3-3-2014

College Voice Vol. 97 No. 11

Connecticut College
Inflation or Increase: A’s for Effort?

AYLA ZURAW-FRIEDLAND
SENIOR EDITOR

According to data compiled by the Connecticut College Department of Institutional Research, 50% of grades awarded at Conn are As. However, this doesn’t mean that grade inflation exists.

That last sentence looks a little ridiculous. How is it possible to say that grade inflation isn’t an issue when a little over half of the overall grade distribution is accounted for by work that is graded as being exemplary or above and beyond? John Nugent, the Director of Institutional Research, has been looking at this issue over the course of a few years. After combing through some files dating back to 1919, he was able to construct a graph showing the shift in grading trends through the history of the college. In 1919, 40 to 50% of grades were at a B or C, As and Ds occurred at a 10% rate respectively. These numbers reflect what was once a normal grade distribution. However, during the 1960s and beyond there was a massive shift. Bs became Cs, and Cs became Ds. And Ds and Fs were nearly obsolete. At this point, receiving anything below a B is reason to be very very upset with yourself.

The easy answer would be yes. But, in the past, it became increasingly obvious that there are no clear answers when discussing grade inflation. What these numbers do show is grade increase; grades have indeed gotten ten higher over time. Though there are some factors that definitely point to the possibility of grade inflation, especially when inspecting grade average differences between specific departments, I believe that these sorts of interactions only succeed in alienating Santiago from the College community.

Santiago wants to be a military therapist. One of her motivations for joining the army was to be able to empathize with her patients when she becomes a psychologist. “I thought, ‘How could I sit there and try to understand what they had been through if I had no experience myself?’” she explained. Her experience with the military is simultaneously working towards earning her Bachelor’s degree in Psychology.

Santiago is a member of the Posse program who instructs spin classes every Monday and Wednesday at the recently dubbed Ann and Lee Higdon Fitness Center. “You just feel really physically clean.”

Robertson began teaching spin classes in the fall of 2012, after encouragement from her friend and fellow spin instructor Devon Elleritz ’13 and William Wayne, Director of the Fitness and Wellness Center. Wayne first initiated the student-led spin classes four years ago (along with student-led zumba and yoga classes) in an effort to extend opportunities for exercise to as many members of the College community as possible. As the school’s strength and conditioning coach, it’s Wayne’s responsibility to train and teach the varsity athletes. “But,” said Wayne, “I want to do more than that. I want to reach people—to have them come here and not have to pay to exercise.”

Soul Cycle—a popular spin-gym franchise with a focus on inspirational and motivational workouts—recently announced a $50 million investment from the private equity firm TPG Growth, LLC. Robertson is currently raising $50,000 for Soul Cycle which will allow the gym to become a national brand.

Robertson recently received the honor of Connecticut College’s SGA Award for her contributions to the College of Arts and Sciences.

Though Robertson’s work has been recognized with numerous awards, she is most proud of the fact that she receives kudos from her students. “I feel really great about the packets of thank you notes that I get,” said Robertson.

Robertson credits her parents for inspiring her to sign up for her workout routine. “My mom used to say, ‘You have to enjoy your exercise or you’re just wasting your time.’ She would drag me to the gym because I was a terrible swimmer.”

Robertson has also received support from her good friend and roommate Shalaiyia “Shal” Hopkins ’16, who has been her partner in crime for years. “I had no idea Soul Cycle existed until Shal told me about it,” said Robertson. “She got me interested and then I just started going.”

Robertson has been involved with the College’s SGA since her freshman year and has held a variety of positions, including SGA president, for her senior year.

Robertson’s journey to becoming a military therapist and, ultimately, a soul cycle instructor, is a testament to the fact that one’s path is not always linear. “It’s a funny thing, but I really believe that you never know what you’re going to get,” said Robertson.

Robertson concludes, “I try to keep in mind that every day is a new opportunity to learn something. And that’s the most exciting part of being alive.”
On the Intersection of Performance and Activism

Last year I saw The Vagina Monologues for the first time. I was confused by the performance, and provocatively, and I thought that it meant I was missing a conversation on women's sexuality, treatment, and empowerment. This year, I saw very same performance at the very same venue and was confused.

It's difficult to critique any performance, and even more difficult when that performance is interlaced with activism and is produced, directed, and acted out by a group of talented women, many of whom are my close friends. But- taking a cue from the monologues themselves—just because a particular topic is difficult to discuss, that doesn't mean it's not worth discussing.

Though I'm certainly no theater buff, I've seen my fair share of plays and musicals. I saw "Wicked" on Broadway and "War Horse" at Lincoln Center, and even once at the Yale Fringe. But I've never had any intention of sitting through any one of them for a second viewing. During this year's "Vag Mon.," I found entertainment in the compelling performances; and I was especially thrilled to see my friends moon and shudder as "unexpected triple organs" (among other variety) on stage but, for the most part, I was just bored. Could you imagine if the theater department produced the same play each year, or if the dance club choreographed the same dance numbers after semester? Entertainment is only entertaining if kept fresh—that must offer the promise of something unexpected.

Except for the final two monologues, the show has not changed since it was first written in 1996. But Bill Clinton was elected for his second term in office and the 18-year maudlin for the Unabomber ended with the arrest of Ted Kaczynski. When this year's senior class was turning four and the freshmen were still being born. Though it's important not to lose ground on the progress that's been made in women's rights and equality here in the U.S. and abroad, anyone involved in The Vagina Monologues should be thinking about how to move the conversation forward, not repeating prose two decades old.

"But it's activism!" Yes, it's impossible to remove The Vagina Monologues from its larger, humanitarian initiative. However, I wonder about how effective a play could be as a means to deliver the essentially feminist message (which I wholeheartedly support) that the Monologues stand for. Looking around Evans Hall I saw students and faculty, many of whom had likely seen the performance before. The rest of the audience consisted of parents who, like me, were there to lend their support to the cast. So when the audience was called upon to end female genital mutilation and to take ownership of the derogatory words and references surrounding women's sexuality, I found myself comparing the situation to that of Facebook activism.

When you "like" any given Upworthy post you're only showing your support at the most surface level, there's no real investment of time or money or hard work. Is attending The Vagina Monologues any different, other than the nominal price of the ticket and duration of the performance?

Ultimately and undeniably, The Vagina Monologues bring more good than harm to the Connecticut College campus. But I think it's important for future classes to consider alternative ways of promoting the same agenda here and now—many students already have. Last month's Pussy Pow Wow and discussions of producing Connecticut College Monologues offer the promise of a contemporary discussion surrounding women's sexuality and gender inequality for an audience that's ready to move forward.

Dave Shanfield & Melanie Thibeault
Editors in Chief

Julia Cristofano
Managing Editor & Business Manager

AYLA ZURAW-FRIEDLAND
Senior Editor

MOLLY BANGS DANA SORKIN

SAM NORCROSS MADELINE CONLEY

Opinions

CHIARA CAFIERO MATTEO MOBILIO

Arts & Entertainment

LUCA POWELL ELEANOR HARDY

Sports

HALLIE GROSSMAN Head Copy

CREATIVE STAFF

ZANDER ASPLUNDH Art Director

MIGUEL SALCEDO Photo Editor

This Week's Copy Editors: Charlotte Peyer Haley Wegner

This Week's Designers: May Moribe Emily Walsh

CONTACT US
ci@thecollegevoice.org
270 Michigan Avenue
New London, CT 06320
thecollegevoice.org

On Actualizing the Bubble

In anticipation of the next four snowstorms this week, Connecticut College has issued an emergency architectural reconstruction project to protect its precious Camels from the harsh elements. The proverbial Bubble will be re-taped each week at Cro for students to drop off their items and to prevent snow from entering the buildings. As students and faculty have been able to sit outdoors during the winter, we are now having the possibility to sit indoors again.

"A bubble!" a junior on SASS suggested. "A bubble!" the rest of the group echoed. "We need a bubble." After applying for and receiving a $630,000 FEMA preparedness grant, the administration passed the construction task off to the Connecticut College's architecture students. "Just don't make it flashy," they said. "We can't be demoted from the construction task." But the administration passed the task off to the Connecticut College's architecture students. "Just don't make it flashy," they said. "We can't be demoted from the construction task off to the Connecticut College's architecture students. "Just don't make it flashy," they said. "We can't be demoted from the construction task."

The team thought the idea of being trapped in a giant plastic bubble might become depressing and perpetuate seasonal affect disorder, especially with the dirty patches of snow still covering the green.

"Since we're going to be living in, essentially, a reverse snow globe, we thought we might as well create an island oasis," one senior said. "We bought some sunlamps and drove to New York for some palm trees."

The team thought the idea of being trapped in a giant plastic bubble might become depressing and perpetuate seasonal affect disorder, especially with the dirty patches of snow still covering the green.

"Since we're going to be living in, essentially, a reverse snow globe, we thought we might as well create an island oasis," one senior said. "We bought some sunlamps and drove to New York for some palm trees."

"We thought minimalism was the best way to go," one student said. A geodesic dome will be constructed overnight (so good luck sleeping with all of the beeping trucks driving up and down Cro Boulevard). Once the structure is solidified, it will be covered with two thick layers of storm glass, commonly used to hurricane-proof coastal homes. Glass was selected over aluminum or steel so that our community can still see the snow, but not have to deal with its irritating consequences.

