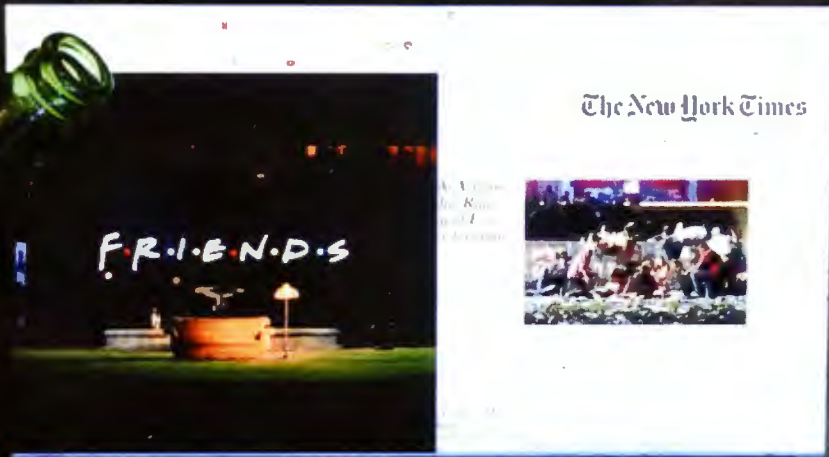


# M

MAST MAGAZINE



# THE CONSUMPTION ISSUE

READING THE RECEIPTS OF OUR DAILY INTAKE

# A Letter from the Editor

PHOTO BY MCKENNA MORIN



What fascinates me most about consumption habits is the way they are able to manifest themselves without our noticing, and how we are able to keep ourselves separate from the impacts these mindless habits may have on a personal, national and global scale.

Some may say the eyes are the windows to the soul—but some would argue it's the trash that bares more. The most brutally honest truths lie in the wake of our consumption, in the crinkled Whole Foods receipts buried beneath McDonald's french fry boxes. Garbage reveals the evidence of our attempts at self-improvement that can sometimes be bogged down by cravings and impulse purchases. Product packaging, fast food bags, empty bottles, Amazon boxes, ticket stubs and wristbands quietly accumulate, creating a not-so-carefully curated time capsule in each of our garbage cans. The most vulnerable parts of ourselves are exposed in our internet histories and bank statements, unapologetically announcing what we desire the most. In our trash bins lie the parts of ourselves we would rather throw away. There

comes a point when we are no longer in control as consumers, but our habits become what consume us. The results of autopilot consumption have power over our identities, our environment and our future generations.

The aftermath of mindless consumption can be dangerous, but when consumption habits are paired with intention, curiosity and awareness, the output can be beautiful. In this issue, we're exploring the dedication of students who are passionate and dedicated to time-consuming hobbies and sustainable lifestyles. Intention can be applied to how we consume our daily intake of ads, TV shows, likes, shares and tweets. Edward Bernays, the infamous pioneer of 20th century propaganda, wrote that "we are governed, our minds molded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of." Building critical media literacy and awareness of corporate interests can help eliminate the mystery and deception, revealing biased subtexts. The more we know about what we consume, the less power it has over us.

“ The more we know about what we consume, the less power it has over us. ”

*Rizelle Rosales*  
Mast Magazine Editor

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# ADDICTING ACTIVITIES

Lutes fess up to their  
favorite obsessions

GURJOT KANG

## Maryah Schrock

Maryah Schrock began her hobby of cross-stitching when she was just seven years old. For those who may not know, cross-stitching is a specific type of embroidery that involves creating a pattern of "X" stitches to form a unique design. Schrock was first introduced to cross-stitching by her grandma during a long family road trip to South Dakota.

"I was just getting restless, so she gave me a needle and thread and told me how to do it, and I figured it out," Schrock said.

On that road trip, she was able to cross-stitch her very first item—a bookmark with a bunch of farm animals. Schrock finds that her hobby of cross-stitching helps her de-stress and transition her focus from one task to a more enjoyable

task. She usually commits around four to five hours a week to this hobby.

