Spring 2016

Collegian Magazine - Spring 2016

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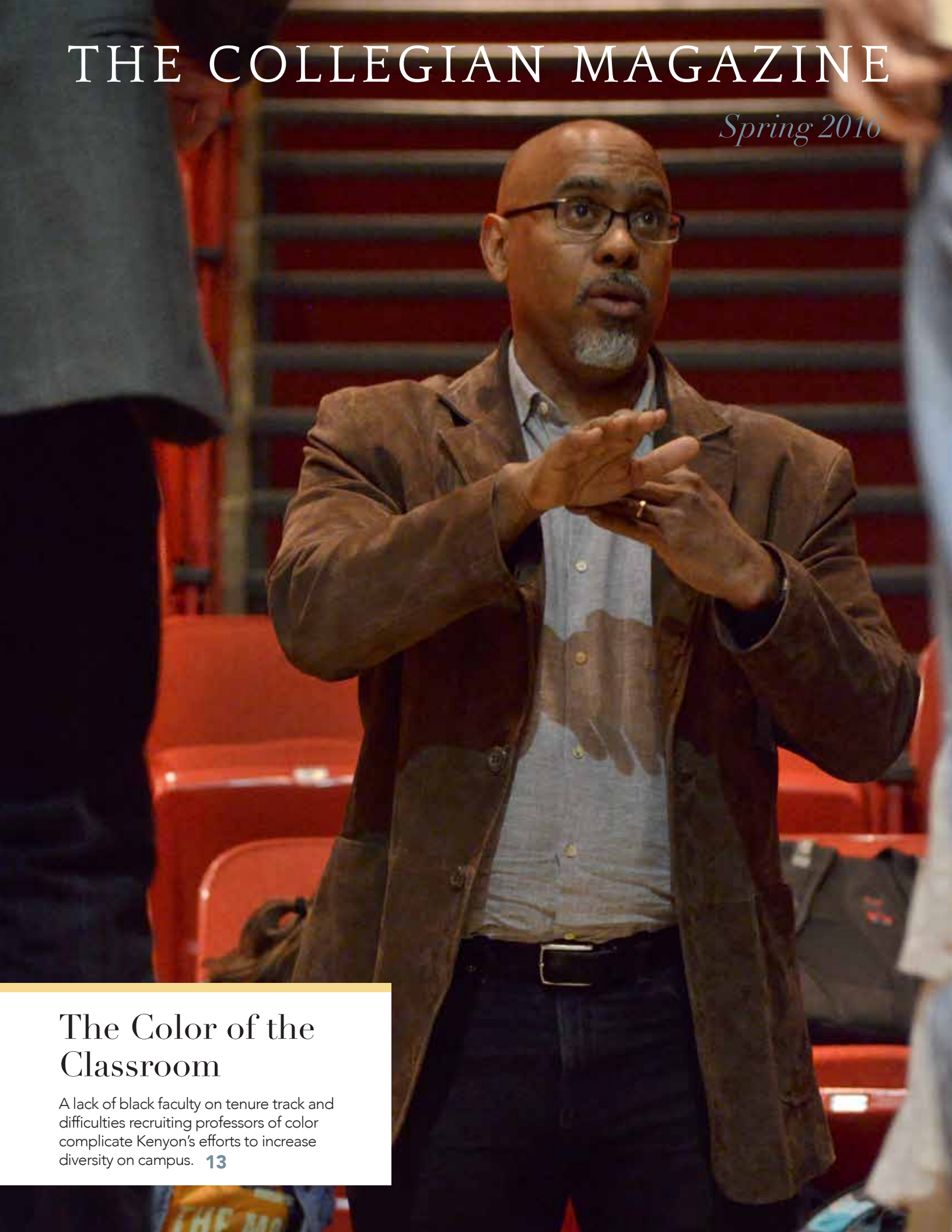
THE COLLEGIAN MAGAZINE

Spring 2016



The Color of the Classroom

A lack of black faculty on tenure track and difficulties recruiting professors of color complicate Kenyon's efforts to increase diversity on campus. 13

Letter from the Editors

Welcome to the fourth issue of newly-designed *The Collegian Magazine*.

Woven into these pages lies a familiar topic — education. Our feature story, "The Color of the Classroom," explores the importance of fostering a diverse intellectual atmosphere at Kenyon. By delving into the College's efforts to recruit and retain professors of color, "The Color of the Classroom" sees how far Kenyon has come, and how much further it needs to go.

This issue's "Out of Reach" story, "The Gambier Experimental College," profiles an alternative education model that offered non-traditional classes in subjects spanning from wine tasting to small engine repair. Drawing students from across the county, the school welcomed anyone with a desire to learn, whether atop the Hill or in the surrounding Knox County community.

Lastly, our profile on the financial crisis plaguing the East Knox Local School District ("The State of Education") examines the consequences that result from failing to make education a priority. Delving into local and state factors alike, the piece questions how and why the district has suffered and what steps led to its current state of fiscal emergency.

This issue also tests new waters. "The Long Shadow" and "An Ode to Breakfast" mark our first forays into literary journalism and nonfiction. Design-wise, we've introduced new typefaces, cleaner layouts, and hand-drawn illustrations to liven up our pages and improve readability.

As our second year wraps up, we remain committed to publishing thought-provoking, long-form profiles and essays. We would be quite lost, however, without the continued support of many. First, thank you to the College and numerous local businesses for their financial backing. Second, to our mentors, P.F. Kluge, Ivonne García, and Rachel Shaver, whose guidance and patience helped us craft a product worth publishing. Third, to our talented and fearless team of editors, writers, designers, photographers, and illustrators, without whom this issue would not exist. And lastly, to you, dear reader, for making our journey worthwhile.

Sincerely,

Timmy Broderick

Julia Waldow

ADVERTISING

Advertisers should contact *The Collegian Magazine*'s business managers at thecollegianmagazine@kenyon.edu for current rates and further information. All materials should be sent to *The Collegian Magazine*, Student Activities Office, 100 E. Brooklyn Street, Gambier, OH 43022.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Collegian Magazine is included in yearly subscriptions to the *Collegian*, which are available for $50. Checks should be made out to "The Kenyon Collegian" and sent to: *The Kenyon Collegian*, Student Activities Office, 100 E. Brooklyn Street, Gambier, OH 43022.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

All members of the community are invited to express opinions or respond to specific pieces through letters to the editors. *The Collegian Magazine* reserves the right to edit all letters for length and clarity. *The Collegian Magazine* cannot accept anonymous or pseudonymous letters. Letters must be signed by individuals, not organizations, and must be 200 words or fewer. Letters should be sent to thecollegianmagazine@kenyon.edu.

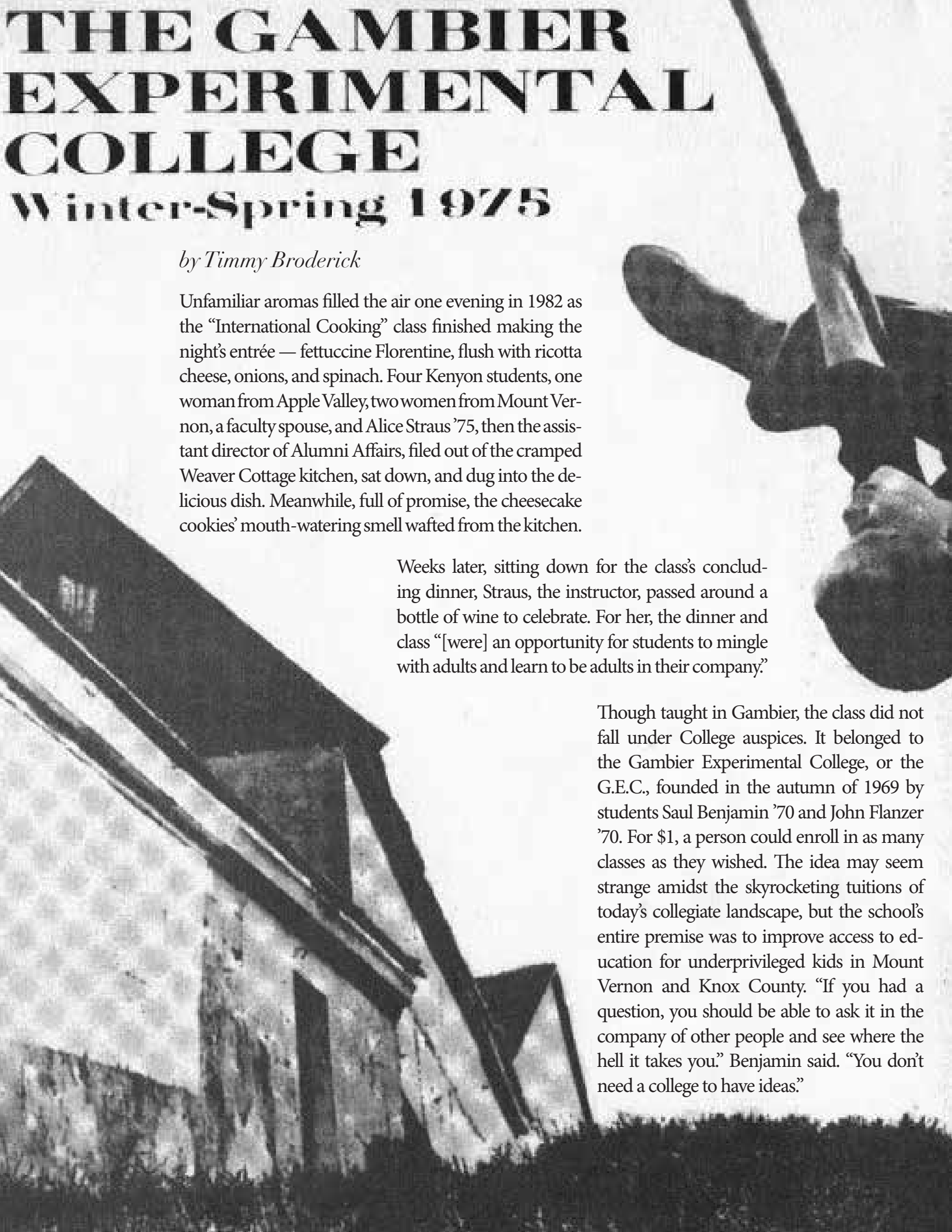
THE COLLEGIAN MAGAZINE

Spring 2016 Volume 2 Number 2

THE GAMBIER EXPERIMENTAL COLLEGE

Winter-Spring 1975

by Timmy Broderick



Unfamiliar aromas filled the air one evening in 1982 as the "International Cooking" class finished making the night's entrée — fettuccine Florentine, flush with ricotta cheese, onions, and spinach. Four Kenyon students, one woman from Apple Valley, two women from Mount Vernon, a faculty spouse, and Alice Straus '75, then the assistant director of Alumni Affairs, filed out of the cramped Weaver Cottage kitchen, sat down, and dug into the delicious dish. Meanwhile, full of promise, the cheesecake cookies' mouth-watering smell wafted from the kitchen.

