

the Gadfly

St. John's College
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THE STRUCTURE

Logos typically holds news reports and narratives of immediate relevance to the Polity. The purpose here is to develop a shared reservoir of information relating to campus life and the community. The Managing Editor for Logos is El'ad Nichols-Kaufman. His email is eanicholskaufman@sjc.edu

Symposium offers the opportunity for our readers to thoughtfully consider contrasting opinions regarding a particular topic. The Managing Editor for Symposium is Luke Briner. His email is lbriner@sjc.edu

Polis serves as a platform for elevating voices in our community. Here we find letters to the editor, columns, cartoons, and submitted pieces. The Managing Editor for Polis is Daniel Nathan. His email is djnathan@sjc.edu

THE COVER

Photo of Delegate Council President Tom Ni, taken by Liz Dowdy

From the Editor's Desk:

Dear Polity,

Here lies another busy issue of the Gadfly. Do with it what you will but please bear these pleas in mind: (1) The Symposium section is especially important and delightful this time around, pay mind to it and take inspiration from its success to form your own submissions for the next symposium topic (which has to do with the nature of our academic program), (2) Take the imperative at the end of page 3 seriously and you will be rewarded (there is a philosopher on the page), and (3) Don't forget to write in with any questions, thoughts, communications, or submissions that you might have.

The best way to reach us is by email: either at sjca.gadfly@gmail.com or cekoch@sjc.edu. Submissions for the next issue will be due a bit before Halloween, let's say the 24th. Spooky submissions are appropriate.

Hope you enjoy the issue!

Sincerely,
Craig Koch

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Updates From the Newsroom

by El'ad Nichols-Kaufman '25

FAREWELL TO ARCADIA

Arcadia. The name is simultaneously very specific: a rugged region in the Peloponnese, home of wild Pan, and also incredibly broad: it is the mythical no-place of the countryside, an everlasting pastoral golden age of shepherds, nymphs and satyrs. Both senses of the name, with their respective toughness and tenderness fit Cadie, our beloved campus dog who passed away last summer.

At a ceremony remembering Arcadia, Chris Krueger, our former athletic director and caretaker of Arcadia, talked about these qualities in her. “She was tough, tough on people,” he recalled. “She demanded attention and exercise.” But she was also extremely tender, always noticing when people were down and giving them the attention they needed. Taylor Waters, Director of Student Services, and longtime companion of Arcadia, described her as “very emotionally aware. She would lean up against your foot, if you were feeling upset.”

The ceremony, which was moved indoors because of the threat of rain, was well attended, with students overflowing the Assistant Dean’s office into Mellon’s halls. After remarks by Krueger, and a short concert of Arcadia’s own singing, the assembled Johnnies sang *Sicut Cervus* as a final farewell to the six million dollar dog who meant so much to our campus.

“Cadie helped crack us out of the ways we get trapped as Johnnies, where we get too stagnant,” explained Krueger. “She taught us to pay attention to something dynamic, moving and alive.”

See page 27 for accompanying photos.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER OFFICIALLY OPENED

Students meet dogs, learn new things (how shocking!) at the Health and Wellness Fair.

The quad was unusually busy for a Wednesday at lunch. Some students flocked to tables set out with journals, stickers, tiles and markers, cookies, Public Safety paraphernalia and various health and wellness materials, while others lavished attention on visiting therapy dogs or practiced yoga.

This event, which included information from community partner, St. John’s Health and Wellness Center and Public Safety, was part of a wider effort to reach out to students and make community wellness more visible for Johnnies. “We’re trying to make the campus a little more aware of what resources are available,” explained Danielle Lico, Executive Director of Campus Health and Wellness. “We’re trying to get people to engage in taking a break from the day in and day out of being on campus and having the opportunity to decompress a little bit. Having that opportunity for students to get more health education is really what we’re aiming for.”

Along with outreach to students, the event also featured the official opening of the Health Center’s new home, in the lower level of Randall. “We wanted to do something to signify we moved,” said Lico. “It’s such a great improvement over what we had previously.” Ms. Demlitner gave a short speech thanking the health center staff for their work, and then proceeded to cut the ribbon over the stairs down to Randall’s “Garden Level” with the appropriately oversized scissors.

The health center’s new space, which will allow for an additional exam room, more space for mental health support, including a room for larger group meetings and a mindfulness room, and extra offices has been in use since the beginning of the year. Johnnies are all welcome (and encouraged) to drop by, ask about what services are offered, and get to know what kind of physical and mental supports are available for student health on campus.

Start of the Year Phishing Attack

A Lesson on Cyber Security

by Paolo Medelius '26

On August 21st, the day before many students would step onto campus for the first time, a phishing attack hit the SJC community. The attack, which targeted all SJC users, consisted of fraudulent emails sent from SJC email accounts to users in the SJC Microsoft Global Address List, the database in Microsoft Outlook that allows members of an organization to find emails of other members in the same organization, in this case those with an @sjc.edu email. The initial, most harmful attack consisted of two emails sent from a former student's account. The first email told students they had two Microsoft 365 email accounts at higher education institutions and needed to verify the correct one, and the other offered false part-time job opportunities. In both cases, there were links to separate sites asking students to input sensitive information including their SJC emails and passwords. From this attack, around 35 SJC students compromised some of their sensitive information.

During the first attack, the IT department became aware of the issue. Its first actions were to delete the phishing emails from the inboxes of SJC emails, disable the accounts sending the emails, limit the number of recipients a sender could email at a time, require the affected students to change their passwords, and notify the SJC community of the ongoing attack. While the attack continued with more fraudulent emails being sent out from different SJC accounts, no one else fell victim.

The IT department later required all SJC users with an @sjc.edu email to change their passwords. Further, it investigated the SJC network and

found that no data was taken from the college's system, and no malware or other malicious software was present. The only information taken was the information the victims provided.

Following this attack, the IT department plans to make some system changes to protect cyber-security in the SJC community. The limit the IT department imposed on the recipients a sender could email at a time was an important measure to reduce the efficacy of cyber-attacks. A limit has stayed in place, but the exact limit is changing, and extended emailing permissions may be granted to privileged accounts. The IT department is also working to empower individual users. The IT department will likely require students to implement multi-factor authentication on their accounts in the future. It also plans to increase its communication with the SJC community and provide information on different cyber-attacks, training users to be able to identify and protect themselves from different attacks.

This effort to empower individual users reflects an important aspect of cyber security that was utilized to stop the phishing attack. While the systems the IT department has in place are important for protecting against cyber-attacks, the phishing attack was only effectively stopped when students were made aware of it so that they could avoid it, and the IT department was actively monitoring for fraudulent emails and deleting them. Managing the risk is often the best way to protect against cyber-attacks, and users serve a significant role in doing this effectively. Frank Anastasio, Chief Information Officer of the

Information Technology Services at St. John's College Annapolis, emphasized that "An important piece of risk management is making sure that people who can be affected by the risk understand what the risk is. That's no different with whether we're talking about a cyber security risk or the risk of a fire in a dorm room."

In the case of fraudulent emails, there are some specific actions users should take to protect themselves. The first step should be to slow down and take the time to identify some red flags. A high sense of urgency and spoofed links or email addresses (links and email addresses which resemble verified ones but differ slightly in their spelling) are common indicators of fraudulent emails. Links and email addresses can be cross-referenced with ones verified in a separate internet search or from another valid source. Further, if the sender of an email claims to be a certain person, but the content of the email suggests that it was not actually from that person, that person should be contacted separately through a verified contact to confirm whether he was the sender. The college will never ask for an account and password and/or other sensitive data via email. If a user encounters a fraudulent email in their @sjc.edu account, there is an option on the email to mark it as phishing. This helps prevent other users from becoming victims of the attack.

Tips from IT!

- Keep up-to-date antivirus software installed on devices.
- Update all software so that their individual security measures are up to date.
- Create complex passwords, use different passwords for different accounts, and make sure to use a password manager software to store passwords.

One Shot Night

A Night with The Board Game Club

by Joe Bennet '23

It's Friday night, September 9th, just after the close of our all-college seminar on Chekhov's *The House with the Mezzanine*. On any other Friday night at this time, a regular meeting of SJC Board Game Club would just be getting underway in the coffee shop in the basement of McDowell, right under the feet of those stragglers in the Great Hall who had stayed lurking late into question period following a lecture. But tonight the club had planned a special assembly. In those spaces usually filled with Bananagram-ers, Azul-ists, Seven Wonders-ers, Captain Sonar-izers, Mars Terraform-ists, and board and card gamers of a dozen other monikers, a new species of gamer cavorted in their place: the Table Top Role Playing Gamer. The Board Game Club, in their magnanimity and charity, had elected to host once again their annual One Shot Night.

