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THE COLLEGE VOICE

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1977

New London Fights Fracking Waste

ALLIE GIROUARD
STAFF WRITER

The New London City Council discussed and heard public opinions on a proposed ordinance to ban disposal of fracking waste in the city at their Feb. 6 meeting. Although an impermanent state-wide ban currently prevents fracking waste from being exported to Connecticut, local action, in this case, is essential. New London residents' endeavors to bring this issue to public attention exemplify proactive attempts to make local change during a time of national turmoil.

Due to the absence of in-state shale deposits that would allow fracking and a current moratorium on the disposal of fracking waste in Connecticut, the issue may seem imperative to public concern. Connecticut's moratorium on fracking waste, however, is set to expire soon, and the Director of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection has indicated that the ban will not be renewed. If fracking waste is exported to Connecticut, New London will be at risk of becoming a disposal site. This result would pose serious health threats to New London residents and would entangle the city in a problematic and harmful industry. For the good of the city, and most importantly, the wellbeing of the residents of the region, the New London City Council must pass the proposed ordinance.

The ordinance came to the attention of the City Council through the dedicated actions of concerned citizens, one of whom is Connecticut College librarian Andrew Lopez. Lopez and his peers in the effort managed to spread the word and rally fellow residents to an impressive degree, as evidenced by the fact that the meeting was so well attended that not everybody could fit in the City Council chamber. Recognizing the high attendance, Council members remarked that they wished every meeting would be so full.

Numerous citizens, including Lopez, spoke passionately in favor of the ban. In his testimony to the Council, Lopez read a letter from Douglas Thompson, Connecticut College Professor of Physics, Astronomy and Geophysics, that confirmed the harm fracking waste disposal would inflict on the city and the region. Arguments against fracking by New London residents included the adverse public health consequences of exposure to toxic waste byproducts, the negative impact disposal sites would have on the city's ability to increase its tax base and the need for local government to take action on environmental issues. This last point is made more urgent by our current political circumstances, as the federal Environmental Protection Agency is seriously endangered.

The public's opinion on fracking has greatly influenced

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Students, Faculty and Staff Stand Against Hate

DAVID JOHNSTON
STAFF WRITER

Wednesday, Feb. 8 provided a warm and sunny atmosphere for Conn's collective stand of resistance against the toxic national atmosphere created by the Trump administration's language and actions. The stand, organized by SGA, maintained as its primary purpose "[to provide] a chance for the Conn community to collectively take a stand against bigotry, racism, sexism, islamophobia, anti-Semitism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, oppressive practices against indigenous communities, ableism and all other forms of recently perpetuated hate" according to an email circulated on campus by SGA. Held only a day after arguments were presented to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals regarding the constitutionality of the Trump administration's travel ban, the stand also protested President Trump's broad use of executive actions. At the beginning of the event, several participants held signs containing messages like "refugees welcome" and "we refuse to be enemies," among others.

At the start of the stand, all attendees were encouraged to ask fellow demonstrators why they chose to attend the event. When asked, Mary Goulding '18 responded: "Too many things, I can't put it into a sentence," and Han-

nah Pepin '19 noted: "Everything is suffocating now and it affects us all in so many ways." Several others echoed these ideas, as many found it hard to find just one thing that brought them to the event.

Other Conn students, however, expressed more specific reasons for standing in solidarity. Many students voiced their ideas by posing on the round stone bench at the top of Temple Green to take turns addressing the crowd. In such an instance, Gerard Lanzano '17 posed: "Who is to say that more countries will not be added?" in reference to Trump's executive order, infamously dubbed the "Muslim ban," barring people from seven Muslim-majority countries for the time being, and from Syria indefinitely, from entering the United States. The sentiments that Lanzano conveyed were echoed by the messages on several presenters' signs, many of which spoke to fears for the future of immigration rights.

Caitlin Kay, a Residential Education and Living staff member, later spoke on a different, but likewise controversial, topic. Kay fears that, given the views of Vice President Mike Pence on gay marriage, hard-fought civil rights gains may be compromised by the Trump administration.

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Too Trumpy?

You’ll see a lot of Trump in this issue. You’ll see a lot of us *Voice* people grappling with how to find the truth, how to report the truth and generally, what the hell to do with the truth when it looks so grim. Considering the discourse swirling around the media during the election season—that, amidst a slew of accusations that the news was too left, too right or too fake, the media blew Donald Trump’s incendiary campaign up from an absurd nuisance to a grotesque danger—I don’t know that I’m comfortable with this issue’s level of Trumpiness. But that’s the thing about the press: if we were always comfortable with what we reported, we would hardly have a reason to report it.

While I agonized over how to cover Trump, my internet scrolling led me to one of *The Atlantic*’s nifty new videos in which James Fallows, a long-time Atlantic writer who has covered presidencies since Jimmy Carter, sketches out what makes Trump different from his predecessors. Fallows distinguishes between “the conventional politician and conventional lying,” citing Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton as examples, and “the second category, described just as bullshit,” characterized by Fallows as a “salesman, infomercial-type guy...saying whatever it takes to please the audience.” According to Fallows, “the bullshitter still recognizes the difference between something that’s technically true and technically not.”

The difference marked by this 45th President hinges on that recognition. As Fallows puts it: “It’s not evident to me that Donald Trump recognizes the difference between the reality he is expressing and the external reality as measured in the world.” This confusion is dangerous.

So what do we do, as journalists, when faced with a figure who not only lies, but who makes it unclear whether he even knows what the truth is? I’m reminded of the comments made by Linda Greenhouse, a Pulitzer Prize-winning former Supreme Court beat reporter for *The New York Times* at *The Yale Daily News*’ Annual Conference on College Newspapers. After mentioning that while she was a student journalist, she had not demonstrated as an activist, Greenhouse was asked if current student journalists should protect their reputations by similarly abstaining from activism. She responded that no, student journalists should participate in activism if they feel inclined to do so, noting that our current moment differs from her undergraduate days because “now, we’re in a time of crisis.” To contextualize this statement, Greenhouse was in college during the Vietnam War.

Speaking to this same sense of crisis and urgency, Fallows says in his video that “What we don’t know...is whether people will look back on this as a close call for the institutions of American custom and self-correction and democracy or as the beginning of something really different.” Though this speculation warns of an ominous state future, perhaps in a more optimistic light, maybe this moment is the beginning of something really different in not only the political world, but the written one too. It might be a given, at this point, to say that journalism needs to change.

-Maia

A note on writer credits

At the *Voice*, we realize that the titles that appear under the author’s name on each article may appear cryptic to the reader who does not know the ins-and-outs of our production process. Mystification is, of course, never our intent. To clarify, the names and titles of staff members as they appear to the right should, with occasional exceptions, match up with the titles assigned throughout the paper. Everyone else receives one of two designations: “staff writer” or “contributor.” Staff writers are simply those who have written for the *Voice* at least three times during the past academic year; contributors have written once or twice. Wondering how you can become a contributor, staff writer or even occupy one of the positions listed to the right? Just come to one of our meetings at 7 pm on Monday nights in Cro 224 or send us an email! We’re open to all.

THE COLLEGE VOICE

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

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Thank you for reading

∞

Thank you for writing

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Community Bulletin

Russian Ship Visits Connecticut Coast

A Russian spy ship was seen 30 miles off the coast of Connecticut on Wednesday, Feb. 15. The ship remained in international waters, making its presence legal on grounds of freedom of navigation. Though the ship’s appearance came at a time of heightened concern over U.S.-Russia relations, coastal patrolling of this sort is not unprecedented.

Fracking Ban Back on the Table

The New London City Council will reconsider a municipal ban on fracking waste disposal in New London on March 6. The Public Welfare Committee will discuss the ban in the early evening, and the Council will vote on its passage following the discussion. While the exact City Council meeting time has yet to be confirmed, the meeting is open to the public.

First Three Floralia Acts Released

The Connecticut College Student Activities Council has announced the names of three of the artists and bands that will perform at Floralia; 2017: a DJ named Ashworth, the hip-hop performer Mike Taylor and the indie rock band And the Kids. For more information on these artists, and to check for more name releases, visit Conn SAC’s Facebook page.

Oroville Dam Maxed Out

Northern California’s Oroville Dam, the largest dam in the United States, has reached critical water levels due to recent rainfall, and its primary spillway has developed a 200-foot hole. Nearly 200,000 residents of the area surrounding the dam have been evacuated. Dam workers are rushing to drain as much water as they can from Lake Oroville before the next storm hits.

Son of Penn State Coach Charged with Soliciting Sex from Minors

Jeff Sandusky, son of former Penn State football coach Jerry Sandusky, has been charged with soliciting minors for sex acts and nude photos. Sandusky’s father was convicted of 45 counts of sexual assault in 2012, but in 2015, Jeff Sandusky asserted that his father was innocent.

