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## UConn establishes new council on combating sexual violence

by **Liliana French**

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The University of Connecticut established a new President's Council on Combating Sexual Violence and Harassment following the completion of the President's Task Force on Combating Sexual Violence and Supporting Our Students.

The task force began in spring 2022 and completed its work in summer, according to UConn Today. According to The Daily Campus, student Alexandra Docken stood outside the Rowe Center for Undergraduate Education holding a sign that said "I was raped, and UConn silenced me" in February 2022, leading to campus protests on UConn's alleged mishandling of sexual assault.

"The task force was charged with evaluating how UConn educates, prevents and responds to sexual violence," according to a UConn Today article.

The new council is tasked with monitoring the implementation of recommendations from the original task force, providing feedback on UConn policies and more. The council held its first meeting in early November, according to UConn Today. Students and faculty can apply to be on the council until Dec. 8.

"The council will also address the need for ongoing communication between students and the UConn administration to monitor and evaluate progress," the article states. "Implementing any recommendations will be accompanied by feedback on the impact of students, faculty and staff experiences."

Grian Wizner, a seventh-semester secondary English education major and president of Revolution Against Rape, applied to be on the council along with fellow RAR member Julia Stout.

Wizner said that RAR's goals include ensuring that all blue phone lights on campus are functional, providing resource brochures to students and pushing for timely investigations of rape and sexual assault.

"We've had a couple of people come up and be like 'hey, this happened to me and it took UConn months for them to get back to me,'" Wizner said.

"Some officers don't really believe sexual assault survivors, unfortunately," Wizner said. "I've had a couple of people say they wouldn't even talk to them unless they had video proof of what was happening, which was crazy."

UConn's 2024 Student Experience Survey, which in-

cluded questions on sexual and interpersonal violence, was completed by 2.5 percent of students who were invited to participate, or 773 out of 30,777 students.

Survey data shows that of students who experienced sexual and interpersonal violence and did not report it, 26 percent did not report it because they were concerned that they would not be believed or would be blamed and 30 percent did not think they would be taken seriously.

Regarding students who did report sexual or interpersonal violence to a campus official, 65 percent said they were given support and resources, while 35 percent said that their report was not taken seriously and 6 percent said that they were blamed or not believed.

Wizner claimed that police do not know how to interact with students in a crisis and that police need better training to help survivors in a crisis.

"We also want better training for the [UConn Police Department], because at least from RAR's perspective, we are obviously not like 'the police are so great,' but on the other side, if we have them, I want them to be better suited to support survivors in a crisis, because I feel like they're not," Wizner said.

UConn's 2023 Annual Fire and Security report covers training for officers in UConn's Special Victims Unit.

"This team of police officers receives specialized training in many areas of sexual violence that goes beyond the minimum requirements for police officers set by the State of Connecticut," the report says. "Specialized training includes management of investigations, use of a victim-orientated approach and current trends at colleges and universities."

According to a university website, the UCPD works closely with the Women's Center and victims of a crime have "the right to timely disposition of the case following arrest of the accused, provided no right of the accused is abridged."

Wizner expressed optimism over the creation of the council, but stated that until meetings occur, he would not be able to tell if the council would be effective.

"At least they're trying to include people and not have administrators come in and be the voices for students," Wizner said. "I'm really, really, really hoping that it would be good [...] but I can't really say anything until a meeting has been held, or I go sit in on a meeting,

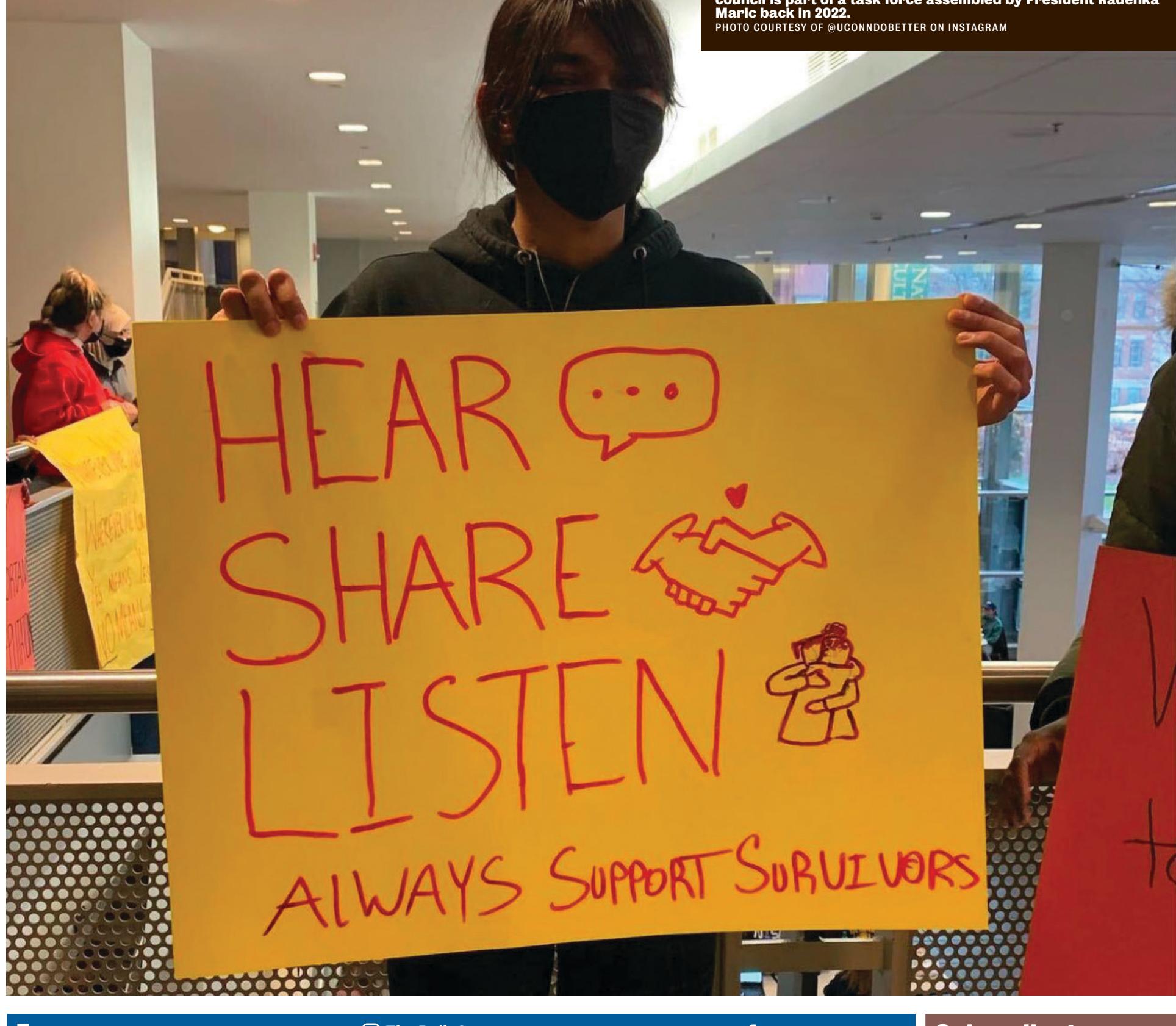
or I am part of the council."

Regarding student knowledge of resources, 66 percent of students who took the survey said that they learned about sexual or interpersonal violence through classes, trainings or other programs, 54 percent said that they understood what happens when sexual or interpersonal violence is reported, but only 42 percent knew where to get help.

The UConn Today article said that UConn was accepted into the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education, which includes over 50 other institutions.

UConn President Radenka Maric and Provost Anne D'Alleva wrote a commitment letter to the NASEM collaborative.

"We are committed to ensuring that all members of our community are free from harassment, intimidation and discrimination," they said. "A supportive community enables us to reach our full potential as educators, researchers and professionals and helps ensure that our students can access the full range of opportunities they need to become fully prepared for life journeys."



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THE DAILY CAMPUS

NEWSLETTER

# Educators and researchers address African American and Latino studies in CT schools

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A group of educators, scholars and researchers gathered in a panel discussion at the University of Connecticut on Nov. 12 to talk about the highs and lows of teaching African American and Latino studies in high school classrooms.

Moderated by Alexandra Freidus, an assistant professor of educational leadership at UConn, the discussion offered insight into the ongoing fight for these courses, the disparities within accessing it and the significant role teachers play in shaping students' understanding of race and history. The discussion touched on multiple topics, from the legislative fights for these courses to the daily challenges teachers face in the classroom.

These courses didn't just appear, but they were fought for by student activists and teachers, according to Daisha Brabham, the director of education and public outreach at Yale University and a professor at Southern Connecticut State University, in reference to the passage of the state law in 2019 that made it mandatory for high schools to offer African American and Latino history courses.

According to the Connecticut General Assembly's public records, the reason this course was so heavily discussed was to ensure that demographics do not determine who has access to these courses. The curriculum focuses on both content knowledge and student identity development, which panelists implied is important for all students to know.

Hannah Cooke, a research assistant at UConn's Neag School of Education, looked into 154 Connecticut high schools to determine who has access to African American and Latino studies and who teaches it.

"We know that more than three-quarters of high schools ran the class; quarter-ish that did not run the class, [and] almost all of the responses [were due to] low enrollment," Cooke explained.