Right now she is working on cross-stitching a blanket. "I didn't know what technique to use, so I actually went to my grandma and she was the one that pretty much taught me all the right techniques," said Schrock. Most importantly, Schrock considers cross-stitching a way to bond and feel closer with her grandma: "It's just me and her that have ever done it; it's specifically a me-and-grandma thing."

PHOTOS BY GURJOT KANG  
Schrock holds a handmade  
cross-stitched blanket.

## Celina Potwardowski



Potwardowski sketches at a table in the Ingram lobby.

Celina Potwardowski considers her prime obsession to be drawing. In fact, she is majoring in Fine Arts with a focus on graphic design and painting. She hopes to someday work on video game designs or an online webcomic.

Every night, Potwardowski finds herself drawing something different to help her develop new skills and techniques. Her last art piece was an ink drawing that took four hours.

Overall, Potwardowski commits around 28 hours a week to drawing and improving her craft. Not to mention, she's also a part of Art Club.

Potwardowski recalls that the very first time she was interested in drawing was all the way back in kindergarten, when she remembers being fascinated with all the beautiful pictures in the classroom. As a little kid, she spent hours trying to replicate an image of a unicorn.

"My parents thought it was pretty amazing that I was there for such a long time doing one single picture," Potwardowski said.

When she was younger, it started

off with and animals (she was really into Pokémon), but now she likes drawing people and exaggerating certain aspects of the human body.

"People are fun to draw if you think about it. They're complicated, but there are so many different variations you can get with a person, and I also like getting expressions out of people, too," said Potwardowski.

She credits the beauty and magic of animation along with many of her favorite childhood cartoons to have sparked the interest of art within her.

In addition, Potwardowski really takes inspiration from anime, specifically Hayao Miyazaki's Studio Ghibli films. "He's kind of considered like the Walt Disney of Japan," Potwardowski said.

Ultimately, her favorite thing about art and drawing is how "it can reach people in different ways. Some people want something that is more of a personal story to them. Other people want to be more mentally challenged. Art is great at doing that."



## Malcolm Clay

Malcolm Clay considers his favorite time-consuming obsession to be video gaming. He began this obsession his freshman year of high school.

He likes playing on the GameCube, the Wii or "anything with like four cartridges that multiple people can play at a time."

Specifically, his favorite games to play are ones that he can play with his friends. Clay says he commits around five hours a day to video gaming.

Some of his favor-

ite games include Mario Kart, Super Smash Bros., Mass Effect, Dragon Ball Z, Street Fighter and Mortal Kombat.

In Clay's opinion, the best thing about video gaming is how it connects various communities and brings people who share mutual interests together.

Clay recommends gaming to everyone because he says it is a great way to get to know others, as well as relieve your mind from the stresses of a hectic class schedule.

Clay displays his copy of Super Smash Bros. for the GameCube console.

## Christine Remigio

Christine Remigio refers to Tetris as one of her most addictive activities. She began this obsession back in fifth grade when she started challenging her brother to online Tetris gaming battles.

Remigio said she commits about five hours a week to playing Tetris. She views the game as an outlet and way to relax from school.

"I don't like homework,

so I play Tetris," Remigio said. What she really likes about the game is putting the pieces together and pushing herself to beat her newest high score every time.

Although Tetris is a pretty simple game, it is in fact the very simplicity of this game that makes it so satisfying for Remigio and puts her mind at ease.

Remigio plays Tetris on a laptop computer in her dorm room.



## Daniel Hachet

Something that Daniel Hachet is really obsessed with is the key concept of sustainability. He first got into sustainability in high school when he took an Advanced Placement Environmental Science class that included interesting labs and after-school gardening workshops.

"[It] helps make the world a better place," Hachet said.

Relating to sustainability, Hachet is part of the Environmental and Social Justice community in Stuen and also works 10 hours a week as the Residence Hall Association's Sustainability Director.

There are many ways he recommends students can be more sustainable in their daily lives, as well. Specifically, Hachet

mentioned the UnPLUGged competition in October when dorms compete against each other to see which dorm can reduce their energy the most.

Some possibilities include making sure to turn off the lights, unplugging chargers when not using them, taking shorter showers, washing clothes in cold water and by drying clothes on the drying rack instead.

