National grade inflation trend impacts Kenyon

Average GPA rises over last decade, but clear causes elude professors.

NOAH WEINMAN
STAFF WRITER

Since the 1980s, the student body has grown not only in size, but also in mean grade point average, according to the Office of the Registrar. While they did not provide specific numbers, the Office said the average, once in the range of 2.75, has risen to somewhere around 3.25. The most common grade given in recent years has been B+.

“Average grades have been going up,” Associate Professor of Mathematics Bob Milnikel said. “That is sort of unambiguously there in the data. Whether or not you choose to characterize that as inflation is a very loaded question.”

Grade inflation refers to distributing grades higher than previously assigned for a given performance level. Some debate the term as well as the causes, but all of those asked did notice a definite increasing trend.

“The arguments for [grade inflation] are fairly obvious: we want our students to be competitive,” Milnikel said. “If everyone else has rising GPAs, we have to match.”

Generally, students with a higher GPA are considered more likely to get accepted into graduate programs and achieve post-graduate success in the job market. The “matching” that Milnikel alluded to would be an attempt by Kenyon professors to make sure their students remain competitive with students from other schools.

Or, students could be improving. “It could be that by holding to the exact same standards we always reason I ended up here, and he’s right there buying a Gatorade. Like, whoa,” Shattuck said.

“Green was on campus to film a series of short, cheeky videos for the Office of Admissions, whose other promotional themes have included the Harry Potter series and Shakespeare. That Green is both a Kenyon alumnus and has a large young-adult fan base makes him a “great emissary” for the College, according to Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid Jennifer Delahunt.

Of Kenyon’s roughly 4,000 applicants last year, 275 hopeful students referenced Green in their applications, mostly in the supplemental portion, Delahunt wrote in an email.

“In September, I was...”

Peircegiving promises gluttony

SARAH LEHR
NEWS EDITOR

According to lore, the Pilgrims celebrated America's first Thanksgiving in 1621. The date of Kenyon’s first “Peircegiving” — a tradition arguably just as illustrious as that fateful Plymouth Rock feast — remains unclear. AVI Foodsystems worker Mary Shaw says Peircegiving has graced the campus for at least 26 years, since she started working at Kenyon.

Peircegiving, an annual meal prepared by AVI in anticipation of Thanksgiving, will take place this evening from 5 to 8 p.m. Each year, AVI closes the servery and heaps traditional Thanksgiving fare on the tables of the Great Hall. Peircegiving distinguishes itself from any other Kenyon dinner, in part, due to sheer volume.

Shaw explained this year’s meal will involve “just a lot of turkeys,” eight cases of spaghetti squash and 400 pounds of mashed potatoes. This reporter expressed incredulity at such a monstrous amount of spuds, but Shaw insisted Peircegiving’s potato dishes rarely make it to leftover status.

Lydia Shahan ’15 waxed enthusiastic about the mashed potatoes, as well as about the green bean casseroles of Peircegiving past. Shahan...
John Green '00 on how students can pursue writing careers

What advice would you give to students who are inspired by your work and wish to pursue similar creative vocations?

My advice: Network, but not aggressively. Work hard on every opportunity you get, whether it’s for the New Yorker or your own Tumblr. Turn things in on time. Write for the audience you want to reach. Don’t be afraid to keep your day job. I still have one, and probably always will. Read broadly, as it is the only apprenticeship we have as writers.

Peirce prep for feast

Continued from Page 1

• Uppped the event as a “resplendent, hectic, splendid feast.”
• Urged Kenyon students to “surrender all expectation that it will be a short meal. If you let the chaos get to you, you’ll just be upset.”
• Since the Great Hall ends up being used for serving food rather than seating and since Peircegiving is an unusually popular meal, the chaos stems from a mad rush for a table.
• “Second to my joy that Peircegiving is coming is my fear that they won’t successfully stake out a place in line, or a table, or that Peirce is going to run out of chairs,” Kristen Prevost ’15 said. “That is a yearly struggle.”
• Prevost typically arrives for Peircegiving at 4:45 p.m., but this year she has a meeting that lasts until 5 p.m. “I’m planning on sending agents to stake out tables prior to my arrival,” she said.
• Alex Andrew ’17 will try a more laid-back tactic this Peircegiving. “[Hyperactive members] told me not to show up at four because … you can show up at seven and there’ll still be food.”
• Andrew, in response to a question about how he’s been preparing for his first Peircegiving, said, “I don’t think I’ve done anything.” The juniors at his dinner table in Thomas Hall clicked their tongues and shook their heads at his naiveté.
• Claire Popovich ’15, who plans to claim a table at 4 p.m. and to get in line for food at 4:45 p.m., offered round praise for Peircegiving. “We should be really thankful for [it],” she said. “It’s what makes Kenyon, Kenyon.”
• Popovich had only one suggestion for improvement and wish for the future: “They should have a real [live] turkey just walking around Peirce,” she said.

Village Record

Nov. 8 - Nov. 12

Nov. 8, 4:00 p.m. — Student driving College vehicle backed into a staff member’s vehicle. Both vehicles sustained damage. No injuries.

Nov. 9, 20:09 a.m. — Injured, intoxicated student in a North Campus Apartment (NCA). Transported to Knox Community Hospital (KCH) by spad.

Nov. 9, 10:10 a.m. — Recliner damaged in basement area of Old Kenyon Residence Hall. Nov. 9, 6:35 p.m. — Fire alarm set off by cooking fire in NCA. No fire. Alarm reset.

Nov. 7, 7:32 p.m. — Student arrested for illegal drugs in Hanna Residence Hall. Strong smell coming from residence.

