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THE NEW PINK & BLUE LINGERIE
FOOTBALL?
ORANGE
THE PILL FOR MEN
Are we ready?
LINGERIE FOOTBALL?
WELCOME TO WEIRD SPORTS

HUMAN CANVAS
BODY ART
TURNING FLESH INTO FANTASY

THE AVANT GARDE ISSUE
SPRING 2012 | VOLUME 14 | ISSUE 2

HYBRID SHARKS 40 | GAMES replace NOVELS 24 | FASHION behind the SCENES 56
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### NEWS
- 3 | Curing Cancer with Sound
- 4 | New Planet Found

### STUDENT LIFE
- 5 | John Masley
- 6 | Fishing Club
- 7 | Philosophy Major

### EXTRACURRICULARS
- 8 | Bug-out Bag
- 9 | How to Burlesque

### FEATURES
- 10 | Solo: Chuck Moss
- 14 | Coastal Hauntings
- 16 | Male Birth Control
- 20 | Weird Sports
- 24 | Video Games as Novels
- 28 | The New Pink & Blue
- 34 | Hoarders
- 36 | Curing AIDS
- 40 | Evolution in Action
- 42 | Synesthesia

### FASHION
- 44 | The Human Canvas

### REVIEWS
- 52 | Music: Chiptunes
- 54 | TV: Reality TV
- 55 | Book: Circular Texts

### EXTRA
- 56 | Behind the Scenes: The Human Canvas

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Cover photo of Michael Wagner, Artwork by Alicia Rancier, Photography by Tracy Fish
Myrtle Beach seems like a pretty normal, ho-hum “culturally void” place sometimes. I am from Charleston, S.C., and was accustomed to the wide variety and abundance of theatre performances, shopping areas, local Southern cuisine, wildlife and historical sites. So, from Charleston to Myrtle Beach presented quite the challenge to find cultural events among the tourist traps that infest every inch of the Grand Strand, the chain restaurants, the wall of hotels eroding the sand dunes and the trash poisoning the ocean waters. Yet, if you look hard enough, Myrtle Beach, especially Conway, can be quite avant-garde.

“Avant-garde” could be too strong of a word for this area compared to others, but when we examine the cultural diversity of the campus and surrounding community, there are more forward-thinking people here than you may first imagine.

It’s not just here either. The past few years have revealed the human generation’s ability to leap toward the new and the never-before-done, the genius and the unconventional. From the medical to the evolutionary, from the sexual to the genetic, from the ghostly to the downright weird, these features all have something revolutionary to share. Although some of the things you’ll find in this issue may appear bizarre, and to an extent they should, bizarre only means you’re broadening your horizons, that you are becoming more avant-garde yourself.

We had some push-and-pull on finding the right feature for this issue, and it wasn’t until we found the right adjective did we select Michael’s story. Her story reflects a movement toward acceptance of others, toward the future of what it means to be a community, a movement that both CCU and the nation are joining in, toward becoming a generation of forward-thinkers.

When you get to our fashion spread, don’t be alarmed. We wanted to take fashion to new heights. Some said it couldn’t be done, but the artists enjoyed working with a new medium and using the human body as a living canvas. There’s no full-frontal nudity, but you should look closely at the designs on their skin. The designs are made with latex body paint (enhanced with paper, sprinkles and feathers). I would say no models were harmed in the making of this fashion spread, but … well, we learned that you should always apply lotion before the paint. If you want to see how it was done, check out the last few pages of the issue where we’ve included a special addition on the design process.

This is my last issue as editor-in-chief, but I’m glad I’m ending on high note. This issue places the magazine in a position to advance and transform into the best college features magazine in the nation. The avant-garde is the innovative, the bizarre and the unconventional, and that is the beauty of this issue’s staff, which I know will take this magazine and make it new. Good luck, ladies and gentlemen.

Angela Pilson
Editor-in-Chief
Here’s an interesting cancer treatment: blasting the infected cells with ultrasound. Sono Photo Dynamic Theory (SPDT) claims that this is a realistic alternative to chemo. The treatment revolves around an agent that sticks to the cancer cells and releases free radical oxygen when light or sound of a specific frequency is introduced. Free radical oxygen is fatal to the cancerous cells. They cannot survive when exposed to it thereby possibly solving how to cure cancer.

SPDT is actually a combination of two separate therapies for the treatment of cancer. One is photodynamic therapy utilizing the power of light. The substance, referred to as a sensitizer, is activated by photons. Sonodynamic therapy, using sound, is extremely similar except that the sensitizer is instead activated by colliding with sound waves.

The reasoning for using the two together, other than the obvious fact that it’s two against one, is that they have a varying degree of influence on the body. Sonodynamic therapy is more effective against deeper tumors, because sound goes through the body with much more ease than light does, but it’s also more intense than photodynamic therapy. As such, sonodynamic therapy is often treated as a semi-local therapy, meaning that it will be focused on the affected area, whereas photodynamic therapy can be used more liberally as a systematic therapy affecting the entire body.

SPDT works most effectively when the sensitizer is absorbed more readily by cancer cells than by healthy cells. The therapy has shown success dealing with both heavy deep tumors and small tumors such as metastases. Due to this, and the unintrusive nature of the treatment, it seems likely that SPDT will be a popular cancer-curing method in the near future. Be on the lookout for miracle stories mentioning this unusual treatment very soon.

- BRAD ROBERTSON

**CURING CANCER WITH SOUND**

Sound therapy is used as a homeopathic remedy for stress. Proponents claim that certain frequencies of sound can induce either positive or negative brain wave activity. In 1973, while working at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City, biophysicist Gerald Oster discovered that the brain would create a phantom binaural beat when certain frequencies entered the brain via the two different ears. The phantom beat would always end up as the mathematical difference between the two frequencies that entered the brain. Sound therapy aims to manipulate these waves, in order to reap their benefits. Below are a few desired frequencies accompanied by their corresponding mental benefits.

**Delta Waves 2 Hz:** Deep Sleep, Healing and Recover

**Theta Waves 4-8 Hz:** Meditative Sleep, Memory Recall

**Alpha Waves 10 Hz:** Optimal Calm, Creativity

**Beta Waves 18 Hz:** Aggression, Heightened Focus and Concentration

S.C. has as estimated 26,570 new cases for 2012

About 1,638,910 new cases of cancer are expected this year

SPDT has been used for over 100 years
**NEW PLANET**

**GJ 667C MAY SUPPORT LIFE**

The Kepler photometer has recently found two new planets that may support life: GJ 667C and Kepler-20f. Although the discovery is an important one, researchers now say that the size of the planets may make it impossible for intelligent aliens to leave and travel to other planets.

The photometer was named after the 17th-century astronomer Johannes Kepler and has found solar systems that may have life-supporting planets. Finding other planets that have sustainable life would be the greatest revelation in our time and one of the most significant discoveries in human history.

“We’re at an interesting point in astronomy where we can rapidly find new planets,” Dr. Louis Rubbo, an astronomer and assistant professor at Coastal Carolina University, said. “We can literally wake up every morning and hear about a new discovery that we thought would never happen not too many years ago.”

Rubbo gained his Ph.D. in physics and was referring to Kepler’s capability to find new planets at a revolutionary speed. The photometer studies a single spot in space for 3.5 years. Those planets it has discovered are being classified by the minute. As of Feb. 7, 2012 around 1:40 pm, 750 planets so far have been classified.

Of course the most exciting part of all this research is the finding of planets similar to Earth in habitable zones. Rubbo says a habitable zone is “the distance from a star where water can be sustained in liquid form.”

Astrobiologists have been studying the atmospheres and temperatures of planets in habitable zones and are trying to find planets that could possibly be home to life forms similar to those here on Earth.

There is some question as to whether or not life can be sustained in places that do not have Earth-like qualities.

Rubbo says, “Our initial search for life elsewhere is going to begin with the search for life conditions similar to ours.” These conditions include things like atmospheric pressure, oxygen, temperature and other qualities that could make a planet similar to Earth.

One of the planets found that could possibly contain life is known as GJ 667C. It is 4.5 times the size of Earth and is only 22 light-years away.

“It’s the Holy Grail of exoplanet research to find a planet around a star orbiting at the right distance so it’s not too close where it would lose all its water and boil away, and not too far where it would all freeze,” Steven Vogt told SPACE.com. Vogt is an astronomer at University of California, Santa Cruz and remarks that “it’s practically our next-door neighbor.”

In a press release written by co-discoverer Guillem Anglada-Escude and colleagues, they use the discovery of the super-Earth to endorse the idea that such planets “should be ubiquitous in the Galaxy.”

If these worlds are as plentiful in the universe as they suppose, it may just be true that we are not alone.

- SARA KASPER

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**ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF NASA**

In 2009, NASA launched the Kepler photometer, which has since discovered at least a thousand new planets. Some of these planets are in zones that have the potential to support life.
THE BOY WITH THE CHAUNCY TATTOO

Word is spreading around CCU’s campus about the freshman with a Chanticleer tattoo on his bicep. Does the name John Masley ring a bell? Masley signed to CCU’s football team this school year and decided to show his school spirit by getting a Chanticleer tattoo. Now that’s dedication!

Ronda Taylor: What’s one thing you want to accomplish in your college career?
John Masley: To get my degree and to kind of know what I want to do for the rest of my life and to start my career after college.

RT: What type of old person do you think you will be in the future?
JM: Hopefully a nice one, not like a guy yelling at kids to get off my lawn.

RT: What’s one thing you like and one thing you dislike about CCU?
JM: I like the campus, I pretty much like everything about it. And I’m a football player, so I like all my coaches and all football has to offer.

RT: What company slogan or logo represents you?
JM: Nike. Just do it.

RT: Who would win in a fight, Peter Griffin from Family Guy or Homer Simpson from The Simpsons and why?
JM: I guess Peter Griffin because he’s got the weight advantage.

RT: What’s your all-time favorite comedy movie and favorite scene?
JM: Billy Madison. There’s so many scenes in there that’s funny.

RT: Do you eat ramen with a spoon or a fork?
JM: A fork, I guess. I never really thought about it.

RT: What’s your favorite YouTube video?
JM: I can watch UFC knockouts over and over again, and it never gets old.

RT: Which teal is the real Coastal Teal?
Answer: PANTONE 322

RT: What’s your character in a scary movie?
JM: I’d be the killer.

RT: Would you be the one to look back and trip in a scary movie?
JM: No, I hope not. I wouldn’t want to be that guy.

RT: What’s the one invention you thought of and found out was already invented?
JM: I don’t really consider myself an inventor, but a spork I guess. I didn’t think that was invented ‘till I saw one.

RT: Team Edward or Team Jacob?
JM: I don’t watch that.

RT: What do you do to get a girl?
JM: It depends on what type of girl.

