

## CA Alumni Push for Divestment An Interview with Phoebe Chatfield '14

by Alex Weyerhaeuser '15

Phoebe Chatfield, Concord Academy '14 and Yale University '18, is attempting to lead Yale down a path many other students have been pushing their colleges to go down as well: divesting from fossil fuel companies. Claire Fitch, CA '13 and Tulane University '17, Lina Janah, CA '14 and Tulane University '18, Kai Salem, CA '14 and Brown University '18, and Austen Sharpe, CA '14 and Brown University '18 are other recent CA alums who have been pushing their respective schools in this direction as well. In a recent interview, Chatfield answered some questions from various members of the CA community about divestment.

**Q:** Why divestment? Of all the possible ways to get climate change to stop, why is this the one that so many young people have chosen? What is it about the history of the climate movement that leads us to divestment campaigns? And also what is it about the history of divestment campaigns that makes us think this is a good strategy?

**A:** Divestment as a tactic in social movements has a pretty long and rich history, particularly starting around apartheid in South Africa. A lot of schools, including Yale, had a lot of divestment movements around that time. So the idea was that the United States as a whole was stalling and not taking any action to intervene in what was going on in South Africa and through a wave of student activism, the U.S. government felt pressure



*Phoebe Chatfield CA '14 and Yale '18 has dedicated much energy during her first year in college pressing Yale's administration to divest from fossil fuel companies.  
Photo courtesy of Phoebe Chatfield '14*

to move to stricter policies in the way it was interacting with South Africa. There have been other divestment movements since then that have been really successful, particularly around tobacco and around companies that are invested in South Sudan and the Sudanese genocide.

The situations in which divestment is an applicable tactic are particularly when government action is stalled and when companies are having unjust impacts not only in the world but also in government and this is why divestment is a tactic that makes sense for climate change.

The way I see it, there are a lot of factors that have contributed to the climate crisis, but fossil fuel companies right now are a rogue industry exacerbating it in many different ways. There's a lot of energy around the divestment movement for various reasons but at its heart it's pretty simple: we feel that it is immoral for our universities to invest in an industry that is not only exploiting communities where it refines and extracts fossil fuels, but also stopping governmental action on climate change, particularly by spreading climate denialism and false information about the science in the climate crisis and lobbying its impact on politics in that way. More than 50% of republicans in the House and Senate are climate change deniers. When you have a Senate that is full of people who won't even acknowledge that the climate crisis exists there's no way to have political action. There are a lot of really important

*continued on page 5...*

## Wadler Calls for Administrative Changes, and Wins

by Nathan Greess '15

The recent election of Callie Wadler '16 as incoming Student Head of School makes Concord Academy students' priorities and concerns clear. In her election speech, Wadler spoke forcefully and candidly, setting herself apart from other candidates by focusing not on CA's uniqueness or her event-planning ability but rather on the CA administration. Her election as Head of All-School Council represents CA students' widespread concern about administrative decisions, conduct, and relation to the student body.

Historically, All-School Council has never been a vehicle for significant change. Beyond recommending changes to Head of School Rick Hardy—which to my knowledge, have not spurred any development in recent memory—Council has no enumerated powers to enact significant institutional reform. Council spends much of its time creating initiatives to reduce stress such as Crunch Bars distribution and “Zen Week” and planning all-school events including Winterfest and Club Expo. This is not to suggest that Council does not do its job but rather that it has been divested of much of its ability to create any meaningful change. All-School Council remains CA students'

only representative body yet had no power over some of the most important and defining aspects of the community. In her recent election speech, Wadler spent much of her two-minute speaking time advocating for issues that Council has never had any power to address. Possibly motivated by confusion over recent Dean's Warnings, Wadler called for a process of transparent and student-involved clarification of school rules. Notably, only one other candidate for the position even mentioned increasing Council's ability to weigh in on such issues.

Wadler pressed the community, asking, “Why don't we talk about the hypocrisy in the handbook?” Her speech centered on the premise that current discipline procedures become too punitive too quickly. Calling for Common Trust to be “re-established as a two-way street,” Wadler addressed the Dean of Student's policy regarding food in the Upper Student-Faculty Center (Upper Stu-Fac) whereby, “leaving a plate in the Upper Stu-Fac three years ago” results in a ban on food. Rather than an immediate punishment, she suggested, the administration should seek a system in which “every mistake...precedes a lesson.” Her election suggests that CA students see considerable importance in increasing Council's ability to address issues such as discipline procedure

and the review of rules, many of which are of greater significance than food in the Upper Stu-Fac.

In retrospect, this strategy may have been a risky bet. Council, let alone the Student Head of School, has never had a meaningful say over such issues—why would anyone elect Wadler, whose chief concerns are ones she would have no power to change? Yet, Wadler won. If nothing more, her victory suggests that even though students were well aware of their elected representatives' current inability to address these concerns, they deemed the issues for which she advocated so important that they elected her in hopes that under her leadership, the student body would gain a more of a voice.

After all, it would have been simple for the student body to elect one of the seven other candidates who focused on traditional issues of planning events and being accessible. Certainly such a candidate would have been a safe bet. Yet, instead, students and teachers opted for Wadler. “Being a leader is about standing up for the beliefs of the community you're leading, and refusing to back down,” Wadler said in closing. If Wadler remains resolute in her beliefs, CA is destined for some much needed change.

## Inside this issue...





# Faculty Introduce New and Revised Classes

by Sam Barton '17

There are many exciting and new opportunities in regard to new courses in the upcoming school year at Concord Academy. Many take advantage of online services, some offer intriguing new twists on esteemed classes, and others are entirely new in a multitude of ways.

Next year, the new online courses offered will be especially evident for seniors in their spring semester, when they will be able to take classes through Global Online Academy (GOA). GOA is an online learning environment designed to provide a different type of learning, rather than a somewhat-lacking imitation of traditional classes. Being subscription-based, there are only a select few schools involved, however, they represent over 12 countries and many states in the United States. GOA offers different classes than CA offers, including harder-to-find classes such as Japanese, Arabic, a code-based digital art class, a digital journalism course, as well as offerings like “Abnormal Psychology.” With such enthralling course options, underclassmen may be wondering why they are not able to take advantage of these new courses yet, which is quite a valid query. However, this gradual roll-in to GOA, akin to a soft-opening of a luxury hotel, is to ensure that by the time a larger student population at CA is using the service, it will have gotten any major issues out of the way. Another interesting aspect of GOA is that they require a representative to be on campus at member schools, again in an effort to reduce any issues that may arrive in the environment. However, the need for a person to be on-hand for CA adds another layer of complexity to get sorted prior to its full integration. GOA courses differ in how they function, ranging from some with more individual components to others that are largely based on video-conferencing with their peers, wherever students may be. If all goes well, other students will be able to enroll in GOA courses for the 2016-2017 school year, regardless of the course’s semester or the student-in-question’s grade.

Courses on campus are also taking advantage of the new opportunities afforded by new online resources, notably, a sustainable design course being offered by Chris Rowe and Gretchen Roorbach to seniors in their second semester. It will be conducted in a similar manner to a senior project, except it will involve a few students, both aforementioned teachers, and some guest speakers throughout the semester. Also, this course will take advantage of a Massive Online

Open Course (MOOC), by EdX, another platform that aims to develop another method of learning.

A very interesting cross-discipline course, “Dance, Music, and the New Media,” has two different courses under the same heading – Performance and Production. The course, as a whole, aims to bridge the gap between performing and visual arts through collaboration between teams of musicians, dancers, and visual artists. The performance side will include musicians, dancers, and a choreographer while the production side of the course will be for visual artists. The production aspect will work on using integrated media techniques to create a unique fusion of animated graphics, projection mapping, and video. After, the production and performance courses will create a final project, combining all of the new techniques.

Among other new electives in the English department, open to next-year’s juniors and seniors, is a class entitled “Lives of Women and Girls,” which analyses female characters and their lives in various pieces of well-known literature, written by both men and women. In addition, the course aims to familiarise students with the history of female authors. The texts build on ones students have familiarised themselves with in ninth and tenth grade English in order to examine the complexities of gender in a range of new texts, including *Antigone*, *Jane Eyre*, *A Room of One’s Own*, and *A Jury of One’s Peers*.

