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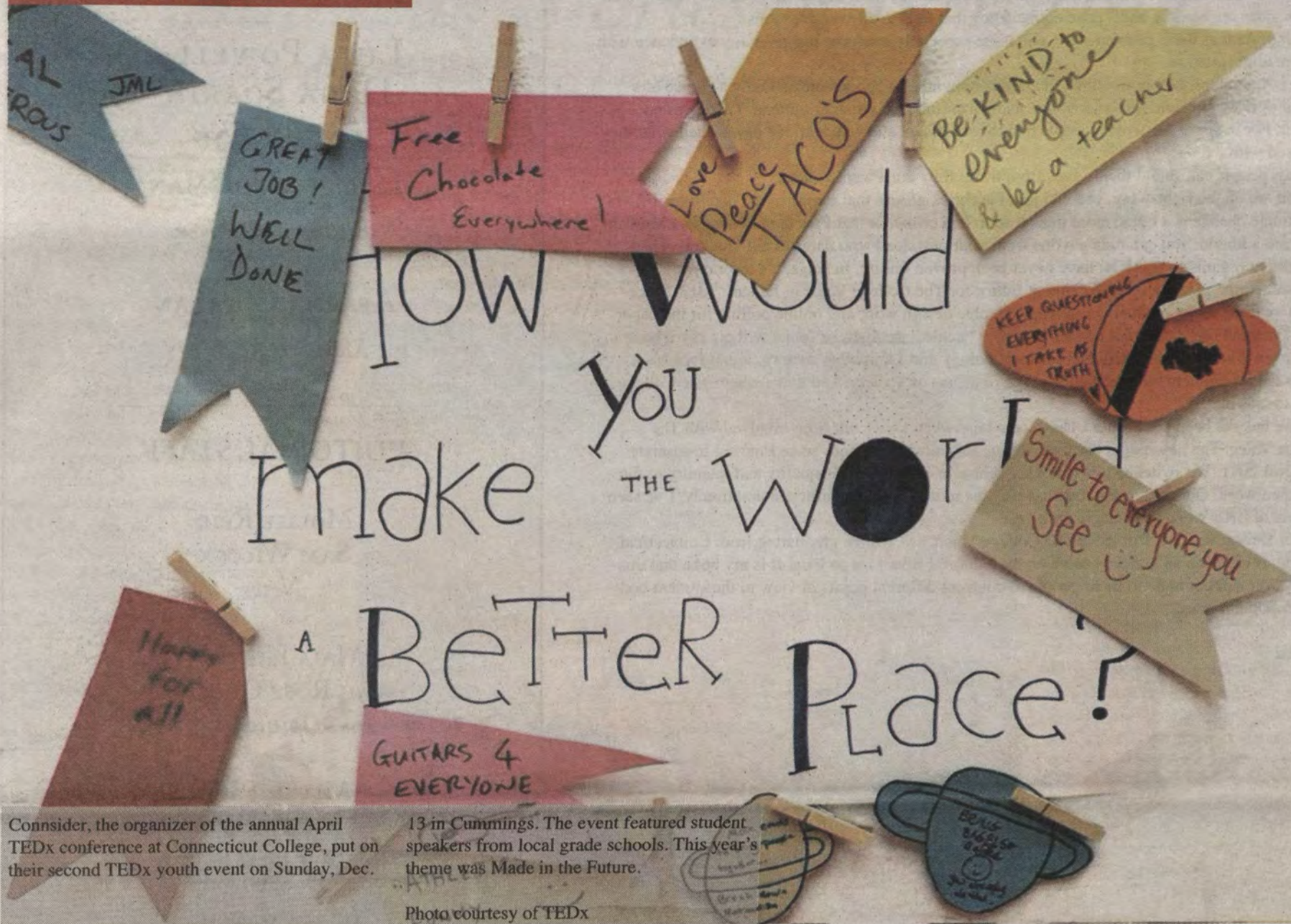
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THE COLLEGE VOICE

EXTENDED EDITION

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER



Consider, the organizer of the annual April TEDx conference at Connecticut College, put on their second TEDx youth event on Sunday, Dec.

13 in Cummings. The event featured student speakers from local grade schools. This year's theme was Made in the Future.

Photo courtesy of TEDx

New London Elects New Mayor

FRED MCNULTY
WEB CONTENT EDITOR

On Nov. 3, 2015, Democrat Michael Passero was elected to be the next Mayor of the City of New London. This comes nearly two months after the Democratic primary in September, when he defeated the incumbent mayor, Daryl Finizio. Both Finizio and Passero spoke separately with *The College Voice*.

In early 2014, Finizio initially announced that he was not going to seek reelection as mayor. However, on the day after Election Day 2014, he announced his plans to run for a second term as mayor.

He cited the city's economic condition as a primary, but not sole, factor that changed his mind. "We had some amazing opportunities before us," said Finizio, singling out

"the conversion to an all-magnet school district and the transfer of land for the Coast Guard Museum." He did not want the progress on these initiatives to falter in the absence of strong leadership.

Finizio was unapologetic in his decision to run for re-election: "If I wanted to keep my commitment to see these projects completed and to keep this progress going, [I needed] to run for reelection if no other progressive candidate chose to do so, and so I jumped back in."

On the other hand, Passero noted that he was initially excited to work with Finizio at the beginning of Finizio's tenure as mayor, but that his enthusiasm quickly evaporated.

"The city was not flourishing under his management," Passero told the *Voice*: "...departments, especially public works became dysfunctional real quick." He went

on to criticize Finizio for firing longtime employees in what Passero deemed a "political witch-hunt." He characterized the beginning of Finizio's administration as a "change of government like in a 'third world country.'"

Finizio, as one might expect, saw his legacy in a vastly different light. He mentioned balancing the budget, bringing forth the first all-magnet school system in the state, and securing the erection of the Coast Guard Museum as a few of his accomplishments.

Earlier this year, Passero challenged Finizio in the primary for the Democratic Party, which occurred on Sept. 16. Passero described his campaign as a "well-oiled machine," noting that he could not think of anything he would do differently. Passero said that he was proud of exceeding his

fundraising goal by nearly two-hundred percent.

On the night of the primary, Finizio lost all three of New London's voting districts to Passero, including those tallied from absentee ballots.

Subsequently, Finizio endorsed Passero. He still defends doing so: "While [Passero] is more conservative than I am and we haven't always agreed over the past four years, at the end of the day he supports the magnet [school] plan, he did vote for the Coast Guard Museum land management, he voted for two budgets, which included a significant tax increase.

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The state of journalism in the United States in general—not just on college campuses—is in crisis. Clickbait headlines from websites such as Upworthy and BuzzFeed incentivize writers to cater to buzz words and clichés instead of quality writing. In a stunning failure to keep up with the Internet, major publications and news networks are now trying to figure how to adapt to the future. Fearing the accusation of “liberal bias,” many approach the most important issues of the day with a “both sides are equally bad,” false equivalency that fails to answer questions.

As important as these problems are, one issue especially concerns me given my experience with social media: isolation.

Older Americans—before my time, of course—remember when people had only a choice of a handful of television and radio networks, and a handful of newspaper options. There was no Internet. For better or for worse, people had to read, listen and watch all the news—even what they disagreed with.

Today, people can shield themselves from truths they don't want to hear.

If you are on the right-wing, you can join Facebook groups that reinforce the disproven beliefs that climate change is a hoax, more guns lead to less crime, or that President Obama is a Muslim. If you are a liberal, you can hide anyone from your newsfeed who dares to tell you that genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) have never been proven unsafe. In ways, it's too easy.

I assumed the position of Web Content Editor for The College Voice in January 2012. Since then, I've done social media management, graphic design work and online polling for the paper. In my personal life, I consider myself a bit of a “techie,” rarely to be found without my iPhone in hand—even when I sleep. I fully embrace technology and I think that society cannot look back.

This isn't a problem with technology. The onus lies on society. And that's where The College Voice comes in.

There has not been a semester I have spent here when I have not been involved with The College Voice. The newspaper has gone through significant changes since I moved to campus in August 2011. We switched to a biweekly schedule, improving the quality and quantity of the published work. Our presence online has become more accessible, efficient and timely. I've seen five sets of EICs work their magic each year.

After December 22, I will leave The College Voice, as I will be graduating from Connecticut College. It has been an honor to serve on the Editorial Board for so long. It is my hope that this publication will continue to force people to confront different points of view to the student body—even unpopular ones.

- Fred

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The College Voice meets each week at
9 p.m. on Monday.

Join us.

THE COLLEGE VOICE

“The views and opinions expressed in *The College Voice* are strictly those of student authors, and not of Connecticut College. All content and editorial decisions remain in the hands of the students; neither the College's administration nor its faculty exercise control over the content.”

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*Thank you for reading
&
Thank you for writing*

Letters from Paris: Students' Stories of Terrorism

JOHN SARGENT
CONTRIBUTOR ABROAD

Editors Note: John Sargent is a junior studying abroad in Paris, France during the Fall 2015 semester.

The clock on my phone read 4:34 A.M. as I laid down on the stiff wooden floor and balled up bath towels that served as my night's bedding. Outside, the sirens continued to blare, and my mind was forced to consider the unimaginable as I faded into the fidgeting half-sleep that always seems to come after deep fear or deep confusion. The evening had begun as simply as any other; we were headed over to another friend's apartment in the 7th arrondissement for drinks before lighting out on the metro for a night of exploring and laughter. Like I said, simple.

So, when the news came that someone had been shot right by our destination, we thought nothing of it. Tragic? Yes. Alarming? Not really. Paris was a city just like New York or Chicago, a place susceptible to random, albeit upsetting, acts of violence, so we decided to carry on with our night. The music was turned back up and the wine was passed around, and before we knew it, the seemingly unnecessary news was lost in the warmth of the company. However, as we motioned towards the door and put our coats on to catch the metro, more news came. But this time, the details were clearer.

"Dozens dead in mass shooting," my friend read aloud as we stood in the hallway of her building, our mouths twisted into awkward smiles of disbelief. What followed, and what ended up dominating the next ten hours in the apartment as we decided to stay in, was a mixture of confusion, fear, speculation and anxiety. All we had to cling to were our phones for information. As news of the attacks spread, we were soon inundated with texts and calls from friends and family members asking if we were okay. Beyond this, our contact with the attacks were minimal. We were safe, warm, with good friends and completely protected in the apartment,

SEAN FELTON
CONTRIBUTOR

On Jan. 7, 2015, twelve people were killed in Paris when Islamic extremists responded violently to a depiction of Muhammad by French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*. The attack was profoundly jarring for the French people, and there was an outpouring of international support. I remember watching the news, sympathetic for the victims of this terrifying crime and confounded that exercising our right to freedoms of expression could prove life-threatening. And I remember my mother, who like most mothers is genetically predisposed to watching threats on the news and creating a worst-case-scenario for her family, eyed my packed bags at the foot of the stairs and shook her head slowly.

On Jan. 10, I moved to Paris. The plane touched down on the runway at Roissy early Sunday morning, and it all felt incredibly surreal. I had never been to Paris before, but my first impression did not feel tainted by tragedy, it felt enriched

sheltered, from the on going bloodshed and loss.

Still, despite our extreme luck to be in a safe space, away from the areas of conflict, we could not help but get sucked into the drama that was unfolding on the screens in front of us. We were left helpless in the hands of the media, our only source on the rapidly updated news that spoke of a higher and higher death toll. Needless the say, any form of comfort that was experienced



PHOTO COURTESY OF
JOHN SARGENT

before watching the news was quickly washed away.

Our experience was pretty much the standard for most students I knew in Paris on the night of the attacks. Things progressing easily, some minor fear in the beginning, but nothing no news was substantial enough to change their minds about the night; that is, until the violence continued. At this point, a world of fear gripped the onlookers through their screens, the only

by French fraternité. Les manifestations that had been happening across the city in response to the Hebdo attacks culminated that Sunday in a demonstration of one and a half million people. Our program orientation had a heavy security focus, and also a discussion of the recent events so that we could process the information and feel in solidarity with and protected by our French neighbors. Tourist attractions and neighborhoods like le Marais (the oldest and historically Jewish quarter in Paris) were brimming with armed French officers. I had never seen stationed policemen carry guns so big. Friends of mine mentioned feeling overwhelmed by the added security measures, but I felt safe, and I also felt a sort of pride in seeing this group of people recover, take extra precaution to care for and protect each other and move on with their lives.

Being in Paris in the early weeks after Charlie Hebdo was also a unique push and pull for me; my professors wanted

reliable flow of information coming from headlines and Tweets.

"I just didn't believe what I was hearing," said my roommate, Justin, a student at the New School in New York City and a member of my abroad program. "I just remember feeling as if I was suddenly alone." Justin was lucky enough to have been traveling outside of France that night, but he says that his fear was almost stronger than if he were there to experience it.

"The second anything like that happens and you aren't around, you immediately imagine all of your friends or people you know who are potentially in a situation where they could get hurt. It's the not knowing that is the worst. I can honestly say that, in my position, I was extremely lucky. I was physically distanced from the attacks themselves, but that didn't mean I felt safe."

to talk about the attacks, and they voiced the French expectation of solidarity from all Americans since France stood with the United States on 9/11. Onze janvier, the day of the manifestations, came up many times in discussions at school as an adaptation of onze septembre, and amongst a room of American abroad students, this always felt slightly tense. I am a New Yorker. I remember the astounding boom, our school evacuation, the smoke and debris in the air and the incredible tragedy. Thus, though the Hebdo attack was horrendous and devastating, I found it difficult to corroborate the comparison during this recurring dialogue in the immediate aftermath.

Nevertheless, I fell for Paris quickly. It was not awe-inspiring and romantic in the ways I anticipated -- it simply felt like home. The city is beautiful, and its people were a perfect conglomerate of fast-paced and carefree. I loved the atmosphere, I loved their love for coffee, cheese, and

The sensation that Justin describes was felt across the board for those not in Paris that night. They say it was so difficult not having direct access to the city itself. In my situation, I was ironically very lucky. I was with all of my friends in a protected area nearly 20 minutes away from where the violence was occurring, so I had the privilege to just wait it out with peace of mind knowing those I cared about were safe.

Yet, this being said, the true strangeness and gravity of the tragedy for those in Paris would come later, when in the light of day we could see the effect these actions had on a city of nearly three million.

After waking up on the floor of a friend's apartment around 10 a.m., my friends and I decided as a collective that it was finally safe to go back to my apartment. The night had been long and uncomfortable, but we were just glad that it was over. We expected things to carry on as usual and the city to quickly rebound. We were wrong.

What struck me first was the silence. Paris on a Saturday afternoon, even in the morning, and especially in the area we were in, should be anything but quiet. We should have been met with the whine of mopeds and the chattering from corner cafes. Instead, the streets were deserted, and a wispy fog had descended across the river. The only light coming through the film of clouds above us was the mottled glow of a distant sun. Even the metro, usually packed and annoyingly busy on such a morning, was devoid of people.

It was at this moment and during the following days that the true weight of what had happened really began to sink in. At first, after watching the news, I felt sad and a bit frightened; yet, in the end, what truly touched me and my friends was the general air: Paris was in mourning.

Museums were closed, along with various shops and boutiques.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

wine. I loved how Paris had a constant pulse.

When I first saw the Eiffel Tower sparkle for the first five minutes of an hour, I was sitting at Trocadero with some friends, a bottle of Merlot, and a round of brie. We were among hundreds of other ogling individuals. I had that inexplicable feeling of pride, the kind you get when you're overwhelmed by the camaraderie you're feeling for friends and strangers alike. It's a sort of pride that strikes you when you realize you're part of something larger than yourself, and when you realize that all the people you pass have lives and experiences you'll never know specifically, but that when humanity is challenged, you all have an immediate and unconditional connection. Though I have no doubt this sense of community exists in Paris without the catalyst of tragedy as well, the magic I felt that night exemplified the power of human resilience. •

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Passero says that he hopes to maintain good ties with the Fire Department and Police Department, as well as stimulate further economic growth. He said that City Hall could do more to facilitate this process, and that it is currently "like a tomb." He hopes to bring the building "back to life."

Finizio recognized the political turbulence in New London over the past years, saying that Passero is "something of a moderate, which I think the city wanted at this time, after a lot of upheaval and change, and we'll see how it works."

Michael Passero was sworn in as mayor on Dec. 7 at 7 p.m. He

now commands the full authority of the Office, and his first full day as mayor was on Dec. 8. Daryl Finizio will continue to practice law in New London, having pledged to live here for the rest of his life.

