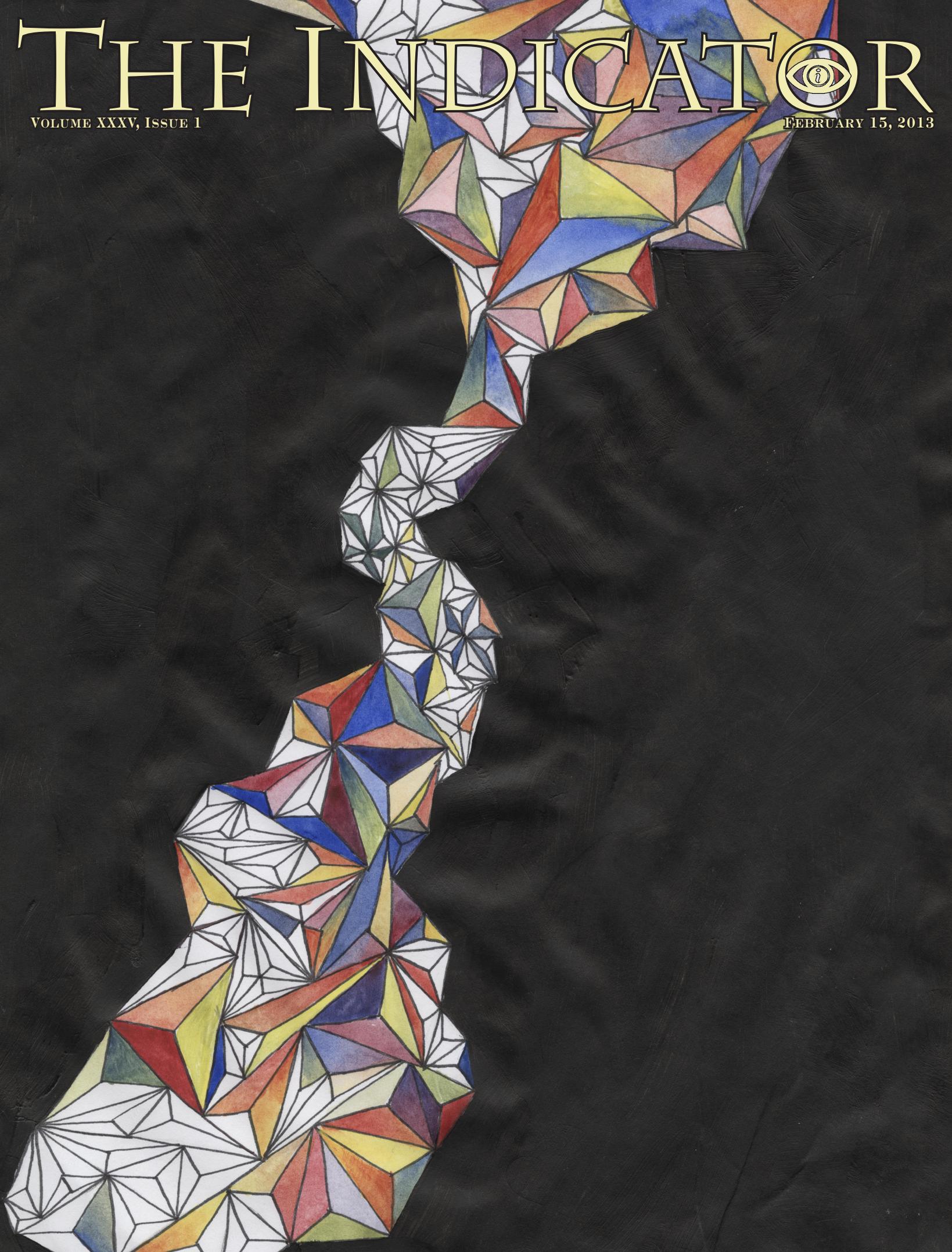


THE INDICATOR

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Letter from the Editor

About three years ago, I attended Amherst Admitted Students Weekend. I did not have very much fun. I found myself lost in a sea of confusion and choices, unsure of where to go, what to do, or how to do it. What distinguished Amherst's from other comparable events was its total and unrelenting freedom. Unlike other schools, whose tightly controlled pre-frosh event schedule slotted me into particular barbecues, lectures, skits, and parties, Amherst merely presented its options on a piece of paper. I could choose to go to whatever sing-offs and presentations I wanted. Or I could go to none of them. Amherst didn't care. And unlike every other school where I stayed overnight, Amherst didn't try to persuade me that I simply *must* come here. It just tried to present itself well, and politely argued that if I liked what I saw then I should consider enrolling. In short, Amherst promised to treat me like an adult. At the time, perhaps because I was not yet interested in being an adult, I didn't recognize this promise's value for what it was, and so I preferred the pre-frosh weekends of other schools. But I know others who saw that promise of adulthood, and chose to enroll largely because of it. Many think that this promise is part of what makes Amherst so great. I now find myself inclined to agree.

But I also wonder whether Amherst has truly made good on that promise. In many ways it has. The open curriculum works exactly as advertised: We take whatever classes we want, in whatever combination we want. This seems to work out well: Amherst students are generally academically successful.

And consider the classes themselves: While there are very valid complaints that sometimes lower-level classes are difficult to get into (see Ben Walker 16's article "Open and Shut" on page 8, which so wonderfully complements and critiques aspects of this editorial), you can usually find your way into any upper-level class you desire, even if you haven't strictly met all of the requirements. It's largely because our professors are people that you *can reason with*. In addition, you have access to almost all of the College's academic resources—valuable art in the Mead, a five hundred year old book in the Rare Books Library, a hi-tech projector from IT—if you merely ask nicely. You don't even have to be taking a relevant class. In a world entangled by bureaucratic red tape and petty officialdom, this simple decency impresses me. That is rare, and that is powerful. That is being treated like an adult.

But in many ways, students are also being gently but firmly told, "Do as Mommy and Daddy say, because they know best." We are *strongly* encouraged to live on campus and eat on campus. The dorms we live in are, in multiple senses, unreal. They are mostly beautiful, old, and well-kept. But they do not simulate "real life" living. Hardworking janitors do our cleaning, so we are not expected to clean up after ourselves. True kitchens (with stoves! Don't call it a kitchen if there isn't a stove!) are rare or barely functioning, and apartment-style living is almost non-existent. Microwaves, the most basic of cooking tools, are banned from private rooms. The lack of cooking options—combined with awful Schwemm's hours—makes it very difficult to cook for oneself. This is not by coincidence—Amherst strongly encourages us to eat at Val. Tapering off the meal plan is the standard at most colleges. For us, it's largely unthinkable.

And then there is the school's drinking policy. It is difficult to determine what you're "allowed" to do at Amherst in the practical sense of the word. Sure, you can consult the Student Code of Conduct. But the Code of Conduct fails to answer the theoretical questions (why are there substance-free first-year dorms if all first-year dorms are substance-free?) along with the practical (can I *really* not drink until I'm 21?). Conferring with upperclassmen is the only way to see how those policies are enforced. And it turns out, from a student perspective, that they are enforced entirely arbitrarily. Unlike adults, who know the laws and how they will likely be enforced, we are not told directly about the policies that govern our nightlife.

If one pattern stems from the divide, it is this: Academically, we are treated like adults, while residentially and socially, we are treated like children. It is no surprise, therefore, that we appear to grow as thinkers, but continue to remain stunted as residential and social citizens. I, somewhat cautiously, suggest that this is because there is one group of people in charge of our academic life (the faculty), and another in charge of our residential and social life (administrators).

The one exception to this dichotomy is the Association of Amherst Students. The AAS manages the very adult budget of around \$900,000 dollars per year, among many other important tasks. Our current student government is the one non-academic area in which students are accorded the full respect and responsibilities of adulthood.

I was upset, therefore, by the most drastic proposal of the Special Oversight Committee on Sexual Misconduct Report: to consider "whether to continue a system that gives the AAS autonomy in managing and allocating the large amount of funding generated through student fees." To a casual reader, this may seem like a minor or technical proposal. It is not. It is a proposal to dismantle the autonomy of the Association of Amherst Students by taking the most powerful, democratic, and authentic form of student representation we have at Amherst and putting it under the control of an administrator.

In theory, a "review" should be impartial, and merely consider the facts at hand. I fear, though, that a review of the AAS born from this committee might be skewed from the outset, with a particular result that is preordained by political exigencies. I implore the eventual reviewers to ignore the underlying implications of the Special Oversight Committee and to not put the AAS under any kind of extra administrative authority. To do so would be to continue to treat us like children, and by extension, further stunt the growth of this student body. If the AAS makes mistakes, they are our mistakes to make. Amherst College is at its best when it treats its students like the adults who they legally are. While many of the Committee's proposals are good ones, to follow their AAS recommendation would be even worse than two steps forward, one step back: It would force us to crawl.

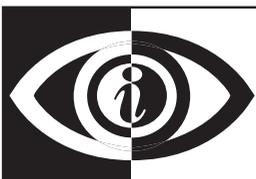
Laurence Pevsner '14



Write, Draw or Edit for *The Indicator*

Send questions, comments,
letters or submissions to:
theindicator@amherst.edu
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The Indicator, Amherst College
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Editor-in-Chief: Laurence Pevsner
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Get excited.**

The Indicator is a journal of social and political thought at Amherst College. Originally founded in 1848, it was resurrected in the spring of 1996 after a 145-year hiatus. *The Indicator's* primary mission is to provide a medium for discussion of local, national, and international issues within the college community. The journal appears four times during the fall and spring semesters.

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INDICARTOON



This is a caricature of Professor Alexander George presenting a question mark. This probably never actually happened.

The Violence of the Mead

Matt DeButts

mdebutts14@amherst.edu

Why the Mead's location holds this campus back.

Most Amherst College students agree on two things: first, that Valentine Dining Hall's hours are inexplicably limited; and second, that our campus infrastructure falls far short of expectations. Each student has an architectural *cause célèbre*: Frost Library is a frequent target—built during the tragic 20-year reign of “Brutalist” architecture—as is Keefe Campus Center, Arms, and all the Social dorms. Last semester, ACVoice lamented the inadequacy of campus social spaces. The Sexual Respect Oversight Committee echoed the concern in its recent report. David Zheutlin '11 and co. raised hell against the renovation of the old frat houses. Really, the unanimous disapproval of our infrastructure is impressive on a campus with as much diversity as this one. Sometimes, what brings the kids together is hating the proverbial architectural lunch-lady.

For a snob such as myself, aesthetic harmony is of paramount importance, so naturally I find something to sneer at. Our campus is a cacophony of architectural eras, thrown together with little regard to the campus gestalt. Our campus is alternately Georgian (the freshman quad), neo-classical (Chapin, Moore, Fayerweather), modernist (King, Beneski) and Gothic (Stearns Steeple). At an all-campus meeting last year, the new Science Center's lead architect threw his hands in the air and ejected, in a nihilistic attempt to ward off criticism of his modernist would-be brainchild, that “there is no architectural coherence on this campus.” If one requires further proof, just listen to campus tour guides tie themselves in knots trying to put a positive spin on Merrill. It would be comical if it weren't so sad. Nevertheless, despite this campus' architectural illogic, Amherst College is perceived as beautiful, on the whole, because most people don't give two hoots about architectural uniformity and because the freshman quad and Memorial Hill are the only parts of campus that anyone remembers anyway.

