

# A Mother Away From Home

By Deanna Williams ◉ December 8, 2013



Having some problems adapting to college life? Need help finding the right organization to join on campus? Or even finding someone to vent to about how much you need to study for an upcoming test? If this is you, I'm pretty sure you have made your way to the office of Leslie Doyle, Director of Diversity and Social Justice. Doyle is not your ordinary director: her passion and love for the students she encounters everyday is what makes her job rewarding.

Originally from Kansas City, MO, Doyle began her college career at Northwest Missouri State where she majored in Communications/Broadcasting. Graduating with her Bachelor of Arts, Doyle pursued grad school at the University of Kansas (Jayhawks) and obtained her first Masters Degree in Higher Education. Many undergraduate students pursue graduate school, but for Doyle going to graduate school for higher education is a choice she is most proud of. "I didn't know you could go to school for higher education until I met my Director of Diversity at Northwest. I was concerned about the representation of people of my color on campus and that's when I met my director."

Not only does Doyle serve as a mentor for the African American students but also an organizer for many events on and off campus. Doyle's recent event which she help plan was the International Bizarre. Students from different countries prepared food, dances and presentations about their cultures. On this day you could find Doyle helping students set up, interacting with students and staff, and overall enjoying her job with a huge smile on her face. The day wasn't over for Doyle after the event. Students came back to Doyle's office to help put things away, talk, and have some good laughs.

Alumni Saliou Dioum, a 2012 graduate from Senegao, West Africa was one of the people in Doyle's office that day. "During my time at Fontbonne, Leslie was my mentor, telling me what's wrong and what's right and always straight forward when it came to helping make decisions." Dioum spent his day catching up with Doyle and informing her about his latest adventures.

Not only do the students love Leslie, her coworkers love her presence as well. "I love working with Leslie, she is awesome." said Student Affairs Administrative Assistant, Michelle Hechinger. Executive Administrative Assistant Mary Asaro complemented Doyle as well, "Leslie is very engaged with the students and keeps them actively involved, and her laugh will tickle you."

With her commitment to her job, Doyle is always encouraging students to complete their academic journey, become leaders, and most importantly to never give up. All the students who have sat with

Doyle in her office in between classes can definitely say she is their mother away from home, someone who guides them to their goals. “ 'I'm going to take care of your baby,' is what my diversity director said to my mom my freshman year at Northwest.”

Taking care of all the students she encounters is what Doyle is committed to doing every day. Continue being the outstanding and amazing person you are Leslie, and know that your work is never in vain or goes unrecognized.

# Chief Datson Speaks at Fontbonne

By Arlene Gandy 🕒 December 8, 2013

Saint Louis city Chief of Police spoke to Dr. Phelps' Sociology 100 class on October 7, 2013. Mr. Sam Datson graduated in 2002 with his masters from Fontbonne. He is a twenty year veteran of the Saint Louis police department, and has been Chief for the last nine months. The topic he spoke on was deviance, and the problems facing the citizens of Saint Louis city.

The department has created a new task force focused on animal abuse. The Chief believes that “animal abuse is a precursor to more violent acts.” The task force has collaborated with Mr. Randy Grimm, founder of a no-kill shelter called Stray Rescue, to save animals from abuse. “Dog fighting has become overwhelming state wide,” said Datson, and with persistence, the task force should be effective in fighting the war on animal abuse.

The Chief spoke freely about his plans to reprogram the department officers in order to address the top issue of crime in the city. Although crime total rates are down 40% statewide, the city's stats remain high. Illegal gun use is on the rise, and is directly related to the 100 reports of guns stolen from cars, 113 homicides, and the 400 arrests for armed criminal action last year.

In hopes to reduce victimization in the city's troubled areas, Datson plans to increase hot spot policing focusing on guns and drugs. “The reality of drugs is that all drugs are part of an economic enterprise...There is a nexus between any drug sales, even marijuana, to violence and crime...”stated Datson. He gave information for non-emergency and emergency contact numbers for police. He wanted to insure the students know that 911 is for emergencies, and 314-231-1212 is the number to call for non-emergency situations. Datson said he enjoys his job, and wants to impact lives in the community he is sworn to protect.

