



Visions

Volume 8
Issue 1

A Letter from the Editors

Sometimes life renders us speechless. It can move us, and it can shake us until speech fails us and leaves us mute with inexpressible emotion. And then, later, as the shock of life wears off, little by little, we begin to communicate again. We might nod to the person next to us. We might move our lips as if in the beginning of speech – we might even whisper.

And sometimes we write. Or paint, or take pictures, or use some other form of communication besides speech in order to speak.

Visions has put together our first issue in order to give our writers, our artists, and our readers a place to speak and to listen to things they just can't describe in the rhythms of commonplace conversation.

Visions, like any piece or collection of writing, doesn't just print out a bunch of people's artistic endeavors so they can have something to show Mom and Dad. *Visions* holds a conversation. It engages its writers and its readers in a silent dialogue that can last anywhere from a span of a few seconds to a few years.

We hope the discussion that courses through our first issue captivates you as much as it has intrigued us.

Happy reading!

Marilee Goad, Mallery Forzese, Dominic Delabruere, and Kala Gleason

“Through working in harmony with life's circumstances, Taoist understanding changes what others may perceive as negative into something positive.”

- Benjamin Hoff, *The Tao of Pooh*

“I sometimes find, and I am sure you know the feeling, that I simply have too many thoughts and memories crammed into my mind.... At these times... I use the Pensieve. One simply siphons the excess thoughts from one's mind, pours them into the basin, and examines them at one's leisure.”

- Albus Dumbledore, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of the Fire* (J.K. Rowling)

“Whatever life holds in store for me, I will never forget these words: ‘With great power comes great responsibility.’ This is my gift, my curse. Who am I? I'm Spiderman.”

- Peter Parker, *Spiderman* (David Koepp)

This issue of *Visions* is dedicated to:

Patrick "Patsy" O'Riordan, father of senior, Hayley O'Riordan, who passed away on October 25, 2007.
Patsy was one of the kindest men anyone could have known, and he cared about everyone else before he cared about himself.
He does not just live in the past but his presence exists now and will continue with us into the future.
Patsy is, was, and always will be.

Dedicated to:

Ryan Michael Bourque, who passed away on November 25, 2007. Ryan was "that kid." The one that you could call on a Thursday afternoon if you just needed to talk, the one who would give his left arm to help anybody out. He was "that kid" who would do anything for a laugh and whose laugh was always contagious. Ryan left behind a legacy. He will never be forgotten, our one and only Varsity Tomcat.

INVENTORY

Front Cover & Back Cover Art

Photography by Dariush Nejad (Class of 2008)

Dedications

Written by Hayley O'Riordan (Class of 2008)

Crash, cry, reboot

Poetry by Kathy Tran

Together & Holding Hands

Poetry by Dominic Delabruere

Welcome to the Circus & Sweet Reverie

Poetry by Cherie Price

Untitled

Photography by Mallery Forzese

Untitled

College Essay by Marilee Goad

Evening Man

Artwork by Kala Gleason

The Greatest Light

Poetry by Robert Taylor

Red Explorer

Poetry by Saige Jutras

Untitled

Photography by Katelyn Connerty

What It is Like to Be a Tree

Poetry by Phoebe Carmichael

Just a Simple Tree

Poetry by Roselly Genao

Four Winds & Untitled

Poetry by Stephanie Tran

Untitled

Photography by Ms. Groleau

Untitled

Prose by Geoff Bergeron

Untitled

Poetry by Katelyn Connerty

Untitled

Print Art by Tess Allen

Fate

Poetry by Brittany Wright

And for a Moment

Poetry by Jessica Dick

Untitled

Prose by Nicholas Giarrusso

New Hampshire & Untitled

Photography by Lindsey Mercer

INVENTORY (cont.)

Life would be boring...

Photocomic by Jonathan Mailloux (Class of 2010)

Some things...

Photocomic by Jessica Hajjar (Class of 2010)

Defining Happiness

Poetry by Karina Castro

Untitled

Poetry by Mrs. Cenca

Dad Who

Poetry by Amber Blum

Where I'm From

Poetry by Stephanie Tran

Sunny Day at the Beach

Print Art by Alex Niemeyer

w3rd

Artlessness by M.G., C.B., & K.D.

An excerpt from "Harry"

Prose by Mallary Forzese

Ping Pong

Prose by Reggie Kwok

Guacamole Stand

Artwork by Olivia Stanislas

Needle in a Haystack

Poetry by Nicole Garcia

Drunk

Poetry by Cayleigh Cameron

Sunglasses

Print Art by Kate Berry

Remember

Reflection by Elizabeth Lyons

Listening in Regards to Rain

Poetry by Karyn Jacobs

Pearly Whites

Prose by Maddie Schneider

Untitled

Photography by Rachael Palmisano

Earthfall

Poetry by Mandy Baril

Untitled

Speech by Hayley O'Riordan

As the limit of x approaches infinity

Poetry by Marilee Goad

Crash, cry, reboot

This program has experienced a problem and needs to close.

What! No.
Undo.

C:\Documents and Settings\Your Life>_

Ctrl-Z.

*'CTRL-Z' is not recognized as an internal or external command,
operable program, batch file, or legitimate way to deal with life.*

Ctrl-Z. Ctrl-Z. Ctrl-zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzfdlkjsafkjfaslkj.

Neither is bashing on the keyboard.

Why.
whywhywhywhywhywhywhy.
Ctrl-F.
Find: why.

Search is complete. There are no results to display.

Common, come ooon.

I'll defrag you more, and I know you've been telling me to update
for, like, five months –

I will, now, if you

only

come

back ...

Colon. Shift-9. :(

ucomebacknowplz.

...restarting.

Huh? O rly? Reallyreally? Okay.

O.

K.

Welcome to Your Life.

:)

Kathy Tran
Class of 2009

Together

I'm aching to feel you in
My arms are itching to be
Around you is an aura of
Light fills my
Skies shine from
Your eyes are deep as
The sea could not be so vast as
This feeling changes
Everything is so different when we're
together.

Holding Hands

We were walking
close
and holding hands.
That's not true.
There was more than that.
We were walking
fast
and clenching hard.
I was lost.
I should have been crying too.

Dominic Delabruere
Class of 2009

Welcome to the Circus

Dressed in a plaid mini, knee-highs that don't match, and ballet flats, she confidently walks through the halls, not noticing the many stares.

Rubbing the spot where she had banged her head on the locker above hers, she quickly forgets the previous laughs and condescending glares.

Oblivious to the outside world, she puts on her stereo headphones, gets her sketchbook out, and gets comfortable under the stairs. There she sits everyday, not knowing she's my hero, not even knowing my name.

Sweet Reverie

Breathless, the girl took a moment to look at the pink sun rise over the quiet football field.

School, only a few feet away.

Peace.

For a moment, she forgot about her freshman book bag and those who couldn't remember her name.

Beautiful, she thought, as her eyes fell from the sky to the candy-colored trees.

Thank you, she whispered, as a smile slowly formed on her face.

Exhale.

With ecstasy, she continued on her way.



Mallary Forzese, Class of 2008

Untitled (College Essay)

My brother sits at the dining room table, his long legs dangling over his chair, as he waits for breakfast. “Marilee,” he says, “why is this part of the table colored? Did you do something *wrong*?”

I look to the side of the table to which he points and see a long orange line curling around the edge of our small rectangular table, attesting to my forays into artistic expression as a pint-sized six-year-old.

“Oh, that,” I say, “I did that when I was six, Pat.”

His eyes grow big, and he laughs.

“*You?!?*” he exclaims, “*You did this?!?*”

He laughs again, his features twisted in a delighted astonishment.

“Yes, Pat,” I sigh. “I did this. When I was six.”

He continues his laughing fit until he grows tired of the shock of discovery, he has often known me to admonish him for his small acts of mischief but almost never as a perpetrator myself.

I return to my section of the newspaper.

My brother, now calm, asks for the comics section from the *Boston Globe*, and I pass it to him, asking if he’d like some of *The New York Times*. He rolls his eyes at me.

