

# THE GADFLY

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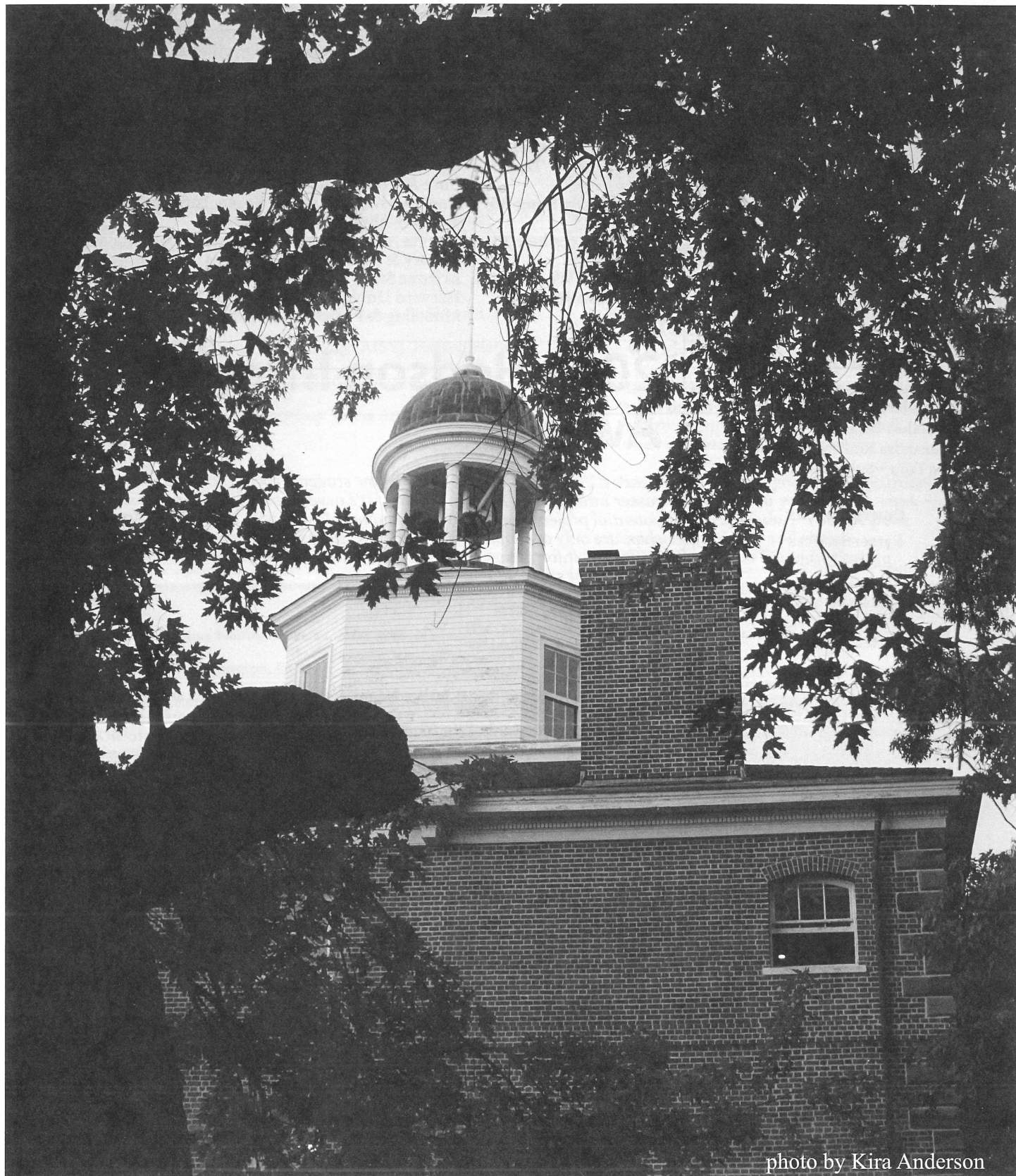


photo by Kira Anderson

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER  
OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

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

Opinions expressed within are the sole 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.

The next *Gadfly* meeting will take place Sunday, Aug 31, at 7 PM in Room 109 on the first lower level of the Barr-Buchanan Center.

Articles should be submitted by Friday, Sep 5, at 11:59 PM to sjca.gadfly@gmail.com.

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## From the Editors:

We done it again! Here goes another lovely issue of everyone's favorite St. John's College publication (sorry Energeia). This is our gift to you for getting over that cold you think you probably caught at the Achilles Rager. Con amor y lealtad,

-The *Gadfly*



# 2015 Pathways Awards

Here's what some of your fellow students studied with a Pathways Fellowship award this past summer. Upcoming information session: Tuesday, September 22, at 3:45 in the Conversation Room. Hope to see you there!

