

## Congratulations, Graduates!



### NOT FAREWELL

Alyssa Katz

“It’s hard to believe the time has come to graduate. Four years I’ve spent at NVCC, but it wasn’t until my third year I really felt like I had a place here. Joining The Tamarack in fall 2015 was the best decision. For the first time, my work was published for people to see, and I felt a sense of pride. Winning an award for one of my pieces in spring 2016 blew my mind. This last year has been by far my busiest, but also the most rewarding. The opportunity to become copy editor has been great, and confirmed that going into editing is what I want. I’d like to personally thank Faculty Advisor, Professor Steve Parlato and current Editor-in-Chief, Chris Gordon. There are not enough words to express my gratitude for your support, encouragement, generosity, and caring kindness. While I may be leaving NVCC, this is not farewell.”

## CLASS OF 2017



### WORLD VIEW

Levi Reynolds

“During my time as SGA Secretary, I worked to make a positive impact on all students. As a STEM major, I was particularly interested in creating opportunities for fellow students in the math and science fields. I’ve also been involved in many activities, both on campus and off, representing NVCC at the state capitol, for example. Two of the most powerful experiences I had while a student at NVCC took me far from campus: my trip to Nepal over winter break, and my recent visit to NASA. I believe the true power of education lies in coming together and learning from one another, to make possible that which would never be possible alone.”



### MOVING ON

Keila Franco

“There were many times when the pressures of school and life were hard to take, but I’ve survived college by looking at every obstacle and simply saying, “YOU’VE GOT THE WRONG ONE!” Naugatuck Valley Community College, you have been good to me. This is the end of the road for this journey, but just the beginning of what we call life. Thank you to everyone who has helped me follow the stepping stones toward my success story, and congratulations to all who join me in taking the next steps. Off I go!”



### AN UNAFRAID VOICE

Nicole Hayes

“I’ve grown as an individual here at NVCC, learning to look at the larger picture, to place myself in others’ shoes, becoming more empathetic. I’ve come of age, am less impulsive in my thoughts about people, and am more willing to speak out on topics of social justice. Three faculty members, Brian Goedde, Julia Petitfrere, and Steve Parlato, have been a big part of my growth, because they recognized my gifts before I did. My advice for students is to immerse themselves in opportunity, because each experience can create a connection and lead us toward our true life’s purpose.”

Continued on pages 4 and 10

## One Rough Hundred Days

Richard Bosco

By the time this article hits stands on May 1st, we will have just passed the 100-day mark of the 45th President’s term in office. It has been a period fraught with drama and division as the new administration seeks to make its mark on our nation by systematically chipping away at freedom and equality. The truth is, in such a short time, our new leader has disrupted and adversely affected countless lives, not just in America, but around the world.

The President has twice tried to ban Muslim people from immigrating into this country. These are people whose only perceived crime is being of Muslim faith and coming from the Middle East or Africa. Men, women, and children, some have gone through months—as many as 24 months—of vetting before being granted a visa to come to America. Many hope to enter the US to escape war, tyranny, and likely death in their homelands. Several have been friends of the United States, often risking their lives to aid our soldiers and diplomats abroad. Like our forefathers, others simply want the chance to build a better life for themselves and their children.

Then there is the issue of undocumented immigrants. During his campaign, the Republican candidate promised he would not break up families. Yet, that is exactly what

he’s been having Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) do since taking office. Though he claimed he wouldn’t deport any Dreamers—young adults brought as children to this country by their parents without proper entry documentation—one of the first people arrested by ICE was a Dreamer. The commander-in-chief has also admonished sanctuary cities and our state, threatening to withhold federal monies if we don’t help ICE in their search for people who are here undocumented. This president’s policies strike many as cruel, and his demeanor has been compared to that of a schoolyard bully. This is especially troublesome given the volatile climate in North Korea, Syria, Afghanistan, and elsewhere.

Of course, there are also the issues around healthcare. The President continues to swear his health plan is going to be the greatest, much better than Obamacare (i.e. The Affordable Care Act). Unfortunately, it seems he has no plan for healthcare, but then neither do congressional Republicans, even though they had over seven years to come up with one. Our fearless leader also promised no Americans would lose their health insurance, yet when the Congressional Budget Office reviewed Congress’s makeshift plan, it was estimated within ten years more than 24 million Americans would lose their

health insurance coverage. Given the number of Americans lacking coverage today, that would raise the total uninsured to 40 million by 2027.

Republicans could not agree on a repeal and replace plan, but instead of reaching across the aisle to both moderate Republicans and Democrats to repair Obamacare, the President is trying to bankrupt the Affordable Care Act. This man is supposed to be looking out for the welfare of all Americans, yet his rushed “plan” could cost hundreds of thousands of Americans their lives. Obamacare, by comparison has, since its inception, saved an estimated 1.8 million American lives, by providing affordable health insurance, giving wider access to care.

With another broken promise—his pledge to “drain the swamp”—this President has earned his reputation as a serial liar. Given his lack of credibility, transparency, and his choice to fill his administration with billionaires and Wall Street CEOs, the swamp has only gotten deeper. For example, as Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner dined with the Chinese Premier at Mar-a-Lago, the Chinese government announced it was issuing the First Daughter’s jewelry company three trademarks to do business in China. Oh yes, the swamp waters are rising.

Of course, we mustn’t forget the President’s tax returns, which he still hasn’t made public. When he claimed this is because he’s still

under audit by the IRS, the press countered by asking for release of the IRS audit letters sent to any taxpayer to notify them of an audit. The President refuses to release even these innocuous documents, begging the question of what he’s hiding.

Speaking of what he’s hiding leads to a discussion of the Russians meddling in our election process. The President continues to insist his campaign staff did nothing wrong in meeting with known Russian intelligence agents. Yet he and his staff have tried multiple smoke and mirror tricks to hinder ongoing investigations. The American public deserves an answer. What does this President know about Russian involvement in the 2016 election, and when did he know it? Back in 2016, the FBI even obtained a FISA warrant to surveil and bug one of his staffers who was known to have passed information to Russian intelligence. What that information was has not been released to the public because the FBI investigation continues.

These issues are just the beginning. Scratch beneath the surface of this rookie President, and there’s so much more: evidence of sexual impropriety; erratic behavior; executive orders that are audacious attacks on human rights; an administration filled with self-serving amateurs, building backward-leaning agendas. It’s been an exhausting 100 days. Who knows what the next 100 will bring?



# Legal Discrimination?

Nicole Hayes, Senior Staff Writer



North Carolina’s history of anti-LGBTQ policies continued with introduction of House Bill 780, titled, “Uphold Historical Marriage Act,” on Tuesday, April 11, by NC House Republicans. It was designed to restore the state’s constitutional ban on same-sex marriages. This is not North Carolina’s first attempt to deny same-sex marriage, as witnessed in 2012’s Amendment One. Both policies are deeply rooted in conservative attitudes toward the institution of marriage. On the other hand, it’s important to note that bills are not laws until passed by House, Senate, ratified, and if required, signed by the Governor. Thus, opposing voices have had a chance to raise their concerns with this bill.

H.B. 780 is directly sponsored by some of the House’s most conservative legislators, whose proposals often fail to find support from House GOP leaders. Sponsors of the bill call for states’ rights to make decisions on same-sex marriages independently. Furthermore, they believe the Supreme Court not only overstepped their power in NC, but also overstepped “the decree of Almighty God.” Republican Representatives sponsoring the bill, including Larry Pittman, Michael Speciale, Carl Ford, and Mike Clappitt, even referenced the Christian Bible, stating, “a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis, 2:24).

Pittman released a statement to WSOC-TV stating, “HB 780 is about the need for the States to reassert their rights. As the bill states, marriage is not a federal matter. For too long, the federal government and federal courts have been allowed to overstep their bounds because the States have not had the courage to say

no. Upholding the US and NC Constitutions means demanding that laws and court rulings do not contradict the very Constitutions we are obligated to uphold. I appreciate Rep. Speciale and Rep. Ford for having the courage to stand with me and say so.

Pittman was referring to Speciale’s commitment to resurrect North Carolina’s Amendment One, which allowed the state of NC to deny the legality of same-sex marriage licenses issued in other states. More than 60 percent of cast ballot votes were in favor of this amendment. While conservative Republicans from NC attempt to reinvent anti-LGBTQ measures, the voices of those who oppose these bills echo over damaging opinions of others.

Ames Simmons, director of Transgender Police with Equality believes bills like H.B. 780 would be hard to pass in such modern times. Simmons stated, “Ideally the people who make laws would be helping to make the situation around discrimination better instead of perpetuating it.” Another opposing viewpoint comes from Wake County Commissioner John Burns who criticized the bill via twitter: “Pittman and Speciale are embarrassments to the state of North Carolina and should be shunned from public life.” If H.B. 780 were to pass, marriage licenses of same-sex couples would not be issued or honored throughout the state.

H.B. 780 has met backlash from those who oppose it. Pittman responded to criticism of his bill on Facebook where he stated, “And if Hitler had won, should the world just get over it? Lincoln was the same sort if (sic) tyrant, and personally responsible for the deaths of over 800,000 Americans in a war that was unnecessary and unconstitutional.”

Pittman’s view towards LGBTQ citizens differs from NC House Speaker Tim Moore, as he stated, “There are strong constitutional concerns with this legislation, given that the US Supreme Court has firmly ruled on the issue; therefore House Bill 780 will be referred to the House Rules Committee and will not be heard.” Opposing voices continue to challenge these discriminatory bills as concerned citizens remain committed to equality for the LGBTQ community.

# How I went to NASA (And How You Could Too!)

Levi Reynolds

This April I was fortunate enough to travel to NASA’s Glenn Research Center in Cleveland Ohio, where I, along with 42 other community college students, from all over the Midwest and New England, participated in 2017’s NASA Aerospace Scholars Program. During the four-day program we formed teams, in which we established fictional aerospace companies that were tasked with coming up with a business plan, designing a prototype rover, and competing for a NASA contract for the next Mars rover mission.

Our prototype rovers competed in two challenges where they had to retrieve rock samples and rover parts on a simulated Martian terrain. Each team member chose a role in our company, some as engineers, some as financial managers, and some even as Social Media marketing specialists, and we all performed our individual jobs to make our company successful.

Additionally, we enjoyed touring NASA facilities, meeting NASA engineers, project managers, educational outreach coordinators, and many other employees, as well as learning about internship and career opportunities at NASA. It was truly an eye and door-opening experience I feel blessed to have been part of, and it almost didn’t happen!

See, I’d never heard of the program until it was forwarded to me by my advisor. I took a curious look and was intrigued, but I felt panic when I learned the deadline for spring application was the very next day! Fortunately, I was able to scramble all my materials together in time to submit my online application, and was selected for the first part of the process (A five-week online course)

Fortunately, if you, like me, are interested in a STEM career field, the program takes place every semester, at 6 different NASA centers across the country including Johnson Space Center, Kennedy Space Center, Langley and Jet Propulsion Laboratories. This year, over 500 community college students were accepted into the program, and 348 were invited to come to various on-site NCAS experiences across the country.

You can submit all your materials online. They require you to be a US citizen and community college student, who has taken, or is currently taking nine hours of STEM coursework. The best part is the course is practically free! (All that’s required is a \$30 check for the on-site portion of the program); NCAS covers hotel, flight to the center, and feeds participants during the program.

The deadline to apply for the fall program is May 2nd, but if you miss that, you can always apply for next spring’s program. So, if you are interested in a career in engineering, mathematics, physics, or any science, the Aerospace Scholars Program could be your foot in the door at NASA, or just a great experience working with fellow STEM students and real NASA mentors.

