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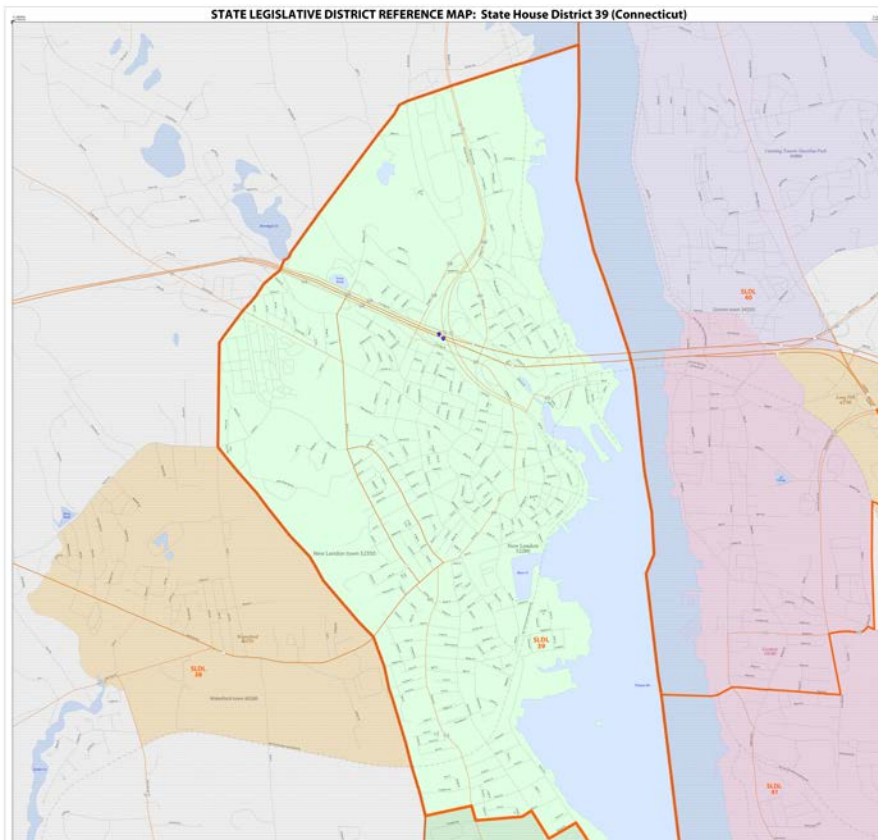
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THE COLLEGE VOICE

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1977

Students May Have More Political Power Than Is Realized



ANDREW LOPEZ
CONTRIBUTOR, RESEARCH SUPPORT LIBRARIAN AT SHAIN LIBRARY

When considering the recent special election for the Connecticut House of Representatives in the 39th District (Feb. 26, 2019) – basically the northern $\frac{2}{3}$ of New London – a second look at the numbers reveals that Connecticut College students could have changed the outcome. The Connecticut Secretary of the State Election Center website indicates that, as reported in this newspaper (March 5, 2019), Anthony Nolan won the election with a mere 963 votes, roughly half of the College's student population.

Despite running on the Green Party line, which carries unequal barri-

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A Talk With the SGA President

DANA GALLAGHER
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Editors' Note: The Voice (TCV) sat down with SGA President Jami-la Ezbidi '19 to learn about her current initiatives and vision for the future. Ezbidi is an Architectural Studies and International Relations double major. She is a CISLA scholar, member of the orchestra, co-chair of Architectural Studies SAB, and member of CISLA SAB.

TCV: How long have you been involved in SGA? What motivated you to first run for an SGA position and now serve as President?

I became involved in SGA my sophomore year when I ran for the position of Chair of Equity and Inclusion. What motivated me to run for that position was the experience I had had as a first-year international Arab student on campus. While the Office of the Dean of International Students I became involved in SGA my sophomore year when I ran for the position of Chair of Equity and Inclusion. What motivated me to run for that position was the experience I had had as a first-year international Arab student on campus. While the Office of the Dean of International Students eased our transition to Conn, many of us still encountered certain barriers to full participation throughout various aspects of our college

experience. I quickly realized how my experience aligned with that of many other underrepresented students on campus and decided to run for a position on the Executive Board which would allow me to address some of these barriers in an effort to push the institution to further provide underrepresented students with the structural support they need.

TCV: What are some initiatives that you are spearheading?

This semester, I serve as the Chair of the Commission on the resurrection of the Commission on Shared Governance, a committee meant to evaluate the practice of shared governance throughout the different sectors of the college. We have decided to put together a guiding document that outlines strategies to assure that committees are functioning effectively and devised a

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Sarah Potter investigates the partnership between CCDining and NewLo-based food organization Brigaid on page 6.

OPINIONS

CCDems and CCRCC debate the release of Robert Mueller's findings on Russian collusion in the 2016 election on page 8.

OPINIONS

Sophia Angele-Kuehn considers the impact of Conn's Master Plan on page 12.

ARTS

Emir Kulluk reviews the Netflix original movie *Triple Frontier* on page 13.

From the Editor

The behavior of the parents, coaches and other higher education professionals implicated so far in the college admissions scandal is deplorable. For those of you who may not have caught up on the news over break, on March 12, prosecutors in the US Attorney's Office of the District of Massachusetts indicted about 50 people connected to schemes to fraudulently. These included fraudulently applying for extended time or engaging surrogate test takers on the SAT and ACT college entrance examinations and admitting students to colleges as recruited athletes at NCAA Division I schools for sports they clearly were not skilled enough to play at that level.

There is no evidence that Connecticut College or any of its employees has been involved in wrongdoing of this magnitude in our admissions process. All of the schools listed as "Other Relevant Entities" in the racketeering indictment brought against 12 of the 50 initial defendants were Division I schools whereas Conn is a Division III school. However, it is still unclear which schools admitted students who committed fraud through test taking practices on the SAT and ACT. There's a possibility that past or present students here or at similar small liberal arts colleges knowingly or unknowingly matriculated as a result of the part of this scandal related to fraudulent activity on tests.

The revelation of this scheme has also led to a national conversation about whether college admissions is truly the meritocratic system that most selective schools claim it is. While it is clear that outright bribery of employees of colleges is unacceptable in our society, the likelihood that parents who make or commit to making large tax deductible donations to schools will in turn have their children admitted to those schools has been well documented for nearly fifteen years. Daniel Golden's 2005 book, *The Price of Admission*, documents how Charles Kushner pledged to donate \$2.5 million over ten years to Harvard University. Not long afterward, his son Jared gained admittance to Harvard despite administrators at his high school firmly believing his academic record did not merit his acceptance there. Jared Kushner is now a prominent figure in US politics, he and his wife Ivanka Trump now serve as Advisors to the President of the United States.

Connecticut College's Honor Roll of Giving from November 2018 states that parents of 18 students in the classes of 2018 – 2022 gave at least \$10,000 to the College during the 2017-2018 fundraising period, and two of the aforementioned students in the Class of 2020 have parents who will be partially funding the \$500,000 donation challenge that the College will be attempting to earn this week. It's important to remember that it's possible for a student to have both extremely generous parents and credentials that make one a strong candidate for a selective college. Additionally the generosity and investment of affluent parents and legacy families is ultimately what keeps Conn in operation and makes it one of the top liberal arts colleges in the country. At the same time our admissions and advancement offices may be making a Faustian bargain with the perception that they give preferential treatment to applicants whose parents promise to be good philanthropic targets.

-Saadya

THE COLLEGE VOICE

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

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Community Bulletin

Why are so Many Women Leaving the Coast Guard?

According to a study released by the RAND Corporation on March 30, 71.1 percent of men stay in the Coast Guard after four years of service compared to 62.4 percent of women -- a gap of 8.7 percent. At the 10-year mark, the gap is 12.3 percent. While similar trends are observed in the other military services, the Coast Guard's retention rates are relatively high in comparison, the study says. RAND's study points out that since leaders are promoted from within the Coast Guard, the higher numbers of women leaving reduces "the supply of potential female leaders."

Connecticut Bans on Plastic Bags, Straws, Containers Passed by Committee

Connecticut is moving toward a statewide ban on products including bags, straws and take-out containers. The legislature's Environment Committee approved legislation on March 25 that would ban Connecticut stores from giving customers single-use plastic bags starting in January 2020. The proposed law would require paper bags issued by stores to be 100 percent recyclable and contain 40 percent recycled material.

Alex Jones Says He Has 'Psychosis' in Deposition on Spreading False Rumors about Sandy Hook Shooting

In a wide-ranging three-hour deposition released March 29, Alex Jones says he has "a form of psychosis." During the deposition Jones vacillates between acknowledging the Sandy Hook shooting happened to raising conspiracy theories. The deposition was taken as part of three lawsuits filed in Texas by the families of two victims of the Sandy Hook massacre.

Sports Spotlight

BY PRICE DAY

Men's Results

Lacrosse loses to Colby 11-17, Coast Guard 10-11 and Tufts 6-24

Tennis loses 1-8 to Wesleyan

Sailing finishes 1st at Staake Team Race

Track & Field finishes 14th at Tufts Snowflake Classic

Women's Results

Lacrosse wins vs. Framingham State 15-12 loses to Tufts 7-21, Colby 7-12

Tennis wins vs. New Haven 5-2, loses vs. Wesleyan 0-9

Sailing finishes 6th at Victor Trophy

Swimming finishes 15th at NCAA Championships

Upcoming Events

April 3rd, Men's Tennis @ Roger Williams, Women's Tennis vs. Merrimack, Men's Lacrosse @ Trinity, Women's Lacrosse vs. Trinity

April 5th, Women's Water Polo @ Utica

April 6th, Men's & Women's Track & Field @ Coast Guard Invitational, Sailing @ New England Team Race, Tennis @ Williams

Staff Recs

Media and journalism recommendations from the staff of *The College Voice*

Dana Gallagher:

"White Nationalism's Deep American Roots," *The Atlantic*. Americans believe that the surge in white-supremacist violence and recruitment has no roots in U.S. soil, according to Serwer. History, though, tells a different story. The language of white supremacists has an American past in need of excavation. Without such an effort, we may fail to appreciate the tenacity of the dogma it expresses, and the difficulty of eradicating it.

