

THE GADFLY

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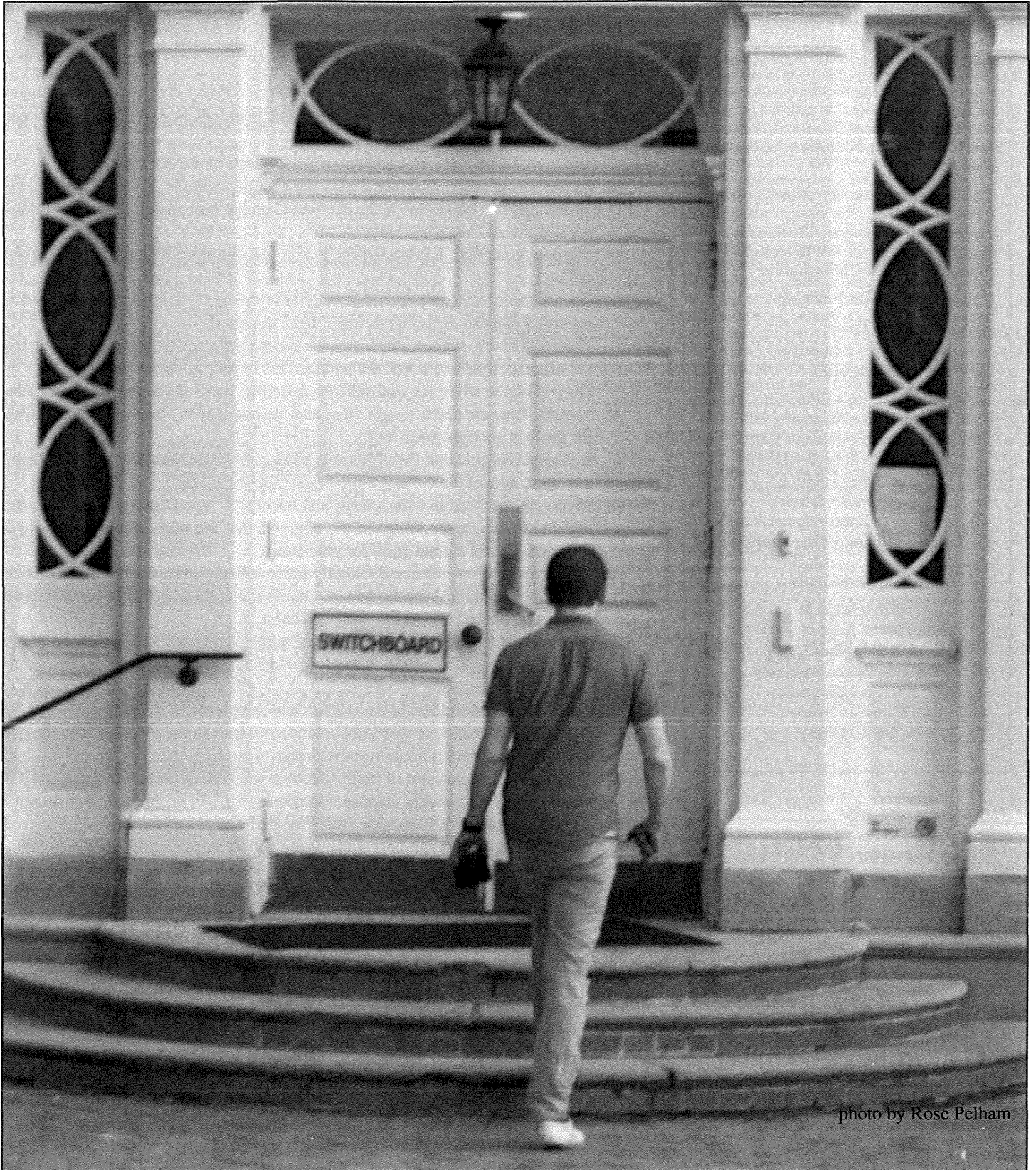


photo by Rose Pelham

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER
OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

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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.

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Freshman Bodies, Freshman Souls

This reprinted article first appeared in the Gadfly on September 2, 1982, and appears annually in our first issue. Without a doubt our athletic director, Mr. McQuarrie, is willing to stand in for the first person voice used in this article—and to answer any questions about our athletic program. -Ed.