- Katelyn Caldwell '16:** University of Washington, Seattle, WA: Latin  
**Emily Grazier '16:** Ohio State University, Columbus, OH: Italian  
**Salomea Jankovic '17:** Montgomery College, Rockville, MD: Economics  
**Andrew Kriehn '16:** University of Florida, Gainesville, FL: Linear Algebra & Abstract Algebra  
**Ezekiel Lemann '17:** UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA: Calculus  
**Jonathan Llovet '17:** Humboldt Institut, Berlin, Germany: German Intensive  
**Sihui Ma '17:** Goethe Institut, Munich, Germany: German Intensive  
**Frederick Nesfield '16:** UNC, Chapel Hill: The English Novel, 1870-WWII  
**Bonnie Scott '17:** Marchutz Academy, Aix-en-Provence, France: Summer Core Art Program  
**Won Kyung Song '16:** Korea University, Seoul, Korea: Introduction to Sustainability & Abnormal Psychology  
**Carolyn Stephen '15:** Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL: Matrix Theory & Discrete Mathematics  
**Elizabeth Wootten '15:** Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ: Russian  
**Siqi Zhao '16:** Harvard University, Cambridge, MA: Introduction to Modeling & Principles of Genetics

# 2015 Hodson Internship Awards

Here's a look at how some of your fellow students spent the summer exploring a career interest with Hodson funding. It's never too early to begin thinking about potential projects for this coming summer. Please note that international internships are only available to international students interning in their home countries. Upcoming information session: Tuesday, October 20, at 3:45 in the Conversation Room. Hope to see you there!

- Jeremy Adams, AGI15**  
Key School, Annapolis, MD  
**Elizabeth Akhvediani '17**  
Consulate General of Georgia, New York, NY  
**Jenna Alton '16**  
University of Chicago, Social Justice Neuroscience & Psychology Lab, Chicago, IL  
**Laura Bartram '15**  
Keuka Springs Vineyards, Penn Yann, NY  
**Lauren Berlin '18**  
University of Southern California, Virtues, Ideology & Morality Lab, Los Angeles, CA  
**William Brown '16**  
Disciples Center for Public Witness, Religion, Advocacy, and Democracy Program, Washington, DC  
**Ambrose Donnelly '17**  
University of Chicago, Dept. of Psychology, Chicago, IL  
**Mary Kate Eckles '16**  
National Archives & Records Administration, College Park, MD  
**Gabrielle Feliciani '17**  
Office of Senator Barbara Mikulski, Washington, DC  
**Camille Gagnier '17**  
Witness for Peace, Washington, DC  
**Joseph Gillespie-Hill '17**  
Anne Arundel County State's Attorney's Office, Annapolis, MD  
**Day Harper '15**  
River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Bethesda, MD  
**Andrea Hill '16**  
Conservation Ecology Center at the Smithsonian National Zoo, Washington, DC  
**Lara Hu '16**  
Maryland Independent College & University Association (MICUA), Annapolis, MD  
**Holly Huey '16**  
New York University Press, Sales and Marketing Department, New York, NY  
**Noe Jimenez '16**  
Added Value, Brooklyn, NY

