

# BASIS GAZETTE

## *QUIZ BOWL VICTORY*

At 8:30 a.m. exactly on a Saturday morning, on October 25, the Arizona Quiz Bowl Association Tournament commenced. Groups of students, followed by a few stragglers, entered the ASU Durham Language Literature Building. Climbing the stairs, many appeared completely comfortable—the epitome of professionalism. Some reviewed eclectic fact sheets; others drilled each other. An undercurrent of chatter filled the small space in the cold building. The overall vibe, as BASIS Scottsdale "B" Team Captain Max Rosenberg divulged, was "excited, anxious, and pretty quiet."



The Quiz Bowl Tournament Director (left) presents BASIS Scottsdale "A" Team Quiz Bowl Captain Alex Cohen (right) with the highest-scoring player trophy and the "Power Plaque."

BY GEORGE YANG

This process seemed familiar to many. For BASIS Quiz Bowl veterans, it was easy to distinguish the foreign and familiar faces: the overpopulated Desert Vista team; the number one team from California, San Diego Olympian Science; and most importantly—for "A" Team Captain Alex Cohen—"that kid that looks like Bubble Bass."

Their relaxation was warranted. Each Quiz Bowl round lasted ten and-a-half minutes; in contrast, weekly Thursday practices at BASIS Scottsdale stretch one-hour

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### SAVE THE DATE

November 26-December 1	Thursday, December 11
Thanksgiving Break	US Piano Recital
Tuesday, December 2	Saturday, December 13
Geography Bee	Barton House
Friday, December 5	December 22-January 2
Yule Ball	Winter Break
7:00-10:00 p.m.	

### FEATURED

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**WHAT TO THINK**  
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**STARBUCKS DELIVERS**  
**MORNING COFFEE**  
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**COUNTRY GONE POP**  
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Structured as a round robin, the tournament pitted 4-member teams against other 4-member teams from different schools. For one question, there was a 10-point tossup. If a team interrupts the tossup, they earn what is known as *power*, which elevates their possibility of getting 15 points for a question. However, the catch is the 5-point reduction for incorrect answers. After the tossup, there were three questions of bonus, each worth 10 points; each question was related to each other. Therefore, there were 45 maximum points. Conferring with teammates was not allowed.

Questions ranged from anything to everything: math, pop culture, literature, science, geography, music, and art. Alex Cohen once encountered a question about the painting, *The Potato Eaters*. He nonchalantly informed me that the artist was Van Gogh. A quick Google search confirmed his answer and his aptitude for Quiz Bowl. When asked how he studied, he casually explained, "Fact sheets, reading." When asked the same question, Max Rosenberg revealed that he often quizzed himself with Quizlet, studying terms on war and geography.

long, with practices entailing five rounds at a minimum, when needed.

Indeed, methods like these have proved successful. The BASIS Scottsdale team beat both Desert Vista, who usually dominates due to sheer number of contestants, and San Diego Olympian Science.

Max Rosenberg described the victory as exhilarating. "Our whole team was contributing. It was a lot of fun and it felt good...I had a few good powers at the end to seal the deal. When I buzzed in ...it felt exciting especially as I answered and he confirmed."

BASIS Scottsdale seized first in the lot: first as the varsity team and first as the novice team. "C" Team Captain Trey Connolly obtained first in the novice individual competition, and Alex Cohen obtained first in the varsity individual competition. However, when asked about his most memorable Quiz Bowl experience, Alex unassumingly replied, "when Mr. Witz opened a coke and it exploded everywhere." When prompted for further elaboration, he explained. "He stood there for 2,456 years and then cleaned it up."

Likewise, the BASIS Scottsdale Quiz Bowl team itself seems to have exploded onto the tournament scene over the past few years, cleaning up awards at competitions. Hopefully, the team's upward trajectory will continue as they head to the National Quiz Bowl Championship.

## SURVIVAL: SOMBREROS, SWIM FLOATIES, AND SALT

BY ERIC KIM

Over the past two months, BASIS students have reported peculiar sightings of Upperclassmen, noted particularly for sporting bright-colored floaties. These students also may be seen wearing festive sombreros, chasing their prey while equipped with plastic water guns, or stealthily salting items of food. However, do not be alarmed if you encounter one of these students; their predatory intentions are reserved strictly for one another. The real question, though, is why they dress and act so oddly.

Last year, BASIS alumni Kathleen Howell and Sydney Galbarski launched "The Elimination Game," in which upperclassmen can participate in teams of two. This year, seniors Valarie Varanese and Charley Murray continued the tradition, inviting all juniors and seniors to participate for a team fee of \$20. With thirty-nine teams of two students and one odd team of three accepting the offer, the game commenced on September 29.

Each team is assigned another team; the aim of the

game is for teams to eliminate their assigned targets until one team is left standing. Teams can eliminate targets either by spraying them with some form of water or by "poisoning" their food, which involves secretly sprinkling salt or Tabasco sauce into the target's food. On the other hand, "safety items," which can be floaties or sombreros, shield participants from both spraying and poison.

Though these circumstances could potentially wreak chaos in a school environment, there are designated "safe zones," where targets do not need safety items to stay alive, including school, places of religious worship, sports events, homes, and workplaces. However, in parking lots, during lunch periods, and after school release, participants remain vulnerable to elimination and must be equipped with safety items.

These rules worked well for the first week, especially with the incentive of

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participants gradually died down to a slow, meager pace, prompting the heads of the game Varanese and Murray to throw in small changes to the rules to quicken the pace of eliminations.

For example, although floaties were the only valid safety items for the first few weeks, the heads designated one week as "Sombrero Week," during

a mystery prize that will be funded by the entry fees. However, the momentum of the game and the motivation of

which sombreros would be the only safety item. Several teams were not motivated enough to purchase sombreros in addition to the floaties, so eliminations increased dramatically that week, reaching the halfway point of 40 students remaining.

Additionally, during Sombrero Week, there was a designated Poisoning Day, on which sombreros would not protect against poisonings. The rules also outline a Purge Day, during which teams can target *any* team, not just their targets, a modification expected in the near future.

## JUNIOR/SENIOR PICNIC

Quickly becoming an annual occurrence, the second-ever Junior/Senior Picnic took place a few weeks ago. A nice way to start out the trimester, shortening an already laid-back week by half a day, the outing was an overall success, despite the last-minute advertising. Playing a few sports, listening to music, and eating tons of food, students enjoyed the picnic, which provided something for everyone.

