

Old Gold & Black

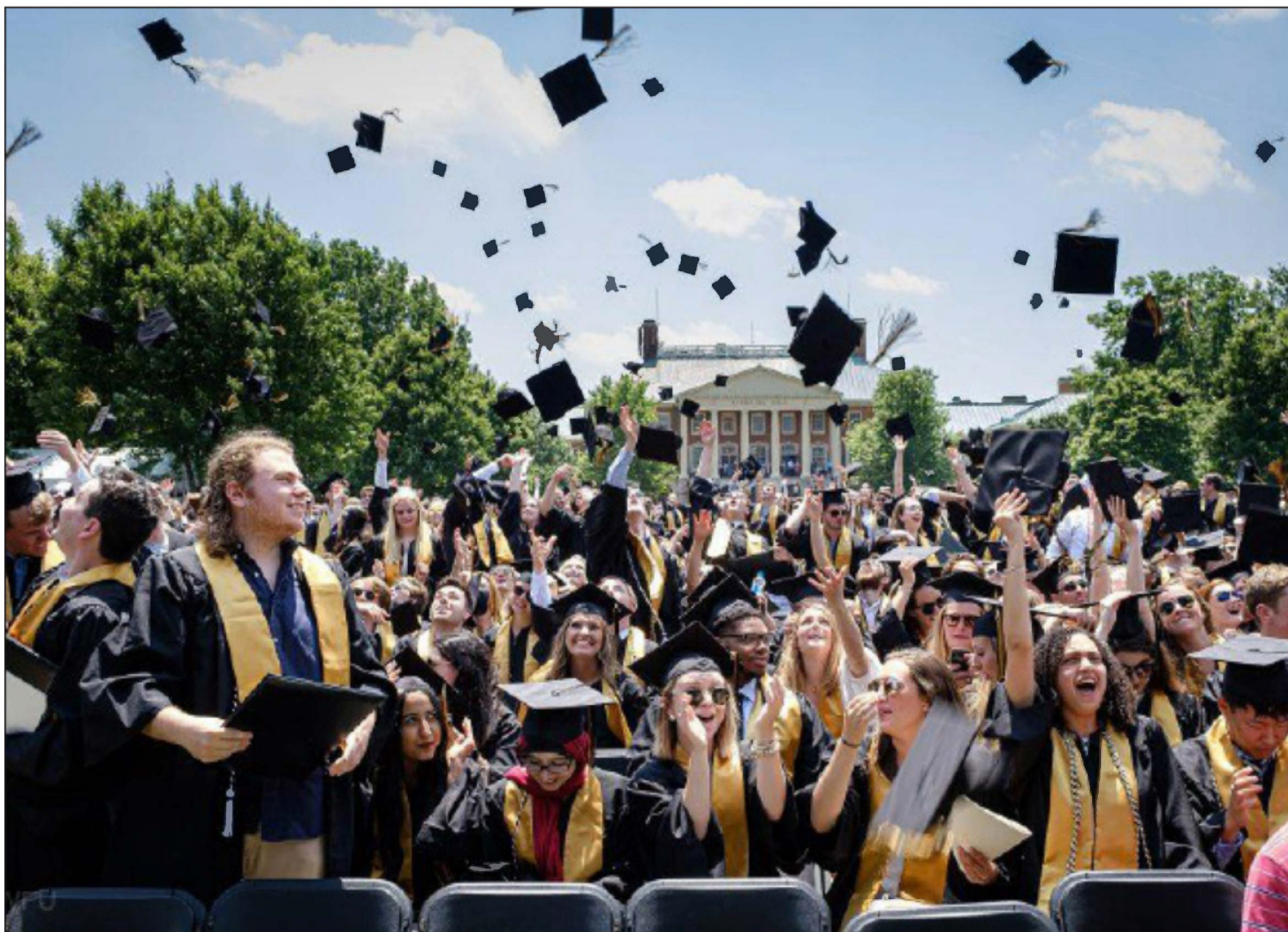
WAKE FOREST'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1916

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"Covers the campus like the magnolias"

wfuogb.com



Courtesy of Wake Forest University

Traditionally, degrees are conferred all at once to graduates on Hearn Plaza. This year, there will be multiple graduation ceremonies for different small groups at outdoor sports stadiums such as Truist Field.

In-person commencement planned for class of 2021

An email sent to seniors on Tuesday confirmed graduation would happen in-person in May

BY JULIA OCHSENHIRT
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Wake Forest University will hold commencement for the Class of 2021 in person this spring, according to an email sent by President Nathan Hatch to members of the senior class.

Commencement ceremonies will take place on May 16 and 17. The university will hold multiple small ceremonies at outdoor Wake Forest athletic venues, including Truist Field. In normal years, all degrees are conferred in one ceremony hosted on Hearn Plaza.

"We know this represents a significant change from the look and feel of our traditional commencement on Hearn Plaza," Hatch wrote in the email to the Class of 2021, "but we are confident we will create a memorable and meaningful experience."

Alongside formal ceremonies, the university will host a "large, celebratory event" on May 16. Hatch wrote that while the event will not be "traditional," it will be a "high-energy event that you won't want to miss." The university anticipates that graduates will be able to invite two guests to the ceremonies and celebrations.

Campus administration is still working out details for commencement. No decisions have been made about speakers or the times and venues of specific events. Details about the ceremonies will

be posted on the commencement website as they are confirmed, and students can anticipate an email from President Hatch with more information on March 19.

In the meantime, seniors are getting excited after worrying for months that their graduation might have gone down the same drain as that of last year's class.

"I appreciate the effort the school is putting into making this work for us and the safety precautions they are taking," said senior Molly McComb.

The decision to hold the ceremonies in person reflects a decrease in state, local and university COVID-19 cases. Daily cases and deaths in North Carolina have been steadily trending downward since Jan. 11, per The New York Times, and there are just four active cases on campus as of March 17.

See Commencement, Page 5

Famous diplomats headline conference

The conference will feature keynote speeches from Colin Powell and Madeleine Albright

BY AINE PIERRE

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Former Secretaries of State Madeline Albright and Colin Powell will give the keynote address tonight at a conference held by the Program for Leadership and Character at Wake Forest.

The conference, officially titled Character and the Professions, will run from March 18-20 and will feature speakers from disciplines as far-ranging as politics and biomedicine, according to Director of Programming Ann Phelps.

"In America and across the globe, we are facing a crisis of leadership," reads a blurb about the conference on the Program's website. "Trust in institutions and the professionals who lead them is at a near-historic low, and in the aftermath of COVID-19, the importance of effective leadership has only become more apparent."

See Conference, Page 4

Hatch plans 'fireside' chats

President Hatch will meet with students on Manchester Plaza starting on March 19

BY ALEXANDRA KARLINCHAK

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President Hatch will be holding regular, small-group discussions with first-year students on Manchester Plaza. This program, cleverly titled Fireside on Manchester to evoke the fireside chats given by President Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s, begins on Friday, March 19, and is aimed at giving the Class of 2024 a chance to speak directly with the Wake Forest president.

In an interview with Old Gold & Black editors on Tuesday, Hatch explained that the purpose of these fireside chats was to, "interact directly with students, find out where people are, talk about planning for next year and listen to how life could be improved at Wake Forest."

See Fireside, Page 6



This column represents the views of the Old Gold & Black Editorial Board.

OGB stands with Asian community

Eight individuals were murdered in cold blood in Atlanta on Tuesday. These atrocities, racially motivated or not, are incredibly disheartening, humiliating and demoralizing to an extent that words cannot convey. The executive team here at the Old Gold & Black would like to extend our deepest condolences toward the victims of these heinous crimes, and to the families who were expecting their loved ones to return home Tuesday night.

Seven women and one man lost their lives in the senseless spree. Once again, our headlines are populated with accounts of gun

“How can we ensure that Asian and Asian-American students at our university feel safe and welcomed in light of recent events?”

violence and bigotry. Now, we ask, how did this predicament arise? How have we ended up here? How can we rebuild?

Community, inherently, is fragile. Trust and confidence, which take years to develop, can be shattered in mere seconds. We saw such on Tuesday.

While the crimes perpetrated occurred in Atlanta, we must consider how they affect our Wake Forest community. How can we ensure

that Asian and Asian-American students at our university feel safe and welcomed in light of recent events? What steps can we take to provide these students with the assurance that they belong here, just as much as their Black, brown and white peers do?

To rebuild, we rely. We rely on our classmates to hear our stories, to empathize with our shared experiences. We rely on our professors to understand our situation, to discuss ways in which we can improve. We rely on our administrators to provide the platforms necessary for communication, to allow us time to mourn, to heal.

We rely on each other, because at the end of the day all we have is each other. If we cannot rely on each other and trust our friends to carry us forward when we cannot carry ourselves, then who can we lean on?

We also rely on structural change. Change that comes from the federal and state level that will prevent such a tragedy from ever occurring again. Change that comes in the form of education, gun control and police reform.

And, while change takes time, we cannot wait one moment longer to take action ourselves. If not us, then who? If not now, then when?

Old Gold & Black

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF
WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY SINCE 1916

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Deacon Profile: Eliza Drake

BY COOPER SULLIVAN

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Eliza Drake is a senior from Columbia, S.C. majoring in theatre with a minor in English. A recent Wake Forest URECA Arts & Humanities Fellow, Drake has written, directed and produced an original play called "The Grim Unfoldings at Hesse-Kassel," which will premiere April 30. In light of the hits the theatre industry has taken over the past year, Drake will be attending business school post-graduation in May. Drake recently sat down with the Old Gold & Black to discuss her upcoming play, and inspiration and difficulties in producing an intimate art form in the age of social distancing.

What aspect of theatre do you like the most? The acting, the writing, setting the scenes up?

