



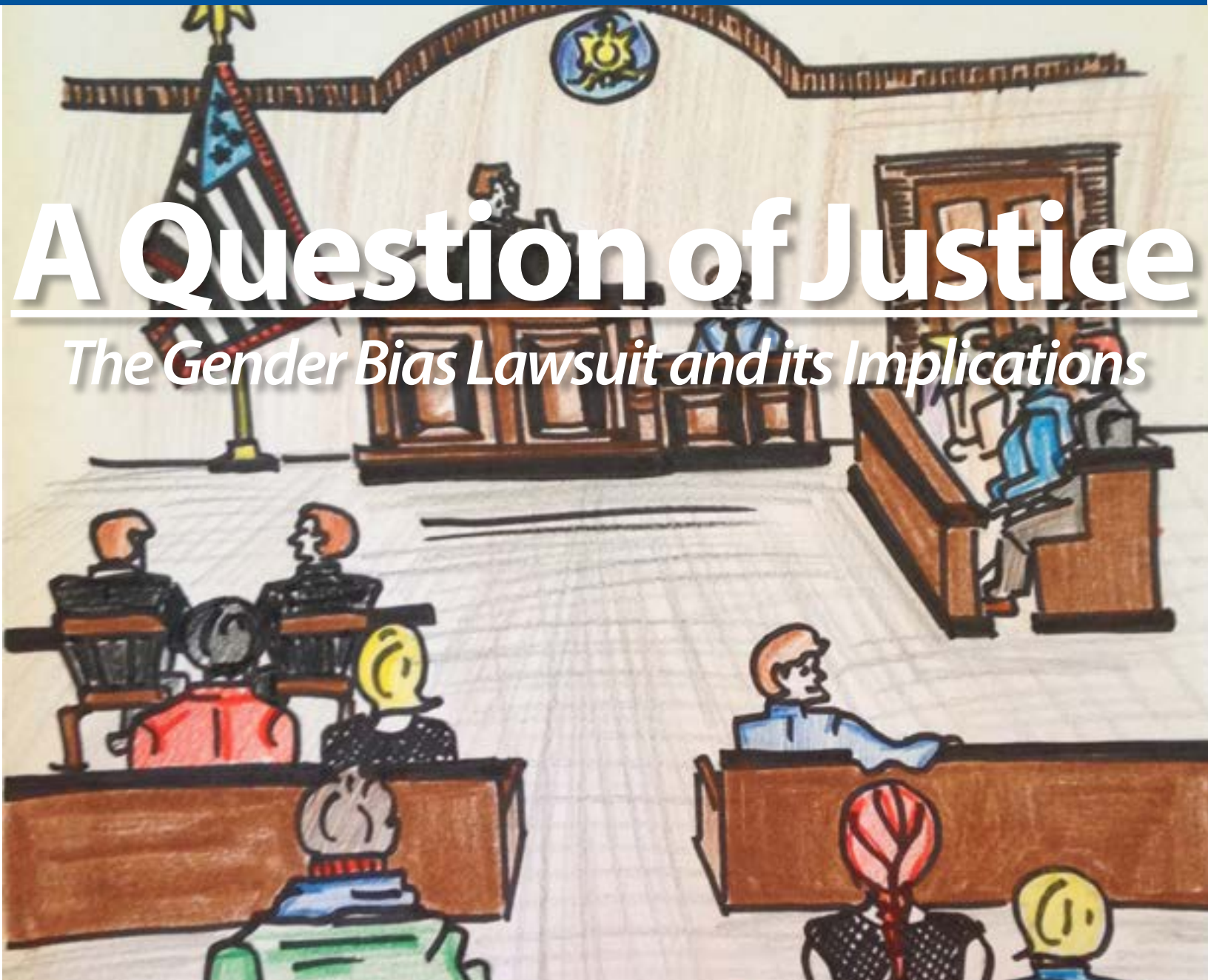
# The Spectator



FALL 2015

A MAGAZINE OF STUDENT THOUGHT AND OPINION

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## A Question of Justice

*The Gender Bias Lawsuit and its Implications*

Inside: Stories on the Presidential Search, Mock Con, the Liberal Arts, and More

Dear Reader,

Welcome to The Spectator's first issue of the 2015-16 academic year. Much has happened across our campus, and within these pages resides a collection of articles that cover such issues in depth for your reading pleasure.

Topping our list of headlines is the lawsuit against Washington and Lee from a former student accused of sexual assault this past year. The lawsuit has drawn W&L into a larger, national discussion on how institutions should deal with sexual misconduct on their campuses. The final result of the lawsuit will emerge in April, but the consequences of W&L's policies are already being addressed by national publications that perceive our school to have acted unjustly. With this in mind, The Spectator carefully and tactfully investigated this sensitive issue, focusing our research on information within the public domain. We are not here to take sides, but to evaluate the lawsuit's impact on the student body and represent the facts thus far, as they are, to our readers.

The Liberal Arts and their future at Washington and Lee presents another important theme for this issue. From a detailed explanation of the University's Presidential search process, to the abrupt cancellation of *the Mikado* and subsequent questions of censorship, to an inquiry concerning our broad FDR requirements, our writers address many aspects of W&L's unique Liberal Arts education and the challenges facing them.

The Spectator is always interested in hearing your own thoughts as members of the community, so write us by email, comment on our articles online at <http://wlspectator.com/>, or send us a letter to the editor and we'll get back to you.

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# Outcome Uncertain, John Doe Lawsuit against W&L Moves Forward

By Ben Gee

“But we can never say this enough: Mistreatment of others is wrong by any standard of our society, by any standard of right or wrong. It is especially wrong in this community, where we — rightly — insist on developing within our students the moral obligation to treat others with respect at all times and under all conditions; where we demand that members of our community never stand idly by when we see others violate those values. It is wrong anywhere. It is especially wrong at this university.”

– Washington and Lee University Press Release, “A Time to Examine, Affirm our Commitments,” Dec. 1, 2014

As the national conversation on campus sexual assault continues to grow in size and scope, we once again witness the law of unintended consequences. In 2011, the US Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) published a letter calling for universities to take the lead on dealing with sexual misconduct. The OCR letter threatened schools with the loss of Federal funding and other consequences if they failed to solve sexual assault problems on campus. Since then, using the guidelines published by the Federal Government, many institutions have made their policies much stricter. No university wants a dangerous sexual culture, nor a reputation for creating one. However, the results of these new policies have incited debate and raised concerning questions. Many assert that university efforts to prosecute alleged rape/assault cases disregard the Fifth Amendment right to Due Process, and violate contracts with their students.

Do universities determine guilt in ways that unjustly align to predetermined gender-based assumptions? Are accused students perceived to be inherently guilty, the inevitable corollary to our doctrine against doubting the victim?

Do universities determine guilt in ways that unjustly align to predetermined gender-based assumptions? Are

accused students perceived to be inherently guilty, the inevitable corollary to our doctrine against doubting the victim? These are questions we now have to confront at W&L.

Washington and Lee University currently conducts sexual misconduct investigations internally. This policy seeks to deal with incidents independent of law enforcement, even though the Federal Government defines them as crimes. As a result, W&L has become involved in an unwelcome court battle after attempting to resolve a case of sexual misconduct on our campus. By assuming responsibility for these cases, W&L has delayed at least two of its students a clear adjudication of justice.



Lynchburg, Virginia Courthouse where the Trial will likely take place

Beginning in late 2014, Washington and Lee University has occupied a spotlight in the national sexual assault policy debate with the case of John Doe vs. W&L. In November 2014, W&L found a student, John Doe, guilty of sexually assaulting another student (‘Jane Doe’), and expelled him from the school. John Doe responded by filing a lawsuit against

W&L alleging three things: First, that the school discriminated against him during the proceedings in violation of his rights under Title IX; second, the university denied him his Fifth Amendment right to Due Process; third, that a violation of John Doe’s contract with the school occurred during his prosecution. John Doe demands financial damages from W&L and reinstatement to the University. The case remains scheduled for trial on April 22, 2015, but in April 2015 W&L’s legal team filed for dismissal. Subsequently, in an important development, US District Judge Norman K. Moon reviewed W&L’s motion this summer. On August 5, Judge Moon denied W&L’s request to dismiss the case, and struck down two of John Doe’s three central allegations.

The Judge’s report outlines John Doe’s view of events, and the supporting evidence for Doe’s allegations of misconduct by Washington and Lee. The report contains the only details yet available to the public. Even if partially true, John Doe’s story gives us much to consider. According to John Doe, he and Jane Doe first

Wikimedia Commons

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engaged in consensual sex on February 8, 2014, after an off-campus party at which they had both been drinking. John Doe reached out to Jane Doe the next day and throughout the next month by phone and facebook, and she reciprocated his amity. They engaged in sex another time the next month, later characterized by both Jane Doe and John Doe as consensual.