- Patrick Kelly '16**  
University of Maryland, Dept. of Cell Biology & Molecular Genetics, College Park, MD  
**Eunji Kim '15**  
DC Public Charter School Board, Washington, DC  
**William Kinum '17**  
Sneeringer Monahan Provost Redgrave Title Agency, Inc., Hudson, NY  
**Madeline Kiss '16**  
Foreign Policy Association, New York, NY  
**Lily Kowalczyk '18**  
Johns Hopkins Medicine Technology Innovation Center, Baltimore, MD  
**Adam Kuester '16**  
Anne Arundel County State's Attorney's Office, Annapolis, MD  
**Qiu Lin '15**  
Hainan Dong-po Academy of Calligraphy and Painting, Hainan, PR, China  
**David Lincer '15**  
Erikson Institute at the Austen Riggs Center, Stockbridge, MA  
**Wanli Ma '16**  
Fiber Optics & Optical Sensor Laboratory, Uinhuangdao, Hebei, China  
**Matthew Manotti '15**  
Classical Academic Press, Camp Hill, PA  
**Shannon McGovern '16**  
Annapolis Shakespeare Company, Annapolis, MD  
**Ashleigh Mierau '17**  
Creative Conventions & Events, Lyons, CO  
**Gwen Milliman '16**  
The Fresh Farm Markets, Washington, DC  
**Owen Morgan '17**  
Yale Neuroscience Imaging Center, Blumenfeld Lab, New Haven, CT  
**Tri Nguyen '17**  
Advanced Institute for Science and Technology (AIST), Ha Noi, Vietnam  
**Linnea Payne '16**  
Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts & McBride Gallery, Annapolis, MD  
**Willa Joy Perry '15**  
IS183 Art School of the Berkshires, Summer Young Artist Program, Stockbridge, MA  
**Jakub Piven '17**  
Seeds of Peace, New York, NY  
**Claire Racette '17**  
Tricycle Gardens, Richmond, VA  
**Christine Rowghani '16**  
City of Hope, Summer Student Academy, Dept. of Hematology & Hematopoietic Cell Transplantation, Duarte, CA  
**Maia Sekulski '16**  
Georgetown University, Dept. of Psychology, Culture & Emotions Lab, Washington, DC  
**Chengyaoing Shi '16**  
Sheltering Arms Children & Family Services, New York, NY  
**Max Silbiger '16**  
U.S. Naval Observatory, Washington, DC  
**Amritpal Singh '15**  
University of Chicago, Experience in Cognition Lab, Chicago, IL  
**Yosef Trachtenberg '15**  
Windward, Klickitat, Washington  
**Allison Tretina '16**  
Burlington County Times, Willingboro, NJ  
**Kip Waite '15**  
Anne Arundel Medical Center, Clinical Research Program, Annapolis, MD  
**Frances Webb '16**  
Food & Water Watch, Brooklyn, NY  
**Peter Wilder '17**  
Chautauqua Institution, Chautauqua, NY  
**Xiuyuan Zhang '17**  
Renmin University of China, Dept. of Language & Literature, Beijing, China

## Notes from the Other Side: 2

### The Bathroom in the Jungle

Judith Seeger TUTOR

How come when you build a bathroom in the jungle  
Suddenly there's a line?

## Dreams

◆ Ivan Romanovich Syritysyn A'19

A time to dream is one most pleasant  
How great can be the things we've seen  
The land of strange things and of visions  
Of blended colors, vibrant streams.

Like mists and fog the vision clouding  
In dreams we know more than we see  
A construct of our own great making  
Gone stretching forth with unknown seams

A pasture of our strongest feelings  
And thoughts revealed but there within  
Our greatest fears and hopes colliding  
An ocean battering unseen

The great divide in all our visions  
Between our thoughts and what we see  
In fact is just some great illusion  
Resolved within us in our dreams

## Vitiligo Venus

◆ R.M. Goad A'19

Girls in knee-flitting skirts  
with books teetering on their  
scalps cannot meet the measure of  
your posture, your regal mien:

immodest though you are—a seamless  
narrative woven in your crooks, rind,  
and buxom splendor. You are pure  
progress, breadth and stature,  
filling for there's life to further.

I have asked you, "Which way is home?"  
and you have clung to bistre and to blue;  
your surety made me crumple my script,  
and listen.

## Sonnet 1 (7/7/15)

◆ Michael van Wie G.I.

The eye, a void, a vacuum where my glance,  
Is sucked, and by the depth of self-same space,  
A-forced to fend 'n' flounder long, ere askance  
My gaze can haul its bulk, beyond the face  
Whose every power bent on entrapment be;  
This pit, in which the demons ope to air  
So that my own eye easily can descry in thee,  
Despite the darkened space within the glare,  
The horror and torture meet will I forsooth  
If in thy eye my eyes are let to sink;  
Thus argue I with eye, and eye no truth  
Doth take, and unheeding hence my glance hast link  
With thee, consuming all, desire, love,  
Doth suck me low to low, from all above.

# On Social Awkwardness

Sebastian Barajas A'17

In my senior year of high school, I visited a small college even more isolated than St. John's, where I attended an Accepted Students activity fair. Despite being at home, all of the current students who were supposed to be enticing us with their clubs were clearly far more terrified of meeting outsiders than we were of meeting them. So it was up to me to begin the conversation at each booth. All the club presidents were stumbling and strange, but the worst bit came when I arrived at the Ultimate Frisbee booth, whose guardian was probably the tallest female human I have ever seen in my life. She was a student, probably nineteen or twenty, and tongue-tied just like the rest.

Determined not to be intimidated, I pointed to the sign-up sheet and said, "Ultimate Frisbee?" She nodded strangely, and I said, "Cool!" It was only after I walked away that it occurred to me that all the names on the list had been girls' names. I glanced back and saw that sure enough, I'd just signed up for girls' Ultimate Frisbee.

Of course, it wasn't a huge deal. It had absolutely zero real negative consequences for anyone involved, save discomfort. I've kept telling myself this, trying to shrug off that moment. But for whatever reason, the memory of that mistake still makes me squirm.

