

# THE BAGPIPE

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## Refugee for a Week

BY MELANIE WHITE

The flames consuming the Covenant College Safety & Security golf cart parked outside Andreas lobby on Thursday, Feb. 5, at 9:45 p.m. caused the week of frustration that would ensue for Andreas residents. Seven days after the initial disaster, Andreas refugees remain displaced and disconcerted.

The fire damaged the Andreas building, rooms, and residents' possessions. Repairs are being made to the blackened brick siding and five windows of Andreas' exterior. Dan Wykoff, Vice President for Finance and Operations, said that there has not yet been an estimate of the total damage costs. "Currently we're in discussions with the insurance company to see what portion of the remediation costs will be covered by insurance and what portion we'll need to fund from our operational budget. The operating budget is always created with an eye toward having enough funding for emergencies such as the golf cart fire."

Covenant College hired Nivek, a remediation firm, to clean Andreas and professional cleaners to wash students' clothes, rugs, and bed sheets that smell like smoke or are covered in ash. An e-mail was sent out by Dean of Students Brad

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## Dr. Dreisbach Speaks



Dr. Daniel Dreisbach speaking in chapel for the WIC lectures series, photo by Abby Whisler

BY CARRIE WOODWARD

This year's Women in the Church Lecture Series guest speaker was Dr. Daniel Dreisbach, who spoke on the Bible's influence in forming the beliefs of America's founders and early American politics. The WIC lecture series is an annual event made possible by the PCA's Women in the Church under the oversight of the PCA's Christian Education and Publication sector, which exists to further the PCA's commitment to creating disciples and teaching and training Christian leaders.

Dr. Dreisbach studied as a Rhodes Scholar to receive his

DPhil in politics from Oxford University. He is currently a professor in the school of public affairs at American University in Washington D.C., where he has worked since 1991, and teaches classes such as "American Legal Culture," "Issues in Civil Justice," and "The Constitution and Criminal Procedure." In addition to teaching, Dreisbach works on the editorial board of the journal *Politics and Religion*, and has written and edited numerous books covering topics ranging from American constitutional law to the lives of Thomas Jefferson and America's founding fathers.

Dr. Dreisbach spoke in chapel on Thursday and Friday in addition to teaching the WIC class Thursday and Friday evening and Saturday morning, with the lectures open to the public and functioning as a one-credit class for students, including Freshman recipients of the Mac scholarship.

Mac Scholar Hannah Rae Lloyd, who was required to take the WIC class, said that a big focus of the class was the Bible's influence in the language and ideas of America's founders, and learning more about that gave her a better perspective on what they were

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## Making the Move

BY MISHEA'LA RUSSELL

Covenant's faculty and staff are in the process of making some big changes as they expect the beginnings of renovation and restoration of the exterior of Carter Hall as well as its roof. The current plan is to divide Carter into three sections (north, center, and south), and all offices and departments within a particular section of the building will take turns transferring themselves elsewhere on campus as construction occurs.

The north section of Carter will be the starting point of this procedure. Therefore, those involved in financial aid, the registrar's office, the vice president for finance, the accounting office, and Student Development will relocate to different areas on campus, such as Jackson, Mills or Brock. For Dean Voyles and his staff and the Center for Student Success, their new location will be the second floor of the Kresge Library. This move could take place either at some point this semester or immediately after the semester ends.

Tad Mindeman, the Kresge Library director, knows plenty of details about this task in regards to the library and the campus as a whole. "Right now they are putting

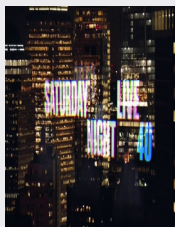
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# Mountaintop Maids

BY MELANIE WHITE

For many seniors, graduation is approaching and figuring out the next step is a stressful scramble. For Tera Davidson and Jordan Doctor, graduating from Covenant meant starting a successful business as passionate entrepreneurs.

Davidson and Doctor began cleaning houses in Nov. 2013 and were competitors for the 2014 Seed Project grant at Covenant. They officially started Mountaintop Maids, the second business based in Chattanooga started by female Covenant alumni, in the summer

of 2014. They now serve over 35 regular clients, 95 percent of which live on the mountain. They have employed four maids since starting their business, three of whom are Covenant alumni.

Mountaintop Maids "aim to improve the lives of [their] clients by providing the best cleaning and household services with a focus on integrity, reliability and customer satisfaction." Mountaintop Maids out-does all individual maids who work for themselves because it is a legal entity and all maids

are professionals. They wear uniforms and are professionally trained. Being a legal entity is also beneficial for customers' tax reports. Mountaintop Maids lives by Colossians 3:17: "and whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

Mountaintop Maids continues to grow beyond current staff capacity. "We are struggling to meet the demand with workers," Davidson said. Davidson and Doctor had great experiences at Covenant and hope to have more Covenant

alumni and students on staff. "We want to find a way to give back to Covenant," Davidson said.

