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The unsigned editorials in this issue represent the opinions of *The Mainsheet* editorial board. Other material contained herein does not necessarily reflect the views of Chadwick School, the staff, or the newspaper.

Letter to the Editor and other contributions are welcome from any member of the Chadwick community. We reserve the right to edit letters for reasons of length and clarity. Other material will be evaluated on an individual basis. Mail all correspondence to the address below, or give it to the receptionist with "For the Mainsheet" prominently displayed.

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Kylie Bronchick: Fashion sustainability

Jake and Maddie: More inclusive Homecoming

Adrienne Alvarado: Take time for playtime

*Staff Editorial***Disclaimer: The thoughts expressed in *Opinions* don't always reflect the views of our staff**

It has come to our attention recently that many readers believe the views of columnists are also the views of *Mainsheet*, so we would like to clarify something: The views and thoughts expressed by the columnists do not entirely reflect the beliefs of *Mainsheet* or any specific editor, only the views of the specific columnist.

Any views expressed in any article in the Opinions section that is not explicitly credited to a staff member is an article written either by a columnist or guest writer, and the beliefs stated in each columnist or writer's piece is only the opinion of that specific person or persons.

Which means that not every staff member or editor dislikes Taylor Swift, en-

dorses playtime or believes that League of Legends is a valuable use of time or money.

While specific columnists may hold those opinions, the staff board does not necessarily agree.

Columnists are selected because they have chosen to write about an interesting topic, are funny and/or thought-provoking...and get their articles in on time.

Most column contributors ask if they can write for *Mainsheet*, and for the most part we say yes...if we think what they have to say will attract readers and is relevant and interesting.

If we believe that we want a type of columnist that the newspaper does not currently have, we ask somebody who we

believe would do a good job.

As for guest writers, for the most part they request to write something in the paper, though sometimes we ask specific people to write something if we believe that it's important.

But often times, guest writers for *Mainsheet* are people who just ask us for an opportunity to write. If there is space, we are open to giving them the chance to share their thoughts in *Mainsheet*, and thus with the entire Chadwick community.

If a columnist or guest writer shared an opinion that you as a reader disagree with, we encourage you to ask us about writing a letter to the editor to share why you disagree. Feel free to talk to us about it.



by Kate McEvelly

Kate's Kulture: My war on Taylor Swift

Love her or hate her, Taylor Swift is a force to be reckoned with. Her new record, *1989*, is the first album since Eminem's 2002 album *The Eminem Show* to sell more than 1.2 million records in the first week of release. Taylor Swift has blown away the music industry and proven that regardless of whether her music is classic country or electronic pop, her loyal "Swifties" will follow her to the ends of the Earth.

Swift's music is undeniably catchy. Her old hits such as "Love Story" and "You Belong With Me" or new songs like "Shake It Off" are near impossible to get out of your head once you hear them on the radio. On paper, she seems perfectly likable: super into interacting with her fans, nice girl reputation, not out partying like her pop star counterparts Miley Cyrus or even Katy Perry. Taylor Swift's image has been squeaky clean, perfectionist, tall blonde who just by chance (yeah, right) only seems to date bona fide movie stars and teen heartthrobs. With a slew of famous girlfriends such as musicians Lorde and Selena Gomez, writers like Lena Dunham, and models like Lily Aldridge and Karlie Kloss, Swift is the perfect best friend and girl's girl. And yet, there has always been something that has driven me up the wall about her.

I love that Swift writes her own music and seems to manage her own career trajectory. Her music is so fun to sing along to (most of the time, that is; "We are Never Ever Getting Back Together" serves as a nails-on-a-chalkboard exception). She seems to be changing the tone of her music to less "poor me" victimization, when relationships don't work out, to more "hey, we both weren't perfect," a more realistic perception of what happens when a relationship doesn't work out. With the influence of Dunham, she is talking about feminism equality for men and women, not some matriarchy, bra-burning, misinterpreted version of modern feminism. She talks about the double standard she has encountered when writing songs about her relationships, and how even though she isn't dating tons of guys, some members of the media choose to paint her as a boy-crazy, needy person.

