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THE COLLEGE VOICE

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER, SINCE 1977

Black Mold Outbreak Exposes Faulty Infrastructure In Ridges

JACKIE CHALGHIN
MANAGING EDITOR

The Ridges have a certain reputation. For many students, the apartments conjure images of athletic upperclassmen, limited Campus Safety patrol, raucous Friday nights. It is not just the culture of the apartments, steadily built over years, that lend it a particular mystique. It is also their physical placement, across the highway that separates them from our main campus. On a campus where nothing takes more than fifteen minutes to walk, those units are accessible only (safely) by a trek, pedestrian footbridge, then another trek. As always with “reputations,” if not totally incorrect, they never offer the complete truth. Away from the main campus—and out of sight for touring parents—the apartments also carry a host of health and safety risks.

The start of the fall semester was characterized by tropical storms and flash floods. On several occasions, the entire student body was warned to limit time outdoors and keep electronics charged in the case of a power outage. For residents living across the street in what are formally known as the River Ridge Apartments, a hypothetical power outage would seem edenic compared to the reality some experienced.

Early in the first month of school, residents of Ridge 17 experienced severe flooding in the basement level of their home, which houses the bedrooms, bathroom, and laundry room. Water soaked not only the ground, but leaked in through walls, dampening much of the surface area within the basement. One resident, Alexa Beckstein '22, grew concerned that the water buildup in the laundry room might cause an electrical fire. While unplugging the machines out of fear for her and her roommates' safety, she was electrocuted. All the while, the water buildup was growing to be a few inches high in some areas. The situation was unmanageable.

Residents of the Ridge contacted Campus Safety first. They called four times before getting through to an officer, who responded, “We’ll send someone when we get the chance.” The officer further instructed the students to “mop [the water] up with a spare towel.” Residents felt the officer was not understanding the severity of the situation—this was not a spill, it was a flood. When the residents threatened to call the New London fire department instead, Campus Safety sent a member of the facilities team, who arrived at the apartment within twenty minutes.

Facilities soon vacuumed the water, and laid down towels on the ground of the affected areas and under beds. The residents were instructed to leave the towels on the ground so that they might soak up any additional incoming water. Something about towels, however, is that when they are exposed to prolonged periods of wetness, they grow mold. Something about mold is that it can be relatively slow to grow, to spread, and to reveal itself. When another resident of the Ridge with a mold allergy—who asked to remain anonymous—started breaking out in hives, she was perplexed. It did not take her roommates long after that to pinpoint the cause of her allergic reaction.

This time, residents of the Ridge contacted not only facilities, as well as Dean of Students Victor Arcelus and Assistant Dean for Residential Educa-

tion and Living Sara Rothenberger. Like the Campus Safety officers before them, Beckstein felt members of administration were not treating the matter with due urgency, or understanding the depth of its ramifications.

Deans offered the empty Knowlton ballroom, recently converted into a six person dorm, as an alternative living option until the mold was cleared. Residents of Ridge 17 asked if they could move into an empty Ridge apartment on their street; students who opt to live in spaces with a kitchen, like the Ridges, are offered only a partial meal plan, and Knowlton is a kitchenless dorm building on the main campus. Administrators declined their request, their reason being that the empty Ridge is potential quarantine housing for students who test positive for Covid-19. The quarantine Ridge remained empty for the duration of their trials, which included trips to Urgent Care for the student with the mold allergy.

What frustrates Beckstein most is that the entire ordeal, beginning with the flooding, was preventable. The River Ridge apartments have a history of structural instability. Built decades ago to temporarily house faculty members, the apartments were never meant for such protracted use. Beckstein spoke to residents of Ridge 17 from two and three years ago—all of them experienced flooding. This suggests that this particular issue is longstanding, that the college is aware, and that no long-term solutions have been implemented.

In an issue of *The College Voice* from 2001, staff writers reported on two students being severely injured when a Ridge balcony collapsed. They fell fifteen feet. One student broke their arm, and another injured their skull. Students also cite experiences where they send maintenance requests, only to receive slow responses or none at all. Maintenance requests seem to have a quicker turnaround, as Beckstein often cites gratitude for the respectful members of the facilities department who entered their apartment.

It is now the administration who is slow to respond or does not respond at all. Residents of Ridge 17 reached out to Rothenberger about potential compensation for damaged personal property. They also requested a meeting with her directly to discuss long-term solutions for flooding. Rothenberger said she would follow up, then never did.

Rothenberger declined a request for an interview and suggested reaching out to Head of Facilities Tom Hobaica and Vice President Rich Madonna. I emailed them both clearly requesting an interview for a *Voice* article. Hobaica responded by outlining the process of submitting a maintenance service request, and Madonna responded by saying that any issues with housing should be addressed in a work order to facilities.

The recent flooding and mold outbreak in Ridge 17 is part of a longer historical trend that points to the uninhabitability of the River Ridge apartments. Over the years, safety concerns have accumulated in regards to dorm infrastructure across campus. Connecticut College prides itself on being 99% residential, a fact which they claim fosters its tight-knit community. Maybe so, but more for the reason that just about every Conn student living on campus has their own housing horror story to share. •

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Letter From the Editor

JACKIE CHALGHIN
MANAGING EDITOR

When I'm not newspaper editing, I'm working at a campus coffee shop, The Coffee Closet. During my most recent shift, a parent entered with a prospective student after completing a tour. She was ready to pay for her order with a debit card, until she read the

sign on the register: "Debit/credit card machine broken, probably for the rest of the semester."

"What's going on at this place?" she asked, referring to the broader Connecticut College campus, "Everywhere you turn, something is broken."

She proceeded to ask about the big display which typically holds baked goods, namely, why was it empty?

"Funny you should mention everything being broken," I responded, "our oven has been dead for the past few months."

The parent paid for her coffee with cash and left, but I wondered about this image of Conn from the perspective of an outsider. We have but one fully functioning dining hall, multiple understaffed academic and administrative departments, and near uninhabitable dorms. Of course, these facts are not exactly highlighted on campus tours—tour guides are instructed to market the school with the verve of a used car salesman—but parents pick up on details like the ones in the coffee shop, and take note. Slowly, fault lines are revealed.

In this issue, our writers tackle a variety of pressing topics. Key aspects of the Connections curriculum, which has become one of the main six figure selling points for the school, are questioned by News Editor Elora Roy '23. Editor-in-Chief Amanda Sanders '22 explores the understaffing within the English department, revealing how national trends within higher education have shaken one of our college's strongest departments. Understaffing extends outside of academic departments, too, and into offices like Equity and Noncompliance—the place where students go to sort any issue surrounding Title IX; News Editor Keri Krasnoff '23 searches for answers about possible ramifications of this understaffing. In keeping with this disquiet, I speak to students about flooding and mold within their school-sanctioned housing. Ultimately, what is called into question is the very inhabitability of these weathered spaces.

It should be noted that the College's newest financial campaign is being marketed under the aphorism "Defy Boundaries." Given the subject matter covered by our writers here, this quote feels strange. Can boundaries be defied before baseline necessities are met?

A central goal here at *The College Voice* is to provide students with enough information about the workings of the campus to form opinions about its true nature. What is currently revealed by our writers, unfortunately, is a campus in disarray. We hope the rest of the student body will take note of all the things that just seem off—even the smallest happenings can be indicative of larger, institutional problems.