John Doe's account continues; On March 15, 2014, Jane Doe saw John Doe kissing a different female at a party event and left early, upset. By August 2014, John Doe and this other female became an official couple. During that summer, Jane Doe worked at a women's clinic for sexual assault issues, and in July she began to tell her friends that she believed she had been sexually assaulted back in February. At the start of the next academic year, Jane Doe and John Doe expressed interest in the same Nepal Spring Term program, and Jane Doe experienced a "strong physical reaction" to seeing John Doe's name alongside hers on the acceptance list. On October 13, Jane Doe reached out to W&L's Title IX coordinator, Lauren Kozak, to report John Doe for sexually assaulting her. However, she requested that no investigation take place. On October 30, when the final list of students going to Nepal was made public with both names present, Jane Doe contacted Ms. Kozak again - this time to request an investigation of John Doe.

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### The report's alleged account of W&L's investigative process presents a worrying portrait of potentially unjust and possibly discriminatory school policy.

The report's alleged account of W&L's investigative process presents a worrying portrait of potentially unjust and possibly discriminatory school policy. John Doe was denied legal representation during the investigation, part of the school's new policy adopted from stricter Federal recommendations. During the evidence-accruing process, Administration purportedly ignored witnesses and testimony from John Doe and prevented him from viewing the exact nature of Jane Doe's allegations. The investigation's evidence selectively included quotations and facts, including a spliced quotation from Jane Doe: "I usually don't have sex with someone I meet on the first night," which strangely omits the second part of her statement, "but you are a really interesting guy." The Administration attempted to convince John Doe to withdraw from the school, and even reached out to his student honor advocates to ask them to convince him as well. John Doe refused to depart, however, because he still believed in his own innocence.

At a November 18 meeting, school Administration presented John Doe with a list of individuals considered for the Student Faculty Hearing Board (SFHB). He was asked if he had any reservations about its members, but

he claims that he had no opportunity at that time to review the impartiality of its specific representatives. The list included W&L Professor David Novack, who has written academic pieces that indicate bias in sexual misconduct cases such as "Rape Nullification in the United States: A Cultural Conspiracy." John Doe indicates that had he known of Professor Novack's academic biases, he would have objected to Novack's inclusion on the SFHB. However, John Doe was not given an opportunity to effectively evaluate the impartiality of his judges. The Administration next denied John Doe's request to record the SFHB hearing on November 20, where Jane Doe was present. She was protected from John Doe during the hearing by both a physical barrier and limits to what questions the SFHB could ask her - if any questions risked provoking her. John Doe claims that Jane Doe's testimony contained many unchallenged inconsistencies, at times referring to John Doe as "disrespectful, dishonorable, and "having treated her as though she were worthless," but at other times calling him "smart, interesting, sweet, and genuinely interested in her." John Doe's Honor Advocates made two further requests for transparency on the events of the hearing, but Administration denied both requests.

The next day, the SFHB found John Doe guilty by the new, lower standard of "Preponderance of Evidence" rather than the former policy "Beyond a Reasonable Doubt," in a 3-1 decision. John Doe immediately filed an appeal to the University Board of Appeals (UBA), but it was denied on December 3 without explanation in a 2-1 vote.

John Doe's Title IX allegation argues that W&L's investigation "occurred in an environment that created pressure for the University to punish male students for sexual misconduct." He suggests that W&L felt compelled to take an overly harsh stance on sexual assault issues, unduly influenced by the well-known Federal Office for Civil Rights' (OCR) "Dear colleague" letter in 2011. Additionally, the notorious and since disproven Rolling Stone article A Rape on Campus: A Brutal Assault and Struggle for Justice at UVA was published just twenty-four hours before the school's decision to expel John Doe. He believes that the Administration's investigation was, instead, a public statement against sexual assault. Therefore, John Doe asserts in the report that he was expelled from Washington and Lee without sufficient evidence or a fair investigative process, in violation of his Title IX rights against gender discrimination.

Judge Moon's report concluded that John Doe's claim of Title IX discrimination will continue, but that his two other claims will not. Notably, although Judge Moon's legal reasoning excuses W&L from prosecution on the charges of Due Process and contract violation, the report does not eliminate W&L's higher responsibility. For the issue of Due Process, Judge Moon stated that because W&L is not a public school and was not "coerced" by the Federal Government into adopting its

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stricter standards, the school cannot be prosecuted. Relative to contract violation, Judge Moon stated that W&L did violate the student handbook's provisions for "good faith and fair dealing." However, the handbook also states that "The policies of Washington and Lee University are under continual examination and revision." Consequently, the judge determined that the handbook cannot be considered a mutually bound engagement between W&L and its students. However, we hold ourselves to a higher moral standard. Even if legally permissible, many of W&L's purported actions throughout the process dishonor those moral values and fail to uphold the unique qualities of our institution.

### Washington and Lee's policy of internally investigating sexual misconduct cases has done a disservice to both John Doe and Jane Doe, as well as the university community as a whole.

Washington and Lee's policy of internally investigating sexual misconduct cases has done a disservice to both John Doe and Jane Doe, as well as the university community as a whole. The case should have been resolved by law enforcement. W&L's involvement has not just led to legal jeopardy, but an existential threat to who we say we are as an intellectual and educational community. This case will more than likely happen again if university policy is not changed.

John Doe's case will reach trial on April 22, and W&L may become the first university to lose a lawsuit of this nature. It is possible that his expulsion could be reversed. We still await Jane Doe's testimony. We still do not know what actually happened on the night of February 8, 2014. Current assumptions on both sides have led to controversy and confusion. What we do know is that a Judge has raised serious concerns about W&L's investigative process. If not rectified, other W&L students are at risk of entering a similar situation to John Doe and Jane Doe.

The John Doe vs. W&L case brings to light an urgent discussion for our campus and our community as well – the question of "grey rape" and the idea that "regret equals rape." Should students be held accountable for the changing attitudes of sexual partners for months or even years after achieving immediate consent? In prosecuting John Doe so vigorously, did W&L inadvertently create an environment in which students become victims to retroactive denial of consent? Judge Moon wrote, "Plaintiff's allegations, taken as true, suggest that W&L's disciplinary procedures, at least when it comes to charges of sexual assault, amount to a 'practice of railroading accused students.'" This finding of the court warrants further reckoning, and could have severe

ramifications as we have already seen across the country. Recent literature for potential male undergraduates warns against applying to W&L, and on October 15, NPR conducted a segment discussing the dangerous culture at some universities of "guilt before innocence," including W&L.

Two weeks after the Rolling Stone article was published and John Doe was expelled, W&L issued a response to the article titled, "A Time to Examine, Affirm our Commitments." In their reactionary response to the article's slanderous fiction, W&L states: "Mistreatment of others is wrong by any standard of our society... It is wrong anywhere. It is especially wrong at this university." As we await a decision, it would be wise for the Administration to ask itself if our institution is truly honoring its commitment against mistreating others by internally investigating instances of sexual misconduct. The welfare of two fellow students is at risk, and with them, all of us. If we are to be a community that holds true to what we believe, it is time to reconsider our framework for sexual misconduct issues. After all – in the words of our Administration, mistreating others no matter the circumstance is "especially wrong at this university."

#### Additional Reading:

Judge Norman K. Moon's Report, August 5, 2015: <http://www.leagle.com/decision/In%20FDCO%2020150806C94/DOE%20v.%20WASHINGTON%20AND%20LEE%20UNIVERSITY>

The Roanoke Times, December 16, 2014: [http://www.roanoke.com/news/education/higher\\_education/student-claims-he-was-expelled-from-w-l-for-consensual/article\\_5c28779e-a237-5e8d-b958-a1a-2dadd83f1.html](http://www.roanoke.com/news/education/higher_education/student-claims-he-was-expelled-from-w-l-for-consensual/article_5c28779e-a237-5e8d-b958-a1a-2dadd83f1.html)

The Roanoke Times, January 28, 2015: [http://www.roanoke.com/news/education/higher\\_education/washington-and-lee-seeks-dismissal-of-former-student-s-suit/article\\_d441b4f3-b9b2-5c5a-941d-4af1ae0f6486.html](http://www.roanoke.com/news/education/higher_education/washington-and-lee-seeks-dismissal-of-former-student-s-suit/article_d441b4f3-b9b2-5c5a-941d-4af1ae0f6486.html)

The Roanoke Times, March 25, 2015: [http://www.roanoke.com/news/virginia/washington-and-lee-student-accused-of-rape-files-new-law-suit/article\\_4d084d7f-8883-5c53-b8cf-1fdd531cab64.html](http://www.roanoke.com/news/virginia/washington-and-lee-student-accused-of-rape-files-new-law-suit/article_4d084d7f-8883-5c53-b8cf-1fdd531cab64.html)

The Roanoke Times, May 22, 2015: [http://www.roanoke.com/news/education/higher\\_education/w-l-defends-policies-on-sexual-assault-allegations-seeks-lawsuit/article\\_86d51102-4c82-560a-b00d-f06a6b3b3c50.html](http://www.roanoke.com/news/education/higher_education/w-l-defends-policies-on-sexual-assault-allegations-seeks-lawsuit/article_86d51102-4c82-560a-b00d-f06a6b3b3c50.html)

The "Dear Colleague" OCR Letter, April 3, 2011: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.html> (*Continued on Page 19*)



# A Time of Transition: The Search for a New President

By Ben Whedon

For a multitude of students, the Spring Term of 2015 was a unique yet exciting year-end adjustment. New and returning students alike faced the intriguing shift from taking four full classes to a single, intensive course. In the midst of this turbulent yet invigorating stage of the academic year came the announcement of Kenneth P. Ruscio's departure, Washington and Lee's President since 2006. In an email to the student body, Ruscio reflected on his time at Washington and Lee and what has changed during his tenure. In his nine academic years as President, the school faced several public controversies such as the debate over Lee Chapel's battle heraldry, the punishment of two fraternities, and the creation of mandatory third year housing.

