberwolf" Looby

Arts Editors

Kelly "Forest Green" Tyra
Melody "Black" Knight-Brown

Earwax Editor

Arthur "Fuzzy Wuzzy" Banach

Features and List

Matthew "Raw Sienna" Whitaker
Luis "Raw Umber" Gomez

Contributors

Larry Andres-Placido, Jicama, Matt's mom's rice krispies, facesitting, Adam Hamilton, bald Connor Ryan, Blu Donation, Lucifer, racoons in the dark room, Dunkin's donuts, the acoustic version of "Can I Get an Amen," Kanye, Lisa Calcasola, Satan, Marcus Milk, cupcake cat, drunk Caitlin kareoke, the gallon of milk, Michael Sheridan, Tinkers, big brother, The Fordham Ram, caf chicken tenders (RIP), Reyna Wang, the eggnog challenge, 2-Chainz, the but-thole issue, Declan Murphy, robot Connor Ryan, glitter, babies, Q Lazzarus, Cudi, Claire Nunez, Estrellitas Poblana III, and, as always, boxed wine.





Porn Community Shaken Up By James Deen Rape Accusation

by Melody Knight-Brown
Arts Co-Editor

Now is not the time to defend rapists #IStandWithStoya

James Deen, porn's boy next door household name as dubbed by PornHub, is a rapist. On November 28th, Deen's ex-girlfriend and fellow porn star Stoya finally came forward about why they broke up in two tweets. They were: "that thing where you log in to the internet for a second and see people idolizing the guy who raped you as a feminist. That thing sucks" and "James Deen held me down and fucked me while I said no, stop, used my safe word. I just can't nod and smile when people bring him up anymore."

These accusations spread across the internet and the porn community quickly, and within hours and days, several major porn companies and the website The Frisky, where Deen published a sex advice column, severed ties with Deen, effective immediately. Amelia McDonell-Parry, who runs The

I believe women. I believe Stoya. I believe anyone...who has come forward

Frisky, stated that although she enjoyed working with Deen, what she liked most of all was his emphasis on consent and that "No amount of good rapport between us or traffic to his columns would EVER supersede the fact that I BELIEVE WOMEN." Kink.com, the largest distributor of BDSM films in the U.S., was the first company to officially blacklist Deen. The CEO of Kink, Peter Acworth, stated that "for the Kink.com

community, as well as the larger BDSM community, consent is sacrosanct. Effective immediately, Kink.com will cease all ties with James Deen, both as a performer and a producer" and that "our performers deserve not only safe sets, but the ability to work without fear of assault. Rape or sexual assault, with or without a safe-word, on-set or off, should never be accepted as a hazard of adult production." Acworth also stated that in the wake of the rape charge, Kink will review its policies to "strengthen rights of performers off-set" and "work with the larger industry to help performers who have been assaulted to more easily come forward." Additionally, Evil Angel, another porn company, has stopped selling any new scenes with Deen and the sex cartoonist Erika Moen withdrew all prior ad and endorsements for the performer and his website. Deen himself voluntarily withdrew himself from his position on the board of the Adult Performer Advocacy Committee, a group dedicated to protecting adult performers' rights, due to the conflicts these rape allegations pose between himself and the committee's mission. He also released a statement saying "There have been some egregious claims made against me on social media. I want to assure my friends, fans and colleagues that these allegations are both false and defamatory. I respect women and I know and respect limits both professionally and privately" and has been inactive from social media since.

Fans of Deen have been quick to defend him, questioning what evidence Stoya has, questioning why it took a year for her to come forward, citing Deen's dedication to consent and re-

spect for women. Moreover, what motivation Deen would have to "resort" to rape since he literally has girls signing up to have sex with him and can act out any kind of sex fantasy, violent or otherwise, he wants with willing partners. Why, they say, would someone who, in May of this year, participated in Porn for Consent, an initiative to get porn companies to remind their audiences that porn is a production and all sex should be consensual. In keeping with this initiative, all films produced by James Deen bare the following disclaimer: the performance you are about to watch is meant for entertainment purposes only. It should not be seen as a model for real-life sexual encounters. We recommend honest, clear, and ongoing communication with your partner(s) to ensure that all sex is consensual. All actors in this film have consented to participate in the acts you see. Have fun, respect each other, and practice safer sex."

Why would a man such as that rape his girlfriend, or anyone for that matter, when rape is so against his values? Well, the simple answer is that Deen's branding is not in line with his personal ethics and the way he has marketed himself is all a lie. The more complicated answer is that despite these issues being important to him, he is an impulsive hypocritical asshole who does not always act in accordance with his beliefs. What is not an answer, however, is that Stoya just made it up. Although there may not be any evidence besides her testimony, although she is a porn star and has sex for a living, although false rape charges are exceedingly rare and Stoya's profession or relationship

status or clothing (she may or may not have been wearing at the time) do not matter. Stoya was raped and James Deen raped her. James Deen is a rapist, and I do not believe that that is too strong of a term. He may still have good qualities, and this does not negate the fact that he has done good work, especially towards adult performer's legal rights. But, he is still a rapist and nothing, whether it is all of the many good things he's done or said, will change that fact. In the same way if you kill someone, whether it is one person or a hundred, whether you are the world's number one philanthropist or a career criminal, you are a murderer; if you rape someone you are a rapist. The one exception to being called a murderer is self-defense, however, if were sticking to the rape as murder analogy, there is no rape equivalent of killing someone out of self-defense. Rape is an active choice. You are never forced to initiate rape. It is never an accident. Rape is rape and yes, sometimes the situation is complicated by drugs or alcohol, but rape itself is not complicated. Rape is rape and it is sick and shameful that rape victims are consistently put in the position of having to prove/justify themselves. It is appalling that people who have been raped are scrutinized, put on trial, and are judged for what they wear, what they do, or how they act. As McDonell-Parry said, "I believe women". I believe Stoya. I believe anyone, male or female, who has come forward about being raped. It is unknown if legal action will be taken against Deen and I don't think it is the media's job to either save him or condemn him, but regardless, James Deen is a rapist, and I stand with Stoya.

Wealthy Fashion Designer Steals Designs From Indigenous Women

by Larry Andres-Placido
Staff Fashion Guru

The world of high fashion has often been depicted as cultural burglary. The designers are portrayed as thieves who steal the identity of oppressed cultures. Concerning recent events, people can argue that current fashion trends are mocking or stealing a culture. From the physical attributes to hairstyles, people are getting their identity stolen.

From the catwalk to harmless Instagram pictures, people often feel like their culture is being used as a ploy in a consumerist world. What makes cultural appropriation bothersome is that people of color cannot take off their "costumes or facades" and return to everyday life without the discrimination or stigma commonly associated with those cultural expressions. Employing someone's culture for expression is an insult that comes with a long history

From the catwalk to harmless Instagram pictures, people often feel like their culture is being used as a ploy in a consumerist world.

and trend of racial and ethnic discrimination and prejudice.

Designer Isabel Marant is widely known for her Bohemian chic style designs. Recently, she has been accused of stealing the designs for one of her blouses from a design created by indigenous women from Santa Maria Tlahuitoltepec, Oaxaca, Mexico. Marant

In this case, the original is not only better, but \$375 cheaper

had a Spring/Summer line called the Étoile collection, which had showcased these stolen blouses. When shown on the catwalk, the crowd was amazed as they had never seen designs like this before.

As soon as the blouses appeared online, people were buying them for their originality and uniqueness. Later, a group of indigenous women from Mex-

Each blouse that the indigenous women makes defines their role in society. Living in poor towns, women are expected to know how to weave clothing for the family, for temples, and for offerings. A fine weaver has status in the community. Clothing and cloth also produce extra income when made for sale, which for many is the only way they can bring income into the household. Chil-

beautiful traditional clothing available or the ones they can afford. Fiestas (parties) celebrating saints' days are other occasions for costumed dances that are often of Spanish origin, and require special rented dance costumes with the embroidery. Even the most common celebration, a quinceañera, or a fifteenth birthday party for a young woman, is another occasion for special clothing. Every stitch work and design is significant for each occasion as it helps show why that day is important.

Multiple people have reached out and collaborated with these women to help shine light on their designs. Online boutiques help create fair-trade, which allows these women to make these blouses and earn a reasonable commission. These boutiques are dedicated to sharing the voice and talent of amazing artisans located throughout remote villages in Mexico. Rather than collaborate with these women, Marant stole their ideas and used them as her own. She not only stole a fashion design, but she also stole a piece of Latin heritage with her as well.

As of now, Isabel Marant is fighting to set the record straight: she has presented submissions which show that these designs truly come from the village of Santa Maria Tlahuitoltepec, Oaxaca Mexico. Furthermore, Ms. Marant, after revealing the true origin of these designs, officially informed the public that she does not claim to be the true designer for these designs. So, what's next for Marant? Earlier this year she stole Adidas' Stan Smith shoe design and now Mexican clothing. Guess we'll have to wait to see what's her next plagiarized design.



ico noticed that their designs resembled the ones on Marant's blouses. When comparing the two, they looked identical. The prices, however, are not identical. Marant is selling her "original" and "unique" blouses for \$395. Meanwhile, the women who created these designs are only selling these blouses for 300 pesos or 20 USD. These women are making authentic Mexican clothing and are making way less of a profit than Marant.

The issue is not only the price difference, but also the theft of a culture.

dren learn by imitation, watching their mothers spin, prepare yarn, warp the loom, and weave. By the age of twelve, whether or not they like it, weaving must be taken seriously. Young girls often watch their moms weave and see how they can create these blouses, because they know that this will be their lives when they reach adulthood.

These designs made by the Mexican women depict a story, a story that is told by the fine embroidery. In Mexico, when beauty contests are held, the indigenous contestants wear the most

Advice from Philosopher Ralph

The fluffiest philosophical meditations.

"UPS and the mailman will eventually bring about the demise of all life"

"I sniff, therefore, I am."

"Few Creatures have the Capacity to master the complexity of the perfect itch"

"I must chew. Chewing is at the very essence of al life, however, it must be done in the proper fashion--only in an up and down motion."

"I don't think highly of birds who pretend to have hair but don't...they are not to be trusted"

"Noseprinting on a glass medium is the only true art."

Study Suggests That There's No "Male or Female Only" Brain

by Blu Donaton

Staff Bill Nye Follower

Whether it is science or society, one key belief about life is that men and women belong to the same type of animal but are separate beings. Our bodies are different and because of this, we are often fit to play separate roles in things as obvious as reproduction to as indistinct as religion. In his famous psychoanalytic perspective, Sigmund Freud even included a separate stage of development for men and women. Surprisingly, his penis envy theory may be incorrect.

In Israel, Tel Aviv University recently reported their findings after they studied over 1400 male and female brains. The goal was to inspect different areas of the brains and the grey matter between them to discover possible differences in connections, purpose, and development of certain structures of the brain between the two genders. Such differences could help understand what makes a male-born person

"Take that, gender binary!" -Science, probably

act and think more masculine and a female-born person view the world in their own distinct way. This was not the case. Rather than discover possible distinctions between the two genders, scientists at Tel Aviv actually found a great deal of similarities. While certain structures such as the hippocampus showed slight differences, being larger in men than in women, this difference appeared lower and less significant than past findings had suggested. An article by Medical Daily on the study even states that "0 to 8% of the brains contained only male or only female structures." This implies that brains between the genders may not only be similar but that there may not be a distinct male brain or female brain.

If true, this research could launch not only a whole new way of societal thinking, but a brand new branch of psychology based not on distinction of gender, but rather on perceived differences versus the biological reality of

similarities between us.

As with most news, this article has a big headline but a small founding. The brain is still a mostly unknown structure meaning that while no differences may be found now, future techniques may reveal hidden mental processes we cannot yet detect. Also, only one university has been referenced to see this lack of distinction, and before information can be trusted it must be redone to see if the results can be replicated.

Despite this, at least the article brings to question just what is really so different between men and women below the skin. Growing up, a lot of us have tried to push the gender boundary now and again, whether it's trying on another gender's clothes or playing with "their" toys. Testing our role in society allows us to feel like we fit in and have a place, but does the role of gender really exist by the time we are born? Just like in science, in society we

test our boundaries and learn from the world around us. While some boundaries, such as those of the moral kind, may be important, others like appropriate gender actions may not. People do this not because we know how we are supposed to be, but because we are born with no instincts and choose much of it for ourselves by learning. Maybe we could have learned to act like tomboys and janegirls if given the chance, or rather maybe could have all just acted like people.

So next time you think all men think alike ask yourself if this is actually true. Ask, are certain genders more prone to a certain mental illnesses by biology or by an incongruent way of thinking of which we have just yet to take notice of? And lastly, ask if we have to be male and female doing male things or female things, or can we all just be people and do people things?

