



THE WAKE

fortnightly student magazine

volume 23 - issue 2



Curiosity, Desire, and Deviancy
A "Fan of Possibilities"
Ojibwe Language Preservation

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Established in 2002, The Wake is a fortnightly independent magazine and registered student organization produced by and for students at the University of Minnesota.

The Wake was founded by Chrin Ruen & James DeLong.

Disclaimer: The purpose of The Wake is to provide a forum in which students can voice their opinions. Opinions expressed in the magazine are not representative of the publication or university as a whole. To join the conversation email eic@wakemag.org.

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5 Marie Ronnander

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Abdimalik Ahmed, Marie Ronnander and Jos Manrique Ordo ez

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Scarlet, Autumn Varriations, Sex Education S4, Dragon Fly and Alone in the Crowd all from original sources

Like to do art, poetry or anything creative ?

Send it to us!

We are looking for more creative submissions! Art, poetry, DIY coloring pages, photography or anything else you want to submit. Email art@wakemag.org for any of your fun and/or freaky submissions :)

The Wake Student Magazine
126 Coffman Memorial Union
300 Washington Avenue SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455



Art by Jos Manrique Ordo ez



wink! one page magazine

Dad Jokes

The painful, the funny, the cringy
and everything in between

Question: What does a dinosaur call
when hes being robbed?

Answer: The triceracops

- Ruth Hoban

What was the little
Scottish dog's reaction
when she saw the Loch
Ness Monster?

She was Terrier-fied

- Zoë Meyer's Dad

I went to the bee-
keeper to get 12 bees.
He gave me 13. I said,
"Sir, you gave me an
extra." He said, "That's
a freebee."

- Alex Kozak's Dad

Question: What do you call a
person with no torso or nose?

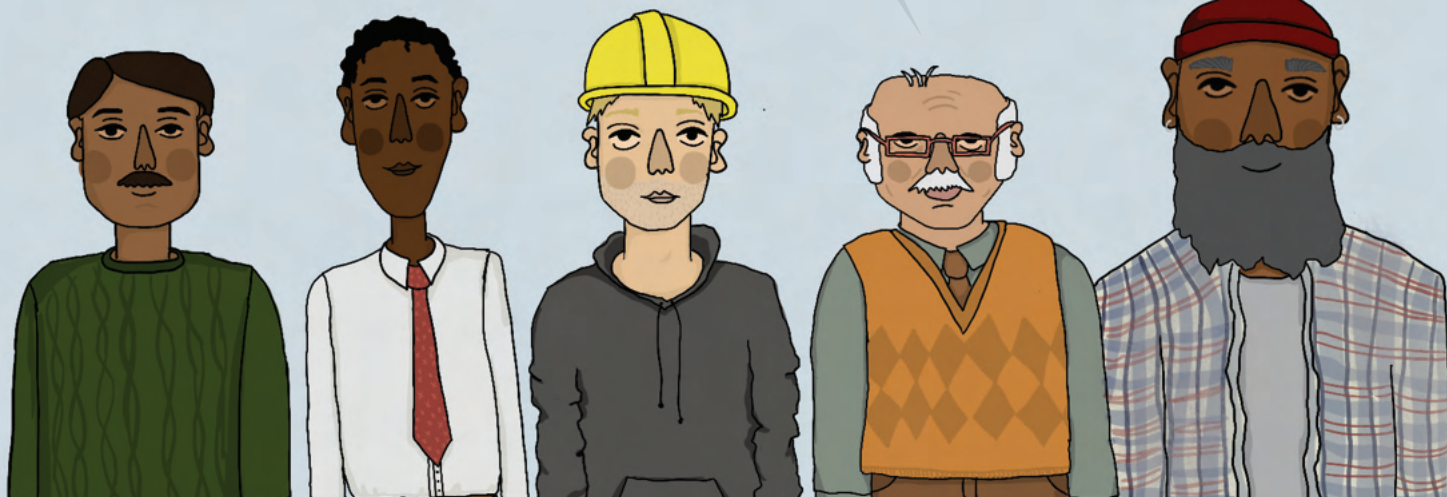
Answer: Nobodynose

-Henry Mueller

Question: What do you call a
magical dog?

Answer: A labracadabrador

-Rachel Huberty



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UPCOMING EVENTS

OCT 16-21

Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular

Stroll through the magical autumnal trails of the Minnesota Zoo as you marvel at carved pumpkin installations.

Minnesota Zoo from 6-10 PM

OCT 20

Howl-o-ween Dog Costume Contest

Bring your doggo in their best costume and enjoy a bonfire and s'mores! People without puppers are also welcome!

Loring Park
From 6:00-7:30 PM

OCT 17

Polyphia

Polyphia is touring with the fourth studio album Remember That You Will Die which blends their characteristic guitar riffs with hip-hop rhythms and trap music. Openers are DOMi and JD BECK, a goofy jazz duo.

First Avenue
Doors at 7 PM and tickets are \$35

OCT 27

Booiling

Dress in your best costume for a spooktacular night of bowling, crafts and snacks. The best costumes will win prizes!

