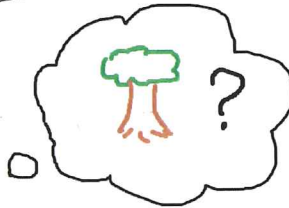


# STOLAF ECOCOMICS



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## General Artist Statement

It is amazing how environmental studies inspire me to write comics. Yet among all other expressions, you may ask *why comics?*

It struck me that funny always get the message across. I remember growing up reading Calvin and Hobbes and developing a sense of curiosity in interpreting their jokes. Thus, I decided to challenge the environmental values, culture and practice we have at St. Olaf. I think of comics as an opportunity to tell stories that I find amusing but reflect an issue that is important. As much as it is about getting feelings, ideas, and views across, I also mean to provoke the reader's thoughts. I believe it portrays the richness in the framework of the liberal arts because the purpose of it is to encourage critical thinking through various visual art and comic techniques.

I have included my artist statement for each of my comic strip to explore my art work more in depth. I try to explore questions such as:

- What inspired me?
- What is the point-of-view on this issue? What is the message?
- What did I learn from exploring this issue?
- What kinds of signs or symbols have I used?



This comic strip is based on my personal experience at St. Olaf. My purpose is to express our own ironic behavior which we may overlook at times. I always thought it was funny that we learn about conservation and resource management in ES classes through tons of readings which we end up printing. I have exaggerated this issue here by (1) personalizing the printer (2) the girl developing self-pity and not showing an sign of "green consciousness" even though she may be taking an ES class. The important message is to realize some of these attitudes and the small choices (to print or not) we make that do make a huge difference later on.

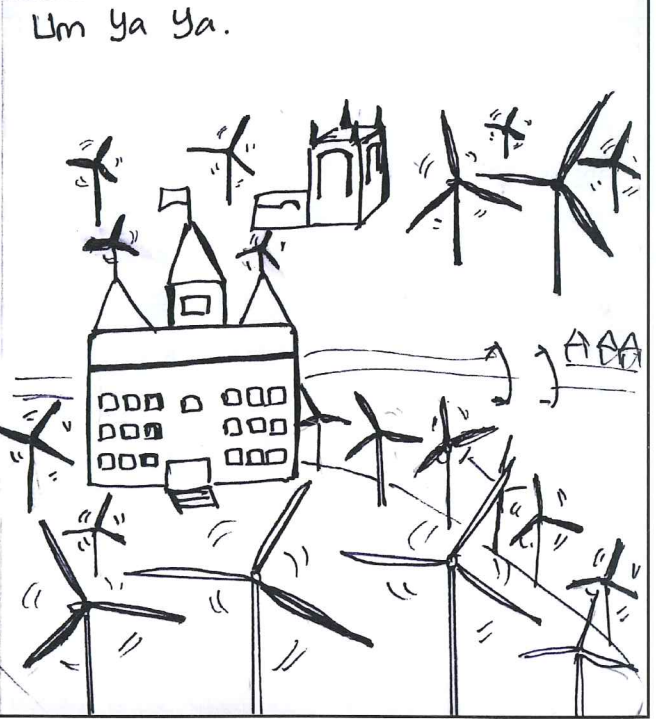
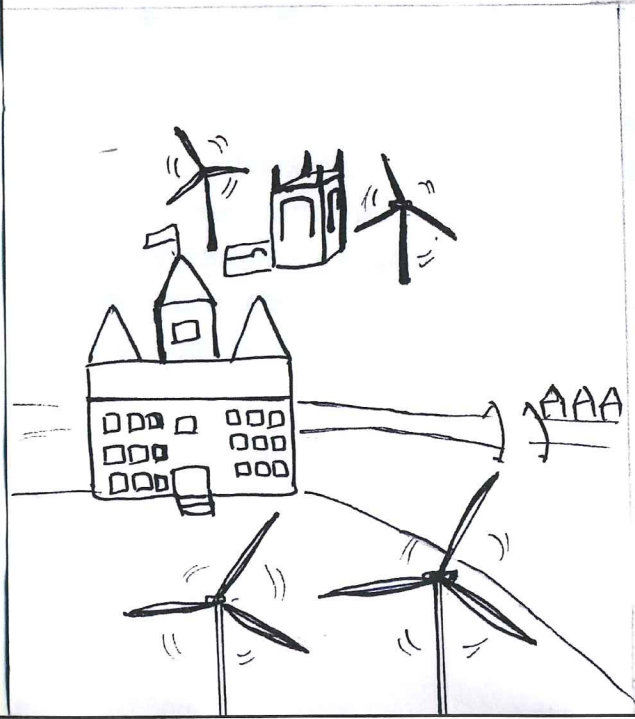




A few weeks ago, there was a lot of busy work outside Tomson Hall because the ground outside was being carpeted with fine grass. Since I like to enjoy St. Olaf landscape at the quad, I found this picture a bit disturbing. Perhaps some people think that it's a faster approach to Spring. In this case, grass was definitely green on the Tomson Hall side. I found imbalance between other areas of the campus where grass was still trying shoot up. Also, the trees were still looking barren so the carpeted grass did not seem natural to me. In this comic strip, I personified the barren trees to show that they even feel awkward and uncomfortable when humans manipulate the environment. This way, people would realize that their desires for "instant gratification of things, in this case even grass, is causing imbalance in nature.