Michael Flynn Resigns 12 Weeks into National Security Position

Trump’s national security adviser, Michael Flynn, resigned after being exposed for having lied about discussing sanctions with the Russian ambassador. His actions could be a violation of the Logan Act, which disallows unauthorized citizens from dealing in negotiations with foreign governments. It has been proven that Donald Trump was informed of Flynn’s conduct over two weeks prior to Flynn’s resignation.

Avalanches Wreak Havoc along the Durand Line

Over 150 people along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan have been killed by avalanches in the mountains. A huge increase in snowfall in the region led to the disaster, and rescuers are still working to reach more remote parts of the area to find individuals potentially trapped under the snow.

Domestic Abuse Decriminalized in Russia

Last week, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a national law decriminalizing some domestic violence. The law classifies first-time assault of a family member as a civil offense rather than a criminal one, resulting in a fine with an approximate maximum of \$500.

Sports Corner

Women’s Basketball (16-9)

Williams W 68-63
@ Colby L 41-56
@ Bowdoin L 49-68
@ Bowdoin L 47-72

Men’s Basketball (13-10)

@ Williams L 63-100
Colby W 70-60
Bowdoin L 70-77

Women’s Ice Hockey (14-7-3)

@ Bowdoin L 1-2
Hamilton T 0-0 (OT)
Hamilton W 5-1

Men’s Ice Hockey (4-16-3)

Hamilton L 1-2
Amherst L 1-2
@ Colby L 1-2
@ Bowdoin T 1-1 (OT)

Women’s Squash (6-16)

@ Hamilton L 1-2
Amherst L 1-2
@ Colby L 1-2
@ Bowdoin T 1-1 (OT)

Men’s Squash (4-17)

Bard W 9-0
@ Hamilton L 3-6
Hobart L 1-8
Hamilton L 2-7

Women’s Swimming (7-2)
NESCAC Championship 3rd Place

Men’s Swimming (6-2)
NESCAC Championship 4th Place

Test Your Knowledge: Introducing *The College Voice* Story Search

Beginning with this Feb. 20 edition, each issue of the *Voice* will bring readers a sampler of engaging, thought-provoking and generally amusing facts and stories in interactive quiz form. Try to fill in your blanks below, then look through the paper to find the answers. For this first edition, we’ve made it easy; they’re all tucked away together.

- 1) A 13 foot alligator in Hanahan, SC has acquired an orange tint, possibly due to algae or water pollutants. The color change inspired locals assign the nickname _____ to their reptilian neighbor.
- 2) An estimated 23,000 _____ are expected to move from New York City to Long Island annually.
- 3) The U.S. food giant _____made a “friendly” \$143 billion bid to merge with its Anglo-Dutch competitor Unilever. The latter company rejected the deal, likely because of the former’s poor track record with labor rights and environmental protection.
- 4) Virginia judge Alex Rueda ordered five teenage boys to _____ for defacing a school with racist graffiti.
- 5) During Michael Flynn’s tenure as Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (2012-2014), Flynn’s subordinates referred to his frequent untrue claims as _____.

Connecting Connecticut and Rhode Island: Updates on the Northeast Corridor

SAADYA CHEVAN
STAFF WRITER

Since Christmas, there has been much concern over planning for future rail service in Southeastern Connecticut and Southwestern Rhode Island. Near final plans have been released for the construction of a new and controversial rail bypass between Old Saybrook and Kenyon, RI. Additionally, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) sent a budget-cutting proposal to the governor's office that proposed significantly reducing Shoreline East service, although this was ultimately not included in Connecticut Governor Daniel Malloy's final 2017 budget proposal.

The rail bypass is a by-product of a push initiated by the Obama administration for the expansion of rail service throughout the United States. Naturally, the planning of projects for the Northeast Corridor (NEC), the Amtrak line between Boston, New York and Washington D.C., was included in this initiative. Within the next few weeks, as early as March 1, a significant part of Obama's rail initiative for the NEC will come to fruition with the finalization of the FRA's NEC FUTURE Tier 1 Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which outlines the government's "preferred alternative" for future development of the NEC that would take place from now until at least 2040. This plan promises to have significant effects on how rail service will be expanded throughout the Northeast, and especially in Southeastern Connecticut.

Included in the EIS is the plan for a bypass between Old Saybrook and Kenyon, RI, which describes the bypass as beginning east of the Old Saybrook station and travelling north of the NEC's current route. According to the plan, the line would cross the Connecticut River via a tunnel and continue "in a series of tunnels, trenches, and aerial structures parallel to I-95 through East Lyme." It would then turn back to I-95, crossing the Thames River via a new bridge located between the highway's two bridges and continue "on embankment or aerial structure parallel to I-95 through Groton and Stonington, crossing the Pawcatuck River north of the NEC into Westerly, Rhode Island." A map indicates that the segment continues to parallel the current curvier tracks in Westerly and Charlestown before finally rejoining the NEC near the straight section of the current West Kingston, RI station. The plan also calls for a new, exclusively high-speed rail station to be built in New London County.

The proposed bypass has attracted much controversy in Southeastern Connecticut and Southwestern Rhode Island. Opponents of the plan are concerned about its impact given that use a great deal of land while bringing very few benefits to the region. At a recent public op-

position meeting, Gregory Stroud, Executive Director of the opposing organization SECoast, claimed that most high-speed trains travelling on it would likely skip the New London County station, as there is not a large enough market for high-speed rail. Currently, twenty Acela trains, which are the fastest service available on the NEC, travel through New London, but only three make a stop at Union Station (two northbound and one southbound), and no Acelas stop in New London on weekends.

Many opponents of the bypass are concerned about its effect on property values. Some landowners, potentially including the Narragansett Tribe, would lose parts of their holdings should the bypass be built. Since the Tier 1 EIS only outlines future construction projects on the NEC, additional planning in the form of a Tier 2 EIS specific to the project will be required before construction begins. Currently no funds are appropriated for continuation of the bypass and given the breadth of NEC FUTURE's improvements. Unless a significant appropriation is made for rail improvements in the Northeast in the next few years, it is quite likely that the project will not be revisited for the next 20 years, if ever.

However, once the Tier 1 EIS is finalized, it would become easier for the project to begin as long as proper procedure had been observed during the planning process, which opponents claim is not the case. They worry that in the meantime, the existence of these plans could make it difficult for everyone in or near affected areas to sell their property because of the uncertainty of if and when it would be appropriated for the project. Home sales in Old Lyme, a community that has been very vocal in its opposition to the proposal, declined over the past year, but there is at present only anecdotal evidence that this was linked to the bypass. Additionally, the large amount of construction required to create a rail line along I-95 in Stonington, Groton, and East Lyme would likely create traffic problems on the highway for the duration of construction. Bills currently in the Connecticut State Senate, sponsored by Senators Paul Formica (R-East Lyme), Heather Somers (R-Groton) and Representative Devin Carney (R-Old Lyme), propose requiring approval of any changes to commuter rail service or state funding for rail projects by the involved communities' voters.

Acknowledging

these concerns, the Tier 1 EIS observes that based on residents' feedback, the FRA changed its plans for the bypass by calling for use of a tunnel, rather than a bridge, for the routing across the Connecticut River and Old Lyme. It also contains a statement noting that the current representation of the bypass must be reviewed in future planning studies and that "as a result of the Tier 2 project study, the alignment between Old Saybrook, CT, and Kenyon, RI, could shift north or south of the Representative Route." In a recent webinar about NEC FUTURE FRA, officials repeatedly stated that the intent of the plan was to point to areas where capacity needs to be increased rather than outline the precise right of way that projects to do so would use. The officials also stated that they will continue to be influenced by public comment until the plan is finalized.

Opponents of the plan claim that the federal and state governments should focus on improving the current rail line rather than partially replacing it with a new one. They point out that the 110 year old drawbridge across the Connecticut River between Old Saybrook and Old Lyme is a significant bottleneck for train travel in the area, as it has a significantly lower speed limit than the rest of the rail line. They suggest replacing the drawbridge with a lift bridge that would allow for trains to cross at higher speeds. Opponents are also calling for the installation of detection equipment intended to stop a train if a vehicle or person gets stuck on the tracks at two private railroad crossings. Unlike most of the other crossings on the NEC, the private crossing in question does not have this equipment, and the NEC plan's opponents claim its installation would cost less than

\$1 million.

Finally, opponents of the bypass are calling for a greater focus on improving commuter rather than intercity rail service. Specifically, they have called for extension of the Shoreline East service to Mystic and Westerly, RI. Such service would encourage the state of Rhode Island to extend its commuter service south of Providence to Westerly, which would give travelers the option of taking trains from Boston's South Station to New York's Grand Central Station without the use of Amtrak. In 2016, the Connecticut Public Transportation Commission's annual report suggested that such an extension of Shoreline East should be of high priority to the state.

The state, however, has recently considered reducing Shoreline East service rather than extending it. A proposal submitted to Malloy's office by CTDOT suggested cutting the Shoreline East budget in half, most likely resulting in a greater than 50% service reduction. Explaining the rationale behind this suggestion, CTDOT spokesman Judd Everhart told the *Voice* that "[on] Shore Line East, there are about 660,000 passenger trips annually. Fares on Shore Line East cover just 7 percent of operating costs, which total about \$35 million. By comparison, Metro-North New Haven Line fares cover about 70 percent of operating costs, which total about \$440 million. The New Haven Line has about 40 million passenger trips annually."

