

Saturday Night's Alright. But Just.

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Last Saturday I didn't do anything remarkable, but that unremarkability was cause for remark in itself. You see, this past weekend was the least remarkable weekend in a remarkably long streak of remarkable ones, which means that remarkably, I've been having remarkable weekends fairly often. Remarkable.



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Lately, great weekends have been more abundant than sleeping freshmen at LS1 lectures. I haven't had to do any planning. I haven't had to call anyone, I haven't had to set anything up, and I haven't had to feign injury or illness to get my friends to hang out with me. Whether it be a road trip to Cornell, a casual evening with friends in Scribner, or a grand pilgrimage across state lines for a night of concert-going, great weekends, like John Grisham novels and low expectations, have just come together recently.

And here's the thing that strikes me about all of this: it didn't used to be this way. I remember back in high school when nothing happened on Saturdays. The highlights of my weekends were new episodes of "Walker, Texas Ranger." The night was a success if I made it to the movies, or Barnes & Noble, even. Even a bad movie would do. Anything.

Actually, the beginning of my Saturday night inaction began long before high school, back in the sixth grade when I started playing hockey. It was normal for kids in grade school to have early morning athletic games; I can remember my youth soccer league played a few 8 a.m. games. Basketball had a few nines. Hockey took early to the extreme.

We'd leave the house at five in the morning, before the sun had even the slightest aspirations to rise. On my way out, I often got stuck on doorframes, end tables, stairways, corridors, or any other gap narrower than a refrigerator, as the bag that held my assorted shin guards, shoulder pads, skates, and gloves was many times wider than I was. I would stumble out of the house groggy eyed and yawning, uneven beneath the pull of gear twice my weight. Then, I'd tread warily across the treacherous icy driveway to my father's Jeep. On snowy roads, we'd fly over bumps and through blinking yellow intersections; the State of Maine had the good sense to realize that it was far too early to turn on the traffic lights.

Hockey games began at 6 a.m. precisely, three towns over. On any given day, we all have a certain amount of effort we're willing to put forth.

Saturdays, my contribution to life was over by 8 a.m. From then on, I was worthless. Saturday night's all right for sleep.

Thus began a long tradition of lame Saturdays. At some point during the middle of high school, I realized I was scrawny and little, came to my somewhat battered senses, and stopped playing the sport that had given me, among other things, a separated shoulder, a painfully bruised tailbone, and at least one occasion upon which I remembered how utterly exhausted I was, how disgustingly early it was, and promptly vomited in and on my helmet and gloves.

Even without hockey pushing it along, the streak lay unbroken for years. Sure, I didn't have something to exhaust me each and every Saturday morning, but that didn't suddenly make Wayne, Maine, population 1200, a thriving metropolis. While after I finished with hockey I had both the time and stamina to do something with the last blank square of my weekly calendar. So, the streak remained intact.

Intact, that is, until college.

I arrived here on a Tuesday. That Tuesday night was more exciting than most, if not all, of my Saturday nights back home. Hoards of us, eager freshmen, traveled down Clinton Street to the Mecca that was Stables, gaits brisk but unhurried by the cool September night. Most were a little confused, few knew the name of the house they were going to, and fewer still knew how to get there. Mostly, we just followed one-another, a long dribble of freshly minted students flowing from the dorms in south quad to the door at Stables, held together by surface tension and line of sight. We came. We saw. We paid \$5 for cups. We drank. We left.

Though it sounds unremarkable now, boring even, Stables beat the double mochaccino pants off of Barnes & Noble. College is exciting; there's no getting around it. Since that night, the vast majority of my Saturdays have been great, except for one time when I started reading F. Scott Fitzgerald's masterpiece "The Great Gatsby" after dinner, and couldn't put it down until well after three. I feel I have to share some of the blame for that Saturday, however. Another great Saturday could have fallen into my little collegiate lap just then, but I was probably too pre-occupied with Nick, Jay, Daisy, and Tom to take notice.

Which brings us full circle to last Saturday. I didn't have a wretched time, and I didn't have a great one. I had a Saturday pretty on par with those in my past: I sat around, I watched a movie, and that's OK. About halfway through - that's about one in the morning for anybody not adjusted to collegiate time yet - I came to the realization that a blah weekend was precisely what I needed; I hadn't had one in a while.

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