Over the past four years, former Mayor Finizio has been a continued presence not only in

the pages of *The College Voice*, but also around the Connecticut College campus. All other issues aside, it is our sincerest hope that Mayor Passero, who graduated from Conn in 1979, will continue this presence from the Mayor's Office. •

To Fundraise, Conn Students "Take the Plunge"

MOLLIE REID
NEWS EDITOR

On Dec. 5, 2015, Connecticut College's chapter of Oceana, a student club that raises awareness about the importance of protecting the world's oceans, held its fourth annual polar plunge at Ocean Beach in New London, Connecticut. As tradition dictates, participating students ran into the chilly Atlantic Ocean while other students supported their peers from the shore. Students were encouraged to donate at least \$5 to participate in the plunge. "Non-plunging" students could also donate money to the cause by supporting friends. According to a post written by CC Oceana to ConnQuest, the goals of the polar plunge were to raise money to donate to Oceana International and to fundraise for the club itself. Another objective of the polar plunge was to have different student organizations, clubs and athletic teams work together in a fun way to raise awareness about the importance of protecting the oceans.

Oceana, an ocean conservation and advocacy non-profit organi-



PHOTO COURTESY OF CONN COLL OCEANA

zation, was established in 2001 by a collection of foundations, such as the Oak Foundation and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. According to its mission statement, Oceana "seeks to make our oceans as rich, healthy, and abundant as they once were...by winning policy victories in the countries that govern much of the world's marine life." Oceana operates on a global scale and seeks to protect and restore the world's oceans through policy and educational campaigns. Since its founding, Oceana has achieved a number of successes. For instance, according to Oceana's official website,

in June 2015, the organization helped to establish a ban on shark fin sales in Texas through years of campaigning.

CC Oceana executive board and club members actively promoted the polar plunge. Jesse Kannan '16, one of CC Oceana's presidents, said that club members "tried a lot of different methods to get the word out about the event. We sent out emails to sports team and clubs encouraging them to take part in the event. We also posted on Facebook and Instagram. Coffee Grounds even created a drink called the Polar Plunge to raise awareness. Our most

successful way of getting students to sign up was tabling outside of Harris a few days before the event."

The promotion and outreach that Kannan describes proved to be effective. The Connecticut College women's rowing team and the Outdoors Club both participated. Both groups brought a number of eager students to the event as well.

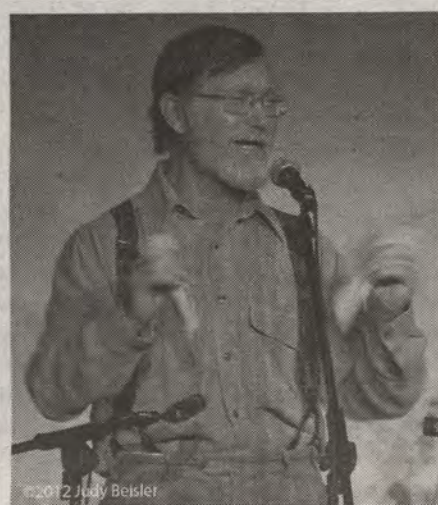
Jessica Wright '16, CC Oceana's other president, and Kannan both feel that this year's polar plunge was especially successful. "I think each year we host this event, it gains more popularity on

campus. People now know that it is a tradition and get excited about it. Jessica and I made more of an effort this year to reach out to sports teams, and other Oceana members were really great at spreading the word and encouraging their friends to join us," said Kannan.

Even though Kannan has completed several polar plunges as a CC Oceana member, she still, like many others, gets excited by running

into the frigid water. "I definitely know what to expect, but it is still a shock every year. Luckily this year the weather was really warm, which make the plunge a lot easier," reflected Kannan.

Students, faculty and staff can look forward to attending future CC Oceana events for the coming semester, such as a celebration of Earth Day in April and more beach cleanups. Kannan added, "We are also hoping to do a screening of the new documentary, *Racing Extinction!*" •



Geoff Kaufman & Magpie
Friday, January 22, 2016
Concert 7:30 pm~Doors 7:00 pm,

All Souls UU Congregation
19 Jay Street,
New London CT 06320
fridaynightfolk.org for Tix & Info



“The Half Has Never Been Told”

DANA GALLAGHER
HEAD COPY EDITOR

On Dec. 7 in Blaustein 210, Cornell University Associate Professor of History Edward E. Baptist examined the concurrent evolution of slavery and American capitalism. The lecture, which highlighted the findings presented in Baptist's 2014 book, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*, diverged from the more conventional theses of many contemporary historians. Analyzing the testimonies of enslaved people and enslavers, as well as statistics on total cotton output from the Revolution to the Civil War, Baptist asserts, “enslavers created a diabolical system that is actually more clearly depicted in *12 Years a Slave* than by professional historians.”

Defenders of slavery sought to differentiate their “peculiar institution” from the rapacious businesses of Northern capitalists. The agrarian hierarchy that sustained slavery, they argued, benefited enslaved people, sometimes to the economic detriment of their enslavers. The Southern planter, commissioned to save enslaved people from their innate “barbarism,” claimed to provide for “productive” and “unproductive” slaves alike.

South Carolina planter and politician James H. Hammond, for example, framed slavery as a moral undertaking. In a 1845 rebuttal to the abolitionist movement, he proclaimed, “We must ... content ourselves with our dear labor under the consoling reflection that what is lost to us is gained

to humanity.” Abolitionists, inveighing against such self-serving arguments, viewed slavery as both economically inefficient and morally reprehensible.

For decades prominent historians have shared the abolitionist view on the productivity of slave labor. During his talk, Baptist noted that slavery is neither antithetical to capitalist greed nor economically inefficient. Instead, he claims, cotton accumulated through slavery served as the commodity essential to nineteenth century international trade and development. Slave owners, he observed, pioneered advances in modern accounting and finance.

Baptist also tied the health of regional and national economies to the interstate trade of enslaved people. When Congress ended the legal importation of enslaved people from outside the United States in 1808, Maryland and Virginia emerged as key trade postings for slaves destined to labor in states bordering the Gulf of Mexico. Baptist estimates that almost one million enslaved men and women were transported to the cotton fields from the Upper South in the years before the Civil War. Harnessing such modern technologies as the steamboat, railroad and telegraph, slave traders were able to maximize economic efficiency.

According to Baptist, the violence doled out by slave owners accounts for the rise in labor productivity on cotton plantations. Despite limited technological innovations in cotton picking, output rose 400% between 1800 and 1860. Although some economic historians link this growth to incen-

tives on the plantation, such as the prospect of monetary compensation for good work, Baptist repudiates these theories. He details the “pushing system” of plantation life. Each enslaved person was assigned a daily picking quota, which increased over time. To ensure that slaves steadily increased output, planters meted out modern forms of assault. Planters threatened enslaved people with beatings, sexual humiliation, bodily mutilation and waterboarding. In the cotton kingdom, Baptist contends, “white people inflicted torture far more often than in almost any human society that ever existed.”

The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism chronicles not only the economics of the slave system but also Southern politics, religion and gender norms. During the question and answer component of the talk, Associate Professor of English and Africana Studies Program Director Courtney Baker, inquired whether sexual violence was employed to increase the enslaved population and thus ensure continued profit on the plantation. “Increasing the slave population may or may not have been a motive of rape,” Baptist responded. The letters of slave traders, he observed, detailed the age and physical appearance of slaves. Because the price of enslaved women “rose and declined at a certain age,” Baptist believes that fertility may have factored into slave value. Enslaved men, by contrast, were priced based upon height.

In a telling explanation on the structural legacies of slavery, Baptist linked gun

violence with a culture of violence on the plantation. Southern men carried weapons both as protection against slaves and to guard themselves against possible quarrels with freemen. To openly carry a weapon was common in the Antebellum South, and to conceal a weapon was considered cowardly.

The intersection of race and gun violence seems particularly acute in the wake of the 2015 Charleston shooting. When asked how the country could prevent future deaths by guns, former presidential candidate Rick Santorum shirked from mentioning gun control or anti-racism education programs, and instead noted that “true forgiveness...gave [him] more hope than anything.”

In a June 2015 op-ed for the *Los Angeles Times*, entitled, “Forgiveness in Charleston isn’t absolution for 400 years of racial violence in America,” Baptist avers that forgiveness, on behalf of the victims’ family members, is not a vehicle for absolution in white America. “The family members’ statements,” he writes, “will not deliver white Americans to some misty land where they no longer have to hear about the impact of nearly 400 years of racist violence.” Instead of blinding themselves to byproducts of a slave culture, Americans must “consider whether they are complicit in our long history of white supremacy. If white Americans want reconciliation, they will have to brave the dangers of atonement.” •

Prominent Writers Debate Free Speech

SARAH ROSE GRUSZECKI
& **MAIA HIBBETT**
OPINION EDITORS

Connecticut College hosted writers from *The Atlantic* and *The New Yorker* on Dec. 3 for an educational and insightful conversation regarding the relationship between race and free speech on college campuses.

Jelani Cobb of *The New Yorker* criticized the invocation of the First Amendment as a defense of discriminatory and destructive speech, while *The Atlantic*'s Conor Friedersdorf warned against the unintended consequences of instating speech codes as a protective measure. The dialogue was moderated by John Dankosky, the vice president of news at the Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network.

Calling the conversation a “morally urgent” issue, Friedersdorf explained that free speech has often been used to gain rights for marginalized groups, not detract from them.

“The Bill of Rights and the people who defend it are my closest allies” said Friedersdorf, noting that in his opinion, speech codes that guide what students may or may not say violate the First Amendment and are susceptible to loopholes. He remarked on failed speech codes that ultimately allowed racist students to display swastikas and voice their thoughts on white supremacy while restricting the greater populace.

“The same laws used to silence bigots can be used to silence you,” Friedersdorf warned.

Conversely, Cobb emphasized that although he is certainly a proponent of the right to free speech, it is imperative to recognize that “not all free speech is created equal.” As he describes, free speech is often utilized to re-inscribe hierarchies and marginalized communities that are already marginalized.

When examining these issues in the context of college campuses, Cobb specifically noted that incidents of racial hostility are directly connected to college retention rates and academic performance for students of color. Therefore, although it may be important to recognize the right to free speech, such a problem arises when “we find ourselves saying one thing while remaining blind to the broader implications that may have deadly consequences.”

Amidst the journalists’ respectful debate, moments of agreement arose periodically. When Cobb described public surveillance as the most significant threat to free speech, Friedersdorf immediately agreed, referencing his recent *Atlantic* piece on Edward Snowden.

During this portion of the conversation, Cobb alluded to the specific incident in New York where NYPD officials followed

a group of university students affiliated with the Students for Justice in Palestine organization. The journalist argued that these types of threats have much broader social implications for women and students and color and added that “listening is what’s missing in the equation.”

A moment of tension arose when Conor Friedersdorf pointed out the impermanence of the college bubble. He commented that students currently protesting “within four years are going to be in places where there is no administration to make demands against...I don’t see a ton of resilience.”

Friedersdorf elaborated that while students at Yale, for example, were justified in feeling oppressed, they would soon hold added power because “they have a Yale diploma.”

While the debate remained logical and civil, Cobb and many attendees reacted against Friedersdorf’s word choice.

“That’s like saying President Obama should not feel humiliated by having to show his birth certificate because ‘you get to be President,’” countered Cobb, “What it sounds like is invalidation.”

In response to the conversation’s redirection, Friedersdorf argued, “I dissent from the notion that empowering someone is condescending or invalidating.”

Friedersdorf also noted that aggressive responses to minor speech infractions at

times impede the progress of conversation, especially in student communities where participants fear social stigma for their words.

“People in these activist communities are terrified of saying the wrong thing,” Friedersdorf observed, calling internally contentious groups “historically self-destructive.”

“That’s what the left has been,” responded Cobb, highlighting the notion that intolerance of hate speech marks a positive social trend that encourages students to be mindful of their words.

In his closing remarks, Cobb posed the question of whether bigoted speech would become acceptable “if we can eliminate pay differentials, and mass incarceration, and housing discrimination.”

Friedersdorf ended his commentary by observing that “people learn in different ways,” and therefore while internalized stigma might help some people reverse their bigotry, “other people learn from debate... I do worry about that second kind of student not having that [transformative] conversation.” •

Multiple Student Government Association Members Resign, Cite Issues Within Assembly, Executive Board, Honor Council

DANA SORKIN
CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

Editor's Note: This story was originally featured on our website, thecollegevoice.org, and has been updated to include more recent information.

On Thursday, Dec. 3, just a few hours before their weekly Assembly meeting, six SGA representatives resigned from their positions. In emails obtained by *The College Voice*, Blackstone House Senator Wesley Chrabsz '17, KB House Senator Margaret Sturtevant '16, Knowlton House Senator Kevin Zevallos '16 and Morrison House Senator Sarah Harris '18 sent in their resignations. Chair of Diversity and Equity Asma Ebadi '18 and Chair of Residential Affairs Joey Mercado '16 resigned from the Executive Board.

JA House Senator Fara Rodriguez '16 resigned at the end of the meeting, which was scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. in Ernst in Blaustein (instead of 7:15 p.m., the usual starting time for Assembly meetings). The meeting ended around 10:30 p.m.

Chrabsz, Sturtevant, Harris, Ebadi and Zevallos did not respond to the *Voice's* emails for comment.

The resignations occurred not long after hearing from Vice President for Information Services and Librarian of the College Lee Hisle during Open Forum and discussing Resolution #24 to establish four additional positions on the Assembly to represent marginalized groups on campus. Pursuant to that, SGA opened the floor to its members to discuss the resignations. What resulted was an exposure of major fissures within the SGA Assembly.

In light of the resignations, SGA President Sal Bigay '16 opened the discussion by reminding Assembly members that the Executive Board created both a physical suggestion box and a Google document to hear from Senators. "I think we can work through this and make SGA what it's supposed to be," he said.

The remarks addressed concerns by the greater Assembly of being poorly informed of the goings-on in the separate Executive Board meetings. But there was no single issue that divided the SGA. The night's discussion ranged from a general critique of

support for the House Senators to the more specific criticism of the role of Parliamentarian Adeline Poris '16.

As Parliamentarian, Poris is tasked with enforcing Robert's Rules of Order, the order of conduct that currently guides SGA Assembly meetings. Some Assembly members felt she had too much power in Assembly meetings, and that Bigay, as President, should be taking a stronger leadership role by being the one to introduce resolutions and structure to the Assembly conversation. Poris was not in attendance at the meeting.

Poris told the *Voice* that, while she realizes that much of her role should have gone to Bigay, the job was one she inherited from her predecessors, and she doesn't feel as though she is doing anything differently from past years. Poris said she has spent the 2015 fall semester "restructuring the bylaws" and hopes to continue reexamining the structure of SGA.

"My job is the bad cop role," she said, explaining that it's her job to decide when the conversation has gone on for too long and needs to be shifted. "It makes sense to have one person on the Assembly to pull people out of the heat of the moment [of discussion]."

Assembly members went on to voice frustration with their Executive Board as a whole. Burdick House Senator Hannah Johnston '18 said, "I feel like you guys are behind closed doors sometimes and we don't know what's happening." She asked for more informal meetings between Executive Board members and Senators to bridge the gap.

Presidential Associate Leah Rosofsky '16, who writes the minutes for official SGA meetings, said that she does take notes at the Executive Board's Sunday evening meetings, but does not disperse them to the Senators. Plant House Senator Nic Peterson '17 suggested a report be sent around to Senators after the Executive Board meetings, which

received support from fellow Senators.

Senators asked for more assistance in writing resolutions, citing confusion with the process and language necessary to draft a resolution. Bigay, who was in agreement, responded that he "want[s] senators to get more involved in writing resolutions."

A revision to the resolution writing format was suggested by President of the Class of 2016 Grace Juster '16.

Currently, resolutions are created by Assembly members (and any student-at-large who wishes to contribute) and then brought before SGA for discussion; the following week, they are voted on by Assembly members. Juster suggested switching this process: discuss issues first, and then create a resolution based on what was discussed.

Senator Elissa Webb '17 said in the meeting that Conn's Black Out day was days after many colleges and universities around the country had their Black Out day, and said SGA should be doing more to support student activists.

Assembly members also revealed their own shortcomings, with Park Senator Sam Lichtenstein '17 acknowledging that many of the committees that SGA assembly members staff have still not met. Lichtenstein is a member of the Campus Safety Committee, one of the groups that is still trying to organize their first meeting of the semester.

