

The Tamarack

Our college. Our news. Our voice.

Naugatuck Valley Community College

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For a Better America

Nicole Hayes and Richard Bosco

Editor's Note: Bosco's recollections italicized.

Racism, bigotry, and prejudice have been a serpentine plague on American culture since before the founding of our republic. America's negative relationship with racial minorities dates to the first enslaved Africans who arrived in 1526 with a group of Spanish colonists led by Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon. American chattel slavery lasted until 1865 when the enactment of the 13th Amendment outlawed slavery and involuntary servitude.

Newly freed Black Americans then experienced a new form of slavery as Black code laws were created. Black codes, enforced throughout the South, forced Black people into indentured servitude (sharecropping) and ensured mass disfranchisement as these new laws made it impossible for Black men to vote unless they owned property.

These codes guaranteed Black Americans remained second-class citizens, their constitutionally given rights denied. Black codes laid the foundation for the Jim Crow era. It is clear separate and unequal based on race is a founding principle of this nation, but that certainly does not make it acceptable. Unfortunately, this cultural plague continues—not content to slither beneath the surface, but regularly rearing its ugly head.

Racism, white nationalism, prejudice, and violence against people of color (POC), the LGBTQ+ community, Muslims, Jews, and Black

and Brown immigrants are on the rise nationwide. More horrifying is President Trump's rhetoric, which gives violent radical groups encouragement. White Supremist/Nationalists in America believe, based on his words and actions, they have this president's approval and support. Trump's tacit approval—clear after the horrifying August 2017 Charlottesville, Virginia incident when he blamed "both sides," claiming even white Nationalists and Neo-Nazis had "very fine people" among them—has given rise to more violence.

For instance, just recently in El Paso, Texas, 22 people (many immigrants of color) were gunned down by a man who made clear he was targeting Latino/a immigrants. These incidents are as disturbing to witness as the violent police brutality in Birmingham, AL on May 3, 1963, when the racist, segregationist, hate-filled Birmingham Police Department turned dogs and firehoses on peaceful Civil Rights demonstrators—some just children. There was a great fear historically, and there is a great fear remaining, of the races mixing.

During Jim Crow, many states made it illegal for White and Black people to interact socially in public spaces. In Birmingham, the law in 1930 read, "It shall be unlawful for a negro and white person to play together or in company with each other in any game of cards or dice, dominoes or checkers" as noted in the Smithsonian. The inability of

people from different backgrounds to discuss the consequences of being barred from true interaction perpetuates an "us versus them" narrative. This breeds more fear and distrust amongst people of different races. How does this impact individuals? What about society? Our nation has missed many opportunities to learn about each other and thus establish a more perfect union.

A white male, born in the mid-50s, I grew up in the 60s, came of age in the 70s. During my life, I've witnessed a great deal, some truly beautiful and magnificent moments, and others as ugly, horrible, and grotesque as can be imagined. The ugliest, most horrible things I've witnessed are racism, bigotry, and hate. Fortunately, I've not had the misfortune to experience this hate, nor could I as a white man. I do not want anyone in this country to ever experience the hate and suffering racism, bigotry, or any kind of prejudice brings to this world.

As a young man, I really believed our nation would overcome hate and prejudice. Well, here we are in 2019, and what the hell happened, America? As I reached adulthood in the 70s, I became somewhat hopeful American racial hatred was coming to an end. Unfortunately, it just went underground.

When Barack Obama was elected President in 2008 with 53% of the popular vote, I truly thought America had finally made it, that we'd turned a corner to a more accepting, compassionate society. I am sorry to say I was very, very wrong.

The night of President Obama's inauguration,

January 20, 2009, Mitch McConnell, Republican Senate Minority Leader; John Boehner, Republican House Minority Leader, and approximately 20 other top Republicans met at a D.C. steakhouse to discuss how to obstruct Obama's presidency. They planned to make him a one-term president by saying no to everything he wanted to accomplish. Most of these Republican "luminaries" may have been there because of political or philosophical differences with the new president; however, it would be naïve to dismiss the likelihood some were there because of racism and hate.

Republicans have moved away from discussing race—instead, harboring racist ideology. In 2018, *The Washington Post* reported that, in 2006, people identifying as members of either party agreed using the n-word is offensive. In 2018, a declining number of Republicans considered the n-word offensive. Democrats, meanwhile, showed an increase in opposition to its use. Just 33% of those who voted for Trump said it was racist for whites to use the n-word, meaning 67% of Trump voters—presumably Republicans—find the n-word acceptable. Hmmm.

All this brings us to today. According to a 2018 survey conducted by the Cooperative Congressional Election Study and reported in *The Washington Post*, an overwhelming 53% of White Americans underestimate the discrimination Black people still experience, underscoring the difficulty in eradicating prejudice and racial discrimination when we cannot even agree they exist or the degree to which they exist. The only cure for what perpetually lurks below, ailing this country, is exposure. For, as Justice Louis Brandeis wrote, "sunlight is the best disinfectant."

In Memoriam

Tamarack Staff



Photo Courtesy of Oprah Magazine



Photo Courtesy of Lisbeth Darsh

Morrison's legacy extends well beyond her own monumental work: books, including, *Sula*, *Love*, *The Bluest Eye*, *Song of Solomon*, *Paradise*, *Jazz*, *A Mercy*, *Tar Baby*, *God Help the Child*, *Home*, and, of course, *Beloved*. She was, after all, instrumental, as a Random House editor, in bringing the works of other Black women to the reading public. Her work, in its many forms, presented the Black American experience, in all its beauty and unflinching ugliness, with never a question as to whether these lives matter.

As author Rion Amilcar Scott, winner of the PEN/Robert W. Bingham Prize for *Insurrections*, states, "So much of black literature, starting with the slave narratives, are written for and to white people. Toni Morrison made it clear that she was writing for black people. An ongoing love letter. That's the perspective a lot of us have now and it's a Morrisonian innovation."

Morrison's passing has left an unfillable hole, not just in the world of literature, but in the hearts of so many. The following tribute, from NVCC President De Filippis, was shared Tuesday, August 6th, the day Morrison's passing was announced.

My Dear Colleagues and Students,

I could not let the day pass without stopping for one moment to remember the life and work of our beloved Toni Morrison. I was an undergraduate student when *The Bluest Eye* first came to my attention. The beauty and power of her language and her ability to narrate with honesty and lyricism have stayed with me all these years, renewed

and strengthened with each new publication. Gracias, Ms. Morrison, for being a part of my life.

"She is a friend of my mind. She gather me, man. The pieces I am, she gather them and give them back to me in all the right order. It's good, you know, when you got a woman who is a friend of your mind." ~ from Morrison's *Beloved*. ~Alfred A. Knopf, 1987.

Let us all take a moment today to reminisce about when we first made her acquaintance, and to celebrate what was a life worth living and a literary legacy to be treasured for centuries to come.

In solidarity with our collective mourning,
NVCC President
Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.

President Barack Obama, who presented Morrison with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2012, writes, "Toni Morrison was a national treasure, as good a storyteller, as captivating, in person as she was on the page. Her writing was a beautiful, meaningful challenge to

our conscience and our moral imagination. What a gift to breathe the same

air as her, if only for a while."

Heartfelt tributes are most needed in our collective sorrow, but

what could be more powerful than words from the author, the national treasure, herself? Morrison's wisdom is so expansive, so quotable, it would be impossible to choose a single, definitive statement. Here are four:

On writing, Morrison stated, "If there's a book that you want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it."

On social responsibility: "...if you are free, you need to free somebody else. If you have some power, then your job is to empower somebody else."

From Morrison's 1993 Nobel Lecture, "Make up a story... For our sake and yours forget your name in the street; tell us what the world has been to you in the dark places and in the light. Don't tell us what to believe, what to fear. Show us belief's wide skirt and the stitch that unravels fear's caul."

And finally, these words from *The Nation*, written in 2015, now more relevant than ever: "I know the world is bruised and bleeding, and though it is important not to ignore its pain, it is also critical to refuse to succumb to its malevolence.

Like failure, chaos

Photo Courtesy of Jill Krementz

contains information that can lead to knowledge—even wisdom. Like art."

We honor you, Toni Morrison. For opening our hearts and minds, we are indebted to you. For all you have given—your glory, your creation—we thank you, *Beloved*.



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



You've likely seen my name here in *The Tamarack* plenty of times over the past year, possibly too many, as my stress levels overloaded with the number of articles I found myself writing each month. But writing is one of the things I love to do, and I intend to keep doing it for a long time to come. This is one of the many reasons I said yes when asked to fill the position of *Tamarack* Editor-in-Chief. To start off this new semester, I'd like to say welcome to all new students; it's wonderful here, and I think you'll like it. As for returning students, welcome back!

So I may as well tell you a bit about myself, since you'll be hearing a lot from me in months to come. I've been a part-time student at NVCC since fall of 2015. I'm currently working towards a degree in sociology, but my true passion is writing. To highlight this, though I've been writing for *The Tamarack* for a little over a year now, I've been writing as a hobby since I was ten. I've written many unfinished books and some poems which I would like to work on more in the future.

Last year, I helped set the wheels in motion for the Creative Writing Club to be an official SGA organization, and I'm currently president of that club as well as a member of Phi Theta Kappa and Safe Space, which will soon change its name to Pride Alliance. I'm also a student worker for the Center for Teaching and LABSS. Funny enough, even though I do a lot around campus, it really does not seem like too much. I just do what I love, write what I think, and try to get all my assignments in on time.

I am really excited for this semester as the new Editor-in-Chief. I hope to do as good a job as the previous holder of the position, Alam Khan. Watching how he conducted meetings and seeing his confidence really helped me to step up into the position. He has now graduated and moved on from NVCC, but I'd like to thank him here, for all he's done for *The Tamarack*. Khan, you will be missed, but we'll continue to make you proud.

Best Regards,
Gwendydd Miller
Editor-in-Chief
tamarack@nv.edu

Highlighting Literacy and Multilingualism

Karlene Ball, ESL Program Coordinator

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) proclaimed September 8 International Literacy Day in 1966. This year the focus across the globe is on Literacy and Multilingualism. According to UNESCO, literacy continues to be an area of concern in most countries, including the US. We cannot consider the worldwide impact of globalization and technology without discussing their intersection with literacy and multilingualism.

NVCC's Office of Multicultural Affairs kicks off the academic year with an event highlighting literacy and multilingualism, Monday, Sept. 9th, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. in L-501. Come participate in activities to test your foreign language wits and learn how to say some basic phrases in other languages. This is also an opportunity to use your literacy skills to write thank you notes, letters to government officials, or to correspond with organizations like Amnesty International.

We'll have information and materials to help. Consider donating *gently used* books to our *Books for Africa* project. They need fiction for all age levels, textbooks at all education levels, and school supplies. *No cookbooks, US History textbooks, CDs or videos, please. We cannot accept books published over 15 years ago. For information, contact Karlene Ball at kball@nv.edu or (203) 575-8156.*

ACE News

Come to the 'Write' Place

Joan Lownds

"Writers do not merely reflect and interpret life, they inform and shape life," wrote E.B. White, the author of *Charlotte's Web*. White's words carry more weight than ever today because the importance of writing has increased dramatically, due to digital technology. Written communication flows between us at an unprecedented pace, through emails, text messages and social media posts. In today's high-tech landscape, you must develop strong writing skills to succeed.

This fall, embark on a quest to sharpen your writing ability at the ACE. We are offering a new, innovative, One-on-One Tutoring Program in Writing that is appointment-based. This will provide you with an intensive, individualized session with a tutor designed to assist you with any aspect of your writing, ranging from specific assignments to general writing skills.

Our free program will guarantee you a tutoring session, and offer a greater opportunity to build a relationship with the tutor, increase motivation and boost your confidence

as a writer. If the hooks for your essays keep getting snagged in the weeds, come to the ACE this fall and we will help you untangle them and reel in your readers!

The ACE will also continue to offer free Writing tutoring on a drop-in basis, along with free drop-in tutoring in Math, Science, Accounting, computer skills, and ESL. In our thriving hub, students who visit the ACE on a regular basis typically earn higher grades than those who do not. Our hallmark is our warm, welcoming, and inclusive environment. Stop by for a visit and meet our dedicated staff, and eat waffles with us when one of our "Waffles for Success" days rolls around. We look forward to meeting you.

To make an appointment for our new, One-on-One Tutoring Program in Writing, visit https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ePidZ3onakmsjdmeWGBt2eSov4cli_9CIH-GvY4UYyxUN0M1TVixTU0yWFEyT0hPUE05NVNwVjJWUy4u or ACE Tutor Referral or scan this code.



Scan this code for an appointment

Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Together --- ¡Unidos Juntos!

Karlene Ball, ESL Program Coordinator

Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated every year from September 15 – October 15. This year, the theme is "Hispanic Americans: A History of Serving Our Nation." According to the Census Bureau, the term Hispanic or Latino/a refers to Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.

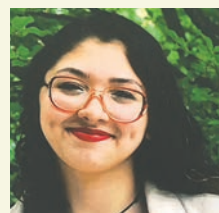
NVCC is a Hispanic Serving Institution whose students identifying as Hispanic have roots in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, The Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and more. Of course, many students born in the United States proudly celebrate their Hispanic heritage as well.

We celebrate the contributions of Rita Moreno, actress, singer and dancer; journalists like Maria Hinojosa; pioneers like labor leader Dolores Huerta; writers like Sandra Cisneros; scientists like Luis Walter Alvarez, Nobel Prize-winning physicist and of course, Sonia Sotomayor, current Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The Hispanic Student Union (HSU) will be celebrating the month with various cultural activities, food tastings, and music. Look for events information on campus bulletin boards and on social media soon. ¡Celebremos!

For more information on events, or if you would like to be a member of the HSU, please contact Karlene Ball, HSU Advisor at kball@nv.edu.

SGA President, Tabitha Cruz



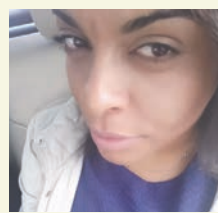
My name is Tabitha Cruz, and I will be your SGA President for the 2019 - 2020 school year. I'm excited to be serving a second term on the Student

Government as President. I am also incredibly thankful to the SGA members who have voted me in for a second year. Because of your support, I'm able to continue advocating for my peers and continue much of the work I started my first time around. I'm thrilled there are so many great events planned for the year already, and I am eager to see how everything goes.

I'm sad to say this will be my last year at NVCC, as I plan to graduate in May. So this will be the third and final time I'll introduce myself in *The Tamarack*. While I'm sad to go, I'm ready to see what the future has in store for me. I'm also ready to make this school year my most memorable yet!

I'm still a music major and plan to pursue a career within the music field. So this year I'll be looking at quite a few four-year universities with music programs. I don't have much else to say about myself (I'm not that interesting), but I will say I am excited to be working with my fellow officers on another great school year for students. So thank you for allowing me to be your SGA President. I hope to see you getting involved around campus at our upcoming events!

Vice President, Elizabeth Ortiz



Hello, my name is Elizabeth Ortiz, and I'm happy to be the Student Government Association Vice President. A

Marketing major expecting to graduate in spring 2020, I plan on attending WCSU to further my degree.

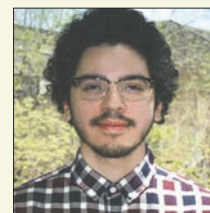
Growing up, I always sought adventure—from climbing hills to playing with mud—creating memories with friends, so when we're at retirement age, we can talk about our adventures. To this day, we build memories by meeting at the airport to travel together.

