

GADFLY

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Photo by R.S. Pelham

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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.

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From the Editors:

In light of recent events, the Gadfly staff would like to remind students that it's not a good idea to play around with mercury, regardless of what Lavoisier says. If you have any overwhelming urges to fling balls of mercury at each other, please contact poison control in advance.

- The Gadfly

Rose's Rager 3: The Rage Awakens

Rose Pelham A '20

Author's Note

I write "Rose's Rager" every year in the hopes that the satire may function as a social commentary, and be funny. Not everything I write here is literally true. This is a work of fiction, albeit with a basis in reality. *Italicized lines are sometimes more fictional and therefore more true than others.*

The Rage Awakens

I returned to the Patroclus Pre-Party, alone, to discover everyone studying Greek, went to the refreshments stand, paid, and found a bisexual waiting for me in a solo cup—since pansexuality had been, for some absurd reason, banned. The night was humid, the doors to the Chasement wide open, the room filled with sweating people, and the air-conditioning—purely hypothetical. In short, it was perfectly uncomfortable in all the claustrophobic ways one would expect and demand from such an event, and in a few others besides for good measure. *It reminded me of home.*

The pre-party was, as always, an initiation for the freshmen, recently freed from the oppressive homophobia of their respective high schools and thrust into our perfect utopia of ἀρετή. As a part of that initiation, they were now being graded on their knowledge of the Greek Alphabet—because it is important, particularly for freshmen, to be ready for surprise Greek quizzes, for it is commonly known that rogue Greek tutors lurk in the shadows at Reality parties. There they lie in wait to ambush unwary students and challenge them to provide all the conjugations for the past middle form of λωω! (Oh, the horror!) Even though Reality has taken precautions to reduce the number of Greek tutors at its events, and has restricted what tutors may quiz freshmen on, we must remain forever vigilant, and forever prepared, lest Greek should strike! Besides, it might help them in language class.

After a half hour of intensive language preparedness training, we sent the

freshmen on their way, I am told, so that Reality could conduct scientific experiments on them. The rest of us stayed behind to ritualistically mortify our flesh in preparation for the party and penance to the gods of profit and the tobacco industry, like a troop of modern flagellants chemically flailing the soft tissue inside our chest cavities with lashes made of long chains of cruel polymers. As the odious nicotine sticks burned, people talked innocuously about life and things and, I suspect, the unparalleled joys of cucumber farming, which is renowned above all other forms of vegetable growing, even more than being a carrot farmer—who forever tills the soil to provide us all with sweet, sweet keratin. When everyone was done with their discourses on vegetable husbandry, and had finished reminding their lungs who was boss, (thereby sowing the seeds for future, cancerous, rebellion,) we walked up to McDowell only a little shorter of breath.

At the entrance to McDowell, stray freshmen were separated from the upperclassmen and sent to the main hall, while we gathered like storm clouds on the balcony above them. Given the freshman class's (well-documented) level of drinking the previous night, I was surprised to see so many of them in attendance—*there might been as many as a baker's dozen!* Then again, I find that one should never underestimate the readiness of teenagers to, with extreme and unrestrained masochism, systematically wreak havoc on their own livers and other organs key to the maintenance of their precious, life sustaining, bodily fluids. But, as I've said before, the upperclassmen aren't any better.

Up on the balcony, we were handed balloons and, in case anyone might choose to act with free will, informed of exactly how they were supposed to be used. Evidently there were a number of anarchists among us, as a few balloons filtered down prematurely anyway. A group of freshmen below me played with one of them. I wondered, with the detached curiosity of a mad scientist, if I were to let mine fall, if they might play with it too.

They did, without even glancing to see where it came from.

The opening of the Achilles' Rager, for its last three incarnations, has been a symbolic replacement for hazing, filling the role it once played with (deliberately?) bad theater. When I was a prospective student (in 2015), it was actual hazing pretending to be merely symbolic hazing. Before then, it was just hazing plain and simple with no pretense of being otherwise. This, I suppose, is true progress.

