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The Crescent

THE VOICE OF THE STUDENTS



**ALEX LOVE AND
BRANDON MAY
HELP STUDENTS
GET FIT**

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GFU IMPACTS LOCAL ECONOMY

By Joshua Cayetano
Crescent Staff

In 2015, Assistant Professor of Economics Nate Peach and 13 students conducted an economic impact study of George Fox University (GFU). Their final report conservatively credited \$140,065,887 of the local economy to GFU.

The report was part of the core curriculum of Professor Peach's ECON 485 class, Selected Topics: Economic Development in the United States, per the request of Rob Felton, director of public information and marketing communications at GFU.

"The main goal of the project was to, frankly, find out how important GFU is to Newberg," Peach said.

In order to attain that goal, Peach and his students unconventionally dedicated a large portion of the report to testimonials from key stakeholders in the local community, defined as Yamhill and Washington counties.

The report says, "The full nature of the relationship between George Fox University and the surrounding community extends far beyond economic considerations."

Peach explained that the decision to include

non-economic indicators of GFU's impact on the local economy arose from a group consensus early in the semester.

"We all agreed that the purpose of an economy is much more than income generation," he said.

Emily Mavrakis, a junior economics major, was a key student contributor and helped finalize the report. She further explained that the report utilized

"THERE'S MORE TO PEOPLE'S WELL-BEING THAN JUST MONEY"

personal testimonials to more fully represent GFU's effect in the community.

"Quantitative methods and fact-based statistics are important to economics, but if you just focus on that, you miss the qualitative side of the impact," Mavrakis said. "There's more to people's well-being than just money."

The body of the report begins with testimonials of community members and ends with a list of the community outreach services GFU provides.

Although the report places GFU as the second

highest contributor in the two counties, it does not include the enormous amount of revenue generated during events like home sports games, scholarship competition days, and graduation. Additionally, Peach and his students were forced to make crude estimates due to limited data.

During the course of the class, Peach's students worked tirelessly to acquire data from GFU and the surrounding community according to his data needs.

"I am amazed at the work ethic of the students," Peach said. "It was very chaotic and the creativity and ingenuity of the students was simply amazing."

The class provided a unique opportunity for undergraduate students to co-author a study that would normally be reserved for graduate or post-graduate economic majors.

"I thought this was a great opportunity that I might not have found somewhere else besides GFU," Mavrakis said.

The report explained that GFU served 3,793 students, employed 2,370 people, and boasted 25,063 alumni in all 50 states and 51 different countries. The total economic impact generated by GFU included factors such as expenditures, construction, and salaries and benefits.

FASHION PROGRAM COMES TO AN END

By Heather Harney
Crescent Staff

The Fashion concentration, and the merchandising and fashion design minors within the Art major will be eliminated next year. Laura Hartley, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, along with Mark Terry, Art Department chair, have discussed this possibility for the last year as they saw the number of students enrolled dwindle to 12.

The currently enrolled students have been notified individually and will have all of next year to complete the requirements in their concentrations.

"IT IS HARD TO RUN A PROGRAM THAT GIVES STUDENTS ALL THEY NEED"

This change was prompted by the Board of Trustees and the President's office, who recognize the limitations imposed by tuition. In order to hold off tuition increases, the school needs to carefully track expenses; every part of the institution has been asked to review how money is spent.

"Our charge from the board is to always be looking at programs making sure our quality is strong, that faculty are appropriate, students are having a good learning experience and that our graduates are leaving here prepared to do whatever they trusted us to prepare them to do," said Linda Samek, GFU's provost.

While each subsequent freshman class has grown, there are a few programs in which enrollment has diminished. Fashion is especially



suffering from low enrollment and the lack of internship possibilities in the greater Portland area.

Even Los Angeles has seen a decline in design production. "Unless you are located in New York, it is hard to run a program that gives students all they need, like internships. We took all those realities together with financial realities of a program that was using resources that was serving a very small number of students and decided to close the program," Hartley said.

This decision was not made lightly. Hartley talked to faculty to ensure the school and department fulfill their commitment to the students who came to study fashion at GFU. Both she and the faculty are making sure that every currently enrolled student gets the opportunity to complete

their degrees.

They have planned out the coursework and will bring on a part-time professor who specializes in fashion next year, in order to meet the "ethical responsibility to the students," said Samek.

There are six students in the major concentration, four students in the merchandising minor, and two students in the fashion design minor.

