

LIFE ACCORDING TO Y

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INSTANTY
SELLA
GRATIFICAZIONE

"I AM A
MILLENNIAL.
GENERATION;
BORN BETWEEN
THE BIRTH OF
AIDS AND 9/11,
GIVE OR TAKE"

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GEN.
ME?

Generation Y. Millennials. The Me Generation. It doesn't matter what we are labelled because most of us don't believe in 'labels'. We are inclined to be more liberal than our predecessors; we support LGBT rights, most of us hope to see the legalisation of various drugs in our lifetime and there are more freethinkers in our generation than ever before. Though despite our acceptance, the general consensus is that many of us are selfish, entitled, narcissistic and twice as likely to live with a mental health condition than Generation X. Some take the phrase 'live fast' a little too literally, with

one fifth of young adults reported to be taking illicit drugs in 2014. From this alone, it can be concluded that we are fairly complicated. It is this paradoxical nature of our collective character that defines us - we are ambitious yet lazy, non-conformist yet materialistic, we are inspired and uninspired all at once. With these contradictions in mind, I intend to explore our mutual hopes, dreams and fears through a series of recorded conversations with my peers, documenting the best personal experiences alongside the very worst to truly uncover what life is like for Generation Y.

• Luisa Rossi.

IN MANY WAYS, THERE IS NO BETTER TIME TO BE ALIVE THAN RIGHT NOW. THINK OF ALL THE ADVANTAGES WE HAVE THAT EARLIER GENERATIONS DID NOT: TV, MOBILES, INTERNET, FREEDOM TO MAKE OUR OWN CHOICES. THESE ADVANTAGES, HOWEVER, BEGIN TO HINT AT THE UNDERLYING PROBLEM. THE GROWING TENDANCY TO PUT THE SELF FIRST."

- JEAN TWENGE.

THE BEST

"So I broke up with my boyfriend of about 10 months in December, the only reason being I just felt nothing for the relationship anymore. I expected a bit of nostalgia or to feel lonely or sad. The first time I got drunk I expected to go home crying my eyes out but it never happened. I felt completely liberated and free and I've never felt like this following a break up. I am always left hating myself for anything I may have done wrong. It was so empowering and I felt so confident and happy just to be myself. I have had the most amazing few months doing whatever I like, not doing anything extraordinary just being so content with my average life at home. But I have experimented with new things, I never thought I would ever try drugs but I finally did, just because I wanted to. I would never have done it had I still been with my ex, not because of what he'd have thought, but just because I feel like a different person, I feel more content with my life now than I ever have before, and it's so good that my happiness is nothing to do with a guy for once in my life."

"Being in love."

"It has actually been pretty hard to pinpoint just one experience as being 'the best'. It's not because I've got loads of great experiences. It's quite the opposite. I'm only eighteen and I've not led a particularly extraordinary life so far. Though if I must choose one thing, it's probably the first time I took MDMA. It was last November and... fuck. I probably won't be able to coherently describe what it feels like when it hits you but I'll try. I was sat with one of my best friends watching Chase & Status and as my favourite song of theirs dropped it felt like my mind just... imploded. Half an hour prior to this I'd dropped a bomb [a dose of MDMA wrapped in Rizla] in this minging toilet and immediately started panicking, telling my mate 'fuck fuck fuck I want it out of me' and then, whilst watching Chase & Status... BAM. It blew my fucking brains out. It was as if someone, I don't know, flipped a switch in my brain and just turned on all of the lights. They were so bright and I had this electric current surging through my veins and I was so fucking happy. It made me realise that I'd never been happy before, not like that at least. The reason that this was the best experience of my life wasn't because of the sensations I had on that night. It's how I've felt since. It's like I left that light switch on. This sounds so weird but I feel as though I've unlocked a part of my brain that's let me know that happiness is really possible. It's here. It's right now. A lot of my friends feel the same way. Mandy let us in on this little secret universe that we never knew existed before."