Apollo took the stage and declared he was Dionysus. *I knew he had to be Apollo because Dionysus is, in fact, a middle-aged high school humanities teacher living in Decatur, Georgia. That's right—I'm pretty sure you can find him on Facebook too. We're friends. He liked a couple of my posts... Why are you looking at me like that?*

In any case, Apollo gave his speech followed by two goddesses, we dropped our balloons on the (pseudo) crowd of freshmen, and the party began in truly Apollonian style with nigh complete orderliness. I went downstairs, walked around the dance floor, and found the room with the food and drinks, where a large group of people where all lightly jostling each other to see who would get the next potato chip. There was a long line for the keg, which was, in truly Dionysian fashion, closely monitored by a squadron of individuals directed to check and re-check ID's least anyone have the audacity to try and sneak past with a cheap photograph crudely taped over a Starbucks gift card, as my step-brother used to do at the University of Georgia. A man asked me what I was drinking and I decided it was time to leave.

I walked around for a bit, went outside, and there I saw that the second cigarette break of the night was already well underway, having begun before the Rager started, and would likely last the remainder of the evening until well after the Rager was over. *I suspect we will soon discover that St. John's College is, in fact, a giant, interactive, amazingly complex Marlboro ad. All the recent donations will turn out to be secretly from the tobacco industry, which surely realizes that this is the only college in the country where smokers outnumber non-smokers.*

As the number of smokers in other parts of the country continues to drop, Johnnies will take up an increasingly inordinate share of the cigarette market, and the tobacco industry will increasingly advertise products specifically, even solely, to Johnnies. Finally, when all other colleges become tobacco free, the CEO's of the worlds' largest cigarette companies will meet and offer the college unlimited funds for the creation of new campuses and to pay for the tuition of every student, provided that we never ban smoking. After that, every book on the program will feature the protagonists taking cigarette breaks, Odysseus will covet Cuban cigars, St. Augustine will be converted by sharing a Hookah with a priest, Pascal will smoke a pipe between each fragment of his Pensées, and the devil will tempt humanity with a forbidden vape pen!

All of this will come to pass by the time Trump is impeached, but not before a second, and even more disastrous, Tucker Carlson interview.

I came back into the party to talk with the people on its edges. I've never been much of a dancer, but I've always found conversation enjoyable. In the room dedicated to food and drinks the floor had been covered in mud, which left the ground there sticky for at least a week afterwards. To avoid

it, I went to the room on other side of the hall, and there I was greeted by the secret illuminati who run Reality. The illuminati, like the other Reality Archons I had encountered, were very eager to make sure my night was going well and that I was enjoying the party. They recounted to me the horrible state they had found it in several years before, and how they had sought to reform it through a series of machinations so complex, and so long term in their design, that only a conspiracy theorist could make sense of them. They asked me if I thought anything could make it better. I can't recall what I said. Then, they were gone, disappearing in an instant when I was distracted, so that I looked back and found no one where they had been sitting.

Leaving the party, I ran into a somewhat drunk sophomore. She was with a group of men, so I stayed a moment and spoke with her. It was one of those inebriated conversations that go in circles never leaving or arriving anywhere, being in all places at once and also nowhere. I left her to the other RA's. It was late and I wanted to go back to the dorm and see my partner. The Rager is only for a certain group of students. The rest of us must make our own spaces. ♦



Gender Inclusive Housing: The Good, The Bad, and The Isolating

Lily Willover A'22

My personal experience of coming out as transgender and transitioning was better than most. My friends, all being of the millennial generation, were very accepting of me. Convincing my family of newfound sense of self was more difficult, but they came around in time. When I came out at my job, I was even more surprised to learn that my boss's son is transgender, so I found acceptance and understanding there as well. Despite this pattern of acceptance, I was surprised to find out the place that would accept my identity the least would be St. John's College, specifically when it comes to housing.

This is not to say that St. John's College, as an institution, has utterly failed me as a transgender individual. It would be rude of me to not acknowledge what they have done. The administration has made sure that my email uses my preferred name, that my tutors use my preferred name, and that my onecard uses my preferred name, albeit with my legal name beneath it in small print. All of these things are helpful and appreciated. Yet, these accommodations are a given. It is expected that the school will use the name that one uses on a daily basis, rather than one that has been abandoned for ages. I do not believe that St. John's should get a standing ovation for such a simple accommodation; rather, I think that it is the responsibility of those of us who feel discriminated in certain areas to hold the school accountable so that the college may improve through understanding the ideas and feelings of its students.

