

The Daily Campus

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PETITION CLAMORS FOR **CHANGE** IN **UCONN BUSES**, WRTD RESPONDS

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On Sept. 7, a petition titled “Fix UConn Transportation!” was added to change.org, beginning with the line, “It’s no secret at this point: Campus transportation has been getting gradually worse and worse.” This petition, currently boasting more than 500 signatures, calls for the University of Connecticut to take the actions necessary to improve the current campus bus system — either get the current bus company in line, or switch to another one.

UConn has been outsourcing transportation for years now, and the buses currently operate under Windham Region Transit District. WRTD began taking over HuskyGO in 2020. In October of that year, a UConn Today article from UConn spokesperson Stephanie Reitz noted that this change would save UConn the money and time required to run HuskyGO. In the article, Reitz said this includes “the multi-million dollar costs of repairing and replacing buses; hiring and managing drivers; running [UConn’s] own dispatch center; and employing its own transit administrator.”

However, despite Reitz’s optimism toward the switch, many UConn students have expressed dissatisfaction with WRTD’s efforts. According to the change.org petition, these grievances stem from limited bus hours, frequent bus cancellations, limited access to Willimantic and too few buses on the road. The petition claims that these changes are in response to a driver shortage.

One anonymous student, who signed the online petition, specifically called out WRTD’s struggle to meet the needs of commuter students, such as himself.

When contacted via email, the student said, “I have found that after 7 p.m. the amount of buses running is not sufficient, with a wait of at least 25 minutes. The extended wait time of these buses defeats the purpose of having a bus line meant to service commuters — it forces commuters to either



UConn buses picking up students from the center of campus outside the Student Union. The UConn bus route takes students to many locations across the Storrs campus. PHOTO BY BLAKE SYKES, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

walk to their parking lots or to wait an excessive amount of time to get on a bus.”

They noted that this was especially concerning as UConn is currently struggling to house all students, and this increase in off-campus students “created a great need for commuter services.”

A second anonymous student who also signed the petition expressed their grievances with bus start times, a sentiment shared by the petition. While many of the buses begin operation at 7 a.m., the Orange Line does not start until 8 a.m., after some classes have started. Due to this later start time, the student said, “I end up usually having to walk all the way to the North part of campus from downtown Storrs” in order to make their 8 a.m. class.

“This lecture only happens at this time,” the student said. “I have to take this class.”

When asked about what improvements could be made to the bus lines, the first student said that a better bus system would “acknowledge the growing amount of commuters at UConn,” would “add more running buses at any given time, and would provide an

accurate tracking app for students to use.”

UConn currently uses the app Passio GO!, which has the intention of providing bus routes and schedules as well as tracking buses and anticipating arrival times. In the eyes of the first student, “A better bus system would not require students like me to have to walk 25 minutes to their car at 8 p.m.”

The Daily Campus contacted Philip Johnson of WRTD for comment on the various issues that the petition cites.

“WRTD is always looking to provide the best possible service to the UConn community,” Johnson said in an email. “This fall, certain routes did have to be adjusted because of budgetary reasons and driver shortages.”

Johnson stated that the Orange Line will return to starting at 7 a.m., “but this will cause a reduction in other services.” Additionally, there is currently no continuous line to Willimantic. Instead, the Green Line services Willimantic starting at 5 p.m., ceasing operation of the main campus. According to Johnson, “the driver shortage is the reason there has

not been a shuttle to Willimantic, but that service will soon resume with a bus that runs approximately every 70 minutes, with more limited hours on Sundays.”

This driver shortage is a nationally recognized issue, described as “widespread and severe” by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) in their 2022 Interim Findings Report. APTA describes itself as “a nonprofit international association of more than 1,500 public and private sector member organizations,” which focuses on supporting members by providing connections and training, while also acting as an advocate for drivers.

The APTA’s Interim Findings Report surveyed 190 transit agencies in 2022. The report discovered that “Ninety-six percent of agencies surveyed reported experiencing a workforce shortage, 84 percent of which said the shortage affects their ability to provide service.” APTA’s report attributed this to an aging workforce — according to the report, “forty-three percent of transit workers are over 55.” Some workers are simply leaving their jobs due to retirement.

Additionally, the majority of transit workers who quit these agencies do so in response to work schedules and compensation, and agencies struggle to replace them due to the regulations surrounding the hiring of drivers. According to the APTA’s report, “Rules about drug and alcohol testing, Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) requirements, criminal background checks, and driving records extend the hiring process and exclude otherwise qualified applicants.”

When asked about the current driver shortage, Johnson said, “The shortage of drivers is part of [a] nation-wide trend and we do depend on our current drivers to take on additional shifts, which is not always possible.” Despite this, “WRTD is running routes at a higher level this year, compared to last year, which is an encouraging sign for the future.”

“WRTD is optimistic about working with UConn in the future and cares about student needs,” Johnson finished. “The shuttles simply can’t be everywhere at once. There are new WRTD bus routes coming soon and they can be found on the WRTD website.”

Siberian husky named Connecticut state dog



Jonathan XV sitting with his now retired brother Jonathan XIV. The current Jonathan is one year old.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @JONATHANTHEHUSKY ON INSTAGRAM

by **Patrick Boots**
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A new law ratified by the State of Connecticut went into effect Tuesday, naming the Siberian husky the state’s official dog breed. The law, Public Act 24-121, was originally proposed as House Bill 5304 this past March and was approved by the Connecticut General Assembly in June.

Although huskies are native to Siberia (located in modern-day Russia), they have found a welcoming community in Connecticut.

“We love the husky,” said Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont at a back-to-school event in West Hartford in September.

“[Huskies are] beautiful, smart, elegant, energetic — just like Connecticut. That’s why it’s the Connecticut mas-

cot dog, that’s why Jonathan’s the mascot of the University of Connecticut. Thank you for representing the best of our state,” remarked Lamont, according to We-Ha News.

The Siberian husky joins the ranks of the Charter Oak, state tree; the cachalot whale, state marine animal; and the praying mantis, state insect, as an official symbol of Con-

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NEWSLETTER

News

Freedom Through Art: 44th annual Prison Arts Program Show

by **Donte Mills**
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Community Partners in Action (CPA) will host their 44th Annual Prison Arts Program Show at Connecticut State Community College Manchester. According to a press release, they are a non-profit agency dedicated to promoting accountability, dignity and restoration for people affected by the criminal justice system. The show is free and open to the public, running from Sept. 26 to Nov. 13.

The annual show, which began in 1978, features artwork from individuals currently or formerly incarcerated in Connecticut. According to the press release, it aims to highlight the value of artistic expression as a tool for hope and connection, both inside and outside the prison system.

"These programs provide us with a creative outlet in our oppressive environment, and allow us to focus our energy in a positive way to create works of art and beauty," said Stefan Scerba on the label for his artwork in the show.

The exhibit includes diverse works, such as drawings, paintings, sculptures and carpentry projects, many of which are created using unconventional materials like soap, woven paper bags and food packaging.

"While the resulting artwork is often exceptional,

the greatest value of the work lies in its ability to engender hope and foster connection between the incarcerated and loved ones and elicit empathy — within and between — the incarcerated, staff and the community," according to Payton Kinney, an intern at CPA.

The opening reception for the exhibit took place on Thursday, Sept. 26, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Hans Weiss Newspace Gallery, located in the AST Building of the Conn. State Manchester Community College campus. A closing reception will be held on Saturday, Nov. 9, from 12 to 2 p.m.

At this opening reception, Jeffrey Greene, CPA prison arts program manager, and others involved spoke on the show, how it came to be and what it means to them.

"The ability for these artists to live in the outside world through their art, it expands the way that people in the prison think, it expands what is possible," said Greene, speaking on the impact of this program on prisoners.

The Annual Show serves as an opportunity to dignify the creative efforts made within prisons and provide families with a way to connect with their loved ones. The gallery hours are Monday to Thursday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

For more information about the exhibit or Community Partners in Action visit cpa-ct.org.