For those unacquainted with one shots and TTRPG's in general, a brief synopsis will follow: a role playing game (as the name might suggest) requires the adoption of an alternate persona by each participant. They design these characters in the constraints of a specific game system, and these player-characters then engage to problem solve, navigate hostile environments, and craft a narrative. Generally a session is run by a "game master" who describes the setting these characters find themselves in and facilitates their interaction within it. The game master sets a scene, plays out the roles of all the other characters of the world, and listens for how each other participant hopes to respond. Often, this is as simple as wanting to walk across a crowded room or spend some money in a store. In resolving

more complicated wishes, cases with a significant chance of failure, the game master might demand a die roll and set a threshold for success. This roll might be modified by a character's inherent abilities (e.g. a thief is likely more capable with lock-picking tools than a battle ax) or circumstantial bonus (it's easier to sneak around at night, easier to shoot accurately in daylight). After determining success or failure, the game master describes the consequences of the attempt and the players respond to the new development in turn.

Generally a game master has a large, overarching story they work through with their players over the course of weeks or months of play sessions, called a campaign. These campaigns pick up each session where the last left off and are contributing to a single massive narrative. For those seeking an experience more akin to a short story than a sprawling epic, an alternative format exists: the one shot. In a one shot, a game master crafts a narrative that can be worked through in a single night of play rather than demanding the commitment of a full campaign. At One Shot Night, just such a collection of games were played.

As people arrived, each game master gave a brief synopsis of the sorts of experiences players could expect in advance, players selected the table they were most interested in, and, over the course of a few hours, strange stories bloomed. In one corner a group of adventurers explored an ancient, ruined temple, finding themselves fighting bandits, cultists, and strange creatures in an old school dungeons and dragons game. Meanwhile, across the room, a session of Bluebeard's

Bride was being run. This gothic horror game saw each player take on the role of a distinct piece of The Bride's shattered psyche as she struggles with the terrible revelations of her husband's horrifying crimes and with the continued expectations of being a monster's wife. I decided to sit down and try a system I had never heard of before: Paranoia. In this comedy sci-fi game each player took on the role of a "Troubleshooter", an agent of the omnipresent, seemingly omniscient, supercomputer which ruled our reality, and upon sitting down I was handed the wildest character sheet I have ever seen.

Everyone present, at each of the tables, got to contribute their unique impulse to contriving entirely new lines of story. Not even the game masters knew where their players would steer the worlds they had crafted, how they would react to the threads of intrigue presented. Something novel and totally unpredictable was derived from the coming together of each of these little pods of players, and for the most part it will be lost again as we find ourselves more and more distant from that night. The experience will become memory, and the memory will grow stale and erode. Regardless of how meticulous my (corporately mandated) note taking is, most of the night is already gone from me. But on any given night such cultivation of tale could happen again. Something different can bloom, just as new and beautiful and exciting as the last. So I recommend seeking out your own experience of this; get some friends together, force one person to be a game master and another in the group to bring snacks. It's free, it's legal, it's goofy and nerdy and it's one more small way of bonding to make it through the night.

Building St. John's

Buildings Past, Present and Future

by Elad Nichols-Kaufman '25

St. John's campus has changed drastically over the years. New buildings have risen, old ones have been renovated and repurposed, and offices, dorms and classrooms have shifted across the campus. This year, returning Johnnies may have noticed a fairly substantial shift in office arrangements, as well as continuing renovations on campus. The health center has moved to the lower level of Randall, many student services have been concentrated in the Hodson house, and career services have moved to Mellon.

Danielle Lico, Executive Director of Campus Health and Wellness, explained that the Health Center began these shifts in response to the increased need for mental health services and a lack of space for basic healthcare. "What became particularly evident, especially as we were returning back to campus from Covid, was the need for more and broader mental health service... We needed the space to be able to deliver those services."

The health center had been using the second floor of Harrison, which was built as an apartment, to provide some additional space, but it was not ADA accessible.

Lico explained, "We had two nurse practitioners who were sharing an office space, and one exam room that was doubling as a vaccine space and a testing space... As we were coming back, we saw that the options were to decrease the services we offer or find a space that could accommodate our needs."

Once this problem was identified, the administration began searching for space to move the health center. Randall's lower level already had sinks

and available, accessible space, so it seemed like the natural space to use, precipitating the move of other offices previously in Randall.

"From there, it was all a domino effect," said Ally Gontang-Highfield, the College Treasurer, "Once we decided that we wanted to move services, the most important thing was to get as many services ADA accessible as possible. The first thing was moving the Health and Wellness Center... From there, we decided to move as many student services together as possible. Student accounts, IT, and financial aid, all those things we tried to consolidate in the Hodson house, so students would have a one stop shop for all services."

That, however, meant offices in the Hodson house, like career development, also had to move, ending up in Mellon, where they could be more visible to students on a day to day basis.

*A*ccessibility Issues:

These renovations, however, only begin to address longstanding student complaints about accessibility. Many of the historic buildings on campus cannot be made accessible without damaging their historic character, and other changes to buildings that can be renovated may be too expensive for the college. Some buildings have undergone renovations that make them partially accessible in the past few years, such as the first floor of Pinkney and the elevator connecting the first and second floor of McDowell. However, even though these are technically accessible, they require difficult and circuitous paths to reach, and often have difficult terrain on the paths towards them. "We are

looking to improve all the buildings," said Gontang-Highfield. "It's really a resource issue. We're looking at the library... We're looking, if and when we get the money to renovate Campbell, to install an elevator."

Campbell Hall, which except the basement is currently completely inaccessible, had accessible bathrooms installed, as required by code. The building has an elevator shaft, but never had an elevator installed, and thus would require major renovations to install an operational elevator and make the building accessible.

*B*igger Changes in the works:

Larger upgrades to buildings, specifically dorms, are currently being planned. Campbell is first on the list, but financial and planning obstacles still remain. "It was our hope to try and tackle that next year," stated Gontang-Highfield, "But it's definitely a resource question."

At the Board of Visitors and Governors meeting this summer, members discussed trying to find funding sources as well as the difficulties posed by closing the building for the entire year, requiring an equal number of housing slots on a campus that's already short on housing.

"We're sorely aware of the problem of housing in town," explained President Nora Demleitner. "The question for us is how do we create more residential space?" Demleitner said that she hopes to build another residence facility, but that there are even greater financial obstacles to that. Building costs have gone up drastically over the past few years, and it is not certain if current streams of revenue

and fundraising can provide the necessary funds.

Last year, the Pritzker Foundation pledged to match \$1 for every \$2 donated to the college for up to \$25 million, resulting in a total possible revenue of \$75 million, to be split across both campuses for physical campus improvements. In Santa Fe, the money is planned for renovations to the Peterson student center and sustainability improvements, like moving entirely to solar infrastructure by 2023. In Annapolis, the money will go to more transformative projects, primarily for dorms. "It's 37.5 million dollars for our campus," explained Demleitner, "and that sounds like

incredible money, but unfortunately it's not enough. So even with the Pritzker money, we're going to need to continue fundraising."

Campus Future:

These projects all play a role in the broad campus master plan currently in the works, which hopes to guarantee more stability for the campus. "We want to stop changing spaces from dorms to offices to dorms," said Demleitner. "That's expensive." This plan will connect to other values of the college, like a smaller environmental impact. "We're looking for architects who will help us do it in a sustainable manner," explained Lico. "How can we

reduce our impact on the environment and improve our use of resources?" Demleitner concurred, "We want to do the right thing."

Demleitner also noted that for the future of the college, student input will be vital. "We encourage everyone to share both concerns and things that work well. Sometimes we assume certain things should be changed, even though some of you might say, 'don't touch that!' I have no idea how you are using space at midnight, or six a.m. I'd love to get feedback on these things, because you are the ones who use them."



McDOWELL HALL, ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, known as Bladen's Folley, commenced as a Governor's Mansion, in 1744.

Front View of McDowell Hall with Cupola, circa 1930-60

How to Oktoberfest

A Lesson in Festival

Article by Helen Felbek '25

After a two-year forced hibernation due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Oktoberfest in Munich started on September 17, the same day Reality and the Waltz committee hosted St. John's annual Oktoberfest.

When this tradition started at St. John's is not easily deduced. But based on some older editions of the *Gadfly*, the party was already a staple in 2004. Back then, however, it was run by Reality only (and apparently, a whole pig was roasted).

Since it seems rather unlikely for Oktoberfest to disappear as a standard part of the college's social calendar, I thought it might be suitable for attendees to at least be educated on the history of Oktoberfest and the customs surrounding it.

The first Oktoberfest was held in 1810 as a wedding commemoration between the Bavarian Crown Prince Ludwig and Princess Therese of Saxony-Hildburghausen. The festivities began on October 12, 1810, and ended on October 17 with a horse race. The event is still held in the same location, Therese Green (Theresienwiese). The exact reasons why Oktoberfest was repeated in the following year are unknown. However, I assume the event was probably enjoyable enough that even people from around the world – Bavarians in Munich, just like college students in Annapolis – have always looked for an opportunity to be merry (and drink). These days the folk festival lasts up to 18 days! Why Oktoberfest starts in September is rather profane: the weather is just nicer in September...