Specifically, I am writing to discuss the topic of gender inclusive housing on campus, and how the options given to me were lackluster. When I had first emailed the administration about gender inclusive housing, I was given two options. My first option was that I could stay in a single room on a female floor. My second option was that I could stay in the transgender hall located at Gilliam, which contains four single rooms and two doubles. Before I dive into what important option is missing, I will discuss the two options.

At first, I was far more interested in the first option on the female floor. In my eyes, it was ideal to stay on a floor with cisgender women, being able to use the female bathroom. Naturally, I feel more comfortable around other woman than

I do with men, so knowing that I would be in a living space away from men was preferable. Naively, I also thought that having a single room would be good for relaxation, but in my first week, I found out how this was not something that works for me. I can be introverted, shy, and more of a "homebody," but being around others is important to me too. It is difficult to be fully alone in this small dorm room I call home. I miss having someone to talk with and laugh with once the day is done. Small things like sharing dinner and sharing rest in the same room at night relaxes me during difficult times. Being in this room on my own has been isolating for me, and I dearly wish I had a roommate to share a space with. In the spirit of talking about feelings of isolation, I'll move to the second option.

When I first heard the second option for the transgender hall, the immediate thought was, "That seems isolating." Indeed, I still feel that way. I am very comfortable around others who are transgender, as we can all understand each other's struggles. Yet, there was a concept here that I did not like.

Here is a hall, all the way at the end of campus, with only a few rooms and a couple showers, in which they put those they can't put into a category of "male" or "female." Now, I am in no way meaning to say that the transgender hall is deliberately isolating transgender folks. I know the good intentions in it; I simply am expressing how it has made me personally feel. The way it feels, to me, is that those of us who identify as transgender or any gender that is not of the "norm" are different. In the administration's eyes, we are not fully male or fully female. If this weren't the case, St. John's would offer a third option.

Gender inclusive housing is more than just being able to stay on the female hall or to have a small hall of people to identify with; it's about actually being fully inclusive to gender identities. What this means is that a third option should exist. An opt-in should be added on the housing survey to ask a cisgender male or female if they would be willing to room with someone who is transgender. Allowing this option would not be new, as many other colleges already allow students to have a roommate of any gender. According to the website, Campus Pride, a non-profit group

that helps LGBTQ student leaders and organizations, 266 colleges and Universities across the US have gender inclusive housing where students can room with any gender (Beemyn). Eight of these are other institutions within Maryland, such as the University of Maryland, John Hopkins University, St. Mary's College of Maryland, among others (Beemyn). I have also personally talked to a few people on my floor that are cisgender who would be perfectly fine rooming with a transgender woman.

With the rise of many people being more comfortable expressing who they are, these identities become better known and accepted. Because of this, I will not sit idly by as I feel pushed aside by the concept of legal gender. If the school wishes to accept me and all the other transgender students, then they must fully accept us as the gender we identify with. It is time for St. John's to step up and work with its transgender students to provide a more comprehensive housing policy that will provide a variety of options that are comfortable and inclusive for everyone on campus.

What the College needs to do in conclusion:

- Work with its transgender students directly to assess their needs
- Adjust the current housing policy to a more progressive one where anyone can opt-in to have a roommate of any gender identity
- Survey the student body to see the current thoughts of everyone on campus
- Generally listen to and respect the needs of those of us who are LGBT, have mental struggles, or do not have neurotypical mindsets (such as Autism).

Are you cisgender and feel similar about the housing policy? Reach out to me at lwillover@sjc.edu with your name, year, and gender and let me know if you would be okay having a transgender, non-binary, or gender non-conforming roommate! ♦

Works Cited:

Beemyn, Genny. "Colleges and Universities That Provide Gender-Inclusive Housing." Campus Pride, www.campuspride.org/tpc/gender-inclusive-housing/. Accessed 9 September, 2018

Drürer: Master Prints

Will Harrington, Mitchell Gallery Guard A'20

The Mitchell Gallery is exhibiting Albrecht Durer: Master Prints until October 14th.