Nov. 9, 11:07 p.m. — Intoxicated student in Lewis Residence Hall. Transported to Knox Community Hospital (KCH), Student cited for underage consumption by Knox County Sheriff’s Office (KCSO).

Nov. 9, 11:26 p.m. — Intoxicated student in Lewis. Transported to KCH. Student cited for underage consumption by KCSO.

Nov. 10, 12:57 a.m. — Intoxicated student in Warder Covent. Assisted by Safety officers.

Nov. 10, 1:59 a.m. — Unknown individual(s) caused damage to window in Mather Residence Hall.

Nov. 21:16 a.m. — Student(s) found to be using illegal drugs in residence in Mather. Items confiscated. Taped personal items turned in to KCSO.

Nov. 10, 8:30 p.m. — While attempting to remove a deceased cat from a path, Safety officer noticed bicycle tracks across stomach of animal. Safety officers properly disposed of deceased animal.

Nov. 11, 1:49 a.m. — Fraudulent parking decals discovered in North parking lots. Investigation continuing.

Nov. 11, 10:27 a.m. — Adirondack chair damaged at Taft Apartments.

Nov. 12, 9:19 a.m. — Damage to the front panel of a soda machine in Hanna.

Nov. 12, 9:46 a.m. — Unauthorized entry into Kenyon Athletic Center by individual.

The Institute of Patient Advocacy

• Council saw designs from the Campus Safety Committee for anti-vandalism posters.
• Council discussed ideas for buttons to make members more visible and approachable.
• Council heard from the Business and Finance Committee (BFC) about their recommendations from the last supplemental budget hearing of the semester. • The BFC recommended the full allocation for the Martial Arts Club’s equipment request, Not For Sale’s request to bring speaker Theora Flores to campus along with publicity materials, Renegades Theater’s request for props, Relay for Life’s request for supplies. WKCO’s request for new recording studio equipment and the Ballroom Dance Club’s expenses for a competition in Columbus. Council unanimously approved these BFC recommendations. The BFC recommended Prevention and Intervention of Violence Advocates’ (PIVA) request be reduced to not include food, as stipulated by BFC bylaw, and to require students to cover $40 of a $70 background check. Council approved the BFC recommendation. Billy Shakes, Environmental Campus Organization (ECO) and the Cricket Club did not present and were thus denied as per BFC bylaw.
• Council then entered a closed session to discuss budgeting for Summer Sendoff.

Student Council

Sunday, Nov. 10

• Council saw designs from the Campus Safety Committee for anti-vandalism posters.
• Council discussed ideas for buttons to make members more visible and approachable.
• Council heard from the Buildings and Grounds Committee about a request to outfit the North Campus Apartments with toilet plunger, and plans for a trial run of new outdoor garbage receptacles.
• Council heard from the Business and Finance Committee (BFC) about their recommendations from the last supplemental budget hearing of the semester.
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News Briefs

Campus packs Great Hall to celebrate Pochter ’15

On Sunday, members of the Kenyon community gathered in Peace Dining Hall for a service remembering Andrew Driscoll Pochter ’15. Pochter was killed in the midst of violent protests in Alexandria, Egypt on Friday, June 28. Pochter’s family was seated in the front of the Great Hall while friends, alumni, faculty, staff and students representing all class years sat behind in support. President Sean Decatur delivered the welcoming remarks.

“We are brought here today … bound by our common desire, indeed need, to celebrate the life of Andrew Pochter,” Decatur said. Although Decatur never had the chance to meet Pochter, “he had heard a great deal” of a man who was “truly remarkable.”

Taylor Scott ’15 said she had found solace by writing letters to Pochter, one of which she shared with the crowd. “I have to be entirely honest with you,” Scott read from her letter. “I am really, really angry, and frustrated, and confused, and heart-broken. I am having difficulty finding peace in your death. … You should be here right now.”

Rebecca Varnell ’15 lived with Andrew in Hillel House last year. She, too, read from a letter she wrote for Pochter. “I know tragedy is supposed to spawn creativity, but thinking of you doesn’t make me want to create or destroy,” Varnell said. “I put the leaves back on the trees to keep the seasons from changing, to keep Kenyon the way you left it.”

The largest group to pay tribute to Pochter was his fraternity, Alpha Delta Phi, whose brothers sang their song “Kaipe.” “Kaipe translates from Greek as ‘Hail,’ in the context of rejoicing Scult spoke of Pochter’s relationship with his male friends.

“For the past two years,” she recited, “I’ve been able to witness the most extraordinary friendships emerge between you and your … guy friends. The love you have for one another exceeds any regular bromance.”

Adam Reed ’15, who helped compose a musical piece in Pochter’s honor, also read remarks from Sarah Gold ’15, who was unable to attend because she is studying abroad. “I remember when my pet fish died freshman year,” Pochter [found] a shovel and helped me dig a hole. Upon his excellent suggestion, we buried my pet fish out in the direction of Mecca,” Gold wrote.

Hillel Director Marc Bragin brought the service to a close with a final benediction. “When our loved ones, our friends, are gone, we … let with the task of re-composing our lives. But what we made within us enabled us to re-enter the gates of life and tomorrow’s tasks,” he told a standing crowd. “We know that Andrew is beside us, still, when we draw upon the times we shared … to make music with love and memory in our hearts.” — Alex Harrover

Despite certificates, elevators on the up-and-up

August 31, 2013. The date is unobtrusively located on the little-noticed Certificate of Operation in the elevator located in Peace Hall. Next to the date, reads, “Certificate Expired Date.”

