

# WORD

FALL 2019

ISLA VISTA ARTS & CULTURE MAGAZINE



ISSUE 38

free

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# LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

You're not in control. And if that scares you, you're in the right place.

If you haven't figured this out by now, you will soon: you're surrounded by chaos. The more you try to get a grasp on it, the more you feel like your life is slipping between your fingers. We won't sugar coat—it's terrifying.

That's why you embrace it.

Why would you exert your energy to win a hopeless fight? You'll find that when you relinquish control of the world around you, you'll gain control of yourself. If it feels uncomfortable, don't stop—that means you're about to flourish.

So take these three months as a time to empower yourself. Don't be complicit. Take action against that which used to control you. If it sounds daunting, just flip through this little magazine to see that it doesn't have to take much.

Learn to notice when your friends are hurting and take action against what has wounded them. Realize that the relief of being genuine to others outweighs the fear of their disapproval. Face those difficult memories you've tried to forget, and use them to remind others that they aren't alone. Critical thinking is nothing without self-awareness.

As you turn these pages, look for the solace you can gain from them. Instead of fearing the future, ask those who are older and wiser where they find their happiness. Transform the ghosts in your house into a cartoon to giggle at with your roommates. Face your anxiety for what it is, and own it. And every now and then, wake up early instead of dwelling in the night. Mornings bring peace, optimism, and a spattering of breathtaking colors.

Keep your wits about you, and don't hesitate to bite the hand that feeds you—but remember to look for the people in this place who make it all a little less scary.

That's what this magazine is for.

Editors in Chief

Cassidy Brown & Summer van Houten

COVER ART // KIYOMI MORRISON

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# MORNINGS IN ISLA VISTA

PHOTOGRAPHY + DESIGN // HAVEN KATO



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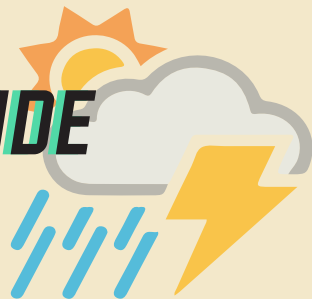
**ISLAND VIEW**  
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# AN ENLIGHTENING GUIDE TO SB WEATHER

## Translation of the Weather App

WORDS // LINDA CHONG ILLUSTRATION + DESIGN // PHOEBE JIN



**ATTENTION, ALL WHO ARE NEW HERE IN ISLA VISTA!** Yes, I'm talking to those of you who anticipate perfect, sunny weather-because this is California, and Santa Barbara is next to the beach. I'm talking to those of you who dress according to the weather outside your window and end up regretting the choice to not bring a hoodie. Oh lost ones, you don't have to be confused anymore. You are not alone. The weather in Santa Barbara confuses me, too. It's always rough trying to decide what to wear for class, because weather apps do not warn me of what's to come. A 71-degree day in Los Angeles gives me underboob sweat by 11 a.m. but 71 degrees in Santa Barbara, on the other hand, gives me numb fingers in the mornings but moist pits by three. What is the sorcery behind Santa Barbarian weather? Is it the ocean or just California in general? I've concocted the perfect guide to translate what the weather app's numbers actually mean.



### 40-50 Degrees Fahrenheit:

You will NEVER see this unless it is either nighttime or early morning. I cannot survive this weather without covering every spot of my skin. The wind and rain tackle all those who dare go outside, so be warned, soldiers, and wear armor to battle the cold.

### 51-59 Degrees Fahrenheit:

These numbers pop up on my weather app in the morning or during cold winter days. Just do yourself a favor and wear your sweatpants and a hoodie. Maybe even put some cute boots on your dog.



### 60-69 Degrees Fahrenheit:

Okay, still really cold. Usually with this number, you'd think the weather is actually a bit refreshing. Not enough to go to class, but refreshing enough to open the window to your room and relish the cool ocean breeze that replaces the stuffiness inside. You go outside ready to take on the day, but what awaits you are not waving palm trees; it's the wind trying to take our souls.

### 70-75 Degrees Fahrenheit:

Ah, the epitome of Santa Barbara weather. Slightly breezy, but sunny enough to feel like you're at the courts. On these days, there are always people doing homework on the grass and tall, sculpted men playing volleyball. Such wonderful days.

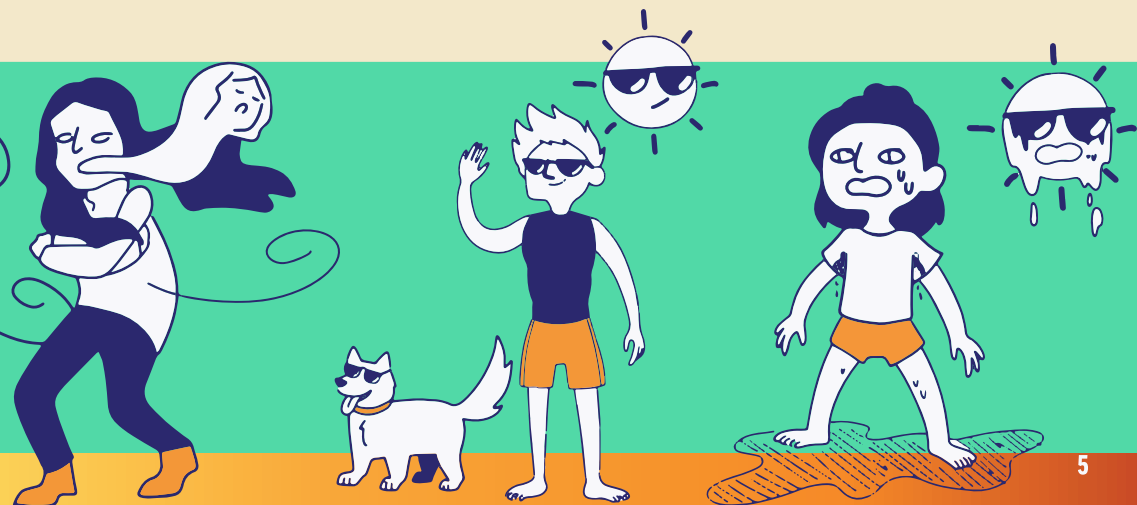
### 76-85 Degrees Fahrenheit:

The morning is refreshing, but you know that heat is coming. Stay indoors where the air conditioner protects you. Prepare yourselves. You will sweat as you bike, you will need to take ice from the dining halls, and you will sit next to a guy that smells during lecture.

I know it's a lot to take in, but each degree makes a difference. Weather determines our attendance to that Monday morning 8 a.m. Weather gives us sweaty pits right before our lunch dates. Weather makes us suffer through dead week with a cold. All the trial and errors have been done and organized for you. So don't be under the weather, get over it!



*\*Disclaimer: Wind speed is usually a consistent four to nine miles per hour. We're next to the ocean, no surprise there. However, if it ever reaches double digits, better luck staying indoors. W*



# ***SEXUALLY CURIOUS FEMALE SEEKS FEMINIST FELLATION***

**How Pornography Became Isla Vista's  
Newest Form of Sexual Education**

WORDS // SUMMER VAN HOUTEN  
ILLUSTRATION // HANNAH ANDERSON  
DESIGN // HAVEN KATO





### **“BE EMPOWERED, PORN WOMAN!”**

my housemate cheers as we watch Felix Vicious vigorously fellate Calli Cox’s extra-large strap-on in front of a crowd of cheering college students—students who are dressed so early 2000s, I find myself hoping for their own sake that none of this is actually real.

I look at my dear friends cuddled on the couch around me, most of whom are transfixed on the laptop, one who seems to be concealing an erection with a pillow, and wonder if they would fellate my plastic penis in the name of feminism. The recent passing of laws such as FOSTA-SESTA, which legalized the policing of sex-related material online (RIP, softcore tumblr porn), have already shut down so many online sex sites that we may have to start producing content in our Del Playa home—just like the reality-style documentary porn craze that took over Isla Vista and other college towns close to two decades ago. That touching scene I just described? Filmed in Isla Vista. Welcome to *College Invasion, Volume 1*: a raunchy adult film in which real porn stars infiltrate college parties to cajole white men into dressing as babies. And have sex with them sometimes, too. Available to view in its two-and-a-half-hour entirety for those who are willing to pay \$4 to a sketchy website that may give you credit card fraud in return.



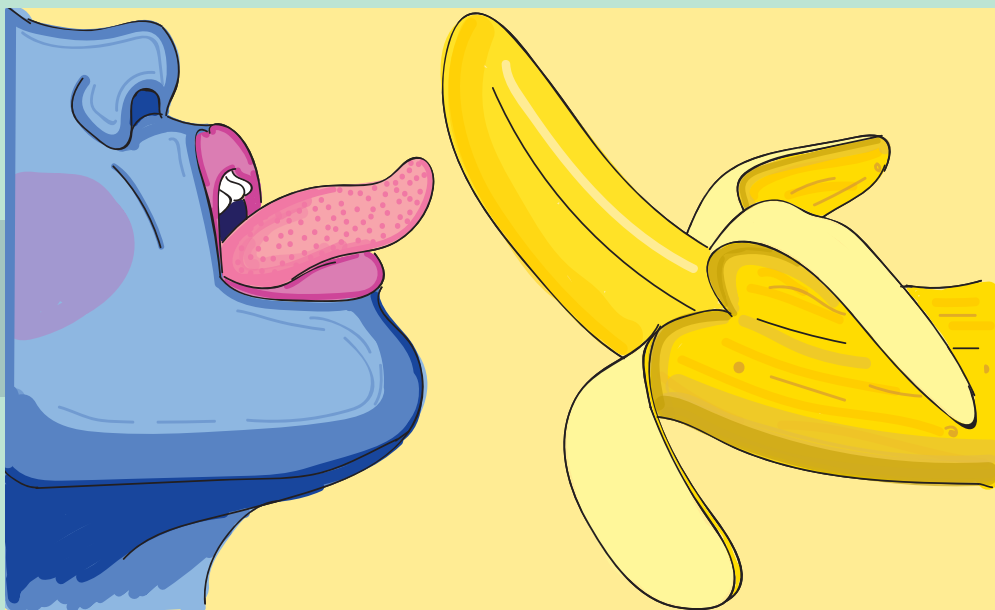
*Sugar: Black Women in Pornography* can be checked out from Davidson Library).

In 2000, porn in IV was literally filmed on Del Playa Drive, but in 2003 the university shut porn parties down, deeming it as an exploitative practice—and to be honest, I can’t really argue with that. What I can argue with, however, is an article published by *The Bottom Line* in 2012 condemning the use of pornography, particularly in public libraries. “Why is something that objectifies and desensitizes intimate relations so sought after?” the author cries. To which I scream back: human sexuality is so much more nuanced than that! And also, I’m on Pornhub in the library more than I’m on GauchoSpace.

**To me, it seems that pornography is one of the only parts of Isla Vista that couldn’t care less about how you get your rocks off.**

Although personally I am not aroused by watching badly-dressed men and women cavorting around as though they have ownership over porn stars’ bodies, I do find myself curious about how pornography is functioning in Isla Vista today. Our brief flirtation with the reality porn industry may have ended, but UCSB has caught a reputation as the academic porn capital of America thanks to the course “Porn Culture,” taught by Dr. Constance Penley, as well as the work of “porn professor” Dr. Mireille Miller-Young (her book *A Taste for Brown*

As consumers of sexually-explicit material, it is necessary for us to recognize the darker side of the adult film industry. As my dear friend Maya Chiodo states, “Pornhub is the Walmart of pornography.” While that is a truly fantastic sentiment, the easy availability of our most secretive kinks on sites like Pornhub, Redtube, or Youporn is often the result of pirated content—which makes it difficult for producers and performers to make any money from their work. The rise of the internet has also led to increased competition without increased



pay, minimal job security, and a heightened demand for physically taxing scenes without mental health check-ins for performers.

Mainstream pornography also fails to take experiences of non-heteronormative identities and expressions into account. Those of us who crave narratives other than the conventional ‘oral sex, penetration, come shot’ storyline are left to scroll desperately through “Popular with Women” categories in the hopes of finding a mediocre girl-on-girl scene that doesn’t overtly cater to the male gaze. And of course, there is the notion that female—note the double standard—porn stars are victims of sex trafficking or childhood sexual abuse, popularized by documentaries like *Hot Girls Wanted* or the rhetoric of anti-porn feminists who claim that the choice to participate in sexual objectification isn’t really a choice at all.

To be clear: you can’t call yourself a feminist if you spend your time telling people what they should or shouldn’t do with their bodies.

In a sex-negative culture like the United States, where my sex education in high school consisted of my Health teacher

playing and then rewinding back a graphic video of a woman’s vaginal delivery, and where I was eighteen years old before I realized that girls could masturbate too—maybe pornography here, as problematic as it can be, is still a better education than the complete denial of sexual desires that fall outside the heteronormative sphere. I don’t think porn should be used as the gold standard of sexual education. There are far too many penis-toting persons in the world who think jackhammering is the key to the “elusive female orgasm,” and many films fail to accurately represent the necessary processes of consent. And most importantly, where are the depictions of accidental queefs?

Still, as IV resident Fernando Gomez notes, “There are certain things in porn that you can try in your own sex life, and some of them will work, and some won’t.” One of my former lovers once said something so ridiculously cliché to me in the bedroom that I had to excuse myself to go giggle about it—but the incident started a conversation about our sexual desires that we may not have had otherwise.