Mountaintop Maids operates Monday through Friday and has two main shifts per day: a morning clean from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon and an afternoon clean from 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. However, hours for Covenant students would be flexible. Davidson and Doctor are open to employing students interested in working as little as 3-6 hours per week. Starting pay is \$10.00 per hour and goes up depending on

experience.

"Mountaintop Maids is an ideal place for Covenant students to work," Davidson said. All the maids get close to each other and to their clients. "I feel like we are just a bunch of friends having fun together."

The future looks bright for Mountaintop Maids. Davidson and Doctor hope to have 100 clients on Lookout Mountain and would then like to expand to the greater Chattanooga area with the help of Covenant students and alumni.

## WIC Lectures

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

trying to communicate through the writing of those documents. "We talked about how the Bible influenced literacy and culture in America. The class made me think about things I had thought about before and ask questions about things I had taken for granted," Hannah said. "I have to write an essay on how it relates to us today called 'the perils in quoting from or alluding to the Bible in political rhetoric.' We started a discussion outside of class about whether or not we would supported the founders' use of Romans 13 as reason to overthrow a tyrannical ruler. Was that actually Biblical?"

An important point to note is that Dreisbach's expertise is largely in history, and studying the thinking and actions of America's founders, and not on application for American citizens today. However, Thursday's chapel, which centered on the question posed in Micah 6:8, "What does God require of us?" explored how the phrase "seek justice, love mercy, walk humbly

with your God" was influential in the political literature of America's founding—and is still frequently cited by American Christians today.

Friday's chapel, titled "Under Our Own Vine and Fig Tree: Micah 4:4 and the Creation of an American Metaphor for Liberty," further explored the use of the Bible in the political discourse on America's founding at the end of the 18th century, using George Washington's writings as a case study on the use of the motif.

Although Dr. Dreisbach's chapel talks and class lectures were academic analyses of the Bible as it relates to early American politics, the frequency of Biblical language and metaphor in the thoughts and writings of America's founders certainly inspire questions about the relationship of the Bible to politics in America, from before its founding until now.



*Dr. Daniel Dreisbach enjoying Covenant's lookout, photo by Abby Whisler*

## Faculty Quote of the Week

"I sulfur without you.  
I've got my ion you. You and I make a good reaction!"  
- Dr. Zuidema on Chemistry related pick-up lines for Valentines Day

## The Verdict

Yes to Governor Deal  
declaring a state  
of emergency.

YES to SNOWDAY.

## THE BAGPIPE



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reflect those of the College or the student body.

## Making the Move CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

up the walls and getting things ready for the Center for Student Success,” Mindeman states, “and the way they’re moving, I can see them getting Janet Hulseley and Sarah Ocando over here during spring break.”

The library staff has already taken a couple of steps in order to accommodate the migration of the Student Development offices, such as moving the DVD and Hamm music collections into the main area of the second floor and shifting the DVD players and monitors to a few of the public carrels. The former DVD room will become the main office for the Center for Student Success, which will relocate to the second floor of the library permanently.

Dean Voyles’ office will temporarily move into the Kresge 215 classroom, and three people from the Student Development staff will also

temporarily relocate into three of the group study rooms on the second floor. The duration of their stay in the library is uncertain. Tad Mindeman said that “It depends on how fast the work progresses over Carter. At minimum they will be here from May through December, maybe longer.”

Although the renovation of Carter is a positive project, there are still a few factors that need to be addressed. The transition of departments and offices, while necessary, is inconvenient for current students and new students who will be attending Covenant next year due to the new locations of the different departments.

“You’re gonna need a map to find people around here in the fall because it’s not gonna be normal,” Mindeman says, “it’s a massive deal.” He continues to explain how this idea is a “giant jigsaw puzzle” because the movement of

one department affects another department, or it affects that particular part of the building they are now planning on occupying.

Another issue is that the construction of the new art building needs to be completed by Fall 2015 in order for the faculty and staff of the art department to move into their new offices, allowing those who are in Carter to move into the offices in Jackson.

Lastly, the restoration of Carter will uproot not only faculty and staff departments and offices, but also students who live on the upper floors in Carter, beginning with the north halls during the fall semester of 2015. They too will be spread out all over campus.

Despite these disturbances to normal campus living, there are still small changes that can be positive for all of campus.

“For years now I’ve been talking to administration about my preference for having all academic

support services under one roof,” Mindeman said, expressing his personal thoughts in regards to the library conversion. “You have the Writing Center, the library, now you have the Center for Student Success. I see that as a benefit to the students to take advantage of the space that we have and it just integrates everything nicely.”