Keep a keen eye, and if anything you see around campus sparks your interest for whatever reason, reach out to our editors with tips, or join us yourself for our next pitch meeting in Cro's Alice Johnson room. All of us at *The Voice* can't wait to hear from you.

Your Managing Editor,
Jackie Chalghin '22

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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Editor-in-Chief

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Dwindling Numbers: Understaffing and the English Department

AMANDA SANDERS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

One of the richest things about a college English department is the wide variety of professors, all experts in a variety of fields that you may have never heard of, such as social media, digital humanities, animal studies and food studies. While Connecticut College's English department typically has a vast array of professors in a wide variety of sects, English majors have taken note of a smaller department for the coming spring semester, with more changes on the horizon. In the spring of 2020, the College offered 23 English classes, which was lowered to 19 classes in the fall of 2021, and then further shrunk down to 15 for the upcoming semester. English majors and minors were emailed on Oct. 28 to be made aware of a further reduction of offerings for the spring.

A reason for this pruning relates to the need for academic sabbaticals. Professors Jeff Strabone, Blanche Boyd and Hubert Cook are all on sabbatical this fall. In the spring, Professors Cook and Michelle Neely will be on sabbatical while Professors Rachel Gaubinger and Marie Ostby will be away on parental leave. Professor Steven Shoemaker will also not be teaching at Connecticut College this spring. In the fall the College employed Professor Sarah Strong and Professor Kate Rushin. Rushin will be here all year to assist with departmental gaps. The department will also bring in Professor Ben Card for the spring.

"Professor Card is a Ph.D. candidate at Yale who also holds a Master's degree from Oxford. At Yale, Professor Card is completing a dissertation on heresy in seventeenth-century British literature. He's an experienced teacher, having taught several courses at Yale, including a co-taught course on Religion and Shakespeare, and a course at Gateway Community College. He'll be teaching Milton--an amazing opportunity for us, since he is a bona fide Milton scholar!--and Religion and Otherness in Renaissance Drama," stated Department Chair Lina Wilder. Card will be the third pre-1800s scholar teaching in the department this spring. Card was hired to teach 300-level classes in order to free up space for Wilde to "cover the 150s," which are the required first-year courses for English majors.

To major in English, the department requires five or more classes to be taken at the 300 level or above that satisfy three geographical areas (British, U.S., and World Literature) and three time periods comprised of medieval, eighteenth-century, and literature consisting of 1800 to the present. "I tried to find someone to teach 20th century or World Lit and there just wasn't anyone interested that I could find for adjunct wages. It's not ideal that there will be three Renaissance lit scholars next semester but people just weren't available," Wilder admitted, "I do think with one class available in each category we will make it doable for people to fulfill requirements."

Another major requirement being changed for the semester is the required 400-level seminar all English majors must take if they're not writing a departmental thesis. Professor Steve Shoemaker was scheduled to teach this year's senior seminar titled "Fitzgerald and Hemingway," but had to bow out due to teaching commitments at Yale. Professor Shoemaker also recently resigned from his position at the Writing Center.

"Obviously he is a very valued teacher and scholar and the fact that we're not able to keep him around is not something that makes me happy. Professor Shoemaker had been teaching this year as an adjunct, which doesn't get a very high pay at Conn. We were not able to

come up with a more permanent offer for him; it's a matter of budgeting," Wilder said.

Seniors will now have to take a 300-level course to fill the seminar requirement along with a planned meeting to build camaraderie. "It is far from ideal; we hope to never be in this position again. We thought 300-level classes would be more important. It was the perfect storm this semester." Many English majors are confused with the new expectations and are disappointed by the smaller offerings.

"As an English major my choices are already limited in terms of class selection, so restricting my choices even further is going to not only hurt me when I'm looking for classes to take next semester, but also any potential new majors, who are going to have even less options than I did throughout my time at Conn," stated Kayla O'Malley '22.

The department will also be shrinking due to the phased retirement of Professors Blanche Boyd and Charles Hartman, who are the College's current Writers-in-Residence. This will be their final semester teaching at Conn. Professor Hartman will be teaching one last course in the spring semester, and Professor Boyd will be teaching two courses. The department is hoping to bring Rushin on as the College's new Writer-in-Residence and as a tenured professor. They are also searching for a fiction or nonfiction writer to bring on in the same capacity. "It's very complicated; we have to get authorization from the Dean of Faculty to do a search," Wilder continued. "Committees weigh in on what is needed. Policy right now not allowing depts to hire more than one tenure track professors per year but we are working on Rushin, and a search committee for fiction for a one year position with the possibility of renewal. Obviously this is our creative writing program so we really like to hear from students about the importance of the program and where we'd like to see it go."

The three year average number of enrollments at Conn in the English department was 579. This number does include individual study, honors research, and Foreign Language across the Curriculum.

"The sad reality is that higher ed is going through some crises. Wages haven't really risen since the '70s and the cost of college keeps going up. There are things we don't offer that I would love to offer... Asian American or Latin American lit specialists [should be hired]. We obviously discuss race but it would be amazing to have a specialist in that area. We'd love to offer journalism and something specific there but we haven't been able to dedicate a position to that, or linguistics. It tends to be a zero-sum game. There are a lot of moving pieces there."

If students want to change the way the English department at Conn works, Wilder suggests weighing in. The department will likely be reviewing the major over the next year after the arrival of a visiting committee next fall. For continued excellence, student voices are needed. •

Enjoy Your Meal! Eleni Mosher, Star of the JA Dining Hall

DAVIEL SCHULMAN
STAFF WRITER

Connecticut College students constantly Crave about the delicious salads, soups, and fresh bread served in the Jane Addams Dining Hall. There is one other thing that distinguishes the Jane Addams dining experience: Helene (Eleni) Mosher, the woman who helps students swipe their Camel Cards. Mosher brightens the day of students by kindly greeting them as they swipe their cards and saying, “Enjoy your meal!” before they enter the dining hall. Students who tell her to “have a great day” are met with the heartfelt response, “have a better one!”

Mosher grew up in the Peloponnese region of Greece and said she gets chills thinking about her childhood because Greece was “at war constantly.” The main war that happened during Mosher’s childhood was the Greek Civil War, spanning from about 1943 to 1949, in which the Greek government army defeated the Democratic Army of Greece (the military branch of the Communist Party of Greece). In our conversation she brought up a specific instance when a man, who she referred to as “the enemy,” came to her family’s house to steal their belongings. Mosher’s sister dressed up as an old woman and pretended to cry to the man and beg him to return their belongings. In the end, according to Mosher, “God gave it some thought and he gave us our stuff back.”

Mosher was a refugee who left Greece alone when she was 19 years old to escape persecution. While looking for work, she landed in New London. Mosher acquired different jobs in the food and garment industries before

joining the dining staff at Conn in 1984. She worked in Harris Refectory before moving to Jane Addams Dining Hall. Mosher feels extremely grateful for her job at Connecticut College because she did not even expect to be hired. When asked what she enjoys most about her job, she said “Everything...[it’s a] dream come true.” She is good friends with her coworkers, one of whom is also from Greece, and appreciates that her swiping job allows her to sit because it is difficult for her to work in the kitchen now since she uses a cane. “I thank them day and night.”