World Leaders Meet to Save the Planet That They Helped Destroy

by Declan Murphy

Staff Green Peace Worker

This past week, representatives from nearly every country met in Paris to discuss—and attempt to address—climate change.

Though there have been many such summits in the past two decades, the last major formal agreement was the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol set hard limits on emissions for major developed nations, in an effort to combat climate change. Unfortunately, while many nations adopted the Kyoto Protocol, it ultimately fell short of what was needed to slow the growing effects of climate change. For one, it failed to include China and India, which have since become major sources of carbon emissions. It also was never ratified or enforced in the United States, thus limiting its efficacy.

The Obama administration—and the whole conference—wants to avoid another mishap like the Kyoto Protocol. As more and more scientists stress the coming crisis of climate change, the urgency seems greater all the time. If this summit fails to realize real

Apparently "not killing the planet" unpopular in Congress

change, disaster will become more and more imminent.

Luckily, there is real hope for a resolution to pass. The U.S. and China have both expressed their willingness to accept limitations on emissions. China, in particular, has been hesitant to limit emissions in the past. However, its latest climate change report is both critical and comprehensive, positively asserting that change is needed and that failure to regulate could lead to disaster. It warns that at current rates, climate change could throw much of China's coast into direct danger of disaster. Further, it urges for China to work together with other nations to reduce its carbon footprint—exactly what the summit proposes to do.

Since the start of the conference, indeed, President Xi Jinping has announced that China will employ cap-and-trade regulation to combat growing emissions. It will also seek to stem the growth of its emissions by 2030. This may seem far off, but China still considers itself a growing economy, so Jinping (and others) argue that it needs

more time to manage steady economic growth and emissions.

The pledge is not in its final form yet, but a draft has been proposed as of Thursday, December 3, that will be reviewed and modified by the member nations of the summit. Expected provisions include hard caps on emissions



for all ratifiers. Other provisions will be revealed as the resolution is fleshed out.

Unfortunately, the resolution is being met with resistance within the United States. Or rather, Congress seems opposed to these measures. The Senate ratified the House's measures that would limit the EPA's ability to enforce limits on carbon emissions. It is ex-

pected that President Obama will veto this bill, and the Senate lacks the two-thirds majority to overturn the veto. Still, it is unfortunate to see such determined oppositions to these measures. This is especially true given a recent poll, which indicates that 66% of Americans believe the US should enter into an international agreement on climate change. As is typical of this particular issue, support is significantly higher among Democrats than Republicans. But the overall takeaway is that most Americans want real initiative taken to limit climate change, a sentiment that their Congressional representatives seem not to share.

The resolution has not been finalized or voted on, but in the coming weeks, the results of the summit should become clear. Obama seems determined to push through and manage to enact a multinational resolution, but with determined opposition back home, this may be difficult. Still, this is a critical time for environmental protection. The results of this summit may decide the fate of the planet.

FAKER THAN TRUTH: HAIKU EDITION

by Zoe Sakas

Trump falls down, hits head
Now in coma, unconscious
Still running for Prez

Jersey takes SI
Finally New York is free
Of its worst borough

Self driving smart cars
Develop programed road rage
Accidents ensue

New policies make
Buying guns now illegal
Texas leaves US

Thumb wrestling trend
Grows as a result of strong
Fingers from texting

Research now funded
To search North Pole for Santa
Better watch out, Claus

Kim surprised with twins
Kanye names South and Easton
Mission accomplished

New laptop released
Does not include hashtag key
Pranks Twitter users

Cheez-It officials
Announce next generation
Of snacks have real cheese!

Gabelli students
Set Hughes on fire, McShane
Is finally proud.

Herd of rams attack
All Fordham's wifi routers
Finals are cancelled!

Ali and Zoe
Fail all their classes this year
Won't leave the paper

-ZS

As Primary Season Approaches, Race Heats Up

by Adam Hamilton
Staff Campaign Intern

With two months until the first votes are cast in Iowa, it is now time to start paying serious attention to the election. The Democratic Party's smaller contest looks relatively simple. Secretary Hillary Clinton has the backing of the majority of the party establishment; as of December 2nd she has been endorsed by 142 congressmen, 38 Senators, and 12 Governors. Senator Bernie Sanders has been endorsed by two representatives and Governor Martin O'Malley by one. Clinton's lead has been growing over the past few months, as her polling lead over Sanders has grown to 30 points. Although, House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy admitting that the Benghazi hearings were intended to lower her place in the polls. Clinton still faces threats from an FBI probe into her private email which may lead to charges filed, but politically she seems safe as long as Sanders continues to languish outside of his key demographic: young educated white (mostly) males. The Independent Vermont Senator, who has never won an election as a Democrat, has galvanized the progress wing of the Democratic Party, but his impressive fundraising and grassroots support are considerable. Former Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley has atrophied in the single digits since the start of his campaign, and little looks to change.

Because of the large number of candidates in the Republican Party, many in the GOP establishment have yet to endorse a candidate. With the lack of a default candidate, political outsiders have been able to reach the hearts and minds of the GOP base. The most recent Quinnipiac University Poll indicates that businessman and reality TV star Donald Trump is still leading at 27 percent. Trump turned the political world on its head when his controversial campaign announcement catapulted him to the front of the pack, where he has more or less remained ever since. Trump holds a commanding lead in the first three voting contests, the Iowa Caucus and the New Hampshire and South Carolina Primaries, contests which traditionally can make or break a campaign. Trump's bombastic approach to the race has helped fuel his

Donald Trump still in lead, somehow

campaign by giving it media attention. Trump has pledged to self-fund his campaign, having only \$217,000 so far in the race, and has used the media attention his campaign generates largely to spread his message. Former pediatric neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson has also tapped into the grassroots anger to make his case for the Whitehouse. Carson's popularity among Christian conservatives, a key constituency in many early voting states, has helped him raise over 20 million dollars in the third quarter, more than any other candidate. Carson's campaign has faced increasing scrutiny in recent weeks over inconsistencies about his life story, as well as long standing questions of competence after Carson demonstrated a lack of understanding

nating Carson to snag second place. Bush's family name has dragged down the governor, and after four anemic debate performances, Bush has had to start cutting staff salary. Conservative Governors Bobby Jindal, Scott Walker, and Rick Perry have already dropped out under similar circumstances, but with such a multitude of candidates, many voters are still waiting for the field to narrow down before deciding to back a specific candidate.

Texas Senator Ted Cruz has the most cash on hand, one of the largest actual ground campaigns and four Super Pacs with a total of \$38 million raised. The barn burning conservative has staked his political career on showing it to Republican voters that he can and does fight the Republican Washington



of several basic policy questions. Outsider candidates more often than not end up losing to the candidate that is backed by the establishment, but both candidates have mounted legitimate campaigns and both have conceivable paths to the nomination.

The Republican establishment is having a bad year. Former Florida Governor Jeb Bush managed to raise an astounding 100 million dollars from Right to Rise, a Super Pac supporting the Bush campaign. Super Pacs are third party independent political organizations that are not bound by the same limits to individual donations that official campaigns are. Bush is polling at around 5 percent nationally, and seems to have lost momentum to his former protégé, Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, who is now polling at 17 percent, putting him just above the stag-

establishment. His campaign maneuvering has placed him in a complete position to pounce and snatch up the supporters of any other candidate that drops; Cruz was one of the few candidates to have consistently not called out Trump, even appearing at several events together. Cruz has established an extensive campaign network in the states set to vote in the South Eastern Conference primary, eight southern states voting together on the first of March, where he expects to pick up a large number of delegates. None of the eight other Republicans reached 3 percent, but that is not a reason to count them out: 2012 Iowa Caucus winner former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum was only polling at 4.6 percent in a University of Iowa poll at that point in the election cycle. At this point in the race it still can be anyone's game.

College Is Terrible, So Order A Coloring Book!

by Elena Meuse
Opinions Co-Editor

Drown in your sorrows with Crayola

Do finals have you crawling under your desk and crying? Have you found yourself repeatedly contemplating alternative career plans that would allow you to forgo a college education? When you open your laptop to write a paper, do you find yourself just gaping in horror at a blank screen for hours at a time?

Maybe you should consider getting an adult coloring book!

Known for their intricate outlines and detailed designs, adult coloring books are basically an advanced form of a regular children's coloring book. (I know what you were thinking when you first heard word "adult," and I assure you there are no dicks involved.) These books require a great deal of time and attentiveness, making them far more appealing to adults than younger children. What started as an intriguing novelty has quickly grown into a huge market, with publishing companies scrambling to add their own books to the expanding genre.

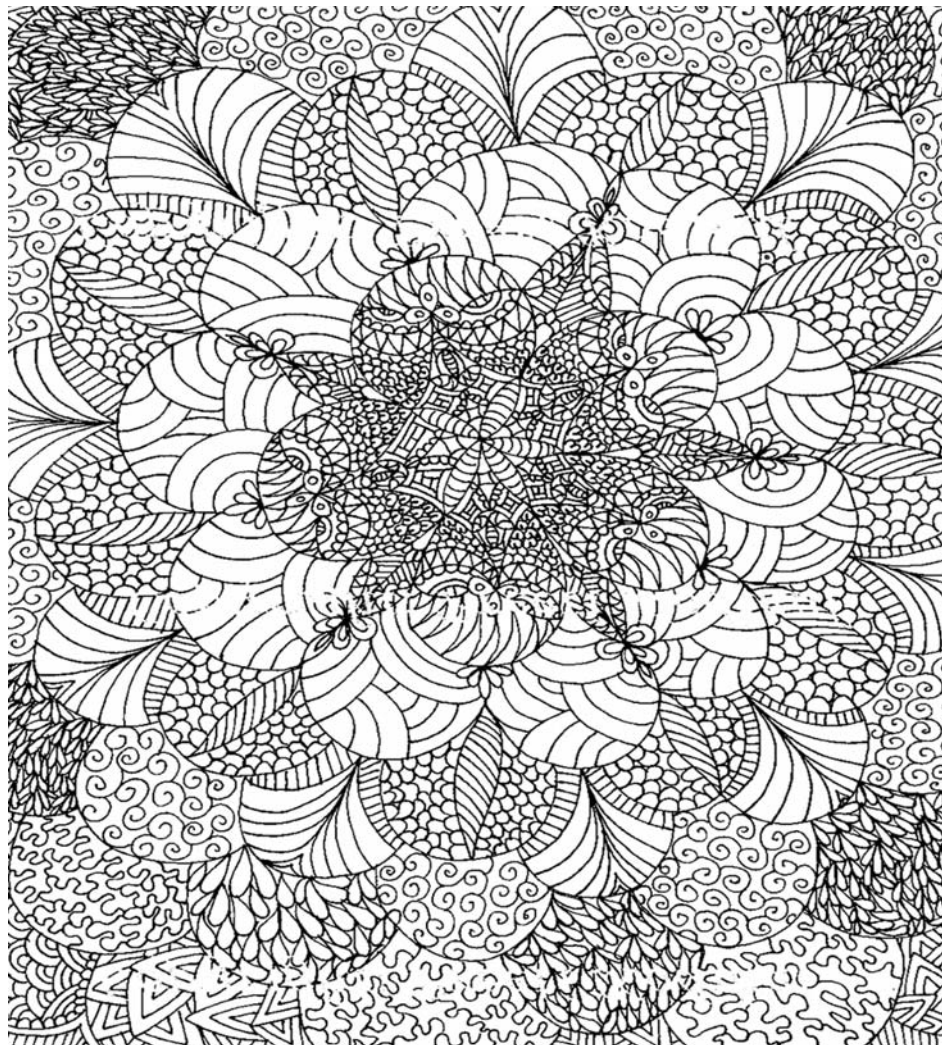
Particularly, within the past several months, adult coloring books have skyrocketed in popularity, topping the Amazon bestseller list. Titles such as *Secret Garden: An Inky Treasure Hunt and Coloring Book* by Johanna Basford and *The Mindfulness Coloring Book: Anti-stress Art Therapy for Busy People* by Emma Farrarons gained widespread acclaim back in the spring, quickly followed by a variety of similar books. From zoo animals to mandalas, there is a wide array of differently themed coloring books for different interests. Most recently, Scholastic debuted their Harry Potter adult coloring book, which has already been added to Amazon's Best Books of the Year list.

The popularity of adult coloring books is mainly attributed to their use as art therapy, helping users cope with stress and relax. The complex designs necessitate focus, yet allow users' minds to wander. While a regular children's coloring book might be too simple to fully immerse someone and a blank page might be too overwhelming, adult coloring books offer just the right balance of structure; users can pick the color scheme and spend hours working on a single design, yet they never have

to completely focus on what they are doing. For anyone who ever doodles during class or enjoys painting their nails while watching TV, the concept is pretty similar. You're working within a defined space, allowing you to only devote partial attention to the task you're performing.

while living with a complete stranger who nine out of ten times turns out to be a complete psychopath who watches you sleep at night! Do you feel okay?"

