Springfield Armory: A Look Down the Barrel of History
by Michael Louth

After the Revolutionary War, President George Washington proposed that if we are to be a nation of our own we must have a place to manufacture weapons for the nation’s defense. In 1794 the Springfield Armory was approved by President George Washington and Congress, to begin manufacturing small arms for our nation’s military. The Springfield Armory was the epicenter of weapons development and manufacturing for 174 years, closing in 1968.

President Washington chose Springfield, Massachusetts as the location due in part because of its geographical advantage. It lies in the midst of the Connecticut River Valley, at the intersection of three rivers, Being located north of Enfield Falls, the Connecticut River’s first waterfall; ocean vessels could not navigate the river. Therefore, the Springfield Armory was protected from attacks by sea faring vessels from the river. The geology of Springfield was also offered a strategic advantage, being on a plateau. This offered the high ground advantage. Springfield also acted as a midpoint between Boston and New York.

The Armory’s early superintendents had frequent contacts with many inventors, such as Eli Whitney. As a result of these contacts the Springfield Armory incorporated machines with hand work, which eased the production and standardization of parts for the firearms it produced. The Armory’s industrial processes and inventions were eventually assimilated into the private sector, transforming how modern consumer products were produced. Many towns and cities were established along the Connecticut River, from Vermont to Connecticut that used these advancements in technology. This area is now known as The Precision Corridor.

One of the most important machines was the Blanchard Lathe, invented by Thomas Blanchard. An employee of the Armory for five years, he believed that if something had to be repeatedly produced it should be done by a machine. In the five years of his employment he invented thirteen machines that eased production of musket stocks. The same process is in use today when you go get your keys copied. Blanchard’s inventions made interchangeable parts and mass production possible. The original Blanchard Lathes can be viewed in the Armory museum.

During the 174 year history of the Armory many famous rifles were designed including:

- U.S. Flintlock M1795 – Post Revolution War, War of 1812
- U.S Percussion Musket M1842 – Mexican-American War 1846-1848, Civil War 1861-1865
- U.S. Percussion Rifle-Musket M1855 – Civil War 1861-1865
- U.S. Percussion Rifle-Musket 1861 – Civil War 1861-1865
- U.S. Springfield “Trapdoor” M1873 – Spanish-American War 1898, Philippine Insurrection 1899-1902, American Indian War
- U.S. Krag-Jørgensen Magazine Rifle M1892 – Spanish-American War 1898
- U.S. Springfield Magazine Rifle M1903 – World War I, World War II

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Reading Group Honors Founder, Professor Dennison Rice

There’s a certain something that happens when you get a group of Faculty, Staff and Administrators together to perform, and that is a spontaneous ignition of fun, talent and collegiality that is contagious! This semester’s October 30th performance of the STCC Reading Group at the “Top of Springfield”, Scibelli Hall, was particularly meaningful as it was to honor and commemorate the legacy of recently passed Professor Dennison Rice. Denny founded and led the group until his retirement when he passed on the baton to Professor Davis Johnson who has run it ever since.

The Reading Group performs once a semester with works both original and by well-known authors, selected around a theme. Selections include poetry, prose, musical compositions, and excerpts from plays. The group is always looking for new members, so if interested, please contact Davis Johnson at ext. 5250.

The following performed, giving Denny quite the send-off:

- Professor Kathy Andrew
- Professor Ken Forfia – “The Cacophonous Clanger of the Keys”
- Anita Gallers, Academic Counselor
- Professor Davis Johnson
- Professor Nancy Pickett
- Professor Nan Rice
- Professor Yasotha Sriharan

Performers and audience members at the October 30th Reading Group performance in honor of the recently passed Professor Dennison Rice. Photos by Cynthia Claudio.

