



OPINION:

Worshipping the Weekend

Transcending Isla Vista's ritualistic nightlife

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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION + DESIGN // ANITA FLORES

REMINISCENT OF CHIMING church bells or the clang of Storke Tower at noon, an alarm goes off in your mind—precisely 8 p.m. on Thursday. It's the weekend in Isla Vista.

Next, a wave travels through Isla Vista's residents from El Colegio to Del Playa (DP), prompting the weekend-long worship of the night. DP is the place of prayer, and getting wasted is the doctrine.

Each IV resident has their own weekend ritual, whether it's freshmen ascending the

"The concept that everybody parties and everybody drinks and everybody uses drugs is just not true."

stairway to heaven, the Alpha Tau Omega chapter house, or seniors' downtown journey from Joe's to Dargan's. And it expands beyond the weekend, too—Wine Wednesdays, Woodstock's Tuesday Karaoke powered by \$9 pitchers, the list goes on. These rituals both perpetuate and unite IV in its unavoidable party culture.

"I think the party culture here runs the social scene," said Lola LaBang, a fourth-year Communication student at UCSB and IV resident. "There's a lot of other things you can do, but on Friday night, a majority of the time, people aren't inviting you to do things on the weekend that don't involve drinking."

As college students living in a utopia surrounded by other college students, sociality is part of our makeup. Paired with the nature of IV's social scene, so is drinking. "Like, why would we not go? There's always something to go to," said LaBang.

When partying in IV is made so routine, activities like drinking and smoking weed start to seem monotonous. This leads young adults to search for ways to transcend these "simple" methods of mind alteration, unveiling the downside that comes with being surrounded by an impenetrable party culture.

Ironically, the urge to escape routine is often why many students come to IV in the first place. Jonah Beck, a first-year Psychology student at Santa Barbara City College, recalled conversations with his roommates in which they admitted that they came to IV for the parties. "Some of them just came for the party scene," Beck said. "The school came along with that."

Yet, the call of DP on a Friday night is hard to ignore. The ancient spirits of Halloween parties and Floatopia linger in the atmosphere, a beckoning call to IV residents and beyond to join our utopic college town.

