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THE COLLEGE VOICE

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER

Inflation or Increase: *'A's for Effort?*

AYLA ZURAW-FRIEDLAND
SENIOR EDITOR

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

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

So is this clean-cut evidence of a grade inflation problem that has become rampant over the past 20 years or so? The easy answer would be yes. But, in the past week, it became increasingly obvious that there are no clear answers when discussing grade inflation. What these numbers do show is grade increase: grades have indeed gotten higher over time. Though there are some factors that definitely point to the possibility of grade inflation, especially when inspecting grade average differences between specific departments, I believe that

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A MILITARY SCHOLAR: SAM SANTIAGO '16

MIRANDA YOUNG
CONTRIBUTOR

Considering that the Coast Guard Academy is right next door to us, the lack of military awareness on the Connecticut College campus is pretty astounding. This was the sentiment expressed by Samantha Santiago '16. You might have seen her walking through Harris on Sunday dinners. If not, make sure to keep an eye out for a girl donning an Army Combat uniform. Santiago is currently the only Connecticut College student who is involved in the Armed Forces, partially due to the fact that Connecticut College does not have a Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program. She is a part of the Military Police, and currently on reserve. One Sunday out of each month Santiago goes to drill training, during which wearing full uniform is required.

There have been many inquiries by Connecticut College students on Santiago's situation. She said of walking around campus in uniform: "I just get stared at. I've even had someone say thank you for your service and then run away." These sorts

of interactions only succeed in alienating Santiago from the College community.

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

Santiago is a member of the Posse program here at Conn. The Posse scholars go through a highly selective interview process during their junior year of high school in order to win a full scholarship to one of the Posse sponsored schools throughout the country. A Chicago native, Santiago found herself discomforted in the Connecticut College community in her first semester.

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SPINNING FOR GOLD *AN EXERCISE FOR EVERYONE*

DAVE SHANFIELD
EDITOR IN CHIEF

I've never been the type to pop my shirt off. I'm not unhappy with my spindly, typical art student physique; I'm just not exactly confident parading around with an exposed torso. Yet, at about twelve minutes into Erin Robertson's spin class, with legs on fire and sweat pouring down every inch of my body, I find myself gladly pulling my drenched shirt up over my head, finding relief in the smallest wisp of cool air snaking in through the cracked window, penetrating the steam-filled room and washing over my skin.

"It's disgustingly sweaty in there," laughed Robertson '14, who instructs spin classes every Monday and Wednesday at the recently dubbed Ann and Lee Higdon Fitness Center. "You just feel ironically clean."

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

Soul Cycle – a popular spin-gym franchise with a focus on inspirational and motivational workouts

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Georgia Naumann '14 dissects and responds to an attack on the Honor Code



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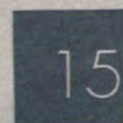


OPINIONS

"Does SGA Even Do Anything?"



A History of the Camel Dome (better known as Dayton Arena)



ARTS

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On the Intersection of Performance and Activism

Last year I saw *The Vagina Monologues* for the first time. I found the performance clever and provocative, and I thought that it succeeded in igniting a conversation on women's sexuality, treatment and empowerment. This year, I saw very same performance at the very same venue and was confused.

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

Though I'm certainly no theater buff, I've seen my fair share of plays and musicals. I saw "Wicked" on Broadway and "War Horse" at Lincoln Center, and even once saw Jude Law play an eerily convincing Hamlet at some theater that I can't remember the name of. Each performance was beautiful and moving in its own way, but I have no intention of sitting through any one of them for a second viewing. During this year's "Vag Mons," I found entertainment in the compelling performances, and I was especially thrilled to see my friends moan and shudder an "unexpected triple orgasm" (among

other variety) on stage but, for the most part, I was just bored. Could you imagine if the theater department produced the same play each year, or if the dance club choreographed the same dances semester after semester? Entertainment is only entertaining if kept fresh—it must offer the promise of something unexpected.

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

"But it's activism!" Yes, it's impossible to remove *The Vagina Monologues* performance from its larger, humanitarian initiative. However, I wonder about how effective a play could be as a means to deliver the essentially feminist message (which I wholeheartedly support) that the *Monologues* stand for. Looking around Evans Hall I saw students and faculty,

many of whom had likely seen the performance before. The rest of the audience consisted of parents who, like me, were there to lend their support to the cast. So when the audience was called upon to end female genital mutilation and to take ownership of the derogatory words and references surrounding women's sexuality, I found myself comparing the situation to that of "Facebook activism."

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

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

-Dave

On Actualizing the Bubble

In anticipation of the next four snowstorms this week, Connecticut College has issued an emergency architectural reconstruction project to protect its precious Camels from the harsh elements. The proverbial Bubble will be realized in the next coming days, encompassing everything from the Lyman Allyn to College House, as well as the Winchesters and Mr. G's pizza (for when Harris supplies inevitably expire). Tired of hearing plows outside their dorms at all hours of the night and frustrated with digging their cars out of the unplowed Gravel and North lots, several Conn students formed an action committee. Under the title Students Against Severe Storms (SASS), they presented their storm preparation ideas for consideration to the administration last week.

"We can't change the weather," one sophomore on the committee said. "That's preposterous. But we're tired of all of the snow, slush and mud. What we need is to a surefire way to keep the storms out."

"A bubble!" a junior on SASS suggested.

"A bubble," the rest of the group

echoed. "We need a bubble."

After applying for and receiving a \$630,000 FEMA preparedness grant, the administration passed the construction task off to the College's architecture students. "Just don't make it flashy," they said. "We can't be demoted from our status as one of the prettiest campuses because of a stupid storm bubble."

SASS members sat down yesterday with the architecture majors in the hidden Burdick laboratory to talk designs.

"We thought minimalism was the best way to go," one student said.

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

"We've set up a collection bucket in Cro for students to drop off

their Bean Boots," said the president of SASS. "We'll send the proceeds down to Georgia and the Carolinas in case they get a few inches of snow again."

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

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

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

Happy spring break!

-Mel

P.S. Yes, this is a satire

THE COLLEGE VOICE

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The College Voice meets each week at

9 p.m. on Monday.

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VIOLATIONS BY THE NUMBERS

70 students sent to
Honor Council

12 found not responsible
for all violations

58 found responsible for
at least one violation

15 academic integrity violations
- plagiarism, improper citations,
and giving/receiving aid on an
exam

15 cases involving alcohol violations
- repeat offenses, or Honor Code
violations involving alcohol

12 drug possession violations
- repeat offenses, or Honor
Code violations involving drug
use

20 violations of mutual respect
- swearing at campus safety,
being rude to House Staff

36 property violations
- covering smoke detectors,
breaking exit signs, etc...

4 involved documents - fake IDs

Counting Code Violations

JULIA CRISTOFANO
MANAGING EDITOR

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

ten-member committee composed of students, faculty, and staff or a three person committee of staff only depending on the nature of the violation.

While alcohol and drug use were removed from our Honor Code in 2011, there are some circumstances in which Honor Council hears cases involving illicit substances. For example, if a student is written up for smoking marijuana this violation would warrant an administrative disposition. However if in addition to smoking the same student was a repeat offender or committed an Honor Code violation as well (i.e. covering up their smoke detector, vandalizing a residence hall), then the case would be heard by Honor Council.

More information about the Honor Code and Student Code of Conduct can be found in the 2013-2014 Handbook of The Honor Code and Students Right and Responsibilities, available on CamelWeb. •



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A Military Scholar: Sam Santiago '16

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Santiago's personal narrative brings to light the lack of military awareness on campus. Though her uniform might elicit isolating stares and strange comments from some members of the community, Santiago has also been approached by a number of Conn students inquiring on how to become involved in the military. "I'm not a recruiter. I can't answer all their questions," Santiago commented. Apparently, military recruiters have not been allowed on campus through the CELS office, limiting the opportunities of those who are interested in joining the army. Santiago is currently working with Associate Professor of Sociology Ron Flores to form

awareness about military service. She hopes to form some type of memorial for Veterans Day, which basically goes unacknowledged on campus, and incorporate military education for those who seek information on the subject.

Santiago hopes that promoting this basic knowledge may change the strange reactions she encounters in the

dining hall. "I wish it weren't such a shock," she remarked on the presence of military uniform on campus. With this in mind, she is motivated to inspire a push for military awareness on campus will create a more conscientious and welcome community overall.