Grace Amato:

"50 Years of Affirmative Action: What Went Right and What Got it Wrong," *The New York Times*. In light of the recent scandals around the socially elite and college admissions, this piece on Affirmative Action comes at the right time. *The Times* begins with the history of Affirmative Action and then ponders over its effects. Is giving students of color a chance to attend higher education, institutions that were not constructed with them in mind, enough for them to succeed?

Max Amar-Olkus:

"Ukraine election: Comedian leads presidential contest - exit poll," *BBC*. Ukrainian comedian Volodymyr Zelenskiy has won the most votes (30.4%) in the first round of Ukraine's presidential elections. Election officials say that Zelenskiy- who also played the president on TV- came out with 12.6% more votes than the incumbent, who says he will run against in the April 21 run-off. The next president will inherit a deadlocked conflict between Ukrainian troops and the eastern separatists in the Donbass region, while Ukraine also strives to fulfil EU requirements for closer economic ties.

Jacee Cox:

"Should Republicans Renominate President Trump in 2020?" *Rolling Stone*. With 2020 on the horizon, presidential elections are on the minds of the politically involved and observant. This *Rolling Stone* article contemplates the current state of the Republican party, the ways in which it will need to make decisions surrounding its identity, and the question of whether or not it is in the party's best interest to renominate Trump for reelection in the upcoming year.

Alex Klavens:

"Apple News Plus isn't a good deal for publishers, but it could have been worse" *The Verge*. Last week, Apple announced an expanded version of their News product, a subscription service Apple News+ that will offer readers \$9.99 a month access to 300+ publications. But Apple may be misleading people on what they'll be getting.

A Talk With the SGA President

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

structure in which feedback and criticism of committee functioning can be taken into account in order to better address some of the structural barriers to effective shared governance.

Other initiatives I have been involved in this year include a project that I myself and SGA Vice President Cheikh Gaye '19 are pursuing. Having recognized certain loops of payments in which students and student groups are caught -- frequently being charged for things the college already owns -- we are working on identifying those cycles with the aim of eliminating the unnecessary bureaucracy and the barriers which come along with them. Financial Aid has been a main priority of our Executive Board this year. There is a need to increase the financial aid budget, and we have had several honest conversations with the Board of Trustees in which we were able to share student experiences with financial aid. The Executive Board is also in conversation with the President of the College regarding the details of the guidelines according to which financial aid is allocated to students at Conn. Other initiatives we engaged in last semester include a campaign to get students voting in midterm elections, experimenting with different strategies to increase student engagement in SGA. This inspired us to employ strategies such as tabling at the library and to actively reach out to students directly to encourage their input on SGA work and the student experience.

We have been working with the administration to communicate student concerns regarding safety and security on campus including the implementation cameras, blue lights, and deadbolt locks for housing located across the street.

TCV: How has your views on SGA and its role in the campus community evolved since you have joined SGA?

Since I joined SGA, it has become increasingly clear to me that SGA must be identified not only as a body of communication between students and the administration but also as a body that facilitates the active involvement and change-making of students. Being on the same page about this topic can be challenging.

Additionally, the importance of strong communication has become increasingly clear to me. We need the proactive engagement of SGA members and of the entire student body for SGA to function effectively.

TCV: What do you think is the most pressing issue facing Conn, and how has SGA been working to address it?

The main issue facing Conn concerns structural support for students throughout their four years at Conn. This involves issues of financial aid as well as other areas of support for underprivileged and underrepresented students. Efforts to increase the diversity of the student



Courtesy of Jamilla Ezbi

body have to come with long-term systemic and organizational support. This has become quite clear to me through my experience as a member of the Muslim community on campus. More resources have to be invested in fostering environments in which every student can feel fully supported and can thrive.

TCV. We recently learned that SGA formed two new committees. Can you tell me a little more about why they were formed and outline what powers they hold?

Yes! The first newly established committee is looking at employment policies across campus. The aim is to make sure that all student workers are presented with clear job descriptions, expectations, and disciplinary procedures at the start of their employment. The committee is also looking at how these procedures are enforced in order to ensure that it is done in an equitable way.

The second committee is looking at the relationship between REAL-staff and students to address any issues of mistrust and ensure a

healthy relationship based on trust, allowing students to feel comfortable to reach out to REAL.

These committees were formed in light of student concerns that were brought to SGA during the beginning of the spring semester regarding student employment policies. Additionally, Sean Soucy -- who was our Chair of Residential Affairs last semester -- was planning to establish the committee enhancing REAL-student relations, an initiative he was very passionate about. The executive board has decided to further continue his work.

TCV: What is a week in the life as President like? What does your day look like in terms of people and committees you meet with?

Mondays at 11 am, I meet with Dean Norbert, the SGA advisor (and occasionally Dean Arcelus as well) to go over issues and student concerns that came up the previous week and to discuss initiatives I am working on. Tuesdays at 4:15 pm, I meet with the Priorities Planning and Budget Committee (PPBC) and we discuss long-term structural plans for the college. Wednesdays, I double check that everything is ready for the general assembly meeting on Thursday, meaning I send out emails about Open Forum, coordinate with the guest who will be attending on what they should cover, etc. On Thursdays, the SGA general assembly meets at 7:15 pm. On Fridays, I catch up on emails and meet with students, administrators, staff, or faculty depending on what I am working on during that particular time period. Sunday at 7:30 pm is our Executive Board meeting, which is when we discuss projects/issues on which each member is working, sharing the latest progress, or we debate issues/concerns that have come up.

TCV: Are there any announcements or messages that you want to deliver to the student body?

Elections for the new Executive Board of next year are now open. If you are passionate about enhancing the Connecticut College experience or any aspect of its functioning, you should consider running!! •

*For the full interview visit www.thecollegevoice.org

Kmec's Lawyers Say Mental Health Issues Warrant Lighter Sentence

ALEX KLAUVENS
NEWS EDITOR

Lawyers for Michael Kmec, a former Connecticut College employee who pleaded guilty last November to embezzling over \$170,000 from the College, are asking a federal judge to consider giving their client leniency because of what they claim are Mr. Kmec's mental and family health issues. Prosecutors are pushing for an approximately two year prison sentence, but Mr. Kmec's lawyers have requested that Mr. Kmec receive "home confinement followed by supervised release." Mr. Kmec's lawyers have also requested and received a third postponement of their client's sentencing hearing.

In a 18-page memorandum, Mr. Kmec's defense team describe their client, who is charged with defrauding the College and its students, as a "hard-working productive member of society" plagued by personal and family health issues. Lawyers said that Mr. Kmec was never dangerous, and that "to the extent Mr. Kmec's mental health played a part in his offense, the most effective way to address the problem is in the community, not through incarceration."

Mr. Kmec's lawyers claim their client has been cooperative with the College and law enforcement. "Mr. Kmec was relieved to get caught and felt he had been living with a terrible secret." They say he "took the initiative to cooperate fully with a criminal investigation that had not even started to ensure the full extent of the situation was disclosed."

The defense team writes that Mr. Kmec's participation in an investigation and criminal proceedings "have taken a significant toll, both emotionally and physically, upon Mr. Kmec, as well as his family." They argue "there is no additional incarceration that could provide any more deterrence for Mr. Kmec than this prosecution has already provided." Mr. Kmec has not been held by authorities and instead was released on \$50,000 bond.

Federal prosecutors say they are not disputing Mr. Kmec's description of his mental health, but claim "Mr. Kmec's mental illness and depression do not mitigate his theft of more than \$170,000 nor warrant a guidelines departure...there is no evidence to suggest that his mental health condition propelled him to embezzle." Mr. Kmec's lawyers claim that "Mr. Kmec had no criminal involvement prior to this plea. But for these charges, Mr. Kmec has

been a law-abiding citizen for his entire life." Federal prosecutors have questioned this argument, saying "even though Mr. Kmec claims he suffered from depression and other mental disorders almost his entire life, he also claims he was a law abiding citizen until he began embezzling from the College in 2014. Furthermore, Mr. Kmec is lucky enough to have supportive and loving family and friends—he had other means to address his mental health issues than by committing fraud."

"This is not a case where the defendant made a single mistake or exercised bad judgment on an isolated occasion," prosecutors write. "Instead, his schemes were methodically executed. There is no doubt about the deliberateness of Mr. Kmec's actions. He took concerted steps to commit and conceal his crime, including creating a limited liability corporation and filing articles of organization with the Secretary of the State of Connecticut for that corporation."

Mr. Kmec's defense team has also argued that family medical issues warrant a departure from sentencing guidelines, referencing Mr. Kmec's wife, who they say has a range of physical health issues, and his son, who they say has "issues" and would be negatively impacted by his father being incarcerated. Prosecutors, however, say they do not think Mr. Kmec's family issues should be considered, citing the Second Circuit in *United States v. Johnson* saying "[d]isruption of the defendant's life, and the concomitant difficulties for those who depend on the defendant, are inherent in the punishment of incarceration."

