



THE OUTBACK

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Letter from the editor

During my second week in college during my first year in the fall of 2021 I began working at the best on-campus job ever created: production center assistant with Intercollegiate Media Studies (IMS). I consider myself incredibly lucky for landing this job so quickly, not just for the fact I get to watch movies at work, or that I've learned a whole lot about cameras and microphones, but above all for the people that I've met there.

One of these people is Maya Olson PZ '25 — who you may remember from Student-Talk as one of our wonderful former editors-in-chief (EIC). Maya and I had a shift together our first semester and as New Yorkers who love books, have parents with overlapping somewhat-obscure vocations, and have a passion for engaging in deep topics, we immediately became close friends.

Not only did the IMS Production Center play an important role in my friendship with Maya, but it was also the place where she asked me to become her co-EIC for the fall of 2023. Minding my own business working incredibly hard during a shift (I was watching "Puss in Boots: The Last Wish"), Maya burst into the Production Center and asked me the only way one ever should, through poetry. How could I say no?

We immediately agreed we wanted to bring that semester's managing editor Sadie Wyatt PZ '25 along on the ride with us. I had known Sadie since probably my first week at Pitzer, but I didn't get to really know her until The Outback brought us together. Spending almost all of your free time with two other people trying to put a magazine together will either tear friendships to shreds or bond you for life; I'm happy to say it's the latter.

I will always be amazed by Sadie's dedication to something that has absolutely nothing to do with her academic life or career goals. For her, a pre-med student, The Outback was a labor of love, a vision she put hours and hours of work into because she wanted to do it. She fought to get us the interviews we needed, fought to keep me and Maya on track, and fought to get us the funding we needed to be able to bring this magazine to you throughout this semester (I was there I saw it).

As I take the reigns of what Maya, Sadie, and I collectively call our baby, I don't do so alone. We have developed a wonderful staff of Pitzer students that have worked their butts off to create this issue. Our theme this month is "Passion," and although no one has been more passionate about The Outback than Maya and Sadie so far, this new staff is about to give them a run for their money.

We have put together an incredible issue this month, and I would like to express my gratitude to our staff and everyone that has contributed to it. I'd especially like to highlight our collaboration this month with Pitzer's Queer-Trans+ Student Alliance (QT's) titled "Black queer trailblazers: Past and present" in celebration of Black History Month.

Finally, I would like to thank Maya and Sadie for everything they've done to get our beautiful newsprint magazine to this point. I love you both. We'll take it from here.

As always. Meet us in The Outback

- Ben

Visit Our Website!
www.theoutback.news



‘No academic freedom for anyone until there is academic freedom for everyone,’: Pitzer Student Senate passes ‘Suspend Haifa’

By Ben Lauren PZ '25 & Ivy Rockmore PZ '27



Pitzer's student senate voted to suspend the college's study abroad program at the University of Haifa on Feb. 11

Voices for Peace (Claremont JVP) on Feb. 12, SJP stated “on day 128 of Israel’s most brutal genocidal attack on Gaza, the stakes for this historic resolution have never been higher.”

The statement cited Israel’s ongoing retaliatory siege which has killed over 28,000 people in Gaza since Oct. 7, as well as Israel’s bombing of Rafah, where roughly one million civilians have sought refuge.

On Sunday, Feb. 11, the Pitzer College Student Senate passed Resolution 60-R-5 calling on the administration to suspend the college’s direct enrollment study abroad program with the University of Haifa in Israel. The resolution, which passed with a vote of 34:1 with no abstentions, cites solidarity with Palestine and the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

The resolution will now move on to the College Council, a group of both students and faculty members, which will vote on sending it to Pitzer President Strom C. Thacker, who could either pass or veto the resolution.

Photo courtesy of Claremont Students for Justice in Palestine

The Senate’s decision represents a major victory for the longstanding Suspend Pitzer Haifa campaign led by 5C organization Students for Justice in Palestine (Claremont SJP), demanding Pitzer cut ties with the University of Haifa for its exclusionary practices and its direct ties to Israeli military programs.

“Pitzer College should not partner with a university with a history of human rights violations and unethical practices,” SJP wrote in an Instagram post on Mar. 3, 2023. “As students in the US. we should support this academic boycott for international justice.

In a joint press release with Jewish

At the Senate meeting on Sunday, Feb. 11,

25 current students, alumni, professors and community organizers spoke on behalf of the resolution during over an hour of open forum discussion. Rounds of applause and cheering followed in support of each speaker from an audience of over 60 people including student Senators and Thacker in the Pitzer’s Founder’s Room.

Speakers consistently highlighted the University of Haifa’s incompatibility with Pitzer’s core values and radical roots, citing the University’s oppression of students from Palestinian ancestry and suppression of student voices who have spoken out for Palestinian liberation as antithetical to Pitzer’s claims of supporting academic freedom.

The Claremont SJP and Claremont JVP joint press release elaborated further on this point.

“This resolution, passed in the face of genocide, acknowledges that we cannot responsibly be in partnership with a genocidal state, and that there is no academic freedom for anyone until there is academic freedom for everyone,” the joint release statement stated.

Many speakers also referenced the University’s close ties with the Israeli military and its role as a site for Israeli Defense Force training programs. Speakers described the military’s role not just in the killing of Palestinians, but in the destruction of academic institutions in Gaza, a topic further emphasized in the joint Claremont SJP and Claremont JVP release.

“Over 100 universities and schools in Gaza have been systematically destroyed and the entire education system has been completely halted under Israel’s military onslaught,” they wrote.

In a statement sent to students on Feb. 12 Thacker confirmed his allegiance to academic freedom and confirmed that he attended the Feb. 11 Senate meeting.

“President Thacker is committed to the educational mission of the College, to academic freedom, and to maintaining a safe and productive campus learning environment for all,” the statement said.

Still, the statement did not express Thacker’s direct support for the resolution, respecting the Senate’s right to act within Pitzer’s system of shared governance, but distancing it from official college policy.

“It should be noted that the Student Senate does not speak for the College, nor does it represent the views of all Pitzer students,” the statement said.

Still, the Student Senate web page makes a point to highlight its communal representation.

“There are over fifty members of Student Senate, which makes it one of the largest per-capita college student governments in the world.”

The statement concluded with a reaffirmation of Thacker’s alignment to

Pitzer’s principles of academic freedom and safety on campus.

“The president will not accept—if and when that time comes—any resolution antithetical to these principles,” the statement said.

Ultimately, Thacker will have the final say on the fate of Pitzer’s Haifa program. Thacker’s upcoming decision will come nearly five years after former President Melvin Oliver vetoed a similar resolution to suspend the Haifa program over human rights concerns, which had passed the Pitzer College Council.

The recent resolution passed on the heels of escalating activism by the Claremont JVP and Claremont SJP, who held a rally on Feb. 2nd urging the College to cut ties with the University of Haifa in solidarity with Palestine.

The rally grew traction on social media,

and was posted multiple times on the official BDS Instagram page with 446,000 followers posted multiple graphics about the resolution’s passing. Other accounts such as @SJP National posted as well, totaling thousands of likes in support of the campaign.

If the resolution passes through the college council, Thacker will have the final decision. Regardless of his choice, the Claremont SJP and Claremont JVP statement made clear student voices will continue to be heard.

“When our administration refuses to act, stays silent in the face of genocide, and constantly undermines student activism, we students choose to stand on the right side of history,” the statement said. “The struggle for Palestine requires sustained coalitional support, and we are so thankful for the people who continue to show up for this fight.”



Photo courtesy of Claremont Students for Justice in Palestine

How do we engage?: Salam Al-Marayati and Daniel Sokatch speak on student discourse of Israel and Palestine

By Ben Lauren PZ '25 & Willa Umansky PZ '27

On February 5., Pitzer College invited president and co-founder of the Muslim Public Affairs Council, Salam Al-Marayati, and CEO of the New Israel Fund, Daniel Sokatch, to speak as part of Pitzer's Presidential Initiative on Constructive Dialogue. The event was moderated by President Strom Thacker and was moved to Zoom from its original location in Benson Auditorium due to hazardous weather conditions.

The two speakers discussed their personal and professional friendship and focused the bulk of the conversation on "how we talk constructively, as a community and as individuals, about Palestine and Israel." The speakers also discussed their views of the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement and students' ongoing calls on Pitzer to suspend their study abroad program at the University of Haifa.

The event was the second in the Presidential Initiative series created by Thacker last December which "focuses on how we in the Pitzer community and beyond can talk constructively about challenging issues," Thacker wrote in an email to students on Feb. 5.

In the email, Thacker went on to describe why he felt it was important to bring Al-Marayati and Sokatch to campus.

"A primary purpose of today's event is to bring together the perspectives of two people who have spent considerable amounts of time working on, thinking about, and talking constructively about the region, including the ongoing and acute conflict," Thacker wrote in the email. "It is not to advocate for or against one side or the other, but rather to help us find ways to come together to

learn from each other and from considering different viewpoints and perspectives."

During his introduction to the conversation, Thacker began by acknowledging neither speaker was from Israel or Palestine, but each held personal connections to the region.

Throughout the discussion, Al-Marayati and Sokatch responded to Thacker's idea of mutual understanding, describing the importance of upholding multiple narratives and engaging in nuanced conversations with people that have differing opinions.

During the talk, Thacker asked the speakers their views on nonviolent protest to which Al-Marayati and Sokatch wholeheartedly expressed their support. Al-Marayati specifically named the BDS movement as the best way for students to enact change.

"I believe in the BDS movement," Al-Marayati said. "Israel is the more powerful party in this. How do we influence it to end the occupation? We can't influence it militarily ... I publicly endorse the BDS program, because I believe that is a way to achieve peace by non violence resistance."

Sokatch, meanwhile, explained that although he strongly supports the right to boycott as a means of nonviolent resistance, he does not endorse the BDS movement citing its ambiguous end goals.



Salam Al-Marayati and Daniel Sokatch spoke on Zoom to the Pitzer community on Feb. 5.

"I do agree that it is a non violent movement and for that alone we need to protect and uphold people's rights to it," Sokatch said. "There are aspects of the program that I understand and support ... There are many people that are afraid that what the BDS movement is calling for is an end to Jewish presence in Israel. I don't believe that many people in that movement subscribe to that."

In an interview with The Outback, Al-Marayati spoke on the conflation of BDS and antisemitism described by Sokatch.

"We're not supporting BDS, because we're against Jews," Al-Marayati said. "We're supporting BDS because we want to end the war; we want to end the occupation ... A lot of times we get charged with antisemitism and it's become a political tactic ... I'm not I'm not involved in this to undermine or eliminate or suppress Jewish voices. I would love to see more Jewish voices along with Muslim voices and Christian voices and just say enough war."

Al-Marayati elaborated in an interview with The Outback on his support of BDS, extending it to the Suspend Pitzer Haifa movement.

"I get my information from Omar

Barghouti,” Al-Marayati said. “Omar founded BDS many years ago. And they give us the list of companies to boycott and these are basically companies that benefit from the occupation in the West Bank and the blockade on Gaza, and support the settler violence against Palestinians ... then in terms of Haifa ... he did put it on the list of the academic boycott.”

Suspend Pitzer Haifa is a campaign led by the 5C organization, Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), which is seeking a conditional suspension of Pitzer’s study abroad program at the University of Haifa in Israel.

According to SJP materials, the University of Haifa excludes students of Palestinian ancestry and students who speak out for Palestinian justice. Additionally, the University has extensive ties to the Israeli military and is the site of Israeli Defense Force training programs.

A resolution to suspend the program was passed by Pitzer’s student senate by a vote of 34-1 on Feb. 11. A final decision will be made by Thacker on whether or not to continue the program.

During the talk on Monday evening, Sokatch expressed his hesitancy to stand behind Suspend Pitzer Haifa. He expanded on this in an interview with *The Outback*, advocating for academic institutions for their role in facilitating constructive dialogue.

“A lot of the people who are thinking about these things critically ... are found in universities and colleges,” Sokatch said. “These things are gray, they’re nuanced. If one insists on a one size fits all answer, you’re not understanding the complexity.”

During both the talk and in his interview, Sokatch repeatedly underscored the obligation students have to educate themselves to understand the nuances within this conversation.

He stressed finding the humility to admit that there is always more to learn.

“I understand that the acquiring of knowledge now is so selective, that people are able to sort of build for themselves an echo chamber that just tends to reinforce their own perspective, and then they become

intolerant of everyone,” Sokatch said. “Someone else who doesn’t agree with them isn’t just a person who may have a slightly different take ... it’s [either] a person who’s supporting genocide or [is] an antisemite, and I reject that dichotomy.”

Sokatch specifically suggested reading both Al Jazeera, the independent Qatari-based news organization, and Haaretz, an independent paper based in Israel. He also referenced seeking out traditionally liberal and conservative American media with CNN and Fox News respectively.