Albrecht Durer lived from 1471-1528. As a child with a knack for drawing, he was sent to apprentice for the artist Michael Wolgemut. He became well known during his lifetime for his work in printmaking: both woodcuts and engravings. The easy replicability of prints allowed Durer to become very rich as he became popular; and later in his life, he was patronized by the Emperor Maximilian I. Even through this rise in popularity and wealth, Durer maintained a consistent interest in human proportionality, and the ability for the visual arts to depict accurately the outer world. This interest culminated in Durer writing two books on artistic technique. The first, *Four Books on Measurement*, focuses on the problems of depicting Geometrical figures correctly.

The second, *Four Books on Human Proportion*, deals with the problems of accurately portraying the human body, but most importantly, all the different forms of human bodies.

Why exhibit Durer at St. John's? There are several reasons for this, but as a student working at the gallery (so, looking at these pieces a lot), I think the main point of interest for us is in the questions of representation. This exhibition is set up so that you walk straight from the doorway to the earliest work of Durer's on display, *Not Preparing for Death* (1492). If you follow the four walls you end up at a work copying Durer, *Descent from the Cross*, by one "Master L.D." The earliest work comes off as very German, or Gothic, with thicker lines, and a flatter scene overall. The last has a roundness and depth helped by an overabundance of thin lines. If you move clockwise from the first to the

last pieces, in between there is a wealth of human representation on display. Ranging from the Renaissance-realistic emotional, to the thick line figurative. There is one image which pays tribute to Durer in the form of double-portrait and realistic representations of architectural elements. Walking through, you begin to get a feel for the aesthetic forms of his day. The endless copying forms from nature, and re-copying what the masters figured out from nature. One wants to ask questions of these paintings, about why accuracy became the main mark of beauty.

A smaller interest is in the prints we have from Durer's Passion series. These are of special interest to the Sophomores studying the New Testament and the St. Matthew's Passion, for their accuracy in displaying emotion, and their relation to the narrative tradition of the passion which is also the background of Bach's piece. ♦

They/Them/Theirs

The hardest part of writing is the opening sentence. As I sat down to write this, I wasn't sure how to approach it. Do I start with saying that I've only just recently changed my pronouns? Should I introduce myself or go straight into discussing gender?

The most important thing to realize when discussing an individual's gender is that how they identify isn't all that they are. However, since arriving to St. John's a month ago, my gender is what I've been struggling to discuss with people the most.

Before move-in day, I told some of my Johnnie friends that I would be using they/them pronouns instead of she/her, as I had introduced myself to them as. I could write a whole book on the six months that I had spent deliberating my gender identity, but that's for another time.

What I admired most of my friends is that they didn't even blink at it;

it took me so long to work up the courage to even call myself nonbinary, but they took it in stride and treated me the same as they would a cisgender person.

But those were the friends I had for months, who I knew were good people. Starting my freshman year of college meant that I would have to introduce myself to quite a few people, and I wasn't sure how I felt about coming out to each person I met. Back home in Indiana, I had to be very careful of who knew, and that caution has been translated into who I am. I am not an easily trusting person.

One of my biggest hesitations to using they/them pronouns was that I still present myself as very feminine. I'm pretty sure I've worn skirts/dresses for the majority of the time I've been here. But, without going into the realm of gendered clothing, when I wear dresses, people tend to assume that I'm female. And while some days I can embrace that femininity, I just want to be able to wear

Hayley Nord A'22

comfortable clothes without being misgendered.

I know, of course, that most people don't mean to misgender me, especially at St. John's. It is hard to know a person's pronouns sometimes. But the trick to knowing is just to ask. When you first meet someone, ask them what their pronouns are. Even if they "look" cisgender. Even though I'm feminine, I'm not a female. Don't assume someone's gender just because they present themselves as more feminine or more masculine.