Mosher said she has no complaints about her job at Connecticut College. She expressed, “[The students] know that I love them.” When asked what inspires her positivity, she said, “What choice do I have?...Being happy or being moody.” Mosher advises college students “to learn as much as they can while they’re young because their brains are more ‘with it’”

Mosher has three daughters, and had one son who passed away about thirty years ago. One of her daughters has two kids— 13 and 15 years old— who Mosher referred to as “the love of [her] life.” Her daughter and grandchildren live close to New London, so Mosher visits with them every day.

When asked if she has any favorite foods served in the Jane Addams Dining Hall, Mosher replied, “Everything’s delicious...the food is good and clean.”

The Jane Addams Dining Hall is open for breakfast and lunch on weekdays, and it recently opened for indoor dining as well. •

Conn Searches for Solutions To Campus Voyeurism Problem

AMANDA SANDERS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

While cheering Conn’s men’s soccer team on to their victory on Nov. 6th, students across Freeman Green and all over Conn’s campus pulled out their phones and opened their laptops to an email from Campus Safety reporting on a Title IX violation. “An individual was photographed without consent while showering in Katherine Blunt House. Connecticut College does not tolerate any actions that invade individual privacy, and such behavior is completely unacceptable. It is prohibited by our College policy on sexual harassment, and is a crime under Connecticut State law,” wrote Mary Savage, Director of Campus Safety and Emergency Operations. This is now an ongoing investigation with the New London Police Department.

This is not Connecticut College’s first brush with this form of sexual harassment and voyeurism. On Oct 26, 2018, the class of 2022 received their first Title IX bulletin from Campus Safety, where Savage informed students of a similar incident. Several months ensued with multiple such privacy violations, where many students were afraid to shower, afraid of these communal spaces. These incidents, including this semester’s, are horrifying and inexcusable. No student should be afraid of having their right to privacy violated in such a way. Solutions that the College offered, and notably that did not work, involved restricting student access to residence halls that were not their own and the addition of privacy shower curtains in shower stalls in Plant House.

In order to protect students, Campus Safety plans to begin patrolling Katherine Blunt House, and intends to take on more frequent patrols of all residence halls on campus. “We also have initiated conversations with the Student Government Association about additional steps that will build on previous work to improve bathroom privacy,” Mary Savage’s email read.

KB residents were invited to a meeting on Nov. 6 by Associate Director of REAL, Lil Carrasquillo-Vasquez and Director of SVPA, Rachel Stewart in the Larrabee Common room to answer questions and have a

shared space.

“I can’t believe this is happening again. I don’t think patrols by Campus Safety are going to do anything, they can’t be there all the time and they would likely only make students feel more uncomfortable. It’s insane that this has happened so many times in four years, without the college ever implementing any genuinely helpful changes,” stated Zoe Pellegrino ‘22, when asked for her thoughts on Campus Safety’s email.

Liz Nanavati ‘23 is frustrated with dealing with such events over and over. “Honestly, I am quite frustrated with the fact that this happens every year. Even freshmen year I used to look around when I entered the shower stall to make sure that I was safe, and it is extremely concerning that this is still an issue two years later. The school has had this happen every single year and, though they send out emails and contact the police, they have not taken the steps to try to resolve it. They could ensure that all of the locks properly close, raise the height of the stalls so that no one can possibly see in, and just update the bathrooms in general. There needs to be an emphasis placed on education of those on campus through more than just an email afterwards or a 30 minute lecture during the chaos of orientation. It cannot be swept under the rug anymore.”

Critiques that circulated previously regarding how the College handled such incidents in the 2018-2019 academic year referenced the lack of transparency in who was involved in the decision-making process surrounding these cases and how little information students received.

Students launched a campaign in 2018 titled “Take Back Our Showers,” which demanded transparency, information, and student involvement in solving this issue on campus. Notably, Savage’s email this week included a mention of the Student Government Association. SGA was unable to provide a comment in time for publication.

Students who have any information on the sexual misconduct situation should speak to the Dean of Equity and Compliance Programs/Title IX Coordinator Ebony Manning or to Savage. Students are also able to share information anonymously through a link sent out by Savage. •

Title IX Office Understaffed in a Time of Need

KERI KRASNOFF
NEWS EDITOR

The College community has been jolted by the sudden departures of faculty and staff members, outlined in emails by President Bergeron over the past year. As a result, offices are left understaffed which could hurt the students that rely on certain campus resources. The Office of Equity and Compliance Programs (OPEC) which houses the Title IX office has been without an internal investigator for over a year and a Deputy Title IX Coordinator for staff since September. In response to this staffing problem, Associate Dean for Equity Compliance Programs and Title IX coordinator, Ebony Manning, and her team have been working with external investigators at the moment with the long term goal to shift to an in-house investigator. “Once we fill the internal investigator position, that person will also serve as the deputy Title IX Coordinator for Students,” Dean Manning wrote via email, “I am looking to fill the Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Staff, which is currently a voluntary position.”

Ariella Rotramel has served as the Interim Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion since August 2021. Rotramel has been working closely with Associate Dean for Equity Compliance Programs and Title IX coordinator, Ebony Manning, and the director of Sexual Violence Prevention and Advocacy (SVPA), Rachel Stewart, to address the staffing concerns. Rotramel suggested via email that the understaffing problem that is being experienced all across campus relates to a nation-wide movement referred to as “The Great Resignation.”

“People are en mass shifting their employers and jobs in light of our changing world,” Rotramel writes, “this is not unique to Connecticut College.” However, Manning offers a bigger reason that stems from federal regulation changes from Title IX itself.

Dean Manning wrote that the Advisor positions as well as a Hearing Panel are actually new additions to the Title IX team. In May 2020, the College received new federal Title IX regulations from the United States Department of Education which forced many institutions, including Connecticut College, to rethink how they respond to sexual discrimination and sexual harassment. Accordingly, the focus of the new regulations is that victims and perpetrators of sexual harassment are treated equitably during any complaint process, making the reporting and ruling on sexual harassment in colleges more arduous and more challenging to find a perpetrator of sexual assault guilty.

Unfortunately, since Dean Manning is the sole individual in the Title IX office it may take longer for sexual assault victims to get an appointment. Dean Manning also recognizes that reporting and processing of cases may take a bit longer due to the demands of the new 2020 regulations while the Title IX office is not fully staffed to begin with. Currently, Dean Rotramel writes that a request for a revised investigator for Title IX and bias has been submitted through the College process so that it can be posted for hiring sometime soon. Dean Rotramel writes, “This position would be different from the one we had in the past, as it would be solely housed within OEC rather than shared with Campus Safety.”

Stewart and the SVPA office works very closely with and is housed under the Title IX Office. The SPVA office provides confidential advocacy to any students on campus who have been affected by sexual violence. “We interact with a broad pool of students only some of whom are interested in, or able to, report their experience to the Title IX Coordinator.” Stewart also mentions the challenge that has arisen for the Title IX team, as sometimes there is a longer wait for a student to schedule a meeting with the Title IX Coordinator to report an incident or access supportive measures such as contact limitation orders. However, the SVPA is still able to provide the same support to any affected student whether that would be emotional

support, referrals to other helpful resources or supportive measures such as academic flexibility, housing changes or other arrangements to support them as they process and heal.

