

the monitor.



volume 16 | issue 2

**a campus
collective**

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short story issue | news | opinions | reviews | art | more

from the editors



the monitor

a campus collective
independent quality since 1995

volume 16 | issue 2

ADDRESS

CSI SUB
Truman State University
Kirksville, MO 63501

ONLINE

trumanmonitor.wordpress.com
monitor.truman@gmail.com

EDITORS

brie vuagniaux
olivia sandbothe
amanda vanderheyden
christi schwaller
franklin cline
james ginns
chris drew

cover photo by | janna langholz

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We meet every **Tuesday** at **9pm** in the **SUB down under**. Each writer is responsible for his or her own work.

"We have a natural right to make use of our pens as of our tongue, at our peril, risk and hazard."

~Voltaire, Dictionnaire Philosophique, 1764

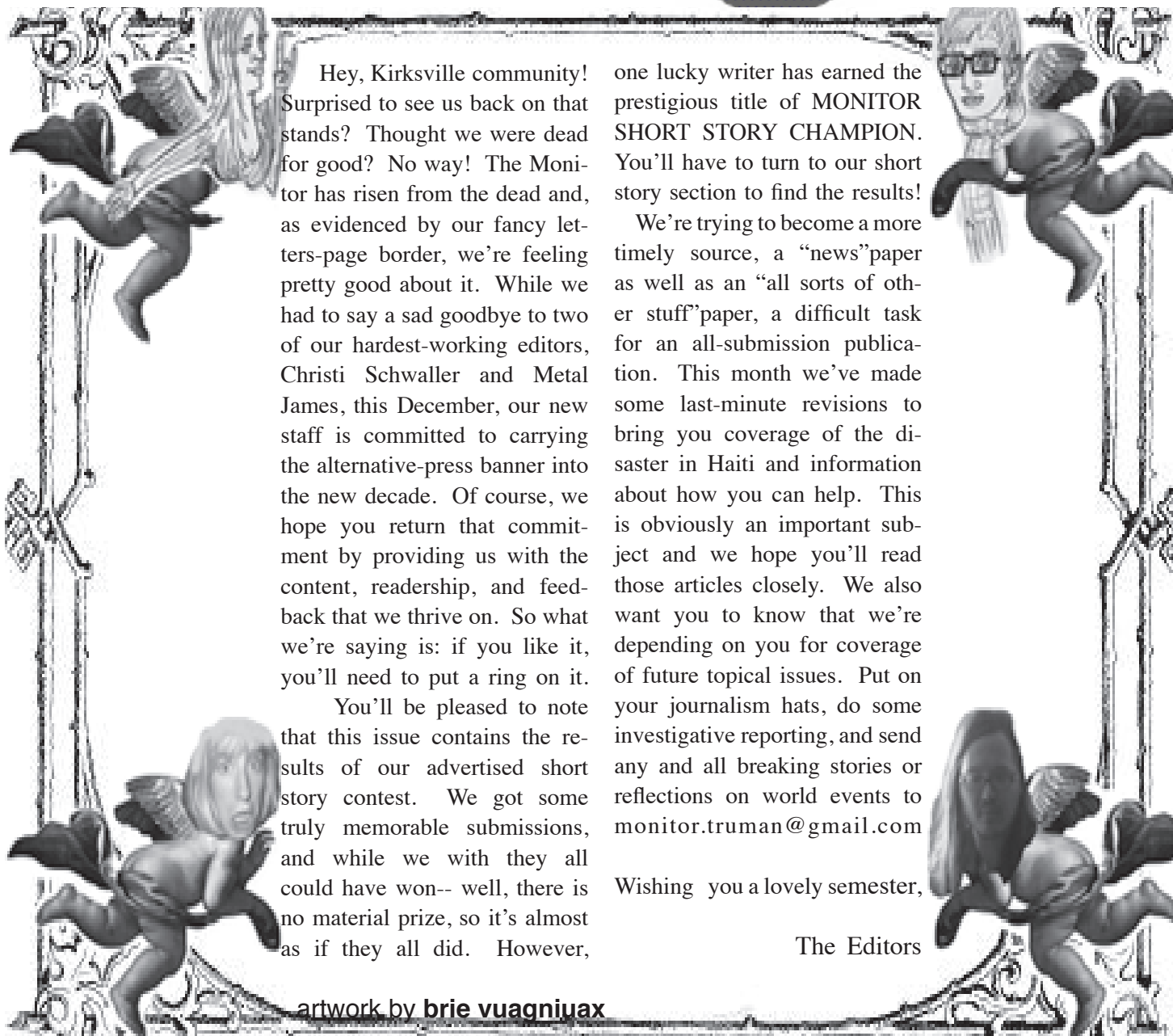


THE MONITOR



the Index

Guess which of these dudes wants you to rock out with him.



Hey, Kirksville community! Surprised to see us back on that stands? Thought we were dead for good? No way! The Monitor has risen from the dead and, as evidenced by our fancy letters-page border, we're feeling pretty good about it. While we had to say a sad goodbye to two of our hardest-working editors, Christi Schwaller and Metal James, this December, our new staff is committed to carrying the alternative-press banner into the new decade. Of course, we hope you return that commitment by providing us with the content, readership, and feedback that we thrive on. So what we're saying is: if you like it, you'll need to put a ring on it.

You'll be pleased to note that this issue contains the results of our advertised short story contest. We got some truly memorable submissions, and while we with they all could have won-- well, there is no material prize, so it's almost as if they all did. However,

one lucky writer has earned the prestigious title of MONITOR SHORT STORY CHAMPION. You'll have to turn to our short story section to find the results!

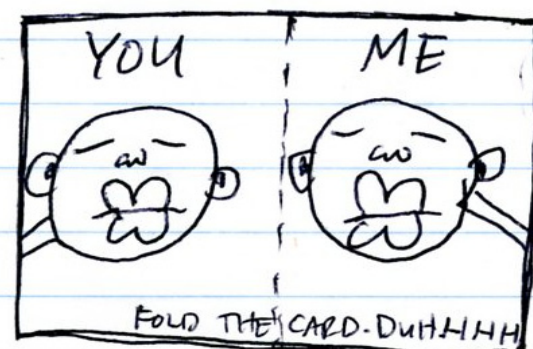
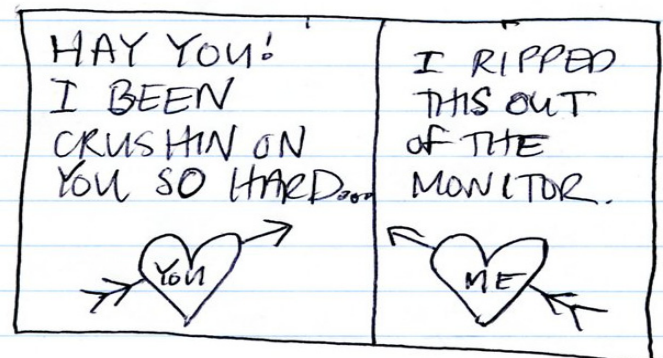
We're trying to become a more timely source, a "news"paper as well as an "all sorts of other stuff"paper, a difficult task for an all-submission publication. This month we've made some last-minute revisions to bring you coverage of the disaster in Haiti and information about how you can help. This is obviously an important subject and we hope you'll read those articles closely. We also want you to know that we're depending on you for coverage of future topical issues. Put on your journalism hats, do some investigative reporting, and send any and all breaking stories or reflections on world events to monitor.truman@gmail.com

