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### College Voice Vol. LV No. 11 [May 13, 2021]

Connecticut College

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# THE COLLEGE VOICE

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER, SINCE 1977

## Watson Fellowship

MORGAN MACCIONE  
STAFF WRITER

The Thomas J. Watson Fellowship is a prestigious year-long grant awarded to graduating seniors from 41 institutions, including Connecticut College.

The purpose of the Watson Fellowship is for recent graduates to pursue an independent project on a global scale. Watson Fellows choose what they want to study and where they want to go, though they must remain outside of the United States for the whole year of their Fellowship. The Watson Foundation prides itself on investing in leaders, allowing them to “synthesize ideas, organic to your own interests, on a world scale.” Conn’s Tashayla Borden ‘21 and Jack Rider-McGovern ‘21 are both recipients of the Watson and have very exciting plans for the next year.

I reached out to Borden, an Africana Studies and Psychology double major, and Rider-McGovern, a Slavic Studies major and CISLA scholar, about their Watson Fellowships.

### Shay Borden

**When did you first learn about the Watson Fellowship, and what was appealing to you about it?**

It was after a class I had with Professor Derek Turner [of the Philosophy department], I think. We were on the top floor of Blaustein and we were chatting, then Professor Hubert Cook [of the English department] comes out. The three of us are talking and it was Professor Cook who brought up the Watson. I took it as a joke at first honestly, as one of those things the professors say that you don’t think applies to you. After, I actually ended up following up and I spoke with Professor Turner about project ideas, graduate programs, and the Watson for two hours in his office. It was a time.

**What is your project about?**

My project is looking at how Black women use art as a form of self-preservation, an act of social resistance in their respective countries. I’m looking within the diaspora and on the continent. I am working with cabarets, art galleries, media organization, and more. All of which have a focus on Black women across sexuality, religion, location, and artistic mediums.

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Article continued on page 4.

## Senior Dance Capstones Set a Promising Precedent

CATJA CRISTENSEN  
STAFF WRITER

Nine senior dance majors celebrated the culmination of their embodied research in a weekend of Capstone concerts on Apr. 17 and 18. The Dune hosted “PRECEDENT-ED. (our connection is unstable),” a compilation of live performances and dance films choreographed by seniors (Sydney Bryan ‘21, Darriana Greer ‘21, Journee Hardaway ‘21, Elisa Kennedy, ‘21 Riley Myhaver ‘21, Lindsey Perlman ‘21, Mara Senecal-Albrecht, ‘21 Ayana Sequira ‘21, and Ryley Young ‘21), department faculty members, and guest choreographers (Professors Shakia Barron, Shani Collins, and Shawn Hove, and guest artist Annie Rigney). The shows were livestreamed on Zoom to an audience of about 130 people each night, and an in-person audience included students, faculty, and family members who were vaccinated or tested negative for COVID-19 within 72 hours before arrival. Audiences were taken on a journey exploring joyful community, individual expression within artistic codification, nostalgic happiness, ancestral memory, and more. A tremendous success and exciting pair of evenings, these concerts developed from months of creative labor, resilience, and flexibility in the face of adversity.

The seniors all took a semester-long capstone course in which they generated ideas and choreography while also focusing on social media outreach and publicity, designing posters, outlining budgets, and printing programs. At the start, they were given the choice to make a live piece or



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Article continued on page 10.

## IN THIS ISSUE

NEWS

3

**The Big (Big) Announcement**  
*Amanda Sanders*

5

**Business Major Announcement**  
*Abigail Acheson*

OPS

8

**Advice to NFL Teams**  
*Scott Robbins*

SPORTS

11-13

**Senior Editorials**  
*Elizabeth Berry, and Kelly Wallace*

## Letter From the Editor

AMANDA SANDERS  
MANAGING EDITOR

This has been a year like no other for students at Connecticut College and for the staff of *The College Voice*. As we planned for the '20-'21 school year, the questions we kept repeating and looked for answers to were: "how would we run a newspaper with no physical paper? How would we run meetings without the beloved Alice Johnson room? How would we create a paper that remote students would hopefully find just as interesting as students on campus, and would want to be a part of? How could we make *The College Voice* succeed in a year where nothing was like it had ever been before.

After doing some reflection these past few weeks, I am proud of the hard work that our writers and editors have put in over the last year. *The College Voice* went the distance. Reporting in a time as difficult as this one, where student burnout is more intense than ever, people are placed into isolation with little notice, and people were required to be more adaptable than in years past, requires not only dedication and skill, but also a desire to add a sense of normalcy to Connecticut College. This year we showed the college that we would not back down from such a challenge. We put out some of our best work and told the stories that students deserved to hear, ranging from from what it was like to test positive at Conn, to how athletes remained able to compete with other institutions, to efforts at the College to remain true to our commitment to sustainability while relying on single-use plastics.

There is still more in this issue that we're excited to report on. Catja Christensen '23 tells us about the triumphs of the dance department Capstones on the Dune and the new ways that they've been able to present their talent. If you've missed our section on "Camels Abroad," Morgan Maccione '21 interviews Tashayla "Shay" Borden '21 and Jack Rider-McGovern '21 about their Watson Fellowships and the plans that they have for the upcoming year as they set forth on their travels. Finally, read testimonials from our seniors, Elizabeth Berry '21, Jozette Moses '21, and Kelly Wallace '21 about their time at Conn and their work with *The College Voice*.

*The College Voice* is looking towards its future. We're looking into the possibility of a podcast that would strengthen our reporting in ways that are exciting and bring us into a new age. Our goal of growing bigger stays the same; no matter who you are it isn't too late to join our team. I'm looking forward to seeing what the 2021-2022 school year is going to look like as we return in the fall, fully vaccinated and with more knowledge about how to exist as an institution in a pandemic.

While we're looking at the future, we want to bring back those elements of our recent past, "the old normal." I am hoping to assemble our team of editors in the Alice Johnson room and bring back those Sunday nights beloved by our staff where students can share article ideas and campus news and have it written down on our whiteboard in blue and green marker. We want to have students flipping through our paper in Coffee Grounds again. I'm eager to see our staff back in The Voice office in Cro as we edit together. I'm looking forward to being a community again, as well as a student paper.

As Editor-in-Chief next year, I can't wait to see what this upcoming year holds for us. I'm excited to bring you, the Connecticut College student body, on that journey with us. Stay tuned.

## 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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JOZETTE MOSES '21  
*Editor-in-Chief*

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## Connecticut College's "Big (Big) Announcement"

AMANDA SANDERS  
MANAGING EDITOR

During the last few weeks, Connecticut College students have been whispering to each other about the email sent out by the Office of Communications on April 19. "Join President Bergeron for a BIG (BIG!) College announcement" the email blast read in colorful letters. The email promised food trucks, music by new Conn bands Prose and Conns, and the Carly Family Band, and that this would be "THE BIGGEST ANNOUNCEMENT IN COLLEGE HISTORY!" What could be bigger than going co-ed, students wondered. Guesses on what the big (big!) announcement varied among *The College Voice* staff from another Plex renovation, to a change in mascot, to even going back to an all women's college.

The announcement was originally scheduled for Wednesday, April 21 at 4:30 pm. However, on April 20, after former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was found guilty for the murder of George Floyd, the College sent another email out to the College community and rescheduled their announcement for the following Wednesday, April 28. Another email soon followed from President Bergeron, acknowledging the general feelings of students were feeling and reminding them of resources available on campus.