To be sure, the freshman quad is smartly arranged. Blair Kamin '79, the *Chicago Tribune's* architectural critic, has pointed out that the quadrangle's buildings arc themselves around Frost

Library at the fulcrum, placing secular rather than religious learning at the heart of campus. (The late 19th century witnessed a shift in religion to the periphery of higher education, mirroring J-Chap's isolation on the western edge of campus.) From the fulcrum of the “U”, at the steps of Frost Library, one can stroll southward uninterrupted across the quad, until trees narrow one's view on the near side of the war memorial. On the other side of the trees the sightline opens up onto the Holyoke Range and the world onto which Amherst graduates will shed their metaphorical light. The raised war memorial forces us to alter our footpath, a slight circumambulation that requires us to implicitly recognize the sacrifices of Amherst's war-dead. I agree with Mr. Kamin that it's all rather well done.

Yet before we soak ourselves in champagne, I beg you to remember the freshman quad's other axis, the east-west axis running from the east exit of Johnson Chapel to the Mead Art Museum. Here, at the eastern end of the James quad, lies the great tragedy of 20th century Amherst College campus planning: the Mead. Forget Keefe, Frost, or Arms, if one campus building needs to go, it is our art museum. Don't get me wrong—the museum is great, the staff is friendly, and the collection is impressive. But those benefits notwithstanding, the Mead needs to relocate. Not because of problems within itself, but because of the unconscionable violence it perpetrates against the campus landscape.

First, the horseshoe-shaped Mead acts as a barrier between east and west campus. Located in the geographic center of campus, it strives to be as obstructionist as possible: one entrance, no rear-facing windows to take in the view, no stairways between east and west campus. Students seeking to visit the Socials from upper campus must loop around Merrill or walk down the unsightly asphalt road next to Keefe. When the science center is completed, it should evolve into a social hub of campus—which will render the Mead's obstructionism all the more galling. We will effectively have two campuses: east/lower (science center, Socials, King and Wieland) and west/upper (freshman quad, Frost, Webster). Straddling the hill, holding the line, do-

ing its damndest to prevent ease of access between the two will be none other than our red-bricked antihero, the Mead.

The Mead's villainy doesn't end there—the Mead also visually obscures a significant chunk of the surrounding countryside. Prior to the Mead's

Forget Keefe, Frost, or Arms, if one campus building needs to go, it is our art museum.

appearance in 1949, Stearns Chapel stood atop the hill, allowing a panoramic view of the Pelham Hills (to the east) and the Holyoke Range (to the south). Now, the Mead has marred the hill upon which it stands, calcifying the eastern slope with its expansive façade and blocking the ground-level view of the surrounding landscape. The only beneficiaries of our eastern view are the residents of third and fourth floor James and Stearns. It didn't have to be this way. The Mead did this to us.

Perhaps the best way to understand the Mead's wickedness is to think through absence. What else could we have done with that hillside? Perhaps an outdoor amphitheater, for outdoor concerts and plays. Perhaps a small café with indoor and outdoor seating. Try to imagine a Friday night: students wander up the hill from the Social dorms, stop for a snack, before passing between James and Stearns onto the freshman quad, Johnson Chapel in front of us silhouetted against the skyline. Imagine standing in front of Johnson Chapel—or better yet, receiving one's diploma, only to glance eastward over the heads of one's peers, past Stearns Steeple onto the hills of the Pioneer Valley. The campus could open. It could blossom to the surrounding countryside and integrate the east with the west. If only, if only the Mead would go somewhere else. Down to the pine grove beside King and Wieland. Into the forest behind the tennis courts. I care not where, but assuredly not here.

Next time you turn to your friend to recite the list of grievances against campus architecture, I urge you to intone one more name. Frost. Keefe. Arms. The Socials. And now, please—the Mead Art Museum. God willing, enough of us will graduate, turn our eyes back to our alma mater, and donate sufficient cash to relocate that benighted roadblock. We—and future Amherst students—deserve to enjoy a campus that is cohesive east and west, and integrated with the landscape around it. 

Matt DeButts '14 is an Associate Editor for The Indicator.



Why I'm Not Sad

Will Savino

wsavino14@amherst.edu

Five active rules to stay cheery.

I have to admit I felt a little unresolved after writing my last article for *The Indicator* (“Why I Drink”). In the article I discussed Amherst’s social scene, our lack of dating culture, and my drinking problem. I meant everything that I said, but I worried that some would find the perspective unexpectedly bleak. Fortunately, I am not as depressed and hopeless as the article may have led you to believe. In fact, I consider myself to be an exceptionally happy person, and in light of our collectively tumultuous fall semester, I’ve decided to share my life philosophy, in the hopes that it might help at least one person maintain a cheery outlook.

In middle school, I was a very unhappy sort. I was a chubby, awkward, dorky tween with a predilection for modern jazz and the Discovery Channel (in contrast to present-day me, who is not a tween). As such, I had few friends and gradually gravitated toward the bleaker subcultures. By the time I was in eighth grade, I was straightening my hair, wearing studded belts, and going to emo concerts every weekend. When you surround yourself with people who make a point of being unhappy, it is exceedingly difficult not to follow suit.

Long story short, after a few meetings with a psychologist and a bizarre trip to France (discussed in my college application essay, better known as “How I Slept With My French Teacher”), I decided to take some time for introspection and try to figure out how to be happy. It certainly was not easy. High school Will was only marginally less awkward than his middle school counterpart, abandoning the straightened bangs in favor of the full-on JewFro. Even so, I made a point of trying to understand my own emotions. By spring of my junior year I had compiled a list of five rules that I follow to this day as a means of staying happy despite the trials and tribulations of everyday suburban life. They are as follows:

1. Keep busy no matter what. You’re going to get most sad when you’re moping around.

If you stay active, you won’t have time to get upset.

2. Surround yourself with people you like. Toxic personalities will drain you of your drive. Stick with your real friends and keep laughing.
3. Always give everyone the benefit of the doubt. People have their own secret battles that you could never understand. Anything offensive they do could be a product of their personal issues.
4. Identify little things to look forward to at all times of the day. No matter how trivial they are, the small things will get you through.

attitudes that will rub off if you let them. Making a conscious effort to spend time with the people who truly make you happy is invaluable.

Rule 3 requires a shocking amount of tolerance for jerks. Despite your best efforts, you will inevitably deal with people who will frustrate, offend, or insult you. It seems to be a strangely forgotten kindergarten lesson that most of these bullies are either coping with internal struggles or unintentionally angering you in the first place. Even something as disappointing as a rejection can be softened by recognizing that no harm was intended.

Rule 4 is great for turning a humdrum day

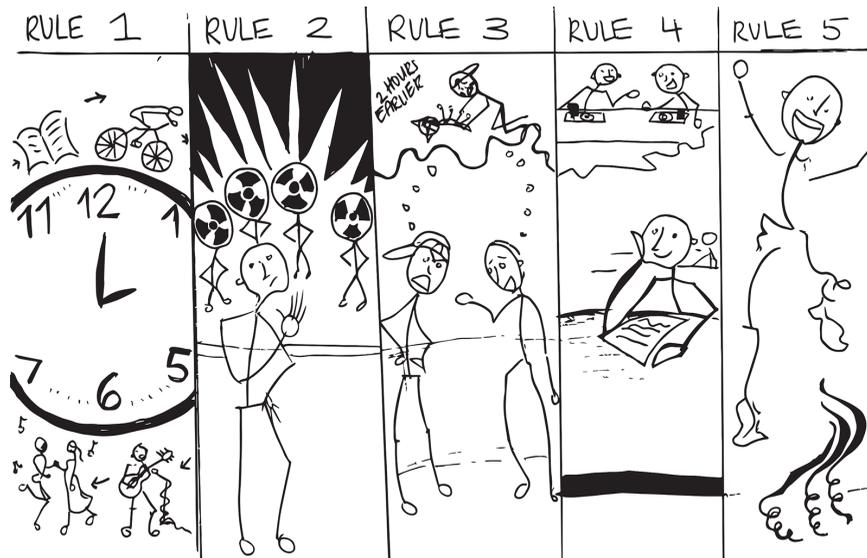
into a series of enjoyable moments. Sure you’re bummed out about your 10 a.m. chem class, but think about how nice it’ll be to wake up and listen to music, then grab lunch with your friends, maybe sit in the comfy chairs in Frost, and then watch some Netflix before bed. It is so easy to forget about life’s simple pleasures and only slightly more difficult to make an effort to focus on them.

Rule 5 is by far the most important. Forcing a bit of enthusiasm may seem like a lame Boy Scout-esque motto, but there is absolutely no better disposition with which to face any situation. Obviously

it will help you enjoy the things you already love, but I guarantee that you’ll dislike doing something you dread far less if you approach it with a bit of gusto as opposed to hipster disenchantment. It is pretty damn hard to get unhappy when you look forward to doing everything that you do.

Yes, the rules are very simple. I’m sure you can find some variant of each one in any self-help book in Barnes & Noble. That being said, it is the simplicity and necessarily proactive nature of the rules that has appealed to me and kept me free from anguish, despite my inclination to be a brooding asshole. They all involve a conscious effort to *do* something. As opposed to other guidelines that have you avoiding certain tendencies, this guide provides a mental checklist of active tools to help your mood. Amherst is hard enough as it is. You might as well do something to stay happy. 

Will Savino ‘14 is the Features Editor of *The Indicator*.



5. Approach everything you do with a sense of enthusiasm. Encourage yourself and others. Never be upset with what you are doing right now.

Rule 1 seems intuitive, but one of the conclusions is surprising: I hate free time. Granted, I don’t get a lot of it, but when I do, I find myself far more likely to get bummed out. If I’ve been sitting around all day on the Internet, I’ll make an effort to do something productive: read a book, ride a bike, write something, exercise, start a project. Even if it’s just busy work, a simple activity will keep your mind active and away from any depressing thoughts.

Rule 2 is maybe the most difficult to follow sincerely. Implicit in avoiding toxic personalities is cutting off ties with friends who are negative influences on your disposition. Again, it seems obvious, but many people are in denial of the negative side effects of some friends. “Cool” or “fun” people sometimes have gloomy or cynical

Dublin' Down on Joyce

Alex Strecker

astrecker13@amherst.edu

One writer's discovery that the Dublin of Joyce lives on.

Forost Library...or the National Library of Ireland? Free trip to Ireland or three more weeks at Amherst in the deep, freezing heart of winter? It might seem like an obvious choice, but let me take you back. For the last few years, I had always imagined that I would write a thesis, and further, I had always imagined that such a process would largely occur during that blessed, eerily quiet three-week stretch known as Interterm. It felt like every senior's thesis story was the same: He or she fretted absently about his or her thesis during the fall and then disappeared in January, only to emerge a few weeks later with the thing nearly done. But once I decided to write a thesis on James Joyce—a decision inspired by taking a class with Professor Cameron appropriately titled “James Joyce”—my long-held image of thesis hibernation began to crack. As I learned in Cameron's class, Joyce left Ireland at the age of 22 and never returned. Even so, all of Joyce's writing is inextricably tied to the city he left behind, Dublin. As one critic writes, “the city of Dublin, more than any scholarly work of reference, is the most valuable document we have to help us appreciate the craftsmanship of [Joyce].” Considering that I had funding from the school and further considering that Interterm always struck me as deeply and fundamentally boring, the question of where

Dublin's never been a flashy city. It reveals its charms slowly and in its little experiences, like a shy friend.

