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# THE COLLEGE VOICE

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER

## CLASS PRESIDENT UNDER FIRE

### #ImpeachPrashanth Movement Gains Momentum

DAVE SHANFIELD  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

A poll taken earlier this semester revealed that the overwhelming majority of the graduating class could not identify their class president. Of the nearly 300 students surveyed, 82% could not name the 2014 class president, 11% were unaware that Class Council existed in any capacity and only 7% correctly identified their elected leader. However, 100% of the graduating class agreed that whoever the president might be, her or she is doing a terrible job.

"It's like a puppet regime, but without a puppeteer," wrote one student.

Prashanth Selvam '14 is widely known across campus as "that handsome Indian kid with perfect bone structure and questionable fashion taste." He is well-liked by his peers and educators: professors remark on his even temperament and easy smile, and close personal friends describe him as "okay" with an "occasional tendency for uselessness." Despite his social and academic popularity – and despite having served as class president for two of his four years at Connecticut College – most of Selvam's classmates were

unaware of his prestigious title until they received an invitation for the 100 Days [until Graduation] Party this February, signed by their president.

Like many other seniors, 2014 Social Chair Peter Herron was caught unaware by Selvam's presumptuous signoff, even after having worked alongside him on Class Council. Said Herron, "I like Prashanth a lot, but I always thought we were, you know, just hanging out, not doing 'class business' or whatever. Besides, I haven't been Social Chair since freshman year... wait, what? I'm *still* Social Chair? All four years? That can't be..."

Students first began channeling their general dissatisfaction towards Selvam after he slashed the number of free drinks offered at the 100 Days Party from three to two per person. Though Selvam promised that the saved funds would go towards a "much better 50 Days Party down the line," seniors received an email from Selvam last week stating that free drinks would not be available at the 50 Days Party after all.

"Why am I paying upwards of 60



grand a year if not for a few nights of maximum intoxication on the College's dime?" questioned Broseph Gordon '14, captain of the men's water-lacrosse team. Thankfully, SGA President Evert Fowle '14 dipped into emergency presidential funds to provide a single free beverage for each attendee. Though disappointed that this amount would not be sufficient to achieve "maximum intoxication," Gordon was appeased.

Seemingly overnight, the once un-

known president has become the face of corruption and ineffectiveness within Class Council. Tweets and compromising Instagrams branded with the "#ImpeachPrashanth" hashtag have skyrocketed, and more formal measures are being taken by college officials in an attempt to securely dislodge Selvam from his seat of power...

HAPPY APRIL FOOLS ;)

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## On Opinions

We of the Opinions section have been having stylistic differences with the some of the other College Voice staff. We have been politely advised that our section trends toward "ranting" to which, at first, we disagreed vehemently and stubbornly and then threatened to quit the paper. No, in reality, the team chemistry here is second to none, and our disagreement was disimpassioned and brief, and really more of a conversation than a conflict. But this editorial is written in contemplation of this very spot-on accusation.

The Opinions section is often the podium from which students air their grievances and critiques; a podium we think is very necessary and which we're privileged to be the stewards of. We do, however, worry that sometimes we are the abettors of a lot of negativity, and even more worryingly, completely unconstructive verbal annihilation of events, people, and policies at Conn. We're not aiming to publish a mess of sugary praise of the

college, but we also don't wish to be enthusiastically handing out the sledgehammers in a carnival of Conn-bashing.

So this, now, for some overdue positivity from the Opinions Editors: There's something I think is very beautiful about our school that I've never heard anyone talk about—our school motto. Let's put aside the ostentation of it being in Latin and move straight to its translation: "Like a tree planted by rivers of water." I think this is really brilliant—that as a college, our intention is to be grounded, calm, integrated into our environment, seeping up knowledge around us. At the risk of the sentimentality I'm always trying to avoid (and, which, in my avoidance often steers my articles and those I edit towards the critical)—these words makes me proud to be here.

And this motto gets at what I think we at the paper are trying to do too, though we may often be perceived more as "uprooters" than "planters." Negative, posi-

tive, or hedging both ways, the articles we publish are reflections of the soaking up of ideas, of paying attention, and usually, of thorough consideration and affection for this place. Our writers care enough about this community to want to engage with it, whether through praise or critique.

Whether a fiery defense of the honor code or musings on an igloo built during a snow day, the words published here, in these last months have planted ideas, if nothing else. And that's powerful enough—it seems that the College Voice Staff can all agree on that, and so atmosphere in the office is peaceful and grounded again, dare I say, like a tree planted by rivers of water. And if you find such tidy endings as the one above suspect, turn to the Opinions section, where I'm sure you'll find everything you're looking for.

-Madeline

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

Join us.

## THE COLLEGE VOICE

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

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# The Bergeron Inauguration : A fresh perspective on old traditions

**MELANIE THIBEAULT**  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

"I would like the students of Connecticut College to have more opportunities to experience the wonderful features of the city of New London," said President Katherine Bergeron during an interview in her office.

With her upcoming inauguration this Saturday, Bergeron, a native of southeastern Connecticut, is sharing her plans for "deepening the relationship of the College to the surrounding community." Connecticut College, only a few years past its centennial mark, has its roots planted in the local community. Already desiring a women's college in his city even before Wesleyan ceased to enroll women in 1909, New London schoolmaster Colin Buell was part of the team of founders of Connecticut College. New London and Conn have been connected since the beginning, but relations between the two could stand to be strengthened as we move into a new presidential era.

"Expanding our relationship with New London is definitely needed," said SGA President Evert Fowle '14. While Fowle says that the College has been working to set up the foundation for improving relations, "President Bergeron is taking the next steps to make this possible."

Erica Lovett '14, a member of the inauguration committee along with Fowle, added: "[Bergeron] is open to hearing everyone's ideas. I know a senior who has already visited her five times. She's so supportive and wants to help in any way she can."

Since beginning her term in January, Bergeron has already met with many undergraduates, and cited nearly 30 students who have visited her during open office hours to express their aspirations and concerns about the College and the community. On many nights, Bergeron has stayed in her office until 7 p.m., not wanting to end these conversations early.

"I have been edified by the students," she said. "Some want to tell me about their experiences, some want to ask about my experiences, and others want to tell me about specific concerns regarding the campus."

While Bergeron has begun to make an impression on the students, they in turn have begun to make an impression on her.

"I've listened to the students' desire to have a positive impact in New London. I want to support the good work that is already going on and build on what we are already doing," she said, citing the Office of Volunteers for Community Service (OVCS) and the Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy (PICA) as two examples of positive student involvement in the city. "It's important to know more about the cultural organizations and notable figures in New London and the surrounding community."

A former Professor of Music at Brown University, Bergeron's love of and connection to the arts has potential to open doors for positive,

rewarding relationships between Connecticut College and New London, which — despite receiving flak from some students as having 'nothing to do' — actually has quite the thriving arts and music scene.

Bergeron names the Hygienic as a personal favorite, and was thrilled with the recent collaboration between Conn's Education Department and the Expressiones Cultural Center on Bank Street for an exhibition called "Artful Resistance." Of the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, she said, "It is extraordinary to have something of that caliber in a city of this size. We are really fortunate that we have a city with that kind of personality."

"I also love Fiddleheads," she added. "You can put that in there."

Even President Bergeron's office offers a refreshing minimalist style as opposed to President Higdon's shelves of souvenirs (not that his "Big Hig" t-shirt collection wasn't a form of art in its own right).

To kick off a week of events leading up to the eleventh president's inauguration, the Thames Club in downtown New London opened its doors for a welcome ceremony, inviting the College community and local community leaders to celebrate the beginning of a new era of collaboration and innovation.

New London mayor Daryl Finizio gave the first speech, remarking that the College has "made an excellent choice" in selecting Bergeron, and that he looks forward to renewing New London and Conn's relationship and partnership — a partnership which Bergeron went on to say "is as old as Connecticut College."

After performances from two Conn cappella groups, the Shwiffs and Williams Street Mix, Bergeron spent her time mingling with members of Connecticut College and the greater New London community. It was her first time at the Thames Club, renowned for being Connecticut's oldest social club. It was also the first official Connecticut College event at the venue, though in the past Conn has been loosely associated with some occasions at the club.

Brian Haagensen, president of the Thames Club, said, "We would love to continue a relationship with Connecticut College. Once [Bergeron] gets settled, we would love to have her back to give us a talk about her plans and intentions."

Though the Thames Club's first floor boasts two gorgeously decorated dining areas, the real treasure exists in the basement of the building: a two-lane duckpin bowling alley. As guests began to leave, President Bergeron — accompanied by her husband and several Conn faculty and students — snuck downstairs for a peek.

Kicking off her heels, Bergeron took an honorary turn at the game. Camera phones flashed and Vice President for Administration Ulysses B. Hammond, who is also a member of the Thames Club, let out an energetic "woo-ee!"

Six pins fell. One for each day left before the inauguration cere-

mony.

Beginning tomorrow, different events will be held every day in honor of the upcoming inauguration. "We want to get people excited about it and make them aware of what's going on," said Pamela Zilly '75, who serves as honorary chair of the inauguration committee. "[These events] are an opportunity to talk to the president and others in the spirit of the inauguration. It isn't just one ceremony. It's really meant to include the whole community."

Thursday night will bring a student reception with President Bergeron, which, according to Fowle is "essentially a hang out with the new president." The ambiance in Ernst will include music from the Death Cab for Cutie Pandora station — Bergeron's pick. "She said she will know every song that plays."

Panels and concerts and Camel cookies will provide opportunities for the Connecticut College and New London communities to interact and perform together. Avid Twitter users can follow and document the week's events with "#Think-DoLead." The hashtag was inspired by Bergeron's speech leading up to ReVision Week on how we at Conn should want to represent ourselves. "It's like she was planning her own surprise party," Fowle joked.

Saturday's ceremony and lun-

cheon will culminate the week in a mixture of tradition and transformation. "We don't want it to be the same ceremony over and over again," Zilly said. "We've spent a lot of time talking about the traditional aspect of [the ceremony], but making it more relevant and more contemporary. It's tradition, but it's also a new step, a new installation. It's important to have a good blend of something that resonates as a tradition, but not as dusty."

Associate Dean of the Faculty Abigail Van Slyck, who serves as co-chair of the Installation Committee alongside Professor of Sociology Ron Flores, echoed Zilly's sentiments. Planning the ceremony, "We wanted to honor those traditions but at the same time, mark and celebrate a new chapter for the College." The committee looked at how they could freshen up past traditions and reflect on what Connecticut College represents as an institution in the twenty-first century.

Fittingly, the musical selections were one way in which the committee feels they have accomplished this goal. Rather than have one student perform "America the Beautiful" at the beginning of the event, this year the song will be sung by a quartet composed of one staff member, one student, one faculty member and one New London resi-

dent. "That sort of change is subtle, but important," said Van Slyck.

According to Flores, the end of the ceremony will consist of more celebratory music than past inaugurations: jazz. "The recessional really mattered a lot to us because past installation ceremonies just ended...like people leaving after the end of a movie. No sense of joy or hope or excitement."

Jazz reflects the committee's and school's hope for a bright future. Flores said, "We didn't want people to just leave. We hope to have them dancing in the aisles."

As for the ceremony itself, the President took advantage of spring break to work hard on her speech, the content of which is a secret until Saturday, though she did offer up the title: "Transplanted by a River."

Bergeron's mentor Ruth J. Simmons, President Emerita and Professor of Comparative Literature and Africana Studies from Brown, will be providing the keynote speech. Mayor Finizio and Governor Dannel Malloy will be in attendance, as well as 93 delegates from other higher-education institutions.

