WEEKEND *ADVICE*

TECHNOLOGY

Scrolling through the semester

// BY MADISON BUTCHKO

We've all been there: your brain turned off at a 9 a.m. lecture, tired from a late night at Bass, the dining hall coffee suspiciously uncaffeinated. Across the room, someone accidentally blasts an Instagram reel with what can only be described as a brainrot audio, and everyone laughs. You groggily pull out your phone to check the time and — is that an email about your late paper? A text about dinner plans? A grade posted on Canvas for that quiz you know you flunked? You gradually get absorbed into the lunch menu at Berkeley, your long-distance best friend's Instagram story and now Connections. When you look up, everything in lecture is foreign — since when did you start taking Astrophysics 8000?!

Technology is bittersweet, and we all know it. Sure, now we can conveniently take notes on an iPad, record and photograph important concepts and subtly stalk our friends on Find My — but our attention spans have suffered as a consequence. In my own biology lectures, I look over the shoulders of those in front of me and see TikTok, not Goodnotes. And as far as notes go, ChatGPT seems to be putting plenty of legwork in. I notice that I can't even make it through a full lecture without checking my email.

History professor Carlos Eire '79 attended Yale as a graduate student around 50 years ago when typewriters reigned, and he has watched Yale change along with its technology. Back when he first attended in the 70s, Ashley's Ice Cream was Whitlock's Typewriter Shop, which Eire says "was essential for everyone's survival."

"Sometime around 1975 a fellow graduate student in computer science told me that someday 'soon' we would all be able to type text onto a TV monitor and produce error-free documents that could be endlessly edited and polished to perfection, and then — best of all — produce the final version on a printing machine," Eire wrote in an email. "I said something like 'sure, yeah, and we'll soon be driving flying cars too . . .' A couple of years later, boom!"

Computers were too expensive for common use at that time, but they were becoming more widespread in the collegiate sphere and would spread across Yale over the next few decades. Even in 1996, when Eire returned to Yale to teach, office work was still done on typewriters and paper, and books had to be located in the stacks manually and checked out using cardboard forms.

"The printing on those forms was very elegant," Eire wrote about the check-out forms. "And the libraries were kind enough to provide stubby little pencils to help us all complete this laborious task."

Eire wrote that Yale "fully embraced" computer technology and the Internet around the turn of the millennium. According to him, Yale's computerized renaissance was fairly rapid: the library and its catalogue became digital, rendering the card catalog shelves in Sterling obsolete, a "reminder of days gone by." The era of Microsoft Word had dawned, though paper copies of assignments were usually required until about 2010.

"And Yale started to provide professors with personal computers," Eire wrote.

We all know the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on digital learning technology, which further cemented remote meetings and virtual education technology as hallmarks of collegiate education. In the words of Eire, we now reside in the "AI Apocalypse," where nothing can be assumed to be original anymore. Artificial intelligence chatbots can write a paper, create a practice exam, take notes and generate resumes. It takes grit — and time — to ignore its siren song.

Technology only continues to change more and more rapidly: The jump from the proliferation of online assignments to the introduction of AI took only a fraction of time compared to the transition from the typewriter to the computer. It's hard not to wonder what's next and how quickly it will change education — and our attention spans.

This year's graduating seniors watched educational technology from the pandemic era become the status quo and AI develop from irrelevant to ubiquitous, but remaining students will witness how it continues to shape Yale over the years to come. Will we scroll through the semester or learn to recover our focus? Personally, I'm hoping for the latter.

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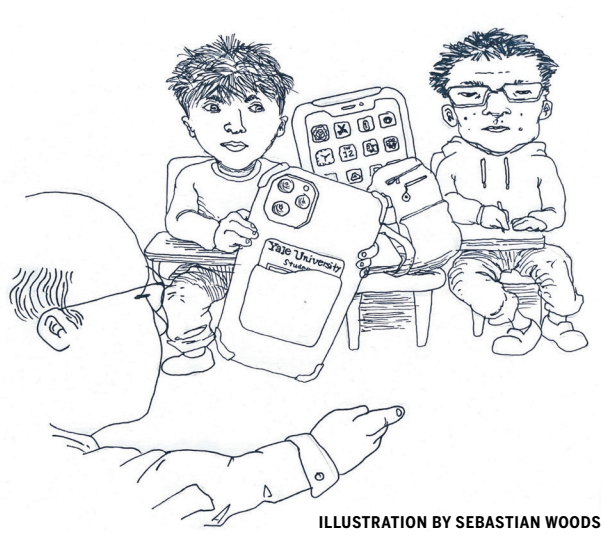