Weeks later, sitting down for the class's concluding dinner, Straus, the instructor, passed around a bottle of wine to celebrate. For her, the dinner and class "[were] an opportunity for students to mingle with adults and learn to be adults in their company."

Though taught in Gambier, the class did not fall under College auspices. It belonged to the Gambier Experimental College, or the G.E.C., founded in the autumn of 1969 by students Saul Benjamin '70 and John Flanzer '70. For $1, a person could enroll in as many classes as they wished. The idea may seem strange amidst the skyrocketing tuitions of today's collegiate landscape, but the school's entire premise was to improve access to education for underprivileged kids in Mount Vernon and Knox County. "If you had a question, you should be able to ask it in the company of other people and see where the hell it takes you." Benjamin said. "You don't need a college to have ideas."

Ellen Fineberg, a coordinator for the weaving course, teaches Barrie Byrnes how to use a blackstrap loom.

"Gambier" was a misnomer: the school's creation grew out of student and faculty discussions about improving access to education for underprivileged kids in Mount Vernon and Knox County. "If you had a question, you should be able to ask it in the company of other people and see where the hell it takes you," Benjamin said. "You don't need a college to have ideas." The founders also decided that cost shouldn't turn people away; they set the registration fee at $1.

The egalitarian approach worked: Over 200 people registered for the first term. Classes spanned from the oddball ("Supernatural and the Black Arts") to the academic ("The Thinker and Society") to the practical ("Batik"). Basements became classrooms, living rooms became lecture halls. Student instructors — lacking a house in which they could gather — often borrowed empty rooms in Ascension Hall.

According to Benjamin, it didn't matter whether the instructor had a Ph.D. or a bachelor's degree. "You're all teaching each other."

The experimental college also filled gaps in Kenyon's curriculum. Doris Crozier, dean of the newly-formed Coordinate College, taught "Anthropology" and Professor of Religious Studies Richard Hettlinger taught "Sexual Maturity," a gender studies course. The College had never previously offered a class on either subject.

The G.E.C. stemmed from an alternative education model developed by Alexander Meiklejohn, an early 20th-century philosopher who founded the original experimental college in 1927 at the University of Wisconsin. Apart from having a common syllabus, the school eschewed all structure in favor of self-directed study.

While Meiklejohn's ideas failed to spread during his lifetime, experimental colleges started popping up during the 1960s at liberal institutions like Oberlin College and the University of California, Davis.

Benjamin and Flanzer decided that Gambier needed its own experimental college. The G.E.C., Benjamin said, "was an attempt to ask the College, 'What does it mean to be a community of learning?'" In accordance with Meiklejohn's ideals, they christened the G.E.C. an "educational laboratory" with no requirement other than the desire to learn.

The first term was a bona fide success, but uncertainty plagued the school's future. Benjamin and Flanzer were graduating and the school lacked a plan to carry it forward. And amidst the confusion, the G.E.C. lost sight of its goals. According to a brief history of the experimental college written in 1975 by Scott Hauser '76, "there were virtually no Gambier or [Mount] Vernon residents enrolled."

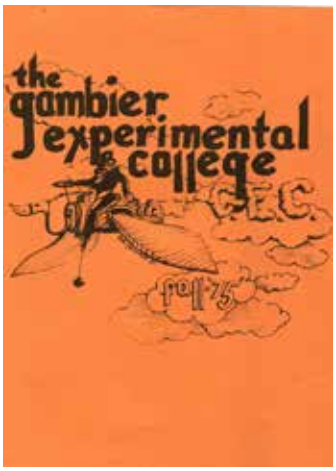
Still, it persisted, and the following fall of 1983, the G.E.C.'s coordinators sent out a call for instructors. At the time, Tom B. Greenslade Jr. was a newly-hired Physics professor with a desire to share his budding passion for photography.

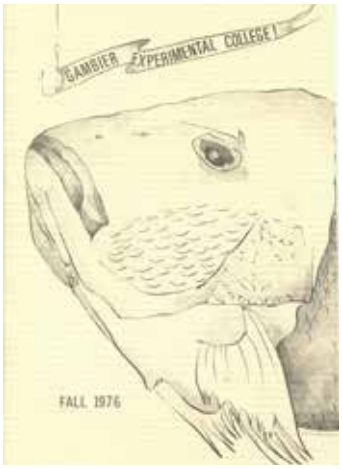
In his class, "A Short History of Photography," Greenslade's students learned to craft pictures using 19th-century techniques like tintypes and stereoscopic photography. Free time was scarce for the younger Greenslade, as he had two toddlers, but he taught the class anyway. "It seemed like the right thing to do. You learn this stuff and pass it on," he said.

Greenslade's was one of 11 new classes that term, including Gambier's first journalism class. The excitement was short-lived, however. The catalogue sent out a plea for coordinators for its Winter '71 term, but the call for help went unanswered. Barely two years old, the G.E.C. folded.

The G.E.C.'s inaugural term in the fall of 1969 drew over 200 people from around Knox County.

The school often commissioned talented student artists to design the course catalog.





"[The G.E.C.] was just about exploring the world through lenses that you used and wanting to see through other people's lenses."

Had Kenyon students not wanted to strengthen the College's ties to Mount Vernon and Knox County, the G.E.C. would have remained an archival footnote. Reviving it "seemed like a cool way to bring people together [with] common interests," said Hal Real '74, the G.E.C.'s new coordinator in 1972.

The new leaders established a Board of Trustees, populated by both students and community residents. To ensure the school's continuation, the Board prescribed semester course evaluations and a $5 registration fee to pay for classroom materials and catalogue printing costs. The core ideal remained, though. "[The G.E.C.] was just about exploring the world through lenses that you used and wanting to see through other people's lenses," Real said.

The G.E.C. offered 30 classes that fall, including "History of Kenyon College and Gambier," taught by College Archivist Tom B. Greenslade Sr. The course description promised that, by the term's end, Philander Chase would signify much more to students than the Bishop who "smoked the ham."

Class met in the old College Archives, a windowless room in the Chalmers Library basement. Greenslade's enthusiasm and love for Kenyon, however, banished the dungeon-esque setting, according to Doug Givens, former vice president of Development, who took the course in the fall of 1973. He enrolled on a whim but gained knowledge that proved "invaluable" to his job. The class was so popular that the elder Greenslade taught it every G.E.C. term until his death in 1990.

Givens also taught a class in the fall of 1973, "Furniture Repair and Refinishing." He showed his students how to strip varnish off an old rocking chair and how to reconstruct a dovetail joint. "The purpose of it was to bring a hunk of furniture in and [we would] put it back in working conditions," he said. As time went on, the students' antiques inspired Givens, so he started researching each piece's origin and style so that the students better understood the history behind each piece of wood.

Every member of Givens' class hailed from Gambier or Mount Vernon. No Kenyon students enrolled. According to Real, it didn't matter whether people came to the G.E.C. as a Kenyon student or "a municipal worker in Mount Vernon or a high school kid … what mattered [was] that [they] were going to explore X, Y, Z together." To further this aim, the school set up a registration booth in the Mount Vernon Square and the *Mount Vernon News* published an article on the G.E.C.'s efforts.

The good press led to a watershed term the following winter. Four hundred people registered for 34 classes. "Cave Science and Exploration," "Death and Dying," "The Grateful Dead," "Pool," "Russia, An Overview," "Small Engine Repair" — the G.E.C. had a class for everyone.

Even for kids. In 1974, the experimental college introduced a children's program with classes on swimming, origami, piano, and improvisational theater. The coordinators wanted to provide a creative and athletic outlet for kids without art, gym, or music classes at school. "Kids enjoy the interaction with Kenyon students and the people who've taught courses have always enjoyed them immensely," Marcie Simon '77, the coordinator in 1976, said in a *Collegian* story on October 28, 1976.

Simon also mentioned in the same article that, "I'm still getting mail from Mount Vernon from people wanting to sign," after more than 370 people registered in the fall of 1976.

Participation waned, however, as the '70s drew to a close. In 1979, the school didn't open at all. It returned the following year, but offered far fewer classes, and its role within the community had diminished.

It survived because, "there was probably always, you know, two or three people like me on campus who liked the idea well enough to give it a go," Liz McCutcheon '82 said.

When McCutcheon took up the G.E.C.'s helm her senior year, she was piloting a sinking ship. "It was very tough to get people to sign up for these things," she said. "Nobody from the town much participated, either." Indeed, when Tom Stamp '73, then the director of public affairs, returned to Gambier in 1984, the G.E.C. was "a mere shadow of its former self."

But McCutcheon wasn't willing to throw in the towel just yet. "I was 20. I didn't know how to make something succeed, but I didn't really know how to give up, either," she said.

McCutcheon believed in the G.E.C. because of her experience leading a class in the spring of 1980. She and a handful of other Kenyon students drove to the Station Break retirement home in Mount Vernon for weekly discussions about Professor Hettlinger's book, *The Search for Meaning*. McCutcheon, the moderator, said, "It quickly became clear that nobody did the readings so we would just use [them] to spark the topic and we would just talk."

The 70- and 80-year-old retirees jumped right in. Family, work, politics, religion, anything was on the table — even sex. McCutcheon laughed and recalled that she and her friends were shocked when one

elderly woman said, "'I don't think I'd get married again, but I might shack up.'"

The G.E.C. stayed afloat throughout the '80s on the back of more lighthearted and whimsical classes. "Middle Path Encounters" taught the valuable skill of how to navigate the "unexpected and expected run-ins with lovers, ex-lovers, debtors, loan sharks, professors whose courses you haven't been to in weeks, and other characters that haunt the path," according to the course description. A perennial favorite was "A.E.S.A.D.B.S.T.P.T.W. (An Evening Sitting Around Drinking Beer Solving The Problems of The World)," which slapped a moniker onto most Kenyon students' weekends.

Still, McCutcheon's prediction was prescient. The G.E.C. faded into irrelevance until, at last, its doors shut in 1990.

Those doors would have remained closed, too, had Barry Lustig '95 not gone out for a drink one fall evening in 1993. "I was drunk some night at the Cove, and I was talking with a few people that had done all these extraordinary things," he said. "I was like, 'I want to know more about what you do, all this cool stuff. There has to be a forum for you to do that.'"

This hand-drawn illustration graced the G.E.C.'s spring 1993 course catalog.

Lustig rounded up some friends who helped him enlist 13 instructors for the "forum." He called it the "Gambier Experimental College," despite having never heard of the old G.E.C. In an email to The Collegian Magazine, he downplayed the coincidence, saying, "I'm 1,000 percent certain, though, that the idea we came up [with] was generated independently of past experimental colleges at Kenyon."

Regardless, Lustig's present mirrored the past. "There were a lot of tensions between the College and the community," he said. "[The experimental college] was a way to include everyone in the community: children, townsfolk, etc."