Cooke's research also revealed patterns about which schools are more likely to offer the course. Cooke found that schools with more diverse student populations, such as those with higher percentages of Black, Hispanic or English Language Learner students, were significantly more likely to teach the course. On the other hand, smaller schools or those with predominantly white students were less likely to offer it.

Cooke also found that students of color in predominantly white schools might need this course the most, yet they're often the ones who miss out because there aren't enough students or trained teachers to run it.

The role of the teacher, the panelists emphasized, was crucial to the success of these courses. Jia-Hui Stefanie Wong, an assistant professor of educational studies at Trinity College, discussed her research on urban and suburban schools, highlighting that the relationship between the teacher and their students was key.

Wong worked with five teachers across two districts monthly, one urban and one suburban, both serving predominantly students of color, ranging around 75 percent. One of the most significant takeaways from her research was that "it matters" who is teaching the course, according to Wong.

Wong expressed that while all the teachers recognized the importance of the course, their differing orientations impacted how it was delivered.

Throughout her research she interviewed one teacher, a Black woman, who deeply committed herself to teaching through an ethnic studies lens, centering anti-racism and communities of color. Meanwhile, in another interview Wong conducted, other teachers did not always have the same perspective or did not show the same level of enthusiasm. Wong explained that some described being assigned to teach the course more out of necessity than choice.

Brabham echoed Wong's statement, explaining the im-

portance of having teachers that are committed to teach essential courses like this one and creating a space where students feel comfortable exploring tough topics like racialization and generational trauma. Reflecting on their experiences, Brabham shared that in one of her classes she spoke about migration and Afro-Latina community using the Disney movie Encanto.

"Students were very happy with that but they also were very clear to voice with me that they would not have engaged with that lesson if I was not Black. So, I do think that who's teaching it is really important and kind of recognizing the limitations that you can have," Brabham said.

Shannon Andros, who has taught African and Latino studies at Norwich Free Academy, a semiprivate school in Connecticut, shared her own experience on this topic and in the classroom.

"Over the past several years, this topic has been de-

professionalized. The fact that ethnic studies as a whole [is still] under attack, it still gives me a stomach-ache," Andros said.

Andros said the main thing that keeps her grounded in teaching this course, despite its challenges, is the students. This course isn't easy to teach, the panelists agreed. It touches on topics regarding decades of slavery, discrimination and more, explained the teachers on the panel.

Yet, some advice Andros received from a colleague gave her a different view on how to approach teaching the course, she recalled: "Teaching this course is about decolonizing myself, by challenging what I've been taught and how I teach it."

Because of teaching these sensitive topics of the past, Shannon wants to make sure her students are included in the conversation on how they felt about the curriculum, by giving an end-of-year reflection. This helps her understand the students personally, which she hopes will help her structure her class for the following years.

# Manchester Jazz Fest 'swings' into season this weekend, to feature UConn students

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For the ninth year, a local fundraiser will bring a lineup of talented performers to Connecticut. The Manchester Jazz Fest will be held this Saturday, Dec. 7 at Cheney Hall, a performing arts institution in Manchester.

The event is produced by BSBI, a community-building group and affiliate of the Beth Shalom synagogue in Manchester. The festival is ticketed, but the admission acts as a fund-

raiser to support locally based charity organizations, according to the event's webpage.

A group of students from the University of Connecticut are headlining the event as part of the "UConn Student Jazz Combo". The group will perform a medley of classic and modern jazz pieces. Steve Bulmer, director of jazz combos for the UConn music department, acts as director alongside seven student musicians: Michael Rentz on trumpet, Michael Farina on tenor saxophone, Ciara Garcia on baritone saxophone, Colin Quigley on guitar, Isadore Palacpac on piano, Andrew Cenarelli on bass and Sean Byring on drums.

The UConn music department explains that different student performers in small "combo" ensembles use the experience to become more prepared for professional music performance environments.

"Under the guidance and direction of faculty members, students work together within assigned combos to develop proficiency in the art of jazz improvisation and small-group jazz performance," the UConn jazz ensembles webpage reads.

The Manchester Jazz Fest's musical lineup also includes three other headline performing groups; the Benny Benack

III Quartet, Matt DeChamplain Quintet and Andrew Wilcox Trio. They are comprised of mostly local performers; Benack's quartet is based out of New York City, with DeChamplain and Wilcox originating in Wethersfield and Hartford, respectively.

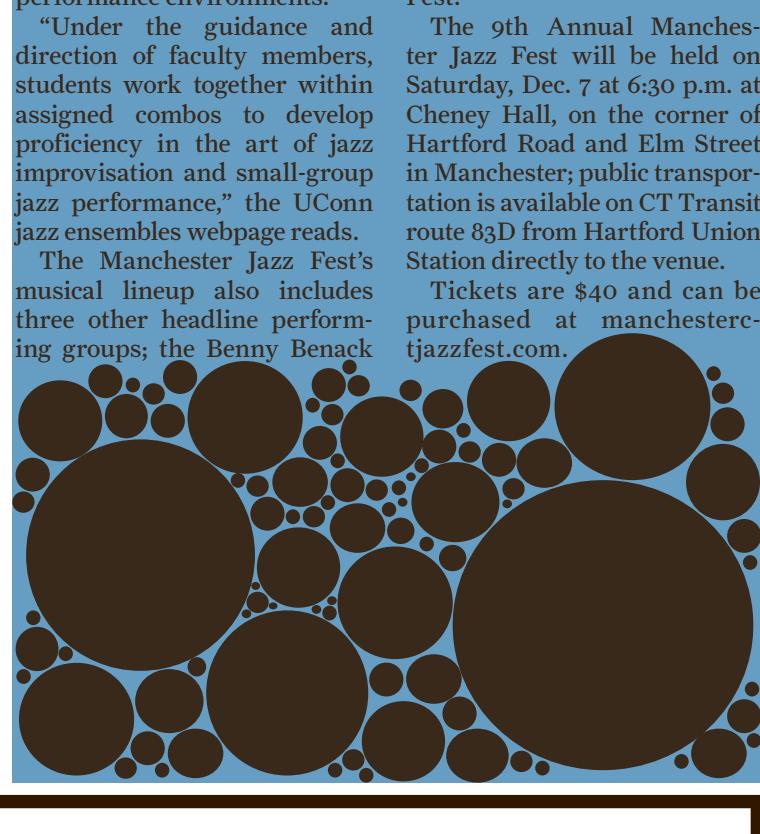
The Hartford Jazz Society acts as a sponsor and the whole show will be emceed by Lorna Diane Blackwell, the host of the "Mixed Bag of Jazz" show on WRTC FM 89.3, a press statement reads.

Some of the musicians performing at the festival have been featured on famous jazz recordings, such as those by Michael Brecker, the Manhattan Transfer and the Jackie McLean Institute of Jazz at The University of Hartford. In previous seasons, the Manchester Jazz Fest has featured local and nationally renowned jazz performers like the Hot Tonic Orchestra, Vincent Herring Quartet and the Brubeck Brothers among others.

Cheney Hall, the festival's host location, was built in 1866 and is operated by the Little Theatre of Manchester Society, according to their history page. The Manchester Historical Society details that the hall is central to the Cheney Brothers National Historic Landmark District, having undergone renovations and improvements to help host performances and events like the annual Jazz Fest.

The 9th Annual Manchester Jazz Fest will be held on Saturday, Dec. 7 at 6:30 p.m. at Cheney Hall, on the corner of Hartford Road and Elm Street in Manchester; public transportation is available on CT Transit route 83D from Hartford Union Station directly to the venue.

Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased at [manchesterjazzfest.com](http://manchesterjazzfest.com).



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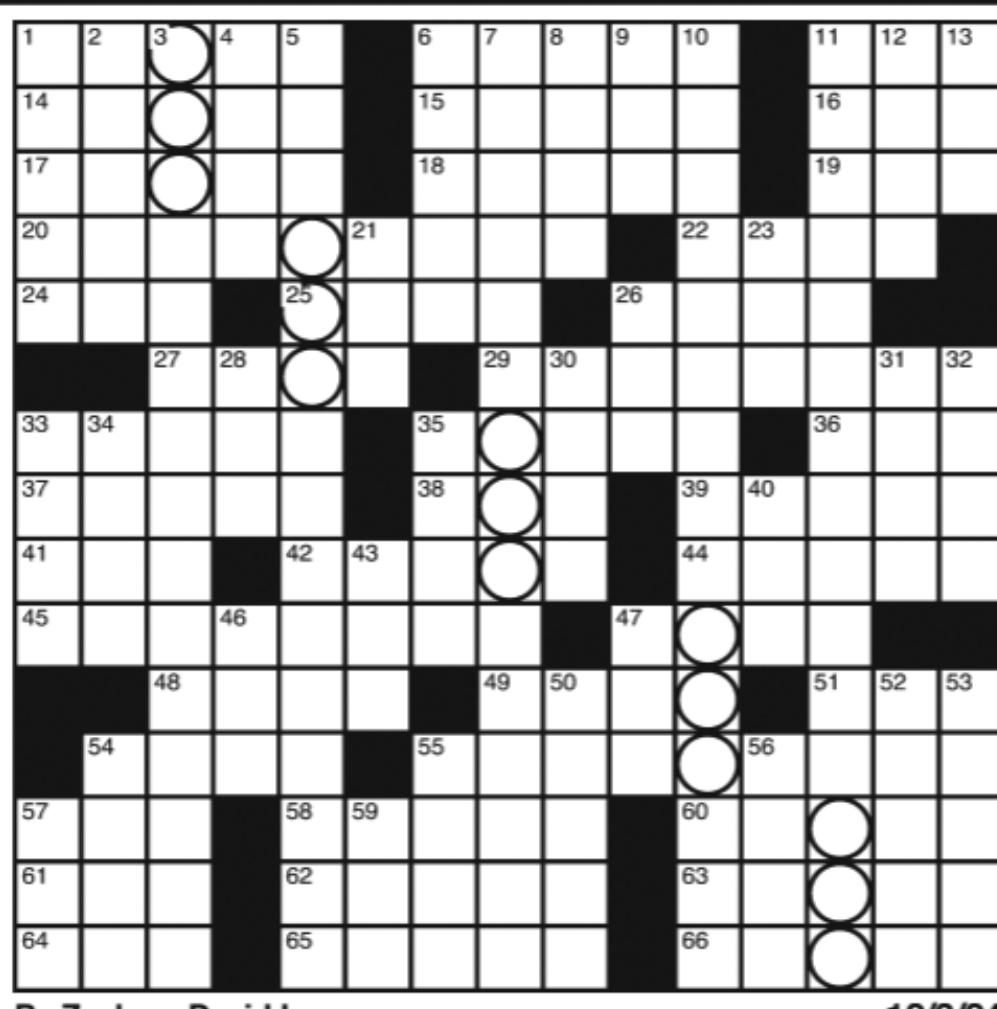
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By Zachary David Levy