“No way, José! I’m only in fourth grade, dude!” he gestures dramatically.

“So? I was reading *The Times* in fourth grade,” I respond.

“Yeah but that’s because you’re kind of, you know, *weird*. But not in a bad way,” he adds, “In a big-sisters-are-always-weird kind of way.”

My mother enters the room carrying scones, hot from the oven, and my brother and I are quick to take our plates.

“Hey, Mom,” I say. “What do you think of incorporating anthropologists into the military? You know, to promote a better cultural understanding of the people they’re dealing with?”

She shakes her head. “It’s not gonna work. That’s such a violation of the indigenous people’s trust. I mean, as an anthropologist, you enter into their world as an allegedly unbiased scholar. You can’t just take that trust and throw it away.”

My dad arrives at the table, connected, per usual, to his morning cup of coffee. “What are you guys talking about?” he asks.

“Anthropologists working for the military,” my mom replies.

My father chuckles. “As if that’d work. Let me conquer your country but hey, I’ll do it in a way that’s culturally acceptable for you. Typical.”

“But shouldn’t the military have some sort of cultural understanding of the people they’re working with? It *would* be arrogant to go into another country without any understanding of its people whatsoever, wouldn’t it?” I interject.

My mom sighs, her hand curved around a scone in thoughtful contemplation. “Well, yes and no. They need a cultural understanding of the people in the country they’re fighting in. But anthropologists working for the military? I just think that’s wrong by virtue of their profession. They’re working in a job that should be completely independent of interfering with the culture they have studied or are studying. I mean, just think...remember that ethnography you were reading this summer? The one in Iraq? What if that guy had gone back and used all that information he had learned and given it to the military, an institution the natives probably don’t appreciate. Wouldn’t you feel a bit betrayed?”

My brother, who has been listening intently, interrupts. “Mom, what’s an anthropologist?”

“Someone who goes into a culture and studies it. For example, Marilee read a book about an anthropologist – what was it?”

“*Guests of the Sheik* by Elizabeth Warnock Fernea.”

“Yes, so you see, in her book, an anthropologist goes to Iraq and studies a village and its people – their culture – by living with them. An anthropologist has to learn their language, their traditions, what they eat, how they dress, what religion they practice. Then the anthropologist applies that knowledge to attain a greater cultural understanding and awareness – and hopefully, to help us attain that same understanding without having to live with the people as he, or she, did.” A light seems to come into my brother’s eyes. “Oh, so you mean, like, say, for instance, I went to Germany and learned German and ate German food and did German things. And then I wrote a report on it?”

“Yes, that’s it.”

“Hey, Marilee,” my brother asks, “are you gonna be an anthropologist?”

“Maybe, I don’t know,” I say. “I find it fascinating, but I don’t know if I want to make a career of it. I was thinking I’d be more involved in international relations.”

“What’s international relations?” he asks.

“It’s the study of different countries and their relationships as pertains to government and culture. It basically combines a study of different countries’ languages, psychologies, sociologies, histories, and politics.”

“Oh,” he says, his brow furrowed in thought. “That’s neat. But I’d rather do something in Louisiana with my cousins. Hey, Mom, when are we going back to Louisiana?”

“Not until next summer, kid. You’ve got school until then.”

“Aw, c’mon...your *mother* lives there. Plus, it’s where I was *born*, for crying out loud.”

My mother fixes him with a look. “Not until the summer. For now, you can focus on your academics.”

My brother sighs and returns to his comics.

Each person’s portion of the newspaper clutters the table, its finish nearly gone from use, in shades of gray. My father clutches the op-ed section as my mother browses the food section, looking for any new and exotic dishes to add to our weekly dining experience.

“Marilee,” she exclaims, “look at this! Vegetarian al biryani – you should make it! I think we have the ingredients...let’s see – onions, carrots, potato, raisins, pine nuts...I know we have those somewhere...cardamom, saffron, cloves, ginger, basmati rice, vermicelli, peas...yes, we have all that. Here, take a look.”

She hands me the paper, and I place it on top of an article describing the ongoing horrors transpiring in Myanmar. The recipe looks enticing and having usually encountered similar recipes containing meat – an ingredient my vegetarian diet excludes – I decide to make it for the week, adding it to my planned menu of dhal and vegetarian gumbo.

“Looks good, Mom. I think I’ll try it out,” I say, passing the paper back to her.

News becomes the medium through which we speak – engendering questions that spark answers that inspire further questions. I look at the table, its eighteen-year-old surface mapping out the stages of my life in spaghetti sauce stains and tea spills – and newspapers. The newspapers are always old, always new, becoming a second finish to the table through their constant presence. Except on special occasions – then we use a tablecloth.

Marilee Goad
Class of 2008

Evening Man



Kala Gleason, Class of 2009

The Greatest Light

Darkness is a greater light
Than any star can shine,
For when the moon takes over,
Yourself – at last you find.

Don't look for you at daytime
You surely won't succeed,
But maybe in the evening
You can see the life you lead.

Darkness can come before the night
With just a single move,
Take a breath and close your eyes,
Yourself – at last you lose.

Leave the world around you
And join in on the bliss,
Experience the peacefulness
Of Nature's greatest gift.

Use your imagination
And at last you can take flight,
For you can see much better
When there isn't any light.

Robert Taylor
Class of 2009

Red Explorer

As the car pulls down the side of the street
I drive my heart straightforward to meet
yours.

I grab your big hand slung out the window
As you turn the radio down
And pick at my chipping nails
And play with the split ends in my hair.

Someone told me autumn has a way
Of braiding love into emotion
And so I pray
There are bigger fingers working
At our hair.

The fierce color of the sky
“I didn’t know
that your eyes
are blue,”
You say.

The leaves painting themselves russet hues
Shading each other to fit the scene
Of what I wish
Of what I dream
To be a new beginning.

And then our lips stop
But my mind keeps insisting

What’s to become?
Will it be nothing?

Could it be the birth of a whole new love?
A helicopter flying too low
Interjects from above.

You tell me that helicopter has soldiers inside.
I wonder how you know things that seem
So unknown
To me.
And when we turned back the clocks a few weeks ago
We reset our hearts along with them.
That’s what the cold breeze said to me
On Darryl Lane.

The morning I fell for you
Like the leaves on the blushing trees
The morning after that long night
You said you would miss me
Too.

I walked back inside the house
And remembered to put the dishes away
And to clean my room so dusty with gray

But I forgot my heart
In your car.

And autumn has a way of doing that.



Katelyn Connerty, Class of 2011

What It is Like to Be a Tree

What is it like to be a tree?

I am tranquility

I am peace

I am relief

What is it like to be a tree?

I am the eyes of nature

I am as the heart of a human, beating, beating, beating

I feel superiority

What is it like to be a tree?

I am Achilles' heel

If I am pierced then she shall fall

She who is mother to us all

What is it like to be a tree?

I can be the yellow sun, bright, shiny, vibrant

I can be green and I can be blue

When my brothers topple and my sisters burn

I can be the orange, bitter on the outside but sweet on the inside

What is it like to be a tree?

Hear me sway with the wind

Hear me rush

Hear me roar like a lion

Hear my melody

Hear my silence

What is it like to be a tree.

Stand by me, look up, and you will see.

Now why don't you tell me?

Phoebe Carmichael
Class of 2010

Just a Simple Tree

When fall strokes its brush upon them, the leaves begin to die,
to make sure the tree can stay alive, each must say good-bye.
This coat of colors comforts the tree to ease what lies ahead,
when cold winds try to fell it after all the leaves are dead.

Standing tall, it holds each branch upwards toward the sky,
to brave those winter storms, sent from clouds on high.
Having deep faith in nature, knowing it soon will send the spring
and those sunny days for the birth of leaves it brings.

Older now, my mind is filled with great awe of the faith I see
and I feel ashamed I had less faith than just a simple tree.
Our lives are made of seasons, and some will make us grieve,
but if we just have faith, we will never be without our leaves.