I also enjoy meeting new people because everyone has a story to share from the journey we all have in common: life. But each one of us has a different take on it. It's as if life plays different scenarios or places people on our path to learn from.

I'm an animal lover, a vegetarian, a coffee lover, an adventurous traveler, a humanitarian, a good listener, good friend, good daughter, and I march to the beat of my own heart.

As new SGA Vice President, I'll do everything in my power to get the job done. As Jennifer Lee reminds us: "Be fearless in the pursuit of what sets your soul on fire."

SGA Secretary, Christian Soto



Hello, my name is Christian Soto, and I'm returning as secretary of NVCC's Student Government Association. I'm also a

Tamarack contributor, a member of Music Society, the M.E.N.'s Club and the Creative Writing Club. I've had a wonderful learning experience at NVCC, thanks to my fellow students and the faculty.

I hope my last year attending the College will be as memorable and full of great opportunities as the years prior. When I first started attending Naugatuck Valley, I didn't know what career path was right for me, and I was very shy. I changed majors about three times and did not participate in any campus activities. Eventually, I switched my major to music, and in music theory class, I met Tabitha Cruz, current SGA President. She introduced me to the idea of becoming SGA Secretary, and I applied for the position.

Since then I've become more involved in organized school activities and events, allowing me to become a greater part of the school's community. I encourage students to get more involved and participate in the delightful activities, events, and opportunities the school has to offer. I look forward to my last year as a Naugatuck Valley student and a member of these groups.

SGA PRESIDENT



Great Beginnings!

Welcome back to another great year at Naugatuck Valley! I'm extremely excited to be back, and I'm sure you all are as well! The Student Government Association (SGA) has so many exciting events planned for the beginning of the year. There are so many fun and educational things happening on your campus, so get involved!

Firstly, if you're not registered to vote, don't worry! The SGA has got you covered with Voter Registration Days happening across the campus. You can catch us on September 3rd, September 16th and September 24th. Be on the lookout for flyers around campus for more information on times and campus locations.

This month is also our annual Constitution Trivia Event; it will take place September 17th from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm! Constitution Trivia is a great way to show off your knowledge of one of country's most important documents. To sign up, just visit rooms S514 or S515 any time before the competition. You can sign up with a buddy or sign up alone; either way we'll make sure you're on a team. We promise a fun and challenging event—and refreshments!

We'll wrap up the month with our first SGA meeting of the year on Wednesday, September 25th in room L501 from 4:00 – 5:00 pm. SGA meetings are a great way to meet new friends and learn more about the campus and how events take shape. And these meetings are open to everyone. If you aren't already a member of the SGA, I encourage you to join, or at least check out an SGA meeting.

We'd also like to meet you, so come see us. The SGA's office door—located in Room S516 in Prism lounge—is always open! If you have questions about anything, you can always email them to Nv-SGA-President@nvcc.com or give us a call at 203-596-2185.

Good luck to everyone this year! I hope to see some of you soon!

Best Regards,
Tabitha Cruz

The Tamarack

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

Editorial

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 Christopher Gordon, *Editor-in-Chief Emeritus*
 Chelsea Clow, *Editor-in-Chief Emeritus*

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 Nicole Hayes, *Emeritus Senior Staff Writer/Alumni Contributor*
 Richard Bosco, *Emeritus Senior Staff Writer*

Kathleen Chesto, *Staff Writer*
 Tabitha Cruz, *Staff Writer*
 Jason Hesse, *Staff Writer*
 Alyssa Katz, *Alumni Contributor/Editor*
 Mitchell Maknis, *Staff Writer*
 Amelia McGee, *Staff Writer*
 Jillian Parlato, *Staff Writer*
 Robert Pinto, *Staff Writer*
 Christian Soto, *Staff Writer*
 John Williams, *Staff Writer*
 Nicole Zappone, *Staff Writer*

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 Julia Petitfrere, Cheryl Swodes, *Guest Contributors*

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EDITORIAL

Consolidation Thoughts

Students First, the proposed consolidation of the twelve CT Community Colleges, is supposed to save the CSCU system money, helping schools climb out of the \$24 million hole the system is in. Consolidation is supposed to prevent the closing of any community college, while helping system-wide student retention. The plan also claims it will introduce a new way of doing things, providing students support in picking a major and staying on track academically, with additional advisors added. All in all, this seems pretty great...on paper.

I have no issue with the plan as it's described on paper, and I'm not here to bash it. In fact, no one else is coming up with another solution, so where's the harm in compromising? I'm not saying the plan is perfect. I have so many questions about people's jobs and what programs could get cut. And I'm exhausted from asking the same questions over and over again.

I am also tired of both sides of the situation pointing fingers and not creating solutions. I do take issue with the fact lack of transparency, whether from the system office or my professors. Every time I ask a question, I'm told to ask someone else, or I'm treated like I don't know what's happening. As a student, I'm going to be the one affected, so why keep me in the dark?

Even worse, students are being told what to think, as if we're too dense to form our own opinions on something that will affect us. Instead of being given simplistic answers, we should be provided resources to form our own conclusions. Students should not be ostracized for how they feel either. Many are afraid to express their opinions and values because they fear they'll be attacked—maybe be their own professors. What's the point of promoting civil discourse if the people we look up to most can't even do that?

When my peers suggested I write an editorial concerning consolidation, maybe they believed it would be filled with hate. Maybe they thought I would demonize those who've proposed Students First, or imagined I would criticize opposing voices. But I just don't feel that way; sorry to disappoint.

Frankly, I don't have a strong opinion either way on consolidation. I believe some aspects are good, and other parts are bad. I just wish everyone would be more willing to compromise. I also believe it's time we make a greater effort to educate those around us, especially students. Whether we like it or not, something will change for better or worse, but keeping students in the dark is definitely not putting us first.

Judicial Branch Internship

Nicole Zappone



Citizens protest proposed highway tolls at the July 22nd special session at the state capitol. Photo Courtesy of Nicole Zappone

During the summer vacation from my substitute teaching job, I applied for an internship with the CT Judicial Branch. When I got the initial email requesting an interview, I was excited but didn't know what to expect. I went with a professional attitude, knowing this interview could go either way.

While waiting, I spoke with a woman at the front desk. Somehow, we ended up talking about social media until I was called in to interview. I knew I liked the office already and was hopeful this was going to go well.

Trecia Austin, Volunteer/Intern Coordinator for the Experiential Learning Program of the External Affairs Office in East Hartford, was kind and professional as she explained the position. Based on my media background and undergraduate degree in Professional Writing, Austin recommended me to the other External Affairs Office at Hartford Supreme Court. She'd suggested this position to provide help because someone in the office had been on maternity leave.

While I was originally going to work in the clerk's office in local court, I took a chance to see where this unique opportunity would take me.

In less than two weeks, I interviewed with Rhonda Hebert, who was excited to meet me. We talked easily, and I'd brought my writing portfolio, which contained all my newspaper articles, from my undergrad years to current. Hebert seemed impressed by my portfolio and wanted me to bring it back for her to thoroughly read. Unfortunately, I never remembered (oops!).

After the interview, I was given the green light. A few weeks later, I started my internship at Hartford Supreme Court on Capitol Avenue. Every morning exiting the highway, I couldn't

help saying aloud: "Good morning, Supreme Court," as if anyone was listening. I was excited for work, feeling a sense of purpose.

I assisted various research projects for both the External Affairs Office and for Justice Raheem L. Mullins. I became acquainted with the Judicial Branch website, gave PowerPoint presentations at the Web Board meeting, and completed other assignments. I also was able to observe a special session, July 22, at the Capitol, where many State Representatives voted on various issues.

Honestly, this was the best summer ever. In the weeks of my internship, I was visited Criminal Court, Community Court, and Housing Court. I learned and saw things I never could've imagined.

My first day, a special request came from Justice Mullins, seeking documentation regarding his Supreme Court seat. He wanted to know who he replaced and asked us to trace the justices back to 1795. Although a tedious project, I completed it in a few weeks with help from my office team. Along the way, I learned plenty about CT history and our early Supreme Court Justices.

Aside from Justice Mullins' project, I was assigned tasks from proofreading documents to looking up positive and negative information about judges up for spring 2020 reappointment. Instructed to keep a folder of findings, I organized little "packets" of information about each judge; it was so interesting learning all about their judicial background.

Another day, I observed Phil, a volunteer, giving a tour of Supreme Court. It was exciting learning so much about CT's highest court. When Phil was finished, the group was able to meet Justice Maria Araujo Kahn; that was a pleasure. Another time, I met Justice Gregory D'Auria.

The final day of my internship was emotional. Not only was it my last day, I was assigned to meet the bail commissioner and observe criminal court. Another intern and I accompanied the commissioner to lock-up, where we watched him interview about 20 people.

Seeing them in handcuffs and shackles was sad, as I'd never seen that before. When one lady shouted, "I'm going home B***hes!" I didn't respond. It seemed very busy, but the bail commissioner told me it was considered a quiet morning; typically, there are many more people.

My internship was unforgettable—especially the people I got to see every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. It was good feeling like part of a team. I wish I'd had this experience sooner. For anyone seeking adventure, new information, and skills to apply to a future career, an internship is certainly the place!

Center for Teaching Create a Habit

Prof. Lisa Kaufman

Lisa Kaufman, NVCC Professor of Communications and co-advisor to the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society, is a longtime CFT committee member.

Welcome! It's nice to have you on campus. I hope your summer was rejuvenating and you were able to relax and enjoy. Now's the time to start anew, forget old habits, and create new ones that will help you achieve academic success and still have fun—the two are not mutually exclusive!

A habit is something you do repetitively without knowing. Habits can become your second skin. So, what habits can you create to become more successful and happier while you're attending NVCC?

Of course, I could offer you guidance academically by suggesting you start off the semester by attending all of your classes, taking good notes, and being a good time manager. However, I'll assume you already have these skills and have used them in the past. If you feel, though, that some of these skills are lacking, seek guidance from those who know, aka your professors, your academic advisor, or go to ACE. Making these behaviors a habit

will definitely increase your chances of success.

What I really want to offer you is the idea of making a habit of connecting with others. You are in new classrooms with people you don't know. Put yourself out there and connect with your fellow classmates. You can help each other with assignments and become "study buddies" when you have an exam. According to academic studies, students are more successful when they study in groups. Make it a habit to reach out to new faces in your classrooms.

Not only does connecting with others enable you to gain more knowledge, it also will make you a happier person. We all feel more comfortable when we identify with others. Actually finding commonalities with classmates is not hard to do. Just talk to each other. I've been amazed at the friendships that have been formed in my classes over the years. But remember, just sitting next to someone for 15 weeks does not make a connection. Make it a habit to talk to someone you don't know in each class.

So, I wish you an enjoyable and successful semester. Don't forget, by creating new habits, you are certain to find college life more fulfilling!

Get Ready For The Fall 2019 Job Fair!

SEPT 12 Interview Skills Workshop
10:00am - 11:00am, S502

SEPT 16 Resume / Cover Letter Workshop
11:00am - 12:00pm, S502

SEPT 18 Nonverbal Communications Workshop
2:00pm - 3:00pm, S502

SEPT 24 Prepare for a Job Fair Workshop
12:30pm - 1:30pm, S502

Workshop space is limited, registration is encouraged. Walk-ins will be welcome if space permits.

FALL 2019 JOB FAIR
 Thursday, October 3, 2019
 10:00am - 1:00pm - Café West
PART-TIME - SEASONAL **Bring Plenty of Resumes,**
ENTRY LEVEL - INTERNSHIPS **Dress Professionally!**

Center for Job Placement and College Opportunities
 L524 * 203-575-8158 * cjpc@nv.edu * www.nv.edu/cjpc

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Happenings @ Other Colleges



**UNIVERSITY OF CT,
WATERBURY CAMPUS
CAREER
CONVERSATIONS**

Wednesdays, 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Campus Lobby

Career Conversations are a weekly opportunity for students to meet employers or graduate program representatives informally and talk about careers, internships, volunteer, and employment opportunities, organization culture, and what to do to land a job.

On September 11, 2019, they welcome the Social Security Administration, Waterbury Offices, as well as the Salvation Army of Waterbury.

For information, contact: susan.hyde-wick@uconn.edu or lisa.mcguire@uconn.edu



**WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY,
MIDDLETOWN, CT
THE MASH ~ 9/6/2019**

Wesleyan University continues a musical tradition, presenting its eighth annual festival, The MASH. Inspired by Fête de la Musique (also known as Make Music Day), the festival highlights Wesleyan's student music scene, with multiple stages on campus featuring everything from a cappella ensembles to student and faculty bands.

The event begins Friday, September 6, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. and will be held at various locations across the Wesleyan University campus.

For more information, follow this link: <https://www.wesleyan.edu/cfa/events/2019>



**WESTERN CT STATE
UNIVERSITY
VISITING ARTIST
LECTURE**

At 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 18th, illustrator David Brinley will discuss his work in Room 144 of the Visual and Performing Arts Center on the WCSU Westside campus, 43 Lake Ave. Extension in Danbury. The event, which is free and open to the public, will be presented as part of the university's Master of Fine Arts visiting artist lecture series. For more information or to RSVP, visit www.eventbrite.com/e/visiting-artist-lecture-david-brinley-illustrator-tickets-65695136923 or call (203) 837-8403. For a complete list of similar SVPA events, visit wscsvpac.eventbrite.com/.



**BOSTON COLLEGE
LECTURE: MARY
ROBINSON: *Climate
Justice - Hope, Resilience
and the Fight for a Sustainable Future***

Mary Robinson served as President of Ireland from 1990-1997 and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights from 1997-2002. Currently, she is Adjunct Professor of Climate Justice at Trinity College Dublin. She is the recipient of numerous honors and awards including the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama. Robinson sits on the advisory board of Sustainable Energy For All (SE4All) and also serves on the board of the European Climate Foundation. Mary Robinson's memoir, *Everybody Matters*, was published in September 2012 and her book, *Climate Justice - Hope, Resilience and the Fight for a Sustainable Future*, was published in September 2018.

The lecture, presented by the Lowell Humanities Series and co-sponsored by the Environmental Studies Program and Earth and Environmental Sciences Department, takes place Wednesday, September 11 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at 100 Gasson Hall, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

Pride in the Hills

Gwenydd Miller



NVCC professors Patti Pallis, Nikki McGary, and Chris Rempfer (l to r) share in the fun at Pride in the Hills. Photo Courtesy of Gwenydd Miller

On Saturday June 15, a momentous event took place in the Litchfield Hills. It featured music, drink, and a large bonfire in the middle of a field full of people. Pride in the Hills, an LGBTQIA fundraiser hosted at Spring Hills Vineyards in Washington, CT, had a wonderful turnout, and the whole night was filled with many different fun activities. One amazing aspect of this night, and definitely worthy of attention, is the fact that four NVCC students, me included, volunteered at this event. NVCC Professor Chris Rempfer even had a hand in organizing the festivities. And I'm happy to say we weren't the only NVCC people in attendance. Professors Nikki McGary and Patti Pallis both joined in the fun and looked as though they had a wonderful time.

Pride Alliance (formerly Safe Space) club members, President Alexis Levesque, and former President Derek Spearin, were among the volunteers, as well as Creative Writing Club Secretary Jenifer Galloway. Each volunteer wore a Pride in the Hills t-shirt as an identifier,

and most of us arrived there for 1:00 p.m. to help set up. Some initial duties included wrapping flowerpots and setting up tables. Later on, we handled things such as helping with parking and checking in attendees. After several hours of hard work, at 8:00 p.m., we were able to enjoy the event in all its wonder. That included food, wine, and trying out new hairstyles at the Wig Bar.