The day proved more exciting than some may have expected. From the raffle of a flat-screen TV won by senior Julie Cho to Chan Kim's challenge of Mr. Truong to a dance battle (unfortunately, that never came to fruition), the picnic boasted more activity than free pizza and a few sports games. Of course, basketball, football, ultimate frisbee, rugby, and soccer were fun too. The homemade

food and henna tattoos rewarded those who stuck around to enjoy the entire picnic.

Students were not the only ones in on the fun; many teachers and administrators made an appearance, including Mr. Garvey, Mr. Hast, and Dr. Duffy, to name just a few. Some of them, like Mr. Peacher, who took a break from teaching math to school some students in basketball, boldly participated in the various sports; all of them seemed to enjoy themselves in one way or another.

Still relatively new, it seems like the Junior/Senior Picnic is here to stay for as long as students desire. That tradition, a responsibility well-handled by the current seniors, will be continuously passed down, and hopefully taken on; it would be a shame to lose the event in the future.

## HEALTHY HABITS: H-CUBED WELLNESS CLUB

BY TIA FORSMAN

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# NEWS

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## HISTORY ON THE MARCH IN COLORADO

BY MICHAEL APPEL

Some pockets of protests percolate in predictable places: Hong Kong's pro-democracy demonstrations, Ukraine's defiance of Putin, and Egypt's Arab Spring. Nevertheless, the seeds of the First Amendment still find fertile soil to sprout in their homeland, America. Ensconced in Denver's comfortable suburbs, free speech fever spiked in Jefferson County, Colorado as September gave way to October. High school students walked out of their schools, hoisted hand-made signs, and clogged the streets to protest the school board's attempt to alter the AP U.S. History (APUSH) course in reaction to its perceived anti-American bias.

The student-led protest germinated on September 19, with the school board's decision to form a review committee for the revised APUSH course to ensure the promotion of patriotism, free enterprise, and respect for authority and to avoid condoning civil disorder. Believing the board to be censoring history to further a conservative political agenda, high school students responded with the very civil disobedience that the board had sought to downplay in American history. Upset that the newly-elected, conservative majority on the school board had proposed the history curriculum changes in addition to a new salary system based on merit pay for student test performance, many high school teachers joined ranks with their students, staging massive "sickouts," which shut down two schools.

The glare from the lenses of national media ignited the student protest. Social media and the active support of parents and community members encouraged thousands of high school students to prolong their protest. Although the fruit of the protest seems small, it is potentially significant. On October 2, the school board voted to include students, parents, and administrators on a new review committee to evaluate the APUSH curriculum. Although the board's latest proposal deletes references to promoting patriotism instead of social disorder, it remains unclear whether the board will actually heed the voices of protest by implementing the APUSH curriculum.

The fervor of the firebrand students begs the question of why the College Board revised the U.S. History course in the first place. Back in 2006, the College Board appointed college professors and high school teachers to redesign the class to deemphasize rote memorization of facts and promote more in-depth coverage of themes and application of critical thinking to historical documents. Two of the most prominent content changes are the increased focus of the previously glossed-over period from 1491 to 1607, stressing Native American-European settler conflict, and the period from 1980 to the present, highlighting social conservatism and post-9/11 counter-terrorism. The new course was first publicized in 2012 and first implemented this year, 2014-2015. The impact will reach many high school students across the nation: last year, 440,000 students sat for the APUSH exam, the second most popular AP test after AP Language and Composition.

Colorado is not the sole contender in the controversy over the revised APUSH curriculum. The Texas Board of Education in 2010 voted to keep its current curriculum, rather than teach to the APUSH framework. Likewise, conservatives in South Carolina have urged an education oversight committee to petition the College Board to delete ideological bias from its framework. The Republican National Committee (RNC) in August, 2014, criticized the course in a resolution, objecting to its "radically revisionist view of American history," which it claims focuses on the negative and largely erases the positive. Asking Congress to withhold any federal funds to the College Board unless the course is rewritten, the resolution further urged a congressional investigation and a one year delay, at minimum, in the course's implementation, until a committee can devise a new version that tells America's "true history." The 600,000-strong members of the conservative activist group Concerned Women for America agreed with RNC, instructing followers to persuade school boards not to implement the

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On the other hand, several pre-eminent

organizations, such as the American Civil Liberties Union of Colorado, the National Coalition Against Censorship, and the National Council for the Social Studies, wrote a letter to the school board in support of the student protesters. Admonishing the board that viewpoint discrimination is unconstitutional, whether couched in terms to promote patriotism or not, the letter argues that the school must maintain official neutrality in politics. Likewise, the American Historical Association approved of the APUSH curriculum and, in a groundbreaking motion, the College Board issued a statement praising the student protesters and cautioning that it would no longer recognize the county's APUSH courses if the school board alters the course.

Much confusion swirls about what elements allegedly contain the anti-American bias. While naysayers are correct when they point out that MLK, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and Dwight Eisenhower are not specifically listed in the new AP framework, they neglect to mention that those same names were omitted in the previous frameworks in effect from 2010-2011 until 2013-2014. Nevertheless, teachers included those figures

in their classes, alluding to the College Board's assertion that the framework is just a guideline, not an exhaustive list of content.



Perhaps the debate can be summed up with a bon mot from Napoleon Bonaparte: "History is a version of past events that people have decided to agree upon." Which

version of American history—the school board's American exceptionalism or the College Board's more complex portrait—should be taught in American schools? The answer arouses passions on both sides. However, the vigorous exercise of constitutional rights by the Colorado students is putting into practice fundamental lessons of American citizenship: peaceful protest to question authority and effectuate change. Perhaps the more important question is whether any one entity—be it the College Board or the Jefferson County School Board—should unilaterally decide the answer.

## EBOLA HYSTERIA

In October, classmates assaulted two Senegalese-American boys at a school in New York in an attack that left the victims so severely hurt that they had to be taken to the local hospital. During and before the incident, the boys were taunted with false accusations of having Ebola, and the school soon identified the racialized stigma surrounding the disease as a primary motive for the violence.

Ironically, further panic has eclipsed this story, the disturbing attack lost among countless articles asking where the disease could spread next. But if the headline seems ripped from a history book, it's for good reason: epidemics have always brought bigotry out of the shadows.