Another English course, “Literature of Paris,” is already a well-loved class at CA. However, next year, it will be a bit different. Rather than it being solely an English course, in the next academic year it will be offered in French, as well as English. Students proficient in French have the option of taking the course in French, both reading the books in French, and writing essays in French, while the other students will be able to take the same course in English. This course would be a great option for students wishing to improve their French in a more advanced way, exploring the language much like familiar English classes, as this class has done in the past.

This is only a selection of the new courses that are available, with others sure to please as well. The next few years are bound to be exciting for students at CA, whether they are combining their varied interests into one course, taking older classes in new languages, or working collaboratively with peers online -- be they in Jordan, India, Germany, or as nearby as Boston or New York.

# Students Elect All-School Leaders

by Anita Onyimah '16

The results are in! CA held its annual all-school elections on April 30th, and twenty-six student candidates gave speeches to their fellow students and faculty. After the votes were counted, the anticipated election results were released via e-mail. The elected leaders plan major school events such as Winterfest, discuss issues and ways to improve the school, and work with both the student body and the administration to implement change. Each position demands a large investment of time and effort.

Next year, school council will be led by seniors Callie Wadler as Head of School and Charlotte Baughan as Vice Head of School, Abby Bresler '17 and Caroline Tsui '16 as co-Heads of Environmental Affairs, Scott

Thompson '16 and Phil Thompson '16 as the co-Heads of Entertainment, Julia Kostro '16 and Hope Nuñez '18 as Community Action Representatives, Quess Green '16 and Nadia Itani '16 as co-Heads of Diversity, and Dennis Miao '16 as the Head of Day Students.

As Head of School, Callie Wadler is tasked with chairing the weekly all-school meetings, speaking at Commencement and Convocation, planning and organizing school functions, and working closely with the Vice Head of School to advocate for students in weekly meetings with Dean of Students David Rost. In her Statement of Intent, Wadler felt strongly about re-establishing common trust as a “two way street, where every mistake...precedes a lesson...rather than a punishment”. When asked about how she

*continued on page 6...*

# CA Packs 40,176 Meals at Stop Hunger Now Event

by Olga Kostochka '17

The Concord Academy community-wide service event for a non-profit organization Stop Hunger Now took place at CA on Sunday, April 12. The goal of the event was to come together as a community and pack meals for children all over the world, to improve their health, and to encourage the children to attend school rather than worry about food shortages.

More than 250 CA students, alumnae/i, faculty, family, and friends worked together in the Student Health and Athletic Center (SHAC) to pack 40,176 meals. The volunteers sorted, weighed, sealed, and packed ingredients into boxes, which would then be provided to developing countries around the world.

As a community, CA deeply valued the importance of the service event and enjoyed being a part of it. Grace Lin '17, who helped with sorting, said, “It is just amazing to see how such a [large] portion of this community is able to join in a voluntary act of kindness and service, to help complete strangers that we will probably never meet in our [life]. The best part is every time we [packaged 1,000 meals] they rang a gong -- it really showed us how if a community can bring itself together it can be so efficient in helping people who are trapped in hunger.”

Working together to package meals allowed CA volunteers to contribute to the world, as well as to one another. Andy Jin '16 noted, “Stop Hunger Now was another instance where I could experience CA’s sense of community. I loved how there were not only the current CA students, but also [alumnae/i], parents, and siblings, who were all willing to help out in this event. I was personally working with [Markos Alemu’s '17] little brother who was half my size. Yet, he was more passionately weighting the care package which motivated me to work harder.”

# March Break Trips

by Somerset Gall '16

While most Concord Academy community members return home during the two week March vacation, some students and faculty undertake a spring adventure, traveling to locations in-state, out-of-state, and even abroad.

These CA sponsored trips cover a wide variety of purposes; from pleasure to extensions of school curriculum to community service, the opportunities abound. This March, students participated in five different spring break experiences: the Costa Rica trip, the French trip, the Improvisational Film trip, the New York trip, and the Dance Company trip. The Costa Rica trip was a community service orientated trip with a focus on environmental issues. Led by science teacher Gretchen Roorbach and Spanish teacher Adam Bailey, students spent nearly two weeks in Hacienda Ario focused on participating in an environmentally friendly lifestyle and engaging with the culture, which included spending time with a host family. As Nina Callahan '16 described, “We went to the Nicoya Peninsula which is located on the Pacific side of Costa Rica. We stayed right on the ocean for five days, and for the other two we stayed in a village located 30 minutes inland with host families. We learned all about the Costa Rican eco-system, deforestation, and water conservation and consumption, while practicing our Spanish. The last two days were spent living with a host family, where we enhanced

In regards to the future of voluntary CA events like Stop Hunger Now, Dolma Tsering '16 said, “Along with the thrill there was a sense of community I found [myself] proud to be a part of, a side that I love about CA . . . sometimes, with our busy schedules, it gets lost. But it was one of those moments where I found that again, and I am so glad I got to be a part of it. [And] yes, I would love to do it again, even as an alumnae [next year]!”

Stop Hunger Now was a successful voluntary project for CA. If the event becomes an annual tradition for the CA community, it would certainly be greeted with work ethic and excitement in the years to come.



CA students, families, and faculty divided up into teams and in an assembly-line style packed over 40,000 meals.  
Photo by Ben Carmichael.

our spanish skills and built a garden at the village’s school.”

Tonhu Hoang and Ben Stumpf led the two-week long French trip traversing the more rural area of the Loire valley, as well as spending time in the more urban Bordeaux. The French trip, geared towards more advanced speakers, gave students the opportunity to gain a glimpse into the French culture, while applying their language skills. As Ben Glass '16 described, “I definitely learned more French, not really new vocab or grammar but just how to speak within the culture. I learned how to be more comfortable with impromptu speaking.”

Closer to home, the Improvisational Film class continued work on their upcoming feature-length film in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. For an entire week, the majority of the class shot scenes for the film at Eisner Camp. Carter Kratkiewicz '16 described how the class “Filmed the entire time for up to 13 hours per day. We had little breaks throughout, but they were long days.”

While each trip was radically different, participants related similar accounts of how the trips provided interesting and engaging experiences during their time away from CA. Callahan related how the Costa Rica trip, “Increased my knowledge surrounding environmental sustainability and the importance of permaculture. Also, my Spanish skills

*continued on page 6...*



# Identity in the Screen Age: A C-Art Exhibit Brings Schools Together

by Alex Berry '17

It isn't often that painting and modern technology mix, but when they do, the results can be interesting. Students from the Middlesex School, Concord Carlisle High School (CCHS), and Concord Academy (CA) helped to curate and contribute artwork to an exhibit at the Concord Art Association (CAA), *Look Me In the Eye: Perception and Identity in the Screen Age*, that uses that relationship to investigate how outlets like social media impact the identity of our generation. The exhibit runs through May 23, 2015.

"It is an exploration of an age where contact is often blind and human touch ephemeral," read the introduction on the gallery wall and pamphlet I picked up when I visited the exhibit. A projector mounted to the ceiling spat out adjectives onto the floor that scrolled automatically. I looked to my left and saw three paintings of the same girl, her facial features contorted in strange ways. I was fascinated by the exhibit's bizarreness.

I continued to wander around the small, low-ceilinged space. The theme of technological identity sometimes manifested itself literally in the artwork. For instance, the three paintings of the girl, all by Ellie Heywood of CCHS, are based on a picture she took of herself with Photobooth, an application on Apple computers. The software is capable of distorting different aspects of photographs. She mimicked the effect directly in her painting, which creates a commentary on her device's ease in changing her appearance. The messages in other pieces of art were less discernible. A series of pen-on-paper drawings by Sam Cadigan of Middlesex shows the backs of various people. In her artist statement she writes that "each subject was a little awkward and nervous when I asked them to turn around for their picture." She intended to show how "uncomfortable one may be with his or her identity."

