



the
North
Avenue
Review

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Last fall, we were angry. And there's still plenty to be angry about (read Martine Fortune's "What is the News You Want to See in the World?" or Alissa Kushner's "A Modest Proposal"). But there's so much more to be mushy about.

This semester, I haven't been afraid to embrace the mush, the cheese, the goo. I might be turning into a full-fledged hippie. And though there have been moments of aching sadness, I've felt buoyed by the love surrounding me. Whenever I become angry, frustrated, or start to feel hopeless, I try to remember that the people around me are just doing their best, like me. We're all just... trying. And though John Jajeh rails against trying in "Amateurs", I think that when it comes to life, all we can do is try our best.

So I've embraced love. Maybe that's why I'm obsessed with Bintou Sillah's "Love" photo series, where friends and lovers embrace each other with wide smiles. In "The Flower Boy of Nostalgia", Liz Welsko explores Tyler the Creator's relationship with nostalgia, how he longs to be taken back to November, a time when he was happiest.

Letter from the Editor.

That's why this issue is colored in pastels and illustrated by flowers and fruit. I hope you leave optimistic that the problems discussed in this issue, though frustrating and heartbreaking, do have solutions. And I hope you look at the people around you—your friends, your parents, and your classmates—and reach out. Love whomever is there to be loved.

Love,

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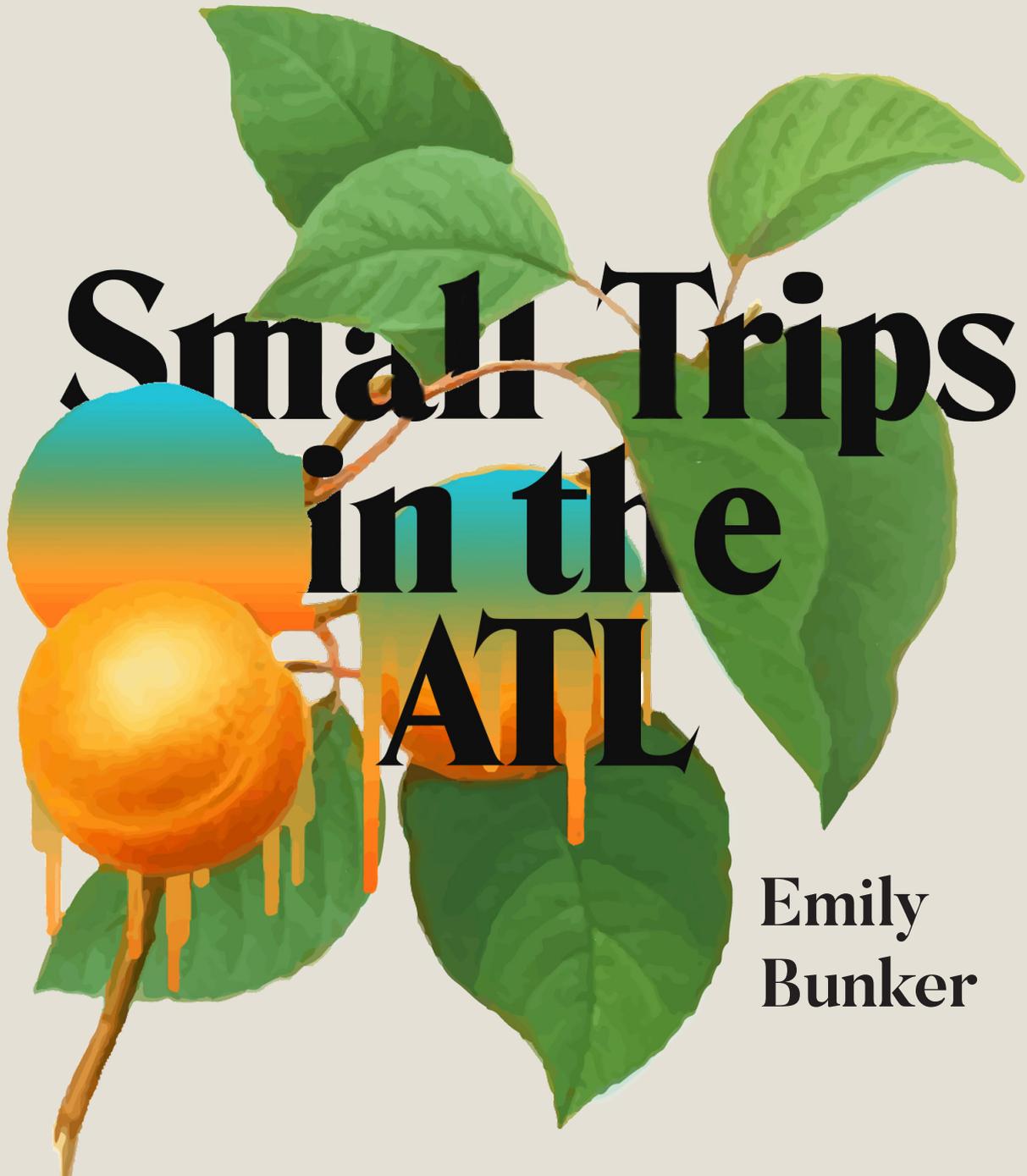
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Small Trips in the ATL

Emily
Bunker

Fifty years after the counterculture explosion of LSD and psychedelic rock, hallucinogenic drugs serve a different purpose. Whether it's relieving mental illness, fostering deeper relationships, or boosting positivity, psychedelic drugs are being used for far greater purposes than a rad party. Part of this trend, known as microdosing, was popularized by Silicon Valley tech CEOs using 10-20 micrograms of LSD to increase their focus, creativity, and innovation. This workaholic mindset quickly diluted as microdosing spread beyond the Tech Bubble and into other industries and cities, including Atlanta.

Although I'd heard of this trend, I never believed it would be popular in the old-fashioned city of Atlanta. Besides how antithetical psychedelia is to southern charm, hallucinogenics are also illegal. But through interviews, research, and observations right here in our city, I discovered Atlanta's own spin on this Cali trend. At the center of the psychedelic community in Atlanta is Moshe Jacobson.

Moshe is the founder of PsyAtlanta, which he describes as a "psychedelic education and support community." Through this organization, over 1000 Atlantans discuss their psychedelic experiences and how to apply their learning to everyday life, a process he calls "integration." The stereotypes of LSD revolve around hippies and tie-dye, but neither Moshe nor the members of PsyAtlanta fit those descriptions. Instead, members view hallucinogenic drugs as "medicine," not "entertainment." Moshe argues that medicine is "something you use to make yourself better. You can also already be well and then use medicine to make yourself better." Moshe prefers this terminology as it "commands a little bit more respect" by transferring drugs from entertainment to personal growth.

Sitting in the coffee shop, listening to Moshe and munching on a sweet potato biscuit, I suddenly saw the ironic parallels of psychedelic drugs and southern cooking. Moshe explains microdosing as feeling more introspective and empathetic, your perception and senses are heightened which allows for more outside-the-box thinking. But because it's a microdose, you don't have an actual trip or out-of-body experience. When Moshe guides others on their psychedelic experiences, he emphasizes the importance of mindfulness and intentionality. In juxtaposition, soul food cooks slowly and carefully. Its consumption is just as slow; supper can take 3 (or 4, or 5) hours. Just as soul food differs from fast food, Moshe's therapy differs from a weekly hour therapy session. LSD and mushrooms are about slowing down and being more conscious in your life, even after the trip has ended. Microdoses subtly encourage these changes by making you more focused and productive. And more importantly, it makes you slow down and actually see your surroundings. Simply put, it's a southern twist on the Silicon original.

