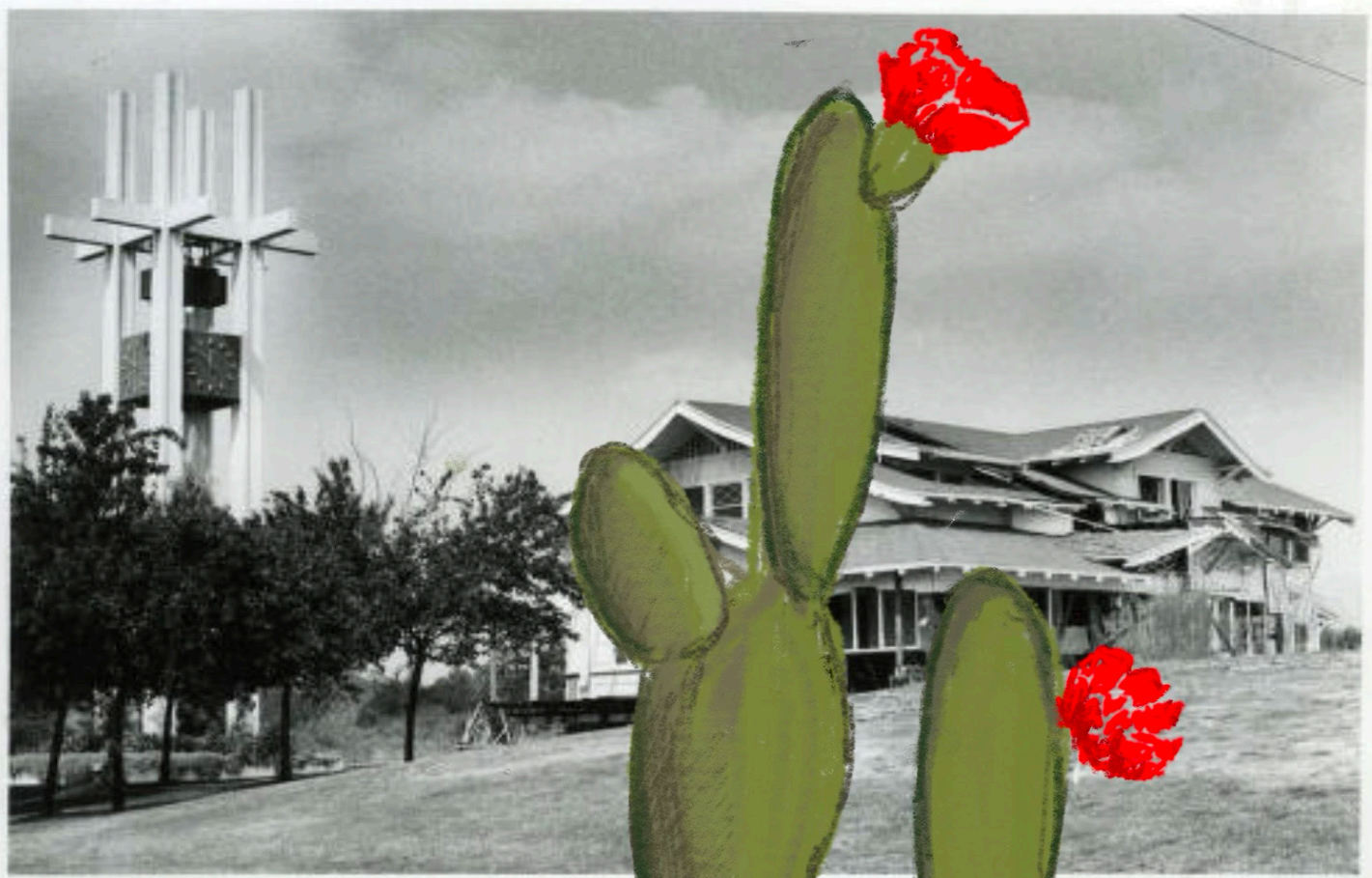


# THE OUTBACK

NEWSPRINT MAGAZINE



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# Masthead

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**Crossword by Olivia Klipfel PZ '25**

# Letter from the editor

Hello Claremont,

I had the pleasure of not being able to write a single piece (aside from a peek in my notes app) for this issue because it was overflowing with work from our amazing staff writers. I feel so lucky to be in the position to have too much work to squeeze into an issue because it's something that no previous Outback era could have dreamed of! We're in a decently comfortable place as a paper and a symptom of our relative stability is that we have our first real cohort of graduating seniors leaving us behind.

Change is hard. That kind of thing has always been difficult for me, I used to sob ridiculous amounts after getting home from camp — sometimes refusing to get out of the car for excessive amounts of time. I love wholly planting myself wherever I am, because I can trick myself into thinking that it'll last forever. Alas, nothing ever does. It somehow surprises me every time when ever-cruel Father Time trucks on without a second thought about us.

Maya Olson definitely altered the course of my life when she approached me on The Mounds during my first week of college, telling me to come write for this “chill newspaper” that she had just revived. I saw a flicker of the kind of Pitzer student I could become in Maya's relentless and commendable passion. Sadie Wyatt made me take it seriously, her dedication was palpable. She was organized and is probably still the best editor I've ever encountered. Ben Lauren, months after the first two changed my life, made me embrace writerhood, taught me how to write news, and encouraged me to truly take on The Outback as a child of my own.

Maya, Sadie, and Ben are incredibly special people. They're passionate, driven, intelligent, and dedicated reporters. Beyond Maya literally starting The Outback, the three of them carried the weight of a disjointed, baby paper on their backs. They roped me into it somewhere along the way. Though not an editor, Nozomi Shima also deserves a shout for her years of service here at The Outback and her status as an awesome individual. Nozomi has been our most dedicated staff writer since maybe all the way back to when I was getting ready for prom. I often joke that everyone in the room needs to get me a first draft except Nozomi because I know her column will be in and perfect.

The Outback won't be the same without those four beautiful souls. Despite that being a desperately sad fact, it doesn't have to be a bad fact. The real world is gaining four amazing people who can bring their brilliance and care through all the spaces they move through. Thanks to their tireless efforts, younger generations now get to shape this paper!

Because of our seniors, The Outback has grown from a ragtag operation into a true family business. I'm the luckiest girl in the world to have had the opportunity to work with all of them for the last two years and to have learned so much from them. #OB4ever

Check us out online at  
[theoutback.news](http://theoutback.news)

Love,  
Willa



# 5C Prison Abolition hosts jazz and poetry concerts:

Words by Spencer Wu-Chin PZ '28

Graphic by Blue Byrnes PZ '27

On April 17 and April 18, the 5C Prison Abolition Collective hosted Freedom First, a jazz and poetry concert series that tours the country. Freedom First is the project of Catalan jazz pianist Albert Marçès and writer, activist, and poet Keith Lamar, who describe their shows as “a call for justice, an invitation to renew one’s faith in humanity, and an emotional ride.”

Lamar is a prisoner on death row in Ohio, set to be executed on Jan. 27, 2027. For the past 30 years, he has been kept in solitary confinement, joining Freedom First to perform live from prison over the phone. With Marçès and a rotating band of guest musicians, Lamar works to raise awareness for his own campaign against a wrongful conviction, as well as issues around incarceration and the death penalty.

On April 18, students and community members filled the chairs and pews in Balch Auditorium at Scripps College, listening to introductory speeches from organizers and members of 5C Prison Abolition. Then, Marçès phoned the Ohio State Penitentiary, and Lamar’s voice crackled through a speaker set on the

stage.

“Keith is someone that moves people,” 5C Prison Abolition member Leila Riker, PZ '25, said. “He has a way with words. He’s musically talented, he’s personable, and even just his voice has] something really warm about it.”

Through a personal connection, Riker brought Freedom First to the 5Cs for the first time last academic year.

“My music teacher [Marçès] heard that I was doing abolitionist organizing out here and reached out to me through my mom,” Riker said. At the time, Freedom First had only performed in New York and Spain, and Marçès was interested in taking the show to California.

At first, other members of 5C Prison Abolition had been apprehensive about inviting Lamar. Lamar’s campaign, Justice for Keith Lamar, centers around his innocence. Organizers were worried that this emphasis might give students the idea that prison abolition is only concerned with wrongful convictions.

Riker felt that they, as well as other members of 5C Prison

Abolition, were experiencing a “purity issue” as a result of being disconnected from the complex reality of abolition in practice.

“They were worried... because it was such a large part of his own campaign,” Riker explained. Potentially, “the audience would basically think that the point was, ‘if you’re innocent, you shouldn’t be in a cage’, not ‘cages are bad.’”

Ultimately, organizers agreed to host Freedom First for their first concert in Claremont in October 2023.

“[Keith] is able to bring people in, which we saw is actually really useful,” Riker said. “If people can accept that Keith shouldn’t be in a cage, then it’s easier to get them to accept that no one should. It might not be that they go to this one concert and leave an abolitionist, but it’s bringing them into this world and forcing them to confront a system that disappears people.”

Tickets to the show sold out, and people lined up around the building for a chance to get in.

“[Lamar’s campaign manager, Amy, and the band expressed that they’d been to a lot of universities, but they hadn’t seen such a mobilization [before],” Riker said. “[So many students showed up] to work, volunteer as ushers and greet the band and run a book club after. There was really beautiful engagement.”

Riker particularly appreciated the chance to bring Lamar and Freedom First back to the 5Cs after their success last year.

“It’s been awesome to see and so special to have, like a relationship that’s continued,” Riker said. “[Usually, inviting speakers is] a transactional experience, and a lot of the people who are working have also been in the book club or spoken to Keith and built a continued relationship. We’re working together on the same campaign.”