The Chiefs visit didn't go unnoticed on campus. Many students, faculty, and administrators sat in, and some took pictures with the Chief during his visit. Chief Datson was recently invited to sit on the board of Directors at Fontbonne.

# Meet Lucille Brantly

By Arlene Gandy  December 8, 2013

Mrs. Lucille Brantly-Russell may not be a hit in a Google search, but she is pioneer, the beginning of the African-American experience at Fontbonne College. In fact, in 1947, Lucille Brantly as she was called then, may have been the first to break the racial barrier at any area university.

In a phone interview, this historic alumna discussed her experience as the only African-American on campus during a highly segregated time in history. Her sweet, cultured-sounding voice lit up when she remembered the Sisters of St. Joseph as “kind and loving, the loveliest women that she had ever met.” While she said her time here as “very fun and enjoyable,” it was not without its challenges.

Mrs. Brantly-Russell spoke highly of her experience as a junior transfer from Hampton University. After graduating from Sumner High School at fifteen, she left for Virginia, but the separation proved to be too difficult for her parents. Although Mrs. Brantly had an older brother that attended Hampton with her, their parents wanted her closer to home. She returned to St. Louis, where her parents had already researched local universities. They settled on Fontbonne, but somehow receiving a catalog at her residence on Cook Avenue in North St. Louis became an obstacle. After several attempts the family finally had it delivered to her father’s colleague in a predominantly white neighborhood.

Her parents filled out the application, and she was admitted. Mrs. Brantly commuted to class, she said, “most days on public transportation.” Her route was Delmar to Skinker, then she would take the 04 Trolley straight up Wydown to campus, or some days her father would let her drive. St. Louis was a very segregated city in the forties, and at that time the school had an enrollment of only several hundred women, most from privileged families. Blacks didn’t have as many of the freedoms they do today. They were not even welcome to sit and eat dinner at any restaurant in Clayton. “I never ate lunch off campus,” Brantly said, and none of her new upper class white friends, or the few Jewish girls at Fontbonne, ever made what she called “a faux pas” to ask her to accompany them. “If you did want to be my friend or socialize with me or didn’t it didn’t make a difference to me.” But whether she was interacting with students, faculty, or staff, Mrs. Brantly focused on the goal of completing her degree, regardless of her popularity at Fontbonne.

Race did limit her social life in other ways, too, prohibiting her to participate on the swim team, or any extracurricular activities which involved physical contact since blacks were not permitted to mix with whites. When asked about activities she attended, she spoke of the annual horse show she enjoyed seeing each year and appreciated the exposure to new experience. She was invited to a few parties off campus by classmates, and “it was [her] pleasure to attend.” However, her classmates didn’t make her feel welcome, and she spent time with the parents of the house who were kinder.

Mrs. Brantly-Russell graduated in 1949 with her Bachelors in Home Economics and continued her education receiving her masters in food and nutrition. Her career began with teaching Home Economics at Vashon High School, followed by Stows Teachers College until 1952 when she married. She left St. Louis for Chicago in 1953 where her husband studied dentistry. Mrs. Brantly-Russell attended Loyola and University of Illinois receiving her certification in administration and supervision. Mrs. Brantly Russell enjoyed being an educator, and although she was offered a very good position as an administrator, she declined, retiring in 1973. With two children, she felt that she couldn’t invest the attention needed to be a great administrator, and it would either be a disadvantage to the students or

her family. She chose to be a homemaker for six years and returned to teaching briefly, from 1979 until 1981.

As a former educator and administrator, she understands and appreciates the preparedness for life that Fontbonne University instills at the institution. Mrs. Brantly-Russell said she was pleased to hear that the same values and standard of character that the Sisters of St. Joseph had established in 1923, are still present throughout Fontbonne's campus today.

# What Not to Talk About at Family Dinner

By Brooke Angel 🌱 December 8, 2013



Going home for the holidays is never easy. After a particularly painful Thanksgiving break, I want to help you survive your Christmas break. Avoid these topics and you should be safe.