Since the new alcohol policy has taken effect, the event's focus has shifted from drinking as much beer

as possible to having a good time and proving one's endurance and dance skills at the polka competition.

Since it is widely known that the taste and quality of American beer are nowhere close to the beer traditionally served at the real Oktoberfest, I deem this new development an improvement for students' taste buds. Still, Students over 21 did not forgo beer completely. For four dollars, Johnnies could choose one of five different beers.



Columbine and Pantalone by Kandler

Considering that one "Maß" (i.e., one liter or 34 liquid ounces) of beer cost 13.80 Euros (i.e., 13.83 USD) at this year's fest in Munich, the four-dollar Johnnie alternative seems much more agreeable.

During the day, flower crown making and hair braiding was offered for people to spice up their evening wear, especially since most

attendees were not owners of actual traditional garments (such as Dirndl or Lederhosen). Alongside the two aforesaid activities, non-alcoholic apple cider, doughnuts, apple fritters, and authentic German pretzel buns were offered. At around seven pm, and in fashion with quite the Johnnie delay, the polka competition started. After forty quite sweaty, but also very entertaining minutes, two freshmen (Ms. Ransohoff and Mr. McKenna) won flowers and eternal glory.

At nine pm, the waltz officially started. Johnnies, following their fashionable trend, tended to arrive late while the midshipmen arrived too early. After some initial problems with the music, the waltz went smoothly. I was, however, encountering many students puzzling over the waltz being held in September and not October.

Regardless of its origins, Oktoberfest has been a great commercial success: 6.3 million people visit Oktoberfest annually and spend 1.110 Mio Euro. They cause 1,615 police operations and drink 7.3 million liters of beer. As far as I know, our Oktoberfest luckily did not cause public safety interventions of any kind. Apart from 1813 (war with Napoleon), 1854 (the cholera epidemic that killed 7,370, including the king's mother Therese whose wedding started the tradition), 1866 (Prussian-Austrian wars), 1873 (cholera), 1914-1918, 1923 (hyperinflation), 1939-1945 (World War II), 2020 and 2021 (Covid), the Oktoberfest in Munich has been held every year since its inception in 1810. Even though St. John's Oktoberfest might not come close to this impressive record, rest assured, it will – according to tradition – return next year.

{CAMPUS EVENTS}

Oktoberfest Photos!

photos by Liz Dowdy '23



Finds from the Archives

St. John's Coffee Shop circa 1950

A lively bunch of students communing in the coffee shop to eat, drink, smoke, and discuss. Isolated students carrying out their own studies, or grabbing their goods and then running off to their own business, are not spotted here. Does this version of the coffee shop strike you as superior to the coffee shop of today? Would you like something like it to return? Are you happy with the shop as it stands?—Write in and tell us!



Student's Playing Baseball on Back Campus , McDowell Hall and Smokestack in the Background circa 1941

There is a contingent among the student body who believe that we ought to play baseball at some point in the year. Whenever the conversation is brought up, one problem is always encountered: where? In this photo, we see one possible answer. Some may still worry for the windows of Randall, Campbell, and Mellon, but the lads of the photo are not even wearing gloves. They are all of one mind and under one command: the command to play ball.



The Exterior of Chase-Stone House under Construction

1963



Chase Stone under construction. I wonder if anybody has been taking pictures of Mellon?

This week's *Finds* are once again sourced from the submissions of senior Sachin Stanislaus. Everyone give it up for Sachin! If you would like to be applauded like Sachin, consider submitting your own finds to us at sjca.gadfly@gmail.com.

Friday Night Lectures

Freshman

Plutarch's *Swarm*, Joe Macfarland, 2017, Christopher. B. Nelson Lecture

Plato's *Theory of Ideas*, Eva Brann, 1979

Aporia on the woman question in Plato's Republic, Mary Townsend, 2019

Sophomore

Vergil's Aeneid and Augustine's Confessions: Reading, Writing, Being Human, Sarah Ruden, 2020

Junior

Hiding behind Geometry: Analysis and Synthesis in Descartes and Spinoza, Joshua Parens, 2021

Leibniz's Monadology and the philosophical foundations of non-locality in quantum mechanics, James Beall, 2015

Senior

Gender, Intersectionality, and Marx's Value Theorys, Sarah Vitale, 2021

Discernment of the good : on Michelangelo and Kierkegaard, Anthony Eagan, 2018

The telos of Kierkegaard's Fear and Trembling, Richard McCombs, 2016

A Reflection on Athletics at St. John's College

Leah Lasell

In 2006 after the birth of our first child, Madeleine, Mr. Lasell and I decided that we should attend our first Guardians basketball game with her. Madeleine was sleeping in her baby carrier and since she was so young, we assumed she would just sleep right through the game. But those buzzers are loud, so she woke up and wanted to be held. At some point in the middle of the game, Mr. Lasell was already on the court, and the captains asked if I could go in. I needed to hand Madeleine off to someone to watch. I looked down the bench, there were four or five students there, and then there was one more student, Mr. G.

Imagine the student on campus that would be most awkward holding a baby, then make them sweaty, smelly, and slippery from a vigorous half of Guardians basketball. Now imagine handing them your six-week-old. That is what I did. He stammered. He tried to give the baby back. The baby tilted. I ran onto the court before Mr. G's protests were louder than Madeleine's. Like the children in the Republic, she needed to be held not just by Grandmas, but by Guardians.

Why did I hand Madeleine to Mr. G? I don't know. (And believe me, I asked myself that on the way home!) But in that moment, it felt right. We were all out there pushing our limits in the physical world, trying to do things with our bodies that we didn't quite know how to do: *pan thumos*, *ou techne!* (The motto works equally well for parenting, by the way.) Intramurals at St. John's give many students the opportunity to find out how alien our bodies can feel and slowly make them feel less alien as we learn new skills. Usually, we do this by throwing a basketball, kicking a soccer ball, or tossing a frisbee, but sometimes it might be holding a tutor's crying newborn. By doing this we learn how to situate our own bodies in space and with respect to others, we learn how to get open for a pass, dodge an elbow, juke a defender, shoulder someone off a ball, take a hit, assert one's physical position, cradle a ball and occasionally a baby.

We also learn how objects move in the world, how balls spin, how objects fly, how objects fall to the ground, and how the traction on the ground affects one's speed. In

Galileo's Two Chief World Systems he has his interlocutors call up countless experiences with moving objects. Galileo's experiments are based on recollected experiences of a lifetime of playing: hoops, bocce, soccer, spinning, throwing, and catching balls. One of the few biographical facts that we now know about Galileo as a child is that for his 9th birthday, he received a soccer ball. Evidently, he put it to good use.

Thanks to Title 9, I grew up in an era where there were ample opportunities for female bodied athletes. My high-school and college had as many opportunities for me as it did for males. Recently, I had a conversation with a Johnnie from Korea and asked him what it was like in Korea. His sense is that girls don't have nearly the same opportunities in Korea as they do here. I'd love to hear from other international students, what was it like where you grew up? Did your high school support everyone's athletic interests?

Unfortunately, as an adult, the opportunities for female-bodied athletes to play are much smaller than they are for males. At the local gym, there is pick-up, but there are no women. Occasionally, I've been able to join a co-ed league. Even if there are rules about how many women are on the court or field, if the game is on the line, the women will rarely see the ball. When women do see the ball, the older men and better athletes who have learned how to play recreational co-ed will modify their play for the women, giving them a bit of space to do a move to get their jump shots off; the young guys with less experience, the ones who are trying to prove themselves, will slide tackle a woman in the open field or slam the ball down into her face as they block her jump shot. I appreciate both, though the former leaves me a bit chagrined and the latter a bit angry.

Over the last ten years or so, I've had the opportunity to play at St. John's in the Intramural league. I do okay at basketball and handball, at least in the B quarters. Here a former varsity basketball player who once trained to be a professional women's baseball player, can keep up with men and even occasionally outshine a player who hasn't done a lot of sports before. On the soccer field, the story is a bit

more disappointing. I'm simply not fast enough and don't kick hard enough to go head-to-head with the players who dominate Intramural soccer. If I am dribbling the ball in the open field, a young man will catch up with me and steal the ball. This is a (near) certainty. On the soccer field, I accept that while I am a good athlete and I have worked hard at developing my soccer skills, I am also a female bodied person with some of the differentiation in ability that goes with that. I have enjoyed almost every minute of playing in adult co-ed leagues and Intramurals, but they are not the level-playing field that Title 9 cultivated and now protects for female bodied persons.

Kunai soccer gives me an additional opportunity to be the athlete that I worked hard to become. Here I have a chance to keep control of the ball, to do a cool move and fake someone out, to step into a challenge, and maybe, just

maybe, get a chance to score. It has been a blast to come out and play over the last few weeks with the community of young women, womxn, and non-cis men. I still get beat, but at Kunai I am beat because I am facing a better athlete and not because of my sex.