The community at St. John's is so welcoming. I'm not afraid to come out to anyone here. My favorite part of the people here is the fact that no matter how you identify or how you look, you're respected here. Your mind and your ideas are what matters. What you're learning is what matters. And who you are is what matters too. ♦

Thoughts on Becoming the People's College

Rose Pelham

A '20

Not long ago we all gathered in the Francis Scott Key Auditorium to hear that the college was freezing tuition at \$35,000 a year while continuing to provide substantial financial aid, and it would be paid for by enlarging the college's endowment with donations, largely from wealthy alumni and philanthropists. All of this would happen in conjunction with a media campaign to increase the visibility of the college and attract new students, starting with an article in the New York Times published as we were gathered there in the auditorium. President Kalenos spoke in terms of making the college accessible to more students and insuring anyone who wanted to could afford to study here. He argued too many colleges were raising the price of tuition in order to appear more prestigious and this was forcing lower-income students out of higher education. His rhetoric was, in places, conspicuously, deliberately populist, borrowing upon terminology and catch phrases popularized first by Occupy Wall Street, then by Bernie Sanders and the Democratic Socialists. There was speak of the ninety-nine percent, of recruiting students from less-than-outrageously-affluent backgrounds, and, of course, of greater inclusivity and diversity. It was a message that sounded current, in touch with the views of the majority of the student body, and liberal, even socially progressive.

The key word for the evening, even more than the phrase "freeing minds," was "philanthropy," which has had a long, if sometimes uneasy, history with progressivism. Andrew Carnegie, in his 1889 essay "The Gospel of Wealth" argued to the effect that the wealthy should invest their money in institutions operating to the public benefit, such as colleges and libraries. In such benevolent largess, he claimed, millionaires and billionaires would be able to use their wealth for the benefit of society. Elizabeth Kolbert has argued in the New Yorker¹ that Carnegie's "Gospel" and its modern counterparts are problematic, both

due to the exploitative way in which the large fortunes necessary to become a philanthropist are acquired, and the consequences of a small number of people being able to use their inordinate wealth to single-handedly influence social change. Her article went on to point out the troubling parallels between the America of the Gilded Age (approximately 1870 to 1900), and our "Second Gilded Age" present, when wealth has again become increasingly concentrated in fewer and fewer hands, leading to a new class of philanthropists. She claims these latter philanthropists, just like their forbearers, have not equalized society with their giving, or solved major social ills, but have managed to effectively convert their wealth into power, which has corroded democracy by undermining majority rule. In this light, Philanthropy, while it often claims to be benevolent, tends to exacerbate social inequality in a way that might conflict with some of the more populist messaging of "Freeing Minds."

It seems implausible that we could separate the way we acquire

money for the endowment from the ends to which it is used. If the money comes from appeals made to the wealthy few, which all of it presumably has, then that must necessarily have an influence on how it is used, and consequently, on the culture of the college. How can we call ourselves the school for the ninety-nine percent and at the same time rely upon the interest and investment of the one percent? We could argue it is a necessary evil, but to do so avoids directly answering the question. To make a better argument, we could claim all people have fundamentally the same interest in the college. In which case, we could appeal to the supposed universality of the canon and argue the knowledge it contains is of interest to everyone, regardless of income or opinion or identity. But this assumes the canon is a stable, self-contained entity, existing in a realm apart from ideology or identity, even though its creation is formulated around expressing an idealized form of the identity of "Western" society, which is inherently also political. That is to say, what we deem sufficiently "great" or

Vision

Iapetus Leviathan

My greatest wish, to eye the rising sun
And through those eyes a beauty never seen,
To see the earth and heavens turn to one,
Is more a dream than something one could win.

For stars come not upon an empty head
With furrowed brows and sapphire gleaming eyes
They're born as spirit burrowed into lead
Learning of love amidst a throne of cries.

Within the earth the greatest gems are found
Yet in the heavens they did once reside
And if one tempts fate to bring them aground
One must know how to love them out of night.

It's through such pains that wishes can abound
And be as music to ones without sound ♦

¹ "Gospels of Giving for a New Gilded Age" August 27, 2018 Issue

"western" to warrant inclusion in the canon, is itself an act of constructing a "Western" identity, and therefore has political consequences. For this reason we cannot place the canon above questions of identity or politics. If we treat inequality in socio-economic status as a political issue, then, it will have an affect on the canon. So the second answer falls apart under the weight of its contradictions, leaving us only with recourse to the necessary evil, which does not resolve the contradiction so much as sustain it. Perhaps all we can do is be aware of the tension between what we say we want to be and the way we go about it.