"I think my best experience would be Creamfields [an EDM festival]. Having such an amazing time with some of my closest friends and I guess taking party food for the first time added to the experience being so good.

I just felt so happy all weekend and lucky to have such amazing friends"

"Going to Uni. It has made me so much more independent. It makes you realise how much more is out there and opens up your little world and puts it under a microscope. You meet so many people and makes you realise what you actually want to do with your life - and that doesn't just have to be one thing. It's so exciting as you realise your life can be anything you want it to be but choosing what is the hardest"

THE WORST

"When Destiny's Child broke up."

"Probably finding out my boyfriend had slept with someone else whilst at Uni and then him saying he still loved me and wanted me back, it was just a very confusing and emotional time. I was hurt, shocked, angry and just felt like my heart had cracked (pathetic) but I can't say it was broken because that's too pathetic... but I guess it was. Though at the same time I was happy he had said he loved me for the first time and wanted to be with me.

I was physically sick when I found out, which was over text by the way.

And it was all in the same text, 'I love you although I must admit I've slept with someone else but I want to be with you'

THROW UP"

"Seeing my Mums face when she was told that I was high on drugs - it was the worst moment of my life so far. I've never seen her so deflated and out of her depth before"

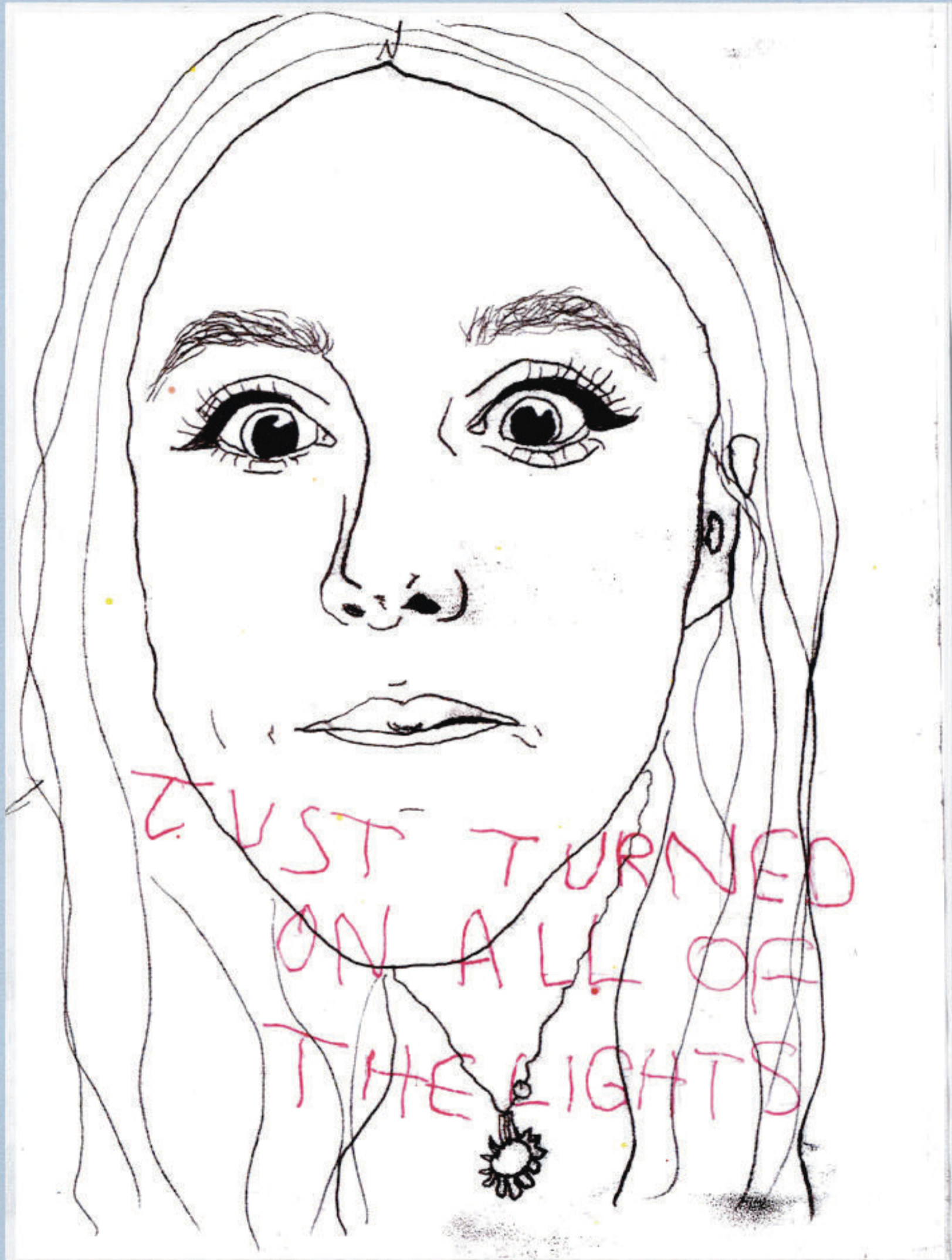
"Moving out of Cheltenham and the house that I'd lived in my whole life. I stood in my empty room staring out at the garden where I'd had so many good times as a kid and feeling devastated that I'd never come back here. Then I pulled out of my driveway in my car and it felt so real. I'd never live in Cheltenham again and my whole life was about to change I got about 100 meters down the road and just cried. Lol."