Bryce Jacobsen A'42

The reasons, both physical and metaphysical, why everyone ought to join in our sports program are many. I list a few:

1. We have the best athletic program of any college in the country.
2. Exercise is good for the body...unless you sprain an ankle or something like that.
3. Most of us feel better, are more alert, and can get more work done if our bodies are healthy and our souls are relaxed.
4. Friendly competition is one of the really fun things in life. It is good for your soul.
5. Your circle of acquaintances will be greatly enlarged. This is good for the soul, provided you can separate the wheat from the chaff.
6. You will learn to accept, and bear with, thousands of split-second decisions from the officials, a few of which are wrong. This is very good for the soul.
7. Do you like to strive for, and achieve, specific goals? If so, consider our college blazers. They are much sought after, and the pathway is clearly laid out. Striving for goals is good for your soul.
8. It is probably true that the more pure fun occurs in the athletic program than in any other area of the college. Fun is good for your soul.
9. If you get involved in team sports, and become a "good team player," you have realized that there are things in the universe that are more important than your own ego. This is a great good for your soul.
10. The benefits of exercise and friendly competition, learned while one is young, should be maintained for the rest of your life...i.e, they should become habitual. For virtue, as the Philosopher said, is a habit.
11. You will get to know numerous alumni, tutors, and staff members who participate in the program. This is good for your soul, or ought to be...provided that they are the proper sort of role models.
12. Our showers are the best at the college; always plenty of hot water.
13. Are you bothered by, or worried by, tobacco fumes in the air? Come to the gym. The whole building is a nicotine-free zone.
14. If you perform some sort of heroic deed on the athletic field, your name will be mentioned in our weekly column. Heroes are always acclaimed. But do not be carried away by this. Remember that "the paths of glory lead but to the grave."
15. A high percentage of our best students are active participants in our program.
16. Those who play, stay.
17. The gym is not particularly well-equipped, as gyms go. But it has washers and dryers, and a coke machine...and I will explain to you, if you ask me, how you can get yourself in tip-top physical shape, without any equipment at all.
18. You can sit in an old-time barber's chair in my office...you can pump yourself up and down, and adjust the slope high or low. Where else can you do that?
19. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.
20. It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.

So there you have it: twenty good reasons why you should participate in our athletic program. If you are not convinced by all of this, come and talk to me. I can probably think of some more good reasons. Or better yet, talk with the upperclassmen. They will tell you all sorts of strange, interesting, and wondrous things. ♦

From the Editors:

Hello guys, it's me again! I'm the incorporeal force that runs the Gadfly and plants idea-seeds in your heads! It turns out that the Gadfly is, in fact, the source of all ideas. Ever wonder where jokes come from? The Gadfly. Ever wonder where in 2007 everyone gets the exact same idea to start wearing North Face jackets and uggs? The Gadfly. This is for real, people. And even the stuff that came before us was only done in preparation for us. You know it.

*Omnipotently yours,
-The Gadfly*

NEW MAN IN CHARGE

Jonathan Grauberd A'18

We at the Gadfly believe that one of the most vital parts of the St. John's experience is participation in our community, our great polity. As such, we thought that the student body ought to get to know one of the new heads of our community, our brand new Dean, Joe Macfarland.

Mr. Macfarland is what one might call a lifetime Johnnie. St. John's was recommended to him in 1983, after he wrote a high school essay about "The Once and Future King," concerning Merlin's tutorship of Arthur. Following his graduation from the undergraduate program in 1987, he "kicked around" a bit, spending time both in the States and abroad, including three months on an Israeli kibbutz. Later on, he attended graduate school at the University of Chicago, where he was a teaching assistant to former St. John's tutor Amy Kass. Working with her persuaded him to return to the St. John's, and in 1998 he became a tutor. Eighteen years later, he is the new Dean of our beloved polity.

When asked about his mission statement for the school, Mr. Macfarland had a simple answer. For him, St. John's represents something special in the modern academic landscape. While this might seem obvious to us in the polity (it bloody well should be), his perspective seemed ... for lack of a better word, refreshing: "I spend a fair amount of time putting out fires," Mr. Macfarland joked, when asked about his goals for the college. Being a lifelong Johnnie and tutor, he understands the program. He knows it for what it is, and - in this age of re-branding - his idea for the school is for it to be what it always has been. In his words, "I want it to be what we think it was. I want lively question periods after lectures. Didn't understand the lecture? That's OK, come to the question period and figure it out. I want students talking on the quad after seminar."

That is not to say that Mr. Macfarland does not have a few things he would like to change. For starters, he would like to see the quality of writing in the college brought up to the standard of our conversations. He believes that students who spend four years reading and discussing great books should be writing essays that reflect that experience. "It is sometimes said that a good essay is one that you can have a good conversation on. It should be better than that."