While the benefits sound nice, many people are deterred from using LSD or mushrooms because of their illegality, at any dosage. What's amazing is how many individuals use these drugs despite that risk. Data from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) show an approximate 17% increase between 2007 and 2017 of individuals over the age of 26 who have tried some form of hallucinogenic drug in their lifetimes. Specific to Georgia, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) has seen a significant increase in LSD cases. In 2014, they had 21 cases, but in 2017 that rose to 137 cases. Through individual conversations, I understood the details of why, how, and who is actually participating in microdosing.

I was lucky to meet such people by observing a Psychedelic Science seminar hosted by PsyAtlanta. On a Monday night in Midtown Atlanta, around 25 people gathered in the community room of a condo complex to learn more about how hallucinogen drugs work. The group consisted of retired folks and students, married couples and single individuals. Despite differing in age, interests, race, and sex, they were united in their interest in psychedelics.

The only problem, he admitted with a sheepish grin, was that he wasn't exactly doing microdoses. More like small-doses.

Haley, a petite neuroscience and psychology student at Georgia State University, lead the discussion. People happily piped up to ask questions or share their own opinions; however, despite the open feel of the room, I noticed that many people still had reservations about sharing personal experiences, particularly of microdosing. The risk of admitting that you trip in your free time differs from the risk of admitting that you microdose while you're at work, driving your car, chatting with your neighbor, etc. Nonetheless, a few people in the group nodded in agreement when one individually bravely opened up about microdosing practices. Everyone giggled when the same individual admitted to occasionally taking too big of a dose and getting absolutely nothing done.

I anticipated PsyAtlanta connections to be the easiest way to interview people, but I was surprised by how many friends of friends were willing to talk to me about their microdosing experiences. On Georgia Tech's campus, I was able to interview two students who are familiar with microdosing. Stephen began microdosing essentially out of boredom. He'd tripped on acid before and found the experience beneficial for his mental health. Stephen started playing around with microdosing during his internship because his work wasn't challenging. The only problem, he admitted with a sheepish grin, was that he wasn't exactly doing microdoses. More like small-doses. Where the recommended microdose

is 10 micrograms, Stephen would take around 40. Ultimately, Stephen said the experience wasn't good for him; it was too much acid.

If Moshe Jacobson reads the paragraph above, he's going to be disappointed. The lack of education about how to microdose, including knowledge of the amount to take and when to take it, prevents many people from reaping the benefits of microdosing. Moshe described the benefits as stabilizing, preventing one from feeling "down". But he also emphasized that if a microdosing regimen isn't taken seriously, it can cause negative effects.

If Stephen is Moshe's problem child, then Jack, another Georgia Tech student who currently microdoses, would be the teacher's pet. Unlike Stephen, Jack is very careful on measuring his dosages and tracking the days he's been microdosing. Jack admitted that he already struggles with anxiety. Microdosing can help with this but doing too much, too often can actually increase his anxiety. Jack uses microdoses to help his productivity and creativity, but explained how this effect happens in an indirect way. Jack described microdosing as a motivational push. When dosing, he feels guilty for being lazy. Normally, he says "it's easy to be lazy when you're sitting in front of computer... to just go on Reddit. But this stuff will make you feel bad for that." Just as Moshe described feeling up and positive, Jack describes his experiences as an internal, abstract change in mentality. Productivity and creativity are just the consequences.

If you're wondering if there's any science behind these drugs, you're not alone. As I mentioned earlier, I attended a "Psychedelic Science" lecture hosted by PsyAtlanta and Atlanta Neuroscience. Through Haley's presentation and my own research, I learned how psychedelic substances affect our brains on a molecular level. Our brains allow us to day-dream of chocolate cake or imagine what a mystical world on acid would be like. They are vastly complex; much of their functions are still not understood. We do know that our brains communicate with themselves and our bodies through our central nervous system. One nerve cell sends a neurotransmitter across the synaptic

The large levels of fake serotonin can cause intense feelings of pleasure and self-esteem, but also introspection, potentially heading to a lost sense of self.

gap to be received by the target cell's receptor. The message probably isn't an invitation to tea, but it could be related to the emotional satisfaction of sweet tea if the neurotransmitter is serotonin. Known in the science world as 5-HT, serotonin plays crucial roles in our everyday lives. From basic life needs, like appetite and sleep, to more complex human needs, like mood and happiness, serotonin is responsible. A lack of serotonin neurotransmitters contributes to some mental illnesses, such as depression and anxiety. To avoid these problems, some people increase their serotonin levels by taking legal drugs like Lexapro and Zoloft. Others take psychedelics.

When people take a high dose of psychedelics, they go on a "trip". This experience occurs because they've given their brains significantly more fake serotonin than the norm — the drugs fit the same receptor site as serotonin. The large levels of fake serotonin can cause intense feelings of pleasure and self-esteem, but also introspection, potentially heading to a lost sense of self. On a microdose, the symptoms aren't quite as extreme. As one Tech student explained, "I think the microdosing is like putting your toes in the water for that spiritual aspect. It'll make you feel more human but ... you're not going to be seeing the walls breathing or some shit like that"—because "shit like that" probably wouldn't be so kosher in a work environment.

Moshe started PsyAtlanta over 6 years ago. He'd just broken up with a long-term girlfriend, the girl who actually introduced him to psychedelics in the first place. He missed having someone to talk to about psychedelic experiences, so he started PsyAtlanta as a way to bring a community of like-minded people together. At that time, Moshe didn't know much about the therapeutic potential of hallucinogens, microdosing, or integration. Now, 6 years later, Atlanta's psychedelic community has grown immensely in size and purpose. It's no



longer just about building community, it's also about helping individuals, educating on the therapeutic value of psychedelics, and living better lives. If all that happened in the last six years, where do you think Atlanta will be in the next six years?

The Flower Boy of Nostalgia

Liz
Welsko

What is it about sitting down to watch a movie you've already seen five times over? The sense of familiarity as the opening screen dissolves into a plot of all familiar details. Maybe it's the raggedy Converse that you just don't have the heart to donate to Goodwill. With every new product that appears on the market, another product falls into the category of "irrelevant". Novel ideas allow us to escape boredom in the name of progress, but it also gives us a bittersweet longing for what we once knew.

Popular culture today is obsessed with recreating the eighties—Stranger Things recreating an entire eighties universe complete with Walkmans and monsters; vinyl and cassettes being sold at every Urban Outfitters without a second thought; scrunchies and corduroy now seen on the Instagram explore page. Nostalgia is packaged and delivered to us from every angle, and no one's having as much fun with it as Tyler, The Creator.

He has come a long way since 2008. His new Converse collab has created the hottest shoes on the market which have sold out in minutes, considering all collections and prices. The branding of GOLF le FLEUR, his fashion brand, is concentrated on opulence and style. Tyler understands coveting a style he once couldn't afford, and now, he's making it a reality for thousands. As a result, he is dipping his toes in every artistic pursuit these days. His recent projects include producing the soundtrack for the new Grinch movie and his GOLF: Autumn/Winter Collection, signaling that he's willing to try anything, which we can easily find in his album Flower Boy.