Despite a few controversial decisions, President Ruscio's positive impact on our campus cannot be ignored. The completion of the \$500 million capital campaign, the restoration of the Colonnade, and the creation of the Mudd Center for Ethics and the Global Learning Center are just some of the many positive developments on campus which President Ruscio has overseen. Over Parents Weekend I had the pleasure of attending the Presidential Gala, where I heard him speak on the issue of his successor. Though Ruscio himself plays no part in the search for the school's next president, he emphasized that W&L faces a changing world and that our choice of new leadership will be one of self-definition for many years to come.

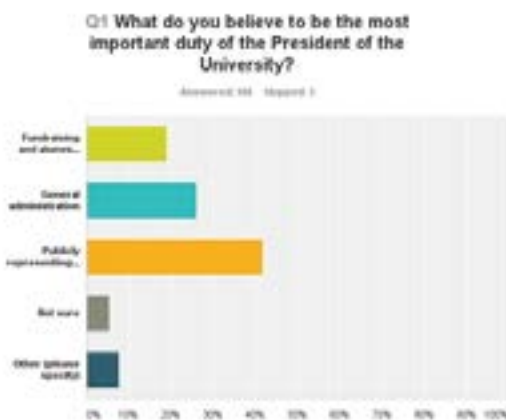
Many in the community mistakenly believe that the President is an omnipotent figure, the person from which all University policy ultimately originates. However, the President's actual duties are far less dramatic in practice. Although the chief executive officer of the corporation, the President is ultimately answerable to the Board of Trustees. As per the University by-laws, the Board may at any time demand that the President account for the status of all university operations. His proposed operating budget is also subject to the full scrutiny of the Board. All appointments resulting in tenure are ultimately subject to the approval of the trustees. The President is by no means an

autocrat; there are legitimate checks on his authority. The prerogative of the President is unfortunately stated in rather vague terms. The University by-laws offer the following statement on the role of the President: "The President shall in general oversee, supervise, and direct the policies and development of the University as prescribed by the Board and shall have primary responsibility to the Board in all areas of the University's work not otherwise assigned by the Board. He or she may from time to time delegate to the other officers of the Corporation, the administrative staff, or the Faculty, such portion of his or her duties as deemed appropriate or as the Board may direct."

These arbitrary and vaguely defined jurisdiction boundaries for the office leaves a lot of room for interpretation. There is little consensus on the precise role of the President. To gauge opinion on this issue, The Spectator sent a survey to the student body in which students were asked to rank, from a list of duties, the most important aspects of the President's job. Nearly 42% saw the President's main duty as

being a symbolic, public representative of the institution. About 26% saw the office as being primarily administrative while another 19% viewed the President chiefly as a fundraiser and a representative to the alumni. The full results of the survey can be found on the website for The Spectator (<http://wluspectator.com/>).

In addition to evaluating these prominent responses, we next asked students what they felt to be the most important qualities the Search Committee ought to look for in a President. On this inquiry, there was a greater consensus. Asked to rank, in order of importance, the qualities needed in W&L's next President, nearly 60% of students chose either "Respect for the University's Traditions" or "Personal Connection to the University" as their first choice. When the second through sixth choices were factored in, however, "Administrative Experience" and "Public Speaking Ability" also achieved strong performances. Over 85% of students responded that they would prefer a current faculty member or an alumnus over an outside hire. Though these results show a real



Graphs display how students answered Spectator survey

concern for the practical qualifications of a potential President, it seems clear that the student body also gives priority to the character and traditions of the University.

The selection of a new President is a relatively straightforward process. Article E of the University Charter provides for the appointment of major offices and reads as follows: “The Trustees shall elect one of their own number as presiding officer, with the title of Rector, and shall also elect a President of the Corporation, a Secretary, and a Treasurer of the Corporation, and such other officers, agents, and employees as may be provided for by the by-laws.” Essentially, the Board of Trustees oversees the selection of all major officeholders and is not bound by any codified procedure.

To its credit, the Board of Trustees has been remarkably open about the search process, releasing periodic email updates to keep the community informed. Early in the process, the full list of Search Committee members was released. It included not only trustees, but faculty members from widely varying departments, including the law school. Moreover, in September the Executive Committee President T. Mason Grist was added to this body. This open and inclusive example of public outreach has sparked high approval ratings. Nearly 86% of the students surveyed by *The Spectator* were satisfied with the transparency of the Search Committee’s actions. However, our data suggests that this approval does not translate into universal student approval of the process. Several concerns linger among the student body.

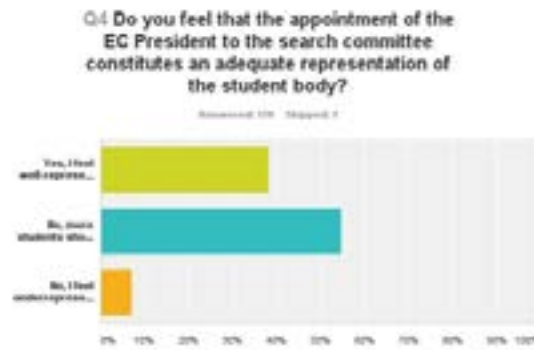
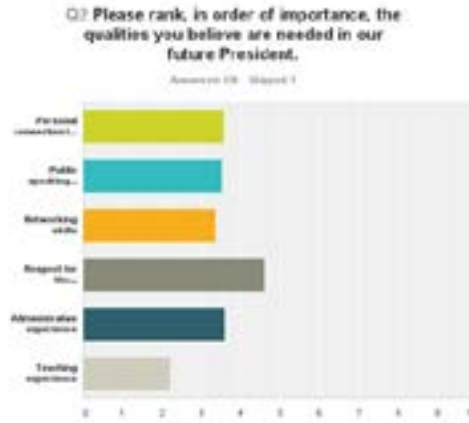
As part of its admirable efforts to gauge community opinion for the search, the Committee released a comprehensive survey on the subject. It was sent to current students, faculty and staff members, alumni, community members, and parents among others. This survey can be found on the W&L website, under the heading “Presidential Search.” While it is refreshing to see such an active attempt to hear community voices, the Committee’s hesitance to release its results may warrant some criticism. The survey’s response numbers, which are publicly posted, show a high level of feedback to the survey, certainly enough to validate the responses. Over 89% of students who answered *The Spectator*’s survey felt that the Committee should release its survey results. So long as our responses are

kept anonymous, there is no real reason not to do so.

Beyond the issue of the survey, the student body expressed concern with our representation in this matter. We asked students if they were satisfied with the appointment of the Executive Committee President to the search committee. Just over 38% were content with that action, while the remainder expressed a desire to see

more students involved in the process. Though the EC President is elected by the students, many expressed concerns that the student body, diverse in its interests, could not be fully represented by a single individual. It should be noted, however, that most responses expressed approval of the EC President’s involvement and merely desired additional representation. One student proposed that a council of honor students from different majors be consulted on the search. Another suggested the election of student representatives to the Board of Trustees. While a consensus on how to address the issue is lacking, it is evident that the students remain concerned about the weight their input carries.

Ruscio’s upcoming departure has placed the University once again into a time of transition and uncertainty. It has sparked debate on campus over the role of the President, and by extension the prerequisites of office. Although in the past many such controversies and vital issues have been handled administratively with no great effort made to gauge community opinion, recent attempts by the Search Committee to do exactly that are cause for optimism. Concerns still linger over the unreleased survey results and a lack of student representation, though it seems the majority of the student body appreciates the opportunity to express their opinions. We, as an institution and a community, now face a decision which will play a part in defining Washington and Lee for years to come. Let’s hope that in their deliberations, the solemnity of this task is not lost on the Search Committee. I, for one, am eager to see what the future holds.





# A Tough Race to Call: Commentary from Mock Con 2016

By David Zekan

With a large Republican field and many candidates who are not playing to make friends, the 2016 Mock Convention team undoubtedly has a tough task ahead. In a recent interview with the Mock Con Political Team, members commented on the unusual aptness of the American people towards swaying as strongly as it has done recently: “The U.S. continues to see cycles of populist fervor grip the country every few years. We saw this when Green Party candidate Ralph Nader won close to 3 million votes in the 2000 presidential race, with some political observers attributing his success to Al Gore’s eventual defeat. Both liberals and conservatives have tapped into a very real anger and frustration among a number of Americans over their struggles to make ends meet after the Great Recession.”

What does this mean and why is it haunting Mock Con researchers? It means that candidates like Donald Trump, who speak frankly about the country’s problems, more easily garner support. The large sway of support from debate to debate can also be attributed to candidates tapping into voters’ anxieties. Emotional voters are prone to quickly and confidently sway support, and it is clear that a majority of those polled know what is at stake in the next election.

