Chill Pill

YOU OWE YOURSELF A FULL LIFE

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A while ago, I stumbled across a TikTok with a creator talking about "living a toothless life." Upon first watch I thought, "oh that must suck, not having teeth," but as I watched the video, it became apparent that her message was more: if you are waiting for the perfect opportunity, there is a chance you will find yourself waiting forever.

I keep coming back to this video. The ultimate lesson I am learning is to live a life that means something — living a life that leaves teeth marks.

Welcome to Chill Pill, a column that comes out biweekly on Fridays about slowing down in a world that rarely lets us as college students. Here, we will talk about balance, burnout and the small things that can make college life feel a little less overwhelming.

Your primary responsibility is yourself. You owe yourself a life well-lived, and it sucks, but no one else is going to hand that to you. It's up to you to prioritise your unapologetic self-expression for your own pleasure rather than external validation. If you've grown up with people-pleasing tendencies, maybe you've faced consequences from taking up space.

Self-expression is brave — just as brave as doing things that people don't understand.

But external rejection doesn't hurt nearly as much as the rejection we will have for ourselves if we sacrifice authenticity for the sake of being easier to digest or understand.

Taking action towards your dreams and passions is an act of self-love. Things will work out in your favor all the time when you open up the space and allow them to. Pre-rejecting yourself is not good as you are limiting yourself to the chance of success. Send the message, ask the question, start the article.

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To me, living a full life means never letting my dreams and ideas lose momentum because I was too afraid to act. I think that is one of the most important and fun joys that we will have in college. The joy of learning how to take up space and finding out who we are and where we are meant to be.

I look (and sometimes stare) at people who have an inimitable energy of authenticity, and that twinkle in their eye almost feels contagious because they glow with the joy of having a deep love for who they are.

There's so much truth in people's energy, and such a huge difference in how you feel around people who have admitted defeat to an existence they dislike and those who have learned to love themselves genuinely, making their joy a priority.

There is no fulfilment without honesty. If you've never learned to really listen to yourself and figure out what it is you actually want out of life, this is the time to start. Journal more, spend more time alone and experiment with your self-expression.

Because there is no point building a life written by someone else, and you owe yourself a full life.

Roundtable

WHAT MOVIES DID YOU SEE THIS SUMMER?

It was a good summer to be a fan of movies — from out of nowhere box-office hits like "The Backrooms," character dramas that kept you to the edge of your seat such as "The Drama," the return of Spiderman to the big screen in "Spider-Man: Brand New Day" and a big-budget blockbuster from one of the biggest directors in Hollywood, Steven Spielberg's "Disclosure Day."

The Life section is back from summer vacation to discuss the movies they loved, or maybe those they didn't.

by Manya Trivedi
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Going into seeing "The Drama," I expected a fun-loving romantic comedy that concluded with a walk down the aisle and a bouquet being tossed. Instead, I was met with one of the most complicated and sarcastic dark comedies released by Kristoffer Borgli.

The trailer sells you a Boston coffee shop meet-cute: an awkward guy and charming girl, both hitting it off right away. What it doesn't warn you about is the drunken confession that changes everything days before the wedding, or how long Borgli lets you sit in discomfort before you realize this was never going to be a happy ending.

I'm not going to pretend that this movie closes strongly. The back half never fully resolves what it's asking about perception and judgment. But what makes this the movie of the summer isn't even the plot; it's the audacity of the producer, Zendaya and Robert Pattinson to bait the audience and then punish them for taking it.

by Sean Aitken
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This summer we had a science fiction blockbuster made by the legend himself, Steven Spielberg. You'd think a science fiction film led by Emily Blunt and Josh O'Connor would be amazing, but it's not.

"Disclosure Day" is a husk of a science fiction movie. The movie is dull and uninteresting; the plot feels like you spun a wheel of science fiction tropes and ran with it. The script feels like a rough draft; it builds to absolutely nothing. All this reaches a tipping point with a scene having to do with a phone and a car, which is genuinely the worst scene I have ever seen in my life.

This is not "E.T." or "Close Encounters"; it's a hollow film that provides nothing of substance to any modern-day discourse. It's out of touch and doesn't understand modern people. At least Emily Blunt killed it and got paid.

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This past May, "Backrooms," directed by Kane Parsons, broke box office records and became studio A24's highest grossing film, making it the ultimate movie of the summer.

"Backrooms" is a psychological thriller surrounding main characters Clark, a furniture store owner, Mary, his therapist, and their unsettling encounter with an alternate surreal world that bends their perception of everything they thought was real.