Adult coloring books are only a small part of the growing anti-stress market, packed with products promising relax-



It's no surprise that people are turning to coloring books to help relieve stress. A recent study from the Higher Education Funding Council of England showed that college students are reporting more anxiety and other mental health issues than ever before. While some of this increase is simply due to the reduced stigma surrounding mental illness, there still appears to be notable increase in problems among students. Given the fact that college has basically turned into a \$250,000 shit show, it's unsurprising that people find themselves feeling unwell. "Welcome to college, take five classes, work 12 hours a week, intern, and oh, do it all

ation and relief. From apps that play "relaxing sounds" to special teas to the ridiculously large array of Lush bath bombs, people are turning to anything and everything to help cope with the growing levels of stress in their lives. All we need next is start splashing the coloring books with lavender essential oils while having them serenade us with soothing noises. (Future Amazon bestseller?) In the midst of this entire stress craziness one thing is clear: People are stressed. And stressed people love coloring books. And if you're feeling stressed maybe you want to start doing some coloring too. In fact, feel free to color the image above!

Realer

Than

Fact

by Caitlin Hufnagle

St. Louis, Missouri

When your last name is Weisser and you decide to bestow the name Bud upon your son, you have to know that you're asking for trouble. I mean, really, what does naming your child after a cheap beer brand most popular amongst frat boys and middle-aged suburban dads at block parties say about how you care his self-esteem? Eventually, your small boy will realize the significance of his moniker when elementary school teachers snicker during attendance and cruel middle school bullies make fun of him. Kudos, parents. You really set your kid up for success. And, unfortunately, the holder of a name like Bud Weisser does not get any special treatment from the brand which his name pays homage. Nineteen-year-old Bud Weisser of St. Louis, MO was arrested for trespassing on secure areas of the Budweiser Brewery grounds. First off, this brings up the question of why Budweiser even has a secure area... are they experimenting with aliens or something? Also, were the police laughing while the arrest Bud? Did Bud feel betrayed by Budweisser's rejection? So many questions, so few answers. Although, Bud apparently made use his mugshot as his profile pic on Facebook, so he definitely recognizes how ridiculous this whole situation is and is choosing to embrace it. Bravo to you, Bud Weisser. You took a bad name and did something absolutely awesome with it. Plus, at least you have a good comeback for when your parents get mad at you for getting arrested—say they were asking for it when they named you Bud.

Syrian Civil War Will Soon Be Old Enough for Kindergarten

by Luis Gomez
Staff CNN Analyst

It's been a rocky five years...the world needs a better strategy

Pre-2011, Syria was just another country in the Middle East; that is to say it was completely ignored by the American news cycle and public unless something important and vaguely-terrorist related happened there.

As the Syrian Civil War drags on into its fifth year, many are asking questions like "Why?" and "How?" and "What?" So, that's what we're going to try to do. We're going to see if we can explain the *How* and *What* of this conflict, and, most importantly, the *Why*.

So, remember the Arab Spring? That populist uprising that spread across the Middle East and attempted to install democratic (or at least new) governments in many nations over there? Yeah, that. That's how this all started. In March of 2011, major populist protests against the government of Bashar al-Assad began. Why were people protesting? Well, mostly Assad was being a massive prick who rigged elections and liked committing something between three and seven human rights violations before breakfast. The protests continued to grow, frequently clashing with police until around May, when the Syrian government sent out the army in to quell protests. Because, after all, the easiest way to settle the concerns of a mostly non-violent series of protests is to start shooting at them. Works like a charm.

As with anything regarding leaders killing their own people, the situation went from bad to even worse as time went on. Massive crackdowns took place, most notably in the city of Hama. This continued for a few months until an armed rebellion began to take shape in early June. Anti-Assad protesters organized themselves into the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and began to fight back against Assad's forces. Members of the Syrian Army began to defect to the FSA and fight against their old boss. More troublesomely, Syrian and other regional extremists begin traveling into Syria and joining with the rebellion in the fight against Assad. In January of 2012, al-Qaeda formed its Syrian branch, known as Jabhat al-Nusra. Pay attention to these guys, it'll be important later.

It's at this point that things start mov-

ing very very very quickly and get very very very complicated so we're going to try to hit as many major points as we can without leaving stuff out.

Sometime in mid to late 2012, the war became a proxy war between many groups. Iran began funneling supplies to Assad's forces. The CIA began a training/supply program for rebels, then ended it, then the Pentagon began a training/supply program for rebels, then ended it. The international community did what it did best in these situations, which means they wrote some very nasty memos at the UN and sanctioned the shit out of Syria. Kurds living in northern Syria decided that since everything was going to hell anyway, hey might as well secede from Syria and declare their independen-

be kept out of extremist hands.

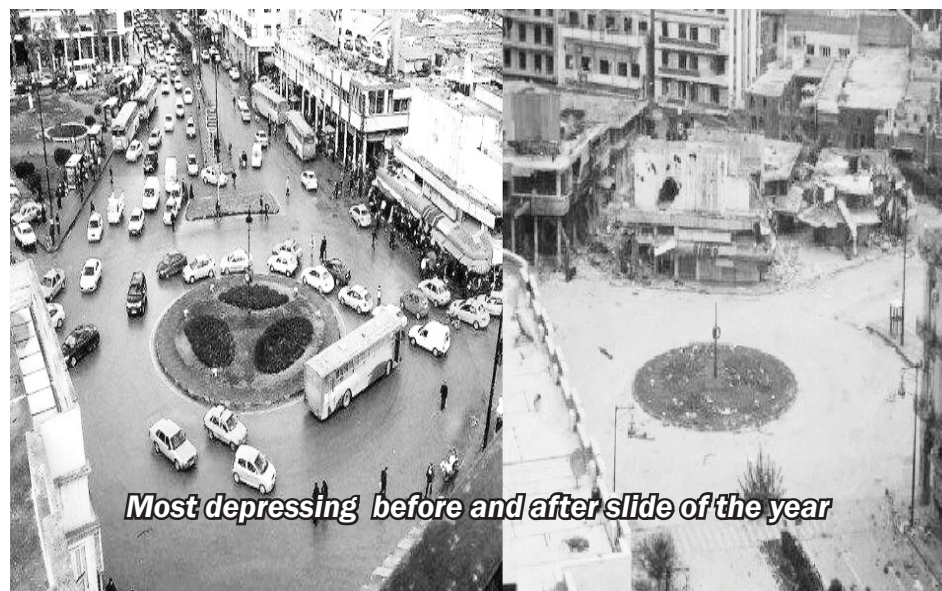
Hezbollah got involved in the conflict in May of 2013. And from then until early 2014 the war in Syria was an escalating spiral of conflict and reproach. And then a new player entered the field, one that would change the entire treatment of the Syrian Civil War. That new player? Daesh.

Before I dig into history, a quick side note on terminology. Daesh is one of many names for ISIS, formerly known as ISIL, and currently trying to pass themselves off as IS, the Islamic State. But I'm not going to call them that. I'm going to call them Daesh because a) it's the Arabic acronym for their name b) Daesh is so, so, so far from being anything remotely close to Islam that calling it Islamic seems wrong and c)

From that point Syria experienced months upon months of Daesh attacks, counter attacks, reprisals, and general dickery that made their already war-torn country a literal hell to live in. On June 29th of 2014, Daesh declared itself a caliphate. Which lead to more fighting. The US began airstrikes against Daesh in September of that year. After that point, things seemed to stagnate, with a fairly common pattern of US airstrikes and Daesh ground attacks emerging. And that brings us up to about fall of 2015, which is when Russia entered the picture. Which, if you know anything about Russia, just ended up making everything worse. Russia began an air support campaign, supposedly bombing Daesh and other extremists, but really only targeting anti-Assad rebels. The US, in turn, responded by sending in a small Special Forces unit to do...well, something. On November 13th, Daesh carried out a coordinated attack in Paris, leaving hundreds dead and more wounded, and prompting the French government to retaliate with airstrikes. On December 2nd, the UK's parliament, after a very long, very contentious debate, voted in favor of airstrikes against Daesh.

So, where does that leave us now? Well, the war in its current form is a ridiculous shitshow. There are four separate, differently backed, ideologically distinct groups fighting amongst one another with basically no end in sight. The longer this conflict drags on, the more messy and complicated it becomes.

And the worst part of all of this fighting is the profound human cost. The refugee problem is so often spoken of in merely those terms, as a "problem," implying there were some easy solution to the fact that, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, at least 7.6 million people have been internally displaced by the war in Syria, and 4 million others are now considered refugees. Consider that, for a second. Really think about that. There is a profound miscarriage of justice happening right before our eyes and we've so far done nothing about it. It's time for the United States to act as it should, and realize just who the real victims of Syria's civil war are.



dence. Which they did. A cease-fire was brokered in April of 2012, which fell apart in July with the massacre of a small farm village called Tresmeh, in which about 200 people died. The FSA counterattack ended with a bombing of Damascus' National Security center, which killed a number of top members in Assad's government.

Conflict continued to escalate until April 2013, when the UK and France presented the UN with evidence that Assad had used chemical weapons against his own population, setting off another chain reaction of conflict, international pressure, and making the entire problem even more complicated. Now, there was a chemical weapons stockpile loose in Syria, and it had to

because it apparently pisses them off. So Daesh they will be.

Anyway. Remember that al-Qaeda operation in Syria, Jabhat al-Nusra? Yeah, that's where Daesh got its start. After having been a part of al-Qaeda for enough time, they decided that apparently the guys responsible for 9/11 weren't radical enough for them, so they broke away from al-Qaeda and began their own movement. Daesh has spent their time in Syria basically ruining fucking everything. They've captured a wide swath of territory, routinely tortured and brutally executed their detractors, and systematically destroyed hundreds of historical and religious sites across Syria. Oh yeah, and displaced a few million people, also.



The Social Pressure Of Resolutions Is Coming For Us All

by Kelly Tyra
Arts Co-Editor

You better fix yourself the right way

It's that time of year again, folks! Finals time, long, ugly puffer coat time, and 25 Days of Christmas on ABC time. December is an emotional month; we laugh, we cry, we party but we also reflect. As 2015 draws to a close let's just take a moment to remember and mourn all of those New Year's Resolutions we completely disregarded after February. I'll start.

This year I wanted to focus on becoming my 'best self.' 2015 was (supposed to be) the year I'd get in touch with my creative side, hop on a treadmill more than once a month, and get in touch with who I 'really' am. I started by writing a personal mantra, which sounds lame and Oprahitic, but turned out pretty badass. It reads: "I hold myself to a high enough standard. I don't need other people's approval, respect, or recognition when I have my own." I scribbled this once a month in my planner, kept it digitally stuck to my desktop background, and tried to ignore how silly it felt to be emulating my own words. Obviously, it's not a perfect statement. It wasn't an excuse to write off other people's opinions or perspectives but a reminder that I am allowed to put myself first because I am the only person who has to live with me for the rest of my life. That may seem scary at times but I take solace in the fact that it is true for everyone.

When you don't keep your New Year's resolutions it may feel like you are letting yourself down. But as we are all alone in this world anyway it probably doesn't really matter and you don't even have to tell anyone.

And if you look back on the past ~355 days I bet you did stick to your guns every now and then. Hell, every time I ate a salad this year, no matter how good that salad was, I know I would rather have been eating pizza. It's the little victories, ya know?

usually to better yourself. I won't dump on that aspect. Self-improvement is a noble effort. If you really want to take a chance make a change the secret is to start small. If you want to begin actually doing the required reading for all your classes, start by reading

accomplish this, which is understandable as Estrellitas exists, you will feed the flames of hatred making you less likely to get back on track. Instead think of it this way, I love the feeling of cooking for myself every now and then; I would like to experience that feeling of accomplishment more often and thus I will resist ordering a quesadilla. Failure in this case would motivate you to try again because you have made the resolution for yourself not against yourself.

One hit wonder resolutions are a good option as well. I wrote a personal mantra and scribbled it down once a month. Easy-peasy but still makes me feel lemon squeezey (???). Try to set some goals that you only have to accomplish once but have the power to change your out look all year long. Shuffle the furniture in your apartment around, delete a distracting app on your phone, get the Kardashian Ad blocker. Small task, big pay off.

If even the baby and big task you set for yourself elude you, and you end 2016 in a puddle of mud on the side of the road feeling no better than you do today, remember that time is a social construct and we are all irrelevant in her wide span anyway. While it may seem like we are hurdling toward some annual finish line as December come to a close we are really just going to keep on moving through space as our baby blue planet runs track around the sun. You are one in 7.125 billion, who cares if you had pie today?