## **1. Going Vegan**

I learned this the hard way. Huffington Post published an article called “Longevity, Anyone? Top 20 Reasons to Go Vegan During World Vegan Month.” In this article, they explained how humans are the only animals to drink another animal’s milk AND drink milk as adults. When my uncle lifted his glass of milk off the table and brought it to his lips, I started in, “Did you know that we’re the only animals to drink another animal’s milk AND drink it as adults? Sixty percent of adults can’t even digest it. Isn’t that interesting?” I wish I was kidding about the speed these words left my mouth, but I couldn’t help myself – I wanted to share this knowledge with my family. The milk sputtered out of my uncle’s mouth and everyone glared at me. They continued to dig into their heart-disease-causing food as I pushed an unbuttered roll around my plate. Aca-awkard (one thing most families can agree on is the wonderfulness of *Pitch Perfect*). So, even though you know the health benefits of veganism, your family doesn’t want to hear about it while they cut into their turkey/ham/roast, devour their mashed potatoes drowned in milk and butter, or while they sip on a cold glass of cow’s milk.

## **2. How the Porn Industry is Impacting Relationships**

Everyone cringes at conversations revolving around sex, but it’s everywhere, so it should be acknowledged, right? However, my stepmom kindly reminded me it’s not “dinner table appropriate.” Reading a blog post by Matt Walsh called “Married Men: your porn habit is an adultery habit” got my gears turning. Growing up in a sexually-charged society, I never thought twice about men and porn because I thought it was normal. But the title of the blog post was enough to make me wonder. I wanted to know if my stepmom thought about it and if it would hurt her feelings if my dad looked at pornography (gross). I wanted to know if my dad felt like he was cheating on his wife when he viewed pornography (grosser). And I wanted to know if my little brothers had been exposed to naked pages of the Internet (disgusting). No one answered any of my questions. Blank stares and blushed cheeks is all I received. Moral of the story: don’t ask your parents or siblings about sex.

## **3. The Sociopath Neighbor**

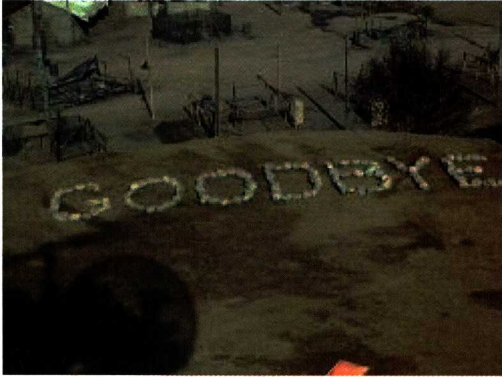
You know the boy across the street you used to ride bikes with and stay out until the streetlights came on with? The family always loves to ask, “How is [insert boy name here] doing? Have you talked to

him lately?" The typical response is, "I think he's doing well. We don't talk much, but he seems to be enjoying college at [insert University here]." However, this holiday, I told the truth. "I think he's a sociopath," is how I answered the "How is he doing?" question. My family's furrowed brows and pursed lips begged for explanation. "All I really see is his social media activity. He makes jokes about rape and domestic violence and whenever I share my articles I write for the paper about these topics, he has something offensive and threatening to say back to me." Can you guess what happened next? Silence. So, even when you realize the people you grew up with are nut jobs, your family still wants to hold on to the innocent memories. Let them live in ignorant bliss.

You're probably not as interested in these random and socially taboo topics as much as I am (if you are, we need to be friends), but avoiding these will definitely keep your family meals less uncomfortable than mine. Happy holidays, friends!

# Goodbye, Farewell, and Amen

By Matthew Russo 🕒 December 12, 2013



The title of this column is also the title of the last episode of *M\*A\*S\*H*. That's a piece of trivia so good you should pay me for bestowing it on you. Seriously, if you win a trivia contest on that question, I get a cut. Anyhow, this is my last column for *The Fontbanner* (or *Griffin Roar* or whatever we're calling it these days), and I'm going to use this space to reflect on my time at Fontbonne. Now, if you think I'm going to say, "I was so happy here, and I'm going to miss you all so much," you haven't been paying attention to my columns. Or you've never read any of the others, which wouldn't be at all surprising.

