

Spring 4-3-2019

"The Crescent" Student Newspaper, April 3, 2019

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The Crescent

THE VOICE OF THE STUDENTS

ACADEMIC (DIS)HONESTY

P.10 |

**RICHARD SILVER:
PARANORMAL
INVESTIGATOR**

P.12 |

**WHAT'S THE
POINT OF TENT
CITY?**

PG.15 |

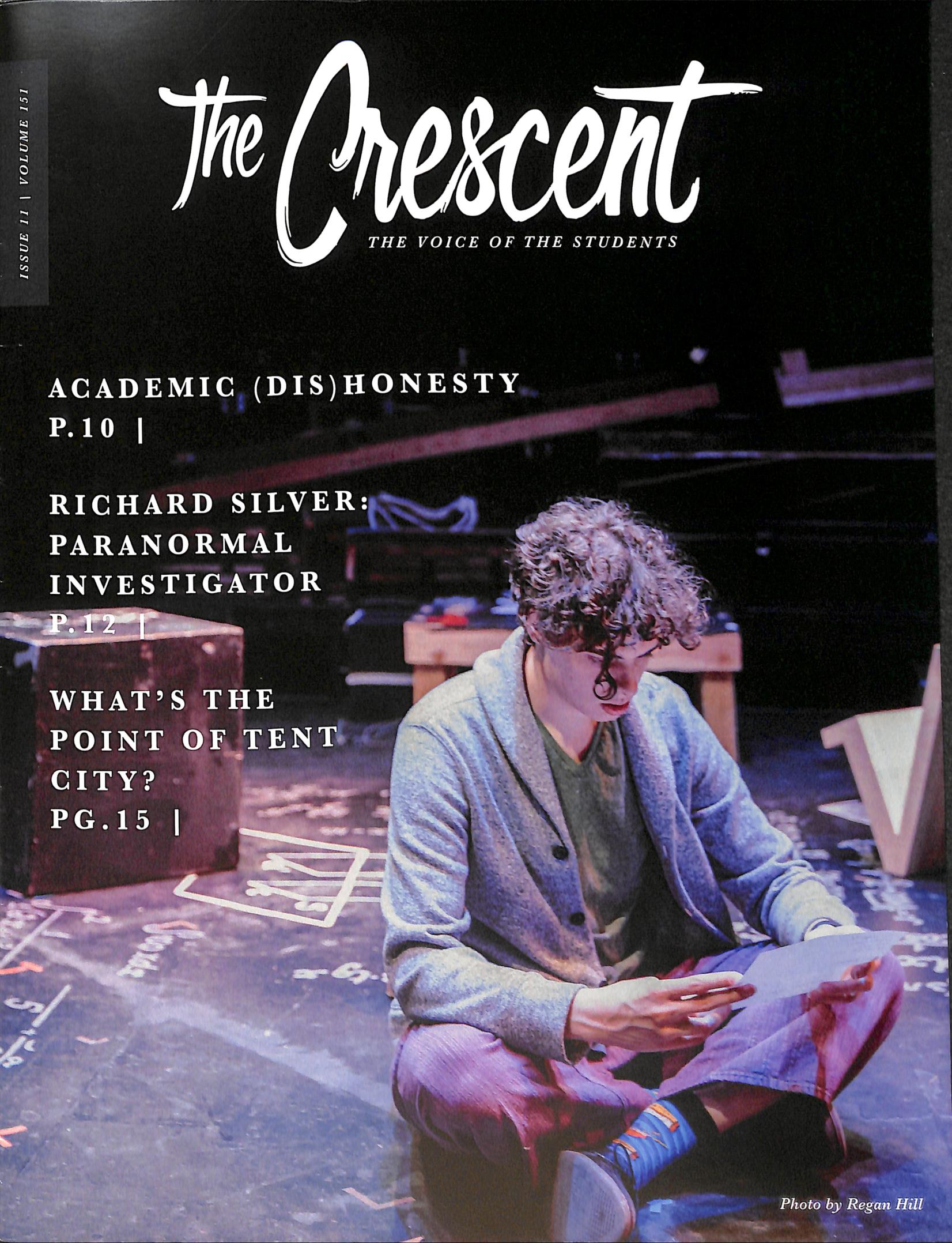


Photo by Regan Hill

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The Voice of the Students

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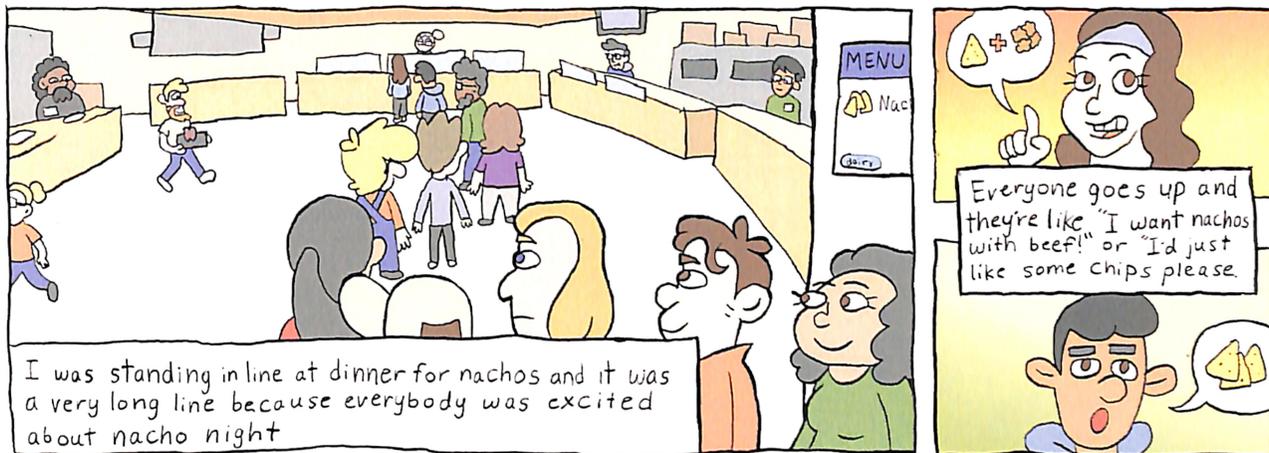
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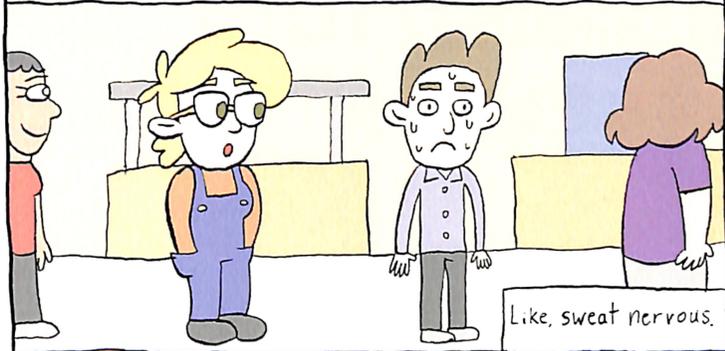


