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# THE COLLEGE VOICE

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER

## TEDXCONNECTICUTCOLLEGE 2015: Genius, Company and Humanity

ANDREW SHAW  
STAFF WRITER

Last Saturday, April 11, was the fourth TEDxConnecticutCollege conference. The event was produced by the students of Consider, a campus club that puts on events with the aim of engaging people in discussions. Though TEDxConnecticutCollege is perhaps their most visible event, the club puts on others with this same aim of “debate,” including a recent partnership with Green Dot, said member Ben Ballard '16. Their goal of getting the campus community talking was reflected in this year's conference theme: genius loves company.

The day opened with a talk by Sonia Magano, a seventh grader at Waterford's Clark Lane Middle School who also spoke at TEDxYouthDay2014 last semester. Her talk, entitled “The World Through Open Eyes,” was about the stereotyping of different cultures and cultural awareness. Magano focused more on “company” than on “genius” in the sense that she wanted to discuss people's connections to, dependence on and responsibility to fellow human beings.

Bob Safian, editor-in-chief and managing director of the magazine Fast Company, offered a different perspective in his talk entitled “The Secrets of Generation Flux: How to Thrive in Chaos.” He discussed what he called “generation flux,” which is both the environment of fast-paced change that we are in now, and the people in that environment who are most able to succeed in it. The members of “generation flux” are not related by age, but rather by their mindset and attitude. “The most important skill in the age of flux,” Safian stated, “is the ability to add new skills.” This ability allows for success in today's jobs, jobs that no one quite understands: F.I.O., also known as “figure it out,” jobs, he said.

In “Mythologies of the Artist-Genius,” Professor of Art History Christopher Steiner focused not on the production of art but instead on



its reception by art historians, museum curators and others. From this angle, “the question of genius is not an objective truth. It's not a measurable fact,” he said. It's socially constructed in relation to race, gender, power, class and other factors. “How exactly do you see genius?” Steiner asked. Historically, “seeing genius” required what's known as “the gifted eye” of art historians. Genius, then, is not a matter of individual talent or skill. “It's a way of packaging or presenting art to a general public,” he said.

“The next time you are shown a ... work of art,” he said, “close your eyes. ... Look beyond your own preconceptions [and] ... dismantle that social construction.”

Walker Cammack's '16 talk, based off of his experiences spend-

ing summers foraging for wild mushrooms and selling them to chefs, examined the loss of American food culture. “There is a connection there: between wild mushrooms and great food,” Cammack said. Cammack believes that through foraging for mushrooms, we can find and recreate our food identity; foraging can remind us that making food is a process. “The goal,” he said, “is to make us conscious eaters again, and also reconnect us to the natural world” so that mushrooms are not part of an “unseen, mysterious world.” They shouldn't remain unseen: “they're everywhere,” and we should “connect” with that world.

Ali Rice '15 started her talk “In Good Company: the Multiplicity of Emotional Vulnerabilities” by

suggesting that “genius loves good company.” She went on to suggest ways to be in good company and ways to be good company. The key she said is “emotional vulnerability: honesty plus exposure.” Honesty alone is not enough; one needs to stand to lose something in order to create a community. Being “vulnerable with somebody” promotes “bonding” with that person; it creates company. Being vulnerable with other people “is the most beautiful, and powerful, and important way to live,” she said. It creates community by ultimately making both yourself and those around you comfortable.

In his talk, entitled “Conflicted about Conflict,” Ramzi Kaiss '17 asked, “Do we have to follow up on news of conflict around the

world?” He said we currently don't know much about events happening in countries and cultures other than our own. The media's coverage of those events depends upon whether those cultures are considered “Western” or “non-Western;” events in non-Western countries garner much less media coverage than events in Western countries do. After tracing how his answer changed over the course of various personal experiences, he argued that we have a responsibility to follow up on news of conflict. “We don't care [because] we don't know,” and if we don't learn, our apathy will continue. “The true company that genius needs,” Kaiss said, “is a desire to know.”

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## Starting to turn the page

What you are holding in your hands is a copy of the penultimate issue of the 2014-2015 publication run of *The College Voice*. It has been a long, exhausting and intellectually engaging last several weeks, but we are committed to putting out a final issue of the *Voice* that will go to print on April 27. We welcome everyone to come forward to our LAST open writer's meeting of the year, today, April 13, at 9PM in Cro 224. Bring your ideas. Bring your frustrations. I am convinced that everyone on this campus has at least one Opinions piece rattling around in their heads.

The form of the final issue will hopefully serve as an overall document of the current campus climate as we close out the year. What I've learned in the last weeks, however, is that there can be enormous changes at the very last moment, both in the passage of events, and in how we reflect on them. This weekend, during a long and harrowing production process, *The College Voice* faculty adviser, Professor Jim Downs, gave some of the best advice to remember about the state of what a newspaper is meant to be. A newspaper is meant to be a snapshot of a community moment, whether it is global or local. It is subject to change. Any given thing that is written in these pages could be completely irrelevant and untrue in the next twenty-four hours. The way any of us reflect on the passage of events today will change by the time we leave campus for break, and likely several times after that.

So again, we invite you to be a part of that snapshot as we consider what is coming next. Ask questions. We'll even give you a few to think over.

- Ayla Zuraw-Friedland

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

Join us.

## THE COLLEGE VOICE

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

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## I was not Surprised to Learn the 'N Word' was Found Written in Bathroom Stalls...

In November of my freshman year at Connecticut College, students flooded the streets in joy, celebrating the election of our first Black President. The next day on our anonymous message board, "Conn Coll Confessional," students were complaining that the country had let "monkeys into office." When later in the year someone posted, on that same message board, that I was dating someone, the first response was, "Who are those people? Are they minorities?" I attended Connecticut College for four years; I was a good student who interned with a judge while I was the Manhattan DA's office when I graduated and now I am at NYU School of Law. Other than students who were self-proclaimed allies to the minority community, I don't know any white people who attended Conn while I did. Connecticut College was, and clearly still is, a segregated community that is not welcoming to minorities.

This is most powerfully illustrated, not in the recent events at Connecticut College, but in people's responses to them. The majority of Connecticut College alumni are invariably (and justifiably) shocked

and appalled at the indecency of racist scrawl in the bathroom stall; however, the disenfranchised minority to whom these acts were directed are simply shaking their heads wearily at yet another attack on our collective humanity. Overt acts, such as this one, do not serve to "start a conversation," the way as people in positions of power so often like to claim as a way of leveraging atrocious behavior. Rather, they force people in positions of privilege to join in a conversation that is always happening all around them—a conversation that they have had the luxury of not engaging in until news cameras to showed up.

We had another incident of student outrage on campus my freshman year, known as the "lobster incident." A group of students brought lobsters to Harris Refectory and asked the staff to cook them as a way of playing a prank on other students who would have thought they missed "Lobster night", which was a previously held college tradition. There was outrage on campus as some students took this as a sign of classism and exclusion. At the time, I thought that my peers were blowing the whole thing out

of proportion. It was Professor Jen Manion, Director of the LGBTQ Resource Center, who put this into perspective by saying that the catalyst for these conversations can always be undermined and contextualized, but it is most important not to get so focused on the single issue that we miss the underlying problem.

I would urge students who were surprised by the recent acts on campus, those who think that they are one time events not indicative of a larger problem, to engage in conversations with their peers of different backgrounds and not only ask, but listen, to their experiences of racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of hate. I would encourage the disenfranchised minority not to insulate themselves for protection, but to be open to dialogue from which there can be understanding. When I was at Conn, I served as a consultant to a newly forming group called "White Allies Against Racism," which employed Unity House and a faculty facilitator to provide white students a place where they could come and learn about privilege and ask questions that would allow them to engage in a more productive conversation in a

more diverse setting.

As an educational institution, Connecticut College has a responsibility to its students and to the world to equip its young people with the resources they need to talk about these difficult issues with grace and compassion. These are sensitive topics with a long history of pain, guilt and embarrassment and so the language we use to discuss them is incredibly powerful in facilitating open communication. We all come from places of privilege and dis-privilege whether it is race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic, education, health or a myriad of other things that effect the way we construe our identities. Rather than judging each other's experiences or compar-

ing them to our own, let's use our own privileges and dis-privileges as a way to empathize with other people's perspectives. Connecticut College, being a small community, provides the perfect space for this type of conversation, but everyone has to be willing to engage and understand why an affront to one person's humanity is an affront to every person's humanity. Pretending that a problem doesn't exist, does not make it go away and hate simply begets hate to the point where no is left and no one is safe. •

-Aditi Juneja, '12

Dear Ms. Zuraw-Friedland:

As Mayor of New London, I have been following the recent incidents at Connecticut College, and want to commend the students for taking initiative in determining the type of community they want to be, and for addressing an issue that people of all ages have difficulty discussing. I also commend President Bergeron for encouraging a dialogue that will help the campus heal and resolve issues important to the student body.

Connecticut College and New London have a special relationship, and it is vital that we both respect inclusiveness and diversity. I was particularly disturbed by the graffiti that targeted students of color on campus. That graffiti does not reflect our shared values. Both the college and the city thrive on diversity, and these acts work counter to the goal of fostering openness so all voices can be heard.

During my tenure as Mayor, it has been important to me that all

people are respected, and that we all work together to bring different backgrounds, different points of view, and better solutions to problems that arise. I am encouraged to see the college administration working cooperatively with the student body as they take an active role in bettering their campus. Efforts like these are necessary in order to erode, and ultimately erase, racial prejudice, so that all people embrace the diversity which makes both New London and Connecticut College great.

Respectfully,

Mayor Daryl Finizio  
City of New London

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# Snapshots of a Community Social Movement: Two Months at Connecticut College

January 22                      February 1                      February 18                      February 19                      February 27

Professors Rose, Pessin, Kane, Etoke and Uddin speak at a widely attended panel to discuss the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris, France.

Aparna Gopalan '17 writes an opinions article in The College Voice presenting concerns about racist undertones in certain faculty opinions voiced at the Charlie Hebdo discussion.

Four students come across Prof. Pessin's personal, unblocked Facebook profile through a post he made on the public Connecticut College Philosophy Department Facebook page. One of the students forwards a post from his page to SGA Chair of Diversity and Equity Lamiya Khandaker '17, who shares it with other professors to gain feedback for email response.

