Restaurant Reviewers Feel out a Franchise: Ruminations on Longhorn Steakhouse

MAN AMAR-OLKUS ARTS EDITOR
AND JOHN CHATIGNY CONTRIBUTOR

Braving the elements in a car on the verge of its death, we two valiant restaurant reviewers drove at 11:45am on Wednesday, Feb. 1st to the culinary institution known to many as Longhorn Steakhouse, though its diehard fans sometimes refer to it as “A home away from home.” At first glance, Longhorn Steakhouse appears to be nothing more than an overpriced Outback Steakhouse, but after peeling back the first layer of the Texas T’Onion (a battered and deep fried onion drizzled with sour cream) we saw all the unique treasures this restaurant really has to offer.

Upon walking through the double doors, you, the bright-eyed new Longhorn patron, should expect to wait for no more than 5 minutes while the ninety-eight-year-old couple in front of you is shown to their table. One advantage of going to Longhorn before 5pm as a college student is that you will more than likely be the youngest diner present by at least 40 years. Unfortunately, you won’t be able to reap the senior citizen benefits (such as death).

The host will either seat you in the lively bar area (where you may find two regulars stationed, enjoying a few mid-afternoon beers) or in the intimate yet expansive dining room. Longhorn’s interior designers need a raise for their impeccable taste and their ability to make each franchise establishment feel like home. In many ways, a meal at Longhorn appears to be nothing more than an overpriced Outback Steakhouse, but after peeling back the first layer of the Texas T’Onion (a battered and deep fried onion drizzled with sour cream) we saw all the unique treasures this restaurant really has to offer.

IN THIS ISSUE

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017

NEWS

Hannah Johnston and Eleanor Knauss break down the particulars of what we commonly call “executive orders” on page 4.

NEWS

Maia Hibbett speaks with Andrew Lopez about local efforts to ban the disposal of natural gas “fracking” waste disposal in New London on page 5.

ARTS

Jennifer Skoglund gives her impression of “Room” and all its wild intricacies on page 13.

PERSPECTIVES

Wesley Chrabasz considers the extreme income disparities present at Conn on page 11.

The Guardian

an article for

More of his ruminations on Spicer can be found in

With a Lifetime of Regret, One Incident at a Time

thor of

Public Apology: In Which a Man Grapples

1993 Connecticut College graduate and the author of

As it turns out, the College Voice did not invent White House Press Secretary and Conn alumnus Sean Spicer’s infamous college nickname. The following interview with Dave Bry, Sean Spicer’s first-year roommate, details this and more about what it was like to share a campus with Spicer. Bry is a 1993 Connecticut College graduate and the author of Public Apology: In Which a Man Grapples With a Lifetime of Regret, One Incident at a Time.

The College Voice: As you know, I’m calling to interview you about your former roommate here at Conn, Sean Spicer, and I guess I’ll just start off with a really easy, softball question. Where did you guys live on campus when you were here?

Dave Bry: We lived in Marshall, dorm room 212, so in the Plex, at the very tip of the Plex, all the way down, like, hidden as far away from the pretty buildings as you could ever hide anything.

The College Voice: What was that dorm like back then, and on campus in general, what would you say the political climate was like?

Dave Bry: That was dorm, I guess like a kinda standard college dorm, very cement walls—they had put three students into what was clearly meant to be a room sized for one or two people. Our other roommate was named Jeremy Beard, and it was, so you know like living in a cement-walled little cell with two other people.

The political climate on campus—that’s an interesting question—I grew up in a very conserva-face area...And then I got to college, and it felt very liberal to me, very liberal. And it affected my life in lots of ways...I remember when people went out and walked and marched in opposition to Apartheid in Africa, that was like, a really big deal for me...Now, you know, throughout college, I ended up going to visit friends at Wesleyan, and learned that Connecticut College was quite conservative compared to some places, and then I’d visit places like Trinity, and learned that Connecticut College was really quite liberal on the spectrum. I think...

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The College Voice: Taking this work of from chance at executive orders to the empty framer, Sean Spicer is showing for the position of DFA, president.

Spicer says he’d experience at American University as one of the including figure in the campaign. While the obvious message “which college brings home America anp just now in its own re-inspection College’s financial aid do not travel with students across States, housing problems for returning students, and a lack of information about the college while making away with three lessons important in his campaign. The college was one of the DFA agenda, however, to get student interest in桌

ditions were not up, to the contrary, directly affect students. How, each an increasing liberal aid and less aid. “The political climate has to... really make it as if the college’s had to know that the DFA, isn’t just a bunch of people getting together on a Tursday night doing nothing. It’s a position that has power, you know it...

The College Voice: vintage Spice: Dave Bry Tells the Voice about Life with the White House Press Secretary

MAIA HIBBETT EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

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Hi again, Conn. It feels good to write. I haven’t had my words printed in The College Voice in months, which may be why there are so many of them in this issue. There might actually be too many, but so it goes.

It’s different now, though, to write and print this paper, since I’m now the face of it (literally, as you can see above, in what probably looks like vanity but is honestly a space-filler). This time around, going to press is a sigh of relief. The paper you hold is proof that I can, in fact, produce an issue as person-in-charge. And though I felt relatively certain that I could do that, it had still never happened before. I’m glad to have it confirmed.

It’s been strange coming into this halfway through the year, especially because it’s meant introducing myself to a lot of new people who are supposed to believe that they are my staff simply because they voted me in. In the fall, while I was abroad in Nicaragua, I worried constantly about how the Voice would change while I was away, as if this modest student paper would morph into some sort of mutant for me to later wrangle. It didn’t.

It has changed, yes, and we’re operating with almost an entirely new cast, but I should have relaxed and had faith in Aparna. She’s smart, and she hired smart people. And when I got back here, I flitted around and pestered them constantly with surveys and suggestions followed by assurances that I do, in fact, know what I am doing (to the degree that any of us do). I adopted a mantra about how I’d dedicated two years to the Voice before going abroad, worried that they wouldn’t buy it. They did.

This is all to say that I am truly grateful to have this team, for their support, their ideas and their acceptance of a new EIC who may seem a little hyperactive and a lot wordy. And I’m grateful to Aparna, for compiling them and moving forth with a vision for a better Voice. If you were to ask her now whether I was annoying as hell last semester, she might lie to protect me. Or, knowing Aparna, and knowing that she is logical, critical and honest, she might tell you the truth: that I bombarded her over email with particularized questions about technicalities and shifts that I felt were being made under my feet, shifts that, I realize now, were what we call “progress.” And in the tradition of that progress—and of my inclination to micromanage—I am pleased to announce two developments that come to the Voice with this release:

1) Accountability surveys. Beginning with this issue, the Voice will send out a Google form to all of the sources our writers interview. In these forms, interviewees will evaluate how accurately they were quoted or represented and have the opportunity to request a correction in our subsequent print edition. If needed, print corrections will also return.

2) Cookie critiques. It’s a simple exchange: write a critique of the Voice; get a cookie. Our first cookie critique will be Tuesday, Feb. 7 in Shain. Stop by the first-floor lobby between 2:30 and 6:30 pm and you’ll find me, a pile of Voice copies, a stack of notecards and lots of cookies. I’m even getting a gluten-free box.

Hopefully these changes will help improve the Voice’s accuracy, relevancy and receptiveness to its audience. In this bizarre era of “alternative facts” and other buzzwords so baffling they become tiring, we need to work on journalism more than ever.

-Maia
Community Bulletin

High-Profile Alumnus Charged with Terrorizing Schoolchildren

James Berrien ’74, former chairman of Connecticut College’s Board of Trustees and former publisher of Forbes Magazine, was charged on Jan. 31 with breach of peace and disorderly conduct. The Day reports that Berrien was identified in surveillance footage from Dec. 21, when he allegedly chased and forcibly boarded a school bus from his BMW.

Conn Students Robbed at Cilantro’s

According to a Campus Safety report, three individuals were arrested for robbing Connecticut College students outside Cilantro’s American/Latin Bar & Cafe on Bank Street. Campus Safety alleged that a “vague threat” was made to the students involved by a 16-year-old boy who has since been contacted by the New London Police Department.