"We've set up a collection bucket in Cro for students to drop off their Bean Boots," said the president of SASS. "We'll send the proceeds down to Georgia and the Carolinas in case they get a few inches of snow again."

The team thought the idea of being trapped in a giant plastic bubble might become depressing and perpetuate seasonal affect disorder, especially with the dirty patches of snow still covering the green.

"Since we're going to be living in, essentially, a reverse snow globe, we thought we might as well create an island oasis," one senior said. "We bought some sunlamps and drove to New York for sand — since Connecticut's in a shortage. We have the botany students procuring some palm trees. It's going to really change the way people look at Connecticut College, and global climate change in general."

When you wake up tomorrow morning, don't be alarmed to find that your Connecticut College bubble nightmares come true.

Happy spring break!

Mel P.S. Yes, this is a satire
In the first semester of the 2013-2014 academic year, 70 students were brought before Honor Council for violations ranging from plagiarism to possession of fake IDs to conduct that creates a hostile environment for members of the campus community. These statistics encompass a wide range of Honor Code violations, but they do not include the following: incidents of stalking, sexual assault, or bias incidents, individual department violations (i.e., candles in dorm rooms), or isolated violations of the drug and alcohol policy. The aforementioned acts are not included in the Honor Code but are violations of the Student Code of Conduct. Violations of these policies are typically addressed through an individual administrative disposition meeting with Sarah Cardwell, Associate Dean of Student Life, or heard by the Dean’s Grievance Board.

Violations of these policies are typically addressed through an individual administrative disposition meeting with Sarah Cardwell, Associate Dean of Student Life, or heard by the Dean’s Grievance Board. A ten-member committee composed of students, faculty, and staff for a three-person committee of staff only depending on the nature of the violation. While alcohol and drug use were removed from the Honor Code in 2013, there are some circumstances in which Honor Council hears cases involving illicit substances. For example, if a student is written up for smoking marijuana this violation would warrant an administrative disposition. However, if in addition to smoking the same student was a repeat offender or committed an Honor Code violation as well (i.e., covering up their smoke detector, vandalizing a residence hall), then the case would be heard by Honor Council.

More information about the Honor Code and Student Code of Conduct can be found in the 2013-2014 Handbook of the Honor Code and Students Right and Responsibilities, available on CamelWeb.
A Military Scholar: Sam Santiago ’16

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

She ended up taking the spring semester of her year off in order to take part in Basic Training at Fort Lenord Wood, Missouri.

Basic Training involves ten weeks of intense physical and mental training, turning recruits into soldiers of the United States Army. During these weeks, superiors completely monitored Santiago’s every move. Time was no longer her own. Periods to shower, sleep and eat were scheduled out and diligently adhered to. Physical tests every few weeks monitored each recruit’s performance – if the requirements were not met, that individual was cut from the program.

Santiago established that the fear of being cut was an omnipresent terror during Basic Training. "I knew so many people who were cut. We started off with over 200 people, and by the end there were between 160 and 180." The fear of failure was enough to keep her driving forward and pushing through the physical pain. This anxiety was portrayed particularly well through Santiago’s narration of one extraordinarily strenuous challenge. Her unit hiked about 12 miles through a number of mountainous inclines. They were dressed in full gear, which weighs about 40 pounds including the pack and uniform.

“I wanted to die,” Santiago remembered. “Halfway through I started crying ... if you don’t finish it, you can get sent home.”

Santiago described experiences ranging from throwing grenades to monkey-crawling 20 feet across a rope. She described shooting multiple machine guns, taking her equipment off in a gas chamber (to demonstrate its use) and repelling down towers. Ultimately, she passed all the physical tests and graduated Basic Training, and joined the Reserve as a part of the Military Police.

Santiago may be deployed at any time, despite her current status as a student. This spring break, she is being deployed to Belize with her unit, to “help out the Belize Defense Force.” While many students might be working on their swimsuit tans on the beaches of Cabo and Miami, Santiago and her unit will be working with border patrol and forming what she calls an “army tan” – the extreme tanning of the neck and hands.

Conn does not offer students information on joining the army, nor does the College currently have a policy in place for its students on military leave; if students need to take time off from their studies, it must be done through either personal or medical leave, neither of which fit Santiago’s situation. Santiago explained that her deployment to Belize was lucky in that two of the three weeks she will be gone will be during spring break, limiting the classes she’ll miss to only a week’s worth. However, if she were to be deployed for longer, the school doesn’t have a policy set in place to allow her to leave and come back without impacting her grades.

Santiago’s personal narrative brings to light the lack of military awareness on campus. Though her uniform might elicit isolating stares and strange comments from some members of the community, Santiago has also been approached by a number of Conn students inquiring on how to become involved in the military. “I’m not a recruiter. I can’t answer all their questions,” Santiago commented. Apparently, military recruiters have not been allowed on campus through the CELS office, limiting the opportunities of those who are interested in joining the army. Santiago is currently working with Associate Professor of Sociology Ron Flores to form awareness about military service. She hopes to form some type of memorial for Veterans Day, which basically goes unrecognized on campus, and incorporate military education for those who seek information on the subject.

Santiago hopes that promoting this basic knowledge may change the strange reactions she encounters in the dining hall. “I wish it weren’t such a shock,” she remarked on the presence of military uniform on campus. With this in mind, she is motivated to inspire a push for military awareness on campus will create a more conscientious and welcome community overall.

And it is completely okay to thank Santiago for her service with sincerity; it’s well-deserved.
RETHINKING OFF-CAMPUS TRANSPORT FOR A SHIFT IN SOCIAL SCENE

ELLIE NAM STORCK STAFF WRITER

Over the past several years, the social scene at Connecticut College has made a clear move towards local bars. As floor and house parties became more strictly monitored, students fell into the habit of utilizing the New London bar scene for nights out. An obvious concern that accompanies this is drink- ing and driving—students, as well as the college faculty and staff, are concerned about the safety of both underage and of age students who are engaging in bar activity.

There have been multiple proposals made to SGA over the past few years about creating a late-night transportation route for our Camel Van system to help students get to and from bars in a safe, reliable way. However, funding is an issue.

SGA Vice President Ted Steinberg ’16, who currently sits on the Transportation Committee, explained that a transportation route to and from the bars is a system that he hopes the school can accommodate; however, it might not be an extension of the Camel Van system, but the perhaps the implementation of an entirely new one. "I think it would be a great thing for student life," said Steinberg. "The current provider for the Camel Van is in the last year of their contract, so as we work out a new deal now is the time to maximize our transportation services."

Director of Student Engagement & Leadership Education Scott McEver explained that there are a lot of differing opinions about transporting students to and from downtown New London. As of this past Thursday, Jeff Celinker ’17 has made a new proposal to SGA about accommodating transportation.

According to McEver, there is no particular plan in place yet, but things are in the works. As the school tries to secure additional funding for new transportation systems, it’s likely that changes will not be implemented for about another year.

Psych Department Awarded for Culture of Service

JANAN SHOUHAYIB CONTRIBUTOR

On Nov. 12, 2013, Connecticut College’s Psychology Department was selected as a recipient of the American Psychological Association (APA) Departmental Award for Culture of Service in the Psychological Sciences. The department was recognized for the extent and variety of the service it provides to the students, the field, the College and the public, both on and off campus. The award included a stipend, which the faculty intends to use for research and attendance of conferences.

The Psychology Department, which also houses the neuroscience department, has 11 faculty members, many of whom have also served on major committees, such as the APA, the New England Psychological Association (NEPA) and the Association for Women in Psychology (AWP). Faculty members have also helped to edit dozens of psychology journals. Such involvements, according to Professor of Psychology Ruth Graham, make psychology accessible to the average person, both in and out of the field.

On campus, the department conducts research projects with students and collaborates with both the Connecticut College Counseling Services and Active Minds, an on-campus organization committed to spreading awareness about mental illnesses. Each faculty member also mentors students in pre-major, major, minor and master’s advising. As one of the most popular majors at Connecticut College, the Psychology Department also typically graduates close to 60 majors per year. The Psychology Department is also the only department on campus with a master’s program, and usually graduates around five master’s students per year.

Sophomore psychology major, Aleksandr Chandra, elaborates on the dedication of the department: “The professors are passionate about psychology and are very involved on campus. There is also collaboration with other departments through research participation and interdisciplinary education.” Emily Impellitteri ’15, a psychology major, agrees, “the interdisciplinary nature of the psychology department speaks to the idea of liberal arts.”

Off campus, many psychology professors regularly give talks to community groups and schools and have written about current psychological research for newsletters widely read by nonprofessionals, helping to “give psychology away” to a larger community. Graham explained to the Office of College Relations in an interview for the College website that these types of service “promote access to the professional end of psychology.”

Professor of Psychology Jefferson Singer, has noted that a sort of service for others is a basis of psychology. Therefore, the department’s award for service fits the greater intention of psychology to help other people. These incredible acts of service reflect the culture of community service and activism on Connecticut College’s campus that further help to put the liberal arts in action.

With a graduate degree from Quinnipiac University’s School of Communications, tomorrow is yours. Because we deliver a hands-on experience with an emphasis on breaking trends, like social media. So you'll be ready to take on tomorrow's world, today.