As the Black Death spread across Europe in the late 14th century, people chose a different scapegoat. Jews were accused of poisoning wells to cause the plague, and hundreds were killed in the backlash that followed. Historically, almost every ethnic group sought to label syphilis as foreign. Italians called it the "French disease,"

BY NAVYA DASARI

while the French called it the "Italian disease"; the Dutch called it the "Spanish disease," Russians called it the "Polish disease," Ottoman Turks called it the "Christian Disease," and Tahitians called it the "British disease."

In a modern context, a destructive stigma also accompanied the rise of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, and the disease was first labeled "gay-related immune deficiency," or "gay plague." That reputation persists today, even with overwhelming evidence against a connection between homosexuality and HIV: in 2013, 14% of Americans surveyed agreed that AIDS was a punishment from God for sinful sexual behavior.

When faced with the fear of death, our instinct is to point fingers, to distance ourselves from the disease as much as we can. We see the foreign as a vector for illness, and we lunge for isolationism to shield ourselves. Dr. Joia Mukherjee, a professor at Harvard Medical School, identified this reaction to Ebola as an attempt to "otherize" the disease. And exotification is instinctive when it comes to Ebola; after

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all, over half of the victims killed by the disease have been Liberian. The media portrayal of Ebola fits easily into the narrative of the developing world as a place of filth and sickness.

Homophobia helped fuel the AIDS epidemic, preventing many with the condition from seeking help. Now, racism is fueling Ebola.

As Leo Mulbah—the head of Atlanta’s Liberian Association—observed, there were no travel bans when mad cow disease spread from Britain in the 1980s, or when swine flu spread from China more recently. The strict ban so many politicians and citizens are calling for now would prevent humanitarian aid from reaching West Africa, and would encourage people desperate to reach home to travel

through other countries instead, making it even more difficult to confine the spread of the contagion.

In order to make compassionate and logical decisions about health policy, we need to recognize that Ebola has been racialized in the public consciousness. In order to prevent ethnic violence, we need to challenge the ignorance that breeds it. Ebola is not a solely African problem anymore, and the longer we pretend that national isolation is protection, the longer we allow the epidemic to spread.

In the meantime, the panic over Ebola highlights an uncomfortable truth: America is not post-racial. Xenophobia festers. Hysteria brings it out.

# SCIENCE & TECH

## LOSING WALLETS

“Your total is \$23.78.”

Out flips your handy iPhone and, with just the touch of your thumb, you pay and set off, casually swinging your polythene bag of goodies.

Like 3D printing and eye detection technologies, this scenario may have seemed absurd, unfeasible, and impossible several years ago. Today, however, we can walk into a number of stores and do it with ease.

While applications, such as Google Wallet, Square, and even PayPal (yes, the PayPal that was once the trademark e-commerce site for schools) already existed, Apple’s *revolutionary* Apple Pay feature has nudged into the niche and added yet another dimension to its multifaceted personality: mobile wallet service.



Currently, Apple Pay is compatible with Visa, MasterCard, and American Express; further avenues are expected to open in the future. Supported by a variety of

banks and accepted at dozens of stores, including American Eagle, Whole Foods, and Subway, Apple Pay has partnerships with Disney, Starbucks, and Staples, which will be coming soon. In a short time, Apple Pay already achieved considerable success: 1 million credit card activations within the first 72 hours. Apple Pay turned out to be much more successful than its rivals through its accessibility, ease of use, and wide acceptance throughout the United States and soon, the rest of the world.

The new feature is compatible with the iPhone 6, iPad Air, and Apple Watch. It can be used in stores, on the beloved App Store, and even within applications like Uber, Target, and Groupon, making it even easier for users to shop on impulse and buy all they want with a tap on a screen.

Similar to the gamut of new inventions Apple constantly seems to be creating, Apple Pay has become coveted by the public, who devour all and anything Apple, even without necessarily understanding the complex implications and future consequences. This rampant popularity, according to Apple CEO Tim Cook, will win over even the most reluctant merchants (such as CVS and Rite Aid), who are hesitant about installing entirely mobile commerce interfaces.

With it being so easy to walk into Starbucks and order that scrumptious Pumpkin Spice with just the gentle touch of a thumb, more and more people are registering both credit and debit cards to get on board of what seems like the Apple Train to the Future. Even in exchange for their wallets.

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

A rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but an iWatch by any other name would make headlines. Last month marked a departure from the usual naming trends of Apple and Microsoft, tech titans who recently revealed the *Apple Watch* and *Windows 10*, respectively.

*Why is the Apple Watch not an iWatch?*

- *The iSwatch theory:* The renowned Swiss

BY SHREY GUPTA

watchmaker Swatch recently released the iSwatch, an LCD based digital watch, and immediately threatened to sue Apple over the use of the term “iWatch.” In order to avoid a costly and unnecessary legal battle, Apple switched the name to Apple Watch. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 9**

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previously Cisco-owned trademark “iPhone”)

- *The Post-Jobs Theory:* The “i” prefix was reminiscent of the Steve Jobs era of personalized computing, starting with the iMac and quickly spreading to iPod, iPhone, iLife, etc. The Apple Watch is the first completely new device launched under Tim Cook’s leadership, and the departure from Jobs’ “i” may mark Cook’s attempt to push Apple into a new era of greater corporate presence.

### *Why is Windows 10 not Windows 9?*

- *The “So Much Innovation” Theory:* According to Microsoft, Windows 10 brings an unparalleled level of innovation (even though it looks just like Windows 7, with some live tiles trapped in the

(But, then again, Apple has not previously backed down from prior trademark lawsuits. Case in point: Apple using the



Start Menu). Such a groundbreaking operating system surely deserves to skip a version number, no? Microsoft explains, in its best diplomatic language: “Windows 10 carries Windows forward into a new way of doing things. It is not an incremental change, but a new Windows that will empower the next billion users.”

- *The Lazy Coder Theory:* This theory seems much more practical than the first. Typically, application developers write specific portions of code to maintain compatibility with certain operating systems. For example, an application designed for Windows XP may have some compatibility code to run on legacy systems, like Windows 98. It turns out that many of these coders were extremely lazy, writing code like this:  

```
if (version.StartsWith("Windows 9")) /* 95 and 98 */.
```

In other words, they assumed that all versions of Windows beginning with “Windows 9” would refer to either 95 or 98...unless, of course, there’s actually a “Windows 9.” Considering that many of the applications written for Windows still retain this legacy code, it would have been a nightmare to name the newest version of Windows as “Windows 9.”