A door was set up in the middle of the field several yards away from the firepit. It had paint cans and brushes around it, and everyone was encouraged to paint their own pictures or messages on it. By the end of the night, the door was filled with fantastic rainbows of color. Food was donated by local restaurants and available all night for guests to enjoy at the big tent. A silent auction was also held. There was a wine stand, a beer wheelbarrow, an open bar, as well as caterers providing unique salads, hot dogs, and mini hamburgers. Iced tea and lemonade were also available.

By the end of the night, many shows took place, including a drag show with many queens dancing and sharing their experiences. Crowd interaction included color-changing umbrellas, with the audience asked to change their umbrellas to a different color in answer to questions. A dance group also performed up in the hills of the vineyard, where a large theater was set up with stone benches and hammocks. The stage was a large, round piece of white granite that overlooked the entire field.

Spring Hills Vineyards was a wonderful location for such an event, and everyone who took part shared a joyful sense of community. I'm just very glad to have been part of such a special event. It was amazing to see the hills come alive with pride.

Communism, Socialism, Republicanism

Richard Bosco

Communism, socialism, republicanism. Each word evokes a different response from Americans. However, the thoughts these words conjure for most are not always accurate representations or definitions. Each word refers to a political philosophy. Two of them, communism and socialism, also refer to economic systems.

Lately, many elected Republicans, and Republican leaders, including President Trump and Senator Graham, have banded about these words inaccurately to describe Democratic healthcare proposals. Trump, Graham, and other Republicans use the words communism and socialism to stoke fear in the American public—mainly because they still have no plan for America's healthcare system. But I digress; let's look at these words' true meanings.

The word communism evokes strong feelings among some Americans, thoughts of the Cold War, the USSR, dictators, and the KGB. The Oxford Dictionary defines communism as: "a political and economic theory derived from Karl Marx, advocating class war, and leading to a society in which all property is publicly owned (government owns all means of production), and each person is paid according to their abilities and needs."

Marx was one of the most influential socialist thinkers of the 19th century. Philosopher, social scientist, historian and revolutionary, he published his *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, in response to the Industrial Revolution's total free market capitalism which led to the exploitation of workers (men, woman and children) in the era's factories. Marx's Communist Manifesto was a theory to stem worker exploitation by giving them control of the means of production and their governments.

Over time, Marx's theories were corrupted by 20th century socialists including Lenin and Mao. Until recently, close to half the world's countries functioned under some version of Marx's communism. Let's be clear, no Democrat I'm aware of advocates communism or socialism as a form of government for

the United States. The opposite is true.

Socialism and communism are often used interchangeably, but they differ in some philosophical aspects. The Oxford Dictionary defines socialism as "a political and economic theory of social organization which advocates the means of production, distribution and exchange should be owned and regulated by the community as a whole." Put simply, socialism advocates for ownership of factories, offices, etc. by workers, meaning profits belong to people who make the goods, not to a group of private owners.

The only recent proposal remotely close to either system is a Democratic idea for a public healthcare option to compete against big insurance corporations. Some candidates, Bernie Sanders being one, propose a totally government-run healthcare system like Medicare for All. Which proposal will end up moving forward remains to be seen. One thing we know: Democrats, not Republicans, are leading efforts to provide affordable healthcare for all.

Finally let's look at our U.S. governmental system and political philosophy. According to the North Carolina History Project, "Republicanism is a term for beliefs defin[ing] the American political experiment. Republicanism stems from a form of government where the people are sovereign. In such a government, virtuous and autonomous citizens must exercise self-control." Simply put, "A republican government is one in which political authority comes from the people. In the United States, power is given to the government by its citizens as written in the Constitution and through its elected representatives."

Republicanism is ideally a form of government whose citizens have liberty, freedom, and independence; however, citizens must exercise self-control and responsibility for themselves and others. Part of that civic responsibility includes being informed, exercising not just their right, but their responsibility, to help govern our nation. Clearly voting and participating in our communities is key to a healthy republic.

Honoring Adjuncts

Moved to Inspire

Diana Dart Harris



Photo Courtesy of Diana Dart Harris

Diana Dart Harris has been teaching long enough to know that you cannot force people to learn if they aren't excited about the material – and if they aren't excited about the material, it's her fault!

Diana has been an adjunct professor in the dance department at NVCC since Spring, 2017. She has taught World Dance History &

Harris loves sharing her passion for dance and the human body with those new to dance...

Appreciation, Dance Pedagogy, and her favorite class to teach, Kinesiology for Dancers.

She has been dancing ever since she can remember but approaches dance from a different perspective than most traditional dance teachers. After earning her degree in Dance Education, Diana's interest in the human body led her to study Exercise Physiology in graduate school. When she teaches, Diana's goal is to create thinking dancers who are educated about their instruments, know how to use proper nutrition to fuel them, and are knowledgeable enough to advocate for themselves when something does not feel right or they may be injured. Her goal to educate dancers reaches beyond her classes to her blog, The Healthy Dancer at www.thehealthydancer.blogspot.com

Diana is also an adjunct at the University of New Haven where she serves as the dance professor in the theater department teaching courses in Dance Fundamentals, Musical Theatre Dance, Ballet and Rhythm Tap. She has enjoyed working on shows with the theater department in the roles of costume designer, assistant director, and as choreographer.

Diana's first love is choreography, and she has been fortunate enough to work with community theater groups, high schools and colleges for more than 30 years. She works with trained dancers and many non-dancers who have entered the theater thinking they could not dance. Her job is to get those people excited about dance, empower them, and make them believe, like she does, that everyone can dance.

Harris loves sharing her passion for dance and the human body with those new to dance, and she tries hard to get them so excited about dancing that they forget how apprehensive they once were.

As a dance educator Diana believes she has been given a gift, saying, "I have been allowed to share my love of dance with people who would never have entered a dance studio. I have been given the opportunity to help them feel more comfortable with their bodies, to help them see they can accomplish what they may have thought was impossible, and, perhaps, the next time they are faced with a seemingly insurmountable challenge, they might remember that time when they thought they couldn't dance."



CAPSS CORNER

Success Strategies

Welcome to fall 2019! On behalf of the Center for Academic Planning and Student Success (CAPSS), we wish you a successful and engaging semester. If you haven't stopped by Kinney Hall, RM 520, to meet us yet, we hope you'll take the time to visit our office. CAPSS is a student-centered area dedicated to assisting you in creating an academic plan and ensuring you stay on track through graduation and transfer. It's our goal to support you in successfully navigating your academic journey at NVCC.

If you're a new student, you may have already met one of our advisors or counselors at a New Student Registration Session. Terry, Sam, Yvette, Sue, and Vince have been assisting students in choosing classes and preparing for their first semester. If you're a continuing student, you may know us through advising, a transfer fair or workshop, Fresh Check Day, a classroom visit, a Degree Works presentation, or a Campus Conversation event.

Whether it's your first or your last semester, we have ideas to help you engage on campus and make the most of your time at NVCC:

- Be prepared! Read class assignments ahead of time and be ready to share your thoughts and ideas with classmates and professors.
- Meet with your professor during office hours at least once during the semester. Faculty are your first line of defense if you don't understand class material.
- Form a study group. This a great way to reinforce learning and meet new people.
- Use the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE), in Ekstrom Hall Rm 500. Take advantage of free tutoring and utilize a supportive environment to complete homework.
- Visit the Library for assistance with research, access free copies of textbooks, borrow a guitar or computer, or just read a good book.
- Join a student club; there are many to choose from! You'll meet students with similar views, majors and interests—or learn about something new you've never been exposed to!
- Attend a student performance. Whether a play, art exhibit, concert, dance performance, or honors showcase, NVCC students are extremely talented!
- Go to the Center for Job Placement and College Opportunities (CJPCO) to develop a resume, practice interview skills, or meet with employers at the Job Fair. Building a resume aligned with your major is a great way to increase employment opportunities.
- Meet with your academic advisor to create a plan to ensure you meet your academic goals in an efficient timeline.
- Check out Degree Works and track your progress completing your degree requirements.
- And don't forget to visit CAPSS! We love meeting new people and can answer most questions about NVCC.

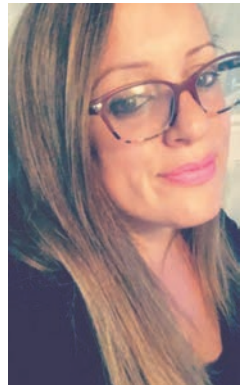
Again, welcome to fall 2019 at NVCC; here's hoping you make the most of it!

Regards,
Bonnie Goulet

Between the Bookends

News from the NVCC Library

Jaime Hammond



Jaime Hammond is Director of Library Services. She loves being a community college librarian and wants you to ask her obscure questions.

This summer, something really exciting happened – a librarian was hired for the Danbury Campus! Ivelisse Maldonado, the new Danbury Campus Librarian, knows a lot about what it feels like to be a student at NVCC. She attended Gateway and then transferred to WCSU. She then went on to get her Master of Library and Information Science degree. I asked Ivelisse a few questions about her life and how she is feeling about her new position.

What was your experience like as a Connecticut community college student?

As a community college student I felt supported to succeed academically. I enjoyed meeting students from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Overall, it was an enriching experience, and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to have graduated from a community college.

What made you want to become a librarian?

As a young girl I always loved to read but absolutely loved to research. The public library was a place for me to read and explore with my siblings. I was inspired to be a librarian because I wanted to help nurture students' love of learning. The library was a place that changed my life by helping me understand readers are leaders, and knowledge is power.

What are you most excited about doing at the Danbury Campus?

I am excited to help support all students and staff members in any way I can. I would like to do monthly events/classes at our campus to support research and literacy. I am also eager to learn more about the students and staff in order to design events that meet their needs and interests.

What advice would you give a new student who is hoping to follow your path and go on to get bachelor and master's degrees?

My advice would be to keep pushing yourself and don't give up. It is very important to set a long term goal and keep going back to that whenever you feel defeated. There were many nights as a single mom where I was overwhelmed by my course work and felt like giving up, but I kept remembering why I started. One of my favorite quotes is, "Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts." (Winston Churchill 1871-1965) Always stay focused with your goals and keep striving for the stars!

The Danbury Campus Library hours will be: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 8:30-4:30pm and Tuesdays 10-6pm. Stop by room D201 to meet Ivelisse and check out some of the new books she has ready for you!

FACE IN THE CROWD

Face from the ACE

Joan Lownds

Hello, I'm Joan Lownds, a Writing Tutor at Naugatuck Valley Community College. This fall, I will start my second year at the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE), where we are launching an exciting, new One-on-One Writing Tutoring Program that is appointment-based. This free program is designed to offer students individualized assistance with any aspect of their writing. Because the program is appointment-based, it will guarantee a tutoring session. I hope you'll come check this out at the ACE.

Beyond tutoring, I am a writer and have published two non-fiction books, *Man Overboard: Inside the Honeymoon Cruise Murder*, and *The Dogs of Camelot: Stories of the Kennedy Canines*. The first book was based on a story I covered when I was a reporter for *The Greenwich Citizen*, when George Smith of Greenwich was tragically murdered on his honeymoon cruise in the Aegean Sea. I got to know George's family and they encouraged me to write the book.

My second book also evolved from a newspaper story, which I wrote about Margaret Reed, a dog trainer who trains the dogs of the Kennedy family. I met her when I was a reporter for *The Wilton Bulletin*, and she told me she wanted to do a book about how President John F. Kennedy was a rather amazing animal lover, and brought a vast menagerie of pets to his White House. Margaret asked me to do the writing for the book, and it was published last year. During the course of writing the book, I learned JFK brought nine dogs to the White House, along with a cat, a rabbit, parakeets, hamsters, and more. This was not highly publicized because some people were grumbling that the Kennedys were turning the White House into a zoo, so the Kennedy family tried



Photo Courtesy of Joan Lownds

"...we are launching an exciting, new One-on-One Writing Tutoring Program that is appointment-based. This free program is designed to offer students individualized assistance with any aspect of their writing."

to keep the story under the radar. JFK was my childhood idol when I was growing up in New Haven, CT, so I truly enjoyed writing this book. Currently I am working on a novel.

I went to college at Arizona State University in Tempe, AZ, where I studied journalism. The Sonoran Desert is starkly beautiful, but I missed New England, so I returned home and began my career as a reporter. Presently, I love working as a Writing Tutor at the ACE, with its warm, inclusive and welcoming atmosphere, and dedicated staff. I look forward to another year of sharing my love of writing with students, and I hope I can help them with their written assignments. To me, writing is essential. As Maya Angelou said, "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."

The New Nazis?

Alexander Wilson

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is a government organization founded in 2003, approximately a year and a half after the September 11th terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. In cooperation with Homeland Security, its mission is to enforce immigration laws and eliminate transportation and border security vulnerabilities.

Under Trump's administration, there has been much more talk of ICE and "illegal immigrants". Several news outlets are covering inhumane conditions at facilities along the Mexican border where innocent people are held captive in overcrowded cages without access to clean water or basic hygiene. A federal judge recently ordered access to soap, toothpaste, and showers was mandatory for people in detention centers, but there's no guarantee they have received it. There have been confirmed reports of Mylar blankets being shared due to a lack of beds. Human beings are getting sick and dying, deprived of access to medical care.

Anyone wishing to argue the perceived guilt of these people can do so. However, I implore you to picture what I've just described: modern day concentration camps. Instead of Jewish people, these are Latino/a people being scapegoated, blamed for America's financial problems. All they've done is come here in search of sanctuary, looking for a better life—in many cases, fleeing unspeakable violence. Should that really be punishable? Should we lock people up like animals?

Recently, ICE started rounding up "illegal"—wait, let's use the correct term, undocumented—immigrants. In Mississippi, workplace raids in six major cities led to the capture of almost 700 immigrants. Those with documentation were let go. However, it's estimated 377 are still in custody after the initial arrests. Many children were left without parents after this raid.

These attacks consume massive resources. However, it seems they won't end any time soon. In response, infographics and articles are circling the internet, informing people of their rights and how to respond correctly to an ICE warrant. The website, Informed Immigrant, has an article citing the best plan of action during a raid. This includes not signing any paperwork, and asking for a lawyer to be present.

Aside from target cities in Mississippi, other vulnerable cities include Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Denver, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, NYC, Newark, San Francisco, and Washington DC. Any major city could theoretically be subject to a raid.

While the end goal is purportedly deportation of as many undocumented immigrants as possible, interestingly, so far only people of Latin American descent are being targeted. Clearly, they're not the only undocumented immigrants in this country. Add to that the fact that ICE has also detained American citizens of Latinx heritage for weeks, despite evidence of citizenship.

Francisco Galicia was held for over three weeks, despite both his mother and his lawyer's insistence he wasn't an immigrant—and despite the official Texas state ID he possessed upon his arrest. His lawyer has declared Galicia was a victim of racial profiling.

These raids and detentions aren't a matter of legal versus illegal border crossings. They're about race, plain and simple. Trump and his supporters' real agenda seems to be eliminating brown people—or at least portraying them as a threat to national security. Perhaps our government should instead focus on domestic terrorism. In 2019, we've already experienced 248 mass shootings, including the recent El Paso Walmart shooting, which targeted Latino/a immigrants. White terrorists are doing more harm than immigrants who just want to live in peace. Let's focus on the real problems, America.



Photo Courtesy of Freepick

Brexit 101

Kathleen Chesto

Traveling through Ireland, in 1987, we assiduously avoided Northern Ireland. “The Troubles,” the Irish name for sectarian violence plaguing the North, were not what discouraged us. Rather, numerous, armed border checkpoints—potentially adding hours to our journey—dissuaded us.