I think, for me, the thing I enjoy the most about the theatre is the collaboration — getting to work with other artists. I have found that in the writing and directing process, I get to do more of that collaboration than I ever got to do as an actor. I have acted in two main stage shows here at Wake Forest, and both of them were so much fun. I loved it, but with acting comes this pressure of being seen and this pressure of "the show really depends on you," whereas if you are in a director's position or a writer's position, it is easy to focus on your art. You don't worry so much about the end product because you're not really focused on the entire performance — you're focused on the experience of the play.

Can you tell me about the play you have written?

I was in a playwriting class this time last year and we were given an assignment to write a ten-minute play. I have always been very interested in the Brothers Grimm so I took that ten-minute assignment and kind of reworked "Hansel and Gretel," focusing on the darker themes from the Brothers Grimm fairy tales. So, from that project, I ended up applying to a URECA Arts & Humanities fellowship. I ended up getting it, so the entire summer I spent researching every single Grimm fairy tale. I read them all in their original translation. From that, I was inspired to start creating this world about three women who are stuck and how they go about fending for themselves and toppling over this oppressive patriarchal system that has been using them like chess pieces. I was really inspired by "Hansel and Gretel" — as I previously mentioned — "Rapunzel" and "Sleeping Beauty." These three stories actually have pretty dark



Photo courtesy of Eliza Drake

themes, including pedophilia and sexual assault. I use those themes and experiences throughout the play to write this revenge tragedy of these women who end up ultimately killing the people that have done them wrong.

How did this come together? Are you just taking bits and pieces from each fairy tale and melding them into one while renaming the characters?

Instead of taking the character names, I used character archetypes. If you were to read the Grimm fairy tales, there is always a hero — I have that hero character in my fairy tale — there is always the damsel in distress and there is always the villain. There are these really famous archetypes, so I tried to take those, develop them and flip them on their heads so it would be more of a new experience when you were watching the play. Another thing I was really inspired by was the actual lives that the Brothers Grimm led. One thing I found so fascinating when I was researching was the source material that they used. The Brothers

Grimm, and pretty much any scholar from that time period, didn't really cite sources. They might have said thank you to a fellow scholar or friend, like 'sir something-something recommended that we look into this,' and if they cited material they would really only cite the other scholars. But in the 20s and up until the 50s, other scholars went back and looked at their work and they found that most of their sources for these fairytales were not other scholars — they were women. Specifically middle-class educated women whom this tradition of folklore passed down from generation to generation through. The Brothers Grimm didn't develop these stories — they simply wrote them down. And in writing them down, they actually ended up sanitizing a lot of the really dark parts so that they would be available for mass consumption.

What is the title of the play?

(Laughing) I probably should have led with that. The play is called "The Grim Unfoldings at Hesse-Kassel." Hesse-

Kassel is a province in Germany and is actually where the Brothers Grimm lived and grew up. During my research, I did a ton of thinking about where I wanted to set this play, and if I wanted to set it in the fairytale world or our world. I ended up setting it in our world. Much of the play actually focuses on the power struggle of the land and the principality of the Hessian people.

What was the most difficult thing you came across during your research, during your writing or maybe now as you are trying to put this onto the stage?

The most difficult part of bringing it onto the stage has been figuring out how to do this while being COVID-19 safe. We have a ton of procedures in place — we are planning to wear masks for every single performance, and all the actors wear masks for every single rehearsal. Everything is socially distanced, and we limit physical touch. A lot of the best moments in theatre are when people are close, so trying to capture the essence of closeness while maintaining six feet of distance has been extremely hard. That has been tough for my actors in particular. It has definitely been very interesting, to say the least, but we have come up with different ways to combat social distancing. In the original script, there is a scene where someone is killed with a knife and we switched that to a pitchfork so that there would be more physical space between the two actors. Coming up with things like that has been creatively fun but also really difficult.

Will the performance be in Brendle Recital Hall?

(Laughing) No, we are doing it outside because of all the COVID-19 research about how the virus spreads, especially in events with more than 20-people. We are using a kind of little weird space directly behind Scales Fine Arts Center. We call it the Scales Alcove, sometimes it's called the Patio, and it's this kind of grimy concrete space that has been used by the Art Department in the past to spray paint and to sculpt outdoors. We are transforming the space with some furniture and a lot of imagination to give it the feel of this fairy tale world, while still within our world.

How long is it going to be running?

There are two performances: one on April 30 and one on May 1. And then we have a rain date on May 2, in case we get rained out.

Editorial Note: This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

POLICE BEAT

COVID-19 Violations/Underage Consumption

- An offender outside Poteat required medical assistance after vomiting due to alcohol consumption. The student refused transport to Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center. The report was filed on March 11 at 11:49 p.m.
- Winston-Salem police responded to a disturbance call after two roommates caused a disturbance. One of the roommates, who had been drinking alcohol underage, was transferred to a different location to spend the night. The report was filed at 12:37 a.m. on March 13.

- Approximately 200 people were found in a Ewing St. parking lot when Winston-Salem police responded to a disturbance call. The report was filed at 6:45 p.m. on March 13.

Miscellaneous

- Officers responded to a loud music call on Macon Dr. Two residents and two guests were in attendance. No citations were issued.
- An unknown subject removed an unsecured mountain bike from a bike rack in Deacon Place. The report was filed at 3:10 pm. on March 14.

Conference: Diplomats give keynote speech

Continued from Page 1

The keynote address by Powell and Albright will serve as a preview of the Wake Forest Face-to-Face program's event also featuring, which was rescheduled for the Fall of 2021 due to COVID-19.

"We really have the Face-to-Face program to thank for [being able to have Albright and Powell speak at the conference]," Phelps said. "With COVID-19 throwing a wrench into everything, a lot of programs that existed on campus sort of separate from each other have found meaningful ways to partner with each other. We thought it would be a great opportunity since it requires very little of big-name speakers to jump on their computers at home."

Phelps hopes the talk will inspire students to seek solutions across the aisle.

"[Albright and Powell] were leaders coming from very different ideological positions at a polarized time," Phelps said. "That said, I think that right now we are living through unprecedented polarization, and these are two people that can speak thoughtfully, brilliantly and kindly together about the world that we live in. I think that's something that we really need right now."

"In a moment when people who come from different ideological standpoints are having a really hard time talking and listening to one another," Phelps

continued, "our hope is that these two people can not only tell us how to do that, but show us how to do that."

Attendees will be able to ask questions through the Zoom chat function after the talk, according to Phelps.

The conference will also feature involvement from Oxford University's leadership program, and there will be a discussion of "Just Mercy" between Oxford and Wake Forest students.

"We're only four hours apart [from Oxford]," Phelps said, "so we don't need to travel across the ocean to have the same kind of meeting."

Freshman Annie Phan, who plans to attend the conference, is looking forward to learning from the two diplomats.

"To get where they are now, Powell and Albright had to climb mountains. Others had only needed to breathe to get to the exact same place, all while staying true to their character," Phan said. "As a woman and a minority, I want to take any guidance I can from two people who have broke ground and redefines what it means to be resilient and have strong principles in the face of adversity."

Freshman John Bilos, who will also attend the conference, is looking forward to hearing from the diplomats.

"The incredible speakers and panel members will give Wake Forest students and people joining all around the world the opportunity to learn how character is both important and specific to certain professors," Bilos said.

This is not the first time a Wake Forest leadership conference has been headlined by big names. A conference put on by the Program in February 2019 featured "Hamilton" star Renee Elise-Goldberry.



Portrait by Laurer

Photo Courtesy of Wake Forest University

Former Secretaries of State Colin Powell (who served under George W. Bush) and Madeline Albright (who served under Bill Clinton) will speak about bipartisanship in this polarized era.

University returns to Yellow after six months

The university transitioned to Yellow status Friday for the first time since October

BY JACKIETHACHER
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On March 12, the bright orange banners that had been hanging on campus since the beginning of the semester were replaced with a muted yellow ones.

While the new banners are certainly less eye-catching than the old ones, they were a welcome change as they signaled Wake Forest University's move to Yellow operating status. The change signals the resumption of many in-person activities and events halted by Modified Orange status,

which was put in place after the spike in cases in early February.

Before the transition to Yellow, a few restrictions were lifted, such as the reopening of ZSR, Reynolds Gym and indoor dining. However, the university officially changed the majority of restrictions on Friday.

While the current Yellow operating status closely resembles the Yellow status of the Fall 2020 semester, there are a few noticeable differences. Per Dr. Penny Rue, Vice President for Campus Life, the changes are due to the fact that the university is more informed now about the nature of the virus.

Working in close consultation with experts and using the most recent data and research, the administration is attempting to ensure that students are staying safe, while at the same

time allowing many activities to resume in person.

One example of this is the new off-campus transportation policy, outlined in the university's official statement released March 5, which allows student organizations to plan off-campus trips, as long as they still adhere to all of the safety guidelines in place on campus.

Of the groups taking advantage of this policy change, Outdoor Pursuits is perhaps the most noticeable. Since their official return with the move to Yellow, they have already led hiking and climbing trips, and the organization has two more planned for this coming weekend, including a horseback riding venture this Saturday.

Another change welcomed by students was the reopening of the basketball and sand volleyball courts. Not only are they available for students to use with friends, but their reopening marks the return of intramural and club sports. In addition to sand volleyball, there is also 3 v 3 basketball, modified flag football, co-ed soccer and more scheduled for the coming weeks.

While these guidelines may seem less cautious than those under Yellow status in the fall, Rue has worked with the university to make campus as safe as possible.