# Stem Cell Advancements

Alyssa Katz

Stem cell research has yielded results within the last few years, from developments in growing “cultured meat” to potentially producing unlimited amounts of blood. These are not intended as replacements for what is currently used, but as an addition or plan B when quantities are limited.

Scientists in the US and England have made breakthroughs in growing meat from stem cells. This would address the moral issue of slaughtering animals for meat, and the environmental issue of greenhouse gas emissions caused by traditional meat processing. The first lab-grown meat was made in 2012, but was very costly. Currently, it costs over \$10,000 to make one meat patty, but hopefully, according to scientists, this will be cut to \$11 within a span of about four years. To produce a cultured beef patty, scientists harvest a small amount of stem

**“Cultured red blood cells have advantages over donor blood, such as reduced risk of infectious disease transmission.”**

*Jane Frayne, researcher at University of Bristol in England*

cells from muscle tissue, which is then grown into muscle fiber. Fat cells are added to give the beef most of its moisture and flavor. Cultured meat is estimated to come to supermarkets within five to ten years. This includes not just beef; scientists have successfully grown pork as well, using skeletal muscle stem cells.

Stem cells can also be used to make artificial blood, supposedly be more efficient than donor blood—and especially useful for people with rare blood types. According to Jane Frayne, a researcher at University of Bristol in England, “Cultured red blood cells have advantages over donor blood, such as reduced risk of infectious disease transmission.” One drawback, however, is that cultured red blood cells do not appear in as large numbers as donated blood, also dying off more quickly. Each stem cell makes about 50,000 red blood cells, while a donated bag of blood contains one trillion red blood cells. Frayne’s research team, though, was able to trap cells in an early development stage, and found a way to continuously reproduce red blood cells before they die off. This method would not replace blood donation, but would instead be more useful to people with rare diseases such as sickle-cell, and again, those with rare blood types.

Despite progress, there is a long way to go. Both advancements are still very costly, and neither has yet passed all tests for regulatory approval. Nevertheless, within the next decade, lab-grown meat may appear on dinner tables, and cultured red blood cells could save lives.

# Quite an Oasis

Tamarack Staff



It was no April Fools’ joke when NVCC’s cafeteria was transformed into a virtual desert oasis to usher in the new month. Saturday, April 1 and Sunday, April 2, the College once again hosted the CT Cactus Show, which drew large crowds—including two visitors from Westfield, Massachusetts. Café West was a sea of spiky green, as several vendors displayed their wares, both the prickly and succulent varieties, along with garden statuary, birdhouses, and all things, well, garden-ish. Plants and supplies were available for sale, and by the looks of the happy sellers and buyers, the event was a great success.

# Raising Awareness

Tamarack Staff



Courtesy of Sandra Valente

Wednesday, April 19th, the Recovery Society held a Drug and Alcohol Awareness Day in Café West from 1100 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

This well-attended event, which was open to students, faculty, and staff, provided an opportunity to learn about substance abuse, drug screening and treatment options. Many students participated in the drunk driving simulation, watched a powerful video, and visited numerous information tables. Members of the Recovery Society were on hand to answer questions and provide information about different substances, their dangers, and available treatment for those struggling with dependency.

NVCC student, Bianca Valentin, found the event to be very informative. Valentin stated, “I learned a lot about all the different types of drugs and how each one affects the body and brain differently. [I know] people who use some of these drugs or have tried them. I liked learning about how to help friends and family

to overcome these obstacles and better themselves. In a world full of addictive drugs, more people need to be addicted to life.”

For student, Shannon Tagg, this event “was a reminder of the dangerous and deadly consequences involved with not only drugs, but addiction.” Tagg went on to say, “Nowadays, substance use is glorified in the media... so teens and young adults often forget the negative effects caused by substance abuse and addiction. Events like these are a huge reminder that the media is not portraying the big picture. I found this event extremely beneficial, and definitely worthwhile.”

Clearly, the DARC Program’s Dr. Sandra Valente and her students are continuing to make an impact. The Tamarack applauds their commitment to raising awareness around these issues that affect us all.

# Justice for All / Social Justice Series

## Starting fall 2017

Professors Nikki McGary and Kathy Taylor

Recently, the FBI and all major news networks have reported an increase in hate crimes. Within our own community, we have heard from both students and faculty who have personally witnessed or experienced displays of disrespect at school or in their neighborhoods. We recognize these challenging times as an opportunity for both intervention and conversation, so that we can engage in dialogue, raise awareness, and cultivate critical thinking. In that spirit we are excited to announce the launch of a Social Justice Series beginning next fall. The Social Justice Series will consist of multiple events each semester where students, faculty, and staff will have the chance to engage in respectful dialogue about issues pertaining to social justice. Please be on the lookout for future events and opportunities. More details to come!



# The Tamarack

“Standing, like a resolute tree, as your source for news.”

Editorial

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## SPEAK UP

Are you interested in where your Student Activities Fees are spent? If so, voice your opinion at NVCC’s Student Government meetings held every Wednesday, 4-5 p.m. in L501, across from the Library. For more information call 203-596-2185, stop by S516, or emailSGA@nvcc.commnet.edu.

EDITORIAL

There once was a time...

Like Earth revolving around the Sun, humans now revolve around technology. Not all technology is bad, of course; much good comes from it. However, since society has gotten so reliant on innovations, many seem to have forgotten there was a time before all this even existed.

Before computers were found in most households (around the 2000s), we’d get information from books and encyclopedias; not to mention essays and homework assignments were handwritten—or done on something called a typewriter. People talked to each other more, spoke on the landline (remember wall phones?), and wrote letters. Some may think of these as the “Dark Ages”, but this isn’t true. Things were simpler before people started caring how many likes or follows they get on their social media posts. It’s as if some people use an electronic world to escape the real one.

What’s irritating is when friends or family are hanging out, and they’re on their phones the whole time, not even giving people they’re with consideration or attention. Also, why do people on vacation need to document every second of their trip through online posts? It’s like they can’t be separated from their social media feeds and “friends” for a second. You’re on vacation, unplug! Is there really a reason to be on that computer or phone? Just enjoy yourself, instead of gawking over what someone is eating for lunch at some restaurant half a world away.

Adults and kids share this tendency; some adults are worse than children: constantly texting, tweeting, snapchatting. And for what? As for kids, even children’s toys come with features taking them online to get extra rewards or offers. And people wonder why families feel disconnected.

In addition, tons of jobs worldwide have been lost to technology. Shopping, banking, taxes can all be done online now, but this convenience paves the way for identity thieves. Plus, texting while driving has increased the dangers for commuters.

It’s like people cannot exist without their smart devices. Everywhere you go people are on their phones, dependent on Wi-Fi. It seems like life did not have purpose until it was invented, but that’s just not true. I challenge you to unplug, to unglue your faces from your devices. Experience what’s around you. No, seriously. You’re apt to find new appreciation for the physical world before you, if you take a break from the online version with its virtual friends and relationships. Heck, you might even remember who your true friends are.

Continued Awareness

Courtesy of Casee Marie

I enjoy advocating for cystic fibrosis awareness, so I felt honored when asked to speak to the sophomore class at Naugatuck High School last month about my own experience with CF. A genetically inherited illness, CF targets the respiratory and digestive systems.

In the beginning of my speech to Naugatuck students, I told them my goal for that event was to keep from crying during my speech, because when I arrived, I was shown a beautiful bulletin board dedicated to NHS’s fundraising campaign for cystic fibrosis. I also met an amazing biology teacher, Beth Rojas, who works so hard every year to raise awareness and funds for CF. It was unbelievably touching to see their efforts to help those living with this disease.

Last spring I spoke to the NVCC Student Government Association about cystic fibrosis, and they chose the illness as this year’s SGA charity. That was such a touching moment for me, and the walk they organized last October was incredibly special. One thing I learned when I began advocating for those with this disease is that no government funding exists for CF research. There is no cure for CF, and while life-sustaining treatments have become more available, there is still so much work to be done.

As May is Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month, I’ll participate in another fundraiser, in Southbury, organized by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, the hub of CF research and information. Titled Great Strides, this is a 5k walk/run. In fact, there are 11 Great Strides events in CT, and I’ve attended the Southbury event the past two years.

On Saturday, May 20, my team, Chelsea’s Champions, will be walking at Ballantine Park in Southbury to raise awareness and funds for CF. Registration for the event begins at 9:00 am and the walk starts at 10:00 am. This is such a lovely, community-filled event and a scenic locale for the walk. You have the option to walk or run, as there has been increased interest in running the course over the years. If you cannot attend the event, or any of the Great Strides events, you can register to become a virtual walker by simply making a donation to the cause.

I hope you’ll consider joining me in raising funds and awareness for cystic fibrosis as both are equally important. For information, go to: [http://fightcf.cff.org/site/PageServer?pagename=cff\\_homepage](http://fightcf.cff.org/site/PageServer?pagename=cff_homepage)

Happenings @ Other Colleges

Alyssa Katz

### Bard College

On May 3rd, New York’s Bard College will host a “National Climate Seminar: US Climate Science, Challenges, and Opportunities,” by Penn State Atmospheric Science Professor Michael Mann. Mann was part of a collaboration that won a 2007 Nobel Peace Prize, was awarded a 2012 Hans Oeschger Medal from the European Geosciences Union, and received the National Conservation Achievement Award for Science from the National Wildlife Federation in 2013. Also a published author, Mann’s latest is a satire, *The Madhouse Effect*. Regarding the environment, Mann stated Trump will “basically take us backwards, back towards our dependence on fossil fuels at a time when the rest of the world is moving ahead and understands that we need to get off fossil fuels.” For info about this important ecological seminar, go to: <http://www.bard.edu/news/events/event/?eid=132315&date=1493827200>

### Carleton College

May 3 – 7 Minnesota’s Carleton College displays an exhibit by nine Irish photographers. This is sponsored by a grant from Culture Ireland, which promotes Irish arts. The nine artists involved will be Gary Coyle, Martin Cregg, David Farrell, Paul Gaffney, Anthony Haughey, Miriam O’Connor, Jill Quigley, Anna Rackard and Ruby Wallis. The exhibit will show the beauty of Ireland, while also detailing rural life from cottages to wildlife. In the face of the modern age, there is still a nostalgia for the old times, which each artist captures in representing the country. <https://apps.carleton.edu/museum/ireland/about/>

### University of Missouri

Exploring the Graeco-Roman world centuries ago, the exhibition “Romance in Ruins” takes place on May 9. The Graeco-Roman period, from 332 BC -395 AD, marked a time when Egypt was ruled by the Persians and their leader Alexander the Great. The exhibition will detail how works of this period still capture aesthetic appeal, and how they brought so much inspiration to art and architecture for those who came after. The exhibit will focus especially on influences during the time period between the 18th and 20th centuries. [https://calendar.missouri.edu/event/exhibition\\_the\\_romance\\_of\\_ruins#.W0RAApV1q2w](https://calendar.missouri.edu/event/exhibition_the_romance_of_ruins#.W0RAApV1q2w)

### Mount Saint Mary College

On May 8, New York’s Mount Saint Mary College holds an event celebrating writers. Hosted by the Writing Center, this event is similar to NVCC’s Confluencia. Writers will be given an opportunity to read work in various styles and genres from academic to creative work. Winners of the 2017 MSMC Writing Contest, Essence of Poetry, student travel writers, and student screenwriters will share their work. There will also be an open mic session to follow, where everyone is invited to read. [https://www.msmc.edu/Student\\_Services/celebration\\_of\\_writing.be?context\\_date=5/8/2017](https://www.msmc.edu/Student_Services/celebration_of_writing.be?context_date=5/8/2017)

## A Morning with Hanna Pearlstein Marcus

Mitchell Maknis

Naugatuck Valley Community College held a Writers’ Conference on April 6, 2017, which featured a morning presentation and Q & A session by New England-based author Hanna Pearlstein Marcus. Marcus wrote the memoir *Sidonia’s Thread—The Secrets of a Mother and Daughter Sewing a New Life in America* which recounts the story of how she and her mother created a new beginning in the US after World War II. The author also spoke about the sequel, *Surviving Remnant- Memories of the Jewish Greenhorns in 1950s America*, published March 1, 2017.

