

ISSUE 2

ZU Magazine

FEMINISM & CHRISTIANITY

Feature Article: page 12



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Hey, Readers!

Welcome to ZU Magazine, Issue 2! I'm so excited you're here. I want to talk to you about controversy.

Controversy is a prominent theme in our society these days. People are less willing to have conversations about differing political opinions, social norms are constantly changing and the church is far more divided from the world than it should be. However, writing presents us with the unique opportunity of being able to share our opinions without bars. That's what I challenged my writers to do for this issue; I wanted them to write about things that are important to them, even if they are controversial in nature.

My hope for you is that in reading this issue, you welcome the controversy, the fun articles, and the research articles, and that you take what they say and learn something new from them. I hope that you find the courage to talk about controversial topics and your opinions about them with people who believe differently than you. Society is never going to change if we refuse to bridge gaps and have conversations with those who differ from us.

I hope you never forget that your opinion matters, your voice deserves to be heard, and you have something valuable to say.

Sincerely,

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TO LISTEN

Pinegrove - Skylight

The sophomore album from the New Jersey band is a good one. The twangy voice of frontman Evan Stephens Hall guiding his introspective lyrics and the instantly recognizable guitars make this record one of the best of the year by far. With a surprise release following a year-long hiatus, it feels like the band has picked up where they left off musically as a band is more grounded and mature.



boygenius - boygenius

Julien Baker, Phoebe Bridgers AND Lucy Dacus? Could it get any better? This dream of an indie rock supergroup just released their collaborative EP under the name boygenius and it's incredible. Throughout the record, all three women find their voice as they create emotional and intricate songs about life and love.



TO TASTE

Smorgasborg LA

Smorgasborg is a weekly market filled with dozens of LA's top food trucks. From gourmet grilled cheese and cupcakes to high-end seafood and donuts, there's every type of food you could want, so grab a bite and check out the numerous other vendors including vintage stores, bookstores and home goods.

TO GO

Upright Citizens Brigade

UCB is a place where LA's best comedians come together in an intimate setting to showcase new material. This legendary improv location has seen some of your favorite comedians find their voice, from Nick Kroll, Ben Schwartz and Donald Glover to Ed Helms, Ellie Kemper and Natasha Leggero. Find cheap and/or free shows here every day.



TO WATCH

The Haunting of Hill House

Even though the spooky season has passed, now is as good a time as any to start watching the scariest new show on Netflix. Based on the Shirley Jackson novel of the same name, the series focuses on the Crain family. Years after their first paranormal experience at the Hill House, they must now confront the horrors once more due to another death within the family.

THINGS TO DO IN LA

BY JONAH MINNIHAN

1.



2.



3.



4.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL ARTIST

BY JONAH MINNIHAN

Think about the content you consume on a daily basis. Music, film, visual art, text; there is rarely a time where we are not under a constant veil of media. Who is creating the content? Is it a celebrity? A famous vlogger? A top 40 artist? Most of the time, the content we consume is created by these people. But what if I told you there were talented creatives walking right alongside you here at Azusa Pacific University? Here are a few talented APU students that are soon going to be competing with your favorite artist for your attention.

1. Katy Killion

In an oversaturated world of vlogging, the quality of the channel depends solely on the personality behind the camera. Katy Killion stands out. Within seconds of watching her videos, it's obvious that Killion isn't acting for the camera; she's just being herself. Her honest reactions toward pop culture's latest trends and figureheads, along with her openness in sharing her own stories, lead her audience in laughing at and with her. With only three videos under her belt, Killion is still working out what she wants her channel to look like. "I'm still experimenting and trying to find my style which is fun and super awkward," expressed Killion.

Look forward to more content by Katy on her YouTube channel and Instagram account.

2. Sola Luna

"Don't Forget Your Friends" is the title of an upcoming EP by alt-pop group Sola Luna, which is releasing next spring. This group of friends makes music that instantly sounds familiar but at the same time is nothing you've heard before. Though Sola Luna has found some success in and around southern California, the band wants to make it clear that the goal is not to be famous. "If we have this mindset of 'if we aren't famous we aren't going to be happy,' that'll destroy the band," said guitarist Georgie Gomez.

Listen to Sola Luna on Spotify and follow the group on Instagram for tour dates and the release of "Don't Forget Your Friends."

3. Taylor Tomlinson

With her hand in multiple projects on and off campus, each with a different role, Taylor Tomlinson has a lot going on. As a filmmaker, she is currently gaffing for one project, the cinematographer for another project and is co-directing a personal project within the next month. In the midst of this busy season, Tomlinson is most excited for her personal project. Since it's a personal project, there is no outside influence on it besides that from co-creator Noah Ouellette. This is a vastly different experience than she has had with previous APU projects. The film, titled "It Will Be Better in the Morning," focuses on the final hours of a man's relationship with his wife due to choices he has made. Post-grad, Tomlinson hopes to venture into film archival and curating, along with filmmaking.

4. Chris Miyashiro

Chris Miyashiro, a visual artist, creates mystic works of art that make you want to leave all your troubles behind. Working with bright colors and intricate designs, his work transports his audience into the scene he creates. Though he has been creating since he was a little kid, he didn't become fully immersed in art until he got a little older. "I think growing up, a lot of us get boxes put on our heads... like its bad to doodle your daydreams during class or that other things, like succeeding in school so you can move up the social chain, are more important," said Miyashiro. "I believe that every single one of us has art lingering inside of us from birth. For some people, half the journey is discovering it." By looking at his pieces, it seems obvious that Miyashiro never lost the drive to keep doodling his daydreams; the only change is the quality of work.

Find more of Miyashiro's work on Instagram and YouTube.

