

The Sensationalist: #10

11/16/22

“Join the polycule of life!”



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Sonnet III

Henry Levitt

Bearing that contrived mortal burden
Plunges my mind through arctic ice.
Ticking clocks now cease their spin,
When pain and apathy entice.
Free falling faithlessly cuts all ties
To paralyzing paradigms,
But fills your head with morbid lies
Equal to drowning pantomimes.
Blinding headlights may choose my fate,
And sobering pain if life prevails...
The light draws no closer in wait,
So this is what living entails:
To Be is suffering and pain,
In which beauty will always reign.

Sanction Letter

On October 18, 2022, I was found responsible for Code of Conduct Violation /10. Use of Prohibited Items/i. Combustibles and other flammable items, for a handheld lighter. During the room check on October 18, RA Shrijani found a handheld lighter on my desk, which my roommate Edwin confirmed was my desk since I was not present in the room at the time. I then received an email to report to The Office of Residential Education to have a meeting regarding the incident. In my hearing with Resident Director Ms. Hernandez on October 24, I confirmed that this was indeed my lighter. We discussed how lighters are prohibited according to the Student Handbook and that I should not be in possession of one while on campus. We also briefly discussed the Boland Hall Fire at Seton Hall University, which I have researched and will outline further on. Following this meeting, I received an email from Ms. Hernandez on October 25, outlining how I now have a warning status that will be complete by Tuesday, November 8. I was also asked to write and submit a 2-3 page reflection paper outlining what I have learned.

At the time of the incident, I was not aware that a handheld lighter was a prohibited item, but I now know that they are not allowed and I have since discarded the item. I have learned that I need to pay more attention to the Student Handbook and policies and to be cautious to make sure I am not in possession of any prohibited items. In fact, since the incident, I have taken a detailed look at the Student Handbook to re-familiarize myself with Stevens' core values, policies and practices, student affairs, and Student Code of Conduct. I have re-familiarized myself with Section 10 of the Student Code of Conduct: Use of and Possession of Prohibited Items. I have looked through and understood what items are permitted and what is prohibited on campus. Finally, I have confirmed that I am not in possession of anything on this list, and also that my roommate is not in possession of anything on this prohibited items list.

In Ms. Hernandez' email I was asked to research the Boland Hall Fire at Seton Hall University and reflect on how the use of prohibited items can largely impact the greater community. The Boland Hall Fire was a fatal fire in a freshman residence hall at Seton Hall University. Three students died, and 58 were injured making it one of the deadliest fires in a college campus in US history. The fire began when two students who

were intoxicated decided to play a prank and set fire to a paper banner. The two students left the paper smoldering before going back to their rooms, and the fire quickly spread, eventually burning the whole building to the ground and causing severe injuries, and as mentioned, three deaths. The two students who started the fire were sentenced to five years imprisonment in 2007.

Combustible items were at Seton Hall University, as they are at Stevens, prohibited, and for good reason. Although I would never play around with fire indoors, or leave paper smoldering anywhere, the Boland Hall Fire is extremely important to remember and think about. What could happen if my lighter were discovered by untrustworthy or intoxicated individuals? What could happen if, malicious or pranking intent aside, a simple accident happened leading to a dangerous fire? The use of prohibited items does not simply affect me, the individual. There are also larger problems that my carelessness could have led to that I am now aware of, and even after researching the fire, still thinking about. It is up to all of us at Stevens to follow the Student Handbook properly, not just for our own safety and health, but for the safety and health of all Stevens students, faculty, workers, and more. In the future, I will be sure that every item I am in possession of is permitted by the Stevens Student Handbook, and if I am not sure, I will double check the handbook to confirm any confusions I may have. I also now know that I can reach out to my Resident Director Ms. Hernandez if I have any questions on the subject.

Signed,

James Hooker



PHOEBE LEVITT

Honors Reflective Essay

Henry Levitt

It has been just about three months since I started attending the University of Georgia, and in some ways, I have grown in my time here, and in other ways I have stagnated. Because the Honors College is a “look to the bright side” and “slap a band-aid on it” institution, I will only focus on the growth—though I do not even think the growth and “eye-opening knowledge” is wholly positive. Also, I need to fill this space with seven hundred and fifty words, so there will be a lot of nonsense and filler within this essay.

