Who Gains from
Shared Governance?

KEVIN ZEVALLOS
CONTRIBUTOR

I love shared governance. I mean, why not? At Connecticut College, we pride ourselves in a “system of governance in which the perspectives of all groups are considered in the institution’s decision-making process.” I can rest easy knowing my perspective, my voice and those of more than 1800 other students are being represented. Last I checked, my peers and I thought exactly the same way on every issue, so there’s no need for me to worry.

But wait: what if, for some magical reason, I just so happen to find some disagreement or disagreement with what the College’s administrative body is up to? Or with the Student Government Association for that matter? Where does my voice come into play?

To clarify, for all those who haven’t heard of shared governance, it “introduces you to … what has always been there depending on your perspective. The discipline introduces you to … what has always been there but what people don’t really see.” Brown provides one example of this. Learning about ancient African history, he says, he realized how significant the influence of Africa has always been: “from how different cultures organize families, to the practice of circumcision; he emphasized that the African diaspora introduced practices that are “a huge part of multiple cultures.” As Professor Etokie says, “If people study the history, they will understand that what’s happening today is not new.”

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A Closer Look at Africana Studies
Important Major Receives Resurgence of Attention

ANDREW SHAW
ARTS EDITOR

Connecticut College has an Africana studies program. Though not well known, it is by no means new. It has been on the books for years and is being resurrected now because, as Africana studies major Maurice Timer ’17 says, “It needed to happen.” He explains, “Students wanted to be able to say that I graduated with an Africana Studies major or minor, and I took these classes. … [There was a] want and need for the major … to be here for students to take advantage of.”

The discipline of Africana studies itself arose from the same need. It “came out of a historical moment in the 1960s and 1970s when students, black students, were demanding a curriculum that addressed their needs,” says Courtney Baker, Professor of English and the director of the Africana studies program. The field is “interdisciplinary by nature,” combining “cultural studies and historical analysis, the arts and social sciences.” At Conn, this includes the following departments: Anthropology, Sociology, Philosophy, Art History, Dance, Music, Hispanic Studies, English, French, Film Studies, Economics, Education, Government, History and Human Development. Geographically, Professor Baker says, Africana studies is “global, covering … everywhere … black people exist.”

This breadth is due to the purpose of the major: to examine “the complexity of black existence,” as Nathalie Etoke, Professor of French and Africana studies, says. She emphasizes that “race is not a conversation. It’s the practice of daily life. … It’s life.” She says, “As long as you can produce culture,” one object of study in Africana studies, “you’re producing life – and you are raising life in spite of everything.”

The discipline “centers the experiences of black people, our cultural productions, and takes race, in particular blackness, as a serious critical lens and object of study,” says Professor Baker. It is political, “deeply connected to the politics of black life, both nationally and internationally.” Africana studies necessarily grapples with the question of “what it means to study black life in higher education.”

Daryl Brown ’17 offers one answer to this question, saying, “I think it could bring a new perspective to all students. When I got to college I felt I was cheated in high school [because] there was some information that was omitted and … [that] I wasn’t exposed to.” Africana studies, he says, “can provide exposure and … develop new perspectives – or better perspectives – about America [and] the world.”

The field is in some ways a challenge to Eurocentrism, recognizing that Eurocentrism, though it is often “taught like it [is] the foundation of all history,” is not “the only way to go.” It is “just one section of history,” Brown says.

The foundational course for the major is Africana Studies 201: Intro to Africana Studies. For Olivia Dodd ’17, now an Africana studies major, the course “was the first time that I had been acutely aware of how much history I had not been taught.” As she says, “This is the continent where humankind came from. … Why don’t I know anything about it?” In the course, she began to understand “that there are so many points of view and a lot of points of view that you will be able to hear and you won’t be able to hear” depending on your perspective. The discipline “introduces you to … what has always been there but what people don’t really see.”

Brown provides one example of this. Learning about ancient African history, he says, he realized how significant the influence of Africa has always been: “from how different cultures organize families, to the practice of circumcision; he emphasized that the African diaspora introduced practices that are “a huge part of multiple cultures.” As Professor Etokie says, “If people study the history, they will understand that what’s happening today is not new.”

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On This Year’s Commencement Choice

When the 2016 commencement speaker was announced, our staff hummed with approval. Yes. Amazing, a journalist, I guess what we’re doing must be important! Naturally we approved, and her appointment was welcomed, almost without question, by many of our peers as well. The news of Rukmini Callimachi’s nomination was met with an interest not unlike that generated by Seymour Hersch’s Oppenheimer lecture in 2014.

Admittedly, most of us hadn’t heard of Callimachi, which probably wasn’t uncommon among the student body unless you were a member of the search committee. Perhaps a reason for that lies in the easy admiration the public holds for investigative journalists – those intrepids who put their lives in jeopardy endeavoring to unearth the ‘truth.’

So we Googled her – and we were impressed. Callimachi’s stories bring life to news as if she were a fiction writer. One of her most recent pieces, ISIS and the Lonely Young American, in The New York Times, recounts the conversion experience of a young American girl solicited by ISIS recruiters – largely by way of Twitter. The story is angled to show you why she joined the extremist group, and to do it without the kind of rhetoric that would have you first point a finger at the convertee for even entertaining the idea.

Callimachi’s work is immensely important in the public sphere. More broadly, her writings have covered the rise and fall of extremist regimes in Africa, military dictatorships and the complexities of capitalism. They give voice to Afghan women and Somali pirates, in immensely different ways. Her work picks up the pieces of the post-colonial world and reassembles them with an intelligibility not bound to the prevailing narratives of Other characteristic to journalism. Her work is essential for us, being so far removed.

Oh, and did we mention that she’s also an award-winning poet? In 1998, Callimachi won the Keats-Shelley Award for her poem, The Anatomy of Flowers. Commencement Committee, kudos to you! If we had the space, we would have ran her poem, as well. Maybe we’ll run a couple when graduation nears.

Come Commencement this May, Rukmini’s address will most likely bring perspective, and life, to our own narrative in the same manner. Here’s to the Commencement Committee for all their good judgment, and to Rukmini, for agreeing to speak.

- Luca
On Sept. 30, in Ernst Common Room, Anthony Jack, Ph.D. Candidate in Sociology at Harvard University, examined the divergent socialization experiences of lower-income youths at a Connecticut College symposium.

His talk entitled, “(No) Harm in Asking: Class, Acquired Cultural Capital, and Academic Engagement at an Elite University,” was sponsored by the Dean of Inclusion and Equity. It was the first in a series of common hour events focused on the African-American experience. In exposing the layers of social stratification that exist within the neediest of minorities, Jack calls upon colleges to recognize the ways in which socioeconomic position corresponds to academic prowess on campuses.

Jack focused largely on how institutional practices can exacerbate the exclusion felt by a university’s most vulnerable students. Beginning in the late 1990s, several colleges adapted no-loan policies to remove the image of higher education as a bastion for the privileged; efforts to support students financially, however, may not prove far-reaching enough to close gaps resulting from social class distinctions. According to Jack, “colleges lag in preparing students for the ways in which socioeconomic position corresponds to the advantages that money...can buy.”

While Jack’s research reveals that, from 2003 to 2009, nearly half of all lower-income African-Americans who had matriculated at prestigious schools had attended private high school. Programs like Prep for Prep and A Better Chance, which place lower-income students in affluent private schools, can ease the transition of African-Americans to college; these students have learned the social and cultural norms necessary to seize opportunities in environments defined by the economically advantaged.

African-Americans with a degree from private schools are dubbed the “privileged poor.” Although they receive excellent educations, their acquired cultural capital is more indicative of academic success than the name of a high school. By contrast, African-American graduates of distressed public high schools, the so-called “doubly disadvantaged,” typically enter college with little exposure to environments where wealth sets the cultural tone. Although experience allows the “doubly disadvantaged” to regain footing with the “privileged poor,” navigating the social sphere takes time. As they struggle to understand the framework of their new world, the “doubly disadvantaged” lose access to social and academic networks.