## SCIENTISTS SPY ON A CELL’S SECRET LIFE

Just as we have memories and experiences that define who we are, each cell in our body has an intriguing past filled with interactions with other cells, molecules, and potential invaders. Imagine how insightful it would be to record the memories of an individual cell’s life in order to grasp a better understanding of cellular behavior.

That is exactly what Timothy Lu and the rest of his team at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology wished to accomplish. The scientists created a model of an ideal memory system, known as Synthetic Cellular Recorders Integrating Biological Events, or SCRIBE for short. The program alters a cell’s DNA so that when a cell responds to a signal, the information received will not be removed from the genetic material. The length of this DNA mutation is determined by the duration of the signal--for example, a short signal will only show a small amount of altered DNA sequence, whereas a longer signal will have a greater effect on the alteration of DNA. The different, altered DNA is expressed through the use of retrons, which produce the altered DNA when the cell is exposed

BY MALAVIKA KRISHNAN

to some sort of signal.

Lu and his team performed several experiments to test the scope of SCRIBE and the different interactions it is capable of capturing. For example, Lu inserted an antibiotic resistance gene in some cells in response to light. When he looked back at the alterations of DNA, he was able to clearly see which cells received the antibiotic and which did not based simply on their responses to light. In another experiment, Lu left these living cells submerged in water for a week and then examined the alterations in their DNA. As a result, he was able to see all the interactions the cells experienced in the water, as well as the different bacteria the cells were exposed to.

Because SCRIBE provides an indication of the myriad of different interactions that a cell undergoes daily, the program allows scientists to determine how one cell develops differently in comparison to another cell. Lu and the rest of the scientific community are incredibly excited about this latest development and its potential to affect our understanding of cells in the future.

# OPINION

## BLACK FRIDAY

BY GURSAJAN GILL

Two thousand people line the storefront as you, a Walmart employee, in a blue shirt, await the onslaught. Time until Walmart opens: 5 minutes. The crowd grows angry, impatient, and restless; they are starting to rattle the doors. All of a sudden, the door hinges give. The huge wave of people surges ahead. A stampeding mob of angry people seeking “the best deals of the year” confronts you. You see one of your colleagues fall over, trampled by the crowd. You try to move forward to help him, but you yourself are being pushed back. There is no one to help him.

This was the scene in a Long Island Walmart during Black Friday not too long ago. A crowd of 2,000 trampled and killed a 34-year-old Walmart employee, and when other employees tried to help, they were repelled. When the paramedics and police arrived, the crowd was still rowdy and violent. And for what? Simply to snag certain discounted items.

Black Friday is exemplifies how excessive consumerism and gluttony rule the U.S.A. Black Friday perfectly represents the hypocrisy of the American people. On the fourth Thursday of November, most Americans sit at home around a table, thanking each other for what they have and asking for nothing more. The very next day, Americans race to stores, push through lines, and fight over

products, just so they can buy more stuff for less money. To score a deal, seven people have died, and 90 have been injured in the last eight years of Black Friday.

Black Friday, although it is a tradition, is merely another way for stores to make money. In fact, better deals than Black Friday occur during later times of the year. Many stores raise prices some months before Black Friday and dramatically cut the prices back to their original to give consumers an illusion of large discounts. A *Wall Street Journal* study even found out that many retailers work with their suppliers and set prices above the suggested retail price for most of the year and cut the prices back to the suggested retail price during Black Friday.



Black Friday is a complete waste of time, energy and money. Unfortunately, Black Friday symbolizes the modern American consumer mindset.

## AN ILL WIND IN THE SUNSHINE BY YASH PERSHAD

### STATE

Merriam-Webster defines a mechanical fan as “an instrument for producing a current of air as a device that consists of a series of vanes radiating from a hub rotated on its axle by a motor.” As complete as Merriam-Webster usually is, the dictionary seems to have missed that a fan is now also a source of political controversy in Florida’s gubernatorial race.

On October 15, incumbent Governor Rick Scott and former Governor Charlie Crist were set to participate in a televised debate on issues important to the citizens of

Florida. Crist, citing the need to be “comfortable,” placed a small, black fan underneath his podium to prevent perspiring during the debate. Gov. Scott believed the presence of this fan violated the rules of the debate because it was an “electronic device”; Gov. Crist claimed to have permission to use the fan.

When the debate was set to start, the fan remained, blowing as steadily as ever. A hilarious debacle ensued. After Crist walked onto the stage without his opponent, the moderator awkwardly

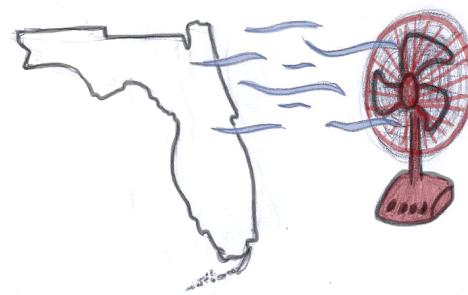
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stopped because he was not allowed to speak without Scott being present. While the moderator aimlessly rambled about how this never before happened, the former governor looked cool with the help of his fan. Finally, Scott walked onto the stage to a mixed response.

Even if this specific type of mischief of the political process was a first-time occurrence, this petty behavior is not new for politicians. Whether in Washington D.C. or Tallahassee, our elected officials are constantly fighting silly partisan battles or arguing about a mechanical fans, while the country spins in its wheels.

Other than providing considerable fodder for some great wordplay, this situation also is a microcosm for the



behavior of those whom we trust to run our great country. As Americans, we are learning to blow off the incompetence of our elected officials. Perhaps it is time to end this trend and elect officials who, rather than argue about fans, are fans of improving America.

## HOW SMART IS IT FOR OUR CHARTER?

It's lunch, and your classmates have just finished making an announcement about the upcoming Yule Ball. You can already picture all of your dressed-up friends; you can hear the music; you can taste the sugary refreshments. The dance sounds like fun. And then you hear the mention of SMART for Charters. Now you are significantly less interested in attending a dance that only five-seconds earlier you were already anticipating in your head.

Until recently, I was decidedly indifferent toward this system—it never really concerned any of the events that interested me. However, my opinion changed in October, when a club, in which I participate, hosted a fundraiser at school. Since the event was occurring in school, we were required to use SMART for Charters for raising all monetary contributions. In the words of one student, “Well since we have to pay through SMART for Charters, I’m not sure if I will be able to contribute to this event.” My initial response was confusion as to why SMART for Charters would prevent students from taking part in school events.