I would spend January seemed like a gimme. Other incentives began to pile up: the fun quotient, the Guinness quotient, the spending-Amherst's-money quotient. But would I be going to Dublin just to “do thesis work” (read those quotes with a wink and a smile, or better yet, with irony)? Or would a trip to Dublin actually jumpstart my project—or better yet, “inspire” my writing (read those quotes with hopeful naïveté)? Even as I described my trip to friends and relatives over Christmas and New Year's, the irony quotes remained: The hopeful quotes stayed in my back pocket. It didn't help that Fred Shipley '13 had conned his way onto the trip. Fred's (physics) thesis work was

going to be done back at Amherst—he was “going on vacation” (those are Fred's quotes now). So, would I really be inspired by visiting a city over 100 years after Joyce himself left the place? It seemed too idealistic. At best, I would try to “do thesis work” while sipping beers in pubs. There seemed to be no in between. As I set off for Dublin, the irony quotes were a useful defense mechanism, but really, I was unsure of what I would find there.

As I rode the bus from the airport to my rented apartment, we passed two McDonald's and two Burger King's on the same street. My heart began to sink. Joyce had never felt more distant. Furthermore, the city of Dublin does not immediately come off as a pretty city, by any means. Yes, there are scattered atmospheric buildings, Trinity College's lovely campus, but in general, there are three modern office buildings for every Georgian brick townhouse. But Dublin never has been a flashy city.

It reveals its charms slowly and in its little experiences, like a shy friend. Day by day, pub by pub, mate by mate, my portrait of 2013 Dublin began to reveal itself and at every turn, every song and every street corner, I found myself confronting a line from Joyce's works; a song embedded in his writing; a real, living person, a Dubliner, who seemed to have just stepped out of the pages of one of Joyce's short stories. Like the good English major I am, I will let quotes be the key to this story—the story of a Joycean Dublin that is very much alive in today's modern city.

Joe asked Maria would she not sing some little song before she went, one of the old songs. Mrs. Donnelly said Do, please, Maria! And so Maria had to get up and stand besides the piano...



(Dubliners, 102)

There are fifteen stories in Joyce's *Dubliners*—at least half of them feature a song and in many, the song is an essential feature. Indeed, every Joycean work is as much melody as prose. Yet no matter how much Professor Cameron emphasized the key role that songs play in Joyce's works, I couldn't imagine that singing was still so important in Dublin. I thought that the songs featured in Joyce's writing were like the balls in Austen's work or the scribes in a Russian story—features of a landscape long dead and gone.

On my third day in Dublin I got a haircut—both of my barbers sang along to the songs coming over the radio, crooning with Kenny Loggins and Taylor Swift. A few nights later, Fred and I decided to conduct some anthropological research and go down the street for a pub quiz. The parameters of what constitutes trivia in a country is important cultural research, after all. Upon sitting down, we befriended the man sitting next to us, Liam, who turned out to be a professional stage actor. When I told him I was from Boston, he responded by telling me about a ballad his uncle used to sing about Boston. He began to sing it but soon realized he had forgotten

most of the words. He assured me it was a lovely ballad nonetheless. On top of these little interactions, there was the simple fact that every single night, in dozens of bars across Dublin, in January (the absolute nadir of the tourist season), there is live music. Sometimes starting at 3:30 p.m. and going until closing. In other words, the city is filled with music and song, perhaps as much as (or more than) in Joyce's day.

Joyce's stories brim with examples of

Every night, in dozens of bars across Dublin, there is live music. Sometimes starting at 3:30 p.m. and going until closing. The city is filled with music and song, perhaps as much as (or more than) in Joyce's day.

people bumping into each other in and around Dublin. This is particularly true of *Ulysses*, a book that draws much of its energy from the force of uncanny coincidences and connections. Reading Joyce, it's hard not to wince a little bit at each incident. Sure, it's fiction writing, it is a constructed thing—but the number of coincidences strain the bounds of credulity. That is, until you have been to Dublin. Dublin feels smaller than a city of 1.3 million inhabitants should. Every time we were walking to a new destination, I would think, "Ah, now this will be a real walk." Impossibly, five minutes later we were there—every time. After two days, I felt like I had been down every street. This provided a great feeling of familiarity, especially as a tourist.

—*He doesn't see us, Mr. Power said. Yes he does. How do you do?*

—*Who? Mr Dedalus asked.*

—*Blazes Boylan, Mr. Power said. There he is airing his quiff.*

Just that moment I was thinking.

(*Ulysses*, 76)

Here, Bloom, the protagonist of *Ulysses*, bumps into the man, Blazes Boylan, who is going to sleep with Bloom's wife later in the day—the first of many unplanned meetings between the two men. After my time in Dublin, I have no doubt that these awkward encounters are not just probable, but inevitable.

One of Joyce's most deeply held ideas about Dublin was that it imposed a feeling of paralysis on its inhabitants. Joyce's story, "The Dead," conveys this particularly acutely. During the story, the protagonist Gabriel wants

nothing but to escape the party he is attending and by extension, the paralyzing atmosphere of Dublin:

How cool it must be outside! How pleasant it would be to walk out alone, first along the river and through the park. The snow would be...forming a bright cap on the top of the Wellington Monument

(*Dubliners*, 192)

I know that same feeling. On our second to last day, feeling a bit tired of Dublin's main attractions, Fred and I wanted to get away. We rented bikes. At the start of our journey, we stopped at 15 Usher's Island, the real life address of the house where "The Dead" takes place. The house is, fittingly, dead—closed for unending renovation. We kept riding, "first along the river" and escaped the city (it was a long ride, the

first time that I had felt a real distance in Dublin) into Phoenix Park, stopping at last at Wellington Monument. That night, we saw an adaptation of "The Dead" (in the famous Abbey Theater, which was founded by many of Joyce's Irish writer contemporaries in 1903). When the actor playing Gabriel uttered the above lines, perfectly describing the day how we'd spent the day, I felt a moment of pure joy(ce).

Sweny's in Lincoln place. Chemists rarely move. Their green and gold beaconjars too heavy to stir...Huguenot churchyard near there.

(*Ulysses*, 68)

Sweny's pharmacy, as described in *Ulysses*, is still standing—"chemists rarely move" indeed. (Nor do churchyards—the Huguenot churchyard is also still standing (lying) nearby). But Sweny's is no longer a working pharmacy: It has become an informal, volunteer-run center for all things Joyce. It holds daily readings of Joyce's work. It hosts a yearly dinner to coincide with the date of the party represented in "The Dead" (a party, which I was told, featured many fine singing performances). At Sweny's one day, I met an amateur Joyce enthusiast who told me a fine Joycean story about one of the men in his *Ulysses* reading group. His name was Paddy and he began to come to Sweny's regularly for readings. Several weeks after Paddy's arrival, Dublin was celebrating a national holiday with a large, civic parade. Our storyteller, attending the parade, noticed Paddy, in full police regalia, marching in the parade. As it turned out, Paddy was an undercover policeman who

took his hour break every day to read *Ulysses* at Sweny's. Not only that, but it further turned out that since Paddy had become a police officer, he had also gone on to get an MA in literature. Not only that, but he had been on his way to a PhD—before the police decided to cut his funding.

What birds were they? He stood on the steps of the library to look at them...an augury of good or evil?...for ages men had gazed upward as he was gazing at birds in flight...

(*Portrait*, 244)

In the above scene, Stephen, the protagonist of *Portrait*, stands on the steps of the National Library, gazing at the flying birds, looking for a sign to decide his fate. On my final day, sitting in the National Library, I decided I needed no such birds: Dublin had been more than enough of a sign for me to make my decision.

On a partly cloudy day, I took the train out to the Martello tower where *Ulysses* begins. The tower itself was a bit disappointing. There was nothing alive about it, just a corny recreation of what the room might have looked like and a decent view of the Irish Sea from the top. But coming back on the train, I could see the tidal flats of Sandycove, where Stephen walks in the third chapter of *Ulysses*. The sandy flats, half water and half sand, reflect Stephen's protean, ever-changing thoughts. In *Ulysses*,

Dublin feels smaller than a city of 1.3 million inhabitants should. After two days, I felt like I had been down every street.

as Stephen walks amidst the "sedge and eely oarweeds," he sees,

A point, live dog, grew into sight running across the sweep of sand...he made off like a bounding hare, ears flung back...with mute bearish fawning...a rag of wolf's tongue redpanting from his jaws...a calf's gallop...dogskull, dogsniff.

(*Ulysses*, 38)

And as I looked out across the flats, there it was—a dog running, with his master trailing distantly behind. 100 years later, there was that same dog. That same dog, running forever on those sands. Joyce may have passed on, but Joyce's Dublin still stands, still runs, still sings, still lives. 🐕

Alex Strecker '13 is a Contributing Writer for The Indicator.

Open and Shut

Ben Walker

bwalker16@amherst.edu

Who are introductory classes really for?

Late in the college admissions process, I happened across a promotional video made for Amherst in the late nineties in order, I assume, to present a complete depiction of the Amherst College experience. I lived in the suburbs then, read maybe more than I should, and aspired to great things—I was, in a word, impressionable. And the video certainly impressed: grainy film stills of brick structures graced with age fade in from black. A lone running back grapples his way through mud and the descending forms of his opponents downfield. Cut to angled shot of the Holyoke Range. Cue ethereal choral music. A man's voice, overlaid, intones:

“Four years here is not...simply a preparation for a future career;” the voice drawls out, flat with Yankee twang, “nor,” it clarifies, “as a kind of marvelous holiday from real concerns.” Amherst, it insists, as men in collegiate tweed idled past the steps of Johnson Chapel, provides “the chance to read hard books and to talk about them [...] with adults who treat you like a human being [...] as if you had serious purposes and serious opinions.” Surely this, the voice concludes with weighted finality, is the “eternal task of Amherst.” The music swells. Eyes tear. Camera pans wide along College Row, pulls back, and turns towards numinous sunlight. Scene.

It seemed that Amherst was a place for serious people who Matter, for those who do Important Things—and that I, too, could Matter and do Important Things, should I end up there (I did). On the surface, the College's attitude towards its students mirrors what is presented in the promotional video. Save the alcohol policy, we are, in Amherst's eyes, responsible, self-assured adults—generous by any standard. Amherst's academic philosophy complements this sort of hands-off treatment, allowing students to direct the course of their study under the Open Curriculum. In theory, I am unrestricted by general education requirements, institutional mandates (except the First-Year Seminar), canons, Western or otherwise—free to take whatever class I express an interest in.

In theory.

At the close of last semester, I received a series of emails informing me that I had been removed

from two classes I had registered to take in the spring. Both were lower-level courses; one was required for the LJST major, and the other a survey course in the English department. Both classes were severely over-enrolled, space had to be made, and upperclassmen had to be prioritized. In one fell swoop, I was denied from two *introductory-level* classes before fall semester had even concluded. Faced with the decision between taking an upper-level English class beyond my depth or no English class at all, I chose the latter.

My experience, as I have found recently, is not so unique. Many first-years have voiced similar frustrations. It seems as if everyone has, as Jacob Greenwald put it in a piece written for *AC Voice*, an “Add/Drop horror story.” First-years were locked out en masse from basic survey courses, turned away, as I was, by over-enrollment and lack of seniority. We, the naive first-years, discovered the dark, sorry truth of the Open Curriculum: that it's *not actually open*.