To determine how class-based boundaries hinder assimilation at college, Jack interviewed over 100 “privileged poor” and “doubly disadvantaged” students at a “renowned university.” Jack emphasized the confidence of one interviewee, Ogun. Having escaped her troubled neighborhood to attend a predominantly white prep school, Ogun found the transition to college manageable. Because her high school required teachers to stay after hours, visiting a professor during office hours seemed natural. In her own words, Ogun felt “empowered to go talk to a professor and say, ‘I want to meet with you.’” Her school instilled in her that she’s allowed to do that and it’s actually [her] right.” When she struggled with a topic, Ogun had no qualms calling one instructor on his cellphone.

Alice, another student interviewed by Jack, however, faced unalloyed culture shock in her freshman year. At her public high school, students frequently skipped class, burned trashcans and engaged in brawls. She confessed that, because she’s “too intimidated or too afraid to go and talk to people,” her attendance at school-sponsored events is an anomaly. Her fear of college as an institution extends to professors; even when professors advise classes of their office hours, Alice questioned whether her presence is truly desired. If the “doubly disadvantaged” view professors as authority figures rather than facilitators, Jack notes, they shall lag behind their peers in cultural capital. One school official with whom Jack spoke admitted that the distribution of college awards is fueled by student-teacher relationships. “Students whom counselors don’t know, they’re just not in the mix,” the official commented. The benefits of learning to interact with persons in positions of power extend beyond accolades. Referencing a study conducted by Northwestern University, Jack explained that firms hire according to “cultural matching,” as well as skill. To gain entry to many higher-level professions, one must pass the “airport test.” For example, if stranded at an airport due to flight delay, a potential candidate should be able to converse at ease on topics of interest to a presumably upper-income co-worker.

To close the opportunity gaps at the university level, Jack indicates that legislators must first fashion policy to address “the entrenched structural inequalities that plague America’s forgotten neighborhoods and neglected public schools.” Patrick T. Sharkey, an associate professor at New York University, seems to confirm this view. He reports that the test scores for children of high poverty neighborhoods are significantly lower if a parent was raised in an impoverished area as well. To address the “multigenerational nature of inequality,” he says in a blog post, “the focus must move to durable urban policies.”

For the short-term, however, Jack encourages colleges to reexamine their current policies from a more nuanced lens. School should implement voluntary pre-orientation programs to guide low-income and minority students in their acclimatization. By allowing for constant contact among students and faculty, pre-orientation erodes social barriers. Keeping the dining halls open during spring break, schools can also ensure that low-income students unable to venture home can eat healthfully and be able to function at optimal levels. Such measures guard against the possibility that “elite colleges will continue to privilege the privileged while neglecting those not fortunate enough to gain exposure to the advantages that money...can buy.”

A Cappella • Picnic on the Green • Family

FALL WEEKEND
Oct. 9 – 11, 2015
Connecticut College

Harvestfest • Theater • Camel Athletics
SAADYA CHEVAN
STAFF WRITER

“You as students of human thought and action have expressed a desire to continue upon the high paths of history...” With these words the first induction ceremony of the History Department’s new Phi Alpha Theta honor society begins. Starting this year, senior history majors with qualifying GPAs will have the opportunity to be inducted into the Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society. The addition of the honor society will greatly benefit those who become members, especially after graduation. Such benefits include networking opportunities as well as graduate scholarships and awards.

Senior Allison Blanning, a member of the History Department Student Advisory Board who helped form the society, is excited to use the society as a resource after graduation. “They have really good fellowships after you graduate, and a lot of really good connections. It’s being part of a history fraternity essentially. You get to meet a lot of people who are interested in the same things, and it’s really good for networking. You put it on your resume and then someone says ‘oh, me too!’”

The benefits of Phi Alpha Theta are highly apparent here at Connecticut College. Professors Lisa Wilson, the chair of the history department, and Ann Marie Davis, also of the history department, are members of the society. Professor Wilson even won a book award in 2000 for her book: _Le Heart of a Man: The Domestic Life of Men in Colonial New England_.

Interestingly, the Connecticut College chapter of Phi Alpha Theta was formed mainly through the efforts of students. It was Blanning who conceived the idea of forming the society. She found out about the opportunities it offered while researching possible CELS internships last year. She then pitched the idea of forming a Connecticut College chapter of Phi Alpha Theta at a Student Advisory Board meeting. The board’s advisor, Professor Fred Paxton, asked the other faculty in the department what they thought of starting a chapter and was met with great enthusiasm.

The next step was submitting an application to the Phi Alpha Theta honor society itself. This turned out to be “a kind of laborious project” according to Paxton. Since Professor Paxton was the advisor to the Student Advisory Board, he was charged with gathering the necessary materials needed for the application, which he said included gathering signatures from various people at the college (history department chair, president of the College, etc.), course descriptions of history department classes and the curriculum vitae of the history department faculty. One of the most important moments in the process for Professor Paxton came when he met with the SAB to discuss what the entry requirements for the chapter would be. For Professor Paxton this was an opportunity to allow students to direct the process of the chapter’s formation. Professor Paxton will serve as the faculty advisor of the chapter once it is formed because of his intense involvement in the application process.

The induction ceremony is scheduled to take place at 5:30 on Oct. 10 in the Chu Room of Shaen Library as part of Fall Weekend. At that time eight members of the Class of 2015, who were unable to be inducted in May because the chapter’s application had not been accepted at that time, will be inducted into the society as part of a ceremony that will bring the new chapter into existence.

Professor Wilson, Davis and Paxton as well as President Katherine Bergeron will also be inducted as honorary charter members. A professor from Roger Williams University will be in attendance to validate that the ceremony took place in the proper fashion.

The ceremony itself is very strict. “They say unless you read [the script] word for word you are not constituted” says Professor Paxton showing an incredibly detailed seven page script, the main part of which calls for six people to read and represent the six “historical ages”: Prehistoric, Ancient, Medieval, Early Modern, Contemporary and Future. “It’s great in its bombastic rhetorical qualities,” says Professor Paxton. “It’s a little bit like Mozart’s _The Magic Flute_, where they have the initiation ceremony into the Masonic group.”

When asked about whether he will be able to arrange for some of the finer stage directions to be executed properly, Professor Paxton replies that no, they will not be able to light candles in the Chu Room.

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

“Sometimes,” Brown says, Africana Studies is “treated as if: ‘Oh, that’s the black stuff. It doesn’t have any connection to me,’” That is incorrect. Each of us “[is] irrelevant if [we] can not relate to … other people,” as Professor Etoke says. Africana studies is “not just for black students,” David Canton, Professor of History and Interim Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion says. “It’s for all students.” And “it’s like any other major.”

“Sometimes,” Brown says, “I would like Africana Studies to be held at the same validity as any other [major].” Brown spoke the frustration of feeling that his major was being trivialized.

Brown acknowledges a greater student demand than he initially expected. “When they introduced this, I thought it was just going to be me and all the other black kids.” But the major has a wider draw. There were “tons of people interested in minorng and majoring,” a result, Brown says, that “shows … how the campus feels.”

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The major is here out of need, but what does it mean to study Africana studies at Conn? The “much-desired” and “urgently-needed” program is in part a response to lived participation. Both Professor Baker and Dean Canton single out the Africana studies faculty representation of any program or department on campus,” Professor Baker says. “We’re in talks … with [the administration] to get a clear indication of the institution’s investment in the program.”

Alumni and trustees are helping in this process, “[getting] involved in strong calls for the administration to invest in the work of developing curricular and social resources for black students, faculty and staff on campus,” says Brown. Investing in Africana studies is in line with the College’s rhetoric of interdisciplinary and full participation. Both Professor Baker and Dean Canton single out the Africana studies program for the inclusiveness of its faculty representation. “We have the most diverse faculty representation of any program or department on campus,” Professor Baker says.

The students and faculty are excited about the future of Africana studies at Conn. “I see a great future ahead of us,” Brown says. “I imagine in … ten years this is a huge department … I think this is going to go into Connecticut College’s history. Because my passion for this I definitely see in a ton of freshmen … People have this passion. Black, White, Latino, whatever, they have this passion.”

Meanwhile, Africana Studies 201, which is open to majors and non-majors, will continue to be taught. Sign up for this spring.