Mr. Kmec's mental health defense follows a January 2019 effort by his lawyers to postpone multiple court deadlines after claiming Mr. Kmec's doctor had "recently indicated that [Kmec's] actions, in this case, may have been impacted or resulted by medication prescribed." Lawyers said that information would be relevant to a presentence investigation report, a document that provides historical context of a convicted defendant during a sentencing hearing.

Mr. Kmec's lawyers did not specify what medications might have influenced Mr. Kmec's actions and did not respond to a request for comment. A presentence investigation report was eventually filled on March 11, 2019, but it remains sealed in public databases.

However, a recently unsealed transcript of a November 14, 2018 hearing at which Mr.

Kmec pleaded guilty hints at what his lawyers might have been talking about. In the hearing, Mr. Kmec told federal magistrate judge Donna F. Martinez about six different prescription medications he was taking at the time: Lamictal, Wellbutrin, Zoloft, Metformin, Lipitor, and Lisinopril. These medications are used for bipolar disorder, seizures, depression, OCD, diabetes, blood pressure, and more.

Judge Martinez asked Mr. Kmec if "any of the medications have any adverse effect on your ability to think clearly or reason -- or be attentive or anything like that...do they leave you fuzzy headed or cloudy or anything of that nature?" Mr. Kmec said they did not. Judge Martinez clarified that "the reason that I'm asking you all these questions...I have to make a determination that your mind is clear. Is your mind clear?" Mr. Kmec replied, "Yes, your Honor."

The Jan. 17, 2019 motion requesting extensions on various court deadlines was not the first. Mr. Kmec's attorney, Raymond M. Hassett, had previously requested extensions due to him being out of state during the holidays. That request got Mr. Kmec's sentencing date postponed from Feb. 12, 2019 to March 14, 2019. The second postponement request that claimed Mr. Kmec's medication may have influenced his actions pushed that date back even further to April 17, 2019.

In a March 25, 2019 motion, Mr. Hassett again asked for a postponement, claiming he will be out of state on April 17. Judge Michael P. Shea initially denied this request, but accepted a revised motion. Mr. Kmec is now scheduled to be sentenced on April 24, 2019 at 3:00 PM in Federal District Court in Hartford.

U.S. Attorney John H. Durham and Assistant U.S. Attorney Heather Cherry are pushing for a sentence of between 21 and 27 months, although Mr. Kmec faces a maximum sentence of 20 years imprisonment. "Unless those in a position to steal from an employer understand that there are serious consequences for their actions, the temptation to steal cannot be eliminated," prosecutors write. "Individuals with access to their employers' financial accounts and the ability to siphon money undetected must see similarly situated persons, such as Mr. Kmec, go to jail for a just period of imprisonment." •

Students May Have More Political Power Than Is Realized

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

ers to ballot access and public campaign financing when compared with the Democratic and Republican parties, Mirna Martinez still managed to secure 535 votes, and she collected enough signatures to become the first Green to qualify for public funding under the Citizens' Election Program during its 13 years in existence. Martinez lost the election by only 428 votes. Not only was it a very close election, the outcome of which could have been different if it was raining or snowing instead of clear and sunny, it could have also been the first election in history of a Green Party member to the Connecticut state legislature, as well as New London's first election of a female state representative for the 39th District, a Latina no less.

In what should be considered a significant political upset, following the Feb. 20 public debate between the candidates, *The Day* broke rank with traditional Democratic town politics by endorsing the Green Party's Mirna Martinez. *Day* Editor Paul Choiniere expressed shock at Nolan's "combination of arrogance and awkwardness" in a Feb. 24 column. Recognizing the difficulty of Martinez's running on a third-party line, *The Day* explained its endorsement in a Feb. 23 editorial: "If voters want someone to represent them who works hard to understand the issues, is willing to consider a variety of perspectives, and is dedicated to making sure her city's needs are not ignored in Hartford, the choice is clear — Green Party candidate Mirna Martinez" *The Day* Editorial Board elaborated, "Martinez impressed us with her depth of knowledge on critical issues, including education, the state budget, tax policy, energy, transportation and health care." Other Martinez endorsements published in the paper included those of former mayor, Daryl Justin Finizio (on Feb. 19), town historian Sally Ryan (Feb. 17), and Staff Writer David Collins (Feb. 7).

According to data obtained from the New London Registrar of Voters in January, there are 438 students at Connecticut College registered to vote in New London. That's 23% of the 1,844 students taking classes at Connecticut College in Fall 2018, and more than enough to have changed Connecticut history if they had all voted for Martinez. It should be noted that the Registrar of Voters data notoriously contains inaccuracies due to the natural movement of voters in and out of the area. But the overall point remains the same: as evidenced in the latest, perhaps unusual, election, Connecticut College students could have more political power locally than anyone may have realized. The seven Connecticut College students who worked on Martinez's campaign were not registered to vote in New London, as pointed out by Joshua Steele Kelley, Martinez's campaign manager, in personal correspondence.

In the interest of scoping this out to see just how much electoral influence Connecticut College students may have had over the last few decades, I will work with the New London Registrar of Voters and the Connecticut Secretary of the State's office to see if there is any correlation between past local election outcomes and how many students at Conn were registered locally. Please be on the lookout for a follow-up article. •

An Update on the Brigaid, Conn Partnership

SARAH POTTER
CONTRIBUTOR

The announcement last semester that Brigaid would be collaborating with Dining Services came and went without much of a visible outcome, from the perspective of students. The company Brigaid (a play on the cooking hierarchy term brigade), founded by fine-dining chef Dan Giusti, has piloted a new approach to the National School Lunch Program. Instead of using the \$1.75 allotted to each meal per student to reheat cheap processed food, Brigaid meets state nutrition requirements while cooking from scratch. It was launched in 2016, the same year Giusti chose to serve the New London School District. Since Brigaid settled in New London, the district has served more nutritious, better tasting, and more adventurous meals, which Giusti argues benefits our cultural understanding of food and overall wellbeing of young students. The national recognition that Brigaid has received motivated Conn to partner with Giusti in the hopes of creating an "even more distinctive dining experience for our students," according to an email sent by President Bergeron to the college community on August 27, 2018.

Prior to this announcement, Conn students had interacted with Brigaid in two, fairly limited ways: some students have attended Brigaid's "Community Meals," which are monthly \$5 dinners prepared by Brigaid chefs and held at Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School, while others have interacted with Brigaid staff members through Professor Rachel Black's Anthropology classes that focus on the role of food in society. These students were excited to hear that Brigaid was coming to campus. Emma Keaney '19 attended a Community Meals dinner last year and said that she was "thrilled" to hear that Brigaid would be collaborating with Dining Services, since the food she had at the dinner was both "affordable and delicious."

Last fall, hope for Brigaid's positive influence on Dining Services only increased when "Community Meals" was served in JA Dining Hall and was met with generally positive feedback from students, according to surveys completed by Professor Black's "Food and the Senses" course. Although students criticized the limited selection, they found that the meal of chicken and

biscuits was delicious, cohesive, and a welcome change from the usual Dining Services options. According to Professor Black, a common complaint about Harris's services is the lack of cohesion. There is a "desire for choice," she says, because we eat in the dining hall three times a day, but the result is fragmented meals made up of sushi and pizza instead of elements that hit all the food groups at each station. She hopes that Brigaid can help with this predicament, since its strategy focuses on fulfilling all nutritional requirements with one delicious meal.

Despite the hopes of students and faculty, the reality of the relationship between Brigaid and Dining Services is much more complex. Dining Services has not historically worked with outside consultants. According to their page on the College website, "Dining Services is self-operated, meaning that all staff is employed by Connecticut College" and they "do not use an outside food service." However, the administration, in particular the Dining Committee and the Vice President of Administration and Finance, Rich Madonna, spearheaded this particular Brigaid project. Therefore, Dining Services did not have a large role in the dialogue with Brigaid despite being the subject of the consultation.

Professor Black, who is a faculty representative on the Dining Services committee, made clear that despite the official announcement, the staff of Brigaid was primarily on campus in the fall to act as consultants and compile a report. This report was sent to Rich Madonna, who has not shared the feedback with *The Voice*. Professor Black stated that she had not seen the report, and all questions regarding Brigaid and its presence at Conn were forwarded to the Vice President by members of the Dining Services staff.

Students feel that, in the immediate future, Brigaid will have little influence over the food that Dining Services serves on a daily basis. In order for a program like Brigaid to work at Conn, some believe that the campus culture around dining must change and people must recognize the importance of food in our everyday lives. Although students are beginning to grasp this idea, they feel that the commitment from the administration is not yet satisfactory. •

Veganism: Is it Worth all the Hype? Are We Meant to be Vegan?

SARAH PFENNIG
STAFF WRITER

Recently, veganism has gained enormous popularity. According to *NPR*, the number of vegan and vegetarians in the United States increased by 50% since 2006, with about 3.3% of people identifying as vegetarian or vegan in 2016. These numbers are humbling compared to India's 30% vegetarian population and the world's 5%. Hummus has even become so popular that tobacco farmers are switching to growing chickpeas, owing to the overall growth in popularity of plant-based foods. I myself have been a vegetarian (or pescetarian to be specific) for three years, and I have been debating whether or not to make the full switch. There are many reasons why veganism is great for the environment, for animals, and for your health, but dare I ask the question: is it the healthiest diet for a human being?