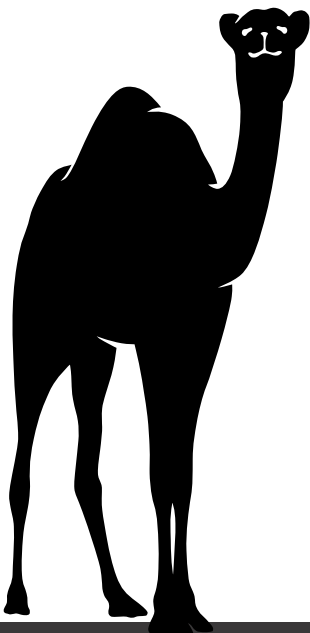
On that rescheduled Wednesday, after days of anticipation, herds of masked Camels flocked to Tempel Green. Dozens waited in line for food trucks and others sprawled out on the green in clumps, catching free t-shirts, enjoying their food, and posing for photos with the school's mascot, Humphrey the Camel. Drones flew overhead to catch the big announcement for a video that will be released at a later date.

At 4:30 pm, President Katherine Bergeron and Board of Trustees Chair Defred (Fritz) G. Folts '82 and former Chair Pamela D. Zilly '75 walked out onto the Dune's stage. After some brief words from Folts, President Bergeron took the microphone to announce the

largest philanthropic donation in the College's 110-year history. Rob '88 and Karen P'20 Hale had gifted \$30 million dollars to the College, on top of their previous donation in 2015 of \$20 million dollars, totalling \$50 million in athletics, financial aid, campus life, and the Career Center (now named after the Hale family).

The newest gift will be split three ways, stated President Bergeron, with the money going to areas that were most affected by the coronavirus pandemic. \$10 million will be going to financial aid, \$10 million will be going to athletics, and \$10 million is being invested in improvements to the campus infrastructure. This donation is part of the giving campaign launched by Connecticut College in 2017, which has now raised over \$170 million dollars, given by almost 12,000 donors in only the last four years. After the announcement, the bands began to play music for the crowds as students celebrated, visited the food trucks and milled about, conversing with their friends.

While the Hales were not able to be present at the big (big!) announcement, they recorded a video to play for the College students, faculty, and staff. "Being part of the Conn College family means family, in the truest sense. It means caring for others. It means growing," Robert Hale stated. "Rob and I have lived the impact of this college. We want it to continue to change the lives of others," added Karen Hale. While at Conn, Robert Hale was a history major and on the College's lacrosse team. He is currently the president and CEO of Granite Telecommunications, based in Quincy, Massachusetts. Granite Telecommunications is one of the largest privately held telecommunications companies in North America. His son Trevor Hale graduated from Connecticut College in 2020 and studied studio art, elementary education, and human development. On the school's website is a link to a form where students can thank the Hales for their generous gift. •



### Blue Camel Cafe

The Blue Camel Café offers a variety of specialty coffees, teas, snacks and baked goods.

Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

First floor, Charles E. Shain Library



@BlueCamelCafe



## Watson Fellowship (Cont'd)

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*Article continued from front page.*

### Which countries do you plan to visit as a part of your research?

I am visiting Canada, Jamaica, UK, South Africa, and Burkina Faso.

### What was the application process like?

I did way too much and actually started planning a year before. I didn't actually make something tangible until after COVID-19 was first formally taking over as a pandemic the week of March 10. I had to juggle 2 internships and LSAT studies, but I took time to email organizations in the middle of the summer. I told both Professor Cook and Professor Turner that I sent over 50 emails in a month. I also worked on personal statement and project statement drafts around the first few months of school. It was kind of hard because the project statement was basically dependent on which organizations emailed me for what availability and it was constantly changing for months.

### How did you come up with your project idea? (any inspirations, experiences, classes, people, etc.)?

The first thing I wanted to do was just have a project about food so I can travel and eat. I was told that I should follow some of my passions such as my Black feminist, panAfrican activist work. I was hesitant because I didn't want to be held in a box that others viewed me in and I wanted to push myself past what I was used to doing. I finally looked at my experiences and more radical ideas when I finally realized focusing on art, beauty, and Black women would be a project I was passionate about, and a project I could learn more about outside of my comfort zone.

### What are you most excited about with regards to the Watson?

I'm really nervous and excited to build global connections. The idea of making communities in spaces that I would thrive in get me doe-eyed all over again.

#### **Jack Rider-McGovern**

### When did you first learn about the Watson Fellowship, and what was appealing to you about it?

I first learned about the Watson last year in a Walter Commons Newsletter. I had never heard about the Fellowship before, but when I saw the description of the program, I thought it sounded too good to be true. I love traveling and learning about new cultures, so the opportunity to do that as part of a year-long fellowship was kind of a dream. The flexibility of the Fellowship is what initially fascinated me because it was so different from other fellowships with a rigid program.

### What is your project about?

My project is focused on community efforts to preserve and promote the use of marginalized languages.

### Which countries do you plan to visit as a part of your research?

Because it's such a flexible fellowship, I can change my itinerary as needed. My current plan is to travel to Peru, Bolivia, Morocco, the Netherlands, Ukraine, Tatarstan, Russia; Gujarat, India, and Okinawa, Japan

### What was the application process like?

The application process can be pretty challenging. Since I'm so passionate about my project, I found it hard to keep myself to the word limit and still write a paper that expressed the full scope of my project and what led to me this specific project

### How did you come up with your project idea? (any inspirations, experiences, classes, people, etc.)?

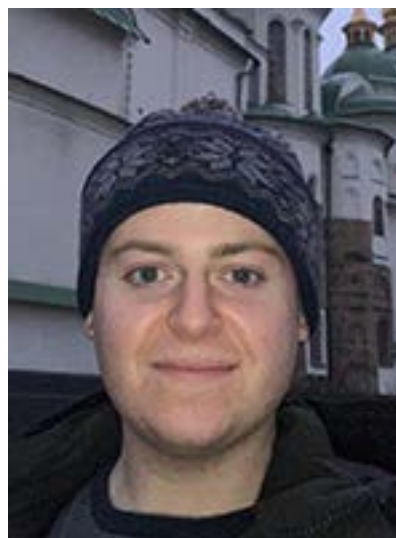
I've been interested in languages since high school, but I had only taken the colonial languages that are commonly taught in schools in America — French, Spanish, Portuguese, etc. But in my junior year of high school I traveled to Ireland and I tried to learn the Irish language beforehand for fun. The language is spoken daily by just a very small portion of the population, having been largely replaced by English. My experience speaking a marginalized language and learning about efforts to revitalize the language got me interested in similar movements to preserve and promote other marginalized languages across the world. This passion led me to starting the Structured Independent Language Study (SILS) Program with Professor Laura Little [of] Slavic Studies. In the SILS program, we provide opportunities for students to study languages outside of the formal curriculum in an effort to decolonize language study.

### What are you most excited about with regards to the Watson?

I am most excited to use my current languages to learn new ones and have the incredible opportunity to talk with people whose voices are not often heard on a global platform. There's something really special about being able to talk to someone in their native language.

### Anything else you would like to share?

I think anyone who has a strong or unique passion should apply for this fellowship. Even if I hadn't won the fellowship, I think the application process still would have been worth it for me because it forced me to organize my interests and ideas into a concrete plan and now I feel like I have much more direction in terms of what I might want to pursue after the fellowship year is done. I look forward to seeing what Shay and Jack will accomplish over the next year! •



Jack Rider-McGovern



Shay Borden

## The Quest for Voting Numbers and Shared Governance

SAMIRAH JAIGIRDAR  
CONTRIBUTOR

The past few weeks have been jam-packed with Student Government Association (SGA) elections and campaigns. Last year, there were a record number of students running for various positions. While the number of candidates this year were significantly less, I expected the voting numbers to parallel last year's and hoped we would far surpass it. The number of ballots cast this year are approximately equal to the number last year. Unfortunately, when the voters for each election primarily consist of each candidate's friends and amount to less than 65% of each class year, it is hard for SGA to convince the administration and the Board of Trustees that shared governance is important for us.