And it is completely okay to thank Santiago for her service with sincerity; it's well-deserved. •



MIGUEL SALCEDO

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RETHINKING OFF-CAMPUS TRANSPORT FOR A SHIFT IN SOCIAL SCENE

ELLIE NAN STORCK
STAFF WRITER

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

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

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

Director of Student Engagement & Leadership Education Scott McEver explained that there are a lot of differing opinions about transporting students to and from downtown New London. As of this past Thursday, Jeff Celniker '17 has made a new proposal to SGA about accommodating transportation. According to McEver, there is no particular plan in place yet, but things are in the works as the school tries to secure additional funding for new transportation systems. It's likely that changes will not be implemented for about another year. •

Psych Department Awarded for Culture of Service

JANAN SHOUHAYIB
CONTRIBUTOR

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

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

Grahn, make psychology accessible to the average person, both in and out of the field.

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

Sophomore psychology major, Aleksandr Chandra, elaborates on the dedication of the department: "The professors are passionate about psychology and are very involved on campus. There is also collaboration with other departments through research participation and interdisciplinary education." Emily Impellitteri '15, a psychology major,

agrees, "the interdisciplinary nature of the psychology department speaks to the idea of liberal arts."

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

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

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An Honor Code Retaliation

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

GEORGIA NAUMANN
CONTRIBUTOR

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

In response to a Letter to the Editor submitted to *The College Voice* last semester by sophomore, Ben Smith, in which he crudely reproached Connecticut College’s Honor Code, I will offer an opposing sentiment regarding the merit of the document. Our college community of students, faculty and staff thrives on the principles of honesty, integrity and mutual respect. While many of us arrive at Conn with a deep respect for these virtues, it would be naïve to think that they are never broken in times of clouded judgment, intense pressure or, sadly, out of apathy. To quote the document itself, the Honor Code acts as a reminder of our obligation to “uphold standards of behavior governed by honor.”

While I wholeheartedly agree that our moral education is an integral aspect of our experience here at Conn, Smith makes several claims about both the Honor Code and the Honor Council that make it clear that he has never read the Honor Code at all. In fact, he even claims to “use its pages as toilet tissue.” I would like to address some of his complaints so that he, and the rest of the student body, might gain a deeper understanding of the worth of our self-governance.

To begin, Smith claims that, “the Honor Code simplifies moral questions into ethical blacks and whites,” and goes on to complain about the Code’s policy on substance use, writing, “The drinking of alcohol or smoking of a bowl of marijuana can in no tenable way be considered dishonorable acts in themselves” (Smith). In fact, the

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

Furthermore, as a member of the Honor Council, I can promise you that no legitimate Honor Code violation is ever considered “black and white,” nor are any two cases considered in exactly the same way. We ada-

the form of his letter, is callous and uninformed. We, as Honor Council Representatives, work hard to make difficult decisions, often at the expense of our own personal relationships within the student body. Smith fancies himself a “pragmatist” with the ability to “recognize that Conn needs a legislative corpus” (Smith), yet he rejects the only system that gives him as a student ultimate power to uphold his ethical standards. Serving on the Honor Council is the most direct way that I know how to uphold standards of morality that I believe

of every year, and we are all well versed in the policies outlined by the Honor Code. We are aware of precedent, the seriousness of confidentiality, and we make a considerable time commitment to serve on the Council each week. “Random members of the student body” could not be expected to have nearly the same level of engagement with the process.

2. “The guarantee of the right of the accused party to face an accuser” (Smith).

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

about it. Currently, there is no official policy on the student body requesting an amendment to the Honor Code. In the past, resolutions have been proposed to SGA and put to a vote. I agree that students should have the power to amend the Honor Code, however, it is worth pointing out that changing a policy in the Honor Code is a slow process that involves assembling a committee in charge of rewriting the policy. Policy changes must then be approved by several administrators before being deemed official.

4. “The removal of all parts of the Honor Code involving the use of illegal substances, though those found to be in violation of another section of the Honor Code while on substances will of course still be held responsible for their actions” (Smith).

This is already the official policy of the College.

5. “The implementation of a policy that mandates that repeat offenders enroll and pass a full semester, four credit course on the nature of ethical thought, so as to reform through learning, not punishment” (Smith).

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

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

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

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

mentally work to ensure that students found in violation of the Honor Code receive sanctions that fairly reflect the severity of the violation, and, more importantly, that help to educate them about the impact of their own actions on the community around them.

Smith complains that “the Honor Code is founded on an inherent mistrust of Conn students as is disallows us from exploring, testing, and discovering our own sense of moral right.” I wonder: What alternative system do you think would ensure more opportunity for students to explore, test and discover their own understanding of “moral right”? As students, we are responsible for the social and academic climate here on campus and for holding each other accountable with that responsibility is essential in ensuring our safety and our happiness.

Smith calls the Honor Council, “a shameful bastardization of civil engagement,” yet his attempt at civic participation in

reflect the College’s spirit.

Next, Smith jumps into a list of five revisions he feels would make the Honor Code, “a document Conn Students can be proud of.” In attempt to illustrate that Conn students should be proud of the Honor Code, I will respond to each element of Smith’s wishlist.

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

If he is going to ask for the “abolition” of Honor Council, Smith really needs to propose a better idea than asking for a random jury of students to oversee each case. Not only would that be a logistical nightmare, but I certainly would not feel comfortable having my own or my peers’ behavior judged by a student who knows as little about the Honor Code as he does. The Council undergoes a week of extensive training at the beginning

The Honor Council does not accept any anonymous incident reports and the accused is always made aware of who filed a report against him or her. While, the complainant (preferred terminology) is not required to attend a hearing, unless the two parties are charged with a no contact order, the accused has every right to face the complainant. If a complainant does choose to attend the hearing, both parties have the opportunity to ask questions of one another, under the mediation of the Council. For obvious reasons, contact between parties is not recommended before a hearing takes place and before a decision is made. Ultimately, the accused can use his or her own judgement about the appropriateness of confronting a complainant.

3. “The ability by a two-thirds referendum vote of the student body to amend the Honor Code” (Smith).

This is a legitimate concern, and one I encourage Smith to pursue if he feels passionately

[YOUR VOICE HERE]

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Epistolary Joy

Why Everyone Should Have a Conn Coll Pen Pal

SARAH HUCKINS
STAFF WRITER

Does anyone dislike getting mail? In my four years at Conn, I've yet to hear anyone complain about an overabundance of letters or parcels. I feel like there is something universally heartwarming about seeing the sliver of an envelope resting diagonally against the walls of your campus box, something uplifting about reading the words that someone carefully choose specifically for you. Though, I think the best verbal articulation of this emotion is expressed by R. Kelly in his lyrical masterpiece, "Love Letter": "sunny days, smiling face/spirit filled, heaven praise."

But letter writing is a dying art. Despite the fact that most people enjoy receiving mail, less and less is being sent. Even just in the past decade, total mail volume has decreased from 206 billion to 158 billion. But I can't say it doesn't make sense. Social media and texting now dominates the

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

Nowhere is this truer than on a college campus. Maybe it's just me, but often I feel like everything is rushed. Students hurry to class, to a meetings, to finish Moodle posts. I think it's rubbing off on our communication skills. Important statements are reduced, and serious statements stripped to the bone as we dash off to the next thing. LOL. ILY. TTYL. I myself am guilty of this. "Thx 4 the support," I wrote to a friend the other day. But I believe a balance can be struck. As much as I enjoy a well-posted Buzzfeed article, gifs, memes, texts, tweets, and all other means of rapid communication cannot express the complexity and depth of how we feel.

So, this brings us back to letter writing. This isn't about saving the postal service (I'll save that argument for a different time and place), it's about saving a little part of ourselves, and immortalizing it on paper. That sounds histrionic, but what I mean

is that so much of letter writing is about preservation--preserving our language, our emotions, our relationships. I know that whatever you put on the Internet remains infinitely in cyberspace (or however all that stuff works), but I think in many ways letters have an even more important type of permanency.

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

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

Letter writing provides a rare time for introspection, amidst papers and labs and games and clubs, a time to pause and reflect--to choose words (and spell them with all necessary vowels) that you think will be meaningful to the recipient, to fill a page with your own thoughts and concerns. And to ask questions, to truly care about the response, to hope for a letter in return.