With so many people trying to make it big in the art world, it's easy to look past those that are just beginning. Sometimes your next favorite artist is right beside you. So take a break from the ones who have already made it big and spend some time exploring the work of those that are just starting out. ■



“Lorelai and Rory:
the dynamic duo of
mother-daughter
television.”

OY WITH THE POODLES, ALREADY

BY ALYSSA BURLINGAME

“Copperboom!”

No, this is not a common term in the English language. This is a term commonly shared between my mom and I when we miss each other or when we’re seeing each other soon. This term was coined, however, from an iconic mother and daughter: Lorelai and Rory from *Gilmore Girls*.

Gilmore Girls premiered on Oct. 5, 2000. (Don’t worry. I feel old, too). Running for eight seasons before airing its final episode on May 15, 2007, *Gilmore Girls* provided mothers, daughters, sisters and friends with spunky, fast-paced dialogue and colorful characters every week. Lorelai and Rory: the dynamic duo of mother-daughter television.

Quick synopsis in case you have not been blessed with knowledge about *Gilmore Girls*: Lorelai Gilmore had her daughter, Rory, at 16 years old. Once Rory was a year old, Lorelai packed her things, left her cushy life with her stand-offish parents in Hartford, Connecticut and took Rory to a small town called Stars Hollow. In this town, Lorelai established her career early on by working at the Independence Inn. Rory grew up, meeting her best friend Lane in first grade. Lane loves music and Rory loves books; Lane dreams of being a drummer and Rory dreams of going to an Ivy League school. Throughout the entire show, the only constant is the fact that Lorelai and Rory are best friends.

Watching *Gilmore Girls* has been one of the most formative components in my relationship with my mom. We have watched the show together for as long as I can remember, and now I can easily say my obsession has reached a level of psychosis only Freud himself would be able to understand.

When I was younger, the show would air on Tuesday evenings. My mom and I would look at the clock and realize it was time for *Gilmore Girls*. We would run into her bedroom and jump on her bed, turn on the T.V. and lay on our stomachs, singing the theme song to each other. This attitude about *Gilmore Girls* and the bond we

share because of it has been consistent throughout my whole life.

Jill Brennan-Lincoln is the chair of the theater department at APU. However, she also played Crazy Carrie Duncan in *Gilmore Girls*. Crazy Carrie was a recurring role that was eclectic, comedic and flirtatious. If you’re familiar with the show, you know Crazy Carrie as the woman who’s completely obsessed with Luke from Luke’s Diner, and refuses to believe that he does not find her attractive.

“It was a really fun part, because it was such a strange character,” said Lincoln. “It’s so fun to be a part of something that was bonding for parents and moms and daughters.”

Gilmore Girls has given my mom and I a consistent conversation topic and watching the show is almost always how we spend our time together when I go home. Beyond that, my mom and I hold an alarmingly similar relationship to that of Lorelai and Rory. My mom is my best friend; we share everything with one another, we watch movies with cookie dough and coffee and we never go a day without talking.

In the last episode of season three, Rory graduates from her high school as valedictorian. She gives a speech talking about her classmates, her grandparents, her town, and of course, Lorelai. “My mom never gave me any idea that I couldn’t do whatever I wanted to do or be whomever I wanted to be. (...) As she guided me through these incredible eighteen years [22 in my case], I don’t know if she ever realized the person I most wanted to be was her.”

These words could not ring more true for me and how I feel about my mom. This moment in the show speaks volumes to Lorelai and Rory’s relationship and volumes to my relationship with my momma. I would encourage every mother-daughter duo to find something to bond over like my mom and I have been able to bond over *Gilmore Girls*. To have that thing I look forward to every time I go home, and to constantly have something fun to talk to my mom about has radically changed the way we interact and relate to one another. ■

APPLE

Which one do college students prefer?

BY ISAIAH VARGAS



Humans relish rivalry.

In sports, there is nothing more exciting than defeating your cross town or cross country rival. The Celtics vs. Lakers, Yankees vs. Red Sox and Barcelona vs. Real Madrid are just a few of the sports world's greatest rivalries stemming back to the 20th century. In the 21st century, a new rivalry is brewing but not in sports. It's in something more prevalent in our day and age: music.

Apple and Spotify are the two giants of the music streaming industry. In terms of accessibility, music is at its peak. Thanks to these two music platforms, we can stream all of our favorite songs and create our own playlists whenever we want. We don't have to burn CDs or rely on the radio anymore.

College kids, like myself, love music. It's the soundtrack of our lives. It's constantly present. It's playing in our dorms while we do homework, blasting through the speakers of our cars, pumping us up at the gym and looming over our heads in a coffee shop. The creators of Apple and Spotify know this. They know how interwoven music is in our daily lives. That is why both platforms heavily target our demographic through student discounts.

According to Digital Trends, Spotify has the most paying subscribers out of all digital streaming services. In 2017, the company celebrated 50 million subscribers. That number only continues to grow. However, Apple Music is right behind Spotify in popularity, despite arriving on the scene nine years later. In July, Digital Music News reported that Apple Music surpassed Spotify's subscriber count in the United States.

Apple Music is the fastest growing streaming platform, but Spotify still reigns supreme. So the question is: which one do college students prefer?

A survey conducted at the University of Delaware revealed Spotify to be the clear favorite.

According to the review, "49 percent of students on campus chose Spotify as their preferred music streaming service."

At first, I was on team Apple. I was lured to Spotify after my cousin offered to share her Spotify premium account

with me. Spotify operates in the same lane as Netflix on the topic of sharing and accessibility. I like to think that what is most accessible will be the most popular.

However, senior communications major Blair Lewis is an Apple Music user because it's more convenient.

"Apple Music is better than Spotify because it's compatible with my Apple device. It's so simple to use and easy to understand."

The majority of Apple Music users I talk to mention how cohesive it is to their other Apple products. It's built in with their iPhone so it's the default for many.