I was standing in line at dinner for nachos and it was a very long line because everybody was excited about nacho night



Everyone goes up and they're like "I want nachos with beef!" or "I'd just like some chips please."

And as I'm getting closer to the front of the line, I'm noticing that the guy in front of me looks really nervous



Like, sweat nervous.



Which I think is weird because it's the nacho line on cupcake night chill out lol

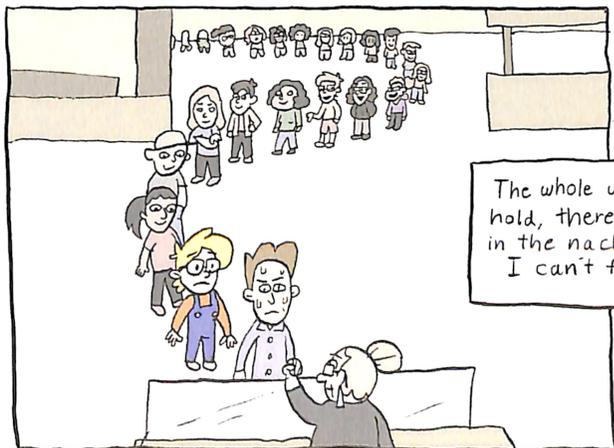


So he gets up there and he leans in to whisper to the server, and I'm too far to hear, but the server leans back and I've never seen such a look of confusion.



Then the guy gestures with a closed hand and the server holds out their hand, and they exchange something,

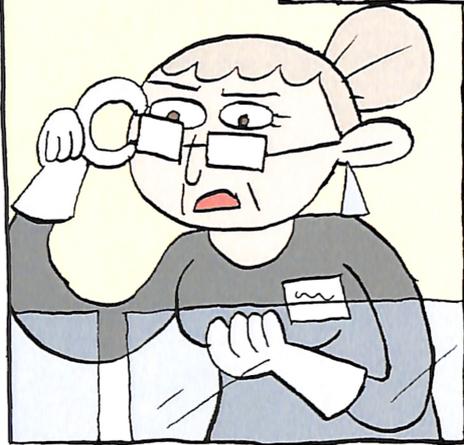
And I'm like "is this a drug deal what is happening"



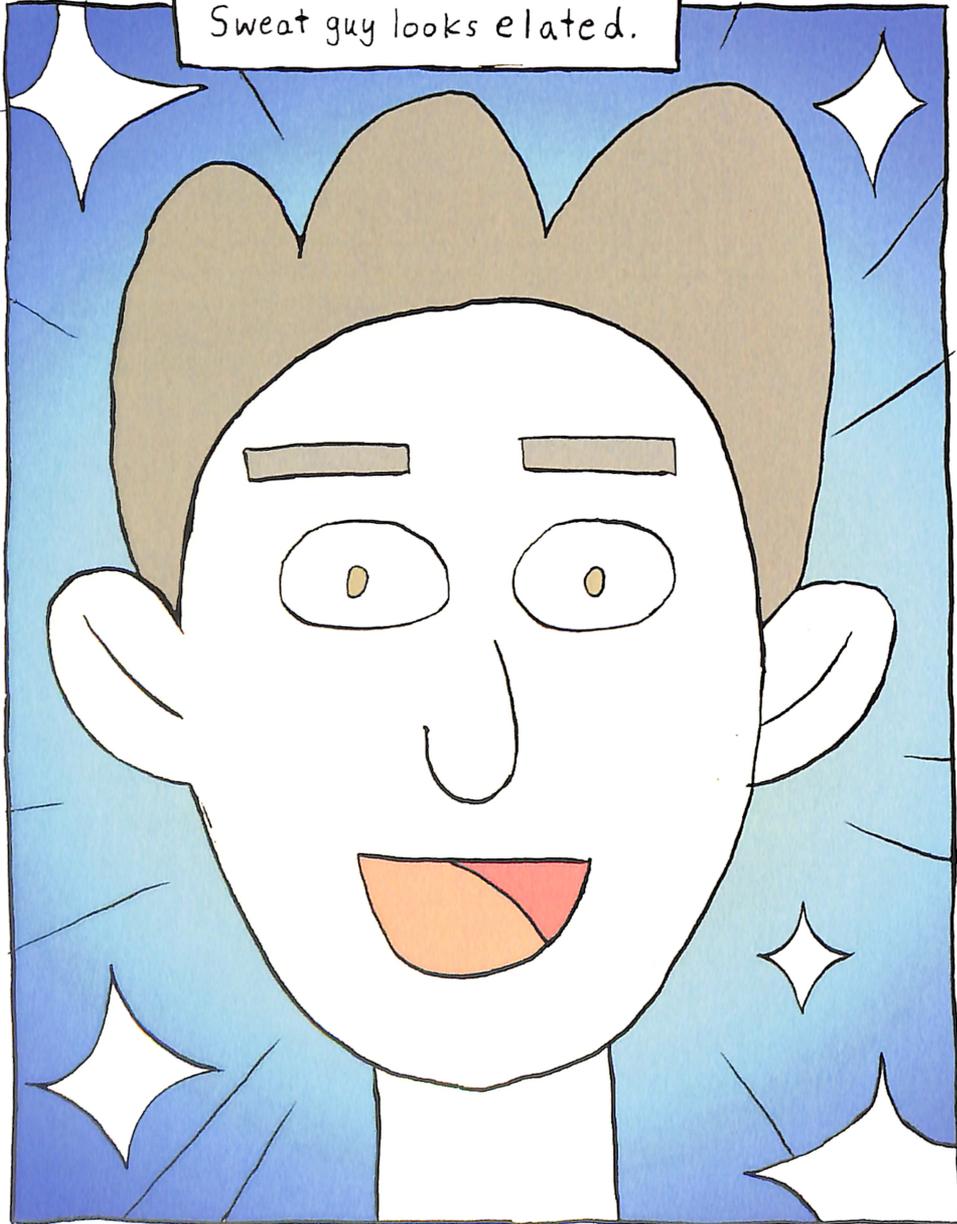
The whole world is on hold, there's a drug deal in the nacho lane and I can't function



