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Connecticut College

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# THE COLLEGE VOICE

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1977

## Greer: the Lesser Known Library on Campus

ELIZABETH BERRY  
STAFF WRITER

Last November, the most recent album in the Bob Dylan Bootleg Series, *More Blood, More Tracks: The Bootleg Series Vol. 14*, was released. The album's deluxe edition is \$105.74 on Amazon and includes a hardcover book consisting of posters from the original *Blood on the Tracks* album cover, ticket stubs, and photos from Dylan's famous red notebook. Days after the album's release, Professor Charles Hartman--who was teaching a course on Bob Dylan that semester at Cummings Arts Center--requested this book, and it arrived in Greer Library, located in the basement of Cummings. As I flipped through this text for my annotated bibliography for the course, I felt grateful that I had access to this updated information on the mysterious Bob Dylan.

There has been speculation among the student body that Greer may be closed in the future. However, W. Lee Hisle, Vice President for Information Services and Librarian of the College, stated in an email to the *Voice* that "there are no plans to close the Greer Music Library." He went on to explain that "last fall, the president appointed a Greer Music Library Task Force to discuss how

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## Police Arrest Sophomore For Voyeurism, Alleging He Photographed Dozens Of Women At Conn And On NYC Subways

ALEX KLAUVENS  
NEWS EDITOR



Image Courtesy of the New London Police Department on Facebook

New London Police say they have arrested a Connecticut College sophomore in relation to multiple reports of voyeurism incidents that occurred at the College throughout this academic year. Carlos Antonio Alberti '21 was charged with seven felony counts of voyeurism for allegedly photographing dozens of female students in shower changing areas without their consent.

Police detailed Alberti's alleged history of recording women in campus co-ed bathrooms and on New York City subways in a detailed affi-

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## Peters, Xanders and Segal Win Competitive SGA, Honor Council Special Elections

GRACE AMATO  
ARTS EDITOR

The last in the series of likely unread SGA emails revealed the winners of the three recent elections: Chair of Equity and Inclusion, Chair of Residential Affairs, and Junior Honor Council Representative. Although many of us abstain from voting out of pure inconvenience (who knows how to log onto Connquest anyway?), the SGA Constitution mandates that at least twenty percent of either the student body or relevant class year votes in order for the election to be considered legitimate. Importantly, the three recent elections were special because the Chair of Equity and Inclusion position became available last semester since the current chair went abroad while both the Chair of Residential Affairs and Junior Honor Council Representative positions became available due to a student withdrawing

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TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2019

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Sharon Von Meter considers the pressures of social media on the study abroad experience on page 7.

#### OPINIONS

Sophia Angele-Kuehn examines the typography of Werner Pfeiffer on page 12.

#### ARTS

Emir Kulluk reviews the 2019 Oscars on page 14.

## From the Editor

This past Friday in Hartford, New London police officer and Democrat Anthony Nolan was sworn in as representative for Connecticut's 39th House District, which represents about two-thirds of the City of New London including Connecticut College. Nolan replaces Chris Soto who resigned in January to become Legislative Affairs Director for Governor Ned Lamont.

During the campaign for the House seat, Nolan ran against candidates Mirna Martinez of the Green Party, Kat Goulart of the Republican Party and Jason Catala, a petitioning Democrat. According to unofficial results Nolan won with 963 votes with 51%, Martinez earned 535 with 29%, Goulart 276 with 15% and Catala 102 with 5%. The Day reports a total 13,341 registered voters in the 39th District, making turnout 14%; even abysmally lower than the just-over-minimum turnout percentages among students voting in SGA elections as we report in this issue.

Nolan raised controversy at a Feb. 20 debate when in response to a question about what he would say to Republican constituents who feel that he does not represent them politically he said "nothing." Nolan also weathered criticism that as City Council President, he missed an excessive number of Senior Affairs Commission meetings, for which he is the Council's liaison. Martinez, who serves on the School Board, recounted uncomfortably in response to a question about Nolan's missed meetings that when the City Council was preparing to take a first vote on a budget, Nolan told her that "he had not read the budget." He responded that the missed meetings were a result of the need to give care to his mother who has cancer.

In my opinion, it appears quite likely that as our College's new State representative, Nolan will give strong support to Governor Lamont and the Democrats' agenda. During the campaign, Nolan was the only candidate voicing support for Governor Lamont's plan to reduce sales tax exemptions without criticism; both Martinez and Catala supported it with reservations while Goulart opposed it. This plan includes ending tax exemptions for coin-operated laundry services, non-prescription drugs, barber shops and beauty salons and college textbooks--essential goods and services for students at Connecticut College that are not currently provided directly through the College itself. Whether or not you believe some or all of these goods and services should be taxed, the cost of your education will increase should any of these proposed taxes become law.

Given the controversy Nolan has stoked during this campaign, we hope he will prove to be a better representative for New London than the allegations against him indicate he will be. As members of our city and the 39th District, it is important that we as students support and encourage representation for New London that acts in the City's and students' best interests. Quality of life improvements in New London, whether through aid from the State or nonprofits, are vital because they improve and expand our own experiences with the City.

-Saadya

## 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.

MAX AMAR-OLKUS '19  
*Editor in Chief*

DANA GALLAGHER '19  
*Editor in Chief*

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## CONTACT US

eic@thecollegevoice.org  
270 Mohegan Avenue  
New London, CT 06320  
thecollegevoice.org  
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# Community Bulletin

## Controversial Lamont Nominee Approved In Nomination Hearing

Legislators scrutinized the governor’s pick for commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development and senior economic advisor this week, highlighting his time as at the firm Goldman Sachs and the company’s role during the 2008 financial crisis. In the end, the committee voted unanimously to support Lehman’s nomination, which now goes to the full Senate.

## OCME: Connecticut sees year-over-year decrease in OD deaths

Fewer people died by overdose in 2018 than in the year before, the first time the state saw such a year-over-year decrease since the state Office of the Chief Medical Examiner began releasing numbers in 2012. But the rates for fatal overdoses and ER visits still are higher in Connecticut than in most other states. Town-by-town data show at least 17 fatal overdoses happened in New London, 16 in Groton and 14 in Norwich.

## Opposition to Legislature’s School Regionalization Plan Grows

Hundreds of parents and students crowded the state Capitol Friday to speak out against three bills that would require smaller towns to consolidate school functions, saying that would cause property values to plummet and negatively impact the quality of education towns can provide. The bills in question would tackle school regionalization as a way for the state to reduce education costs in the face of multibillion dollar budget deficits.

This issue of *The College Voice* includes after-the-fact SGA and Honor Council election coverage. In the future, the News section will be covering SGA, Honor Council, and elections more rigorously than ever before.

SGA should be an important deliberative legislative body for the students of Connecticut College. Honor Council should be the place where students receive a fair hearing with respect to any alleged violations of College policy.

SGA finds regular success in using financial resources to make positive changes on campus. SGA’s finance committee dishes out over \$100,000 to student organizations each year; SGA sustainability chairs have often brought dozens of funding-based resolutions to the assembly floor. But representatives might feel as though much of the student body doesn’t care about what goes on in SGA. They are likely right. The latest email I received from my SGA representative featured six different font colors, two different font sizes, and asked if I wanted to allocate “6,935” -- no dollar sign attached -- to fund a portable water station. The email said “REAL” wants to look into putting small printers and water fountains in dorms.

Every single year, someone on SGA thinks the biggest change they can make at this school is giving their dorm a water fountain. I like water. It keeps us alive. But we already have a lot of water. You know what students don’t have? Any real legislative influence over actual school policy.

If “shared governance” is going to mean more than funding projects, student leaders need to stand up and assert an actual right of not just “shared governance,” but real governance.

*The College Voice* also needs to do better. This year, we have tried to improve our News coverage of the College. But we haven’t covered SGA as much as we should have. Going forward, here’s what we plan to do and here’s what we need from SGA:

*The College Voice* will cover SGA elections before,

during, and after they happen. In the past, *The College Voice* has struggled to regularly cover elections and has failed to report basic election results. For some unknown reason, SGA itself has rarely reported complete election results, instead only announcing who won an election. *The College Voice* will be publishing election results, including vote tallies for every candidate. For this, we will need the assistance of SGA to accurately report election results. Twice this year, the SGA Chief of Communications has sent *The College Voice* blurry screenshots of election results. It is unclear how it is technologically possible to take a blurry screenshot.