New Years resolutions are an interesting phenomenon. Forty-five percent of American's make them every year on January first and twenty-five percent drop those wills and wishes within the first week, forty-six percent within the first six months. Less than ten percent of people actually achieve whatever they have set out to do and while it's bleak it sure as hell makes me feel better and hopefully comforts you as well.

I know the point of resolutions is

the first five pages of each text. Baby steps are steps nonetheless and when you prove to yourself that you can work through the tedium you'll be encouraged to push yourself harder and set new milestones and goals. Six pages here I come!

It is also important to make sure your resolutions stem from a place of self-love as opposed to self-loathing. You may hate yourself for ordering from GrubHub five times a week and vow to never order again. If you fail to

Japan: Land of The Cute and The Heaviest Metal

by Blu Donation
Staff Weeaboo

Following cultural development most countries often create their own sources of entertainment wildly different from other nations. For some this may be fast cars and high-paced action, while others might prefer a more theatre-like production of romance and suspense. Despite differences modern day people tend to lean towards many of the same core ideas making it possible for another country's creation to become popular in other places despite the lack of popularity or possibility for that creation to come out the other nation's culture. For these reasons Japan stands out

The leader of the group just happens to be a cross-dressing death metal singer

as a major source of both confusion and admiration in the world of entertainment as its many more original creations such as anime are viewed by some of us with questions about its out-there themes, strange characters, and weird artistic design. Others fall in love with its originalities, diversity in creations and boldness of subjects rarely seen or heard of in American life. In recent years, however, anime is no longer alone as a new source of entertainment stemming from Japan has started to hit other nations causing many weeboos, Japanese culture nerds, and music lovers alike to freak out over a new fandom.

Idol culture has come to redefine stardom

This is the start of idol nation.

Combining the core selling points of cute appeal, music, and role models in 1970, Japan created idols as a new class of performers meant not only to entertain and inspire but to be completely and utterly beloved by those who experienced them. Many idols share similarities with pop-stars, however Japan added an extra ingredient or two to the recipe. Idols mainly differ from pop-stars in their out right

anime, and real life idol culture's true power is its ability to inspire, showing that everyone is different but that we all have an inner yearning to succeed and be loved for being who we are. Idols often create a whole new world as there is much more to them that meets the eyes, as was the case with newest idol group Ladybaby.

Ladybaby is much like any other idol group, as its members include two cute Japanese girls and some up-

Combining his love of all things cute with his lust for heavy metal, Ladybeard formed the band to live out a persona who could embody it all even creating a new genre of music they call "Kawicore" mashing the Japanese word for cute with the term hardcore metal.

While the band is in many ways strange and different, it also embodies everything people love about idols. Much like a real person every idol is different and whether it is truly themselves or a character they play each stands out as someone distinct. Many idols even portray themselves much like an average person ,who wasn't born beloved but whose hard-work and unwillingness to give up on what they loved gained them their place in the world. This is their power and appeal. Idols much as their name implies are meant to inspire spreading not only cuteness, but their passion and desire to work hard, to love ,feel and to one day become famous, loved and accomplished just by being we all are are. Performers like Ladybeard, a now popular character who could never arise in America, even show the break down of societal norms putting down age differences, gender, and gender roles to just show the worlds cultures some rules can be broken, the strange can be embraced and harnessed, and that it doesn't matter who you are or what you love anyone can be loved and we all can just have a little fun.

Cause hey if a beared man in a dress singing death metal can be loved, why can't you? (Go out and find your idol!)



obsession with cute appeal. They are meant to be adorable using an assortment of costumes and sentimental lyrics to bring a closeness between fan and performer to a new level. While this sounds shallow for many idols become more than just a pretty face but a source of energy and inspiration. Spreading through games,

beat j-pop music. However there is a bit of a twist. The leader of the group just happens to be a cross-dressing death metal singer and Australian wrestler, dressed as a 5-year old girl. His name is Ladybeard, and he is the center of the popularity of the band whose very first song gained 7 million hits on youtube in less than a month.

Relatives Coming To Stay?



What Do You Mean Calm Down, I've Got Work To Do!

by Zoe Sakas
Co-Editor-In-Chief

Editor finds it difficult to meditate when there is shit to get done

I'm taking a political science class this semester, and we've spent the last few months talking about how to apply different philosophies from various streams of political thought to attaining global justice. Most recently, we have read a book called *Practicing Peace in Times of War* written by a Buddhist nun from New York City, Pema Chödrön. Her writings focus on how meditation and reaching internal peace are essential in the quest to establish justice. In simple wording, her main suggestion is to focus on oneself and reach internal peace through the practice of meditation. To Chödrön, because we cannot control anything or anyone except ourselves, all we can do is find ways to establish peace within ourselves.

Chödrön makes a claim that the root cause of injustice is this concept called shenpa. She describes shenpa, which is translated as "attachment," as the sticky feeling we experience when someone irks us. She gives the example of being insulted; the anger we feel as a result of being insulted translates into shenpa. According to Chödrön, when we act on shenpa, which can also exist as guilt, blame, or aggression, we make decisions that we will later regret because they are results of irrational emotions and the lack of internal peace. In order to achieve justice, we must escape and overcome shenpa.

On a personal level, I can completely understand how Chödrön's perspective can be very effective. It is difficult to live a happy and successful life when you are bogged down by anger and aggression. And typically,

when dealing with personal relationships, when we act out of these irrational "sticky" feelings, the only result is more hatred and tension between the two parties. Meditation can be a good way to release those emotions, and reflect on thoughts that might be detrimental to our internal peace and con-

sive institution, can drive good and passionate people to take action. Especially when dealing with injustices that already exist in our societies, it is essential to blame those who are the cause of the oppression of marginalized communities in order to promote some kind of change. When an act of

ence that arises from social injustices like oppression is very much warranted, and to find peace with it might actually be detrimental to progressive social action. It is possible to act out in non-violent ways while still not swallowing any of the anger you are experiencing. Meditating on such matters won't lead to further action, and although the one who meditated might feel a bit less aggressive, the lack of raw feelings might not be as productive.

There are plenty of examples I can think of when anger was the stem of positive social action. One recent example that is very close to home occurred on Fordham's campus just a couple months ago. The racial bias incidents sent the Fordham community into a whirlwind of social initiative. Between the talks organized by ASILI and the creation of Fordham Students United, the strong feelings that these racial bias incidents provoked resulted in a positive change at Fordham.

The link between moral anger and social action is definitely apparent, and it is an important one. While meditation and a peaceful heart might be helpful to overcome detrimental emotions on a personal level, when dealing with social injustices it is sometimes necessary to just let that anger take the lead. You can't tell someone who is suffering from an oppressive society to sit in peace and meditate on their experiences. In the long run, that won't help anyone. When we witness or experience an injustice that makes us angry, we should act on it. This action is what will lead to a better society.



Let the anger flow through you

sequentially personal relationships.

However, with that said, it is difficult to picture how this would be beneficial on a larger scale. As much as patience can be a virtue, and internal peace might lead to clearer decision-making, anger can also result in positive social action and social progression. Being angry at an oppressor, or an oppres-

sive institution, it is the anger that stems from that act that typically initiates a large step within a social movement.

Meditating about these injustices, as I mentioned, might lead to reaching some sort of internal peace about them. But, is that really what we want? The internal shenpa that we experi-



Stand Up For Female Empowerment: Make A Duck Face

by Melody Brown

Arts Co-Editor

If you don't know what duckface is, you probably lived under a rock. It's that face girls make in selfies, where they, according to urban dictionary "push [their] lips together in a combination of a pout and a pucker, giving the impression [they] have larger cheekbones and bigger lips." It's supposed to make a girl look more attractive, but only manages to be absolutely ridiculous. It is this contrived distortion of the face that might be grotesque if it wasn't so funny and we, being the self-respecting human beings that we are, can sit back, grab the popcorn and laugh until as this new trend fades.

Or can we? Yes, duckface and is stupid looking, basic, average, overdone, but who cares? Why does that mat-

Wait can we take another my eyes looked weird

ter? I'm the first person to admit that duckface looks dumb, but honestly, how do you take a selfie that doesn't look dumb? I mean of course people can just stop taking selfies. There is something nauseatingly shallow and superficial about it, but maybe there is also just the hint of something empowering about as well. Posting lots of pictures about yourself can be seen as narcissistic but it also takes a measure confidence and a self assurance in yourself to put those pictures out there.

Not to get all feminist anthropological psychological or whatever, but girls have spent so much of history being invisible, being anonymous. Selfies for better or worse are self-initiated attempts at being visible and making fun of the faces girls make in them

feels like lowkey shaming girls into not feeling comfortable with their face, into not being visible.

And if that's feels like reaching too much, how about this: people make fun of duck-face because in our society, it is easy, acceptable, and in many ways cool to make fun of girls. Basic white girls, Starbucks cups, uggs, leggings, northface jackets, hunter boots, beliebers. How girls act, how they drive, what they like, who they like. Girls can hardly breathe without being ridiculed for one thing or another. They are constantly the punchline of so many of society's jokes that the don't even really seem like jokes anymore.

There's the argument that it's funny because its true; it is just so common for girls to do this and it is funny how

stupidly obsessed girls get about certain things they like. But so what? Why is it bad to like the things everyone else likes? Starbucks is a convenient source of caffeine and sugar. Northfaces are warm. Leggings are comfortable.

Or there's the argument that these jokes don't really mean anything and besides we make fun of stereotypical guys too. But it does mean something. Our humor says a lot about what kind of society we are, which in this case would imply we are a misogynistic culture of institutionalized sexism. And yes, it's true we make fun of guys too. Guys get shit for wearing salmon pants or taking gym selfies but it's not on the same scale or as pervasive as the humor we and gather at the expense of women.

A Perspective On Life With Disabilites In The Media

by Lisa Calcasola

Staff Broken Bad

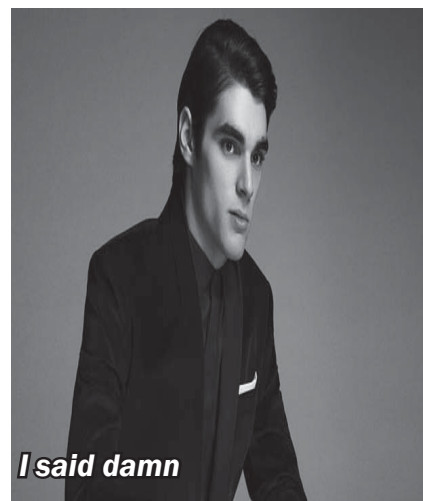
While we may live in a time of exaggerated FOMO, it's no exaggeration to say that if you missed seeing RJ Mitte speak on December 1st in Keating auditorium, you missed out big time. Mitte, best known for his character Walt Jr. on the smash TV series *Breaking Bad*, visited Fordham to speak for about an hour, covering a range of topics, from acting to disabilities to the importance of representation in the media. Mitte was, in one word, hilarious, as well as superbly well-spoken. Witty, eloquent and really damn hot, too—this is a guy you'd want at any party or social event. Not that I'm biased or anything.

Breaking Bad was Mitte's first major acting role, which he first auditioned for at 13 years old. Mitte's character on the show lives with cerebral palsy and requires crutches to move around in his daily life. Mitte also lives with CP, albeit a milder version than his on-screen counterpart. The main theme of Mitte's Tuesday night talk focused on his personal attitude toward his so-called "disability".

Growing up, Mitte never realized that going to physical and speech

Also Walt Jr. got like super hot

therapy every week was considered "abnormal"—he thought that's just what everyone did when they weren't in school. Mitte told the audience of his family's attitude towards his dis-



I said damn

ability: "I was never allowed to use my CP as an excuse for anything, and I never did. If I wanted to play soccer, I worked hard for it, like anybody else, and I'd get out and play."

Mitte emphasized that although he and Walt Jr. have a disability, their disability does not define them. It is not who they are. This theme has also been expressed in other works, such as John Green's *The Fault in*

Our Stars, in which main characters Hazel and Augustus have cancer, but their cancer is not their whole story. They are not their disease; they are human beings who also happen to have a condition that makes their lives different from the masses.

Mitte is a strong advocate for representation in the media. It's not so much shining light on people with disabilities, he says. It's entering them organically through the literature, by introducing them as people with real life problems who also happen to have a disability. Although he shied away from using the term "normal" ("Who in the audience thinks they're normal? Well, they're wrong!"), Mitte admitted that a key aspect in Walt Jr's character is the way his CP is introduced and thus "normalized" through later episodes. In the very first episode, we see Walt Jr's crutches before we see the actual character. However this is the first and only time the crutches take center stage; in every episode after this, his crutches become background as we become emotionally invested in the character himself. We become accustomed to a formerly "taboo" object and this "normalizes" what may have been previously regarded

with suspicion or fear, because it was unknown. This is what scares people, Mitte explained. The unknown scares people, because they're not sure how to react.