Boy



From Tyler's start in the music industry over ten years ago, he's been provocative to a fault, as noted by his two country travel bans—just for his lyrics. However, with the release of *Flower Boy* in 2017, Tyler did something that's more surprising than his usual sexually explicit rap-routine. Instead, he revealed his emotions (and didn't scream at us for the first seven tracks). No alter egos here—just Tyler laying down synth chords that are softer than tears. *Flower Boy* is the Bat-Signal that Tyler is ready to open up about his emotions, and he's not alone. Our generation is desperate to escape from the turmoil of the present day by searching former decades. And why not? The past promises comfort, potential for inspiration, and a sense of control. Tyler's sentiments are a guiding force, heralding a mass-longing for what is known. In "See You Again", Tyler hit a peak both emotionally and commercially. This was his first song that made mainstream airways, and it's gorgeous in every way. Through all his hard work, he poses more questions than answers. Sure, he's finally reaping the benefits, demonstrated with the track "Who Dat Boy", but on the next track "Pothole" he's warning



the listener to not get distracted or sidelined by the potholes of life. It appears that Tyler can't let himself enjoy living in the present moment of his success out of anticipation for whatever is coming next. He's worried that he's going to get too comfortable with his own success and that anxiety seeps into other aspects of his life such as his sexuality and his writing. In "November", he raps "What if 'Who Dat Boy' is rhetorical and this shit is over?" The man is searching for a soulmate or self-confidence. There's no end to the uncertainty he has for himself and the world, and where's a better place to look for answers than the past? Throughout a good chunk of the album, Tyler's expressing insecurity, loss, and self-doubt. That doesn't stop him from providing us a holistic experience of his thoughts. Flower Boy is the vehicle into Tyler's elusive soft-side, where he feels comfortable relaying all of his experiences to us. From the opening chords of "Foreword", Tyler raps about cars, hobbies, his sexuality, slavery, and suicide.

Take "November". The opening chords are sung by gently-voiced Kilo Kish before Tyler enters with his typical gruff, yet poignant, phrasing "take me back to November." November symbolizes a time in Tyler's life when he was living in pure joy, the summer of 2006 when he formed the group Odd Future. He starts to ask us "what's your November?/is it a person?" He's reminiscing on what he considers one of the best times of his life, when he was creating art everyday surrounded by friends. The song then cuts to voiceovers of Tyler's friends talking about their Novembers: skating all afternoon, falling in love, the usual things. Sure, all these are nice and we probably all have our own sentiments that are similar but what's Tyler's point? He's talked extensively about his real passion for producing music. And it fits—Flower Boy plays like a score to Tyler's life, especially in the chord progression. To me, it's impossible to listen to only one song on the album; the lyrics beg you to continue listening. Each song builds on the previous one, crafting a story that is enthralling to experience. The last song on the album, "Enjoy Right Now, Today" plays like the ending credits of a movie. Compared to the opening track, it feels hopeful. The catharsis leaves Tyler feeling ready to enjoy what lies ahead in his career.

Why is this heartbreak for the past so intoxicating? It's almost impossible to remove yourself from the

hole of memories, feelings, places, and sounds that are no longer present. For some, there's a sense of longing for what can never return. For others, it's a way to cope and regroup oneself. From a young age, we are taught to make decisions for ourselves. As we stumble in search of what works for us, we fail, we try new things, we fail again, and we continue this process until we reach success. But once success is achieved, most of us realize we're not satisfied. There's still something inside that is unfulfilled, and fighting for that success suddenly doesn't feel as important as it once did. The purpose of it all might not be in the ever-expansive universe, but in the small joys and triumphs that people experience each day. At its root, nostalgia triggers the desire to fill our inner voids, which is why Tyler decided to use nostalgia as a catalyst for looking ahead. After all, if there's one thing that's certain about the future, it's that it will always be uncertain.



Tell me I can't build a chair
And I'll construct a house
Ladder in my hands
Dirt upon my blouse

Tell me I can't play a song
And a symphony I'll compose
Crescendo in A minor
And then the tempo slows

Tell me I can't climb a wall
And I'll fly to Kathmandu
Everest at my feet
The summit in my view

Tell me I can't win the game
And I will lead the team
We win, we win with passion
We lose, we lose with esteem

Tell me I can't speak my mind
And I'll sing my mind instead
Thoughts that aren't on paper
Words that can't be shred

Tell me I can't write a poem.



Tell Me

Jasmine
Al-Aidy





A
is for
ACE

Katie Zong

The first time I told a friend I was asexual, he didn't believe me.

It happened during your typical outing with friends. We were walking to Sweet Hut to grab milk tea and relax after a long week of exams, complaining about classes and joking around as we always did, when the conversation turned to relationships. I casually mentioned that I couldn't relate—I am asexual, meaning I don't feel the same way about others. I didn't think it was a big deal. My high school friends knew this long before I realized this about myself, and being uninterested in sex didn't seem so crazy to me that it would warrant a "coming out" discussion. Besides, my friends were open-minded college students who were supportive of the LGBT+ community. Surely they wouldn't even bat an eye, right?

I was wrong.

**“If you think the
'A' in LGBTQIA
stands for 'allies',
you're wrong.”**

The conversation halted, and all I saw were looks of confusion. Despite my discomfort, I tried to explain myself by talking about how I didn't see people the same way they did and by answering all their curious, yet incredibly invasive, questions about my sexuality. Most of them seemed to understand.

"That's not a real thing," my friend said. "I think your standards are just too high."

He didn't say it out of negativity, but it stuck with me. I haven't brought up my sexuality with him since.

this, asexuality is something that two-thirds of Americans struggle to define... let alone conceptualize.

We may pursue romantic relationships in which sex is totally off the table, or ones in which we're willing to compromise. While one ace-identifying individual could be sex-repulsed, there could be another who has a sex drive or enjoys sex while still not feeling any particular sexual attraction. After all, libido and sexual attraction are mutually exclusive. Some of us are aromantic, or "aro", and don't feel romantic attraction either, instead finding satisfaction in platonic and familial love. There even exists in-betweens (i.e. gray-aces and gray-romantics), who

Asexual, or "ace", describes an individual who does not experience sexual attraction. Many people confuse this with celibacy, which is incorrect—celibacy is a choice, while being ace is not.

If you think the "A" in LGBTQIA stands for "allies", you're wrong. Asexual, or "ace", describes an individual who does not experience sexual attraction. Many people confuse this with celibacy, which is incorrect—celibacy is a choice, while being ace is not. Similar to how people don't choose their sexual orientations, asexuals don't choose to be asexual. We simply aren't drawn to others in the same way.

It's likely that someone you know is asexual. In 2004, Brock University's Anthony F. Bogaert estimated that 1% of the population is asexual. (For comparison, a recent Gallup poll found that 4.5% of the U.S. population identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.) Despite

experience sexual and/or romantic attractions that exist somewhere between asexual and sexual, aromantic and romantic. People experience their asexuality differently because, just like any other sexual orientation, it exists on a spectrum. It's complex, nuanced, and incredibly fluid, and at the end of the day, there is no right or wrong way to identify. Use the words you feel best describe you.

I identify as a gray-romantic asexual. This means that I do not feel sexually attracted to other people, but I'll have a wild crush on someone once in a blue moon. It never lasts long—the current record is two weeks.

My relationship with my sexuality was never

defined by a singular, earth-shatteringly profound moment of soul-searching that people seem to think is essential to understanding one's identity. My friend had sent a light-hearted text that I was "the ace to her aro" (she's an aromantic bisexual). Just like that, I could finally put a word to how I felt. I hadn't realized that I was asexual—rather, I had simply found the words to express what I had already known.

If I had a nickel for every time someone told me I "just haven't found the right person", I'd be able to pay off my student loans. It's difficult to describe what it's like to be asexual in a world where everything seems to revolve around sex. Just explaining the concept is an uphill battle, even to other members of the queer community. The very idea that there could be an opposite state to sexual attraction baffles people. After all, it's strange and completely antithetical to everything we know about mammalian behavior. How could it possibly exist?