Riker sees hosting and building relationships with people like Lamar as a critical part of 5C prison abolition and organizing.

“PrisAb is such an incredible opportunity and can be such an incredible space for learning, but if it’s not working with directly impacted people, I feel like there’s something missing,” Riker said. “When I first joined ... it was mostly a political education club ... [but] now, there’s really amazing work happening that’s involved with local orgs like Critical Resistance and Justice LA.”

As a whole, Riker saw the opportunity to work with Freedom First as a chance to bring a different, but important, kind of activism to the 5Cs.

“Something I have felt lacks a lot, especially in [the] Claremont organizing scene, is joy,

music, art, and food,” Riker said. “Every time I engage with Keith or with Amy or with the group of musicians, I leave uplifted. We’re laughing. Even though we all know we’re fighting a really ugly fight and that Keith has two years till he’s supposed to be murdered by the state of Ohio. He knows that, but he also knows that none of us can keep going if we don’t find ways to be joyful.”

To Riker, organizing necessitates making space for joy through events like Freedom

First.

“Being able to not just imagine the world that we’re trying to build, but make it a reality, even if it is just for the duration of a song or for the hour that you’re dancing and making art is crucial,” Riker said. “If we forget what that’s like, if we don’t make it our reality, then we might forget that it’s possible. And once we stop being able to imagine the world we want to live in, we’ve lost.”



# How to organize for Palestine?

By Dahlia Gressel PZ '28

Recently, several international college students, graduates, and professors have been deported by ICE and the federal administration for making statements in support of the pro-Palestinian movement. To justify their actions, the federal government claims that these statements are expressions of sympathy with organizations such as Hamas, classified as a terrorist organization by the U.S. Department of State.

On April 29, 2025, a federal judge ruled that Mahmoud Khalil, a Palestinian graduate of Columbia University, could legally be deported for his role in organizing the highly publicized pro-Palestine encampments at the university. Hostility from the Trump administration raises questions about the future of pro-Palestinian advocacy. In such a dangerous political climate, how should individuals and organizations on college campuses approach their activism?

First, I sought out the professor of my Palestine history course who asked to remain anonymous in light of recent arrests and deportations. I was interested to learn about what he witnessed and learned about the development of the movement for Palestinian self-determination's current state. Since he grew up in Gaza and only moved to the

provided a unique perspective on the question plaguing me: "Studying Palestinian history is important because history is repeating itself, and it is important to understand the historical roots of the current problem." For students interested in learning about Palestinian history, he recommends two books: *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine* by Rashid Khalidi and *The Holy Triangle* by Joel Nederhood.

On the role of college students in organizing for Palestinian liberation, the professor told me, "I think the main function of the students is to continue in their education, not to suspend the lectures, [and] not to make demonstrations. Sometimes they can [engage in] peaceful demonstrations. But also [it is important] to educate people, and to talk about the issue ... Educating people is the most important thing." In our Palestine history classes, he has repeatedly emphasized the importance of learning Palestinian history to the Palestinian struggle, as opposed to armed struggle or disruptive demonstrations. While he still sees these forms of resistance as important, he perceives education as a crucial component of the struggle. This is evident when we leave the classroom and thank him for the lesson, and he responds, "It is my duty."

Then, I interviewed an or-

ganizer with Claremont Students for Justice in Palestine to gain a student perspective. She explained

that the deportations are a tactical move to "distract from what's happening in Gaza, so the most important thing is, no matter what absurdity is going on, ... to make sure we aren't distracted from what's happening on the ground in Palestine and not losing sight of the goal of ending institutional complicity and fighting for divestment." Regarding risk assessment for student organizers under the current administration and what factors should be considered when making decisions, she emphasized the importance of working pragmatically. She explained that with any high-risk action, it is crucial that participants "have the tools to be able to do a proper risk assessment of where they're at and how much they can give or how much they can show up, because there's so many different ways to show up for a movement." As she clarifies, SJP allows members of its organizing body to participate only to the extent that they feel comfortable doing so, one way in which the organization aligns with my professor's earlier suggestion on tactics.

In this political climate, great care must be taken while organizing for Palestinian liberation. The professor from Gaza's responses were much more liberal than I expected, focusing primarily on the role of education instead of student demonstration. The Claremont SJP organizer, however, stressed the importance of disrupting business as usual while also continually performing risk assessment on an individual and group level. Divisions in orga-

nizing tactics have always existed: this moment is emulative of the anti-Vietnam War protests on college campuses in the 1960s, when student groups differed on organizing strategies. As the Claremont SJP organizer stated, "At different points in history, we've seen a rise in similar fascistic movements, and there's always been push-back from administration and the state when you're organizing against admin and the state, and there always will be ... Organizing against the state and institutions is always going to be risky." Or, as repeated at many SJP events, there is no organizing without risk.

# Treasure

Words by Caiden Searcy PZ '27

Graphic by Ash Dirks PZ '28

During my junior year of high school, I took a rare trip via bus into south east

Portland. Upon arriving at the bus station a few blocks away from my house, I found a scruffy man wearing ample layers, pacing the sidewalk between the sheltered bench that was the bus stop and the small, leafless tree that lived beside it. At that time, I liked to think of myself as quite unshakeable (though in reality I was not, and still am not), and I did not want to be moved from my original intention of waiting for the bus. So, I sat, and he paced. After several minutes, he stopped pacing and addressed me, carefully enunciating the following sentence and looking directly into my eyes:

"There is treasure under this tree."

I don't remember exactly what I did. I may have mumbled something, but more likely I remained silent. No more words were exchanged, and he returned to his vigil. Some minutes later, I boarded my bus and left, thoroughly destabilized.

That summer (it was either January or February when the first episode occurred), I remember seeing him twice more; each encounter, he seemed gaunter and shabbier than the last. The final time I saw him was just before school started again; he was stationed on a corner in the Pearl. He stood no further away than he had when we had met that winter, now separated by the glass of the window of my car. I remember thinking he looked like King Lear when he was out in the storm: utterly betrayed. I have never seen a stage production of King Lear, but if I did, I expect Lear would look exactly like what I saw at that moment.

We may have made eye contact, but whether he recognized me, I could not tell. I felt tempted to give him something, but I had no cash (deliberately). The light changed, and I never saw him again. I often wonder what happened to him. I wonder if he found a job, or a home, or if he somehow found a way out of the storm. I have accepted that I will never know these things, but I console myself with what I do know. What he and I, and now you, know. There is treasure under that tree.



# Intergenerational Insights & Growing Pains

## Words and Graphic by Nozomi Shima PZ '25

As I near the end of my time at Pitzer, I have been reflecting on the life lessons I have learned through each chapter of my life. Each stage brought experiences that unlocked understandings of how the world worked and the role I played in it.

I remember reading “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” when I was younger than Greg and hating how little kids were depicted as dweeby and stupid, because I was that age and I didn’t feel dweeby and stupid. I felt smart, capable, and complex. It’s easy to think of children or even teenagers as being less evolved or advanced than we are now, but I always want to give Past Me credit for being smarter and more complicated than she looked. I have as much to learn now as I did then.

For my last Outback article, I present a list of movies that do young people justice, recognizing them for the intricate, multifaceted beings that they are. Through exchanging life lessons with someone from an older generation, they remind me that wisdom doesn’t always come with age. Sometimes, we need the perspective of someone at a different stage of life to better understand our own.

Thanks for reading my little movie column. I hope my articles inspire your next watch.

Love, Nozomi

### Hunt for the Wilderpeople

Our story opens as Child Welfare Services places foster kid Ricky Baker in the care of warm-hearted Bella and her gruff husband Hector at their remote New Zealand farm. Bella waves off the officer’s warnings of Ricky’s “delinquent” past, accepting him wholeheartedly. Ricky is just starting to feel at home when tragedy strikes and Hec is left with Ricky under his sole care. When Child Welfare Services threaten to take Ricky back into the system, he fakes his death by burning the barn down and leaving only his hilariously unconvincing note (reading, “Goodbye cruel world. Burned myself to death in this barn. As you can see if you look inside this barn. Ricky Baker”), and runs away to the wilderness, only accompanied by his dog Tupac.

Hec follows to bring Ricky

back, sure that his inept survival skills could not conquer the wild New Zealand bush. Unfortunately, Hec accidentally injures his ankle in the process, and the two are forced to live off the land until it heals. They have no defense when Child Welfare Services arrive at the scene of Ricky’s obviously staged self-immolation and come to the conclusion that Ricky was kidnapped by Hec, igniting a nationwide manhunt with increasingly heightened stakes. As they evade hunters, wild boars, and glib “molesterer” allegations, Ricky and Hec form an unlikely bond. They exchange



survival and hunting skills for stories of past hardships of the foster system and lessons in haiku-making, slowly becoming the family that neither ever would have admitted to wanting.

Māori newcomer Julian Dennison breathes humor and heart into Ricky, a cherubic young teen who is truly the core of the movie. A lively adventure comedy that balances its moments of grief and danger with lighthearted repartee and an unwillingness to dwell, “*Hunt for the Wilderpeople*” is Taika Waititi at his pre-“*Jojo Rabbit*”

best. The film is surprisingly under the radar for a big name director and for how universally enjoyable it is, most of the viewership and acclaim having stayed close to its New Zealand home. Indeed, the movie is unapologetically Kiwi, with Waititi's homeland providing the funky soundtrack by Wellington-born band Moniker, lush settings of sprawling backwoods, and absolutely addictive accents.