"The worst experience of my life is going to Uni. It makes you realise how you miss how you had it before with your social life. The hard work and distance puts strains on pretty much all of your relationships back home leading to rejection and loneliness if you aren't lucky like in my case. Keeping busy is fine, which is usually all the time but there are the nights like now when you can't sleep because of how you miss certain people or the way things use to be.. But I guess in this world how are you expected to be happy at all if you cant just enjoy the time you spend with yourself. It's such a good life experience though. It all out weighs the bad and makes you grow.

I guess it's like moving on, relationships die and new ones form and it's so strange to think about it, like one day in the future we will look back on Facebook and Instagram and think of it fondly but also have that longing to go back to these times, when right now we are looking forward to the future... Like, is there a time in our lives when we are happy exactly where we are? It's so strange."

"Being bullied was quite bad."





DRUG CULTURE

You can buy drugs online now. Download the Tor server to your laptop and a few clicks and a few days later your party food will arrive neatly packaged right on your doorstep. Is it safe? Actually, as crazy as this sounds, yes... Sort of.

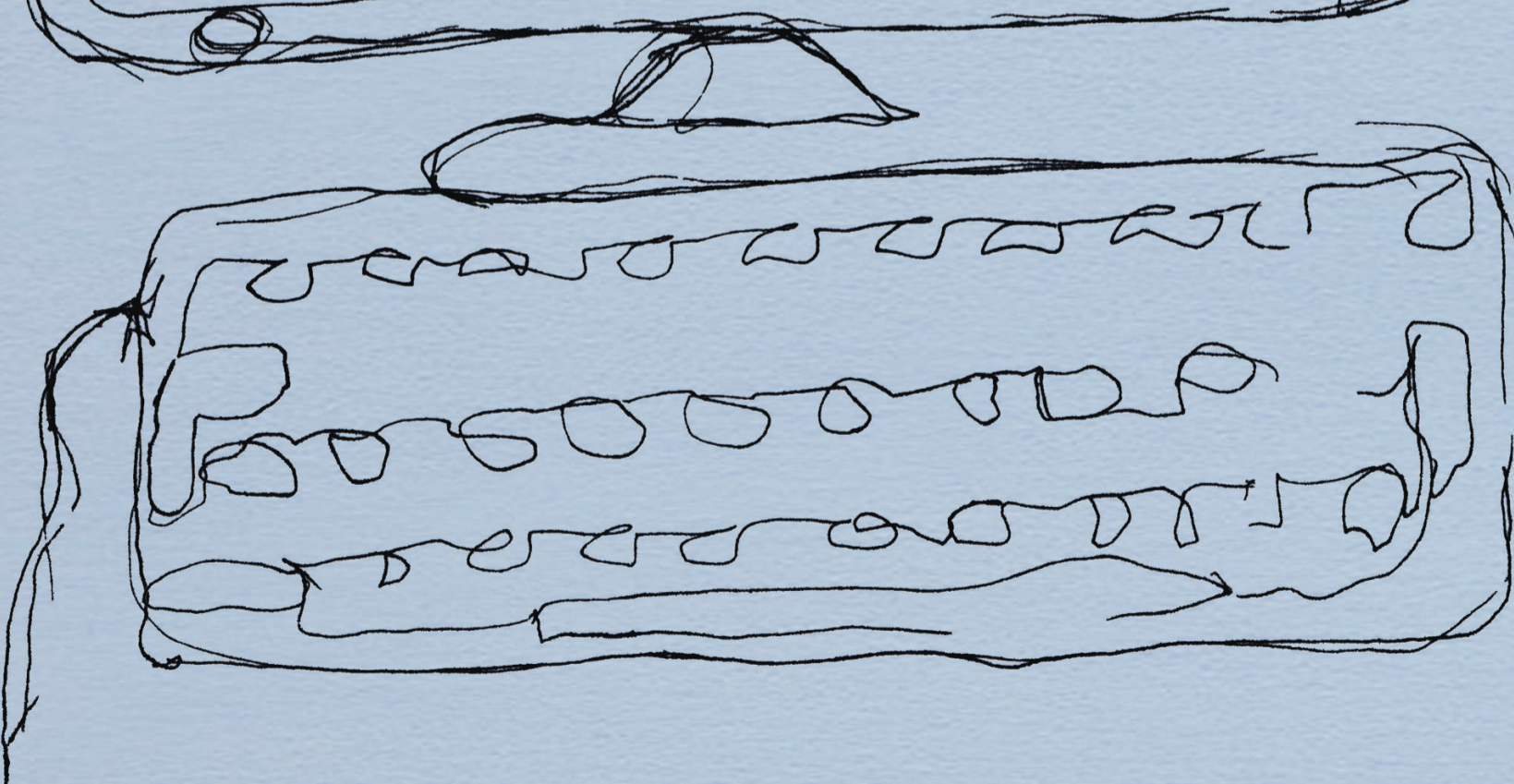
Not only does the Tor server ensure anonymity for buyers, but also every product on Dark Net market sites has customer reviews. The most famous of which are Agora, which somehow survived the law enforcements recent crackdowns on online bazaars, and the now-defunct Silk Road. So, do not worry. You can sleep soundly knowing that the five-star-rated Coke you ordered is not cut with rat poison and that you are probably not going to get caught.