But the server looks down into their hand, for a good ten seconds, then sighs, then with this look of defeat, nods to the guy and hands the mystery item back.

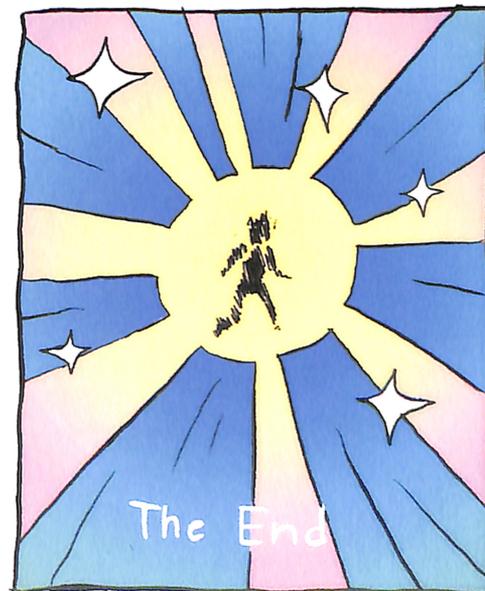
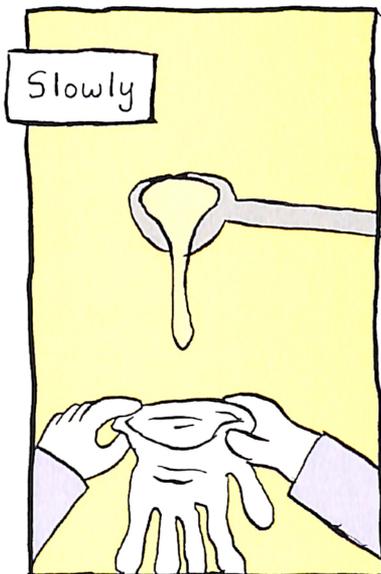
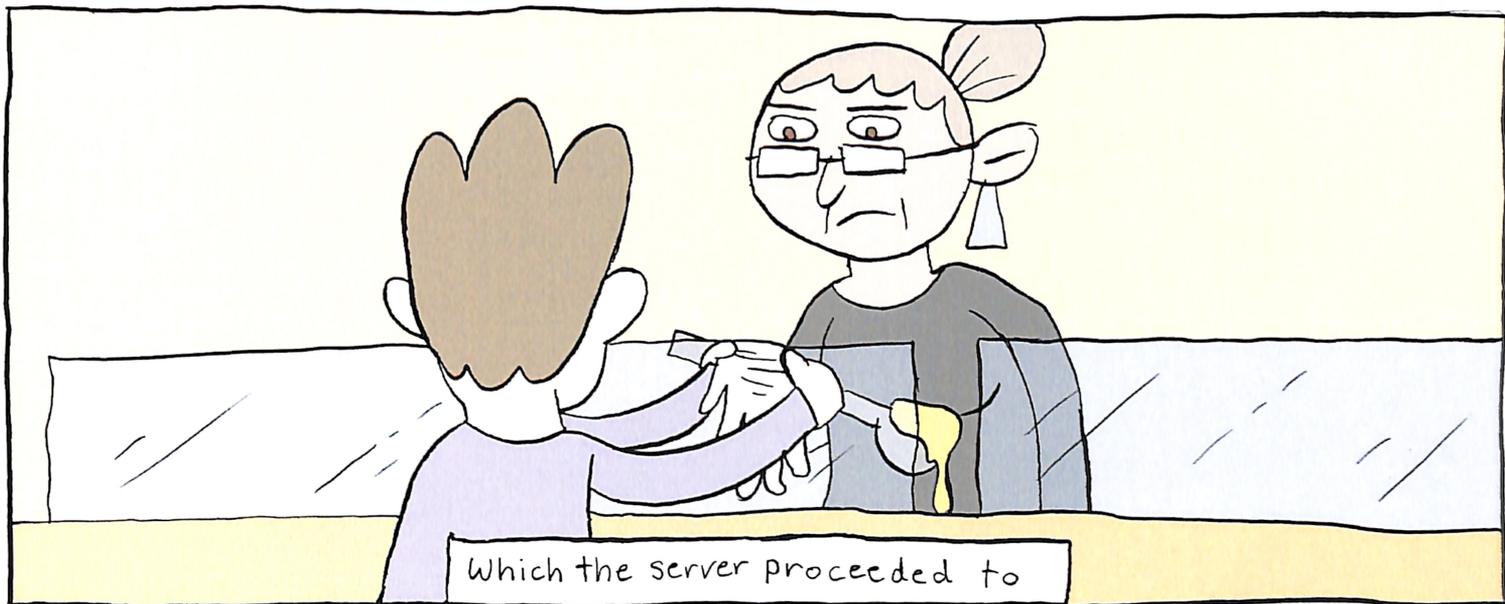