It's safe to say, then, that while the Open Curriculum sounds appealing in theory, it no longer works as it should in practice. Blame the administration, perennially apathetic upperclassmen, those sly fraternities that bend all of Amherst to their shadowy agenda—but the problem, I think, arises instead from Amherst's split commitment to two competing pedagogies.

Broadly speaking, the College likes to fancy itself as the embodiment of the liberal-arts ideal. Here, we are told: You are adults—make of Amherst what you will. And so, after a semester or five spent justifying our mercurial interests in Tibetan tantric yoga and commodity reification as “exploring the liberal arts,” we realize we must specialize, that is, declare a major. Specialization in a single subject requires scope as well as depth, the idea being that it wouldn't hurt to learn how to swim before deep-sea scuba diving. Most departments, to this end, obligate their majors to take a certain combination of survey and seminar courses. Doing so, however, constrains the explorative Open Curriculum, as most students limit their course selections according to what is required by their prospective

majors. Our choices become bound by our interests. Certain courses become over-enrolled when requirements overlap with the Open Curriculum's liberalities. Requirements create massive demand for introductory classes offered by popular majors, and because—surprise, surprise—we are *allowed* to take whatever class we want, anyone interested

Amherst instead must find a happy medium that satisfies the needs of specialization and the liberties allowed by the Open Curriculum.

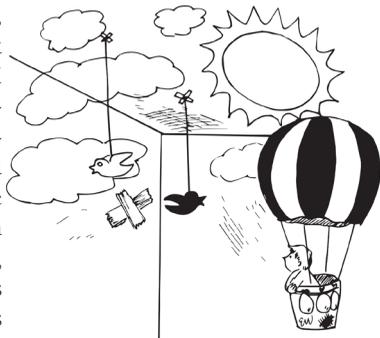
enough to register for a class, can. Upperclassmen and majors receive priority, first-years are encouraged to take the class the following year, and the cycle perpetuates.

So why not match high demand

with supply? Simply provide more introductory courses, or create multiple sections of the same course? Again, the onus falls on the Open Curriculum. By design, the Curriculum encourages faculty specialization that indirectly limits the number of introductory-level courses. If a faculty member doesn't *have* to teach a survey course beyond their area of interest, why would they? Even the First-Year Seminar, the only class technically required by the College, is structured by faculty interests. That's why it's possible to major in Political Science and not take a single course on American government—but wait, are you interested in America's death penalty? Because there's an entire department for that. That said, faculty specialization allows students to conduct research with and learn from preeminent experts in their respective fields, an invaluable experience that distinguishes Amherst from a host of other schools.

The larger question, then: What the hell do we make of all this? Amherst's academic culture is ruthless, unyielding, and unlikely to change. At the same time, the College suffers from a muted crisis of purpose that *ought* to change. Do we embrace the spirit of the Open Curriculum sincerely and remove *all* requirements? No, no—leave formlessness to Hampshire's LARP-ing rabble. Do we reject the Open Curriculum entirely and revert to a stringent gen-ed core? No, thank you. Amherst instead must find a happy medium that satisfies the needs of specialization and the liberties allowed by the Open Curriculum. For if I truly wanted to “read hard books [...] with adults” who value who and what I am, it is, as I have heard, the eternal task of Amherst to grant me that slight indulgence. 

Ben Walker '16 is a Contributing Editor for The Indicator.



Taking Pro-Life Seriously

Daniel Webber

dwebber14@amherst.edu

A pro-choicer's defense of the pro-life position.

I would like to make abundantly clear, here at the outset of my argument, that I am pro-choice. I believe in a woman's right to choose to terminate her pregnancy for any reason. In this respect, if you are an Amherst student, you and I are probably standing firmly on common ground. But we pro-choicers are too often too intellectually lazy for our own good, and I submit that it is our frequent failure to adequately understand the pro-life argument, and not pro-lifers' closed-mindedness, that impedes meaningful dialogue on the issue of abortion. The sooner pro-choicers recognize that the pro-life position is not just empty appeal to religious authority, but a solid philosophical argument deserving of serious attention, the better for everyone involved.

Pro-choice arguments seldom rigorously engage the question of when life begins, and as a result, rarely consider questions of human rights as they might regard fetal life. In fact, pro-choicers often point to this non-engagement as a merit of their view. The pro-choice position allows everyone to make his or her own metaphysical determinations on the nature of humanity. If abortion offends your sensibilities, the argument goes, you need not have one yourself, but neither should you stop anyone whose values differ from yours. This is a pretty bit of relativism, but it should not be surprising how infrequently it convinces pro-lifers to change their minds. The issue of life is everything for the anti-abortion stance, and the pro-choice camp is quick to criticize pro-lifers for a seemingly over-zealous commitment to the abortion issue. Why is the pro-life faction so intent, pro-choicers seem to wonder, on imposing one view of life on the rest of us?

It seems standard to write the behavior of pro-lifers off as the militancy of religious fundamentalism, but a basic attempt to understand the pro-life argument on its own terms explains both pro-lifers' refusal to accept the logic of choice as well as their devotion to abortion as an issue. If one takes as a premise that life begins at concep-

tion, then prenatal life is metaphysically the same as that possessed by born persons such as you or me. Abortion, from this perspective, is not only a destruction of a human life but the killing of one's own child. If one accepts the further premise that children are entitled to life support from their parents, then abortion is morally tantamount to murder: the intentional killing of an innocent child with malice aforethought.

Pro-lifers are not sympathetic to the logic that one ought to be free to choose abortion as it suits one's own moral values for the same reason that virtually all of us believe that one ought not be free to choose to murder if it suits one's personal philosophy. The view that a fetus constitutes a human with a right to sustenance necessitates the exclusion of other views of life in a way that the view that life begins at birth does not. With this in mind, it is not surprising that abortion is such an overwhelmingly important issue for the pro-life camp. If the government were allowing a practice by which more than a million Americans were being murdered every year, hopefully such an issue would receive an inordinate amount of your political attention. You would probably demand the government ban it immediately, and you certainly would not want your tax dollars funding it. The pro-life outrage makes sense: One might disagree with their premises, but their conclusions follow from those premises logically enough.

A belief in a right to life for the unborn, then, understandably eclipses all other concerns. In fact, if one takes this view seriously, it is not radical but necessary that one oppose abortion even in troubling cases such as rape. Pro-choicers often want to characterize this sort of extreme opposition to abortion as indicative of a general heartlessness

implicit in the pro-life view: Pro-lifers, the argument goes, are waging a war on women, inserting themselves into private women's health choices and subjecting victims of assault to the further pain and indignity of an unwanted

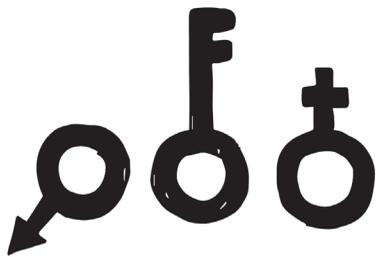
pregnancy. But this view is only tenable if one presumes that pregnancy is of no moral significance, abortion no morally different than a routine medical procedure. But no matter how traumatic, demeaning, and tragic an experience rape may be, it would be ridiculous for us to say that it justifies the murder of an innocent third party. And yet this is exactly what one must say, under the pro-life view, if one approves of abortion in cases of rape. The pro-choice argument cannot be framed as a simple matter of feminism, respect for privacy, or even common

decency without first successfully responding to the concern that an innocent human life is on the line.

As I stated previously, my

goal is not to convince anyone to embrace the pro-life position that I myself reject. Rather, it is my hope that my fellow pro-choicers might more clearly understand the discourse in which they must engage if they wish to have a meaningful dialogue with the pro-life side. If we try to sidestep the issue of life, casting the issue as one of women's health or privacy, we will argue straight past any pro-lifer, for whom the sanctity of life involved cannot be trumped by concerns of preference or convenience. We will only be able to convince each other one way or the other if we attempt to do so at the fundamental level. This is possible, but difficult: The right to life argument is more grounded than the baseless religious faith we might like to pretend it is. To stand opposed to it requires one to argue either that there is some point between conception and birth at which a child attains a new metaphysical status as a human—a tricky philosophical task, to be sure—or that children generally have no right to the support of their parents—a position many would find problematic. I believe that the correct conclusion to draw is that abortion is nothing more than a personal choice a woman makes regarding her own body, but I also believe that this is not a conclusion to which we can merely jump. It is rather a conclusion that we ought not feel entitled to reach until we have adequately grappled with the weighty questions of human nature that the issue invariably raises. 

The right to life argument is more grounded than the baseless religious faith we might like to pretend it is.



Daniel Webber '14 is an Associate Editor for The Indicator.

Point

Should Amherst Students

Ethan Corey

ecorey15@amherst.edu

Amherst College educates men and women of exceptional potential from all backgrounds so that they may seek, value, and advance knowledge, engage the world around them, and lead principled lives of consequence."

Does a career in finance fit with the College's mission? Can stock analysts, hedge fund managers, and derivatives traders really "lead principled lives of consequence"?

Finance is the second-most common career path chosen by Amherst graduates, and recruiters for investment banks, private equity firms, and wealth management companies are ubiquitous in the Career Center. Many students at the College see finance as an acceptable or even laudable occupation for ambitious and driven Amherst students. Perhaps some recognize the problematic relationship between Wall Street and the rest of the world, but very few would go so far as to say that it would be immoral or unethical for an Amherst grad to take a six-figure starting salary as a junior analyst for Goldman Sachs or Barclays. While a high-quality liberal arts education should prepare students for a wide range of professions, careers in finance not only contradict the values of a liberal arts education, but they also make the world a worse place.

The debate about the role of Wall Street in American society often falters from a general lack of clarity about exactly what finance firms actually do. Of course, this is largely because firms on Wall Street engage in a dizzying variety of diverse and disparate activities, from leveraged buyouts to venture capital, from currency hedges to collateralized debt obligation (CDO) trading. Yet all of these enterprises can be reduced to one simple goal: making as much money as possible by any means necessary, legal or otherwise.

The profit motive isn't necessarily a bad thing *per se*, but Wall Street takes the animating spirit of capitalism to a whole new level of abstraction. Financial speculation is more akin

to gambling than to running a business. The performance of a financial product has no necessary connection to anything in the concrete reality of markets or industry. Take the Facebook initial public offering (IPO) as an example: Morgan Stanley, the underwriter for the IPO, offered shares to the general public at an unreasonably high price (nearly twice the actual value of the stock) while selectively passing along adjusted earnings reports to preferred clients revealing that the stocks were overvalued. Unsurprisingly, the stock price plummeted in the days following the IPO, causing thousands of investors including pension funds and individual 401(k)s to lose money. Morgan Stanley and its clients all made large profits. Whether stock prices rise or fall, Wall Street wins either way, at the expense of ordinary Americans.

An old slogan held that 'what's good for General Motors is good for the country.' Today, the more accurate slogan would be 'what's good for Wall Street is awful for the country.' While the Dow Jones Industrial Average has surpassed its pre-crash levels and Wall Street firms are raking in record profits, the unemployment rate still sits at eight percent, and eleven million more Americans live in poverty than in 2007. Wall Street has learned to profit from economic collapse, making it all the more frightening that Wall Street has immense control over the economy.