Yet, the unsolicited relationship advice is infinitely preferred to the unsolicited and borderline rude assumptions about my physical and mental health.

"You should go see a doctor, maybe you have a hormone deficiency."

"Are you sure you're not just afraid of sex?"

These are real things people have said to me. When the overwhelming majority of people fail to understand exactly what you are, the automatic conclusion is that something is wrong with you. Anything becomes more plausible than the truth, because the truth—the very notion that sex isn't a universal interest—isn't supposed to exist. This type of thinking invites stereotypes that can hurt asexuals and sexuals alike. For decades, sexually-reserved women—some of whom may very well have been asexual—were labeled "frigid" or mocked as prudes. Toxic masculinity disproportionately affects men by aligning individual worth with sexual experience and proficiency. Back then, and even now, men and women who fail to express interest in sexual gratification are labeled as gay or lesbian and harassed. There are even instances of corrective rape being employed in attempts to "fix" sex-repulsed asexuals. Our fixation with sexuality and sensuality pressures all people into engaging in sex even when it may be coerced or nonconsensual.

While asexuals generally may not encounter the oppression that the gay or transgender communities face, it is important to recognize that it is still very easy to discriminate against those of us who identify as asexual.

Too many people see the lack of attraction as the absence of something essential, as if it were some kind of emotional void. If a part of you is "missing", it's easier for others to perceive you as less than human. They can point their fingers and say, "Something inside of you is broken. You need to be fixed." But it's not like that. We are just as capable of loving and having meaningful, fulfilling relationships as any other person. There is no void, no empty space to fill—there is a heart, a soul, a mind ready to embrace others. We can love, just differently.



What I Did Last Summer

Anonymous

**“Oh, we got arrested as
FUCK,” my partner-in-crime
reflected after all the dust and
probation had finally settled.**

We tripped right at the finish line too, late-night August 14th, less than a week before the start of the semester. It was brutally sudden, extremely terrifying, and unpleasant. All of which is to say we had it incredibly easy.

We were in the parking lot of a public park, watching *The Yellow Submarine* and waiting to pick up a third friend. The police pulled up, flashed the lights, got out of the car, and had us roll down the window. They kept the small talk brief.

“Something smells interesting, gentlemen.”

“Just having some cigarettes, officer.”

He inspected the carton. “Doesn’t seem like it.”

“.....”

“Step out of the car.”

In hindsight, the better move was to maybe NOT do that, but we did. A few minutes later we were handcuffed and placed under arrest for Simple

Possession of Marijuana and Possession of a Controlled Substance (I'll let you guess which one). We heard our rights and everything. Good to know we had them, I guess. At this point, time ceased to exist entirely; even now I honestly can't remember when it all started. The entire thing was intensely surreal; the weed aside, everything felt like a dream. We were driven to the county jail, stripped, searched, and given a uniform. Then, we waited. We were photographed and allowed to make a call. Then, we waited. We were each given a blanket and mattress and sent to our cells.

Then, we waited.

I experienced two things I never had before: powerlessness and uncertainty in a manner that was more absolute, more crushing, and more overwhelming than anything I'd previously encountered. I had absolutely no idea what was going to happen in the next minute, the next hour, day, week, whatever. But it didn't matter — it was 100% not my decision. There was no room for argument, no room for anything except a set of bunk beds, a sink, and a toilet—and eventually some food I couldn't bring myself to eat.

After several hours, my friend was called away. After returning about an hour later, he explained that he had just been to bond court.

"The other one is scheduled for three o'clock today."

"What time is it now?"

"No idea.... But my bond is paid. I'm leaving now."

"Wish me luck." We shook hands and he left. I waited.

After a while we were let out into the central space of the cell block for an hour. There were tables, a TV up on the wall, and phones, but still no clock. So I just sat down and watched *How I Met Your Mother* — currently the single weirdest situation I've ever been in. As you might imagine, it was pretty hard for me to get into the episode, but something else did catch my attention. The phones had been in use since the moment we were let out, and one caller was becoming visibly agitated. He was a tall, too-skinny, white guy with a strong southern accent. He was probably in his early twenties but was clearly using

something that aged him beyond that. He had been talking to "Momma" for a couple minutes, having an argument that was becoming progressively more intense.

"I got bond court at three, I'm beggin... I can't afford no bondsman... you get it all back anyway. Please." A pause. "No! You don't understand! Like I need outta here NOW. Momma please. Please! PLEASE!" He got the guards' attention with that one.

"Quiet down back there."

"I can't do this please, Momma, I'm begging you." Another pause. "No! No! How can you? I need you, I need HELP!"

"Shut up..."

"NO! SWEAR I WON'T! PLEASE! I SWEAR!"

"Not gonna tell you again! Shut the hell up or I WILL shut you up!"

No good, at that point he was hysterical. "I CAN'T FUCKIN BELIEVE THIS! BULLSHIT! YOU NEVER DID NONE OF YOUR SONS LIKE THIS BEFORE! MOMMA! BULLSHIT! PLEASE! PLEEEAAASE!"

"That's it!"

The guards moved in and the other prisoners started yelling, but this man was in another world. The screaming, the howling, the phlegm, spit, and tears flying — he just started whaling on the phone console. "NOOOOOOOO! MOMMAAAA!"

I watched as he was tackled to the ground. "Legendary", Barney said, and the canned laughter rolled. The guards took the man away. At least they didn't tase him.

At some point, 3 o'clock arrived, and I was led out of the block with about five or six other inmates, cuffed and shackled in the holding area and then walked to a very small courtroom. There was the judge's bench and stenographers desk but not much else. We stood in front of a two-way mirror behind which were my parents... I hoped. Each of us were called individually to stand in front of the judge and given different orders—post bail, bond, or just sent back to the block to await criminal trial. I was given a \$1000

bond and sent back to the block.

A while afterwards I was called from my cell, given back my belongings, and told I was free to go. My dad picked me up and I had the most uncomfortable conversation I hope I'll ever have. The whole thing took a total of about thirty-six hours from arrest to release, or at least I think. A week later I was here at Tech and waiting on an interview to get into PTI, South Carolina's probation program for first-offenders: drug tests, counseling, online programs, community service and the like. I managed to not fail out of school and finally finished PTI back in January. I'm not proud at all, just lucky. Between Greyhound tickets back home at least once a month, application fees, enrollment fees, expungement fees, drug tests, Uber fare to and from community service, and more it cost somewhere around \$1000, which was paid partly by me and partly by parents, whom I'll gradually pay back. Yet, my takeaway from all of this isn't how difficult or expensive it was, or how much jail sucked — although it kind of was and definitely did. It's actually just the opposite.

Instead, I think a lot about that other prisoner. I don't know if his "Momma" or just someone eventually came for him, but it wasn't pretty. Unable to pay any kind of bond or bail, he was stuck in jail for at least another month (likely going through withdrawals) before finally facing his criminal trial. Given that he couldn't afford that initial fee, I seriously doubt he could afford any kind of bail deal or probation program post-trial. He's a full-fledged convict now, and will be for a while. I wasn't particularly impressed by the prison system and laws surrounding drugs before being arrested (Whoa, that plant could ruin your life... I better send you to prison!) but getting arrested did make those issues viscerally real.

The only thing separating him from me is some money and choice of vice. I'll be completely expunged with no record of being arrested. When (and if) he gets out, he'll have a hard time finding a job. And then what? He probably lost whatever he had and entered prison because, at some point in his life, he was looking for some release and made a bad call. Now he's free but broke. I understand why he needed the release.