RT: How did the Chanticleer tattoo on your bicep come about?
JM: I knew I wanted to get a football tattoo, and I wanted to put my number on the inside of it, so I knew it was going to be something about football.

RT: What encouraged you to get a Chanticleer tattoo on your bicep?
JM: I got it when I signed for football, and I just really like everything about it. I like the coaches that recruited me, and I knew I was going to be here for my whole college career.

RT: How do you think you will feel about your tattoo years from now?
JM: I think it’ll be a good memory and hopefully a lot of good football memories.

- RONDA TAYLOR
Club Highlight

FISHING CLUB

CAST OUT A LINE WITH CCU’S FISHING CLUB

Coastal Carolina University’s very own Fishing Club travels to many places and partakes in various types of fishing. The club first started out as the only fishing club at CCU; however, part of the club eventually branched off into the Saltwater Anglers Club. While the Anglers Club only focuses on saltwater fishing, the Fishing Club does both salt and freshwater.

“What we do is well … fish,” says Kristin Forquer, president of the Fishing Club. “We do both saltwater and freshwater fishing. Anything from offshore fishing trips to camping trips to catfishing trips, we do it.”

Along with all 10 members, the club goes on monthly trips to practice and to participate in fishing tournaments.

“We generally go on trips every month. Some local things, and at least one trip that can be anywhere from two hours to five hours away,” says Forquer. “Some trips, we will keep the fish we catch, like catfish, certain saltwater fish, and if we catch any walleye. We will usually have fish fries.”

Last month alone, the club was involved in a dogfish tournament in Wilmington, N.C., at Wrightsville Beach on Johnny Mercer’s Pier. In future endeavors, the club will be heading to Charleston, to Richard B. Russell Lake (a 5-hour trip), and then possibly to Beaufort, S.C., for a weekend.

Jessica Edmonds, a junior math major, likes the diversity that the Fishing Club brings to student activities.

“I think it’s cool that we have unique clubs like this at Coastal,” Edmonds says. “It allows students to participate in clubs that they have never thought of trying before.”

Club members also learn and teach each other about the best types of baits to use for which fish.

“Usually when we fish for saltwater fish, we’ll use live bait or frozen bait,” said Edmonds. “Freshwater fish, we’ll use lures and grubs and whatnot. If we use live bait, we will catch it ourselves with a cast net.”

Members also have a chance to travel to different areas such as the Chattooga River, the Jellystone Campground, Richard B. Russell Lake at Calhoun Falls in S.C., and many other areas as well. The club even fishes locally around places like Murrells Inlet where they catch bluefish, flounder, red drum, ladyfish and stingrays. Forquer has even tried to start the club’s very own surf fishing tournament, which may take place next semester. Wherever this club has an opportunity to fish or take place in a fishing tournament, they will be there!

“It gives me an opportunity to teach others what I know about fishing,” Forquer says. “I get to plan trips, which can involve all kinds of different species of fish. It’s also really nice to meet people who share the same interest in fishing as I do.”

Advice for fishing from Forquer? “When helping some of the members when we go fishing, something I’ll tell them is ‘When in doubt, set the hook!’”

-LINDSEY HOLT
**Ask A Major**

**PHILOSOPHY**

**INTO THE MIND OF A PHILOSOPHY MAJOR**

I am waiting tables when a friendly customer gets me to admit my major, one I usually try not to explain. As always, I’m faced with some variety of the same question: why philosophy?

I see the point. Almost every other undergrad major has some obvious set of practical application skills, even among the ever-elusive humanities: English majors write, historians research, anthropologists dig, musicians perform, and philosophers … think? Right. It’s weird. Here are the most common questions I’ve had to answer over the last four years:

**“Why would you want such a useless degree?”**

Biomedical ethics. The Peace Corps. Law school. Seminary. And almost any grad school subject you could imagine. Aside from chiseling my writing into a strong, well-developed sculpture, philosophy taught me skills that are necessary both for continuing my education and for the work force: how to analyze and critically evaluate dense texts, develop strong arguments and form creative solutions. After philosophy, I feel like I can tackle any career move successfully.

**“What are your classes like?”**

They challenge me to seek answers to questions I’d only encountered on some primal level: What does it mean to exist? Why is the world the way it is? Is there an objective moral truth? The questions, and possible answers, are endless. Favorite courses: Existentialism; Social and Political Philosophy; Philosophy of Mind; Philosophy of Love and Sex; Philosophy of Science; Biomedical Ethics; Environmental Ethics; Philosophy through Film. And, given the department’s 2:1 student-professor ratio, the best perk is having the time for discussions outside of class. I’m always at home in the philosophy hallway.

**“Don’t you just sit around smoking weed all day?”**

If philosophy majors were doing drugs, they’d have to be on something like the NZT Bradley Cooper takes in *Limitless*. CCU’s Spring 2011 philosophy graduates all graduated with high honors, and philosophy majors nationwide consistently score higher than any other discipline on the LSATs, the GMAT and the GRE, which I sweat over last semester. The part I didn’t sweat? The Analytical Writing section. My score was 5.5 out of 6. Try doing that while you’re high.

**“So, what’s your philosophy?”**

This question plagues us. Philosophy is not a study of different people’s theories and ideologies; it is not a world view. Philosophy is active, pulsing, heated. It is a verb more than it is a noun — the act of searching for the truth, of arguing until all the small points are whittled away and we are left with no possible answer but the one that has no objection — although once a question seems to have an answer, it’s often classified as science. Did you know that “science” was originally referred to as “natural philosophy”? Fun fact.

**“Want to talk about Nietzsche?”**

No. I don’t. I’m OK with Nietzsche, but I’m tired of his groupies who appear randomly at the tables I wait on, in the check-out line at Home Depot and in the Edwards gazebo spouting random quotes to fit all kinds of irrelevant situations. No one should just pick a philosopher and wholeheartedly subscribe to everything he writes. As I said before, philosophy is always an argument. If you’re just agreeing, you’re not doing philosophy.

**“Who’s going to pay you to think?”**

Major corporations often hire philosophy majors over business majors due to their creative thinking and problem solving skills. According to a 2008 study quoted by Kutztown University’s Philosophy Department, the mean salary of philosophy majors 15 years after graduation was $81,000 — more than any other humanities discipline.

- CYNTHIA SCHOSCH

**Possible undergrad career paths:** teaching, civil service, politics, public service, writing, business. **Possible career paths with continuous study:** law, medicine, physics, environmental studies, ethics, religion, education, psychology, literature, rhetoric, history, etc.

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**CCU philosophers in the real world:**

- Rachel Gainey, senior philosophy major: law school
- Gabrielle Wirth, junior philosophy minor: grad school; Peace Corps
- Brian Tracy, junior philosophy major: Assistant to the Director of the Jackson Center
- Hans Sapocheck, senior philosophy major: seminary
- Micah Bucy, alumni: law school
- Blake Monroe, alumni: musician
- Dr. Michael Ruse, philosophy professor: Head of QEP; former chair
- Dr. Jon Trerise, philosophy professor: member of medical ethics board at Conway Medical Center
- Dr. Denise Paster, former philosophy undergrad at Bridgewater State University: English professor at CCU
- Dr. Sam Taylor, former philosophy undergrad: attended law school, politics professor at CCU
IF THE WORLD ENDS, BE PREPARED AS A BEGINNER NOVICE EXPERT

If you can’t beat them, join them. Or, in this case, if you can’t beat them, avoid/leave/flee them. Natural disasters are beyond human control. There’s no winning against Mother Nature. The best strategy is to be prepared before the unexpected arrives. A bug-out bag allows for an accessible get away from any approaching natural disasters like thunderstorms, hurricanes and worse.

Among various other abilities, the men of Coastal Carolina’s Veterans’ Office are familiar with the harsh reality of natural disasters. So, obviously we wanted to get their take on everything. Veterans Leon Grissett, Chris Resio, Matt Olsen and George Paul worked together in compiling a list of things to consider when creating a bug-out bag. The list starts off with subtle precautions to take and items to consider and makes its way to more severe precautions to take in worse situations.

To explain, there are three different levels of preparedness: beginner, novice and expert. Having a bug-out bag that fits your needs and your expertise level can possibly prevent illness, injury or, in some cases, death.

Beginners should keep their bags lightweight, no heavier than they can carry for extended periods of time. The bag should include some form of first aid kit, water, food, basic tools, a flashlight and some type of fire-starter. These are the basics for the beginner bug-out bag, but the more advanced bag is beneficial if you live in a disaster-prone area. As we live in the southeast, a bag created for hurricanes and floods would be best (at least while you live here).

Make note though, some of these items are prohibited on campus, so if you live in an on-campus dorm or apartment, make sure your bag fits student resident guidelines. If not, you could be fined or even suspended.

Novice bug-out bags should include gear for hunting and gathering like fishing lines and hooks and a book on edible plants. Along with your solar-powered emergency radio, you should include some large rubberized ponchos to use for shelter.

The expert bug-out bag has all these items and includes knives, a flare gun, a type of firearm like a .22 revolver (which is powerful enough to stop humans and small creatures from attacking you), a matchet and an inflatable raft, which can serve as a type of shelter or water transport.

- RONDA TAYLOR
How to BURLESQUE

By the Sea Dance Studio
1145 Robert M Grissom Parkway
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577


What It Really Is: Olga, our burlesque instructor at By The Sea Dance Studio, sashays her hips in a figure eight. She’s abundantly figured, and she flaunts the glory of her body by moving in a way that throws her curves into the spotlight. She shows us how to sway and walk, teasing the amateur curves out of each of us. Burlesque dancing is all about flaunting the female form, celebrating how gorgeous it is to be a woman and to look at a woman’s body. You’ve gotta be ready to flaunt it. Know how sexy you are and own it. Splay confidence from your gaze so that it would capture even a cobra in a trance.

The Moves: If your body isn’t in some way forming an ‘S,’ you’re doing it wrong. For the figure eight walk, for instance, you take eight steps forward. That’s it. Except that it’s a specifically fluid walk:

Start with standing straight up.
Place a hand on your left hip as if you’re a runway model. Let your hip jut out, as if you’re trying to hold a baby or a paper bag full of groceries.
Notice how your right knee bends in order to do this, but your left leg stays straight? You should naturally be able to shift your weight completely onto your left leg and bend your right knee so that your right foot comes slightly off the ground.

Place that right foot behind your left ankle. Now, dragging it on the floor without lifting it off completely, slide your foot forward and place it in front of your left leg, but in a casual way, not too formal.
Feel your weight shift onto your right hip (it should jut out) as you place all your weight on the right foot and bend your left knee so that your left foot can drag from its place behind your right foot to take another step.

You should notice that your hips will sway as you shift your weight, but you shouldn’t be trying to sway them, they should just naturally sway. … I know, it’s complicated. You might need Olga’s help with the rest.