The Class Council Elections this year were fairly competitive. This situation made voter turnout even more critical than it normally is but the number of ballots cast were less than ideal. There were at least two candidates running for most positions. Many elections were especially close, differing only by a few votes. For instance, both the 2022 President Election and the 2024 Honor Council Election were extremely close. Every vote mattered for those races. A larger voter turnout could have made those races more definitive.

	AY 2020-21	AY 2021-22
Class of 2022	275	275
Class of 2023	270	211
Class of 2024	200	223

Summary of Total Voter Turnouts\*:

\*As we do not have the total number of eligible voters for AY 2020-21, this table contains the total number of ballots cast instead of the percentage. Both years, we were below the 70% mark.

Reflecting on last year's SGA elections, I realized how important voting numbers can be at a small liberal arts school like Connecticut College. Some elections can be decided by a mere margin of five votes. Hence, I wanted to increase voter turnout during my time as the SGA Chief of Communications. One of the most important aspects of my role is to ensure that elections run smoothly and fairly. My job involves setting up elections, asking for nominations, and working closely with the Office of Student Engagement to ensure that there are no malfunctions when voting opens. To ensure fairness, during the SGA Executive Board Elections 2021-22, I had my administrative access to elections revoked as I was running for a position. But I was responsible for setting up and running the SGA Class Council elections for the upcoming academic year.

When voting opened on April 22 and I saw low ballot numbers, with advice from both the current SGA President (Daniel Varela '22) and Vice-President (Kayla Glemaud '21), I designed an Instagram giveaway campaign. In this initiative, students who voted and posted about voting on their Instagrams could be chosen for a \$5 dollar voucher for the Coffee Closet. Unfortunately, only one person availed this option and ballot numbers merely increased by approximately 60 ballots each class year. On the last day of elec-

tions, the SGA President and the current Class of 2024 Class Council offered free food at their upcoming class event in exchange for a minimum 40% voter turnout. In spite of what I unofficially dubbed as "The Grand Bribing Scheme," overall voter turnout for the Class Council Elections disappointed me.

Looking at the voting numbers, I have failed to keep my campaign promise of getting a voter turnout of at least 80% for each class year. I do not know what else I could have done on a personal level to engage more student voters. I believe the primary reason I failed was the overall waning of interest in the idea of shared governance. At a time when student burnout is at an all time high and our concerns are going largely unheard, I understand why many Camels are not keen on this elusive concept of shared governance. However, the pandemic has shown that there are significant limits on what shared governance can achieve when one is a student. While we are the largest stakeholders here, a tuition-driven institute like Conn is primarily concerned with the bottom line. Hence, despite Conn being a tight-knit community, many people feel their vote won't make a difference. Why? Because a singular SGA Executive Board or Class Council cannot change the institutional barriers that we face daily and everyone knows that.

But that doesn't mean shared governance is completely pointless.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, shared governance took a backseat this year. As the incoming SGA President, I intend to change that as we try to have a more "normal" 2021-2022 academic year. I will bring back the Committee on Shared Governance and reinstate monthly meetings between President Bergeron, the SGA President, and Vice-President. Most importantly, I plan on using SGA as Conn's primary body of accountability. This will manifest itself in various ways. From passing resolutions that demand the REAL office reassess their practices to utilizing the Board of Trustees as a means to keep senior administrators accountable, SGA will strive to ensure that at the very least, the administration has a plan to address our concerns.

To get a headstart, I have a meeting with President Bergeron on May 5 to ensure she knows SGA expects shared governance to be a priority for next year. While I think I get along well with the administration, they know my priorities and loyalties lie with my fellow students. Hence, my focus for next year is amplifying the student voice as we begin to veer towards normal and decide for ourselves how we can approach shared governance. •

## Nostalgia, Karol G and Feeling Seen

/DEAN JAIR ANDRADE  
CONTRIBUTOR

Beleaguered by a pandemic for over a year ought to remind us of one thing: it's a lie to say life is too short; if anything, it's too long. Especially this past year, there have been too many crises, heartbreaks, breakdowns, blunders, restarts, deaths, and births. Occasionally, however, there are moments of ecstasy. For me recently, those moments have been those in which I feel Seen, and in a year of seclusion, that bliss hits a little different.

Late in March, preeminent *reggaetoneira* Karol G released KG0516, her third studio album, sprinkled with several #tbt moments, the most surprising being “LEYENDAS.” This tribute to la vieja escuela merges Ivy Queen, Nicky Jam, Zion, Alberto Stylee, and Wisin & Yandel, all mainstays of reggaetón's ascension to world domination, singing some of each other's greatest hits. A six-minute closer that glides from one classic to another like a DJ's setlist at a quinceañera, “LEYENDAS” is not only dedicated to the legends it features but also to an entire Latine generation that can't imagine popular music without syrupy melodies over dembow rhythms.

In this track, Karol is tapping into a trend that has been brewing in the last few years, in which reggaetón of yesteryear is continuously interpolated and reworked by young artists. If you can quickly recall Wisin's iconic bars in “Mayor Que Yo,” or if you can perfectly sing the hook of Angel & Khriz's “Ven Bailalo” without having heard the song in a decade, or if you watched a bootleg copy of *Talento de Barrio* with your dad, or if you heard your Guayaquilean aunt ponder the definition of *mahón* after having heard it when “Pegao” was released, then this revival moment is for you. Like so many poor Latines who grew up during an era in which reggaetón was still marginal in the pop sphere to acts like RBD and Juanes, songs like “LEYENDAS” take you way back.

It takes me back to hearing my father singing “Lo Que Pasó, Pasó” upon its release; to hearing an older cousin reveal that she had learned that Don Omar owned at least three phones; to pondering with my sister what Wisin, Yandel, and Yankee looked like without their opaque sunglasses; to blowing on N64 cartridges at a cousin's apartment while “Caile” blared from the courtyard below; to eavesdropping my mother's aunts recounting the latest episodes of *Cobras & Lagartos* and *El Cuerpo del Deseo*. Like Twitter was saying a few months ago: you just had to be there.

Not only was I there, but much from within that eclectic milieu became embedded in my identity. Inhabiting an institution like Connecticut College, however, has often made me feel like that entire memory bank is worth little. Sometimes one finds themselves feeling like Toto in Manuel Puig's *La Traición de Rita Hayworth*: inhabiting a space that both nourishes and degrades. Conn, after all, fashions itself as a rigorous institution, so one is bound to feel less than in the path to edification, but that experience is thornier for minority students.

Besides walking next to a tall, blond man while touring campus, the first moment of profound inferiority arrived at my first class: USA Plays/American Drama. Whatever poise my trying-to-be-cute outfit conferred me was stripped when we were told to introduce ourselves by naming the most recent play we saw and one that had moved us. As my turn approached, every student—nearly all white and pretty—announced works by obscure playwrights. For my family and I, never having attended a play or even read one, the closest thing we knew about theater was *High School Musical*. When my turn arrived to introduce myself, I had to confess that I was the only one in the room without any knowledge of the subject. Drenched in embarrassment, I dropped the course

immediately afterwards.

Perhaps this scene struck me particularly because I had gotten so adept at assimilating. This past weekend over dinner, a friend asked me why, given that I spent nearly half my life abroad, my accent is perfectly New England. Growing up, I explained to her, at predominantly white schools, one quickly learns that possessing an accent thick enough to knock on, that dressing like one is from *that* part of town, and that not getting the right jokes wasn't how one amassed cultural capital, escaped ESL classes, or could be the administration's token immigrant.