When asked whether he has any specific advice for the new Freshman class (listen up, class of 2020!), Mr. Macfarland's response was simple and to the point: "Work now, don't postpone 'til later, and do it with friends." He mentioned his own lack of

interest in Greek in the first semester of his Freshman year, and how it was only in January - once he started studying with a friend - that he finally really understood the material. "If you just get by, it will catch up to you," he added, saying that once he got a grasp on the work, he started enjoying Freshman and Sophomore language. Another facet of student life he focused on was discipline, specifically its necessity at St. John's. Mr. Macfarland has been through the program and taught it many times over. As such, he understands a simple fact that sometimes eludes us during our day to day lives: the program is meant to be enjoyed. "There is a lot more pleasure to be had in classes if you are not always just catching up."

Speaking about the polity as a whole, our new Dean gave the intramural teams a plug: "It is great to see people of such different skill levels so excited and competitive, and yet so collegial." He believes in the need for release after a day of classes, and moreover, he thinks that competing in the games can help class discussions. "It is good for your soul to get your body out onto the field. Struggle to win, so you can get it out of your system before going to class." Finally, he thinks that, while it is easy for students to socialize within their own classes, the intramural teams give them a chance to interact with a much larger group of people.

As we wrapped up our interview, Mr. Macfarland spoke about the importance of the way we conduct ourselves in class. "A person studying in a library for hours can by a singular effort learn a lot. But students talking to one another, sharing ideas in class, learn a great deal more from one another." He was quick to bring up his early experiences in graduate school, where - after his professor paused during a lecture - he was quick to start talking, to the shock and dismay of his fellow students. He thought that the professor was done talking and that conversation was about to begin, whereas the professor was just pausing for a moment. Though he was mistaken, his enthusiasm for conversation provides a simple juxtaposition with the other students in his class. They were silent, because they came from a place that is not like our college. They were used to listening and remembering. But we at St. John's, we speak, we share, and we discover. That exchange of ideas rests at the heart of our polity, and it is good to know that our new Dean understands and respects this fundamental fact ♦

In your gallery- *The Essential Line: Drawings from the Dahesh Museum of Art*

Lucinda Dukés Edinberg Art Educator

The Mitchell Gallery has opened the new exhibition season with late 19th-century French drawings in a display titled, *The Essential Line: Drawings from the Dahesh Museum of Art*. This collection of intimate works in charcoal, pencil, graphite, and pastel reflects the training of an artist in a range of fundamental exercises, preparatory studies for paintings, and highly polished drawings as finished pieces.

Drawing was considered the foundation for the training and making of art—a long standing tradition in Italy, but less so in other European schools. Paris's Ecole des Beaux-Arts (the post-Napoleonic incarnation of Louis XIV's Academie des Beaux-Arts, founded in 1648, and the most important art school in the Western world) established drawing as part of their curriculum mid-nineteenth century. Part of the interest in formal training came from a general complaint about the low standard of works produced by the students at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Realizing this perceived inadequacy, the leading art dealers Goupil and Cie grabbed the opportunity to organize the production of Charles Bargue's drawing course, *Cours de dessin*, a 3-part series of classical drawing courses

written in collaboration with Jean-Léon Gérôme. This instructive "bible" introduced drawing by having the student copy master drawings and prints, advance to sculpture and, finally, work with a live model.

Emphasis on the benefits of observation and constant drawing was, as the Dahesh Museum of Art director, David Farmer, wrote, "an important exercise to keep the eye and hand in shape, as an athlete does." This academic training was not, however, without controversy, particularly if one considers the time period from which these artists were working. The Impressionists had already exhibited several times by the time the book was printed, and they, along with the Post-Impressionist artists, were less concerned with representational accuracy than they were with personal expression and vision (it is worth noting that works by Picasso and van Gogh are known to have been based upon Bargue's plates).

There are still different camps on the virtues of academic training and what constitutes craft and creativity. These arguments stem long before the French, or even the Italians, as evidenced in Plato's

writings. Much could be discussed, argued, and explored in the Ion and Symposium, as Plato saw art as a copy of a copy—essentially that art is imitation—an idea upheld even through the Renaissance. And it doesn't help that Plato didn't subscribe much to the idea of "art by divine inspiration." But, might I propose that the creative genius shows us things we might not ordinarily see and, perhaps, reveals something truer than we might see, even with the skill of the artist's craft, which was honed through academic training?