The Concord Art Association (CAA), a non-profit organization founded in 1917 by American painter Elizabeth Wentworth Roberts, only a minute's walk from downtown Concord, and the host of the C-Art program. Last year the theme was Mapping Concord, and the organizers presented each

student participant with a square board on which to interpret a corresponding square section of Concord land. The student artists were allowed to use whatever medium or combination of media that they wished as long as their artwork fit on the surface. The final pieces were arrayed side-by-side in the same gallery space as this year's C-Art. The final pieces ranged from stark realism of natural landscapes to the abstract.

However, some changes have been made for the current C-Art initiative, which is funded by the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Concord Cultural Council. "The most significant difference that also reveals the growth in the program is the transfer of responsibility from the teachers to the students," said April Stone, a marketing and communications director at the CAA. She gave me her information when I met her briefly during my visit. "Last year's installation was curated by the adults in the collaboration-- curators and staff at Concord Art [Association] and faculty at the respective high schools."

An agent of that shift is the new curatorial program, in which John Koury, Connie Blumenthal and Caroline Stotz (CA), Eli Decker, Ellinor Heywood (CCHS), Sam Cadigan and Lily Henderson (Middlesex) are involved. During The Curator as Artist, the Artist as Curator Seminar, "student curators met weekly with museum curators, educators[,] and artists to learn about [...] curating an art exhibition."

Stone believes that C-Art will continue to be a successful way to unite the three schools. It has already proven itself to be a useful addition to school curriculums that lack the means to fabricate this kind of gallery experience, and especially such a collaborative one.

I made my way across the room to a wall with a grid of 3½" by 9" pieces of wood. A few of them were blank--their white surfaces untouched--and others had been painted on. I read the sign next to the arrangement which beckoned the visitor to take one of the blank pieces, create something theme-related, and return it to the wall. I looked back down at one of the slates. It read, in pasted-on computer keys: "To be or not to be yourself?"



## A Profile of Jonathan Smith

by Leo Feininger '16

The painting studio: various student works hang around the room, large mirrors look back at you from three of the four walls, a model skeleton stands by the front, little cacti and other plants sit by the windows, and countless smears of acrylic and oil paint garnish the floors, sinks, and cabinets. This is the teaching space of none other than Jonathan Smith, an individual who has worked at CA for nearly 26 years and enlightened countless students with his extensive knowledge and experience with art. Jonathan has made art since he was a young child and currently teaches painting, printmaking, and figure drawing--three subjects with which he has had much practice.

Jonathan spent most of his early life on Long Island, but just before his junior year in high school he moved to New Hampshire. He remembers playing curb ball and pick-up baseball in his neighborhood. When at home though, he spent a large portion of his time painting and drawing.

Reflecting on his early artistic ventures, Jonathan said, "To me, when I look back at the work that I did, it seems like typical childish work, and I don't mean childish as not advanced in any way for that age. It may have been, but it seemed pretty typical of a child that age ... As a typical kid I would copy a lot of things, pictures from magazines of athletes doing their thing and cars and motorcycles, all sorts of fun things, and birds too, I always loved birds."

Perhaps some of the reason why Jonathan kept going with his artwork was because of encouragement from those around him. Speaking of his family, Jonathan said, "I don't know what they saw, but they saw something." In addition, attending his last two years of high school in New Hampshire Jonathan had quite a remarkable art teacher who was very passionate about his job, and who would later inspire Jonathan to become a teacher himself. Jonathan said: "My teacher would encourage me to draw on my own and to push myself. He just seemed to have a great time. He loved it."

Jonathan said that during his years in college, through the teachings of his professors and involvement with other students, he gained a more worldly perspective of art. "The experience in college and working with professors really opened my eyes to a much larger world of art ... seeing other creative people pushing themselves helped me put myself together a little bit as an artist."

After college, Jonathan spent a few years working a variety of jobs. However, setting his sights on a career involving his art, Jonathan ended up attending graduate school at the City University of New York at Brooklyn College a few years after he left college, with the thought of an art-related profession in mind but not necessarily teaching. But then, about a year into graduate school, Jonathan remembered that he had wanted to become a teacher, and so he became a printmaking teacher's assistant an effort to prepare.

A few years after leaving graduate school, Jonathan came to Concord Academy for an interview. He recalled the experience like this: "I parked on Main Street, in front of Aloian house, and I got out of the car and I looked at the school, and I said to myself, 'Holy crap, this is the school. This is where I want to teach.' I eventually heard back from CA, and I didn't get the job." However, in a turn of events, "the guy they [the CA administration] gave the job to didn't want to work there, and luckily I was the second choice. The next thing I knew I got a call from Chris Rowe and he said, 'You got the job!'"

Teaching younger generations has provided Jonathan new insights into art-making and influenced the directions his own art has taken. And, on occasion, Jonathan has used the ideas behind his own work to create projects for his classes at CA. Jonathan said, "Young artists are so open to experimentation-- they'll just throw caution to the wind and throw it on the canvas. Experienced artists are a little conservative and don't want to experiment much, so seeing [my students] do that all the time keeps me fresh."

In recent years, Jonathan made a series of large still life paintings depicting everyday objects with backgrounds inspired by Greek mythology. Over the last five years, he has also been working on two series of works, one inspired by bones and the other by maps. Jonathan's bone paintings and drawings are representational in that a viewer recognizes the bones but are also abstract in that the bones form landscapes and other unique formations. Jonathan said that, "Because of my experience with figure drawing I've always been involved with drawing the human form, and I've always been interested in what's going on just below the surface--the bones, the muscles, et cetera. And that eventually made a segue into my own work by creating these bone paintings."

Similarly, Jonathan's map paintings can be recognized as maps, as he makes them first using a small cropping tool to select certain sections of images from a book and then combining these images into one vibrant, acrylic painting.

Jonathan described his two current series, one of bones and one of maps respectively, as "very organic" and "very grid-like." A number of Jonathan's pieces are photographed and available to see on his website: [www.jonathansmithartist.com](http://www.jonathansmithartist.com). However, if you want to see his art in a more personal context, Jonathan has multiple open studios every year at the Emerson Umbrella, a mere two minute walk from the CA campus.

*The three drawings pictured to the left are pieces in Jonathan's recent collection of bone paintings and drawings. Photo courtesy of Jonathan Smith*



# The Value in Academic Collaboration with Other Schools

by John Koury ’16

Concord Academy is widely recognized for the rigor and quality of its academics. In the past, when I’ve openly questioned Concord Academy’s high tuition, my peers have always quickly interjected, “Yes, but that’s because the classes are so AMAZING. You won’t find better teachers anywhere else!” Though as a new student I questioned this statement, I have come to agree with it over time. The excellence of Concord’s courses is largely unrivaled. Why is it, therefore, with its devoted teachers and amazing classes, that Concord Academy would seek involvement in external academics?

Earlier this semester, I took part in the Concord Art Consortium, one of Concord Academy’s academic collaborations. According to the course description, “This course is a joint venture with Concord Academy, Middlesex School, CCHS, and the Concord Art Association. Through a series of lectures and workshops, students discover the art of museum and gallery curation.” As a member and frequenter of the MFA, I was excited to take part in this opportunity to learn more about gallery organization and curation, but I was skeptical. As terrible as it may sound, having attended private schools all my life, I questioned what fruit collaborating with CCHS would yield.

To put things simply, I was quickly humbled, ashamed, and intrigued, all at the same time. The artistic ability, integrity, and enthusiasm of almost every student in the class far exceeded my expectations. So, even after just one meeting, the Concord Art Consortium had already taught me something that CA never could. Working alongside students from what I considered to be different worlds than my own completely abolished my bias. I no longer think of public school students and private school students as any different. We’re simply all students. This is a realization I believe everyone should have.

In addition to popping my “CA Bubble,” the course was fascinating. We were walked through the conception of gallery theme, the selection of artists, and the organization of artwork. Professional curators regularly attended our classes both to present and to aide us throughout the process. This is an opportunity that CA could never have offered on its own. Until this class, I’d never realized how much thought goes into the curation of a gallery. I have a newfound appreciation for the MFA, and I doubt that I’ll ever visit any museum the same way again.

Despite my enlightening experience,

# Advice from Junior Year

by Julia Shea ’16

Junior year. The year of high school that my mom’s friends, my brother’s friends, and everyone else whom I have talked to remember as the most intense. After surviving this notoriously stressful period of high school, and actually enjoying it, I would like to offer underclassmen a few pieces of academic and social advice.