Prof. Pessin replies to Khandaker. He removes the post in question from Facebook.

Nine different students file a bias incident report against Prof. Pessin's post through the bias reporting system voicing concerns that the post used dehumanizing language.



WNPR/DAVID DESROCHES

March 24

March 25

March 26



THE MOVEMENT INSTAGRAM

March 27

March 28

WNPR Connecticut publishes breaking story after interview with Prof. Pessin.

The College's Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE) issues a statement condemning hate speech.

By April 2, collectively over forty departments, offices and centers issue similar statements.

Campus forum facilitated by visiting alumna Liza Talusan '97 after faculty members refuse offer to lead the conversation on the grounds of dissatisfaction with the structure of the forum. Students and faculty speak out about all types of discrimination they have faced in the campus community.

National news source, Inside Higher Ed, publishes article concerning conversations surrounding Prof. Pessin's post.

Zuraw-Friedland reaches out to The Day newspaper in New London to invite them to campus forum for local area coverage.

NBC Connecticut covers campus forum.

Student Government Association passes two resolutions. Resolution 21 condemns the use of hate speech. Resolution 22 asks administration for a strong statement against dehumanizing language. A precedent is created when Resolution 22 was presented and passed in the same night.

NEWS8 conducts a segment in which Prof. Pessin gives testimony about his home explosion and expresses concerns about the reasons behind the ongoing conversation over the Facebook post.

WNPR publishes a follow-up article surveying the discussion at the Mar. 25 campus conversation to supplement previous interview.

Slate Magazine publishes article covering events resulting from the Facebook post.

Mondoweiss publishes article regarding campus discussions and climate surrounding Facebook post.



WNPR/DAVID DESROCHES

April 3

April 7

April 8

April 9

April 12

President Bergeron appoints the new Interim Deans of Institutional Equity and Inclusion after considering student, faculty and staff nominations. The team consists of Professors Sunil Bhatia, David Canton and Sandy Grande.

Breitbart News publishes an article including new information and input from Prof. Pessin and other community members.

David Bernstein, Professor at the George Mason University School of Law, publishes a post with the Volokh Conspiracy blog associated with The Washington Post.

An anonymous user posts a petition supporting Prof. Pessin on change.org. As of the night of April 12, it has over 700 signatures.

Homophobic defacement appears on a wall in Park residence hall.

David Bernstein publishes a second post with the Volokh Conspiracy blog regarding future campus events sponsored by the office of the Interim Deans of Institutional Equity and Inclusion.

Every piece of information in this article is backed by eyewitnesses and electronic evidence (timestamps on emails, screenshots, articles, other electronic communication between different involved constituencies) which we are willing to share if contacted by interested parties for verification.

Reporting done by: Ayla Zuraw-Friedland, Kaitlyn Garbe, Dakota Peschel, Wesley Chrabasz, Taryn Kitchen, Ikbel Amri, and several other contributors.

March 2                      March 4                      March 8                      March 18                      March 23

Letters to the Editor written by Lamiya Khandaker '17, Michael Fratt '15 and Kaitlyn Garbe '15, and alum Zachary Balomenos '14 are published in The College Voice.

Meeting takes place between some of the students who filed bias report, the students who wrote letters to the editor, Deans Victor Arcelus, Sarah Cardwell and Abby Van Slyck, and Prof. Pessin.

President Bergeron sends first campus-wide email concerning the Facebook post, announcing forum to discuss "the nature of free speech, our responsibilities as a community defined by the Honor Code, and our status as a College aspiring to uphold the value of inclusive excellence" for Mar. 25.

The College Voice reaches out to Prof. Pessin asking for response.

The College Voice website publishes apology by Prof. Pessin. Khandaker publicly accepts apology in a comment below the post on the Voice website.

Gopalan writes an online petition demanding an administrative response condemning dehumanizing speech on change.org. The petition is published under the name of Ayla Zuraw-Friedland '15. As of the night of April 12, it has over 500 signatures.

Prof. Pessin goes on medical leave for the remainder of the semester due to personal reasons as well as stress caused by the tension around his post.

Approximately 60 faculty members send a memo addressed to President Bergeron laying out proposed requirements for post of Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion, and demanding the appointment of an interim before the appointment was made.



WNPR/DAVID DESROCHES

March 29                      March 30                      March 31                      April 1                      April 2

Racist defacement found in the three first floor bathrooms in the Crozier-Williams student center: "No N\*\*\*\*\*" is written several times between the hours of 9 a.m. and 12 p.m.

Senior administrators announce an open campus meeting in Cro's Nest to discuss the incident. Noting President Bergeron's absence, approximately 50 students leave the meeting and walk to the President's house on Williams Street. Further discussion ensues in her living room.

Campus Safety alerts students of the possibility that the perpetrator responsible for the racist defacement may have been a visitor from off campus. NBC broadcasters interview students about issues of racism and administrative response on campus. Discussions of past racist incidents on campus are held.

Conversations occur between students, staff and administrators in Cro to plan second forum for Mar. 30.

Connecticut College cancels classes, athletics and extra-curriculars and holds a mandatory forum to address the racist defacement.

Structural change at the College discussed during the open Question & Answers session with eight senior administrators. Students, faculty and staff call for:

- the appointment of an interim Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion
- the suspension of the search for a permanent Dean pending reconsideration of the position description
- the reform of bias incident reporting process.

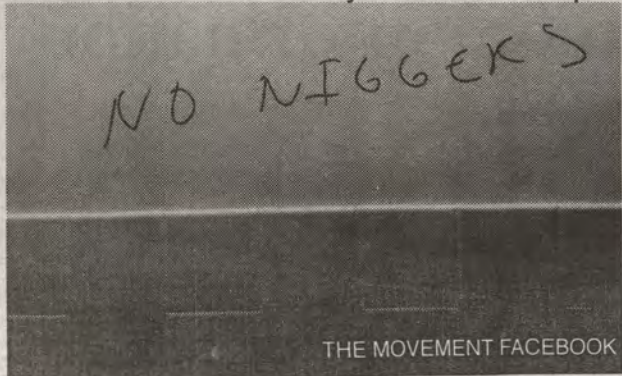
NBC Connecticut covers the events concerning the racist defacement after reaching out to a student on campus.

The Hartford Courant covers the forum, and their article is later picked up by GOPNews. Frontpage Mag covers the story of the Facebook post.

The Root publishes an article on defacement found in Cro bathrooms in context of discussions surrounding Facebook post.

Faculty Steering and Conference Committee (FSCC) passes resolution that "openly condemns speech and acts that demonstrate hostility or intolerance toward others."

Fox News covers school closure to discuss mandatory campus forum of Mar. 30.



THE MOVEMENT FACEBOOK



THE MOVEMENT INSTAGRAM

## Clubs Plan to Sell at Upcoming Flea Market

MOLLIE REID  
STAFF WRITER

As the academic year comes to a close and the weather comes warmer, student clubs have begun to plan for the upcoming year. For many, this early preparation for 2015-2016 entails some spring cleaning. To make the most of what is left over and to try to earn some extra funding, about sixteen student clubs and organizations will take part in the Student Activities Council (SAC) 2015 flea market. The flea market will take place on Saturday, April 18 from 1pm to 4pm on Larrabee Green. If the weather does not seem promising, the event will take place in Cro, the connection, or the hallway outside of the 1962 room.

As the Director of Finance, Victoria Wade '15 is partially responsible for creating funding events and hosting events for Conn's students. Wade said that the idea to have the SAC flea market "came from the success clubs have had at Harvestfest, which happens every fall on Parents Weekend. However, often

times, clubs and organizations (including SAC) have items they ordered that didn't completely sell out, and students see items they missed, so the idea for another 'mini-Harvestfest' came to fruition." She believes that the SAC flea market is a great way "to unite all of the clubs on campus, help them fundraise for the rest of this year and next year and to host an event on a beautiful Saturday (hopefully) that's open for everyone to attend."

To get a glimpse at what some clubs will be selling on Saturday, students can look at a Google spreadsheet that outlines what the club or organization is selling. Women's Rowing will be selling "camel tanks" and Women's Club Rugby will be selling shirts and socks. The SAC flea market is not limited to apparel. Students can buy baked goods from Cakes for Care, a club "dedicated to the art of baking and to the support of local New London charities," or hot sauce from Sprout, "the organic gardening club and sustainable food initiative" at Conn. •

## TEDXCONNECTICUT- COLLEGE 2015: Genius, Company and Humanity

FROM FRONT PAGE

In two separate talks, Stephen Hallquist, Post Assistant at Conn, and Professor of Religious Studies David Kim discussed the role of love in creating communities. Hallquist, like his father, is a minister, an occupation that he can trace in his family back to the fourteenth century. Because of his father's occupation, Hallquist was moving every three or four years growing up. Moving made it challenging for Hallquist to become part of a community, and he realized the importance of "search[ing] for common ground ... [through] learning how to dialogue [sic] ... with people." Learning to communicate with other people effectively, Hallquist said, "is always a matter of proactive forgiveness and proactive love."

It is just this question of deploying love in order to create social change that Kim discussed in his talk "Radical Love." We live, he said, in "deeply cynical times," where "we can not be with another, [when] we can not be with ourselves." We live, too, in racist times, when "the culture tells [some people] that [they] are less than human." What are we doing about it? What can we do about it? "How do [we] close that gap [in people's perception of others' humanity]?" he asked. "[We] have to start with small gestures." We need to be aware of what others are seeing. "Who are [others] seeing, and who are they not seeing?" Who are we seeing and not seeing?

We can't give into cynicism and we must find hope because "to live in a loveless world is to be unfree."

Kim said. To extend your humanity to another is "an act of moral genius, it's an act of affective genius."

An instance of extending humanity to others is exactly what Professor of Sociology Ron Flores' talk was about, which, appropriately, he gave together with members of the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation and some of his students. Collaboration during weekly Sunday meetings between Flores and his students and members of the Eastern Pequot does "the work of community," which needs to happen every day, not just [the proverbial] yesterday. "Understanding and appreciating diversity, building and appreciating diversity, happens every day." It is "not always fun. [It is] not on TV," he said. It is an exchange of historical and cultural information that aims to educate both native people and the general public – because it's only through some form of education that we recognize others' humanity.