Madeleine is now 15. She now has three siblings each of whom have spent hours on the sidelines of St. John's athletic events. Madeleine and Penelope have both played Intramurals and Kunai and enjoy coming out when they can. Oscar and Hugo are still too young, but they like talking about thawing permafrost, Pokemon, and electrical experiments with anyone who is willing to listen on the sidelines. Both of our daughters are athletes. Our sons are too, if you count chess and Rubik's cube solving. But all of them, if they choose to come to St. John's, will have an opportunity to play sports. I love that about our school.



All Photos are from the Digital Archives, see the back cover for more information.

Sunrise on The Severn: A Partial Picture of Rowing

Jordan Kammeyer

It's 5:55am. The long, straight sidewalk to the boathouse is illuminated by the glowing heads of the St. John's street lamps. The light just reaches the swathes of fog on the soccer field, and I can see dark figures cutting across the damp grass. There are a few brisk walkers along the path in front of me. I, too, move quickly, both to get warm and to shake off sleep, the memory of my cozy bed still fresh in my mind. Reaching the boathouse, I descend the splintery wooden stairs and enter the brightly lit room with boats and oars lining the walls and ceiling. The worn wooden floor is already covered with people stretching. If the walk in the cold air didn't wake me up, this place of early morning energy certainly does. I go up to the whiteboard, move the magnetic popsicle stick with my name on it from "not here" to "here," and begin stretching with the team. The number of us depends on the day: sometimes there are as few as ten or twenty and sometimes there are close to fifty of us. The latter is more often the case at this early date, when the horde of eager novices hasn't yet been whittled down by the hardships of rowing. Their hands are not yet blistered, the dock is not yet frost-covered, and the novelty of the task and the hour still motivates them to wake up when all of campus except a lone Public Safety officer is asleep.

The moon is gleaming low and bright in the dark sky when we get out onto the water. It lightens as we take a warm-up lap on the Creek, the little twig of water connecting to a branch of the Severn River that our boathouse shares with the Navy. A heron flies by, and a glance into the water reveals several delicate and ghostly white jellyfish. Our coxswain, cramped in the hollow at the stern, is the only person who can see forward as the rest of us move ourselves backwards. We make it under the bridge through the just wide enough opening, oars almost scraping against the columns. As we pass through, the clack of the oars hitting the water echoes against the concrete surface above and around us.

After passing the stately Navy boathouse with its fake swans on their dock and going under two more bridges, we finally reach the River. Our long row starts here, and on a good day, we make it past the Route 50 bridge with ample

time to return. By now, the sunrise is in full force. The sky is lit with a pink warmth that makes the evening's golden hour seem gaudy in comparison. The water is an expanse of black undulations like hammered metal in motion, each indent dipping and lifting and flowing, each soft peak touched by the color of the sky. Our strokes work with the water, the oars submitting to the natural flow of forward-and-back as we skim along the surface with grace and speed. The shell makes a narrow, shallow cut in the water that leaves a neat wake, leaving a barely discernible trail moments after. Maybe all of this is waxing poetic, but the activity of rowing begs this sort of attention and appreciation for your own actions and surroundings.

This little description barely scratches the surface of the experience of crew, but the beauty of the sport and the early morning practices is something that too few Johnnies get to experience. Of course, it's also not beautiful in certain respects—unless you happen to find raw blisters and sore tailbones beautiful. Despite the physical and mental challenge of pursuing the perfect stroke, the experience of using pure bodily power to guide a vessel across water is a unique display of elegance—well-worth getting out of bed at an ungodly hour.



Sunrise on the Severn by Tim Mewmaw

Like St. John's, Like Seminar

Amos Elwell

I invite you to join me in considering the intramural game as a physical seminar.

Seminar, the mental one, might be described as two hours where all Johnnies sit around a table and discuss a text that (hopefully) everyone has read. It might more aptly be described, though, as a communal synthesis of individual readings. This individualized framing is produced because of our different worldviews and experiences—reading any book, each person in the room is going to view it in light of the things they have experienced, which vary drastically among participants. Thus, the challenge of the seminar, from my perspective, is to, as a team, consider many interpretations in the struggle for communal understanding. This understanding is not homogenous, nor should it be. Circumstantially, the seminar must agree about, say, a framework, but it is not the case that everyone in the room must understand the text in the same way as one another. What is more important is understanding, then politely agreeing or disagreeing with, other's interpretations made in light of their unique experiences.

Intramurals, the physical seminar (or so I propose), has much the same challenge. While in seminars we might encounter folks with an extensive knowledge of the book's subject matter, in intramurals we find folks who have played and excelled at a certain sport throughout their life. What, then, am I to do as someone who knows little,

or plays comparatively poorly? This is answered most easily when we consider neither seminars nor intramurals to be demonstrations of individual proficiency. The best seminar is not one in which one individual makes major breakthroughs that are significant only to them; rather, I say, it is the one where the group progresses furthest (and there are many debatable ways of measuring this progress). The best intramural game, then, is not when one individual scores every point or has the best game of their career—I would go as far as to characterize this as the worst possible way of gauging intramural success. Instead, I suggest we view intramurals from the team's perspective: how much progress is a captain inciting in their teammates? How much growth is coming from the most novice player? How excited are people to be around one another, to be on a team together? How many people got to touch the ball or meaningfully contribute to this game? We only set ourselves up for frustration and disappointment when we

consider the intramural game as a stage set for individual domination or display of skill.

If seminar or intramural games are routinely disappointing or frustrating for you, I suggest approaching your next game or seminar with the following statements in mind. The exercise of the seminar classroom is to see how communally a group can further their individual and collective understandings. The exercise of the intramural game is to see how interactively, considerately, inclusively a group can play. Give it a try.



Discus Thrower, John J.A. Murphy

A Reflection on Freedom in *Paradise Lost*

Luke Briner

Is there greater freedom in obedience or disobedience in Milton's *Paradise Lost*?

What needs to be laid down before anything else as we attempt to answer this question is the fact that Milton's God has endowed every one of his creatures with perfect and unalienable freedom of will: "[f]reely they stood who stood," he explains to his Son, "and fell who fell" (III.102). It's this freedom of the will that gives rise to the very dichotomy between obedience and rebellion, as well as their moral significance, since it's only by the existence of a genuine ability to will one thing rather than another that agency could be ascribed to the actor. Moreover, God goes on to explain that, even if he has foreknowledge of the future, it "had no influence" (III.118) on the fault of those that have rebelled, and so necessarily implies the same holds for those who persevere in obedience; commitment to either decision is entirely up to the individual, and therefore the consequences of either decision themselves belong solely to the individual.

We can now examine the natures and circumstances of both obedience and rebellion throughout the epic. Obedience consists simply in the active alignment of one's own will to the will of God; and this is the condition of the angels in Heaven, and of Adam and Eve before their Fall. Since all things proceed from the creative power of God, and since God has a particular intent for each of his creations individually and in kind, this conformity to his will is in practice simply conforming to the nature that he created us with and intends us to keep. Disobedience, conversely, consists in the active contrariety of one's will to the will of God, occurring whenever a desire or passion for something other than God becomes stronger than the will to follow it. This pursuit of another object other than God's will is the basis of rebellion, and consists specifically in jealousy of God's Son in Satan's case (V.654-662) and in the desire for pleasure, praise, and knowledge in Eve's case (IX).

Now the consequence of obedience is vast and unending happiness, while the consequence of disobedience is a

life filled with suffering and despair. The angels obedient in Heaven are said to experience Beatific joy simply by experiencing God as he resides and acts in his "pure Empyrean" (III.57) within a transcendently lovely Heaven (see I.684, III.61-62), thus showing that Milton's God must be seen as the Supreme Good. Likewise, Eden was originally created as an incomparably beautiful "Heaven on Earth" (IV.208), and Adam and Eve themselves in their newly-created state were a "[b]lest pair" (IV.774), taking idyllic joy simply in worshiping and serving their blessed Creator. Hell and the post-Fall Earth, conversely, are nothing more than degenerations from these primordial conditions brought about as the inevitable punishments for disobedience. The suffering experienced there, however, while on some level ordained by God himself, is just as if not more profoundly seen to come from the sense of regret and shame which naturally arose from that disobedience, as is seen in Satan's agonizing self-doubt and remorse at having ever rebelled in the first place (IV.18-113, IV.846-849, IX.455-493, etc.), and Adam's lament at having freely chosen to so flagrantly contradict God's command for him (X.720-860).

From this alone, it's not difficult to see the faultiness of the logic behind disobedience against God. Since Milton represents his God as the Supreme Good, the pursuit of any end other than or in contradiction to the nature or will of God would be nonsensical and self-harming. Such a pursuit would be so nonsensical and self-harming, in fact, that it would denote a real sort of unfreedom on the part of the actor. Since, as Plotinus observes, "[e]ffort is free once it is toward a fully recognized good," while "servitude lies in being powerless to move towards one's good, being debarred from the preferred path in a menial obedience" (Enneads, VI.8.4), the lessening of one's own participation in the Supreme Good must be understood as a very real kind of subjection. But this is exactly the situation that Satan and the rebellious Adam and Eve find themselves in, and so they reveal themselves in their disobedience not to be heroic revolutionaries or noble knowledge-seekers, but ignorant children who have tragically thwarted their own

ultimate happiness by the pursuit of inferior goods at the expense of the absolutely superior.