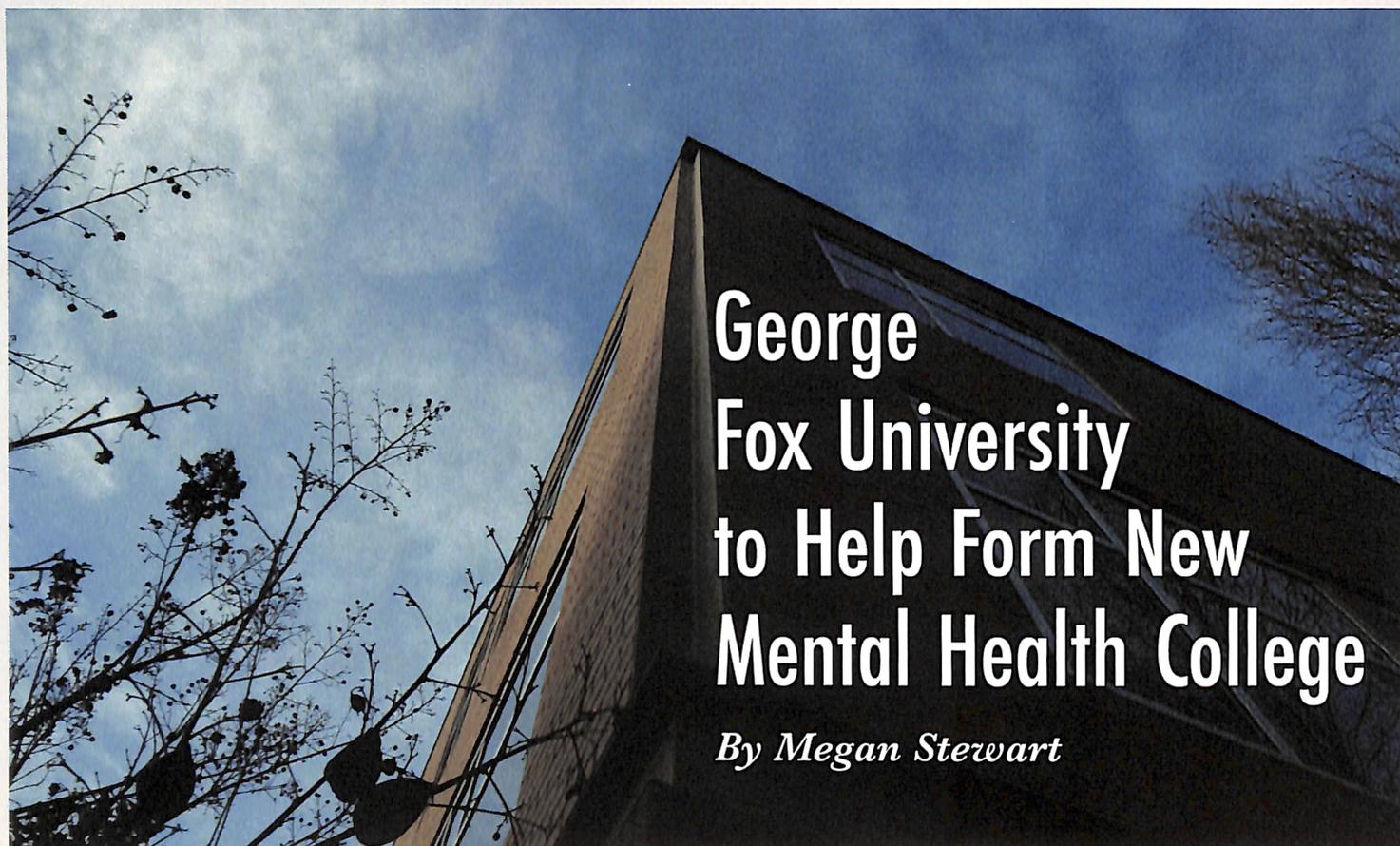
Sweat guy looks elated.



He takes the item and unfolds it, I am literally going to piss myself in suspense, and reveals it to be, a clear rubber glove.







George Fox University to Help Form New Mental Health College

By Megan Stewart

If all goes according to plan, George Fox University (GFU) may be one of the reasons rural Oregon's healthcare quality and workforce improves in the future.

For years, the Oregon government has been concerned with the shortage of healthcare workers in the state, especially in rural areas such as Roseburg. According to a 2017 legislative report, empty positions include "skilled and experienced nurses, medical technicians, allied health professionals and behavioral health (mental health) professionals."

To make matters worse, many current healthcare employees are close to retirement age, which means their positions will soon need to be filled. Staffing shortages means lower quality care, longer lines at doctors' offices and less time with health care professionals.

To combat this issues and develop potential solutions, officials from the Oregon Department of Veteran Affairs and the Oregon State Board of Nursing formed The Rural Medical Training Facilities Workgroup. In September 2017, the workgroup announced their top and most ambitious suggestion: building a new allied and mental health college in Roseburg.

Programs will be added to the college curriculum

over time, beginning with the careers Oregon needs most desperately. The college is intended only for those seeking advanced bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and PhDs, but will accept transfer students with associate degrees from community colleges such as Umpqua Community College in Roseburg.

As of now, future programs include nursing, physical therapy, radiology, medical/clinical lab technology, licensed clinical psychology and social work. Officials hope that the creation of the college will bring much needed skills and knowledge to the state, which currently lacks opportunities for higher level degrees in these fields.

But what role will GFU play?

After signing a contract with the Oregonians for Rural Health, GFU agreed to provide accreditation, or help certify their programs. In other words, GFU will making sure the new college is held to the appropriate academic standards. GFU will also supply an academic model for running an institution and hiring staff and teachers.

With a background in pro-bono and service-oriented work, as well as being highly regarded statewide in both the medical and healthcare fields, GFU appears to be more than qualified for the job.

Photo by Dylan Erlebach

Kylee Wiseman Wows with Watercolor

By Emma Bach

Any scholarship, no matter the field, is competitive. They usually involve a dedicated application process, a particular skillset or a specific field of study. All of which make the recent accomplishments of Kylee Wiseman, a second-year student and studio art major at George Fox University (GFU), even more impressive — this March, Wiseman brought home the Northwest Watercolor Foundation's Gold Grant Scholarship. She is the first GFU student to do so.