"This is an important time for the institution," Bergeron said. "It's very moving to see the care and concern for the College expressed by those whose lives take them beyond the College." •



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# Harvard Law School Professor Noah Feldman to Deliver Keynote Address at Ninety-Sixth College Commencement

**MOLLY BANGS**  
NEWS EDITOR

On May 18, at the 96th Connecticut College Commencement ceremony, Noah Feldman will deliver the keynote address to the Class of 2014. Feldman is the Bemis Professor of International Law at Harvard Law School, as well as a Senior Fellow of the Society of Fellows at Harvard. According to his Harvard biography, he specializes in constitutional studies with an emphasis on the relationship between law and religion, constitutional design and the history of legal theory. Feldman is also a contributing writer for *The New York Times Magazine* and a columnist for *Bloomberg View*.

In 2003, Feldman was a senior constitutional advisor to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in Iraq. He therefore advised members of the Iraqi Governing Council on the drafting of the nation's interim constitution.

Drew Majkut '14 said, "I am super excited to have the opportunity to hear Noah Feldman speak at our commencement. I really enjoyed last year's speaker [Howard Gordon], but I think that Mr. Feldman brings an element to the table that has been impressed upon us during our four years at Conn: integrity. What is missing from his bio on

the Harvard website is that, yes, he did serve under the CPA in Iraq, but that he resigned from the position because of ethical objections of how he viewed the American approach to rebuilding

Feldman has authored six others books: *Cool War: The Future of Global Competition*; *Constitutional Law, Eighteenth Edition*; *The Battles and Triumphs of FDR's Great Supreme Court*

*"One of the many things I love about my brother is that it can be hard to predict what he will say at any given moment – but what he has to say is always interesting, often provocative and, generally, pretty damn entertaining. I'm really looking forward to having him on our campus."*

Simon Feldman, Professor of Philosophy

the Iraqi economy and political system."

Majkut explained that Feldman went on to write one of his books, *What We Owe Iraq: War and the Ethics of Nation Building*, on the matter. "He discusses the ethical obligations that a state has when rebuilding another state. Even when we mean well, the results will almost always be suboptimal."

*Justices; The Fall and Rise of the Islamic State; Divided by God: America's Church-State Problem and What We Should Do About It; and After Jihad: America and the Struggle for Islamic Democracy.*

Feldman is the brother of Simon Feldman, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Connecticut College. When asked about his relationship with the College, Feldman noted, "I've spoken at

Conn once before. But my only other relationship is through my brother Simon, who loves the College and the students and talks about both all the time."

Professor Simon Feldman said, "I was surprised and thrilled to find out that my brother, Noah, was asked to be our commencement speaker. I didn't even know he had been nominated! One of the many things I love about my brother is that it can be hard to predict what he will say at any given moment – but what he has to say is always interesting, often provocative and, generally, pretty damn entertaining. I'm really looking forward to having him on our campus."

Having given one prior commencement address at Kalamazoo College a couple of years ago, Noah Feldman said, "[I enjoy] the chance to be part of the joy of the graduates and their families, as well as their introspection about their futures."

In the past four years, the Class of 2014 has witnessed a wide array of keynote commencement speakers. In 2011, Clark University Research Professor of International Development, Community and Environment Cynthia Enloe '60 spoke at the '93rd Centennial Commencement. The following year, the United States Ambassador to the Court of St. James in London, Louis B. Sus-

man, delivered the speech. Last year, an Emmy-winning television writer and producer, Howard Gordon, was the College's choice.

These choices have been received with varying degrees of success by the student body, and, in particular, the graduating class at hand. One of the largest qualms students have expressed in the past is a lack of diversity represented by the speakers. While Feldman is a white male, he brings with him a different area of expertise than previous speakers.

Majkut spoke to the choice of Feldman as opposed to both past years' speakers and commencement keynote speakers in general: "While he isn't the flashy, sexy pick that most colleges try and get for commencement speakers, I think that his international experiences, depth of knowledge and ethical integrity will result in a more meaningful speech that the Class of 2014 will remember long after we graduate."

When asked about his expectations for the commencement ceremony on May 18, Feldman quipped, "I am hoping for good weather! If I can say something that adds to the experience, that will make me happy. If not, everyone will have fun anyway." •

## Crippling Student Protests Persist in Taiwan

### *Students occupy parliament over controversial trade bill with China*

**SCOTT KALUZY**  
CONTRIBUTOR

Students in Taiwan have occupied the legislative Yuan (parliament) in Taipei, paralyzing the government in an attempt to stop a controversial trade deal with mainland China.

The occupation began on March 18, after the ruling Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist) Party reneged on a promise to review the trade deal line by line before submitting it for a vote, accusing opposition parties of obstructing the democratic system and deliberately stalling the debate through misuse of parliamentary procedures. In response to the government's refusal to put the trade deal to a vote without the line item review, students and other activists have continued to occupy the Yuan, demanding that the deal be reviewed and altered to address their concerns about the economic and political implications of the deal.

The deal, called the "Cross-Strait Service Agreement," was negotiated between the respective governments' representatives during the summer of 2013 and was designed to liberal-

ize trade between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. It opens 64 economic sectors in Taiwan to mainland Chinese investment and allows people from Taiwan to invest in 80 economic sectors on the Chinese mainland.

It is one of the central policies of Ma Ying-Jeou, current President of the Republic of China (Taiwan), and is designed to further integrate Taiwan into the regional economy and to allow it to compete with other nations in the region. However, many Taiwanese people view the pact with suspicion, and feel that it will make Taiwan dependent on the mainland, fueling fears of the possibility of a hostile takeover in the future. Many young people also resent the possibility of people from mainland China being able to compete for their jobs in an increasingly competitive domestic job market.

The government in Taiwan, officially styled the "Republic of China," ruled the mainland from 1912 until 1949, when they were defeated by Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communist Party in the Chinese Civil War. After the end of the war, the Republic of China government and two million of its mainland Chinese supporters retreated

to Taiwan, where they have remained self governing despite dwindling international recognition. The People's Republic of China, the government formed by the Communists in the mainland after the war, claims a right to control both mainland China and Taiwan; it has also made clear that it would use force if necessary to achieve this goal.

The situation is further complicated by the presence of a significant portion of Taiwanese society that wishes to leave China's sphere of influence entirely and formally declare independence as the Republic of Taiwan. In recent years, the conflict between those in Taiwan who seek a formal declaration of independence from China, and the Kuomintang Chinese Nationalist Party, who favor eventual reunification with the mainland, has caused increased tensions in Taiwanese society and between the two sides of the Taiwan strait.

As Professor Tek-Wah King, a Chinese-American from Taiwan who teaches Chinese at Connecticut College told me during our interview, the real underlying cause of the tension between the government and the pro-

testers is not the service pact per se, but the larger conflict between pro- and anti-China factions within Taiwan.

"Of course," King notes, "Tensions and frustrations accumulated through a bad economy would definitely make the island more turbulent. But the underlying issue is between pro-China and anti-China political factions." Taiwan's economy has stagnated in recent years, and more and more students feel that prospects for the future are dim, moving to an increase in political protest and activism amongst young people and the population at large in recent years. These frustrations have played out in mass protests and civil actions before, but this is the first time the government has been completely paralyzed by the actions of the demonstrators.

The occupation of the legislative Yuan has entered into its tenth straight day, and shows no sign of stopping. The current protests are amongst, if not the largest, ever in Taiwan's history. Still larger demonstrations in front of the presidential palace were scheduled for this past Sunday, suggesting that the current events in Taiwan are far from resolution. •



# RESIDENTIAL EDUCATION FELLOWS: A Growing Program

ELEANOR HARDY  
SPORTS EDITOR

REF: another unknown Conn acronym to some and a great resource to those who know more about it. When it comes to programming, the Residential Education Fellows are a hidden gem.

Nearly each house on campus has a REF floor governor who works closely with the REF professors involved in the program. After going through a selection process, tenured professors are elected to the position and allotted a \$1,000 budget to work with throughout the year, creating an endless amount of possibilities.

Professor Catherine Stock, the head faculty of the program who serves as a liaison between Residential Education and Living and the professors sees the REF program as an "opportunity for professors to be creative and connect with students." In her eyes, the professors selected who have the most success and are happiest with the results of the program are "comfortable crossing the boundary between a professional relationships with students and one a bit more informal." The program is more than just bringing intellectual life outside the classroom, it also shows a different side of both professors and students.

Seen as a useful forum for discussing issues of diversity, whether ideological, political or a variety of other things, REF programs provide a safe space that's not within the four walls of a classroom. Kevin Zevallos '16, the Knowlton REF Floor Governor finds that the best asset REF programs have is their ability to "expand on ideas and topics in an informal setting while building relationships with faculty outside of the classroom."

REF events aren't only extensions of topics discussed in class. Many professors use the program as a way to introduce their own personal hobbies or interests to students, exposing their personable side while briefly masking the more formal side

seen in the classroom. This past fall, Associate Professor of History David Canton took a group of students hiking at Sleeping Giant State Park in New Haven, followed by lunch at a local diner. The hike consisted of chatter and laughter, and served as a break from the bubble students often find themselves in on campus and as a window into a city Professor Canton knows well. Professor Katherine Stock took a group of students to see *The Social Network* when it first premiered a few years ago. Though Professor Stock teaches in the History department, this event was well attended by computer science majors causing her to challenge herself and shift her thinking during their conversation over pizza following the movie. The learning happens for both the professors and students through programs such as these. The programs also bring forth

normally meet and getting to show them some cool science." The REF program allows professors and students to branch out and explore topics completely outside their area of study. Kaitlin Cunningham '16, the KB REF Floor Governor, never interacted with science, but teamed up with a fellow REF to do an event on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and ended up learning about a subject she never would have discovered on her own.

This year, in an effort to become more widely known on campus, the REF program engaged in a Six for Six Program catered towards freshmen. The program consisted of six events for freshmen only and took place over six weeks at the beginning of the fall semester. The idea behind the program was that the freshman class would meet new people or find common interests among friends through the program, as well as engage with different professors whom they may encounter later during their college career. A stepping stone into greater plans for next year's freshman class, the Six for Six Program was a success.

The REF program is a vast resource on campus that is widely underused. While low attendance events are sometimes most successful, producing engaging and intimate conversation, most students would be surprised by what they can gain both intellectually and personally from attending REF events. With that, the REF Program encourages students to reach out to floor governors and faculty and participate in programs.

The misconception that the programs are purely educational may be what's causing students to be hesitant to attend, but there is no definition of the "educational" aspect. A hike, cooking class, chemistry experiments, movie screening and even a local meat barbecue can be made into something educational. After all, the main goal of REF program is to complement our liberal arts education and expand what educational can really mean. •

*Seen as a useful forum for discussing issues of diversity, whether ideological, political or a variety of other things, REF programs provide a safe space that's not within the four walls of a classroom.*

a certain synergy between students and faculty as they cultivate new ideas together. Open to almost any idea, floor governors are allowed to work with residents, friends, classmates and other staff members to create unique programs. Collaborative events have been extremely successful for the REF program this past year. Most recently, a large group of REF floor governors hosted the "KB in KB" event, which brought together a variety of students to engage in an informal Q & A session with President Bergeron. Delicious desserts and dinners provided through the substantial budget also add a bit of enticement for students to attend events.