Aijeen & Aileen, friends



This is What Love Looks Like



Vivan, Emi, and Isabel,
friends



Bintou Sillah



Taylor and Esar, couple





**Inside Georgia Tech's
favorite psychiatric
hospital**

Broken Euphoria, Grace Halverson



Welcome to Ridgeview

The Technique found that in the span of twelve months, Tech's mental health resources sent at least nineteen students to receive involuntary mental health evaluations off-campus. Primarily, these students went to the Ridgeview Institute, a for-profit psychiatric hospital located in Smyrna. When students come out of Ridgeview, they often have the same story. They were made to feel like criminals, dehumanized, and feel that the hospitalization only made their initial condition worse.

Mallory Rosten

In high school, Anna R.* had a mantra that she repeated to herself whenever things got bad. Everything will be better in college, she told herself. Just get through this and then in college you'll have friends and you'll be happy. It was her constant prayer, and those words pushed her through.

And things did get better. She joined a sorority and found close friends. But soon, Anna realized that, though she loved her sisters, she only saw them when they were drinking. She began to feel isolated. And so, in her sophomore year, she quit.

Then her depression came back. Her sorority had left a hole in her life, and she felt alone and empty. "I lashed out and pushed friends away," Anna recalls, "I became toxic to be around."

That's when she turned to the counseling center.

Over a year later, she found herself trying and failing to fall asleep on a top sheet at Ridgeview Institute, a mental health facility in Smyrna. Laying in that room was the culmination of a chain of events that began in the counseling center at Georgia Tech. She would spend the next five days there.

So she lay there, crying, wishing she was at home in her bed, cuddling with her dog. She had cried on the way to Ridgeview and now, alone, the tears came flooding back.

When the staff at Ridgeview told Anna they were involuntarily committing her, they cited Georgia code 1013. Created in 2013, 1013 allows licensed professional counselors in Georgia to authorize the transportation of a person that “appears to be mentally ill... requiring involuntary treatment”. Once the individual is transferred, they are reassessed by the admitting facility to determine whether they meet the criteria to be involuntarily committed. This form, 1014, must be completed within 48 hours of arrival. The patient must be judged to either present a substantial risk of imminent harm to self or others (based on overt acts or threats of violence) or so unable to care for their own physical health and safety it presents a life-endangering crisis. This is the criteria the Ridgeview staff determined Anna met.

The next morning, after a breakfast of eggs and toast, Anna couldn't stop thinking about how she needed to be studying. It all seemed so surreal- yesterday had been a normal day at school.

“My parents didn't understand a lot about mental health,” Anna says, “They're really religious, and basically they would tell me that my depression and anxiety was happening because I wasn't going to church enough. They told me to stop feeling sorry for myself. And so I went into college thinking that I brought these problems on myself.” In high school, when Anna began to show signs of depression or anxiety, friends would cut her off because they didn't know how to deal with it. A thick stigma surrounding mental illness. And being a person of color in a predominantly white high school only increased her anxiety.

“It was really alienating,” she says. But instead of getting better in college, that alienation worsened in the sorority environment. “I developed a lot of unhealthy habits like binge drinking and not valuing myself unless a fraternity boy asked me to an event.” She withdrew from all her hobbies and became disconnected from herself.

When she left her sorority, her depression returned. “It got to the point where I was always very unstable. “ She ideated suicide, but never made any plans. She just felt it would be easier if she were dead.

“I just felt really alone,” Anna says.

She started counseling at Georgia Tech and saw a student physician regularly for a month. But one particular day, her counselor noticed that things seemed really bad. She asked Anna if she wanted to die.

Anna thought for a moment. She wanted to die, she said,

“It felt less like a hospital and more like a prison. You feel like you're different. You feel dehumanized immediately. The staff members treat you like a psycho, not like a person.”

but she clarified that she didn't have any intent or plan to commit suicide. The counselor grew quiet and left the room. When she returned, she told her that she had talked to her supervisors, and they had decided that Anna needed to go to the hospital.

It was a Wednesday at 6:00 P.M., and Anna was tired and sweaty from walking around all day. She insisted again that she wasn't feeling suicidal. She told her counselor that she didn't want to go. Her counselor told her that that wasn't an option.

“I froze. I didn't know what to do. She told me that GTPD would be arriving soon to take me to the hospital. And I just started balling, hyperventilating. I begged her not to make me go.”

The counselor's supervisor came in and told her that there was nothing she could do and that she needed to calm down.

“I remember crying so much and one of the older women came up to me. She said to me, ‘It’s okay baby. I can feel your sadness.’”

They didn’t give Anna an option of hospitals, or ask her what her insurance could pay for. As GTPD lead her away, Anna couldn’t help feeling like some sort of criminal. Though she wasn’t handcuffed, they told her that they would handcuff her if she became uncooperative. Over the long drive, Anna frantically texted people telling them what was happening, and someone in a group chat mentioned that she was probably headed to a place called Ridgeview.

She waited for five hours before being admitted, during which two friends came and brought her sweatpants and a sweatshirt. Her friend had been involuntarily hospitalized before, and knew what Anna would need. They told her she would be there for three days, which at the time seemed way too long.

They didn’t give Anna an estimate of cost and just asked her for her insurance information. After signing all the forms, it was time to say goodbye.

“I said goodbye to my friends, which was the hardest thing I’ve ever done. I was just crying and telling my friends that I was just really scared.”

The counseling center defines a crisis broadly as anything that requires immediate attention. “Crises can cover just about anything,” says Mack Bowers, one of two associate

directors of the counseling center. He served as interim director from July 2017 through June 2018, longer than anticipated, after the previous director left for another job.” It may be that somebody broke up with their boyfriend or girlfriend. Or somebody had a panic attack while they were taking a calculus test. A lot of them are mental health crises, but then there are things that might be more situational.”

Each hour, a staff member is on triage duty all 40 hours the counseling center is open per week. At 4, there are two on duty, due to the high volume of students at that time. From 5:00 to 8:00 AM the next day, there are after hours phone consultations available.

When asked about the more dangerous crises, when a student is thinking of harming themselves, Bowers says that the counselor will perform a risk assessment. They ask about past suicide attempts and if they have a plan in place.

Then, the staff will consider a range of options from group therapy to intensive outpatient programs to inpatient programs like Ridgeview.

From the 16 or 1700 students they saw in 2018, Bowers estimates 2-5% were sent to intensive inpatient or outpatient centers.

“We try to get the lowest level of intrusion,” Bowers says. “We do have several facilities that we typically work with just because they know our students better. They wouldn’t necessarily mix college students with other people that might not be in the same stage of life.” Ridgeview Institute is one of those facilities.

Bowers was clear that the counseling center doesn’t have a fiduciary agreement with any of them and does not endorse those facilities.

When deciding which facility to send students to, Bowers stresses the comfort of the student. It has to be the right fit. “I’ll usually talk with the students about the different places and offer them a choice. Sometimes, because of insurance, there’s a limit to how many choices they have. There might be only one facility in the city that actually accepts their insurance.”

During the interview, Bowers stated that insurance information is the most salient factor. But he emailed me later to say that “While insurance is one factor we consider, we also attempt to refer to the most appropriate setting. Generally treatment can be costly so insurance is an important consideration.” This information is collected either by asking the student directly or from the initial

intake form the student filled out.

The year before Anna, in the fall of 2017, Tyler M.* was also committed to Ridgeview. He had been in search of a specific SSRI, a depression medication that he had taken before and knew worked for him. He understood, on a logical level, that the pain he was experiencing was only chemical. All he had to do was get to Stamps and get a prescription. He wanted to feel better.