Hachet tries to personally incorporate sustainability in his life by limiting the amount of items plugged in his room, buying items with less packaging, avoiding eating red meats and always making sure to recycle.



Hachet works as RHA's Sustainability Director.

## ...watching



### Friends

MARYAM SHAFI  
SOPHOMORE

### How I Met Your Mother

HANNAH MCCULLOUGH  
SOPHOMORE



### American Horror Story

SAGE ALLEN  
FIRST-YEAR



### Criminal Minds

JORDAN FAHEY  
JUNIOR



## ...listening



### Tyler, The Creator

CAITLIN CHACON  
FIRST-YEAR

*"My favorite song by him  
is 'See You Again.'"*

### K-POP

*"My favorite K-POP  
group is BTS."*



LEAH FOSTER-KOTH  
FIRST-YEAR

### Alt-Rock

*"My favorite band is  
Deerhunter."*



SCOTT FREESS  
FIRST-YEAR

## ...reading



### Is Everyone Really Equal?

by Ozlem Sensoy & Robin DiAngelo

*"It's a good way to  
learn about social  
issues."*

MIKE VALDEZ  
JUNIOR

### Crossing the Wire

by Will Hobbs

*"It gives a glimpse into the  
reason why undocumented  
Mexican immigrants come  
to the U.S."*

CARLOS  
ALVAREZ  
FIRST-YEAR



### A Separate Peace

by John Knowles

*"It's beautifully written, and  
it has a lot of sensory imagery  
that I like."*

BRYNA FROHOCK  
FIRST-YEAR



## ...snacking



### Green tea ice cream

MADISON LAVERGNE  
SENIOR

### Spicy Korean rice cake

ARIANA KONG  
FIRST-YEAR



*"Anything with  
carbs and  
cheese!"*



BRIANNA PAPISH  
SOPHOMORE



# LIVIN' LA VIDA

## RIZELLE ROSALES

People who know the Pacific Northwest may be familiar with a number of things: bike lanes, gourmet dog treats, Chihuly glass, the smell post-rain and vegan stereotypes. The original concept for this piece involved having a curious omnivore and a passionate vegan submit separate opinion pieces, but we thought it would be more interesting to put them in the same room. I moderated an interview with omnivore Brooke Thames and vegan Marcos Giossi to delve into his experience of the vegan narrative and briefly break down larger questions surrounding accessibility, ideology and implementation of this lifestyle.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: BROOKE THAMES IS THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF MAST MEDIA.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARCOS GIOSSI

**BT: We can start by going over our history with food...**

MG: I grew up in a bicultural environment. My mom is Mexican and she remarried to a Mexican man, so there was a lot of Mexican food growing up, a lot of tamales and pozole. My dad's side is... Swiss maybe? Not sure, but they're very removed from where they're from, so there was a lot of American food. I had a good amount of meat growing up, a lot of chicken actually.

**BT: How long have you been vegan?**

MG: Two years ago I became vegetarian, and a year ago I went vegan. A friend of mine first exposed me to veganism through the arguments to go vegan, so I started researching them because I wanted to know more and I wanted to be able to justify my actions—I'm a philosophy minor, so I'm really into being able to justify the things you do and your values and all that. It took me a year of being vegetarian and sort of grappling with the arguments for veganism... and eventually I just decided, well, this seems like a good thing to do! It was a long time of trying to poke holes in the argument and figure out if it was for me.

BT: I always grew up eating meat as a part of our daily meals as a kid. My dad really likes to barbecue so we always had steak and stuff like that. I had lots of barbecue and fried chicken and stuff. I knew that vegetarianism and veganism were things that existed in the world... but it feels like such a huge thing here at PLU. I work for catering so I know there's a ton of people who are vegan and vegetarian! My roommate is also vegetarian, and so I've been more widely exposed to it. I haven't really considered it for myself, but I'm interested in learning why people choose to do it.