A vegan diet excludes animal products: meat, dairy, eggs, honey, gelatin, and even animal-sourced clothes and soaps. Following a vegan diet will significantly reduce your carbon footprint. A study done by scientists at Oxford University concluded that cutting dairy and meat products out of your life can lower your carbon footprint by 73%. Many argue that eating vegan is one of the best ways you can help save the planet. It provides more environmental benefits than buying an electric car, recycling, or flying less frequently. A vegan world would not only dramatically lower the amount of methane and carbon dioxide contributing to the greenhouse gas effect, but would also free up hundreds of thousands of acres of land deforested to raise cattle. According to a study published in *Science*, "A vegan diet is probably the single biggest way to reduce your impact on planet Earth, not just greenhouse gases, but global acidification, eutrophication, land use and water use." The study even pointed out that being vegan is superior to buying sustainably sourced meat and dairy, which still at the end of the day contributes to global warming.

There is no question that animals suffer in the meat and dairy industry. Many raised in factory farms live in squalor conditions, some never seeing the light of day. Cages or stalls are often too small for animals to have space to move, and they are treated so poorly by workers that they are often abused, maimed, and tortured. By being vegan, you choose not to buy products associated with animal cruelty. In doing so, the meat and dairy industry lose profits and they are taking notice. It is no coincidence that we now see labels like "cage-free," "free-range," "pasture-raised," "grass-fed," and "Certified Humane" on our food. (Not all of these are legit. If you are concerned about animal welfare when buying meat or dairy, be sure to look up which

labels are certified and which are bogus.) These marketing strategies reflect rising consumer concerns for animal welfare: shoppers are making decisive choices about the animal products they purchase in the grocery store. So when people try to argue that being vegan won't make a difference since animals will suffer anyways, tell them these trends say otherwise. Vegans have changed the food industry!

Despite the enormous environmental benefits that vegans provide to animals and the planet, the number one reason people convert to veganism is for their health according to *NPR*. To me, this is concerning since findings on the matter are conflicting. An article published by Oxford University Press in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* states that vegetarian and vegan diets offer many health benefits since these diets are often rich in fiber, folic acid, vitamins C and E, potassium, magnesium, and many other beneficial compounds such as phytochemicals (like antioxidants). Furthermore, vegan diets also boast lower saturated fat and cholesterol." In general, a vegan diet contains far more nutrients than the average American diet," according to Megan Ware, registered dietitian nutritionist. Findings suggest that vegans are thinner. They also have lower cholesterol and blood pressure, which reduces their risk for heart disease. Some studies even claim a vegan diet can lower your risk for cancer. However, avoiding animal products altogether puts you at risk for deficiencies in essential nutrients like vitamin B12, calcium and omega-3 fatty acids. Vitamin B12 is essential for nerve and blood cells, and without it you will become anemic and your nervous system will start to deteriorate. Calcium is needed for strong bones, and omega-3 fatty acids have a slew of benefits including neuroprotective benefits as well as lowering cholesterol and blood pressure. Megan Ware also warns of the low availability of zinc and iron in plants, so vegans may also be at risk for deficiency in those.

These facts alone tell me that humans are not "meant" to be vegan if we cannot survive solely on plants. Many nutritionists argue that the healthiest diets are those that follow moderation, and are majority plant based like the Mediterranean diet. This diet was recently ranked as the best diet by *U.S. News and Reports*, which emphasize that regions of the world that follow this lifestyle tend to have the longest lifespans and the lowest rates of cancer and cardiovascular disease. While this diet does not exclude animal products, it significantly reduces their amounts compared to what most Americans are used to eating. Poultry, eggs and dairy are eaten in moderation, and red meat is only to be eaten for special occasions. What is interesting though is that it requires followers to eat fish and seafood a couple times a week. This would not be possible on a vegan or vegetarian diet.

While it is true without a doubt that veganism benefits the environment and animals, it is not yet clear whether this diet is the healthiest for you. Yes, eating more plants will increase your uptake of nutrients and vitamins, but relying solely on plants will rob you of essential nutrients like vitamin B12 and calcium unless you take supplements. Therefore, I argue that keeping a majority of your foods plant based and limiting your meat and dairy consumption will offer superior health benefits.

As always, consult your doctor before making any changes to your diet or lifestyle. Your doctor always knows what is best for you! •

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Room for Debate

Editors' Note: *Special Counsel Robert Mueller recently delivered his findings on Russian interference in the 2016 Presidential elections and possible obstruction of justice by President Trump to the Attorney General. Disclosures from Mr. Mueller's report seem to satisfy neither Mr. Trump's critics nor his defenders, especially given the public's high expectations for answers. Seeking to foster more bi-partisan dialogue on campus, the Voice has partnered with Connecticut College Democrats (CCDems) and Connecticut College Republicans and Conservatives Club (CCRCC). The pieces below reflect the unofficial positions of both clubs. Kailas Menon '20 penned the response for CCDems, and Austin Smith '20 has written for CCRCC.*

CCDems

On March 24, U.S attorney general William Barr released a four-page summary of his "principle conclusions" from Special Counsel Robert Mueller's report on Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. The submission of this report marks the end of the 22-month investigation. It's safe to assume that everything is fine and dandy now, right? Think again. In the wake of Mr. Barr's summary, Congress appears divided on whether the Mueller report should be released to the public. Republicans have rushed to the convenient conclusion that the President has been vindicated and that no further investigation is necessary. The Democrats, on the other hand, are not entirely satisfied with Mr. Barr's summary. As a result, they have demanded that Mueller's report should be released.

In the midst of all this drama, numerous questions arise. How reliable is Barr's summary? Is it truly non-partisan? Most importantly, do the American people have a right to see Mueller's report? In all honesty, it is highly questionable whether Mr. Barr's summary is accurate. After all, prior to his appointment as Attorney General, Mr. Barr published a 19-page memo arguing that Mueller's investigation into whether the President obstructed justice was "misconceived." The memo itself heavily implies that Mr. Barr could have been biased in favor of his boss. Could it be that Mr. Barr relied on his own skewed definition of obstruction of justice when drawing his own main conclusions on the report?

Prominent Democrats have been clamoring for full transparency over the past few days. Senator Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut put it best by saying that the American people deserve to see the complete facts and evidence of Mueller's report, especially since the report is unclear about a possible obstruction of justice by the President. Recently, at an event, former candidate for Georgia governor Stacey Abrams humorously described that relying solely on Mr. Barr's summary was like "having your brother summarize your report card to your parents." As convenient as reading it may be, this four page summary isn't enough to draw conclusions. In fact, whether or not the American people should learn what really happened during the investigation should not be a partisan issue. A well-established trust in government is one of the fundamental aspects of a democracy. By keeping his arguments vague, it is possible that Mueller wanted to leave it up to Congress to draw its own conclusions.

Regardless of the fog of controversy surrounding it, the Mueller investigation does reveal certain facts. Russia did interfere in the 2016 election in an attempt to delegitimize our democracy. The sole purpose of Mueller's investigation was to determine how this foreign adversary specifically tried to manipulate our elections and who was involved. Releasing the Mueller report in full will give the American people a chance to learn what Russians did to manipulate the country's election system, but also ways to prevent it from happening again. The very fate of our democracy may depend on it. •

CCRCC

After Special Counsel Robert Mueller delivered his report concerning collusion with Russia during the 2016 election to Attorney General William P. Barr, many facts have come to light while others still remain in the dark. According to Mr. Barr's four-page report released to Congress, Special Counsel Mueller has determined that neither President Trump nor his team had conspired with the Russians during the 2016 election. While the full details of the report have not yet been released, and may not be for sometime, there has been great speculation that there may be no indictments to come in the future that are specifically directed at President Trump or his associates. While the President may not face future indictments, many members of his team have been taken down by Mueller and his office since the investigation began in May of 2017. Paul Manafort, Richard Gates, Michael Flynn, George Papadopoulos, Michael Cohen, and many others have all plead guilty to a myriad of charges under the Mueller investigation, ranging from tax evasion to conspiracy against the United States.

All of these indictments have led me to question President Trump's judgment in terms of who he's looking to surround himself with. Anyone can plainly see that the aforementioned people previously in the Trump camp were crooked in one way or another and ultimately did not portray the President in a great light. Even with these indictments against the President's associates, the main mission of the investigation, at this point in time, could be classified as a failure--especially to Democrats. In my opinion, the results of the investigation could have been the home run the Democratic party needed to discredit the President before the 2020 election. With no concrete evidence of collusion, or even questionable details coming out against the President in regards to collusion at this time, I believe the Democrats may have put all their eggs into one basket and are coming out of the two year investigation looking bewildered.

At this time, it is hard to draw any concrete conclusions from the investigation as the full report has not yet been released. I think it is commendable of Mr. Barr to push for the full release of the findings from the investigation in an attempt to be transparent with the American people, especially during a time when lawmakers undervalue and underutilize transparency, in my opinion. I'd like to advise all members of this community, regardless of party affiliation, to look out for the full report and use it as a learning tool and a time to reflect on what the United States and its officials have gone through over the past two years and what this could mean in the short term and long term. •

How Should We Evaluate the Robert Kraft Scandal?

PHILLIP KUHEL
STAFF WRITER

On the cusp of winning yet another AFC (American Football Conference) championship game, on the morning of Jan. 20, 2019, Patriots owner Robert Kraft paid a visit to Orchids of Asia Day Spa in Jupiter, Florida. While there, Kraft solicited sexual services both on the 20th and the day before and was caught both times on security camera footage. As part of crackdown on prostitution among massage parlors in Florida, Kraft alongside 24 other men was



Image courtesy of Chris Graythen/Getty Images

charged in a police operation helping to fight human trafficking.

Dating back to press conference held in February, 2019, Martin County officials went over details of a nine month-long human trafficking investigation that spans from New York and China back to Florida. All the women were from China, and none of them spoke any English. The assets that were seized are valued at an estimated two to three million dollars. Uncovered in a 16 page affidavit, online accounts and reviews of the Orchids of Asia Day Spa showed to have various terminologies referencing that sexual acts were provided at this spa.