Part of the Northwest Watercolor Society (NWS), the Northwest Watercolor Foundation's Gold Grant Scholarship is a \$3,500 grant “presented annually to an outstanding and promising art student.” As part of her application, Wiseman submitted five of her watercolor works, in addition to an artist statement and biography. It wasn't a difficult decision for the scholarship jurors, as they chose Wiseman as the winner unanimously.

Wiseman's award-worthy watercolor pieces all featured birds as the subject matter. Birds have been a deep-rooted love of Wiseman's since she read her first field guide in the second grade. She has long-since studied birds in detail, from their anatomy to their behaviors.

“Birds continue to enchant me,” Wiseman said. “Seeking to capture their beauty and life on paper has become the driving force of my artistic practice.”

With her major in studio art, Wiseman seeks to become an illustrator and create artwork for hospitals — her dream job. Some of her work has already included commissions for hospitals.

In her artist statement, Wiseman elaborated on “Birds of Oregon,” one of her five pieces from the scholarship. The work features a total of 38 varying bird species, all of which are native to Oregon, and includes a key that provides details about each bird:

“My painting ‘Birds of Oregon’ is close to my heart because it encapsulates my two great passions: sharing my love of birds and comforting hospital patients,” she said.

“Birds of Oregon” now resides in the pediatric wing



Painting by Kylee Wiseman

of a hospital in Washington, where it “serves as a fun distraction and teaching tool for young patients,” Wiseman said.

All in all, Wiseman hopes to continue “to delight and uplift others through the beauty of birds” in her artistic

future. She plans to put the scholarship money towards her study-abroad trip to Orvieto, Italy, which will take place next spring.

“It truly is a blessing from God,” Wiseman said. “This award could not have come at a better time!”

Campus Club Tackles Cultural Identity



By Jen Wright

Transitioning from high school to college life is difficult enough for most people, but for Third-Culture Kids (TCK), it’s made even more difficult by the culture gap.

The Third-Culture Kids club at George Fox University (GFU) makes it their mission to help each other adjust to college life in what may be a foreign country. The club members are mostly students who grew up in mission-

ary families and experienced or are experiencing culture displacement.

The club provides a space for students to talk with each other about the difficulties they have in transitioning to a new school or country, and the struggles in finding cultural identity and a sense of belonging.

Aren Thomas grew up in Rwanda and moved to the U.S. in 2015 to attend GFU. Thomas’ older sister, Bre-

Photos by Victoria Prieto

anna Becker, started the TCK club a few years ago and Thomas' younger sister is in the club leadership.

"I have a lot of pride in my African upbringing," Thomas said. "I love what it meant, the culture, and the experience of, like, I went to a boarding school in Kenya for four years, and that was the best experience in my life, and I absolutely loved it."

Thomas' sister helped him adjust to American culture, but it was still difficult because of all the gaps in knowledge of cultural "norms" in the U.S. The TCK club has helped Thomas discuss and learn these things in a welcoming environment.

"I know for me, it was really helpful to even just talk to other people," Thomas said. "It's like providing a home. If you go to a place where everyone else is completely different from you, you can't feel like you're at home, or be yourself anywhere."

Third-culture kids and missionary kids most commonly experience cultural displacement and having other people to talk to that are going through or have gone through the same thing is helpful and comforting.

"The interesting thing about TCKs is, like, they will never fit in perfectly somewhere," Thomas said. "Like, I will never be fully American, but I'll also never be fully Rwandan. But I think that I can really engage in cultures, and I love being able to see that there's a lot more than is being presented right here, how people act."

For Ryan Johnson, who grew up in Uruguay, the biggest question the club tackles is something everyone goes through, to a degree.

"It's about processing your past," Johnson said. "Like, what does your past mean for your future?"

Johnson felt that he never really fit in. In Uruguay, he was "the American"; now, in the U.S., he feels less "American" than ever.

Even parents of TCKs and missionary kids can have a hard time understanding the experience, because they usually didn't have a similar childhood.

"That creates this sort of schism between them," Johnson said. "My parents, raising me in another country, meant that they had to change a bit of what their expectations were."

The club president, Ben Kraske, grew up as a missionary kid. Kraske has a lot of plans for the club, including having older members act as "mentors" for new students.

Kraske wants to start a system where TCKs help each other through adjusting to a new environment and then turn around and do the same for someone else.

The club has been focusing on building structure this year and this year they have experienced a lot of growth.

You don't have to be a TCK or a missionary kid to

come to meetings, and you can learn a lot about cultural awareness and missions by attending, Kraske said.

The club meets every Wednesday from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m., for fellowship, games and discussions.



Academic (Dis)honesty

By Jen Wright

Imagine you are taking a test. You've been studying hard for this test, but you are unsure of your ability to remember enough to get the grade you need to pass the class.

Your flashcards are in your bag beside you, and the professor isn't looking. Do you trust your preparation, or do you try to use your flashcards to help you on the test?

In a survey conducted between 2002 and 2015 of over 70 thousand undergraduate students, thirty-nine percent of undergraduate respondents admitted to cheating on tests and 62 percent cheated on written assignments, according to the International Center for Academic Integrity.

One of the biggest factors in cheating is academic stress and the expectation for students to constantly perform at a high level. Students may feel justified in cheating a system seemingly built to make them fail, especially when the benefits of getting a high grade are so valuable.

"With so many scholarships, awards, internships and other incentives at stake, it's entirely possible that those reporting no regrets considered their actions justified when rewarded for their 'success,'" the Open Education Database (OEDb) said.

There are a multitude of ways to cheat, from flashcards to fake water bottle labels, simply peeking over your neighbor's shoulder, or even plagiarism.

Academic plagiarism can range from a single sentence copied from Wikipedia or Yahoo! Answers to a full paper pulled from an online "paper mill" like allfreepapers.com.

The public is more concerned with academic dishonesty than college officials, with results from a survey by the Ad Council and Educational Testing Service stating 41 percent of Americans consider cheating a serious issue, but only 34 percent of college officials do.

"They attribute the surprisingly low numbers to a decreased stigma surrounding the actions and an increase in emphasizing a stockpile of rewards and honors over hard work and dedication," the OEDb said.

When more value is placed on grades and honors than genuine performance, students suffer, especially students trying to adhere to the rules.