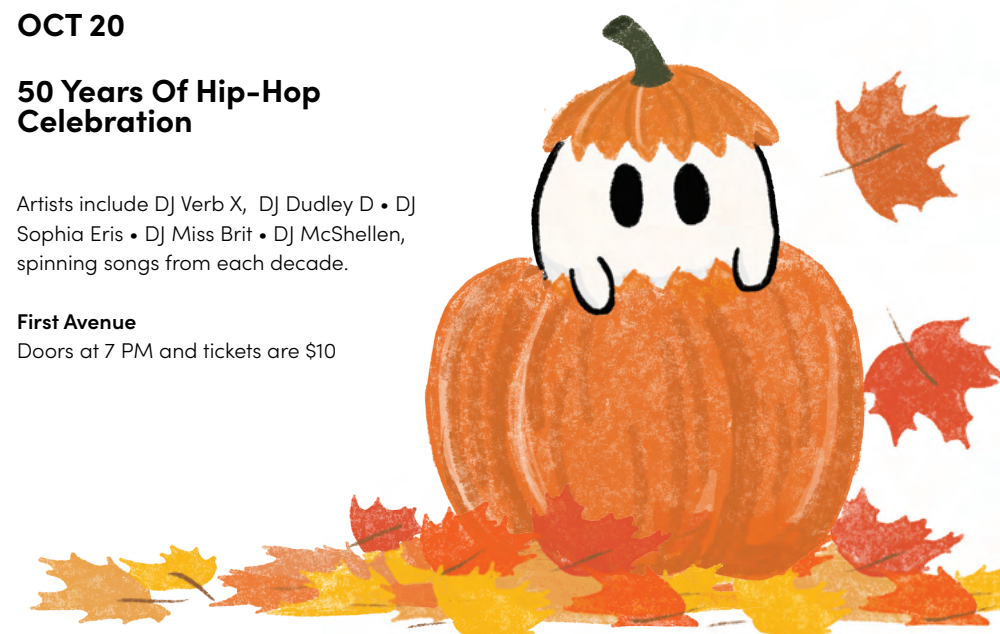
Goldy's Gameroom
7pm, bowling is \$3 per game

OCT 20

50 Years Of Hip-Hop Celebration

Artists include DJ Verb X, DJ Dudley D • DJ Sophia Eris • DJ Miss Brit • DJ McShellen, spinning songs from each decade.

First Avenue
Doors at 7 PM and tickets are \$10





Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Reader,

About a week ago I was laid flat by a (nearly) lethal combination of a fast moving longboard and an even faster moving train. My board caught on the tracks just seconds before the Metro zipped by, and I had no choice but to jump for it. My fall wasn't epically dramatic; I didn't fly through the air or anything, but I did land with my complete weight on my ankle. Much like my ego, my ankle was very, very broken.

When I chose to learn how to ride a longboard over the summer, there was always an inkling that things could go wrong. That was the entire reason I loved it so much, I had the ability to navigate the edge of comfort and danger. That element of unknown was the yin to my control-freak yang, born from a semi-masochistic tendency to do everything to the extreme.

Heading the production end of The Wake was another of my extreme choices. I filled the shoes of Executive Director my second year into college by diving head first into a giant vat of the unknown. The year was chaos. The type of uncomfortable where each word sounded like gibberish, and my head was constantly swimming with thoughts of event planning. Not only was I wading through 17.5 credits, a job, and tutoring, but I had to carry a 20 year legacy on my shoulders.

But the beautiful thing about The Wake is that, even though there's one hundred ideas flying about at any given second, there's also one hundred extra shoulders to help carry the weight. Being placed in a lead role also meant learning that leadership isn't accepting all the burdens. I was forced to ask questions, to listen to what our staff had to say and to scream (very politely) for help when I was drowning. Which was very often.

Only recently, our newest EIC, Sophia, told me that she never thought anything was going wrong last year. Which made me audibly laugh because I don't think I ever was doing anything right. Most of the time I'm standing in front of our intimidatingly amazing staff spouting absolute nonsense and praying that there isn't a spelling error on my google slide. Then sending a recap email with a Kermit the frog GIF to smooth everything over.

And I love it. I love the constant acceptance of Murphy's law, and the constant belief that it will be overcome. Here, I'm always growing alongside people who hold the same passions as I do. People who unabashedly pour their entire hearts into the pages you have before you. The Wake gives the kind of support where you'll never break. Unless you're dumb enough to race the Green Line, but then you kind of deserve the cast.

With so much love,

Marie
Executive Director



Art by Marie Ronnander

Curiosity, Desire, and Deviancy

The nature of having (and being) a body

BY QUINN MCCLURG

I will preface this article with two things: one, I am a trans woman; two, when we are born, we are born into inherent deviancy. I am not preaching Catholic guilt nor original sin, but rather, the sheer absurdity of a (mostly) blank-slate-child trying to fit into all of societies’ respective norms and pressures.

I like to think that humans, similar to any other newborn or unguided creature, automatically tend toward curiosity and pleasure; for me, my curiosity led to an utter fascination with the feminine, followed by attempts to imitate it. Even now the compulsion is near impossible to explain, but I felt it now as I did then: a compulsion beyond base desires, attractions, or possessions, more in the realms of becoming, being, and understanding.

But, compelled or not, I was still a child, small and ignorant; no matter how unfamiliar I was with societal norms, I was still governed by them. Often these norms were enforced by other parties’ resistance (parents, peers, politicians, “professionals,” etc.) and my own deepening social and cultural awareness (through media, education, socialization, representation, etc.). In the face of this hegemony, I learned how to forget, fear, repress, be ashamed, and “belong.”

I lingered in this compulsory conformity all throughout high school; I tried not to further the intolerance of the hegemony I lived under, plus I was in no place to put anyone else “below” me. Still, without the proper tools, awareness, or communities, I didn’t understand that my constant dissociation and dissatisfaction was out-of-the-ordinary; but, unwittingly, I carried it in every part of my body, my identity, and my psyche.



Later, the more I understood how much I deviated from imposed social, psychological, and biological norms, the more I felt as if none of them mattered or were inherently meaningless to begin with. Although, ideally this may be true, my nihilism made me ignorant to the endless histories of violence that created and enforced such categorization or normativity to begin with, not just in gender, but in wealth, race, religion, orientation, or any other kind of existence. Existence within a monolith is a void of rejecting those unbelonging; I didn’t feel comfortable in the insecure absence that was white, cis masculinity, but I couldn’t have truly understood any other identity without the experience of being outside my own. Thus, from my denial, I became a “man-I-guess,” unfortunately ignorant and unable to understand. I like to consider my later identity adjustments to nonbinary and agender as indicative of a somewhat furthered education and deepened awareness.