During the presentation, President Kalenos openly acknowledged those who will benefit most directly from the drastic reduction and freeze in the cost of tuition will be upper middle class students who were paying near the full tuition price. The policy, however, does not seem to be aimed only, or even primarily, at the upper middle class. President Kalenos also argued the reduction in the advertised price of tuition was intended more as a symbol of affordability rather than the thrust of an effort to reduce costs to students. He heavily implied that the actual cost for students and their families would come in the form of liberally applied scholarships, which would have the effect of making the college affordable for everyone. This, I think, is laudable.

My parents divorced when I was five years old. In high school I went to live with my father, a high school teacher. His yearly income is less than the approximately \$52,000, which used to be the annual cost of tuition not including fees. At the end of high school, I had barely more savings than he did. My mother couldn't afford to pay for me to go to college, as well as look after my younger brother (who will be in college next year) and her aging parents. The expectation was I would apply to St. John's, get in, and go to the University of Georgia, which offered in-state tuition and guaran-

teed scholarships. After financial aid, however, the cost of attending St. John's College was less than the cost of attending UGA would have been. My step brother, who goes to a state college on in-state tuition, with scholarships, will graduate with far more debt than I will have. No one in my family expected this would be the case. The cost of tuition lead us to believe St. John's would almost certainly be unaffordable even with aid. I have no doubt it has discouraged some people from applying.

I don't agree with the questioner who suggested lowering the cost of tuition might result in the college

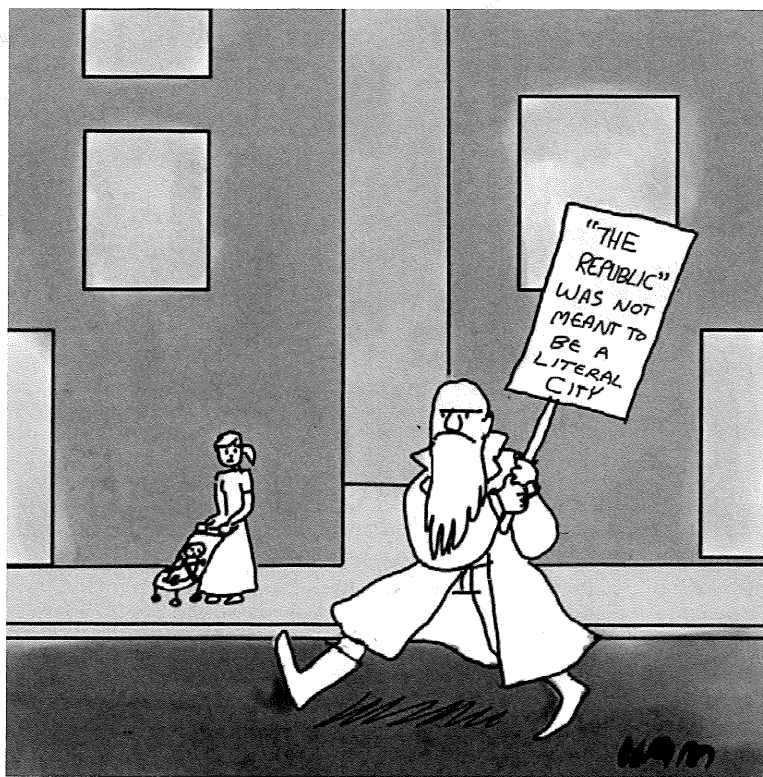
tent of what was said, but because of the possibility for future change it left open. In his speech, President Kalenos argued the objective of the "capital campaign" was to acquire the money needed to make the college (financially) accessible to everyone. When my boyfriend and I first heard the word "accessible" we did not think about finances. We thought about what would be needed to include students with disabilities in the college community, and the changes it would necessitate.