Marcus informed an attentive audience about the challenging life experiences that

inspired her to tell her story. She said she felt her memoir is of interest to audiences because there are many stories about life during WWII, but not many that explain what happened to immigrants afterward. She recalled that although her mother didn’t smile much, Marcus was pleased to utilize pictures of her smiling mom on her book covers. She addressed the question of whether she had gone back to the areas of her youth to corroborate her recollections with others by responding candidly that’s just not how she wanted to write her story. She stressed the me in memoir, explaining the story was about her memories, so she felt it should be written solely from her perspective.

The author also offered listeners tips on techniques to craft and hone their own work.

Marcus shared that she wrote her outline in four parts, which allowed her to focus on each subject and not become overwhelmed. She also advised writers not to get too attached to their titles, but to focus on crafting the story. Marcus’s titles changed frequently, with a title of the day during writing.

One way Marcus got her work noticed was by condensing the story into a two-minute presentation synopsis. This led to a national tour to support her first book. This was a good reminder that would-be writers should get used to speaking before an audience in order to hook prospective publishers and readers. To learn more about this fascinating author, visit her website: <http://hannaperlsteinmarcus.com> and look for her books, *Sidonia’s Thread* and *Surviving Remnant*, on Amazon.com.

Hanna Marcus kept her audience engaged whether with secrets from her past or details of her unique writing style. Her lecture was informative, fascinating and a great learning experience for writers. The time at the NVCC’s Writer’s Conference was well spent.

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



Only Memories

I am sitting here wracking my brain trying to find the right words to share. Ideas are swirling around one after another, individual memories of this school year trying hard to make themselves the dominant image. All of them are equally important though. And all of them are thanks to you, the supporters of your community college's newspaper.

There have been some glitches along the way, but that is okay, because people make mistakes. It was the overwhelmingly positive encouragement you've given to your newspaper that keeps us going. We work to be better at what we do because you're always there for us.

The Tamarack is more than printed words on paper; it is everything that you make of it. The quest for equality, the need for awareness and community engagement are a part of this newspaper, because they are a part of you, the reader.

So, I sit here trying to find words to express all the incredible experiences I got to share with you. Experiences I hope I have been able to turn into words, so that others might share in them as well. But this time, words simply won't come, only memories.

This is how I will end this semester for The Tamarack. Lost in memories and offering an open recruitment for new writers. Your voices are important, and they are needed. If you're interested in a career as a writer, being published in The Tam is a great first step. You'll work with an awesome team of fellow writers and editors. You'll build skills and techniques and discover talents you didn't know you had. You will also be an influence in a way you never thought you could be.

Don't be afraid to knock on the door of room S519 in the Prism Lounge if you see me (pictured above), or anyone else in the room. It's a pleasant duty to talk with students and faculty about ideas to include in our newspaper, or just to get to know people who want to express their reactions to the articles we feature.

Regards,  
Christopher Gordon  
Editor-in-Chief  
tamarack@nv.edu

Applause, Applause!

Christopher Gordon

Hello, theater lovers. If, like me, you enjoy supporting local actors and seeing well-produced shows, then spring 2017 was the season for you here at NVCC. Two shows, opening a week apart, were offered by the Stage Society.

The first, Adam Szymkowicz's *Hearts Like Fists*, was the rousing adventure of a troop of women—Katie Steinbacher, Kat Lynch, and Teagan Gavin—protecting their city from the gripping machinations of the mentally disturbed Dr X, played by Chris Varanko. Along the way, the women also helped their newest member, played by Victoria Hicks, navigate the tricky world of maintaining a personal life with a new love, played by Tom Santopietro. They also aided their non-masked, heroic nurse friend, played by Sam Mankowski, as she dealt with unrequited affection and the sting of feeling less than worthwhile.

The creation of this world was both deeply emotional and lighthearted, filled with relatable situations for everyone, especially us superheroes in the audience. I applaud the talented young actors who, at least for two hours at a time, let us know what the world would be like with heroes who push past fear and never let villains of any sort win.

The next production was *Golden Boy*, by Clifford Odets. Set during the Great Depression, this thought-provoking drama concerns the pursuit of money over passion and the price of achieving unexpected fame. Sadly, this also marks the last time Blaise Russo will appear as a student here at NVCC. Judging by the performances this actor has brought to NVCC's stage, his name will grace marquees from New York to LA in no time; hopefully, he'll take a lesson from his time as Joe, and not let talent and fame overwhelm him.

When I stopped by to enjoy a night at the theater, the box office had already had a run on tickets, so I, writer supreme and editor-in-chief was wait-listed! This is not a criticism, but an exclamation of how well-received this production was. Full of feeling and thought, the scenes were at times hard to witness without being reminded of some personal tragedy or event. I would write more, but any words I add now would only detract from the experience. You truly had to be there.

To the students, faculty, and supporters of NVCC Stage Society, I want to say how much I look forward to what's to come. Your dedication to theater is strong, and it speaks volumes. It takes a brave soul to step out of the darkness and bare your heart for the world to see. Bravo!

Learning to Care

Special to The Tamarack



Courtesy of Cocchiola Meyer

The LABSS Division sponsored a Human Services/Pre-Social Work Alumni Evening on Wednesday March 22nd. Thirteen alumni attended, and the evening finished with pizza and time to mingle. Current Human Services/Pre-Social Work students were invited to hear about the path the alumni have taken since graduating from NVCC. Alumni also offered pieces of advice, such as: "learn APA formatting; it is important," and "be open to different experiences because you may end up practicing social work with an entirely different population than you expected."

Approximately 50 current Human Services/Pre-Social Work students attended. Our own NVCC alumnus, currently a University of St. Joseph's BSW student, Yovany Cruz, offered her advice. Cruz is completing her social work internship here at NVCC, engaging students in education and support services. In the photo, she is surrounded by other alumni, including Brianna Rose to her left, a current ACE tutor and BSW student at CCSU. Nayare Rivera, a Dec 2016 graduate spoke also about her recent hire at St Vincent De Paul, her NVCC fieldwork placement.

April also saw Human Services Club members making a difference on campus. On the 11th, Human Services students, in collaboration with staff from Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury, sponsored Sexual Assault Awareness Day in Prism Lounge. The event included informational handouts and nail-painting. Through the generosity of students, faculty, and staff, funds were raised to purchase sweatpants which Safe Haven will distribute to survivors. In fact, the ongoing efforts of the Human Services Club have raised over \$389.00 this semester for this cause.

SGA PRESIDENT



Fond Farewell

Hello, Naugatuck Valley Community College students,

We are finally nearing the end of the spring 2017 semester. As we all know, with warm weather comes the temptation to slack off on our studies. But with exams coming up, I encourage you all to study hard, and don't lose focus! Still, there's plenty of opportunities for fun with all the upcoming events the SGA has to offer, such as Spring Fling, and the Leadership Banquet! The SGA has brought some fresh ideas to the table for these events we're sure you will enjoy. I know I will!

For many of us, me included, it is an emotional time of year. In my case, not only does the end of this semester mean saying goodbye to the class presidency, but saying goodbye to NVCC in general. This is my final semester here at NVCC, and graduation is around the corner.

It has been such a humbling experience to serve as the Student Government Association President. I want to take this chance to thank all the students who voted me in, and those who have worked hand in hand with me! A special thanks to Karen Blake, and Rita Ostrander, my two SGA advisors, and of course, Carlos, Cat, Levi, and Geo, the SGA officers.

Also I'd like to thank those students who have lent a helping hand at all the events! I've been able to learn and grow so much with each amazing experience I've encountered alongside you all. I wish nothing but the best to all the students I will graduate with this semester, and I wish success to those who will continue to study here at NVCC.

Take advantage of every opportunity this community has to offer, continue to give back and make a difference, and remember, you don't lose unless you quit! I leave you with a quote by Vince Lombardi, who said, "If you'll not settle for anything less than your best, you will be amazed at what you can accomplish in your lives."

Keila Franco

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A JOY TO SERVE

Cat Rourke

“Out of all the things I’ve enjoyed at NVCC, I’ve especially loved working with people; this makes sense as a Human Services major. Deciding to become an SGA officer was one of the best things I’ve ever done. The role of Treasurer has been a lot of work, but it’s also given me great insight into what’s important in a college student’s life. I’ve enjoyed supporting other students, listening to their concerns, suggestions, and problems. My dream is to work with blind and deaf children at Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Mass.”

Making a Splash (at Yale)

Chelsea Clow



Last month, four of my classmates from NVCC's Physical Therapy Assistant Program joined me to participate in an event called Splash at Yale – an opportunity to teach 7th through 12th graders a topic of our choice at Yale University. This event takes place in April and is organized by Yale students. When signing up, college students can suggest virtually any topic to teach. You can even select the students' grade level and the number of students in your class.

My classmates and I decided to teach two classes: one titled, "What is Physical Therapy?" and the other called, "The PT and the PTA." I had hoped this experience would be a good opportunity to not only educate students on what physical therapy is, but to teach them what is involved with pursuing this career path. I wanted to be able to offer these young students an idea of what this career path is like and to answer any questions they may

have about the process involved in earning a degree as a PTA.

We had such a blast with our students! Our classes were full of attentive, eager students interested in the field of physical therapy. To my surprise, many of our young students had commuted from New York City to attend this event. We had students eager to participate in our demonstration, and they asked several great questions. This experience taught me a lot about presenting, and in particular, educating someone about physical therapy, something I will be doing often in my future career as a physical therapist assistant.

Splash is not exclusively a Yale phenomenon. Harvard, Princeton, and MIT run their own Splash events, along with other New England colleges. I encourage any serious, motivated college student to pursue this opportunity next spring. It was incredibly rewarding to teach young students a topic about which I'm passionate—and one I'm still learning about every day. This was one splash I'll cherish greatly.



Photos Courtesy of Chelsea Clow



FACES IN THE CROWD  
Lessons Learned

Halit Basuljevic

If there is anything I can take away from my time at NVCC, there are two things that have reinforced my idea of what would make me a better person. One is to carefully acknowledge the everyday faces that are often taken for granted. Another is this: at every height I achieve I must be careful not to slip up and instead discipline myself to work harder at making my dreams realized.

Of course, this wasn't always the case, as I expected my time here to be just a fleeting episode in my life. Meddling in distractions and slacking in courses were routine. Luckily, I picked my head up and began acquainting myself with the staff and students here, which then created great opportunities for some positive reflection, as well as chances to explore creative outlets.

Greatness doesn't come alone; but rather in an egalitarian fashion, where not only are we standing on the shoulders of giants, but also by the helping hands of the community that surrounds us. Communication is key, I learned that. And as a part of The Tamarack, I was given a sense of how a newspaper runs and the incredible effort by the staff that put their soul into the work.