The 1993 course catalogue was slim but sported a wide range that resembled the G.E.C.'s early years: "Lesser Known Languages of Latin Origin," "Using IBM Computers," "Ecological Awareness," "The Life and Music of Bob Dylan."

Photos courtesy of the Greenslade Special Collections and Archives

The leadership team behind the G.E.C.'s winter 1973 term proudly show off their catalogue.

And 20 years before his protests and subsequent imprisonment, the Venezuelan politician Leopoldo López '93 led a decidedly different movement in Philomathesian lecture hall: "Wine Tasting." He rallied students together in "a serious attempt to learn something about wine so that people don't … think that Chateau Collapsible (wine in a box) is the pinnacle of the vintner's art," the course description read.

Lustig estimates that 200-300 people signed up for the term's courses. "Part of the reason the experimental college was successful was that not only did the core organizers take ownership, but the community also wanted to take ownership of it as well," he said.

Still, the school was, at its core, student-driven. Lose them, and it would collapse again. Which — when the leaders stepped down after the spring 1993 term — it did. Lustig remembers the school persisting, but the Greenslade Special Collections and Archives holds no such records of a continued existence.

While the G.E.C. is gone, its legacy at Kenyon persists. Many of the games and discussions the school sponsored are now official clubs within the College. Tabletop Club hosts Dungeons and Dragons; Russian Club sponsors lectures on Russian history.

Furthermore, those classes Benjamin says Kenyon "should have been offering" 40 years ago — anthropology, gender studies, journalism — are now majors or integrated into the curriculum.

Perhaps the most obvious example of the G.E.C.'s legacy is the Craft Center. It emerged from G.E.C. classes in the early '70s and practices a familiar formula: Kenyon students and Gambier community members sign up to knit, spin a pottery wheel, or cook Indian food together.

Times have changed, though. Straus pointed out that, "If you want to go knit, you go to YouTube." Real agreed. "If you wanted to learn about macrame back then, you had to find somebody who understood how to do macrame," he said.

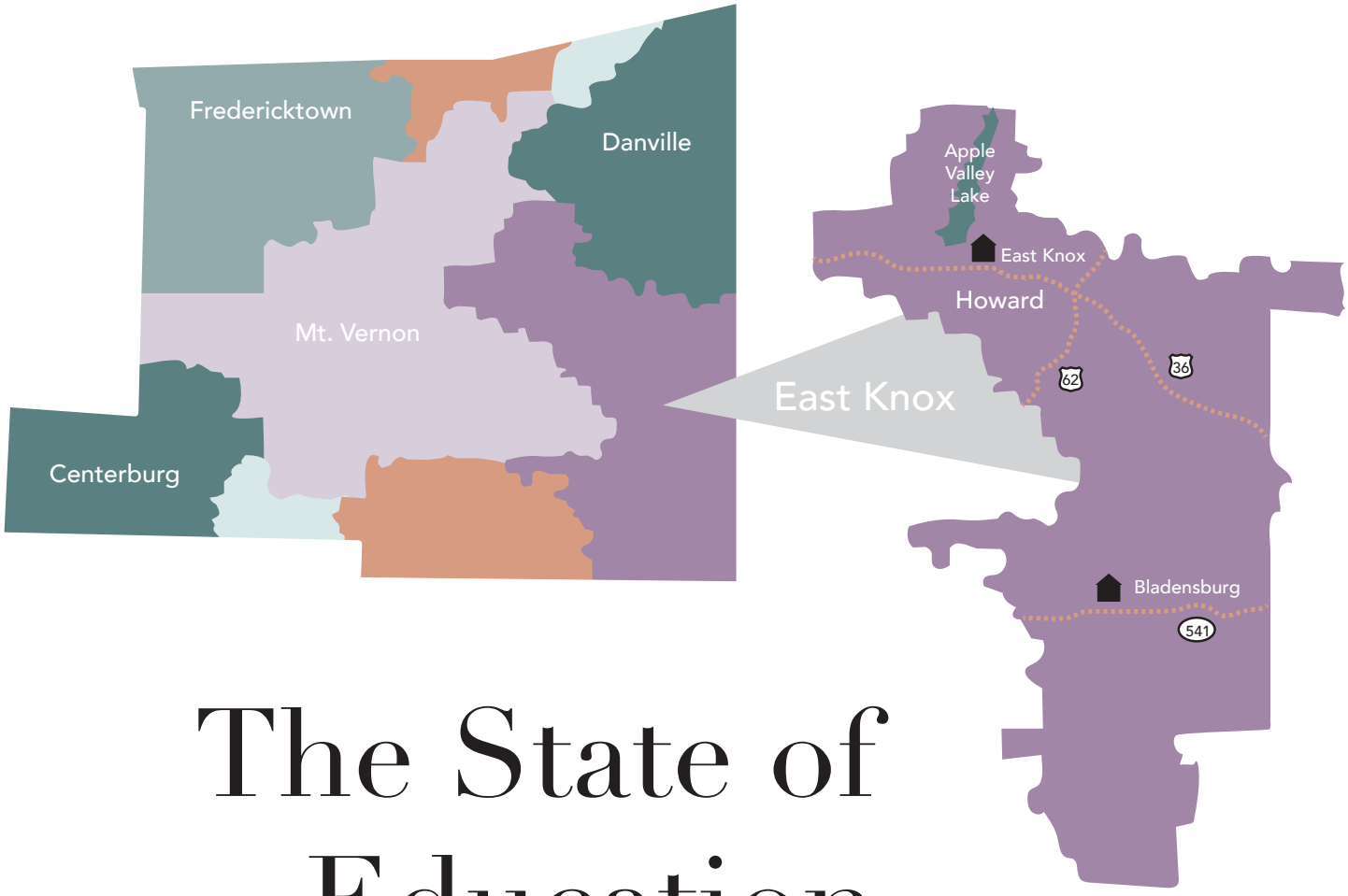
Persuading students to sign up for additional classes is also harder now, according to Straus. "Students in general are a lot busier." She believes that, "if [the G.E.C.] becomes that much of a need, somebody will step up and do it."

Whether or not the alternative school returns, Straus is happy to have participated in it while it lasted. She remains close with Judy Fisher, one of the women from Mount Vernon in Straus's "International Cooking" class. Both women credit their lifelong friendship to the course.

To Real, it is this possibility of creating lasting connections that explains why the G.E.C.'s multiple rebirths are not a fluke. "I don't think that anything knocks down barriers better then the sharing of and pursuing common interests and exploring common interests — whether you are in the arts, whether you are an intellectual," he said.

"Do I still think it could be viable today?" he queried. "Absolutely. For the same reasons, which is bringing people together to build a community." Lustig echoed Real's optimism, saying, "I hope students pick up on it again. It was good fun."

A single slate-gray box stuffed with four folders sits on a shelf in the Archives, waiting. ■



The State of Education

by Timmy Broderick, Christopher Comas, Katherine King, Ian Round, and Julia Waldow

Three years ago, children's voices filled the halls of Bladensburg Elementary School. Now, the site is silent, the buildings unkempt, the lot abandoned. Used notebooks pile high in dusty classrooms, whiteboards reveal traces of old math problems, and empty school buses sit in the parking lot, waiting for kids who will never come. Closed in 2013 due to funding problems, the school stands as a testament to the economic crisis plaguing the East Knox Local School District.

East Knox's problems are set against the backdrop of a recent decline in the quality of Ohio's public education. When Governor John Kasich took office six years ago, Ohio's education system ranked fifth in the country, according to the annual "Quality Counts" report by *Education Week*. Last year, Ohio was 18th. Now, it's 23rd.

These numbers have shined a spotlight on Kasich's education platform — which promotes school choice and the expansion of charter schools — and his continued use of property taxes as the basis for public school funding, a method deemed unconstitutional in 1997 by the Ohio Supreme Court. Over the past six years, Kasich has also cut $515 million in funding from traditional public schools (which educate 90 percent of Ohio students), according to *The Washington Post*. The ramifications of these policies, coupled with East Knox's failure to pass a levy since the Reagan administration, prompted Ohio to declare the district in a state of fiscal emergency in February 2015.

PROPERTY TAX

School districts receive a portion of their funding from real and personal property taxes collected from the district's homeowners.

2013

$4,456,000

2014

$4,469,000

2015

$4,679,000

Crisis at East Knox

While East Knox's fiscal emergency embodies "the last and most severe stage of a school district's financial solvency problems," according to Ohio Auditor Dave Yost, its problems began years earlier. In September 2012, the Ohio Department of Education placed the district in fiscal caution, the first stage of fiscal distress, due to an anticipated deficit for the fiscal year and potential deficits for future years. The office then declared fiscal watch in September 2014 after the district failed to submit a written proposal to eliminate the anticipated deficits. Two months later, the East Knox Local School District Board of Education passed a resolution stating its inability to adopt a financial recovery plan. Finally, on February 5, 2015, Yost declared the district to be in fiscal emergency.

The very next day, Kasich released a state budget plan that reduced aid to East Knox by 4.8 percent. "Governor Kasich may have balanced the budget, but he did so on the backs of teachers, firefighters, and policemen," Jacobs, a fifth grade teacher at East Knox Elementary School, said.

Since the district's troubles began, the district has had to fire teachers, freeze wages, and cut benefits, classes, and after-school programs. There is no art, music, or physical education in the kindergarten through sixth grade levels, and students must "pay to play" in sports or band.

Underfunding in the district has also caused a high teacher turnover rate. According to Superintendent Steve Larcomb, the district has lost 63 percent of its teaching staff in the past three years due to retirements and resignations. Jacobs said the turnover rate escalated six years ago, when teachers' salaries froze and the district began cutting its expenditures. More problems arose in 2013, when East Knox Elementary School and East Knox Junior/Senior High lost every fifth through 12th grade math teacher.

"There's a lot of uncertainty among staff," District Treasurer Jessica Busenberg said.

Ohio has attempted to find a solution to the crisis by appointing a five-member fiscal district commission. According to Busenberg, the commission has found that "it's not a spending problem — it's a funding problem."

The Derolph Case and the Funding Formula

Ohio school districts' budgets generally derive funding from two sources: local and state funds. Local funds consist mainly of district tax revenue. Property owners are taxed at a specific percentage of their property's value, also known as the millage rate. East Knox's 2015 rate was 26.37, the lowest in Knox County. Nearby districts Mount Vernon and Danville have millage rates of 33.83 and 35.86, respectively.

To calculate a homeowner's tax, a district's millage rate is divided by 1,000 and then multiplied by a property's value. For instance, a million-dollar home in East Knox would furnish a $26,370 property tax. During the 2015 fiscal year, East Knox received $4,679,000 from property tax revenues.

State funding is less explicit. According to the Ohio Department of Education, "The amount of state funds that a district receives is based on a formula that takes into account the student enrollment and the property wealth of the district." The exact formula is never released and is subject to change, year by year.