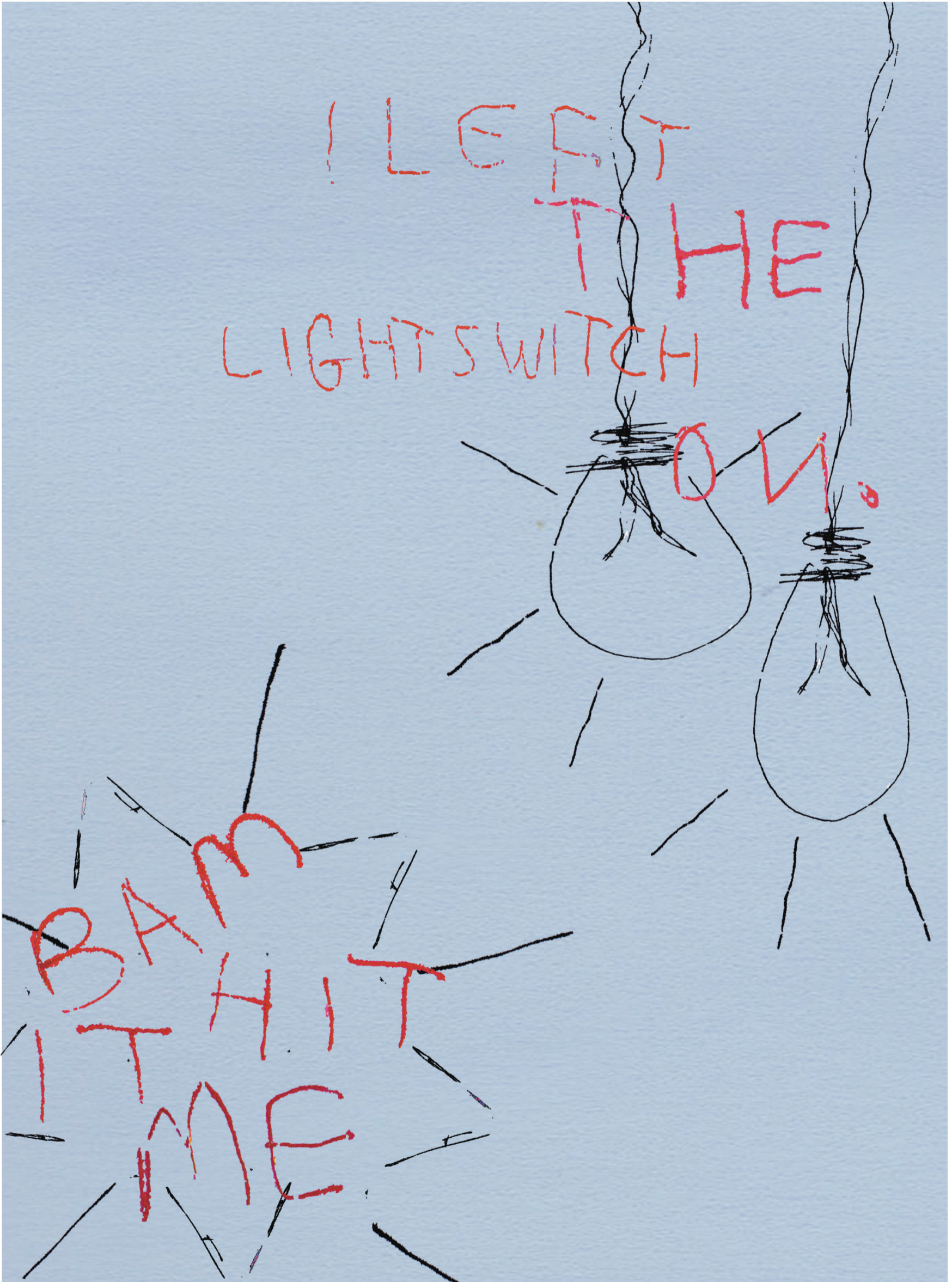
Drugs are simply a part of Youth Culture but these sites, in my opinion, are what separate Generation Y from the free love hippies of the 60s with their LSD and 90s ravers with their shit haircuts and pills. Now, we have the Millennials buying whatever the hell they like without even having to get out of bed to do so.

It is probably safer buying 10 whole grams of customer rated crystal MDMA on Agora than buying 1 shitty pill that was cut with fuck-knows-what from a friend of a friend's older brother who lives in his Nans spare room. There are no faces, no names, and you know exactly what you are getting. This convenience, however, is what detaches us from previous generations and makes online drug shopping only sort of safe. It is quick. It is easy. It means more youths are buying drugs. Whether it is from an adverse reaction or an overdose, drugs can kill you no matter how 'clean' you believe them to be.

A recent FBI investigation into Silk Road uncovered that "from February 6, 2011 to July 23, 2013, total revenue generated from sales [on Silk Road] was 9,519,664 Bitcoins. This figure is equivalent to roughly \$1.2 billion in revenue at current Bitcoin exchange rates". That revenue is from just one site alone. There are many others. As law enforcement shuts one down, three more launch. It is like virtual whack-a-mole.

The demand for these online utopias is high and their creators know that Generation Y will do just about anything to get their jaws swinging on a Saturday night.





