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The Bullsheet, a forum for news, humor, and community dialogue, is funded by DCGA and is printed each day that classes are in session. Submissions must be sent before 6:30pm for next day submission via e-mail to:bullsheet@denison.edu. Submissions herein solely reflect the opinions of the authors.

Edited last night by: Zach Correia  
Delivered this morning by: Bugg  
vol. LXVI/ no. 29 / March 5, 2020

## THE 1918 SPANISH FLU AT DENISON

The question of the current outbreak of coronavirus is becoming more of a question of “when” instead of “if” it will come to campus. Although it still can be contained, the virus’ high infectivity rate means it will be hard to isolate the germ. The U.S. has not dealt with a severe pandemic like what the coronavirus may become in many decades (the HIV and AIDS epidemic of the 1980s comes close within the communities it impacted but had a near-zero transmission rate outside bodily fluid transmissions). The closest modern pandemic that can be compared to is the Spanish Flu of 1918.

The Spanish Flu in total killed around 50 million people worldwide with about 675,000 Americans dying according to the CDC. The Spanish flu came in two waves with a relatively normal first wave and then a severely deadly second wave that peaked in October 1918 when most of the deaths occurred. What made the Spanish Flu unique was that young healthy people were succumbing to it more than normal high risk demographic like old people and children. A prevailing theory is that the healthy immune systems of young adults over attacked the virus leading to more severe symptoms causing higher rates of death. Dealing with the flu became a national emergency that affected every corner of the country.

Denison and Granville, however, were largely untouched by the Spanish Flu. No Denison students died of the flu. In total, zero male students and only twelve female students were infected according to the January 10, 1919 issue of the Denisonian. There was a military officer’s school at Denison during the duration of the war and a few of these men were infected with a mild form of the virus. However, their status as “Denison Students” has been debated both now and back then. Additionally, at least according to the same Denisonian article, Denison was one of only two colleges in the country not to close during the epidemic. Granville fared worse though, with around 120 cases of the flu by the start of October according to the Denisonian.

Even though the flu was relatively mild on campus, lessons can still be learned from it. The main reasons why Denison, and to an extent Granville, got off easy was that Granville was a backwater town, the student population was spread out, and there was a ban on public gathering before the height of the epidemic.

Granville was more or less an isolated rural community that was not connected to any major infrastructure. The National Road was far to the south of town and the railroad was only a spinoff line from Newark that carried mostly freight. People did not come to Granville just to pass through. Professors lived in town and travel outside the county was not a common day-to-day occurrence for most people. Compared to a city like Columbus or Newark, there were few ways in and out of town with fewer people coming and going.

Another reason that the flu was not severe was that most male students lived in what we would today call off-campus living. The male students of Denison either lived in fraternity houses in the village, joined eating clubs, or boarded in Granville homes. If an outbreak were to happen, the male student population was dispersed enough that if one house got infected the others were far away enough to not be infected. Female students were not as lucky. While women could take classes alongside men at Denison, technically all women were students of Shepardson College with its Victorian-era idea of gender. All women students were required to live on what is now South Quad in close quarters with each other. An outbreak did occur in King Hall by the start of December 1918, when the flu had mutated into a less severe strain. When a student was sick they were moved to the Kappa Phi sorority house (now the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority but a different house than their current one) that was converted into a makeshift hospital. The actual moving of students to the hospital is actually kind of funny. According to the Denisonian, once a student became ill, a call was put out to the President and the Registrar along with two “strong fraternity men” to carry the student on a stretcher to the hospital. If the President or the Registrar were not available, then the nearest faculty member would stop their class, grab the two or three strongest students, put on gas masks and carry the sick student to the hospital and then just go back to teaching. Never say Denison faculty don’t care about their students.