Each student will be guided though the next year with a narrow focus on which class he or she needs in order to achieve his or her concentration or minor before the program closes.

Hartley said there will be a fashion show next year for current students to celebrate the culmination of their work.

PHOTO: MICK HANGLAND-SKILL

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The Crescent is George Fox University's student newspaper, a publication that has been part of the university and the Associated Student Community since 1891. The opinions and ideas presented in this paper do not necessarily reflect those of George Fox University.

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Issues can be found in the Student Union Building and are available upon request.

Letters to the editor

Letters are welcomed and will be printed on a first-received basis. They must include the author's signature, academic major, class standing or job title, department name and phone number. Letters are subject to editing for space and clarity.

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COVER PHOTO: HAYDEN MERCURIO

SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS LOBBY IN SALEM

By Kelsey Herschberger
Crescent Staff

A group of 15 senior social work students from George Fox University (GFU) attended the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Lobby Day at the state capitol in Salem on Feb. 8. Students learned how to lobby for legislation for key bills. Their professor, Lizz Schallert, accompanied the students.

The NASW brings together social work students at the capitol to work on bills important to social workers. As a part of their macro-practice training, students meet speakers and gain instruction on how to effectively communicate with representatives who affect the passing of legislation.

After providing materials on certain bills, the students split up to meet with particular senators in order to lobby for the students' particular bill. Emily Warnes, a senior social work major, lobbied for a bill

which would lift the ban on inclusionary zoning and require land developers to earmark up to 30% of their development for affordable housing.

"We have a housing crisis right now, as well as a problem with gentrification, both in Newberg and

"YOUNG PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE LEADING OUR STATE AND COUNTRY ONE DAY"

all throughout Oregon," Warnes said.

Rebekah Harding, a senior social work and psychology major, worked with Warnes on the same

bill, setting up meetings with key representatives during the short session.

"One of the coolest parts for me was getting to meet a legislator, Senator Peter Courtney. We tend to build up these walls around political figures like they're untouchable, but the whole experience humanized the office," Harding said.

The event benefits the larger community as much as it gives students work experience. "The lobby day is important because it brings awareness to issues that are happening in the larger community outside George Fox University and allows us to see how the policies that the government makes directly impact us and the clients we serve," Warnes said.

"People in the capitol get excited when young people are involved and interested in politics. They know young people are going to be leading our state and country someday," Harding said.

AUSTIN O'NEAL:

ACT SIX SCHOLAR, SUPERFAN, BOOBOO.

By Heather Harney
Crescent Staff

You have seen him on campus. You have probably heard his voice in class, on the football field, during a community event, or in the Den. Austin O'Neal stepped onto the GFU campus four years ago, and our community has never been the same.

"My first impressions were good; he seemed to have a lot of energy, he's great in a group, I would say that he's an icebreaker. When people are really quiet, Austin makes people feel welcome," said Kenneth Hoover, senior and social work major. "His impact on me has been challenging in a good way. He has inspired me to do my best."

O'Neal had never heard of George Fox until his senior year of high school. "I thought it was that oatmeal stuff," chuckled O'Neal as he recalled his (mis)understanding of all things Quaker.

As a high school student, O'Neal was very involved in not only academics and sports, but also volunteering and leadership opportunities. He was a State Officer for Skills USA, a Special Olympics coach, basketball manager, and a member of the National Honor Society. O'Neal's contributions to his school and community did not go unnoticed.

A counselor at David Douglas High School encouraged O'Neal to apply for the Act Six scholarship. The principle of the Act Six, according to the website, is to be a "leadership and scholarship program that connects local faith-based community affiliates with faith- and social justice-based colleges to equip emerging urban and community leaders to engage the college campus and their communities at home through a simple but powerful four-part strategy" that ends with recipients returning back to their communities to serve.

O'Neal wrote eight essays and entered into the competition for a full-ride scholarship. He was interested in pursuing a career in culinary arts. O'Neal made it through the first two phases and ended up at GFU as part of 20 remaining students all vying for seven spots. Getting through to phase three meant he was already accepted at GFU; however, the scholarship recipients were still up in the air. But when he was chosen as one of the recipients, O'Neal began to look to his future as a Bruin.

However, when O'Neal began to register for his classes, he found out that GFU no longer offered a Foods and Nutrition degree (the closest thing he could find to a culinary degree on campus). He was crushed. Unsure of what direction to go, O'Neal



was encouraged to take "Introduction to Social Work." There he met Professor Cliff Rosenbohm, who saw something in O'Neal.