"Each club sport has submitted a safety plan," Rue said. "They are practicing with constraints [which

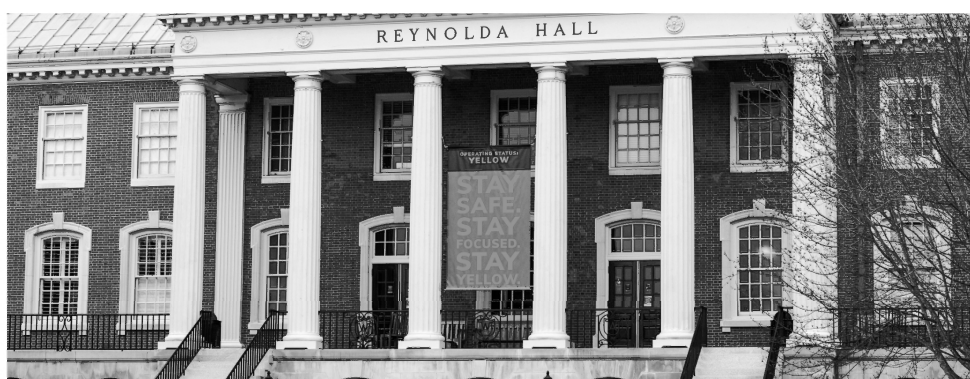
vary] depending on the nature of the sport."

The same is true for intramural sports, and the school is ensuring social distancing and mask-wearing are enforced throughout practices and games. With an increase of vaccinations being administered, some students wonder if campus will enter Green operating status or even return to something resembling pre-pandemic Wake Forest. However, Dr. Rue believes this to be unlikely in the near future.

"I could imagine as we reach herd immunity, [which is around a 70% vaccination] rate, we could consider lifting additional restrictions," Rue said.

Until then, the university will likely remain in Yellow operating status. With this in mind, as we look towards the remainder of the semester, she reminds students that we can return to Orange at any point.

"The guidelines [of what will return the campus to Orange Operating Status] haven't changed. It is up to you all," she said of the student body. "You know what works and what doesn't work. If you're gathering socially unmasked, then we're going to have another surge. Be smart and think about each other. All students get the same sanctions when a surge hits, even those that have played by all the rules. Think about each other."



Katie Fox/Old Gold & Black

Wake Forest has transitioned to Yellow with even looser restrictions present than in the fall, in part due to better information about viral spread.

Commencement: COVID-19 and graduation

Continued from Page 1

Additionally, according to the North Carolina COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard, 20% of the state population has been at least partially vaccinated for COVID-19. These changes have prompted the state to begin lifting many coronavirus restrictions, increasing mass gathering sizes and allowing businesses like movie theaters to operate at 30% capacity. While trends look promising, public campus administrators will re-evaluate plans for commencement if health conditions worsen or the state re-imposes additional restrictions.

There remains some COVID-19-related anxiety, however.

"I am still concerned about the high risk of COVID-19 if most of the population in attendance isn't vaccinated," McComb said.

This year's commencement will look very different from the ceremony for the class of 2020, which was held virtually. That live stream featured a video compilation of celebrities Tina Fey, Carson Daly, Jon Stewart, Tracy Morgan, Jimmy Kimmel and Chris Paul congratulating the graduates, as well as speeches from President Hatch and then-student body president Mellie Mesfin. Drone shots of campus, Wake Downtown and "2020" spray-painted on Hearn Plaza rounded out the ceremony.

Since deciding that last year's commencement would be virtual, campus administration has planned to celebrate the class of 2020 in person as soon as conditions allow. Administrators are considering two options: an outdoor ceremony on May 22 or a "special homecoming celebration" during the

upcoming fall semester. Members of the Class of 2020 can voice their preferences through a survey on the commencement website.

While commencement will look different this year, administrators are excited to safely honor the class of 2021.

"We've been working all year, and we're excited about the opportunity for graduates to celebrate together in person and to have family present and applauding their accomplishments," wrote Director of University Events Shannon Dubuison in an email.

"I am grateful that we can mark this milestone together," Hatch wrote in the email to the class of 2021, "and I look forward to honoring [the students'] achievements."

More information on commencement will come out Friday.



Photo courtesy of the Winston-Salem Journal

Commencement will be in-person this year, unlike commencement for the Class of 2020, which was held virtually. The in-person element relies on COVID-19 cases continuing to trend downward.

TEDx makes virtual return to Wake Forest

A slate of speakers, including a variety of industry leaders, will give TED talks at the event

BY ABBY BERMEO
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On April 10, Wake Forest will host a TEDx event, the university's ninth. This year, as with many popular events, the festivities will be held online, and students will either be able to view the speeches online or simply walk over to Manchester Field for a public viewing of the live stream.

The TEDxWake project is organized and coordinated by a team consisting of sophomore-through-senior students, with a host of freshman volunteers. Professor of Medicine Anthony Atala, who has given a TED talk himself, is the adviser of the student group.

Each year, the team reaches out to about 40 influential and inspiring individuals and ultimately selects eight to speak. As a team, they send

emails, LinkedIn messages and even Instagram direct messages to these potential speakers to invite them to the event.

These individuals are chosen in the hopes that they will contribute to an overall theme and teach students about a variety of important topics. This year's theme is Spill the Tea, the goal of which is to engage younger students on campus.

While many of the speakers will not be revealed until the day of the event, it has been confirmed that James Ford, Bryce James and Clementine Jacoby will all speak. Each talk will be 15-to-20 minutes long and will cover topics including environmental health and drone reforestation, equity and race; and flying sports cars. Most years, the speakers give talks on campus, but this year, all speakers will speak virtually.

According to Laura Acosta, a member of the team, this year was easier in terms of rallying speakers. Because of the lack of travel, the pool of candidates was wider, allowing the team to be more selective in choosing their desired speakers.

Acosta believes that the TEDx talks are a good opportunity for students to learn and expand their worldview. She also emphasized their potential for inspiration.

"As students, we set out to find the fresh voices we believe the community should be aware of, and then we provide the platform for them to

amplify their message," Acosta said. "I'm extremely thankful our team has the opportunity to set up such an event, especially during these times of disconnect."

Acosta firmly believes that TED talks are valuable to education and part of the benefits of going to a school like Wake Forest.



Katie Fox/Old Gold & Black

In previous years, TEDx events were held on Wake Forest's campus, with speakers giving in-person talks. This year, the event will be held virtually.

Fireside: Hatch reaches out to first-years

Continued from Page 1

Vice President of University Advancement Mark Petersen noted that the idea has been in development for a little while now, as President Hatch typically held one-on-one office hours with students throughout the past semester. Thanks to COVID-19, however, Hatch has not been able to connect mask-to-mask with students — particularly first-year students — during the past two-and-a-half semesters.

“We’ve been talking for a while about how to connect with our first year students,” Petersen said. “Historically, Hatch had office hours that were pretty busy. And oftentimes, it was first-years who were trying to understand more about Wake Forest and wanted to get to meet the president.”

“It’s not at every university that the president is happy to sit down and talk to students,” Petersen continued. “Because of COVID-19, we just haven’t been able to do that all year. And we really miss that.”

Due to the intimate nature of Fireside on Manchester, the number of first-year students who are able to attend each conversation is limited to the number of Adirondack chairs that can be spaced six feet apart in compliance with CDC guidelines.

There has been an extremely positive response to the announcement, as the first three Fireside on Manchester chats are already at full capacity.

Freshman Abby Lecrone expressed excitement about the prospect of speaking with Hatch.

“I think this is so important,” Lecrone said. “We freshmen are the underdogs, and we don’t have a lot of say in most things. I think by opening these conversations up, Hatch is saying ‘I hear you, I see you and I want to help you out with anything you have going on.’”

Both Hatch and Petersen emphasized that these events are not designed to be soapbox speeches — they are chances for meaningful, engaging conversations to develop between new students and administrators.

“We want [people to] hear and be a part of the same conversation,” Petersen said. “It’s not so much [Hatch] talking the whole time as much as him asking questions and getting to know people.”

Other administrators will likely host their own discussions and conversations using the Fireside on Manchester format.

Fireside on Manchester is one of many programs being brainstormed and implemented in an effort to improve communication between students and ad-

ministrators and make university leaders accessible to first-year students. Additionally, the Fireside on Manchester series will encourage even more students to use the space on the lower quad to meet and mingle with new people.

“If this is just one more important thing that we can do to connect people together, I couldn’t be more excited about it,” Petersen said.

“When I came through this weekend and saw everybody spread out on the plaza, it just looked like Wake Forest again,” he continued. “And I really, really want to give the credit to the campus life team who put [Fireside on Manchester and] all of this together in hopes that people would be able to have a way to enjoy it.”



Katie Fox / Old Gold & Black

As part of an effort to engage with first-year students, President Nathan Hatch will meet with students on the Manchester Quad’s fireside space to address concerns and answer questions about Wake Forest.

LGBTQ+ students, allies hail passage of H.R. 5

H.R. 5, the Equality Act, would extend civil rights protections to millions of LGBTQ+ Americans

BY KHUSHIARYA

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Step outside of Wake Forest’s campus gates and you may not receive just treatment, at least if you belong to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer and beyond (LGBTQ+) community, as per North Carolina anti-discrimination laws.

“As a queer non-binary person, I think about what will happen if I’m on vacation and need to go to the hospital, but the doctor doesn’t want to treat me,” said A.J. Mazaris, director of the LGBTQ Center at Wake Forest.

As a white, upper-middle-class person, Mazaris recognized their relative privilege and expressed the need to create safety networks for LGBTQ+ people of color.

The Equality Act (H. R. 5) was recently passed by the House of Representatives and would extend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation in areas including employment, education, housing, public spaces and jury service. If passed in the Senate, this act would recognize the rights of the LGBTQ+ community at the federal level, getting rid of the varied state laws currently in place.

Whether the bill passes the Senate depends almost entirely on the fate of the filibuster rule, which requires 60 of 100 senators to agree to vote on a bill before it can move forward, according to John Dinan, professor of politics and international affairs.