In response to the revelations of Kraft's solicitations at Asia Day Spa, a spokesperson for Kraft responded that, "We categorically deny that Mr. Kraft engaged in any illegal activity...Because it is a judicial matter, we will not be commenting further." This ultimately delves into a highly contentious debate on whether or not prostitution should be legal.

In the summer of 2015, Amnesty International passed a resolution on the decriminalization of sex work, "The organization decided that decriminalization is the best way to defend sex workers' human rights and lessen the risk of abuse they face," according to reports in *The New York Times*. The question is, however, whether the legalization of prostitution will only increase its demand without properly protecting prostitutes from exploitation and/or violence/abuse. Those who believe prostitution should be illegal argue that, despite the fact that sex workers voluntarily engage in solicitations, they often

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Climate Change— the Earth's Plea for Help

WILL CANELLAKIS
STAFF WRITER

Teen suicide has always been a pressing matter, but recently it has become much more apparent in society, especially with the prominence of Broadway's *Dear Evan Hansen* and Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*. As a result, many people have begun sharing their personal exposés with the world and have advocated for increased attention surrounding not only teen suicide, but mental health in its entirety. This resurgence has led to increased research on the topic and has brought greater attention to "red flags" that indicate a person's plea for help. In addition to the research, there are a range of beliefs regarding the question of why teens, in general, feel so trapped that suicide is the only escape. Digressing from the multifaceted answer to this, however, there is an inexorable link between "red flags," the question "why," and climate change.

Climate change is a hotly debated issue

in society that, much like teen suicide, has resulted in an increased amount of research. To exemplify some of the research, scientists have noted the steady rise in temperature and extrapolated the consequences of the rise— e.g. the melting glaciers and subsequent rising sea levels. In addition to this, the destruction of animal habitats and other environments has begun affecting humans in much more prominent ways, such as the recent hurricanes and wildfires. These consequences have led to the seemingly rhetorical question "how can we mitigate climate change?" If we cannot save our planet, everything that we aspire to be--whether that be an artist, a teacher, or a musician--will all be for naught because our earth will become increasingly inhospitable. This notion seems to be losing value, however, as our government, and our society, has turned a blind eye to Earth's red flags.

This is extremely problematic. Many of us still believe that climate change is a myth, despite the evidence. People are denying the frightening reality that this planet will not

sustain us for much longer, and in turn, are making this catastrophic problem increasingly difficult to solve. This neglect parallels that of teen suicide. The parents, friends, and adults in a teen's life who ultimately miss the signs are left with the sheer horror of irremediable death. They are forever broken knowing that they had a chance to save the teen but missed it. We cannot let this happen. We cannot continue to ignore Earth's plea for help. We cannot miss the opportunity to save the planet we call home. We need to be selfless and selfish at the same time. We need to disregard the pedantic happening in our lives and fight the one true battle that matters more than anything— the battle for survivability. We must save our own lives by saving the lives of everyone around us. If we cannot do this, then there will be no future. Like true Americans, if we want something, then we must work for it. Is your survivability something that you want? If it is, fight for it. Save this planet and save your life. •

Pot Proves Perpetually Perplexing Predicament for Prospective Politicians

MAX WHISNANT
STAFF WRITER

Over the past several years and continuing into today, the legalization of marijuana has proven to be a hotly contested issue. The two opposing arguments have fallen under partisan lines with Democrats generally gravitating towards legalization and Republicans advocating the opposite. However, presidential candidates of either party have typically refused to touch the subject with a ten-foot pole, up until now.

With more research available than ever and with 10 states and the District of Columbia having already legalized recreational marijuana, the topic is now fair game in presidential primaries. Several Democrats are jumping on board the train. All this newfound media attention and research has some pro-legalization advocates claiming vindication, but all the while, those against the proposal aren't convinced.

In the entire history of the human race using or even acknowledging the existence of marijuana, not a single person has died due to an overdose. Researchers estimate that in order to overdose from marijuana, you would have to consume 1,500 pounds in 15 minutes. Meanwhile, the National Institute of Health (NIH) estimates that up to 88,000 people die from alcohol-related causes annually.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), there is no definitive research to support the claim that marijuana is a "gateway" drug. This, however, by no means should dismiss or minimize the fact that there are health risks to the consumption of marijuana.

In spite of the significant research out there, from credible sources nonetheless, some are hell-bent on proving that the legalization of marijuana is a mistake. Their argument is based on a few factors, but the three consistent pieces

of evidence are that the use of marijuana leads to "hard" drugs, the mental health risks are substantial, and that there isn't enough research out there yet.

Pro-legalization advocates are not ones to sit on the sidelines, letting critics take aim at them. Their supporting evidence is wide-ranging, finding footholds in social justice, the economy, and health. They cite the criminal justice reform, the creation of jobs, and the reduction of danger due to research.

I like certain aspects of both sides of the argument, but there are also problems with both. Those fighting to keep current bans in place or even increase restrictions believe that marijuana is a gateway drug. While there are some cases and studies that support this claim, there is no substantive proof to confirm either side of this argument. I also don't buy the claim that there isn't enough research out there. There is substantial literature out in the world that focuses on marijuana. What percentage of that research supports or maligns the legalization of marijuana I don't know, but it is beside the point. Surprisingly, I like some of the points made by this side that aren't as key of a factor in their argument. For example, the level of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the chemical responsible for most of marijuana's psychological effects, present in marijuana has increased from 5% to 25% since the 1970s and 80s. There has to be more research into what might one day be considered the optimal percentage of THC to minimize the potential health risks.

On the flip side, the pro-pot people often exaggerate the impact that legalized marijuana would have on the economy. While the creation of jobs must not be considered a complete falsehood, that there would be some mass exodus to open one's very own recreational marijuana store is laughable. I'd also caution those who

push for legalization to not overreach with statements that diminish the possible dangers or that they shoot too high with expectations of a quick battle.

Despite finding issues and holes within both sides of the argument, I believe that the positives outweigh the negatives. I believe that in legalizing recreational marijuana, the American populace will experience a number of favorable outcomes. First of all, the stigma surrounding marijuana will start to dissipate, leading to even more research and adding to the seemingly never-ceasing flow of new information. Secondly, legalization advocates, along with myself, believe that the criminal justice system disproportionately affects minorities, especially African-Americans. I think this is indicative of the larger problem surrounding the lack of legalized marijuana on a federal level.

One day, all this might culminate in research money going towards the ill-effects of other drugs which could face potential legalization. Until that happens, and perhaps for the better, marijuana remains the topic of choice.

Legalization of marijuana or even other harder drugs is at the center of an intersectional web of economic, racial, and moral issues facing this country. The movement of drug legalization as a whole is hardly perfect and it must be done responsibly and methodically. But, based on the information available, the legalization of marijuana is only the first step. If this comes to fruition, we can then start on the multitude of issues that are extended from what I consider a new baseline. Issues regarding jobs, prison reform, and more will begin to crumble. It will be a slow process, but it is a necessary one for our country to endure and emerge from. •

REFLECTIONS ON THE HISTORY OF TRICK PHOTOGRAPHY

APRIL 3 - JUNE 5, 2019

The Linda Lear Center for
Special Collections and
Archives

This exhibit is curated by students from Art History 250, Perspectives on Photography, offered by Professors Steiner and Gonzalez-Rice. The exhibit will open with student presentations in the Charles Chu Asian Art Reading Room on **April 3 from 10:25 to 11:40 a.m.** and a multigraph, or trick mirror photo booth, in Shain Library.

From the Growth Imperative to the Resistance Imperative: Juliet Schor and Reimagining Capitalism

SHARON VON METER
CONTRIBUTOR

Thursday, March 28 marked the beginning of the Reimagining Capitalism lecture series organized by the Global Capitalism Pathway, with the goal of bringing scholars and activists together from multiple disciplines in order to reimagine a more sustainable model of capitalism for the future.

The series was kicked off with a lecture by Boston College Professor of Sociology Juliet Schor. Schor specializes in the sociology of economics and her lecture, entitled “Pathways to Plentitude: Beyond Consumerism and Climate Chaos,” served as a history of the relationship between capitalism and the environment, a pointed critique of the overconsumption habits commonplace in industrial nations, and a suggestion of how to create more sustainable consumption practices.

Schor began her lecture in the crowded 1941 Room by describing a history of global capitalism. Tracing modern capitalism’s roots back to the eighteenth century, Schor described how capitalism began as a racialized system, with enslaved Africans serving as the backbone of the cotton and sugar industries. This system later progressed during the Industrial Revolution to include women and children in the workforce.

Alongside her discussions of capitalism’s racial, gender and class disenfranchisement, Schor chronicled its historic connections to environmental degradation, mentioning the deforestation of the island of Madeira to accommodate the sugar trade, and the rise of fossil fuel capitalism that has resulted in excessive amounts of carbon dioxide pumped into the atmosphere. She noted that this is a trend that has rapidly accelerated post-World War II due to the growth of population and production, and has led to dramatic environmental disasters, such as Hurricane Maria, which killed over three thousand people in Puerto Rico, and Cyclone Idai, which destroyed the entire city of Beira in Mozambique.

After providing this historical backdrop, Schor targeted contemporary consumer culture and the failure to hold companies that pollute the environment accountable for their actions. She provided a two-pronged solution that I felt admirably encompassed both short and long term societal solutions to halting environmental degradation. Schor’s short term goals largely focused on changes in both policy and consumption habits. She emphasized the need to use productivity growth to reduce hours and growth, rather than expand production, pointing to other industrialized nations such as the Netherlands as examples of countries that have successfully decreased work hours and maintained a high quality of life. Schor then stated that with the introduction of

shorter hours, our consumption habits should adjust to low cost consuming and sustainable lifestyles. This I felt was one of Schor’s most successful arguments, as she utilized specific examples such as clothing swaps and thrifting as means of combating the exploitative fast fashion industry to support her point.