Community Partners in Action filming a documentary film at the Prison Arts Warehouse for their 150th anniversary. CPA is hosting their 44th Annual Prison Arts Program Show from Sept. 26 to Nov. 13. PHOTO COURTESY OF @CPA.CT ON INSTAGRAM

HUSKY, cont. from p. 01

necticut. The successful effort follows heavy involvement from University of Connecticut students and supporters, following UConn's continued athletic success and dual men's basketball NCAA National Championship wins. UConn's mascot, Jonathan XV, a purebred Siberian husky dog, testified in support of the bill before the Connecticut Administration and Election Committee in March.

"I am excited to be the next iteration of a symbol that unites our state and energizes Nutmeggers nationwide," Jonathan XV said in his testimony during the hearing.

Laura Centanni, co-chair

of Alpha Phi Omega's Husky Committee, regularly acts as Jonathan's student proxy and handler.

"As we all know, we are students today and huskies forever ... The resilience, perseverance, and openness of Siberian huskies speak to the spirit of Connecticut and the qualities we strive for at UConn. While it may seem like a small gesture, naming Siberian huskies the state dog of Connecticut sends a powerful message of unity to the students of UConn and the state we've all chosen to call home," Centanni said in a statement to The Daily Campus.

The bill's passage was championed by the Connecticut Valley Siberian Husky

Club and the Connecticut Federation of Dog Clubs and Responsible Dog Owners, two nonprofit groups organized to inform and support initiatives related to the care of dogs in Connecticut. They regularly sponsor events and outings for husky caretakers and both act as chapters of the American Kennel Club.

Thirteen other states have official dogs, and some others have started petitions, including an unsuccessful attempt to make the Siberian husky the state dog of Washington in 2004, similarly modeled after the University of Washington's mascot.

The new law also names lollipops as the state candy, owing to their early history

in New Haven. In the early 1900s, George Smith started marketing hard candy on-a-stick as "Yale Lolly Pops", and the story purports they were named after a racehorse he had seen. Smith's New Haven-based BradleySmith Company patented a mechanical design to insert the sticks into the candy in 1914 and registered a trademark for the name in 1931, but the popularity of the candies resulted in the name becoming genericized. Several schoolchildren and members of the public submitted comments of support for the sweet's new state symbol status.

Connecticut has also contributed to a number of other innovations, including the

first hamburgers, cheeseburgers and pizza (named the state food in 2021), as well as Wiffle Balls, the cotton gin and can openers among others. Numerous significant people and ephemera have the distinction of being official state figures.

Since 1934, the legacy of Jonathan the Husky has lived on through a long line of handsome pups. Alpha Phi Omega, a co-ed service fraternity on campus, has chartered the dynasty for over 50 years, in collaboration with a local host family who care for the dogs' daily needs. The mascot huskies are named in honor of "Brother Jonathan" Trumbull, the first colonial governor of Connecticut, and as a play on the Yukon territory name.

The Daily Campus

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By Jay Silversmith

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THE MUSIC NEVER STOPS | LORIN PELLEGRINO

by Dan Stark | HE/HIM/HIS | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | daniel.stark@uconn.edu

Every musician has their reason for why they play music. Some do it for love, some do it for their friends and others do it for money. For Lorin Pellegrino, it's about playing what he calls "genuine music," music that shows his true self and that he's proud to be showing to the world.

Pellegrino is one of the fastest rising talents in the Storrs music scene. A singer-songwriter and guitarist, his songs feature dynamic arrangements, introspective lyrics and a sound that combines a multitude of musical influences, making him one of the most varied musicians in the scene today.

Music has long been a part of Pellegrino's life, as his dad was a musician and encouraged him from a young age to explore what music can offer. But playing and writing music took a much more prominent role in his life during the pandemic, as he weighed whether to focus on sports or music, ultimately deciding to pour his energy into music.

"During COVID, I realized that 'this is something you've got to utilize, a skill you've got to master, and maybe you can take this a little further than football because that's going to end,' he said. 'I realized that music is going to be a lifelong thing [for me] so I started doing that.'

Pellegrino recruited his friend Aksel Sather to play guitar and a rotation of musicians from his hometown of Fairfield, Connecticut, and started the band Tweed Sugar. Under this first incarnation of the group, they released an EP, "Phone Call Voices," in 2021 and a full-length album, "Made With Sugar" in 2022. During this time, he wrote all the songs himself, focusing on his relationships, experiences and his own insecurities. He said that during this time, "I was young and trying to find myself," both as a person and songwriter. This led to him pushing himself to write different kinds of songs, ranging from punk rockers to acoustic ballads.

"When I wrote each song, the words meant something to whatever I was writing about," he said. "But specifically, I was writing songs because I would listen to records and say, 'I want to make a song like that.'"

One of the songs he wrote that means the most to him is "Harmonic Gates," a track from "Made With Sugar." He channeled his uncertainty he felt about what path he would take in life, something that was especially pronounced being surrounded by people in high school that had a specific plan, and called it a song that motivates him in tough times.

"Harmonic Gates" means a lot to me because I was a young kid amplifying my insecurities and telling myself to stay strong," he explained. "That's probably one of my favorite songs of mine because it reminds me to keep going."

After graduating high school in June 2022, he headed up to Boston to attend Emmanuel College with the goal of making it big up there and making connections with students from the nearby Berklee College of Music. But Pellegrino soon found that it wasn't going to be as easy as he thought.

"I went to Emmanuel thinking I was going to go to Berklee, find a bunch of guys and network, and I did, which was nice," he said. "But at the same time, all those Berklee guys were going to make bands with each other."

After his Boston plan didn't go as expected, he transferred to the University of Connecticut for his sophomore year in 2023. He described the first month at UConn as one of the toughest months of his life as he tried to find himself on a new campus. But his trajectory changed when he met drummer Sean Byington and re-connected with bassist Sebastian Rodriguez, who he knew from Fairfield, while trying to network at UConn's jazz program. Byington and Rodriguez, along with guitarist Brennen Ravenberg, would become the

backbone of the revamped lineup of Tweed Sugar.

Pellegrino said that when he started playing with those three, his approach to songwriting changed from wanting to do everything himself like he previously did, to wanting and encouraging contributions from others in a more open process.

"I was very secluded with music," he said. "I wanted to write everything myself, bring it to a band and have them play it, kind of like hired musicians. But I really started to appreciate working with people that care as much as I do. With guys like Seb, Brennen and Sean, it started to feel more like a family with how we would write songs."

Fueled by this new lineup and approach to songwriting, Pellegrino and the band have been writing constantly over the past year and have been working on recording an album, showcasing a sound that is simultaneously heavy and melodic, but most importantly, engaging and full of energy.

Pellegrino's talents aren't only limited to his work with Tweed Sugar. He also releases music as Hoodoo Little, a solo project that he started during his time in Boston. The project started with his desire break away from guitar-based arrangements and explore other styles like R&B. He has used this project to release experiments in different genres, as well as in-progress demos, to SoundCloud on a regular basis, showing his ability to write songs in different genres.

Now, Pellegrino and Tweed Sugar have increased their presence by doing more shows around Storrs. He said that "it's been a dream" getting to perform at shows on and off campus to crowds who are engaged with the band's originals.

"I feel like I'm so connected with these crowds because they're not just there to have drinks with their friends and fuck around, they're actually here for original music," he said. "And it's been great, I feel like I've found my people."



Life

Coffee vs Tea?



ILLUSTRATION BY COLBI LORANGER, ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

It's fitting that the Life section is debating which of the two caffeinated life-forces is preferred: coffee or tea. There are others, including energy drinks and soda, that can also get the job done, but people are far more particular about coffee and tea. Good arguments can be made validating both, whether it be added health benefits or just overall taste, so let's find out which drink Life prefers!

by Maleena Muzio | SHE/HER/HERS | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | maleena.muzio@uconn.edu

Misaligning with the option I typically choose, I am team tea. Although both have health benefits, tea offers more. Coffee is often filled with unhealthy syrups (which are delicious but so bad for you), while tea relies on natural sweeteners, like cane sugar or honey. Tea can soothe your sore throat or ease digestion issues, rather than making digestive issues worse (coffee drinkers, you know what I mean).

Students, you may be asking: "How will I stay awake without my highly caffeinated coffee?" Well, instead of taking in mass amounts of caffeine at once, and then experiencing a crash by afternoon, why not just drink a couple of teas throughout the day? Tea contains lower caffeine contents, and green tea specifically been proven to provide a more sustainable, slow-burning energy source.