“It is highly unlikely that there are currently 60 senators willing to support this legislation — hence, it is unlikely to pass if the filibuster rule is maintained,” he said.

While it may not become law, for many students, the Equality Act is symbolic.

“As a bisexual individual, it means a lot to me that LGBTQ+ rights are being discussed in the government,” said an anonymous sophomore. “The fact that leaders are pushing this law sends a positive message to Gen-Z, which is passionate about social issues.”

College Republicans President Elizabeth Whitehurst, a junior who identifies as a Christian, agrees with the overall premise of treating all citizens equally. However, she believes that the Equality Act infringes on religious freedoms granted by the Religious Freedoms Restoration Act (RFRA).

“Doctors might have to perform sex-change operations even if that goes against their religious beliefs,” Whitehurst said.

According to Assistant Professor of Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies Rachel Corbman, using the RFRA argument oversimplifies this issue by assuming that the rights of religious people always go against the rights of the LGBTQ+ community and vice-versa.

“Not all religious people are homophobic and not all LGBTQ+ [people] are atheist,” she said.

Myles Cyrus, a sophomore who identifies as a Baptist and an ally of the LGBTQ+ community, also supports

the Equality Act. According to him, religion should not be used as an excuse to discriminate.

“Christianity encourages love for all people, [so] why are we so intolerant of someone on the grounds of being who they are or loving who they love?” he asked.

The United States has a history that enshrines the separation of church and state, so it is questionable to promote hate in the name of RFRA, according to an anonymous sophomore.

“The Old Testament defends slavery, but we still have the 13th Amendment,” they said. “It is about what we value as a society, not what a scripture prescribes.”

They went to a Catholic high school in their home state that was not very accepting of their identity as an LGBTQ+ person. Now in college, he experiences the opposite. He believes Wake Forest is a liberal, accepting bubble in North Carolina, which he views as a relatively conservative, unaccepting state.

Mazaris believes that there is a need to untangle the equality that the American constitution theoretically guarantees. In their opinion, there are contested notions about what it means to be American and what ideas should govern the understanding of gender and sexuality.



Photo Courtesy of Law and Crime

Democrats in Congress advanced H.R. 5, otherwise known as the Equality Act, last month. It now faces a difficult road in the Senate, where current rules require 60 votes for passage.

Dr. Susan Wente visits WFU biology class

The soon-to-be 14th president spoke to students about Aspartate transcarbamoylase

BY AINE PIERRE
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This past Saturday, March 14, Charles M. Allen Professor of Biology, Dr. Gloria Muday, was finalizing her lesson plan on Aspartate transcarbamoylase (all eight syllables of it), a catalyst that aids in the biosynthetic process, when a colleague sent her an email with the CV of Wake Forest's incoming president, Dr. Susan Wente. Muday took a moment to glance at Wente's CV, only to discover the very first publication listed was about no other enzyme than Aspartate transcarbamoylase.

Muday sent a quick email to her department chair, asking if she could extend an invitation to Wente for her class scheduled for Tuesday, March 16.

That, in short, is the story of how students in Muday's biology class scored a 30-minute, wide-ranging discussion with the soon-to-be 14th president of Wake Forest.

"The students were able to ask her questions ranging from the biochemistry of that

enzyme to her vision of running a university coming from a science background," Muday said. "It was fun, in 30 minutes, to go from the nitty-gritty all the way up to the big picture."

The students were almost universally impressed with Wente.

"She is a great communicator," said Muday, "and that spans from explaining how certain amino acids in a protein have a very important function all the way up to how the experiences that you get from being a research scientist really prepare you to do things like run a university."

Students got to hear directly from Wente about how her experience with testing hypotheses, which could turn out to be wildly incorrect or extremely successful, shapes her attitude toward trying new things on the administrative side.

"Life is an experiment," said Muday, paraphrasing Wente. "You have to try things, and when they work well, great! And when they don't, you tweak things to make them work better."

Muday's class also heard from Wente about how the experience of running a lab and mentoring students has prepared her to work with students and teams as president of Wake Forest.

"When I realized the enormous energy I felt from building and creating environ-

ments to support others' successes," Wente told the Old Gold & Black in February, "serving as associate vice chancellor for research and senior associate dean for biomedical sciences and then provost was the logical next step."

Wente, for her part, greatly enjoyed the experience.

"I am passionate about the student experience and it was a special treat to briefly engage with Dr. Muday and her students," Wente said. "I discovered my love of sci-

entific research in an undergraduate biochemistry lab and I was heartened to see a classroom of students pursuing this field of study.

Wente also signaled that she would be open to joining classes next fall and beyond.

"Although I wished I could be in person like [Muday's class was], it was actually possible for me to join due to the virtual platform," Wente said. "I am hoping and planning for in-person opportunities during the fall semester once I arrive on campus."



Photo Courtesy of Gloria Muday

Students were able to ask Wente not only about the enzyme they are studying in class, but also her vision for heading up the university as a woman in science.

AstraZeneca vaccine rollout paused in Europe

After some patients developed blood clots, the EU paused its rollout of the vaccine

BY CONNOR MCNEELY
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This week, Europe has succumbed to yet another wave of COVID-19 cases amid multiple countries' decisions to pause AstraZeneca vaccinations.

The chaos started when Norway and Denmark suspended use of the new vaccine, reacting to multiple reports of blood clots forming after inoculation. The Danish officials described the decision as a "precautionary" measure that would last a period of 14 days.

On March 7, the primary case — and the basis for the reaction of many European countries — was reported in Austria. A 49-year old woman received the AstraZeneca vaccine and died shortly after as a result of a severe blood coagulation disorder. There was another individual affected by the same batch of vaccines. A 35-year old developed a pulmonary embolism after vaccination, and he is said to be recovering. Additionally, there were seven reported cases of cerebral blood clot formations in Germany.

These developments have been the primary reason for the halt in AstraZeneca vaccinations. Concern has been raised due to the sheer number of reported illnesses

and deaths, and also as a result of the relatively young age of those affected.

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) has been investigating several more incidents of clotting that occurred last Sunday in Norway and Denmark, although they have added to the speculation that there might not be a link between the vaccine and the illnesses. The EMA said in a statement that "many thousands of people develop blood clots annually in the EU for different reasons."

Germany's decision to suspend the rollout of AstraZeneca prompted confusion from both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the EMA, as well as general confusion from most medical experts around the world. The suspension decision — which was made on Monday — has drawn the concern of many epidemiologists and top government officials, too.

"We are exactly on the flank of the third wave [of the COVID-19 pandemic]. That can no longer be disputed. And at this point, we have eased the restrictions and that is speeding up the exponential growth," Dirk Brockmann, an epidemiologist at the Robert Koch Institute, told Germany's public broadcast network.

However, Germany's decision has caused a domino effect within Europe's vaccination plan. Spain, the Netherlands, Ireland and Italy have temporarily stopped distributing the AstraZeneca vaccine, despite the advice and expertise of medical agencies.

The U.K. remains the only country that has continued administering the vaccine

and has reported a massive reduction in the risk of hospitalization of people aged over 80 by more than 80%, according to new data from Public Health England (PHE). Despite these successes, the U.K. still faces an uphill climb in the fight against COVID-19 and in the administration of the vaccine. The E.U. has considered a restriction on the export of COVID-19 vaccines to the U.K., because of the lack of reciprocity exhibited by the U.K. to the E.U.

The European Union is now leading the fight against international hesitation in dispensing the AstraZeneca vaccine.

"We are still firmly convinced that the benefits of the AstraZeneca vaccine in preventing COVID-19 with its associated risk of hospitalization and death outweigh the risk of the side effects," said Emer Cooke, the head of the EMA.

European countries are now working to overcome this stumbling block in the public trust in the AstraZeneca vaccine. Leading medical experts are now in the midst of an inquiry into the effects of the vaccine, the results of which will be determined and released today. EU leaders are hoping the info will help boost public trust.



Photo courtesy of CNN

The AstraZeneca vaccine has been linked to a death in Austria and multiple blood clot developments in Germany. Thus, some countries have paused its distribution.

The views expressed in all opinion columns represent those of the article's author, not the opinions of the Old Gold & Black Editorial Board

Dear Winston-Salem

Transportation dilemma lingers in Winston-Salem

Lack of parking spaces and public transit constitute major problem for Winston Salem residents

BY JACK PORTMAN

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The American reliance on cars engenders two conflicting ails, and the resolution of either would seemingly exacerbate the other. On one hand, those who need a car in order to go about their daily activities (most people) require an accessible place to park their vehicle near their residence. On the other hand, these individuals need suitable parking options wherever their car may take them. If both conflicts were resolved to grant the wishes of both parties involved, we would be living out the car manufacturer's utopian fantasy. But this isn't really the case, especially for those living in rental complexes. In most American cities and counties these complexes are not required to provide sufficient parking to accommodate every resident.