Friday Night Folk at All Souls presents

**Andrew Hardin & Jeannie Burns In Concert!**

Friday, October 16, 2015
All Souls UU Congregation
19 Jay Street, New London, CT
Doors 7:00 pm ~ Concert 7:30 pm

Tickets:
$20 at door, $17 advance,
$10 students/active military

www.fridaynightfolk.org
Finding Conns
Commencement Speaker

SAADYA CHEVAN
STAFF WRITER

In a recent e-mail to the Connecticut College community, President Katherine Bergeron announced the selection of investigative journalist Rukmini Maria Callimachi as the keynote speaker of the College’s 98th commencement, scheduled for May 22, 2016. Callimachi was born in Romania, but fled from the country to Switzerland with her mother and grandmother when she was five, and then came to the United States when she was ten. Callimachi has earned an impressive record in her career. She is a two time Pulitzer Prize winner who currently covers Islamic extremism for the New York Times, for which she wrote a series of articles called “Underwriting Jihad.” This series explored how ransoms paid by European governments became one of the main sources of funding for Al-Qaeda. Before joining the New York Times, Callimachi worked for the Associated Press as its West Africa Bureau chief from 2006-2014. She also covered the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina while working for the AP. On Callimachi, Ben Halvorsen ’16, the co-chair of the 2016 Commencement Committee said, “I don’t know what kind of speech she’s going to give, but you know it’s going to be a big one.” The process of selecting a commencement speaker is somewhat secretive, in part to prevent the College from potentially offending any of the people who are considered for or offered the position. Each year, the student body votes for commencement speakers, a poll is conducted to see who they would like new. Every year in the fall, a committee is formed consisting of faculty, administrators and students in the junior class. The committee meets to make recommendations about potential commencement speakers for the next academic year’s commencement (so the committee formed for the fall of 2015 will be making recommendations for the commencement speaker in 2017 who will be the commencement speaker at the current junior class’ graduation). The students on the committee consist of the junior class president, who chairs the committee, and four members of the junior class who represent various interest groups on campus.

The process has been controversial in the past. The most recent controversy came a couple years ago over the selection of Louis B. Susman, former United States Ambassador to the United Kingdom, as the 2012 commencement speaker. Some students felt that Susman did not properly embody the spirit of the college, and petitioned the administration via change.org to make the selection process more transparent. This resulted in the number of students seated on the committee being increased from two to five, and the inclusion of the class president as part of the final selection process for the speaker. The committee is briefed on potential speakers. Current college policy dictates that Connecticut College does not pay its commencement speakers to speak at the College. Speakers are awarded an honorary degree and are compensated for travel and lodging expenses. Because of this the College uses its connections to try and identify potential speakers, says Halvorsen. “One of the College researchers does all this research on alumni connections and all the other relationships the College has, so it’s like this is an alumni’s good friend, this is an alumni’s husband or something like that,” says Halvorsen. Another method the committee uses to identify potential speakers is soliciting recommendations from the junior class via e-mail based on connections that members may have to potential speakers. However, Halvorsen notes that, “Generally those connections are kind of loose at best.” Both Halvorsen and fellow co-chair Bonnie Wells, the secretary of Connecticut College, believe that not paying the commencement speaker actually benefits the College. “You get people who actually care. There have been some really good ones in the past. One was a really famous dude, but he was also the father of an alum, and he really spent his time doing his research about that grade, and so he made references to things that only the kids in that grade would understand and know, so he got a lot of laughs. People really appreciate that stuff,” says Halvorsen. According to Wells, most similar small liberal arts colleges have the same policy for compensating their commencement speakers.

The committee also tries to conduct outreach to the junior class. As the list of potential speakers is narrowed to people the committee thinks would be actual good choices in the poll, the committee asks the junior class to see who they would like to have the possibility they feel would make a good speaker. Halvorsen notes that unfortunately, there is often not very good turnout for the poll. He recalls being told by a college statistician to try to aim for a 50% response rate. According to Halvorsen, “The people who have strong opinions vote, and I guess the people who don’t, don’t. The people who have strong opinions, they’re going to pick a candidate who reflects their issues, so that’s why normally you get a lot of political possibilities.” However, the poll does have an effect on the commencement speaker list. Halvorsen notes that some potential speakers who do well in the poll may have been overlooked by the committee while others who do poorly may have been favored by the committee. This can effect whether or not the committee recommends those people as speakers.

Once the committee’s work is completed at the end of the fall semester, a meeting is scheduled with senior administrators, the president of the College and the president of the junior class for sometime during the spring semester. During the meeting, the participants review the committee’s recommendations, and express their opinions to the president about the various possible speakers. Ultimately, the final decision about who the commencement speaker will be is made by the president of the college. A letter of invitation is sent to the person who is selected. By the time the College receives an acceptance it is usually the summer or fall before commencement. If the speaker accepts in the summer, he or she is not announced until the fall once students have returned to campus. •

Strategic Planning Committee Announced
Work Begins to Plan for the Future

DANA SORKIN
CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

On Sept. 30, President Katherine Bergeron announced the final list of the students, staff and faculty members who would make up this year’s Strategic Planning Committee. John Nugent, director of institutional research and planning, will staff the committee, and the school will also work with outside consulting firm Kerling and Associates. K&A has worked with numerous other schools in past years, including other NESCACs such as Colby College and Hamilton College, according to their website. The committee will be meeting bi-weekly, with frequent visits from the K&A consultants.

In a follow-up e-mail to the campus community after her initial announcement of the committee, President Bergeron explained that the committee will work towards “identifying our goals and priorities for the next five to 10 years. The process will engage the whole community: staff, faculty, trustees, alumni, parents and friends of the College. It is one of the most ambitious projects we will undertake this year.”

Grace Juster ’16, one of the students selected for the committee and the president for the class of 2016, took the Voice via email that by the end of the year the goal is to have a strategy for the future of Connecticut College and a plan to best emphasize the assets and opportunities found here.”

According to the Strategic Planning Process page found on the College’s website, the work of the committee will be split into three categories during the course of the year. First, the “engagement, information gathering and planning phase,” which will occur from August-December 2015. This phase will consist of interviews, surveys and general data and information gathering plans. To interact with the larger campus community, the committee has planned larger open forums, similar to the “town hall” style meetings held in previous years when the curriculum reform was underway. Juster explained: “We are in a data gathering stage and need to hear your voices to make changes.”

Phase two will begin in January 2016 and last until early April. During this time, the committee, and the larger College community, will review the findings from the previous phase, as well as continue to refine the goals and objectives of the plan going into the final phase.

The final phase will begin in April, and will end with the academic year. “Implementation/action plan completion” will see the handoff of the plan to the Implementation/Action Planning Group, and ultimately the final review and approval of the strategic plan that will lead the College into the future. Juster stressed the importance that seniors will play in throughout the year as the plan is formed, calling it an “opportunity for our class to reflect on what went well or what could have gone better during our time here and make Conn the best it can be for future classes.”

The other student representatives on the Strategic Planning Committee are Roxanne Low ’19, Gil Mejia ’17 and Jake Varsano ’18. •
Modern Research:
Forming (and Exercising)
Your Own Political Opinion

MAIA HIBBETT
OPINIONS EDITOR

Over the summer, I nodded my head half-heartedly while a friend of mine lamented the fact that, due to bureaucratic institutions like the Electoral College, her vote would never count. She pointed out that as a liberal in Massachusetts, the general consensus in her state would usually swing in the general direction of her favor, and, therefore, she saw no need to vote. Of course, in the last gubernatorial race, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts picked Republican Charlie Baker over Democrat Martha Coakley. I can count off the top of my head ten Massachusetts friends of mine who, misjudging the political climate in the region, elected not to vote in the race despite being of age.

As I interpret it, our generation’s political apathy stems mainly from two sources: disillusionment—which I can understand—and misinformation. I find the latter of these harder to excuse, especially when it provides older generations with grounds for dismissing the former. Most of us can likely agree that when we log on to any social media service—primarily Facebook—we see an onslaught of political posts, whether from activist friends or conservative uncles. A report for the Pew Research Center in June 2015 by Amy Mitchell, Jeffrey Gottfried and Katerina Eva Matsa notes that 61% of 36 outlets featured in the survey, Millennials reported being less aware than Gen Xers and Baby Boomers about two: BuzzFeed and Google News. Awareness between generations proved fairly equal when concerning the other 16 sources.

