

The Trinity Tripod

-ESTABLISHED 1904-

Now then-Trinity!

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

Volume CXVI
Number XII

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NEWS EDITOR

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FEATURES EDITOR

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To Our Readers:

Keep your eye out for the *Tripod's* Sunday morning feature series on issues of history, importance, and interest to the Trinity community. Check it out on Instagram or our website, trinitytripod.com.

This week, the *Tripod* considers the religious history of the College and its connections to the Episcopal Church.

Bicentennial Planning, Comprehensive Campaign Beset By Ongoing Pandemic

GARRETT KIRK '24
NEWS EDITOR

The *Tripod* conducted an investigation into the College's plans for the Bicentennial, as well as its progress with the Bicentennial Comprehensive Campaign.

Director of Media Relations Stacey Sneed told the *Tripod* that those serving on the Trustees' Bicentennial Committee consist of "Philip Khoury '71, former trustee, and Kelli Harrington Tomlinson '94, current trustee, are chairs of the Bicentennial Celebration Group. Cornelia Thornburgh '80, Board Chair, and Kate McGlew, Director of Major College Events, are also part of that group."

In terms of the regularity of meetings, Sneed said "[t]he Celebration Group met with President Berger-Sweeney in August to discuss the mission of the Bicentennial Celebration and share ideas about the kind of events

that could be planned."

Sneed also mentioned that "[t]his group will meet quarterly to provide general oversight and guidance to the Bicentennial Steering Committee, which is chaired by Kate McGlew. The group met again in the fall to further discuss the mission and develop the planning committee structure outlined. The Steering Committee will develop specific celebration plans with the help of subcommittees that represent all areas of Trinity."

Sneed said "[d]uring the fall, they discussed the mission and developed the planning committee structure outlined [see the response above]. We anticipate sending a letter to the community this month inviting broad participation in this effort."

Sneed additionally stated "[w]e haven't scheduled specific Bicentennial events yet—first we want to invite participation in the planning effort—but we



The College has raised \$182 million as of March 2020.

TRINITY COLLEGE

anticipate kicking off the celebration in September 2022 and are planning for a fifteen-month celebration that will continue through the fall 2023 semester."

Sneed noted that "[i]t's too early in the planning process to talk about specific publications or commemorations, but we do know that a fuller telling of Trinity's history and a celebration of that history, which is under way already by the Primus Project, will be a significant focus of our Bicentennial

efforts." Other institutions, including Oberlin and Dartmouth, have developed and published commemorative histories in advance of their Bicentennials.

The *Tripod* previously reported on the Comprehensive Campaign in September 2020, noting the College has raised \$182 million so far, but is still working on the total goal of reaching \$435 million. \$64 million of those funds came from November 2019 to September 2020.

see CAMPAIGN on page 3

Tripod Examines Chaplain Search

KIP LYNCH '22
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

The College has recently posted the job description for College Chaplain and Dean of Spiritual and Religious Life. The Rev. Allison Read previously served in the position for 12 years before accepting the position of chaplain at Groton School in Feb. 2020.

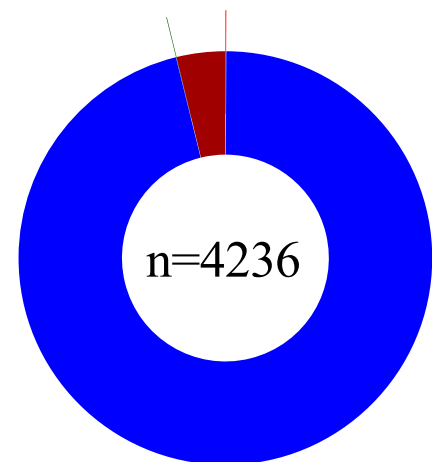
The posting indicates that the chaplain "collaborates with College administrators, faculty, staff, students, the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, and other spiritual care leaders of the College community to enrich the spiritual and intellectual life of the campus" and "fosters holistic student development, builds a vibrant community of faith, and furthers the mission of Trinity College to prepare students to be bold, independent thinkers who lead transformative

lives."

The College Chaplain is required to "conduct regular services in the Chapel according to the customs of the College and the provisions of the Episcopal Church; preach regularly in the Chapel and provide for visiting preachers" and "conduct special services, e.g. baptisms, weddings, memorial services for members of the College." Although ordination in the Episcopal Church is required in order to conduct services such as Holy Communion according to the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer, it is not listed as a minimum qualification in the job description. Preferred qualifications include a Doctor of Theology and "3 or more years of experience as a College/University Chaplain and/or teaching experience in

see CHAPLAIN on page 4

COVID Test Results: March 8 - March 15



- 0.07% Positive
- 96.08% Negative
- 0.05% Inconclusive
- 3.80% Invalid

In total, Trinity has conducted 4,236 PCR tests between Mon., March 8 and Thurs., Mar. 4, with an overall positive test rate of 0.07%. The inconclusive test rate was similar at 0.05% while the invalid and negative test rates were 3.80% and 96.08%, respectively. As of Mon., Mar. 15, there were 3 active student cases, but 19 students in quarantine due to close exposure.

The Trinity Tripod

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Trinity College

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CORRECTIONS

In the article titled "Spiritual Life and Religious Services at Trinity Stay Easily Accessible in the Wake of a Global Pandemic" on page 8 of the Features in the Mar. 9, 2021 edition of the *Tripod*, the term Islamism was incorrectly placed in a survey of religious offerings. The term has been corrected to Islam in the online version of the article.

On The Lost Class of 2020

The Class of 2021, no doubt, is fortunate to have an in-person Commencement ceremony this year. The decision was, by most estimations, unexpected, and in recent days peer institutions such as Bates and Williams have announced similar plans for in-person ceremonies (though Williams has indicated that no family members will be admitted to the ceremony).

However, what became equally clear following the announcement by the College last week was a deep and abiding disappointment among the recently departed members of the Class of 2020 for a ceremony of their own. What is to become of their recognition and accomplishments? What justifies keeping them away from campus for another year to mark the milestones that, for so many, are an indomitable part of the Trinity spirit and a prerequisite to closing the chapter on those "care and sorrow free" undergraduate days.

Last August, no doubt, was an overly optimistic projection from those who bemoaned the decision to cancel May Commencement and petitioned for an opportunity in the late summer. The pandemic has been borne out and demonstrated that any in-person gathering of significant size and stature is certainly impossible and, even today, an appreciable risk.

Even so, the College has made the bold declaration that by this May conditions will permit an in-person gathering, divided between two ceremonies, for the Class of 2021 and two members each from their families. Why can the same not be offered for the Class of 2020, particularly when they were promised a celebration this year.

The timing seems sensible. Joe Biden asserted last week that all citizens should be eligible for the vaccine by May 1. The pace of vaccinations continues to increase, with 100 million doses delivered since January 20. Today, Ned Lamont indicated that Connecticut residents over

16 would be eligible to be vaccinated by Apr. 5. Already, as of Monday, as many as 101.1 million doses have been administered and 19.9% of the U.S. population has been vaccinated, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Still, even with the mass vaccination campaign, it strikes the *Tripod* that, by any measure, an in-person Commencement for any class will still run a risk. Coronavirus requires but one infected person to spawn an outbreak. To assuage that concern, the College promises safety measures of masks, distancing, and testing.

In her letter to the Class of 2020, however, President of the College Joanne Berger-Sweeney had a solitary "prime reason" that a ceremony for last year's class cannot occur is because "current students continue to participate in comprehensive, on-campus testing and safety protocols leading up to and through Commencement."

But are the two guests per student in the Class of 2021 participating in comprehensive, on-campus testing? The reality is that as many as 1,200 parents or other family members could arrive to celebrate the Class of 2021 this May and they, as much as any member of the Class of 2020, will have spent the preceding weeks free from the "comprehensive, on-campus" testing regimen that is presented as the scion of safety.

If 1,200 parents from across the country are deemed sufficiently safe to attend with the presentation of a negative PCR test, what bars a ceremony for the Class of 2020? The addition of 600 members of the Class of 2020 also submitting their negative PCR tests to remain in compliance hardly seems to increase the risk sufficiently to merit cancelling their ceremonies for another year. In both events, the numbers would be similar: close to 2,000 students and parents would be on Trinity's campus in May. That is a risk, but a risk the

College feels is worth taking for one class but not two.

Several enterprising members of the Class of 2020 have gone further in their pursuit of ensuring safety, according to a recent petition which has circulated, and have attained a commitment from BioReference Laboratories to offer free on-campus COVID-19 testing for all participants. On that basis alone, any cost prohibitions to the College could be reduced by some measure, and an additional opportunity for safety from the virus has manifested itself.