In high school Tyler regularly saw a psychologist to treat his depression. "I was actively suicidal, not necessarily to the point of planning, but it was something that was on my mind." Seeing the psychologist helped Tyler, and his suicidal thoughts disappeared.

But the intensity of Georgia Tech became overwhelming, and his depression returned. That's when he decided to go to Stamps, but the earliest appointment they could make was in two weeks.

"At the time I was dealing with such excruciating pain and I wanted these thoughts to go away," Tyler says. He thought that by speaking to a crisis counselor, he'd be able to get the medicine much faster. And for him, that was a powerful decision. He knew that his thoughts and feelings he was having could go away, that they weren't part of him. "I'm proud that I decided to get myself help that day, despite the consequences that happened."

Tyler had gone to the counseling center the year before as a freshman, but they had told him that they were at capacity and couldn't help him.

Now, the counselor told Tyler she was sending him to a place where he could get the medication. If he went in and told them exactly what he told her, he would have his medication within a few hours and would be able to go home. He doesn't remember being told that he would be going to a psychiatric hospital. "I felt betrayed, honestly. I felt lied to."

Like Anna, Tyler had suicidal ideation, meaning he experienced intrusive thoughts of dying. But he had no intention to commit suicide. He had no plans, and didn't want to die.

After waiting for hours in the Ridgeview lobby, Tyler was told he should voluntarily commit himself. If he didn't, they would involuntarily commit him. They gave him an estimate of three days.

"I joked in the waiting room that I was going to be locked up in a psycho ward." Tyler says, "But it wasn't real until that moment. And I told them I couldn't take three days

off of school. I had so much work to do. But they said something like 'too bad'."

Anna was taken to what she says looked like a rundown retirement home. This was a girls only cottage where Anna would stay for the next five days.

All Anna could think about was how she needed to be studying.

There were group therapy sessions every other hour. They were decently helpful, says Anna. But in one of the she remembers a girl started having a schizophrenic episode. "I was thinking to myself, why am I here. I'm just a college student."

When she first called her parents, they were angry. They hadn't known where she was and had called the police, the physics department, and her law professor. Now, they were disappointed in her. They told her she should've known what would happen if she reached out for help. They worried about how much it would all cost.

Anna couldn't sleep because of her anxiety, so the psychiatrist prescribed her a sedative. And they had to be within eyesight of the nurses at all times. She couldn't go to her room to lie down during the day, because that was considered avoidant behavior.

The nurses made her feel crazy. "They were talking to us like we were dumb and incapable of communicating," Anna says.

"I remember crying so much and one of the older women came up to me. She said to me, 'It's okay baby. I can feel your sadness.' It's weird because for the first time I was around people who understood my feelings."

"It got more bearable each day because I had started to become a bit closer with the people there. It's kind of like a sense of unity among everyone."

Each patient is assigned to one of the psychiatrists, who becomes in charge of that patient's care. They are the ones who make the decision to release a patient. Anna saw her psychiatrist a total of three times, and was told by other patients that she was lucky. He was known to release people early. The third day she was there, her psychiatrist told her that he saw a lot of GT students come through Ridgeview. They all told him they shouldn't be there. They just had suicidal ideations but the school sent them there involuntarily. He agreed that Anna shouldn't be there.

On her fourth day, Anna found out she would be discharged the next day. They told her the average was 7 days.

Tyler was also there for five days, which he spent watching TV and attending group therapy.

“I didn’t even want to be there for more than three hours, but thank G-d I was able to get out of there as soon as I could,” Tyler says, “It felt less like a hospital and more like a prison. You feel like you’re different. You feel dehumanized immediately. The staff members treat you like a psycho, not like a person.”

He felt threatened by the amount of control the staff had over him. “As a Jew, it’s one of the worst things I can experience because all I learned growing up was how my grandparents and great grandparents were dehumanized.”

Worst of all, Tyler says, he didn’t feel safe. “There were people banging their heads against the wall,” he says. One patient in his cottage said he was suicidal. Tyler couldn’t stop thinking about how their doors were unlocked, and that if the man wanted to, he could’ve walked into his room and killed him. He began to experience extreme anxiety, something he had never felt before.

Anna remembers that at one point she just started walking from one end of the cottage to the other because she felt so trapped. “I felt like I was actually mentally unstable because they acted like I was a criminal,” she says.

One of her worst memories is being verbally harassed by male patients as she waited in line in the cafeteria. The staff didn’t do anything to stop them.

Tyler had initially been quoted \$800 a day for 3 days. But he as he soon found out, being released within 3 days was extremely rare. 5 days seemed to be the standard minimum.

When Tyler came out he was no longer depressed or ideating suicide, but he attributes that to one thing only: sertraline. The medication he sought in the first place.

But he did come out angry. “It was an unnecessary traumatic event, a waste of time and money,” Tyler says. He feels lucky that he had such a strong support system and so was able to keep his head above the water.

In Ridgeview, he didn’t even dare think about his

school work. It took all his energy to not let his mental health slide. Thanks to accommodating teachers, it took him about a month to catch up on all his schoolwork.

“I tried to keep away the memories of what I had just experienced because every single time I thought about it I just became excruciatingly angry. But you can’t hold on to anger like that.”

Tyler still strongly feels he didn’t deserve to be there. “I wasn’t a threat to myself and I wasn’t a threat to others.”

“It made me less trusting, honestly,” Tyler explains, “That’s a really sad thing to lose. It was really hard after that. I was lied to so well that I just didn’t know any better. I felt so naive. Now, I just have to remember and deal with the reality of what occurred.”

For Anna, the only positive thing to come out of her experience was a list of resources for dialectical behavioral therapy that Ridgeview provided. But she says this is something Georgia Tech should have provided to her from the start. “They knew they weren’t providing me the help I needed but instead of directing me to a place I could get help, like an outpatient program, they sent me to Ridgeview.”

But while she was in Ridgeview she found she couldn’t improve. “It was such a negative, toxic environment that it was hard to accept help from people,” she explains.

“It worsened my condition. When I left, I felt like I had no control over my life. I couldn’t even reach out to a counselor without risking this happening again. I felt like I couldn’t ask for help, like I had no options.”

The adjustment period was difficult. Anna frequently had panic attacks and woke up screaming from nightmares. It was almost always the same. She would be anywhere- in class, her dorm, or on the street, and officers would show up and take her back to Ridgeview.

“I was living in so much fear and for a while my mental health got worse because I was too scared to talk about it,” Like Tyler, she says she was traumatized, “My trust was completely broken.”

“This school needs to do something more than just help people with academic stress,” she says, “More people need to know about what happened.”



**WHAT IS THE
NEWS YOU
WANT TO
SEE IN THE
WORLD?**

Martine Fortune

What did you see on the cover of this magazine or on the page you opened to? Did you notice the picture first? We've all heard the cliché "a picture's worth a thousand words" but have you asked whose words they are, where they come from? Photojournalism is the practice of communicating news through photographs. It has long been essential to the news industry. We see photos accompanying news segments on tv, articles online, in print, and on blogs and social media posts. Every image we are shown is a deliberate act. Our perceptions and judgements are being decisively shaped. I am trying to shape your opinions with the images in this article. This can be a treacherous act when applied to news reporting. In this article I seek to understand how the media, specifically printed and televised news, uses images to shape our understanding and opinions of current events. Some person or some group of people decide exactly what information we are given and I seek to show the effects of these decisions. We as consumers are not often aware of how the news is being framed to sensationalize and dramatize real events, how we are being manipulated to judge people and situations without the full story.