The Mitchell Gallery is fortunate to have the drawings on view, as works on paper, due to their fragility, travel less often. Landscapes, portraits, and "selfies" are seen in sketches by well-known artists, among them: Rosa Bonheur, Gustave Doré, and Lord Frederick Leighton. The wonderful perspective drawing, *In the Kitchen*, certainly provides a mathematical and optical translation of real life into 2-dimensional form. If one subscribes to Plato's second theory, that "art is imitation of eternal Beauty and eternal Truth," then surely these artists provide a mirror of ourselves in some fashion. Consider the Forms, then take a break from academic life and come to your own Mitchell Gallery to appreciate what might be divine inspiration, or at least, the quality of "the line." The exhibition remains on view through October 16. ♦



Théodule-August Ribot (French, 1823-1891), In the Kitchen, n.d., pencil, pen and ink on paper. The Dahesh Museum of Art, NY.

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♦ Ivan Romanovich Syritsyn

As fettered rage inside me builds
The embers for consuming fire,
My mind and muscles are drawn thick
By chains and hooks of my desire.
As mad pursuit makes actions broad
And spreads a net that's to ensnare,
My mind knows neither lust nor love
But thirsts for presence absent there.
In such a way my wayward life
Has led me to the path I'm taking.
I see no reason to revive
Whatever now I have forsaken.
Whichever lot will surely be
I'm chained now and also free.

Ben Haas Answers

On Diet and Confrontation

I have to be on the meal plan, but I'm worried about eating well and keeping up a varied diet. How can I stay on a budget and keep up my health?

While the main dishes in the dining hall may seem a bit heavy, it's not hard to keep up a healthy diet while on the 21-meal plan. If you're the plain, run-of-the-mill carnivore, you have some solid protein choices; if you're not into the main dish on the hot bar, turkey burgers are great sources of protein, as are the hard-boiled eggs in the salad bar. Three eggs have about 16 grams of protein!

In keeping with the five-color scheme, a bed of spinach with tomatoes, carrots, and peppers is a good start to any meal. Topping it with sandwich fixings at lunch makes for a full meal, with some fruit and a good tall glass of water. That is not to say that you should cut out carbs altogether -- some multigrain toast with peanut butter or apple butter at breakfast is a great start to the day.

For the vegans, the selection at Cucina Verde is surprisingly varied most days, and they often have dishes that everyone likes. I find the creamy pasta dishes with soy sausage a particular favorite.

Overall, if you're ever worried about whether you're getting enough to eat, St. John's has a resident nutritionist, TK, who is happy to talk to students about their diets, and Ted Canto, the manager of Bon Appetit, always makes time for students who come to him with concerns and requests.

One of my seminar tutors has been really weirdly critical of my points and I feel like I must just be bad at philosophy or something. What can I do?

First things first, you're not bad at philosophy. The whole point of seminar is to air your views and develop your ideas, and it's important to understand that it's OK to do that development in seminar. Unless you're claiming that people didn't like Socrates because he was ugly, you're probably fine. If your tutor seems to be singling you out, the first step is to talk to them about it outside of class. Ask them directly about how you're doing in class and tell them what's going on. If they're deliberately making you feel this way or are unapologetic about it, the next thing you can do is talk to Victoria Wick, the Student Services Coordinator.

If you can't talk to your tutor about it or are intimidated by them (don't worry, it happens), I would talk to a classmate before going to Ms. Wick to see if they feel the same way. If all else fails, you can always meet with Katherine Heines, the Assistant Dean -- she can mediate a meeting with your tutor and will try her best to ensure a positive outcome.

Do you have questions or issues you'd like a fellow student to weigh in on? Email bnhaas@sjc.edu -- all submissions will be kept anonymous, and I'll choose the most universally applicable questions for each issue.

The Assassination of JFK

Cameron Byerly A'19

I guarded lives for several years.

More accurately, I was a lifeguard. I managed chlorine levels and provided an atmosphere of safety. The hours often burned, so it was pleasant to cool off in the water during shifts. And no matter how many years I'd do this, or how refreshing the result, I would think the same words every time the water rose over my chest.

'Why would I do this to myself?'

The question has become a familiar... maybe personal *ᾄδουμων* would be a fair description for Johnnies (with apologies to Freshman, The Apology is a few months away). Self-inflicted discomfort always brings it about. In the case of jumping in a pool, the question of 'why' has an easy answer, but in all other moments of pure reaction, when all thought is the doctor's needle in the arm, this familiar little spirit is a knee-jerk reply to life's many mallets.

So when watching the footage of John F. Kennedy's assassination again during my sunny vacation days, I have to properly answer this question. Something so horrid must warrant a hefty excuse.

JFK's death was a captivating historic moment on all fronts, from the political, to the personal, even the conspiratorial. The human factor is primary to my own fascination, along with a simple catalyst: the assassination of John F. Kennedy was captured on film. The most powerful leader on Earth was reduced to a desecrated corpse in the back of a Lincoln... and anyone with an internet connection can access the footage in seconds, shot so clearly it seems an arms length away. Millions already have.