To the casual observer of Kenyon’s elevator inspection certificates, there might be reason to fear the safety of many campus elevators. Currently, there are 22 in-use elevators on Kenyon property; some of these are accessible to general passengers and some are intended only for freight. Nine of the elevators intended for passenger display outdated safety certifications, most of which expired this past summer in July or August.

Luckily for Kenyon’s stair-wise, all the elevators are actually certified through June or July of 2014. Kenyon’s elevator inspector, employed by the State of Ohio, stipulates that Maintenance keep an original of all current elevator certifications on file and that Maintenance workers display a copy of every certification in the elevators themselves, but Maintenance neglected to hang up the current copies.

“It’s a big campus. There are a lot of little details,” Director of Facility Operations Greg Widder said of the oversight. “No one is harmed by not having these [current certification copies] in place.”

“It’s something that should be followed through [on],” Widder acknowledged. “Ultimately the ownership of this lies in my department’s hands.”

The inspector responsible for checking the elevators came to campus on Tuesday, Nov. 12, and he is expected to finish his rounds sometime today. He will likely stick Kenyon with a minor infraction because of its failure to display up-to-date certification information in all locations. This infraction will have no real consequences, as long as Maintenance swaps out the outdated certificates for current ones within 30 days.

In short, while some students maintain that ghosts are a serious menace to Kenyon elevators, mechanical dangers are a non-issue. Current certification information for all Kenyon elevators can be found on the Ohio Department of Commerce website. — Sarah Lohr
Unapologetic nerds eagerly anticipate John Green’s Feb visit

Continued from Page 1

Speaking in L. A. at a gathering of about 400 people and when the slide of John Green came up, there was a gasp from the audience and then applause. I asked, “Do we have some nerdfighters there?” and there was more applause,” Delahunty wrote, referring to the collective of Green’s fans who, according to Delahunty’s website, “fight to increase awesome and decrease suck.”

“Clearly, he speaks to so many different people,” Delahunty added.

In an email, Green expressed gratitude for his fans and for the enthusiasm generated by his work.

“When readers come up to me at signings or in Chipotle or wherever it is a genuine pleasure to meet them and they’re always really lovely,” he wrote.

A subset of those readers were Kenyon students who had tried to form a nerdfighters club on campus two years ago.

“We sort of met once and were like, ‘Hey, let’s be friends,’ and then people sort of formed friendships or didn’t, and that was about it,” Kim Schwenk ’15 said.

“We entertained the idea for a little bit more and then just sort of let it die,” Conor Dugan ’15 said. He added, however, “I know that lots of other people here have read John Green’s books, have watched VlogBrothers videos and would consider themselves nerdfighters.”

Green maintains an active social media presence and produces, with his brother Hank, the Vlogbrothers YouTube video series, whose entries deal with everything from health care reform to The Great Gatsby, have amassed over 350 million views.

“It’s inspiring,” Dugan said, “for some people to see writers from Kenyon going out and actually making a living that way, as well as making a living doing creative content like VlogBrothers.”

“I always wanted to write, actually,” wrote Green, who briefly pursued a career in the Episcopalian ministry after graduating from Kenyon. “I just never saw [writing] as a realistic career goal. When I was a senior at Kenyon, I met briefly with [Professor Emeritus of English Perry] Lentz during his office hours and he told me, ‘People think all you can do with an English degree is go to law school or become an English professor. But there are many opportunities out there you don’t even imagine yet.’ That proved true for me.”

Shattuck said she viewed VlogBrothers as empowering for brains teenagers: “I think that it was really great to have these two brothers talking about how it’s good to be a nerd and how you can use that for good and not have to feel weird about the fact that maybe you don’t fit in with what’s considered normal.”

She further attributed her fandom of Green to him being both “very articulate and very funny. … Even though the primary audience for his books is, perhaps, young adults, he doesn’t really talk down to people.”

In light of Admissions increased utilization of Green, however, Selwyn questioned the efficacy of relying too heavily on him.

“If that’s the only thing Admissions is doing, that feels worrying,” John Green is a part of Kenyon, but Kenyon is a lot more than just John Green,” she said.

Selwyn also suggested that Green might not be an effective tool for recruiting males. “There’s been

New bleachers to use aluminum

Continued from Page 1

made, according to Newell, because “it’s a lot cheaper to use aluminum than concrete and it can be done in a shorter amount of time so that we don’t interrupt playing seasons.” The new bleachers will be manufactured off-site before they are installed.

In addition to the bleachers, the walkway at the front of the stadium will be elevated to improve accessibility by reducing the total vertical distance from the back to the front of the stadium. “If you start higher, there won’t be as much of a fall from the parking lot,” Arnett said. “The idea is the back row here will have 14 spaces for wheelchair access.”

Newell believes the new bleachers will be a significant improvement over the old ones. “I think it will greatly increase the experience of going to the games,” he said. “One part of it will have actual chair backs rather than all bleachers, so there’s an opportunity there to have a better feel. Two, there’s going to be bleachers that go up next to the press box, giving more of an enclosed feel. So when you’re entering the stadium it feels like you’re entering a stadium rather than just walking out into it. There will be a more designated section for visitors that will separate visitors and students a bit better. All of it will provide a better true game day experience.”

He also said while the College has not ruled out selling season tickets in the future, it has no plans to do so at the moment. Arnett agrees that the updated bleachers will benefit the different athletic events on campus. “It’s more of an event if you have a nice environment,” he said. “I think there will be an excitement when we clean this all up. When there’s a new venue, everyone wants to check it out.”

College will replace corroded Gallery roof

KELSEY OVERBEY STAFF WRITER

It’s only been two years since its opening, but already the Gund Gallery is in need of serious renovations. Last July, the College discovered a series of mysterious white blotsches on the Gallery roof; closer investigation revealed corrosion in the zinc panels that were used to construct the roof. The splotches began to grow rapidly, and the College determined the roof would have to be replaced.