Bigay told the *Voice* that he liked the change in format of Thursday's meeting, which eschewed from Robert's Rules. He and SGA Vice President Juliette Verrengia '16 said in an interview that they have been committed

to creating structural changes in SGA since being elected in the spring, but cited the challenges of working to create changes within SGA while simultaneously keeping SGA running. Verrengia called this "impossible."

Having served on SGA for four years, Bigay said that not until this year has SGA worked to rethink structural issues, and that such changes "take more than one semester."

Joey Mercado, the former Chair of Residential Affairs, told the *Voice* in an interview that, while the structure of SGA was a problem,

issues within the Executive Board created a "toxic environment." He specifically cited a GroupMe chat (a cell phone group chat texting application) for the Executive Board members. Messages sent in this private chat included comments on the physical appearances of senators, and other inappropriate jokes at the expense of the Assembly members, sometimes being sent while Assembly meetings were going on.

Though Bigay, Verrengia and several other members of the Executive Board were asked by some of the members of the

Assembly to resign from their positions, only former Chair of Honor Council Ariana Taylor '16 has done so.

Rodriguez, former Senator of JA, spoke to the *Voice* on Dec. 8. She said that SGA is "not an environment that is conducive to full participation," and that many students, whether they are part of the Assembly or not, do not feel comfortable walking into SGA. She expressed the need for the structure of SGA to change, as well SGA leaders to be "held accountable for their actions and statements."

Rodriguez resigned in person at the end of the meeting, as opposed to over email, and reflected on that decision by saying, "As a woman of color, I had to resign [in person] because when I was sitting in my last meeting ... people were misconstruing what people resigned for, so I thought that if I resigned the same way, my message was going to be perceived differently. Unfortunately, I have to try very hard to not fall into the stereotype of the angry woman of color which would completely undermine my reasons for leaving."

Conversation continued during the SGA Assembly's next and final meeting of the semester on Dec. 10. Webb presented a list of grievances against the Executive Board, and the Assembly spoke at length about both the messages from the GroupMe as well as larger structural issues needing to be reformed. More calls came for the Executive Board to resign, but, at press time, only Taylor has resigned. Taylor told the *Voice*, "What I said was my personal opinion in a professional setting. I would like to say to students, I apologize for my lapse in professionalism; however, I still have their best interest at heart."

Zach LaRock '16, an elected member of Honor Council, also resigned. He told the *Voice*, "I am neither surprised nor shocked by the SGA Executive Council's behavior, but I am deeply and profoundly disappointed that we as a student body now must confront, in a very public way, the fact that the individuals we elected to serve us have ethical standards that are just so low." •

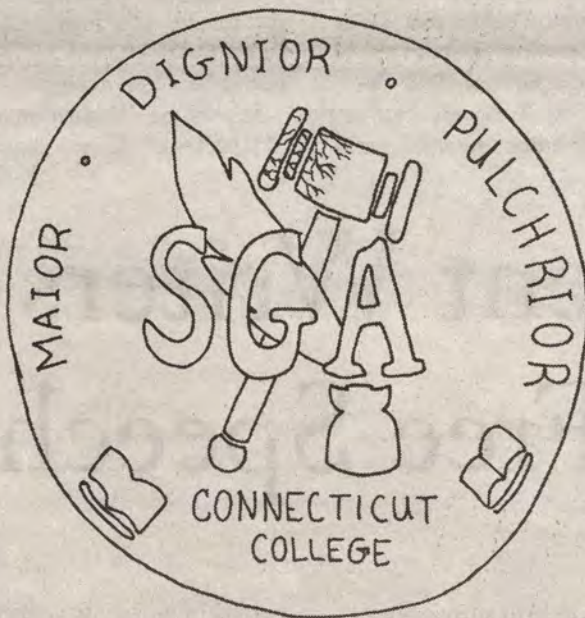


ILLUSTRATION BY ANNA GROFIK

There was also discontent amongst Senators who felt that SGA wasn't doing enough to support the Black Lives Matter movement on campus. Students protested in Harris and JA dining halls, Shain library and, ultimately, the SGA Assembly meeting in the week before Thanksgiving break to raise awareness of racism on campus, and on campuses around the country. The SGA Executive Board supported a Black Out day that week, encouraging students to wear all black in support of students at Missouri and Yale. Earth House and 360

Unique Study Spaces to Consider

KRISTINA HARROLD
CONTRIBUTOR

On Campus!

Hillel House - Located in North campus, near the Winthrop Offices and Earth House. There are study spaces on both levels, with comfy couches, games, and a television downstairs (for a well-deserved study break of course)!

Harris Atrium - Above the entrance to Harris Refectory, there are tables and corrals lit by a glass ceiling. Warm, sunny, and close to food!

Dorm Common Rooms - A classic. And don't worry, you're welcome in any common room on campus! Feel free to occupy the spaces that are not yours, like the United States.

A tree - Comfortable and innovative, climb up as high as you can for amazing sights and have the squirrels provide you with complimentary chatter as soothing background noise.

Classrooms (with big tables) in Fanning, Blaustein, Bill Hall, New London Hall - Grab a few friends and inhabit a room for a long study sesh.

Coffee Grounds and Coffee

Closet - Coffee Grounds is located next to KB, and Coffee Closet

is part of Harkness. Both have extended hours during finals, in addition to caffeine and snacks.

A Closet - Hunker down in this dark and isolated spot. Located in yours or someone else's room. For added warmth and comfort, make sure your only light source is a candle, and perform an impromptu séance to the underworld gods if you need a quick study break.

3rd Floor Cro - Dance studio lobby on the third floor has nice couches to hang and read (or nap) but all of cro has lots of tables.

Underground - Guaranteed to be quiet and tranquil. Shovels can be provided by Groundskeeping.

Language and Culture Center (LCC) - On the first floor of Blaustein, this welcoming spot has couches, computers, and resources in a large variety of languages. And free tea!

Chapel Basement/Library - A favorite quiet location on campus, there are large tables, couches and a great spot to escape from the hordes of people in Shain.

Unity House - Super comfortable and quiet, with lots of nooks and crannies for studying. Located right next to the bridge to the AC

Off Campus!

Muddy Waters - 42 Bank Street, New London. A cozy spot (hello couches) with killer sandwiches and a view of the water.

Washington Street Coffee House - 13 Washington Street, New London. Great food, great vibes, and great drinks. Bonus: they have \$2 tacos on Friday and Saturday nights.

A Parking lot - Plop yourself down in the middle of any parking lot, in use or abandoned. The cold hard surface is certain to keep you awake as you fight off the sleepies.

Starbucks (Groton, East Lyme, Waterford) - Two words: "Eggnog Latte."

Panera (Groton, Waterford) - Also two words: Bread bowls.

Your mother's womb - The warmest place around. Great to crawl back up when the world all just becomes too much.

Groton Townhouse (open 24 hrs!) - Your usual diner fare. If your studies have you craving waffles at 3 AM, this is the place to go. •

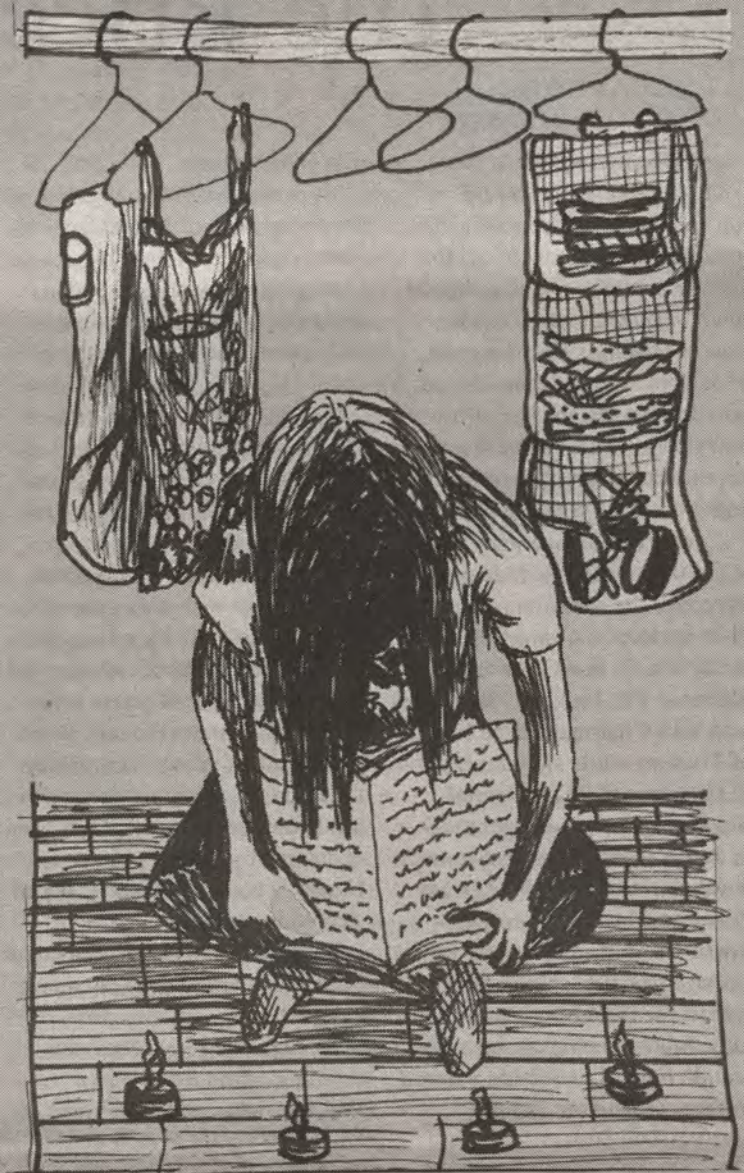


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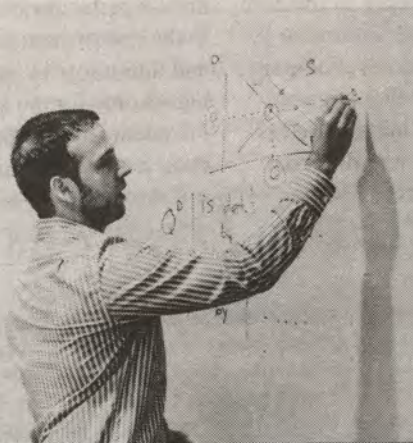
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The armed personnel that flooded the streets per order of President François Hollande made it feel as if Paris were under occupation. There was even a momentary curfew put in place the night of the attacks, one of the first since 1944. What all of this produced was a sense of distress, a feeling of deep anxiety that permeated the usually jovial glow of such a fantastic city. People walked tall with their heads high, but there still lingered within their eyes a distant unease. For just a moment, despite the international and domestic support, Paris was defeated. It was a sensation that hung languid in the air.

It is strange for me to think about how much can be stirred up and thrown into chaos in such a small amount of time. I often think of wars or mass tragedy as something in capital letters, pieces of profound history that are swaddled in the pages of textbooks and newspapers. But I forget that sometimes the most horrifying events can be set off by small scale acts of hatred. Even though I wasn't a victim and I didn't know anyone harmed in the attacks, I still felt assaulted, defeated, along with the Parisian citizens.

I was excited to show off my new home to my two friends visiting from Barcelona and Prague. Paris had evolved for me in those first few months to something beyond a city on a postcard or the backdrop of a movie. It had flowered into something bolder, more tangible, a place

that I could touch and experience and get lost in. It was as if I was adopted by the cobblestone streets and heavy marble facades. I felt at ease and welcomed.

So, now, when I read headlines about how what happened on the night of Nov. 13 has sparked worldwide trauma and produced volatile political conditions across Europe and the Middle East, I am saddened. I remember that even beyond the international implications that such terrorism had, at its core, it was just senseless violence against innocent people. These people who ventured out into Paris to get a drink, catch up with friends or attend a music event featuring their favorite band. To those victims and their families, the global unrest must feel insignificant in the wake of such loss.

In the end, I think what needs to be remembered beyond the faceless headlines and body counts of any global tragedy, whether it be Paris or Beirut, is that within those numbers and statistics exist names and families. We must do our best to focus on those who weren't lucky enough to say, "I wasn't there." •

Divestment: The Price of Clean Money

LUCA POWELL
CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

In 1988, a group of Connecticut College students urged a motion for the college endowment portfolio. Its goal was to get the College's money out of apartheid South Africa in order to undermine the then apartheid regime. After contentious debate that resulted in the resignation of trustee Barry Bloom, the Board resolved not to further invest in companies doing business in South Africa.

"I have resigned as a Trustee of Connecticut College in order to protest the adoption of this ill-considered divestment policy," wrote Bloom in a Letter to the Editor of *The Day* in 1988. Bloom was Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees while simultaneously President of Pfizer Central Research, which had operations in South Africa. To divest from South Africa was to divest from Pfizer, and by that token the Board was forced to weigh the College's relationship to Pfizer against the demands of the student body. Student activism, including a candlelight vigil outside a Board meeting, pushed the Board to prioritize the latter.

In 2006 the College was again urged to divest, with the aim to get College money out of Darfur. President Higdon sent letters to the College's investment fund managers, asking them to investigate and sell any co-mingled funds in Sudan. The sum? Less than 0.4% of the then \$189 mil-

lion endowment.

"It is morally imperative that the community of institutional investors take every possible action to support the people of Sudan and to bring this tragic situation to a speedy and peaceful resolution," Higdon's letter concluded. The former president underlined the symbolic, political impact of divesting as well as the responsibility of Connecticut College to invest ethically.

Now, divestment has become synonymous with collegiate environmentalism. At a growing rate, students at American colleges and universities have begun to urge their administrators to take their money out of "dirty" companies; for example, the fossil fuel industry. It is a movement that has been countered by industry giants like Exxon, who have called it "out of step with reality."

Because of the way Connecticut College exports the management of its relatively small endowment, explained Vice President of Finance Paul Maroni in a 2014 interview with *The Voice*, it would be difficult to divest. Maroni suggested that the College's obligations to sustainability are in the hands of the Office of Sustainability.

"It makes no sense to green the campus without also greening the portfolio," said Bill McKibben, an acclaimed environmental activist and Professor at Middlebury

College, where the divestment debate persists. Meanwhile, at Bates, Amherst and Bowdoin, the movement to divest has been blocked by administrators.

It is clear that the economic impact of our College's divestment on the industry would be marginal. The significance of such a motion would largely be personal to the College. Divestment would be a demonstration of the College's commitment to sustainability, to actual shared governance on administrative matters and, ultimately, to aligning itself as an intellectual institution fundamentally opposed to the fossil fuel industry, which has been long characterized by disinformation campaigns and speculative science.

Advocates for divestment emphasize that buying into the ethically sketchy fossil fuel industry is hypocritical in academia, a sector we rely on to produce and advance knowledge. Connecticut College specifically, because of its pioneering history in environmental sciences – the Arboretum, the groundbreaking Goodwin-Niering Center for the Environment – appears especially behind the times. One might imagine the late Botany Professor Bill Niering rolling in his grave.

It is the beginning of a movement towards more morally informed, accountable or even "enlightened," administrative policies. And, notably, it's a movement that has always originated from the student body, which, at Connecticut College, has a history of high ethical expectations of the College as a whole.

For divestment to be feasible at Conn, trustees would need to be convinced that divestment would not impact the well being of the school. Such concern is the reason why many in the debate would vouch for caution. Restructuring investments according to social or ethical sentiment is unfamiliar territory for most schools. For many, it is seen as unintelligent investment. As a result, administrators voice concern over institutional

longevity, history and tradition threatened by fossil fuel divestment.

Some schools have loudly denied students' reform demands.

"The concerns of the students are understandable but the message from the divestment movement is fundamentally misguided," said

Robert Stavins, Director of Harvard's environmental economics program. Neither Harvard nor Yale have divested, despite nearly 100 Harvard professors independently petitioning their university to do so.

Harvard President Drew Faust responded to the professors that the endowment is not political and should not be used as such.

Among schools with more comparable endowments to Conn – where the economic impact of divestment would be largely symbolic – the administrators echoed Harvard. In the NESAC, Bates soundly refuted a drawn out student divestment campaign, enumerating a host of reasons as to why divestment is fundamentally flawed.

"The transition would result in significant transaction costs, a long-term decrease in the endowment's performance, an increase in the endowment's risk profile and thus a loss in annual operating income for the College," said President Clayton Spencer in an open letter to the students. From a



ILLUSTRATION BY ANNA GROFIK solely financial standpoint, the

administrative response of Bates (which had a 263.8 million endowment in 2014) would equally apply to Connecticut College (which had an endowment of 278 million in 2014). Bowdoin and Amherst joined Bates in deciding not to divest.