Wishing you a lovely semester,

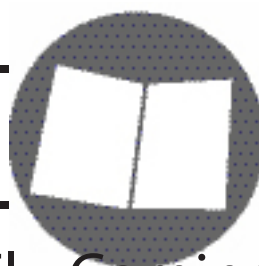
The Editors

artwork by brie vuagniaux

valentines' day special



send your letters to: monitor.truman@gmail.com. letters may be edited for length.



the world in brief(s)!

compiled by | **chris drew**

British Hospitality

Three Holiday Inns in Britain are part of a new trial human “bed-warming” service. The service involves willing employees dressing in “all-in-one fleece sleeper suits” and lying in bed prior to guests. According to reports, Florence Eavis, Holiday Inn spokeswoman had been unable to explain why beds couldn’t be warmed by hot water bottles or electric blankets.

Gum on feel the noise

A Ukrainian student with the habit of chewing gum dipped in citric acid died recently after accidentally dipping his gum into an “undetermined explosive substance”. The young man was at home in his room when his parents heard a “loud pop”. After investigating, they found him in his room in less than favorable conditions. Police have yet to determine what the substance was.

Gotta’ Catch ‘em All

With 12,113 items in her collection the UK’s Lisa Courtney has been named by the Guinness World Records as having the world’s biggest Pokémon collection. The 21-year-old said she has been collecting for 13 years, and stores her massive collection throughout the house she shares with her mother.

Watch Out! New Flu Coming.

story by | **dr. e donald gray**

I woke up this morning around 11:30 and had my usual four fingers of Aristocrat and Mountain Dew. It was a seemingly normal morning until I received a memorandum on my Iphone from the Surgeon General, who was forwarding this to me from the World Health Organization. I immediately dropped my copy of Finnegan’s Wake and began to read to the horrifying facts.

There is such a thing as Turkey Flu, and it will put a damper on the holiday season. I am not sure the specific name, but I call it TF69. Seeing that holiday season is beginning, be cautious this Thanksgiving and Christmas. These are the things he told me:

- This season people should hunt their own turkeys. Wild turkeys are safer. One should use a large caliber weapon, such as a .357 magnum, to ensure complete annihilation of the animal.
- The skinning of the turkey must be extremely thorough. Burn all inedible parts in a brushpile in the least

ceremonious way possible. Resist the temptation to make a headdress out of the feathers.

- Soak the body of the turkey in some sort of liquor. This is the only surefire way to make sure it is clean and safe. The oven must be set to at least 500 degrees Fahrenheit; otherwise it will not be cooked thoroughly.

- One must remain suspicious about the safety of eating these birds. Consistently drink large amounts of liquor each respective holiday to ensure that residual alcohol remains in the mouth to kill the most tenacious pathogens.

- Symptoms of TF69 include: nausea, vomiting, blurred vision, slurred speech and poor judgment. If anyone exhibits these symptoms, they most likely have TF69. They must be killed, for the greater good. The most effective way to do this is shooting them with darts or throwing bundled socks.

- The pit for the dead is the one near the clock tower; cover their heads with bandanas so they can retain their personal dignity.

Ertl comes clean, admits steroids.

story by | **franklin cline**



In an exclusive interview with The Monitor, a teary-eyed and emotionally despondent Gerhard Ertl admitted to being under the influence of performance-enhancing drugs, most notably steroids, while conducting his groundbreaking and award-winning research.

The 73-year-old Ertl, who was awarded the 2007 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his studies of chemical processes on solid

surfaces, told The Monitor in a telephone interview that “it was time to come clean. However, I truly believe I was given the gift for studying chemical processes on solid surfaces, and only took the steroids for health purposes.”

Ertl’s heartfelt confession did not come as a surprise to his peers. Upon the announcement of Ertl’s Nobel Prize, many of his fellow scientists cried foul. Peter Agre, who received the prestigious award in the field of chemistry in 2003 and is currently president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, noted that “many of us were taken aback that a chemist who was still doing work into his seventies would suddenly reach his prime so late in the game. We figured something was up for a long

time.”

Agre went on to note that the field of chemistry has been hit hard by rampant performance-enhancing drug use in the past ten years, leading many scientists to refer to this time period as “the steroid era.” This comes in spite of a federal grand jury investigation of several chemists, including Ertl, in 2005. (Ertl refused to talk about the past during his testimony, forcing his friends and followers to speculate about what he could be hiding.)

Ertl, who is currently continuing his research at the Fritz-Haber-Institut der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft in Berlin, Germany, is the sixth Nobel Prize recipient to come clean in as many years, adding his name to a list that includes Ryoji Noyori and the notorious John B. Fenn.

the monitor first looks:

Gorillaz-Stylo

Happy Birthday-Girls FM
review by | **chris drew**

Currently working on the final touches to their debut self-titled album, Vermont trio Happy Birthday is a garage-rock throwback. The group recently signed a contract with the famous “indie” label Sub-Pop, and released their first single Girls FM. A catchy low-fi pop-punk ballad with energy and spirit akin to somewhere in between The Pixies and The Ramones. I fell in love with the song on the first listen, and definitely suggest check-

ing it out. The album comes out March 16th, and they’ll be touring afterwards, with appearances at SXSW and a stint on tour with the Vivian Girls.

Also due for an early March (9th to be exact) release is the newest LP from the Gorillaz “Plastic Beach”. The first single Stylo is out now however and its safe to say it appears the UK group still has “it”. For starters the beat to the song sounds like something The Sugarcub Gang might have rapped over, only

slightly creepier. And, if that doesn’t win you over, how ‘bout a guest spot by Mos Def? Damon (2-D) is, of course, on top of it with that trademark voice, and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Bobby Womack really rounds out the song with his own soulful guest spot. If this song is a signifier of things to come then “Plastic Beach” is really something to look forward to in 2010.