This formula is also a deeply contentious subject in Ohio history. In 1991, superintendents from poor, mostly rural districts banded together to challenge this funding policy, claiming that poorer districts with lower property taxes were underfunded.

A series of lower court appeals and litigations ultimately led to the 1997 Ohio Supreme Court case of *Derolph v. State*. The Court ruled that property tax was an unconstitutional basis for Ohio's education funding scheme because it "fail[ed] to provide for a thorough and efficient system of common schools."

The Ohio legislature introduced several bills that shored up public education, but none of them modified the state's reliance on property tax. In response to this oversight, the Ohio Supreme Court recommended several policies to the legislature. Many viewed this action as judicial overreach, prompting a public backlash that stymied the court's efforts.

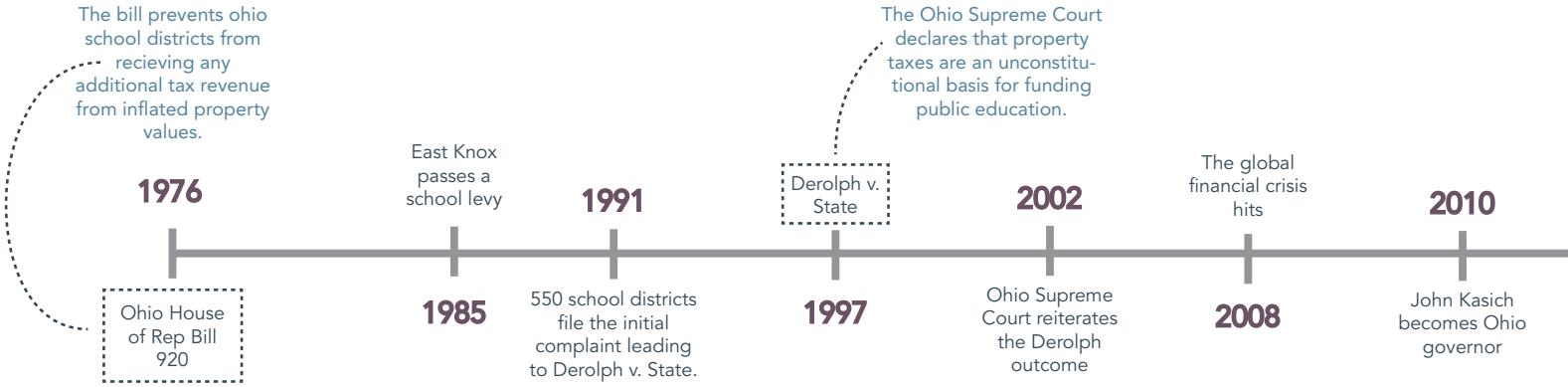
In 2002, 11 years after the initial suit, the state's highest court reasserted the illegality of property tax-based funding. Again, nothing changed. Though the formula is not static — it has changed four times in the last 10 years alone — local property tax collections remain the biggest determinant in budget allocations.

Property Values and Levies

The state's inability to overturn these unconstitutional policies has created numerous problems for East Knox. Just northwest of Howard, the district's main city, lies the Apple Valley community. Its high concentration of wealth raises the average property value of the district, but that demographic masks a struggling rural community.

While Apple Valley is generally supportive of school levies, Busenberg said, the community's disproportionate effect on property value means that there is a disconnect between how much East Knox needs and how much the state thinks it needs.

Busenberg said that districts with higher average property values receive less money from the state. She



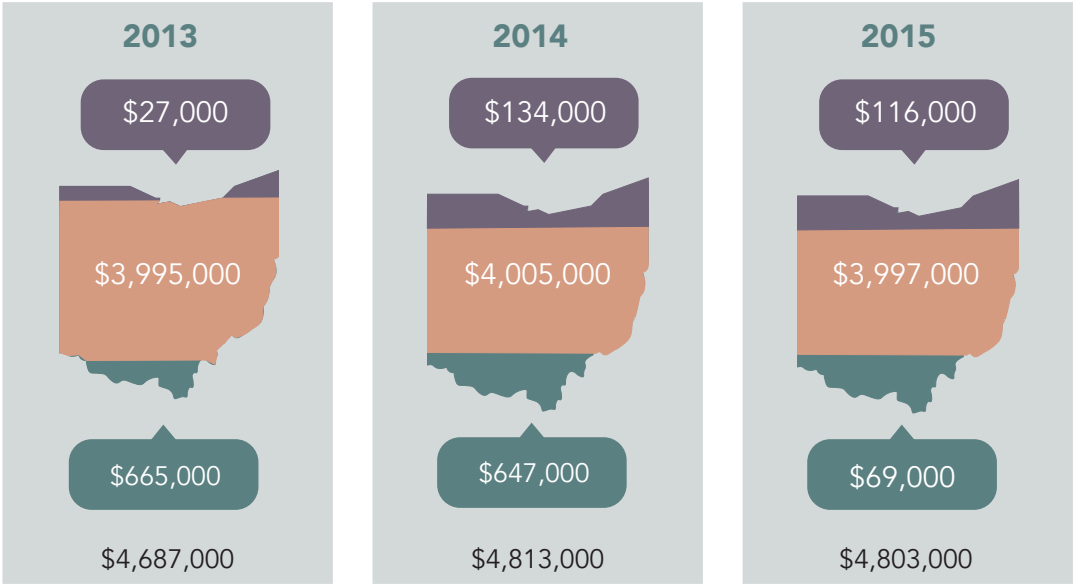
STATE FUNDING

School districts receive state funding from three different sources: (1) unrestricted, formula-driven state aid based on student enrollment, (2) property taxes, which include the Homestead and Rollback payments that represent the portion of the tax bill paid by the state, as opposed to the tax payer, and (3) restricted state aid related to economically-disadvantaged and career tech funding.

Restricted state aid

Unrestricted state aid

Property tax allocation



"Governor Kasich may have balanced the budget, but he did so on the backs of teachers, firefighters, and policemen."

Kaisch rolls out a formula for new public education, cutting East Knox's budget by 4.8%.

The State of Ohio declares East Knox to be in fiscal emergency

2016

2015

Ohio drops to 23rd in Education Week's annual reports

explained that the state assumes that the district can partially fund itself by passing levies — ballot measures that raise the district's millage rate to fund education on a local level.

For a school district to function, millage rates must increase accordingly with the yearly rise in property values and school budgets. If a levy fails to bump up the millage rate, the local funds derived from tax revenue will remain static while the district's needs increase. The state assumes that districts across Ohio compensate for rising property values, when, in fact, East Knox's failure to up its rate means it has less money to support a rising budget.

The district's financial troubles began around the time of the 2008 housing crisis, when property values plummeted across the state and subsidies for local school districts decreased. Until that point, Busenberg said, East Knox had seen regular increases in state funding and property tax revenue.

In the wake of the crisis, farmlands also experienced an unanticipated rise in value relative to many urban properties, leading to further decreased state funding for rural areas across Ohio. Higher property values don't always bump up local funds, either. House Bill 920 (HB 920), passed in 1976, prevents Ohio school districts from receiving any additional tax revenue from inflated property values.

Spending levies have become these districts' only means of increasing the money from their homeowners. The rise in East Knox's farmland valuation is meaningless for East Knox unless it can pass a levy. Only one levy has passed in the last 43 years, and it was later rescinded. Since 2010 alone, nine levies have failed.

"My water bill goes up — I don't vote on it," Busenberg said. "There aren't a whole lot of things that people get to say yes or no to, and unfortunately education is one of those things."

Several factors are at play, including the voting population. Gary Schworm, who is heading this fall's levy campaign, says that the community's support of the levy is wasted because "a lot of people that own homes in Apple Valley are not registered voters here; they're weekend or vacation homes."

Busenberg also thinks the failed levies stem from the fact that East Knox is more spread out and rural than other school districts, such as Danville, making it potentially more difficult to build a strong sense of community. Mount Vernon School Board member and former Mount Vernon teacher Mary Rugola-Dye agrees that a sense of community is the main reason that Mount Vernon is able to pass levies while East Knox cannot.

"We here in Mount Vernon … have a community of people that know that our community is stronger with strong public schools," she said. "East Knox, unfortunately, I do not believe has that."

School Choice

Another contributor to East Knox's funding problems is Ohio's open enrollment program, which allows students to attend any participating public school across the state. Each school can decide whether it will accept students through open enrollment, but all districts must allow students to leave.

All five Knox County school districts (Centerburg, Danville, East Knox, Fredericktown, and Mount Vernon) have open enrollment. Because East Knox is losing funding and resources, some of its students are choosing to enroll in other schools, namely Mount Vernon and Danville, Busenberg said.

Brendan Urban '17 lives in the East Knox district, but chose to open-enroll in the Danville Local School District as a rising fifth grader. He says that most students open-enroll in Danville to avoid pay-to-play extracurriculars in East Knox. "I don't think people open-enroll to Danville because of the education," Urban said. "I think East Knox has better teachers."

Busenberg believes that, while beneficial to the individual, student exodus is not just a result but a cause of the district's poverty. Per the state formula, districts across Ohio receive a certain amount of money per student, so lower enrollment numbers equals less state funding. East Knox, for example, loses about $5,800 per year from open enrollment. "We lose over a million dollars a year [in local funds] losing students to other districts, which is almost 10 percent of our budget," Busenberg said.

Open enrollment also allows students to opt for online charter schools in lieu of a physical institution. In this case, their tuition money is transferred from their public district to that online charter company.

"Places like East Knox have a small number of students but are losing a lot of money," said Michael Charney, a retired Cleveland teacher and education activist. According to Busenburg, East Knox lost $360,000 in revenue to online charters in the last school year.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

Year	Annual Loss
2011 - 2012	-$1,392,139
2012 - 2013	-$1,324,775
2013 - 2014	-$1,370,958
2014 - 2015	-$1,588,612
Total Loss	-$5,858,928

Charney is concerned about the quality of education that these online charter schools provide. "If you look at the test score performances of the different companies that run [charter schools] they're really poor, even worse than Youngstown," he said, referring to an Ohio school district that has regularly received Fs on state report cards, according to *The Washington Post*. According to Charney, "Some of the kids that sign up for these just don't want to show up and go to a regular school ... they don't even turn on the computer."

Since assuming office in 2011, Kasich has expanded charter schools across the state and more than doubled the number of vouchers for students to attend private and charter schools, according to *The Washington Post*. "I feel that [online] charter schools should be held to the same standards as public schools," State Representative Margaret Ann Ruhl (R-Mount Vernon) said. "Accountability in these institutions is important to ensure that children are not being robbed of the education they have been promised."

While Charney emphasizes the exploitive nature of for-profit charter schools, Reagan Neviska '17, of Fredericktown, felt she experienced "the bright side" of the online charter system. Neviska attended four different online charter schools from elementary to high school, along with being homeschooled, and felt they "varied greatly."