Regarding options, coffee has one: cream and sugar (unless you are crazy and drink it black). Tea is much more diverse, ranging in temperature, mocking lattes or being mixed with lemonade. Next time you walk into Bookworms or The Beanery, notice how their signs offer coffees that rely on artificial flavoring, while the variety of teas comes from the core of their components.

By no means am I dissing coffee drinkers; I am one myself! Although, because I know from experience how awful coffee can be for someone, I have recently switched to team tea. If you are a stubborn coffee advocate, I recommend you give tea a try. You just might end up feeling like a healthier, more productive person.

by Michelle Pawlos | SHE/HER/HERS | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | michelle.pawlos@uconn.edu

When it comes to coffee versus tea, I'm team coffee for UConn students on account of multiple reasons. If you need to stay up and study, coffee is a friend to many! Especially with midterms coming up, it is inevitable that many of us will be losing sleep and need that extra boost. As I'm drinking my coffee while writing this, I am gaining life to make my 8 a.m. class after having a statistics test last night and waking up early today. I will admit that it isn't the best for you. However, if you drink it in moderation, there is no harm.

You can find coffee anywhere on campus with a good variety of flavors. I always see people walk in with coffee from The Beanery, which I have visited, and I will say that it has a great selection. The Bookworms Cafe in Homer Babbidge Library also provides a lot of options. Dining halls such as Whitney even have their own cafe section. One may argue that these places also have tea, but is there as much selection?

If you are strictly a tea person, I recommend a nice lemon ginger tea with honey, as it has its benefits and is tasty. When it comes to coffee, I believe that any coffee is good coffee, but you may want to try a pumpkin or apple flavor for the fall season!

by Mikayla Murphy | SHE/HER/HERS | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | mikayla.murphy@uconn.edu

With how much coffee I drink, it may seem like I'm on team coffee, but contrary to popular belief, I've actually been on team tea my whole life. Most of the time, I'm just drinking coffee because the caffeine gets me through my early mornings and late nights. My friends like to make fun of me because all I drink is straight black coffee, but I like coffee overall and I choose to drink it outside of those circumstances. However, there is just something about tea that coffee can't replicate. It has been a staple in my life since middle school, although you'll probably never see me drinking it outside of my dorm room.

I personally think there are more flavor options with tea, and it doesn't make my heart race like coffee does, which is a nice change of pace. I've heard about the health benefits of drinking tea, and while I haven't done my research, it's nice to believe that tea is good for me. My favorite tea combination is lemon tea with mint leaves (courtesy of the head chef at my old job). It reminds me of home, and I highly recommend you try it. It is comforting to drink tea, so I will forever and always favor tea over coffee. However, you will still most likely see me with a medium iced black coffee from Dunkin' in the morning.

by Bonnibel Lilith Rampertab | SHE/HER/HERS | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | lilith.rampertab@uconn.edu

I will eternally be team tea. It's elegant and prissy just like me, and I grew up drinking it every morning and night as my mother intended. Plus, my therapist said that drinking mint tea regularly decreases the androgens in your body, which is ideal for me. I drink tea nightly and I am proud of it. I'm super grateful the dining halls have assorted teas; everyone with a meal plan should take advantage of the tea selections if they like tea.

On a few occasions, however, I drink coffee. It's bitter without creamer and even more unhealthy if you sweeten it considerably to negate the bitterness. The majority of times I've drank coffee was by accident when my parents forgot to take out the Keurig pod from the machine. It galvanized my dislike for coffee.

Coffee makes me hyper and increases my heart rate dramatically for a bit before I crash out and feel even worse. Furthermore, my father works for the Baronet Coffee Roasters factory, and every day when he comes home, he smells like it.

Tea and coffee have oddly become gendered to me, but there are so many other beverage options to choose from. I just like tea the most. If you like coffee, more power to you. I just cannot, for the life of me, like it.

by Ben Lassy | HE/HIM/HIS | LIFE EDITOR | benjamin.lassy@uconn.edu

This year has really been a year of shifts for me. As an unabashed tea fanatic, I caved this year and purchased the cheapest Keurig machine known to man. As for the K-Cups? The cheapest Tim Horton's available, a brew I shamelessly call "Timmy Ho's."

Does that purchase make me a turncoat?

Far from it. Tim Horton's is one of the worst cups of coffee I've ever had, and the cheap Keurig machine is one of the least pleasant plastic hunks of junk I've ever had the displeasure of using. Nevertheless, I have another 10 K-Cups to go through, so it still sits in the kitchen.

Beside it is my seldom-used tea kettle. I'm not sure why, but with the craziness of senior year, I find that tea is less and less soothing for me. It's great, but I rarely have the peaceful moments required to thoroughly enjoy a cup.

Maybe coffee just gives off a facade of hard work. Not that I'm productive or anything, but I feel powerful after a cup of coffee, whereas after a cup of tea, I feel at peace.

For now, my answer is coffee because it's time to make the best of this year, but by graduation, I'm confident the answer will be tea.

by Patrick Boots | HE/HIM/HIS | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | patrick.boots@uconn.edu

The best beverage to enjoy on an autumnal day isn't coffee or tea at all — it's hot cocoa.

Just imagine yourself holding a warm mug, with frothy chocolate-y milky goodness, and maybe some marshmallows on top. It's perhaps enjoyed with a lady-finger cookie or a peppermint stick. The story goes that European explorers took cocoa beans and a drink-making technique from Central America and brought them back to the Old World, dubbing it "the drink of the gods." The industrious Dutch then developed refining methods for producing chocolate as we know it today, and enjoyed their hot cocoa nice and thick. I like mine that way too — maybe it's because I'm Dutch. Shout out to Munson's, too.

Now, if I was forced to choose one: coffee, or tea, I'd be on "team tea" — but I prefer herbal fruit tea. My girlfriend is also a tea fanatic and has a collection of specialty flavors, some that sparkle like magic; it's fun to enjoy those styles. The UConn dining halls do offer a selection of teas from Bigelow, a Connecticut-based (but nationally distributed) tea company, and I sometimes make myself a cup if I am in the dining hall, but I'm not a fan of just tea.

I don't drink coffee, but I love a Dunkaccino from Dunkin' — it's the perfect blend of hot cocoa and coffee, without being too bitter or in your face. Some franchises have discontinued making this crown jewel, though. However, the "Dirty Cocoa" option at the UConn Uniquely Caffeinated Cafés locations comes close.

This fall, I'll be studying in the library or sitting under a tree drinking some of my choice beverages. And, when it comes to all of these drinks: They're to be enjoyed hot! How else, of course?



Life

@dailycampuslife

EAR 2 DA SKY: STAYING GROUNDED WITH DOECHII'S "ALLIGATOR BITES NEVER HEAL"

by Hayden Cromer
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Welcome to Ear 2 Da Sky! Each week, I will be going over topics within music culture and reviewing albums and EPs across genres, eras and artists that are submitted by readers and listeners of my radio show every Monday at 11 p.m. on WHUS 91.7 FM! For this week's submission, I will be going over Doechii's 2024 mixtape, "Alligator Bites Never Heal."

I have personally had Doechii on my radar since early 2021 due to — like many — the power of social media, discovering her single "Girls" and her EP "Oh The Places You'll Go" through what was known as Twitter back then (now X). Marketing your music through independently-run internet platforms isn't the newest idea, dating back to the late 2000s and early 2010s "Blog Era" of rap with artists such as Kid Ink, Kid Cudi, Childish Gambino, Drake and many others. However, Doechii was one of the first artists to use TikTok as a platform for getting their name out there, which served as a catalyst for the rest of her career.

As she has been signed to Top Dawg Entertainment and risen to the upper echelon of the music industry, "Alligator Bites Never Heal" displays Doechii's introspection, personal relationships as well as her entire career. Listeners explore this soul-searching more closely in "BOILED PEANUTS," "DENIAL IS A RIVER," "BLOOM" and the first track of the project, "STANKA POOH."

"STANKA POOH" sets the mental scene for the listener, chalking Doechii up to be nothing if she were to die

today but a "TikTok rapper" and "YouTube actor." The track takes away from her achievements and explores this strongly internalized imposter syndrome, undermining her successes as though she took the "easier route." She also grasps at her age — 26 years old at the time of recording this tape — as she doubts if this will all be worth it. She questions whether or not her success and fame will pay off before the age of 30, or if she will just die meaninglessly.