Academic #1: Choose your English and history electives based on the topic and the books. It’s easy to fall into the trap of picking the same classes as your friends or picking based on the teacher, but at the end of the

some CA students haven’t found reason to take part in outside academic involvement. Joey Caradimitropoulo, ’16, has never taken part in any of CA’s interscholastic collaborations. In our recent conversation, Caradimitropoulo said, “I have never thought to take advantage of any of the academic collaborations that CA offers (i.e. Environmental Consortium, Concord Art Consortium). I think these are great opportunities for CA students to explore an interest in either environmental science or art, in these scenarios. My interests have not led me to any of the consortiums, and since I have not thoroughly read either course description, it is not my place to expand on my biases about these classes.” Like Caradimitropoulo, most CA students have not yet taken part in outside academic collaborations, whether because of lacking interest or an ignorance to their existence. Linc Berkley ’17, offered an alternative viewpoint. He said, “There are some classes that CA is simply unable to offer on its own. By working with other schools and organizations, all student interests can be met.” As I mentioned earlier, Concord Academy could never have provided as authentic of a curation experience as did the Concord Art Association. By collaborating, CA was therefore able to offer the best possible student opportunity.

Though I do agree with Caradimitropoulo that CA does a wonderful job of catering to the interests of its students, the facilities at CA simply cannot support each and every desired subject. For example, I was recently intrigued by the addition of the Chemistry of Cooking class to the science course offerings. Upon further investigation, however, I found that class time rarely includes actual cooking. This was not so much the result of deliberate choice as it was the result of lacking cooking space. As far as I know, the Centennial Plan does not include a new, student accessible kitchen space. As someone who would love to learn more about cooking, I would therefore appreciate CA’s offering of an outside culinary course. Several other students with whom I have spoken share similar opinions. Maddie Hurley, ’16, said “I would be really interested if Concord Academy were to offer academic collaborations on social justice. Massachusetts is a hotbed of progressive thought, and getting to learn from those at the forefront of equality advocacy would be an amazing opportunity. Also, working with the other Concord high schools would be a great way to strengthen the community.” I look forward to further involvement in CA’s academic collaborations. Hopefully, in the coming years, every student’s interests will be met.

day, the content is the most important. When it’s 11p.m. and you are struggling to keep your eyes open, you’ll have a much easier time finishing your homework if you find it interesting. On the subject of reading for English and history classes, do your absolute best to complete it for each and every class meeting. When pressed for time, you might be inclined to leave readings for the weekend. Unfortunately, that will prevent you from delving into in-class discussions that repay you for your hard work.

Academic #2: Sleep. I feel mildly hypocriti-

*continued on page 6...*

# The “Push for Passion”: A Unhealthy Societal Pressure on Teens

by Isabel Cushing ’17

A few weeks ago, at a dinner party I was attending with my family, the hostess called the attention of the table. She looked around intensely and began drilling the present high-schoolers, myself included, with questions. “What are your extracurriculars?” she asked. “What are your passions?” My older sister, having recently gone through the college process, automatically recited a comprehensive list of her activities, and I watched the hostess nodding with approval as my sister mentioned sports teams, dance programs, community service hours, editorial positions, and clubs. I bit my fingernails subconsciously and racked my brain for what to say.

High-schoolers are encouraged to work toward leadership positions and participation in countless clubs, but this alone is not enough. We are also driven to select one or two activities to which we devote special attention--our “passions.” Influential teachers and even supportive family members have urged me, “Just find your passion!” as if, with enough hard work, I could simply choose a passion and play it up for my college applications.

I recently read an article on the *New York Times* blog, Motherlode: Living in the Family Dynamic, entitled “Our Push for ‘Passion’ and Why It Harms Kids,” by Lisa Heffernan. This piece addressed the prevailing contemporary belief that adults have a duty to push their children to “discover” a passion.

It has become clear to parents and prospective students that colleges are seeking out passion and devotion among candidates. One article, giving tips for how to create a “killer college application,” named passion as the number one most important aspect of a college application: “Share your passion[s]... and use them whenever possible in admissions and scholarship essays.” The idea of

passion or love for an activity has become an asset from which students are encouraged to extract as many benefits as possible; the word has lost its true meaning in the eyes of young adults and their worried parents.

Furthermore, the “push for passion” often preoccupies students with what Kenneson calls a “pseudo passion,” an activity that takes up time and energy whether or not they are actually passionate about it. This mindset can detract from our ability to find activities that we truly love and enjoy.

As a sophomore in high school, I feel intense pressure to amass and excel at a host of extracurricular activities, not necessarily from specific adults in my life but from the general culture around me that surges with stress and urgency. It is urgent that I discover my passion and vital that I stand out among the crowd, if I want to have any shot at getting into a “good” college.

The drive to find a “passion” as we have come to define it, whether or not it boosts your college application, is harmful and confusing to children and young adults. As Kenneson stated in her article, “childhood isn’t about passion, but rather about exploration.” The parents, teachers, and culture around us create an environment in which exploration is perhaps inadvertently discouraged. I have been told many times that it is better to devote myself to a few clubs than to dabble in everything. But how am I supposed to discover my passion, if I cannot explore all the clubs that I am interested in?

We need to make the transition to a culture that supports exploration and discovery, so that students can work to determine what they truly love to do. In my view, a passionate person is someone who has the interest, energy, and courage to embrace life. I would rather be invested in all aspects of life than force myself to pick a single passion.

# CA Should Divest from Fossil Fuels

by Claire Phillips ’15

One sign read, “Climate change is undeniable.” Another, “Green is the new Black.” The third sign asks, “If not us, WHO? If not now, WHEN?” This year, CA students and faculty attended the People’s Climate March in New York, Global Divestment Day workshops at the State House, and a Divest Harvard rally. At each event, the people present and the signs they held were a bit different, but they all advocated one common message. They emphasized that, as CA alumna Phoebe Chatfield ’14 said at a divestment rally at Boston College, “The climate crisis is not ‘an issue,’ it is THE issue that is defining our life and our future.” And they called upon institutions, governments, corporations and everyday people to divest from fossil fuels, by selling their investments in the fossil fuel industry to combat its destructive impact on the climate and our futures.

Investors sometimes use divestment to promote social change by selling their stocks in industries that they believe support, represent, or participate in an activity that they consider immoral. If many stockholders divest, their actions can engage the public in questioning an industry’s integrity and morality. Universities across the world divested from South Africa during the Apartheid era with fantastic results, promoting an international discussion on the subject and aiding

Apartheid’s downfall. Now, a fossil fuel divestment movement is spreading to schools, towns, and churches across the country and beyond. Students are asking their administrations why their schools’ endowments are invested in an industry that threatens our future.

Concord Academy’s investment committee and Board of Trustees have recently been considering fossil fuel divestment, and the idea - like the movement - has grown in popularity. Alumna Kai Salem ’14 and Chatfield met with Head of School Rick Hardy last year to propose fossil fuel divestment; the board considered the idea, and while some supported it, the group was unsure both whether it was the morally correct thing to do and whether it was financially feasible. This year, Nora Silva ’15, Chloë Sahyoun ’15, and I met with Hardy and CFO Amy Fredericks twice to propose the idea again. We pressed them to urge the investment committee to divest CA’s endowment from the most powerful 200 fossil fuel companies. We also presented a petition from over 90% of the senior class backing divestment and information about energy companies outside the fossil fuel sector whose investment returns had consistently been better than those in fossil fuels.

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# An Interview with Phoebe Chatfield '14

...continued from page 1

ways that college students can work on climate change but divestment is a particularly powerful tactic because it's hoping to push the needle in that political way.

Q: What are the arguments against divestment? Is it simply that the stock prices for these fossil-free companies are low, which would mean big losses for the school?

A: I think one of the biggest roadblocks is that institutions, especially really old ones like Yale are really slow to move. The opposition is just that making any sort of radical statement like this is difficult at places that are slow to change. There is also more direct opposition to the divestment movement: there is the fear that it will negatively impact the endowment, which, in my opinion, is not particularly well-founded because there are really credible studies that have shown that the impacts on the endowment are very negligible. There have been a lot of endowment managers that have created fossil-free portfolios that are really successful. Cambridge Associates, which runs the endowments of a lot of schools, including Swarthmore, has recently made a fossil-free option, and that was a big game changer for a lot of schools. When you have a credible and successful company like that it shows that this option is financially viable.