Chief Business Officer Mark Kohlman is overseeing the roof replacement project. According to Kohlman, the process of replacing the roof began in the fall. “Early in September is when we put the ice and water shield across the entire roof,” he said.

The shield was installed in an attempt to stop the already severely damaged roof from further corrosion. For the winter, however, the roof will need to undergo another temporary change. Kohlman says they plan on “tearing off the existing roof and putting on a temporary roof that’s made of rubber.”

With regards to planning for the permanent roof, Kohlman said, “We don’t anticipate [having to pay].” Chair of the Student Council and Grounds Committee Chair Hope F. ’14 said she is also the College’s chief copy editor, said he is “glad that they noticed the issue before it got any worse,” and feels “confident that it will be fixed and that the roof will function properly.”

A huge push to make the admissions material not more accessible, but more appealing, to male applicants, she said, “which is interesting when you consider the huge John Green push, because I would have to consider his core demographic to be dudes; I would consider it to be young women.”

Green is scheduled to return to campus on Feb. 10, when he will give a talk in Rosske Hall.

“I remember, when we were a freshman, there was a senior who was like, ‘You have to try and get John Green to come to campus,’” Dugan said. “I was like, ‘I’ll do it for you, I’ll do it.’ I never did, but he’s coming anyway.”

His visit is sponsored by Faculty Lectureships, will also come during a time when plans to cut back on touring and travel.

“My kids are very young and I don’t want their childhood memories to be of packed suitcases and brief visits between airports,” Green said.

“I think he’s one of our most famous alumni, at least at the moment,” Shattuck said. “So I think if you’re trying to get Kenyon out there, it’s definitely a way, because people are familiar with his work.”

"When readers come up to me at signings or in Chipotle or wherever it is a genuine pleasure to meet them and they’re always really lovely,” he wrote.

A subset of those readers were Kenyon students who had tried to form a nerdfighters club on campus two years ago.

“We sort of met once and were like, ‘Hey, let’s be friends,’” and then people sort of formed friendships or didn’t, and that was about it,” Kim Schwenk ’15 said.

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Selwyn also suggested that Green might not be an effective tool for recruiting males. “There’s been...
The Veterans’ panel extols service

KATIE GUYOT | STAFF WRITER

“You ask for your service.”

It’s a simple sentence — five words, 20 syllables, a little too familiar that it flies off the tongue almost instinctively every Nov. 11. But according to several of the attendees at this year’s Veterans’ Day panel in Philanthropist Lecture Hall, saying “thanks” isn’t thanks enough for the sacrifices made by the nation’s veterans.

“We celebrate Martin Luther King Day, we celebrate Constitution Day, but we’ve never really done anything for Veterans Day as long as I’ve been here,” said Ryan Stewart ’08, who served in the U.S. Army between 2008 and 2012 as an armor officer, was the panel’s moderator. Since returning to Gambier in July to take the position of director of class giving in the Office of Annual Giving, Stewart has been working to form a veterans’ group on campus as a resource for the College and for fellow veterans.

The panel included veterans from a variety of military service branches and groups on campus, with Stewart from the Army, Kyle Barber ’16 from the Navy, Manager of Facility Services Gary Sweeney from the Marine Corps and Assistant Professor of Mathematics Marie Snipes and Campus Safety Supervisor Gregory von Freymann from the Air Force.

“I come from a pretty big military family,” Snipes explained as she opened her PowerPoint of pictures.

All panelists emphasized the familial nature of military service under the volunteer system. Snipes, Barber and von Freymann, for example, each had two grandfathers in the service, and Sweeney still recalls the awe with which he held his father’s uniform before he earned his own upon enlisting in 1966.

“Patrission… for me was growing up understanding what my dad went through,” Sweeney said.

Von Freymann said returning to civilian society after experiencing the “death and destruction” of the Gulf War was a “culture shock.”

“I wanted to go back in,” he said.

Now, von Freymann offers guidance to Kenyon students who plan to join the armed forces.

Barber was the only current student on the panel and entered the Navy directly after high school in order to pay for Kenyon. The Post-9/11 GI Bill paid for most but all of his education, and he thanks the support he has received from Kenyon for his ability to attend the school today.

“Because of the financial background, Kenyon’s amazing financial aid covers the differences,” he said.

From the audience, President Sean Decatur asked the panelists how Kenyon could do more to support and connect with the veteran community on campus.

“It’s programs like this [panel] that I think will foster that plan,” Sweeney replied.

Several audience members expressed disappointment with the broader nation’s treatment of its veterans, especially with regard to the exploitation of veterans’ GI Bill benefits by for-profit colleges.

Professor of Religious Studies Mary Sosny told the group she would like to see the civilian population do more to support the women and men who were honored on Monday’s Veteran’s Day.

“Saying thanks is wonderful,” she said. “Let’s back it up.”

Professors recognize grade inflation

Continued from Page 1

Mary Sosny told the group she would like to see the civilian population do more to support the women and men who were honored on Monday’s Veteran’s Day.

“The V eterans Day panel underscored the familial nature of military service.

“I think it would be a good thing to do anything for Veterans Day as a recognition of the sacrifices made by the veterans,” said Professor of Political Science Fred Baumann with a reference to how the thank you message is so often said.

“Like any inflation, it gets discounted. I think at a certain point, trying to pull [grades] back leads to the problem,” he said.

“If that could make [students] argue more seriously, I think it would increase the student body’s sense of urgency,” he said.

“The cause for such a rise in grades remains unclear. While there may be pressure on professors to give higher grades, it also appears students are genuinely earning them.