The reconstruction of Carter Hall will definitely be a huge undertaking that will affect the faculty, staff, and students of campus. But these new developments far outweigh any slight or even major disruptions of the campus lifestyle. “We’ll be better off in the long run,” affirms Mindeman, “just temporarily it’ll be different.”

## Refugee for a Week CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Voyles at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 6, instructing Andreas residents to fill up two trash bags with anything that required professional cleaning. Students were told in the e-mail that they would only need to keep enough clothes to last them “a couple of days,” however, bedding and clothing has yet to be returned to them and some students are left with nothing to wear.

Voyles’ e-mail on Friday instructed Andreas residents to find new temporary housing arrangements so the building could be thoroughly cleaned. 4th floor residents were required move out by Friday at 11:30 p.m., 3rd floor residents were required to move out no later than noon on Saturday, and 2nd floor residents were required to move out Monday morning. Students found temporary homes in the dorms and houses of friends. The students left

with no place to stay were given a placement on campus by Chris Stern. Once students moved out, they were unable to get back on their halls.

Students were told to leave all electronics including computers, TVs, sound systems and gaming consoles in their rooms to be professionally cleaned of any soot that could be a fire hazard. Not having a computer to do homework was one of the many inconveniences Andreas residents had to face. “I had a typed assignment due on Monday that I didn’t have my laptop for,” said Sarah Withers, RA of Kallah. “We have still not gotten the ‘okay’ to get our electronics back.”

Andreas students will not be able to return permanently to their halls until Friday, Feb. 20. As of Monday night, Feb. 9, students are allowed on their halls from 5 p.m. - 7:30 a.m. However, the building is extremely hot and living conditions

are bad enough that sleeping in the dorm is still not a real option. “The big question for Andreas residents during the day is: where do I go?” Withers commented. “There are so many times during the day that you just mindlessly go back to your room and for us that is now impossible.”

Of all the damage and inconveniences students have had to face, many would say that the lack of love, sympathy, and encouragement from the Covenant community has been the most difficult aspect of the fire. At first, this was due to a lack of awareness about the incident. No e-mail was sent out about the fire until Friday night, and students had to go to classes as usual that morning when most professors did not even know about the fiasco the students had faced the night before. Finally, Chaplain Lowe made a comment about the fire in chapel on Wednesday, Feb. 11. He encouraged Covenant students and

faculty to support those affected by the fire. “Students in Andreas have felt more love and support since then,” Withers said.

Withers spoke for her hall saying, “The fire has shaken us all up more than we thought it would. It has been emotionally draining and stressful and it has made it hard to focus on school work. It has been difficult to go a week without being able to be together as a hall daily.”

For Andreas refugees, everything remains up in the air. The process of cleaning and repairs has taken longer than expected because there was miscommunication about how the HVAC system works in Andreas, and the process of cleaning it had to be completely altered.

Withers put it well: “The lives of Andreas residents got flipped upside down but everyone else’s lives have continued as normal.”

## SIX WORD STORY

Vending  
machine  
life.

Stole my  
money.

-Jospeh Klingman

Submit your own six-word story to Jamison Shimmel and check out [bagpipeonline.com](http://bagpipeonline.com) for more stories!



# Live From New York... SNL Turns 40!

BY JAMISON SHIMMEL

On Sunday night, Saturday Night Live heaven occurred, for fans of the show at least. To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the late night comedy program, a three and a half hour chunk of prime time television was set aside for a special SNL celebration show. Since the start of this year's 40th season, SNL has advertised the event as one of the biggest television events, and definitely the biggest SNL event of all time. However, little to no information was provided as to the actual anniversary episode. Viewers were kept guessing, anxiously waiting to see what the show would look like. As the program drew nearer, details were released regarding the guest list and live audience. In an interview with Hollywood Reporter, SNL creator Lorne Michaels explained "The rules we used were these: Every host was invited. Every musical guest was invited. Any cast member and writer who had been here longer than a year was invited. Not everybody is going to come. The other rule we used, which was just the simplest way to go, was if people sent back their RSVP, they were in the mix of people we could write for."

The evening began with a live red carpet event, in which members of the SNL family arrived and were

interviewed by The Today Show team. What may have been the most entertaining or exciting aspect of the Red Carpet segment was to see the star-struck look in many of the current SNL cast members' eyes as older, former players arrived and were interviewed. The special opened with an electrifying performance from Jimmy Fallon and Justin Timberlake, in which they performed a "History of SNL" rap, similar to their History of Rap bit from Fallon's The Tonight Show. While there were fewer live sketches than many hoped for, the video montages from the 40 years were fantastic and brought entire casts from previous generations to the forefront of current, younger viewers' minds.