By presenting this data, I do not mean to discount all of the news sources trusted by our generation—I have often been one to turn to The Daily Show for an update on current events, and I would definitely listen to Jon Stewart over Bill O’Reilly, though the former is a comedian and the latter, technically, is not. The danger, however, of relying more on social media for news is that consumers of social media news might end up voting in accordance with a social trend rather than their actual beliefs.

This issue has an easy fix: actually clicking on the articles your friends share. While all news outlets are subject to biases, reading—or even scanning—all articles provides a better insight than simply reading headlines and Facebook comments. Additionally, we can then read about the same topic from different angles in other sources, allowing us to get closer to the truth.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8
What exactly are we not supposed to do in our dorm rooms? We have a “absolutely no illegal substances” policy, a tobacco-free campus policy, a non-smoking policy in residence halls, and a non-smoking policy in classrooms and libraries, among others. These policies are not new, they are old news, and they seem to be in place to serve a particular goal: to prevent people from inhaling secondhand smoke. Despite the obvious, deadly and ignored health threats: tobacco.

Smoking has long been considered a social activity, but it is also a health hazard. It is estimated that smoking causes 1 in 5 deaths worldwide. In the United States, smoking is the leading cause of preventable death. Despite this, the majority of smokers continue to smoke. This is because smoking is addictive, and it is difficult to quit. Moreover, the tobacco industry has spent billions of dollars on advertising to attract new smokers.

The first time I smokes cigarettes was at 16, when I was introduced to them by a friend. I started smoking because I thought it was cool, and because I wanted to fit in with my friends. But soon I realized that smoking was not as enjoyable as I had thought.

I have tried multiple times to quit smoking, but I have not been successful. I have tried nicotine patches, gum, and other medications, but nothing seems to work. I have also tried non-smoking methods, such as using E-cigarettes, but I have not been able to stop smoking completely.

I believe that smoking is a bad habit that needs to be eliminated. It is not just a personal choice, but it also has a social impact. It affects not only the smoker, but also others around them. It is important to educate people about the dangers of smoking and to provide them with support to quit.

The tobacco industry has a lot of power and influence. They spend billions of dollars on advertising and lobbying to keep their products on the market. They also use tactics to prevent people from quitting, such as offering free samples and discounts. It is important to resist these temptations and to make healthy choices.

I believe that it is time for the government to take action against the tobacco industry. They should impose stricter regulations on smoking and provide resources for people to quit. I also believe that it is important for individuals to make healthy choices and to resist the temptation to smoke.

I urge everyone to consider the risks of smoking and to make the choice to quit. It is not an easy decision, but it is a decision that can save your life.
While there are nuances in regards to student experiences here, there are also certain experiences that can and do impact us all and thus become more personal in our desire for real solutions.

Don’t fret, because the College promises: “there is usually little to no deliberation before we make decisions here. Rather than distant representatives setting a course that affects us here, there are also certain experiences that can and do impact us all and thus become more personal in our desire for real solutions.

If we are going to be sincere about having or building a democratic world, then we must learn democracy at school too. If we don’t learn democracy at school, where are we supposed to learn it?

Participatory democracy includes restructuring student government along lines of inclusive politics, and this can extend far beyond PB. When speaking of reconfiguring decision-making apparatuses, I think we have to talk about how faculty, non-teaching staff and students can play a significantly larger role in decision-making (if they cannot take most or all administrative power). Today, we have the example of Mondragon University, in Spain, which operates as a university cooperative, with students, teachers and non-teaching staff all operating the university together. I am not claiming that PB or other measures of participatory democracy will fix every single problem. However, I do believe that when the greater campus community has control over funds, we can then shape our priorities, collectively. Solutions should not have to be decided by elected administrators who, for the most part, do not interact with many students on this campus and have only been working here for one to two years, with the exception of Lee Hisle, Ulysses Hammond (who is retiring) and Paul Maroni (who is also retiring).

It’s time we get past what’s best for “me” and start thinking about what’s best for us. Yes, that would mean longer meetings, as anything that is participatory is inherently longer, but this is a small price to pay for bridging the many social divides here on campus. Participatory democracy is inherently longer, but this is a small price to pay for bridging the many social divides here on campus.

We are a community, aren’t we? It’s time we get past what’s best for “me” and start thinking about what’s best for us. Yes, that would mean longer meetings, as anything that is participatory is inherently longer, but this is a small price to pay for bridging the many social divides here on campus.

The word ‘public’ is usually top-down. Therefore, certain referendum questions are often phrased in obscure and confusing manners. Even though many people ask, “where is all my tuition money going?” they do not pursue the question further.

PB involves a four-step process. First, identifying and diagnosing a problem, then deliberating, discussing and proposing potential solutions after implementing projects and monitoring the completion of the project. As an example, let’s say the campus community recognized we have limited access to healthier food options in the dining halls. The campus community determined that replacing Just Mayo, a vegan alternative to mayonnaise, with the mayonnaise we have now would be a healthier alternative, both for our stomachs and the environment.

This would lead to voting on whether or not to supply Just Mayo in the dining hall. Finally, members of the campus community would directly and publicly engage with the mayonnaise we have now would be a healthier alternative, both for our stomachs and the environment. Instituting PB can serve as a way to build trust between student organizations and SGA, create stronger transparency over the allotment of funds to clubs, learn about the common goals of each club and finally establish a collective dialogue over yearly academic priorities.

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The Continued Evolution of Empowering Women on Campus
As Told By Vaginas becomes the WE Initiative

SAMANTHA WEISENTHAL
CONTRIBUTOR

For individuals who are oppressed by society, a community of conversation can bring relief, self expression and power. This community must live within the ideals of empathy and sympathy, and it must feel the self expression that will in turn lead to equity and compassion for each separate individual.

The Vagina Monologues by Eve Ensler provided an incredibly relevant voice for women during the late 1990s, when the work was created. Ensler explored uncharted territory, from the smell of the vagina to the hair that dresses the “down there.”

While we value Ensler’s work, as a feminist movement we are beginning to realize that not every woman is born with a vagina. Beyond this, some parts of The Vagina Monologues stereotyped different parts of society through sweeping statements and metaphors that made cliché the struggle feminist movements as a whole are trying to fight against.

As Alia Roth ’14 stated in her article for Thought Catalogue, “...when a production that has been performed year after year in our community has resulted in the boredom of the audience, the falsification of our generation’s stories, the silencing of some students and triggering of emotions, it is time for the re-production of this show on our campus to end; the Connecticut College community has moved on.” The Vagina Monologues no longer spoke to the experience of the women we as a community try to empower, and therefore it was time to try something new.

It is important to acknowledge that certain aspects of The Vagina Monologues stayed relevant. There were several reasons why we kept the word “vagina” in the name last year. Juliette Verrengia ’16, the technical producer of this year’s show and a member of last year’s executive board, said, “for the first year it was important to keep the word [vagina] in the title to keep the show congruent with The Vagina Monologues. Now that we are more established the word vagina is not as important to have directly in the name.”

Although we have changed the individual monologues performed in the show, the overall intention of the show remains. The empowerment of hearing a woman’s story through the voice of a fellow woman who can empathize with the experiences of others has always been the driving force of the production. What feels even more empowering is that we are reading the stories of the women with whom we attend class, go out, and eat meals. The ability to not feel ashamed based on personal female experience is something we as a collective try to practice.

Verrengia added: “Many cis-gendered women find strength from feeling comfortable outwardly saying the word vagina,” and for this reason, we wanted to keep the word in the title.

However, through further discussion as a group and a community, we began to realize that by using the word vagina we were limiting our audience of women. “It would be detrimental to ignore the conversations about being exclusive to some individuals... There are other things that are more important to women than having a vagina, and a lot of the things we go through may or may not be routed in that.” We as a community accept every woman no matter how controversial her womanhood may seem.

So now, as a community on a mission to legitimize the experiences of women, we have become something new yet again: The Women’s Empowerment (WE) Initiative. We chose this name for several reasons. As Mattie Barber-Bockelman ’16, the reading committee chair in charge of reviewing and selecting submitted monologues, put it: “It was most striking to me that this group was a vehicle for women’s mobilization on the campus, that’s what we wanted to name the project to reflect. The word initiative and the connotation it personally makes it more active. By making it an initiative type less stagnant and more progress based.” Being a feminist medium on this campus means that we are here to express all the stories of women that have been oppressed by the patriarchy. We are here to empower women, to take a stand, to live in sisterhood and to make a difference. “This is what we are and what we live. It’s not just about what we are saying it’s about what we are doing,” Barber-Bockelman continued.