Civil Unrest

Fast forward to April 29, 1992; the verdict of the Rodney King trial was released and the Los Angeles streets fell into chaos. The LA Times sent out multiple reporters and photographers who risked their lives to capture the riots. Fires, dead bodies and destruction splashed the pages of the LA Times as they documented "A city in crisis". In the year leading up to this event, the LA times also covered the trial. Some of those earlier articles feature images of Rodney King's battered face and blurry still shots of the video of the assault. Later on, articles are accompanied by the stoic faced, smartly dressed officers as the trail comes to a close.

Even when tension over the trial verdict was palpable, the LA Times risked their employees' lives to expose the depth of racial tension in the city. Why were they so keen to do so? Aside from being a pivotal moment for race relations in America, these riots exhibited violence on a scale that is rarely seen in this country. Showing the results posed a question to all citizens: is this what we want our country to become? Now our country strives to prevent such destruction by showing a strong police presence at any protest as a preventative measure. While the question is valid, most people don't want to live in a country where social change is implemented through violence, focusing on the violence of these events makes us forget the catalysts that lead to such extreme actions. There was a whole class of people who felt undervalued, unsafe, attacked.

Trial(s) of the Century

The often unfair portrayal of black people in the media has been a topic of contention for several decades now. We aren't strangers to racial tension in our current generation either. This social issue came to a head again in 2012/13 when Trayvon Martin was killed. Arguably, the fight for civil rights and racial equality has picked up again in the wake of his murder. This murder and subsequent trial are peculiar because George Zimmerman, Martin's murderer, was not arrested until public outcry via a Change.org petition called for his arrest. As the trial unfolded and events of that night uncovered, the media began to dig into Zimmerman and Martin's background. Interestingly enough, stories came out criminalizing the 17-year-old. Reporters dug up his social media posts, text messages, disciplinary records and other information that could damage his reputation. This was an attempt to turn Martin into the "suspicious character" Zimmerman believed him to be.

The scrutiny of this case and its dissatisfactory end brought racial profiling to the forefront of social consciousness. The next year, in August 2014, protests and riots broke out in Ferguson Missouri after the shooting of Michael Brown. There are many famous images to come out of this period of time. The next image is of a man throwing a teargas canister. When this photo was first disseminated people had no other information about the situation. They made assumptions like, he was



Robert Cohen



TIME Magazine - OJ Simpson. (n.d.).



throwing it at the police or that it was not even a teargas canisters, rather, a Molotov cocktail. It wasn't until CNN found and interviewed the man that the world found out he was trying to protect himself and a group of children as they were peacefully protesting. He threw the canister away from people, nowhere near the police. These protests brought to light the aggression and abuse that police organizations are capable of.

A Thousand Words

When photographers first started hunting down images for the sake of documenting current events, they were often gruesome images. Take, for example, the first photograph of an execution by electric chair. New York Daily News specifically hired a photographer from the Chicago Tribune so he could infiltrate the execution chamber and take this photo. News photography was synonymous with tabloid photography at the time and I believe that attitude still exists today to some degree. This type of investigation, this rabid clawing and scraping for the most sensational evidence has flavored photojournalism to this day. Photographers have claimed to got to such lengths because the public's had a "right to know". In reality, these photographers and their employers chose what information the public received and the context.



Kirk Mckoy/Getty Images

The power of an image doesn't just lie in what is shown but how much it is shown. Often we don't even pay attention to those five minute segments on television or 500 words or less articles unless the headline and corresponding picture captures our attention.

Photographs are associated with truth, construed as evidence, especially in journalism. Over decades of reading and watching the news, we have come to collectively associate certain images with assumptions. We see a car on fire, people running and we associate it with chaos, rioting, a collapse of social order. We judge those people negatively. We see a young person in a cap and gown or smiling with friends and family and we immediately sympathize with them. We see the same politician's face for weeks in the news and we adopt the opinion of our favorite news outlet about them. Everything we see is deliberately placed to trigger our social biases or make us form them.

A Mod Propos

Alissa Kushner

Disclaimer: This is a satire.

It is with flaming anger that I, along with many of my countrymen, watch the bodies pile up as school shootings continue, rampant, throughout our great land. These buried children, instead of having the chance to grow up, spread their wings and live the American Dream, have their very right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness torn from their being. The luckier among them, the still-living peers of these dead children who experienced the shootings, the carnage, and the terror firsthand, often develop PTSD. They spend their precious time wallowing in therapists' waiting rooms, across from Vietnam veterans with all too-similar afflictions.

I think it can be agreed upon by all citizens, regardless of their position on the political spectrum, that something needs to be done to end this deplorable mess and save our country's youth. No children—no people—should have to live in an ever-growing state of fear that their schools will be the next target, that their lives will be the next taken by a random act.

If any member of our great society could develop a permanent, fair, and simple way to reduce this problem, he or she would certainly be supported by all citizens, as well as both sides of Congress, and would be hailed a national hero. But my intention is far from being confined to solely helping children currently attending school. This solution, after its initial phase of implementation, would help the entire country become a safer, more inviting place to live.

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Sal

As for my own part, having mulled over this pervasive problem since the early days of Columbine and Sandy Hook, I have found many statistics to be grossly misconstrued. They are often twisted in support of one ideology or the other, particularly in their appeals before our great Congress.

With the lack of clear, correct statistics (the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was not permitted to do any research regarding gun violence for 20 years), many have dreamt up crazy solutions to end this violence. Some have even gone so far as to propose that teachers should be trained and armed so that they may stop a potential shooting. However, a teacher is not hired on the basis of being willing and able to wield a gun, but rather on his or her knowledge and ability to teach. And this is how it should remain.

Having found fatal flaws in several of the current popular arguments, I shall humbly share my own thoughts on what could be done to pacify every side and rectify this national crisis.

I have been assured by a very knowledgeable German that programs that utilize the malleable willingness of a young mind are often the most successful. Skills learned at a young age will not only stick with a child but can be built upon for a lifetime.

It is also a well-known fact that the best way to deter unsavory behavior is through fear. Fear of failure is used by teachers, fear of punishment is used by mothers, and fear of rejection is used by the status quo. The fear of mutual destruction is what I will focus on in my proposal, which I now modestly present:

Children in public schools should be taught to properly care for, shoot, and conceal a military-grade gun starting from the age of 10 (the same age Hitler deemed it acceptable to mold boys into men through his Youth program). They should be trained throughout their Youth to wield this gun and, upon middle school graduation, shall be presented with an official license to own and conceal a gun. (Just think of what a thoughtful and easy milestone graduation present a gun would make for children across the country! A whole new world could open up for customizable gun skins. Perhaps rhinestones on Sally's or a monogram on Bobby's...)

There is, of course, the problem with the education system itself that must be overcome in order to make this plan feasible. The manner in which we currently teach our children leads to a snowball effect of regurgitation of abstract and arbitrary words and concepts, in which

If everyone is on a leveled playing field in terms of their prowess with a gun, school children would no longer have to cower inside classrooms when they hear gunshots rain in the halls.



less and less information is retained each year. Many class subjects from year to year have little to no relation with each other, so important facts are constantly being forgotten, replaced by the heap of next year's knowledge. Practiced skills on the other hand, such as burning ants with a magnifying glass, or solving an algebraic expression, are much harder to forget, and therefore much easier to build upon. The proposed program should run each school year, building upon itself and teaching our children more and more about guns until high school graduation. At that point, should they choose to, the children should be able to join the U.S. Army with no extra training necessary to become a sniper.