Experience, though, was still a different, lacking matter. Unknown to me, I was still harboring those nameless and “deviant” compulsions, but needed adequate genderfuckery to recognize them. The first time I had makeup on, I was confused; the first time I wore a dress, I was disgusted; the first time I was a bottom, I was ashamed. But it all felt so damn. good—I hated how good it felt, and I hated that I wanted even more of it.

It took me a while, but I followed my means of pleasure and curiosity to the ends of killing the misogynist, monogamist, racist, cop, and conformist in my head—it took uprooting every

societally ingrained notion that I never realized I had ever learned. The more I learned about hegemony and intersectionality, violence and retaliation, courage and grace, the more understood identity in itself. Then, my own identities became crystalized within myself. And, of course, in identity and resistance, the work will never be easy, nor will it ever be done.

Here, it would be incredibly easy for me to talk about how difficult it is to have (“have,” as it’s hard to feel like you can “be”) a trans body, a woman’s body, or any kind of body at all. But let me start over.

As a woman, I will never fit the societal ideals of a woman; as a trans woman, I will never fit the biological ideals of a woman. But I don’t let “failure” bother me because firstly, most women, no matter how cis or normative, probably do not feel included in these ideals anyway; secondly, the unattainability only makes me feel more affirmed. If I hit a mark, despite the impossibility of it all, I feel affirmed; if I miss a mark, I can be affirmed knowing I am a still-living example of genderfuckery and deviation from societal norms.

I continue to remain curious about where our collective deviancy may take us next—maybe more pleasure, maybe more pain, maybe more understanding. But, as I said earlier, no matter how positive the change, our work will never be easy, and our work will never be done.

So strap in: you were born a deviant—you better start acting like one. 👁

A “Fan of Possibilities”

Have you ever felt lost when deciding your major? Well...so have I.

BY GABRIEL MATIAS CASTILHO

“All I want is for you to be happy in whatever you choose to do in your life,” my father said in his native Portuguese as I shared with him my first ideas for my undergraduate major. It was a reassuring phrase to hear from someone so important in my life, but I felt more lost than before. Most of my friends started university with much more certainty than I due to parental expectations or just a clear idea for the future, whereas I just had a “fan of possibilities” (a Brazilian idiom that represents an open range of opportunities). Recursively, the anguish of late night reflections bled into the next day, my mind whirling with anxiety and the consequent procrastination left me paralyzed. We all have our own journeys, but endless speed bumps were not what I expected. The amount of possibilities of futures presented by the university is extremely overwhelming. For example, CLA professors do not get tired of telling you their major provides you with a wide range of professions and paths to choose. The emphasis on having a wide repertoire of classes from different majors, as represented by the Liberal Arts requirements, encourages students to discover their own path while acquiring new abilities. In fact, during most classes, you feel like everyone around you is looking at this storefront, happily selecting their own path. Does nobody understand how consequential this choice is or is it just me? How can I possibly reconcile all of my interests into one single academic choice? Father, I do not know if what I did was right, but I hope that one day I can look back at my choices made in university and feel happy with those decisions. 👁



How the UMN's Native Studies Department is preserving a culture



The Wake talks with the American Indian Studies department to learn about the Ojibwe language preservation and what it means to Native American communities.

BY MAYA BELL

What happens to a society when their language is taken?

What happens when you try to revive it?

In Minnesota, the Ojibwe tribe is one of the largest tribes in the United States, with almost 320,000 people. Despite the size of the tribe, the Ojibwe language is considered an endangered language by the American Society of Linguists. This is due to the United States and Canada's history of cultural erasure. According to the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, there are about 523 known Indian boarding schools in the US, with 24 of them being in the state of Minnesota. The native boarding schools were meant to assimilate native children into European culture and erase all traces of their original culture. Decades after the boarding schools closed down, the American Indian Studies department at the university is attempting to keep the Ojibwe language and Ojibwe cultural traditions alive.

The movement to revive the Ojibwe language started at the University of Minnesota in the 1960s. American Indian students and faculty proposed a curriculum of historical and contemporary American Indian issues along with language classes for Dakota and Ojibwe. In June 1969, the Minnesota Board of Regents approved the Department of American Indian Studies and is now located at Scott Hall by the Mississippi River.

Zoe Brown, a teaching specialist for the Ojibwe Language Program knows the work that the

American Indian Studies Department has done for the classes. "Even before there was a department of American Indian Studies department here, people were teaching the language classes, so there were Ojibwe classes through the nineties and the 2000s," said Brown. As a black teaching specialist, she originally learned the language from the University of Minnesota, "It's a beautiful language," she said. In Ojibwe, beautiful roughly translates to miikawaadendaagozi. Now as a teacher, she recommends that students collaborate with one another using a resource called the Ojibwe People's Dictionary.

In recent years, the American Indian Studies department continued to expand and revitalize. In 2010, the American Indian Studies Department collaborated with the Minnesota Historical Society, Ojibwe leaders, and the University of Minnesota libraries to create the Ojibwe People's Dictionary (OPD). The OPD functions as a dictionary and a website to preserve historical traditions, which can be accessed at <https://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/>. On the website, there are links to photos of Ojibwe tribes and testimonies from Ojibwe people about their time in different historical eras.

Zoe Brown, says that learning the Ojibwe People's Dictionary is a great resource. "It's hugely important. The OPD lets you hear from all of these different elders and native speakers. It's a great learning tool. It can be this hub to maintain and share the speaker language." Of course, the creation of the OPD didn't come with challenges,

Nicholas Deshaw, a beta tester for the OPD said "At the time when it was being launched I was a part of the beta group that got to see it and experiment it before it went public. Now people from all over the world use the Ojibwe language dictionary," During testing, the OPD had the difficult task of trying to translate the language that has no word that directly translates to english. This makes the need for language revitalization even more important to the Ojibwe community.