Last summer, we entered the North with less indication of a border than traveling I-84 from CT to NY. No checkpoints, no border markers—only a small sign, easily mistaken for a street sign, informed us we were in Armagh, one of Northern Ireland’s six counties. Nothing indicated we were in the United Kingdom, a striking reminder of what the European Union (EU) created. However, we did see signs and posters reading: “Say NO to Brexit” and “No Hard Borders.”

March 31, 2019, Great Britain was set to formalize its decision on leaving the EU. Britain’s new Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, was elected on promises to leave and restore “Britain’s sovereignty.” To understand reasons behind this decision and what it could mean for Great Britain, for the US, and the EU, it’s necessary to understand the history of the Union and Brexit.

The Maastricht Treaty of 1993 created the Brussels-based EU. Its predecessor, the European Economic Community, was established in 1957 to foster economic cooperation between European nations after WWII. The hope was nations who traded together would be less likely to wage war, as both World Wars were precipitated by European disputes. The EU, descendant of the EEC, designed to integrate Europe’s nations politically and economically, includes a united foreign policy, common citizenship rights, and (for member nations, the UK excluded) a single currency, the euro.

Great Britain joined the EEC in 1973, but shared a stormy history with the Common Market (as it was called). Becoming prime minister in 1997, Tony Blair worked to strengthen ties between EU and mainland European countries. His efforts were undermined by “mad cow” disease in the late ‘90s, which led to the EU banning British beef, and a 27-year battle over the sale of English chocolate in Europe.

In 2007, after plans for an official EU constitution collapsed, member nations negotiated the Lisbon Treaty, giving Brussels broader governance powers within the EU. Nationalists in Britain grumbled about giving up sovereignty. In 2013, then Prime Minister David Cameron promised to renegotiate Britain’s membership in the EU if his Conservative Party won a majority in the general election. Concurrently, the UK Independence Party was garnering voter support against EU membership.

In May, 2015, with economic unrest in the Eurozone (19 EU countries’ territory), and an ongoing migrant crisis bringing 300,000 migrants yearly into the UK, the Independence Party called for “Brexit,” British exit from the

union, just as Cameron began negotiating the UK-EU relationship. He sought a “deal” providing financial safeguards for his country, allowing Britain to block EU regulations, and changing migrant welfare programs. Results of this “deal” were announced in February 2016, with June 23, 2016 set for referendum on remaining or exiting the EU.

Voter turnout was 71.8%; with 30+ million people voting, referendum to exit passed 51.9% to 48.1%. Cameron resigned and new Prime Minister Theresa May gave formal notice, March 29, 2017, of Britain’s intent to leave the EU, officially starting a two-year countdown to withdrawal. When Parliament rejected May’s EU withdrawal agreement and the deal she negotiated with the EU, the European Council set a new deadline of October 31, 2019, withdrawing the negotiated deal. New PM Boris Johnson insists Britain will leave without it.

In all the rhetoric about migration and sovereignty surrounding the referendum, economic and political consequences were downplayed. Mark Carney, governor of the Bank of England, recently said a “no-deal Brexit” would cause “instantaneous shock” to the economy, with a one in three chance of throwing Britain into severe recession.

Merchants and hoteliers in Northern Ireland, facing the gravest consequence of “no-deal,” argue return to a “hard border” with checkpoints in Northern Ireland would bring a return of long delays transporting needed materials, as well as unwieldy tariffs, threatening their already fragile economy. The resurgence of terrible sectarian violence would also be a real possibility.

Stark differences between UK countries in the referendum vote could have immense political ramifications. England and Wales voted for Brexit. Northern Ireland and Scotland voted to remain, Scotland overwhelmingly so, leading the Scottish Independence party to call for a referendum on Scotland’s withdrawal from the UK.

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar believes no-deal Brexit could lead to a united Ireland, causing more people in Northern Ireland to question union with England, Scotland, and Wales. Speaking in Donegal, Varadkar stated, “Increasingly, you see liberal Protestants and liberal unionists...ask[ing] where they[d] feel more at home. Is it in a nationalist Britain talking about potentially bringing back the death penalty? Or is it as part of a common European home and part of Ireland?” (London AFP)

Rob Ford, professor of politics at the University of Manchester, told CNN, London, “I wouldn’t be surprised if no-deal Brexit ends up being looked at by historians as the event that breaks up the UK.”

What effect will Brexit have on the US, the EU, the whole world? Should we be more concerned, more aware? Look for an October follow-up article.

A Lifetime of Journalism

Mitchell W. Maknis

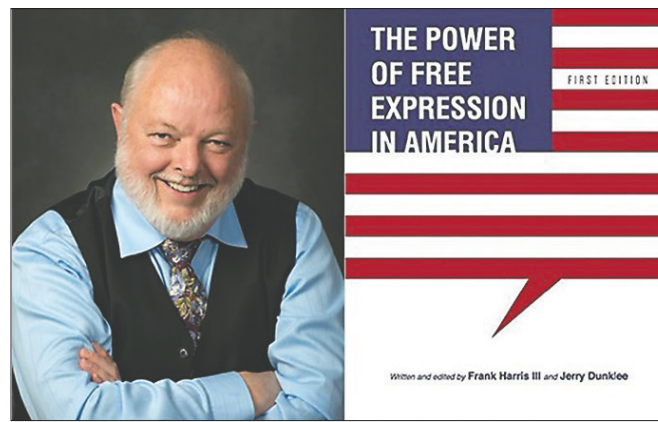


Photo Courtesy of <http://www.scsujournalism.org>

Ethics are a cornerstone of professionalism; journalists, especially, must remain objective to retain credibility in presenting facts to the public. That said, as media changes, ethical standards must adapt to changing times. As one of the architects restructuring the Society of Professional Journalism’s code of ethics in 1996, SCSU’s professor Jerry Dunklee has been indispensable within the journalistic community.

Making revolutionary strides in the broadcast field, Dunklee captured the spirit of journalism, making history in the process. He discerningly dealt with taboos, as well as developing one of the country’s first programs to discuss the AIDS virus before the disease even had a name. I was fortunate to sit down with Prof. Dunklee and gain insight into his journey and his impact shaping modern journalism.

Born in 1945, Professor Dunklee lived in small-town Michigan with his parents and four siblings. Residing in a poor household Dunklee called “smaller than most apartments,” he spent his youth helping provide for his family, growing fresh vegetables, hunting pheasant, and fishing every week. Dunklee went on to employment at General Motors, operating machinery, stamping auto parts, and dabbling with welding.

One of Dunklee’s early aspirations was to become the next Johnny Carson. At 17, his resolve strengthened, he registered for a degree in theater at Michigan State University. His financial circumstances, however, made this impossible. Scholarships were non-existent, so, to pave the way for his education, Dunklee found employment however he could, including finding work (and comfort) at his campus radio station. This unplanned experience shifted his brain; he later procured a full-time job as disk jockey for a local station. Even so, radio’s long hours caused Dunklee’s grades to suffer, and he was eventually asked by MSU to leave school.

Unsure of his future, Dunklee needed a new perspective; in 1966 he enlisted in the U.S. Army. Receiving extensive training from the bomb disposal unit, he worked with the Secret Service, protecting President Lyndon B.

Johnson. After his discharge, Dunklee returned to radio; at the station, he was given the opportunity to perform news segments. This minute change was a turning point: he became enthralled with the prospect of journalism.

Graduating MSU with a journalism minor, Dunklee struggled to find work during economic recession. He eventually found stable employment in New Hampshire. After working his way up to operations

manager, Dunklee needed a change. When the Dean of Emerson College offered the opportunity to teach radio performance, he accepted, matriculating into the school’s graduate program to earn his Masters in Public Affairs Reporting.

Subsequently, he returned to his radio career with a Saturday morning talk show. Dunklee then received an unexpected call. The owner of WELI in New Haven, who’d caught Dunklee’s program, offered a chance to produce his own journalistic talk show. He accepted, moving to CT in 1978. Over several years at WELI, Dunklee built his reputation, presenting the public difficult topics, inviting guests to explain and participate in in-depth discussions on important matters covering politics, social issues, science, and medicine.

After a fruitful radio career, Dunklee accepted a full-time faculty position at SCSU, teaching journalism. This opportunity seemed fortuitous with a management change imminent at WELI. Dunklee knew from experience new owners wouldn’t support the quality content he’d been providing. This fresh start enabled him to share decades of knowledge with future generations.

Since then, forming college workshops and programming, he’s credited with creating the CT Journalism Hall of Fame (into which he was inducted in 2012). Dunklee co-wrote the textbook, *The Power of Free Expression in America*. An in-depth exploration of the press’s societal role, it is available on Amazon. Dunklee also forayed into fiction, writing a children’s book, *Doris and Morris and Horace and the Brontosaurus*, available on Kindle and Amazon.

After a lifetime of journalistic exploits and 33 years at SCSU, Dunklee—while looking into retirement—encourages students to seek guidance from someone who’s not their professor to better broaden perception. His advice: “Get started in college, get involved on campus, practice your craft. Learn to screw up on campus because, if you fail in the real-world, consequences will be more severe.”

Stay up-to-date with Prof. Dunklee via his website <http://jerrydunklee.com/about/> or follow him on social media.

Environmental Activist, Bill McKibben

Robert Pinto

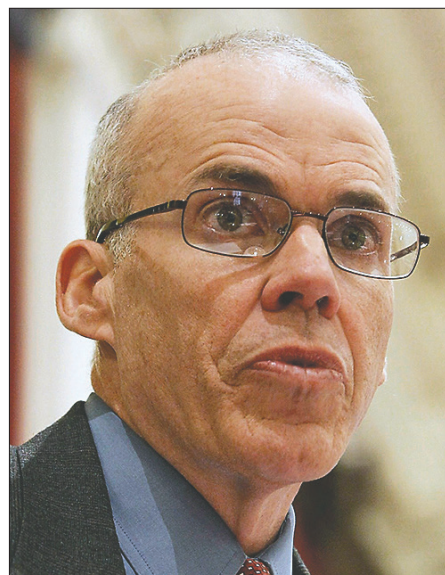


Photo Courtesy of Google

I like spending my spare summer time reading. After discovering Bill McKibben’s *Falter*, I felt compelled to contact the author. For those unfamiliar with author/activist McKibben, he graduated from Harvard in 1982, lives in Vermont, and is a Middlebury College professor. McKibben founded 350.org; the organization’s goal is reducing carbon levels in the atmosphere to 350 parts per million. His work fighting climate change earned McKibben the 2013 Gandhi Peace Award.

I asked McKibben how he started his fight against climate change. He replied, “I wrote the first book, *The End of Nature*, for a general audience about climate change in 1989.” My next question concerned his founding of 350.org. McKibben stated he and a group of seven undergraduates started it a decade ago; explaining it grew fast, McKibben added, “We think we’ve organized 20,000 demonstrations in every country except North Korea.”

As for the climate change movement’s future, McKibben believes it will continue growing fast, especially among young people. He’s concerned, however, whether we can act fast enough to catch up with the physics of climate change.

Regarding ways to reduce or reverse levels of carbon pollution in the atmosphere, McKibben responded, “You plant a lot of trees; they suck carbon out of the atmosphere. And changes in the way we farm can help pull carbon out of the air, sequestering it in soil.” McKibben also believes corporations should take a more active role. “Every corporation has a big lobbying team in DC, and they should be set loose to demand changes in the law.”

Students can help positively impact the current climate crisis. McKibben encourages students to “Join in: The Sunrise Movement, 350.org, Fridays for the Future, Extinction Rebellion—all these organizations can make a huge difference!”

McKibben sees advances like artificial intelligence as positives in fighting climate change. He points out “The rapid fall in price of solar and wind power is a big deal—thanks to engineers, this is now the cheapest way to generate power worldwide. That’s a big help!”

I asked McKibben which leaders can make a strong impact in reducing carbon pollution. He replied, “It would be very helpful to have a strong Democratic candidate topple Trump, who thinks climate change is a hoax. Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren have been especially outspoken, but all have said good things.” McKibben calls the Green New Deal “the first legislation on the same scale as the problem. It’s really important—many thanks to the Sunrise Movement and Alexandria Ocasio Cortez for bringing it forward!”

Revolutionary Rhythms

Not the Man They Think I Am at Home

A Film Review

Cheryl Swodes



Photo Courtesy EltonJohnVEVO

Elton John's 2019 fantasy biopic, *Rocket Man*, opens with a startling shot of the singer, clothed as a devil, twisted horns and all, striding down a dark corridor. It defies our image of the pop star who wrote a seemingly endless stream of classic hits starting in the 1970s and continuing until this day. We learn soon after the opening sequence, however, that the singer with the vibrant stage persona is broken. Elton John has just abandoned a concert and is hurrying down the hall of a rehab facility, ready to deal with his own devils.

Director Dexter Fletcher and writer Lee Hall construct the movie, which had been gathering dust for several years until Paramount took over in 2018, as the stylized journey of an artist who began life as a piano prodigy with the chewy name, Reginald Kenneth Dwight. "Rocket Man" refers to his 1972 space race-inspired hit single about the loneliness of being just too far from everyday life.

This is a central theme in the movie, the sense of "otherness" John felt struggling with his emerging sexual identity and emotional turmoil. With flashbacks and flash-forwards, *Rocket Man* employs Elton's hits to underscore situations and emotions—it's a clever way to experience his catalog.

Elton John's life takes shape under Fletcher's masterful direction, and a tour-de-force performance by dancing, singing Taron Egerton who inhabits the role with frankness and vulnerability, without ever becoming a cartoon. No doubt he will be nominated for an Oscar for this performance, and a win would be well-deserved.

Jamie Bell is great in the role of even-keeled songwriting partner, Bernie Taupin. Elton has often remarked of Taupin, "We've never had an actual fight," though, with Elton's tempestuous nature and growing addictions, the movie unflinchingly shows his life as a prolonged battle, mostly with himself.

The singer's parents seemed really unsuited to raising a child, and while the steely, disapproving father wounds the audience as it must have wounded the boy, his brutally blunt mother Sheila, portrayed without pity by the versatile Bryce Dallas Howard, seems nearly sociopathic in what she feels entitled to say.

Add to these troubling characters manager John Reid, played with sinister chilliness by Richard Madden. In Reid, we see a character who, like so many real-life users, promises much more than he nonchalantly helps himself to, but Reid was also the man who, as Elton John's first lover, affected the performer profoundly. Their sexual encounter is dealt with less explicitly than some have complained of, but that it is an integral scene of a wide-release film is landmark nonetheless.

Rocket Man could have been a self-congratulatory tale of the life of a man generous with his time and resources on behalf of AIDS research and many other charitable entities. It could have been a film about his silly feuds with celebrities or his diamond-like, lasting devotion to his friends. At the soaring heart of it all, *Rocket Man* is about a man reclaimed by courage, honesty, sobriety, and love. He becomes, at last, at home with the man he thinks he is.

My ConnectiCon First

Alyssa Katz



Photo Courtesy of Alyssa Katz

This was my first time attending ConnectiCon, the annual comic book convention held at Hartford's Convention Center, so I hadn't known exactly what I was getting into. My friend and I went for the day, Saturday, July 13th, meeting her brother, my boyfriend and his friends. My boyfriend dressed as Toshihori Yagi (in teacher form) from *My Hero Academia* was a sight to see; I couldn't get over the wig! And, no, my friend and I did not dress up.