In addition, Wall Street firms are notoriously unconcerned about following the law. During the height of the mortgage bubble, the compliance divisions of many Wall Street firms were approving subprime mortgages based on obviously fraudulent claims (what waitress makes \$14,000 a month in tips?), all so that their firms could continue to use the mortgages in complicated CDO derivative schemes, many of which were designed to fail. So far, no finance executives have been prosecuted for their complicity in the 2008 financial crisis. Or take the case of HSBC, a British bank busted by the Feds for money laundering for drug cartels and terrorists. Even

though the bank illegally accepted over \$15 billion in drug money, they avoided all prosecution by paying a \$1.9 billion settlement over the next five years—meaning that they still walked away with a \$13 billion profit! These are hardly exceptional cases. For a variety of reasons, such as a castrated regulatory system and a revolving door between finance and government, banks rarely face prosecution for their actions, creating a perverse incentive for bankers to break the law on a regular and systematic basis.

Finally, working in finance is bad for your mental health. Studies have found that one in ten individuals working in finance meets the diagnostic criteria for anti-social personality disorder, which, for those unversed in abnormal psychology, is characterized by "a pervasive pattern of disregard for, and violation of, the rights of others that begins in childhood or early adolescence and continues into adulthood." To put that in perspective, only one percent of the general population meets the diagnostic criteria for the disorder, meaning that bankers are ten times more likely to have the disorder than the average person. Moreover, other neurological studies have found that the high-pressure environment of financial businesses causes the brain's cortisol levels, the hormone for stress, to be abnormally high for extended periods of time. Research suggests that elevated cortisol levels have significant "cognitive and behavioral consequences, specifically by shifting risk preferences or disturbing the neural basis for rational choice." In other words, Wall Street acts like a pressure cooker on the brain, slowly turning ordinary bankers into hormone-crazed financial cowboys ready to hop on the next disastrous bubble and run the economy into the ground (again).

The College should not be encouraging its students to join in Wall Street's orgy of corruption and bald profiteering. No matter one's personal values and ethics, the pressures of financial markets erode all ideals. On Wall Street, the only thing that matters is the bottom line. Working in finance is emphatically not a 'principled life of consequence'; it is a life of making money for money's sake, with no regard for the consequences. That's something the College shouldn't be encouraging. 

Ethan Corey '15 is a Contributing Writer for The Indicator.



Counterpoint

Go into the World of Finance?

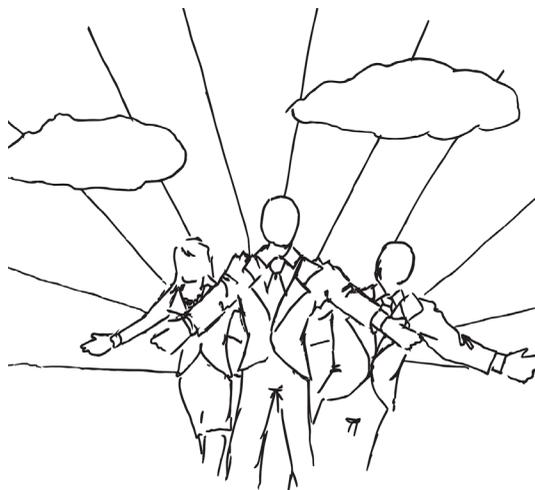
Chris Friend
cfriend14@amherst.edu

There are problems with the finance industry. Everyone knows this, and pretty much everyone is willing to admit this. Moral hazards abound, while the ability to flout the law is possible and the rewards for doing so can be high. Some call out that the institutions of finance themselves are inherently inequitable and only serve to entrench current power structures and inequalities within our society. All of these various complaints about finance industry cause people to deride the following: It appears that the “best and brightest” in our society merely go into finance jobs and do not become doctors or engineers. I intend to prove that if you believe you are a person of strong moral character, then you have an almost *moral* obligation to enter the world of finance.

This moral obligation is due, largely, to two main factors: the size of the financial world and the outsized influence that individuals can have in that world. It’s dangerously easy for one person to have massive effects on the markets—single individuals have been able to cause trading losses of over \$2.3B (UBS), build Ponzi schemes that lost investors over \$10B (Madoff), and effect other various massive losses throughout history. The power of someone in the financial world is a kind of power and influence held by very few doctors, lawyers, or engineers. If a doctor or lawyer acts immorally, they gain only at the expense of a patient’s health or their clients’ freedom. Moreover, because doctors, lawyers, and engineers each have professional societies that require membership to practice certain crafts (being a member of the bar, holding a medical license, etc.), there are methods of

means that there are significantly fewer methods of redress against financiers outside of the legal realm. The key take-away is that financiers are significantly more influential, as people, than people in almost any other industry.

This influence is probably a bad thing (echoing the lyrics of Kayne West, “no one man should have all that power”) but there is little potential to regulate financiers outside of the system without significant repercussions. Even then, it’s unclear that this regulation would even be helpful. What is the best way to solve the problem of outsized influence, then? The financial world obviously has a number of difficulties, especially with respect to incentive structures for people who can cause significant damage to financial markets and people’s livelihoods (see: the financial crash).



The solution proposed by a number of people is simply that students should not enter the financial world—instead, they should reject invest-

ment banking and consulting and get good, strong jobs in other important industries. This solution, however, is probably the

most dangerous possible way to solve the problem. By stigmatizing the financial industry as evil, this solution deters good people from entering. The only people who still will want

jobs as financiers will be those who are there for the money.

Those financiers who are there for the money will be much happier to sacrifice their dignity and morality for a quick million(s), and simply will not care about the vast and wide-reaching effects of their business. By pushing college kids away from jobs in finance, the only

For those of strong moral character—enter finance. Be the people that save the system, not those that demonize it. It is significantly easier to point to a problem than to fix it.

people left in the finance industry are those who do not care if they are doing something considered evil. They’re just in it for the big payday.

We as Amherst students must bring high-minded morality back as a cornerstone of finance. Back in the day, financial panics were not solved by the government coming in to save the banks while the financial institutions fought back, tooth and nail—rather, financial institutions had to save themselves (i.e. Panics of 1893, 1907) through the strong moral character of bankers. A number of vastly wealthy financiers took huge sums of their own money and put them into banks to save the system from utter collapse. This is what has been missing from finance in the past decades—the realization of the moral importance of the financial system.

So, what do I propose? Stop demonizing financial jobs. Make them jobs that require as much moral strength and character as being a lawyer or a doctor. If you are of weak moral character, don’t be a financier. Be a doctor or a lawyer. We don’t need you. People of weak morals will only enable the eventual destruction of the system, when it is truly in need of a rebirth. For those of strong moral character—enter finance. Be the people that save the system, not those that demonize it. It is significantly easier to point to a problem than to fix it. The world needs more people who are willing to fix this one. I think Amherst students should be up to the task. ☺

Chris Friend ‘14 is an Associate Editor for The Indicator.

Those financiers who are there for the money will be much happier to sacrifice their dignity and morality for a quick million(s), and simply will not care about the vast and wide-reaching effects of their business.

redress against immoral actors in these professions. There is no such required qualification to be a financier—which is excellent! Praise the good lord for free markets and the like—but it

Appleton and India

Blaine Werner

bwerner15@amherst.edu

A meditation on the origins of friendships.

If you happened to walk through the left stairwell in Stone on Friday, February 1st, you may have passed and glanced at the rasterbated image (created by printing out sections of the picture sized to a page and then connecting these pages together) adorning Room 102's door: a picture of rapper Drake captioned with his motto "Y.O.L.O.," with an image of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama laughing beneath the YMCMB artist. You may not have known two things: (1) the joke is that the Dalai Lama is the fourteenth reincarnate of the bodhisattva of compassion, Avalokitasvara (hence the joke of only living once) and (2) Gelugpalooza (a pun on Gelugpa, the tradition of Tibetan Buddhism associated with the Dalai Lama. I know, we got carried away) was in full effect behind that door. This was the reunion party for the Tibetan Studies in India program I participated in during winter recess, and it brought back together most of the eighteen Five College students who, before December 27th, our departure date from Boston to a Tibetan University in India, knew nothing about one another (aside from the shameless but admitted Facebook stalking we all committed).

As a second-year living in Morris Pratt, I sometimes reminisce about the days of my first year at Amherst, especially whenever I pass by my old dormitory, Appleton. That year was marked by a lot of the typical personal growth and

self-revelation that occurs when one begins to live independently and with forty or so strangers, but it was also marked by the memories of Super Smash Bros. (on N64, as we were all Nintendo purists, unlike those South looneys with their cinderblock Gamecubes) and watching college basketball in the common room. In fact, that common room, the only one

in the dormitory, was Appleton's little mixed blessing for us: It forced many students out to Frost for studying, but also forced a number of us Appletinis, regardless of which floor we lived on, to come together in one room. There, many of the guys bonded over four-way battles on Sector Z or the game-winning shot by Christian Watford in last year's Indiana-Kentucky men's college basketball match-up; a group of girls had regularly scheduled viewings of *Dance Moms*. Since those days of quadrangle yore, I am sure I am one of many who look back on that first of many wonderful Amherst experiences—the first-year living experience—and find my head turning longingly in the direction of my old room.

And yet, a hint of cynicism seeps into my mind as I look back on these times, and I question how all of it took place, how I faced a group of strangers and we shared awkward getting-to-know-you conversations and somehow became friends with these people. Was it because Hurricane Irene kept us locked in a common room playing 20-person Catch Phrase?

Or was it because we were all genuinely meant to bond? This skepticism reemerged with the nostalgia my Tibetan Studies group recently triggered. Ten Smith, four Hampshire, two Amherst, one Mount Holyoke, and one UMass student comprised "us," but somehow there was nothing any of us wanted to do more than spend our time together. We quite

literally spent every moment of every day with each other, from the moment we left our rooms to go to breakfast until we finally were worn down from the day and retired to our beds. And while the friendships made in my first-year dorm or Tibetan Studies program did not happen instantaneously (à la *Step Brothers*), it certainly seemed that quick. Did our friend-

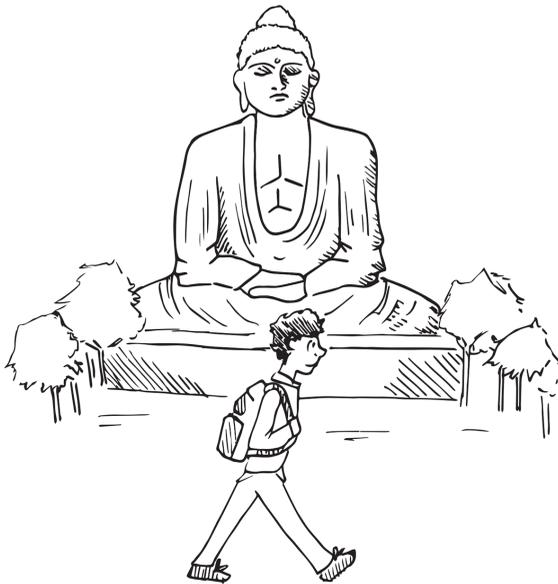
ships arise solely from that set of conditions (namely, being forced to be with each other for an extended period of time)? Was it the high stress-level we all shared? Were our friendships forged through the dire and exciting times of India? If we had not faced the culture shock of India (and the philosophical and metaphysical shock of Buddhism), would these friendships

Did our friendships arise solely from that set of conditions (namely, being forced to be with each other for an extended period of time)?

have ever developed? And does the same apply to my Appleton experience? Where would we be without the chaos of Irene and the shaky instability of the first semester of college bringing us together emotionally and catalyzing our fellowship?