Public Hearing for Connecticut Rail Bills

Three proposals for the Connecticut Transportation Committee will be presented at a public hearing in Hartford at 12:30 pm on Monday, Feb. 6. The bills, proposed by state Rep. Devin Carney, R-Old Lyme and state Sen. Paul Formica, R-East Lyme, would limit the state’s ability to develop a railway running through Southeastern Connecticut without municipal approval and restriction.

Hate Crime in Quebec Leaves Six Dead

On the night of January 29th, six people were killed in an attack on a Quebec city mosque. 17 other people were injured during the attack, five of whom are currently in critical condition. The shooter, described as “pro-Donald Trump, anti-immigration and sympathetic to the far right” was 27-year-old Alexandre Bissonnette. He has been charged with first-degree murder and attempted murder.

Legal Grounds to Challenge So-Called “Muslim Ban”

Federal Judge James Robart ruled on Friday Feb. 3 that there are grounds to challenge President Trump’s executive order curtailting immigration from majority-Muslim nations. Said ruling from Robart has led to the suspension of Trump’s ban, and the state department is now reversing its cancellation of approximately 60,000 visas since the executive order was put into effect.

White House Considering Embassy Move Despite Territory Disputes

Following a statement of intention by President Trump to assist the Israeli government in moving its national capital from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as its national capital, the White House has begun preliminary discussion regarding the potential relocation of the Tel Aviv-based U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem. Both Israel and Palestine have territorial claims to the city, and the proposed move has been criticized for its potential to provoke violence.

Upcoming Star Wars Film Title Announced

Lucasfilm has announced that the title of the next Star Wars Film, Episode XIII, will be “Star Wars Episode XIII: The Last Jedi.” The film will premiere in theaters on December 15th, 2017.

Sports Corner

EXTENDED VERSION: YOUR FULL UPDATE ON SPORTS SINCE WINTER BREAK

Women’s Basketball (15-6)
- @ Mitchell W 89-40
- Hamilton W 70-53
- Middlebury L 56-58
- @ Trinity L 72-77
- @ Amherst L 35-69
- Bates W 87-69
- Tufts L 48-72
- New Rochelle W 90-32
- @ Wesleyan W 65-58
- @ Eastern Connecticut St. W 72-59
- Newbury W 91-50

Women’s Ice Hockey (13-6-2)
- @ William Smith W 5-1
- @ William Smith T 1-1
- @ Trinity W 1-0
- Castleton T 1-1
- Bowdoin L 0-3
- @ Wesleyan W 1-0
- @ Wesleyan L 1-2
- Williams W 3-0
- Williams W 4-1
- Manhattanville W 8-0
- @ Saint Anselm L 1-3
- @ Trinity L 0-1
- Colby W 5-0
- Colby W 5-0

Women’s Squash (5-14)
- St. Lawrence L 0-9
- Mount Holyoke W 5-4
- Colby L 2-7
- Dickinson L 0-9
- Bowdoin L 1-8
- @ Smith W 9-0
- William Smith L 0-9
- @ Tufts L 2-7
- Virginia L 0-9
- @ Wellesley W 5-4
- @ Wesleyan W 5-4
- Tufts L 0-9
- Wesleyan L 0-9
- Hamilton L 2-7

Women’s Swimming (7-2)
- Grinnell W 163-68
- Williams L 108-186
- @ Amherst L 125-163
- @ Wesleyan W 205.5-88.5
- Fairfield W 215-72
- @ Trinity W 227-33
- Wheaton W 221-67

@ Wesley W 226-65

Men’s Basketball (12-8)
- UMass Dartmouth W 77-71
- Springfield L 57-63
- @ Hamilton L 70-86
- @ Middlebury L 89-97
- Trinity L 52-70
- Amherst W 83-76
- @ Framingham St. W 67-64
- @ Bates W 73-58
- @ Tufts L 83-100
- Fisher L 63-70
- Wesleyan L 75-83

Western Connecticut St. W 95-68

Men’s Ice Hockey (4-13-2)
- @ UMass Boston L 1-9
- Franklin Pierce W 8-2
- Manhattanville W 5-2
- @ Hamilton L 2-4
- @ Amherst L 1-4
- Wesleyan T 4-4
- @ Trinity L 0-5
- Middlebury W 3-1
- Williams L 3-4
- @ Tufts L 0-3
- Tufts L 1-2

Men’s Squash (3-14)
- St. Lawrence L 0-9
- Colby L 0-9
- Dickinson L 0-9
- Bowdoin L 0-9
- @ MIT L 0-9
- Western Ontario L 0-9
- Hobart L 0-9
- @ Tufts L 3-6
- Virginia L 0-9
- @ Amherst L 0-9
- Tufts L 2-7

Men’s Swimming (6-2)
- Grinnell W 143-91
- Williams L 90-197
- @ Amherst L 123-165
- @ Wesleyan W 199-80
- Fairfield 203-76
- @ Trinity W 168.5-93.5
- Wheaton W 214.5-72.5

Women’s basketball currently holds the best record of Conn’s varsity sports. Photo courtesy of Connecticut College Athletics
Within the first two weeks of his unprecedented presidency, Donald Trump signed over 20 executive actions, including the controversial order to halt immigration temporarily from seven Muslim-majority countries and indefinitely from Syria. Trump's swift, unilateral orders have pushed Americans into action, causing protests, demonstrations and Senators' telephone lines and many questions. On Friday Feb. 3, Professor Mary-Anne Borrelli addressed questions and dispelled myths surrounding the Trump Administration's active first month in office at an event hosted by the 68th anniversary of the college chapter of the Roosevelt Institution. The first and most important question discussed doubled as the event's title: “What is an executive order?” Though executive orders have been an especially hot topic in the past few weeks, the implications of such actions are not as cut and dry as they may seem. The executive clause of the Constitution gives presidents enormous discretion when enacting and enforcing widespread policy change, which manifests most often in the forms of executive orders and presidential memoranda. At Roosevelt's event, Borrelli distinguished between an executive order and a presidential memorandum, which, though operating under different names, have nearly identical effects. “Both of them have the same effect in that the minute they are issued, they go into force as law,” Borrelli stated. Executive orders mirror Congressional legislation—as they are assigned numbers and added to the federal register—but are unilateral and effective without congressional approval. Presidential memoranda fall under much of the same umbrella in effect, but usually regard issues that Congress has already assigned to the executive branch (e.g. the order to resume construction of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines). Though often referred to in popular vernacular as “executive orders,” the 22 executive actions taken by President Trump have mostly fallen under the categories of presidential memoranda and proclamations.

While executive orders and presidential memoranda cover most of the unilateral actions taken and enforced by the President, other commands can be issued by the President in the form of proclamations, signing statements, national security directives and impoundments, all of which give the President power to shape policies and policy enforcement in different ways. At “What Is an Executive Order?” members of the student body learned how to distinguish between these actions. Their definitions are as follows: proclamations tend to foreshoe policy action but are generally treated as a presidential comment rather than a command, and they often have to do with lower-stakes issues; for example, presidential proclamations usually indicate ceremonial observances, such as the designation of February as “National Heart Month” to promote heart-disease awareness. National security directives, as the name suggests, refer to policy directly related to United States national security. Signing statements and impoundments both affect the ways policies are enforced, the former by allowing the President to refrain from implementing legislation deemed ‘unconstitutional,’ and the latter by permitting the President to deny funding to certain institutions and congressional rulings. Impoundments as a whole have been ruled unconstitutional, while no ruling has been made on signing statements, though actions resembling the statements have been ruled unconstitutional in the past. “You have to learn to drink from the fire hose,” Borrelli concluded. Though some of Trump’s orders have been intended to reverse those made by former President Obama, the majority reflect policy change Trump promised during his campaign. We are unlikely to see a slowing in executive actions coming from the White House in the near future, as the President has just begun to flex his executive muscles. The path going forward seems yet more shrouded in uncertainty than we consider that the left is fighting back with vim and vigor, the effects of which are already emerging. We saw live evidence of this during Roosevelt's event on Friday night when a federal judge in Seattle temporarily blocked the ban on immigration, calling it unconstitutional. With the ruling, Judge James Robart encouraged resisters to keep protesting Trump’s executive actions. This activity promises a tumultuous four years. So, are executive orders good or bad? “That depends on the content,” warned Borrelli. Franklin Roosevelt issued hundreds of executive orders over his 12 years as president, including one which condemned discrimination in our troops and another which paved the way for Japanese internment camps during the Second World War. Executive actions have the potential to create both great victories and great failures. They might promote civil liberties or limit them.