12/3/24

**Monday's Puzzle Solved**

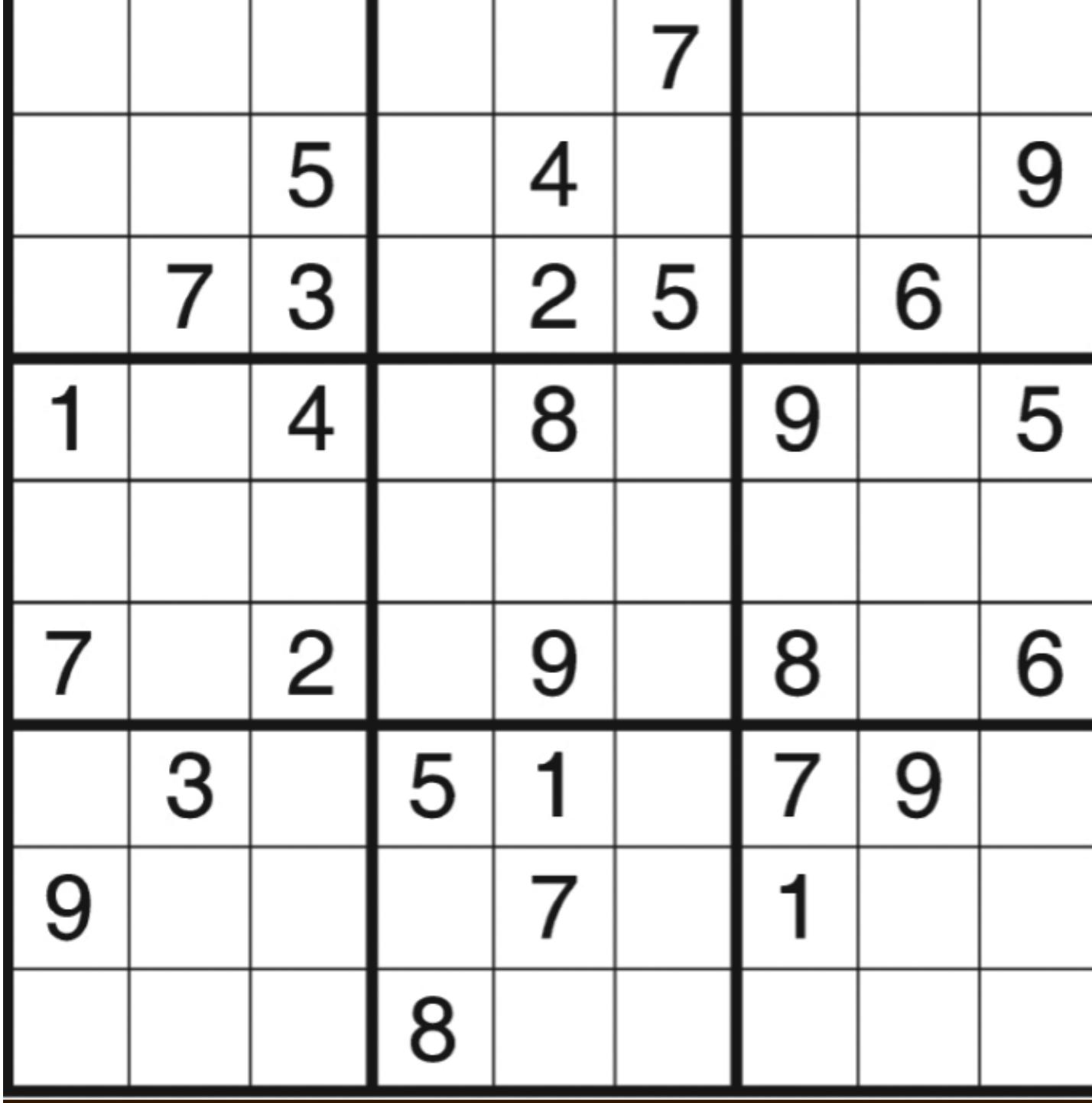
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# 'Liminal Animals': Recording history and ambivalence toward God

by Bonnibel Lilith Rampertab  
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**Content warning for depictions of lynching, self-harm and violence.**

Ulver (Norwegian for "Wolves") originally started out as a black metal band, but they switched genres after their third album, "Nattens madrigal: Aatte hymne til ulven i manden" ("Night's Madrigal: Eight Hymns to the Wolf in Man"). It would be suitable to say that Ulver is like a musical Swiss army knife and a jack of all trades. They are certainly eclectic in their musical discipline, experimenting and creating a dynamic discography. On Nov. 29, 2024, "Liminal Animals," released after the death of the band's keyboardist, Tore Ylwizaker, took a synthpop approach.

The album begins with "Ghost Entry," a beautiful lamentation of the art and power of recording as well as the process of enjoying music. According to the lyrics, this song was written and recorded on Monday, June 21, which would fall under 2021 at the latest if the lyrics are truthful. The vocalist, Kristoffer Rygg, calls his recorded voice "a distant ghost," which with the synthpop backing makes one reminisce about the 1980s. The "moving objects" and "the music they make" could be referring to the consumerism of buying merchandise for bands and artists someone would enjoy. After a short instrumental break, a beautiful bassline becomes apparent that accompanies the vocals. The vocals at the end make Rygg sound like a ghost — a clever usage of mixing and reverb.

"A City in the Skies" is immediately disturbing as it begins with "A Black widow hangs from a tree," which makes one think about the spider until the lyrics continue. These include: "Marked with the cross, a symbol of concern," "Under the cover of night, a powerful play, rolling into the city, wild beasts of prey," "The killing machines, what are they thinking of?" and especially after the instrumental break with the softly played part, "Break the window, get into the house, wipe the memory, we were never here." The song tells a chilling story of a lynching by using animal metaphors, or maybe that's reading too deeply into the lyrics, and the "Black widow" really was a spider with a cross instead of an hourglass shape on its body, though the second verse wouldn't make as much sense. A city in the skies makes one think of Heaven, after all.

"Forgive Us" is about asking both the world and God for forgiveness — two conflicting opposites as Earthly and Heavenly things are juxtaposed as different and even contradictory to one another. Appeasing both sides surely isn't going to end well. The theme of the Greek god Pan dying will become relevant for the final song. The song features a beautiful trumpet solo from Norwegian avant-garde jazz artist Nils Petter Molvær.

"Nocturne #1" is a solemn instrumental that sounds similar to metalcore band Loathe's ambient material with the synth melodies. The lowest buzzing synth slowly swallows the rest of the synths in the mix.

"Locusts" begins with a quiet soundscape of what sounds like

a street before percussive instruments and a piano swallow the recording. There's a metallic instrument like a xylophone in the mix. The lyrics reference how locusts are used in "The Bible" to signify how in The Book of Revelation the end of the world is predicted partially with a swarm of locusts attacking. The lyric, "The wind is picking up pages from the scriptures" exemplifies this Biblical reference.

"Hollywood Babylon" is quite the provocative song with the lyric, "Don't fuck with America, they'll shoot you anyway," followed by gunshot sound effects to make it clear that they're talking about gun violence and not necessarily just filming. Satirically, the song advocates for self-harm (which is a terrible idea) as well as violence, stuffing your face presumably with food and finding solace in religion with the line, "Sing 'Hallelujah' to the Lord, it's how this song goes," before going into the chorus with the lyric cited prior and not the word "Hallelujah."

The lyric "Don't speak nothing but the truth" is a double negative, which purposefully makes the message that people are allowed to lie. "You never know who's watching you" feeds into the paranoia many people have about being surveilled, especially online. This song comes off as a sardonic critique of American society.