These talks about the responsibilities of company reinforced how conversation aids understanding. TEDxConnecticutCollege itself does this. It is "a platform for honesty" that offers different, sometimes contradictory views," said Marina Sachs '15, who was involved in producing the event. It, just like the stories that it enabled this year, requires that those involved work together. It is only through this working together, as the Connecticut College and Eastern Pequot collaboration demonstrated, that we can begin to see the invisible people. And we need to see them, we need to hear their stories, for "we are bound," as Kim reminded the audience, "in a network of reciprocity based on our common humanity." •

## THE COLLEGE VOICE

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## Demystifying Media Bias Surrounding Anti-Semitic and Islamophobic Discourses

LAURA CIANCIOLO  
CLAIRE RAIZEN  
STAFF WRITERS

In light of recent events on this campus as well as articles in the media, we find it necessary to highlight a number of misconceptions about Islam and anti-Semitism. We would like to dispel the notion that criticizing the Israeli government or military amounts to a condemnation of Judaism or Jewish people (just as a critique of Saudi Arabian state is not automatically anti-Islam or anti-Arab).

Edward Said's seminal work on orientalism serves as our first point of reference. Said asserts that Western conceptions of the Middle East do not arise from an objective analysis of the region, but rather are viewed through a lens that in effect distorts reality. Orientalism propagates a false historical narrative through its creation of an "ideal other." Said's conception of American Orientalism is particularly relevant to our analysis of current campus events and to the larger narrative of Islamophobia. The history of orientalism in Europe differs from the American narrative, as the United States never possessed colonies in the Middle East. As a result, America's brand of orientalism is entirely unique, defined and politicized by its relationship with Israel, a Western democracy.

Along the same vein, Said remarks that Israel regards the entirety of the Arab world as its principal enemy. Viewed through this framework, the Palestinian desire for national determination is seen as a disturbance to Israeli security. Resultantly, Palestinians and pro-Palestinian Arabs are seen as irrational, violent and inclined toward terrorism. This very fact helps explain the sheer magnitude of Islamophobia on both this campus and in the United States in general. Similarly, these massive generalizations conflate a number of distinct categories, as many individuals believe all Arabs are Muslims, and these two categories are regularly conflated with violent terrorists.

The conception of the "dangerous Arab terrorist" is also manifested in the portrayal of the Middle East in Western media. In emphasizing the figure of the dangerous Arab terrorist, the media propagates the false presumption that all Arabs are a threat to Western interests. This tendency is visible in the Washington Post article published about the current situation on our

campus. David Bernstein, author of the article and also a Professor of Law at George Mason University, singles out a student who wears the *hijab* as the sole voice on campus who spoke out against Pessin's anti-Palestinian post, ignoring the numerous other members of the Connecticut College community who were alarmed by it. Our own Hillel House issued a statement on March 25th as a result of the Facebook post stating "We do not condone racist speech or actions toward any group under any circumstance." Bernstein also quickly conflated criticism of the post with anti-Semitism itself, as if a critique of the Israeli government was itself anti-Semitic. Finally, his thinking ignored the fact that many Jews themselves are critical of the Israeli government as are other citizens of the United States. Singling out the most visible Muslim woman on campus as the sole voice was permissible precisely because of the Islamophobic discourse in the media and the broader public. The media's tendency to generalize and broadcast false assumptions detracts immensely from a clear-headed discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian problem.

With these ideas in mind, it is imperative to turn now to Norman Finkelstein, an American political scientist and author of *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse of History*. Finkelstein argues that charges of anti-Semitism, identical to the accusation David Bernstein made in *The Washington Post*, are essentially misuses of anti-Semitism that serve to delegitimize valid criticisms against the Israeli state. In other words, criticisms against Israel as a state are in fact not anti-Semitic in nature. Criticizing Israel's policies does not amount to criticizing Judaism or Jewish people. With Finkelstein's remarks in mind, we as the authors want to make an imperative clarification. In criticizing Professor Pessin's original Facebook post, which likened Palestinians to rabid pit bulls, students were not invoking anti-Semitism but were simply criticizing the racist and orientalist nature of his remarks. We can see how this is an instance of anti-Semitism discourse being appropriated to mask Islamophobia.

The polarizing nature of the current conversation precludes productive dialogue on this subject. In order to transcend orientalist assumptions and language, we must stop making generalizations that impede dialogue. Similarly, we

must become more critical of the way in which Western media portrays issues of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism, using anti-Semitism to avoid criticism of the Israeli government and ignore orientalist assumptions about Arabs

and Muslims. It is evident from the events that have transpired on this campus that generalizations about Islam, Arabs, Jews and all of their representations perpetuate unproductive dialogue. We hope that in invoking Said's discussion on

Orientalism and Finkelstein's discussion on anti-Semitism we have begun to provide a greater understanding of Islam and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. •

## THE COLLEGE VOICE

encourages all students,  
of all class years, to  
participate in this year's SGA,  
Class Council and Young  
Alumni Trustee elections.

APRIL 17

Speech Night for SGA Candidates

April 18-20

Voting Period for SGA Candidates

APRIL 24

Speech Night for  
Class Council and YAT Candidates

April 25-27

Voting Period for  
Class Council and YAT Candidates

Talk to candidates,  
read their platforms,  
listen to their speeches, go vote.  
Best of luck to all candidates.



# Why I Wrote My Letter-to-the-Editor

## *Personal Reflections on Speaking Out*

LAMIYA KHANDAKER  
CONTRIBUTOR

This is my official statement of events that have transpired since day one.

It was 8:42 p.m. on February 18. I had just received an email from four students. It was a screenshot of a dehumanizing post made by a professor. Let me reiterate, this screenshot was sent to me by four other students.

After some time of contemplating how to proceed, I decided to compose an email. This would be my second concerned email to the same professor. The first time I expressed concern was on Jan. 24 over ideas he shared at a public panel (Charlie Hebdo) which made me and several other students feel uncomfortable. I emphasized to him the significance of acknowledging that intolerance and violence occur in various forms regardless of who perpetrates it, and the importance in having solidarity for all victims. I received a defensive, unapologetic and more offensive response in return. I did not engage with him again after that until Feb. 18. I thought I would let him know that his use of language was bothering many students.

When the initial students found the Facebook post their first instinct was to send it to media outlets right away and to print it out and paste it all over Blaustein

and other academic buildings. But I had asked them not to, and instead sent him an immediate email regarding his post. This is an excerpt the response that I received:

"It's particularly upsetting that in both the Hebdo case and the FB comment, you seem to have misunderstood or misinterpreted what I said."

In addition to an attempt to justify the use of language by reference to a political conflict, he followed with:

"If my analogy inadvertently invites that overly literal misunderstanding, then I am truly sorry and surely need to be more careful, and I've taken the post down to think about whether it does; and I appreciate your calling attention to that fact; but either way, it is a serious misunderstanding."

For the second time in a row, I have been told that I had misunderstood language that was harmful, offensive, derogatory, or dehumanizing. I asked myself: Should I continue to privately engage with someone who keeps dismissing me and telling me I misunderstand everything he says? If it was just me, then fine. But over a dozen faculty members and dozens of students cannot all be mistaken.

Over the next two weeks many students, including myself, contemplated on the best way to ap-

proach this. This was not about his free speech. This was not about Israel and Palestine. This was about a group of intellectual young adults in a college climate who understand the definition of racism as a "social structure that yields superiority and privilege for some, and discrimination and oppression for others." An analogy that justifies an "owner" and a "cage" in a sensitive region where women, children and civilians are known to die in large numbers is a racist analogy regardless of one's political views. And we engaged with this incident of racism through the best outlet possible—our student-run college newspaper.

Let me reiterate—my letter to the editor in *The College Voice* did not endanger this professor's life. My letter was not the reason for worldwide attention. That was going to happen regardless of whether I had written it or not. My letter, in addition to the other two, actually stopped his post from getting into the media right away. I had advised students to keep it within the local community so we can have a community conversation about our values.

When my letter was published, the administration facilitated a private meeting with the professor and eight other students—the writers of *The College Voice* letters and the students who filled out a bias incident report. A few

days afterwards, the professor issued a public apology. I acknowledged that apology publicly, and my role in all this ended right there, right then.

At this point I decided to disengage, however this did not stop other students from taking up more active roles. A petition was created by others to ask the administration to take a clear stance on disrespectful, racist speech. This petition was created because students were tired of having the conversation end behind closed doors. Not once has any student asked for his resignation. This was not about the professor. But I still did not sign this petition. I did not share this petition. My role had ended.

I believed that I had done my job. I expressed grievances on behalf of underrepresented students who felt uncomfortable. I thought that whatever would transpire afterwards would be a sign of positive change for our school to make it a more acceptable community. I was wrong.

This tenured professor reached out to the media, and the media attacked undergraduate college students. I immediately became vilified as the 19-year-old Muslim student who silenced him for his political views. I am now, and I quote David Bernstein in his *Volokh Conspiracy* blog from *The Washington Post*—"a Bangladeshi who wears an Islamic

head covering," affiliated with "anti-Semitic organizations" that so happens to be linked with terrorism. I was overcome with shock.

I was stripped of my American identity and reduced to the Muslim activist who had targeted a professor. My name is blacklisted on hate blogs. My name is out in national media when I tried to protect him from national media. My past activity in high school (when I was a minor) was sensationalized to "anti-Semitic, terrorist-like activity." The attempt to dig up dirt on a 19-year-old student who was heavily stalked and harassed was not only unprofessional from a grown tenured man, but also inappropriate. Has this professor lost sight of his role as an educator and protector of students?

We are entitled to our political opinions. Not once have we attacked him. Not once have I engaged in anti-Semitic activity. This was supposed to be a community dialogue on the use of racist language. Ironically, I have been the one to be attacked for my free speech regarding my activity and commentary on political issues.