Despite the suggested cuts, the governor's final budget proposal maintained funding for rail service at originally planned levels. It was unclear whether this proposal would have affected service to New London, since most Shoreline East trains originate or terminate at Old Saybrook. •



PrivacyAware

After his cone of shame pic went viral, Frank was reluctant to go to the park.

Share with care
What you post can last a lifetime
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Jan. 28



STOP | THINK | CONNECT

Conn Resists Together

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Referencing a newspaper clipping that she placed on her office wall the day gay marriage was legalized, Kay remarked: “I’m scared [the newspaper] will have to come down symbolically, even though it will not physically come off of my wall.”

Following Kay, Emma Schlichting ’17 commented: “I’m scared because racism divided this campus two years ago, and this country is divided now. Remember to stand up for something.” With that statement, Schlichting referred to the events of Spring 2015, a contentious period in the College’s history during which students argued about the implications of anti-Palestinian language publicized by Professor Andrew Pessin on Facebook, vulgar graffiti in Cro revealing hatred toward the black community on campus and the broader issues evidenced by these instances of hate speech.

SGA President Ramzi Kaiss ’17, one of the students who spearheaded the Stand of Collective Resistance and Solidarity efforts, spoke to the event’s



Photos courtesy of Hannah Johnston



specific purpose and timing. “This is a result of students, faculty and staff standing against the Trump administration for a stand of collective resistance as so many of us here at Conn are affected by what’s been going on,” said Kaiss, adding, “I’m here to listen to what’s on people’s minds and to be in solidarity with other groups on campus.” His remarks demonstrate the importance of collaboration across differing causes in order to affect change.

While a majority of signs and comments presented concerned the Trump administration’s recent executive actions, there were also a few posters and speeches about Sean Spicer ’93, the White House Press Secretary and a Conn alumnus, which denounced Spicer’s execution of his work as a poor reflection of our community and its values.

Speaking in regard to the community values that Spicer has eschewed, Dean of Institutional Equity

and Inclusion John McKnight emphasized the importance of Conn’s stand for solidarity. He observed: “I feel a connection to the community here; I have spent many hours on campus. I am concerned for people in this community and the greater community, I am also here for solidarity for people here and around the world.” While McKnight recognized that he has not been at Conn for long, he has gotten to know many students, and he wants to support them and make the campus a better place for everyone. For the Office of the Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion, the stated first purpose of the stand, to demonstrate a resistance to various forms of bigotry, racism and oppression, should be of paramount importance.

The common hour was soon over, and many had to return to their schedules by going to class, work and other obligations, but some of the Stand of Collective Resistance and Solidarity’s attendees stayed out after the stand’s official conclusion to continue talking and collaborating. Those who remained further reflected SGA’s latter goal for the stand, which read in the official campus-wide invitation: “to brainstorm and discuss the next steps that our community needs to take in its fight against all ongoing forms of hatred.” •



40th Floralia: Budgeting for More than Hay

HANNAH JOHNSTON
NEWS EDITOR

40 years ago, Floralia was little more than an informal spring gathering of Connecticut College students. Now, as its anniversary approaches, it is clear that the event has evolved into much more, and those who coordinate it aim to keep the changes coming. Regarding Floralia's evolution, chair of Student Activities Council (SAC) Jeff Celniker '17 stated: "it has really become a professional music festival where students are expecting, and kind of demanding, artists to perform." This year's Floralia promises to be impressive, with a packed line-up of nationally and internationally known artists and a corresponding production value. The performers, who will be announced one at a time by SAC every Thursday, represent a wide range of genres, covering music styles such as hip-hop, rock, alternative rock, pop, EDM, dream pop, country and more.

"I know we're really excited about the line-up; it should be one of the most diverse line-ups we've ever add," said Geoff Norbert, Associate Dean for Student Engagement and co-chair of the Floralia Safety Working Group. Celniker elaborated on the production value of the event this year, explaining that SAC is "basically doubling the budget for production" and planning production further in advance. Celnicker also mentioned the additions of a runway stage and an Emcee to Floralia, noting that "the host will connect the whole show together. We're looking to do 5-10 minute turnarounds [between acts] but he'll be making that time part of the show;

he's a stand-up comedian so he'll be talking to people, making jokes."

Both Norbert and Celniker specified that SAC and other offices contributing to the massive spring event are hoping to put more time and thought into so-called "novelty items" and other non-concert aspects of Floralia.

Celnicker hinted at potential and ideally interactive novelty items by commenting: "I'd love to see a big graffiti wall. I don't know if you should be expecting a roller coaster, but something where you can engage."

Students can also thank Ariana Pazmino '18, SGA Chair of Sustainability, and the Sustainable Projects Fund (SPF) for allowing SAC to allocate more time, resources and money to the non-concert, non-logistical aspects of Floralia. SGA recently passed three resolutions which granted almost \$20,000 from the SPF to the Floralia budget. Pazmino explained that the funding will go toward "portable restrooms that don't use harmful chemicals or dispose of the waste harmfully, as well as fencing and signage that can be reused over the years. That'll be one big purchase this year with the hopes that the materials will be used in the coming years." The SPF funding will also be used to purchase hay and contract food trucks.

About the food trucks, Pazmino said: "We're trying to take into consideration Halal, kosher, vegetarian and vegan options, as well as more types of ethnic food."

Pazmino's comments evidence a collaboration between the Office of Sustainability and SAC that is emblematic of Celniker's efforts toward cosponsorship. Celniker attributed this collaboration in part to devel-

opment within SAC, noting that "SAC has identified its strengths and its weaknesses."

Celniker and Norbert were vague regarding the level of safety regulations to be expected compared to previous years. According to Norbert, the Floralia Safety Working Group "[has considered] a lot of different options to make sure that the event is kind of [held to the] standard [of a] professional festival." Celniker also expects that Floralia will feel like a professional music festival, noting, "I think that you can't have one without the other, so you can't expect and demand high-quality artists without the other part of it, which is an area for the festival, security guards at the doors and at the stage, and also, what music festival has anyone ever attended where they can just bring in any sort of alcohol or drugs?" The specifics of coming Floralia precautions will be communicated as the event approaches.

Because this will be Floralia's 40th anniversary, the festival's coordinators hope to make the day fun and interesting for the entire student body. These efforts will hopefully make the event not only impressive, but also more accessible to a more varied crowd.

"[SAC] wants to make it the most appealing, diverse, cohesive event possible" Celnicker explained, "because it seems to have catered to a certain demographic in the past, and we want it to appeal to everyone." This goal is reflected by the three artists who have been released so far: Ashworth, Mike Taylor and And the Kids, who represent a range of genres. For more information on the line-up names that have been released, students should consult the SAC Facebook page or the *Voice's* Community Bulletin. •

Twilight for Winter Sports

ELIZABETH VAROLI
CONTRIBUTOR

The coming weeks mark the transition from the end of the 2016-2017 Connecticut College winter sports season to the start of the 2017 spring sports season. For winter student athletes, the month of February is filled with tournaments and championships, whether they are NESCAC championships, final games, NCAA tournaments or nationals. All of the early mornings, late nights, double sessions and even the family time athletes sacrificed over break culminate in the final meets, matches and games they play in this month.

To shed light on the hard work of winter athletes in our community, several of Conn's representatives in winter sports were asked how they feel going into this final stretch of the season considering the pressure of such a culmination. Through a series of interviews, they addressed their personal and team-wide attitudes as they face the positive and negative aspects of the winter season's end.

Based on their responses, it is clear that these athletes have a great deal of respect for their sports, their teams, their school and themselves.

Anne Holly '17, a tri-captain of the women's squash team, explained how she will lead her team in their final two weeks. According to Holly, "it's important for us to stay focused during our final six practices. We have to keep up the high energy as we work on executing our shots

in match play. We put in the work in practice and now it is time to tie it all together as our home match is the culmination of four years of hard work as a Connecticut College squash player and a Camel." To this day, she believes that "every day, it is an honor and a privilege to put on the jersey, and by wearing it, we represent Connecticut College in every aspect and must act with the utmost sportsmanship."

After four years playing for Conn, in addition to her time training in high school, Holly has only four matches left in her collegiate squash career. Reflecting on her time at Conn, Holly said: "having arrived at CC with three people on the team, to have risen to 28th in the nation with a key win over the 22nd team, it is important that we keep pushing for more. We never settle with our current performance. We have so much talent on this team and the results that we are able to achieve given the extremely limited resources available to us, is incredible. There's no better time to support Camel Athletics, women in sports or squash. We plan to end the season with our best performance yet, with no regrets, the utmost sportsmanship and an improved ranking proving that this is just the start of a great future that you'll want to support." On Feb. 24-26 they will compete in the CSA National Championship.