Now I see that the dilemma is quite simple. Before SMART for Charters, all students needed to do was bring cash to school and pay at the door. Often times, students carry an extra dollar or two with them anyway, so even if they forgot about an event, they would still be able to

BY DIVYA VATSA

contribute on the day of the event. However, the new payment system forces us to remember every single event that is happening at school, tell our parents which ones we want to attend, commit 100% to attending the event, and verify that our parents have paid before the deadline. All these preliminary steps require extra memory space, meticulous future planning, and coordinated organization. I know that I am not alone in my sentiment that this feels like too much work and effort, especially during academic marathons, like the trimesters.

To be fair, let's understand some reasons why the administration would implement this system, despite its lack of popularity among students. Although a hassle, SMART for Charters provides an organized means of collecting money for school events. The school can quickly see the exact amount of money raised and the identity of contributors. Parents can see exactly which events their students attend, as well as alleviate constantly prodding their child to turn in fees. In fact, SMART for Charters has been very effective for extracurricular activity registration.

BASIS administration implemented SMART for Charters at the request of their external audit firm as way to minimize cash in the schools because cash is more difficult to track and record accurately. This system is used by all BASIS schools.

As a result, we should not completely bash SMART for CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

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Charters. While the school's intent in adopting it was to promote efficiency, the main consideration should be how students react to this system. On the whole, we do not seem very inclined to put in the effort to pre-pay. Unfortunately, sometimes, the consequences are that our student body is

unable to come together like we used to at school events prior to the domination of SMART for Charters. Until we devise a solution to this perplexing problem, some students will have to keep bombarding the rest of us with announcements during lunch until we are annoyed enough to finally submit to our charter's smart payment system.

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## REFLECTIONS OF A TEMPORARY LUNCHEON WAITRESS BY KATHLEEN WU

Do I see BASIS students, in crisp aprons, whisking platters of gumbo and succotash to a host of distinguished guests? Or not-so-elegantly shoving plates onto cream-colored tablecloth? Last Sunday, members of the BASIS National Honor Society helped serve lunch for a *Pueri Cantores* youth choir fundraiser at St. Bernard of Clairvaux Catholic Church. Luncheon patrons, who donated \$25 to fund the choir's trip to Rome, filed in from mass at noon. Our job was to set the tables and prepare for three-hours of plate-delivering and drink-pouring.

Upon entering the Church's Parish Hall, we were provided white aprons, large plastic gloves, and table numbers to serve. We were trained on how to pour water from large, ice-swirling jugs (tip to the side first to minimize spillage), on how to serve dishes ("Excuse me, sir-madam, allow me to serve you", then graciously place the plate on the table) and clear places (take from the left; never take the plate away without first confirming Mr. Eating-Person's full completion of his meal). Always keep the glasses full; one plate at a time; *both* hands on the plate to prevent lima beans from raining onto astonished civilians' heads.

At the start of the luncheon, we formed two lines of paired, gloved, and fidgeting persons. On his way to the head table, the bishop blessed us for our service, and, glowing, we commenced the delivery of the day's meal. We were instructed to serve the ladies at the table first, and then the men, but this caused us literal-minded students some confusion (what of the children? the elderly?). With only one kitchen/source of food delivery, our rate of delivery was around two plates, per volunteer, per half hour. Many expressed concern over the inefficiency of the process. Others displayed dismay over the impropriety of asking "May I clear your place?" while the choir was singing. But these anxieties were forgotten as our clients, one by one, dug into their meals with relish; as, one by one, one less customer was left to eye a more fortunate neighbor's plate with gastric indignance.

After three hours of precarious balancing acts, we were weary. We gazed hungrily at half-eaten sponge cake slices. Gumbo wafted fragrantly into our twitching nostrils as we scraped it into trash receptacles. But we had fulfilled our duty. We had fed a room of people without drowning anyone in sausage soup.

# ABUNDANCE OF STRESS AND ITS ANTIDOTE BY GEORGE YANG

Lower School students are preparing for Precomps. Upper School students just finished Trimesters and see a new wave of tests. Veterans Day seems like the last gulp of breath before a long swim. We are reminded of the words of the Dory, an amnesic, but buoyant, Pacific Regal Blue Tang: "Just keep swimming, swimming, swimming. What do we do? We swim~." Nevertheless, stress often seems overwhelming; we believe that only someone who routinely forgets their past can move into the future with no worries.

Optimists point out the surplus of research showing how stress can be helpful. Richard Shelton of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Alabama, Birmingham notes that stress can boost memory, increase short-term immunity, and bring motivation. However, hopes fall when flu season commences and coughs and snivels become the norm, or (even worse) when we have a memory lapse during a test.

So, what's the real story? According to Bruce McEwen, professor of Neuroendocrinology, stress causes animals to adjust. The creature secretes hormones and remembers where the stress occurred so it can escape the stress next time. It's a natural learning aid.

The problem is that we cannot escape tests; a test is the Sword of Damocles, always dangling above our heads. Worse, chronic stress spurs anxiety, insecurity, and a deluge of other negative health effects, including blood vessel constriction and increased blood pressure. The symptoms mimic those of a bout of anger, explains Christopher Edwards of Duke University's Medical Center: you often "experience lapses in judgment or logic." That is too bad, especially when taking a math test.

The way to fix the problem is one that we already know and use—breaks. Not Summer or Thanksgiving Break, but routine breaks intended to relieve stress. Consider the following instructions a prescription to prevent the perils of stress.

## 1) How to power nap:

Power napping must be strategic. You should tailor your napping lengths to your needs:

10 to 20 minutes: use for a short boost in energy.

30 minutes: use for catching up on sleep, not for energy. You feel tired for another thirty minutes after you wake up.

60 minutes: good for memorizing information. Use this if you have finished studying and can afford around twenty minutes of grogginess when you wake up.

90 minutes: this improves memory of both information and physical tasks. It is a full cycle of sleep, and allows you to wake up easily without any dazed feeling.

Besides length, you can also make naps effective with coffee. If you have around twenty minutes, a cold cup of coffee nearby, and an exhausted mind, a caffeine nap may be the way to go. Sip the coffee, go to sleep, and the caffeine will make you wake up feeling invigorated.

## 2) How long to work: 90-minute rule.

According to physiologist Nathaniel Kleitman, you should work in 90-minute cycles. He explains the symmetry between the dream life and the conscious life: in a 90-minute nap, we go through a full cycle of sleep, and in a 90-minute working period, we progress through the high and low levels of attentiveness.