THE COLLEGE VOICE holds weekly writers meetings on Mondays at 9 PM in Cro 215

All students welcome, with or without experience

Join us.

To learn more about our MS programs in Journalism and Public Relations, visit: www.quinnipiac.edu/journalism

Hendrix & North Haven, Connecticut
**An Honor Code Retaliation**

Senior Georgia Naumann responds to— and deconstructs— sophomore Ben Smith's criticisms of the Honor Code in his Letter to the Editor published this past December.

**Georgia Naumann**

**CONTRIBUTOR**

"We will never, by any selfish or other unworthy act, dishonor this our College; individually and collectively we will foster her ideals and do our utmost to instill a respect in those among as who fail in their responsibilities; increasingly we will strive to quicken a general realization of our common duty and obligation to our College. And thus in manifold service we will render our Alma Mater greater, worthier, and more beautiful."

In response to a Letter to the Editor submitted to The College Voice last semester by sophomore, Ben Smith, of our crudely reproached Connecticut College's Honor Code, I will offer an opposing sentiment regarding the merits of the document. Our college community of students, faculty and staff thrives on the principles of honesty, integrity and mutual respect. While many of us arrive at Conn with a deep respect for these virtues, it would be naive to think that they are never broken in times of clouded judgement, intense pressure or, sadly, out of apathy. To quote the document itself, the Honor Code acts as a reminder of our obligation to "uphold standards of behavior that fairly reflect the severity of the violation, and, more importantly, that help to educate them about the impact of their own actions on the community around them."

Smith claims that "the Honor Code simplifies moral questions into ethical black and white," and goes on to complain about the Code's policy on substance use, writing, "The drinking of alcohol or smoking of a bowl of marijuana can in no tenable way be considered dishonorable acts in themselves." (Smith)

In fact, the Honor Code exists separately from the Student Code of Conduct, which handles illicit drug use and social functions policies. The Honor Code was amended about three years ago so that, as Smith says, students are not labeled "dishonorable" for their own isolated use of drugs or alcohol.

Furthermore, as a member of the Honor Council, I can promise you that no legitimate Honor Code violation is ever considered "black and white," nor are any cases considered in exactly the same way. We adopt the form of his letter, is callous and uninformed. We, as Honor Council Representatives, work hard to make difficult decisions, often at the expense of our personal relationships within the student body. Smith fancies himself a "pragmatist" with the ability to "recognize that Conn needs a legislative corpus" (Smith), yet he rejects the only system that gives him as a student ultimate power to uphold his ethical standards. Serving on the Honor Council is the most direct way that I know how to uphold standards of morality that I believe of every year, and we are all well versed in the policies outlined by the Honor Code. We are aware of precedent, the seriousness of confidentiality, and we make a considerable time commitment to serve on the Council each week. "Random members of the student body" could not be expected to have nearly the same level of engagement with the process.

1. "The guarantee of the right of the accused party to face an accuser" (Smith)

The accused party is guaranteed the right to face an accuser.

While I wholeheartedly agree that our moral education is an integral aspect of our experience here at Conn, Smith makes several claims about both the Honor Code and the Honor Council that make it clear that he has never read the Honor Code at all.

The Honor Council does not accept any anonymous incident reports and the accused is always made aware of who filed a report against him or her. While, the complainant (preferred term) is not required to attend a hearing, unless the two parties are charged with a no contact order, the accused has every right to face the complainant. If a complainant does choose a system in which random members of the student body are summoned to adjudicate a single case, (Smith)

2. "The abolition of Honor Council, that which of oligarchy, and the establishment of a system in which random members of the student body are summoned to adjudicate a single case." (Smith)

If he is going to ask for the "abolition of Honor Council," Smith really needs to propose a better idea than asking for a random jury of students to oversee each case. Not only would that be a logistical nightmare, but I certainly would not feel comfortable having my own or my peers' behavior judged by a student who knows as little about the Honor Code as he does. The Council undergoes a week of extensive training at the beginning of each semester, four credit course on the nature of ethical thought, so as to reform through learning, and not punishment." (Smith)

This is quite possibly the most outrageous request on Smith's list. In his introduction, Smith asks for more autonomy for students to discover their own sense of moral right", yet here he is asking for students to literally be taught "the nature of ethical thought." Who does Smith propose will teach these courses? How does he suggest students will fit this course into the Honor Council's already tight schedule? Do repeat-repeat-offenders have to take the course twice? I strongly urge you, Ben Smith, to consider the hypocrisy of this suggestion.

Smith finishes with this: "We as a student body need to shake ourselves awake from our complacency and be active participants in our own moral education." (Smith)

He is absolutely right. I encourage Smith, however, instead of using the Honor Code to wipe his backside, to read it. I am confident that many of his concerns will be put to rest, and that he will have a more informed platform from which to pursue meaningful change.

---

**[YOUR VOICE HERE]**

A letter to the editor is a unique opportunity to share your thoughts, concerns or reactions with the Connecticut College community.

Write to us at eic@thecollegevoice.org.
Epistolary Joy

Why Everyone Should Have a Conn Coll Pen Pal

SARAH HUCKINS
STAFF WRITER

Epistolary Joy

Why Everyone Should Have a Conn Coll Pen Pal

realm of communication, allowing people to transfer information immediately, keeping in touch with their fast-paced lives.

Nowhere is this truer than on a college campus. Maybe it’s just me, but I feel like everything is rushed. Rushed to get work done, rushed to get to class, rushed to finish Moodle posts. I think it’s rubbing off on our communication skills. Important statements are rushed, and written words are lost as we dash off to the next thing.

"LILY, TTYL. I myself am guilty of this. "Thx 4 the support," I wrote recently to a friend. That day I was running late and I realized that my words were not very thoughtful. As much as I enjoy a well-posted Buzzfeed article, gifs, memes, texts, tweets, and all other means of digital communication, I sometimes feel the complexity and depth of how we feel is lost.

So, this brings us back to letter writing. Isn’t this about saving the postal service? I’ll save that argument for a different time and place. It’s about saving a little part of ourselves, and immortalizing it on paper.

That sounds histronic, but what I mean is that so much of letter writing is about preserving—preserving our emotions, our relationships. I know that whatever you put on the Internet remains infinitely in cyberspace (or however that stuff works), but handwritten letters are a little more permanent. They have an even more important type of permanency.

As much as I love Facebook, you can’t really replace a handwritten note. You can’t touch it. You can’t see the person’s handwriting. You can’t smile at the tiny hand-drawn stamp in the corner. And, more importantly, as a writer, you probably aren’t going to take a significant portion out of your day to carefully construct the digital post. I see Facebook, and other social media avenues, as fitting neatly into our hectic lives, allowing us to communicate while rushing off to our next engagement.

But when living at this pace, it’s important to stop and look around once in a while, though looking around doesn’t necessarily need to be outwardly focused.

Letter writing provides a rare time for introspection—preserving our language, our thoughts, and our way of thinking. It’s a way to slow down the pace of the day, to read a book, to take a walk, to relax, to entertain yourself, and to make someone’s day a little brighter.

I think it’s rubbing off on me. I started writing letters to people this winter. I started writing letters to people I haven’t seen in years, to people I haven’t seen at all. I started writing letters to people I know, to people I don’t know, to people I’ve never met.

Letter writing is a thoughtful endeavor, in every sense of the word. And this is why I encourage all to consider obtaining a Conn Coll Pen Pal. Because it is so easy.

It’s thoughtful in the considerate sense (I think one of the best ways to make someone’s day a little brighter is to send them a kind letter) but also thoughtful in the contemplative sense. Letter writing is in many ways like writing in a journal, slowing down the pace of the day to sit down and wander through a mere four years at Conn.

Emma echoed Julia in that for the most part, people have been accepting, but expounded on the topic. "People often ask me, and it’s a pattern I’ve seen across my whole life: people don’t know how to say ‘nice.’ It’s so obviously because I don’t ‘either.’ You don’t have to worry about opening the door for me, I actually appreciate that. I know people think it might make me feel like it is simple. It’s just a door.

Not knowing what to say isn’t the only problem. Facebook makes the conversation feel like it is a page with your own thoughts and concerns. And to ask questions, to truly care about the response, to hope for a letter in return.

Letter writing is a thoughtful endeavor, in every sense of the word. And this is why I encourage all to consider obtaining a Conn Coll Pen Pal. Because it is so easy.

It’s thoughtful in the considerate sense (I think one of the best ways to make someone’s day a little brighter is to send them a kind letter) but also thoughtful in the contemplative sense. Letter writing is in many ways like writing in a journal, slowing down the pace of the day to sit down and wander through a mere four years at Conn.

Emma echoed Julia in that for the most part, people have been accepting, but expounded on the topic. "People often ask me, and it’s a pattern I’ve seen across my whole life: people don’t know how to say ‘nice.’ It’s so obviously because I don’t ‘either.’ You don’t have to worry about opening the door for me, I actually appreciate that. I know people think it might make me feel like it is simple. It’s just a door.

Not knowing what to say isn’t the only problem. Facebook makes the conversation feel like it is a page with your own thoughts and concerns. And to ask questions, to truly care about the response, to hope for a letter in return.

Letter writing is a thoughtful endeavor, in every sense of the word. And this is why I encourage all to consider obtaining a Conn Coll Pen Pal. Because it is so easy.