ILLUSTRATION BY SEBASTIAN WOODS

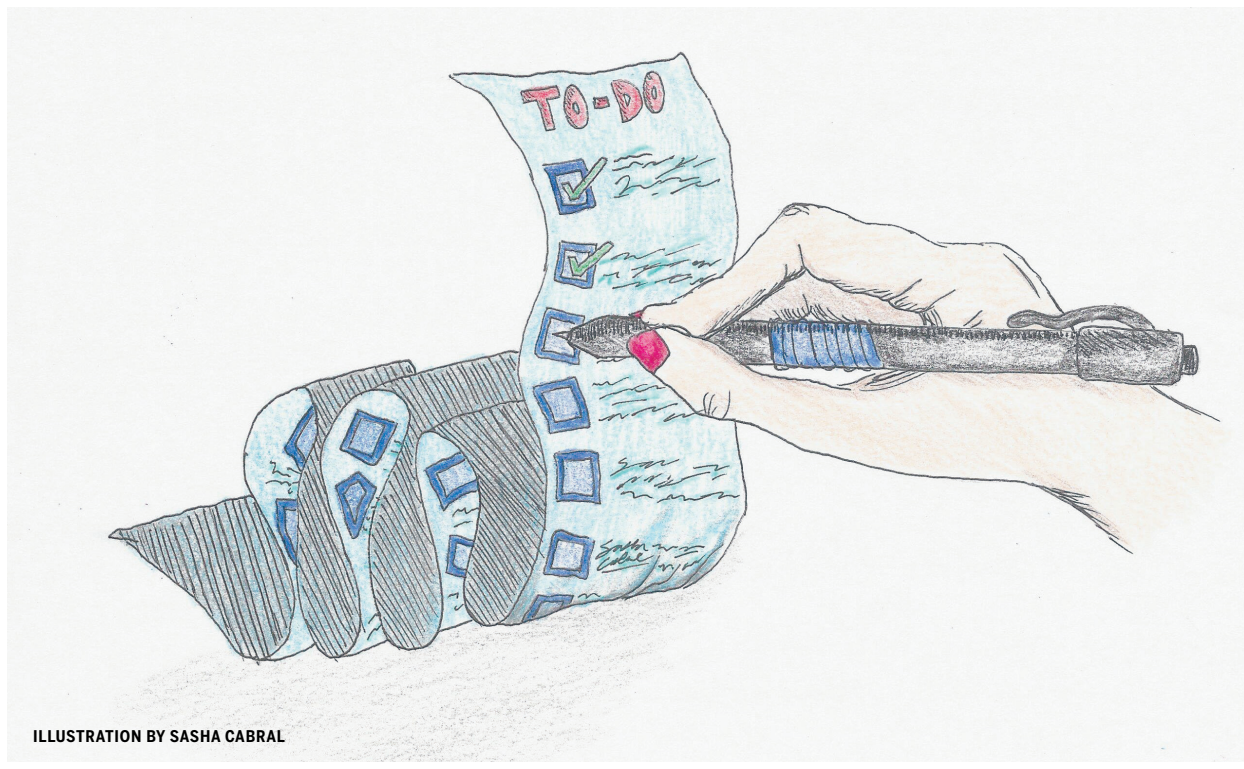

ILLUSTRATION BY SASHA CABRAL

TO-DO

The ultimate Yucket list: 100 things to do before you graduate

For the average senior, four years at Yale produce roughly three regrets, two unverifiable memories of Toad's and one unshakeable opinion about Wenzels. The Yale Daily News has somehow gone its entire digital history without publishing a definitive bucket list of Yale traditions, an oversight I am now — perhaps unwisely — correcting.

