

# Intertext

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## Introduction

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Layout by Ariel Samuel. Art by Kristina Sarowitz. "Manifest."

“While we once asked how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe, now we assert: How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?”

—Amanda Gorman, “The Hill We Climb”

On the first day of class, we sat in our socially-distanced chairs, masks on, listening to Patrick discuss how this semester would be different. Patrick said he would normally bring in bagels for us to snack on and enjoy together, but one disheartening change this year was the fact that we could no longer eat in class. Like the lack of bagels, this semester has been disappointing, to say the least. In what is arguably the largest growth period of our lives, we’ve lost basketball games, our concept of time, and the sense of community that the university is so eager for us to have. A movie night over Zoom just isn’t the same. We’d like to say we’ve grown through it, but everyday feels like the last, a bit harder to get out of bed. This class, though, has given us a sense of community in an *unprecedented* time of loneliness. We’re all lonely together, and some of these pieces reflect that.

Each of the editors were asked, “What does it mean to be a college student right now?” as we struggle through this together. Our class is just a small sample of some of the challenges and struggles that COVID-19 loaded onto our generation. The next page is a visual representation of these struggles. The art we chose to accompany the words and snapshots of our editors sums up the chaos and confusion of being a student during a pandemic. One thing that stood out to us is that it wasn’t all bad. Despite the stress and anxiety, students are still able to find joy in

the small things. We want that to define our generation. We have marched through resistance, proved our resilience, and are still able to recognize the beauty in the small moments.

We also want to take this opportunity to thank all of the authors, artists, and photographers who contributed to this issue. Your insights made a lonely time a little more hopeful. We want to acknowledge Professor Patrick W. Berry for all of his guidance throughout the process. He was instrumental in piecing together this publication, and we would have been lost without him. Though we did not get bagels, we are more than grateful for his other contributions, such as his ongoing dedication to us and the publication. Thank you to Benay Bubar for her guidance on copy-editing, to Wendy Mansfield for her feedback on the layouts, and to Barbara Lynn Cantone for sharing her experiences as a writer. Thank you also to the judges of the Louise Wetherbee Phelps Awards and the Margaret Himley Award for Critical Encounters through Writing: Rae Ann Meriwether, Brice Nordquist, Emily Pifer, and Nicholas Rys. Without you, *Intertext* would not be complete.

Finally, we want to thank you, the readers, for taking time to enjoy the little slices of life we have curated. During such a difficult semester, we are all looking for connections, and hopefully *Intertext* offers some resonance.

—Ashley Clemens, Kyle McDonald, and Ariel Samuel

“In 2021, we’ve had to alter the narrative—our definition of a ‘crazy night’ has been forever changed.” —Chloe Hechter

“Dutiful patience has turned to anxiousness as the rules of the pandemic have become the new norm.” —Drew Harper

“Being a college student now is far different than what it meant to be one just a year and a half ago.” —Kyle McDonald

“It wouldn’t be out of line to say that we, as a university, have taken an even larger hit to our identity than most other schools.” —Mira Sickinger

“To be a student this year is to sit by a window but a few inches thick and still feel that the distance through that window to the world outside could be measured in miles.” —Cameron Macaulay

“As the shutdown began, I couldn’t help but pity myself, thinking this is the worst possible stage of my life for the world to go on pause.” —Jeanette Orlando

“Being a student right now feels at times like a scam. This isn’t what I signed up for. However, as a student, I feel it is my ultimate responsibility to learn, even if I’m learning things in a different way than I initially planned.” —Lydia Engel

“The ideal college experience that I envisioned ceases to exist, and sometimes it feels as though it won’t be a reality for a long while.” —Aminata Ceesay

“I am in my room, not a classroom. Thus, I feel less responsible to be present.” —Benjamin Goldsmith

“But on the bright side, it is much easier to sleep in, and I have time to bake cookies between classes.” —Bonnie Yu

“It’s really not nothing: It’s going to class, trying to do the readings, cooking, putting on a mask, taking off a mask, trying to do the readings, going to class again.” —Ashley Clemens

“Despite all of this uncertainty, I am certain that our class will have an unbreakable bond because of our shared experiences and all of the time spent waiting in lines together, six feet apart.” —Ariel Samuel