### **Uptown Girls**

"Uptown Girls" is a sleeper hit with a glaring critical and audience reception discrepancy, with a 13% Rotten Tomatoes score against a solid 3.9 out of 5 stars on Letterboxd. It follows the story of a spoiled trust fund girl suddenly forced to grow up and a young girl who was forced to grow up too fast. Molly Gunn, embodied by the beloved late Brittany Murphy, lives as if Tai's makeover in "Clueless" went too far. She's technically an orphan, left with her rockstar father's fortune after a fatal plane crash when she was young. Lavishing in unearned wealth and a lack of responsibilities, she navigates the nightlife and luxury shopping scene of Manhattan like it's her job (as if she's ever had one). When she finds out that her business manager has embezzled her entire inherited net worth, she is suddenly left with no home, no belongings, and no income. She couch surfs with friends, but her years of living in bachelorette luxury have left her ill-prepared to be a considerate roommate, giving her no option but to get a job. Molly lands a gig nannying for 8-year-old Ray, played adorably by Dakota Fanning at her peak

of child stardom. Ray's mother is a high-up in the music industry with little time in her schedule to fulfill her role as a mom, and her father is effectively a vegetable after suffering a stroke that resulted in a coma. Precocious beyond her years, Ray copes with her justifiably overwhelming feelings by micromanaging everything she possibly can. She carries around her own personal soap, refuses to eat meat out of fear of mad cow disease, and thinks fruit punch might as well be cyanide. The two of them represent exactly what the other is trying not to be; Molly's free spirit and Peter Pan syndrome completely clashes with Ray's paranoid meticulousness and structure. However, the longer they spend together, the more they realize that they have more in common than they think, and develop a sweet friendship.

One of the film's most beautiful scenes comes during a spinning teacup ride at Coney Island. In the dizzy, colorful blur, Molly and Ray see each other clearly for the first time; underneath their facades are two girls who have been left to navigate the world alone, and finally have each other. This moment anchors the film in what critics during the early 2000s chose to overlook, a tender story about grief and the balance between childhood and maturity.

### **My Old Ass**

This was my favorite movie of 2024. I went into the theater with two friends whose names were the same as the best friends in the movie and was immediately invested. All I

knew going in was the initial concept: a girl does shrooms and hallucinates her older self, played by Aubrey Plaza. Maisy Stella wittily and confidently portrays Elliot, a recent high school graduate ready to trade her family's cranberry farm for college in the big city. Her summer plans involve spending her last months with her best friends and the cute girl who works at the coffee shop. So, when she meets her 39-year-old self, her aspirations are upended by two pieces of advice—to spend more time with her family and to avoid anyone named Chad. Magical realism enables older Elliot to continue to mentor her younger self, but also forces her to reckon with her own past. She finds that ironically, being young and dumb is a necessary part of life. It's easy to look back on your past decisions in regret without reserving empathy for your past self who deserves the freedom to make mistakes and grow from them.

As a protagonist, young Elliot is refreshingly self-assured and funny; she feels more like someone I would be friends with than an archetype of a girl in a coming-of-age movie. The script intertwines pop culture jokes with bits of wisdom that feel perfectly suited to our generation. This is the "Stoned at the Nail Salon" of movies, inspiring introspection about the unrelenting and inevitable passage of time, as well as inspiring a heavy flow of my tears. "My Old Ass" will give you the much needed reminder that you don't have to rush through all of the learning and loving that's left for you to do.

# Coachella and politics of resistance

Words by Oliver Schoening PZ '27

Art by Thea Riley PZ '28

Coachella is back and as self-indulgent as ever. Despite worries about declining attendance, it wrapped a successful second weekend of the year with performances from artists new and old. At this point, the festival's reputation precedes it as a hub for American cultural hedonism. Coachella was bolstered by performances from big-ticket artists like Megan Thee Stallion, Lady Gaga, and Charli xcx, who belatedly declared the end of last year's 'brat summer.' However, this year, consumerism was balanced out by a political landscape that loomed large for artists and attendees alike.

Left-wing darling Bernie Sanders set the tone for the weekend, opening up Clairo's set on the first weekend with a surprise stop on his "Fighting Oligarchy" tour. He urged the audience to remain vigilant, saying "You can turn away, and you can ignore what goes on, but if you do that, you do it at your own peril."

As the American left struggles to find direction after the first few months of the second Trump administration, Sanders has again emerged as a galvanizing voice of opposition. Some conservative

outlets derided what they perceived as the irony of Sanders' appearance during a "Fighting Oligarchy" tour at Coachella, seen by many (myself included) as a symbol of American excess and consumerism. However, be that as it may, these arguments of betrayed ideals are ones made in bad faith and fail to see the value of the appearance of someone like Sanders at Coachella. People from all over flock to attend, and in times like these, the left cannot afford to pick and choose where and how they reach people. Sanders ended his remarks by thanking Clairo, saying "I'm here because Clairo has used her prominence to fight for women's rights, to try and end the terrible, brutal war in Gaza, where thousands of women and children are being killed." As the conflict continues with the support of many politicians for further military action, Sanders' appearance offers hope that there may be another path forward.

Bernie and Clairo may be the most notable example, but politics loomed large for other artists, too. Nicolás Jaar of the band Darkside interrupted his

set to draw attention to the recent detentions of pro-Palestinian activists across the country, saying: "Some of you may know, just protesting a genocide that's happening means you can get deported, like Mahmoud Khalil".

The most controversial political event over the entire two weeks of Coachella came at the hands of the Irish hip-hop trio KNEECAP. The trio projected various statements onto the screen during their set, reading "Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people," "It is being enabled by the US government who arm and fund Israel despite their war crimes." and "Fuck Israel, Free Palestine". Sharon Osbourne, the wife and manager of Black Sabbath frontman Ozzy Osbourne, called for the band's work visa in the United States to be revoked, saying in a social media post that "Their actions included projections of anti-Israel messages and hate speech, and this band openly support terrorist organizations." Obviously, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one that carries a more personal significance for many. Be that as it may, Osbourne's statement is one that uses an extremely broad interpretation of hate speech that risks further devaluing the term. Frankly, I am disheartened by the fact that Osbourne seems to be taking advantage of the wave of recent deportations of pro-Palestinian activists in order to punish a band for political statements that she

disagrees with. While some of KNEECAP's past statements can only be described as questionable at the very least, accusing the band of hate speech is a large jump to be made, and the band's words at Coachella fall short of any real reason for the band's visas to be revoked.

There is a disingenuous air to Osbourne's accusations of hate speech given the content of her husband's music. After all, one of Black Sabbath's best-known songs is an anti-war anthem with lyrics such as "In the fields, the bodies burning, as the war machine keeps turning." It is nearly impossible to hear these lyrics and not have the constant news of more airstrikes on civilians in the Gaza Strip come to mind, but it is unsurprising that these words are inconsequential now. Interestingly, there is no record of Osbourne ever condemning Israeli military action against Palestinian civilians. Her words may well have been better received if she had, but as of now they are coming from someone who is willing to turn a blind eye to the indiscriminate bombings of Palestinians in order to serve her own political agenda.

Even more ridiculous is Osbourne's claim that "the festival organizer facilitated this by allowing artists to use the Coachella stage as a platform for political

expression". Music has always been political. Even artists like Clairo who may not be overtly political in their music showed their ability to utilize their platform in order to mobilize people towards important political causes. This type of fiery political activism at Coachella isn't a new phenomenon, either. In 2007, festival headliner Rage Against the Machine's frontman Zack de la Rocha delivered a fiery speech denouncing the Bush administration at the height of the Iraq War, saying that "they should be hung and tried and shot" for their hand in the violence. Compared to this, KNEECAP's message seems tame.

When seeing artists use their platforms for political activism, I am begrudgingly reminded of right-wing journalist Andrew Breitbart's eponymous doctrine stating that "politics is downstream

from culture". These words echo the Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci's theory that the ruling class maintains control by shaping cultural norms in order to manufacture consent and reinforce dominant ideologies. Although it is easy to dismiss celebrities for being out of touch with reality, the activism of these artists and politicians at Coachella offers some hope that there is something being done about the right-wing shift in wider American society and culture. Even amid these threats of reprisal and assaults on free speech, it is incredibly important that these artists make use of their platforms to counter it. Give an inch and they'll take a mile, as the saying goes. From Gill-Scott Heron to Joan Baez and beyond, musicians have to work to ensure that marginalized voices and communities are not cut out of the deal completely. Whether or not it is the "right time or place" does not matter.



# Gabi Starr & antisemitism

Words by Ben Lauren PZ '25

Graphic by Genevieve O'Marah SC '28

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Over the past year, Pomona College has faced extensive scrutiny for alleged antisemitism on its campus and a lack of support for the school's Jewish community. Last May, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and Brandeis Center sued the school for their response to protests after Oct. 7, 2023. Then, earlier this semester, the ADL handed Pomona a failing grade on its "antisemitism report cards." This all coincided with a wave of federal inquiries into Pomona's administration from the Department of Education and Committee — which cited the ADL's report card in its letter.

As someone that has been covering these schools incredibly closely since Oct. 7, I find the assertion that Pomona's administration, and specifically Pomona President G. Gabrielle Starr, has not been outspoken against antisemitism to be blatantly false. Starr has shown support for Jewish students at the 5Cs going back as far as 2018. The administration's support for Zionist students specifically at the colleges has been made abundantly clear, having its own students arrested, suspended, and banned simply for protesting.

However, according to the ADL, Brandeis Center, and apparently the federal government's definition of Judaism, which is fully aligned with Zionism, Pomona has done everything in its power to fight antisemitism.