It’s thoughtful in the considerate sense (I think one of the best ways to make someone’s day a little brighter is to send them a kind letter) but also thoughtful in the contemplative sense. Letter writing is in many ways like writing in a journal, slowing down the pace of the day to sit down and wander through a mere four years at Conn.
Inflation or Increase: 'It's for Effort?'

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

there are some cultural changes and climates on this campus that have come to contribute to the changes.

Consider this: in the 1960s, education became much more touchy-feely. Psychologists suggested that grade inflation was important to nurture a student’s self-worth instead of simply cramming information into their skulls. They finally realized that maybe children are people. Some of the changes may be due in part to Cronk becoming co-ed during the Vietnam War. Perhaps not coincidentally, that is when we see the frequency of A’s shoot up and the use of other grades decrease. Clearly this phenomenon doesn’t exist in the Conz vacuum: other liberal arts schools, such as Vassar, have seen similar trends. With this in mind, we can view the issue as something that is part of a greater ideological shift that registered across the entire country. The changes do not exist in isolation from greater educational and social issues.

I thought that I was in firm opposition to grade inflation. Then, after an email conversation with Professor Simon Feldman, I realized that defining grade inflation as ‘no easy task: ‘Given that grades (outside of some narrow contexts) are not (and in my view should not be, especially in the humanities) mere objective quantitative measures of student work-product it’s really not clear how we could even establish that inflation was occurring.’ While the blue line on the graph representing the distribution of high grades paints strongly upwards, it does indicate something as negative as grade inflation i.e., people giving high grades for mediocre work.

I suppose the first question we can ask is: what is the function of giving grades? Why do we still do it? Other schools are beginning to do away with traditional grading systems in favor of a Pass/No Pass structure. What merit does the old system hold?

During an interview with John Nueguet, former president of Bates, a conversation held between several members of the faculty regarding how they go about grading their students. ‘Should grades be the carrot or the stick?’ I took this to mean, how should grades be used as a motivating factor? In one case, if the normal grade distribution were in play, receiving lower grades would inspire the student to work harder to achieve higher grades. On the other hand, if higher grades are rewarded, would the reduced stress allow students to have more liberty to be creative without being preoccupied with how well they would do on a paper or project? On the other side of the coin, if students know they can receive high grades for work they acknowledge as not being their best work, will they be galvanized to produce high quality coursework?

Some may say that the grading system should be regulated so there are basic standards held across all departments and faculty. If everyone is held accountable for producing the same caliber of work, that would maybe lessen the sensation of what we might call grade inflation across the campus, right? But if we were to do that, the main complaint would be that an infringement of academic and intellectual freedom of both faculty and students.

The main difference between grading techniques is whether the professor chooses to grade the class in relative to one another (that’s where curves in science courses come from), or individual students in comparison to their previous work. In some cases, it is more useful for students to be in competition with themselves rather than with their classmates. For the most part, in the humanities, I feel as though that’s only the way to distribute grades. However, there is the question as to whether it is ethical to send a student off with a glowing record they improved and they tried, if they are being held to the same standard as a student who performed one of two diverse subjects. It is clear that the students that major in Biology or Chemistry have the lowest GPAs, and that the Performance Arts students tend to have the highest. This is absolutely not a reflection on the legitimacy of each department, and not even a clear indicator of the existence of grade inflation. It merely confirms the different natures of different courses of study. As an English major talking to friends that are Behavioral Neuroscience majors, I am always stricken by the different attitudes they have toward their coursework. One major told me that they’re not sure why they study so much for tests when, regardless of the time they spend, they feel as though they are still just as likely to get a C.

One professor in the English Department brought up an interesting point regarding the practice grade regulation as an economic issue. If students at Conz went back to being on the normal distribution curve, it would put us out of competition with all the other schools that didn’t. As bad as the job market is now, imagine graduating with seemingly lower grades compared to the rest of the class of 20-whatever across the country. If students cannot be competitive in the job market, or survive in the world, how functional is the school they graduated from? This professor went on to say that the only way to erase whatever grade inflation may possibly exist would be to invent a grade that is higher than an A and completely unattainable. Regardless as to whether grades are high due to inflation or other factors, it is interesting to note that no one school can change the grading hierarchy without immense consequences for itself and its students. Another issue to be addressed is the difference between disciplines. In the data Nueguet put together, he divided the departments into Performance Art, Humanities, Social Sciences, Hard Sciences and Mixed to reflect students double majoring in two diverse subjects. It is clear that the students that major in Biology or Chemistry have the lowest GPAs, and that the Performance Arts students tend to have the highest. This is absolutely not a reflection on the legitimacy of each department, and not even a clear indicator of the existence of grade inflation. It merely confirms the different natures of different courses of study. As an English major talking to friends that are Behavioral Neuroscience majors, I am always stricken by the different attitudes they have toward their coursework. One major told me that they’re not sure why they study so much for tests when, regardless of the time they spend, they feel as though they are still as likely to get a C.

This article has spent a large majority of the time presenting only some of the many factors that must be taken into account while defining and considering the existence of grade inflation. According to some definitions it is rampant, according to others it may not be such a problem. As of yet, I have not presented a solid opinion as to whether a grade inflation exists, or if it is a bad thing for the student and collegiate education as a whole.

I guess my final response is: does it really matter? My honest opinion is that, regardless of all of these messy institutional and historical factors that play into grade inflation or increase and the shift that ended with students having a 50% chance of being rewarded with an A versus a B or C, is that students themselves are accountable for their learning. That is, after all, what a liberal arts education attempts to ingrain in our students: accountability for their thoughts, opinions, beliefs, position in society, and how they come to learn about all of those things.

While this might seem like a separate issue, it really isn’t. If students are truly there to learn, why should it feel like a B is a failing grade? Why should it feel like getting an A is any better? If students feel a sense of ownership over what they put on paper to eventually be handed in for a grade, maybe then they’ll feel pride for their work as a separate entity from the grade they receive.

An issue that stuck from President Katherine Bergeron’s Q&A in Coffee Grounds last week was that, according to her, Connecticut College is too modest. After a discussion with a few friends, we came to the conclusion that that’s just a nice way to say that we can be incredibly self-deprecating. Maybe this grade increase is a reflection of the school doing something right in the face of a structurally flawed education system. While many of the other liberal arts schools show similar trends in their grades over time, it is not completely across the board; some schools reflect much lower GPAs. This could be due to grade inflation that is uneven across the board, or it could be an indication that some schools have done truly amazing things with their students.

The development of technology has certainly changed the way we educate ourselves outside of the classroom. In turn, the huge amount of information that is available to anyone with an internet connection has added a new element of social consciousness to course work; we no longer have the excuse of only having one library to work with. We have a world of information and observation, and now we have accountability for it.
The Ineffectiveness of Notes on Napkins

HARPUR SCHWARTZ
CONTRIBUTER

If you walk into any dining hall on campus you will find a bulletin board that sports the slogan "Napkin Notes." What will you find on this board? Well, notes on napkins. Either a few short words about how great a meal was or, more likely, a complaint or request that someone has. In theory, it seems like a great idea. These notes serve as an outlet for students to anonymously speak their minds. However, do these napkin notes actually lead to change or are we wasting our napkins? After surveying our dining halls on campus, I have come to two conclusions: our requests rarely change anything; and our dining hall staff should do stand up comedy.

To begin with, who actually responds to our pleas? In our smaller dining halls such as JA and Freeman, the South Campus Dining Hall Coordinator responds to our requests for change. But have you ever wondered who leaves the comments in Harris with the perfect mixture of sarcasm and sass? The man, the myth, the legend: Mr. Knece. As the General Manager for Board Plan Operations, he is the one responsible. Need a good laugh? Knece makes our napkin notes worth perusing. "Where are the eggs rolls???" "On the hotline of course." My personal favorite napkin note was the difficult multivariable calculus problem set question to which Knece responded, "Me no smart for this." Humorous indeed, but does he always solve the problem in need?

In the JA dining hall, one student requested that the salsa that is put out in the morning be left out for lunch and dinner because their quesadillas were "lacking." However, a few days passed and once again the salsa didn't make it past breakfast. Salsa does not seem like a ridiculous request, but clearly there is a conspiracy theory going on.

Time and time again, requests are made, but the answers we are given are not satisfying. Either we are told that what we are asking for is not possible, or we are told that they are "looking into it." "On Stir Fry Night could you also have mango sauce broth? It'd be another great use for stir fry ingredients!" "I am not sure if we can do this, but I will look into it." "Can we get vegan cheese?" "I am currently looking into this." It seems as though saying the word "no" is a taboo, and we are given the answer of maybe so that we are somewhat satisfied into thinking we are eliciting change. But really, Conn are you looking into it?

Napkin Notes are used at schools all across the country as the primary way for students to directly communicate to those who feed them. It is a tradition that was put in place years ago. Even in practice, we are no outmoded form of communication. We make requests hoping they will be approved, but in actuality they give us very little power. We have to give the dining halls some credit. The staff does work hard, and I know it is hard to fulfill every request. However, something needs to change because no one is listening to us. Maybe everyone should tweet their favorites and others can favorite them. The ones with the most likes can actually get done. If they are reasonable enough. Also, this way everyone can see the dining service's responses. This is one option of many in order to make a happier student/ dining services relationship.