## 3) How to break with focus.

This is not an oxymoron. The most effective breaks are not the ones staring at a computer or TV screen, but rather the ones that are intentional. You should incorporate deep breathing and imagery, imagining that the test or assignment will turn out well. This mental break helps ease nervous tension.

Stress is inevitable at BASIS, but it's helpful to have a few tools to deal with it. Richelle E. Goodrich puts it well: "You can add up your blessings or add up your troubles. Either way, you'll find you have an abundance."

# FOOD

## CONVENIENT COFFEE

BY JULIE CHO

Craving a morning macchiato, but didn't wake up early enough? Distressed because you forgot your late-night latte in the middle of trimester week? Have no fear; Starbucks is here!

Recently, Starbucks has announced two new projects that will rewrite coffee history: pre-ordering and delivery. The new options are to debut in Portland, Oregon in December. Beginning in 2015, however, customers all over the world will be able to place orders on the Starbucks app in advance of their visit and pick them up at their selected Starbucks location. That means no more waiting behind indecisive teenagers or deciphering cups with ridiculously misspelled names.

Moreover, Starbucks took the convenience factor a step further. Not only will coffee lovers have the option to pre-order their frappes, but also the power to have them delivered right to their desk. "Imagine the ability to create a standing order of Starbucks delivered hot or iced to your desk daily... That's our version of e-commerce on steroids," Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz boasted.

Starbucks hopes that its new delivery system will provide an edge against the competitive fast-food chains, which now serve specialty coffees (refer to "Fast Food

"Breakfast Battle" from the September *BASIS Gazette*). Although this coffee delivery system sounds great in theory, some are worried that it would push up the prices or lower the quality of the drinks. What do you think about the new projects Starbucks is brewing up?



A highly-caffeinated New Year: Starbucks enhances its customer service with pre-ordering and delivery options in 2015.

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## THE MOST IMPORTANT HOLIDAY OF NOVEMBER

Every year, in late November, one of the northernmost nations, a country ruled by a government of the people and for the people comes together to celebrate its good fortune. On that day, we revere the triumph of the pioneers of a new nation, despite facing both a long history of oppressions from an evil empire and the longest odds of success. Ever since the formation of this exceptional nation, this autumnal holiday has been venerated as one of the most hallowed holidays, as the preeminent display of nationalistic pride. Here is a guide to two of the greatest holiday traditions for oblivious readers.

Early in the morning, in the nation's largest city, children and adults alike flock together to watch the parade. Featuring soldiers from all four branches of the military and musical talents, such as Marija Naumova, the parade is a both a show and a reminder of what has made the country great. As the parade marches through the roads, the country's diversity and strength are as evident as ever.

## IT'S A SMALL WORLD AFTER ALL, OR IS IT?

Have you heard the latest on social media? It's all over for a steady couple, and it's all because of a new girl, who has turned heads and won over hearts to become America's most popular girl. The boho-chic, long-haired, and even longer-legged beauty's name is Brandy Melville, and she already boasts almost two million followers on Instagram.

Some of us here in Arizona might wonder who she is, but teenage girls on the East and West Coasts and Hawaii already are familiar with her beachy style. The number one up-trending teen retailer in the United States, according to research firm Piper Jeffray's most recent semi-annual survey on teen spending habits, Brandy

BY BRIAN GLUCKSMAN

And what kind of holiday would this be without a feast? Ever year, families from all over this diverse nation dine together. Celebrating traditional delicacies, like sulku pudins, the meal features enough piquant food to last for days. However, while it is true that everyone enjoys the meal, the real beauty of the dinner is that families spend time together. Overcoming both partisan differences and physical separation, relatives gather together to appreciate all they have to be thankful for.

November is a time of change. As the leaves turn, the red-and-white striped flags unfurl to celebrate Latvian Independence Day on November 18. Like every other nation, Latvia has a day of national pride and a belief that their nation is the best. However, we Americans tend to ignore other cultures. The least we can do is join together and celebrate Latvia for one day.

BY LAUREN APPEL

Melville symbolizes a recent seismic shift in teen taste, according to *The Wall Street Journal*. No longer wishing to be a walking advertisement with a name brand plastered on their T-shirt, teens now seek to express their personality by mixing and matching relaxed separates. Hence, most teen girls consider the prominent logos on those once-cool "A" chains—Abercrombie & Fitch, Aeropostale, and American Eagle Outfitters—to be as passé as flip phones. Abercrombie's embarrassment is so acute that it has removed logos from its own clothes to try and win back the fickle teen consumers.

Fashion-smart girls with  
CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

smart phones flock to the eighteen Brandy Melville stores in the United States or, better yet, order online to stock up on the artfully distressed, loose layering collection, featuring slouchy sweaters, patterned high-waisted bottoms, cut-off denim shorts, off-the-shoulder graphic T-shirts, and delicate accessories, which they then don while snapping a selfie to post on Instagram. However, Brandy Melville's style is not its most innovative feature. Indeed, the brand's bohemian silhouette recalls similar styles at H&M and Zara. Just scroll through pictures of young celebrities at Coachella to see the familiar breezy, feminine vibe.



How then can this fashion coup d'état be explained?

Brandy Melville's magnetism seems more a result of its

marketing than its unique fashions. Its one-size-fits-all sizing policy is both a source of its popularity and criticism. Not even making the list of the top ten hottest teen brands in previous surveys, Brandy Melville's skyrocketing rise to number one, even with its limited brick-and-mortar store footprint, invites inquiry into how its marketing strategy has mesmerized teen girls. Not only are all Brandy Melville clothing items notoriously labeled small or one-size-fits-all, each store's display of eye-catching black-and-white signs proclaims: "One size fits most."

That blanket declaration begs the question, "Really?" In fact, Brandy Melville's one-size-fits-all bottoms fit teen girls wearing the American size equivalent of 0, 1, 3, and 5; only a teen customer with a tiny waist, therefore, could shimmy into Brandy Melville's skinny jeans. However, the Brandy girl, idealized in their Instagram account—thin, blonde, and white—does not reflect reality. While Brandy's sizes do not correspond with statistics recording the true average size of American teen girls, to list those so-called "average" measurements would be just as damaging to girls who fall above and below the average as Brandy Melville's one-size-fits-all policy. Moreover, Brandy Melville's clichéd California surfer girl look seems to ignore the diverse ethnic identities of real California girls and of the general American population.