This is my story. A 19-year-old who published a letter in a student-run college newspaper for a small community to a 19-year-old whose name is now out to *The Washington Post*. •

## Whose Commencement?

### A Call for Transparency and Senior Class Involvement in Ceremony Decisions

ANNA CURTIS-HEALD  
CONTRIBUTOR

Two weeks ago, I received a phone call from an unknown New London area phone number. It was Dean Arcelus, calling in response to my email, which had expressed a concern over the lack of information surrounding commencement decisions such as selecting the student graduation speaker and class marshals. Over Spring Break, I had emailed Dean Arcelus to share my disappointment that both of the class marshals chosen to represent the Class of 2015 at Commencement, were men. I do not mean to say that I think either of chosen class marshals are undeserving of this honor; I merely think that there are many worthy individuals for the position, many of whom, in our 60% female class, are women. A few weeks before spring break, an email from the 2015 class president, Eleanor Hardy, announced the class marshals who had been selected by the senior class council. This surprised me, as I had heard nothing about the process until the decision was already made, and felt that such a decision should be based on input from more than four members of the senior class. Additionally, I asked Dean Arcelus to tell me more about the process of choosing the graduation speaker, as the news about the class marshals led me to fear a lack of transparency and shared governance when it comes to commencement ceremony decisions. I was surprised to learn that the class marshals were responsible for choosing the student graduation speaker along with Dean Arcelus. I question how these two individuals can fairly represent the Class of 2015, not only because they are both male, but because they are two out of our class of nearly 500 students.

Over the phone, Dean Arcelus walked me through the student commencement speaker process, and emphasized how student graduation speakers are chosen based on the content of their intended speeches. After the initial nomination process (which is open to the Class of 2015, faculty, and staff), the student nominees' files are reviewed, and they are then invited to write a preliminary speech outline.

About two-dozen seniors usually participate in this stage, and the selection committee then narrows this number down to a pool of eight or nine students. The student graduation selection committee is made up of the two senior class marshals, Dean Arcelus, Merrill Collins from Events and Catering, Debra MacDonald from the Office of Communications, and David Jaffe of the Theater department. This year, Dean Arcelus has added Eleanor Hardy to this committee, to represent the Class of 2015 along with Mike Clougher and Matt Safian, in the absence of a female class marshal. The remaining candidates are then asked to craft a full-length speech draft and preform it for the committee in Palmer. Speeches are judged based on their content, as well as how they are delivered. Once the student is chosen, he or she will receive help from the staff members for both writing and presentation.

After speaking to Dean Arcelus, I questioned my original desire for a vote, open to all seniors that would choose the student graduation speaker. While I think the fact that normally only two seniors are involved in the selection process could be problematic, I was impressed by the commitment to choosing speakers based on the content of their speeches. This avoids making the process into a popularity vote, and puts students on an equal platform, as they are offered support along the way. However, if the class marshals are honored with the role of choosing the speaker, the process for selecting the marshals should be well thought out and should take input from the senior class. I spoke to Eleanor on the issue and she agreed that inviting more participation from the senior class would be beneficial. She shared with me that the senior class council did not receive any structure or guidance for how to make the selection, and that they attempted to receive nominations through SGA and word-of-mouth, but she agreed that a more widespread invitation for nominations would be an improvement. I asked Eleanor if she thought a voting process would be problematic, and she said yes, because students might "campaign" for the position, which would make it difficult to honor the "un-sung heroes" of the senior class for their unrecognized contribu-

tions.

After my conversation with Eleanor and Dean Arcelus, I had more confidence with the existing structure put in place for choosing the student graduation speaker. However, the process for choosing the class marshals, an honorary but important position, needs more work. When it comes to choosing the class marshals, the class council is forced to follow unclear precedents of the past, rather than a structured, inclusive nomination process. All seniors should be asked to participate in nominating class marshals, as they are when it comes to nominating student commencement speakers, so that a variety of students are considered for the honor. I think mandating a one-female, one-male class marshal may not be the solution, but I would suggest that future class councils think about the college's history and goals of inclusive excellence throughout the process.

It is imperative that the senior class, and student body as whole, be aware of both selection processes before they start. Currently, only students nominated to speak are privy to any other step of the process. Without transparency and clear invitations for participation, the mission of shared governance is not being upheld. Without framework, participation will falter. Seniors deserve to be given a chance to choose who they would like to represent them. In future years, I hope all students will be notified well in advance about the selection process, so they may take time to consider whether or not they would like to be considered for the student graduation speaker. All seniors should be asked to nominate deserving candidates for class marshal, and the class council should be given more support and structure in choosing the students. Commencement is the capstone of our time at Conn, and processes leading up to the event should reflect our deepest commitment to shared governance and full participation. I would like to thank Eleanor and Dean Arcelus for speaking with me, as it is this kind of commitment to direct action, if followed by structural change, that will make Conn truly reflective of its goals as an institution. •

# Why are Centers Selective?

## *Understanding the Limits of Admission to Academic Centers*

**AMANDA YACOS**  
STAFF WRITER

On our campus, academic center programs like CISLA, CAT, PICA and the Goodwin-Niering Center all give off the impression of closed-door societies that exclude those who don't meet their "standards" of admission. But how far is this true? To use the term exclusive would be unfair because these centers are "selective" only because they have to be. What it all boils down to, like almost everything in the world, is money. All programs run on generous endowments or grants that enable them to have internships, conferences and hire staff and faculty.

As a program, PICA is rigorous and has many requirements, including courses outside of one's major. To take part, a GPA of 3.0 must be maintained, you must take a senior seminar, participate in 300 hours of a community internship and present a senior project. Rebecca McCue, Associate Director of PICA, has said, "PICA supports many students (PICA scholars and non-PICA scholars) with programs, funding for social entrepreneurship projects and initiatives that fall within our mission. We organize and implement events, lectures, symposia, etc. each year that educate the entire campus about issues related to social justice, community action and public policy." Not all students are capable of devoting the time to the requirements, or have the desire to, to begin with. This is where judgments about PICA regarding exclusivity are made. PICA is self-selective based on those who choose to take part in this program and have put in the effort and time.

That being said, could PICA admit more students if it truly wanted to? McCue mentioned that, "We have discussed ways in which we could offer this type of experience to more students, however we have limited resources and capacity. Currently our resources only allow for one full-time permanent staff position in the Center. The other positions are part time." The

Holleran Center as a whole provides community engagement opportunities and social justice opportunities for over 400 students each year. But the center provides a variety of initiatives that are made accessible to the active and proactive student. Each year, the center uses its full budget with the goal of helping students and the campus community.

CISLA is similar in this way, as the students the center takes in are quality over quantity. The overall number is based on, again, the endowment that the center has and is able to spend. Marc Forster, Director of CISLA, said that, "If we were to admit more students we would have to go from a class of 30 to 50. We would have to have two classes, which would be more students to pay for and a lot more support. We don't have the resources to be larger than that. We usually have between 36 and 50 applicants and 30-34 are accepted. So yes, it is selective, but a large majority do get in." As a program, CISLA is not major-specific and is made for students who want to engage in international internships and have made the effort to show their interest through their proposal and academic standing.

With more students, the intimacy and relationships that students foster with advisers would suffer. The single class would have to be split, more staff would have to be hired and the less individual attention and care would be given to those who need it.

The endowment that CISLA receives is the largest limiting factor. It's the largest endowment for a variety of reasons including history and purpose. But because these internships are abroad, they are obviously costly and depend largely on the economy and the business cycle. In addition, different countries have varying expenses and CISLA has to be wary of this. The endowment is not just for internships expenses but also for paying for staff salaries, support, lectures and conferences.

The Goodwin-Niering Center, on the other hand, does not admit more students because the stu-

dents who are involved (sophomores, juniors and seniors) meet all together for a Thursday night seminar. The center, according to Jennifer Pagach, "fosters peer to peer mentoring, and students get to see ahead what they will be doing- internship and SIP presentations, practicing and honing their presentation and research skills with feedback from each other, it fosters a sense of community. If we let more students in, the class size would be too large to do that, and to us, the students come first." Again, the conflict of quality over quantity comes into play.

According to Glenn Dreyer, the budget of the Goodwin-Niering Center is funded by endowments also, "that support our mostly part time faculty and staff and our annual budget." The Goodwin-Niering Center is "an academic center and not primarily a social or service entity, like so many other college organizations. Thus we select students to join the center based on their academic achievements and our evaluation of their potential to succeed in a program that asks students to do additional individual work beyond that required in their majors and minors," added Dreyer. But, the biennial conferences, and frequent guest lectures, are free to Conn students. The recent "Feeding the Future" conference for example, is free to the entire campus community.

CAT is unlike many of these programs, is doing the most from what I can tell to bring attention to new students and grow their program. After recently receiving a generous \$100,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation, the program is hoping to take off in upcoming years. The last thing they would like to be called is exclusive. With upcoming speakers, guests, artists and the introduction of a course in the fall involving the program, CAT is actively expanding to incorporate more "digital humanities." The vision is for a center that is open to many disciplines, and to "envision beyond what's right in front of them", says director Andrea Wollensak. The goals are "to develop a new certificate

program, to create a new interdisciplinary cluster for the revision curriculum, and to seek out inter-institutional collaborations that will strengthen the reach and relevance of the center's programs." With only two graduating seniors at the forefront of the program, CAT is encouraging anyone interested to apply.

But requirements do include a GPA of 3.0, the presentation of a project proposal and the completion of the course COM 110 at some point in the student's time at Conn. In essence, CAT is the most "inclusive" as they are not worried about funding and are only interested in the improvement and expansion of their program. If one meets the requirements, they can be a part of the program.

In conclusion, these centers are not "exclusive" and they're not purposely trying to shut anyone out. Rather, they don't have all of the proper resources to host more students without the quality of their programs suffering. If one puts in the work, takes the initiative, time and care, there will be nothing preventing them from taking part as well. The misconception of exclusivity should be replaced in the minds of students, for these programs are honestly just trying to find the best candidates for what they're trying to achieve. If you want to take part in these centers but don't have the time, look for public events that you can attend, since a good portion of them are free and available to the general community. In conclusion, these programs strive to be as rewarding as they can be with the resources they have. •

# Race Education

## The Imperative to Teach Social Consciousness in High School

MAIA HIBBET  
STAFF WRITER

Racism—whether as aggressive as the vandalism in Cro or unintentional as ignorance and inaction—does not spring up out of nowhere. While issues of race on college campuses stem from a variety of perspectives and experiences, one fact is certain: all students here at Conn attended high school in some form. Had many Conn students, while homogenous in background, received more active race and social justice education during high school, racial tensions on campus might have been less prominent.