## **The Fontbonne Experience**

I feel like I had high school and college experiences opposite to those portrayed in popular culture. High school is supposed to be awkward and cliquey, whereas college is where you "find yourself" (and drink irresponsibly). For me, high school was smooth sailing, perhaps because I went to a small all-male one where we were all comfortable (maybe too comfortable) with each other. There were no "popular" kids and "losers" because everybody knew each other and mingled. There were jocks in honors classes, video game nerds on the football team, tough guys in the marching band. Guys had their own circles of friends, of course, but these circles were kind of interconnected.

When I first came to Fontbonne, I found it, well, awkward and cliquey. The first two semesters I felt pretty unwanted and outsiderish (although I'm partially at fault for having some pronounced antisocial tendencies and for sometimes being shy to the point of cowardice). However, thanks to many excellent English majors, I began to feel more and more part of a community, peaking with the senior seminar I took last semester and declining somewhat this semester now that many of my comrades have moved on. Still, students outside the English Department do not make me feel welcome here (with a handful of exceptions, of course). I had a class recently, for example, in which the room had two columns of tables; on the first day, I sat on one side with another person, and everyone who came in after us sat on the opposite side. Now, it was a small class, and I realize that maybe they were all friends who preferred to sit next to each other. But this article isn't about hypothesizing reasonable excuses; my pieces are about making accusations without giving anyone a chance to defend themselves.

As for "finding myself," I was never lost to begin with. I must say, I don't think I have changed all that much during my college education, not that I didn't learn anything because I learned a lot. But I'm the same guy as when I started, just with more knowledge. My goals, my outlook on life, even my style of



dress have all remained basically unchanged. I see this as a (mostly) good thing, because I kind of like me.

“For God knows what reason.”

Shut up.

### **The Asshole Amendment**

You may have assumed, from the previous section, that everyone in my high school got along and liked each other. I said it was an all-male school, didn't I? There were some huge assholes there, whom I disliked. That's something missing from Fontbonne.

“Wait, are you about to complain about people NOT being assholes?”

Yes. I didn't hate anyone here. If you thought I hated you, well, I'm very sorry to disappoint you like this. Everyone here was unfailingly nice and polite (to my face). Was a little hostility too much to ask for? Not from everyone, of course, that would be horrible, but from one or two people. In the best case, this hostility would be a sort of rivalry. We could have traded witty insults and competed against each other. I like the idea of having a nemesis. It's hard to play the hero without a villain, you know?

Also, I've heard it said that indifference is worse than hate. I can see why. When people are indifferent to you, it makes you feel sad, but when people hate you, it makes you angry, which is far more motivational. It's the difference between “you against the world” and “you outside of the world.”

“That last paragraph was a little too serious for my tastes.”

You're right. I'm becoming far too reflective for my own good. Would a dick joke help?

“Tremendously.”

Okay, there once was a man from Nantucket—

“On second thought, maybe this isn't the place for that.”

Good, because, honestly, I had nothing after that.