*The College Voice* will cover systemic trends of SGA elections. We hope to find out why executive board positions are often uncontested. We also hope to find out why voter turnout is almost always so incredibly low that SGA extends voting periods to meet a 20% turnout threshold. Recently, the winner of school-wide election for Chair of Equity and Inclusion received only 125 votes.

The Assembly must maintain an easily-accessible record of anything that happens during SGA meetings. Formal agendas, minutes, resolutions, and more should be accessible to anyone at the College. SGA should also consider recording meetings to eliminate the week-long waiting period before SGA minutes become official record.

SGA must also reform the Chief of Communications position to ensure professionalism and create a more formal line of communication between SGA and *The College Voice*. This year, *The College Voice* has struggled to communicate with the Chief of Communications. Between blurry screen shots of election results and multiple instances of questions going unanswered, SGA’s communications officer

# Sports Spotlight

By PRICE DAY

## Men’s Results

Swimming finishes 7th at NESCAC Championship

Squash wins 6-3 vs. Hobart

Lacrosse loses 7-8 vs. Bowdoin

## Women’s Results

Ice Hockey loses 2-3 to Middlebury

Swimming finishes 5th at NESCAC Championship

Squash wins vs. Boston College 8-1, Colby 6-3, William Smith 6-3

Lacrosse loses 7-12 vs. Bowdoin

## Upcoming Events

March 5th, Women’s Lacrosse vs. Coast Guard, Men’s vs. New England College

March 8th, Men’s & Women’s Track & Field @ NCAA Championship, Sailing @ Navy Spring Regatta

March 9th, Men’s & Women’s Tennis vs. Bates, Lacrosse @ Middlebury

# On SGA Elections

An Editorial from News Editor Alex Klavens

has not been formally open with us. Many members of the assembly have been incredibly open at times, including the vast majority of the executive board. However, this happens informally, from peer to peer, not from newspaper to student government.

The student body’s lack of engagement in SGA activities must be frustrating to SGA representatives, particularly for those student government leaders who have put in hard and honest work over their many years on the Assembly. Students do care what happens at this school, either at the level of policy or at the level of what impacts students’ everyday lives. But SGA needs to go beyond water fountains, communicate better, and expand the definition of student government at Conn.

There are some on campus whose lack of respect for SGA derives from a belief that SGA can’t do anything, that “shared governance” is an illusion, not a reality. Those people might say that if SGA tried to pass legislation that altered Student Code of Conduct and Honor Code policies, administrators simply wouldn’t listen. This concern is completely valid. It is certainly possible Dean Cardwell would enter into a despotic rage if SGA were to pass a resolution that tried to change any features of the Student Handbook or disciplinary policies.

The College will eventually have to give respect to a Student Government that demands it. If the College abides, it will make shared governance for the student body legitimate. If it doesn’t, it will be explicitly defining “shared governance” and “honor code” to be marketing bullet-points that help convince Boston-area high schoolers that if they come to Conn, they can leave their laptop charger on a library table and they can advocate for their very own water fountain.

Whatever the result, expect *The College Voice* to cover all of this. If we don’t meet those expectations, hold us accountable. Better yet, come report for us.

# Peters, Xanders and Segal Win Competitive SGA, Honor Council Special Elections

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

from the College. For students who want to see change on campus, the election process plays a key role in working to fix issues regarding the Failure to Act clause, diversity and affinity groups on campus and REAL Staff policies.

Asa Peters '19 successfully ran for Chair of Equity and Inclusion because he felt that as a senior he wanted to finally become more involved in SGA. The Chair of Equity and Inclusion aligned well with his own interests and values, so he felt that it was the right opportunity to become a more active presence on campus. His campaign platform was informed by his own experiences. Peters said that earlier in his college experience, he didn't feel too great around here, in terms of my identity." However, he started to become comfortable exploring his own identity and how it fit into Conn through classes, lectures and talking with friends. As Chair of Equity and Inclusion, Peters hopes to use his new position to continue "making environments on campus affirm people's identities and make everyone feel like they can really thrive here." His framework for working as the Chair is

influenced by ideas that Paolo Sanchez '18 articulated as the Chair last year--creating a large SGA committee of affinity groups, offices and centers "where people who may be facing similar issues on campus might collaborate." Peters also created a

nizations. Peters won 30.8% of the vote. After Sean Soucy withdrew from Conn, Chair of Residential Affairs became vacant. Therefore, many candidates used their campaigns to address the controversy surrounding REAL staff policies like

the Failure to Act clause and similar issues regarding the relationship between students and administration. However, Cam Segal '20, who won 37.6% of the vote, did not pull from the controversy. Instead, he campaigned as a Morrison Housefellow who wants to be a liaison between residents and housing staff. His campaign also focused on promising larger-scale events that built off of initiatives he had previously spearheaded as a Housefellow, including bringing therapy dogs to campus, holding music nights and bringing in a comic hypnotist. As Chair of Residential Affairs, Segal will lead two SGA

committees, one more broadly focused on residential life and another that focuses on REAL Staff policies. Some residential life ideas include having water fountains and printers in residence halls and an addi-

## Chair of Residential Affairs

Candidate	Votes (558)	Percent
Cam Segal	210	37.63%
Tyler Clark	166	29.74%
Christian Vazquez	124	22.22%
Chloe Hunwick	58	10.39%

Results of the Special Election for Chair of Residential Affairs  
Image Courtesy of Grace Amato

## Honor Council Representative (2020)

Candidate	Votes (158)	Percent
Conor Xanders	45	28.48%
Margaret Davey	34	21.51%
Amiansu Khanal	26	16.45%
Hannah Rogers	20	12.65%
Elena Erdekian	17	10.75%
Chloe Hunwick	16	10.12%

committee trying to "assure consistency in how student employment operates across campus." Additionally, he feels that it is our duty as students to celebrate diversity and ensure equity through being active in the structures in place at the school including centers, offices and student orga-



# Police Arrest Sophomore For Voyeurism, Alleging He Photographed Dozens Of Women At Conn And On NYC Subways

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

davit that expanded the scope of “shower incidents” from five that were reported during the 2018-2019 academic year to a set of 213 different shower stall videos that included approximately 30 women in eight different dormitories at Connecticut College. Detectives discovered that in hundreds of “shower stall videos,” Alberti allegedly recorded women either “preparing to enter the shower, in the running shower, or using the stall area to towel off just after their shower.”

Detectives also found 72 “up-skirt videos” on Alberti’s electronic devices in which he allegedly recorded women from beneath their skirts on New York City subways. Alberti told police he “needed to know what was under their skirt.” The videos allegedly show women’s “genitals, pubic area, or buttock or the undergarments that clothe the genitals, pubic area, or buttock of a woman.”

Police claimed Alberti “felt it was a compulsion and could not stop.” Alberti admitted that early on, he would walk into dorm bathrooms hoping to run across a woman showering. Police say Alberti eventually took to sitting in campus bathrooms “for extensive periods of time, sometimes up to three hours, waiting for a woman to use the shower so he could record them.”

Alberti allegedly used two iPhones, a cell phone “filevault,” and a computer to store 213 “shower stall” videos of approximately 30 different women. In one case, Alberti allegedly maintained a special folder on his computer for videos of one female student who he had a crush on and had recorded on two separate occasions. Videos were labeled by date, such as “11-30-18(x).mp4.” One of those instances involved seven 1-10 second videos of that woman; another slow-motion video lasted for over two minutes.

According to New London Chief of Police Peter Reichard, police ultimately identified Alberti as one of two possible suspects based on Camel Card dorm access logs provided to police by the College. Police say Alberti, along with one female student, were the only students who appeared to have accessed Plant and Morrison houses within 12 hours before each reported incident.

Between Oct. 17, 2018 and Jan. 23, 2019, four female students reported five incidents in which they believed they had been photographed without their consent while in shower areas. In the first case, a student reported observing a large white hand holding an iPhone above the shower curtain while showering in Plant house, according to the affidavit. The victim allegedly screamed, and then, in a towel, chased after the suspect while he ran away. Though the victim never saw the suspect, they described to police hearing the sound of sneakers.

The next incident, after 7:30 PM on the night of Friday, Oct. 26, 2018, occurred in Morrison house, a freshman dorm. The victim described noticing someone in a toilet stall adjacent to the shower pointing an iPhone at her below the stall divider. That victim described to police noticing “maroon Nike skate sneakers, possibly with a white stripe.”