-CYNTHIA SCHOCCH
Chuck Moss usually pushes a broom to get paid, but not tonight. He’s still pushing a broom, but it’s a clever act on the stage, catching the audience in the recital hall of the Edwards (EHFA) building completely off guard. The first act is announced, and yet, here’s Chuck in his janitorial uniform nonchalantly pushing a broom across the dimly lit stage, as if he were on duty. He looks up, and plays confused.

“What are y’all doin’ here?” he asks, smiling because he’s been planning to say that all week. He rests his broom against the piano and sits down. After turning the silent keys into the rich, penetrating sound of the Maple Leaf Rag, he gets up and sweeps his way off stage.

It’s 8p.m., and I’ve finally found Chuck. He’s working, but this time he’s behind the counter at the Kangaroo Express. He doesn’t know I’m outside watching him. Or that I’ve been trying to track him down for the past few days. And he definitely doesn’t know I’ve been curious about him since last spring when I somehow happened across a DVD containing one of his piano recitals. I had recognized his face, but I couldn’t figure out for the life of me how I knew him. And then it hit me: He was definitely the man from the DVD. It all fascinated me — the piano, the two jobs. I had to know more.

He has a friendly face, a gleam in his eye that I can see from the parking lot. It’s like a silent movie, watching the customers as they step inside the station, taking their sounds with them. He greets them, as they throw their change and Slim Jims on the counter. His eyes aren’t typical. They don’t stay on the register or zone out somewhere above the customer’s shoulders. Instead, his eyes meet the customer’s eyes in a way that makes it seem like he’s friends with each and every one of them.

Before I walk inside the store, my gaze is broken by Myra, my neighbor’s 16-year-old girlfriend. She’s a frequent customer and claims to know Chuck pretty well. She says he has a second job somewhere, but that he won’t tell anyone where. I smile because I know exactly where. She also calls him an ass, which surprises me, but I guess that’s what I used to
call them too, all those employees who wouldn’t sell me cigarettes because I was underage.

With that, I step inside and Chuck welcomes me into the store, his eyes so full of life they’d shine despite the fluorescence gleaming off the red-tiled walls. His forehead is greased by the sweat and oils that can only be a product of working one’s ass off. He’s good at that. He’s doing it now, rushing around the store taking care of the trash in the spare seconds he has between customers, his black-and-yellow company polo unbuttoned in an attempt to keep all of the life from being sucked out of him.

But Chuck’s used to this. He usually works both jobs in the same day. He’s been balancing the two for so many years that what started out of necessity has now become second nature.

“I’m just lucky that I’m tough enough to handle it,” he says with a genuine smile. “I just want to accomplish as much as I can.”

As he switches out the plastic dispensers containing the cappuccino mix inside the Bean Street Coffee Company Machine, I ask, “Do you have time for anything else?”

“I used to,” he says, wiping off the counter, his mind off in a more enjoyable time.

In the late ’90s, Chuck drove straight trucks with his older brother, Kevin. Together, they make a “brother team.” They do everything together. Back then, they trucked all over the country and on up into Canada, hauling loads containing everything from car parts for Ford to tanks for various branches of the military.

One of Chuck’s most memorable loads was
What seemed impossible isn’t impossible anymore, and then you step it up some.

a million dollar tank engine, the Hercules 88, weighing in at over 6,000 pounds. He enjoyed the freedom and change of scenery truck driving provided, happily oscillating between cities for two years.

Near the end of his second year, he was hauling a load through Gary, Ind., when he received a phone call that drastically changed his career. Chuck was offered a custodial position at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, S.C., which he accepted, eager to try out a new path — one that would provide health and dental benefits and significantly more stability. Shortly after acquiring the custodial position, he also landed a job at the Kangaroo Express. He’s been working both jobs since 2001.

Kevin, Chuck’s brother, also began working in the EHFA building. Up until recently, they had been working together on the same schedule for over nine years. About six months ago, all of their schedules changed — different times, different buildings. Eventually, the administration did away with the rotations, putting their best workers back in their proper, comfortable locations. Which means both Chuck and Kevin are back to cleaning the EHFA building.

Long before the shift changes, Chuck was 36 and had five years of cleaning the EHFA building under his belt. Students and their music filled the air around him as he swept the halls. It became more personable than just an everyday job. Chuck and Kevin would get together and support the students, often by bringing pizza to the theatre kids on production nights. They became a part of the building and its atmosphere, a part the students recognized and accepted. Chuck had been around the students and their talent so long, it left him wanting more. He wanted to learn.

Chuck approached Dr. Powell, a music professor, with his new-found interest, who was delighted to set aside the time to teach Chuck the ways of the piano. Chuck even went out that night and bought a $200 keyboard and began “practicin’ up” every day. Each week, Dr. Powell gave him new assignments to enhance various techniques. He’d practice little bits at a time, sometimes four measures on his left hand for a week, then four on his right the next until he made his way through the piece. In time, he began performing for Dr. Powell’s master class.

“What seemed impossible isn’t impossible anymore, and then you step it up some,” he says.

Going from truck driver to custodian to pianist isn’t exactly a career path one plans out, but working for 10 years at the university has its advantages. Chuck’s been working for the university for a decade, and he’s got an honorary key chain to prove it.

“It’s hard to leave something that’s stable, but I’m always striving to do more,” he says. “It’s a calculated risk, not just goin’ and doin’ somethin’ stupid. It’s gotta be calculated.”

Chuck and Kevin are, by no means, in any hurry to leave the EHFA family. They both view the people of the music and theatre department as the best and brightest, making it tough to ever want to leave the atmosphere the EHFA building provides them. Yet, I can tell he treasures the memories he holds. He’s gained a lot more than just a key chain. He’s gained the confidence to become a pianist and a solid part of this campus. It’s a place he can call home.

Two years after he began performing for Dr. Powell’s class, Powell felt he was finally ready for a live audience in the recital hall.

“Were you nervous?” I asked, leaning over the counter at the Kangaroo.

“Sweatin’ bullets, but you just gotta make sure you practice up good, so when you’re nervous your fingers just do the work,” he said as his eyes flickered, remembering his performance of the Maple Leaf Rag, raising his hands to chest level, twinkling his fingers as if there were keys in front of him.
The past few years have shown a rapid increase in people’s interest in the paranormal. Undoubtedly, everyone has seen at least one episode of a real-life ghost hunting show or the latest supernatural blockbuster. The study of the paranormal has been around for much longer than this, and you don’t have to travel all the way to Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, Pa., to experience a little for yourself. Something paranormal may be stalking just outside your door. You just need to ask a Coastal Ghost Hunter.
Formal ghost hunting, according to the Norco Paranormal Group, dates back to 1848 in New York, only 12 years after the first still photograph. A small group of young adults, Daniel Douglas Home, Florence Cook, the Davenport Brothers and Kate Fox, grew bored of listening to urban legends and decided to prove or disprove the presence of spirits.

The founding fathers of this science differed in their reasonings. On one end of the spectrum, Home set out with empathy for past spirits trapped here on earth. On the opposite side stood Harry Price, whose soul purpose for experimenting with paranormal investigations was to disprove many photographs of spirits circulating at the time. Still, the true starting point of this supernatural science is next to impossible to date. Stories about spirits of the dead have circulated through societies since the dawn of storytelling itself.

The most common evidence of paranormal existence during the 1800s were photographs. A photography professor at Coastal Carolina University, Easton Selby, described the creators of these images as “true masters of an almost alchemical art.” Techniques ranging from doubling negatives on top of one another to passing electricity through the subject were used to create a supernatural appearance. Still, others have yet to be explained in their creation.

“I’m a skeptic,” Selby explained. “But I’m truly fascinated by the methods people use to take these photographs.”

He also finds the psychological aspect of it interesting. According to him, people seem to believe that everything in a photograph is grounded in the reality of the reader’s mind. Because of this, people are willing to believe what they see.

What exactly does a ghost hunter look for? Generally speaking, a ghost hunter looks for anything that can be proof of the presence of something supernatural. Then, they tackle the task of disproving their own collected data. Most electronics are said to be able to pick up the presence of a spiritual entity.

A quick Google search can bring about hundreds of pictures people claim to be of a ghost or spirit. Basic recording devices have also been known to catch unheard sounds of passed human interactions. A basic ghost hunting kit on Amazon comes equipped with an EMF meter for measuring changes in electromagnetic fields, a motion sensor, an EVP listener for picking up sound waves from paranormal sources, a thermometer for measuring sudden changes in temperature and a basic digital camera.

So, once you have your ghost hunting kit packed and ready, where should you look to find paranormal activity? The Grand Strand is littered with stories passed down from generation to generation of spiritual presences: Some of these sightings are close to CCU and shockingly strange.

In Conway, S.C., countless people have reported witnessing what many call the Lucas Bay Light. Witnesses claim to have seen on Lucas Bay Road an unexplainable bright light appear and grow as it approaches before their car motor cuts off and the light disappears.

A little further south in Georgetown is the bizarre story of the Georgetown Midget Man. In the 1820s, a merchant of short stature fell in love with a beautiful young woman. As he went off to sea for business, this woman was caught attempting to perform witchcraft in order to make her lover taller. The short merchant returned home in time to see the love of his life hung. He wasn’t able to help her. Watching her die drove him to insanity. He starved to death under her feet. To this day, people claim to hear the ghost of the Georgetown Midget Man weeping, screaming and sometimes attacking larger men. Travel down Hwy 501 past Georgetown and turn left onto a road named Amos to see for yourself.

One last thing to consider before heading out onto the back roads of the Grand Strand searching for something paranormal and supernatural: Go about it safely. First, make sure to do some last-minute research into the area you are planning on going to, and make sure you will not get in trouble for trespassing on recently marked off property. Second, dress appropriately. You will most likely have to go through some brush, over a fence, etc. Take precautions to avoid cuts or other injuries. Finally, make sure that you are mentally prepared for the possibility of witnessing something supernatural. It may sound silly, but having a panic attack or fainting out in the middle of nowhere doesn’t sound fun and won’t make for a good ghost story.
MALE
BIRTH CONTROL
MODERN CONTRACEPTION FOR MODERN MEN

Jack Wright

Historically speaking, men have been aggressors throughout history. This itself is not an instigation, but an observation, one that has intrigued me for a long time. In bedtime stories, we (alas, for I am a man) are the ones who were the slayers of kingdoms and the rescuers of fair maidens. We traversed mountain tops and burned cities to the ground. And now, in the wake of a debate that has been going on in the bedroom for over 40 years, men are showing fear in the face of a modest question: If the pill were available for men, would we take it?
Even though the original pill was popularized in the 1960s, people have been trying to find ways to even out the contraceptive playing field since the dawn of civilization. Hippocrates (460 BC - 370 BC) wrote down one method of birth control: “If a woman does not wish to become pregnant, give to her in a drink of water-moistened copper ore in the amount of a vicia bean, and she will not become pregnant for a year.”