Indeed, there is no shame whatsoever in proceeding with caution on the question of Commencement, but that caution should be well-placed: if it is safe for parents from all corners of the nation to return to campus for the ceremony of the Class of '21, a few extra students returning from outside the auspices of Trinity's comprehensive system for the Class of '20 hardly seems to augment the risk levels so significantly as to bar an event.

The College ought to consider being more frank about what it is doing to plan commemorations for these young graduates. They, too, are among the ranks of alums who have trod in the same coop as we, investing countless hours in pursuit of their coveted degrees. They deserve some recognition and, if it is possible to orchestrate that recognition this year, then by God with all our zeal and effort we ought to do it.

At the very least, a date certain should be set for the ceremony, not an ambiguous smattering of summers in the forthcoming years. A conciliatory message from the President that affixes no future date for a ceremony (or proposes a celebration during the Bicentennial in another two years) hardly seems acceptable consolation. To many, it smacks of an insult. Those students deserve better. Trinity deserves better.

-The Trinity Tripod

Want to write for the *Tripod*?

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NEWS

SGA Weekly Meeting Discusses Mather Options, Budget Shifts

HALLIE BACHMAN '24
CONTRIBUTING WRITER
and
GARRETT KIRK '24
NEWS EDITOR

On Mar. 14, 2021, the Student Government Association (SGA) met for their weekly meeting to discuss their plans for the upcoming months at Trinity.

The Food Committee met with Chartwells and pushed for Trinity to increase the amount of vegan and vegetarian friendly food options available in Mather Dining Hall and the Bistro alike. The chefs were receptive, and the Food Committee was optimistic that some changes will come out of this interaction.

SGA discussed a proposal relating to the rules for how SGA Executive Board members are elected. There was some disagreement over how the proposal should be written. Some members of SGA believed that the proposal should follow the lines of the U.S. Constitution, while oth-

ers thought that was putting too much pressure on SGA to be like a state entity, and thus they argued that the governing body should be more flexible as a school government. Members argued that the proposal needed more transparency so that students felt it was their choice who was on the board.

SGA Vice President for Finance Camille Valentincic '22 circled back with the meeting attendees about the miscommunication that occurred with the recent budget changes made in the finance manual. Valentincic noted that after this previous change occurred, there had been disagreements from outside parties surrounding the modifications, and a prior public forum was used by these organizations to voice their grievances. Umoja Cultural-House Coordinator Joderick Estrella '22 responded by mentioning that organizations outside SGA would like to be included in future decisions of this nature since budget changes affect

everybody at the College.

SGA Vice President Jack Stone '22 also told listeners that the housing lottery has been tentatively scheduled to occur during the last week of April. Stone brought up the unique challenges that incoming first-years face in the pandemic world as a future issue to address, regarding housing and become more acquainted with the Trinity community. Stone also discussed the potential of telling students about the utility of the Bantam Network as a way that these individuals can meet potential roommates.

Towards the close of the meeting SGA President Giovanni Jones '21 reminded those who attended the meeting that the SGA elections are on the horizon. Jones reminded members of the association and others at the meeting that election packets are to be distributed on Apr. 11, with class presidency and Executive Board candidates campaigning up until the official elections on Apr. 28.

Campaign Progress

continued from page one

Vice President for College Advancement Michael Casey declined a telephonic interview. Casey instead submitted a statement to the *Tripod* that shows these figures have since increased, saying “[w]e’ve raised \$196 million to date and we are still in the quiet phase of the campaign.”

Casey also noted in his statement that “we are on track to hit our overall goals despite some adjustments due to the pandemic to focus more on providing immediate support for students and families through the annual fund, gifts to support current financial aid, and the student equity and emergency fund. As we come through this moment, we will focus more of our attention on the facilities and endowment initiatives in the campaign.”

Casey noted that a *Tripod* article from 2019 detailed the different areas the capital from the campaign will go to, including “Financial Aid,” “Academic Distinction,” “Endowing Athletics and Facilities,” the “Trinity Fund,” “Student Life Programming and Facilities,” and the “Chapel Endowment and Facilities.”

During the 2019 fiscal year, the College received an alumni participation percentage of 30.3%, totaling 6,813 alumni donors. These numbers had fallen from the 2010 percentage of 55.3%, a year that saw almost double the number of alumni donors at 11,078.

Recent efforts to contribute to the fund from alumni come in light of the College’s past two campaigns. Both campaigns managed to exceed the College’s goals, with the 2006 “Cornerstone Campaign,” which raised \$281.1 million, and the College’s “Legacy Campaign” which reached \$87.9 million.

Other NESCAC institutions have been working on campaign objective of their own, with Williams exceeding its objectives, raising \$650 million in a recent campaign. Williams has also recognized alumni and alumna with a Bicentennial Medal. Amherst College has also created a history website and commissioned several years in advance three keepsake books addressing Amherst’s history and alumni achievements according to *The Amherst Student*.

DEI Faculty Launch Community Outreach Initiatives

JACK P. CARROLL '24
NEWS EDITOR

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Faculty Fellows outlined plans to connect with staff, students, and faculty to compile information on “initiatives across campus that are focused on racial injustice and broader DEI issues” in an email addressed to members of the Trinity community on Thursday, Mar. 4. According to the email, the Fellows’ plans are a part of a broader effort to “communicate about the work that is being done and to foster connections” on initiatives related to these matters.

Launched by the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in fall 2020, the DEI

Faculty Fellows program was created to “provide support to individual faculty, departments, and programs in their diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice efforts.” For the 2020-2021 academic year, the Fellows include the following faculty members: Professor of Political Science and Department Chair Stefanie Chambers; Eric Galm, Professor of Music and Chair of the Music Department; Charles A. Dana Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience Sarah Raskin; Associate Professor of Chinese and International Studies Yipeng Shen; and Head Swimming and Diving Coach and Assistant Professor of Physical Education Carlos Vega.

In an emailed response

to the *Tripod*, the Fellows clarified that each of the appointed professors “serve as liaisons and help connect people to resources. If we are approached by students, faculty, and staff we will help direct them to available resources.” When asked about their past work on racial injustice and DEI issues, the Fellows highlighted their efforts to run an equity certificate program for Trinity faculty and staff, create a record of DEI groups, programs, and initiatives at Trinity, and to connect P.R.I.D.E. leaders and DEI Faculty Fellows.

With regard to the certificate program, the Fellows stated that “In January, we offered a four-part virtual Equity Certificate Program

facilitated by two nationally recognized DEI experts, Amy Bonomi at Michigan State University and Nelia Viveiros at the University of Colorado at Denver.” The Fellows noted that “approximately 200 faculty and staff participated in this training and received certificates upon completion. In feedback surveys, 90% of the participants recommended this program to their colleagues.”

The Fellows also indicated that they are currently soliciting information from faculty, departments/programs, students, and staff to fulfill their goal of creating a record of DEI groups at Trinity. Regarding their February meeting with student peer leaders in the

Promoting Respect for Inclusion and Diversity in Education (P.R.I.D.E.) leadership program, the Fellows stated that the “goal of these ongoing meetings is to share information and find opportunities to collaborate across the two groups.”

Furthermore, the Fellows noted that they have not been in direct contact with the Board of Trustees’ Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, which was formed over the summer in response to student concerns about equity issues on campus. The Fellows added that they are “in constant communication with Dr. Anita Davis, Vice President for DEI, who serves as a Cabinet-level liaison to the committee.”

College Campus Safety Report: Mar. 8 - Mar. 15

Monday, March 8
Jarvis Parking Lot

Larceny.
Thefts from motor vehicle. This case remains open.

Wednesday, March 10
Jessie Miller Field

Property Vandalism.
Four students involved and received disciplinary referral.

Search For College Chaplain Advances

continued from page one

higher education.” This marks a departure from past searches. Former President and Professor of History, Emeritus Borden W. Painter, Jr. told the *Tripod* that “All searches up to now have specified that the person be ordained in the Episcopal Church.” He clarified that due to the Called to Common Mission that established full communion between the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, both churches recognize the validity of each other’s baptisms and ordinations. Thus, ministers ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church may be able to conduct Episcopal services as specified in the Book of Common Prayer.

Interim Co-Director of Spiritual and Religious Life John Rose described how, since the Trinity College Chapel is a consecrated Episcopal chapel, in previous searches “any Chaplain candidate proposed by the college has had to be approved by the Episcopal Bishop of Connecticut.”

The *Tripod* reached out to Dean of Student Life and Director of the Bantam Network Dr. Jody Goodman for comment. She is leading the search according to Chief of Staff and Vice President for External Affairs Jason Rojas. Goodman described how the search committee, despite not being finalized, has

“worked closely with Bishop Laura Aherns of the Episcopal Church of Connecticut... conducted focus groups with students, alumni, faculty, OSRL [Office of Spiritual and Religious Life] staff, and Hillel Board members to further assess the needs of OSRL.”