However, the Mock Con team also offered up another rational explanation for Trump’s success in the late summer, and the taper in his popularity that we are currently seeing: “Trump’s poll numbers in Iowa have gone from a high of 28.3% in September to 22.3% in October.” Candidates undoubtedly want to see their numbers rise, but dramatic polling changes this early in the electoral process means little. A Mock Con Representative offered to explain this phenomenon: “One theory of Trump’s initial success throughout August was that, among other things, Congress was on recess,

meaning the month was a slow media cycle. As things pick back up heading into October and November, we expect to see his news domination continue to drop.”

When questioned about their confidence in their ability to accurately predict the 2016 Republican Nominee, the Mock Con Political team assured the Spectator that they have measures in place that will assure good research on a state-to-state level, regardless of the sentiments of the American people as a whole and seemingly biased media coverage. It is the student body’s hope that the political team, from leading researchers to state chairs and their delegates, will succeed in an accurate prediction and not lead the W&L community astray for the second

time in eight years. Mock Con Political also emphasized the importance of image in a presidential candidate and cited Professor Connelly, who notes that President Lincoln would never have been elected in 1860 had there been televised debates.

The American people not only want a candidate who will speak his or her mind and speak honestly about issues of importance to them, but also

someone who is polished and photogenic for viewers during debates. Perhaps this means a candidate who falls somewhere between Trump and Huckabee, or one who has experience outside of Washington. After all, three of the top candidates in the polls are not career politicians: Trump, Fiorina, and Carson, respectively. Without a doubt, the American people are tired of career politicians who “play the game” and are ready for someone who will take a stand against current corruption. However, those at Mock Con Political foresee a welcome challenge, one that will prove strenuous at times but that makes the race and their jobs as analysts all the more exciting and important.



Handouts from the 1980 Republican Mock Convention at Washington and Lee

Special Collections at Washington and Lee

# The Blessing and Burden of Choice: George Washington and W&L

By Catherine Ahmad

“To promote literature in this rising empire and to encourage the arts have ever been amongst the warmest wishes of my heart, and if the donation which the generosity of the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Virginia has enabled me to bestow on Liberty Hall now by your politeness called Washington Academy is likely to prove a means to accomplishing these ends, it will contribute to the gratification of my desires.”

When discussing George Washington's relationship to Washington and Lee, this quotation from his letter to the Board of the Trustees is often cited. Washington's everlasting influence on our university does not go without notice. In 1796, Washington gave Washington and Lee University, which was called Liberty Hall Academy at the time, \$20,000 worth of James River Canal stock. This gift saved the struggling university and the school was renamed in Washington's honor.

However, Washington's struggle over what to do with the stocks is less well-known. According to historian Gordon S. Wood, Washington possessed a significant cash-flow problem at that point in time and could have utilized the stock, which would have been worth millions today. However, he was concerned that such a choice would tarnish his reputation for virtue and selflessness. Accordingly, Washington wrote to several associates looking for advice. In the end, he accepted the shares and gave them to this institution, which was one of the most significant gifts to any educational institution at the time and one that still contributes to the school's budget today.

Living a life of virtue and honor has to do with choice. Each day, students at W&L make a conscious choice whether or not to maintain their reputation as a person of honor. Our commitment to these values extends beyond this campus and our years here. It is also important to note that these choices do not come without sacrifice but they result in the improvement of society. Washington made the conscious choice to stand by

principle rather than price. As a result, his personal impact has enabled students to continue receiving a stellar Liberal Arts education over 250 years later.

It was Washington's greatest wish to support the Liberal Arts, and it is our duty as students of this University to be well-versed in many aspects of academia. But in this same vein, we make the crucial choice to attend a Liberal Arts institution and take courses that challenge us. At the undergraduate level, we have the ability to take

courses that ignite our passion rather than just fulfill requisites for degrees. Mark Twain eloquently stated, “Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do, so throw off the bowlines, sail away from safe harbor, catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore, Dream, Discover.” We

have each been gifted four years at this institution to question the world and more importantly, ourselves. The impact of Washington's choice has spanned generations, wars, and political upheavals. Choose wisely.



Liberty Hall Ruins, which still stands today

# Amidst increased Tuition and Rising Student Debt, W&L Degree Maintains Value

By Philip Aiken and Burke Ugarte

One of college education's most pervasive problems today is simply defined: the price tag. The cost of college has systematically increased in the past 30 years at a staggering amount, consistently outpacing the rate of inflation. In comparison to a 1.4% rise in inflation in 2014, tuition and fees at private nonprofit colleges climbed 3.7 percent on average to \$31,231, completing a 10% real increase from 2009-10 to 2014-15<sup>1</sup>. These expenses do not include room and board costs, which have also continued to rise more quickly than inflation, right alongside tuition. When including room and board in these calculations, costs average \$42,419 at private schools, still not including other items such as transportation, books and laundry.

However, when observing tuition and fees increases over the past 30 years, one may note that the past decade has not shown increases as aggressive as the previous two. Taking this into account, why is rising college tuition such a problem now more than ever? Although overall tuition in the past decade has increased slightly less rapidly than the previous two decades, college price increases are still accumulating. And who is footing the bills for rising tuitions?

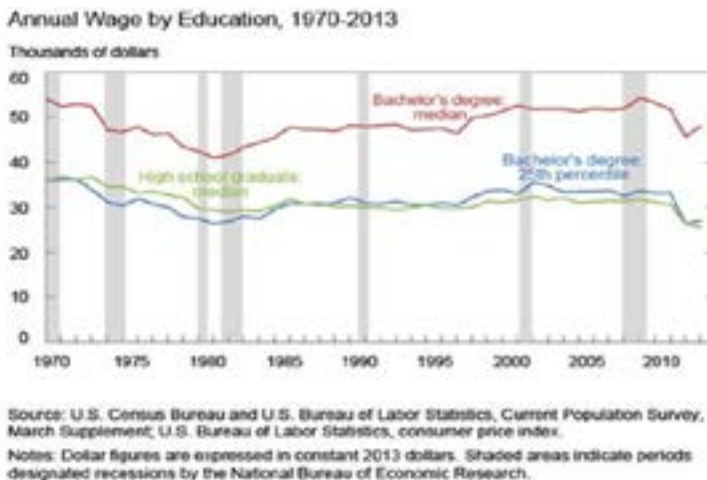
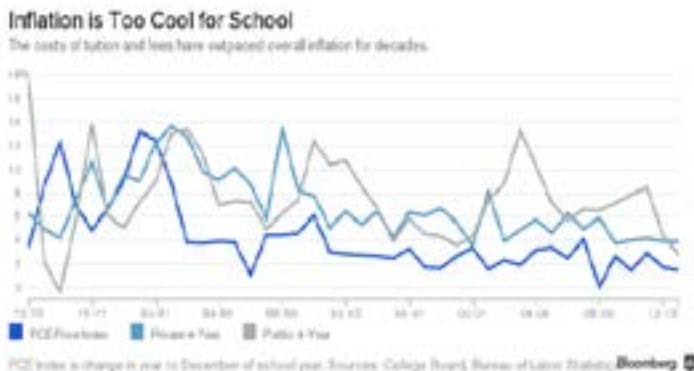
Students.

In the last decade, student loans have become almost a rite of passage in the United States, increasing 84% from 2008 to 2014<sup>2</sup>. Even more horrifying: By Novem-

ber of 2014, student loan debt reached \$1.2 trillion (up from \$260 billion in 2004), making it the second largest source of personal debt in the US behind mortgages<sup>3</sup>. Payment plans for federal loans are now as natural to the college process as walking across the stage to receive a diploma. These plans would not be an issue if college graduates could pay them - but according to research from Experian, 39% of open student loan accounts are currently in deferment. In other words, student and graduate borrowers are late on paying a collective \$417 billion of their loans.

Considering that both the cost of going to college and average student debt increases every year, is the investment for college education even worth it? Or will the slightly higher salary that your college education earns you simply pale in comparison to the much higher debt that you will suffer? Is a college degree still worth it? Economists and educators alike have debated this topic over the past several years. In 2011, the

U.S. News and World Report chose Craig Brandon's "no" argument as the most credible and well-founded answer to this question<sup>4</sup>. (Continued on page 19)



student-loan-debt-reaches-a-bonkers-1-2-trillion/  
3 <http://academic.mintel.com.ezproxy.wlu.edu/display/722989/?highlight>

4 <http://www.usnews.com/debate-club/is-a-college-degree-still-worth-it/with-college-only-the-motivated-need-apply>

1 <http://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing/figures-tables/tuition-fees-room-board-time>

2 <http://college.usatoday.com/2015/04/08/national->



# “The Ethics of Citizenship”: Making Real-World Choices Clear as Mudd

By Camille Hunt

At the beginning of each academic year, the example set by Robert E. Lee teaches the new freshman class the difference between right and wrong. From the moment each new student signs their name in the Honor Book, they swear to uphold the honor of the institution but their promise goes further than that. Each W&L graduate leaves our campus with an instilled understanding of the importance of trust, which has for generations made W&L alumni so incredibly successful. So how can the Washington and Lee community expose itself to, learn from, and endeavor to solve ethical issues occurring in the world off of The Hill?