SELFIE CENTERED



In 2006, I got a digital camera for Christmas. It was nothing special, just one that I had picked from the Argos catalogue and my Mother decided was cheap and shitty enough to give to a kid in primary school. She probably thought that I would take it out on my bike or scooter or whatever it is that 10 year olds do and smash it... You don't want to give a kid a piece of technology that is worth anything, right?

But that is not what I did.

I have a sister who is almost 7 years older than I am, which would have made her 17 back in 2006. She had a Myspace page, which if you have not heard of it, is basically Facebook's emo-filled predecessor. 10-year-old me thought it was the coolest thing, like, ever. So with the help of my sister I made a profile. I basically copied everything she and her friends had on theirs, which, of course included selfies. This is where the Argos catalogue camera came into play. I used it solely to take posed photos of myself for my page. There must have been hundreds of photos on there of me all pouting-peace-signs with too much eyeliner on.

As I mentioned, this was almost ten years ago and I am pretty certain that the term 'selfie' was not coined until Apple brought out the front camera on the iPhone in 2011 and Instagram blew up into the self-important sea of #kalesmoothie #gymselfie and #michealkor-swatches that it is today.

I had been sucked into selfie culture at just ten. As I got older, social media use grew and developed alongside me. I do not know what adult life would be like without it. This is the same case for every member of Generation Y. We have become numb to people documenting every aspect of their lives because we do it too.

However, when you really think about it, selfie culture is more than just teen narcissism. The Instagram selfie captioned with the sassy girl emoji is not just saying "I think I'm pretty". It is saying "Tell me I'm pretty."

Generation Y are typically categorised as self entitled. We were raised to believe that we are all 'unique' and 'special' by our Generation X parents. We were conditioned by receiving trophies and certificates as children for merely participating in an activity.

So, it should come as no surprise that this need for praise as children has manifested itself into the teenage selfie.

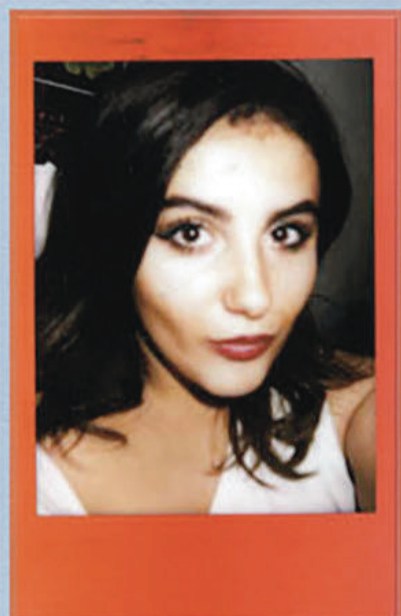
Do you need a little confidence boost? Selfie.