Letter writing is a thoughtful endeavor, in every sense of the word. And this is why I encourage all to consider obtaining a Conn Coll Pen Pal (bonus: campus mail is free). It's thoughtful in the considerate sense (I think one of the best ways to make someone's day a little brighter is to send them a kind letter) but also thoughtful in the contemplative sense. Letter writing is in many ways like writing in a journal, slowing down the pace of the day to sit down and wander through a mire of thoughts. But a letter is entrusted to another, and the words stay not only on the page, but also with the recipient.

Accessibility at Conn: Considering out Campus from an Alternate View

APARNA GOPALAN
STAFF WRITER

The first thing Julia told me is that "emergency" is spelled wrong on the campus safety vans that escort her to class each morning. "How is it spelled?" I asked, scribbling furiously on the nearest napkin. "Emergengy," she giggled. "On every single one."

This isn't the only detail she has noticed that would evade most people. Every time she walks around campus, she is aware of what she calls "flat spots" on a curb: the slope where some curbs merge into the road instead of dipping sharply like others. She knows that Knowlton has steps without railings. She can list places where electronic door openers were installed last year: Olin, the rotunda in the Plex and the side entrance to Blaustein. And she knows what it is like to live with cerebral palsy and difficulty in motor control from the hip down.

Students with disabilities account for 13% of the student population at Conn. That's approximately 65 students per class year. When I asked the Director of Student Accessibility Services (formerly Student Disability Services, renamed because the main point is what they provide: accessibility) how "disability" is defined in this estimation, she tells me it is "any type of impairment that affects a major life function," covering everything from ADHD to a wheelchair.

I had never thought of walking as a major life function, but as I listened to Julia describe the process of getting rides from Campus Safety in bad weather, something becomes apparent. "You must see a completely different Conn than I

do," I said, and she agrees. For Julia the world is split into "accessible," "partially accessible" and "inaccessible" in her mental map.

Because of her weakened depth perception, the presence of stairs is often a source of doubt (though she still always chooses stairs "...because I can take them. I still can.") Non-flat curbs are a worry, and Tempel Green might as well be a rushing river for how traversable it is in January. One way in which Julia gets across campus is through escort rides from campus safety.

"Most of the time they are nice and friendly," she said of the officers that escort her to class, "but sometimes it can get awkward." There have been times where officers have treated the whole thing like a burden, she tells me. "I've had 8 am classes, and you have to call them 45 minutes in advance. Sometimes, they show up after an hour."

When I ask her if they recognize her name when she calls, she says most do, but there have been times when they've acted suspicious. *Why do you need a ride? What's wrong with you? Do you have crutches?* I was amazed at her calmness in relating this. I asked her how she responds. "I just tell them I have balance problems," she says. "But most of them are really, really nice. I'm friends with them. We talk about our lives on the way."

"Nice" is one of Julia's favorite words. Professors are really nice when she is late to class, and all of her friends and most people are really nice and understanding about her disability. She talks about rare not-nice occurrences, things like people with temporary crutches telling her to look at their

acute suffering and learn not to complain so much about her problems all the time. When I'm open mouthed at this, she talked about the relativity of pain. "Everyone hates the fall," she said smilingly.

We were walking out of the library at this point, and I debated out loud whether or not to go to burrito night in Freeman, and quickly decided it's too much effort to do the walk. I immediately slapped my forehead as she laughed. "This is what I'm talking about. I'm not bothered when people around me complain about falling and slipping in the ice, or about distance, because my problems don't discount or trivialize theirs. But what I'd like is for them to not trivialize mine."

Barbara McLlarky, the Director of SAS, is the next person I talked to. She told me about the work her office does in ensuring students like Julia have their needs met. Collaborations with Housing (for preferential housing lottery to make sure students have their access needs met), Admissions, Health Services and many other departments abound. Efforts like allocating note-takers to students and making sure any documentation needed by professors is provided on time form a big part of the day to day at SAS. She talked about SAS being all about "leveling the playing field," a very positive if slightly ironic image of the equal opportunity that at least in theory exists at Conn.

When I asked about how Conn stacks up against comparable schools, McLlarky told me it stacks up pretty well. I asked about the admissions process at Conn and how students' decision is affected by the disability friendliness of the campus, and

she told me that the application is disability-blind and that students should make sure to visit the campus before deciding. Somewhere along the way, I began to feel my feet trip in the red tape of confidentiality, delicacy and propriety I knew I'd walk into at some point when researching this topic. Not to mention that talking about students with disabilities is hard when disability looms over us as an-almost-maybe offensive word. Luckily for me, my next interviewee had no confidentiality to uphold, and lacked any excess of delicacy and propriety. She introduced herself and her disease frankly: "My name is Emma and I have CP. It's a neurological disorder I was diagnosed with at birth. I have a walking disability and use crutches."

Bathing and laundry were added to my list of unexpected major life functions when Emma said she thought about things like "Is there a chair in the shower? Am I gonna be able to carry my laundry basket without help?" when she was picking a school. I think of the list of selection criteria on the College Board website I'd often used last year: club options, housing choices, city size. I wonder what I would have done if flat walkways were a criterion I'd needed to sort by.

The "lucky" thing about CP is you get what you get, and it doesn't get better or worse, Emma told me. "The only thing is, you have to be your own advocate. I once got a ride from the library to Blaustein when it was really bad outside. I have no shame. It is about growing into your own shoes." This time, it is not so ironic.

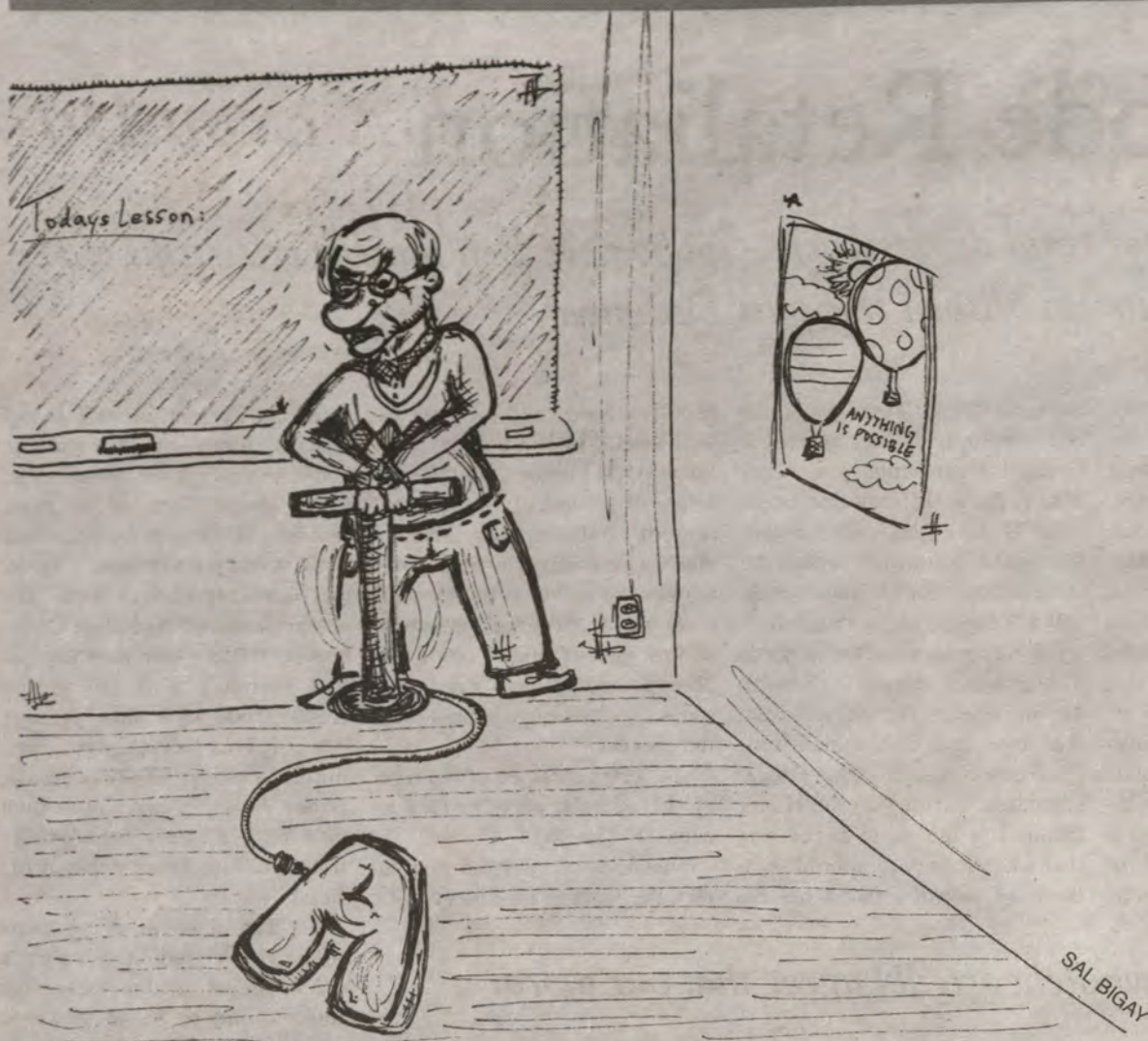
Still, Emma is no fan of get-

ting rides. "If you were walking to Harris, you could stop on your way and pick up your mail without thinking about it. I can't do that if I'm being driven around. It all has to be very planned."