"The Red Light" tells an imaginative story with only a handful of lyrics, many of them repeated, about an apocalypse where "man is wolf to man." A beautiful call-back to "Ghost Entry" is found in the lyric, "A message on the radio, written a hundred years ago," also feeding



ALBUM COVER COURTESY OF ULVER ON BANDCAMP

into the post-apocalyptic narrative.

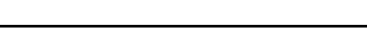
"Nocturne #2" is the second and final instrumental track on "Liminal Animals." The instrumentation this time around sounds like something industrial band Nine Inch Nails would produce for their instrumental "Ghosts" series or for "Hesitation Marks" with the arpeggiating synths. There's a stringed instrument in the mix that sounds like a shamisen.

The final track, "Helian (Trakl)," is presumably a recitation of the poem "Helian" by Georg Trakl in Norwegian. The vocal inflections themselves sound like how Trent Reznor whispers the bridge of "Closer" by Nine Inch Nails. The synths in the background help this comparison even more. Otherwise,

one could get away with comparing the vocals with Peter Steele's of Type O Negative with the beginning of "Christian Woman." The point is that Rygg's voice sounds seductive.

Ulver has come a long way from being just a solid black metal band. They achieved a lot in their 30-plus years of making music from an experimentation standpoint. This is just another record in their expansive catalogue and a pretty decent one at that.

**Rating: 3.5/5**



## Kim Deal explores chamber pop in her debut 'Nobody Loves You More'

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Kim Deal is a singer, songwriter, guitarist, bassist and keyboardist who has her hands all over the alternative rock scene. As a former member of the Pixies, the Amps and the Breeders, it's safe to say that Deal has cemented her legacy,

and now with her solo debut, "Nobody Loves You More," she aims to add to her legacy with a project that is a departure from her usual sound.

While this album doesn't entirely venture outside of the alternative rock genre, it gives us plenty of tracks that delve into Deal's rendition of chamber pop. Her best attempt at chamber pop throughout the

whole project comes in the introductory title track. It consists of somber and repetitive lyrics with lounge production in the first half that pays off with a swelling horn section with a great melody before mellowing out again with the final repeated chorus. It's a great track that I wish reflected how the rest of the chamber pop cuts on the record sound.

The next track, "Coast," is another chamber pop track that does not work nearly as well for me. It continues its use of horns in a less intriguing way and delivers a decent chorus with a tropical feel that matches the album cover. Next, we see Deal return to her alt-rock sound with "Crystal Breath," a track that sounds like something that could have been on a late '90s record by the Breeders. It contains Deal's signature slacker vocals and some fun and quirky guitars.

It's here that I start to notice a pattern: virtually every other song on this project switches from a calmer and more somber chamber pop track to a more energetic alt-rock track.

The contrast this provides

comes as sort of a double-edged

sword as it provides a good sequencing for the album. On the other hand, as a person who is not really into chamber pop, it sometimes feels like a slog to get through the more poppy song in anticipation of the next song.

This is not the case, however, for the song, "Are You Mine?" It's an eerily beautiful track amplified by its haunting lyrics written from the perspective of Kim Deal's mother who is affected by dementia, "Are you mine? Are you my baby? I have no mind for nothing but love."

The last two songs I want to discuss in length are two of the last tracks on the project, "Summerland" and "A Good Time Pushed." "Summerland" is a very pleasant and soft song with simple melodies from Deal's ukulele and soft vocals providing the backdrop for Deal's laidback singing of barebones lyrics. The track has bursts of electric guitar sprinkled throughout until it fades out at the end of the song.

"A Good Time Pushed" then begins by reviving the guitar that had just faded at a more upbeat tempo to close the al-

bum out with another nostalgic-sounding track reminiscent of the Breeders. The track has some solid guitar work by Deal as usual, an infectious chorus and a nice bridge composition before one last chorus that feels like a melancholic goodbye.

Overall, while there are not many standout tracks to write home about, the whole album has a very cohesive tropical sound that I think Kim Deal is able to pull off pretty well. At times the record bored me because it stuck with instrumentation, which while well-produced, became formulaic to my ears by the time I figured out what Deal was going for. With some of her most personal tracks and an almost entirely self-produced album, "Nobody Loves You More" proves itself necessary as Kim Deal's first solo outing.

**Rating 3.5/5**



ALBUM COVER COURTESY OF KIM DEAL ON BANDCAMP

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# Life

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## 'Astro Bot' as Cutest Game of the Year 2024

by Desirae Sin | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | SHE/HER/HERS | desirae.sin@uconn.edu

Welcome back to "The Backlog" for the last time this semester. It's been a busy and hectic fall but writing for this column has been the highlight of each week for me. Just like last year, there is only one edition of "The Backlog" for December. Because of this I'm going to explore one of the nominees for Game of the Year. It's not necessarily my nomination, but one that I think deserves some love and attention. Though it's competing against huge titles like "Elden Ring: Shadow of the Erdtree," "Black Myth: Wukong" and "Final Fantasy VII Rebirth," I believe "Astro Bot" is the cutest contender for Game of the Year.

"Astro Bot" is a 3D platformer developed by Team ASOBI and is only available on PlayStation 5. It is a spin-off title of "The Playroom," a game that came with the PS4 in 2013 to showcase the console's abilities. The PS5 had a similar free game called "Astro's Playroom," which also showcased the newest features on the console. To say that I wasn't expecting another installment is an understatement, as "Astro Bot" is a full-fledged game and not just a demo for the consoles it's on.

It's considered a survival game but it's very reminiscent of platformers like "Little Big Planet 3" or "Mario Odyssey." Players control Astro, an adorable robot set on rescuing all the bots spread throughout six galaxies. After his PS5 spaceship is attacked by a green alien named Space Bully Nebulax and the ship's CPU is stolen, Astro must travel throughout space to find the rest of his crew and rebuild the PS5.

There are 90 levels throughout the game, so players have a lot to do and discover. Within these levels are bots, coins and puzzle pieces for you to find. In each of the Astro games made by Team ASOBI there are references to hit PlayStation titles. Some bots you find are dressed as iconic video game characters like Kratos and Atreus from "God of War: Ragnarök," Ratchet and Rivet from "Ratchet & Clank," Jin Sakai from "Ghost of Tsushima" and even The Boy and Trico from "The Last Guardian." Any video game fan would be

pleased to see their favorite characters come to life once more as cute bots throughout the game.

To find collectibles and bots, Astro is armed with abilities each stage designed to help him traverse the area or defeat enemies. Some like Barkster the Bulldog Booster straps onto Astro's back and allows him to air-dash through enemies and terrain. The Twin-Frog Gloves act as slinging boxing gloves, allowing Astro to grab onto objects on the map and punch enemies into oblivion.

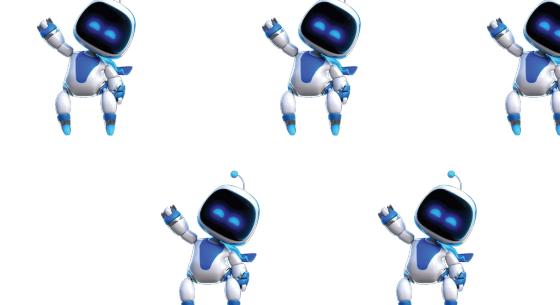
Some levels have hidden areas or puzzles for players to solve. They usually result in a collectible, so it's worth it to replay levels after your first go-around.

There's more to "Astro Bot" than just stage traversal. In some levels Astro is able to gain the abilities of certain PlayStation characters. At one point, Astro meets the Nathan Drake bot — named Raider Dude in the game — from the "Uncharted" franchise. Set in a jungle terrain, Astro receives Drake's gun and goes through the stage with his haido. It's features like this that honors the titles we know and love, along with replicating iconic games with a charming twist to it.

"Astro Bot" is a single player experience, but I do feel that it's a great game for children. The controls are simple but immersive, as they showcase features on the DualSense controller for the PS5. Games like "Astro Bot" don't have a plot beyond finding your friends and saving the day. But that's what makes it appealing to all ages. It's an adorable game with cute characters and fun enemies. Personally, I think the bots look like Eve from "Wall-E" which is one of my most favorite movies.

Even though it's competing against hard hitters this year, I think "Astro Bot" is a great video game for this year's nominees. I adore games that exist for the aesthetic, and putting some of my favorite characters in a cute game is a great marketing strategy on the part of Team ASOBI. A game doesn't have to have a detailed story and lore behind it to be enjoyable, everyone can appreciate a good platformer every now and then.