Thus far, you have heard my statements of the ineffectiveness of napkin notes. However, I have heard something that was put in place years ago. Even in practice, we are no outmoded form of communication. We make requests hoping they will be approved, but in actuality they give us very little power. We have to give the dining halls some credit. The staff does work hard, and I know it is hard to fulfill every request. However, something needs to change because no one is listening to us. Maybe everyone should tweet their favorites and others can favorite them. The ones with the most likes can actually get done. If they are reasonable enough. Also, this way everyone can see the dining service's responses. This is one option of many in order to make a happier student/ dining services relationship.

With the current system in place, it seems that our requests as students are subjectively approved. If you want to use the napkin notes as a way to foster change, make sure you aren't making a request that you actually want accomplished.

The Ineffectiveness of Notes on Napkins

If you walk into any dining hall on campus you will find a bulletin board that sports the slogan "Napkin Notes." What will you find on this board? Well, notes on napkins. Either a few short words about how great a meal was or, more likely, a complaint or request that someone has. In theory, it seems like a great idea. These notes serve as an outlet for students to anonymously speak their minds. However, do these napkin notes actually lead to change or are we wasting our napkins? After surveying our dining halls on campus, I have come to two conclusions: our requests rarely change anything; and our dining hall staff should do stand up comedy.

To begin with, who actually responds to our pleas? In our smaller dining halls such as JA and Freeman, the South Campus Dining Hall Coordinator responds to our requests for change. But have you ever wondered who leaves the comments in Harris with the perfect mixture of sarcasm and sass? The man, the myth, the legend: Mr. Knece. As the General Manager for Board Plan Operations, he is the one responsible. Need a good laugh? Knece makes our napkin notes worth perusing. "Where are the eggs rolls???" "On the hotline of course." My personal favorite napkin note was the difficult multivariable calculus problem set question to which Knece responded, "Me no smart for this." Humorous indeed, but does he always solve the problem in need?

In the JA dining hall, one student requested that the salsa that is put out in the morning be left out for lunch and dinner because their quesadillas were "lacking." However, a few days passed and once again the salsa didn't make it past breakfast. Salsa does not seem like a ridiculous request, but clearly there is a conspiracy theory going on.

Time and time again, requests are made, but the answers we are given are not satisfying. Either we are told that what we are asking for is not possible, or we are told that they are "looking into it." "On Stir Fry Night could you also have mango sauce broth? It'd be another great use for stir fry ingredients!" "I am not sure if we can do this, but I will look into it." "Can we get vegan cheese?" "I am currently looking into this." It seems as though saying the word "no" is a taboo, and we are given the answer of maybe so that we are somewhat satisfied into thinking we are eliciting change. But really, Conn are you looking into it?

Napkin Notes are used at schools all across the country as the primary way for students to directly communicate to those who feed them. It is a tradition that was put in place years ago. Even in practice, we are no outmoded form of communication. We make requests hoping they will be approved, but in actuality they give us very little power. We have to give the dining halls some credit. The staff does work hard, and I know it is hard to fulfill every request. However, something needs to change because no one is listening to us. Maybe everyone should tweet their favorites and others can favorite them. The ones with the most likes can actually get done. If they are reasonable enough. Also, this way everyone can see the dining service's responses. This is one option of many in order to make a happier student/ dining services relationship.

With the current system in place, it seems that our requests as students are subjectively approved. If you want to use the napkin notes as a way to foster change, make sure you aren't making a request that you actually want accomplished.

Sarah Hawkins
Staff Writer

Author's Note: This is my fifth semester on SGA, and of course that affects my bias, but I'd argue that the best way to understand student body is to become a part of it.

Over the course of four years, this is one critique amongst many that I've consistently heard. Perhaps this sentiment is coming from a vocal minority, but I've heard it as a demand to want to provide a counterargument to those with a negative perception of student government. As someone who frequently forgets to "yield back," I understand frustration with the seemingly arduous process of the Robert's Rules (SGA's rules of comportment), and as someone whose conception of "business casual" is a patriotic sweater and corduroys, I was in full support of the relaxation of the dress code. I am sorry that only one for whom going to an SGA meeting is not a top contender in the Thursday Night Activity category. But I can't get on board with the criticisms of SGA's efficacy.

I have noticed that central to most criticisms of student government is the belief that SGA does not produce any substantive change. One of the most often cited reasons for this is that "shared governance" only implies a nominal concept, a theoretical buzzword that isn't put into practice. Students feel that Harris has no real power and that resolutions carry no weight. I hope to challenge these perceptions through student government and shared governance.

Although the Student Government Association itself is comprised of 34 members, these individuals cannot make SGA function effectively in a vacuum. It's not that these individuals aren't doing their jobs. As an assembly, we have been elected to represent the entire student body, but I believe this relationship ought not be a one-way street. I always encourage students who desire change to reach out to their representatives or to the executive board member. It is this dialogue between students that truly makes student government effective.

I imagine SGA functioning somewhat like a time machine. If students have a desired destination, SGA can help get them there, but if they don't know where they want to go, then it's less productive. Perhaps this isn't the best metaphor, but what I'm trying to illustrate is that the vehicle is there, it just needs to be taken advantage of. And over the course of four years, I have seen an increasing number of initiatives derive from students not on the assembly. I believe this is a testament to their willingness to speak to the opportunities SGA has to offer. One crucial example of the resources that are available is the Student Sustainability Fund.

There is currently $42,000 in this fund. The fund is for students to make a change that is not necessarily tied to environmental, social, or economic issues (or any combination thereof). This encompasses almost any idea for a project, it's highly likely that it fits within one of these categories. It's unique option to propose that SGA fund is another way street. I always encourage students who desire change to reach out to their representatives or to the executive board member. It is this dialogue between students that truly makes student government effective.
Searching for Seinfeld: Current Day

ANDY STEIN-ZELLER
CONTRIBUTOR

"What if Seinfeld is still on TV today?" It is a question begged by word Twitter iconoclast @Seinfeld2000, whose online persona is so strange, so honest, so detached from and yet at the same time completely attached to reality, that I think he might be writing the definitive history of American popular culture as we know it. It is on track to widespread acclaim as the definitive, indisputably final word on postmodernity. Experts may disagree, but @Seinfeld2000's postmodernity, in the sense that he thinks hemight be writing the definitive, comprehensive, indisputable final word on any topic whatsoever, cannot be, his comprehensive knowledge of the Seinfeld series is at once loftiness and stupidity, as its subject is Seinfeld, satire, and postmodernism. Experts may disagree, but @Seinfeld2000's postmodernism is the sort of definitive lameness that reality has been perverted and contorted into a sort of definitive lameness in an effort to provide a crack in an unbroken wall of Seinfeld situations-the puffy shirt, the ascot, the trench coat, the always-on-sale cashmere-sweater-that's-on-sale-that-she-doesn't-know-it-but-she-wants-it-swear, the context of rarefied modernist dissonance that they haven't seen since Season 7. The more familiar you are with the Seinfeld series, the more obscure moments from the series' nine-season run. The more you identify with the Seinfeld series, the more you become a stick to the Seinfeld spirit pervades in an elaborate web of ideas with one aura of subtlety but shamelessly disgustingly direct and creepy self-absorption, and that is why doing so is unprecedentedly direct and creepy. It's really difficult to capture the essence of what this person is all about without reading a ton of his writing, and that's why doing so is so magical. He creates a universe, much in the way that the creators of Breaking Bad or True Detective create universes to which it is easy to develop a serious addiction. It's not as if his system is consistent, predictable, or sound in any sense of the word, rather as if there is an elaborately coded web of ideas which one or two many components. It's not that slight over-the-topness, that makes this world so compelling, the more you submerge yourself into the universe, the more the universe begins to provide. The more familiar you become with the stick to the Seinfeld spirit, the more exhilarating it is when he once again shatters your expectations. @Seinfeld2000 has elevated tweeting to an art form, just like The Sopranos elevated television as an art form and Watchmen elevated the graphic novel to an art form. He has enacted a modest but important shift in the paradigm of observation, and that reality has been perverted and contorted into a sort of definitive lameness as if there is only one universal truth. And it lies to see as I have that ironic postmodern entertainment has peaked, that reality has been perverted and clarified in a way that defies the so-called laws of nature and that the question is no longer "Are we alone?" or "What's the point?" or "How can I do better?" or "What's missing?" or "Who am I?" Existential cluttering is done—there is only one universal truth, and it lies below.

"It was the best of times, It was the worst of times, It was the age of seinfeld not being on TV, It was the age of imagining it still was."
The Pulse of Student Poetry

To Be a God

Luca Powell, Sports Editor

"It's times like these when I really think I have the best job in the world," stated Professor Charles Hartman as he broke the silence of a semester on sabbatical to introduce the event: a reading of selected original works by the student poets of the Connecticut Poetry Circuit. The reading marked the fourth stop of the Circuit's nine-stop tour, bringing five student poets to select Connecticut schools. This past Tuesday, there were only four (absent was Anna Renken, from Yale University).

With excitement, Hartman spoke of the value of readings as doorways into the ever-changing nature of the craft. As the College's poet-in-residence and a professor here since 1964, Hartman framed the reading by considering how we might " gauge" the current tenor of poetry at the college level. The suggestion laid a warm groundwork for the recitations to come; from a theoretical perspective, whatever ensued would be valuable exposure to the nature of poetry as it is engaged today.