**BT: What kind of privilege is involved**

**in veganism?**

MG: There's that implicit privilege of food choice, a privilege that not only vegans hold but most omnivores in the U.S. hold as well. And there are people who don't hold that same privilege of food choice as those who do reside in the U.S., because of things like food deserts and people who are working three jobs and have to buy the nearest processed food that's cheap... I think that's important for anyone with food choice to kind of realize that privilege and realize... how all those decisions affect our overall food system.

**BT: What are the main arguments of veganism?**

MG: Most of the time, people go vegan for three main reasons. Health is a big one that I didn't really consider going vegan... I mean, health is important to me, but not nearly as much as the animal ethics side and the sustainability side. Those two were the most convincing arguments for me, and that's where I ended up not being able to justify my old habits and I decided to go vegan. The argument on the animal ethics side is that animals are capable of suffering—they're sentient beings. They're not like plants where they don't have a nervous system or a brain, that sort of thing. Animals are capable of not only experiencing pain, but remembering pain and anticipating pain. So the argument is that because we share that faculty, we should do what's in our power to not cause that pain for animals... You can tell when an animal is having a good time and doing what their instincts are telling them to do. After seeing footage of mass quantities of animals in our food system, where their best interest is not in mind when they're being produced for a specific purpose, for our gain. Whether

it's for their eggs, for their milk or for their meat, we don't have their best interest in mind. We have our best interest in mind. We're using them without regard to what they are and what they want.

**RR: In your opinion, does ethical meat consumption exist?**

MG: That was my final argument against veganism actually! There's more expensive, posh "pasture-raised" meat [out there]... For me, I couldn't justify that for two reasons. Even when animals are given those resources, they're still slaughtered. We try to find more humane methods, but even those sometimes aren't effective. We're also killing the animal much earlier than their natural lifespan, and that was problematic for me because animals in the wild sometimes don't achieve their longest lifespan, but I feel like we're not even giving these animals a chance. The other reason I couldn't justify it was because I felt that it was unfair of me to be using these resources. The implication of using these resources to produce meat when we could be using less resources, and also because other people don't have the option to spend money on expensive meats. It kind of creates an even deeper divide between the people who have that option and the people who don't.

**RR: What do you think turns people away from veganism?**

BT: Based on my recent meditation with veganism... At least for the people who do have the option to be vegan and choose not to.... I feel like it comes down to the weird feeling about veganism. You can either get really attracted to veganism, like the ritzy trendy part of it—and also the people who want to make compassionate choices—but on the other end, some people are really turned off. I think some people can view

veganism as being really pretentious—

MG: Like the holier-than-thou sort of thing?

BT: Yeah exactly, and the culture revolving around it. That's why I think some people choose not to do it even if they have the option to, just because they were rubbed the wrong way. I'm also thinking about lower income individuals as well, and really trying to gauge how easy it is for a family that has been eating meat up to this point who are really pressed for time and worried about so many other things. To answer your question, I think some people are turned off by the pretentious stereotype, and there's also a group of people who don't have the resources to do it easily.

MG: I think access is a huge part of it. The definition of veganism is to exclude as far as is practicable and possible, any use and abuse of animals for their food, clothing or any other purpose.

### **“The privilege of food choice comes with responsibility.”**

A really important part of that definition is the “possible” and “practicable.” So I mean, I wouldn't condemn anyone who has to make the difficult decision of feeding their family every night if they're in a spot where all they can do is what's cheapest. In the U.S., what's cheapest isn't what's best. Not just in terms of the welfare of animals, but the welfare of the planet, and the person's health and their family's health. So I don't think any good would come of shaming anyone in that situation or anything like that.

**RR: Is there a bad way to practice veganism?**

MG: Some people, at first, they don't really think about the animal ethics part, they're doing it for a self-motivated reason. Those people are most likely to have a vegan diet. There's a difference between doing the diet and having the worldview. I think another reason why people don't go vegan is that people see it as extreme and daunting. I mean, I used to have that worldview! And now here I am, and I don't feel extreme at all. But I think it feels like a big change, and I think if people are learning about veganism and finding that they align with the ethics and the worldview... they can mitigate that daunting-ness! It can be

gradual. It's a process of changing habits, and you can do it step by step.