I don't think any of us would be working on this if we thought it would have a negative impact on this university—we're working on this because we believe in this university and its ability to become a leader. But I know Yale's own investing policy says it shouldn't invest in industries that are immoral even if there is a potential for financial gain.

Q: Do you truly think it is logistically possible to completely divest from all forms of fossil fuels?

A: My divestment campaign and others' are not asking that they divest from all fossil-fuel companies right this second; we ask that they halt any new investments in fossil fuel companies and then in three to five years they phase out all other investments, which I think is extremely feasible. I know when Pitzer College divested in California they had given their administration two years and within six months they had phased out.

Q: What do you know about how students on college campuses build their forces to gain momentum and fighting power for the divestment movement? Do they try to connect with other student groups? This is obviously an issue that concerns everyone, but not everyone knows that.

A: We've been really focusing on base-building on campus this year and that's looked primarily like a lot of coalition building, so bringing together different groups of people around this issue that is important to all of us. One of the frameworks that has been



*The rallies in which Phoebe Chatfield '14 partook have grabbed the attention of Yale's administration and the Yale Daily News.*

*Photo courtesy of Phoebe Chatfield '14*

really empowering to do that with has been thinking about climate change as a social justice issue. We've been doing a lot of work with other student groups around climate as a social justice issue and also around the ways in which our activism on campus can make space for other student activism and for the realization of a lot of other social justice causes on campus.

We've also been working with faculty and alumni a lot and working to engage them in the issue of divestment because the voices of faculty and the voices of alumni are often heard more strongly than the voices of current students. Alumni and faculty can put a lot of pressure on the administration to move on this issue.

We were part of a coalition of student groups earlier this year called Unite Yale, which brought together students on the issues of fossil fuel divestment and support for our cultural centers, which have been chronically underfunded and have not had a voice in the administration in the ways that students feel would be appropriate and empowering for them. These issues encompass the primary ways in which students are organizing on campus and we brought people together for a rally that highlighted the interconnections between all these causes. That was one of the most exciting things that happened this spring because students spoke really eloquently about the ways in which race and class intersect with the climate crisis, both in Yale's decision not to divest and the ways it plays out in the broader world. It is important that we're building a culture on campus that is anti-racist and that highlights intersectionalism and equality on campus, both for the safety and wellbeing of students here and the ramifications for the broader world.

The environmental movement has had a history of being incredibly white and wealthy and of not focusing on that intersection, but the student climate movement today is totally transforming what that looks like.

Divestment interrelates with that a lot for me because I think that here at Yale, and also at Concord Academy, we are really far away and disconnected from people that are already suffering based on the climate crisis. When we are so far away from that it can be really easy for us to continue with business as usual, even when it's having such serious ramifications with people elsewhere and I think that because we are so removed from that we have the responsibility to be making these connections and forcing our administration to take a powerful stance.

Q: What leads a student group to make the switch between asking for the school to divest to engaging in direct action and civil disobedience for the school to divest or just putting more pressure on the school than just asking nicely? When does a divestment group go to the next level? What were the stages that lead up to that?

A: What that looked like for Yale was that for the first two years of our campaign we worked really closely with the administration. We presented a well-written and well-informed proposal to them and engaged in a lot of negotiation meetings with them to discuss the issue. While we continue to work really closely with the administration, since we got an official "no" in August things have shifted.

We engaged with the administration earlier this semester around the social injuries of the fossil fuel industry and the ways that they exploit communities directly as something separate from the climate crisis, and the administration responded by bringing our attention to on-campus sustainability efforts, which cannot adequately address any of those social injuries in any way.

Because we felt like we weren't being heard by the administration and our arguments weren't being taken seriously that led us to take direct action and to engage in a fifty person sit-in in the president's office. Fifty

of us went in in the morning and occupied that space for the day and we were asking that the Yale administration reconsider the issue of divestment, we weren't asking for divestment right then, just that they would issue a statement saying that they'd reconsider and unfortunately when the building closed they chose to arrest us rather than to say that they'd reconsider. Even though I felt so disrespected by the university and so discouraged that they weren't even willing to reconsider, I felt a lot of student and also national support.

Q: What advice do you, as a college student, have to us and the entirety of the CA body on accelerating the process of divestment at CA?

A: I've been so thrilled and proud to hear about all the work that's been done this year with the campaign at CA and also really encouraged to hear that the administration has been taking the proposal seriously. It would be a really meaningful action for CA to divest because it would be the first high school to do so and it would be completely in line with Concord Academy's values. I would say that the best thing that students can do right now is to show that there is so much student and faculty support and to engage in the administration on really friendly and collaborative terms, especially since they have seemed willing to work with you all.

Divestment is by no means the one-shot solution to the climate crisis, but is a really important and empowering way that students and institutions can do to take a really powerful stand on this issue. Doing this work gives me a lot of hope that political and personal change is possible.

The way that we can respond to the climate crisis can not only address and start to solve the problem but can also create more opportunities for people to have a voice especially people who don't always—young people and communities all over the world who have been suffering from the climate crisis, which are communities that have been oppressed in a lot of other ways for a long time. The way we are responding to the crisis is giving them the voice they haven't had and taking down the institutions of oppression and power that have devalued them. The reason the climate crisis has gotten to this point is that the people who are suffering are already marginalized communities and people without power and if we can start to tip the scales on that that will be really important.

We as youth feel the climate crisis so acutely because this is our future, this is our life in twenty or thirty years.

## CA Should Divest

...continued from page 4

As conversations about divestment and CA's carbon footprint have spread through the CA campus, the Board of Trustees has begun to seriously consider divestment. Students, faculty, parents, and alumni have begun to ask: why should we divest from the fossil fuel industry the best kind? If we're going to divest, why not, for example, from the weapon-making industry? And why is divestment one of the most powerful ways to combat climate change? As Harry Breault

'16 explained, "Divestment correlates with a larger movement. It is one component of a process that must include government regulation, political pressure, and citizen activism." I believe that divestment alone cannot, and will not, solve the environmental crisis. Rather, divestment, along with other forms of political pressure and persuasion, will begin the shift towards positive change. Chloë Sahyoun '15 elaborated: "A lot of people don't understand that divestment is not about the financial implications of our

stocks; if we divest, they will be bought by someone else, and compared to the amounts that these corporations have, our stocks are nothing. It is the public statement we are making, the pressure we are putting on the government to stop subsidizing companies that are catastrophic for our future, that counts."

CA's Board of Trustees, Investment Committee, CFO, and Head of School continue to consider whether to divest from fossil fuel stocks. It is indeed the Investment

Committee's obligation to prudently manage the school's financial holdings, and not make hasty decisions. Nonetheless, as Nora Silva '15 sees it, "It is our school's fiduciary duty to financially provide for us while we attend CA ... and to continue to do so for years and classes to come. But CA is compromising our future - and that of upcoming students - by not taking a political or social stand on the greatest social justice issue of our generation."



# Predictions for the NBA Playoff Season

by Jeremy Liang '16

As an exciting NBA season draws to a close, including a dramatic battle for the final eight seeds in each conference, the NBA playoffs are finally upon us. Starting April 19th, each playoff team faced the daunting task of winning sixteen games amongst the chaos of the media and the blood and sweat on the hardwood. Only one team will raise the Larry O’Brien Trophy as the 2015 NBA champions. Everything is heightened in the postseason: the calls get more controversial, mistakes are carefully scrutinized, and losses become even more overwhelming and painful. However, on the flip side, winning is that much sweeter, making the glory of the championship truly rewarding. When the confetti falls and a team is crowned champion, the members of the team will know that their playoff run incorporated consistency and perseverance, unlike the NFL playoffs, in which a champion can emerge victorious through a single play.