My rental accommodations, for example, consist of a four-bedroom townhouse, which, according to the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Unified Development Ordinances, only necessitates three parking spaces. The rental complex hosts 300 residents, all living in four-bedroom units. To satisfy the minimum requirements of the Development Ordinances, the complex must offer 225 parking spaces to its residents. The complex surpasses that requirement by 25

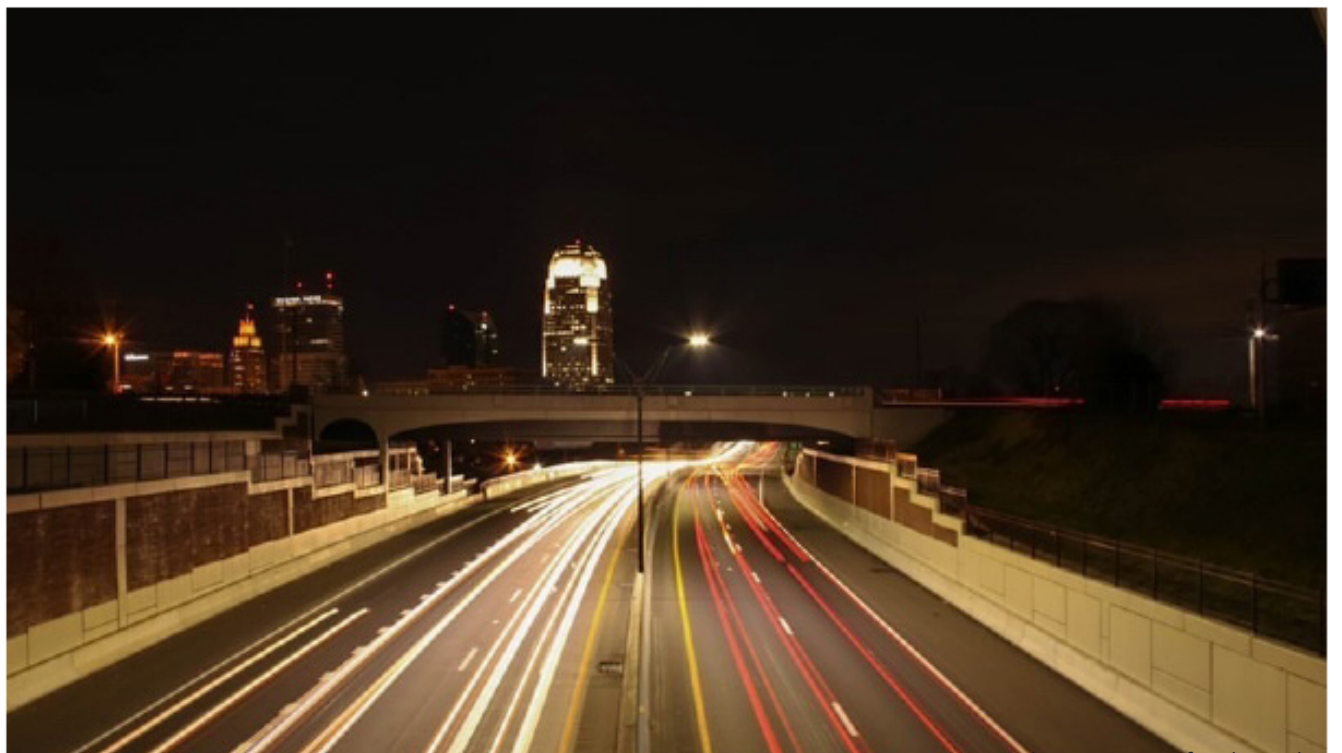


Photo courtesy of Andy Woehr

Photographer Andy Woehr's long-exposure shot of a Winston-Salem highway displays the city's heavy nighttime traffic flow. Winston Salem residents rely on their cars to navigate the city's many highways.

spaces (altogether totaling 250 spaces), but nonetheless leaves 50 residents to fend for themselves. Were the entire residential population of this particular complex not Wake Forest and Winston-Salem State students, who happen to transport themselves to the same campuses every day on roughly similar schedules, this would be a pretty big problem for those without parking permits.

One might suggest that the Development Ordinances be amended such that each occupant is requisitely afforded a parking space. However, were this the case, the entire surface area of Forsyth County (or much of it at least) would be covered by parking lots. Advocates for expanded affordable housing availability often contend that, by decreasing the zoning requirements relating to residential parking so that complexes are required to provide even less parking than they already do, apartment buildings could leave smaller footprints and allocate more space to dwellings. This is likely a sound idea, and I tend to agree with it.

This said, Winston-Salem is very difficult to navigate without a car. The public transportation system was reduced due to budget constraints several years ago, resulting in fewer routes (especially to and from outlying areas) and a marked decrease in schedule frequency. The city is highly segmented by major highways, effectively confining walkers and bikers within pocketed areas. Moreover, the county reports an extraordinarily large number of food-deserts (22 in total), suggesting that walking to grocery stores may not be feasible for many of its residents. By reducing the zoning requirements relating

to parking for new developments, the city's mobility issues may only be exacerbated.

Had the tension between housing and parking availability been adequately recognized earlier in the 20th century, our cities and towns might have been organized differently, with commercial centers and housing more proximate — even enfolded within one another. However, this didn't occur, and as a result, cars are, for many, a requisite for daily life. Reformed zoning ordinances could theoretically remedy this problem if given the time to do so. However, the American reliance on the automobile seems so entrenched that envisioning alternative ways of life is rather difficult. The best path forward, at this point, may be a dramatic expansion of the city's integrated transit system. If public transportation was reliable and accessible enough to provide transportation for those without cars, zoning ordinances relating to residential parking could be shrunk and the city's stock of affordable housing may be free to expand.

As things stand, it seems that either parking spaces or affordable housing must be at a deficit, and that to provide more of either would be at the expense of the other. Parking deficits could be more readily accommodated, perhaps by increasing funding for city services, but there is no acceptable solution for an affordable housing shortage other than increasing the stock of affordable housing. So, it would seem, expanded investment in public transportation and a reduction of the quantity of parking spaces that rental complexes are required to offer may at least be a stopgap solution suited to address the tension between parking and affordable housing.



Photo courtesy of Winston-Salem Transit Authority

While the transportation system is robust, Winston-Salem's parking situation is failing.

American Politics

GOP bills restrict and reduce minority voting

State legislative changes aim to shorten early voting periods and limit absentee voting



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One of the most polarizing moments in American political history was undoubtedly the 2020 general election, an event that sent shockwaves through the entire nation, oversaw historic voter turnouts and was succeeded by a farrago of indignation, uncertainty and civil unrest. However, one of the most significant consequences of the election's outcome is the GOP response to their sudden and seemingly holistic loss of governmental control. The implications that this reaction conveys regarding the general legislative goals of Republican lawmakers are wide-ranging and extremely dangerous.

In 43 states across the U.S., GOP lawmakers have introduced a variety of bills with one common goal: to make it as difficult as possible for certain demographics to vote. Unsurprisingly, the states that have encountered the brunt effects

“ Though unnerving, the fact remains that Georgia serves as a microcosm of America as a nation.”

of these bills in the 2021 legislative session are also considered to be traditionally “purple” states, specifically those that flipped from red to blue in the 2020 presidential election. This agenda has been strongly emphasized in both Georgia and Arizona.

Georgia in particular finds itself at the center of this controversy, with 22 proposed bills attempting to restrict voter access in the state. The 2020 presidential election marked the state's momentous flip to blue, as it voted for a Democratic presidential candidate for the first time in 28 years. This critical upshot, which arguably secured President Joe Biden's eventual victory, puts into perspective the motivation behind this new proposed voting legislation.

Bills such as SB 241 heavily restrict absentee voting, indicating that residents of the Peach State would no longer be able to request an absentee ballot in order to avoid missing a day of work for the purpose of voting. African Americans, who make up the majority of US citizens living in poverty, are distinctly targeted by these bills.

In addition, controversial restrictive bills such as HB 494, HB 512 and SB 175 attempt to restrict early voting, a practice which African Americans tend to participate extensively in. The racist repercussions of these bills — which were likely passed due to the fact that Black and brown people tend to vote for Democratic candidates in the majority — are unsettling, but not a novel phenomenon. The implementation of Georgia's “exact match” law in 2017 by the then-Secretary of State, Republican Brian Kemp, attempted to disenfranchise about 53,000 Americans. It's no coincidence that 76.3% of voters affected by such laws are Americans of color (Bloomberg City Lab).

Politician and voting rights activist Stacey Abrams is leading the opposition to these new bills and isn't afraid to call a spade a spade. “I do absolutely agree that it's racist. It is a redux of Jim Crow in a suit and tie,” she said. “The only connection that we can find is that more people of color voted and it changed the outcome of elections in a direction Republicans do not like.”

Abrams, who registered 800,000 voters of color in Georgia during the months preceding the election, has been accredited with delivering the state to the Democratic Party.

Though unnerving, the fact remains that Georgia serves as a microcosm of America as a nation. Bills targeting Americans of color, specifically African Americans, by re-

ducing the early voting period, have swept through multiple states including Washington, Tennessee, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Montana, Missouri, Minnesota and Iowa. Moreover, bills restricting absentee voting have been proposed in 34 states. The GOP lawmakers behind these propositions point to their goal of reinforcing the election process to avoid the voter fraud that they believe occurred in the 2020 presidential election — fraud of which they cannot provide any evidence.

“We must pass laws to prevent election officials from jeopardizing the election process,” said Republican Gov. Greg Abbott.

However, with no proof that the election process was ever jeopardized in the first place, this surface-level explanation exposes the GOP's thinly veiled attempt to force a favorable outcome in the forthcoming 2022 and 2024 elections.

These proposed legislative changes come just after the storming of the United States Capitol on Jan. 6, another attack on American democracy perpetuated by Republican politicians. Former President Donald Trump, in particular, has engaged in spreading false narratives of voter suppression and election fraud in order to mobilize supporters of the GOP. These suppressive tactics are an affront to the principles of freedom that America was founded upon, principles that the Republican Party claims to hold in high regard.

Royal Racists

Meghan Markle stands up to British royal family

Oprah Winfrey's interview special with Meghan and Harry exposes institutional racism



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In 1995, Princess Diana partook in a controversial interview with Panorama that is still making headlines today. Last week — 25 years later — her youngest son's wife, Meghan Markle, broke her silence in a tell-all special with Oprah Winfrey. This, of course, followed the bombshell that was dropped last January when Markle and Prince Harry announced that they would be stepping back from their roles as working royals. The “Megxit” stories that followed claimed that Markle instigated the Sussex departure and was responsible for Prince Harry's estrangement from the family. Truly, I didn't know much about Markle and believed most of what I read about her. Recently I have had quite the change of heart regarding Markle. She has received a lot of detrimental press from the second she entered the royal limelight.