**BT: Can you tell us more about the environmental factors?**

MG: It really boils down to trophic levels in the food web. Only ten percent of the energy consumed by primary consumers from plants actually goes into the primary consumer. When we eat animals that eat plants, it's much more resource intensive because it takes a lot more plants to feed the animals. A tenth of the calories that we get from animal products—we can get 10 times as many calories just from consuming the plants directly. To feed animals, we're using a lot more land and a lot more water and a lot more fossil fuels for farming. There's a lot of synthesis studies that take into account the different peer-reviewed scientific articles that say we can effectively undermine our emissions globally through plant-based living. It makes a big difference.

**RR: How does cultural tradition play a role in veganism? How do you respond to traditional dishes in other cultures that involve meat?**

MG: I try to be compassionate and as respectful and understanding of other cultures as I can. I have to juxtapose that with the fact that I don't see it as fair to be killing animals for personal gain. I see it as tangential to other issues of injustice. For example, in the U.S. there are movements trying to dismantle aspects of our culture that are very unjust and hurt people. Patriarchal and imperialistic ideas, those also perpetuate injustice. People are cognizant of that and want to make a change. For me and for a lot of vegans, we see the exploitation of animals also as an injustice, and also worthy of slowly dismantling that to make our society more just and more equitable.

**BT: In the vegan community, do you discuss other motivations outside of animal and environmental justice?**

MG: Absolutely! I have to take into account how my actions are affecting other classes, and I have experience trying to make the food system more just... but I can only really speak for myself. I really do hope that vegans are taking that into consideration and I try my best to do that too. It's all connected, and social justice is very important to me alongside animal justice. There probably are vegans out there who haven't fully come to terms with the privilege of food choice that goes along with

their identity, but I think that it's very important to make that a part of your vegan identity. The privilege of food choice comes with responsibility.

**BT: What's your reaction to people who understand veganism, but don't choose to practice it?**

MG: It can be a little disheartening, especially when people are aware of what's going on in the industry, but I also know that changes can be big and daunting. Meat tastes good, and animal products taste good—and vegans know that! It's hard when people say “you don't know what you're missing.” But for vegans, the taste doesn't justify the harm... I can see and be compassionate towards why people don't make that change. I think that's important to keep in mind when interacting with people... they're human beings, and we're all going through stuff.

**RR: A question for both of you: what needs to happen for veganism to gain momentum and win over the majority?**

MG: I think right now, veganism is a small movement. Right now, we're only 0.5% of the U.S. population. With any really small minority group, often times, they're initially perceived in terms of stereotypes and that sort of thing. I think that, as different kinds of people who hold lots of different identities incorporate veganism into their lifestyle, maybe those stereotypes will start to break down a little bit more. That, I could see making veganism bigger and more accessible. I think a big part of it is: “what is this identity and how does it relate to how I've constructed the narrative of who I am?”

BT: First, you have to somehow effect a change in the system of values. Not everyone thinks the same way about animals and not everyone thinks the same way about meat production. At least from my perspective, America is like, “Meat is American! Hamburgers are American!” and all that stuff. If we're talking about America specifically, I think a harder challenge than just changing structures of wealth inequality is changing the way we think about our values in terms of meat... which I think is way harder to do. Even just the hamburger... it's American. If you're going to be American, you've got to eat hamburgers. Equity is at the forefront of my social justice-mindedness, so I think in order to make this a reality we do have to dismantle racism and classism and all those intersections.

# Locavore Lifestyle

Supporting local farms and fresh food

## COURTNEY MIRANDA

I grew up in the Gallatin Valley beneath the Big Sky of Montana, where the buffalo still roam and the deer and antelope actually do play.

PHOTO BY MCKENNA MORIN



Fresh and local produce are readily available in abundant supply around Bozeman. The cheapest prices are found at the local grocer who supplies—you guessed it—locally sourced food.

The most popular and, I might be biased, the best restaurants are locally owned and pride themselves on their 'grow local, eat local, buy local' policy.

They call us locavores: people whose diet mainly consists of locally grown or produced food.

I am a fifth-generation Montanan. My great-great-grandfather settled on a piece of land in northern Montana and it has stayed in the family since then. My grandparents currently tend to the farm, raise cattle annually and let their enormous Missouri foxtrotter carriage horse, Scooby Doo, pretend he's one of the cows.