Connecting faculty and students from a variety of interests, REF professor Marc Zimmer's favorite part about being involved in the program is "having contact with students I wouldn't

## COLLEGE HOPES TO IMPROVE RETENTION RATES THROUGH CHANGES TO FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

CASEY DILLON  
STAFF WRITER

Think back to the beginning of freshman year: how many friends did you have at orientation who did not complete their education at Connecticut College? Your list might turn out to be longer than expected. According to Dean of the College Carolyn Denard, Conn's average retention rate over the past decade has been about 90%. At a school with just over 1,900 students, the absence of that 10% is largely noticeable among campus community. Dean Denard cited a number of reasons that students transfer, including the possibility that "a student has decided to attend a larger school, is interested in a major we don't offer, has a health issue or has other personal reasons for leaving."

As one junior who contemplated leaving Connecticut College said, "The bubble here can be so stifling." Conn's small size and distance from the heart of New London all contribute to an isolating and remote feeling that many incoming students are not necessarily prepared for. A number of factors contribute to the preconceived notions that incoming students have about college life, and it is the job of the current students, staff and faculty to ensure that incoming students have an accurate idea of what Conn's culture is in order to attract students that will thrive in our campus's atmosphere. The same student also said, in regards to thoughts about transferring; "What ultimately made me stay were the amazing friends I made and the academics; I have such close bonds with some of the professors here. I would be heartbroken to leave them."

Conn's student-to-faculty ratio is 9:1, which provides the time and opportunity for strong connections and relationships to form and ultimately help students throughout their college careers, as well as into the so-called "real world." However, academics are only a portion of what makes up the campus environment.

The key to increasing the retention rate, it seems, is to improve

the student experience. "All of the curricular and co-curricular programs—from curriculum review, to top-notch faculty, to expanded research and internship opportunities, to recent-run movies, to late hours at Ruane's Den and many others—are designed to make the student experience at Connecticut College meaningful, engaging and fun," said Dean Denard. Reaching out to first-year students is also an initiative that is receiving more attention from the staff of the school.

Recently, a number of changes and programs have been made that might address some of the main issues that cause students to transfer out of Conn. The Office of Residential Education and Living has implemented Camel Chats that, according to Scott McEver, garnered significant participation from the freshman class. The third Chat, hosted before spring break, saw 70% participation from the freshman class, and the first one saw 85%.

Zoe Davis '16, a floor governor in Freeman, explained to the *Voice* in an email, "I have found that Camel Chats have helped me meet every freshman on my floor and get to know them better, which then leads to a better freshman experience because they have someone they can turn to for advice or help, from homesickness to what to wear for the winter formal to venting about a challenging test." Smith Floor Governor Kamal Kariem '16 echoed Davis's sentiments, adding that the Camel Chats allowed him to take initiative when reaching out to freshmen, instead of waiting for them to reach out to him.

Other newly instituted programs include the I'm IN Campaign, Dean Talk Backs and Parent Call-Ins. Starting next year, freshmen will also be housed more closely to one another to create a stronger sense of community. Ideally, these programs and general changes will ensure that the concerns of freshmen are met early and effectively so that their needs can be addressed, and thus, students will be encouraged to return to Conn for their sophomore year. •

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# LINEUP RELEASED, TICKETS SELL FAST FOR COLLEGE'S THIRD ANNUAL TEDx

ELLIE STORCK  
STAFF WRITER

Adventure. Exploration. Travel. Taking journeys. Wanderlust.

These ideas were on the minds of the TEDx Connecticut College executive team when they began brainstorming for the 2014 TEDxConnecticutCollege Conference: Not All Who Wander Are Lost. The conference will take place in Cummings Arts Center on April 14 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

In its third year at Connecticut College, TEDx (the "x" represents an independently organized TED event) is reaching all corners of our campus with a palpably strong ambition to spread ideas and generate conversation. It's creating quite a buzz.

The lineup of speakers this year, chosen through a careful process of brainstorming, networking and reaching out, includes six off-campus guests, four alumni, five professors and seven students, ranging from freshmen to seniors. The speakers vary greatly in profession and expertise, from an underwater archaeologist to photographers, dancers to journalists, activists, entrepreneurs, students and professors focusing on the arts, English, anthropolo-

gy, and more. The TEDx executive board has made it their goal by spending hours of preparation to create a thoughtfully selected assortment of enthusiastic speakers for the upcoming full-day conference.

Spencer Francus '14, Chair of TEDxConnecticutCollege, began his involvement with the organization during his sophomore year, when asked to help with web design. He has been involved with it ever since.

Since Francus's first year with the organization, there has been a hugely collaborative effort from all TEDxConnecticutCollege team members to make a name for the organization on campus.

"Essentially, the difference between the way we're operating now and the way we were operating in 2011 is with a lot more support than we've ever had before. We really wanted to generate positive buzz around an event that most people have never been to, and to really to engrain in the campus community the expectations that we have, which are always over the top and very big," said Francus. "And so the first event was great, and it sort of let people know that we were seri-

ous. The second year was even better. We had 50 percent more speakers; we had a tremendous amount of support from not only the student body, but from the Administration and departments. And this year we've been hosting these monthly events, and really cementing ourselves in the extra-curricular, social world on campus, and that's been able to make TED a recognizable thing."

Francus noted that the way in which ticket sales has progressed since TEDxConnecticutCollege's first year on campus has hugely affected the speed at which the event becomes publicized and consequently very well-attended. Now that tickets are sold online, combined with how the event has been so hyped up around campus, tickets to the conference have progressed to be very high in demand.

"I think we sold 100 tickets in half an hour," said Francus. "That alone says a lot about the excitement and the way we've been able to make a name for ourselves on campus. And it's been because of our excitement and ambition about it, but also because of how receptive the community has been to it."

The process for choosing the theme for the conference takes an immense amount of time and diligent planning from the team members. Francus explained that in the fall, the executive team had a three-hour meeting in which they brainstormed and used ideas that had been previously collected from around campus to come up with one concrete idea.

"We took all of the themes from all of the idea boards and wrote them down on a black board in Fanning—50 or so themes. And then we categorized them based on their concepts. A lot of them sort of spoke to the same sort of themes, notions, ideas," said Francus. The group then decided what was the most popular, and what conclusively captured everything together. "The majority of these submissions had to do with ideas of looking forward," Francus said. "Looking forward with uncertainty. Exploration, discovery, adventure." After a thorough discussion about campaigns and ideas, a list of about 50 titles was created, then one-by-one eliminated until the team decided on the final idea: Not All Who Wander Are Lost.

One of the seven student speak-

ers, Ted Steinberg '16, a Government and American Studies double major, will be giving a talk about sports and Judaism. Steinberg was very inspired by the concept of TED itself when creating his own talk. "I love watching TED Talks. I love the kind of talks that are funny with some kind of moral, or food for thought, attached to it. So that's what I'm hoping others get out of mine," he said. "I love the events that the TEDx Connecticut College has had these year."

Steinberg's experience as Vice President of SGA has helped with his ability to talk to large audiences. "I like to speak publicly," he commented. "I'm really excited for the whole day of the conference. My talk is just one of them. I'm excited to hear all of the other talks, see all of the other talks. It's a lot of interacting. It's going to be a fun day. I think it's exciting to have students given the opportunity to speak. Students have these experiences qualitative enough to talk about."

Tickets for the conference will continue to be available this week in Cro for \$15, or can be purchased on the website: [www.tedxconnecticutcollege.com](http://www.tedxconnecticutcollege.com).

## Celebrated Investigative Journalist Seymour Hersh to Speak on Campus in Human Rights Lecture Series

SARAH LANGFITT  
CONTRIBUTOR

Seymour Hersh, who is widely considered to be the best investigative journalist of our time, will be speaking at Connecticut College on the April 3 in Evans Hall. He will be the fourth speaker in the anonymously funded Human Rights Lecture series. The talk, entitled, "This Day in History: Reflections on U.S. Foreign Policy and Human Rights Practices," will begin at 4:30 p.m. Other speakers in the series have included *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof, the founder of the North American chapter of Doctors Without Borders, Richard Heinzl and Program Director of WITNESS.org Sam Gregory.

Seymour Hersh gained renown with his exposé on the My Lai Massacre in 1969 and the military cover-up that followed to protect the troops who participated in the slaughter of as many as 500 civilians. In the aftermath of the story, the army went on to indict and convict a platoon leader of murder, Thomas Calley. In writing this story, Hersh had followed up on tip from an antiwar attorney and ended up revealing a huge breach of human rights as well as mysterious cover-up activity by the army during the court-martial.

Seymour Hersh also broke the story of the Abu Ghraib prison scandal on May 10, 2004; in his article, he did not feign away from blunt honesty regarding the horrific nature of American soldiers' abuses of

Iraqi inmates. Once again, Hersh revealed a multi-rank attempt within the military to keep the truth from coming out. Earlier this semester, Connecticut College Amnesty International hosted an event that screened the film "Ghosts of Abu Ghraib." This event gave students who attended a background in preparation for Hersh's upcoming talk. Acclaimed human rights lawyer Susan Burke spoke on Friday, March 28 on the same issue.

Amnesty International has supported the decision to bring Seymour Hersh to campus, and consequently created many awareness-raising, Abu Ghraib-centric events leading up to Hersh's address. "Amnesty International's goal," said Treasurer Molly Bangs, "is not only to raise awareness but to enhance the greater human rights narrative and conversation at Conn. As this spring marks the ten year anniversary of Hersh's story that broke the Abu Ghraib story, we thought honing in on issues such as torture was particularly relevant."

Lectures such as the Latin American Lecture Series on Social Justice last semester have focused on inequity in the world and how our actions in the US affect people worldwide. Amnesty International works to continue this pattern of eye-opening lectures to feed the awareness and conversation on the significance of human rights.

Associate Professor of Government Tristan Borer advises the Amnesty International club and has also played a large

role in bringing Seymour Hersh to campus. In addition, Borer is one of a few professors who will interview Hersh after his talk. The hope is that along with speaking about his role in breaking the story of the My Lai massacre, Hersh will also address the topic of Abu Ghraib and the United States military a decade later.

In an interview with Brook Gladstone from *On the Media*, Seymour Hersh was critical of American leadership questioning its ability to learn from and react to the past. In that same interview, Hersh admits that there are some justifiable parallels between My Lai and Abu Ghraib, the biggest difference being that at Abu Ghraib, they were not killing people. He describes a similar process of revealing the atrocities at Abu Ghraib to that of My Lai. Hersh also acknowledges the existence of intense rage present in the military towards the civilian population that is seen in both the Vietnam and Iraq wars.

Investigative journalist Seymour Hersh has played a huge role in working to reveal the truth about injustices and human rights abuses committed across the globe. His focus on the United States government is crucial in helping to contain the massive force that is the Government and the U.S. military. His experiences lend an important narrative to the extensive power and above-the-law mentality expressed in the American military and the importance of awareness when it comes to human rights.

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# The Effectiveness of Notes on Napkins

## Senior Sarah Huckins Defends Dining Services Tradition

**SARAH HUCKINS**  
STAFF WRITER

Maggie D'Aprix '17 hates cherry vanilla ice cream. "Seeing the light pink tub and feeling pure joy, and then seeing the 'cherry vanilla' written on the little board, is one of the most soul crushing experiences," she tells me. Not one to suffer idly, Maggie sought recourse by writing an impassioned Napkin Note, appealing to the Harris staff: "Cherry Vanilla ruins my day, please make it stop." Mike Kmec's response illustrates the power Napkin Notes can have, as he wrote back: "Due to the overwhelming amount of Napkin Notes on this subject alone, we will reduce the amount of Cherry Vanilla Ice Cream ordered. It is one of my favorites but I will bow down to the pressure." This is but one example of a successful Napkin Note interaction.