The show we create will never be the same show twice. The artistry and power of the community we all feel so blessed to be a part of surprises us each time we read or perform these monologues. As a woman on this campus I could not feel more blessed to have a sisterhood who I know understands some part of my experience being a woman. Every woman has a voice in the WE Initiative, and at the end of the day, I think that’s what Eve Ensler would want.

Now to File an Incident Report
Step by Step Instructions on the New System

SARAH ROSE GRUSZECZKI
OPINIONS EDITOR

How to File an Incident Report

Step by Step Instructions on the New System

1. Go to camelweb.conncoll.edu. 
2. On the top of the page, there is a tab which includes the option “incident reporting” on the far right. Click this.
3. Fill out the form with all the information that you have about the incident. It is crucial to include the names of all those involved and provide a detailed description in the space provided. In the description, make sure to use names (not pronouns) when describing student involvement and be sure to include everything you witnessed. If you have emails, pictures, or graphics which provide further information or evidence about the incident there is a space to include this information as well.
4. Press submit. Your report will be reviewed both by the Interim Dean of Equity and Inclusion and The Office of Student Life, after which the appropriate action will be taken. You may be asked for more information as necessary but your commitment to keeping our community safe will be sincerely appreciated.

Incident Reporting:
These reports may be used by faculty, staff, or students to report violations or a general issue. This form is received by the Office of Student Life. This form should only be completed when there is no suspected bias involved and is also available under the “incident reporting” tab on camelweb.

Sexual Misconduct Anonymous Reporting Form:
According to the college handbooks, this form “may be used by students to submit an anonymous report of sexual misconduct. The information provided on this form is used for the College’s Annual Security report and to inform our understanding of the prevalence of such incidents. The person submitting this form may remain anonymous and should not personally identify anyone involved. When you choose to submit a report, it is important to understand that anonymous reporting limits the College’s ability to follow up on the incident. This form is received by the Senior Associate Dean of Student Life and the Title IX Coordinator and may also be accessed through camelweb under the incident reporting tab.”

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual misconduct, Darcie Folsom, Director of Sexual Violence Prevention and Advocacy, is an excellent person to speak with. If you have any questions or concerns about an incident, she is a completely confidential resource. Darcie’s think SAFE interns Anna Marshall ’16, Juliette Verrengia ’16 and Erin Moran ’16 are additional contacts to discuss incidents of sexual misconduct and possible courses of action.

Darcie’s office can be reached at 860-439-2219 during business hours. She can be contacted after-hours through campus safety or the administrator on-call. If you would like to contact Darcie, you can also reach out to the floor governor or housefloor on call and they will gladly direct you. Darcie’s office is located in the hallway on the second floor of Cross in room 222.
THE COFFEE CLOSET

is expecting!

Come visit our new baby “The Walk-In,” over in Harkness. Opening Fall Weekend.
The Lyman Allyn Art Museum, located just off the south end of campus, currently has three temporary exhibits on view. All three are worth the short walk, and as Connecticut College students, the Lyman Allyn is free for us to enter with our school-issued ID. The temporary exhibits take up almost the entire second floor of the museum, and each shows a different way identity is expressed and explored.

Launchpad of the American Theater: The O’Neill Since 1964 takes up two rooms on the second floor. The first room is small and dark, featuring a screen flashing quotes from myriad celebrities and artists who knew and loved the O’Neill Theater Center. Every quote says something about how the theater was a safe haven for them, a place where myriad celebrities and artists who knew and loved the O’Neill Theater Center. Every quote says something about how the theater was a safe haven for them, a place where they could create, learn and challenge each other in an otherwise ruthless industry. Industrial looking shelves stacked with worn out plays and silver framed photos of celebrities are shoved in the corner. The corner seemed out of place. It was the kind of place I expected to find myself in during a theater professor’s office hours in Palmer.

The second room is the largest of the three current featured exhibits at the Lyman Allyn. One of Enders’ largest paintings is the first thing you see coming up the stairs to the second floor, and two more paintings line the short hallway leading to three long gallery rooms. Enders’ work is diverse. Some of it is childlike in the best sense of the word, capturing life in its simplest and most innocent form. Some of it is complex. She mixes her blues with pinks, oranges, greens and reds to give her work the same chilling depth as ice. She paints everything from landscapes to plants to abstract thought. Most of her paintings are oil on linen, but she uses watercolor and pencil with the same mastery. There is even a fourth room, small and dark, with only two little benches, that features a slideshow of photographs on the far wall. Enders selected the photographs herself. They are sketches from her various travels, showing how she keeps a sort of paint journal to remember the feel and spirit of a place so that she can paint it — and do justice to it — later on. Charlotte Kotik, curator of contemporary art at the Brooklyn Museum, describes Enders’ work as a place where “representation and a nod to abstraction happily coexist.”

Each exhibit focuses on individual expression and identity in different ways, from the introspective and focused portraits, to the art of expression through theater at the O’Neill, to the way that Elizabeth Enders connects her innermost thoughts to aspects of nature and landscape. Identity can be as focused as a photograph or as abstract as Enders’ oil painting Languages:Peel/Harbor/Sky. The Lyman Allyn is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10A.M. to 9P.M. Admission is free to Conn students. Take a walk over.
In Palmer 202, “Disgraced” Takes Center Stage

MOLLIE REID
NEWS EDITOR

Upon walking into Palmer 202, audiences of Wig and Candle’s production of Ayad Akhtar’s Disgraced see two figures frozen in place, situated in a well-furnished apartment, ready to begin the play. One figure, Amir Kapoor, portrayed by Ramzi Kassis ’17, is a corporate lawyer at a large firm specializing in mergers and acquisitions. Amir, who was born in Pakistan and raised Muslim, has actively chosen to assimilate into New York life and longs to be made partner at the firm. His relationship to Islam, as the 90-minute play unfolds, becomes more complicated as discussions of faith, racial profiling, 9/11 and other issues and historical moments, develop.

The other figure who shares the stage with Amir is his wife, Emily, portrayed by Kristina Harrod ’16. Emily, a white painter, is fascinated by Islamic traditions and art. She seeks to integrate the culture and history into her own work, which is to be presented in an upcoming, high profile show.

In the first scene of Disgraced, Emily encourages Amir to engage in a court case involving a local imam who has been accused of working with a terrorist organization. Her sentiments about Amir’s involvement are shared by his nephew, Abe Jensen (born in Pakistan and raised Muslim, has actively chosen to assimilate into New York life and longs to be made partner at the firm) who is the photographer; and Cat Boyle ’16 was the artist for the show.

Additional reporting by Dana Sorkin ’16.}

Students to Perform “Elephant’s Graveyard” on Fall Weekend

ANDREW SHAW
ARTS EDITOR

To open their season, the Connecticut College Theater Department is performing George Brant’s play Elephant’s Graveyard over Fall Weekend. The story is based on an incredible historical event: the 1916 hanging of an elephant – yes, an elephant – in a small Tennessee town (this is the only known case). According to the script, the story “[explores] the deep-seated American craving for spectacle, violence and revenge.”

In advance of the show, The College Voice wanted to learn more about the process and effort that went into bringing this story to life. The Voice spoke to Lana Richards ’16, Assistant Director, and Brittany Baltay ’16, Stage Manager, via email to learn more about what it took to produce such a unique show.

The College Voice: What have some of the best moments in putting together the production of Elephant’s Graveyard? Some of the most challenging?

LR and BB: Time is always the biggest challenge when putting on shows at Connecticut College. We started rehearsing the second week of school, I think, so you always wish you could have more time to experiment and play with the show.

It’s been really exciting to work with Caz Liske, our guest director from Moscow. [Editor’s note: Cazimir Liske teaches at Moscow Art Theater, National Theater Institute.]

“We’ve been doing these improvisational exercises called études that … most of us were unfamiliar with until now. It’s been a great learning experience to work with someone outside of our department who can bring a fresh perspective to the theater.

TCV: Without giving too much away, can you elaborate on some of the themes and messages you’re hoping the audience takes away after seeing the show?