A wonderful argument against my plan is how this could affect the children who are depressed or angry. Under this new regime of coursework, they would now have access to and extensive training with guns, so the damage they could do is objectively much greater. What if they attempt a school shooting? If it did escalate to this point, as I have previously pointed out, there would be mutually assured destruction. If everyone is on a leveled playing field in terms of their prowess with a gun, school children would no longer have to cower inside classrooms when they hear gunshots rain in the halls. Now, they can all be heroes—a young child's dream—and

save the day.

But what if a shooting were to happen in a kindergarten, before formal gun classes have commenced? Well within a generation of this solution's implementation, all teachers—having gone through the American school system themselves—would be well equipped to stop the menace. This cleanly solves the divisive issue of whether teachers should have training with guns. Hiring on the basis of gun proficiency would be no different than testing for base level skills with Earth Science or Geometry.

As for the kindergarteners, it would obviously be recommended that the parents teach their children basic (or even advanced) gun skills before starting school. After all, you wouldn't want a child going to school one day and playing with blocks for the first time, would you?

Another qualm that the shrewd reader may have is giving formal gun training to bad people, such as gang members and petty criminals. But in the new and safe America, there would be no reason to incite terror and, say, rob someone at gunpoint, because everyone now has a gun of his or her own. What's more, the sad reality of the pervasive cycle of socio-economic status and opportunity probably mean that the robber is less adept with a gun than the wealthy patron



But a generation of elevated crime is a small price to pay to ensure an eternally safer and stronger America.

of society from whom he or she is stealing from. The private shooting lessons and better teachers that the victim has had throughout his or her childhood would in many cases reverse the role of robber and victim. Once the criminals and gangs acclimate to this trend, the crime rate would decrease throughout the country.

This solution would also greatly strengthen the economy of this great nation. There first would be a huge boom in gun sales (both as graduation presents and general luxury and collectors' items—think of them as cheaper versions of a car). There would also be a newly created job sector for school-age arms coaches, not to mention the boom in the private tutoring sector and recreational after school clubs.

The one downside to this solution is that in the first stages of implementation there would, regrettably, be a spike in violent crime against the middle-aged and elderly, as all the nation's children would have gone through gun training while their older counterparts would not have. But a generation of elevated crime is a small price to pay to ensure an eternally safer and stronger America.

It would be amiss to pretend that no other proposal to fortify our nation against the terror of school shootings exist. But I, having been worn out by the years of thoughts, prayers, and promises by politicians to their constituency, believe this solution is the most logically sound. Though in part taken from old teachings, it is wholly new, innocent, easy, and effective. Could another entity offer a solution as thorough and with as much net gain as the one I have humbly presented, I would gladly step aside from my personal crusade and leave this one in the dust. But until that point, we must march forward as a society to push for a safer, more protected, more modern America.

UNDER 25

A Selection of the 25 Most Disappointing Under 25 at Georgia Tech



1 **Jeremy, twenty one**
Jeremy has used an app to hire a person to pick up and deliver Wingnuts to him every night for twenty two consecutive nights.

2 **Alexa, twenty**
It's been two years as an industrial engineering major and Alexa still doesn't know what industrial engineering is. At this point, she's too afraid to ask.

3 **Arnav, twenty-one**
The most genuine human contact Arnav's had in a month has been answering questions on Piazza.

7 **Matthew, nineteen**
Everytime Matthew tells his mom about a date, it was really a group project meeting with three other guys.

4 **Ethan, nineteen**
Ethan, whose parents have taken out a second mortgage to pay for his tuition, has started snorting ritalin.

8 **William, twenty-two**
After spending a semester abroad in Serve Learn Sustain and completing a year long project on sustainability, William accepts a full time job offer at Chevron.

5 **Leah, twenty-one**
Leah is still chasing the high from Naruto running across Tech green in her freshman year.

9 **Joe, twenty-one**
Joe confidently hands his resume to a recruiter at the Career Fair, even though his only leadership role is social chair n his twice-suspended fraternity.

6 **Brett, nineteen**
Brett is a second year and still tells everyone he meets that he was waitlisted at MIT.

10 **Kori, twenty-three**
Sadly, Kori's Fjällräven Kånken backpack is the most unique thing about her.

11

Maya, nineteen

Tour guide Maya forgets she already told her group that part of *The Internship* was filmed in the CULC. “I didn’t know if I mentioned it already, but I guess it doesn’t hurt to bring it up again. Moms eat it up.”

18

Bethany, twenty-two

CompE major Bethany is the only female in three of her classes for the fifth semester in a row. She places bets on how many guys will awkwardly ask her to “study” this week.

12

Ryan, twenty-four

6th year Mechanical Engineering major Ryan still complains about ME 2110, a class he took 4 years ago. “Our team worked 50 hours a week and we still got last place! Oh, you’re not ME? You wouldn’t understand.”

19

Rohan, twenty

The extent of Rohan’s social activism is complaining about Parking and Transportation Services on r/gatech. There, his username is u/reggaepussy420.

13

Grace, eighteen

Grace orders Blue Donkey Coffee for the sixth day in a row. She won’t admit that the ice coffees all taste the same.

20

Megan, twenty

Megan’s sole creative outlet is arranging the stickers on her laptop.

14

Justin, twenty-one

Student Competition Center team member Justin eats Cookout for 5th meal in a row, spends 30 hours straight working on car, and wonders why his only friends are SolidWorks and transistors.

21

George, twenty-two

Finding a bug in his food at Brittain is the most exciting thing to happen to him in two weeks.

22

Jason, nineteen

2nd year C.S. student Jason still tells himself that deodorant and dabbing his neck with a damp towel is sufficient personal hygiene.

15

Jackson, twenty-two

As a WREK Radio DJ, Jackson won’t respect you unless you listen to his favorite 80s Icelandic disco-folk-ambient band collective.

23

Chase, twenty-four

7th-year undergrad Chase has limed from North Ave to Skiles every day for the past three weeks.

16

Will, nineteen

This is the third week straight Will has gone without buying groceries. He doesn’t have a meal plan.

24

Aparna, eighteen

Aparna still tells people she’s dating her FASET boyfriend, even though they broke up on the first day of classes.

17

Emma, twenty

Emma has one token LMC friend for, you know, inclusivity.

25

Kaylee, twenty

Kaylee has been coding for twelve hours straight. Time has ceased to exist. She has always been working on this project. She will always be working on this project.

John Jajeh



AMATEURS

“Inspiration is for amateurs. The rest of us just show up and get to work.” – Chuck Close

Charles Bukowski’s tombstone reads “Don’t try.” It’s peculiar how the man who spoke like Yoda also looked like him. But Bukowski’s words weren’t chaotic for the sake of chaos or beautiful for the sake of beauty. No one wants to read that bullshit. His messages unraveled the chaos and beauty hidden under vices, love, and life. His vision to dismantle being human was prophetic. And as a writer who thought about what his tombstone should say, he only chose two words.

TWO. GOD. DAMN. WORDS.

Of all the genius and mystery he encapsulated, he only wanted to relay a two-word message. And frankly, it’s perfect.

Bukowski’s statement is not one of pretentiousness or malintent. It’s actually quite inspiring. Don’t *try*. Trying is trickery—a deceit woven to produce a hopeful façade. It’s porn “getting you off” to feel positive about yourself, even though you’ll quit tomorrow and forget about it the day after that.

So, don’t try.

If your heart holds desire, be prepared to wear down your fingernails—clawing, scratching your way to victory. Practice mithridatism. Work with or without your coffee. Shave your head like Britney Spears. Become mad in the pursuit of what you believe is beautiful and chaotic. But whatever you do, don’t try.



**Summer
2019.**