Another victim, whom Alberti allegedly recorded at least twice, described in an email to campus safety director Mary Savage and Title IX coordinator Ebony Manning noticing a black iPhone during a Thursday, Nov. 30, 2018 incident, and a similar black iPhone “with possible red detailing around the camera area of the phone” after a January 23, 2019 incident.

Detectives made contact with Alberti on Thursday, Feb. 7 by visiting his room, Plant 311. Police say Alberti agreed to talk with the detectives about the voyeurism, but initially stated “he had no idea who had been recording the women.” Detective Keith Crandall says he noticed a red iPhone XR with a black case on his bedside dresser, along with “a lot of red things in [Alberti’s] room.” Alberti reportedly described red as his favorite color. Crandall asked Alberti about red shoes, and Alberti showed Crandall maroon Nike sneakers that had a white stripe.

Alberti reportedly allowed Crandall to look at the contents of the red iPhone. After Crandall looked through some photographs, he opened a “Recently Deleted” folder. In that folder, Crandall says he saw a video of “a woman using the toilet in what appeared to be a dormitory bathroom.” When Crandall asked him about the video, Alberti “began to tremble and his voice started to crack.”

According to the affidavit, Alberti denied involvement at first, but soon after admitted to using his phone to record women in dorm showers.

The five reported voyeurism incidents stretch from October to January, but it is

unclear how far back Alberti’s recordings go. Though police say they have made contact with at least one victim who was unaware that Alberti had recorded her, it is unclear whether police have identified all 30 women they say Alberti recorded at the College.

Alberti has posted a \$150,000 bond and is scheduled to appear in New London Superior Court on March 15, 2019. A first-time offense for voyeurism could result in a fine and up to 5 years in prison. He is also “separated from campus,” according to College spokeswoman Tiffany Thiele. Alberti is officially “On Leave,” per the College’s student directory. Thiele says Alberti’s status at the College will be determined through the College’s student conduct process, which involves a Title IX investigation. •



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<sup>1</sup> Program offered on campus, online and hybrid <sup>2</sup> Program offered online only

<sup>3</sup> Program offered on campus or online

# Peters, Xanders and Segal Win Competitive SGA, Honor Council Special Elections

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

## Chair of Equity and Inclusion

Candidate	Votes (405)	Percent
Asa Peters	125	30.86%
Shyanne Temple	78	19.25%
Shonan Hendre	64	15.80%
Marianna Palladino	47	11.60%
Nouhalia Oudija	46	11.35%
Therese Etoka	45	11.11%

tional budget for snacks in dorms.

A Junior Class Honor Council Representative seat also became open at the beginning of this semester. Conor Xanders '20, who had been on Honor Council as a sophomore, ran as an advocate for students and won 28.48% of the vote. His campaign promoted more transparency between Honor Council and the student body--balance that can be hard to strike while maintaining individual privacy. Xanders, however, feels students carry misconceptions about how the Council works. On Honor Council, Xanders wants to serve as a resource to students as "someone they know has a vibrant social life, they know has made mistakes in the past, and they know will continue to do so." He also wants to be a part of changing the parts of Honor Council and the Honor Code that students are unhappy about, including the Failure to Act clause. Xanders articulates that Honor Council requires fundamental restructuring. On Honor Council, Xanders sometimes feels like he cannot take the context of students' actions into account because he is "trained to go by precedent [...] not to deviate from sanctioning." More specifically, he feels that the Failure to Act clause is too broad and therefore sanctioning based on the clause is mostly an "interpretive science," which is not always fair. The clause does not stipulate a uniform degree of sanctioning but instead dictates that sanctioning vary case by case. Not only that, but Xanders points out that "there is not a single student on this campus who has not violated the Failure to Act clause at some point." The Failure to Act clause ultimately "exists as a policy to create fear," Xanders says. Xanders hopes to work as an advocate for students by spreading information about the Honor Council and its processes since a lot of it tends to be clouded in mystery.

As students continue to receive emails from SGA to run for positions, attend speech night, and vote on Connquest, they need to keep in mind that SGA will continue to work towards changing and creating policies that will affect the student body for better or for worse. •

Do you like to write?

Are you interested in world news or learning more about the New London Community?

Join *The College Voice* at our bi-weekly writers meetings held on Sundays at 8pm in the Alice Johnson Room in Cro

Email [eic@thecollegevoice.org](mailto:eic@thecollegevoice.org) for more information



## Social Media Misleads Study Abroad Experience

SHARON VAN METER  
CONTRIBUTOR

Having returned from my semester abroad in Belfast, Northern Ireland two months ago, I cannot help but notice the flood of pictures and videos on my Snapchat, Facebook, and Instagram accounts from this semester's group of students studying abroad. As my friends post images of the picturesque views of the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland or a wine and pizza night in Rome, I remember how I felt when I decided to study abroad: a yearning to travel all corners of the world.

However, my renewed desire to explore is accompanied by a wisdom accrued from studying and traveling around Europe the prior semester, especially concerning social media usage. Studying abroad appears like an idyllic experience in most social media posts. Jenni Wilson '20, who studied abroad in Florence, Italy, during the fall 2018 semester, views social media as a platform that "helps perpetuate this portrayal of study abroad as this incredible, idealized experience."

This idealistic representation of study abroad on social media not only gives those at home a false impression of a complete study abroad experience, but also applies pressure on others studying abroad. During my time in Belfast, I worried that my experience was not as fulfilling as others' experiences because I was not traveling nearly as much as some of my friends were. Social media heightened my tendency to compare my study abroad experience with others and to equate the value of my time abroad to how many places I had been to.

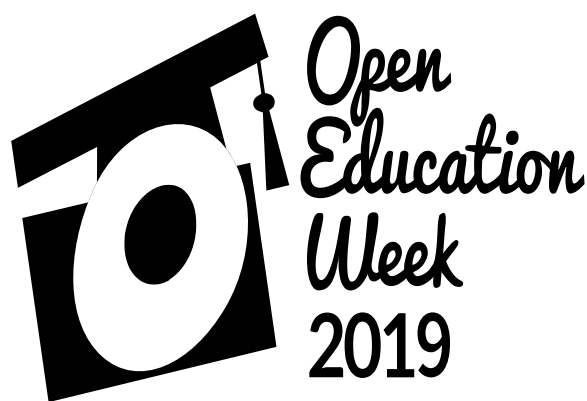
In addition to serving as a platform to idealize studying abroad, social media also has the power to remove one entirely from his or her experiences. Several times when I was traveling, I was focused less on enjoying the present moment than on capturing the perfect

picture for my Instagram account. In addition, checking social media can lead to increased fears of missing out on whatever is occurring back home. Saadya Chevan '19, the managing editor of *The College Voice* who studied abroad in Vienna, Austria during the spring 2018 semester, says that his relationship between social media and study abroad was "tricky" as his feed was "very American-centric."

Despite the drawbacks of using social media while studying abroad, such outlets have the potential for positive use. Shirley Parson, Director of Study Away, believes that social media can be a great means of communication in case of an emergency. On a more day-to-day basis, Parson sees promise in social media as means of giving friends and family insight into the study abroad experience. Different social media platforms give different impressions of study abroad. While some people (like myself) construct Facebook albums with over nine hundred pictures in them, some Conn students like David Johnston '19, use Instagram to showcase their experiences. Johnston, who studied abroad in Vienna, Austria in Spring 2018, made an Instagram account entirely devoted to travel to share his adventures.

Balancing study abroad and social media can be difficult, but it is not impossible to maintain healthy social media habits while traveling. To avoid the problems social media poses to the study abroad experience, Conn administrators should hold an information session on the topic, complete with advice on how best to use social media alongside tips on how to stay in the moment. We must remember that while study abroad gives many students transformative experiences, social media is deceptive. Learning to assimilate and adapt to a new culture is challenging. Despite the pictures you see online, not everyone experiences study abroad as idyllic at every moment of their travels. •

## Wouldn't it be great if you didn't have to buy textbooks?



What would you do with the money?

Please send us your answers!