Mason Evans '18 from the men's hockey team, expressed similar respect for his team. Evans says, "it feels good knowing our seniors can

end their careers on a good note; they've really earned it during their time here and the rest of our team owes it to them to make the most of the last weekend. I think we've really improved as a team this season regardless of wins and losses; hopefully that can translate into 2 wins to close out the season. The season has been a blur thus far just because of how much fun we've had, but at some point all of us need some time off to rest and regroup for next season." On Feb. 18 the team will take on Bowdoin for the final match of the season.

Daniel Reisman '18 of the men's squash team commented on how his team has prepared for the CSA National Championship, which will take place Feb. 17-19. He said: "it feels good knowing that all the work we have put in throughout the season will show at Nationals. Everyone on the team is eager to play well and use the past couple months of training to do so. Going into the last few weeks of practices, we all feel better than we have the entire season since we have been pushing extra hard to wrap things up."

A conversation with these student athletes would demonstrate to anyone how seriously they take their commitments to their respective sports and to Conn. As the winter sports season comes to an end, we wish these athletes the best of luck. With hard work and perseverance, their efforts should come together in incredible athletic performances.

As Holly always says, "Go Camels!" •

Objectivity Isn't Dead; It Was Never Born

MAIA HIBBETT
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Last semester, I made a nightly habit of sitting before the TV with the three women who made up my host family in Managua, all of us rocking in wooden chairs. Sometimes we practiced this ritual in near silence, drained and locked on whatever was on cable, but we typically used the time to catch up on the day's events and fresh neighborhood gossip. While we mostly watched *novelas* or an over-the-top Judge Judy-type program titled *Caso Cerrado*, my family made occasional but generous efforts to dose me with U.S. news by flipping to CNN's Spanish-language international outlet, cutely dubbed CNÑ (and no, the abbreviation does not line up with any translation of "Cable News Network"). On one of such nights, CNÑ aired a translated documentary about the Trump family. Though I have since been unable to find the material online, what I saw at the time illustrated, via personal testimony, narration and photo montage, how then-candidate Trump had raised such hardworking, high-powered, generally wonderful children. My family, alarmed, questioned why the humble yet inspirational father figure presented differed so vastly from the demagogue with whom they'd been familiarized.

My host family was surprised, but they are not naive. They'd seen propaganda before. Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega, currently in his third consecutive and fourth overall term, owns most of the national news stations and papers. The nightly news frequently shows interviews with civilians expressing their gratitude for Ortega in his sponsorship of the latest municipal gathering or infrastructural achievement. This journalism presents factual events and supposedly true testimonies, but is it objective?

On the *Media's* Brooke Gladstone once answered a related question by stating simply, "No." Gladstone, however, was not responding to an inquiry about any particular objectivity, but instead had been asked: "Is objectivity even possible?"

The question of objectivity is tired. Many times it's been posed, and many times it's been answered. And yet, we repeatedly hear the concept cited as not only a guiding principle but an absolute necessity of good journalism.

As many readers likely know, Lewis Wallace was recently fired from *Marketplace* over his Medium post "Objectivity is dead, and I'm okay with it," in which he argues that truthfulness is not dependent upon neutrality and that it should be a journalistic priority to include diverse and marginalized perspectives. He has since added another post called "I was fired from my journalism job ten days into Trump," to which Mark Lasswell, former editorial features editor at *The Wall Street Journal*, can likely relate. While Wallace

clashed with his superiors over public expression, Lasswell's conflicts at the *Journal* unfolded in the internal sphere; according to *The Atlantic*, editorial page director Paul Gigot "blocked Lasswell from publishing op-eds critical of Trump's business practices and which raised questions about his alleged ties to Mafia figures" in June 2016. Lasswell was then offered a leave of absence, supposedly to work on his book, and was fired upon inquiring about his return post-election.

A pro-objectivity argument might present Lasswell as a pariah of the post-truth age, a committed defender of fact regardless of political agenda and thus, the antithesis to Wallace. But Lasswell edited the *Journal's* opinion pages, which *The Atlantic* identified as "a showcase for the intra-right divide over Trump." He may have been fired by a biased editor, but it wasn't for his own impartiality.

The truth is, as Wallace puts it in the first of his two mentioned posts, "it matters who is making editorial decisions." It should not be a revelation to note that different media outlets present the same facts to different effects, but the conflation of truthfulness with objectivity refuses to go away. The documentary I saw on CNÑ was truthful; it highlighted where the Trump children went to school, where they held summer jobs, how they began to raise families of their own; and it has not, to my knowledge, been proven in any way false. But it was not objective. It demonstrated a clear attempt to humanize Trump, an endeavor to squish him into the wholesome family-man mold that U.S. politicians find so useful.

Could anything have made the documentary objective? If the directors had spliced in a segment about Ivana's rape allegations against her ex-husband or a clip of Trump saying "perhaps [he'd] be dating" Ivanka, would that have done it? In the mainstream, the premise of "showing both sides" prevails as the key to objectivity, even if doing so means recognizing violations of civil rights, racist rhetoric and blatant lies as legitimate, even long after Fox News adulterated the phrase "fair and balanced." And implicit in "showing both sides" is the notion that perceptions of any given issue fall into the neat organization of binary opposition. While no, not all news stories are presented this way, most are, and while yes, many issues can be divided into two large and generalized camps, the disputes within them and the dissenters left on the margins matter. There are never just two sides.

And just as there are never just two sides, there is never a single correct approach to a story. Objective facts of course exist, and naturally we should report them as such. But beyond that, we should strive to report the most honest version of the truth as we see it,

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We Are Entitled to (True) Facts

DANA GALLAGHER
PERSPECTIVES EDITOR

Five days after the inauguration of President Donald Trump, George Orwell's nearly 70-year-old *1984* climbed to the number one slot on Amazon's best-seller list. Pundits and journalists alike attributed the novel's rising sales to comments made by Kellyanne Conway, Counselor to the President, following the Trump administration's first official press conference. Asked to account for White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer's false statements about the size of inauguration crowds, Conway toed the administration's line by claiming that Mr. Spicer merely presented "alternative facts." To many, the explanation sounded decidedly and alarmingly Orwellian. Jill Abrahamson, former Executive Editor for the *New York Times*, characterized alternative facts as "Orwellian newspeak" and "just lies." Alternative facts, however, have more insidious implications than the overt government lies against which Orwell rails in *1984*. While false from an empirical standpoint, many of Trump's statements resonate with Americans because they speak an emotional truth. To combat the rise of alternative facts, therefore, journalists need to balance coverage that condemns their spread while also identifying the causes of their proliferation and acceptance.

"Everyone is entitled to his own opinion," the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan famously said, "but not to his own facts." Many Americans, having witnessed the rise of sensational news stories and alternative facts, may conclude that they can tailor their own facts in addition to their own opinions. Alternate facts appear to be an outgrowth of an election that witnessed the spectacular rise of "fake news stories." Social media sites provide viewers with easy access to limitless "news" stories ranging from Pope Francis' endorsement of Donald Trump to Hillary Clinton's sale of weapons to ISIS. Fake news became ever more ubiquitous during the recent presidential election. According to *BuzzFeed*, the 20 top-performing fake election news stories received more shares, comments and reactions in the final three months of the campaign than the 20 top election stories from 19 major legitimate news sites.

Fake news stories, in addition to gaining an increased audience this election cycle, maintain greater credibility among some voter segments than conventional news outlets. According to a recent poll conducted by Emerson College, 53% of voters dub the media "untruthful" and a mere 39% believe it to be "honest." The poll further found that 69% of Demo-

crats think the news media is truthful compared to 9% of of Republicans. Significantly, 17 of the top 20 most shared fictitious stories were either pro-Trump or anti-Clinton.

The Trump administration, through its outrageous policy statements, may appeal to Republicans who believe that traditional news outlets fail to capture the depth of their anger and despair. The poor, disaffected white men and women who voted for Trump see truth in fake news and the alternative facts that Trump promulgates. Trump's false assertion that he turned out "the largest audience ever to witness an inauguration" speaks to an emotional truth. Millions of Trump voters, dubbing themselves the "silent majority," have long believed that they and their needs have been neglected. In portraying his crowd size as exceptionally large, Trump characterizes his voters as members of a movement that is finally being heard. The sentiment behind Trump's statement, rather than the words themselves, rings true to many. Fake news stories that falsely claim Pope Francis endorsed Trump's presidential run, for example, hold a similar appeal to voters. Facing criticism for supporting policy proposals with racial undertones, die-hard Trump voters found moral credibility in the voice of the Pope. The story holds emotional truth: Trump was a legitimate candidate and, by extension, his constituency had justifiable policy priorities.

Decades prior to his 2016 Presidential run, Trump presciently predicted the complex narrative that surrounds the alternative facts in our so-called "post-truth" era. "I play to people's fantasies," he claims in his well-known book *The Art of the Deal*. "People want to believe that something is the biggest and the greatest and the most spectacular. I call it truthful hyperbole. It's an innocent form of exaggeration—and a very effective form of promotion."