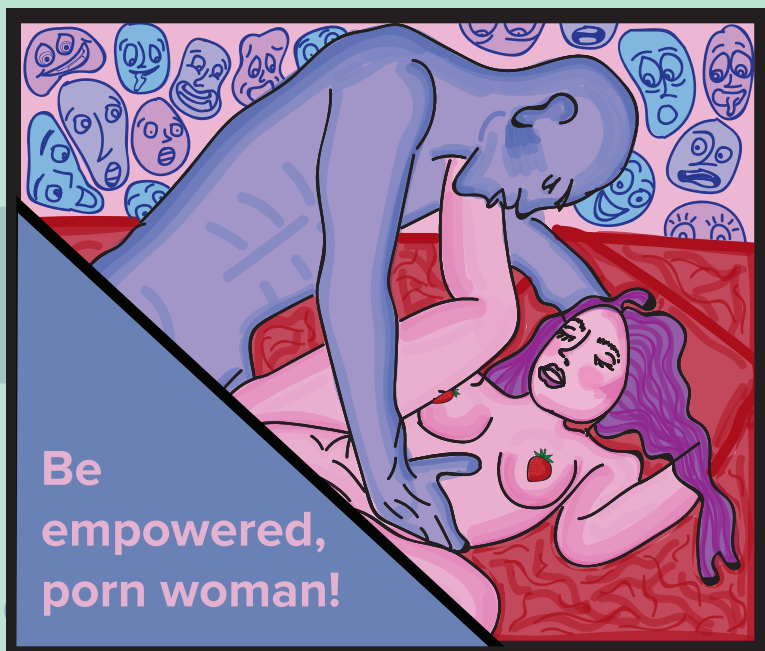
The increasing visibility of feminist indie pornographic projects in recent years offers a solution to those of us caught between our rampant sex drives and hesitancy to support exploitative production companies. Websites like XConfessions, Bellesa, and CrashPadSeries include sexual material ranging from non-normative gender expressions to consensual kink to the hilariously accidental queefs I've been so desperately searching for.

In Isla Vista today, where sexual behavior is regulated by drunken heterosexual norms, many of us turn to pornography as a way to explore those sexual curiosities we may not feel comfortable expressing in the real world. "The IV hookup culture is mostly focused on male satisfaction. Pornography is a way for me to filter my sexual experiences and take agency in my own pleasure," remarks UCSB student Georgie Goldberg, a sentiment mirrored by her peer Mia Winther-Tamaki, who credits pornography for teaching her that sexuality and pleasure go hand-in-hand

and giving her the confidence to claim her right to orgasm. My own sexual exploration in Isla Vista has been halted by the popular assumption that any femme girl-on-girl action is performed strictly for male attention. To me, it seems that pornography is one of the only parts of Isla Vista that couldn't care less about how you get your rocks off.

I will admit, maybe we shouldn't be masturbating to "Passion by the Poolside" in library bathrooms as a study break. But by failing to acknowledge the power that pornography can hold, we miss a valuable opportunity to start a conversation about our sexual desires—one that has been noticeably missing from mainstream understandings of sexuality. Imagine a world in which porn stars instead came to Isla Vista to teach students the magical art of cunnilingus. Two decades from now, future versions of us could be getting off and educated at the same time.

My advice? Watch porn with your housemates. Who said friends with benefits couldn't be educational? **w**





# *SEARCHING FOR SAFETY*

WORDS // ADDIE TANZMAN PHOTOGRAPHY + DESIGN // RACHEL DENG

## Sexual Assault in IV



## THE HOOKUP CULTURE OF IV

permeates through every party, kickback, or mixer you attend. From the moment you enter Del Playa and its beachfront properties with blaring loud music, you see it: boys shouting down from a balcony for you to join their party or walking next to you on the street, saying they have an in and you're invited. In this environment, casual sex is the norm. Unfortunately, this hookup culture quickly transforms into something else. During your first year, you quickly learn what to expect of boys at parties. It's completely normal for them to pass you a full handle of Vitali and encourage you to drink up, or to introduce themselves right before telling you to go take a shot with them. You get used to boys grabbing your waist from behind without even bothering to ask your name. We are growing up in a time where hooking up with a new person each weekend is normal. This culture, while not inherently bad, is what allows for sexual assault to be so prominent in our little town.

Unfortunately, the easiest targets for boys who are on the prowl for vulnerable girls are freshmen. Freshmen are new to the area and generally do not know what to expect when they go out the first few times. Mia (name changed to protect privacy), a UCSB student who is a survivor of sexual assault, explained to me that the night she was sexually assaulted was her first college party. She was a freshman and hadn't even been in IV for a full week. Prior to her assault, she had planned to save herself for someone special—maybe until marriage, maybe until the right guy—but that all changed her first week at college. Mia went to a party one night with friends and drank a lot, as many of us do when we go out. She danced and had fun, barely noticing the boy who was following her around the party, until she got ready to leave. He invited her and her friends to an after party. She said yes. She had been drinking all night, so her inhibitions were low. After the next party, he invited her back to his place. With some encouragement from friends, she decided to go. When they arrived at his place, he gave her even more to drink. When asked, she told



him that she did not want to have sex, but he ignored her. She lost her virginity that night, and it changed her forever. Unfortunately, Mia's story is not rare. Mia did nothing wrong that night, and if she had been in a different place, or if any number of variables had been slightly different, it's possible she never would have had that experience. She did what all of us have done at some point in our IV careers, but that night, her life was changed forever. One in three women is a victim of some sort of sexual violence. One in six women has experienced attempted or completed sexual assault. What happened to Mia has happened to millions of other individuals, and it has to stop.

I later asked Mia if there was anything she wished she had known before that night. She said that rape is not black and white, but everything in the gray area of questioning whether what happened to you fits into the mold. "It's not some stranger in an alleyway who sneaks up on you out of nowhere. It's a guy in your dorm, that boy in that fraternity, the boy you sit next to in class." Eighty-five to ninety percent of rape cases on college campuses are committed by a person the victim knows. Many of us are all too familiar with the feeling of second guessing our own experiences because we have been taught that sexual assault is this concrete idea when really, it can be a

multitude of situations between individuals of different identities in all different settings.

Four months before I graduated from high school, I was sexually assaulted by a boy who I had known for over ten years, one who I once considered a friend. He came to a neighborhood party I was at with three of his friends. I was well past drunk by the time he arrived. One of his friends, another boy who was once my friend and whom I trusted deeply, told me to go to the bathroom. I went, and found my rapist waiting for me. He then took me to the utility closet of my next door neighbor's house and forced me to have sex with him, ignoring my protests and my pleas for him to stop. At one point while we were in there, one of his other friends opened the door. He saw me on the floor, naked and crying, and left. When I returned to school five days later, I was a ghost of the person

I used to be. I could barely make it through the days, constantly wondering when and where I would run into my rapist. I found out that his friends who were there that night, who had facilitated my assault,

had told people that I was a bitch to my rapist. That I had been mean to him at that party because he never "got his nut." I lost someone close to me because she began dating my rapist's best friend. I have begun coming to terms with what happened to me, but there will never be a day where I do not

"It's not some stranger in an alleyway who sneaks up on you out of nowhere. It's a guy in your dorm, that boy in that fraternity, the boy you sit next to in class."



question what could have happened if one of his three friends had told my rapist that I was too drunk to have sex. I will always question whether my friend's short lived relationship with my rapist's best friend, who voiced his disbelief of my rape, was worth losing our friendship. I will always question whether or not his friends were right, whether I was a bitch to him, because I said no many times, but then did not fight back. I will always question whether or not my rape was "real" because it was not what we were taught in school.

I do not blame my friend for dating that boy, and I do not blame those other boys who were involved, but I will always wonder what could have been. I empathize with them, because they were raised to think that they could get whatever they wanted, even if it meant forcing a girl to have sex with them as she begged them not to. I empathize with our generation and those before ours who were not raised to ask for consent, and respect the answer, whatever it may be. I empathize, but I wish for more. I wish for us to change our generation and raise the next generation to respect all genders and identities and their right to say no, and to understand that while no means no, so

does silence, and intoxication, and anything short of an enthusiastic yes between all members involved.

Mia was sexually assaulted during her first week at UCSB, but she stayed. She decided not to let that boy define what this school could be for her and has excelled here since that time in her life. The night that I was assaulted, I drank too much, like Mia. My inhibitions were low, like Mia. I trusted a boy to respect my wishes when I told him no, like Mia. After my assault, I lost the sense of safety and belonging that I had felt in my town. I no longer wanted to be a part of a community that housed rapists and their facilitators. After graduation, I moved 3,000 miles away from the town I grew up in. Unlike Mia, I let that boy redefine my home for me. I could not see past my trauma. I came to IV, hoping to find that sense of safety again, before realizing that IV has the same problems that I left. The difference is that I truly believe we have the ability to end sexual assault here. We can stand up, raise our voices, and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. We can expect more from our peers. We can make IV the safe, wonderful place that we all know it can be. We can prove to Mia that she made the right choice. **W**

#### RESOURCES:

RAINN network <https://www.rainn.org/>

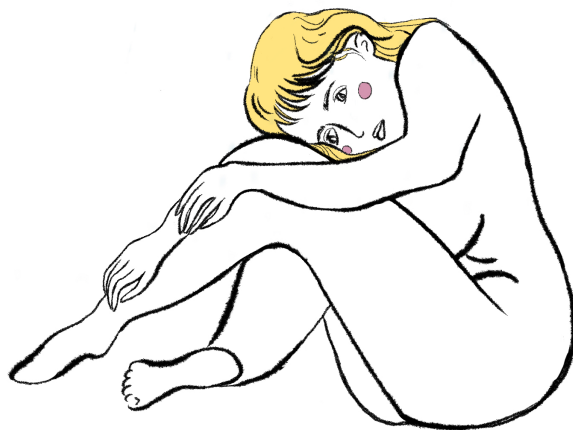
CARE (located in the WGSE room in the SRB)

National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE



I empathize, but I wish for more.

# *MY STRANGE*



WORDS // MAYA CHIDO

ILLUSTRATION + DESIGN // MARINA SONN

# *ADDICTION*

**WHEN HEALTH BECOMES A DANGEROUS HABIT**

## I AM RECOVERING FROM AN ADDICTION

I never thought I would have. For almost two years of my college career, this addiction changed who I was as a person and prevented me from living a flavorful and delicious life. This out-of-control compulsion was an eating disorder.

At its peak I was a total recluse. I would make myself go to bed as early as 9:00 p.m. in order to feel rested for my daily 6:30 a.m. yoga class or 55-minute-minimum run. It made me miss trivia nights at Woodstock's, karaoke at Lao Wang, sake-bombing, movies, and parties because I couldn't stray from the daily regimen that my drill-sergeant-self had assigned. But, like a drug addict, I was in denial of all of this.

Suffering from an eating disorder (ED) is not wholly equivalent to drug addiction, but for me there were a lot of similarities. I'd get anxious about eating meals with other people, for fear that they would inevitably notice my avoidance of any food that would actually make me feel full. I didn't want to be around people because I didn't want to be caught. I wanted to live in my own world, high on starvation, without the judgmental gaze of friends or family to contend with.

This was my personal experience with an eating disorder. At least 30 million others in the United States also suffer from an ED according to the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, but each of those 30 million people deals with their unique set of issues. The detrimental tendencies I inflicted upon myself were controlled by that yoga mat-toting, kale-eating monster we call "healthiness." To be specific, I was suffering from orthorexia. And if I'm being

completely honest with myself, I continue to suffer from orthorexia today. Once you have an eating disorder, you always will. For people with orthorexia, that means constantly having to contend with that Lulu-Lemon-wearing devil on your shoulder endlessly whispering to you the number of calories you've consumed, minutes you've exercised, or grams of sugar you've swallowed. *Psychology Today* says that orthorexia involves an obsession with "clean" or "healthy" eating. Sufferers base their self-worth off of how well they abide by the food regulations they have contrived, which are based upon a fabricated image of purity and health. The truth is that the most "fit" people,

who are perceived to be the epitome of social success, have hindered social lives due to the amount of time and energy required to maintain their temple of a body.

**WHEN COUNSELORS USE  
NUMBERS AS REMEDIES,  
PATIENTS TURN INTO  
A DATA POINT**

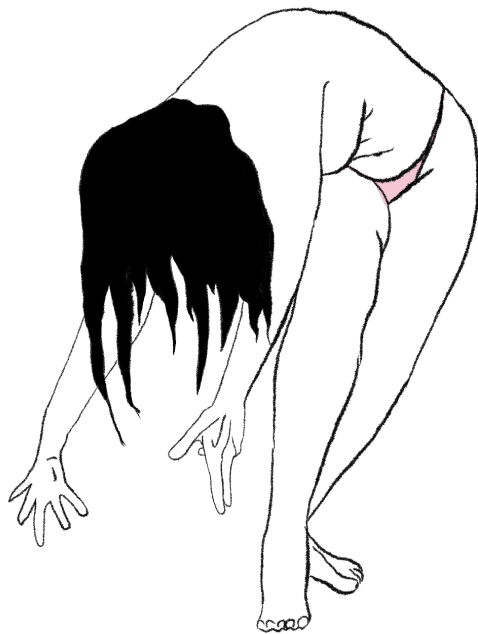


For example, casual drinking becomes an all-out obstacle course in order to maintain the visage of healthiness. For me, that meant only consuming tequila shots to trick myself into thinking that as long as the liquor wasn't accompanied by a sugary soda, I'd be existing within the realm of minimal calories and pure ingredients.