Goodman noted “the important history and relationship the College has with the Episcopalian tradition” and added that “we will always ensure that ordained ministers of this faith [Episcopal] tradition will be involved and officiate ceremonies as we have done this year. This process will be inclusive of all voices of our Trinity community, which includes students, staff, faculty, alumni, and affiliates of the Office of Spiritual and Religious Life.”

Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut Ian Douglas commented that “the Episcopal Church serves in a consultancy and support capacity to the search process for the next Chaplain at Trinity College. We are committed to helping generate applications from the best candidates possible in The Episcopal Church.”

The Rev. Trevor Beauford currently serves as Interim College Chaplain and Interim Co-Director of Spiritual and Religious Life while the Rev. Rebekah Hatch serves as Episcopal Chaplain. The other Interim Co-Director is John Rose, former College Organist and Director of Chapel Music.

Official Title IX Policy Released

JACK P. CARROLL '24
NEWS EDITOR

and

GARRETT KIRK '24
NEWS EDITOR

General Counsel and Secretary of the College Dickens Mathieu announced Monday afternoon that the College has made significant changes regarding policies on Sexual Harassment and Nondiscrimination. The College has altered the label of the Sexual Misconduct policy from “interim” to “official,” as well as making adjustments to the College’s policies.

Mathieu corresponded with the *Tripod* by email, saying that “[t]hese changes are part of the college’s commitment to continually review key policies and modify them, as necessary, for the benefit of our community.”

In terms of the new procedure for sexual improprieties, Mathieu said in his original email that “the new policy has been reorganized, to improve the sequence of information; supplemented, to clarify the roles, duties, and responsibilities of those responsible for enforcing the policy; and augmented, to provide additional step-by-step explanations and guidance concerning the procedures for reporting, assessing, investigating, and adjudicating allegations of sexual harassment.”

Complainants and respondents will no longer acquire multiple incident reports, there will instead

only be one document, the information of which will still be contestable throughout the hearing process.

Secondly, impact and mitigation statements will be collected before a particular hearing rather than after a case has been ruled on. When administering punishment to a respondent that is found responsible, the email added, the Title IX coordinator will prove this information to an Administrative Panel.

When asked about the difference in sanctions highlighted in the email, Mathieu told the *Tripod* that “[s]anctions may differ, depending on whether the Respondent is a student, faculty employee, or staff employee.”

In addition to shifting the guidance from “interim” to “official,” the College also brought in an outside firm for temporary “administrative support” for the new policies.

Mathieu indicated that “[f]or the next three to six months, the two policies... will be supported by external consultants from the firm Core Triangle. These individuals will serve in interim positions, while the college engages in searches for staff employees who will perform these functions permanently.”

The positions filled by Core Triangle are that of “Interim Assistant Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Compliance” and “Interim Deputy Title IX Coordinator.”

Mathieu told the *Tripod* Monday that “[f]rom the numerous firms that submitted

proposals, the college selected Core Triangle, because Core Triangle’s presentation inspired confidence that the firm will provide exceptional service to the college.”

Mathieu further indicated to the *Tripod* that “[t]he Interim AVP for DEI and Compliance will report to the General Counsel. The Interim Deputy Title IX Coordinator will report to the Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment. When occupied by permanent employees, the Deputy Title IX Coordinators will report to the Title IX Coordinator; the Title IX Coordinators will report to the AVP for DEI and Compliance; and the AVP for DEI and Compliance will report to the Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.”

The *Tripod* previously reported on the College’s commitment to hire permanent officials for these positions. President of the College Joanne Berger-Sweeney promised hires by the end of the fall semester, a position that was confirmed again to the *Tripod* in September. As of November, the positions remained unfilled.

Jayne Bianca '21 was part of this committee that prepared the interim policy. Bianca told the *Tripod* Monday that to her knowledge she was “unsure why the policy is being adopted permanently. We [the College] were originally required to adhere to Trump-DeVos era regulations, although we had some leeway.”

Intercollegiate Update: News on Nearby Campuses

University of Connecticut

The *Daily Campus* reported the university’s plans to relax several Covid-19 restrictions which began on Thursday, Mar. 11. Students will now be able to entertain guests in residence halls and host larger events outside (e.g., outdoor movement activities, entertainment performances) as part of the university’s transition to a “blue” status. Students living in residence halls are limited to one guest. The guests that students choose to host are required to leave campus by 11:59 p.m. At the time the article was written, the Storrs campus reported a Covid-19 positivity rate of 1.13 percent. In addition, 1,149 students, faculty, and staff have received their first dose of the vaccine and 1,001 have received a second dose. Dean of Students Elly Daughtery in an interview with the *Daily Campus* said that although the lifting of restrictions looks promising for the community, they will also “never lose sight of the disruption and concern this virus has caused... Covid-19 will, I hope, continue to fade as vaccination rates continue to rise and prevention efforts maintain good health.”

Wesleyan University

The *Wesleyan Argus* recently reported that the Connecticut Supreme Court released a decision in the *Kent Literary Club et al. v. Wesleyan University* case, reversing a previous judgement which had ruled in favor of the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity on Friday, Mar. 5. In the article, the *Argus* indicated that the Court’s decision “comes after six years of legal proceedings by the Kent Literary Club (KLC), the alumni chapter of DKE, against the university.” The KLC filed the lawsuit in Feb. 2015 after the fraternity failed to comply with a 2014 policy which indicated that “all residential fraternities on campus would have three years to become fully coeducational.” After a series of unsuccessful negotiations with the KLC, the university removed the fraternity’s property from the list of student housing options available for the following academic year. The Court’s decision comes after the university appealed a 2017 decision by the Middlesex Superior Court which ruled that the university had violated the Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act, and ordered the university to pay \$386,000 in damages and \$411,363 in attorney’s fees and costs.

Williams College

As reported by *The Williams Record*, the College has removed 127 students from campus following a party held on the ground floor of Wood House on the night of Feb. 26. According to the *Record*, 80-100 people were in attendance and many of the students were “unmasked” and “nonresidents” of the building, thereby “violating the College’s COVID rules prohibiting indoor socializing.” In the same article, widespread anger and frustration was reported among members of the Williams community following the discovery of the significant gathering of students. One student informed the *Record* that the behavior of students at the party was “deeply irresponsible, privileged, and demonstrates utter disregard for their community’s health.” One student who was at the party told the *Record* that “We’ve already been tormented so much. We’ve realized how much of a stupid mistake it was... We’ve been sent home. I am at home right now. I’m not at college where I should be. I am a student. And we’re still getting hate. Just chill out now.” The College’s response comes amidst widespread vaccination efforts to stem the tide of the virus nationwide.

OPINION

Coping with Video Games: The Positives and Negatives

SKYLAR SIMPKINS '23
OPINION EDITOR

In our newly pandemic-defined society, we all are frantically searching for a way to cope. Without our friends and family to rely on, most of us must look to other resources for entertainment and sanity. For myself and millions of others, video games are the end-all-be-all of coping mechanisms. Whether it be *Call of Duty*, *Animal Crossing*, or *Among Us*, millions of individuals worldwide turn to video games for much-needed comfort in our heavily modified reality. A concern about video games was their depictions of violence causing real-world violence, and while a small part of the population believes there is causation present, the vast majority have moved past blaming video games for violence and instead have taken time to understand mental illness. Today, the problem does not lie with violence but instead vicariousness. Those that play and enjoy games are in one way or another coping with our isolated realm by living vicariously through the intangible and animate world we immerse ourselves in.

We control the character, so we become the character. We mostly idolize our characters, their heroism, athleticism, and overall aesthetic. When we morph our minds into the screen, we become happier and content with our current situation. While this

sentimental cacophony seems effortless and painless, we must understand the gravity of the implications of existing within a fictitious reality.

While this coping mechanism is painless at inception, the pain will begin to build the longer you are entrenched in the video games' realm. Once you leave the game and are faced with the actual world around you, the pain will be felt, and it will be nearly insurmountable. Our minds will thrive on the euphoria of video games, creating withdrawal-like symptoms when you are away. We require more time in the imaginative universe to fulfill our psychological needs. This treacherous cycle will continue until all your motivation to complete earthly tasks diminishes, and your only motivation will lie with the quest menu.

The reality I describe is bleak, and not every gamer will fall the same way into this vicious cycle. What saves us from falling into complete dependence on video games is the upkeep of earthly motivations and social practice.

If we refresh our motivation to accomplish tasks in the real world, we cannot fall ill to video game ecstasy. We can do this by maintaining a few daily goals for ourselves: get dressed, vacuum the floor, turn in that biology homework, etc. With these little goals made, we ensure that our satisfaction cannot be fulfilled without their completion. This psychological mind trick will tether us to the real world

while we spend some time rappelling through Hyrule.