Is the symbolic action of divesting worthwhile? Historically, the College has responded that it is. As a campus movement towards fossil fuel divestment grows, the memory of an administration that has divested before will be an influencing factor concerning a much greater pool of money than a 0.4% share in Darfur.

To that end, it would be in character for Connecticut College to question the surprisingly naïve proclamation by Harvard's President Faust that an investment as big as an endowment (Harvard's approaches \$40 billion) is not inherently political. In the arena of fossil fuel divestment, students will expect the College to lead from the front. •

VOLUME IX, NO. 21

AD FONTES



Fanning Takeover. Foreground Activists from left to right: Erik Rosado, Sheila Gallagher, Frank Tuitt (with hat), and Richard Greenwald. Photo by: Jennifer Caulfield.

Fanning Takeover Forces Action

by Fernando Espuelas-Asenjo
Publisher &
Cynthia Fazzari
Assistant News Editor

Seven people are sitting around a table in Abbey. It's 9:35, Wednesday night, April 31. Sheila Gallagher puffs on a Merit, smiling often as she shuffles through documents. Richard Greenwald, in a button-down, blue oxford shirt, sits, rocking his chair on its hind legs, amazed and excited that it's going to happen. Frankie Tuitt, a silver anchor necklace hanging from his neck, says, "It's going to be a big fight for all of us." Trying to keep up with the conversation, his pen racing across a yellow legal-sized pad, Dan Besse writes down the statement, making light of the group's seriousness. Bass Ale in one hand, a pack of Marlboro 25's in the other, Jed Alfred, doesn't want to mince words. "Don't dilute it," he says. Christine Owens looks down and nods. "we're

running out of time, let's do it." Sipping apple juice and making jokes, Reed Thompson worries, "Can we get another padlock? Do you have one?" -Reporter's Notebook

After eighteen and a half hours, a group of 54 concerned majority and minority students unlocked the doors of Fanning Hall. Their occupation began at 4:55 A.M. Thursday May 1, and ended at 11:15 P.M. when the Administration's Senior Staff and protestors jointly signed a statement, outlining steps to improve minority life at Connecticut College. The protest was peaceful from beginning to end.

"We are fifty-four diehards who are not trying to get attention, but an adequate response," senior Richard Greenwald said.

The students demanded that the Administration create: an affirmative action plan; sensitivity training for the staff; development of an Afro-

American/Black African studies major; increase in the minority enrollment to 15% by the class of 1991; increase in minority faculty; a resolution of the questions "concerning the directorship of the Office of Minority Student Affairs"; improvements to Unity House; and at the resolution of the protest, immunity from prosecution for all the protestors.

"I don't think the demands are radical: they can be met with goodwill and hard work," said Bruce Kirmse, associate professor of history.

"I think the minorities are pampered beyond reason. The Administration has been preoccupied with the minorities in exclusion of other concerns," said William Frasure, associate professor of government.

The protest was sparked by a twenty-seven page "Statement of Expression," submitted to President Oakes Ames

Continued on p.7.

Higdon, Trustees Take A Stand

Activist students, faculty members, and administrators at Conn have long spoken out against the devastating human rights violations in Darfur, Sudan. This grassroots movement took on a new form upon the beginning of winter break, when the issue was brought to the Executive Committee of Conn's Board of Trustees. By appealing to fund managers and other college presidents, President Higdon, along with the Trustees, has taken a critical step towards the application of monetary pressure on the Sudanese government enabling the genocide.

The trustees' Executive Committee unanimously endorsed Higdon's letter, which requests that fund managers "immediately divest from investments in companies that are in any way providing support to the government of Sudan in its genocidal campaign." Higdon's letter, backed by the full support of the Board of Trustees, signifies a deep commitment, on the part of the

college, to make a difference.

Comparisons to divestment from the South African apartheid regime are immature; the landscape of institutional fund management is drastically more complex now than it was then. Fifteen years ago, institutions like Conn had relatively direct control over its endowment assets. Since that time, institutions have nearly universally adopted a co-mingled policy: to maximize the potential of our endowment, our assets are arranged in such a way that the school itself has a minuscule stake in a gargantuan fund. Higdon and the Trustees have been valiant in their actions. In terms of divestment, the most Conn can do is to take a proactive stance in starting the engine of the proverbial bandwagon. Hopefully, many others will jump on.

W.G. Sebald's *The Emigrants*

MITCH PARO
ARTS EDITOR

W. G. Sebald (1944-2001) was a German writer, academic and emigrant. Though his written language was German, he taught only in England and held positions at both the University of Manchester and the University of East Anglia. He wrote four novels (and supervised their translation into English); as well as a number of poems, essays and short stories.

Though Sebald's career was relatively short, having written his first novel only 11 years before his early death in a car accident in 2001, his work earned and continues to earn substantial acclaim in both Europe and America.

The central themes of his writing are memory; the loss of memory and its recovery; the decay of civilization, nature, culture and people; a complementary fascination with the seemingly arbitrary things that survive; and the bodies of formal knowledge, natural science, history and architecture that seem to preserve the past and present. His magisterial, unsentimental renditions of individual narratives of survivors of the Holocaust, as well as his unique and artful use of the novel form, constitute what the *New Yorker* has called his "extraordinary contribution to world literature."

The features of Sebald's novels that combine to create his distinct style include a mixture of fact and fiction, biography and autobiography, scientific lexicon and poetic figures of speech. In the course of the narrative, these elements blend with their

opposites and with one another.

His paragraphs are long but not expansive. He does not dwell on the description of a single object or event, but rather his descriptions stay on the level of photographic accuracy even when they are at their most poignant. The narrative eye's constant movement from feature to feature serves, in the sequence of its attention, to drive the plot. The photographic clarity of the language is paradoxically complicated by the actual presence of black and white photographs in the text, which are more often cryptic than revealing.

The Emigrants bears each of these earmarks of Sebald's style. The novel is structured in four sections, each longer than the one before it and each dealing with the history, life and death of an emigrant. Each of these men carries, in an indefinable way, in the negative space of his character, an emptiness caused by the loss of homeland. Three of the men are German, and one is Lithuanian. Each is connected personally with the narrator — two housemates, a former teacher and a great uncle.

The narrator remains nameless but has undeniable biographical similarities to the author. For example, the first sentence of the novel reads: "At the end of September 1970, shortly before I took up my position at Norwich, I drove out to Hingham with Clara in search of somewhere to live." Sebald started at Norwich in 1966, and his wife's name was Ute.

The man that he meets at the house he finds in Hingham, the novel's first emigrant, Dr. Henry Selwyn, is pictured only

a few pages later in his butterfly garb. He bears, as the narrator points out, a curious resemblance to the author Vladimir Nabokov, who was himself an emigrant from Bolshevik Russia as well as a passionate lepidopterist. Still more cryptically, the presence of the figure or specter of this "butterfly man" is one of the few commonalities of these four disparate stories. One's inclination, in any case, is to take this photograph as a representation of Dr. Selwyn himself, a man whose name one might have found in the phonebook.

These are only two examples in the novel where the line between a real person and an invented character is deliberately blurred. But one is not compelled to begin a Wikipedia hunt for personal details, but compelled, rather, into the curious intimacy of Sebald's stories.

In the course of each story, moreover, the narrator and the question of the narrator fall away, replaced by the much more compelling question of the story's main character. In *The Emigrants*, as in Sebald's other novels, the story is told primarily through reported speech, through stories told by characters in the story (the characters of which often tell stories in turn), through books, newspapers, journals and photographs. The two longest stories each end with the narrator making a journey to a central location of the preceding narrative. He carries with him the weight of this story (complete in his mind as it can never be for the person who lived it), and brings it himself to an end. This sort of third-person conclusion, in which the story's listener

is responsible for finishing it, gives us a strong sense of its ending while leaving readers with the sense that everything most important remains in the irretrievable past.

The very last section of the novel deals with the author's own emigration from Germany to Manchester, England, and more centrally the story of Max Ferber, an artist and emigrant German Jew. The two meet when the author first leaves Germany for Manchester at 21, and Max begins to share his story. After a separation of nearly three decades, the two meet again and Ferber gives the narrator his mother's diary from the early 1940s, after he himself had already made it to England. This journal leads the narrator to the town it describes, the last known residence of Ferber's mother, which provides him only with the company of old spa visitors and an overgrown, gated graveyard, for which he is given the wrong key. This uncanny place leaves him with a sense of the "mental impoverishment and lack of memory that marked the Germans."

Back in Manchester, returning to his hotel room after visiting the dying Ferber, he begins to enter into the missing memories of we're not sure who: the view from his fifth-story window and the sounds rising from the city below begin to seem to him, and then become indistinguishable from photographs he had seen the previous year, in Frankfurt, Germany, of the Litzmannstadt ghetto. •

Returning to Walden

LUCY WEAVER
CONTRIBUTOR

As our winter break draws near, many of us are probably thinking about the ample free time to finally read for pleasure. The question of what books to read will undoubtedly come up, and for that I have a solution. Take a few days to return to one of those Great American Classics and think critically as you follow Henry David Thoreau on his two-year excursion to Walden Pond near Concord, Massachusetts.

If you had to read *Walden* for an idealism or nature course in high school, now is a good opportunity to reread without the burden of reverence that often comes with Thoreau. Instead, read with an air of cynicism, for while *Walden* has some great philosophical ideas about humans and technology and government, Thoreau was a satirist at heart. Allow yourself to be amused at his overall belief in his own superiority.

His observations range from bragging about how much money he saved building his cabin by hand to stating that Concord, home to not only himself but also to Emerson, the Alcotts, Hawthorne and more, had "no taste for the best or for very good

books." This declaration could ruffle the feathers of those not familiar with Thoreau's tendency toward bluntness.

Regarding trashy books, in fact, Thoreau goes so far as to say that they cause "a dullness of sight, a stagnation of the vital circulations, and a general deliquium and sloughing off of all the intellectual faculties." Conversely, he says that "the works of great poets have never yet been read by mankind, for only great poets can read them." Between his feelings about trashy books and great poetry, one wonders what Thoreau actually did like to read. You'll find gems like this in and around his high philosophy.

So, Connecticut College students, I recommend leaving behind your "lives of quiet desperation" this winter break and following Thoreau's adventure at Walden Pond. His "enemies are worms, cool days, and most of all woodchucks" — whose aren't? You may find that you have more in common with him than you thought you did. •

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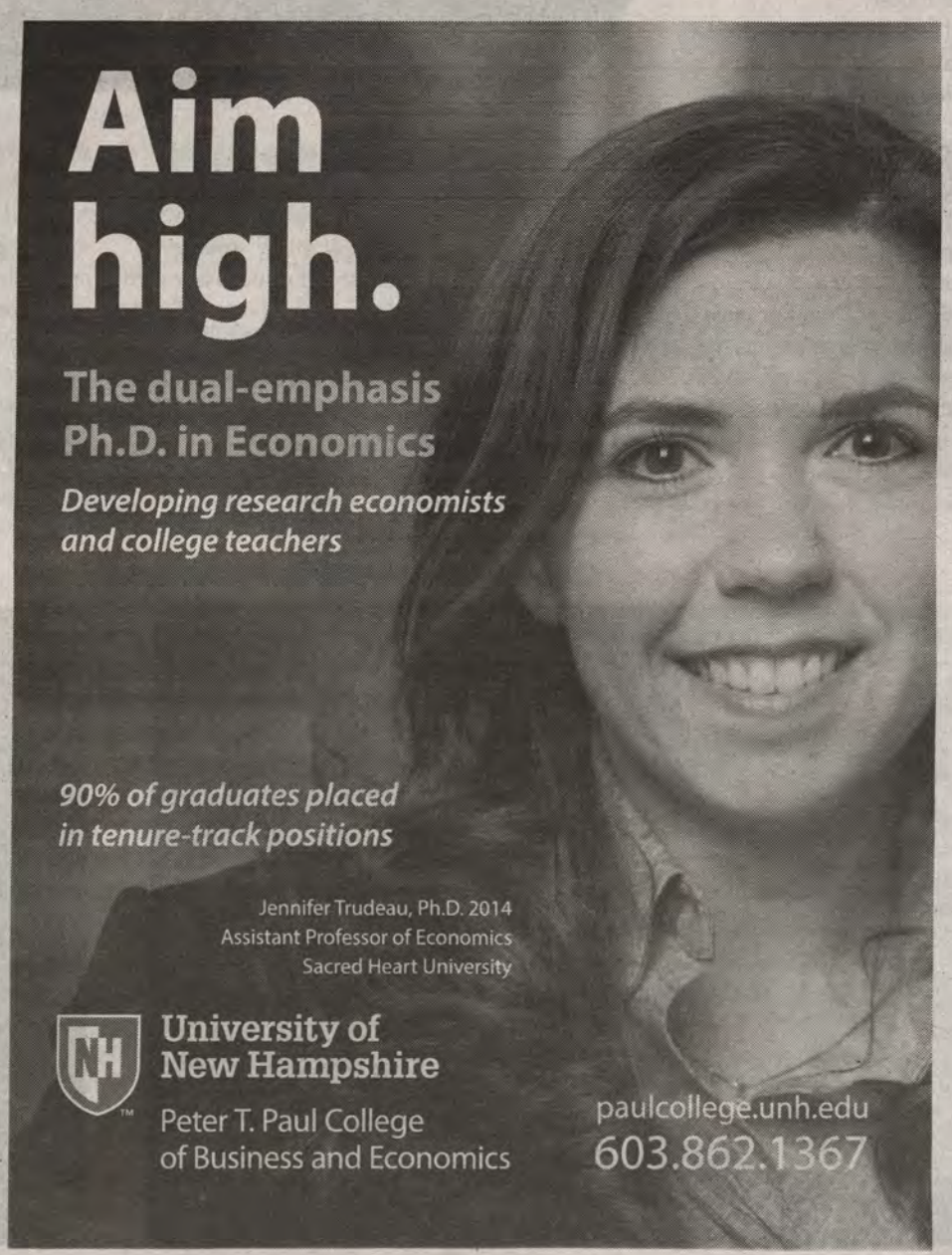
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Students and Faculty Come Together to Conclude Russian Winter Arts Festival

ISABELLE SMITH
STAFF WRITER

The chapel vibrating as sound bounced out of the piano was a magical experience. On Thursday, Dec. 3 and Friday, Dec. 4 the Russian Winter Arts and Music Festival continued from earlier in the semester. The first night featured student performances, showcasing Will Platt '19, Justin Winokur '18, Mitch Paro '16, Andrew Shaw '16, Claire Raizen '18 and faculty accompaniment by Tony Lin and Christine Coyle. This was a particularly fun performance because of the variety of instruments and styles featured.

Platt and Lin, playing violin and piano, respectively, opened up the evening. The piece, Pyotr Ilych Tchaikovsky's "Valse sentimentale," from the end of the 19th century, had a slow dance rhythm. It compelled the audience to sway along.

Next, Winokur and Paro performed a tenor-piano duet. As a listener, it was harder to pick up the tune in this piece because of the piece's complexity. Both musicians seemed to be following their own beat, but then there would be moments of perfect alignment. Together, both piano and tenor would shorten and sharpen their sounds or elongate them. This was really fun to listen to because the chaotic nature of the piece had moments of compete fluidity.

The next instrument encountered was the clarinet, played by Shaw and accompanied by Lin on the piano. The music, Rimsky-Korsakov's "Flight of the Bumblebee," was very appropriately named. This piece had a dizzying effect. As the clarinet song spiraled downward, the piano accompaniment seemed to spin upward.

Following Shaw, Winokur played his second piece of the evening on the cello. This piece has a romantic sway to it, encouraging the audience to picture a ballroom in a tsar's palace full of synchronized dance moves.

Next was Raizen's short, fast cello piece.

The surprising change in tempo made it all the more enjoyable.

And for the finale of this performance, Lin played two pieces: Sergei Rachmaninoff's "Etude-tableau in D major, Op. 39, No. 9" and Sergei Prokofiev's "Etude in D minor, Op. 2, No. 1." Lin played in an engaging style; he changed his position on the bench depending on the tone of the notes. When he played high notes, he seemed to be sitting on nails, but when performing low notes, he pounded on the keys. Both pieces were fast and dramatic.

audience followed along in translation.

Emily Frey Giansiracusa's lecture, "Boris Godunov and the Terrorist," followed.