Language revitalization serves not only as a way to preserve history, it's a way to empower native communities. Cultural identity and language knowledge have improved physical and mental health outcomes among native communities. Nick Deshaw, an American Indian Studies faculty member, talked about his own experience in learning the language, "For me, it meant so much for me to be able to reclaim my language as best I could. Now as a parent, I can pass it on to my child, so that he can learn the language."

While the University of Minnesota has helped with the revitalization of the Ojibwe language, members of the American Indian Department think the institution can still do more. Deshaw states "Absolutely, I think the University of Minnesota could be doing more. Our program needs a lot more support as far as resources. We really need more space and a lot more visibility. I think this place should be a flagship point of pride for the University, that we are one of the few places in the world where you can get a 4-year bachelor's degree in the Ojibwe language." 🗨️

A Gorgeous Evening with Gregory Alan Isakov at The St. Paul Palace Theatre



BY SOPHIA GOETZ

This Saturday, I had the privilege of seeing singer-songwriter, Gregory Alan Isakov, in concert at the Palace Theatre in St. Paul. While this was my second time seeing him perform (I attended his last performance in February of this year, on his previous tour), this latest performance proved to be nothing short of remarkable, if not exceeding the expectations set by his winter tour. Gregory Alan Isakov's most recent stop on his much-awaited national tour took place at the Palace Theatre in St. Paul. Even though I arrived at the venue nearly two hours before doors, fans had already gathered there in droves, awaiting their opening (like myself) with eager anticipation.

Seattle-based singer and the original opener for the show Damien Juradowho was unable to attend due to illness, was replaced by singer-songwriter Eric Johnson of the long-established folk band Fruit Bats. Despite the last-minute nature of Johnson's performance—sans his usual-accompanying band members—gave an impressive show, playing notable hits from the band's extensive discography: "We Used to Live Here," "The Bottom of It," and my personal favorite, "Mountain Humbug Song." Though it was my first introduction to the Fruit Bats, Johnson's opening proved to be an unforgettable experience. After Johnson's opening, the five-piece band, consisting of guitarists Steve Varney and Danny Black, violinist Jeb Bows, bassist John Paul Grigsby, and drummer Max Barcelow, appeared on stage with the South African singer-songwriter, Isakov

himself. Isakov entered the stage in a casual outfit and a brown hat with a brown brim, and the response from the crowd was tremendous.

I have always considered myself an avid concertgoer, and while I have had the privilege of seeing many of my favorite artists live, I can say without a doubt that there is no other artist who is astronomically better in concert than Isakov. The singer-songwriter opened his set with a track from his new album, Appaloosa Bones, which was released nearly two months ago — "Before the Sun." While not my favorite track on the album, the gorgeous swells of the violin, combined with Isakov's incredible stage presence and voice, easily made it my favorite song of the evening.

Unlike his last concert, where he mostly played hits from his older albums, during this performance Isakov primarily featured tracks from his latest project, such as "The Fall," "Miles to Go," and "Terlingua." I appreciated how well Isakov and the band were able to emulate the Southwestern origins that inspired his most recent album. And while this concert primarily featured tracks from Appaloosa Bones, Isakov did keep some old favorites, such as "Amsterdam," "San Luis," and "Caves" from his setlist. Chills certainly swept through the audience as Isakov performed "Liars," repeating the phrase "now we're just liars" with a soaring vocal and instrumental background. One unforgettable moment from the evening came as Isakov introduced his band-mates, recounting how he and guitarist Danny Black had been in a band together since they were twelve years old. The audience could be heard aww-

ing as the two reminisced about their shared childhood. As Isakov and his band finished out their set with the stunning instrumentals of "Appaloosa Bones," they thanked the audience and exited the stage. However, the crowd was not even remotely satiated, and responded to their exit with cheers and pleas for an encore performance. Much to our delight, it did not take long for Isakov and his companions to return to the stage. However, this time, instead of their usual formation spread out across the stage, they huddled toward the front center mic, bringing their instruments with them. During their encore, the band performed lively and upbeat versions of "One Day," "Silver Bell," and (my personal favorite) "Shades of Blue."

While I get a lot of enjoyment out of going to metal and punk concerts and I really enjoy the sense of community that those concerts foster between the performers and the audience. I must say that the magic of my Friday night with Gregory Alan Isakov was something I didn't feel at the noisier shows. It was one of those nights when everyone forgot about the outside world and just enjoyed the music. Briefly put, my evening with Gregory Alan Isakov was one of the loveliest I've experienced in recent memory. 🗨️

My Upbringing

By Abdimalik Ahmed

This is a season of winning
I'm standing on the stage and they're applauding, lauding that this is only the beginning
I stand there grinning, man look, I'm prizewinning, the distance of the goal is actually thinning

I get back in the car and I hear something ringing
The shirt I specially bought for the event now stuck to my back, clinging
I'm sat stationary but everything is literally spinning
I've been clamping it down but oh it's finally brimming

I almost thought I'd go one night without it coming out swinging
Without it slinging it's stinging dimming
I came here with no intention of bringing
it's constricting mudslinging

The weight of it on my body, pinning
Oh GOD, there is no flinging this zinging bowstringing
It will never cease tinging my every moment of free-swinging
It has cursed me to a life of hand-wringing whinging

My every potential happiness it has committed to personally hamstringing
It probably has a direct correlation with my upbringing

4:24am, 3/20/23

Rising Housing Crisis For UMN Students

A stylized illustration of a red brick building with several windows. Some windows have flower boxes with green plants. A large green tree is on the right side. The scene is set against a blue sky with a yellow sun or moon. The overall style is painterly and warm.