Roselly Genao
Class of 2011

Four Winds

The gold-tinted leaves
Shimmer with one crisp, gentle
Touch and fall with dying grace.

Tornados of sweet,
Powdered sugar swirl and whirl
And settle like waves.

Velvety petals
Reach for sunlight and wave to
Busy meddling bees.

Musty and humid
Air mix with sun and laughter
Ensues ne'ertheless.

Untitled

the spidery chaos of bare branches
shield a village
of red roofs
complementing rolling green and yellow hills
the church's puffy smoke
signal
the outside
but branches of sinuous trees
fingers of Mother Nature
attempt
to shield this quaintly innocent village
from hostile winter
and bitter wind



Ms. Groleau, Faculty

Untitled

John loved having fun. He loved climbing, playing basketball, and exploring. But John was told that he would have to go to school and work hard. Then, when he was grown up, he could have all the fun he wanted. So John made a list of all his favorite things to do, and he buried it under his favorite climbing tree. He told himself he would work hard and do well, and then he would be able to come back and do all the great things on his list.

John buried the list and began focusing on his schoolwork. As time progressed, it became college work. John had fun here and there, but he always thought of the list. His college work eventually became real work. He worked in a small cubicle and faced the computer for hours on end. Slowly over time, a combination of the white screen and the cramped working space erased the memory of the list. Years passed and John could no longer recall what compelled him to spend his time hunched over the computer screen. He spent virtually all of his time in front of either the television screen at home or the computer screen at work.

By the time his work was done, he had a larger cubicle and a nicer computer. And as he walked to his car, leaving work for the last time, he finally remembered. John may have been old, but he could never forget where his favorite climbing tree was. He arrived at the tree with a shovel and after an hour of digging, he recovered the box that held the list he wrote more than half a century ago.

John smiled as he read his adolescent penmanship. The first lines on the list read, "Dear John, if you are reading this then that means I'm grown up and I've finished all my hard work, and it's time to have fun. Now the first thing you have to do to begin this awesome list is to climb our favorite tree."

The moment John read that line, he got a sick feeling of doubt. He was over sixty and was in no shape to be climbing trees. *But this isn't right,* John thought. *I worked hard like I was supposed to and now it's time for me to have fun. But what is the point of having fun if your body can't keep up with you?*

No, John thought. *I haven't broken a bone in my life. Sure I'm old, but I'm not an old guy. I'm not one of those guys who's broken a hip and has a box for their daily doses of pills.* John was confident he could climb the tree and do everything else on the list. So he put down the list and took off his reading glasses and jacket. He soon realized that he couldn't tell a branch from a leaf. Years of sitting in a poorly-lit office staring at a lit box all day had taken its toll. *But that's all right. So I need glasses; so what?* He stared at the tree and anticipated each move. When he felt he was ready, he took a step back to stretch out. He felt a sharp pain in his back. Another wound from working hard. A sore back caused by slouching in front of a desk for most of his life. *That's fine, once my adrenaline starts pumping, I won't even feel it.*

So he positioned himself in front of the tree, carefully putting his foot and hands in the proper positions. John had finally reached the moment he had daydreamed about so much during school. As John held the tree, he thought: *this is the first day of the rest of my life.* And with that thought he gave a great "Umph" and began to pull himself up the tree. He stopped halfway up with a shocked look on his face. He had heard a noise as he climbed up, but the forest was silent. The sound had come from his back. Pain shot through him as he let go of the tree and fell back. He was only a couple feet off the ground, but he hit the forest floor hard. On impact he heard a second crack and knew he had broken a hip. He lay on the forest floor in unbearable pain and agony and thought of the days when he was a kid. He remembered when he fell from much higher up and didn't even have a scratch. While lying there alone in the forest, John realized he was finally one of the old guys. This wasn't the first day of the rest of his life, but the last day of his life.

Nicholas Giarrusso
Class of 2008

Untitled

I lie awake in bed tonight
I hold my tears 'cause I'm alright
Your picture's behind my pillow case,
I shut my eyes to get some space
I hold my heart even though I can't touch it
It hurts too much, I think you've numbed it

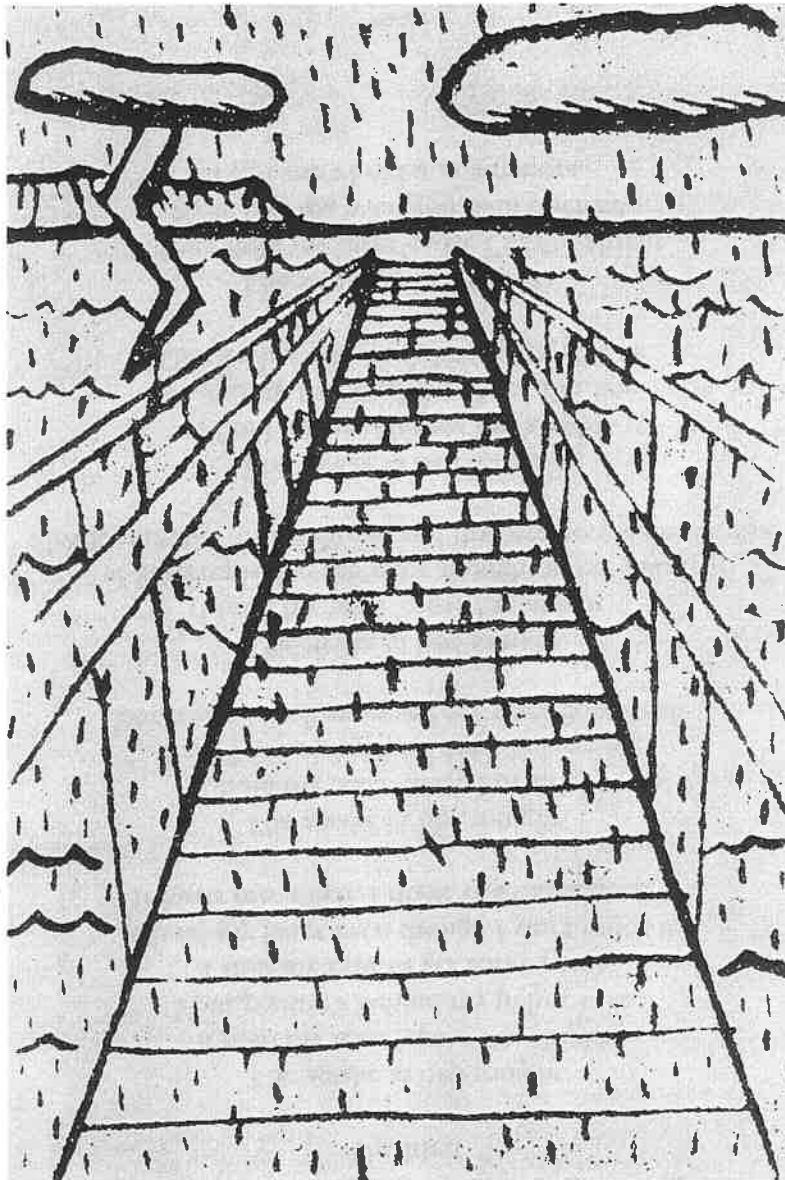
I lie awake in bed tonight
I hold my tears 'cause I'm alright
I say I'm not, but you don't believe me
But when I look at myself my tears flow freely

I lie awake in bed tonight
I hold my tears 'cause I'm alright
I keep replaying the same thought in my mind
Slowly minutes turn to hours and that memory fades in time

I lie awake in bed tonight
I hold my tears 'cause I'm alright
You think I'm alright, you see I'm fine
That's what you don't know, it's all a lie

I lie awake in bed tonight
I don't hold my tears 'cause I'm not alright
Now you see what you didn't before
I just can't hold it in anymore.