Zoe Bertone ‘22 is the program coordinator for SVPA. “This is the first year that the role of program coordinator has been part of SVPA. Part of my role is to support the other student staff, and be a liaison between them and Rachel [Stewart].” When asked about general DIEI work conditions since the beginning of the semester in regards to their understaffing, Bertone writes that work conditions have been good. “Our student staff has been extremely committed and working very hard to put on different events, as well as provide educational opportunities for the campus community.”

Overall, the result of both the 2020 regulation changes and the pandemic has led to staffing challenges for the Title IX office. “I hope that we can continue to build the OEC as it is a critical part of our College,” Dean Rotramel writes. “Their work is also the work we all must embrace as issues like sexual violence and harassment are social at their heart. We have to all choose to not tolerate and challenge attitudes and behaviors that contribute to these problems.” In the meantime, all the campus community can do is wait for advocates of Title IX who share Connecticut College’s values to fill these positions. Dean Manning writes, “I want the community to know that this Office will continue to provide supportive measures, (contact limitations orders, academic flexibility) as well as an equitable, unbiased and thorough Title IX process.” •



Connecticut College

Putting the Liberal Arts in Action? A Critique of Pathways at Conn

ELORA ROY
NEWS EDITOR

Pathways form an integral part of the redesigned Connections curriculum. But, as a junior and a member of the Media, Rhetoric, and Communication Pathway, I have found myself unexpectedly perplexed trying to understand precisely what this program is trying to accomplish and how it enriches my own college experience. Modeled after the centers for interdisciplinary scholarship, each Pathway consists of four principal components: a thematic inquiry course taken in the spring of sophomore year, three core courses that relate to the theme of the Pathway, some form of global or local engagement, such as an internship, and a senior reflection course which culminates in the All-College Symposium. All of these pieces should connect to an animating question, which should in turn connect various elements of your college experience, such as your major(s), minor(s), extracurriculars, and community engagements. Despite its promising claims, the Pathway program lacks a set of clearly defined goals or objectives, and has yet to strike the balance between having too many requirements and providing students with enough guidance to create a truly enriching experience.

Based on Conn's mission statement, the goal of the Connections curriculum as a whole is to "put the liberal arts into action as citizens of a global society." However, there is no specific written objective for how the Pathways fit into this initiative. Is the global/local engagement requirement the "action" referred to in the mission statement? Is the act of pursuing a Pathway to connect different fields of study in and of itself sufficient "action?" What other ways might students accomplish this mission without the completion of a Pathway (or a Center)? How, exactly, does the Pathway unify our college experience? Which elements are most beneficial for doing so? How much weight does the completion of a Pathway hold outside of Conn? These are all questions I have received only vague and insufficient answers to thus far.

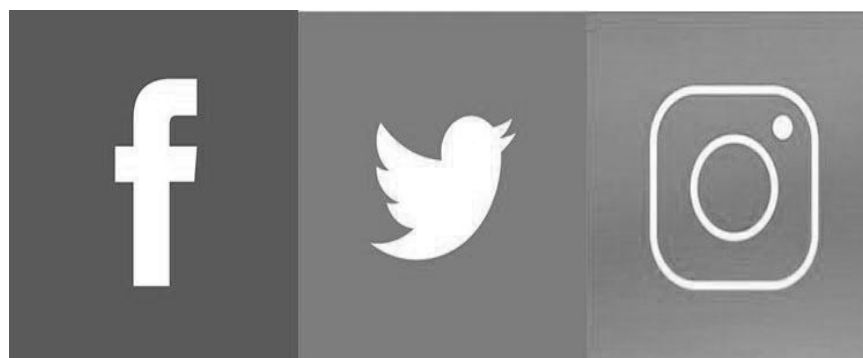
These undefined objectives further lead to two fundamental flaws in the program's design: the Pathways attract students already interested in interdisciplinary learning, and emphasize reflective, academic learning

over experiential learning. One core tenant of the Pathways is interdisciplinary learning, however, those most interested in tying together multiple fields of study like the program promises have already taken an interdisciplinary course load. The program provides little to no incentive for those who might hesitate to branch out beyond their major or area of study, aside from waiving the requirement for one mode of inquiry. As such, it is nearly impossible to know whether the broad themes of the Pathways foster interdisciplinary discourse, or if the students who seek out the program would have had these conversations anyway.

Further, the Pathways lack a set framework or set of checkpoints to guide students along their journey. After the completion of the thematic inquiry course sophomore year, students are left to their own devices until the fall of senior year to figure out how to relate their coursework to the Pathway, whether they choose to meet with their Pathway coordinator for guidance, and how their animating question might evolve. Of course, a certain amount of flexibility in comparison to the Centers is to be expected, however, the complete lack of any structure or advising meetings makes it unnecessarily difficult to view this process as a gradual journey as opposed to fragmented weeks of forced reflection.

All of this being said, I still do not hold an overall negative view of the Pathway program. Regardless of its shaky aims and multiple shortcomings, it has been an enjoyable and enlightening experience for many students, myself included. After viewing my classmates' presentations on November 4 at the All-College Symposium, I realized that I had been overlooking one of the most important elements of all: community. Ultimately, the pathways might not dramatically influence you to do something completely new or exciting, or even take classes radically different from those you would usually be taking. But, they do provide a designated space to reflect upon your college experience, to look back on these four rather chaotic years with polished unity, and to share what you have learned with a diverse community of peers, faculty, staff, and family members. It may not be a perfect experience, but it is one many of us navigate together. •

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An Open Letter to the Connecticut College Administration

MARC STERN
STAFF WRITER

It is safe to say that a large majority of students at Conn have become extremely frustrated with the current state of life on campus. As the pandemic slows down, we are facing a growing number of obstacles. As the college moves forward, we are demanding greater say and transparency in the everyday operations of the college.

At a time when the College is undergoing tremendous shifts, not all changes have been welcome. When the pandemic started, the College quickly adapted to a remote learning environment, consistent with colleges across the country. Last fall, the College attempted on-campus learning, and succeeded at keeping overall Covid-19 rates low on an unvaccinated campus. This past spring was even better. As vaccines rolled out, it was assumed that much of our lives would slowly but surely return to normal. Then the Delta variant hit.

The school's response to the rising demand in mental and physical health services has been horrendous. Sending out a newsletter twice per semester saying that there are mental health services available on campus and that we should 'walk around the Arboretum' when students were isolated from their peers and forced to communicate through screens was virtually a band-aid solution. It is those same students who are earning grant funding through Davis Projects for Peace, winning Watson Fellowships, getting drafted to the MLS, and receiving Fulbright scholarships.

If the administration is trying to craft the elite school it so desperately wants to be, then it must recognize when it is succeeding. The College is seeing amazing milestones under unprecedented political and economic situations despite tight financial constraints. But it is holding itself back. By limiting students' social interactions, stifling students' academic performance, and neglecting many of both our and the faculty's basic needs to function properly, the College is holding itself back on its quest to build on strength and defy boundaries.

In addition to our mental health, our physical health remains a major issue in our residential spaces. It is inconceivable to tell students they cannot gather with large groups of friends out of fear of a virus, yet maintain student residences in the River Ridge apartments. Not a single student was hospitalized in the COVID outbreak of Sept. 6-12. Yet, after a student is hospitalized from exposure to black mold, it took several weeks for mitigation efforts to be taken. This isn't the only time

an issue like this has happened. In 2018, Johnson students were forced to leave their dorm after dozens of rooms were discovered to have mold growing inside. Johnson flooded again this semester in early October, as did the Ridges this September. In Olin Laboratory, there seems to be a bucket that picks up water leaking that lives there permanently.