Although motivations can keep us on track to success, this is only a preventative measure. If you have already fallen into the deadening cycle of video games, how do you get out? The only way I believe someone

“We can do this by maintaining a few daily goals for ourselves: get dressed, vacuum the floor, turn in that biology homework, etc. With these little goals made, we ensure that our satisfaction cannot be fulfilled without their completion.”

can accomplish this feat is by interjecting reality into your video game. The best way to accomplish this is through social features. By adding human interaction to a video game, we become less indulged in the reality on the screen. We hear from other humans and are slowly pulled from our pseudo-reality. Social software allows us to realize that we are not in this game, and it does so with the softest touch. Our reality is rendered, but a reality rendered with friends who share a similar passion. We are reintroduced into the real world with friends who love the same guilty pleasures.

For most, it is hard to admit a dependency upon video games, mainly due to social implications, but this dependency is not all nefarious; in fact, it can motivate us in ways we never expect-

ed. If we idolize our character's aesthetic or athleticism, we might be moved to spend some more time in the gym or on self-care to achieve the physique of our pixelated friend. We could also be motivated to improve our mental state. If our character has a positive mindset that we

their video game reality will achieve it with no medication, no strenuous thought activity, and will not hurt anyone while engaged in the game. Video games are a safe way for individuals to relax and explore their imagination without the risk of external harm to others. This unmedicated euphoric state must be appreciated but cannot be worshipped due to the temptation of vicariousness.

None of us are perfect and with new isolation protocols, many of us feel more depressed than usual. Safe ways to relieve this depression should be honored but used carefully. Our mind thrives on euphoria and pleasure, so if we overindulge our mind in these stimuli, we enter ourselves into a deafening and dangerous cycle of pleasure and withdrawal. Every ounce of induced euphoria must be met with skepticism and caution to ensure that we do not fall victim to the withdrawal cycle.

The terrain COVID-19 has created calls for some changes to behavior for the sake of our sanity, and video games can provide a solution to our social isolation. While video games can be costly, I urge everyone to try to play games (many are available online for free) when they feel stressed or alone; however, be aware of their addictive qualities and set yourself up for escape from the perfect little world on the screen. Now, if you will excuse me, I have to slay Alduin for the fourteenth time.

Age v. Equity Debate: Saving Lives from COVID-19

KIP LYNCH '22
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Generally speaking, I do not regard Connecticut as a state that has its house in order. One need only look at its capital, which has for years suffered from severe mismanagement un-

time in the form of the State Police. Connecticut Public Radio said in a report that “The mayor blames the explosion of gun violence in his city on COVID-19.” It seems that education at Exeter, Yale, and Oxford does not mean much in the way of logic. Connecticut's only

“Lamont made the right decision by ignoring the CDC's recommendations and basing vaccine distribution solely by age.”

der Democratic politicians. This past year, Mayor Luke Bronin gladly championed the “defund the police” movement and promptly cut Hartford's public-safety budget by \$2 million, 6% overall. The resulting spike in gun violence sent him running to the Governor for another handout, this

saving grace is Governor Ned Lamont, at least when it comes to the distribution of SARS-CoV-2 vaccines.

In its vaccine distribution recommendations to states, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advocated for the prioritization of essential workers and those with underlying condi-

tions after those older than 65 years. To me at least, this was unobjectionable until I read their justification: to “promote justice” and “mitigate health inequities.” This recommendation is all the more objectionable when one realizes the complexities in defining these categories, which in turn only complicate a process that is supposed to be as quick as possible. Lamont made the right decision by ignoring the CDC's recommendations and basing vaccine distribution solely by age.

He explained the problems encountered in defining categories: “A lot of complications result from states that tried to finely slice the salami and it got very complicated to administer...The CDC said grocery and food service workers [should be prioritized].” He then described

how his office would receive calls from convenience stores or big box stores that similarly sell food, seeking to be prioritized.

As for the states that prioritized “equity,” one only need to look at California, that bastion of the Democratic Party, where special access codes have been provided to community organizations to distribute to predominately black and Latino areas. The codes enable one to sign up for appointments on the My Turn vaccine scheduling website. Those codes, somehow, found their way into the hands of well-off residents, who then distributed the codes among themselves before getting shots. *The Los Angeles Times* reports that “establishing fairness in the vaccine distribution process has loomed large over California's vaccine roll out...But deep in

equities have still emerged in vaccine administration.”

The Editorial Board of the *Wall Street Journal*, perhaps the only mainstream media outlet that has not succumbed to left-wing bias, praised Lamont's decision, stating “The Democratic Governor is right that complexity is the enemy of speed. It's also the enemy of equity. Decisions about who is or isn't an ‘essential worker’ are arbitrary...Bravo to Mr. Lamont for thinking of the larger public good, and understanding that simple can be smart.” The editorial noted that while minorities die at significantly higher rates than white people, “outcomes differ far more by age than race or underlying conditions. A 58-year-old black retiree is 10 times more likely to die from the virus than a 40-year-old black worker.”

The Seriousness of Recurring Paintball Incidents

SKYLER SIMPKINS '23
OPINION EDITOR

One of my most vivid memories from visiting Trinity for the first time was when a student nonchalantly informed me about the paintball attacks on campus. I remember being very confused as to why

a friend that they were hit by a paintball, you merely respond with a couple of quiet laughs. I, for one, feel like this should cease. Students should not have to be concerned about being shot by a paintball when walking home from the cafeteria, but students should not

“well, at least it isn't real bullets” should give us a slight relief, but what if these shooters upgrade to ball-bearing guns? Are we okay with this non-fatal weapon? Students at Trinity should not have to worry about walking across Allen for fear of being paintballed or bb'd. Our physiological mechanisms will react in the same way whether we hear a paintball bullet or an actual fatal bullet. Maybe these students are only suffering from bruises, but the fear from the activation of their sympathetic nervous system will affect some students much more strongly than others. The vulnerability of being shot is pertinent whether or not the perpetrators are using real bullets.

Trinity College needs to step up its game to end these paintball incidents. Campus Safety should

stand guard at times and places paintball attacks are likely to occur. They should accurately report the de-

incidents as youths being youths. We must define how our society should act and hold it to those standards.

“When you hear from a friend that they were hit by a paintball, you merely respond with a couple of quiet laughs. I, for one, feel like this should cease.”

she was so okay with the activity, but once you invest a semester into the Trinity College community, you become okay with it too. When you receive emails reporting an incident, you disregard it. When you hear from

laugh off these incidents as quirky little perks of being a Trinity College student.

I understand how someone could find comedy in these occurrences. The non-fatality of paintballs and the possible thought of

“Maybe these students are only suffering from bruises, but the fear from the activation of their sympathetic nervous system will affect some students much more strongly than others.”

tails of the car(s) to proper authorities and maintain persistence that these incidents are not merely looked over but stopped.

We as students should do some things as well. Firstly, we should stay safe by walking on the illuminated interior paths of campus. More importantly, we need to change our mentality. We cannot just laugh off these

Students should not feel like being hit by a paintball is one of the traditions of going to Trinity College on our Hartford campus. We cannot just let these incidents occur with no protest; instead, we should show the school our support in preventing future attacks. If no one defines how society should act, we will no longer have a safe society.

Amending Our Education System For Future's Sake?

ALEX WECHT '24
OPINION EDITOR

The world is changing. We must do so as well. It seems apparent that American high school curricula are failing to adapt to the challenges we face today.

“But,” you may protest, “standardized test scores are rising, and now my eight-year-old is more advanced in math than me!” But what good is a society of one-track thinkers? What happens when we lack practical, interdisciplinary education? Where will real growth and understanding come from when high school students are forced to pour over math problems but aren't given exposure to civics, humanities,

and social sciences? Young people need a learning platform adequate to allow meaningful inquiry into our worldly reality. I would argue, for example, that an American teen should understand how that plastic bottle that they just littered will impact our environment before he or she is required to analyze yet another quadratic equation.

“We need to be teaching high school students to be well-rounded, practical thinkers. Math isn't the way to do that.”

As America struggles to bring our younger generation's academic progress up to the speed of other countries, many have urged educators to double down on quantita-

tive training. The Common Core Education Curriculum, as proposed by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, provides: “The Common Core is a set of high-quality academic standards in mathematics and English language arts/literacy (ELA). These learning goals outline what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade. The standards were created to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college, career, and life, regardless of where they live.”

