

An abstract painting featuring bold, organic shapes in red, blue, and white. The red shapes are primarily on the left and bottom, while the blue shapes are in the center and top. The white shapes are on the right and bottom. The overall composition is dynamic and expressive.

THE OUTBACK

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Masthead

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Letter from the (managing) editor

During my first week of college ever an old friend of mine who was already well acquainted with Pitzer introduced me to her friend Maya Olsen. Maya told me that I should try swinging by The Outback meeting to see if I vibed with it, and let's just say I vibed with it pretty hard. Wednesday night Outback meetings in The Grove House grounded me through my transition to college, chaos being wrangled by Sadie, Ben, and Maya became a staple of my week that made me feel whole. I felt myself growing both as a writer and a person, since those growth journeys happened alongside each other my writerhood and personhood have gotten inextricably tangled up. I have the Outback to thank for that, Ben, Sadie, and Maya to thank for it.

I got the position of managing editor for when Maya and Sadie were going abroad. Maya had been my closest link to our wonderful editor's team of first semester and I felt like I had at least had a few conversations with Sadie, but I could never crack the mysterious and aloof Ben Lauren. At the last meeting of first semester, I told Ben that we were going to be best friends. I know for a fact that I didn't believe it when I said it.

I'd like to think that my prophecy came at least partially true, because Ben is one of my favorite people I know (not sure how he feels about me though). Ben is the most driven person I have ever met in my life and I have met a lot of amazing and passionate people. I wish we could loudly and proudly dedicate every single issue of The Outback to him, since every issue is because of him. Ben and I have spent late nights in The Grove House mass editing the next edition, or worked into the wee hours of the morning in his dorm figuring out Indesign, or woken up basically with the sun (7am) to do an interview on the floor of my dorm. But! No matter how much time I spend alongside Ben making sure that The Outback gets out, he spends more. I think he must have a special power where he invents a 25th hour of the day, because I actually don't understand how he does what he does let alone does it well if he lives the same days as the rest of us.

I don't know what I want to be when I grow up. I don't think that I want to be a journalist, though I won't write it off, but I want to be as dedicated to something as Ben is to journalism. Aside from being the TSL editor-in-chief, Ben has a hand in every single piece we put into The Outback. I wouldn't be surprised if I found him actually cutting down a tree to make the paper himself.

It's definitely silly to say writing for The Outback has changed my life, because we have (optimistically) like 30 monthly readers, but it has. Like I said before, I have become a writer this year. I started wearing that label in the fall, but I feel it becoming a physical part of me while working under Ben. His passion has made me realize my passion. When I look at him I see the word 'writer' crawling out of his chest, etched on his hands, and shining out of his eyes. I feel the word being scratched in my own palm every time I get to work on or work through a piece with him.

Ben, #fourthwallbreak, please let this actually be the letter from the editor because I really want to publicly dedicate this issue to you. Ben is an inspiration to me and I wanted to let you all in on the magic that takes human form in him so that maybe Ben Lauren and his alien-like work ethic and care can inspire you too.

As always meet us in The Outback.

- Willa

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What is academic freedom?: Pitzer community responds to Thacker's boycott veto

By Ben Lauren PZ '25

On April 11, with over a two-thirds majority, the Pitzer College Council passed resolution 60-R-5 in favor of an academic boycott of Israeli universities — preventing the school from opening any new study abroad programs in Israel. However, just minutes before the vote, Pitzer President Strom C. Thacker announced he would be vetoing the resolution, regardless of the result. It went on to pass with a 48:19 majority.

Both during the meeting and in a statement sent to the Pitzer community later that night, Thacker critiqued the bill on two points: Its interference with Pitzer's normal procedures for opening and closing study abroad programs and, most significantly, his own ideological stance against academic boycotts altogether.

"I do not support an academic boycott of any country, as it directly opposes our educational mission and our commitment to academic freedom," Thacker wrote in his statement. "A key role of a liberal arts college is to educate students to think critically, listen actively, and develop their own informed views. We must always promote academic freedom, even when it is denied to others."

But is an academic boycott of Israel inherently opposed to "academic freedom?" Thacker believes it is, yet the College Council's vote suggests they disagree. Why are students and faculty at Pitzer specifically calling for an academic boycott? And how could it directly affect people in Gaza?

First, what would it mean for Pitzer to boycott? Essentially, the school would not create any new pre-approved programs with any university in Israel in response to its decades long occupation of and its over six-month long siege of Gaza.



"Whereas Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, B'Tselem, and the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories declared that the state of Israel is committing apartheid and ethnic cleansing against the Palestinian people," the resolution reads.

Pitzer students would still be eligible to study abroad in Israel, but would need to go through the process for non-approved programs.

It would also endorse Pitzer's closure of its formerly pre-approved program with the University of Haifa as part

of the academic boycott. The program was closed on April 1 by Pitzer's Study Abroad and International Programs Office after receiving two proposals, including one challenging its alignment with Pitzer's core values.

Resolution 60-R-5 aligns itself with Pitzer's "Suspend Haifa" campaign which began years ago joining the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement in response to a 2005 call for solidarity from 175 Palestinian civil society organizations, including the Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees. The BDS movement has guided much of

the action taken by 7C pro-Palestinian organizations such as Claremont Students for Justice in Palestine, who began the “Suspend Haifa” campaign, and Pomona Divest from Apartheid. In an email to The Outback, Amanda Lagji, associate professor of English and world literature at Pitzer, described the tangible effects of a boycott and the influence it gives students to participate in BDS.

Earlier this semester, Lagji moderated a panel discussion with Gary B. Nash Professor of History at UCLA Robin D.G. Kelley and author Maya Wind, who wrote the book “Towers of Ivory and Steel: How Israeli Universities Deny Palestinian Freedom.” Lagji cited Wind’s book to challenge Thacker’s attempt at protecting academic freedom, stating that it “shows that academic freedom is always already compromised in Israel.”

in the IDF or whether it is statements concerning them wearing uniforms. This commitment is essential.”

“In short, freedom, of the academic kind or otherwise, is constrained at Israeli universities not only for Palestinian students and faculty, but also for anyone critical of the Israeli state. When conducting her interviews, Wind noted that Palestinian and Jewish-Israeli interlocutors asked for anonymity for “fear of retaliation both within and outside their universities.” The University of Haifa is especially egregious in my view (including the granting of academic credit for active deployment in the IDF, and their role in Israeli hasbara) but not exceptional.

Lagji additionally addressed Thacker’s statement’s citation of the guidelines set in 2005 by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) advocating against academic boycotts.

“The AAUP ... has long advocated against academic boycotts: ‘We reject proposals that curtail the freedom of teachers and researchers to engage in work with academic colleagues, and we reaffirm the paramount importance of the freest possible international movement of scholars and ideas.’ I concur.”

Lagji explained that the AAUP statement quoted by Thacker was introduced in direct response to what would become the BDS movement, and was never voted on by the entire AAUP body. She went on to describe the dissension from the vote within the organization in the years since.

“One of the original backers of the AAUP position, Joan Scott, has written at length about reconsidered her position back in 2013, and many of the members of AAUP have shifted in the intervening years,” Lagji said in the email. “There’s movement afoot to revisit that blanket statement about boycotts.”

On April 24, Thacker’s claimed alignment with the AAUP was challenged further in a statement by the 7C AAUP Executive Committee of the AAUP’s Claremont chapter. The statement, signed by representatives from all 5Cs plus Claremont Graduate University, states Thacker’s April 11



After Pitzer President Strom C. Thacker vetoed the Pitzer College Council’s vote in favor of an academic boycott of Israeli Universities on April 11, the Pitzer community has responded in force.

Photo courtesy of Pitzer College

“The goal of BDS to use non-violent means to apply pressure to the Israeli government to end the occupation; the academic boycott is just part of a larger cultural and economic boycott,” Lagji wrote in an email to The Outback. “Some have argued that BDS measures, especially academic boycotts, are mere symbolic gestures, but I think we all know the power of the symbolic-- and the way colleges are so quick to use force to undermine these measures (protests and civil disobedience related to BDS calls) speaks to their power.”

“[Wind] describes how ‘university administrations aligned with the state and Israeli far-right groups... narrowly define permissible research, teaching, and discourse on their campuses,’” Lagji said in the email. “Tel Aviv University, for example, won state funding that was constrained by a 53 page list of conditions, including that the university will ‘undertak[e] to ensure that the academic staff will refrain from offensive statements toward the [Israeli Defense Force (IDF)] soldiers studying at the institution, whether it is statements concerning their actual military service

statement “elides several salient facts about that 2005 [AAUP] position.”

They clarify that the 2005 position has never been incorporated into the AAUP’s Policy Documents and Reports or in the “Redbook,” therefore making it an inaccurate depiction of the organization’s opinions.

“Thacker’s invocation of the 2005 position on boycotts, without acknowledging the context or complexity surrounding that position, gives the impression that his decision is rooted in universally accepted core AAUP policies when it is not,” they wrote.

The statement also called out Thacker for the “several ways Pitzer College is otherwise not in compliance with AAUP policies and principles.”