“I do think junior professors are often hesitant to give low grades, or at least too many of them,” Ly saker said. “I have maintained the same rubric and scale for about 15 years and I am still teaching. Everything is dis tinguish truly excellent work.”

This is at least as much my fault as anyone else’s. I spend lots of time thinking about the future of the program.

From time to time, some speculates go through genetic bottlenecks and get very small. Supposedly there were once about six breeding cheetahs in the world and then they recovered. I think we’ve kind of originated bottlenecks and I think we’re going to do fine.

Do you think the College offers sufficient support for IPHS? Yes, I do. I would have no difficulty to say that about always, but now, yes. Now there’s more sympathy and support, to some de gree, because of different leadership.

You’re known around campus as the ghost stories you tell at “Haunted Kenyon” tours. How did this originate?

It was the idea of one of my former students, who worked in the Alumni Office. They were looking for an event on the first evening of alumni week to en courage people to stay for the tail party at the president’s house.

How long have you been telling these stories?

Too long. I’m frankly tired of telling them. I’d like them to rather mystifies me why people like them as much as they seem to.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.
Students belt tunes for Archon karaoke benefit at VI

Bill McCulloh, Dina Snow, Ben Locke, Bob Milnikel and Janet Thompson pose after last week’s children’s concert.

The orchestra, comprised of both Kenyon students and community members, plays four concerts a year. A board, working in conjunction with Locke, is responsible for the scope and finances of the organization. Each year, the board presents several fundraisers, the most famous of which is the annual gala.

Thompson has played in the orchestra for 20 years, saying, “It keeps you active, and you understand what the students are going through when you keep yourself active.”

McCulloh played for the orchestra when it first began in 1965 for 13 years. After his retirement in 1999, he began to play with the group again. “It’s the only time in the week I’m officially on campus … It’s been one of the important ways of still being in the community,” McCulloh said.

Associate Professor of Mathematics Bob Milnikel has played the clarinet in the orchestra for the last nine years. “It’s good to get to know students in a different context … and let them see the faculty as people who have lives outside of the classroom — hobbies, interests, as well,” Milnikel said.

According to all of the veteran members, the single most important factor in keeping them coming back year after year has been Locke’s direction. McCulloh said, “In addition to [Locke’s] musicianship, there are two things, for me, that stand out: one is his humanity and the other is his humor.”

As for Locke himself, even after 30 years, his love for his job is still immediately evident. “I surprise myself that I’m in my 30th season,” Locke said. “That’s always been in my personality, though. I can’t imagine not doing,” Snow said. “It’s kind of like a family … from the people we meet when we first started to some of the old professors who have played and since passed away.”

Professor Emeritus of Music Paul Schwartz started the orchestra in 1965 as a place for his daughter to play the cello in a high-caliber artistic environment. Schwartz, who became Kenyon’s first full-time faculty member in music in 1947, is credited as the pioneer of the Department of Music at Kenyon.

After Schwartz’s retirement, the orchestra was under the direction of a number of leaders. Locke took over the direction of the orchestra in 1984, when he began teaching at Kenyon.

Bill McCulloh, Dina Snow, Ben Locke, Bob Milnikel and Janet Thompson pose after last week’s children’s concert.
Language should evolve to reflect current culture

PHOEBE CARTER CONTRIBUTOR

“Balance and swing, hay-for-four and gypsy melt-down!” The caller walked us through the moves as the familiar sounds of contra dancing filled the Gund Ballroom. Stomping feet and the cluckles of sheepshod new dancers mingled with the ever-present whine of the fiddle, and a sense of revelry filled the air.

But something had cast a shadow. It was that troublesome word “gypsy,” a word used in contra dances across the country to identify a step that involves circling with your dance partner while making eye contact but without actually touching.

The step is a favorite with the countryside, we are not only using the language we use is evocative of a culture in the way that language we use conjure a false image of a culture in the way that words or phrases like “gypsy” or “Esikimo sit?” Language ought to evolve to reflect our current consciousness. Using such terms represents an outdated understanding of other cultures, of who they are, and how our vocabulary can be unintentionally harmful.

Language exists for us to communicate, and if the language we use is evocative of a false stereotype, not only are we causing unnecessary harm, but we are not communicating as successfully as we could be. When the words we use conjure a false image of a culture in the way that “gypsy,” for many, is associated with the words “dirty” and “thief,” and for others with glorified images of free-spirited musicians who roam the countryside, we are not using our gift of language to its fullest potential.

Perhaps it would be over-the-top and absurd to try to remove all potentially racially suggestive words from one’s vocabulary — no more “van-dals,” “hooligans,” or “Indian summers” — but we are the force behind language, and the way we choose to use it creates the atmosphere in which we live.

A word is not just a word any more than you and I are just people unattached to an attractiveness and history and the context of the world. A word carries with it weight and gives responsibility to those who speak it. Let us not take our power of language lightly, nor shirk the responsibility that comes with it. Let us bold with our words and call things as they truly are.

Phoebe Carter ’17 is a prospective international studies major who is continuing her marginalization in the way they themselves are not relevant. For the people whose histories are intertwined, whether positively or negatively, with those words, they are more than just words. That is the name of the step! Get over it.”

Then I thought again. When it comes to words with clinical origins, one could argue that they are just words, after all, and in the case of the gypsy melt-down, they were not intended in a derogatory manner. The use of these words have stayed from having any real connection with the culture that they are, accurately or inaccurately, identified.