These presentations were an interesting addition to the festival, adding an academic component. The only issue for the non-experienced ear is that the Russian language is difficult to decipher, so listening to the plots and characters became confusing very quickly. Fortunately, most of the members seemed to have some experience with the Russian language. Even some members from the Russian New London community

on piano produced quite a sound. One would play louder with more emphasis, and the other would play quieter background music. Then they would switch. They were a dynamic duo.

The final piece of the night, Modest Musorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, played by Lin, was by far the most magnificent. The piece took about 20 minutes to play through. The titles of each of the pictures were listed in the program, and as the tone changed, it was obvious that the composition had moved on to the next picture.

One of the really cool things about the names of the pictures being represented was that they displayed elements of Russian culture. "The Promenade," "The Market Place at Ligmoges" and "The Great Gate of Kiev" displayed the city life of a Russian town through the loud, exclamatory, hustle-bustle music. Meanwhile, "Cattle," and "The Ballet of Unhatched Chicks" provided an image of country life, with low steady overtones, and flurries of high notes, respectively. The pieces about "The Gnome," and "The Hut of Fowl Legs (Baba-Yaga)" referred to Russian folklore – particularly Baba-Yaga. She is supposedly a witch who lives in the woods in a tree house. But instead of a tree, the house is made of chicken legs. The music based around this piece was suspenseful, fast then slow, and seemed to be saying, "uh oh, uh oh uh oh." All the pieces combined

produced a beautiful work of art.

Lin played this composition masterfully. It was a very impressive display. When the final notes of "The Great Gates of Kiev" rang through the chapel, the audience stood and cheered for one of the primary organizers and performers of the Russian Arts and Music Festival. •



The Russian Arts and Music Festival continued all of the next day, too. In the afternoon, there were presentations on Russian masterpieces of art by students from Slavic Studies 165: From Russia with Love. Molly Brunson, a professor of Slavic languages and literature at Yale University, responded and expanded upon each of the students' comments, continuing the discussion about Russian visual artworks.

Later that evening, Olga Nikolaeva read sections from *Boris Godunov*, while the

arrived for the later lecture.

The final performance of the Russian Arts and Music Festival was an all-faculty showcase. Students got to observe their professors' deep passions and talents. The enthusiasm was remarkable. First Kumi Ogano played two pieces: Rachmaninoff's *Moments Musicaux*, Op. 16 in B minor and E minor. These pieces complemented each other beautifully. The first is slow and methodical, while the second is faster. Next, Gary Buttery on tuba and Patrice Newman



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF OLGA NIKOLAEVA

Poetry Corner

"Aubade"

They say one day
The sun will swell,
Encapsulate the earth.

And this brings fear
To have so near
Such molten, stellar girth.

The grass will bake,
The trees will fry,
The air will cook you fast.

A microwave
Of dale and glade,
No building built to last.

But these mornings one looks coldly
On glowing sun in morning haze;
One lives its hug of heat and light.

Routines of cars,
Commuters, coffee drinkers,
Hold it as their given right:

A finger given to an infant,
Thoughtless, hungry, and dependent.
We live its hug of heat and light.

- DA

Editor's Note: This poem, by Emma Horst-Martz '18 and Grace Sheeran '18, is brought to you by the Women's Empowerment Initiative, an organization dedicated to bringing women's voices to the stage and page.

"Boobie Pride"

In the West it's all about the best breast
we push up and pad, we chicken outlet ourselves mad.
but now the hipsters help the small chested sisters,
making fads saying small boobs are rad
then what happens when my itty bitty titties aren't considered so pretty?
it's nice to not worry about luggin big jugs,
but we're told that those jugs are like drugs to the guys we want to love
middle school was rough for the girls who had chest stuff
and the girls who were ashamed because our stuff wasn't up to snuff
three nipples, two nipples, or even none at all

The WE Initiative is proud to present: *Coming from the Beast*

Our annual narrative-based production,
written entirely by women on campus
February 20th

Auditions will be held January 30th
Email empowerinitiativecc@gmail.com for info

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S.O.S.

Saturday, Jan. 30, 2016

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STEPHEN HALLQUIST
STAFF MEMBER CONTRIBUTOR

Before Buddy the Elf found his true identity and discovered the joys of eating spaghetti with maple syrup, or before Ralphie convinced his father what a perfect Christmas gift a Red Ryder carbine-action two-hundred shot range model air rifle would be, *It's A Wonderful Life*, directed by Frank Capra and starring James Stewart and Donna Reed, was an enduring essential for getting into the spirit of the holidays.

While my family enjoys watching *Elf* and *Christmas Story* every year around Christmas time, *It's A Wonderful Life* is a movie that speaks to us all year long. The story is about a guardian angel named Clarence, hardly one of the heavyweights like Gabriel, Raphael or Michael, but one of those apprentice angels trying to earn his wings. In order to be a full-fledged angel, Clarence is charged with the task of convincing a kind-hearted yet suicidal small-town businessman what life might have been like if he hadn't existed at all. The lesson is revealed as Clarence directs his charge, George Bailey, to be a spectator of the lives of others who would never had known him. Within one Christmas Eve night, Clarence proves that without George, the lives of so many would have been a disaster. The message realized by George is unambiguous, poignant and vital: You matter.

The movie's lesson is not just one for holiday consideration, but one that can be witnessed in so many lives in a number of circumstances. In my own life, I've witnessed it directly and in few degrees of separation. In those experiences, it became obvious to recognize the impact a single person's contribution could make to the big story. Individual actions, often appearing insignificant, do matter.

That point was driven home for me in the summer of 1973, when I witnessed three sessions of one of the most infamous episodes of modern times: the Watergate hearings. I was living in nearby Arlington, Virginia at the time, and I couldn't imagine being close enough to something so significant in American political culture to see it live. These hearings, along with impeachment proceedings being conducted in Congress, ultimately would lead to the resignation of a sitting president, Richard M. Nixon.

It's a pretty good bet that, on the night of June 17, 1972, President Richard Nixon did not know Frank Wills. At the time, Wills was a 24-year-old, \$80-a-week security guard who was faithfully doing his job at the massive Watergate complex situated along the Potomac River in Washington, DC. It's also a pretty good bet that Frank Wills started the night with no clue that he was about to change Nixon's

life, as well as the course of American history.

While Wills was conducting his rounds, a fairly boring routine, he discovered a break-in of the offices of the Democratic National Committee. He alerted the local police, who, upon their arrival, discovered five men associated with the Republican National Committee and the Committee to Re-Elect the President (Nixon). They were arrested, and the rest is history.

Although it is true that many individuals had a part in the ultimate outcome of the Watergate affair, it's not difficult to see the impact of one solitary individual on the whole story. Frank Wills had no intention of starting a series of events that ended as it did. He was merely doing his job. He showed up and fulfilled his duty. His faithful actions made a huge difference, even if he never thought

*Individual actions, often
appearing insignificant, do
matter.*

he would ever make a difference. He discovered that he mattered.

One other person who discovered he mattered in the lives of others was someone who has a more local relationship. In 1997, Steven Spielberg directed a historical drama film that tells the true story of a group of slaves who overwhelmed their Spanish captors on the ship *La Amistad* and tried in vain to return to Africa. Instead, they were taken to north and were captured off the Long Island Sound. Ultimately, the ship and its human cargo were taken to New London, Connecticut. After a brief time in New London, the slaves were taken to New Haven where they were to stand trial for murder.

Fortunately, local area abolitionists took up the slaves' case and hired Roger Sherman Baldwin, a young and inexperienced real estate lawyer to represent them. Baldwin would later be elected governor of Connecticut. Their case was taken to every level of the American judiciary and finally to the U.S. Supreme Court, where they were

represented by former United States president John Quincy Adams. The decision of the court was to grant the slaves their freedom.

Until the infamous Dred Scott decision of 1857, the *Amistad* case was considered the most significant case regarding the issue of slavery in United States jurisprudence and provided a means for many enslaved people to seize their freedom. But without the efforts of one local man, Dwight Plimpton Janes, the fate of the slaves would have been a no-brainer, and Steven Spielberg would have had to find another subject for a film. According to New London Maritime Society records, "Janes had already been an active figure among New London's abolitionists when the *Amistad* arrived in port. Born on July 31, 1801, he grew up in the fiercely anti-slavery community of St. Albans, Vermont. After marrying Jane Winthrop Allyn, daughter of a prominent New London family, Janes lived in Montreal and attended the American Presbyterian Church, led at that time by abolitionist minister Joseph Christmas. Janes carried his views to New London when he moved there in the 1830s and began working for the grocery and mercantile firm Hurlbut, Butler & Co. He joined the American Anti-Slavery Society, distributed abolitionist materials, and tried to start an anti-slavery prayer group at the Second Congregational Church."

Janes managed to get aboard the revenue cutter *Washington* for the initial legal hearing, and noticed that the captives were speaking in their native language. Jose Ruiz, one of the *Amistad's* owners, told Janes that none of them spoke Spanish or English because they were "just from Africa." It was enough to convince Janes that the captives were freeborn Africans, not Cuban slaves as the Spaniards claimed. He sought to bring the matter to the attention of several prominent abolitionists, writing to Roger S. Baldwin, a New Haven lawyer; Joshua Leavitt, editor of *The Emancipator*; and Lewis Tappan, a silk merchant.

The actions of Janes were significant to the case, enough so that without his testimony, the Africans would have been doomed to continued slavery, prison, or worse.

Unlike Frank Wills, Dwight Janes acted with intention. Either way, with or without intention, their lives mattered to many people and redirected the course of American history of social justice. While it's possible to go on sharing how significant one life can matter in the affairs of others, I'd like to encourage the Connecticut College community to look at what can be done right here on campus, in New London and its surrounding communities. You will never know how significant your contribution may be. With or without intention, just being there in the lives of others raises the odds that you will bless those around you. I triple-dog-dare you. •

Stop Saying “Last Semester,” but Keep Saying Something

MAIA HIBBETT
OPINIONS EDITOR

The first time a Connecticut College first-year student met my mention of “last semester’s events” with wide-eyed confusion, I was shocked. The most recent time, I was exhausted.

“There was this thing,” I rambled crudely, “that a professor wrote on Facebook—and there was this vandalism...”

Having now explained the situation several times over the past semester, I felt disappointed that I still could not succinctly outline what occurred last spring while emphasizing that the issues remain unresolved. More so, however, I was frustrated that the first-years had not learned about the situation already. Their lack of information impedes our ability to move the conversation forward.

In an interview with the *Voice*, Interim Dean of Equity and Inclusion David Canton noted that he and a few collaborators created a website complete with synopses, links to individual conversations, and updates regarding last spring’s events.

“The degree of interest ranges,” Dean Canton commented, explaining that for students interested in the subject, the information is out there.

While this notion makes sense, excusing students from essential campus conversations creates a disconnect within the student body, especially in areas as crucial

and currently relevant as racial justice. As students become acclimated with the campus, they should be made aware of issues of importance to large portions of the student body.

Dean of First-Year Students Andrea Rossi-Reder spoke to the role of orientation in the same interview. She noted that in recent years, orientation has become increasingly “decentralized,” with orientation groups now designed around first-year seminars rather than residential spaces.

“The student advisors go through a training before classes start,” Dean Rossi-Reder explained, noting that their training focused mainly on “the nuts and bolts of registration.”

“[Last spring’s conversation was] something that I figured would come up naturally,” she added. For students of color, this might be “something they would take up with their ALANA big sibs.”

Dean Rossi-Reder elaborated that this discussion was “not really the job of the student advisors.”

“A lot of the jobs that the SAs had to do got taken over by floor governors,” she said, “They’re the ones dealing with [first-years] in their social and residential lives.”

Aidan Cort ’18, a floor governor in KB, commented that the REAL office advised floor governors about “how [they] could be proactive in helping talk to [their] residents about racism and pointing them towards their resources.”

Cort clarified that if he remembered correctly, the floor governors were not, however, explicitly instructed to address their residents about the spring’s events.

Dean Canton noted that to a certain degree, this is an issue of student agency. While students never received an in-depth explanation detailing the incendiary Facebook post and vandalism and the conversations that followed, both deans seemed to be under the impression that first-year students had at least heard of what happened.

“It was in the convocation address,” mentioned Dean Rossi-Reder.

“If you don’t know, you can ask,” Dean Canton pointed out. He suggested that students who felt dissatisfied with the way the situation was handled write a letter or request an open forum to voice their concerns.

“Let them come talk to me,” he stated plainly.

Dean Rossi-Reder added that administrators experienced a setback this fall when Rev. Dr. Jamie Washington, President and Founder of the Washington Consulting Group and the Social Justice Training Institute, cancelled his visit to Conn due to scheduling issues.

“That’s really where the conversation was going to take place,” noted Dean Rossi-Reder, describing Rev. Dr. Washington’s cancellation as “a loss for us.”

Dean Canton said that the event had been designed as “a whole forum for the first-

year class” and was scheduled for Oct. 23.

Trevor Bates ’18, a student adviser, noted that first-years did receive some racism awareness information in the format of a panel discussing *Whistling Vivaldi*, the Class of 2019’s summer reading. Some students have criticized the social psychology book as problematic for lacking a diverse representation of cases.

It appears, then, that Conn tried to address the ongoing tensions from last semester. Notably, the information exists for those who seek it, but the problem stems primarily from those who would prefer not to acknowledge it. While nearly everyone has, at some point, contributed to our racist culture—whether intentionally or accidentally—the students who typically make the independent effort to educate themselves about racial justice are not the main perpetrators of aggression and exclusion. Likely, the most problematic group will not visit the webpage.

Additionally, this is an issue of institutional memory. Forgetting last spring’s conflict is in the best interest of Conn’s public image—that is, at least, if we’re pursuing the image of a NESCAC utopia. As a student body, however, we have the power to decide whether we will erase our points of contention or consider them as we move forward. It is up to us to decide whether *our institution is immaculate or evolving.* •

To Activists and to Spectators: *What Student Activism Should Activate in Us All*

SEAN FELTON
CONTRIBUTOR

The recent social and racial climate at Mizzou prompted thousands of students at colleges around the country to stand in solidarity with the students of color affected by the threatening malice of their classmates and to ignite a wave of protest and activism in pursuit of social justice.

Demonstrations, candlelight vigils and #StudentBlackOut protests have dotted the university scene in the past few months, highlighting an urgent call for change. Student activists at Princeton, Tufts and our own Connecticut College opened a dialogue on institutional racism and spoke out on the ways implicit marginalization infiltrates their personal experiences.

As with the manifestations of any social movement, these instances of student activism elicited a broad spectrum of emotional responses. Some students were immediately moved by the protests. Others felt initially overwhelmed by the information before them. And since our campus is home to a largely liberal population who strives to uphold principles of social equality, many students acknowledged institutional racism but had difficulty situating the existence of such oppression so close to home.

So, if activism precipitates such variance in reaction, how do we reconcile these responses? And what must we fundamentally take away from its place in society?

First and foremost, variance in response is okay. Issues of racism and diversity are hard to talk about. Addressing these aspects of society requires courageous conversation on cultural competence. Though crucial, these dialogues are undeniably difficult to bring to the forefront of discussion. We should not shy away from ideas or feelings that do not align with our own; we should instead elevate our capacity to challenge discomfort. Put poignantly by President Barack Obama in a recent speech regarding political conversation on liberal arts campuses, “I don’t agree that you, when you become students at colleges, have to be coddled and protected from different points of view.”

When we consider the effects of activism, we must acknowledge that invalidation of emotional reactions to activism might be as harmful as invalidating the cause itself. Activism aims to educate, so it should never deny a student who is first confronting the realities of societal injustices the ability to engage these issues at a comfortable pace. There is danger in assuming a lack of active participation indi-

cates a lack of emotional connection or the absence of information internalization.

“One flaw in some activism,” a student suggested, “is when it generalizes an audience based on assumption. Not actively engaging does not mean you support the opposite cause.”

Conversely, there is danger in invalidating the assertive emotional expression of protesters. “I’ve been a spectator when an organization is fighting for what they believe in and I remember feeling receptive, and wanting to know more about the topic they were discussing,” Shelly Rodriguez ’16 shared. “I felt like I needed to give them a chance, to give them a voice that made them feel heard.”

Thus, we should not get caught up in the content of these disparities, for it detracts from the larger issue at hand a response to a protest is the start of an important conversation, and the fact that it got people talking is, in itself, a small victory. We must focus instead on the intrinsic and overarching message student activism sends.