Katelyn Connerty
Class of 2011



Tess Allen, Class of 2008

Fate

I can write down every thought I feel
I can scream
and pretend my whole life isn't real
I can punch the wall to control my hate
I can close my eyes
but there it waits
cause you can't hide from it
you can't change it
you can only accept it
it's life
it's who we are
it's our fate
and it decides
where we go in life
my advice
don't fight it
because your fate is in your character
and you can't change who you are

Brittany Wright
Class of 2008

And for a Moment

You are always with me,
I can feel you all around me,
And for a moment the pain disappears.
I see you in everything I do,
And for a moment everything is okay.
I can hear you guiding me,
And for a moment I am at peace.
I can feel you giving me strength,
And for a moment I am strong.
I can see you in my actions,
And for a moment I am happy.
I can hear you in my words,
And for a moment I can speak.
I can feel you holding me up,
And for a moment I am grateful.
I can see you in my reflection,
And for a moment I am proud.
I can hear you in my thoughts,
And for a moment I understand.
I can feel you as I teach,
And for a moment I can smile.
I can see you in my beauty,
And for a moment I feel pretty.
I can see, hear, and feel you because,
You are always with me.

Jessica Dick
Class of 2009

Untitled

"What can you say about a twenty-five-year-old girl who died? That she was beautiful. And brilliant. That she loved Mozart and Bach. And the Beatles. And me...." – Erich Segal, Love Story

I walked by her everyday. She was on her way to the diner to earn her menial pay, and I was en route to the hospital to change residents' diapers. I worked on the renal/kidney floor of What'sAMatta U Hospital. I wasn't infatuated, but she was always in the back of my mind. Her elegant stroll as she consistently put two steps in a slab of sidewalk, carefully making sure she wasn't under-stepping. The way her hair fell to the side of her face and bounced as she strolled by me. I would not stare, but rather take a quick glance into her hazel eyes.

After meeting her for that brief moment everyday, I finally went to her diner during my lunch break. Soon enough I was going everyday and she knew my order by heart. She would ask me just for her own reassurance, "Coffee, eggs over hard, and wheat toast?" I would always reply, "Yes, please," always too nervous to flirt or start a conversation. I was never the person with the skills to really "woo" the ladies.

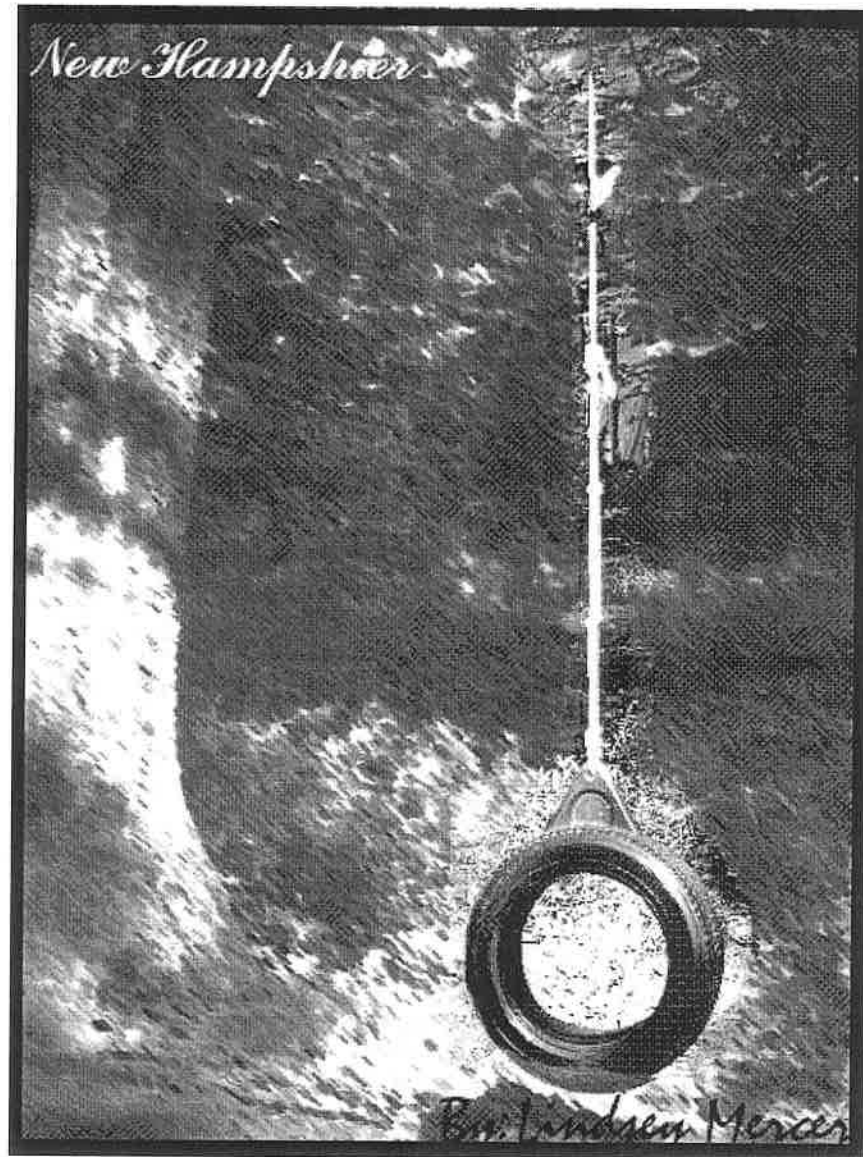
One day, I must've had a boost of courage or my self-esteem must have been high, because I did something I thought I never would've. I asked her for her name. She answered euphorically, "Julia. Like the song." I told her I knew of it because I was a huge Beatles fan. I told her my name was Tim. Before long we were discussing current world affairs, where we grew up, and our favorite songs by The Beatles. She was twenty-four years old, she lived downtown, and she was from Rhode Island. Coincidentally, we grew up only a few towns apart from each other. She had lived in Warwick and I grew up in Providence.

I finally asked her if she'd like to grab a bite with me. Not at the diner, of course. She enthusiastically agreed. We went to an Italian Restaurant in Union Square called *Mario and Luigi's*. That is where we had our first date and our first dance to "The Way You Look Tonight" by Frank Sinatra. After this date, we would attend the pictures and see old movies about Groucho Marx singing about his "Lydia, that Encyclopedia." We loved to laugh and put our Fab Four records on and sing "She Loves You."