Pomona received its failing grade partially due to its allegedly inadequate response from administration, but primarily due to the frequency of pro-Palestinian protest on campus. It seems that the ADL is unaware that there has not been a protest on campus in seven months.

We compiled every response Pomona has made to alleged antisemitism on campus since the beginning of Starr's tenure. See the full version online.

March 27, 2023

Starr responded after a student's Israeli flag was cut in half and a map in Oldenborg Center had the name of Israel removed.

"We want to be clear in stating that antisemitism is a form of hate, and we reject antisemitism in all its forms, and the growing wave that is emerging across the United States makes it crucial for us to work together," Starr said.

January 2023

Starr outlined a plan to address antisemitism on campus which Jewish chaplain Rabbi Hannah Elkin said in an interview with The Student Life Newspaper was "a dynamic, multi-faceted approach that will hopefully do a lot of good for the Jewish community at Claremont. President Starr has been an amazing partner to and supporter of the Jewish community."

June 6, 2024

In her message "The Road Ahead," Starr doubles down on her decision to authorize the call to the police on April 5th and reiterates that they will not divest.

Dec. 22, 2023

Starr reinforces that the college will continue to "actively oppose antisemitism" in her year end message.

Nov. 2, 2018

According to Julia Frankel, a Jewish student and writer for TSL, Starr gave a speech during a Solidarity Shabbat dinner hosted by various Jewish organizations at the 5Cs in response to the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting the week prior.

"Starr spoke movingly of the plague of anti-Semitism, and a diverse group of students — Jewish and non-Jewish alike — joined together to mourn the 11 lives lost," Frankel wrote in TSL.



# Understanding Pitzer's finances

By Soren van Loben Sels PZ '28

If there's one sentiment we at Pitzer share about our college's finances, it is that we lack them. To talk about money and where it comes from, we sat down with the newest member of Pitzer's administration, new VP of advancement: Bob Fass

*This interview transcript has been edited for clarity and concision.*

**The Outback:** How would you describe the Office of Advancement, given that a lot of people don't know what you all do?

**Bob Fass:** We have several primary functions, one of which is fundraising. A lot of our operation is about raising funds from parents, alumni, foundations, corporations, and outside entities to support the work going on here. I mentioned those two constituencies, parents and alumni—we actually run both the parent relations program and the alumni relations program.

**OB:** Are there any specific fundraising plans that you'd like students to know about?

**BF:** One of the things I enjoyed in my first couple months on the job was the opportunity to work directly with students and faculty. It is exciting for me to be able to work and collaborate with people who share my interest in helping to make Pitzer the best community it can be. I am really intrigued with the idea of people coming to us with ideas for how we can work together in partnership to raise those dollars. Students came to me and discussed how we might raise dollars for student emergency funds, especially to help our most vulnerable students, students like international students and students who are transgender, who may be experiencing some

difficulties with the current federal orders.

**OB:** What might a cut in federal funding look like at Pitzer?

**BF:** So, the irony here is that there is vulnerability; we would be subject to losing some potential grants—faculty grants, research grants—and financial aid, but we're relatively small in scale in terms of the impact that would have on Pitzer... It would be very difficult to get through, and I want students to know that we are 100% committed to them. So, if the worst happens, we will remain 100% committed to them. We would find a way to honor our commitments. Would that have some relationship to fundraising if it were to happen? I'm sure it would. But regardless of what we were able to raise, that commitment stands. If you were to ask me a little more of a crystal ball version of that, I worry a little bit more about how that would impact the future, because if that were cut and not restored, it might impact things like future admissions.

**OB:** You've mentioned the culture around money here. Is there anything more you'd like to say?

**BF:** Sure, it's an observation that I've been making in my first couple months on the job. I think that attitudes around money are always very tricky. There is an old saying about the things that you are never supposed to discuss, usually meaning politics, religion, sex, and money, because they are thought to be impolite. But in a liberal arts environment, we talk a lot about those things. It's sort of what we are supposed to do. But, I think, at Pitzer, one of the things

I've been a little frustrated about with regards to money is that sometimes there's sort of a feeling of shame around people whose family have more or people who make money as alumni in good jobs, and somehow they feel like they have to excuse that a bit. I don't know if that's tied to money being associated with privilege and with power, but I also think we should promote that our alumni can make a good living, and that we should promote that people who come from money can do a lot of really good things with money. I have been wrestling with this idea of reframing this entire conversation around the power of money to do good. In fact, I've been using this phrase a lot: live well, do good. To me, that really describes what I think the Pitzer ethos is about. It's okay to live well: to live well physically, to live well mentally, to live well financially, to live well professionally. That's all okay; in fact, we want our students and alumni to live that way. The 'do good' piece is what do you do with that, whether it's money, whether it's time, whether it's influence, whether it is expertise—how do you use what you've built in your lifetime to help other people? That's why I loved when the students came to me and asked me to partner, because partnership for me is the way in which we make Pitzer a better place.

**OB:** Is there anything you'd like to share about yourself?

**BF:** I grew up on the Pomona College campus, about six blocks from my office. I'm looking forward to Kohoutek, which I used to sneak into as a high school student. I remember it fondly. It's just such a blast to be a part of this community that has given me so much and that I now get to contribute to.

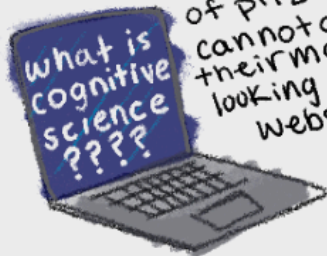
# \$ENIOR

# 2025



22%

of pitzer seniors cannot define their major without looking at the website



OF SENIORS never got their bike stolen

DON'T FEEL BAD!!  
44.4% of PZ25 NEVER had a paid summer internship...  
#awesome!

~50% of PZ25 found

Love at the BCS

57.8% of people had common sense...



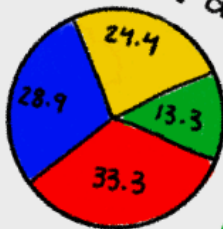
white

29%

jumped off the roof

what? 13.3%

Class at every SC?



- yes
- yes except mudd that doesn't count
- 4/5
- 3/5

70% of seniors attended at least one



TREE FUNERAL

"CONSIDERATION"  
YOU ARE OF THIS PLACE, IT IS CHANGING YOU  
AMERICAN FLAG (MEAD)  
best mural?

# SURVEYZZZ

ever been to a sports game sober?



50% of seniors have had someone sleepover in their twin bed...



With their roommate home.

Do you have a postgrad job?

- Yes (11.1%)
- grad school! (20%)
- trying my best in the application process m (26.7%)
- no further questions (42.2%)



Did McConnell come back around after freshman year containment?

SURVEY SAYS... **YES! (54.5%)**

best event?

Anything at the Grove House  
 Freshman Year Halloween  
**Franzia**  
 DJ Mandy  
 LSU Mercadito

EXACTLY



## SOME FINAL THOUGHTS...

"love to the people and tomatoes to the institution"

"BYE SUMMER CAMP!"

"I am a better person because I went here."

"HEY DID YOU GUYS KNOW THAT THEY BOUGHT THE GROVE HOUSE FOR A DOLLAR"

"what the \*!?!- was that? who the \*\*\$! am I? what the ?-\$! are we doing???"

"and lol but i think we're all trauma-bonded by this off-brand Oxford experience."

# I wish my notes app were as messy as yours

Words by Madeleine Farr PZ '27

Graphic by Celina Steinberg PZ '27

My favorite part of the Outback is the notes app section, which features snippets of students' most random or profound thoughts as they appear on their phone. It recognizes an essential facet of the contemporary human experience — everyone with a phone and something to remember can relate. A breakup letter followed by a grocery list; a compilation of brain rot words ensuing a deep reflection about mass consumerism.

Immediately, I'm insecure. I probably sound fake and Netflix Original-y describing what I think a "normal person" notes app looks like. I'm sorry. Please keep reading.

A couple weeks ago, I was sitting with my roommate on the beloved couch outside our dorm—a lovely, warm evening. I'll look back fondly on those nights when she's a million miles away in Australia next fall — us, scrolling on reels, giggling and showing each other the "funny" ones. She showed me a video about opening your notes app to record some meeting time and instead being faced with the deepest, darkest thoughts of your early morning delirious self. Then she turned her phone back to herself, laughing and remembering that I couldn't relate. Now, I hate her and I'm glad she's going to Australia for a semester.

I was only formally diagnosed with OCD nine months ago. It was liberating; I'm working with licensed professionals and now have the language to describe my symptoms and an understanding of what obsessions and compulsions actually are.

But my notes app is bland as fuck. Minimal notes, with titles all formatted the same way (all caps, bold, emoji at the end). I can thank OCD for that.

Before the notes app it was Snapchat memories. I never had them. I could never look back on cringey times on my private story with "6 years ago" pasted in the top left corner. I turned on the setting to "Save to Camera Roll," so any photo I took on Snapchat — and I took thousands after I ran out of storage — went directly to my phone.

Then I would have to delete the extra camera roll album that came with downloading a photo from Snapchat. Over, and over, and over again.

OCD is a bitch, basically. For me, emptiness is a priority, as is uniformity. Yet, a mental civil war rages in my brain: I make fun of people who like minimalism and blandness and Kardashian-house-esque decor. I'm proud to say that no matter how

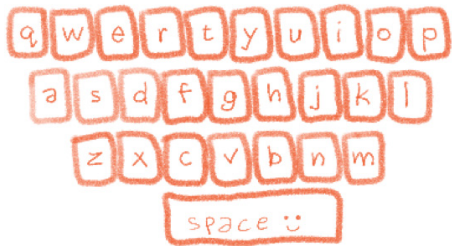


intense my obsessions have gotten, I've still embraced a colorful lifestyle. My room at home and my dorm here are colorful and bright, and I love both. But the knickknacks, the lights, and the trays that make it colorful must be placed just so. I'm pretending to be a cool girl.