Phoebe Papademetriou, nostalgic for the cuisine of Soup & Breads past, helped craft a note requesting that the beloved and famed bleu cheese dip of 2012 be reinstated to its place of honor by the silverware. This note was penned on a Tuesday, and by the following Thursday, there was the dip, in all its glory. "I remember

coming into Freeman sopping wet from an arctic rainstorm and seeing the long lost dish. I was filled with such joy. Seeing that dip brought back great memories," she recounted. Again a day was made by the answering of a Napkin Note.

However, I have also heard stories of frustration with the Napkin Note system, recently embodied in a recent *Voice* article that centered on the thesis that "our requests rarely change anything."

Although I personally disagree with this statement, it would be difficult to prove empirically.

But something important to consider when assessing efficacy of Napkin Notes is their scope. Although I don't think Napkin Notes would be a particularly effective way to foment a culinary revolution, I do think they provide an important tool.

It is my understanding that Napkin Notes are an accessible means for students to communicate to Dining Services their likes, dislikes and suggestions. And if a request is not fulfilled, I do not believe this means "no one is listening to us," but rather may signify that the request was not feasible. Dining Services has limitations of both budget and physical space that it must work within. I've

known Mike Kmec for almost 3 years and do believe that he solves each problem as best as is possible with the resources available.

To answer the probably rhetorical question, "are we wasting our napkins on notes," I'd say it depends. If you are asking for lobster and nutella, as one Napkin Note did, I'd say yes, that is a waste of

\$50,000" argument in regards to the desire for two different types of granola in JA. The comprehensive fee for Connecticut College 2013-2014 year is \$58,780. That is a significant amount of money and I do believe that it is important to think critically about the cost of our education and what we are getting out of it. However, I think the tuition

expect to be given based upon high cost of tuition, or rather, what does our cost of attendance guarantee us? When is the use of this argument appropriate, if at all?

The cost of attendance, or comprehensive fee, at Connecticut College includes, but is not limited to, the cost of tuition, room and board. These are very broad terms that encompass the classes we attend, the dorms we live in, the food we eat. As different individuals have their own interpretation of the specifics of what this cost ought to grant us, the tuition (or rather cost of attendance) argument is highly subjective and thus potentially problematic as a stance for reform.

It is not my intent to suggest that we should have low expectations as to what opportunities are offered to us. Nor do I have any interest in quelling those interested in affecting positive change on campus. I only mean to posit that the connotations surrounding the financial argument make it a complicated one, and one that individuals should contemplate before using. I don't think there is any one right answer to the questions I've raised, but I do think they are important to ask oneself, to determine what they mean to you. •

*"By using tuition cost as reasoning for why something should be provided to us, it implies that we have paid for said thing, that we are entitled to it. And that is a difficult argument. Especially for granola."*

a note. But if you are asking for something that is within the realm of possibility, then no. Though even if a seemingly reasonable note goes unfulfilled, please rest assured that there is no conspiracy theory and understand that Dining Services works hard to reconcile epicurean tastes and the need to put food on the table for 2,000 hungry students.

Beyond a discussion of the efficacy of Napkin Notes, what I would like to unpack most is the invocation of the "steep tuition of about

argument is a tricky one and one that ought to be used judiciously.

By using tuition cost as reasoning for why something should be provided to us, it implies that we have paid for said thing, that we are entitled to it. And that is a difficult argument. Especially for granola. One might argue that it is not ludicrous to expect a granola aficionado to walk the eight minutes from JA to Harris. But that aside, it raises some complicated questions. Is two different types of granola really something we should

# The Big Problem with Tiny Cups

**LEAH ROSOFSKY**  
CONTRIBUTOR

It was April 16, 2012, a day that is not only internationally recognized as my half birthday, but also my "Accepted Students Day" visit to Connecticut College. While there were many great parts about Conn (clearly I enjoyed my visit, I'm here aren't I?) there was one part that really threw me off. Now, it wasn't immediate but over time a great fury built inside of me that all students, staff and faculty need to be aware of. I need to raise awareness to a problem our campus is faced with.

That problem being--tiny cups.

When I first tell people about this issue, I get befuddled looks- "What ever do you mean?"

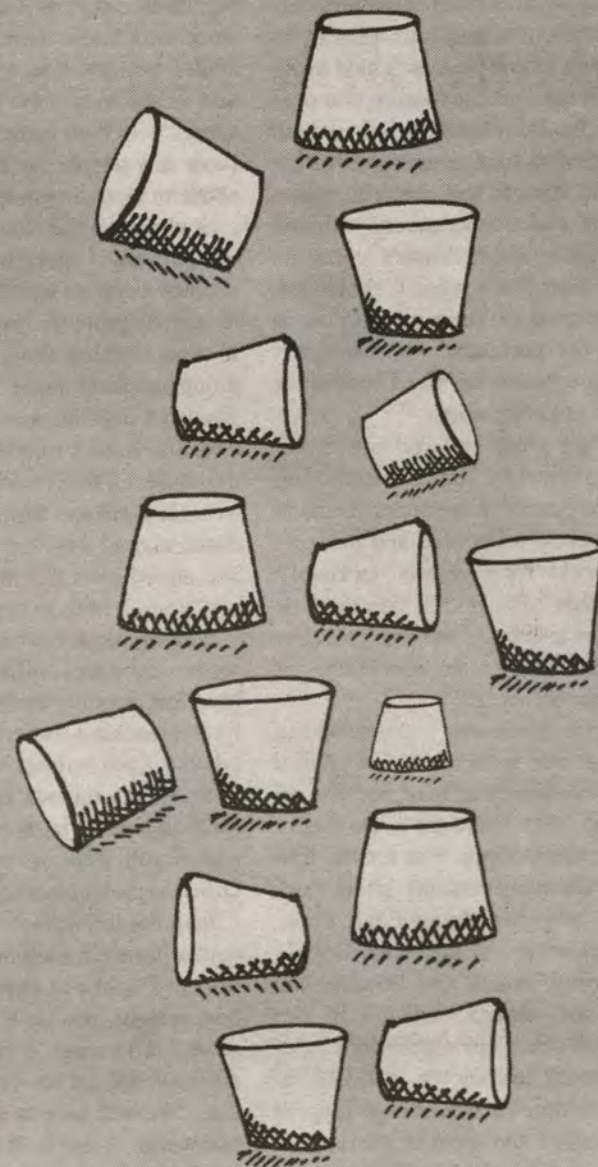
What I mean is the teeny, tiny cups used at catered events. You use them at lectures, convocation, oh and the worst are barbecues. Let me lay out the problems for you.

First off, the cups are so small that if you want anything more than a little cat lap of water then you're out of luck. I mean these cups are so small that without even trying, I feel like I'm rippin' shots every time I drink out of them. How is anyone possibly able to quench their thirst with a drinking vessel so petite?

Now on to the really, really bad issues revolving around the cups. In order to effectively wash down that whole wheat cracker/cheddar cheese combo, you need to have at least three cups because one just will not do it. I don't know much about environmental studies past my fifth grade trip to the "Trash Museum," but if the general idea still holds true that using a lot of plastic is bad (especially when you don't throw it away) then Al Gore will be pretty peeved at our carbon footprint. You think you can be slick and get away with one cup and just go back for refills but when there is a free cheese and fruit platter, what makes you think that not every broke, starving college student within a one-mile radius will all be hovering over the snack section at the same time? Honey, there is no way you're going to be able to make it back to the water again.

Now, I do not hate all of Conn's plastic tableware. The forks and knives at catered events are so durable it's amazing. The Connecticut College logo on the cups is also a great feature that I would never want to see gone.

I'm ready to make a change, to see a difference, one that will not only affect those associated with Connecticut College but one that will change the world--say no to tiny cups. •



DAVE SHANFIELD





# When Group Work Hurts

## *Splitting the Grade with the Slacker*

**MADELINE CONLEY**  
OPINIONS EDITOR

On Sundays, I meet with my U.S. and Vietnam class group to work on our project on Lyndon B. Johnson\*. I love these meetings, to which we all arrive ten minutes early, prepared to enthusiastically present to each other our vigorous research filed away in neatly organized manila folders. Our passion for Lyndon B. Johnson is unmatched, our ideas for our final presentation flow like mountain streams and our willingness and ability to work cooperatively with one another is worthy of a children's television show. Or at least that's what it should be, and how I imagine our meetings play out in the mind of our professor, who like many professors here, has an unflinching confidence in the power of group work.

In reality, my group on Lyndon B. Johnson meets infrequently and reluctantly, and when over the course of five hundred emails we do manage to set a time and place to meet that works for everyone, inevitably someone sleeps through the meeting, or forgets, or has a surprise lacrosse practice. It shouldn't be like this; the possibilities of group work are plenty.

This group in particular is composed of one freshman, one sophomore, one junior and one senior, which in itself is remarkable and tailor-made for some sort of brochure for the College. But for the four of us, as it is for many students, group work can be like slogging through tar, thick, black, Vietnam-war-era tar, with Google Docs and group emails and Powerpoints floating on the surface, sticking to our clothing and flooding our nightmares.

A recent study has shown that 85% of Conn students' time outside of class is spent in group meetings and another 5% is spent emailing about them. While this statistic is entirely untrue, it reflects many students' feelings about this part of our education with some accuracy. The lamentations can be heard all across campus: "I have a group

meeting." And if you don't have a group meeting, your friend does. Something that is rarely heard: "I'm having a great experience working in a group!"

As with most articles of this nature, a degree of informal polling goes into its writing. In an effort to find the merit of group work, as I know there is some, I spoke to what I thought was a generous cross-section of students. Few people wanted to be quoted with their name attached, mostly because few people had positive things to say about working in groups.

Students, in fact, have some pretty nasty things to say. I spoke with a friend who had recently been an unwilling participant in a disastrous group project, and when I asked if in quoting her about her experience, her group members might be offended at being slandered in print, she said she wasn't worried. She wasn't worried because, as far as she could tell from working with them, they were illiterate and therefore wouldn't be inclined to read a college newspaper anyway. She added also that the experience made her "lose all faith in people."

If group work is a medicine that when effective, produces collaborative, educational bliss and soothes the burden and the isolation of working alone, it should be said that when it goes wrong, it goes really wrong. Side effects include crises of faith and a tingling feeling in the legs and ankles that makes you want to run to the Registrar's Office to pick up a transfer form.

Juan Pablo Pacheco '14 said in more eloquent terms something that nearly every student I spoke to expressed: "Our education system just isn't designed for group work." The most commonly called-upon rationale for group work by professors is that, "We will have to work in groups in the real world"—that is, if rationale is provided at all. However, as Pacheco wisely pointed out, group work in the future is an inevitability—but in the "real world," in offices or film sets or wherever you may find yourself, "There is almost always a clear

hierarchy, and you know exactly where you fall in it." Not having a hierarchy isn't necessarily bad, he said, but guidance is wanted. This idea resonated strongly with many, who said that the unclear structure of group projects makes for wasted time, slacking off and bad blood all around.

Other grievances surfaced. Variations on this idea emerged with some force: while some professors hold group work in the highest regard, others make the ability to work well with others seem as irrelevant as learning to herd sheep or administer leeching.

A class I took the spring of my freshman year comes to mind, which I will leave unnamed for obvious reasons. The professor announced on the first day of class that only two students would be receiving A's; this was not a class where we would be coddled but rather judged against each other. His teaching style was dictatorial, arbitrarily calling on students for inane trivia, resulting in one of my classmates suffering through nearly every class in a perpetual state of immanent nervous collapse. Needless to say, we were not once asked to work in groups. This, I've found, is the exception, as most professors thankfully prefer to foster a more comfortable learning environment.