I can offer a simple reason to watch; because you can. To the unconvinced; I encourage the discomfort all the same. Watching the footage is to expose oneself to the purest element of chaos, in its cruelest form. This is a reversal of fortune with no transition, proof that the American President is as susceptible to the anarchy of bullets as anyone.

Watching the film, as JFK is driven forward, the eyes of today are fixed on him in anticipation of the inevitable. Yet by the time the footage has faded to black, I cannot imagine anyone still watching the man, and not staring, transfixed, at the woman in pink. Her name is Jacqueline Kennedy, and her actions are far more striking than her husband's. With Jacqueline Kennedy, the film is more than just a death.

The details of the tragedy are secondary to the importance of the footage. The date, 1962, is not easily recalled. The model car has come to trivalry, the circumstances of his campaigning ignored, and most everything else dismissed to a contemporary audience. The event itself is a capsule, and no amount of explanation changes the mechanics of what is seen. When the famed Zapruder Film is put to the monitor today, there is only a husband and wife, waving in the back of an open car.

When the president comes into frame, he seems to cough into his fist, and lean forward. His wife leans towards him, with her arm around his shoulders. Visually, they seem to be confiding in each other. Only through subsequent reports can one know the man had already been shot through the chest, his posture is so subtly slouched.

With no warning, the man's temple explodes into a fist-sized patty of red and white. His body flops horribly. The President is dead. But the empress in pink sits up, pushes off her husband's shoulder, and stretches back across the car trunk. Testimonials confirm that Jacqueline was reaching to grab a chunk of her husband's brain, before being motioned back into the seat by a man following the car on foot.

She had this same brain tissue in her hand for hours, and in her shock, she would not remember reaching for it when questioned later. Reports state that she was grabbing the piece to put her husband together again.

Before the bullet, she was First Lady, a figure of adoration and grace worldwide. She had given speeches to millions and attended dinners of prestige and international importance. She held more than just influence over the world's most powerful leader. She wore the most beautiful dresses and jewelry. She was a figure, a celebrity, a power, but a person as well. In the next moment, she was splattered in her husband's blood, reaching to grab a piece of his brain to correct his death.

Articulating these details may suggest a perverse fascination with the grotesque elements of the tragedy. But the disquieting elements are integral to understanding the personal reality of an increasingly distant historic moment. These graphic details may address the physical death of JFK, but more so they reveal the demise of Jacqueline Kennedy's life as she had lived it.

The footage moves the First Lady towards her tragedy as smoothly as her limousine. She has been moving towards that moment, at the same speed, her entire life. Never for her was a second spent not a second closer to that bullet.

The modern voyeur has the ability to rewind the footage and return her to former prestige. One only needs to press play to repeat the fall from grace. This makes the primary change of interest not the president, from life to death, or even the tragic Mrs. Kennedy, from royalty to animalism, but the viewer. There is a positive benefit through watching, and a positive in the ability to watch.

The choice to watch this film encapsulates the power of free internet as nothing else can. How can the aura of infallibility exist in our leaders when such raw evidence proves otherwise? What a privilege; what a curse. Watching the world's most powerful man being killed is eclipsed only by watching the desperate stretch of the world's most powerful woman.

But why would you do this to yourself?

The question has multiple answers. When in need of a reality check, or of appreciating the moments of life that can vanish in seconds, please visit this video. When considering the power that the internet provides the modern man in a free society, rather than such footage being tucked behind firewalls or censors, revisit this video. Because in the days of JFK, men made war, and women were left to pick up the pieces. Here we see who requires our attention, and who deserves our sympathy.

The reminder that everything can go wrong so quickly helped me guard lives more carefully. And perhaps, if seen this way, others can also appreciate the times before tragedies... or at the very least the power, the modern privilege, to sit in a room and watch a president die for free. We can do what Jacqueline could not; with the drag of a mouse, we can reverse the footage, and put the man, and his wife, together again.