Although discussing race in high school—or, for that matter, middle and elementary school—certainly would not solve racism, it would help to bring the issue into consciousness for many students at an earlier, more impressionable age. Additionally, it could teach students how to engage in racial discourse without making problematic statements.

In order to understand why so many high schools neglect the issue of race, I spoke with Professor Dana Wright of the Education Department. Professor Wright explained how some “institutional barriers” limit the discussion of race before college.

“Teachers have a lot of pressure on them,” Wright said, referring to the intensity of high school curricula. She noted that many high school teachers are expected to adhere to the content of textbooks, which seldom deal with issues of race or social justice. Often, there is an expectation that teachers will “get through the whole textbook,” leaving little time for them to discuss issues

beyond it.

Wright emphasized that a greater force contributes to the compliance with textbook-based curricula: standardized tests. She explained that even when teachers want to introduce social justice, current events, etc. into their classrooms, they find themselves limited by the notion that at the end of the year, test scores will be used to assess their worth.

This reaches a political level, she added, because “the expertise of teachers gets shamed by politicians, and that trickles down to superintendents and principals,” which builds the pressure on teachers to ignore their instincts and teach to the book or the test.

Beyond the institutional barriers, the censorship of these discussions also occurs as a form of ideology called “adultism,” which Wright defined as “the belief that young people are inferior or ‘in development.’” Following this theory, youth are regarded as less than whole people who require protection from the world’s more challenging ideas. “[Students] are thinking about these issues anyway,” Wright added. “They’re not being protected.”

To get the perspective of a current and local high school student, I spoke to Ilana Fogle, a sophomore at The Williams School. Ilana told me first-hand how poorly issues of race are handled at Williams.

Ilana, who is of Israeli descent, told me, “When I came here, a lot of stereotypes about Jews and darker people were put upon me. People kept asking me if I was black,” illustrating the ignorance and lack of understanding present among The Williams School’s student body. Ilana continued, “this one girl was just staring at

me for five minutes and said to me, ‘You know, Ilana, you have a really big nose,’ and I know the teacher heard it and did nothing about it.”

Ilana’s comments were concerning, especially considering the teacher’s inaction in what was clearly an unjust situation. “A lot of bad words are being used and thrown around this school,” she added, “because people think it’s okay and normal when it’s really not, and no education has gone on about it.”

Hopefully The Williams School will catch up to its time, because according to Professor Wright, progress in high school discussions of race is on its way. “If teachers have a chance to visualize what they want students to learn, many of them do want to discuss [race],” she explained. In the past, the problem has been the fact that teachers rarely get to discuss curricula in spaces free of administrators, but with the rise of the information age, teachers have begun to share ideas and materials with each other more than ever.

“As these resources become available, more teachers are integrating them into their coursework,” Wright added, referring to tools ranging from storybooks to documentaries that can be used to teach children from kindergarten through high school about race and social justice.

With the methods described by Professor Wright and a shift in standardized test culture, hopefully high schools will begin to produce more informed students. Although Ilana’s accounts from The Williams School are not necessarily representative of all high schools, they do clearly indicate a need for change. The problem is close to home, but not exclusive to our community and neighbors. •

## The Friendship Model of Thesis Advising: Is it Replicable?

PETKO IVANOV  
CONTRIBUTING  
PROFESSOR

*This article was originally written in June 2014 with the editorial help of Professor MaryAnne Borrelli of the Government/International Relations Department.*

This year’s Oakes and Louise Ames Prize for the most outstanding honors thesis went to Jyoti Arvey ’14 of the Slavic Studies Department for “Gender in the Everyday Life of the Russian Home.” Her thesis is an ethnographic exploration of what it means to be a woman “the Russian way,” as revealed in the gendered daily practices of several families in Ufa, Russia. Having conducted four months of participatory observation and hours of interviews, Jyoti painted a vivid and nuanced picture of contemporary Russian life in the domestic sphere. As Jyoti’s advisor, I provided guiding hypotheses while letting the voices of her informants surprise us. Among the recurring topics most relevant to the identity constructions of domesticity was permanentnyi remont (ongoing home remodeling), which became an epistemological key to the gender dynamics of the Russian home.

Specifics of the topic aside, advising Jyoti in her thesis work was in and of itself a process worthy of reflection. Whatever else it is, “thesising,” a verb Sybil Bullock ’14 coined, is always collaborative. It involves so many parties that it is difficult to pay homage to all of them. An honors thesis is not accomplished in a year – it takes much longer and, in my experience, the crucial factor is building a network for mutual learning and support across students and faculty, in which advising is not a hierarchical practice but part of developing an intellectual partnership and, eventually, friendship.

In my case, it all started with Hegel. Some two and a half years ago I read Hegel’s *Philosophy of History* with a group of highly motivated students, as part of their self designed course on philosophies of modernity (other faculty members taught in the seminar as well). Some members of this group later resided in or frequented Earth House, which provided an emotional and intellectual atmosphere supportive for thesis projects; I was the primary advisor of two and a reader for a third. In many respects, the “earthlings” became a family and were regarded as such by its members – both faculty and students.

Arguably, the success of these students (their names were all over the Awards Ceremony list) was the result of circumstances deliberately nurtured by students and faculty alike. “Thesising” included topically relevant art projects like Juanpa’s (Juan Pablo Pacheco ’14) short film making and screening (in Film Studies), or Jyoti’s multimedia installation (in the Art Department). We learned that thesis writing is not only about the product (i.e., the thesis itself), but also about the process in which the writers acquire intellectual tools that they can continue using long after the writing itself is finished, hopefully throughout their careers.

Advising, of course, has its “technical” challenges: narrowing down the thesis topic (students usually start with mega ideas); adopting a theoretical framework and the readings that go with it; learning to do the writing in small, manageable steps while bearing in mind the overall composition of the thesis; and setting weekly priorities and small portion deadlines. Last but not least, there is a lot to be said about cooperating with faculty readers (Andrea Lanoux of Slavic Studies and Eileen Kanie of the History Department in Jyoti’s case) whose fresh critical lenses defamiliarize the project and help to negotiate its completion. It takes a department (or

two) to produce a successful honors thesis.

All of this said, the question remains whether “the friendship model” of thesis advising as described above is replicable, including for me. As Juanpa put it, “So what are you going to do now – replace us with another group of students?” While replacing this particular circle of friends is impossible, the model of close intellectual relationship with and among thesis writers could be sustained if students are more integrated cross generationally (with “younger” students gravitating around the seniors) and residentially (around housing that cultivates “thesis writing spirit”). •



Provided by author  
Pictured here: Professor Ivanov and his students

# Congratulations to the Women's Water Polo Team on Achieving Division III Championship Three-Peat

**WILL TOMASIAN**  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF  
ATHLETICS

GROVE CITY, Pa.—For the third consecutive year, the Connecticut College women's water polo team has been crowned as the Division III Champion.

The Camels gutted out a 13-10 victory against Washington & Jefferson College in Grove City, Pa. Saturday night to earn the threepeat.

Connecticut College improved its record to 18-13. They will turn their attention to the Collegiate Water Polo Championship that will be hosted by Princeton University.

Washington & Jefferson wrapped up a terrific season with a 17-9 record.

Senior All-Americans Kate Jacobson (Collegeville, Pa.) was named the Tournament's Most Valuable Player while Connecticut College Head Men's & Women's Water Polo Coach Matt Anderson was honored as the Coach of the Tournament.

Jacobson and fellow classmate and All-American Nicky Jasbon (Greenacres, Fla.) garnered first team All-Tournament honors while junior Kelsey Millward (Baie D'Urfe, Quebec) was recognized on the second team.

Senior Isabelle Baneux (Ithaca, N.Y.) erupted with three goals, four assists and four steals to lead the Camels to the win. Jacobson had three goals, two assists, one steal and one field block. Jasbon had a hat-trick with three goals, one assist and three steals.

Shannon Cry (Monterey, Calif.) finished with three goals, one assist and a pair of steals. Abbey Wroblewski (Honolulu, Hawaii) dished out two assists while adding one steal. Millward accounted for one goal and steal.

Brianna Harrity (Jeffersonville, Pa.) checked in with one assist and one steal for the Division III Champs.

Junior net-minder Ashley Amey (Napa, Calif.) made eight saves in the cage.

Millward leads the club with 67 goals and 65 steals while ranking second on the squad with 33 assists. Jacobson has amassed 57 goals and 22 assists to go with her 42 steals. She has tallied 191 goals, 131 assists and 132 steals in her prolific playing career.

Jasbon has tallied 50 goals, 32 assists, 53 steals and 10 field blocks for the Camels this season. The program's all-time leading scorer, Jasbon has amassed 219 goals, 122 assists and 244 steals for the Camels. •



CONN COLL ATHLETICS



CONN COLL ATHLETICS



CONN COLL ATHLETICS

## Player Profile: Sarah Fishman '15

**ELEANOR HARDY**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Major: Psychology

Years Rowing: 4 years

What got you interested in rowing?

I tore my ACL twice in high school. After the second time, my doctor strongly recommended I take up rowing (because how could you tear your ACL while sitting in a boat?) and put an end to my soccer days. When I was looking at colleges I was considering going somewhere that would allow me to walk on to the team and try it out. I applied to Conn ED and contacted Eva over the summer. On move in day, I met Eva for the first time and haven't looked back since!

Favorite part about being on the crew team:

The laughter. I don't know if it's the crazy early mornings or the amount of time we spend together over spring break, but there is always a reason to laugh and people to laugh with.

What is one thing you wish people would better understand/know about crew?

It is such a unifying sport. At a boat meeting last week, Annie Scheer said that she can't wait until the boat (8 rowers and 1 coxswain) gets to a point of breathing together. Although it sounds crazy and kind of cultish, she is absolutely right. Once a crew clicks, everyone does breathe and move together and there is no better feeling.

End of the Season Goal:

Have each boat leave New England's with a medal and im-

prove within the 8's racing pool at ECACs.

Will you continue to row after graduating?