How the rise in luxury apartments around campus
affects students looking for off-campus housing

BY ALESSANDRA BENITEZ

Exactly three and a half weeks after I moved into my new house in Dinkytown, the leasing company sent us an email saying we had to renew our lease by the first week of October. Otherwise, it would go to the first people to sign. As if the start of the midterm season wasn't enough stress, I now had to add figuring out housing to it, for yet another year. The email got me thinking about the process I went through around October of last year looking for housing, which was stressful, to say the least. I'm sure many can agree that housing near campus is difficult to figure out for a number of reasons. Finding a relatively nice, relatively close, and relatively cheap place is all most of us students can ask for. But unfortunately, leasing companies around the U of M make it hard.

Minnesota's weather is unforgiving, steaming hot in the summer, freezing cold in the winter, and so damp the rest of the year. Additionally, many students don't have cars and rely on school buses, public transportation, and good old walking as means of transportation. I know one major component when I was looking for a house was making sure I wouldn't have to walk a long way to get to class (sorry to those who live in Como), so my roommates and I decided Dinkytown was our best option: close to school and to the fun. Because we knew it'd take a while, we started looking for a place for this year around mid-October last year. We looked everywhere: apartments, houses, duplexes, you name it. We toured at Uncommon, which was great, except it didn't list any prices on the website (we would soon find out that's how you know it's going to be expensive).



We toured a couple of houses in Dinkytown which were kind of breaking down and still too expensive, and even some apartment buildings (they all had that smell). Even when we did find a couple of places that checked our boxes, they always got taken by some other group literally a day or two before we told the company we'd like that unit. Seriously, it happened like three times.

These difficulties in finding affordable housing are felt all throughout the U of M's student body. The Wake conducted a poll to see how students are feeling the effects of expensive housing, in which over 50% of the participants reported living in an off-campus house or apartment. When asked to briefly describe what the process of finding said housing was like, the responses were all very similar: tedious, difficult, and annoying. Most students agree that in order to find something nice and reasonably priced, you have to start looking very early into the school year. Many recounted looking for housing as early as October of the previous year by utilizing Facebook pages, apartment databases, social media, and word of mouth. Most of the time this research resulted in touring multiple places without avail, sometimes for months on end due to the state of the unit, the size, the price, and so on. There are a lot of things that students resent about leasing companies around campus, but chief among them is pricing. Many simply cannot keep up with the rising prices in housing around school, and some students even stated that the high prices directly resulted in them having to live at home and commute to school.

Let's face it: when it comes to student housing you don't need it to be super nice— functional will



do just fine. The problem is leasing companies around the school want to rent out almost functional units for extravagant prices. Just look at the luxury apartment buildings all around campus. The Hub in Stadium Village is a great example of this: stylishly furnished apartments, a pool, jacuzzi, gym, and super expensive rent. Though, if you've ever been inside one of The Hub apartments, you know they're tiny. We're talking about almost no living room space and zero kitchen storage. But, of course, the amenities sure are nice.

More recently, these luxury-style buildings seem to be all the new rage in Dinkytown. Just this summer The Fieldhouse was finished and people started moving in. It has a pool, a huge gym, a clubhouse, a media room, a game room, study rooms, and any more rooms you can think of. Rent, of course, is egregiously high. If Identity is ever finished it will also be a luxury-style apartment building (word on the street is it might have a McDonald's), and Landmark Properties plans to build yet another luxury housing building by the fall of 2025.

“Regardless of popularity, these buildings seem to be popping up left and right, and leasing companies certainly don’t waste any time getting tenants and charging them rent, sometimes before they’re even finished building the complex.”

But how do students feel about these “luxury” apartments? Most are not fans. Not surprising, considering that increased competition between housing companies has in turn raised the prices of housing overall, making it rather difficult or sometimes impossible for students to afford living near campus.

Regardless of popularity, these buildings seem to be popping up left and right, and leasing companies certainly don't waste any time getting tenants and charging them rent, sometimes before they're even finished building the complex. But for some, this greed blew up in their faces. Identity is still not finished, even though we're more than five weeks into the semester. They left hundreds, if not thousands, of students stranded. For their grand solution, they offered every person who was supposed to move in two options. One: find alternative housing on your own and receive a \$150 gift card per day until move-in; two: alternate housing provided by Identity and a \$80 gift card per day until move-in. Except, if you took the first option, you're stuck commuting to school and back every single day, which is pretty annoying if you were supposed to have housing near school. If you took the second option, you likely got put in some basic hotel room, which means no kitchen, paying for laundry, and more. The general opinion of our poll respondents is that these offers were not nearly enough to make up for the inconvenience and stress that Identity put them through.

Most people chose option one, which meant they had to scramble to find a place to stay. What many people had to do was try to find short leases while the property was finished building or new housing altogether. Short-term leases were preferred since Identity won't let them get out of their leases. Identity's behavior towards its tenants

during this situation was considered predatory by a lot of students. As if this wasn't stressful enough for students, they might not even be able to move in at all this semester. The projected move-in date was supposed to be September 29 for some floors and early October for others. However, Identity did not have a permit to have people actually live there yet, as the residents were informed. They ended up getting the permit last minute and people can now move in... right as midterm season is starting

“The prices keep going up, yet the quality of the residences keeps declining steadily. If these trends continue, there’s a very real possibility that students will eventually get priced out of living near campus, as some already have.”