"Rosenbohm was very persuasive," said O'Neal. "We talked outside of class about becoming a social work major. I had already decided by then I wanted to be a school counselor. I want to work with students one on one." O'Neal felt social work

"I WANT TO WORK WITH STUDENTS"

provided a more hands on training than psychology, especially in what he planned to do with his future.

Becoming the "Superfan" happened very organically. ASC President Kyle Webster told O'Neal that his "Superfan" persona was needed this year. His cape, painted face, and helmet create an image of pure joy.

The Lip Sync Battle this past fall also stands out as a highlight of O'Neal's career at GFU. The journey began with a secret email from his roommate.

"Personally, I am not a fan of choreographed dancing. So, he kept asking me if I wanted to dance and I said no," O'Neal said. "So he just told me I would be in the end. They gave me suggestions of what to do. The day comes and there is a lot of

booty shaking by other teams and Lorelee tells me the booty-shaking challenge has been issued. I said 'No, boohoo, it had been accepted.'

"Olivia was like, 'Austin, no, President Baker is here.' Even better, I said," O'Neal recalled with a huge grin on his face. "I was winging it like none other."

Popular Portland restaurant Screen Door became his obsession when he was 17. His godmother took him. He thought waiting an hour in line to eat somewhere was stupid, but after he received his plate of chicken and waffles he was hooked. It is the only time he has never been able to clear his plate. "I take to go. I have only killed a plate twice. I can't stay away from my chicken and waffles," he said.

O'Neal's mother has had a huge impact on his life. His mom is a social worker at Emmanuel Hospital. She also races dragon boats. "She is a bad-ass," declared O'Neal.

His mother has been a source of inspiration for O'Neal. He remembers an especially touching memory of his mother working to lose weight: "I vividly remember the time when I was little and we were measuring her by how we can touch our fingers when we are hugging her," he said. "The moment I was able to touch my fingers I said, 'Mom, I can hug you. I am touching my fingers.' She started to cry. It was really precious. It was a good inspiration."

PHOTO: KOSETTE ISAKSON

STUDENTS FORM FITNESS CLUB

By Rory Phillips
Crescent Staff

Oftentimes we come to George Fox University (GFU) for the friendly atmosphere and small classes, but we end up staying for friends and activities we come across along the way. One of the best ways of getting around is through clubs – the organizations which bind members together in the name of a single hobby. From the fast-paced Swing Club to the intellectually-oriented Young Democrats, options at GFU are wide open.

Senior Alex Love noticed one little kink in the system: could there be a place where like-minded college students meet and grow healthy and strong together?

The brand-new Fitness Club at GFU is the brainchild of president Alex Love and Brandon May. Last summer, the two finally captured their dream of a campus organization dedicated to a healthy lifestyle for college students. Spending last

semester carefully deciding how to lead the club and make it flourish, the paperwork was submitted in September and was given the green light from ASC.

"THIS CLUB WILL HELP PEOPLE PURSUE A FIT AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE"

The Fitness Club insists on including everybody. Those knowledgeable about working out can make an impact on less experienced members. They meet every other Sunday, with a discussion session about a specified topic (nutrition, proper approach to exercise, or anything in between), followed by a quality workout session, together or individually.

"I think this club will help people interested in pursuing a fit and healthy lifestyle have a place that both encourages them and also brings them together with other like-minded individuals," Love said.

"There are many clubs that seek to get students active, such as the Ultimate Frisbee club and a few others, but none that had fitness specifically as their goal. I think ASC liked the idea and saw the club as potentially beneficial to the student community and they have certainly been very supportive of the club and a huge help to myself and the other officers," he said.

Erika Lopez, an ASC Clubs representative, couldn't have agreed more. When she had first heard about the idea back in September, she immediately appreciated this unique method of cultivating quality community, a GFU staple.

"They don't just meet to work out in Wheeler," Lopez said. "They provide a way for people to connect if they do want to do that, but the club also leads events such as rock climbing at The Circuit."

NARNIA: GFU'S TIME MACHINE

By John Weinert
Crescent Staff

Deep in the recesses of the Plant Services building lies a secret realm. To reach it, you must talk to a Plant Services employee, who will guide you through narrow corridors, past sawdust-filled workshops, and up flights of stairs, finally bringing you to an unassuming door. Beyond this door lies Narnia.