Or is there another element to consider? Perhaps it is that, as a friend from Smith said, when you are put with people in an unfamiliar context and you share the intimacies of unknown and numinous situations, when your reality is shattered and your paradigm completely warped, you get to know people's good and bad sides at the same pace. And while these friendships are made quickly, since no one is held at the polite but distant arms-length that seems to be the essence of all college social interaction, they are friendships nonetheless. For what would friendship be without its roots, its cause? It can take place anywhere: in your seminar on Foucault, when you are up until 2 a.m. working on the same Environmental Science paper in a common room, or during a flight from Paris to Delhi. This might sound naive or downright silly, but, in a way, so is friendship itself and maybe life too. Human happiness does not seem to have been built into our creation, so it is only our capacity to love that gives meaning to all that we face in life. Ultimately, I know this much to be true: I would not have had the opportunity to make the friendships I made had I not lived in Appleton or had I not gambled on a winter study program in a foreign country. And I am grateful that I did. 

Blaine Werner '15 is a Contributing Writer for The Indicator.



An Offer You Should Refuse

Jeffrey Feldman

jfeldman15@amherst.edu

Why Israel should be allowed to speak for itself.

When I sought to describe my Birthright experience to friends and family, the only word that spilt forth from my mouth was “overwhelming.” How could it not be, when a whole world was manufactured in ten days? In this world, a group of 40 strangers is a “family,” everything outside it is not your concern, and your spirituality and sense of self become someone else’s property.

When you arrive in Israel, you aren’t you. You’ve spent nearly 24 hours travelling; it hasn’t quite hit you that you will spend the next 240 in a comparable state of delirium that’s the product of your exhaustion (emotional and physical), cramped quarters, and feigned friendliness to your 39 travel companions. For the next 10 days, you will experience things that excite you and sadden you, things that captivate you and disgust you, and things that fail to move you at all.

But that’s to be expected. I, for one, had plenty of Jewish baggage waiting to show up on my doorstep, after its brief disappearance between the end of high school and until I left for Birthright. After all, I was the product of a Jewish day school, where faith was a requirement for good grades. When I left that environment, I didn’t know how to respond to the burden of faith without incentives. As time wore on, I scorned religion and saw it as a broken institution; yet I would still readily identify myself as a Jew. When I got to college, my religious development stagnated; I’ve done my best to suppress any and all thoughts on the matter since then.

And so, with all its historical and present ties to Judaism, Israel should have been the place where I could soul-search and explore for myself what it means to be Jewish and what it means for a Jewish state to exist.

Unfortunately, the thoughtful dialogue I was planning on having with the land, its culture and its people was not a priority for Birthright. In fact, I’m willing to bet that such honest discourse is in direct conflict with the program’s unstated mission: to force its hard-line conservative ideology onto its participants.

The name of the program, “Birthright,” reeks

of this agenda: It’s far from a matter of fact that every Jew is owed citizenship in Israel, but the name certainly insinuates the contrary. (It’s interesting to note that, in Israel, the program is known as “Taglit”—a slightly less loaded term that means “discovery” in Hebrew.)

The fixed ideological nature of the program manifested itself in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

- ~ An “Israel Update” given by a state-sponsored speaker who believes that videos of angry people speaking Arabic on Palestinian state TV prove that all Muslims want to destroy Israel.
- ~ Our group’s singing of the national anthem of Israel during a tour of Tel Aviv’s Independence Hall. (When was the last time you heard a non-citizen sing “The Star Spangled Banner” outside a sports stadium?)
- ~ The Mega Event.

I think the last item warrants further explanation.

From the very first day of our trip, we were told to get excited for the Mega Event. Though not all the details could or would be revealed to us, we heard that all the Birthright participants in Israel at the time would be there, as would the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. I knew it would be bad, but I didn’t imagine—I couldn’t have imagined—just how bad it was going to be.

On the night of the Mega Event, my group shuffled into an auditorium packed with Jews from all over the world: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Russia, Uruguay, and, of course, the US. Representatives from each country fervently chanted their national songs—the Brazilians’ national noisemaker, the vuvuzela, at the fore—underscoring the massive divides that still exist within the tiny global Jewish community.

When the crowd finally quieted down, a trio of buglers tooted a regal melody, and a circle of large men in suits surrounding one small, gray-haired man made its way onto the stage. It was time for Netanyahu to speak. Though he largely discussed the Birthright program itself, the prime minister peppered his speech with some comments whose relevance at this particular event escaped me: He warned us of Iran’s nuclear program and supported Israeli settlements in disputed regions of the country. After about ten minutes of uninspiring stump speech, he was

escorted off the stage. That’s when it got weird.

Lights flashed. Music boomed. Dancers on platforms swayed, each holding a giant, lit-up Hebrew letter. One Israeli pop star after another paraded across the stage, singing copyright-infringing Birthright pop-aganda—“Taglit forever/ Making us stronger/ Back into our home/ Just like a waving flag”—and atrocious electro-pop covers of such synagogue favorites as “Shalom Aleichem” and “Oseh Shalom.” Because this was the 13th anniversary of Birthright’s existence, this party was billed as a celebration of the program’s “Bar Mitzvah Year.” Accordingly, one of the dance tunes featured such asinine lyrics as, “It’s your Bar Mitzvah (Yeah)/ It’s time to party!” All throughout, the meecees called for us to chant, in unison, “We are one! We are one!”

I could see what they were doing. Like some sort of cult ceremony, the purpose of this event was to manufacture a sense of unity formed around spectacle and groupthink. Sure, one could argue that every religion aims to bring people together to be a part of something greater. But this was not Judaism; this wasn’t any culture I identified with. I had to get out of there.

It was strange—I was offended on behalf of an ideology I had all but rejected ten days before. Ironically, Birthright’s attempts to force its agenda down my throat had actually brought me closer to Judaism. Outside, in the lobby, I congregated with the dozen or so other members of my group who had had enough of the Mega Event, and we had a fruitful discussion of precisely why it made us so uncomfortable. It shed light on the aspects of Judaism and Zionism with which I was comfortable.

Despite Birthright’s attempts to force me into adopting a cookie-cutter conservative point-of-view, I managed to come out with a more well-rounded opinion than I started with. But about ten percent of the people on my trip had never before explored their relationship with Judaism or Israel, and weren’t able to discern truth from fiction. And it’s for those people that I say: Birthright is a harmful thing. I’m ashamed that I condoned the way in which Birthright manipulates its participants and the Jewish identity in order to push its agenda. “Birthright isn’t just a free trip,” I was repeatedly told by my trip leaders. “It’s a gift.” Though its wrapping is enticing, the gift of Birthright is one that comes with serious ethical strings attached, and I’m only one of the hundreds of thousands who got tangled up in them. 

Jeffrey Feldman ‘15 is a Contributing Editor for The Indicator.



House of Cards

Netflix

2013

A REVIEW BY

Todd Faulkenberry

tfaulkenberry13@amherst.edu

In his excellent *The Revolution Was Televised*, Alan Sepinwall traces the rise of high-quality television over the past fifteen years. From its conception all the way up to the end of the millennium, television was more or less an “idiot box” that housed shows whose palatability was matched only by their lack of depth. Over the next handful of years, however, things began to change. First, an explosion of the sheer amount of television channels allowed for more exploration by viewers and a subsequent fracturing of the viewership. Second, the film industry began to eliminate the “middle-class movie” by focusing their resources on low-budget films or blockbusters. In turn, television began to fill this void by producing deep, complex shows that took advantage of newly diverse interests. “If you wanted thoughtful drama for adults,” Sepinwall writes, “you didn’t go to the multiplex; you went to your living room couch.” This golden age—beginning with shows like *Oz* and *The Wire* and coming into its twilight currently with shows like *Breaking Bad* and *Mad Men*—transformed television from an “idiot box” into a place of real intellectual intrigue.

Like every drama that takes itself seriously nowadays, *House of Cards* is clearly a product of this revolution. What makes *House of Cards* so fascinating, however, is its potential to shift the small-screen paradigm like no show since *The Sopranos*.

Produced and sometimes directed by David Fincher and starring Kevin Spacey, *House of Cards* details the life of Representative Frank Underwood at a climactic point in his decades-long political career. From the first scene of the series, where Underwood puts a dog out of its misery with his bare hands, it is clear that Spacey will be playing an anti-hero. The plot is set into motion a couple of scenes later, when Underwood is denied the Secretary of State job that was promised to him

by the new administration. Underwood hatches a plan over the next twelve-and-a-half episodes that, while perhaps not as dastardly as some of Walter White’s exploits, is just as impressive given Underwood’s place in the public eye.

The most talked about aspect of *House of Cards*, however, has nothing to do with its plot.

All thirteen episodes of the first season were released on February 1st. Unlike any show before it, *House of Cards* is explicitly meant to be

watched during a bleary-eyed weekend so familiar to procrastinating college students with a Netflix subscription. More interesting than its mass release, though, is who’s doing the releasing. Netflix is the first entity to make a high-quality television show available outside of television itself. Emancipating TV from the box raises a handful of questions. Where will this new path lead? Who else has the ability to produce high-quality TV? Hulu? Amazon? An ambitious YouTube user? This emancipation could lead to a diversity of dramas in the same way that the proliferation of channels led to a diversity of TV shows in general.

Aside from its unique style of release, two thematic elements of *House of Cards* stand out. First, the show manages to create strong women characters that are all too rare, even in the most beloved dramas. One of the most unfortunate aspects of modern drama is its misogyny. This often occurs because the protagonists of shows tend to be exclusively male. When someone, usually a character’s wife, stands in the way of that character, the audience often vilifies

her as a “total bitch.” That’s why everyone hates Betty Draper and Skylar White, despite the fact that these women have to deal with the exploits of morally corrupt, sociopathic husbands. *House of Cards* has not one, but two strong female characters: Underwood’s wife Claire is every bit as smart and conniving as her male counterpart, while Zoe Barnes is an aspiring journalist who navigates the moral complexities of using her sexuality to her advantage. With any luck, these two dynamic characters will inspire the development of more

complex female characters in future TV dramas.

House of Cards also ignores the most striking trend in television over the past year. Since dramas like *House of Cards* attract a thoughtful audience, this also means that these shows attract some viewers who are too thoughtful: They aren’t willing to suspend their disbelief, and criticize

House of Cards is explicitly meant to be watched over a bleary-eyed weekend.

any plot development that strikes them as unlikely. The noise from this contingent finally reached a fever pitch in 2012. Shows of all

types were criticized, whether it was *Girls* for not having enough black people, or *Breaking Bad* for having a train robbery, or *Homeland* for a host of unquestionably far-fetched scenarios. Instead of trying to invoke realism, *House of Cards* instead recognizes that TV drama does not have to mirror a documentary. While some of the greatest shows were so great precisely because of the commentary that arose from their realistic portrayals, *House of Cards* shows that its one premise is to entertain. Yes, some of Underwood’s schemes don’t meet the resistance they would in real life. Yes, it’s high impossible for one man to manipulate D.C. as deftly as Underwood does. And yes, it’s still totally worth suspending one’s disbelief to enjoy a show as fast-paced and entertaining as *House of Cards*.