As an aspiring journalist, I consider it an advantage. And as a student, I received a very welcoming admission into the communal appreciation that the college stands by and upholds. The community also helped me thrive as a writer, both humbling and encouraging me as pertains to the exhilarating and inspiring art works of my fellow students. They say writing is often done in solitude, but the exchange of ideas, mingling



“Greatness doesn’t come alone... where not only are we standing on the shoulders of giants, but also by the helping hands of the community that surrounds us.”

with various crowds, and collaborative work all testify to the opposite.

If there is one thing I can give back after leaving NVCC, it's to replicate the ability to maintain a community and encourage others to prosper within it, no matter the amount of alienation that is so widespread today. Wherever I end up, I would hope to model myself after these ideals, to come full circle by connecting individuals and their helping hands.

“Going Around the Block” Writer’s Workshop

On April 11th, the LABSS Division partnered with the Academic Center for Excellence to hold a workshop for students who were facing “Writer’s Block”. The workshop was organized and presented by Professor Lou Lombard and facilitated by Professor Chris Rempfer and Developmental Education PA-1240 Coordinator

Students were offered strategies including pre-writing techniques, ways to avoid distractive environments, the use of anecdotes, statistics, and rhetorical questions as a “springboard”

Rose-Mary Rodrigues of the ACE. Students were offered strategies including pre-writing techniques, ways to avoid distractive environments, the use of anecdotes, statistics, and rhetorical questions as a “springboard”, and the importance of using emphatic order. In addition, students were supplied with sheets to schedule time for daily writing, goal setting, and assignments/deadlines for organization. Energized by the freewriting and brainstorming techniques discussed, the students produced creative and thoughtful writings on the topics labeled on their individual “blocks”. With the resounding success of the workshop, the LABSS Division and ACE will continue the collaboration each semester as an aid to students who wish to improve their approach to writing

Not So Colorific

Alyssa Katz



Crayola has been in the news recently, causing uproar with the announced plan to discontinue a color from their crayon line. It was revealed Dandelion Yellow will be retired, making room for a new shade of blue; the new color name has not yet been released.

This was announced on National Crayon Day, March 31st. Many wondered why white isn't set to be retired, since “nobody uses white.” People hoped this was an early April Fools prank, but quickly learned it was no joke.

This is not the first time colors have been removed from the box. In 1990, several hues were phased out, only to be replaced by new shades, one of them being Dandelion. Colors removed included maize, lemon yellow, blue gray, raw umber, green blue, orange red, orange yellow, and violet blue.

The same thing happened in 2003 when blizzard blue, magic mint, teal blue, and mulberry were booted. Burnt sienna had also been on the chopping block, until a signed petition saved it.

Crayola is currently running a contest asking people to submit potential names for the new crayon color. The winning hue will be picked in May, with plans for it to officially join the crayon family sometime this summer.



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# Preserving History

Jessica Ney



Courtesy of dailymail.co.uk

Over the past several years, ISIS has been raiding and terrorizing much of the Middle East. In their attempts to build a single, global caliphate, they have destroyed much of the history and culture of the lands they inhabit. In Syria alone, there have been six UNESCO historical sites almost totally destroyed, either through bombing, or other deliberate vandalism. ISIS forces have destroyed multiple mosques, museums, and a bridge that crossed the Euphrates River. ISIS has no pride in, and no respect for, the culture of Syria or Iraq. With their perversion of the Quran and their militant mindset, their goal is world domination by any means necessary.

The Islamic faith has been present since 600 AD; unfortunately the great hostility between religious sects has led to many civil wars and even more unsettled issues. The Middle East has a rich and beautiful history that has been slowly erased throughout the years. ISIS is not the first cause, nor the only reason there are gaps and losses in cultural history. For example, the Buddhas of Bamiyan were destroyed in 2001 by the Taliban. Multiple coups in the seventies and eighties in Afghanistan caused the destruction of many homes and government buildings.

Along with catastrophic military destruction, there has also been a complete lack of regard for the few bits of surviving history. Copies of black and white films and television shows, carpets, archives of parliament, and ancient chandeliers were saved and sent to Ghouta. They have, however, been misplaced, exposed to dampness, and in general, forgotten; these treasures are forever lost. What has been saved is spread throughout Damascus and will hopefully be reclaimed by research teams.

The people of Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, in fact, much of the Middle East, suffer due to overpopulation, fear, and war. Sadly, those struggling to hold onto their history can only find fragments. This may not seem important to the US, but in all cultures, historical artifacts are key to cultural identity. True Islamic pride cannot grow or be preserved if believers have no idea where their faith came from. Peace may remain elusive if there can be no understanding of others' beliefs. And it may be impossible to learn from past mistakes if there is no history to study. Cultural history is a root of pride, strength, and hope for the future. The Middle East is presently in turmoil; how tragic it would be if hope were completely lost in the rapidly disappearing past.

# The World in a Day

Alyssa Katz



Courtesy of Christopher Gordon

Cultural celebration came calling on April 17th with the International Arts Festival, a daylong celebration marking NVCC as an International Center for the Arts. Traditions from several countries were presented, and all were invited to share in fascinating aspects of many cultures. Performances kicked off in the Leever Atrium, moving to the Playbox for more show-stopping entertainment.

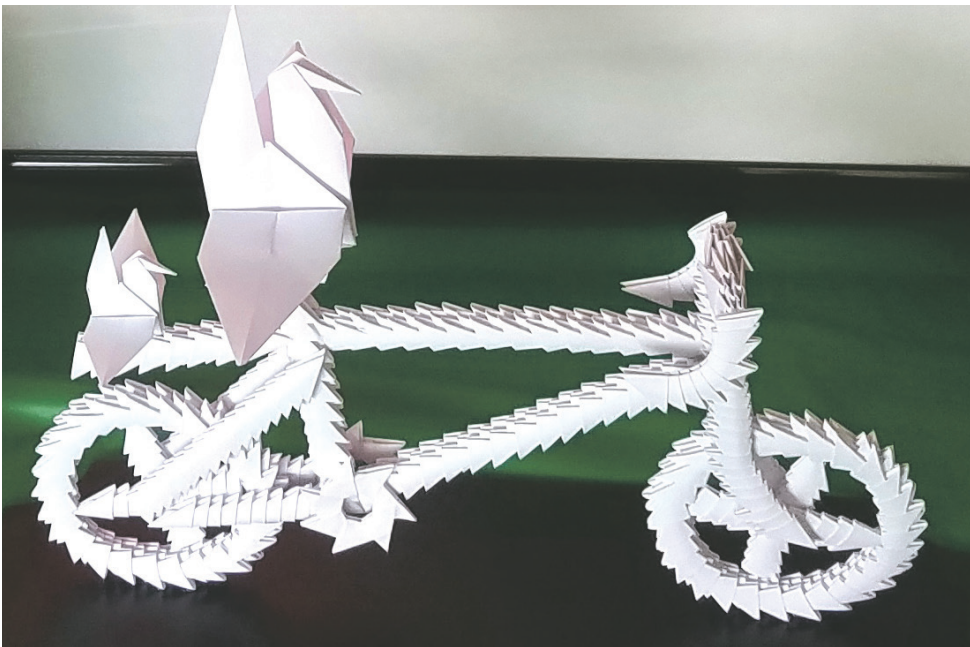
Events in the Atrium were interactive. Performances included a drum circle, creating rhythms on a variety of drums. There was an African-style dance routine performed by NVCC's Terpsichorean Dance Ensemble. Then two different Greek folk dances were taught. In a mini concert, a trio from the Accordion Society played several songs, taking us on a journey to a different country. The Hispanic Student Union also took part, teaching a simple, two-step dance, the Bachata, gathering just about the entire audience to participate. Capping off the Atrium performances was a contemporary-style dance routine by two young women, one of whom is earning a dance degree from NVCC.

What could go better with a melting pot of culture than an array of traditional foods? From grape leaves stuffed with rice, to empanadas, to vegetable stuffed breads, each dish represented

a different country. This was indeed a new experience, trying foods never sampled before.

Along with the entertainment, the library offered genealogy for anyone interested in learning their ancestral history, while the Art Club offered stamp art. In addition, a Vietnamese artist demonstrated the art of origami. It was amazing to watch him perform the ancient tradition of folding paper into intricate shapes without using glue or scissors. With help from enough people, and plenty of folded paper, his goal was to create the NVCC logo entirely in origami. Also on display was a glass case with some of his other works, including Mushu from Disney's Mulan.

The event went well into the evening, with our own Fulbright Scholar, Felipe Karam, sharing his original musical composition, a legacy piece created to commemorate his year at NVCC. Our college is known as a place of diversity, and this event was a perfect way to celebrate the rich cultural traditions of our students, faculty, staff, and administration. It was a reminder of the harmony that results when people come together to learn about one another's cultures. The launch of NVCC as an International Center for the Arts was a joy, and just the first of many future opportunities to share traditions in unity.



Courtesy of Chris Gordon

# Letter to My Daughter in the Future

Agnes Santos

*In honor of Mother's Day, a heartfelt message from one mother to her daughter.*

Dear Kassidy,

Has this day really come? Are you about to go away to college? How time has flown. Baby girl, if there was anything I wanted, it was for you to be ready for the future. I would have loved a manual, or even a note on what the future could have held based on my choices. I have many regrets, but I will not make this mistake. I'm writing this letter to give you a snapshot on life choices. Being prepared to take on the world is scary; there are obstacles and challenges in life, and no guidebook. Life sometimes comes like a ton of bricks; other days it's a bag of feathers. Either way, I want you to know what your choices can bring.

When I finished high school, I worked full time in retail, and I was madly in love with your dad. That was all I needed, a job and the man of my dreams. Your father and I did some community college, but really didn't put in much effort. See, people settle, and start believing things aren't going to change. But that is not true. You can make any change in your life. Ovid said, "The cause is hidden; the effect is visible to all." I want you to understand you are accountable for you. What you do today can affect your future.

You will be out there in the world. Scary isn't it? Remember Fran Sorin's advice: "When we trust and follow our instincts authentically, we are making choices...aligned with who we are." You will have to trust complete strangers. Remain calm, that's the way of life. We're all strangers until we get to know each other. I know I told you as a little girl, "Never talk to strangers." Don't misunderstand; there are some strange people out there. It's up to you to use your best judgment on who you keep near.

Don't be afraid, sweetie. I'll always be there to guide you. Roads will lead to the inevitable: Love... Heartbreak.... I'd be lying if I said you won't experience puppy love and true love. With each will come happiness and heartbreak. That's just how it is. We're not all created the same. We fall in love differently, and we hurt differently. Lucille Ball said, "You really have to love yourself to get anything done in this world." Remember, you define yourself; no one else can. Love yourself before anyone else.

So I say to you, baby girl, keep your head up and watch for a clear path. Your road will get bumpy, but stay on it. Our creator has a plan for us all. It's how we cope with it that will determine our life's outcome. Stay focused on school, so you can be successful in your heart's desire. Always believe in yourself. When you love, love hard—but with one eye open. Stay true to who you are. I have no doubt you will be ready for the world.