Haiti

essay by marc beker

I returned from Haiti just a couple of days before a powerful earthquake rocked the country on January 12. I was in Haiti on a solidarity delegation to document human rights abuses by the United Nations Stabilization Mission (MINUSTAH) and to observe preparations for February's legislative elections. We met with social movement activists who continue to fight in the face of overwhelming odds to rebuild their country.

Many people have observed that the Haitian earthquake was more a political disaster than a natural one. The similarly powerful 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake in California killed 63 people, while the death toll in Haiti appears as if it may soar over 100,000. Our experiences in the country confirmed that the solution to Haiti's problem is political in nature.

Two hundred some years ago Haiti was the richest colony in the world, but today it is the poorest and most unequal country in the Americas. A successful slave revolt in 1804 defeated the French planter class, but the only other independent country in the Americas, the United States, refused to welcome a Black Republic because of the powerful example it set for marginalized and oppressed people everywhere. The French demanded a 150 million franc payment from the Haitians for losing their prized pearl of the Antilles. Haiti made the payment, strangling any possibility for development, and sacrificing its future so as not to be seen as an international pariah.

In Haiti, we heard from grassroots activists who complained that large international aid agencies collect funds for administrative salaries, vehicles, and office support, but little of this money filters down to the people who need it the most. Dumping cheap rice on the country has destroyed the local agricultural economy. Haiti has a desperate short-term need for assistance, but this aid must be funneled through groups like Doctors Without Borders (<http://doctorswithoutborders.org/>) and Partners in Health (<http://www.pih.org/>) that have a track record and distribution networks necessary in place to make proper use of the aid.

The longer term solution, however, is political. Already conservative pundits are proclaiming that the earthquake is an opportunity to remake the country along neoliberal lines. But the extraction of natural resources, creation of low-wage jobs, and privatization of government functions are factors that have left Haiti incapable of responding to a natural disaster.

Haiti has never recovered from the ostracization it faced from the French and United States governments at independence, and ongoing international policies appear to be designed to sink the country deeper into debt. The U.S. marines occupied the country from 1915 to 1934, and the earthquake seems to provide a convenient excuse for the United States once again to land military troops and reassert its imperial control over the country.

In 2004, the French, United States, and Canadian govern-

ments removed popular leftist president Jean Bertrand Aristide who promised to shift resources to the most marginalized sectors of society. They have insisted that the current government ban his Fanmi Lavalas, the largest political party in Haiti, from participating in electoral contests.

The solution to Haiti's problems is to allow the country to develop its own economy and political system without constant outside intervention. Otherwise, Haiti's next natural calamity will be worse than this one, and the country will continue to sink deeper into poverty, inequality, and social exclusion.



Screw Caribou!

opinion by | alexander clippinger

Screw 'em. Sorry, Canadian Bambi, but we need oil more than we need you. If you can't stand the drills, get out of the tundra. I'd move quickly; I think I hear Palin's chopper coming over the nearest hill.

We really don't care. Or at least, we shouldn't. Millions upon millions of people die each year due to lack of food, water, or shelter, or because of hatred and bigotry. Millions upon millions of species have died over the eons; leave it to humans to be the first to care more about the survival of other species than it does about the survival of its own. If hippies put as much effort into ending the violence in Africa as they did attempting to get impotent panda bears to mate, we'd have total world peace by now.

Extinction has happened before, and it's happening again. Evolution. Natural selection. Just replace the word "natural" with "man-made" and "selection" with "wanton destruction." The dinosaurs died because they couldn't learn to live with asteroid fallout. The polar bears will die out because they can't suck it up enough to swim to the next iceberg. Grow gills or get packin'.

In fact, we should applaud global warming and the valuable work it has done in weeding out the weaklings. The polar bears who survive are clearly superior. It's like nature is teaching its children to swim by throwing them into hypothermic, orca-infested waters.

We don't want to save polar bears and blue-footed boobies because we believe in endangered species and biodiversity. We care because "environment" is the newest buzzword; it's spilling over from coffee-sipping circles of intellectual elites and holdovers from Woodstock. We care

because we want to see these majestic creatures running free in their natural enclosures in the wild plains of San Diego. We care because the Discovery Channel shoots them in HD.

I have watched Humpback Whales break the surface of a serene Pacific bay, spraying a geyser of cold water into the air as they exhale, a deep breath before the plunge. I have peered through early morning darkness to watch sea turtles faithfully churn the sand and lay their eggs. I have seen a sloth twist slowly through the trees. And I would burn every single one of them for fuel. Animals are, after all, renewable resources. The future is a paradise where zoos are factories, and Koala bears are on the assembly line. Grab some pandas, slip them some Viagra, and watch your energy shares soar.

This is America. We're winners, dammit. Why do we care about these losers, if they're not offering us anything in return? It's time to support the winners, because the losers are literally toast.

White-tailed deer are winners. Hell, we nearly hunted them to extinction in the nineteenth century. We've developed millions of acres of their natural habitat. We kill hundreds of thousands of them a year.

Did they cry about it? Did they drown on their way to the next patch of forest? Hell no. They turned around and bitch-slapped us with their hooves. They turned around and started breeding like crazy. They can't live in the woods anymore? They'll live in the suburbs. Now their population is more than 30 million, up from three hundred thousand just seventy years ago.

Now they're bringing the fight to us. Do you think

those collisions are just accidents? I have two words for you: suicide wrecker. The "deer in the headlights" is a cliché created to protect us from the truth; that behind those big, blank eyes there exists a fierce militaristic discipline, a soldier preparing to promote the species by assaulting a pickup truck with his face. Muslim extremists can't hold a candle to these warriors.

Mockingbirds are in close second. It goes to the nests of other birds, eats their eggs, and lays its own eggs in their place. Then they go and do it again. Screw proper parenting. Screw child support. Other birds are busy making nests: these homewreckers are setting up franchises.

At a smaller scale, wasps continue their war against the weaker species. Bees can only sting once before they seize up and die—no wonder they're going extinct. But wasps? Wasps don't stop stinging you. Wasps get bored with stinging you. They plant their eggs inside caterpillars and eat them from the inside out. They're the chestbursters of the insect world; killing off one damn butterfly at a time.

Perhaps it's time for the winners to set aside their differences and unite against the animals that suck hard. Deer cavalry. Mockingbird jets. Wasp cannons. At this point platypi, echidnas, fruit bats, pill bugs, and blue birds of paradise have only one thing in common: they're all equally flammable. Screw caribou.