ST. OLAF - CARLETON

RIVALRY



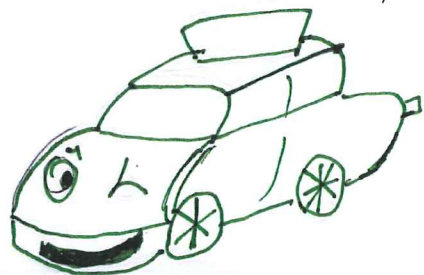
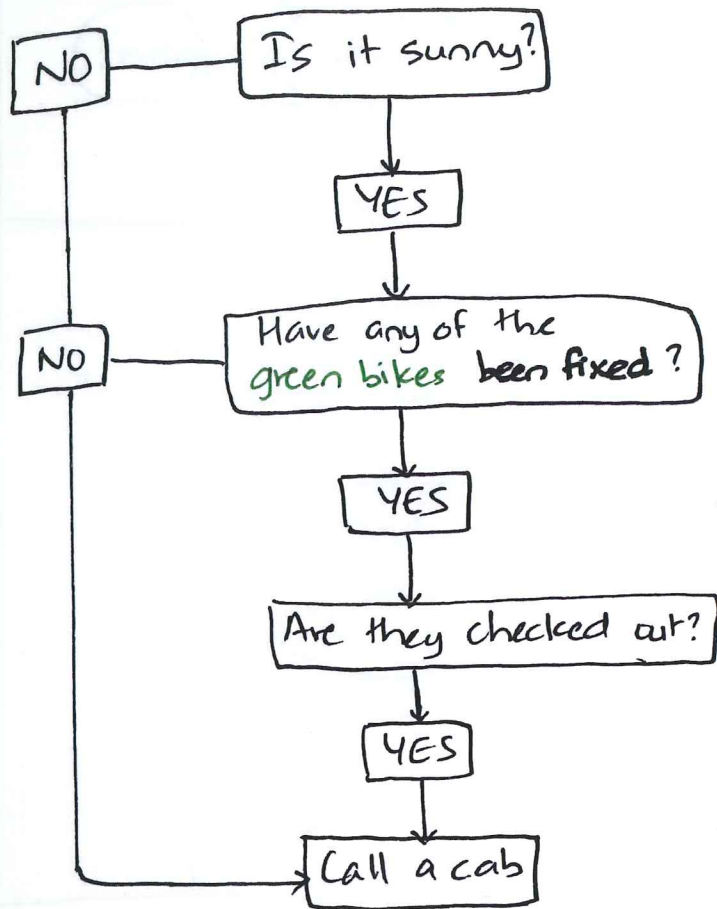
I see the wind turbine as an icon of campus sustainability at St. Olaf. Not only does it supply up to one-third of the electricity used by the college and thus advocate our work, it also creates environmental awareness to other places. I thought that it made perfect sense especially because we live on the Hill, which brings on to my next point that we can see Carleton's wind turbine whenever we look a "magisterial gaze" from here. I was surprised that both of the rival schools have wind turbines. As I looked into that, I was more surprised when Carleton had theirs earlier than ours. Did that have influence on our decision? Are we reaching an era of "green competition?" Thus, I decided to use their rivalry history to show these thoughts. "Um Ya Ya" is my biased decision for St. Olaf's victory in the end.





Since I enjoy the quad, it has been disappointing to see how the greenery is gone because there have been an increasing number of pavements. This comic strip is to show my feelings for this loss and to discourage pavements that are unnecessary. I have depicted these with a scale of time to show the gradual change.

# Going Downtown



I was very excited when St. Olaf first had the green bike program. I thought it was a brilliant idea especially for green but bike-less people like me. However, whenever I tried to check out a bike, they were either “being fixed” or “checked out”. This comic strip makes use of a flow chart to describe this frustration. Perhaps, in an economic point of view, a greater demand in cars may lead to a greater demand in cabs (although this is not shown on the comic, but a thought to reflect on).



Shitfaced from last night

Ok class, let's go around the room and tell us your individual projects

I'm creating a cookbook

I'm exploring Ches' traditional ecological knowledge

I'm writing a research on St. Olaf squirrels

I'm building a treehouse.

Today? Ahh shit! shit! shit! shit! I'm screwed.

SHIT!

I meant "shit" as in analyzing it in an ecological way because even though we say "shit" all the time, we don't know the impact of it

Yes, Diane?

Awesome.

Professor Farrell from his book, *The Nature of College*, influenced me to bring up this issue about "Shit."

He said, " College students talk about shit all the time, but not ecologically. A superficial conversation is shooting the shit. Something obvious is "no shit!" while "bullshit" is a standard response to falsehood. If you care, you might give a shit. If not, you might get shit-faced at a party. And if the party gets too wild, the shit hits the fan. "Shit" is on top of our tongues, but we need to bring it to the front of our minds, because shit isn't just a linguistic construct; it's a daily reality. Americans make about five billions of waste a day without even thinking about it, but we don't know shit."

I used our ES 399 seminar class to create this cartoon strip. In addition to Professor's Farrell message, I wanted to bring out the nature of college students when they procrastinate or forget to do things and brainstorm ideas at the last minute.