I think girls who mix metals are cool, but I can't. I think girls with ornate, complex outfits are cool, but I can't bring myself to dress like them. I express myself primarily through jewelry, which is another part of myself that I like. But I still embrace uniformity — all my jewelry is gold (or whatever Target "gold" is).

As for my notes app, I desire to be nonchalant. Just as I desire to be nonchalant about the angle of my Macbook on my desk or whether my volume and brightness are at the exact same level across my devices ... My chance is currently through the roof.

When we come back next fall, I have a goal. Return to the Outback with a nonchalant, messy, "normal person" notes app, excited to contribute to the beloved section. Stay tuned to find out how I do.



# As seen in my notes app

Words by Willa Umansky PZ '27

**kangaroos are so scsry what the living fuck**

## fun questions to know about friends

what are really little things that you miss about your routines in high school?

do you think that the trump assassination at temp was fake?

**ugh**

because i will obviously miss you,

## Poems I love

Memoir - Robinson Jeffers

Meditation at Lagunitas - Robert Hass

Present - Margaret Ross

Before Disaster - Yvor Winters

Kings - Jessica Laser

On Time - John Milton

Precession of the Equinoxes - Kenneth Rexroth

Another Spring - Kenneth Rexroth

In the Station of the Metro - Ezra Pound

A Magic Mountain - Milozs

Account - Milozs

A Confession - Milozs

Theodicy - Milosz

To Mrs/ Professor in Defense of my Cats Honor and

Not Only - Milosz

Coffee Shop - Thomas Gunn

Skin Hour - Robert Lowell

Ezra Pound's Proposition - Robert Hass

Not Waving but Drowning - Stevie Smith

Musée des Beaux Arts - W. H. Auden

## Yeats

One must choose between perfection of the art and perfection of the life

## Paradise lost movie

Theo, write it and take drugs

## Robert Hass about his wife Brenda Hillman

We would be on a hike and we would hear a bird call and I'd ask her what it was and she would say 'the one that sounds like the orange scribble?' And I would think 'Oh Damn, I never would have thought that but it's so apt.' I always thought that it was because she has bad eyesight and I have good eyesight. She was making up the world as she walked through it, whereas I was describing it as I saw it.

## will i have this song that makes me think of you

creep by radiohead

## Text coco

Deli man beza's deli

## wants

new blundstones

cezanne sweater

cheek pore

Thesaurus

loafers

## The outback — lowkey logo at the top

CARVED:

newsprint magazine

Volume 4 issue 5 may 2025

# I hated suburbia until I didn't.

Words by Lucy Kaplan PZ '28

Graphic by Thea Riley PZ '28



On any given day, I complain about two of the three following subjects: American politics, burn-out, and boredom. I have found the former to be a constant these days, so it really just alternates between the latter two.

I find myself in a bizarre phase of my life. Wrapping up my second semester of college, I have found the past year has managed to be both over and underwhelming. Overwhelming: so many new faces, places, books, subjects, and intricate social conflicts that arise only when you suddenly live next door to the strangers who become your best friends. The burnout that I, among many college students, experience is a natural product of an atmosphere that demands a lot of us: academically, emotionally, and intellectually. However, none

of this has been the source of my internal conflict.

I was raised in constant motion. My parents, both academics with too many pursuits of intellect and passion to name, shaped my childhood into one of exploration. One sport per season. One book per month. One new word per day. I was once gifted an electronic bookmark with a built-in register of the Oxford English Dictionary, and much later, a record player so I could listen to music in my bedroom while my parents kept my phone in theirs (both testaments to the benefits reaped by doing things the “old way”).

I continued to attend schools among exceptional peers and under the guidance of life-altering

teachers. I dropped my penchant for organized sports, but picked up theater and journalism along the way. My whole life led up to the moment when I would carry my pursuits and lessons learned to a college education.

And I was underwhelmed. My predicament could perhaps be summed up most efficiently through a description of my geographic journey.

My childhood bedroom looked out directly onto a brick wall. For a New York City apartment, this was pretty standard. The lack of a view never bothered me because I never spent much time in my room. Moments spent with the door closed usually meant homework, temper tantrums, and early bedtimes that I resented.

Instead, as I presume goes for

many children raised in an environment such as Manhattan, most of my childhood took place outside of my cozy little nook. My mornings and afternoons were marked by walks to and from school, frequenting Halal carts and Starbucks on the way. The hours of 4pm to 5 pm were reserved for bopping around Riverside Park playgrounds. Rainy Sundays were for family trips to the museum. My exploratory cohort—made up of me, my younger brother, and our childhood babysitter—was unfamiliar with the meaning of the term boredom. Shortly after moving cross-country to the Pacific Northwest, I discovered the “Seattle Freeze”: the Seattle phenomenon that demands considerable effort to make friends, acquaintances, and even casual conversation. It required a certain amount of tenacity to break into conversation at my new middle school, a cohort that had been tightly knit since preschool. Perhaps a symptom of my homesickness, my best friend quickly became another girl who—in remarkably coincidental fashion—had also moved from New York City to Seattle the same year and now attended the same small school as I did. Even more impressively, our younger brothers are the same age, and our families are now close friends (Darby, we made that happen.)

Seattle is now home for me, but it took years for it to become that way. Moving from New York to Seattle meant no longer falling asleep to orchestral honking and headlights outside my window. It meant no more chats with the doorman, the gyro vendor, or the old guys we met playing pick-up soccer in Riverside Park. Steadily, it grew on me. The

months emerging from lockdown encouraged me to explore my neighborhood, a bustling center of queer artistry and BIPOC culture that I had taken for granted, because how could anything ever compare to Manhattan? Luckily, I eventually found excitement emblematic of my childhood nestled in cafés that doubled as bike shops and sketchy 7/11’s stocked with my favorite Gatorade flavors. A constant seeker of variety and amusement, I don’t believe my psyche was destined for the isolation of suburbia. There’s something about waking up to pure silence that unnerves me: not just the silence of my sleeping roommate, but the quietness that I know extends for miles in every direction. I will admit, this is utterly dramatic. I am lucky to be on a campus as vibrant as ours here in Claremont — I am forever amused to pass a cigarette-smoker, political protester, and suit-clad Claremont McKenna student all while on my short walk to class. Beyond campus, we are not 40 miles from the city of Los Angeles. (While I could argue that Los Angeles is not the metropolis people claim it to be, I will leave that debate for another day.) The point is that for the first time in my life, moving to Claremont had me feeling kind of bored. Even worse, I didn’t have an easy out. I had no plethora of museums to frequent (I do love the Benton, but I’ve memorized its walls at this point), younger brothers to bother, or a car to drive up and down the coast.

Thus, I have spent the last seven months learning how to exist in a world without constant stimulation. And I have to say, I have picked up some pretty damn cool hobbies along the way. Since this

past October, I have dipped my toes in creative writing circles, something that I used to reserve for my Google Drive and personal diaries. I have learned more Bob Dylan songs on guitar, plastered more doodles on my walls, and worked more hours as a grill chef than I would’ve thought possible. If you’re instead looking for academic proof of time well spent, I know more about coding than a public policy major perhaps should, have painstakingly designed a framework for bipartisan prison reform in the state of Michigan, and could explain the puzzle of American Jewish liberalism in bothersome detail.

Yes, that is the nature of college, but it is specifically the nature of a college that makes you take initiative in your exploration instead of handing it to you. I sometimes carry out little thought experiments, imagining myself in a parallel universe where I study political science in Washington D.C. or journalism in Boston. I would wear black boots and striped scarves, sipping on cappuccinos as I decisively walked between classes and internships that I somehow secured in my first year: the picture of incoming career success.

Instead, I have a café job that I love and a course load that allows me to take upper-level dance classes that I am not qualified to be in. I wear the same sneakers every day, and my walks between classes are painfully meandering. Through lapses in conversation and unmapped hours in my room, I have created space for myself to grow through introspection. Thus, I find myself here in Claremont, a community as wholesome as it is sleepy. Learning boredom by rote, I have grown anew.

# An interview with the Cachua family

Words by Maya Olson PZ '25



On May 30, 2024, Hugo Cachua was shot to death by an off-duty LAPD officer in Ontario. Founded by Cachua's sister, Melissa Miramontes, United Families for Justice (UFJ) is, according to their website, "a family based community dedicated to supporting families like ours who have lost loved ones to police violence and state-sanctioned brutality. We seek truth, demand justice, and hold those in power accountable." The Outback interviewed Miramontes and her brother, Luis Cachua, at a Community Building Workshop at Pitzer hosted by the Community Engagement Center and UFJ on April 18.

**The Outback:** First, do you want to introduce yourselves super quickly?

**Melissa Miramontes:** My name is Melissa Miramontes. I am the sister and best friend of Hugo Cachua, and I am here to speak on Hugo's behalf.

**Luis Cachua:** My name is Luis Cachua. I am Hugo's younger brother, and I'm also here to speak on [his behalf] and [answer] any questions you may have.

**OB:** For people who might not know [about Hugo], my first question is: can you tell us a bit about your story, why you're here on campus today? If a student who was reading this knew nothing about you, how would you explain your story?