Professor Nan Rice performing “Imagine” by John Lennon, in honor of her late husband, Professor Dennison Rice, founder of the STCC Reading Group.
Byเฉลิมฟ้าวานิช

Birth of a Vocation

Growing up, my summers were always spent on Connecticut’s beaches where I realized what I wanted to be as a career. The moment I realized I wanted to become a marine biologist was an experience I won’t forget because it opened my eyes to all the things living around us that we don’t take a moment to notice.

My family used to spend weekends at a hotel in West Haven Connecticut, where the beach was pretty much across the street. It was a hot summer day in the middle of July and I was probably around ten years old. I remember sitting on the wet sand enjoying the soft breeze and the sounds of the bird chirping. I sat peacefully watching with curiosity the seagulls peck at all the little crabs that stayed behind during low tide. The sight was interesting to me, so I got up off the sand and started walking straight towards them. Walking barefoot, I could feel all the little shells from the hermit crabs and sausages under my feet along with the soft wet sand. The sand was cold and refreshing on my feet, but the small was strong and fluffy, which only killed the vibe slightly. Although it smelled, it didn’t stop me from wanting to explore.

As I was walking I was watching the sand and the imprint that my feet left behind, and noticed a sudden splash of water. I wanted to know why water just randomly appeared out of the sand like that. So, I took on an old jagged shell big enough to dig with, and started digging at the spot where the water came from. I dug until I hit something hard and broke the shell. When I reached into the hole to try and feel what was inside, I felt a huge rock that was jammed into the sand, so I got on my knees and used both hands with a good amount of force to release what I thought was a rock from the sand. When I finally pulled it out, it was a giant clam that was bigger than my hand. I could feel the clam tighten itself up while I held it in my hands. This is a defense mechanism they use to keep predators from opening them up. It looked just like the purple clams from SpongeBob, just not as purple.

I stood at what I had just found and realized how cool it was that I had found it. I then started to think about what else I could possibly discover and how awesome it would be to find something totally brand new to me. I put the clam in a small toy bucket that I had randomly found thrown around. It was cracked a little bit and I was missing the handle, but it was good enough to hold a couple of clams. I was so intrigued and continued looking for more random quirks of water and digging up the clams. I spent most of that day happily digging, just to find out a few more before the side started to cool in again. I walked off the beach with my bucket of shells and crossed the street back to the hotel to show my family what I had found under the sand. I remember feeling so proud of myself for learning something new. Obviously, catching clams wasn’t a new thing, but it’s not something I ever knew about or how to do.

This experience was one that I will never forget because it opened up my eyes to the world of marine biology, which is a field that I find so intriguing in every way. A marine biologist is someone who studies all types of sea creatures, and can choose to specialize in studying large ocean animals. It made me realize that there’s so much to learn about the oceans, and we’ve only scratched the surface.
At Right:

First Floor
- Health Center

Second Floor
- Student Financial Services (everyone co-located for better service).

Third Floor
- Mechanical and egress for conference rooms.

First Floor
- The forum. This is a new space the STCC has never had before. Landmark for you (center elevator on South wall). At the end of the forum, there is a big concrete wall.
- Disability, career, and Veterans' services and the adaptive testing lab.

Second Floor
- Academic advising and the testing center.
- Bathrooms on all three floors.

Third Floor
- Lobby; storage and mechanics.

Why You Should Watch The WNBA

by Jamiel Sam

The goal of the game isn’t to dunk on people, it’s to win. Basketball is the same sport regardless of who participates in it at any given time or any given court. Regardless of the race, gender, age, or country of origin of the ball handler, the hoop is still 10 feet tall and he/she shares the court with nine other players during live action. Winning basketball transcends all of the preconceived mental barriers people place on the game based on their limitations and/or overactive imaginations. Middle schoolers want to shoot turnaround fadeaway jump shots like Kobe Bryant or Michael Jordan, without realizing those players are 6’9” giants with long hands and near unattainable strength and balance. I find that in trying to teach the game to younger, less-athletic players, watching women’s basketball is effective because they use the same professional tips that NBA players do, but without possessing physical or athletic tools that are tough to relate to those who did not hit the genetic lottery. Many less experienced or less informed basketball players are under the impression that because women are not as athletic as men or that because they cannot do flashy dunks, they are lesser basketball players when that is simply not true.