This affinity for assimilation must've stuck with me through my time at Conn because, for example, the only time I entered Unity House or the LGBTQIA Center were during transfer orientation and I never attended a meeting for Las Voces Unidas or QTPOC. The reasons for why I never attached myself with Conn's BIPOC population—and, particularly, its queer community—remain hazy to me. One succinct rationalization that I've drawn is: half the boys in the Naugatuck Valley, it seemed, wore eight-inch Chippewas and watched tractor pullings live. That, as much as any Don Omar classic, is what I'm familiar with, whereas that oh-so elusive Posse Privilege, attending private schools, growing up in a large city, or feeling queer enough feels foreign. Of course, no one ought to expect all BIPOC students to be like oneself. But can anything compare to fellow students just getting you? To be Seen like that—in my case, as a *déclassé* queer *ecuatounidense*—is rare.

It was that alienation from Conn's whiteness and its students of color that compelled me to delve deeper into what was never going to be found in Blaustein's classrooms or Tempel Green and do what many BIPOC nerds here do: create my own syllabus. The gag, then, is that it is because of Conn's estrangement that I sought Jorge Enrique Adoum's *Entre Marx y Una Mujer Desnuda*, Chelo Alonso, Mariana Rondón's *Pelo Malo*, Joaquín Torres García's inverted map, or the *Guerra del Agua*. Just as key in galvanizing my reexamination of my identity are the understated yet powerful moves of Conn's Latines: the MMUF presentation by Viridiana Villalva Salas '20; *Seven Twenty-Five*, written by Ana Reyes-Rosado '20; cumbia, merengue, and salsa bursting from the Harris kitchen; the PICA presentation by Kairis Rivera '21. More than any class reading, fellow BIPOC students are the encouragement behind embracing my outsider identity while simultaneously acknowledging my complicitness in the marginalization of this school's poor BIPOC student population.

Such reflection is long overdue, but as my time at Conn comes to a close, I remain hopeful that many of the invested BIPOC students here can make great strides in disruptions: indeed, we can't continue to be complacent with all-white, all-non-poor Winthrop Scholar cohorts, or rare BIPOC contributions to *The College Voice*, or so many of our trans and non-binary students feeling unwelcomed and unvalued, or the unspoken segregation between white and non-white students at Harris and even at seniors's receptions at President Bergeron's home. More and more Conn students of color are forging their own avenues for identification and validation, which recently has resulted in new initiatives like Akwaaba and POCA.

Ultimately, as many reasons as there are to be disillusioned here, Conn's students of color provide just as many reasons to be in awe, inspired, and perhaps even Seen—the way Karol G did for me. •

## Does Conn Really Need a Business Major?

ABIGAIL ACHESON  
CONTRIBUTOR

On April 20, Dean Jefferson Singer sent out a message alerting students that a survey would be sent out to gauge student interest in a possible Business major/minor. With an Economics major and minor, Finance minor, and the Entrepreneurship pathway all available, however, business-minded students in particular have a variety of options to pursue their interests. This begs the question: what would a Business major/minor add that any combination of these available courses of study do not? Does the proposal of a Business major/minor in addition to these many other opportunities reveal an underappreciated, underlying purpose of the Connections program?

I want to start by saying how stimulating I have personally found Connections to be. Through it I have been able to study a nexus of subjects and disciplines in a way that was only made possible by the structure of this academic program. Although I officially am majoring in History and minoring in Educational Studies, through the Power/Knowledge pathway and the analytical tools it provided me I have been able to study unequal power dynamics (on micro and macro scales), and to study the politics of my two disciplines more centrally than I would have been able to do otherwise. Connections also ensured that I will leave college with a clear sense of what exactly I studied and did over the course of my four years, giving me a sense of groundedness and purpose that I think I would feel very lost without. Given how much I have enjoyed learning through this academic program, it is with disappointment and reluctance that I explore below some of the ways the program may be negatively shaping learning at Conn.

In the beginning of the program, many criticized the conspicuous unwillingness of the college to make commitments concerning what it stands for and what it is trying to produce in the world with this academic program. In a May 2017 article for *The Voice*, Aparna Gopalan '17 argued that Connections seemed to prioritize the transfer of a set of priorities and mindsets (marketed as “skills”) to first and foremost prepare students to enter the workforce as obedient, sufficiently-credentialed workers. Gopalan goes on to say, “Instead of taking the whole institution to task by establishing a clarity about what kind of learning should happen and why, Connections once again lets the College get away with tough unanswered questions – what does Connecticut College stand for, what is it trying to produce in the world, and why does it exist at all?”

Zachary LaRock '16 expands on this criticism by pointing out how the budding Connections program seemed to deepen “the marriage of collegiate academia with career services departments that aims to facilitate a student’s absorption into the labor market.” The Connections program seems to fit into a larger, troubling trend at liberal arts institutions such as Conn: the favoring of vocational training and career services over critical, complex study that might disrupt many of the desires and aspirations students come into college wanting to pursue.

The proposal of a new Business major/minor is the latest occurrence in a deepening of this pairing of collegiate academia with career services departments. What makes this trend so concerning is that it conflicts with the college’s mission to “encourage effective citizenship,” because citizenship is much more than getting a job. From the very beginning, some of the people most heavily involved in the design and implementation of the Connections program linked it to the development of effective citizens. Despite being an academic program, faculty seemed to be on the sidelines of the development of Connections. As LaRock reports, faculty involvement in development of Connections was dwarfed by the heavy involvement of Deans and the Career Services Office. The Academic Resource Center, Career Services Office, and the Dean of the College office have been heavily involved in the development of the program—not the Dean of Faculty office as one might expect.

As reported by LaRock, in an interview, Dean Singer himself proposed that part of the purpose of the Connections program was to “encourage effective citizenship”. As LaRock argues, “this categorization situates students in an inevitably political framework. A citizen is someone who, along with having certain responsibilities to society, is also confronted by the demand to make critical decisions that will impact its future.” This is precisely why the continued emphasis on job preparation and vocation-oriented studies is so concerning. Citizenship is much more than “personal branding” or “marketing oneself” to get a job. Essential to producing effective, responsible, critical citizens is a nuanced education that rejects claims to neutrality. Something which at its core is “a story of rupture, discontinuity, and political reorientation,” not one of unquestioned, neutral accumulation of skills and professional networks to secure the right job after graduation.

With ever-rising tuition costs and corresponding debts it is more than understandable that students and parents feel the pressure to be able to find immediate work that pays enough to live comfortably. The pursuit of this, however, should not be increased investment in vocational tracks—something which a Business major/minor would be a part of. This would be a disservice to a more critical, complex, disruptive education.

I hope it is clear, though, that Connections does have the potential to be transformative. Its emphasis on interdisciplinarity and on enabling students to pursue whatever mesh of their interests they may desire could be a wonderful way to instill in all students an understanding that unequal power relations shape all disciplines and areas of work. As Gopalan puts it, however, the pursuit of many interests should not be a story without conflict. Students’ “interests, if pursued deeply, contain each other’s undoings,” and this is an unavoidable truth that the college seems unwilling to accept.

Given the explicit emphasis of the Connections program on preparing students for employment post-college, it may be safe to assume that its commitment to developing effective citizens comes second. However, in order to live up to its transformative potential Connections cannot continue to fall short of achieving political awakening in all students. The program should centrally encourage political engagement, and prepare students to responsibly engage in civic life via critical, power-and-social-difference-focused learning. The college’s unwillingness to take a clear stance on what it stands for and for what purpose it educates students weakens its academic rigor, and squanders its opportunity to foster a civic sensibility in all students.