In the case of Trump's executive actions, the country is heavily and starkly divided. On the political side less represented at Conn, many Americans are excited to see action being taken following two terms of gridlock and slow progress under Obama. “The [politically] right part of the country is excited about this,” commented Roosevelt club president, Ryan Friend, “they feel like their president is doing something.” •

### January 20, 2017:
Trump signs an executive order declaring his intention to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

### January 23, 2017:
Trump signs a presidential memorandum to indicate his intent to withdraw from the Trans Pacific Partnership (a trade deal to lower tariffs for several Pacific Rim nations).

### January 23, 2017:
Trump signs a presidential memorandum to freeze government hiring in the executive branch (except for in the military).

### January 23, 2017:
Trump signs a presidential memorandum reinstating the 'Mexico City Policy' which requires that non-governmental American organizations refrain from discussing abortion abroad.

### January 24, 2017:
Trump signs a presidential memorandum establishing a review process of American manufacturing regulations in order to find ways to reduce said regulations.

### January 24, 2017:
Trumps signs three different presidential memoranda to build more oil pipelines in the U.S. The first two memoranda were signed to review and approve the building of the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Keystone XL Pipeline.

### January 24, 2017:
Trump signs an executive order to allow officials to request an expedited environmental review of high priority infrastructure projects.

### January 25, 2017:
Trump signs an executive order which cuts funding for self-declared ‘sanctuary cities.’ The order specifically withdraws federal funds from cities that don’t comply with immigration policies.

### January 25, 2017:
Trump signs an executive order stating his intention to (and plan for) building a wall along the border between The United States and Mexico.

### January 26, 2017:
Trump signs a presidential proclamation establishing Jan. 22 through Jan. 28, 2017 as National School Choice Week. The proclamation encouraged Americans to take advantage of vouchers and charter schools.

### January 27, 2017:
Trump signs a presidential memorandum commanding the Secretary of Defense to conduct a review of the readiness of the military.

### January 27, 2017:
Trump signs an executive order which temporarily keeps people from majority-Muslim Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen from entering the country for 90 days; the order also keeps Syrians from entering the country indefinitely.

### January 28, 2017:
Trump signs a presidential memorandum stating his intention to develop a plan for defeating ISIS.

### January 28, 2017:
Trump signs a presidential memorandum removing many high-ranking military and intelligence advisers as regular attendees of the National Security Council’s Principals Committee. The memorandum also states that the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff will only be invited to meetings when necessary, and that council to the White House Steve Bannon will be a regular attendee.

### January 28, 2017:
Trump signs an executive order requiring all executive appointees to sign an ethics pledge against lobbying (the order, however, only requires that eligible candidates have left their lobbying position one year prior to appointment).

### January 30, 2017:
Trump signs an executive order to remove two federal regulations for every new one that is proposed by the executive branch of the government.

### February 2, 2017:
Trump signs a presidential proclamation to declare February “American Heart Month,” in order to call attention to heart disease (this is an action that has been undertaken by every president since 1963).

### February 3, 2017:
Trump signs an executive order to establish “Core Principles” in regards to finance and the finance industry. The order also reduced Wall Street regulations.
One by one, Connecticut municipalities are sending a message to state and federal legislators: no to local fracking waste disposal. Following the lead of municipalities across four counties beginning with Washington and most recently including Middletown, New London aims to become the next city to ban fracking waste.

Andrew Lopez, Research Support Librarian in Government Documents and a New London resident, has been actively involved in the efforts to ban fracking waste disposal in New London and has brought the issue home to Conn. At least an estimated ten Conn students will attend the New London City Council meeting at 7 pm on Feb. 6 using transportation facilitated by SGA.

"SGA jumped right on this," said Lopez, "I'm supposed to coordinate with the group downtown which submitted the ordinance and these guys here, so that we can have maximum impact on City Council.

New London would be at least the eleventh municipality to pass a ban on fracking waste disposal, but the city could be more vulnerable than many of its peers due to its demographic makeup. According to 2010 data from the U.S. Census Bureau, New London has a 30.2% Latino population compared to 13.4% statewide in Connecticut and a 17.4% African American population to Connecticut's 10.1%. Census data from 2015 shows that the median income in New London is $36,250 to Connecticut's $70,331, and while New London has a poverty rate of 28.6%, statewide poverty sits at 10.5%.

Efforts to ban fracking waste in New London and in communities across the state are unfolding while the temporary statewide moratorium on fracking waste disposal remains in place, but according to Lopez, the drive for these bans will persist regardless of whether Connecticut continues to extend the moratorium beyond its expiration date. Enacted under Gov. Daniel Malloy's leadership in 2014, the moratorium states that no fracking waste may be disposed of in the state of Connecticut between July 1, 2014 and the same date in 2017.

On July 1 of this year, the Regulation Review Committee will decide how to move forward with fracking waste regulation, either by extending the moratorium or by replacing it with other legislation. "We have reason to believe that they might extend it for another year," said Lopez, "but [organizers also believe] that that's only an excuse for not taking action, and that when they do take action, it's not going to be prohibitive or regulatory.

Therefore, individual cities and towns are taking prohibitive and regulatory action into their own hands in an attempt to put it, "What's happening municipally is an attempt to preempt that inaction on the state level."

Concerning state-level legislation, Lopez commented of the issue: "I don't trust him, and I don't think he will be on our side unless we get mass mobilization. And passing these town ordinances is our attempt to communicate indirectly with people like Gov. Malloy. We want to use these town bans to show the state government: We're not interested. You can't be dilly-dallying with this moratorium, and also you definitely can't leave it unregulated. You can't allow it. This is an attempt to drive state policy."

Former New London Mayor Darryl Finizio has been unclear about his position on the issue. Lopez noted: "I assume he's on board, but I don't think I've seen that he signed the petition: I don't think I've seen that he's liked the Facebook page, which is our main source of communication.

Current Mayor Michael Passero has liked the page "Ban Fracking Waste in New London" on Facebook and was called "open-minded" and "interested in the issue" by Lopez. It is likely that the proposed fracking ban's momentum in New London is in part a result of concerns about new seizures of power in the federal government. Lopez pointed out the appearance, on day one of the new administration, of an "America First Energy Plan" document that "We must take advantage of the estimated $50 trillion in untapped shale, oil, and natural gas reserves, especially those on federal lands that the American people own."

“Waste can be difficult to identify. CT News state oversight was adequate. "This exemplifies the point of what's happening in 2017. I like that. That's the way it's supposed to be."

Connecticut, of course, is not the only state that can pass bans on fracking waste. Because the issue is up to state regulation, the municipalities in Connecticut wield the power of influence across state lines. Lopez stated with excitement: "If more and more states do this, then we show the federal government where our policies need to go, which is sort of what's happening in 2017, I like that. That's the way it's supposed to be."

The College financed the Connecticut College Republicans and Conservatives club to visit Washington D.C. and witness a historic moment: the inauguration of Donald J. Trump as the 45th President of the United States. Having finished studies in the post-election Women's March on Washington, the College also supported CCRC experience the inauguration. This was the College's effort to foster diverse thought and support students' pursuit of their political ideologies. Students who attended the inauguration reported impressions of the environment more peaceful than those portrayed at media. The CCRC does not necessarily support the Trump administration but believes in showing respect to the new United States President on a historic day. CCRC members learned a great deal from their trip to Washington D.C. and from witnessing the peaceful transition of power to a highly controversial administration. •

NEWS • 5
A Report on the Women’s March from an Attendee

ANNA RUBIN
CONTRIBUTOR

Commonly heard in discourse throughout the United States is an immense pride and sense of privilege in the Constitutional right to exercise freedom of speech. When operating properly, freedom of speech gives anyone in the U.S. the right to express their opinion without censorship or restraint. To this end, the First Amendment of the Constitution asserts that "Congress shall make no law prohibiting the free exercise or abridging the freedom of speech."