LR and BB: In our society there is a large motivation to join the status quo or go along with majority opinion, even if that majority isn’t the “right” thing to do. This play addresses that sort of mob mentality as well as passive bystanders, and how dangerous those things can be, especially when left without intervention. The show depicts a community in crisis, which was partly why the show was chosen in the first place – in response to the events surrounding race that happened on campus last spring.

TCV: What are some of the more unique aspects of this show that sets it apart from other productions Conn has put on in the past?

LR and BB: For one, the staging is pretty different from a show you might normally see at Conn. It’s not the typical living room drama or period piece. The script allows for a lot of creativity in terms of movement and staging, so there are a lot of really exciting and dynamic moments, sometimes more like choreography than regular stage blocking. Also the whole cast is going to be in black and white makeup. In general the design for the show is pretty spectacular; we’re still in tech right now putting the elements together but you can already tell that it’s going to look great.

There will be four shows, all in Tansill Theater: October 9 and 10 at 7:30 P.M., and October 10 and 11 at 2 P.M. Tickets are available in Tansill one hour prior to the performance or at the box office in Palmer.

Additional reporting by Dana Sorkin ’16.
Baseball's Biggest Time of the Year

Thoughts on a Second Wild Card

PETER BURDGE
SPORTS EDITOR

Years from now, we will be looking at Major League Baseball’s second Wild Card as a blessing. We will wonder how the game’s postseason ever existed without it. It opens the field of playoff contenders and promises the excitement, intensity and buzz that many think baseball lacks. And yet, hardly anyone in baseball likes it.

Beginning in 1994, MLB included one Wild Card team from each league into its playoff system. Those two teams joined the six division winners to make an even eight-team bracket. But since then, teams have started to fight for Wild Card spots, with nearly all year, Pittsburgh had to put up a fight with St. Louis to brush past the Wild Card spot, making the regular season more important and leaving two teams to duke it out down the stretch in September.

Those arguments are not unfair, but are perhaps misguided. There may be too many bad teams in a game’s “playoff hunt,” but this new system makes room for teams to improve. On September 1, there were four teams within five games of the second Wild Card spot. The second team, the Anaheim Angels, had a 66-66 record. Not great, but not terrible. Anaheim was 3.5 games out of the second Wild Card at this point, and a whole seven games behind the Yankees, who held the first Wild Card spot. In the old Wild Card system, Anaheim would be out of contention. Picking up seven games on a team in one month is near impossible. 3.5 games is a lot easier.

Anaheim finished the season within a hair’s breadth of the playoffs, losing out to Houston on the last day of the regular season. With only one Wild Card spot, Anaheim would have been eliminated from playoff contention far earlier. They may have had a .500 record in early September, but they made a run, finishing with a respectable 86 wins. If they were out of contention at that point, the room to make a run would not have been there. Their season would have effectively ended much earlier, and they would have packed up their bags. Mediocrity in early September does not do a bad team make.

But, those curmudgeons say, forget about the Angels. Wouldn’t it be more exciting to have all of these teams fight for one spot? When the top two Wild Card teams wrap up their places in the postseason, there’s nothing else to watch. Those two teams should contend for one spot.

Maybe, but doesn’t this format also make winning the division more important? A team winning its division means that it gets to skip the Wild Card Game and can move on securely into the first round of the playoffs. In the old system, it didn’t matter how a team got into the postseason—as long as a team made it, they had an essentially equal chance of succeeding. This new system puts a premium on division titles and makes these races much more exciting.

Even though the Blue Jays and Yankees appeared as locks to make the playoffs back in August, their fight for the American League East has been a must-see offensive slugfest.

In the National League, the playoffs have also been a sight to behold. The New York Mets and the St. Louis Cardinals are both in first place in the West, and the New York Mets, the St. Louis Cardinals, the Chicago Cubs, the Pittsburgh Pirates and the Los Angeles Dodgers all have their spots.

Representing the American League, the Blue Jays and Royals have not just clinched playoff spots but have also secured their division titles. The teams fighting for the three remaining spots are all American League West teams. The Texas Rangers, who are currently in first place in the West, are the top pick to win the division. The other teams are most likely fighting for Wild Card spots but could trump the Rangers if the Rangers have a meltdown at the end of the season. It certainly would not be the first time an upset happened. At the moment, it seems like there is one spot left in the Wild Card, and the Angels and Astros will be fighting over it because the Yankees have a three game lead over both for the first Wild Card spot.

Once the playoffs begin, the Kansas City Royals will be the toughest team to beat in the American League. Their offense, led by the young Eric Hosmer, will not let last season repeat itself when they lost to the Giants in the World Series. They have a young and energetic lineup that can hit for power, hit for average and steal bases. Even with pitcher Greg Holland shut down for the postseason, the Royals still have a powerful bullpen filled with young arms that throw very hard. In October baseball, hard throwing relief pitchers have always had success.

In the National League, the playoffs are set. The Chicago Cubs and Pittsburgh Pirates will battle in a one game Wild Card playoff. The last time the Cubs made a run in the playoffs, Chicago fan Steve Bartman was terrorized after he made a game (and history) altering catch and went into hiding. So who knows what will happen this time around. Lead by ace John Lester and Jake Arrieta, the Cubs have the pitching and the talent to beat any National League team. Garret Cole, Pittsburgh’s best pitcher, and the Pirates will have to compete with their tough rivals. But seeing how Cole was unable to participate in last year’s playoffs, he will be ready and fired up for what will be an amazing one game playoff between the two Central Division teams.

Everyone is going to make the argument that the St. Louis Cardinals are the best team in the National League, which is why I will not. Rather I will propose a team that can beat them. If you watched the All-Star game last summer, the first thing you remember was Jacob Degrom’s ten pitch inning where he made the American League lineup look like a team of tee-ballers. The New York Mets, guided by their trio of young aces, Degrom, Harvey and Syndergaard, will defeat the Cardinals in the NLCS and ultimately win the World Series because of great pitching and timely hitting by players like David Wright and Yoenis Cespedes.

October Baseball is Just Around the Corner

COLE MITCHELL
CONTRIBUTOR

Finally, October is here, and that means playoff baseball will be here shortly. Soon Wild Card teams will be duking it out in one-game playoffs to see who will go home and who will still have a chance to make it to the World Series. Fans will be louder than ever, and rally rags will be of all sorts of colors. Finally, by the end of the month, someone will raise a golden trophy and a 2015 World Series Championship Banner.

But which teams are going to be in the 2015 Major League Baseball postsea- son? Many of the teams that will be in the 2015 playoffs have already clinched their places.

They include the Toronto Blue Jays and the Kansas City Royals in the American League. In The National League, the New York Mets, the St. Louis Cardi- nals, the Chicago Cubs, the Pittsburgh Pirates and the Los Angeles Dodgers all have their spots.

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Taekwondo: Maintaining Balance Through an Ancient Art Form

ISABELLE SMITH
CONTRIBUTOR

Taekwondo: broken down, the word, “Tae” means foot, “Kwon” means hand, and “Do” means art. Together, we have the art of the hand and the foot.

According to World Taekwondo Federation, taekwondo is an art of self-defense that originated in a tiny kingdom in current day Korea. It is one of the oldest martial art forms in the world, beginning 2,000 years ago. The area was constantly under attack, so the king established a system of protection. The sons of the nobles were trained in combat and discipline. The young warriors were also trained in history, philosophy and poetry. The combination of skills made the art form applicable for every day lives, not just for battle.

Taekwondo was brought to the United States in the 1950s. It is now the most practiced martial art in the world, with over 20 million practitioners. The Olympics validated it as a sport when it appeared in the Korean 1988 Olympic games. Now it is commonly practiced to provide self-defense, but also to improve character, self-discipline and confidence that can be applied to any task.

Elias Aquino ’16 is a testimony to these qualities. He is a Connecticut College senior from Los Angeles, California. Majoring in Music and Botany, he is finding a connection between the two studies with German (the language of both plants and music). While applying to colleges, he heard about Connecticut College and became interested in the honor code. “Conn’s honor code is similar to taekwondo,” he said in an interview. Speaking in more depth, Aquino explained that Conn and taekwondo strive to balance individuals and build their honor. Taekwondo does this through building technique, working toward a goal, and respecting the instructor and the Korean flag, which hangs in every studio. Connecticut College does so though engaging the intellect and fostering a community of passionate people who participate in shared governance. Both encourage individuals to accept their deficiencies and work towards improvement. Because taekwondo had been such an influential part of his life, Aquino was enchanted by the idea of a school with taekwondo values.