Emma echoed Julia in that for the most part, people have been very accepting, but expanded on the topic: "People always ask me, and it's a pattern I've seen my whole life: people don't know how to react." I nodded vigorously, because I don't either. "You don't have to worry about opening the door for me, I actually appreciate it!" she says. "It makes it much easier for me. It's that simple. It's just a door."

Not knowing what to say isn't the only problem. For "How does Conn stack up?", she was point blank. "In terms of disability awareness, there is work to be done here. There isn't enough recognition of disability and how it impacts a person's identity, and their life. What we need is willingness on the community's part to learn." She mentioned steps like the Disability Symposium as being steps in the right direction. As a sidenote she added, "And the walkways need to be cleaned better."

"Are you excited about the snowstorm this week?" I ask Emma jokingly, closing my notebook. She answered immediately. "Yes! If it means a snow day. No, if we have class." It is the standard response, but there's so much more behind it, now that I can hear. Once you open your eyes to it, the stick figure with the wheelchair is much harder to overlook, and so is the awareness of sharing this campus with people who are seeing a completely different Conn. •



Inflation or Increase: 'A's for Effort?

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

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

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

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

I suppose the first question we can ask is: what is the function of giving grades? Why do we still do it? Other schools are beginning to

do away with traditional grading systems in favor of a Pass/No Pass structure. What merit does the old system hold?

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

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

The main difference between grading techniques is whether the professor chooses to grade the class in relative to one another (that's where curves in science courses come from), or individual students in comparison to their previous work. In some cases, it is more useful for students to be in competition with themselves rather than with their classmates. For

the most part, in the humanities, I feel as though that's the only way to distribute grades. However, there is the question as to whether it is ethical to send a student off with a glowing transcript because they improved and they tried, if they are being held to the same standard as a student who perhaps, overall, was able to express his/her ideas better

Professors have an interesting position within the grading system as well, especially depending on their status within the school. A professor that has not yet received tenure may be more reluctant to hand out lower grades because it could have an effect on their end of semester professor feedback reports from students. If a professor gets negative reviews, the chance of achieving tenure is drastically reduced, which is frustrating considering the current adjunctification of academia. Often it is out of the professor's own interests to grade in a certain way, whether it is conscious or not.

A professor in the English Department brought up an interesting point regarding the practice grade regulation as an economic issue. If students at Conn went back to being on the normal distribution curve, it would put us out of competition with all the other schools that didn't. As bad as the job market is now, imagine graduating with seemingly lower grades compared to the rest of the class of 20-whatever across the country.

If students cannot be competitive in the job market, or survive in the world, how functional is the school they graduated from? This professor went on to say that the only way to erase whatever grade inflation may possibly exist would be to invent a grade that is higher than an A and completely unattainable. Regardless as to whether grades are high due to inflation or other factors, it is interesting to note that no one school can change the grading hierarchy without im-

mense consequences for itself and its students.

Another issue to be addressed is the difference between disciplines. In the data Nugent put together, he divided departments into Performance Art, Humanities, Social Sciences, Hard Sciences and Mixed to reflect students double majoring in two diverse subjects. It is clear that the students that major in Biology or Chemistry have the lowest GPAs, and the Performance Arts students tend to have the highest. This is absolutely no reflection on the legitimacy of each department, and not even a clear indicator of the existence of grade inflation. It merely confirms the different natures of different courses of study. As an English major talking to friends that are Behavioral Neuroscience majors, I am always stricken by the different attitudes they have toward their coursework. One major told me that they're not sure why they study so much for tests when, regardless of the time they spend, they feel as though they are still just as likely to get a C.

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

I guess my final response is: does it really matter? My honest opinion is that, regardless of all of these messy institutional and historical factors that play into grade inflation or increase and the shift that ended with students having a 50% chance of being rewarded with an A versus a B or a C, is that students themselves are accountable for their learning. That is,

after all, what a liberal arts education attempts to ingrain in their students: accountability for their thoughts, opinions, beliefs, position in society, and how they come to learn about all of those things.

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

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

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

The Ineffectiveness of Notes on Napkins



PHOEBE PAPADEMITRIOU

HARPUR SCHWARTZ
CONTRIBUTOR

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

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

In the JA dining hall, one student requested that the salsa that is put out in the morning be left out for lunch and dinner because their quesadillas were "lacking". However, a few days passed and once again the salsa didn't make

it past breakfast. Salsa does not seem like a ridiculous request, but clearly there is a conspiracy theory going on.

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

Having the option of pesto for pasta and sandwiches seems reasonable, right? Nope, it is too expensive. Do you want oatmeal more often in the mornings? Sorry, five days a week is already enough. What about if we get the yummy fruit granola in JA that Harris serves? "Due to limited amounts of space we can only serve one kind of Granola. The Oats and Honey is extremely popular and is currently our number one cereal. I will not be removing it." The counterargument to us not getting what we ask for is that requests from Conn students "abuse" napkin notes, and we use them to make "ridiculous" demands. The problem is defining what demand is too ridiculous because with a steep tuition of about \$50,000, many people feel that having two types of granola in JA is not a ludicrous plea.

The Napkin Note responses that are really the most unhelpful are the ones that tell us our wish is granted, but then it is never followed up on. One veg-

etarian student wrote a napkin note explaining how they would really like for there to be a separate pair of tongs for the veggie burgers because the tongs touch meat before touching the veggie burger. As a partial vegetarian (I don't eat red meat), I believe this is a rational complaint. Kmec responded by saying, "Sure, we can do this." Great, awesome, the vegetarians of Conn thank you. Except, Kmec, where are our tongs? Days have gone by and no change has been made to Harris. We are promised change time and time again, yet we never see it.

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

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

"Does SGA Even Do Anything?"

An insider's response to the common question

SARAH HUCKINS
STAFF WRITER

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

Over the course of four years, this is one critique amongst students that I've consistently heard. Perhaps this sentiment is coming from a vocal minority, but I've heard it often enough to want to provide a counterargument to those with a negative perception of student government.

As someone who frequently forgets to "yield back," I understand frustration with the seemingly arcane procedure of Robert's Rules (SGA's rules of comportment), and as someone whose conception of "business casual" is a geriatric sweater and corduroys, I was in full support of the relaxation of the dress code. I can empathize with anyone for whom going to an SGA meeting is not a top contender in the Thursday Night Activity category. But I can't get on board with the criticisms of SGA's efficacy.

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

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

I imagine SGA functioning somewhat like a time machine. If students have a desired destination, SGA can help get them there, but if they don't know where they want to go, then it's less productive. Perhaps this isn't the best metaphor, but what

I'm trying to illustrate is that the vehicle is there, it just needs to be taken advantage of. And over the course of my time on SGA, I have seen an increasing number of initiatives derive from students not on the assembly. I hope these individuals can also speak to the opportunities SGA has to offer. One crucial example of the resources that are available is the Student Sustainability Fund.

There is currently \$42,000 in this fund. The fund is for students' projects that are related to environmental, social, or economic issues (or any combination thereof). This encompasses almost anything: if you have an idea for a project, it's highly likely that it fits within one of these categories. It's unique opportunities like this fund that allow SGA to help make students' projects a reality, and SGA highly encourages everyone to take advantage of this resource.