And yet it is this implicit use of a culture to describe something that doesn’t even directly involve the culture itself that concerns me. By using these words flippantly, we are taking a culture that has been marginalized and continuing its marginalization in our language, as though they themselves are not relevant. For the people whose histories are intertwined, whether positively or negatively, with those words, they are more than just words. Language is constantly evolving. New words like “bromance” and “affluenza” become a part of our vocabulary, whether we like it or not, and why can language not also evolve to a more sensitive — or at least more accurate — nomenclature when it comes to words or phrases like “gypsy” or “Esikimo sit?”

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Why be anonymous when we know how to challenge?

CLAIRE BERMAN
CONTRIBUTOR

Raise your hand if you have ever sent something anonymous by the Internet. Except, don’t actually, because I’m not talking to you in person. You are reading a newspaper — probably in a library. If you start raising your hand, you’ll look somewhat foolish. But you were going to raise your hand anyway.

It twitched at your side, even if you weren’t quite proud of it. Okay, so, hypothetically raise your hand if you’ve ever sent a work of yours with your name attached, to a publication, Internet or otherwise. Looking around at this hypothetical group of hands, I’d say that a lot more of you have sent something anonymously.

You have taken enough psychology classes to know that correlation does not imply causation. That being said, I would like to put forth this unscientific hypothesis to the world and under my own name: the ability of our generation to speak with no obligations to put forward a name to support their words has led to a certain reluctance on this campus which are immediately subject to shut it again on some of our brains, we risk running in the middle. “The object of belief is to put in our respective positions and allow others repugnant to our rights is that you must allow others repugnant to your own.” The difficulty of the matter is that there are many varieties of opinion here, and it is sappy and sort of bad to have a trim of sadness, that makes things edifying. But things go afield if one sadness decides the others smell too much. It is the collegiate equivalent of botulism. There are some things that are risky to say on this campus which are not controversial, and yet those who suggest they are immediately subject to ad hominem and name-calling. Dialogue can be little debate and thought in such an environment, and if we find that we will have to go with exactly the same mind as we had as first years, it should have been a very poor use of money indeed.

Academia is an odd place, where differing views go to clash tirelessly, and to facilitate this, we must have a strange mix of audacity and humility. I am not saying we ought to go about self-effacing and glumly proclaiming we are wrong. I think we should be as bold and firm in our convictions as before, but refrain from proclaiming offense and requesting censure when an opposing view is equally valid. To believe that you could be wrong is, in application, being content in the fact others think them selves as right as you do. It is a narrow line between open-mindedness and empty-headedness, and virtue lies somewhere in the middle. “The object of opening of the mouth, is to shut it again on some thing solid,” G.K. Chester- ton tells us. And I am for the closing of minds upon good and well-ruminated thought. But I do not think we would like to eat any thing made by chefs who believe the dish to possibly be good with a good chance of being had. Let our voices be raised, not because we wish others to go unheard but because we believe we have something to say.

Some maintain that it is too narrow a sphere to be seriously considered a philosopher, you must be capable of rigorous, per haps even scientific analy sis. I maintain that you must love wisdom. By this definition I think we are all philosophers, if we are in earnest in the chase of truth. I believe there to be an objective truth, but we will have far better chances finding it (or its lack) with minds going in different directions in search. There is little time, then, to spend it telling others they are going the wrong way. Let each go his own way, and we will see who lives most well. It is the pursuit of a life well lived that brought us all to this hilltop in the first place.

Matthew Eley ’15, of Howard, Ohio, is an English major since an IHPS concen tration. His email address is elmy@kenyon.edu.

For open dialogue, a prudish mind should not be a closed one

MATTHEW ELEY
CONTRIBUTOR

One of my more disad vantage conditions is that I may be wrong about a few things. This might initially seem a comforting thought (old business to some); but then again, I may believe in a few things that you do. I know with certa inity that you and I could easily find common ground within moments of conversion. But I am fallible and can trace these mutual opinions back to some other thinkers in my own thoughts — and thus, for the same reason I may be wrong about a few things, you may be as well.

My goal is not to offend (for I would thus offend my self, and I am a relatively self-satisfied individual), but allude to a more general problem that seems to pervade academia. There are occasionally those who seem to think only they are right and all others wrong. This is disagreeable to most everyone, and the usual remedy is to get the perpetrator to admit that they are wrong and every other one else may be right. But I think this breeds rancor and quiet philosophers who keep to themselves. I propose a new system: that we might allow everyone speak as though they are right.

“The truth of the matter is that there are many varieties of opinion here, and it is sappy and sort of bad to have a trim of sadness, that makes things edifying. But things go afield if one sadness decides the others smell too much. It is the collegiate equivalent of botulism. There are some things that are risky to say on this campus which are not controversial, and yet those who suggest they are immediately subject to ad hominem and name-calling. Dialogue can be little debate and thought in such an environment, and if we find that we will have to go with exactly the same mind as we had as first years, it should have been a very poor use of money indeed.”

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Why be anonymous when we know how to challenge?

CLAIRE BERMAN
CONTRIBUTOR

But the difficult part about defending your rights is that you must allow others repugnant to you to have them.”

The claim above is accurate in many situations, but it is false in others. The object of belief is to put in our respective positions and allow others repugnant to our own. In many cases, this is true. In other cases, it is not. It is a narrow line between open-mindedness and empty-headedness, and virtue lies somewhere in the middle. “The object of opening of the mouth, is to shut it again on something solid,” G.K. Chester-ton tells us. And I am for the closing of minds upon good and well-ruminated thought. But I do not think we would like to eat anything made by chefs who believe the dish to possibly be good with a good chance of being had. Let our voices be raised, not because we wish others to go unheard but because we believe we have something to say.