Pride in diversity and acceptance is, perhaps, a more widely contested concept. The U.S. projects an image of welcoming more immigrants than any other country, praising diversity and respecting others, and to many U.S. citizens and residents, these values are essential. Those who consider that race, gender or ethnicity makes sense for Connecticut College, given that the institution was originally established as a women’s college and has only been co-ed since 1969. Of course, despite this likely correlation between values, the College remains an institution without a stated political affiliation, and did fund another group of students’ travel to Washington for Inauguration Day.

A wall in Shain Library reads, "Our freedom to say or write whatever we please in this country is holy to me. It is a rare privilege not only on this planet, but throughout the universe." This declaration echoes the sentiments and messages voiced at the Women’s March in Boston late this January.

Conn provides all it can to support its sports teams, but there are limits to what a Division III school can offer its athletes, especially in comparison to what Division I schools provide. The difference manifests clearly between the Atlantic Coast Conference and the New England Small College Athletic Conference. Facilities, trainers, coaching staff and other factors play a significant role in the performance of a team. Therefore, when looking at the results of Saturday night’s match in Providence, it is important to understand that the Conn men, a Division III program, put up a respectable fight against the UVA men, for all intents and purposes a Division I program. The Conn men have an exciting few weeks coming up. Conn squash fans can look forward to their matches at the NESCACS, a weekend at Hamilton College and another weekend at Nationals, location yet to be determined.
Dean McKnight’s Job Made More Crucial by Current Political Climate

MAIA HIBBETT  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

For John McKnight, recently installed Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion, the biggest shock of his inaugural semester was not exactly Conn-specific.

“I couldn’t have imagined we would have elected Donald Trump as President,” McKnight admitted, “and it has had a direct influence on, certainly, the campus climate, the current environment and the way I think about my work.”

While academics’ commentary on the the new presidency has a tendency to sound ominous, McKnight assumed a concerned but not devastat-ed perspective, clarifying: “The truth is, it hasn’t changed anything in terms of my vision for an engaged campus community...But I guess what has changed is [that] it has intensified, and it has made the work even more urgent.”

McKnight stressed passion and pragmatism, noting that “There’s so much to be on fire about right now...And I think there’s this general perception that colleges want to somehow hamper that or reign it in in some way, and I think that’s a misguided notion. What I want from the student body is to be really clear about the issues that matter to you, know exactly what questions to ask, and find ways of engagement that will be productive and that will really bring about the change that they wanna see.”

Noticeably aware of the critiques that this message of productivity might bring about, McKnight added: “Sometimes that happens in the form of protests or demonstrations, and other times it happens in a more strategic way of approaching a problem...But I don’t want people to hear or read that and think: ‘they just don’t want us to protest.’

“Sometimes that happens in the form of a gathering, to be able to discuss the implications, for people to celebrate, or mourn, or whatever it is. Not expecting the outcome that we ended up with, it quickly turned into a very large gathering,” McKnight remarked.

Since that initial gathering, the work has become more technical and rooted in policy. McKnight said that at a luncheon to which all international students were invited, he “brought in an immigration attorney to talk about what we imagine might be coming down the road,” an opportunity which he believes was crucial.

“The number one advice we’ve been hearing from our legal counsel in advising these students is: they all need to have an immigration attorney kind of on speed dial,” McKnight explained. Regarding Conn’s part in making that happen, he added: “We’ve established a fund for people who are seeking legal counsel and may be unable to afford it.”

Because Conn’s student body includes students from countries listed under Trump’s so-called “Muslim ban,” McKnight noted that those students are of particular concern at present. But, he clarified: “The focus keeps shifting. The first week after the election, we were really focused on DACA and undocumented status.”

McKnight added that while Donald Trump’s election has led Americans to shift their policy priorities, one issue’s elevated urgency does not diminish the importance of another. He mentioned that the identities of individual students are so varied that Conn and other institutions must provide support across a spectrum of diverse national, racial, religious, socioeconomic and sexual identities.

When asked if he was worried about Trump’s vow to disrupt sanctuary cities, McKnight stated: “Yes, I worry about everything he says.”

“Part of the issue with the word ‘sanctuary’ is that it doesn’t actually have any legal bearing right now for any of the institutions that have claimed it,” McKnight admitted. He continued: “But what I love about Conn’s stance on this is we defined, for ourselves, what it means to be a sanctuary...[President Bergeron] said what that meant, and what that meant was we would go to extreme lengths, within the confines of the law, but to extreme measures to protect our students.”

“If this new presidential administration wants to challenge sanctuary statuses,” Dean McKnight posed, “would he start with colleges?” He added that we must critically consider: “What does it mean to ‘go after’ sanctuaries?”

Three members of the Connecticut College community were honored with Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards at the Black Heritage Month kickoff event “Young, Gifted and Black.”

Honorees (below) from left to right: Nathalie Ethoke, Associate Professor of French and Africana Studies; Lamiya Khandaker ’17, Government and Global Islamic Studies major; Shameesha Pryor ’17, Africana Studies major and Human Development minor

Photos courtesy of Connecticut College website
“How can I describe Sean Spicer?”

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

among the NESCAC schools...Connecticut College is probably about in the middle politically, and I imagine that you have things going on like, colleges in general skew liberal, but maybe preppies in New England—kids from New England prep schools skew conservative, so you get kind of a mix of that, but I would say that it was a liberal place. You know, Sean I think started, or not started, but joined the Young Republican club or something, and he was Republican, and that was obviously kind of a rarer stance/position than most of campus. I would guess that it was 85% liberal versus 15% identifying conservative.

TCV: So you just mentioned that Sean joined the Young Republicans club. What were his other involvements and what was his presence like on campus? His major, anything like that?

DB: He was very into sailing, and he had grown up sailing, and I know one of the things that he talked about a lot was how that kind of provided this automatic little social club for him at the school because

All the sailors had to get up early to go to practice every morning, and so you know their schedules were dictated by their sailing classes, and everything else fell behind that. So the sailing club at the school, I remember it was a very insular club—not sailing team, I'm sorry; I keep calling it a club—it was a team; they competed; they would race against other schools that had sailing teams. And so that really seemed to be his main deal. That was his scene. Those were the friends I think he hung out most with.

He majored in I believe Government, and I wanna say Chinese. Early on, I remember this conversation one of our first days when me and Jeremy and he were talking about what we were gonna major in, and I was so amazed that Jeremy and he both were like—government and business stuff; they both were very into business, and I had no interest in anything like that—I wanted to major in English...I think Sean majored in Government, maybe with a Chinese minor, but I'm not even sure if he like, you know, kept up and went through with it.

“Every year he ran for class president. Every year he lost.”

campus? Well-liked?

DB: Um, no. Not well-liked. Not like hated. How can I describe Sean Spicer? Because he was kind of an interesting guy. He was very into, like, always having a sense of humor, and funny, and laughing and chatty. And that was something that was, you know, kind of pleasant about him. But he wasn't so good at it. And he wasn't very popular, I would say—he was like, he would walk into the room and everyone would kind of go: “Ugh, Spicer.” But he was aware of that, and so then would like, play with it, so he'd be like: “Hey, come on guys! It’s just me! Come on, let’s have a beer; we love each other! Yeah, come on—oh, I know you don't like me, but that's just because you don't know me!” He'd put his arm around you, and kind of be like, “come on!” you know? And so it was this very interesting combina-
THE COLLEGE VOICE  FEBRUARY 6, 2017

room... but I always had some stuff in my origi-
nal room, so I would get back there, and I hung
out a lot on the floor; all my friends were on that
floor and in that dorm, so we were still around
each other a lot.

TCV: And so when The College Voice assigned
Sean Spicer his infamous nickname, was there a
big campus reaction? Did a lot of people notice?