Throughout the day, there were a huge number of individuals portraying all sorts of fandoms and anime characters. I didn't know who most were; it was mainly anime, some were very clever. A few, I did recognize, such as superheroes, Pokémon, and Star Wars characters. There was a Rey with a remote-controlled BB-8 and a Queen Amidala from the Star Wars prequels that I thought were standout costumes.

One event we saw was a Marvel photo-shoot. A lot of Marvel fans had gathered in the

space, all portraying either movie or comic book versions of the characters. One by one the characters would assemble according to whatever group was called out: movie characters, comic book characters, heroes, villains, and so on. As they posed, people would take their pictures.

There were a particularly good Doctor Strange and Black Widow, and basically all of the Guardians of the Galaxy were present, including Star Lord, Nebula, and Rocket—Fat Thor from *End Game* even got thrown in there as a joke. It was interesting to see the different timelines of the characters, from comic book to movie, or from old artwork to modern artwork.

As if the day wasn't wild enough, end of day brought a Death Match. As soon as Emcee Mooky came out and shed his shirt, the crowd went wild. Then there was the teddy bear, and everyone shouting, "Blood for Odin!" You could tell most audience members had attended ConnectiCon for years. Two by two, characters faced off (for example, Link vs Zelda, Freddie Mercury dressed as Deadpool, Zeus vs Scyther—even Totally Spies) and whoever got the most cheers won that round. After they "killed" the loser, they were "eaten" by zombie Con staff members. For ties, they'd call into the next room, to the 21 and over group, a.k.a. "the drunks" to choose a winner.

While it was a strange day and also a bit overwhelming, my friend and I had a good time. While I thought this sort of thing was just for nerdy adults or even young adults, there were also a bunch of kids there who dressed up. When asked if I would go back next year, that is...undecided. And when asked if I would dress up? Again, undecided. Ask me next year.

alumni SHOWCASE



Minerva Maldonado

Eyes on Excellence

Naugatuck Valley Community College is the true essence of a *community* college. My time there prepared me for working in the real world and helped me understand life is not just going to college, but being part of a community. NVCC's faculty, programs and students unite the campus to create a sense of belonging.

Workforce Achievers Value Education (WAVE) is one program designed to build students' academic skills while developing everyone's emotional quotient. I interviewed for WAVE, as it was selective, before finishing my senior year of high school. In the top three of my class, I was told I would be great at whatever I did. I made the choice to decline another college to attend NVCC and be involved in the WAVE Program.

WAVE encouraged me to be involved, providing tutoring, and workshops. They helped me understand the college process, FAFSA, and choosing classes. Most importantly, WAVE provided me with community. I also made sure to get involved in campus groups such as the Political Science Club, and NVCC gave me my first real job through work study; I was an English Peer Tutor at the ACE.

An inaugural member of NVCC's President's Circle, I graduated in two years in May 2011. On the Dean's List, and a Phi Theta Kappa member, I earned an A.A in Liberal Arts and Sciences, then continued onward to finish my bachelor's degree. I graduated Dean's List and Sigma Tau Delta from the UConn with a B.A. in English in December 2013.

From there, I knew I wanted to work in education and assist others. I held various jobs over three years while continuing to figure out where exactly I needed to be. I worked at Waterbury Hospital teaching their Children's Leadership Training Institute on Monday nights. I was also a substitute teacher for Waterbury Public Schools, and worked with Gear UP in Waterbury Public Schools. After

"Community college allowed me to become the successful, service-oriented individual I am today. If not for NVCC and WAVE, my college experience would not have been as rewarding..."

a while, I stumbled upon a new path where I could learn to help others—and possibly be a professor in the future—as an optician.

I turned back to the community college system in 2017, attending Middlesex Community College (MXCC) to get an A.S. in Ophthalmic Dispense and Design in order to take the state licensing exam to become an optician. At this point, with my NVCC roots, I was no stranger to community college. I graduated from MXCC Dean's List and Phi Theta Kappa with an A.S. in Ophthalmic Design and Dispensing.

I participated in a service mission to help provide eyecare services to the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation in Southeastern CT and helped in the fabrication of eyewear for multiple missions. In February 2019, I was honored with a travel grant to attend a leadership conference for the Opticians Association of America (OAA) in Tennessee.

In April, another student and I were randomly selected to attend a mission trip to Ecuador. We traveled with a group called Partners for Andean Community Health (PACH) to provide eye care services and glasses to remote villages in Ecuador. I was also recently given the opportunity from the OAA to assist with two others in leading a breakout session for the next group of student leaders in Florida in February 2020.

Community college allowed me to become the successful, service-oriented individual I am today. If not for NVCC and WAVE, my college experience wouldn't have been as rewarding, and I might not have found where I truly belong. My community, my experiences, and the wonderful people that influenced me will always make NVCC special to me.

On the Field

John Williams

The smell of fresh cut grass. The sound of the bat cracking in batting practice. The ballpark attendant yelling, "Peanuts, get your peanuts!" These can only mean one thing: it's time for baseball. As the second half of the season gets underway, the 2019 All-Stars put on a great show during All-Star festivities. What an awesome slugfest in this year's Home Run Derby.

Pete Alonso, of the New York Mets, took home the trophy with 23 dingers in the final round. The following night the American League edged out a victory over the National League 4-3 in the 90th Midsummer Classic at Progressive Field, home of the Cleveland Indians. Both teams played a great game, but the American League made just enough plays to get the win.

This will give the American League home field advantage throughout the World Series Championship. Every fan hopes to see their team holding up the Commissioner's Trophy, when it's all said and done. Unfortunately, some teams are already looking forward to the off-season.

There are 162 games in a season. Injuries have affected most teams, while some have avoided the injury bug. This is the time of year when teams start to get in playoff mode. The New York Yankees, Minnesota Twins, Houston Astros, Atlanta Braves, Chicago Cubs, and Los Angeles Dodgers are all respected division

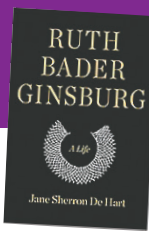
leaders as of August 2019. Look for these teams to be competing to become this year's World Series Champions. As the hunt for October playoffs draws near. I'm looking forward to seeing which teams will rise to the top.

Meanwhile, in other sports news, the NFL kicked off its 2019 season with new Hall of Fame inductees receiving the NFL's most prestigious honor. Tony Gonzalez, Ed Reed, Champ Bailey, Kevin Mawae, Ty Law, Johnny Robinson, Pat Bowlen, and Gil Brandt are the class of 2019. These men have made contributions on and off the field. I'm glad I got to watch and admire these great men growing up.

While fans are enjoying the gold jacket ceremonies, current players are in training camp with aspirations of playing in Super Bowl LIV. Teams start training camp with a 93-man roster. By Sept 1, at 4 pm ET, the rosters must be cut down to 53 men. The four preseason games give coaches time to assess players, to build a roster aligned with the coaches' philosophy, as rookies and undrafted free agents get their first taste of the daily grind of playing in the NFL. Some rookies have more hype than others. Here are the top 10 draft picks to keep your eye on this year:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Kyler Murray QB | 6. Daniel Jones QB |
| 2. Nick Bosa DE | 7. Josh Allen DE/LB |
| 3. Quinnen Williams DT | 8. T.J. Hockenson TE |
| 4. Clelin Ferrell DE | 9. Ed Oliver DT |
| 5. Devin White LB | 10. Devin Bush LB |

I'm excited to see what the 2019-2020 season brings. Who'll be this year's Rookie of the Year?

RECENTLY
READ

Ruth Bader
Ginsburg: A Life
by Jane Sherron De Hart

On August 10, 1993, Ruth Bader Ginsburg was sworn in as only the second woman ever to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court. Another woman would not ascend to the court until President Obama nominated Sonia Sotomayer in 2009. By then, RBG was nationally recognized as the single most powerful force in overturning U.S. laws that defined and upheld the inferiority of women. In the process, she had become one our nation's most transformative legal minds.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg: A Life, by Jane Sherron De Hart, is the story, not just of the woman, but of the issues, the forces, and the political climate that developed her amazing passion for justice, and shaped her successes and failures.

Ruth Bader was born and grew up in Flatbush, New York, the second daughter of devout Jewish parents. The Hebrew injunction of *tikkun olam*, "to repair the world," became the deep, abiding tenet of her life and work.

The author skims lightly over the early years, focusing on the strong influence of her mother, Celia, in nurturing her academic skills and independence. Celia developed cancer during Ruth's freshman year of high school and died two days before Ruth would have graduated as valedictorian. In later years, RBG would share how being denied the right, as a woman, to recite Kaddish, the prayer for the dead, for her mother, ignited her incipient sense of feminism.

Experiences at Cornell Undergraduate and Harvard Law (where she was one of nine women) provided a daily diet of anti-feminism foreshadowing the attitude she eventually encountered in the employment market after graduating first in her class. She was rejected by one law firm after another because they didn't hire women, or had already hired one token woman. RBG's marriage and extraordinary relationship with her husband are highlights of this section of her story.

The desire for equality had been thoroughly awakened by the time she began working for the ACLU. Using the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, particularly the clause guaranteeing "equal protection under the law" she began her quest, overturning each law that discriminated on the basis of gender, one at a time.

Unfortunately, the author gets entangled in the minutiae of the law regarding each legal case, as she details the rocket ascendancy of RBG's career. While it is difficult not to get lost in names and case numbers as one extraordinary challenge after another creates legal precedent for equal benefits, equal pay, equal education, equal employment, equal access to health care, these accomplishments are breathtaking and have permanently altered life and opportunity for women in this country.

The book ends on a poignant note, describing the change in our present political climate and RBG's consequent struggle to remain on the court, despite her husband's death and her three battles with cancer. This is an amazing woman, an amazing life, but I wish the book were a little easier to read. If 700 pages seems overwhelming, I recommend the movie, *A Matter of Sex*, available on Amazon Prime.

Kathleen Chesto

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Summer of 2019
ConnectiCon XVII

Mitchell W. Maknis

Everyone experiences the summer differently, but more often than not, there are memorable moments waiting to be discovered. For many New England residents, their memorable moment didn't require an arduous journey abroad. From July 11-14, at the Hartford Convention Center, many pop culture enthusiasts convened at Connecticut's original multi-fandom convention, fittingly entitled ConnectiCon, for its seventeenth annual event.

ConnectiCon offers something for everybody by providing a plethora of experiences for fans of timeless genres of entertainment ranging from movies to anime, television, and video games. It was evident something special was happening upon entering the Convention Center as many attendees were dressed in varying cosplay attire. This enabled fellow pop-culture enthusiasts to express their love of the entertainment industry while awaiting the many exhibitions within the Convention Center.

After admiring, mingling and posing for pictures with cosplayers, fans could make their way deeper into the event. There people had the opportunity to meet universally recognized actors such as Jim Cummings, known for portraying iconic characters such as Winnie the Pooh and Tigger. Also in attendance was David Sobolov, known for his work portraying Gorilla Grodd in the Television Series *The Flash* and *DC's Legends of Tomorrow* as well as Blitzwing in the motion picture *Bumblebee*. The event planners also arranged a reunion with the cast of the acclaimed video game *Devil May Cry 5* including Rueben Langdon (Dante), Dan Southworth (Virgil), Johnny Yong Bosch (Nero), and Brian Hanford (V).

ConnectiCon also provided fans the chance to hear their entertainment heroes speak at panels where they were able to acquire answers to long-awaited questions. I was fortunate enough



Voice actors Tara Jayne Sands and Jake Paque at their panel. Photo Courtesy of Tracey Maknis

to attend a panel that united two *Pokémon* voice actors: Tara Jayne Sands and Jake Paque, who brought passion and unbridled charisma to their collaborative effort. It was a joyous experience witnessing these two talents play off each other's words as they delighted fans with stories on their extensive careers.

While celebrity panels and autographs were a highpoint of the convention, they were not the only laudable aspect. For instance, Con goers were able to enjoy many exhibitors showcasing their wares. Dealer Booths housed many small businesses, such as independent film distributor, Media Blasters, and the culinary artisan, Silk City Hot Sauce.

The Artist's Colony was especially eye-catching, as each artist brought their eclectic niche to the convention floor, entrancing patrons with their distinct illustrations. Creative energy could also be found at the CT Festival of Independent Games area where indie tabletop creators socialized with guests, gaining input on their meticulous creations. If that wasn't enough to keep the ConnectiCon populace occupied, attendees could also make their way to Gamer's Corner where friends and strangers alike partook in varying console and arcade games.

It was clear staff members worked tirelessly to arrange a show that provided a variety of media for every con-enthusiast. This made it possible for like-minded individuals to convene for a truly memorable weekend. The experience will have to hold them until next summer, when ConnectiCon returns, July 9-12, 2020.

A Year's Walk

Robert Pinto

While browsing the web recently, I stumbled upon the remarkable story of a young woman who had just finished her journey walking from Fort Kent, Maine to Key West, Florida. It was an emotional journey for Jessie Grieb, who at 26 years old, decided last summer to begin a Maine to Florida walking journey to raise awareness of the opioid addiction epidemic in the U.S.

For Jessie, the crisis hits home. She tragically lost her brother to an opioid overdose; the pain has stayed with her since. She decided to channel that pain into something monumental. I had the pleasure of conducting a telephone interview with Jessie Grieb. Her story is extraordinary.

How long did it take you to walk from Maine to Florida?

I started the walk July 23rd, 2018 and completed it June 14th, 2019.

Have you been an active person your whole life?

Not at all! I barely walked a couple of miles here and there, though I was a cheerleader in high school.

How many people do you think you met during your walk; can you share some of their stories?

I met hundreds, so many kind people throughout the United States. People opened their doors for me and let me stay in their homes. There was an amazing lady named Kay who lived in the Boston area; she let me stay in her home. She was very generous and she didn't have much to give. At one point, I spoke with a grieving mother for hours, about how she lost one of her children to opioid addiction.

During this walk, I detoxed, so I stayed clean and sober during the entire duration of my walk. My goal was to walk 20 miles per day. That's usually what I averaged. Another goal was to walk 100 miles per week.

What was your favorite state to walk through?

Maine was my favorite. It was a really cool place with lots of antique stores. Maine was the cleanest state I walked through; no litter or pollution or anything. I also really enjoyed walking through Georgia, which has some really pretty spots. Savannah was a very nice city to walk through.

What was the most challenging part?

Alone time was very challenging. Most of the time I spent walking alone. I was completely alone walking from New York to Florida. Winter was the most challenging. Walking through Florida was also very challenging because the heat was so intense, and I was pushing a 60-pound cart with all my gear. For people who've walked across the U.S., there truly is a post-partum depression once you've completed your journey.

Can you tell me more about your mission for this walk?

I worked with Brett Bramble and his organization called Freedom to Grow. It's a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization whose mission is to help people with troubled pasts learn how to have happy and healthy futures. I raised a little more than \$5,000 for them.

Would you do a walk like this again?

If I were to do another walk, I would walk to California; I'd want to walk from the East Coast to the West Coast.

What plans do you have for the future?

For now I'm going to spend time with family and friends in Florida. I'm still processing so much of this walk; my family says they see a huge change in me. My parents are a big inspiration for me and this really has been emotional for me.

Thank you for your time, and good luck to you!
Thank you, my pleasure!

Salem in Summer

Gwenydd Miller



The docked sailing ship, Kalmar Nyckle. Photo Courtesy of Gwenydd Miller

Everyone knows one of the best tourist spots around Halloween is Salem, MA. The witch museums, the spooky atmosphere, the ghost tours, and the many New Age/Wiccan stores are all very alluring, but that's only one side of Salem. There is a lot of history there, beyond witches and ghosts.