Diana Taurasi of the Phoenix Mercury became the WNBA’s all-time leading scorer this past season, her 13th in the league. At the age of thirty-five, Taurasi has achieved many accomplishments and broken many records, but she never takes the cake in signifying who she is (and was) as a player. What stands out to me is how effortless she makes the game of basketball look, which makes sense; anybody who has scored enough points on their peers to become a professional league’s all-time leading scorer, has a relative mastery of their craft that should make it seem like a breeze.

Crossover to the men’s side and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar has stood the test of time (he retired in 1990), to remain the NBA’s all-time leading scorer. Kareem was all of at least 7 feet and 2 inches. When you factor in the extra inch or two his Chuck Taylor’s added when he played, he was at least 7’3”. He played for 20 years in the league and was known for his effortless unstoppable move, the skyhook. True to its name, Kareem could extend off one leg and reach into the sky anywhere within 15 feet from the hoop and flick the ball in, and there was nothing you could do about it.

Standing only six feet tall, Taurasi is tall for a female guard but doesn’t have anywhere near physical luxuries Kareem scored his 38,387 career points with (Basketball Reference 2017). On the other hand, she is a professional basketball player and has spent an amount of time perfecting her game that would be unimaginable to the average person. That is how Taurasi is able to exhibit an effortlessness and an aura of unbridled confidence that rivals the likes of Steph Curry, Lebron James, or Kyrie Irving, all proven championship-level playmakers and game managers. In each of the past three NBA seasons, James and Irving have teamed up on the Cleveland Cavaliers against Curry and the Warriors. It was the first time in NBA history that two teams met in the Finals three years in a row with the Warriors taking two of three (Bleib 2017). Taurasi has three WNBA championships with the Mercury, equal to James in his career, despite her playing one season less.

In college she was a national champion with the UCONN Huskies in each of her final three years and is regarded as one of the greatest UCONN players of all time, at a school that has won eleven National Championships since 1995. The more than two decades running of dominance reflects the dominance of coach John Wooden’s UCLA Bruins in the 60’s and 70’s on the men’s side, where they won ten titles in a twelve year span. Much like Taurasi, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (then Lew Alcindor) won three championships in twelve years with the Bruins during his time there. At such a historic school, Taurasi stands out as one of the greatest players to ever come through there, and her list of accomplishments since leaving only serve to confirm that notion. In her fourteen year career, nine times she’s made the All-WNBA 1st Team and three times 2nd Team. The All-league teams are awards chosen after the season to recognize the best performers in the league at their position that season.

As players, we often make the game far more difficult than it needs to be. We get caught up in emotions and “proving ourselves” or “playing our game” and almost forget to just play the game. The game is just basketball, not “do-whatever-I-feel-like-ball”. I think females have a much better grasp and understanding of this concept than do male players, on average. “Hero-ball” as basketball purists like to call it, is the antithesis of the way the game should be played. In my years of experience playing, coaching, or just studying the game, I have found the lead cause of hero ball not to be sheer inexperience (as even some of the NBA’s best are prone to...
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A Tour of the Ira H. Rubenzhal Learning Commons

The Learning Commons sits on the site of an old Western Mass State Armory, a place of historical significance. The building is now a hub for student resources and services, with various offices, study rooms, and a student center. The facility is designed to accommodate the needs of students, faculty, and staff, providing a modern and comfortable environment for learning.

Emerging from the west end of the eating commons, one will encounter various offices including that for Student Services. The building, open to the public, houses a variety of student services and resources. An important aspect of the Learning Commons is the emphasis on accessibility and inclusivity, providing a welcoming environment for all.

Building 19: the old Army Armory building, in the process of being metamorphized into the Ira H. Rubenzhal Learning Commons.