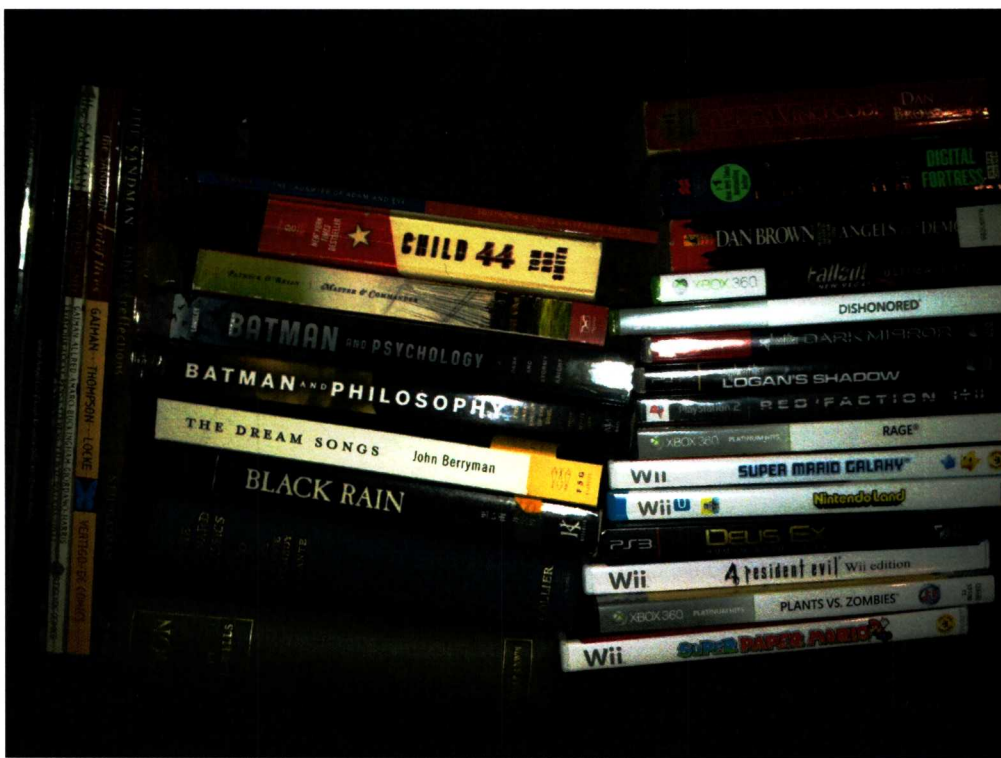
### **A Word about the Faculty**

The instructors here at Fontbonne were always helpful and approachable. The professors of the English Department in particular are an awesome bunch of people. I can say with any hesitation that I received quality instruction and support from these individuals.

However, I'm left wondering what it says about a college when its faculty is friendlier than its student body.

### **My Dear Departed Free Time**

I work limited hours a week, don't have a girlfriend, and am involved in few on-campus organizations, but somehow Fontbonne managed to consume all my free time like a whale a shrimp buffet. I own stacks of books I haven't read, video games I haven't played. Here's a partial sample (To maintain my journalistic integrity, I must confess that since taking this photo, I have read Dr. Sommer's poetry book, which is the thinnest one pictured):



“That’s really more evidence of a lack of control of your spending habits than of a lack of free time.”

Nevertheless, what my pending graduation means to me is freedom. I’ll be able to read what I want to read, write what I want to write, and play my goddamn video games because I spent a lot of money on them.

### **Writing for *The Fontbanner***

Writing for this publication has been fun (well, at least the columns and video game reviews were). I’m grateful to have received the opportunity to express my opinions and share some experiences, to have been given a voice. Whether I used this gift wisely or not is neither here nor there. I’ve been allowed to write about pretty much anything I want with whatever language I chose. The word “asshole” appears four times in this article alone.

Although writing for “The Banner” was enjoyable, sometimes it felt like screaming into an empty room. Sure, it’ll make you feel better, but there’s no reaction. No agreement, no argument, no one saying, “He’s dead-on,” no one saying, “This guy’s way off base,” but most of all no sympathy. I wrote about some personal stuff on this site, for instance my complete failure at online dating. Now, our newspaper staff, after reading a draft of that column, came to a consensus along the lines of “this is funny” and the comments stopped there. While I wrote about it in a humorous manner, the point wasn’t just to be funny. If it was, why on earth would I write about something so personal?

“Because you’re weird.”

The question was rhetorical, and even if it wasn’t, that is not an acceptable answer, you asshole (five).

### **Closing Remarks**

It may seem as if my view of Fontbonne is overwhelmingly negative, but that’s not totally true. While I

wasn't always happy here, I met some good people and received an outstanding education. I may regret some decisions I've made or how some things turned out, but I don't regret coming here. In the end, I think this was the place I was supposed to be. I can't imagine having been an English major anywhere else. The training I was given is invaluable and I sometimes (begrudgingly) had fun. That being said, I'm ready to move on. As I look to the future, I'm not too nervous. I think I'm prepared to take the next steps. So, bye.

“Good riddance.”

Hey, this is my last column. I get the last word.

“Fine.”

Stop it.

“Okay.”

Seriously, I mean it.

“All right.”

Goddamn you, I'm done.