Let's start with coffee (how I always start my time there). There is this coffee shop, Joho, right down the street from the Salem Maritime

**Everyone associates witches
with Salem, but you really
should think of pirates!**

Center—which we'll get to in a minute. Joho is wonderful; think Starbucks, only local and with more of a mom-and-pop feel. It also has big comfy couches, more activities for its customers, and is by far superior (sorry, Starbucks; I still love you).

What brought us to Salem this summer was actually the Salem Maritime Festival, held August 3rd - 4th. It had visiting ships such as the Kalmar Nyckle, and the Viking replica ship, Polaris. They gave free ship tours, and there were many tents and tables selling merchandise and demonstrating life in colonial days. However, we stayed at the festival less than an hour, as there were many other things to explore.

It's hard going to a harbor and not wanting to go out on the water. Well, Salem has two different cruise lines I know of. One features the Schooner Fame at Pickering Wharf Marina, a replica of a privateer ship from 1812, and a fun activity. Once on the water, you can buy snacks or drink, talk with the friendly crew, and even help them sail. It's a perfect summertime Salem activity, and on weekends, cruises run well into fall.

We also stumbled across a new restaurant: Scratch Kitchen. Everything's made on-site or sourced locally. Even their ketchup is made from scratch and has the most unique flavor. They specialize in sandwiches, grilled cheese, and smoked meats. The French fries were also delicious, although they threw me for a loop; served in a flowerpot, a "small" could easily be too much for three people. It's a nice shop, reasonably priced, with friendly staff. Definitely worth stopping if you're in the area!

Everyone associates witches with Salem, but you really should think of pirates! The New England Pirate Museum features...the pirates of New England, naturally, and a fun, informative descent into the museum's dark caves. Conveniently located just across from Scratch Kitchen, it's easily identified by painted pirates climbing the building on a rope ladder.

These are just a few of the wonders Salem has to offer. The House of Seven Gables (Nathaniel Hawthorn House) and Essex Peabody Museum, are among many non-witch-related destinations in Salem. Another must-see, which does include witches and wizards, is the Harry Potter Store, right next to the wand shop, also Potter-themed. Even if you're headed there this fall, when planning for next summer, be sure to consider Salem.

American Idiot

Gwenydd Miller

“Don’t want to be an American idiot,” was sung by many enthusiastic performers on stage. *American Idiot*, based on the music of punk rock band, Green Day, has been a musical for some time. The original Broadway production even had Billie Joe Armstrong, lead vocalist and guitarist for Green Day, playing St. Jimmy. Premiering on Broadway back in 2010, it’s been produced repeatedly in smaller productions to this very day.

American Idiot played the Thomaston Opera House the first week in August, featuring student performers; however, just because they were students, didn’t mean they weren’t amazing on stage. They captured the essence of Green Day’s songs perfectly. Unfortunately, I’m not sure if that means we should congratulate them or send them to rehab because some delivered performances almost too believable... After all, *American Idiot* covers pretty strong topics, including drug use, suicide, war, and perhaps the hardest to swallow: growing up. Its subtext also tackles commitment to friends and family, as well as the importance of home.

The story is about three friends, who want to leave their hometown to take on the real world. One friend calls himself the Jesus of Suburbia; he’s an unemployed drug user, who always forgets to shower. In fact, that was a running joke throughout the performance. Jesus of Suburbia gets three bus tickets with money his mother loaned him, but the friends quickly separate when one learns his girlfriend is pregnant, and, duty bound, he stays behind to support her.

The other two hit the big city and find themselves lost in terms of self. Boredom and unproductivity get the better of them—this would’ve been an excellent time to sing “Longview”; however, that didn’t happen. One friend finds his motivation through patriotic duty, joining the military, while Jesus of Suburbia falls in with a drug dealer, St. Jimmy. He also falls in love with Jimmy’s ex-girlfriend, the “Last of the American Girls,” and according to her, “She’s a Rebel”. The three eventually go their separate ways, each facing heartbreak, loss, and in one case, severe injury.

Songs from other albums like, “Know Your Enemy,” “Before the Lobotomy,” and “21 Guns,” were performed well; each told parts of the story via lyrics we all know. For instance, the closing song was “Good Riddance,” often remembered as “Time of Your Life”. While gruff and crude, featuring strong language, these songs touch the darker parts of our minds, revealing things we might not always want to see. This made the punk rock musical a wonderful expression of art in modern life.

Thar be Pirates

Gwenydd Miller

August 10th, a mysterious ship floated down the CT River. Notorious pirate, Dixie Bull, boarded a large vessel filled with time travelers from 2019. Several other pirates came on board, including Thomas Tew and William Kidd. Together, the pirates sang, joked, and did all they could to entertain these folks, bringing them back to another time.

On “Thar be Pirates,” an Essex Steam Train and Riverboat Cruise, a steam train, boarded with dozens of excited people, traveled into the past, to a time when pirates still roamed the New England waters—or so the conductor said as we rode to the riverboat. Time travel or not, it was magical. Actors dressed as pirates walked up and down the train cars, staying in character the whole night, and providing entertainment with their horrible jokes.

The steam train was quite the sight. The bench seats featured a back that flipped either way, so passengers could sit facing whichever direction they chose. The train car’s ornate ceiling indeed felt like traveling back in time, the old-fashioned lights providing a majestic glow.

Once off the train, we were met at the docks by many more pirates, and one mermaid, sitting further inland, waving to us. When several people went to take pictures with her, one pirate warned those people would not live much longer. Mermaids, after all, have a habit of taking people’s souls.

Complimentary Dark and Stormy drinks were served upon boarding the riverboat. A Dark and Stormy is a mixed drink consisting of ginger beer (like ginger ale, but with much more ginger) and dark spiced rum. They’re delicious if you like ginger. In fact, Goslings, a company that manufactures both rum and ginger beer sponsored the cruise.

One storyteller, in a red satin coat and top hat, shared a tale about William Kidd and his buried treasure. He spoke of two young men who stumbled upon the treasure, never to be seen again; as the story went, Kidd’s good friend, the Devil himself, was guarding the chest that night. At this point, the man took off his top hat; revealing prosthetic horns, he claimed to know the story because he’d been there. He spent the rest of the night approaching people, talking like an old friend, saying, “I know you already have one of these, but take another just in case,” then handing them a business card reading: “His Satanic Majesty, Dark Lord of All Evil. Offices everywhere, call anytime.”

About twenty minutes into the cruise, the infamous Dread Pirate Dixie Bull came aboard. The rest of the night was spent singing along with sea shanties, and drinking “grog” from the bar below deck. Eventually, we returned to land, spirited away on the train back to our own time. It was a night to remember, one I look forward to repeating in the future. Hopefully, they’ll run an event like this again.

FACE IN THE CROWD Musically Speaking

Ryan Bisson



Photo Courtesy of Ryan Bisson

Ryan Bisson is the Educational Assistant for NVCC’s Music Department. While on campus, he can be found singing with the NVCC Choir, or with Fermata the Valley, NVCC’s a cappella group. During school days, he can be found in the music office, working on ear training, or talking music theory with students. If you happen to come past the music office at the right time, and you’re very lucky, you may even catch Ryan practicing his bass trombone.

Ryan grew up in Connecticut as an active athlete and musician. During school he played trombone, but most of his time was spent wrestling, running, and pole vaulting. His love for music really began in his high school marching band, where he played trombone and tuba. He continued to pursue his musical studies at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and at Boston University.

While living in Massachusetts, Ryan travelled throughout New England playing all different styles of music, from orchestra, to pit orchestra for musicals, to large and small jazz

ensembles. In 2015, Bisson was named winner of the American Trombone Workshop National Solo Competition, for his performance of the Penderecki Capriccio. The next year, his quartet, The Rhombus Quartet, was named runner up for the American Trombone Workshops National Quartet Competition. Ryan continues to enjoy his work as a bass trombone player, traveling on weekends to various jobs throughout New England.

If he has a weekend off from playing trombone, you can find Ryan out in the woods, hiking or rock climbing. When the weather is bad, you’ll find him at home playing video games with his amazing wife, Emily, or playing with their dog, Pearl.

Ryan always keeps the door to A504 open while he’s there, and he loves to talk music with anyone who comes by, so stop in and say hello!

Confluencia

Tamarack Staff



Jose Gonzalez.
Photo Courtesy
of the Poet’s
Website

Vincent Toro.
Photo Courtesy
of Poetry
Foundation.org

Caycedo-
Kimura
Photo Courtesy
of MA Poetry
Festival website

NVCC hosts its first fall 2019 Confluencia, in the Playbox Theatre at 5:30 p.m., September 24th; Prof. Steve Parlato will moderate. This literary celebration, coinciding with Hispanic Heritage Month, features a special roster of poets of Hispanic heritage: Luisa Caycedo-Kimura, Dr. Jose Gonzalez, and Vincent Toro.

Born in San Salvador, El Salvador, Gonzalez authored the International Latino Book Award Finalist, *Toys Made of Rock*, as well as *When Love Was Reels*. His poetry has been anthologized in the *Norton Introduction to Literature*, as well as in *Theatre Under My Skin: Contemporary Salvadoran Poetry* and *Wandering Song: Central American Writing in the United States*. Co-editor (with John S. Christie) of *Latino Boom: An Anthology of U.S. Latino Literature*, he is a contributor to National Public Radio and has presented at colleges and universities nationwide. A Fulbright Scholar, and editor/founder of *latinostories.com*, González is professor of English at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London.

Vincent Toro is author of *Stereo. Island. Mosaic*, which won the Sawtooth Poetry Prize from Ahsahta Press and the Norma Farber First Book Award from the Poetry Society of America. Holding an MFA in poetry from Rutgers, he is contributing editor for *Kweli Literary Journal*. Toro is recipient of a Poet’s House Emerging Poets Fellowship, a NY Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Poetry, the Caribbean Writer’s Cecile De Jongh Poetry Prize, and Metlife Nuestras Voces Playwriting Award. His poems appear in journals including *Buenos Aires Review*, *Codex*, *Rattle*, *Cortland Review*, and *Best American Experimental Writing 2015*. Toro teaches at Bronx Community College and is writing liaison at Cooper Union Saturday Program.

Poet and translator Luisa Caycedo-Kimura was born in Colombia and raised in NYC. She’s travelled through Latin America and Europe, and in 2013, spent two months in Spain as Robert Pinsky Global Fellow in Poetry. The 2014 John K. Walsh Residency Fellow (fellowship supported by the Institute for Latino Studies at the University of Notre Dame and the Anderson Center at Tower View) and the 2014 Adrienne Reiner Hochstadt Fellow at Ragdale, Luisa is an adjunct instructor at Asnuntuck CC and holds an MFA from Boston University. She has been widely published.

Confluencia, open to all, again features music, refreshments, and an open mic. Faculty are encouraged to bring students. We look forward to seeing you!

“The function of freedom is to free someone else.”

Prof. Julia Petitfrere

“Thank you for introducing me to Toni Morrison. I am watching CSPAN and the opening of the African-American History Museum,” read an e-mail on September 24, 2016. I hadn’t actually introduced this now-former student to Morrison, but to her work—*The Bluest Eye*. Readers of all persuasions and skill levels should know Pecola, I believe, so I have used it in developmental English courses and Studies in Women’s Literature, which is where this student met both me and Morrison.

He’d enrolled in Women’s Lit because it fulfilled a graduation requirement and because, he said, living in a house “full of females,” the information might be useful. He was an African American man, middle-aged, married, former military—never shy about saying what he thought of the works. Whether he enjoyed or was confused by them, agreed with them or was unconvinced by their perspectives, we heard about this, often prefaced by how he regretted coming across these writers

later in life. He was embarrassed and annoyed he hadn’t read writings by Black women until that course.

One of my greatest struggles in course design is who (and what works) gets left out because of time constraints and the intricacy of material. I am conscious of the inevitable student’s voice saying “I have never...” Another struggle is in offering things I love, works with special meaning to me, dreading that students will not necessarily hate them, but not give them a chance.

Such is the case with Morrison’s *Beloved*, my if-the-house-is-on-fire-grab-this item (and *A Mercy* because, in 2008, Morrison actually held my copy and signed it!). My beloved grandmother would have insisted I grab my passport and social security card.

Speaking of my grandmother, the gut-punched feeling when news came that Morrison had died was similar to when my sister called in the pre-dawn hours years ago and I, mid-sleep, answered, “Is it time?” We knew our grandmother was dying. I’d thought time was getting short, too, to be sharing the

planet with this literary grandmother when I saw images of Morrison in a wheelchair.

Last semester on reading “Recitatif” in my literature courses, I confessed my fear that when the time came it would be hard for me. It was. I cried a long time. Friends and family called and texted to check on me. This past spring in another iteration of Women’s Literature, I shared with students what makes Toni Morrison’s work especially meaningful to me.

Many years ago, I was introduced to Morrison’s work as a university student, in a course called Contemporary Women Writers of Color; we read *Sula* and I was hooked then on women’s voices and sister-love. I enrolled in a course on the complete works of Toni Morrison and Jamaica Kincaid. There was no feeling better than going from that class to my other English literature course where a classmate shared that a student in her friend’s class had made this insightful comment about the missing three in 124 Bluestone Road being symbolic of the dead child. “That was me,” I said.

When Morrison received the Nobel Prize in Literature, my professor brought in newspaper

clippings for me. (I still have them.) Years later, my cousin Nicole asked me to recommend a book for a report she had to write. Though I wanted to suggest my favorite, *Beloved*, I thought I should ease her into Morrison, so I loaned her *The Bluest Eye*. She liked it. I made a deal that after she read *Beloved*, we would see the film when it was released in October. She read. We went. After, she said, “You know, I think the book was better than the movie.” “It usually is,” I answered.

The Sunday evening following our movie date, I saw Nicole briefly and teased her about looking too grown up. On Monday, I answered when someone from her middle school called to say Nicole had fainted. She hadn’t. Her heart had stopped. And when I got to her school, I knew she had died, at least for a while before paramedics restarted her heart.

She existed in a persistent vegetative state for fourteen and a half years, precisely half her life, until she died again a few years ago. Our last real conversation was about Toni Morrison. Though Nicole never said so, I imagine her feeling, “Thank you for introducing me to Toni Morrison.” Like I felt when “meeting” Morrison. Like my former student.

A Nation on Speed

Kathleen Chesto

Following the mass shootings rocking our nation this summer, a poem by Brian Bilston appeared on Facebook. In each line, Bilston chose an easily recognizable symbol representing a nation: "England is a cup of tea. / France a wheel of ripened brie." Each stanza ended with "America is a gun." The final verse wrought incredible sadness as he decried this terrible truth. Truth, yes, but not the whole truth.

Guns are not the root of the problem. They are a way we express rage, and their easy availability certainly contributes to our status as most violent first world nation on Earth. But in the absence of guns, there would be homemade bombs, knives, planes, cars, a thousand ways to kill and maim. As Shakespeare aptly wrote, "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars but in ourselves."

Seeds of violence exist in each of us. Joseph Campbell, who studied world symbols and spiritual

traditions, taught that violence is inherent in all cultures, that life eats life. We must try to fathom what in our own culture gives this violence such power. Is this an inherently American violence; does our way of life foster it?

According to Webster, violence is "force accompanied by rapidity." A force, scientifically speaking, is simply a "push or a pull," but rapidity makes that force violent. A bullet thrown by hand is relatively harmless; speed makes it lethal.