**LC:** I'm here to get justice. For the people to know what's happening out in the streets, out in the world, in the community. The officers are in charge, to protect the community, which is the complete opposite of what they're doing. They're just using their power, corruption, and their lethal weapons, to take people's lives away. They're not being held accountable whatsoever. My brother, to me, was the dearest. He was my teacher. He was everything to me. He was my mom's first born.

For him to be taken away in that manner, I want everyone to know; that it can happen to anyone, and that pain that it leaves you — the hole — will never go anywhere. We just want these officers to be held accountable. And anyone else that commits murder should face the same penalty and not just walk free, and keep their jobs, and all of that.

**MM:** We really want everybody to know; when you think about Hugo, he was 37 years old. He was a father of two. He had a stepdaughter. He was a very good family man — a very great human being. He really cared for his family, really took care of us, really was there when we needed anything. He meant the world to us.

And when his life was taken from us by this off-duty LAPD officer, our whole life shifted. Our whole life has changed with Hugo being stolen from us. Hugo was killed. He was unarmed. He was shot multiple times, and he was defenseless. He was trying to survive, trying to get away, and yet this officer still took it upon himself to shoot an unarmed man... He did ultimately end Hugo's life. The Department of Justice, the law enforcement agencies — [they] refused to even give us an autopsy report to find out what happened. They continued to use exemptions and the investigation as a reason to withhold information of what happened that night.

We continue to try to fight to bring awareness to Hugo's story — and not just Hugo's story, but a lot of families who have lost their lives [because of] police brutality and [unjust] murders. There's thousands and thousands

of people a year getting murdered by police, and yet [we] still don't have a solution. There [are] still cover-ups. There's still corruption. There's still red lines and red tape that continue to protect these officers, in this system.

We want the community to know that this happened. Especially in Claremont. This happened 15 minutes away from here. Hugo grew up out here. We've been in this community basically our whole adult lives, our brothers' lives. When they were younger, they went to school out here. This is our community, and it happened out here. This officer was not an Ontario [officer]... He was not supposed to be in this area. He was not in uniform, he was not in a police vehicle, he was not rendering aid. There was no reason why he should have been in contact with Hugo.

Again, this happened in our community, and it's really brought a rude awakening. We hope that the community of Claremont, the college community, opens up their heart, opens up their mind, to something that is real. It's reality. It can happen to anybody. We want to have change. We appreciate you all who are taking the time to read this story, to hear us, and we hope that we see you in this fight for change for something better, for something greater, for your future.

**OB:** Thank you. Do you have anything you want to add? You've discussed how police tend to have their own legal system [at the event]. Do you want to explain that idea, as you've experienced it? I think your perspective on that is very pertinent at this time.

**MM:** According to the Department of Justice — which there's no nobody higher than the Department of Justice, right — they're actually investigating Hugo's case because he was an unarmed man, and that is a protocol: the Department of Justice steps in. The Department of Justice [granted] us an interview and told us that there was two laws: ...their laws and our laws.

... In reality, there is only one law. It is black and white. They are choosing to withhold the information [because] they feel like we're going to fall off and we're going to forget that this actually happened. We're definitely not going to. We're not going to forget what happened to Hugo no matter how long it takes. If it takes five years, ten years, we're still going to fight. The Department of Justice, they can use the time frames and use all these legal terms to [tell us] why they're not giving us this information. What the reality is, is they're trying to hold and hide information. They're trying to hide and create a narrative that is in their favor. Rather than holding their sick, demented, evil officer accountable, they are trying to make excuses as to why he should not be held accountable...

[The case is] urgent. We shouldn't have to wait a year to find out what happened to our brother. We shouldn't. There's no reason why. There's no reason. They know the truth. They have the investigation. I'm sure it's been done. They want to know: Do we hold them accountable, or do we try to hide this? That's basically what it comes down to. The system needs to stop trying to cover up and stop trying to protect these evil, unjustified

killings, because it needs to end.

**LC:** ...And these are the people that are supposed to protect us, but yet they're taking their lives from many people... and for anything. They back them up, so no repercussions happen to [officers]. It's very sad and it destroys families.

**OB:** In a challenging time where the laws are being broken by our own president, is there a way that you hold on to hope? How do you think about making effective change right now, when we're seeing this type of injustice on an even bigger scale?

**LC:** I would just say that the only way that gives me hope is for the people to open up their eyes. Once the people see that this [doesn't] just happen to particular groups of people, more and more the people will get together. The communities will grow. Once our voices are one, we become the strength of the states, of the country. No one else can overrun that. Once the people know they have the power to make change... Once the people realize [and say,] 'hey, that human being is hurting, I wonder why?' Or, 'it hasn't happened to me, but I can imagine.'

That's why I say, open your hearts, your mind, and [ask], what would you do if you lost your loved one? Think of the person you love most, and imagine them gone by the people that are supposed to be protecting you.

That's what I would say. I believe in the people. That's what gives me hope.

**OB:** Beautiful. Thank you. We all need a little hope right now.

# Naloxone Meditations

Words by Rylan Waterman PZ '27

Graphics by Blue Byrnes PZ '27

I walk by a man who has overdosed on fentanyl. His body contorts awkwardly off the curb at the intersection of Mission and 16th, legs stiff, levitating above the ground. His face is pale and he does not respond when a woman in a wool trench coat asks if he can hear her. He is bundled in layers of jackets and still does not respond as the lady in the trench coat and an older man wearing a maroon beanie phone the police.

*I am outside Birthplace of the Mission*  
Sty—

a pause, she has read the sign all wrong,  
—*I'm outside La Cumbre Taqueria... 521*  
*Valencia. He is not moving and his face is very pale. Yes. About five minutes. I do not have Narcan.*  
I, too, do not have Narcan.

Guilt rushes up from my stomach, through my gullet, to my mouth, drying my tongue and leaving my lips sticky. It would have been easy to bring with me. I think of my sister, who always carries Narcan on her, and only a couple of months ago was urging me to do the same:

*It's so small. And easy to use.*  
I had told her it looked like a tampon. She did not find this amusing.

*Bring it with you. It could save a life.*  
I said yes, I will, good idea Anna.  
And yet here I am. At the intersection of Mission and 16th where a man lies dying — and he certainly might die, because I did not have the time to reach into the medicine cabinet and grab one of those pink-and-white paper boxes on my way out the door.

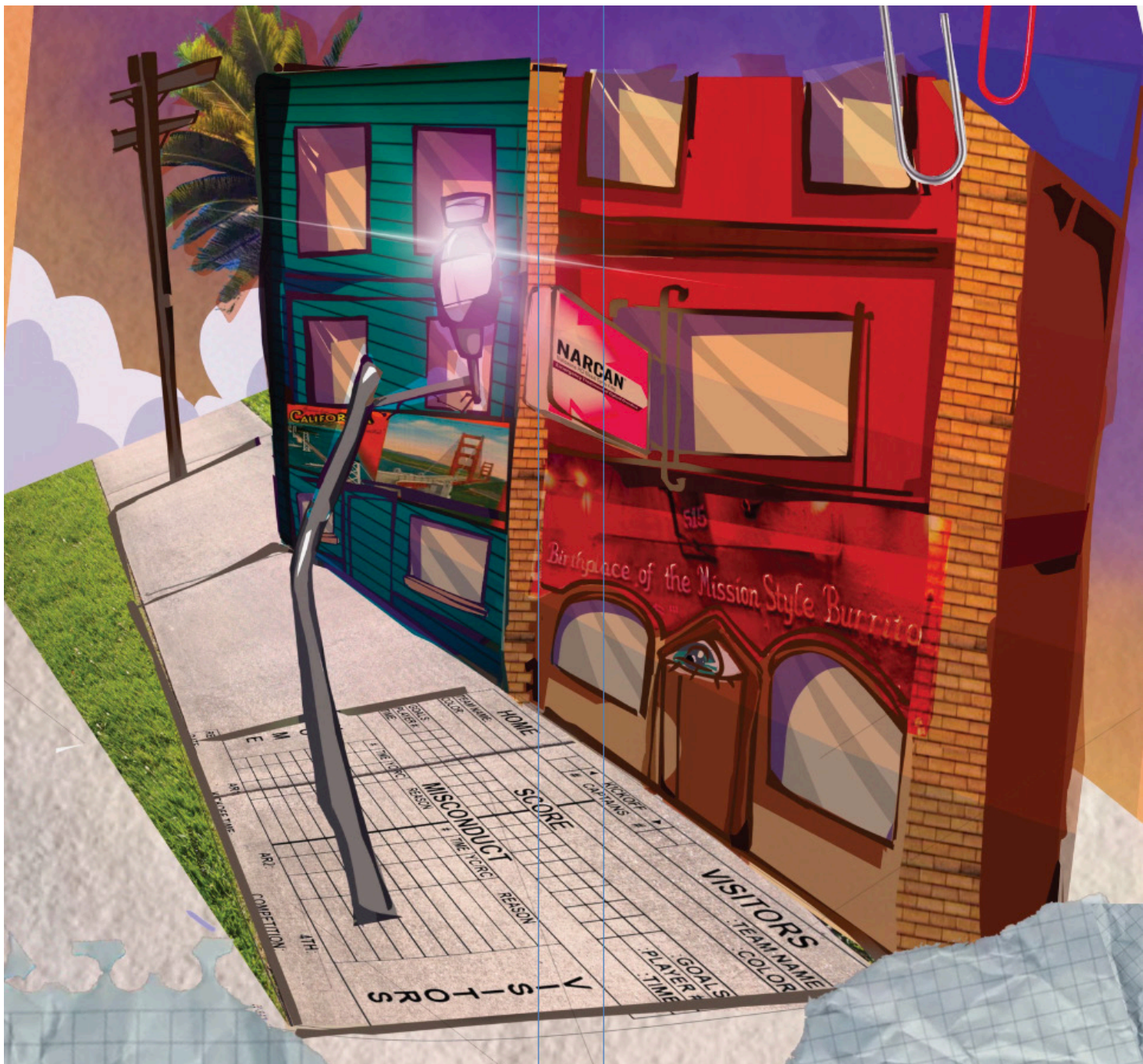
The lady in the trench coat and the man with the maroon beanie continue to speak frantically into the phone as I begin walking down the street again. Should I be walking away? I take another look back at the man. He is still levitating. What is the proper overdose etiquette, do I stay and wait for the ambulance? I would probably only slow down their rescue efforts. But I could have saved

him. I should not fault myself. No! Oh but I should — I could have saved him! I am guilty, I have... I have... I have a nauseating and blatant disregard for human life. I am morally reprehensible, I walk aloof to worldly afflictions, I cannot save this man because... because I do not care. His world is not my world, I can offer no sympathy for a man I have only just met. My love is finite, my altruism a limited and shrinking resource. This is not true. There is compassion in me. I am just too afraid. I am too afraid.