Recently they've purchased and cared for orphan calves—calves rejected or lost by their mothers. Grandpa has a makeshift bottle feeding system in the barn to feed what he refers to as his babies.

Every year, the grandchildren name each newborn calf, and my grandma refers to each one by their given names.

My grandparents usually have about 7-15 cows in the spring plus about 20-25 orphaned cows. My family butchers a cow only once every two years.

My brother and my dad are avid hunters and fishermen, so for the majority of my life, our freezer was fully stocked year-round with elk, venison, beef and fish. The whole family was required to help in the

processing of our hunted meat.

That meant butchering it ourselves—which is why I am a gatherer and not a hunter.

I have very distinct and unfortunate memories of hanging and wrapping meat. As gross as it sounds—and actually is—the whole process taught me so much about the importance of good meat.

Coming to Pacific Lutheran University was a particularly difficult diet change. I approached meat very cautiously because I didn't know where it was from.

I essentially became a vegetarian for my first couple of years at PLU because I wasn't willing to try the meat. Now that I'm cooking my own meals, it can be very hard to incorporate the protein I need using local meat on a college student budget—and I'm not the only one.

Kait Dawson, a junior at PLU, made the choice to become a vegan the summer before her sophomore year. Being a vegan is often a choice about consuming the right kind of food for your body and the environment. This easily coincides with the principles locavores value, too.

Though organic is a word easily associated with high quality food, Dawson sees past the craze.

"I don't always buy everything organic. Sometimes it really doesn't make a difference and it's just a price markup," said Dawson.

The best thing you can do for your produce is buying fruits and vegetables in season. "I research what's in season and I try to eat based on that, like in the fall I eat more corn or pumpkin," said Dawson. "Stuff that's harvested in the fall because you know it's not being shipped in from places like South America."

So for those of us who crave watermelon year-round, the best thing you could do for yourself is substitute. Otherwise your watermelon-based diet is most likely lab-produced or grown under very unnatural circumstances.

Dawson does her grocery shopping from a variety of places.

"There's definitely some planning and thought that goes into it. I buy some things from Fred Meyer, QFC or there's always Trader Joe's," said Dawson.

However, she and her family mainly shop at Harbor Greens in Gig Harbor or in University Place. "They're very transparent and label where things come from," said Dawson. "There's a lot of tricks where



PHOTO COURTESY OF KAIT DAWSON

## Kait's Vegan Banana Bread

### Ingredients:

- 1 3/4 cup of flour
- 1 1/2 cup of sugar
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup mashed bananas
- 1/2 cup of vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup of soy milk
- 1 tsp vinegar
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 cup of applesauce

Preheat oven to 325°. Mix flour, sugar, soda and salt together in a large bowl. Mix bananas, oil, soy milk and vinegar in a medium bowl. Combine banana mixture with dry ingredients. Add the applesauce and cinnamon. Stir well. Pour into a greased 9"x5" bread pan. Bake for 30-40 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean.

something will be labeled 'fresh Atlantic salmon' but when you do the research it's not actually fresh, it's raised on a farm."

In a place as widespread as Tacoma, it can be hard to find affordable local restaurants, especially those sourcing local. If you look hard enough though, they're out there.

Being a vegan, Dawson is generally drawn towards Asian restaurants because they don't use a lot of dairy and always have a vegetarian option. "My favorite is Lele's in Gig Harbor. It's this Vietnamese restaurant. I love pho and teriyaki places because they can always substitute for tofu," said Dawson.

There are so many layers to the realm of food consumption—no food police will know if your beef was grass-fed and locally raised or if you grew your own potatoes. Because at times simply buying cereal on a college student budget is all that seems manageable. But even taking baby steps can make such a difference for the community and the environment.



PHOTO COURTESY OF COURTNEY MIRANDA

Visit  
[PugetSoundFresh.org](http://PugetSoundFresh.org)  
for harvest schedules,  
market locations  
and more info on  
supporting local farms.