Apple's cohesiveness provides a lot of opportunities to surpass Spotify in terms of bundling. Just a couple of days after Spotify sweetened the deal by adding Hulu and Showtime to the student bundle, Apple responded.

"Apple is considering creating a single subscription offering that would encompass its original TV shows, music service and magazine articles," The Information reported.

In my experience, most college students I talk to prefer Spotify. APU student James Alston enjoys both but ultimately chose Spotify as his favorite.

"The one thing I feel Spotify has going for them is their selection of playlists. It's extensive," Alston emphasized. "Every genre or mood you can imagine, they have. On top of that, personalized playlists like 'Discover Weekly' seem to know my taste so incredibly well. I don't feel that I get that same selection with Apple Music. Spotify wins for me."

Whether it be with playlists or bundles, Apple Music consistently replicates Spotify's every move. That is pretty revealing in and of itself. Apple seems to be playing catch up with Spotify, but can you blame them? After all, Spotify did have a nine-year head start.

Apple Music is threatening to become the number one streaming service, but they are a long way from appealing to college students. As of now and the near future, more students are on team Spotify. ■

SPOTIFY

FEMINISM



&



CHRISTIANITY

BY CARLI RICKER

They brought down one of the most powerful producers in Hollywood. They marched in protest of the election of President Donald Trump and helped to redefine beauty standards in the media. Whether someone supports them or not, feminists are making their voices heard and heard loudly.

Feminism has a lot of influence in today's popular culture and it still is an uncomfortable topic in some Christian communities. Feminism, by definition from the Oxford dictionary, is, "The advocacy of women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes." By this definition, it seems as if Christians should get behind this movement. However, some Christians still believe the role of women is dependent on men.

Recently, there has been a movement within the church, pushing for participation in both feminism and Christianity. This new movement calls for changes such as equal leadership roles for men and women in the church and believes Jesus to be a feminist.

With these conflicting ideas it begs the question: can one be both a feminist and a Christian?

An article from Christianity Today answers this question by saying while the church supports women, its definition of women's rights varies greatly from that of the world. The article's author, Wendy Alsup, claims the main difference between modern, western feminism and the church's view of women is centered around the idea of independence and how it's defined. She claims western feminism says women are fully independent and do not need men, while Christianity calls for co-dependency between men and women. She writes, "Instead of a social justice that gives woman complete independence from man, God wrote a story that advocates social justice in interdependent relationships between men and women. God lifts up women but not in a way that frees woman from dependence on man or man from dependence on woman."

On the other side, the new movement within the church embraces both feminism and Christianity.

One of the leaders at the forefront of this movement is Sarah Bessey, author of the book "Jesus Feminist." In an interview with Religion News Service, Bessey explains her approach to Christianity and feminism saying, "When I say

'Jesus made a feminist out of me' it also means that Jesus shapes my feminism, rather than the other way around." She explains, "When I decided to become a disciple of Jesus, it meant that I wanted to live into my right-now life the way I believed Jesus would do it—that included my passion for and advocacy for women's voices and experiences, healing and justice." Bessey believes the Bible gives numerous examples of Jesus uplifting women and treating them equally to the men he interacted with.

Perhaps the void between support in both feminism and Christianity lies in misunderstandings.

For example, some Christian women may believe if they declare themselves to be feminists they cannot be a mother and take care of the home. Bessey addresses this misunderstanding by saying, in the same interview, the key to embracing feminism as a Christian is in "the motivation for our choices."

"Perhaps the void between support in both feminism and Christianity lies in misunderstandings."

A woman can choose to leave her career to raise a family, so long as she did it because she wanted to and not out of obligation or social expectations. The key is that women feel empowered in their decisions.

I believe the divide between feminism and Christianity lies in the movements secular feminism has pushed. These movements include issues such as abortion and sexual

liberation, where secular feminists, with no religious ties, have pushed for acceptance on issues which stand in opposition to Christian principles.

This is where it gets tricky. Can someone support a social movement, like feminism, even when parts of it do not align morally with their religious beliefs, such as Christianity? I believe you can. As a whole and by definition, the feminist movement is about all aspects of equality for both men and women.

I believe as a Christians those principles and values should come first and that people are allowed to disagree on certain aspects of a movement they decide to support. After all, Christianity differs on certain practices, yet the common belief in Jesus dying on the cross for all our sins is the core belief of each denomination. Similarly, while one might disagree on certain issues within the feminist movement, people can still be a feminist if they work to support the foundation of it: equality. ■

EMBRACE YOUR “FUPA”

BY STERLING BENNETT



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALYSSA BURLINGAME

“WHAT UP HILA KLEINER’S!” and “WHAT UP PIMPS!”

IT’S TIME TO STOP! In a world inundated with “It’s Everyday Bro!,” the Paul brothers and a Shane Dawson documentary series, a hero has risen. One man with “internalized oppression,” that Jewish thicc boy and YouTube pioneer Ethan Klein has come to save the platform.

Ethan Klein, the founder of H3H3 Productions, began his YouTube career in 2013 alongside his then-girlfriend Hila. The first few reaction-style videos were made to help Hila with school projects but later became a career for the now married duo.

The couple’s love story and career path is unlike any other on YouTube. Ethan was born in California and attended the University of California, Santa Cruz to study English literature while Hila, born in Israel, served in the Israel Defense Force.

During a school trip to Israel, Ethan met Hila and it was awkward conversation at first sight. Ethan approached Hila at a Holocaust Museum and the rest is told in the “How we met at a Holocaust Museum” video on the H3H3 main channel.

Fast forward three years to 2016 and at the age of 31, Ethan became enshrined into the Hall of Living Memes.