We also don't need to trouble ourselves here with the question of whether free will really exists when all our actions are dictated by the pursuit of the Good in this way; again, we are assured by God that he "formed them [his creations] free, and free they must remain,/Till they enthrall themselves" (III.124-125), but, since God is the supreme Good, we're still safe to think of an action which would deprive them of that Good as unfree in precisely that sense of self-enthrallment as a result of a rash, ignorant, but wholly self-willed decision.

For the same reason, we must understand obedience to God, either in the case of the loyal angels or Adam and Eve before their Fall, as a realization of freedom, in that choosing to follow his supremely good will is precisely the means by which their most perfect happiness is attained. Since, again, God has made all his creatures wholly free to make whatever decisions they will, the decision of those creatures to persevere in obedience to him who intended such indescribable goodness, beauty, and love for them, is quite as free as any other decision that they could make. In fact, we should actually see those who persist in a perfect state of obedience as being freer than otherwise, since obedience to the will of the Supreme denotes a clarity of vision and will on the part of the obedient one, and, in attaining beatific communion with that Supreme by precisely that means, they achieve their end more perfectly than in any other case.

It follows necessarily from all of this that the idea of disobedience being in any way "more free" than obedience is textually and philosophically incoherent. Not only does obedience to God in no way contradict freedom, but, on the contrary, the two concepts are fundamentally intertwined and complimentary: freedom is the necessary prerequisite for obedience, and obedience is itself the means by which we achieve the supreme Freedom of communion with the Supreme Good. Therefore, those that have persevered in their obedience to God are not only as free as the rebels, but actually far freer, since it's through their obedience that they preserve their union with the all-transcendent Perfection, and, in doing so, earn a Beatitude that "no eye has seen, nor ear heard" (1 Cor. 2.9). Conversely, the disobedient have become miserably unfree, even when rebelling in the name of "freedom," since they have in doing so deprived themselves of their own Good by the senseless pursuit of inferior idols.

This, we might venture, is exactly what Milton wants to communicate to us: on one hand, the profound connection between freedom and obedience, and, on the other,

the ruinous consequences of the misunderstanding and misuse of freedom in the pursuit of inferior ends or in the sophomoric, idiotic rejection of obedience itself. Let us, then, conclude as Adam finally does, that "to obey is best" (XII.561).



The Rebuke of Adam and Eve

Pick your Poison

Helen Felbek

As a previous writer in the Gadfly has posited: “At St. John’s, nicotine usage—cigarettes, more to the point—is an oft undertaken habit. A lifestyle to some. A cultural flashpoint to others. School spirit to many.” While I personally cannot fathom what reasons would compel students to put their health at risk (it is probably not about wanting to fit the stereotypical “sensitive philosophy student” trope), I do have to admit that I am biased in the sense that I have never smoked in my life and probably will never take it up. So, it may come unsurprisingly to the reader that this opinion piece is clearly anti-smoking. But it is anti-smoking for probably different reasons than you are expecting to read.

We are all adults here, in a country that is the epitome of liberty – or so it claims – thus, it should obviously be up to each individual to conduct some sort of “cost-benefit analysis” for themselves and decide to take up the habit of smoking or not. It is also each person’s individual choice to decide on how they want to indulge in their habit. Well, the school’s smoking policy is limiting the options – at least to a certain extent – by “banning” smokers from the quad and forcing them to less inviting spots on campus, such as the “fern lounge” or whatever it is called these days.

But people still decide to ignore the admin’s rules and smoke on the quad and around campus anyways, and while the rebellious teenager in me understands the urge to show an authority figure that their threats (of fines, suspension from the residence halls, and suspension from campus) are not taken seriously, the fresh-air fanatic remains annoyed at

having to walk through a cloud of cigarette fumes.

On a personal level, I am sure I would find a way to get around the smoke and breathe freely, but I can’t help but notice that it seems close to impossible to have a conversation on this topic, which is puzzling to me since the polity prides itself on applying the seminar-style discussion to non-program topics. Non-smokers who complain about the negative externalities of consumption or even dare

to question the general culture surrounding smoking on campus are easily portrayed as uneasy killjoys who are in league with the administration.

Maybe the reason for this inability to have an open-ended conversation about smoking culture has something to do with the fact that some polity members are addicted to nicotine. Perhaps it is also connected to the hubris that some young people seem to have when it comes to their own bodies: “Oh, this substance is potentially harmful and addictive? No worries, I’ve got it under control. I could stop if I wanted to!” Just because we are privileged to enjoy a liberal arts education does not mean we are above the trap of failing to examine

our own weaknesses or lapses

in judgment that we so readily condemn in others. It is basically the same problem that we encounter when it comes to an unhealthy diet or lack of sport. I definitely fall into the trap from time to time, especially when tempted by the sugary vegan chocolate chip cookies offered in the dining hall. I could also imagine that if the administration makes smokers feel like persona non grata, it is understandable why the fronts on either side are entrenched and no dialogue



Smoking Peasant by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner

seems possible. With the risk of sounding like a full-blown relativist, it is also, frankly speaking, quite hard to stay fact-based and “rational” when it comes to questions of tastes and preferences.

A question beyond tastes and preferences, though, is the environment. Tobacco plants are mostly grown in monocultures and require massive use of water, large-scale deforestation, and the over-use of pesticides, which usually also tend to lead to contamination of the air and water systems. In addition, a single cigarette contains many harmful or even poisonous substances like tar and nicotine. One littered cigarette has the potential to pollute up to 50 liters (13.2 gallons) of groundwater. This is the rough equivalent of flushing the toilet 8.25 times! When confused for food, the butts pose a risk to wildlife (or in the case of our campus, the bunny rabbits and concerningly tame squirrels).

But what about e-cigarettes/e-vapes? They have been advertised as a cleaner alternative to traditional cigarettes and often do not even contain nicotine. But that does not mean that they are less harmful to the body and the environment. All e-cigarettes or vapes have a battery that is needed to vaporize the liquid. These batteries are usually lithium-ion batteries, meaning they contain rare earth lithium. The same one that is needed for smartphones or electric cars. Even if you do not care about the precarious working conditions and breaches of environmental laws under which lithium is mined, you should at least consider what it means to throw away an e-cigarette. Most e-cigarette batteries contain up to 0.15 grams of lithium. In comparison, an average cell phone battery contains 2-3 grams of lithium. This means that the lithium used in 13-20 disposable e-cigarettes is equal to one cell phone battery. This is alarming since lithium is becoming increasingly rare and is crucial to fuel the “green economy.” Most single-use e-cigarettes have a battery that could technically be charged but is just designed without a charging outlet. Additionally, e-cigarettes are most often disposed of in nature or in domestic waste, which, while more convenient than proper recycling facilities, means that the lithium contained in the batteries cannot be salvaged and reused. In the UK alone, two disposable e-cigarettes are being thrown away per second. This equals approximately 10 tons of lithium ending up in landfills. This would be enough to make circa 1200 electric car batteries.

Another aspect of Johnnie's smoking culture that must be reckoned with is the fact that much time at St. John's is spent leisurely in discussion, often around a table on the quad or enjoying the sunshine around town. Situations like these are where many Johnnie smokers got started and to this day light up. So, how are the dangers of nicotine consumption

and the Great Books program related? Well first, why do we read the so-called Great Books? This is most likely a question that every single student in the 85-year-old history of the “New Program” has asked themselves (maybe even while smoking). Ultimately, the answer to this question is unique to each person, but I am going to suggest to you the conclusion that I have reached: I believe that the program is supposed to have an effect on the “soul” of the students and therefore have a lasting impact on their behavior, their life, and their future. This, of course, does not mean that the program automatically makes everyone a “good person” (What does “good” even mean?!). Far from it. It should, however, mean that everyone has a willingness to examine and reevaluate their stances and engage in open-ended conversations on all sorts of topics – including topics that hit closer to home. This might be initially uncomfortable but is in my opinion absolutely necessary.

I know that smoking is not a problem unique to this campus and that the ignoring and breaking of rules surrounding smoking could probably be applied to many other things such as underage drinking or cannabis consumption. The great books and this very expensive liberal arts education seem, however, obsolete if we are unable to synthesize what we do in class with what we do outside of class. I think it would very much be in the spirit of the program, as well as the college, if we could return to having a conversation about controversial topics such as recreational design and what kind of culture should be conserved and celebrated at the college – and for what reasons. I get people who haven't chosen St. John's just because of the Great Books program but also because of its size, social makeup, location, traditions, history, clubs, tutor system, parties, and maybe even its student's affinities for drugs, alcohol, and nicotine. But I don't think that critically examining dangerous traditions is going to send any of us packing to any other Great Books program like those at UChicago, Columbia, or Hillsdale.