For many people, the favorite to win both the Western Conference and the eventual NBA Championship is the Golden State Warriors. Under first year coach Steve Kerr, a former Chicago Bulls point guard won his own championships with Michael Jordan, this year’s Warriors team posted an NBA-best record of 67-15. However, beyond the record, the Oakland team dominated opponents with exciting play from MVP winner Stephen Curry and all-star Klay Thompson. The Warriors are the league’s second most efficient offense but also the most efficient defense. This is in large part to defensive MVP runner-up Draymond Green, who acts as a Swiss Army knife for the Warriors as a versatile, “do-it-all” type player on both defense and offense. This led the Warriors to win in a consistent and often dominant fashion, and on average, by over ten points. Golden State is a clear frontrunner in the West, and is the pick of many analysts to win the Western Conference.

The San Antonio Spurs, the reigning NBA champion, are also amongst the favorites to win the conference. It seems that every year, Coach Greg Popovich and the Spurs find a way to defy their old age and finish another stellar season. This year was no exception. Although the Spurs are only in the number six seed in the West, this rank is very misleading; the Spurs’ record is only a game behind the number two seed, the Houston Rockets, and had the Spurs won

their final game of the season, they would be in ownership of the two seed. However, the seed is simply a number for the San Antonio squad, and with their fluid, unselfish offense and high basketball IQ, they always play their best basketball in the postseason. If anything, their most valuable asset is playoff experience. Since the beginning of the Duncan-Popovich era in 1997, the Spurs have been in the playoffs every year. This year marks their 17th consecutive playoff season. In this span, the Spurs have won five NBA titles, and are seeking their sixth one this year. Although the road to the championship is made difficult by their low seed (San Antonio will not have home court advantage for most of the playoffs), the Spurs will find a way to survive and advance, as they always do. However, this year’s Western Conference playoff teams are exceptionally talented, leaving the field still completely open. While the Warriors and Spurs are the frontrunners, there are many other teams able to shine in the postseason. The Memphis Grizzlies, sporting an energetic and suffocating defense, will give any team trouble with their size and physicality. The Houston Rockets, the number two seed, are led by MVP runner-up James Harden, who has proven to be an scoring threat with over 35 points in 16 of his 82 regular season games. Additionally, the Los Angeles Clippers utilize an offensive strategy that earned the title of “Best Offensive Efficiency” in the league, mostly from the stellar play of point guard Chris Paul and other team members such as Blake Griffin and Deandre Jordan.

The Eastern Conference, on the other hand, is more or less set in stone. While there are some compelling teams seeded three and below, the main contenders for the Eastern Conference title are the Atlanta Hawks and the Cleveland Cavaliers. Many experts are choosing the Cavaliers to advance to the NBA Finals, despite having a lower seed. This is mostly because of Atlanta’s recent case of the injury bug, which unfortunately prevents the Hawks from playing to their full potential. The Cavaliers, after acquiring center Timothy Mozgov and guard J.R Smith midyear, have been playing with great form since the All Star break. The wine and gold are led by NBA megastar LeBron James, who despite his “old” age of 30, is still playing in phenomenal form. With the many offensive weapons in the Cavalier’s roster, it would likely prove too much for an injury-ridden Hawks team, and thus the Cavaliers are the favorite for many to represent the East in the NBA Finals.

## Advice

cal in writing this, since I am often one to check e-mail and Facebook right before I go to bed. If you can muster the self-control, avoid surfing the web before you go to sleep. Five minutes can very quickly turn into an hour. Or two. Power down your computer and phone. You’ll be glad you did come the morning.

Academic #3: Take advantage of public libraries. You’re less likely to become distracted, and sitting upright at a table might improve your focus in itself. And, if you do lose attention, you’re bound to gravitate toward something worthwhile.

Social #1: If you are able to, spend time with friends at locations outside of CA. When on campus, you might subconsciously limit your conversations to subjects that are related to school. By disconnecting from the physical

space, you might find that your conversations wander to new places.

Social #2: Focus on the people whom you do like, not the ones you don’t. No matter where you go, there will likely be people you don’t care for. Criticizing, complaining, and gossiping can take an enormous amount of time and brainpower that would be better channeled toward something more constructive.

Social #3: Eat your meals with people. It’s tempting to grab dinner on a paper plate and bring it to a classroom so that you can multitask. Take thirty minutes, talk with someone new, and have your dinner at a table with real silverware and ceramic plates. Some of the best conversations I have had with people at CA are at dinner with a mix of people that do not normally spend time together.

# All-School Leaders

...continued from page 2

felt about her election, she replied that it was “amazing to have been elected! Especially because [she] finds [her]self on a platform that past heads of school weren’t. [She’s] ready to speak to what the community wants without backing down.” As Vice Head of School, Baughan hopes to “work with and support members on council to make CA a welcoming and positive environment, as well as achieve the goals and interests of the student body.” Her duties include serving as the secretary of each council meeting and assisting Wadler in implementing council’s agenda for the year.

As co-Heads of Environmental Affairs, Abby Bresler and Caroline Tsui will facilitate Recycling Duty and organize weekend environmental service opportunities. Bresler and Tsui are both passionate about the environment. Tsui, when asked about her motives for running, said that she hopes “to instill in the CA community a greater sense of enthusiasm towards the green movement and responsibility for the environment.” Bresler puts a few of their specific ideas forward. They plan on “running workshops educating people about climate change, hosting discussions to hear people’s attitudes and suggestions, figuring out a use for the leftover water in coolers after games and sports practices, and providing the school with statistics on how much water and electricity it uses and then hosting a competition to reduce the amount.” In addition, they hope that, “through informative weekly announcements and posters that are also funny or eye-catching, [they] will educate people in small doses that add up, and therefore help change their everyday actions and encourage them to bring their newfound knowledge and enthusiasm to their communities outside of CA.”

Co-Heads of Entertainment, the Thompsons, will lead an entertainment committee comprised of the two elected entertainment representatives from each grade to make the year as fun as possible for each grade and the school as a whole. The Thompsons could not be reached for comment.

As Head of Day Students, Miao will consider how certain policy changes might affect train students, driving students, and other commuting CA students, and boost the morale of day students. Miao could not be reached for comment.

Community Action representatives Kostro and Nuñez are tasked with presenting community service and activism ideas to all-school council and working with the Entertainment co-Heads to come up with community service opportunities for students. Kostro was elected Community Action Representative last year as well. Since her election, she’s helped organize the Stop Hunger Now event, and CA students were

able to package over 40,000 meals. When asked about her plans for next year, she said that she hopes to make Stop Hunger Now an annual event, making it even bigger and better next year. This year, she was able to get CA sports teams to spend a practice at a local service organization, and “this coming year, [she] wants to ensure that every sports team has the opportunity to do so”. When asked why she ran for Community Action Representative, she said that she “truly believes that community service can be one of the most fulfilling things one can do with their time, and [she] wants everyone at CA to have the opportunity to do so.” Nuñez will be partnering with Kostro to help further the projects begun this year and bring new new ideas to the table. When asked why she ran for the position, she said that “although boosting community service is one of my goals, my main goal is strengthening the CA community internally.” She hopes to partner with the Heading Home Foundation, an organization that focuses on ending homelessness in the Greater Boston area.

As co-Heads of Diversity, Green and Itani will work closely with the Community and Equity team to help plan the Diversity Dinner, Revisit Days, and Admissions Open Houses. While Itani was on campus to give her speech, Green recorded his voice all the way from Italy to give his. Even while on a School Year Abroad program in Italy, Green ran for Diversity co-Head and won. When asked why he ran for the position, he said that he wanted to “change our school’s approach to discussing diversity... as co-Head of Diversity, I want to challenge [the CA community] to reflect on the ignorance we ourselves demonstrate and work together to dispel it.” For his first act in office, he wants to give the affinity groups more of a presence on campus by redefining their roles in the CA community. He’d like to remind CA that groups like Alianza Latina, UMOJA, and A.S.A. “aren’t merely here for celebrating the culture and identity of their members, but also to serve as a medium through which all students can take part in the ongoing conversation about diversity at our school”. His co-Head, Itani, wrote in her statement of intent that “the CA community holds far greater potential than is being utilized,” and promised to work with Green and the C&E Office “to ensure that CA lives up to its full potential in terms of spreading awareness outside of the ever-prevalent CA bubble.”