In terms of the live sketches, audience favorites like "Celebrity Jeopardy" and "The Californians" were brought back and updated. It was in these live sketches that the former celebrity hosts who had been invited back participated. The celebrity-packed California lifestyle spoof featured guests like Taylor Swift, Bradley Cooper, Kerry Washington, and Betty White. While not every guest excelled in the sketch they were a part of—go watch "The Californians" and see for yourself how Swift attempts a Californian accent—so many did.

A highlight was Emmy-winning Betty White who ended "The Californians" by making out with Bradley Cooper, a sight I believe everyone should see in order to appreciate her comedic abilities. Turd Ferguson made a much-appreciated appearance in "Celebrity Jeopardy" and Will Ferrell was on his game, per usual with his realistic and humorous Alex Trebek impersonation. Kate McKinnon, one of the strongest cast members this year, brought her Justin Bieber to the Jeopardy skit, updating it and providing extra physical humor in an already packed sketch.

Weekend Update was given a fantastic, albeit brief segment in which Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, and Jane Curtin returned to give an abbreviated Update. The highlight of the segment was not only the fact that three former female Update anchors hosted it, but also the return of the beloved Bill Hader played Stefan. Celebrities like Emma Stone, Edward Norton, and Melissa McCarthy stopped by to play their own renditions of beloved Update guests—Roseanna Rosannadanna, Stefan, and Matt Foley.

While it is difficult to choose a favorite part of the show, perhaps the most entertaining segment

was the "Iconic Moments" section hosted by Martin Short and Maya Rudolph (who played Beyonce for the entire segment). Rudolph sang "Drunk In Love" and "Halo," changing the lyrics to recap moments from SNL, of course, hilariously. A close runner-up was Will Ferrell and Ana Gasteyer's over-the-top awkward music teacher duo the Culps to sing some of today's hits: "Uptown Funk," "All About That Bass," and "Turn Down for What." Please, whenever you can, go watch this hilarity and appreciate the comedic gold that is the Culp Duo.

There were so many other incredible segments throughout the show that I don't have room to recap and rave about, but if we're Facebook friends, you know that I was over-the-moon excited with the entire show. This was like the best high school reunion ever. Nobody got old, gross, and came out a loser; rather everyone shone (to the best of their ability) and SNL was indeed honored—with plenty of homage paid to Lorne Michaels. When you get a chance, my recommendation is go to NBC.com, watch as many highlights from the special as possible, and enjoy this fantastic celebration of late-night comedy that's "Live from New York, it's Saturday Night!"

## The Phosphorescent Blue's Review

BY MOLLY HULSEY

The Punch Brothers' long-awaited album, *The Phosphorescent Blues* was released January 28th under the direction of T-Bone Burnett, producer of Coen Brother's *Inside Llewyn Davis* soundtrack. So far, it has superseded the expectations of both fans and critics. In response to the release, Joe Breen of the Irish Times gushed that, "Listening to the Punch Brothers is an exercise in wonder... Where did that come from? What's that reference? Is that Debussy? Is that The Beach Boys? Is that bluegrass, blues, jazz,

classical, rock? Who cares because that tune's just beautiful."

It is difficult to believe that the conglomerate of sounds on the album escape primarily from an acoustic mandolin, fiddle, banjo, bass, and guitar quintet. Performing plucky orchestral pieces (such as Debussy's "Passapied" and Sciabin's "Prelude") to cerebral dramas ("Familiarity" and "My Oh My"), the Punch Brothers are jacks of all trades and at least a master of some. In the spirit of all folk musicians, even cover tracks are

molded into distinctive creations as the quintet departs from tradition to — drawing a line from "Familiarity"—"make some music of your own, amen."

The Punch Brother's' experimental, almost avant-garde approach on their new release can seem unsettling and scattered at times. This was the intention. Lyrics such as "Pretend you love it because you love them/as you explode out of your phones, amen," "Shine little lights of ours/Like Orion's Belt of Stars/Connected only from afar,"

and "There's nothing to say that couldn't just as well be sent/I've got an American share of 21st century stress" depict the artificiality and "plugged-in" loneliness of an age illuminated by the glow of smart phones and 140 character epiphanies. Chris ThileStiles, mandolin wizard and lead vocalist of the Brothers, shares that the album discusses the "importance of connection, particularly in a world where it's pretty easy to take being connected for granted." Quirky, unexpected shifts even within

tracks imitate our generation's struggle with constant, electronic distraction.

The Punch Brothers have not only spun together a genre-bending triumph in *The Phosphorescent Blues*, but bravely ask the question, "Oh Lord/can you keep the whole world spinning under our thumbs?" for all of us.

# Edith Stein Review

BY GARRETT SISSON

Edith Stein is a hard show to pull off. Its protagonist is a fiery Jewish scholar who embarks on a harrowing journey of spiritual self-discovery. Its antagonist is a misogynistic Nazi sociopath whose only inclination seems to be self-advancement. For two hours, the characters search for spiritual peace against the backdrop of one of the most vile genocides in recent human history—the Holocaust.