Rather than being the man’s responsibility, this was usually the woman’s duty. Not until Giacomo Casanova (April 2, 1725 - June 4, 1798) did the “assurance cap” (i.e., condom) become a widely practiced method of pregnancy protection.

Then, we have the more recent science, like the recently published article by the BBC which details experiments where subjects (rats) were “zapped” in order to reduce their sperm productions. As a male, this concerns me.

Now we have “the Pill,” used by 100 million women worldwide. It’s quick, cheap and effective at preventing pregnancy. But, the side effects can range from loss of libido to more serious issues like depression and cancer. Women ask, “If there’s a risk involved, why should women be the ones who have to take it?” The de facto answer has thus far been that women were the only ones who could take it; there wasn’t a male alternative, until now.

Say hello to “Mr. Pill.”

Scientists at Edinburgh University’s Centre for Reproductive Biology just finished trials on the new version of the pill. The male pill works simply by blocking sperm production, so the risk of pregnancy is diminished to roughly zero. So far, results have been promising.

With a condom failure rate of 14 percent, the original pill is an attractive alternative. The pill for women has a 5 percent failure rate. The pill for men has a (so far) 0 percent failure rate. The margin of error with these results is slight, but larger since the trial was composed of 4,000 men compared to 100 million women who are currently on the original. Essentially, this contraceptive could create another type of sexual revolution if the male version is as effective as the female version at preventing pregnancy.

Side effects are so far nonexistent for men participating in the trials, which addresses one of the main concerns males had. Men are hesitant to try any contraceptive that will affect their hormones. They’ve witnessed what women go through, and, although they sympathize, they don’t want to empathize.

Given that research is still in the development stages, the lack of side effects might not mean much, but what makes Edinburgh’s research so different is that their version of the pill (compared to failed predecessors) figured out how to block sperm production without messing with testosterone levels. Previous versions of the pill couldn’t do so. Thus, the most serious known side effect (and the biggest

“If there’s a risk involved, why should women be the ones who have to take it?”
obstacle preventing a male alternative to the pill) has disappeared. Questions on who is responsible to take the pill can no longer be answered with, “You have one, but we don’t.”

Guys across campus seem to be split. “I would never want to take that,” Chad Yates said, a senior communication major at CCU. “Even though they say there are no real hormonal side effects, by reducing your sperm count to zero, that could in some way, shape or form alter male hormones. Long-term at least.”

Out of those I surveyed on campus on whether men or women should be more responsible for taking the pill, about half said women. The rest said it should be more or less equal, depending on each pill’s side effects.

Girls were much more inclined to be in support of the male version of the pill. Seventy percent of the students I asked threw their support behind it wholeheartedly, with the rest saying the issue was so small that it didn’t matter. If it’s such a small issue and the majority of people who are concerned about it support it, how do they go about getting it?

The answer is, they don’t. The pill isn’t ready yet — but it almost is. According to those involved in its production, the new pill will cost between $15 and $20 a month, which is around the same costs for some of the existing female birth control options, if not cheaper. The male contraceptive will be prescribed by doctors in the same way that the original pill is now and will be available to any man willing to give it a try. In five to 10 years, the pill will be in normal production.

A line is still drawn between what’s being said and what will actually occur. Whether men will man-up and take responsibility for preventing reproduction, unwanted pregnancies and abortions … well, that’s something we’ll all have wait and see.

It wasn’t always so easy as popping a pill to avoid a pregnancy. Here’s a list of ancient birth control methods.

**Lemon Juice**: Used as a spermicide and was widely popular in certain areas. Women soaked sponges with lemon juice and inserted them vaginally before intercourse.

**Queen Anne’s Lace Seeds**: Supposed to help block progesterone synthesis, thus preventing implantation. Although, the seeds were relatively harmless, the plant unfortunately looks a lot like the deadly poison hemlock and water hemlock.

**Dong Quai**: A plant that was used in many Asian cultures. Dong quai was brewed to make a tonic that women used to alleviate menstrual pain, but also to induce uterine contractions to cause an abortion.

**Cotton**: A popular contraceptive device taken both orally and inserted vaginally. Cotton would be mixed with other ingredients to create a barrier and to act as a spermicide. During the time of American slavery, women chewed on the bark of the cotton root, which was supposed to help prevent ovulation.

**Unripe Papaya**: Ingested to stop pregnancy, but the seeds were also effective as a male birth control pill. The seeds reduce sperm count to zero with relatively no side effects, and it’s reversible.
Ever wanted to participate in a frozen dead guy casket race? Me too! Or perhaps duel in an Extreme Pencil Fighting Contest? No? Well, believe me when I say these are actual sports and many people take part in them each year.

Lindsey Holt

Sol Neelman, author of the book *The Wild Weird World of Sports*, has dedicated his time and energy in capturing some of the world’s strangest, yet most exciting, sports.

Since his first experience with shooting the roller derby, Sol Neelman has covered a vast array of unusual sports. From Chess Boxing to Fly Fish Catching, a lot of weird sports are out there that most people have not even discovered.

“One of the first weird sports I shot was roller derby in Seattle in 2005,” says Neelman. “The pictures I was making made sense to me, and I was having fun doing it. Derby was my tipping point. After that, I tried to track down as many fun and weird sports as I could. Before I realized it, it became an obsession.”
One sport in particular that may “knock your socks off,” or just clothes in general, is Lingerie Football. This is not your regular football game. The game is an all-women sport, which consists of two teams of seven. Both teams’ offensive side contains one center, one quarterback, two additional backs and three wide receivers. The defensive side consists of two linemen, two cornerbacks, two linebackers and one safety.

All play is full contact and follows suit to any other indoor football game, only without field goals or punting. One thing this sport is definitely known for is, of course, the uniforms. The uniforms only include shoulder pads, knee pads, elbow pads, helmets, bras, panties and garters. Players will receive fines if they wear anything under their uniforms, so wardrobe malfunctions are bound to happen. The Lingerie Football games take place during the fall football season and are definitely unique among other indoor football leagues.

Got a love for volleyball? And possibly mud? Then Mud Volleyball would fit you perfectly.

The Annual Mud Volleyball Tournament, a fundraiser presented by a gymnastic club in Redmond, Ore., has several volleyball courts filled with nothing but ankle- and knee-high mud pits. Everyone who participates has a good time playing volleyball, being splashed and landing in the mud.

“Mud and volleyball can be a perfect combination,” said Shannon Slattery, member of the CCU Women’s Club Volleyball. “The mud is all slimy, but it makes diving for the ball so much more fun.”

“My all-time favorite weird sport is Kaiju: live monster wrestling,” says Neelman. “Think Godzilla and his intergalactic rivals in a wrestling ring. It’s really brilliant, and the folks that perform it do so at a super high level.”

Kaiju, a Japanese word meaning “strange beast” (translated as “monster”), is specifically linked to a type of tokusatsu entertainment.

The most popular Kaiju of all time is Godzilla. You know, that big green monster that attacks cities and destroys everything? Well, imagine this same concept, but within a wrestling ring with a whole bunch of other monsters that are bent on destroying one another ... this is the sport called Kaiju.

Within the wrestling ring, there is a mini city where the monsters come and fight one another. There is also a tuxedo-wearing MC and a “Kaiju Commissioner” who oversees the matches. If the Kaiju Commissioner doesn’t do his job, Kaiju.com states, “The entire world could get caught in the crossfire.”

At present, there are a total of 30 monsters that compete in these Kaiju competitions. The monsters can include a factory-worker-turned-soup-can called Kung-Fu Chicken Noodle, a dirty hare-sage dubbed Dusto Bunny, to a square-headed mad scientist known as Dr. Cube. But no matter the character, this sport is definitely amusing to see.

“It might be more fun to actually play this sport than watch it,” says Alexandra Miles, an art studio major. “I like kung-fu and I like chicken noodle soup, so I’m down. I like me some Campbell’s.”

Croquet is a favored lawn game that involves hitting wooden or plastic balls with a mallet through little hoops called wickets. It is often considered a healthy pastime and an ambitious sport. But up in Portland, Ore., the Mondo Croquet Annual World Championships is catching on. The championships are held for extreme croquet lovers.

But how is this sport so different from regular croquet? Well, instead of the regular mallet and wooden/plastic balls, Mondo Croquet is played with bowling balls and sledgehammers. Yep, it is just like regular croquet but involves a little more strength. It has a bit more oomph. Think Mondo Burger, but with croquet.

This sport is crap … literally. The Annual Outhouse Races in Conconully, Wash., have everyone building decorative outhouses to race across the finish line. The rules are quite simple, the outhouse, also known as the “thunder box,” must have three wooden sides, a roof, and a toilet completed with a toilet seat and toilet paper. There must be two pushers and one squatter, making it a three-person team. The pushers must wear buckets on their heads and push the outhouse. The squatter acts as a guide, telling them where to go. The event usually has a great turnout despite it’s crappy material.

Curran Thomas, a junior CCU elementary education major, says, “This sport seems very bizarre to me, and you will probably not find me out there playing this anytime soon, but it is interesting to look at.”

Despite it’s bio-hazardous materials, racing outhouses can even burn calories. Take that laxatives.
There is a whole world out there filled with weird sports. By starting a new (yet odd) sport, it not only gives society a skillful activity, it also brings the community together.
Parents have been claiming for years that video games will rot your brain. Wouldn’t you just love to prove them wrong? If your answer is yes, then there are plenty of opinions out there, both professional and otherwise, that you can use to back yourself up. If your answer is no, keep an open mind. It’s about to be blown.
Many scientific studies exist that support the positive influence of video games. Some games teach you unique skills directly. One such game is the popular Sim City series in which the player learns to understand basic city functions and to manage resources effectively. Other games improve muscle memory and reflexes, particularly the shooters and fighting games that parents are most opposed to.

That’s right, folks. Halo and Gears of War are making today’s children smarter. Who knew?

Of course, then you have the variety of educational handheld games that have been strangely popular in recent years. Examples include Brain Academy and Scribblenauts. Whereas our generation shied away from words like “educational,” games that focus on memory and vocabulary skills seem to be gaining ground, particularly on handheld systems. But the studies vindicate players who hate these games by claiming that virtually every game, even supposedly violent ones, has something unique to offer the human brain. So, screw Cooking Mama, I’ll stick with tactical RPGs.

Now that the positive aspects of gaming have been confirmed, many scholars are moving on to a more advanced question. Can video games effectively replace novels in some ways and, more to the point, are they already doing it? Judging from my own experience with role-playing games, and from professional opinions, the answer’s looking like a big fat YES.

Dr. Jennifer Boyle of the English Department at CCU pointed out that when the novel became prevalent in the 17th and 18th century, many opponents claimed that it would make people stupid.