5/5



CLIPART COURTESY OF ASTROBOT WIKI



# Opinion

## The Daily Campus

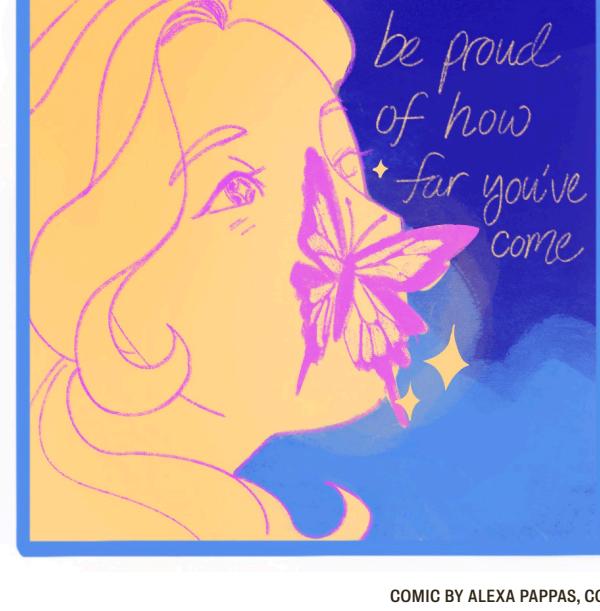
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COMIC BY ALEXA PAPPAS, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

### ► Editorial

## How did we get here? A historical look at UConn's growth and budget issues

An important part of the job of The Daily Campus Editorial Board is building and holding institutional knowledge about the University of Connecticut for students. As students, we enter and move on from this university usually in a span of four years. In between adjusting to life in this new place and eventually preparing to move on from it, we are somewhat expected to impact the community in a meaningful way. However, it's hard to learn enough about this university to make meaningful change while also dealing with the other responsibilities of college life. In terms of the state of UConn, we students tend to focus on current events and developments, failing to see the bigger picture. Yet, the problems plaguing UConn are anything but new, and understanding how they represent larger systemic problems within the university and the state as a whole is important to making meaningful change.

When talking about UConn's current budget crisis, the typical discourse surrounding this problem has focused on the contributing factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, American Rescue Plan Act funds and the ongoing funding issues within the state of Connecticut caused by the government's "fiscal guardrails." Although these factors are incredibly important, and ought to be talked about, they do not exist in a vacuum. What truly needs to be understood in order to address the current budget crisis is the history of UConn's development and its ties to state funding.

To start, Governor Ned Lamont has used the claim that UConn's state funding is at record levels. In terms of baseline appropriations, he is not entirely incorrect, but the statement is out of context. According to a CT Insider analysis, state appropriations when adjusted for inflation are actually significantly lower than in past years going as far back three decades. Specifically, when taking inflation into account, UConn's baseline state appropriations have been higher than they currently are in 1992, 2000, 2009 and 2016 to the degree of many tens of millions in extra funding compared to now. When inflation is taken into account, state funding has actually been generally declining for about 30 years.

Yet, during this same amount of time, UConn greatly expanded its expenditures, opting to rely more on student tuition and fees for funding instead of state support. Specifically, in fiscal year 2000, state funding made up about 52 percent of UConn's total budgeting. As of 2017 this number dwindled to about 28 percent. As of FY2022 this number has further gone down to about 25.3 percent, according to data from the Connecticut Mirror.

UConn's strong increase in funding despite stagnation from the state has come from drastically increased tuition. In-state tuition and fees in the year 2000 cost about \$5,400, and for this current school year that number has increased to over \$21,000, about a 400 percent increase since 2000. This coincided with an increase in the number of students per faculty member which began in 1994, creating a less individualized student experience. Instead of hiring more faculty as a response, UConn prioritized increasing the amount of management and executive positions, as well as the pay those positions received.

The times where the legislature has been most interested in monetarily supporting UConn have largely been focused on capital expenditures. In 1995, the state legislature began what would end up being a decades-long process to revolutionize UConn's campuses, colloquially known as "UConn 2000." This plan, along with subsequent extensions, authorized the use of at least \$5.4 billion in state bonds with planning oversight to ensure the money was only going to aggressively expand each campus.

Connecting these various historical trends now reveals a theme about the nature of UConn and the school's current position. This is to say, the problems that UConn faces have deep historical roots heavily intertwined within the context of the state to which it belongs. The expansion of campus despite clear lack of institutional stability, the shift of cost burden onto students, the alienation of poor and minority communities through exponential cost increases and the steady decline of state support for its flagship university are trends which developed today's plight by the permission of both UConn and Connecticut's leadership. These same trends created the shaky financial situation that was eventually exacerbated by COVID-19 to put UConn in the place it is now.

The point to understanding all this niche historical knowledge about UConn's funding and growth over the past 30 odd years is because it reflects upon the way that we live now in much bigger ways than just UConn. It acts as a mirror onto which we can see the same dysfunction within the state of Connecticut and, more broadly, the United States too. These levels of culture, national, regional and local ties are all part of each other. If we understand that, learning about and trying to improve UConn is part of the process of trying to improve the entire society we live in. All change starts small, it could start here too, if only we have the knowledge and ability to make it happen.

## Ecocide in Palestine: Destruction of land, water and identity

by Fatima Khan

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Palestine, renowned for its ancient, terraced hillsides, fertile plains, bountiful olive trees and diverse ecosystems, is facing ecocide. Ecocide, which is the deliberate and systematic destruction of ecosystems, is a weapon of displacement and control. The environmental degradation, a consequence of ecocide, threatens the well-being of the land and the people living in it. This article is the third in a four-part series examining the intertwined histories of genocide and resilience in Palestine and Connecticut, setting the stage to explore how environmental degradation is woven into this story of dispossession.

Water scarcity lies at the heart of Palestine's ecological crisis and serves as a primary and calculated tool of ecocide. Water resources are restricted by Israel, severely limiting Palestinian access. The Mountain Aquifer, the only underground water source in the occupied Palestinian territories (OPT), is exploited disproportionately by Israel, which extracts more than 80% of its supply. Palestinians are left with only a fraction of the resource — far below the daily minimum recommended by the World Health Organization.

Access to surface water from the Jordan River has been completely denied to Palestinians since 1967. This loss not only deprives communities of water for agriculture and daily needs. Increased groundwater salinity levels directly harm coastal agriculture and reduce the products that can be grown under new agricultural conditions and erodes the natural and cultural connection to the

river, which has historically been vital to the region's ecosystems and economies.

In Gaza, the situation is even more catastrophic. The southern end of the Coastal Aquifer, Gaza's sole water resource, is over-extracted, depleted and contaminated by seawater and sewage infiltration. 90-95 percent of Gaza's water is now undrinkable, leaving residents dependent on costly bottled water or desalination plants, which are inaccessible to many due to economic and infrastructural challenges. The inability to transfer water from the West Bank to Gaza, imposed by Israeli restrictions, renders Gaza one of the most water-stressed regions in the world.

Agriculture, the backbone of Palestinian livelihoods, has been devastated by environmental degradation. The destruction of agricultural land and infrastructure in Gaza is a deliberate act of ecocide and a critical dimension of Israel's campaign of systemic dispossession. Farms and greenhouses — lifelines of food production for Gaza's population — have been systematically targeted, depriving communities of both sustenance and economic stability. As of Sept. 1, 2024, 67.6 percent of Gaza's cropland has been damaged by the ongoing genocide. The loss of arable land due to bombing and bulldozing, combined with contamination from toxic debris, has resulted in a severe decline in agricultural output.

This devastation is compounded by other acts of resource deprivation, including the deliberate obstruction of humanitarian aid, medical infrastructure, cultural monuments and more. Furthermore, the systematic uprooting of olive trees has left the soil barren and biodiversity disrupted. Since

1967 some 800,000 olive trees have been uprooted by Israeli forces and settlers in the occupied West Bank alone. Their destruction not only causes immediate economic loss but also erodes the intergenerational knowledge tied to traditional farming practices.

According to a recent UNEP assessment, the ongoing genocide has generated over 39 million tons of debris, contaminated with hazardous materials such as asbestos, industrial waste and unexploded ordnance. This debris not only poses risks to human health but also disrupts soil fertility and pollutes water sources. Additionally, the use of munitions with heavy metals and the destruction of solar panels have exacerbated soil and water contamination.

Coastal wetlands and biodiversity hotspots, such as the Wadi Gaza, have also suffered irreparable harm. These ecological impacts are not collateral damage. They represent a systematic dismantling of natural and human infrastructure, leaving the population increasingly vulnerable to disease, food insecurity and long-term environmental instability.

The systematic environmental degradation in Gaza — this ecocide — is a tool of genocide. By destroying vital resources like farmland, water sources and greenhouses, this deliberate destruction ensures that Palestinians cannot return to their land or rebuild their communities. The loss of these resources disrupts not only their ability to sustain themselves physically but also severs their cultural and historical connection to the land. In effect, this ecocide is a key weapon in the genocidal strategy to ethnically cleanse Palestinians, effectively attempting to erase them as people.



A man waving the Palestinian flag in front of sprawling buildings. This photo was taken in 2024. PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

## Photo of the Day | The cold weather is here to stay



Students walking in the sun on a frigid day on Dec. 2, 2024. Many are looking for moments of rest as the stress of finals begins.

PHOTO BY MADISON HENDRICKS, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## Let's "hold space" for clarity this year

by Evelyn Pazan  
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With the Nov. 22 release of "Wicked: Part I," Broadway fans of all ages are flocking to theaters to watch Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo take on the roles of Glinda and Elphaba, respectively. The film has received overwhelmingly positive critic and audience feedback and has broken countless domestic and international records.

Alongside the attention "Wicked: Part I" has garnered for its bright and colorful take on a fan-favorite musical, it has also received attention on social media for another reason. During an interview prior to its release, Tracy Gilchrist from Out magazine became an internet sensation when she asserted that "people are taking the lyrics of 'Defying Gravity' and really holding space with that." Cynthia Erivo responded by clutching her chest to express deep emotion and shock, while Ariana Grande reached out to grab Erivo's pointer finger in support. While the actresses seemed to understand the concept of "holding space," social media users were left in utter confusion. What does "holding space" with something truly mean? And why couldn't we just say that the lyrics resonated with people?