Dissatisfaction with off-campus housing has grown exponentially due to the rise of luxury apartments as well as blatant shows of disrespect from leasing companies. The delay in building Identity is just one example of how landlords continue to take advantage of students around campus and get away with it, since they're the only companies near school. The prices keep going up, yet the quality of the residences keeps declining steadily. If these trends continue, there's a very real possibility that students will eventually get priced out of living near campus, as some already have. 🙄



Overambition on the Horizon

How thinking ten steps ahead clears a path for the first footprint

Marie Ronnander

I’ve been working on the same experiment for almost five months; each step toward progress is memorized with a mythical rhythm. First, measure the chemical, but be careful, as just one flake on your skin might be enough to give you third-degree burns. Second, dissolve the chemical in water, but don’t stir the solution too fast, as water could splash back, and again: third-degree burns. Now, adjust the acidity of your solution with yet another chemical that could leave you with, you guessed it, third-degree burns. Needless to say, gloves are very important in research.

What is more important in this line of work is accepting that all beautiful things take time to be understood. You can’t just look at Van Gogh’s “Starry Night” without wondering why he painted it. Most doctorates in science would see these five months as just a couple of seconds standing staring at the “Mona Lisa.” This is all to say, while my eyes are drooping from looking at outdated, pixelated screens for hours on end, I’m beginning to understand the beauty in my pursuit. Each new failed iteration of my experiment drags me closer to answering what the little enzymes I’m studying actually do.

In addition to researching fluorine chemistry and risking crispy skin, I spend time TA-ing in a neighboring teaching lab. I’m a walking encyclopedia on the do’s and don’ts of environmental toxicology, which is a very technical term for researching how human-made chemicals affect the world around

us. In the case of the BIOL 3004 teaching lab, “the world” is synonymous with, well, zebrafish.

I should mention that this is the same class that made me realize how greedy science can be with your time. I remember my first day as a student, listening to the TA spell out my certain failure in the course. My concept of research was that I needed to either solve cancer, world hunger, or, at the very least, the climate crisis. Not to mention, this was to be done with just a few zebrafish and a list of approved chemicals. I felt as though I was supposed to lasso the moon in only three months while also being graded on the technique in which I chose to do so.

My own environmental toxicology research in that class amounted to sunburned zebrafish and a poster explaining why our experiment didn’t work. But throughout this extremely expedited research session, I only grew more curious as to why the world was unfolding as it was. How could I change my experiments to get more meaningful results? My failures only caused me to press harder to understand what I was observing; I could only see the paint strokes if I leaned closer to the masterpiece.

Now, I watch my students file into class with the same ambitious intensity set on their faces. They want that Nobel Prize by the end of the month, and my job is to make sure they’ll be more or less mentally stable when they find out they won’t win it. What’s more

important is that I make sure that they don’t lose interest in understanding why things go wrong, and how much we can learn from the wrong.

Because within each failure is a little naturally selected success. That tiniest bit of success is needed to keep the fuel burning. Our tiniest bit of understanding of Van Gogh’s pain pushes our curiosity for the artist; the smallest piece of supporting data unravels our need to know more. This desire to continue to learn is how cancer is cured, and how the climate crisis will be solved. We just need to stay rooted under the light of our initial ambition.

While, no, unfortunately my students will probably not solve the opioid epidemic, they are learning that failure means growth. I’m hoping to show them that their lofty ideas are worth pursuing, but they have to learn to crawl before they can walk. And if you get real good at walking, maybe you’ll start to run. Sure, you might slip and skin your knee in the process, but if you keep pressing forward, eventually you’ll be running marathons. I’m miles further from where my research began five months ago, but I still have many miles to go—and I’ll make sure to wear gloves in the process.



Main Character: I am Her

A love letter to autumn

Vishalli Alagappan

I look out my window into the night sky that resembles the calm, dark depths of the ocean. I snooze my alarm one last time just to snuggle with my stuffed polar bear under a warm, heavy comforter. Slow autumn mornings are so easy to romanticize; I feel like a character in a Wes Anderson movie.

A sepia filter rolls in as I stretch my arms out, followed by the necessary yawn. I leave my bed undone and neatly place a vinyl onto a record player. “Gotta Get Up” by Harry Nilsson plays in the background as I walk expressionlessly to the bathroom, still half-asleep. I brush my teeth fervently, spit out the bitter toothpaste, and smile maniacally to inspect my teeth. The camera then pans to the kitchen where I reach for the top shelf to get the loose leaf tea. Then, it shifts to a birds-eye-view shot of the mug with hot water, waiting for the stainless steel ball infuser with the aromatic Darjeeling tea to steep. I leave the frame as the water changes from clear to a rich, velvety brown. Meanwhile, I water my dying plants and give each a little kiss and quick words of affirmation to get them through the cold. The fridge door then opens, flooding the room with mellow yellow light. I pour the milk into a disfigured handmade mug and place it in the microwave. The camera returns to that birds-eye-view to capture the muted white of the milk swirl into the rich brown tea.

The song ends as I remove the record and replace it with another that plays “Fly Me To The Moon” by Frank Sinatra and Count Bassie. I dress in the quintessential outfit of cream sweater, flared burnt umber corduroy pants, and square toed green boots. I stack an array of necklaces on top of the mockneck and finish off with a pair of stud earrings. The camera follows me into the kitchen as I grab the tea and bring it out to the porch. The frame zooms out as I look up at the hints of orange creeping into the night sky. The last few leaves finally let go and float to the ground: oh, how I love autumn.

Dreaming is a Reality, Kind Of

Everything is in our minds.

Bianca Llerena

Many moons ago, as I was slowly beginning to fall asleep, I had an epiphany of sorts (as I always do), so I scribbled away in my notes app moments before falling into Morpheus’ arms. When I awoke, this is what I found:

reality is just as real as our dreams
(both are reality)
yet dreams happen in our brains
(we perceive reality in our brains)
therefore, both are equally as important,
or better said, equally as unimportant,
the only difference is one involves others’ brains
and one does not

Written almost (I repeat almost) poetically, this oversimplified explanation struck me, and I have now potently turned to this new attitude when it comes to valuing my dreams. Personally, I have always loved deciphering my dreams, and I genuinely find importance in how they make me feel. A question I have used to help others understand what I mean is this: if your dreams play a role in how you feel/think/act, then aren’t they some form of reality?