“It was going to ruin people, especially young girls,” says Boyle.

What were the arguments against it? The novels were seen as unrealistic (of course). They’ll rot your brain, make you lazy and give you escapist tendencies. Girls who read novels lost their connections with reality. Is this starting to sound familiar? The overprotective parents of the past echo down to today’s older generations. The parallels are undeniable.

Of course, her view isn’t merely historical. Boyle is a profound literary theorist with some leanings toward philosophy, so it should come as no surprise that she sees the leveling up we’re all used to as a complex process. It’s not just a satisfying jingling sound and an onscreen character jumping up and down. It’s tied to skill, progression, power and directly links to the achievements of the player.

They’re not called “experience points” just for show.

“They’re capturing the imagination in ways that novels don’t,” says Boyle.

Members of our own generation have varied opinions on the matter. Most educated people have at least acknowledged a move toward learning as a virtual process.

CCU senior Eric Riedinger, double-majoring in English and psychology, figures that video games are in themselves a more fun type of literacy.

“They are more like reading a picture book that’s somewhat interactive,” Riedinger says.

When discussing video games as the new novel, Riedinger was quick to allude to story-rich RPGs, which do have narrative elements. Many of these games are so narrative that they actually don’t allow the player to skip scenes. In many instances, you wouldn’t want to anyway. How do you know where to go next if you don’t watch the plot unfold?

Katie Pitcher, a business and advertising major at Horry Georgetown Technical College, truly cares about the characters and plots.

“They’re important because when I play video games, I become the character I’m playing as.”
The world isn’t being saved by Mario, Samus Aran and Leon Scott Kennedy. It’s all about the player. The player is the hero, and as such, our characters need a battle worth fighting for.

“If I don’t feel like I’m fighting for something, then I can’t really get into it,” Pitcher says.

Couldn’t have said it better myself.

Of course, there are still some complaints about video games. One of my closest friends, a hardcore gamer named Rhyan Kamp, disagrees with recent studies.

“They turn teenagers into violent, mindless, drug-abusing children,” Kamp says. Even within the gaming community, people do not always agree that they’re a positive influence.

“They became my life, starting with Game Boy Color,” Kamp says.

So, while they do have powerful educational value, it’s important that we do not completely dismiss our elders. Yes, a person can become addicted to video games. Kamp has a point. It’s not all level ups and bonus points. The games may become addictive, but their popularity is undeniable.

“They’re not going away anytime soon,” Boyle says. It’s her professional opinion that they’re here to stay.

Let’s not forget the huge communities that embrace the gamer life firsthand. It’s true. They’re a part of life now. If you really want your kids doing chores, you may have to humiliate their avatars.

Get used to the new fictional layers of our world because the struggle is more or less over. Just be glad that video games have positive effects, and level up as often as you can.
Outside, the rain was sluggish, and the traffic sloshing by was both irritable and irritating; but inside the coffee shop, things were warm and the atmosphere was lazy. It was the perfect place to meet a perfect stranger. And Michael Lynn Wagner is, in fact, quite perfect. She is absolutely stunning, from the lines of her face, to her self-designed fashion, straight down to her beguiling, husky voice. She also has a secret, which really isn’t a secret if you’d only ask: Her name is Michael for a reason.

Haleigh Woodlief

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TRACY FISH
I would like, if I may, to take you on a strange journey. It’s a necessary journey. Our society is becoming increasingly aware that it’s not so simple to assign pink and blue to females and males. We struggle enough to feel comfortable within our own bodies, but imagine the struggle to feel comfortable with our own gender. After all, gender is a crucial element to who we are.

Imagine, if you will, that the stereotypes we apply to males and females have been generated and perpetuated by ourselves. Whether we realize it or not, things we wear, ways we speak, and habits (down to our smallest of gestures) are proof that each and everyone of us is constantly performing.

Judith Butler, a philosopher of feminism, queer theory and ethics, is of the belief that all gender identity is performed. We get our cues from the world around us, our parents when we’re infants, our peers as we age and the media.

In her article “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution,” Butler writes, “Gender identity is instituted through a stylized repetition of acts.”

We are not born with a gender identity; we develop it over time. It’s a theory, but one to consider.

“I wasn’t sure when I really started thinking this way, or thinking that I was a female in a male’s body,” Michael said. She believes it began when she was three years old, recalling a time when she would take black crayons and redesign the dresses of princesses in coloring books to suit her tastes. In third grade, she grew her hair out and gained greater confidence.

“I didn’t really start dressing like a girl until fifth grade.”

On May 23 and 24 of 2011, Redwood Heights Elementary in Oakland, Calif., came under fire from the conservative group the Pacific Justice Institute, as well as some uncomfortable parents, for giving one-hour lessons on gender identity and acceptance provided by an organization called Gender Spectrum.

“I’m not doing any surgeries. I’m not doing any of that. I don’t want to physically alter myself.”

In the lessons, instructors used all-female geckos and transgender clownfish to help students understand that gender diversity is prevalent in nature. If the Discovery Channel had released a version of Finding Nemo, Marlin would have changed his sex after his wife’s death in order to take over as the dominant female.

Redford Heights wished to open the minds of their students, to make the environment a warm and welcoming one for every individual and to aid in guarding their students against harassment. They wanted to show their students that there are variations of gender beyond the pink and blue stereotypes. Sometimes, the colors mix, sometimes they switch, and sometimes we just go orange.

As Michael speaks, everything about her is collected. She’s at ease with the world around her — she’s a Virgo after all, and how could I have expected anything less? She’d immediately strike you as the type of person who was in complete command of her environment. Her confidence is something that was built over the years through the support of family and friends.

Though she claims not to have been teased much growing up, she says, “I definitely wasn’t comfortable, middle school, early high school, being who I was.”

Most anyone can relate to the horrors of those stages of life. It wasn’t until attending the Academy of the Arts, Science, and Technology in Horry County that she was able to “flourish,” and flourish she did.

When Michael first went to school to study hair design, she was faced with problems from the faculty. She recalls a time when, while putting on makeup before class with another student, she was singled out by one her professors.

“I’m standing there next to the girl, and we’re both doing it, but she didn’t get called into the office — I did.”

Incidents like this became more frequent and remained unaddressed by the administration until she felt it was time to leave.

“These are the people you should trust,” she says.

It is not entirely the fault of class-
room settings that much of the LGBTQ community find themselves uncomfortable in their own skins and with their perceptions of themselves, but that may be where much of the problem begins and is perpetuated into college. The source of the problem lies in a lack of understanding and communication.

Welcome to relationships, right?

To be clear: This is not entirely about sexual orientation. I’m going to make an assumption: When many of us see the acronym “LGBTQ,” we immediately connect it to sexuality. We are not entirely wrong, but the community stands for something more than that. It does not only stand for an awareness of sexual preference, but also of gender identity. To be clear, the American Psychological Association defines transgender (the ‘T’ in LGBTQ, in case you were wondering) as an “umbrella term for persons whose gender identity, gender expression or behavior does not conform to that typically associated with the sex to which they were assigned at birth.”

In response to the topic of sexuality and its association with gender, Michael states, “I don’t feel like a gay person.”

Of the men who’ve loved her, she says, “They’re in love with who I am, not the parts that I have.” Despite identifying herself as a female, Michael is proud of who she is physically: “I’m not doing any surgeries. I’m not doing any of that. I don’t want to physically alter myself.”

“Confusion and ambiguity are fine. Nobody needs to feel bad about it.”

After problems with the administration at the first hair school she attended, the second was slightly better, only this time the situation was switched: The administration was “real nice,” she says, but her peers this time around were, as she describes, “really Southern.” In the end, she found friends from out West who were more accepting of who she was.

“Really Southern” — it’s a loaded description, y’all. Let’s face it: We’re in the South. And as much as we wish it were so, southern hospitality ain’t all it’s cropped up to be, at least when it comes to the LGBTQ community.

We’re noted for being conservative and traditional in our outlook on all things regarding love, marriage and self-acceptance. This might not be so on an individual scale, but from a broad outlook, this is how we appear to the rest of the U.S.

Despite the conservative environment, Coastal Carolina University students are taking steps toward acceptance and a more inviting atmosphere. The university is gaining a greater number of out-of-state students each year. These students are taking action where they feel action is needed.

Action can begin with you. Or, it can begin with Coastal Carolina University’s Safe Zone Program. Founded on Jan. 11, 2011, the program has attracted over a hundred allies in faculty, staff and students. The program is designed to “send a message that sexual orientations and gender presentations are part of our culture and are acknowledged and supported.” Its volunteers are listed on the website to offer support and information to anyone in regard to “sexual orientation, gender identity, harassment and/or discrimination.”

The training sessions instruct attendees on awareness, acceptance and action. It’s full of good-humored and open folk, eager to learn and enlighten. Resident Hall Director and Safe Zone volunteer, Mike Hoffshire, states that one of the problems people face when coming in contact with LGBTQ peers is the lack of awareness.

“Most of the time people don’t recognize it,” Hoffshire says. The simple lack of recognition in the classroom, and on campus in general, may cause discomfort and hurt amongst those who already feel unsure of themselves in a primarily heteronormative environment.

Lacey Long is a graduate student and teaching assistant at the University of South Carolina. His sex is female, but his gender identity is something entirely his own. In interviewing him for the article, I asked what gender pronoun he preferred, to which he responded: “When people refer to me as ‘she,’ I sometimes actually look around to see if there’s a female version of myself in the room. I’m very rarely referred to as ‘he,’ and the novelty of that tickles me, but it’s not accurate, either.”
I've chosen to go with the novelty and hope that he'll at least be tickled.

A couple of years ago, Long used to describe himself as androgyne.

“I know the definition of androgyne is in between male and female or even genderless,” Long says, “but the components of the term evoke both maleness and femaleness, so in my mind, androgyne equals both, whereas my preferred self-definition is ‘neither.’ Part of that might be my inability to identify with either, so identifying with both would be doubly impossible.”

His experiences as a student and as a teaching assistant have made him more confident in his gender identity, but still, as a TA, he faces difficulties. For instance, he wanted to give his students the opportunity to refer to him as either “Mr.” or “Ms.,” but decided that they’d be “too weirded out” by a non-gender-normative person. Regardless, he still brings LG-BTQ issues into class to inform.

According to Hoffshire, the college environment presents a place of learning. “[It’s a] good time to explore and educate real world issues,” Hoffshire says.

Hoffshire and Jonkot both agree that there aren’t enough resources for people on campus, but at Safe Zone, they are certainly working at it. Jonkot noted that there has been a greater diversification of the campus. We’re seeing a transition phase into progressive thinking.