In the Oprah special, Meghan addressed the onslaught of malicious, misleading press that she received, saying that she was not protected from media defamation

“ Meghan Markle has shattered the enchanting facade that has always drawn me to the royal family.”

like other senior members of the family had been in the past. Such led her to suffer from depression and suicidal thoughts. This statement was eerily reminiscent of Diana's struggle with isolation, alienation and her heartbreaking battle with bulimia.

After hearing Markle's side of the story, I am in awe of her strength of character. She's authentic, cool and an advocate for mental health and women's rights. People just don't want to see that side of her and the media has used that to villainize her just as they did with Diana. Meghan Markle has shattered the enchanting façade that has always drawn me to the royal family.

In a not-so-shocking twist, Meghan and Harry revealed that members of the royal family were concerned about how “dark” their child's skin would be. They discussed denying him the title and security that Prince Charles' other grandchildren possess. Harry and Meghan weren't given an explicit reason why this was happening, but honestly, it isn't hard to guess. Snippets of the family's prejudice towards Meghan have been evident for years.

The family had an extraordinary chance to embrace Meghan and make her part of the family years ago. She is a stunning,

intelligent and accomplished woman of mixed race. One would think that the royal establishment would have seen Meghan marrying into the family as a chance to become more aware and representative of their diverse, multicultural English nation. Instead, the Royal family opted for the route of tearing her self-image to shreds.

The couple would not reveal who raised these extremely racist concerns, comments which have sent the world on a witch hunt, but I think it was Prince William. My first suspicion was that the culprits were Charles and Camilla. I mean let's be honest, few truly admire those two, (especially if you've watched Season 4 of “The Crown”). However, these “concerns” allegedly started before the wedding. Charles walked Meghan down the aisle in place of her father. I am not a fan of Charles and Camilla, but I highly doubt Meghan would have been comfortable with Charles holding this deeply personal role in the wedding if he had been a part of those conversations. In the post-special coverage, Oprah shared that Prince Harry insisted that it was not his grandparents. This leaves me thinking it must have been William, especially since Harry said their relationship has been on the rocks.

People are polarized about this issue. They either applaud Meghan and Harry for their call for fundamental change, or heavily criticize the couple for putting their

own family in the line of fire. Certain critics of Markle — such as Ben Shapiro and Candace Owens — say they don't believe any racist comments were made whatsoever. Shapiro even went so far as to say that her acting in the interview was as bad as it was in “Suits”, because it totally makes you sound smarter when you drag a woman's success through the mud to prove your point.

The Palace released a 61-word response. This struck me as a feeble attempt at remedying the issue, considering it was barely even a paragraph. The statement read: “The whole family is saddened to learn the full extent of how challenging the last few years have been for Harry and Meghan.”

However, according to Meghan and Harry, the royal family certainly did know. The question is: did they care when Meghan came to them because she was suicidal and needed help? No. Prince William came out saying they are “very much not a racist family.” After seeing the interview, that is about as unbelievable as the Prince's own glow-down. The Palace says that the issues raised about race will be handled privately, but only time will tell.

I don't think people are actually shocked about racism in the royal family — I think they are shocked that Meghan dared to say it on national television. Hasn't she been silenced for long enough? More importantly, if she didn't say it, who would?

Entertainment

"Wandavision" signals new divide in television storytelling

Emphasis on spectacle diminishes opportunity to evoke realistic, inspiring stories



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This past year, Disney+'s Marvel has announced a wave of streaming series that will have lasting repercussions on the television industry. The release of "Wandavision" (2021) has signaled this new change. TV shows are now bringing in A-list actors and big-time blockbuster movie budgets, begging the question: — what kind of quality are execs aiming for? These improved capacities for special effects and straightforward storytelling have and will continue to put every other part of the industry in the backseat as TV becomes a means to entertain, and nothing else.

To provide a bit of context, television was initially meant to be the passive little brother to Hollywood. Families could escape awe and splendor for more frank shows such as "The Dick Van Dyke Show" (1961) or "The Addams Family" (1964). For the most part, TV kept this path for decades. Sixties television made sure that even the most general audience

“All the show had to do to disguise its two-dimensional storytelling was slip in a profundity about love.”

could understand what was going on and that they wouldn't have to think too hard. It wasn't until the era of paid subscription that you could start to see complex themes explored by showrunners in partnership with HBO.

"The Wire" (2002), "Oz" (1997) and "The Sopranos" (1999) are examples of television shows that decided to make it their goal to entertain the audience while also bringing in complex and layered storylines regarding drug addiction, prison reform and mental illness. Why the switch? Because once a subscription service gets involved, that means more money and more talented writers and actors to employ. As such, we start to see a shift towards a desire to tell real, human stories that critique our society while simultaneously providing hope. Unfortunately, in our generation, more money has also meant more opportunities for passivity and spectacle.

Critics might argue that Marvel is just the place for the merging of both spectacle and complex ideas, yet one would just need to look at Noah Hawley's work to see that this isn't the case. Hawley took a character from "Marvel", David Haller, and created a show without the

foundation of a comic storyline. Instead, he captured the character's essence in an original, critically acclaimed hit show: "Legion" (2017).

In this show, not only is the powerful mutant side of Haller explored, but the show also investigates the side of the character that suffers from mental illness. Hawley uses superb writing and creative camera techniques that entertain the audience, allowing them to try and figure out what's real and what is just part of Haller's mind, without this information being spoon-fed to them. By doing this, the audience is encouraged to try and grasp what mental illness is and the cycle someone can go through trying to figure out if their disease is what defines them.

"Wandavision" missed this opportunity to tell a multifaceted story with its brilliant premise of a powerful witch with mind powers who has just undergone a traumatic event. Instead, the viewer is treated to quirky comedy and special effects that make excellent acting performances and an elaborate plot irrelevant. All the show had to do to disguise its two-dimensional storytelling was slip in a profundity about love.

From this, you get the essence of the TV industry's divide through two Marvel properties, "Wandavision" and "Legion". FX, "Legion"'s network, wanted to show their worth by telling different stories such as "Legion", "American Hor-

ror Story" (2011), and " Fargo" (2014). FX was able to balance entertainment value and the responsibility to engage with the audience's beliefs and mindset, something that was possible due to their basic cable setting. Now the era of subscription services has made it so that you just have to make enough content to make an audience's 10 to 20 dollar monthly subscription worthwhile. Audiences are allowed to miss some episodes or skip to the big parts if they so choose because the streaming service will still get paid for their subscription.

There is a grim future ahead of us compared to when HBO began its programming in the 1990s, but that is not to say there is not great work being done by streaming services. HBO itself has continued to produce exceptional shows that take a deep dive into society's inner workings in "Barry" (2018), "Succession" (2018) and "Watchmen" (2019). However, if an audience becomes too passive in the era of blockbuster television, then the proper art form of television will be swept under the rug.

As an audience, we need to ask more of our shows. We need to ask not to be spoon-fed plot points or simple ideas. We need to want shows that can explore the good and the bad of our society. If we can do that, we can make sure that TV remains one of the last art forms that can inspire true societal change.

Ansley's Ameliorations

Students desire amended Spring Break

Solutions to the administration's cancellation of Spring Break must be realized



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As the weeks of March fly by, students are keenly aware that a break in the academic calendar is greatly needed. Although Wake Forest has instituted two "mental health days" into our schedules, this is not sufficient care for our mental and academic health needs. Two days off in the middle of the school week is not nearly equivalent to the nine-day break that students normally receive this time of year. This fact becomes especially apparent when these days off are not even coupled together or placed at the beginning or end of an academic week. For these reasons, Wake Forest's mental health days are a failure in the administration's attempts to provide some mental and academic aid to students who may be experiencing burnout.

“I can see many other solutions as viable for the benefit of students' mental and academic health.”

I can see many other solutions as viable to benefit students' mental and academic health. First, in order to simulate a less intensive academic cycle, Wake Forest could have instituted a "light week" where professors are not allowed to test, quiz or assign homework to students. This week could refresh student's learning capacities while keeping them on campus. A measure such as this would allow adequate time to do something more conducive to their well-being than completing homework assignments and studying after classes have concluded.

An additional solution could have been that halfway through the semester, the Monday, Tuesday and Friday classes of one week could have been canceled. And in the following week, Tuesday and Thursday classes could have been canceled. Again, this solution would allow for students to have a relatively relaxed schedule compared to the arduous demands of a regular week. This solution would also keep students on campus because they

would still have their regular work-studies, jobs, or internship responsibilities.

Additionally, if Wake Forest felt that they could track our student ID usage, then they could actually give us the whole week off of classes as if this were a regular year. To keep us accountable for staying on campus and not traveling recklessly during a pandemic, administrators could use location-based service check-ins to track whether students are on campus or not. Wake Forest actually already has the infrastructure available to do just this — they use a similar system to track whether or not a student is actually in the stadium when they check into Wake Forest athletics on the Screamin' Deacons Rewards app. This system is so accurate that even a student driving by the stadium will not be counted as attending.

In the spirit of cooperation with the Wake Forest administration, I also see an opportunity to build on the "Wellness Days" idea. I believe that the two mental health days would have been more significant if they had occurred on two successive days. I understand that administrators wanted to avoid giving us a Monday or Friday off to prevent travel, but it would have been a better break if they had even given us a Tuesday and Wednesday off or a

Wednesday and Thursday off in the middle of the week, as opposed to days off at the end of the week.

For example, on my Tuesday "Wellness Day" I had multiple assignments due. I spent almost my entire "day off" working on homework that was due that day or the next day. My friends shared similar disappointments. They still had homework due the day after our break, so unless they worked ahead on Monday and finished all work due that Wednesday, the Tuesday off did not really give them a break at all. In this way, scheduling these successive mental wellness days would be a far more viable option.

