THE COLLEGE HILL INDEPENDENT EDITOR APPLICATION
SPRING 2018

Thank you for applying to edit the *Indy*! Section editors are responsible for pitching, writing, editing, and assembling content for their section for each issue.

Below are some questions.

All applications are due by **Friday, December 8th**th at **11:59 pm** to theindy@gmail.com. Please include the subject line "APPLICATION". Please feel free to email the managing editors (katrina_northrop@brown.edu, signe_swanson@brown.edu, jonah_max@brown.edu) if you have any questions.

PART I

Please type your responses below each question.

- What is your name?

- We're planning on conducting interviews before the end of finals period, on December 13th, 14th, and 15th. When is your last day on campus?

- Can you commit to the *Indy*'s two mandatory weekly meetings (Monday at 7pm, Wednesday at 7pm)?

QUESTIONS

1. In order of your preference, list at least three sections: News, Metro, Features, Arts, Science, Literary, Sports, Food, Tech, Occult, Ephemera[1]:

     i.
    ii.
   iii.

2. Why are you applying to be an *Indy* editor?

3. Why are you applying to your listed section preferences?

4. What do you like about the *Indy* in general (also consider the layout, graphic design, and website)

5. What would you like to change?

6. As an editor and a member of the staff, what work would you do to include voices that you feel have been historically excluded from the media?

7. What's a piece that you have read in the *Indy* that made an impression on you? Feel free to consider writing, design, and illustration.

8. Please pitch three articles that you would like to publish in your top-ranked section.

9. What do you see as the role of the *Indy* compared to other campus/community publications?

10. What is your experience with writing and editing? Please list any articles you've written for the *Indy* or any other publications.

11. This past fall, the *Indy* worked together to create a mission statement that reflected its aims as a publication and as a member of several broader communities (http://www.theindy.org/about). What are one or two things from this statement that seem especially important to you?

12. What other communities are you a part of, either on-campus or off?

13. Please send us two samples of your writing that you're proud of. These samples can be academic or non-academic writing, from the *Indy*, a class or elsewhere.

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[1] Hi! As of now, the clearest guide to explain what each of these sections are lives in a really long document that we don't want to make you read. To get a better sense of what each section does, our Wikipedia page is pretty good.

PART II

Please edit **one** of the following articles. The first one is a draft of a piece that ran in the Arts Section, while the second one is a draft of a News piece. Make comments to the writer as if you were editing for the *Indy*. Make changes, move information or cut blocks of text—use **bold** for edits. Do not use track changes in Microsoft Word. Consider giving specific comments within the text and general comments at the end. Go beyond copy-editing: address style, tone, structure and anything you think the article is missing. We are interested in both the content of your comments and the manner in which you convey those comments to the writer.

You will need to add a title, subhead, and byline. Insert "biflics"—section headings—where appropriate to break up the text.

I.

ADD A TITLE
And a subhead
By Robert Venturo

There is a grid; it gathers itself from beyond the picture-frame, and focuses to a point on the distant horizon. From that distant point, facing the opposite direction, one can imagine the grid's expanse *ad infinitum*, like an ocean that falls off beyond the curvature of the earth due its sublime massiveness. A group of young men and one woman gather on this grid, pasted together in relief against the precise lattice beneath them. They eat; they play music; they listen; the woman and a man lie down, sensually, in contact. Where is this rendezvous? There are mountains, bounded by a field on one side and a forest on the other. The grid, extending beyond the frame, into and around the spectator, terminates within the frame at this natural border. With the foundation of Superstudio in 1966, the architect died, preceding Barthes' author by a whole year. Two recent graduates of the Florence School of Architecture, Adolfo Natalini and Cristiano Toraldo di Francia, began Superstudio as an architectural firm that didn't practice architecture, but thought it. Their most famous project was the *Continuous Monument*: a series of conceptual collages that imagined a grid superimposed across the earth. In some of the pictures the grid wraps around natural landscapes like valleys or mountains. One displays Manhattan, spared as a relic of an architecture that used to be, and surrounded by the neutral, monumental non-architecture that has supplanted it. *Picnic-Orgy* is one such visual thesis of the *Continuous Monument*. The grid was not meant to be built, and fails even to be represented; hence the strategy of a series of collages, geographically scattered, that each imply the grid as a whole. The imagined material for the grid was glass—a quintessentially modern choice, symbolizing light, transparency, and moral adequacy to other new materials like iron and steel. The glass grid would dominate Earth's topography through sheer neutrality and ubiquity. Rem Koolhaas, speaking of the urban grid that structures so many human spaces, noted how the "grid is, above all, a conceptual speculation [...] in its indifference to topography, to what exists, it claim superiority of mental construction over reality." The grid counters narrative, which takes place in and through architecture; the "continuous monument" is one architectural act, implemented over

time, in defiance of time. Against this monument, a "picnic-orgy" is just as strange as an executive meeting, and it presents a critical ground for normative practices and politics.