Narnia, so called because its original entrance was once behind a cabinet, holds over a century of George Fox University history. Arrayed on shelves in neatly organized boxes, or haphazardly on tables or in piles throughout the large room, are a bewildering variety of artifacts from the school's past.

By the entrance lies a pile of door closers. In the middle of the room sits an enormous mound of the gray plastic desk/chairs seen in classrooms all over campus. Farther back, towards the rear wall, the objects get older, and more interesting.

A cross made of burnt wood sits on a table. It is made from the remains of huts destroyed by arson in Bangladesh. The organization that rebuilt the huts, St. Paul's Cathedral Relief Services, sent it to "The Friends – Oregon . . . as a symbol of the Church's missions of reconciliation in every sphere of human activity and as a tangible fragment of the Cross that Christ still has to bear to redeem the sons of men." It was donated to the school by David LeShana.

Beside the cross sits a box of nails from the original Hoover Hall, built in 1892. Accompanying



each nail is a piece of paper with a short poem on it, commemorating the Hall and exhorting its reader to remember it.

The doctor's bag of Dr. John Brougher, complete with medical supplies half a century old, sits on a table. Brougher, after whom Brougher Hall is named, was a local doctor in Newberg who delivered over 10,000 babies over the course of his career.

Narnia contains more than just school history, however. Many of the items there are of cultural and anthropological interest, sent to the school by missionaries serving abroad. African weavings, artifacts of "the Aymara Speaking Communities in Southern Peru," a Kenyan ax from the early

19th century: these are just a few of the many unexpected treasures to be found in Narnia.

Some objects, however, are confusing. On one shelf, inside a velvet-lined box, sits a crystal diadem inscribed with the name and image of the Central South University of Forestry and Technology in China. Against one wall leans a sign shaped like a hand, simply labeled "Alexandra to Ivory Park." Along one wall are lined, shelf over shelf, wooden chairs of every conceivable make and vintage.

You can learn more about Narnia through the George Fox Journal's featured story "Treasure of Narnia," which is accessible on its website.

PHOTO: JOHN BURGESS



TIPTOEING THROUGH CAMPUS

DANCERS AT GFU WANT TO BE KNOWN

By Adrienne Speer
Crescent Staff

Athletes are numerous on George Fox University's (GFU) campus. Athletics play a major role in our community, and athletes are usually easy to spot. But dancers, who are athletes of a different category, blend in with the crowd. When they step on a dance floor, however, it's easy to see the passion for movement and expression ingrained in their bodies.

"Dancing is my favorite thing in the world; it's my favorite sport," Samantha Biever said. "It is so freeing."

For GFU students like Biever, Amanda McConaughy and Amy Shifley, dance has been a part of life since they were young, and they consider themselves athletes.

"I do consider my dance form athletic because it takes a great amount of core and leg strength, and it also requires a lot of technical skill," said Shifley, an Irish dancer.

Dance provides an opportunity to push

boundaries and develop grace and self-confidence. "I love Irish dance, partly because of the two different types of shoes and dances we get to do. There are hard shoes for sound and rhythm and soft shoes for more balletic dances," Shifley said.

These three women have spent the better part of their lives in dance studios. They've passed the milestones: first time on stage, first Nutcracker,

***"IT'S EASY TO SEE
THE PASSION FOR
MOVEMENT AND
EXPRESSON"***

first solo part, first pair of pointe shoes, and first auditions. Several have trained pre-professionally at major ballet schools, and some are now dance teachers.

Although they no longer train competitively

in dance, they value the time spent honing this particular craft. "I started ballet when I was five years old," said Biever. "I always kept going back to ballet. I also did tap, hip hop, jazz, and musical theatre."

Several GFU dancers wish for a practical way to continue dancing while at college, at least in a recreational sense. Dance requires the proper facilities: safe, sprung floors; full-length, wall-to-wall mirrors; and standard handrails. GFU is sorely lacking these resources: the dance room in Wheeler Gymnasium has harmful concrete floors and broken mirrors.

"I know that there are a lot of dancers around campus who have to let dance go," Biever said. "I wish there was a way to take dance classes at George Fox."

While resources are scarce, GFU dancers do the best they can. They hope for improvements in the future, such as the addition of a proper dance studio to accommodate the aerobics and dance classes that do exist, and a space for dance culture to grow at GFU.

PHOTO: KOSETTE ISAKSON

SOCCER FRIDAY

By Cassidy Scott
Crescent Staff

It's one of George Fox University's (GFU) best-kept secrets. Wind or rain, every Friday night Austin Field is open for anybody and everybody to come play soccer—a night long since titled Soccer Friday.