Haiti: Curse or Opportunity

opinion by Mehdi Zaidi

“They got together and swore a pact to the Devil. They said we will serve you if you get us free from the French. . . true story. And so the Devil said okay, it’s a deal,” uttered Pat Robertson in his nasally tone on The 700 Club, commenting on the recent earthquake in Haiti. Perhaps he received this portent from one of his divinely inspired chats with God, but is more probable that such childish banter is the product of his lunacy. But Pat Robertson is no stranger to such remarks. What is more shocking is that the mainstream media, as well as respected world leaders are in essential agreement with Robertson by faulting the excess of the disastrous earthquake on internal Haitian factors. This perception entirely dismisses the complicated history of Haiti – a tragic tale in which critical junctures offset the normal course of economic and political development.

This is not to say that the blame for Haiti’s impoverishment rests solely on foreign powers. Structural inequity is embedded within Haitian society, but a significant portion of Haitian destitution is a consequence of international intervention. The story of Haiti commences with an independence movement by slaves under the revolutionary leader Toussaint L’Ouverture, who sought to liberate the island from the French. Once freed, the French government forced Haiti to pay 90 million gold Francs to France for the loss of property (slaves), a value tantamount to \$ 21 billion American dollars today. In Haiti’s case freedom was literally not free for it had to pay this unnecessary debt until the 1940s; clearly a diversion of resources from important development activities. All the while an international embargo was instituted by Western powers to weaken Haiti. The United States also played a role here, avoiding diplomatic and economic interactions for fear that it may encourage slaves in the Southern states to rebel.

Fast forward to the twentieth century when, despite such heavy costs, post-WWII Haiti attained agricultural self-sufficiency. Then

the Duvalier dictatorships, backed by Western support, endeavored to advance urban industrialization through foreign investment – a vision that was forcibly implemented through its paramilitary wing, the Tonton Macoutes. Wage rates and labor standards became virtually nonexistent to attract Multinational Corporations. Conditioned loans were received under successive rulers from the IMF and the World Bank, which led to the privatization of public utilities, the elimination of tariffs and cutbacks in social programs. Simultaneously, subsidized American and foreign rice, ironically often in the form of aid, caused the market for domestically grown crops to diminish. This induced the exodus of rice farmers into squalid city slums. Such policies continued into the 1990s when Bill Clinton announced support for the ‘Hope’ initiative, an economic development plan that placed undue emphasis on keeping Haiti ‘competitive’ in textile production to attract Multinationals, and when George Bush II assisted Haitian military officials in ousting populist President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Given its sad trajectory Haiti could have done without a 7.0 magnitude earthquake. It is necessary to recognize that it was extra-geological factors in combination with the earthquake that are the cause of the current devastation. Were it not for the collapse of the agricultural sector, perhaps three million residents would not be crowded into tin houses destined to collapse. Perhaps public utilities could readily be restored (where they are present) were they still in control of the government rather than monopolies. Perhaps the transportation infrastructure would have been sturdier and more geographically widespread had government budgets not been slashed by international monetary institutions.

At this point, carping about blame serves little function. My aim was simply to disprove the contention of the mainstream media. What is more urgent now is providing humanitarian assistance to Haitians, and ensuring that our policies do not repeat the mistakes of the past. In fact despite the devastating conditions on the ground, the dispersion of aid is beginning to look quite impressive. The self-organization of Haitians is remarkable as well.

All of us can help the people of Haiti in a number of ways.

Type “How you can help Haiti” on the Truman State University website search tab to view opportunities to assist with relief efforts. Recently, organizations in the Council on Social Justice in conjunction with Globemed decided to arrange a concert in the Journal Printing Building on February 19th at 8 pm. Tickets will be available soon and all proceeds will go towards Partners in Health, a credible NGO that has been working in Haiti for two decades. After this tragedy Haiti must not be forgotten, as Pisco, Peru was after an earthquake in 2007, nor should Haiti continue to face manipulation at the hands of puppet regimes with foreign agendas. This calamity should be used as an opportunity to allow Haitians to develop their nation.

The first step in this process is ensuring that our government treats Haiti and Haitians with respect. President Obama should fulfill his promise of humane treatment by enacting Temporary Protected Status for Haitians in the United States, in addition to allowing Haitian Americans to legally work (remittances constitute 20 percent of Haiti’s national income). Second, the American military as well as all other governmental organizations and aid agencies should respect the human rights of Haitians; a thorough reading of the UN Guiding Principles for Internally Displaced People may suffice for now. In the long term, the US and the international community ought to supply Haitian farmers with grants for seeds, fertilizers, and small equipment so that they may replant their crops. Engineering expertise from American military regiments should be employed to construct earthquake resistant structures. The corporations operating in Haiti to take advantage of its depressed wage rates should be regulated by the Haitian government, so that fair labor laws and higher wage rates can become the norm. Conditioned loans to the government should be entirely eliminated and substituted by unconditioned grants, with a watchful eye on corrupt government officials. In addition Haiti’s debt should be forgiven. .

These steps only offer a beginning, but conceivably, following them may enable Haiti to continue on a path towards development. And then perhaps Piti, piti, wazo fe nich li – little by little just as a bird builds its nest, Haitians can rebuild their home.

UPBEAT, DOWNTOWN!

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**“vaocluse”
by christi schwaller**

“poetry slam” by george barlow



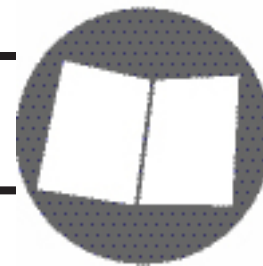


"untitled" by christian schaefer



"ashley" by mark hardy

short stories



short story contest winner|

Alyssa Harris’s story Harper’s Casket was selected as this year’s short story contest winner. Alyssa is a Senior biology major with a minor in equestrian science. Congrats Alyssa!

Harper’s Casket

fiction by | alyssa harris

They called him Loco, Lunatic of the West, with a ring of white around his pupils, and the temperament of a Spanish devil. He was a nightmare of a stallion. His palomino hide flashed faster than the sun, black mane and tail flying behind like a banner, black hooves beating a crescendo and churning up a trail of dust to blot out the sky. He was stronger than any other two steeds, and seemingly impervious to exhaustion. He never grew tired.

The other was called Job, a bull of a man, with bulging muscles and a permanent sneer. His left hand had three fingers and two stumps - a testament to other battles. Every move he made was full of deliberation and strength; every step he took left a heel print in the dust. There was no horse alive he couldn’t break and ride, even if he had to fight them ‘til the blood came and mixed with the sweat, and it was all the animal could do just to keep breathing. He could best anything with four legs.

He never lost.

Circle H Ranch was the unlucky keeper of these two personalities, and they were kept with pride.