Moving beyond student government into the murkier realm of "shared governance," I believe that more important than the possession power is the knowledge of how to effectively wield that power. And this means understanding the limitations of that power. Shared governance is just that, shared. There are certain issues that are not under SGA's purveyance.

One such example occurred this past April, when a group of Film Studies and English Majors came before the assembly to discuss a resolution to support the Department of Literatures in English petition to revise the current staffing plan. Ultimately, after almost four hours of debate, SGA decided that our role in shared governance does not extend to staffing decisions. Even though some argued that this resolution illustrated the weakness of SGA, I believe that it proves its strengths.

SGA not having the final authority over every decision does not undermine the concept of shared governance—it shows that it is working. But what I believe is the ultimate power of SGA is that it can give students a platform to speak and can provide students with the opportunity to have their voices heard. Faced again at this past Thursday's meeting with a discussion of the role of SGA, I think Chief of Communications Grace Juster said it best: "SGA can always connect students with those who do have the final say, it can help you down the path to your goals, and if there is no solidified path, it can help you forge one."

Searching for *Seinfeld*: Current Day



"Jerry not sure which member of Pussy Riot hes dating," imagines Twitter humorist @Seinfeld2000.

ANDY STEIN-ZELLER
CONTRIBUTOR

"What if *Seinfeld* is still on tv today?" It is a question begged by weird Twitter iconoclast @Seinfeld2000, whose online persona is so strange, so honest, so detached from and yet at the same time completely attached to reality, that I think he might be writing the definitive history of American pop culture as we know it. It is on track to widespread acclaim as the definitive, indisputably final word on postmodernity. Experts may disagree, but @Seinfeld2000's comedic palette synthesizes a uniquely chaotic array of bizarre funny, and one thing is for certain—one cannot read this guy's feed and not begin to wonder what in all holy heaven his deal might be, whoever he is.

Unless of course, one has not

seen the NBC classic zeitgeist sitcom to end all sitcoms, *Seinfeld*.

A Philosophy Professor at Conn once told me that *Seinfeld* is a show about horrible people who care only for themselves, and that it was very funny. Our "modern day" narrator who uses his "imaginatiens" to "imagen what it would be like if Senfend on tv," forces us to reconsider why we loved the Upper West Side foursome so much, whenever we first fell in love with Jerry, George, Elaine and Kramer, or as @Seinfeld2000 affectionately calls them, "Jary, Garge, Elan, and Krame."

Placed in a seemingly endless series of situations that somehow pertain to popular culture and/or the behavior of the characters from "Senfield," this foursome of aging protagonists are exposed to be the materialistic and respectively womanizing, sociopathic, self-absorbed and racist-in-real-life

individuals that they always have been. These situations, restricted to a description 140-characters in length, are a little less forgiving than those on the much more popular and less weird Twitter account, "@SeinfeldToday," which is an older, marginally less funny/clever/original/creative account that would post things like, "Jerry gets stuck on a never-ending group text. 'You used to be able to avoid people! Now they can choose to live in your pocket forever!'"

While @SeinfeldToday emphasizes the harmless, sometimes endearing characteristics of the leading men and woman, @Seinfeld2000 shows no mercy. Here's an example where we're reminded that George literally killed his wife (albeit with his frugality), through a "refarance" to the episode where George wants to tell his girlfriend that he loves her and is worried she won't say that she loves him back—

"Garge txt his GF 'ily'

JERY: But are u confedent in the 'ily' return

GF doesn't reply so Garge end her life

Turn out her iPhone was broken"

Here's another that reminds us that, despite a well-intentioned episode with him as the deserving-of-sympathy guest star on "Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee," Michael Richards is still probably a racist. While referencing a Netflix Original Series.

"Why did krame call the jack-o-lantern the N word?"

orange is the new black"

It gets weirder—some of these "twetes" reference "technalagical" computer hardware specs, while others undermine President Obama in a sort of definitive lampoon of the President's right wing detractors. Some poke elegant yet crude fun at controversial figures like Rob Ford, George Zimmerman and Vladimir Putin, while others use photoshop to offer visual aids as to what *Seinfeld* would be like in 2014, like blending Elaine's face onto the infamous Miley Cyrus *Rolling Stone* cover.

No one is safe from the atrocious spelling, nor an honest assessment from an enigmatic, anonymous internet zombie whose playfulness is only matched by his deadpan, concise thoughts that transcend irony and almost become a means of escapism for everyone who would otherwise get off on a 25 minute Buzzfeed kick. To follow @Sein-

feld2000 is to momentarily escape this dimension and for an instant gaze down upon our image-obsessed, self-centered, messy society, and to know the absurdity of the human condition.

The plot keeps thickening. One of the most essential elements of this user's persona is, and couldn't not be, his comprehensive knowledge of *Seinfeld*. His tweets reference not just the classic *Seinfeld* situations—the puffy shirt, the contest—but also some of the more obscure moments from the series' nine-season run.

One of my favorites is the re-write of William Carlos Williams' "The Red Wheelbarrow" as follows—

"So much depends
upon

a red
dot

on the white
cashmere sweater."

—which thereby situates the obscure George-buys-Elaine-a-cashmere-sweater-that's-on-sale-because-it's-stained-and-hopes-that-she-doesn't-know-it-but-she-does-so-George-gives-it-to-his-cleaning-lady-after-he-impulsively-has-sex-with-her episode within the context of rarefied modernist poetry.

His career was launched after Gawker published what is ostensibly a *Seinfeld* script entitled "The Apple Store." He then created a video called "Seinquest2000" that begs viewers to consider "What if *Seinfeld* still coming on your tv every thursday night must see tv? Honestly, it's a mystery that has intrigued the world's greatest thinkers throughout the ages." Through masking his exaggeration, dishonesty and weirdness in a cloak of at once loftiness and stupidity, as well as some seriously disorienting language, our narrator fulfills his own self-fulfilling prophecy that the spirit of *Seinfeld*—a show about nothing, everything and the ups and downs of being completely self-absorbed—has never been more relevant than it is today.

"Elane start dating Amazon tech support expert who appears live on her Kindle Fire HDX tablet whenever she push Mayday button." This spirit pervades in an unprecedentedly direct and creepy fashion, but it also makes many die-hard *Seinfeld* fans experience that aura of subtly but shamelessly cruel situational comedy in a way that they haven't since Season 7. "Jary finally just kill Newmen."

@Seinfeld2K has written for

Vice's Noisey and live tweeted for them during the VMAs and the Grammys (with no shortage of Kramer at the Emmys references and a genius kick of comparing Pharrell's Grammys hat to the J. Peterman Urban Sombrero Elaine is given the task of describing for the catalog in Season 8). In terms of objective internet ubiquity, with 32.6K followers, he's really doing quite well given that he's such a weirdo.

It's really difficult to capture the essence of what this person is all about without reading a ton of his writing, and that's why doing so is so magical. He creates a universe, much in the way that the creators of *Breaking Bad* or *True Detective* create universes to which it's easy to develop a serious addiction. It's not as if his system is consistent, predictable, or sound in any sense of the word, but rather as if there is an elaborate web of ideas with one or two many components. And it's that slight over-the-topness, that makes this world so compelling—the more you submerge yourself into the universe, the more it begins to provide. The more familiar you become with the shtick, the more exhilarating it is when he once again shatters your expectations.

@Seinfeld2000 has elevated tweeting to an art form, just like *The Sopranos* elevated television to an art form and *Watchmen* elevated the graphic novel to an art form. He has enacted a modest but important shift in the paradigm of observational humor, of which his namesake is the Godfather. If you like *Seinfeld*—no, if you identify with any of the characters on *Seinfeld*, and if you can both laugh at and pity yourself and the rest of the world without any cognitive dissonance, then you might be interested in further delving into the question of what exactly it would be like if the *Sinebird* series is still on NBC.

If you check out the work of this beautiful mind, you may begin to see as I have that ironic post-modern entertainment has peaked, that reality has been perverted and clarified in a way that defies the so called laws of nature and that the question is no longer "Are we alone?" or "What's the point?" or "How can I do better?" or "What's missing?" or "Who am I?" Existential pondering is done—there is only one universal truth, and it lies below.