I agree that students should have high-quality

literacy skills, but why the emphasis on mathematics? We need to be teaching high school students to be well-rounded, practical thinkers. Math is most definitely not the way to accomplish that. The Common Core standards put an extraordinary amount of pressure on educators to prioritize math requirements. This curriculum fosters the wrong mentality in students from an early age. It teaches students that they're in school to pass tests rather than to learn. It teaches them that

school is to prepare you for standardized tests, not to help you get ready to tackle the world and all its facets.

Many will argue that math is the ideal method for learning critical problem-solving and analysis. These math advocates say that, without a rigorous mathematics education, students won't be able to deal effectively with the curve balls life will throw down the road. I maintain that a rigorous mathematical education is critical at the elementary and middle school level. However, once students enter high school, the requirements should integrate more practical substance.

As teenagers begin to find themselves and cement their beliefs and personalities, they must step outside of the Common Core mindset and into the real world. Unfortunately, high schoolers are burdened with overwhelming quantitative requirements, on top of the enormous pressures associated with the SAT and ACT. By the way, the general trend in SAT performance has been a decrease in reading scores while math scores have risen. So, while we might be getting better at math *per se*, we are getting worse at practical learning and analytical thinking. Isn't math supposed to improve our reasoning skills?

By the time students have reached the high school level, they will have already had plenty of time to develop their mathematical skills

through demanding curricular requirements. It is time to present high school students with courses that encourage and generate meaningful consideration, passion, and drive.

The vast majority of students will never use the equations and formulas they're learning. Doing things you don't want to do makes you feel uncomfortable, but they are indispensable; however, mental broadening can be sought and earned in much more meaningful ways.

Students are far more likely to fully engage in their studies when they can see the material's practical implications. If our nation's high schools would add civics, social sciences, and humanities courses to the “general education” curriculum, students would not only show more interest in school, but they would also be learning more of what would equip them for college and life beyond.

Courses like environmental studies, philosophy, cur-

riculum, and government are

With philosophy as a requirement, high school students would enhance their logical and analytical reasoning, close reading skills, and moral compasses. They would also develop an ethical and moral sensibility that they would carry throughout their lives.

The importance of courses in civics and American government is evident. How many of the rioters who stormed the United States Capitol on January 6th had read our Declaration of Independence, our Constitution, or the Federalist Papers? It's good to probe these documents and themes in college closely, but every American should have a grounding in them from their high school studies.

The interdisciplinary aspects of these studies will allow students to make sig-

“Students are far more likely to fully engage in their studies when they can see the material's practical implications.”

nificant connections—allowing them to find their place in the world. With this cohort of broadminded and well-educated newcomers, our colleges and universities will be better facilities for advanced study in interdisciplinary subjects.

FEATURES

March Madness is Back! How One Crescent House Bonded Over a March Madness Bracket Tournament

BAILEY MCKEON '22
FEATURES EDITOR

You read that right, March Madness is back! After experiencing an abrupt cancellation in March 2020 just after the coronavirus pandemic sent the U.S. into a lockdown and a period of quarantine, March Madness is taking place this year. 2021 has brought back the excitement of sports, specifically basketball, to the month of March as we experience the anniversary of the COVID-19 shut down. And with the return of collegiate basketball playoffs comes the enthusiasm of fans eager to predict the outcome of this year's tournament.

This past Sunday, or as basketball fanatics like to call it, Selection Sunday, called upon fans to create their brackets. Two proud Bantams, Olivia Hampton '22 and Lily Wear '22, took part in this year's bracket selection. "We've been counting down the days until Selection Sunday all week. For some peo-

ple, Christmas is the big day, but for us it's Selection Sunday," Wear added.

The two were crushed this time last year when the tournament was cancelled due to coronavirus concerns, which pushed them to make March Madness 2021 one for the books. "This year, with the world coming together to beat coronavirus, the madness is back," Hampton remarked. The two spent the evening in their crescent townhouse making their selections while celebrating with pizza, beer, and chocolate covered strawberries, and of course, ESPN on their television.

"When I made my selections, I prioritized teams that I knew had done well in previous March Madness tournaments," Hampton explained. "And for the teams that I was less familiar with or uncertain of, I chose the winner based off of which team name I liked best." This explains why Hampton chose Gonzaga to be this year's champion—they have done well in the

past and, as Hampton put it, "they have a silly name."

Wear, however, took a different approach. "I like to base my choices off of how nice people who attend those schools have been to me in the past. My ex-boyfriend goes to UConn, so obviously I have them losing in the first round," Wear stated. "Secondly, I really value school colors, which is why I have Michigan winning the entire tournament. Bleed Blue and Gold, baby!"

Hampton and Wear found the tournament to be a great way to not only en-

joy their love for basketball but to also come together during a period of mass isolation. They began a group to compete with their seven other roommates, whom they convinced to take part in the fun of March Madness this year. Entering their group requires a five dollar buy-in, along with a personal letter of intent to the Commissioner (Hampton). Hampton, Wear, and their other roommates will award the sum of the buy-in money to the winner of their bracket competition. They intend for the winner to spend the prize

money on something enjoyable for their entire house. "This gives me something to look forward to keeping up with for the next month, which is always a joy during this pandemic," Hampton expressed.

If you're looking for something fun to do in the era of COVID-19, perhaps consider creating a March Madness bracket and inviting your friends to make one, too. Brackets lock on Friday at noon, followed directly by the commencement of the first round of games. Let the madness begin!



JEFFREY BAKER-USA TODAY SPORTS

This year's March Madness Tournament will take place entirely in Indiana due to COVID. The tournament will run beginning Thursday, Mar. 18, until Monday, Apr. 5.

The English Department Launches New Online Literary Magazine Featuring Student Poetry, Fiction, Non-Fiction

KATIE CERULLE '22
FEATURES EDITOR

COVID-19 has shifted many aspects of Trinity College campus life. One unexpected shift in the social climate of campus is that students have been less able to display their creative and academic works with an audience. With all venues and public readings closed, showcasing student work has become almost an impossible feat. In order to combat this, five students from the English Department's Student Advisory Board have come together to create the Trinity College Literary Magazine. Summer Dow '22, Liz Foster '22, Julianna Freeman '22, Ayana Platt '22, and Frank Orenstein '22, with the help of faculty liaison Professor Christopher Hager, have spearheaded a new publication on campus in order to publicize creativity among the student body.

A developing idea for years, this magazine came to fruition in December 2020 through the work of

many members of the Student Advisory Board. The group has had many meetings in order to prepare for their first issue, with over 23 pieces submitted to the magazine for review. The winter 2021 publication will include 9 works of poetry, 2 fiction pieces, and 2 nonfiction literary papers to come out Mar. 20 in an online only format. These numerous meetings between the editors have been dedicated to reviewing received works and working with accepted authors to revise and finalize their submissions, as well as bettering the experience of readers and authors on their newly formed website. "This website will be an extension of Trinity's English Department and will include more than just creative works; events, interviews, and student engagement activities are also going to be featured," Dow remarked.

Dow informed the *Tri-pod* of her great excitement in beginning this new publication within the Trinity community. "I am

excited for students in English classes and beyond to have a platform for their work to be recognized," Dow explained. "They also have a platform to publish their work in a more informal way outside of competitions parented by non-Trinity organizations." Additionally, she described the power that writing has on improving the connections within the Trinity community. "Throughout COVID, campus culture has become isolated," she observed, "but having an online publication like this magazine can bring campus back together even while we are still apart."

In addition to a live website, the group also plans to advertise their magazine through an Instagram account, posters, and other digital forums to gain interest and viewership for posted submissions. Going forward, the periodical will be released quarterly: fall, winter, spring, and summer. Thus, new work will also be accepted quarterly. In late March, the jour-

nal will also be hosting a Zoom reading of the work of authors from the winter edition of the publication. This is a good opportunity for interested applicants to get examples of other work and ask questions if necessary. Additionally, the spring publication for the Literary Magazine is accepting new submissions until Apr. 9, 2021.

In the following quarters, instructions on how to submit work will be available through the English Department Instagram, @trincollenglish, and on their website. Students interested in submitting works of poetry, short stories, or nonfiction literary academic writing can send their writing to literally-magazine@trincoll.edu.

The poster is for the English Department Literary Magazine. It features a blue and yellow color scheme. At the top left, it says "The English Department Literary Magazine" with a small illustration of a person reading. The main text reads "ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS FOR OUR SPRING PUBLICATION" and "Deadline to submit: Friday, April 9th 2021". Below this, it lists "ACCEPTING: NONFICTION ACADEMIC WORKS (4000 WORDS MAX), CREATIVE WORKS OF POETRY (2 PAGES MAX) AND FICTION (8000 WORDS MAX)". At the bottom, it says "SEND WORKS TO Literary-magazine@trincoll.edu". The background of the poster shows a photograph of a large, multi-story brick building, likely Trinity College.