Yet, it would have been hard to leave the Chuo Room with a single impression of the art form. The student poets noticeably used the poetic medium in vastly different ways. Certain poems were defined by captivating attention to detail, while others found a clear philosophical footing. Still, others presented distilled meditations on personal experience.

Following an introduction by our own Julia Burgdorff '14, poet James Ciano took to the podium. A senior from Trinity College, James' poetry drew largely from life in upstate New York. His first poem, "Buy Dirt Falling Down Well," a title hatched from a newspaper clipping, he explained, before then continuing with four more. As a poet, his style was impactful and direct, giving a reading that very passively encouraged his audience to follow tangential interpretations of his lines. He concluded his second poem, "Radii" with the thought, "After all, what more is a circle than a line that loves itself?"

Next came Laura Hawking from the University of Hartford. "Today I will read poems that explore memory's ability to become a sense," she pronounced, precluding the clearly philosophical nature of the poems to come. Traveling from the vivid image of a wet matchbook to ruminations on the ephemeral nature of matter, Hawking's inclinations towards metaphysics were infused by a slow paced and thoughtful style.

The direction of the reading took a thematic turn with the third and penultimate reading. Tori Sheldon, from Albertus Magnus, explained how her poetic journey had been an investigation into imagination and detail. Ironically, the combination delivered an experience that felt cinematic and real. It was easy to engage with Sheldon's characters as they were very softly delivered to hang thick in the air of the Chuo Room. The dreamy nature of her poetry was not incongruous with her long-term goals in life: to retire in Arizona with a telescope.

Fourth and finally came Burgdorff, whose poetry I was familiar with from a shared writing seminar (with Hartman, of course). The quality of her reading instantly invalidated any need for her immediate apology for her voice being burdened by a cold. Her first poem, "Midnight in New Hampshire," drew from macroscopic language and rich juxtapositions of individuals and nature. Burgdorff wasted no time in sketching a vivid landscape filled by the regal height of evergreens. "Like kings filled with blackbirds." Her last poem hummed with intensity as it imagined inhabiting the form of a deity. "Like a god! A falcon without a falconer move and dwell in days! like a god!" All too soon, Julia's lyrical recitation concluded what had developed into a dynamic immersion into student poetry.

To Be a God is one of five poems written and read by Julia Burgdorff '14 in the Connecticut Poetry Circuit:

To Be a God

I bare my teeth like a god.
Hunt the ground, stay quiet.
What do you know of death?
To be mortal is not to know it.

The infant plant must push through dirt
into lesser darkness, poke out of the ground
like a needle threading its own eye, or
perish. I will not know the moment when it comes.

Like a god, a falcon without
a falconer. I move and dwell in days
like a god. I see a curse written
on every page. I find the trouble.

Toothpick bones picked out of a pellet
speak of the bird and the gizzard-womb from which it came as thrown-out
love letters speak. If you're lucky,

a rat skull. Shrew bones.
Arrange them into a new order.
The skull as moon in a fertile cosmos. Once forgotten, prayer is not reiterated.
**The Snobbery Awards**

**Netflix > Midterms**

**CALI ZIMMERMAN**

**STAFF WRITER**

It's the most wonderful time of the year...to be a cinephile. The Academy Awards closed in on us as fast as the racecars in Rush. To help as thoroughly as we need, in case we did not pay the $14 to watch Jadi Dench's face on a mov-

...ie screen (which I did, and it was worth every penny), we are taking to the needym aterbly of the online watching universe to catch up on this year's nominated films. Or, we just watch Netflix.

I will not preach how Netflix has revolution-

ized the way in which we watch films and television, because no one doubts the power of Netflix anymore. Online streaming is crucial for the college students who are too busy with their work schedules to make it to the theater and/or choose their intimate college dorm room for their view-

...ing experience.

If you want to check out movies that battled for the golden statue on March 2, then seek Red-

...ox or the theater for refuge. The films listed be-

...low were not all nominated for oscars, but defi-

...nitely deserve the attention of the public (and are not in theaters). Watch and enjoy!

1. Blackfish
   
   **Director:** Gabriela Cowperthwaite
   
   **Starring:** Tilikum the killer whale
   
   **Reason to Watch:** If you have not seen Black-
   ...fish, you will REALLY missing out. Everything you thought about SeaWorld will be shattered with a large, whale-sized tail fin. The man be-
   ...hind the curtain is revealed and he is out for blood. (Netflix)

2. Fruitvale Station
   
   **Director:** Ryan Coogler
   
   **Starring:** Michael B. Jordan
   
   **Reasons to watch:** It is a shame that this movie was not nominated. The true story detailing the tragedy at Fruitvale Station is upsetting and beautiful. Time stands still as the film details the final hours of the incident at Fruitvale Station causing emotional brevity in consistent melan-
   ...choxia. (Redbox)

3. Spring Breakers
   
   **Director:** Harmony Korine
   
   **Starring:** Selena Gomez's tears and James Fran-
   ...co's hair
   
   **Reason to Watch:** Sparing no Break. If you have not seen a picture of James Franco dressed up as his charac-
   ...er, Allen, then you will be trolled away in this film even more. I say "trolled" because this film is modern and stylized (just like Miley), Vanessa Hudgens, Ashley Benson and Selena Gomez's crying face star in this spring break vacation explosion. This is a film to watch with your friends in a large group setting (with a great soundtrack). (Redbox)

4. The Kings of Summer
   
   **Director:** Jordan Vogt-Roberts
   
   **Starring:** Ron Swanson and Moises Arias
   
   **Reason to Watch:** An under the radar wonder. The film is a new-aged Stand By Me, with an incredible cast of teenagers. Sure, the plot is as shallow as a kiddie pool, but you will smile with nostalgia. The front door is left open for the viewer to walk through and experience the new universe created for youth. Stand out perfor-
   ...mance, Moises Arias. (Redbox)

5. Room 237
   
   **Director:** Rodney Ascher
   
   **Starring:** The Overlook Hotel
   
   **Reason to Watch:** This epic collaboration de-
   ...ails the meaning behind Stanley Kubrick's The Shining. Well, the film is committed to astonish-
   ...ing the audience with its magic lat tricks filled with ghost stories and staged moon landings. The detai-
   ...ed theories behind this film alone are astonishing and worth a visit back to the Over-
   ...ook Hotel. (Netflix)

6. The Spectacular Now
   
   **Director:** James Ponsoldt
   
   **Starring:** Miles Teller and Shailene Woodley
   
   **Reason to watch:** The Spectacular Now defines a generation. Miles Teller's performance is so organic you forget that his character is not a real person you hang out with daily. The film is a great screenshoot of teen life that is relatable and realistic. Shailene Woodley holds her own, but it is Teller's film. (Redbox)

7. Adore
   
   **Director:** Anne Fontaine
   
   **Starring:** Naomi Watts, Robin Wright, Xavier Samuel, James Frecheville
   
   **Reason to Watch:** Okay. If you have not heard of Adore, get ready for your world to be rocked. Basically it's about two really good-looking, middle-aged mothers who fall in love with each other's attractive sons. Bonus, the film is supposed to be a drama. At no point is the ridiculousness of this film brought into question. The end result is ab-
   ...ert, and hilarious: like Bad Grandpas with Brit-
   ...ish accents. (Netflix)

8. The World's End
   
   **Director:** Edgar Wright
   
   **Starring:** Simon Pegg, Nick Frost, Martin Free-
   ...man
   
   **Reason to Watch:** If you are a fan of Shaun of the Dead or Hot Fuzz, this film is structured in the same vein. Simon Pegg leads a troop of mis-
   ...fits through his town as they attempt to accom-
   ...ish the circuits of bars. There is a major plot twist that will peak interest halfway through the film. I won't spoil it if you don't already know what happens, but it is rather humorous to watch the reactions of those who had no idea what was coming (like my parents when I watched it). (Redbox)

9. Prisons
   
   **Director:** Denis Villeneuve
   
   **Starring:** Disappointing teenage children, fa-
   ...thers with emotion, rain, and Paul Dano
   
   **Reason to watch:** Prisoners deals with plot twists, a ton of blood and lackadaisical staring (followed by expositional crying). The palpable masculinity brews at the helm of Hugh Jackman and Jake Gyllenhaal. Gender and racial politics aside, this movie is intense and exciting. You will end the film really hoping to have a dad like Hugh Jackman. (Redbox)

10. This Is The End
   
   **Director:** Evan Goldberg and Seth Rogen
   
   **Starring:** Every celebrity who is in their 20s and friends with Seth Rogen
   
   **Reason to Watch:** Like Spring Breakers, this film takes advantage of its star power. Seth Rogen, James Franco and gang play alter egos of themselves who are dealing with the apoca-
   ...ypse. Another film worth watching in a large group. (Redbox)
The Engine Room: Beers, Burgers & Bourbon

ELEANOR HARDY SPORTS EDITOR

Laden with Pinterest-inspired decorations and rustic furniture, Mystic’s Engine Room is the new sweet spot for all-American comfort food. Serving up America’s most cherished dish, the burger, the Engine Room provides a natural and hip yet historic atmosphere in their refurbished marine engine building. Not your average burger joint, this restaurant has a few personal touches that place it above the rest.