In terms of protecting the environment, it would be great if we could bring back ashtrays on campus. But in case this is too much of a PR disaster for the college, I (and the bunny rabbits) would be delighted if smokers could be more mindful when it comes to cigarette waste and might consider carrying a portable ashtray (Buy it on Amazon, if you must...). And those few e-cigarette smokers, perhaps consider getting refillable and rechargeable ones. The best thing for the environment (apart from quitting) would be the following: reduce your consumption. Don't switch to equally harmful alternatives. And don't defend your harmful addictions with the simple claim that smoking belongs to the college, because the true core of the program is the texts and the discussion-based learning, not the cigarettes.

Representing Student Interest

by El'ad Nichols-Kaufman '25

{ON THE DC'S ROLE IN CAMPUS COMMUNITY?}

The campus is once again embroiled in vigorous discourse on what is in the student interest, and what the college administration, and the students, should do about it. These arguments are not new, touching subjects both superficial, like the alcohol and smoking policy, and serious, like accessibility, inclusion and environmental impact. They have lost none of their vigor in the past few years, reaching every corner of campus, from boisterous complaints in the dining hall to decorous discussion in SCI forums, from tutor discussions to administration conferences, and even to the much reviled Delegate Council.

In the last issue, Junior Delegate Daniel Nathan published an article claiming that the Delegate Council, or DC, has been entirely deaf to student discourse about administrative changes over the past few years. The administration has overstepped itself, he argues, and its “presence threatens to drown out the freedom” of the campus. If the DC listened to student interest, they would stop the process in which so-called “organic, authentic culture is scrubbed and digitized,” and take “responsibility to regain” some kind of “freedom.” This argument seems to be based on two assumptions that seem rather problematic: one, that the current St. John’s culture is somehow inferior to what it has been in the past because of the administration’s actions, and second, that the current Delegate Council has somehow been complicit in this. Not only are these assumptions problematic, but they also seem to overlook the real issues facing this campus, which the DC and administration have failed to act on sufficiently.

I have only been at St. John’s for a little over one full year, and so I suppose I am one of “those that came after” and thus cannot properly understand St. John’s, but I find many of the protestations against the “slights to the intangible” that the administration has supposedly been using to squash student freedom silly, and frankly, to be distractions to issues that more directly affect our lives as members of the

polity. The complaints about smoking are an easy example: no one has the right to give others lung cancer, and the idea that the administration is somehow taking away freedom by prohibiting smoking on much of campus is ridiculous. Complaints on the alcohol policy seem similar: like it or not, the drinking age in this country is 21, and the idea that the administration’s compliance with this law, and thus not allowing free alcohol at parties or requiring IDs at New Years, is destroying college culture is strange. Is our polity so dependent that we cannot function as a community of learners without free alcohol? Likewise, the idea that Mellon’s renovations or school sponsored extracurriculars are bad for campus culture seems to follow the same thread of thought. This thought, which lies at the core of Mr. Nathan’s essay, seems to stem from the idea that any action of the administration creates a culture not directly arising from the students, and thus destroys the “vibrancy of the discourse, along with the depths of meaning we find in each other and within the texts.”

This is patently untrue. The administration’s actions all contribute to campus culture, whether intentionally or not. If the administration allows smoking on the quad, they are encouraging one kind of culture, while if they prohibit it, they are building another. Neither is more authentic, with more of a claim to “true student interests.” These issues, while certainly contributing to how our community sees itself, are not an imposition of values from above, but rather an example of how the administration prompts, responds and reacts to ongoing student discourse, and how our community sees itself in light of these decisions.

The DC has been very engaged with these issues in the past few years. I remember budget hearings derailed for up to an hour over arguments about what the administration really means with the new alcohol policies, or what we can do about their limitations on parties or open mics, and even some discussion of free donuts. Our members are



What St. John's Makes Me Do

by Naina Wagh '24

students, who have the same concerns as any other students, and participate in the same discussions and arguments. The problem with the way the DC operates is not the lack of discussion on issues that students care about, but rather the lack of meaningful action on the issues that actually impact the polity most.

A good example of this is the problems with accessibility on campus. Most of the buildings on campus are not ADA accessible, and those that are have other practical obstacles to mobility. I've often heard students complaining about these problems, and the lack of administrative action on them. In a recent interview with members of the administration, I heard that there are many conversations on the topic, but not much immediate, concrete action planned due to a lack of funds and an ignorance of what practical steps can be taken. This is a place where the DC can truly take responsibility. I hope to lead an effort to reach out to people with mobility issues, identify the specific difficulties with each building, and reach out to the administration with specific and detailed requests for practical, actionable changes, rather than vague declarations on the loss of campus culture.

This kind of practical action is necessary if the DC wants to make itself more than the glorified budget committee it is currently known as. The DC has taken actions on the things that really matter to students, both small and large, before, like President Tom Ni's effort to keep gender neutral bathrooms in Mellon, and needs to do more of this to truly take up a positive role in campus discourse. There are so many issues facing the campus, from the aforementioned accessibility issues to those of inclusion and equity, to changes made to the program, or the lack of housing on campus, which could be addressed with a more action minded, and community aware, Delegate Council. This is the kind of real change we need to see on the DC, which only needs a bit more commitment from its members to be realized.

St John's is making me such a brilliant sophist! Not only can I lie to others, but even to myself to serve my end. I'm not sure what that end is. I came to desire to seek truth, but now I seek the appearance of seeking truth. I think if my desire remained honest, I wouldn't mind seeming foolish to others, as long as I held the belief that I was succeeding in finding something true. But that desire has been altered, partly because every new text I read, I use to understand myself and partly because I am surrounded by people who have that same desire for truth. As much as we claim that St. John's is a bubble—marching to the beat of its own drum—it is merely a reflection of the “real world” the college sets itself apart from.

Hypocrisy festers in the ideals of “no competition” and self-containment. I find myself in a competition to be noticed by my tutors and peers. There are no grades or exams to quantify my worth, but the very public displays of engagement with the texts still require me to compete. When I make a clever remark I will think, “I am better than you—expressing my thoughts is sufficient, because to be humble is to be wise.” I enjoy the silent agreement of my peers and tutors. I spend hours trying to understand that Euclid proposition, rejoicing in the pleasure that thinking brings to me. I distinguish myself from anyone else who doesn't enjoy Euclid as much as I do.

In glorifying the Program as the means to seek truth, I realize that I have learnt not to fully disagree with the authors I dislike. Aristotle. Aquinas. I suppose it is good that I

have developed that sense of looking at a text objectively. When I read over and over again how women are inferior, I put my womanhood aside to fully “understand” what is being said. I engage with or simply don't respond to bigoted opinions in order to seem objective. I explore whether emotions are more superior to rationality while setting my emotions aside. I suppress my rage and sometimes even forget that it is there.

I cannot wholeheartedly invest myself in any one aspect of St. John's—mathematics, study of language, theology, etc. I only learn enough to slowly develop a personal language with which I comprehend myself and categorize my small world into universals and specifics. I like to think that with each year I am changing for the better, learning better to seek truth—but that one kid I found annoying during Freshman year, I still find annoying in Junior year. I attribute growth only to myself. I am a liar. You are a hypocrite. Maybe we are both ugly. Maybe all this truth seeking is self-flattering. After all, “I seek truth” is a pretty bold claim, especially when making it to oneself.



The Devil's Darling by Thomas Rowlandson

Breaking Down the Archetypes of Johnnie Men's Fashion (and their implications)

Kai Gyorki

I am a firm believer that what you wear tends to be a pretty good indicator of who you are. As we get dressed for seminar we beg the question, 'am I the kind of person who will wear a Lil Peep national tour t-shirt from 2017 in front of Mr. Schulman?' The answer alone can say a good deal about us. Naturally, as I looked around the quad I saw that mens fashion at St. Johns tended to fall into camps. Not as simple as preppy, or jocks, no far more nuanced than that, and at the same time maybe less nuanced as well. I spent the past week breaking down the major archetypes of Johnnie men's fashion, and categorizing what it may mean about the person wearing it.

The Dark Academia Johnnie



A preferred uniform of Johnnie men, they call it dark academia, I call it over priced vintage slacks with their dad's old sweater. Throw some loafers on and he is ready to go and paint the town a muted gray! This brand of Johnnie can be seen drinking black coffee, smoking pipe tobacco, and explaining Proust to a somewhat terrified freshman girl on the quad.

The High School Uniform Johnnie



I'm not sure if they decided that their Catholic boys' school uniform is the height of fashion, or if they just never thought about it in the first place, but one thing I do know is that rain or shine, Monday morning or Friday night, this Johnnie will be wearing a polo shirt and a choice between khaki shorts or pants. Do their boat shoes give them super speed? That can be the only explanation for why they always beat you to class. They know Latin, they finished half the year's seminar readings over the summer. Unfortunately they will probably use that as an excuse to talk over you in class. They can be found almost nowhere except the dining hall, library, and in an argument next to the coffee station after seminar.