Love always,  
Mom

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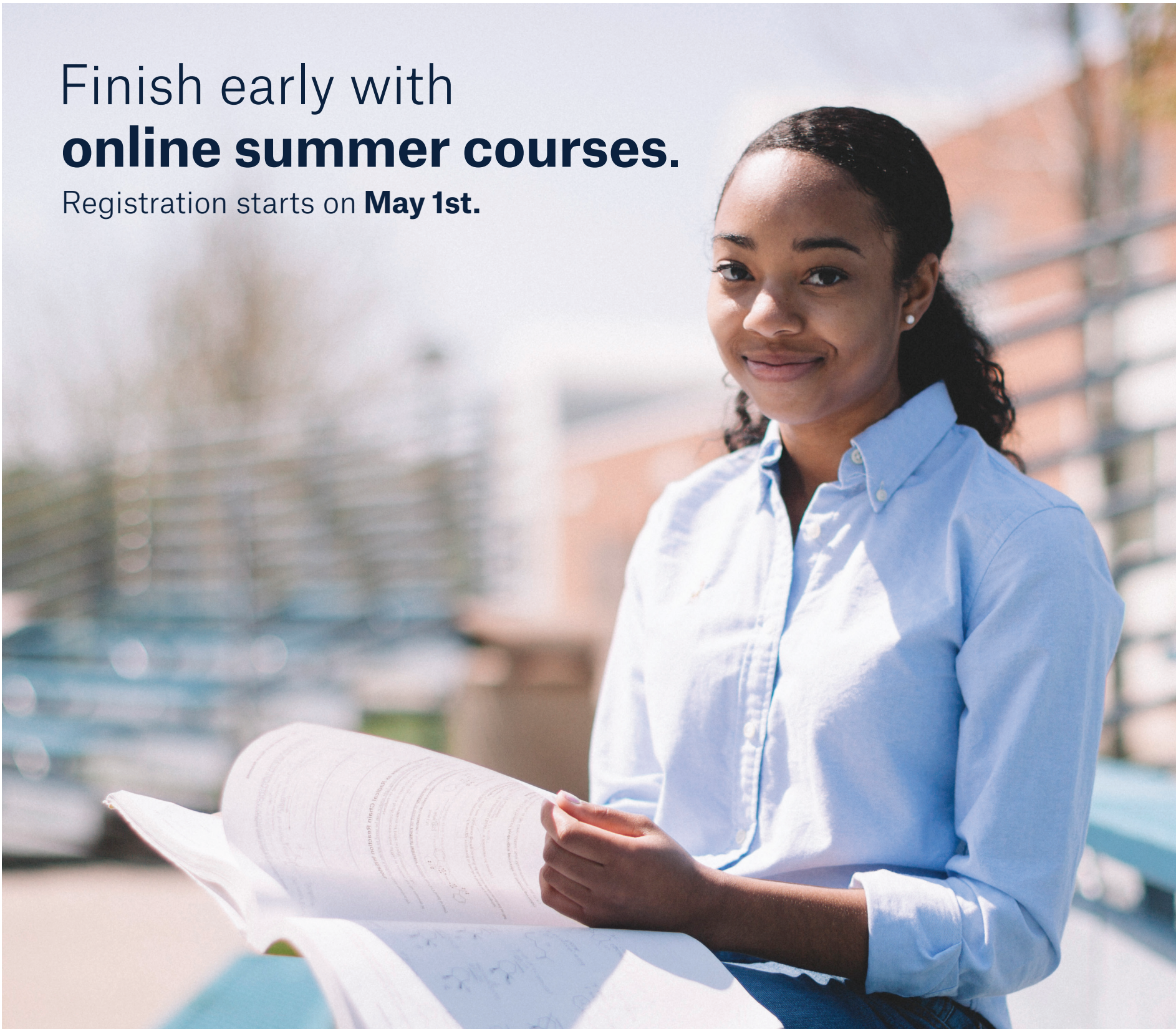
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# Reclaiming a Lost Art

Alyssa Katz



With technology creeping to center stage within the last few decades, certain traditions have nearly been lost. For instance, cursive writing is something we used to be taught in elementary school after learning how to print. With typed communication—and texting—becoming more widespread than handwriting, it’s a shame that teaching cursive to students has indeed become a lost art. However, recently, there has been an effort to reinstate cursive in schools across the country.

Just last fall, New York Public Schools, the largest US school system, re-introduced cursive to their curriculums. Also last year, Louisiana and Alabama joined other 14 states requiring cursive be taught to students. There is indeed a generation gap. Many members of Generation Z, the generation following Millennials, have not been taught this curly-q written form for lack of necessity and importance. Some kids only learn to sign their name in cursive, while others never learn that. Frankly, though, this type of penmanship is more beneficial than one might think.

While useful for reading old documents and letters from loved ones, there is still controversy surrounding the reappearance of cursive, because new Common Core school curriculum doesn’t address teaching script to students. The impact of cursive’s disappearance was seen firsthand by NY Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis, who witnessed an 18-year-old printing his name on a voter registration sheet. In response, she went to state officials and gained support to have cursive re-introduced in school systems.

Officials find it as valuable a tool as playing a musical instrument, but they won’t force every kid to learn a musical instrument either. Others feel it’s not needed with printer ink the go-to rather than pen or pencil. It’s not that cursive was ever banished from schools; it just died out of popularity as Times New Roman 12 point font became familiar to computer users.

Some children are actually embracing script, becoming fascinated with its fancy look and the fact that it’s kind of “like doodling.” In addition, while Common Core may not require cursive, learning script is a useful occupational and life skill that also benefits cognitive skills as opposed to typing on a keyboard.

Each person has their own view on whether cursive should be taught. Some see it as beneficial, others as a waste of time. Regardless of opinion, this seemingly lost art is making a nationwide comeback.

# Bizarre Storytelling

Alyssa Katz

Sideshow Goshko is a monthly storytelling event in New York City where authors tell odd stories about their lives. Comedy writer, Leslie Goshko, started the event in 2009, and it has since increased in popularity. She also contributes occasionally to the *Huffington Post*, is Director of Storytelling for the *Gotham Comedy Foundation*, and has appeared on talk shows on Sirius XM Radio. Originally a high school teacher in Oklahoma, Goshko won an internet dance competition in which the prize was to perform for one night in Broadway’s production of *Hairspray*. This undoubtedly changed her life because, soon after, she and her husband moved to NYC.

One night, her husband brought her to a venue that houses writers’ events. While Goshko joked it was “another place to drink,” she saw firsthand the theatrical performances authors could articulate when speaking passionately about their work. In addition, once she won the Manhattan Monologue Slam, she got the inspiration to host her own storytelling event, though not wanting to do stand-up. A New York venue gave her a trial run hosting

# Writers’ Lab – Part 2

Halit Basuljevic

In my April article, I ventured into how a writer with an acute eye for good-looking prose should tighten and rein his writing so his story comes alive. Writers of this temperament are often the ones you have to re-read in order to fully enjoy, and although students are taught conciseness for the sake of transparency and easy-breathing, I find some of the best works are those that are able to evoke a mixture of emotion and meaning. Much like everyday life, characters may be complicated, confused, indecisive, and passionate. What goes on inside their heads is a series of backlashes, a clash of wills, so to speak. Of course, this is easier said than done when maximalists like me try to be as literary as possible; whether toying with word play, using irony and humor, or mixing poetry and prose, if not carefully checked, it begins to convolute our story and leave the reader completely lost.

What matters most is not to dance around the reader, to revel in pyrotechnics to show how good you are or become so labored in your writing the end-product looks mechanically sloppy and not at all organic. Only the masters can get away with wagging their tongue just to blow fire in your face. And you’re not at master status when you insist on focusing too much on language. Yes, it is part of your toolshed and should be used enthusiastically. However, to prolong the analogy, most writers in this camp end up waving at thin air, hoping they eventually catch something of value.

This is all due to failing to follow the vision of the story. Instead, a writer’s mind is already diving into that word list, straying from the vital ingredients needed to make a genuine, entertaining narrative. This advice is for students of any temperament: the more you are into the life of your character and the world that envelops them, the more you’ll be able to weave together the expressions that perfectly pierce into the heart of an inquiring reader. It sounds like common sense, but when you look at it, the hardest part in writing is having so many ways of mentally surveying a particular scene that accurately sketching it becomes a burden. This makes a writer wish he could just pluck his thoughts and scatter the image onto the page.

But unless Elon Musk finds a way, neither you nor I are not going to have that luxury. With a little practice, I urge any writer struggling with this to just meditatively stick to the image, and let the story carry from there. Screw good-looking prose. If it’s truly important, it’ll snake its way in there. This way, you’ll be able to channel all the skills you accumulate while still creating an engrossing story.

her own event, and Sideshow Goshko was born.

Sideshow Goshko has earned much praise, named a “Critics’ Pick” by both Time Out New York and the NY Times. Not only that, the event has also been featured on TruTV’s *Impractical Jokers*, NPR’s *Snap Judgment*, and in The New Yorker. A classically-trained pianist, and lover of performing, Goshko is indeed a busy woman.

Each month different authors join the festivities. They represent a widespread variety of names and places, from podcasts to NY Times best-sellers. Generally, the setup includes four writers who each have ten minutes to read from their work. Goshko also includes herself in the mix. Following are trivia questions and a giveaway of “Sideshow Sauce,” which is a bottle of wine.

It’s all in good fun; even better, as each advertising post announces: “Always FREE, always at a Soviet Bar.” If you want to partake in the enjoyment, get there early, since seats go fast. If this sounds interesting, check out Sideshow Goshko’s blog: <http://sideshowgoshko.blogspot.com/>

# Revolutionary Rhythms

## All Hail the King



Elvis Aaron Presley, born January 8, 1935—who would’ve thought a poor boy from Mississippi would grow up to become one of the most famous and popular musical icons of all time? Rebellious, sexual, charming, and multi-talented, no one has ever been able to match up to Elvis’s abilities.

Receiving a guitar for his 10th birthday, instead of the bike he wanted, it turned out to be a more rewarding and lasting present than any bike. Taking to the streets of Memphis, where Elvis and his parents lived, he learned a lot from his Black neighbors who schooled him in rhythm and blues.

Fast forward to high school, when music became a hobby for Elvis. But all the while, because of his eccentric, flashy fashion choices and pride in his hair, he was mocked by his peers. That never stopped him, though. After graduating high school, Elvis went to Sun Records to make a recording for his mother as a birthday present. He did not expect to be discovered and sign a record deal.

While he had some hits such as “That’s All Right,” it wasn’t until his first #1 hit, in 1956 with “Heartbreak Hotel,” that his career really

began to skyrocket. He appeared on a few talk shows, the most popular being the Ed Sullivan Show, and also started a movie career, eventually starring in 31 films.

There was a lot of controversy surrounding Elvis, however, especially when he first came on the scene. Critics didn’t approve of his sexual presence, and he came to be an icon for teenage rebellion. With his swaying hips, flashy clothing, smooth baritone voice, he was a total ladies magnet; parents were not pleased. However, none of this was really his intention. Those who knew him considered Elvis a wholesome, kind, Southern gentleman. Not to mention a perfectionist, very generous, and, believe it or not, an introvert.

In 1958, Elvis was drafted, and he spent two years in the US Army. He didn’t want any special treatment, just to be treated like a regular guy while doing his duty to his country—even if that meant cutting his luscious locks. When he left the army in 1960, he’d been promoted to sergeant.

After the army, his career continued, though his popularity waned as other musical sensations took the spotlight. His 1968 televised concert, considered his comeback, featured Elvis at his best, highlighting his special ability to perform just about any genre. Rock, country, gospel, he could do it all.

The day Elvis Presley died, August 16, 1977—at just 42—sent shockwaves throughout the world. It was as if the whole world stopped that day. Fans still flood into Memphis to pass through the gates of Graceland and pay their respects. Gone but not forgotten, Elvis was, is, and always will be, the King of Rock and Roll.