In so many words, the description of truthful hyperbole fits with alternative facts. While certainly not an "innocent form of exaggeration," Trump is correct that hyperbole improves a politician's sales pitch. Playing to the emotions of voters, Trump communicates that he understands the pain of his constituency when he promotes alternative facts. While a useful reference point, *1984* fails to capture the nuances of Trump's communication strategy. Alternative facts, unlike Big Brother's propaganda, are not aimed at convincing voters of a specific truth. Rather, they encourage voters to question the very nature and concept of truth in the context of today's divisive political reality. •

How the White Working Class Got Played

WESLEY CHRABASZ
STAFF WRITER

On June 28, 2016 Donald Trump, then the presumptive Republican nominee for President of the United States, delivered a speech to supporters at a steel factory near Pittsburgh, PA. In his remarks, Trump lambasted the financial elite, free-trade agreements and elected officials for turning their backs on working people and exploiting economic decline for their own financial gain. Trump's rhetoric was exceptionally unusual for a Republican nominee, at times even reminiscent of themes discussed by progressives like Bernie Sanders during the Democratic presidential primary of that same year. "If we're ever going to deliver real change, we're going to have to reject the campaign of fear and intimidation being pushed by powerful corporations, media elites, and political dynasties," Trump said, "The people who rigged the system for their benefit will do anything--and say anything--to keep things exactly as they are."

In an election year already swept by populist fervor across the political spectrum, Trump seemed to be speaking directly to millions of disaffected voters who watched in utter disbelief as the media, Wall Street and politicians proclaimed the country's successful recovery from economic recession, even as their own economic futures remained frighteningly uncertain. Feeling betrayed and forgotten, these voters determined to enter the voting booth in search of any candidate that might voice their anguish and punish the elites they so passionately resented. In his speech outside Pittsburgh, Trump made the decision for these voters painfully clear: "The people who rigged the system are supporting Hillary Clinton because they know as long as she is in charge nothing will ever change."

The election results of Nov. 8 prove that these disaffected voters, i.e. the white working class, chose to put their faith in Trump, and that decision won him the election. According to exit polls, Trump earned 67% of the votes of whites without a college degree compared to Clinton's 28%, a margin large enough to flip Rust Belt states like Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan, all of which had voted for the Democratic ticket in the most recent presidential elections. It is clear that many working class Americans put their faith in the Republican nominee in hopes that he would make good on his promises to curtail the influence of the financial elite, rid the government of corruption and restore economic prosperity to the middle class. Now, in Feb. 2017, a month-long look into the economic

policies of the Trump administration has already provided more than enough insight into Trump's real economic priorities.

Unfortunately for those disaffected voters who hoped that Trump might remain an economic populist as President, it seems that the United States is now barreling at an even faster pace toward oligarchy. On Nov. 13, only a few days after his election as President, Trump announced that Stephen Bannon (net worth \$10 million), a former Vice President at Goldman Sachs and executive chair of Breitbart News, would serve as Chief Strategist to the White House. On Nov. 29, Trump nominated Steven Mnuchin (net worth \$500 million), another former Vice President of Goldman Sachs, as Secretary of the Treasury, and Mnuchin has since been confirmed by the United States Senate. On Dec. 12, Trump announced that he would appoint Gary Cohn (net worth \$60 million), the current President and COO of Goldman Sachs, as Director of the National Economic Council. And finally, on Jan. 4, Trump announced that he would nominate Jay Clayton, a Wall Street attorney whose wife is an employee of Goldman Sachs and whose own law firm represents Goldman Sachs in court, as Chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission. Putting aside the absurdity of nominating an individual who has spent his life defending financial firms as Chairman of the governmental organization tasked with prosecuting them, why might this roster of individuals from a single source spark concern?

First, let us consider the reputation of the financial firm of which we speak. For those who might be unaware, New York City-based banking and investment firm Goldman Sachs has become notorious for its financial recklessness. The culture of the firm was described as "toxic and destructive" by one former executive who also complained of the "decline [of] the firm's moral fiber." The banking giant famously defrauded investors during the financial crisis of 2008 and was subsequently charged with fraud by the federal Securities and Exchange Commission in 2010. Citizens should find rational cause for concern when individuals with the moral caliber of Goldman Sachs are invited to lay the blueprint for the American economy.

Second, it is important to remember Trump's own words on Goldman Sachs while competing for the Republican nomination last year. In Jan. 2016, Trump spoke of Ted and Heidi Cruz's affiliation with Goldman Sachs by declaring: "He's borrowing from the banks. And, by the way, he's got personal guarantees, and he's got low-interest loans, all low-interest. And now he's going

to go after Goldman Sachs? It doesn't work that way. Goldman Sachs owns him. Remember that, folks: They own him." These words, juxtaposed with Trump's recent administrative appointment decisions, are even more revealing when considering that in Aug. 2016, *The New York Times* reported Trump's own nearly \$1 billion in outstanding loans, at least partly credited to Goldman Sachs. Additionally, Goldman Sachs' stock has surpassed its pre-recession levels and reached an all-time-high since Trump's election as President.

Trump's betrayal of working class Americans does not end there. Trump has also nominated former N.M. Rothschild & Sons investment banker Wilbur Ross (net worth \$2.5 billion) as Secretary of Commerce, Exxon-Mobil CEO Rex Tillerson (net worth \$325 million) as Secretary of State and former President and CEO of World Wrestling Entertainment Linda McMahon (net worth \$1.35 billion) as Administrator of the Small Business Administration. Of course, I'm sure that all of these individuals are well acquainted with the struggles that everyday working Americans face.

Let us not forget our precious Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos. DeVos (net worth \$1.25 billion), a longtime advocate of school choice programs and charter schools, was narrowly confirmed as the 11th United States Secretary of Education on Feb. 7 by a vote of 51-50. DeVos' controversial confirmation was the only one in history in which a Vice President's vote was required to break a tie and had received significant opposition for a number of reasons. Oddly, her passion for privatizing education and streamlining financial resources away from public schools was not one of them. Of much greater concern to both Democrats and Republicans was DeVos' severe lack of experience in public education, her ignorance of basic education policy and her family's political donations to the Republican party. In fact, DeVos herself admitted during her confirmation hearing that it was entirely "possible" that, collectively, her family had donated over \$200 million to the Republican party, prompting U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders to ask: "Do you think, if you were not a multibillionaire, if your family had not made hundreds of millions of dollars in contributions to the Republican Party, that you would be sitting here today?" But we should rest assured that Trump's nomination of Betsy DeVos had nothing to do with her family's financial contributions and everything to do with DeVos' record as a strong opponent of grizzly bears in schools.

Lastly, Trump's decision in signing a number of executive orders,

memoranda and proclamations has clearly illustrated his administration's economic priorities. As one of his first actions as President, Trump signed an executive order on Jan. 20 "minimizing the economic burden of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act pending repeal," signaling his administration's intention to repeal health insurance coverage for some 20 million low-income Americans. On Jan. 26, President Trump signed a proclamation declaring National School Choice Week 2017, evidencing the administration's prioritization of privatizing public education. In perhaps the most ridiculous action that his administration has taken so far, on Jan. 30, President Trump signed an executive order on "reducing regulation and controlling regulatory costs" which effectively instructs his administration to arbitrarily eliminate two prior federal regulations for every new federal regulation that is proposed. Whether President Trump and his administration understand what a "federal regulation" actually is remains unclear.

Worst of all, on Feb. 3, President Trump signed an executive order "on core principles for regulating the United States financial system" which seeks to eliminate the bulk of financial regulations put in place after the 2008 financial crisis. No other presidential action that Trump has taken so far is as revealing. The very fact that a President whose election campaign centered on restoring economic confidence to the millions of working families who had been affected by the financial crisis and following recession would, less than a month after taking office, propose to recreate the very same unsatisfactory economic conditions that propelled him into office is abhorrent. But the fact of the matter is that Trump now inhabits the Oval Office and is now actively working against the interests of those who put him there.

So, to those working-class Americans who voted for Trump and couldn't see why a billionaire real-estate mogul from Manhattan wouldn't always have their best interests in mind, please enjoy the next four years. As our public education system crumbles, as millions of us lose healthcare coverage, as clean water and workplace safety regulations are thrown out the window, as the minimum wage is repealed, as the country descends into yet another financial crisis and years-long economic recession, rejoice! Rejoice that we finally have that wall on the Mexican border--because that's truly what is going to make America great again. •

Trump Stays in his Comfort Zone: Infrastructure as a Business

CAM NETLAND
CONTRIBUTOR

Improved infrastructure has always been a crucial and minimally controversial policy platform of Donald Trump's bid for the presidency. Though his proposed policy has been overshadowed by the xenophobic and sexist statements that marked his campaign, Trump has always had a vested interest in improving the country's infrastructure for two reasons. One: it allows for the nationalist rhetoric that marked his campaign to finally manifest itself in a plan that will mobilize American workers and the economy. Two: the plan will increase privatization in the infrastructure world, which is a victory for the Republicans and anyone skeptical of the government, as Trump supporters tend to be.