A little video titled “Vape Nation” hit YouTube and immediately transcended H3H3 to one of the top channels on YouTube. Nobody would have thought a man wearing pajamas, socks with sandals, a marijuana du-rag and a “go green” shirt walking around vaping would be a success. Ethan’s exclamations of “VAPE NAYSH Y’ALL” led to 23 million views and “Vape Nation” being the highest viewed video on the H3H3 channel.

Posting a constant flow of videos through the rest of 2016 and 2017 opened many doors for Ethan and Hila. One of those videos was featured on the most subscribed channel of all time, PewDiePie. Other collaborations with iDubbbz and Filthy Frank caught the eyes of many as the trio is arguably the biggest meme on YouTube. As the subscriber count climbed, the “Naysh” grew and H3H3 found themselves in the biggest battle of their lives.

A reaction video titled “the big, the BOLD, the beautiful” where Ethan and Hila made fun of Matt Hose got the duo into a lawsuit over the rights of fair use. A year and a half long process eventually ended in H3H3’s favor. They

were allowed to keep the video online, which was a huge victory for all content creators.

Spending hundreds of thousands of dollars and countless hours to stand up for YouTubers all over the globe made Ethan and Hila heroes to the online community. Winning the lawsuit meant people could not sue creators and ruin people’s careers over something as simple as criticism.

After the lawsuit was finished, two more challenges arose. One of those was the “ad-pocalypse” or the demonetization of videos and once again, Ethan and Hila stood up for the online community. H3H3 made countless videos calling out YouTube for the changes and became one of the loudest voices against the system.

The most famous of these videos is called “Youtube’s rules don’t apply to everyone.” In this video, Ethan compares the way YouTube treats Jimmy Kimmel versus Casey Neistat. Both made videos on the Las Vegas shooting. Kimmel campaigned for stronger gun-control while Neistat’s asked people to give to charities. Neistat’s video was demonetized, Kimmel’s was not. Ethan questioned the decision and even went far enough to call out YouTube for “selective enforcement.”

Other than YouTube, the 2016 election was a prestigious time for H3H3 as they pushed back against political correctness and fought for free speech. During the unsettling political climate, Ethan reacted to a video by BBC asking if gifs and emojis that featured black people in them were a form of Blackface. Ethan responded in the form of his alter-ego “Whiteface man.”

That was not the only time “Whiteface man” has appeared on the H3H3 channel. A video by NowThis calling the word marijuana racist caught the eye of Ethan. The NowThis video tries to explain the origins of marijuana and how it was used to “knock on people of color and their devilish ways.” Ethan’s response was to make a video the only way he knows how, to unleash “Whiteface man” on his subscribers and exploit the absurdity of the claim.

The successful outlandish and satirical comedy produced by Ethan and Hila is a testament that anyone can make it. A 30-year-old Jewish man with a neck “FUPA” and dad bod can influence and be the voice of an entire community.

Ethan Klein may not be the hero we wanted but he is the hero we deserve.

The questions left to ask is, are you ready to join the “VAPE NAYSH” and embrace your “FUPA?” ■

Marijuana in America & the Legalization Battle

BY BRENDAN FRETWELL

Marijuana has been used by humans for four thousand years. It was first used in the western world in 1545 when Spanish merchants shipped the plant to North America. Since then, marijuana has become controversial in the United States.

In the 1960s, it was common for the white middle-class youth of America to have experimented with or regularly used marijuana in many different ways. At that time only 12 percent of Americans supported legalizing the drug in comparison to today's 52 percent, according to the Pew Research Center.

Marijuana is in the top three most popular drugs behind alcohol and tobacco according to SAMHSA. As its popularity has increased, the cries from both sides to legalize or ban this intoxicating drug have become louder and more evident. Here are some important facts about cannabis:

- "According to a study done by Duke University and researchers in New Zealand, people who used marijuana heavily in their teens lost an average of eight IQ points from the ages of 13-38. However, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, those who started using marijuana as adults showed no IQ declines."
- Researchers at the U.S National Library of Medicine found that only 9 percent of heavy marijuana users actually become dependent or addicted.



- If the federal government made marijuana legal, it would create \$105.6 billion in government revenue between 2017 and 2025. It would also create one million jobs by 2025, according to Forbes.
- Marijuana is not a gateway drug. A report by the National Institute of Medicine found "no conclusive evidence that the drug effects of marijuana are causally linked to the subsequent abuse of other illicit drugs."

- Overall, multiple studies have found that marijuana is far less dangerous for the health of the human body than alcohol or tobacco, according to The Journal of the American Medical Association and The Journal of Psychopharmacology.

The arguments against the legalization of marijuana are credible but contain some flaws. One argument is that the drug is far too powerful and dangerous for anyone to use. The levels of Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in regularly bought marijuana has increased from 4 percent in 1995 to 12 percent in 2014 according to the Journal of Child Psychology. So while the drug has become more powerful, it is still not strong enough to put the individual or society as a whole in any form of danger.

An additional argument is that marijuana can cause schizophrenia, which is a type of psychosis. Although marijuana use has risen immensely since 1996, cases of psychosis among those who use marijuana have remained stable according to Schizophrenia Research. In addition, marijuana does not raise the likelihood of psychosis unless a user is already at a greater risk.

Along with arguments against marijuana, there are plenty of arguments in favor of it. Marijuana being legalized would actually provide many benefits to the country both from economic and societal standpoints. Additionally, because marijuana is currently illegal in most of the country, legalizing it would help the criminal justice system immensely.

Criminal justice resources could be used to focus on other crimes far more serious than marijuana-related offenses. In 2013, Jeffrey Miron, who is a senior lecturer at Harvard University, reported that enforcing marijuana laws cost both the state and federal government \$20 billion per year. Miron also reported that the government would save \$8.7 billion if it were to legalize marijuana and according to the CATO Institute, marijuana would create another \$8.7 billion in tax revenue.