Stylistically, Covenant's performance is impressive. The action is staged to make the most of limited resources in space and equipment. The minimalistic red drapes constantly remind the audience that the Nazis' total domination is imminent, while an upper screen displays a static image to signify changes in scene. A simple lighting

pattern and stage block clearly establish the nuns' confession grille. The story's dreamlike jumps in time are supported by semi-surrealistic direction.

Another strength of the show is its authenticity. The costuming is accurate to the time and place, as well as visually interesting and thematically appropriate for the characters. Sensitive areas, like the Nazi salutations and pronunciation of various Hebrew phrases, were given careful attention to make the play believable. Though individual makeup work sometimes makes it hard to tell age differences, from a technical standpoint, the show is on point.

The play is full of heavy subject matter, which places a high demand on the actors. Indeed,

when the show suffers, it is from pacing that is either too fast or too slow. As a character study, every scene in the show should engage the audience's thought, which also made it unfortunate when, on the show's opening nights, some scenes were recited more than acted and not all of the secondary characters were convincing.

Fortunately, the lead actors were excellent. Andrew Lupinek is genuinely creepy as Karl-Heinz, portraying a ghastly, up-and-coming Nazi that is fully animal and non-redemptive. Yet at no point does Lupinek let the character lose its ground in human drives; the genius of the resulting performance is a monster that represents the worst natural, unbridled potential in all of us.

Emma Shope's Edith is multi-layered and intriguing, as is fitting a character whose arc is open to different interpretations and who is written with the conflicting traits of a real person. Shope presents a full embodiment of the character, which is best revealed in moments of improvisation and acting when there is no dialogue. There is real subtlety in the distance between Edith Stein and her mother, the warring desires of Edith's heart, and the development of her spirituality over the course of the play.

Honorable mention goes to newcomer Sammie Brown, who holds a commendable presence as the convent's prioress—an important figure through many of the play's most critical scenes.

Though the Gospel itself is never verbalized, Edith Stein is a play with beautiful, meaningful truths to find if you are prepared to search as Edith did. The many clashes between cultures and religious beliefs create a drama that is as tragic as our history, and accordingly, the play provides more of a challenge than a resolution. In finding ourselves void of understanding in Christian love and the Christian life, we are drawn toward the example and promises of Christ to find our spiritual peace. Edith Stein concludes this weekend with performances Friday at 8 p.m. and Saturday at 2:30 p.m. in Sanderson 215.



*The Edith Stein production at Covenant College, photo from covenant.edu*

# Gender Equality in the Music Industry

BY LOUIS METCALFE

Recently, the Icelandic artist Björk made a stir when she suddenly released her album *Vulnicura* almost two months early. The album was received positively by critics and fans alike, quickly shooting to the number one spot on iTunes and debuting in the Billboard top 20. Björk is not only making an impact with her music, she is using her album as a platform to discuss problems that she sees with the modern music industry.

It was mistakenly reported that Arca, a newcomer to the music industry, was the sole producer of *Vulnicura*. Arca quickly took to Twitter, stating that Björk and he were co-producers on the album. Björk told Pitchfork this was something that happens to her and other female artists often. Björk contrasted this with the way men are given credit for their work. Talking about Kanye West, Björk stated, “With the last album he [Kanye] did, he got all the best beatmakers on the planet at the time to make beats for him. A lot of

the time, he wasn’t even there. Yet no one would question his authorship for a second.” Björk’s frustrations should cause us to investigate how the music industry and music fans treat female artists.

Many would argue that the music industry is not sexist. Taylor Swift’s 1989 was the best selling album of last year, and Beyoncé’s self-titled album was one of the best selling album of 2013 and received a nomination for album of the year.

But how involved were these singers in creating their albums? Looking at songwriting credits for these albums, the first thing one notices is how many people had a hand in writing tracks on Beyoncé. In addition to Beyoncé herself, twenty-five people had songwriting credits on the album. With this many songwriters, one has to wonder how much songwriting Beyoncé actually did. Frank Ocean expressed his concern about current songwriting trends, tweeting, “it’s a bad trend that artists try to muscle for credits on songs they had no part in writing. writers just

say no UNLESS it’s Beyoncé. lol” Beyoncé also had collaborators in production on every one of the album’s fourteen songs. 1989 tells a similar story; Taylor Swift only wrote one of the songs by herself and instead collaborated with other artists in production on every song on the album.