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## Party Pupils Lament Mediocre Concert Attendance at Conn on Twitter

PHILIP KUHEL  
STAFF WRITER

At 10pm on Friday February 1st, the dance/electronic group duo Party Pupils performed in the 1962 room in Crozier-Williams. Party Pupils was a major act for the College to get. MAX, a member of the group, is becoming a name in the music industry. He was featured in two tracks from Hoodie Allen's debut album, *People Keep Talking*. In 2015, he also performed with Fall Out Boy, Wiz Khalifa, and Hoodie Allen on the Boys of Summer Tour. But despite his name recognition, MAX and Party Pupil could not attract a large crowd. For quite a while now, Conn students have become notorious for skipping events organized by the College. Various organizers--such as the Student Activities Council (SAC) and Associate Director of Student Engagement Jeanette Williams, criticized the choices students make when deciding between school-run events and pretty much anything else. However, I would argue that low attendance at school sponsored events isn't necessarily a "Conn problem." Rather, the fact is that at the end of the day, college students are never going to be interested in weekly/bi-weekly events held by this school or any school for that matter. The College continues to suppress off-campus parties and events. It tries to compensate for party break-ups by holding events that are uninteresting to the student body and ultimately force students to venture off to bars in New London, of all places, to have a good time. The College, like thousands of other colleges, should allocate money and resources for parties to be *held* responsibly off-campus at the Winches and Ridges rather than the potential dangers of partying and drinking in public places like the bars in New London.

The Party Pupils concert was met with a mediocre attendance of between 30-50 people at most at a given time. Could this low attendance be tied to the fact that students don't like partying in the same spaces that are used to meet teachers on Parent's Weekend? Could it be the fact that the "party" space seems too institutional, located just a floor below where many academic dance classes are held? Or that the 1962 room resembles

a space to hold dances in middle school? Clearly, whatever the reason, the space seriously hinders students from showing up. On a day of the week (Friday) where things are rarely happening on campus, you would think that these events would maybe have a greater success, but the lack of imagination concerning the parties continues to drive students away.

Even though the events themselves are approved by the College, SAC is a *student*-run organization that works "to enhance and diversify the social experience for students at Connecticut College." So, if a student-run organization is playing a role in organizing events for students by students, it's hard to believe why we as a school don't find interest in them. Except, at the end of the day these events are held by the College. Any College sponsored event will appear less exciting and "cool" to students than an off-campus party.

Party Pupils, after the lackluster attendance, went to Twitter to ask their following about their, "worst/most embarrassing/least attended gig of your career." They proceeded to say, "we might do the same after tonight's college gig. Lol." So yes, this musical group called the school out for not showing up to their performance but at the end of day, skipping out likely wasn't much a loss. While up-and-coming, the group isn't yet big enough for anyone to really care, and our College isn't big nor wealthy enough to book a more well-established group. Party Pupils did end up deleting the tweet, but college kids likely aren't going to go see a new group that lacks widespread name recognition, especially if the school organizes it. The school isn't going to pay to get a relevant artist and, as a result, no one is going to show up, especially given the fact that the school itself is under 2,000 students.

At the end of the day I believe if the College wants to attract a larger audience, it must tap into something that will actually bring students to want to come to their various events. The imagination needs to be constantly elevated in order to compete with events held by students that will likely be more attractive. If not, then the College needs to be prepared to understand why their events will be seen as second-tier compared to what is happening on campus that is organized by students. •

## The Origins of Ghosting

AMANDA SANDERS  
STAFF WRITER

Ghosting: the act of slowly cutting someone out of your life romantically by ending all contact and ignoring your former partner's attempts to communicate.

Since dating apps have become popular, it has become increasingly easy to disappear from someone else's life. You can unmatch someone in a matter of seconds and it's like you were never there. All messages, gifs, and images disappear in a flash; this leaves the other person alone, confused, and with no way to ask you why you disappeared.

Ghosting originated in 2011 and became more widely known around 2015 when news outlets reported that actress Charlize Theron broke up with Sean Penn by ghosting him. She ended their engagement by ignoring all texts and calls he made until he simply stopped calling. This isn't just a thing that happens to celebrities though. Ghosting has become a common phenomenon. A statistic released by dating site Plenty of Fish in 2016 claims that nearly 78% of single millennials (between ages of 18-33 at that time) had been ghosted at least once.

If everyone knows the pain of being ghosted, why do people still do it? Maybe because these "ghosts" are primarily focused on avoiding the awk-

ward moment where one person has to break it off with the other. There's no chance of seeing someone cry, or chickening out when all you have to do is unmatch. The lack of social connections developed by people who meet online also means there are less social consequences of dropping out of someone's life.

For those who are ghosted, the lack of closure can be infuriating. People end up feeling used and disrespected. Rejection can activate the same pathways in the brain as physical pain can, so ghosting can feel like a punch to the stomach. The difference between a punch to the stomach though and being ghosted is that there's no set protocol on how to react after it happens to you. We need social cues to tell us how to react to what has happened, and the silent treatment leaves us with nothing to react to. Ghosting is the ultimate use of the silent treatment, a tactic that has often been viewed by mental health professionals as a form of emotional cruelty. It leaves you unable to emotionally process the event that has just occurred.

Unfortunately, the more you get ghosted, the more desensitized you become and the more likely it is you'll end up ghosting someone else. Ghosting is a passive aggressive move and leaves you scarred and hurt on both sides. So why bother? •

## Greer: the Lesser Known Library on Campus

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

the music collection and excellent services of the Greer Music Library could be best utilized by the broader campus community.” This task force, comprised of the Dean of Faculty, the music librarian, and faculty from the music department, “has prepared a summary of their findings, which we are reviewing. According to Hisle, no decisions have been made.” Jozette Moses ‘21, a former student employee at Greer during Fall of 2018, corroborated this statement. She observed that during some of her shifts, Carolyn Johnson--the head librarian at Greer--met with Information Services staff and faculty to discuss “the assessment of Greer.”

My interactions with Greer have been short, but they are always helpful. In the spring semester of my freshman year, I enrolled in free piano lessons which are available to all Conn students. New to complex concertos and music theory terms that went beyond my simple piano lessons in high school, Greer was a safe haven where I found free blank music staff paper that fit my needs. Flash forward a semester, and I was back again in this intimate space picking out books to read for my final on Bob Dylan.

My previous interactions showcase Greer’s vast resources. Almost like a miniature version of Shain Library, Greer offers study spaces and collaboration rooms for students, desktop computers, and various technology accessories including disk drives, headphones, extension cords, VHS/VCR tapes, and record players--not to mention the hundreds of musical scores, magazines, CDs, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and biographies. Patrice Newman, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Music at Conn, constantly uses Greer to find the right music for her students. In fact, she stated in an email that she has “a towering stack of music from Greer in the piano studio because there is so much music in the collection to be curious about and to investigate!” Recently, Moses and Johnson spent time going through Greer’s materials. Moses explained that materials relevant to Greer’s collection are being categorized in Shain, as opposed to being categorized in Greer as done in previous years. Moses speculates that these resources, which would normally be kept in Greer, would instead then be shelved in Shain.

While changes to Greer are still under consideration, it would be devastating to lose this space. Newman describes it as “a treasure trove (which) vitalizes the depth of music investigation and music-making at Conn.” It is important that Greer remain in Cummings as this location “maintains an integrated vitality that was

visionary when Cummings Arts Center was conceived, designed and built and remains visionary in the dynamic arts world at Conn today,” according to Newman. Separating Greer and its collection from Cummings would diminish this harmony. More logistically speaking, where would Greer’s collection go? Shain is already stocked with a vast collection of its own, leaving only room in the basement for music related items and resources. This option would not be viable as the basement of Shain is devoted to the IT desk and student study spaces. Hisle stated in an email that “a number of options are under consideration, including combining some operations with Shain Library.”

However, Hisle explains that the Task Force is in the beginning phase of this assessment and that the goal of the Task Force “is to ensure that students, faculty and staff continue to have access to a robust music collection and the suite of services that have long distinguished the Greer Music Library.”

Johnson is currently the only full time employee at Greer as the assistant to the librarian position has been unfilled since the retirement of the previous assistant on June 30, 2018. Moses finds this situation bizarre, as do I, because if this position were filled it would signify “an ongoing relationship between Greer and the school.” Additionally, there seems to be subtle budget cuts to Greer. Johnson can only take work study students and when working on her own in contrast with Shain, which hires some



*Images courtesy of Elizabeth Berry*

non-work study students. Most students have hours in the evening and on weekends, so Johnson often did not have another student at the desk area even if the extra help would have increased her productivity. This statement speaks to Johnson’s character as she devotes considerable time to Greer. Whether this is a result of the hiring freeze Conn instituted last spring, one can only feel saddened at the thought that Johnson may one day be removed from her role as librarian.