They specifically cited Thacker’s decision to veto the vote, stating that although their statement should not be read as an endorsement of an academic boycott, the veto directly undermined the democratic vote on the resolution.

“We find it profoundly disappointing that the effect of the presidential veto is to undermine the AAUP’s long standing insistence that shared governance is a fundamental principle of academic freedom,” they wrote in the statement. “While President Thacker need not endorse the College Council resolution, we urge him to reverse his veto and refrain from standing in the way of the democratic practice of shared governance at Pitzer College.”

In his statement, however, Thacker made clear that he believed shared governance was better represented by the college’s committee system, where groups like SAIP, who decide the fate of study abroad programs, are made up of both students and faculty.

“We now have in place in our system of shared governance a more rigorous process to ensure that our programs meet our academic and operational standards and provide the best possible learning and growth opportunities for students,” Thacker wrote. “The College Council recommendation would undermine this element of our shared academic governance.”

Nevertheless, the 7C AAUP Executive Committee statement disagreed with this statement, standing behind the College Council, which is also composed of student senators and faculty members, as a definitive form of shared governance at Pitzer.

They additionally noted how the presidential veto has only ever been used twice in Pitzer’s history — then President Melvin Oliver’s veto of a 67:28 College Council vote to close the Haifa program in 2019 and the Board of Trustees’ veto of a unanimous Student Senate vote to boycott products from certain Israeli companies in alignment with BDS guidelines — both times against pro-Palestinian legislation. They compelled Thacker to be mindful of how powerful of a tool his veto is.

“The presidential veto exists in Pitzer’s governance system, but this power, like similar powers of college trustees, is a power that must be exercised with the utmost restraint and respect for the College’s shared governance system to avoid harm to the College,” they wrote in the statement. “The veto should not be used to support a political agenda at odds with the outcome of the shared governance process.”

Finally, in his statement Thacker raised the point that this resolution, and with it an academic boycott of Israel, could increase divisiveness among students as well as potentially bring a rise in antisemitism and Islamophobia on campus.

Related to the broader concept of freedom of expression, we must likewise guard against creating the impression that some perspectives are more welcome on campus than others,” Thacker wrote. “I believe the College Council recommendation, if accepted, could have such an impact. We will not tolerate anything, including Islamophobia and antisemitism, that threatens our ability to maintain a safe and productive campus learning environment for all.”

Thacker’s qualms raise similar concerns to those of Pomona College President G. Gabrielle Starr, who prior to a student referendum vote that showed overwhelming support from the student

body for disclosure and divestment from “the apartheid system in the state of Israel,” released a statement titled, “Pomona Opens Doors, We Don’t Close Them” where she claimed the referendum would divide Pomona’s community and that it “raises the specter of antisemitism.”

Still, Lagji spoke out in favor of a boycott, specifically challenging Thacker’s worries surrounding antisemitism.

“If it’s the charge of anti-semitism, I think it’s frankly disingenuous and sloppy to continue to equate BDS actions which target the Israeli state with Jewish people everywhere; as our peers and colleagues and students in [Jewish Voice for Peace] have continued to insist, the state of Israel does not represent all Jews, and it endangers our students when the two are equated,” Lagji said through email.

Speaking on the questions of human rights, Lagji, whose work centers on the history of colonization and apartheid, called out the United States for its “deep investment in the Israeli state through weapons and other funding.”

She followed by calling on supporters to actively listen to Palestinian voices, highlighting BDS as a form of non-violent, effective resistance.

“BDS is a Palestinian-led movement ... and they have asked the global community to stand with them in principled solidarity through BDS,” Lagji said through email. “I am following the lead of those most impacted by the occupation, as they believe, following the example of South Africa, that BDS is the way to effect change in a non-violent way.”

OPINION: Institutional responses to nonviolent student activism

By Anonymous PZ '25



Pomona College was quiet on the morning of April 6th. As I struggled to shuffle my tired legs across Marston Quad, I couldn't help but get caught in the beauty of the dappled light on the pavement outside of Alexander Hall. The natural illumination of the building was a facade of tranquility — its shadows casting trampled grass in darkness, which concealed the remnants of the day before. Never would one assume just 18 hours prior, cops in riot gear riot suppression weapons escorted 19 arrested students out of the hall doors and another student who was standing peacefully on the street into police vans. Or that 7 of those 20 students were now houseless and anxiously waiting to know if their education would be put on pause.

After a long night outside the drab and sharp-edged Claremont Police Department, the softness of campus stood out in direct contradiction to its punitive capabilities. When did colleges become sights for such compromising punishment? While I had heard of the Kent State Shootings in 1970 and was well aware of the implications of police presence during a student action, I assumed a level of ignorance that shielded me from imagining the lengths schools would go to directly participating in punishing students.

Watching my classmates zip-tied and forced into white vans doesn't just traumatize the nervous system. It sends a strikingly clear message that Pomona wants to stifle its students rather than be a site for moral and intellectual expression. It begs more than just the question of free speech, but whether or not college jurisdiction should entangle itself in forcing students into political obedience.

Colleges and universities have continually represented colonial legacies of power and American imperial desires, so what does it mean that 19 students walked away with nothing more than trespassing citations and one on a flimsy charge of obstruction, but are facing a concoction of disciplinary responses from Pomona? It's one thing for students to knowingly participate in illegal demonstrations subject to arrest, but another oppressive extension of America's commitment to top-down power for Pomona to deny its students access to necessities like food, shelter, and education in the wake of student demands.

As a student, I condemn the disturbingly abusive and unreasonable response of Pomona President G. Gabrielle Starr, and I can't help but wonder if this response is a lesson in sacrifice within organizing that demonstrates a generation of students willing to live according to their morals despite consequence. Pomona Divest From Apartheid (PDfA) challenges the "liberal" fabric of the college. The riot-gearred cops tore away the image of Pomona as an academic utopia to reveal the uneasy reality that American colleges have always and will continue to be committed to colonial projects like that of Israel.

Is it a fantasy to have desired Pomona to be a radical safe haven for student activism? I think so. Pomona's response signifies that civil disobedience does still carry political weight on campus — especially in opposition to colonialism — it's just a matter of whether the school will decide to continually risk the lives of its students moving forward.

President Strom C. Thacker of Pitzer College released a statement in response to the arrest of 5 of its students at the demonstration. The email represented a commitment to continuing the education of its reprimanded students and stated an interest in making sure students could still receive credit for their Pomona classes. As a Pitzer student, I felt a wave of gratitude, yet simultaneously an internal conflict about whether this dampens the "radicalness" or significance of the PDfA demands. While there is an immense privilege in being able to participate in political action at the expense of your future, and I would never wish for my peers to have their education and housing threatened over a nonviolent action, does Pitzer's affinity for so-called "radicalness" remove power from the role of civil disobedience and protest? It's not as though Pitzer willfully implements its activists' demands. What the consortium helps Pitzer succeed in is allowing students to actively participate in high-risk actions without compromising their future.

And so I pose the question; is it Gabi Starr, the perfect antagonist to student activism, or Strom C. Thacker, a sustainer of student education amidst political escalation, who enables students to become fully-actualized and conscious political citizens?

OPINION: A reflection on the Vietnam protests at the 5Cs

By Ben Connolly PZ '26



Ben Connolly looks back at the history of protests at the 5Cs and asks what can we learn from administrative responses to activists of the past

Photo courtesy of Pomona College

In light of Pomona's authorization of the arrests of 20 students by the Claremont Police Department (CPD) on April 5 for protesting the removal of a mock apartheid wall, it is a particularly opportune time to revisit some examples of student activism that took place within the 5Cs during the Vietnam War. In compiling this history, I hope to provide some resources to help better contextualize Pomona's radical response on April 5th, 2024.

Following America's initial military occupation of Vietnam in 1965, Pomona students and local residents marched in unity to express their avid disapproval of the war. While counter-protesters were also keen to make themselves apparent on campus, the anti-war sentiment spread throughout the student body.

Much of the tension arose around the recruitment policies for on-campus military drafts. CMC's ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps) program had enlisted "some 191 students" into training, resulting in dozens of graduates serving in the Vietnam War. Anti-war outrage amongst students culminated in 1968 when roughly 79 students occupied and refused to exit Sumner Hall while Air Force recruiters were conducting interviews inside the building. As the protestors occupied Sumner, an additional 125 students circled the perimeter of the building with posters and placards. The demonstration successfully canceled all remaining interviews, but all 79 protestors were required to give up their names or risk suspension or even expulsion.

Students continued to protest the ROTC

program for its complacency in the war, prompting Pomona to announce that ROTC would no longer count as a course credit, though they ultimately decided to continue the program.

In October of 1969, the 5Cs participated in the "Moratorium to End the Vietnam War," a nationwide demonstration rooted in education and a call for peace. All across the country, people took part in marches, teach-ins, and vigils to once again demand an end to the war.