Chances are that each of us have walked past the building at the corner of Washington Street and Lee Avenue almost a thousand times, but we may not be aware of the exciting things going on within its red brick walls. The former Sigma Chi fraternity house, now the Mattingly House, serves as the home to W&L's Roger Mudd Center for the Study of Professional Ethics. The Mudd Center was established in 2010 through the contributions of alumnus and award-winning journalist Roger Mudd '50. Over the span of his long and esteemed career, Mudd won five Emmy Awards, the Peabody Award, and the Joan Shorenstein Award for Distinguished Washington Reporting. His impressive resume includes a stint as host of NBC's Meet the Press and his infamous interview with Senator Edward M. Kennedy for CBS, largely considered a catalyst for Kennedy's defeat in his race against President Jimmy Carter for the 1980 Democratic Presidential nomination. Through Mr. Mudd's generous donation, the Mudd Center has been able to foster discussion within the Washington and Lee community about important ethical issues in both the public and professional spheres, and provoked critical thoughts about today's culture. The Center's mission statement reads:

The Roger Mudd Center for Ethics is committed to fostering serious inquiry into, and thoughtful conversation about, important ethical issues in public and professional life. It seeks to advance dialogue, teaching, and research about these issues among students, faculty, and staff across all three schools – the College, the Williams School, and the School of Law. By facilitating collaboration across traditional institutional boundaries, the Center aims to encourage a multidisciplinary perspective on ethics informed by both theory and practice. Its ultimate goal is to provide the tools and resources necessary for thinking freely, critically,

and humanely about the complex ethical questions we face in an increasingly diverse yet interdependent world.

At the start of each academic year, the Mudd Center announces a theme for the events it will hold over the following months. This year, it has chosen “The Ethics of Citizenship” for its 2015-2016 theme. The Center's website explains, “This theme has a double meaning, insofar as we aim to investigate both the ethics of conferring or withholding citizenship status as well as the ethical rights and responsibilities that attach to those who are granted such a status.” The theme will search for answers to some difficult questions; their scheduled events touch on topics as diverse as immigration and climate change.

The Mudd Center kicked off this year's ethical investigation by hosting Danielle S. Allen, Professor of Government at Harvard University and Director of Harvard's Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics. She presented on “Participatory Readiness: On the Liberal Arts and the Ethics of Citizenship” in late September to an audience in W&L's Stackhouse Theater. Dr. Allen is a political theorist who has published works on democratic theory, political sociology, and the history of political thought.

Melissa Lane, Class of 1943 Professor of Politics at Princeton University, was also hosted by the Mudd Center as part of “Ethics of Citizenship” theme. Lane's presentation was titled “The Democratic Ethics of Communicating Climate Change: Insights from Aristotle,” presented in the Northern Auditorium of Leyburn Library. All talks funded by the Mudd Center are open to students, faculty, and staff free of charge.

In addition to its impressive list of upcoming speakers, the Mudd Center also looks forward to sponsoring the 2015 Business Ethics Institute, which will take place this December. Professional Ethics Institutes are two-day events involving a public keynote lecture and seminars for invited participants. They focus on ethical case studies of professional areas such as the business, medical, legal, and environmental fields. The Mudd Center sponsors these events in conjunction with the Knight Program in Media Ethics.

There's no doubt that Robert E. Lee would approve of the work being done by the Mudd Center today. (*Continued on page 19*)

# A Time for Choosing: Anxiety and the Liberal Arts

By Paul Lagarde

When the founding staff and I revived this magazine two years ago, we did so out of a deep respect for this university and a desire to perhaps, in some small way, leave it a better place than we found it. During our run, we've covered important issues such as third-year housing, the Confederate flag controversy, and the University's reporting of admission statistics. The article to follow addresses what I believe to be a more fundamental issue than any of these, the issue of mental health, as it cuts to the very core of what we believe as a liberal arts university.

The W&L chapter of Active Minds, a national organization dedicated to addressing issues of mental health on college campuses, estimates that over 25 percent of students experience anxiety and depression during their time at Washington and Lee. There is no question that our university is an academically challenging one. Though W&L has succumbed to some grade inflation in recent years, it still remains far more difficult to succeed here than, say, Harvard, where the median grade awarded is an A-.

In a recent interview, Dr. Kirk Luder, University Psychiatrist, told *The Spectator* that students are particularly susceptible to anxiety and depression during their first year of college, noting that it is the highest-risk time of life for men and the second-highest for women. "That of course has to do with the convergence of unique stresses as you're coming to school combined with incoming first-year students not having their normal resources for support," Luder said. "Managing freedom, a higher level of challenge to your competence, developing new friendships, developing a new adult identity, all at the same time that you have an irregular schedule, and you throw frequent binge drinking into the mix, and there are just a lot of students who spiral down because their normal coping gets overwhelmed by the amount of stress that they have."

Much of the stress facing W&L students revolves around academics. There seems to be a general sense that our generation will face much more competi-

tion in the job market than our parents did, and that in order to succeed, you will need to perform your absolute best, an attitude Dr. Luder notices frequently among today's students. "Students now have much more pressure to get good grades than students did 25 or 30 years ago," he said. "When I was in school 30 years ago, the students who were pre-med, or sometimes pre-law, worried about their grades, but the rest of the people weren't too concerned. They wanted to pass, but they didn't feel like they needed to get all A's or all A's and B's."



View of Washington and Lee's Colonnade

Dr. Luder believes that it is this pressure to perform, coupled with an increase in general availability, that has driven about 30 percent of W&L students into taking "study drugs" such as Adderall and Vyvanse without a prescription. "There's at least 10 times more prescriptions for Adderall floating around out there than there were 20 years ago," Luder stated. "It's much easier to get and there's also just the sense that ADD and ADHD are clearly over-diagnosed in the college population, especially the selective college population. And I think there's some sense of unfairness that students have—why does this person get Adderall and I don't?" Noting that anxiety over grades often causes stu-

dents to turn to study drugs in the first place and further noting that these same study drugs can often increase anxiety as a side effect, Luder described to *The Spectator* the "vicious cycle" these drugs often trap students in, inculcating in students a sense that they are necessary in order to succeed academically, while at the same time, worsening the original problem, which is not pure distractibility, but anxiety, thus leading to an increased demand for study drugs and so on.

The pressure to get good grades and find a fulfilling job is a function of our modern, global society and likely here to stay, and I will submit that Harvard-style grade inflation isn't the answer. Some of the problem likely stems from the price tag of today's top universities—if you are shelling out 60 grand a year to attend a top school like W&L, you are likely going to feel a fair amount of pressure to make that investment worth your while, and the way you make any investment worth-

while is by achieving a high monetary return, in this case via a prestigious job. An emphasis on education as a means to a career is of course not at all in keeping with the traditional idea of the liberal arts, but in a system where the federal government, through an irrational distribution of student loans to anyone who asks, encourages universities like W&L to spend more on new buildings and raise tuition prices far beyond reasonable levels, money cannot help but enter into the equation. If students themselves do not feel the need to succeed in their studies, the parents paying the bill often provide the necessary stimulus. That is not to say that pressure is always a bad thing. Many times it pushes people beyond their own perceived limits and drives enormous achievement and creativity. It is when the pressure supersedes the end goal, however, that anxiety sets in and paralyzes individuals in their potential.

On top of the demands placed by academics, Dr. Luder added that W&L students in particular face a somewhat unique stress arising from the social demands of the campus culture. “Our students here are very highly social,” he said. “They value social interaction a lot, and there is a more generally recognized social hierarchy here than on other campuses. Part of it is related to the high percentage of people in Greek organizations, and part of it is that students tend to select this school if they want that kind of social experience. So a lot of the stresses that we see here are students who feel like they aren’t fitting in, they’re not being included in the social group that they want to be included in, they feel marginalized or alienated—that kind of thing.”

Part of the issue, Luder believes, arises from the prevalence of social media in the college student’s mindset. “There are so many more competing demands for students’ time than there used to be, and a lot of it has to do with social media and the constant connectedness. Students feel a lot of pressure about basic things like being able to respond to their friends quickly when something is going on. Take the phenomenon of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out)—we’ve always experienced it, but it’s on a whole different level now than it used to be.”

College represents a time of transition for students, and with that transition comes a unique set of challenges. According to Dr. Luder, the number of students seeking treatment for mental health issues these days is higher than ever, which on the one hand is good that people are seeking the help they need, but on the other hand, perhaps indicative of an increase in the underlying problem. Our generation increasingly feels pressure to succeed in academic and social endeavors, and to do so with the appearance of effortless ease. Some have the ability to do this, but for the many who do not, their college years may be marked by anxiety and a feeling of powerlessness. They might turn to Adderall to focus during the week, and then to alcohol to forget during

the weekend. In an existence fueled by whatever substance is the flavor of the moment, it isn’t difficult for one to lose sight of his or her true self. I cannot pretend to offer a solution for the problems regarding mental health on this campus, but I do know that the first step towards solving a problem is recognizing that there is one. Earlier I mentioned that the goal of a liberal arts education is not to prepare one for a career—it is not to “teach you how to think” or give you “critical thinking skills”—these are simply the buzzwords of those who seek to make liberal arts degrees desirable to employers. Rather, done properly, an education in the liberal arts will free the mind to understand what is true, what is good, and what is beautiful. After all, the very root of the word ‘liberal’ is the Latin word *liber*, which means ‘free.’ Behind the original conception of a university lies the idea that a young person on the verge of adulthood can enter into a world of ideas and emerge several years later able to think freely and clearly about his or her place in the world. The rise of mental health issues on W&L’s campus casts doubt on that claim, leaving us, therefore, with two possibilities. We can have honest discussions about what is driving increased levels of anxiety and depression on this campus, and in doing so, hopefully address the problem, whatever it may be, at its root, or we can join the chorus of those who decry the value of a liberal arts education in this day and age as worthless, as it surely must be if it leaves a generation of students insecure and uncertain of their place in the world. Now is a time for choosing, and it is our choice that will shape the future course of this university.