Unfortunately, students do not utilize Greer’s resources enough--including myself. Moses stated that Johnson would have student employ-

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## Michael Cohen: Can We Trust Him This Time?



LEELAH KLAUBER  
LAYOUT COORDINATOR

*Michael Cohen Testifying to Congress  
Images courtesy of Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images*

“He has both good and bad, as do we all,” said Michael Cohen of Donald Trump, his former client, 11 minutes into his opening statement to Congress.

After pleading guilty to eight counts of financial crimes in federal court on August 21, 2018, Michael Cohen was sentenced to three years in federal prison and ordered to pay a \$500,000 fine. In Cohen’s recent testimony to Congress on Feb. 7, CNN captured him saying, “...to launch a campaign on hate and intolerance and actively win, I regret the day I said yes to Mr. Trump.” So, is it only now that Cohen is going to jail that he has realized his wrongdoings? Further into his opening statement, Cohen says that he is ashamed of covering up for Trump over the years. But what’s different now since the last time Cohen was in front of a tribunal for Trump’s wrongdoings?

Cohen states, “Trump knew of and directed the Trump-Moscow negotiations throughout the campaign, and lied about it,” and that Trump lied about it because he apparently never expected to win. This seems outlandish; Cohen simply shifts the blame off of himself and entirely on Trump. “There were at least a half a dozen times between the Iowa caucus in January of 2016 and the end of June where he would ask me ‘how’s it going in Russia?,” Cohen claimed. Yet, Cohen has no real evidence of collusion between Trump and Russia, just memories of Trump asking him about Russia frequently. Even if Trump had been colluding with the Russian government, the reason why Cohen is going to federal prison is for his previous lies under oath; based on his track record, the public has no reason to believe what Cohen is he’s saying about Trump, and why should we believe him?

Cohen says he has “his suspicions” about Trump violating election laws, and he implies that instinct should be enough proof for the public to share his position. After his elaborate speech on why his kids and friends think he’s trustworthy, Cohen says, “Yet last fall, I plead guilty in federal court to felonies for the benefit of, at the direction of, and in coordination with individual number one.” He offered the room a declaration of his guilt, but does not say why he lied for Trump in the first place. If his conscience was telling him that what he was doing was wrong, and his brain knew that it was illegal, why was Trump so incredibly “mesmerizing” that Cohen had to act in accordance with the illegalities Trump carried out?

Cohen states, “Mr. Trump is an enigma, he is complicated, as am I.” What is the purpose of this sentence? Should we, the American people, now be understanding and sympathetic to both Trump and Cohen for all the lies they have told and illegal activities they have overseen? Cohen’s statement, or, really, apology, seemed forced and just as untruthful as the last time he sat before a jury. •

# Greer: the Lesser Known Library on Campus

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

ees track the number of students entering Greer every half hour during their shifts; “the most Moses ever printed was four people other than [herself].” Maria MacNeill ‘21, who has taken music theory classes and is a member of the Connecticut College Orchestra, explains that “most people probably don’t know about [Greer’s collection of resources],” however, “the staff there would be happy to explain all the resources available to anyone who asked.” Unlike Shain which has three floors and is constantly swarming with students, Greer offers a smaller space with librarians who are readily available to help you. Abigail Schmitt ‘21, a flute player in multiple Music Department ensembles, observed that Greer has been closing earlier than normal: she was studying there earlier this week and a student employee informed her that the library would be closing earlier that day.

Greer is more than a library; it is a place for music students to gather between rehearsals and study when more popular spaces on campus such as Shain or the coffee shops become too rambunctious. Similar to MacNeill, Schmitt uses Greer as a quiet study space for both her music and other studies. Schmitt relies on Greer “to check out and view scores and CDs before actually purchasing the music.” In between orchestra rehearsals, Schmitt and her friends will go to Greer to study, having no other location nearby that doesn’t require walking a long distance in the dark and cold. Cummings does not have another study space on the same level as Greer, only a few small tables and a couch in the lobby area. On a busy day, studying in Greer is the best option for Schmitt: “by the time I would pack up my instrument from one rehearsal and walk to Shain and settle down, I wouldn’t have much time to actually complete any assignments. Without Greer, South Campus only has The Walk-In, Coffee Closet and common rooms for true study spaces.” Fiona Ocain ‘19, another flute student and student employee at Greer stated in an email that “Greer is an incredibly valuable and unique resource.” She declined to comment on the exact plans for the future of Greer. Schmitt believes “if the space were to be removed, it would be a tragedy to the music department and all the students who utilize the space.”

Greer is considered the ‘Music Library’ on campus, but Schmitt

explains that this space can be used by non-music students. She goes on to explain the benefits of students utilizing this space more often: “I often hear the complaints that Shain is way too busy, especially the collaboration rooms, which is why students should go to Greer. The rooms in the back act as bigger collaboration rooms with a printer. The staff is super welcoming and nice, and during finals they often leave out snacks.” Schmitt wants more students to use the space but also realizes that if Greer were to become as busy as Shain, it wouldn’t be the same library. All the same, she feels offering snacks or drinks could attract students to use Greer as there aren’t a lot of options available to students in this area on campus. MacNeill appreciates Greer’s location because it is near where

music students practice and is “a common study space on the south side of campus, which is really convenient for students living near there or students who have classes there.” Hisle stated that “It is precisely because the quality of [Greer’s] services and resources are so exceptional that we want to broaden access for everyone—and build on its success.”

For the students who use Greer on a daily basis, it is a hallmark of their education at Conn. MacNeill is grateful to have Greer, she remembers “being surprised and excited just by the concept of a music library when [she] first came to Conn.” It has been a recent trend for the College to select music related spaces, such

as Greer and the Barn, as spaces to reduce funding. Moses, although not a music student,

stated that “there are a lot of cool things in Greer that you are not going to get anywhere else and people donate amazing things all the time. The space doesn’t get the attention that it deserves.” One has to wonder why exactly this is, who is at fault, and more importantly how we can save Greer. Moses wonders whether Greer is highlighted on campus tours of the College and during orientation; perhaps making Greer more known around campus would increase its use. Or, the problem may run deeper than ignorance of one student building, but rather ignorance of what it means to be a liberal arts college: incorporating all disciplines into a well-rounded education.

After all, the plaque outside the Toor Cummings gallery, which explains the intent of Cummings Art Center, states the following: “to house art and music studios, a darkroom, galleries, a music library...” •



Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth Berry



# The Medium is the Message – Literally – in Werner Pfeiffer’s Typography and Artist’s Books

SOPHIA ANGELE-KUEHN  
ARTS EDITOR

In the German novella *The Guest* by Yoko Tawada, the protagonist walks through a flea market and picks up a book whose title is written in a circle instead of left to right. She asks the hawker what language it’s written in, and he shrugs, grinning, saying that it’s not a book, but a mirror: “To our eyes, you look exactly like this writing.”

This opening scene of the Kafkaesque story reflects on the experience of feeling like the “Other” in a new country and mastering a foreign language, whose peculiar words and letters the protagonist experiments with on a typewriter.

The typography, prints, and artist books produced by German-American artist Werner Pfeiffer also hold a mysterious, unreadable yet important message, as read in the circular-shaped *Liber Mobile* (1967). Four lithograph prints of the entire portfolio *Liber Mobile* (“Liber” means “book” in Latin and is the Roman god of wine and free speech) are displayed at the Linda Lear Center in Shain Library. They feature cut-outs that allow layering over other prints, which can then be rotated or moved underneath according to the desire of the user.

“They’re characteristic of [Pfeiffer’s] work – they’re really designed for you to play with ... Each one is created with an eye towards the whole,” commented Ben Panciera, director of Special Collections and Archives.

Indeed, each print is reminiscent of the shape of an eye rolling around a pupil center, each uniquely coded and seemingly untranslatable once the “reader” looks closer and their eyes become adjusted to its strange language. In this case, letter form is the form of art. Colored letters, numbers and alphabet-based symbols come together and create larger shapes, made possible thanks to careful manipulation using letterpress printing. It makes one realize that the letters that one sees and interprets on this very page are mere lines and circles representing ideas, feelings, and physical objects, with a little serif flair at the ends.