"BOILED PEANUTS" is the third song off the project, titled after a common snack in the southern United States, especially in states such as Florida, which is the artist's place of birth. Doechii talks about her life in Tampa, even dropping the address of a house in her neighborhood. She highlights the ever-unbalanced scale of the media spotlight, as she discusses her drug use and struggles with addiction, bringing up her constant scrutinization from faceless social media accounts. But after that, she delves into the materialistic things that have come with that exact same spotlight.

Following that is track four, "DENIAL IS A RIVER." This is in reference to the infamous clip from "The Wendy Williams Experience," as Doechii reflects on a past relationship. She opens the song with a conversation with her voice of reason. She then goes on to reflect on a past relationship that had ended in infidelity, as the man she had been with cheated on her — with another man — tying back to the title of the song. She then goes into how she turned this hard time in her life into success, going on to create a platinum record, a lengthy list of hits as well as making a large sum of money. But as fast as she turned to this success, she



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

turned to drug addiction. She finally owns up to her voice of reason, exclaiming that it was a tough time, rather than attempting to uphold a facade of success.

The eighth track, "BLOOM," opens with Doechii airing her grievances that come with success and the pressure to withhold it. She reminds herself to make goals, but also to check in with family and make sure everyone is okay all while she still worries about herself. A second voice in the conversation consoles her, telling her: "Because, you, you just can't do it all in one moment," a grounding sentence to those in need of hearing it. Through all the struggle and mental gymnastics of

trying to balance everything, Doechii finally finds her place to bloom.

Doechii is greater than the artist comparisons and viral, made-to-be catchy hooks you hear in every video as you scroll through your timeline. She is truly an artist, taking inspiration from her city, as well as her own struggles. It feels as though she shared her personal journal with the listener, creating a fully transparent and vulnerable project in "Alligator Bites Never Heal."

If you want to submit something to my radio show, hear your music on the radio and possibly even see an album or EP you submitted get reviewed in the paper, submit it here: <https://bit.ly/ear2dasky>

RATING: ★★★★★

Tears in Our Typing Pool: 'Distant Call' lo-fi demo collection by Broadcast

by Bonnibel Lilith Rampertab | SHE/HER/HERS | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | lilith.rampertab@uconn.edu

England dream pop band, Broadcast, makes the sort of music that feels like a much-needed warm hug or cup of tea on a windy and cold day, especially for avid and depressed readers such as vocalist Trish Keenan. After her untimely passing in 2011, which broke the collective heart of the music-listening community, James Cargill and the other current members of Broadcast retired the band name and released an album under Children of Alice: a direct tribute to Keenan and her love of the "Alice in Wonderland" book.

After May 2024's "Spell Blanket" demo collection, which had the foundation for a new album, Broadcast fans dreaded the inevitability of having less new material from the band to go off of. September 2024's "Distant Call," offers some great insight in terms of how they create their songs and, as a result, creates a newfound appreciation for the band as a result.

The centerpiece of these demos is Keenan's soft-spoken

and utterly beautiful voice, but unexpectedly, there is also just an intimate acoustic guitar for instrumentation. You can even hear the shifting of the fingers on the frets if you listen closely. The lack of percussion and electronic sounds as well as the low-fidelity nature of the recordings is reminiscent of Texan avant-garde singer-songwriter Daniel Johnston's work in a way, though instead of his seemingly sporadic style of composing and recording material with terrible yet somehow endearing equipment, these demos are more contained and controlled in the aspect of recording and composition. The hissing noise, although it may deter some, adds to the overall feel of the collection, and adds a layer of even more intimacy.

"Tears In The Typing Pool" is easily one of Broadcast's most popular songs, and for good reason. The theme of a song about processing emotions of grief with writing, is a fantastic and productive idea. Although the lyric, "The land is unchanged,"

claims that writing doesn't do much in the physical world, it can still have an impact on the social, mental, emotional, psychological and cultural worlds.

"Still Feels Like Tears" features phenomenal guitar work which sounds like something Brazilian lo-fi pop artist Bruno Berle would compose. The underlying layer of tremolo notes was a great choice to add texture to the song.

"Colour Me In" is, like many Broadcast songs: vague, cryptic and up to multiple interpretations which can highlight the audience's perspective in interpretation. The lyric, "Today or next year, I'll always be here if you want to colour me in," from the chorus could symbolize loneliness and a need for others to define you. Furthermore, the lyric, "If green is chasing the hills over miles, if blue is pursuing the sky, see if the red of your heart doesn't mind where you begin to colour me in," highlights the limitless potential of these primary colors if they collaborate and mix with each other

to make other colors. There are many ways to interpret this song and the emotions that went into making it, but at its core, it is human.

The "Distant Call" version of "O How I Miss You" is interesting because instead of the song being an ominous interlude that builds up, representing the urgency of loneliness in 2003's "Haha Sound," there are two full verses in the short song delivered by Keenan. It begs the question of why the verses were cut from the original version, though the "Distant Call" version lacks the deep and electronic-based production qualities of the official version.

"Please Call To Book" is the only song that wasn't previously on another project prior to its demo's release. It also serves as the closer of "Distant Call." So many emotions are subtly portrayed in the instrumentation and lyrics, but there is a ray of optimism in the lyrics, "If the Sun shines inside, the Sun shines outside." It's a beautiful and heartfelt way to end off the

discography of one of the greatest dream pop bands.

These demos would understandably only appeal to dedicated fans of Broadcast. Still, "Distant Call" makes for great studying music.

Broadcast's music as a whole, in its innovative inspiration from retro-ness, will seem to always be timeless. There are some common themes that unite the generations of humanity, and art is a way to bridge the gap. I am forever grateful for Broadcast for inspiring many to embrace reading and writing more as Keenan did. I hope Keenan and Broadcast will never be forgotten. It's up to us to keep their music alive and to share it around like good writing. Real death is in forgetting.

Rating: 4.5/5



Opinion

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COMIC BY SARAH CHANTRES, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Cognitive Dissonance versus Intersectionality

Identity Troubles

by PJ Bekkali
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Cognitive dissonance is what happens when a person holds two sets of beliefs at odds with each other. The human brain doesn't like logical inconsistencies, so someone experiencing cognitive dissonance performs mental gymnastics to justify their opinions. These arguments don't hold up to outside scrutiny and it becomes an endless feedback loop of justifying one's own wrong opinions with more wrong reasoning.

Many minority groups are particularly susceptible to cognitive dissonance. It can lead to searching for a different scapegoat or minority to blame for society's actions. As a member of the LGBTQ+ community, I admit that it's very isolating being in the "out-group" of society. Being considered abnormal leaves a hole in your heart, just begging for a community to fill it. That can lead some people of minority status to search for acceptance and validation elsewhere, particularly in fringe political groups. They fall further and further down the rabbit hole and bond over a shared hatred of other minority groups. They consider themselves above those minorities because they're special and they're different. They're one of the good ones.

It's pitiful to watch, though sometimes the irony of the situation can be funny. When I need a good laugh at the absurdity of human behavior, I scroll through Blaire White's social media page, and watch other far-right political commentators of minority status. It's a bad habit, I know, but it's hilarious to me to see these people uplift ideologies that are

so at odds with an unchangeable part of their existence: their labels.

The worst part is that they don't seem to realize how they look to the members of the groups they're trying to appeal to. They parrot the harmful rhetoric of their new "in-group" they've seemingly found acceptance in. They may draw false equivalencies between the mixed bag of reactions to their controversial identities. They seem to take pride in how special they are, how their two conflicting identities, usually political and minority, are so rare to find in tandem. They seem to want to overcompensate for their identity with their politics. But their political "allies" are always laughing at them behind closed doors. They are the butt of the joke on all fronts.

What's even more shocking is what happens when their political "allies" are elected. They fail to come to the reasonable conclusion that a party that believes in restricting the rights of minorities will restrict their rights too. They come to the illogical conclusion that they will be exempt because they are special and parrot the talking points of hatred. They are deluded into thinking they are a part of the "in-group" of their fringe political group. In reality, they are in just as much danger as their fellow minority. There is no such thing as being "one of the good ones." We are not immune to the consequences of our behaviors.