"I have been a sentient being, a thinking animal, on this beautiful planet, and that in itself has been an enormous privilege and adventure." - Oliver Sacks ♦

La Rentree

Patricia Locke Tutor

Here in France, la rentrée is, as one says, a thing. You come back reluctantly from a hypothetical carefree beach life to the real world, with its return to work, more formal manners, and social responsibilities. At SJC, the reentry means new classes, proper address in class, and the fraught interpretation of social signs. In France, this transition is taken way more seriously than in the USA. The French have a regular verb, *rentrer*, and a noun to go with, *la rentrée*, both of which refer to the return home either from vacation or even, in a small and inverse way, from the daily journey out to the world. One must treat oneself gently during the autumnal time of transition: surely one needs ice cream, extra paperback novels, and sales on school supplies and hair ornaments to soften the blow. In Aix-en-Provence, the movie theatres have special showings at reduced prices. In Paris, chick lit and high lit with the slipcover “Literary Reentry in Your Pocket,” draws attention in bookstore windows. I really adore this attention to the changes autumn brings, even if the response can border on an oversensitive self-preoccupation. Surely, we should welcome the fall by unpacking our warmer clothing, sharpening our pencils, and getting haircuts, right? We can begin anew, with resolutions to have a more orderly and healthy life, even though we mourn the passing of our slacker ways. Seniors who barely finished reading *War and Peace* know what I am talking about.

And while we are treating ourselves tenderly, drinking extra water and getting extra sleep to get over the jet lag that tosses us up on shore in Annapolis, we turn to our relations with others. Renewal of friendships and trying out new activities appears to be an autumn ritual in France as well. It is way too early to invite people over for dinner, as the refrigerator is not stocked. How about a picnic? I notice that French people love afternoon or evening strolls. On a mid-September weekend, there are sign-up tables on the main boulevards for local hobby clubs, volunteer opportunities, civic and outdoor activities. This gives one something to look forward to, balancing the last lingering gaze backwards to summer. Which reminds me:

Have you registered to vote? November will be here before you know it, and your vote helps to make democracy work. If you are an American citizen, you can either vote absentee in your home state, or, now that you are residing in Maryland, right here. In either case, it is simple to register online. Just Google “register to vote” and see what

happens. If people tell you that your little old vote doesn't matter, don't listen to them! Clearly they aren't in the spirit of *la rentrée*, which highlights one's own point of view and reestablishes one's relations to others. So-called “down ticket” races are as important as the presidential race right now, and every single vote counts. While on sabbatical, I happened to be in London right before the Brexit vote last June, where various waiters and cab drivers assured me that of course the Brits would vote to stay in the EU, so no need to vote. When I travelled south to Canterbury, people I spoke with were not at all surprised at the result to exit. So refresh yourself with reading up on the races and other matters on your state ticket before the deadlines to register and vote. I think the historical struggles to acquire the right to vote ought not be treated in a casual manner by those of us they intended to benefit.

If your summer was primarily devoted to working as much as possible to make the dough to swing this education, another definition of *la rentrée* is tailor-made for you, since it refers to the return home to the private sphere after a tough working day. Welcome back to living with Johnnies who are your people, who can talk your talk. Welcome back to a place of genuine thinking and conversation, and an opportunity to read with other readers. This is an invitation to have your own literary reentry in your pocket.

When you are out walking, be sure to listen to the deciduous trees. They rustle with that dry scratchy sound of late summer, before they turn color and have one last flame of glory. As you feather your new nest, hang your posters and get to work memorizing those paradigms, bid summer adieu by being gentle with yourself and those around you. Vive la rentrée! ♦



Rose's Rager

Rose Pelham A'20

The hype was unavoidable. Though we had no idea what it was, the posters, Facebook posts, and the people talking about it all colluded to make it seem omnipotent. To freshman, the Achilles Rager presented itself as an unavoidable initiation right steeped in Dionysian tradition, at once both terrifying and orgasmic, as it can sometimes be said that terror heightens pleasure.

At first I dismissed the Rager as nothing more than a high school dance party with a few gimps thrown in so as to increase the sexual tension. It seemed to be an in-person equivalent of a grinder, and being trans, there are good reasons why the Internet, with its immediate access to millions of fetishists worldwide, is a generally superior dating platform. But I can imagine the implications of this in the minds of a number of sexually repressed freshmen coming from conservative backgrounds, hoping to shed their initial anxieties (and add a few new ones) in the awkward ritual of college party courtship. To a certain extent, I think everyone did want an orgy, but no one in their right mind could act on it, so we all went and were disappointed, if safe.

Being a generally repressed (read: oppressed) freshman, I wasn't sure how I could attend. I spent the last few years of my life in the state of Georgia, most notable for being the home of Martin Luther King Junior, and also the state where the carving on Stone Mountain was created to memorialize the Confederacy. It is at once an equal measure moderate progressive and downright fascist. It is likewise not a good state in which to be transgender, even if Atlanta is a tolerant city. The state legislature did just spend four years trying to legalize discrimination against us, after all. So, coming from the county next to where the Klan was busy distributing anti-transgender leaflets, I was not sure what to expect at the Rager. The Klan aside, I went in a dress and lipstick to the Patroklos pre-party anyway.