Representation in the media isn't a new topic, but it is gaining traction with shows like *Fresh Off the Boat*, *Blackish*, and Aziz Ansari's new TV series *Master of None*. Minority voices are being heard, voices that have existed in America forever but have never really been at the forefront of pop culture. Now they are slowly, finally getting their chance to be heard. Throughout the media's one-sided history, the party in position of power (usually but not always a straight able-bodied white male) has represented almost all corners of the media, and thus all other groups have been asked to put their own identity aside while watching movies or TV shows. Now it is time for new groups to share their story, and ask others to identify with something else. This is how empathy is born. Put yourself in other people's shoes, and see what their lives are like. You might find they're not so foreign after all.

the paper's View

Endings are softer to the eye than in the mind. As I'm writing this final exec, I'm sitting in the print shop immersed in the familiar scene: the editors (more accurately, my paper fam) are typing away at article edits, chomping on snacks, arguing about current events, and watching bizarre dark-side-of-YouTube videos. It's comforting to know that at exactly 4pm, everyone's going to complain about being hungry, at around 6pm, there's going to be a frustrating formatting glitch in somebody's InDesign file, and pretty much every new hour will be punctuated by a stranger yelling that Starbucks is closed. Everything feels warmly the same, but when I leave the office tonight, I know that it'll be my last late-night walk back home. And that's hard to think about. So much of my personal growth in college has been colored not only by writing and editing articles (and photoshopping pictures of Ted Cruz licking lollipops), but by hanging with these strange and beautiful people. They taught me, among many other things, the importance of 80s new wave, boxed wine, acoustic RuPaul jams, not taking things too seriously, but always having confidence in my own perspective. I know that things will never be the same, but when I visit the print shop next semester--and very likely, a couple years from now--I know that things will be even better than they were before. And so will I. Thanks, fam. Take good care of the baby.

-Ali

It's an understatement to say that being a part of this very special publication has shaped my college experience, in the best way possible. *the paper* brings together the most interesting, passionate, out-of-the-box thinkers at Fordham, and I am so thankful to have gotten to spend the last few years learning and growing with them. The memories we've made in B-48, from listening to Q Lazzarus to ordering Estrellitas every Sunday night to finding the strangest ways to "decorate" the print shop, will always be how I remember production weekends. Alongside watching editors crunch to finish the articles they know they should have worked on the week before, struggle with severe hangovers, and find themselves lost in the terrifying black holes of the Internet. But more than all that, my experience with *the paper* has exposed me to people who want to make some kind of difference, all in their own unique ways. My favorite *paper* memory happened during our first production weekend this semester, when Ali and I decided that we wanted to update the mission statement of *the paper*. All the editors sat in a circle as each one talked about what the paper meant to them. Everyone here, regardless of where they came from and who they are outside the print shop, agreed that what Fordham needed was an outlet where anyone can talk about whatever they want to. Everyone agreed that we should emphasize issues of social action, creativity, uniqueness, and freedom of expression. I have had so much fun at *the paper*, and I'm sure thinking of my memories here will make me tear up everytime I hear the first chord of *Goodbye Horses*, but the lessons I have learned from these incredible people and the perspective I have gained from working with this free-speech student paper will shape how I think and act every day. And for that, I am most grateful.

-Zoe

Xoxo,

Your Deaditors-in-Chief

FOUR CHRISTMAS SPECIALS TO SEE BEFORE SANTA COMES

Much to the disappointment of major retail chains, Christmas only comes once a year. Around this time of year, television channels air episodes of their shows focusing on the beloved holiday. These episodes are often heartwarming and hilarious, yet, we feel ashamed if we watch them outside the season. Make sure to watch these specials to avoid post-Christmas regret!

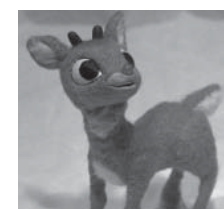
How The Grinch Stole Christmas

The Dr. Seuss story tells of an ugly green creature called The Grinch who hates Christmas and attempts to prevent the holiday from happening. In the end, he learns that there is more to Christmas than decorations and gifts.



Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer

This tale follows the life of Rudolph, one of Santa's reindeers who is treated differently because he was born with a glowing red nose. His family and peers come to see the value of his difference, and Rudolph becomes a valued member of the reindeer community. The message of this special is timeless, and can be applied to the plight of today's disadvantaged groups.



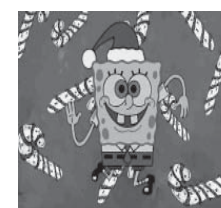
Ed, Edd, 'n' Eddy's Jingle Jingle Jangle

A special which sums up the true meaning of Christmas in one unforgettable quote, *Ed, Edd, 'n' Eddy's Jingle Jingle Jangle* is worth a watch with all of your friends during the Christmas season. It shows in a humorous manner how the notoriously greedy Eddy learns what Christmas is really about. After doing an act of kindness, Eddy exclaims, "Christmas ain't about what you find under a tree. It's about what you find in your heart!".



Christmas Who? - Spongebob Squarepants

From the hit show *Spongebob Squarepants*, "Christmas Who?" shows what would happen if Christmas was introduced to a society that had never heard of the holiday. The special follows Squidward's denial of the holiday and all the goodness it brings. Eventually, Squidward learns the joy of giving himself.



Safe Spaces Aren't Here To Steal Your Freedom Of Speech

by Siobhan Donahue
News Co-Editor

You're just kind of being an asshole

Recently, there has been much backlash against concepts such as political correctness, safe spaces, trigger warnings, and basic human decency. The argument is that these things hinder freedom of speech and further promote the "coddling" of college students. I strongly, but respectfully, disagree.

So, what do the terms political correctness, safe spaces, and trigger warnings even mean? I ask because clearly not everyone knows. Political correctness is "the avoidance of forms of expression or action that are perceived to exclude, marginalize, or insult groups of people who are socially disadvantaged or discriminated against". Safe spaces "are an area or forum where a marginalized group is not supposed to face standard mainstream stereotypes and marginalisation". A trigger warning is "a statement at the start of a piece of writing, video, etc., alerting the reader or viewer to the fact that it contains potentially distressing material often used to introduce a description of such content". All of this can be summarized as concepts which ensure that everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

So, what is with these accusations that these concepts are "babying" people and destroying the freedom of speech? First of all, there is nothing infantile about the idea of not being racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, etc... No one is being oversensitive when they request that their identity not be attacked or in the case of trigger warnings, ask if they can be warned ahead of time when a traumatizing topic is about to

be discussed. I think the reason why people see this as "coddling" can be traced to two reasons. The first reason is the the modern idea of PC is relatively new, tracing its start to the 1970's. Even then, not many people are educated on these things while they're young. I did not even hear of the terms "safe space" or "trigger warning" until 2011. So, once people are introduced to these ideas, they

and just wants to continue making jokes about stereotypes, etc, without being called out for them.

The critique of censorship also stems from a place of societal misunderstanding. There is nothing about being politically correct, creating safe spaces, and implementing trigger warnings which suppress speech. If anything, they promote it. Think of this way. Imagine you are in

talk because there is no fear that their very being will be attacked. As for trigger warnings, if you want to express something and your message happens to contains sensitive content, you can still say it. They whole point of trigger warnings is that you alert people who have had bad experiences concerning that content before you say what you want to say. That way they can take care of their mental well-being. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that. After all, in 2015, we need to respectful of people's mental health. Also, the common counter argument is that people can't "get over" their trauma by avoiding it is flawed since some of the first steps to recovery, as recommended by psychologists, is the creation of a safe space. Also, seriously, "get over it", what is this, 1938?

To conclude, people who argue against these notions tend not to understand them. In fact, in their counter discourse, they usually use anecdotal evidence to support their claims that this is all liberal nonsense. Seriously, many examples about PC gone wrong are urban myths. Obviously, there are people out there who do not realize that it is a privilege to not be ignorant and do not know how to handle people who accidentally say something terrible, which is different from intentionally being terrible. However, most people know that the goal of political correctness, safe spaces, and trigger warnings is to educate and the people who are against that are usually the same people who do not want to admit that they may be bit problematic.

**EVERY STUDENT
DESERVES
A SAFE SPACE**

Even the ones you don't like.

may see it as being excessive when compared to the lack of these ideas. The second reason is that the groups who often promote these notions are the same ones society marginalizes. In society's eyes, these oppressed groups of people are just making a request which society can ignore along with everything else it ignores due to complex structures of power and privilege. However, all society is doing when it rejects these ideas is sending the message that it does not care about these groups of people

a room with a bunch of people and want to express your opinion. Before you begin to say what you want to say, the other people in the room dehumanize you and remind you about a traumatic event in your life, causing you to have mental anguish. Now, state your opinion. Except, you most likely cannot because of what the other people in the room did to you. In my opinion, that is censorship. Notice how my example though, is about the lack of safe spaces, etc. In a safe space, everyone is free to

Stress Dogs not doing it anymore?



Get A Rage Lion



Rhinestone Cowgirl Dance Party: Grimes at Terminal 5

by Reyna Wang

Staff Dark Fairy Warrior

“Sorry, I’m not usually this out of breath, I have the flu,” pants Grimes with her quirky lisp, proceeding to apologize if she projectile vomits on us. These are the first words we hear from the eclectic synthpop icon at the Terminal 5 show of her “Rhinestone Cowgirls” tour. For an artist who is almost narcissistically good at fabricating a romanticized image, from the grandiose music videos to the psychedelic hair and costumes, Grimes’ awkward, utterly human personality is acutely ironic. And if there was one constant that defined Grimes as an artistic figure, it would probably be this odd combination of otherworldly fantasy and earthly humbleness. It’s also an indication of the unique DIY-ness of Grimes, who sings, writes, and produces her own music, dyes her own hair, directs her own music videos, etc. She has full creative control over her persona, doesn’t worry about what’s “cool,” and you never know what she’ll morph into next.

In the midst of this fall tour, Grimes released her highly anticipated album *Art Angels*, almost four long years after the release of her breakthrough album *Visions*. Since then, Grimes’ sound has drifted from the dark, dreamy, minimalism that won her recognition, but thankfully, it hasn’t lost much of its weirdness in the process. While *Art Angels* is definitely a pop album, its tracks range vastly in accessibility. Though “Flesh Without Blood” is a delightfully catchy and danceable, many of the other more accessible tracks are bland, to say the least. “California,” for

Sick in more ways than one

instance, is this squeaky clean, sickeningly sweet bubblegum pop song with extremely clichéd lyrics. This radio pop level of accessibility is pretty shocking for an artist who just a few years prior was making music that could be classified as witch house. Perhaps it results from Grimes’ acknowledgement of the need to cater to her growing audience, or perhaps it’s just the evolution of her sound. Either way, these uninspired tracks are luckily few, giving way to the more idiosyncratic ones, most of which are killer. Grimes gets pretty hardcore on this record, growling, gasping, screaming in her paradoxically sweet and high-pitched voice, and it’s incredibly refreshing and energizing. Some of the lyrics, such as the cheerleader-like chant of “Kill V. Maim,” are sassy as heck, which is a totally new and amazing dimension of Grimes. Apparently she even taught herself to play violin for this record, which paid off in tracks like the opener where the use of organic strings is so beautiful. Other tracks like “Artangels” have a strong 80’s pop influence, which was also present in *Visions* and has proven to work well for Grimes. Overall, I think the positive, punchy attitude that gives the album cohesion reflects a more

confident and happy Grimes, and I was excited to see how this new attitude would manifest itself in her live performance.

Terminal 5 was packed. I had never seen so many people lined up outside of a venue almost over an hour after doors opened. Even the security let you know that this was not going to be your ordinary show, doing thorough bag checks and taking away fake IDs.



Eh! I don't behave!

But what was most impressive was that no one was there just because their friend dragged them along, or because maybe they had only heard of Grimes and were looking for something to do. Terminal 5 was packed with dedicated

Grimes fans who might not know all of Grimes’ incoherent lyrics on *Visions*, but joined me in belting the random words they sound like they are. It was packed with people who were ready to break it down to “Go,” even though the general consensus is it’s not that great. It was packed with people from around the world whose eyes all twinkled with enlightenment, in disbelief that we were being blessed by Grimes’ presence. It’s safe to say that while the crowdedness of the show made it hard to see, this was one of the best audiences I have ever been a part of.

Grimes, in a t-shirt, fringed shorts, and leg-brace, was accompanied by two backup dancers, which is regular in Grimes’ shows. While they twisted and turned hypnotically throughout her performance, Grimes jumped frantically about the stage, dancing in her jerky, manic fashion and impressively displaying no flu symptoms. You can tell that Grimes just wants to have fun and make sure that her fans have fun. She wants to make sure no one is afraid to dance, and for the most part, the show did feel like dancing at a high school slumber party, only with a goddess in the room. She played a lot more songs from *Visions* than I had expected, including all of the hits and more, which was fine by me; I’m sure I speak for a lot of the audience when I say that although I love *Art Angels*, I’m still very emotionally attached to *Visions*, and seeing as Grimes just wants her fans to have a good time, she probably recognized this and played more of her old stuff intentionally instead of trying to promote the new album.