However, in his interview Al-Marayati described his difficulties with trusting American news outlets to report fairly, advocating for finding truthful reporting through sources in the area such as Haaretz, and most significantly on social media.

Still, similarly to Sokatch, he stressed the importance of listening to a range of sources, also describing the concept of an echo chamber.

“I make it a point that I’m not just looking at Palestinian social media sources, but also Israeli social media sources to get their perspective and read what the other side is saying as well,” Al-Marayati said. “Otherwise, you’re just talking within an echo chamber and you’re just talking to yourselves ... You have to learn to make peace with your enemy. You don’t make peace with your friends. That’s why they’re already your friends.”

In discussing how to have these conversations, both speakers addressed the necessity in coming to an agreement on basic facts. A specific point of contention within the news media and on social media is whether Israel’s ongoing siege, which has killed over 28,000 people in Gaza and left over 67,500 wounded, should be labeled a genocide.

During the talk on Monday, Al-Marayati unequivocally referred to Israel’s assault on Gaza as a genocide. Meanwhile, when interviewed, Sokatch emphasized that genocide carries a legal objective definition, making clear he was in alignment with the rulings of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). He raised a critical point that although he may have personal investment in a certain reality not being the case, the

facts themselves are indisputable.

“None of us should feel we have the luxury to come up with our own definition of what is an international legal [term], and it’s there doesn’t matter what I want it to be or think it is, it’s there,” Sokatch said.

In his interview, Al-Marayati described similar feelings to Sokatch, explaining the difficulty in speaking on Hamas’s Oct. 7 attack on Israel, which killed approximately 1,200 people.

“It is [a] serious introspection on our respective souls and the soul of our country ... to be critical, especially when people from our own religion are committing acts of violence against innocent civilians,” Al-Marayati said. “That’s what’s so important in creating this discourse — to have that overarching goal and that common ground ... We’re all coming together to say how can we end this conflict?”

The concept of the overarching goal described by Al-Marayati was heavily emphasized by Sokatch as well.

“There’s not a Jewish or Israeli monolithic line here,” Sokatch said. “The same is true on the Palestinian side. There’s a multiplicity of opinions and lots of different camps. We’ve got to try to figure out a way to get beyond what feels terribly polarizing [in order] to understand what’s happening without denying the reality of what’s happening.”

Al-Marayati spoke on this point as well, highlighting the critical need for real, civil discourse to achieve justice.

“If we can get other Americans to start believing that there is this construct for civil dialogue and real discourse on the issue ... we [can achieve] a more hopeful situation for future generations to take it from there and achieve peace that is concomitant with justice,” Al-Marayati said. “Right now, American public opinion is influenced by fear and we want it to be influenced by hope.

Daniel Sokatch’s daughter Zoe Sokatch PZ ’27 is a staff writer with The Outback

Faculty for Justice in Palestine

press release

Editor's Note: The following statement is a press release from Faculty for Justice in Palestine (FJP). The views expressed reflect organizing efforts of over 40 faculty members across the Claremont Colleges in support of the student-lead Suspend Pitzer Haifa campaign. Since The Outback aims to represent dialogue that includes all Pitzer-community voices, we also aim to include faculty in this endeavor. This press release is coming on the heels of the Pitzer Student Senate passing a resolution on Feb. 11 to suspend Pitzer Haifa in addition to much of the ongoing actions on campus in solidarity with the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions movement.

Claremont faculty members establish Faculty for Justice in Palestine (FJP) chapter. A group of more than 40 faculty members from the 7Cs have established a Faculty for Justice in Palestine (FJP) chapter. This coalition emerged from the statement last fall issued by 180+ faculty members and four departments standing in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza and colleagues in occupied Palestine. The Claremont FJP chapter is a community co-sponsor of the #SuspendHaifa motion currently being considered at Pitzer College.

The Claremont FJP has ratified the following Principles of Unity:

- FJP is a democratic and plural collective of Claremont faculty who support the cause of Palestinian liberation. We define faculty broadly according to AAUP guidelines to include all those involved in creating the teaching and learning environments at the Claremont Colleges.
- FJP understands the struggle for Palestinian freedom to be aligned with anti-colonial movements and struggles around the world. These include movements for Indigenous land rights, Black liberation, gender and sexual freedom, immigrant and refugee justice, and a liveable and sustainable planet.
- FJP supports and endorses the principles of BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions). As faculty, academic and cultural boycotts of Israeli institutions as outlined by PACBI and divestment in relation to college endowments and retirement funds are most relevant.
- FJP calls for an end to Israel's occupation and colonization of Palestine. We insist on the fundamental rights of Palestinians to self-determination and legal equality, and we pledge to respect, protect, and promote the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and lands.
- FJP rejects the conflation of support for Palestinian liberation and criticism of Israel with antisemitism. We stand against racism and oppression in all its manifestations, including anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian racism, anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia, antisemitism, anti-Blackness, white supremacy, caste discrimination, misogyny, homophobia, and oppression targeting trans and non-binary gender identifications, and people with disabilities.
- FJP supports and amplifies the work of SJP and other student groups struggling for Palestinian liberation in Claremont.
- FJP strives to protect and defend students, faculty, and staff who engage in speech and activity for Palestine and Palestinians, including BDS organizing. We support and defend the right to teach and talk about interlocking global systems of oppression including those related to Palestine.
- FJP affirms that the most securely employed among us protect more vulnerable members at all times.
- FJP participates in regional cross-campus coalitions with allies at other colleges and universities, and exists as a branch of the National FJP network.

Claremont faculty members who affirm these principles are welcome to join the FJP or our affiliated announcements-only listserv by emailing claremontfjp@gmail.com.

An introduction to Isabelle Thacker: Her hopes, her experiences and observations

By Rachel Rowlee PZ '25

Isabelle Thacker joined the Pitzer community when her husband, Strom C. Thacker took office on July 1st, 2023. She spoke with The Outback through an email exchange on her experience at Pitzer thus far, her career as an attorney, and how she hopes to engage with the Pitzer community.

Thacker, who previously worked as a supervising attorney at The Legal Project in Albany, explained how her passion for social justice led her to pursue a career in law. She described observing noticeable socioeconomic and racial divisions growing up in New Orleans in the 1970s and 1980s.

“At some point, I realized that perhaps I could make things a bit less unfair for some people if I became an attorney and advocated for them,” Thacker said.

This philosophy is reflected in Isabelle’s work, which she said involves “representing people who face barriers to accessing what many of us take for granted.”

Thacker described some of these barriers, explaining how her work focuses on, “access to appropriate services in school, public benefits, decent housing, immigration status, and/or the right to live free from violence or coercive control.”

She explained that these are issues that she believes her work can help address in Southern California.

“Given my skill set and the limitations on my law licensing (I am a member of the Georgia, Massachusetts, and New York state bars, but not of California’s), I am hoping to be able to do some volunteer work as an immigration attorney in Southern California.”

Thacker went on to explain she could practice immigration law within the State of California, as it is governed by federal law, and can be practiced in any state.



Isabelle Thacker is looking to bring her experience in social justice work to the Pitzer Community and Southern California.

Photo courtesy of Isabelle Thacker

Additionally, Thacker is fluent in Spanish and is hoping to work directly with Spanish-speaking immigrant populations while in Southern California.

“A dream of mine has long been to do volunteer work with immigrants on the U.S./Mexico border,” Thacker said. “I’m not sure what form that will take, but as I get involved with various local communities and groups, I hope to be able to figure out a way to volunteer on the border.”

Thacker expressed that her legal career “has not been linear,” and any career in social justice will have both great and challenging experiences. She emphasized her openness to discuss her career with students, as well as their own aspirations and interests.

“I have spoken with a few Pitzer students who are interested in working on immigration or social justice issues and/or becoming an attorney and would welcome those kinds of conversations with anyone in the Pitzer community,” Thacker said. “Please feel free to reach out!”

Thacker illustrated that her openness to the community has come from a deep admiration for the community members she has engaged with thus far at Pitzer.

“I love how inquisitive people are,” Thacker said. “I love the passion people bring to their ideas about social justice. I love how people care about each other and the world.”

Ultimately, for Thacker it is Pitzer’s core values which have drawn her to the college’s community, and she is incredibly excited to become an even bigger part of it.

“Pitzer’s core values and mission really resonate with my interests and career choices, Thacker said. “I am excited to become engaged in activities that Pitzer students lead. Y’all are a dynamic and creative group, and I’m looking forward to seeing, and if you would like, helping with, the programs/ideas that you are working on to further social justice.”

Intimate Inquiries

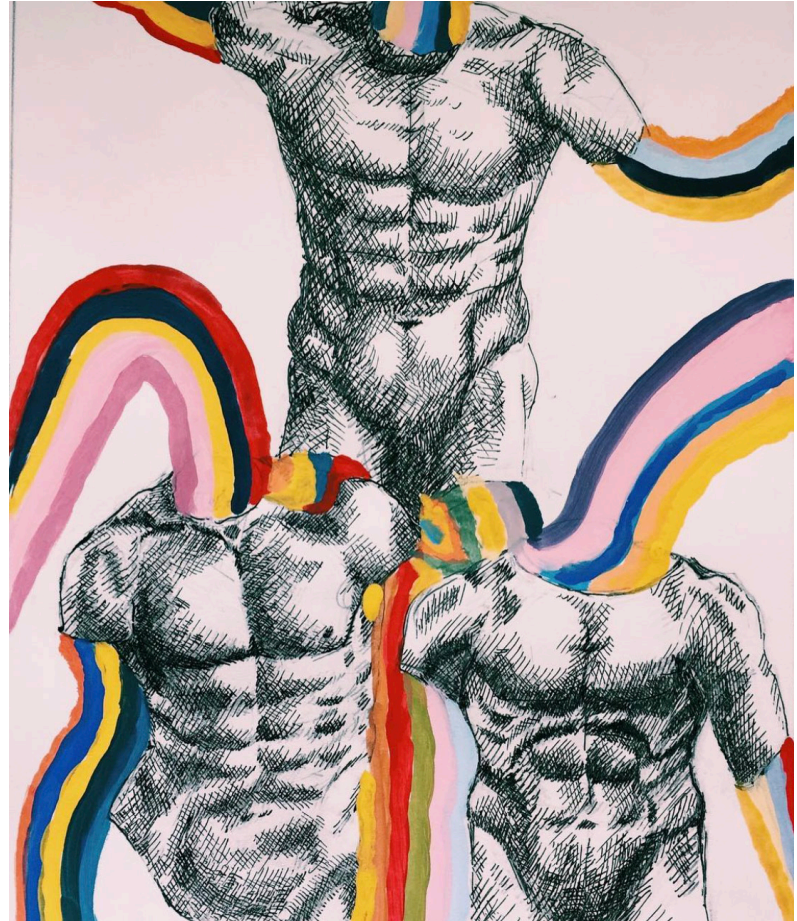
Dear Clementine...

I recently got involved in a steamy situationship with a mutual friend and am unsure what to do now that our passion has subsided. This was an experience of first-semester passion, and the two of us want to focus on our studies during the spring semester. The problem is, our situation may have gotten out to a couple of people in our friend group. I am worried that the events of last season will spread to everyone, which would definitely make group dynamics very awkward. Should I talk to my friends for damage control? The friend I was involved with is choosing to remain quiet and thinks it's best to pretend like nothing happened when with the rest of the group. Some of our friends definitely live for the drama though...

Sincerely,
Can I Fix This?

Hey Can I Fix This,

I have good news for you... I think you can find a solution to this predicament you've found yourself in! While the complicated implications of your situationship might seem to be a threat to the peace of your friend group, this might not actually be the reality. It sounds like you're perhaps feeling like you need to secure your friends' good graces. Friendship is stressful at a school of this size and at an institution with such an affinity for clique culture. In this context, the yearning for damage control is as natural as the sun in SoCal! If your friends "live for the drama", rehashing old gossip involving you and a mutual friend could maybe start some shit that doesn't need to be started. I think the best way to combat drama, but also feel like you're doing something to aid and remedy the situation is to have a conversation with the root of it all; your last semester's steamy situationship. You and the ex-bae don't have to be besties by any means, but an amicable relationship never hurt anyone on a campus that seems to be shrinking by the day. Definitely pull them for a chat and voice your worries... or at the very least your yearning for courtesy, and dare I say even friendship?



Graphic by Luca Rudenstine PZ '26

If you do end up talking to your friends, it is crucial to remember that this is not a social war of words where you need to be on the defensive about previous fornication with your ex-sitch. It is likely your friends will be appreciative to hear about your various sex-capades. If you've established civility and a mutual respect for your various friendships and your ex-situationship, it is plausible your friends will follow suit.