Imagine walking into the world's largest 24-hour conveyor-belt buffet. They have the technology, funding and resources to produce unlimited amounts of every dish imaginable to enjoy without having to leave the table. With options like all-day breakfast, a sushi bar and a chocolate fondue fountain, it wouldn't be easy to prioritize a healthy portion of nutritious food.

This buffet represents the access we have to media today in the U.S. Our ability to consume a constant stream of input on autopilot is much like absentmindedly reaching into an open bag of snacks on the kitchen table. In an age of abundance, how do we approach the decision-making process in consuming media?

With the rise of fake news, impulsive tweets and national tragedies, media literacy is critical to making sense of the events, patterns and structures of power that dictate our everyday lives. Developing a well-rounded taste in media is a way to look critically at forces of injustice and engage in powerful dialogue and action.

Daniel Schabot, Visiting Associate Professor of Communication at Pacific Lutheran University, sees this literacy as a skill that can be strengthened. "You have to practice," said Schabot.

This practice, however, is no easy feat. Balancing the intake of credible news, published opinion and entertainment—and knowing the difference—is vital.

Broken down into four steps, media literacy consists of identifying credible sources, contextualizing the content, synthesizing information with other sources and taking breaks.

### STEP 1: IDENTIFY

Though it may sound obvious, noting the date, author and publisher of the piece is critical to confirming credibility and legitimacy.

Opinion and news articles distributed by legitimate publications are cycled through several rounds of copy editing and fact-checking to ensure accuracy. However, blog posts published online by independent writers do not always go through the same process.

"It's not like the old days when people open a newspaper and the editorials are all in one section," Schabot explained. "Now, people get whatever article is first on their Facebook feed."

Social media plays a large role in blurring the lines between news, opinion, entertainment and advertisement. The rise of native advertising and "infotainment" can drown out information in comedy or flashy click-bait.

A fundamental element of identification is recognizing when the media outlet is politically biased by the funding and support they receive from outside organizations, affecting content, language and coverage.

Once these genres and biases are identified and separated, then the viewer can see the pieces of media for what they are.

### STEP 2: CONTEXTUALIZE

Contextualizing media can help the viewer see how the information is informed by norms, ideologies and other cultural influences.

Thoroughly reading more than just a headline and the lead, as well as recognizing the political leaning of the publication, is a large part of Schabot's advice on putting context to media.

Political facets of news media in the U.S. stretch back to our nation's first federalist and anti-federalist newspapers, Schabot said. Politically biased articles have been around since the country was founded.

"What students don't realize is that news is episodic—it cycles through," said Schabot. "If the first episode of news was the first newspaper back in the 1700s, you're coming in as a new viewer at episode 1,560 without any context. Without context, the news can put you in a state of perpetual rage."

Recognizing political and chronological context can help viewers find something closer to the truth, and seeing the whole picture can help the audience find hope in resolution as the episodes continue.

### STEP 3: SYNTHESIZE

Smart media, like a satisfying meal, rarely consists of one ingredient. The magic happens with the combination of different ingredients and cooking methods, getting information from various sources and applying your own heat of critical analysis.

However, it is all too easy to choose media that are convenient and pleasing instead of nourishing

# Recipe for

RIZELLE ROSALES

# Media Literacy

GRAPHICS COURTESY OF PIXBAY.COM

and informative. The interference of confirmation bias can funnel a consumer's exposure to information that is exclusively within their worldview.

"If you're only watching the 'Colbert Report' and reading a few articles here and there on Facebook, you're not getting a well-rounded view of what's going on," Schabot explained. Gathering diverse information is the best way to get a clear picture of the inner-workings of society.

### STEP 4: TAKE A BREAK

Taking the time to relax might be the most important step in this process. "We definitely need to take those mind breaks," said Schabot. "I don't think we should live in a perpetual state of rage."

Trying to maintain a perfect diet of exclusively informative media isn't realistic or sustainable. Taking a break to watch YouTube cooking shows or the new Netflix comedy special gives your mind a chance to decompress and renew a sense of clarity after a day of dense news reports.

Taking time away from screens in general can actually improve literacy, and taking time to talk with community members and peers helps process information. It can rejuvenate a grounding sense of hope and positivity to discuss things with others.