Legalizing marijuana would also create more jobs, which would serve not only the people but also the government. According to New Frontier Data, the legal cannabis market will create 250,000 jobs by 2020. This is with only 30 states providing medical or recreational marijuana. If all 50 states would legalize cannabis, millions of jobs would be created for everyday Americans.

Finally, it has been shown that even with laws, people are still going to use illegal substances. The prohibition of the 1920s and 1930s is a great example of this. During the prohibition, people could not legally purchase alcohol, and their access to it was usually hidden and scarce. Due to this, people started drinking hard liquors that were designed to get people intoxicated quickly.

Since the legalization of alcohol, hundreds of different drinks have been produced and sold with each having their own intoxication strength. At this point, one can walk into a liquor store and there is an endless selection regarding alcohol percentages. The same principle applies to marijuana. Because the drug is scarce and illegal across so much of the country, people are using stronger marijuana to make it worth their while since access is limited.

Currently, recreational marijuana is legal in nine states and 21 additional states provide legal medical marijuana but not recreational. Canada recently legalized marijuana on Oct. 17, but the drug remains highly regulated when it comes to the production and distribution process.

Individuals can have their own views and values when it comes to this controversial topic. However, it is important that people are aware of the facts surrounding marijuana from both a positive and negative viewpoint. The public needs to remember to study the facts and take them into account when taking a side in the legal marijuana discussion. ■

Love Thy LGBTQ+

Neighbor as Yourself

BY CANDY PLASCENCIA



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALE VILLASENOR

Most modern-day Christians have the same goals: live a life according to Christ and eventually be allowed into Heaven. They do this by going to church, giving their 10 percent and reading their Bible. These are all amazing practices of Christianity but one aspect our generation struggles with is having a love for people who are not familiar with the word of Christ.

Many modern-day Christians are quick to completely dismiss the views of the LGBTQ+ community, atheists, different denominations, different religions and even some who have admitted their sins.

The truth is, Jesus tells us to go out and welcome those who don't know him and to love others as we would love ourselves. Leviticus 19:18 reads, "Do not take revenge on others or continue to hate them, but love your neighbors as you love yourself. I am the Lord."

One of the biggest arguments within the Christian community is how Jesus views the LGBTQ+ community. Many scholars and individuals do believe that you can live a life through Christ while also being part of the LGBTQ+ community. However, modern-day Christians' closed-mindedness prevents them from listening or understanding LGBTQ+ members' point of view. Instead, try expanding horizons by looking at verses such as Mark 12:29-31: "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

It is believed by many Christians that being part of the LGBTQ+ community is a sin. One biblical story that gets tossed at the community is the story of Sodom, where it is commonly believed that the city was destroyed because of wicked activities. Some interpreters and individuals believe that those wicked activities refer to homosexuality but there's more to the story. Ezekiel 16:49 states, "Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy." The city was not destroyed because the citizens participated in homosexual activities but because the people were corrupt, rude and didn't help the poor. It is easy to see the misconception if the story of Sodom is read on its

own but more thought and research needs to be done before modern-day scholars and individuals make assumptions about the meaning of some texts.

Let's assume that being part of the LGBTQ+ community is a sin. Jesus is willing to forgive everyone's sin, no matter what it is. Let's compare sin to the number of hairs on our head. We all have hair, some of us have a lot and some of us don't have as much but regardless we all still have some. In the same way, we are all sinners no matter what we claim or do. Romans 3:23 states, "For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard". Thankfully, the Lord forgives all sin. 1 John 2:2 says, "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world." God sent his only son to the cross, not only to redeem the souls of Christians but to redeem the souls of all sinners.

Another idea that often gets tossed at the LGBTQ+ community is that their sin will or cannot be forgiven since it is an "intense" sin. Again, assuming that it is a sin, there's no levels of sin because God views all sin equally. James 2:10-11 says, "For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. For he who said, 'Do not commit adultery,' also said, 'Do not murder.' If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law." To put in simple terms, let's say person A has committed murder, person B has committed adultery and person C stole a candy bar from the store, who is the biggest sinner? The answer: none of them, because all sin is equal. There is no scale to sin because Jesus does not view one sin as worse than another.

Seeing that we are all brothers and sister in Christ, we should still love those with opinions different from our own—people who view God in a different way, believe in different gods or goddesses and even those who don't believe in a god. Remember, God calls us to love everyone with the same love we have for ourselves.

The overall goal for Christians is to live a Christ-centered life and to bring the Word of God to as many people as possible. Though many modern-day Christians believe that these communities will be blocked at the gates of heaven, we can be the generation that loves and accepts everyone. ■



“If a vegan’s diet is not well thought out, it can lead to deficiencies in vital bodily nutrients and can cause long-lasting health issues if not taken seriously.”

EFFECTS OF VEGANISM OVERTIME

BY KENDAL SHRIDE

As more of our population is becoming concerned about environmental protection and the longevity of our world, the vegan diet has started to become a more attractive way of life to many. The supposed health benefits that come along with adopting this lifestyle is also an attraction that people are interested in.

Regardless of the reason why a person decides to become a vegan, the vegan lifestyle has become a trend in this day and age.

Whether they are doing this for health benefits or concern for the environment, it is a dramatic change in diet. It’s important to look at what happens to a person’s body after becoming a vegan, and how veganism affects a person’s health in the long term.

The vegan diet has known risks and benefits that have been proven by science. However, studies are still being conducted on what the lasting effects of veganism are on the body.

There are many vegans that are mindful of putting the right nutrients into their bodies that will sustain them, but there are some vegans that don’t necessarily eat very healthy. Since what they are consuming is still vegan, there is a common misconception that all vegan food is healthy.

“It is important not to replace dietary meat with unhealthy foods. Pay close attention to food labeling and make sure that your dietary needs are being met,” said Natalie Butler, a registered and licensed dietitian.