Schor’s inclusion of long term goals gave her lecture a commendable edge that allowed for it to not completely consist of individualism-based solutions on how to save the environment. She stressed the need to hold large corporations and politicians accountable for environmental catastrophe, and stated that if they do not make a change, it is up to the masses to take action and create change. Schor’s point that stuck with me the most on this topic is that our society must shift focus from having a growth imperative to having a resistance imperative, as our planet is in too much danger to continue focusing on economic growth.

Overall, Schor’s lecture was both a pointed critique of capitalism and an excellent means of providing solutions to our current climate crisis. Unlike most anti-capitalist statements, Schor’s contained an element of hope with her feasible solutions, and unlike most solutions on how to save the environment that focus on individual action, hers stressed the need for communal responsibility and holding corporations accountable in order to create change. •

Robert Kraft Scandal

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

come from marginalized communities of low socioeconomic status.

Rachel Moran, the founder of Space International--which advocates the abolition of the sex trade--has stated in interviews with *The New York Times* that, “I cringe when I hear the words ‘sex work.’ Selling my body wasn’t a livelihood. There was no resemblance to ordinary employment in the ritual degradation of strangers’ using my body to satiate their urges.” Being someone who entered the sex trade business at the age of 15, Moran has gone through and suffered the traumatic experiences associated with being prostituted and speaks heavily against its legalization, “The effort to decriminalize the sex trade worldwide is not a progressive movement. Implementing this policy will simply calcify into law men’s entitlement to buy sex, while decriminalizing pimping will protect no one but the pimps.”

However, despite Moran’s strong stance on sex trade and prostitution, the issue of its legality is still very contentious. Gillian Abel, who is an associate professor and head of the Department of Population Health at the University of Otago in Christchurch, New Zealand, believes that prostitution in fact should be legal. She argues that because prostitution is often a choice that, “to deny that prostitution is work not only infringes on women’s right to choose their work, but also on that of men, transgender and gender-diverse individuals.” Furthermore, by keeping prostitution illegal, prostitutes may lack opportunities to receive proper legal aid. In 2003, for example, New Zealand became the first country to legalize prostitution and thus allowed sex workers the rights and compensations of any other legal worker. These protections ultimately made them less vulnerable and susceptible to being exploited by illegal operations. And if violence does become an issue, “sex workers can now request police assistance if they are exposed to violence, report crimes

without fear of being held accountable for involvement in the illegal acts themselves, and seek support services,” according to the *New York Times*. The success found in New Zealand makes a strong case for the legalization of prostitution as it actually allows for the protection of the workers themselves. They don’t need to fear for seeking help because of the risk of prostitution in the first place.

Based off the case of New Zealand, how should we deal with the issue of Robert Kraft and instances in the future of individuals purchasing sex? Will stigma surrounding prostitution eventually dissipate like marijuana consumption did about ten years ago? We now have presidential candidates openly talking about how they smoked weed in college and nobody bats an eye anymore, even though it would’ve been a suicidal move up until very recently. Is this sort of trajectory going to be the same for prostitution? Only time will tell. •

Building on Strength -- The Future of Our College

SOPHIA ANGELE-KUEHN
ARTS EDITOR

I decided to come to Connecticut College because of the bathrooms in Fanning. It was Open House on a brilliant October morning in 2015. Throughout the day, I shared a delicious lunch with the English Department in the 1962 room, attended a Latin Poetry class with my family, and ate a chocolate muffin in Blue Camel Cafe. However, it was at the quietest point of the day, after the poetry class had ended and my family and I were wandering the deserted halls of Fanning, that I finally envisioned myself as a student here. I wanted to walk these same halls, go up all three flights of stairs with a backpack full of books and a takeaway latte, passing the delicate windows set high above, hearing the echo of my shuffling steps.

Everyone has some story prepared in the back of their mind with why they chose to come here. Maybe you have had a Camel sweatshirt since birth or blue is your favorite color. What struck me most of all about Connecticut College was its “aura,” its promise of a blackboard seminar learning experience and an afternoon spent reading in a striped chair at Blue Camel cafe; that is, its “image,” a vision of the future.

My family and I finally got ready to leave and took a bathroom break. When we reconvened again, my mom, an occasional HGTV viewer, commented on the black and white tile in our bathroom. My dad was standing by the stairs, quietly adjusting his jacket over his arm: “Oh, yeah! Mine had a full-length mirror, even a chair for me to put down my coat!” It was this simple, passing remark on a design detail of a seemingly neglected building that kindled a special kind of bond between Connecticut College’s architecture and me.

A couple months ago, I heard a rumor that the first floor of Fanning would begin its renovation into the Office of Career and Professional Development during spring break. “All glass and white,” my source said. “A lot of light.” After I heard this, I whispered “Oh no...” and put my chin on my hand. My chest hurt a little as I went back in time. I decided I had to go back one last time before break and walk down its halls, and maybe take some pictures. I was soon standing in front of three pastel-bright architectural renderings behind glass.

I was taken aback, and a little disturbed by the figures that resembled the dotted backgrounds in comic books. My home was rendered in 2D, the trees transparent. “No,” I said again, scanning the pages. I had trouble even seeing my campus, which had dramatically turned into a small university. I got mad. I wanted to protest. I was almost driven to low-key vandalism by wanting to take out a Post-It note and

slap it over the too-cheerful plans, also probably scrawled with a resolute “No!” I didn’t want a “connector” building between Fanning and Bill Hall, ruining the symmetry of every building surrounding Tempel Green. I didn’t want an outdoor amphitheater, taken right from Swarthmore College, between Cro and the Plex, rendering the tent set-up of Floralia impossible.

However, the “Master Plan” is already starting to take place. The renovation and career office take-over in Fanning will actually begin in a few weeks time. Last April, President Bergeron emailed “Exciting News! Building for the Future” to everyone about the \$20 million in donations to go toward Palmer auditorium renovations. Palmer’s renovations will be completed in the Fall of 2021, according to the “Campus Master Plan” webpage on the College website. And before even I set foot on campus for the first time, former College President Leo Higdon and his administration were wrapping up their “Campaign for Connecticut College” with the completion of a road from Tansill Theater to Winthrop Hall in 2016. The renovations in New London Hall and Shain library had already been completed in 2012 and 2015, respectively. The sparkling, sunny renovation of the library was even one of the contributing factors in my decision to come to Conn rather than another NESCAC; prior to the renovation, the library was also originally designed in the hulking Brutalist architecture of the 70s. So why did I have such a strong reaction against these colorful sketches of the future of the College?

Perhaps this reluctance of change stems from the fact that everytime I walk from the Plex to my Blackstone dorm, or from Shain to Cummings, I’m witnessing history right before my eyes. The Georgian symmetry of Blaustein lies besides the Collegiate Gothic facade of New London Hall, and the streamlined Modernism of Palmer auditorium becomes the avantgarde Cummings Arts Center from the 60s. Our campus encompasses almost every trend in architecture and their accompanying ideals. Every building is a piece of history, a functional museum.

Then again, every building was once a new fundraising project too, pushing for the advancement of the College through space and design. After some research, I was relieved to find that these renovations also received some push-back from students in the past, according to Thomas Blake McDonald’s ‘10 thesis, *The Architecture of Connecticut College*. Once upon a time, the older stone buildings of Central and South were preferred over the cement-walled Plex built in 1962, which lacked the “essence of the historic.” The complex of dorms had since then undergone a massive renovation in the 90s to

its present state, which is yet again being revamped in choice dorms.

In an interview with *The Voice*, Victor Arcelus--the Dean of Students and a member of the Master Plan Steering Committee--master plans have been taking place about every 20 years at Connecticut College, with a break after every project to re-evaluate the College’s needs. They’re designed more as a road map and don’t always turn out as presented. They usually built off of the preceding plans, with our current “Master Plan” influenced by the Connections curriculum proposed in the “Strategic Plan” of 2016. With that in mind, a connector building between Fanning and Bill would link academic disciplines by giving professors of various departments new office spaces. A renovated space on the first-floor of Smith-Burdick could house an “Affinity Center” that would bring the LGBTQIA Center and Womxn’s Center together and create a space for international students and cultural student organizations, according to Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion John McKnight in a response to my email. A renovated Cro with a set entertainment space for dances and student group performances could help make Cro dances popular again. A more centralized dining area in the student center would save a couple minutes of walking from South Campus. According to the webpage, the Master Plan will not only renovate and implement new spaces and buildings, but it will also bring out the academic and social life of Connecticut College and promote accessibility and diversity.

If you put it like that, of course I’m all for the Master Plan. An elevator in Fanning is necessary and expected. An improved (and more attractive) pedestrian bridge to the Athletic Center could save lives. I’m on board, that is, only if the more personal (and cheaper) improvements are made in accordance. The Master Plan does list vague “plan principles” to keep in mind while changing Connecticut College. “Renew and Reinvest in Existing Campus Environment” wants to “celebrate the historically significant architecture and landscape” and “address deferred maintenance.” Keep original wooden doors in New London Hall, check. Make the Walter Commons for Global Study and Engagement match the rest of Blaustein and Connecticut College, left blank. Address complaints of mold in Johnson House and paint over its gray cinder-blocks, left blank. I lived in Morrisson my freshman year, when the dorms on the fourth and fifth floors were turned from singles into doubles with a partial wall divide. It was perfect. Then it became unnecessarily and completely renovated, while Johnson lay in the shadows, well-hidden from the typical tour route.