She found the Ohio Virtual Academy frustrating because it offered only one learning speed. However, the Buckeye Online School for Success "was very set-your-own-pace, which could be very fast or [take] as long as you [needed if you] got it done by the end of the semester.'"

Ultimately, Neviska feels that the charter school experience depends on the student and agreed with Charney that many students get little out of this form of education. "A lot of people I know … took the opportunity to be at home, to not do anything, whereas you have to be very self-motivating and actually work," she said.

Future Hope

Whether due to local factors like levy failures or state factors like open enrollment and the state funding formula, students are leaving East Knox in droves. In 2009, the district had 1,305 students. Now, it has 923.

Still, the situation in East Knox isn't all bleak. "We're doing surprisingly well with limited resources," Schworm said. "I think that's really a credit to the teachers that we have. They're working really hard with what they've got."

Ohio is also working to fix funding allocation, according to Ruhl. "I believe that we have made some positive strides in changing state funding," she said. "We still have a lot more work to do, but I think that we can get to a place where the formula is crafted so that public education is consistent across the state."

Levy support has increased, too. About 65 percent of voters opposed the levy in 2011. In 2014, only 52 percent opposed it. "We were within a hundred or so votes," Busenberg said.

According to Busenberg, there will be another levy on the ballot in November. She hopes to get those last 100 votes by framing the tax in a positive way to potential voters. Rather than a robbery of taxes, Busenberg wants to frame the proposal as, "Look what you can get with your money."

"When you have a mom saying, 'I want my kid to have the same opportunities I had,' people listen." ■

The Color of the Classroom

by Griffin Burrough and Julia Waldow with photos by Jess Kusher

On an early morning in April 1996, Professor of Sociology and Legal Studies Ric Sheffield and Professor of English Ted Mason met with urgent business to discuss.

The College had just delivered the results of its tenure review, and half the black faculty found themselves out of a job. Assistant Professor of History Robert Hinton had been denied tenure, Assistant Professor of Psychology G. Renoir McDonaugh was denied a second reappointment, and, suddenly, Sheffield and Mason found themselves the only two black professors remaining at Kenyon.

The men looked at each other and made a solemn pact.

"If you go, I go."

On the previous page: Associate Professor of English Jené Schoenfeld, only the third tenured black woman in the College's 192-year-old history, reads in her office.

"I think that [diversity is] the piece that really does enrich the academic and intellectual experience on campus."

Twenty years later, and 40 years since Kenyon hired its first black professor, an English instructor named Kenneth Bluford, the number of black faculty members has increased significantly. Kenyon now has 12 black professors, all tenured, across various departments. But with no new black faculty currently on tenure track, several retirements on the way, and difficulty recruiting professors of color, the College may be taking a step back in its commitment to diversity.

"Some of us are 60 years or older, which means that we may not be here for much longer," Sheffield said. "It's quite possible that two or three of us … could be gone before there's another African-American who becomes tenured to the faculty."

Sheffield pointed out that when compared to losing faculty of another historically underrepresented group at Kenyon — women — this idea seems rather jarring.

"Let's say you're a young woman at this college [in 1969, when women first enrolled]," he said. "And someone said to you, 'Oh, by the way, we're not going to tenure any more women to our faculty for oh, seven years, 10 years.' That would be one of the most absurd things you would ever hear."

The intricacies of tenure

The tenure process itself is extensive. The Tenure and Promotion Committee (TPC) is tasked with reviewing faculty members at three different stages in their Kenyon careers — a pre-tenure review in a faculty member's third year, a tenure review in the sixth year, and a review for full promotion to professor (as opposed to associate or assistant professor) generally in the 13th year.

Comprised of seven tenured representatives from each academic division of the College, the TPC reviews a prospectus, a CV, a department letter, five letters from colleagues at Kenyon, three letters from colleagues not affiliated with Kenyon, course evaluations, and as many as 20 letters from students in deciding whether to grant a professor tenure.

The decision to grant tenure is based primarily on merit and whether the faculty member under review meets or fails to meet expectations in teaching excellence, scholarly and artistic engagement, and collegiate citizenship. Factors such as gender, race, and sexual orientation do not play a role in this process.

"There is no explicit instruction anywhere in terms of what this committee is supposed to do that enjoins upon it to consider diversity, race, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic background, or any of those things. ... Each case is considered as an organic whole," said Professor of History Jeff Bowman, who heads the TPC.

"We don't think that simply having an ethnic or racial identity contributes to successful teaching," Provost Joe Klesner echoed. "Now, it may well be that somebody who is African-American can bring to the classroom an important, different perspective. But the question is whether they are [doing so] successfully."

Thomas S. Turgeon Professor of Drama and Film Jonathan Tazewell '84 agreed. "I think all my colleagues would say that they would never want to feel that the reason they were given tenure was in any way influenced by ... their race," he said. "I think they would want to say, 'I am as good a teacher as anybody else who is here. My scholarship is as good as anybody else's scholarship. My work and engagement with this community is as good as anybody else's. I don't think that's something that anybody would ever want to question, and I certainly wouldn't want anybody to question that about me."

Within the faculty, 76 percent identify as white, 6.6 percent identify as Asian or Pacific islander, 6.1 percent identify as black, 4.8 percent identify as Hispanic, and 0.4 percent identify as American-Indian or Alaskan. The racial background of 5.7 percent of faculty is "unknown," according to data from the Provost's Office.

Some students of color explained they take comfort in having a professor of a similar background, and many remarked it can even add to their classroom experience.

"At a Predominantly White Institution (PWI), having a professor of a similar race (preferably non-white) matters and means a lot," Abraham Lawal '16 wrote in an email to *The Collegian Magazine*. "It allows for the student and professor to build a connection with each other."

Benjamin Adekunle-Raji '17 echoed Lawal. "Seeing a professor of color in your classroom immediately soothes the soul, almost as if you get that, 'Thank God, I know at least in this class I probably won't hear some super ignorant mess or be singled out as living anecdotal evidence because I'm the only the black student in the class, or maybe even the only student of color in the class," he wrote in an email to *The Collegian Magazine*. "It's comfortable being able to explore the differences in perspective between members of a common identity, rather than having to be the sole representative of that identity."

Investigating diversity

The College's attempt to foster diversity in the classroom is not a recent effort. After the events of 1996, for example, Bill Lowry '56 — the fifth black man to graduate from Kenyon and the first black trustee — worked with faculty including Mason and Sheffield to start a variety of programs targeting diversity, including task forces and a dissertation/teaching fellowship.

The 1987 Task Force on Diversity, 1989 Colloquium on Diversity, and 1991 Task Groups discussed diversity issues within the student body, faculty, and staff, with a particular focus on supporting underrepresented groups on campus and developing a well-rounded curriculum that would enhance the experiences of all.

"Diversity is not [only] about students of color; it's about really the climate of the College," Sheffield said. "What we confirmed through the diversity task force was that diversity was absolutely essential for the learning experience of all students."

President Sean Decatur agreed. "I think that [diversity is] the piece that really does enrich the academic and intellectual experience on campus," he said. "An educational experience can be strengthened … [by having the] opportunity to have conversations or interact or talk with people who have different backgrounds, different experiences than yourself."

The College's teaching fellowship aims to help promote this diverse academic experience. Named after a former trustee and editor of the *National Black Law Journal*, the Marilyn Yarbrough Dissertation/Teaching Fellowship provides a stipend for one or two scholars to live at Kenyon for a year, complete their dissertation, teach a course, and learn more about the liberal arts environment. The scholarship requires applicants to be members of "underrepresented groups" such as ethnic minorities, first-generation college attendees, women in fields traditionally taught by men, and men in fields traditionally taught by women.

The program serves to usher in new talent, welcome diverse perspectives, and show fellows that Kenyon can provide the same opportunities as research-based institutions. While the program is not specifically intended to

Thomas S. Turgeon Professor of Drama and Film Jon Tazewell directs actors in the Bolton Theater during a rehearsal for A Free Man of Color.

"It's quite possible that two or three of us … could be gone before there's another African-American who becomes tenured to the faculty."

facilitate the hiring of new faculty, the College has, on occasion, considered fellows for a job if one later becomes available. Current faculty members who participated in the Yarbrough program include Professor of Sociology Marla Kohlman, Associate Professor of English Jené Schoenfeld and James D. and Cornelia W. Ireland Professor of Music Reginald Sanders.

"I found it a really good opportunity to feel what it feels like to be faculty," Schoenfeld said. "At one's graduate institution (at least for me), I was firmly entrenched in my identity as a graduate student. So I had a chance to do some teaching, but I felt very much a gulf between myself and my professors. And here, I was invited to attend department meetings. … It felt almost like an apprenticeship and it was really helpful."

Mason, current head of the fellowship and associate provost for diversity, equity and inclusion, also praised the program's mission.

"One of the great things about the program is that it has succeeded in bringing vibrant, new faculty members here who enriched the curriculum and the life of the College," he said.

Forming support systems

While the College has worked to increase racial representation, it has also attempted to provide resources for those it brings to campus. In recent years, Kenyon has founded a series of affinity groups — support groups for faculty, staff, and administration based on ethnic or cultural background. Among these networks are groups for faculty members who identify as women, Asian, African-American, or LGBTQ+.

Monique L. Jernigan, the assistant director of diversity, equity and inclusion, helped start the Professional Women of Color at Kenyon (PWOCK) group after arriving at the College three years ago.

"I think it's definitely made me more fond of Kenyon, just because I'm young, I'm of color, I don't have any kids, I'm not married, so what else is there to do when [I'm] not working?" Jernigan said. "It allowed me to build connections outside of my professional role, and not just with people I work with, but with people I wouldn't necessarily come into contact with."

Jernigan said the affinity groups serve as a support system for faculty who may experience difficulties establishing connections or acclimating to the College's more isolated environment.

"With college students, it's different because you're already in a cohort of your own. You're all first years," she said. "For employees, it's more difficult to find your group. But I do know it's not impossible."

The College also holds a faculty development seminar every summer, called "Crossroads," to examine issues related to African and African-American studies.

"One of the things it has developed for us is a common ground and a community that is both academic and social so that you can engage with people who share your cultural background but also share your intellectual interests," Tazewell said.

Searching for faculty

Despite these measures, problems remain regarding faculty representation and the ways in which Kenyon attracts and evaluates candidates.

Within the faculty ranks, there is a

"At a Predominantly White Institution (PWI), having a professor of a similar race (preferably non-white) matters and means a lot."

"relative paucity of black women," according to Sheffield. Of the dozen tenured black faculty, nine are men. And until the last few years, only one black woman — Kohlman — was a tenured professor. Associate Professor of History Sylvie Coulibaly earned tenure in 2013, and Schoenfeld earned tenure in 2014, for a total of three black tenured women faculty in Kenyon's history.

Schoenfeld isn't personally bothered by the gender gap, but thinks Kenyon should work to reduce it. "It has not made me uncomfortable because they are wonderful men," she said of her tenured colleagues. "But it does suggest that Kenyon has work to do. There does need to be a better balance. From an experiential perspective, it's been fine, but from an equity perspective, I think Kenyon needs to look at that."