The first time the unbridled stallion was tied up he knocked down the ten men that were holding him in his effort to be free. When the cowboys first tacked him up and strapped themselves down in preparation for a hard ride and a hard break, he fought tooth and hoof, devastating their efforts until, at the end of the day, they had to give up on the break and in to exhaustion. He could tear through bridles and saddles faster than a Texas cyclone, and break bone like twigs. His sharp hooves cut like razors, and terrorized any who came near. His reputation of being

Thanks to everyone who submitted stories for the contest. We had a good time reading them, and were pretty pleased with the turn-out. Don’t forget though, the monitor is always looking for submissions, so keep up the good work and keep the submissions coming.

-the monitor staff

untamable grew.

“If he cain’t be broke, he’ll hav’ta be shot.” Charlie, the ranch-owner, said. “I’m tired of havin’ my men tore to pieces.”

“Job is only three days ride from here,” Buck told him. “Don’t look so grim, Charlie. Send for Job.”

“Send for Job,” was the answer received again and again.

When Job arrived, the men cheered. Only Charlie seemed bothered.

“Ya don’t hav’ta do this, Job. That stallion’s crazy. Ain’t worth yer life.”

“Is’ just a stupid hoss.” Job replied.

With the sun high in the sky, they gathered around the corral. Anticipation was thick in the air as the horse was tacked up, and Job stood by, ready to mount. There was a hush as Job took a deep breath, then leapt suddenly and tensely into the saddle, ready for the fireworks. The stallion didn’t move. Job grinned with confidence, knowing that he was winning already. He kicked the horse forward, emboldened, and then the world turned upside-down. The stallion exploded like a bull from a starting gate, bucking and kicking to shake the earth, wild enough to kill most men. Job held fast for many minutes, staying seated by the skin of his teeth.

The stallion, enraged that his persecutor was still aboard, went to even greater lengths. He reared and went over backwards, pinning Job underneath. His spectators gasped, sure that he would be crushed, but when the stallion got to his feet again, Job was still aboard, cussin’ like a sailor. The cowboys whooped and crowded around the fence like school-boys; they had rarely ever seen such fine entertainment. It was a game, a game with no rules and an unpredictable end.

The stallion fought on into the day, under the heavy barrage of Job’s whip and the scorching heat of the sun. Finally, as the sun sank low and red into the west, the stallion slowed, displaying the exhaustion he must have been feeling. Sweat poured down man and beast, running over faces and chests that gasped for breath. Job swayed in the saddle, too tired even to cuss. The stallion stood, legs splayed, nose brushing the ground, beat at last. Job knew it, and that’s when he made his biggest mistake – he relaxed. The stallion sensed weakness the second it was displayed, and burst into a run like he hadn’t just been running all day, caught in the fight of his life. He ran right through the corral fence, out into the open country, and into the light of the sinking sun. Their silhouette could be seen as it shrunk into the distance – man and beast, merged into shadow, like a centaur from hell.

The cowboys’ shock was quickly replaced by action as they ran for their own horses. They had seen the show this far, and were determined to see it through to the end. As the men gave chase, Charlie remained behind.

“That sure was a purty sight.” Clem said to him. “Ain’t ya even gonna go ‘n see what happens?”

“Don’t need to.” Charlie replied. “They ain’t comin’ back. Do ya know what lies due west of here, about a half-mile?”

“No”

“Harper’s Canyon. It’s a quarter-mile wide. They ain’t comin’ back.”

“You think ol’ Job would let that happen?”

“No, but that stallion – he was loco.”

Butterscotch Fitzgerald

fiction by | bill fishback

hour one

I tried to listen to them argue through the door about some shit. The dude’s voice behind the door was pretty muffled and the only things I could really hear clearly were vocal inflections like “uh” and “um.” We definitely needed a periscope or some sort of fiber optic, microphonic ear device. I also really thought that a pith helmet with a headlamp on top would be pretty helpful. Eavesdropping is like, way harder these days.

Once the chick he was talking to got real mad, there was some yelling, so I could clearly make out words like “makeout” and “no” and “fuck you.” I felt that I had a general idea of what they were saying, I think. Then, the door opened when I was leaning in on it. I see the chick walking outside giving me dirty looks and she asked me why I was leaning in listening to the TV. I didn’t know what to say.

“Hi!”

“Who are you?”

“Uh, want to make out?”

“NO!”

“Fuck you.”

hour two

The words, much like alphabet soup, but too mushy to retain any of

the noodle’s structural integrity, flew out of the evangelist’s mouth last Tuesday like no other. He said, he said “Popcorn my laundry! Take my bathrobes and my priest robes and my underpants and my socks and throw them down the pit of shame—O trumpet wonder! O solemn mountain of death! O land of lakes! Why, I do not need them so aquaintedly, I might as well make my own!” People were listening because he wasn’t moving his eyes, and that is a symptom of cyanide overdose. He was a weird man and they killed him.

hour three

I think they abandoned Scotty before he outgrew his dinosaur pajama phase as a child, but not too young of a child, one with the wisdom to have good taste at least dammit. And yes, I have this dream. There is no REM sleep, nor alignment from the attachment we feel to the sun, breaking free from the prison that is our self as a unified part of the whole, but retaining enough originality to stand independently of other things. I took of my wisdom tooth and was lead to glory! Brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins—yes, the lot of you! —even the stepsiblings are allowed here. If this is the swimming pool of justice, hear me out—I want to go to the deep end! Then a dew of the least eyebrow-raisin’ dictating farmers jump out of the holly bushes and ask a replica of a replica of a band aid to try to stop all of the monstrosity that is electricity to leave their veins.

An Empty Day

fiction by | chris drew

We relax briefly. A darkened room. She says something, and I retort. There is a strained pause, a sort of misguided reverent illusion hung in the air. I whisper. She inquires. There are words at the back of my throat.

“How long have we been going on like this?”

“I don’t know what you mean.”

They are stars, the space between them infinite and they themselves only faint aged recollections of the truth.

“Alright.”

Feet and noise in the apartment above us.

Innocuous tension in silence.

A vague hint of light tracing her silhouette.

“Okay.”

Professor Ponder's Jake

fiction by | **belphegor the magnificent**

a revenge story that is most interesting

The thousands of ramblings and incoherent readings of Professor Ponder I had borne as best I could, but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. But you, who so well know the nature of my soul shall not suppose the punishment imposed was not equal to the crime, to which the reader is now pointed.

On a certain day before Thanksgiving Break, Dr. Ponder ceased his muddlings in philosophy to speak of my faith, held most dear, of Eris, goddess of discord, whose most sacred day is Friday. Ponder referred, in a class that was to be held in less seriousness than the rest of the semester, that Discordianism is a joke religion.