On the other end of the spectrum of cognitive dissonance is intersectionality. Intersectionality is when the overlap between minority statuses causes a unique understanding of discrimination. Usually, when someone experiences persecu-

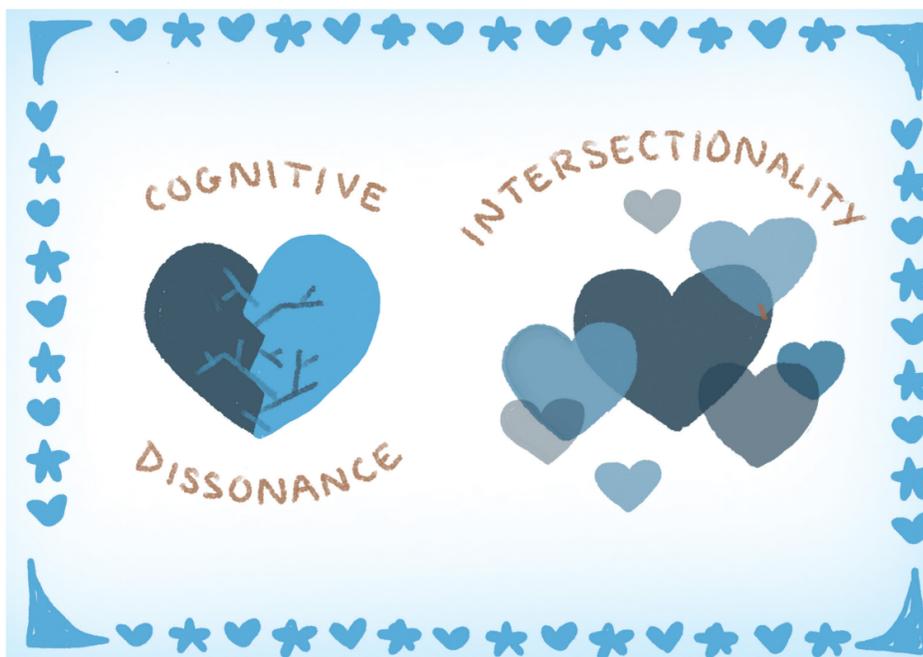


ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH CHANTRES, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

tion based on an unchangeable part of their identity, they develop a stronger sense of empathy. They realize how stupid it is to draw lines between race, religion, sexuality, gender, nationality, et cetera. They don't want anyone else to live through the difficulties, discrimination or danger that they have faced. This is a normal, human response.

Being disenfranchised generally gives one a certain outlook on life, barring outliers such as sufferers of cognitive dissonance. It's why women tend to be more left-leaning politically than men. It's why it's so hard to find an openly queer or non-white Neo-Nazi, Zionist or any variety of fringe political group (outside of social media). It's odd and does not fit neatly within their scope of life. They're hammering

the square peg of their existence into a round hole - it just doesn't make sense.

Though some victims of cognitive dissonance may accuse people whose morals align with their actions of having a mob mentality, it's obvious who is truly being unduly influenced. It's not crazy to assume that most members of the LGBTQ+ community are pro-equality, pro-union and pro-Palestine. We have a firsthand understanding of how hatred and propaganda are terrible weapons and that a little bit of empathy can go a long way. All of these ideologies are linked; your experiences don't live in a vacuum separate from your opinions.

All this to say when you meet a victim of cognitive dissonance, you have several options. The easiest option is

to get angry or laugh at their ridiculousness. A more difficult, time-consuming option is to poke holes through their arguments, in the hope that they will see the light of reason. Though it may be in vain, it can't hurt. It may sow the seeds of doubt in their own mind. It may stop other people from falling victim to the same logical fallacies and flawed reasoning. But at the end of the day, you can't just travel into someone's brain and force them to understand how inconsistent and hateful they are being. Some people are comfortable being wrong. Though it may be their right to have their own opinions, it is also my right to point out how bad these opinions may be. I've accepted that we may always be at odds, much like the gap between their two identities.

Op-Ed: Rosh Hashanah encouraging unity and fresh starts

by Jessica Nirschel
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Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year celebrated at the beginning of the autumn season. When thinking of this special holiday, the representations that come to mind are apples dipped in honey to signify a sweet new year of beginnings, a festive meal shared with friends and family and the sounding of the ram's horn: the shofar. These essential parts of celebrating the New Year symbolize the greater significance of a time of self-restoration and transformation. This year will be 5785, the number of years since the creation of the world, according to biblical sources.

Rosh Hashanah is considered "the birthday of the universe" and serves as the onset of the Jewish calendar. Jewish people across the globe gather in synagogues to seek forgiveness, improve their lives and mark a new beginning. Rosh Hashanah begins at sunset on Wednesday, Oct. 2, with a large brisket dinner, and will last until Friday evening, Oct. 4. It will also overlap with Shabbat, which begins Friday evening.

When it comes to greetings, there are a variety of phrases used to greet Jewish peers during this time. For example, you can say anything from "may you be inscribed and sealed for a good year," to "have a happy sweet New Year" to even "may we be like the head and not the tail," to

reflect a sense of moving forward, success and good vibes.

An iconic part of Rosh Hashanah is hearing the shofar, a ram's horn, during morning services to call people to repent and awaken their souls.

A tradition practiced on the afternoon of Rosh Hashanah, after a celebratory lunch, is one where participants gather around a body of water (this year at Mirror Lake) to symbolically "cast away their sins" by throwing pieces of bread into the water. These meaningful customs highlight our intentions for the coming year.

Rosh Hashanah is considered a time for not only reflection but for celebration as well. We are reminded to pray for the health of our world and our country. Jew-

ish holidays can connect us and reinforce a commitment to unity and perseverance. Additionally, we can celebrate brotherhood, kinship and connection to everyone else on Earth. Rosh Hashanah shows that despite differences, we all share a common theme of humanity and can all work together to repair the world.

Rosh Hashanah allows the Jewish people to welcome the potential of fresh starts that influence the course of the rest of the year. As Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon says, "A sudden transition from one opposite to another is impossible and therefore man, according to his nature, is not capable of abandoning suddenly all to which he was accustomed." Change is possible as long as

we take it little by little. Therefore, we are reminded of our capability to change through hearing the shofar, tasting the sweet apples and honey and engaging in deep, meaningful prayers for ourselves, America and Israel. We have the power to change the world and our lives bring light into the universe.

For those staying on campus for the holidays, there is good news for you. There will be services, lunch, dinner, community and everything in between happening at the Hillel and at Chabad of UConn. Chabad will be hosting its annual "Power Hour" service to ensure accessibility for all students during a busy day of classes. There will be services every day of Rosh Hashanah, prayers, food and celebration. There is even a brisket dinner!

Opinion

Photo of the Day | Walking down the 4.0



The sun shines as students walk back from town passing by Mirror Lake. These students are entering the sixth week of this semester at UConn's Storrs campus. PHOTO BY VON LINDENTHAL, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Bangladesh's quota protest movement leaving many dead



Panoramic view of a town in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. This town is located directly off Bangladesh's southern coast. PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

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On July 15, 2024, Bangladesh witnessed the deadliest protest in its history, which left thousands injured and over 200 students dead. This ongoing struggle is not just about the government's quota system but highlights a deeper disillusionment with government policies, economic disparities and political freedoms. The recent violence has become a symbol of a broken system that prioritizes political loyalty over equal opportunity with the government's harsh response exposing the underlying issues with governance and human rights in Bangladesh.

As a Bangladeshi-American student at the University of Connecticut, I have a personal connection to this issue. My relatives, who are actively involved in the protests, have shared harrowing stories of the impact on their families and the broader implications for their communities. Many families are grappling with the loss of loved ones, fear for their safety and uncertain-

ty about the future.

The roots of this unrest can be traced back to 2018, when students in Dhaka and Chittagong first took to the streets demanding an end to the existing quota system. Originally intended to honor freedom fighters, the policy gradually became a source of resentment, as it severely limited job prospects for many qualified candidates. While the initial protests were focused on abolishing the policy, the more recent unrest reflects a broader disappointment with the government's failure to prioritize merit-based employment and create adequate opportunities for the growing number of educated young people.