Back in Claremont, approximately 2,000 people (students, residents, and even students from Chaffey College and the Claremont School of Theology) peacefully rallied through the campuses singing and chanting. The crowd was ushered by 12 CPD officers to guarantee their safety. When put in contrast to Pomona's mili-

tarized response to April 5's Pomona Divest from Apartheid protest, a correlation is revealed in what 5C administrators believe is "reasonable protest". A protest, or rather the larger social movement it is tied to, will face a response from the 5C administration that reacts according to the degree in which the protesting and consequent amends (if any) will impact the schools financially. The current BDS protests are exactly what they do not want. As stated by Pomona Vice President Jeff Roth, the college has an index fund in the S&P 500, a stock market index of the 500 largest companies in the United States, many of whom have deep-rooted, transactional histories with the Israeli government. For example, Microsoft has continually supplied Israel with advanced software to fortify their military. Google and Amazon are both working directly with Israel on the 1.2 billion dollar Project Nimbus, a cloud service allowing for new levels of mass surveillance. Pomona continues to invest in and benefit from these companies. We do not know the degree to which Pomona is financially involved with Israel, but we objectively know that multiple companies benefitting from our endowment money have direct involvement in Israel's occupation of Palestine. If these companies are benefiting from the profits of occupation and we are benefitting from the profits of the companies, Pomona's involvement in genocide is far more direct than admin would like to admit, posing a serious financial risk to Pomona should they ever have to pull their investments. The frantic and situational enforcement of the demonstration policy in regards to the demonstration on April 5th, 2024 were never the issue, but rather the severe monetary risk the movement poses to Pomona admin.

For months, the Pomona student body has been repeatedly reprimanded in emails by Pomona President G. Gabrielle Starr for violating the school's demonstration policy.

Any demonstration deemed disruptive, non-peaceful, threatening to public safety, or an impediment to 5C business by administrators become violations of student policy. What then are expectations for a student protest? What is the point of protest in the first place if not to disrupt?

On April 13th, Pitzer's Vice President & Interim Dean of Students Jan Barker Alexander sent an email to students condemning "campus vandalism" by students who had glued pro-Palestine posters to buildings around the school's campus following Strom Thacker's announcement he would veto the College Council's vote for an academic boycott of Israeli universities.

"While freedom of expression is valued and expected at Pitzer, these actions fall into the category of campus vandalism. As I shared with students in a message yesterday, our policies exist to 'ensure that all members of our community can exercise their right to express themselves freely, while maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for all' The Wall on the north side of Mead Hall is the location for this type of expression". This is the ethos of the administration's perspective on student protest. While the protest wall is a helpful outlet for student expression, there is such blatant irony in a designated protest spot provided and sanctioned by the administration.

In a TSL article from 2015, student Julian Jacobs interviewed Noam Chomsky to discuss Israel's occupation of Palestine. Discussing the contentiousness of the conflict, Chomsky notes that while at many colleges "[Students for Justice in Palestine] is commonly under attack, at many colleges the attacks have been resisted and it's flourishing ... By now Palestinian solidarity is a major issue on campuses, with enormous student support."

He further described the shift in response to these protests.

"Meetings, which used to draw a small and mostly hostile audience, and were sometimes broken up by angry protesters, now tend to be overflowing, with audiences that are engaged and committed even at institutions where security measures were extreme not many years ago, some not far from you," Chomsky said.

Chomsky also recalled his own parallels to Vietnam War protests.

"It's also well to remember that confrontation with state policy is rarely easy," Chomsky said. "Take Boston, one of the

most liberal cities in the country ... In October 1965, we tried to have the first public demonstration against the war. It was broken up violently, with bitter condemnation of the demonstrators in the liberal press ... The forces that are seeking to suppress advocates of Palestinian rights are fighting a losing battle, and their leadership at least is well aware of it."

As Chomsky illustrates, Pomona's suppressive tactics and militarization of campus are signs that the institution is very aware that it is "fighting a losing battle." The myth of Israel has dissolved, and the youth have seen it for the horrific colonial project it is. The police involvement in response to a peaceful protest has shown the insecurity of the admin.

Anyway, I would like to applaud Gabi Starr for her absent-mindedness because I truthfully can't think of any better way to get students to support the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement. I highly recommend reading the full interview with Noam Chomsky if you are interested in learning more about anti-occupational movements on college campuses.

The physical act of the sit-in on April 5th, 2024 was not what truly prompted the militarization of the campus and arrest of students, but rather the severe monetary risk the movement poses to Pomona admin.

Scan the QR code to read Chomsky's full interview



OPINION: Institutional memory

By Wynne Chase PZ '26

Artwork by marilyn grell-brisk

Again, there are a plethora of interesting articles about protests and the current situation in which you can immerse yourself within this edition of the Outback Magazine, so I was hoping to take this article in a slightly different route.

Amongst the stimulating conversation of my Social Change and Organizations class with professor grell-brisk, the topic of Pomona vs Pitzer's past responses to protests arose.

Our class conversation brought me to ponder how institutional memory can survive when most students age out of the school every four years. Specifically, I was interested in how institutions ensure that students can learn from past protests on how to effectively persuade institutions.

Here are some suggestions on how to improve institutional memory that I've cultivated from my class discussions and my own reflections:

If students are not professional organizers, how can they get the resources and information to still be effective in their actions?

Look to people who have been here for a while:

Luckily, there are people who have seen the past protests and movements and actions at your institution: professors and staff. Working at a college like Pitzer, these staff members have witnessed or even helped students organize throughout their years of teaching. They are important resources to seek advice from since they have seen which methods were effective and which were not. It is important to remember, though, that professors (especially non-tenured ones) may be subjected to the choking grasp of the institutions' politics and may not be in the position to speak on something



without risking their job.

Keep journals & logs — start a living document:

Write about what techniques you or your peers have tried. I talked with two professors about this article and their immediate responses were two completely separate stories about the common fault of students attempting the same methods that have failed before, simply due to the fact that they didn't know about those previous attempts.

This frustrating repetition of history makes sense; throughout the years Pitzer students have likely been educated similarly, so our ideas have the potential to be alike. It is disappointing, though, that there hasn't been an opportunity to learn from the past because essentially every 4 years there is a completely new population of students at the colleges.

Consider which methods you or your peers have attempted that have made the expected impact and which have not. This will be the living document that future years can add to. Make this accessible to students regardless of your presence at the school.

Seek out old information:

Purposefully look into the past, because

one of the best instructors is history. There may not be an easily accessible document about past movements/activism, but you'll still find more information if you search with the purpose of learning about what students have tried in the past. Not all the information you look into has to be from your institution. Because there currently aren't popular, easily accessible living documents of past protest/persuasion methods, it is crucial to seek out sources about historical institutional protests.

Mitigate the cycling out of leadership:

When seniors are the only people in charge, their information is left with them when they graduate, and it becomes much harder to access. Thus, it will be instrumental to have younger grades constantly in leadership roles (alongside older students) in order to remedy the process of cycling out. This way, there is a constant flow of knowledge about actions that have happened in the past, informing us about what has worked before. So, if a sophomore was a leader, they could lead the next sophomore and still be there for a year after that to continue sharing what they learned.

While writing this article, I had an eye-opening conversation about dialogue and debate with somebody who has seen many school protests. Dialogue is about

reaching an understanding, but debate is about winning (sometimes at all costs and at others' expense). In fast-paced, life or death situations, it is easy (and possibly at times effective) to skip the dialogue step, but when attempting to make institutional change, it may not be the most productive.

The reason why finding a space for dialogue is difficult is because shared governance spaces are not set up for dialogue; they are created for debate. For example, people can bring nuanced, well-thought-out calls to action to the

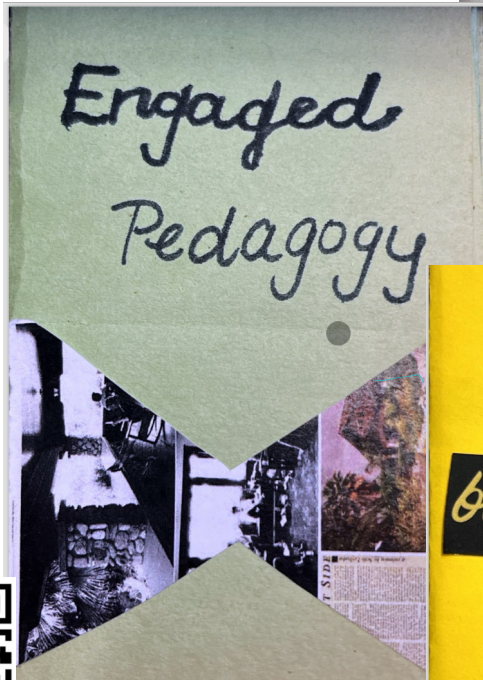
Pitzer College Council, but because it is a space for debate, there can never be the chance to reach a shared understanding of the topic before making a decision. Dialogue is a crucial step that is often left behind in place of speedy results. Oftentimes this can backfire because if a mutual understanding (created through dialogue) is not reached prior to the debate, then college council members must decide in the moment without having enough time to really hash out and understand the issues. Thus, their decisions may be impacted by this lack of knowledge or comprehension of the

necessity of an action.