He held the story of Malaclypse the Younger and Omar Ravenhurst, who beheld Eris with whom they spoke in 1958 in a bowling alley, to be a mockery of the idea of prophets. He

proposed that the Original Snub, by which our great goddess accidentally caused the Trojan War (the beginning event of Western Civilization), after being snubbed by Zeus, was to mock the apparent human need to have a mythic event spark the rise of civilization. He mocked Discordian rituals as “clinging to religious absurdity in ritual” purely for its own sake, and that Discordians did not hold any spiritual values but humor.

At length I set out to demonstrate the Discordians have nothing but sincerity in their faith, and possess no humor. The plan described is example of the high Discordian principle call a “jake”. It a method by which, by spreading nothing but mass confusion, revenge can be extracted. The following actions were performed:

Waiting patiently outside the international student office, I paid five dollars to any student willing to write a letter to a fake public official in their native language and script, place them in an envelope to be mailed to a fake address in

their country. After receiving five of these letters, I wrote Professor Ponder's address as the return address, and sent them to a post office box without stamps.

Spying an old halloween pumpkin close to Kum and Go I absconded with it, plastered a picture of his face on it, place two cans of tuna fish inside, drenched the whole thing in animal fat, and set this pumpkin effigy on fire. After said fire was extinguished, I beat it with an aluminum baseball bat. The entire event was recorded. Artistic rendition of the video tape was posted on You Tube, and a link to “Burning Pumpkin Effigy” was posted on his blackboard site. Not only was the initial flame burst recorded, my video camera was left on to capture stray animals devouring the pumpkin innards.

At approximately 11:23, a threatening phone call was made at his house, with an “officer” swearing he knew the location of Mia Kid, a suspected fugitive. What Ponder himself failed

to suspect was that Mia Kid is an approximate anagram for “I am dick.”

Two students waited outside his office, having a fake disagreement over whether Sartre or Camus should be considered the most important literary existentialist. As soon as he attempted to voice his said view of this subject, the students abruptly stopped all conversation and left

A copy of the Principia Discordia was placed by his office door. Inside lay a note reading “As opposed to any blather you may hear about Constantinople from They Might Be Giants, you can still write letters there, provided you address them to the Patriarch of Constantinople. Signed, Belphegor the Magnificent.

After break I relish seeing his reaction. Hail Eris!!!!

P.S. I just want to remind you that you are a pope regardless of what anyone says but me.

Txting

fiction by | **elliott eastin**

The batteries were dead. It was in the washing machine. Your carrier dropped the ball and the message was never delivered. You've traveled outside your service area. Your friends are too lazy to bother returning your texts.

All are possible reasons for miscommunications using cell phones. Paul was a smart enough kid, and he knew all of these things. On top of that, he knew it was a well-known fact that you can't text message break up, but it didn't stop him from panicking when he got a text from Jennifer saying that it was over.

He and she had been dating for nearly two years, and as far as he knew, things were going very well. He had been sweet and considerate, and, unlike the jocks she could have been going out with, his primary goal was not to simply get into her pants. She had been hot, but in a very classy way. And she had more than the rudiments of personality to her, in stark contrast to the girls who could be summed up in a bleached-blond hairdo and semi-gloss lipstick. They'd met in Geometry. She'd hated proofs as much as he, and out of that mutual hatred blossomed a compassionate and surprisingly functional relationship.

Until today.

He texted her back, fearing the worst. “What's over?” An hour later there was still no reply. He text her again “Hey, what were you talking about?” Another hour elapsed. An hour really is a long time as he found out.

He'd memorized the pattern of some rather complex wall paper, walked his dog, and stared out at the rain which had begun to fall without warning from a patch of rather unlikely low, grey clouds. Then, of course, he'd perfected staring at his phone. It was nice. A sleek blackberry with an ample keyboard for text messages. It had internet access too. And all such features had, to him, the approximate value of a piece of gravel without Jennifer who still hadn't texted him back. He called her, but there was no answer. He had the terrible vision of his number flashing across the screen of her phone as it rang and her just shaking her head pityingly at his feeble attempts to find out what he'd done wrong. Or worse, she'd changed his number to “Do not answer” instead of “Paul Snugglebun Haxton”.

In Psychology, Paul had learned that there are steps to the grieving process, the first two of which are “denial” and “anger”. Having moved considerably beyond step one, Paul felt it only fair that he should indulge himself in step two. Feeling much better already at having arrived at this sensible conclusion, he threw his phone across the room which came to rest in several pieces in the fireplace.

Paul's home telephone then rang, but by then he'd already stomped off to go for a brisk run. Well, a brisk trudge at any rate.

Having no answering machine to take the missed call, Paul was unable to answer Jennifer in her frantic attempt to explain to him that she'd sent him that text by mistake, innocently selecting his

number from her contact list instead of “Home” so that she could tell her parents that the movie she had attended with a number of her friends had come to a suitably mushy and unrealistic conclusion. (Paul had opted not to go see a chick flick with several chicks). Then, against all odds, Jennifer had dropped the phone in the street where it was promptly run over, appropriately enough, by a Mack Truck, and, in those two hours of agonizing silence, she'd gone to her cell phone provider and received a replacement phone on which soon appeared Paul's confused text messages. Jennifer wondered if Paul was mad at her. Paul wondered if Jennifer even cared that she'd made him so mad.

Paul met an attractive young girl in the park on his trudge who thought his broody mood was hot and that perhaps he was an artist. He thought she was hot, and the fact that he'd just been broken up with and that she was offering to walk with him made him particularly non-resistant to the idea of getting coffee with her.

Paul then spent the remainder of the date trying to figure out why this girl (whose name turned out to be Cynthia) wouldn't shut up about sculpture and painting and such. Jennifer had been right, he reflected sourly into his cup of triple-strength caramel-mocha espresso while Cynthia went on about some modern writer.

It was over.



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Pioneer Square

by | **faith martin**

Blue skies streaked overhead. I looked down to see people of different races, sexes, genders, backgrounds, interests, and classes. They somehow have all flocked together in this one place.

This is Pioneer Square in Portland, Oregon. Pioneer Square has been called Portland's "living room." It's centered in the middle of the city, by the courthouse. Made of brick, the square is mainly flat, while bricks towards the edges form small stairs that creep towards Italian ice vendors and hot dog carts. Starbucks, the infamous coffeehouse that brought "coffeehouse culture" to mainstream America, sits on the right side of the square. Their patio is always chockfull of socialite teens, businessmen, and young writers blogging away on their laptops for everyone to see. They stare quietly upon the street performers, hacky-sack enthusiasts, burn-outs, slackers, punks, goths, artists, and homeless citizens that call Pioneer Square their refuge from the hustle and bustle of the city.