The grid's argument, and with that modernism's, is undermined by its material. Glass, while apparently stable, clear, and hard, is not actually solid: it is an amorphous solid, which means that on a molecular level it is somewhere between a liquid and solid. While it has some crystalline elements of a traditional solid, its molecular structure is randomized like a liquid. All of this is to say that on a geological timescale, glass is melting: the grid becomes a pool, without structure, enveloping.

This crystalline grid/pool has a source: Earth's crust. Industrial glass manufacturers use a synthesis of sand, recycled glass, soda ash (sodium carbonate), and limestone (calcium carbonate). Soda ash derives from sodium chloride (salt), which is mostly gleaned from sea water and harvested from brine wells, salt lakes, and salt mines. Limestone is mined, makes up about 10% of the total volume of all sedimentary rocks, and is made up of skeletal fragments from marine organisms like coral and mollusks.

A glass grid that spans a global surface ignores a latent impossibility: the materials of glass, which are already present in the crust it seeks to overlay, are limiting factor. Ten percent of something cannot cover itself. Modernists myths, whose biblical time is incommensurate with geological time, begin and end in an Earth of fertile abundance, a Garden of Eve ground-zero, transformed by technology. This story is only pieced together and never complete, except in an implication beyond the narrative itself. Furthermore, while refusing all narratives on the surface of the Earth (human history, architecture, diversity), it forgets the depth beneath it: millions of years signified by layered inorganic material. From this perspective, the glass grid is one scene in a much bigger story playing out beyond the sensible limits of human beings, cosmically slow (or fast).

In 1969, ARPAnet goes live, the same year as the Continuous Movement's critical assault on architecture. But while Superstudio's grid is never built, ARPAnet prefaces the development of a genuine global grid of sorts, the Internet. What's hyperbole to Superstudio is, at least in part, reality today. But the Internet relates more to the concept of grid than to a realization of the concept. Like the grid, the Internet does not exist in any analogue to our imagination of it. We interact in digital spaces, imagining our voices and images mingling in a cloud, but the cloud is underground, in transatlantic cables and bleak server farms. Like the grid depicted in *Picnic-Orgy*, the Internet is not real as we picture it. The internet levies dispersed and ostensibly neutral existence to utopian ends, while it has become a power-laden regulative apparatus, at once a liberating commons, an invisible prison, and a physical strata composed of metals extracted from the earth. The scene in *Picnic-Orgy* is ambivalent; while dystopic to some extent, an extension of modernism to its absurd end of equalized space, the scene is beautiful, elegant, captivating: a utopia in image form, that would become uncanny, autocratic, and scary in any real implementation. It's a dream. But what of the Internet, which we are dreaming all the while it exerts real transformations on our social and physical landscape? Can we sustain this dream, now that it is not a collage in an art museum?

As the glass grid balks at its material origins, refuting its lineage of stone and sea creatures, the Internet obscures its material base on all front**s**. The Internet is all water, flowing through protean screens and polished aluminum. The user interface through which people access the Internet literally gives a face to an opaque and complex organism of metals and electricity; the interface is more than three times removed from the electrically charged hardware of a computer (if such a hard/soft distinction can be made) by assembly code, machine language, high-level language, and finally a visual, trivial language. The minerals used to bring the Internet

to life [Zn, S, Ag, Cl, Al, Cu, Au, Y, Eu, K, F, Mg, Mn, Cd, As, Gd, Tb, Ce, Pb, Si, Ca, Ti, P, Pb, Fe, Sn, In, and Cd] are buried beneath application windows, videos, documents, C++, and binary code—buried, in spite of they've been unburied to reach their present form. And the very name Internet, which describes a decentralized system of nodes and signals, brings together these parts into a fictional unity—a continuous monument, a substantial grid.

ROBERT VENTURO B '19 needs a byline.

II.

ADD A TITLE
And a subhead
By Maude La Joie

On September 8, video surfaced of Hungarian journalist Petra Laszlo tripping refugees as they ran past police out of a camp near the Serbian border that had been set up to detain them. Laszlo was working for a news channel associated with Jobbik, a far-right party notorious for spreading anti-immigrant sentiment. Though the journalist was fired, the event highlights the growing confidence of far-right parties in Europe, that had already been slowly gaining popularity before the breaking point the current refugee crisis seems to have reached. As thousands of migrants, most fleeing the ongoing civil war in Syria, cross into their nations' borders, these parties may see an even greater rise in support.

The same day that the video came out, a post appeared on the Pope's official Twitter account urging religious communities to take in refugees. The next day, Bishop Laszlo Kiss-Rigo of Szeged-Csanad, representative of Hungary's largest religion in the southern region of the country, called the wave of migrants "an invasion." Prime Minister Viktor Orban has become a notorious voice in the crisis, asserting that a wave of Muslim refugees would threaten Hungary's identity as a Christian nation.