However and with whomever you choose to recount your past fling to, it shouldn't be in the spirit of social leverage, but more so out of pure trust and emotional connection. If you don't feel like you can talk about intimate parts of your life with certain friends without them taking it to the extremes, it might be useful to interrogate why you feel compelled to rope them in. Are you wanting to tell them because you feel insecure in your friendships? Do you hold resentment towards your ex-sitch for wanting to keep things quiet, even though it feels like a meaningful part of your first semester? Or perhaps you actually do want to stir things up in your romantic and platonic world? Whatever the reason, be intentional with how you approach discussing your past steamy seshes. You also do share friends in common with your ex-situationship, so I'd advise keeping them in mind when recounting silly anecdotes or hot moments. How will this affect how your collective friends interact with them? With the two of you together? How you engage in these conversations will in turn dictate the ways in which you respect your past fling and continue to honor them as a friend this semester.

I have faith that this could be a great moment to address underlying issues surrounding gossip with your friends. Communication is your best tool! Use it wisely and honor your heart.

Xoxo,
Clementine

Intimate Inquiries

Dear Clementine...

I have been wanting to explore my sexuality my whole life, but at Pitzer it feels really pressing to define my sexuality. I'm nervous that if I claim to be one thing, or hook up with anyone, I will suffer from imposter syndrome. Worse, what if I am just an imposter feeling social pressure?

Sincerely,
Nervous Nelly

Hey Nervous Nelly,

This is a very exciting message to receive seeing as we at the Outback LOVE the queers! [Please see page ____ for our QTs spread #overzealously.] The emergence of micro-labels for every facet of one's identity during the internet age is beneficial for some, but nail-biting for many. IT'S OKAY TO BE THE ONE NIBBLIN YOUR NAILS ABOUT IT! On the one hand, the idea of having a perfect box in which you magically fit is appealing beyond belief, but on the other hand, that box can close right up and trap you. At a school that seems so sexually liberated and uninhibited, there is also the assumed possibility of embarrassment if you yourself are still figuring things out. Sex is luckily not a performance, but an activity that delves into intimacy, passion, and connection. It is okay to not know all the bells and whistles... Or even if you like others touching your own! The great opportunity that college, and truly your whole life, gifts you is that of exploration and experimentation. Whether you are in a heterosexual or queer relationship, freeing yourself from the confines of sex as "one thing" or "penetrative" or even "top" and "bottom" opens up a realm of sexual possibilities that can occur with any type of partner. Sex is dynamic, just like yourself.

Sure, porn and media feed us a template for how to conduct ourselves sexually depending on who we are with, but in practice that is up for you and your fling to decide and communicate together. Tune into the other person's body (and words!) and let the butterflies down *there* lead you through the experience.



Graphic by Luca Rudenstine PZ '26 and Ben Connolly PZ '26

Remember: sexual identity is personal, and can be as private as you want. You are not powerless to the perception of others, and can choose the ways in which you disseminate your sexual experiences and identity. Perhaps a few experiences will help you understand this aspect of yourself more deeply. As long as you're respecting the people that you hook up with and not using the queer community to experiment without empathy despite a lack of attraction, let your sexual curiosity lead you to numerous new experiences! Sex can be deeply emotional, and you might not even be able to anticipate how aroused you will feel until it is already happening, but keep in mind that sex is not just a guessing game. You can tell your partner about your nerves, how you like to be turned on, what is working and what isn't, and most importantly what you want out of the experience. It is not shameful or rude to be uncertain, as long as your partner understands where you are at. Certainly do not use or disrespect your peers, but it is also completely alright to not love a dance-floor-make-out or realize you don't want to have sex with someone again. As long as you are conducting yourself safely, and honoring the other person's body both physically and emotionally, let the fun begin!

Another thing that's awesome about sexuality is that it is on your own terms in a way that most other parts of you are not, and therefore is undefinable for anyone but yourself. Perhaps this sounds blindingly obvious, but you don't owe anyone anything in terms of a label. If YOU are wanting a label, label it baby! If you're wanting to change that label when a change feels right, change all you want! Sex is fun! Exploration is fun! Surrender to attraction and see where it takes you before you start to limit yourself! Or better yet, don't limit yourself or your love at all!

Xoxo,
Clementine

A letter to my first love

By M.

I have five unsent letters to my first love in my desk drawer. In this discourse of passion and heartbreak, I present to you five chronologically ordered excerpts from the love letters that have been walked in and out of the mailroom countless times. This is my catharsis. This is my sending them to her without complete indulgence. This is patience, waiting for the day when we read them aloud at our kitchen table and love each other once again.

Excerpt 1: A Reflection on Loving an Artist

Do you remember when we sat in the street in Rome and you drew a jazz quartet? In my moments of peace, we're sitting on the cobblestones. We dance and I spill my cheap beer and there's graphite on your fingertips. Sometimes, when I listen hard enough, I can almost hear it! The trumpet you were sketching, or was it a saxophone? I can almost feel your lips on mine as you whisper "I love you" into my mouth while we walk away from the band, leaving your drawing in the bassist's open case, but I can't. We were beautiful in that moment, after we weren't strangers anymore and before we became strangers again.

Excerpt 2: A Comment on Loneliness

How do I untangle you from every part of me? I have dreams that we're old together, dreams that we're children together, dreams that we're together, right now, in this moment. I think we both know that if I could've chosen, I would've followed you across the country. It feels like some sick joke on God's behalf, like I've found the key to the inner workings of the universe and dropped it down the storm drain to be swept away with the movie stubs and train tickets and doodled letters and photo booth picture strips and pressed flowers. We're so young, and we've already held and lost what everyone spends their entire life looking for. What is there left to find now that we know what it means to love and to be loved?

Excerpt 3: Pettiness is a Healthy Coping Mechanism

I think I'd rather spend the rest of my life yearning for the home I've found in you, and hoping desperately that I find it in every other lifetime than never having experienced it in this one. I hope, selfishly, that you yearn for me, that you hurt too. For our comfortable silences, for family dinners with yours and mine, for holding me from behind while I stir our dinner in the cast-iron, for the single card game we knew how to play, for whispered names and grips on sheets and hands wrapped in hair, for holding one another through the night, for hosting dinner parties together, for shared lipsticks and cigarettes and toothbrushes, for feeding me focaccia and raspberry mochas, for eternal text threads, for car rides with hands on thighs and beautiful views and shared seven-dollar matcha lattes and our songs on the radio and a destination for just us. I hope you too are cursed to spend the rest of your life yearning.

Excerpt 4: An Inquiry

We spent the holidays together. I am so angry with you. How dare you tempt me with how deeply I can love you, with how I fold perfectly into you and melt into your soft skin, soft smell, soft touch. Not fair. Now that we're done pretending for this cold, confusing month, we won't speak for a while. So, as I wait for you to return to me in this lifetime, I think I'll look for versions of us existing together in alternate ones. In how many lifetimes do you think we find one another? I hope all. Secretly, desperately, I hope in this one. Seeing us in all things is comforting, but it also makes me hate everything beautiful. I want to beg you to come home, but I won't. It might be time that I accept that while I'm in this body and you're in that one, we might be stuck with only yearning, only observing other pairs and hoping they might just be different versions of us. Where you're a hummingbird and I'm a trumpet flower. Where you're the moonlight and I'm the tide. Where you're a girl and I am too.

Excerpt 5: Happy Birthday!

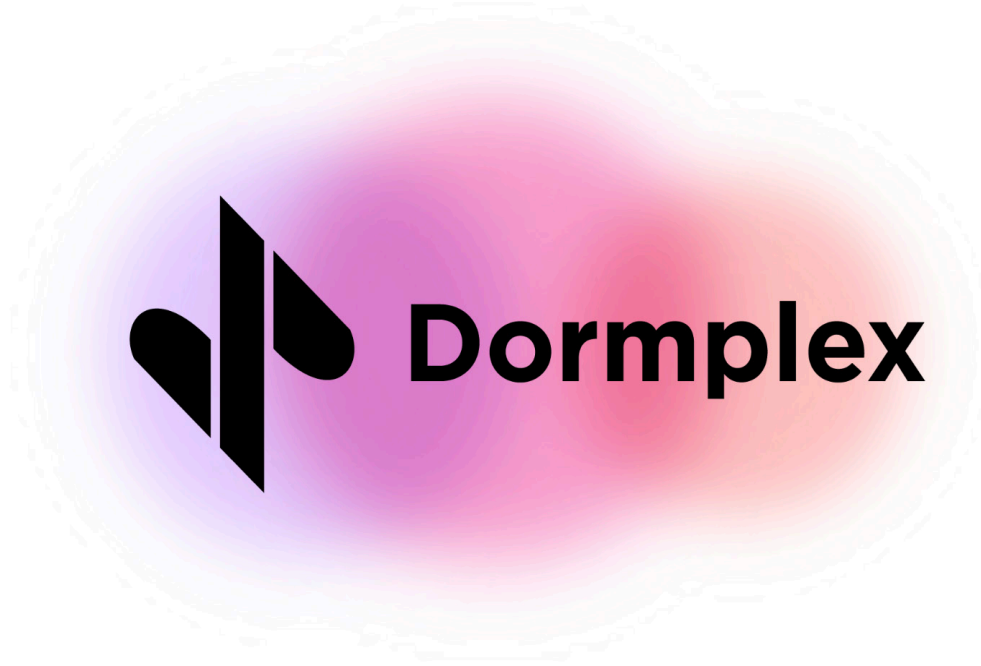
Happy birthday. Nineteen, my favorite Aquarius! This world is more beautiful with you in it. I hope the 9th is a day of celebration of you, your accomplishments, the ways you've made this world better. You are so loved! You've given my life purpose! What I can't tell you is that I hope I get to love you on every birthday you ever have. I'd make you a birthday cake every February for the rest of my life if you'd let me.

Excerpt 6: A Final Address to My First Love (and Another Letter to Add to my Desk Drawer):

You have taught me what it means to be unconditionally loved and to love unconditionally. It's torn me apart completely, but it is also the most important lesson I will ever learn. I will not send these letters, although I do have this daydream where you and I sit around a kitchen table together when our hair is gray and our tattoos are blurry, and we read them aloud in celebration of deciding that this life is ours to share. For now, I'll compile the key points for safekeeping and read them to everyone but you.

PZ Junior co-founds Dormplex app to provide 5C's with digital marketplace

By Ainslee Archibald PZ '25



Co-founded by a Pitzer student, Dormplex is an app that provides students with a safe and accessible on-campus marketplace.

Photo courtesy of Dormplex

What if, instead of limiting yourself to Pitzer students via student-talk, you could buy and sell with students across the Claremont Colleges through a 5C-exclusive platform? That's the goal of Dormplex, an online marketplace for college students launched by Noah Leopold PZ '25 last semester.

Dormplex launched as a test website last November. Now, Leopold and his co-founders are working on an app and looking to grow their presence both at the Claremont Colleges and at other campuses.

Leopold believes that no centralized platform for student transactions currently exists to meet campus needs. He views Dormplex as the solution.

"Things like Facebook Marketplace

and Craigslist are a little bit outdated," Leopold said. "They're more for our parents' generation than they are for us."

Unlike public platforms, Dormplex requires a college ".edu" email to access. Each campus will have its own marketplace, while the consortium is all in one system due to physical proximity. According to Leopold, Dormplex could bring safety and convenience that public platforms don't offer.

"When you're meeting with people on these platforms, you could be meeting with some random person miles away," Leopold said. "So it's both a little bit unsafe, potentially, and it's not very proximate... A platform that allows you to see things for sale only on your campus makes it a lot easier to actually do those transactions."

Leopold serves as co-CEO of Dormplex. He co-founded the startup with his friends from high school, co-CEO James Heath, who goes to Middlebury College, and CTO Aiden Habboub, who attends

Kalamazoo College. The original idea for Dormplex came after Heath's struggle to find a barber while at Middlebury.

"James [Heath] is Black, and he goes to school at Middlebury, which is in rural Vermont," Leopold said. "It's a lot of white kids and all of the barbers around are only used to cutting white people's hair... It took him a really long time looking around and asking people to find another student on campus who ran a barber shop. We were thinking, if there's a platform where everyone who's selling things at their school can just post what they're offering, it would have been a lot easier."

Leopold said Dormplex has reached about 120 test users and has had a few transactions since their launch at the 5Cs last November. The majority of those users have been at Pitzer, but they were able to expand beyond to the other colleges through a partnership with the Mac Shack.

Cianan Gamble PZ '23 ran a barber

14 business on campus before graduating last fall. After talking with Leopold a year before Dormplex launched their website, Gamble was excited to list his business on the platform when it eventually went live.

“I was super happy to put my button up there,” Gamble said. “It was very easy to set up.”