Aquino has been practicing taekwondo since middle school. He became involved with a studio because of an invitation from family friends. As middle school is a challenging time for most children, Aquino was eager to get involved with an athletic endeavor that demands physical and mental focus. Aquino channeled his frustration from school into improving his form and technique. Aquino said that the practice helped him loose weight, gain focus and find a channel for his energy. Taekwondo works on a belt ranking system. Because of this, there is always a goal in mind. The higher up the belt rank, the more challenging the level is to pass. The constant goal makes it easier to get back up again after a bump in the road. “They were happy years,” recalled Aquino, “I felt more in control of my life.”

When Aquino first came to Connecticut College as a freshman, he joined a martial arts club, but was disappointed to find the lack of taekwondo. Then he attempted to create a taekwondo club, but was unsuccessful. There were many reasons that piled up: he was challenged to find members; he wasn’t registered, so he was short on advertising; he became involved in other things and his focus was distracted. He drifted away from his practice. While studying abroad in Germany, he was reintroduced to the art form when joining a taekwondo club on the German campus. This experience inspired him to get back into taekwondo.

Returning to Conn in his senior year, Aquino has been practicing four times a week with a couple of fellow students. They meet in the athletic center in the zumba-boxing room on Wednesdays at 4:30pm, Fridays at 8:00pm, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:00pm. Repeatedly, Aquino said, “No experience is needed!” He wants more people to know about the club and be willing to try something new.

If you want to work on your strength, loose some weight, improve your grade and have fun, email Elias Aquino for more information at eaquino@conncoll.edu.

The Connecticut College men’s soccer team defeated NESCAC-rival Hamilton College 2-1 at home on Sept. 26. Ousmane Dieng ’18 and Ben Manoogian ’19 scored for the Camels. Since then, the team has gone on to defeat Trinity 2-0 on Sept. 29, and tie Williams 1-1 on Oct. 3. The team will play their next NESCAC game, against Bates, on Oct. 7 at home.
Early Takeaways from the NFL Season

ELIZABETH VAROLLI
STAFF WRITER

Just under a month ago, on Sept. 10, the 2015 NFL season kicked off with the 2015 Super Bowl champions, the New England Patriots, facing off against the Pittsburgh Steelers. In this competitive start to the 96th NFL season, the New England Patriots took home a win, scoring 28-21. Some major players contributing to this Patriot win included Tom Brady and Rob Gronkowski. Brady, back in the swing of things after the 2014 Deflate-gate controversy, set a franchise record with 19 consecutive completions in his 23rd game with four plus touchdown passes. Brady appears to be playing some of the best football of his career, and the Patriots started the season declaring their dominance as the best team in the NFL.

Going into the season fans already have huge expectations for some top rookies and sophomores. Derek Carr, drafted by the Oakland Raiders in 2014, is a top up-and-coming quarterback. Carr and rookie Amari Cooper make a tremendous pair. Cooper has the potential to become the strongest NFL wide receiver in the next few seasons. Moreover, Cooper and Carr together will be capable of tearing up the NFL.

Another strong player to look out for is Atlanta Falcon’s wide receiver, Julio Jones. This season and the past season have cemented Jones as the best wide receiver; he is head-and-shoulders above the rest.

Looking back on the start of the NFL season, the first four weeks of practices and games have highlighted some important team dynamics that may influence future season games. Injuries might set back the Indianapolis Colts, specifically quarterback Andrew Luck. Luck received an injury to his right shoulder, which is his throwing arm, and has been sitting out of practices. Matt Hasselbeck filled in for Luck in Week 4, but the Colts are relying on Luck’s quick return in weeks to come.

This season, multiple teams have learned that it is necessary to play aggressively throughout all four quarters of a game, never dropping their intensity. The New York Giants and the Baltimore Ravens have learned the hard way that they cannot get overly confident early on in a game.

Every team is fighting for the two coveted spots at Super Bowl 50, Feb. 6, 2016, at Levi’s Stadium in California. But before teams can travel out west, some of them have to travel across the pond and play in the NFL’s version of international football. These games will take place at Wembley Stadium in London.

The first match at Wembley will happen on Oct. 4, when the New York Jets face off against the Miami Dolphins. Though taking place in London, this will be considered a home game for the Dolphins. The word on the street is that the Dolphins gave up this lucrative home game against a division rival to gain rights to a Super Bowl in future years.

In preparation for this overseas battle, both teams are training hard. The Jets have even enlisted a sleep specialist so that both players and coaches can perform at their best and overcome the challenges of jet lag. Other big matchups at Wembley this year will happen Oct. 25, when the Buffalo Bills play the Jacksonville Jaguars, and Nov. 1, when the Detroit Lions play the Kansas City Chiefs.

The NFL season has just started, with only four out of 17 weeks of scheduled in-season games having been completed. Fans watch eagerly to see how rookies will perform and how injuries will change team dynamics. At this point in the season, it is still too early to predict who will advance to the 2016 Super Bowl, and more importantly who will take home the ring.

List Qualifies for Singlehanded National Championship

WILL TOMASIAN
SPORTS LIAISON

Skipper Charlotte List ‘18 of Fair Haven, N.J. has qualified for the Singlehanded National Championship. List scored 24 points to place fourth at the New England Singlehanded Championship that was hosted by Boston College. She will travel to Old Dominion University to compete in the Singlehanded National Championship November 6-8 in Norfolk, Va.

List is excited to represent the College on the national stage next month. “There was a lot of wind but it went really well,” List said. “I was really just trying to keep the boat upright and get around the buoys and stay in the top five. We spent a few more days of practicing on the boat this year and I’m glad that it worked out.”

Sophomore Allie Maurillo scored 46 points en route to her eighth place showing. Haley Kachmar finished in 13th place with a score of 84 points. Amanda Clark ‘05, a two-time Olympian for the United States, won the North American Singlehanded crown for the Camels in 2001.

It was another solid weekend of sailing for the Camel coed team, who visited Dartmouth to compete in the Hewitt Trophy Regatta. The Camels placed fourth in the 14 team field with a score of 213 points. Sophomore skipper Walter Florio, Erin Smith and Olivia Liebniick sparked the Camels with a third place finish in the C division, scoring 76 points. Senior skipper Bryce Kopp, Tori Allen and Albert Rodiger scored 70 points en route to their fifth place showing in the A division.

In the B division, sophomore skipper Max Gillivray and junior crew Eliza Garry placed sixth for the Camels with a score of 67 points.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOHN NAREWSKI

Martin Registers 1,000 Digs for Camels

WILL TOMASIAN
SPORTS LIAISON

Connecticut College’s Caroline Martin ’16 of Palo Alto, Calif. has accomplished just about everything one would want to achieve in her prolific playing career. She helped lead her team to a 25 win season in a memorable rookie season that landed the Camels in the second round of the NCAA Championship. Martin’s been honored on the All-NESCAC squad in each of the past three seasons and now she can celebrate with her teammates the recording of her 1,000th career dig.

“We are excited for Carol to achieve this milestone in her career,” Connecticut College Head Volleyball Coach Josh Edmed said. “She works very hard to find success on the defensive side and this achievement gives tangible evidence to her ability to read the court well and make big plays for us.”

Martin and the Camels (8-5) picked up a pair of wins in Worcester Saturday. Connecticut College knocked off the Farmingdale State Rams, 3-0, in the early match. The set scores were 25-10, 25-19 and 31-29.

In the second match of the day against Clark, the Camels battled back from 1-0 and 2-1 deficits to hold off the Cougars in five sets with the 3-2 victory. The set scores were 13-25, 25-17, 25-23 and 15-12 in favor of the Camels.

The Cougars fell to 13-3 with the loss. The Rams from Farmingdale State moved to 6-7 with their shutout losses to Clark and the Camels.

Martin erupted with 25 kills and 27 digs, adding two blocks and one service ace in the sweep. She has recorded 1,001 digs for the Camels. Junior Ella Johnson had a big day for the Camels, registering 20 kills, seven blocks, six digs and a pair of aces.