The major renovation projects could then be seen as million-dollar surface touch-ups, while only a couple years ago both the immensely popular Smith dining hall and international-themed Knowlton dining hall -- an oft-cited detail to point out to tour groups -- were closed due to budget cuts and to run dining services more efficiently, according to an article in *The College Voice*. The elegant Knowlton dining hall now lies empty behind closed doors. Harris and JA dining halls become packed during common hour. Moving Harris to a renovated Cro in the future begs the question of whether this will impact the two intimate dorm-based dining halls left in South Campus.

Of course, it’s all about image, as Fanning Hall was for me as a prospective first-year. Now whenever I have my German class in New London Hall 200, a tech-savvy cramped space with glass for a wall, I see tour groups stare at us as they take the scenic route from Tempel Green to the Old Quad in front of Blackstone. Once, the tour guide decided to stop with her back to the glass doors of the classroom, a group of 20 strangers facing us. Immediately the professor became more animated, we smiled more and used more gestures while arguing our points. Once the visitors left, the frowns returned as we realized that we had become objects on display, actors in a play.

Perhaps I’m too sentimental and attached. However, Connecticut College is my home. I love Connecticut College, and continue to fall in love with it with each day as spring descends upon us. I love how the sunset lights up the roofs of buildings, while deepening the blue of Long Island Sound in the distance. I love sitting in the back of Shain library, largely neglected by the 2014-15 renovation, when the streaked windows are washed in sunset colors and shadows of leaves from the trees that define this campus. And then there is, of course, the people temporarily occupying it.

Maybe this is why I’m so hesitant for my second home to change: people come and go, buildings and their embodied memories tend to stay longer. My alma mater will change even when I’m no longer a student walking its grounds. It will look completely different when I return with my own family during Reunion weekend. These current renovation plans are always aimed for “the future of Connecticut College,” for the faceless camels still to come. Then again, once upon the time the “future” was a few years ago, when I was also a prospective camel dreaming about becoming a college student. In the end, we all chose Conn for a reason, yet Conn wouldn’t have even existed if one person had not said “Yes -- let’s change this,” plunging a shovel into a rocky farmland hilltop in New London. •

Triple Frontier: Perversion of What is Already Dirty

EMIR KULLUK
BUSINESS MANAGER

Netflix has been pouring more and more resources into its film production and, after the success of *Roma* at the Academy Awards, the company does not seem to be slowing down anytime soon, especially with its most recent film, *Triple Frontier*. This film is being heavily promoted by its all-star cast, including Ben Affleck, Oscar Isaac, and Charlie Hunnan, to name a few. Its main question or selling-phrase, is intriguing: What happens if US soldiers go criminal?

The story of the film asks the audience a question, that when questioned further, actually makes a lot of sense: what is preventing US soldiers from using valuable survival and combat skills they acquired for free (not considering the time of service) for their own good? The answer the film provides seems to be a mix of providing vigilante justice while also benefiting the soldiers themselves.

The story starts with Santiago (Oscar Isaac) pursuing the henchmen of a drug lord with local authorities in Columbia. The scene ends with Santiago questioning one of his informants, who tells him that they know where the drug lord is hiding and where he keeps all of his money. Santiago, not trusting that local authorities will be able to pull off such a mission, comes back to the United States to reunite his old special forces team (who are all trying to stay afloat in modern society) and eliminate the drug lord while keeping the money for themselves. What starts out as a mission that will be beneficial for both the local authorities and the retired special forces team turns out to be the manifestation of man's greed and aggression once the escape plan of the team goes sideways, resulting in them trying to survive in the wilderness.

The cinematography and camerawork of the film are probably where it shines the brightest. Even though the cinematography is slightly desaturated to give a rough, muddied look that reflects the harsh realities of military life, the color palette varies with the luscious greens of the forest, the light blues and whites of the mountain ranges as well as the dark blues and blacks of night time. This allows the film to distinguish each section of the movie as the squad moves further into the wilderness, running away for their lives. The camerawork, with its close-ups during tense moments of the film as well as its tight cinematography, amplifies the tension and sense of caution within the film, placing the audience in the position of Redfly (Ben Affleck) or any other member of the group. There are several specific shots where depth-of-field is utilized to isolate members of the group from their surroundings, showing the mental transformation they are going through as they shatter their moral code.

Even though the cinematography and camerawork allow the audience to empathize with the characters, the film lacks important character development.

The script does not work hard enough to present the characters as relatable and does not provide enough of a backstory for some members of the group to give a reason as to why they are taking part on this mission and taking on this risk. Besides Ben Affleck's character, Redfly, the movie does not provide any backstory on what the other characters are doing. Even if it does, it is only brushed away in a line as to what they were doing before they took on the mission. This lack of characterization rears its ugly head as the movie progresses, with the characters becoming more and more aggressive after all the unfortunate things start happening one after another. It is at this point when the audience starts to disconnect from the film since the characters were barely represented as likable or relatable characters, and now they are becoming more and more like the stereotypes that filmmakers wanted to eliminate. What message does the movie send when the supposed good guys (and there is no reference point to what made them "good" in the first place) are swayed by evil?

This issue with characterization leads to the next largest issue with the film, which is its message or question the film seeks to address. One would expect that a group of people who embark on such an impossible mission would either suffer heavy losses or go through such a difficult process to succeed that their character is permanently altered. However, this does not seem to be the case with *Triple Frontier*. One would imagine that running away from a leaderless cartel and surviving through the wilderness would cause members of the group to live their lives differently and be changed mentally, yet the ending of the movie seems to hint at a much different state, simply stating: man is man, and men will always continue to pursue their own interests, regardless of what it costs them.

The problem with making such a philosophical statement is that the film now has no arc. The message was the same at the end of the movie as it was at the beginning, which is the reason why the whole chain of events had begun and why there was no character development. The audience is forced to question whether they wasted their time or not. One might retaliate by stating that an action movie should not be judged on its character development. However, the mental and physical changes that the characters go through give meaning to the action itself. Otherwise, it's just mindless action, which is where this film seems to be headed towards.

Triple Frontier is not a terrible film -- in fact, the action scenes throughout the film were impressive, the acting was decent and the set pieces were gorgeous. However, if you think that *Triple Frontier* is the action movie that is philosophical, thoughtful or anything that the marketing for it advertised it to be, I'm sorry to inform you that that is a frontier which Netflix still seems to be exploring. •

Guerilla Girls Bring Protest Art to Conn

AUDREY BLACK
CONTRIBUTOR

Connecticut College Womxn's Center held an event titled "Guerilla Girls Gone Wild" on Feb. 26 inspired by the Guerrilla Girls.

The Guerrilla Girls are an anonymous group of womxn artists who have been protesting racism, sexism, and the lack of diversity in the art world since 1985. Whenever they make a public appearance, members of the group wear gorilla masks. Individual members use the names of famous women artists as their individual pseudonyms.

They formed in response to a Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) exhibit titled "An International Survey of Recent Painting and Sculpture." This exhibit featured 165 artists, but only 13 of which

were women, with even fewer people of color. It included no women of color. The group created and put up posters addressing this disparity throughout Manhattan.

The Guerrilla Girls believe the issues of representation are perpetuated by those who hold power in the art world. The group member who goes by the moniker Alice Neel has stated in several interviews that, "The power in the art world has mostly been white males. They in turn are attracted to work that they can relate to because of their culture and experiences. It's not wrong, it's just limited."

Creating and distributing posters with graphics and statistics

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Guerilla Girls Bring Protest Art to Conn

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has remained the predominant form of protest used by the Guerilla Girls. They also appear publicly to protest and have produced books and billboards that detail the facts and visuals used in their posters. For example, the Guerrilla Girls created a poster with the image of a nude woman with the head of a gorilla and text that reads, “Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum? Less than 5% of the artists in the Modern Art Sections are women, but 85% of the nudes are female.”

In recent years, the protest artwork of the Guerilla Girls has been displayed in exhibits themselves, documenting the 34 years that the group has been active and creating art. Since they have begun protesting, the number of women artists shown in museums and galleries has improved, but group members believe there is still a long way to go.

In the spirit of the work of the Guerrilla Girls, the Womxn Center’s event challenged participants to redesign hegemonic art. Participants sat at tables in the center of the



Images courtesy of Audrey Black

Cro 1941 Room, creating collages and art pieces. Around the room, larger printouts of famous works of art were provided, and people could add their own words or collages to the pieces, with the intention of challenging sexist, racist, or noninclusive aspects of the artwork.

Liza Miller '19 thought of and planned the event. She is the student ambassador

of communications and marketing at the Womxn’s Center. Miller first learned about the Guerrilla Girls in an art history course and wanted to combine what she had learned about the protest group and their mission at the Womxn’s Center. She planned the event to incorporate the ideology and history of the Guerrilla Girls in a meaningful and interactive way.

Additionally, Miller felt the Guerrilla Girls were particularly relevant given a recent trend in the art world. “The Guerrilla Girls movement intersects with a lot of art projects today; a lot of artists are creating art satirizing traditional works of art. I thought it would be cool to bring together the work of artists rebelling against standards and the work of the Guerrilla Girls,” Miller shared. After the event, Miller stated, “I was amazed at how the event went, people were so invested and created such beautiful artwork.”