People have always fascinated me. No two people can or will be alike. Most people follow the lead of others on how to behave, dress, talk, believe, and just be a member of society to feel comfortable in their surrounding society. This is very untrue in Portland. And that's evident at Pioneer Square.

As my cousin Ken and I people-watched, a gentleman approached us. He was somewhat

short and stocky, but quite muscular. Tattoos covered his right arm, with a few on his left as well. He was shirtless, wearing only green khaki shorts and leather flip-flops. He looked to be a younger man of Samoan decent, which is not uncommon in Portland.

"You guys look like you need to play some hacky-sack!" he shouted with excitement.

Both Ken and I quietly declined, although he said, "Come on!" several times. The Samoan man finally walked away from us, moving on to the next person, asking others to join. This encounter made me smile, because the friendliness and outgoing characteristics of this man were so unlike the people in the area where I lived.

I've always loved diversity. Because of that, I love Pioneer Square. I felt a sense of belonging as I rested there on the tiny brick stairs, staring at the people below as they simply behaved as themselves and not anyone else. If I could, I would people-watch for hours, learning as much as I possibly could about every character I encountered. I doubt there is any other place on Earth such as this, or anywhere else I'd rather be.

In the square, there is a statue that depicts a well-dressed man holding an open umbrella and attempting to hail a cab. This statue, I thought, never really fit in with the square. But then again, none of the people there fit a mold either.

Foreign Film Festival 2009

by | **brie vonyo**

If you missed the free foreign films offered every wednesday at the Kirksville Megaplex over the months of October and November, The Monitor is savin' yo ass with a run down of how some of these indy flicks blew many minds inside our snow sloshed midwestern town.

Belgium- Eldorado

Yvan (~John Goodman with bigger calves) engages in a bromance with Elie (the heroine addict who robbed his house). Filmed beautifully with wide panoramic shots of the Belgian landscape while following the duo cross county on a road trip filled with silences and interesting conversation, a dead dog, abrupt and strange nudity, and whiskey drenched bonding. Made me wonder if a heart can ever grow without breaking a bit...

Latin America- Sin Nombre

Gangs suck. A broken-hearted Mexican ex-gang member runs for his freedom to America, crossing paths with Sayra-- a good-hearted, young and beautiful Honduran woman. They become glued at the hip, the audience swoons at the innocence and strength in their inter-dependency. Sin Nombre explores the political atmosphere Latino immigrants attempt to escape, and the image of America that motivates them on their dangerous and impoverished journey.

Uruguay- XXY

A hauntingly erotic film about a 15-year old

intersex girl, Calex, who earns the love and admiration of the people who bear witness to her struggle with gender dichotomies involving hormonal drugs and surgery, and violently ignorant classmates. Set in a small sea side village. I LOVE THIS FILM.

France- Les Temoins

Set in 1984-5, a painful foursome develops between the indescribably pure Manu who falls in love with Mehdi who is a cop, father, and married to the talented, independent, and large breasted Sarah, who is a good friend to the physician Adrien who is obsessed with Manu and rival to Mehdi. Anyways, when someone in this tangled mess contracts HIV the film develops incredible depth when the characters show amazing courage in caring for one another.

France- Les Chansons D'amour

A MUSICAL about a threesome and all the emotional complications lying therein. I want to buy the CD, because the songs are very lovely. I enjoyed how the film showed Ismael's fluid sexuality with both fierce honesty and grace.

Altho the film festival has come and gone, movie stores don't go anywhere, and neither does the media lab nestled in the second floor of the library. Check these movies out, and you will mentally study abroad (for less than 5 dollars).

DIY: Things you can do with books

by | **lars sandwich the thrice**

Read them. Just kidding. Read this article. Then mutilate some books. But before you get a literary bonfire going, let me clarify. Take some old books that are already damaged and alter them into neat arts and crafts projects. This way, books that would never have been read again can live on as the works of art they deserve to be. Now you just need some beat-up old books. You can get them from garage sales or thrift stores; Outreach Mission on Elson Street has them 10 for a dollar. Only use those that are torn, stained, or otherwise messed up. Then try one of these projects.



Book purse: You may have seen these before. I got one when I was in high school, but the concept never really took off as well as some other DIY fashion trends. People were just too enraptured with those silly torn-up-then-sewn-back-together t-shirts to worry about accessories. But book purses are cool, and they would blend perfectly into the Kirksville aesthetic. Older Readers Digest Condensed editions have some really cool colorful patterns. For a big bag, encyclopedia volumes would work great. I started to type up instructions on this, but they were pretty lengthy. Don't be fooled, though. It's really not that difficult. Just search the internet for a how-to guide with illustrations. I used www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Book-Purse.

Ransom note: Give someone a (NICE) ransom note. That means no kidnapping or blackmail, okay? "Cookie bomb" your friends by leaving anonymous baked goods outside their door, attached to them a friendly note made out of words and letters from the pages of a children's book. Go with large print; too small and the letters will be frustrating to cut out and glue.

Picture book: Open a book to the page of your choice and draw or paint whatever you wish. The great thing about this artwork is that you don't need to frame or hang it. If the spine is loose enough, just

lay it open on a table with the painted pages facing up.

Erasure poem: Last spring, poet Mary Ruefle was keynote speaker at the GEO conference here at Truman. She also gave a talk on her other favorite hobby, erasure. Ruefle takes old, damaged books and gives them new life by marking out or whiting out portions of the text. What is left is poetry that bears the same basic essence as the original text. This is a fun and interesting exercise in creative writing.

Scrapbook: Gather up some old family photos and vacation trinkets that are already lying around. Just paste them onto the pages of a big coffee table book, and the text will form a cool border around them. You can draw or paint whatever you like on the pages too. Consider gluing beads, feathers, buttons or other tidbits throughout the album. Paint the book's cover or make a collage on it with paper cutouts. That way it won't get accidentally filed away with the rest of your books. Easier still, glue a favorite photograph on the front cover, covering the original title.

Pressed flowers: We've probably all done this before. Just leave some flowers in a thick, heavy book, and come back later. But you can also combine this with other crafts. Dry pressed flowers might look great in your scrapbook or erasure poem.

Wallpaper: Pages from a book can make an interesting background if you're trying to decorate a small space. Washington St. Java Co.'s ladies' restroom is wallpapered with sewing patterns, which you can get bundles of for about a quarter at most thrift stores.

Framed Narrative (LOL): If wallpaper's too big of a commitment, put a one-page flash fiction story, poem, or illustration in a photo frame on your shelf or coffee table. Or frame several of these and hang them in an asymmetrical cluster on the wall.