However, Gamble explained things went less smoothly after he initially registered with the platform.

“It didn’t really take off,” Gamble said. “I didn’t really know anybody who used it to sell anything... I never got a haircut booked through it.”

Still, Gamble is optimistic about Dormplex. He recommends it for students who are running small businesses on campus.

“It’s so easy to set up; it’s kind of like, why wouldn’t you?” Gamble said. “I’m glad that my page was on there for a while.”

From the administrative side, Leopold recognized that the website’s launch hasn’t all been smooth sailing.

“We started with a website, which at first had a lot of bugs,” Leopold said. “We tested it at Claremont last semester, got some users, got a lot of feedback, and fixed all the things that weren’t working.”

As a result, the team decided to turn it into an app, building it to respond to user feedback. According to a statement from Leopold, the app is complete and the team is in the process of posting it to the Apple App Store, with an Android app in the works.

Leopold says he’s committed to Dormplex as a long term venture, and building the app is just one part of that roadmap.

“We have the next year really planned out,” Leopold said. “We don’t have as solid of an idea of what we’re going to do after that. But our hope is to really get Dormplex out there at a few schools

this next semester. Then at the end of the semester, and over the summer, we’re hoping to raise a venture capital round, so we can really try to expand the following year.”

Dormplex has already made progress on expanding to schools other than the Claremont Colleges, specifically at University of Michigan and the home campuses of the other co-founders.

In recent years, apps such as the social media app Fizz have tried a similar approach to gaining a foothold in the college lifestyle. Leopold has reflected on the success of this kind of approach, and is planning on doing something different with Dormplex.

“[Apps like Dormplex], to expand,

“We were thinking if there’s a platform where everyone who’s selling things at their school can just post what they’re offering, it would have been a lot easier,” Noah Leopold PZ ’25 said.

have tried to use ambassadors, who they pay hourly wages, to market at the schools that they wish to expand to,” Leopold said. “We found that this didn’t really incentivize the students to work hard at promoting the platform, since their success is not at all tied to the success of the platform... These platforms typically perform really well at the school where the founders go. Then, they really struggle to expand beyond that, because they don’t have an incentive structure for these people that are working.”

Dormplex, in contrast to this approach, is going to be built on a franchising model, and will make money by taking a cut on the transactions on the platform. Leopold’s goal is to better align the incentives of the franchise partners with the success of the platform.

“We can partner with students at schools around the country, and eventually around the world, to market it at their own school,” Leopold said. “We’ll do a payment split with them, so they will keep 80% of the revenue from their school.”

The franchise partner’s 80% comes out of the 5% fee Dormplex will be taking out of every transaction on the platform. The other 95% will go to the seller. Leopold said the team is also looking at other revenue streams like paid promotions and partnerships with local businesses.

In order to make sure Dormplex is able to take their cut, names aren’t currently included on listings. This is intended to encourage people to sell through the platform rather than meeting up separately. However, the team is planning on changing this in the future.

“We’ll give sellers bonuses for every certain amount of items that they sell,” Leopold said. “That way, we don’t have to be so exclusive in order to actually get the revenue and get the transactions to happen on our platform.”

Leopold has one piece of advice for Pitzer students interested in creating a startup on campus: Don’t wait.

“Figure out what you can do today to get started, whether that’s making an Instagram to try to get your business off the ground or talking to a partner,” Leopold emphasized. “Just take action and do it.”



Link to a survey Dormplex is running to gauge interest in their product

Why doesn't the Pit-stop take meal swipes anymore?

By Jack Paradis PZ '26

If you're like me, your morning routine was completely turned on its head when Pitzer College's trademark coffee shop, the Pit-stop Café, stopped accepting meal swipes last fall. I ran out of flex money in, like, early October. To be fair, we get 160 flex dollars for the 16 meal plan, and at \$6 for a bagel and a coffee, that'll give you 26 days of breakfast. But I digress.

I decided to channel my frustration into curiosity to answer the question we've all been wondering: Why did the Pit-stop stop accepting meal swipes?

I started asking around to get to the bottom of it. I'm a sophomore myself, so I asked my sophomore friends if they knew what happened. Mostly, I got answers along the lines of; 'Pitzer's broke,' 'Pitzer hates us,' or 'I don't know.' Eventually, I asked an upperclassman about the issue, and I learned that the Pit-stop only started accepting meal swipes during the pandemic. Realizing this story was more complex than what I had previously thought, I decided to conduct an interview with the general manager of Pitzer's dining services, Miguel Menjivar.

Menjivar quickly explained that dining halls have specific permits to be able to offer food in exchange for meal swipes, which the Pit-Stop doesn't.

"Pit-stop is not registered with the health department as a food establishment in that way," Menjivar said. "We can do coffee there and we can do pastries. That's it. [Meals] require a health permit."

However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, California laws regarding dining halls were loosened, allowing Pitzer to utilize the Pit-stop more flexibly. Menjivar explained this was in an effort to spread out students during dining hours.



Last semester, the Pit-stop Café shocked students by no longer accepting meal swipes. Jack Paradis PZ '26 investigates why the café has disrupted the morning routine of Pitzer students.

Photo by Ashe West-Lewis

"Lots of rules were not enforced [during the pandemic]," Menjivar said. "Definitely health codes were not enforced. They wanted to make sure people stayed away from each other so they allowed certain things; for us to do a certain way of service. In order to prevent people from congregating, we opened different spots for people to eat, and that was one of the things they did at the Pit-stop."

According to Menjivar, when California's dining hall protocols went back to normal they had to go back to simply operating as a café.

Hopeful for some good news, I asked Menjivar if there was any way that meal swipes could return to the Pit-stop. He explained that the answer is more complicated than what one might expect.

"What needs to happen is that [the Pit-stop] needs to get a health inspection, which it's not big enough for," Menjivar said.

In order to qualify for inspection, a facility must have certain requirements like a three compartment sink and somewhere to prep and wash dishes. "It's just too small for that," Menjivar

said. "The only way that it could happen is if the place gets expanded. If it's a little bit bigger, then we could possibly do it."

In short, meal swipes were only accepted at the Pit-stop last year because California state laws became more relaxed about what constitutes a dining hall during the pandemic. California laws have reverted to their pre-COVID status, and Pit-stop no longer meets the requirements to accept meal swipes. Additionally, because cross-5C dining was shut down during most of the 2021-22 school year, the staff wanted students to have more dining options. It also meant fewer students crowding McConnell, which was a potential COVID hotspot in 2021.

Although meal swipes won't be returning to the Pit-stop in the near future, not all hope is lost. McConnell recently expanded their breakfast hours from 9:30-11:00 a.m to help fill that awkward gap of time in the morning. Cross-5C dining is up and running. The Pit-stop has been updating their menu and it only costs an extra 85 cents to get oat milk in your latte. The future is bright.

Words by Willa Umansky PZ '27, graphic by Ben Connolly PZ

'26

I wanted to wear pants because it's cold and the wind has been nipping at my thighs more than it used to since I've been calling paradise home for long enough now. I tried a few pairs that I thought could work. I ended up in tights and a dress with the cold still sinking its teeth into me. I don't quite despise my body, but I miss my pants. Later, Coco and I talked about how despite our appreciation for the hips that crown our welcome to womanhood, we miss our pants that we bought before we caught a case of the curves. I took a cab to the doctor's office because I was running late. I was trying on pants and was too busy inspecting my stomach to look at a clock. I don't remember the first time that I went to the doctor alone, but I know that the women who work at the front desk surely don't know what my mom looks like.

I haven't weighed myself since a family vacation in 9th grade. I've let my weight ebb and flow even if the weight of it crushes me sometimes. I can't look at photos of early high school, because I grow sickeningly jealous of baby me. And it makes me want to weigh myself. But I won't. I have hips now and I don't want to see a number reflective of that, so I'll keep the feeble peace between me and my body and blissfully lock myself in ignorance.

The woman who works at the front desk and doesn't know my mothers beauty or how we have the same smile at a certain angle tells me that we'll do the basic stuff while my doctor helps a toddler in the other room. I have eight more years here, but apparently it'd be weird for me to hold on for that long. I wonder when she'll retire.

I get on the scale.

I make the mistake of looking.

I say "Jesus fucking Christ" under my breath as my vision blurs, but this woman doesn't know my mother and doesn't know me without curves and probably wonders why someone with hips wants to be weighed on a scale with Sesame Street stickers, so she can't tell that anything is wrong.

I'm sitting in the chair that my parents used to sit in with my doctor across from me. She tells me that my hair looks great, pauses and breathes, then says I look really good. I still have tears obstructing my vision. I think she said what she did because she can tell my throat is growing a lump because she knew my moms hair before it was gray and she gave me shots before I was brave. I say I thought I looked good before I saw the numbers on the scale that had the same stickers since before I had hips. We talked about quitting cigarettes and my sex life. She tells me things about herself. Here I am with a woman who knew me before I knew knowing oneself was a thing to do, here we are talking like women do.

I walk home in the rain, listening to an album I discovered recently enough that it had yet to see Brooklyn through my eyes. I get a coffee and wonder when I started having one every day. The music suddenly feels all wrong and I can hear the silence that my singing or talking on the phone or television shows once filled in my parents' houses, so I somewhat frantically switch the album to one that had seen my Brooklyn, even my Brooklyn in this light, same time of year and same weather. I stroll past the street I used to be unable to pass without snapping my head to gaze down, because a boy I thought I loved lives there. I don't turn my head...at first. However, one's body can never forget a habit like that, so my neck snaps without any viable consent from my brain. I can hardly see down his street because the crosswalk is so busy, but I can see myself on a city bike waving at him before I thought his eyes lit up a room, in pants that will never fit me again.

I met up with Coco in a coffee shop that we'd sit in for hours last year. One that my foreign friends and I frequented two summers ago, one that my dad and uncle used to rave about before it became mine. I almost forget I have to jump up and down and feign shock when we embrace, because I felt as though I'd been here for the leaves changing. I had

fallen back into it so quickly. Nothing has changed, I just can't fit into my pants anymore.

We went to my house. I lived somewhere else for a while, but President Street saw me become myself. It saw me when I ensured that I fit into the pants that I can't get beyond my thighs now. It saw me when I stopped looking and stopped fitting. It saw me excited in the mirror when I fit again after a summer where I moved so fast and did so much that I didn't need to make any effort for my pants to fit at all. I'm sad this time, because I think the cool sailor pants that I bought at fourteen won't ever fit again. I loved those pants, I even got them tailored for more money than I paid for them. No matter how bitter-sweet, I think my hips are here to stay. Coco showered in my shower like it was her own. One time I got too drunk and high on my crazy Zolofit dosage of 2021 and Coco and Beza had to bathe me. I used to be really sad. I got Coco a towel from my dad's room. Arla opens my door because it's unlocked because Pitzer is not New York and I leave my door wide open and hang prized possessions on my porch but I'm bad with transition and I forgot that New York isn't Pitzer. I had to force myself to jump around again, because I forgot again that I don't fit into my pants anymore. We sit on my bathroom floor and talk like we always have.

Suddenly we're all trying to squeeze under my umbrella while walking to dinner. We order a bottle of red wine so we can have a guilt free cigarette after our meal. The woman studies my fake ID for too long and she knows it is not real, and I know that she knows, and she knows that I know that she knows, but she gives it back and brings us our wine. The lighting is warm and the wine makes my belly warm and it's so much warmer inside than it is in California because we've just escaped the cold rain.

Beza comes a couple hours later. Dinner was long. We talked about politics. Beza comes and we keep sitting on my bathroom floor, laughing like we're still

going to eat lunch in the cafeteria in two days. I suddenly notice the puffiness of my cheeks as my back is hitting the wall and my butt feels the cool tiles through the thin fabric of only pants at home that fit me. I wonder if these girls I love are noticing the fullness of my face. We laugh and tell Beza that we talked about politics over wine at dinner. I can't believe we talked about politics at dinner, it's so absurd, like we're playing the part of matured. We meet up with Breyten and Baurice and head to a bar on Smith Street. Baurice was the last boy I had a sleepover with before penises and vaginas simply couldn't be near each other because the magnetic pull was too strong, apparently. We slept in the circus tent that still

lives in my dad's closet because I want my kids to have it.

I posted a picture of the boys and my girls. Our middle school PE teacher liked it, despite the cans of beer so obviously in hand. We're old enough for the teachers that didn't let us curse to like photos of us with such atrocities to innocence as beer.

My girls are en route to womanhood and the boys that didn't get tall until recently are on the road to being men. I have hips and my friends and I drink wine instead of just taking shots.