**The Spectator is proud to be an Intercollegiate Studies Institute member publication**



# Yellowface Backlash Changes Touring Plans, Switches W&L Opera Opener

By Chuck Dodge

“Since its first performance on March 14, 1885, *The Mikado* has consistently been the most popular, most performed and best known of Gilbert and Sullivan’s thirteen surviving musical collaborations. Indeed, it is arguably one of the most frequently played musical theater pieces in modern history.”

- Statement of the New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players Board of Directors, Adopted June 25, 2015

The Lenfest Center and Washington and Lee Concert Guild had planned to host a New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players performance of the 130-year-old opera *The Mikado* on Monday, September 21st. Selling out over the summer, the highly anticipated production was expected to open Lenfest’s series of five professional performances over the course of the current academic year. Its cost? Between \$20,000 and \$22,000, simply to pay the performing group, according to Lenfest Director Rob Mish.

The Friday before the night of performance, however, heads turned when the University announced without explanation that it had cancelled the production and would instead show NYGASP’s well-known rendition of another classic, *The Pirates of Penzance*.

The altered situation left many students bewildered, and a host of questions arose about the motives and handling of the sudden decision. With clarity suspended and *Mikado* promotions resting lame duck on Leyburn televisions, we approached Mish to ask what had happened.

Despite conjecture, the switch did not reflect a University decision so much as cultural backlash in New York City against *The Mikado*’s planned performance there. Earlier on Friday the 18th, NYGASP announced that they would cancel the production’s touring stint following complaints from the Asian American community about stereotyping apparent in the show’s makeup and costume design: a concept commonly referred to as “yellowface.”

While there are variations of the technique in play and film, yellowface intentionally oversimplifies the appearance of Asian characters by emphasizing stereotypical features such as slanted eyes, sharp brows and pursed lips. More often than not, these roles are filled by white men and women, registering a mix of comedy and genuine attempts at creative casting. *The Mikado*’s version of yellowface is extreme, however, powdering actors’ faces with color to an extent that is blatantly playful. But perhaps the fact that it is so excessive is what makes it a target among other cases that seem to not

draw as much attention from censors and defenders.

With a decisive measure, NYGASP pulled the plug and presented the W&L orchestrators with three alternatives: (1) perform the play with no makeup, (2) perform the play with more traditional Japanese white makeup or (3) cut the show altogether and perform *The Pirates of Penzance*, the tour’s actual replacement, in its stead.

The choice was fairly easy, said Mish, a lifelong enthusiast of the alternative play. “We didn’t want to bring in a half-baked show,” he said, explaining that the other forms of the play wouldn’t satisfy the traditional characteristics of the controversial classic. *Mikado* tickets were converted directly to *Pirates* tickets. The stage was set to accommodate the new play. Unhappy converted-ticket owners were refunded in full, capping a hurried but necessary rewrite of the season opener.

Little can be said about W&L’s involvement in the performance change other than that the university managed to pivot quickly in a situation that left them with a simple choice of quality, tradition, and respect for the play’s original features. The choice does not bring W&L directly into our ongoing national discussion on the merits of censorship, and the conflict between racial respect and the culture or history of the arts.

However, New York Gilbert and Sullivan’s reaction to criticism represents another major mark in an ongoing conversation. Reactions to this play alone go both ways.

In 2003, *The New York Times* published an article titled “Japanese Hail ‘*The Mikado*,’ Long-Banned Imperial Spoof,” written by James Brooke. The article details the Japanese reaction to the play’s first showing in Japan, where the play is set, as it filled a 1,000-seat national memorial theater night after night. Minoru Sonoda, head priest of the Chichibu Shrine and a proud Japanese citizen, watched his daughter perform in the play as a character crudely yet humorously named “Yum-Yum.” To the surprise of many, Sonoda was delighted with the performance. “The mikado of the opera is different in nature from the tenno,” he said, referring to the modern term for emperor. “In the case of the traditional tenno, he did not appear before the people, he hid behind a curtain. In the opera, the mikado is very kind and familiar to the people. He is very humorous, so we can laugh.”

Put simply, the important distinction for Sonoda is that *The Mikado* doesn’t try to mimic past Japanese society. Instead it parodies it, employing stereotypes in a humorous context that is markedly different than

the real thing. The article also accounts the interesting words of Miyazawa Shinichi, and English literature professor present at the showing: “Now we can make fun of ourselves. The Japanese people have grown up.”

But clearly, not everyone agrees with these two men. Protestors of the opera this year would surely detest the thought that “growing up” equates to becoming less sensitive to mocking one’s own culture. Otherwise, *The Mikado* would have been performed at W&L as scheduled this September.

In reality, there are many reasons that people are upset with the stylistic and casting choices that created *The Mikado*. One argument asserts that yellowface or even “blackface” plays, for that matter, create a void of job opportunities for Asians and African Americans, respectively. (White actors and actresses are often chosen to fill these roles to highlight the irony of the play). Yet casting Japanese actresses in such roles, for example, generates an even deeper controversy that revolves around the potential harms caused by public self-effacement, as many interpret it. At the very least, these controversial traditions are bound to offend those who view this sort of self-effacement as a source of shame. Others, like Sonoda, do not see it that way.

Ultimately, however, all of these opinions are external to the reality of the show’s cancellation. Protesters didn’t censor the play; Gilbert and Sullivan did. Bloggers didn’t cancel the play; Gilbert and Sullivan did. The Board of Directors’ June 25th statement reads:

“One hundred and forty years after the libretto was written, some of Gilbert’s Victorian words and attitudes are certainly outdated, but there is vastly more evidence that Gilbert intended the work to be respectful of the Japanese rather than belittling in any way. Although this is inevitably a subjective appraisal, we feel that NYGASP’s production of *The Mikado* is a tribute to both the genius of Gilbert and Sullivan and the universal humanity of the characters portrayed in Gilbert’s libretto.”

The Board’s statement continued by describing its intentions for the play, explaining: “In all of our productions, NYGASP strives to give the actors authentic costumes and evocative sets that capture the essence of a foreign or imaginary culture without caricaturing it in any demeaning or stereotypical way.” One cannot help but raise a brow when reading this last sentence. Gilbert and Sullivan’s original response to the issue, stated here, is that the play does not attempt to utilize stereotypes in depicting the given culture. This means that either (1) the play accurately or “authentically” depicts an imaginary culture, or (2) the play accurately or authentically depicts an existing culture. Both possibilities derived from Gilbert and Sullivan’s original statement explicitly refuse to draw upon any sort of racial stereotype. If this were the case, or if Gilbert and Sullivan truly believed it, what reason would they have to cancel the play

altogether less than two months following their confident statement? The final decision appeased many, most notably including the Actor’s Equity Association, who publicly praised NYGASP for “listening to the Asian American community.” Others are outraged by the cancellation, contending that the same rationale would cast only French actors in *Les Miserables*, for instance.

Confusion about acceptable practice permeates this issue, and catalyzes a heated procession of back and forth dialogue. But ultimately, the power of opinion rests in the hands of groups like NYGASP, who can choose whether and how to execute controversial shows. And thus they not only control the shows that headline a city, but fundamentally influence what is available to a community.

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These institutions are the filter of culture, sifting the gravity of art and ethics. Their decisions bear the heaviest of consequences, among them the removal of cherished arts and the possibility of racial degradation. These ramifications possess such power that groups like NYGASP wield an immense and vital social responsibility.

Without our own popular ability to make these critical choices, we can only hope that our cultural filters make the right decisions for the full scope of society. Regardless of each outcome, concern should arise from the tendency for these monumental decisions to remain so volatile to change. Issues like those raised in *The Mikado* must be treated with tact, but naturally its decision makers are just people also, harboring independent values and beliefs that can affect their decisions.

As a reflection of democracy, it may be comforting that those in charge are sensitive to public opinion, but a wavering two-month ruling is not steadfast - it’s dangerous. We rely on the outbursts of angry bloggers and protesters on both sides of an erratic conflict.

Flash reactions to conversations that occur on laptop screens and poster boards are difficult to judge. Yet there must be a more definite line between decisions that are sensitive to publicized thought, and those that hastily accept it. Some outcomes are wisely fickle. Others prove simply rash. Who holds the authority to draw this line? Evaluating the decision to cancel *The Mikado* as well as similar choices in the past isn’t as important - or as possible - as resolving how we’re going to get them right in the future. Disputes of this magnitude deserve a structured discussion, and one needs to take place before we lose ourselves in waiting.