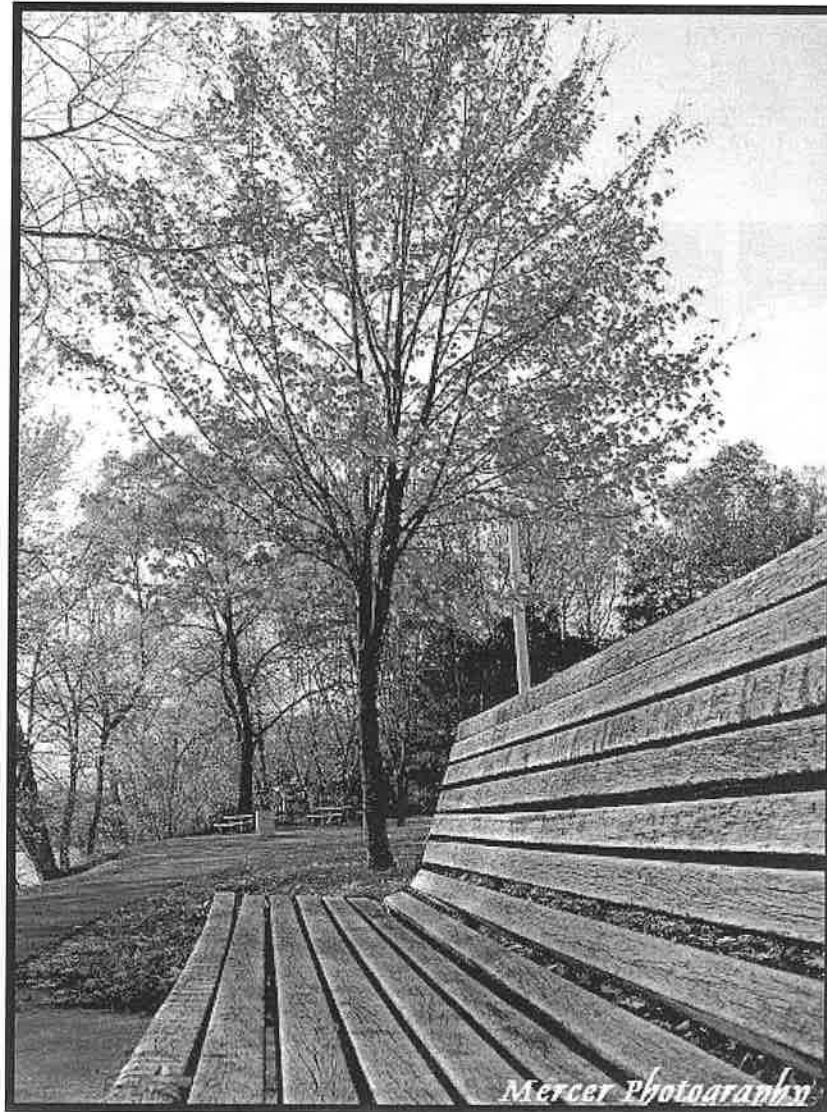
At this point we were dating for many months and we had quite a yearning for one another. Then she started feeling weak. She thought she was working too much. Not the case. She went to the doctors and found out she had leukemia. We were both torn over this ordeal. Despite the terrible news, we continued to enjoy each other's company and on that unbelievable day, April 16, 1986, I told that I loved her. I told her that I would be loyal to her and support her. She thanked me and told me she loved me. I took her to the restaurant where we had our first date. We danced to "The Way You Look Tonight." At the end of our song, I got on one knee and proposed. She delightfully accepted. We arranged a quick wedding with our immediate family and friends and started our life together. Although we were only married for a few months, it was all the time I needed.

She passed on August 17, 1986. She was everything I could ever dream of, and she showed me something I had never been shown before: Love.

Geoff Bergeron
Class of 2009



Lindsey Mercer, Class of 2011



Lindsey Mercer, Class of 2011

Life would

be boring if

We
were
all
the
same

Jonathan Mailloux

some things

Jessica Hajjar

need to be believed

to be seen

Defining Happiness

Many fail to meet their aspirations.
Their aspiration being happiness.
Mostly because they are scared.
Fear becomes the factor.
Letting them become victims.
Victims of failure.
Remaining stuck.
Because that “one” step is so hard to take.
So hard to break through.
But whoever said happiness was easy?
Easy to live?....yes.
Easy to achieve?....maybe.
Easy to get when wanted?...no.
Better said, what is happiness?
Dictionary states noun, satisfaction, bliss, enjoyment.
Many state the material things.
The pressure to fit in where one doesn't belong.
The pressure to look a certain way.
Taming your body to be what it is not.
Once again being the victim.

Smiling to make them “see” you're happy.
Laughing to make them “think” you're happy.
Unlike the Declaration of Independence, you're pursuing a lie.
Lying to be happy.
Thinking a simple gesture can change it all.
Can fake it all.
What is happiness?
Undressing.
To be willing to let go.
Leaving fear behind.
Smiling when no one is there.
Aspiring to what is wanted.
Achieving what is wanted.
Having complete satisfaction with oneself.

Karina Castro
Class of 2009

Pain

Sometimes is born of purpose –
a broken bone, a gash of the knee
But more often it is a bastard child, unwanted.

This child is named disappointment, despair, doubt, and death.
He cannot be sent away.

Pain lives because I nurture him, I embody him.

He embraces my neck, kisses my lips and clutches at my heart.

Pain lives because I love him, I embody him.

He is me.

Joy

Never has a cause only an effect.
It is the love child of all emotion.

This child is called life and letting go
of pain.

I live because Joy nurtures me, He embodies me.

I embrace his neck, kiss his lips and clutch his heart.

Joy lives in me.

I am here – here I am.

I am joy I am pain

I am me.

Mrs. Cenca
Faculty

Dad Who

Dad who bestows money for a kiss on the cheek
and asks if it is enough
who is raisins and stubs
who is head of the table and a glass of wine
whose hands are old rope
is coming home from work earlier just because
who curses in Italian
who wishes he knew more Italian
whose hugs are quilts
always has interesting fun
jet boats, go-carts, and a BB gun
who won't stop playing till his kids are done
is tired
is a Ford truck that has seen better days
is a hibernating bear's snore
who wants to push you on the swing, but can't anymore
is regrets for buying a computer
who plays Frank Sinatra and Italian Mob Hits
is work boots then slippers
who doesn't like animals, but they like him
is the sound of an engine that won't start
has one golden rule
Never move far away from Daddy

Amber Blum
Class of 2010

Where I'm From

I am from chopsticks,
from Windex and wishes,
I am from the earth of my people.
(Sweet, gentle,
it tasted like cucumbers.)
I am from the bamboo shoots,
the yellow orchids
whose dainty petals I recalled
blossomed with every New Years.

I'm from brownies and calculators,
from *The Last Emperor* and *Paris-By-Night*.
I'm from the survived-the-worsts
and the seen-the-bests,
from Work hard! and Keep dreaming!
I'm from *Namo Amitaba*
with red prayer beads
and Four Noble Truths to live by.

I'm from *Old Path White Clouds* and *Sophie's World*,
from eggrolls and red bean buns.
From the life my grandmother gave
to her village,
the cigarettes my father refused to keep his faith.

On the closet shelf were dusty albums
protecting the past,
a treasure of memories
to relive in the present.
I am from those photographs --
snapped before my existence --
printed from my family history.

Stephanie Tran
Class of 2009

Sunny Day at the Beach



Alex Niemeyer, Class of 2008

w3rd, yo.

(Honestly. Explain it. Like, now.)

An excerpt from “Harry”

His name was “creep” and “weirdo” to us, nobody knew his real name or anything much about him. The man was odd looking and always quietly lurked about the old brick building. His gigantic shoulders looked like those of an athlete and his massive arms appeared to be able to strangle any one of us. As a group, we looked forward to our daily rants and the occasional sandwich thrown to the back of his abnormal head. He never reacted to any of our actions; he just stood there and continued mopping or changing the light fixtures.

Deep down I knew what we were doing was wrong. I knew we must have somehow been hurting the poor man. I, Stephanie Perdoni, head cheerleader and the most popular girl at Edgewood High School knew this man was hurting, and I did nothing but contribute. Edgewood, California is not a big town. It is barely on the map. We had one Wal-Mart and one McDonald's, and those were the highlights. We watched more high school sports than professional, and our basketball team was the best in the county, we were noted for our fabulous cheering squad.

This particular day went on as all days normally did. After school I had a meeting with my science teacher because I could not understand any of Newton's laws. After my last period study I walked at a quick pace to the west wing only to discover the room in complete darkness. I turned to leave after realizing Mr. Bleeker had forgotten about my appointment. I walked slowly through the hallways and I seemed to be alone with the white walls and blue lockers that surrounded me. After turning the corner to enter the east wing, I noticed a dark figure in the distance. At first I thought it was a nerd named John Harris who always follows me. When I began to approach the figure I realized it was the janitor.

My lungs seemed to collapse and a rush of hotness flew through my body like a volcano ready to erupt. All I could think of were the hurtful words my peers and I had said to this man, but at this moment I was not with my peers, I was by myself and in a position to do something right. I walked up to him and noticed much more than a gorilla-sized man with dark hair. I noticed a man whose eyes were deep and hollow and pierced mine with screams of sadness. He politely said “hello”, but his voice implied that he was timid and unsure of the situation. I began to introduce myself, and I learned the nameless man did have a name-Harry. Harry, was a strong name for a strong man, and as I later learned, a man with a strong heart.