The show soon makes clear how apt its name is. Frank Underwood slowly constructs a beautiful house of cards, laboring away until he can finally put himself at the top. His plan, however ingenious, is also precarious: All it takes is a swift wind or a sloppily placed card for it all to come crashing down. The writers of *House of Cards* should be mindful of this metaphor as they construct their own work. As *Homeland* showed us the past fall, it only takes a handful of episodes to taint any series. *House of Cards*’ first season is intricate, intense, and thrilling. Given its base of Spacey and Fincher, this show has the potential to become one of the best serialized shows of this post-Golden Age era. It may never be *The Sopranos* or *The Wire*, but, then again, what will? Is it even fair to judge television by those impossible standards? As Spacey says at the beginning of the series, “That’s how you devour a whale: one bite at a time.” *House of Cards* must build at its own pace, within its own strength, if it aspires to be a whale of modern drama. If not, it will simply devour itself. 

Todd Faulkenberry ‘13 is a Associate Editor for The Indicator.



Marsh House

81 Lessey Street
Amherst, MA

A REVIEW BY

Ricky Altieri
raltieri15@amherst.edu

The vestiges of fraternity life linger in the halls of Marsh dormitory. The tinted windows above the entrance door are decorated with colorful Greek letters; the bathrooms are not separated by sex; the library and ballroom boast pianos, fine artwork and elegant fireplaces; the slim corridors and lean walls turn every whisper into public conversation. In 1984, when Amherst banned fraternities, the administration recognized Marsh's peculiar bent toward communal living. They solicited recommendations from the public to decide what kind of community Marsh would hold, eventually settling on the proposal of then-student Ron Bashford (of Theater Department fame) to turn the dormitory into an arts house.

Almost thirty years later, Marsh purportedly occupies a special role in Amherst's social and artistic scene. The house has two primary goals: (1) to foster artistic growth and community among students and (2) to provide an alternative social environment, where students dissatisfied with mainstream on-campus options can thrive. Recent discussion of sexual respect has brought campus culture under scrutiny, shedding harsh light on problems in residential life and at parties on the weekends. But the central narrative of Amherst social life—the parties at the socials and their pregames on campus—does not represent student culture in its entirety. Though encumbered with many of Amherst's broader social issues, Marsh and other specialty housing tend to address the isolation, separation and lack of community that some students encounter in other dorms.

While not everyone in Marsh regularly practices art, the building retains an artistic atmosphere. Coffee Haus events, poetry groups, and occasional art exhibitions create a forum for student work on a campus that isn't always conducive to music, poetry, dance and the like. Marsh technically mandates that every student in

the house complete an arts project by the end of the year, and even if few students actually fulfill the requirement in its entirety, it prods would-be artists in the right direction. Additionally, the arts project requirement serves as an important bonding tool early on in the school year. Before heavy coursework set in, Marsh students this year spent time collaborating and dreaming up extravagant artistic endeavors—and accidentally got to know each other in the process.

The community that resulted from this early bonding is perhaps best explored through the eyes of the house's informal cat: Cat. Let me explain: one evening, just outside of the dorm, a Marsh student spotted a friendly feline. He ushered it inside, where news of the visitor traveled quickly. The house soon agreed that the cat—named Cat—could be a dorm pet. Having received plenty of attention, food, and a place to sleep that first night, Cat now regularly loafs around the dorm, where he's sure to find people who will play with and take care of him.

In a residential building on campus, a community cat seems much less likely. First, in a bigger dorm like Mo Pratt or Morrow, you couldn't be sure that the whole community would support having a pet meandering through the halls or lounging in the common room. Second, since Marsh sits on a hill far from campus, the community is relatively self-contained, meaning that fewer people are likely to notice or mind an animal. The analogy extends to other potentially irritating dorm activities. Consider that three or four nights a week students play live music in the Marsh ballroom, sending tunes throughout the house into the evening, without any complaints or issues.

In comparison to other upperclassmen dorms, Marsh seems tight-knit. That's self-fulfilling, as people who choose Marsh generally want community and openness. For some, myself included, Marsh recreates the closeness that emerges between students living on the same floor

freshmen year. Looking for new friends and living in a new environment, people in both freshman dorms and Marsh seem more open than usual to making connections. This carries the downside of some social posturing; but the stakes in Marsh aren't quite as high as freshman year, so people are less anxious about fitting in.

The party scene in Marsh also differs in important ways from that of the socials. First, Marsh events tend to be less crowded, especially during colder, winter months. In addition,

party dynamics focus less on drinking and more on marijuana. This leads to “slower” parties; more conversation, more food, earlier ends to the night, and less hooking up. Additionally, though, parties are more likely to have esoteric themes that encourage clever costume wear. The broader implications of such differences *vis-à-vis* drinking and sexual respect issues aren't clear, but slower parties are an alternative—though by no means one that satisfies all—to the stronger narrative of Amherst party culture.

While the community presence in Marsh feels strong, the house still falls victim to some of the social difficulties that plague other dormitories. Even within a tight-knit community, economic and demographic factors play some role. More significantly, as in other buildings, students find that the allocation of dorm rooms and common space affects their social life. The second floor, where most Marsh parties and pre-games take place, has the greatest number of residents. On the first floor, by contrast, rooms are far apart, so students living there don't have the benefit of passing by their friends in the hallway or as they exit and return from the building.

In Marsh some of Amherst's difficulties can be avoided, for the price-tag of a ten minute walk to campus and lackluster heating. While the differences can contribute to a student's experience—it has made my time here noticeably better—Marsh is still fundamentally an Amherst college dorm. Don't come to Marsh looking to escape the campus ethos; below the differences, for better or worse, is the culture that underscores the Amherst experience. 

Ricky Altieri '15 is a Contributing Editor for The Indicator.

The community that resulted from this early bonding is perhaps best explored through the eyes of the house's informal cat: Cat.



FICTION

Chris is a Poo Poo Head and He's Not My Friend Anymore

Garrett McCoy
gmccoy13@amherst.edu

As Teach popped the cap off her marker with a resounding snap the other kindergarteners and I turned to face the whiteboard. Our semicircle of cross-legged five-year-olds filled most of the room. With careful deliberation, Teach dragged downwards a solid black line of ink. Her hand returned to the top of the glistening pillar and she rounded off a slight ringlet extending roughly halfway down the right side. This maneuver was swiftly repeated, and after delineating the second downward arc she removed the marker from the board and turned to face us.

"Alright, everyone. Today we're going to learn about the letter B. Can anyone tell me something that starts with the letter B?"

Chris Higgins raised a lone, traitorous hand. "Beth," he said.

When a kid walks into a room, he brings his whole life with him. Five years, laid on the table and spread out for everyone to see. It's a vulnerable feeling. A kid needs someone he can trust, else it all becomes too much to bear. For me, Chris Higgins was that kid.

Lifelong friends, Chris and I were nearly inseparable. Our houses had been next to each other for at least five years, and I can't remember a time when he wasn't there for me. Sure, he wasn't as smart as I was; Chris didn't know his left from his other side. But I relied on him all the same.

That relationship was shattered yesterday.

Chris and I were playing in the sandbox after school. He had begun erecting with his hands the latest in his series of beige cathedrals while I resumed my daily excavation towards the bottom of the pit. Assuredly impressed with my catacombs, Beth Harris approached our sandy workspace.

Beth was my girl. We ate lunch at the same

table at least twice a week, and sometimes our cots were close to each other at nap time. She never made fun of my freckles or my wretched overalls, and I'm pretty sure she liked my finger painting of her. Once, I even offered her my pudding and she accepted. It would be a bit of an understatement to say Beth and I were an item.

On this day Beth had with her two shovels as she stood agape in wonder of our sandy kingdom. She looked at our grimy hands as we looked at her pair of pristine plastic spades. I felt guilty at once. I had realized that with only two shovels available between the three of us Chris would be without one. Before I could say anything, however, Beth walked over to Chris, handed him her extra shovel, and they began scooping and piling together.

That's when everything changed.

I fled the sandbox. I wanted nothing to do with the person I was once proud to call my best friend. My girl and now my capacity to trust had been taken from me. I managed to survive the night and return to Jubilee Elementary this morning, but it would take all my strength and willpower to stay afloat. One thing was certain: Chris would answer for what he had done.

I was using my black crayon to put the finishing touches on my drawing when Teach leaned over my shoulder.

"Jeremy, your animal is very lovely but vul-

ture starts with a V. Remember today's letter?"

It's a buzzard, you blind, sadistic tyrant. But I couldn't tell her so. I'd learned to never

cross Teach. Doing so invariably leads to confinement in the Ladybug Room. Home to the driveling, savage preschoolers, one trip to the Ladybug Room could scare a kid into good behavior for a whole month. Internees always returned besmirched in glitter, drool, and any number of sticky mystery substances, the life in

their eyes long since departed. I'd never been there, and today wasn't going to be any different. I turned my paper over and began drawing a beagle instead.

My life was over. Soon Teach would unhinge her jaw, calmly lean over, and swallow me whole.

Soon we broke for recess. A raucous game of tag began outside almost immediately, but I wasn't ready to risk encountering Chris face-to-face. I sat down on a bench some ways away from the commotion; no sign of Chris or Beth. As I let my eyes drift towards the jungle gym I noticed Markus sitting on the end of the slide.

Markus Schmidt. Two-time student of the month, consummate with a crayon, and starting pitcher for the local tee-ball team, I always kept an eye on him to see if I could learn something. At the moment, he had removed his sandals and, in an impressive display of flexibility, was licking each of his toes in careful succession, perhaps judging and indexing each by taste. Good kid, as far as I'm concerned.

Recess ended and we all reluctantly returned inside. Teach gave us a little more time to finish our animals. Sprawled on my stomach, I continued working on my second attempt. As Teach's shadow appeared on my page, I swallowed and awaited her verdict.

"Jeremy..."

I kept my head down, straining to steady my trembling hand.

"...dog begins with a D."

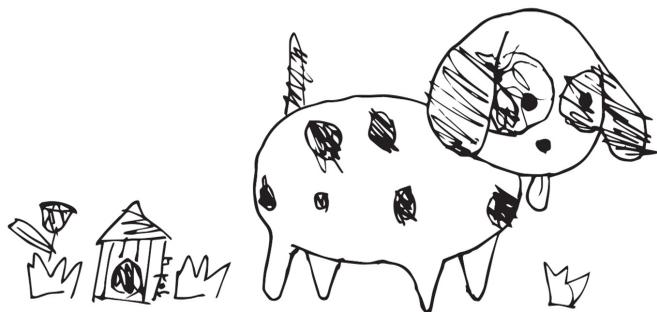
My life was over. Soon Teach would unhinge her jaw, calmly lean over, and swallow me whole. No more Chris, no more Beth. Maybe the darkness wouldn't be so bad.

"Oh my, that's a beagle, isn't it? I'm so sorry. It's a very wonderful beagle indeed!"

An outflow of joyous relief surged through me. I had stood at the edge of the abyss and survived. My rapid breathing slowed as the terrifying high-heels clopped away to cast judgment on their next victim.

"Okay, everyone," announced Teach, "Please get a carpet square and find a place to sit."