Over the years, discontent has been brewing among students and recent graduates who view the quota policy as a symbol of systemic inequality and an obstacle to fair employment opportunities. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's decision to raise the quota to 56% in response to earlier protests shocked the nation and exacerbated the discontent, pushing many graduates into a state of hopelessness

and financial instability. What started as peaceful demonstrations quickly escalated due to the government's harsh crackdown, leading to widespread violence and an outpouring of rage against the administration's refusal to address the concerns of the youth.

Sheikh Hasina publicly labeled the protesting students as "Razakar," a highly charged term referring to collaborators with the Pakistani military during the 1971 independence war, which further inflamed tensions. This rhetoric was followed by violent attacks from the Bangladesh Chhatra League, the student wing of the ruling party. Armed with sticks and steel pipes, they targeted peaceful protesters, while the administration imposed curfews and internet blackouts to hinder the organization of protests and to prevent the news from spreading internationally. Police were given orders to shoot on sight, a move that escalated the situation into a tragic bloodbath.

The media, both local and international, offered limited coverage due to the strict control of infor-

mation and internet shutdowns. As a result, the seriousness of the situation developing in Bangladesh went largely unnoticed by the rest of the world. Information that was kept secret made the situation even more invisible to the general public, which emphasizes how critical it is to raise awareness of the issue and aid the affected students and their families.

Rather than being based on differences in race or religion, the main focus of this battle is the fight for equal employment opportunities and the freedom to protest. It draws attention to deeper issues of political and social justice in Bangladesh, where prejudice often takes precedence over the needs of the general public, and opposition is occasionally subjected to harsh punishment. The events of July 15, 2024, have not only permanently altered the course of the nation's history, but have also brought attention to the pressing need for reforms that will meet the needs of the younger generation, who simply want a fair shot at finding work.

Action and unity are needed in

response to this crisis, particularly from international students and communities who have access to resources, platforms and the freedom to express themselves. Students at UConn have a special chance to raise their voices in support of the rights of anyone impacted by Bangladesh's current crisis. We can give voices to those who have been silenced and support the students and families who are fighting for justice through social media, planning awareness campaigns and working with student organizations. We must acknowledge our privilege and make use of it to show our support for the victims of this tragedy.

In the end, the situation in Bangladesh serves as a reminder of everyone's universal right to demonstrate, demand equal opportunity and have their voice heard without fear of retaliation or losing their life. It is more than just a localized conflict. It is our duty as citizens of the world to make sure that these rights are upheld and that those in Bangladesh who are battling for justice are aware of their powerful influence.

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COMIC BY LILLIAN LAFEMINA
ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR
THE DAILY CAMPUS

Sam's Section: Best non-Big East players in men's college basketball

by Sam Calhoun | STAFF WRITER | HE/HIM/HIS | samuel.calhoun@uconn.edu

October has arrived, which means charity exhibitions in men's college basketball are set to be held this month. Friday marks exactly one month until the season officially starts, so I figured now is the time to start hyping up the season.

This edition of Sam's Section will cover my favorite players in college basketball outside the Big East, which will be covered later this month.

R.J. Davis, Guard, North Carolina (2023-24: 21.2 ppg, 3.6 rpg, 3.5 apg, 1.2 spg, 42.8 FG%, 39.8 3P%, 87.3 FT%)

Davis is returning after a consensus first-team All-American season, leading the Tar Heels to an ACC regular season title and a trip to the Sweet Sixteen. Following the departure of former Tar Heel Caleb Love, the White Plains, New York native had his breakout season. He became the 19th player in program history to earn consensus first-team All-American honors, leading the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) in scoring. He became the first Tar Heel to lead the conference in scoring since Tyler Hansbrough in 2007-08. He broke the Dean E. Smith Center record for scor-

ing with a 42-point performance against the University of Miami, which was one of the 23 games he scored at least 20 points. He also set single-season program records for three-pointers (113) and three-pointers per game (3.05). The Jerry West Award recipient (the nation's best shooting guard) is a Wooden Award-caliber (nation's best player) player.

Hunter Dickinson, Center, Kansas (2023-24: 17.9 ppg, 10.9 rpg, 2.3 apg, 1.4 bpg, 54.8 FG%)

Dickinson had his best season since his freshman year at the University of Michigan, earning his second consensus second-team All-American honor. The senior from Alexandria, Virginia, became only the second player in college basketball history to achieve such honors at two different schools, with Elmer Oliphant being the first—Purdue University in 1914 and the United States Military Academy (Army) in 1915. He became the only player named a Wooden All-American at two different schools. His most impressive feat was four 20-rebound performances last season, which ranks third all-time at the University of Kansas in 20-rebound games,

behind Wilt Chamberlain (20) and Bill Bridges (13). He had 17 of his 48-career double-doubles last season in Lawrence, Kansas. Despite a disappointing season for the Jayhawks which saw the most conference losses since the 1988-89 season, Dickinson should return as one of the best players in the country.

Mark Sears, Guard, Alabama (2023-24: 21.5 ppg, 4.2 rpg, 4 apg, 1.6 spg, 50.8 FG%, 43.6 3P%, 85.7 FT%)

Sears had his breakout season last year, similar to Davis. He led the University of Alabama to its first Final Four in program history. He earned consensus second-team All-American honors last year after increasing his scoring average by nine points. The Muscle Shoals, Alabama native set the program record for most points scored in a single season with 797 points. He became the first player in Division I college basketball in the last 31 years to record 795 points, 150 rebounds, 145 assists and 95 3-pointers in a single season. He scored at least 20 points in 26 games last season, which broke Reggie King's school record set in 1978-79, who recorded at least 20 points in 23 games. The former

Ohio University Bobcat scored 121 total points in the Crimson Tide's run to the Final Four, which ranked second among all NCAA Tournament players. He is primed to be one of the best players in college basketball for his fifth season. Alabama looks to be one of the best teams in the country, being ranked No. 2 in the ESPN Way-Too-Early Top 25.

Caleb Love, Guard, Arizona (2023-24: 18 ppg, 4.8 rpg, 3.4 apg, 1.2 spg, 41.3 FG%, 33.2 3P%, 83.9 FT%)

Despite criticism for leaving the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Love silenced those critics by earning his way onto the United States Basketball Writers Association (USBWA) and National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) All-American second teams. The Wildcats were phenomenal in the school's final season in the Pac-12 Conference, winning the conference's regular season title and going to the Sweet Sixteen, where they lost to Clemson University. Love was one of five finalists for the Jerry West Award, becoming the third Wildcat under head coach Tommy Lloyd to reach 600 points in a season, with 648 points last sea-

son. With a new conference that looks to be the best in college basketball, Arizona should be ecstatic with their star guard returning for a fifth season.

Johni Broome, Forward, Auburn (2023-24: 16.5 ppg, 8.5 rpg, 2.2 apg, 2.2 bpg, 54.8 FG%)

Broome improved in his second season at Auburn University, scoring 2.3 points more per game than the 2022-23 season. The former Morehead State University Eagle helped the Tigers win the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Tournament for the first time since 2019, winning the tournament's Most Valuable Player honor. He was named a third-team All-American by the Associated Press (AP), USBW and The Sporting News. The Plant City, Florida native was the only player in the top 10 among SEC leaders in scoring and rebounding. He also boasted the second-best field-goal percentage and second-most blocks in the SEC. Despite being a first-round exit in the NCAA Tournament last season and losing multiple key players from last season, Auburn is expected to be a fringe-top-10 team in the country.

		6				8		
	7				3		5	
			4		2			6
5			3			6	8	
		4				7		
	9		7		6			1
3			1		4			
	1		5					
		5				9		

Solution to Tuesday's puzzle

1	6	3	8	9	4	7	2	5
2	7	4	6	1	5	8	3	9
9	5	8	7	3	2	6	1	4
3	4	9	2	6	8	5	7	1
8	1	5	4	7	3	2	9	6
6	2	7	1	5	9	4	8	3
4	9	2	5	8	1	3	6	7
7	8	1	3	4	6	9	5	2
5	3	6	9	2	7	1	4	8

Sports

Photo of the Day | Frosty



On Saturday, Sept. 29, The UConn Huskies host the Minnesota Gophers for their second matchup of the weekend. The Huskies lost in overtime with a final score of 2-3. PHOTO BY MERCER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

5 GROUP OF FIVE TEAMS POISED FOR A CFP RUN

by Ryan Lombardi | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | HE/HIM/HIS | ryan.lombardi@uconn.edu

The new college football 12-team playoff has drawn excitement from fans for giving more teams a chance to win it all and for the first time, guaranteeing a spot for a non-power conference champion. Under the new system, the top four highest ranked conference winners earn automatic byes, while the next highest ranked champion will play in the first round. That fifth spot opens the door for the remaining conferences, known as the Group of Five. The battle for the right to a playoff berth is certain to spark intense competition between otherwise overlooked schools. Here are five of those teams that have the best chance to represent the Group of Five in the playoffs this year.