As a quick clarification, the term “political awakening” can be a scary term, but what I refer to here is a question of purpose. What kind of purpose are we preparing students to commit themselves to? What are the outcomes of this purpose, and how are they different for people in different social groups? What tools are we giving students to determine their own purpose in alignment with their values (assuming they can identify what their values are, which seems a bold assumption)?

I have attempted to explore here the larger trends of which a new Business major/minor would be part. Trends including the “careerifying” of collegiate academia and prioritizing the production of docile workers over effective citizens. Connections has so far allowed students to pursue their many interests, but this is not, nor should it be, wholly apolitical. As it stands now Connections fails to live up to its transformative potential by falling short of providing a disruptive, politically orienting education. Let’s not dig ourselves deeper into this hole by adding a Business specialization.

If you share any of the concerns expressed here or if you feel motivated to learn more about how a Business major/minor might affect education at the college, please reach out to me at [aacheson@conncoll.edu](mailto:aacheson@conncoll.edu). •



## My Advice to NFL Teams with a Top-5 Pick: Resist the Urge to Take a QB

SCOTT ROBBINS  
CONTRIBUTOR

The NFL draft recently concluded on May 1. The top three picks taken were all quarterbacks (Trevor Lawrence, Zach Wilson, and Trey Lance). This has not been a surprise to most given that quarterbacks are usually the most common position taken within the first five picks of the draft. Because it is the most important and highest paid position in the NFL, most teams assume they can rebuild by taking the most highly-touted college quarterbacks.

Let's take a look at my favorite team, the New York Jets, and the recent outcome from the draft. The Jets management recently traded away former starting quarterback and third-overall pick in the 2018 draft, Sam Darnold, and selected Zach Wilson

But, does it really make sense to use a top-5 pick draft for a new quarterback? Yes, I know Trevor Lawrence has been raved about for years, and Zach Wilson is supposed to be the next Patrick Mahomes (and I am excited to watch him play for my team). But, I can't let my excitement of watching a new quarterback get in the way of what I actually think is the smartest move for NFL teams, which is to take a non-quarterback in the first-5 picks.

If we take a look at the recent history of the NFL, quarterbacks taken with top-5 picks have not necessarily performed like the elite quarterbacks that NFL teams had in mind when they decided to draft them. To prove this point, let's look at the top ten quarterbacks in the league right now. Here's my list: Patrick Mahomes (Kansas City Chiefs), Tom Brady (Tampa Bay Buccaneers), Lamar Jackson (Baltimore Ravens), Aaron Rodgers (free agent), Russell Wilson (Seattle Seahawks), Josh Allen (Buffalo Bills), Deshaun Watson (Houston Texans), Ryan Tannehill (Tennessee Titans), Derek Carr (Las Vegas Raiders), and Justin Herbert (San Diego Chargers).

Mahomes's draft value shot up at the last minute and was taken 10th overall; Brady was selected in the sixth round, Lamar Jackson went 32nd overall, Aaron Rodgers was taken 24th, Russell Wilson was selected in the middle of the third round, Josh Allen was taken 7th overall, Watson was the 12th overall pick, Tannehill went 8th overall, and Justin Herbert went 6th overall. While there are a handful of single-digit picks in there, none of them were taken with a top-five selection.

You could say Kyler Murray is doing well and is expected to inch his way towards the bottom half of this list, but in terms of veteran quarterbacks who have proven their worth and been to the Super Bowls and won the MVPs consistently like Tom Brady, Aaron Rodgers, and Russell Wilson, it becomes pretty clear that top-5 draft picks for quarterbacks matter less than most people think.

Here are all the quarterbacks taken with top-5 picks since 2014: Blake Bortles (3rd overall, 2014, Jacksonville Jaguars), Marcus Mariota (2nd overall, 2015, Tennessee Titans), Jameis Winston (1st overall, 2015, Tampa Bay Buccaneers), Jared Goff (1st overall, 2016, Los Angeles Rams), Carson Wentz (2nd overall, 2016, Philadelphia Eagles), Mitchell Trubisky (2nd overall, 2017, Chicago Bears), Baker Mayfield (1st overall, 2018, Cleveland Browns), Sam Darnold (3rd overall, 2018, New York Jets), Kyler Murray (1st overall, 2019, Arizona Cardinals), Joe Burrow (1st overall, 2020, Cincinnati Bengals), and Tua Tagovailoa (5th overall, 2020, Miami Dolphins).

The easiest ones to analyze are through the lens of Bortles, Mariota, and Winston taken 4 and 5 years ago. Two of them, Winston and Mariota, are not even starters in the league anymore, let alone their failure to become perennial MVP candidates. Bortles is an interesting case, while he led his team to a AFC championship game, he never became the quarterback the Jaguars dreamed of when selecting him with the third-overall pick back in 2014. I believe Wentz is overrated and clearly not a top-10 quarterback

because he got too much credit for the year the Eagles won the Super Bowl. The fact that the Eagles were still able to win it with his backup Nick Foles says it all. Mitchell Trubisky has had some good first few seasons, but he has earned his spot on the list of top-10 NFL quarterbacks according to most experts. Baker Mayfield took a step in the right direction this year by helping the Browns make the playoffs, but he has not proven himself yet as an elite, reliable quarterback that can lead his team into the playoffs each year. Sam Darnold was just dumped for two second round picks after finishing with some of the worst records in his years with the Jets. We can't rule out Kyler Murray and Joe Burrow because they have played well for their ages with bad teams, but they haven't played enough in the league, especially with good teams and in quality games. Tua has not proved himself worthy of his pick yet; he finished his rookie season with 11 touchdowns and 5 interceptions while playing in his first 10 games.

As a Jets fan, I remember in 2014 when so many Jets fans were upset to lose to the Tennessee Titans and lose the chance to get the number one pick to take the franchise quarterback and supposedly turn the whole team around. The top two picks were both quarterbacks that year, and they were Winston and Mariota. This year, I am noticing a similar thing amongst Jets fans is that sometimes, we think getting that 2-overall quarterback pick will save us, and I want to believe it will. But, I am afraid to state my opinion that it won't, and maybe taking a dominant player at a different position like Kyle Pitts might have been the better decision for the franchise.

You can't really accurately predict how a quarterback will respond to pressure in the NFL with everyone stronger and faster. That's why Tom Brady went in the sixth round to the Patriots, and many of the quarterbacks taken in the top-5 picks have failed. The truth is, I don't really know how Trevor Lawrence, Zach Wilson, or Trey Lance responds to major-league blitzes and makes decisions in less time. That's why fans' excitement about Trevor Lawrence, Zach Wilson, and Trey Lance might not match what will come from them in the next few NFL seasons. •



Unsplash

## Interview with Dulcie Everitt '20

**JOSH MOYLAN**  
CONTRIBUTOR

Earlier this semester I had the privilege of sitting down with Dulcie Everitt, a Connecticut College Graduate from the class of 2020, to discuss her upcoming book *Brexlit: The Problem of Englishness in Pre- and Post-Brexit Referendum Literature*, and to talk about her time here at Conn.