Taiwanese rap artist Aristophanes joined Grimes on the stage for the song “SCREAM,” which is one of the most badass tracks on the new record. It was cool seeing her go so hard, shouting into the mic with an almost animal abrasiveness that one would’ve never expected from *Visions* era Grimes. It seems that Grimes has shed some of the dark fairy aesthetic she once embodied and has grown into more of an Amazon warrior, confident with both her contrasting identities, and this is a pretty inspiring thing.

EVENTS

What: SantaCon 2015 -
New York City

Where: A yet undisclosed site somewhere in the five boroughs of NYC. Follow @santacon on Twitter for more info.

When: Sat. Dec. 12th @ 10am

How Much: \$10 cash donation

Why: Imitation is the highest form of flattery and Santa will appreciate you for dressing up as him and will bring you lots of presents this year like a passable GPA.

What: The Museum of Feelings

Where: 230 Vesey Street

When: Now through Dec. 15th

How Much: Free

Why: It's a unique exhibit that reflects the current mood of New York in vivid color by reacting to social media.

What: It Ain't Where Ya from, It's Where Ya At; but Not Like That

Where: 22 Jackson Ave.

When: Sun. Dec 13th @ 3pm

How Much: \$12

Why: A panel discussion about the intersections of gentrification, education, cultural production and community building, followed by a set by DJ-Bearcat

If You're Five-Year-Old Can Do It, We Are Doing It Right

by Michael Sheridan

Staff Squiggly Line

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum is hosting a major retrospective of the life work of the Italian artist Alberto Burri. I recently had the opportunity to see the show and was fascinated by the artist's abstract creations. Working primarily in the 1950's and '60's, Burri used new, interesting mediums and techniques to create groundbreaking works of art. For example, the artist used old cloth from food sacks in some of his works and actually severely burned some of his other paintings to create something the art world had never seen.

While I personally found the show exceptionally interesting, and I spent over an hour and half walking through the exhibition, my friends were much less impressed. The problem they had with Burri's works, as does much of the public, is that it is simply too modern. Burri's works are the type of paintings in which there are no figures, but instead the canvas is covered with a few black squares and maybe a line or two. Yet, I am here to defend modern art, and help explain exactly what the art movement is all about.

The artwork that most people think of when they think of "modern art" rose to prominence in the post-World War II era. Centered mainly in New York City during the 1940's and '50's, artists such as Jackson Pollock, Lee Krasner, Mark Rothko, and Willem De Kooning all rose to fame as leaders of the new movement of Abstract Expressionism. Introducing new techniques, materials, and subject matters, these artists worked to challenge accepted notions of art, often on a grandiose scale. A decade later, another movement of minimalism rose in popularity which stressed simplicity above all else. It is the artwork from this period that is often considered by many to not be "real" art.

The most common argument against abstract painting is that "anyone could do that." However, this argument is invalid for several reasons. While the

In defense of modern art

techniques may appear simple, such as Pollock's drip paintings, it's often harder than one might think to create cohesive balanced works of art this way. Pollock and the other artists didn't paint in this style because they were unable to create illusionistic works. They did it because they were talented enough to invent new groundbreaking ways of creating art. Furthermore, most of the techniques are only valued in an artwork if the piece was created by the inventor of the technique. Often times, it is less about the actual artwork and more about these revolutionary methods that make artists stand out in this

what many in the art world consider the "laziness" of viewers. When looking at a traditional artwork, the artist has done all of the work. All the viewer must do is stare at the picture and immediately understand what is happening. Yet, with abstract art, the viewer has to engage with the piece and work to understand what was meant by the artist. Returning to that field of red, one might consider how the particular shade of red makes them feel. Is it a lighthearted red, blood red, dark red, or some other shade? How does the subtle nuisances in color change the overall feeling of the work? These are

the types of questions that a viewer must work to answer, something with which the average viewer usually does not want to deal. Yet, if you actually take the time to figure out what the artist was trying to say, the experience is rewarding, and makes the process of viewing modern art fun.

Furthermore, people often claim that abstract art is bad because it is often impossible to distinguish from children's art. If children can create similar artwork, than surely there is not talent in these works.

period. Thus, even if you were to paint a canvas in the style of Jackson Pollock, don't expect to rake in millions of dollars.

A second argument often used against these works is that they simply don't mean anything. Many people like to mock paintings from this time period by questioning how much meaning there could be in a canvas that is simply a field of red. Yet, the abstract expressionists poured their emotions into their works, hence the name. The goal of this movement was to strip away all the excess and leave art with only the pure essence of emotion. The artists believed that their work would be accessible to the public, and that as they were painting the most basic level of human emotion, it would be understood by the masses. However, time has proved otherwise, as many museum goers struggle to understand the artists' intentions. This is due to

Yet these similarities are not a coincidence. Many artists purposefully worked to paint like children. This is because they believed that when children drew, they were drawing with pure unbridled emotion. As the artists were attempting to also reveal their inner emotions, they turned to children's art as inspiration. Thus, while people often use the comparison between the two as something that is negative, the artists of the movement would have actually been quite pleased.

While I'm not saying you have to love Abstract Expressionism or Minimalism, it is important to have a basic appreciation and understanding of what exactly the artists were trying to achieve in their works. I would highly recommend going to the Guggenheim and checking out the Burri Exhibition which runs through January 6th. Tickets are \$18 with a student ID.



You May Tell Me I'm a Meme-er but I'm Not the Only One

by Matthew Whitaker
Features and List Editor

Imagine, it is 2003, you have just come home from school, and you are eager to check AOL Instant Messenger. After moving your mouse past the *Neopets* and *Disney's Toontown Online* icons, you open AIM, and see that your friend has sent you a link. Upon opening the link, you are greeted by a dancing banana with the song "Peanut Butter Jelly Time" playing on repeat. The phenomenon you witnessed is known as a "meme," one of the greatest things created by humanity. Though, what is a meme? A meme, or more specifically, an Internet meme, is a piece of media which presents an idea or topic in a relatable, abridged, and often humorous manner. Memes are easily spread through their relatability and use of common knowledge. For example, the normie meme, Trollface, is recognizable to most people in both meaning and purpose simply through the image itself. This begs the question, how are memes so recognizable? One of the keys to a successful meme is its ability to be easily spread. Image memes are quickly spread through instant messaging on social media platforms. The main reason why memes have exploded in popularity in recent years is because of the many new platforms on which they can be shared, like Facebook and Twitter. Though, what was meme culture like before the rise of social media?

Prior to popular social media, spreading memes was much more difficult. Platforms for spreading memes were mostly email and instant messaging, which required more work to send memes than their present-day counterparts. Thus, memes did not spread as quickly, and there was a lower variety of memes to enjoy. A few classics from the ancient meme era include, "Peanut Butter Jelly Time," "Chuck Norris Facts," and "Badger Badger Badger," all coming from the first half of the 2000's. Memes from this era often did not spread on a basis of humor or relatability, but through their silliness or weirdness. When the 2010's rolled around, social media platforms were

Dank memes rule, normies drool

growing exponentially, and memes took a dark turn in their evolution.

2010-2013 was the normie era of memes, a time when relatability took precedence over quality. What does "normie" mean? A normie is someone who follows the mainstream to a fault, often being devoid of any individuality because of their reliance on popular culture. He or she rarely produces anything of significance, and mostly regurgitates ideas and content created by others. This disgusting regurgitation is how normie memes, the vomit of meme culture, came to be and spread like a disease. These memes, if they can even be called that, became icons



of certain feelings, and were soon devoured by normie culture. Examples of these memes include, "Rage Comics," "Bad Luck Brian," and "Trololo," which can be easily repurposed for almost any situation, yet contain virtually no content. Normies swarmed towards these memes, regurgitating them throughout the Internet, making "meme" a sickening word during the era. Eventually, the popularity of these so-called memes crashed, and memes became rare and hated for a period.

During the spring and summer of 2014, memes sat in a dormant state, appearing rarely and receiving little fanfare. Though, on the first day of fall, the world of memes was changed forever thanks to a veteran of the ancient meme era. On that day, an image of *Old School Runescape's* Gnome Child character appeared on Reddit with the caption, "Born just in time

to browse Dank Memes." The meme quickly spread, spawning several other dank memes in the process. Though, what is a dank meme? Firstly, "dank" means high-quality, cool, or very funny. Thus, a dank meme is a meme that is of high-quality and has actual content and creativity. Dank memes can be of greatly varying quality, often depending on the dankness of the creator. There are many different types of dank memes, some examples being "Rare Pepe" and "The Dark Side of Sesame Street." Dank memes are loved by meme enthusiasts, people who both create and enjoy dank memes. Dank memes are enjoyable because, unlike normie memes, they often target a specific audience, creating a feeling of humor and relatability in a specific environment. These audiences began connecting with one another, creating the meme team culture.

The meme team culture has been growing rapidly this year, and shows no signs of stopping anytime soon. One might ask, what is a meme team? A meme team is a group of people who share and create memes with one another, usually having preferences to certain types of memes and levels of dankness. Status within meme teams is often determined by the quality and quantity of memes posted. An example of a meme team is my own, as I am a member of the meme team, "Where The Wild Memes Are," which prefers only the dankest of memes. Each meme team has its own culture, which can affect its ways of sharing and enjoying memes. Using my team as an example again, we host a biannual event named "MemeFest," where we come together and appreciate many different types of memes, also celebrating the growth of memes in the past two years. The exponential growth of memes' popularity shows no signs of stopping, as more people learn to appreciate the greatness of memes every day. Despite all the hatred and violence in our world, we can all unite through the splendor of memes, ushering in a new era of human existence. Don't let your memes be dreams.

SHOWS

What: Navidad Flamenca

Where: The Bronx Museum of the Arts

When: Sat. Dec. 12th @ 5pm

How Much: Free

Why: Flamenco Vivo
Carlota Santana is one of the nation's premier flamenco and Spanish dance companies. Also it's good to check out other cultures around the holidays especially if the black baby Jesus outside FMH isn't cutting it for you diversity wise

What: Imaginary People

Where: Mercury Lounge

When: Mon. Dec. 14th @ 7:30pm

How Much: \$10

Why: Imaginary people but not imaginary music. Go and have some non-imaginary fun with your imaginary friends.

What: Harry and the Potters

Where: The Bell House, Brooklyn

When: Sat. Dec. 19th @ 4pm

How Much: \$20

Why: An extension of the Harry Potter weekend on ABC. If you don't go, you're a muggle. Don't be a muggle. Be a wizard.

Jessica Jones is the Hero We Need and the Hero We Deserve

by Declan Murphy

Staff Super Streamer

The complaints that Marvel's film outings are formulaic grow more and more powerful with each new installment. An eager, quipping, fresh superhero battles a nondescript enemy until a large and destructive climax in some sort of urban center. (Also worth noting: said hero is a straight white man). That's exactly why Marvel's Netflix programming has been so refreshing. *Daredevil*, released earlier this year, prioritized pathos and character work over jokes, brutal and realistic action over sci-fi setpieces, and compelling characters over one-dimensional villains. It appears Marvel's once again struck gold with *Jessica Jones*, which may be an improvement over the already stellar *Daredevil*. Jessica Jones is the freshest and most original take on a superhero to come out of Marvel Studios.

Jessica Jones, based on the Marvel Comics series *Alias*, tells the story of the titular super-powered private eye.

Netflix platforms another hit Marvel Series

By adapting little bits of the procedural conventions of crime dramas, *Jessica Jones* immediately liberates itself from many of the rote superhero tropes. Instead, the show is imbued with a dark noir vibe. This is accentuated by Jessica's sharp wits and crime-solving skills. Despite her super strength and limited flight abilities, you're more likely to see Jessica use her brains than her brawn.

The true success of *Jessica Jones*, though, is the subtly feminist lens through which it presents the heroine—and her well-rounded supporting cast. Jessica Jones is Marvel's first female superhero to have a starring role (sorry, Black Widow), and as such, she's a real triumph. It doesn't hurt that the show is executive produced and written by a woman, Melissa Rosenberg, a welcome voice in the male-dominated world of comic book adaptations. Jes-

sica Jones is everything that you'd hope for in a strong female superhero. She never needs saving; she's rarely (if ever) sexualized.

Even better, Jessica has a supporting cast with a number of other well-written women. (For those keeping score, this show passes the Bechdel test in the first few minutes of its first episode). Her friend, Trish Walker, is a confident radio host who can fend for herself nearly as well as her super-powered counterpart. Carrie-Anne Moss also stars as lawyer Jerry Hogarth, who, in addition to being a woman in a position of power in a large law firm, is one of the Marvel Universe's first openly gay characters.