The English Department is unveiling a new literary magazine. Its first issue will be released for winter 2021.

The magazine staff will be accepting submissions for its spring issue until Apr. 9, 2021.

Emma McGraw '23 and Erica Desmond '23 on How Volleyball and Equestrian Teams Adapted to COVID

OLIVIA PAPP '23
FEATURES EDITOR

The last time the volleyball team had a season was during the fall semester of 2019. Their regular scheduled season is in the fall. Unfortunately, with COVID, the volleyball team was exempt from games this past fall. Emma McGraw '23 was able to offer her thoughts on her collegiate experience as a member of the volleyball team throughout her time at Trinity. "When I didn't have any games, I was upset because volleyball is one of my passions. I walked onto the team my freshman year, totally not expecting to make the team, but was excited when I made the cut and not only was able to pursue volleyball at the collegiate level but was also able to be embraced with an entire group of teammates who would go on to become some of my closest friends and future roommates at Trinity," said McGraw.

McGraw was only able to experience one competitive season in the fall of her freshman year. Not only did she think sports would be shut down once COVID happened, but she was also worried the team would become disconnected. Thankfully, despite the demise of sports with the rise of COVID, McGraw was still able to bond with her teammates through practices.

Her team was still able to practice with six people at a time despite the pandemic. "I was able to focus more on my academics as a result of COVID, which was helpful with my tough academic schedule. However, I still was not happy that we were not able to compete," added McGraw. Now, with the pandemic slowly subsiding as more Americans are able to be vaccinated, the girls on the team get to have full team practices with all sixteen students.

"Since we've all been working hard on improving our game despite no seasons, I think the girls are all ready for what this season of competition will bring," said McGraw. This semester, the Trinity women's varsity volleyball team will be playing Connecticut College, Eastern Connecticut State University, and Saint Joseph's College, with a tentative match against Wesleyan University. "We never have had a season during the spring," noted McGraw, "so it will certainly be interesting. Usually, since we are not in season at this time, we will have open gyms with just captains and no coaches. I'm interested to see the changing dynamics with the game schedule in the spring," she stated. McGraw relayed that she thought it was the right thing to do for the Trinity administration to have games this season. "As

long as we're all being tested and are in a controlled environment, and wearing our masks, I think we are all safe from COVID. I think this return to the bit of normalcy we once had will be better for everyone's mental health," she said.

Erica Desmond '23 is part of the equestrian team here at Trinity and has unfortunately not had a show in about a year now. "We missed our regional competitions which we showed for all year. Not having a showing was disheartening, as we weren't able to execute what we were training for all year," said Desmond. The team worked very hard on technique all year, making it more unfortunate that the team was unable to show off their new talents.

"Our shows are in the fall and spring, usually

on weekends. What's interesting, is that we don't have showings this spring despite the Trinity administration allowing all other teams to compete," said Desmond. Equestrian is unable to compete since it is a sport that is not technically run through Trinity College, but rather through the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA). The IHSA, the organization that runs equestrian in the United States, has decided to restrict teams from competing to protect their students from COVID. "Unfortunately," said Desmond, "Trinity has no say. The Trinity administration is still allowing practices in order to facilitate a bond between the students and the horses. Our team may host a mock show to boost team morale in the spring." As of now,

the equestrian team is able to go down to the stables and practice once a week. "I think, hopefully, we will be back in season in the fall. I am excited to be back in season, however, we lost all of our points and regional qualifications since this is what the IHSA organization decided to do," Desmond remarked. "All students that qualified for regionals were required to move onto the next level without having the opportunity to compete for national titles," she added.

Erica owns her personal horse, named Hendrix, at the stables about thirty minutes away from campus. "I look forward to riding my horse, Hendrix, every day," said Desmond, and hopes that there will be continued opportunities to engage in equestrian activities this spring.



Erica Desmond '23 sits on her horse, Hendrix, at Marshall Sterling Finals in 2018.

Volunteer Spotlight: Abbey Bass '22 on Working with CovEducation to Provide Virtual Tutoring in Chicago

MAURA KEARY '22
FEATURES EDITOR

Since the start of this spring semester, junior Abbey Bass '22 has spent her time volunteering as a virtual tutor for young students in Chicago. The program, CovEducation, is a new tutoring platform for students in grades K-12 who have been affected by COVID-19. Bass specifically works with a middle school in Chicago called Chicago Heights. She explained that there are also more general mentorship opportunities offered in which young students are paired with college mentors all across the country.

Bass was able to get involved with CovEducation

after an application was advertised online regarding the possibility of becoming a tutor. Shortly after applying, Bass was offered the position and jumped right into action. The CovEducation x Chicago Heights program paired Bass with a sixth-grade student with whom she works for two days during the week, or more if requested. The sessions run for 45 minutes each day and will run until the end of their school year in June. CovEducation matches mentors with the students based on interests and education needs. Due to the young age of Bass' student pairing, she is able to help with virtually any school subject that the student needs help with.

Since Chicago Heights Middle School is currently following a hybrid learning model due to COVID-19, Bass connects with her student via the Zoom platform whether the child is studying at home or at school. Bass's role, she explained, is to help the student with their studying habits and homework since they are not in a physical classroom space as they are used to. She helps with homework in all subjects, insight about life, creating relationships, or just providing a safe space for the student to talk or discuss any issues.

"I really enjoy working with kids especially since I used to be a camp counselor," Bass explained. "I also

love to tutor and share my knowledge, so I thought this would be a great opportunity to take advantage of. As a kid, I liked going to school and learning, and due to the pandemic, these students don't get to have those same experiences."

Bass said that she would consider this program a positive aspect that has emerged from the pandemic. She explained that without schools turning to remote or hybrid models, these students would not have been able to connect and meet with different people across the country. The students now have the chance to use the CovEducation mentors as an additional resource and ask questions about

the world or what they are curious about in or outside of the classroom.

In addition to the tutoring sessions, Bass has also been able to meet and connect with other college students who are volunteering as well. Together, they are able to reflect on their experiences and share tips and advice over Zoom calls.

CovEducation is free to all students and the volunteer mentors are available to help in any capacity. Bass offered concluding thoughts on the organization, noting that she "wants to help them in whatever way that I can in order to make this time easier for them, whether it be tutoring or just being there as someone they can talk to."

Arts & Entertainment

Poetry You Should Read If You Don't Like Poetry

CAROLINE RICHARDS '22
A&E EDITOR

Poetry has somewhat of a bad reputation (though incorrectly!) for being boring and overly complicated. I get it.

If you're like me, you first read poetry when you were a measly seventh grader and it was a sonnet by Shakespeare that used words like "lo" and "thou" and yes, it was beautiful, but in the end, it made little sense and you definitely weren't anywhere near interested in reading anything like that *outside* of school.

Maybe you read poetry again in high school but this time it was Milton or Chaucer and again, beautiful, but hard to read and connect with. You believe your teacher when she says *Paradise Lost* and *The Canterbury Tales* are masterpieces, but you aren't really sure why.

Don't get me wrong, I have nothing but artistic admiration for

Shakespeare and Milton and Chaucer. They fundamentally shaped the English written-word.

But they're also a bunch of old white guys who lived decades before me and whose experiences I couldn't *really* relate to. And what I've learned about poetry is that you either connect with a poem or you don't, especially when you're a young reader. So, when you start off your poetic education with incredibly complex, esoteric poets, it's like your teacher has thrown you in with the sharks and is telling you to fend them off with squirt guns.

My point is, don't be dissuaded by poetry because of your aversion to the really difficult poems. I am a huge proponent of finding one poem, or one poet, or even one line of poetry that you love and find meaning in, then working outwards from there.

You don't have to know why you like it, it just has to be something that

you *get* (and this is different for everyone but you'll know it when you see it).

That being said, here is a list of some of my favorite (and recently written) poetry books that transformed the way I read and enjoy poetry. I encourage you to test the waters. I promise it's worth it.

Love and Other Poems by Alex Dimitrov

This is a wonderful 2020 release that completely lives up to the hype.

The book features Dimitrov's poem "Love," a sprawling list full of life's wonderful twists and turns, among other quietly powerful poems that will suspend you shamelessly above the New York City skyline. You will look up after reading this book and realize hours have gone by while you've been immersed in the language and sharpness of Dimitrov's imagery. Guaranteed to make you think.

Our Andromeda by Brenda Shaughnessy

This book changed me. I read this my freshman year of college and based my entire poetic personality around it for the entire semester. It is abundantly clear how much delight Shaughnessy takes in writing her poems and playing with the ways we use day-to-day language. I still want to be her, and so will you. By the end of the book, you will have realized fifty new things about yourself. Also, this was my introduction to swear words in poetry. Game changer.