I don't think this spring will be my last time in a boat, but I will certainly need a break from those early morning wake ups. You can only be a morning person for so long!

How do you get up so early for your crazy practices?

REALLY loud music and alarms. My neighbors and roommates have been true gems for putting up with me over the last four years. I'm living next to Grace Steward this year, so I have a built-in alarm clock right next door! I also usually leave my phone out of reach before I go to bed. When my alarm went off before 5am on Saturday morning, I had no choice but to get up and turn it off. •

## Player Profile: Michael Clougher

Major:

I am triple majoring in computer science, mathematics, and economics.

Years Rowing:

5 ½

What got you interested in rowing?

I had some friends on the team in high school who thought that I might be a decent rower, and so they convinced me to join.

What is your favorite part about being on the crew team?

There is no other feeling like getting out on the water when it's really nice weather and just row for miles up the river.

What is one thing you wish people would better understand/know about crew?

I think few people realize how the sport is just as technically demanding as it is physically; it takes a lot of body awareness and con-

trol to row effectively, and smaller boats can easily become unstable on the water.

Goals for the season:

I want to help set the team up for a strong showing at our New England Championships, and I will also be competing after that in my single at the Dad Vail Regatta, which is the largest collegiate regatta in the country.

How has being on the crew team defined your time here?

It's certainly been an integral part of my experience at Conn since I devote so much time and energy to it, but I really love it and I have found it to be incredibly rewarding.

Will you continue to row following college?

Yes, I am definitely going to continue rowing competitively after graduation. •

# ATHLETIC ACTIVISM: UCONN COACH BOYCOTTS FINAL FOUR

**SARAH ROSE GRUSZECKI**  
CONTRIBUTOR

It was a tumultuous week for the NCAA as coaches, players and athletic officials as they approached the Final Four Championship in Indiana. However, amidst the roaring crowd, overpaid coaches and Division I athletes, there's one individual who didn't stand on the sidelines this year. UConn head coach, Kevin Ollie, did not travel with his men's basketball staff this season in response to Indiana's controversial Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

The decision not to attend was made in response to and in support of Governor Daniel Malloy's signing of an executive order which placed a travel ban to Indiana. The order was declared following the announcement of Indiana's Religious Freedom Restoration Act which many critics argued would promote LGBTQ discrimination. Specifically, several politicians feared the law would allow businesses to refuse LGBTQ individuals strictly on account of their

sexuality or gender identity. As described by Malloy in an interview with MSNBC, "A member of the army could be gay, go into a coffee shop under this law and have someone say 'because you're gay, even though you're wearing the uniform of the United States, I am not going to serve you.' That was the intent of the law, they knew what they were doing, and someone has to call them on it."

According to UConn president Susan Herbst, the team's decision to boycott Indiana travel was one which deeply reflects the morals and core values of the institution. As described by Herbst in a recent press release, "UConn is a community that values all of our members and treats each person with the same degree of respect, regardless of their background and beliefs, and we will not tolerate any other behavior."

Although UConn Men's team was not in the final four this year, as reigning champions of 2014, their avoidance of the event resonated strongly throughout the athletic community. Following the statement, many others within the NBA have expressed simi-

lar sentiments against the law including former NBA player and current TV basketball analyst Charles Barkley. As described by Barkley in an interview with USA Today, "Discrimination in any form is unacceptable to me. As long as anti-gay legislation exists in any state, I strongly believe big events such as the Final Four and Super Bowl should not be held in those states' cities."

In defense of the Act, many republican officials have argued that any implications of homophobia within the religious protection act are unintentional. House Speaker Brian Bosma and Senate President Pro Tem David Long, two of Indiana's most influential politicians, have both pledged to fight for an updated format of the act which will explicitly protect the rights of those within the LGBTQ community. Although the update still requires a vote from the legislature and a signature from the governor, its chances of passing with the support of Bosma and Long are reasonably high.

From the perspective of many, the controversy surrounding Indiana's religious freedom law may seem surprising. Howev-

er, the proposal is strikingly in line with the state's lack of protections for LGBTQ residents. According to the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), in the majority of US states, including Indiana, there are no laws which currently protect LGBTQ individuals from being fired solely on behalf of their sexuality or gender identity. Indiana is not alone or in its development of the Religious Freedom Act, as many states including Arkansas have created or are in the process of developing similar proposals.

Perhaps what is most unusual, however about the act's controversy is the outpour of support and activism on behalf of the NBA and the greater athletic community. While some argue that politics have no place in athletics, it has been recently contested that our ever growing professional athletic industry plays a key role in promoting concrete social change. This activism was profoundly demonstrated in light of the Ferguson shooting, where members of the St. Louis Rams protested the Grand Jury's decision by walking on the field portraying an all too familiar

"hands-up, don't shoot" gesture. Although the participating players received multiple threats following the games proceedings, their commitment to standing in solidarity and promoting racial justice were commended by many, both in and out of the athletic community.

In the context of LGBTQ issues, our nation has also been a recent witness to remarkable athletic initiatives including the "You Can Play" campaign which seeks to eliminate homophobia in athletics. The program has been successfully implemented in professional athletics, colleges and universities across the country, including Connecticut College. Many professional athletes, most notably UMass Basketball player Derrick Gordon and former NFL pro Scott Fujita, have taken equally strong public stances to advocate LGBTQ equality. Indiana's policymakers may be lagging behind, but one can only hope the athletic community will continue to tread forward in the fight for social justice. •

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

**Women's Lacrosse:**  
Conn 10- 14 Bowdoin  
Conn 11- 10 Amherst

**Men's Lacrosse:**  
Conn 10- 13 Amherst  
Conn 7- 12 Bowdoin

**Men's Tennis:**  
Conn 2 - 7 Bates  
Conn 0-9 Williams

**Women's Tennis:**  
Conn 5- 4 Bates  
Conn 0-9 Williams

**Men's Track & Field:**  
5th place out of 16 teams  
@ Silfen Invitational

**Women's Track & Field:**  
4th place out of 17 teams  
@ Silfen Invitational

## SO YOU DON'T MISS IT

**Men's Lacrosse:**  
@ Hamilton  
4/18 1:00 PM

**Women's Lacrosse:**  
vs Farmingdale State  
4/16 7:00 PM  
vs Hamilton  
4/18 12:00 PM

**Women's Tennis:**  
@ Tufts  
4/18 10:30 AM

**Men's Tennis:**  
@ Tufts  
4/18 2:30 PM

## College Inducts Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2015

**ELEANOR HARDY**  
**DYLAN STEINER**  
SPORTS EDITORS

On Sat. April 11 the Connecticut College Athletic Hall of Fame inducted three alumni and one former coach with a ceremony plaque reveal in the Hall of Fame Room for their achievements as Camels. The recent inductees are former head coach of women's field hockey and lacrosse Anne Parmenter, javelin thrower Kerry Newhall Heath '98, dual athlete in men's lacrosse and ice hockey Tim Boyd '01 and long distance runner Adam Fitzgerald '03.

Parmenter led the field hockey team from 1987 to 2000, where they appeared in six ECAC Division III New England Championships, and the lacrosse team from 1991 to 2000 with a 107-47 record and nine ECAC attendances and two championship titles. Since 2000, Parmenter has coached women's field hockey at Trinity College and in 2006, climbed Mt. Everest.

Heath placed fifth in the javelin throw at the 1996 NCAA Championships for track & field, and in 1997 won the ECAC championship in the same event and still holds the school record.

Boyd helped lead the men's lacrosse team in 2001 to their first appearance in the semifinal round of the NESCAC Championship, and the men's ice hockey team to an ECAC Championship game in 1998. Upon graduating, he was given the Anita L. DeFrantz '74 Award.

Fitzgerald placed 25<sup>th</sup> at the 2003 NCAA men's cross-country cham-

pionship and contributed to the Camels' notable 20<sup>th</sup> place finish that year. He won multiple New England Division III Championships, All-New England Championships and NESCAC titles in the 10,000-meter run. Since graduating Fitzgerald served as volunteer assistant coach to the Camels cross country and track & field teams from 2004 to 2010 and is an avid marathon runner.

The Athletic Hall of Fame was created in 1989 to honor members of the college community "who have brought distinction to themselves and Connecticut College through their achievement, commitment, sportsmanship and leadership in athletics." •

# Burdge's Baseball Breakdown

**PETER BURDGE**  
STAFF WRITER

**World Series winner:**  
Baltimore Orioles

And so the baseball season has begun. There will be dark horses and crashing stars. There will be languid summer games, and intense chilly October nights. There will be joy, and there will be disappointment. And there will be predictions.

So here are my predictions for the coming season. Based off of the failure of my haughty assurance that Kentucky would win the NCAA tournament (they did not even make the championship game), who knows if this version will be more accurate. But predictions are hardly ever true; they only need to be made.

**Biggest surprise:**  
Cleveland Indians

Coming off of two decent years, the Indians are ready to make a move. Their division has no powerhouse—the Tigers are on the downswing, Kansas City will have to battle pressure from last year's World Series run. Led by manager Terry Francona, who has two World Series wins on his resume, Cleveland fits the role of a scrappy ragtag team that can win games. They will not dazzle anyone, but they will win games. Outfielder Michael Brantley is a classic five-tool threat, leading the team with 200 hits last year, and perennially posting 20 home runs. Cleveland even added some boost to its lineup with Brandon Moss, who was the center of power in the Oakland A's offense over the past three seasons. And few remember that the Indians' No. 1 starter Corey Kluber won the Cy Young Award last season. The ingredients are there, and they have been simmering for a few years now. The Indians will make a deep run into the postseason and will finally bring some joy to Cleveland.

**Biggest disappointment:**  
Washington Nationals

Yes, Washington might have the best rotation in baseball history. On paper. When was the last time the best team on paper, the team with the scariest roster and the greatest names in the game, lived up to the hype? I can't remember one. The list of mega-teams that failed drags on through the Angels of recent years, the 2012 Marlins, the 2011 Red Sox and the Yankees of the early 2000's. All of these teams tried to win by stockpiling the best players in the game and it never worked. Washington is trying to do that this season, adding Max Scherzer to its already bloated starting rotation. Scherzer was great in 2013 when he won the Cy Young Award, but he is not near the best pitcher in baseball as the Nationals' diehards and bandwagoners will have us believe. Yes, the roster has some great names. Ian Desmond, Bryce Harper, Stephen Strasbourg, and Scherzer will get fans to salivate, but those oh-so-coveted stars have never won anything. Washington is a hyped-up bunch of underachievers, and all signs point to a failure of a season. Many have deemed this season as a coronation ceremony for the Nationals, but they will not even make the playoffs.