While yes, the reality outside of our dreams is physical and involves others’ bodies and brains, our dreams give us tangible and palpable information and can create vivid, real emotions within ourselves. What is more real than that? It is important not to forget all of our reactions with other people, the physical pain we feel, and the world around us; it all happens in our brains. Our dreams give us the gifted experience of unveiling our subconscious, which is much harder to do when we feel like we have to be in control all of the time. I suggest giving more credit to your dreams and validating the power that they bring us, as they can help us learn more about ourselves than we ever thought they could.



Altered State of Mind: Sustaining a Paradigm Shift

Devna Panda

Each time I read a new quote or watched a new movie when I was younger, I felt like I was experiencing a paradigm shift. Every beautifully written piece of prose worked its powers of persuasion on me and slightly swayed my worldview. Eventually, I began questioning the validity of the quotes and wondering if I was possibly just an incredibly impressionable person. Yet, when I was seventeen and I read John Donne’s “Meditation 17,” my life was irrevocably altered. Now, chances are if we are close friends or even if you’ve met me in passing at a party, I most likely have shared this experience with you already.

My high school teacher Ms. Wallenberg (known affectionately as Wally) introduced the poem we would be discussing in AP Literature by asking a question: why are bells commonly used as a symbol in literature? After a few raised hands, the answer came swiftly: bells often signify death and suffering. In John Donne’s “Meditation 17,” he uses this imagery to describe the idea of common humanity – “Any man’s death diminishes me because I am involved in mankind. Therefore, never send to know for whom the bell tolls; the bell tolls for thee.”

These words have been reverberating in my mind since. As Wally explained how this stanza underscores that other people’s pain should affect us as acutely as if it were our own, something shifted in my mind.

We have a duty to the individuals in the periphery of our lives. I was reminded of the first time I was exposed to this line of thinking. In my junior year of high school, while I was taking the required health education course, our teacher had a guest speaker come in to lead the class. The guest speaker had been a victim of sexual assault and was coming to discuss the legislation she had been able to help put in place after her experience. Toward the end of her talk, she described a thought process that I had never encountered before. What if we were to accept partial responsibility for the well-being of those around us? When people that you’ve never encountered before walk past you, what if you consider what you owe to them merely because you are alive at the same time?

As someone who had been fairly consumed by my own life and mind, I was stunned into silence. If we were to give other people’s hardships as much wholehearted attention as we do to our own, this world would undoubtedly be a better place. We are each other’s keepers.



4

How Long Until We All Go Mad?

Do the children of the (mis)information age stand a fighting chance

Jules DeLuc

With highway robbery being the law of the land in the land of stripes and stars, is there a glimmer of hope for Generation Z? Or has our future been stolen before they could even grasp it, bought and sold to the highest bidder? As the world melts away, is the ground we tread upon even safe? The slow but cruel erosion of freedom is but an afterthought when facing the blight of starvation and eviction. Who cares about voting when they are living off ramen packets and tap water?

Something’s got to give. Can the storm truly be weathered? Other swathes of American reprobates, young, spry, and ready to take on the world have come and gone. What separates the “Good Vibes” generation, with its penchant for social media showboating, to the hippies of the “Free Love” generation, who spent ample time making love rather than war and wearing flowers in their hair?

Like the socially conscious hippie, will we too die out, grow apathetic, or become complacent when the baton of authority is passed to us? With the ongoing fossil-ocracy, can we even be certain we will assume power before the world becomes one big nuclear warhead wonderland? Like the previous batches of cretaceous period podium pushers before us, it remains to be seen if the can will be kicked further down the road. Who’s to say the “anti-woke” club-wielding brutes pounding at the city gates, shaking the rafters, will not beat us in the vie for power?

Then, there’s always the chance that the post-millennials have all turned into mind-melted zombies, stupefied by the endless march of twitter scrolling, craniums rocked too hard by fidget spinner freak accidents and too many attempts to pass tide pods off as a meal. I raise these concerns as one of these 21st century social pariahs, born in the aftermath of the Y2K delusions at the turn of the century, seemingly molded into a “screen-ager” without my own consent.

Have “kids these days” become stupefied by an onslaught of streaming service subservience? Sadly, there are plenty of us who blindly swear an oath to women-bashing charlatans on the internet. Not to mention, those of us who went all in on the NFT craze, only to watch it go up in flames.

Truly, whirlwinds of danger race all around us. However, it would be a foolish mistake to count the youth of America out just yet, for a rabid dog is most crafty and capable when backed into a corner, standing in a pool of its own frothy saliva. And despite the laundry list of societal atrocities we are exposed to on a daily basis, we endure it nonetheless. That fact alone speaks to the character of Generation Z.

We have thus far taken the post-9/11 hellscape in stride, in spite of our freedoms dying a little more with every TSA agent

fondling. If the “iGeneration” can withstand the demotion of Pluto as a planet, the end of Blockbuster video rental stores, and the pains of not being able to get your grubby hands on that goddamned bendy pencil at the scholastic book fair that one time in the third grade, then surely they can take on just about anything. Another thing people seem to either forget entirely or ignore is the blight of COVID-19, and our persistence to push through it in spite of the countless who were, for one reason or another, unable to see it through to the end. Truly this is a generation of prize fighters, already punched their way through one financial crisis, and swingin’ for the fences with the next currently underway.

I’m fairly sure the world will keep turning, as it has for millenia, and as long as we can prevent the death of our world, either by way of fossil fuel or atomic annihilation. The dilemma of supposedly corrupted youth is a tale repeated throughout our history, a debate rearing its head every time the youth of a society begin to approach autonomy and authority. However, this time it feels like a legitimate threat as penguins begin moving into apartment blocks everywhere and ice cubes become a greater luxury than gold leaf. What a racket! 🐼



2



Shanna Sivakumar

A once in a life time interview with our very own reviews editor!