There is a certain bodily terror in coming out by way of demonstration. In keeping with Aristotle's theory of spontaneous generation, where there are trans people there shall be discrimination, for transphobes come into being wherever trans people are, just as soil spontaneously generates earthworms. At least that is how it seems in the mind. Walking down my hall, I half expected David Duke to jump out at me from a doorway, foaming out the mouth, with his little mouth-within-a-mouth sticking out, because that man is secretly an alien sent here to weaken humanity before the mother-ship arrives. But I digress; I went to the Pink Triangle pre-party, and it was fine, no Klan members materialized, or if they did, they were more interested in discovering the

meaning of that feeling they got when looking at Brandon in the fifth grade.

The pre-party was less musical, and more social: more talking and no dancing. I am sure a few couples were produced, the people at that party being the LGBTQIA+ community's only dating pool on campus, but I can't think of anyone in particular. My terror slowly slithered back to its cave, and then it was time for the party proper.

The music before the Rager was better than the music during the Rager, even if it was one song on a loop. There is something about the soundtrack for *Mad Max: Fury Road* that is both befitting of an Iliad themed party and writing essays late at night. If it didn't exactly put me in a party mood, it did make me want to finish my IB Extended Essay. That aside, I think the opening sacrifice was somewhat unrehearsed, which was evident leading up to it. If you can't line up a few freshmen within one loop of a six-minute song, don't bother, or else get a longer playlist. Also, make sure your sacrifice shows up on time! I have engaged in hundreds of rituals to invoke the spirit of Dionysus, and not one of them was delayed by the absence of the sacrificial offering! Get your occult practices down right! Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse! But I digress.

We entered the great hall through the front door, in something of a confused mob formation resulting in a great deal of confusion as to who was who and what was what. It was also a very inefficient way to enter a building, resulting in momentary surges of people punctuated by long pauses between entrances. Then the new arrivals became a trickle and the music haltingly started. The DJ must have been absent, from what I later heard; the songs seemed chosen at random, and they were frequently cut off. The musical peak was Gorillaz's "Happiness Inc." but after that Dubstep seemed to take over, and all we need to know about that is the Key and Peele sketch.

After I was done torturing myself with overly repetitive beats, inducing bleeding ears and a burning desire for self-defenestration, I simply walked out. The actual party seemed to have dissipated at exactly the same time people realized the drinking age is 21 and that bad music is better-enjoyed drunk. Thus we left the party to the of-age upperclassmen, but continued to talk on the quad, in the vain hopes of finding a romantic partner, or else a one-night stand. Most people just stood around talking in groups, an activity more banal than becoming of Achilles'rage. But then again, I am sure Achilles did do a lot of standing around and talking while he was enraged, how else could people know of his anger? It was not like he could tweet about it.

After a time a boy did come over and seemed interested in me. I am not sure whether it is a greater mark of acceptance

for a trans-woman to find that straight men or lesbians are attracted to her. In either case, bisexuals, myself included in this category, somehow seem less flattering. Are you attracted to me because I am not convincingly feminine enough, because I might show characteristics of both genders? I don't want to. But in Georgia there are few options for transgender dating, so you take what you can get. Trust me: I know. (*But why did I go out with that one drag queen? I shouldn't have done that. He still loves me, but I don't love him. This is not good, not good at all.*) Anyhow, I talked to him for a long time, a few hours. It was a nice night/early morning. Nothing happened, and it was probably much better that way.

As for the Rager, it was weak. I mean, it wasn't terrible, not as it seems like it used to be, but it wasn't exciting either. We had all these gimps and nothing to do with them! How do you have a boring party with gimps! Gimps are all that is wonderful in life: they are weird, bizarre, majestic creatures born of our entirely human, and increasingly fetishistic sense of sexuality. But you made gimps boring! Shame on you Achilles' Rager, you ruined gimps. ♦

Beach Glass

♦ Anonymus

There on a seaside sand
Burns the pyre of Patroklos,
Where tired soldiers seek the courage
The hate
The greed
To die for Agamemnon.

Somewhere nearer my pyre waits
Unburnt.
Somewhere nearer sands shift
Waiting to be burnt into beach glass,
Shattered from toasts
And thrown into the sea.

And levity will give rise to sacrifice
And mirth
To death
Days
To night raids
Morning blood
To evening tears.

And
The
Gods
Will
Weep.