**Player to watch:**  
Jose Abreu

Major League Baseball is anticipating a wave of Cuban stars with the opening of relations between the United States and the island nation. But it's hard to believe Cuba can give the league any star better than Jose Abreu. Last season's American League Rookie of the Year, Abreu posted prolific power numbers with the White Sox. He thundered onto the baseball scene with 10 home runs in April (a rookie record) and 31 RBI (also a rookie record). His numbers slowed a bit towards the end of last year, which is understandable since he had hit 29 home runs and driven in 73 runs at the All-Star break, numbers that are great for a full season let alone half. So expect great things out of Abreu on a reloaded White Sox team. We all have thought that 50-home run seasons are extinct, but Abreu will hit 50 this season. He is bringing raw power back to the game and has quickly become the scariest hitter in baseball.

**Team to watch:**  
Chicago Cubs

Is this the year? The Cubs have not won a World Series since 1908, and have not been relevant in nearly a decade. This year has a different feel about it. Making Jon Lester their No. 1 starter with a megacontract and bringing former Rays' manager Joe Madden into the dugout, Chicago is more primed for a World Series win than it has ever been. Even their homegrown talent Anthony Rizzo, Javier Baez and Kris Bryant look like stars. Yet it is hard to believe that this is the year. In baseball, teams rarely turn around on a dime from season to season, and after winning only 73 games last year, the Cubs have work to do. Lester is a great pitcher, and even better in the postseason, but it has yet to be seen if he can singlehandedly carry a team on his back. And having young guns is great and it attracts fans, but they also need time to develop and become winning players, not just players who put up good numbers. So have patience Cubs fans, this may not be your year. But no matter what your Cubs do this year it will be worth following, simply to see what happens.

Why not Baltimore? The Orioles have been near the top of the game for years now, and they are made up of players ready to win. Manny Machado is the best third baseman in baseball. The team's outfield is as sure as any. From top to bottom their pitching staff is solid, and they have one of the best bullpens around. Yet what makes Baltimore most appealing is really a process of elimination. The rest of the American League is not much better—Seattle seems to be a favorite, but the Mariners are unproven and incredibly limited in postseason experience. The Red Sox are riddled with question marks. Cleveland will be good, but not good enough to outhit Baltimore in a playoff series.

When they do reach the World Series, the Orioles will not face a murderer's row from the National League either. There are solid teams but none stick out. St. Louis could make the World Series. So could Pittsburgh. Even the Mets (yes, the Mets) could make a run. But this is Baltimore's year. Whoever the team faces in the World Series will not be as complete or as powerful as the Orioles. So I'm picking Baltimore. Why not?

That tends to be the very nature of making predictions—there are educated guesses and there are guesses that simply have good feelings about them, so we try to combine the two into one clean outcome whittled down from a jumble of names. So take my predictions as you will. They may very well be wrong, but where is the fun if I don't make them? •

## GET IN THE GAME

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## DEFACEMENT VS. GRAFFITI:

*How Language Frames Understandings of Campus Vandalism*

JAMES LAFORTEZZA

DAKOTA PESCHEL  
OPINIONS EDITOR

Graffiti has a long history of being a tool for protest. Because of its public form it inherently makes a statement to a broad audience of passersby and not ones who frequent galleries or museums. What was written on the bathroom walls in Cro a mere two weeks ago is not graffiti, it is defacement. There is nothing artistic about the scribbles that were found on the bathroom walls the morning of March 29. On the other hand, the visual event of anonymous students painting the words "I Feel Unsafe" in three prominent locations on campus, one outside of Fanning, one outside of Crozier-Williams and the last by the entrance of the Athletic Center, is better aligned with graffiti as an art movement. Quibbles with language are often thought to be trivial endeavors. However, language has the power to frame how one views our visual world and thus it is also important to be critical and understand the long and heavy historical context of these two campus visual spectacles that occurred in the past two weeks.

Initially in the 1960s and '70s when graffiti started to gain traction as a movement, this mode of representation was not considered an artform but merely a scratching or writing on the walls. Even the artists themselves would refer to their craft as "writing" and call themselves "writers." Writing is a political act, particularly in the public sphere. However, graffiti is more than that. Famed street artist LSD OM notes, "My first impression of why other people were writing was because I felt people were angry, upset that they didn't have a voice in the world." It is clear that graffiti, as an art form, is about critiquing and questioning power and expressing oneself particularly if one feels their voice is stifled or

suppressed. Even though many excite over graffiti art, it is also a highly contentious medium because it is technically defacement and vandalism, and thus it is often devalued.

Today, some would still consider this contention enough to label graffiti a medium that is unworthy of praise. Regardless of these opinions (opinions similar to those who do not value abstract expressionism or modern art in general), this style has also been co-opted into institutions like museums and galleries that have given legitimacy and cultural capital to this form of expression. Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring are but two artists who became famous due in large part to the graffiti art that they promulgated throughout New York City. Both of these artists created distinctive visual languages that took to the walls of New York City and let the people know of their struggles and hopes. Their positions as marginalized artists, Basquiat as black and Haring as gay and HIV-positive, are integral to the form of their work and the ideas they explored in a public arena. Graffiti art is inherently activist in nature which is why it is crucial to understand the difference between the two campus incidents and how mislabeling them is an act of injustice.

The incident in Cro does not elicit nor does it merit being associated with this very deep history. Obviously this is only a short overview of the wide range of ways that graffiti has been used as a form of protest, but what it comes down to is very simple: to call this hastily scrawled racist phrase on the bathroom walls graffiti would be to elevate this to the status of art when in reality it is a tired remnant of Jim Crow era segregation. This is evidenced by the fact that the defacement occurred in a bathroom, a historically loaded battleground of racial injustice and bigotry.

This also brings to light how

little American culture has come in demystifying and understanding racism as a structure that perpetually privileges whiteness. It is certainly clear that there has been little progress. While many students on our campus have been in crisis mode even before this moment, there are still many who do not understand and do not care to understand how this incident has affected their peers. Essentially what it boils down to was that scrawling this phrase was an act of violence, not an act of protest. It was an act of oppression that reinforced white supremacy and privilege, not an act of revolution that deconstructed these very notions. Graffiti historically has been a form of art that has given voice to those who are interested in making a public statement from their marginalized positions. By continually framing the incident in the Crozier-Williams bathrooms as "racist graffiti," the College seemingly elevates this visceral act of hate into art while delegitimizing graffiti's rich historical and social contexts as an art form.

The student response to this incident on the morning of the 30th of March was actually a work that merits being called graffiti. It was a thoughtful, powerful message that made it clear how our institution is failing its students. The message was clear and concise, and was an act of protest that is artistically building on graffiti art as art that is imbued with social commentary. This kind of institutional critique of power is at the very core of the history of graffiti, which is why it is critical to distinguish the language that is used to describe the two incidents. While both inevitably fall under the category of "vandalism," the former is defacement that caused immense harm, the second was an act of protest--a call to action for the campus to make change.



THE MOVEMENT INSTAGRAM

## The Greenhouse

I trudge along; my face is cold and raw  
My glasses fog with every breath I draw  
I glimpse a great glass bubble in the snow  
I push ahead, my pace no longer slow  
I reach the glass and cast my gaze inside,  
A misty jungle blooming and alive  
Hands in my coat I lean against the door  
Some snow I shed melts quickly on the floor  
A rush of air comes forth to meet the cold  
I feel the grip of winter lose its hold  
My dripping nose is captured by a scent  
And whirling back in time my thoughts are sent  
Suddenly I'm lying in the grass,  
I'm gazing at the clouds as they roll past  
I'm drifting home; my sneakers caked with earth  
My smiling lips and eyes betray my mirth  
I'm sprinting through the woods with dog in tow  
Twilight resting on the trees, they glow  
A voice I hear tells me to get to work  
My mind is brought to present with a jerk  
With cheeks made red I turn to wash the panes  
The smile upon my lips and eyes remains

## Poetry Corner

-Jason Hamburger

# On the Centenary of Saul Bellow

**MATTHEW WHIMAN**  
ARTS EDITOR

So, Saul Bellow would have been 100 this year. That's a big deal, partially because—in case you didn't know—Saul Bellow is a big deal. He's a Nobel laureate. He's been awarded a Pulitzer Prize, a Guggenheim Fellowship, an O. Henry Award and a National Medal of Arts. He's also the only writer to have won three National Book Awards. He is arguably the most decorated novelist of the 20th century, if not of all time.

As an English major, I'm embarrassed to say that I'd never read anything by Bellow until a little over a year ago, outside of class, when I found a beat up hardcover of one of his novels, *Herzog*, in a bookstore. For whatever reason, I bought and read it. I'm glad I did.

*Herzog* is the most perfect novel I've ever read. I declare that without hesitation.

Often cited as Bellow's masterpiece, the book is about Moses Herzog, an academic in his mid-40's recovering from his second failed marriage and the turmoil of middle age. It has no real plot to speak of. It's mostly epistolary, made up of Herzog's rambling letters to everyone including his mistress, President Eisenhower, Nietzsche and even God.

It's a strange novel, and as I read it for the first time last summer, I often found myself asking: Why? Why am I—a 21-year-old college student—reading a near-400 page book about an intellectual going through a mid-life crisis? It seemed like a viable enough question, yet I was also somehow drawn to the book like no other I'd read before.

I've since read more Bellow, not everything he's written, but enough to know that my compulsion to *Herzog* was no fluke. Bellow's other novels and short stories carry just as much emotional depth along with the dense intellectual provocation that brimmed off the pages of *Herzog*. Many writers are considered successful if they can manage to imbue their work with one of the two—feeling and thought. Bellow not only accomplishes the feat of writing books that contain both, but he does it better than anyone else I've read.

That's why I'm glad to see that this year—on the 100th anniversary of his birth and 10th anniversary of his death—Bellow is being celebrated with the recognition a writer of his talent and merit deserves.