But what is more problematic than tyrannical professors are those teachers and classes that straddle the line between collaborative and individualistic learning in a confusing way. Should we prepare for a world that is cut-throat and competitive, or collaborative, kind and democratic? While we're smart enough to know that it's not always so clearly one or the other, students I spoke to reflected on the mixed signals in our education.

This is what students say, generally, about group work. Sometimes it works, and when it does, it's a powerful approach to learning, and perhaps more significantly, a meaningful way to connect with other students. These successes are mostly felt to oc-

cur in upper level classes, with like majors, in groups of four people or under. It works especially in dance classes, and sometimes in the visual arts. Senior seminars are often the stage for smiling-picture-on-the-college-website-appropriate intellectual collaboration. The choice to work with your friends is good, although it can be dangerous territory.

One senior I talked to, disproving a few of the theories above, told me, "Last semester I was in an upper-level seminar and worked with close friends, and I had to carry them on my back the whole way...I thought it was ridiculous because we're seniors—I shouldn't have to do that anymore." Herein is one of the strongest themes articulated in these conversations: people hate being the disciplinarian, and in group work, someone nearly always has to be.

Here, now, is where I so much want to write some recommendation for the future, introduce a new idea that will lessen the frustration and disorder of group work—something that transforms that which is written above from a series of complaints to a useful proposal in the ever continuing discussion on how to make this college run better, think better, feel better. But here's the twist: I think it might be our fault. I'm not sure if professors are to blame, even those who are confusingly straddling the line between an individualistic and collaborative curriculum. I think we need to get better at this stuff, I think we're too ready to finger-point, and we're even readier to give up.

Generally, professors seem to trust that the world is good, we are good, things are good. They believe in us, in our ability to collaborate, to communicate with each other, to create something that surpasses the ability of the individual. My fear is that we don't.

*\*The name of the class and the subject of the group project has been changed. You know why.*



# Tour Guide Deception

ANDY STEIN-ZELLER  
STAFF WRITER

There are two different ways that Tour Guides engage in the art of deception. The first is unintentional deception, e.g. they will give a statistic or description of some facet of the College that they think is right but is not. “Students live in Unity House” and “People never run out of printing money” are two examples I heard recently. This is more often something that new Tour Guides (like myself) do when put on the spot by an abrasive question or when they feel some sort of inexperience-based anxiety. Compared to the other two ways we bend the truth, these instances are more so a series of semantic mistakes rather than anything actively deceitful. On my first tour, my athletics-related statistics were dripping with errors. And, because families are bombarded with so many facts, stats, opinions and anecdotes, one little slip-up here and there is more likely than not to have consequences of a negligible order.

The other way that Tour Guides inaccurately represent our college is through straight up lying, in the willingly-saying-something-about-the-College-that-we-know-is-not-true-in-order-to-present-it-in-the-best-possible-light sense of the word. The good news is that these lies are never, to my knowledge, handed to us by Admissions in the form of numbers and statistics. Our stats and general facts about the College that we memorize and rattle off are rock solid, and in no way aim to bend the truth. An example of how this happens elsewhere is at a college of a similar size with Greek life, where Tour Guides are told to tell their tours that 30% of the student body takes part in Greek life. What they don’t say is that pledges can’t join until sophomore year, and that 70% of non-freshmen participate in Greek life. This is a willful, not to mention cunning, choice on behalf of the Admissions Office at this particular school, and again, to my knowledge, none of the stats about Conn given to us by Admissions are manipulated.

When I talk about the food at Conn, which we can all agree has its ups and downs, I say that it’s “good, and sometimes even excellent.” By not saying that it can be bad (Harris codfish and old lettuce from JA can really throw a wrench in our digestive tracts, no?), I’m lying. Although the food can be good, and sometimes can even be excellent (Soup and Bread, the Festivus Roast, and some of the Harris Sandwich specials have brought us a lot of happiness over the past four years), I’m still lying. I lie because to do otherwise would conflict with the primary goal of our Admissions office (and every Admissions Office in the country), which is to get as many people to apply to the school as possible.

When I give my “Everyone at Conn understands the importance of the Honor Code” spiel, same deal. Every

Tour Guide does this in one way or another, and we have enough impressive statistics and factoids (free music lessons, 9:1 student/faculty ratio, equal distribution of all four classes in non-specialty housing, unlimited meal swipes for everyone living in a dorm, etc.) to complement instances where the information is relayed via personal opinions that are not grounded in evidence.

Again, I cannot stress enough that Admissions really handles any potential dishonesty with the utmost integrity. Rather than go the route of other colleges and give inaccurate statistics, they encourage us to do one of the things we should be learning how to do at Conn in the first place, and that is to communicate ideas with clarity by synthesizing the objective and the subjective. This sort of rhetorical strategy is to be found in almost any real-world situation, where so often success depends on someone fashioning a veil, an illusion of sorts or a stretching of the truth. I’ve asked my superiors how to

*“I lie because to do otherwise would conflict with the primary goal of our Admissions office (and every Admissions Office in the country), which is to get as many people to apply to the school as possible.”*

handle talking about the less-than-perfect aspects of being a Camel, and they are guilty of nothing more than encouraging me to “stay positive.” A good Tour Guide will read between the lines on that one, but at the same time I’ve never felt like I was being pressured to lie by a superior.

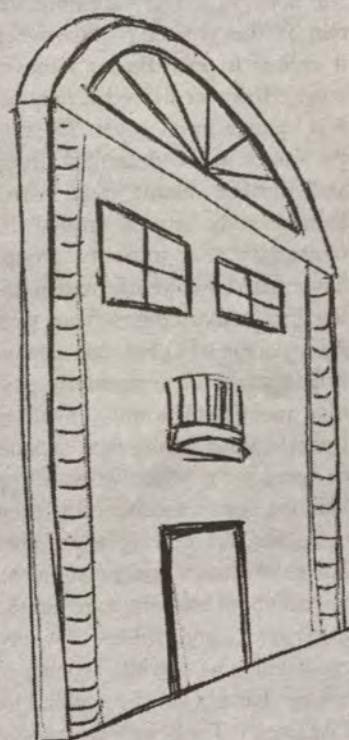
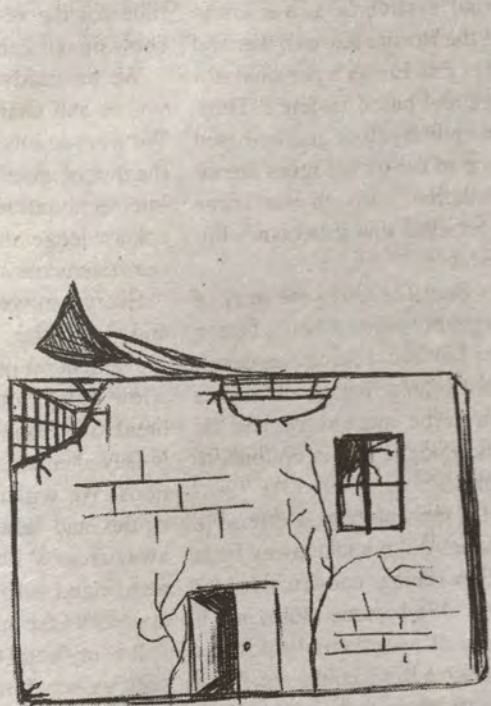
Much of the “sugar-coating” comes from what we don’t say, rather than what we do say. For instance, so many people are attracted to Connecticut College because of our flagship interdisciplinary centers, and it gives me great pleasure to talk about how the centers are a unique opportunity to both sharpen our academic focuses and broaden what’s possible for an undergraduate student to accomplish. What I don’t say is that the Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology has had a 50% retention rate amongst its senior class and that the CISLA sophomore seminar often breeds circular, static discourse because of the relatively enormous number

of students it admits. Although the former, a fact, and the latter, a subjective opinion, would offer a balanced look at the centers, I don’t tell either to tours because it would make the College look bad. We also omit things like Fishbowl (or used to, RIP), detailed descriptions of Floralia and Cro Dances and things like how much free alcohol the College gives (or doesn’t give) to the senior class, simply because parents tend to be anxious enough about losing their child and don’t need to get any ideas planted in their heads about said child turning into a debauchorous alcoholic who on occasion gets naked in public (private-college-bubble public, but nevertheless).

Why then, as students of an Honor Code school that values truthfulness and integrity above all else, are we comfortable engaging in this type of behavior?

First, the good at Conn College unequivocally outweighs the bad, and any lie cannot even begin to obscure what this school has to offer. Limitless are the opportunities for students to get involved with so many different parts of this machine, to make decisions and take actions that author the future of the College, to choose from a hugely diverse range of academic and social environments. We are more or less free to do anything we want, and free to constructively (or unconstructively) criticize what we cannot do. We are an institution that every day rises to new levels of ambitiousness, of prestige and of reputability, and the coming of President Bergeron, our increasing commitment to sustainability, the Academic Resource Center, our all-Steinway status, our fresh-off-the-presses 3-D printer and all other things new and exciting do nothing but augment Conn’s momentum. While we cannot deny our imperfections, our college was founded precisely because a group of women were dissatisfied and worked together to solve the problem of getting an education. The need to constantly improve and to never cease striving for betterment is at the core of our essence and our heritage, and without the imperfect this train ride of progress would come to a screeching halt.

The second reason is that tours are arguably the most efficient way to attract an increasingly strong and increasingly large body of applicants, which in turn will ensure that the quality of our student body accelerates in parallel with that of our resources. The strongest applicants—kids who are intelligent, outgoing, ambitious, virtuous and high-spirited—are going to be critical of all tours they attend, and to give a great tour means to be confident, fluid and sincere, but also positive. Through a few minor exaggerations, omissions and even fewer good old-fashioned fibs, we Tour Guides can engage in a process that has limitless potential to ensure the sustainability and growth of student bodies for generations to come. •



*“And now we’ve come to Lazrus, one of Conn’s most desirable residence halls...”*



# One Billion Disagreeing?

RACHEL MADDOX  
CONTRIBUTOR

Eve Ensler, V-Day, and *The Vagina Monologues* are all things that many people know about, especially on the Connecticut College campus. This year specifically, given the groundbreaking Connecticut College V-Men video going viral, these are all things that have been highly publicized and frequently discussed. However, there is more to the movement as a whole. Eve Ensler authored the *Vagina Monologues*, a collection of monologues taken from the lives of real women that discuss many issues surrounding femininity, from pubic hair to orgasms to sexual assault and violence. V-Day is a global event seeking to end sexual violence around the world by bringing women together with a series of events, benefits, films, etc. to spread awareness in an empowering way. Underneath the umbrella of V-Day is 1 Billion Rising, which is a worldwide dance event supporting this cause. At Connecticut College, it manifests in the shape of a yearly flash mob.

Lauren Chief Elk, in her article "There is No 'We': V-Day, Indigenous Women and the Myth of Shared Gender Oppression" argues that Eve Ensler's V-Day campaign and the "framing of sexualized violence as an issue that hurts all women equally" directly invalidates and further trivializes the experience of Indigenous women. This seems to me to be quite the outlandish assertion, and in this article I will seek to deconstruct the argument that Chief Elk makes in order to reach a different conclusion. As a campus that has just produced a very popular, very much-talked about and well-attended production of the *Vagina Monologues*, the questions raised in the article are important to address.