St. John's is an especially hard college for students with disabilities. Our curriculum, and our campus, is designed in such a way as to make it

nearly as inaccessible as possible to a great many people. I cannot imagine what the difficulty of seminar would be to someone who had trouble hearing, or the challenge seminar readings would pose for someone who could not see. I know students with dyslexia already get relatively sparse accommodations, which can make classes almost impossibly difficult. If we want to make the college more accessible, why should we limit ourselves to finances? Why should we exclude a whole class of students for no fault of their own? Do we hold it against people that their needs should sometimes be different?

I hope the college will come to the conclusion that, if it wants to be accessible to everyone—if

it wants to be a college for all people interested in the curriculum—then we must find better ways to include students with disabilities. ♦

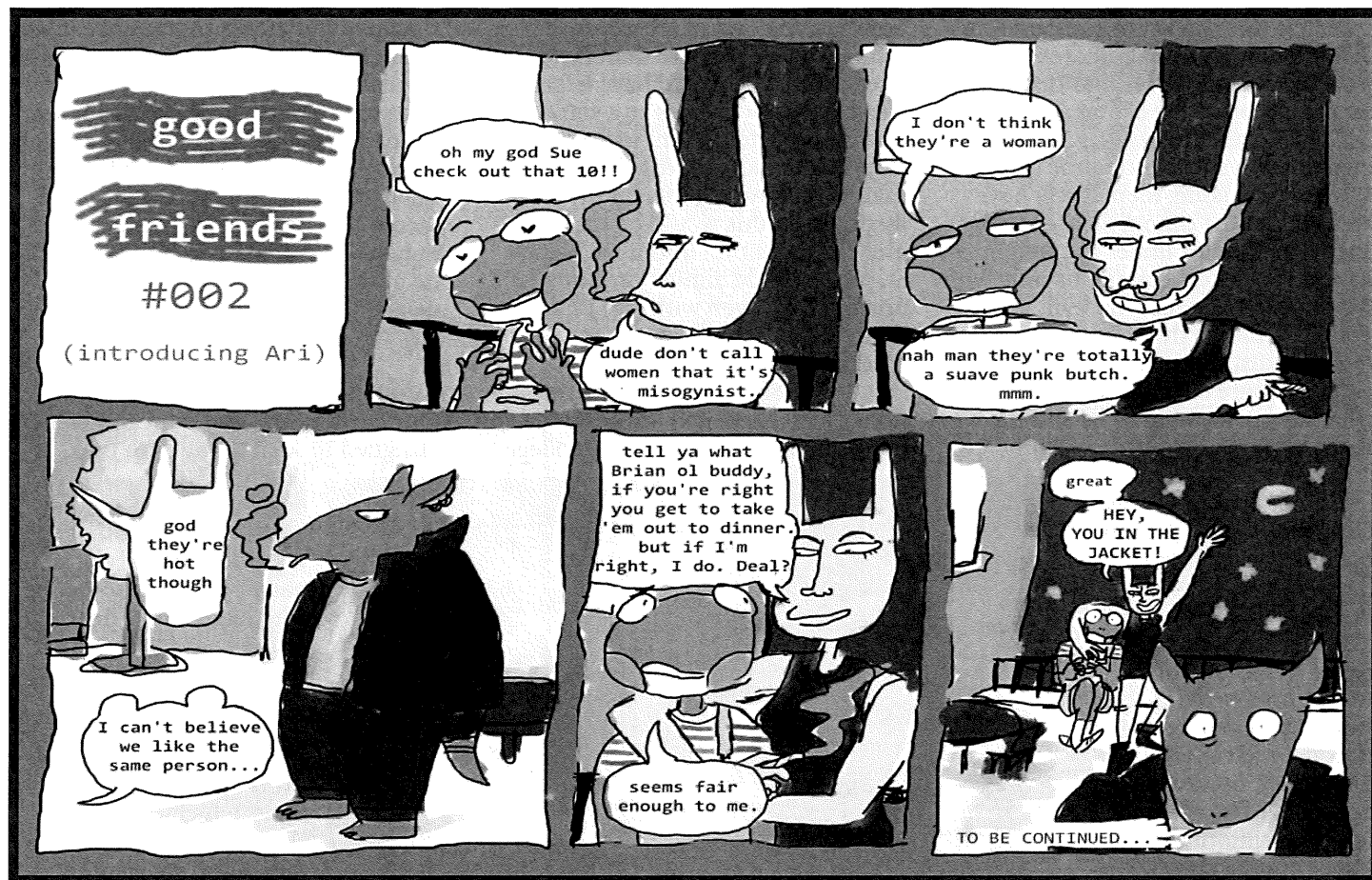


recruiting worse students through loss of prestige and competition. Money has never made anyone smarter. We should recognize that when we read Plato's Meno and witness the eponymous character's ignorance—which seems to be actively encouraged by his wealth and power. Asking for too much money, however, forces many qualified individuals out of the pool of potential students, even when they might have been better off academically or made better college students than their wealthier peers.

What gave me the most hope was the talk of making the college more accessible, not because the con-

Good Friends, #002

Hamilton Christian A'21



Who was Jacob Klein?

The early days of the College have been shrouded in mystery. Everyone knows the New Program was implemented in 1937 and ever since then St. John's has served as one of the most unique institutions in higher education. However, who were the people who helped shape the College as we know it today? A few names are relatively known, e.g. Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan. And of course, everyone knows Eva Brann, one of the earliest tutors associated with the Program. Yet it would be beneficial to remind ourselves of an often-forgotten name, Jacob Klein.

Jacob Klein, known affectionately as Jasha, was born in Russian Latvia and educated in post-WWI Germany by prominent scholars of the time such as Martin Heidegger. With the advent of the Nazi Party in Europe, he was forced to flee to America where he became one of the first tutors under the New Program. Klein served at the College from the time of his arrival to his death in 1978 acting as Dean from 1949 to 1958. He is the man who, as shown in a promotional video from the 50's, was not only a great counsellor but also the only person who could draw a perfect circle by hand.