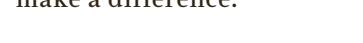
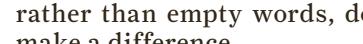
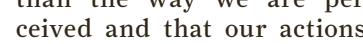
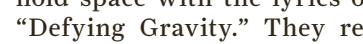
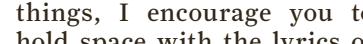
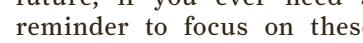
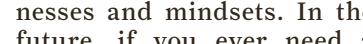
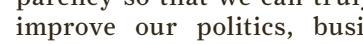
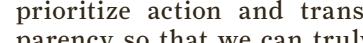
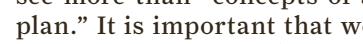
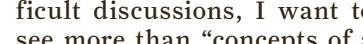
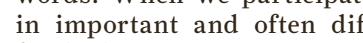
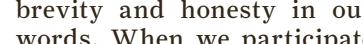
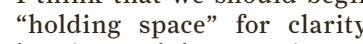
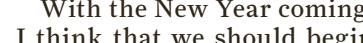
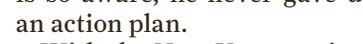
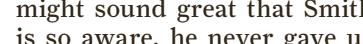
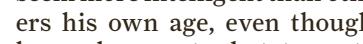
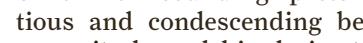
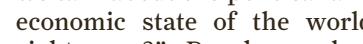
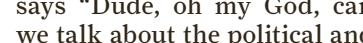
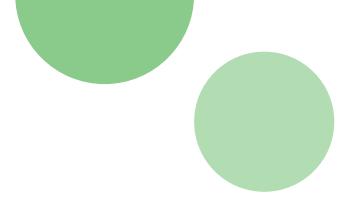
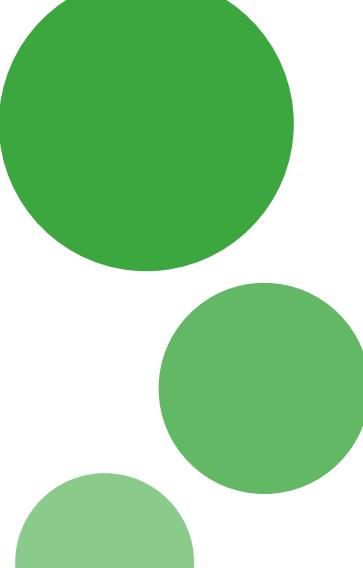
While the "holding space" interview is a funny and harmless result of "Wicked: Part I," it highlights the growth of a modern phenom-

emon. Individuals in media, politics and business have started relying more heavily on pseudointellectual language to seem smarter, unique to others or more politically in tune. These phrases tend to be hollow, but in the age of social media, the importance of perception outweighs substance. That tendency, especially during difficult conversations, is where this trend becomes a problem.

This phenomenon is most common in business and politics, and it isn't new. In fact, it is so common that it has a name, obfuscation, or the practice of using confusing and vague language to hide the truth. One of the most notable political examples was coined in the mid-to-late twentieth century by economist Thomas Schelling and the United States military. In his article "Dispersal, Deterrence and Damage," Schelling used "collateral damage" to refer to damage to civilian areas that were not military targets but were affected by efforts to destroy other strategic targets. Since then, "collateral damage" was used during the Vietnam War for the United States military to escape their responsibility for the deaths of thousands of civilians. It continues to be used today in similar contexts to obscure the truth.

In business, obfuscation and pseudointellectual language are used in almost every part of the organization. From hiring new candidates to attracting stakeholders, businesses use obscure language to make broad and appealing statements that lack a backbone or concrete examples. For example, companies will use corporate jargon like "leveraging scalable solutions for granular optimization," to describe efforts to increase the efficiency of a process. Why couldn't they just say that? Well, it just doesn't sound as cool, and then they would be expected to prove it.

On social media, blatantly odd pseudointellectual language tends to be turned into memes. An example similar to "holding space" occurred in 2022 when a 2018 clip of young Jaden Smith, Will Smith's



# Big East Baller Update No. 4: UCONN, PROVIDENCE DISAPPOINT IN MTEs AS BIG 12 GAMES APPROACH

by Sam Calhoun | STAFF WRITER | HE/HIM/HIS | SAMUEL.CALHOUN@UCONN.EDU

Big East Baller Update No. 4: UConn, Providence disappoint in MTEs as Big 12 games approach

Feast Week was full of excitement, but not for the Big East. In the two weeks of multi-team events (MTEs), the Big East went 7-12. That is abysmal for a conference with high expectations for the season.

Among the worst teams during this time were UConn and Providence. In the Maui Invitational, the Huskies collapsed, losing to Memphis, Colorado and Dayton in three days. The national media criticized coach Dan Hurley's behavior on the sideline and made fun of the fall of the back-to-back champions. It was the first time the Huskies lost three consecutive games since the dreaded January 2023 stretch. But the national spotlight was on the Huskies as they had the easier side of the bracket on paper (Memphis is going to be excellent this season, however).

Providence has yet to play star forward Bryce Hopkins, who could make the team significantly better. Instead, the Friars went 0-3 in the Battle 4 Atlantis, losing to Oklahoma, Davidson and Indiana.

The last thing I want to note is that legendary St. John's coach Lou Carnesecca, 99, passed away on Saturday. He was well-liked by most in a league full of fierce rivalries and competitors and was one of the most impactful coaches in his 13 seasons in the Big East. Not only was he the greatest coach in St. John's men's basketball history but he was an even better person and mentor to the players coached, the coaches he went up against, the coaches who he shared the bench with and the coaches that came to coach the Red Storm after he retired in 1992, also the year he was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. My condolences

go out to his family, friends, players and everyone surrounding the St. John's men's basketball program.

**Best Game:** Jeremy Roach hits buzzer-beating 3-pointer as No. 13 Baylor stuns No. 22 St. John's in double overtime

In the Baha Mar Hoops tournament, St. John's led by as many as 18 points. They led by five points with 18 seconds left before disaster struck. Utah transfer Devion Smith made one of two free throws to give the Red Storm a 98-93 lead. Baylor freshman VJ Edgecombe knocked down a 3-pointer to cut the deficit to two and then fouled Zuby Ejiofor, who went on to miss both free throws. Even though former Seton Hall guard Kadary Richmond was the hero at the end of regulation for the Johnnies, forcing overtime with a jumper with seven seconds left, former Duke guard Jeremy Roach got the last laugh, drilling a 3-pointer at the end of the second overtime to give the Bears a 99-98 win.

**Weekly Awards**

**Player of Feast Week:** Kam Jones, G, Marquette (22.7 ppg, 6.3 apg, 3.7 rpg, 2.3 spg, 69.2 FG%, 52.9 3P%, 71.4 FT%)

Butler forward Jahmyl Telfort was named the MVP of the Arizona Tip-Off, resulting in him receiving Monday's Big East Player of the Week honor. However, this edition of Big East Baller Update recaps the past two weeks of college basketball. Marquette has not lost this season thanks to him. The senior from Memphis, Tenn. is averaging 19.6 points, 6.3 assists, 4.6 rebounds and 1.5 steals per game. He is also shooting 65.3% from the field, 45.5% from deep and 70% from the free throw line. What put Jones over Telfort was his triple-double performance against No. 6 Purdue. He scored 17 points, brought down 13 rebounds and handed out 10 assists in the 76-58 win

over the Boilermakers while going 7-12 from the field.

**Freshman of Feast Week:** Thomas Sorber, F, Georgetown (11.5 ppg, 9.3 rpg, 4.3 apg, 2 spg, 1.8 bpg, 68.9 FG%, 50 3P%, 57.1 FT% in four games)

There was no question about who deserved to be the Big East Freshman of Feast Week. Sorber was named the Big East Freshman of the Week for the last two weeks and has recorded three double doubles this season. Georgetown is doing well despite their competition, currently on a four-game winning streak. The Trenton, N.J. native's best performance of the last two weeks came in Saturday's win over UAlbany, scoring 14 points, grabbing 13 rebounds, dishing out four assists and stealing the ball twice. Sorber is averaging 14.7 points and nine rebounds per game this season and began his college career with two 20+ point outings in wins over Lehigh and Fairfield.

**Best games coming up (excluding UConn-Baylor on Wednesday, check out the preview tomorrow!)**

**No. 5 Marquette at No. 6 Iowa State (Wednesday, 8 p.m., ESPN+)**

Wednesday's college basketball slate is phenomenal, and headlining the night is two of the best-coached teams in the country: Marquette and Iowa State. This may be the toughest test for Kam Jones, as Iowa State's defense is the best they will face. Marquette also prides itself on their defense, which will make it hard for the star-studded backcourt of Tamin Lipsey and Keshon Gilbert to get going.

**No. 1 Kansas at Creighton (Wednesday, 8:30 p.m., FS1)**

Creighton was disappointing in the Players Era Festival. However, they are battle-tested because of that MTE and will host top-ranked

Kansas on Wednesday night. The best individual matchup of the season is potentially in this game as centers Hunter Dickinson and Ryan Kalkbrenner face off.