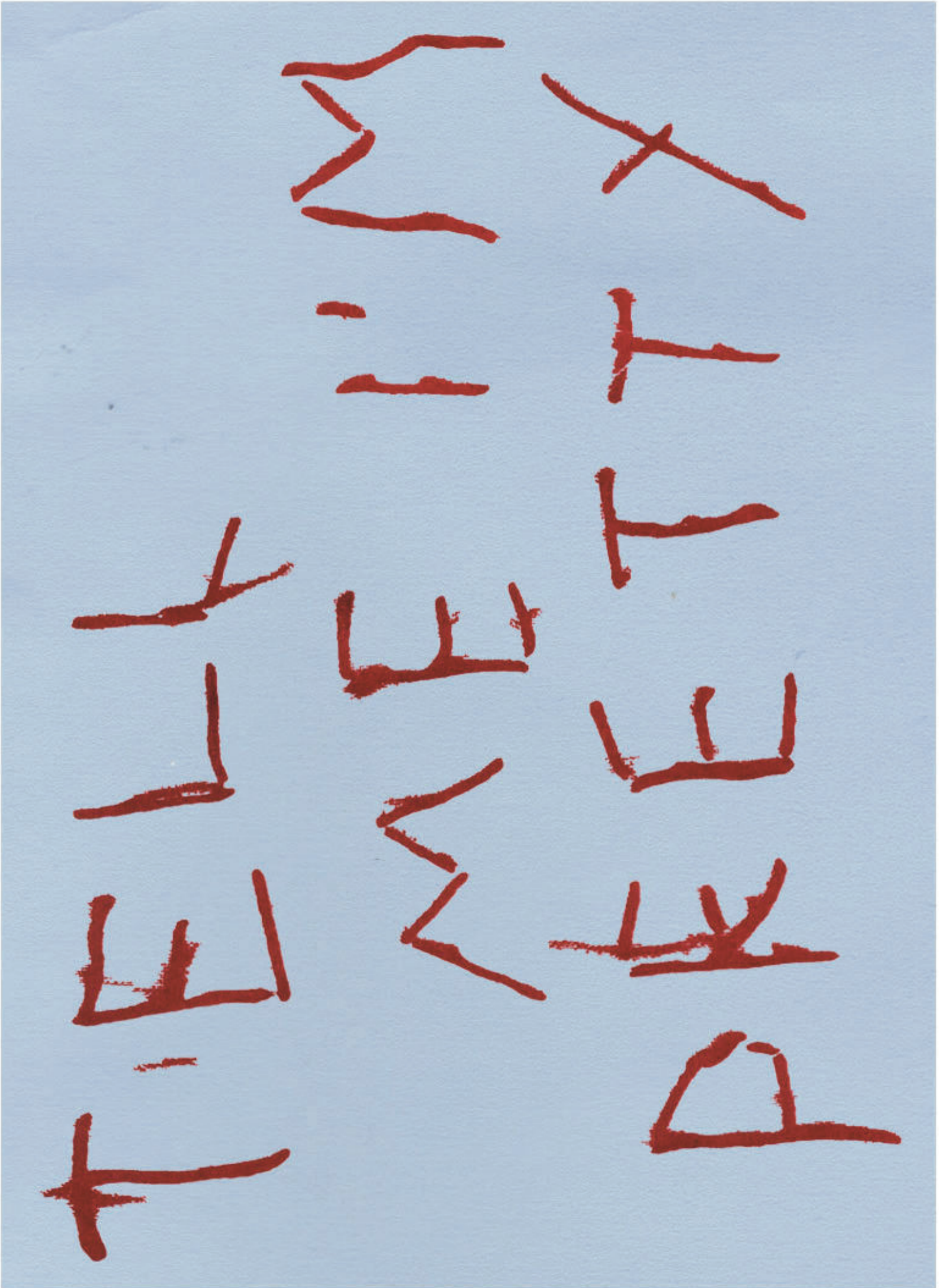
Are you having a rough day? Selfie.

Nothing particularly wrong? Fuck it. Just upload another photo of your face so that the Internet does not forget what you look like.

A like on your photo is instant self-gratification. That, I believe, is what defines us. We crave praise and we crave it immediately because of the fast-paced technological world we have grown up in. Selfie culture epitomises this perfectly.

According to TIME magazine, narcissism is prevalent in every generation. Generation Y are no worse than any other generation and, given the chance, any Baby Boomer or Gen X'er would have posted as many selfies online when they were young as we do. It appears that narcissism is just part of being a teenager. Millennials just have the opportunity to document theirs online.

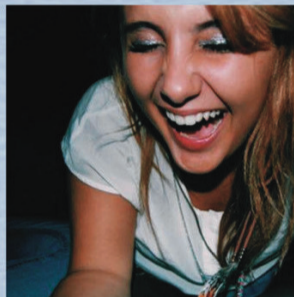








ABOUT



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Created by Luisa Rossi

An illustration student at SGS college, Stroud. This newspaper was presented as part of her Final Major Project and was inspired by both Tracey Emins provocative illustrations and i-D magazines honest insights into youth culture.

From September 2015, she will be studying BA (Hons) Journalism at University of The Arts, London.

I AM A MILLENNIAL.

Is this really how you want us to be remembered?

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