The first piece of filler information that I will delve too deep into, is what I have learned within the honors program as it relates to the ethos of the University of Georgia as a whole. Well, thus far, the assignments within the Introduction to Honors Seminar class can be categorized into two divisions. Yet all have the similarity of being busy work and an abject waste of my precious time here on this planet. Before I go into the categorizations, I think it is time for my first filler tangent. Philosophers from the Stoics to modern Hindus and Buddhists, along with thinkers of every creed and era in between, have all agreed that the most precious thing we have, and will always have, is time. We will never be able to get any of our time back, nor will we be able to slow it down. And so, when the Honors College wastes my time with pointless pre-professional assignments and tells me that “this is the way the world is” and that I must subscribe to the absurd time wasting that will be intrinsic in any job I will have for the rest of my life, it is naturally disheartening for an eighteen-year-old to hear. More than disheartening even, it is depressing. I just graduated High School and am excited to forge my own way when the Honors College begins to prod me towards a corporate soul sucking job under the guise of “practice for the future”. Well, this course did not give me practice. It gave me a jaded view of the future and it gave me very little hope that I will accomplish the goals I want to. The other category that I mentioned above attempts to inform me about all the initiatives I can take part in from study abroad to CURO, but it goes too far in its scope when it requires me to conduct pointless research that will not help me in any way.

Now back to how the information in the former category has affected me and will continue to do so. The information I have learned has made me jaded and hopeless. Instead of doing assignments in any of my classes for the benefits I will get from them, I now do it so that I can graduate with satisfactory grades and obtain my degree. The Honors College has taught me that this is all that matters to get a job. In fact, they taught me that the seven seconds a recruiter looks at my resume is all that matters. So, I should practically be on my knees kissing the boots of Jere Morehead for teaching me how to pass the first test to get a job.

I believe that I satisfactorily answered the first question of what I learned and how my worldview was shaped. Now onto the next question. I need to spend the next 200 words speaking about how my future plans will impact me as a person in the future. A question that begs the impossible. Oh, how I do love this very important reflective essay. This is truly helping me reflect on myself in an introspective way. Oh, what would I have done without it!

That is enough of that for now. A plan that was the future and now is the present is my participation in the Philosophy Club. I actually started this before my journaling assignment and pretended that this would be something that I wanted to join in the future because I needed material to write about. I am not sure what the Honors Program's obsession with future growth and academic trajectory is, though I can make assumptions that I may perhaps expound upon later. Regardless, the Philosophy Club provides me with a group of people that I can discuss subjects that would be deemed a pointless waste of time by the administration of this University, and so, it is a fresh breath of air.

Now I must talk about how I envision the Philosophy Club to shape my future and everything else that hinges upon that. If I am being honest, thinking about the future like this helps no one. It gives me severe anxiety, so I try to avoid it at all costs. And hypothetically if I did think about it, it would only set me up for disappointment. Usually, I would pretend to think about the future and write acceptable nonsense that no one will read, but this time I refuse. I will not sacrifice my mental health for a grade that goes nowhere. I will not

sacrifice my mental health, my soul, to make money and give the Honors College good looking numbers to parade around in front of investors and prospective students. But Philosophy Club! My future! It looks great!

In conclusion, I applaud the Honors College's incredible ability to waste my time. And even though all these assignments came close to crushing my soul and hope for the future, they failed to succeed. I am not a pre-professional tool, nor will I ever be. I can say one thing, I will succeed my way. Thank you for listening to my screed. I hope I receive at least fifty percent, though if I'm being honest, I do not really care.

Wrath of Zeus Eco-Terrorism Ploy

Imagine having the power of Zeus; the ability to smite an enemy with a rod of pure energy from thousands of feet above the Earth. Well, experiments by the University of Florida prompted me to realize this as a real possibility. What I mean to say is that us mortals have the power to summon lightning bolts anywhere we please. Now for reasons surrounding legal concerns I will not be creating a "guide" but instead I will pose a hypothetical situation in which a foe of oil conglomerates may smite a natural gas rig using this technique. Of course I do not condone or encourage the use of destructive tactics--this is merely a fictional story and an educational piece.

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Let's say a natural gas company scores a drilling grant on pristine land in a rural Pennsylvania town. Once the extraction begins, nearby residential wells are inundated with drilling chemical concoctions and crude propane. Within just a few weeks, the contaminant leaching has become so bad that the once lush rivers are veritable cesspools--and the town does nothing. This scenario is not too hard to imagine, as it is the same story that has played out again and again above the Marcellus Shale located in northern Appalachia.

Unfortunately for this gas company, it has awakened a sleeping giant: an eco vigilante...and she's out for justice.