These facts expose two truths. First, despite requiring all students, faculty and staff to be vaccinated with arguably the most advanced vaccines created in human history, social gathering rules remain far too strict for this point in the pandemic for a relatively isolated campus of young adults. Second, it exposes the desperate need for new residential buildings on this campus. It is unethical for the school to continue the prioritization of any new construction project at Connecticut College

until the very homes we live in are adequate for all students. It is no longer acceptable for the school to think that installing dehumidifiers in its residence halls is an adequate solution to the high humidity that is consistently present in our homes. If this isn't a sign of significant water damage, I'm not sure what is.

The college seems to be in the red, meanwhile, President Katherine Bergeron's salary was increased by 66.43% (\$418,304 to \$629,728) from 2019-2020 following a large donation last year. Campus Safety has a new fleet of Ford Explorers, which seem to only be used to give out a quick \$75 ticket for students parking in the wrong section, but dropped the cable bill out of the budget in the name of speeding up the wifi.

The big reason that I, along with many others, chose Conn was because of the premise that we would feel like more than just a number, unlike at larger universities; and from that sense, we weren't wrong. The number we are to the school is far more degrading. Rather than being 1 in 30000+, it is safe to say that we are all looked at as one number to the administration: \$77,575.

Although I might just be one angry camel in a large herd, I know that there is a wide and deep sea of students who feel the same apathy and

indignation that I do in our four-year trek across the desert. I, along with others, are asking for the student body as a whole to be able to find easily accessible ways to voice our opinions and concerns about what the school can be doing better and what we would like to see the school do in the future. Although I'm not quite sure what a good final solution might look like, I'm sure that we as the camel community can come together to come up with one that can help students, faculty, and the Conn as a whole become the elite institution we have the potential of being. •



Zoe Pellegrino

How Progressives Treat Dissenters and Nonconformists

PETER GATTUSO
STAFF WRITER

For those who have been paying attention to Congress' navigation of President Biden's ambitious agenda, the names Manchin and Sinema are likely familiar. Amidst Biden's "Build Back Better"

legislation, a \$3.5 trillion progressive wish-list, Senators Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) have become notorious for their opposition.

The obsession from the media, pundits, and activists on these two non-conforming legislators is odd and peculiar, especially considering the hyperfocus is on ridiculing or belittling them, not on persuading them. Instead of trying to engage in serious and thoughtful discussions on public policies, many on the left resorted to neanderthal thinking, attempting to browbeat and bully Manchin and Sinema into supporting Build Back Better. Dissent is not only unwelcome to the progressive agenda, it is brazenly maligned as "anti-Black, anti-child, anti-woman, and anti-immigrant."

This was the sentiment of Rep. Cori Bush (D-MO), who released a statement attacking Sen. Joe Manchin. Bush didn't even bother to explain how not supporting Build Back Better hurts these groups, much less attempt to persuade in a civil and respectful way. Bush, as so many other legislators do, views Congress as a battle ground to push her radical agenda instead of a forum for deliberating legislation. Bush's demagogic rhetoric follows a perfunctory formula: whoever opposes my public policy proposals is anti-(insert marginalized/minority group here).

Naturally, populist rhetoric has its consequences. When government officials spread misinformation and accuse their co-legislators of instilling hatred and damage upon people, people are going to respond. In Arizona, extremist activists have taken the call to harass Sen. Kyrsten Sinema at every opportunity. At Arizona State University—where Sinema is a lecturer—activists confronted Sinema and followed her into the bathroom where they continued to harass her through the bathroom stall. In a similar confrontation, activists disrupted a wedding in which Sinema was officiating. A video captures the mother of the bride begging the protesters to stay quiet for an hour so that the wedding could proceed, to no avail.

The core tenet to democracy is debate and discussion, not harassment. Yet, harassment is the strategy that is often pursued —by activists and legislators alike. The Democratic caucus makes up half of the Senate, making them the majority through the tie-breaking vote of Vice President Kamala Harris. But instead of watering down their unprecedented progressive and costly legislation so that they have the votes to pass it, they attempt to bully any and all dissent into submission. The Democrats' behavior precisely depicts the problem George Washington had with a party system: legislators would react to the motivation of their party instead of their conscience and constituents.

Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) declared "two people do not have the right to sabotage what 48 want and what the President of the United States wants." Technically speaking, Sanders is correct. Two people do not indeed have the right to sabotage what 48 senators and the President wants. But 52 senators do have the right to reject what 48 senators and the President wants. Somewhere in Bernie Sanders' calculation, he somehow forgot about half the senate. The premise of Sanders' assumption is that senators should vote based on their party, and not their actual beliefs. The implied system Sanders advocates for is a parliamentary system, where people elect parties, not people. In this system, legislators are obligated to be benevolent towards the party leader and vote in whichever direction they may dictate.

Bernie Sanders is not alone in promoting a parliamentary system

over a democratic-republic. Rep. Katie Porter (D-CA) quipped that Kyrsten Sinema is failing her constituents by voting against the Build Back Better legislation. Porter is misguided in her opinion that legislators are meant to be mere delegates, bound to the opinions of their constituents. Were this true, then the legislative process would be run by a direct democracy, a majoritarian rule system. Keep in mind, this parliamentary argument—that elected representatives are bound to the views of their constituents—is the same view of those who attacked legislators who supported the impeachment of Donald Trump. Countless Republicans attacked Reps. Liz Cheney (R-WY), Adam Kinzinger (R-IL), Anthony Gonzalez (R-OH), among others, for not representing their constituents in regards to their vote to impeach Donald Trump. Yet, these congressional members voted for what they believed in, despite putting themselves at odds with their party. What Democrats and Republicans alike seem to have forgotten is that legislators voting along their own beliefs instead of the beliefs of their party leader is a good thing. Every state and district elected their own senators and representatives. The country did not elect Chuck Schumer, Mitch McConnell, Nancy Pelosi, or Kevin McCarthy, states did.

The legislation President Biden is pushing for—in terms of cost proportion to GDP and redefining the role of federal government—is comparable to President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal and Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society. However, the difference is that both FDR and LBJ had the electoral mandate to do so; both had overwhelming Democratic majorities in both the Senate and the House. President Joe Biden and the Democratic leadership seems to have developed the ill-conceived notion that they are deserving of such a mandate, despite only having a tied Senate and a House majority by seven seats. Conclusions from the 2020 election results, and supported by the Virginia and New Jersey 2021 gubernatorial results indicate that Joe Biden and the Democrats do not have any such mandate beyond being not Donald Trump. The Democrats barely have a majority in Congress, which binds them within the parameters of their own caucus. If they wish to pass such radical sweeping agendas then they need the majorities to do so, and not bully dissenters into conformity. •



A Brief Review of the MLB Season

JOHNNY ALEXANDRE
SPORTS EDITOR

With their 7-0 victory on November 2., the Atlanta Braves defeated the Houston Astros in six games, becoming the 2021 World Series Champions. This was the team's fourth World Series pennant in franchise history and first since 1995.