The School Swag Johnnie



This Johnnie is constantly adorned in school merch. Drinking water? It's out of a school water bottle. Looking for their keys? On a school key chain. Is it starting to get chilly? Don't worry, he will offer you his SJC quarter zip. If he's an RA he's a good one, he always comes to soccer games, and he will genuinely care about winning. He's a bit weirded out by Madea, and does not understand the appeal of poetry. He probably would have enjoyed state school more, but somebody has to have school spirit. This Johnnie can be found drinking out of one of those fancy water bottles, and going for a run.

The Suddenly Shirtless Johnnie



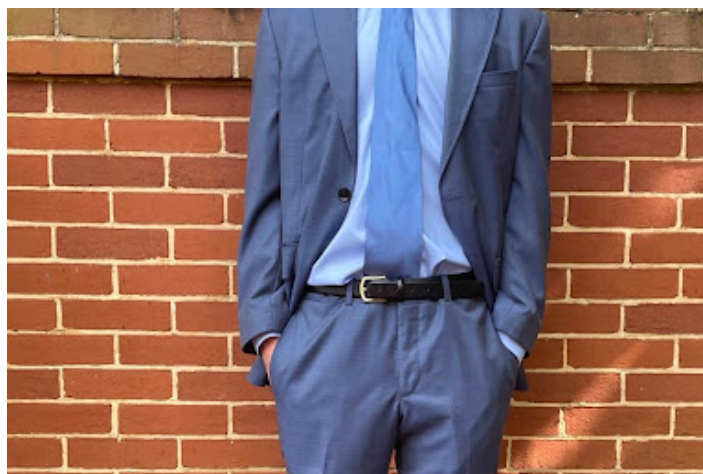
Why does this Johnnie exist? I do not have the answer to that. But he does, and I am not a fan. This Johnnie is a bone chilling addition to the quad on Friday night at 11:45 pm. He can be found standing alone staring out at the field or if he's getting crazy, wrestling someone on the ground.

The Ugh Johnnie

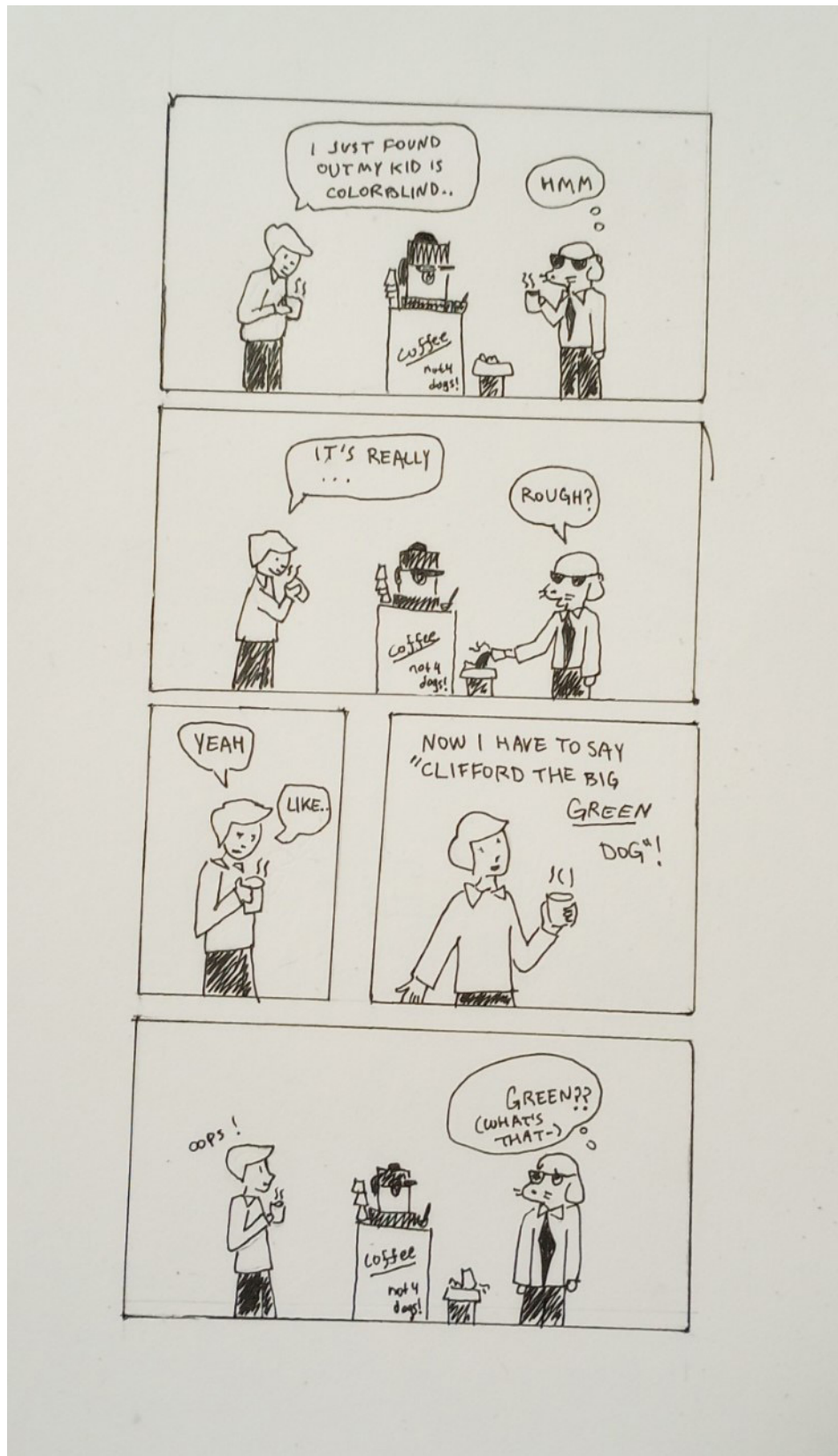


Maybe worse than any other Archetype listed, this Johnnie is one to be wary of. He can be identified by his many layers, wide legged pants, the mismatched jewelry that he clearly does not take off in between outfits, and occasionally, cracked nail polish that he absolutely asked a girl to do for him as a move of seduction. If you see him at a party, RUN. He will undoubtedly try to get you to listen to Alex G with him. He may seem like just any guy heading to mini, but there is something in his core that is rotten and scary. Whatever you do, don't listen to his sound cloud, that's how he gets you. He can be found walking to the smoking area, drinking before his 1pm class, and being incredibly emotionally unintelligent.

The Suit to Class Johnnie



This Johnnie's day to day wear includes a blazer. This archetype goes further than the precedence of high school uniform Johnnie, there is something sinister here. He won't just interrupt you in seminar, he is here to destroy your ego in class, his goal is to be a constant reminder of your inferiority. His actual affect however, is usually a reaction of mild annoyance. He knows all the dances at the waltz, he quotes readings we will not study for another year. He can be found making a woman tear her hair out in frustration, talking to tutors while they try to get to their cars, and I have to assume taking their suits to be dry cleaned.



Tamar Pinsky

THIS MONTH IN HOROSCOPES—SEPT 2022

*Madame T***ARIES**

(March 21 - April 19)

Spooky season is upon us, Aries. Time to pick a Halloween costume. What will you be? There are endless options... Will it be scantily clad Socrates or a raunchy Elizabeth Bennet? Each layer of polyester brings with it a new personality. The one you have on right now is working well, but for Halloween you can really let loose. All those years ago you left a trail of viscera out of Nebraska, but your new face as a young philosophy major in Annapolis has thrown everyone off your trail. Where once a full grown, grizzled man with a body count of 19 stood, now stands a 20 year old lad who has much to learn about the nature of things. Isn't it funny? This Halloween you can be an escaped lunatic dressed as a Johnnie dressed as a gaping minion.

TAURUS

(April 20 - May 20)

Cleanse yourself. Drink the College Creek water. Become pure.

GEMINI

(May 21 - June 20)

You're very lonely, Gemini. You feel very isolated in your old age, the weather makes your joints ache. Your body feels hollow and brittle. You sit outside and watch for storms in your solitude. The newscasters and tornado warnings can't predict what's coming, not like you can. Maybe that's why you always end up feeling alone. This curse disguised as a blessing drives people away. If you didn't have to be cursed with the ability to predict the weather maybe you'd have a family. Your wife would come back, you could even play with your son again. Damn that wizard and his monkey's paw dealings... Maybe join some clubs, it's a great way to meet new people.

CANCER

(June 21 - July 22)

Homespun holidays ahead, Cancer! Your loved ones might be overwhelmed by your seasonal needs but fear not- a cocoon is just what you need to keep them close and comfy- and you're just the crafty crab to do it! As we all know, your innate ability to shoot streams of silk from a secret hole that all Cancers are born with will help you make a perfect, snuggly swathe for your besties this fall. It is a cheap, heartfelt gift that everyone is sure to love as the temperature drops! Your gift will let you wrap up your friends and family in a manner that will keep them very cozy, and close to you, forever. And ever. And ever.