By Shanna Sivakumar

Shanna Sivakumar is a senior at the University of Minnesota studying Psychology with a minor in Film Studies. She is also the Music & Reviews Editor at The Wake Magazine. I sat down as her for a Q&A this week because no actual artists were available... we should be back to our regularly scheduled programming for our next issue.

Q: Do you mind if I record this interview?

S: Oh, not at all. Sorry, this is my first time doing this sort of thing. I've never interviewed myself. I've never been interviewed.

Q: How did you get interested in The Wake Magazine?

S: Ok, so, sophomore year of college, two of my roommates were interns at The Wake and dragged me to a meeting at the beginning of the year. At the time, I was a little too shy to pick up a pitch, but I got to see how a student-run magazine worked and thought it was a great way to get involved on campus. And then, junior year, I decided to apply to be an intern. I've always loved pop culture and media, so I chose music/reviews and now I'm here, I guess?

Q: Why choose Music/Reviews?

S: I love media and entertainment. I don't know if there's anything more to it. Anyone who has gotten to know me knows that I adore talking about my favorite songs, movies, and TV shows. And despite pursuing a minor in film studies, my first love has always been music. This position is everything I've wanted, because now I get to write about these things I love rather than subjecting my friends and family to hear me talk about Beyoncé's "RENAISSANCE" one more time. Anyways, the previous Reviews Editor graduated last spring so the position was open and I was the only intern, so when I got the text saying the position's mine if I'd like, I immediately said yes. Also I love reviews. I love our little four pages at the very end of the

magazine. And to be honest, I thought this position would maybe require less work in comparison to Cities or Voices... and then I realized I was responsible for the Q&A. But honestly, I love doing the Q&A. Once I work through my social anxiety, I assume it'll be even better.

Q: Your favorite class so far?

S: I'm taking Screenwriting this semester and I absolutely love it. I originally chose my film minor just so that I could take this course and honestly? Worth it. It's a class of less than 20 students so it's quite intimate. I recently had a bit of my screenplay critiqued and that was kind of a... vulnerable experience. But I'm glad I did it because I learned a lot.

Q: What music are you listening to right now?

S: I would be lying to my core if I didn't mention the new NCT 127 album, so there's that. But this summer has largely been my Beyoncé summer. I've seriously nose-dived deep into her discography so I'm guessing most of my Spotify Wrapped this year will be Beyoncé related. But a couple songs I have on repeat right now are "SUMMER" by The Carters, "Lipstick Lover" by Janelle Monáe, and "Love Of My Life" by Queen. There's a lot more, but I'll keep it down to my top three for now. Except I have to include a bonus track, "Special Affair" by The Internet.

Q: What do you want to do with your time at The Wake this year?

S: I guess— I hope to convey my genuine love for entertainment and media. I hope every student writer gets to write about something they love, and that local artists can be uplifted here at The Wake! And a final message to all the music lovers out there: stop hiding and start writing! Come pitch that new King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard album. From boygenius to Sufjan Stevens to the latest Marvel movie installment, I would love to read it all.

Q: My top 5 movies (in no particular order)

BlackKkKlansmen (2018) — Spike Lee I remember watching this movie (which is currently streaming on Netflix!) and about 30 minutes in, I was like, "this is some good writing." Later on, I looked up the film on Google or Wikipedia and saw that it got the Academy Award for Best Writing. Well, that checks out. I really love the writing— especially the way the writers were able to include humor within such serious subject matter. Also the entire



climactic scene is done so well... ugh I love this movie. The only critique is probably the portrayal of a policeman as the protagonist. And while I didn't view the film as copaganda by any means, I could see how others might have.

Ladybird (2017) — Greta Gerwig One of my favorite movie genres would have to be the coming-of-age indie films. Ladybird is so well written and is geared towards anyone with a complicated mother-daughter relationship. Somehow, Greta Gerwig managed to encapsulate universal girlhood, to the point where it transcends

race or socioeconomic status. Also, there's one particular scene (at the airport) that never fails to make me shed a tear.

96 (2018) — C. Premkumar

This is a Tamil movie about two people seeing each other after two decades and they used to be in love with each other. It's simple and beautiful and dialogue-heavy. It always reminds me of the beauty of human connection. And much like Ladybird, it's got an airport scene that makes me cry.

Super deluxe (2019) — Thiagarajan Kumararaja Easily one of my favorite Tamil films ever. Such beautiful cinematography— every frame could be a painting. It's funny, it's nostalgic, and it's hyperlink cinema— where every story eventually connects with the other.

Pariyerum perumal (2018) — Mari Selvaraj While Pariyerum Perumal is

such a well done film portraying one man's fight against the caste system in India, part of the reason I love this film is for the main actors, Kathir and Anandhi(<3). But aside from that, this movie is such a strong directorial debut, filled with symbolism while still leaning into the dramatics that are a staple in Indian cinema.

Q: My top 5 "no skip" albums (in particular order)

RENAISSANCE — Beyoncé
AM — Arctic Monkeys
Madharasapattinam (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack) — G.V. Prakash
NCT RESONANCE Pt.1 The 2nd Album — NCT
WHEN WE ALL FALL ASLEEP, WHERE DO WE GO? — Billie Eilish

Q: My top 5 TV shows:

Crashing
Fleabag
Stranger Things (specifically the first 2 seasons)
I Told Sunset About You
The Office (lol)



MORE 'UM's
PER HOUR
THAN ANY
OTHER
STATION.

100.7 FM + 104.5 FM

RADIO K

770_{AM} 100.7 & 104.5_{FM}

★ ➡ ★ Real College Radio ★ ➡ ★