What is the scope of this infrastructure plan? Trump has pledged to invest upwards of one trillion dollars into infrastructure, which is a sum far greater than any past president has ever accomplished.

Who could be upset with that promise? Infrastructure is, for the most part, an issue upon which even the most partisan politicians can agree. More capital invested into infrastructure is, arguably, a good thing. Better roads, tunnels and bridges would shorten commutes and prove well worth their value in the long run. Improved infrastructure, such as new water pipelines, could have prevented the contamination tragedies that beset Flint, MI and other towns near fracking zones. For Trump supporters, infrastructure plans uphold the nationalist rhetoric of "Making America Great Again" by boosting the growth and development of the American empire. For Trump opponents, the plan also avoids any of the previous ethical dilemmas of controversial travel bans or health-care reform. What could go wrong?

Trump's infrastructure proposal, unlike many of his campaign promises, also has historical relevance. In the World War II period, American infrastructure served as the model for the rest of the world and European cities in particular crippled by the lightning war. The possibility of a one trillion dollar infrastructure plan is enticing and also reminiscent of the nationalism that fuelled the postwar expansion of American culture. So, when Trump proclaimed during his inauguration: "we're going to rebuild our infrastructure, which will become, by the way, second to none!" he relied upon a historical framework, namely, the post-WWII nationalism that accompanied the rapid development of American infrastructure and culture.

Infrastructure improvements would live up to Trump's promise to "Make America Great Again!" Once again, Trump's generalized platitude interferes with clear thinking, namely, what infrastructure is going to be made great again? When we as a society idly converse about infrastructure, we forget several crucial elements and biases--that is, one man's idea of infrastructure is always different from another's. With this in mind, President Trump may advance infrastructure projects that benefit the few and neglect other projects that affect far more Americans. To clarify, President Trump's understanding of infrastructure extends beyond roads, bridges and tunnels. It also includes institutions such as hospitals, housing and schools. In other words: real estate.

This does not come as a surprise, as it seems the seventy-year-old former real estate tycoon is simply following the maxim: "do what you know." Trump's long-term relationship with real estate implies how his infrastructure operation will be carried out. Trump is extending the privilege of infrastructure development to other businessmen such as himself because, if this infrastructure plan gets underway, much of

the funding will be done by private companies.

So what does this imply? Should an infrastructure plan proposed by the federal government be carried out by the government itself? Or would companies that are geographically located near areas that require development perform more efficiently than the government? Either way, the operation will be profitable. Private companies won't invest millions to billions of dollars in infrastructure out of pure generosity. They will want to own that infrastructure--and they will pay for it with alleged massive future tax credits--82% of the down payments. What this means is that corporations will become owners of America's interconnections; the nexus of roads, tunnels, hospitals and other municipal projects will be increasingly privatized. Whether or not this plan coincides with one's position on privatization, it will certainly limit the oversight of the federal government. The plan, which could possibly slow the growth of the federal government budget for years to come, would represent a victory for Republicans.

Readers may also be asking: how will Trump fund this plan? There are currently \$167 billion in

private infrastructure investments, far short of the one trillion dollar plan Trump proposed. Though private companies would own a majority of the infrastructure under Trump's plan, the federal government will still want a piece of the pie and will have to use its own funds. But how will the government amass those funds? The reader's first reaction is hopefully defensive because of the obvious answer: it will come from taxpayers.

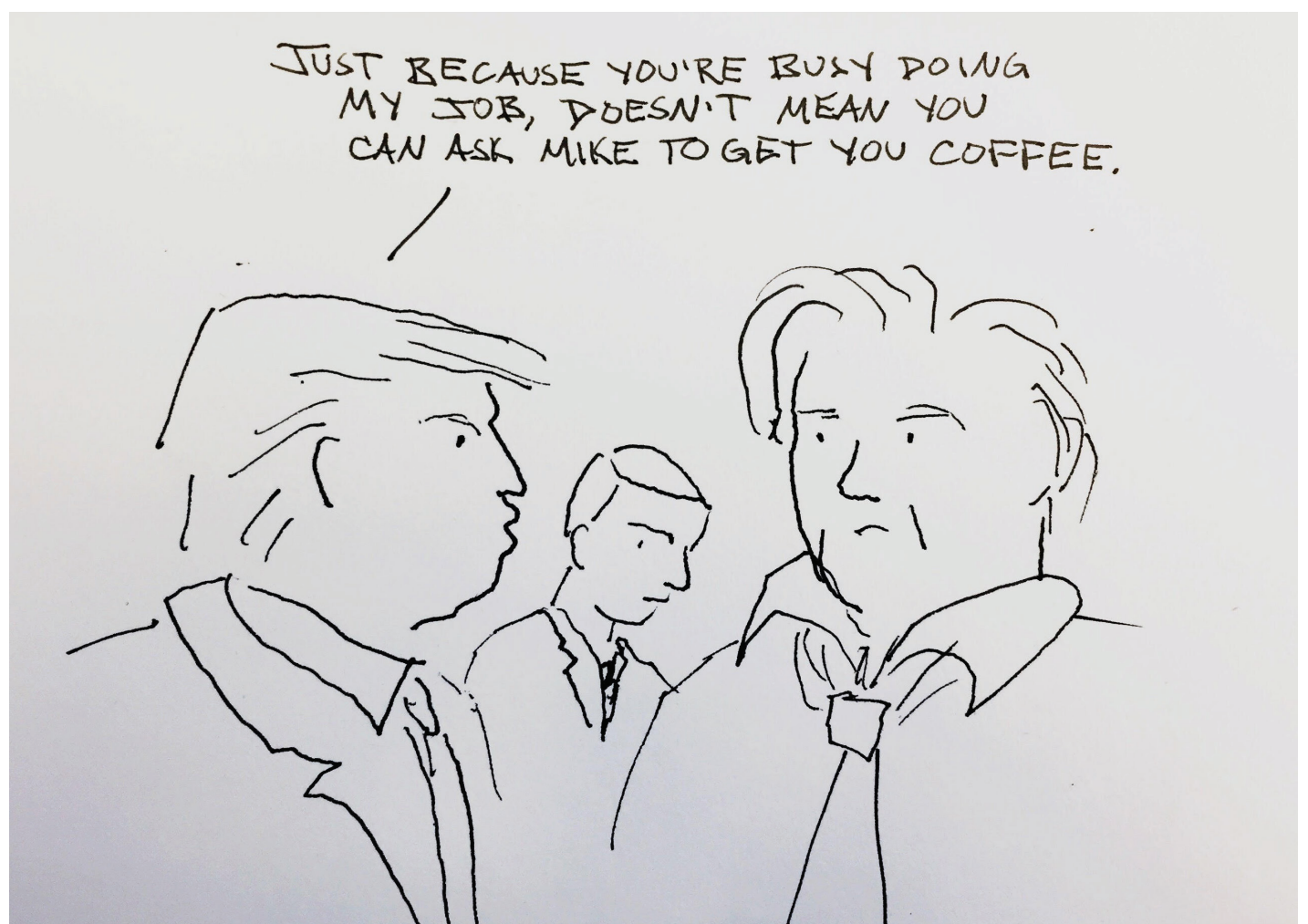
Authors of the plan argue that taxpayers won't be affected by it because its cost will be offset by the new revenue generated from the improved infrastructure. However, this claim only accounts for the revenue generated in the long run; in the short run, the plan will have to be funded by taxes if it is to be as grand as President Trump has proposed. This is concerning news considering Trump's tax plans have been vague to say the least, and the administration likely won't be courting many of the private companies looking to invest in infrastructure; rather, the same American populace that voted him into office will pay the bill.

Another concern: how will

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Keeping Bannon in Line: A Voice Political Cartoon

ANNIKA TUCKSMITH
ILLUSTRATOR



An Open Letter to Sean Spicer from Fellow Camels

Editor's note: The following letter was sent to the *Voice* by former Editor-in-Chief Claire Gould '10 and was signed by over 1,200 Connecticut College alumni and students. The *Voice* reached out to Spicer via Twitter for comment, but he has since not offered a response.

Dear Mr. Spicer:

We represent over 1,200 Connecticut College students and alumni from classes ranging between 1957 and 2020. We are asking you, a fellow alumnus, to respect the Honor Code pledge that binds our Connecticut College community:

"I accept membership into Connecticut College, a community committed to cultural and intellectual diversity. I understand my obligation to this community under the Honor Code and pledge to uphold standards of behavior governed by honor. I pledge to take responsibility for my beliefs, and to conduct myself with integrity, civility, and the utmost respect for the dignity of all human beings. I pledge that my actions will be thoughtful and ethical and that I will do my best to instill a sense of responsibility in those among us who falter."