I'm proud of the curve of my hips as they stretch away from my waist and I don't hate when my stomach rolls when I sit and I love who I am. I just didn't want to see a number. I sure as hell

17
did not want to see a number on a scale where my doctor turned it to kilograms every time before she weighed me, because she somehow knew I didn't want to see a number that would decimate my self image immediately. Dearest Pants, I will miss you and your company. I will miss the way you hugged my body. I wish you could see me into the future of my femininity and I hate to say it, but I fucking hope you don't because I certainly don't miss forcing myself to fit. Dear Hips, welcome—I guess. My love for you is still begrudging, but you can't ask me for more because at least I'm semi willing to say goodbye to my pants.



Poems from my notebook – of body

Words and graphic by Luca Rudenstine PZ '26

11/23/22

I just couldn't watch another woman
hate herself anymore
I trimmed off her strong tender skin
its cloth falling at my feet.

And hung it up in her closet like an
old work blouse
Without a body there was no more
suffering. She was a goddess.

I used to wake up mornings,
limping back to the chapel room
my scale, a church
Mounting my feet on it like a cross
and worshipping my weight.

So one day I took to the mirror with
a blanket and
smothered her till she became so mu-
ffled
I could barely hear her sharp words.
Oh fuck that mirror,
she hardly had anything good to say.

02/04/23

Beauty wears wings and it
migrates
through me.
God has teeth and trims
the gravity from
my feet
I can feel myself lifting
off the sidewalk

01/28/24:I strengthen my body so
that I may
be a steady vessel for my emotions

So that I may hold space for
what I'm feeling as I give it
permission to flow through me

my strength creates ease

I do not wish to silence what
brings discomfort

my hope is to offer myself
refuge within this body I know
to be my home

this is a subtle distinction, but a
meaningful one



Private Dry-Cleaners

By Tye Iverson PZ '26

The certificate that I bled over, the one that had my tears staining my palms white with mountains of salt, finally landed me in this room. My whole life I've waited for a moment such as this. My parents have always expected nothing but greatness, and it seems as though I've delivered. Oh, to be on the top floor; the windows are a little wider, the eyes of Man a bit more narrow. Such a place makes the hills rise from my pores. The Geese are flocking! And now, he sat across from me; the Man I've learned so much about.

This Man, the one who could give me all that I desire, wore a blue suit. His dress was so neat and ordered one could still see the steam from his private dry-cleaners located down the hall and to the left from his office, near his assistant's bedroom. His striped gray tie fit the navy color like a ball in a glove, so satisfyingly well. His skin was leather, worked in but smoothed with an impossible care we all wanted to achieve. The wealth that overloaded his pockets had also given him bleached veneers, which he'd had drilled in up on the hill, right at the top, by his empty

home.

He was perfect. I've never seen anything like it; I knew it's what I wanted. He opened his mouth to speak, hesitation clearly being something he'd never experienced:

"You know what I heard today?" Slowly, he leaned over his desk to whisper, "The engine wants a new name! I overheard it calling for a wise man." He leaned back and began speaking normally again, "I suppose that's what it wants. Is that what you want? To be a piece of the puzzle, that is." He was smiling the whole time, although it wasn't real but rather something practiced.

Before answering, I peered towards my shoe to hide my excited smile and saw an ant. It held a crumb above its head, the massive weight seemed to cause distress upon its tiny body. The three sectors of the ant's anatomy shook under the weight of the object that was far too big for it to hold. I glared for merely a second longer, until the Man placed his foot forward without looking and crushed the ant. I watched the small piece of life twitch to death as I looked up, thinking nothing of it.

"Yes." Slowly his veneers smiled with pleasure from my answer, his smooth leather skin stretching with an inhumanness plastered upon him, though hard to find. A white poster to a white wall.

"Very well..." He slowly got up, pushing his hands off the table to support himself. He walked around the left side of his desk in perfect form, seemingly choreographed; he's done this a million times. He arrived at his destination which happened to be just to my right. He stood with the blank face of any statue, turning off the eerie smile he'd held upon his face for most of the interview. I was full of pure thrill; I knew what was to come and I wanted it. The yearn engulfed me.

I fixed my gaze upon the Man in front of me. He looked me up and down one more time before he opened his mouth. Slowly his lower jaw and bottom row of teeth dropped. They descended to the floor never seeming to stop as they passed the point of brokenness, but it was natural; he was used to it. When the bottom portion of his mouth finished falling and his chin met the floor, his tongue lolled, unfurling as if it were the red carpet leading me to success. Along it there were words burned in ink, Ignis Fatuus. Assuming it to be a slogan for the wise I stepped forward, feeling the hard office carpet turn to mushy taste buds. As I walked through his hallway of a mouth, the once roomy space slowly shrunk and soon enough I found myself on all fours—crawling. His saliva stuck to me like honey, keeping me from advancing too quickly. The farther I went, the smaller I had to make my body and soon enough I found myself laying on my stomach sliding down the Man's esophagus. The light, at this point, had completely dissipated, and my fears finally began to creep upon me. I questioned my decisions that brought me here, but I knew hesitation is what kills. As the challenge of ignoring my guilt continued, I made sure to follow the darkness; it had become my only light.



Pitzer BSU hosts second PZ Black Flea marketplace

By Ivy Rockmore PZ '27

On Feb. 3 Pitzer College's Black Student Union (BSU) hosted the second edition of PZ Black Flea, gathering student artists, organizers, and shoppers to uplift and empower the Black creative community on campus. The vibrant flea market provided a space specifically for Black students at Pitzer and Black vendors from across the state to sell artwork, vintage clothing, crafts, and more.

The PZ Black Flea began last semester under the direction of founder and lead organizer, Hannah Chimpampwe PZ '26. Chimpampwe's work included delegating work and serving as the main point person for the PZ Black Flea working group, which organized the logistical aspects of the event alongside administration and staff.

Working group member Bee Joyner PZ '25, who created maps, designed tote bags, and communicated with vendors for fees, mutual aid work, and contracts, praised Chimpampwe for the amount of dedication she put into the event.

"She actively put in so much work in finding funding for this event and executing it," Joyner said. Joyner created maps, designed tote bags, and communicated with vendors for fees, mutual aid work, and contracts in preparation for the event.

Vendor William Marshall PZ '25, who sold clothing at the event, described what it was like to observe the planning process from start to finish.

"I saw it go from just a rough idea or like a weird sales pitch to materializing before my eyes, which is kind of like one of the most amazing things I've experienced being here," Marshall said.

Vendors like Marshall expressed deep appreciation for the organizers who envisioned and brought the PZ Black Flea to life. According to Marshall, the organizers brought thoughtful intention

PZ BLACK FLEA

THEE
event of
the year!

LOCATION: **PITZER**
DATE: **FEB 3RD 2024**
TIME: **1-6PM**

**SHOP BLACK-OWNED
BUSINESSES FROM ALL
AROUND CALIFORNIA!**

**DJ MOONGURL
DJ HABESHA
DJ TRON**

**SPECIAL PERFORMANCE
BY ASHA IMUNO
YFR EAZY**

SPRING '24

Pitzer College's BSU successfully executed its second Black Flea, a market that amplified the work of Black artists and vendors, entrepreneurs, and organizers at Pitzer's Mounds on Feb. 3.

Courtesy of Pitzer Black Student Union

to creating tangible benefits for Black students on campus.

"I have an incredible amount of respect and admiration for everyone who plans events like these because they materially improve the lives of Black people and give opportunities for those who really need it to improve their own livelihoods," Marshall said. "Especially in a place like Pitzer, that has such a dense population of the wealthiest, most privileged people around, the organizers worked to bring artists in to get their own profit from it."

Chimpampwe created the event with similar interests in and appreciation for uplifting the work of Black student-artists.

"I think having an event like this at the 5Cs is important because Black students don't always have the space to be themselves and show off their talents and crafts at these institutions, so I wanted to make an event that gave Black students the opportunity to do so," Chimpampwe said.

The bustling marketplace drew students searching for community along with

art.

“Hannah wanted a lot of students to participate — not just LA vendors, but the Black community in Claremont to platform their own ideas, their own creativity,” Marshall said.

Vendor Evann Penn Brown PZ ’25, founder of small business Rockface Ink (@rockface.inc on IG), values the welcoming atmosphere that PZ Black Flea fosters.

“It’s so great to have a space where you’re outside and you’re in the air and you look around and it’s Black people,”

Joyner agreed. Noting from their personal experiences as a Black individual at a predominantly white institution, Black students’ creative work often goes unnoticed.

“The PZ Black Flea enables us to feel inspired to amplify the voices and creative nature of the Black people around us,” Joyner said. “We rarely platform those voices or businesses. It’s also important that you buy from small businesses generally.

As both a vendor and shopper, Penn Brown found connection through admiring others’ work.

“I had a bunch of really, really sweet people shop my art,” Penn Brown said. “I just got sent a picture of somebody wearing my stuff. It’s a great way to meet and connect with people.”

Despite the cold weather, organizers like Joyner felt gratitude for the amount of community support. Chimpampwe agreed, noting the turnout was higher than last semester’s.

“This event was even better than the first one,” Chimpampwe said. “A lot of Black students and non-Black people across the 5Cs showed up and it was a great way to start BHM [Black History Month]. Everyone loved the vendors and performers.”

Marshall also described the fulfillment in providing visibility for creativity that often goes underappreciated on campus. Marshall resells his thrifted clothing with his brand Will’s Wardrobe (@wm_bepop on IG), aiming to value pieces as the unique works of art he sees them as.

“Artists are kind of like the lifeblood of any community that they enter,” Marshall said. “There’s a lot of amazing talent and creativity and amazing creations happening on these campuses every day that isn’t really recognized.”

According to Marshall, the PZ Black Flea also enables young entrepreneurs to build sustainable small businesses. At the same time, it serves as a platform for community organizing.

“The PZ Black Flea enables us to feel inspired to amplify the voices and creative nature of the Black people around us,” Bee Joyner PZ ’25 said.

“The Flea is a valuable environment for political and community organizing,” Marshall said. “Politically, the vendors at the Flea can use their space to spread information about their causes.”

Penn Brown noted the variety of vendors sourcing materials ethically.

“A lot of the vendors’ work is really sustainable,” Penn Brown said. “At least for me, I thrift all the clothes [that I sell].”

Penn Brown is a student in Pitzer Professor Laura Harris’ course “B(L)ack to Nature: Poetry & Theory” class. Students in Harris’ class made sugar scrubs to sell at the flea, and they’re now able to use that money to fund a community garden.

“For the sugar scrubs, we made that 21 in-house; we had the rose leaves and we picked some lavender,” Penn Brown said. “I think it’s very important to highlight how inherently great that is for the environment. It’s not just about personal money-making, it’s funding for greater causes.”

As the PZ Black Flea gathers momentum after its first year, the creative energy on campus promises an even brighter future for the event. Penn Brown envisions more collaboration and community participation as the market becomes a staple platform.

“No pressure on anyone, but I hope it honestly grows,” Penn Brown said. “Having vendors come in from outside the community too, is just such a great way to get to know people and

get access to more things.”

Meanwhile, Marshall encouraged more student artists to participate as vendors in future PZ Black Flea markets. They wish for the event to showcase even more of the

exceptional skill and passion already flowing through campus.

“I think that a lot of people are afraid to be vendors and show off their talents out of judgment, but also out of fear of not being able to find a community or find people to engage with what they create.”

As the PZ Black Flea gains momentum, Joyner celebrates its potential as a mode of economic justice.

“A part of equity, generally, is distributing wealth in spaces that deserve it as well,” Joyner said. “PZ Black Flea is an amazing, radical space if you truly think about it.”

BLACK QUEER TRAILBLAZERS: PAST AND PRESENT

By The Pitzer Queer-Trans+ Alliance

BHM 2024

Intersectionality isn't just important to the queer liberation movement and for the safety of all queer people, it is vital. Simply put, there is no queer movement or safety without the consideration, involvement, and prioritization of people of color. The same systems that police the movements, expressions, and sexual activities of queer bodies have long done so to Black bodies through the added traumas of enslavement, dehumanization, and brutality. Individuals of color are subjected to constant scrutiny of their sexuality and gender expression based on white supremacist constructions of masculinization and feminization. The road to liberation has been paved by queers of color, with Black women at the forefront of the most pivotal moments, theories, and initiatives in queer history. BIPOC are not a subsection or concession of the white-dominated mainstream LGBTQ+ movement to be marginalized or tokenized; they are and have always been at the center of the fight for queer justice, and any queer collective that does not center their concerns or go up in arms for Black liberation is therefore illegitimate. This issue seeks to honor Black History Month by providing short (and admittedly incomplete) snippets of the lives of some of the most influential Black queer figures in American history. Black queer history must be honored and engaged with every month, and the Queer-Trans Alliance graciously welcomes any feedback and suggestions on how to make Pitzer's queer club more engaging, safe, and welcoming for queer students of color.