In this wide, crowded world, we strive not to step on each other’s toes, and to avoid at all possible costs, “that awkward moment when ...”. In our coffee shop conversation, Michael told me that she was fortunate enough to have very few of those awkward moments.

“A teacher would typically pull me aside and ask me how I’d like to be addressed,” she explains.

This worked well. In taking aside and asking a student what their preferred gender pronoun is, we as faculty and students can spare ourselves awkward moments and create a sense of acceptance and openness within the classroom.

Long is of a similar mindset: “Confusion and ambiguity are fine. Nobody needs to feel bad about it.”

Michael visited a class to speak to some of the students, recalling her experience with warmth.

“I hate sounding vain,” she says with a little laugh. “But they were mainly just shocked at how pretty I was and how I carried myself. They said I carried myself very well. Very confident. If I don’t own it, who am I?”

Words to live by.

Curiosity has a bad rap, but it’s a good thing. It helps us move forward and understand each other. Ultimately, the classroom needs to become a safe environment for seemingly controversial issues. CCU faculty, staff and students are working toward that.

Professors who have Safe Zone stickers on their office doors are forward thinking and accepting. In the end, let’s just remember this simple bit: People are people, multifaceted, with hearts and minds no matter what they dress like, look like or simply are.

On a few occasions, Michael has been told that she should just change her name. It is a masculine name. But more than that, it’s her name, and she has every intention of keeping it.

“That’s who I’ve always been. I’m not going to alter it.”

**TRANSGENDER STORIES**

**ALI SALEEM:** a Pakistani television host, actor, scriptwriter and impressionist. She is best known by her alter-ego Begum Nawazish Ali. Saleem was born a male and said she had desired and fantasized about being a woman from a young age. Saleem now appears as the cross-dressing Begum Nawazish Ali on various television channels.

**JENNA TALACKOVER:** a Canadian beauty pageant contestant who was disqualified from the Miss Universe competition in March 2012 when the organizers discovered she was transgender. Many have criticized the organizers for their decision, but the Miss Universe Organization stated that the rules currently require all contestants to be naturally born females.

**CHAZ SALVATORE BONO:** (born Chastity Sun Bono) an American transgender advocate, writer and musician. He is the only child of Sonny and Cher. Bono became a spokesperson for the Human Rights Campaign and served as Entertainment Media Director for the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD).

**LEA T:** a Brazilian fashion model. She has been featured in *Vogue Paris, Interview Magazine, Candy Magazine* and *Love Magazine*. She has also recently been featured on the cover of *Elle Brasil*.
A TV show highlights the dangers and drama behind what some may consider a first-world problem. Hoarding has become an issue that affects over 3 million people.
Shirley, a former hoarder, had 29 dead and living cats in her home. The animals were uncovered in the most shocking episode of *Hoarders* on A&E TV.

Shirley, like any hoarder, collected large amounts of items that were invaluable and a major health risk.

“Hoarding behavior poses a serious health risk and can cause problems within relationships and daily functioning,” said Dr. Terry, a psychology professor at CCU. “Not being able to use rooms in your home because there is no space left can cause unsanitary and hazardous conditions.”

The show *Hoarders* exposed viewers to hoarders’ struggle with treatment. The show revealed to the unknowing public that there are over three million people who deal with this disorder. Hoarding is extremely hazardous, and most individuals don’t realize their behavior until it’s too late.

Every hoarder has to start somewhere, like a collection of shirts on the floor or leftover empty bottles sitting on the kitchen table. Somewhere along the line, the piles get out of hand making it harder to control.

“For some, hoarding may ease some anxieties, but it is a maladaptive behavior, which leads to other areas of distress,” Terry said.

There are several reasons as to why something triggers hoarding, which commonly comes from past experiences. Hoarders have a conscious and subconscious reasoning and purpose for their actions, whether or not it makes sense to anyone else. It could be the death of a relative or some sort of abuse they experienced in the past. Although hoarders find comfort in collecting invaluable items, in reality, the hoarding causes more issues and leaves hoarders unfulfilled. Hoarders can be socially handicapped because of the clutter in their lives that prevents them from interactions with others.

The effects of hoarding are practically endless and can be detrimental to a person’s everyday functions.

“Some people cannot use their bathrooms, so they do not bathe; while others cannot get to their stove or refrigerator, leaving spoiled food and eventual pest problems,” Terry said.

People are less likely to go to a home that is trashed and cluttered, leaving most hoarders socially isolated. The isolation places hoarders deeper into their disorder, and they collect even more. The collection seems like a prized possession after having had it for so long. This connection to the items makes it harder for hoarders to part with them.

Hoarding is a constant struggle and a habit not easily broken. Antidepressant drugs and cognitive behavioral therapy can work for most hoarders. Therapists talk to hoarders about their situations to get a better understanding of the clutter and the causes behind it. As it is done in *Hoarders*, specialists go into patients’ homes to help them slowly understand why they need to stop hoarding and get past it.

Hoarding is like any other unhealthy habit individuals can form. The behavior won’t go away immediately; there’s a process. The items are not the issue. The mindset of a hoarder is where the process must start. Knowing the reasons behind hoarding behavior can help individuals recognize the symptoms ahead of time and can thus be treated easily without the clutter.
From Hysteria To History

The Long, Dirty Road To Curing AIDS

In March 2011, the medical journal Blood published an article written by German specialists. The information in this article shook the world: HIV was removed from a terminally-ill, 48-year-old HIV and leukemia patient.

Gabe Lesnick

In an interview with the BBC, the Noble Award winning scientist and discoverer of AIDS, Francoise Barre-Sinouss, said that HIV/AIDS treatments have “progressed beautifully,” and that on an international level, we can soon expect an “AIDS-free generation.” But, this road to the cure has been one tainted with stigma, prejudice and hysteria. And some people suggest the stigma still exists.

“The disease is here, protect your children! Get rid of AIDS in your town!”

These words echo in the Captain Planet episode titled “A Formula for Hate” (1992) as a broken-voiced Ma-Ti reads the Eco-Villains’ latest fear-mongering propaganda. This was the first children’s cartoon to address the disease and the discrimination that AIDS-infected people faced. Considering the episode aired contemporaneously to the peak of the AIDS epidemic, this cartoon was revolutionary. It can be easy to forget now, but when AIDS began to pop up in industrialized countries, it was literally viewed as the modern-day plague.

People who contracted this “plague” were not treated with the sort of charity we would now expect. In fact, if you contracted the disease in the 1980s or ’90s, you would find yourself at the mercy of a public all too eager to outcast, stereotype and blame rather than console, understand and help. The media coverage at the time didn’t help either.

From the very beginning, infected people were marginalized. The New York Times featured an article titled, “New Homosexual Disorder Worries Health Officials.” Throughout the article, the author refers to the disease not as AIDS, but rather, “gay-related immunodeficiency” or GRID, an acronym created by none other than the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

Incidentally (or not), all levels of society were ready and able to redirect their fears on already marginalized groups. Instead of facing the disease with poise,
our culture contained its fear by bottling it up in its already existing ones: sexual promiscuity, drug use and the third world.

Eventually, it wasn’t people who contracted and spread the disease, but the homosexuals, the junkies, the sluts, the Africans, etc., etc. So, all was fine. Well, not FINE. Actually horrible, really horrible, but good enough. The Western world deferred its fear on things it was already afraid of, but then something happened. “Normal” people started getting sick. Return of the repressed?

The very likely inspiration for Captain Planet’s “A Formula for Hate” was a teenage hemophiliac named Ryan White who was barred from his high school when officials found out that he was infected by the virus. The prejudice and discrimination he suffered forced his family to relocate. In a state of exile, Ryan White died in 1991. Historically, his life is probably the most popular of heart-wrenching stories of AIDS discrimination; it took a so-called “normal” person to fall victim to convince the public not to treat infected people like shit.

Luckily, with the help of Kwame, Wheeler, Linka, Ma-Ti and Gi — but mainly because of organizations like the World Health Organization (WHO), the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), Averting AIDS and HIV (AVERT) and the activist artist collective Gran Fury — the shocking bright light of truth gleamed through the dark spectre of HIV proving that the disease is, well, just a disease. And while this fact does not diminish the OHMYGODAIDS—INGSUCKS factor, it does remind us that, like victims of all other diseases, HIV- and AIDS-infected people should be treated with dignity and charity.

Moving rapidly forward into the present day (about a decade later), a team of medical researchers from Berlin claim that by using stem cell transplantation (SCT), they can functionally cure HIV and AIDS. Pretty amazing, right? Well, here’s how it happened. In March 2011, the medical journal Blood published an article written by German doctors who hold a wide of array specializations regarding HIV and AIDS treatment. According to their reports, they began treating an HIV patient named Timothy Ray Brown (aka The Berlin Patient) with SCT in 2005. Brace yourself, here’s where it gets pretty scientific.

The treatment involved extracting adipose-derived stem cells from a donor’s bone marrow. These donors carry CCR5 gene variant Δ32 (CCR5r32/Δ32), which is medically transplanted into the infected person. These receptors are naturally resistant to CCR5-tropic HIV strains.

Why is this so important? Well, HIV typically infects a human by clinging onto a receptor known as CCR5; however, some people have a mutated CCR5 called Δ32, and because the Δ32 receptor’s surface is a little bit smoother than that of everyone else’s, the virus is unable to attach itself — so no host, no virus. The transplanted Δ32 began replacing the patient’s original CCR5, along with the virus that attached to them.

At the final stages of testing, samples were taken from the patient’s gastrointestinal tract (the immune system organ which is usually most affected). The test showed zero traces of the virus. In 2011, CBS San Francisco conducted an interview with the Berlin Patient during recovery. Both HIV and leukemia were absent from his system.

So, the Berlin Patient is officially cured, but are we out of the woods? Obviously, we can’t

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get over excited about this case. The Berlin Patient is only one person out of the 37 million people infected. Furthermore, the treatment is not by any means a vaccine, and people continue to contract the disease every day. In fact, approximately 2.7 million people contracted the virus in 2010 alone.

Although the technology for this functional cure exists, we aren’t there yet. Now, you might ask, “If this new cure exists, shouldn’t every infected person receive it?”

First, it’s not really a question of should we, but rather of could we. This cure is a new and experimental procedure, which means money is a huge factor. Even if you have health insurance, this procedure would not be covered by it. Second, the CCR5Δ32 is extremely rare. Less than 1 percent of Europeans carry it; that puts the number of potential donors at well below 1 percent of the entire human population. Third, although legislation passed in 2009 to encourage stem-cell research, SCT is still a stigmatized medical practice in the United States and around the world. So, really there’s not much we can do other than rely on prevention and pre-existing treatment options. Bummer, right?