A carefully selected 16 beer draft selection in addition to a complete bourbon bar would make “a Kentucky man proud”, the Engine Room goes out of its way to accompany its food with some classic southern drinks. Highlights of the drink menu include a homemadeinfused gin dedicated to Stonington’s very own Beer’d, a genuine and hip yestorian brewery.

Committed to working with the local farmers and sharing a philosophy that every customer should know where their food comes from, the chefs and owners go out of their way to find the right farmers, purveyors and fishermen in order to serve up the most locally sourced foods. With the burger beef traveling a short distance from North Stonington and the cheese coming from Mystic itself, the burgers are carefully built to achieve tasty perfection.

After my own dinner there Friday evening it’s safe to say it is all-around exceptional. Scattered at a cozy, farm-like table topped with crafty mason jars filled with soil and greens, burlap drink menus and a one sheet menu, the simplicity of the restaurant is what initially makes it most comforting. There is no flipping through pages and pages of a menu only to order some chicken and every item sparks an “Oh, I could totally go for that right now” thought.

After selecting a beer from my hometown brewery in keeping with the restaurant’s local vibe, I quickly decided that a mandarine grilled cheese was just what I was craving, while my friends opted for one of the many selections of beers: one smoked beef and one French onion. Being anything but similar to every other burger joint, the waitress delightfully followed up our orders with “Will that be cooked bloody, rosy or crispy?”

And with that, we were hooked.

With the burger beef traveling a short distance from North Stonington and the cheese coming from Mystic itself, the burgers are carefully built to achieve tasty perfection.

The grilled cheese was anything but mundane and blew any of my own creative Harris panini grilled-cheese concoctions out of the water. Thick slices of hearth bread, local Mystic melville cheese melted to that just-right consistency—it was mouthwatering. Not much talking occurred as we scarfed down our meals and had a side of baked mac-n-cheese which tastes just like your mom’s back at home. The reviews on the burgers were equally as positive as their unique combination of ingredients doesn’t really permit otherwise.

When the arrived at the table we were all happy with the price of the meal. Fair for the quality of the food, it’s place any student can go for a quick break from Harris and not have to wait for a weekend when their parents are visiting. Even if a sit-down meal isn’t in the plans (if it is, it’s a seat by the open kitchen and watch the cooking in the works), the bar is down to earth, friendly and busting on a Friday evening.

Taking the American classic and adding a little hometown twist, you’ll leave the Engine Room with a full stomach, a not so empty wallet and an urge to head back for more the following week. *

TIM HARTSHORN STAFF WRITER

High 5’s, located at 318 State Street, presents patrons with one of the most distinct bar experiences in New London. Decidedly part of New London’s “alternative” bar scene (which also includes Oasis, 33 Golden Street and, prior to its unfortunate closure, the EL N GEE), this establishment nonetheless identifies itself as a sports bar—and with good reason. Nine large, flat-screen televisions line the walls of the bar, which prides itself on having access to the broadest range of sporting events of any drinking establishment downtown.

Bartenders are extremely accommodating, and will readily change the channel being broadcasted on a particular screen to the game of your choice (provided, of course, that no one is watching the program currently being shown). Much of the décor at High 5’s is also sports-themed, the most prominent example of which is an extensive collage of sports photography—ranging in subject matter from NBA basketball to the WWE wrestling to local New London athletics, several of whom are related to members of the High 5’s staff and ownership—which stretches along the left wall of the establishment.

Underlying this inclination toward sporting events is, perhaps contrary to a first-time patron’s initial expectations, a categorically “alternative” ambiance. The bar’s play that fluctuates between hip hop, classic rock, R&B and even some reggae, but refrain from delving into the realms of Top 40 or electronic dance music. Pictures of rock stars and punk albums pepper the walls surrounding the bar counter, and, perhaps most apparently, a great number of patrons on any given night will, through choices in fashion, reveal their identification with “hipster,” “punk” and other “underground” aesthetics.

According to Jenna and Dez, owners of High 5’s, sporting events act as a way for their diverse patron groups to readily integrate; the bar is intimately concerned with being accessible and accommodating to all. (Also noteworthy—High 5’s is a favorite spot of Conn professors, so next time you need to talk about your midterm grade...)

Without a doubt, the biggest draws of High 5’s are the bar’s impressive beer selection and high-quality food. With the exception of PBR, a reliable fallback for when you are running low on cash, the taps at High 5’s are served exclusively for craft beers. The selection is reliably diverse (never will you be forced to choose between five different IPAs when in the mood for a lager) and very reasonably priced. Bartenders are all extremely knowledgeable about the brewing process and readily offer free samples of beers available on tap. High 5’s also stocks bottles of several more mainstream beers (Budweiser, Corona, etc.) behind the bar, as well as a variety of hand-liquors.

Also notable at High 5’s is the menu, which, unlike any other bar in New London, changes on a nightly basis (generally with the exception of the burger and wings, both of which are delicious). Ownership and staff at High 5’s regard food as high priority when it comes to providing a completely satisfying patron experience, and remain steadfast in their commitment to regularly develop new recipes. Food is always prepared in a timely manner and, like drinks, can be purchased at a very reasonable price.

Perhaps, in a general sense, the most appealing feature of High 5’s is the establishment’s simultaneous consistency and variety. Dez and Jenna consider their bar to be a highly personal space, and, as such, make their presence felt during the establishment’s décor, selection of food and drinks and, most important, commitment to providing patrons from all subcultural pockets of New London and elsewhere with a comfortable bar atmosphere.

That being said, with this accommodation of various crowds comes an array of diverse vibes. Stop by midway through a football game and you will find a substantially different atmosphere—in terms of patron energy and interaction—than that which overtakes the bar during the Olympics or, conversely, on an average weekend.

Indeed, during certain days of the week, at certain times of night, you might find the fervor that generally overtakes High 5’s during important sporting events to be momentarily subdued; most patrons will be seated, eating food and casually drinking beer in accordance with more “traditional” bar protocol. On Superbowl Sunday, conversely, you can expect nonstop conversation, cheering and chanting spurred on by first-rate dishes and quality beer.

It is the ability to base such adaptability based on a platform emphasizing customer service and top-of-the-line products which make High 5’s a unique space on the New London landscape.
On Thursday, Feb. 20, Friday, Feb. 21, and Saturday, Feb. 22, Connecticut College’s Dance Club showcased its spring performance, entitled “Moving Company,” in Myers Studio. The performance was approximately an hour and a half in duration, and showcased the technical ability and choreographic visions of dance department students.

“Moving Company” offered its audience an eclectic mix of quirky post-modern and modern dance. Emily Ryan’s “D.O.R.M” introduced a series of connected tableaus, her dancers engaging in an ebb and flow of movement across the stage. They paused in clusters, one dancer sticking her tongue out with a pout. The dancers deadpanned the audience, much like Allyn McNerney ‘14 in Maia Draper-Reich’s “Seems to go nowhere.”

Both of these pieces provided the audience a sense of comic relief in the contrast between the lack of facial expression and the humor of the gestures. The image of Draper-Reich’s soloist giving an exercise and casually wandering around the stage with a bag of Cheetos for the duration of “Tainted Love” is not an easy one to forget.

The statement was both bold and relatable, and McNerney’s performance was subtle and unapologetic. We watched her embrace her own disinterest in anything but her snack; she was not even concerned with the audience. While many post-modern works emphasize audience engagement, this piece offered us a window into the dancer’s world, but no obligation to become a part of it.

Similarly memorable images could be found in the works of Meg Robbins ‘15, Aurianna Lajaunie ’15 and Christophe Desorbay ’15. Robbins’ “a little to the left” incorporated the constant replacement of cardboard boxes on the stage as dancers took individual moments to enjoy brief and controlled solos within this chaos. The piece was an ode to the “joys and struggles of exploration,” and Robbins’s choreographic choices left wonderful space for the audience to interpret this theme in a way that carried personal meaning.

Lajaunie’s “bohoflo,” set to the song “Jubel” by Klingande, seemed to be a dance of celebration. The dancers, dressed in vibrant and warm tribal prints, created beautiful silhouettes against an orange cyclorama. This choice presented us no specific narrative or deeper implication, but rather an inviting aesthetic.

One of the beauties of dance is its versatility of intention. It has the ability to tell a story, evoke a meaning or to simply be lovely to look at. The most successful dance works are those that do not require the audience to take anything specific with them. Lajaunie created a piece that gave us dance in its simplest, most unassuming form – the treat of pure movement in space.

“The Usual,” choreographed by Desorbay, closed the show with a bold dedication to coffee. His dancers took a starkly lit stage in business attire and moved through an array of coffee cups. The most stunning visual came when the seven dancers on stage gathered in a chump and began throwing the cups, filled with water, in various directions through the space. There was a fantastic element of surprise in this, and it was almost as if the stage had become a three-dimensional canvas. The water seemed to scatter in a series of photographable images. It was beautiful and memorable, and a smart finish to a fabulous performance. As an audience member, I was satisfied with the dance I had experienced, but left craving more.