We are a nation in a hurry, a nation where most actions are "accompanied by rapidity." We drive

five mph over the speed limit, no matter what that limit is; ten if we can get away with it. We have instant hair coloring, instant pudding, Jiffy-Lube, Minute Rice. We invented "fast food."

Consider how rushing affects even simple actions. Just closing a door can become violent when we hurry. We bang things, raise our voices, lose our tempers. Our language becomes violent. Respect gets left behind as we dash ahead. Road rage, scourge of our highways and frequent source of violence, is a clear product of people in a rush.

Busyness is our national virtue, multi-tasking raised to an art form. We invent time-saving devices so we can fill saved time with more rushed activity. In an informal 1999 poll by a Connecticut publisher, several hundred people on U.S. streets were asked to describe their previous two weeks in one word, with no suggestions. Most frequently chosen were "rushed" and "busy"; "frantic" and "stressed" placed high on the list. In 20 years since that poll, things haven't improved. We've conditioned another generation of children to accept frenzied living as normal. According to Webster, we're all living violent lives.

I don't believe this is the most serious seed of national violence, only the most prevalent, most insidious. It is easy to look at more blatant causes: racism, inequity, religious intolerance, and say, "Not me." It's easy to look at the enormity of these issues and believe ourselves helpless to change things. But are our lifestyles building the underlying foundation of respect needed to address these issues? Does our rushed American way of life contribute to the problem?

We may not need to change our lives entirely, but we must be conscious of how we live. Helen

Keller said, "I cannot do everything; but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do."

Are you willing to change what you can?

Queer Code

It Started with a Brick

Alexander Wilson



For the last decade, New York City has annually hosted one of the largest LGBTQIA Pride events in the country. The weekend-long celebration culminates in a parade. This year marked the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Inn Riot, and I was fortunate enough to attend with close friends and my boyfriend.

To say it was busy was an understatement. We took the train into the city, and there was standing room only. We were as packed as could be; trying not to fall on each other during the hour-long ride was a challenge. Then there was the power walk from Grand Central to Greenwich Village. We found a spot in the mid-route on 7th Avenue, and settled in to watch the show.

It was spectacular. There was a slight delay in timing, but that hardly mattered. Seeing so many people happy to celebrate who they are, both in the parade and on the sidelines, made my heart sing. I took so many pictures my phone started protesting. We stayed as long as we could, but since we all had to get home that night, we left before the parade had finished. Next time, I'm staying the whole time, screw it if I don't get home until 3:00 a.m. again.

As much as Pride events are positive environments, with people reveling, it wasn't always that way. I mentioned this was the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riot. On June 28, 1969, police raided the Stonewall Inn during the early morning hours, looking to arrest as many people as possible for homosexuality. As

was customary then, four plainclothes policemen were lining up people to check patrons' IDs. Most nights, officers would also take them into the bathrooms to verify their sex; anyone "crossdressing" was arrested.

However, that night was different. A crowd gathered, and a bystander shouted, "Gay power!" inciting chants from those around him. People began throwing things at the cops, protesting the raid and arrests made that night.

The next night, riots continued. Marsha P. Johnson, a black transgender woman, took matters into her own hands. Climbing a lamp-post, she dropped a heavy bag onto a police car below, shattering the windshield. Graffiti started appearing in the area of the inn, boasting phrases like "They invaded our rights," and "Support gay bars!" People were finally realizing LGBTQ people would no longer tolerate the hatred and crimes against them.

If it wasn't for those nights in the past, we wouldn't have the pride events we know today. Once we started saying we are proud of who we are, we couldn't stop. Now, fifty years later, we gather in the thousands, just to shout all over again, "Gay Power!" We earned our pride through the blood, sweat, and tears of those before us. Now we have to honor them.

Sylvia Rivera. Stormé DeLarverie. Michael Fader. Allen Ginsberg. Craig Rodwell. Randy Wicker. The list of names could go on. We owe so much to these people who participated in the riots and spread awareness. Thank you, brothers and sisters. Here's to another fifty years of pride.

Yours truly, a prideful Alexander

Dependence in a Cup

Jason Hesse



Photo Courtesy of Steve Parlato

One of humanity's oldest and most destructive habits is its indulgence in psychoactive substances. Modern laws have barred and restricted the use of more exciting drugs like heroin and cocaine, of course, but the most popular drugs have always been legal. Even cannabis, the leading illegal substance of choice, has undergone a gradual statutory acceptance for recreational use in the last seven years, and the runner-up, cocaine, remains popular in spite of heavy regulation.

Meanwhile, their legal counterparts—alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine—have been camped within our culture for millennia, sold now in grocery stores and gas stations, corner stores and coffee shops across the world. Even with conscious effort, eluding their influence would prove difficult. But just because they're accepted doesn't make their affects any less harmful.

It would be difficult for me to claim these three substances are themselves toxic to the body because, by themselves in moderation, they're not. Rather, the danger of these drugs results not from what they do while they're in the body, but what happens after they leave.

Chemical dependence, more commonly called addiction, is the consequence of the repeated alteration of brain chemistry, and while this happens most obviously with hard drugs like meth and heroin, it is similarly a consequence of smoking cigarettes or drinking regular cups of coffee.

This is the crux of my objection.

When caffeine is new to the system, it generates a feeling of alertness and focus. It helps defeat morning fatigue and provides a surprisingly potent burst of energy, transforming banal into bearable, if not into desirable. But as caffeine continues streaming in, the brain has a decision to make. Wow, it thinks, with this new caffeine boosting the transmission of all these neurochemicals, there are too many chemicals flying around; *if I want to maintain a balance, I'll have to cut back on production so the overall effect is the same as before.* And, because the brain knows best, it does the right thing and adapts to maintain that balance.

This system works flawlessly—until that flow of caffeine stops. And since everyone needs sleep, this flow stops every night. Many long-term coffee-lovers can attest to the difficulty of days without their drug of choice—mornings especially. This is the disaster of chemical dependency. Whenever one smokes to allay their stress or drinks to escape their pain, the body and brain become reliant on these solutions instead of directly confronting the problem and coming to a healthy solution. This might sound like it has nothing to do with coffee, but the concepts translate completely.

That cup of coffee is a psychological crutch. Maybe it started because waking up was hard, but now it's harder to function without a caffeine-fueled jump-start. Anything to make life easier, right? All it takes is for that regular reliance to slip under the radar unnoticed until, inevitably, salvation can only be found in hot water and ground beans.

Hilarity at Fifty

Jillian Parlato



Photo Courtesy of Monty Python

Some songs, movies, and television shows endure, aging gracefully, becoming even more relevant with time. The same can be said of comedians, and more specifically, comedy troupes; *The Carol Burnett Show*, *Saturday Night Live*, and even *All That* have proven evergreen in terms of entertaining audiences. Above all, Monty Python tends to be most popular, among old and new fans, fifty years from its inception.

Formed in 1969, Monty Python was the brainchild of Oxford graduates, Michael Palin and Terry Jones; Cambridge graduates, John Cleese, Eric Idle, and Graham Chapman; and sole American, animator Terry Gilliam. Television was nothing new to the Pythons; before the group's official formation, the six had been in a total of nine shows, including *The Frost Report*, *At Last the 1948 Show*, *Do Not Adjust Your Set*, and *How To Irritate People*, most notable for featuring an early version of the famous "Dead Parrot Sketch," centered instead on a shady car salesman.

Following these early successes, Palin, Gilliam, Jones, and Idle were offered their own comedy series by Thames Television, while the BBC offered Cleese and Chapman a show. Cleese rejected this offer, reluctant to do a two-man show with Chapman, whom he viewed as erratic. Instead, thinking back fondly to working with Palin on *How to Irritate People*, Cleese invited him to join them. Palin suggested Jones and Idle; Gilliam joined at Idle's request. Other accounts differ somewhat, suggesting Chapman and Cleese met with the others out of a fondness for *Do Not Adjust Your Set*. What is certain is this fateful meeting would change comedy forever.

To meet the demand for new content, they began work on a comedy show in the vein of *Beyond the Fringe* and *Not Only...But Also*, which both featured comedians Peter Cook and Dudley Moore, who inspired them. The result, a madcap, yet often intellectually charged sketch show, entitled *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, would alter the course of comic history. With skits from "The Ministry of Silly Walks" to "The Spanish Inquisition," it inspired countless comedians, including David Cross, Sacha Baron Cohen, and Seth Meyers. Gilliam's cutout animations, featured throughout each episode, were integral to Trey Parker and Matt Stone's interest in animation, and their eventual creation of *South Park*.

After the success of *Flying Circus*, (1969 – 1974), the Pythons aspired to make a feature film. Drawing inspiration from an idea the team came up with during hiatus between seasons three and four of their show, the group's first movie was *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. Based on the King Arthur legend, the story remained surprisingly faithful to the myth, while retaining classic Python humor.

Two other movies, *Life of Brian* (1979) and *The Meaning of Life* (1983), followed, to similar acclaim, although *Life of Brian*, about a man mistaken for the Messiah while living almost the same life as Jesus Christ during the same time period, is perhaps best known for controversy and accusations of blasphemy that arose upon its release. Forty years later, it continues pushing boundaries and sparking discussion about the importance of freedom of speech.

Through *Flying Circus*, their movies, and unforgettable live performances, it's clear Monty Python's impact is as strong as ever. I, along with many fans, have no doubt their legacy will endure another 50 years, continuing to inspire creators to strap a ridiculous fake nose on the face of entertainment.

Earth Matters

Plastic Bag Ban



Alyssa Katz

Effective August 1st, stores across Connecticut stopped offering free plastic bags at checkout.

Instead, customers were expected to bring reusable bags, or pay 10 cents per plastic bag to carry items home. This is due to a new law intended to eliminate plastic bags to help the environment. In 2021, CT will ban single use paper and plastic bags altogether. However, bags used for meat, fish, and produce will still be available.

While some like the no plastic bag rule, and already switched to reusable bags before the law's implementation, others are having a hard time adjusting. Some have forgotten reusable bags at home or in the car and refused to pay 10 cents, walking out of the store with loose items in hand. Others simply call it an inconvenience.

While some stores offered free paper bags at checkout for the month of August, they're now charging for each paper bag, and, as of September 1st, plastic bags were no longer available for purchase. Certain towns opted not to give people an option of paying for plastic, doing away with the bags entirely as of August 1st. Though the law is well-intentioned, it'll take some getting used to.

When it comes to how much energy it takes to produce bags, plastic takes the least amount of energy, but they're the least durable and most environmentally harmful, as plastic takes a very long time to decompose. Most plastic bags end up in landfills, and they're also a major contributor of litter, both on land and at sea.

Do you ever see bags flying by while driving on the highway—or walking in a park? These can end up in storm drains, eventually reaching waterways, where they present hazards to wildlife. Both land and aquatic animals are susceptible to the threat of plastics, whether due to choking, or the material's inherent toxicity. It's estimated that by 2050, there may be more plastic than fish in Earth's oceans. Concerns over plastic's devastating effects on our oceans are driving the anti-plastic movement.

Paper bags do take more energy to produce (and require cutting down trees), so they also cost stores more than plastic. Paper can sustain a few trips to the grocery store, but can also rip easily, especially when wet. However, trees used to make these bags can be replenished through replanting, thus benefitting the environment.

While reusable bags take the most energy to produce, they are the most durable, accommodating larger, heavier loads. Though they last the longest, they're generally made of cotton and plastic, and they require significant energy to produce.

While each bag has its positives and negatives based on durability, amount of energy to produce, and cost, taking single-use plastic out of the equation is clearly necessary. It may take some adjusting to plastic bags no longer being available, but in the long-run, it will be beneficial, one step toward reducing our carbon footprint.

Moon Landings and Smart Phones

Kathleen Chesto

Are smart phones making us smarter?

About twenty years ago, while spending an evening with a small group of friends, someone randomly asked: "Does anyone remember the date of the moon landing?"

The conversation was suddenly filled with personal reminiscences as we tried to connect the event to what was happening in our own lives at that time. "It was the summer I was in Seattle..."; "It was my first year at USC..."; "It was the summer before I was drafted for Vietnam." The date search was delayed as we delved into things we'd never known about our friends, thanked one for his previously unmentioned service, and sidetracked into when the Vietnam draft had been initiated.

After twenty minutes sharing stories, we determined the landing had been in July of 1969, although we did not know the exact date. However, we had learned far more about our friends than we'd known when the evening started.

In May, the same question arose while having dinner with two other couples. We knew it was the fiftieth anniversary year, but what were the month and day? Before I could share my earlier memory, three people had whipped out smart phones and provided the answer—effectively ending the conversation.

Most of us have smart phones. We no longer have to probe our memories for answers or for connections that provide them. We no longer have the need to share our individual histories, placing them in the context of our larger,

shared history. The information is available at our fingertips. All we need to remember is to charge our phones.

Don't get me wrong; I love my smart phone. I can check weather and traffic, access recipes, measurement conversions, dates, quotations, and news releases. We are all far better informed with our phones than without them. But I suspect we've become less connected, despite the fact we're instantly available to a multitude of friends and acquaintances.

Because dates, facts, and learned history are all in my phone, I no longer take the time to recognize how they were woven into the history and fabric of my life. There is no chance of remembering the long-forgotten people and ideas imbedded in those events. While it is still possible to share our stories surrounding these events, and we can ask friends to share theirs, the absence of a compelling need to do so frequently short circuits that process.

I don't think we've become smarter, just different. Smart phone memories are like digital clocks, offering one moment in time—clearly and precisely defined—yet isolated. Human memory is an analog clock, with each moment situated in the whole of the day, so we can clearly see how far we've come, how far we've yet to go. One is far more accurate, the other far more encompassing. Not better, just different.

Joni Mitchell said it best in "Both Sides Now": "Something's lost and something's gained in living every day."

Greetings from Danbury!

Trevor Beninson



My name is Trevor, and I have a story to tell. I am 24 years of age and have been enrolled at NVCC for four semesters, majoring in Psychology studies and minoring in Liberal

Arts & Sciences with a 3.91 GPA. I'm currently a Library Research Assistant at NVCC's Danbury campus, and I've been a Danbury Student Government Senator for a year.

I volunteer at the Danbury War Memorial, almost every morning, helping maintain upkeep of the facility as well as providing mentoring and coaching to youth coming to play basketball. I'm also a part-time streamer affiliated with Twitch.tv. Through this service and Fortnite, I've developed a small online community, primarily youth, with whom I interact frequently. I also participate in a men's flag football league every Sunday.

Eldest of three children, I just happen to be the only male. My two younger sisters are 16 and 14. Although I wish things were different, contact with my immediate family is minimal. I'm hopeful one day I will have the family unit I dream of. My biggest influence for deciding to pursue a career in Psychology has been my personal life experience. I'm fascinated with how the human mind works, and one day I want to help individuals dealing with mental disorders, focusing on offering counseling and developing forms of treatment beneficial in coping with various disorders.

In addition to online gaming and football, my hobbies include basketball, reading, and self-educating. I have curiosity for all things unfamiliar and love to teach myself about new things. My long-term goal for the next ten years is mainly completing as much of my post-secondary education as possible; my ultimate plan is to earn my Doctorate in Psychology.

I'm very self-driven, mainly due to a lack of family and support networks throughout my childhood and early adulthood. I've always been an independent individual, but since arriving at NVCC, I've been able to build a network of friends and supporters who've made my time here all the more enjoyable.

For a long time, I didn't know where my life was headed. Many times in my past I found myself questioning my purpose on Earth, wondering if I would ever get a chance to leave my footprint on the world. Since coming to NVCC, my outlook has changed. I no longer ask *if* I will leave my mark, but rather *when* I will leave my mark.