According to Sheffield, Kenyon finds some of its faculty through an "old boys' network" that stems from current or former faculty members' connections and recommendations. "I suspect some of [the lack of black tenured women] has to do with faculty networks," he said. "Who are your colleagues? Who are the people with whom you study or with whom you've done research or collaborate? If those networks don't include women of color, then they oftentimes don't come to the attention of this college and the hiring process."

Despite the "old boys' network," Kenyon practices equal-opportunity employment by making its positions open to everyone, regardless of background. Candidates do not list their race, gender, or other identifying information on their online applications but can report them to the Equal Opportunity Office if they so choose. However, departments making hiring recommendations do not have access to that information.

Tazewell believes this non-discriminatory stance can, at times, be problematic. "I know the reason for [equal opportunity hiring] is to avoid the negative, to avoid the possibility that there would be any discrimination against those people, but at the same time, by not having that information at all, it doesn't allow us to be positive and opportunistic and aggressive in making sure those people get on the short list."

The administration recognizes the issue's complexity and hopes to shorten the hiring timeline, "if it meets the important collegiate goal of adding diversity to the faculty," Klesner said. "But you see that the

Professor of Sociology and Legal Studies Ric Sheffield sits on a panel as part of the Celebration of High-Impact Practices in late March.

goal runs at variance with the goal of equal-opportunity searches."

Further challenges

Kenyon's hiring process is not the only deterrent to a diverse faculty. Limited resources and competition from other higher-education institutions can pose a problem as well, Klesner said.

"If Yale is throwing $50 million at [increasing diversity] and Brown is throwing tens of millions of dollars at the matter, and you kind of go around to different places, you can see a challenge there," he said. "We think that Kenyon is a great place for someone to work as a professor, but when Yale comes knocking, it's pretty hard to say no."

Knox County's demographics also complicate matters. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 report, 96.8 percent of the residents are white, and one percent is black. Coupled with Kenyon's isolated, rural location, these factors could dissuade applicants hailing from more diverse, urban areas, according to Jernigan.

"I think there's a challenge there [in that] students, faculty and staff that come from diverse backgrounds are used to living in a diverse area," she said.

Sheffield, who grew up in Mount Vernon, agreed. He said his students often doubt his roots, because they rarely see people of color around town.

"The incredulity that I saw in their faces revealed to me their assumption that I couldn't be from here because 'there are no black people in Mount Vernon,'" he said.

Moving to a predominantly white community might intimidate potential black professors, according to Jernigan.

"I think for some faculty of color in particular, moving to a not-diverse place in the middle of Ohio might not sound appealing, and they might not bother to apply unless someone they know said, 'I know someone at Kenyon, and it's actually a good place to work,'" she said.

Decatur agreed. "I think that part of our communication to prospective candidates is making sure that we are giving people the information they might need about how they can build a life here," he said. "Regardless of race or gender or background, rural Ohio isn't going to be for everyone. And that's something that I think we need to recognize, but I think we can make a good case for how it can work out for a range of families."

Forming a better relationship with the surrounding Gambier, Mount Vernon, and Knox County community is essential to ensuring all candidates feel comfortable, Tazewell said.

"I do think the College could use its influence as one of the largest employers in the county, and as one of the oldest institutions in the county, to work with the local community to say, 'What is it that you're doing to make this a more welcoming place?'" he said.

Future prospects

Though location, demographics, and recruitment and hiring strategies can pose challenges to fostering diversity at Kenyon, the College is working to find solutions.

According to Klesner, Kenyon could increase diversity within the faculty by refining the College's recruitment process and being more "aggressive" in targeting candidates of color. "Efforts that I think are important are reaching out to people we know who are at the graduate schools and letting them know that we are especially eager to hire candidates ... from minority backgrounds because we want to make gains there," he said.

In addition, Decatur wants to expand the Yarbrough program to "cast the net as widely as possible." As a dissertation fellowship, the Yarbrough program is only available to students completing a dissertation. Graduate students doing post-doctorate programs or pursuing a Master of Fine Arts do not write a dissertation, making them ineligible for the fellowship. This, in turn, can limit the number of candidates of color who are drawn to Kenyon.

Changing the program's structure or considering alternative options may make Kenyon more appealing to candidates. More flexible policies could also impact visiting professors of color deciding whether to apply for a more permanent position. This past year, for instance, the College allowed Arianna Smith, an assistant professor of biology and a woman of color, to take time off in order to undertake a postdoctoral fellowship at Michigan State's medical school for the next three years. When she returns, she will be put on tenure track, but it could take at least five years before the TPC hears her review.

Even if Smith becomes tenured, the College cannot be complacent in its efforts to recruit a diverse range of people, Tazewell said. "The institution gets to a place where it feels like, 'We have kind of arrived. Oh, look, now we have more faculty, so we must have done something right.' And then complacency sets in, where you no longer feel there's a crisis, and you no longer feel that there's any need to be opportunistic."

The College has made strides, though. In the past few months, Kenyon's faculty and students have worked together to create dialogue surrounding racial politics and representation, as well as join in the #BlackLivesMatter movement that has surfaced at colleges across the country. From a solidarity sit-in in November to the Black Student Union's Black History Month events (which included historical trivia, a professor panel, workshops, and a #BlackIs photo gallery, among others), Kenyon is hoping to stimulate more conversation — and action — on campus.

"We're being ahistorical if we say, 'Race doesn't matter anymore; we've arrived at a place in American society where everyone is equal, where the law protects everyone, and, therefore, race isn't significant,'" Sheffield said. "That's not true. We're not in a post-racial America. And Kenyon, I think, is a beneficiary of a change in culture, nationwide and worldwide, but at the same time, there's more to be done. … It is a complex story whose endings have yet to be written." ■

The

Long Shadow

by Henry Burbank with illustrations from Henry Uhrik

The ominous figure, tall and clad in a dark overcoat, stood alert, watching a couple approach. He waited patiently on the sidewalk, as if he was about to meet a friend or was simply taking shelter from the bitter winter wind. And yet he appeared anxious, his eyes darting quickly up and down the Sveavägen, a major street in Stockholm. There was something sinister about him, witnesses would say later.

The couple walked quickly, eager to get home to their apartment in the Old Town after seeing a movie with their son and daughter-in-law. Why the husband, Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme '48, had decided to brave the snow- and ice-ridden roads rather than take a taxi or the Metro would soon be scrutinized by prosecutors, detectives, and media from around the world. His decision earlier in the day to dismiss his security was yet another foreshadowing event in what was to become one of Sweden's persisting mysteries.

The couple crossed the Sveavägen near its intersection with the Tunnelgatan, a short, pedestrianized lane connecting the thoroughfare to a nearby neighborhood via a tall, steep staircase. Continuing towards the corner, still a long way from home, the Palmes encountered the well-built man. Their paths crossed only for a moment under the calm glow of the streetlamps. Then, the tranquil scene was punctuated by a shattering crack, followed by the cries of Olof's wife, Lisbet. "No! What are you doing?" she screamed into the otherwise silent night.

As the couple passed him, the figure had pulled out a .357 Magnum revolver and fired two shots. One bullet grazed Lisbet, while the other struck Olof's back, throwing him to the ground. It was 11:21 p.m. on February 28, 1986, and the prime minister was dead.

"Suddenly I received a letter from Kenyon. I had never heard of the College, but as it turned out I was lucky, extremely lucky to land there."

Director of Public Affairs Tom Stamp '73 was at a college dinner when he heard the news. "I knew we would be getting a lot of calls," he said in an interview earlier this year with *The Collegian Magazine*, reflecting on the moment he was informed by a member of the security staff of the events across the Atlantic. "I immediately got up and went back to the office and started pulling things together."

Within hours, the phones began to ring. "We had calls from the networks, *The New York Times, The Washington Post,*" Stamp said. "It's fairly rare that this happens to a foreign leader who's a graduate from an American college or university." Shortly thereafter, Stamp started working with Swedish Embassy Officials to gather information about Palme's time at Kenyon and in the United States.

Born into a wealthy, aristocratic family in 1928, the young Olof quickly distinguished himself in intelligence from his peers. Fluent in Swedish, German, and English by the time he was a teenager, Palme attended an elite Swedish boarding school before enrolling in Stockholm University at age 17. In 1945, his studies were interrupted when he was drafted into the army, where he became an officer at the end of his two-year commitment.

Following his military service, Palme expressed a strong desire to study in the United States. "He had wanted to go to school in the States; he never made entirely clear why," his classmate and friend Henry Abraham '48 told the College *Alumni Bulletin* in 2012. "He turned to his grandfather, who was a Lutheran bishop in Sweden at the time. [His grandfather] said he would take care of it, but you have to agree to one condition. You have to go to a Protestant college."

Palme obliged, and in 1947 was awarded a scholarship from the American Scandinavian Foundation. "Suddenly I received a letter from Kenyon," Palme told the *Alumni Bulletin* in 1984. "I had never heard of the College, but as it turned out I was lucky, extremely lucky to land there."

Despite having enough credits from Stockholm University to graduate after only one year at Kenyon, Palme was actively involved in campus life. He was an exceptional student, earning straight A's as a double major in political science and economics, writing his thesis on the United Auto Workers, and spending extensive amounts of time at an industrial plant in Mount Vernon. "He spent every weekend exploring the union movement," Abraham said. "He would go to the plant and talk to people."

Palme was also a star on the soccer field and worked in the dining hall as a waiter. "He received, as we all did, 47 cents per meal and all we could eat," Abraham told the *Alumni Bulletin* in 2012. "We put up a sign [reminding the waiters] to wear neckties. And one day he came in with a necktie and no shirt on. When we took him to task, he pointed to the sign and said, 'All you said was wear a necktie.'"

In addition to Abraham, who went on to become one of the nation's foremost experts on American constitutional law, Palme became good friends with Paul Newman '49. "[Palme] had a real knack for conversation," Stamp said. "He knew where he was headed."

Palme recieves an honorary doctorate from Kenyon College in 1970.

"Like a nation of cuckolded husbands, the Swedes were the last to know."

After returning from the United States, Palme entered politics and built a controversial career. As the leader of the Social Democratic Party, he was responsible for the formation of the contemporary Swedish welfare state, a move that branded him a traitor to his upper class origins. Under his tenure, Sweden expanded its pension, universal healthcare, universal dental, public housing, and public education programs, becoming one of the most far-reaching welfare systems in the world. Additionally, Palme was a proponent of gender equality, introduced separate taxes for husbands and wives, and invested heavily in nuclear energy, the technology that still powers most of Sweden today.

Despite his success at home, Palme never forgot Kenyon. In 1970, just as his political career was about to peak, he accepted an invitation from President William G. Caples to speak on Reunion Weekend. Amid the tumultuous environment surrounding the Kent State shootings just one month prior, Palme returned to Gambier to give a speech titled "On the Freedom of Men and the Freedom of Nations." The prime minister addressed over 1,000 attendees — including busloads of protesters boycotting Palme's vehemently anti-Vietnam War stance.