St. John's Debate Series: *Progressivism*

Jonathan Grauberd A'18

As the fateful election draws near, we at Gadfly decided that we want in on some of the action, and to that end we will feature a series of debates. Each debate will focus on a specific issue, and will feature two students, one liberal and one conservative. It is not the intention of this feature to vilify anyone, but to start up an honest debate within the polity. So without further ado, the Gadfly is proud to present Sawyer Neale and Matthew Manotti on the issue of progressivism.

It is Mr. Manotti that started off this strand of debate by calling progressivism "villainous." Or in his words, progressivism is change for the sake of change. It breaks down what came before it, with little thought towards the merits of the past.

Mr. Neale began by questioning the "villainous" characterization. He claimed that while progress for the sake of progress is flawed, there is merit in seeing flaws in the world, and in turn fixing them. In essence, he argued that while constantly tearing down the past is not productive, addressing its flaws is of paramount importance.

Earlier in the conversation, Mr. Neale cited his own experience as an elected Pennsylvania delegate to the 2016 Democratic National Convention pledged to Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT). Efforts, partially led by Sanders delegates before and during the Convention, led the Democratic Party to adopt what Mr. Neale has heralded as "the most progressive platform in the history of the party." Mr. Manotti was quick to bring up Senator Sanders as a progressive figurehead. He claimed that Sen. Sanders represented everything he thought was wrong with progressivism. In his words, "Sanders promised a political revolution." A revolution, which he claimed was aimed at the entire political establishment, not just as some specific set of grievances. He went on to say that the runaway success of the Trump campaign as a reaction to the left wing progressivism. In his opinion, the traditionalism which is most often associated with conservatism reacts in response to the progressivism that sought to tear down everything that they knew and held dear.

In response, Mr. Neale brought to the forefront the undercurrent of anger that has been extremely prominent in both sides of the aisle. Both of our debaters agreed that the anger in the country has a direct correlation to both movements. Or as Mr. Manotti said, "Bernie and Trump are both rebel votes," they were never what anyone expected, and yet they both gained much more traction than anyone had previously anticipated. In addition, he added that the current crop of candidates are the most despised in modern history, or in other words, "Like Wormwood and Crowley from a C.S. Lewis book"

Mr. Neale disagreed, saying that although he was a Sanders delegate he supports former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton wholeheartedly. In his words, "We have someone who wants to build bridges on one side, and on the other side we have the troll that lives under the bridge." He acknowledged that Sec. Clinton has her flaws, but that she was undoubtedly qualified for the presidency,

a sentiment neither of our debaters was able to extend towards Mr. Trump.

Both Mr. Neale and Mr. Manotti agreed that tearing down everything is wrong, the debate took an interesting turn in regards to the nature of what one might call societal refinement. It was acknowledged that a society needs to change and evolve. But it is the way in which it progresses towards this state that the two gentlemen disagreed. Mr. Manotti claimed that the notion that men could build "heaven on Earth" was flawed, "conservatism is the only thing that opposes that mentality. It reminds us that we are not Gods." Mr. Neale, as a proponent of Sen. Sanders (to whom he jokingly refers to as his "spirit animal"), claimed that there was goodness in his movement. The movement might have called for a revolution, but it was doing so based on the founding principles of the United States of

“Conservatism is the only thing that opposes that mentality. It reminds us that we are not Gods.”

life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, which are as Mr. Neale says, "fundamentally good," yet frequently flawed in execution. Progressivism to Mr. Neale, isn't the refutation of first principles that he sees Mr. Manotti suggesting, so much as promoting means through which we can bring those principles to greater fruition.

Mr. Manotti proclaimed that none of the progressive causes withstands the test of time. As each generation attempts to erase its past, nothing gets built, or at the very least nothing that can survive more than a century. For this reason, he believes in tradition and gratefulness. For starters, he says that anyone living in a society that provides them with a measure of

safety should express gratitude instead of demanding more from the society. And in addition, he advocated slow gradual change, which requires patience. He said, "Conservatism at its root is the party of slow down. It cannot be the party of stop." While there are issues that need to be addressed, the swiftness demanded by our modern society can lead to populism. Populism that can feed "rebel votes" like Trump and Sanders. A fact that Mr. Manotti was quick to point to in order to back up his general distrust of populism. For the simple reason that Mr. Manotti believes that the masses cannot be trusted once they are in grips of mob mentality.

Which brings up the most interesting question from the debate: can the people be trusted? Left alone to their own devices, will the masses make the right decision? And is the place of any form of government to tell them otherwise?

Of course there was far more to this debate. Mr. Neale and Mr. Manotti went over everything from voter suppression, racism, and Obamacare. They sparred vigorously for half an hour, and when all was said and done they shook hands and hugged it out. This is St. John's. When we finish debating we leave as friends and colleagues. No more, no less. ♦