Soccer Friday had humble beginnings. In fact, pinpointing how the weekly soccer meet-ups started is hard. Ryan Elder, a junior at GFU, guesses it started his freshman year, if not the year before. But within that expanse of time, Soccer Friday has grown into something much more than a simple pick-up game among friends.

"We used to only have enough for one game, with small fields, and now we normally have enough for two games with eleven versus eleven," Elder said. "It's grown enormously."

Of the people who come to Soccer Friday, one can expect an array of talent: from seasoned pros to those who have never kicked a ball before. However, this mix of people keeps the environment relaxed and fun; the atmosphere at Austin Field stays friendly.

"When you play against one person one week and with them the next, it keeps things casual and



fun. It makes sure that everyone has a good time," Elder said.

Relationships have flourished off the field as well. Soccer fans are still able to connect and recognize each other on campus.

"I honestly don't think it's just a thing that happens every Friday," said Ricky Miguel, who has been going to Soccer Friday since its early inception. "It's more than that, it's the atmosphere that Fox people create that bring people together and that makes them want to continue coming."

"Relationships are created between people

that they otherwise wouldn't have had if they did not have Soccer Fridays," junior Kirbi Havemann added.

Perhaps the fun, relaxed atmosphere or the noncompetitive attitude is what brings people back every week. Or maybe it's simply the opportunity to get moving and play soccer every week. Either way, the weekly event is only growing.

If you're interested in checking out Soccer Friday, players meet at 8:30 p.m. at Austin Field and usually play until they get tired or the lights turn off.

PHOTO: JOEL RURIK

NEXT YEAR: PLAN A SUPER SUPER BOWL PARTY

By Heather Harney
Crescent Staff

Planning a Super Bowl party takes time, coordination, seventeen-layer bean dip, rearranging furniture and lots of cleaning.

There are decorations to be placed, twisted, and dangled from the doorframes and popcorn ceilings. A ton of ice made or bought. Extra rolls of toilet paper and paper towels to be stocked. Plastic dishes, forks, knives, spoons and more to be removed from a year of dust.

My planning begins with the opening kick-off of the first NFL game of the season.

I compile my list of friends who have good taste. No Broncos fans. No Cheeseheads. No Twelfth-Men or -Women. No Patriots. No Cowboys. No Raiders. No fair-weather fans. My list is super elite. I am a Niners fan, but a Bears fan by birthright. I am cool with people who accept that my teams are superior to theirs, but I do not allow any colors that clash with my teams' colors.

The football season also allows me to practice recipes. I have a Bloody Mary chili that will curl your toes and rid you of the hangovers you don't

have because there is no alcohol at my parties. I signed a lifestyle contract and I am only 40 years old.

I outsource anything related with cheese. I make my own bread. I pull it out of the paper wrapper and toast it in the oven. All of my specially-made deviled eggs are sourced from an organic farmer.

There are always mini-games to be planned

***"NO BRONCOS FANS.
NO CHEESEHEADS"***

and played. There are score sheets for the commercials, a piñata, and a wet bar covered in ten different kinds of Mountain Dew and other sodas.

My parties are the bomb, y'all. But if you aren't invited next year, I wanted to share some of my hard-fought knowledge on planning Super Bowl parties with you.

Do not go grocery shopping three days before the Super Bowl. The deals are silly. A true

hostess spends the big bucks and goes to the Dollar Store.

- Do not go T.V. shopping two days before the Super Bowl. This shows your amateurish skills, and the store will know you are just buying a TV because you are embarrassed by your 20-inch flat screen.

- Do not order your 20-foot subway sandwich the day before the Super Bowl. This will stress out the poor sandwich artists, and you will end up with PB&J and turkey-teriyaki sandwiches.

- Do not order pizza the day of the Super Bowl. This is a lame move. Just go to the store and buy 50 Totino's pizzas and put them in the oven the day of the game. Your guests won't know the difference, I promise.

- Do not forget to buy tissue. There will always be someone crying after the game is over. They might be sad their team lost, or they saw a commercial that made them laugh so hard they cried, and maybe even peed themselves a little.

With these five simple rules, you can begin to create the epic parties I throw. Maybe, you will achieve your own fame.