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THINGS WE CAN’T DO

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Cancelled Cabaret a worthy replacement for Pippin

Although Phillips' reading was full of beautiful language and evocative imagery, a few moments distracted the audience from enjoying the overall tone of the reading. Because the poems featured very human descriptions, Phillips used some sexual imagery that felt rather discordant in comparison to the agility of his other work.

That aside, the overall spirit of the event was one of celebration. Phillips was personal and personable, conversing readily with community members at the signing following his show. Coupled with the success of prior events, Phillips' keynote provided the perfect cap to a fantastic festival.

Shrew eschews stereotypes

Ouellet said: “We did some movement workshops in the rehearsal process and I tend to drop my voice a bit. Costuming was a bit more difficult, but nothing I was too concerned about. I actually do onstage is all that different from any other show I’ve been in.”

Jongeward is manipulating more than just gender, though, in Shakespear’s play.

“I am trying to find the comedi- edy and romantic end of the Kate and Petruchio plot. I am finding it really hard to find the Kate and Petruchio one-act plays were to be written, researched, and designed and produced in the course of the week. The project was cancelled due to a lack of interest.

Carl Phillips stuns with poignant poetry

Victoria Ungvarsky

Even before keynote speaker Carl Phillips arrived, as the audience packed itself into the Community Foundation Theater in the Gund Gallery last Saturday, they sensed they were in for an incomparable event. Student ushers carried packets of poetry, allowing the attendees to peruse and preview Phillips’s work before his speech at this year’s Kenyon Review Literary Festival. The Festival is a two-day extravaganza to celebrate literary achievement within the Kenyon community, as well as a celebration of the work of Carl Phillips, the 2013 winner of the Kenyon Review Award for Literary Achievement.

Phillips capped off a successful weekend at the Festival with a speech that included bits of his poetry for the Denham Stillliffe Memorial Lecture. The address focused on finding direction in life through writing.

“Writing is an attempt to fashion a compass for life,” Phillips told the crowd. “Writers speak from our own hauntedness to the hauntedness of others.”

The overarching theme of directions arising from the poems he selected, which he titled “The Compass,” “North,” “As a Blow, from the East” and “Southern Cross.” Phillips does not have a poem for East – possibly, he con- fessed, because he is from the East Coast and it is therefore the most familiar to him. Instead, he is interested in exploring the unknown, the things he cannot understand. The metaphor of the compass, which he centered his speech around, explored how mystery can still surround even the most structured of mechanisms.

His poetry integrates this idea in terms of human relationships, which led into some of the most poignant and graceful moments in his speech.

Although Phillips’ reading in drag, much to the audi- ence’s delight. The show began to gain in speed and energy.

Phillips highlighted a nuanced performance of “I’ve Grown Accustomed to Her Face.” He showcased an impressive vocal, emotional, and dynamic range. For some, this may have been the Pippin fix they needed, but for most it just showed what was lost when the musical was can- celled. Shrew had been cast in the title role.

For their finale, the compa- ny performed Avenue Q’s “Fat Now.” The finale was an excellent choice, leaving the audi- ence humming as they filed out of the theater.

The Trials of Brave Potato

Brave Potato Productions faced two cancelled projects this semester. One they were to be written, researched, and designed and produced in the course of the week. The project was cancelled due to a lack of interest.

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It’s interesting how many people connect with Shakespeare, how many famous musicians were inspired to write music based off his plays and how one play can inspire such different music.”

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EMILY SAKAROTO
A&E EDITOR

This weekend, Stage Femmes will bring the work of Kenyon actors, directors, faculty, and alumni, who overlapped with their Kenyon alumni and faculty members, including Wendy MacLeod ’81, former professor Meredith Friedman, Will Arbery ’11, Patrick Shaw ’07, Japhet Balaban ’09, Leigh Sheppard ’92, Grace Femmes co-president Emma Miller ’15 and Sydney Fishman ’13, to the stage in two performances. Works include one-act plays and monologues, all by persons now involved in Kenyon theatre previously.

“Troupe’s one-act fest to debut...”

Callan Schackör - Collegian

Stage Femmes Co-President Emma Miller ’15 is excited about how the weekend should turn out.

“There are [almost all] new plays which have never been done anywhere else, and they were all written by people with connections and ties to the community,” Miller wrote in an email to the Collegian.

“Some people in the audience will know playwrights who represents with their time at Kenyon, at which time I think is really unique and incredible.”

Stage Femmes’ series of one-act plays and monologues will open on Friday, Nov. 15 at 6 p.m. The next performance will be on Saturday at 2 p.m., and the final showcase will be Sunday evening at 8 p.m.

The KENYON COLLEGIAN | THURSDAY, NOV. 14 | KENYONCOLLEGIAN.COM

Gina Rickert ’14 and Conor Dugan ’15 act in a proposal scene.

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![Image](https://example.com/image.png)

**“Wine for Whiskers” breeds funds for cat sterilization.**

**JULIE FRANCE**
**FEATURES EDITOR**

Cats and wine go together. One only need look at the Village Market classic, “cat wine” — wine in cat-shaped bottles — or the “Wine for Whiskers” fundraising event for Spay and Neuter Abandoned Cats and Kittens, Inc. (SNACK) in Mount Vernon.

SNACK, Inc. held its first fundraiser to test the waters. SNACK was an ideal means of exhibiting her love for animals as well as connecting with her new home. “I thought that this would be a great way to be involved in the community,” Unger said.

“The breeding of stray and feral cats is not a problem for cat lovers only. “A lot of people don’t realize how problematic a large colony of stray and feral cats can be. It causes lots of disease [and] wildlife like raccoons to come into the area since people leave out food, and it’s also just a nuisance,” Metcalf said. Though some people may recognize the hazards of stray and feral cat colonies and try to help, they often perpetuate the problem. “People often feed stray cats, take them in or just decide to bring a few cats to be spayed or neutered. But that doesn’t help the problem at all,” Metcalf said. “SNACK is solving the problem in one fell swoop.”

**VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY SUSANNE UNGER AND TONI METCALF ’09 REPRESENT KENYON AT SNACK’S BENEFIT.**

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**CLASS CLASH**
**COMPILED BY LIAM REILLY**

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**What is the name of Kenyon’s previous athletic facility?**

- The Ernst Center
- No response

**Where are the Los Angeles Dodgers originally from?**

- Brooklyn
- Paris

**What cities did the EU designate as European Capitals of Culture for 2013?**

- Brussels, France and Košice, Slovakia
- Copenhagen

**Which party won the Virginia governorship last week?**

- Democratic
- Republican

**Weekly Scores**

- 2
- 2
- 1
- 2
Field hockey drops NCAC title game

NOAH GURZENSKI
STAFF WRITER

The Kenyon field hockey team's season came to an end at the hands of DePauw University, although this was 2-1 loss at the North Coast Athletic Conference (NCAC) championship on Saturday, Nov. 9.

A game which marked the farthest Kenyon advancement in the NCAC tournament since 2007, started off grim for the Ladies as No. 1-seeded DePauw put themselves up 1-0 less than two minutes into the match. Before the first half came to a close, the Tigers found the back of the cage once again, making the score 2-0 going into the second half of play.

"We just had to talk about our game plan again," Head Coach Jacque DeMarco said about the Tigers preparing for the second half. 

"Remind them that they are capable and that we can play with them and that we can win." And score they did. Co-Captain Maddie Breschi '16 got Kenyon on the scoreboard with 30 minutes remaining in regulation, driving home a shot off of an assist from Rachel Hall '15's penalty corner to cut DePauw's lead to one. With the goal, Breschi increased her season scoring total to 18, breaking Kenyon's single-season goals record set in 1988. Although Kenyon shut out DePauw in the second half, DePauw's defense was up to the task, holding Kenyon to three shots on goal for the half in order to come away with a 2-1 win, claiming their second consecutive NCAC title.

Despite the loss, the Ladies finished their season with an overall record of 13 wins and seven losses, making this their best season since 2006. In addition to this distinction, both Breschi and Hall were recognized as the NCAC Player of the Week during the season. Breschi, along with Alex Bair '14 and Emmy Weiner '16, represented Kenyon on the all-NCAC tournament team for their performances in the conference tournament.

Looking back on the season, Co-Captain Suzie Gurzenda '14 attributed the close-knit nature of the team as a primary source for the Ladies' success and commitment that took them to the NCAC championship.

"The team was super well-committed," Gurzenda said. "It goes back to really looking out for each other and really wanting to be with each other every moment of every day, and every day in practice we wanted to be there, wanted to be with each other. So I think that just culminated into really productive practices and hence really productive games and just slowly, step-by-step, we had a really productive season because of it."

Whether looking at Kenyon's overtime victory at Wooster or its upset Denison in the NCAC semifinals, it is clear that the program re-established itself as an NCAC power this season, and DeMarco believes Kenyon is capable of remaining in the top tier of the conference for seasons to come. "We deserve to be in the [NCAC] championship," DeMarco said. "And there's no reason at this point why we shouldn't be." 

Seniors lead rugby

Continued from Page 12 

ORU abruptly shut down, leaving in previous members without an organizing body for the upcoming rugby season. "Everyone in the ORU got an email," Kengmana said. "Normally they start sending out stuff mid-March. We didn't hear anything until mid- to late-June saying that [the former commissioner] was resigning."

That's when McCleary took matters into her own hands and reorganized the women's rugby league. Kengmana follows McCleary's new lead. "Me and this other guy, Andrew Asgian, the president of [rugby at] Baldwin-Wallace [University]...we were actually only two guys who were left at the club. So we were cut from the rugby union and form our own league beforehand. And then we saw that it was no longer a thing, so...I did the same thing as Molly," Kengmana said. "We sent out an email to all the D-III teams in Ohio saying, 'we're making a new league, let us know if you want to join.' The first step was calling USA Rugby, and then forming the schedule."

Kengmana said organizing the playoffs proved especially difficult. 

"I had to coordinate with the head of the NSCRO, the National Small College Rugby Organization, and set up the tournament for the Great Lakes region, which is Michigan and Ohio; that doubles as our league's playoffs," he said. "It's a lot of phone calls, a lot of emails. It's a lot of pushing buttons and being diligent. It's a lot of paperwork, but it's good to have in place."

By taking charge, McCleary and Kengmana enabled the two Kenyon teams and others around the region to continue their seasons. Both teams will pick up their seasons again in the spring.
Rugby seniors take the helm

After the Ohio Rugby Union folded last summer, two Kenyon seniors stepped up.

Molly McCleary '14 and Michael Kengmana '14 took over as the commissioners of the respective leagues that men's and women's rugby play in.

Kenyon falls to Fighting Scots on Senior Day

"We need 11 people doing the right thing at the right time. We were one block away or one catch away from scoring, and we could have scored a lot more points."

Michael Kengmana '14

Kenyon has just one game remaining, and it's the biggest one of all. The Lords will travel to Groveville, Ohio for a date with archival Denison University on Saturday, Nov. 16.

Kickoff is at 1 p.m. The Lords, in a three-way tie for fifth place in the conference, are one game behind Denison and are looking to pull even with their hated foe. Mathematically eliminated from the playoff hunt, Kenyon is also hoping to play spoiler to Denison's postseason chances, as the Big Red is just one game behind the College of Wooster for third place in the conference.