"It was the best of time's, it was the worst of time's

It was the age of 'senfeld' not being on TV, it was the age of imagin-ing it still was" •

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GRACE GRIFFIN

Winged Victory has Seen Better Days

PAIGE MILLER
COLUMNIST

Winged Victory, also referred to as *Nike*, is a replica of the 3rd century B.C. sculpture *Winged Victory of Samothrace*. As is true for Connecticut College's replica, the artist of the original is regrettably unknown. In the mid-19th century, the original *Winged Victory of Samothrace* was discovered on the Greek island of Samothrace and later traveled to a safer home where it would be cared for and appreciated—the top of the Daru staircase in Paris' Louvre Museum.

Since its arrival at the museum in 1884, *Winged Victory of Samothrace* has only been moved once. On the evening of Sept. 3, 1939, a crew of men gently lowered the sculpture down the staircase and transported it to a chateau in the French countryside for safekeeping during World War II.

During June of the same year, Connecticut College acquired its own full-sized 7-foot tall replica of the sculpture. Since 1939, our *Winged Victory* has gained symbolic value and was officially listed to have a "highest" priority for conservation in the Sculpture and Decorative Arts Conservation Services, LLC report of 2009.

Made from white Carrara marble, the sculpture's structure has developed severe cracks over time, and several chunks of the wingspan are missing due to cracks left untreated. As for the surface, there are small splotches of paint and many fissures have formed due to rain runoff.

Furthermore, *Winged Victory* has been at the receiving end of various campus jokes over the years, including sculpted snow heads and being toilet papered.

The Sculpture and Decorative Arts Conservation Services, LLC report recommended that, "The piece should be stabilized and moved indoors as soon as possible. It should be placed in a location where it can be protected from accidental impact with people and materials. Stabilization involves consolidating all loose material, and filling all joints, gaps and fissures with a soft lime-based mortar...Once the sculpture is stabilized, it should be inspected annually and all open cracks and joints filled with a soft mortar. The sculpture should be cleaned using a biocide to prevent the intrusion of algae and lichens into the surface."

In its 75th year at the College, as it struggles to uphold its structural integrity, *Winged Victory* nevertheless continues to hold significant iconic value. •

The Pulse of Student Poetry

LUCA POWELL
SPORTS EDITOR

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

With excitement, Hartman spoke of the value of readings as doorways into the ever-changing nature of the craft. As the College's poet-in-residence and a professor here since 1984, Hartman framed the reading by considering how we might 'gauge' the current tenor of poetry at the college level. The suggestion laid a warm groundwork for the recitations to come; from a theoretical perspective, whatever ensued would be valuable exposure to the nature of poetry as it is engaged today.

Yet, it would have been hard to leave the Chu Room with a single impression of the art form. The student poets noticeably 'used' the poetic medium in vastly different ways. Certain poems were

defined by captivating attention to detail, while others found a clear philosophical footing. Still, others presented distilled meditations on personal experience.

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

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

The direction of the reading took a thematic turn with the

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

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

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

To Be a God

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

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

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

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

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

The Snubbery Awards

Netflix > Midterms

CALI ZIMMERMAN
STAFF WRITER

It's the most wonderful time of the year...to be a cinephile. The Academy Awards closed in on us as fast as the racecars in *Rush*. To help us through this time of need, in case we did not pay the \$14 to watch Judi Dench's face on a movie screen (which I did, and it was worth every penny), we are taking to the seedy underbelly of the online watching universe to catch up on this year's nominated films. OR, we just watch Netflix.

I will not preach how Netflix has revolutionized the way in which we watch films and television, because no one doubts the power of Netflix anymore. Online streaming is crucial for the college students who are too busy with their work to make it to the theater and/or choose their intimate college dorm room for their viewing experience.

If you want to check out movies that battled for the golden statue on March 2, then seek Redbox or the theater for refuge. The films listed below were not all nominated for Oscars, but definitely deserve the attention of the public (and are not in theaters). Watch and enjoy!

1. *Blackfish*

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

2. *Fruitvale Station*

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

3. *Spring Breakers*

Director: Harmony Korine
Starring: Selena Gomez's tears and James Franco's hair
Reason to Watch: Spraaaang Break. If you have not seen a picture of James Franco dressed up as his character, Alien, then you will be twerked away in this film even more. I say "twerked" because this film is modern and stylized (just like Miley). Vanessa Hudgens, Ashley Benson and Selena Gomez's crying face star in this spring break vacation explosion. This is a film to watch with your friends in a large group setting (with a great soundtrack). (Redbox)

4. *The Kings of Summer*

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

5. *Room 237*

Director: Rodney Ascher
Starring: The Overlook Hotel
Reason to Watch: This epic collaboration details the meaning behind Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*. Well, the film is committed to astonishing the audience with its magic hat tricks filled with ghost stories and staged moon landings. The detailed theories behind this film alone are astonishing and worth a visit back to the Overlook Hotel. (Netflix)

6. *The Spectacular Now*

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

7. *Adore*

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

8. *The World's End*

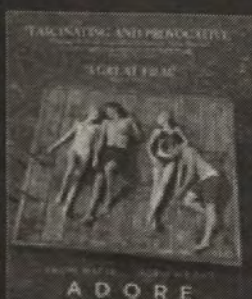
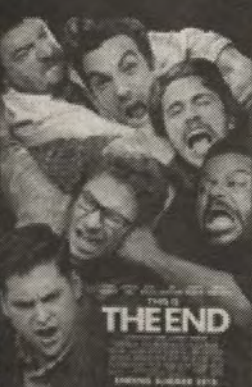
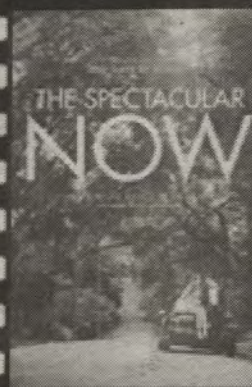
Director: Edgar Wright
Starring: Simon Pegg, Nick Frost, Martin Freeman
Reason to Watch: If you are a fan of *Shaun of the Dead* or *Hot Fuzz*, this film is structured in the same vein. Simon Pegg leads a troop of misfits through his town as they attempt to accomplish the circuit of bars. There is a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

9. *Prisoners*

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

10. *This Is The End*

Director: Evan Goldberg and Seth Rogen
Starring: Every celebrity who is in their 20s and friends with Seth Rogen
Reason to Watch: Like *Spring Breakers*, this film takes advantage of its star power. Seth Rogen, James Franco and gang play alter egos of themselves who are dealing with the apocalypse. Another film worth watching in a large group. (Redbox)



BLACKFISH

THE SPECTACULAR NOW

FRUITVALE STATION

WHY LIVE WHEN YOU CAN RULE

THE KINGS OF SUMMER

SPRING BREAKERS

PRISONERS

ROOM 237

DINING

The Engine Room: Beers, Burgers & Bourbon

ELEANOR HARDY
SPORTS EDITOR

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

A carefully selected 16 beer draft selection in addition to a complete bourbon bar that would make "a Kentucky man proud", the Engine Room goes out of its way to accompany its food with some classic southern drinks. Highlights of the drink menu include a tap dedicated to Stonington's very own Beer'd, a genuinely local nano brewery.

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

After my own dinner there Friday evening it's safe to say it is all-around exceptional. Seated at a cozy, farm-like table topped with crafty mason jars filled with soil and greens, burlap drink menus and a one sheet menu, the simplicity of the restaurant is what initially makes it most comforting. There's no flipping through pages and pages of a menu only to order some chicken, and every item

sparks an "Oh, I could totally go for that right now" thought.

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

The grilled cheese was anything but mundane and blew any of my own creative Harris panini-grilled-cheese concoctions out of the water. Thick slices of hearth bread, local Mystic mellville cheese melted to that just-right consistency—it was mouthwatering. Not much talking occurred as we scarfed down our meals and a side of baked mac-n-cheese which tastes just like your mom's back at home. The reviews on the burgers

were equally as positive as their unique combination of ingredients doesn't really permit otherwise.

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

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

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



PHOTOS COURTESY OF AUTHOR

High 5's: An Alternative Sports Bar

TIM HARTSHORN
STAFF WRITER

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

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

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

According to Jenna and Dez, owners of High 5's, sporting events act as a way for their diverse patron groups to readily integrate; the bar is intimately concerned with being



accessible and accommodating to all. (Also noteworthy — High 5's is a favorite spot of Conn professors, so next time you need to talk about your midterm grade...)