With all of these possible solutions in mind, it is very clear to me that Wake Forest failed miserably in their attempt to give us some semblance of a Spring Break in our schedules this semester. In the context of the pandemic, mental health issues and academic burnout on campus are affecting people now more than ever before. Wake Forest could have implemented any one of the above strategies for a more sincere attempt at giving students the rest that they need to perform successfully and remain mentally strong during this spring semester.

Deacons return to March Madness

The women's basketball team is slated to play No. 8 seed Oklahoma State on March 21

BY ESSEX THAYER

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The night of March 15, the Lady Deacons exited the Joel Coliseum for the last time this season, yet no game had been played. Instead, players, coaches and families had gathered to watch the NCAA Women's Basketball Selection Show hoping that the Demon Deacons would return to March Madness. Nearly 20 minutes into the bracket reveal, the coliseum witnessed its biggest celebration in an entire year. For the first time since 1988, Wake Forest's name was read off. They were returning to the Big Dance.

On March 4, the Demon Deacons won against UNC Chapel Hill in a game they believed earned them the right to be in the tournament. After the win, Head Coach Jen Hoover shared that sentiment.

"I felt we were an NCAA team from the get-go," she said. "There's no way they can take [North Carolina] after what we've done to them twice this year without taking the Deacs, bottom line."

After losing to Louisville the next day, Wake Forest had to wait ten long days, hoping their name would be called. During that time, the team practiced without any certainty that they would have the opportunity to play another game. Without any idea of what lay ahead, Hoover had to rely on the team to stay focused.

"Our work ethic has been really good. I have to credit our seniors. We got together ... before we even left Greensboro, and we knew we wanted to practice," she said. "[The team] brought an energy and excitement about still playing ... thinking they were going to play in the post-season."

The uncertainty of those 10 days had a massive effect on the coaches as well. For Hoover and her staff, that meant a lot of time spent watching computers and tv screens.

"All of us, staff to players, were watching every game that was happening. We were on the edge of our seats for that BYU-Gonzaga game," she said.

Being on the bubble, each additional team earning an automatic bid to the tournament mattered for Wake Forest. When Missouri State, a team certain to make March Madness, announced they would be withdrawing from their conference tournament, that meant the conference would be getting an extra bid for whoever won their final. For Wake Forest, that meant another spot that could've been theirs was lost.

"That whole Missouri Valley Conference thing, it was just nerve racking," Hoover said.

When the bracket reveal began, many ACC teams, including North Carolina, quickly earned their bids. Wake Forest had to wait. As time went on, Hoover began to worry.

"We saw [North] Carolina get in and some of the other teams in the conference and [I started] to get antsy," she said.

In the third region, sweet relief came for the Demon Deacons, though most likely higher in the bracket than they imagined. Wake Forest was projected as one of the last four teams to receive a bid and was slated by ESPN as a No. 11 seed. When their name came up on the scoreboard, the Demon Deacons were listed as the No. 9 team in their region.

For Hoover, the appearance is her first since she led the Demon Deacons into the dance as a player.

"It's an unbelievable feeling ... I remember what it was like as a player," she said. "As nervous as we were, [hoping for a tournament bid] is exactly where we want to be. We want to be [making the tournament] year in and year out."

To begin their season, Wake Forest was scheduled to play an extremely tough out-of-conference slate, and Hoover was concerned.

"Of our first three games of the season, two [were] against Top 25 programs ... I thought 'Oh my gosh, is this really smart?' The team said, 'Let's go. Let's do this.'"

In their third game of the season, Wake Forest put their name on the map, defeating then No. 24 Missouri State. In the press conference after the reveal, Hoover expressed her belief that in that moment, she knew her team was destined for greatness.

"[After the win against Missouri State] we knew this was a special group and I wanted to challenge them from day one," she said. "That's all prepared us for what we're getting ready to go experience in Texas in the NCAA Tournament."

In San Antonio, No. 8 seed Oklahoma State awaits Wake Forest in a first-round matchup that will be played on March 21. While there is much preparation ahead in the coming days, Monday night was a night of appreciation and celebration for Hoover and her team.

"This is a huge step for this program. To have the ability to hang [the NCAA Tournament] banner in the coliseum ... no one can take that away from us," she said. "[This moment is] something that every one of these kids will be able to tell their children about one day. That's what makes this so special."

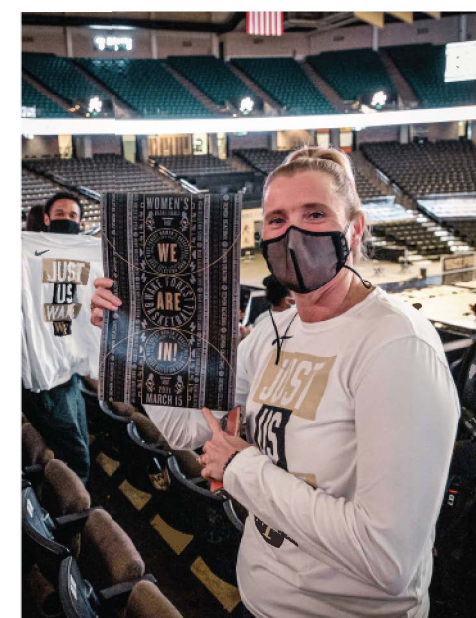


Photo courtesy of Wake Forest Athletics
Head Coach Jen Hoover posing with "We are in" signage after the reveal.

The OGB's official March Madness bracket

The Editorial Team went the safe route, choosing Gonzaga to win it all

BY THE SPORTS EDITORIAL TEAM

Ladies and gentleman, we have finally made it. After a global pandemic took March Madness from us last year, we are back and better than ever.

Even though the men's team is not in the tournament this year (but women's basketball is!) we encourage you to enjoy this year's edition of the NCAA Tournament regardless. Watch the games, fill out a bracket and have fun with it all.

Here at the OGB, we took it upon ourselves to fill out a bracket of our own. We hope you use it as a means of helping build your own bracket, or as a comparison. If neither of those apply to you, then at the very least please feel free to bash us when it eventually busts.

It has been a long road, but come March 18, get ready to hear the sweet sounds of CBS's March Madness intro once again. Without further ado, let's get into it!



Wake Forest falls in heartbreaking fashion

After leading by as many as 14 points, Notre Dame closed the gap in the final minutes

BY CHRISTIAN ODJAKIAN

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Heartbreak. There's no other word to describe it.

For most of their opening game in the ACC Tournament, Wake Forest was in dreamland, playing their best basketball since the Florida State game a month ago.

But it all came crashing down when Notre Dame erased a 16 point second-half deficit to win on a beautiful 30-foot buzzer-beater by junior guard Trey Wertz.

"As soon as I shot it, I knew it was good," Wertz said.

The No. 11 seed Fighting Irish staged an epic comeback to defeat the No. 14 seed Demon Deacons 80-77, ending their season at the Greensboro Coliseum last Tuesday.

Notre Dame closed the game out on a 17-2 run to shock Wake Forest and complete the epic comeback. The Fighting Irish took the lead with two Prentiss Hubb free throws to make the score 77-75. But with just under a minute to go, freshman guard Carter Whitt confidently dribbled right up the middle of the court, pulled up at the free-throw line and knocked down the mid-range jumper to tie it back up.

After a Notre Dame miss, Wake Forest had the opportunity to take the last shot of the game with the shot clock turned off. Wake Forest Head Coach Steve Forbes opted not to call a timeout so the Irish couldn't set their defense, allowing the hot-handed junior Davien Williamson to try and put the game away. However, Notre Dame's Cormac Ryan made

a fantastic defensive play, stymieing Williamson's drive and shot attempt, before pushing the ball up the court and flipping it to the trailing Wertz, who delivered the cold-hearted game-winner.

"Sometimes the game can be cruel," Forbes said. "It doesn't always reward the team that maybe deserved to win. We led for 35 minutes of the game, but we just couldn't finish it."

"At the 10-minute mark, it didn't look very good," Notre Dame Head Coach Mike Brey said. "I said 'fellows, how we finish the game is really going to determine a lot about how we go into next season. ... Show me how you're going to play it, because I'm really interested.'"

Forbes had his guys fired up for the game, and the Deacs came storming out of the gates. Early on, Wake Forest was out-rebounding Notre Dame 15-2. Players were driving and shooting with confidence, willing the ball into the basket. Wake Forest jumped out to a 21-7 lead eight minutes into the game after Ian Dubose knocked down a pull-up three from the top of the key in transition.

Notre Dame cut the lead to three in the first half to make the score 33-30, but Wake Forest responded with an 11-2 run to stretch the lead back to double digits. Then, in the second half, Notre Dame cut the Wake Forest lead to just six with just over eight minutes remaining, but back-to-back Williamson threes gave the Deacs a 12-point cushion. Wake Forest held off two Notre Dame pushes, but the final one was too much to handle.

Williamson played an incredible game, scoring 21 points with five three-pointers. He's the first Wake Forest player in history to make at least five threes without missing one in an ACC tournament game.

For the second straight year, Isaiah Mucius showed up big in the ACC tour-

namment. The junior forward notched a double-double with 20 points and 12 rebounds. Whitt scored 12 and added seven assists.

Notre Dame's hero, Wertz, finished with 16 points on 5-6 shooting. Juwan Durham had 16 as well, and Cormac Ryan and Prentiss Hubb added 14 apiece.

An eight-game losing streak is a tough way to end the season, but there are certainly still positives from Forbes' first season. A culture grounded in energy, effort and belief is starting to be built, and the only direction is moving is up.

"I think this is a season [in which] we've learned a lot about ourselves and about our team, and what we want to do moving forward," Forbes said. "There's going to be a lot of guys coming back that understand the expectations and what we need to do. So I thought it was a positive moment even though it is a loss."