One stormy night, she sneaks into the fracking compound with an Estes Rocket and stand, a long spool of thin copper wire, and a radio signal launcher. She ties one end of the spool of wire to her target (most likely a gas storage container or rig) and the other to the rocket. Wasting no time she sets the rocket on the stand and turns on the radio controller. Then she runs out of the compound until she is a safe distance away and pushes the magic button. She watches as the rocket shoots into the sky with jarring speed only to be met with pure plasma and electricity at the zenith of its arc. She blinks and hears an explosion rupture one tank...and another...and another. Even the deluge cannot stop the ferocity of the infernos that have set fire to this forsaken fracking faction.

Though she has the urge to visit the site the next day (an urge every arsonist may experience) she knows not to make the rookie mistake and instead watches the local news program reporting on what they think is an unpreventable "tragedy". A manager of the site may even voice his confusion in a live interview: "I don't understand why the lightning struck the storage container when there's a lightning rod not even 200 feet away!"

Obviously this is quite the setback, yet not enough to stop the operation completely. But perhaps if a pattern continues, there may be some pseudo-religious, if not economic reasons, to abandon the project. Regardless, our vigilante will unfortunately always be able to find more targets that deserve the wrath of Zeus.

THE POINTLESS PANTS PROJECT (P.P.P.) UPdAtE

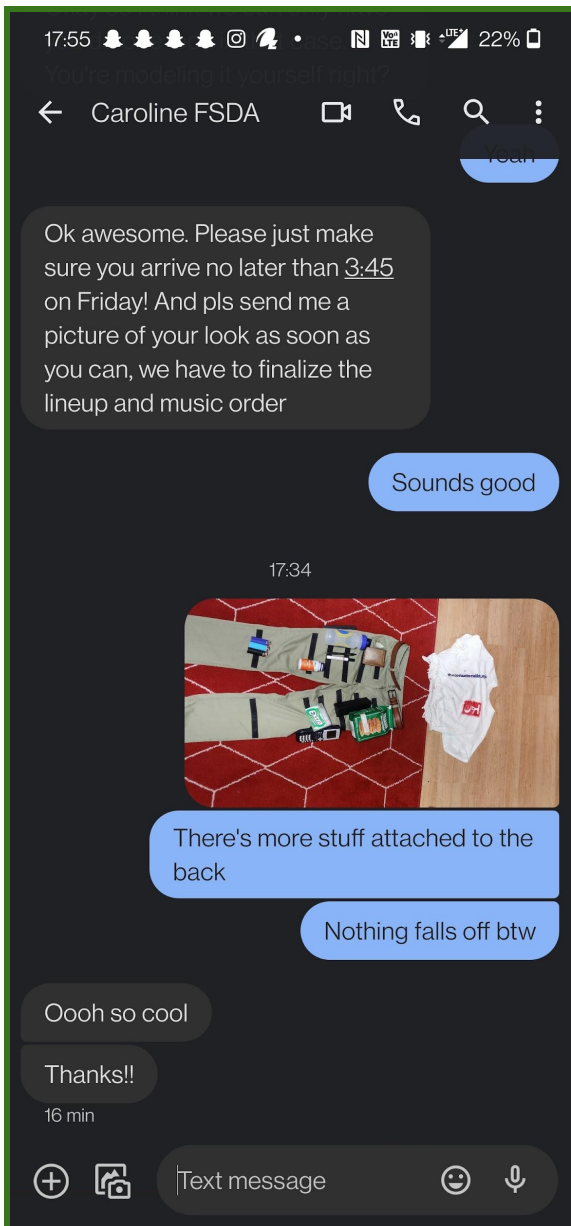
The Pointless Pants are done! Well...kinda. My abject laziness (though I am likely to attribute this to business if you bring it up in conversation with me) caused the project to morph slightly into a form that perhaps exceeds the original idea in its level of pointlessness. Instead of sewing many pockets, which I may still do over Thanksgiving break when I borrow my sister's sewing machine, I decided to stick velcro to items one would plausibly store in said (nonexistent) pockets. Now the pant's user can stick almost anything to his or her lower extremities without any cloth intermediaries. Below you will find a few ideas out of the literally infinite possibilities.



I am still partaking in the fashion show this Friday, though I had to jettison the “secret” look due to the constraint of only being able to model one outfit. So I combined the top half of that secret look with the Pointless Pants to create something glorious yet foul, holy yet cursed, pointless yet...no it's still pointless.

As of yet I have not decided on a name for this combined look. If you have any ideas, please reach out to me (203 800 5800) before Friday.

-XOXO Henry



P.S. I will shave my belly hair before the show.

Music of the #10: [Pointless Pants Project](#)

This has been The Sensationalist: #10

“What is life for if not for fucking around?”