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

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

Perhaps, in a general sense, the

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

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

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

It is the ability to base such adaptability based on a platform emphasizing customer service and top-of-the-line products which make High 5's a unique space on the New London landscape. •

MOVING COMPANY



SEAN FELTON
CONTRIBUTOR

On Thursday, Feb. 20, Friday, Feb. 21, and Saturday, Feb. 22, Connecticut College's Dance Club showcased its spring performance, entitled "Moving Company" in Myers Studio. The performance was approximately an hour and a half in duration, and showcased the technical ability and choreographic visions of dance department students.

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

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

The statement was both bold and relatable, and McInerney's performance was

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

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

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

One of the beauties of dance is its versatility of intention. It has the ability to tell a story, evoke a meaning or to simply be lovely to look at. The most successful

dance works are those that do not require the audience to take anything specific with them. Lajaunie created a piece that gave us dance in its simplest, most unassuming form – the treat of pure movement in space.

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

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



PHOTOS BY MIGUEL SALCEDO

A HISTORY OF THE CAMEL DOME

IGGY STERLING
STAFF WRITER

The ice rink at Connecticut College didn't have a name when doors first opened on February 1st, 1980. What would eventually become known as Dayton Arena, or alternatively, the Camel Dome would remain nameless for the first several years of its existence. Not until brothers Judson Dayton '80 and Duncan Dayton '81 had graduated did Dayton Arena receive its official moniker. It is with these brothers where the history of our storied rink begins.

The Dayton brothers of Minnesota came from a very wealthy and philanthropic family. Their father, Ken Dayton, was the CEO and grandson of the founder of the Dayton Hudson Corporation, now known as the Target Corporation. The family has a strong tradition of philanthropy, with Ken Dayton founding the One Percent Club, a club of extremely wealthy members who donate one percent of their net worth or five percent of their income, whichever is larger, to charity every year while trying to convince other affluent people to match their commitment. Coming from Minnesota, the Dayton brothers were also avid hockey players. The only problem, was that Conn had no ice rink. The nearest rink at the time was Wesleyan's rink in Middletown, a 45 minute drive away. The Dayton brothers decided that Conn needed its own ice facility and put a substantial donation forward, somewhere around a third of the total cost of the two million dollar rink. After that initial investment, other donations started coming in to be put towards a rink, until construction was underway in 1979.

The rink was designed by Daniel F. Tully, a prominent architect of the time, who was known for his non-traditional design geometric patterns. Tully is responsible for buildings on over 100 different schools and universities, many of which are ice rinks or Olympic swimming pools. Tully, a graduate of the Coast Guard Academy, has buildings on other NESCAC campuses including Middlebury, Trinity, and Amherst, and also designed the renowned Alford Arena home of the U-Maine Black Bears. Tully would also go on to design Conn's athletic center several years later. While Tully's resume is impressive, his work designing Dayton Arena is much less so.

Besides the fact that the rink which was scheduled to open in October of 1979 but was delayed until February, there were many problems once it was finished. "I remember when I first got here, I couldn't believe it" says Phil Siena, the rink manager. "There were no players benches or penalty boxes, just doors on the boards. There wasn't even rubber tiling on the floor, you couldn't walk around in your skates". If the Dayton brothers are where the history of the rink begins, Phil Siena is where it finds itself today. An ex-Army Ranger, Siena was working as a Zamboni driver and mechanic at a rink in Glastonbury when the rink went bankrupt in 1979. He was hired that spring by the college, along with ex-NHL player Doug Roberts, who was brought in to operate facilities and coach the Men's Hockey Program.

Neither man could have been overly pleased with what they saw when they first start in the fall of '79. In addition to seemingly have forgotten to give the players benches, there was no scoreboard, and only two tiny locker rooms which as Siena recalls "weren't big enough to fit a high school swim team". To make matters worse, there is only 15 feet of space from the sides of the rink to the walls of the building, which when coupled with their aggressive angle leaves very little room for things like bleachers or a snack shop. "It's also the only rink I've ever seen where the Zamboni bay is right by the front entrance and not at the back, away from all the people."

What the rink lacked in design, Roberts and Siena made up for with ingenuity and scrappiness, literally. When the Glastonbury rink went bankrupt, it was seized by the bank. Roberts and Siena made a deal with the bank, and in exchange for \$1,500 they were given a key to the shutdown rink allowed told they could take anything they could carry. So Roberts and Siena rented a U-Haul truck and filled it with everything they could find, from wall clocks, office furniture and lobby benches most of which is still in use today, to goal posts and the scoreboard on the wall. In a separate deal, Conn won a bidding war with Wesleyan to purchase the rinks' used Zamboni from the bank as well. Eventually everything came together; with the first ever sheet of ice being made on December 27th, 1979.

That first year, Conn spent half of their season driving to Wesleyan for practice. The following year they joined the ECAC South. Hockey quickly caught on at Conn and games became a large attraction on campus. "It used to be rowdy in here man, the roof would be bumping" recalls Siena. Even last Fridays seemingly rowdy Coast Guard Game would have been tame. "The first three or four years we only had half glass on the sides by the stands. We had to put in the taller glass for safety, but in the earlier years you could literally get right on top of the players and tell them what you thought of 'em from the stands". Siena recalls countless instances of people throwing beer cans and such from the stands. "Once there was even a live chicken that someone threw on the ice during a game. Another night, everyone threw rubber super ball out there. It was a different time back then, the college didn't have to be as strict on drinking".

And surely drinking was very common thing at the rink in the early days. Siena remembers how players that were injured or healthy scratches would sit in the Zamboni room and imbibe a few bottles of beer during the game. It wasn't just the players, after home games, Coach Roberts was known to have a beer in the office with Siena and the other game workers. One year, they even used the Labatt Blue logo for center ice.

As the team got better, things got more serious. In 1990 Roberts lead the Camels to their first and only ECAC South Championship. On that team was Roberts' son, Doug Roberts Jr '91 and Rand Pecknold '90. Pecknold is now the head Coach of the Quinnipiac University Men's Hockey program that

lost to Yale in the Division I National Championship last year. If you are wondering why you never noticed a championship banner before, that's because it was stolen several years later over the summer. The college has never replaced it. Perhaps spurred on by their success, Dayton Arena got an update that same year, with the current men's locker room being built as an add on at the back of the building. That allowed for the two lockers to have a wall knocked out and be converted into the Women's locker room.

In 2000 Coach Jim Ward replaced Doug Roberts, and really cleaned things up. "Roberts was a great coach, but he was an old school guy, and had an old school way of doing things" recalls Siena. When Ward came in, the games got less rowdy. There was an effort to really crack down on the drinking, while giving the College and its hockey program a more serious and respectable reputation. Certainly, the men's hockey team has done that bring The Green Dot Game to campus, and giving talks on responsible drinking habits to incoming Freshmen during orientation as well as work with the Gordy Foundation which works to reduce alcohol abuse on campuses.

On the ice the program has struggled, though this year saw a very strong finish with the Camels making playoffs for the first time in several years. And on some level, it is very hard not to equate our success partially with our lovable, but quirky and outdated rink. When teams come to play, they have to either get dressed next door in the AC, and walk over in their gear or get dressed in the "plywood palace" two small open roofed locker rooms made out of plywood at the back of the rink, that share a single toilet and have no showers. Certainly it hurts the recruiting process when rival NESCAC schools like Bowdoin and Middlebury have new, top of the line skating facilities (ironically enough in 2009 Bowdoin tore down its own historic Dayton Arena which was replaced by the 1,900 seat Sydney Watson Arena).

While the rink itself may be sub-par the ice itself is anything but. Siena has been driving a Zamboni for close to 40 years now and is something more like an artisan than a mechanic or technician. His goal is to always make a sheet that is as flat as possible "just like a pool table, baby". His devotion shows through; as a life-long hockey player I can attest that Conn has some of the best ice I have ever skated on. Which ultimately is the most important; games aren't won in warm locker rooms and new grandstands, they are won on the ice. That is what sets Dayton Arena apart, as the common saying at the rink goes "our ice is nice".

Dayton Arena is quirky, non-traditional, and perhaps in need of serious improvement, but it is functional, and it is ours, which if you think about it, is a great metaphor for Conn itself. Next year, Dayton Arena will reach it's 35th anniversary, and while I will have graduated and be long gone, the rink will still be here, and so will Phil and there will be a new group of students coming to enjoy it and play the game they love on its ice just like all those students before them.