Boise State Broncos, Mountain West

Led by the best running back in college football, Ashton Jeanty, Boise State is currently ranked No. 21 in the nation, as of week five, with a 3-1 record. Their only loss came in a thriller against Oregon, where, if it weren't for a late 100-yard kick return by the Ducks, Boise State might have earned an impressive top ten victory. Regardless, Jeanty shined in this game with 192 rushing yards and three touchdowns to nearly carry his team to the upset. He currently leads the FBS with 845 rushing yards and 13 touchdowns. Redshirt sophomore quarterback Maddux Madsen, who won the starting job over former five-star Malachi Nelson, has managed the offense effectively, keeping the team on track. The Broncos hope to see improvements in their defense and special teams, but with Jeanty in the backfield, they'll always be a threat to opposing teams.

UNLV Rebels, Mountain West

Another Mountain West squad, UNLV, is off to a hot start, ranked No. 25 and sitting at a 4-0 record. They've posted

convincing wins over Houston, Utah Tech and Fresno State, and notched a stunning win over Kansas. The Rebels have been the subject of numerous headlines in the past week after their starting quarterback, Matthew Sluka, announced he would sit out the rest of the season due to NIL disputes. The Rebels quickly switched gears with their next quarterback in line, Hajj-Malik Williams, to drop 52 points over a potent defense in Fresno State. With their already strong resume and proven resilience, a Mountain West Conference championship could easily place them in the field of 12 in December.

Liberty Flames, Conference USA

Liberty had high expectations going into this season, after finishing last year ranked No. 25 in the country. However, being a part of a particularly weak conference means they have little room for error, especially without any power five schools on their schedule. At 4-0, Liberty essentially can't afford to lose a single game to keep their playoff hopes alive. Led by quarterback Kaidon Salter and running back Quinton Cooley, the Flames hope to improve as their victories have been tighter than expected, failing to cover the spread in three of their four games. But if they find their stride and go undefeated, it'll be hard to keep Liberty out of playoff discussions.

James Madison Dukes, Sun Belt

In just their third year at the FBS level, James Madison has already established itself as a G5 contender. The Dukes went 11-2 last season, winning the Sun Belt and defeating Air Force in the Armed Forces Bowl. Despite losing key pieces to the transfer portal, they're 4-0, including a 70-point explosion against North Carolina in week three. Redshirt sophomore QB Alonza

Barnett III has been impressive, averaging 255 passing yards per game and passing for 12 touchdowns over four games. With a light schedule for the rest of the season, JMU has an opportunity to run the table and win the Sun Belt to push for a playoff spot, especially with their statement win over UNC on their resume already.

Navy Midshipmen, American

Never did I think I would be considering two military schools as playoff contenders, but here we are, with both Army and Navy boasting 4-0 records for the first time since 1945. However, between the two, Navy's offense has proven to be a powerhouse, especially after pulling off a thrilling 56-44 victory over Memphis thanks to quarterback Blake Horvath's four rushing touchdowns. Not to mention running backs Brandon Chatman and Eli Heidenreich combined for three more. The Midshipmen's dominant victories over Bucknell, Temple and UAB improved their case. However, the path to a playoff berth will be tough. A week 10 matchup with Notre Dame will likely define their season, but they'll also need to navigate tough AAC opponents like Tulane, USF and of course, Army. Now just imagine an Army-Navy rematch for the AAC title and a playoff spot on the line. It may be wishful thinking, but we can dream.

It's still early, and teams on this list may fall or rise as the year goes on and the season progresses. Perhaps another team will also establish itself in this race. And whoever the representative will ultimately be, they'll presumably still have to get past the fifth best team in the nation in the first round. But we should know by now that college football is full of surprises, and the expanded playoffs only add to the unpredictability.

Men's Golf: UConn Comes Up Just Shy of a Victory at GreatHorse

by Trevor Coughlin
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The Huskies put up a strong fight at the UConn Invitational, held at GreatHorse in Hamden, Massachusetts, but fell just short of defending their title, finishing second among 13 competing schools from Sept. 29 to Oct. 1.

After finishing the second day with a score of +2 and a three-stroke lead over the University of Rhode Island, the Huskies shot a surprising +13 today, ending with a final score of +15. This opened the door for the Rams to secure victory at +5. Other notable competitors included third-place St. John's (+16), fourth-place Boston College (+17) and fifth-place Sacred Heart (+32).

In the individual competition featuring 78 players, the Huskies were led by senior Ray Dennehy, who finished in a tie for second place at -3. Junior Connor Goode followed closely, tying for sixth at even par. Rounding out the Huskies' top five were senior Trevor Lopez in a tie for 20th (+7), senior Eric Boulger in a tie for 24th (+8) and freshman Matt Costello in a tie for 32nd (+10). Just outside the top five, sophomore Bradley Sawka and senior Vikram Konanki tied for 36th (+11), sophomore Jackson Kantowski tied for 40th (+12), freshman Caden Blanchette tied for 46th (+16) and junior Colin Spencer tied for 54th (+19).

After tying for 24th last year, Princeton, Massachusetts senior Dennehy made a significant leap to finish in second place, leading the Huskies on the scoreboard. On day one, Dennehy had a promising start with an eagle on the first hole, finishing the day with eight birdies and a score of 68 (-4), placing him second behind Rhode Island's Tyler Bruneau. On day two, Dennehy's score slipped; he managed only four birdies and finished at +2, dropping in the standings. However, he bounced back on day three with a score

of -1, completing the invitational with a total of 213, tying with Bruneau and finishing just one stroke behind victor Peicheng Chen

Following Dennehy was last year's champion, junior Connor Goode from Glastonbury, Connecticut, who finished in a three-way tie for sixth place. On day one, Goode had a strong start with four birdies, finishing with a score of 70 (-2). He maintained consistency on day two, adding five more birdies for a score of 71 (-1), which put him in the lead heading into the final day. However, on day three, he shot a 75 (+3), which allowed him to

hold onto a tie for sixth place with Holy Cross' Matt Williams and Sacred Heart's Michael Rothberg.

Finishing third for the Huskies and tying for 20th overall was Lopez from Winchester, Massachusetts. Lopez demonstrated consistency throughout all three days, recording scores of 74 on both days one and two, and 75 on day three. He made six birdies over the course of the tournament, finishing with an overall score of 223 (+7), tying Sacred Heart's Ethan Phillips, Siena College's Mike McConie, and BC's Brian Xu.

Next was Boulger, who finished

in 24th place, tied with Villanova's Ryan Pamer and BC's Benjamin Hong. The Walpole, Massachusetts golfer had a strong start, making four birdies and finishing even with a score of 72 after day one. Over the next two days, Boulger posted a pair of 76s, ending the tournament with a total score of 224 (+8) and adding six more birdies.

Rounding off the Huskies' top five of the invitational was new coming freshman Costello from Taunton, Massachusetts, finishing with a score of 226 (+10). On day one, Costello scored a 77 (+5)

with two birdies. On days two and three, Costello managed to lower his scores, scoring a 74 and 75, with a total of seven birdies, ultimately tying for 32nd with BC's Marcus Lam, Fairleigh Dickinson's Matus Kudlac and Merrimack's Quinn Lapinski.

Overall, the Huskies will have two weeks to rest before heading down south to compete in the Elon University's Phoenix Invitational from Oct. 14-15. If they can maintain the strong performance they started with, they should be well-positioned for success in this upcoming tournament.