This MLB season was a great one for many different reasons. The Angels' Shohei Ohtani became the first real two-way player since Babe Ruth, being named a two-way All-Star as the American League's starting pitcher and leadoff hitter. There were huge blockbuster deals made at the trade deadline, the kinds one would only imagine becoming true in a video game. Both the Chicago Cubs and Washington Nationals decided to rebuild, sending some of the most exciting names in baseball, like the lightning-fast Trea Turner, the three-time Cy Young award winner Max Scherzer, the powerful slugger Anthony Rizzo, the game-changing Javier Baez, and former league MVP Kris Bryant all to new homes.

The month of October is reserved for the MLB playoffs, and getting there was no easy task for the 10 playoff teams. The playoffs allow for the winners of the six total MLB divisions, three in the National League, and three in the American League. There was additional space for four total wild card teams, two in the American League and two in the National League, who would face off in single-elimination games against each other to continue their seasons in the next best of five-game round.

Multiple playoff races came down to the very last game of the season. The National League West Division was decided by one game between two teams. The San Francisco Giants finished with 107 wins, while the Los Angeles Dodgers finished with 106 wins. These two teams finished with the third and fourth-most regular-season wins in the 21st century. The American League Wild Card between the Boston Red Sox, New York Yankees, Toronto Blue Jays, and Seattle Mariners was a four-team battle until the very end of the season, with all four teams, including three from the American League East division finishing within two games of each other.

Playoff baseball is a time where all regular season methods of operation, and statistics are forgotten about for the time being. A time when a historically dominant hitter like Cody Bellinger can redeem his entire 2021 season with one swing of the bat. These are the games where it isn't unreasonable to see a team like the Los Angeles Dodgers call their ace Max Scherzer out of the bullpen to earn the save in the final inning of a win or go home game.

The semifinals of the MLB playoffs, the National League Championship Series, and the American League Championship Series included the Los Angeles Dodgers, the Atlanta Braves, the Boston Red Sox, and the Houston Astros.

The heavily stacked Los Angeles Dodgers fell to the Braves in the NLCS. The Braves, despite losing their exciting young star Ronald Acuña Jr. to a torn ACL, were able to rely on their strong pitching and remaining sluggers, most notably Freddie Freeman and Austin Riley to win the series in six games.

On the American League side, the Red Sox, who had been defying everybody's expectations all season, were unable to defeat the Houston Astros in six games. The Red Sox defeated their division rivals, the New York Yankees, and the Tampa Bay Rays along the way in the playoffs to get to this point. Despite Boston's centerfielder Kiké Hernández hitting an astounding .408 over 49 at-bats in this year's MLB playoffs, including three home runs in the ALCS, the Astros were able to outlast Boston to advance to their third World Series appearance in the last five years.

The Houston Astros came into the 2021 World Series as favorites, but it was the underdog Atlanta Braves and their controversial "chop" celebration that came out victorious, again in six games. The Houston Astros deep lineup struggled for the majority, paving the way for the Braves fiery bats and shut down bullpen to lead them to victory.

As the page turns and the offseason begins, it will be especially interesting what roster moves are made. Most notably this winter will feature one of the best shortstop free agent classes in recent history with six former all-stars going on the market. •

Sports Spotlight

Featured Team: Men's Cross Country

10/31 @ NESCAC Championship, 7th/11

Upcoming Events:

Nov. 13 @ NCAA Reigional
Championship (Harkness Park)

Coaching Staff:

Luke Maher, Head Coach
Sam Alexander, Volunteer Assistant

Featured Team: Women's Cross Country

10/31 @ NESCAC Championship, 7th/11

Upcoming Events:

Nov. 13 @ NCAA Reigional
Championship (Harkness Park)

Coaching Staff:

Ned Bishop, Head Coach
Emily Mauro, Assistant Coach

Featured Team: Men's Soccer

11/6 @ Colby W, 1-0
11/7 vs. Tufts L, 0-2

Upcoming Events:

TBA @ Salem St. (DIII Men's Soccer
Championship - First Round)

Coaching Staff:

Ruben Burk, Head Coach
Andrew Storton, Assistant Coach

Featured Team: Women's Soccer

10/30 @ Middlebury L, 2-1

Upcoming Events:

TBA @ SUNY Geneseo (DIII Women's
Soccer Championship - First Round)

Coaching Staff:

Norm Riker, Head Coach
Analisse Rios, Assistant Coach

Underrepresented Voices in Film: Conn's Newest and Most Exciting Club

HANNAH STOEVER
STAFF WRITER

If you were to tell me that during my sophomore year there would be a new club in relation to film and representation in the industry, I would have been hesitant to believe you.

However, this semester has changed everything with the creation of the "Underrepresented Voices in Film" club. The club was founded by Jenna Kramer '22, who I have had the pleasure of taking a Film Studies course with this semester. We were able to conduct a non-traditional interview on a shared document to prevent any miscommunication. The following questions and responses are from this interview:

Stoever: When did you first come up with the idea for Underrepresented Voices in Film? What was your primary goal?

Kramer: I first had the idea my sophomore spring when I was doing remote classes. I was working on a feminist film and my professor at the time continually put my film down and said "he did not understand it." I felt like he did not put an effort into understanding how the film is important to me and my values and instead made me re-write the script. It was deeply upsetting to me and I wish I had a space outside of class to talk about why it was so frustrating to people who would understand because they were going through similar situations in their film production classes.

Stoever: Could you talk about the club's mission statement? How did it begin versus how does it look now?

Kramer: The mission statement has developed and changed since the original draft, which I am incredibly grateful for. This whole time I have wanted the club to be a collaborative effort so when members gave me feedback/ideas on how to improve the statement and make it more inclusive I made the necessary changes. My main goal for the club was to provide a space for people who suffer from identity-based discrimination to feel validated in their frustrations and emotions. I felt really lonely in my struggles and I did not want that for anyone else.

Stoever: How was the process in creating the club? What advice would you give to others who wish to make clubs of their own?

Kramer: It was more work than I expected! I suggest having a solid idea of what you want to accomplish within your club before you start the paperwork. Also, don't do it alone! Start a club with a friend, it will elevate so much of the work and you can come up with fun ideas together!

Stoever: What would you say you're most excited about in regards to Underrepresented Voices in Film?

Kramer: I am most excited about having a group of friends. I felt distanced from my peers during the pandemic since I spent my whole junior year remote. So to be able to meet new people and connect on an emotional level is definitely the most exciting part. Also we have some really exciting ideas for events coming up so stay tuned!

Stoever: Are there any events that you hope to do in particular with the club for this semester?

Kramer: This semester I really want to invite a local filmmaker to come speak to our members about their experience working in the film industry and how they overcame any identity-based discrimination in their process. I plan to open this to all Conn students so everyone can get the opportunity to hear from them and ask questions!

Stoever: What have you noticed about the club's first few meetings? How does the participation and discussion tend to be?

Kramer: I am really proud of all of the members. The first meeting people re-

ally opened up and shared their deep emotions and frustrations. I went home after the first meeting and cried because I was so happy to be a part of this and be a part of everyone's healing. When we are not battling our emotions we have really fun discussions. Recently we discussed *The Duff* (2015) which turned into a discussion about Bella Thorne's controversy, true crime, etc... very diverse and engaging conversations!