Marsha P. Johnson

Marsha P. Johnson is perhaps the most well-known and talked-about Black queer historical figure in dominant culture, particularly for her perceived role in the Stonewall Riots of 1969. Born (AMAB) to a working-class family in New Jersey in 1945, young Marsha was reportedly not shy about expressing her feminine identity through her clothing but was forced to hide it after being bullied by her peers and sexually assaulted when she was 13. After graduating high school in 1963, she moved to New York City with only “a bag of clothes and \$15” in search of freedom and acceptance, to be found amid a marginalized yet vibrant subculture of divas and deviants. There, she began to wear gender-affirming clothes once again and officially named herself Marsha P. Johnson; the P stood for “Pay It No Mind,” Marsha’s motto and radically elusive response to questions about her gender and sexuality.

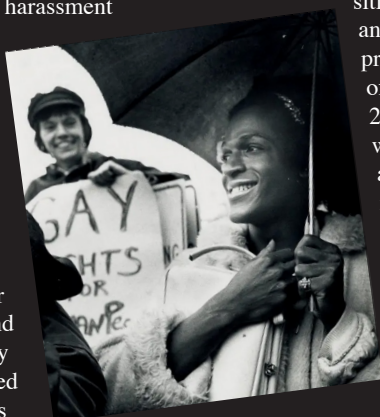
NYC was a very socially and legally hostile place for queer people at the time in spite of its lively underground scene, which for Marsha and others meant a life of unemployment, eviction and homelessness, police brutality and routine arrests, and various forms of harassment and physical violence.

Circumstance forced her into sex work, a highly criminalized labor then dominated by often deadly for trans women of color (highly demanded and typically sustained by closeted white married men in high positions of political or economic

power, such as Wall Street businessmen, seeking to live out their fetish fantasies in private while using their daytime activities to further endanger the lives of the women they used in effort to hide their shame).

While she continued to live this way, she also found her passion and rose to fame in the drag scene and was known in the queer community for her flamboyant eccentricity, relentlessly positive attitude, and commitment to uplifting and encouraging other young queers to accept themselves and their identities. It was through this disposition that she became a mentor and a mother of sorts to another prominent queer historical figure of color, Sylvia Rivera (1951-2002), a Puerto Rican trans woman known for her tireless activism surrounding low-income queer communities of color in the latter half of the 20th century.

On June 28, 1969, Marsha arrived a gay bar (often run by the mafia, they were some of the only places considered safe enough for queer people to



power,

considered safe enough for queer people to

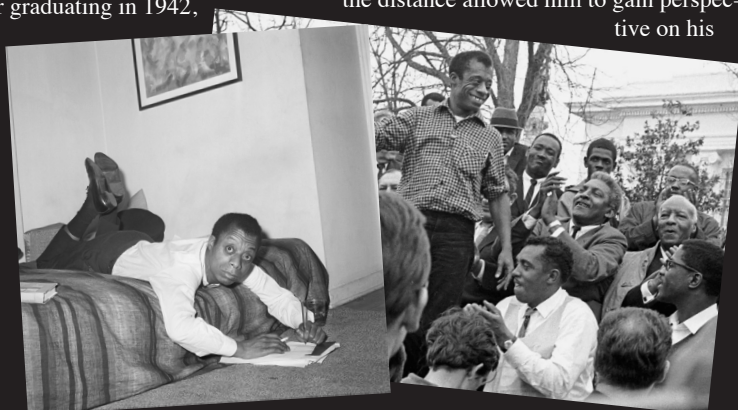
gather) called the Stonewall Inn to find that the police had initiated one of their routine raids to rough up and intimidate queer people—and this time, the patrons were fighting back. Many different accounts have created confusion around the events of the riots as well as Marsha’s role in them; while she is often said to have “thrown the first brick” at the police thus starting the riots, her responses in later interviews indicate that she arrived after the riots had already started. What we do know for sure is that she was on the front lines, regardless of when she joined them, and played a great physical role in the revolt and disruption of police business that night. Including Marsha, the strongest force of the uprising came from young trans women who felt they had “nothing left to lose” and were beyond exasperated with the oppression and harassment they experienced on a daily basis.

Her life and legacy live on in the communities she touched. Brick by brick, she built the foundation of the queer liberation movement we know today. Her radical philosophy of self-acceptance, “happiness as a political tool,” and taking up space as an act of resistance are ever so important in the fight for trans survival.

James Baldwin was and remains a central figure in black queer literary history, bringing an intersectionality into the American consciousness that was in many ways ahead of its time. A groundbreaking playwright, novelist, and essayist during the Civil Rights Era, his writing on the Black experience in America was a monumental contribution to the social and intellectual revolution taking place and continues to shape societal attitudes toward Black Americans today. Baldwin was born in August 1924 to a single mother in Harlem, New York. He developed a passion for reading and a gift for writing at an early age, displaying an ability well beyond his years, and he put his skills to work on his school magazine at DeWitt Clinton High School in the Bronx.

As the eldest of nine children, he felt a serious responsibility to help take care of his family; after graduating in 1942, he put college on hold and worked in various jobs to support them.

In 1945, his friendship with writer Richard Wright landed him a fellowship through which his essays and short stories were first published in national



magazines and newspapers. In 1948, he moved to Paris for another fellowship, and the distance allowed him to gain perspective on his

identity and position within American history:

James Baldwin



It explores themes of sex and sin, religious morality and misogyny, poverty, abuse, and the persistence of pain and violence as a legacy of slavery and racism. In a critical moment, it focused on the complexity of identity and spiritual development in a system founded on oppression.

In the following years, Baldwin got to work incorporating depictions of homosexuality into his writing, exploring love between men and the complexity and

fluidity of human sexuality in works such as *Giovanni's Room* (1954) and *Just Above My Head* (1978). Homosexuality was extremely taboo at the time, and Baldwin was taking a huge risk in exposing himself to homophobic discrimination in addition to the blatant racism he already faced.

He often commented on his beliefs that rigid categories of sexuality and gender were another way of limiting freedom.

Through this philosophy, he drew a parallel between the queer and Black liberation movements that were unfolding on the basis of autonomy; in doing so he articulated, made visible, and became primarily through intellectual means, Baldwin emerged as a leader and architect of the Civil Rights Movement, to be considered along with MLK, Bayard Rustin, and other activists with whom he had friendships.

His experience of being Black and gay in America, then Black and gay in Europe, gave him a consistent "outsider status" and a unique experience of never "fitting" the assigned boxes of the dominant narrative; through essays on dehumanization and oppression of Black people, his openness about his relationships with men, and his ideas about the fluidity of human sexuality, he was able to write his own which has persisted long after his death in 1987. His complexity and legacy of "complicating" existing attitudes around Black American lives and sexuality live deep in the American consciousness and the fight for queer and sexual liberation today. a crucial point of intersection where few had dared before.

"Once I found myself on the other side of the ocean, I see where I came from very clearly... I am the grandson of a slave, and I am a writer. I must deal with both."

In 1953, he published his first novel, *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, a deep and provocative semi-autobiography that speaks partly to his complicated relationship with his Harlem community, religion, and his father.

Bayard Rustin

Bayard Rustin, the main organizer and gay mastermind behind the 1963 March on Washington, was born in West Chester, Pennsylvania in 1912. Raised by Quaker grandparents, he grew up with a pacifist philosophy that would help develop his emphasis on nonviolence as a means of achieving justice for Black Americans.

In his early adult life, he was active in organizations such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Youth Communist League, formed and led anti-colonialism and anti-racism initiatives including the Free India Committee and the Committee to Support South African Resistance. He helped plan the Journey of Reconciliation or the "First Freedom Ride," during which African American and white riders bussed through the South together to protest segregation of public transportation.

Everywhere he went, he rallied for the liberation of people from oppression and against segregation, economic exploitation, and apartheid. By the time he met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., he had already proven himself a formidable activist.



of the march, Rustin took the microphone to read a list of demands from civil rights

In 1953, Rustin was arrested for having sex with two men in a parked car in Pasadena, California. Same-sex sexual activity, under the crime of "sodomy," was illegal at the time and was not decriminalized nationally until 2003; for his crime, he spent 50 days in jail and was forced to register as a sex offender.

Rustin met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the 1956 Montgomery bus boycott. Over several years of friendship, it was Rustin's insistence on pacifism that had the greatest influence in the development of Dr. King's ideology of



to discredit his demands for the social, political, and economic liberation of Black people. Even some Civil Rights activists protested his involvement in the March on Washington, partially in fear that his presence

leaders for President John F. Kennedy.

Rustin was discredited by segregationists for being a "communist, a draft-dodger, and a homosexual." His sexuality was weaponized time and time again by his political enemies, who cited his "immorality" in attempt

nonviolence. Enamored by Rustin's emphasis on pacifism and his strategic genius, Dr. King asked him to be his advisor. It was in this role that Rustin organized the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom of 1963 where King would give his famous I Have a Dream speech, all in the span of two months. At the end

as a gay man could hinder the legitimacy of the anti-segregation movement in the eyes of the public.

Rustin continued to take on more forms of activism, finding hope for economic equity in socialism and advocating for collaborations with white people to create jobs and political opportunities for all. In 1968, he published an amended version of the Economic Bill of Rights that demanded specific legislative actions to support labor unions, job creation, welfare, affordable housing and urban development, and equitable education. He later met the love of his life, Walter Naegle, and became more involved in the gay rights movement in his final years.

According to Naegle, “He saw this as another challenge, another barrier that had to be broken down—a larger struggle for human rights and individual freedoms.”

Rustin remains a slightly lesser-known figure in queer and Civil Rights history, partly because he



was sometimes hidden in order to shield the anti-segregation movement from the stigma around his sexuality. We must remember him for his pivotal role

in integrating the political, social, economic, and personal and breaking down barriers in more ways than one.



A promo poster for the 2023 Netflix biodrama *Rustin*, which explores the partially-hidden life and legacy of the openly gay Black Civil Rights leader and the racism and homophobia he endured while devoting his life to racial justice.

Audre Lorde (1934-1992)

Audre Lorde was a self-described “black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet,” librarian, academic, and activist whose writing offered a scathing emotional critique of a wide range of social and civil injustices. Born in NYC in 1934 to immigrants from the Caribbean island nation of Grenada, Lorde grew up reading and memorizing poems, often reciting them as a means of expressing her feelings when she was otherwise unable to articulate them.

Her complicated relationship with emotional expression was likely influenced by a difficult relationship with her parents, who were generally cold or distant. Her mother’s lighter skin and the fact that she could “pass as Spanish” was a source of family pride, and Lorde was regarded with a certain distaste and suspicion for being darker than her mother.

By age 12, Lorde was having experiences beyond the recitable, and she began writing her own poetry to fill the gaps. Her first poem was published in *Seventeen* magazine after it was rejected by her Catholic school’s literary journal for being “inappropriate.” She participated in poetry workshops throughout high school, but felt like an outcast because of her queerness.

In 1954, Lorde took classes at the National University of Mexico, where she accepted

and confirmed her identity as both a lesbian and a poet, in her personal life and art. She then attended Hunter College in NYC, where she got engaged in working-class lesbian (bar) culture in Greenwich Village while keeping her identity hidden in the academic setting. In 1961, she gained a master’s degree in library science at Columbia.

In 1962, Lorde married a white gay man named Edwin Rollins. Apart from the taboo of interracial marriage, this was a common arrangement, as it was safer for lesbians and gay men to be each other’s “cover” during this time of heavy persecution and violence against queer people. They had two children together, while each continued to pursue same-sex relationships.

They divorced in 1970, just after Lorde began her position of poet in residence at a college in Mississippi where she continued writing and teaching.

Lorde’s experience in academia can be described as “outsider” at best. Most professors in the 70s were straight white men, a combination of 3 identities of which she shared none. This influenced her work and inspired several provocative essays on queer feminist theory, rage, racism, and their various intersections.

In 1980, after more than a decade of writing and teaching civil rights-engaging workshops to her young Black undergraduate

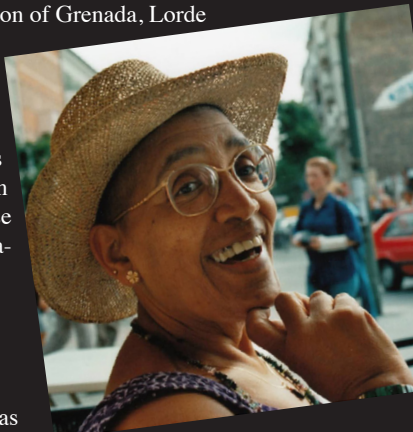
students, she co-founded Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, the first American publisher for women of color. In 1981, she was a co-founder of the Women’s Coalition of St. Croix, dedicated to helping female victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Her commitment to intersectional feminism continued to shine in the late 80s, when she helped establish SISA (Sisterhood in Support of Sisters) in South Africa for Black female victims of apartheid and its manufactured injustices.