Student activism is about spreading awareness. It implies such embedded systematic shortcomings that only a jolt from our daily routines and expectations might alert us to the feelings of our peers. When protesters enter a space, their goal is to

emphasize the existence of an issue so pervasive it warrants interruption. Productive student activism aims to create opportunities for those who are underrepresented, not to minimize the character of their spectators. Ultimately, effective student activism targets a form of injustice, not the members of an audience. It has everything to do with the voices of the activists and the injustices they publicize, and less to do with the stillness of the spectators.

The mere existence of protest should signal to us that, most simply, we have a grave and long-unacknowledged problem. The content of any demonstration is important, but its underlying implications are crucial. Rodriguez, also a participant in the recent series of protests at Conn, summarized the importance of activism with: “Activism, to me, is strength: strength in numbers, strength in community and strength in organization. With that strength we bring awareness, unity, support, and change. Activism is fighting for your passions, fighting for what’s right. To spectators, activism should be an eye opener, an open door to walk through and explore a new world filled with answers, but also a world that leaves you wanting more, more answers.” •

SGA Conversations

Why Members of the SGA Executive Board Must Resign

DEION JORDAN
CONTRIBUTOR

When members of the SGA Executive Board repeatedly perform poorly and engage in gross misconduct, should they be held accountable?

When members of the SGA Executive Board, to be more specific, repeatedly create an injurious climate, wantonly disregard the safety of others, attack Assembly members while performing official duties, and act in a way that constitutes a serious lapse in judgment, should they all resign?

For me, these questions have a concrete answer: yes. However, it seems as if members of the Board reached a different conclusion. Despite being compelled to resign by those affected by the repugnant actions and coarse speech of members of the SGA Executive Board, many of them have decided not to do so. SGA may fulfill its duty and obligation to create a better Connecticut College for students and a mission to increase school unity and spirit, but when it comes to intragovernmental affairs and the Executive Board as a whole, issues continuously arise.

The most recent and provocative example of gross misconduct and wrongdoing arose after screenshots of messages from a private GroupMe chat for Executive Board members was released to a handful of students. The content of the conversations, in my opinion, are to be considered despicable, insensitive, and vicious! Some of the messages included snarky witticisms, personal and character attacks, and even alluded to members “forcing” students they liked to comply, a suggestion advanced by the President. The latter messages were followed with a joking and trivializing deploy of a “red dot” alert. This raises red flags for me; given rape culture on college campuses, it is never acceptable to allude to or even attempt to discuss forcing oneself to violate another’s bodily autonomy. Nevertheless, the Board still found a way to play “victim,” and referred to protesters and legitimate victims as “petty” during Thursday’s Assembly meeting.

This shortcoming and indiscipline is so egregious that it both warrants and justifies the resignation and/or impeachment of the

President and all elected Executive Board members who engaged in gross misconduct evidenced by the GroupMe chat. In order to understand why the Board must resign, we need first understand the gravity and potential impact of their deliberate and shameful actions. The main role of the SGA, as student leaders, is to work to ensure a healthy college environment for all students socially, academically and when producing co-curricular policies.

However, major fissures exist amongst the Assembly. Distrust and discomfort are at its peak due to the cliquish nature of the Exec Board, which ultimately produced the poisonous environment that initiated this debacle. All things considered, it is no exaggeration to presume the Executive Board incapable of fulfilling its duties. Yet not everyone agrees that this is true. During Thursday’s meeting, members of the Board decided to fight against those with genuine grievances by playing the victim.

I listened in on the meeting with disgust and contempt. Members of the board avoided responsibility and decided they were not in the

“right state of mind” to produce a concrete decision – offering to wait until spring semester to make a decision. However, they seemed to be in the “right state of mind” when they were sending reckless text messages during an SGA meeting. The Board seemed to represent its own words at that moment: “slicker than slick.”

The President and Vice President laughed and cried as they expressed their feelings to members of the Assembly. I found the entire thing to be a huge slap in the face to those that were wronged and slighted by “senior” members of the Assembly. To be quite frank, I found their actions and perhaps even the entire meeting to be a disingenuous charade.

Above all, it is pertinent to remember that students, whom you may have voted into office to represent you and to uphold a sense of integrity, accountability and community, deliberately and calculatingly disregarded that duty. Members of the SGA Executive Board actually harmed members of the Assembly so severely that they resigned their positions as our representatives due to the harsh conditions that exist

on Thursdays in Ernst Common Room. The SGA Constitution holds that the President and all elected Executive Board members may be impeached for gross misconduct related to the specific Board member’s office. Members of the Board commenced a verbal assault against their colleagues and must be held accountable.

Regardless of what you may think of SGA, seeking the removal of representatives who have engaged in negative acts at the expense of their own colleagues is the appropriate way of ensuring accountability. We, as members of this institution, have the ability to show those harmed that we care by supporting resignations and moving to replace old leadership with leaders who have the potential to rectify the situation and ensure it never arises again.

I invite anyone who has been bullied, hurt, and/or vulnerable to stand in solidarity with those who have been slighted by these leaders and contact your House Senators and ask them to take the necessary steps to oust members of the toxic regime. •

Restructuring as Process

LEAH ROSOFSKY
CONTRIBUTOR

Editor’s Note: Leah Rosofsky is the Presidential Associate for the 2015-2016 academic year for SGA. As Presidential Associate, she is appointed by the President, and not elected by the student body.

The Executive Board and Chairs Council has had lapses in judgment, reflected in cell phone correspondence. GroupMe messages, which Exec Board members and Chairs have taken responsibility for, are said to be the catalyst for creating a “toxic environment.” However, this correspondence is not an indicator of a toxic environment; it is instead a reminder that SGA, as a space, has been structured in a way that has disenfranchised students.

I would like to acknowledge that I am not speaking on behalf of the entire Executive Board and Chairs Council. My purpose in writing this article, as Presidential Associate, is not to deny that negative events occurred; rather, my goal is to shift the focus of our conversations and broaden the contextual scope. I argue that SGA exists and operates within a system that would never be able to meet the demands being asked of it. SGA does not have the type of institutional pull that students want it to have.

Student government acts as a liaison between the students and the administration.

Taking a root cause approach to solving the broken student government would involve changing a hierarchy that extends far beyond the confines of Ernst at 7:15 p.m. Not only is this semester’s Executive Board and Chairs Council the most diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, sex, class, gender and sexual orientation that the Class of 2016 has seen in their four years at Conn, it is also the first time in recent history that there has been any attempt at restructuring and revising SGA processes.

I don’t do SGA because I am interested in government, I do SGA because I like to make connections with other students who believe in making this school better. As elected members, the students on the Exec Board and Chairs Council should be held accountable for their actions by the greater student body. However, they should be held accountable as students. If we break it down, “Student” represents all students, “Government” addresses the political nature of the organization, and “Association” refers to the individuals who work together to provide for students. But, as of now, the parts of this sum are being reviewed selectively and individually.

SGA serves as a singular voice for the collective student body, and this benefits the administration. With the presence of SGA, student clubs and organizations are cut off from direct interaction with

the administration. Consequently, blame for institutional failure often rests on the shoulders of students in SGA, rather than on administrators themselves. The administration is often granted the privilege of silence; meanwhile, individuals on SGA Exec and Chairs—our peers—are under immense pressure to perform institutional responsibility.

The third resolution that SGA passed this year, “CC 15-16 #3 Resolution for the Connecticut College Association to Deconstruct the Previously Adhered to Standards of Dress at the General Body Meetings,” addressed a long-term concern of SGA performing a traditional and privileged status within the campus community: requiring business casual attire at Assembly meetings. Passing this resolution came with the acknowledgement that this year’s SGA would challenge and rethink norms.

The restructuring process opens a space in which more voices can finally be heard, but this should not come at the expense of other students’ well being. Students in leadership positions work in a historically and politically situated space. Members of SGA, especially those who have been on SGA for multiple years, have the difficult task of attempting to better a system while simultaneously continuing to work within its channels. This has resulted in hurt feelings, both on the part of people in the

Assembly, as well as Exec Board members and Chairs.

At this moment, SGA has passed more resolutions than last year’s SGA passed all year. These include initiatives to fund student research, to create a task force to restructure club processes and to support numerous sustainability projects. In order for SGA to work for students, students must work with SGA. In the past few weeks, I have questioned SGA and its potential to incite change through legislation. I have come to the conclusion that the system is flawed, but we’re doing the best we can. We want the system to improve, and we want to keep support student endeavors. It is incredibly difficult to do both at the same time.

It is unfortunate that the first Exec Board and Chairs Council to attempt restructuring is being blamed for a structure that has existed for years. Restructuring is a process, not an event. It is not our faults that define us, and we should not let them divide us. •

Paying Forward what my Teachers Gave Me

LUIS RAMOS
CONTRIBUTOR

As a college senior, I am asked about post-graduation plans on a regular basis. Like many seniors, I have struggled to come up with a set plan that does not change from time to time. I arrived at Connecticut College knowing that I wanted to study architecture, but I didn't know exactly where that would take me. I never imagined the incredible opportunities my four years here would afford me. I'm unspeakably grateful for each and every one of them – but also a little sad. So many of the classmates I grew up with in a working-class neighborhood in Houston won't get the same chances that I've had to learn and grow, and won't have

the choices that I do as I move into full-fledged adulthood.

Unfortunately, my former classmates in Houston are not unique. Millions of kids growing up low-income don't have access to the education they deserve.

This infuriates me. I didn't get to Conn because I was exceptionally gifted or talented. I got here because of my school and the teachers at YES Prep in Houston – mentors and role models who pushed, guided, supported and loved me.

As I thought more and more about my post-grad plans, these teachers kept showing up in my mind (partly because they also show up in my phone so often –

still emailing and calling regularly to see how I'm doing, offer help, and get the latest on campus life). Many of my most influential teachers at YES Prep were Teach For America corps members. As I noticed TFA posters going up on campus this fall, it became clear to me that I now had that freedom and responsibility to follow in their footsteps. I'll never be able to pay back what they did for me. But I *can* pay it forward.

I know Teach For America isn't perfect. No organization is. But the criticisms I've heard of TFA just don't match up with my reality. Our education system is deeply flawed, and fixing it is going to take the hard, dedicated work

of thousands of people across sectors. TFA corps members and alums are a part of this – not the whole story or solution by any stretch but certainly a key part of mine. Without TFA, many of my favorite teachers would never have made it to my classrooms. And they certainly wouldn't have landed in my school. Founded by TFA alumni, YES Prep is changing the game for low-income students. It's the reason I have the choice to become an educator. It's the reason I can't imagine choosing anything else.

You don't have to think TFA is the answer. But you do have to understand the impact its teachers and alumni are having on kids

like me before you dismiss it. If we want to live in a world where every student can walk into her closest neighborhood school and get a great education, we need to do everything we can to support, celebrate, and partner with the people who are trying to make that happen. When I enter the classroom as a teacher next fall, I won't be trying to push a private agenda. I'll be joining an incredible community of educators, some who came through TFA and some who did not, coming together to give underserved kids what they need to create bright futures for themselves. It's a privilege and an honor. •

Conn Forgets Turbulent Past

SAADYA CHEVAN
STAFF WRITER

Some Conn students associate the name Pfizer with New London's woes. The first time I heard of the pharmaceutical giant mentioned in the context of New London, I was told that a dwindling trend in New London's Jewish population could be partially attributed to Pfizer's departure from the city.

I noticed more mentions of Pfizer while investigating a Connecticut College students' protest in 2012 over the selection of former investment banker and United States ambassador to the United Kingdom Louis Susman as commencement speaker.

Students degraded Susman's character based on his daughter's position as a Pfizer vice president.

Concurrently, I discovered a *New York Times* article from the early 2000s that reported on the resignation of Connecticut College President Claire Gaudiani and made several prominent mentions of campus backlash due to her involvement with the New London Development Corporation and Pfizer in New London's redeveloping Fort Trumbull neighborhood.

The subject of Pfizer came up again during an interview with Stephen Hallquist, a well-known mailroom staff member. Hallquist pointed out that we must understand not just how we perceive New London but also how New London perceives us. With that, we launched into a discussion

PHOTO COURTESY OF
SAADYA CHEVAN



about the College's involvement in bringing Pfizer to New London.

For a more detailed account of how Pfizer came to New London, I would highly recommend reading Jeff Benedict's book *Little Pink House*, which is incredibly detailed and well-researched. It is currently being adapted into a movie, though I anticipate that this somewhat fictionalized adaptation that will likely leave out the College's involvement.

The story goes something like this. In 1997, then Republican governor of Connecticut John Rowland decided to develop New London's waterfront with the hopes of attracting a Fortune 500 company. As part of this push, his administration recruited Connecticut College President Claire Gaudiani to head a quasi-public development agency, the New London Develop-

ment Corporation (NLDC), which would use state money to implement their plan.

Gaudiani, who had connections to Pfizer through her husband and the College's Board of Trustees, was aware that Pfizer had aims to house a new research and development facility and began floating the possibility of Pfizer coming to New London. To her credit, she was able to convince the company to select the New London site against almost impossible odds.

As a result, the company demanded many concessions that would require the NLDC to acquire almost all of the property in the Fort Trumbull neighborhood, demolish all the buildings there and turn over some of that empty land to Pfizer, while developing most of the remaining land.

This would eventually result in a massive fight over the NLDC's use of eminent

domain, the much despised and highly controversial power of government to force people to sell their land so that it can be used for the public good. The most prominent opposition figure was Susette Kelo, a resident of Fort Trumbull who led the neighborhood in the fight against the NLDC to determine whether the organization could take their houses. Kelo also received assistance from members of the New London community, including Hallquist and Professor of History Fred Paxton who, despite pressure from Gaudiani, became a prominent member of the College in opposition to the NLDC.

Kelo's name rose to prominence through the lawsuit *Kelo v. City of New London*, which ended with a decision by the Supreme Court in 2005 in favor of the City. The case focused mainly on whether the City had the right to transfer possession of private land to Pfizer. In a dissent to the ruling, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor summed up the opposition: "Nothing is to prevent the state from replacing any Motel 6 with a Ritz-Carlton."

Kelo v. City of New London has been cited as one of the most unpopular Supreme Court rulings from this century, with around 80% of Americans disagreeing with it and over 40 states passing laws that would safeguard against similar proceedings. Notably, Connecticut did not pass such laws.

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Suze Clues

Editor's note: The College Voice is bringing back the classic advice column in a big way! Ask Suze, our in-house relationship and lifestyle guru, all the questions you've been mulling over. Send Suze your questions anonymously at www.sayat.me/CCCollegeVoiceAdvice.

This week Suze is joined by special guest Randy who specializes in wing-manning, pop-lock-and-dropping and listening to your heart.

Which large mammal could you take in a fight? On a date?

S: I've spent a long time thinking about this and after I was ridiculed for answering with 'whale' for dating, I would have to say that I would fight a possum. And still date a whale. They are beautiful and majestic and then I would travel the oceans.

R: I will admit, I did in fact ridicule Suze for this answer, but I will admit to the majesty of that ocean-dweller. Personally, I'd have to say I'd fight a swan. I did in fact almost fight one that was challenging me on Mamacoke island. We were fighting over the same rock to meditate on.

S: Swans are not in fact mammals though. And I doubt they meditate.

R: My speciality is pop-lock and dropping. Not biology. But fine. I'd date a panther and fight an armadillo.

I'm a freshman and struggling to adapt academically. In high school I got really, really good grades without trying very hard, but here I spend all day studying and feel like I get mediocre grades. They're not bad grades by any means, just not what I'm used to getting in high school. Am I doing something wrong?

S: As someone who spent 85% of her college experience in the library and is now a senior wondering what happened, I would have to recommend that while studying is important having other adventures are too. The transition to college is challenging and many people find that even though they work hard, they don't get the same grades they did in high school. It just takes some time to adjust to the workload and your other responsibilities. Talk to professors, visit the ARC and above all don't stop

trying or stress yourself out too much. Do your best but there are other things in life that are just as important.

R: I second that Suze. My narrative is actually pretty similar to yours anonymous questions asker. I did jack in high school and got away with it. College really cranks up the heat, but if you're like me, you'll rise to the challenge when you find something you're passionate about. If you're feeling burnt out in the classes you're taking now, try out others ones in different departments. While grades matter, finding your subject of interest and cultivating a relationship with the professors is vitally important to getting to most out of the academic sphere at this place.

Dear Suze, I'm hooking up with a guy who seems super into me when we're together but gets kind of weird and awkward when we run into each other around campus or in town. How do I tell if he's really into me?

R: Well, everyone displays affection differently. However, we've reached a point where we are too old for games. Perhaps the awkward comes from him not really knowing where you stand either. Try to have an open dialogue next time you're alone. No games, just ask him what's up.