Here are a couple prominent anecdotes about him:

1. In the late 1960s, townspeople in Annapolis, proud of the long heritage of the Naval

Academy, were often suspicious of the "hippies" at the other (and very unusual) undergraduate school in town, St. John's College. One early summer evening, as shadows from the tall trees covered the sloping lawns in the front of the campus, an Annapolis matron phoned Dean Klein to angrily complain that couples were "fornicating on front lawn".

After contacting a campus guard and learning that indeed some couples were necking in the shadows—but nothing more—Klein phoned the lady back and extended his deepest apologies. In his cultured voice with a slight continental accent, he explained, "If I've told them once, I've told them a thousand times—fornication on BACK CAMPUS ONLY!"

2. During WWII the Navy considered seizing the campus of St. John's via eminent domain in order to expand the Naval Academy. The fledgling New Program which was based on the great books of western tradition had just recently found a home there, on a campus whose oldest building was constructed before the Revolution, and with funding precarious, any move would probably kill this controversial endeavor outright.

A small delegation headed by Jasha Klein was sent to Washington to try to dissuade the government from seizing the campus. They entered the office of the Secretary of the Navy, who brusquely told them, "You have exactly one

Ivan Syritsyn A'19

minute to tell me why I shouldn't use your buildings to help the Academy in war time." Jasha Klein silently took out his pipe and began filling it with tobacco. He lit the pipe and checked to see if it was drawing well. Then, after 55 seconds had passed, this renowned scholar who had fled Hitler stood up and went to the door.

Turning, he said, "Because without what St. John's stands for, this country is not worth defending against the Nazis." The Navy built the addition across the Severn River instead.

Besides having a very colorful character he was a prominent scholar in his own right. He wrote several preeminent works such as *A Commentary on Plato's Meno*, *Plato's Trilogy: Theaetetus, the Sophist, and the Statesman*, and *Greek Mathematical Thought and the Origin of Algebra*. His correspondents included such prominent names as Hannah Arendt and Nicholas Nabokov. Although his work and administrative role had a great impact on the College few visible signs of his prominence remain today. One can still find a few pictures and portraits of him around, most notably in the Dean's office. Hopefully in the coming years we can rediscover the value in his thought. At the very least, we can pay proper homage to the man whose spirit and vitality ensured the survival of St. John's to our present day. ♦