When My Brother Was An Aztec by Natalie Diaz

Oh my word: this book. It will pick you up and throw you across the room. I have never read a book of poetry quite as stark and heart-wrenching. I mean, not to be grossly vivid, but Diaz's language will stab you in the chest

with its razor-sharp edges and fearless tenacity and you will never fully recover. Her descriptions of her Native American experience and struggles with family and identity are both beautiful and terrifying in their ability to bring them to life in your imagination. I read the title poem at least once a week.

What We Are Given by Ollie O'Neill

You know when you meet someone and you get to talking and at the end of the conversation you feel like you've known them your entire life? That is what this book is to me. O'Neill just gets it and knows how to say just the right thing to make you feel a certain way. The verve to her language and the steadiness with which she paces her poems are unmatched. Reading this book feels like having a conversation with yourself about the meaning of life and the vastness of the universe.

Details Matter and Other Poems by Sara Barrett '21

Details Matter

The squashed but still squirming cockroach
lies in the corner lit by an iridescent
light that flickers whenever the toilet flushes.

Scum ridden clay tiles cradle
his brown crepe paper exoskeleton—
a frigid embrace.

Nowhere to fly off to, no one
to exterminate his suffering—
his wispy breath echoes

through the abandoned dust filming
the spider web stretched over him,
somehow safe from the hay fingers

of the janitor's broom. What do you
think: should we pay him more attention—
pin dot eyes searching for relief,

small waiving feelers twisted,
and translucent wings cracked—
or simply throw him away?

Screen It

Anticipation
when phones buzz, friend or foe—
who knows. Notify me.

Hospitable Aunt: Necessities Only

Rice paper skin stretched
thin over supplement fed bones
contains a fiery spirit.

Bow-kneed legs adorned
in sweatpants jive
around her immaculate kitchen—

always barefoot
unless the dark grained slabs
were frigid.

Shale grey wool socks adore
the toes
they so rarely embrace.

Political opinions and Lennon's lyrics
spew from tight
bubble gum lips;

and every dinner's finale
never receives an encore,
but a "mwa mwa...kiss kiss;

please leave."
To which my grandma
responds: "it's too hot

here and the chicken
was dry. I was going
home now anyways."

Their eyes roll,
and my grandpa silently thinks
Crap, I created another one.

Weekly Skylights: The *Tripod* Looks to the Clouds

JOEY CIFELLI '23
A&E EDITOR



March 8, 2021. 9.0/10.

(Left) If you're anything like me, you've long had a desire to dig a really, really big hole at some point in your life. And if so, you probably also find yourself unable to say why exactly this need sticks around in your head, sometimes fading into the background for months, years, even, only to inevitable resurface stronger than ever. What is that, right? I should clarify that by a really big hole I'm more specifically referring to a really deep hole, which are infinitely more interesting. The farthest I ever got in fulfilling this desire was about three feet into the middle of my Dad's garden. It felt great, but hardly satisfying. I do not think we'll truly be satisfied until someone digs through the entire planet, core and all. That person will be a legend. And, after it's done, we can drop in random crap lying around the house and watch it slowly fade away, which is all any of us ever really wanted.

(Right) Sitting at my desk I can hear the wind howling outside. There's nothing quite so suited to safety and comfort as tempestuous weather locked behind a pane of glass. One small break is all it would take to cut short this placid hideaway. It's interesting that way, that the difference between cozy bedroom and ruined mess is only a window thick. Astronauts must know that feeling most starkly. No storm on the other side, no anything, forever. And a small break isn't just the end of the room, but death. The window-pane can be almost anything, I think. The idea is still there. So many small things create the life we know.



March 9, 2021. 6.6/10.



March 10, 2021. 7.2/10.

(Left) I met someone earlier today who fell sideways. I walked out of class and saw him sitting on a bench, except he was sitting where most of us place our backs. I said hello and asked him how he got to be in such a predicament. He replied that he had been in Spain up until an hour ago when he slipped on a dog leash and plummeted across the Atlantic Ocean. He said he came to a jarring stop on that very bench and was thinking about what to do next. I offered him hospitality in my room if he so wished, and he gratefully accepted. It took some time to plan out a path that would be suitable for us both.

(Right) I walked on the stone walkway most of the way, and he walked on the pebbly rock wall of the building next to it, occasionally being forced to climb or hop down the fashionable architecture. Thinking on this, I imagined he must appreciate minimalist design. And gothic architecture, well, it must be a nightmare. I was about to share my musings when an extremely unfortunate gust of wind caused the man to lose his footing and tumble like a weed off the wall and out of sight. I finished walking to my room after that, and it has just occurred to me that I never asked for his name.



March 11, 2021. 6.2/10.

SPORTS

Your Guide to March Madness: A Breakdown of This Year's Modified Tournament and Participating Teams

ANNA BAUER '23
SPORTS EDITOR

For anyone who wants to learn the game or perhaps simply needs a new favorite pastime, March Madness, the NCAA Division I men's basketball tournament is just on the cusp of beginning.

Though the pandemic forced the NCAA to cancel the men's basketball tournament last year and lose \$600 million in revenue as a result, March Madness is making its comeback in 2021. However, just like everything COVID-19 has touched, alterations need to be made in order to continue to keep athletes safe while still allowing them to play the game they love.

In order to limit travel during this endless pandemic, for the first time ever the NCAA has decided that the entire 68-team tournament will occur in one location: Indiana. Teams will be expected to follow specific rules and protocols, and a plan has already been developed in case any players are infected with the virus and teams need to drop out. In addition, teams will be housed on hotel floors dedicated solely to them and they will have physically distanced meetings and dining, as well as secure, dedicated transportation to-and-from competition and practice venues.

Other changes include how the brackets and teams will be handled. Ge-

ography will not be considered this year (as all teams are in the same location) and so teams will be placed into brackets based solely on rankings. Furthermore, Selection Sunday will reveal the 37 at-large selections (one more than usual), while the other 31 automatic qualifiers (one less than usual) are already known. Typically, there are 32 automatic qualifiers because of the 32 Division I conferences which all receive an automatic bid that they award to the team that wins their postseason conference tournament. This year, however, the Ivy League did not play, so there are only 31 automatic qualifiers (listed below) and, therefore, 37 at-large teams. An at-large bid is how teams that did not win their conference tournament are able to play in March Madness. A selection committee convenes and decides which teams, that were not automatic qualifiers, will compete. This past Sunday, Mar. 14, the 2021 Selection Sunday occurred, revealing the 37 teams (listed below).

A total of 67 games will be played, beginning with the First Four this Thursday, Mar. 18, and the first round will begin on Friday and Saturday, Mar. 19 and 20, respectively. Meanwhile, the Final Four are still planned to play on Apr. 3 and 5. The First Four will consist of eight teams – the four lowest-seeded at-large teams and the four

lowest-seeded automatic qualifiers. The automatic qualifiers will play their fellow automatic qualifiers and the at-large teams will play their fellow at-large teams. The four teams to lose will be the first eliminated in the opening round of the tournament, leaving 64 teams when the first round begins. This is a single-elimination tournament, so once a team loses, they are out of the tournament completely.

Tune in to the *Tripod* for updates on this ongoing competition throughout the coming weeks and to a sports channel to watch the fun play out. You, too, can become a part of the madness this year!

List of March Madness Automatic Bids:

Hartford (15-8)
Houston (24-3)
Georgia Tech (17-8)
St. Bonaventure (15-4)
Liberty (23-5)
Georgetown (12-12)
E. Washington (16-7)
Winthrop (23-1)
Illinois (23-6)
Texas (19-7)
UC S. Barbara (22-4)
Drexel (12-7)
North Texas (17-9)
Cleveland State (19-7)
Iona (12-5)
Ohio (16-7)
Norfolk State (16-7)
Loyola-Chicago (24-4)
San Diego State (22-4)
Mt. St. Mary's (12-10)
Morehead State (23-7)
Oregon State (17-12)
Colgate (14-1)

Alabama (24-6)
UNC Greensboro (21-8)
Abilene Christian (23-4)
Oral Roberts (16-10)
Appalach. State (17-11)
Texas Southern (16-8)
Grand Canyon (17-6)
Gonzaga (26-0)

List of March Madness At-Large Bids:

Michigan State (15-12)
UCLA (17-9)
Wichita (16-5)
Drake (25-4)
Baylor (22-2)
Oklahoma (15-10)
Missouri (16-9)
Creighton (20-8)
Virginia (18-6)
USC (22-7)
Kansas (20-8)

Oregon (20-6)
VCU (19-7)
Iowa (21-8)
Michigan (20-4)
LSU (18-9)
Colorado (22-8)
Florida State (16-6)
BYU (20-6)
UConn (15-7)
Maryland (16-13)
North Carolina (18-10)
Wisconsin (17-12)
Villanova (16-6)
Purdue (18-9)
Texas Tech (17-10)
Utah State (20-8)
Arkansas (22-6)
Florida (14-9)
Virginia Tech (15-6)
Ohio State (21-9)
Tennessee (18-8)
Oklahoma State (20-8)
Syracuse (16-9)
West Virginia (18-9)
Clemson (16-7)
Rutgers (15-11)



The Men's Basketball team from the University of Virginia was the last team to win March Madness in 2019. They are one of 37 at-large bids for this year's tournament, which will take place entirely in Indiana.