LEO

(July 23 - Aug 22)

Beware the creek this season, Leo, lest you encounter nautical peril... The water is vast and cold. There has never been something so uncaring as to whether you live or die. The inky blackness is full of worms and small fish (maybe even jellyfish?) Eventually you will also be full of worms (again, maybe even jellyfish). This acknowledgement of your watery grave does not change the outcome, Leo. The water calls to you, an ancient beast sings her songs to you, luring you in. You've managed to fight it for this long, but she's growing stronger- more persuasive. She tells you such awful things, she's lived through mass extinction and she'll do so again. You are the only one who is aware of the countdown, Leo. She won't tell anyone else. Maybe it's because she's afraid, maybe it's because she likes to watch your panic. Let's stay away from the creek for a while.

VIRGO

(Aug 23 - Sept 22)

You've been waiting for Fall, Virgo. Finally, time for sweaters. Finally you are safe in your shell, covered from the ever critical eyes of your peers in a veneer of cashmere and denim. Pick some apples, post pictures of leaves, no one can judge your mandatory fun time when you're wearing your silly little boots. Everyone loves that you enjoy things on a schedule. Everyone loves that you try to force them onto this same arbitrary schedule. All the warmth that everyone around you deprives you of can be easily replicated by a \$6 coffee drink.

LIBRA

(Sept 23 - Oct 22)

Happy Birthday, Libra. Finally, you get to be the center of attention, and you don't even need to publicly air your relationship drama. Isn't it great to be celebrated? At least at a surface level, you're just now starting to realize maybe you don't like the attention... Maybe having everyone think about you all the time isn't a good thing... The walls have eyes here, Libra. You are so seen. You always have been. There are no secrets in a 300 year old building, the pipes groan under the weight of your sins.

SCORPIO

(Oct 23 - Nov 21)

Thus ends your Hot Girl Summer, Scorpio. That's ok, though. You're versatile, you're adaptable and hot and full of good things. Finally, time for Witchy Woman Winter. You'll peak here, after all, goth is trendy now. We won't mention that you bullied all the alternative kids in your high school, that's behind you. Besides, you helped them build character. Right now your Amazon™ fishnets overlaid with a Shein top embossed with the logo of famous goth band 'AC/DC' is the talk of the town.

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 22 - Dec 21)

The stars tell me you'll be meeting your dream woman soon, Sag! She's a strong feminine energy (maybe a water sign?) Based on the positioning of Venus, this will be a great romance, full of wonder and adoration. Mars' position relative to Saturn dictates that she'll be at least 7 feet tall, with great leathery wings spanning about 9" across. Her cloven hooves alert small mammals to her presence, and though they may try to run, they'll never be faster than her. Her empty goat-like eyes are as hypnotic as her teeth are dull, but don't be fooled, she has a hell of a bite. Many have met their end at her unhinged, dangling jaw, even more have barely escaped to tell the tale. Be open to meeting new people this month, Sag, you don't know when you'll finally meet the Pine Baroness of your dreams.

CAPRICORN

(Dec 22 - Jan 19)

The memories will fade soon, Capricorn. It won't always hurt, just for now. Eventually it will only sting. When you're reminded of it in the hum of a car going past your window, or the color green. There is a relief in knowing that wounds scar over with time. Just don't think too hard about the people who put them there. Thinking too hard is what got you here. These bars now hold you like she once did. Your patron smells this month are buckwheat and gasoline. They remind you of her, too. Everything seems to... At least she can walk free, even if it means you're due to ascend to the throne of wood and wire. The brine drips into your eyes and down your face before being absorbed by the fabric over your face. They'll flip the switch soon. An audience grows around you. Finally, maybe in the clutch of the electricity pumping through you, you'll be able to forget it.

AQUARIUS

(Jan 20 - Feb 18)

As we settle into the new semester, you're starting to notice something is a bit off with your living situation. Sure, your roommate is nice enough, you two are friendly, but something about that boy they keep bringing around just rubs you the wrong way. Maybe it's the way that they lurk outside your dorm till one of you lets him in, maybe it's his strong disdain for Italian food (I mean who doesn't like garlic bread?!?) It could be something about how he treats your roommate... They always tell you they had the most romantic date, moonlit walks, picnics by the water, and archives of old poems he's memorized. Who memorizes poems nowadays? Your roommate always gets back at odd hours, right before sunrise (despite you telling them MANY TIMES that you have a 9am, and the precious bit of sleep you get is not to be interrupted). And let's not ignore the hickeys your roommate is always flaunting. Something about that guy just really sucks.

PISCES

(Feb 19 - March 20)

The accident was years ago, Pisces. We're all hoping someday you'll move on. Please move on, we can't continue with you in this state. We promise we won't forget you. We'll see you in sunsets and in butterflies and in rainbows or whatever the hell else Wikipedia says the dearly departed appear to us as. Wikipedia didn't mention anything about this. There's a reason you're always cold to the touch, Pisces. The trail of ectoplasm that drips from your heels is becoming a real hazard. You appear to us only in mirrors and bodies of shallow water, it's getting more and more difficult to communicate. This is our last effort, the horoscope column of the school newspaper is our last resort before we have to start talking to priests.. You should really try talking through your unfinished business with a friend or therapist.

Polity Communications

Delegate Council Clarification

The DC would like to clarify the reference to 'the missing \$30,000 of allocated club funds' in the last Gadfly issue in Mr. Briggs' article on the reform party. DC had approved the full \$80k in expenditures for Fall 2021. However, we only acquired the receipts for about \$50k of the \$80k in expenses. Nonetheless, according to the signed checks and bank statements, we could account for \$80k. However, about \$30k did NOT have physical receipts to back them up. But, because we had the checks, we know who got paid and reimbursed, so there was a trail. Most importantly, we can guarantee that most of the money was spent by the clubs in the interest of the students.

Grace Songeun (Delegate Council Treasurer) '24

A Correction of the Editor's Ignorance

Hey Craig, who did the finds from the archive thing? It says they don't know why that tree is called the Liberty tree and to write them if you know, but there's no name. It's because it was the Annapolis Liberty Tree lol. Like the Liberty Tree in Boston. The Maryland Chapter of the Sons of Liberty met there before and during the revolution. I have more info if need be.

Sarah Thyer '25

PS. I (Craig Koch) normally write the captions for *Finds*, and I was happy to find out all I did about the liberty tree from Ms. Perkins and Ms. Thyer. The usual address to contact for anything related to the Gadfly is sjca.gadfly@gmail.com, though you may also always write me with any questions, corrections, or concerns (cekoch@sjc.edu). The emails of the managing editors may also be found below the table of contents on page 1 if you would like to contact them.

Gadfly Corrections

There was an error in the last issue of the Gadfly. The photos on pages 5, 18, and 19 were the work of Meliha Antony rather than Liz Dowdy, who was properly credited for the cover and the photos on page 7. This was corrected in the pdf that was sent out, but unfortunately the error stands in the print edition. As you'll see below, there was also an error in dating one of the photos in *Finds*. My apologies for the mistakes.

Craig Koch '23

From an Alum

Here's why it was called the Liberty Tree:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/pmextra/oct99/25/pmliberty25.html>. Graduations were held under the tree so it had extra significance for St. John's students.

Regarding the bookstore, that picture is from the 70s, not the 50s. My classmate, Mary-Hannah Jones, is seated on the couch. She started with the class of 1977 but graduated in 1978.

It was wonderful to see our class picture featured in the Gadfly. A bunch of us were on campus this past weekend for our 45th reunion, and we haven't changed a bit.

Julie Perkins '77



Danielle Lico, Norma Demleitner, and Joe Macfarland celebrate the opening of the health center, photo by Meliha Anthony '25



The beloved Arcadia, photographed by Ruby Miller '23



The Poet Virgil in a Basket by Lucas van Leyden

Photo details (From top left to the bottom right): Students Barrel Rolling on Back Campus during the First Real Olympics, 1951; Evan G. Canter, Eugene E. Wise III, Thomas E. Wischer, and Students Playing a Game of Tug of War during Reality, 1982; Barbara Oosterhout, Sarah Covington (Crooke), and Students Playing a Game of Tug of War on Back Campus during the First Real Olympics, 1951; A [St. John's College] Women's Basketball Game with the United States Naval Academy, n.d.

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

Founded in 1980, the Gadfly is the student newsmagazine distributed to over 600 students, faculty, staff, and alumni of the Annapolis campus.

Opinions expressed within are the responsibility of the author(s). The Gadfly reserves the right to accept, reject, and edit submissions in any way necessary to publish a professional, informative, and thought provoking newsmagazine.

Submissions sent to the Gadfly should either be in Google Docs or JPEG format. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication.

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