GFU SCRAPS FASHION

By Adrienne Speer
Crescent Staff

This semester, George Fox University's (GFU) Art and Design department made the decision to cut the fashion design major and minor. This decision has caused some controversy among current and graduating students, and I find myself conflicted.

Last spring, I was one of many students recruited to model in the Fashion Design department's fashion show. As I prepared for the show backstage, I was stunned by the creativity of the designers showcasing their artwork—from Alyssa Rand's feather-embellished evening gowns with sweetheart necklines and cascading trains to Josi O'Farrel's garden-inspired collection of frothy tulle skirts and flower crowns. Not only was I blown away by the designs themselves, but by the force of creativity behind each designer.

Unfortunately, students don't necessarily come to Christian universities to study fashion design. Maybe this is why only a handful of gifted students have chosen to study under this major in past years—people simply don't know the program exists, and it doesn't have the resources necessary for growth.

"I think the main problem is that fashion isn't a typical thing that people who are seeking a Christian education are thinking about. Usually fashion is of the 'material world,' literally!" Dani, a fashion design major, (name changed) said.

This semester, only two students will graduate from GFU with a degree in fashion design, joining two others who graduated in December. Four is a small number, and it makes sense that the higher-ups would decide to cut the program. My question, however, is similar to one I ask about the arts at GFU in general: is there any way to improve marketing, funding, and overall support for

programs like theatre, art, design and dance?

Fashion design programs in Oregon are scant as it is. GFU was the best option for Benjamin Zeeb, a freshman, who will now have to fit all his fashion classes and his first collection into his sophomore year before the fashion design professor, Eileen Celentano, steps down.

"I have to have an entire line designed by next year," Dani said. "The art department is the overlooked major in the school, and the fashion department is the overlooked group in the art department."

Maybe in the future, GFU will revive the fashion department. What probably will have to happen first is an expansion of the art and design department as a whole: a step into modernity that is far overdue, especially for a liberal arts university.

PHOTO: MICK HANGLAND-SKILL

IS INTERDEPARTMENTAL ED DEAD?

By Jade Becker
Crescent Staff

The balance between major-determined specialization and a learning environment in which students of various fields interact and learn together is important, yet difficult, to manage.

Given the daunting task of reconciling George Fox University's (GFU) liberal arts philosophy, the shifting academic climate, the restraints of a four-year program and national accreditation requirements, the General Education (GE) committee has again moved to trim the liberal arts core.

This new GE package will still work to encourage cross-departmental learning, though it seems to be representative of a more economic, or efficient, means of conducting higher education. It is difficult not to see these curriculum changes as yet another step toward specialization, where students are comfortably tucked into their departments and

left unexposed to the larger truths brought about through interdepartmental learning.

"THERE'S SOMETHING SPECIAL ABOUT A SERIOUS ENVIRONMENT FOR MAJORS"

And while this reduction may save new students from general education courses we remember as totally and completely unredeeming, it also follows that these students may end up completing their degrees without those courses from outside their respective fields oftentimes invaluable to intellectual growth.

On the other hand, many of the most fulfilling moments of higher education are found in the

learning that takes place during major-intensive courses.

"There is something special about a serious environment for majors," said Brian Doak, associate professor of Biblical Studies. When each student is truly excited about discussing the eschatological implications of Isaiah, for example, the learning environment is noticeably enriched. And while it is no longer required students to pass six credit hours of Literature of the Old and New Testaments, students with interest in particular subjects are still welcome to enroll in more advanced Bible courses, despite the reduction in GE requirements, according to Doak.

This is true of many other departments—students can enroll in many courses from various fields—though some credit-intensive majors will be unable to spare the time. So, while you are no longer required to engage as much with the other disciplines, the option to extend yourself outside the comfort of your department is always available.

Men and Women CAN BE FRIENDS

By Ryan Lackey
Crescent Staff

Author, YouTube personality, unfortunate Liverpool fan and generally sharp-witted guy John Green has spoken on a phenomenon he calls the "romanticization" of American culture. This romanticization, Green claims, deifies and worships the romantic relationship. No matter your problem, be it psychological, existential, social, or proctological: the prescription is romance.

This isn't to say that romance is bad. For many people, a committed romantic relationship is the social and personal nexus of life. If the relationship is healthy, that's a good thing. Romance is, well, romantic. Passionate, epiphanic—peaceful and orienting. There's a reason Keats didn't write sensuous sonnets to his best bro. (Tu-BRO-culosis? Anyone?)