Actually, if you take the time to pay attention to the drinking habits of your peers, you may find that this phenomenon exists everywhere. There's even a term for it: drunkorexia. The University of Texas, Austin has an entire web page devoted to the subject, where they cite that "30 percent of women between 18 and 23 diet so they can drink." A 2017 *Vice* article on the bad habit points to the fact that it's difficult to tell whether or not drunkorexics have an eating disorder, a drinking problem, or both. The blatant irony of this method is that nothing about it is "healthy." Starving yourself to compensate for consuming empty calories is bad for your liver, your stomach, and your well-being. This fixation on healthiness may not only lead to eating disorders, but can also make recovery from them nearly impossible.

This reality is true for Adriana Montes, a first generation Chicana college student finishing out her last units at UCSB. Since age ten, Montes has struggled with an eating disorder. According to the body mass index (BMI) chart, which measures the body fat of adults and is in Montes' opinion, "complete bullshit," she was overweight. Since our culture equates being overweight to being unhealthy (think Michelle Obama's "Let's Move!" campaign), her disordered eating was ignored and never addressed by doctors, let alone family or friends.

A similar story is true for Emily Elrod, a Psychology and Communications double major at UCSB, who told me about her struggle with starving herself and abusing laxatives. Again, the BMI chart was used as an end-all measure for healthiness; but in this case, Elrod was in the space considered as "normal," which prompted people to congratulate her for her weight loss. Even her counselor at the time told her that she didn't have an eating disorder because she wasn't underweight. The fact that you would have to be visibly emaciated in order to warrant medical treatment is incredibly indicative of how the image of "health" breeds impossible standards and self-destructive habits.



**THE FACT THAT YOU WOULD HAVE TO BE VISIBLY EMACIATED  
IN ORDER TO WARRANT MEDICAL TREATMENT IS INCREDIBLY  
INDICATIVE OF HOW THE IMAGE OF "HEALTH" BREEDS  
IMPOSSIBLE STANDARDS AND SELF-DESTRUCTIVE HABITS.**

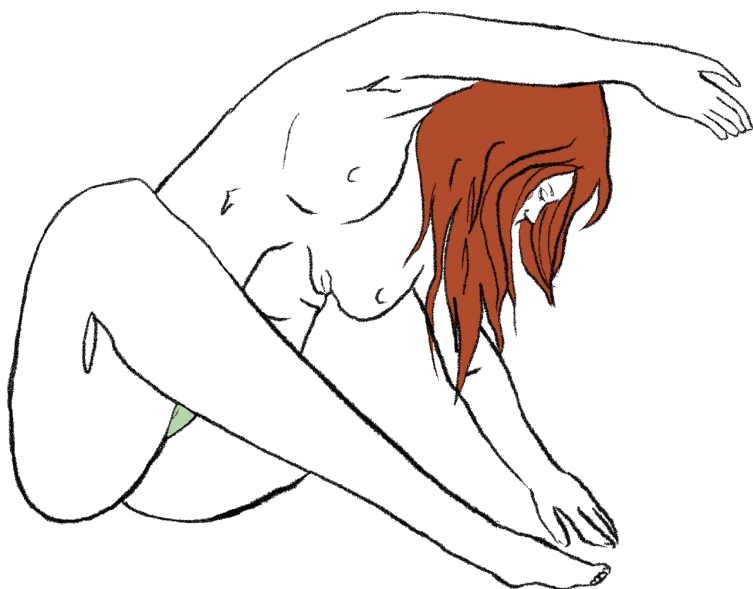
In Santa Barbara, “healthy” culture is everywhere, so the ED recovery process is particularly fraught. For Montes, making friends with size-zero (how is zero even a size?) girls when she wasn’t even able to find clothes that fit her in local boutiques was a major source of torment. On top of that, Montes had grown up in Mexico, where she was raised to believe that whiteness and thinness were ideal physical traits that made life easier. Her “overwhelmingly Catholic” community put particular pressure on the young women, while “allowing boys to grow up without a responsibility in the world.” Many cultures create ideals that are virtually impossible to reach. Though these sought-after qualities may differ from culture to culture, the same issue remains: that there is a standard that we are all measured against in the first place

For those in eating disorder recovery, reaching the “healthy” (what the fuck does healthy mean anyway?) range on the BMI chart shouldn’t be the primary goal, because it leaves out so many other issues that accompany eating disorders. When I was

told to weigh myself every day and count my calorie intake, it just became a new thing to fixate on. It wasn’t about improving my quality of life; it was about reaching a number that supposedly meant I was “normal” or “okay.”

When counselors use numbers as remedies, patients turn into a data point, losing the physical, cultural, and psychological traits that make them unique. Finding reprieve from an ED isn’t about finding a new health standard to strive for. For Montes, it involved taking time off of school and becoming financially stable so she could afford to focus on feeding herself and healing from her ED. Even more impactful for Montes was becoming part of UCSB’s queer community, which she calls the most “open and body positive” part of the school.

“I would feel comfortable wearing nothing more than a bra and skirt at queer get-togethers, because everyone knows what it’s like to feel different there.” And there lies a target that is worth striving for: embracing our differences and saying to hell with health standards. **W**







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The most amazing homemade authentic Mexican Food in Isla Vista. Our food is made fresh daily, with homemade gluten free tortillas, a special blend of spices passed down for generation gives you the feeling of down south without leaving home!

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# *HAVE YOU SEEN MY SISTER?*

Getting to Know Careless Cub

WORDS // EVA JUENGLING BEAN  
ILLUSTRATION // THERESA PHAN

PHOTOGRAPHY // MARCOS REYNOSO  
DESIGN // DANIA ASCENCIO



**TUCKED AWAY** in intimate backyards, emanating from garages lit by string-lights, or pulsating onto Del Playa from patios overlooking the ocean, the drum beats and guitar riffs of IV's music scene have become a mosh-heavy cornerstone of IV culture, no matter the day or time.

One of the bands finding a voice in the nooks and crannies of DP is Careless Cub, a three-piece surf-rock band consisting of lead singer and guitarist Grant Chesin, drummer Andrew Becker, and bassist Ray Muhlenkamp. Drawing inspiration from classic rock bands like the Eagles, The Beatles, and Led Zeppelin and mixing it with a laid back, singer-songwriter feel, they played their first gig in 2017. Now, two years after their official inception, they're known in IV for their high-energy shows and dearly loved local hit, "Isla Vista."

"I visited UCSB my freshman year, when I was still going to school back at a community college in Sacramento. I met Andrew through my friend from back home who went to UCSB," said Chesin. "When I moved here the following year we started playing together, but we weren't Careless Cub yet."







Ray Muhlenkamp and Grant Chesin, missing drummer Andrew Becker

Eventually, a backyard encounter led the band to add Muhlenkamp as a bassist. “We met Ray because we were playing in my yard, he walked by, and he just started talking to us. He played bass, and a couple months later we asked him if he wanted to be in Careless Cub,” Chesin explained. Thus, Careless Cub was born.

The moniker is a story within itself. “We were really bad at picking names,” Chesin laughed. “I really like wolves—they’re my favorite animal—but I was like, ‘We cannot put wolf in our name. We do not sound like wolves.’ So, we picked ‘Cub.’” Chesin also described an early desire to be as free of audience expectations as possible. “For the ‘Careless’ part, we thought, ‘How do we have no expectations when people see us, and blame it all on our name?’”

Since then, Chesin, Becker, and Muhlenkamp have slowly gained traction as a trio while engaging with the spontaneous energy of IV. “We played our first show in a yard. We invited 50 people and there were over 100 people in the yard by the end,” said Chesin. “We were like, ‘No one even knows who we are,’” he laughed.





Although a high turnout may have been surprising two years ago, it definitely isn't anymore. Especially not after the band released "Isla Vista," a song that has now, quite literally, become synonymous with the IV band scene. "I actually wrote that song before I moved here. I visited twice and I was just like, 'I'm just going to kind of go for it,'" said Chesin. "I don't actually have a sister—that's what everyone's question always is," he clarified. He explained how instead, the lyrics themselves are a little bit more serious than the catchy, upbeat tune lets on. Writing it, he said he envisioned "a person who's kind of lost a little bit of their self-worth," and paired it with what he saw in the negative side of IV: "allowing yourself to indulge too much."

Although the song might be on the serious side if you dive into the lyrics, the immediate excitement that sweeps through the crowd upon hearing the sharp strum of the song's opening is infectious. "I'll see people at shows who I've never seen before. I don't know how they're connected to us, and they know all the words," said Chesin. "It's the first time I've ever written a song where people sing it back to me."

Having achieved a solid hold on the IV backyard scene, the band is now looking to expand and reach a wider audience. They've begun to put feelers out in downtown Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, playing venues such as Wine Therapy, Telegraph Brewing, and Slodoco. In Chesin's opinion, however, digital reach is just as, if not more, important. "It's about how you traverse this electronic age of getting your music out there. You want to get on these playlists and you want to do so much. I think the next step is trying to get more followers, more listens, but also creating an [identifiable] sound."

It's clear to anyone who's walked the streets of IV on a weekend night or paid a visit to an IV park during a community event or festival: there's an energy that surrounds the music scene here that is unlike any other. Chesin sums up how this energy feels from the other side:

"It's crazy how you can show up with people who have never seen you or heard of you and it just feels like a full-on concert. It's literally like, a small PA system, a drum set, and two guitar amps and you feel like a rock star. It's really awesome." **W**

Check out WORD's Intro to IV playlist on Spotify, comprised of bands that either got their start or still play in IV. We also recommend The Advocates, Posthuman, Tiki Luau Lounge, and Aqua Stallion for a good live show boogie. Happy grooving!

**Isla Vista**

Careless Cub

**Lustful Eyes**

Reefcity

**Content**

Modern Genre

**Drinking on the Roof**

The Mallards

**Idk Don't Ask**

The Six Sevens

**Break**

Odd Army

**Sugartooth**

Feral Vida

**Yikes-a-Daises**

Careless Cub

**Anybodyoutthere**

Modern Genre

**Ashes**

Feral Vida

**We Had a Ball**

Odd Army

**Cog On**

The Mallards

**Fomo**

The Six Sevens



To listen to this playlist on Spotify open the app, go to the search bar and scan this code with the camera icon in the top right corner.



**HEY, ISLA VISTA!**

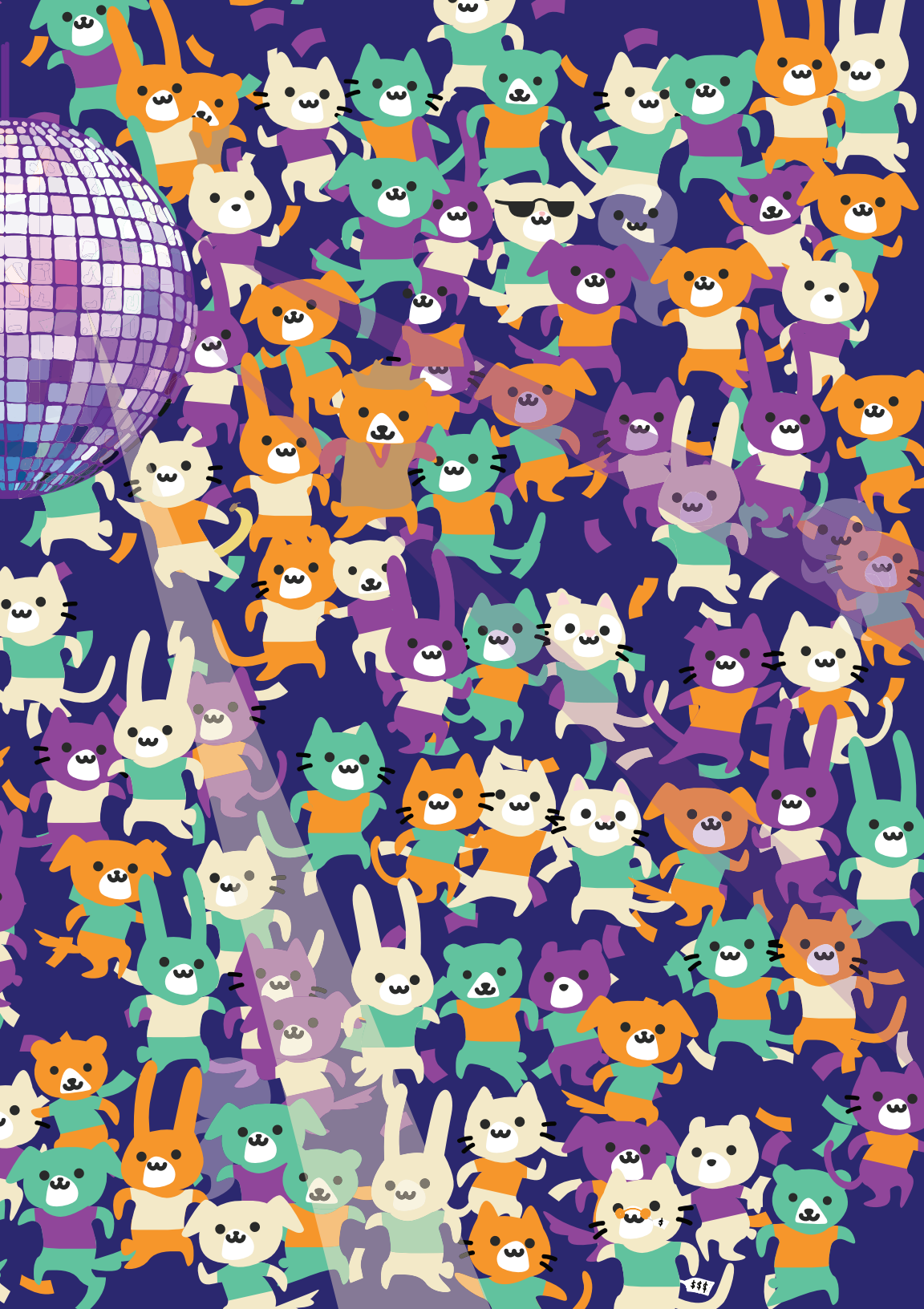
# iSPY

ILLUSTRATION // PHOEBE JIN + THERESA PHAN

Take a break and join a disco party!  
Can you spot the following in the lively crowd?