The show also embraces sex positivity so naturally you'd hardly notice it if it weren't so rare to see on television these days. Both Jessica and Trish engage in casual sex, on equal terms

with their partners, and these choices are not only free of judgment but embraced.

Also worth noting is the inclusion of Luke Cage. Cage is a black superhero, and unlike the other prominent black characters in the *Avengers* films, he's no one's sidekick. Not to discredit Falcon or War Machine, but one can't help but feel that these characters are relegated to the sidelines. Fortunately, this is not the case for Luke Cage, who is given plenty of time to shine before his own show debuts some time next year.

On top of all this, *Jessica Jones* is a damn good mystery / crime drama with a healthy dose of superheroism. It's a testament to the writing and acting of the show that it's progressive without every feeling self-congratulatory. Jessica Jones would still be a huge accomplishment even if Marvel wasn't struggling with representation in its films. However, given the occasional failings of the *Avengers* films, *Jessica Jones* manages to succeed on both fronts.

Jessica Jones liberates itself from many of the rote superhero tropes

It Took Me Longer to Write This Title than It Did to Write The Article Below

by Luis Gomez and Kelly Tyra
Features, List, Arts Editors

I like to write. Writing and I have a pretty good relationship. Occasionally I can put out one or two stories that I'm rather proud of. The process of getting to those stories is usually a lot of thought, energy, and more than a few screwdrivers. But mostly, it takes time. Lots and lots and lots of time. And that amount of time I take means Nanowrimo and I are...not the greatest of friends.

To anyone not in the know, Nanowrimo stands for National Novel Writing Month. It's a writing challenge that takes place every November. That challenge? Write 50,000 words during the month of November. It's an interesting idea that has led to the creation of more than a few novels, most notably Sara Gruen's *Water for Elephants*. But for me? It's literally one of the most stressful things I encounter all year.

Let me tell you a little bit about my creative process, and then maybe that'll explain why Nanowrimo and I don't get along. Story ideas are always bouncing around in my head, but it

Proof that pressure and creativity have a complex relationship

takes a very long time for them to leave my head and actually end up on the page. I do a lot of mental editing, and I do a lot more editing once I actually start writing. I've started plenty of stories only to have them end a paragraph later because I don't know where I want to take the rest of it. And all of this takes time on my end. I write in bursts, and the gaps between bursts can be a few weeks long.

And then Nanowrimo strolls in. Nanowrimo, with its word-count-inspired approach to creativity. That seems antithetical to how writing should work. The stereotype about writers always trying to change their old works exists for a reason. We are a passionately self-critical bunch of people, always looking to change something for the sake of the story. To then present us with this sort of "anything goes as long as you get it written down" method of writing doesn't mesh well with the way I, and many others, write.

Trust me, I've tried Nanowrimo. I've tried it for the last four years. But the kind of writing Nanowrimo asks you to

do is not the kind of writing I like doing. The kind of writing Nanowrimo needs ends with me being burnt out and uncreative for months. The kind of writing Nanowrimo needs doesn't encourage creativity: it stifles it in the name of the novel.

Nanowrimo isn't a solitary creative plague, however. Creativity challenges present themselves time and time again in numerous formats across numerous creative genres. Take popular author Kerri Smith's work, for example. Her series of creativity inducing books such as the highly popular *Wreck This Journal* and *F_nish Th_s B__k* challenge owners to embark on creative missions of self-discovery. But even these heavily structured artistic tasks can be daunting. To rub salt in the artists wound, the back covers often (jokingly) discourage those lacking in imagination to turn away from the challenge they hold in their hands implying that some people just aren't cut out for the artistic endeavor. Failure to complete or start one of these do-it-yourself art books can leave you feeling just

as deflated as failing to complete the 12,500 words a week Nanowrimo demands of you.

Some people are able to rise and meet these challenges with grace and enthusiasm. While their accomplishments are commendable, I wonder if they miss the point of creative thinking altogether. Is it really something that should be rushed through like a sweaty toothed madman? While some structure can be helpful, excessive structure can halt the creative drive. While challenges like Nanowrimo and *Wreck This Journal's* give people a jumping off point, there's no guarantee that these challenges actually end up helping.

After all, pressure and creativity are notorious frenemies. Perhaps because the feelings of confinement found in the pages of creative journals and the entire month of November are the antithesis of the freedom of mind that allow for the most successful creative thought. However, without slight pressure would the freewheeling artistic mind ever put pen to page? I just did, but I'm also way past deadline.

California Summers and Twenty-First Century Riot Grrrl

by Ali Glembocki
Co-Editor-in-Chief

A little over a week ago, I got the opportunity to interview Melissa Brooks of California-based band The Aquadolls. Mel's the lead singer, songwriter, and overall creative director of the band—she's also a completely rad human being, which is no real surprise. The Aquadolls' first full-length release is 2014's *Stoked On You*, a sharp and shimmering pop-rock record with the perfect balance of fun and bite. It's the kind of album with a soundscape lush enough to live in. The Aquadolls just dropped "Girl Riot," a punchy ode to girl power, kicking ass, and taking names. We discussed everything from feminism to cartoons, and of course her and the Aquadolls' plans for the future.

AG: Wow! I'm gonna fan out for a second—I love your music. it puts me in a very specific space when I listen to it—especially *Stoked On You*, which feels like a nostalgic summer in California (sweet but not sugarcoated), which I've never really got to experience firsthand, but love to visit through your music. What kind of time, place, and vibe are you going for in your upcoming work, if any?

MB: Aw, thanks! The next music that I will be releasing is quite in-your-face and loud. The time of sound is pretty modern with the use of synths and drum samples but ties into the 70's and 90's punk style with brash guitars and shouty vocals. Basically, these new songs are amped up and wild. They are also super fun to play live at shows.

AG: You just dropped 'Girl Riot' (nice!!!!) and I can tell that it'll be in heavy rotation on my iPod already. I know in previous interviews you mentioned that you're inspired by feminism, especially the riot grrrl move-

An Interview with Aquadolls' Mel Brooks

ment. What was your introduction to riot grrrl? How does it inspire your music?

MB: I identify as feminist, meaning I believe in political, economical, and society equality of the sexes. Riot grrrl was a time in the 90s that took the punk scene by storm with female-fronted bands and artists who expressed

they are a woman. I want this song to bring girls together and help them realize that they don't need to live up to society's impossible standards, as well as standing up for themselves if they encounter sexist bullshit.

AG: What was the first concert you've ever been to and how old were you? (mine was N*Sync in 2nd grade oh

OUS" which was inspired by her song "Luxurious." I was so determined for her to see my sign, even though she never did. Lol.

AG: Your merch is rad. I couldn't help but notice that one of the shirts says 'beach goth mel.' is there a story behind 'beach goth?' how would you describe it, in relation to your style and your music/visuals in the Aquadolls?

MB: Beachgothmel is my Instagram user name. It's that because the user @melissabrooks is saved. Which is the one I want haha. One of my fans designed that shirt and it's super rad! I love the beach and hang there a lot.

AG: What kind of music did your parents listen to when you were growing up? Has that shaped your sound at all?

MB: I grew up on oldies. Jimi Hendrix, The Beatles, The Ronettes, Connie Francis, Patsy Cline, Brenda Lee, Madonna, The Beach Boys. I love the melodies within old music and it certainly inspired me, even to this day I come back to these artists and feel nostalgic.

AG: What's next for the Aquadolls? Another single, a music video, a super big surprise, etc?

MB: Expect a new EP early new year, a music video for Girl Riot that I will be shooting really soon, and a co-headlining tour with SWMRS this January!

AG: Are you planning on touring the east coast anytime soon (plz?)

MB: SOON! I promise.

AG: Okay, some rapid fire questions: what's a song currently stuck in your head? Favorite 90s cartoon? and can you describe your relationship with your bandmates in a word or two?

MB: Happy With Me by Holychild. Hey Arnold

We love messing around and doing crazy shit together.



The luxurious Mel Brooks

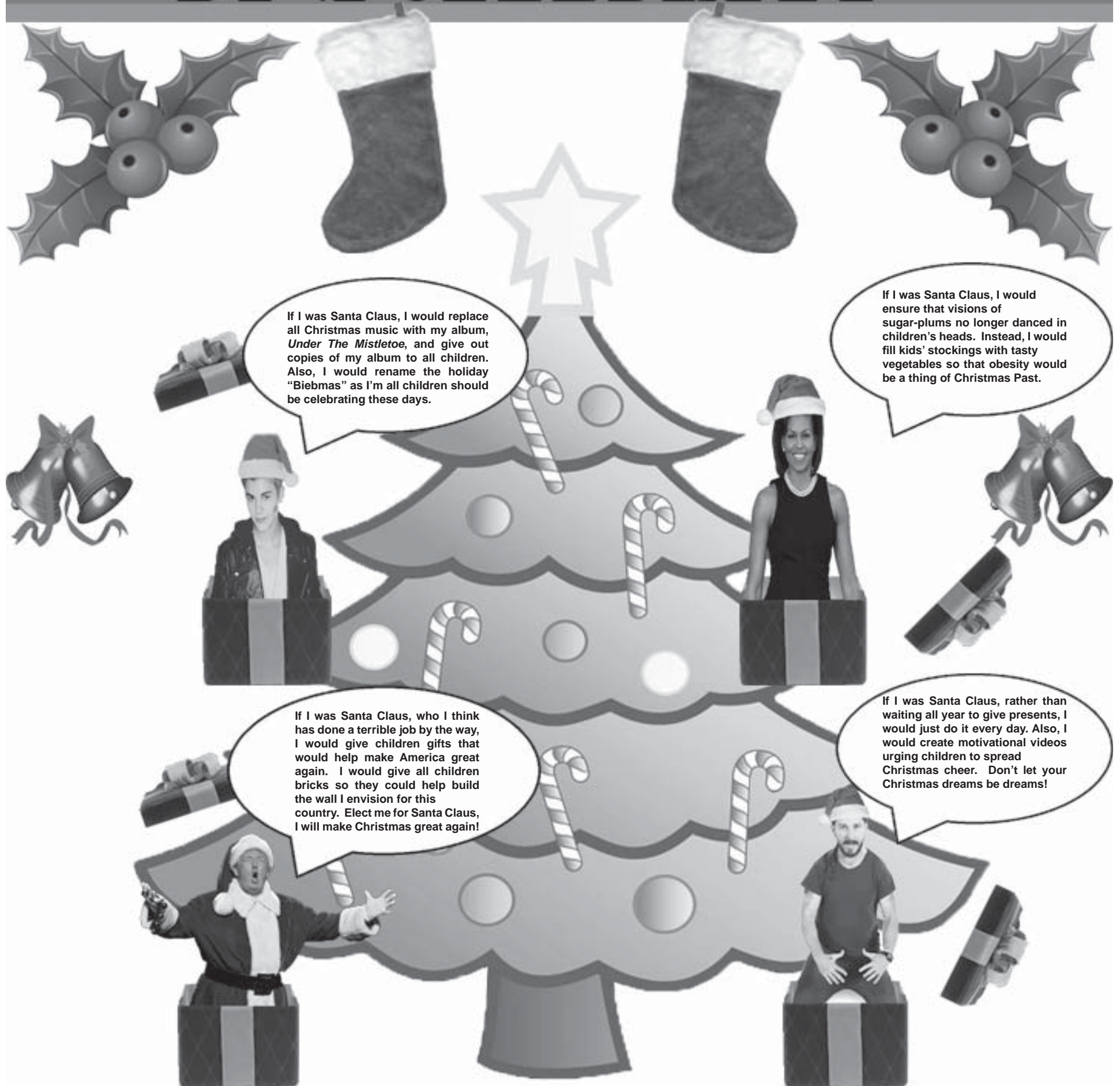
feminism through their music. Now, in 2015, riot grrrl is a thing that happened in the 90s that many of us look back on and think of how political music was back then. With Girl Riot, the lyrics itself aren't the deepest and most profound, and I wasn't going for that. I just want for women to listen to this song and feel like they can fight against any oppression they have experienced, any issues they have faced because

god) Can you paint a picture of what that was like for you?

MB: My first concert was Gwen Stefani at the Anaheim Pond when I was in fourth grade. I went with my parents. We had nosebleed seats. I could barely see her but I was way in the back screaming every lyric back. I made a poster from magazine articles of her that I cut up and wrote in bold letters, "YOU MAKE ME FEEL LUXURI-



IF SANTA WAS REPLACED BY A CELEBRITY



If I was Santa Claus, I would replace all Christmas music with my album, *Under The Mistletoe*, and give out copies of my album to all children. Also, I would rename the holiday "Biebmas" as I'm all children should be celebrating these days.