The danger in our especial valuation of romantic relationships is that we create an expectation of romantic latency regarding our platonic, inter-gender friendships. A man and a woman who enjoy a close but nonromantic friendship are "in denial" or "blind" or just waiting unawares until their caterpillaric relationship passes the larval, platonic stage and blooms into romantic butterflyhood.

This is absolutely ridiculous.

Even if we don't subscribe consciously to this romanticization, we cannot escape it. Articles abound online, lecturing men and woman on the perils—indeed, the futility—of platonic friendships. These articles range from pop-psychology ("3 Reasons Men and Women Can't Be Friends" in Psychology Today) to peer-reviewed scientific inquiry ("Men and Woman Can't Be 'Just Friends'" in Scientific American). It's not only the titles that are similar. Most of these sorts of articles make the same point: romance is coming, baby, and you can't escape it.

What's especially interesting is that these sort of articles seem to draw on a particular brand of

gender essentialism and heteronormativity. That the romanticization argument leaves no room for individuals outside the traditional binary is self-evident, and the article from Psychology Today implies that both men and women want to sleep with, well, any and every member of the opposite gender—perhaps unconsciously. The writer, Donna Flagg, claims "there are some realities to acknowledge when it comes to male and female friendships . . . under certain circumstances the frustration may be too much to manage."

Ah, the key to successful inter-gender friendships: sealing off the ol' libido like a Mason jar.

In his piece for Scientific American, Adrian Ward similarly presents men and women as subject to a romantic attraction that remains beyond their control. In fact, Ward's romanticism is downright predatory, "lurking just around the corner" and "waiting to pounce." Still, some of Ward's findings

"I LIKE TO THINK I MAINTAIN A MODICUM OF FREE WILL"

— he interviewed 88 pairs of opposite-gender friends—seem to support his claims. Some of his data even suggests, uncomfortably, that men tend to sexualize—or fantasize about sexualizing—platonic relationships more than women do.

Ward's data, though, shows only that we've internalized the romanticization narrative—not that it's true.

My consternation here is twofold. (Actually, it's manifold, but I'm just addressing two issues, here.) First, the rhetoric around romanticization suggests a very traditional masculinity, femininity, and heterosexuality. These aren't bad things, but they're presented as not even the default options, but the only options. The common conception (Ha!) of heterosexuality is that to be heterosexual means not

a predilection for attraction towards the opposite sex but a total and complete absence of attraction towards the same sex. In other words, culture suggests that, for a man, being heterosexual doesn't mean you usually like women—it means you never like men.

This just seems impossible: sexuality must be more gradated. I identify as heterosexual, and I guarantee I am more attracted to the man I consider most attractive than the woman who to me is least attractive. But the romanticization narrative doesn't reflect this. Man/Man and Woman/Woman friendships are never in question. But Man/Woman friendships are continually suspected.

Secondly, behavioralism be darned, I like to think I maintain a modicum of free will over my desires and attractions. The romanticization narrative implies a certain materialism that devalues both romantic and platonic relationships. We, as some say, just "can't help" our attractions. But if hormones and evolved proclivities and unconscious evaluations of fertility (the pseudoscientific catchall term "biology" is usually applied here, as in, "It's just biology") charge even our friendships with reproductive implications, then the term "romanticization" becomes meaningless. Whatever romance exists in romanticization is destroyed. If biological makeup or socialization or psychology or really anything unmediated by at least a little free will is how we choose our partners, then it's all moot anyway.

My message here is not one of flag-waving individualism, that we should do whatever makes us happy, love and platonically love whomever we please. In constructing any relationship, romantic or friendly or whatever, we ought to think about just that: the relationship. The Other, not the self. Relationship does not exist so that I may be heard, but that We may communicate with reciprocity. To me, this is a wildly free and hopeful definition of relationship. And to limit relationship is to keep people apart. As such, the embargo on inter-gender relationships constitutes an unhealthy and artificial barrier.

PHOTO: HAYDEN MERCURIO



MEET THE DATING GAME COUPLES

WHAT'S THE SECRET TO LOVE? WE ASK THREE COUPLES

By John Weinert
Crescent Staff

Last week saw the return of the annual Dating Game. Before the Game, I sat down to talk with the couples competing this year.