For example, years ago there was a huge demand for a data science minor. Over the course of an entire semester, a committee put together a proposal, and the version that went to the College Council got everybody's support. Taking the time to talk through the proposal and create

Zines from one of my classes:

these are just the covers of some of them...



...Scan the QR codes to see the inside of these zines v

Pitzer College seniors prepare for thesis art exhibitions

By Ivy Rockmore PZ '27 & Zoe Lusk PZ '25



Pitzer College's art majors are gearing up for their senior thesis exhibitions on Friday, April 26.

Photo courtesy of Jonah Ifcher PZ '24

As the academic year draws to a close, Pitzer's graduating art majors are gearing up for their senior thesis exhibitions at the Pitzer College Art Galleries. Titled "Haven," this year's program will feature work from Lillie Minskoff PZ '24, Jonah Ifcher PZ '24, Ryann Liljenstrolpe PZ '24, Molly O'Hara PZ '24, and Sky Park Tausig PZ '24.

Bringing starkly different perspectives and approaches, the artists are looking to come together to create a surprising and dynamic exhibition. The Outback spoke with three of these seniors to learn more about their creative process.

Minskoff's journey to her thesis project began in her sophomore year when she took the class "Sustainable Sculpture" with professor Sara Gilbert. The experience reconnected her with art after a long hiatus and inspired her to pursue a major in studio art with a focus on ceramics.

"I love ceramics, and I'm so happy that I have been able to devote so much time to learning, refining, and expanding my practice," Minskoff said.

Minskoff's exhibition features a collection of personalized ceramic pieces designed for cannabis use. Each piece is crafted with a specific individual in mind, representing the significant people in her life during her time at the Claremont Colleges.

"The theme I'm trying to emphasize is just like the social powers of cannabis and what it's brought me in the community it's brought me," Minskoff said. "We are all able to take part in such a magical privilege in where we are in Southern California and

[cannabis] has been through so much crazy, crazy history."

Ryann Liljenstrolpe's project explores the relationship between art, surveillance, and religion. "I wanted to give people a chance to have a very personal, very intimate and very free experience with art without being watched by me, or by the gallery," Liljenstrolpe said.

"The spiritual world is governed by the church and by institutions of religion, and it is also very physically restrictive, like the way that you exist in that space is extremely specific and extremely controlled, and everything can and should be done in the right way," Liljenstrolpe said. "And so, I was sort of thinking about those spaces and institutions of museums and of churches versus what I felt personally like they contained."

The installation, featuring a wooden altar and a kneeler, is curtained off and scented with frankincense, creating an intimate space within Pitzer's Nichols Gallery. Visitors are encouraged to



Pitzer's seniors will join artists from Pomona and Scripps Colleges who will also be presenting on Friday,

Photo by Zoe Lusk PZ '25

physically engage with, and perhaps take home, “homemade sacraments” or “artists’ bones” in the form of ceramic teeth and knuckles.

“I’m playing with a lot of different textures and things here,” Liljenstolpe said. “With sight, but also touch and smell and sound.”

Liljenstolpe’s thesis has shifted dramatically over the semester. “One of my very first ideas was just creating a bunch of ceramic security cameras,” Liljenstolpe said. “And having a gallery that was filled with those would have been cool. I was thinking about what that communicates.”

Ultimately, Liljenstolpe decided to focus on fostering relief through her piece, rather than re-creating a sense of surveillance.

“I was realizing that giving this institutional critique about museums and surveillance can turn really bleak,” Liljenstolpe said. “It can put your viewer in a mind space where you’re making commentary, but what it’s doing in the moment is also making them feel very uncomfortable and very watched ... I want it to create a spark of liberation.”

Ifcher’s project explores themes of growth, gender, and the human desire to shape our environment. His installation forms a sort of a bricolage urban landscape — the city features skyscrapers made up of close-ups of Ifcher’s body, Hot Wheels toy cars, and large-scale printed photos that Ifcher altered and abstracted with printer ink.

“I think the biggest thing here is about growth and the city is something that spreads and takes over something that’s aging and [growing over] time,” Ifcher said. “There’s control in that you can guide it. I can decide where to put things, maybe what they look like, but that growth is something that is inevitable.”

Finishing his piece, Ifcher reflected on the emotion and time that has gone into the thesis show.

“It was really nerve-racking at first,” Ifcher said. “I was like, ‘Yeah, I want to do something incredible.’ Because something they say a lot in this program is like, this is your first show, not your last show. I was working for probably about 20 or 30 hours a week for the entire semester.”



Three of Friday’s featured artists spoke with The Outback on their approaches to the exhibition and what they’ve learned throughout their collegiate careers.

Photo by Zoe Lusk PZ '25

Liljenstolpe shed light on the creative process behind her project.

“In the first semester, it was all ideating,” Liljenstolpe said. “We would do lots of different readings, kind of starting at the bibliography. We were asked to curate a theoretical group show with other artists ... who we could see exhibiting our own work alongside of.”

Ifcher also emphasized the conceptual nature of his creative process.

“Last semester, I made all these kinds of dreamlike and abstract paintings and images, things that were just like shapes and colors,” Ifcher said. “They were about love and a past experience that I had, all based on a poem. I had a really hard time describing it to the faculty. And they were, they were really focused on how I made them. And I felt like they weren’t actually looking.”

Based on that experience, Ifcher decided to make a piece that was more easily explained.

“I decided to do something that’s a little more didactic and conceptual, and can be explained and can make sense in an academic context,” Ifcher said. “When we got access to this space, I just moved everything out and then it’s really been planned from the bottom.”

In addition to the physical work of installing their exhibitions, the seniors have also been asked to supplement their pieces with writing.

“Each of us have written artist statements about ourselves to put into a potential, like, brochure and then we also had to write a little didactic about the projects themselves,” Minskoff said.

The opening will be on Friday, April 26th in Nichols and Hinshaw Galleries. There will be live music, wine, and food provided by the Grove House. As Pitzer’s exhibition opens on the same night as the art thesis exhibitions at Scripps and Pomona Colleges, the artists envision students wandering from one show to the next, enjoying work from across the 5Cs.

“The pieces are about this community that has been so [important] to me in the time I’ve been at Pitzer,” Minskoff said. “I think [the piece] is about 15 of my closest friends. I couldn’t have done this without them. The project was made for them and because of them.”

The Outback Preserve: The ecological core of Pitzer's community

By Celina Steinberg PZ '27

What is the Outback Preserve? Since long before the inception of the Newsprint Magazine that bears its name, the Outback Preserve — a largely undeveloped nature preserve home to a diverse array of indigenous Southern California plants and wild-life — has been a foundational part of the Pitzer College community.

The Outback Preserve is central to both Pitzer's community life and institutional history. Originally spanning across about one-third of Pitzer's entire campus, years of development on top of it has led to the Preserve now containing only a little over three acres of land on the northeast section of Pitzer behind the East and West Residence Halls.

Over the years, multiple environmental analysis courses have utilized the Outback Preserve as a resource for students to engage with the local ecosystem in their studies. The preserve has undergone ecological restoration through the combined efforts of Pitzer students,

staff, and faculty. It is a place on Pitzer's campus where community members can visit, attend events, and connect with the native flora and fauna in their own backyard.

Paul Faulstich, professor emeritus of environmental analysis at Pitzer, has advocated for preserving the land of the Outback Preserve throughout his time at Pitzer. He spearheaded the development of the course "Restoring Nature: The

Pitzer Outback," which is an environmental analysis course that utilizes the preserve as a resource to teach and provide students with hands-on experience while learning about ecological restoration.

"I've utilized the Outback as a teaching resource," Faulstich said. "I think that the more it can get used without being overused, the more value it's going to have to an educational institution like Pitzer, and the more reason there is for protecting it."

Although recent community engagement with the Outback has been dwindling, some newer students have still found time to explore the preserve. Blue Byrnes PZ '27 talked about their experience engaging with the Outback as a first year.

"I go there to draw a lot, to read, or just to listen to music and hang out in nature," Byrnes said. "It's very relaxing."

While they have had the opportunity to engage



In addition to being the namesake of this magazine, The Outback Preserve is a critical piece of Pitzer College's history.

Photo by Celina Steinberg PZ '27

with the natural ecosystem of the preserve, Byrnes described how many students do not know the full extent of what the Outback Preserve has to offer.

“I feel like a lot of people I talk to don’t appreciate the fact that we have this full nature trail on campus, and they assume it’s just another vague walkway,” Byrnes said.

The emergence of an Outback Preserve Club in recent years aims to promote awareness of this space on campus. The events hosted by the Outback Club vary from concert sessions to markets and restoration activities, all of which take place in the preserve.

The Outback Club is still fairly new and only formed at the beginning of last year. Maggie O’Connor PZ ’25 is a co-founder of the Outback Club and described what the club aims to achieve as an organization.

“The goal of the club is ... To start the process of creating an institutional memory of the Outback ...

[And] our larger goal is to make it synonymous with Pitzer,” O’Connor said. “Pitzer is the Outback, and Pitzer would not be Pitzer without the Outback.”