If I was Santa Claus, I would ensure that visions of sugar-plums no longer danced in children's heads. Instead, I would fill kids' stockings with tasty vegetables so that obesity would be a thing of Christmas Past.

If I was Santa Claus, who I think has done a terrible job by the way, I would give children gifts that would help make America great again. I would give all children bricks so they could help build the wall I envision for this country. Elect me for Santa Claus, I will make Christmas great again!

If I was Santa Claus, rather than waiting all year to give presents, I would just do it every day. Also, I would create motivational videos urging children to spread Christmas cheer. Don't let your Christmas dreams be dreams!



by the paper staff

The holidays are an important time. It's a time to rest, relax, and argue with Aunt Gloria about the finer points of queer theory while at dinner and Can't We Just Have A Nice Evening For Once. It's also a time where everyone, in one way or another, comes together and does something special in the name of tradition.

Tiny Christmas Trees

by Zoe Sakas

For the first time, I'm spending this Christmas away from my lovely family. This has led me to reflect on some of the things that make the holidays so special. Of all our little traditions, I think my favorite would have to be the buying of our two-foot tall Christmas tree. As residents of a New York City apartment, and with three seemingly (actually) wild cats, there is only about two-three feet of air space that is underneath the ceiling and still high enough that the cats won't reach it. How on earth New Yorkers fit those 10-foot trees they sell on the street in their apartments boggles my mind. My mother, brother and I are always very proud of our little tree, and we have just enough space in our tiny storage room to fit the 20 ornaments that it can hold.

An Eternal, Snowbound Fight

by The Angriest MSNBC Anchor

My Tradition is the War On Christmas; my eternal and constant war of non-denominational greetings, subtle winter themed decoration and on occasion stealing the baby Jesus from Nativity displays. Nothing makes me happier than saying Happy Holidays

to some dick in a Christmas sweater while I cradle and raise the plastic baby Jesus as my own child. Sometimes people will say god bless to me when I sneeze so I'll carefully explain to them that I am beyond religion and also that Christmas is just a stolen pagan solstice celebration rebranded. After that sometimes I'll pose for photos with all my baby Jesusi. Every Year I buy a Christmas tree just so I can burn it on my front yard while reading passages from The Origin of Species to my neighbor. He's a reverend he told me he respects my views, I told him that respect won't trick me into surrender. This war wages eternal into the night!

CHRISTMAS OR ELSE

by Kim Davis

Like most Americans, I live and breathe Walmart. However, I am sad to say that in recent years, Satan has taken a hold of Walmart, and no, you damn liberal hippie, I am NOT talking about their human rights abuses. That is fine since it is capitalism and capitalism is as American as banning same-sex marriage. My beef with Walmart is the fact that when I walk into their store, the greeter says, "Seasons greetings!" THE ABOMINATION! As a result, my new CHRISTMAS NOT HOLIDAY tradition is to go down to the local Walmart and stage a protest. I make sure to scream at all of their workers, who quite frankly, are making too much money for their job of spreading Satanism. Anyway, Merry Christmas and do as Jesus would do!

Kinkshaming Crescent Rolls

by Ali Glembocki

Traditions are funny, you know. Some

are passed down from generation to generation, flowing from Great Great to Great to Grand to Parent to You, an entire cultural legacy placed in your hands to either continue or drop like a Tinder match gone sour. Others are newer traditions, borne of innovation and creativity, maintained by a sense of fresh energy and enthusiasm by all involved. My holiday tradition is more like the latter, but not exactly. It's more of a pattern than anything else. My holiday tradition is getting kinkshamed by a crescent roll. Now, I know what you're thinking: "She probably wrote that sentence wrong--that makes no sense. She meant kinkshaming a crescent roll." Now, I understand where you're coming from there. Crescent rolls aren't sentient objects and I am. Now, look at it this way--only sentient objects can have kinks in the first place. So, both scenarios are ultimately just as realistic. And one of them is.

Traditions? I Guess?

by John Looby

I don't really have many actual holiday traditions but I guess binge-watching Netflix and sleeping on my couch the whole break counts. I really enjoy lying about and doing nothing that is my tradition. If it were possible and have my whole family open our Christmas presents while lying in bed. The holiday season is about love and other emotions that I need cards to convey; it is not about me being a productive citizen. As soon as my flight lands in Rochester this year like every year I'll be immediately walking in the general direction of my bed. I miss my bed. What is so difficult about bed technol-

ogy? Why doesn't my dorm have a nice bed Fordham? My tradition is escaping these horrible beds. I need Netflix and a full night of sleep every day for a Month. I guess I'll also do Christmas stuff, or just take more naps.

Praise Be, Kill a Tree

by Kelly Tyra

Every year my family and I try to engage in the locavore movement and purchase our Christmas tree from the weird guy on our street who may or may not just call his property a tree farm for the tax write off. After we verbally assault one another arguing over which tree we will sacrifice to the baby Jesus in front of this kind pseudo stranger, we drag it back home and proceed to argue about who has to trek up to the attic to retrieve all of the ornaments our family of seven has acquired over the years. We then fight over who gets to put up certain ornaments even though we are all over the age of ten at this point. Next it's time to string the lights and beads which are undoubtedly knotted beyond repair. My mother mourns our fake pre-light strung tree and we remember how fucking sharp the spines on our farmer friends trees are as we painfully hang each ornament. One of us is sent outside to ensure the tree looks appealing through the window even though we have no neighbors. Finally my dad spends three hours setting up the model train set beneath the sight of carnage while we apply bandages to our wounds make spike the eggnog. Every year someone forgets my niece is young and implies Santa isn't real and then we have to call the CIA to wipe her memory.



Adele 25

by Claire Nunez

On November 22, the world had yet another, Adele-fever breakout with the release of her latest album, *25*. The British singer, famous for her strong, raspy voice, broke *NSYNC's single-week CD sale record by selling 2.3 million copies; however, I found the album disappointing despite all of the hype. When "Hello" was released, I thought this album was going to be a drastically different from her previous albums, *21* and *19*, by including more than just ballads, but I was wrong. There are one or two songs that are more upbeat like "Send my Love" which is super catchy and greatly different from her previously released tunes. Some songs though are way too long, like "I Miss You"—she doesn't need 5 minutes and 49 seconds to say she misses this guy, we get it you can shut up now, Adele. "Hello," to be completely honest, is the best song off the entire album because it really shows off Adele's vocal range and her talent—the other songs are good, but they all seem to be about the same subject matter and have the same beat as all of the songs on *21*. They're nothing special. With a voice like Adele's, she has to sing ballads but they all start to sound the same after going through the first few tracks. I hate to make this comparison, but Adele is like Taylor Swift pre-Red, every track is about the same love-sick Adele with the same beat, notes and tempo in every song. Overall, Adele's album is impressive solely for her vocal talent and range, but otherwise I

don't find it to be extraordinary as my friends suggest. It's just another CD on my shelf that I'll pull out and play when my aunts or grandma come over.



Givers *New Kingdom* by Declan Murphy

New Kingdom, the second album by Louisiana-based rock group Givers, marks an unfortunate lateral move. The album pales in comparison to their 2011 debut *In Light*. Whereas *In Light* was bright and original, *New Kingdom* falls more in line with typical alt-rock—and in the process, loses most of the touches that made the original so noteworthy. Luckily, some standout tracks preserve enough aspects of their earlier releases to reach the same heights. The upbeat "Sure Thang", with its appropriately twang-y title, marries light but driving percussion with energetic vocal harmonies. "Record High, Record Low" also emphasizes the percussions and lets vocalist Tiffany Lamson take the lead. Indeed, it's her smooth and inviting voice that saves even some of

the album's weaker tracks. One such track is "Bermuda". The band's sensibilities don't match the rapid fire lyrics, and the whole track seems off balance. Again, Lamson's vocals provide some stability to the otherwise jumbled track, but for the most part it's a miss. *New Kingdom* is not a total failure, but it's a disappointment given the band's promising debut. There are certainly tracks worth a listen—indeed, some of the album's best ranks up with the best of *In Light*. But on the whole, the album abandons the distinctive flavor that made *Givers* enjoyable. For a standard alt-rock album, *New Kingdom* is adequate. But having the potential to be so much more, it feels like a true let-down.



Kid Cudi? *Speedin' Bullet to Heaven* by John Looby

I've listened to a lot of really bad albums so I could review them mercilessly. I've always listened to the album the whole way until now. What in the fuck were you trying to do here Cudi? This album sounds like the bastard child of Sun Kil Moon and Nirvana that was left to live on the streets. I tried to listen to this whole album quite a few times I in all seriousness could not do it. The experience was just too painful. *Speedin' Bullet 2 Heaven* has no redeeming qualities. If a song has even a slight positive moment Cudi is certain to immediately thereafter spit in the listeners face with some bullshit. The worst of which is those god-awful Beavis and Buttthead interludes. At one point they're basically there just to say that this is the greatest album of all time, which is to say that they're there to spread lies and annoy the fucking shit out of anyone who attempts to listen to this trash album. Cudi I want you to know something, this is not fucking punk rock. I don't fully understand what you were going

for here but it was not punk rock and it was not good. If *Man on The Moon III* isn't good I'll take you to court and use this album as evidence to have you legally barred from making music. There's no honest reason why albums like this should be made unless I guess trash music is someone's fetish.



Coldplay *A Head Full of Dreams* by Luis Gomez

Every joke about Coldplay being a dad rock band now is true, mostly. Sort of. How's that possible? Well, it's possible because *A Head Full of Dreams*, Coldplay's latest album, is boooooooring. *A Head Full of Dreams* is Coldplay's seventh album, coming on the heels of the rather 'meh' *Ghost Stories* and the more interesting *Mylo Xyloto*. If you take look at Coldplay's career as a whole, you can track this distinct movement from pure alt-rock to an alt-electronic-rock mix, and *AHFoD* is determined to keep that trend going. The title track sounds like something U2 might have made in the mid-90s (ie back when U2 was good). It's an upbeat, busy track that I actually liked quite a bit. But the album never really matches the energy or interest level of that first track, and it all ends up petering out. The most disappointing track has to be "Fun," which for some reason is featuring Tove Lo. Now, Tove Lo doesn't get a verse, nor does she sing the chorus for this one. She is literally there just to do harmonies for Chris Martin. I don't know why they needed Tove Lo to do backup vocals when there are literally thousands of other competent, non-Tove Lo singers who could have done them. I genuinely don't get the decision to have her feature and do nothing with that. It's ridiculous. At this point in their career, Cold-

play isn't looking to surprise anyone. Nor are they looking to convert anyone who isn't already a fan, so basically *AH-FoD*'s central question is "Did you like Ghost Stories enough to stick with the band?" And if your answer to that question is a yes, then by all means go enjoy the album. Otherwise, it's just not that interesting. The cover's cool, though.



favorites Choir Elikya, Damiano Affinito, and Choir Insieme per caso. Perhaps the freshest new voice on the album is Alessia Busetto, whose simultaneously soothing and powerful vocals harks back to a young Dido, if Dido had vocal range. The must-listens: "Cuidar el Planeta" and "Pace! Fratelli!" Skip out on: "La Iglesia No Puede Ser una ONG!" and "Santa famiglia di Nazareth" if you know what's good for you. Here's to hoping that the Pope brushes the inevitable critical panning he'll receive in the media for his debut, and gets back in the studio for his sophomore effort with a fresh perspective and a hungry attitude. FuturePontifex LoveSounds.



**Pope Francis
Wake Up!
by Ali Glembocki**

There's been a host of memes leading up to Pope Francis's debut album release. Most of them imagine the Pontiff dropping theological bars over sick imaginary Zeytoven beats. The reality of the Pope's LP *Wake Up!* is that all of his bars are old—we've heard them before. They're snippets from his previous speeches, mostly in Spanish. That is a safe, but lazy move on the part of Papi Francisco, who can easily draw crowds of thousands to his performances at the drop of a habit, or at the lick of a tabernacle. But as an up-and-coming artist looking to make his mark on the game, Fran needs to take it from zero to sixty. And unfortunately, 'Cisco just wasn't willing to take the risk needed to crossover from underground notoriety to Top-40 success. Papa Frank is the Kanye West of his subgenre—he loves himself. He has a big ego. His wardrobe is monochromatic and his chains are gold. And he relies heavily on features—but unlike Kanye West, Franny Pack depends completely on his collaborators, to the point where they are basically carrying the entire album on their shoulders. His collaborators include the beloved Choir Compagnia Aquero, the elusive Giorgio Kriegsch, the established Choir Academia Ars Canedi, as well as crowd



∴ WHAT'S GOIN' ON? ∴
MARVIN

∴ THESE WALLS ∴
KENDRICK

∴ TELL YOUR FRIENDS ∴
WEEKND

∴ LINK UP ∴
NXWORRIES