Stoever: In simultaneously taking Film Studies courses, do you bring any topics of class discussion and implement them into the club's conversations?

Kramer: Yes! I find a lot of overlap between my 'Representing Gender' class with Dr. Nina Martin (also our advisor for the club) and our discussions. It is really exciting to be able to broaden my education and use what I learn in class in our club discussions.

Stoever: In terms of representation and diversity in film, what are some of the topics that you'd like to discuss in Underrepresented Voices in Film? What about general issues regarding film studios and companies?

Kramer: I hope we get to discuss how poor representation in film is harmful to audience members and how seeing your identity being mis-represented on screen is deeply frustrating and upsetting. From there I would love to open the floor for members to discuss how this makes them feel. Providing a space to foster and validate people's emotions was the #1 goal of the club so letting members speak about their experience and be heard is a major topic of discussion. Also, we talk a lot about poor casting choices and what companies/filmmakers could have done or could do better in the future.

Stoever: Have you had any feedback about the club so far? If so, could you talk about what you have heard in response?

Kramer: Yes, I have. I got feedback from a member about the mission statement. Looking back I do not understand how I was so naive in thinking the statement was as inclusive as I wanted it to be. This particular person helped me draft a new statement (which is highlighted on ConnQuest and our Instagram @underrepresentedvoicesinfilm) to be welcoming and inclusive to any future member.

Stoever: Do you have any worries about the club's outcome? What do you hope for the overall future and success of the club?

Kramer: I always worry! If we can only have five meetings I would be satisfied. I gained a lot from sharing my frustrations and I would like to think a lot of the other members feel the same. If I can help one person feel comfortable and validated then I have accomplished all of my goals.

Stoever: Is there anything that you would like to say to the students, Film Studies department, and/or Connecticut College as a whole, either about the Underrepresented Voices or in regards to the state of film in general?

Kramer: I want to extend a welcome to anyone who is interested in joining the club. We are always looking for new members and new ideas for events! In terms of the current members of the club, thank you. I have received so many heartfelt emails about the club and so much encouragement and love from all of you. It has really touched my heart and pushed me to make this club the best it could be.

Being able to talk with Kramer about Underrepresented Voices in Film was an absolutely memorable experience. I truly admire her goals and work towards creating the club, and I am looking forward to the following meetings. I highly advise you to attend at least one meeting, as they will never disappoint. Underrepresented Voices in Film is an incredible new club, and I wish the absolute best for its future. •

Last Night in Soho: Director Edgar Wright Serves Spooks in New Thriller

JIMMY CORK
OPINIONS EDITOR

College is an adjustment period for everyone, but for first-year fashion student Eloise Turner, (Thomasin McKenzie) a dream of a glamorous life in the big city quickly turns into a reality-altering nightmare. After a rough first night in her dorm thanks to her mean girl roommate Jocasta (Synnøve Karlsen), Eloise moves into a single room off-campus. On her first night in her new room, she has a "dream" where she inhabits the body of aspiring singer Sandie (Anya Taylor-Joy) as she traverses the nightclub scene in early 1966 (the year is never explicitly mentioned but I'm just going off the giant *Thunderball* poster which appears in an early sequence which premiered in 1965). Eloise, a 60's fan, is at first enamoured with finally getting to live out the night life she dreamed of but what she sees at night through Sandie's eyes quickly veers into the disturbing and she soon finds herself hard pressed to distinguish her harsh reality from the frightening past.

The film's director, Edgar Wright, made his directorial debut with the 2004 *Shaun of the Dead*, a critically-acclaimed send-up of zombie films. He followed that up in 2007 with the equally-praised buddy-cop comedy *Hot Fuzz*, then made his first American film *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World* (2010). *Pilgrim* was an outright bomb at the box office but has since become a relatively widely-seen film due to a cult following and popularity on streaming platforms. Wright returned to the UK in 2013 to make *The World's End*, a pub crawl comedy that I consider to be my favorite film of all time. He followed that up with 2017's *Baby Driver* after dropping out of *Ant-Man* in 2015 due to creative differences with Marvel. Despite a growing popularity with film geeks, *Driver* is Wright's only film that can be considered a true box office hit. Unfortunately, judging by my theater at the AMC Lisbon (the film was inexplicably not playing at Waterford or Mystic), which was completely empty notwithstanding me and four friends, it does not seem like Wright has another hit on his hands. That being said, I had a really good time with this one. The first half of the film is relatively tame and scare-free but nevertheless entertaining, keeping me engrossed in the mystery of the film. The film does undoubtedly bring scares towards the end, fully transitioning from a thriller to a ghoulish horror film by the

third act. However, there are certainly some elements that don't quite work. A few stylistic choices towards the climax feel somewhat excessive and out of place and a few characters are disappointingly one-note despite copious amounts of screentime, most notably Michael Ajao's John, who seems puzzlingly unphased by the physical and emotional abuse he endures throughout the film.

Despite existing in a wholly different genre, many publications including the *Los Angeles Times*, have compared the film to Quentin Tarantino's *Once Upon A Time in Hollywood*, as both films saw pop culture obsessed directors finally getting to make a film set in the decade where they got so much of their musical and cinematic influences from. While *Soho* has some visually stunning moments, some computer-generated wide shots of period London don't quite compare to the practical long shots of Rick Dalton and Cliff Booth cruising down a fully converted 1969-accurate Hollywood boulevard. Tarantino did directly influence *Soho* in one key way. Wright revealed in an interview with Total Film magazine that the *Pulp Fiction* director introduced him to the Dave Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick & Tich (yes, that's their name) song where the film gets its title.

While I'd personally consider *Soho* to be a lesser effort in Wright's particularly impressive directorial canon, it has me just as excited to see what the filmmaker does next. Wright revealed on the Happy Sad Confused podcast that he has a pitch for the next *James Bond* film. Wright is clearly a huge fan of the series, having worked with both former Bonds Timothy Dalton and Pierce Brosnan on previous films. The *Bond* love is evident in *Soho* as well, outside of the aforementioned *Thunderball* poster, the late On Her Majesty's Secret Service actress Diana Rigg appears in the film as Ms. Collins, the landlord of the haunted room Eloise rents, giving a wonderful final performance of her over sixty year-long career.

I'd love to see Wright's take on *Bond* but part of me hopes that he sticks with making original films like *Soho*, *Baby Driver*, and *The World's End*. It's been wonderful to see movie theaters really come back to life over the past few months but the box office has been overwhelmingly dominated by big franchises, particularly superhero films. Hopefully, the cineplex can continue to be big enough for both Wright's fresh, weird films and the big Marvel universe he stepped away from. •

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Harry Styles Concert Comes to Mohegan Sun Arena

SOPHIE MULVIHILL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Colorful boa feathers cover the floor. “Who’s the opening act?”, asks a woman standing with her tween daughter. Synchronized screams come from the crowd every few minutes. Fans wear their boldest outfits.

It’s Harry Styles: Love On Tour.

On Oct. 21, Harry Styles performed the first of two shows at the Mohegan Sun Arena in Uncasville; a 10,000 seat arena roughly 20 minutes from Connecticut College. The tour was postponed a year because of the pandemic, but started this fall. The arena was laid out with a center stage and walkways to mini stages on 2 ends. The Watermelon and Cherry seating pits were on either side of the line-down-the-middle stage. The show was 90 minutes long and Styles performed 17 songs, including all but one song from his most recent album *Fine Line*, a few from his debut *Harry Styles*, and a cover from his One Direction days.