For many alums, Pitzer’s identity is synonymous with the Outback Preserve. Faulstich described his experience attending Pitzer in the 1970s and highlighted the drastic reduction of the preserve’s presence on campus from its original state.

“When I was a student at Pitzer in the



The Outback Preserve was once a third of Pitzer’s campus but is now only a few acres.

Photo by Celina Steinberg PZ ’27

1970s, the Outback was a third of the campus,” Faulstich said. “So the campus is approximately 33 acres, and 11 of those acres were the Outback. It stretched all along where the pool is [and] where the big parking lot [is] ... All of that was the Outback.”

“I go there to draw a lot, to read, or just to listen to music and hang out in nature,” Blue Byrnes PZ ’27 said. “It’s very relaxing.”

Emphasizing the historical importance of the Outback Preserve to Pitzer’s community, Faulstich described the social activism that surrounded it in the mid-1970s.

“Harvey Mudd College was starting to do some development on the east side of their campus, and they brought bulldozers out ... And they actually intruded onto Pitzer’s campus unknowingly,” Faulstich said. “But ... [Sheryl Miller] went out there along with some students

and stood in front of the bulldozers ... And they halted that intrusion. In the process of that, they also brought awareness about that undeveloped part of campus.”

The preserve was a much more prominent aspect of Pitzer in the past, but over the years it has been gradually reduced due to developments on the land. Faulstich expressed his concern about the reduction of the Preserve to a far smaller area than it originally occupied.

“In the past, the Outback was taken for granted in a way that it isn’t anymore because it shrunk so much,” Faulstich said.

O’Connor shared Professor Faulstich’s concern about possible future development on the Preserve, citing Pitzer’s ever growing need for student housing. Still, when discussing her hopes for the future of the Outback, she expressed her wish to see respectful engagement with the preserve from the community at Pitzer.

“My only real wish is that it [the Outback] stays here forever, and that it becomes more synonymous with the Pitzer community,” O’Connor said.

Faulstich shared his aspirations for the Preserve moving forward.

“I hope that it continues to be a prized piece of Pitzer’s campus,” Faulstich said. “And that it inspires people on campus ... to take care of the land that we have left.”

Blood, Not Semen

By Ivy Rockmore PZ '27

Artwork by marilyn grell-brisk

I was only seventeen when I ejaculated into the cup that my future children would be frozen in.

I couldn't help but quell the trembling on my fingers as I unbuttoned my pants and placed the cup on the tilted counter. I sat on scratchy white paper laid out over my makeshift bed, but the flimsy gown they provided offered little comfort or privacy. The longer I stared at the room's gray walls, the more I realized even the shade itself couldn't commit to a tone. As my eyes grew sore, I realized perhaps it was even baby pink, though that might have been too on the nose for a sperm bank.

The room smelled fresh — not like the spring breeze on a cool April day or the ocean, but more like a toad hopping out of the water as it shakes, suffocates, shrivels, and eventually explodes.

In reality, of course, the room reeked not of frog guts but of semen. I figure both are gross enough to paint the picture: Weeks-old semen was stuck to the walls and stained on the bed like a Jackson Pollock painting. Even the supposedly newly washed blanket, which who-knows-how-many men had wiped their youngsters off with, had little specks of twilight embedded in its cloth.

The nurse tiptoed out the door, but not without remembering to leave me magazines. Of course, the nurse wasn't so kind as to give me the latest copy of *Vogue* or *Cosmopolitan*, but *Juggs*, which

was apparently intended for the horny man the medical system thought I was. I flipped through the pages, suddenly slapped with that old bulletin smell. On the seventh page, a woman rode a horse in a way that was supposed to be erotic, but it reminded me of the carriages at merry-go-rounds that I used to ride as a child.

Even when I was small enough to com-

“Ivy, it's the law,” my doctor replied, his jaw set like stone. “If you want to go through with this, this is just another hurdle you'll have to face.”

I grunted, dragged my feet to the front desk, and booked the appointment — signing away a piece of myself in the process.



As I stood in this room, plastic cup in hand, I couldn't help but dwell on the situation's absurdity. Here I was, a teenager barely on the cusp of adulthood, about to make a deposit, an ejaculation, a 'gifting' that could result in a new human life — or multiple lives. These lives would be suspended in an artificial frozen state, waiting for an unknowable future that would never come.

To become a woman, evidently, one must stroke. And so I did. I looked toward the clock: It was 3 p.m. on a Wednesday. My fingers seemed to take on a life of their own, moving with a newfound sensitivity. They grew tails. I closed my eyes and

fortably fit in those carriages, I knew; at twelve, I proclaimed to my parents that I would never have children.

But five years later, the state of Texas informed me that I could not undergo feminizing hormone replacement therapy — which makes the body infertile over time — without freezing my sperm.

I begged and pleaded with my doctor.

“But I don't want a kid!”

“Why can't I just adopt if, I guess, I eventually want one? I know I don't, but please, just—”

begged my brain to conjure up an image of somewhere else entirely, somewhere far away from this sterile room. I kept my eyes shut, putting all my energy toward ejaculation. In doing so, I made little wrinkles flow from my eye sockets, echoing how I did when I was a little kid, intently focused on achieving something. Soon, I was breathing tiny gasps for air, and I felt like I was split in half. A bubble of hot air escaped from my lips, stained pink.

The poet Ocean Vuong describes penile ejaculation as if one is expecting blood to rush out of the phallus rather than semen. In this eerie room that felt like

a portal to humanity's end, my semen appeared to be blood, as if my body was playing some satanic twist on water into wine. Pints and pints of crimson poured forth with the unstoppable force of a ruptured dam.

TOO FAST, I thought — my hand shaking as I grabbed for the plastic cup, trying to catch at least some of the flood before it was too late. The room seemed to pulse with the weight of something huge and terrifying happening inside me. As I released, my whole body shook like it was coming apart at the seams. It was like I was emptying out not just my semen but my entire being, spilling my guts into this tiny cup in the middle of nowhere. I was a mother.

Trans motherhood was something I feared, but regardless, I took the first step because I had to. What does that mean? That I really did it and created this potential future child? That I somewhat willingly participated in this strange, clinical ritual? I'm never going to be able to give birth in the typical way, so perhaps this was my parturition. Somewhere out

there, a piece of me is frozen in time, suspended in a state of eternal possibility. What do I do with that? It's a thought that fills me with awe and dread, with wonder and disgust.

In Alabama, the state has become a dystopian landscape where the very concept of reproductive rights is under constant, unrelenting assault. IVF, once a beacon of hope for those struggling to have children, is in a precarious position. And in Georgia, democrats are racing to create protections for IVF against its neighbors' assault. Lawmakers are plain old drunk — not on tequila but on their own sense of moral superiority.

This turn of events makes me awfully puzzled. The state made me save my sperm before it pathologized me. But now, I might not even be able to use the frozen children they forced me to churn out. They have made me into a producer: Urged to put out genetic material, but unable to access the very sperm I created.

What's going on in the country is espe-

cially fraught with this question because it feels like I am bound to something. Someone made me commit to frozen children. And now, I'm left wondering what that commitment means in a world where reproductive rights are under constant threat.

Our medical and legal systems are apocalyptic. We check boxes and do things because we're told we're wrong about ourselves.

But the truth is, we never are.

As I handed the semen-filled cup to the nurse, a sudden wave of nausea overwhelmed me. I doubled over, heaving violently as the contents of my stomach spilled into the toilet, the acidic stench overpowering the clinic's atmosphere. In that moment of vulnerability, as my body purged itself of the disgust and resentment I felt towards this twisted system, I couldn't help but wonder if I would ever truly be free from the shackles of a society that refused to take my desires seriously.

Love

Words and photo by Willa Umansky PZ '27

Why does love seem so inaccessible? The only way I'm able to take myself seriously to keep my fingers laboring over these keys is to picture myself in some kitten heels at a cubicle in 1992, writing for some shitty women's mag that encourages anorexia. But seriously, what the fuck is up with love culture? And what's the proper way to finish that previous sentence "what's up with love culture here?" or "what's up with love culture these days?" Maybe it's a me problem, in which case I'll go fuck myself and stalk the Instagrams of those that remind me of my own inadequacies, but based on conversations I've had with even the most beautiful of Mead dwellers, love seems like a pretty tricky thing to foster naturally here.

First of all, since our generation is scourged by situationships, we've got to address the big fat elephant taking up half of the room. You probably aren't at all wondering, but Dictionary.com

defines a situationship as "a romantic or sexual relationship that is undefined and noncommittal. People in a situationship are more than friends but less than committed romantic partners." This can be a prolonged romantic courting thing or a non-committal hookup buddy or a friend with bennies deal... or some other crazy dynamic that I can't think of.

I recently had a conversation with a confusing friend-or-more that left me a bit down despite it being incredibly productive. After this conversation, I was sharing a sad cigarette with a friend, and she told me something glaringly obvious, but not obvious enough for me to conceive the thought myself. She said that she was proud of me because everyone our age would rather live in confusion rather than have a hard conversation to seek clarity, and that's why situationships are an affliction that plague our generation. People are so scared of getting hurt or facing a legitimate and explicit rejection that they allow themselves to fall into

unhealthy dynamics that ultimately hurt them more than a hard conversation would.