DB: Yes, yes. It was a thing, for sure, a lot of
people remember it—I know from talking to other
people I've been in contact with, a lot of people
remember it. It was funny; he was—he was a Re-
publican trying to run for president of the class
every year. Every year he ran for class president.
Every year he lost. Every—four years running
for class president, four years losing. So he was
kind of, he kind of made himself into Sean Sphincter,
you know? That was his nickname; people teased him about that, and then, when
it got into the press, you know, he had that reac-
tion, and it was a story on campus.

TCV: So, did The College Voice come up with that
nickname, or was it a preexisting thing on cam-
pus?

DB: Oh, no. I don’t think so. That was just a preexisting nickname. I think one of the people that
worked on the Voice was kind of in
this group of guys that were sort of
friendly with Spicer on the sailing team and they kinda teased him, and then he put it in the paper first, I
think. So maybe it was like, that
person invented that nickname, and it was not—no, I can actually
remember that no, lots of people had that nickname for him before it ran in the paper, I think, to the best
of my memory.

TCV: You've already spoken to this one pretty significantly, but as a
roommate, just as a person to live with, what was [Spicer] like?

DB: He was kind of gross, really. I mean, but look, again, I have to
take some complicity in this, like—
I mean, but look, again, I have to
consider the fact that there was a—
that person invented that nickname,...
and then he put it in the paper first, I
think. So maybe it was like, that
person invented that nickname, and it was not—no, I can actually
remember that no, lots of people had that nickname for him before it ran in the paper, I think, to the best
of my memory.

TCV: And so you already mentioned that after you were roommates you kind of
just kept a casual relationship on campus, but did you ever stay in touch at all after
graduation, or was the next time you saw
Sean Spicer when he was the Press Secre-
tary?

DB: The next time I saw Sean Spicer was—
no, not when he was the Press Secretary. I
mean, you know, I read the papers, and he'd been coming up through politics. There had been—
he was working for certain congress-
cmans that would be passing certain actions or
pushing for certain laws, let's say, and he was
often a spokesperson for these people... he
was someone whose name would get in the
paper, and they way people pay attention
to that stuff, when it's—you know, some-
thing done about the coffee mugs, fine,
but did you ever stay in touch at all after
graduation, or was the next time you saw
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tary?

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to that stuff, when it's—you know, some-
one would send an email, be like, "Look at
that stuff, when it's—you know, some-
thing done about the coffee mugs, fine,
but did you ever stay in touch at all after
graduation, or was the next time you saw
Sean Spicer when he was the Press Secre-
tary?"

DB: No. No, I haven't seen him in person
since college.

TCV: Okay, well I think that takes care of all
of my questions for today. Do you have anything to add?

DB: No. I'm happy to answer your questions, I'm psyched
to see the story.

• Editor’s note: According to the Connecticut College Alumni
Directory, Spicer graduated with a major in
Government.
Punching Pepe: Meme Magic and Ethics Regarding Free Speech

CAM NETLAND
CONTRIBUTOR

The “alt-right,” a white supremacist movement that originated within extremist internet forums such as 4chan’s /pol/ in 2010, has become the subject of controversy and media fascination surrounding the 2016 presidential campaign and America’s political climate. Largely condemned by politicians, the alt-right has resurfaced in ethics debates after the movement’s representative, Richard Spencer, was assaulted on inauguration day. The attack has garnered a significant amount of attention in the past six months as it has become the focal point of a broader conversation about the position of hate speech and the moral implications of public-condoned violence. Is it moral to punch a Nazi? How should these incidents be handled? Those are the questions that dominate current discussions.

The controversy surrounding Pepe underscores the alt-right’s use of internet memes. The Internet sphere exists in a realm where clear-cut categorization of authors is nonexistent. In today’s world, especially in the age of Trump, it is unlikely that memes will ever be contained to the confines of the internet. Memes are a part of the world we live in, and that is why it is so crucial to examine the implications of this popular form of communication.

Deep internet forums, such as those in which the alt-right gained traction, often incorporate memes to position a point or encourage lulu. Lulu is schadenfreude-deived laughter at the misfortune of others—often enhanced through the ubiquity and influence of meme culture. Along with memes and lulu, the internet features millions of activists who are overjoyed to see their opinions punished. After the overwhelming support for the assailant was spread online, Spencer commented: "I am afraid this is going to become the meme to end all memes. I’m going to hate watching this." He also complained on his fear of traveling without a bodyguard but has so far taken no legal action in regard to the punch. The minority of people upset by the assault on Spencer argues that punishing a bully constitutes bullying itself. Yet this doesn’t hold. The hatred of Nazis does not equate to the hatred Nazis harbor for innocent people. Moreover, the violence involved in assaulting a Nazi who chooses to publicly spew his or her bigotry and hatred is not a consequence of pre-emptive. Whereas the Nazis spew racial hatred in order to proselytize or even incite violence toward minorities in the moment, a good Samaritan who hates Nazis and assaults one does a public service by stopping the dangerous flow of racial distribution and taking the trash off the street.

From the perspective of people concerned for the future of America, the general consensus has been: yes, it is ok to punch a Nazi. Hate begets hate. You get what’s coming. The assumption is that penalizing someone who preaches hate should have its consequences. Now, how would these activists respond if Spencer had contacted police and his assailant was found guilty of assault? Would the puncher’s actions be justified from a legal standpoint? The answer is no. Spencer is within his complete jurisdiction to report and arrest anyone who has done harm to him. Yet what about the legality of hate speech? In many countries, a Nazi would be committing a crime by disseminating hateful ideology. In the United States, where hate speech is legal, a simple punch reveals the degree of freedom average citizen possesses to distribute justice on their own.

In today’s world, especially in Trump’s world, we have to be especially scrupulous about how we define free speech. People may resort to violence, or other instinctual responses to dissent, more often than not in the age of Trump. While we may derive some sense of justice from watching a Nazi get socked in the face, this violence reflects a civil decorum that is spilling through the hourglass as we transition into a new political leadership. As a citizen, I condemn the actions of the person who punched Richard Spencer, but as a person I applaud him for doing so. Whether they are mutually exclusive or not, in the blurred lines of Trump’s America, we may lose both altogether.
Let’s Talk About Class

BY WESLEY CHRABANZ
STAFF WRITER

“How much does your family make?” As if by instinct, nearly every student at this college might immediately furrow their brow in response to such a question. “Well, that’s none of your business!” Of course, such a reaction is by no means confined to the student body of Connecticut College. One would likely receive a similar response in any other part of the country.

But why is it that we are often so defensive when it comes to discussing our socioeconomic status? Is it due to personal privacy? Or is it perhaps because the subject is so uncomfortable to discuss? I, for one, am of the belief that the most uncomfortable subjects are the subjects that deserve to be discussed the most.

A few weeks ago, The New York Times published an article titled “Some Colleges Have More Students From the Top 1 Percent Than the Bottom 60%” which reported on the status of income inequality on college campuses across the United States. Based on research from the Equality of Opportunity Project, the article identified thirty-eight four-year institutions of higher education in the United States which had more students from the top 1% of income earners than from the bottom 60%. Currently, there are 3,026 four-year institutions of higher education in the United States. That means that roughly 1.3% of all four-year colleges and universities in the country report having more students from the top 1% of income earners than the bottom 60%. This portion of colleges is so incredibly small, one might wonder why I even bother to write about it. Well, you might be interested to know that Connecticut College made the list.

Of the country’s 3,026 four-year colleges and universities, Connecticut College ranked twenty-second in terms of income inequality. Further, The New York Times ranking reported that 18% of Connecticut College students come from households that earned greater than $630,000 annually (the top 1% of households in the United States), while only 14.8% of students come from households that earn less than $65,000 annually (the bottom 60% of households in the United States).

To put this in perspective, consider that if you were in any given course with twenty students, it would not be unlikely for four of your classmates to be millionaires.

To some students, these revelations regarding the College’s near-obscene level of social stratification may be surprising. But that 14.8% of the student body from the bottom 60% of income earners likely has been aware of the College’s overrepresentation of wealthy households since their first week on campus. You’re probably familiar with the term “culture shock” in the context of an individual’s difficulty in adjusting to the way of life in foreign countries. Well, it does not seem unfair to characterize the experience of middle class and low-income students on this campus as marked by their own degree of culture shock. Prior to my first year at Conn, I had never heard of Vineyard Vines, I had no idea what a prep school was, and I couldn’t point to the Hamptons on a map. I have to admit, many of my social interactions were a bit confusing. I met people who hadn’t ever done their own laundry. Some claimed to have never eaten in a food court. And everyone had seemingly taken a trip to Europe at some point. It was clear that I had a different cultural experience growing up than many of my peers.