In Denmark, a highway was closed for a number of days to prevent migrants from crossing into the country's borders from Germany, and the government spent $37,500 publishing ads in Lebanese newspapers meant to discourage migrants from entering the country.

Though France has been one of the least popular destinations for refugees, the leader of its far-right National Front party, Marine Le Pen warned that "unless the French people take action, the invasion of the migrants will be every bit the same as that of the fourth century, and could have the same consequences," alluding to Celtic invasions that took place in the Middle Ages. Mayors in the country are refusing the Interior Minister's requests to take in refugees.

In Sweden, one of the more welcoming countries during the crisis, the anti-immigration Swedish Democrats are now ahead of all other major parties in recent opinion polls, at 25 percent. And though German Chancellor Angela Merkel had at one point promised there would be no limits on intake of refugees, Germany is now increasing border controls.

With even the countries most willing to take in refugees unable to unify support, the chances of a broader European agreement to handle the crisis seem slim. Germany has insisted that the refugees be taken in more evenly among European countries. Many countries are against such an agreement, particular less wealthy former Communist states such as Slovakia, where every major party has taken a stance against any requirement to accept refugees.

These disparate responses do not bode well for a weakening European Union, but the human rights implications are perhaps the most disturbing.

The island of Lesbos, a popular tourist destination in Greece, has become the largest point of entry for refugees, due to its proximity to Turkey. There is now a backup of 20,000 refugees waiting to register with authorities on the island, and Coast Guard officials often work double shifts to rescue those who get stranded near its Mediterranean shores. Upon arrival, refugees often must sleep on sidewalks without access to toilets, and face distrust from locals.

In Lebanon, attacks against Syrians have been on the rise. Tents in Syrian refugee camps are torched, and military personnel raid camps and beat residents.

Meanwhile, gruesome images and discoveries like that of a truck with the dead bodies of 71 refugees in Austria continue to appear in the media. Austrian Chancellor Werner Faymann's response to the incident emphasized the need for "combating criminals and people traffickers," ignoring, perhaps, the conditions that would drive a refugee to cast their lot with the sort of person who would crowd them with dozens more into a truck for a border crossing. In light of the dire situation refugees are facing, it's becoming clear that Europe is grappling with an intrenched xenophobia even in less extreme circles than Jobbik and National Front. As these issues come into the foreground, it becomes easier for these parties to gain power.

The philosophy that such far-right groups preach often comes with terrifying consequences for the people they fear are ruining their countries. Militias led by Jobbik have terrorized Roma villages and led rallies outside of homes, all justified as necessary measures to improve safety.

In France, the right wing group Génération Identitaire began conducting "scum patrols" on the Lille subway last year, also justified as a safety measure, to harass passengers they perceived as not French. The much larger National Front was founded by former supporters of Vichy France, and currently holds 2 seats in the National Assembly. The National Front largely campaigns on a distrust of immigrants, particularly Muslim ones, who make up a large portion of France's population.

The distrust takes form in a fear that Islam threatens the secularism at the heart of French government. Over the years, controversies have emerged over the right of Muslim women to wear the veil. My French teacher over the summer, who grew up in a Muslim family in Lille, explained it this way: "in America, wearing the veil is just a part of freedom of religion, but in France, it sends the message that your allegiance to Islam is greater than your allegiance to France, and to be French means that the republic is above all else. It's a cultural difference."

So opposition to Muslim immigration isn't simply a value of the far-right, but also a value that fits in comfortably with the values of French citizens across the political spectrum. The France-based feminist organization FEMEN has become known for its topless protests in front of Islamic centers, conflating many Muslim women's practice of covering most of their bodies with female oppression. The implication is that Islam's presence in France exists in opposition to feminism, secularism, and freedom.

When the attack on French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo's offices took place, the rallying cry in support of free speech was "je suis Charlie," going beyond defending the magazine's right to free speech and implying an alignment with the magazine. The same magazine recently published a cartoon reminiscent of a famous image of a refugee child drowned on the beach this month on its front cover.

Geert Wilders of the Party for Freedom in the Netherlands, has warned of the "Islamisation of the Netherlands," also making an appeal to secular, liberal values—though Wilders also advocates a ban on immigration from all Muslim countries, and has compared the Quran to Mein Kampf.

It's important for any country taking in refugees to consider how they would support this

new population. But in Europe the discussion turns far too often into whether it's even desireable to help refugees who fled war and risked their lives to reach what is meant to be a safe, democratic haven. Dealing with the refugee crisis won't just be a question of resources, but a question of whether Europeans believe their institutions are strong enough to hold up in a multicultural, pluralist society.

MAUDE LA JOIE B'20 needs a byline.

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Again, thank you for taking the time to fill out this application. We will be in touch soon about the interview portion. Please feel free to reach out with any questions you have. We look forward to meeting with you!

Yours,
Jonah/Katrina/Signe (JKS)