**No. 11 Wisconsin at No. 5 Marquette (Saturday, 1:30 p.m., FOX)**

The Golden Eagles and Badgers have a tie for the nation's longest active winning streak at eight games (along with Florida, Oregon, UC Irvine and Columbia). Marquette has exceeded expectations without Tyler Kolek and Oso Ighodaro, defeating Maryland and Purdue. The final three games of their non-conference schedule are difficult, continuing with in-state rival Wisconsin on Saturday afternoon.

Wisconsin has a top offense and is the best free-throw shooting team in the country.

**Photo Courtesy of @UConnMBB on Instagram**

PHOTO COURTESY TO @UCONNMBB ON INSTAGRAM



## Photo of the Day | Let's go Huskies!



UConn men's basketball ends the losing streak with a 54-point blowout on Saturday night against the Maryland Eastern Shore Hawks. The final score for the game held at the XL Center in Hartford was 99-45 on Nov. 30, 2024. PHOTO BY MERCER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## Who's to blame? BOSTON BRUINS CONTINUE DOWN ROUGH PATH

by Nicole Caruso | CAMPUS CORRESPONDANT| SHE/HER/HERS | NICOLE.CARUSO@UCONN.EDU

There's no doubt about it that the Boston Bruins have faced their fair share of struggles over the years. From a game 7 Stanley Cup Finals loss in 2019 to winning the President's Trophy in 2020 yet failing to make it past the second round in the playoffs, fans were hopeful that the Bruins would turn it around in recent years.

During the 2022-2023 season, the Boston Bruins were the team to beat. They finished first in the league, winning the President's Trophy, set numerous NHL records including most consecutive home wins to start a season and were the fastest team to reach 50 wins. Their 65-12-5 record was earned by the help of key players including captain Patrice Bergeron, Brad Marchand, David Pastrnak and the goaltending duo of Jeremy Swayman and Linus Ullmark.

Pastrnak had one of the best seasons of his career that year, leading the team in goals (65), assists (52) and points (113). Swayman had a stellar .920% save percentage, Ullmark with .938%, proving that either one record was not nearly as good

of them in goal would be a challenge for their opponents. Despite the record setting regular season the Boston Bruins had, and the first-round home advantage, they failed to make it past the first round of the playoffs as they blew a 3-1 series lead to the Florida Panthers.

It's safe to say that after that extremely disappointing turn of events, Bruins fans were not happy, and a debate sparked as to who was to blame. As if things couldn't get any worse, the Bruins lost captain Patrice Bergeron as he hung up his skates in the offseason. This left the team without a leader it desperately needed and had fans questioning the future of the team after a hopeful start under their new coach.

The Boston Bruins hired Jim Montgomery as their head coach in 2022. After their initially successful 2022-2023 regular season, fans had hopes that he would lead the team to yet another strong regular season in 2023-2024, and longer playoff run. While the Bruins' record was not nearly as good

as their 2022-2023 season, and 15 overall picks where they selected Jakub Zboril, past the first round and into the second where they faced a familiar team. During the second round, the Florida Panthers and Boston Bruins once again found themselves facing off, but this time Florida had the home advantage. Florida beat Boston in six games and the Bruins were once again sent home with fans looking for answers as to why the regular season Boston Bruins fail to perform the same in the playoffs.

In the offseason of 2024, the Boston Bruins lost Ullmark to the Ottawa Senators and were at risk of losing their other goaltender, Swayman, as well. Swayman and general manager Don Sweeney of the Bruins failed to reach a contract agreement for several months of the summer leaving fans questioning Sweeney's ability to manage the team. Sweeney has been on fans' radar for years with many pushing for him to be fired.

Going back to the 2015 draft, the Bruins had the No. 13, 14

and 15 overall picks where they selected Jakub Zboril, Jake DeBrusk, and Zach Snyshyn. It was a surprise to many as to why Sweeney did not select Mathew Barzal, who was considered a top contender at the time. Barzal ended up being selected 16th overall by the New York Islanders, where he still plays today. All three of the Bruins draft picks no longer play for the franchise yet Barzal remains a top player in the NHL for the Islanders. Sweeney's most recent controversial move came just a few weeks ago on Nov. 19 when he fired head coach Jim Montgomery.

The Bruins started out this season with a tough 8-9-1 record which is the main reason Sweeney claims led to his decision. Fans were outraged stating that Montgomery was a key part of the Bruins success in past years as his tenure as head coach provided the Bruins with a 120-41-23 record. To make matters worse, just five short days later, Montgomery was hired as the head coach of the

St. Louis Blues — the same team that beat the Boston Bruins in their painful 2019 Stanley Cup Game 7 matchup. If this situation sounds familiar, it's because it has happened before. In 2022, former head coach of the Bruins, Bruce Cassidy was fired and then shortly hired by the Las Vegas Golden Knights. To make matters worse, just one year later, Cassidy led the Golden Knights to their first ever Stanley Cup during the same record setting regular season the Bruins were projected to win it all.

Since firing Montgomery, the Bruins are 4-2-0 with one of their wins coming from their Centennial game against the Montreal Canadiens on Sunday. Only time will tell if the Bruins coaching was the issue but if you ask me and many other Bruins fans, I think it's time for general manager Don Sweeney to turn his attention to other potential issues within the franchise aside from the head coaches.

## WHY THE GUYS FROM BEANTOWN ARE THE TEAM TO WATCH IN THE JUAN SOTO SWEEPSTAKES

by Jake Loomis | CAMPUS CORRESPONDANT| HE/HIM/HIS | JLOOMIS415@GMAIL.COM

The MLB offseason is heating up fast as we are approaching the annual MLB Winter Meetings. Now, teams are looking into their rosters for next season and looking into how they can improve, whether through top free agents or trades. However, the market has not moved that much so far, as only one big signing has been made as Blake Snell went to the Dodgers. This is because one of the most coveted free agents of the last decade will dictate spending terms for teams. Juan Soto, who just came from a star-studded campaign for the Yankees, leading the team to the World Series, is a free agent and should command one of the largest deals in sports history when he signs.

Soto and agent Scott Boras

met with all the interested parties who want the young outfielder at various times in the last couple of weeks. Per reports, the teams interested are the Dodgers, Blue Jays, Mets, Red Sox and Yankees. Soto stated in his meeting that he is looking into several factors for the team he chooses including a bright future, money and a strong fanbase. At the end of the day, Soto will go to the team that will make the most sense because the money will be there. The front runners so far have been the Mets and Red Sox. The Mets are no surprise as billionaire owner Steve Cohen is willing to fork over any amount of cash to put a good team on the diamond and get to the promised land of winning a championship. The

Red Sox are the biggest surprise, as they are a team that has not spent money throughout the last couple of years. Many have mocked ownership for not trying to win games as much by not spending money on free agents. However, if the reports are true, the team is looking to spend a lot this year.

The Mets would be a decent fit for Soto. However, why would he want to leave the Yankees for the second-best team in New York? The Yankees still have everything Juan would need other than him being the star as he would still have to share the spotlight with Aaron Judge. The same would go for Toronto as they don't have as great of a roster, and they have a star in Vladimir Guerrero Jr. Los

Angeles seems to be out of play as they have almost \$1 billion in deferred money owed to several players which raises the question if they can afford to spend big on him. The Red Sox are the team to watch here, as they have many things that Juan Soto is looking for. Per reports, the offer comes in below the Mets, but it will reach Soto's asking price of around \$600 million. Boston also has one of the top-rated farm systems in the game and a lineup that has a good combination of old and young. Their pitching is the place that could use work, although general manager Craig Breslow says they will try to go out and get an ace such as Max Fried or Garrett Crochet. The Sox also have a rich lineage of Dominican Ball-

players which is a draw towards Soto. Boston does have two budding superstars, Jarren Duran and Rafael Devers, though Soto would become the face of the franchise to form a big three. The biggest thing if Soto goes to Boston is that it would spark a rivalry that has been dormant for the last couple years.

Soto holds the cards, and per his agent, he will look to decide by the MLB Winter Meetings. We should then see a snowball effect from there as the market should start moving leading to more signings and trades. The team that lands Soto is getting a generational player, as he is so young and has not reached his full potential. A ballplayer like this truly comes across once in a blue moon.