And yet, my problems with Taylor Swift

break down to three key issues: 1) her music has one subject matter: love, and she aggressively markets her one theme music to very young, impressionable girls; 2) she paints herself as just like you and me, but let's be real, she isn't, and 3) she only dates famous guys (players) and complains when it doesn't work out.

Let's take *1989* as a Swift case study. Part of the hype for this album was that it was supposed to be a totally new side and subject matter for Swift: Less about guys, more about friendships. That's just totally not true. To be fair, "Shake It Off" is about forgetting about the haters and "Bad Blood" is about a feud with rumored nemesis Perry. Non-relationship songs such as "Welcome to New York" (terrible song) is not explicitly about boys, it's about getting over boys in a new city. And "Blank Space" is poking fun at her boy-crazy public image. But "Style" (Harry Styles...cough), "Out of the Woods," "All You Had to Do Was Stay," "I Wish You Would," "Wildest Dreams," "How You Get the Girl," "This Love," "I Know Places" and "Clean" are all about romantic relationships.

Love and high-profile relationships sell records, and Swift seems to define the men she dates. She can write songs about whatever she wants, but as NPR reporter Melissa Block points out, impressionable young girls are unintentionally given the message that the most important part of womanhood is being in a relationship. Older girls hopefully learn that defining yourself by the people you date is unhealthy for your self-esteem and self-confidence. Younger girls don't know that yet.

Many idolize Taylor Swift. Her romantic narratives and Starbucks-filled New York dates we see in paparazzi pictures make us want the same fairytale relationships. It's this fantastical world Swift creates that can be so damaging. There is so much more to growing up and being a girl than being in a relationship. There is nothing wrong with being in love or having your heart broken; that's not the point. The point is that aggressively marketing your music to a demographic that mindlessly repeats your lyrics without understanding the message that is being absorbed seems manipulative. Perry

and Cyrus aren't marketing their music toward middle school girls...and Taylor Swift is.

The subject matter she broaches in *1989* is far more grown-up than anything she has done in the past. And again, there is nothing wrong with a musician talking about love, sex and relationships. But when you are marketing your music toward young girls, again, I believe you bear some responsibility to keep your music more PG and more diversified. Talk about your dynamo female friendships and your journey to embracing yourself. Talk more about shaking off the haters and finding yourself in a new city. "I said no one has to know what we do. His hands are in my hair. His clothes are in the room." Little girls don't need to be repeating those lyrics.

Beyond the manipulative marketing, which, yes, plenty of other artists use as well, Taylor Swift dates Taylor Lautner, John Mayer, Jake Gyllenhaal and Harry Styles... and still expects the world to believe that she is just your average 24-year-old. Taylor Swift comes from a well-off family. She is tall, skinny, blond and pretty. She dates famous guys and dresses in expensive designer clothes. She has a few million-dollar houses--in Nashville, the Cape, California and New York. She isn't the *average* American young person! If she was really looking for a normal relationship, she wouldn't be dating celebrities. She just wouldn't.

Now, for someone who isn't the biggest Taylor Swift fan, I do know a lot about her. That's because I really do want to like Taylor Swift. One of my best friends, who is a diehard Swift fan, swears that I secretly love her and need a good dose of "Swiftamine," an SNL-created cure for Taylor-Swift-music-induced vertigo.

But as Melissa Block pointed out in her Swift interview, Taylor has a huge platform to talk to vulnerable young girls who love her music. I wish she would broaden her music to be about more than just heartbreak and love songs. I wish she would let go of the idea that she is just like us. I even wish she would try dating a normal Joe guy. Supposedly, *1989* was to be a whole new side to Swift. I don't think it is.