WORD Magazine's famous albino raccoon  
Three Careless Cub members dancing the night away  
A banana to snack on later  
A cool dog wearing sunglasses indoors  
A cat with a party-appropriate sleeping bag  
Barney the purple bear  
Four ghosts wiggling to the beat  
A thrifter cat wearing its newest find  
Your local Friendship Manor resident





# NOW LEAVING: ISLA VISTA

Are We Now What We Feared Before?

WORDS // MICHELLE POLITISKI ILLUSTRATION // DANIA ASCENCIO DESIGN // JASMIN TAYPAN



“During Halloween weekend, it was like the entire world shut down around us. It was basically a true holiday to all of us, except we got to feel the pride of it being our holiday,” she said.

“During Halloween weekend, it was like the entire world shut down around us.”

“There are multiple factors, for sure, but police presence is huge. If you’re a local here and you can throw a party the week before and have three cops working, or you can have a party that weekend and have 250 cops working, you’re probably going to have it before or after,” Schroeder said.

A group of stylized, faceless figures in various costumes, including a baseball player, a ghost, a unicorn, a mummy, a vampire, and a pumpkin head, standing against a dark blue background.



## There's a certain level of pride involved in wherever you live that doesn't always carry over when you leave the community to spend a raucous weekend somewhere else.

makes out-of-towners so dangerous? Schroeder detailed the most common types of people who flock to IV for the holiday.

He said, "They fall in different groups. There's a group that comes to sell drugs and you'll see them walking around in a hoodie with a backpack. There's a group that just wants to party, and then there's a group that just wants to take advantage of drunk people, whether that be stealing from them or taking advantage of them physically. They're bad actors, and they insert themselves into these parties and end up causing a lot of problems. But of course, the majority of them just want to party and have a good time."

To many Isla Vistans, it makes sense why out-of-towners would be prone to causing trouble. I care about IV because it is my home and where I spend most of my time. There's a certain level of pride involved in wherever you live that doesn't always carry over when you leave the community to spend a raucous weekend somewhere else.

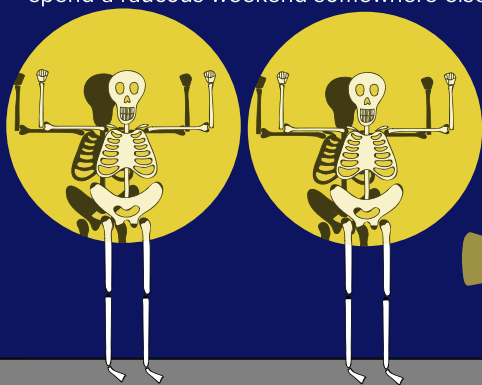
The solution for many students in IV who want to enjoy Halloween has been to simply go to a different school, despite out-of-towners having been a problem here. Common destinations include Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and the USC/UCLA area, where students aren't as restricted with guest policies and noise ordinances.

It's a toss-up whether we'll see the same sorts of shutdowns at other schools that we've seen here. Pei Ja Anderson, a second-year UCSB student, talked to me about why other communities might have more resources to handle these kinds of events.

"Places like LA are such big cities that are very different from the IV and Goleta areas, where it's so concentrated with college students and much smaller. I think SLO would be a better comparison, but I hope we don't wreak havoc there," she said.

Because there is no quantitative proof that Gauchos have caused a significant ruckus at other campuses, this theory is based mostly on speculation. Nonetheless, it's safe to assume that if the streets of IV are empty year after year, the students are going somewhere.

It seems, though, that Isla Vistans may not have to skip town to enjoy Halloween





in coming years. Schroeder provided a glimmer of hope for those who want to see Halloween make a comeback.

He said, “This year, we’re not moving cars off of Del Playa, since the crowds have been so small. We’re starting to kind of give people their freedoms back a little, because they’re working with us.” While it took several years to pass all of the ordinances and regulations that are currently in place during Halloween, Schroeder believes that things in government work a little more quickly when it comes to reversing placed restrictions. This means that in the next couple of years, we could see Halloween crowds begin to grow again.

However, our responsibility as locals remains, even if Halloween comes roaring back. It could fall again as quickly as it did in recent years if we don’t exercise caution with the space we inhabit. Isla Vista has been a carefree, creative, and proud community for many years. Keeping it safe fun is to all of our benefit, including those we invite in from out of town if they soon themselves in our shoes. **W**

## **Tips and Tricks from IVFP for a fun & safe Halloween**

- 1.** Know a group of people—whether you’re in town or out of town—and stay with them, no matter if someone falls out of line.
- 2.** Keep your cell phone charged! Many problems arise when your phone dies. CSOs have often set up charging stations for this purpose during events.
- 3.** Don’t have your first experiment with an unfamiliar drug during an intense party environment. You often won’t know the person who sold it to you, and it’s an easy situation to go south if you don’t know how your body will react.
- 4.** Drink water! This one should be obvious, but it’s one of the easiest things to forget.

# DEPOPOCALYPSE NOW

## Thrifting Gentrified

WORDS // SAM DREITZER   PHOTOGRAPHY // GAVIN MENTZ  
DESIGN // RACHEL DENG



**IT'S HALF-PAST FOUR** in the morning, the wee hours of another workday in bustling Los Angeles. Though the sun hasn't yet begun its rise over the City of Angels, Abel is wide awake and preparing for a long day ahead.

Abel is an independent vendor of vintage clothes, and with the help of his keen eye and sharp business sense, he's made a living off clothing sales since he immigrated to the U.S. from Mexico 30 years ago. He's out the door by 5:30, has his canopy and racks set up by mid-morning, and will not be back home until 7:30 at night or later. As he's looking through boxes for clothes to sell, there is a very real chance that his finds will be snatched from his hands or stolen from his cart by a wealthier vendor to be sold elsewhere at a dramatically inflated price. With vintage fashion as a growing trend that shows no sign of slowing down, instances like this

are becoming increasingly commonplace for vendors like Abel. Suddenly, the low-income, often undocumented people who depend on clothing sales for survival find themselves toe-to-toe with hobby vendors in a competition that feels impossible to win.

In many ways, the rise of thrifting is an encouraging turn of events. As fast fashion has fallen out of vogue, many people have become more conscious of the impact that their shopping choices can have. On top of this, people very much enjoy the added creativity that thrifting can bring to their wardrobe; your imagination is the only limit to the looks you can serve with the help of a thrift store. However, like everything, this trend has a dark side.

Abel's daughter, second-year Environmental Studies major Gabriela, grew up in the world of vintage fashion, and has seen thrifting evolve from something that poor students were shamed for into the biggest trend in fashion. With her project for a class on Latinx poetic expression, Gabriela sought to bring light to this dark side, wearing a thrifted outfit with price tags featuring both the price her father would sell each item for, and the artificially inflated price charged for the same item by a wealthy vendor. In a conversation I was lucky enough to have with her, Gabriela elaborated further on harmful thrifting practices and ways to thrift consciously. She sees that gentrification of the vintage clothing market has really taken off in recent years, and has noticed an influx of entitled vendors from privileged backgrounds. These vendors often sell in expensive vintage stores and on platforms like Depop at extremely high prices. As a result of this and the market's soaring competition, vendors like Abel are faced with higher prices and maintenance costs than ever before and are struggling to make ends meet. Many

immigrants turn to vintage clothing sales as an accessible livelihood that doesn't require a Green Card or follow strict regulations—these vulnerable communities have become the underdog in a field where they have long been the lifeblood.

None of this is to suggest that you shouldn't thrift; thrifting will always be a better alternative to the capitalist horrors of fast fashion. The key is to thrift responsibly and sustainably, and the key to that is awareness. In Gabriela's eyes, this is (more often than not) simply a matter of informing yourself as to where your money is going and thrifting with the intent to support local vendors and others who sell clothes to get by. The gentrification of secondhand clothing

sales is a serious problem, but by thrifting consciously, we can begin to solve it. I know as well as anyone how

amazing it feels to find something great at a thrift store, and to serve a cold, hard look with confidence. Make no mistake, though: The best looks are those served with a clear conscience. **W**

The best looks are those served with a clear conscience.

For more tips on how to serve sustainably, turn the page and check out, "Sustainability, But Make It Fashion" by Kody Chong.



# SUSTAINABILITY, BUT MAKE IT FASHION

## *Resistance Through Wardrobe*

WORDS // KODY CHONG  
PHOTOGRAPHY // GAVIN MENTZ  
DESIGN // HANNAH KARIM

**NOWADAYS, IT ISN'T DIFFICULT** to spot people using reusable straws in lieu of single-use plastic ones or toting thick canvas bags to lug their groceries around. While these small efforts are both admirable and effective, there seems to be less discussion over how other parts of people's daily routines, such as the clothes they wear, have an even more harrowing impact on the environment.

For example, did you know that it takes 2,700 liters of water, enough water for one person to drink for two and a half years, to make a single cotton shirt? Fast fashion (cheap, mass-market retailing geared to satisfy ridiculously quick trend cycles) is one of the biggest sources of pollution globally, coming second only to Big Oil. And the issue is progressively worsening as consumption culture thrives in today's capitalistic climate. Considering how voting with your dollar is one of the most effective ways to demand change, it is crucial that we are more cognizant about what products we advertise on our body. After all, they represent the morals we stand for. Granted, being a completely sustainable consumer is impossible and requires the initial privilege of having access to environmental education or even the liberty to choose one's own clothing. Yet just as we staunchly continue our small efforts of resistance symbolized by metal straws or canvas bags, those who can, must try. Here are a few tips on how to minimize your wardrobe's environmental impact:



**Consumption culture thrives in today's immensely capitalistic climate.**

## 1. Buy and Sell Clothes Second-Hand

This is probably the most effective way to consume more sustainably, as it hampers the manufacturing of new clothing. Some online thrift shops to try are Depop, Poshmark, and Etsy, while local options include Alpha Thrift Store and Destined for Grace.

## 2. Know Your Materials

Not all materials are equal in their impact on the environment. Nylon and polyester are both non-biodegradable and release nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas 310-fold more potent than carbon dioxide. Rayon, wool, leather and PVC have been proven to release harmful chemicals as well. Some sustainable alternatives are organic cotton, recycled polyester, hemp and organic wool.

## 3. Repair Your Clothing Before Tossing It


For many of us, when our favorite pair of jeans no longer fits or a hole pops up in a sweater, our first instinct is to toss it out. However, getting the item altered and repaired by a tailor or dressmaker is often cheaper and more sustainable than replacing it. Although it may seem tedious, this is a simple effort that has a large impact.

## 4. Beware of Greenwashing

Not only are fast fashion conglomerates aware of the sustainable fashion movement, but many are capitalizing on it, releasing “green” clothing lines or pledging to donate a percentage of profit toward environmental foundations. This “greenwashing” is often fictitious; almost no regulation is needed to stamp an article of clothing as “sustainable,” and no percentage of donations compares to the damage done by manufacturing the clothing in the first place. When unsure, research the company to see whether they have a transparent mission toward sustainability.

It is crucial that we are more cognizant about what products we advertise on our body. After all, they represent the morals we stand for.

## 5. Educate Yourself

Though these tips may be a helpful first step, there is a larger responsibility to educate ourselves on the environmental detriments of unsustainable fashion. Some recommended sources are: *The True Cost* by Andrew Morgan, “You Are What You Wear” TED x HKBU by Christina Dean, and *Overdressed: The Shockingly High Cost of Cheap Fashion* by Elizabeth L. Cline. 





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## A semi-serious guide to bike path survival

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**WELCOME TO UCSB**, which at this point in time (if we were to relate this to history), is parallel to the end of the lawlessness of the wild west. Halloween is dead, Floatopia is gone, and UCSB has climbed ranks amongst its sibling universities. To amplify the “taming” and accompany the transition of this chapter in UCSB’s development, there is a recurring segment of this magazine dedicated to a PSA for all who inhabit the bike lane. Most have been touched upon with sass—and more sass will be added—*but* this is also aimed at answering the simple questions of the bike lane.

To start: before getting on your bicycle, make sure you are following the tire pressure allowed for your set of tires. Ensure you have proper threading in your tires—my slip at the roundabout next to the MRL/Marine Sciences Building is still fresh in my mind. Before you start, make sure to also ensure your brakes are aligned equidistant from your rim rotors, or if you’re fancy, your *disc-brake* rotors.

As you are riding, make sure that you feel comfortable looking over your shoulder while following a straight line. You made it to UCSB—you can *also* learn to do this. It ensures you can be aware of other cyclists behind you and appropriately switch lanes. Following this, also make sure you can ride with only one hand, as signaling is equally as important for cyclists as it is for drivers.