But cheating isn't all black-and-white, and the grey area is huge, according to Professor Isaac Choi, an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at George Fox University (GFU) who teaches ethics classes and is a faculty fellow for

the William Penn Honors Program.

Many universities have writing centers to help students with written assignments and tutors to help students understand their coursework. But where do you draw the line between getting help and cheating?

"If you have a student who hires someone to write their paper, that's clearly dishonest," Choi said. "Maybe if you hire someone to really help you a lot in writing a paper ... that's kind of more in the grey area, right? Because where does tutoring end, and actual dishonesty begin?"

Academic pressure, low self-confidence and lack of awareness of what cheating is can all play a part in the decision to cheat, but according to Choi, academic pressure plays the biggest role.

"Students are at a disadvantage because of the fact that they have been so highly programmed since birth," Choi said, "whereas, when I was young, kids were able to play, they were able to relax. [Students] have been under a 'pressure cooker' from very early on. Over-programmed, [over-examined], over-tested, these kind of things, I just think are bad cultural trends."

These combined factors have made it harder for students to succeed overall, and professors like Choi and Professor Steven Classen are working to help their students not only get good grades, but also to have a good experience. Classen is a professor of Communication at GFU and a faculty chair for the Department of Communication and Cinematic Arts.

Being a department chair means that Classen sees students in cases of academic dishonesty and has the opportunity to discuss the issue with them. But Classen doesn't just admonish students and discuss punishments and sanctions in those meetings, he tries to help build on the experience.

"I use it as an opportunity to talk with them about why the college experience should be about not just passing classes and not just getting grades but also about them thinking about their own character, their own values, and the cultivation of virtues," Classen said.

As teachers, both Classen and Choi are mindful of the pressures on students and attempt to lighten the load as much as possible, encouraging an emphasis on learning rather than grades.

Grades don't always reflect how much a student is

learning in a class, or how much time they are putting into their work, and rarely reflect a teacher's opinion of a student.

"Students do feel pressure to get A's and B's in classes, and I oftentimes say to students that C students very often are the students who will learn as much as the A students in a class," Classen said. "I also make it clear in many of my classes that grading scales don't correlate at all with how much I appreciate a student, [or] how much I like a student."

Fostering a welcoming classroom environment is one way for teachers to help students combat the academic and social pressures that push a student to cheat, but a larger change in the system may be required to affect the kind of genuine success coveted by university students nation-wide.

On the whole, though, academic honesty has to be its own reward. You may not get the best grades or scholarships, but you learn the material in the most thorough way, and that sets you up for success in the long run.

Costa Rican Cravings



By Megan Stewart

Costa Cup, one of George Fox University's (GFU) only student-run businesses on campus, began with three seniors thirsty for a company idea to pursue in their marketing class.

Now, with over 200 Instagram followers, an active consumer base, business hours, a location, and a legitimate contract drawn up with the Bon Appetite staff, Costa Cup appears to have become more than just a school project. It's become a success.

Costa Cup, founded by Sadie Vargas, Nate Hyatt, and Bri Borrer for Marketing 480 (Marketing Management

and Strategy), is a coffee company with several goals: to provide George Fox students with a good product, to immerse their customers in the Costa Rican way of life, and to raise money for the orphanage Hogar de Vida, all while spreading the love of Jesus.

Open Mondays and Wednesdays from 8-10 a.m. in front of the Bruin Den, Costa Cup provides one flavor of drip-coffee, made with ethically sourced beans harvested from Vargas' family plantation in Costa Rica. Vargas' father, Ronald Cortez, runs Cortez Coffee, which supplies Costa Cup with their materials. Vargas has no personal

connection to the Hogar de Vida, only that its located is in Costa Rica, near her family's plantation. All net proceeds go directly to the orphanage.

The charity aspect of the business could account for the steep price: \$2.50 per 12 oz. When compared to Costa Cup's competitor, the Bruin Den, whose own product falls under \$2.00, the cost may raise some eyebrows.

However, Costa Cup's mission to give back has always been at the forefront, not its competitive potential. Even though it was for a school assignment, the teammates agreed early on that they wanted to create something meaningful.

"We didn't just want to make t-shirts or something like that or do something random," said Hyatt, one of two marketing majors in the group (Vargas is in management). "We wanted to be able to add some personal aspect."

Knowing GFU's student body well, the team concluded that the characteristics that might make Costa Cup less popular at other schools or venues — such as cost, lack of staff, and limited hours — wouldn't hinder their success, but rather bolster it. People at GFU, Hyatt said, appreciate charity work.

"Fox being a faith-based university, we know that stu-

dents are going to be more likely to want to give and to donate to something that's deeper than just the product itself and something that's supporting a good cause," said Hyatt.

Their assumption proved correct. Costa Cup broke even during their first quarter as a company, the main objective for their marketing class. This is also an impressive achievement for coffee businesses, which generally don't see much profit when they first start out.

Even with the group's hopes, Hyatt admits they never expected to garner as much support as they have now. Hyatt even gave a mock business proposal on Costa Cup in his Professional Writing class once he realized how well they had designed the company.

"Once we got the momentum rolling, we realized we could totally make it a real business," Hyatt said. "I don't think any of us are going to be moving in that direction, but it would definitely be plausible."

Hyatt predicts that Costa Cup will be closing forever at the end of the semester, before finals week. However, he's not against his partners pursuing something further with the business if they so choose. Perhaps Costa Cup's success will pave the way for future student-run companies on campus.

Richard Silver Paranormal Investigator

By Aurora Biggers

It was spring break and the previous week's sunny weather had faded away into overcast skies and drizzly rains — a fact Richard Silver seemed blissfully unaware of as he walked in smiling, gave me a high five and slid into the booth across from me.

We chatted about the weather and obvious lack of students on campus. Silver is pleasant and easy to talk to. I learned he fluently plays seven instruments, including the acoustic guitar, drums, piano and violin. He is also a web designer and an architect — he recently designed a school and an orphanage for a group in India.

"My friends call me the Renaissance man," Silver said. Silver, director of Mail Services for George Fox University (GFU), is certainly a multifaceted guy; but only one of his many interests brought me to meet with him — paranormal investigation.