When it came to international issues, Palme earned a reputation as a leader motivated by ethics and idealism rather than political calculation. In addition to opposing the Vietnam War, Palme provided financial support to the African National Congress, sheltered Chilean exiles following General Augusto Pinochet's 1973 CIA-backed coup, and critiqued Eastern European communist dictatorships.

Two busloads of members from the International Longshoremen's Association protest against Palme's speech at Kenyon.

Many thought Palme went too far in his criticisms. "There were a number of people, especially among the military, who considered Palme a traitor to Swedish interests in the Cold War," Gunnar Wall, an investigative journalist who has covered the Palme assassination for decades, told *The Collegian Magazine*. "They thought he was inviting the Soviet Union to pursue an aggressive policy towards Sweden." In the context of Cold War politics and the 1980s, "he was seen as an extreme and dangerous person."

Two bystanders rushed to the scene as the gunman took off at a full sprint down the Tunnelgatan. He raced down the short alley toward the stairs, narrowly avoiding Lars Jeppsson, an archivist in his mid-20s who quickly gave chase after hearing the gunshots and seeing a man running away. In what witnesses would later describe as a feat of enviable athleticism, the assassin scaled the 89 steps two or three at a time before checking for pursuers at the top, then rounded the corner and continued running.

The police were on their way, thanks to a call from a nearby taxi driver. A small crowd was beginning to gather around the lifeless body, still yet to be identified as the prime minister, and his increasingly hysterical wife, the only eyewitness to the crime. She maintained that Palme was still alive, and failed to answer any questions posed to her by first responders.

Undeterred, Jeppsson remained in pursuit, and soon came across two individuals who reported a man running past them moments before. He looked Scandanavian, they would later tell investigators, and seemed to be opening or closing a small bag as he ran past them, taking care not to slip on the snowy roads. They directed Jeppsson toward a street they said the man had run down, and he continued the pursuit. Turning onto the quiet street, Jeppsson spied the figure far in the distance, his footprints gradually disappearing under the cover of a gentle snowfall.

The ominous figure, tall and clad in a dark overcoat, vanished into the cold, dark night.

"It's pretty unbelievable that a prime minister can be assassinated and there's no seeming solution to who was responsible," Stamp

Lisbet Palme congratulates her husband on his award from the College.

said. Wall shares this sentiment. "After almost 30 years, the investigation is still at the point where it was the day of the murder. We don't know the motive, we don't know if it was a single killer or a group of some kind, we don't know if it was a very carefully planned murder or a spontaneous act," he said.

From the moment the shots rang out, the police response to the murder was heavily criticized. In *Blood on the Snow,* a book published in 2005 on the assassination, Swedish author Jan Bondeson writes that "it would have been relatively easy to put up roadblocks around central Stockholm, or at least on the major highways out of the capital, but amazingly, this [was] never done." And it took hours after the murder for Stockholm police to begin monitoring outgoing trains, flights, and ferries.

Many other aspects of Swedish society failed to function effectively as well. "It is not until 4:00 a.m., when almost every other television station in the world has told the news of the murder, that Swedish television finally transmits an emergency news bulletin," Bondeson writes. "Swedish military chiefs of staff got the news from the Swedish military attaché in Washington, who hears it on American television." As a correspondent for *The London Times* would later remark, "like a nation of cuckolded husbands, the Swedes were the last to know."

Explanations for such grave errors were frequently offered. One hypothesized that the sheer gravity of the situation had a paralyzing effect on Swedish society. "Our idea of Sweden back then was of a bucolic, tranquil haven, where leaders lived like the ordinary people," Jonas Hinnfors, professor of politics at the University of Goteborg, told *The New York Times* earlier this year. "Yet suddenly, there lies the prime minister in his own blood, and the legal system fails to find the killer. Our self-image was shattered."

A second, more troubling reason, Wall said, was that "from the beginning in leading political circles, the murder was considered a very sensitive thing." Because of the crime's severity, investigators felt great pressure to find the culprit, but Palme's polarizing reputation inside and outside of Sweden meant that a thorough investigation risked uncovering some inconvenient and embarrassing details for powerful parties. "I've tried not to draw any strong conclusions," Wall said in response to a question regarding allegations of a police coverup in the aftermath of the murder, but "some of the persons who had a leading part in the investigation obviously knew things which they did not want to be exposed." Bondeson, who corresponded with *The Collegian Magazine* over email, was less forgiving, saying that "not only the police but the entire country of Sweden was quite corrupt in those days. I am sure there were some good, honest cops as well, but they did not make the important decisions."

In the spring of 1989, a Swedish court indicted Christer Pettersson for the murder of Olof Palme.

A man of medium height, with dark hair and a bushy mustache, Pettersson had had frequent runins with the Swedish police. In 1970, he was convicted of manslaughter after killing a man in the streets of Stockholm, and upon his release from prison took up petty crime to finance his drug and alcohol addiction. "You could say that Pettersson was such a person that he could, under special circumstances, have killed Palme," Wall said. "He was a very aggressive and violent person who, if he happened to be at the wrong place at the wrong time, could have done it." What's more, he had been picked out of a lineup by one of the most trusted witnesses: Lisbet.

Just as in the initial hours following the shooting, however, there were clear examples of police misconduct when it came to Pettersson's indictment. First, and most damning, was that Lisbet was an unreliable witness. She was in hysterics the night of the crime and had failed to pick Pettersson out of a lineup earlier in the investigation. This time around, the police did not take any chances, giving Lisbet a description of their primary suspect before showing her the lineup of individuals. This seriously compromised the integrity of the procedure. Second, the prosecution lacked any physical evidence beyond Lisbet's testimony. "They hadn't any other really serious thing on him," Wall said. "They had decided to look for a person of his kind, who was dangerous, who had been in the area, who had killed someone, and who could have gotten a weapon, and then they found Pettersson."

Lisbet's identification of Pettersson "started a mechanism which was almost impossible to stop," Wall said. "The authorities had to take him to trial. Since the widow of the prime minister had said it was him, it would have been viewed as a scandal if they hadn't." Pettersson was found guilty, but on appeal, the prosecution's lack of evidence became clear. Throughout the trial, Pettersson maintained his innocence. "He testified that the shooting was 'a vile deed and one I never could have done,'" according to an article published in *The New York Times* during the trial. Bondeson agreed. "Pettersson would hardly have been able to commit the perfect murder and then get clean away," he told *The Collegian Magazine*. Prosecutors were unable to find the murder weapon and, given the circumstances surrounding the lineup and Pettersson's identification, the appeals court ruled unanimously that he was innocent.

Photos courtesy of the Greenslade Special Collections and Archives

"Suddenly, there lies the prime minister in his own blood, and the legal system fails to find the killer. Our self-image was shattered."

The fiasco surrounding Pettersson's trial made many Swedes doubt that an attention-seeking madman killed Palme, but Palme's political record left the door open to anger from entrenched political groups who had something to gain from his death. "Palme was killed for political reasons, because he was standing in the way for opposing interests," Bondeson said. Because of the lack of physical evidence and credible eyewitnesses, Swedish police were stuck in a sort of stalemate, unable to prove any speculations but not able to rule them out either. "People love conspiracies because there are good reasons to be suspicious," Joakim Palme, Olof's eldest son and a professor of politics at Sweden's Uppsala University, told *The New York Times* earlier this year.

Theories surfaced as time passed, but none stuck. At the beginning of the investigation, the police commissioner passionately pursued the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) after receiving a lead indicating the group's implication in the murder. But a year-long investigation into PKK activities yielded little conclusive evidence. Other prominent theories suggested Palme was killed by right-wing paramilitary groups or in conjunction with a scandal between the Indian government and Swedish arms manufacturers. In 1996, the situation became even more complicated when apartheid intelligence officials testified before South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission that one of their agents had assassinated Palme.

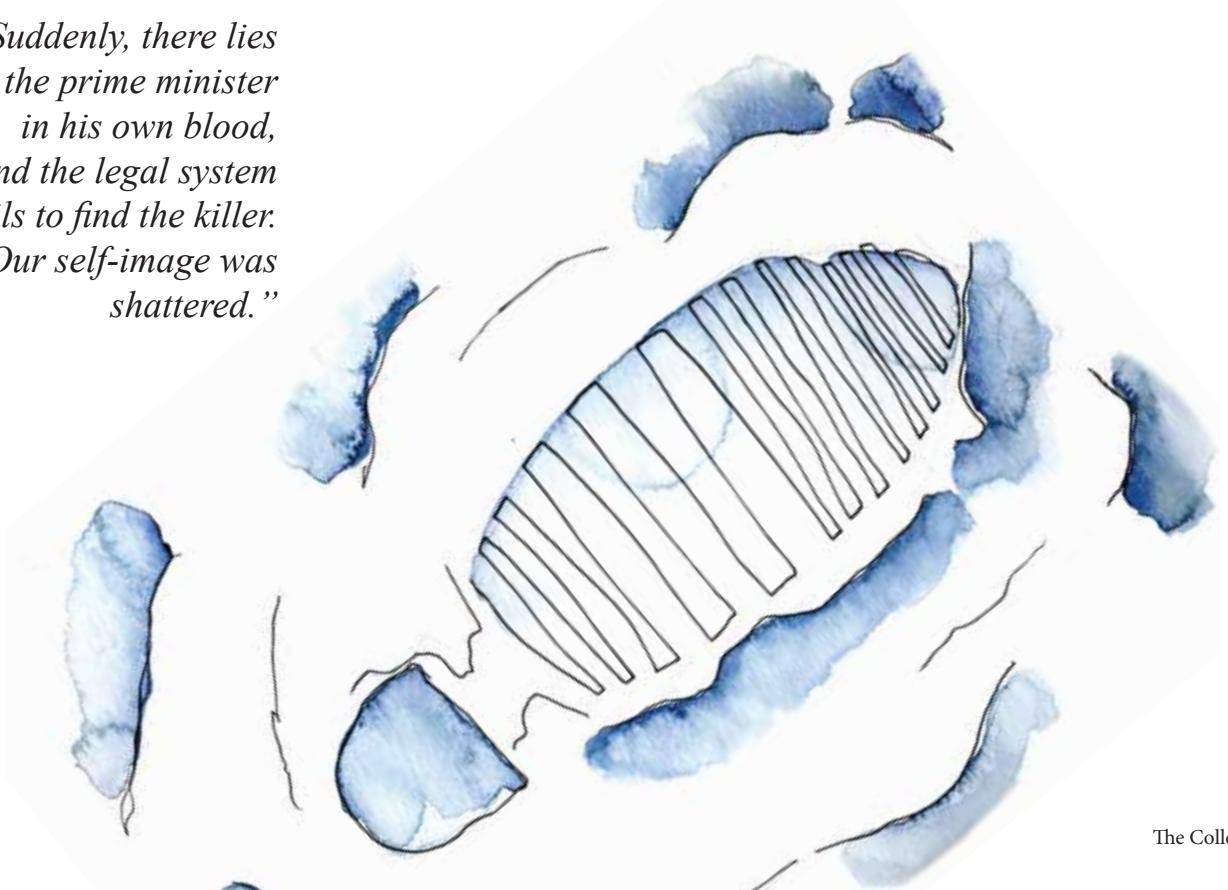
Regardless of the culprit, "this whole thing has all the rings of some kind of intelligence or paramilitary operation," Wall said. "I think there's a strong reason you should look for the answer in that explanation, especially now that the murder has been unsolved for so many years and many other ways have been studied." Bondeson said that "a small, organized group, with links either to Swedish or South African intelligence" was most likely responsible.