*Continues on back...*

## CONTINUED FROM FRONT

The other big step that prevented more students from getting infected was the banning of public events. By October 4th a ban on public gathering was in place including church services, public schools and spectating of sports games. This lack of events can be seen in the Denisonian being reduced to four instead of six pages as there was nothing to cover. It got so bad at a point that the paper started running updates on professors' lives and student poems about flu. All student and Granville citizens were discouraged from leaving town, even to go to Newark, and from having close interactions with others. The main reason classes continued was mostly to keep students in town and give them something to do with their time while the rest of the village was largely shut down. While small gatherings did continue such as YMCA meetings and small prayer services most events were postponed until after the epidemic.

All of this is to say that we are not the university nor the Granville of 102 years ago. We travel more and most faculty and staff members do not live in Granville. We are not the little village that could isolate itself as we did a century ago. If the coronavirus does come to campus it will have an easy time spreading through the dorms. While I am sure that everything will be done to keep the campus as sanitized as possible it does not take much for one student, say coming back from spring break, to spread it to the rest of their floor. While the Denison Bubble is good at making a strong sense of community, all of us being close together makes it a prime location for viruses to spread. If there is an outbreak on campus, we should expect for events and gatherings to be canceled. If the campus outbreak is severe enough, the canceling of classes may happen. That would not be a decision Denison takes on its own but would follow what other schools are doing and recommendations from the CDC. It is also a long way off from where we are now so don't plan on the due date of your paper being pushed back.

This is not to cause panic or worry. Infections in the U.S. are still low and as more data is reported young people seem to have less severe symptoms. However, as the 1918 flu shows we must be prepared for disruption of normal business and life on campus. If the current outbreak grows, it's only a matter of time before it comes to our hill. If you are feeling sick do not go to class. Whatever you miss can be made up later. Your personal and our community health is way more important than any assignment or lecture. It's also not going to be the end of the world for an event to be postponed or a meeting canceled. If anything that might help with Denison's toxic busyness culture. It is going to be on all of us to prevent its spread. So wash your hands, disinfect surfaces, don't touch your face and stay updated on news about the virus.

*- Zach Correia, Head Writer*

**SKETCH'S**  
**TASKMASTER**  
 HERRICK AUDITORIUM  
 MARCH 8TH  
 2:30 PM

SKETCH'S COMEDY TROUPE  
**OPEN**  
**AUDITIONS**  
 HERRICK AUDITORIUM  
 MARCH 8TH | 3:30 PM  
EMAIL OR DM US WITH QUESTIONS  
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APPLY TO WORK AT THE  
**WRITING**  
**CENTER**  
 ALL MAJORS WELCOME  
 MUST BE AVAILABLE 6 HOURS A WEEK  
**APPLICATION MATERIALS**  
ONLINE APPLICATION FORM (MYDENISON)  
 2 FORMAL DENISON FACULTY RECOMMENDATION LETTERS  
 3-5 PAGE EXPOSITORY WRITING SAMPLE (CAN BE AN EXCERPT)  
**APPLY BY: MARCH 27TH @ 4PM**  
EMAIL APPLICATION TO:  
 ROYLER@DENISON.EDU

Spring Dance  
**COLORS**  
**OF**  
**AFRICA**  
 Friday, March 6  
 7:30 PM - 12:00 AM  
 Knobel Hall, Burton Morgan  
 Colors of Africa (green, yellow, red) Theme  
 Performances from Afro-Spice Dance Team & DJ Joe  
 Come enjoy free signature African food!  
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get in, boomer!  
we're going to lose the election

Staff "Biden quoting the Declaration" Box

- Jax "We Hold" Preyer, "Managing Editor"
- Isabella "these truths to" Puccini, Senior Editor
- Sophia "be self-evident" Menconi, Senior Editor
- Charlie "all man" Schweiger, Junior Editor
- Zach "and women" Correia, Head Writer
- Jay "are created" Huff, Senior Writer
- Elizabeth "by the" Arterberry, Junior Writer
- Jack "go" May, Sophomore Writer
- James "you know" Whitney, Delivery Sheriff
- Katie "you know the thing" Kerrigan, Foreign Correspondent

Wash your  
fucking  
hands