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# A Bastion of the Liberal Arts

By *Tim Lindsay*

When Robert E. Lee became president of Washington College, he imbued the school with a rich pallet of new business programs, added a school of journalism, and folded the Lexington Law School into the College. Lee acted further to introduce a score of science courses and others in math and the languages. These bold moves largely reinstated Washington College, bringing the school into a position of national prestige for later generations. When perceived in conjunction with his sole demand that all students act as a gentleman, Lee's broad academic patronage makes it appear pointedly obvious that the famed general and philanthropist had no interest in promoting and educating cohorts only in one particular realm of thought. Lee sought for students to liberate their minds, to achieve a broader reality and thereby, become mature and cultured intellectuals. Washington and Lee has invariably and unceasingly accomplished what Lee endeavored.

Yet on a broader national spectrum, the liberal arts today sit on precarious footing. With rising education costs at liberal arts schools and the risks of hampering debt, students can easily find it more opportune to seek employment out of high school or conservatively decide to pursue finance rather than investigate Socrates' prudence or Faulkner's literary prowess. Of course, to eschew business or pre-med borders insanity; this writer opted for a major in Accounting and Business Administration, itself an intellectually demanding and cultivating subject. But as Hillary Clinton fights for a debt-free tuition, the imminence of traditional colleges as an expensive luxury does not seem improbable. Her campaign has permeated the dialogue of many and has given radically progressive ideas conversation, whether warranted or not. Anything similar to Clinton's proposal could leave the liberal arts in the wake of four-year public schools.

But in spite of raw speculation, the indispensable value of a liberal arts education could never depreciate with additional commendation and renewed assertion of merit. In early August, John Agresto, the former president of St. John's College in Santa Fe., NM., and the American University of Iraq, published a piece entitled "The Suicide of the Liberal Arts." At an early age, Mr. Agresto had to decide between a steady income on the docks, or a liberal arts experience - an experience which would leave him with a background in Greek architecture and philosophy, subjects that are valuable to a degree but without much tangible benefit. "Yes, this "liberal education" is worth something. But so is making, doing, building, and working—so is the good stuff," Mr. Agresto writes. "And that tension—between the practical and the intellectual and more academic and cultural on the other—has been and still is at the heart of America's historical ambivalence toward liberal education." But while the author makes a sound point, his latter

contention that current stewards of the liberal arts have debilitated the minds of its students through furtive "indoctrination" and "prejudices of the current culture," perhaps apt on a broader scale, simply have not revealed themselves at W&L. Mr. Agresto insinuates that educators have manipulated the study of liberal arts as a means to confront current issues and figures and that a broad range of distribution requirements and options has cultivated "intellectual randomness" in our students. Even though Washington and Lee offers a broad portfolio of foundation and distribution requirements, One could argue that students can still avoid a core examination of "the finest books, to alternative answers to the most compelling questions, to great literature and art and pivotal historical events." Other students will inevitably gain exposure to the various degrees of thought processes which are even more integral to the fiber of liberal arts, and vital to freedom of thought.

The author also maintains that limited interaction between Finance and Engineering majors with History and Classics majors, furthers this isolated relationship between the practical and academic. That trend only assists in the incapacitation of the liberal arts. This argument merits little import for W&L, as a student who hasn't taken a course in the Williams School, on the Colonnade, or in the Science Center would be very difficult to locate, to say the least.

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Over the years, W&L has continued its firm commitment to engendering well-rounded students and serving as a depository of knowledge, amid a number of monumental and sometimes contentious decisions.

To explain this well-known reality to students, alumni, and staff would be a waste of effort for all sides. Spring Term, Mock Convention, and our physically interconnected campus illustrate this academic dedication. However, W&L should be wary of a potentially imminent attack on the liberal arts. To protect one of its staples, the University and community should move forward with the intent to expose students to all aspects of reality, the things that have improved society and those that have encumbered its progression. To the degree that Mr. Agresto says, "They can have us ponder law and justice, the nature of innocence and causes of moral culpability, forms of government and the ordering of societies that can preserve our civilization," would be a summation of what Robert E. Lee himself might have sought.



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# *Satirical Spectator*

*By Andrew Fox*

## ***Wild New Frat DEA Brings Automatic Rifles onto Campus, Doesn't Get Kicked Off***

Apparently a new fraternity called DEA is making its presence felt this year, and they have left the school speechless. On its first day of existence no less, members of DEA arrived on campus with military-grade assault weapons and somehow didn't get kicked off. W&L administrators offered no comment on DEA's intimidating surge to the forefront of the social scene, probably because the school just can't handle this amount of outrageousness. When asked to describe his fraternal organization, one DEA member remarked, "You could say we're a bit druggy." Another member chimed in, "We like to roll deep to the most happening off-campus houses," while other members were even heard saying, "FREEZE. You have the right to remain SILENT!" Reports are now surfacing that several other members of DEA were spotted dragging off what appeared to be future initiates, in what appeared to be handcuffs, in what can only be described as one of the most unorthodox rushing events ever staged on our campus. Some are quick to disparage the up-and-coming Greek organization, pointing out how many non-university affiliates they have; however, the DEA insists that they were in full cooperation with the school at all times, up to and including their most recent raid... I mean rave. No word has reached us yet on how the DEA plans to house the growing number of people it has been bringing to its events, as DEA representatives have been particularly cryptic. "I'll tell you what we do know. We want to offer an alternative to third year housing for the students here," said an officer on DEA's executive board, "we plan on working with the university to provide long-term housing options, a maximum of 5-10 years to be exact. Just don't tell prospective students and please don't tell wealthy alumni."

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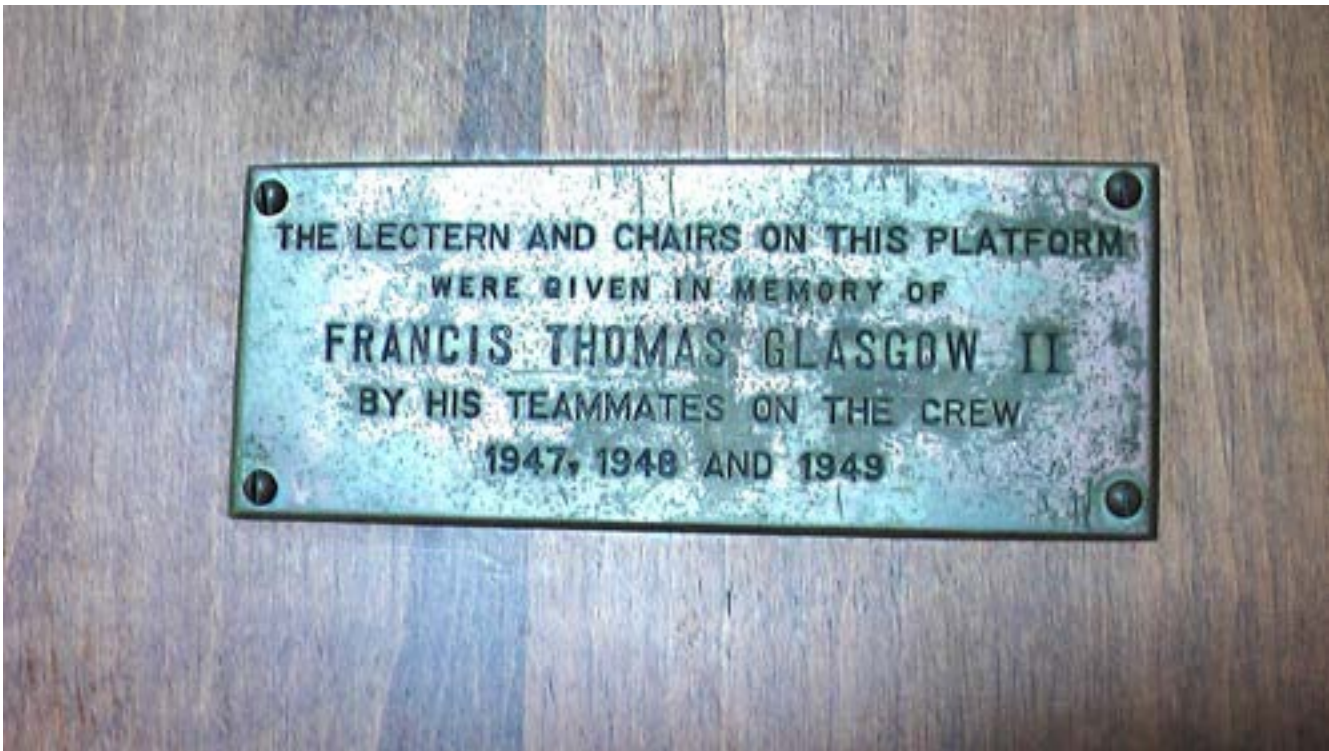
# Letter to the Editor

For 56 years this plaque was on the front of a lectern in Du Pont Hall, which is being renovated as The Center for Global Learning at Washington and Lee University. It honors Francis Thomas Glasgow II, W&L class of '49, who was killed the following year while serving in the U.S armed forces in Korea.