According to the official summary accompanying the typographic prints, *Liber Mobile* is inspired by the work of philosopher Marshall McLuhan.

“When I first came across Marshall McLuhan’s writings he was a trail blazer and visionary. He foresaw the change of our cultural matrix away from an alphabet culture to an image based expression. My *Liber Mobile* is a direct response to his thinking and is an ode to the end of an era,” commented Pfeiffer for The College Voice.

McLuhan is probably best known for his phrase “the medium is the message” in his 1964 book *Understanding Media*, arguing that the medium of a message and its characteristics is far more important than the message itself, by even influencing how the message is perceived. With *Liber Mobile*, the media is literally the message (pun intended) with language acting as the artist’s paintbrush. Using a similar media but perhaps a different message, a dozen hand-stamped prints from Pfeiffer’s *Alphabeticum* (2006) portfolio in Linda Lear manipulate the shapes of letters and numbers as what they are – shapes – to create intriguing geometric designs.

Not too long after emigrating from Southern Germany in 1961, Pfeiffer became Professor of Art as well as director of Pratt Adlib Press at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. On his motives for the transition, he commented, “I was quite curious about the US. At the time it was a country full of hope and promises. After almost 60 years I naturally feel at home here.” He retired from teaching in 2002 to focus on being an artist and proprietor of Pear Whistle Press in Red Hook, New York. His books, collages, drawings, prints, paintings and sculptures have since then been shown both internationally and at the neighboring campuses of Vassar, MIT, Princeton, and Cornell, to great acclaim.

Several examples of Pfeiffer’s artist books and sculptures were featured in Cummings’ exhibit “Loose Leafs and Bindings: Book Arts and Prints” from Jan. 22nd until Feb. 28th. Curated by Professors of Art Andrea Wollensak and Timothy McDowell, the purpose of the exhibit was to highlight the interactive relationship between text and image and the importance of physical print in today’s Twitter and CNN-dominated society. This message was enforced by the presence of a massive Gutenberg press dominating the center of the sky-lit room, paying homage to the genesis of print technology, mass media, and con-

sequently, western democracy. The walls were covered with words and books instead of paintings.

“Artists’ books are books that have been created by artists that explore and experiment and test the definition of what ‘book’ is... and a lot of them are not books at all,” explained Wollensak, guiding me past the display cases. “We’re challenging what a book is, working with very traditional methods, but also new processes. The laser-cut projects are digital fabrication, and we use the computer to compose the type ... Really it’s about not using the internet, and that they’re very physical. Once the material is put in its form, that’s it, it’s not something that can be distributed digitally. I think there’s a resurgence in this direction, coming back to the importance of the object, and the politics of that kind of information control.”

Letterpress printing was invented by Johannes Gutenberg ca. 1450 in Germany, a thousand years after it had first been explored and used in East Asia. However, the importance of moveable type and visible language took hold in the western world, helping establish new religions, revolutions, and artistic and intellectual movements.

“Quite often books are exploited for expedience, to impose, to misguide and to manipulate. On the other hand the power of a book to spread free and unbridled thought renders it equally vulnerable,” writes Pfeiffer on Cornell University’s online exhibition of his work. Pfeiffer grew up with book censorship and public book burnings in post-WWII Germany, and strives instead to create and cherish books rather than dismantle them: “The creation of a handmade book involves a multitude of dimensions which are not answered by typing a code into a computer. The bookshelf of the virtual world does not offer the thrill of holding a finely crafted piece of work to closely examine it, feel it or smell it. Or even blow the dust off it.”

Other displays in “Loose Leafs and Bindings” also pulled attention back to tactile artworks and the tools used to shape them. Featured were the works of the two Weissman Visiting Artists: blown-up pages from Italian graphic novelist Daniele Marotta and the research results of Emily Larned’s Impractical Labor in Service of the Speculative Arts (ILSSA) project on

artists’ “essential tools for living.” Claiming a separate room were the wildly unique creations of students from Wollensak’s Artist Books class taught this past fall. Wollensak is also the Director of the Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology.

We approached a display case with Pfeiffer’s *Abracadabra* (2007), a collection of individual pages and 3D paper structures that can be folded and flipped, is an homage to the work of Dutch typographer H. N. Werkman who was shot by the Gestapo in the final days of WWII.

“This is *Abracadabra*, which is just a magical piece. And ideally you want people to handle it ... it keeps changing,” gushed Wollensak. We both looked down at the pieces of paper that had been transformed into a still circus of letters.

In comparison, the accordion-style *Zig zag* (2010) is a kinetic structure built solely from folding paper and printed on a Vandercook press. It’s “a hands-on piece” that’s “best experienced by removing the centerpiece from the constraints of the box and by letting the construction inspire your interaction with the work”, according to the directions in the box. This touching and playful manipulating of the artwork, essential in reading books, is also essential in exploring Pfeiffer’s work.

On the last page of Yoko Tawada’s story *The Guest*, the protagonist separates the letter Z from the secluded German words on her typewriter: “... *Blit z schlag / Net z haut / Z erplat z en*.” Inspired and fascinated by writing this sharp-sounding letter over and over again, she attempts to discover its personal meaning for her.

“It is difficult to say what specially it is that inspires you. Something enters your field of vision, your subconscious, your emotions and keeps resurfacing,” replied Pfeiffer to my email. “If something comes back repeatedly and with enough clarity it is necessary to give it a try and develop an answer to it ... At the moment I am fascinated by numbers, their history and their mystique. This curiosity will probably end up in a series of artist books.”

And as for his latest read? “*Thank You for Being Late* by Thomas L. Friedman. A fascinating book about thriving in the age of accelerations.” •

## Student Perspectives and Photos from Study Abroad

ASHLEY MYERS  
CONTRIBUTOR

Greetings, Newspaper Readers! My name is Ashley Myers, and I studied abroad in Copenhagen during the fall of 2017. When deciding where I'd want to spend four precious months of the transient time that is college, I knew two things: I had to go somewhere I'd never been and I had to be able to write (a lot). Copenhagen was charming new territory, with rainbow houses along the canal and an authentic amusement park that sold mugs of mulled wine around the winter holidays. The location was perfect, so the program was the next piece I had to research. I soon discovered that with my program, DIS, there's the option to reside in a living and learning community (LLC), and it just so happened to have a creative writing one. I was sold.

Fortunately, my LLC's apartment was in the bustling heart of Copenhagen—less fortunately, above a bar, so Despacito would keep me up at 1am. I lived with fourteen other people—including Michael, our dry-humored and much-beloved Danish SRA. We all became like family after a mere few days of late nights talking or listening to our musical members play guitar and sing. Every Tuesday, we would meet with our LLC coordinator, Karina, for a writing trip. We traveled to a beach at sunset, the old house of Dan-



Above Images Courtesy of Ashley Myers

ish author Karen Blixen, and the smoke-filled Cafe Intime, which felt like a portal back to the 1920s when it was built. The very first place we went was Assistens Cemetery where Kierkegaard is buried. We were instructed to go off to a spot alone with our small, black journals to free-write for 45 minutes. We reconvened as darkness set, sitting in a circle to share what we wrote. The sharing aspect terrified me, but eventually I grew so comfortable with reading my work aloud that I volunteered even on days when it wasn't suggested.

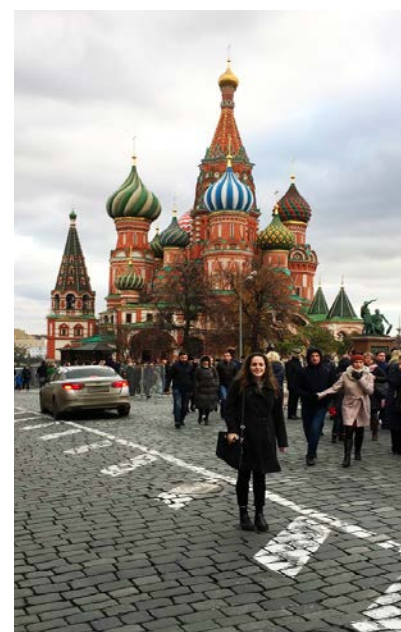
One of the most memorable experiences for me was hunting down giants. You might be questioning my sanity right now, but these were not mind-made. Danish artist, Thomas Dambo, built his six Forgotten Giants out of scrap wood and hid them on the outskirts of Copenhagen. I rounded up a handful of my apartment-mates to look for the first, our only guide an online brown treasure map, with, yes, an X to mark the spot. I got four out of the six giants. In the process, I made a new friend as we both almost missed the bus, lost a pair of shoes to an iced-over channel of muddy water, found a human-sized hamster wheel, and wrote a short story about the giants, Thomas and Tilde, on a picnic table surrounded by purple wildflowers and bees.