These works fell among six others, all of which brought unique facets to the performance. We got to take a peek into the choreographic worlds of eleven individuals; we got to watch their thoughts translate tangibly onto bodies. “Moving Company” was a fulfilling hour and a half and certainly was not a show to miss.
A HISTORY OF THE CAMEL DOME

IGGY STERLING

STAFF WRITER

The ice rink at Connecticut College didn’t have a name when doors first opened on February 1st, 1980. What was known as the Glastonbury Rink, became known as the Dayton Arena, or alternatively, the Camel Dome would remain nameless for the first several years of its existence. The original opening day, the price to get into the Camel Dome was 80 cents. And in 1981 ‘81 and Duncan Dayton ‘81 had graduated did Dayton Arena receive its official moniker. It is with this backdrop that we tell the history of our storied rink.

The Dayton brothers of Minnesota came from a very wealthy and philanthropic family. Their father, Ken Dayton, was the CEO and grandnephew of the founder of the Dayton Hudson Corporation, which was the country’s first discount retailer. Tully, a prominent architect of the time, was the CEO of Dayton Hudson and was also avid hockey players. The only problem, was that Conn had no ice rink. It would have to be built. Though they had just invested $2 million dollars into the rink, the cost of the two million dollar rink. After that initial investment, other donations were needed to cover the deficit in order to keep the rink open.

The nearest rink at the time was Wesleyan’s rink in Middletown, a 45 minute drive away. The Dayton brothers decided to finance the rink, and put a substantial donation forward, somewhere around a third of the total cost of the rink. After that initial investment, other donations started coming in to put towards a rink, until construction was underway in 1979.

The rink was designed by Daniel F. Tully, who was hired to design the rink. Tully would also go on to design the Glastonbury rink, which went bankrupt, it was seized by the bank.

Eventually everything came together; some level, it is very hard not to equate the two lockers to have a wall knocked out and imbibe a little ice. That is what sets Dayton Arena apart. Without. The rink itself may be sub-par, but that is what makes it special.

As the team got better, things got a little more fun.
CONTINUED FROM FRONT

-charges $35 per session at their
New York City studios. Robert-
son's classes, known for their high
intensity and high volume (both in
decibels and attendance), are abso-
lutely free of charge.

"Spinning is another way of
training indoors with a stationary
bike," explained Wuyke. "Those
bikes [in the spin studio] are spe-
cialized to be like road racing
bikes. You can do aerobic exercise, strength and interval training. You
can even spin with weights. When
you go inside there with the mu-
sic, the time goes fast. Everyone is
sweating like crazy — it’s like a
duty exercise."

Robertson spends anywhere
from one to four hours at a time
conducting music research for her
sets, using popular sites like
YouTube and Soundcloud. "I real-
ly like finding the stuff that no one
has, not top 100 radio hits," said
Robertson. "I do my best to think
about the music and routines, it's
consumption at a planned out". Elec-
tronic music and dubstep remixes
frequent Robertson’s workout
playlists. "Original Don" by Ma-
jor Lazer and the Kat Krazy remix
of Bastille’s " Pompeii" are among
her favorite tracks.

In addition to the blasting mu-
sic, shouts of encouragement
and inspired cheers lend themselves
to the cacophony emanating from
the spin studio during classes. "At
the beginning of the year every-
one was pretty quiet," Robertson
recalled. "Now [the classes] are
known to be upbeat and loud. Peo-
ple are screaming and holding
weight, I absolutely love it when
people are loud."

Throughout the academic year,
Robertson's spin classes have be-
come increasingly in demand as
word of the intense and boisterous
workout has spread across cam-
pus. Dedicated cyclists show up
early to reserve a bike with a stra-
tegically draped towel or sweat-
shirt. "They're so ridiculously
popular, you need to go down an
hour in advance to save a bike," said
Jamie Balk '16, a regular at
Robertson’s classes and defensive
specialist on the varsity women’s
volleyball team.

In fact, the classes have be-
come so renowned that they were
brought to the attention of both
Balkin’s volleyball coach and
the coach of the men’s basketball
team. This past fall, both teams
began private spin training under
Robertson’s instruction.

"A couple of the guys started
doing it last spring, and we talked
with our coach about it, and he
started picking up that we loved
it," said John Bullitt '14, co-cap-
pain of the men’s basketball
team. So, this fall, the basketball
team began meeting with Robertson
every 10 days for a mandatory spin
class.

"It's one of the best ways to keep
in shape," claimed Bullitt’s team-
mate Mason Lopez '14. "Lopez
declared that basketball players'" kness take a beating on the court,
and spinning offers a low impact cardio workout that other forms
of exercise cannot. And, while bas-
ketball requires a lot of sprinting,
spin classes offer "45 minutes of
pushing yourself the entire time."

"You can definitely feel it carry
over into basketball too — I can
jump a little higher, run a little
faster," added Bullitt.

Balkin agreed that spin offers a
new and highly effective workout
to the volleyball team’s training
repertoire: "It’s completely dif-
ferent from any other workout.
[There are] short bursts of explo-
sive energy — you’re always chang-
 ing positions and doing resistance
training. ... You can see a total
transformation in your body. Your
legs feel stronger; your breathing
becomes more normal the more
you do it. Even now doing other
cardio activities, everything is
starting to go more smoothly."

While Robertson has certainly
added fun and variation to varsity
training (Lopez described an in-
stance in which Robertson brought
water guns to their training and
"when everyone was dead she just
howled [them] down; her experi-
ence training the volleyball and
men’s basketball teams have influ-
enced the weekly classes, too.

"When I started training the
basketball team we were doing re-
ductly intense workouts, so with the
normal classes 1 slowly started in-
tegrating their set list," explained
Robertson. "It was amazing. With-
in a few weeks I was teaching the
regular classes the same way I was
Teaching the basketball team."

Now, members of both teams
(and others, to be sure) are regular
attendees at Robertson’s Monday
and Wednesday classes, adding to
what Robertson describes as the
"most fun crew" that makes up her
class. Varsity athletes cycle along-
side students who may never have
worked out before — "you could
be next to the President," said
Wayke, recalling an instance in
which Ulyses Hammond, Comm’s
Vice President for Administration,
attended and enthusiastically en-
joyed one of Robertson’s classes.

"When you’re in there, you
know you’re struggling just as
difficult as every other person on
the bike," said Bullitt. "When I’m
in there, I try and push the people
next to me a little bit — it’s great to
be in a room with so many differ-
ent people there at the same time."

Robertson affectionately refers
to attendees as her "little spin fam-
ily," and delivers her instructions
accompanyingly. "I’m there to give rec-
ommendations. Everyone has their
own limits, and that’s it. If I’m
saying gear 15 and someone can’t
do it, do gear 10."

"There’s no shame or
holding back in that class," added Balkin.
"Partial nudity is accepted. It’s re-
ally streamy — by the end, everyone
is half naked."

In past semesters, spin classes
have been offered with more fre-
quency, as there have been multi-
ple instructors on campus. Howev-
er, over the years these instructors
have graduated and moved on,
leaving Robertson to lead the
classes on her own until she gradu-
ates this May. "I Wish I could thank
her so she could be here one more
year," joked Wuyke.

Though she is currently in the
process of training a few junior and
senior级的 girls to take over for
her, Robertson’s regular train-
ers will be sad to see her go. "I
happily to help get Connecticut
women’s squash team out in the
public because I think we
have great potential in the coming
years to move up in the rankings."

Player Profile: Leah Puklin ’14

ELEANOR HARDY
SPORTS EDITOR

Junior captain Leah Puklin
was recently named to the All-
NESCAC Women’s squash sec-
tion team after a successful sea-
son playing at the #2 spot. Being
viewed as a key player by fellow
NESCAC coaches, Leah not only
succeeds on the squash courts
but also in the classroom, as she
was also named as a CSA Scholar
Athlete. With a 12-10 record for
the season, Leah topped off her
season last weekend at the Col-
lege Squash Association National
Team Championship.

Hometown: Bala Cynwyd, Pennsyl-
apnia
Major: Environmental Studies,
Mathematics Minor.
What got her interested in
squash: I was introduced to
squash at a young age from my
grandfather who took me to play
at the courts in the famous Payne
Whitney gymnasium at Yale Uni-
versity. I have been playing squash
competitively since high school.
My high school was the first pub-
lic school in the nation to have a
squash team.

Favorite in-season moment:
My favorite in-season moment
was when we had a three match
winning streak against Haverford,
Smith and Northeastern. Everyone
really came together and played
some of their best matches of the
season. It was fun to watch and to
be a part of.

Pre-match routine: It usually
starts with me watching some of
my teammates’ matches since I
usually don’t play in the first round
of matches. Then I go off on my
own to find a quiet hallway where
I can do some sprints, lunges and
stretches. I like to be around peo-
ple before I play to get pumped
up so I don’t usually go off on my
own and warm up for very long. I
also like to get a pep-talk before I
match from either my coach or
one of my teammates.

Reaction to All-NESCAC
Award: I was really surprised
and honored to receive the All-
NESCAC award. It felt great to be
acknowledged by other coaches
for my dedication to the team and
love of the sport. Receiving this
award is a major accomplishment
and it feels great to be acknowl-
edged for the hard work and dedi-
cation I have put in to this team
for the past three years. I am also
happy to help get Connecticut
College Women’s squash team out
in the public because I think we
have great potential in the coming
years to move up in the rankings. "

[***]