Riding with a friend is nice, but going side-by-side on the bike lane is extremely annoying. Please make sure to ride single file. It's not only a huge nuisance, but a safety hazard for the rest of us to circumvent you.

When coming to a stop, just like on the highway, give people adequate space in front of you. It's safer for both parties. The buffer between you and the next cyclist comes in handy when they make a left hand turn on the right side of the lane, and you almost rear end them with a dozen eggs in your bag (true story). The stoplight at the Pardall intersection, from red to green, is only 15 seconds—I've counted—if you time it right, you won't have to stop. Acknowledge the instance when you don't time it right by stopping at the light—a car will one day run you over, and we will see the aftermath on Facebook's Free & For Sale. Let's not.

Obey the rules of the lane and stick to the right as a default. I know some of y'all don't have a driver's license (I grew up in a place with better-than-average public transportation—what's YOUR excuse?), but come on, this is common knowledge—we even do this on escalators! (Unless you're in the UK.)

The left-hand side of the lane is for making a left-hand turn or passing someone else. Otherwise, for the love of Buddha, stick to the right.

Roundabouts—here we go again—know that those inside it have priority. Do not be surprised at their conviction to cut you off. Hesitation on the bike lane is dangerous, so please respect the priority of those in the roundabout. If you're currently in the turmoil of the roundabout and can see the hesitation in those incoming, signal that you plan on exiting with your hand directly pointing ahead. We need to place in bold, the already bolded YIELD sign at the entry of those disasters.



On the topic of headphones: your tunes may be a *bop*, but it seriously puts others at risk if you are not paying attention to your surroundings. Please try to avoid placing both headphones in (or take them off altogether). We're all trying to make it to our discussion section and not participate, only simply existing there to soak up those sweet participation points.

Beach cruisers, just don't.

They're not efficient and they take up a lot of space. Just purchase a more comfortable seat for a 6KU bike and carry on.

When parking, make sure you lock the frame of your bike to the rack. If you can, lock the front and rear wheels with a cable lock. Try to avoid leaving it in foreign parking racks, in IV or on-campus overnight.

For the night riders: please invest in some reflective tape, slap it across your frame, and maybe invest in some lights. As everyone seems to ride without a helmet, we really need to compromise here.

**Ride safe Mapaches! W**



# HAUNTED ISLA VISTA

WORDS + ILLUSTRATION // HANNAH FORD-MONROE

I have a ghost in my house. His name is Scott and he lives in my attic. I wondered if other Isla Vistans had apparitions in their homes, so I did some intensive research (posted in Free & For Sale) and collected these goosebump-inducing tales. GET SPOOKED.

## Encouraging Healthier Habits

Liv's ghost is named Evelyn. She's a kind spirit, but she often messes with Liv's drinks.



Liv had some wine on top of a 6-foot shelf. She was home alone and left the room.



When she came back, the bottle had moved to the floor, unshattered. This happened three times.

Once, Liv got home to find all her doors and windows inexplicably locked. The bottle of champagne on her counter had mysteriously exploded.



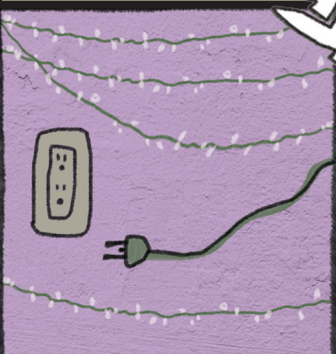
certified  
VOT  
CHILL

## Apple Pie Delta



Bea has a ghost that lives in her room at her sorority house. Once, she saw it in her mirror.

When Bea called her friend in to tell her about seeing the ghost, the Christmas lights on her wall started flashing.



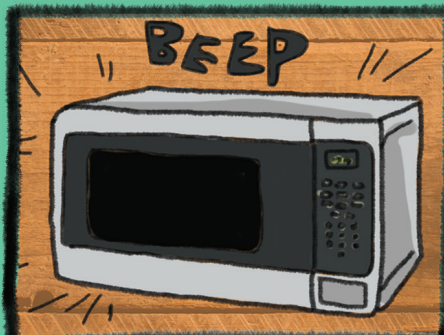
The lights WERE ABSOLUTELY NOT PLUGGED IN!

# Object Earthquakes

Pia has a ghost named Gigi, who is sus as hell. First off, Pia and her roommates hear their names whispered at night.



Often, one item in their room will start shaking even though everything else is completely still.



One time, their microwave started shaking, and when they opened it, THREE car alarms went off outside.

Since all this crazy shit went down, they have saged their room and things have been normal.



## Ghost Goes Tech

Rachel has a ghost named Steve. One time, she got a text asking if she was home alone.

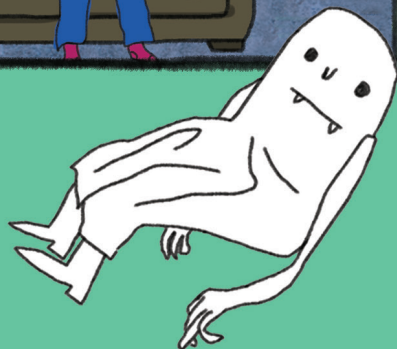


Her housemate Melissa was home, so she typed out:



No, i'm home with Steve  
No, i'm home with Steve  
No, i'm home with Steve

"Melissa" autocorrected to "Steve"!





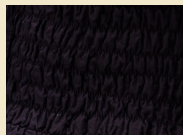
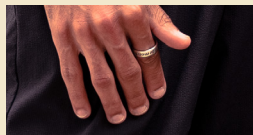


**Antonio Robles Levine &**

@blesstonio

**Dorothy Tang**

@pressedassglittersoy milkbitch



# STREET STYLE

Fits of IV

PHOTOGRAPHY // MARCOS REYNOSO  
DESIGN // NICK SONG



**Chloe Hiu See Tsang**

@chloehiuseetsang



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## *Isla Vista Trading Post*



**Individual Expression**

**Community Involvement**

**Environmental Consciousness**

**Clothing Pickups Sunday's 3-5! DM us @ivtradingPost**

# AROUND TOWN

ILLUSTRATION + DESIGN // THERESA PHAN

## Magic Lantern Films

IV's personal movie house screens the best of current cinema and occasionally keeps you up all night with a Harry Potter or Lord of the Rings marathon! Friday and Monday at 7 & 10pm in IV Theater. Only \$4.

[www.facebook.com/MagicLanternFilmsIV](http://www.facebook.com/MagicLanternFilmsIV)

## AS Program Board Films

AS Program Board is a student-operated, non-profit organization that provides fun and educational events for the UCSB community. You can depend on AS to show a terrific free movie every Tuesday night in IV Theater.

<https://aspb.as.ucsb.edu>

## MultiCultural Center

Make MCC your "home away from home." They host a thrilling program of culturally high-powered events on campus, in Isla Vista, and in Santa Barbara.

[www.mcc.sa.ucsb.edu](http://www.mcc.sa.ucsb.edu)

## Jeffrey's Jazz Coffeehouse

Swing by one of their free jazz concerts! Jeffrey's is more than a music and poetry venue; it is a place of healing and solidarity that welcomes all Isla Vistans.

[www.facebook.com/JJCIslaVista](http://www.facebook.com/JJCIslaVista)

## Biko Garage

Local bands, famous bands. Bands, bands, bands. Keep your finger on the beat at their facebook page.

[www.facebook.com/BikoGarage](http://www.facebook.com/BikoGarage)

## Be the Producer

Need advice on producing your own show or performance in the wilds of Isla Vista? Ellen Anderson, the director of IV ARTS will happily help.

Ellen Anderson at [eanderson@ihc.ucsb.edu](mailto:eanderson@ihc.ucsb.edu)

## The BOX

Do you wish your visual art could be ogled by thousands every day? Display it in The BOX, a student-curated gallery located in the lobby of IV Theater. Exhibits range from skateboard art to watercolors. Open to all students! Email the curator for more information.

Andy Ochoa at [ivarts@ihc.ucsb.edu](mailto:ivarts@ihc.ucsb.edu)

## IMPROVABILITY

Start your weekend with a laugh. Join the audience of UCSB's award-winning improvisational comedy team and be a part of their fast-paced show. Voted Best Late Night Entertainment at UCSB! Fridays, 8pm in Embarcadero Hall. Only \$3.

[www.facebook.com/islavistalive](http://www.facebook.com/islavistalive)

## UCSB Theater & Dance

Just 30 seconds from Isla Vista! Walk through the flashing Pardall Tunnel and your world opens up to thrilling theater and dance performances. Check out their current season and low-cost student tickets.

[www.theaterdance.ucsb.edu](http://www.theaterdance.ucsb.edu)

## Laughology

Live stand-up comedy shows. Past comics include Vincent Oshana, Rory Scovel, and Andy Hendrickson. Always funny, always free, most Saturdays at 8pm in Embarcadero Hall.

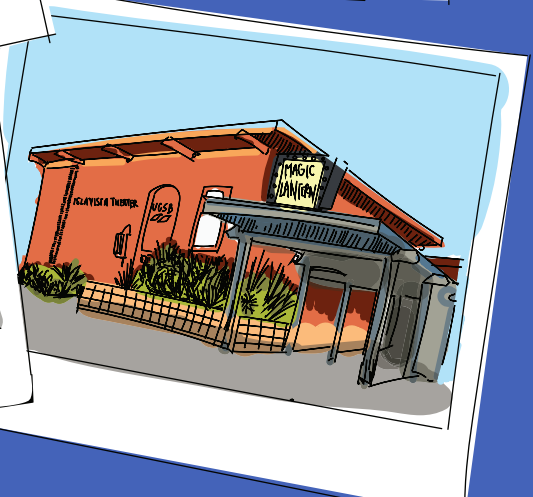
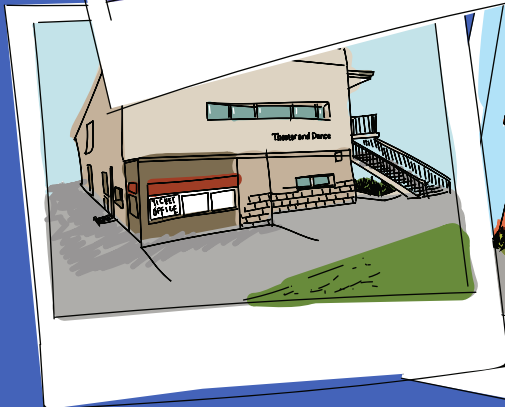
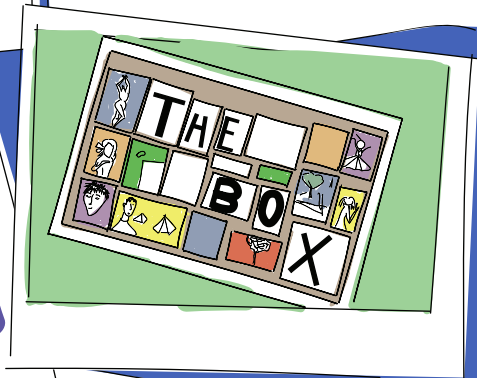
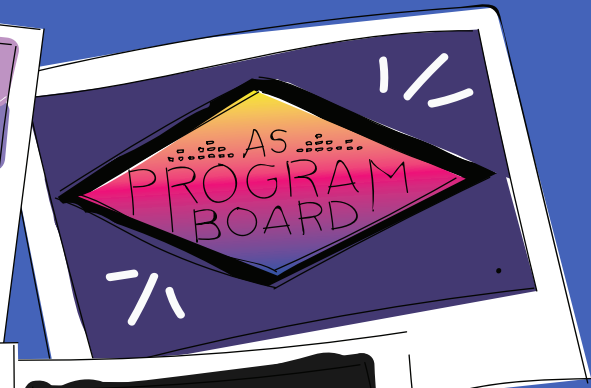
[www.facebook.com/Ucsblaugh](http://www.facebook.com/Ucsblaugh)

## Shakespeare in the Park

Keep an eye out for our Spring 2020 production of Shakespeare in Anisq'Oyo' Park. Visit us for up-to-the minute listings for this and other pop-up IV ARTS events!

<http://ivarts.ihc.ucsb.edu>





# ***A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY HAUNTING***

How Does Technology Change How We End Relationships?



WORDS // HANNAH JACKSON  
DESIGN // HANNAH ANDERSON  
ILLUSTRATION // JASMIN TAYPAN

**"WE SHOULD DO THIS AGAIN SOMETIME,"** he said as we lay in my bed. I couldn't contain my surprise. Going into our out-of-the-blue hookup, I decidedly lowered my expectations. Sometimes sex between friends is just a one-time thing, I reasoned. We had fostered a confusing relationship throughout the entirety of a year, but before we had sex we were undoubtedly friends. And in spite of whether we continued hooking up or not, we would remain friends above all.

Or so I thought.

It only takes one absolutely heart-wrenching abandonment to get people to change their ways.

"Hey, did you still want to hang out this weekend?" I texted him later that summer. After his graduation and my return from Eastern Europe, we were both confined to the San Fernando Valley as he searched for a post-grad job and I waited out the seemingly interminable start to my study abroad program.

A day of radio silence went by and I shrugged it off. "He's probably just busy," I concluded. But soon, the weekend expired and I trudged to work the next Monday morning admitting defeat. I had been ghosted.