Beyond my cultural differences with the more affluent students at the College, over the years I began to notice how many of them were woefully ignorant of the economic realities that the less-affluent faced. For example, I once asked another Conn student what threshold they considered to be low-income in the United States. In all seriousness, they responded “Anything under $200,000.” For those of you who are unaware, the median household income in the United States was $55,000 in 2015.

This campus is extremely fortunate to have such spaces as the Women’s Center, the LGBTQIA Center and Unity House for students to come together and discuss critically important issues surrounding gender, sexuality and race. The presence of such spaces and the continuation of such dialogue is not only conducive to a rigorous and intersectional education, but also invaluable in the formation of a student’s worldview.

Writing this is not my way of advocating the formation of a center specifically to discuss issues regarding class, poverty and social status. However, I feel that the lack of discussion of issues regarding class, paired with the reality that so many of our students are much more affluent than the average individual, has created a campus culture shrouded in ignorance of the economic realities of the rest of the country, and, indeed, the world.

The issue of class is especially relevant today, in light of the working class movements ignited by both Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump during the 2016 U.S. Presidential election and the economic themes that both candidates’ campaigns brought into the forefront of political discussion. However, I fear that within the student body of Connecticut College, there exists a dominant culture of elitism that is all-too-quick to dismiss many of these voters as “white trash” and the like. I have to wonder: when students discuss free trade agreements, minimum wage, healthcare law and the like, do they realize that they are not speaking in the abstract? Or does their privileged perspective prevent them from understanding the human experience of economic violence?

I can’t speak for any other students on campus, but class is certainly an identity which I feel separates my own life experiences from those of others. My family falls into the bottom 60% income bracket and has existed there for as long as I can remember. One of my immediate family members received unemployment benefits during the most recent recession. I have tens of thousands of dollars in public and private student loans. I went to a public high school where thousands of dollars in public and private student loans. I went to a public high school where most of my classmates went off to community college or directly into the workforce upon graduation. I once had a summer job pushing carts at the local Walmart, and–besides the limited policy that the College required me to purchase–no one in my household can afford health insurance. But perhaps the most ironic insight of all is that, even having been accepted to multiple state universities, I made my decision to attend Connecticut College primarily because their financial aid package made it the cheapest option I had. I feel no more or less comfortable sharing details about this aspect of my identity than I would any other.

So why do we not talk more about class on this campus? Why is it still considered rude to discuss one’s household income or socioeconomic status? Many of our students are more than happy to share their experiences regarding race, gender and sexuality. So why is that taboo about sharing our experiences regarding class?

I don’t pretend to know the solution to these problems on our campus, but it couldn’t hurt to commit at least some of our intellectual effort toward understanding the perspectives of middle-class and low-income students on campus.

Or, of course, we can choose to take our ranking in the top 1.3% of U.S. colleges and universities in terms of income inequality and wear it with pride.
The Mouth of a Shark

AMIANU KHANAL
CONTRIBUTOR

no one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark.

you only run for the border when you see the whole city running as well.

-Warsan Shire, “Home”

Keeping the nation’s population safe is the utmost duty of any state leader. However, the steps adopted by President Trump to ensure Americans’ safety are not only unconstitutional but also dangerous in the long term. After Trump’s Jan. 27 executive order banning immigration from seven majority-Muslim countries, hundreds of Muslim Americans’ futures and those of their citizens alike were held in airports nationwide. In some cases, permanent residents were deported. This act is unconstitutional since sections 212 and 237 of the Immigration and Nationality Act state that a permanent resident has the right to live permanently in the U.S., provided they have not committed any major crime. Therefore, what TSA did nationwide, last week, was unconstitutional.

According to President Trump, the West is the greatest enemy of Muslim extremist organizations such as ISIS, Al Qaeda, Taliban etc. However, said terrorist organizations do not just abhor Christians, but also Muslims with a set of ideology that does not com- ply or align with their set of radical beliefs, including other Muslims in the region. Based on the statistics listed at the beginning of the article, it can be inferred that no one is more hurt by these terrorists than the Muslims in the Middle East; no one is more adversely affected by their barbaric agenda than everyday Muslims in Syria, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Yemen and Somalia, and no one wants to see these radical terrorist groups defeat more than Muslims.

Citizens of these nations are drained, tired of having to live under conditions where getting raped by a gang of men is—at this point—disturbingly routine. It is disheartening to comprehend that people live under such dire conditions where each day is a bag full of unpredictabilities. It is unfair and unjust that these people have to live under such tyranny. More disheartening is the demonization of refugees from these countries as they try to save their lives by relocating. As Warsan Shire puts it in her poem “Home” “no one puts their children in a boat because the water is safer than the land.”

As the so-called most charitable people in the world, and as a nation that reintroduced liberating ideas like those of the free market and democracy to the modern world, we must do our best duty to help the helpless. It is our utmost duty as a leading nation of the free world to help these refugees who have seen far more cruelty from life than one needs to see. It is our utmost duty to defeat Islamic extremism; but vilifying the everyday Muslim is not the way to victory, only to alienation and undue prejudice. Trump’s immi- gration ban vilifies the average Muslim by equat- ing him/her with terrorism and this practice will not help us defeat ISIS. Continuing with this tactic will only further terrorist agendas and solidify their first principle of indoctrination: “the West is evil, the West dislikes us, and we should join our cause.” In the long term, the continuation of this line of thought and policy will only further the reach of dangerous radicalism and we will not be able to de- feat the evil entity.

If we can discern the difference between moderate Christians and Westboro churchgoers, then we must be able to differentiate an everyday Muslim from a member of ISIS. When we accomplish this, there will be a step closer to defeating Islamic ter- rorism. It should be the whole world against radical terrorism and Islamic extremism, not the whole world against Islam—and yes, there is a major differ- ence.

On the other hand, I believe that vetting is an absolute necessity for ensuring the safety of Ameri- ca, but the vetting process should be made smooth- er and more organized. Subsequently, banning an entire flock of immigrants from majority-Muslim countries looks more like a “Muslim ban” than “thoughtful foreign policy.” It is indubitable that religious extremism in any form is lethal. Undoubted- ly, terrorism is a salient issue and a major point of concern for the whole world. Yet the world is not just the West, and more than anyone else, Is- lamic extremists threaten the everyday Muslim liv- ing in the Middle East. These extremists target their own people for not following in the footsteps of their radical religious beliefs. Therefore, as leaders of the free world, the United States and its citizens bear a significant responsibility in providing safety for the refugees. We must help refugees affected by radical Islam in the Middle East. Humanity must prevail over the barbarism proposed by the extremists.

Letter to Spicer

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

volved in the executive order halting entries of refu- gees and citizens of certain nations.

Despite our occasional mistakes, I still strongly believe in the overall ability of the Voice to report campus news accurately and fairly. I have been writ- ing in the Voice for over three semesters now and I have seen many highs and lows. I continue to support and believe in the Voice’s overall mission to inform the student body even if I have occasional disagree- ments with its editorial decisions. Two weeks ago our sister New London newspaper, The Day (which also produces copies of our print edition), wrote an editorial acknowledging the reality that journal- ists do not always execute the duties of their profes- sion faithfully, which I recommend that you read. The Day claimed: “Serious journalism is an imperfect art practiced by skeptical idealists and admitted obs- sessives. They never have all the answers.” If we can agree to acknowledge our mistakes, then our readers must accept that we always strive with integrity to provide the best information we can on issues facing our campus and lives, a promise that should also be held by the White House Press Office.