There is a growing concern across the nation — and the world — that the Trump Administration does not respect the dignity of all people, regardless of race, immigration status, faith, ability, gender identity, or sexual orientation. There is also consternation about the Administration's conflation of so-called "alternative facts" and reality. As the White House's chief spokesperson, your repeated belittlement of and malice towards our constitutional right to a free press and your unwillingness to ground the Administration's messaging in fact and truth greatly concern us. What we have heard from you in the White House press room fundamentally conflicts with the values of the Connecticut College community.

The principles embodied in the Matriculation Pledge are instilled during our years in college, but they are meant to inform our actions beyond graduation as well. Part of that pledge requires all Connecticut College community members to not only refrain from, but actively combat the spread of rumors, lies, and misinformation. This system of shared values is an essential part of our Honor Code. We respectfully ask you to remember the values you learned at Connecticut College, adhere to them, and use your influence to help spread them throughout President Trump's administration.

We would appreciate the opportunity to engage in further discussion with you about our values and shared alumni community. We invite you to meet with us either in Washington DC or on campus in New London. Please contact conncamellte@gmail.com to coordinate logistics.

Sincerely,

Connecticut College students and alumni

To see the full list of signees, please visit thecollegevoice.org.

Exorcising the Spectre of Objectivity

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

and as individuals we will not always see it the same way. Denouncing "the View from Nowhere," Conor Friedersdorf asserts that journalists should claim authority on the basis of being informed, not on an absence of opinion. He warns media organizations: "To build your credibility on viewlessness is to concede, every time an employee of yours is shown to be a sentient, opinionated person, that your credibility has taken a hit."

I think we should commit and abandon the false pretense of objectivity, and instead press forward with the informed truth. I'm drawn to Emile Habiby's construction of the Pessoptimist, the protagonist's surname and essence in Habiby's novel *The Secret Life of Saeed the Pessoptimist*, characterized by Anijuli Raza Kolb as an oxymoronic figure who, stripped of family, human rights and national belonging, experiences "a radical, deranging solitude" that leaves him "babbling toward justice—an insistence on being, and making a record of one's being over time...embodying the kind of dummy Theodor Adorno accused Walter Benjamin of being, perhaps admiringly: an astonished presenter of mere fact."

Saeed the Pessoptimist thus appears a tragic fool, admirable and pitiable for his insistence on continuing. But I like to think that in the context of journalism, to persist is the responsible path, though perhaps that does not exclude it from being the foolish one.

The words "mere fact" ring of objectivity-related discourse, but note that Adorno calls Benjamin, and by extension Kolb calls the Pessoptimist, its "astonished presenter." The reaction, informed by subjectivity, is recognized, but it does not change reality.

All people have subjective experiences of reality and therefore opinions, and all publications, for better or worse, are run by people. I, along with a handful of fellow students, run this one. We all have opinions. They are not all the same. They are all capable of affecting what runs in this paper. But they are not, I assure you, preventing us from printing the truth. •

Local Efforts Against Fracking Waste

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

how Council members view the issue. Councilman John Satti shared, for example, that he had not known much about fracking before the ordinance came to his attention. Concerned citizens who spoke at the meeting, he said, had educated him on the dangers of fracking waste disposal. All of the Council members expressed their support for the ordinance, and many tied their support to the passion of New London residents about the issue. As councilman Don Venditto, Jr. shared, "I'm proud to be part of a community that cares so much about community welfare."

As the ordinance has not yet undergone legal review, the Council ruled to send it to committee before an official vote is held in the coming months. New London residents, however, maintain high hopes that the measure will pass. That hope is emboldened by the passion, commitment, and activism of local residents who care about an issue and want to be a force of change in their communities. During a time when many Americans believe that the federal government is not looking out for their interests or promoting their values, we must look to enact change locally. A focus on state and municipal government is essential to creating movements that ultimately impact federal policy. Believing that neither the federal nor their state government could protect them from the harmful effects of fracking waste, New London residents turned to municipal government as an avenue for change. As the presence of so many passionate constituents and the forceful nature of their arguments convinced all the councilmembers to support an issue that had not previously been on their radars, the Feb. 6 City Council meeting demonstrated the efficacy of this strategy.

It is our job, as citizens of cities, states and the country as a whole to stand up for our values and hold our elected officials accountable. If the state of our country is causing you apprehension, and the actions of the new administration affront you, think locally. Push your the government of your town or city, and your state, to address the issues you care about. Get involved with organizations doing important work in your community. Vote in local elections, and pay attention to what your elected officials do once in office. Call them; show up at their town halls; show that you are an engaged citizen who passionately cares about things. While we must all keep our eyes on events happening nationally and globally, we must also do the sometimes harder and often less glamorous job of being involved in our communities. Locally-led change directly improves the lives of community members and sustains an issue-based movement with the potential to promote wide-reaching change. Be inspired by the passionate New London residents who have already made change on an issue they care about and get to work. •

Donald Trump, Infrastructure Mogul

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people in regions with failing infrastructure respond to the plan? Are their neighborhoods prioritized in the rebuilding process? Will saving Flint, for example, yield more of a net gain for contractors than building a bridge toll on a major highway? What about other contaminated towns sequestered in a fracking zone?

While we can all agree that infrastructure is an important project for the country, we must recognize the optimism and fantasy inherent in a one trillion dollar financing. If infrastructure was always that easy to fund and fix, the government would have done it already. However, lofty infrastructure plans have always proved fickle and difficult to enact especially without national approval. Perhaps this is how former President Barack Obama also failed to enact his infrastructure plan despite its being an opportunity for job creation in the wake of the 2008 economic recession. Let us hope that if Trump does get this project off the ground, it won't be because another recession or a third World War catalyzed the action. •

The Triumphs and Tribulations of a Comedian's Art

SHATRUNJAY MALL
BUSINESS MANAGER

When renowned and beloved actor and comedian Robin Williams committed suicide in Aug. 2014, few people could fathom how someone so humorous and seemingly happy on stage could suffer from such mental issues as depression and bipolar disorder. Indeed, the tragic story of Robin Williams highlights the loneliness, depression and anxiety that even the most successful entertainers can face, despite their privileged positions at the top of the entertainment industry.

The case of Robin Williams makes it all the more apparent that entertaining others is not easy and can incur a special toll. In order to learn more about comedians' art, and especially the apparent contradictions between the stage persona and real life, I caught up with a few campus comedians to get their general perspectives on the issue and about the atmosphere for comedy at Conn.

The costs and consequences for a comedian's maintenance of a masked persona on stage are of special interest to me. For John Chatigny '18, a stand-up comedian and member of the campus improv group N2O, "comedy for the most part is about having a sort of masked fake personality. It's all about putting on a show for an audience." Further, according to Chatigny, since comedy is "so dependent on audience approval, it's very easy to be self-conscious, since the number one fear is that people won't like what you have to say. Worrying about how others will react to your jokes leads to self-consciousness about every other aspect of your character, in my opinion. And self-consciousness, anxiety and depression tend to go hand in hand."

Jake Barr '19, who is also a stand-up comedian, shares this view. He sees comedy as being about self reflection, noting that "the art of comedy is especially challenging because it is dependent on other people. You need to put yourself out there to be funny." Will Kadison '17 highlighted how this stress and self-reflection can be a potential strength, noting: "Feelings like anxiety, anger and sadness can be effectively used as a comedian. A fair amount of comedians use those types of feelings on stage rather than mask them. I would say that I use my own strange perspective on things to make them funny on stage."

Kadison also sees the value in using comedy as a coping strategy to deal with various mental issues, including depression and anxiety. "It can put a positive spin on really negative situations," he observed, adding that in his experience, comedy has helped him feel better, "whether that's in performance or just joking around with friends."

Barr, who suffers from general anxiety, similarly feels that humor has helped him deal with stress, and according to Max Amar-Olkus '19, "laughter is the best medicine," whether laughing on your own, or making other people laugh. Indeed, Amar-Olkus feels that humor has been effective in helping him to deal with his ADHD and talk about the issues related to it.

Chatigny, however, noted that comedy as



From left: Kadison '17 and Chatigny '18
Photo courtesy of Max Amar-Olkus

a coping mechanism can be a "double-edged sword." Though he definitely sees coping through comedy as effective, and something of value, he wonders "whether it's a healthy thing to do." Indeed, it is entirely possible that people use humor as a temporary reprieve from dealing with deeper issues for which they may need more than just a few laughs.

During these conversations about comedy and mental health, I also inquired how comedians on campus viewed the atmosphere at Conn for reception of humor. According to Barr, "dark humor is not very well received on campus," although he does not buy the "lazy argument" propagated by some that millennials as a generation are "politically correct snowflakes." Chatigny takes a similar view. According to him, "it's entirely possible, even preferable to make jokes that are funny without being shocking."

Barr also emphasized a concern that certain groups of people are easy targets of comedy without being able to push back against the tropes constructed about them. As examples, he cited the mentally ill and Asian people, explaining that through comedy, certain "psychotic tropes" are constructed about those who suffer from mental illnesses. In Kadison's viewpoint, "there is a distinct atmosphere of political correctness on campus," but he does not see it as limiting the quality of on-campus humor. Instead, he believes that "good comedians can be funny and politically correct." Though Amar-Olkus did not contradict this statement, he nevertheless considers that "without comedians who pushed the limits, there would be no progress." Barr as well sees the role of comedians as being to "flirt with the boundaries."