At Naugatuck Valley I've found family in a place where I came for education. Through these doors, I've experienced opportunity where I looked only to experience education. Inside the classrooms, I've acquired knowledge beyond what any textbook could ever teach, because faculty here are mentors. I'll be taking classes at the Waterbury campus this semester, and I'm thankful for the opportunity to share my opinions with all who are willing to listen. As I said, my name is Trevor Beninson, and I still have a story to tell you.

Thank You All

How About DAT!

A new semester has commenced, and it won't be long before student clubs are planning events and activities. As they attempt to involve the student body, announcement flyers will blossom all over campus.

What attracts me to a flyer is the graphic art. I see the picture before the words; in fact, the picture must entice me to read the words. If the words are inviting enough, I'm hooked. Working with Music Society over the past two years, I've begun to realize how essential graphic art is to the success of our events.

This visual garden is provided for us, free of charge, by the digital art students. A combination of their original ideas and hours spent searching for internet images has produced the art adorning all these flyers. And the sponsoring group gets to critique and offer suggestions and changes before the final version goes to print.

In my former career, I often worked with expensive graphic artists who were far less helpful and accommodating, and no more talented. The same group of DAT students willingly provides programs for events and makes video recordings for College archives. At multiple camera events, that recording is often followed by hours of editing.

DAT has designed many logos for various student groups and created CCTV clips for our in-house monitors. The Theater Department has relied heavily on them for posters advertising their shows, as well as audio, video and photos used in performances. DAT students have also been actively working toward audio recording for music students and video clips for theater students, but to date, staffing has been insufficient to reach some of these goals.

Last spring, when Music Theory IV students were required to perform original musical compositions, DAT was there to record them. I'd hoped to get a copy of my own performance, but when I inquired, students had already left on summer break. DAT Director Ray Leite met with me, generously spending an hour searching through unedited, untitled video files until he found and copied the piece. The graciousness I experienced with his students had obviously been well modeled for them.

Like the stage crew in a theatre production, the work of our Digital Arts Department is essential to the success of our many campus productions. Just as it is with stage crew, the work is clearly visible, but the people behind the work are often invisible.

I would like to start the year by sincerely thanking all of you who work so hard for all of us. I'm only one student in one small society in one small department on campus, and I have found your contributions invaluable. Multiply that by all the departments you serve, and it is abundantly clear how essential you are to life on our campus.

Thank you for all you've done in the past, and for all we are going to ask of you again this year!

Kathleen Chesto

Summer School?

Amelia McGee

Road trips with friends, going on vacation, and enjoying gorgeous beach weather scream summer! Hitting the books and spending hours on classwork is not the first thing that comes to mind when we think of summer, but what if it was?

This summer I made a decision to take an accelerated, five-week Human Anatomy and Physiology 1 class. Yikes! Sounds daunting, I know. I thought the same thing and had plenty of doubts before the class even began. What if I couldn't keep up with the workload;

what if I didn't do well in the class? Would it bring down my GPA, and worst of all, would I have to retake the class? Despite all my concerns and doubts, I made a promise to myself to finish the class. I figured, no matter the outcome, I'd learn something from it—and I did.

Organization is key to success in any accelerated course. I learned this very quickly the first day of class. Having an agenda/calendar to write down assignments, upcoming due dates, or tests proved very helpful. I was able to keep organized and stay on top of my work.

Another important step to succeeding in any accelerated course is not being shy. Don't be afraid to talk to your peers and professor. Ask questions! If you're confused or lost, ask your

professor for clarification. Do not be scared to do so, because your classmates probably have the same questions and may be just as confused.

Because it's an accelerated course and time is of the essence, always ask your questions as soon as possible. Do not wait. You won't have time to revisit the subject and ask questions later. By that point, you'll be farther into the curriculum, so you may end up unintentionally confusing yourself. Just remember not to be shy about asking questions. It's how we all learn.

Procrastination. We've all done it, even if we don't want to admit it. This had to be one of the hardest things for me to overcome while taking an accelerated course. The difficulty of the class, assignments, tests and exams alone

were not nearly as challenging as it was to keep from putting things off.

I've struggled with being a procrastinator since I can remember, and I'm sure a lot of others do, too. I had to constantly keep myself in check and avoid putting things off. I knew if I did fall behind, it would just be too difficult to catch up. My advice is to work smarter, not harder.

Do not let the idea of taking a summer course scare you away. The experience really was not that bad. Just stay organized, don't be shy, and don't procrastinate. You will do fine, and you'll feel great having earned three credits—and completed a challenging course over break!

Veteran's Voice Service and Sacrifice

Rick Bellagamba



A group of wounded veterans from across the country are helping children with disabilities in Virginia Beach. The group, *USA Patriots*, is teaching kids who live with limb loss, whether

they suffered amputation from illness or injury. Their goal is to teach the basic fundamentals of playing sports. *The Kids Camp*, formerly known as the *Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team*, is operating in its seventh year as host for their younger fellow amputees.

Josh Wege, a combat Marine who lost both his legs from an IED in Afghanistan, says, "My injury is honestly one of the biggest blessings in my life." He says his injuries put his life into perspective enough to share with anybody. "I don't put socks and shoes on in the morning. I literally have to strap legs to my body to be able to walk," said Wege. He and other veterans are sharing their positive appreciation with seventeen kids this year. "They deserve to be kids. We get to bring them out to teach them how we've gone through it, and we also learn from them, too," said Wege.

Wesleyan University allows the camp to use their fields plus reside and dine on campus for free, which saves the organization about \$30,000. The campers all eat and sleep for free. Fundraisers throughout the year fund all activities and meals for camp participants. Wege states, "We want them to come here carefree and simply have a great time. We're here to pop that bubble that society has put on them that they're disabled. They're not. They're just kids; they just got a couple more challenges to go through."

It is a powerful example for these young people to actually see and learn from veterans who know the challenges they are facing. "We got knocked down, but we got right back up and we're still leading by example. That's what the military has taught us to do, so we're going to keep doing that," said Wege.

In 2000, an ex-army lieutenant, Scott Higgins, co-founded *Veterans Advantage*, a public benefit corporation with the mission to create 'greater respect, recognition, and rewards' for those who serve and their families. A Vietnam War Veteran, Higgins states, "Like so many others, I did not ask to go to Vietnam. I had raised my right hand, though, and taken the oath of office and was committed to serve."

When he returned home after his service, there were no parades or special events to welcome him back. Higgins returned to an America that showed little understanding or respect for what he and his fellow veterans had endured while fighting the most unpopular war for their country overseas. "After 10 years of war, the country wanted to forget the war. It ignored the brave service and sacrifice of Vietnam Veterans. I was determined to do something about that," Higgins said.

Later, he was appointed by New York Mayor Ed Koch to co-chair the *New York Vietnam Veterans Memorial Commission*. The Commission built a stunning memorial in lower Manhattan, created a jobs program for Vietnam Veterans, and in 1985, organized the first "Welcome Home Parade" for all Vietnam Veterans, ten years after the war ended. Well over 25,000 Vietnam veterans finally got the recognition they deserved during what was the largest ticker tape parade in U.S. history with over 1 million people turning out to thank them for their service. So today we say, "Thank you for your service and sacrifices."

Rick Bellagamba, US Army: 1971 - 1974

Public Safety
Department



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Readers Respond

Dear Editor,

Alexander Wilson's article, "Stop, Don't Shop," had a really unique title [that caught my attention] due to employees going on strike, because of contract negotiations all across New England. Wilson's information made a valid statement, especially when he wrote, "Employees have worked hard to earn these benefits. They aren't asking for more; they're simply trying to keep the benefits they already have" (6). I support ... the hard workers who deserve more, with included health benefits and a better raise to support their families. I'm happy your editor's note notified [readers] that upper management took control of the situation and renewed a contract, and that now everything can go back to normal.

~ Sincerely, Edmund Edgehill

A Real Train Wreck

Richard Bosco with Steve Parlato



Photo Courtesy of
Time Magazine

As of late August, the Trump presidency, in its 32nd month; in that time, our nation has suffered a President and administration lacking moral integrity. We've experienced multiple mass shootings, a growing neo-Nazi/White Nationalist movement, a dramatic rise in hate crimes, looming trade war with China, ongoing foreign espionage against our electoral system, and a President who wouldn't recognize the truth if it hit him in the face (not surprising, since he rarely utters it). There's also a possible recession on the horizon, not to mention increased risks to endangered species--which may soon include our own, given Trump still considers climate change a hoax.

According to *Mother Jones News*, mass shootings, (attacks with three or more fatalities) have resulted in 251 fatalities, and 727 wounded, since Trump's inauguration. To be fair, Congress did pass, and Trump signed, a bump stock ban after 58 people were killed and 546 wounded by one shooter during the October 2017 Las Vegas rampage. What we don't have are laws enacting comprehensive background checks, a ban of assault-style weapons, red flag laws, or stronger laws addressing firearm usage in commission of any crime.

This president also spouts racist rhetoric, then denies having "a racist bone in his body." Trump doesn't care if the racist bile he spews incites right-wing radicals or causes citizens and immigrants to be run down or gunned down by radicalized white supremacists. Following the August 2017 murder of Heather Heyer, a young woman peacefully demonstrating against racism and hate, in Charlottesville, VA, Trump resisted calling the white nationalist responsible a terrorist. Instead, he claimed there were "many good people on both sides."

So according to our president, the KKK,

white nationalists, and neo-Nazis are good people. Not to overstate, but Trump-appointed FBI Director, Christopher Wray, declared white nationalists are domestic terrorists and a clear and present danger to our nation and its security. Even Trump should be able to admit this danger, considering a white nationalist, inspired by his anti-immigrant rhetoric, recently drove 10 hours from Dallas to El Paso, to slaughter innocent Walmart shoppers.

After surrendering to police, the shooter declared his goal was to kill as many Mexicans as possible. Perhaps Trump thinks of this as another endorsement from one of those "good people." To be fair, shortly after the latest shootings, he pledged to enact stricter background checks (tied to stronger immigration laws, though mass shooters are generally American-born white men)--only to backpedal in record time, likely in response to NRA backlash.

Dare we address the Trump economy? While continuously crowing over the greatest economy ever, Trump fails to thank President Obama for leaving such a healthy economy. Any Economics or Math Professor could easily illustrate this with a trend line and simple graph. Trump also brags about tax cuts for the rich, but disregards how they're increasing our national debt. If the current debt accumulation trend continues, economists predict debt will double between 2017 and 2025. A recent survey by the National Association of Business Economists reports 74% of business economists are sufficiently concerned about Trump economic policies resulting in a recession before the end of 2021.

If you need another reason to make Donald Trump a one-term President, think about the nearly 1 million plant and animal species at risk of extinction worldwide. Now consider this: Trump and his Interior Department recently announced a set of rules effectively gutting the Endangered Species Act in service of "energy dominance." In a recent *New York Times* op-ed, Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey referred to Trump's latest move as "like a plan from a cartoon villain." The question is: Who will have the last laugh?

Enough

Tabitha Cruz

At a friend's house the other day, awaiting my turn to play piano, I noticed *Time* magazine on her coffee table. The word ENOUGH was written across the cover with different cities written behind it. A sensation of dread came over me, because I knew just what was going to be covered in the issue. For weeks, I'd been avoiding the topic of mass shootings. I'd been skipping posts and stories that might address the topic, but I knew I couldn't avoid it any longer. I'd have to check back into reality.

Reading, I was overwhelmed by the information, by the sad and real news. I skimmed most of it, unable to bring myself to read its entirety. I couldn't bring myself to feel angry, and I couldn't bring myself to feel sad. I feel mostly exhausted reading news of one mass shooting after another. I know the more I read the more paranoid I'll feel.

I can't go anywhere without thinking of an emergency plan in case an intruder attempts to murder everyone. I can't go see a movie

expecting to relax and enjoy it. Instead, I sit the whole time, wondering if the seat I chose will be the cause of my untimely demise. If I attend a concert, will I escape from my spot, or will I stand and accept my fate?

In high school, my friends and I played a game where we'd assess the best method of escape if an intruder did come. We'd talk about stairwells and floors, each criticizing the other's plans, telling them they'd be killed if they dared to take Stairwell C from the fourth floor. We also talked about how we should practice lockdowns during a passing period and what to do if we were caught in the open and not in a classroom. We would finish the game reminding each other it was impossible: we were safe. Nothing could happen to us. We were just teenagers; kids can't die. We kept ourselves safe with a false sense of security.

That same summer was Orlando's Pulse Nightclub shooting. I remember hearing about it on the radio at work, then again in my mom's car. I remember feeling uneasy as

Deja View

Jason Hesse

This summer, *The Lion King* remake released nationwide to mixed reviews. Many people I know—myself included—were skeptical and worried the film would fall short of the original by a fair margin. And if you believe the critics, it seems our fears were justified. Rotten Tomatoes currently rates the remake at only 6.01/10 with a 52% approval rating, whereas the original boasts an 8.39/10 with a 93% approval rating. How can there be such a significant shift in attitudes if these two films are telling the same story?

Part of the disparity, admittedly, could be cultural. Despite a nostalgic reverence for the original, it's possible many viewers have outgrown the message of *The Lion King*, or that the lessons it conveys are less in line with the current cultural zeitgeist. Perhaps our mass affection for the original is simply steeped in nostalgia for childhood, and we view the film each time through these rose-colored glasses. Some critics suggest the problem lies in the lifeless, stilted animation which is not as expressive and emotional as in the original. But I'm not driven to determining what exactly about the remake made it less enjoyable—I actually have yet to see it. Instead, I want to address the question of why: why bother remaking a film many remember so fondly?

One tenuous case could be made for the new 3D animation, but this is Disney we're talking about—they could have made any story about anthropomorphic animals if their goal was to push the boundaries of realistic-looking animation. When it comes to *The Lion King* in particular, their reasoning was likely twofold: to maintain copyright control of their characters, and to make more money.

Surprise! Unfortunately, that first reason is actually a misconception. Copyright control only protects works, not ideas, and the 2019 version of *The Lion King* is technically a different work than the original. The only real defensible property would be the names of its characters and places and the specific stylization of its title, but these are trademarks, not copyrights, and don't expire unless they fall out of use. And since *The Lion King* merchandise is still alive and well around the world, I don't expect Disney to be in danger of losing those trademarks anytime soon.

A fresh source of income, then, becomes the main motive for Disney. With budgets of over \$150 million, a 3D-animated Disney film is an expensive venture. If the main goal of the company (not the individuals who work on these films, let's make that distinction clear) is to earn more than its costs, which hypothetical film would be a safer investment: a new film with an unknown story and no brand history, or a remake of one of the most well-known Disney films of all time?

Thus, it's not surprising theaters are often flooded with sequels, remakes, and spin-offs, because for the highest potential return of investment, the answer to that question, "Why bother?" is almost a no-brainer.

I heard the news over and over. I remember scrolling through Instagram, seeing all my friends' pictures and hashtags. Some friends even posted graphic video clips. That night, I couldn't sleep. I began questioning my own mortality. I felt as though nothing was real, because in real life no one could just brutally murder people without a second thought. I questioned where I'd go if I died, and whether I've made peace with myself, especially since I could get gunned down anytime, anywhere.

Then came the Las Vegas shooting. By that point, I'd already begun to check out of the horrible news that fills our phones daily. Now I can't even bring myself to read articles about victims and perpetrators. I can't bring myself to have discussions about gun violence, because I am exhausted having the same conversations with the same outcomes. I would think *Time* would feel the same. They've had two covers with the same word, ENOUGH; you'd think they would start to question what enough really is.