Well, wait a minute, there is one thing that everyone can do. We can make sure that we do not proliferate the AIDS stigma. And we really should try to do so because according to AVERT, discrimination and denial are the biggest threats to the efforts of stopping the spread of AIDS. Yeah, that’s right, denial. Despite everyone’s best efforts, the stigma still exists. And due to this stigma, many people deny, or in some cases ignore, that they are infected, and thereby refuse to treat the illness.

Keeping in mind the theme for Worlds AIDS Day 2011 “Getting to Zero: Zero new infections, Zero discrimination,” we should continue to keep our minds and hearts open, continue to educate people about how to prevent and treat the disease, and, most importantly, to NOT BLAME THOSE WHO HAVE CONTRACTED IT. Science in the 21st century has given us the option to end AIDS, but whether or not we ever do is up to you.

**TIMELINE OF HIV AND AIDS**

1884 – HIV is transferred to humans between 1884 and 1924.
1970 – HIV is thought to have entered the United States.
1983 – AIDS is found among non-drug using women and children.
1985 – AIDS is found in China.
1986 – More than 38,000 cases of AIDS reported from 85 countries.
1988 – The American government conducts a national AIDS education campaign. World AIDS day is established.
1992 – Captain Planet launches the first episode that deals with the AIDS/HIV pandemic and is the first episode in an American children’s animated series to directly address HIV and AIDS.
1996 – Combination antiretroviral treatment is shown to be highly effective against HIV.
1997 – Brazil becomes the first developing country to begin providing free combination treatment.
2002 – Takalani Sesame and Sesame Square, the South African and Kenyan versions of Sesame Street, introduce a five-year-old HIV-positive girl named Kami, the first character on a children’s TV show to have the virus.
2004 – South Africa begins to provide free antiretroviral treatment.
2009 – President Obama announces the removal of the travel ban that prevents HIV-positive people from entering the U.S.
2010 – The United States, South Korea, China and Namibia lift travel bans for people living with HIV.
The Australian black-tip shark and the common black-tip shark are easily confused to the untrained eye. The two species are very different, but share some similar traits. Both are from the same family, Carcharhinidae, and both have combined to create the new hybrid shark.

**EVOLUTION IN ACTION**

*These sharks are viviparous; the development of the embryo occurs inside the mother’s body and leads to a live birth.*

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**COMMON BLACK-TIP SHARKS**

*(Carcharhinus limbatus)* grows to be about the same length as the Australian black-tip, but weighs almost twice as much, usually 271 lbs (123 kg). The black-tips prefer cooler temperatures and are currently overfished. They are used for the meat, skin, fins and liver oil. The black-tips are considered Near Threatened by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

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**AUSTRALIAN BLACK-TIP SHARKS**

*(Carcharhinus tilstoni)* usually grow to be about 1.5 to 1.8 meters (4.9 to 5.9 ft) and weigh an average of 110 lbs (52 kg). Australian black-tips are smaller than the common black-tip sharks and prefer to stay in warmer waters. Even though these sharks are fished and valued for their meat, they are considered a Least Concern by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

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Both species of sharks survive mainly on fish, but they also eat cephalopods, smaller sharks and crustaceans.
Jack Wright

From Charles Darwin to Bill Nye the Science Guy, it’s always been thought that mankind had to wait millions of years before evolution became observable. We look at our history as a species through fossil records or archaeological excavations, but we never get a glimpse of evolution working in the present moment. That’s no longer the case.

The finding of a new hybrid shark is putting an end to the lab- and museum-only evolutionary displays. In fact, if you really want to see it, try heading to your nearest shark-infested beach.

The hybrid shark was discovered off the Australian coast by a team of researchers led by Jess Morgan (University of Queensland) and Colin Simpfendorder (James Cook University) back in December of 2011. Their newly published findings, “Detection of Inter-Species Hybridization in Chondrichthyes,” show the largest case of shark hybridization (the crossing of two different species) ever before seen. Although hybrids have been found before, they’ve been isolated discoveries. Simpfendorder’s voyage found an unprecedented 57 hybrids along the 1,200-mile coastline.

Their expedition was originally meant to genetically identify marine animals off the northeast Australian coast, but then they began to find sharks with confusing physical characteristics. One black-tip shark showed a different number of vertebrae than normal, which is a marker often used to distinguish between species. Sharks that were genetically identified as common black-tips looked more like Australian black-tips, the former’s cousin. The sharks’ lengths were not an average of the two parent species, usually found in interbreeding, but rather a completely unique length different than that of either species. However, most interesting of all, the hybrids are breeding healthy children.

Dr. Jennifer Ovenden, one of the paper’s co-authors, says, “Wild hybrids are usually hard to find, so detecting hybrids and their offspring is extraordinary. It was unprecedented because hybridization between sharks in the wild has never been reported before in Australia or worldwide.”

Finding one hybrid would’ve been a big deal, but 57 means that the whole theory of shark evolution has to be re-evaluated.

Still, most people’s concerns with the hybrid discovery have nothing to do with scientific progress. They imagine some Jaws-like supershark will be born as part of this new shark species. On the shores of Myrtle Beach, this has some people worried. Both Simpfendorder and Morgan, the discoverers of the hybrid sharks, claim this is not an issue.

“We don’t think there’s any issue with that at all,” Simpfendorder said. “Both of these species we don’t consider a danger to humans. Given that they keep the same sort of morphology of one or the other of their parents, we should see no visible change in terms of what we see out there in the ocean.”

This doesn’t mean that evolution isn’t in play; it just means that the changes seen aren’t dangerous, or even external, but rather slight and difficult to see without the aid of a microscope.

They imagine some Jaws-like supershark will be born.

Australian black-tips usually live in tropical waters. No one knows why they changed swimming patterns, not even the research team who found the new sharks; but, one possible reason is that warmer climates may have pushed the Australian sharks away from their previous habitat. The find has brought up more questions than it’s been willing to answer. Before Simpfendorder’s discovery, shark evolution was considered well understood; this, however, has changed things.

“We thought we understood how species of sharks have separated, but what this is telling us is that in reality we probably don’t fully understand the mechanisms that keep species of shark separate,” Morgan said. This means we have to go back 200 years, all the way back to Darwin’s revolutionary studies in the Galapagos, and reassess what we thought about the evolution of the shark.

By using each other’s genes, the sharks might be able to gain a future evolutionary advantage in warmer climates.

“If [the Australian shark] hybridizes with the common species, it can effectively shift its range further south into cooler waters, so the effect of this hybridizing is a range expansion,” Morgan said.

This might mean a future benefit for the sharks’ fight for existence. It might not. Either way, this is survival of the fittest that’s visible from outside the laboratory and away from the museum.

As Morgan puts it, “This is evolution in action.”
In an endless ruck of medical conditions both inexplicable or just downright strange, there are few that come to mind as strange as synesthesia (with the exception of the one that mentally necessitates the voluntary amputation of limbs). Seeming less like a problem and more like a permanent side effect of mass amounts of psychedelics, synesthesia lies as somewhat of an outlier in terms of medical issues because of a strange attachment that its hosts develop to it. These hosts are called synesthetes. Although synesthesia is known as a neurological problem, it is viewed more as a phenomenon due to the lack of debilitation associated with it. Some may say that it is more enriching than normalcy. As you read along with this article, your brain is fully capable of capturing it for its intrinsic value and retaining large portions (hopefully) of what is read, but are you tasting what I am saying? No? Very well then; let us carry on.
When we say “perception,” we perceive the word in the ever-common way in which we are intended to. These words contain no value except for that of enhancing a sentence and decorating a point. However, the very word “perception” will be perceived much differently by a synesthete. Due to an altered hard-wiring of the brain, one type of sensation can easily leak over into another. Quite literally, it is thought to be a case of cross-wiring.

This anomaly was first haphazardly noted in 1812 by the German professor, Georg Tobias Ludwig Sachs. At the time, he was publishing a medical dissertation focusing on his own physical abnormality: Albinism. In this dissertation, he detailed daily experiences that, to him, seemed completely natural. He noted that when he sensed something, anything at all, whether it be words, numbers, pictures, letters, ideas or musical notes, there was an accompaniment perception of other
senses. To Sachs, this additional sense seemed perfectly normal. A logical association did not seem of distant likelihood. His work is commonly considered the first medical notation of synesthesia.

So, you say you want in? You want to be a part of the phenomenon? After all, most synesthetes claim it’s a completely neutral experience, often leaning more toward the positive side of the spectrum. Synesthetes normally tend to be women, with the female population having anywhere from three to eight times more synesthetes than men. Being left-handed is also a common attribute.

Other risk factors (such a negative wording) include complete neurological health otherwise and a family history of such conditions. Though it is inconclusive, some researchers believe that oftentimes synesthetes are of a higher IQ level than average. If this were true, it is not a product or benefit of the circumstance, but solely a factor in its presence.

Synesthesia comes in several varieties. Let us begin by stating the obvious: We have five different senses. Hearing, sight, touch, smell and taste have the capability to overlap in the strangely-wired minds of the synesthete, giving us a total of 20 different permutations. That said, it is not such a black-and-white issue that we can break down in such simplistic terms.

We must think first that sight can be broken down into certain categories. In many cases, synesthetes are stimulated by certain shapes, colors and movement. The same can be said for any of our senses, thus, disabling us from condensing it into such uncomplicated nomenclature.

So, let us toy around momentarily with the possibilities of synesthesia. We can potentially assign colors to words or letters — imagine the chromatic spectrum of reading a book. This is the most common form of synesthesia known as grapheme-color synesthesia. Then, there are the bizarre combinations such as tasting a noise or hearing a touch. It is not uncommon for synesthetes to be able to experience more than one type of these at a time, but it is rare for more than three to be of prevalence.

I’m sure this all sounds relatively appealing, and one can easily understand why. There is a certain fascination with abnormalities of the mind — especially ones that pose no particular threat to one’s well-being. The effects of synesthesia are often accredited to better memory due to the tendency to anticipate what stimuli they may experience with simultaneous senses. This association works cohesively with cognitive function in order to assist the brain in accessing information easier.

Being that this serves as one of the only known positives of the phenomenon (I’m speaking of beneficial elements, and not your undying need for psychedelic stimulation), we must also cover the short list of known negative aspects. Some synesthetes complain of difficulties with numbers (speculation however, suggests artistic incentive) as well as continual confusion between right and left.

If you have no qualms with looking like a fool while swearing under oath, or pledging your allegiance to the flag or being a terrible back-seat driver — then this may be the neurological abnormality for you.

That’s right folks, a Synesthete label can earn you a place among the likes of David Hockney, Wassily Kandinsky (the man who heard his paint box hiss), Vladimir Nabokov, Olivier Messiaen or many of the other great minds of philosophy, art or literature. Kandinsky, as a matter-of-fact, credits his invention of true abstraction to his condition where he would paint pictures that created to him musical symphonies.

Messiaen once said, “When I hear music, I see in the mind’s eye colours which move with the music. This is not imagination, nor is it a psychic phenomenon. It is an inward reality.”