# ROUNDTABLE:

## WHAT BOWL GAME SHOULD UCONN PLAY IN?

After an excellent 2023-2024 campaign, the 8-4 UConn football team is bowl eligible! However, where exactly the Huskies will be playing is a mystery. Connecticut has the potential to play all over the country, whether it be in the Bronx, N.Y. for the Pinstripe Bowl or in Florida for the Boca Raton Bowl. In this week's roundtable, our group of writers will give their take on the bowl game they think the Huskies should be

lacing up for.



by Gavin Friedman

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What better place to hold the Huskies' eighth bowl game than along the beaches of South Florida. FAU Stadium, home of the Boca Raton Bowl, is located just over two miles away from the Atlantic Ocean which can provide plenty of picturesque scenery. This can also be a good opportunity for the social media team to use the beautiful landscape to make some good content. Additionally, there are only three bowl eligible teams

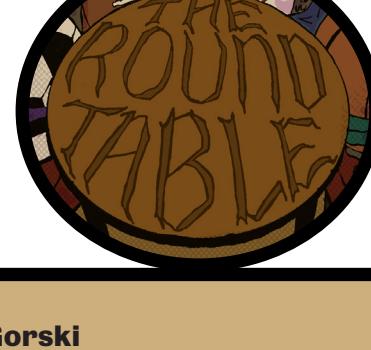


by Ryan Lombardi

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In the time of bowl season, fans usually hope their team gets invited to picturesque destinations or games with long-standing traditions. Instead, I'd like to see the Huskies close their season somewhere completely different: Boise, Idaho. It may not be an ideal vacation spot, nor does it have the prestige of certain other bowls, but it makes up for all that with one key thing: personality. Not only is the game hosted on Boise State's unique blue turf, but the event takes pride in

its potato theme. It has arguably the best bowl mascot out there, a giant potato named Spuddy Buddy, and fans and players alike are treated to various complementary potato dishes. So while some hope to see UConn finish its historic season in warmth and paradise, I'd rather it come to a close with the Huskies hoisting a literal potato bowl trophy and seeing head coach Jim Mora fall victim to the obligatory post-game french fry bath.



by Brayden Gorski

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In an era of College Football filled with gimmick bowls, crazy trophies and mascots, a bowl game in America's most beloved ballpark would be a sight to see. Connecticut played at Fenway Park for the first time in 2017 against Boston College, falling to the Eagles 39-16. Since both teams are bowl eligible in 2024, what better opponent for this Boston-based bowl than the Boston College Eagles? The Huskies have

never defeated BC in 14 games against them, which is an additional storyline for a possible bowl game. This game will also be a massive test for UConn, a team that went 0-3 against ACC teams during the regular season despite keeping all three games close. The two most prominent FBS schools in New England facing off in the cathedral of the region would bring fans from all over to Fenway Park.



FILE LOGO/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Daily

# Sports

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL:

### HUSKIES RETURN TO STORRS TO FACE HOLY CROSS

by Avery Becker | STAFF WRITER | SHE/HER/HERS | Avery.Beacker@uconn.edu

After their dominant run in the Baha Mar Hoops Championship, the UConn women's basketball team will return to play in front of their home fans to face Holy Cross on Tuesday.

The Huskies are coming off a strong performance in the Championship game against Ole Miss, where graduate students Paige Bueckers and Azzi Fudd combined for a total of 47 points.

"We have a long way to go, but I think in the short term they have continued the path they were set on," Head Coach Geno Auriemma said to media personnel on the team's status this season.

"I think if you're gonna come play in Connecticut you better have a lot of confidence, or you're gonna get exposed," Auriemma said.

However, despite these tough matchups, having them in the middle of the season is beneficial for the squad as they build their identity.

"We came back in that fourth quarter and showed something and that's going to go a long way," Auriemma said when asked about the game against Ole Miss. "We're going to need to do it again at Barclays, at Notre Dame, at Iowa State, at Georgetown and USC. Christmas can't come fast enough."

The last time these two New England foes faced each other was more than a decade ago in November of 2011 for their season opener. The Huskies ended up taking the dub 77-37. Contributing to the Crusaders' 40-point deficit were UConn Alums Bria Hartley and Tiffany Hayes who scored 17 and 16 points, respectively.

A player Connecticut will have to look out for on the Crusaders is guard Simone Foreman. In her junior year campaign, the Maryland native has averaged a 14-point average in her seven games played so far this season.

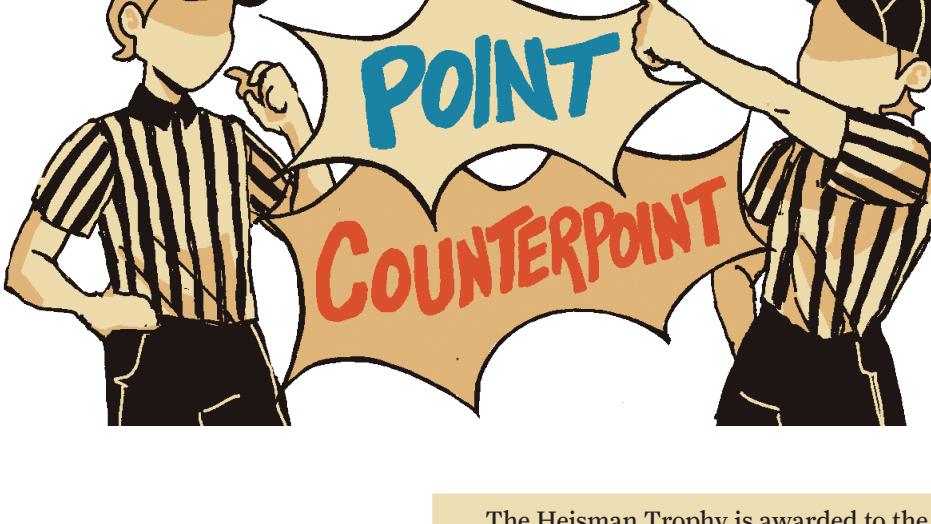
Another game means another chance for Fudd to play after returning to the court on Nov. 20 after being sidelined for a year from an ACL tear.

"It's another addition, it's exciting," sophomore KK Arnold said on what the addition of Fudd brings to the offense. "It's another added on piece that we needed. [Fudd] brings a lot to the floor and we're very proud of her, especially during the Ole Miss game, you could see her old self."

To see Fudd and the Huskies in action on Tuesday, tip-off is scheduled for 7 p.m. from Gampel Pavilion. Husky fans can tune in on SNY, if they cannot make it to Storrs.



PHOTO COURTESY TO @UCONNWBB ON INSTAGRAM



### WHO SHOULD WIN THE HEISMAN TROPHY: TRAVIS HUNTER OR ASHTON JEANTY?

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

by Matt Dimech | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | HE/HIM/HIS | rwq21004@uconn.edu

The Heisman Trophy is awarded to the best player in college football during the regular season. It is down to two candidates: Colorado wide receiver and cornerback Travis Hunter and Boise State running back Ashton Jeanty. Both players have made compelling arguments as to why they should win the prestigious award. However, only one can win it and make history for their respective programs. In this edition of Point-Counterpoint, staff writer Sam Calhoun and campus correspondent Matt Dimech make their arguments on who they believe should win the Heisman Trophy.

#### SAM CALHOUN: ASHTON JEANTY

Jeanty has taken the college football world by storm this season, rushing for 2,288 yards and 28 touchdowns on 312 carries. He is the sole reason why Boise State is in contention for the College Football Playoff, which they will most certainly be in if they beat UNLV in the Mountain West Championship on Friday night. Running backs are not usually in the race for the Heisman Trophy. The last running back to win the award was Derrick Henry in his 2015 season at Alabama. Mark Ingram II won the award in 2009 as he helped lead Alabama to a national title. Reggie Bush won the award in 2005 at USC. Those are all the running backs who have won the honor in the 21st century. However, Jeanty has been statistically better than all three of the previous running backs to win it. Bush rushed for 1,740 yards and 16 touchdowns on 200 carries. While he averaged 8.7 yards per carry and Jeanty averaged 7.3, Bush had multiple games where he failed to rush for over 100 yards while Jeanty's lowest number of yards on the ground was 127, but that was on 11 carries. Ingram rushed for 1,658 yards and 17 touchdowns on 271 carries and averaged 6.1 yards per carry. Henry had the most compelling campaign for the Heisman Trophy, leading the nation in rushing yards (2,219), rushing touchdowns (28) and carries (395). However, he only averaged 5.6 yards per carry. Bush and Ingram did not lead the nation in rushing statistics when they won the Heisman Trophy. I also believe that the Heisman Trophy should also go to the player who is the most valuable on the team. While that can be said for Jeanty, there are arguments that Colorado quarterback Shedeur Sanders is more valuable than Travis Hunter.

#### MATT DIMECH: TRAVIS HUNTER

If you want to use the word "value," then look no further than Travis Hunter. Hunter has been simultaneously one of the best players in all of college football on both the offensive and defensive sides of the ball. He has hauled in 14 receiving touchdowns which currently ranks second in all of FBS, while rushing in one. As a cornerback, Hunter has batted down 11 passes while plucking four interceptions, once again ranking among the best in the league. Despite Jeanty's talent, dominant running backs have popped up all the time in the history of college football. Meanwhile, we have not seen a player like Hunter in decades, not since the 1997 Heisman trophy winner Charles Woodson was making waves as the only defensive player to ever win the award. Woodson was also an elite do-it-all player who was an effective corner, receiver and returner. In his Heisman season, he intercepted a conference-leading seven passes, four fewer than Hunter in 2024. He averaged 8.6 yards per punt return on the season and scored a touchdown on a return against Ohio State to propel them to victory over their dreaded rivals. Woodson also scored three scrimmage touchdowns as a receiver. While Hunter has played in a more pass heavy era of football, his numbers as a receiver still dwarf that of Woodson's. Hunter has amassed nearly 900 more receiving yards and 12 more scrimmage touchdowns. Jeanty does, however, have one stark advantage over Hunter; he has one more game to win over the voters in the Mountain West Championship, and voters could fall susceptible to being prisoners of the moment. However, Hunter's most recent game might have been his best yet. He reeled in 10 catches for 116 yards and three touchdowns and tacked on an interception in Colorado's 52-0 thrashing of Oklahoma State. With the season Hunter has had, it is without question that his contributions on both sides of the ball will have earned him the most prestigious award in college football.