**When you were a student at Conn, what were you involved in, academically and extracurricularly, that led you down the path to becoming a published author?**

I was an English major, a Government and Philosophy double minor, and a scholar in the Holleran Center. I was also a member of the Women's Varsity Swim Team, a Writing Tutor for the Writing Center, and a Holleran Center Fellow. I have wanted to be an author from a young age. I've always loved to read and write, and growing up I felt strongly about the importance of books not only as a source of information, but of compassion and understanding, as well. So, I wanted to write a book that makes other people feel the same way. Having said that, up until my senior spring at Conn, it was really just a pipe dream. It was something I had my eye on, but something that I didn't think I had the skills or the experience to achieve. It was through my English major that I was able to develop as a writer over my four years at Conn, and I received a lot of encouragement from professors. Working as a Writing Tutor was also a huge learning curve; it helped me refine my writing process and gave me the confidence to believe I was a good writer. Even so, it wasn't really until senior spring that I felt I was capable of having my work published. In the fall, a paper that I'd written for a 400 level English class was accepted to two undergraduate magazines: the *UC Berkeley Comparative Literature Undergraduate Journal* and *The Foundationalist*. And then when I was working on my thesis, my advisor, Jeff Strabone, started suggesting that the work I was producing might be worth publishing down the line. That's where my confidence kicked in. My experiences at Conn helped me reshape my dreams of becoming a fiction writer to becoming an academic author. Maybe one day I'll branch out into fiction writing, but for now my strengths lie in academia.

**Do you remember, looking back at your childhood and high school years, if there was a book or an author that inspired you the most?**

I couldn't pinpoint one, but when I was studying English in my junior and senior year of high school, I started reading more classics on my own. It's kind of a random one, but I read *Dracula*, and I got the sense that I wanted to write a book that left a mark like that one. I'm not saying that's going to be me, but that's definitely what I aspire to.

**Now that you've published, how does it feel to have achieved a goal that you'd thought was out of reach? What's gone through your mind?**

It's all very surreal. My book isn't officially released until January 2022, but it's available for pre-order on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and Waterstones; and it's been really exciting to see my name and my book appear on them. Since only a handful of people have read my book, it still feels like a small personal project, but once others start reading it, I think it will hit me a bit more. I've definitely had a lot of anxiety about my work being out there. Especially since it's an academic book, and I only have an undergraduate degree, there's some concern that others won't take my work seriously. But, I think, on balance, I'm just really excited and proud to be one of the first voices and first books out there on the subject of *Brexlit*.

**What drew you to the topic of English Literature in the time of Brexit?**

The Brexit referendum was a watershed moment for me. I grew up in London, and was 18 at the time of the referendum, so it was only the second time I'd ever cast a vote. Watching the debate unfold that year was a time of introspection for me. I felt engaged with Brexit in a way that I hadn't been in political decisions before that. I remember in the fall of 2016, after the referendum, when Ali Smith's *Autumn* was released, there

was a lot of discussion on how quickly she'd published the novel in response to Brexit, I was immediately intrigued. So when it came to designing a thesis proposal my junior year, I thought back to that moment, and started reading up on other texts published quickly in response to Brexit. I started toying with the idea of writing my thesis on *Brexlit*, but was unsure of myself because of the lack of an existing conversation on this topic outside of book reviews. However, I put the idea forward to my advisor and he encouraged me to go with it.

**Did the idea of Englishness as an issue in literature come from reading these books, or was it something that you had in your mind prior?**

It was a bit of both. I took on board a lot of information from these book reviews, and from my advisor. But my ideas formed fully from reading the books. The intrigue was definitely there before I started reading because the success of the Leave campaign always raised questions about Englishness and why English people feel more of a desire to leave than Scottish people or Northern Irish people.

**How would you describe Englishness? How does it manifest itself as a problem in and outside of literature? May I have an example from the book?**

This is a really big question, it's basically the whole book, so I'll try and be concise. One of the reasons I was drawn to Englishness is because it's really difficult to define. I didn't have much of a sense of what it meant to be English, growing up in England, and I didn't think much about it. I always thought it was a series of stereotypes, like "keep calm and carry on." The fact that it's a difficult identity to describe is part of its problem, but that is on top of the fact that Englishness, or English nationalism, doesn't match the nation state. English nationalism is considered a proto-nationalism because there is no English State within the United Kingdom, so it's somewhat unclear what English Nationalism is attached to in this context. When researching for the book, it became clear that Englishness in its current form is built around nostalgia and a longing for a perceived former greatness, referring to the perceived greatness at the height of the British empire -- a greatness that never really existed, at least in moral terms. This is all similar rhetoric to what we saw with Donald Trump and "Make America Great Again." The appeal to nostalgia is a very common political tool, and it's used across the political spectrum. That said, it's mostly used in right-leaning parties to suggest that where we're going is worse than where we came from. An example I can give from the book is a theory from a book called *Heroic Failure* by Fintan O'Toole. He suggests that English Nationalism in the age of Brexit can only be described as "self pity." Which is to say that on one hand, Brexit is fueled by a desire to be in control, but on the other hand, it positions itself as a revolt against oppression, in this case from the EU. In other words, English Nationalism seeks to piece together opposing impulses of dominance and liberation at the same time. *Brexlit* texts, in many cases, attempt to resolve this form of Englishness and create a new more inclusive version of it.

**What was your writing process like with regards to this work? Did you have lulls? Points of enthusiasm? How did this book come to fruition?**

Because this started as my senior thesis, I had rough guidelines about how much work I needed to produce at each stage. I needed to have the first chapter done by the end of the first semester, and the rest done by the spring. The way I wrote wasn't as ordered as that. I didn't start writing the first part until I'd finished reading a lot of the material, but when writing the second part, as soon as I finished reading one of the texts, I would immediately go and write a paper on it in isolation. It wasn't until towards the end, when I had a big bank of material, that I looked at them as a group of essays and wove them together. I definitely had lulls, and for me when I'm blocked I need to step away all together. But I would also have days where I would write twenty pages or more. So it happened in fits and starts. One thing to say

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Article continued on page 10.

## Senior Dance Capstones Set a Promising Precedent (cont'd)

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Article continued from front page.

COVID-safe art-making medium. Five of the twelve pieces were films, and some choreographers, like Greer and Sequira, had taken the course *Dance for the Camera* with Professor Hove which gave them vital experience and technical knowledge. Greer also noted that several of her dancers had not performed live before, and she did not want to throw them into a difficult, unpredictable performance venue for the first time. The seniors all received feedback on their work from professors and peers in two virtual choreography showings earlier in the semester, but those making films struggled to receive as much constructive feedback as most of the faculty's expertise lies in live performance choreography. Films added location scouting, filming, and editing on top of rehearsals and had to be completed by the first of two tech weeks while live dances could still tweak and edit choreography while rehearsing on the stage. Despite the difficult timelines and challenges of mixing media, both live pieces and films were successfully completed and shown over the weekend.

The months of unforgiving rehearsal schedules were made more arduous with health and safety guidelines. In order to meet the performance deadlines, auditions were held asynchronously over winter break, as students learned dance phrases from videos, filmed themselves in their homes dancing, and submitted these clips to a Google Folder for seniors to assess and choose their casts. Rehearsals began in the first two weeks of the spring semester while dancers studying on-campus were in onboarding quarantine. Choreographers used inconvenient Zoom dorm room rehearsals to explain concepts, teach short phrases, and get to know how each dancer moves. Eventually, rehearsals were moved to the studios, but dancers were still confined to the six square foot boxes. Finally, dancers were allowed to use the full studio space and travel in every direction as long as they maintained six feet of distance indoors and three feet outdoors.