The idea of Eve Ensler's movement is that women can come together regardless of background in a fight against sexual violence that stems from the shared experience of being female. Admittedly, this seems a little idealistic, but Chief Elk aggressively dismantles the entire notion in her article.

Chief Elk begins by saying that Ensler was insensitive in her spotlight on Canadian Indigenous women during a particular V-Day event on February 14, ignoring the fact that the day is an especially sacred day to Indigenous women as it marks the Women's Memorial March, honoring murdered and missing Indigenous women. She goes on to attack "mainstream feminism and harmful approaches to gender justice," by stating that "mainstream feminist anti-violence policies backfire on women of color and other marginalized groups" in that their message of cracking down and insisting on more involvement from the very law enforcement that incarcerates thousands of women of color each

year. According to Chief Elk, Ensler's U.S. Prisons Project—seeking to "make prisons more habitable and less violent" for those incarcerated—is furthermore indicative of the aforementioned claim.

Chief Elk adamantly makes these broad arguments, backed only by passive references to "Twitter chats." These are arguments that are generalized and combative in nature, making this part of the article feel more like a temper tantrum rather than research. This brings us to the first outrageous claim: that Eve Ensler, by demanding more of American law enforcement and seeking to improve female prison environments, is reinforcing and therefore supporting a system that regularly oppresses women of color. This claim is problematic because this issue is so much more complicated than that.

There is no doubt that the prison system in this country is incredibly fractured: there is corruption within the staff, gangs, racial divisions, and, of course, high rates of sexual violence. Eve Ensler's focus is the sexual violence issue as it operates within this particular context. Changing the American prison system is a completely different ball game. In other words, a part of sexual violence has to do with lack of action on the part of many law enforcement officers, and on the other side of the coin, hostile environments within prison systems.

Eve Ensler's specific cause is sexual violence. It is not prison and law enforcement. She therefore focuses on a miniscule facet of something that has to do with prison and law enforcement, never claiming to fix the structure as a whole. The fact that high percentages of people of color in this country are incarcerated, often wrongly, and often more than once, is an undeniable issue of racial disparity. But that is a sociological issue of dominant groups and ideologies asserting their power, and that is not something that is going to be shouldered solely by Eve Ensler or any other single human being.

Chief Elk also discusses the "benevolence" of white women and the problems with white feminism. She asserts that white feminism, as it currently exists, is not equipped to "address issues that affect Indigenous people, or other women of color, that is not based in white supremacy." She writes that the standards for this feminism and efforts to combat gender-based violence have foundations in white values, which perpetuates the idea of a white savior complex. This complex is emphasized by new legislation called the International Violence Against Women Act that seeks to educate women across the world on how to protect themselves against sexual violence and abuse, which according to Elk "has sent the message that it's acceptable

to use survivorhood to perpetuate ideas about interpersonal violence, and this has influence over national policy."

Chief Elk raises some valid points about white feminism and the white savior complex. Feminism itself tends to have white influenced undertones because that experience is a part of the dominant ideology as it exists globally. That is historical. However, Chief Elk goes on to her final, climactic argument that "there is no we." In other words, she argues that, "The problem with the framing of sexualized violence as an issue that hurts all women equally is that it erases many of the historical and current experiences for Indigenous women." She says, "Rape in particular is a force of colonization" and that this "patriarchal colonization" that originated with white settlers also includes white women. In essence, she is saying that white women are a part of the overarching issue that catalyzes sexual violence.

We have now arrived at the second outrageous claim, which is that white women reinforce the oppression of women of color, and that act therefore invalidates any experience they (white women) have with sexual violence. These two combined claims are not mutually exclusive the way that Chief Elk seems to want them to be. The idea of white women and subsequently white feminism is indeed problematic when addressing women on a global scale in the way that Eve Ensler does.

However, as aforementioned, this is an issue of dominant majority groups that will not be fixed by any one given person. To say that *because* of this, white women contribute to a patriarchy that was established hundreds of years ago, and therefore have no validity when it comes to their own sexual assault is absolutely unacceptable. Anyone who has been sexually assaulted has experienced pain and violation, and deserves to address her experience and fight back.

It is important to remember that *that* is the greater picture when it comes to Eve Ensler's movement. However flawed it may be, it is sincere in its goals. To point the finger at the dominant group and further blame and insult them is only turning around the oppression that minority groups have faced for years, and nothing productive comes from that. As a person of color, this uncontrolled attack on a generally positive movement is not something I can in good conscience support or agree with. When women stop blaming one another for their obstacles and tearing each other down, perhaps a conversation can be had about bringing together the experiences and values of women of color with white women in a way that has not been done by Eve Ensler. Then, we may engage in a true fight against worldwide sexual violence. •

# Why Connecticut College Will No Longer Perform *The Vagina Monologues*

ALIA ROTH  
CONTRIBUTOR

When I first saw *The Vagina Monologues* my freshman year at Connecticut College, the show changed my life. I felt empowered, liberated and motivated to get involved in issues regarding gender-based violence. I had never experienced being a part of such an outrageously supportive, loving and powerful community of women.

As a co-producer this year, I was aware of the problematic elements of the *Vagina Monologues*, but co-producer Ari Holden '14 and I continued on as our executive board had already been working tirelessly on producing this show. It was not until the spring, when rehearsals for the show started, that I began to feel frustrated with the lack of autonomy I had in production.

I could not alter the script, and I could not add or take away monologues even when they were more offensive than powerful. Among some these offensive monologues were:

*Coochie Snorcher* -- essentially the glorification of rape between two women, one being a fourteen-year-old girl.

*The Woman Who Loved To Make Vaginas Happy* -- a favorite for many. We tend to forget that the lines "the Black woman moan," "the Jewish moan" and "the uninhibited bisexual moan" are written in this monologue. These lines are then followed by "stereotypically sounding moans" which changes the tone of the monologue to one of racism, anti-Semitism, sexism and queer-phobia.

*My Vagina Is A Village* and *Jumping* -- the first a graphic description of sexual assault as a war crime during the Bosnia-Kosovo war and the latter Eve Ensler's personal story of gender-based violence. Thus, the only portrayals of gender-based violence in the monologues are either "othered" through war crime or so personal that it becomes uncomfortable.

*They Beat The Girl* -- the story of a transgender woman being beaten and her boyfriend being murdered; the only representation of a trans woman in the entire show, and the only monologue that is optional to perform.

For the most part, these offensive undertones did not take away from the show being constructive for the cast. We became close, and it was overall an extremely positive experience. But I could not shake my doubts, especially when a few cast members approached me to express their discomfort with some of these monologues. With all of the criticism surrounding the show

and personal doubt I experienced, I wanted to gauge if the performance still impacted the cast the way it was intended. After the show, I surveyed the cast to better understand what they want from this kind of movement within the context of our community; because in any feminist movement, the voices of the people in the movement should always be at the forefront.

Not surprisingly, the cast expressed very similar concerns. The most common criticism from the cast was that there was not a single monologue that came from us -- college-aged women. The vast majority of women in the show commented that they wanted the freedom to change monologues or add their own. Less than half of the cast felt their personal experiences were represented by the monologues, and not one person said that performing the monologues was their favorite part of the show. Many commented that, "The dedications, building a strong community of women, sisterhood and the connections and friendships I found" were the most powerful parts of the experience.

When the actual performance is neither fully representative nor empowering for the women themselves, what is the purpose of performing it? If even some of us are uncomfortable with the words we are speaking, why continue speaking them?

There was absolutely a time and place for TVM. The monologues created an undeniable platform that has changed so many women's lives. But when a production that has been performed for years has resulted in the boredom of the audience, the falsification of our generation's voices and the silencing and triggering of emotions, it is time for the re-production of this show on our campus to end.

We are ready to speak our own voices and share our own stories. We want to introduce autonomy to the monologues, to speak about the intersectionalities of identities, to acknowledge that our bodies and our statements are political.

Every movement transforms, and with the evolution of this movement on our campus, we will allow this production to grow and break free from the constraints that V-Day demands for their productions. We will now be telling *our* stories and while we are moving away from V-Day, we will continue to stand with it in solidarity and appreciate the space it has created.

It is my hope that this movement will leave behind a stronger group of women who will continue to build on this production, mentor each other and maintain a space of creativity, passion, advocacy and critical engagement. •



# MLB Expectations: After Opening Day

PETER BURDGE  
CONTRIBUTOR

Baseball's Opening Day has finally come: that one American tradition that has for so long given fans a beacon to hope through-out the cold, wind-whipping winter nights of winter has made it into our lives.

But after Opening Day, why should you watch Major League Baseball this year?

Because 2014 is looking to be one of the exciting seasons in recent memory, so expect headlines. Here are the four most compelling stories that will jump into the sports landscape, and give everyone a reason to watch:

**1. Boston's run to repeat as World Series Champions.** Every year, we follow the World Series winner as the official 'team to beat', but never, since the Yankees three year run from 1998-2000, do teams win consecutive championships. The 2014 Red Sox are different. With a great deal of overlap from last year's roster, Fenway Park will be rocking with the continued excitement and chemistry that carried the team to 42 one-run games and 11 walk-off wins.

Boston will have some concerns, however; namely with its inexperienced left-side infield defense (led by Xander Bogaerts and Will Middlebrooks). They will also need to accommodate Grady Sizemore, a one time All-Star plagued by injuries, as he makes his first Major League start in more than two years.

Though the team showed its

consistency last year, never losing more than three games in a row, much of its success came from reliable role players and a strong bullpen—qualities that are difficult to constantly rely on. It will be hard for the Red Sox to recreate last year's triumphs in a more competitive American League and at a time of growing parity in the game. But if they do, it won't be without excitement.

**2. The Yankees' and Dodgers' attempts to buy a championship.** This off-season, the Yankees reverted to their old selves by fishing with furrowed determination for the best possible talent on the market, scooping up Jacoby Ellsbury, Brian McCann, Carlos Beltrán, and Japanese sensation Masahiro Tanaka; The value of those four contracts alone amount to around a half a billion dollars.

Yet in their attempt to build a superteam, the Yankees still find themselves with a pool of players on the downslope of their primes, or completely past them. Even the pitching staff, which should get a boost from newcomer Tanaka, is iffy, with C.C. Sabathia coming off of a mere 14-win season, a far cry from 20 win seasons of his earlier days. No matter how well the Yankees play, though, their star specked roster undoubtedly guarantees half-a-billion-dollars worth of storylines.

The

Dodgers have had their own troubles keeping up their own much-hyped superteam. Topping their list is Cuban sensation Yasiel Puig, a never-a-dull-moment kind of player who runs wild on the base paths, powers through his uninhibited swing at the plate, and showcases his ability to gallop like a horse and throw like a god in the outfield.

But Los Angeles has four other All-Star outfielders on the roster, and manager Don Mattingly has shown his frustration with Puig's child-like antics this spring. He has been, and will continue to be, a story nearly every day. Challenging the Yankees in the big-name game, the Dodgers will draw our attention with its marquee roster, headlined by Puig, Adrian Gonzalez, Hanley Ramirez and Clayton Kershaw, perhaps the best pitcher in the game.

**3. New phenomenal players.** Baseball's pipeline of young talent is especially thick this year. Jose Abreu will be a new addition to the American public eye, as he spent his former career in Cuba before defecting and signing with the

White

Sox. In his last Cuban season, Abreu hit 33 home runs and drove in 93 runs, a season that would be impressive for a power hitting major leaguer, but something Abreu did in only 66 games.

Xander Bogaerts is ready to become a major fixture in the Red Sox lineup after showing himself to be comfortable under pressure after playing only a limited role on the team during last year's World Series. Bogaerts had been touted as one of the best prospects in Boston's minor league system, and his bright future begins this year, with the potential to already be one of the best offensive shortstops in the game.