Alyssa Katz

# To Infinity and Beyond

Trevor Lilly

February 27th, SpaceX founder and CEO Elon Musk announced the company will send two tourists on a trip around the moon and back before the end of 2018. The two travelers, who asked if the company would be willing to take them on a weeklong lunar cruise, will spend a week in SpaceX’s Dragon 2 capsules, launched using their Falcon Heavy rocket, one of the company’s most powerful. It would be fully automated, though the travelers will still undergo emergency training. If Musk’s plan succeeds, it will be the farthest any human has traveled into space in over 40 years.

SpaceX is no stranger to setting records. In May 2016, they broke two records with the same launch. Their ninth mission to the International Space Station was the first to reuse an orbital booster twice, and it was also the marker for most rockets launched in a year—a record they’d already held before breaking it again with that mission.

The company has made numerous efforts to make this dream a reality, possibly within our lifetime. They have been working on a new kind of rocket, called an Interplanetary Transport System (ITS) that can be reused, significantly cutting cost per space mission. They’re also developing more powerful engines, “Raptor Engines,” which will be able to transport larger numbers of people, in a shorter length of time, using less fuel.

SpaceX also plans to send rockets with an average of 100 people aboard into Earth’s orbit, with the booster detaching and landing back on the Launchpad. It will then be equipped with a tanker and launched again, meeting the capsule in orbit to refuel. The capsule will then be



Courtesy of SpaceX

able to travel the distance to Mars in as little as 80 days, as opposed to about 4 months.

Musk’s ultimate goal is to make humans an interplanetary species, colonizing other planets. He mainly has his eyes on Mars, as it is the only other planet in our solar system within a range of the Sun that would allow it to support life. His end goal is to send a total 1 million people to Mars, to create a self-sustaining environment. SpaceX would provide a system of ITSs traveling to and from Mars, so people could stay as long as they want, heading back to Earth if they chose. This would allow for much easier access to resources as well, speeding up colonization.

With advances in technology and cutting costs, Musk hopes to make space missions as accessible as possible. He estimates cost per person somewhere between \$100,000 and \$200,000. That may seem pricey, but it is a huge savings considering it currently costs an average \$60 million for SpaceX to send a crew of usually seven people on missions much closer than Mars.

While SpaceX still has a way to go, (they’ve yet to hold test flights) they’ve still made several milestones in their efforts and seem determined to reach their ultimate goal. Only time will tell, but it seems interplanetary travel may actually be possible within our lifetime.



# NVCC Theatre Thrives in Community

Anna-Nicole Doucette

This summer, NVCC’s Theatre Department will expand its horizons to Phoenix Stage Company, as Prof. Burton Tedesco, and several talented students and alumni, take part in Phoenix’s production, *The Three Musketeers*. The cast includes Dante Cyr (d’Artagnan), Brian Bowyer (Porthos), Christopher Varanko (Aramis), Adriana Varanko (Sabine), and Katie Steinbacher (Constance). Tedesco will serve as one of the fight directors. These individuals’ current or previous involvement in NVCC Theatre shows our program is truly remarkable.

*The Three Musketeers*, a thrilling comedy based on the timeless Alexandre Dumas novel, begins as d’Artagnan travels to Paris in search of adventure. His sister, Sabine, set to attend a convent school, poses as d’Artagnan’s servant, quickly becoming entwined in his adventures. In Paris, d’Artagnan encounters the musketeers. Joining them to defend the honor of France’s Queen, he finds himself opposed by Cardinal Richelieu, a deadly threat. Even more deadly is the infamous Countess de Winter, who’ll stop at nothing to avenge herself on d’Artagnan and Sabine for their meddlesome behavior.

What’s special is the number of current students and alumni working on this show. Recent alum Adriana Varanko (Beatrice in NVCC’s Much Ado About Nothing) is extremely grateful to take on the role of Sabine. She said, “Being my first show since graduating, I didn’t know what I’d walk into. However, the lessons on audition prep and professionalism I learned at NVCC made me confident. Working with amazingly talented people, including NVCC alumni and current students who are like family, is a great way to get back on stage after a year off

“**This summer, NVCC’s Theatre Department will expand its horizons to Phoenix Stage Company, as Prof. Burton Tedesco, and several talented students and alumni, take part in Phoenix’s production, The Three Musketeers.**”

and feel comfortable in a new theater.” Varanko continued, “Rehearsal is fast moving. On top of lines and blocking, many of us have to learn fight choreography. It wouldn’t be *The Three Musketeers* without incredible sword fights!” She explained that, while she has some stage combat experience, working with experienced fellow actors and directors, “every rehearsal I learn more about myself.”

Varanko isn’t the only cast member passionate about her craft. Katie Steinbacher, recently seen as Sally in NVCC’s *Hearts Like Fists*, plays Constance. Always eager to explore new theatre, she’s embraced the challenge with palpable enthusiasm, saying, “*The Three Musketeers* is a compelling story that will keep you on your toes! The most exciting thing is being able to work with NVCC alumni I didn’t have a chance to work with when they were here. It’s going to be a learning experience, and the finished product will be something you won’t want to miss!”

Though in early rehearsal phase, it’s apparent this show will dazzle. Phoenix Stage Company’s *The Three Musketeers* will run June 10, 16, 17, 23, and 24 at 8pm and June 11 and 18 at 3pm at Clockwork Repertory Theatre, 133 Main Street, Oakville. Tickets go on sale May 5, 2017. Don’t miss this stunning production!

## FACES IN THE CROWD Unstoppable

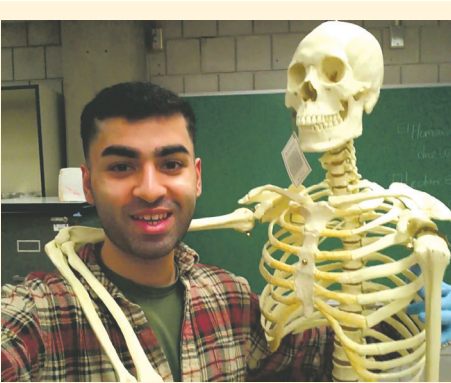
Alam Khan

If some random person ever needed help, whether it’s looking over an essay for errors, or providing a ride at 2:00 am, I’m your man! Friends at NVCC will tell you I like to help others. What can be a better joy than pushing others to excel in their goal and seeing them get there?

I emigrated from Pakistan to the US at the ripe age of five in 1999. Living here, you overlook the luxury of not having to worry about load shedding in temperatures well above 100 degrees, but that’s another story. Having lived in many CT towns, including North Haven, New Haven, and Cheshire, experiencing cultures not only from my family, but from fellow classmates, formulated the bedrock for who I would become. Growing up through the horrors of 9/11 (did we ever find those WMD?), living under a permeating shroud of apprehension, made me question my role in society as an adult.

After completing high school, I was still unsure what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. One thing was sure, however: my deep desire to honor my parents for sacrificing so much to provide opportunities for their children. Graduating alongside many who went to prestigious colleges, I wanted to pursue a different accolade, something my mother would be proud to tell others. Thus, I enlisted in the US Marine Corps and was shipped off to Parris Island, South Carolina.

No doubt it was tough, but I was tougher! Developing a mindset through rigorous training and thinking, I felt unstoppable. Learning how to traverse with night vision goggles and going off road—fully locked/



loaded, strapped with an M-16—was something most people don’t experience. I was living it up. Coming home after, I quickly applied to NVCC to get a degree in something involving software, but that changed, as my heart wasn’t in it.

After some soul searching, and talking to friends and family members, I realized I like helping others and seeing them develop. I switched my program to first attain an associates in Liberal Arts and then pursue a bachelor’s in biology. Eventually, I hope to be a surgeon in an operating room, saving lives and prescribing the good stuff.

My favorite experiences with friends in Naugatuck have been trying new things I was opposed to at first, such as mashed potato pizza...yeah. One of the hardest challenges is working third shift from 11 pm to 7 am and then coming right to college. To those looking for advice from me, come find me. I’d love to help!

Shout out to my mom, Mubarick, for believing in me, and to my friends Sarah, Molly, Unique, Andrew, Jack, and many others for good times spent together. I’d like to thank Professors Petitfrere and Parlato for guiding me, understanding my situations, and helping me stay the course.

Semper Fidelis. OORAH!

# Emulation: Retro Gaming

Bradley Edwards

Many people these days just don’t have room for their older gaming consoles. They give their trusty Nintendo 64s to their friends, possibly never to be seen again. Others sell an out-of-date Playstation on Ebay, or take their first generation XBOX to the flea market. Seldom will you find someone with an NES, SEGA, or Atari; the Ghosts of Gaming Past.

But it’s still very, very easy to play these games. With some simple Google searches, someone can download an emulator and a ROM of their favorite retro game—be it from NES to Nintendo 64—and play it right on their personal computer. Granted, they’re going to have to use a keyboard, unless they have a USB controller. Emulators are software that simulate, or

recreate, the properties of home consoles, and they’re very dynamic. ROMs are basically the compiled game files found on cartridges. Game Boy, Playstation, NES and SNES... you name a system, there’s an emulator. This even includes Playstation 2, GameCube, the Nintendo Wii, and the Nintendo DS. The only non-developed emulators are those for modern consoles, since the technology is still new and not prone to reverse engineering.

Companies are not a big fan of this, however. Although most games will never see the light of day again under most companies, they still resent the idea that people are getting their old, marketable games for free. This is largely exclusive to the console companies themselves,

chief among them is the single most vocal company, Nintendo. They’re not unjustified, either; they’ve created a means to purchase these games again on their more recent devices and consoles, which means emulated games syphon their funds.

Though this could be circumvented by Nintendo actually making more new games and new IPs, those old games are still their property. Further, most game companies don’t deem emulation of their products illegal when one has the relevant products in possession. Despite Nintendo’s claims, there’s no way to prove or monitor the emulation situation, and it’s fully legal to emulate games; the only illegality is distributing them, which doesn’t jeopardize consumers. Retro gaming is easier than one may think; it only takes a few clicks to get started.

# Empty No Longer

Bayley Shean



Pictured are just three of the one-of-a-kind, handmade bowls purchased by faculty members at the Empty Bowls event.

On April 18, all of the Art Club’s efforts paid off, and in a big way. For the past two semesters, the NVCC Art Club had been preparing for Empty Bowls, one of their largest events of the year. The idea was this: each person who attended would pay \$12 for a bowl of soup, and the proceeds would go to a local food pantry. From the building to the trimming to the glazing, each bowl was handmade by members of Art Club, as well as a few of the club’s friends.

The three different soups were graciously provided by NVCC’s Hospitality Club. When the day finally came, the event went off without a hitch. From faculty to staff to students, dozens of people, including the college president, Dr. Daisy Cocco De Filippis, showed their support. De Filippis purchased several bowls, delighted with how “beautiful” they were.

In fact, many who attended were torn and ended up buying multiple pieces. Those bowls did not remain empty for long, however. The all-you-can-eat soup was regarded as “absolutely delicious” by a number of individuals.

The Art Club sold more than 60 bowls, raising a total of \$913, which, as previously stated, will be donated to a local food pantry. In addition, all of the remaining soup from the event was given to a local soup kitchen. Hopefully, this was just the first success for Art Club’s “Empty Bowls”; many future events are planned. You might even say this was only the first course.