When we look closer at the liner notes of Beyoncé and 1989 a strange pattern emerges. Of the twenty-five songwriters on Beyoncé, only two were women, and of the nineteen producers on the album, none were women. Similarly, only one out of the six writers on Swift’s album was a female. This seems to be a trend in popular music: look at the songwriting and production credits on most female pop albums and you will most likely see the same group of men over and over. In fact, Ryan Tedder, the lead-singer of OneRepublic has songwriting credits on both Beyoncé and 1989. Beyoncé and Taylor are women singing men’s songs.

Beyoncé is an incredible singer,

but that’s not why she is famous. She is flamboyant, attractive, tends to wear minimal amounts of clothing, is married to a famous rapper, and makes massive amounts of money. Her image has been carefully crafted by her record label to gain her more attention and sell more records. In her concerts, music videos and television appearances, Beyoncé sells her sexuality as much as she sells her music, and we buy it. We have turned Beyoncé into a sort of goddess, worshiping her on social media and dubbing her “Queen-B.” Beyoncé is a celebrity who just so happens to be a singer, too.

We see the same techniques used again and again in the popular music industry; the charts are filled with entertainers who focus more on cultivating their image than their music. Iggy Azalea, Nikki Minaj, Lady Gaga, Katy Perry and Lana Del Rey are just some examples of entertainers who heavily rely on their sexuality to sell music and concert tickets; when we support these entertainers, we

must realize that we are supporting music made mostly by men, not women.

If we want to promote women in music, let’s listen to music made by women, and, like Björk suggests, give women credit for the music that they create. Let’s listen to artists instead of sex-symbols. Seek out women who write their own songs and support them because they make good music, not because they fit our culture’s definition of sexy. While a problem does exist in the music industry, the problem also exists with us. We are the ones buying into what record companies are trying to sell, and it is up to us to choose music that glorifies women as God’s creation who are co-creators, made in his image.

Recommended listening: Purity Ring, First Aid Kit, Haim, Lily & Madeleine, My Brightest Diamond, Sleater-Kinney, St. Vincent, Lucius, Tune-Yards and Björk.

# An Open Follow-Up Letter to Sufjan

BY LIZ SIMAKOFF

Hey Sufjan,

It’s me, the girl with the curly hair and the tortoise-shell glasses that I lost a month after meeting you. It might seem forward to some people for me to call you by your first name, but I also think that calling people by their first and last name in a letter is kind of ridiculous. Also I know you would tell me to just call you by your first name if you were here because when we met, you didn’t ask my name but you smiled really genuinely at me, which is better than a name exchange.

I was the one who made my friend go talk to you and live Instagrammed it so that all of our friends would know how amazing his night was—meeting his hero and all. I think what my friend meant to

say in his letter to you was that he’s sorry he has been over-thinking all of this so much. This may seem strange, to contradict him after he’s just written you that long letter with so many impressive sounding adjectives, but I know you’d like this follow-up because of what happened when we met you. I know because I remember looking into your eyes and you winking at me. I knew you thought it was cute how awkward he was being and how uncomfortable this was for everyone. You thought it was sort of silly how we barged in, but you got it: because intermission was ending and life is short, you have to walk up to your heroes when you see them sipping champagne—if only to thank them for their work.

The other thing my friend left out in his letter to you was how he

gushed for the rest of the night. He told everyone he met and could not believe it had actually happened. I made him tell his sister and his mom because I knew that they would be as happy for him as I was, even if none of us love your work as much as him. Everyone was so happy to see him so happy; that is friendship after all, loving people in spite of their uncomfortable meetings and feeling things with them.

The truth is, I would do it all over again, a hundred times over. Because I learned something important then, and in the months following. While Calvin might have made so many mistakes when he walked up to you that night, you forgave him immediately and understood his tunnel vision came from a good place. You knew that

he meant well, so you forgave him, and I’m guessing so did CJG because everyone is young once and they know what it’s like to be so uncomfortable in your own skin. I’m not excusing Calvin, and I’m sure you’re not either—he was kind of being an idiot that night—but we both forgave him for that. Because that’s what you have to do for people. You forgive and then you move on, and you are glad you do—it brings you closer to God and to his people.

I have had to forgive a lot this year, and I know that while I am projecting a lot onto you in this letter, you have probably had to do a lot of forgiving in your life as well. It is certainly never easy; some people avoid it forever and drown in their own sin and the sins committed against them. But, oh,

how wonderful it is to let go—to realize that you have been forgiven more deeply than you will ever understand and to let go of your offenses against others. It is like having your feet set down on the highest mountain and singing all of the best notes with your friends. Forgiving is the truest form of freedom, the place where we truly understand who we are in the Lord.

Thanks for being so patient with us that night, and in reading both of these silly letters. I’m really grateful for your life and your work. I hope we can hang out some day and maybe sing something together.