Lorde believed that language was a more powerful form of resistance than violence, and this became crucial in 1980s Berlin. Her voice and mentorship of black women activists there gave rise to the Black movement in Germany, while her critiques helped place the events in a broader historical and systemic context.

During this time, her ideas became distinctly anti-capitalist and socialist, and her poems and essays offered a whole world of criticism against capitalist democracy, imperialism, and Western influence.

Lorde’s passion for queer liberation and depictions of her experiences as a Black lesbian are ever-present in her poetry and activism. As she got older and became more confident in her sexuality, she opened her work and activism to include the issue



of gay rights and personal experiences of queerness more publicly. Throughout the 70s and 80s, her words helped develop the emotional heartbeat and rhetorical strength of the gay rights movement. In 1979 alone, she gave pivotal

speeches at the March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights—which echoed in part the organization and demands of the Civil Rights March in 1963—and the National Conference of Third World Lesbians and Gays, also in Washington.

She advocated for the acceptance of queer people until she died of cancer in 1992, but not before speaking out about the lack of representation for Black women or lesbians in the medical advice and literature she was given.

Miss Major Griffin-Gracy b. 1940

Miss Major Griffin-Gracy is an iconic Black trans activist and Stonewall veteran who has been fighting on the frontlines for trans liberation since the late 50s. Miss Major was born (AMAB) and raised on the South Side of Chicago in the 40s, an area with a historical legacy of ethnic diversity, rich music and creativity, and being a hub for unions, immigrants, and migrant workers.

Growing up, she always felt more like a female and reports trying on her mother's clothes whenever she was out to look and feel more like a woman. As a teenager, she met a drag queen named Kitty who taught her how to do makeup and became involved in the underground Chicago drag ball scene. Inspired by



the riot squad came in, Miss Major fought back with the others until she was kicked unconscious by a police officer, waking up in custody the next morning with a broken jaw.

However, Miss Major has stated that as far as Black trans folks are concerned, “Stonewall never happened.” The gays and lesbians in the scene then wanted nothing to do with trans women, and they still “want [them] erased.” Even in the Pride march to

sations in prison radicalized her, and she began to “politicize” her experience and take action following her release in 1974.

Since her incarceration in the 70s, Miss Major has built a 50-year career as a fierce advocate and organizer for queer and trans liberation, centering trans women of color survivors of police brutality and incarceration in men's prisons.

After her partner died of AIDS in the late 80s (an epidemic that was helped along by government and medical negligence and malignance toward the affected communities), Miss Major began working in HIV prevention and San Francisco.

Miss Major faced much discrimination in her teens and young adult years. Her parents were unsupportive and thought her interest in womanhood was just a phase; when she expressed her feelings (“came out”) to them at age 12 or 13, they responded by taking her to church and psychiatrists, while her sister reportedly burned pictures of her. She was then disowned, losing her family and home.

While she had always presented as male and wore men's clothing in public, she was outed and expelled from two colleges in a row after her dresses were found in her room. After being incarcerated in a mental health facility in Chicago (she said this in an interview but there is little information on the cause or charge), she moved to NYC where she made money as a sex worker and was embraced by a supportive drag community.

Gay bars were some of the only places queer people could convene in NYC, and they generally did not allow entry to trans women—one of the only places that did was the Stonewall Inn, where Miss Major became a regular patron. She was there on the iconic night of June 28, 1969, when the police raided it and this time, “sick of their shit,” the patrons didn't budge. When

commemorate the Stonewall Riots one year later, the trans women who had fought on the front lines were invisible. While most see Stonewall as the epic symbol of gay liberation, Miss Major knows that progress has been minimal for trans women who are still being killed in horrific numbers year by year, and even slower for Black trans women.

In 1970, Miss Major was arrested for robbing one of her clients and was sent to Sing Sing prison, a men's facility. Several months later, she was released on parole but sent back to prison for wearing makeup when meeting her parole officer. Her treatment in prison was nothing short of atrocious, as she was constantly violated and humiliated by correction officers.

While in prison, she was mentored by another prisoner named Frank “Big Black” Smith, who had been a leader of the historic Attica Correctional Facility riots of 1971. Smith taught her about the prison industrial complex, urged her to learn more about African-American politics and history, and inspired her to get to organizing. These conver-

outreach in Going against the grain and protocol, she took to the streets to provide resources for the unhoused, and eventually started street clinics.

In 2004, she joined the Transgender Gender-Variant Intersex Justice Project, where she served as the long-time executive director; the TGIJP provides support and access to legal and social advocacy to trans people in California prisons as well as formerly incarcerated and police-targeted individuals.

Miss Major now resides in Little Rock, Arkansas where she founded the House of GG's (aka Griffin-Gracy Educational and Historical Center), a retreat center which “creates safe and



transformative spaces where members of our community can heal—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually—from the trauma arising from generations of transphobia, racism, sexism, poverty,

ableism and violence, and nurture them into tomorrow’s leaders”—particularly trans women of color living in the U.S. South. She is currently focused on a variety of creative projects including the series *Trans*

in *Trumpland* and a 2023 book release on her life’s activism called *Miss Major Speaks*. She suffered a stroke in 2019 but has since recovered.

Kylar Broadus

Kylar Broadus is an attorney, public speaker, author, professor, and long-time trans rights activist who was the first openly trans person to ever testify in front of the U.S. Senate.

Broadus was born (AFAB) in 1963 in the small rural town of Fayette, Missouri, he grew up grappling with both race and gender. His parents were the children of slaves and were living under the Jim Crow laws at the time. He was beat up daily for being light-skinned Black, a point of contention in a “color conscious” community.

Growing up, he was introverted and didn’t feel right in his skin, but didn’t yet have the words to describe his experience. He constantly felt like he had been “dropped into the wrong life that’s not [his]”. His mother dressed him in very gendered clothing, and he remembers changing his outfits in kindergarten. With no internet, he searched books and other material to try and figure it out but found nothing.

In his teens and young adult life, he identified as a lesbian—it didn’t feel right, but it was the closest he could get. His gender expression was more masculine during this time, which made using public bathrooms tricky; men’s rooms were unsafe, and he would get confronted by aggressive police when he tried to use a women’s room (this remains very much a current struggle for trans people).

Broadus describes wishing he could stay in school forever, since jobs were very gendered and would enforce feminine dress in the workplace. Nonetheless, he graduated Central Methodist University with a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration.

In his mid-20s, he reached a breaking point with “having to dress like someone else everyday in drag to go to work, just to make a living,” and in



1994 he announced that he would be

transitioning. Race informed his decision to come out: he was very close with his POC community which was like a family, so he chose to stay and try to be himself rather than move somewhere else and pretend to be someone he wasn’t in the business world.

Upon coming out and starting to wear men’s clothes to work at an insurance company, he faced a constructive discharge (an employee’s involuntary resignation that is a result of the employer creating an intolerable or hostile work environment, pressuring or coercing them to quit) due to harassment and discrimination. He then developed PTSD from this harassment.

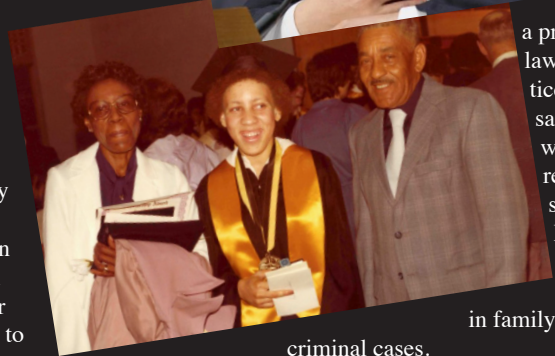
Soon, the Internet became more available, which helped Broadus connect with others like him and more of the movement became recognizable. This exposure and community, including small gender-affirming conferences, helped him feel for once like he wasn’t alone or insane.

Being forced to leave his job for expressing himself, unemployed and devastated, Broadus began to get involved with trans advocacy. Facing the idea that it was legal for his company to discriminate based on gender, he began a decades-long and continuing commitment to use the courts to legally change conditions for trans people. As an attorney, he has since helped develop many local, state, and federal protections for regarding gender identity and expression.

Broadus was appointed to the Human rights Commission of Columbia,



Missouri where he began to research small ordinances and protections to find the legal basis to contest employment discrimination and incarceration of local trans people. This paved the way for the first real trans policy a decade later. For 18 years, Broadus worked



at a private law practice in the same city, where he represented LGB-TQ+ clients in family and

criminal cases.

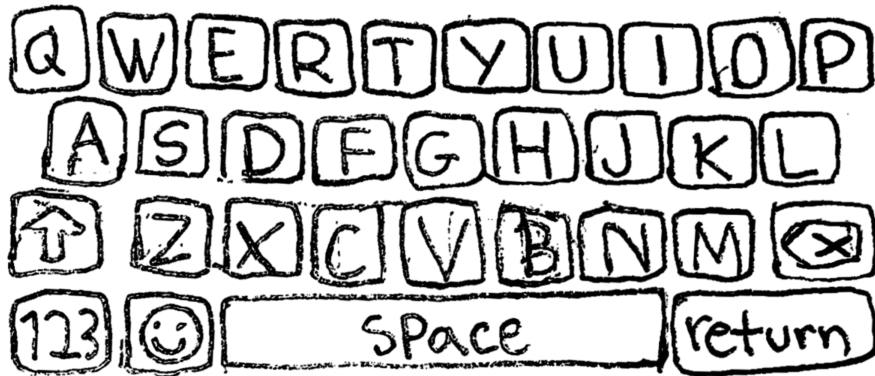
Broadus has also served as the chair of the business department at Lincoln University, teaching business law and workplace discrimination for 20 years. He has served on numerous task forces and commissions working to instate protections for trans people, including the National LGBTQ Task Force and the DC Mayor’s LGBT Advisory Task Force Committee. In 2006, he authored an essay called *The Evolution of Employment Discrimination Protections for Transgender People*, the first of its kind, which has been and is studied by law and Gender Studies students at many universities.

Throughout his work, Broadus recognized that many of the trans people of color he talked to in meetings felt isolated despite living in big cities and among communities of color. In 2010, he founded the *Trans People of Color Coalition* to help foster much-needed community and representation. In 2012, he became the first Black transgender delegate to the Democratic National Convention and has since received many awards for his internationally recognized pioneer work in the movement for LGBTQ+ protections.

Also in 2012, he became the first trans person to testify before the U.S. Senate when he advocated for the *Employment Non-Discrimination Act*, which was to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the existing law which outlawed workplace discrimination on the basis of race, skin color, religion, sex, and national origin. The ENDA then passed in the Senate with bipartisan support but was rejected by the House Rules Committee.

As seen in in my notes app:

By Willa Umansky PZ '27



I do to prove myself worthy? I'll give it, love that is, I don't even need it back honestly. I'll just hold it in my heart and know that it's real. I want to know that it's real so bad. I can't fathom the feeling, I can't craft an idea of it out of nothing. I want to feel warm and I want to be held and I want to want to hold someone and I want to hold a face in my hands and kiss lips for the thrill of lips on mine and I want to feel it in my gut and in my whole body. I want to be reduced to a thing that wants another. I want to feel it more than anything.

do you relate to henry miller?

also do you believe in god?

Tv show idea

ozempic

Ensemble cast

gooooodbye new yorkkkk

i'm tired on the plane and for some reason the volume on my television doesn't work

downloaded music and books are all i know

sigh

the pilot warned us of turbulence west of Denver

plane full of new york area kids devastatingly crashed on way back to west coast liberal arts school, everyone would be talking

my eyes are so goddamn heavy and I cannot read anymore

im tired tired tired tired tired

imagine that the "tired"s are spiraling into a tornado like shape, trailing down the page

the theme of this notes app spiel is descent I guess #lol

see you in class on Tuesday or on the mounds or something

Shitty rate my prof

Incredibly disorganized, super not engaging, and overall a really shit prof. I had her for my FYS and while she is personable and approachable she is truly just an insufferable English

teacher archetype. She is borderline manic

end. easy a tho, since she doesn't give af

Hello Professor Gilbert, I hope you're having an awesome day. I would love to take this class! I like Jews and ancient history. Please let me in. Sincerely, Willa Umansky

I lived in the womb of the world

for the jew the world is a cage filled with wild beasts

i make your ovaries incandescent

frightening me a little with her heavy lesbian air

a thick tide of semen flooding the gutters

i hear not a word because she is beautiful and i love her and now i am happy and willing to die

i have found god but he is insufficient

page 178 if all christians were as devoted to god as i am to her the world would be crawling with jesus christ

i don't know if i have an eating disorder or if i'm just a woman

passover when i was little was magical

Love?