Latching on to this body dysmorphic statistical disparity, critics contend that Brandy Melville fuels eating disorders, like anorexia and bulimia, which already threaten the vulnerable self-image of teen girls, who are assaulted with impossibly perfect media images 24/7.

On the other hand, Brandy Melville enthusiasts celebrate its sizing, touting its inclusiveness and convenience. Unlike the higher price tags of Abercrombie and Fitch, Brandy Melville's reasonable prices—most items are under \$40—appeal to teen girls, who do not feel discriminated against economically from participating in the trend. Because the brand reaches out to their target female teen consumers in the language of social media, it meshes perfectly with Millennials. Furthermore, most fans applaud the lack of sizes, citing enhanced shopping convenience.

Supporters also assert that Brandy Melville girls are not just pawns, but participants, in the brand's success. Twenty teenage girls from its Santa Monica store on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street act as the brand's product research department, who are paid to brainstorm and select new styles, model the clothes for a photographer, and post on Instagram. Consequently, some of these individual teen girls have rose to popularity on Instagram; one girl named Alex Centomo has more than 200,000 followers. Hence, Brandy Melville launches entrepreneurial opportunities for these young women.

Now that you know about Brandy Melville's rise from a low-profile Italian clothing company's sole store in Westwood next to UCLA in 2009 to a worldwide retailing phenomenon, you can log on to brandymelvilleusa.com to judge the trend for yourself. Alternatively, you can pop into a local PacSun store to see the clothes at the only Brandy Melville wholesaler in the U.S.

Whether it is discrimination or fashion, Brandy Melville has made its mark in teen retailing. It's up to you to decide what that mark means.

# E-SPORTS SATIRE

BY EVE FABRE

## Oh, How Time Flies

From League, to Dota, to CS Go,  
It all looks like a puppet show,  
hours and hours wasted  
bet your face will look pallid,  
3 a.m. and an essay to go.

## What My Mom Has To Say

Why is this a sport?  
Go outside and enjoy nature  
It's been two whole days!

# THOUGHTS ON NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

BY LUCIA WANG

Is it really that weird for so many people to have birthdays in November?

Apparently, if you were born in October or November, you should have lots of birthday buddies. Why, out of all months, would these months be the most popular birthday months?

Let's take this from a logical perspective.

A birthday in November translates to a conception around Valentine's Day. And since Valentine's Day is the time to celebrate romance and love and kissy-face fealty, it makes sense for a child to be conceived on Valentine's Day and born nine months later in November. (Unless you celebrate the holiday as SAD, Single Awareness Day, and you dine alone and binge on self-gifted chocolates.)

Now, let's take the issue from a different perspective.

Imagine an adult who does not live in Arizona. Instead, he or she lives somewhere with cold winters,

places like Minnesota or Ohio. Imagine that it is January or February, and, thus, it is below-zero degrees outside and very difficult to stay warm inside. What is a better way to stay warm besides snuggling inside and making babies with your spouse? Apparently nothing. There is nothing better to do in the cold winter months.

Interesting.

So, to answer my initial question, no.

'Nuff said.

# NOSTALGIA REVISITED

BY MOLLY ONO

You're seven again, or eight, or ten, or twelve—but those details don't matter. What does matter is the cartridge grasped in your second-third-fourth-grader hands. It is chunky and inelegant against today's standards, but a marvel nonetheless. It will carry you through a world in which you are the main character, where your journey is the cornerstone for each pixel running across your screen. You simultaneously become the worshipped (in the game) and worshipper (of the game), and soon the only thing flooding your days and your thoughts is either Pokemon's Ruby (or Sapphire, depending on your level of taste) or the intense separation anxiety onset precipitated by such trivial matters as school.

Now older, you believe that you've moved on to bigger and better things, more enthralling, more sophisticated, more mature--but who are you kidding. These sacred games still elicit a thrilling sense of collective exhilaration through all the players that have been under the spell of the undying creed ("Gotta catch 'em all!"), so much so that a fan base spanning generations can take up arms faster than should be possible. And it is, without a doubt, this dedication and patriotism that Nintendo targets with the November 21<sup>st</sup> release of Omega Ruby and Alpha Sapphire, reboots of the original Ruby and Sapphire, with the flavor and look of a hungrier and more contemporary company. Gone are the charmingly simple pixilated landscapes of Hoenn, replaced by the "3-D" graphics introduced in Black and

White back in 2011 that seem to draw out a unanimous, but not unbearable discomfort during game play, which is only exacerbated by the 3DS console (which is the only console compatible with the new games). Despite these drawbacks, the promise of actual flight atop a pokémon and of "mega-evolutions"—aptly named upgrades of pre-existing evolutionary pathways for the less-than-aptly named upgraded games—still exist as temptations even for the most fastidious of Pokémon epicureans.

Ultimately, whether these new editions will live up to their predecessors remains to be seen. With the new graphics and additions to game play, they certainly have a good buzz, and not a small amount of blogs, media outlets, and big-name retailers have been hyping the ever-loving life out of it. However, Omega and Alpha stand not only on the shoulders of giants, but on the wonder and wanderlust of childhood memories; to sustain this nostalgia will be their definitive test. At the very least, the excitement of cradling the new game should not only extract notions of a simpler time and a more innocent and naïve world, but emphasize the disparity between past and present: you are a different person, this is a different game, and this is a different world, but still there remain semblances of the uncomplicated and painless haze that dwells exclusively in the minds of children. And you can almost taste it again, just barely. And so you slot the game into the player, and feel a familiar rush. If only glancingly, you are seven again.

# TIA'S TUNES

## TAYLOR SWIFT'S 1989

Disclaimer: I am not the biggest fan of Taylor Swift. When I walked into Target to purchase her new album, I questioned what I was doing several times. But when I saw that the big Taylor Swift display was completely empty except for three copies of the album, I was slightly intrigued. So, as a music-lover, I swallowed my pride and walked out of Target with T-Swift just to investigate the hype.

On Monday, October 28 T-Swift, T-Swizzle, Tay Swift, whatever you want to call her, dropped her new record *1989*. Last time I checked, Swift was a country star, but today she is competing with and being compared to pop artists like Britney Spears as she approaches the record for the most album sales in one week by a female artist.

*1989* begins with “Welcome to New York,” a song full of synths and an aggressive chorus that, frankly, gets pretty repetitive. But that’s a pop song for you. Swift needed a strong pop song to start off this incredibly poppy album, and “Welcome to New York” delivers.