An obvious area where vegans could be lacking if not well managed is their intake of protein. Vegans cannot consume animal products like dairy, meat and eggs which are high in protein. Therefore, vegans have to find other alternatives.

If they fail to do this, they are at risk for protein deficiency. Protein deficiency leads to weight and muscle loss, liver problems and low blood pressure

and heart rate. Without protein, your body will become weak and have a harder time recovering from illnesses or injuries.

Another health concern for vegans is their vitamin supply, specifically vitamin D, which is vital to building strong bones. An article by Clay Mcnight discussed the risks of the vegan diet, focusing on the importance of vitamins for vegans.

Mcnight states the “lack of vitamin B-12 is one of the biggest concerns with vegan diets, especially because vegan diets are typically rich in folacin, which can mask B-12 deficiency symptoms.” He recommends that vegans should be mindful of consuming foods high in B-12 like soy and rice beverages, cereals, or supplements.

Mcnight makes the point that vegan diets which are properly planned “are healthy and can even lower the risk of certain diseases according to the American Dietetic Association”, but that “there is a risk of being deficient in certain nutrients if the vegan diet is not carefully planned.”

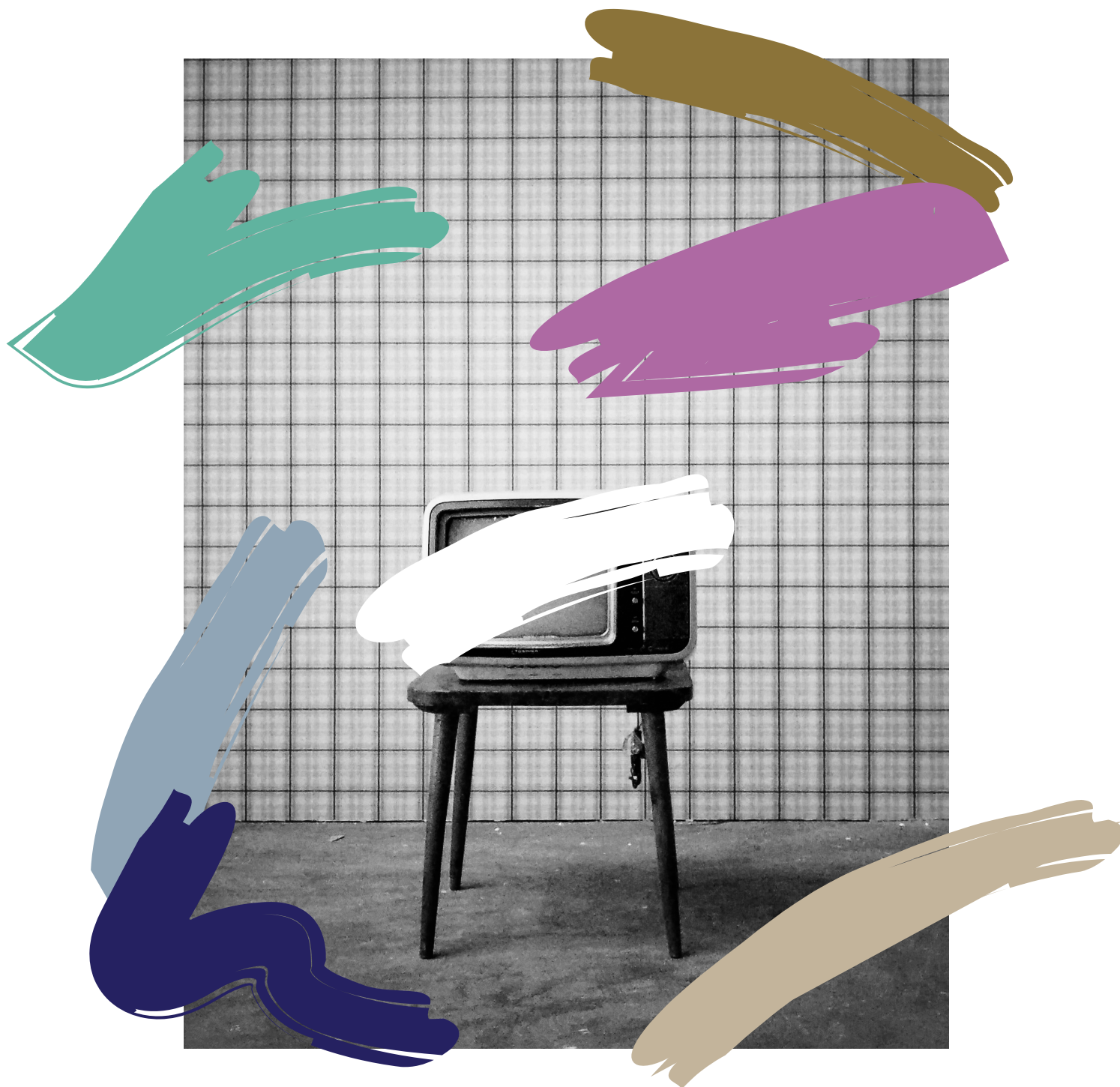
What Mcnight says about the importance of a planned vegan diet is understandable. If a vegan’s diet is not well thought out, it can lead to deficiencies in vital bodily nutrients and can cause long-lasting health issues if not taken seriously.

Butler recommends that someone considering switching to a fully vegan diet should gradually stop eating animal products for a smoother transition. “Incorporate one meat alternative first, then progress to other non-animal produce, eventually excluding animal produce completely,” she said.