Now, I've talked to a few friends of mine here in Claremont who are lucky enough to have fallen into love about how they ended up in a relationship. I mean seriously, if you're a socially aware (or just nosy) person, you know all the couples around these parts because they're recurring characters given how few visible relationships there are. An anonymous gal pal of mine recently got into a relationship, and when asked about the culture surrounding love and hookups on this campus this is what she had to say:

"I don't really think there is a super intense hookup culture on these campuses. Looking back, I can't recall many or even any of my friends having a one-night-stand type of thing. But I do have to say there is a weird issue with lack of good communication between any



romantic or sexual situation in these colleges — now I realize this could be seen as hookup culture. But, I feel like it's not hookup culture exactly because in all the weird sexual/romantic flings my friends and I have had it's not as casual as I would define hookup culture to be. I feel like everyone has emotions and feelings here and it's more of how good/willing someone is to express them."

I talked to another mysterious friend of mine who pulled a Pomona baddie and these were his reflections of how hookups and love culture manifest at these schools.

"I think with any relationship you can't just go into it immediately, there's always going to be that awkward period. But I do think there's a difference between going on dates and actively putting yourself in a position where you're going to be in a relationship versus just hooking up. I feel like I haven't really seen people who are just hookups or sneaky links, then develop into a relationship."

Now let's talk about the apps; for christ's sake, we have GOT to talk about the apps, people! Tinder and co. are emba-

rrassing... but how can that be the case if everyone is on it together? It's awkward and vulnerable in a weird, removed way that can only be for our generation, but I think people's distaste for it stems from a future anxiety. If you meet someone on Tinder and you two really hit it off — I'm talking Mounds-lounge to Mallot-dinner-date, then some yogurt in town and a kiss on the mouth in the cloak of darkness that blankets Pomona in the evenings type of hit it off — things are obviously bound to progress. However, when you eventually bring that special someone around to meet your friends, the LAST thing you want to do is resign from the romance-is-dead culture and admit that you met someone on Tinder. The real issue is that old fashion flirting culture seems to be out of style here at the 5Cs. Maybe this is a me problem, but I feel like in order to ask someone on a date, or even kiss someone and at the very least get you en route to being fuck buddies stuck in the pitfalls of the aforementioned situationship, you need to be really close with them already either from a naturally developed friendship or from being study buddies. The reason everyone turns to the apps is because it breaks the fourth wall of confessing attraction, without having to actually brave

doing so face to face.

So maybe the trick is that we need to start working up courage to hit on people? But also that could go south really quick which is definitely why we resolve to dating apps that ensure mutual attraction before allowing one to engage with a prospective partner.

I would end this off with an inspiring paragraph about how we could be the change, but I'm not sure that's a feasible task, and so I won't bore you by attempting to tie up the loose ends of love culture with a pretty bow. I mean, I guess I do have a bow of sorts in that we should all commit to doing what feels right and not just going with the vibe of the culture, because that is true.

Sometimes, you need to have a hard conversation that makes you sad in order to gain clarity, rather than continue to be swept away by confusion. Sometimes, if the energy feels right, you need to be brave and ask someone on a date. I think what we can learn from my anonymous, successful lover friends is that communication is key. Have conversations, make sure your intentions (sex, romance, weird other?) are made clear.

Intimate Inquiries

Dear Clementine,

I am currently in a serious long term relationship with a man who I love very much. The thing is, I'm a bisexual woman. I am definitely attracted to women both sexually and romantically, but before getting into a relationship, I had very few experiences with women. I see myself with my boyfriend long term, but I can't stop thinking about the possibility of exploring my sexuality more. What should I do?

Sincerely, yet another bisexual woman in a hetero relationship

Heyyyy yet another bisexual woman in a hetero relationship,

Wow! There are a lot of you! This guy must be a reaaaal keeper. If he's a real one, this is definitely worth bringing up. The good thing is, you have common ground; girls! That might be the best place to start. Are threesomes in the realm of possibilities for you two? I know, I know, they can really complicate things... But it also might be a great way to explore from within the safety of your relationship.

If you take the threeway route, I have a few suggestions. It can't be someone you both know, so the best place to start is by going somewhere together and pointing out which women you find attractive. It could be based on appearance, voice, style, how they carry themselves – whatever it is, make it known to your boyfriend. This might be really weird for him at first, so definitely make sure to check in and establish a way you want to talk about other people sexually that ensures his emotions are considered as well.

Next, discuss what you are curious about doing with women. It could be eating pussy or maybe it's literally just kissing. Once you have verbalized it with your boyfriend, ask him what he is craving to have or see you do sexually. Fantasy and

desire might be all the exploring you're both up for.

If you wish to proceed, go to a bar and find someone you both are mutually drawn to. A classic approach is to tell the woman you and your boyfriend think she is cute. Or if that feels too bold, find a way to mutually flirt with her. She is also a real person in this dynamic, so letting her know you are both interested in her is essential. The sex part is for you all to collectively consent to and figure out together. And if finding someone IRL fails, remember, there are always the apps!

Anywayyyys, it's totally possible he's not down for that. Or maybe you want this to be your own sexual exploration without him. If that's the case, it boils down to three things; communication, trial, and (potential) error. You both have gotta be down with the prospect of you getting with women separately from him. And maybe this means you have to also be down with the prospect of him getting with other women beside you. Opening your relationship requires quite a bit of communication, and is certainly no easy feat. I suggest you research the various Greek definitions of love, and figure out what boundaries you would want to set in order to be open.

From what it sounds like, you both are quite devoted to one another. That's awesome. If you are in it for the long haul, sexual exploration with women could be a sustainable move for your relationship. Curiosity might overtake you if you don't. In some ways, exploring with girls could be exactly what you need to do to be able to stay in the relationship and honor your love for him. Sounds counter-intuitive, I know. But really, it seems like what you have got going with him is special. You don't have to compromise your sexuality or your heart. There's a lotta life to live and a lot of people to sleep with ahead of you, so you might as well embrace the work it will take to understand your sexuality.

Dear Clementine,

How do I get my boyfriend to agree to pegging? He's a cisgender heterosexual man that thinks it's gay.. </3

**Sincerely,
a frustrated bisexual girly**

Alright Frustrated Bisexual Girly,

I have a few questions off the bat. 1. Have you ever stuck a finger up there? 2. Would he be down for you to stick a finger up there? 3. Does he like fingers there already? ["THERE" is his B*T-THOLE btw] and 4. Have you considered proposing "opposite day" yet? If none apply, I suggest you get a lil lube and make sure the next time your gettin' down and dirty to massage his taint... maybe even move back towards his you-know-what, and put a little pressure on his hole.* If it's going swell (maybe even literally swelling), slowly move your lubricated [emphasis on LUBRICATED] finger into his hole. Do the gentle come-hither motion (you know what's up miss bi queen) and check in on how it's feeling for him. Let him explore your b*-tthole too so he doesn't associate it with being "gay." Also... real talk: is your boyfriend homophobic?!? I sure hope not because that's a whole nother thing to sort out. Anyways, if the bum arena is pleasurable for both of you, perhaps it'll become a more frequent part of your sex life.

Once you get him warmed up to the idea of a lil prostate action, it might reopen the conversation of pegging. Pegging is a bit of an investment, so you both must be on board. Definitely check out a sex shop with him to get him comfortable with adding props. Maybe even get him to hold or adjust a strap-on! Ease him into the equipment, especially since it can be quite intimidating. The key part of this phase of conversation is to normalize butt-stuff and the addition of props.

Remember: you can always start with a butt plug. Plunging right into the deep end might freak him out or literally be painful. I think the more you explore and expose him to the pleasurable possibili-

ties of his own b*tthole, the more likely he will feel willing to give it a try.

At the end of the day, people are into what they are into. You should never force or coerce someone into engaging in a sexual act they do not want to have. If your boyfriend knows it's truly not something he wants, you gotta honor his wishes. Maybe you still buy the strap and parade around to feel sexually satisfied. Or find other ways to dominate him in the bedroom. If you are seeking to "fuck" him, maybe you two will consider adding more positions to your sexual repertoire that have you doing the work. Commit to finding alternatives that gratify your sexual needs without sacrificing his.

If all else fails, you can always explore threesomes *wink wink* and put that strap to good use with another partner in the mix.

*Always exercise consent! Especially when trying new things. Give him a lil whisper in his ear if he likes it, or wants you to keep going.

Dear Clementine,

I am about to graduate and kind of recently got out of a long-term relationship. However, there is a guy that I would really like to take on a cute date. Nothing too serious, because who in their right mind would think about starting a relationship one month before graduation? Definitely not me... right? Anyway, I am really nervous about asking him out. What if he rejects me? You might say the worst that he can say is "no", but I disagree. The worst he can say is that I'm a dumb stupid idiot for even thinking he might want to go out with me. Anyway, do I take the chance while I'm still here? Or do I leave this place living in regret? Tell me what to do, oh Clementine...