Rookie outside hitter Jenny Kellogg accounted for 15 kills, 14 digs and four aces for the victors.

Senior Andrea Mullaney posted 13 kills and three blocks for the Camels. Belinda Mullally chipped in with 11 kills, 17 digs and three blocks.

Sophomore libero Caroline Branian recorded 38 digs, averaging 4.75 digs per set on the day.

Sophomore setter Kaita Elisman dished out 80 assists to go with her 12 digs and five aces, averaging 10 assists per set in an impressive outing at the Camels’ table-setter. •
There are at least three ways in which Connecticut College’s a cappella groups differ from most other campus organizations: they are steeped in history, some as old as the College itself; they meet more often than other student groups – on average, three times a week for two hours at a time – and they are among the best known. Indeed, it is not hard to get into an Ivy League school. Yes, you read that right. Adam Lonner ’16, president of the ConnArtists, estimates that this year his group auditioned 60 students and accepted four. That comes out to an acceptance rate of 6%, about the same as Harvard’s.

Fortunately, for both those who love to sing and those who love to listen, there is more than one a cappella option on campus. Indeed, given our relatively small student body of about 2,000 students, there is a disproportionately large number of a cappella groups: seven in total, with 12-15 students in each. Tulane University, by contrast, has approximately 8,000 students but only two a cappella groups. So it’s fair to say that the a cappella presence reverberates far more strongly at Conn than it does at some other schools. Surprisingly, however, the presence of so many a cappella groups does not reduce the level of competition; if anything, it enhances it, by allowing so many talented singers to participate.

Singers auditioned for the a cappella groups over a period of seven days during the second week of school, with approximately 60-80 students trying out for each group. Each group has its own audition requirements, but in general, the process consists of performing a song – a verse and a chorus – solo, participating in tonal exercises and singing with other members of the a cappella group so those conducting the audition can get a sense of how the voices blend. After the auditions, group leaders essentially in that moment choosing the group they will accept, I remember the palpable anxiety felt by so many students. A good friend of mine could not even sit still between 6 and 8PM, (which was when she was told she would receive a call), and refused to part with her phone for one instant – or even go to the restroom! When she found out she got in, the a cappella group that had accepted her showed up at her door, singing the most beautiful harmony, and then whisked her away into the steamy Connecticut night. I did not hear from or see her until the next day, when she described the previous 12 hours she’d spent with her new a cappella group as “the best night I’ve had at Conn.” I did not ask for details, and she did not provide any.

So the aura of mystery surrounding how new members are welcomed into their a cappella groups certainly continues to fuel speculation, and perhaps is slightly at odds with the goal of putting an end to the rumors that speculation inevitably feeds. But if the groups prefer to keep the details of their traditions private, who are we to quibble, especially when the members themselves speak so warmly and lovingly of evenings spent in one another’s dorms.

In describing the welcoming process, Ben Ballard ’16, co-president of Vox Cameli, said that the a cappella group was actually described to him as “the closest thing Conn has to Greek life” when he first toured campus. Caroline Noonan ’16, co-president of the Shwiffs, said, “It’s the most fun.”

The idea of a selective community, steeped in tradition, which sees itself as a sisterhood or brotherhood, that maintains strong alumni connections (alumni of Conn a cappella groups will often reach out to current members to perform at various venues), are additional attributes of the a cappella experience that evoke the atmosphere of Greek life. Noonan says, “My friends have described the fraternity and sorority as a group of people that you can count on even if times are tough, and a group of people you want to tell everything to first.” This, Noonan says, is a description perfectly embodied by the Shwiffs. Similarly, Alex Medzorian ’19, one of the newest members of the Co Co Beaux, was told that “throughout college, friends come and go, girls come and go, but the ‘Beaux’ is there for life.”

At the same time, however, there is a stigma attached to Greek life, which explains why many a cappella members reject any comparisons between their groups and the fraternity and sorority system. That stigma arises from the unfortunate practices associated with hazing. At Conn, rumors have long circulated that several a cappella groups have engaged in certain “welcoming” hazing rituals. According to Lonner, “In the past, [hazing] was a huge problem for all of the a cappella groups. When I was a first-year, I remember our president talking about it, but only in the sense that it was something that the culture of a cappella was trying to stop.” Indeed, according to Webber, whatever questionable conduct may have occurred in the past has long since ceased, and the a cappella groups are working diligently to eradicate the rhetoric of “hazing,” or even “initiation” from the a cappella lexicon altogether. Webber posited that rumors surrounding the welcoming process for the new members of a cappella stem from a place of simple mystification.

On the night the groups revealed who they were accepting, I remember the palpable anxiety felt by so many students. A good friend of mine could not even sit still between 6 and 8PM, (which was when she was told she would receive a call), and refused to part with her phone for one instant – or even go to the restroom! When she found out she got in, the a cappella group that had accepted her showed up at her door, singing the most beautiful harmony, and then whisked her away into the steamy Connecticut night. I did not hear from or see her until the next day, when she described the previous 12 hours she’d spent with her new a cappella group as “the best night I’ve had at Conn.” I did not ask for details, and she did not provide any.

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In describing the welcoming process, Ben Ballard ’16, president of the Co Co Beaux, further underscored the stark disparity between the dehumanizing acts associated with hazing and the practices of Conn’s a cappella groups. Said Ballard, “The point [behind the welcoming process] is not to drink excessively or do ridiculous escapades. We simply want to have a communal bonding experience.” Medzorian concurred: “I never was put in a situation where I felt forced or obligated to do something I didn’t want to do. All I was left with was a better sense of my new community and more excitement for future musical endeavors.”

There remains, according to Lonner, a “concerted effort” to disassociate a cappella’s welcoming process from immoral acts. Indeed, this is an effort worth making, because a cappella groups deserve a reputation that reflects and honors all that they bring to our community. The a cappella community provides this campus with extraor-
dinary, life-affirming music, drawing such large crowds that there will actually be two concerts held during Fall Weekend to avoid overcrowding in the chapel. Said Noonan, “Even my friends’ parents come to our events. People, from what I’ve found, love a cappella, even if they don’t have a child performing.”

Many groups have made or are in the process of making their own albums. The Co Co Beaux, for example, are on iTunes, with impressively high sales rates, and they produce albums every three years. The most recent album features artists such as Mumford and Sons, Bas-
tille and Adele, and the group is planning a concert at the Florence Griswold Museum. Two years ago, the Shwiffs beat out dozens of other applicants to sing the National Anthem at Fenway Park. Many groups travel to differ-
et universities, such as Johns Hopkins and American University, to perform. As Lonner put it, “I don’t think you can spend a year here without at least hearing about a concert or seeing a group perform.”

Indeed, there are many exciting initiatives on the agenda for Conn’s a cappella groups. The ConnArtists have just begun fundraising for their new album; the Shwiffs have an album coming out next week. Groups are also in the process of planning the “a cappella challenge,” with the help of SGA and SAC. The challenge consists of “voting on an album or song from one artist, and then being given two weeks to arrange and fully learn a new song,” said Moore. Last year’s event featured Lorde, the year before featured Justin Timberlake and this year’s artist has yet to be revealed. The event will be held during Halloween weekend.

There are also restructing efforts being implement-
ted to improve the general cohesion of all seven a cappella groups. Such efforts include the establish-
ment of an executive board, to which each group will send one member, presumably its pitch (music director) or president (business director). The board will meet once a month to ensure unified decision making. Right now the board is working to fix the song claiming process. The process, as it currently stands, allows one group to hold onto a song for ten years, never doing anything with it, but still have the ability to prevent other groups from performing it. The idea behind claiming is to ensure that multiple groups do not perform the same song at a concert. But, as Webber said, it is also a “horrible” process that allows one group unfairly to monopo-
lize a song for an extended period of time. One of the rules, being implemented, according to Webber, would allow a group to “claim a song, then [if the group didn’t use it] within either a semester or a year, [it would] lose those rights.”

Webber also noted, correctly, that in the absence of Greek life, alternative entertainment options on campus must be available and widely supported. “A thriving music community,” opined Webber, “would be my top choice.” Given the immense popu-
larly of a cappella on campus, it’s fair to say that Webber is not alone.”