Who doesn't like a dangerous base stealer? Baseball has not had a legitimate threat, someone whose speed can not only change a game but carry a team, since Ricky Henderson in the 1980s and '90s. The Cincinnati Reds have one this year in Billy Hamilton. In 2012 while in the minor leagues, Hamilton stole 155 bases, 106 more than MLB's leader that year, and 25 more than Henderson's modern Major League single season record. Baseball has not seen a 100-steal season since 1987, and Hamilton looks poised to break that 27-year drought.

**4. Instant replay and the pace of games.**

One of the most common critiques of baseball of late has been the lethargic pace of games, as if they were

meant to be slow and exhausting to watch. But the growing dead air between pitches has led many former fans to flee to the more action-packed NFL and NBA.

We may have seen the first roll in a potentially growing tide around baseball, as Miami Marlins president David Samson recently said that one of the biggest goals for his team this year is to reduce the duration of games. Samson and manager Mike Redmond will encourage players not to dawdle (either in the batter's box or on the mound) between pitches, arguing that, "If we want to engage fans 18 to 49, we have to play faster."

And play faster they will, unless, of course, the new system of instant replay slows the game down. Major League Baseball is finally expanding its instant replay to make virtually all field plays (not balls and strikes) challengeable by managers. The league thinks it has created an efficient system, placing a group of umpires at the league offices in New York, who, after reviewing the disputed play, will communicate with the umpires on the field as to what the correct call is. The system is past its experimental stages, but will surely come with criticism as it marks an end to the traditional norms that have become staples of the American game.

So let us begin the season, if not with pomp and fanfare, then perhaps simply with high expectations for what is to come. Opening Day is here. That is something we can all celebrate. •



## Warren Buffett's (Conditional) Billion Dollar Pledge

NICO PREMUTICO  
CONTRIBUTOR

Every passing March brings a few weeks of imminent satisfaction for two groups of people. First, we have the urologists, whose clientele multiply every year as scores of men across the country strategically schedule their vasectomies, knowing well in advance that they will have a few days to sit around the house and stare at their television screen. This brings us to our next group of March enthu-

siasts: college basketball fans.

March Madness is a sporting event like none other. For the 68 Division-One teams that are lucky enough to qualify for the tournament, by either winning their respective conference championship or by way of an at-large bid, the focus of an entire country falls on them. March Madness can make a small university from Nebraska into a nationally polarizing institution, but one must keep in mind that there is more to this internationally admired tourna-

ment than just the love of college basketball.

Every March brings a certain competitive spirit to make a sports fan out of any of us. As millions of people scramble to fill out their office March Madness brackets money changes hands at an exponential rate. Everyone loves to fill out a bracket for a shot at a few hundred bucks and office bragging rights, particularly at the mere cost of a ten or twenty dollar entrance fee. This year brought a new element of prize for simply

filling out a bracket.

Warren Buffett, the revered "Oracle of Omaha," offered a new prize for the first fifteen million entrants to his competition: one billion

dollars for a completely perfect bracket, and one hundred thousand dollars to the top 20 runner-ups (if none were indeed perfect by the end of the tournament). At first glance, his pledge seems risky, even for someone like Buffett, who could afford to lose that much fifty times and still be a billionaire. But keep in mind that there has never been a recorded perfect bracket, and Buffett's analytical prediction told him the odds of a divine perfect bracket this year were virtually zilch.

Alas, after only the first two rounds of this year's tournament there are zero perfect bracket's left in his fifteen million-person pool, and, for that matter, zero left in the entire country. How is this possible? 15 million people are failing to predict the out-

come of 63 straight games year after year?

According to Jeff Bergen, a mathematician at DePaul University, the chance of randomly predicting the outcome of the main draw's 63 games is one in 9,223,372,036,854,775,808. For the devoted college basketball fan, the odds decline to a modest one in 128 billion.

Just to put the mathematical randomness of March Madness into perspective, the last remaining perfect bracket in the entire country for this year's tournament was held by Brad Binder. The 23-year-old from Illinois claimed he just "entered for fun to see what happened," and made his picks in a mere three and a half minutes.

Ironically, he did not even enter Buffett's Billion Dollar Bracket. And, of course, his bracket is no longer perfect after the plethora of first and second round upsets. His casual success in this year's March Madness brackets perhaps reinforces a reality for Buffett's 15 million participants: that a shot in the dark for one billion dollars is just that, a shot in the dark. •



# SAM GILL '14 TAKES HOME NATIONAL TITLE IN 100 METER

ELEANOR HARDY  
SPORTS EDITOR

Over spring break senior Sam Gill joined the small, elite group of national champions at Connecticut College. The fifth Camel ever to take home a national title, this was Gill's third and final year competing as a standout swimmer in the NCAAs.

Gill and a senior from Emory became NCAA co-champions of the 100 M backstroke with a time of 47.62 seconds, just .06 seconds off from the current the NCAA record. Gill shared that winning the national title "has been a surreal experience and absolute honor." After coming in a close second by .01 seconds in the hundred yard butterfly the previous day, Gill felt that "there was even more drive to win, especially knowing that it would be my last competitive backstroke swim of my career."

Last year, Gill attended

NCAAs in Texas along with senior Julia Pielock, both of whom swimming individual events. This year, traveling to Indianapolis, the two were joined by other members of their respective teams. Joining from the Men's team were juniors Kirk Czelewicz, Patrick McGinnins, sophomores Drew André and Loring Bowen and freshman Michael Fothergill. In addition were members of the Women's team, Sam Pierce '16, Rachel Wilson '16, Ivy Durepo '17 and Skye Marigold '17. Although exhausting to compete in both individual and team relay events this year, Gill was happy to be able to "have the memories of competing with the guys. Having us all become All-Americans is something I will never forget." Both teams finished strongly with the men placing 12th overall and the women 16th.

As a senior, this was Gill's last competitive swimming event as a Camel: "at the end of the last

session of the meet, it was pretty hard to walk away from the pool and head to the locker room, knowing that I'd never be back, but I'm glad to say I left it all in the pool with nothing left to prove," shares Gill. Not only was nothing left to prove in the water, but great strides were made in proving the success of Conn's swim program. With a national title, Gill sees their success at this year's championships as a "solid start." Able to break 20 of 22 school records this season in addition to four conference records at NESCACS this past February, Gill remarked "that our program is on our way to the top of the NESCAC and even the nation."

Although his hard work and dedication to the sport and Conn's program can be seen as

*"I'm glad to say I left it all in the pool with nothing left to prove"*



COURTESY PHOTOS

## NESCAC POWER RANKINGS

Compiled by THE COLLEGE VOICE

This is the first installment of the spring NESCAC Power Ranking. The Power Ranking will be posted weekly and will rank the eleven NESCAC schools based on men's and women's hockey, men's and women's basketball and men's and women's swimming and diving.

SCHOOL	MEN'S TENNIS	WOMEN'S TENNIS	MEN'S LACROSSE	WOMEN'S LACROSSE	AVG
CONN COLL	10	N/A	5	10	8.3
HAMILTON	11	8	1	8	7
BATES	5	1	9	5	5
COLBY	5	8	7	5	6.25
WESLEYAN	5	5	1	11	5.5
TRINITY	5	5	9	2	5.25
TUFTS	9	5	1	7	5.5
BOWDOIN	1	1	3	8	3.25
MIDDLEBURY	1	3	7	2	3.25
WILLIAMS	1	3	4	4	3.0
AMHERST	1	N/A	5	1	2.3

The poll was devised as follows: Sports Editor Luca Powell ranked all NESCAC schools in each sport. These rankings were based on NESCAC standings as well as quality wins and influential losses to NESCAC opponents. These scores were plugged into an impossibly complex algorithm to composite an overall ranking for each school.

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

**Women's Lacrosse:**

Conn 11 - 4 Springfield  
Conn 9 - 11 Tufts

**Men's Lacrosse:**

Conn 9 - 2 UMass Dartmouth  
Conn 13 - 21 Tufts

**Men's Tennis:**

Conn 6 - 3 Coast Guard  
Conn 2-6 Wesleyan

**Women's Tennis:**

Conn 1 - 8 Methodist

## SO YOU DON'T MISS IT

**Men's Lacrosse:**

vs Trinity  
4/2 4:00 PM  
vs Bowdoin  
4/5 1:00 PM

**Women's Lacrosse:**

@ Trinity  
4/2 7:00 PM  
@ Bowdoin  
4/5 12:00 PM

**Women's Tennis:**

vs Mount Holyoke  
4/5 10:30 AM  
vs Smith  
4/5 3:00 PM

**Men's Tennis:**

vs Trinity  
4/2 3:30 PM  
vs Bowdoin  
4/6 10:00 AM



# Ricky Rozay Drops New Record

*Chickens Everywhere Panic*



MATTEO MOBILIO  
ARTS EDITOR

It's been a tough couple of years for the Teflon Don, to say the least. In January of 2013, Rick Ross was the victim of a drive-by shooting, although he was not seriously injured. A few months later, he lost a lucrative sponsorship from Reebok after some of his lyrics in rapper Rocko's song "U.O.E.N.O." described an encounter that could only be characterized as date rape. While Rick Ross certainly has tried to sweep the latter incident under the carpet, He puts the drive-by shooting at center-stage for his new album, Mastermind. While the shooting does not really inform the overall tone or flow of the album, an audio recording of a 911 phone call from the scene titled "Shots Fired" is featured early on, perhaps in an effort to Ross's confirm authenticity as a gangster. The message seems to be that this is a man who was gunned down and has come back for revenge, not with bullets, but with raps.

But while Kanye West's "Through the Wire" gave meaningful insight into how an almost fatal car crash affected West's outlook on his music and his life, we soon forget that Rick Ross was ever supposed to be an underdog because he refuses to say anything significant about the event. Where as Kanye rapped: "Just imagine how my girl feel / On the plane, scared as hell that her guy look like Emmett Till," Ross can only muster: "False floors for firearms is how you should ride / Tried to murder me while in mine so that's how I survived." His boisterous attitude floods the album throughout its entirety, delivering what we've come to expect from a Rick Ross album. At a time when artists like Kendrick Lamar, Drake and Kanye West are sincerely exploring deeper emotions, Rick Ross remains impenetrable. With innumerable references to his cars, women, cocaine and gold chains, the only emotion Ross is caught expressing is the emotion (or sin) of pride. Ross probably spends a few too many moments reveling in his success and his clearly '90s inspired gangster affectation is difficult for the listener to indulge in for all of the EP's nineteen songs; still Ross has done an exceptional job recruiting some great guest performances, as well as picking some beautiful beats.

Those guest performances include Jay-Z, Lil' Wayne, Kanye West, Meek Mill, Big Sean, and French Montana, who shine brightly, sometimes even more so than Ross. The album's pinnacle, "Sanctified" (produced by DJ Mustard and Kanye West), combines Betty Wright's soulful vocals with ghostly synths that make the song a sure-fire radio hit. Kanye's verse is entertainingly self-deprecatory: "God sent me a message, said I'm too aggressive / Really!? Me!? Too aggressive!?" On "The Devil is a Lie," Jay-Z, who has

spent his career honing his braggadocio, lays down a superb boast: "You seen what I did to the stop and frisk / Brooklyn on the Barney's like we own the bitch / Give the money to the hood, now we all win." Jay's presence brings out the best in Ross who delivers some amusing lyrics: "Club Armani where the cash is / Dubai I can do it like a sheikh / Top floor nigga, Burj Khalifa!" but stays in his lane for the most part, filling out verses with references to his ownership of Wingstop Restaurants: "Wingstop owner / lemon pepper aroma / Young black nigga, barely got a diploma," or a personal favorite, "Came from the hood / ain't nothing changed / Still lemon pepper on my mother-fucking waaaangs." Although Ross's features are usually stronger than him in lyrical style and content, they keep the album moving and offer the variety necessary to keep things interesting.