Silver says his paranormal career began in 2002 when he was on a beach vacation with family. His family was gathered around a campfire telling spooky stories when he had the "hair brained idea" to start a family paranormal society. It gained traction with his cousins, and in 2003 the family went on their first investigation to White Eagle Tav-



ern in Portland, Ore. The hotel was once a brothel and is known for paranormal occurrences.

Silver and his family used an electromagnetic field device (EMF) and a voice recorder. "A normal EMF reading is 0.5-1; we were peaking into the 4.5-6 range." Silver explained that this is a strong sign of a spirit presence. When Silver later listened to the voice recording, he detected a voice saying "Kill em"; she hates him."

He believes this was a spirit referencing the spiteful relationship between Rose, a woman who serviced many men at White Eagle Tavern in the 1900s, and a man who was known for mistreating her and the other women at the Tavern. This experience solidified Silver's interest in the paranormal.

"The cousins eventually disbanded, but I kept the group going and since then have brought new people onto the team," he said. For Silver, it wasn't just a fun idea thrown out around a campfire and incited by scary stories, it was a calling. "I'd just love to go into some pretty intense places and just feel my heart pound," he said.

The team Silver refers to is his own company, The Extreme Paranormal Society. His team includes himself, his wife, and a couple from his church. Every few months Silver and his team will investigate a new case, but in the meantime, he is fielding multiple potential clients and determining if their story is reliable enough to investigate.

This works well with his demanding job at GFU, but sometimes his second job causes eyebrows to raise on campus. Silver conducted a few investigations on campus, namely an investigation of Pennington House — home of the William Penn Honors Program. It is a hot spot for activity, according to Silver. It was once home to Levi and Rebecca Pennington — Silver believes the spirit of either Levi or Rebecca may still reside in the house.

He investigated the house alone in 2014, except for the company of another faculty member who is now retired. He recalls they heard crashes in the kitchen while they were upstairs. When they investigated the kitchen, they found magnets were displaced from the fridge and were on the ground. The rug at the bottom of the stairs had also shifted, although there was no wind or any other people in the house.

Silver said the faculty member who accompanied him often was alone in the house early in the morning. She once, according to Silver, heard movement upstairs and believed it was the cleaning crew. However, when she went upstairs to check, there was no one up there. Silver deemed his findings inconclusive but finds it hard to deny the possibility of spiritual activity.

Despite Silver's evidence of the paranormal realm, some on campus find his work dubious.

GFU is a Christian campus and many professors and students view Silver's work as incompatible with traditional Christian theology. "Telling people you're a paranormal investigator, it's like coming out of the closet, saying you're gay," said Silver.

Silver has his own paranormal theology. "Theologically I have to be very careful, but I'm a Christian trying to understand this part of the world," he said. Christians shocked by Silver's work often cite Deuteronomy 18:10-12, a warning against communicating with the dead.

Silver says the way he interacts with spirits is different, though. He investigates to have a better understanding of the paranormal world and help people who encounter unwanted spirits. Silver's clients are usually seeking help removing spirits from their home.

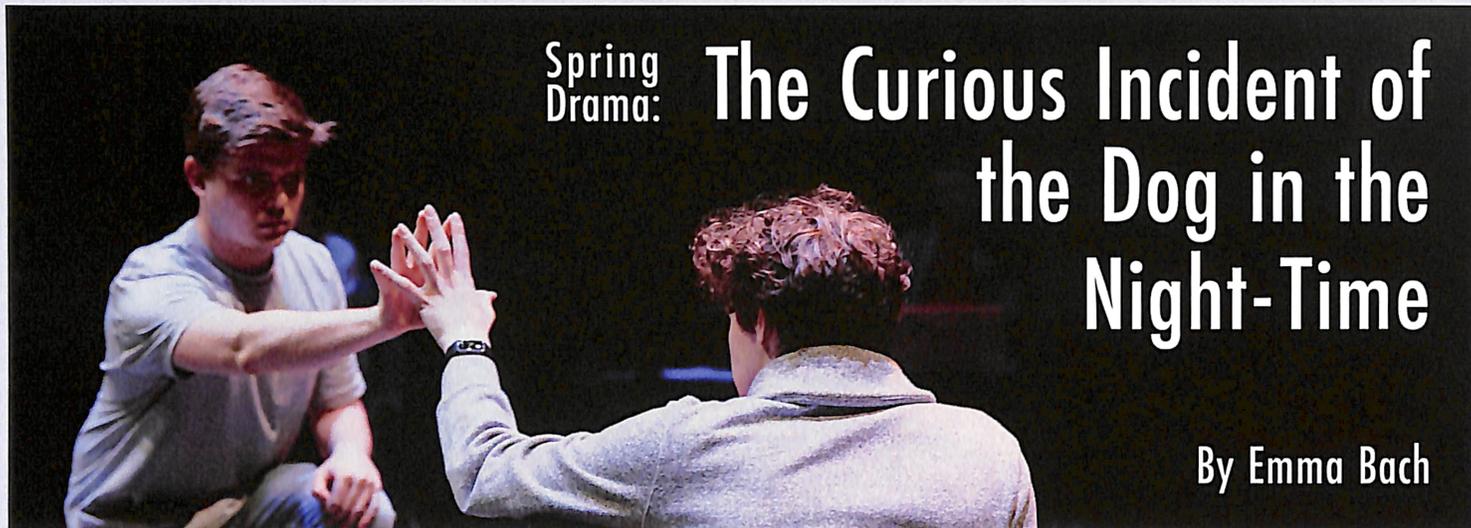
Silver explained there are different categories and signs of spiritual activity. There are four levels of classification. Level one is "I'm here," according to Silver. This is the prankster. The spirit wants you to know it's there and might make itself known by moving your stuff around, for instance stealing your car keys and then returning them a little later. This is low level, non-violent activity, says Silver. Level two is a "Mover." The spirit is more active and moves your stuff around in front of you and makes audible sounds. It is more active, but still benevolent. Level three is a full-blown poltergeist, characterized by cold spots and possible physical touch. The fourth classification is a violent spirit, escalating on the poltergeist actions.