As the trend to adopt the vegan diet is growing, people must be careful. When switching to the vegan diet, people need to properly plan their meals so that they are able to live a healthy vegan lifestyle without nutritional deficiencies. ■

GRAPHIC CONTENT IN THE MEDIA

College Students, Violent Media and Desensitization



BY CHARISSA ENNS

A 20-year-old male college student sits down to watch “Avengers: Infinity War” on a normal Friday night with friends. Let’s say, hypothetically, 30 minutes later, he hears shouting outside and thinks nothing of it, probably somebody screwing around he thinks. Later, he finds out that someone got mugged just outside his house. This is an example of desensitization. It starts when people react slowly to potential violent threats and tend to be less sympathetic when they do happen. According to a study done by the National Library of Medicine, those who are exposed to “sexually violent movies led to less empathy for victims of violence several days later in experimental studies with male college students.” This is the definition of desensitization.

With the birth of modern media, younger generations are increasingly exposed to violence. One example can be found through the viral scandal involving Logan Paul. On Dec. 31, 2017, he posted a video of someone who had died by suicide in Japan’s Suicide Forest. Six million people watched the video before YouTube removed it. The video’s popularity demonstrates how people are intrigued and entertained by brutality.

Technology and media seem to play a large role in this trend. Technology today makes it easier to find and watch brutality. Honglan Le, a sophomore biochemistry major agrees, “We are more aware of violence because of media.” This affects college-aged students because we are the first generation that cannot remember the world without the media we have today. Having easier access to graphic content, can affect our emotional state.

People react to violence in different ways. According to the New York Times, violence in the media can cause either heightened alarm or desensitization. Basically, our brains do not know how to react to all the pain, so we become less empathetic and more aggressive. This was proved in a study at Indiana University School of Medicine. According to Psychology Today, when young men played a violent video game for one week there were visible alterations in their MRI brain scans. Graphic video games affected their emotional and decision-making center of the

brain. This is disturbing, as the movies, video games and news we consume are often full of brutality. In fact, CNN says “90 percent of movies, 68 percent of video games, and 60 percent of TV shows show some depictions of violence.”

Violent media affects its consumers negatively, as a result, when someone is in need, people are less likely to respond. The more we are exposed, the more our brains are desensitized. An experiment done at the University of Michigan demonstrates this. Two studies were done where college students were exposed to violent and nonviolent media and then given a situation where they needed to help someone. Those who had been exposed to violence were slower to respond or simply ignored the situation. The slower reaction to those in need shows that violence is normal in our society. If various forms of media continue to expose our brains to violence, desensitization can only get worse.

Younger generations are particularly affected by desensitization. Our parents did not grow up with nearly as much technology and it has developed drastically. Think about it: 30 years ago smartphones did not exist. As generations are exposed to violence at younger and younger ages it negatively affects society as a whole. We are becoming desensitized.

With all of this, there has to be a way to counteract desensitization. The answer is simply to unplug. Engage in activities that are outside of the screen, such as reading, drawing and playing sports. Creativity is often linked to our emotions and helps to counteract the effects of desensitization. We need to control their media time and not let it control us. Giving up on watching media is not realistic, but we can easily step away from it. If someone designates time to be on social media and to check the news it will limit screen time and allow them to be engaged with their loved ones. This helps us to reconnect with our emotions and build relationships which helps with empathy and keeps us from becoming complacent. The key to combating desensitization is to focus on what matters because empathy helps us relate to others and want to help. ■

How to Clean Out Your Closet and Craft Your Personal Style

BY JUSTINE BROWN



Do you ever stare into the depths of your closet with no clue of what to wear? Or maybe you have trouble matching shirts with anything other than that one pair of jeans you put on daily? Answering “yes” to these questions might lead you to think it’s time for a shopping spree to increase your outfit options. However, this is actually a sign that it’s time to purge the wardrobe and get back to the basics. Once you’ve established a solid base of clothing, it’s easy to find a cohesive style which reflects your inner personality and looks great!

After living away from home for a year, I realized that I had an overabundance of clothes. There were plenty of clothing items I had left behind, but even some of the pieces I brought to APU went unworn all year! Now I am focusing on pieces of clothing I actually like and use. In order to do this, I’ve had to go through a process of getting rid of old or rarely worn pieces, narrowing down clothing styles and limiting new purchases.

The first step is the most painful but also the most important: ditch the clothes you never wear and donate them to a nearby thrift store. Start off with pieces that no longer fit or are uncomfortable. Remember, the clothes stuffed at the bottom of a drawer should be the first to go - if you never wear it now, you never will. Putting on an outfit in the morning and then quickly changing into something else means it is time to get rid of it. If you find an article of clothing especially difficult to part with, stick it in a bag and set it in the closet. If you don’t find yourself wanting to wear it, donate it after 30 days. Anything that is worn out, recycle instead of donating.

Some pieces of clothing are just way too cute to really get rid of, so host a clothes swap with your friends! Set aside the pieces you love that either don’t fit properly or don’t match the style you’re going for. Ask some friends to do the same thing and plan a time to meet and try on each other’s clothes. Once each person has tested out a few new looks, keep the pieces that work. This way, everyone can pick up something new for free, and you’ll be comforted knowing that friends are using the clothes you loved (just not enough to wear).

Now that you have cleared out your closet except for your favorite pieces, it is time to prep for future shopping plans. First, purchase new clothes to replace worn out, well-needed pieces. Consider if you want the new pieces to be identical to these or if you will go in a different direction. You might try out a new look, such as switching from all skinny dark-wash denim to a pair of light blue mom jeans. Pick out the basics that speak to you. The key is to purchase items that fit your body type and make you feel confident while wearing them.

In order to limit your future spending and narrow down

your style, select colors and patterns to create a cohesive look. Choose your neutrals and stick with them as a base for your wardrobe. Pick the neutrals that look best with your skin tone and hair color. Then, choose a few colors and patterns to focus on. In order to easily mix and match, make sure these do not clash with one another.