Ghosting, for the blissfully unaware, is a social phenomenon in which a person abruptly ends a relationship by completely cutting off all communication. It is certainly not new, but the prevalence of technology has made 21st century ghosting all the more ubiquitous and cruel. Because, let's be honest—who isn't on their phone 24/7? In fact, according to the Pew Research Center, 92 percent of Millennials own smartphones and 85 percent use social media. Another

study found that Millennials check their phones upwards of 150 times a day.

Although ghosting is not limited to romantic or sexual relationships, it is the context in which we most often think of it. However, it can take all forms; even platonic friendships have met their ends by sudden awkward drop-offs in communication. I'm sure we can all think of a friend we made out of convenience in the first week of freshman year; regardless of how far apart our lives grow, it still hurts when they avert their gaze in public or unfollow us on Instagram.

No matter the type of relationship, true and sincere ghosting is immensely blindsiding to the ghostee and callous of the ghoster. That being said, there are certain levels at which ghosting occurs, affecting every type of relationship from near-strangers to long, deeply-committed relationships.

When I asked my fellow UCSB students if they've ever experienced ghosting on either side, most were quick to say yes, but had to wrack their brains for a specific instance. It has become so commonplace to completely abandon peripheral relationships that at some point, we all know we've done this but can't actually materialize a memory.



## When I tell people that I don't ghost anymore, they're surprised.

So what qualifies substantial ghosting? Pure ghosting leaves a scar on the heart; it causes trust issues and fear of future abandonment, just as it did for Taylor Kaye (name changed for privacy), a UCSB student who was ghosted by her boyfriend just shy of their one-year anniversary.

Kaye and her boyfriend had rekindled their relationship after she returned from abroad. However, she was completely blindsided when, two days before the anniversary dinner they had been giddily planning for weeks, he called her and told her that he didn't want to see her.

"We had been talking nonstop and everything had been okay up until that moment," Kaye said. She did not hear from her boyfriend until a week later when he called her once again to tell her that he needed "to do his own thing." Feeling caught off guard and hurt, Kaye put her swirling thoughts into a letter that she sent to her boyfriend. "The next day, he texted me, called me creepy, said, 'I'll talk to you when I'm ready,' and never talked to me again. This was in January."

Instances like Kaye's seem rare, yet ghosting happens constantly. But that shouldn't make it acceptable. Ghosting is incredibly nuanced. I'm not saying you need to send a drawn out message explaining why you don't want to date people who creepily slide into your DMs, or a Tinder match

who hits you with a "wyd." That being said, sometimes downright rejecting somebody can put a person's (in most cases, a woman's) safety at risk. Ghosting tends to fall into a gray area, but in this case, preservation of physical well-being is undeniably black and white.

Some people don't see ghosting as the hurtful action that it is, instead viewing it as a helpful tool for people who "just aren't taking the hint." Konrad Neithercutt, a UCSB student, believes that ghosting is actually the right thing to do when taking someone else's feelings into account.

"Sometimes it just needs to happen. Actually a lot of the time," he said. Neithercutt, like many others, stands by the fact that it's easier to ghost someone than to tell them that they're "being weird." And in a sense, he is correct. It is easier for the person doing the ghosting to completely disregard the feelings of the ghostee when they choose to ignore them. But in a power imbalance of that magnitude, ghosting is simply cowardly.

Summer van Houten, a UCSB student who was ghosted by her boyfriend of three years, agrees. When her boyfriend, who was studying abroad, seemingly dropped off the face of the earth one day, van Houten was more willing to consider that he had died in a "freak roller coaster accident" before coming to terms with being ghosted.

"The person that you're involved with deserves that respect," she said of a clear



and honest breakup. "Even if it's going to make everybody feel shitty, it's better to have that closure than to be up all night desperately searching for the answer." Van Houten, who ultimately found closure in the form of a strongly worded email, doesn't think of her ex as a dick, but decided that he "didn't know how to communicate."

So many people find themselves on both sides of this situation, yet it very rarely reforms behavior. Ghostings from insignificant relationships will not force us to amend our lifestyles, but it only takes one absolutely heart-wrenching abandonment to get people to change their ways.

When I tell people that I don't ghost anymore, they're surprised. Call me crazy,

but if someone isn't interested in me I would rather rip that Band-Aid off and move on, rather than spending every moment whipping my mind into a frenzy over someone who ultimately doesn't care about me. So, I have resolved not to do it to anybody else.

While your cowardly actions may take the pressure off of you, it places a world of self-doubt and hurt onto the shoulders of the other. As someone who's been there, and still feels the sting every now and again, let me just say that I wouldn't wish that pain on anyone.

It's really that simple. Don't be a dick. **W**





# DON'T RUN

## Alienated in Isla Vista

SHORT STORY // HAILEY GROSS

ILLUSTRATION // MOLLY CUNNINGHAM

DESIGN // DANIA ASCENCIO

### "YOU OKAY, BLITHE?"

"Huh?" I jumped, coming back from my cloud. "I think, I mean, yeah." I snapped out of it. Whatever it was, it had my wrist beeping off the charts. "I just haven't been sleeping well. Don't even remember waking up this morning. Or falling asleep, for that matter."

Margot came up eagerly clenching our costumes for the day. "Well, whatever's going on, snap out of it and let's move before the buses get here! All you need is a shower, one of those battery-acid-like Bang energy

drinks, and a cute photo-ready outfit to get you goin'!"

"Marg, about that—"

"You don't want to go as Thelma and Louise anymore, do you? I had a feeling this would happen. They're not the most flexible outfits but they are edgy."

"It's not the costumes Marg. I like them. We can wear them."

Marg's face softened and she began breathing normally again. A good sign. "Then what is it?"

"I was actually thinking this Halloween, we could stay in town for once. We've never actually spent a Halloween here and—"

"Woah. Woah, woah," she interrupted, "you mean stay? In IV? Alone? All weekend?"

I didn't know where my hesitation came from. All I knew was that for the first time, in a long time I was following my gut. And I was prepared for her to shoot it all down.

"You're a genius Blithe!"

"I am? I mean ... I was under the impression that you'd take a bit more convincing than this." Maybe she misheard me.

"No, say no more. I couldn't be more on board. This will be perfect—just think of the magnificent clickbait! For my channel and your Blog—the adventure points we've been waiting for—this is the badass defiance everyone wants to see! Should we get going?"

"In a bit ... Light me up, would you Marg?"

"For God's sake why do you still insist on smoking those things?" Margot scoffed, holding a flame up to ignite my morning stogie.

"It pairs well with my coffee."

It was a game we played. She'd lecture me, like those old films our parents watched when the husband read the paper and the wife made the evening's pot roast. Except she's my roommate and this isn't 1950's America.

"You haven't seen my vape, have you?" Marg called from down the hall. I shake my head as if she could hear the gesture. How fucking ironic. How convenient and hypocritical to look out for my lungs while walking around with a JUUL tied to her neck—like it's on standby, ready to give her a fix

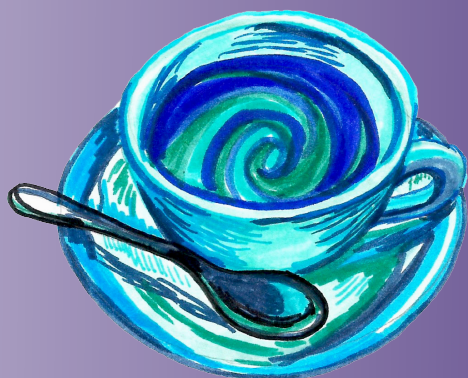
after hot yoga. But I'm gross for my morning cigarette. My watch started to beep—my heart monitor again. I was getting too fazed. Thinking too much, too early, it warned. I cooled down. Maybe she's right. It's all for aesthetics anyway. Mine just happens to be a dying art. Or, blogging about one at least. Who drinks their entire coffee and finishes a stogie after the photo is taken, after all? No one has time for all that. Not to mention the calories.

Well, it worked anyway. Moments after posting the morning's mood, the likes began pouring in. The pleasant, disruptive, lil' jingle sounded as credits accrue to my account. Thus begins the day's work. I sipped my beverage slightly. Pleased, my gaze fixated on my swirling cup of Joe, still piping hot. And then, I paused for what seems to be an eternity. An exaggeration maybe, but any time not spent planning the next task always seems to be considered extraneous. It just feels so damn good. If there is any guilty pleasure, one off the record because of just how guilty it is, it has to be this. To just be. The steam rose from the cup, meeting my skin, inciting the most invigorating and warming chill. The fog, familiar, excited my senses and played harmoniously with my seemingly unshakable morning brain fog.

"Blithe, wake the hell up, we've got to get a move on!"

"You losers know that everyone skips town Halloween weekend for a reason, right?" Damian chimed, coming in to assume his usual sofa position.

"There's no strict law that has been passed, yet, to keep us from staying here or—"



If only everyone knew  
how much you're  
capable of when you  
have nothing left  
to lose.





"You guys do whatever you want. I just heavily advise against it. I won't rat on you. Just make sure you're not here when they walk through to make sure everyone gets on the buses."

Shit, I had forgotten about the checks. "Maybe he's right Marg, maybe we should just go to the parties up north like planned and not risk any—"

"Nonsense, nothing bad will happen. It's going to take balls, but once this is on our feeds it'll be well worth it."

I didn't know what I had just gotten myself into but Marg seemed confident, excited even—it was too late to back out.

"So we're doing this?"

"I guess."

"Perfect, then we should get going now. Damian, you'll check our names off?"

"I got you covered. Just remember, they'll think you're going up north with us, so if anything happens...if anything from the stories is true..."

"Don't be silly, Dame, since when do you believe in anything?"

She had a point.

"Shall we, Blithe? I have just the place in mind!"

Streets were already emptying as we walked, and only a few buses remained. It's funny how this place, home to so many, goes from bustling oasis to abandoned ghost town in a few hours—leaving it vulnerable for God knows who or what. All for what? Comfort? For the sake of avoiding time spent alone with our thoughts when we finally get some damn peace and quiet?

We made our way to the 69 block as the sun settled behind the junkyard piles. We were safe here, safe in that we wouldn't be seen. No officer would dare man a checkpoint down here and risk going within spitting distance of the massive, piles of JUUL pods, still radiating their nicotine fumes posing dangers of the Millennial Virus. Luckily for us, we were already infected. If only everyone knew how much you're capable of when you have nothing left to lose.

"God, I could really use a cigarette right now."

"No time—we're here!"

From the moment we found this little old



This must be what power feels like. Whether it was over my own inconsequential existence or one step toward becoming one of the gods.

house at Devereaux, I knew it would come in handy—our own little safe haven, our clubhouse. People either don't know it exists or are afraid of it. When I turn around, there she is—at the very top.

"Get the hell up here, Blithe, this view is insane! I want you to get some footage of me with the ocean in the background while the sun's still setting."

As I made my way up the ladder, I couldn't help wonder how I got here. This was not where I initially thought I'd end up on Halloween night, but part of me was glad we had come here—maybe because we had done something different, perhaps stupid. We were the only ones who dared to stay in town, and that was enough to make me feel like I was still in control of something. This must be what power feels like. Whether it was over my own inconsequential existence or one step toward becoming one of the gods. Even if I did not save footage of this night—I still felt a bit more at home here. Why

would I run away from a place that I'm still getting to know? This was exactly where we were supposed to be.

Then, a familiar sound to interrupt the peace—our wrists go crazy. Despite my attempt to silence the monitor, the sounding remains. Like it wanted something more.

"Blithe, get over here, the ships are landing and want our location."

"What? Ship? Margot what are you talk—"

She grabbed my wrist, "Your memories still haven't rebooted yet, have they?"

I looked up to find the mass of flying spheres, making their way to the most dimly-lit portion of the empire below—the beloved and, now defenseless, Isla Vista.

As the largest hovered above us, pulling us upward to reunion, my fog lifted. I remember where I am. Who I am.

My eyes meet Margot's once again.

"We were what they warned us about. We are what they ran from. We are the out of towners." **W**



# EMBRACING THE HAZE

## A Conversation From Friendship Manor

WORDS // KIYOMI MORRISON

PHOTOGRAPHY // AVERY DESANTIS    DESIGN // JASMIN TAYPAN

**NOT FAR FROM THE BUSTLING STREETS** and Bird-riding folks of IV's population lies a far different crowd than the average college-goer. Friendship Manor is IV's very own retirement community, an unsuspecting cluster of buildings on El Colegio where you can often see residents outside enjoying the fresh air.

A tragedy of the modern day is the increasing rift between the new generation and the one that came before us. But we must always stop to remember that our hands, too, will grow old, our backs will ache, and we'll become the older generation that no longer understands the "pesky youth" or what "Juuling" is all about.

I went over to Friendship Manor to talk to some of their residents and learn a bit about a life that came before mine. Here I met John Rupert—"R. U. P. E. R. T."—as he spelled out in quick, short letters. He's 77 years old, and will have lived at Friendship Manor for three years this September.

As the fearless volunteer to my call for interviews, he pulled up a chair and shared a slice of his life over chocolate pudding.

Where did you grow up?

Toledo, Ohio. I went to Ohio State University. I quit school and hitchhiked across the United States until I got to Los Angeles. This is 1962.

I wanted to earn enough money to buy a ticket to Calcutta. I started out as a house boy. Within a short period of time, I became desk clerk and then assistant manager, which I enjoyed a lot.