S: I agree with Randy. We are too old for this nonsense and it's SUPER important to learn how to be an adult about these sort of things. If you feel comfortable, talk about it. Otherwise I would cut your losses and move on to someone who is not going to act like a fool when you run into them.

I'm in love with my Arabic tutor, what do I do?

R: Wait until you're not being tutored, and ask him/her if they want to get lunch or something.

S: Wow, Randy that was some good advice. What a

surprise that we're both still single.

R: Dude, I know right? To be completely honest, anonymous question asker, it's been a while since I've "asked someone to lunch." If you do that, you're a braver human than I. Hats off.

I'm trying not to drink this semester, but I feel as though it is hard to go out with my friends and stay sober. Should I not go out or should I find new people to hang out with?

R: Listen, drinking and partying at college is like less than .05% of the fun. Your friends will realize eventually, and if they don't, then I think it'd be worth it to spread your social circle. That being said, engaging in inebriation is a consistent theme in a lot of our lives. Try to open a dialogue with them to let them know where you're coming from. If they're having wine night, you bring the cheese. Stay within your comfort zone, know when you want to leave. I promise, you won't be missing out on anything.

S: I am a HUGE fan of taking a night off and just spending some time in my room watching TV or reading. I also am a proponent of hanging out with different types of people as a way to mix up your friend group and to try something new on the weekends. If you are unhappy hanging out with your friends at the moment, try something else. Doesn't mean you can't hang out with them at other times during the week but when it's a Thursday or Saturday night you either do your own thing or reach out to another group. I agree that not drinking when other people are can be a challenge and it's something I struggle with too, but ultimately it's about doing what's best for you. Your real friends will support that no matter what.

One Semester Down

KATIE COWHERD
STAFF WRITER

The two hour car ride from Redding to New London, Connecticut seemed alarmingly short on that first day. I watched the sunrise silently from the backseat, tuning out my parents' banter and wiping my nervous, clammy hands on the car seat.

I had spent the last week in a perpetual state of panic, making last minute, late night Target trips with my mother and staying up until 2 am reorganizing boxes and suitcases to ensure that I hadn't forgotten anything as I packed.

The very idea of college terrified me right from the start. As someone who was shy, quiet, and a little nerdy, I was worried that I wouldn't be able to make friends. I was worried that my roommates would be mean, weird, unfriendly, or too friendly. I was placed in a quad, which had not been part of my plan, and was in itself a terrify-

ing prospect, to be perfectly honest.

After a quick (by which I mean extensive and immediate) investigation of their Facebook profiles, I found that they all seemed breathtakingly normal, and I decided that I was definitely going to end up being the weird roommate.

For the duration of the car ride on move-in day, all I could think about was how to say hello without sounding like an overly nervous child, which was how I felt.

As it turned out, all of my roommates are lovely people and we get along fantastically. We figured out how to live with each other pretty quickly, creating our little ecosystem, learning how to share a room, and spending considerable amounts of time in the same small space as each other.

We all have our little quirks, but it works. Someone always turns the heat way up; someone always comes back at 2 am from

the library; someone always opens the windows, and someone else always closes them.

But it works. Somehow.

Orientation was a pretty big blur. Everything happened too fast, and in such a short amount of time. At the academic fair I spontaneously decided to get my education certificate and left with all paperwork from the certificate program's table without ever having the intention before that day of ever taking any pedagogy classes.

I was so set on continuing French, taking the 300 levels that would make my mother, a French teacher, proud. Instead, I enrolled in Italian 101. I spend a lot of time in that class mumbling in frustration because I can't use French words while trying to write sentences and I forgot how to say "with" and "lettuce" in Italian again.

Things were not playing out the way I

thought they would.

Living on my own turned out to be less about being able to watch Netflix whenever I wanted and stay out as late as I pleased and more about having no one here to tell me that I can't have Lucky Charms every day for breakfast.

I started to feel pretty well adjusted until the racial tensions of the campus took the spotlight, and I realized that Conn's atmosphere was a lot more complicated and not quite as friendly and inclusive as I had been led to believe. As a white student, I had been unforgivably ignorant of the experiences of minority students here, and their experiences in the world in general. I came to Conn blind, but it has been an eye opening semester.

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While Pfizer was able to build their facility long before the case was decided, in an “I told you so” moment for Kelo and her supporters, they closed it in 2009, a mere eight years after opening. Additionally, Gaudiani was forced to resign from her position 2000 after it was revealed that the school was facing a huge budget shortfall, causing a massive number of students and faculty to demand her departure.

Personally, I would be very surprised if any Conn students knew about these events. Although the proceedings received a sizable amount of media attention when they occurred, current students were too young to be aware of them. Considering that the final verdict of the case was handed down ten years ago, most seniors here would not have been older than 13 when it was ruled.

While it is probable that many faculty and staff members know about the case, those who arrived at the College after the ruling likely have little to no awareness of Conn’s role. However, the residents of a city, unlike those of a college, do not constantly change. Although the students who opposed Gaudiani and the NLDC are long gone, there are still plenty of people in New London who remember the Kelo case and Claire Gaudiani’s involvement with the NLDC. The case quietly slipped into the history books much more quickly here at Conn than in New

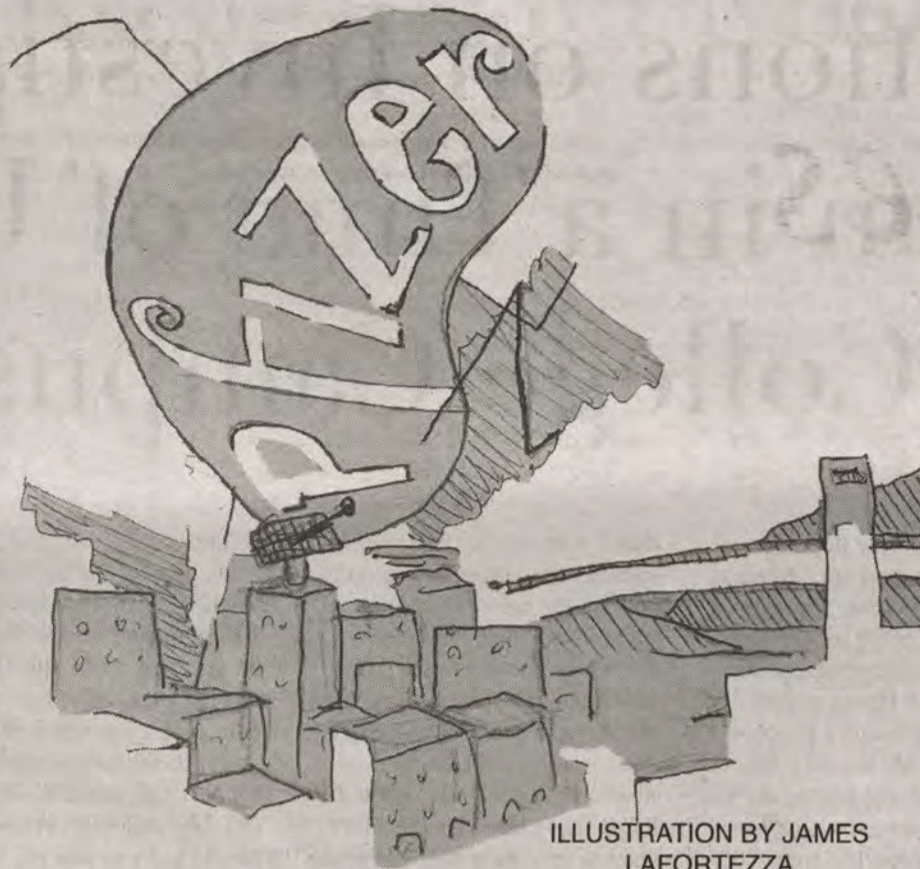


ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES
LAFORTEZZA

London.

This chapter in Conn’s history reflects a basic problem in our campus culture: our lack of institutional memory. From conversations and from reading Benedict’s book, I came to the understanding that this was a scary time to be at Connecticut College,

especially for faculty. It was difficult to be in opposition to Gaudiani, who was very set on getting her way no matter what. In some ways, the problems our college has faced recently are very similar to the ones that we faced 15 years ago. In both cases, people have been afraid of speaking out because of the possibility of backlash.

“History repeats itself,” as the adage goes, but one way for us to ensure a better future for our institution is to learn about and remember our previous mistakes. What do we really know about the history of Connecticut College beyond the fact that it was founded as a women’s college in 1911 after Wesleyan stopped admitting women? I could tell you more about what UC Berkeley was like in the 1960s than Conn during that same era, when our College became co-ed.

The truth is that there are certain structural problems that need to be addressed here, but they will not be addressed until we start paying attention to where Conn came from. Every person with a relationship to this institution influences it in at least some small way. All of us are influenced by Caroline Black, the first chair of the Botany department, who established the garden in her name in 1928, by Mike Shinault, the first Men’s Basketball Coach who came up with our camel mascot and, indeed, by Claire Gaudiani.

Whether by many degrees of separation or few, we are linked to these people, and it is ultimately our charge to determine their legacies and whether or not we want to carry on in their ways. We must not forget our college’s past, for if we do, we will continue to make the same mistakes and fail to truly appreciate what we are, what we are not, and what we can and should become. •

Critiquing Worldviews Through Gender

ANDREW SHAW
ARTS EDITOR

I decided to write this article when I noticed how many of the restrooms outside of dorms adhere to the gender binary while bathrooms inside dorms do not. Was this the result of policy not being put into practice? Was it the result of Conn wanting to create and sustain a public image for prospective students and other campus visitors that adhered to social norms? I wanted to find out.

When Conn went co-ed in 1969, there was no room for “sex-segregated bathrooms,” said Prof. Jen Manion, Associate Professor of History and Director of the LGBTQ Resource Center. The dorm bathrooms went co-ed when the admissions process did. The establishment of some gender-neutral bathrooms outside of the dorms is the result of years of activists’ work. A list of gender-neutral bathroom locations is available on the College’s website.

Courtenay Barton ’16 said, “The bathroom conversation has been had so many times in the last five or six years.” That I knew what she meant by “the bathroom conversation” only highlights this. Despite the conversation’s duration, several buildings on campus -- Blaustein, for example -- still do not have gender-neutral bathrooms, however.

The conversation has now expanded to include housing, healthcare and counseling. Barton pointed out that gender-inclusive housing is only available to upperclassmen. According to the Office of Residential Education and Living’s website, “First-year students and transfer students are assigned roommates of the same biological sex. ... [These] students can live

with someone of a different biological sex [for gender identity] only by going through the College’s room change process, which takes place ... [three] weeks into the fall semester.” The site justifies this limitation by noting that “the gender-inclusive housing option should be part of a process in which two people who know one another enter willingly into a roommate situation.” I’m not convinced by this reason, which adheres to heteronormativity. Regardless, outside of gender-inclusive housing we are not required to know our roommates before we room with them. “[The gender inclusive housing option is] not for people in romantic relationships to room together. ... It’s so trans* people can feel safe on this campus. And to be honest [Conn] has a high transfer rate for trans* kids,” said Barton. Conn’s overall first-year retention rate has hovered around 90% for the last few years.

The conversation about potentially reforming policy does not aim to demonize any of these spaces but rather is about meeting students’ basic needs. The goal is “to have conversations with different people on campus who could affect the [lives] of trans* kids. ... They deserve to walk into the health center or the counseling center and feel just as safe as you or I do,” said Barton.

This conversation matters because, as Barton said, “We’re literally talking about people’s safety and comfort.” Additionally, gender is an axis of power through which disempowerment occurs. In order to understand disempowerment, we need to understand power, hence the present discussion.

Gender is a system that grants and removes power. Not acknowledging that gender exists along a spectrum, and forcing a person to conform to one side of a binary or the other -- as happens in a variety of socially-defined spaces such as bathrooms and shared dorm rooms -- means that we are not fully acknowledging someone’s personhood. Who we choose to recognize -- because it is a choice -- is incredibly powerful. By enforcing the gender binary without creating space for trans* individuals, Conn marginalizes individuals who do not fall on one side of the binary or the other.

Indeed, it is trans* and gender non-conforming individuals who expose the gender binary for what it is, a regulatory system, precisely by not adhering to it. As Joan Scott said on Dec. 10, “Diversity doesn’t cure the problem. In fact, it draws attention to the structures that perpetuate the problem.” Gender is one arena in which we can question who has power. This power is understood not as something that is “unified, coherent, and centralized,” but rather as “dispersed constellations of unequal relationships,” Scott wrote elsewhere. Because it is one of many organizational systems for social relationships, “gender [is] implicated in the conception and construction of power itself. ... Gender inequality [helps to structure] all other inequalities. ... [It] affects [even] those areas of life that do not seem to be connected to it,” for “the imposition ... of the rules of social interaction are inherently and specifically gendered.”

Related to this question of how power is dispersed is the question of who we

recognize as legitimate, as “fully” human. Gender serves to legitimize some people and not others, as Scott and many other scholars have noted. Because historically we’ve been told that gender is polarized, we enforce that system and discount the people who do not fall at either pole. We erase trans* and gender-non-conforming people as a result. Because gender norms are culturally bound, they rely upon “the refusal or repression of alternative possibilities,” as Scott reminds us. In this conflict, “the position that emerges as dominant is stated as the only possible one,” when in fact it is not. Regardless, we begin to consider “these normative positions [as] the product of social consensus rather than of conflict.” In the context of our campus, “People don’t see [trans* people] all the time so they forget they exist. ... [But] they’re part of our family,” Barton said.

Justin Mendillo ’17 said, “Let’s get some visibility,” through “targeted queer hiring” or bringing certain speakers to campus. “Let’s talk about trans* people,” because that “validates [them].”

As the specific example of the gender binary suggests, Scott concludes in her article, “we must ... continually subject our categories to criticism, our analyses to self-criticism.” Critique allows us to recognize that our worldviews have sources, reasons why they are the way they are. Through that analysis, we can potentially change and improve those worldviews. Regardless of whether we change them, “consciousness,” as Marx has written, “is something that the world must acquire, like it or not.” •

Reflections on Investigative Journalism in a Time of Upheaval on College Campuses

ANDREW SHAW
ARTS EDITOR

Most of the reportage that this newspaper does is quite local. Something happens on campus, and we cover it. In the process, we may speak with students, faculty and staff. We speak with, that is, people we know, at least as people who are affiliated with Connecticut college. It's a pretty straightforward process. We interview them, write down what they say, add commentary and background, and we have ourselves an article. I tried something different for this article. I spent a Saturday afternoon a month ago wandering around Yale in an attempt to figure out more early why students were protesting and why these flashpoints keep happening across the country, including here at Conn. It turns out that investigative journalism is harder than I thought. First I had to get there. That was hard. And *didn't help that I misremembered the train time and so arrived twenty minutes late. I ended up sitting in a coffee shop for a couple*

of hours and pacing the train station for the third until another train came in midway through the afternoon. So much for arriving in the morning. And when my train arrived in New Haven around 3:40, with the sun scheduled to set before 5:00 and my sense of direction so nonexistent that finding my way around Yale's campus became a project, then I had less time. Oh, the excitements of travel.

When the first person I asked about the tense campus climate declined to speak on it ("No thank you") I wasn't very hopeful that the article that I had expected to write – about what's happening at Yale and why similar events keep happening on campuses across the country – would come together. And it didn't. I didn't discover much new in terms of the contested issues that hasn't been stated elsewhere, and I won't restate them here.

During my investigation, I had two experiences. Most students

didn't want to talk. Two would speak to me, but offered to do so only off the record. Each choice suggests that they didn't have a confident response to the issues, which only emphasizes how complicated and potentially divisive these issues are. Perhaps no one wanted to say something that they might regret later. People didn't want to have their words attached to them because they didn't know what they thought. That is, what they thought was likely changing, influenced, among other things, by the opinions of the people around them. Of course, people's thinking can always change. But it has the potential to change differently, more quickly, in a moment of upheaval like the moment of upheaval that Yale and other campuses across the country are experiencing. In such upheaval, people often *keep quiet when they don't know what to think. They speak when they think of something that they believe they will be able to stand*

behind.

Or, perhaps the students' views weren't changing, and they were simply uncomfortable voicing an opinion that might elicit a backlash. In a time of upheaval and fear, people can feel pressured to voice the socially acceptable response. This sort of mob mentality can limit dialogue because it forces people to try to stay one step ahead of the other person, always guessing the reaction that their words might draw and preemptively tailoring their words to that reaction. This is especially true in times of upheaval and fear, when people don't know who their friends are. (Indeed, determining whom one's allies are is the first step in any sort of group protest.) In such situations, it can feel as if there is no room for respectful disagreement, and so people choose not to speak.