Bobi Whitehead and Andrew Bergh – Dating

John: Tell me a little about yourselves.
Bobi: We're seniors. I am an interdisciplinary major studying Christian ministries and theater.
Andrew: And I am a music education and vocal performance major, with a worship arts minor.
John: How long have you two been dating?
Andrew: A little bit over a year.
John: How did you two meet?
Andrew: So we met in choir our freshman year. We never really talked to each other.
Bobi: We both tried for choir chaplain, and we both got male and female chaplain.
Andrew: So we started spending a lot of time together, through that.
John: That's such a George Fox story.
Bobi: Praying for each other!
Andrew: Everyone was asking, "are you two a thing?" and we're like, "No, we're not, we're just good friends." It turned out to be more than just friends.
Bobi: Then we started dating and everyone still

thought we were just good friends.

John: How did you start dating?
Andrew: I made a video: "10 reasons you have no reason not to date me."
Bobi: It was hilarious.
Andrew: My style, I'm flush with cash, my car...
Bobi: And he got consent.
Andrew: Yeah, I asked her dad, too.
John: How has your dating experience been impacted by the dating culture at George Fox?
Bobi: When a guy and a girl hang out, I think people just assume they're dating.
John: Have you been getting lots of comments about getting married?
Andrew: Absolutely.
Bobi: Ring by spring!
Andrew: So, if we win the Dating Game tonight, I will propose on stage.
Bobi: And if we lose, we'll break up.
John: Sounds like some high stakes.

Bryan Neufeld and Keiko Fujii – Engaged

John: Tell me a little about yourselves.
Keiko: We're both seniors, I'm a computer science major.
Bryan: I'm a computer engineer.
John: So when is the big day?
Bryan: It's the end of May.
John: So how long have you been dating?

Keiko: A year and four months.
John: How did you meet?
Keiko: We were in the same freshman dorm. We both lived in Pennington.
Bryan: So we both interacted normally. We had the same group of friends, because we're sciencey.
John: How did you start dating?
Bryan: I had a creative method to (ask her out). We had played this game called Hack RUN, which is kind of simulating hacking into a system, and it's really fun – you feel like a hacker, it's great. And so I tried to replicate the game, only I made it custom, and at the end, it had a poem that you finally get to, and the poem was how I officially asked her out. It was a very pretty poem.
Keiko: It was at the Oregon coast, too, when he finally gave it to me.
Bryan: The Oregon coast is her favorite spot.
John: What has been your experience with the dating culture at George Fox?
Keiko: Well, when I actually first came, I was in a long-distance relationship with a guy back home, so it was interesting getting to observe the dating culture without actually feeling the need to be in it. Definitely, there was almost like this pressure, at least among the girls, to have a significant other freshman year. Our RA at the time was single, and so we would always joke around about how we would set her up and find her a guy.
Bryan: I think the biggest way George Fox culture impacted dating was that – I came from public schools, and finding a Christian girl in a

public school was rather difficult in Denver. And so, it just became way easier to find someone actually compatible [at George Fox].

Keiko: And it's nice, because people choose to be here, and so you're all already have something in common.

Molly and Sean Roberston – Married

John: Tell me a little about yourselves.
Sean: I'm a junior psych major. I'm nontraditional, so I'm 27 with kids. And a wife.
Molly: I'm not a student. I'm a stay at home mom to our two boys, and I am really good at laundry, cooking, putting people down to naps. So I do a lot of that.
John: How long have you been married?
Molly: It will be three years, in August.
Sean: We should say five years to make it sound better.

Molly: A hundred years. It's a lot.

John: That's impressive.

Sean: It's the evangelical dating culture.

Molly: Anyway, three years. We dated for two years, and we were engaged nine months into our dating-ness.

John: How did you meet?

Molly: We met in third grade.

Sean: We've known each other for a very long time. I think my earliest memory of you was you beating me at wall ball. I think I called you a name, probably, and you chased me around the playground.

Molly: You weren't very nice.

Sean: Well, you beat me at wall ball.

Molly: We both went to the same junior high and high school, but then we both moved away. When we were 23, he was coming back into town from the Navy, and we hung out. It wasn't supposed to be a date –

Sean: No, just friends catching up.

Molly: But then it turned into a date. And then he asked me "where was this going?" right after the date.

Sean: You don't need to say that.

Molly: That totally happened.

John: What has been your experience in the evangelical dating culture?

Sean: We weren't coming from that perspective when we were dating. I grew up in the church, but I was away from the church while I was in the military. And then, as we started dating, it became part of our lives. And then, as we were getting married, it just blossomed –

Molly: Blossomed –

Sean and Molly: We finish each other's ... sandwiches.

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