## alumni SHOWCASE



### Conor Meyers

As a 2015 graduate, I have great memories of my time at NVCC. Entering the Horticulture Program out of high school, I recall feeling somewhat unsure of the answer to that age-old question, “What do I want to do in life?” The answers came to me during my time at NVCC.

I began the program thinking I wanted to start my own landscaping company and worked at this goal throughout my time in school. Because of work and the driving

## Success, of Course

distance to NVCC, I was not able to participate as much as I wanted to in the great clubs and events throughout the year. There were bus trips to botanical gardens and many Horticulture Club events, such as plant sale, to benefit the school and community. My favorite memories are of time spent in the greenhouse where we experimented with different growing techniques, and one particular event where the culinary department taught us how to cook with produce we grew. The greenhouse, the rose gardens, and the Tamarack Arboretum, were some of my favorite places on campus.

I enjoyed the core classes at NVCC – it was great meeting people pursuing different majors and interests. However, I especially enjoyed the amazing Horticulture curriculum classes. When you fill a classroom with a group who have the same passion (especially the Professors), it is truly a great learning environment. I recall meeting Professor Chris Tuccio in the greenhouse while I was considering the Horticulture Program at NVCC, and by the end of the tour, I knew NVCC was the right fit. Prof. Tuccio was also a fantastic advisor. He taught me several aspects of horticulture, Computers in Landscapes, and daily field techniques, but also, focused on leadership and

practical thinking, and how to budget for a business in Landscape Construction.

During my internship at a prestigious country club, my career focus changed. Having learned the basics of golf course management, I was then able to gain employment in this industry. Throughout the past few years of hard work, remaining open to learning and new opportunities, I gained employment as Golf Course Superintendent at Oronoque Country Club. I’m responsible for maintaining an 18-hole championship course, a natural turf practice facility, and turf driving range, as well as an events lawn and clubhouse landscaping. This job involves management of the agronomic calendars for chemical and fertilization applications, irrigation of the property along with cultural practices of aeration, over seeding and landscaping. NVCC also taught me to be a steward for environmental protection and proper land use.

I truly appreciate everyone at NVCC who helped me through to graduation. My advice to you is to keep your mind open to new learning experiences – you just may end up pursuing something unexpected! Also, talk over these ideas with your advisor - they can be an awesome resource!



# A Call to Action

Christopher Gordon



Public service is a hard business. So many people need so many things, and a lot of the time there simply isn't anyone to help them. Giving back to the community, though, can be both a rewarding and fun experience.

This April, NVCC students and faculty continued to show their compassion to the Waterbury community. Volunteers spent a Sunday preparing food, cleaning dishes—and one brave soul even climbed into an oven with a ton of cleaner and a few hand tools to scrape out a year's worth of grease. After a few

hours, the people who rely on this soup kitchen started to arrive.

Students all participated in passing out food to those in need. With oven cleaning chemicals being extremely toxic, the soul who braved the ovens for a few hours instead focused on mopping the kitchen floors. All in all it was a fulfilling and surprisingly fun event.

The only dark cloud that presented itself was a shortage of volunteers. Being a college student isn't easy; no one is saying otherwise. Sadly, with nearly 7,000 current students, only a handful gave of themselves. The ten students who took part made a big impact. Imagine if all NVCC students split into groups of ten; that would create approximately 700 groups. Now picture each group spending one day giving a few hours to help. That is almost two full years of community service.

The life of a college student is filled with activities, and studying for classes is a time-consuming responsibility. Sometimes, we get so caught up in our own challenges, we forget there are so many residents in need within our community, people who don't have the opportunities we now enjoy.

If all of us took five hours out of our schedules and gave them to those in need, the world would soon become a much brighter place. I urge everyone reading these words to volunteer some time for those less fortunate. The benefits are much greater than you might imagine. This comes from a man who walked away from the soup kitchen covered in oven grease.

# ENG281/Parlato

Christopher Gordon

In fall 2016, students enrolled in Creative Writing were reminded on day one that, as a *process* course, this class would not fulfill a 200-level literature requirement. An astute psychology-minded individual, I could make a compelling case for ENG281's inclusion in a psychology degree program.

Class 2 saw a minor loss of students. And so it happened, every few weeks another face gone. Writing's not easy; poetry that confuses the senses isn't as well-received as a painting that does the same. And creating a piece that delights—and ignites creative cognition—is beyond some people's reach. I pity these souls whose minds will never stretch beyond their current shape.

Students who stayed worked hard. One grizzled old timer started off saying, "I can't do this," but in the end, proudly displayed his

For students who feared their words, yet spoke up, there is nothing but respect.

creation: a ring of pages encircling a classroom. His mind crafted a bridge around the world, connecting concepts no one else ever could, or ever will again. This student dove deep into his experience, resurfacing with words he never knew he had. It's impressive what "I can't do" can sometimes do.

For students who feared their words, yet spoke up, there is nothing but respect. Open reflection concerning solitary words drives vital growth. The safe environment created in our room from 12:45 to 2:05 Tuesdays and Thursdays was a spot where words not meant for mortal ears were heard. From the single person who raised his hand most of the time, to the brave few who followed—until even the most shy words were spoken—this is what being an author is.

There was a rush to the classroom, to experience a world filtered through diverse minds and pens, prompted by a professor who knows the sting of rejection, but possesses the courage to offer his work for all to see. Poetry or prose didn't matter; the major concern was always on process. Without a critical yet understanding hand for guidance, so many words would've been lost.

There's a special therapy in writing, hidden meanings in plain view, read, and felt, in ways unexpected. A poem created by one mind gains new meaning in the mind of a reader. In this way fresh and amazing poetry is fashioned. What each adds to the mix is important to the whole, all parts finding a way in.

Ugly abuse suffered by one is transformed into beauty once a creative spirit touches it. Subtle shifts of context turn joyous statements into dark expressions of hate and grief. These tools, found within creative writing, help wounded hearts find relief not expressed otherwise. Writing holds the ability to bring others into a dark world, without charging the outrageous fees demanded of the author. It also has the ability to shine light on darkness, and, through multiple eyes, show how little there is to fear.

Prompts—both carefully created and hastily scribbled on a whiteboard—sparked talent in hands that never considered this outlet. Random words, poetic limitation, prosaic norms, all tricks to interpret what was previously thought to be unknowable for all but one.

This class might not gain a student a literature credit, nor will it inspire the uninspirable, but it creates opportunity for all who have the courage to take it. Seizing concepts worlds apart and finding a way to connect them is creative writing's greatest strength, a strength every student should work to develop.

Creative writing is more than crafting poems and prose, more than learning the difference between a Shakespearean and an Italian sonnet. It is unlocking chains, throwing wide doors, truly learning what power is, wielding the pen's might. Next semester, you'll have a chance to take up pens under the direction of Professor Julia Petitfrere, a gifted writer and teacher. Register now!

# That's What She Said



Jessica Ney

## To Be Seen, Not Heard (Or Paid)

Last month, between golf trips, vacation, and general time wasting, Donald Trump managed to write off many of the Obama-era changes, including the 2014 Fair Pay and Safe Workplace Order. This order was put into place by President Obama after much research into sexual assault cases and unfair contract distribution.

Obama recognized that many big corporations were underpaying their female employees, and that sixty percent of said companies were given federal contracts, regardless of their horrific discrimination. So he made it mandatory for paychecks to list hourly wages, hours worked, deductions and total pay. This made it easy for women to check whether or not their boss was paying them fairly and properly.

But that's not all. This act also banned forced arbitration; aka "cover-up clauses". Without this ban, companies can file a hush order regarding any and all sexual harassment claims, keeping them out of courts and the public eye. This forced silence impacted many women, causing them to put up with harassment or question whether the issue was all in their head. Silencing these claims also perpetuated the myth that it's "not that bad"; meanwhile, male superiors were allowed to wreak havoc in workplaces all over the nation. President Obama's order made positive change for workplaces across the nation, change that has just been revoked.

The worst part of this repeal is that many of the companies that underpay women get millions back in grants. The director of Equal Rights Advocates, Noreen Farrell, described this repeal as "an executive order that essentially forces women to pay to keep companies in business that discriminate against them, with their own tax dollars."

Using this executive order, Trump (who has repeatedly exhibited outrageous and demeaning attitudes toward women) has silenced many women. The repeal is clearly a continued attempt to sweep women under the rug, where he thinks we will stay.

Thankfully, there are women like anchorwoman, Gretchen Carlson, who sued her CEO directly for alleged gender bias and sexual misconduct. We, women and enlightened men alike, can be inspired to take a stand together against unfair and dangerous treatment in the workplace. Men must recognize a woman's inherent worth, and women must claim that worth. Being brave and bold, we must never silence ourselves for the sake of a man.

RECENTLY READ

Audre Lorde's *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*

When it comes to reading material, I usually prefer blogs or short literary pieces. This changed when I enrolled in Women's Literature, a 200-level English course, taught by Professor Julia Petitfrere. As part of her mission, the class was introduced to more inclusive works, as we were given content that explored once silenced voices. I've read the thoughts of early feminists, such as Virginia Woolf and Mary Wollstonecraft, and I've learned of their experiences as women in a male-dominated society. However, one feminist truly stood out, Audre Lorde, author of *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*.

This assigned reading is one I related to on several different levels. Lorde describes the book as a "biomythography." The autobiographical main character, Audre, lives in New York City throughout much of the book, and she struggles against different experiences of discrimination. As someone who identifies as a member of the LGBTQ community, I felt connected with the main character as several of her experiences have been similar to my own.

It's rare, I must conclude, that students are given reading material that doesn't focus on heteronormacy. *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* does this beautifully, inviting readers to place themselves in situations that may seem foreign, such as same-sex relationships. Also, it tackles the negative treatment of Black women entering the workforce pre-Civil Rights. For example, the main character secures a position at a factory in Stamford, CT, but finds herself jobless after just under three weeks of employment. During this era, Black women were routinely fired without cause within three weeks of employment to prevent them from joining unions.

Perhaps, like me, you'll connect with Lorde's protagonist through shared experience and identity. Or maybe, reading about her life will introduce you to a world you've never understood. Either way, as summer approaches, I encourage you to add Audre Lorde's powerful work, *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name* to your must-read list.

Nicole Hayes



# Challenge by Another Name

Jake Strizower

Is stress good or bad? Most will answer, "It's terrible," but I think differently. In her book, *The Upside of Stress*, Kelly McGonigal says studies show stress or anxiety is bad only if one thinks it is. People who think anxiety is harmful are more likely to have high blood pressure, heart attacks, and other anxiety-related diseases. However, people who thought of stress in a positive light, as something that might help them overcome a challenge, had fewer of these issues than people who viewed anxiety as bad.

A few years ago, I had to take a math final. Before the test, I was so nervous about having anxiety. I thought, *If I'm anxious, it's because I'm really inadequate and I will fail the test*. In fact, I did fail the test—not because I was inadequate, but rather because I wasted my energy trying not to get nervous about the test. I hear some students complaining, "Ooh, I'm stressed out." Every time I hear that, I think, *Ok, now I should be stressed*, which is not necessarily a bad thing.

As I'm writing this, I'm also stressed because I'm thinking, *Who said people will like whatever I write, or I'm not the best writer*. Since I accept stress as a motivator, I say to myself, "The stress will help you rise to the challenge of writing for a newspaper for the first time."

“People who think anxiety is harmful are more likely to have high blood pressure, heart attacks, and other anxiety-related diseases.”