Strange as this may sound to us, Nabakov sympathized with that of the norm by speculating: “The confessions of a Synesthete must sound tedious and pretentious to those who are protected from such leakings.”

They always say it takes an off-kilter mind to be great. So, as we await the non-existent forms to come around to sign up for synesthesia, let us keep in mind the good, the bad and the sensory.
THE HUMAN CANVAS

BIRTLILIAN
ARTIST: Ursula Hockman
MODEL: Ron Mellen-Stier

TRACY FISH PHOTOGRAPHY
BLACK, WHITE & GREEN
ARTIST: Scott Cullum
MODEL: Courtney Wortman
GLOW FISH
ARTIST: Stephanie Jones
MODEL: Tori Jordan
LIFE IS SWEET
ARTIST: Lisa Buff
MODEL: Jenna Kazmierczak
Ever listened to Dubstep? Yes? I’m sorry. The Internet can’t seem to get enough of this current iteration of mass-produced electronic music, and trust me, that’s exactly what it is. While Skrillex is being awarded Grammys and every song imaginable is being made into a Dubstep remix, the many artists and pioneers of modern electronic music remain in obscurity.

Electronic music has once again made a large resurgence. An explosion of underground electronic music is being made from Game Boys, discarded commodore 64’s and your dad’s old Atari. This music is Chiptunes, and the warriors of the genre, Chiptuners. Chiptune is music made on old gaming systems, from old discarded electronic equipment or on computers through emulators.

Chiptunes themselves are nothing new. Having a rich history of re-appropriation, subversion, rawness and anti-establishment, Chiptuners have been exploring the limits of outdated computer hardware to such an extent that it has become an art form. Before the 1980s, microcomputers were not available; therefore, the majority of the public’s interactions with large and powerful computers was amidst the rich cultural and historical landmark of the late 20th century—the video arcade.

The combination of the lights, colors and sounds within the arcade created a very strong, visceral imprint on arcade-goers. Not only did the experience of an arcade create a new culture, it also created a strong childhood memory. Well, those children grew up retaining those strong ties. Wanting to recapture that experience and express it again, these now grown children went back to the old arcade cabinets, to their first Game Boys, and started tweaking them. From this nostalgia, the very first Chiptuners emerged.

The most experienced Chiptuners often share similar sentiments. One of the most common things you will hear
a Chiptuner say is that the hardware (e.g., Game Boy, NES, etc.) doesn’t feel like a gaming device anymore; it feels like an instrument. This idea of treating hardware like musical instruments is reinforced by the thousands of artists pushing the limits of old hardware.

The most commonly used piece of hardware by Chiptuners is the handheld 8-bit Nintendo Game Boy. Equipped with one four-channel sound-chip, this device’s sound is instantly recognizable due to its limited scope. In order to utilize the system’s sound-chip, many pieces of software have been developed. The two most widely used are LSDJ (Little Sound DJ) and Nanoloop. Both provide a graphical interface that lay bare the Game Boy’s sound capabilities and allows the competent user the ability to transform the blips and beeps into a musical orchestration. That is what Chiptune artists strive to do.

One of the most well known Chiptune artists, Jeremiah Johnson, releases music under the psuedonym Nullsleep, and has been instrumental in fostering the chip music scene. Johnson began his musical career while studying computer science and music at Columbia University. He started by creating the DIY Chiptunes label/artist collective “8bitpeoples” with his friend and fellow Chiptunes enthusiast, Mike Hanlon.

From there, Jeremiah continued to perform and release music under 8bitpeoples. Later teaming up with local venue and arts center The Tank in New York City, 8bitpeoples proceeded to hold local Chiptune shows, which proved to be an incredible success. Encouraged by the success of these smaller scale shows at The Tank, they proceeded to organize the first Blip Festival in 2006. Since the inception of Blip Festival, the event has been held in New York, Europe, Tokyo and was held this past February in Australia.

Now don’t get me wrong. I’m sure there are many artists that affiliate with the genre “dubstep” that are incredibly talented. Though by this affiliation, they’ve lumped themselves in with a multitude of mediocre musicians that make poor electronic music that only sounds different because they overlaid a thick reverb track on an otherwise unremarkable song.

So, why listen to it? Just saying. Especially now that you’ve read and have been enlightened to the glorious world of 8-bit music, you don’t really have any excuse left to continue listening to dubstep, right? So the next time you hear the latest DeadMou5 single blasting from some car while you’re stuck in 501 traffic, remember, there’s something better out there.

- TOM SHANKS
REALITY TV BECOMES TOO SURREAL

Since 1925, television has been around to occupy and ruin the minds of people everywhere. From soap operas to documentaries to game shows, the TV tells it all. Around 2000, a new phenomenon was becoming more popular with the public: reality TV shows. Shows such as Big Brother and Survivor came onto the screen and somehow addicted everyone by simply revealing people’s ordinary lives.

But these days, reality TV shows are a little more … well … bizarre.

Swamp People

There is certainly nothing better than seeing a good ol’ alligator hunt to soothe the soul.

On Aug. 22, 2010, the series Swamp People made its big debut on the History Channel. The reality series is based upon the lives of several alligator hunters that live in the swamp areas of Louisiana and how they hunt alligators for a living. Each person is given a certain amount of tags each year that must be fastened onto their kills. Once their tags run out, their season is over.

Throughout the series, the show captures how the alligator hunters face bad weather conditions and, best of all, wrassling alligators. If it isn’t the alligators that catch your attention, then it must certainly be the hot studs on the show.

I Didn’t Know I Was Pregnant

I have no words to describe this reality series. The title says it all. What’s better than watching a woman give birth when she did not even know she was pregnant in the first place?

The show reveals women who had no idea they were pregnant and how they went into labor. One repeat scenario that seems to pop up a lot is the woman who gave birth on the toilet. Other cases show the women who went to the hospital wondering why they were in such great pain, only to find out they were pregnant and, whelp, time to push! But no matter the circumstances, the show reveals how most couples or single parents are living happily with their child.

After watching this show, most people (especially women) are soberly reminded of one more reason why they need to wrap it up.

Hoarders

This show that airs on A&E tells the lives of people who basically collect things and never throw them away. They just keep collecting and collecting until their whole house is filled with junk. It eventually becomes a health hazard. The show brings in a psychologist, a cleaning specialist and a professional cleaning crew to go in and help the person. It is disturbing and sad to see how emotional these people get when they have to throw away things that seem to have some sort of sentimental value to them. But if they don’t, they will have to kiss their houses goodbye.

Jillian White, an elementary education student at CCU, says, “Reality shows like Hoarders are interesting because I never knew people actually did these things, which makes me keep watching it.”

You can definitely learn one thing from this show: Throw your things away!

My Strange Addiction

Just when I thought that people cannot get even weirder, I am proven wrong.

The series covers multitudes of people and their uncommon compulsive behaviors. When I say strange addictions, I mean super-mega-creepy addictions. For example, episodes have shown how some people are addicted to eating dry wall, dryer sheets, rocks, plastic, cat food, tape and nail polish.

Another episode revealed a woman who is addicted to acting like a baby and refuses to grow up. But then there is also the classic crazy cat lady. Oddly enough, the woman from the episode is allergic to cats, but cannot help but to keep collecting them.

“My Strange Addiction is one of the weirdest and coolest reality shows on TV,” says Chandler Aaron, a junior physical education major. “After watching the first season, I was shocked that they would let these people do harmful habits on film, but it definitely keeps me interested and a repeat viewer.”

With all of the odd reality shows out there, it is obvious that TV has become even more eccentric from what it used to be. But if you really think about it, when was it ever considered normal?

- LINDSEY HOLT
Once upon a time, Scheherazade sat down next to her homicidal husband and began to tell him stories. Each story ended in a cliffhanger to be resolved the following evening. For your reading pleasure, below are listed books and book series that feature embedded narratives—stories within stories, meant to keep you reading and hanging on for a thousand and one nights (unless, of course, you read faster).

Morgenstern’s Classic Tale of True Love and High Adventure: The Princess Bride, William Goldman
You’ve seen the movie, perhaps. And if you haven’t, how have you lived all your life and not known the phrase “Hello, my name is Inigo Montoya. You killed my father. Prepare to die”? Inconceivable! Go see it now. Or read the book. But not in class, you’ll laugh too hard. Full of wit that only a master of meta-fiction can wield, Goldman creates a hilarious fantasy tale that has been abridged from a fictional account of a much larger story. Interspersed throughout the adventure is the abridger’s comments and recollections of his own life. Try not to take the text written in italics throughout the novel too seriously. Of course, ultimately, it is still the story of Buttercup, Westley, Inigo and Fezzik, but funnier. And if you don’t know who these people are, you really need to find out. Or maybe I need to write a better review, so that you actually care to find out.

“The Name of the Wind,” Patrick Rothfuss
His name is Kvothe. And with his flaming red hair, musical genius and a special skill for knowing the true names of several elements of nature, he has made himself a legend. But really, he’s a little more complex than that. If you’re into the fantasy scene and you love characters, meet Pat Rothfuss. The man has a deep respect for myth, which is why he likes to deconstruct it. This new series follows the story of Kvothe, a man who has become a legend in a world that loves its stories. Moving from present into past and deep into the folktales and myths of a new and exciting world of fantasy, Rothfuss creates a rich and memorable narrative that is sure to keep you hooked long into the next book.

Garden of Forking Paths,” Jorge Luis Borges
On a webpage, or in an anthology of short stories, you will read about a spy, Dr. Yu Tsun, working for the German Empire. It’s a quick read for the skimmers, but even they cannot miss the ponderous philosophies that will easily fall into the many-worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics 20 years later, and especially the prophetic musings that describe today’s hypertext. The story folds in on itself, and as it does, unravels the mystery of a book written by Tsun’s ancestor, which describes a labyrinth with no end—a maze in which all possible outcomes occur from a single action, creating an infinite, non-linear expanse of time. Of course, I am sure that there are multiple endings to this story, but you will read only one. In this time, at least.
My body art fashion shoot vision came true, and I have a group of extremely talented and dedicated Tempo staff members to thank for that. One long weekend was all it took ... well that and some liquid latex, hard labor and quite a few tears. We learned some important things in the process though: liquid latex dries very fast, doesn’t taste good and “hurts like hell” to peel off. Overall, it was an astonishing success. A special thank you to my photographer, Tracy Fish, who went completely out of her way to get each shot. I also want to thank the artists for their time and energy and, of course, the models for enduring all the pain.

- KAYLA LOOYSEN, Art Director
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What

Archarios is published annually and is unveiled in the spring. The magazine publishes student poetry, short stories, photography and artwork. All work is judged twice during the academic school year by Archarios staff with faculty and student volunteers.

Where

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