Player Profile Matt Vadas '14

ROXY BARBERA
CONTRIBUTOR

The Men's Basketball team may have closed out their season on February 15th with an overall record of 9-14, but the hype is far from over for their senior superstar, Matt Vadas. With a monumental total of 1697 points Vadas, a co-captain with fellow senior John Bullit, became the program's all-time leading scorer. Vadas not only surpassed the previous scoring record of 1656 points, held for over a decade by Kareem Tatum '01, but was also dubbed Conn's "three-point shooting king" garnering 239 triples by season's end.

When I asked about his most memorable game in his four years at Conn, Vadas recalled February 14th. "I'll always remember the game against Williams because it was when I broke the record and even though we came out in a loss (98-90) it was definitely one of the better games we played as a team."

Though today he is an undeniable shooting legend, Vadas didn't earn this title overnight. With basketball as his passion since he was 3, Vadas describes his changing role on the court, "In high school I was a little smaller so I played guard, but mostly at college I've played in the forward position. A lot of the offense is centered around the forward position scoring so it was nice that my teammates had faith in me shooting a lot of the shots."

Vadas also spoke about the team's desire to make playoffs, "We would've liked to have made playoffs, we had a really strong beginning of the year but we kind of faded at the end." Notwithstanding this let-down, the 2013 season remained Vadas' favorite in his time at Conn.

"This was the most enjoyable season on and off the court because we were really close as a team. Even though we had a large number of both seniors and freshman it never felt like there were any cliques, and I think that we played the best basketball on the court because of this cohesion off of it."

While others may be concerned with the basketball team graduating one of its most exceptional players, Vadas has nothing but faith in the program's future.

"We kind of came into a broken program, and it was really nice after our four years to feel like we have it going in the right direction. Even though we didn't have the best record, the progress we made is incredible and shows the best is yet to come."

And the best really is yet to come. After graduation the spotlight may follow Vadas internationally to Europe where he hopes to find an opportunity to play the sport at a semi-professional level. But no matter where life takes him, Vadas said, "I definitely want to stick around basketball. I don't know if I'm coach material, but I'm sure I'll stay with the sport somehow."

But even off the court, Vadas stays competitive. His current goal? Beating the entire Lego Harry Potter video game along with senior, Christian Sbarro. In his downtime, however, you'll probably find Vadas listening to his all-time favorite band, Phish. "It's a jam band, like a Grateful Dead for a younger generation."

A senior, Vadas reflects on his incredible journey that wouldn't have been possible without his, "awesome group of seniors and teammates" or Coach Satran. "He's great. He's definitely been through a lot with the team, and the positives he created made the experience what it was."

When I asked one of his best friends for a comment on Vadas, there was no mention of him as Conn's all-time leading scorer or of his unbelievable three-pointers. Instead, she simply looked at me and said, "Matt is the nicest kid I've ever met in my entire life and I've met a lot of people, so that says something."*



SPINNING FOR GOLD

EXERCISE FOR EVERYONE

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

—charges \$35 per session at their New York City studios. Robertson's classes, known for their high intensity and high volume (both in decibels and attendance), are absolutely free of charge.

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

Robertson spends anywhere from one to four hours at a time conducting music research for her set lists, using popular sites like YouTube and Soundcloud. "I really like finding the stuff that no one has, not top 100 radio hits," said Robertson. "I do my best to think about the music and routines. It's cognitive, it's planned out." Electronic music and dubstep remixes frequent Robertson's workout playlists; "Original Don" by Major Lazer and the Kat Krazy remix of Bastille's "Pompeii" are among her favorite tracks.

In addition to the blasting music, shouts of encouragement and inspired cheers lend themselves to the cacophony emanating from the spin studio during classes. "At the beginning of the year everyone was pretty quiet," Robertson recalled. "Now [the classes] are

known to be upbeat and loud. People are screaming and hooting and hollering. I absolutely love it when people are loud."

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

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

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

"It's one of the best ways to keep in shape," claimed Bullitt's teammate Mason Lopez '14. Lopez explained that basketball players' knees take a beating on the court, and spinning offers a low impact cardio workout that other forms of

exercise cannot. And, while basketball requires a lot of sprinting, spin classes offer "45 minutes of pushing yourself the entire time."

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

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

While Robertson has certainly added fun and variation to varsity training (Lopez described an instance in which Robertson brought water guns to their training and "when everyone was dead she just hosed [them] down"), her experience training the volleyball and men's basketball teams have influenced the weekly classes, too.

"When I started training the basketball team we were doing really intense workouts, so with the normal classes I slowly started integrating their set list," explained Robertson. "It was amazing. Within a few weeks I was teaching the regular classes the same way I was teaching the basketball team."

Now, members of both teams (and others, to be sure) are regular

attendees at Robertson's Monday and Wednesday classes, adding to what Robertson describes as the "motley crew" that makes up her class. Varsity athletes cycle alongside students who may never have worked out before — "you could be next to the President," said Wuyke, recalling an instance in which Ulysses Hammond, Conn's Vice President for Administration, attended and enthusiastically enjoyed one of Robertson's classes.

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

Robertson affectionately refers to attendees as her "little spin family," and delivers her instructions accordingly. "I'm there to give recommendations. Everyone has their own limits, and that's that. If I'm saying gear 15 and someone can't do it, do gear 10."

"There's no shame or holding back in that class," added Balkin. "Partial nudity is accepted. It's really steamy — by the end, everyone is half naked."

In past semesters, spin classes have been offered with more frequency, as there have been multiple instructors on campus. However, over the years these instructors have graduated and moved on, leaving Robertson to lead the classes on her own until she graduates this May. "I wish I could flunk her so she could be here one more

year," joked Wuyke.

Though she is currently in the process of training a few junior and sophomore girls to take over for her, Robertson's regular trainees will be sad to see her go. "I don't think anyone could compare to the level of intensity and consistency that Erin's brought to the classes," said Balkin.

To Wuyke, it's imperative that student-led classes continue to thrive at the athletic center. "That's where I learn the most, with you guys," said Wuyke. "Yes I may have experience, yes I've been running all my life, yes I've been in the Olympic Games. But I learn from you guys, you guys are teaching me. That's what I love."

For those of us who aren't varsity athletes and might have trouble finding motivation for exercise, Robertson's classes offer a fun, intense workout in a safe and encouraging environment. "When the music is so loud your senses kind of blur out the pain," described Robertson. "When I'm up there and we have a sprint, the music is so loud, seeing everyone go so fast, the noise, heads down. It's such an intense moment. I've seen people come and look through the window, shocked. When the class is over, people usually come up to me after and say 'Man I had such a fun time. I hate working out, but this was fun.' It makes it worth it."

Bullitt echoed the sentiment: "Everyone loves getting a good workout, and it's a great way to get your ass kicked. •

Player Profile: Leah Puklin '14

ELEANOR HARDY
SPORTS EDITOR

Junior captain Leah Puklin was recently named to the All-NESCAC Women's squash second team after a successful season playing at the #2 spot. Being viewed as a key player by fellow NESCAC coaches, Leah not only succeeds on the squash courts but also in the classroom, as she was also named as a CSA Scholar Athlete. With a 12-10 record for the season, Leah topped off her

season last weekend at the College Squash Association National Team Championship.

Hometown: Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania

Major: Environmental Studies, Mathematics Minor

What got her interested in squash: I was introduced to squash at a young age from my grandfather who took me to play at the courts in the famous Payne Whitney gymnasium at Yale University. I have been playing squash

competitively since high school. My high school was the first public school in the nation to have a squash team.

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

Pre-match routine: It usually starts with me watching some of

my teammates' matches since I usually don't play in the first round of matches. I then go off on my own to find a quiet hallway where I can do some sprints, lunges and stretches. I like to be around people before I play to get pumped up so I don't usually go off on my own and warm up for very long. I also like to get a pep-talk before my match from either my coach or one of my teammates.

Reaction to All-NESCAC Award: I was really surprised and honored to receive the All-

NESCAC award. It felt great to be acknowledged by other coaches for my dedication to the team and love of the sport. Receiving this award is a major accomplishment and it feels great to be acknowledged for the hard work and dedication I have put in to this team for the past three years. I am also happy to help get Connecticut College Women's squash team out in the public because I think we have great potential in the coming years to move up in the rankings. •