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Lacey Ward and Elyse Buchanan in Halloween Garb. Photograph by Lacey Ward

Holiday Season

By Douglas Yeisley

Now that Halloween is history, stores, catalogues, and commercials begin to gear up for the holiday season. In a few short weeks, we will be eating Thanksgiving dinner with odd relatives and carrying bags for our mothers after Black Friday's rush. If you have watched a Christmas special or two, such as the *For Better or Worse* special or *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, you can probably see the point I am trying to drive home. Commercialism goes hand in hand with the holidays these days. In fact, Halloween is the second most expensive holiday after Christmas.

Why do we do it? Personally, I do not think it was rooted in selfishness. Often times, it was more about trying to get someone you love the very best. Certainly, advertisers and other corporations took advantage of this sentiment, and

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Cop Shooting Hits Close to Home

By Amanda Arbour

This year on October 31, Halloween frights were overshadowed by real-life scares. As most of us know, a police officer was shot in North Philly – the third in four days. Charles Cassidy, a 25-year veteran of the Philadelphia police force, stopped at a Dunkin Donuts on his normal patrol, and unwittingly walked into an armed robbery. The man holding up the place shot Cassidy in the head and ran, returned to take the cop's gun, and then fled the scene. Within moments cop cars were speeding up Broad Street, their sirens wailing. The most massive manhunt in Philadelphia history was underway, with literally the entire police department on the scene combing the neighborhood in search of the suspect.

Until this incident I had always thought about gun violence in the abstract – I cared deeply about it, but it was something that happened to other people. This hit home for me, because the shooting occurred just a few blocks from my family's home. As soon as I heard about it I called them to see if they were okay. My mom was out shopping and didn't feel safe coming home. My brother's school – like 53 others – had been put on lock-down. And my dad was working at Albert Einstein Medical Center, where Officer Cassidy was undergoing surgery. This was my family, my neighborhood, and this was not an abstract issue for me anymore.

And I'll tell you, it made me angry! All the news articles talked about what a good cop Cassidy had been, well-liked by the community. He was a family man, with a wife and three children. It did not seem fair. But at the same



Image Courtesy of Google Images

time I had to ask myself, what about all of the other people who get shot in Philly? Sadly, it is a routine occurrence, and other victims do not get anywhere near the attention that Cassidy did. He got the entire police force, while other people only get one or two cars. Where is the massive manhunt to find their killers? I understand that killing a cop seems worse somehow because they are trying to protect us. But life is life, and it saddens me that some lives are valued above others.

In the aftermath of this tragedy Mayor Street pledged the full resources of the city to hunt down the killer, and lamented a loss of respect for life on our streets. Although certainly the killer must be brought to justice, we must not lose sight of the bigger picture. The easy availability of illegal guns in Philly has unquestionably fueled the violence this city has witnessed. And undergirding it is the hopelessness and desperation caused by poverty and lack of opportunities. It is compounded by a profound distrust of the police, who have at times been agents of discrimination and brutality in minority neighborhoods. All of these factors must be recognized and addressed if we want to stop this tragedy from repeating itself.

Community

“T”-ing Off On Temple’s Ad Campaign: The Truth About College Students

By Matt Lettieri

Let’s face it: college students are not as exceptional as Temple’s recently launched alumni ad campaign suggests. You’ve seen the billboards that emphasize the Temple “T” and gush forth such admirable qualities as INITIATIVE, COMMITMENT, and DETERMINATION...what school are we talking about here? I don’t know if alumni display these traits or not because I’m not an alumnus, nor have I been in the past (although there’s a slight possibility I might be one in the future). But after judging my fellow students, I see that the ads are all wrong. To set the record straight, I’ve compiled my own list of attributes that college students proudly display.

BANKRUPTCY

Students don’t usually have a lot of extra cash lying around. This is why Diamond Dollars are so great. They feel like Monopoly money. You can go to 7-eleven and get a Reeses’ Fastbreak, s’more Pop-tarts, Sour Patch Kids, two strawberry frosted donuts and a blueberry slurpee without feeling like you spent a dime (I know from experience). It can be difficult to adjust to life without Diamond Dollars, though. “Oh, I think my soon-to-be fiancé would really like this ring. How much is it again? \$5,000?! You take Diamond Dollars, right?”

INDIGESTION

There are some really great places to eat on campus, but many of them serve pizza and/or cheesesteaks. Enough said.

INTOXICATION

It’s a well known fact that college students drink a lot of alcohol (though certainly not Messiah students). But people fail to realize why alcohol consumption is so rampant. It’s because there’s an

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Keeping the Kitchen Clean

By Lauren Wise

At home, some of us might never wash the dishes: we leave them all over the house, and then mom or dad just takes care of it. We run out of the house and leave the place a mess. The chairs will not be pushed in, our magazines lie spread open on the table, and our spilled milk and cereal gets splattered all around. We do not need to take care of the messes we make because our parents take care of it. They will come into our rooms and take the dirty dishes while we sleep. Things simply get done.