My first conversation with Harry was quiet, but it was a start. He questioned why I was talking to him, clearly threatened and unsure of the true reason why I had come for a second encounter. Harry must have felt I was going to make fun of him with my friends but that was far from my intention. The next time I went to talk with Harry was less awkward than the first. I sat on an overturned barrel across from Harry who was leaning on a dusty mop. The hallway was his territory, and I figured his allowing me to be in it was a good enough start for me. The conversation was small talk because he was still unsure of my reasoning. He spoke in short, simple sentences and I listened. His voice was soothing to my ears, and the way he spoke softly with his hands made me feel comfortable. I am usually shy with strangers, but I was peculiarly open in my conversation with Harry. I found myself yearning for our routinely meetings. Harry and I met

every Wednesday afternoon and spoke of our lives, dreams and aspirations. I chuckled at the thought of *Wednesdays with Harry*, similar to the story by Mitch Albom. Everyday was a lesson; it opened up my eyes and enabled me to look outside of the bubble I had slowly formed around myself. My friends noticed a change in me; they called me names and ridiculed me for not being extremely mean to everybody. I was fed up with the fact that popularity determined who we were as a person. I am a great person and being popular blinded me from that trait.

My so-called friends did not understand why I was never present during the daily name-calling or why I never went to the tanning salon with them on Wednesday afternoons. I was drifting away from them which made it difficult when they turned the tables. My confidence, which had been so high, fell fast as the hateful words were thrown at me. They swarmed around me like the mosquitoes did at the stadium during night games. The blow was hard and I stumbled to find words, but I produced nothing in my own defense. The cruel and harsh names made my stomach churn with every syllable spoken. These girls, the ones I called my friends, the girls that followed my every move, were now leading others in putting me down. I had been pushed to my limit and I could no longer take the verbal abuse. I skipped lunch and retreated to a deserted staircase filled with cobwebs and a pile of dust that stained my pants and made me sneeze. I sat in the stairwell alone and I cupped my face and felt my swollen cheeks burn like fire. I could feel the sweat accumulating beneath my pink polo shirt, and I soon felt lightheaded. I had never felt so betrayed in my life. The humiliation took hold of me and made me feel inferior. My whole life I had made all the decisions, and I was the one who led everyone in antagonizing the unfortunate people who happened to live in this world I felt I had created. I was now on the other side of the spectrum because instead of hurting others, they hurt me. As I was re-playing the events over in my head, I felt a hand touch my shoulder. In fear of more ridicule, I jumped and slowly turned to face what I thought would be my enemies.

Harry stood behind me with a mop in his right hand and a handkerchief in his left. I accepted his offer and proceeded to wipe my face with the soft cotton. My eyes still burned, and I was a bit embarrassed because I realized how Harry had felt everyday during the daily abuse. I could have never imagined being in the position I was in at that very moment, sitting beside a man I had not long ago laughed at. When he finally broke the silence I felt at ease, like everything would soon be okay and nothing else could harm my already battered self esteem. His soft voice flew through my ears and filled my body with comfort and warmth. I stopped trembling and faced Harry with a half smile looking for more support. Harry and I discussed my situation so vividly that I could see myself as my “friends” and Harry now as the victim. It was not an illusion; this had happened and Harry had experienced the same torment just weeks earlier. I felt a lump in my throat, my tongue tripped over words to say to this innocent man. I felt so weak, so powerless, realizing that I was a part of such horrible acts against this man who in a matter of months had changed me into the person that was truly inside of me. It was at this time that I realized the only way to fix my faults was to change the views of the other ignorant people who I once considered my friends. I knew I had to take a stand and do something for Harry because he deserved to be treated with respect and others needed to know that. Not only was Harry an amazing person but his entrance into my life also changed who I was as a human being and opened my eyes to the judgmental life I once lived.

Ping Pong

When the day ends, I run to the ping pong tables like everyone else does. Whether they play or not, I do not know. The game of ping pong is the battlefield of life. A ping pong paddle produces the peppery, passé odor of bullets that have been shot. How you use your weapon is up to the user.

Everyone who goes to the gym tosses his or her backpack on the ground. People sign up for the battle on a red clipboard that people scribble on all the time. Some people place their own name twice just to be sure they can play. Everyone calls out who they are going to play. If two pairs call out “next” on the next game, a verbal war breaks out. These wars don’t last a long time, but the games do. I sign a freshman up to play with me.

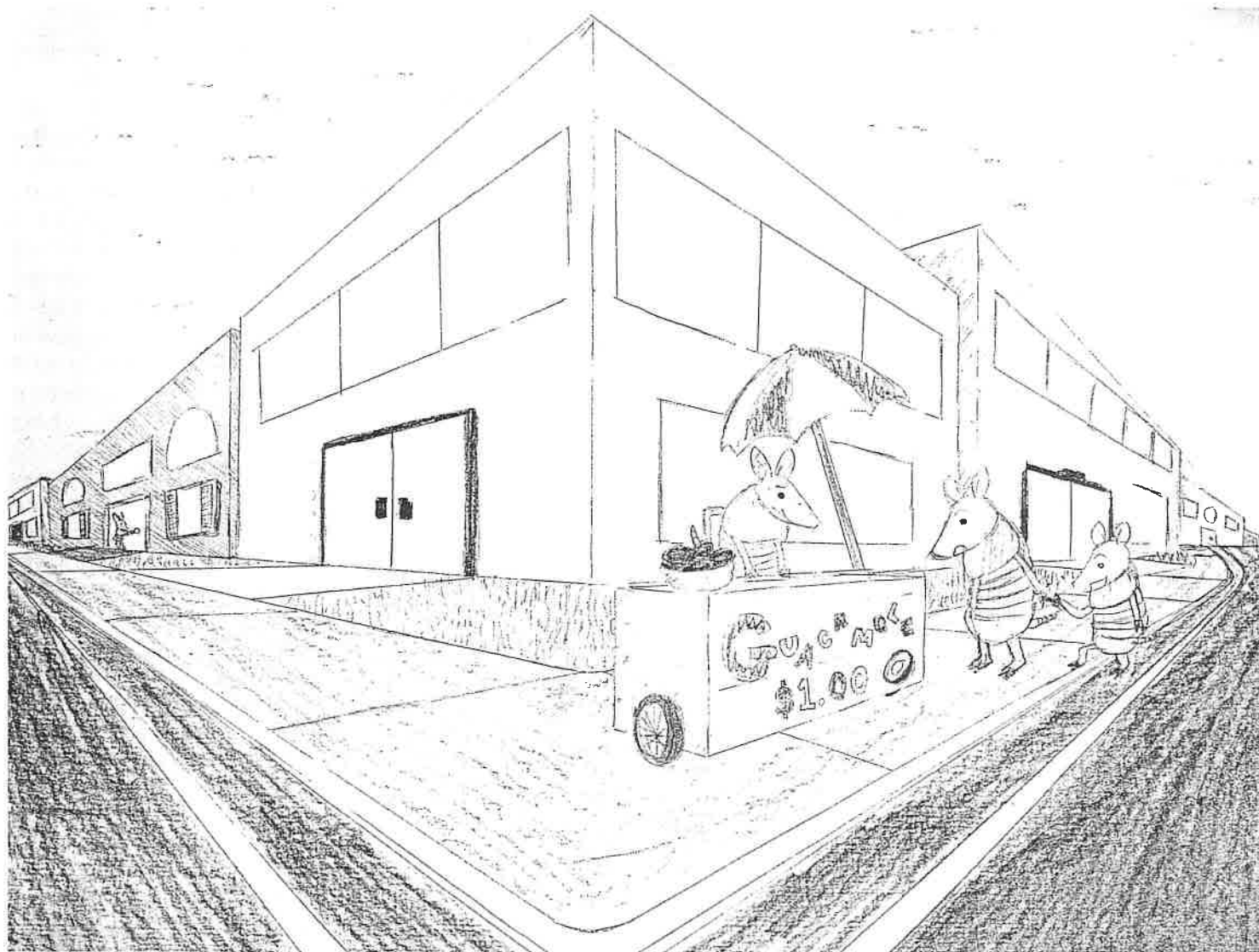
After practicing and then winning the volley, I serve the ball five times. The freshman misses terribly, costing him five points. When he hits the ball, I return with a force that sends him flying. At game point, he messes up the serve, ending the quick game. I think that I am done for the day until Mrs. Marsiglia, who is one of the masters of ping pong, comes.