“Wink” Glasgow was raised in a prominent legal family of Lexington, Virginia. As a member of W&L’s rowing team, he was memorialized by his friends on the crew of 1947, 1948 and 1949, who donated the lectern and chairs. They include Robert E.R. Huntley, beloved President of the University from 1968 until 1983, and Roger H. Mudd, the illustrious broadcast journalist and author.

Many experts in different subjects and all professors in the Art Department taught students and visitors from this lectern in the auditorium of Du Pont Hall. In 2014 David A. Keeling, class of '73, acquired the lectern and offered its return to W&L, but President Ruscio would not meet him.

This lectern should continue to honor Wink Glasgow and his W&L friends, whose generosity benefitted students, faculty, alumni and the public for such a long time. Suggestions for its use should be sent to [DAKeeling@Hotmail.com](mailto:DAKeeling@Hotmail.com).



# Thoughts and Musings

By Ben Gee

## *A Presidential Candidate, Utopian Visions, and Kafka's Message from the Emperor*

The crowd gradually quieted, turning their rapt attention towards the debate moderator as he began to pose a question. He asked, innocently enough, "You don't consider yourself a capitalist, though?" The inquiry's recipient, a prominent candidate with strong populist credentials, takes a few moments to collect his thoughts. Although a famously bold speaker, he clearly dislikes the question, employing the full extent of his political skills during these precious few moments to arrive at a satisfactory answer. Finally, he collects himself and begins to speak, characteristically thundering: "Do I consider myself a part of the Casino-Capitalist process, by which so few have so much and so many have so little? By which Wall Street's greed and recklessness wreck this economy? No I don't. I believe in a society in which all people do well, and not just a handful." The entranced audience gives the candidate a generous ovation. Crisis averted; the debate moves on.

This key moment, one of the most important highlights from the recent Democratic Presidential Debate, reveals a great deal about America's changing ideological tides as we approach a critical election year. Bernie Sanders, the candidate who gave these remarks, stands remarkably close to Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primary process. According to a Boston Globe poll taken after the debate, Sanders has 35% support in New Hampshire to Clinton's 37% - an extremely close margin. What makes the impact of Sanders' campaign so seismic for America's political landscape is his unapologetic socialist beliefs, and the corresponding willingness among many Democratic voters to support this agenda.

To Mr. Sanders, every problem facing America can be logically reduced to a single fault: The power of the one percent, or "billionaire class," a group that hoards the nation's wealth in sinister enclaves like dragons or great trolls. Consequently, all of Mr. Sanders' solutions in some way involve a vast redistribution of wealth away from the one percent and to various Government programs. The one percent - like all Americans - owes its wealth to capitalism, an economic system that has brought the world into an era of unprecedented prosperity over the last few hundred years. However, socialists like Sanders look towards capitalism's flaws with resentment instead of looking at its resounding successes with appreciation.

Ever since the first socialists began demanding checks on unrestrained European industrial capitalism in the early 1800s, socialism has gradually evolved out

of capitalism and into its natural philosophical opponent. Socialists like Sanders argue that top-down, massive Government programs will result in utopia for America: Free college, free healthcare, guaranteed vacations, enlarged social security, Medicare, and Medicaid programs, the prevention of climate change; and atop all that, a thriving middle class. All this would be accomplished by increasing the redistribution of wealth, and limiting the free market to the reconstructive whims of our grand-world builders.

The Czech author Franz Kafka once wrote a cryptic short story, entitled *A Message from the Emperor*. His tale enigmatically begins, "The Emperor - so they say - has sent a message, directly from his death bed, to you alone, his pathetic subject, a tiny shadow which has taken refuge at the furthest distance from the Imperial sun." This distance soon proves immeasurably vast, and the Emperor's unfortunate messenger has to work his way through the massive crowd of every single subject in the Emperor's kingdom, in addition to all the valleys, mountains, and limitless miles that lay between his starting point and destination.

No one knows what the Emperor's message might be, or why he has sent it. However, we do know that the message is important, that it was meant for us, but it may never reach us. Until the Emperor's message arrives, we are left on our own, only able to imagine what the message's perfections might entail.

In a similar fashion, human beings have always sought societal perfection, but we have not yet found a practical Governmental model that solves all the world's problems, or even one that promises to do so. Modern democracy has created a world with more peace and cooperation than in any other period in history. Democracy is flawed as well, but Winston Churchill's oft-quoted proverb still holds true: "Democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried." When Communism tried to overpower Democracy in the 20th century, it imploded on its own. We know that Democracy is not perfect, but until the Emperor's message comes, it remains our best and familiar course.

The same can be said of capitalism, which has elevated a larger portion of the world population above poverty than at any other point in history. How-



Bernie Sanders in a 2007 Senate photo

Wikimedia Commons



ever, Sanders purports to know the contents of the Emperor's letter, a world in which the Government gives people things and no consequences follow. We can have the best of both worlds, he promises!

Such an alluring prospect is what the Emperor's subject hopes to see when the messenger finally reaches them. The reality is, we do not know the Emperor's message, and it would be unwise to suppose that we do. Our current capitalist democracy is imperfect, but it is certainly superior to hundreds of years of failed socialist projects and their innumerable victims. Before we succumb to prophets and demagogues who promise us paradise, let us ponder the Emperor's message, making its way step by fastidious step towards us. Convincing ourselves that we can divine the Emperor's message before it arrives will only ensure the destruction of what we have. Until then, we should learn and anticipate as Kafka's righteous subject does: "But you sit at your window and dream of that message when the evening comes."

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**Continued From "Outcome Uncertain":**

NPR Article, October 15, 2015: <http://www.npr.org/2015/10/15/446083439/for-students-accused-of-campus-rape-legal-victories-win-back-rights>

Rolling Stone Article Controversy Analysis, April 5, 2015: <http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/features/a-rape-on-campus-what-went-wrong-20150405>

Boston Globe, Harvard Sexual Assault Debate, October 15, 2014: <http://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2014/10/14/rethink-harvard-sexual-harassment-policy/HFDDiZN7nU2UwuUuWMnqbM/story.html>

Washington Examiner Article, August 7, 2015: <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/judge-upholds-accused-students-gender-bias-claim/article/2569840>

Heritage Foundation Article, August 18, 2015: <http://www.heritage.org/research/commentary/2015/8/why-any-male-studen-should-think-twice-before-applying-to-washington-and-lee-university>

The Roanoke Times, August 6, 2015: [http://www.roanoke.com/news/virginia/w-1-student-expelled-for-sexual-assault-is-allowed-to/article\\_b599a12b-e558-578f-bc75-3d666b2b237a.html](http://www.roanoke.com/news/virginia/w-1-student-expelled-for-sexual-assault-is-allowed-to/article_b599a12b-e558-578f-bc75-3d666b2b237a.html)

Washington and Lee Press Release, December 1, 2015: <http://www.wlu.edu/presidents-office/messages-to-the-community/a-time-to-examine-affirm-our-commitments>

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**Continued From "The Ethics of Citizenship":** The Center has already impacted the University in a big way, and it shall continue to positively influence our campus for years to come. Through the Mudd Center, Washington and Lee rededicates itself to pushing its students towards more fully embracing and contemplating our Honor System, encouraging us to debate and study the ethical decisions that we will face after graduation and beyond. For that, we gratefully say thank you, Mr. Mudd.

**Continued From Amidst increased Tuition:** Aside from higher tuition and increased student debt, Brandon also cited concerning party habits and lower graduate understanding of economics and politics to back his argument that "It makes no economic sense to send most kids to college." A more recent study by Liberty Street Economics showed that the average value of a bachelor's degree has held its all time high of about \$300,000 for more than a decade. However, while the median income of college graduates in 2013 proved over \$15,000 higher than the high school graduate median, the study also showed that the lowest quartile of college graduate earnings just barely beat the median income of high school graduates<sup>5</sup>.

Washington & Lee students have weathered this financial storm very well relative to other institutions, but we are by no means strangers to the current student debt crisis. According to US News, the most recent cohort of graduating students from W&L with student loans averaged \$23,224 in total indebtedness<sup>6</sup>. Still, that sum is nearly \$10,000 less than the national average. Furthermore, the same source pegs the percent of students who have borrowed during their four years in Lexington at a meager 32%, far below the national average that punctured 70% in 2013. Of the students who took out loans, the most recent statistics show the default rate was a meager 1.3% in 2010 and even fell to 1.1% in 2011<sup>7</sup>.

Washington and Lee students have been well sheltered from the crisis for reasons that are difficult to quantify. There is no clear answer why W&L students are not drowning in debt like other students across the US. The single biggest driver seems to be W&L graduates' ability to enter the workforce relatively painlessly. This is in part due to our extensive alumni network that affords a wealth of opportunity and connections for students. However, the alumni network is merely complementary to the strong liberal arts education and W&L experience that teaches students how to think critically and operate in the real world. The current student debt crisis is a reality students face across the US, and presents a just reason to question where and why we are at school. For W&L students, the answers to those questions are self evident, and should be quite reassuring.

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5 <http://libertystreeteconomics.newyorkfed.org/2014/09/the-value-of-a-college-degree.html#.ViFI1bxVik>

6 <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/washington-and-lee-3768/paying>

7 <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2014/11/13/average-student-loan-debt-hits-30-000>

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