All my love,

“Obsidian Curls”

# Thoughts on Human Sexuality

BY PROFESSOR CLIFF FOREMAN

Like other Christians, I have had to think through the bewildering flood of ideas about gender and sexuality that our culture has been generating in the past few years. It's been confusing and difficult. Some of the things I've said about human sexuality in the past no longer seem adequate to me. Many of the things I've heard other people say seem unbiblical and troubling. But I think I'm ready to express some of my opinions with a modicum of clarity.

Most human beings are gifted by God with either a female body or a male body. Some human beings are inter-sexed, and their situations are difficult, and I'll come back to them. But I don't think their situations should cloud our understanding of what the Bible says about males and females. If a male or a female wants to enter into a sexual union with another human being, God's will for that person is clear. Genesis says, "God created human beings in his own image; male and female he created them," and "for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife and the two shall become one flesh." When Jesus was asked about God's will for human sexuality, he went to these passages from the creation story. So people to whom God has given a male body are free to enter into a committed sexual union with people with female bodies, and vice versa. That was Jesus' understanding of God's intention for marriage, and I don't think human beings and human cultures have the freedom to change that.

That's clear and it's simple. But the concept of gender complicates things. I hear the word gender being used in two different ways right now. Gender can refer to a culture's patterns for communicating and expressing maleness or femaleness, or it can refer to our personal conception of our identity as we express it sexually. I don't really like the way our culture is thinking about that second use of the word. Many of our American

contemporaries seem to believe that we are born with a gender that is independent of our bodies' sex. So our way of thinking or feeling might be female and our body male, or vice versa. Generally, when people say that they believe this, they are thinking about what we have come to call sexual preference, the sort of person someone has come to want to have sex with. People in our culture have come to believe that we are born with an innate sexual preference and as we mature our preference manifests itself in an inevitable way. I, personally, doubt that that is true, since none of us are born wanting to have sex anyway, and the way our personalities develop is a complicated process. But whether it is true or not is irrelevant in my opinion. As a Christian, I believe that none of us is born with an innate desire to do the will of God, anyway, and all of us need to repent of our sinful desires and follow God's will, whatever we desire and however we have come to desire it.

The other idea of gender is also troubling to me, though. Our ideas about gender come to us from our cultures, and our cultures, as human creations, reflect both human creativity, part of the image of God in us, and human fallenness, our collective evil. Further, our cultural ideas about gender are often intolerant, cruel, and oppressive. And Christians frequently try to baptize these cultural ideas and read them back into the Bible. Too often we try to determine what men are supposed to be like and what women are supposed to be like and then we brand as sin anything that doesn't fit these Christianized gender roles. People are varied and complicated; they don't all fit into those generalized categories. When we try to squeeze our brothers and sisters into these set concepts of maleness and femaleness, we play right into our culture's ideas of gender. But I don't think same-sex attraction or any other sort of personality variation should call into question

people's maleness or femaleness given to them by God at birth. I think each of us needs to discover who God has made us to be and to express that without worrying about whether others will think that our personalities fit their cultural conception of what qualities are male or female. If you are a woman, whatever you are is what a woman is. If you are a man, whatever you are is what a man is. The only thing we need to renounce is sin.

So, as I said before, if someone has a male body, he is free to enter into committed sexual union with a person with a female body, and vice versa. People are also free to stay single, and the Bible says that God honors that decision. What we aren't free to do is to define ourselves as somehow something different from what God has made us physically. Nor do I think that we are free to decide that we would prefer to have a different sex than the sex God has assigned to us. People who are born with some sort of ambiguous genetic or physical sexual characteristics are, of course, a different story. Though this is complicated, my most basic opinion right now is that those people probably know better than anyone else what they are and that they should be free to avail themselves of whatever medical procedures will help them to express who they are sexually.

Americans have always cherished freedom, and we have wanted to further the freedom of other people. But a Christian also must believe that human freedom is limited by the will of God and that following God's will furthers true human freedom and happiness. Our culture has taken on itself the right to redefine something that Jesus saw as a creation ordinance, something that human cultures have almost universally maintained. Our job as Christians is to think carefully about what people around us are saying in light of our understanding of the word of God. Then we need to do our best to do the will of God, to honor

each other's personalities, and to love others. No doubt a lot more thinking has to be done about this issue. Perhaps some of my ideas still need to be adjusted, and I'm willing to listen to other arguments. But this is what I am willing to say with some confidence right now.