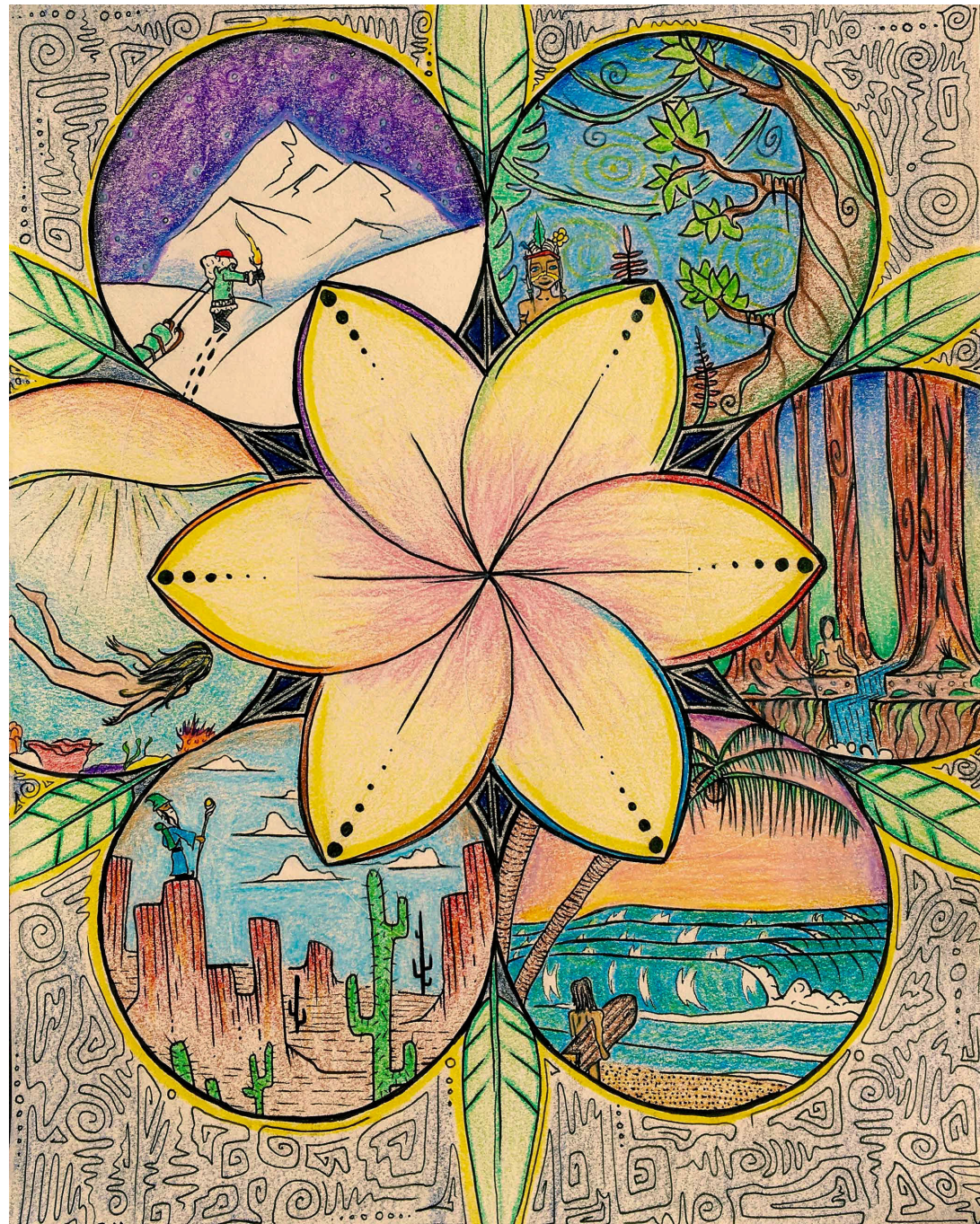
If a few pieces in your wardrobe do not fit your recently selected palette, there is no need to immediately throw them out. However, in the future, intentionally purchase items that will go well with the majority of your clothes. In order to have a cohesive wardrobe, various items need to match so pieces are interchangeable. This is most convenient when taking a minimalistic approach, and versatile clothing options are also extremely helpful while traveling.

When rebuilding your wardrobe, only buy necessary items or pieces you truly love. If you don’t love an item while trying it on, don’t purchase it. Only buy what you need unless you try on a piece and can’t stop thinking about it later. For example, if you need new sneakers, decide beforehand what style and color you want. Buy a pair that is made well and fits nicely. Perhaps while you are shopping, you find a dress that fits perfectly and looks adorable. If you will wear it regularly, it is worth it to make the purchase.

Finally, don’t forget to pick out staple accessories. These are accessories that will be worn every (or almost every) day. This typically includes pieces such as watches, earrings, glasses, hats and belts. Some people decide to be very tame or minimalistic with their accessories, while others go with big statement pieces. Choose whichever feels right to you, but stick with one style and stray from it only occasionally. Accessories are extremely fun to play around with and can completely change an outfit. Either way, invest in practical accessories to wear regularly.

Now that you have cut out the clothing you never wear and purchased a few needs and loves, you need to maintain this cohesive closet. The most important thing to remember is to not buy things unnecessarily. Do not buy a piece in a color that matches literally nothing you own. If it looks good but is uncomfortable, it is not worth purchasing. Whatever you buy from now on should be both comfortable and practical while instilling you with confidence.

The process of remaking your wardrobe may take time, so think of it as a work in progress. Have fun with it! Tweak your style and try on outfit combinations you wouldn’t normally wear with the pieces you own. As long as you’re willing to try something new, you will never run out of original looks to rock for the season. ■



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ZU Magazine is a publication of ZU Media, a multi-media student voice of undergraduate Azusa Pacific University. Our stories seek to bring people together while impacting our readers. We provide narratives, inquires and dialogue in a Christian academic setting that value individuals' stories as well as community concerns. Our writers are student journalists interested in crafting articles that connect with readers and challenge them to grow as people.

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