UConn men's golf walking off after a strong hole on the course. The team just recently had a strong outing at the GreatHorse competition. IMAGE COURTESY OF @UCONNMGOLF ON INSTAGRAM

UConn Football in Talks to Join the PAC-12

by Tyler Pruneau | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | HE/HIM/HIS | tyler.pruneau@uconn.edu

Over one year ago, the disintegration of the Pac-12 began and every Power Five conference, except the Pac-12, secured a new long-term TV rights deal. This negatively impacted the conference, pushing eight programs to seek a new conference.

Oregon and Washington headed to the Big Ten, Arizona and Arizona State quickly joined Colorado in the Big 12 and California and Stanford advanced to the American Athletic Conference. This left just two teams behind, Oregon State and Washington State, forcing a rebuild of the conference.

Expanding in 2026, the Pac-12 looks to add Utah State, San Diego State, Fresno State, Colorado State and Boise State after merging the Pac-12 and Mountain West conferences. Still needing seven more teams, talks began between the conference and the University of Connecticut.

In the past, the Huskies struggled to generate success in the AAC and exited their contract early. Considering all possibilities, the football team staying independent impacted the program greatly. The first year of independence was a struggle as the team finished 1-11, but soon after, the era of Jim Mora began.

Ending the year with a 6-7 record and attending a bowl, Mora earned his players' trust in his first year, providing the team hope. After not ending the season how they

wanted last year, the team turned the page and blew out three of their opponents so far this year. Last year, Duke University beat the Huskies 41-7, whereas this year, they lost by only five points.

With Connecticut consistently improving and showing their competitiveness, this is what the Pac-12 wants and needs. If this follows through, the only sport joining would be football. Although basketball is also a main athletic focus for UConn, joining the Pac-12 would be advantageous.

When leaving the AAC early, UConn paid \$17 million due to the football team's poor performance. This leads to the question: If the team failed to compete, why join another conference? The answer is simple enough: UConn has since demonstrated a high level of play. Seeing familiar faces in this year's schedule from the AAC, the Huskies already took out Florida Atlantic in a 48-14 win. UConn also has yet to play Rice, who they beat in the past, alongside Temple and the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Additionally, a couple of the teams joining the Pac-12 clashed against UConn in the past. In the 2022-2023 season, the Huskies lost to Utah State but kept the score below 11 points, keeping them in the game. In 2021, Fresno State crushed the Huskies in a 45-0 loss.

One year later, Connecticut pulled an upset and beat Fresno while they ranked as the No. 24 best team in the

nation. Under Head Coach Mora, competing and winning in the Pac-12 is a no-brainer, the talent is there and the team has proved it several times already.

Before the Pac-12, there was the conversation about joining the Big 12 conference. Conversations paused, not granting Connecticut an invitation. The football team's past performance in the AAC possibly influenced their reasoning.

Taking the opportunity and joining the Pac-12 alone could benefit the university down the road. Unlike the Big 12's deal of leaving the Big East entirely, nothing would change except the football team playing in a different conference. If the team exceeds expectations, the conversations of joining the Big 12 resuming are likely.

Mora took questions about conference realignment and told CT Insider.

"I mean, I see some headlines every once in a while, but I don't know. I grew up a Pac-12 guy, obviously. But, yeah, I've got enough to take care of. Right here. I don't spend a lot of time on that. If I were to spend time thinking about conference realignment, I wouldn't have time to think about anything else because it's all over the news and who knows what's going on," he said.

The beginning is just starting and if conversations continue, the results and effects on the team and university should be interesting.



Sports

ROUNDTABLE: WORLD SERIES PREDICTIONS

It feels like it was just yesterday when the Los Angeles Dodgers and the San Diego Padres played out the first MLB games in Seoul, South Korea on March 20. However, after a long 162-game grind, October is here. For some fanbases, this marks the perfect time to cheer on their favorite football teams or watch something new on Netflix. However, for some teams, this is where the postseason grind begins. The New York Yankees look to finally get over their ALCS hump this year, as both Aaron Judge and Juan Soto put up ridiculous offensive production. Of course, who could forget Shohei Ohtani and the Los Angeles Dodgers' successful 98-win campaign; although, don't count out teams like the Phillies or the Orioles from making a little bit of October magic. In this week's roundtable, our group of writers will give their take on who they see putting all of the pieces together and winning this year's fall classic.

by Jake Loomis
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This year's World Series will be won by the Detroit Tigers: mark my word. The Tigers have been the real shocker of the MLB season so far, going on a hot streak in the second half of the year. This team is gritty, determined and wants it all. They also have a top-tier manager in A.J. Hinch with a lot of postseason experience that should help aid the team down the stretch. The road will be tricky, though, as the Tigers will be a wild card team. However, if they can continue to stay hot and prove themselves, they should have no problem upsetting powerhouse teams like the Yankees. The road will start with Hinch's former team, the Astros, where he was involved in the pitch tipping scandal that ultimately led to his firing. The Tigers have arms and good bats that should be able to provide them enough to sneakily win it all this October.

by Connor Sargeant

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While it wasn't always pretty, the New York Yankees punched their ticket to the playoffs after a solid 94-win season. All year long, the former American League MVP Aaron Judge has been mashing baseballs at a high level for New York. The 32-year-old hit .322 from the dish with 58 home runs and 144 RBIs. Judge also was the first player since Barry Bonds in 2004 to finish with a slugging percentage over .700. Fans also cannot sleep on Juan Soto and the season he is having. The right fielder batted an excellent .288 for the regular season, not to mention launching 41 home runs and 109 RBIs. The Yankees also boast one of the most solid pitching staffs, which includes Gerrit Cole. Additionally, New York has a deep bullpen, which typically is the deciding factor in these games. With the high level of talent and this being Judge's seventh try at the post-season, look for him to make some noise and take this team all the way to the promised land.

by Ryan Lombardi

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This Padres team is starting to feel more like the Giants in the early 2010s, as it seems like they are competitive every other year. After mediocre results last season, the Padres made significant moves by trading Juan Soto in order to shed payroll and bolster their pitching staff. While the pitching hasn't exactly been lights out, they've somehow improved offensively, leading the league in batting average and top ten in OPS, home runs and RBIs. A three-man rotation of Michael King, Dylan Cease and Joe Musgrove should put them in situations to let their bats do the talking. Not to mention a sneaky good bullpen that consists of Tanner Scott, Jason Adam and closer Robert Suarez. And of course, we finally get to see Fernando Tatis Jr. make his return to the postseason. In 2020, he carried San Diego to a series win over the Cardinals. Simply making it to the playoffs seems to be the difficult part for San Diego, but they're here and it feels like this is their best chance to make some noise.

by Patrick Minnerly

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The Mets just punched their ticket to the playoffs on Sunday with a thrilling victory over the Braves. It took so much for them to get here, from starting 0-5, to being eleven games under .500 by May 29, to breaking out in June to become one of the hottest teams in baseball. And yet, it almost wasn't enough. In the end, it was the heroics of Francisco Lindor, who has put the team on his back this season, that secured the win over a team that has historically beaten the aspirations of Mets fans into the dirt. But this season was different. The Mets fought through every challenge thrown at them. They embraced the fun of Grimace and infielder Jose Iglesias' song "OMG." They showed the heart and grit necessary to make it far in the playoffs. The superteams like the Yankees and Dodgers may have their flashy records and eye-popping stats, but what really matters for the postseason is how much you want it. And the Mets really want it. "Ya Gotta Believe!"



FILES ILLUSTRATION/THE DAILY CAMPUS

WHAT TO KEEP AN EYE ON THIS WEEK

UConn SCOREBOARD



2 vs. 1

Field Hockey
Sunday

Upcoming Games



Women's Soccer,
7 p.m. Thursday
Storrs, Conn.



Men's Ice Hockey,
7:30 p.m. Friday
Storrs, Conn.

INSTAGRAM OF THE DAY



@uconnpd_officercarson
Today is #nationalblackdogday Be sure to pet every black dog you see and tell them they're special #blackdog #blackgoldador

TWEETS OF THE DAY



B/R Hoops
@brhoops

5-star guard Darius Adams is headed to UConn

The Huskies get one of the best scorers in HS basketball regardless of class @darius-adams

UConn Insider
@UConn_Insider

Sources: UConn won't join Pac-12, doesn't consider conference the right fit

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