At MCPC, things are not always so different. If we make a mess, there is someone there to clean it up. The dishes may not mysteriously vanish from our rooms while we sleep, but if we leave them in the cafe, they do miraculously get cleaned. If we don’t push in our chairs, they push in themselves. It is like magic, and all we have to do is put the dishes in the sink.

We are lucky we do not have to clean our own dishes everyday. Even as we draw nearer to living completely on our own, our eating area is still clean whenever we come in for dinner. The chairs are in order and the dishes are in place. But there is a problem: we have not realized our own responsibility for this place. We do not bring dishes back, we leave messes for others to find, and allow chairs to be scattered throughout the room.



Mel McKrell Replacing the Milk. Photograph by Emily Yoder.

Quite frankly, if those hired to wash the dishes only washed the dishes, we would all be eating in a scummy mess of a place. We all need to take ownership of this place in which we live. If we do not, we will not have cups to drink out of, we will not be able to put our bagels on anything but a napkin, and we will always have to go fetch a chair when we want to sit down.

So bring back your dishes and push in your chairs. Do not leave papers scattered open on every table as if you are toilet training your animal. This is your cafe and your space. It is where you live. Do not just do it because someone else tells you to; do it because it is your cup, your plate, your tables, and your current home.

**Remember: An
Autumn Affair,
November
16,2007 on
board the *Spirit
of Philadelphia***

Image Courtesy of Google Images



The New Pornographers in Concert

By Emily Yoder

The New Pornographers are rock stars. The Canadian super-group's music is frequently labeled as "power-pop," but they displayed their rock and roll philosophy of resilience and putting the music first during their sold-out performance at the Trocadero Theatre last Friday. Despite technical difficulties, the eight-person band plugged away through fan favorites with enthusiasm.

Lacey Ward, an MCPC junior, and I braved the elements to reach the concert. We avoided the rising gutter water amassing near the Norris and Broad sinkhole, and shrugged it off when the city's wind tunnels flipped my umbrella inside out several times. We were inevitably soaked by the time we reached the line. The concert-goers wrapped around the Chinatown streets, huddling under awnings and umbrellas, carefully avoiding the entrances to various Asian restaurants.

The Trocadero Theatre itself was warm and tightly packed. Its dramatic balcony and stage date back to the 1870s when it once hosted musical comedies and vaudeville shows. Singer Neko Case joked that it looked like the theater from

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Photograph of the New Pornographers at the Trocadero by Emily Yoder

Naturalist or Nutcase?

Sean Penn's Film Balances Self-discovery with Selfish Impudence

By Devin Thomas

Jon Krakauer wrote his 1996 bestseller *Into the Wild* because, in the author's own words, "the story affects all who hear it." Of course, the tale of Christopher McCandless—an Emory University grad from an affluent household who, in 1991, donated his life savings to charity and cut all ties to family and friends as he hitchhiked his way across the U.S.—moves people in dramatically different ways. Some see Chris as a free spirit, an adventurer, a modern-day Henry David Thoreau looking for his own personal Walden beyond the financial security and emotional placidity of suburban American; others see him as naïve and impetuous, shirking the responsibilities of the real world for an imaginary America of wide-open spaces and rugged individualism.

The best part of director Sean Penn's cinematic adaptation of Krakauer's nonfiction "novel" is that neither side gets the upper hand. Penn—though certainly not a masterful (or even subtle) director—crafts a film of great emotional significance, deftly navigating a complex and utterly human tale about one man's search for his identity. The film succeeds largely thanks to its amazing cast, headed by Emile Hirsch as the adventurous young protagonist. As he explores the corners of the American West, learning how to thresh grain in Wyoming and how to hop a boxcar up and down the Californian coast, McCandless comes across a host of unique traveling companions: leftover hippies Rainey and Jan (Brian Dieker and Catherine



Image Courtesy of Google Images

Keener); gregarious, hard-drinking farmer Wayne (Vince Vaughn); a young would-be Joan Baez named Tracy (Kristen Stewart). His most touching contact is with Ron (Hal Holbrook), a widower and Army veteran who views Chris with a mix of wonder and apprehension. As the earnest vagabond opens Ron's world-weary eyes to a whole new way of life (symbolized by the old man's surly determination to follow Chris up a steep hillside), he begins to see the young boy as a wayward grandson.

And then Chris disappears into the interior of Alaska: beautiful countryside filled with hidden and inescapable dangers, as he soon learns. It is here that Chris finally dons the mantle of the great transcendentalists, carving his manifesto into a tree trunk and establishing his own Walden in an abandoned bus near a murmuring brook. As winter fades and the brook transforms into rushing, uncrossable rapids, Chris must face his own humanity.