// BY SETH GOLDIN

The list that follows is semi-ordered:

1. Trauma-dumped in a pre-orientation "hometown"
2. Grabbed coffee at the Jitterbus
3. Read "The Opposite of Loneliness"
4. Snuck into your friend's duty night
5. Strolled through the Yale University Art Gallery
6. Explored the Peabody Museum
7. Toured the Yale Center for British Art
8. Attended a recital at the School of Music
9. Explored the "Brain Museum" at the Cushing Center
10. Created a masterpiece in one of the college art studios
11. Peered out of the Observatory telescope
12. Requested texts from the Sterling or Beinecke archives
13. Hissed at a Yale Political Union debate
14. Caught a Dramat theater performance
15. Attended — or sang in — an a capella concert
16. Supported a friend at — or performed in — a dance show
17. Wore a last-minute costume to the Yale Symphony Orchestra Halloween concert
18. Published in — or been quoted in — the YDN
19. Cheered at any Yale sporting event besides The Game
20. Played for an intramural team
21. Visited every residential college library
22. Eaten in every dining hall — yes, that includes Pierson
23. Snacked at a buttery other than your college's
24. Played ping-pong in a buttery
25. Cooked in a student kitchen
26. Grabbed a bite from a food truck behind Murray
27. Visited the Yale Farm or Wooster Square Farmers' Market
28. Been to Pepe's
29. Been to Sally's
30. Been to Modern
31. Argue about which of the above is the best pizza spot
32. Been to Patricia's
33. Ordered a late-night Wenzel at Alpha Delta
34. Ordered an omelette at JE — if you know, you know
35. Gone to an event just for the free food
36. Said you'll grab a meal with someone
37. Actually grabbed a meal with someone
38. Used GCal to schedule a meal with someone
39. Answered a tourist's question
40. Yelled "happy birthday!" at a tour guide
41. Grabbed burgers at the Well
42. Said you "go to school in Connecticut"
43. Pet Handsome Dan
44. Taken the Yuttle
45. Stayed up past midnight talking about religion
46. Hiked East Rock at sunrise or sunset
47. Hiked West Rock
48. Ice skated at "The Whale"
49. Biked the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail
50. Worked out at Payne Whitney
51. Blown giant bubbles on Cross Campus
52. Napped in the Good Life Center
53. Run in the annual Faxon Law New Haven Road Race
54. Gone on a long walk to the Yale Divinity School at night
55. Had a deep, meaningful conversation in Murray's secret courtyard
56. Retreated with a club
57. Visited a town in Connecticut other than New Haven
58. Rode the Metro North to New York City
59. Visited the Yale Club in New York City
60. Sledded down Science Hill
61. Studied at the Lillian Goldman Law Library
62. Picked a class because of a crush
63. Pulled an all-nighter
64. Fallen asleep in a class
65. Slept through a class
66. Credit/D/Failed a class
67. Cried in front of your dean
68. Requested a dean's extension
69. Studied in the stacks
70. Changed the aux at Timothy Dwight's dining hall
71. Split up a suite
72. Slept in a Bass cubicle
73. Eaten at Pasta E Basta
74. Attended a suite party
75. Did everything except drink tea at a college tea
76. Danced in the God Quad
77. Attended first-year Holiday "Dinner"
78. Tailgated at the Yale-Harvard game
79. Crashed the first-year snowball fight
80. Waited in line at the Pierson Inferno
81. Mingled at Senior Masquerade
82. Been to Woads, Soads, Hallowoads, Mistletoads or Valenwoads — bonus: "Woads Scholar"
83. Meditated with the Buddhist group at Harkness Tower
84. Heard the Whiffenpoofs sing at Mory's
85. Sipped from a Mory's cup
86. Caught the "Yague"
87. Been to GHeav after 2 a.m.
88. "The Tang" or "Caps"
89. Made fun of a friend at a Mellon forum
90. "All Star"-ed Feb Club
91. Polar plunged at Lighthouse Point
92. Attended "Battle of the Bands"
93. Dartied at Spring Fling
94. Picnicked on Cross Campus
95. Done the "Yorkside Challenge"
96. Stumbled upon the third Good Life Center
97. Infiltrated — or joined — a secret society
98. Witnessed — or streaked in — the Bass naked run
99. Attended a party hosted by the Pundits
100. Graduated...

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