She challenges me to a game of ping pong. Ball after ball passes me as she places her shots well, and I feel like I am in left field. The game goes by so fast that I can’t even return the ball. The score ends at fifteen-five. Horrible!

That’s when I realize something. I don’t need to obsess about a stupid game. I just want to play for fun. Someday, I will grow tired of ping pong and go obsess about something that is more important to me, like writing.

Reggie Kwok
Class of 2010

Guacamole Stand



Needle in a Haystack

She walked into the station with tears streaming down her face,
Like a five year old who just scraped her knee.
Her heels were hitting the floor,
The clock striking four;
 Tick tock, tick tock...
She arrived at the front desk,
She lifted her head, looked at the man in the blue suit and badge,
and stared into his eyes.
She kindly asked for help in the only language she spoke.
He stared back at her, clearly not understanding a word she said.
He turned back and addressed the others;
 "We have another one."
She waited for nearly three hours.
She took in her surroundings and realized she wasn't the only
Hispanic woman in the waiting room,
She was one of many.
She was a needle in a hay stack waiting to be found.
She saw a Hispanic man approaching her,
He looked like Marc Anthony with of touch of Juan Luis Guerra.
The scent of his Curve cologne could be noticed from miles away.
She stared at the blue and black tie with brown spots.
The man she worked for was wearing it
The night he did it, the night it happened.
He left a mark, and she wears it shamefully above her heart, knowing
it'll stay with her forever.
She told her story with tears streaming down her cheeks as she relived her horror.
She picked up the prickly pen that felt uncomfortable as she signed,
She signed the complaint she filed against that detestable man.
The interpreter walked up to the front desk,
Threw the papers on top of the other hundreds that probably won't ever be looked at,
and said,
 "Just another rape story..."

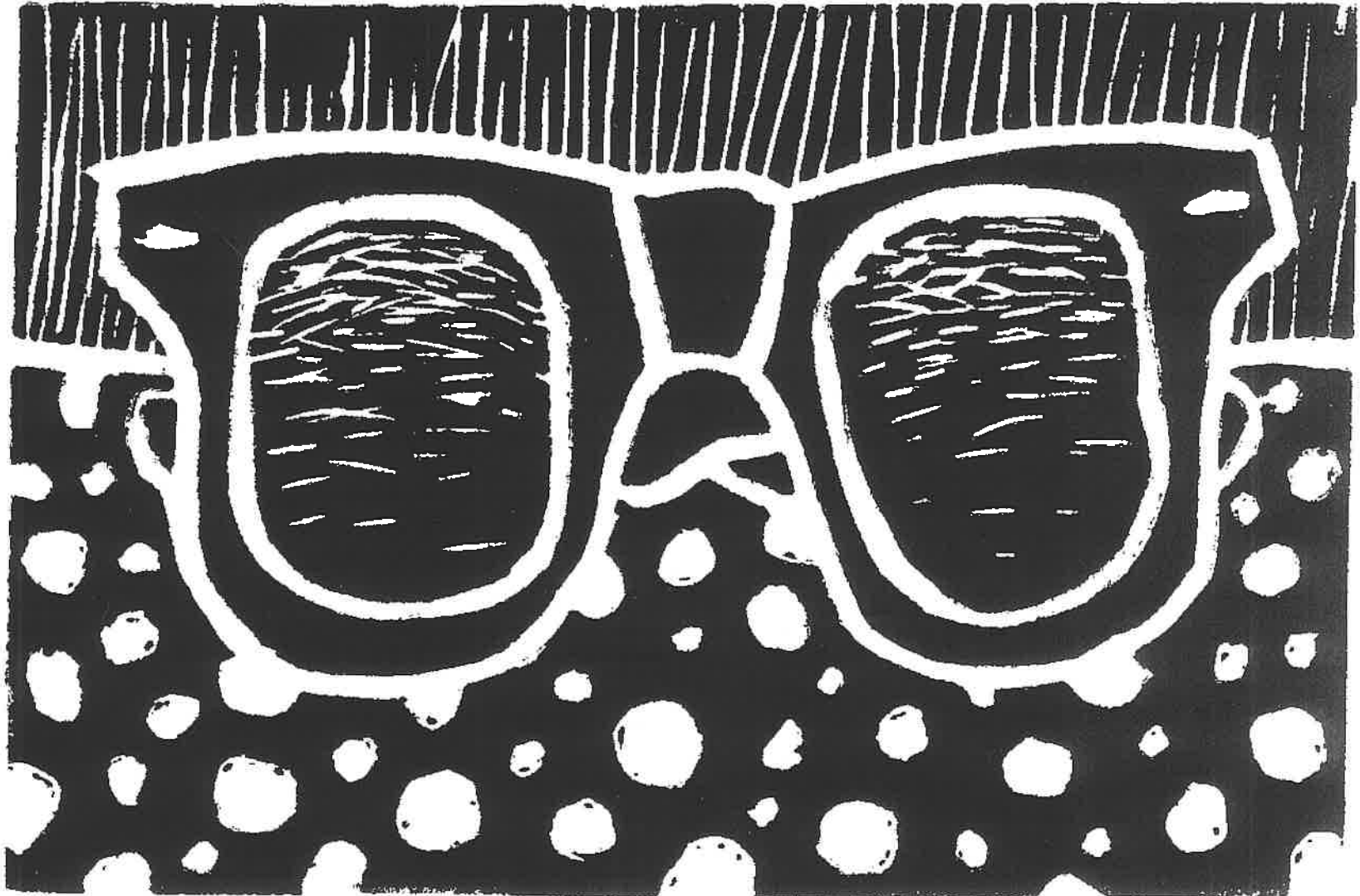
Nicole Garcia
Class of 2010

Drunk

It's a bad obsession
A bad addiction
They way people act
They have no idea what they're doing
They can't walk straight even if they wanted to
Falling, flailing all over the place
Like little kids that just got off the Turkish Twist
Grabbing onto me for support
Me just wanting to let them go
It's not my responsibility
You did it to yourself
The obnoxious laughing
They way they seem so dizzy
They don't know what's going on
I hate it
I can't stand the way it makes people act
What do they even drink it, the alcohol?
Doesn't it all taste the same, like nothing
The alcohol
A disease that some people can't cure
Or just don't know how

Cayleigh Cameron
Class of 2010

Sunglasses



Kate Berry, Class of 2008

Pearly Whites

Dad's teeth are small and narrow. They are a dull shade, but no one knows about the discoloration, just us. Dad usually doesn't show his teeth when strangers talk. If he shows his teeth while laughing with others, his lips close over them quickly. When I make him laugh, and I always do, he is not ashamed, and beams.

Mom has big, square teeth. Her teeth are an aged shade of very off white. She puts dark colors on her lips. Then they look whiter. Mom is sure to only show her top teeth when laughing and smiling, those are nice and straight, except for this one tooth that sticks out. I call that tooth her cat tooth, because it's like a fang that comes out to warn us whenever we get dangerously close to that invisible line that all children so often cross. Mom rarely shows the bottom teeth. Some are crooked, and some are chipped, like a broken record.

Jon has bright white teeth when you stare at them. I don't know why this is because he never brushes them, and there are a bunch of cavities in the back. They're crooked on the top, but not on the bottom. Jon jeers his pearly whites, and lets the crookedness shine. It's the straight ones that he hides. There's a cat tooth emerging. At one time, all Jon wanted for Christmas was his two front teeth, but now he's got 'em and I don't like it.

My teeth are big like my mom's, square too. Also, they're really straight 'cause long pieces of metal with tiny square brackets worked two years to make 'em that way. I brush my teeth about four times a day, but they still don't look as white as Jon's. When I smile you can see all of my teeth... I want you to.