Decoupage: Cut out interesting shapes from pages of a book and glue them onto a lamp shade, light switch cover, or anything that needs jazzing up.

Origami: Look up instructions for different origami objects. Make a thousand paper cranes out of War and Peace while contemplating war and peace!

Free Hat: We're offering free hats to all readers right now. All you have to do is read this issue cover-to-cover, and then fold it and put it on your head.

Happy crafting?!

MONITOR COMIX



comic by | ryan moore

fill-in-the-blank by | matt ziegler

Chris: I've been stuttering- er – studying all fucking night.

You: _____ (7 words)

Chris: I'm _____ (1 word)

You: _____

(19 words)

Chris: Are you direct quoting me?

You: _____ (1 word)

Chris: You can't fucking direct quote me, I will sue you.

You: _____ (5-69 words)

Chris: No, you cannot publish this, I will sue you.

You: _____ you. (1 word)

Chris: Cut the crap man, this is ... Shaft.

You: _____

(4-20 words)

Chris: No, that's what the _____ does. (1 word)

You: _____

Chris: Why are you still quoting me?

You: _____

Chris: I'm gonna' smack the _____ (1 word) out of you, _____ (name)

You: _____

Chris: You better hope I don't see you next Tuesday and/or Thursday.

You: _____

Chris: No, I'll smack the _____ (1 word) out of you.

You: _____

Chris: No, she doesn't have a black boyfriend.

You: _____

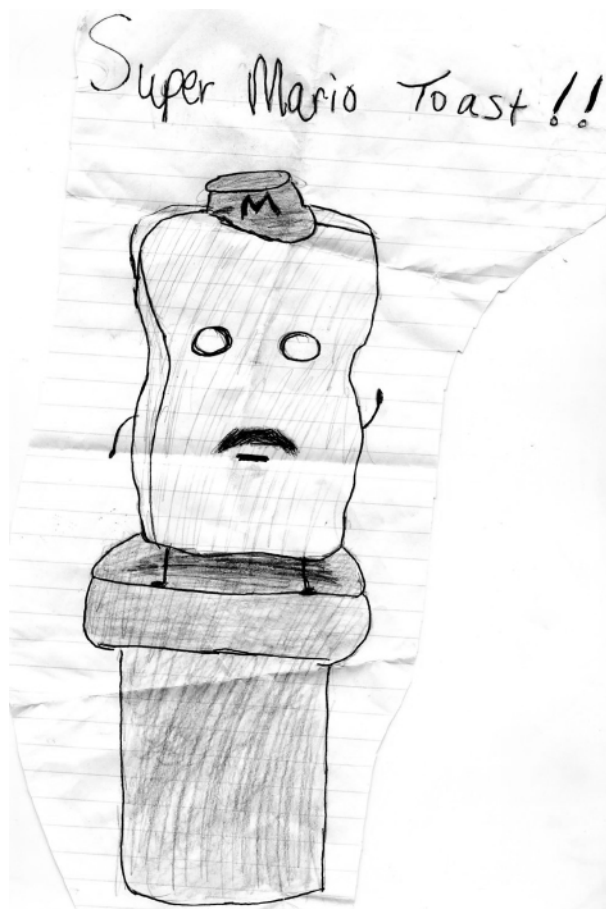
Chris: I'm gonna' throw something at you.

You: _____

Chris: Don't worry I have three tests tomorrow.

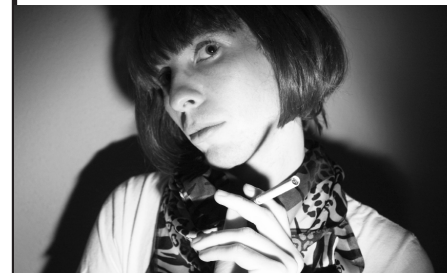
You: _____

Chris: Bueno suerte.



Queen Astra

Let the stars be your guide!



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This month you will fall behind in your child support payments.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may have been born into the wrong gender. It all makes sense now, doesn't it?

Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Don't let your practical prudency prevent you from picking pennies from your piggy bank to purchase presents for important people.

Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

The answer will be revealed through dance.

Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You glow because of your inner beauty.

Aries (March 21-April 19)

You will be specifically excluded from health care reform. They said something about not covering "ugly people."

Taurus (April 20-May 20)

How you gonna win when you ain't right within?

Gemini (May 21-June 21)

You should really consider a new hairstyle.

Cancer (June 22-July 22)

You can stretch one pair of underwear out for almost a month, but that doesn't mean you should.

Leo (July 23-August 22)

Be on the lookout for birds of prey. Remain calm and they may not attack.

Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Remember: there is water at the bottom of the ocean.

Libra (September 23-October 22)

The grass is not greener on the other side of the fence, but that's only because it's winter.

My Back Pages

email your poems to:
monitor.truman@gmail.com



Splashing Eyes

The crazy spaces
Between stars
I find in your eyes
Like black emeralds
That burn down to coal.
How can you manage to not see dear?
To know and not know
How painfully full
Your spheres,
Splashing into mine,
Can be.
Keep your beauty,
Never stop looking through me.

-Peter Johnson

Perpetual Whatever

lost the little book you gave
me
for scribbles, indeterminate
glimpses;

a few snatches still hover
over me
September leaves
a moon I saw once
low beneath a streetlight
a perpetual whatever
a thought that begins
"she never moved towards"

-Franklin Cline

ARGYLE STATE

summer silt on winter boots
cavernous excesses mined from recessive roots
where too cold motives met with too warm blues
and i was nothing but a vein untapped to you
we were a load of shit but
we made the brightest line
unbroken in the dark shift

-Anonymous

untitled #3

i don't know plot-
its unfamiliar rigidity
plays with my percep-
tion of real.

it is. it is. no one
says differently
and that is the prob-
lem.

colors matter.
shades matter.
white is another way
of saying:
can i just not?

-Joshua Hess Wangler

Boredom

Cardboard is the color of boredom,
Laced always with despair
From the sight of vast eternal
Sand-deserts of nothingness
Whilst dragging your heavy feet over
soundless mounds,
Humming of sameness.
Before your very weary eyes
Hungry for a splash of color,
Lie infinite blanket-folds (upon blanket-
folds)
of sandy emptiness
And a dull-gray horizon, a teasing distant
mirage
Emitting the dusty scent of endlessness.

-Michelle Martin

UNTITLED

WINDSWEPT BRAVADO HAIRLINE EYES STARE BACK AT ME THROUGH FAKE RAY BAN GLASSES.

VERMOUTH BITTER FACIAL CONTORTIONS.

SNAPDRAGON FEATURES.

-CHRIS