Choreographers reflected on the challenges of executing their original choreographic visions according to the constantly changing guidelines, and they discovered ways to convey emotions and ideas while wearing masks and without physically touching. The process was emotionally, physically, and mentally exhausting. "Your soul is tired, your heart is tired," Perlman said, reflecting on a special kind of creative burnout they struggled with due to draining rehearsals. Without spring break, choreographers had little time to revise their choreography and filmmakers did not have a period of time to focus on editing. Classes, rehearsals, filming, and homework piled on top of each other, and many students struggled with general burnout. With the new academic schedule, classes started earlier and ended later in the day than previous years,

a dance film, which was a new option this year as dance films have grown in popularity as a

forcing rehearsals to be hosted seven days a week at every available hour, even on late Thursday nights or early Sunday mornings. "We never really had time to warm up before rehearsals, so the possibility of injuries happening just became that much greater," said Young. "And then into tech week, being out in the cold for so long and just having your muscles tense up, by the time the Sunday show was over, I woke up on Monday and felt like I could not move. I felt like everything in my body hurt to an extent that it had never hurt before." In addition to rehearsals, weekly academic dance technique classes continued, and dancers never had a chance to physically recover.

The *Dune* allowed for high-quality productions with live audiences and performers, regaining a semblance of traditional large-scale department shows, but the unpredictable weather added another layer of risk and stress. An earlier third show was scheduled for Thursday April 15, but it was rained out. However, it was the 40-50 degree weather plus wind chill that made performing hazardous. The cold exacerbated injuries that arose from the intense rehearsal schedule, and the night dew made the stage slippery. For dancers used to dancing barefoot on dry, indoor theaters, wearing socks and sneakers in such a different environment was jarring and uncomfortable. Masks quickly became soaked with condensation, making breathing difficult in the brisk night air. Last minute costume changes were necessary, and choreographers made sure their dancers wore as many warm layers as possible while still maintaining mobility to prevent muscular injury and tightness. Hood Dining Hall in Blaustein served as a dressing room, and dancers had to run across Tempel Green, cross the street, and run into the building between pieces. Some even resorted to changing behind the production crew tent in the frigid air to make it back on stage in time. Performance adrenaline and excitement kept everyone going throughout the long evenings.

The production crew's dedication and professionalism alleviated much of the stress that comes with performances. Professor Hove and his production class students Jocelyn Lewis '24, Haley Michel '24, and Zoe Zitner '24; along with Bruce Valenti and Rodney Dumond from theatre services; and sound manager Josh Paquette, braved the many long, cold hours and set up the *Dune* with lighting, sound equipment, multiple cameras, and flooring each night. The production value was at its highest, and performers and viewers alike were able to focus on the dancing without worry. All of these elements came together to set an auspicious precedent for future generations of seniors and creators. In grappling with the layers of adverse circumstances, the Department and seniors discovered innovative ways to share performances live online and in-person, how to safely perform in outdoor conditions, and how to stay connected as artists and friends even if their connection may be a little bit unstable. •

## Interview with Dulcie Everitt '20 (cont'd)

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Article continued from page 9.

too, is that it was a continuously evolving piece of work. The revisions were definitely the most important part. In terms of knowing when you're done, there's always something more you can do. I guess you know you're done when you can't see anything more than words on a screen or when you're comfortable with the product. So you're never really done, but it's helpful knowing that you'll have a copy editor at the end of it.

**Did you enjoy writing this book? Does that extend to other things that you've done? Why?**

I did enjoy writing this, yeah. It was something that I was deeply invested in, and I was motivated by the fact that I knew I was going to be the first person publishing something on this subject. But, I love to write in general, and I love to write because I love to read. Like I said earlier, I've been sentimental since I was kid about how words on a page can offer us new perspectives on the world and hold an incredible amount of power. I think I love writing because I want to give other people moments of seeing things in a new way, which is exactly what I ex-

perienced during the research process. It also wasn't just an academic endeavor, it was a personal journey. I hadn't understood what it meant to be English, and this helped me understand why I didn't know. It was a really fun experience.

**What's next? Where do you go from here? Any exciting prospects?**

Well, right now I work at a small PR firm in London, but I do hope to pursue a PhD in the not so distant future. For now, I'm going to focus on enjoying the rest of this process, and trying to make this book as big a success as possible. I'm going to be working with a publicist, so I'm excited to get into the promotional side of things and just enjoy it!

In her new book, Dulcie Everitt explores the interesting and fairly new phenomenon of Brexilit. Her book offers a chance to reflect on the immense changes that Brexit brought about, and the not so new problems that were spotlighted in the literary response. I'd like to thank Dulcie once again for the interview, and encourage you to pre-order the book, which is available for pre-order now at Barnes and Noble's website. •



## Call Me Rory Gilmore

ELIZABETH BERRY  
ARTS EDITOR

I hope I am not alone in having the whimsical dream that my parents would drop me off at college where I would lean against a random oak tree, open a book with absurdly small print discussing the thing of the thing that is the thing, and happen to be invited to a secret society by an attractive youth whereupon we dress up as bourgeois members and jump off buildings with umbrellas in hand. Oh, silly me! I confused reality with season five of Gilmore Girls.

If I were to rate my first year at Connecticut College on a scale of the dorm bathrooms on a Sunday evening (pre-COVID) to Boatweiler singing “Teenage Dream” at the Barn (pre-COVID), I would categorize it as an overcooked piece of bow-tie pasta from Harris. Not the worst, but certainly not ideal. I was fortunate enough to crawl through my first year without COVID-19 as an antagonist, which makes me empathize even more with the class of 2024.

Needless to say, I was not particularly happy my first year at Conn. During Fall Weekend, I hid my tears in a bowl of spaghetti and meatballs at Paul’s Pasta, and when I went home for break, I considered not coming back. “Maybe college just isn’t for me”—words I actually said, the epitome of a Ravenclaw. There were solitary study sessions at cubicles on the third floor of Shain. There were dishonest camel chats where I sunk into my floor governor’s butterfly chair in an attempt to fly away. There was googling of “how to know when you should transfer colleges” and nightly phone calls with my parents while sitting on a bench outside Branford, watching herds of students passing by. I was upset and angry that I couldn’t just be happy and take shots of...blue Gatorade... and post about said activity on my Instagram with a strategically placed flower emoji. I felt guilty because I had the privilege of access to a liberal arts education and I wasn’t in the mindspace to make the most of it.

But in the backdrop of my homesickness and existential crisis, was The College Voice. Even if I wasn’t vibing with Camel spirit, bi-monthly pitch meetings in the Alice Johnson room in Cro became my safe space: a place to escape my dorm room and Voice topics I wanted to cover for the Arts and Opinions sections. I looked up to the Editors-in-Chief and fangirled over the section editors. There was Maia Hibbett ‘18, Dana Gallagher ‘19, Sophia Angele-Kuehn ‘20, and Jozette Moses ‘21. There were interviews with students involved in Sprout Garden and the WCNI radio, investigative pieces on student housing and the Barn, as well as reviews of student curations in Cummings and performances by OnStage. Even though my introverted self was too afraid to talk to peers while grabbing for a banana in Harris, sitting down in Blue Camel to interview students felt safer. Talking with inspiring juniors and seniors convinced me that there must be something over the hump that is your first year at any college. As Mrs. Potts so wisely puts it: “There may be something that wasn’t there before.”

The summer after my first year I had the opportunity to study abroad in Perugia, Italy for six weeks. I came back to Conn my sophomore year with a “make it worth” perspective. One could say abroad ~changed me. I began to say yes to opportunities that daunted me before and was possessed by the Knowlton ghost to overpoint both semesters (don’t do this). I dreamed of becoming an Arts section editor so I could be what the editors were for me my first year. Since orientation, I had been searching for my camel moment, and I have arrived at the conclusion that it was being elected an Arts editor my junior year. And here, I invite you to let those tears fall and stain this virtual newspaper. Writing pitches on the whiteboard in Cro in blue Expo marker or reading off a list over Google Hangouts became the highlights of my week both pre and post COVID.