Silver says most spirits are people who died and have "unfinished business," but the remaining entries — the more malevolent ones — are the minions of the devil. His method may be unorthodox, even for the paranormal community.

"If it's a soft approach, I pray them out," Silver said. He believes in the power of God in these instances and says there is biblical precedent for such interactions with spirits. With expressive motions, Silver recounted Jesus casting demons into pigs, as told in Matthew 18. "Jesus also gave the disciples authority to cast out demons," Silver said.

If the spirit is benevolent, not a demon but instead an un-living person struggling to move on, Silver says you need to acknowledge their existence and ask them to leave.

Silver's paranormal theology doesn't convince everyone, but Silver is okay with that. He says he's still a bit of a skeptic. Ultimately, "nothing about the paranormal is conclusive," Silver said, it's just "fun, dangerous, intriguing, and fascinating."

Spring
Drama:

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

By Emma Bach

This spring, the George Fox University (GFU) theatre department is putting on the drama “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time.” Debuting April 4, this Tony Award-winning show is scheduled to run for two weekends and contains some adult themes.

The story centers around Christopher, a boy with Aspergers Syndrome, and his quest for truth.

Rhett Luedtke, professor of Theatre, describes the play as “an inspiring story of the mystery of the human mind and the power of forgiveness.”

JeanneAnn Faris, a fourth-year student and director of the show, was responsible for choosing the play. When describing the process of directing and how the show came to be, Faris explained why the play stood out to her:

“I have a particular interest in stories that an audience member will leave understanding another person or another experience more deeply and really and truly,” Faris

said. “I also think that it’s a very challenging show on a lot of different fronts. It’s a great challenge for all of us, and it’s a story that I think really matters right now, which is what theatre should always be doing.”

“The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time” is set to be delightfully different — unlike most plays, which have around three to six scenes, “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time” is made up of 57 short scenes. It will also be produced “in-round,” which means the audience will be on all four sides of the stage.

“Contemporary theatre is moving in this direction a little bit,” Faris said. “We’re breaking that mold.”

Tickets can be purchased online. Faris encouraged everyone to come and see the show:

“It’s the best kind of play because it’s dramatic and comedic and tragic and hilarious and everything in between,” Faris said. “The way that we’re doing it at George Fox is going to look different, and I think that’s significant.”

With Two Female Candidates, Did We Overlook Their Merit?

By Hannah Lee

This year, George Fox University’s (GFU) Associated Student Committee (ASC) elected their first female student body president. The election was a game-changer, as both nominees for the

position are female. Both Kokanee Ellingson and Lexi Hamaker emphasized their womanhood as a reason to vote for them.

Each expressed their femininity in different ways. El-

Photo by Regan Hill

lingson ran with her friend Meghan Elford, and the two of them focused their issues on mental health and female empowerment. Lexi ran with Kevin Tshilombo and centered her campaign on the importance of diversity on campus.

Both women are incredible, strong and passionate about the student body at GFU. However, their womanhood was not what students focused on — it was their boyfriends.

Hamaker is dating Nemo Heye, last year's student body president. Ellingson is dating Bailey Sauls, current student body president. Throughout this election, I noticed the majority of students' focus on what Sauls and Heye thought as opposed to the nominees themselves, which was very frustrating. After the election, Sauls tweeted:

“Now that voting is closed, I fully endorse Kokanee and Meghan for President and Vice President. Highly qualified, two women, the most passionate people I know, and played by the rules the whole way. And it was horse s--- that I wasn't able to endorse them during campaigning.”

Heye, on the other hand, posted his excitement for Hamaker's future as president.

This is not the first time a woman's campaign has been overlooked by her male significant other. Throughout history, we have seen women's accomplishments being

overshadowed or linked to their male significant others' status or actions.

Throughout the 2016 presidential election, I saw many people dismiss Hillary Clinton as an option because of her husband's scandal, which is entirely unrelated to Hillary's policies or qualities. Obviously, this is a different situation as neither Heye nor Sauls have scandals, but I do feel that their status as current and former presidents did in fact affect the election.

Because he is no longer in ASC and has since graduated, Heye had the ability to endorse Hamaker and Tshilombo, which he did. Since Sauls was the current president, different rules applied. He had to stay silent on social media.

As evidenced by Bailey's tweet, the restrictions on endorsement caused tension on both sides. Unfortunately, this moved some of the discussion away from the women themselves and toward the men around them.

Moving forward, I hope our student body will focus on what matters in student government — the nominees themselves and their plans to better our school experience. I speak for both myself and the women on this campus when I say I do not want my abilities and accomplishments to be dependent on a man's influence.

What's the Point of Tent City?

By Danielle Brown

I participated in Tent City this year and while the experience is unlike any other at George Fox University (GFU), it wasn't one worth the trouble. Tent City exists for students to secure their spots on Juniors Abroad trips. Students are assigned a number through an ASC lottery, which determines where they pitch their tent. They are then required to spend the night before registration in their tent.

In past years, ASC has conducted tent checks throughout the night to ensure at least one person is in the tent at all times. But this year, no tent checks were done, so sleeping in the tent held no real purpose.

My friends and I found ourselves repeatedly asking what the point of Tent City was as we tossed and turned and struggled to find a peaceful hour of rest.

By the time the evening activities had ended and I had officially given up on doing any homework, our neighbors had just started to party, laughing and screaming beside

the warmth of a campfire placed just outside our tent. Unfortunately for my friends and me, the noise didn't subside until 2 a.m.

Tent City is not a place for light sleepers. Even without the noise, it was difficult to sleep. Though the weather wasn't as bad as it has been in prior years, the cold air blowing through the tent left us shivering until morning. Last year, Juniors Abroad prospects had to sleep in tents and blankets that were soaked by rain.

It would make more sense if Tent City was more of a competition. Participants could compete to be the first group to set up their tent or have the most decorated setup, letting more competitions like that decide where each tent stands in line. Otherwise, the night feels like a complete waste.

However, the experience wasn't all bad. It was nice to spend some designated non-study time with friends and finally relax a little while the excitement of traveling abroad started sinking in.

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