When I earned enough money, I bought a ticket to Calcutta by way of Tokyo, from Osaka to Formosa, from Formosa to Hong Kong, Hong Kong to Thailand, Thailand to Burma, Rangoon, Rangoon to Calcutta. So I was just a globe-trotter.

When I got back, I went back to college. I was really hungry for a foreign fix. In the Spanish department at school there was a sign hanging. It said, "Live with a Mexican family, go to Interamerican University [in Mexico], learn Spanish." I did.

So for my summer I went and lived in a house—a middle-class [Mexican household]. [They] opened up all the rooms to eleven American boys from all





over. A wonderful summer. I went back to college, and at the end of that year I went back [to Mexico] for a second year. It was still the cheapest thing I could do.

I went back and knocked on the door of Casa de Mari. Señor Mari came, saw me, greeted me with open arms. He said, “Well, Señora Mari and I decided this year, only American girls. But you can stay.”

So I lived that summer in a house with eleven American girls.

One of those first days I looked across the patio. There were three girls on the other side of the patio having a good time, talking, chuckling and laughing.

There was one. I met her and we’ve been married 51 years.

She was from Kansas. I was from Ohio. We had met in Saltillo, Mexico and created a family in Santa Barbara.

All of my time as a kid, I was interested in photography. I wasn’t a journalist ... I wasn’t anything—not much, just me. And so when I traveled before [in Hawaii], I went into a pawn shop and bought a Minolta Rangefinder camera for \$38. But when I got to Hong

Kong, I bought a Nikon with three lenses.

By the time I got home, photography was the only thing that interested me.

I came out here and went to Brooks Institute for three years. After two years, I went back to Kansas, got married, brought my wife here. We lived 42 years in Carpinteria. I raised four kids [there].

You know, there are lots of things that could’ve gone other ways, but so much went well that I don’t know what I could change without changing something else. I choose what I have.

***There will come a time  
when you won’t be  
remembered by anyone  
and the people who did  
are gone.***



What is something that you really don't understand about the new generation—my generation?

The tattoos all over your bodies. Good God! You know, when you're my age, you're going to look at those things and go, Jesus, why did I do that? But maybe you won't. Maybe it'll be a thing [where] you'll say, "God, I'm ready for another one."

What do you think the meaning of life is?

Well, first to get through it. Try to learn. And be better. We're smart enough to understand what's so dumb. What's so stupid. What's so harmful. I don't know that there is a meaning.

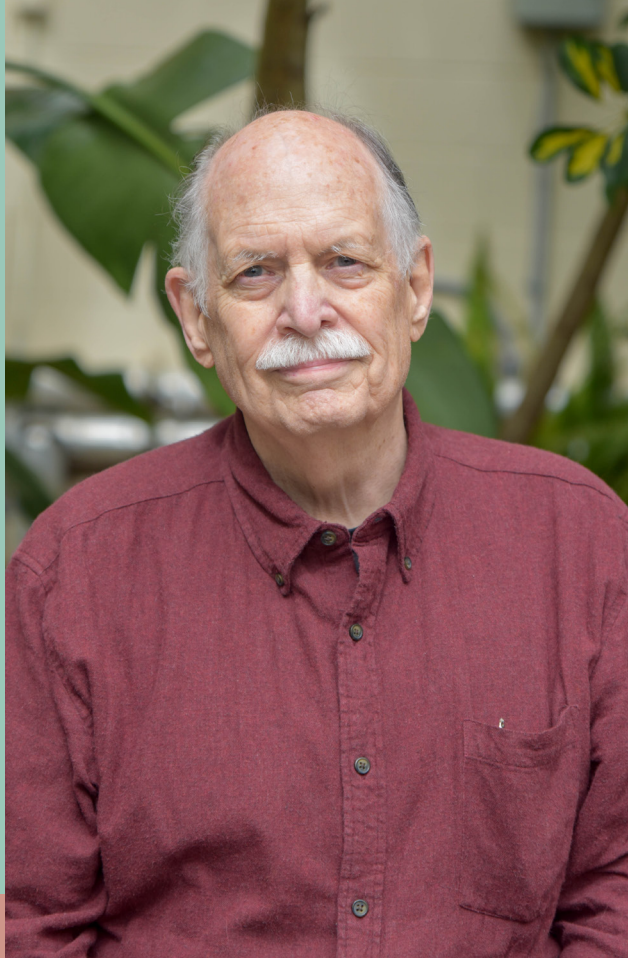
There's still time, but in the last three years there hasn't been much time. When you get old ... new shit happens. And it takes a lot of time out of your life, and then becomes your life. And so that's... that's a disappointment.

*I choose  
what I have.*

Does getting older scare you?

Not when it hurts. [But] each stage is new. There are moments in my life when I've made decisions to do something different. And when you do that, you leave behind familiarity—the routines of life back when you were there or doing this other thing.

Your friends die. You look at life as this thing which is solid—your memory. And sometimes when we look out over there, there's enough haze in the sky ... but you can still see the mountains. And other times, you can't quite see the mountains. And there are times where it's so foggy you almost can't



see the building across the street.

Life is like that as you get older. You're moving farther and farther away, and pretty soon your past is as crisp as the mountains with an awful lot of haze before you see it. And the longer you live, the more hazy that past is.

There will come a time when you won't be remembered by anyone, and the people who did are gone.

The result of you being here will be so tangential and it won't be spotable, and then that disappears. And the tangent left from you is so thin, but still there.

We can say the corny single drop in the ocean changes the waves of all in time. But during a storm, you know—does it really?

I love living. I love it. There's some things I just love doing. **W**



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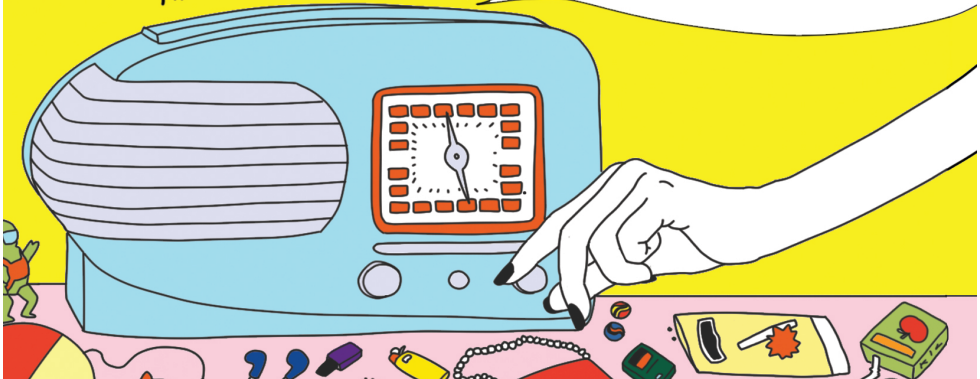
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FIND OUT WHAT'S  
HAPPENING IN AND  
AROUND SANTA BARBARA



# IN VERSE

## Poetry That Speaks of IV

POETRY EDITOR // MICHELLE POLITISKI

ILLUSTRATION // EMILY KOMESSAR

### A 'Droid Dream // Hugh Cook

I remember the kid  
In the afternoons in afterschool  
At Rob Gym, pretending  
We were droids.

I walk around campus.  
I wonder if I'm in your Android,  
One of the lines you hold.  
I think ever since seven  
I've been pretending,  
Trying to be everyone's android.

I'm not paranoid,  
I'm just not sure  
The kid ever gets out,  
Around this campus.

Kids aren't supposed to  
Be in College.

### Two Summers Past: Del Playa // Hugh Cook

The sky opened,  
Falling apart in fluid seeds.  
I walked into a drowning skylight.  
Under a richness of night, all energy  
damped.  
Pounding tears graced my skin,  
In climatic ablation.  
Stripes of twice fire lashed the sky,  
burning trails into the night.  
Moments of corded dashes of violet,  
Lit my march into the muddy, swirled ocean.



## Dorm Room Love // Julieta Corral Phun

We rock slowly,  
back and forth  
savoring the lines that our bodies hold for us  
the crevices filled with the music of our ancestors—  
P. Diddy and Snoop D-O-double-G.

Our spirits rise together,  
flow through the universe until time and space doesn't matter.  
The only thing that does is that we are together.

I don't know you.  
I think I want to  
    in between the sheets of my twin XL bed,  
    the top bunk cramming our tangled bodies together.

You hair gets lost in my hands and the ceiling is too close for  
comfort  
and I feel confined in you until  
    we break.

You rock me to security,  
me in your lap,  
your arms entrenched in my waist and  
your hands doing God-knows-what

and our heads were pressed upon the ceiling,  
leaving little indents where  
love hasn't been felt in a long time.



# PLEASE DON'T SIT HERE

## My Monkey Mind in a Lecture Hall

WORDS // CASSIDY BROWN

ILLUSTRATION + PHOTOS // ALASKA YOKOTA

DESIGN // AVERY DESANTIS

**I HAVE ANXIETY.** Like, the kind that gets you alternate exam setting accommodations and makes you check the weather before picking out your clothes, and it never really quiets down. Most of us get it—at least every now and then. For me, it sounds like this:

What time is it?

1:37. You have time.

Why are you walking so fast? Stop being in such a rush. The people walking past you probably think you're mad. Someone's coming toward you. Should you look at them? Smile?

Shoot, they didn't look back. Did you look dumb?

There are people waiting outside the classroom. You should stand near the door to get a good seat. But you don't want to be one of those pushy people forcing your way in and then it will be crowded and—

Door's opening. Walk. It's okay, make space for yourself. Actually wait, this person wants to go. You should let them go, you aren't in that much of a—

You're in. Where should you sit? People. Talking. Squeaking. Hot.

Find aisle seat. There. Sit. Are you in anyone's way? No.

Laptop out. What's going on after this? There has to be something you're forgetting.

Calendar tab: you have one more class. Then gym, shower, food, homework—

Homework. What homework? Reading response is tomorrow, midterm is Tuesday and it's Thursday. That means you have five days to prepare, but you're busy Friday and you go home Saturday and that leaves Sunday—

Will you have time on Sunday? Laundry: two hours. Groceries: one hour. The rest of the day will be for the midterm.

But you've been busy all week. Sunday

is the only day left—if you spend it studying, you'll be stressed. You won't be able to stay on top of everything, you won't do well on the midterm—or any midterms—and you'll get bad grades this quarter and you'll start letting people down, and then you'll have to work so hard to get your GPA back on track and that will just lead to—

“Excuse me.”





You're in the way.  
"Sorry, go ahead!"  
Please don't sit here.  
"Is anybody sitting here?"  
"No, it's all yours!"

No no no no no. Lean toward aisle.  
Get space.

Wait. Why are you moving for them? You deserve space. Sit up straight. Everybody else does.

...Now your elbows are touching. Back to aisle.

Are they looking at your laptop? You're wearing workout clothes and they have a cute outfit. What are they thinking?

Only one more class. You're almost done. Then you get to relax.

No you don't. You have that midterm. You can't afford to put it off, or you'll have to cram. You don't want to cram, because you know how anxious you get. And when you're under that kind of pressure, you won't perform well, and it's just going to be better for you in the long run if you study tonight.

What else? You should read, but you won't. You used to do readings. You were motivated when you were a freshman, and now you're counting down the seconds until you get to go home and relax, only to realize that you never get to relax and all you do is school and work and is this ever going to change or—

"Okay, let's get started."

You're in class. Get notebook. Put away laptop. No distractions.

"Just a couple of announcements first ... "

You should have gone to office hours. You told yourself you were going to. Is it too late? When is the paper due?

"... So now that we've gotten that out of the way, we can dive into today's lecture. Focus. What's the date? How is it already week five? What happened to September? Time is passing and you've barely done anything but go to class.

Stop beating yourself up about how much effort you're putting into school. You're here to get an education and you're working hard. Give yourself a break. Why are you so negative?

"... And I can guarantee this will be on the midterm, so make sure you get it down ..."

Focus. Stop thinking so much.

Media literacy. Mass audiences. Segmentation. Niche audiences. Universal appeal. Too many thoughts and too many things and so much happening and what did the professor just say—

Step outside.

Close your eyes. Breathe in for four long seconds. Hold for two. Out for six. Repeat. Repeat. Repeat.

Back inside. Sit down.

Focus. 

## IF YOU EVER HAVE TROUBLE QUIETING THE THOUGHTS IN YOUR HEAD, TRY ANY OF THESE FREE WAYS TO COPE:

**Yoga:** check YouTube's Yoga With Adriene

**Meditation:** apps like Headspace make it easier

**Playing an instrument:** kazoos count

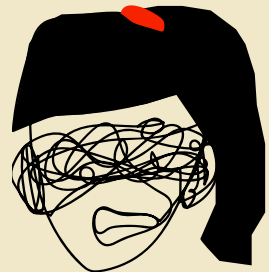
**Exercise:** even a walk works wonders

**Guided journaling:** lists always help

**Time outdoors:** check out Los Carneros Park, five minutes from IV

**Positive affirmations:** you're killing it, x10.

**Massage chairs:** just ask CAPS



# SIERRA HOTEL: MEMORIES

WORDS // MELISSA WEIDNER ILLUSTRATION + DESIGN // THERESA PHAN

Just after a month of being downrange in Balad, Iraq in 2006, where I was a Combat Flight Medic, I received a wounded Marine via Medivac. I immediately noticed his praying hands, which were wrapped with a rosary and resting on his left pectoral. Upon further inspection, I saw that his body was riddled with shrapnel, that he had a gunshot wound, and that he had burns on 30 percent of his face and body. Although I will never forget his battered and beaten body, it was his need for his mother that, to this day, holds a deep place in my heart.