**Sincerely,
The Smitten Senior**

Hello Smitten Senior,

Trust me, we've all been there, doll. An

awesome thing about anyone remotely conscious of respect and social cues would absolutely never say that you're a dumb stupid idiot, even if they think that (which they wouldn't). If you're in a place of thinking about having a conversation, there is most probably a valid basis for that. If it's out of the blue, I know your anxieties tell you not to believe me, but the worst that he can say is no. It isn't at all dumb to follow your heart, and in fact, your position of having one foot out the door should just motivate you to risk possible rejection. Also, people are much easier to sweep off their feet than you might imagine. The persistence of hookup culture makes the prospect of a date exciting in itself, then add on the fact that you're probably sexmazing (sexy and amazing); this guy will most likely be thrilled that you're asking him.

Dear Clementine,

So, I am a Sophomore at Pitzer and almost done with all my major classes. A few weeks ago, my friend and I ran into my advisor, and my friend thought it would be funny to tell him that I didn't do any of his readings when I was in his class. My professor got offended, and now he is ticked off at me and thinks I'm a slacker. I don't know what to do because I wanted him to write me a letter of recommendation, and now I don't know if I should try and switch advisors. My friend screwed me over, and now I have to deal with the consequences. Am I cooked?

**Sincerely,
The Wannabe Loner**

Howdy Wannabe Loner,

You seem to be confused about what this column is here for... but we're still here to push you in the right direction. Just swing by his office with an apple in hand, give the door a good firm knock, and when he opens the door, make sure you have your best sultry puppy dog eyes on lock. If you're reading this and thinking, "oh my goodness do I know what Clementine is about to suggest..." That's right. Fuck

your advisor.

I propose you also freshen up on the class content so that your first move can be to woo your professor with your delectable wits. Intelligence is sexy, especially for a professor. And let's be real: scholars are not the most "fit" individuals, so utilize your spry body for good. Let's just call it a little tension relief. Once you have established yourself as irresistibly knowledgeable, that's when you lock it in with a flirty sexual innuendo of your choosing (ideally related to the class content.) Ideally, you are sitting close to your advisor, and can even do a cliché arm nudge or "hand on the forearm" move. That's when you lock eyes and seal the deal.

I'll let you fill in the blanks... But we can't forget the most important part! Pillow talk! This is your opportunity to broach a letter of recommendation. Hopefully, the hook-up went great, and you're both in a wonderfully endorphin-full state of appreciation. Tell him how much he has taught you, literally, figuratively, and sexually. And then bring up how much you value his insight on your capabilities. I have a feeling he will be totally on board.

If this mission fails, desperately consider a new advisor. ASAP. You could always just have a conversation, too, if that is more comforting, but remember; college is a time to explore, so let your intellectual (and sexual) curiosity take you places you could've never imagined.

After The Time We're In:

Words by Tye Iverson PZ '26

Artwork by Luke Robinson PZ '27

A brother and sister sat next to each other on the beach they knew so well as the sand let their bodies slowly mold into itself, the small grains pressing softly into their skin. The now elderly siblings held a steady gaze upon the scenery, watching the tide and its waves pull in, curling towards them, and pushing a foam to its edge. As the water swayed, inching closer and closer to their feet, the pair squinted across the water; behind the horizon was a setting sun with the swords of a thousand rays throwing themselves across the sky. They had been there on many different occasions with many different people, but now, it was just them.

"I wonder how many times we've been here? To this exact spot?" The brother thought aloud as they looked through the horizon.

"Oh god." She chuckled softly, "I'd be scared to know."

"Yeah...I guess I don't wanna know either." His smile faded as his thoughts tumbled, "It seems our chase for time is coming to an end."

"Well, I don't know about that. I may fear age, but we still have a life waiting to be fulfilled."

"And how's that?"

"We still come here. Our place."

A moment passed and together they sat, watching the sun dip lower, its glimmering rays now bouncing across the water. The brother smiled toward the beauty in front of him, satisfied with the words of his sister. Slowly he leaned his head on her shoulder, fading asleep as the star fully disappeared.



Fragments

Words by Willa Umansky PZ '27 (W) & Zoe Lusk PZ '25 (Z)

“Old Pearl” by Eli Heart PZ '26

After the first bit of vibrato spilled from the depths of this old Russian Jew, a chorus of habitual ‘Amens’ spilled from the lips of his kin. The family joined for the latter part of the kiddush, words tumbling out to a familiar tune thanks to muscle memory and a god fearing spirit. w

His car is still where they left it and so she wonders if he just hasn’t wanted to walk through where she begged, “If we’re having this conversation can we please just have this conversation?” w

Episode begins with a close up on Stephen Buck’s face, there is a tension filled silence. He begins to sing. He very dramatically performs ‘Black Max’, flipping around chairs sitting backwards and really speaking with his eyebrows. The camera pans to the kids just looking confused and amused. Other Stephen is struck by Stephen B’s talent, perhaps even turned on. W

Stuck picking my pancreas off the floor and gluing my kidneys back in place. Attempts to quell residual desire are like cinnamon tea on yom kippur afternoon. I’m a phony, always have been. w

Where one became so tiny they could step, one foot after the other, inside the



blue and white china sink. Just to be chased by the etched blue dragon that curled around the drain. Z
There was nothing outside of this room. There was, however, her name inside, hot-pink spray painted on the wall, albeit over a crossed-out orange “Francesca”. There was also a red Lunar New Year lantern, a heated Japanese toilet that blinked and stood at attention when she entered the bathroom. A small silver mirror built into the shower, ostensibly

for shaving. A stage for desire. This place will move, be unrecognizable soon. You have to keep finding it, keep having it find you. z
There are no other customers, but there are ripe plastic grapes that furl around the jewelry cases. The shop owner rewards me ten-percent-off for my potentially-Sicilian-face. Z

I wish I were a better writer

Words by Willa Umansky PZ '27
Artwork by Ben Connolly PZ '26

My eyes are heavy. My head is foggy. I sent a text last night that I shouldn't have. I just wanted to have sex. My eyes are heavy and I can't focus on my paper that's due in two days. How do I write a book? The guy I've fucked a few times but not enough to call him the guy I'm fucking told me that publishing a collection of essays is just a cop out. He was saying it in reference to himself and I nodded agreeably and said totally, while cursing myself in my own head. He thinks he's a better writer than me even though he's yet to read anything I've written. He's probably right. I don't know words. I say nothing revolutionary. I repeat myself over and over again. When my fingers dance on the keys I vomit out a disgusting slew of last night's dinner and never wanting to grow up. I couldn't create a character for a novel that doesn't have curly hair and a weird relationship with death. It has to be me me me me. I can't write about not me. I know that everyone says that when you write fiction it's never really fiction, but I couldn't even get close. That is just how hopelessly uncreative I am.

I'm a lot less smart than I want to be. I wish I was undeniably brilliant. I always write about hating myself, or loving some version of myself, or the weird relationship that I have with some aspect of myself.

Like I said, me me me me me.

Even now, I'm desperate to allow myself to fall into the trap of writing as I do. Novelties don't have the same appeal as tired topics that I know like the creases in my palm. I want to say I'm so fucking self-obsessed and maybe that's why I don't believe I'll ever fall in love. Then of course, that will lead me down the world's longest rabbit hole in which I must touch on my hatred of my own

body, then my mother's implicit eating disorder, and then somehow that will magically lead me to wondering deeply about how my family lived in the old country, then—if we're really lucky—maybe that could lead to a brilliant commentary on globalization and the ethno-religion status on Judaism. Then maybe that could even lead me to the Israel-Palestine of it all and my reckoning with a Zionist upbringing that I'm struggling to unlearn. But it won't, because I refuse to trip and land head first in the vicious pit of my writing patterns that are so exhausted that they are now completely devoid of meaning and unable to flaunt the label of creative.

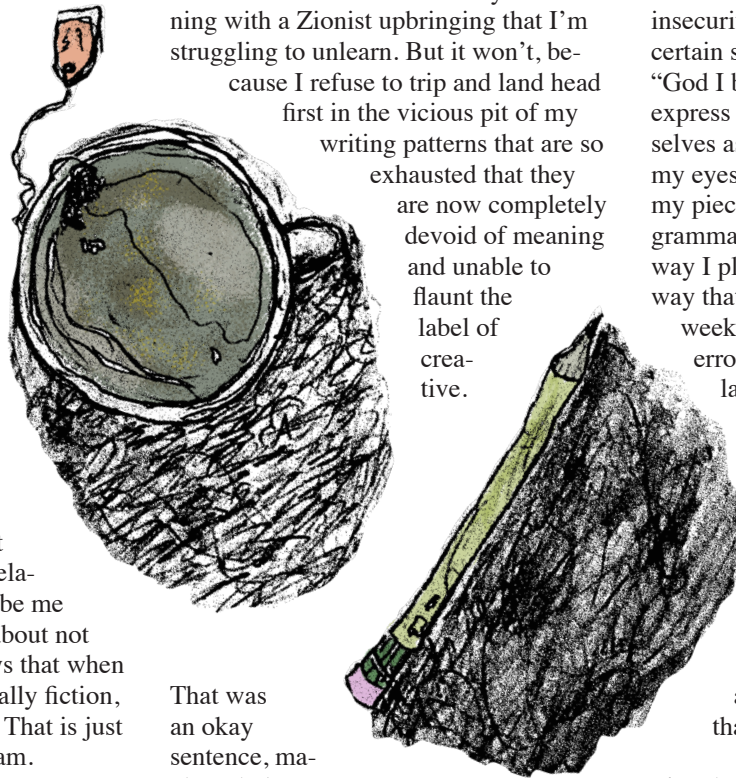
That was an okay sentence, maybe I do know some words... or at least how to dress them up nicely. I just wish I knew more.