As such, for comedians at Conn, just like for those elsewhere, the challenge remains finding something that will have a wide appeal while not alienating a significant section of the audience. Humor can serve as a powerful medium of resisting societal norms and political oppression, as well as opening up a conversation about difficult issues. It is perhaps for that reason that authoritarian regimes crack down on the freedom of expression of humorists and satirists. As far as more openly discussing mental issues is concerned, audiences may be more receptive to being pushed to challenge some of their own presumptions. Audiences, in consuming entertainment, may be more willing and ready to accept the apparent contradictions between humor and depression. •

Dying for Tony D's

JENNIFER SKOGLUND
PERSPECTIVES EDITOR

For more than 10 years, Tony D's in downtown New London has consistently served the community delicious food. This Valentine's Day, I ventured onto the love-stricken streets of New London for a sane and delicious dining experience. Anticipating a busy night, I had made a reservation one week in advance. I chose Tony's for its atmosphere: vivacious, bustling with people and boasting Motown music, brick walls and Renaissance murals illuminated by warm ambient lighting.

The service was diligent and polite. My server was never far but didn't hover, plied me with refills of water and knew when I was ready to order. For dinner, I selected the rigatoni with homemade meatballs and sauce paired with a glass of Estancia moscato. While waiting for my main course, I received a plate of tapenade and a basket of warm bread, which, being light, fluffy and already shiny with butter, immediately piqued my appetite. Even the olives, which I usually consider a lowly and cursed fruit, must be praised for their inclusion in this tapenade. Next came the salad, for which I opted in on grated cheese and pepper ground by my server himself. Though it consisted only of spinach, lettuce, and arugula, this salad was topped with the most delicious dressing I've ever tasted and the flavors of its few ingredients blended so exquisitely I was left wanting more salad, a most unusual phenomenon.

By the time the rigatoni came, I was ready for the orally orgasmic experience of my life. The pasta with which I was met was certainly favorable, if not able to meet my high expectations. The rigatoni was cooked al dente and the complexities of the D'Angelo family sauce, heavy in basil, sweet and slightly dry, improved on the giant meatballs, which were tender yet not particularly savory.

Full of carbs, already on my fourth glass of water and nearly done with the delectably sweet moscato, I began to doubt my stomach's ability to take my constant blows. Yet I knew this was only weakness talking; I had to strong through dessert, for my roaming eye had spotted "Chocolate Chilli Pepper Creme Brûlée" on the dessert menu. When the creme brûlée came, it was love at first bite. Usually a light tan, the brittle crust was dark with chocolate and interspersed with crimson flecks of pepper. "I'd die for this," I said upon my first taste, and it wasn't just the moscato talking. Everything about the creme brûlée, from the deep richness of chili pepper and bittersweet cacao in the caramelized top, to the creamy, faintly gingery custard, to the cannoli cream peeping out from under the dish, made dessert the highlight of my evening.

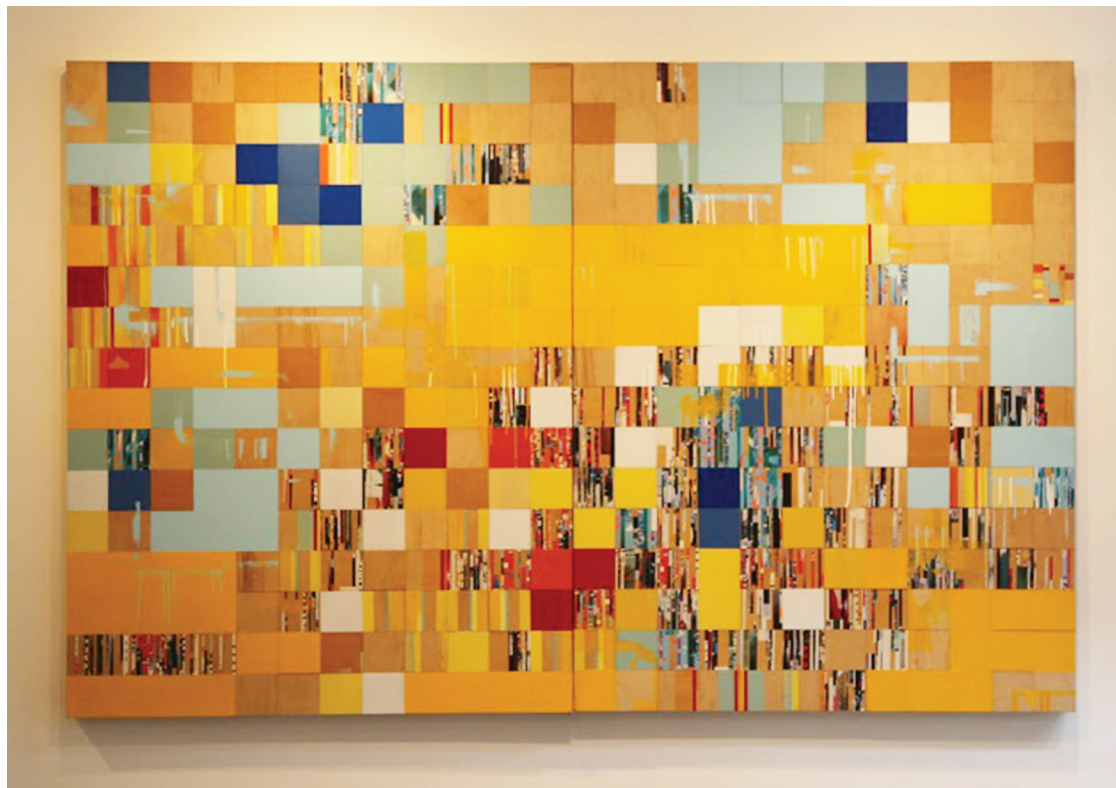
For dining in or take-out, I recommend Tony D's to lovers of reasonably priced Italian cuisine. Buckle in for the salad; don't skimp on the cheese and pepper, and say yes to dessert. •

NEWS QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1) "The Trump-a-gator" (NBC)
- 2) tons of compost (*The New York Times Magazine*)
- 3) Kraft Heinz (BBC)
- 4) read 35 books, including *The Kite Runner* and *Things Fall Apart* (*The Guardian*)
- 5) "Flynn facts" (*The New York Times*)

Ivan Toth Depeña Merges Art, Architecture and Tech

SOPHIA ANGELE-KUEHN
CREATIVE DIRECTOR



Photos courtesy of Emma Schlichting



Augmented reality provides a live view of a real-world environment in a manner reminiscent of virtual reality but which features elements supplemented by computer-generated media. One artist known for augmented reality is Ivan Toth Depeña, who installs his projects publically throughout South Florida and is currently displaying his work as a visiting artist in Cummings Arts Center until Mar. 3. Funded by the prestigious Knight Arts Challenge Miami Grant in 2014, Depeña created a virtual reality tour of Miami using the project site's mobile app "Lapse." Once downloaded, one simply points the device at certain walls or public spaces to see and hear amazing technological experiences on the screen. It's app-activated art.

"I enjoy coupling machine and human to create layered and often unpredictable results. My work encompasses painting, drawing, light, video, photography, architecture, sculpture, in-

teractivity and installation. Sometimes singularly and other times all at once," remarks Depeña in his artist statement. He goes on to add: "I am interested in pursuing (both as a process and a means of learning) a true intersection between different disciplines."

The Florida and North Carolina-based artist has also used his Master of Architecture degree from Harvard University to design other artistic feats for the public, like "Color Field" in Lakewood, Colorado. "Color Field" is a tree-like sculpture located next to a train station that uses kaleidoscope-like laminated and tempered colored-glass panels to shed light on the banal surroundings. Depeña also designed a building-sized light installation called "Inside/Out" in the University of New Mexico's Pit Athletic Facility. He even collaborated with fashion designer Reed Krakoff to create an interactive boutique window display that lights up when pedestrians walk by.

While Depeña is known for his public installations, the exhibit in Cummings titled "Ivan Toth Depeña: Interconnections" showcases his independent studio activities, which combine traditional and non-traditional

methods in his 2D work. Certain pieces combine pixel-like wooden squares with thin scraps of photos and needle-thin architectural designs, while others resemble bleeding varnished watercolors speckled with drilled-in shapes. It is a masterful, arresting grasp on the language of art.

"Regarding process and inspiration, I am absorbed in combining the ideas of chance and intention as both a mechanism and inspiration in my studio output. Surprise can come from the accident... But the unforeseen can also come from careful planning and rule structure...I implement both methods mentioned above to establish a neutral ground where I then begin the sequence of overlaying," reads Depeña's statement. This merging of fields results in an outcome that challenges and inspires the mind.

Depeña will talk with students and offer a public lecture in Cummings 308 on Wednesday, Feb. 22 from 4:15-5 pm. The event will be followed by a reception. •