Tom Brady Signs Contract Extension, Keeping the "Dream Team" Together for Potential Super Bowl LVI

ANNA BAUER '23
SPORTS EDITOR

This past Friday, the once-New England Patriot superstar, now Tampa Bay Buccaneers' rockstar, Tom Brady, signed a contract extension with Tampa.

The contract details a four-year extension; however, it voids to a one-year extension which means that Brady will be with the Buccaneers at least through the 2022 season. While Brady had once said that it was his goal to play until age 45, he revealed at his most recent Superbowl win that he is

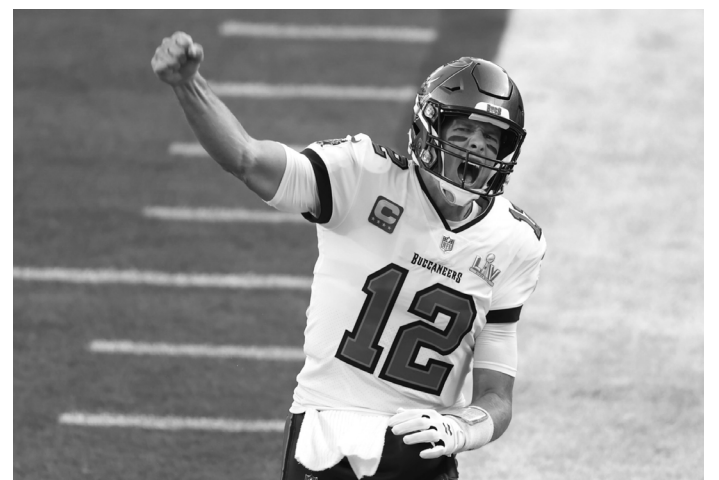
considering playing beyond that. No matter if the 43-year-old plays beyond 45, one thing is for sure, Brady is definitely in pursuit of another Superbowl ring with the Buccaneers.

Before this new contract, the Buccaneers were \$7.756 million over their \$182.5 million salary cap because of re-signing Lavonte David, an inside linebacker, to a two-year extension, and the franchise tag on Chris Godwin, a wide receiver. Similar to Brady's deal, David's contract includes voidable years as well which

is something Tampa Bay has not done in over a decade. David commented to ESPN that "Tom is one of those guys that understands that it takes a whole village to win – The bond that [the team] had, the bond that [they] shared this year – was like no other." The Buccaneers clearly have a winning team on their hands – Brady knows it and so do the other players, so to keep this team together, Brady has signed a new contract extension that allowed the Bucs to not exceed their budget and keep the desired "Dream

Team" together. One thing is for sure, the 2021-2022

season and Superbowl LVI are sure to be fascinating.



Tom Brady, Super Bowl LV's MVP, signed a contract extension with the Buccaneers, strengthening hopes at a repeat.

This Week in Sports At Trincoll...

NESCAC Will Allow Spring Competition with a Modified Season for Certain Sports Teams Only

MATEO VASQUEZ '21
SPORTS EDITOR

After a year without athletic competitions, the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC) has shone a light at the end of a dark tunnel. There will now be intercollegiate competition for the Spring semester with a modified season. The NESCAC has now joined the ranks of other Division III conferences by allowing for a spring season to occur.

However, the decision comes with a variety of conditions that should be noted. Trinity will participate in a limited season against other schools in the following sports: baseball, softball, golf, lacrosse, rowing, tennis, and outdoor track and field. All competition must remain adherent to the local and institutional policies so that rates of transmission can remain low. The season is set to begin in April and will continue into the end of May.

Another interesting el-

ement to consider for the spring semester is that the winter and fall sports that were unable to host their seasons will now be given the opportunity to have locally-based contests.

The main emphasis that was continually repeated in the report was that competition can resume and continue as long as individual campuses and alert levels remain at a consistent level that allows for play to occur. As Director of Athletics Drew Galbraith told the *Tripod*, "Between mitigation efforts, regular testing and supervision, athletics and recreation is one of the most regulated and monitored co-curricular pursuits for our students. We are proud that our student-athletes, coaches and staff will be among the leaders who will illustrate how to participate in campus activities in a safe and responsible manner." There have been no reported COVID cases in the fall semester related to athletics, according to the College,

and these results played a large part in the decision to return to an athletic season for the spring semester. The opportunity is definitely an amazing demonstration for athletes to show that amidst a pandemic, with the proper safety measures in place, athletic competition is still an option.

Following this announcement last week, there is still a lot that is currently in the works. Competition is not set to take place until April and many teams are now attempting to figure out when and where athletic competitions will take place. In order to keep virus transmission low and allow for the safest possible conditions on campus, Trinity teams will have a variety of strict guidelines relating to travel and competition. Competition will only occur through day trips and all athletes must practice physical distancing en route to competitions. While away from campus no indoor dining will be

permitted and masks must be worn at all times, including during competition.

Unfortunately, there will not be any spectators permitted at games, however there is a diligent effort to make sure that all NESCAC locations are able to livestream the events throughout the semester in some capacity. Of course, a key caveat to all of this is that adjustments can be made at any time throughout the semester and all

school administrations and the NESCAC will be monitoring everything closely to ensure that conditions remain safe and that all protocols are being followed.

While there are still a lot of unknowns in the coming weeks, this is definitely a sign of a return back to some kind of normal. If everyone remains vigilant athletics are here to stay and will emerge from the pandemic stronger than ever.



Trinity will be partaking in seven different sports this spring semester, including outdoor track and field.

Cam Newton Signs Contract Extension: What Does This Mean for the Future of the New England Patriots?

MATEO VASQUEZ '21
SPORTS EDITOR

There has been a lot of movement in the National Football League (NFL) in the past week. However, one thing that is drawing attention around the league is Cam Newton and the future that he has with the New England Patriots. After a full analysis and breakdown of his contract, the Patriots definitely signed Cam Newton to a lower-end-of-the-deal kind of contract. He is guaranteed to get \$5.1 million from the contract as a healthy backup on the roster and \$8.6 million if he starts and is able to make it to the playoffs. The maximum that his contract allows him to reach is just \$13 million which, in the long run, is not much compared to last year's contract and other aspects of his position and career.

Essentially, the contract

deal with Cam Newton was a way for the Patriots to say that they have a guy they will continue to work with into the upcoming 2021 season. However, he may not be "the guy" and there are still a lot of potential openings and options for who their next quarterback might be in the upcoming years.

The contract really can be viewed in two ways. Cam is being given a second shot with the Patriots, and they are interested in keeping him on the team for a bit longer to see what else he can do and truly grasp his true potential. On the other hand, this is a lower end of the contract deal and is something that backups usually receive, which might be a signal to the end of the Cam Newton quarterback era for the Patriots.

The addition of Cam Newton to the team has definitely sparked a lot of unwanted conversations. This

past season, Rodney Harrison, a former Patriots Hall of Famer, spoke out vocally in opposition about adding Cam Newton to the Patriots roster and how he was no longer capable of performing at the same high level that is required in the NFL. On the flipside, this was an unprecedented 2020 season that simply is almost impossible to compare to other seasons. Cam Newton himself missed a lot of games due to contracting the coronavirus and this no doubt affected his ability to connect with his team on and off the field. Personally, I view the contract as a second shot for Cam Newton as this might be his last chance to show what he can do with the Patriots. He was definitely not, in any terms, a standout athlete or quarterback in this past season, but that does not mean he is incapable of providing a different angle on the field and bringing some-

thing unique to the table.

While Newton has only been signed to a one-year contract, there is still some hope to what the Patriots are able to build as a team. Cam Newton in years past has certainly attracted many free agents towards his teams and keeping him on for another year allows for the Patriots to sign a lot of free agents and really create a team structured

around Newton giving him and the team an opportunity to stand out on the field. In actuality, if the Patriots thought that Cam Newton was the main issue on the offense, he would not have been re-signed. The Patriots show no signs of getting rid of him anytime soon, and many believe this is the season where Cam Newton could really be an offensive weapon.



USA TODAY

Cam Newton has signed a one-year contract extension with the New England Patriots, with \$5 million guaranteed.