This is the feeling we're all terrified of: being misunderstood, out of our element, looking like idiots. That's why we hurry past people in silence when we only kind of know them and aren't sure how we relate to them. Greet them too enthusiastically and we risk making them think we want to get to know them better when in reality, we aren't sure what we want. Greet them too unenthusiastically and we risk insulting them. Better just to hurry by and pretend not to have noticed them.

Similarly, I could have just wandered past the Ultimate Frisbee booth, pretending not to see it, or the woman who was blocking out the overhead lights. But instead, I did the brave thing. I talked to her because I was interested in her club. So why should I feel so embarrassed about my honest mistake? Why would it have been any better if I'd just feigned blindness, too cowardly to even fulfill the basic purpose of the whole activity fair?

If we carefully examine situations like this, it's clear that the main source of social awkwardness is the illusion that social awkwardness can be avoided: that if we just play our cards right, we won't have to face it. So we structure our lives around avoiding "awkward" people and "awkward" situations, in order to make our lives "awkward"-free. But this isn't possible. Like quicksand, trying to escape only makes it worse. Awkwardness is a voracious demon that devours both young and old, room Johnnies and quad Johnnies alike.

That's right: quad Johnnies. There's a misconception that the most awkward people are the nerds, the weirdos: the ones who sat at the video game table in high school. The truth is that those people usually aren't all that awkward, since they embrace all of the multifarious characters who seek asylum at their table—their only real requirement being that one wants to sit with them. The truly awkward ones are usually the so-called "popular" kids: the ones who only sit with one kind of person every single day, year after year. Most of us Johnnies (given that we're shameless nerds) have probably had the experience of venturing to talk to one of these people, and seeing them recoil in panic, as if to say, I don't know you. This isn't an approved conversation. My friends need to authorize it, and then at least one of them needs to be present. You're not following procedure. Help! Their eyes flick around, looking for escape routes. We nerds then feel awkward, and bizarrely assign blame to ourselves, even though they're clearly the ones with the problem. This should be obvious: if we're open enough to try and start a conversation with someone we don't know, and we have the social awareness to recognize that person's discomfort and blame ourselves for it, chances are we're far less awkward than they are.

Awkwardness comes when people try to exercise too much control over their social lives in a world where even the most confident and outgoing person can only really control half of it.

The more open we are to different people and shifting social situations, the less awkwardness we will experience. This means welcoming and sometimes approaching new people when given the chance, and not clinging to them when they want to go. It also means finding comfort in company as well as in solitude, while fearing neither of them (though there's nothing wrong with preferring one over the other).

So the next time we try to talk to someone new and they run away, or we try sitting with new people and they immediately snatch up their plates and blast off to the moon, we should consider that in all likelihood, they're the ones who fail at socializing. Remember: it takes two to be awkward. ♦

## THE AFFAIR OF WRITING

Mei Yiyang A'19

Whipping threads of ideas to orderly phalanx on stacks of printing paper has never been my strength nor will it ever be. Shimmering afternoons are sure to be wasted if essays or reports stand high on my schedule. If my memory is correct, none of my post-assignment session is passed without me panting, sweating, pacing about the living room terrified of the approaching deadline while finding nothing worthwhile to write about. I am held forever in awe of those skilled writers under whose fingers the spring flowers bloom in winter.

Writing isn't always that hateful actually. When I first started primary school, I actually loved to write. Instead of squabbling over some stupid questions with friends on the playground after school at the early age of 7, I would walk along the bushes on the way home, shedding my eyes with the fallen leaves pretending no naked eyes of mortals could ever discover me and stretch my mind's window this way to the green hills, that way to the grasses. I could hear clean voices fresh as springs alight with gleaming rays and see flocks of sheep fly over pastures chased by wolfings. When my nibs brush over the paper, the whole world stop breathing: winds cease roaring and leaves stop rustling. Rooms vanish, smokes arise, flags brandish, and the moon wanes. The magical world of lines was never so intoxicating.

It's only till middle school, I think, that this very kind of composing reveals its dark nature. My stream of thoughts grow so parched behind the closed school gates that I only finish one essay throughout the three-year schooling career. Late at night when moonlight stream down from the dark mountain top, my imagination would cry in agony at its utmost lung from the scorched hell where no living things reside in. Time no longer exists, days are measured by stars in both morning and evening between the teaching buildings. Summers stink with wet uniforms and winters freeze with no heating; midnights are stuffed with screaming winds and windows are shattered over raged snowflakes. It just is not possible to carve out a single line of creativity from such a place.

I never recover from that nightmare. Never again till the very moment do I taste the joy of arranging thoughts and presenting them to people again. It is said by discussion the sparks of intelligence will light up the hibernated brain so to open up the caged mind. But I am just not sure when exactly this miracle will happen. ♦