The film is based on a viral YouTube series Parsons created, which generated excitement and buzz about the film before it was even released. This launched "Backrooms" into becoming a cultural smash hit and stirred up conversation about the accuracy and execution of the concept.

Consequently, "Backrooms" became a huge topic for film enthusiasts and is ultimately the movie of the summer.

by Jaylyn Davis
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One movie I saw over the summer was "Supergirl." I remember watching the trailer a year ago; when it concluded, I told my parents we were going to see the movie in theaters.

I thought "Supergirl" was fantastic. As a female college student, I love watching movies that involve female superheroes. Kara and Ruthye's friendship was inspiring, and the film centering around Kara and Ruthye saving Kara's dog, Krypto, was very heartwarming.

It's a shame that the film received poor reviews. What irritates me is that the horrific reviews exist because "Supergirl" has female main characters. Like, come on. Just because Kara is a woman doesn't mean her story is horrible. In fact, Kara demonstrates that women have strength and they can fight off enemies just like men. I wish those who are against "Supergirl" could see that.

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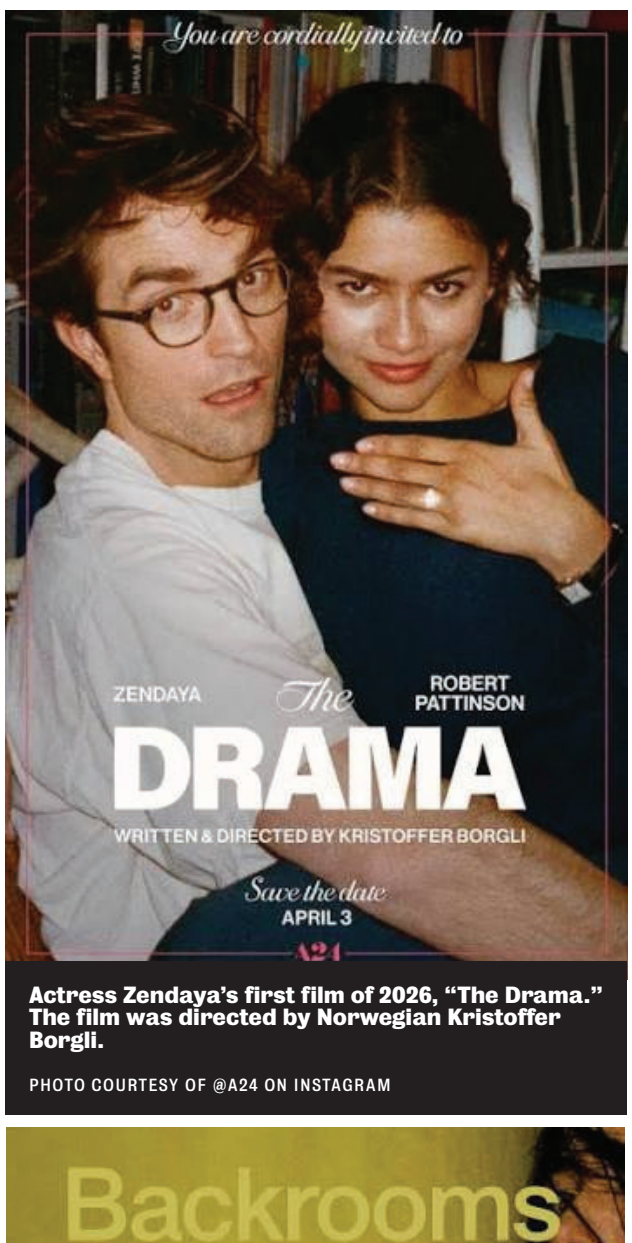
Kane Parsons' "The Backrooms" is less a scary movie and more so a creepy one. The 21-year-old director did a fine job of adapting his web series for the big screen. Leaning more on the inherent creepiness of the concept and shrouding it in mystery instead of playing all his cards early in explaining the lore.

One nice touch was the storyline between Clark (Chiwetel Ejiofor) and his therapist, Doctor Mary Kline (Renate Reinsve). Their interactions helped center a movie about a 4chan copypasta and gave a human element to "The Backrooms," making it appear less alien and grounding it within the human world.



Actress Zendaya's first film of 2026, "The Drama." The film was directed by Norwegian Kristoffer Borgli.

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The official movie poster of the 2026 psychological horror film, "The Backrooms." The film is adapted from director Kane Parsons' YouTube series of the same name.

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