The elected student leaders seem to be brimming with ideas and ambition. The 2015-2016 school year is slated to be an exciting and productive one under their leadership.

# March Trips

...continued from page 2

were enhanced. For someone who doesn’t take Spanish being in an environment where little English is spoken was a true challenge, but also a great environment to learn the language.”

For Glass, the French trip was an opportunity to, “Go to Europe and travel by myself. While you are with a group you definitely have to do things on your own.” He also described how the trip gave him the ability to be, “More comfortable speaking French; you kind of get thrown into the water when you are in a foreign country;

that’s what’s great about traveling, you learn so much faster.”

For Kratkiewicz, the film trip was a reflection of his future plans. As he said, “I am interested in film, it’s what I want to do with my life.”

While the purpose of each trip varied widely, participants each had the opportunity to spend time learning and engaging with other CA students and faculty in a new setting and culture.



# 25 Years of Study in Feminist Literary Criticism

## An Interview with Leigh Gilmore

by Shannon Sun '17

Q: Congratulations on delivering your lecture called “Hiding in Plain Sight: Emotions and Ethical Witness in Women’s Auto-biographical Narratives” in Poland, Leigh! Could you tell us more about the content of your lecture?

A: I was invited by faculty in the Literature Department at the University of Wrocław to offer a keynote lecture at an international conference on “Emotions.” As a focus of scholarly interest, the emotions cross many fields: from psychoanalytic studies of attachment and affect, to cognitive science and new interests like emotional intelligence, to translation studies and linguistics. My field is literature, so I study how our feeling that reading is personal and individual is itself an emotion that links readers together as a public.

Q: What were you trying to convey through your lecture?

A: In my talk, I was showing how adult women writers like the abolitionist Harriet Jacobs and Nobel Peace Prize winner and Indigenous rights activist Rigoberta Menchú use narratives of their own girlhood as an invitation to distant readers (specifically, “white women of the North,” for Jacobs and an international activist community for Menchú) to form a sympathetic bond with them. These writers manage their readers’ complex affective responses (of aversion, voyeurism, disidentification) in the direction of sympathy. They understand that identification is a political emotion, a feeling that might move someone to an ethical action. I trace a history of women writers using autobiographical narratives of childhood in this innovative way through to contemporary comics artists like Marjane Satrapi and Phoebe Gloeckner.

Q: Who were your audiences?

A: For the keynote lecture, dignitaries from the university were present, as well as faculty from Europe, North America, and the UK. I also spoke with Master’s and PhD students who are taking degrees in English literature and whose interests are in autobiography.

Q: What were some of the responses that you received from your audience after you delivered your lecture?

A: I learned that feminism is at the center of a culture war in Poland.

Q: And did you anticipate such reactions?

A: It was surprising to some students to hear feminist critical analysis delivered from the podium of the most hallowed hall of the university, the Aula Leopoldina. The feminist faculty wanted this public statement about the rigorous quality of feminist thought to be part of their students’ and colleagues’ experience.

Q: I noticed that you have also published several books (including *The Limits of Autobiography: Trauma and Testimony*, *Autobiographics: A Feminist Theory of Women’s Self-Representation*, and *Autobiography and Postmodernism*) that are related to feminist studies. What sparked your interest to research and write about this area of study?

A: I was initially drawn to questions of self-representation in literature, to the “I” of first person narrative in fiction and nonfiction. I was lucky to be in graduate school during a

period of intellectual foment in the US, and it was exhilarating to be able to look at canonical texts through a new lens. Conventional assertions that women were not great writers or that only European men had produced great literature were simply not sustained by the texts themselves. So that period paved the way for a renewed interest in the past—not as source of exclusion, but as rich and meaningful archive—as well as opening up the possibility of studying understudied writers from the past and present.

Q: Which of these books are you most proud of—and what kind of impact do you wish to make with this book?

A: I have to say I am proud of anything I publish because writing is hard work. But I write to engage with ideas, so I am always interested in how my work has been taken up. One example of that is being asked to come to Poland. Scholars write as part of an ongoing conversation. We write in conversation with the past and for generations in the future. We also write to shape the conversation in our own moment in time.

Q: Why did you decide to use autobiographies as a means to researching about feminism?

A: I like big topics: what is the self and what does it mean to give it a structure and a shape in literature? What are the prominent discourses and measures of truth and identity in a culture? Who gets to tell the truth and who decides? How do forms of self-representation change or persist over time? You might be surprised that anything we think of as “just human” is also about gender and that feminism is a mode of bringing critical analysis to that generalization.

Q: How do you think researching this genre of work affected your studies?

A: I argued in my first book (that’s something scholars say, by the way, “As I argued...” and it sounds really stilted and weirdly self-referential if it’s not in your vernacular) that autobiography is less a coherent genre than a wide-ranging practice of self-representation in many forms (including poetry and autobiographical fiction).

Q: What have you learned throughout these decades of researching about feminist studies?

A: What have I learned from 25 years of teaching and writing in the field of feminist literary criticism? First, that what we call gender is a relation of inequality in which those whom we call “women” can be demoted by those whom we call “men.” Gender offers a technique of power for categorizing life. This hierarchy is made invisible to us through habit (e.g. men in positions of power = power is something that “feels weird” when women hold it). Second, that gender never stands alone -- neither in our everyday experience nor in larger structures. It is always connected to race, class, sexuality, and age in ways that truly reward our attention to this multiplicity. To miss the connections is to miss everything interesting. Third, everything can change. Feminism has a quality of hope, always. Remember how Hawthorne presents Hester Prynne’s views about gender? Feminism links hope and futurity to a critical analysis of past and present. And also strives for equality now.

Q: Do you think that any of your childhood experiences sparked your long-term interest

in feminism?

A: I never had a conscious moment when I was not a feminist, I think. To be conscious of gender is to be a feminist. Unless, of course, your consciousness is to say that men are better than women or should have power over them or should do this or that because ... patriarchy.

Q: Did your family in any way influence or encourage you to pursue research on feminism?

A: My parents always encouraged my critical and creative thought. I had a free-range intellectual upbringing. I studied the Bible and Faulkner, Virginia Woolf, Kafka and Hermann Hesse, the confessional poets, and the medieval mystics. I was always waiting for a ride home from my dad in some library, so if it was on the shelf, I read it. I grew up listening to sermons and watching my father prepare them. My mother was an English major at Ole Miss and this inspired me. Both of them pointed me toward the distant horizon of my potential.

Q: What are some obstacles that you’ve encountered in your pursuit of feminism and gender equality?

A: I did have teachers who said I could not do certain things because I was a girl, or refused me certain opportunities. I think that remains an aspect of many women’s experiences and it was part of mine, too. Some of these I was only dimly aware of as gendered, but I caught on. Once you can see the power dynamics, you can ally with others, press for fairness, and share the work of progress together.

Q: You mentioned previously that you never had a conscious moment when you were not a feminist, because “to be conscious of gender is to be a feminist.” I have some female friends, however, who either don’t believe they are feminists, don’t believe they should be feminists, and/or are afraid to describe themselves as such. What would be your response to such attitude? In other words, how would you define the term “feminist,” and what kind of value do you think this term might hold?

A: Well, maybe they aren’t feminists. I’d give anyone their right to self-definition. But I think you might be suggesting that some women are afraid of the self-definition even though they agree with everything feminist activism has fought so hard to attain: the vote for women, for example, the right to be educated and to work, the right to inherit money, to have your own bank account, not to marry, if you so choose. You are suggesting that there are women who want all the benefits of feminism, but perceive that they would lose some sort of social prestige if they made that public. If you think women can thrive in a world in which we do not have access to the vote, education, employment, and self-determination that is equal to what men have, and further, where our access to all those things is controlled by men, then you are not a feminist. If you think that law



Leigh Gilmore delivered her speech in the baroque hall called the Aula Leopoldina at the University of Wrocław in Poland. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons: Stako, September 2005 (UTC)

and custom should foster women’s rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and you oppose what gets in the way of this, you are a feminist.

Q: You encouraged us to “look at [our] world closely” – I wonder if you maybe had a female role model you looked up to when you were around our age? If so, who is she and what did you admire about her?