To be completely honest, TCV got me through the moments when I doubted Conn was my home. When I studied abroad in Bologna last spring, I curled back into a shell of myself, feeling homesick not for my hometown but for Conn, an ironic discovery that slapped me in the face almost harder than receiving an email at 2 am in a dimly lit bar that my study abroad program had been canceled due to COVID-19. I felt guilty for craving Knowlton’s wooden floors, cranberry walnut bread from JA, and spilling the college tea in the Voice’s office while I was studying at one of the most prestigious universities in Italy, surrounded by Tuscan neighborhoods that made Under the Tuscan Sun

seem plausible. When I returned home from Italy, last year’s editorial team welcomed me back into that (virtual) space and I was able to find a sense of normalcy in writing for the arts section once again. Everything else felt disjointed and disCONNECTed but joining Google Hangouts for TCV didn’t add to my burnout. And here is the pun you have all been waiting for: I felt CONNected.

Of course, I wish that my last year writing and editing for the newspaper mirrored the semesters before where we met in-person to pitch, write, and edit articles. But I am grateful for the work of current editor-in-chief Moses and managing editor Amanda Sanders ‘22 have done to establish the environment we once took for granted. In the spring semester, section editors have been able to edit articles in the Voice’s office on the second floor of Cro. Sitting in rolling chairs that are probably older than us seniors, I felt like I had entered a parallel universe where I was a junior once again, sipping a Bee’s Knees on Saturday mornings while musing with Moses about having our own Winches senior year (irony).

In this former universe, I was happy at Conn. There was admiring from afar (difficult when you are near-sighted) and unfortunate love triangles. There was dancing on the armrest of a sunken coach in Winch 6 screaming along to “Mamma Mia” (don’t try this at home). There were late chats while holding a Build-a-Bear and sleepless nights laying on my floor debating whether CIS-LA was the right path for me. There were quesadillas from Harris, and that awkward moment when a boy in Coffee Closet mocked my article on EEE: “can you believe she changed her sheets just because she thought she saw a mosquito on her bed?” Unbeknownst to him, I was sitting right behind him, but I stand by my decision and deem him unworthy of the Life and Death Brigade. And if you are reading this now, kind sir, you owe me a latte with freshly squeezed oat milk and organic honey.

Joining The College Voice my first year at Conn was simultaneously the most intimidating and rewarding choice I have made as a Camel. Of course, there were moments where I doubted if I was a good writer and if journalism was a career I wanted to pursue. But reading student journalism has humbled me to the point that while I still struggle with comparing myself to others, it has become easier to celebrate beautiful reporting, rather than fall down a rabbit hole of self-loathing. Those darker moments of self-doubt and anxiety are still there, and I am sure they will remain after graduation, but those thoughts no longer feel all consuming. If you are where I was four years ago, know that you are not alone and happiness is possible.

Rory and I both survive on coffee and fine food establishments. Our bookish-selves evolved during our four years as undergrads thanks to student journalism. But the difference is, she is a bulldog and I am a camel. And so are you. •



Grace Neale



## Don't Be Afraid To Fall

KELLY WALLACE  
OPINIONS EDITOR

It's often said that one's college years are a very formative time in one's life, a time when there is so much to take in. But these are things that are better off observed first-hand. Like Soren Kierkegaard once said: "Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards." I don't think it was until the second half of my junior year at Connecticut College when I began to put together all of the puzzle pieces I had found here. Some I found in the classroom where I would sometimes wonder where the knowledge I was learning was going, some I found in the experiences I had with fellow camels, and some I found on my own, exploring by myself in the arboretum. You won't really be able to see the full picture at the beginning, but I promise you that once you have enough pieces, everything you've learned and experienced will come together in the end.

In my junior year, I took an ice skating class (which I would highly recommend). Despite it not being a more "academic" class, I learned a lot. I remember I had a classmate who would often fall. Each time, she would get right back up and laugh, shaking it off. One day I skated up to her and told her that she was inspiring. I definitely would have thought that I'd be inspired the most by the classmates whizzing by me, skating backwards like they had been doing it their whole life. But while these classmates did encourage me to get better at these things, I was more inspired by my classmate who fell at least once per class. When she asked me in disbelief why I found her inspiring, I told her that I was so inspired by her resilience. But not just that, what I was most inspired by was how she was not *afraid* to fall. There were moves that I was afraid to try, such as stopping, because I didn't want to fall. I remember falling towards the end of the class and wishing that I had done it sooner. Another student offered to help me get up, and this is representative of the type of community we have at Conn, as well as what lies beyond the fall. Sometimes we need a hand to get up. Had I not fallen, I wouldn't have been offered the help to stand back up.

My classmate was learning each time she fell. Our brain is always taking in information. We don't always notice until there is a perceptible amount of change, like being able to perform a new move such as skating backwards, or finally being able to calculate a change in pH. When we are not afraid to fall, we are able to take chances and to take risks that can lead us to great places. I've fallen here many times, but what I've learned is to not be afraid of it. Life cannot just be gliding perfectly on the ice, we must fall in order to understand what we have done wrong and where we can correct things, and to show others that it really is *okay* to fall. If my classmate didn't fall, she might not have learned and progressed as much. I wouldn't have learned from her resilience and eagerness to get back up and try again. Staying where there is no chance of falling can be safe, but you will miss out on opportunities to learn and people who will help you get back up.

You most likely already know that college is a time where you'll learn many new things and be challenged in the classroom. So I'm not going to tell you to study a bunch because your parents or professors are probably enough of a reminder. What I'm going to tell you is to **have fun**. In doing so, you'll make many memories and learn so much about yourself. In your experiences with others you will learn who you are in relation to the world around you and you may be inspired by a quality in another, such as me with my ice skating classmate. In your first year you might have zero ideas about your future. I barely knew who I was until my junior year. During college, you will learn so much about who you are and what you might like your life to look like down the line. It can be a time where you are finally understanding who you are, without anyone else's input or influences. Figuring out these types of things can be *immensely helpful* in understanding yourself and your motives. Find out what you are passionate about, who you like to surround yourself with, don't be afraid to get your heart broken (it gives you a lot of insight, trust me), and find ways to enjoy where you are at.

College is a transitory period in life, but that doesn't mean that what you do during this time doesn't matter—I have learned that it is very much the opposite. So spend your Friday and Saturday nights doing things you *enjoy*

and spend time with people who bring you comfort and happiness (although you will most likely need some nights alone, too). When you look back on your college years, how do you want to feel? Maybe you would rather spend your Friday nights studying and that's who you are, but maybe you're like me and want to take time to enjoy your weekend nights. Finding balance between having fun in college and being engaged in your studies can be difficult, but when in doubt, don't be afraid to ask a professor for some extra time on an assignment or to go to office hours. Some of my fondest moments in office hours have been in my junior and senior year when I stopped being afraid of my professors and started asking a bunch of random questions like "do you think the lab rats experience love?" or even "what is the point of life?" (ask this question to a biology professor and you'll finally find something they *don't* know). If you get a lower grade than you were hoping on an exam or assignment, now you know where you can improve. Don't shove the exam in a drawer like I have done many times before, look back over it and understand where things did not go well and where they could go better next time. You'll learn what you're best at and what type of thinking and skills you need to develop more. But make sure that during your journey through college, you spend some time honoring and listening to what will make you feel joy and help you through the tough times. Don't be afraid to fall and to laugh about it, and know that your fellow camels will be there to help you get back up. •



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