*If you are interested in processing these ideas further, Covenant is hosting a panel discussion titled "Sexual Identity and the Christian: Continuing the Conversation." The event will take place on Thursday, Feb. 19 featuring: Hans Madueme, Camille Hallstrom, Kevin Eames, Shan Alexander, Evan Marbury, Kevin McAlvey and Hunter Rasmusen in Sanderson 215 from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.*



*Covenant artists including junior art majors Sarabeth Kendall and Meghan Earll have been contemplating issues of gender and identity in their respective art practices. In Kendall's "Volume," pictured above, the artist uses wire to suggest the form of a bra and the implication of its taboo nature. Pictured below, a partial of Earll's collage titled "Adam and Eve" takes images from art history to explore a biblical concept of identity. Photos taken with permission from the artists' Instagrams.*

# Softball: The Game of the People

BY SCOTT MCKNIGHT

Nineteen. Yeah, nineteen. That's why you should find yourself at a lot of softball games this year. Well, it's one of the reasons. These girls work all year long to reap the rewards a few months out of the year and to represent Covenant well. Softball is like baseball without the things people complain about in baseball. Game too slow? Softball hears you! That's why they shrunk the field so the action takes place a lot more quickly. Now don't get me wrong, I love to watch Garrett Kriston, Micah Mabe, and Alec Mitchell fan batters as much as the next guy, but some folks take issue with the lack of balls put into play in an average baseball game. No worries, folks, softball feels you! That's why they've got a larger ball that keeps the ball in play and you on the edge of your seat. Softball! It's the game of the people!

Alright, so it's a cool game and it fills the voids where baseball misses. Why else should we be braving the cold to watch the Scots play some softball? Our ladies have game. I wanted to save my explanation of "nineteen" for the end, but I can't contain it anymore. The Lady Scots have scored nineteen runs in their first two games. Nineteen. I asked a Physics major and he said that's like more than eight a game. These girls are hitting .367 on the year as a team. That's absurd. They're getting on

base nearly 47% of the time! Expert source, Kaitlyn Simons, said that's almost half the time. How much fun would a game be if you were getting on base almost half the time you come up to bat? Exactly. That's why you should find yourself at a lot of softball games this year. These girls are raking and having a blast doing it.

So softball is great and the Scots are great at it as a team. Still not sold? Well the team rolls out some great individual talent, too. The Scots are returning two players who received postseason honors last year in Morgan Lane and Jordan Brett who are already back on similar paths again this year. Morgan is batting .500 and already has a pair of RBIs. Remember what we talked about earlier about getting on base half the time you come up to bat? Yeah, just ask her about it if you see her around. In addition, junior Madison Quirk has come flying out of the gates this year in her third season as a Scot. She couldn't have gotten off to a better start. No, literally, it's mathematically impossible for her to have started any better. She's had five at bats and she's gotten five hits (two of which were doubles), scored four runs, and tallied four RBIs. On top of that, the Scots have six freshmen on this year's team and they are making a big impact early. One of these is Cris Grant, a freshman

hailing from Gardendale, Ala. who is doing big things for the Scots so far. Grant has thrown only eight innings so far but has fanned fourteen batters. Now, if you haven't been in the stands and felt the joy of a home-team strike-out, then this is urgent. You may need to find a local high school game instead of waiting for the Scots to come back into town. The feeling that comes with watching someone try to hit a pitch and missing the ball not once, not twice, but three times just pulls on your heart strings in an unexplain-

able way.

The late, great Nelson Mandela said, "Sport has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to the youth in a language they understand." So get yourself out to a softball game the next time the Scots are in town because they're good at what they do, they worked hard to be as good as they are at what they do, and because it's Mandela-approved.



Lady Scots Softball players during a game in their 2014 season, photo from athletics.covenant.edu

# Scots Spotlight: Abbey Bailey

BY NATE FRIERSON



Abbey Bailey playing against N.C. Wesleyan, photo by Anna Dove

**Name:** Abbey Bailey

**Year:** Freshman

**Hometown:**

Burnsville, North Carolina

**Sport:** Basketball

**Position:** Guard

**Major:** Biology

**Q: What is your best memory with the Scot's basketball team?**

A. Beating Agnes Scott in over time on Senior Day.

**Q: What/who got you to start playing basketball?**

A. My mom played basketball in college. For as long as I can remember she was always putting a basketball in my hands and encouraging me to pursue the sport.

**Q: What's your favorite tradition of the Scots' basketball team?**

A. Watching Coach Carter before the first game of the season.

**Q: What do you do to get pumped up for games?**

A. I like to go down to Ashe gym a few hours before the game and get some extra shoots up alone before we start our team warm up.

**Q: If you could have one superpower, what would you pick and why?**

A. I would want to have the ability to travel in time, so I could go back and relive exciting past events.

**Q: What is something about you that most people don't know?**

A. In the summer I show and ride horses.

**Q: If you could play another sport in college what would you pick?**

A. Volleyball

**Q: Do you have a favorite professional basketball team (WNBA or NBA)?**

A. I don't really follow professional basketball, but I am a huge Duke fan!

**Q: If you had to pick a theme song for the 2014-2015 women's basketball team what song would you pick and why?**

A. I would have to choose Thinking Out Loud by Ed Sheeran because everyone on our team has been obsessed with this song for the past three months.