I wish I was smarter than the people around me and that I didn't smoke so much weed while my brain was developing. When I felt smart I was gratuitously in love with my own thoughts and as naive as can be, so this whole inferiority complex is probably just my shitty nature fucking up the perfectly healthy process of realizing that the world is bigger than me and my assertions. I wish I was smarter than people in the way that I wish that I were prettier than people. I love sitting in a room where I know I have the best smile there or the most fuckable mouth. The guy I've fucked some number of

times may be smarter than I am and think he's a better writer than me, but he thinks I have a fuckable mouth so I consider that a win for me and women everywhere! At least I know some words and occasionally have the most soulful eyes or biggest tits in the room.

I walk an odd line between overconfidence and crippling overanalysis and insecurity about my writing. I will read certain sentences that I craft and think "God I bet people wish they could express this god awful piece of themselves as eloquently as I." Then I roll my eyes at myself in disgust and reread my piece and gag on my inability to use grammar well enough to accentuate the way I play with words or choke on the way that I find a word I've learned that week and use it excessively and even erroneously. I learned "erroneous" last week. I have to force myself to use metaphors, show not tell, do anything outside of myself, really. The only thing that flows from the depths of me naturally is a narration of me. How I feel, how I think, how I love myself so, or hate myself even more. Maybe my nose is just really big so I have a harder time seeing beyond it than other people do.

Time has passed. Now I feel like nothing flows out of me, except texts to my therapist debating the merits of SSRIs. Oh the age old question, to quell the void in my stomach and ruin my sex drive, or to let the void grow but sustain myself with the art of an orgasm? I'm sure the founding fathers grappled with queries of this sort. I'm assuming this feeling will go away once I regain purpose in ever sunny SoCal, but New York seems to be bringing out the numbness in my limbs and the hollowness in my chest that I thought I had filled. My fingers on the keys feel far too laborious for me right now. I'm so weak. Cough. Cough cough. The mere thought of going to the bathroom is too much, let alone the treachery of forcing myself to be creative. Blah blah, blah blah blah, blah blah



blah. I wonder who said that for the first time. If it were me I would have made it like gloop or something a little more fun to say. Maybe the thrill of blah has just dulled, I bet it was gloop level fun before being substantiated with a spot in the dictionary. It's actually a bit absurd that gloop has a wiggly red line under it but the validity of blah is somehow recognized by Google Docs.

Well that was a bit dramatic, the whole "cough cough" thing, I still ardently stand by my gloop and blah stance. I'm actually fine. That was just me feeling down with the Sunday Scaries after a soulless night out in New York. I've said that word to describe how I feel about nights out on this trip home. Soulless. Soouuuuuulllless. I can feel the word taking space in my mouth as I breathe it out. It's just so remarkably fitting. I love saying that word to describe what it has felt like to me, because I do declare that no word has ever fit so perfectly in the mouth of the beholder to describe a concept at hand. No one is dressed in fun clothes, everything bought from the same four stores, everyone follows this strange silent law where we wear jeans and a "going out top." Going out top is just a synonym for something that shows off your stomach or back if you're thin enough for it to be impressive, your tits if they're something to flaunt, or the perkiness of your tits based on their ability to sit well in a garment that should otherwise be pretty unflattering. Don't get me wrong, this isn't the misogynistic portion of the evening where I assert that I just don't understand the desires of women who are like other girls. I love going out tops, I'm usually a boobs out or fun print girl, since I boast nothing thin enough to flaunt. When I drag the tendencies of going out through the mud, I too am caked in mud. Aside from the uniform, I find the soullessness to be palpable in the gross sexual energy that radiates onto the street from inside the sweaty bars. Everyone is on a mission, like I get it, it's fun to makeout with someone in

the middle of the bar, but god let's have a dance and maybe a little fun with friends before at least.

I'm back at school now, the whole I wish I was smarter sentiment has left this page and permeated my soul in a way that leaves me so down and out about my intellect that I've made it my official mission to learn more words. I sound like a phony when I try to casually throw "bereft" into a sentence. I'm in a cage built by my smoking habits at 15, the cage only has so many words inside, and I am given my rations of a new word once a week. I cannot talk about foreign policy in the way that Rick in my British Empire in the Middle East class does. Good going Rick, you're so smart that you've made it into my musings about my lonely brain cells with very few friends to keep them company. Don't even get me started on trying to crack the code of poetry. Now I'm 19, as of yesterday at 2:45pm

hot feet

By Willa Umansky PZ '27

when my feet get hot i can't sleep
i go into moms room
a few steps on the cold floor
cures me

i am plagued by my love for her
i love her in my stomach
the love eats at my intestines
there's nothing left
and i'm sad

i'm on a long drive
tracking trees that pass
mulling over my possible speech at dads funeral
screams tearing a path from my throat to the depths of my belly
phantom pains from phantom sobs
then dad's voice snaps me out of it
"want a snack, love?"

how did i ever not know?
you're perfect
and i miss your faces being younger
you're perfect

i miss laying in your arms when i was smaller
all i want for the rest of my life is to be your daughter
i'd give anything to be yours in every life

my cheeks are wet and i wish i was home
my feet are hot and i'm cursing the passage of time
mom's room is not next door
my feet aren't cold
so i cannot sleep

instead of 5:45pm since I live on the west coast now. My computer screen is decorated with colorful lines from my mistreatment of her, thank god for Appicare but fuck the Inland Empire for how far the Apple store is. I cried for about 4 hours straight last night, on my birthday. I cried the most I've cried since that one time in tenth grade when I walked around Brooklyn balling my eyes out because I had a year long come-to about the terrifying meaninglessness of life. I won't detail what set me off, but just trust that it was ridiculous on my behalf but also on the behalf of the grown man that I got into a fight with. I started crying to get him to fuck off and see the daughter in me, not quite femme fatal but at least some female manipulator bulls-hit, but then I just couldn't stop crying. Like I literally could not stop. Mine eyes were totally made the fool of the other senses and so on. I tried dancing with tears falling and I tried talking with tears falling and now reliving it I'm going to stop retelling the breaking of hell in my tear ducts, because I cried in front of so many fucking people last night so I'm going to will it away and block it out forever. I've been 19 for a month and Diego has been dead for seven years and two days, his life was only my whole childhood, no big deal. It used to hurt so bad, but now the dulling of pain is what bothers me most. I'm drinking tea because my throat hurts. I am happy right now, all things considered. I've written three poems recently, no code has been cracked but I'm shimmying my way into that world. Shrunken words on a page, painting a picture in a way that I couldn't before, it feels good in a way that I couldn't have expected. I adore my friends. I'm going to Costa Rica next week. I yearn to kiss a boy who's destined to leave me to glue my guts back in place. I'm drinking tea and reading my writing and still wishing I was smarter, but getting off on my own wit. Old habits and dead horses die hard by blunt force.

Campus Couture Chronicles: April Edition

By Willa Umansky PZ '27



“An elf who went to a Lil Yachty Concert”

Our beloved Ben Connolly '26



“Pretty generic?”

Stella PZ '26



“Me me me me. It looks far less Christmas-y in person. Also I’m not a narcissist, just didn’t get enough pics of wild fashionistas”

Willa Umansky PZ '27



“I dress for the job I want”

Emilio PZ '25

The ultimate summer playlist

PROFESSIONALLY SELECTED BY THE OUTBACK STAFF

1. Spread - Outkast
2. Life's Gone Down Low - The Lijadu sisters
3. Maud Gone - Car Seat Headrest
4. Mine - Taylor Swift
5. Late Night Crawler - Indigo de Souza
6. Talk/Pleasure - Samba Jean-Baptiste
7. Montreal - Penelope Scott
8. Blame - Air Traffic Controller
9. Heavy on my Heart - Lucki
10. Sunshine (feat. Foushee) - Steve Lacy
11. how?! (feat. Niontay) - RiTchie
12. California - Joni Mitchell
13. Jodie - SZA
14. Please Kill Me - Coma Cinema
15. Ipan Park - MIKE
16. Gimme Da Lite - Lil Yachty
17. BAD WEATHER - Anycia
18. Hand On Me - Nourished by Time
19. Pretend Friend - Sam Austins
20. Finish Him - RXKNephew