In the same way that health and physical education classes give students the tools to interpret portion sizes and nutrition labels to make informed consumption decisions, media literacy education can teach students the skills needed to discern and filter through the abundance of media that influences our the structures that affect our daily lives.



PHOTO BY RIZELLE ROSALES  
Schabot teaches a public speaking class.

# Clicks that Consume You

BEN LESCHENSKY

One afternoon this past summer, I was doing some online shopping for a bike. College was quickly approaching and I was in need of some wheels. I was browsing around on a couple different bike sites, trying to find the best bike for me. Before long, however, I was swarmed with ads for bikes. How did Facebook know what I was searching for? This made me question what else Facebook knew about me, and if my personal data and searches stretched beyond my social media. As it turns out, I had no idea the amount of data that was out there.

In the age of the internet, the practice of clicking to select, choose, like, retweet, share or submit is a common and important part of everyday lives. The emergence of the internet and personal devices over the past couple decades has allowed humans to communicate and network online at an increasing rate.

However, with all of this communication and participation on our devices, there has been a rise in the amount of data available. The term used to define this mass of information is called metadata, or "Big Data."

Metadata is primarily composed of an individual's digital footprint. A digital footprint is what is left behind online, and is a history of a person's usage of digital devices.

Search engines such as Google, Yahoo, MSN and AOL contribute to a digital footprint, alongside a form of internet tracking called cookies. They all keep track of what someone searches, thus allowing third-party viewers to access their personal information.

One of the largest and most disturbing aspects of Big Data is the consumption of data by the government. Mass surveillance by the government allows them to listen on calls, read emails and texts, track individual's movements and secretly turn on phone and computer cameras. This is in part due to an act passed over a decade ago, called the PATRIOT Act. The act—signed into effect after the 9/11 ter-

rorist attacks—furthered the authority of law enforcement agencies, allowing them to monitor the public's phone, computer, business, medical, financial and any other electronic records.

The depth of government consumption of public data was revealed even further in the National Security Agency leaks of 2013. Edward Snowden, an employee of the NSA, discovered a program which gave the government access to nine major U.S. internet companies and allowed the NSA to read through content of emails, phone calls, photos, chats, stored computer data and social networking details. The extent to which the government was, and still is, spying on the public is frightening.

While it may seem impossible to remain private on our devices, there are methods to stay safe and limit the amount of data

be applied to both messages sent from a computer, as well as the hard drive, making the drive inaccessible to anybody who does not have a password.

Laptops should be stored in a safe place. If that option is not available, the user should put the computer to sleep—logging out and shutting down provide even more safety if the computer is stolen. Another step includes putting a sticker or cover over a computer's camera so others can not remotely access the camera and use it.

Cell phones and tablets also have their own set of tactics available for keeping information safe. Keeping the software (apps) and operating system updated keeps the device secure from outsiders. As the primary protection against data theft, a password is vital in keeping personal information safe. Setting a unique password

for his or her phone—one that only he or she knows—will provide the most security. Using a password manager can help a user keep track of his or her passwords and logins.

At Pacific Lutheran University, students can take simple steps to keep their information safe and secure. Logging off of public computers is a good first step to make sure nobody else

can take possibly personal information. Another protective option is to browse safely while on campus. Whether it means using private windows on web browsers or clearing history, both options allow for improved privacy. Finally, since PLU students live in a semi-urban area, setting up a virtual private network (VPN) will allow for private browsing on phones and computers.

There is no perfect way to stay safe on our devices, and there will always be data out there for others to see. However, if one takes the right steps, they can greatly decrease their chances of being snooped on, and increase their privacy and security.



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one produces. Options for improved privacy exist on social media platforms, computers and our phones.

Facebook offers multiple options for more advanced security. The first step any Facebook user can take is updating the privacy settings to match their desired protection. This could include controlling who can view said Facebook page, removing connected applications or limiting access to personal information such as birthdays, age or place of birth.

Computers offer their own set of privacy options as well. Many technical solutions are available for keeping these digital devices private. However, the most secure option is encryption. Encryption can

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