Despite the careful craftsmanship of the narrative, Penn chooses an erratic, almost frenzied approach to cinematography, employing unnecessary close-ups and erratic camera angles that distract from the simple naturalism of the story. And while Hirsch's performance in the final minutes of the film is striking, almost hypnotic, the director continues to utilize bizarre cinematic tropes that consistently undermine any possible catharsis.

While not without its faults, *Into the Wild* tells a compelling story. Released

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Urban Living

Temple

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alcoholic beverage for each area of study:

- History majors have Samuel Adams
- German majors drink Beck's
- Spanish majors go for Dos Equis
- Art students like Red Stripe

In contrast, Nutrition students don't care what brand their alcohol is as long as it's of the light variety. Physics majors just drink Jack Daniels because they really need it.

ENDANGERMENT

Crossing Broad Street during rush hour can be quite an adventure. Even when the little white man tells me I can walk, there are still cars trying to turn in all directions. It's really every pedestrian for himself (and herself, lest I fail to be Politically Correct). It feels like a human game of frogger.

PROCRASTINATION

Students have finely tuned this habit over the years. In its earliest stages, it consisted simply of checking away messages in an obsessive-compulsive manner. Through time it has grown to include a plethora of choices, including Facebook, Youtube, and iTunes. Choosing the correct form of procrastination on any given assignment is a skill that a student must work hard to master. It takes so much effort to perfect procrastination that a student barely has any time left for school work, which is why we never get around to it. It's ok, though, because if this college thing falls through we can always be "Pro"crastinators.

So there you have it. Next time you see a cherry and white sign that says "SUBSTANCE" it actually means "SUBSTANCE ABUSE." Or if it says "HEART" you'll know that it's supposed to be "HEARTBURN."

INTOXICATION, BANKRUPTCY, INDIGESTION, ENDANGERMENT, PRPCRASTINATION...

Temple University.

New Pornographers

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"The Muppet Show" when she first emerged from backstage.

The set began with "All the Things That Go to Make Heaven and Earth," an energetic, tightly harmonized track off of their album, "Challengers," which came out this summer. Songs from all four of their albums made the set list, although "Challengers" was most heavily represented.

The fans crowding the front of the stage acted as rambunctiously as the anthropomorphic Muppets would have, jumping at the barrier and cat-calling various band members. A girl who claimed her name was Jackie relentlessly requested "Jackie, Dressed in Cobras" during each song break, until front-man Carl Newman complied, playing it a third of the way into the set.

Newman avoided the cliché of the egotistical front-man role. Although he took charge, altering the tentative set list, each of the songs was clearly a group effort. Newman ignored requests for songs off his solo album, and consulted fellow singer and guitarist Dan Bejar for ideas several times throughout the show.

Case also recently found success on her solo venture, "Fox Confessor Brings the Flood." She could easily play into her role as the object of indie fan-boy desire. Relying on her soothing alto voice instead of the potential sex appeal of her wavy red hair, she played the set in a dingy T-shirt, and pulled her locks into a makeshift bun midway through the evening, sharing the spotlight with her seven band mates.

The sound difficulties began when they had a false start on "All the Old Showstoppers." Certain parts came in out of synch and front-man Carl Newman decisively put a stop to the song after twenty seconds. Their second attempt went more smoothly. However, the technical difficulties continued with squeaking microphones and a stage light popping.

One of the monitors went out during "The End of Medicine" (unfortunately, for irony's sake, not during "From Blown Speakers").

Despite the sound and lighting problems, the band played a relaxed, whimsical set, and even emerged unshaken for a four song encore of older fan favorites.

Into the Wild

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in the midst of Oscar-fodder films like *Rendition* and *In the Valley of Elah*, Penn's humanist elegy proves that a film can still be both highly personal and deeply moving.

Show times for *Into the Wild* at the Ritz 5:

3:10, 6:00, 8:50

Holidays

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after several decades of this, the true meaning of the holidays became clouded.

However, all is not lost. Knowing exactly why we celebrate a holiday is not the end of the world. By the mere fact that we do, we are taking part in a collective memory of our culture. Everyone else who is also partaking of the holiday, then, are simultaneously bonding over this shared experience, whether it is labeled a Halloween or Harvest Festival. We talk incessantly about community here, but holidays after all are the time when our community as a nation is at its closest. Sentimentality is dragged out from the cellars, estranged families come together, and old wounds are temporarily forgotten.

Sometimes, you need to purchase that Dora the Explorer merchandise to make the baby of the family happy, but it is important to share the warmth and love that comes with gift giving. Nothing is so subversive as to appease corporate greed with love and compassion. Maybe the child and you can send that Dora the Explorer doll or some candy to a needy child together.