I have always treated the whole person, not just the wounds of my patients, but this particular Marine needed more than my medic abilities. He was intubated because his wounds wouldn't allow him to breathe on his own, and he was in severe pain—all while being fully awake. Because he was frightened, I stayed by his bedside, regardless of whether I was working on

him; I kept vigil, holding his hand, smoothing back his hair, and telling him stories to keep his mind off the pain. When we reached the point where there was nothing further we could do to save him, I sang him a lullaby, as his mother would have done to ease the demons of the night when he was little. Just before he passed, I saw a single tear fall from his young eyes. I could not save him, but I vowed to live my life for us both. My accomplishments would not be mine; they would be ours. My love, sadness, and joy would also be ours.

I decided that everything I did I would do for all those I carried with me as well as for myself. To this day, I may be weighed down by thoughts of those I lost, and I still feel the pain of loss, but I also feel honored to have their memories with me. They give me strength to carry on when things get tough. They remind me that life is worth fighting for.

That we are worth fighting for. **W**

## ABOUT THE SIERRA HOTEL:

"Sierra Hotel" presents writings from participants in UCSB's creative writing workshop for veterans and military dependents. The workshop, which began in 2012, provides the opportunity for this unique group of UCSB students to write about their military experiences as they study the craft of creative non-fiction. To read more work by UCSB student veterans and military dependents, visit Instant Separation, A Digital Journal of Military Experience from the University of California: [www.instantseparation.org](http://www.instantseparation.org).

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Melissa Weidner spent 7.5 years in the US Air Force as a Flight Medic. She worked as an Advance Trauma Life Support both in the air and on the ground. She graduated in 2019 with a BA in Psychology and a Minor in Applied Psychology.



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# ALBINO RACCOON BAD(ASS) FEMINIST YES, I DO SHAVE MY ARMPITS

WORDS // KHANDO DECKYI KHANGSAR  
ILLUSTRATION // MOLLY CUNNINGHAM  
DESIGN // HANNAH FORD-MONROE



**“WOW... THAT’S NOT VERY FEMINIST OF YOU.”** In that moment I felt my heart race, my blood boil, and my cheeks flush red with embarrassment. Was what I said wrong? Does one candid comment really mean that I can’t call myself a feminist anymore? Then, I thought: *fuck, how can I show my solidarity? How could I show that I am, in fact, a feminist?* Yet the only word that left my mouth was, “What?”

Does it make me a bad feminist if I sing along to Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg’s “Bitches Ain’t Shit”? Am I a terrible feminist for not having watched Captain Marvel? What if I like to cook for my partner, or want to be a mother? What is the benchmark for being a “good” feminist?

At the age of five years old, I decided that I was going to hate the color pink. I told my mom that I didn’t like Barbies and that they were too girly. As I entered the seventh grade, I convinced myself that not wearing makeup and being “one of the guys” somehow made me a better woman. In high school, I judged my female peers who took pride in their sexuality while I sat complicitly, listening to boys gossip about a girl having “loose lips.” I never wanted to be in the same space as the label “feminist.” I didn’t want to breathe its air, I didn’t even want to be friends with it on Facebook. The way I saw it, this label came with the baggage of being labeled as a “party pooper,” “too sensitive,” a “man-hater,” or “that girl.”

During my first week at UC Santa Barbara, I was browsing through the various clubs near Ortega dining commons when three young women of color standing by their club table titled “I Am That Girl” yelled across the table at me. “Why are YOU a badass?” Fast



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forward three years later and I Am That Girl has shown me strength in vulnerability. This small club that meets once a week gives individuals at UC Santa Barbara a safe space to vent about “taboo” topics. Here, I learned how to become an unapologetic feminist.

In reading Yen Le Espiritu’s article “We Don’t Sleep Around Like White Girls Do” for Dr. Mireille Miller-Young’s “Women of Color” class, I learned how to analyze myself and my experiences as both a woman of color and an immigrant’s daughter. This class provided me with an intersectional lens to analyze feminism and my unique relationship with it.

In a collection of essays titled *Bad*



*Feminist*, Roxane Gay contemplates the idea of “bad feminism” through her personal experiences with the label. “But I willingly give blow jobs. I had it in my head that I could not be both feminist and sexually open,” she reflects. Inspired by Gay and my own personal journey, I have also learned to be self-reflective: acknowledging my actions and the unconscious biases that I have developed through socialization and gendered forms of media.

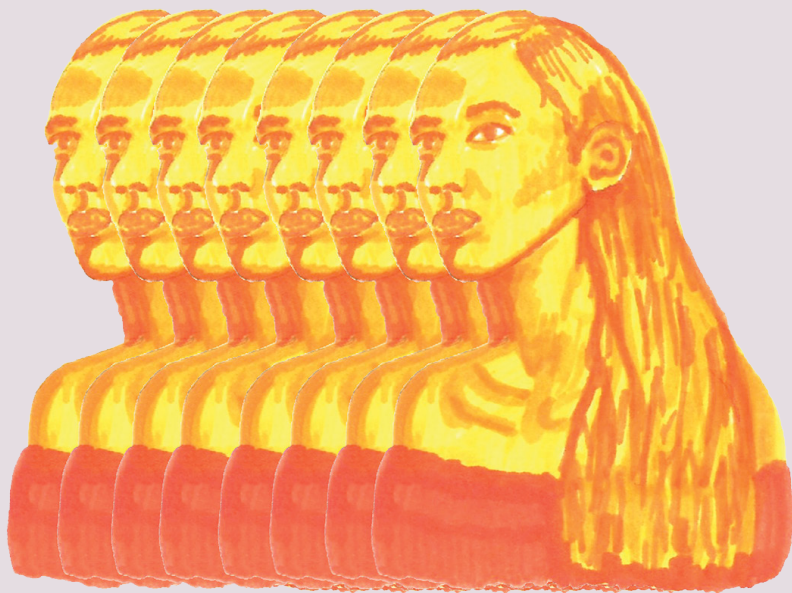
So, why is it that I still feel guilty every time I shave my armpits or listen to YG? Why do I feel judged for wanting to have kids and settle down? We live in a culture where it’s cool to be “woke.” I used to be policed for being a “man-hating” feminist, but now my words, actions, and values are being policed for not being feminist enough. So, I wonder: where is the rulebook here? Where is the *Feminism for Dummies* book at Barnes & Noble? Does feminism even mean the same

thing for everyone?

I am still navigating through my journey with feminism as a young woman. Maybe I *am* a bad feminist. But before we can decide who the bad feminists are, we have to know what feminism actually means. To me, it seems that there isn’t any *one* definition –and maybe that is the beauty of feminism itself.

So why the fuck should I let other people decide if I am a feminist or not? My individual experiences, morals and values shape my definition of feminism, so why should I push that definition onto someone else? A friend once told me that “Ultimately, feminism is about choice.” I don’t think we can blame ourselves for wanting to participate in gendered social roles or listen to misogynistic lyrics. After all, we have been raised in a patriarchal society.

But at least being a bad feminist is better than not being a feminist at all. **W**

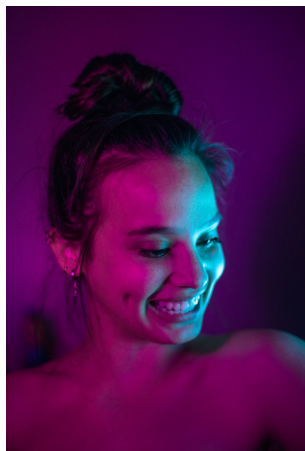


# ***TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER***

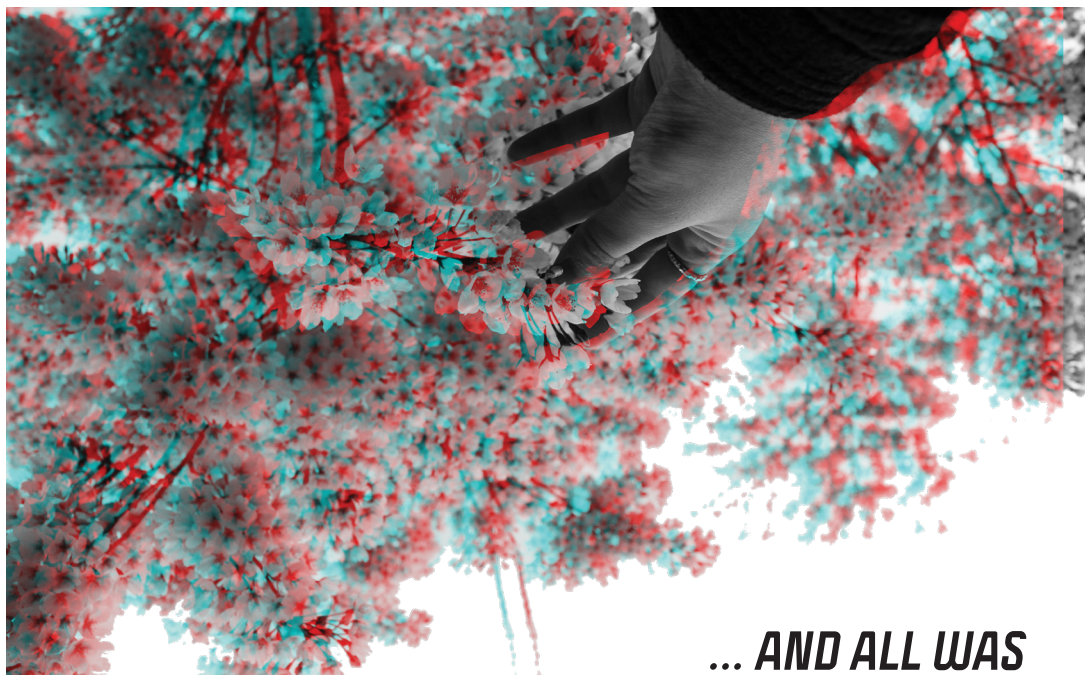
**A DYSTOPIAN PHOTO ESSAY**

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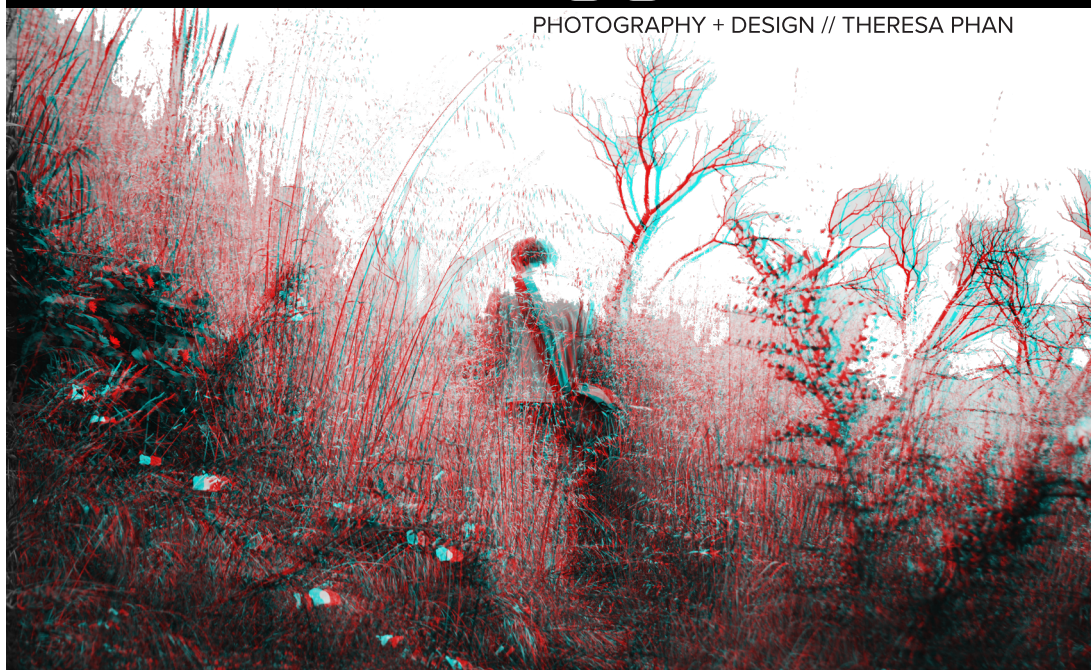






... AND ALL WAS  
**COMPLETE**

PHOTOGRAPHY + DESIGN // THERESA PHAN



# ISLA VISTA GIVES YOU CREDIT

ILLUSTRATION + DESIGN // ALASKA YOKOTA

## MAGIC LANTERN FILMS

FILM/MEDIA 119ML

ISLA VISTA FILM EVENTS

Contact DJ Palladino at [djpalladino@ihc.ucsb.edu](mailto:djpalladino@ihc.ucsb.edu)

Magic Lantern Films teaches the ins and outs of film programming using IV Theater as a lab. Students gain experience in budgeting, publicizing, researching, theater management, series-pitching, and curating, culminating in the execution of screenings that come out of students' own pitches.

## WORD MAGAZINE

INT 185ST

Contact Ellen Anderson at [eanderson@ihc.ucsb.edu](mailto:eanderson@ihc.ucsb.edu)

This issue of WORD: Isla Vista Arts & Culture Magazine is brought to you by the student artists and writers in INT 185ST and its partner OSL campus organization. We welcome new writers, designers, photographers and artists from all majors.

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