Remember

An announcement is made in a low grating voice on a rainy Monday morning. A tremor is seen through the school as one of our own, we are told, is not with us anymore. A few of us are bewildered as we feel a penetrating sorrow in our chests. Others are brought to tears as we knew this face well and are unbelieving.

The former group goes about the day without too much sorrow, but every time we want to laugh or smile guilt sinks in. How can we be doing this when some of us cannot steady our hands to pick up a pen?

The latter group's emotions are a medley of things. Some, like a centrifuge, fling off emotions like happiness and anger to leave guilt and sorrow. Some of us fling off guilt, happiness, and sorrow, allowing anger to simmer and boil over in its place. No one had the right to take away someone who had brought so many great things to our lives.

Some of us are divided in our emotions, but all of us feel a degree of loneliness. We are now alone with our emotions, letting them tear away until we wish we could feel nothing. We feel all alone on the inside, although we are around people who care for us. Our voices are raised in a question of why. As the people among us who never knew this face look around, lines of deep, piercing sadness line everyone's faces. The girl you know as the one with the heavy concealer and powder has a barren, red tear-swept face as she walks by your open classroom. The guys next to you hold their pens a little too tight and incessantly bounce their knees. The girl who always has a comeback is speechless and covers her head on her desk. We want to look away in shame. We shouldn't look; it's something that's indecent. It is a weakness that gives us squeamish feelings to look upon. But why? Our emotions are human. We look at the girl next to us, so red and tear-soaked, that goose bumps leave us wanting to cry. For her, for the lost, for **everyone**. Yes, this is definitely human. We want to comfort them, but we know anything we say would be a stammer of incoherent vowels and consonants. It wouldn't change anything. We know our words can't do much to heal anything, but we desperately want to try.

Some of us are afraid. We have never felt a death of a person close to us, and we are timid. What is it like to be one of *them*? We wonder... how do you deal with those emotions?

We are not alone. They are no strangers: they are our teachers, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts, uncles, step-brothers, and step-sisters. Each one of us takes on many different names to many different people. We are viewed differently everyday by different people. Some think of us as obnoxious and rude. Some think of us as too perfect or prim. But we all feel the same. We make one community. One family. One us. One we. We are divided through our different ranges of emotion and everyday stereotypes. We all need to heal. Grief brings us all together as **one**.

Elizabeth Lyons
Class of 2011

Listening in Regards to Rain

Have you ever listened as perception falls from the sky?

As rain slides down the leaves on trees and lands in your eye?

As the heavens open up and drop water to ground,

I feel like a lost child who's finally been found.

I love to dance and twirl in the rain,

The silence of it makes me forget all my pain.

The sound of water as it hits my window

Lets me rest easy, asleep on my pillow.

When water from above collides with the water from below,

The lakes, the ponds, the ocean, the sound makes my heart glow.

I wish I could share this feeling I get,

My only advice is open your heart and let be wet.

Karyn Jacobs
Class of 2008



Rachel Palmisano, Class of 2008

Earthfall

Glistening dew on a moonlit lawn
Only witness to morning's yawn.
Stiletto heels of pointy stars
And crimson tears cried by Mars.
Screams of woe from the Earth resonating
Its example, solemnly and sadly demonstrating
What happens to Mother Nature left prone
To human devices, their wants alone.
No care they save to their golden world turned brown,
So they watched as their race and their children crumbled down.
The dying planet breathed its last and died,
As the trees and the birds and the sea gave a sigh.
Once a turquoise, emerald golden world filled with beauty
Now a charred blackness, lump of cold metal treated cruelly.
And the moon cracked, and swayed in mourning,
Tears of greatest sorrow rapidly forming
Cries of agony still loudly in mind
Sadness everywhere a body could find.
Puncturing stiletto heels of pointy stars
And crimson tears cried by Mars.
Screams of pain from the Earth resonating
An example, sadly, solemnly demonstrating
What becomes of Mother Nature left prone
To naught but human devices, their wants and pride alone.

Mandy Baril
Class of 2009

Untitled (Speech)

Two thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight. This is the number of times the average human heart beats every forty minutes; it is the number of babies born in the United States every six hours; and it is the number of miles that separates Methuen, Massachusetts from Passage West, County Cork, Ireland. Two different towns, two different worlds, neither is known to an outsider, neither seems to mind its estrangement. One may question what two completely different locales, a world away from one another, have in common. These two towns have an equal partnership in fostering something truly unique—the raising of a child. For seventeen years, there has been a balance of love and trust. This balance will continue until said years have been multiplied by infinity.

My father was born and raised in a small village, virtually unseen even on a map, in County Cork, Ireland, called Passage West. He came to America to seek opportunities, to help his family and to better his life and the lives of others. My mother is the only daughter of two Lebanese parents. She was born on an air force base in an Indian Reservation and was raised in America. Patrick Joseph O’Riordan and Sherri-Lynn Marie Habib met unconventionally, fell in love, and, for the first time in their families’ histories, married someone outside of their ethnic backgrounds. With this marriage came a child, one daughter who joined both the Lebanese and the Irish people forever.

As a child, I was raised between Ireland and America. The countries came with diverse traditions and different languages, new friends and old relics. In each country, I had family with different customs, and the same behaviors. They shared a love for their members. Other than family, these worlds had two incomparable atmospheres. There was no aspect of life that remained the same when I flew from one country to the other. It was as if I had two different lives; it was as if I was two different people. I learned early in life to switch between my Irish and my Lebanese sides. I knew that when I spoke with my Sittoo, I spoke Arabic and I was a good girl. When I was in Ireland at Christmas, I told Christmas tales as Gwailga, and that meant I was *cliste* or, in English, *clever*. It took me a long time to comprehend that these two countries made me who I am. It was a struggle to learn not to be two separate entities, and instead to combine both of my sides to be me.

I realize now that these two countries have equally contributed to the creation of the person that I am. Even though I do not fully comprehend my nature, or what my purpose is in life, I do understand how to be me. I am thankful that I grew up in two very different countries and lived with varied cultures. I embrace my heritage because it is what makes me, me and I would not change it for the world.

Hayley O’Riordan
Class of 2008

$\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} *$

I am the horizontal asymptote
of my own life –
I do not touch the x-axis
but merely rest above it,
waiting to fall
but held aloft by
a vertical asymptote:
that will go on,
and then to achieve;
but here exists a discontinuity –
and I, sandwiched between,
wonder whether, or if –
to remove it.

Marilee Goad
Class of 2008

*As the limit of x approaches infinity

Your Submission Here.

[visions@centralcatholic.net]

Thank You, Gracias, Merci!

The staff would like to thank the people who contributed to the creation of this book, which is now the #1 BEST literary magazine in CCHS history.

To Mr. David DeFillippo, and the entire faculty and staff, thank you for supporting this issue and the work that has gone into it.

To the English and Visual Arts Departments, who help us make and love our stuff.

To Riverside Press in Methuen, MA, because without them we would have to handwrite each edition.

To Jane England and her staff at England's MicroCreamery in Haverhill, MA, for allowing us to snap loudly to each other's work and for feeding us.

To Malco Electronics in Lawrence, MA, for putting the "mic" in open mic. (boom).

To Dariush Nejad, for taking beautiful photographs of light to make our covers look super cool.

To Ms. Karen Moynihan, for being the nicest person in the world and also for encouraging students to be the best writers they can possibly be.

To Ms. Groleau, for submitting your photo, for encouraging submissions, and for knitting really nice hats.

To Mr. Welch, who will eventually get around to reading this. Next year. Maybe-ish.

To Crystal Barrick, without whom we couldn't have produced this issue. w3rd.

To Ms. DeSantis, for putting up with our alter-egos who transform into *Visions* superheroes when necessary.

To our readers, who wait patiently and eagerly during the process of this creation.
Until next time, break me off a piece of that *Visions*!!!

**8 out of 10
Owners Who Expressed
a Preference
Said Their Cats Preferred
*Visions...***