Moreover, there's some benefit for being stressed: a hormone named oxytocin which is responsible for pleasure in social connection and relationships. In times of stress, the hormone reacts more, and that may prompt us to seek out more friends and relationships. It also strengthens our heart which makes us healthier. Nevertheless, this doesn't mean we should give in to stress or stop exercising. In fact, working out is a great way to ease stress—along with staying fit.

So next time you experience something stressful, and you feel anxious, don't feel bad. Just tell yourself, "I'm having a challenge." When you feel your heart beating faster than usual, just remember, it's helping you to get more blood flowing into your brain which helps you think and work better.



FLORIDA BOUND  
Dayton Fenwick

I started attending Naugatuck Valley Community College in the fall of 2014. During my time here I've performed in musical productions with the Stage Society, been a member of the College Chorale and the Music Society, and I was recently inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. After NVCC, I will be transferring to the University of Central



Thank You All



The Final(s) Countdown

**Christopher Gordon**

I bet a lot of you are having similar thoughts right now, *FINALLY, IT'S FINALS TIME!* I won't deny having the same thought myself a time or two over the past few weeks. It's been a busy semester, filled with academics, social events, and work. It's time for a break...after this one last task, of course. For most of us, that task won't be easy. For those who find the task to be easy...well, let's just say I envy your prowess. Study time, tests, and writing essays are a necessary part of the journey.

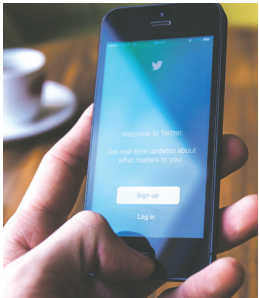
I remember , when I first started at NVCC, a fellow new student addressing my English 101 class the first day. He was upset to be here, and not at a "real school." He quickly found out NVCC is indeed a real school, and the information we receive here is exactly the same as what students at Harvard or Stamford receive. Okay, maybe not *exactly* the same. I find it hard to imagine a Harvard professor hunting down a wayward freshman or sophomore who has a paper due. Having been the hunted party in my time here, I can assure you it does happen at NVCC. I am grateful new students, fresh out of high school, are generally the ones who hold the opinion that community colleges are not "real schools."

And so we have our last exams to triumph over and our last club events to enjoy this semester. It is with a mixture of joy and sadness that each academic year ends. Naugatuck Valley Community College is a unique institution which usually draws out the best from everyone. To all of the graduates who'll leave to start a new adventure, I know the excellence infused in you will affect the new people and environments you'll soon embrace. You will continue to display the best within yourselves, and draw out the best in others. It is a legacy to be proud of.

For the students who are returning next fall to this very real college, I look forward to spending my last few semesters with you. I can hardly wait to use my talents to help new students succeed, as their unique Thank you all.

“Oh, no! Republicans sold my info!”

Bradley Edwards



Everyone’s been freaking out about the latest bill signed into action by Republicans and the President. People think this bill means internet service providers will sell one’s data at their leisure, but this is still technically illegal under previous acts outside the bill. Most news articles about this matter only point to different explanations by different people who have stronger understandings of law—or sometimes just different messages they want people to take away. According to the FCC, a customer’s private information includes app downloads, browser histories, precise geographical locations, and even financial and medical data.

The truth is this bill is an abstract, legal frame-working bill, and it’s hard to discern its intent without more framework being added. Like numerous prior “internet privacy jeopardizing” bills that have faded into obscurity once media attention waned, this bill has the marks to do the same. Many people speculate companies already sell data or use it to hone advertising results. So to them, the worst-case scenario of data selling is nothing new. If anything, it’s more honest. This is not to say, though, that this scenario is cut and dry, because it’s not. The current media outcry against the bill may be telling, but that’s also not really definitive.

For now, the best thing for people to do is see what happens, since nothing is conclusive yet, and it’s been a short time since the bill was signed into effect. We would also do well not to jump to conclusions based on suggested interpretations; fear-mongering—especially coupled with ignorance—gets people nowhere. It is best to be fully informed before making decisions about the bill, based on information as it becomes available. Despite what’s been suggested, the bill may not impact a layperson’s browsing data, and there’s no proof yet it will result in companies selling consumer browsing history.

Google vs. Alternative Facts

Bradley Edwards



Recently, Google has added a “fact check” function to its news and web searches, redirecting to various trusted sources that give outright answers regarding the truth of various facts. This is an attempt to combat the current “alternative facts” situation, and an attempt at promoting clarity in the media environment. The likelihood of it accomplishing said goal is probably slim, as it doesn’t address the underlying problems of the “alternative fact” scenario at all.

The reason this small, simple attempt by Google to get a word in edgewise in the whole politically divided situation comes off as short-sighted is because the issue is simply bigger than informing people. The political climate is now a realm of social politics, divided moral values, divided judgements of character, and a division in what sources people choose to get their news.

Many simply do not trust big media as much as they used to; they find it very hard to hold them accountable when they lie, deceive, or omit details—be it intentional or otherwise. People on all sides of debate are finding it hard to access the same level playing field.

This isn’t to say though that the fact check sites Google uses, such as Snopes, PolitiFact, and FactCheck.org are infallible sources of information. In addition, Google’s attempt to oust “fake news” speaks volumes about how they expect to influence people, their presumption to command the flow of information, and how they are aiming to simply refute “alternative facts” and “fake news” by labeling them as such.

No, it takes higher thought, good persuasive arguments, and friendly reasoning to convince people. No amount of assertive name calling will get anything done in the realm of logical debate, even if it may accent it at times. Why doesn’t Google simply hire a few public speakers if they really want to get involved? Why is the nation not being more intuitive in the ways it bridges differences and levels debate?

Earth Matters

Recycling Advances



Alyssa Katz

You all know the Three Rs, right? Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. We all (hopefully) recycle products like plastic bottles, glass jars, and tin cans, which can be made into new products. Generally, if an item is recyclable, it has the symbol embedded on the bottom. There are several items, however, that have not been recyclable in Connecticut until now.

Since 2007, the Extended Producer Responsibility Program has been in the works to have electronic industries share the cost of recycling their products. Similar programs have followed for recycling mercury thermometers, mattresses, and paint. The incentive is that municipalities will be reimbursed for collecting items. In a recent study, 26 million pounds of material have been removed from landfills, and over 100 jobs related to recycling have been created. This has also reduced carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere by more than 13 million kilograms. Carbon dioxide is bad for the atmosphere because it depletes Earth’s ozone layer.

Tom Metzner, environmental analyst for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), stated, “This is the way to go. This is the way of the future.” By 2024, it’s estimated 60% of waste will be removed from landfills. In 2015, 82% of latex-based paint was collected, 18.6 million pounds of electronics were gathered, and 63.5% of mattresses were received; all for recycling purposes. Other items likely to be added to this list include rechargeable batteries and tires. While mercury is no longer used to make thermometers, a significant number of them are still in use. Though the response has been slower in Connecticut, Vermont and Maine actually offer \$5 incentives for returning mercury thermometers.

In addition to these advances, DEEP recently launched a new plastic bag recycling program. From bags that cover your newspaper, to Ziploc, to bubble wrap, this new program will decrease the amount of trash, in turn helping recycling plants. While plastic shopping bag bins already exist, more than half the contents tend to be other items, causing recycling centers to take time sorting and separating contents. New bins will be available outside grocery stores to make sorting materials easier.

More people are realizing how important our planet is, and that it’s our job to keep it clean and healthy. One easy way to stop climate change is for all of us to follow the three Rs.

The Privacy Mirage and the Weeping Angel

Mark Kacyrat

“Lonely assassins” is the moniker given to monsters known as “Weeping Angels,” on the British sci-fi series, *Doctor Who*. Like creepy, Victorian-era cemetery angels, these creatures keep watch on unsuspecting victims. When someone looks at one, the creature (otherwise frozen in time) moves closer. This game continues until the prey is “touched by an angel.” This slice of popular culture possibly served as the premise for an alleged, unfinished surveillance project between the CIA and MI5 codenamed, “Weeping Angel.”

The project allows intelligence agencies to hack Samsung smart TVs, recording conversations while TVs are turned off. “Weeping Angel” is one of many purported CIA mass surveillance projects detailed in documents published March 7 by anti-secrecy organization WikiLeaks.

The publication, known as “Vault 7” (lauded the biggest-ever leak of CIA documents), details ways in which the CIA is able to break into smartphones, PCs, smart TVs, and even self-driving cars (as reported by the NY Times). On the surface, such methods may be useful for espionage in the interest of national security. Nonetheless, WikiLeaks’ document dump renews important questions regarding privacy and secrecy in our connected world.

Privacy and secrecy are ultimately inter-related, but the latter is often regarded with suspicion depending on the keeper of secrets. Suspicion can be exacerbated if individuals

feel their privacy is under siege. Technological progress, while making the world smaller and more connected, has presented continuous challenges to privacy. What is privacy?

According to scholar Raymond Wacks, privacy has traditionally meant “the desire to be left alone, uninhibited, and unconstrained [by others’ prying].” Granted, this definition can also promote secrecy. In a privacy vs. secrecy dichotomy, individuals (even those with nothing to hide) demand immunity from surveillance of everyday activity by positions of power and authority, such as corporations and governments. For better or worse, such entities have troves of secrets hidden from the public. Should the average person sacrifice his or her privacy, for powerful entities with potential skeletons in their own closets?

A cornerstone of current debate on privacy involves how many hi-tech companies collect personal customer information. Companies (i.e. Facebook, Google) offering “free” services in exchange for user information, where the user “is the product” draw enormous scrutiny. Concerns stem not only from the creepiness of personalization algorithms and data profiling, but the potential for abuse of user data. These concerns are expressed most vocally in situations when companies must cooperate with government requests for user data.

Many users are unaware what they sign up for, lacking time and patience required to read legalistic, lengthy privacy policies. A Pew Research Center survey shows half of

Americans polled fail to understand privacy policies are legal documents outlining how customer data is managed and used. These policies, by definition, do not guarantee user information is kept confidential.

It’s fair to say an expectation of privacy in the traditional sense is a mirage. What is important is to avoid being touched by the “weeping angel” of secrecy. In the late 1990s, scientist and sci fi author, David Brin, released a nonfiction book, *The Transparent Society*, that argued for “reciprocal transparency,” as the proliferation of the Internet and technologies raised questions on the viability of privacy. Brin argued society could overreact and restrict the flow of information, in turn enforcing a “reign of secrecy,” but governments, cyber-criminals, and wealthy interests could still find ways to watch the common person. However, the common person has fewer tools to watch such characters, thus failing to preserve any true privacy.

“Reciprocal transparency” addresses this by asking for mutual accountability between parties. What’s the potential of Google user data being abused, if top execs and employees’ embarrassing personal secrets are published? Citizens get upset when the watchers are perceived as going too far (fallout over Edward Snowden’s NSA leaks, for example). If secrecy is the “weeping angels” on *Doctor Who*, keeping an eye on the watchers freezes their ability to avoid being caught in wrongdoing. To ultimately survive though, we must be vigilant not to blink.

Readers Respond

I really understand where the author of “Meant to Be” is coming from. I, too, thought I would have my life figured out when I graduated from high school, but not everything goes according to plan. Community colleges are frowned upon, but that does not mean they’re not good schools. NVCC has a lot of great programs, especially the Arts, which most colleges don’t have...I believe the Arts are great for the college and those who attend. As Bayley Shean said, the artists are a family, a family with talent. The Arts can really help someone find true purpose...as a person. Even though we may not be where we thought we were going to be, maybe we’re right where we belong.

~ Desiree Ortiz

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