I could write a full-length novel about my abroad experience, and have barely covered .001 percent of what I did there, but to sum it up: Copenhagen is the place to go and be and live in the fullest sense of the word. •

ALI PLUCINSKI  
CONTRIBUTOR

Hello everybody! My name is Ali Plucinski and I am a junior who just returned from my semester abroad in Saint Petersburg, Russia! Having spent this time abroad, I was certainly able to put a lot in perspective. Life was much harder there. Our everyday comforts were luxuries. Financially, the country is far less affluent, a fact that opened my awareness to the value of the American dollar. In addition to becoming more culturally aware, I was blessed with a wonderful host family consisting of a grandmother, mother, father, and two younger brothers who were 5 and 7. They were truly special boys--we often played soccer in the hallway, hide and seek in the bedroom, and card games in the kitchen. They had no problem making fun of me for my poor Russian which was probably for the best. My favorite experience was probably the mushroom hunting excursion that my host family took me on. Apparently, it's quite the activity in Russia and we explored forests from sun up till midday, scavenging amongst all sorts of mushrooms (many of which were poisonous). It was especially interesting as a student of political science to see a new country and gain perspectives so different from our own. To find so many commonalities in a people that we identify as nothing like us was surprising and amusing at times. I am still contemplating the best way to integrate my new world view back into Connecticut College, to keep that open perspective and help

others open their world views too. Here are some pictures of my time there! •



Above Images Courtesy of Ali Plucinski



## Oscars 2019: When Somebody Drives, Somebody Loses Best Picture

EMIR KULLUK  
BUSINESS MANAGER

The 91st Academy Awards show has been under fire since Kevin Hart announced that he would not be serving as a host this year. Another big issue that has been plaguing the Oscars since 2018 was the announcement of a new category, “Best Popular Film” alongside the classic “Best Picture.” Now, before I dive into the awards and my opinions on the winners, I want to talk about these two points: Was the no-host situation as big of a deal as it was reported to be? How did the “Best Picture” category turn out?

In my opinion, there was no problem with the Oscars not having a host. In fact, I think it is a change for the better. Right at the beginning of the ceremony, Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, and Maya Rudolph came on stage to tell the audience that there would be no hosts. After this announcement, the ceremony kicked into full gear, with very little wait time between the categories. In between the distribution of awards, pairs of actors, actresses, and performers came on stage to introduce the nominees from each category and created anticipation for the “Best Picture” winner. Some musical performances also broke the monotony of the ceremony. The pace of the show felt much faster compared to previous years, as there was no host to make jokes and give speeches in between the announcement of each award winner. The awards were what people wanted to see, and they got what they wanted. There also seemed to be no tense moments since there was no host to keep on making political jokes and political commentary to the point where it felt like

it was taking over the entire ceremony.

When it came to “Best Picture” and “Best Popular Film,” the Academy decided to merge the two categories and nominate upwards of 6 to 8 films. The Academy managed the backlash well. However, I felt as if some movies, which were specifically meant for the newly created “popular” film category, felt out of place competing against more serious films. The controversy surrounding the “Best Picture” winner is a whole other subject that will be discussed later in this article.

Overall, however, the winners of each separate category proved to be decent and satisfactory for the masses. The big highlights were *Black Panther* grabbing three awards for “Best Original Music Score,” “Best Costume Design,” and “Best Production Design.” *Roma* also scored by for “Best Director,” “Foreign Language Film,” and “Best Cinematography.” Netflix has shown its capabilities to produce an Oscar-worthy film with *Roma*. *Roma*, with its nostalgic black and white aesthetic, as well as its amazing cinematography and story, deserved its wins. *Black Panther*, which managed to bring a specific type of culture and style of life very rarely depicted on the big screen, also rightly deserved its recognition. Marvel, which produced the movie, has recently made a statement saying that superhero movies can and should be viewed as works of art.

Some unsurprising winners were *Bohemian Rhapsody* in the categories of “Sound Editing” and “Sound Mixing” and *Vice* in “Makeup and Hair-styling.” *Bohemian Rhapsody* perfectly re-created the Live

Aid concert of 1985 on screen with its roaring crowds and the legendary voice of Freddie Mercury, whereas *Vice* transformed Christian Bale into Dick Cheney.

One very heartfelt moment during the Oscars was when Spike Lee won his first Oscar after 30 years of filmmaking for “Adapted Screenplay” with his film *BlacKkKlansman*. Lee jumped onto Samuel L. Jackson, who was announcing the category, and they both celebrated together on stage. Lee, wearing his golden Jordan sneakers as well as a big, shiny key, proceeded to give a poetic speech that honored his ancestors and all the people who were forced into slavery for several hundred years. This speech was reciprocated with a standing ovation and turned into one of the highlights of the night.

After everything was said and done, it all came down to the category everybody was waiting for: Best Picture. Everybody was even more interested in the category this year due to the merging of the “popular” and Best Picture category as well as the fact that there were some films which represented much more than their content. *Black Panther* represented the rising popularity and trend of superhero films, and *Roma* represented the revolution of big studio-style filmmaking. *BlacKkKlansman* represented the change from the classic black-protagonist film format: a drama film about slavery and oppression to make a cop film with Spike Lee’s out-of-the-ordinary filmmaking style, ushering in a new era.

The general consensus was that *Roma* was going to win, due to the importance of its story in our modern times and

its amazing visuals. People thought it was a well-rounded representation of what film is meant to be: the merging of an idea or a message with mesmerizing visuals. However, the result took everybody by storm, as the “Best Picture” award was given to *Green Book*. In what seemed to be shocking even for the producers behind the film, *Green Book* managed to surpass all the other nominees.

If I had only one chance to change something about the Oscars, it would be the decision to give *Green Book* the award. Even though *Green Book* is not a bad film in, comparison to the other nominees it does not bring anything new to the table. In fact, such a concept had been executed in the past in 1989 with *Driving Miss Daisy*, starring Morgan Freeman and Jessica Tandy. Besides these similarities, the movie has had a rocky behind-the-scenes press tour as one of the main actors, Viggo Mortensen, used a racial slur. The movie also faced criticism for its subtext regarding race relations and the presence of racial stereotypes. I believe that *Roma* should have won. However I cannot say that I am surprised, since the Academy is infamous for making safe-bets.

Overall, this year’s Oscars were a good iteration since it felt faster with no host and there were several interesting performances, including a performance by Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper which turned a few heads with a few hiccups along the way. If only the “Best Picture” category was not so polarizing, I could’ve said I actually enjoyed the Oscars. However, it is clear that the Academy needs to go through some dramatic changes regarding what it values. •

## *The Boys' Asa Peters Takes Hip Hop at Conn from the Underground to the Limelight with His Expertly Produced Diss Tracks*

STERLING ROWE  
CONTRIBUTOR

There's a game to Conn's music scene and it's 'dysfunction.' Some of it's right in your face with the clean organization of the Music Department and MOBROC. Some is buried deep in the dorm rooms of noisy neighbors or someone who likes to sing in the shower. Just like any artists who live underground, the musicians have layers of talent and potential. A layer I would like to peel back is that of the Asa Peters '19 who is a co-creator of a rap-diss-collective called *The Boys* that records in the basement of Cummings.

In the basement of Cummings, you will find all the equipment necessary for a productive studio session. A group of students studies for exams, cracks jokes, refreshes their social media feeds while writing raps to a looped beat crafted by Peters. The words cool and groovy fail to describe the intensity he brings to a project. As a double major in Botany and Music and Tech, Peters' involvement with music began when he was 8 years old and first picked up the saxophone. He has since expanded his music skills to include producing, which he has done for a total of four years. Peters can also play a selection of other instruments such as flute, piano, and

drums. But his main baby is the alto saxophone. I wonder what type of relationship Peters may have with music in order to craft the soundscapes that he feels?