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A Tour of the Ira H. Rubenzhal Learning Commons

"Your Reality Is Just As Important As Mine": A Profile of Professor Eric Brown

by Jamal Sam

I ntrigued to the door and knocked gently as I was told I could when I arrived at the professor’s office. Professor Brown sat in plain sight with his back to me, watching something on his computer while engaged in another conversation. He looked up briefly as I entered and greeted me with a warm smile. He offered me a seat and began to talk about his work and teaching philosophy.

Professor Brown was an immigrant from a region that happens to be his wife, Shelley.

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The Springfield Armory, at the time the Springfield Arsenal, (an arsenal is a storage unit for weapons, while an armory is a place where weapons are manufactured); also saw a political uprising in 1787. Daniel Shays, a Revolutionary War veteran, led thousands of rebels in an uprising for civil rights and against economic injustices. Shays marched the rebels to the Springfield Armory in an attempt to take hold of the weaponry stored there. The uprising is known today as Shays’ Rebellion. This rebellion influenced the federal government to create the US Constitution whereby the power of the federal government was sharply increased, with the intention of the federal government to create the Rebellion. This rebellion influenced

The springfield Armory in an attempt to take hold of the weaponry stored there. The uprising is known today as Shays’ Rebellion. This rebellion influenced the federal government to create the US Constitution whereby the power of the federal government was sharply increased, with the intention of preventing any future rebellions against the government.

The deactivation of the Springfield Armory in 1968 led to the buildings being unoccupied. In 1969, the Springfield Technical Institute moved to the vacant Armory. Buildings were renovated into classrooms, giving rise to Springfield Technical Community College. For a short video of the history of STCC please view the following link: https://www.stcc.edu/about-stcc/history/

During this time, the Arsenal building opened as a museum operated by a non-profit organization called Friends of the Springfield Armory, Inc. In 1974, the Springfield Armory National Historic Site was authorized by Congress P.L 93-486. In 1978, the Armory was established as National Historic Site.

The historic site sits upon 55 acres, 20 acres are managed by the National Park Service (NPS). Thirty-five acres are managed by Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. STCC and the NPS work in collaboration to manage the site as a whole.

Today, the Springfield Armory National Historic Site offers a way to discover the past, not just through the weapons that were developed here, but also through the innovations and technological advancements in engineering pioneered here. The weapons produced at the Armory swayed battlefield field tactics from the War of 1812 to Vietnam. The Armory is a place where the students of STCC can learn about the early origins of their school and the historical use of their classrooms.

Sources: National Park Service. “Springfield Armory National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan.” Springfield Armory National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan, 2015. Other information was learning on the job from current National Park Service employees and the current volunteers that work at the Springfield Armory.

The Graphic Communications and Photography Department at Springfield Technical Community College recently installed a new Canon 750C Digital Press. The new digital press is state-of-art and was funded by the Commonwealth.

“The Canon digital press is a standard for many of the printers in Western Mass,” Professor Matt Kriftcher, Department Chair, said. “This acquisition offers students the opportunity to experience the latest technology in printing available in today’s print industry,” Kriftcher said.

The Graphic Communications & Photography Department at STCC offers a curriculum designed to prepare students for careers in printing, publishing, advertising and photography. Degree options include Graphic Design, Photography, and Web Design & Advertising. Graduates with their associate degree might transition into this industry or transfer to a four-year degree course at Central Connecticut State University or Elms College.

Evening courses are also offered in addition to the day program courses. Evening courses being offered during the 2018 spring semester include GAT-175 Airbrushing II, GAT-170 Introduction to Photography, and GAT-160 Introduction to Web Design.

Registration for day and evening courses has begun and will continue through January, 2018.

Courses fill up fast so register soon!

For more information about applying, call the admissions office at 413.755.333 or visit www.stcc.edu/apply.

—STCC Press Release

Professor Matt Kriftcher examines the new Canon 750C Canon Digital Press recently delivered to the Graphic Communications and Photography Department. Photograph by Dariel Lopez.