I wonder whether I would have ever noticed the man had I been walking down the street moments earlier, before the bustle and commotion, before the lady with the wool trench coat and the man in the maroon beanie. I am a native San Franciscan, and being one of the few (and gifted) to be born and raised on the tastes of It's-It Ice Cream Sandwiches (otherworldly) and the myriad smells on Muni (unpleasant, homey), I have cultivated some sort of supernatural ability that allows me to tune out all crazed-and-shouting addicts encountered on a day-to-day basis in the city by the bay. At this point in my life it comes as second nature, built through years of conditioning, and hundreds of experiences with the usually harmless, sometimes loud, members of the city's unhoused. It was a skill I would have touted at one point in my life. Now — as a man keels over on the street dying, I feel deeply wrong. I am wholly evil.

My college friends, visiting for spring break, are not as skillfully ignorant and take note of each irregularity San Francisco has to offer. I have a sinking suspicion they are marking down each incident, tallying it all in a big scorecard against my city:

**Incident 1.** Haight and Masonic. Adult male. The individual in question approached the victims and engaged in a brief verbal altercation. Suspect used profane and derogatory language: Punks, Fuckers,



Fucking Punks.

**Incident 2.** Market Street. Adult male. While enjoying a pleasant walk through San Francisco’s downtown, the victim’s eyes were assailed by the dirtied white moons of the suspect’s posterior.

**Incident 3.** Marina district. Adult female. More nudity, this time in its totality.

This all worries me because I have set out on a mission to show my friends how perfect this place is — it has taken great work to persuade the two New Yorkers, their Big-Apple elitism blinding them to the beauties of an unquestionably superior city. It has been harder still to convince my friend

from Middle-Of-Nowhere, Washington. I watch and try to gauge his impression of it all — when we walk through the Haight he quotes Lord Business from the Lego Movie:

*what a bunch of hippie-dippie baloney.*

I laugh, and worry more.

I love San Francisco so much I am blinded.

In wake of the conservative media’s feces-fueled fear mongering campaign against the city, I find myself increasingly combative. I know the nay-sayers are wrong, misguided, upset that their bridges aren’t quite as golden and their streets not nearly so winding. They fear modernity — this metropolitan utopia, Nirvana realized. San Francisco is beyond mortal worries like pain and suffering, this is the place to be, the place to love, the place to grow old.

The blindness of love was a problem that presented itself early in life, manifesting in an inability to let go of crumbling relationships with evil ex-girlfriends, (yes I'm petty, fuck you Ellis!) but it's also a blinding self-love. I worry — especially when I get high — that my satisfaction with life serves to conceal an expectation that everything will, and will always, work my way. When problems arise I write them off as anomalies in my beautiful life, blips in an otherwise perfect system. This ignorance works until it does not. Until I realize I have ignored a man on the verge of death.

I had hoped that in writing a short little essay I would trick my subconscious into presenting a neat moral of the story, gift-wrapped and tied off with a bow. Admittedly, as I reach the end of my word limit, I realize this has not proven to be the case. If you have read this far and feel cheated out of the past few minutes, I offer some objective facts that will perhaps make you feel better, perhaps state the obvious, perhaps tie this mess

together:

1. San Francisco is a beautiful city.
2. San Francisco is a city riddled with problems.
3. Some say that I am nice to look at.<sup>1</sup>
4. I would say that I am riddled with problems.
5. When I get high, I get anxious.
6. Sometimes, when people get high, they die.
7. I will bring narcan with me.
8. My sister is always right.

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<sup>1</sup>Source: *Myself, My Grandmother*

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# Little lessons from my freshman year

Words by Kayra Hidarlar PZ '28

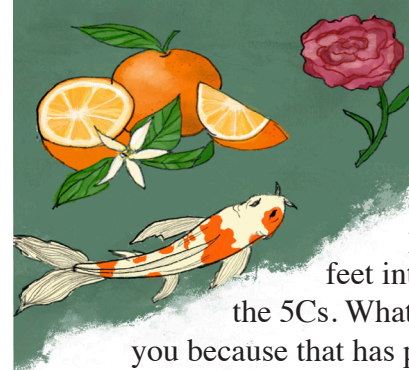
Graphic by Sonia Sidhu PZ '28

It feels like just yesterday I said goodbye to my family as we heaved all of my luggage, boxes, and decor into my new dorm at Pitzer. Somehow, I am already finishing my first year of college.

Not only will entering my sophomore year increase my chances of getting the classes I want, but I also think I will have a better sense of what home is like for me here. At the beginning of last fall, I was figuring everything out — learning where every building is, finding my people, developing my routine. Now I feel more confident navigating the 5Cs — for example, I actually know my way around (for the most part) and have found my community. Here's what I would tell my freshman self (or any incoming freshmen who might be picking up a three-month-old copy of this issue).

## **Just try that class that sounds cool**

Throughout my first year at Pitzer, I have taken some ridiculously interesting classes that I genuinely love, but I think the Food, Culture, & Power course at Pitzer takes the cake in terms of being the most unique. I went into this class with an open mind, though doubtful this class would inform my major decision. To this day, Food, Culture, & Power is a class I cannot stop talking about. This class, along with some others, has gotten me into some of the most fulfilling conversations, given me the opportunities to meet cool people, and helped me find my niche, which I am still discovering at the time of publication. I still am not fully set on a major, but I think it has been some of those quirky, unconventional classes that have helped me get closer to declaring one, because they have confirmed what I truly love learning about.



This is part of the beauty of taking classes at the 5Cs. We have the opportunity to take some unique, interdisciplinary courses across the consortium, where we can meet people outside of Pitzer and experience each school's niche. The fact that we have the ability to dip our feet into multiple fields shows the opportunities that we have by being a part of the 5Cs. What I'm trying to say is, take that class that may sound oddly interesting to you because that has personally opened up a new world of self-discovery for me and provided unexpected opportunities.

### **Prepare for your Spotify Wrapped to receive a glow up**

Being at Pitzer has contributed to a positive trend in my music taste. Before coming here, I mainly found enjoyment in listening to a lot of upbeat pop, and I still do, as I continue to explore pop artists to this day. However, I have also developed an appreciation for the genre of more calm and slow-paced indie. Charli XCX, Clairo, Faye Webster, Troye Sivan, Conan Gray, The Marías, and MUNA are a few of the many artists/bands that have been regularly appearing on a lot of my Spotify playlists recently.

And, come on, I know for a fact that most students at Pitzer like to listen to at least one of these artists. In an odd way, though, I think that finding these indie and new pop artists have not only helped me develop and refine my music taste, but it has also helped me find this more calm, cool, and somewhat artistic side of myself that I didn't realize I had before coming to Pitzer.

### **Don't be afraid to wander outside your Pitzer bubble**

Something that is interesting, and that I have noticed for a while now, is that not only Pitzer has become my home. I find myself hanging out at Scripps often, perhaps more than at Pitzer (this may have something to do with the fact that I am a Scripps Rising). I find this interest in romanticizing the Scripps campus, as I stroll and skip next to the orange trees, go to the Motley – matcha or coffee in hand – to study and chat with my friends, admire the turtles and fish swimming in the Scripps pond, and soak up the sun by sitting on the grass fields.

Another reason I think Scripps could be my second home outside of Pitzer is because of the community I found when taking my French classes there. I am passionate about learning the language and potentially studying abroad there, and it is nice to find people who have those similar interests as me. At the end of the day, I wouldn't have found my second home at Scripps if I hadn't gone out of my Pitzer bubble, so this is my message to explore the other schools around you!

### **For sophomore year**

I definitely want to try to continue trying new things and getting outside of my comfort zone. One way I would be able to do this is to get more involved in at least one or two clubs that I love, have fun being in, and am passionate about. While I do dabble in a few here and there, I definitely don't have enough consistency, and honestly, there are already a few that I want to fully become a part of (one of them being the Outback!).

I also want to go outside and connect with nature more often — whether it be through hiking, camping, or swimming in a creek. I don't intend to fully conform to the granola girl subculture at Pitzer (not that I have anything against it). But even though I feel that I don't fully fit into it, I think I would prefer to adopt those elements here and there, such as being more mindful of the environment around me and stepping outside more.

Overall, my one year at Pitzer has helped me grow, find my home away from home, and discover my niche interests, all of which have contributed to shaping me as a person. Going into next year, I feel that keeping these takeaways in the back of my mind will help make my Pitzer experience much more enjoyable and fulfilling than it already is.