If the Yale students I spoke to understood anything, it was how tenuous and provisional their understanding was. There is a

story, with many actors, in this fear and discomfort. Both despite and because of these many actors, this fear and discomfort actually resulted in a paucity of voices. It resulted in speculation, of which this article is a part. This is, I think, a story of a place that, while it is supposed to be a community, is not in fact a community. Community is impossible while people feel that they cannot express their views. The truth of this is being borne out in demonstrations on college campuses across the country right now, including here at Conn.

This attempt at investigative journalism, travel and all, reminded me of the purposes of a newspaper. When I realized that whatever I could write about Yale would certainly not be – could not be – a terminal story, I remembered that a newspaper is not meant for terminal stories. It's periodic, iterative. It's a snapshot in time of what we think at that time. •

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I attended a series of events, hanging in the back, listening, trying to understand. I feel like I'm not doing anything to change what needs to be changed, and I know a lot of my friends do to, but I think that it's important to understand what's going on. It's the first step towards us actually helping everyone on campus feel like they belong here (which they most definitely do, we all worked our butts off for this opportunity).

The fact that administration did nothing to address these issues on race and free speech during our absurdly long orientation (ours was days longer than orientations at any other NES-CAC) is a problem. They needed to put a considerable amount of time aside to make sure that this incoming class was actually prepared for the campuses racial climate. We should have spent less time talking about how it's against honor code to use racial slurs and more time talking about the fact that they had been written in stalls in the bathroom in Cro. They should have spent less time telling us that we cannot make offensive jokes, and more time telling us about the intense debates and protests over the idea of hate speech that

occurred last semester.

The first time I heard someone say "Pessin" my response was to say "Guzuntight" because I had no idea that that was the name of a professor that was linked to intense racial debates at this school. This is a problem.

Now that the semester is starting to end, I'm mostly focused on surviving my first round of finals with my sanity intact. Papers, presentations, exams, oh my! I have more to do than I have had all year and I'm just not entirely sure how that happened. I'm very tired. I walk around in a perpetual haze of exhaustion from late nights making outlines and studying verb tenses. I twitch a little whenever someone says "coffee" and I almost cry every time I actually can smell some.

Here's to hoping that next semester will be as eye opening as this one was, if a little less terrifying at the onset. •

THE COLLEGE VOICE
wishes you luck on your
final exams!

Study hard, take breaks, eat
snacks, sleep and enjoy the
warm weather!

Wishing the entire campus
community a restful break,
happy holidays and a healthy
new year. See you in 2016!

Sport: Medicine for Misfortune

DYLAN STEINER
SPORTS EDITOR

Minutes after an international soccer match between France and Germany began on Nov. 13 at the Stade de France, tragedy struck Paris as ISIS initiated one of its first direct attacks on the Western world and the deadliest attack on Parisian soil since WWII. French President François Hollande was in attendance, and concern that the chaos close to the stadium would alarm crowds forced the game to finish prematurely. As fans eventually left the stadium, many only starting to hear of the full scope of the events outside, they joined in unison to sing the French national anthem.

The German national team was prevented from returning to its hotel due to the threat of further attacks, and instead spent the night in the stadium. The French team decided to join the Germans in a display of unity. One of Germa-

ny's national soccer stadiums, the Allianz Arena, lit its exterior with the colors of the French flag. Many American professional and college sports teams waved or displayed the French flag before games in the aftermath of the Paris attacks. The Washington Capitals projected the French flag on to the ice before a game.

As harrowing as events like these are, sport has time and again proved its power to unite people across borders and languages in times of heartbreak and hardship. Citizens of all nations can relate to and celebrate the universal qualities that sport exemplifies: teamwork, selflessness, integrity and tenacity. The Paris attacks are only the most recent display of the strength of these values against tragic adversity. The French president's presence at the Stade de France that evening may have created a conceivable target for ISIS, and it is exactly the above qualities combined with

large crowds that make sporting events targets for terrorists seeking to instigate disorder. It is perhaps the power these qualities hold among a free society that offers some explanation as to why terror groups like the Taliban and ISIS condemn and prevent participation in and arrangement of sports.

A year prior to the Paris attacks, on Nov. 24 2014, a suicide bombing killed over 40 people at a volleyball game in Afghanistan. It was one of Afghanistan's deadliest attacks that year despite its limited coverage by Western media. Many of the casualties were due to tightly packed spectators enjoying one of the country's most popular sports.

A year before that, on April 15 2013, the Boston Marathon bombings rattled post-9/11 America. Immediately following the tragedy, countless sports events were canceled or rescheduled out of fear of a repeat attack. But this disruption

did not last. Soon after, numerous teams responded and offered tribute to victims of the attack, including the Boston Celtics, New England Patriots and Boston Red Sox. When the Chicago Blackhawks defeated the Boston Bruins in the Stanley Cup final later that year, they honored the mourning city in *The Boston Globe*, admiring its sportsmanship and paying respect to those affected. The triumph of the Red Sox at the 2013 MLB World Series, if not viewed as helping to heal the city's wounds, may be seen in some respects as catalyzing a return to normalcy and, ultimately, a triumph of those principles sport promotes. In the celebratory parade that followed, the players honored the victims at the marathon finish line.

This desire of the American sporting world to offer respect in the aftermath of tragedy, especially in contrast with the minimal reaction by journalists to the 2014 Af-

ghanistan attack, reflects the permeation of sports across all aspects of American culture. In the grief that follows terrorist attacks, sporting events bring people together, offering reflection and an opportunity to move forward. This solidarity is not limited to American soil, however. The international response to the Boston Marathon bombings was overwhelming. Marathons and races across the globe that followed in the wake of the bombings organized vigils and fundraisers.

The sporting world, one that values overcoming challenges, adversity, and improbable outcomes while maintaining cohesion, is one that will likely always respond in unanimity to unfortunate events within and outside its discipline. The Paris attacks fortunately did not occur within the packed Stade de France, but the sporting world extended its solidarity to those affected regardless. •

Trump Ignores Muslim Sports Heroes

SHATRUNJAY MALL
STAFF WRITER

The ongoing presidential campaigns of Ben Carson and Donald Trump for the Republican Party nomination have relied on political mobilization based on explicit xenophobia to an extent that has not been seen in recent years.

Carson, a renowned former surgeon, gained notoriety for his unconstitutional call to prohibit Muslims from running for United States president.

In a similar vein, Donald Trump, real estate developer and reality show host turned politician, has gained an infamous reputation for racist comments. While launching his campaign, he referred to Mexican immigrants as "criminals" and "rapists" who needed to be deported and prevented from coming into the United States. He wishes to do so by building a wall across the US-Mexican border. Since the Paris terrorist attacks in November, he has also directed his hate towards Muslims in the United States, a prominent target of his ire. He has most recently called for a ban on Muslims entering or re-entering the United States. Trump has refused to retract or apologize for any of his comments.

Following the deadly shootings at San Bernardino, California, committed by a married couple that identified as Muslim and was allegedly linked with terrorist organizations in the Middle East, President Barack Obama has called for tolerance and restraint. During an address from the Oval Office, he alluded to the dangers of conflating Muslims and their religion with the acts of a minuscule number of their co-religionists, when he said, "Muslim-Americans are our friends and our neighbors, our co-workers, our sports heroes."

In response, Donald Trump tweeted "Obama said in his speech that Muslims are our sports heroes. What sport is he talking about, and who? Is Obama profiling?" which like some of his other controversial comments have since been roundly condemned and refuted.

Among those who have criticized Trump

for his comments are precisely some of those Muslim sports heroes who he has purposefully ignored and conveniently forgotten in his remarks. This list includes such legends as the former heavyweight boxer Muhammad Ali and the pro basketball star Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

In response to Trump, Ali said "I am a Muslim, and there is nothing Islamic about killing innocent people in Paris, San Bernardino or anywhere else in the world. True Muslims know the ruthless violence of so-called Islamic jihadists goes against the very tenets of our religion." Similarly, Abdul-Jabbar accused Trump of stoking fears rather than offering actual solutions to the problems of terrorism, adding, "Trump's irresponsible, inflammatory rhetoric and deliberate propagation of misinformation have created a frightened and hostile atmosphere here that could embolden people to violence."

Other highly eminent Muslim-American sports personalities include the former heavyweight champion boxer Mike Tyson and the former pro basketball stars Shaquille O'Neal and Hakeem Olajuwon. In American football, such teams as the Detroit Lions, the Kansas City Chiefs, the New York Jets, the New England Patriots and the Denver Broncos currently have Muslim team members. There are several other current and former sports persons in basketball, baseball and boxing who practice Islam in the United States.

Beyond American sports, several of the top athletes in the world are Muslim, most notably in soccer. This includes such well-known, even beloved figures in soccer, as Mesut Ozil and Sami Khedira, who played for Germany and Samir Nasri and Karim Benzema who played for France. All four represented their countries in the FIFA World Cup. Were Trump to impose his travel ban and deport all Muslims from the United States, American fans (potentially also including some of Trump's supporters) would be deprived from viewing some of their favorite players in a wide variety of sports.

How would Trump make America great by undercutting American sports? By excluding some of the country's and the world's best

athletes? Further, how would the United States ever qualify for hosting the Olympics, the FIFA world cups and several other international sports competitions?

What is especially surprising (or perhaps not so much) about Trump's comments is that he has often met and been photographed

with several of the most famous Muslim sports personalities, including O'Neal, Ali and Abdul-Jabbar and even tweeted at them before, referring to them as friends of his. However, there is logic to Trump's madness. By overlooking the vast contribution of Muslim-Americans to the world of sports, Trump aims to further exclude Muslims from the mainstream of American society. He renders Muslims as perpetual "foreigners," who are beyond the pale of acceptability. This is a category that has included, at different points of time in American history, such groups as the Irish, Italians, Jews, Chinese and Japanese, among others.

It is also perhaps no coincidence that many of the most accomplished Muslim athletes in the United States belong to racial minorities. Because of the racialized imagination of Muslims in the United States as "brown" or "black," Trump's Islamophobia is ultimately a statement of white supremacy, which has an ugly history since the colonization of North America and the

establishment of the United States.

That the fascist Trump is gaining (and not losing) popularity because of his chauvinistic rhetoric is the most recent sign yet that racism is far from over in the contemporary United States. •

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Women's Basketball Commands on Court

DANA SORKIN
CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

The Connecticut College Women's Basketball team is starting their 2015-2016 season doing everything right. Eight games in (including a win against NESCAC rival Tufts), and they have yet to lose a single one. Their level of play to begin the season has been so strong that many of their games have ended with the team winning by upwards of 20 points.

The depth on the team gives the Camels a strong advantage, with all players contributing equally and when it matters most, and many have been recognized for their achievements. The team is coming off of a strong 2014-2015 season, during which they went 16-9, reached the NESCAC tournament quarterfinal round and saw accolades such as the NESCAC Women's Basketball Rookie of the Year awarded to Mairead Hynes '18. But they want to do even better.

Senior captain Willa McKinley said that unique challenges arise with being a team with a winning record. "Lots of people want to beat you," she said, noting that being a NESCAC team is an additional bonus because non-NESCAC teams are always looking for an upset.

With the NESCAC considered to be one of the best DIII conferences in the country, McKinley knows the biggest challenges have yet to come. Their first NESCAC game, on Dec. 12, resulted in a win against Tufts, ranked ninth in the nation. Mairead scored 15 points and had 8 rebounds. Kylie Caouette '19 scored 14 points, and Liz Malman '17 had nine. Though this wasn't considered a conference game (the Camels will play Tufts again on Jan. 23, 2016), it certainly set the stage for what the team hopes their rest of the season will look like,

because their hardest and most important games are yet to come. McKinley said that it's equally important to win non-conference games so the team goes into the NESCAC games with confidence, which she described as being a "lot more competitive and difficult."

McKinley spoke on the differences in this team that makes them better than ever, mainly their depth. This year's team has six first-year students and six veterans, and there are obvious challenges that come with playing a college-level sport for the first time, but the team's first-years have "upped the play" overall, according to McKinley. She described the first-years as "taking on the role of sophomores" in terms of adapting to college basketball. The rookies aren't just making an impact on the team, but within New England as well. Payton Oumette '19 was honored as the New England Women's Basketball Association's Rookie of the Week in late November.

McKinley said that the team practices as hard as they play, and it shows. Many of their wins so far have been complete blow-outs, though McKinley said that this comes with challenges. "It's really hard to play by your standards when you're so much better than a team," she said, before adding that the veterans on the team need to set the precedent by constantly playing their best basketball, regardless of the score. Even if they're winning by 30 points, she said, they can't give up, especially with more NESCAC games in their future, which are unlikely to have such large scoring gaps.

As captain, McKinley reflected on her four years on the women's basketball team, saying it feels bittersweet, but that she wants the team this year to be the best it can be. The chemistry of the team is found not just on the court, but, McKinley said, off



PHOTO COURTESY OF OLGA NIKOLAEVA

Warriors Out for Blood

COLE MITCHELL
STAFF WRITER

Five months ago, the best team in basketball, the Golden State Warriors, and the best player in basketball, LeBron James, competed against each other for the NBA Finals Championship. In six games the Golden State Warriors claimed the title as the best NBA team in basketball last season and they have continued to dominate so far in the 2015-16 NBA regular season. At 24-1, the Warriors have steamrolled their competition. In the Western Conference, the Warriors are in first place and have a four game lead over the second place team, the San Antonio Spurs.

The Warriors have played 10 games at home and 15 games on the road. No matter where the Warriors have played, home or road, they have done very well. In all 10 of their home games the Warriors have scored over 100 points. The Warriors have allowed 100 points or more in only four home games this season. At Oracle Arena in the Bay Area, the Warriors dominated their competition and consistently won games at home. Only later in the season did the

Warriors start to play very well on the road. In all of their games leading up to their one loss against the Milwaukee Bucks, the Warriors have scored at least 100 points, and in ten of their road games they have allowed 100 points or more. At 24-1 the Warriors have continued to be the best team in basketball both at home and on the road.

Golden State has continued to do well in the much tougher conference, but between seasons the organization did not choose to add any top-notch players. They also made sure to keep everybody from the Championship run. The Warriors' biggest question during the offseason was whether they could keep Draymond Green. Many people thought that the Warriors would not be able to offer him the monster contract that he deserved and he would find another team to pay him. With the salary cap, they had to make sure that they could pay Stephen Curry and Klay Thompson, and that left Green in a questionable area. The Warriors and Green agreed on a deal at five years and \$85 million. The Warriors also kept players like Shaun Livingston and Festus Ezeli. Golden State kept that amazing core group of Thompson, Curry,

Green and Andre Iguodala, and it paid off.

Everybody on the squad would tell you that competing and winning in the NBA is a team effort, but the star this team flows around has to be Curry. Curry's performance this season at point guard has been the best of any player so far this season. Curry has not missed a start this season and plays about 34 minutes per game. Keep in mind that Coach Steve Kerr loves to rest his players, and although he is not coaching due to health reasons, his staff has probably kept a close eye on Curry's minutes all throughout the season. Curry is also averaging around 32 points per game while shooting around 46% from the three point line and 90% from the free throw line. The Warriors would never have achieved this win streak with just Curry, but everyday he has proven to be their leader.

Green is probably the most versatile player on the Warriors because he can play so many positions, while always contributing good defense. He is the Warriors' small forward, but he can hit clutch three pointers and at the same time drive in for an easy layup. He is certainly not the most flashy player on the Warriors,

but he seems to always get the job done. Klay Thompson is the typical shooting guard for the team. He missed his first game against the Boston Celtics this season with an ankle injury. He shoots 43% from the three point line and is averaging around 17 points per game. As many Warriors fans know, Thompson is Curry's "Splash Brother" and the two of them continue to impress from beyond the arch.

Finally, the Warrior's sixth man is Iguodala. When first coming to the Warriors he had to completely change his role from a starter to a constant bench player, but he did it with integrity and enthusiasm. Iguodala, the reigning Finals MVP, said he "embraced the role" of becoming the sixth man for the Warriors. He was a bench player for the Warriors last season until Kerr gave him the starting role in Game Three of the Finals to guard LeBron James. Up against the best player in basketball, Iguodala responded, and the Warriors went on to win three games in a row to secure their crown. Curry plays a heavy role in the offense of the Warriors, but the contributions of players like Green, Thompson, and Iguodala led the team to a 24-1 start. •