Jenny Lewis, an alternative/indie singer who has been in the music industry since Styles was 4, opened to an arena full of screaming fans who may not necessarily have been there for her, but still happily danced along. She played 9 songs, including “Silver Lining” by her former band Rilo Kiley.

An hour after Lewis began, Styles rose up from under the stage to begin his performance with “Golden”, the opener to his sophomore album, setting an upbeat tone for the show. Styles continued with the cheerful theme, playing “Carolina” and “Adore You.” “Only Angel” is a song with an angelic-like intro, which is even better when the lights are timed perfectly along with it. Then came “She,” one of his longer songs that features an impressive guitar solo by band member Mitch Rowland.

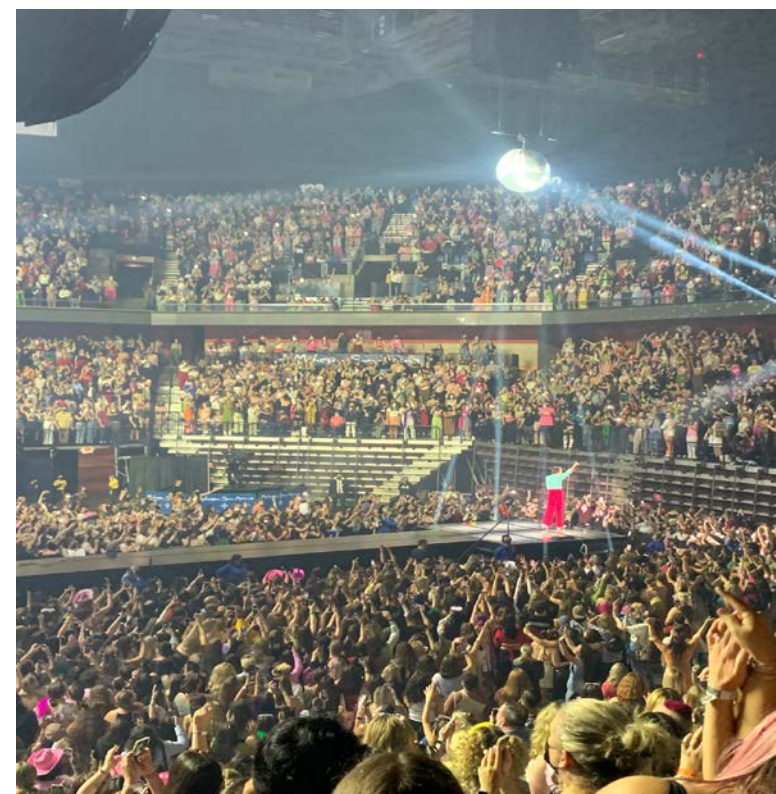
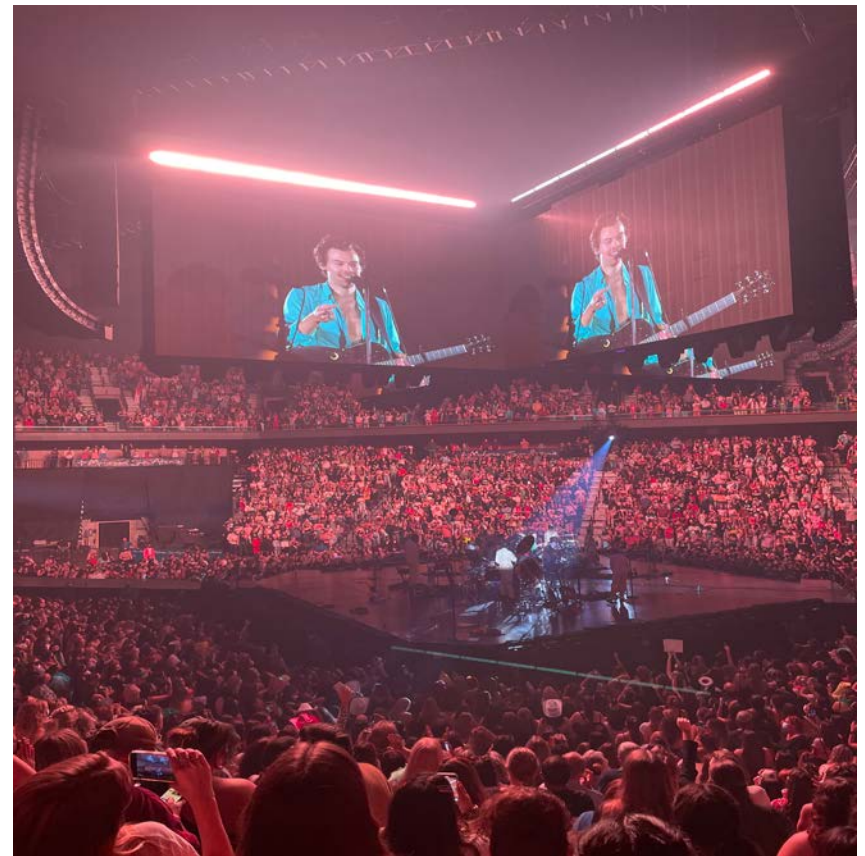
Styles traditionally takes a moment in every show that he plays to sing “Happy Birthday” to a member of the audience. However tonight he shared that it was his mother Anne’s birthday, so the entire arena sang to her. He joked around with the crowd, which included asking a three-year-old girl on her dad’s shoulders if he should keep going -- luckily she said yes.

Styles prefaced the next bit of the show with “we have about 15 minutes of straight dancing, so if you need a drink or a bathroom break, you don’t have time for one” and started “Canyon Moon.” The energy began to rise in the packed stadium. At one point during the song a pack of balls was tossed to him and he juggled. Immediately after he demonstrated this skill, he jumped into “Treat People With Kindness.” As the crowd bounced along, the floor began to shake... Styles then led into a crowd pleasing cover of “What Makes You Beautiful” by his former band One Direction. To no one’s surprise, everyone knew the words. Styles has performed this song at a majority of his shows since the band went on hiatus 6 years ago. His voice has matured and the style of the song has changed, but it is a good callback to where he started. It was also during this song that he asked everyone in the crowd to dance even harder than they had so far. Before singing “Fine Line”, Styles hinted at his encore and said, “we’re going to sing one more song and then we’re going to pretend the show is over.” He thanked his band, the crowd, and everyone else who made the show possible, and also was grateful for the fact that this tour is even happening considering where things were a year ago.

This encore was three songs many had been waiting to hear, “Sign of the Times”, his debut single; “Watermelon Sugar” which (as it should) was played on repeat by every Top 40 radio station this summer; and “Kiwi,” one of his loudest and makes-you-want-to-dance songs.

Styles wore an aqua blue shirt with matching suspenders, bright pink pants and white boots. This outfit in different colors has been the uniform that he wore on the *Fine Line* cover and during most of the shows on this

tour. Styles switched between several guitars during the show, which he played during songs when he was not dancing with the crowd. The lights and videos played during the show also added to the ambience of each song. The energy of the ecstatic crowd, and the obvious enthusiasm Styles and his band displayed, made it an amazing show. •



Sophie Mulvihill