The artwork created at the “Guerrilla Girls Gone Wild” event is currently on display in the Womxn’s Center, which is located on the garden level of Smith House. •



Conncoll Drip: The Fashion Group That Takes Pride in its Weirdness

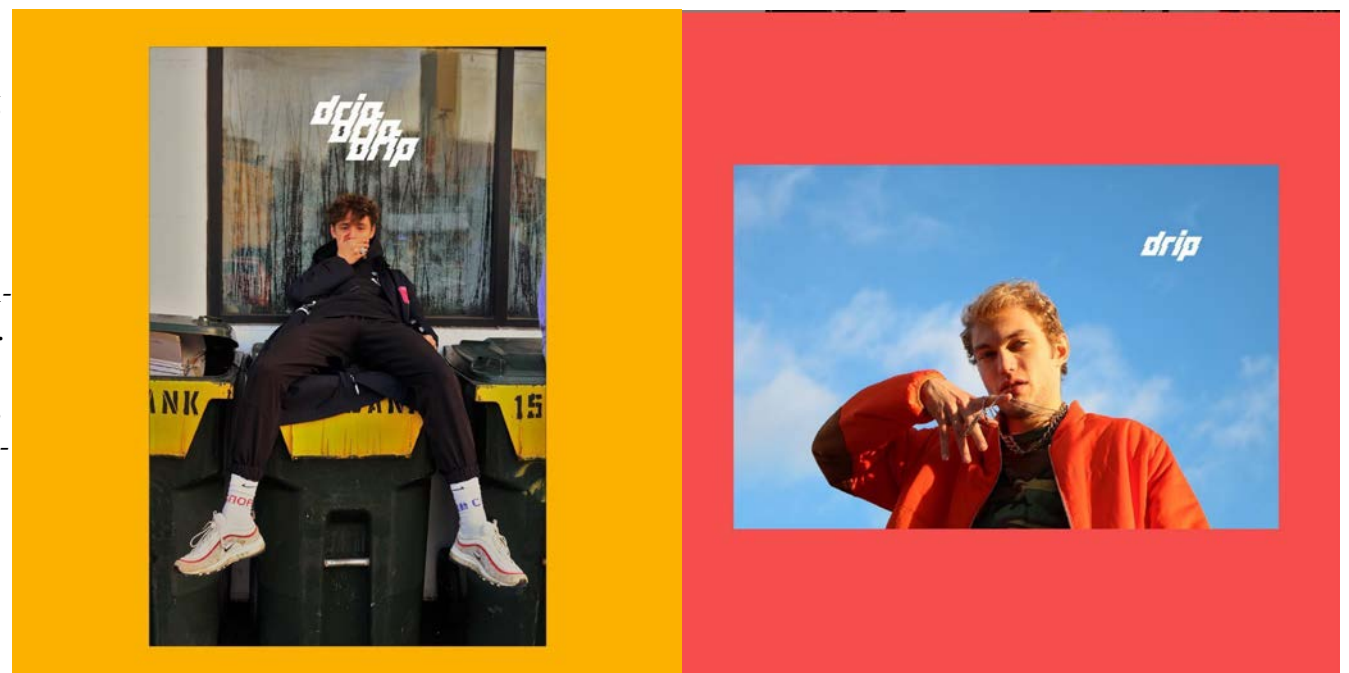
JOZETTE MOSES
OPINIONS EDITOR

Came thru dripping last September was the Conn-coll Drip Instagram account (@conncolldrip). The account is headed by four seniors: Cameron Dyer-Hawes, Nate Morris, Price Day, and Rory Deutsch. In the past months, the four have established an idiomatic brand for themselves through the account--which is further supported by each of their unique and individualized styles, thoughtfully constructed graphics, and utilization of local spaces. The account was inspired by a finsta account originally shared among the close friends. The Drip account has now become a medium to express the spontaneity of contemporary and casual fashion. While the group members had difficulty defining their particular style, they did provide multiple influences which impact their artistic vision including Tyler, the creator, Vince Staples, Blood Orange, and Luka Sabbat. Dyer-Hawes also noted that their posts focus on repurposing trends, specifically the reuse of aesthetics from the Y2K period and 1980s. The account actively seeks to embody an image contrary to the well-established campus fashion magazine, *theLOOK*. Morris reflected on his experience modeling for the magazine, saying “they put people in particular clothes from someone else’s closet and force you to go into their style.” Dyer-Hawes acknowledged that *theLOOK* does not “celebrate personal style.”

“I feel like [theLOOK] isn’t weird enough,” he went on to say. This notion that the group prides itself on “weirdness” is largely a result of Drip’s diverse shopping habits that have produced a closet with an array of unique pieces and signature items. Alongside the group’s occasional trips to Goodwill in Groton, Deutsch remarks that some of his favorite items were previously owned by his father. When speaking about similar rival accounts--Finesse Fits and Conncoll Posed, which emerged soon after the debut of Conncoll Drip-- the group acknowledged the new accounts had potential but were lacking an identifying aesthetic to set them apart from *theLOOK*. Conncoll Drip has been a distinct edition to the fashion scene on campus, and while the seniors have not yet determined the future of the account and brand, there is a strong motivation to pass the vision of the Drip to a new group of visionary students. •



Images Courtesy of @conncolldrip on Instagram



Student Perspectives and Photos from Study Abroad

HANNA BOBROWICZ
CONTRIBUTOR

There have been many instances during my time in Edinburgh, Scotland that I felt like I had traveled back in time. It sounds silly and cliché to write, but studying Scottish history and culture while living in Edinburgh is the most rewarding part of my study abroad experience. I have always felt a call to Scotland. In high school, I was so determined to attend a college as far away as possible that I even considered applying to Scottish universities. But I live in California, and my parents weren't keen on me studying in a different country. So I settled for the East Coast.

When looking more closely at the University of Edinburgh, I became even more excited at the prospect of living in Scotland. The University offers the opposite experience of studying at Connecticut College. It is a massive and research-oriented school located in the heart of a major European city. I couldn't wait to cook for myself, attend large lectures, and make friends with full-time students once there. I was initially intimidated at the start of the school year, but I have become more confident in my educational and social



Above Images Courtesy of Hanna Bobrowicz

endeavors by throwing myself into a different environment.

The best part about studying in Edinburgh is living within the landscape that I am learning about. I am taking English and Scottish courses, studying the history of Great Britain, and pursuing cultural opportunities. I am even learning about art movements. Professors regularly reference events that are artistically commemorated in the city or art that hangs in the local museums. I have taken a few trips into the Highlands of Scotland and love being able to understand the historical and political culture that surrounds the land. I appreciate that I am constantly learning more about the city I call home. So yes, as I wake up in Edinburgh, I feel like I have stepped into a different world and I hope that you will, too! •



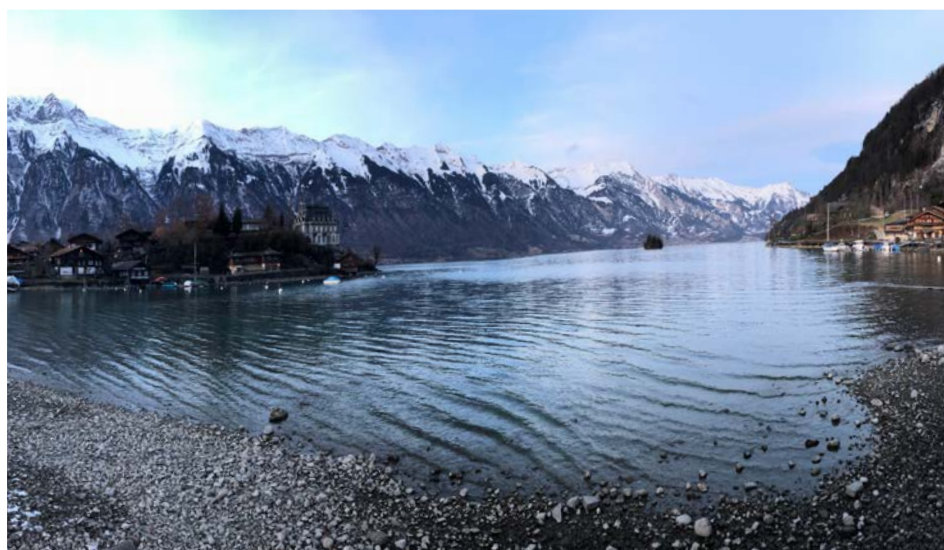
MATTHEW BUTERA
CONTRIBUTOR

Going abroad has always been something that I knew I wanted to do. It was a way to get out of my comfort zone, embrace different cultures, and see the world. Anthony Aquadro '20, also abroad with me, came up with the idea of going to Vienna. At first, I was weary of it. However, after reconsidering, I realized that I had family in Austria and that traveling to the country would be a great way to connect with them. Not to mention that Vienna has outstanding food and is known for popular and delicious meats, including Wiener Schnitzel. I thought to myself, "Where do I sign up!"

Here's a little about Vienna. Vienna is 160 sq. miles (twice the size of Boston) with just over 1.8 million residences. There are 23 different districts, with each district having a different vibe than the next. You get a little bit of everything--from churches and palaces to beautiful parks filled with vegetation and life. It has also been ranked as the most livable places to call home. Yet, Vienna is overlooked by many and I will never understand why.

My time here is going by quickly, yet I have seized every moment. Every week and every day brings something new. Monday through Friday is a grind with school work, going to the gym, and cooking. But once my Friday class is out, I am usually traveling throughout Europe. I had not been accustomed to different cultures previously but traveling has given me that opportunity to see

the world and understand different perspectives. I am able to see a new way of life, all while getting to try new foods and experiencing the history that defines each city I explore. Just be accepting of the culture that you are in and you won't be disappointed. For those looking to go abroad, I promise that Vienna will not disappoint. •



Above Image Courtesy of Matthew Butera