# An Ode to the Outback

Words by Maya Olson PZ '25 and Sadie Wyatt PZ '25

When I was a freshman, I was asked to help revive Pitzer's newspaper. My answer? Absolutely not. I felt ill-prepared, overwhelmed, and wanted to be somewhere legitimate. Plus, who would be editor-in-chief? What would it require? I had no idea, and wanted nothing to do with it. Plus, I had just arrived at Pitzer, dyed my hair bright pink (canon event), and was taking Terril Jones' "International Political Feature Writing" course (rite of passage). I was still learning about the nooks and crannies, joys and sorrows, highs and lows of this beautiful place. I was learning about how actually, there had been no existing place for student work to be published, of art, of literary, of creative, of journalism, of anything. There was nowhere to tell the stories of our dining hall staff, our little happenings, brag about our beautiful outfits, and specifically, hold this institution accountable for change. There was nowhere — other than our beloved Student-Talk — for what The Outback now provides.

The best part about a student newsprint magazine? It's the ability to be whatever it is you need. However you feel toward this place, there is a spread for you to fill. Whatever's on your mind, what needs to be appreciated, what needs to be fixed; we're here to hear it.

The student newsprint magazine is a very special place. It is a place for both art and long-form investigation. Collage and confrontation, graphics and grandiose declarations of political affinities. It is a place where each and every thought is given weight and value, in whatever form it comes in. Which is why I adore it so much. It's an honor to have a historical archive of all that occurs here. It truly is.

Thank you to Ben for showing up to every single meeting, nodding at the very first one where I gave a speech for half an hour about what The Outback could be, and then making sure it turned into that. Ben came to The Outback as my friend, and now graduates being its longest-term Editor-in-Chief. Three semesters in charge, you have shaped this space. But your care and dedication has extended long beyond your official tenure; you are the voice of reason whenever anyone calls, you are the calm and collected confidant of writers big and small. Ben, your brilliance is the reason The Outback is so impressive, but your deep support for everyone is the reason it is so damn special, unlike any other place in the world.

Sadie, you have one of the best eyes in the game. You know exactly the potential this place had, and you kept it pushing until it was there. Thank you for fixing every typo, calling me to make sure everything came together just so. You should be so proud of how you've made this both a space for legitimate news and genuine interest. You are the embodiment of pluralistic expression; a STEM major with an appreciation for things you cannot quantify. Thank you.

And who in the world is a more perfect embodiment of The Outback than Willa? When I met you, I could see it; you are so incredibly intelligent, capable of quoting literature offhand and simultaneously making everyone around you laugh. I fear that I cannot encapsulate your infectious energy and enthusiasm in writing, as you are so much better at it. You are the reason people know what The Outback is: people fall in love with your brain, the way you carry yourself, your interests, and many forms of expression, so they read our silly magazine. You are a friend to all without letting your opinion or politics waver. You are The Outback. You are the reason it is read outside the Hub, you are the reason it has a look, a reputation, a name. I cannot wait to see where it will go in your hands. It has already become the most popular space on campus because of you.

The Outback is as much a physical publication as it is an intangible bundle of care and joy. We dub it our Labor of Love, but in reality it is a metaphysical being that follows you around. What can you fit in The Outback? It pushes you to think about what the world should know about this beautiful campus and the beautiful brains roaming on it.

My first letter from the editor said,

“Having a central space... encourages true change, accountability, and accessibility. It also encourages community, discourse, expression, and true amplification of the voices on our campus. Our focus is Pitzer, but we hope to encapsulate a time, movement, and generation, for both the now and whatever is to come... It is a meditation of care, and a means of questioning the institution that brings us together, to improve upon what we determine to be true. There are overlooked stories to be told. There are voices to be amplified. There is accountability to be had. There is so much to question, and so much to investigate, and still so much to celebrate”

And this I stand by. Forever and always, I will remain in the metaphysical Outback. Thank you, Willa and the staff, for making me laugh every Monday night, for making me sob at the incredible work that comes out of here, and making this something I will always be proud of.

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Early Spring Semester, 2023— It was my sophomore year and I had friends and already declared my major and even romance in my life. Yet I felt like I was floating, aimlessly and confusingly without something specific at Pitzer that I could call my own. I thought about the things that kept me grounded in high school. Something that was work and intellectually stimulating but didn't feel like effort because I was so excited to do the work. I loved the Newspaper in high school and journalism had always been a part of me... no genuinely, both of my parents were journalists growing up. However, they did tell me most of my life to never become a journalist. So, naturally, a student newsprint magazine felt like the right buoy—something for me to hold on tight to, hopefully stopping me from drowning into a sea of liberal arts students.

Maya Olsen was a girl I knew Of— she had cute outfits and was brave enough to send student talks and was definitely too effortlessly cool to want to be friends with me, let alone share her personal passion project with me. I was scared to ever go to a meeting alone because it was college and who goes to things alone, where are your friends you loser? But I knew in my heart of hearts that truly cool people like Maya Olson would go to things alone, so I went to an Outback meeting.

There were probably 5 people and there wasn't a structure or an issue coming out and I fell in love. I texted Maya asking, well begging, to be involved. I listed reasons why I knew I would be a great Managing Editor and she took me up on it. And then I was Editor in Chief and then I went abroad and cried and cried about it and then I came back and lurked in the corner and edited articles and now I have to leave again, but this time for good, and I can realize all this place has brought me. I learned Indesign against my will, and I can say I brought a club from 3 people to 40, and I know I helped create what hopefully will become a Pitzer institution. There were many times that it did feel like a lot of work, even though I loved it. But I have no regrets at all!

Maya and Ben have seen me probably at my lowest, my most creative, and my most excited, and I couldn't have dreamed of better Co's. The both of you made me fall in love with journalism again and I know I could tell you anything and I am so proud of you both. Willa, I couldn't be more proud of how you've grown and have not a fear in the world that you will continue to make the Outback a more beautiful place.

There comes a time in every Mom's life where their Baby grows up and no longer needs them. The Baby slightly rejects their Mom at times, and pushes Mom away, and naturally pulls Mom close in times of need. The Baby knows it owes some of its life to Mom, but feels it could, and will, be bigger and better than Mom ever thought it could be. I couldn't be more heartbroken and proud and loving and grateful to be leaving my Baby. I would say sorry for that weird analogy, but I know Maya and Ben would tell me to stop saying sorry. So I'm not.

I love you forever, Baby. I hope you grow so big and live for so long and pass knowledge down so many generations that you don't need to remember me anymore. It would be the greatest honor of my life for you to forget me.

Goodbye Baby and thank you Pitzer :)

**ACROSS**

- 1 timezone of claremont colleges  
 4 The inferior sports team at the claremont colleges  
 9 Video game company  
 14 Common pasta suffix  
 15 Phantom of the \_\_\_\_  
 16 \_\_\_\_ Dreaming  
 17 People everyone knows and seems to be everywhere all the time  
 20 What you put babies in to sleep, also houses  
 21 PZ hangout spot (sing)  
 22 The superior sports team on campus  
 23 Hoaxes  
 26 Personal identifier  
 29 Function  
 30 \_\_\_\_ Phillips, Professor at PZ  
 31 Leafy green  
 32 He speaks for the trees  
 33 Whimpered  
 35 Commonplace finals activity  
 38 F-150s  
 39 Found across PZ campus  
 40 The superior sports team at the claremont colleges  
 41 \_\_\_\_-theory, Econ Staple

- 42 document for proposed federal actions that are likely to have significant environmental impacts  
 45 Professional that deals with money  
 46 Cows noises  
 48 Yes? \_\_\_\_  
 49 Dowdy dresser  
 51 Ho Ho Ho  
 52 Website to decide classes, along with hyperschedule  
 57 Signs  
 58 \_\_\_\_ Bird gets the worm  
 59 Bow \_\_\_\_ Pasta  
 60 Often found on Mudd Field, Athern, or Green Beach

- 61 A barely passing grade  
 62 Use protection to avoid!

**DOWN**

- 1 Machu \_\_\_\_, Peru  
 2 lengths of wire, gut, or hide stretched to produce a rattling sound  
 3 intime, scrambled  
 4 \_\_\_\_ Chef  
 5 last 3 of url beginning  
 6 A headphone must  
 7 Standardized test for grad schools  
 8 Fish often found in poke bowls  
 9 Dumbledore, informally  
 10 To do a 180  
 11 Sodium bisulfate, for one

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14			15					16				
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22				23	24	25				26	27	28
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		49	50					51				
52	53						54	55	56			
57						58					59	
60						61					62	

12 To slow in music, for short

13 Put in bread to make it rise (Abbr.)

18 \_\_\_\_ Kids

19 A long while

23 Cats do this

24 Bank for military families

25 Phishing scemes

27 \_\_\_\_ping, a snooze

28 One of the Try Guys

30 Hanging tool for all dorm room decor

31 Chinese video app

32 Hairstyle for curly hair

33 \_\_\_\_-theory, Econ Staple

34 Mem\_\_\_\_, a trinket to take home

35 A must-do for exams

36 Pursue

37 \_\_\_\_ Tuesday

38 CBD relative

41 Cleaned the floor

42 Some Dadaist paintings

43 Enthusiastic

44 Like icarus, in the sky

46 Nickname for Mother

47 Lobot\_\_\_\_,

48 Trip to make friends as a freshman

50 Paid to your landlord

51 Dylan \_\_\_\_,

Professional Belgian Footballer

52 Holds a curtain up

53 Interactive Q&A

54 Music Genre

55 Magic, on scoreboards

56 Winter bug