Events are being held across the country, mainly in New York

and Bellow's adopted home Chicago, honoring the writer's life and extraordinary body of work. There are also several book releases in store, including a reissue of *Herzog* with a new introduction by Bellow's friend and fellow 20th century literary titan Philip Roth, as well as the first volume of an extensive biography on Bellow by Zachary Leader.

Both of those releases are planned for early May, but a book of Bellow's collected non-fiction, *There is Simply Too Much to Think About*, was already released at the end of March.

Because Bellow wrote non-fiction in all forms, from personal essays and lectures to reviews and more critical pieces, and the collection culls works from all periods of his career, *There is Simply Too Much to Think About* has the ability to delight and disappoint in equal measure.

If the collection shows anything, it's that Bellow was always clearly most at home writing fiction. That doesn't mean certain pieces don't rise above the rest and stand out as fantastic works in themselves. His essay "On Jewish Storytelling" weaves together general history, personal anecdote and an academic seriousness to the topic to create a concise whole that is—like his best novels—both enlightening and entertaining.

Some works in the collection—particularly the lectures—drag and wander on aimless asides that are neither all that necessary nor interesting. Because there are so many such inclusions, the collection never becomes a seamless and enjoyable whole. Chalk that up to the editing job of Benjamin Taylor, who also made the puzzling decision to exclude a number of short eulogies Bellow wrote for several academic and literary friends. The best of which is about John Berryman and first appeared as the forward to the poet's posthumously released novel *Recovery*. It is a touching farewell to Bellow's colleague and an exquisite piece of writing, but is nowhere to be found in *There is Simply Too Much to Think About*.

The collection is an obvious must have for any Bellow fan, if only to have Bellow's seemingly boundless knowledge on hand for whatever needs it may satisfy. Everyone else should start with his fiction, which is what his reputation rests on. It's the reason Bellow's centenary is being observed this year, and it will likely be the cause for another celebration 100 years from now. •

# Ear Training: A Conversation with Caroline Lazar '15, Candidate for Honors in Creative Writing

**MITCH PARO**  
STAFF WRITER

**TCV:** Why did you choose to do a thesis in creative writing?

**CL:** For me it was the natural choice. I came here knowing that I wanted to do creative writing. I had been speaking with Blanche Boyd [the college's writer in residence and a professor of English] since my junior year of high school about the program and the way she runs things. As to the thesis, I wanted to come away from senior year with a solid collection of work, something that I could put down on a table and say I did this, this is done, this is what I went to school for [with three authoritative thumps of the table].

**TCV:** So you have a professional interest in fiction writing?

**CL:** Absolutely. In a beautiful ideal world, yes [lingering over the first syllable of "beautiful"]. At 16 I started writing for McSweeney's, Dave Eggers' publishing company. I had a two year contract to write non-fiction, mostly narrative, personal essays. At Conn the emphasis is on the short story. I liked this because I had always been driven towards fiction, even when writing non-fiction. In a way fiction is truer, and the idea of that truth always interested me.

**TCV:** Is truth a theme of your project?

**CL:** Not intentionally. As you write a lot of stories you find the themes that you subconsciously repeat because you are obsessed with these things.

**TCV:** What obsessions found their way in?

**CL:** I'm highly inspired by comedians. Take someone like Steve Martin, who can be so funny and then so smart and serious. That marriage has always been interesting to me. It's something that I aspire to achieve in my own work.

Andy Kaufman said that what he worked for was purity of reaction in his audience. Whether that meant laughter or anger, the purity of the reaction was primary. That's something that I strive for as well.

The title of my thesis is *Thrill of the Chafe: and other Tales of Stubborn North Americans*. Many of the stories deal with Americans who are set in their ways and confronted with some reason to change. Also, white bald men show up frequently in my stories. One of the stories, for example, is about a fictionalized, washed up Billy Joel. I was interested the idea that a white man in this society is supposed to be at the top of the heap, but he might not recognize his own decline, might not recognize that he is fooling himself. And this is not just men. One story is about a woman in the Ozarks that imagines she's royalty as she spends her days sitting in a lawn chair on her concrete lawn. I think that one of the saddest and funniest things is when people can't recognize who they are, while they stubbornly hold onto a mistaken identity.

[Here the conversation turned to the author Nabokov]. Nabokov is one of my top, top. Take *Lolita*. Humbert Humbert is a pervert and a bad guy, but he is so funny. His humor is attractive even while we are

aware of how perverse the whole situation is. This is the kind of humor I'm interested in, the kind that is shot through with sadness.

**TCV:** How do you work? Pen? Pencil? Computer? Do you draft?

**CL:** I always carry around a couple of notebooks, a different one for each bag. I take notes throughout the day. When I feel I have a story, I type out the notes in a document called "notes" in the same form that they are in the notebook. I make a new document for the story, and write and edit on the computer.

**TCV:** I don't write down everything and then draft. Draft. Draft. [three more thumps]. I work the sentence while I'm chugging away. I can't let a paragraph go unless I've tuned it right...And it always feels like it could use a little more tuning. One of the first pages of the thesis has a list of alternate titles which is covered with my notes and scribbles. This is to represent the sort of editing and self-critical work that went into this project.

**CL:** I read each of my stories out loud about fifty times. Every line. Blanche calls this "ear training". By hearing yourself, or Blanche, or other students read stories out loud, you learn to catch with your ear what's good and what's not. I have to shut myself away while I do this, for everyone else's sake, more than mine. To other people it sounds like you are reading the same weird line over and over, which I guess you are [mutual chuckle]. But you have to listen to it like music, you have to make sure every note sounds right to you. If there is one "and" out of place, it disrupts the rhythm of the entire story.

**TCV:** What has Blanche done for you?

**CL:** The best thing she can and has done for me is to kick my ass, and you can quote that. If my work isn't as good as she knows it can be, she'll say "give me better, because I know you have it in you." I had a story last year that was well received [it won a prize at the college and was a finalist for a national prize at John Hopkins]. Blanche will warn you, in these situations, not to get "one-story-itis." She will knock out the fear of writing something new. You've written a good story, great, now write the next one. Do the work. Do the work.... Blanche has two rules: "Is it good? And, does it matter?" I am firmly in the Blanche school of thought. To me, these are the only two things that there are. Overall, I really can't thank her for everything she has done for me.

**TCV:** Are you happy with the product?

**CL:** Wittgenstein said, after one of his books was published at only 75 pages: "as to the shortness of the book, I am awfully sorry for it...if you were to squeeze me like a lemon you would find nothing more." I use this as an epigraph. Which is not to say that there is nothing more in me, but what I have to say for these stories, I've said.

**TCV:** What's next, in life?

**CL:** Next fall I have an internship with Saturday Night Live's Weekend Update. Beyond that, the goal is to never stop writing. In a perfect world, I would write for SNL. But I'm highly superstitious so \*knocks on wood\* knock on wood. •



# X Ambassadors LIVE

**ELEANOR HARDY**  
SPORTS EDITOR

We're all used to that same Saturday night in Cro. The smell, the white walls, the tile—they've all been branded in our minds and almost become a second nature to some—a Saturday night ritual. This year one of the SAC Executive Board's goals was to "diversify events and utilize a variety of places on and off-campus" explains SAC Co-Chair Olivia Wilcox '15. This weekend SAC accomplished their goal, or some would say knocked it out of the park, hosting a concert at the Hygienic Art Park in New London.

Little do many people know, the park has had quite a history before becoming what it is today. Starting as the Hygienic Restaurant in 1919 the restaurant served as New London's only 24-hour eatery. The Hygienic Art Incorporation then began in 1979 and hosted its first exhibit in the restaurant and place for artists to show one piece of their work. After a successful first show, the Art Exhibition became an annual festival in New London. Despite the restaurant later closing, the show continued and was held in various historic venues throughout New London.

In 1996 the original building of the Hygienic Restaurant was being prepared for demolition in order to accommodate a bank parking lot on Main Street, and this ignited a grassroots effort as the local community worked to save the Historically Registered building. Through partnerships with many state-wide and local organizations the Hygienic Art Incorporation bought the building and renovated it to accommodate a residential artists cop and public art galleries. At the 21st annual exhibition in 2000, the building opened and remains today as a symbol of community activism and the arts.

Presently, this unique space hosts several events throughout the year. With a park next to the building, SAC put this dynamic outdoor space to use hosting this year's Spring Concert. With over 300 students being bused between the park and Conn, it strayed far from the typical or ritualistic Saturday.

Conn's very own MOBROC band The Banditos kicked off the night with their much loved classics. Collier Gray, a member of The Banditos said "It was awesome to get into New London for a show. Hygienic Art Park is a great venue and the audience's mentality is totally different when they make it to a show off-campus."

Following The Banditos, X-Ambassadors, a New York based band, performed as the headliners for the night. While the majority of Conn students didn't know much about the

band, it was apparent that everyone enjoyed the night. SAC tends to have a knack for finding bands right before their big break. Jeff Celniker '17, Director of Musical Events and Concerts, has done an exceptional job introducing Conn students to new and different bands. Recently featured on TV, the X-Ambassadors are bound to make their big break.

Celniker explained that he "heard their top song Jungle during the World Cup and it became a favorite over the summer." When the Concerts Committee first started planning the spring concert Celniker and the crew thought that a band, rather than a DJ, would be best as it appeals to a wide range of kids. Featuring songs from their most recent album, Love Songs Drug Songs, Celniker and his committee made the right choice as when Jungle came on excitement flowed through the crowd. Although a shorter set, students were happy to be somewhere new and listening to different music rather than another DJ.

The community outreach through events such as these are crucial to our developing relationship with New London. Getting students off campus is never an easy task but a change of pace can make it a success. Alumna Sarah Huckins reflected that "I think it's great that there's been an increase in the spaces used for events since my time here, it makes things more exciting." Celniker agrees and explained that in his position on SAC he is "definitely invested in bridging the gap between the surrounding area and Conn."

All in all, SAC succeeded in doing things differently. The music was enjoyed by all, members of New London community stopped by the park to see what was happening, and students got a taste of one of New London's many hidden artistic gems. •



PHOTOS: JEFF CELNIKER