When we make these mistakes, we risk letting our readers believe that journalists cannot ever write in an objective manner. Even a single Facebook post such as the Voice’s, can be used by writers dissemi- nating fake news as evidence that their unfactual ar- ticles constitute a public service. I am most worried, however, by mistakes that occur without editorial accountability. I have been concerned about how, in recent semesters, we have made very few attempts to make our corrections process transparent to readers. This has given the impression to the community that we are unconcerned about our mistakes. I am happy to report that our new editor-in-chief has pledged to make the Voice more accountable this semester, which I hope will allow the campus to place more trust in us.

In closing, I would draw your attention to com- ments Professor William Frasure made in an article recently published by the College about you. Specif- ically, he stated: “The most important journalists in America will be sitting before him every day. Aside from Trump’s, his will be one of the most listened to voices in the country!” I think that Professor Frasure assumed you would be doing your job with the highest integ- rity, the same integrity that college and professional journalists aim to practice every time we write for and publish an issue. Professor Frasure is right to call you a “great talker,” but can you do more than just talk?

Thank you for taking the time to read my attempt to acknowledge the wrongs that this newspaper has committed against you. I hope that we can both agree to act with integrity and transparency about our mistakes as we try to get the facts cor- rect in our respective jobs. In particular, I personally expect you to be honest in the statements you will release in response to petitions I and others signed on the White House website calling for the release of President Donald J. Trump’s tax returns and his divestment of assets in a blind trust. These two petitions are the only ones to have received over 100,000 signatures, which means that you have to respond to them. Hey, it’s better than explaining why an extraordinarily low number of Syrian refugees are allowed to enter this country or why only a “medieval maniac” (in the words of Charlie Crist) would catego- rize Black Lives Matter as a terrorist orga- nization! Since the petitions were post- ed on Jan. 20, and the White House has promised you will respond within ninety days of their posting, I look forward to seeing what you have to say about them on April 20. After all, I hope you will prove yourselves to be a more responsi- ble Press Secretary than the ones Barack Obama ap- pointed, who always seemed to be late responding to their White House petitions.

Announcing two prizes sponsored by the Friends of the Connecticut College Library

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A Spastic, Entertaining Cry for Freedom: SITI’s Woolf-Based “Room”

JENNIFER SKOGLUND
PERSPECTIVES EDITOR

A one-woman act of madness, inspiration and femininity came to Conn’s Palmer Auditorium on Feb. 3: “Room,” directed by Anne Bogart and starring Ellen Lauren. Conceived of by SITI Company, “an ensemble-based theater company committed to providing a gymnasium-for-the-soul,” “Room” consists of Lauren as writer Virginia Woolf delivering excerpts from Woolf’s essays. I consider it a stab at advancing Woolf’s convictions regarding excerpts from Woolf’s writer Virginia Woolf delivering from Woolf’s various episodic efforts and essays. I consider it a stab at addressing the modern relevance of Woolf’s convictions through theatrical application, if you will. The result? Funny, poignant, a bit obstreperous; altogether, “Room” is an interesting call to arms for women’s autonomy and intellectual freedom.

The performance opens with a startling confession: “It is true, I am a woman,” Virginia declares. She reads from “A Room of One’s Own,” emphasizing the importance of having “room to move...to breathe...to imagine.” She speaks of the impossibility of knowing a human being or knowing to what a life amounts. She uses the beautifully descriptive imagery of The Waves to illustrate the cyclical nature of time. “All life and reality really is,” says Virginia, “is memory.” A wise woman, huh?

Her existential musings are as jarring as they are funny. “Am I alone in my egotism when I say that never does the pale light of dawn filter through the blinds of 72 Tavistock square,” she recalls from her Self Portrait, “but I open my eyes and exclaim, ‘Good God! Here I am again!’ – not always with pleasure, often with pain; sometimes with an acute spasm of disgust – but always with interest.

I’m sure this sounds highly profound so far. Still, you might be wondering how I sat through 90 minutes of a grown woman flailing around on stage while lecturing on how to read a book. Lauren as Virginia managed to keep my admit terribly fish-like attention with vigor and youthful animation; in fact, it was the energy of her performance that kept me stirring. Just when her stern advice starts to become too somnolently self-indulgent and pedantic, Virginia switch-es trains of thought and explosives with energy, leaping around the stage in an ecstasy of histrionic delight. With the way the stage lights cast her dancing shadow on every wall, the performance is almost acrobatic. But what truly kept my interest throughout the show was a combination of the wonderful musical accompaniment and Virginia’s bizarre physical movements. Our heroine’s gyrations and writhings synchronize to a musical number that help illustrate her message as well as the dangers of alcoholism. Whether during instances when her jutting, musically spasmodic movements match sharp, shocking piano notes or when her smooth, rolling motions meet with soothing timbre, the choreography is ceaselessly entertaining. At one point, Virginia lies on stage and almost swims in place with a surreal smoothness, as if she were a moulding insect.

All of this entertaining staging couches a lecture—on artistic integrity and the necessity of free thinking which is anything but boring. The blown-up shadow of Virginia’s silhouette bounces across the walls as she confesses to murder. “I killed the angel in the house,” she declares. She has killed the ideal picture of domestic docility, the silent and mindless woman she was supposed to be. “It was self-defense,” she explains, that moved her to murder. She feels shad no other choice when she felt the dammy, lifeless “hand of the angel at her throat” and heard it whisper to her to extinguish her mental curiosity.

Virginia’s confession to homicide is only our first glimpse into the horrors of existence she sketches. The music builds to a piercing, Hitch-cock-like accompaniment as she confesses to having been “afraid of her own body,” before telling a story of childhood sexual abuse. Yet she refuses to stay silent just because the topic is “unpleasant.”

“We are all women here,” she says solemnly, “let us admit that these things happen.” For Woolf, the erratic and sometimes unjustly horrifying nature of reality forges two types of “being,” being and non-being. Only by fully embracing being do we experience the shock of creative inspiration, a force which drives us to leave our mark, however small, in this cold, uncaring void of a universe. Virginia’s appreciation for being and creative literary expression builds to a crescendo of rapturous delight as she rolls around on the ground shrieking in ecstasy. The performance concludes with a shockingly calm explication of Modernist principles of artistic experimentation. Virginia dares us to challenge forms, to overflow where structure has not yet accounted for our creative powers.

While she sometimes borders on the maniacal, I liked Ellen Lauren as the Big Bad Woolf. For modern readers, Virginia’s message, if the somewhat incoherent dramatic composition of the letters could be said to have such a thing, is thus: autonomy—having a mind of one’s own— is the only way to live freely in our erratic reality.

Cummings Arts Center’s Evans Hall screened the 2016 documentary Salam Neighbor on Feb. 4. Salam Neighbor features Chris Temple and Zach Ingrasci, two American filmmakers who lived among 85,000 Syrian refugees at the Za’atari refugee camp in Jordan for a month. The film focuses on the lives of refugees, whose stories get lost amid the torrent of news headlines. It is thus a highly moving film that shows the everyday struggles of individuals who have had to leave their homes and, in many cases, family members, because of the internecine conflict of the Syrian Civil War. The film shows us that due to this conflict, many people have lost loved ones and are struggling to rebuild their existences. Despite the hardship they experience, many of the individuals and families featured show resilience in the face of immense turmoil and difficulty.

The screening was free and open to the public, but attendees were given the opportunity to make donations supporting refugee families escaping conflicts in the Middle East to settle in the New London area. The event featured a discussion and question and answer session following the screening and was sponsored by Connecticut College’s Committee on Refugees Relief and Education and Fresh Air, a local non-profit refugee resettlement team. Not only did the screening and discussion of Salam Neighbor provide the Conn community with an easy opportunity to learn about the harsh circumstances that thousands of people worldwide face daily, but it also helped connect Conn students to local residents and organizing efforts.

SITI's Woolf-Based “Room”

Photo courtesy of Chasi Annexy/SITI Company

Photo of Ellen Lauren (SITI Company)

Refugee Crisis Education Efforts Continue with Salam Neighbor

SHATRUNJAY MALI
BUSINESS MANAGER

Feb. 3: “Room,” directed by Anne Bogart and starring Ellen Lauren. Conceived of by SITI Company, “an ensemble-based theater company committed to providing a gymnasium-for-the-soul,” “Room” consists of Lauren as writer Virginia Woolf delivering excerpts from Woolf’s essays. I consider it a stab at advancing Woolf’s convictions regarding excerpts from Woolf’s writer Virginia Woolf delivering from Woolf’s various episodic efforts and essays. I consider it a stab at addressing the modern relevance of Woolf’s convictions through theatrical application, if you will. The result? Funny, poignant, a bit obstreperous; altogether, “Room” is an interesting call to arms for women’s autonomy and intellectual freedom.