I checked the clock on my way to the carpet squares, which were neatly piled like a short-stack of syrupless, fuzzy pancakes. I wanted lunch, but the little hand had not yet disappeared. Shushing my tummy-noises, I grabbed a red square. Red, like the birthmark on Beth's



POETRY

Profligate Muse

When it is late and I have yet to write
 Some script or argument or, better yet,
 A verse or two – she thinks it her delight
 To flounce out past me with a pirouette.
 She takes her leave to chase another beau;
 White gowns, bare feet, and coquettish glances
 All carry her away, and I don't know
 To whom she speaks, or with whom she dances.
 She leaves me in a stupor, pen in hand,
 To blink in a white desert, without aim,
 Until sheer frenzy pulls me through the sand
 And I scratch out some miserable refrain.
 When she returns in hiccupping surprise,
 I greet her acidly through bleary eyes.

Daria Chernysheva
 dchernysheva16@amherst.edu

temple, hidden by her hat. Chris probably didn't even know it was there. Wouldn't appreciate it like I do, either.

Arranged around the room on our felt like a fragmented checker board, we sat anything but still as Teach rummaged through a velvet sack. Her smile silenced us and her hand emerged with a solid blue card.

"This morning we learned a new letter. Can anyone tell me what that letter was?"

Silence. Squirming. Teach's sick games like this one scared me the most. We'd learned that letter just before recess; no way was anyone going to remember it.

"Nobody?" I waited.

Brayden cracked first, raising a timid hand. It took Teach a second to notice, moving only her eyes when she did.

"Yes, Brayden?"

"Um..."

"Do you remember the letter?"

"Um...no," His hand was down. Idiot.

"Well, that's okay Brayden. The letter, everyone, was B. Do you all remember the letter B?"

"Yes Miss Summers," we chanted.

"Good. Very good." I trained my eyes downwards but could not prevent her words from slithering into my ears. "Now it's time for us to practice the colors. Can anyone tell me what color this is?"

I glanced up reflexively. She blandished us with the blue card, eyes twinkling with the false promise of praise. Lars Bartman's hand shot upwards, and it was then I remembered Lars' brother had taught him the colors wrong

as a joke. I found out a few days ago when he asked for a bite of my purple apple. That situation, however, paled in comparison to the self-destruction about to take place.

"Oh my, it looks like Lars knows what color this is." She beamed at him so hard it hurt my eyes.

"Orange!"

Teach tilted her head ever so slightly. Nice knowing you, Lars.

"Not quite, Lars. But very close! Does anyone else know what color this is?"

"But it is orange! It's orange like the sky and the sea! Like my mommy's eyes!" With enflamed cheeks the color of my carpet square, Lars kept up his hapless resistance.

"Lars, please be polite and let someone else answer."

"Orange orange orange orange orange!" He was blubbing now, cascades of tears comingling with dregs of oozy snot.

"Lars, if you're not going to behave properly then you'll have to go

to the Ladybug Room. Is that what you want?" But he was too far gone, and we all hung our heads in empathic shame. I heard Teach skulk over to the sobbing five-year-old and pull him to his feet, leading him away with the sinister ease of a practiced executioner.

"Please stay where you are, everybody. I will be right back." With feigned mirth she added, "The quietest student gets a special surprise!" The door thudded shut. Yet another sacrifice to the toddlers.

I took the moment of mourning to throw a glance at Chris. Sure enough, there he was, eating a booger next to Beth. My nails dug into my palms as I bottled my rage. The nerve of that backstabbing scumbag! I silently dared him to meet my gaze. Special surprise be damned, I would howl at him with all my respiratory might.

Before I burst, the soothing melody of the bell signaled nap time.

As I climbed onto my cot, I heard someone say that Zack the Paste-Eater had gone home early. Apparently Teach found him prone in a corner, whimpering and clutching his gut.

Too much paste and the body sort of gives up after a while.

I laid on my back, trying to keep my eyes shut and my mind clear. I found a piece of gum on the underside of my cot and I chewed it to ease my nerves. Chris and Beth were somewhere in the room on cots of their own. I wonder if the guilt of betrayal kept Chris awake. If he felt any guilt, that is. His infidelity still stunned me, and I found myself growing nostalgic for the years we spent together as allies.

My sympathies soon evaporated, however, as I recalled the blatant disloyalty Chris had displayed just a day ago. I counted the glow-in-the-dark stars on the ceiling and convinced myself that there must be no effrontery in the history of kindergarten as cruel as the crime Chris had committed against me. No longer would I sulk about, ashamed and indignant. Redemption was nigh.

When nap time finally ended I lurched out of my cot and bounded out the door. School had ended, but my mom didn't come to get me and Chris until later. I hurried to the sandbox, our usual meeting place, and waited for my betrayer. Emerging alone, he saw me and approached with uneasy diffidence.

"Hi," he mouthed, reluctant to enter the sandy arena in which I stood. I looked at his shoes. Untied, both of them.

"I ate my lunch by myself today," he said. "It was peanut butter and jelly."

My favorite. We always traded when he got PB&J. I didn't let his words affect me, however, and continued to glare. My eyes were the magnifying glass and he was the ant.

"I had cookies too but I gave one to a squirrel," Chris added.

"You're not my best friend," I muttered.

"What?"

"You're not my friend anymore."

He was flabbergasted, and the look of sincere surprise on his face further upset me.

"Why?"

"Because you got the shovel from Beth and I didn't get the shovel and you're not my friend anymore!" My assault continued.

"Am too!"

"Nuh uh!"

"Yeah huh!"

"Nuh uh!"

As we traded blows, each verbal dagger more vicious than the last, I saw something that made me stop and turn. Chris spun around as well.

Emerging from the classroom, hand in hand, was Pops and Beth. Her waddle keeping pace with his top-heavy shambling, we could do nothing but stare in bewilderment. Pops stopped, pulled the sucker from his mouth, and offered it to Beth. She took it, placed it firmly in her left cheek, and they continued walking.

Chris and I looked at each other. Salty warmth began to obscure his features and flow into my mouth, and I heard him whimpering. Synchronized like divers, we crumbled into the sand, curled up against the dunes, and cried. For though we may have been but five-years-old, in that moment our friendship was eternal. (C)

Garrett McCoy '13 and Daria Chernysheva '16 are Contributing Writers for The Indicator.

FROM THE INDICATOR'S ANECDOTAL ARCHITECTURAL ARCHIVES

The Indicator staff has recently uncovered a number of alternative proposals for the Keefe Campus Center renovations. These classified documents were recently released in an effort to end the culture of silence regarding college blueprints. For the first time, *The Indicator* is revealing the ideas that were *not* on the AAS ballot. Here are the best potential plans for reinventing Keefe:

- * Convert the building into two functional rooms: the Mail Room and the Female Room.
- * Create a space to allow for wildlife to roam free. Give out hunting licenses. Call the new space the Game Room.
- * Fill the Women's Center with colorful vagina imagery. Rename the building Georgia O'Keeffe Campus Center.
- * Release rap single "That's That Schwemm's I Don't Like" by Chief Keef Campus Center.
- * Create a space for students to rehearse pick-up lines. Call it the Spittin' Game Room.
- * Stage a nightly performance of the Vagina Monologues. Rename the building Queef Campus Center.
- * Replace the upstairs with a penguin zoo. Have it constantly narrated. Call it the Morgan Freeman Room.
- * Create an arena where students fight to the death for the glory of Amherst. Call it the Hunger Game Room.



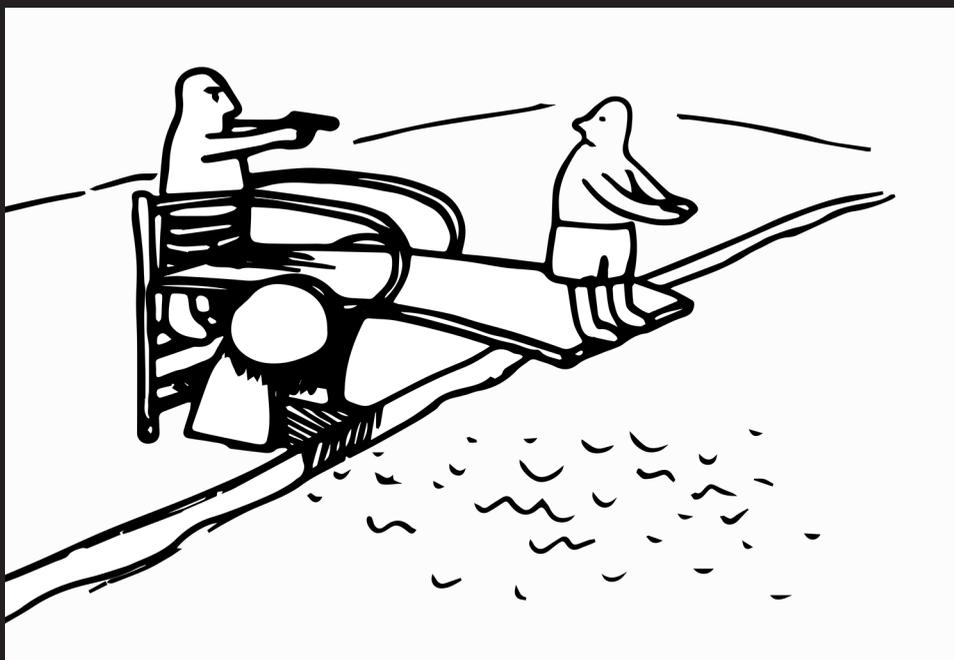
Do you like Keefe? Write, draw, or edit for *The Indicator*.
theindicator@amherst.edu
"VOLUNTEERING AS TRIBUTE...SINCE 1848"

The Report Card

Subject	Grade	Comments	Subject	Grade	Comments
Snowstorm Nemo causes students to overdrink	A	This just in: Whiteouts cause blackouts.	Amherst students give out flu shots in Val	D+	First thing served in Val that doesn't get you sick.
Blackout occurs at Super Bowl	B-	UMass student blacks out at Souper Bowl.	Beyonce reunites with Destiny's Child	A+	THDA majors and Chapman residents finally watch the Super Bowl.
Amherst introduces Single Stream recycling	B	Yet they still say I can't recycle half-eaten pizza. Thanks, Obama.	Richard III's body recovered under parking garage	C+	Tony Marx's hookers' bodies found under Keefe foundation.
Valentine's Day F happens	F	Sorry, couples. I've already reserved every table at Moti. I'll be getting diarrhea alone this year.	Republican armless guitarist wows student body	B+	Last Republican in the US not bearing arms.
Construction crew cleans up Keefe debris	A-	Remains to be seen if the administration will sweep it under the rug.	<i>The Indicator</i> plans to unveil publication website	A-	You know, a website. Like Facebook... or Pornhub.

-WS, DH, RS

INDICAPTION CONTEST



Submit a caption to theindicator@amherst.edu
Think about how great it would be if you won!

SINGLE STREAM GARBAGE AT AMHERST COLLEGE

Effective whenever

YES!

Throw out all the same shit you used to

- ✓ Syllabuses for classes you were never going to take
- ✓ Strange boxes you don't think are recyclable
- ✓ Questionable tissues

NO!

- ~~X~~ Unfinished beers
- ~~X~~ Children
- ~~X~~ Promises
- ~~X~~ Things you want to keep

JUNK/STUFF + MORE JUNK



YES!

- ✓ A million used red cups
- ✓ Unnecessary reminders that the Writing Center exists
- ✓ Latest issue of The Student that you didn't read
- ✓ This magazine

NO!

- ~~X~~ Come on, you know what you're not supposed to throw out.
- ~~X~~ Don't make this difficult.



NO FEDERAL SECRETS



QUESTIONS?

Seriously? It's just a trash can...



NO OTHER TRASH CANS