Just please let me love. Let me be loved. Please at least let me know what it is to love, what it is to care. What it is to experience falling into it, what it is to know that it is a feeling that will never go away. Please, dear god, dear whatever entity can hear me, what can

Free write

What is the prompt I dont know the prompt I dont listen in this class I think Ru is buying tickets to a basketball game I dont know the question i'm so excited to not take this class

she's in the benadryl

grief is weird. the pain erodes. the pain erodes and it kills me. the world doesn't stop turning cuz you want it to. cuz now you're just a little boy who died. goodbye friend that mourned friend, i'll grieve my old self now i guess, the one whose stomach has a hole with the shape of you

g?d

if you asked if i believe in god

i wish i could smile like there's no chance at all

but i resent him for my lack of prophetic status

or his refusal to bestow upon me

the key to the world

love

have i achieved broken record status yet?

my palm is bereft

replete with a forlorn heartache

it's a hollow hand i fear

destined to remain devoid of anything other than a pencil or penis or whatever exists in between

Symphony

By Noah Schiller PZ '26

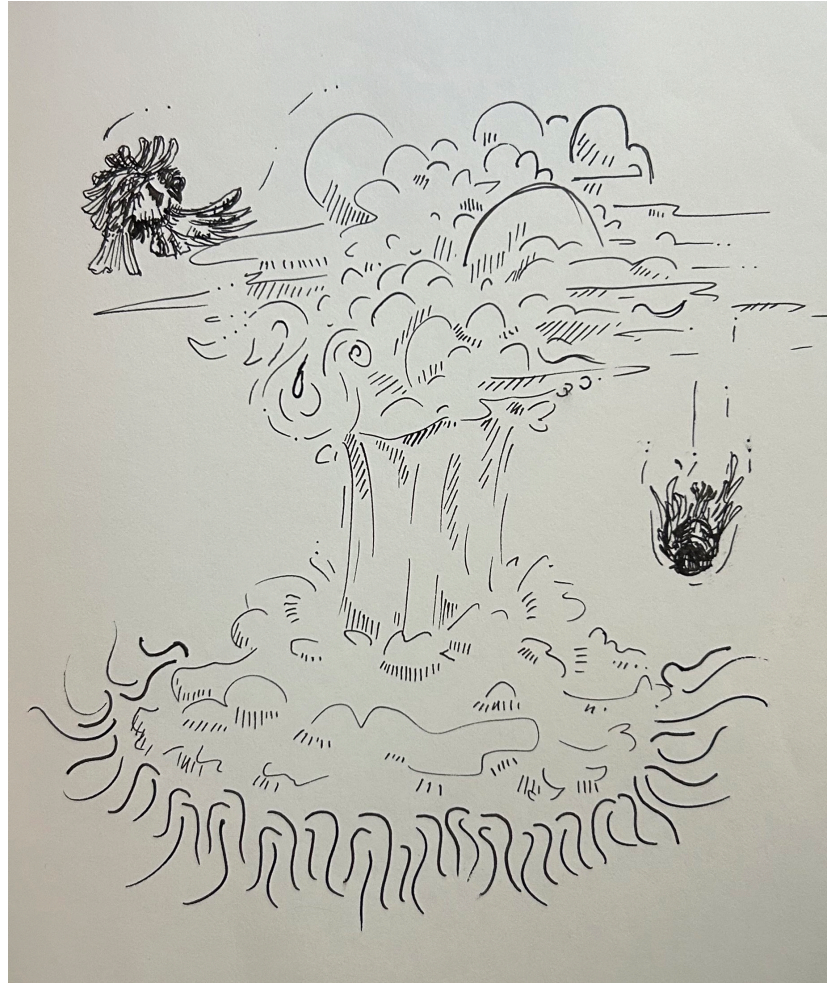
I long for the color green
and its rippling hues that sway silent
In the forgotten forests of my memory

They sang a simple song
One I could understand
Perhaps even sing along to, but
I don't know the words
I don't know the words

The melody was tender
Welcoming me into
Their green, green place
Washing weary eyes in emerald waters
Bubbling past baby bamboo shoots
Baritones of this symbiotic symphony

Together you sang a sweet
Lullaby. I want to learn the words
I want to learn the words.
I wish I could sit among your singing
Every evening as greens glow
In the dusk

You taught me the tune,
You showed me the words,
But lyrics are a foreign language
Like a mother
Singing her child to sleep
Irreplaceable, so I must wait
To go back to the green,
Where I can sleep soundly again.



“Untitled” by Graham Hynes PZ '26

Five questions: Sal Bandan, matinence technician III

Words and photo by Willa Umansky PZ '27



What TV show are you watching right now?

Bandan: Soap operas. I'm always watching soap operas.

What's your go-to snack when you get home from work?

Bandan: Peanut butter, for sure. I can't cook *laughter*

Follow up question, chunky or smooth?

Bandan: Chunky, for sure. Always SKIPPY®.

Who is your favorite singer?

Bandan: I like a lot of singers. Ooh, but I LOVE country,
I listen to a lot of country in general. Blake Shelton,
specifically.

Do you have a dream car?

Bandan: I have a pickup truck. It's a chevy. I'm a big Chevy
guy.

³⁰ February Campus Couture Chronicles

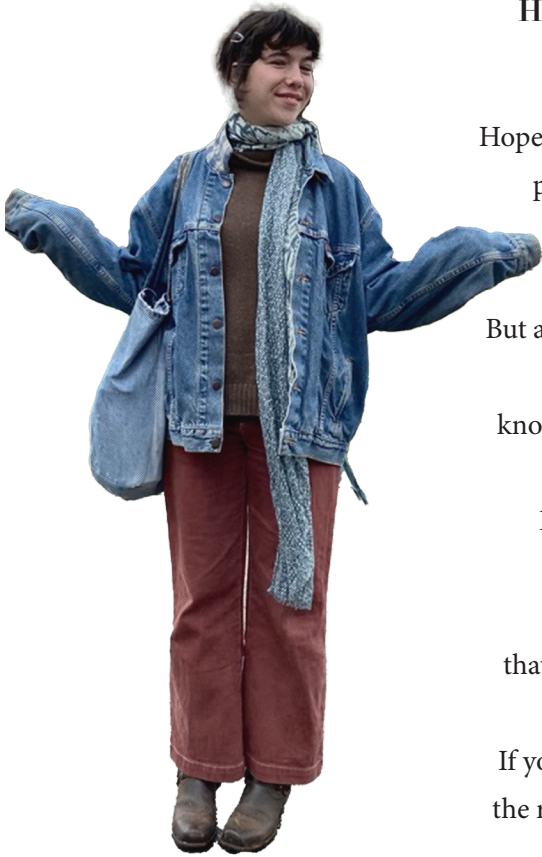
Hello my Dear Friends!

By Willa Umansky PZ '27

Oh how rainy it's been!
Hopefully when your eyes see this
page we know sun again.

But as I craft this column for you
tonight,
know that the rain has brought
Pitzer much plight.
I'm sure you remember,
dearest future dweller,
for it was just last week
that the sky shed tears in such
sheets.

If you don't remember because
the return to warmth has wiped
your mind,
here's a compilation of the rainy
fashion you'd find!



Valentines Fun

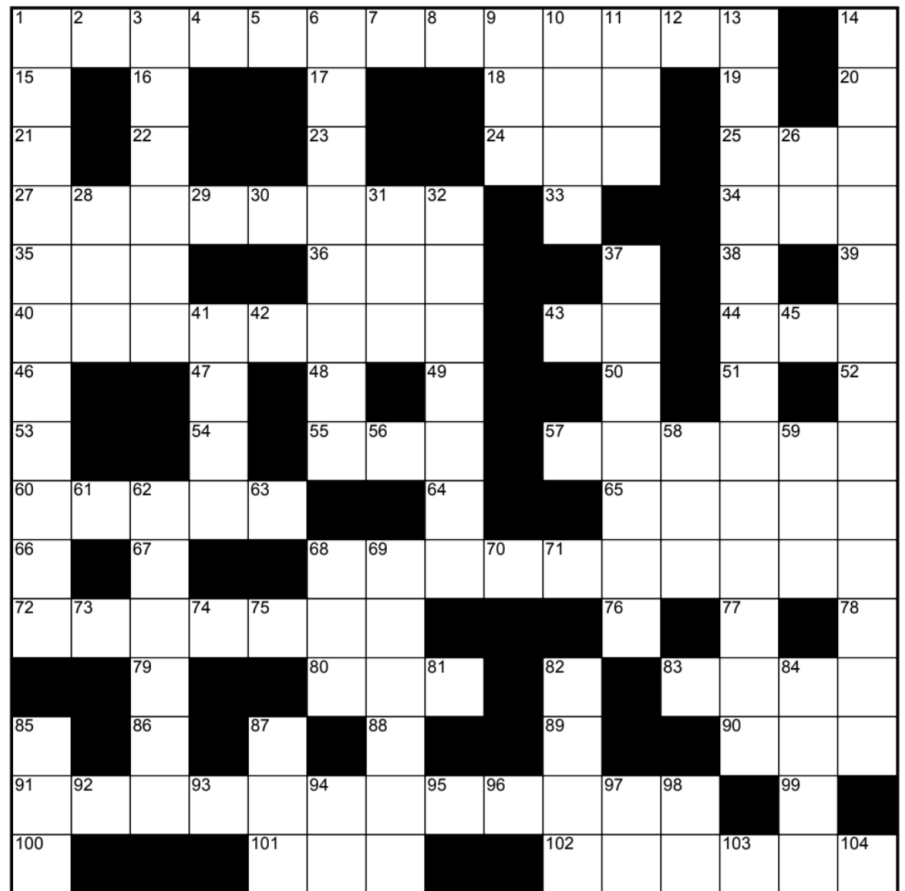
By Brooke Benmar PZ '25

Across

1. Commitment-phobe's predicament
 18. Friend, or ____
 24. 2022 orchestral drama starring Cate Blanchett
 25. Before anyone else
 27. An animal that might be in "the room"
 34. Sometimes comes in the little white variety
 35. TV coach Lasso
 40. to trick, like Little Red
 43. T.S. spelling song
 44. organization head
 55. Magazine and channel, Nat ____
 57. Potato classification
 60. Bought by the dozen
 65. Isabella, Isaac, Ian or Ingrid
 68. "Here's looking at you, kid" movie
 72. Modern day conman
 80. Alternative housing placement for Pitzer students
 83. To-do organizer
 90. ____ the season
 91. Fate of Archduke Franz Ferdinand
 101. It's finger lickin' good
 102. Daily task to "run"

Down

1. Iconic candy conversation starters
 3. Penguin's outfit
 6. staying afloat; with "water"
 9. Crypto
 10. Cusser's mouthwash



11. Super Bowl-featured electric guitarist
 13. system of buses, trains, subway & more
 14. Alice's personal villain
 26. ChatGPT author
 28. Feline zodiac
 31. Maria's vocation in Sound of Music
 32. Socially acceptable Instagram Reels
 37. Quality of wombs or soil
 41. Bird of love and peace
 58. de Armas of Knives Out fame

59. Pirate Party host, or 49ers RB
 62. Business pants
 68. Pitzer student volunteer hub
 82. Mystery explanation -- must've been ____
 84. To use ASL
 85. Death ____ for Cutie

tonight i gave

BIRTH

to the pacific ocean.

Goodnight forever, my love
my body is sinking

in to

Flames of PASSION



A whole new

rich embrace

dearest darling,

We are

Breathtaking

DREAMS

Giving

our daughters.

MORE

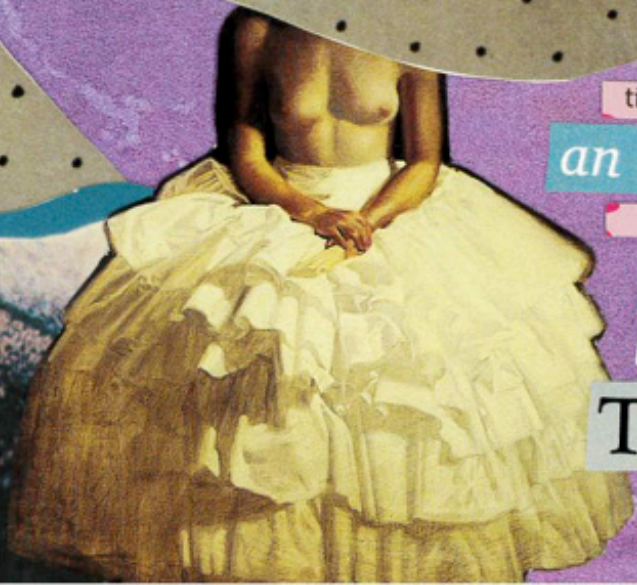
Life

The

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CREATIVE

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