A: As much as we have a habit of looking to exemplary role models, I was always just as interested in the mass of those who were part of a movement as those who were its leaders.

Q: In this case, I’m interested in your thoughts on how women are portrayed on TV and in movies. Who do you think is the best example of a well-portrayed strong female character in TV or movies that you have seen in the last few years? Are there any attempts at such characters that you feel didn’t work well?

A: I think we are in a period of extraordinary vitality for women in comedy and this is where I see a great positive change. I can’t tell you how misogynist and bro-esque most of comedy has been for my life. Feminists would be accused of having no sense of humor because we didn’t laugh at sexist and racist jokes. But now? Women in comedy don’t just blend in, they define the landscape of comedy, as I see it. And I look for change.

Q: Thank you for sharing your stories and insight with the *Centipede*. Looking forward, are you planning to write another book about feminism some time in the near future?

A: I have two new books in progress, both of which are feminist scholarship, as well as several new articles in press or recently published in scholarly journals. You’re all welcome to check them out on my academia.edu page, if you find your interest piqued. I have a new book that Columbia University Press is publishing in the Gender and Culture series that I am finishing this summer.



# The Centipede

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The *Centipede* is the official student newspaper of Concord Academy. The paper encourages comments from its readers in the form of Letters to the Editor. No anonymous letters will be printed. The *Centipede* reserves the right to edit all articles for length and content.

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The mission of The *Centipede* is to inform, spark curiosity, and generate discussion within the community and beyond. The majority of the content relates to school issues, events, and news, but occasionally writers voice their opinions on politics, sports, and other contentious topics.

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Julia,

Recently, I read the front-page article which posed the question: Why Do We Feel Guilty About the “CA Bubble”? Answer: You feel guilty because every day you are aware of the suffering of others as you go about life in an exquisite intellectual cocoon. You feel guilty because you care about other people. This is good – it tells us that we are raising alert, informed, and sensitive young people.

But perhaps guilt is not the best use of your emotional energy. Guilt can really weigh a person down, and it is rarely productive. Gratitude and perseverance could serve you better. Yours is a privileged environment, to be sure. Keeping that in mind, celebrate your stay inside the CA bubble by working hard and giving your best effort. Caring deeply about other cultures, and cozy educational sojourning are not mutually exclusive. Your parents and teachers want you to do both. It is totally fine to enjoy living as you do, as long as you can recognize and appreciate how ephemeral and unique the experience is.

Student schedules are jam-packed by design. Consequently, you are not expected to keep up with every global news event. And teenagers are not expected to right the wrongs of the world. The walls of your bubble are clear – keep looking at the outside.! TBut try to savor your time on the inside;, it will be over altogether too quickly. I thank Alex Berry for reminding us to consider the upside of Chameleon Nation’s insularity.

Wishing you every success,  
Jamie Wade Comstock

CA ’82, and mother of Ivy Indictor ’17

Dear Julia,

I enjoyed your article on public vs. private school. I am also glad that this issue has been addressed in the paper, as you have. I do occasionally see the put-downs of public schools. Let me share my own thought, on a slightly different take.

I tutor all over greater Boston, public and private and charter schools, and am a product of public school (Acton-Boxborough, 1979). My first teaching position (as a classroom teacher) was at CCHS in 1987. I taught pre-calculus and pre-algebra, and have the scars to prove it.

I support public education as an idea, but dislike the current systems. The teachers are not respected, and many are drawn to the job out of laziness, which breeds mediocrity. I have taken enough graduate education courses in my career to have heard plenty about teaching being a “backup job”, or a chance to coast for 30 years with summers off, or a chance to wait to get married.

I won’t teach at any public school. Even in the most affluent communities I see unhealthy environments. At CA I see young people, full of life, who are slightly “different”. DEMONS, super-smarts, kids with no concern for fashion, actors, musicians, male dancers, gay/lesbian/bisexual, etc. They are being who they are here. In public schools they would walk the halls waiting to be ridiculed or physically assaulted by gangs of kids in the restroom, then not supported by lazy faculty. These kids thrive as “nerds,” geeks, eccentrics, and take acceptance of this lifestyle forward with self-respect. And at CA any kids with abusive tendencies are usually caught and retrained. I’m not sure kids here know how talented and caring the CA faculty are.

I saw the abuse at CCHS and Weston High, and these are where you would not expect it. I know my characterization of CA in not necessarily 100% true, but it is for the most part. And yes, I am jaded.

Thanks for your insightful, thought-provoking article.

Dan Sanford, ASC Tutor

## Class of 2015 Matriculation

Seniors were invited to share their plans for next year with the *Centipede*. Below is the information provided by those who chose to share.

Aidan Aciukewicz: Vassar College ’19	Henry Feinstein: Swarthmore College ’19	John Lee: Harvey Mudd College ’19	Noa Ryan: New York University Tisch ’19
Arick Admadjaja: New York University ’19	Sean Finnegan: Northwestern University ’19	Dan Levine: Hofstra University ’19	Chloë Sahyoun: University of Edinburgh ’19
Anna Antoniadis: Tufts University ’19	Abby Galantowicz: Oberlin College ’19	Elaine Liu: Emory University ’19	Sameer Sarma: Tufts University ’19
Noam Benkler: Gap Year, Carleton College ’20	Jaime Greenwood: Northeastern University ’19	Reilly Loynd: Emerson College ’19	Caroline Schoeller: Colorado College ’19
Chiara Bercu: Wesleyan University ’19	Nathan Greess: Brandeis University ’19	Nando Martinez: University of Redlands ’19	Maggie Shea: Brown University ’19
Connie Blumenthal: Barnard College ’19	Eliza Guion: Gap Year, Colorado College ’20	Bobby McKean: Emory University ’19	Nora Silva: Hamilton College ’19
David Cao: Oberlin Conservatory ’19	Isabel Hajian: Rhode Island School of Design ’19	Elena Nahrmann: Muhlenberg College ’19	Matt Simon: University of Southern California ’19
Kelley Conley: Connecticut College ’19	Eve Harris: Gap Year, Tufts University ’20	Binh Nguyen: Tufts University ’19	Ben Stoloff: Hamilton College ’19
Dylan Courville: Wesleyan University ’19	Lucy Hollister: Gap Year, Macalester College ’20	Iris Oliver: Tufts University ’19	Caroline Stotz: University of Michigan, Ann Arbor ’19
Sam Culbert: Kenyon College ’19	Mahfuj Hussain: Wesleyan University ’19	Karly Oettgen: Bates College ’19	Mauri Trimmer: Gap Year, Tufts University ’20
Rose Crowley: Barnard College ’19	Hikaru Ikebe: University of Texas Austin ’19	Aidan O’Shea: Brown University ’19	Daniel Tsui: Carleton College ’19
M. Leandra De Los Santos: Muhlenberg College ’19	Carter Jones: Trinity College ’19	Chris Pappey: College of the Holy Cross ’19	Bennett Wanandi: Boston University ’19
Sophie Demoulas: University of St. Andrews ’19	Sydney Kasok: Rochester Institute of Technology ’19	Tyler Parke: Bates College ’19	Alex Weyerhaeuser: Gap Year, Yale University ’20
Margot DesBois: Middlebury College ’19	Noah Kelleher: George Washington University ’19	Shanika Paul: Smith College ’19	Verreth Wilson: Bennington College ’19
Sophie Drew: Haverford College ’19	Jay Kim: New York University ’19	Claire Phillips: Bowdoin College ’19	Nick Wilder: Bates College ’19
Angelo Eliopoulos: Providence College ’19	Lindsay Klickstein: Williams College ’19	Finn Pounds: Tufts University ’19	Earning Yomjinda: Princeton University ’19
Emmy Ells: University of Vermont ’19	Charmaine Lau: Pitzer College ’19	Autumn Rasmussen: Wesleyan University ’19	Ali Zildjian: Hamilton College ’19
Lucy Farnsworth: Northwestern University ’19	Sam Lazarus: Northeastern University ’19	Michelle Robidas: Clark University ’19	Erik Zimmer: Duke University ’19
		Sarah Rodowick: Gap Year, Colorado University at Boulder ’20	
		Corey Rost: St. Lawrence University ’19	
		Ford Rundell: Colorado State University ’19	