The ominous figure disappeared down a quiet lane in Stockholm on February 28, 1986. He might have been Swedish, South African, Chilean, or American. He might have been an intelligence operative, a desperate stalker, a victim of mental illness, or a criminal. He might have meant to kill the prime minister, or Palme might have simply strayed too close to a psychopath. We will likely never know.

Today, Sweden continues to confront existential unknowns. Buckling under the influx of hundreds of thousands of asylum-seekers, the welfare state's finances and social tolerance are being strained. Right-wing nationalist parties have gained favor with more than half of Sweden's population and threaten to overthrow the Social Democrats longstanding hold on Swedish politics. Like other European nations, the country is struggling with how to reconcile its liberal values with its homogenous community.

But there are rays of hope on the horizon. When the rest of Europe turned its backs and closed its doors on hundreds of thousands of refugees, the Swedes let them in. Rather than leave refugees stranded in Syria and Iraq or dead on the shores of the Mediterranean, the Swedes acted. "They responded because they could not accept that outcome," James Taub wrote in *Foreign Policy* in February. "They had no special obligation to act; they did so because they believed it was right."

Though Olof Palme died 30 years ago, his ideas live on. "Democratic freedom requires solidarity among the people," he stressed in his 1970 Reunion Weekend speech. "In order to live and survive a society must have a comprehensive solidarity, the ability to recognize the conditions of other people, a feeling of joint responsibility and participation. Otherwise, sooner or later, society will fall apart into petty, egotistical interests. There is never 'we' and 'they.' There is only 'us.'" ■



An Ode to Breakfast

by Peter Granville with illustrations from Yoobin Han

Breakfast begins long before the first bite. Its pleasures precede the first step into the Great Hall or the opening of those weighty wooden doors. It starts outside, on Middle Path, as aromas — of sausage, of eggs, of bacon — wash over you, a mixture equal parts cozy and intoxicating. Breakfast is as much psychological as it is gustatory.

Just ask "Sesame Street." In a skit from 1977, Cookie Monster visits Ernie's house for breakfast, and Ernie sings a song about all the healthy options he has to offer: eggs, milk, cereal, fruit, the works. Cookie Monster joins in, singing about all that he wants to eat: scrambled cookies, fried cookies, soft-boiled cookies, with "cookie juice" on the side. In a twist toward the grotesque, when Ernie says he doesn't have any cookies but that he has a frying pan and eggs, Cookie Monster gratefully takes the pan and, to Ernie's shock and horror, devours it.

Though Cookie Monster shuns the healthier options, his antics fit right into the commonly-held adage, "breakfast is the most important meal of the day." Most studies tell us that eating anything at all (albeit, maybe not a pan)

makes us better-focused students and all-around happier people. Many college students, however, choose not to eat breakfast. According to a 2010 study published in the *Undergraduate Research Journal for the Human Sciences*, more than half of all college students skip breakfast more than half of the week. These actions aren't without consequences — a 2012 study by the Sussex Innovation Centre found that skipping breakfast tends to negatively impact student performance and increase levels of anxiety.

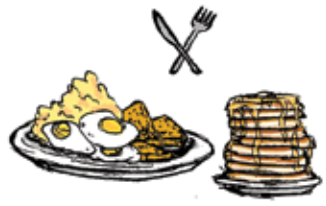
Clearly, the choice whether to eat our morning meal bears great weight. Even something as simple as a donut — what Wikipedia considers a "common, but not serious" breakfast item — matters.

"THE POST-KAC"

"THE PRE-EXAM"

"THE LIT READER"

"THE ELEVENTH HOUR"



"ALL-NIGHTER SURVIVOR"

At Kenyon, we frequently discuss the food Peirce offers, but rarely examine the intricacies of our breakfast experience. It might seem too mundane for query. But why can't the common be serious?

Breakfast at Peirce is certainly common: It belongs to all students alike. Simply appearing to be a Kenyon student suffices for access. And if you've had Peirce breakfast once, you know what to expect the next time, and the next: scrambled eggs prepared in heaps, machine-shredded or diced potatoes, and locally-crafted oatmeal.

This is not to say that we all eat the same breakfast. We could even develop a taxonomy of the various breakfasts. "The Post-KAC" breakfast would include some combination of chocolate milk, scrambled eggs, and sausage, possibly enlivened with some Sriracha sauce. "The Pre-Exam," an omelet with tea and a coffee-to-go, may involve the hurried studying of flashcards in the Fusion line. On New Side at 8:30, you'll be sure to find "The Lit Reader," an English major's diet of oatmeal with granola and honey, possibly grapefruit slices on the side, tea in one of the more generous Sustain-A-Mugs, and the day's *New York Times*. "The 11th Hour," a half-eaten bowl of cereal, a picked-at breakfast burrito, and possibly a Diet Coke, may accompany a student frantically completing the last bit of homework for their first class. "The All-Nighter Survivor," with heaping scoops of eggs, hash browns, and pancakes, sustains the dreary-eyed student at last wrapping up a paper or problem set.

Maybe you agree with this taxonomy, and maybe not. Regardless, at Kenyon, most of us treat breakfast as a means to an end, not the end itself. Chocolate milk helps power an athlete's morning weight-lifting, for instance, and protein-rich eggs are a tool for sharp test-taking. This is not to say that breakfast is insignificant, but that it normally derives its significance from something else. Purpose, rather than pleasure, becomes the motivator.

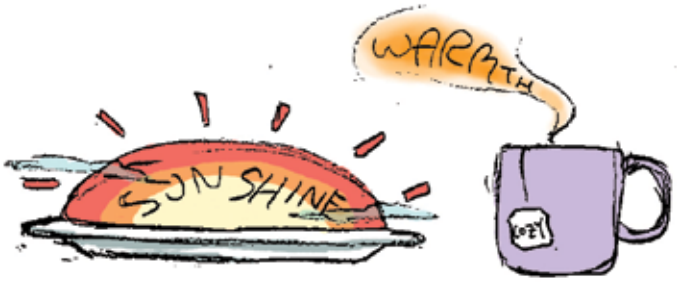
We fall into the same trap. When we wake up, we are the focus and center of our world. We get out of bed, we rub our eyes, we shower, we brush our teeth, we pull on our socks. These are very private moments, seldom a topic of conversation. Then, something else happens: We relinquish the center, most likely to our coursework or some extracurricular commitment. Thus begins the grind, our day's work. Similarly, we eat breakfast not because it is good food meant to be enjoyed, but to grind as best we can.

An idea thus emerges that eating breakfast is just a thing we do, not something we do for the experience. How often do you wake up, head to Peirce, load your plate, and enjoy the sunrise? Do you give yourself the chance to eat your breakfast cozily, not worrying about the day's work? Beneath the beloved PSA, "breakfast is the most important meal of the day," we might presume that our daily lives are all about performance, perhaps in the classroom or the gym or the workplace. By that logic, the best we can do is fuel ourselves properly to perform the best we can. And that message is, by all means, a real drag.

We'd be better off adopting a Cookie Monster-like mindset — If you want cookies, eat cookies. Or donuts. Or bacon. The substance matters little; your satisfaction is the goal. Breakfast, especially "Breakfast for Breakfast's Sake," is an opportunity to reflect, to nourish, and to sustain. Yes, Peirce breakfast is common. But your breakfast is uncommon. And that might mean it's a big deal. Serious, even.

As the sun rises on the Hill, it illuminates buildings which will house challenging discussions, residence halls in which relationships will be tested, and an athletic complex where limits will be pushed. As we step out of our beds, being a "college student with a job to do" climbs up our list of priorities, while being a "human being with feelings and needs" sinks. It's not an easy transition. The University of California, Los Angeles's 2015 American Freshman Survey found that about 37 percent of first years at private colleges are "frequently overwhelmed" by all the work that they must complete. Anxiety is common, but many students fail to acknowledge their own needs. Men in particular struggle to seek help, but the pressure to present ourselves as sturdy oaks, impervious and independent, is by no means gender-specific.

Many of us use stress and anxiety to our benefit. No sports team at Kenyon rallies under the mantra, "Everything will be fine whether we win or lose." As students, we often wait until the last minute to start assignments, and



"BREAKFAST FOR BREAKFAST'S SAKE"

"The problem is that we find it hard to love ourselves when we navigate college as a thing to be done well, not a piece of life to be lived well."

the do-or-die atmosphere helps us focus. Many students overbook themselves, exchanging sleep — or breakfast — for one more line on a résumé. This way of thinking is hazardous, but it usually pays off, albeit with added costs. The problem is that we find it hard to love ourselves when we navigate college as a thing to be done well, not a piece of life to be lived well.

During the throes of the 2014 Polar Vortex, famished of sun and warmth, I tried to find joy through validation in academics and athletics, constantly working harder, sleeping less and less. I starved myself of self-love until I gave in and poured myself a bowl of Mallow Oats. More than good grades ever could, Peirce's off-brand Lucky Charms bundled my soul in good vibes. Mallow Oats helped me put myself back in the center of my world.

The well-known but little-practiced truth is that no one must be impervious and independent. Kenyon has invaluable resources. The counseling center is incredible; the Peer Counselors are angels. But this is not to say that little moments like a good breakfast can't help, too.

You're free to dislike breakfast: You may derive your motivation from elsewhere. Maybe you get up because the professor of your 9:10 reshapes your understanding of modern politics, because your on-campus job gives you a sense of purpose, or because your teammates are your personal heroes. Maybe you just get up because you have to. But if nothing else comes to mind, breakfast can be the part of your day that makes starting the day worth it. With the humble promise of hash brown triangles, the trek through the morning's snow and fog and rain is not a mindless rambling but a journey with a destination.

It's good to have something, and if you haven't got anything, you've got breakfast. It will be waiting for you, eternally reliable and aiming to please. The most important meal of the day just wants you to feel important, too.

Now help yourself to a donut. They're delicious. ■

Behind the Scenes

by Jess Kusher

Students rehearse A Free Man of Color *in the Bolton Theater. Written by Tony Award-winning playright John Guare, the show will premiere Thursday, April 7 at 8:30 p.m.*

the VI

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