“Blank Space” is the second song on the album. I honestly thought Lorde made a guest appearance on this track because of the dark, echoing intro. But as soon as I heard the lyric “Got a long list of ex-lovers/they’ll tell you I’m insane” accompanied by the classic three-chord chorus, I knew it was completely Swift. The song is predictably catchy, with a much more compelling chorus than “Welcome to New York.” Swift definitely used her romantic reputation to her advantage in this one.

“Style” takes the third spot on the album and is strangely reminiscent of her 2009 hit “You Belong with Me,” especially her references T-shirts and skirts. I guess Taylor likes her clothes. The subject matter definitely appeals to her younger listeners. The one key difference between the two songs is the switch from a twangy banjo background to a Jesse McCartney-like guitar intro and slow drum beat.

In “You Took a Polaroid of Us,” Swift sings about the latest trendy throwback in an incredibly trendy way with her fourth track “Out of the Woods.” (Hey, she should

use Polaroids for her cover art. Oh wait. She did.) Just as repetitive as those of previous songs, the chorus seems to be some sort of failed anthem. Swift claims this song is about the “fragility and...breakable nature of some relationships,” but I felt none of that fragility, merely shallow lyrics shoved into a pop song mold.

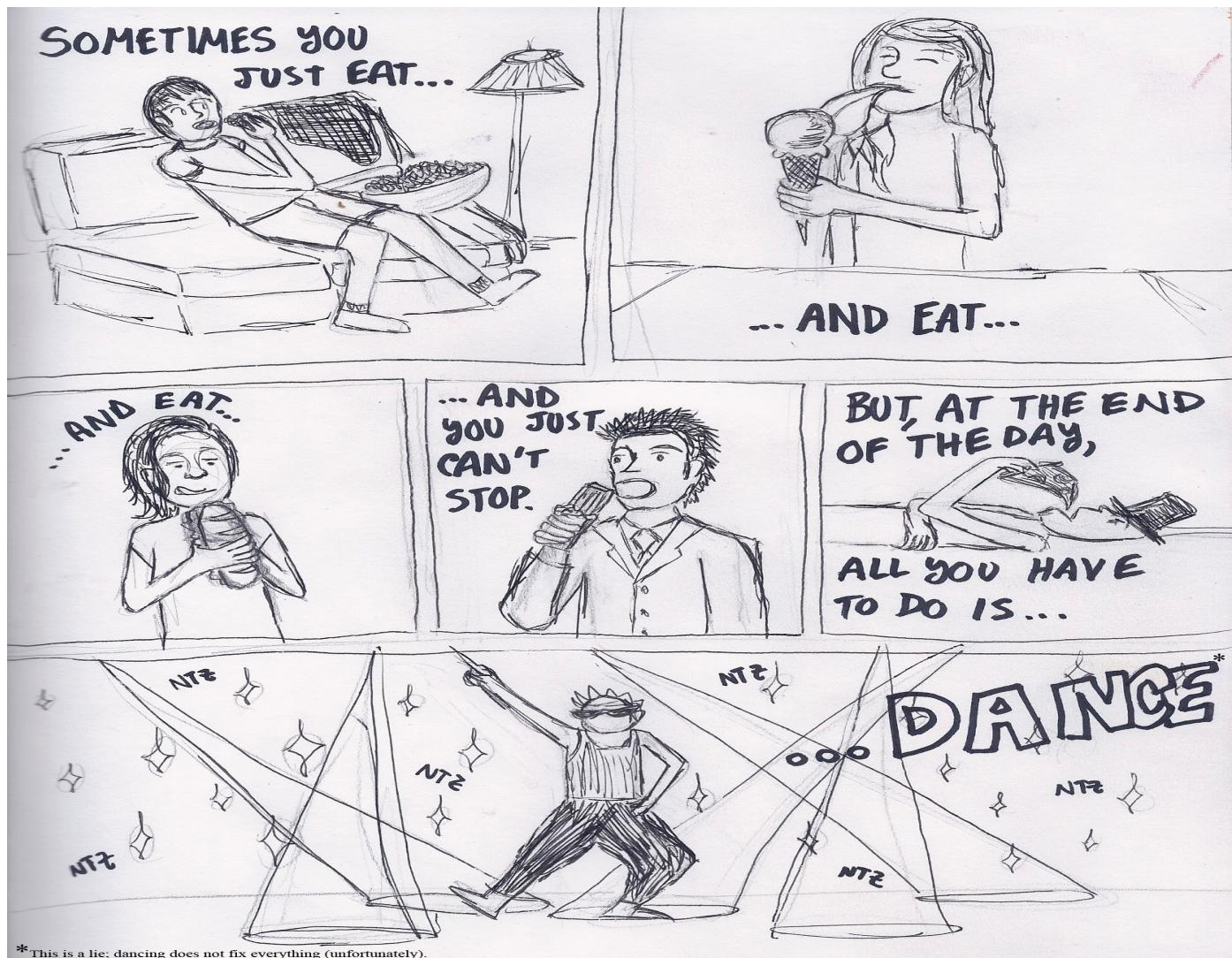
“All You Had to Do Was Stay” and “Shake It Off” (the debut single of the album) both seem to serve as the obligatory dance songs of the album. It’s great to have them, but not when they’re accompanied by “lock me out,” “mess you made,” and “gone forever,” phrases that we have all heard before.

I have been pretty harsh so far (but only because the first eight songs on the album are extraordinarily monotonous). While many of Swift’s songs are predictable and obviously target a younger audience who will have no problem singing along, “This Love” and “Clean” provide refreshing breaks from the trendy lyrics that litter the first couple tracks. The songs might not be timeless ballads, but they certainly evoke more emotion and depth than any of the other tracks.

Ultimately, *1989* follows a rule that I have always found to be true when it comes to music: if you can dance to it right away and find yourself already singing the lyrics after a couple hours, it’s not an album that is going to last. Swift creates a couple great moments on this album with “This Love” and “Clean,” but the rest of the songs are over produced and their overall style is simply overused. She seems set on heading in the pop direction, which is admirable, but she needs to use her past influences to her advantage, not completely disregard them. I felt the best songs on this album were ones that allowed her lyrics (if they were not already cheesy) to really shine. If she lets the popular production of mainstream music, instead of her lyrics, lead her career from this point, then she might lose momentum.

Rating: ★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆

Reminds me of: Katy Perry, Carly Rae Jepsen, Demi Lovato



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