The performance opens with a startling confession: “It is true, I am a woman,” Virginia declares. She reads from “A Room of One’s Own,” emphasizing the importance of having “room to move...to breathe...to imagine.” She speaks of the impossibility of knowing a human being or knowing to what a life amounts. She uses the beautifully descriptive imagery of The Waves to illustrate the cyclical nature of time. “All life and reality really is,” says Virginia, “is memory.” A wise woman, huh?

Her existential musings are as jarring as they are funny. “Am I alone in my egotism when I say that never does the pale light of dawn filter through the blinds of 72 Tavistock square,” she recalls from her Self Portrait, “but I open my eyes and exclaim, ‘Good God! Here I am again!’ – not always with pleasure, often with pain; sometimes with an acute spasm of disgust – but always with interest.

I’m sure this sounds highly profound so far. Still, you might be wondering how I sat through 90 minutes of a grown woman flailing around on stage while lecturing on how to read a book. Lauren as Virginia managed to keep my admit terribly fish-like attention with vigor and youthful animation; in fact, it was the energy of her performance that kept me stirring. Just when her stern advice starts to become too somnolently self-indulgent and pedantic, Virginia switch-es trains of thought and explosives with energy, leaping around the stage in an ecstasy of histrionic delight. With the way the stage lights cast her dancing shadow on every wall, the performance is almost acrobatic. But what truly kept my interest throughout the show was a combination of the wonderful musical accompaniment and Virginia’s bizarre physical movements. Our heroine’s gyrations and writhings synchronize to a musical number that help illustrate her message as well as the dangers of alcoholism. Whether during instances when her jutting, musically spasmodic movements match sharp, shocking piano notes or when her smooth, rolling motions meet with soothing timbre, the choreography is ceaselessly entertaining. At one point, Virginia lies on stage and almost swims in place with a surreal smoothness, as if she were a moulding insect.

All of this entertaining staging couches a lecture—on artistic integrity and the necessity of free thinking which is anything but boring. The blown-up shadow of Virginia’s silhouette bounces across the walls as she confesses to murder. “I killed the angel in the house,” she declares. She has killed the ideal picture of domestic docility, the silent and mindless woman she was supposed to be. “It was self-defense,” she explains, that moved her to murder. She feels shad no other choice when she felt the dammy, lifeless “hand of the angel at her throat” and heard it whisper to her to extinguish her mental curiosity.

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to “play matchmaker with perfect pairings” appeals to the romantic in all of us. While Longhorn may be a bit pricey for the average college student, it’s the perfect location for a third date. If you and your special someone want to split an appetizer but want to avoid onion breath, steer clear of the Texas T’On-ion. Instead, opt for the Sweet Corn Fritters, served with a red chili ranch dipping sauce. Light, crisp and delectable, these fritters function as the perfect palate cleanser between the complimentary bread and butter and the Buttermilk Fried Chicken Tender Salad—a dish that amounts to being just a few pieces of chicken sitting on a bed of limp greens.

For the non-carnivorous patrons, Longhorn Steakhouse offers a wide variety of vegetarian side-dishes. Family favorites such as french fries, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes and broccoli offer a flavor to the menu that is lacking in the meat-based dishes (of which there are many). It’s a simple touch, but a nonetheless appreciated one. There are no wine tastings to be found here, but the bar at Longhorn rivals that of even the most high-end casinos. If you’re over 21, you can (and should) try a delectable strawberry margarita served with a rock candy stirrer. The tragic closure of Captain Buck’s Tiki Bar and Grill has left many students lost and seeking a place to go on the weekends. If you are in this position, look no further—experienced bartenders at Longhorn supply you with the experience Tiki wishes it could have given you. For those under 21, bottomless refills on your favorite soft drinks will help to wash down the countless calories that you’re likely to consume.

When the time comes to order a main course at Longhorn, customers may be slightly overwhelmed by the sheer variety of meat options. Fear not, however, as it is very hard to go wrong here. Be it the Bourbon-glazed Salmon served on a bed of rice, or the simpler but no less decadent Cowboy Pork Chops, each and every choice is a delight to the senses. After perusing the lunch menu for several minutes, John ultimately decided on the Steak & Bacon Cheddar Melt, served with a side of fries, paired well with a tall glass of water which was refilled so often, it was as if the waitress heard a cry for help whenever it was empty. Max's $8.99 Burger combo came with a small Caesar salad that tasted as if it had been made three days prior. The wilted greens were encrusted in a veneer of day-old dressing. The burger, while large and cooked properly, was succinctly described by Max as “kind of ass.” Unfortunately, we were unable to save room for dessert, but if we had the choice, the “Chocolate Stampede” which weighs in at a modest 2,430 calories, looked like a delightful mix of sweet and savory.

After we left, we continued to be puzzled by the beautiful contradiction that is Longhorn Steakhouse. The décor and overall ambiance paint a picture of the old American West, but one look at the clientele tells a vastly different story. The Longhorn Steakhouse in Crystal Mall Plaza is a special place, a place that welcomes people from all walks of life. Regardless of political affiliation, race, creed, religion or stance on the music of Brad Paisley, Longhorn unites everyone by tapping into one of the most fundamental human urges: the desire to eat unthinkable amounts of beef.
Blurry photographs are the bane of day-to-day snapshots, but the unclear, large-scale photos of Peter Daitch on display at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum could be mistaken as the latest pieces of modern art. The exhibit is titled Peter Daitch – Photographs: Landscapes, Abstracts & Urban Scenes and will run until April 2, 2017 in the Glassenberg Gallery. It showcases digital photographs taken mostly in New England locations like Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut, yet there are a couple from Aspen Valley, Colorado as well. As familiar as the locations may seem, the photographs are unfamiliar and thought-provoking.

Besides including a few traditionally sharp shots of foggy cityscapes, Peter Daitch employs ideas of expressionism and abstract artwork using the camera as his only tool. For those unfamiliar with expressionism, it can be best defined by the iconic early 20th century painting “The Scream” by Edvard Munch with its striking undulating lines. Daitch’s artistic photography, however, is more streamlined and technological—a bafflingly simple yet skillful grasp of camera techniques that combine long exposures and a swooping motion of the camera lens to create something new.

Sam Quigley, the Director of the Lyman Allyn Art Museum eloquently puts it, “His expert eye and engaging empathy for his subjects draw us into a world that is familiar yet newly presented in fascinating moments. These abstract and artfully rendered photographs inspire us to view our surroundings with new appreciation and humility, and to open ourselves to alternate perceptions of the world around us.” Today’s flawless vistas of sunset-backed mountains and sunny beaches have become so common that they have lost artistic attraction and cause for contemplation. Daitch’s work forces the eye to hunt through each curve and take a guess about the original subject matter. The realistic details have been erased, leaving only the light, colors, and composition being conveyed. The mundane has been updated and revamped, and art has come back into photography.

Daitch’s interest in photography began with an attraction toward dynamics. When he was young, Daitch tried capturing his friends’ professional-looking skateboard poses, and in late high school he enjoyed venturing into Boston’s ballet studios to photograph dancers’ strong movements. In this way, his work attempts to infuse 3D motion into a rigid 2D form to move observers in conjunction with his subjects. He received a BFA in photography from the University of Bridgeport in 1985 and only recently has focused on expressing abstract and expressionistic landscapes through images. Apart from typical art forms like drawing and sculpture, the photographer records a specific existing moment in time from one unique viewpoint. Peter Daitch has shown that gallery worthy art can spring from local nature scenes with the help of a perceptive eye and a camera.
Women’s March and Inauguration:
A Voice Photo Comparison

Women’s March in Boston
Photos courtesy of Anna Rubin

Inauguration of the 45th President of the United States in Washington, DC
Photos courtesy of Amiansu Khanal