Fascinatingly enough, Asa describes music as sight. "Another relationship I have with music is how I relate objects to sound [which] subconsciously creates images in my mind." When I first heard how Asa explains how he relates sound to images, I couldn't grasp the idea of it. Memories come to mind when I listen to music, so the idea of your brain sending you Snapchat messages of how it visualizes sound is cool.

When I asked Peters about the music scene here at Conn, he observes that you can definitely find people who are heavily involved in music inside the classrooms of Cummings. However, Peters points out how, in relation to other genres performed on campus, hip hop has taken an underground approach. There aren't any organizations on campus centered on the genre of hip hop, despite it being the most popular genre in the world, so the musicians interested in the genre lack significant resources to invite creative persons and help build community, like you might find for other genres on campus through MOBROC and the Music Department. Peters also collaborated with MOBROC rock band Montreal Protocol in 2015.

Peters points out how hip hop collaboration on campus is usually by word of mouth. Any entity of Hip Hop is usually found as an extension among musicians on campus, not their main focus of genre. It's an "if you know, then you know" sort of thing. When I sat down with Peters the other night, I was curious to find out how the rap beefs his collective is known for started. "The beefs started one night my junior year, we were all kicking back and my friend, Jake, fired a roast at me one night which made me a lil emotional so I fired a spicy track right back." This has inspired the glorious rap battle between Nate Devine '19 and Elijah Pineda '19 for almost two years. The battle between Devine and Pineda is an extension of the music competition among the gents of Winch 11, according to Peters. "I produce the diss-tracks for Nate and Elijah acting as a neutral party and the other guys do the same. . . The rap feud between me and Jake set the precedent for Nate and Elijah," Peters says. It doesn't matter which side you pick in the Winch 11 battle; anyone can get the smoke. Being a fan of hip hop and R&B artist D'Angelo's work, I asked Peters how he feels as a producer on rap. "I think it's really cool," he says. "I always freestyle to my beats. Vocals can really change the way you hear a beat with flows and the way you punctuate words. I haven't made anything with much meaning yet but I will say my flow is infectious." •

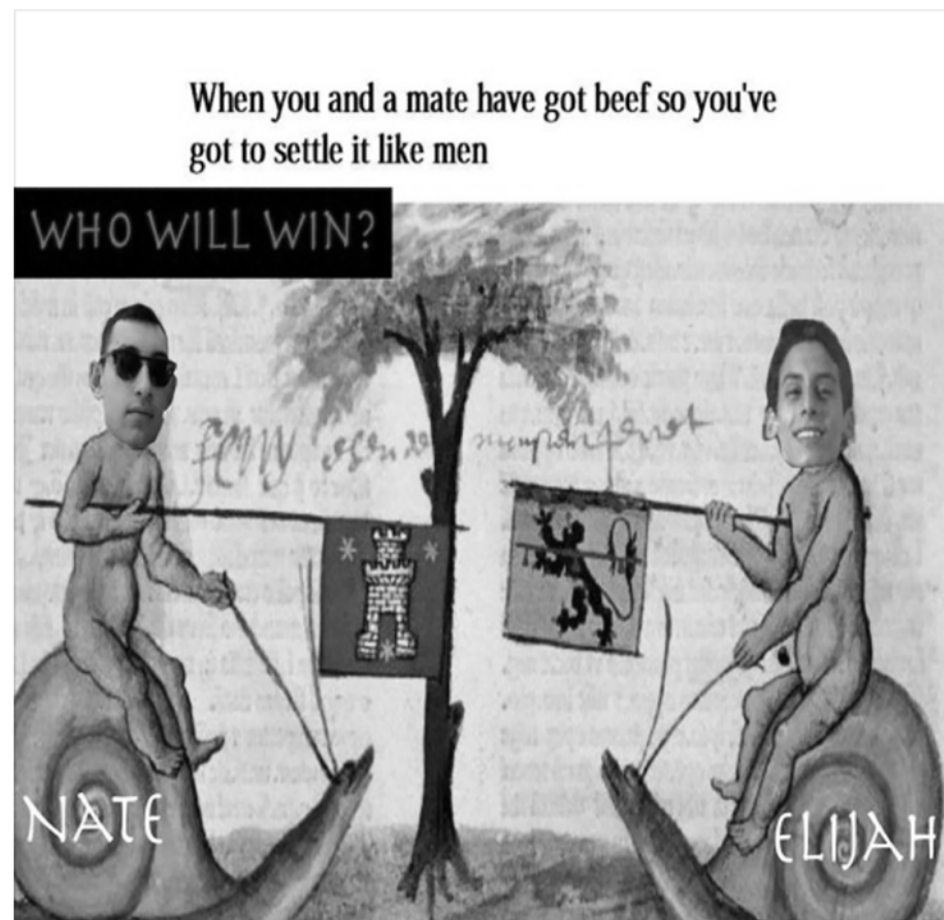


Image Courtesy of The Boys on Soundcloud



## Theater Department Enters New Territory With *Dee*

SAADYA CHEVAN  
MANAGING EDITOR

From, March 1-3, the Theater Department presented the first performances of a new musical *Dee*, written and directed by Professor Ken Prestininzi with music by Alphonso Horne. *Dee* narrates the life of a working-class Italian American woman from Detroit, Michigan who wants to become a singing sensation.

Presenting new work is a challenge for any company of performers. Large parts of the script are constantly subject to change as the show's writer determines what works well on stage. Scott Leff '20 who is choreographing the performance, notes that it is valuable for students in any college theater department to experience creating works that have never been performed before, given that productions of new work are regular undertakings for many professional theater companies. However, Leff also notes that he and Prestininzi have attempted to make their process friendly to students by avoiding taxing practices such as handing 30 pages worth of script rewrites to performers to learn in one day, which can occur with rehearsals in professional settings!

For Ariel Salerno '21, who plays Dee, the protagonist and namesake character, it is her first performance at Connecticut College in a leading role. She has made previous appearances in three Department shows, including last year's production of *Spring Awakening*. Salerno came to the College with significant theater experience, having performed in around 25 plays and musicals in her schools and community. She is now pursuing a self-designed major in musical theater and hopes to succeed in the industry after graduating. Salerno notes the similarities between her own dreams as a performer and the character Dee's interest in becoming a "star." She believes that this element is relatable to any college student hoping to land their own dream job.

*Dee*'s performers see both benefits and disadvantages to getting to create a play that's never been staged before. George Grotheer '19, who plays several roles including the father of Dee and King I-Doll, the owner of a failing record label, notes that the lack of reference material for the show has been a challenge for him; the only recording of the songs and their accompaniment he had access to prior to rehearsal was made by the composer.

Max Toscano '21, who performs several roles including the avian themed Buzzard and Freddie the Bird Catcher, feels that the lack of source material to base his performance on is a "freeing" element for his rehearsal process; the fact that he is the originator of his roles means that he is able to create his interpretation without being conscious of how it differs from a professional's work on the same show. Toscano

finds the fact that he is collaborating with Prestininzi as writer and director of the show helpful in this regard as he is able to understand if his interpretation fits with Prestininzi's original intentions for the piece. He looks forward to the show's opening this weekend, noting that it's his and the cast's opportunity to give the public its first ever sense of who the characters Prestininzi has created are. Salerno agrees with Toscano that there's an advantage in not having significant source material to compare her performance to.

In terms of inspiration, *Dee* is a loose adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's epic play *Peer Gynt* mixed with the life and rise of the singer Madonna and Professor Prestininzi's own experiences growing up in Detroit. Grotheer describes its genre as absurdist, particularly in the second act, which is focused more on the protagonist's struggles. The first act, by contrast, is focused on a less metaphorical telling of the protagonist's attempt to become a successful musical artist.

All of the cast members interviewed for this article describe the collaboration of Prestininzi and Leff as an excellent asset for the show. The cast finds that Prestininzi is able to give easily understandable direction, and Leff works well to accommodate his choreography to their needs. This is particularly important as much of the cast lacks dance experience. The cast is excited for audiences to finally get to see the musical. Toscano believes viewers will particularly appreciate the wide variety of music genres presented in the performance. He describes it as overall a "nice, special show," and "something that's not afraid to be itself." Grotheer is also excited for audience members to see the show for the first time, noting that they will appreciate it very much if they come in with an open mind for viewing this new work. •



Pictured from left to right: Max Toscano '21, Sam Gironi '19, Ryan DeAngelis '22, Ariel Salerno '21 and Adam Dutton '22. Image Courtesy of the Connecticut College Theater Department