Ross does step away from the triumphant horns and drum crashes of '90s era hip-hop to briefly explore his more melancholic side. Lil' Wayne's support on the "Thug Cry," an eerie, bass-heavy track, showcases some of Lil Wayne's best work in quite a long time. On "In Vein," the Weeknd slows things down even further with his signature gloomy and carnal vocals. Delivering the hook and a verse, the Weeknd's presence pervades over the entire track. When Ross finally shows up to do his part, the result is surprisingly satisfying. The bravado is undimmed but his growling voice contrasts nicely with the Weeknd's desperation, which manifests itself through his high-pitched moans and wails.

Ross raps so much about Ross (and chicken wings for that matter) that it can be easy to turn off from the self-appointed "mastermind." But if we realize that he might not be taking himself as seriously as previously thought – we remember that this is a genuinely fun album. On his sixth album, Ross doesn't stray far from doing what he does best. His lyrics and flow have always been limited, but that doesn't mean they aren't enjoyable. No one is going to be running out to proclaim Mastermind a classic or that Rozay is changing the face of hip-hop; that doesn't seem to be his aim anyway. The album benefits greatly from guest artists who spice things up and is jam-packed with well-picked music from the likes of DJ Mustard, J.U.S.T.I.C.E. League, the Weeknd, and Mike Dean. Mastermind meets its modest goal; "Sanctified" is the hit that we'll learn all the words to (really just Kanye's verse) and the rest of the album will let us live out our thug ambitions vicariously – at least for a few weeks. Just make sure that when the interviewer for your summer internship asks how you work with others, you don't respond: "Catch a nigga slipping / put a bullet in his temple / Homie, it's the same rules, money talks, simple." •



PHOTO COURTESY OF CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

## Cleaning Between the Lines: LeWitt's *Irregular Towers*

PAIGE MILLER  
COLUMNIST

Sol LeWitt (1928-2007) was an American Conceptualist and Minimalist painter and sculptor from nearby Hartford, Connecticut.

In the early 1950s, LeWitt attended the School of Visual Arts and pursued side work as a graphic designer for the architect I.M. Pei and Seventeen magazine. In 1960, he took a job at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City as a receptionist and clerk, surrounding himself with works by Mark Rothko, Le Corbusier and Edward Steichen. These influences allowed LeWitt to develop his artistic style, which is geometric, saturated with color and systematically formulated.

In addition to drawing and painting, LeWitt began exploring three-dimensional work. His first sculptures, or as he liked

to call them, "structures," were primarily wooden, closed forms. In the mid 1960s, LeWitt decided to take a drastically new approach to his three-dimensional work by revealing the structure of forms, and the square became an iconic shape for his "building block" fascination. This shift led LeWitt to experiment with stacked cinder blocks as a way to create monumental "structures," and much of his work from the late 1980s and early 1990s reflects this trend.

In 1997, LeWitt created Irregular Tower (Horizontal Bricks #2), which was installed at Connecticut College just south of Freeman House during the same year.

According to the Sculpture and Decorative Arts Conservation Services LLC report in 2009, the piece is listed with moderately high conservation priority. Its current condition, however, is listed as "poor." On the surface, the sculpture has several orange and black stains due to moisture accumulation, salt deposits and lichen growth. Chunks from lower part of the piece are missing, most likely a result of weed-whacking or mowing damage.

The Sculpture and Decorative Arts Conservation Services LLC report recommends a "wash once per year with a non-ionic detergent. When mowing, keep at least one foot away from the sculpture."

In fact, the report divulged, "The artist's intent should be clarified in order to determine whether or not weathering, staining, and biogrowth were desired and appropriate. After getting in touch with LeWitt's assistant, Susanna Singer, she expressed that "Mr. LeWitt would not have wanted the object to become stained or covered with bio-flora. He preferred clean lines and was not interested in having the piece revert to nature." •

*In the mid 1960s, LeWitt decided to take a drastically new approach to his three-dimensional work by revealing the structure of forms, and the square became an iconic shape for his 'building block' fascination.*



## NOW IN THE LYMAN ALLYN

**SUB-  
URBAN  
ISM**  
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# #NotSurprised

## Kimye Climbs the Social Ladder

CALI ZIMMERMAN  
STAFF WRITER

If you have not heard, Kim Kardashian and Kanye West were on the cover of *Vogue*. For all those who disapprove of Anna Wintour's decision, take a step back to realize you are a mouse falling right into a 14-karat gold, gourmet cheese trap that Wintour meticulously designed. There was no question that this cover would be met with major backlash. Kim is a constant target in the media for her existence alone, and Kanye continues to question his existence on Earth. Our existence is built around consuming all that Kim and Kanye are. We yearn for facts about them even though we hate them. Society is not confined to just "hatewatching" certain T.V. shows and movies

(which is analogous to how we binge watch shows as well), but to how we observe celebrities. Kim and Kanye are at the zenith of 'hatewatching'.

A recent *New Yorker* article discussed how Matthew McConaughey has finally found his footing as a reputable actor, calling this his "McConaissance." Rachel Syme discussed McConaughey's career trajectory, and how he is in the pinnacle of success and recognition. What makes Kimye and McConaughey homogenous is the way in which they publicize themselves. McConaughey has worked to undermine his romantic comedy image to become an elite dramatist. He is looked at for his body in a completely different way (due to the drastic nature he went about looking the part in *Dallas Buyers Club*). He

is still considered sexy, just not sexualized.

Kim and Kanye have also perfectly maneuvered themselves to become publicity gold. While their approach is the opposite of McConaughey's, their use of

we are talking about them.

In an attempt to be current in the media, Anna Wintour has capitalized on Kimye. By using the hashtag #TheWorldsMostTalkedAboutCouple, *Vogue* is asking for subscribers to become

a cliché. Both McConaughey and *Vogue* are known for being typecast: McConaughey for his buffness and *Vogue* for its high art content. By subverting their images, both are now constantly in the media.

The controversy with having Kim and Kanye on the cover of *Vogue* will follow the magazine for issues to come, because people will be wondering what *Vogue's* next move will be. Will the magazine continue on the trail of pop culture? Will Annie Liebowitz use filters on Instagram to edit her photos? Regardless, McConaughey, *Vogue*, and Kimye are all cultural icons now that we will continue to exasperate over until there is something else to #hatewatch.

*Will the magazine continue on the trail of pop culture? Will Annie Liebowitz use filters on Instagram to edit her photos?*

sexuality and excess glamour involved. Though the magazine makes them a marketable dream. Every outlandish act Kim and Kanye pull is set to cause a stir in the tabloids. For better or worse, the importance of not becoming

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## Swaying in Smocks

*Contemplations on the Trisha Brown Dance Company*

EMILIE STOLL  
CONTRIBUTOR

Trisha Brown Dance Company comes with a complimentary combination of performance versatility. Trisha's show in Palmer this weekend didn't only leave me inspired after it ended, but it drew me in during. What stood out to me was the dancers' constant play with internal and external focus as well as the attention to points of initiation in their bodies.

Within the movement, there were moments where the dancers focus as well as body language was more introverted and grounded into the floor during repetitive, slower movement in unisons. The energy between each dancer was still radiant in the almost breath-like seamlessness between each transition and ability to travel across the stage. In other moments, the dancers, without force, had genuine moments of eye contact. As a viewer, this gave me a comforting feeling of strong partnership and community. It was nice to see the performers not just look at each other but really see each other and even occasionally smile; it was evident that they were at ease in their motions.

Trisha's style enables her dancers to play with using initiation as the central cause of movement. Each dancer had such

clear points of initiation in their bodies in the way they would bend in their joints or balance with a specific part of their body. Men would lift the women through hip connection or foot to torso connection; ways of lifting that I had never thought of but were executed seamlessly. I appreciated the articulation in the shapes the dancers made and the clarity of their moments whether they were being linear or more round and three-dimensional.

I especially loved the final piece of the show, entitled, "I am going to toss my arms-if you catch them they're yours." All nine dancers were wearing what looked like big white smocks, which they gradually took off one by one throughout the work. On stage right were big fans blowing throughout the entire piece, which gave the piece a nice airy quality and weightlessness. It was visually striking to see the smocks blow off stage when the dancers would take them off revealing brightly colored leotards for the women and briefs for the men. I grew curious as to what it must be like to dance in front of such winds.

The company comes with an admirable sense of strength, cohesiveness, attention to detail, and authenticity. It is apparent that they love what they do, which only makes me love what I watch.



## DINING

*Washington St. Cafe**Local coffeehouse, intercontinental flavor*CHIARA CAFIERO  
ARTS EDITOR

We arrived at Washington Street Coffee House in downtown New London around 6:30 p.m. on a rainy Saturday evening. My roommates and I frequent Washington Street for Sunday breakfasts but had never been for dinner. It's BYOB and meals are inexpensive, usually between \$5 and \$10. We'd seen the signs for \$2 Taco Night on Fridays and Saturdays, so we decided to give it a try.

Although we weren't there on a night with a performance, the café often features live music on weekends. The place has a relaxed feel, with paper lanterns hanging from the ceiling and work by local artists covering the walls. There's a "free" box by the door to take or leave miscellaneous items (this time it was filled with ties). The place has a young vibe, but customers of all ages enjoy Washington Street, from families with little kids to a group of older regulars who gather to read the newspaper together.

Washington Street's cuisine manages to combine Mexican with Asian-fusion with classic

American, which makes for an eclectic menu that incorporates quality ingredients like prosciutto, as well as home-made sauces.

We brought a bottle of red wine, which we drank from paper cups. I ordered the chicken tacos with goat cheese, cabbage, red onion, and house-made jalapeno hot sauce. My roommates ordered the same tacos, the Thai green curry with bok choy and the sesame ginger chicken wrap.

I love tacos, and these did not disappoint. The jalapeno hot sauce was fresh

*Mexican with Asian-  
Fusion with classic  
American makes for an  
eclectic menu*

and zesty with just a little kick—a surprising complement to the tanginess of the goat cheese. We ran into Spencer Francus '14, who also had the chicken tacos, and commented that said goat cheese was "a revelation."

Liz Spackman '14, said that her Thai curry didn't taste especially like curry, but it was more like rice and steamed vegetables in a broth. Although she might not order that dish again, Spackman remains a huge fan of Washington Street. She loves the banh mi (pork belly) sandwich, which she says "melts in your mouth." She also

recommends the meatloaf sandwich, which is "probably overlooked because a lot of people have bad associations with meatloaf or think it's boring. But they do it really well and it's perfect if you're looking for some down-home goodness. They make their own ketchup, too."

While we enjoyed our meals, we agreed that nothing compares to their breakfast. We recommend the oatmeal with apples and cinnamon, the huevos rancheros, and the breakfast sandwiches (which come on homemade English muffins). Their pastries are also excellent, and their coffee is so strong that my roommates jokingly refer to it as "jet fuel."

Any time of day, Washington Street Coffee House is a great spot for students and locals alike. The natural light from its huge windows and its attractive but minimal décor make it a great place to study. It's also a unique place to bring visiting friends if you want to impress them with great food and a cool scene. We can't say enough good things about Washington Street! •