In their next game of the tournament, Notre Dame got destroyed by No. 6 seed North Carolina, to the tune of a 101-59 rout.



Courtesy of The Tar Heel Blog

The Notre Dame team surrounded junior guard Trey Wertz in celebration after his buzzer-beating bucket stuns the Demon Deacons.

An expert's preview of the NCAA Tournament

After the bracket reveal on March 14, there is much to look forward to

BY CONOR ROBBINS

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The teams have been seeded, and the bracket has been set. Nets will be cut down, tears will be shed and legacies will be made. Most important, however, after experiencing a very different kind of March Madness a year prior, college basketball fans around the land can once again prepare their doctor's notes in anticipation for the best month the sport has to offer. THIS IS MARCH, so your local tournament expert is here to break down all the action. Let's dance.

On March 14, the selection committee released their bracket of 68 teams, split into four regions, and seeded 1-16. Unlike prior tournaments, this year's festivities are slated to take place within a bubble in a single setting — Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. As if this year's circumstances weren't unprecedented enough, a wild regular season added another wrinkle to the fun — for the first time since

1976, both Duke and Kentucky will be watching postseason basketball from their couches, just like the rest of us.

With these blue bloods taking a year off from national relevancy, some new faces have earned top billing on the bracket, including Gonzaga (26-0) and Baylor (22-2). Gonzaga, the lone undefeated squad from the regular season, is led by future NBA lottery pick Jalen Suggs and coach Mark Few. With crafty guard Jared Butler at the helm, Baylor has dominated against impressive competition all season, culminating with a Big-12 regular-season title. With a combined record of 48-2, these two programs have earned their top seeds and are primed to compete for the first title in their programs' history.

Rounding out this year's group of No. 1 seeds are Big Ten standouts Michigan and Illinois. Led by upstart coach and Wolverine alum Jawuan Howard, Michigan (20-4) brings a regular-season conference trophy and a balanced inside-outside attack to Indianapolis. Meanwhile, Illinois enters March as perhaps the hottest team in all of college basketball, having won their last seven games and most recently a Big Ten Tournament championship against Ohio State. Overall, the Big Ten holds four of the tournament's top

eight seeds and has nine teams dancing in total. When making your picks, consider the strong possibility that one of these midwest teams will be cutting down the nets come April.

While the selection of the tournament's top seeds came as a surprise to few, the real drama occurred on the other side of the Bracket — the notorious bubble. Following shocking conference tournament victories from the likes of Georgetown (Big East), and Oregon State (Pac-12), these bid stealers guarantee that a series of teams on the fringe of tournament contention would be sweating it out on selection Sunday. Most notable among these squads were tournament regulars Syracuse (16-9), Louisville (13-7), Michigan State (15-12) and UCLA (17-8).

In the end, Syracuse earned a No. 11 seed and first-round bye, while fellow 11 seeds Michigan State and UCLA will duke it out in a play-in game on Thursday night. Louisville, however, was not so lucky. They were listed the "First Team Out" on the committee's bracket. They are joined by Colorado State, Saint Louis and Ole Miss as potential replacement teams should a team miss the tournament due to COVID-19 circumstances. With tournament teams Virginia and Kansas withdrawing

from their conference tournaments early, the need for a potential replacement is not out of the question. For now, these aforementioned squads are confident they can field the five-person roster necessary for tournament competition.

Finally, what is March Madness without a Cinderella story or two? This year, in particular, the possibilities are endless. Bracketologists have quickly identified teams like the UC Santa Barbara Gauchos and the Winthrop Eagles as two underdogs primed to complete the notorious 12-5 upset. This type of upset occurs in a whopping 35.7% of such games, according to NCAA.com. The Gauchos take on Creighton (20-8), while the Eagles face the 2018 champions, Villanova (16-6).

Further up the bracket lies the always dangerous Loyola-Chicago (24-4). The Ramblers return to the dance for the first time since their miracle run to the Final Four in 2018. Opposing teams will likely be more prepared for the No. 7 seed this time around, but nobody will want to play them either. Illinois, be warned.

And that's all from me. Congrats on making it to March. I don't know about you, but everything feels just a bit more right in the world this week, and it only gets better from here.

Deacon Spotlight: Hosei Kijima

BY KHUSHI ARYA

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Hosei Kijima is a sophomore on the men's soccer team. Though he is a defender, he essentially plays all positions. Originally from Yokohama, Japan, Kijima moved to the U.S. when he was 12 years old and played club soccer with the IMG Academy U18 Elite Boys squad. Earlier this month, he scored two goals in the last five minutes against ACC rival, Boston College.

Khushi Arya: How and when did you start playing soccer?

Hosei Kijima: As a child, I was always on the athletic side and liked running around a lot. When I was six years old, I joined a local soccer team in the park near my house in Yokohama. It was just something I did to stay active, and my parents were happy to see me enjoy playing a sport.

KA: What made you pick Wake Forest?

HK: In all honesty, Wake Forest was my only option. While I was a junior in high school, Coach Bobby Muss needed a player because someone who was supposed to come to Wake Forest went pro. I was the first player that the IMG coaches recommended to him and, luckily, he ended up liking me. I committed to Wake as a junior and graduated [high school] one semester early so I could play in the spring of last year. I am glad Coach Muuss believed in me.

KA: You were born in Japan and moved to the United States. How is living here different?

HK: The Japanese culture, in general, entails a lot of discipline and hard work. Football (soccer) is the number one sport in Japan. It's almost a way of life. There are four to five teams playing for each school, and the competition is intense. I was 12 years old when I moved to Florida to train and study at IMG academy. It took me two years to fully adapt to the American culture, and while it wasn't necessarily difficult, it was different. I was trying to assimilate,

but at the same time, trying to figure out my unique identity. I respect and honor my family more than anything, and I try to visit them every now and then. My intention is to never forget my roots as I find my place in this world.

KA: Let's talk about the Boston College game last week. How did you feel when you scored your first career goals at Wake Forest?

HK: It's a funny story. I had been practicing a lot of volleys the week before the game. A day before the game, I was at the pit eating with my teammates, and I vividly remember telling my teammate Nico that I was going to score a volley in the game. One minute we were losing, and the next, the ball was up in the air — I just knew the goal was bound to happen. It was pretty seamless. The emotion I felt was unlike anything I had ever experienced before. After tying the game in the 85th minute, I didn't want us to go into overtime [because] I knew everyone was exhausted. When the goalkeeper moved from his position in the last minute of the game, I caught him off guard and put in another goal. The ball was beautifully passed to me by David Wrona, and I took a low shot [that found] the goal.

KA: What's your favorite Wake Forest soccer memory?

HK: Everyone will assume it's that Boston College game, but that is not true. My favorite memories are simply seeing everyone work hard during training and getting through the ups and downs, together, as a team. I always remind my teammates that we are not perfect and we are not going to win everything. But the beauty of the game is coming back stronger every time.

KA: What does a regular week of training look like for men's soccer?

HK: We have 8 a.m. training sessions that incorporate intense training in short periods followed by 10 a.m. lifts four to five days a week. In the afternoon, we have Zoom calls to review the film and tactical stuff. On game days, we have a jog and stretch in the

morning. The idea is to bring the heart rate up and bring it back down so we are ready to go during the game. Then we go over defensive principles and get breakfast sandwiches.

KA: How do you balance schoolwork with a demanding soccer schedule?

HK: I don't believe a perfect balance exists. Nobody can balance academics, a college sport and social obligations equally. I try to get things done early, but sometimes I leave something until the last minute. I think that happens to the best of us, and it is okay as long as we learn from those mistakes and do better next time.

KA: How do you feel about this season so far, in light of the pandemic?

HK: The pandemic has been a serious issue for us. Just yesterday at the pregame meal, we were talking about how adversity shows a person's true character. We wear masks and socially distance so we can stay healthy and support the team. The fight we give for each other as a family is noteworthy. Last semester, the UVA game was unfortunate because most of our players couldn't play due to contact tracing. But, we got through it, and that experience made us stronger.

KA: What is something that you do for fun aside from playing soccer?

HK: I like to produce music once or twice a week. I also enjoy controlled recovery periods or CRPs, as I like to call them. In other words, I appreciate my 30 or 90-minute naps.

KA: What are your future plans? Do you plan to play professionally?

HK: I would love to play professionally if I can. Currently, my focus is on this season. I want to do my best to help the team win. More importantly, I want to be there to put a smile on everyone's faces when we are going through tough times. I like to crack jokes to make people laugh and to project good energy to the team.



Photo courtesy of Wake Forest Athletics

Baseball suffers tough weekend in Miami

Wake Forest was forced to cancel the final game of their series due to a lack of depth

BY JAKE STUART

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After over two weeks in the dugout due to COVID-19 protocols, Wake Forest baseball is back. The Demon Deacons immediately faced a challenge against the Miami Hurricanes, who overcame top-ranked Florida to open their season. It didn't help Wake Forest that Tuesday's game against Elon was postponed, as this contest would have given the Demon Deacons a chance to build confidence after winning just one game out of three against Notre Dame. Regardless, the team was back on the diamond once again and ready to play ball.

Friday: Wake Forest 0, Miami 10

In the first road game of the Demon Deacons' young season, Wake Forest fell to No. 5 Miami in a tough contest. Wake Forest was held to just two hits and five baserunners against one of the premier collegiate talents, Miami pitcher Alejandro Rosario. The Miami native is ranked as the No. 24 overall prospect in the nation by Perfect Game, and throws a fastball that reaches 97 MPH. In addition, Rosario was selected as a 2019 All American Classic Player and a pre-

season All American. For Wake Forest, senior William Fleming took the mound for the third time this season. He looked stellar against Northeastern and rock-solid against Notre Dame, only allowing four runs on 13 strikeouts in those games, combined.

The first two and a half innings were scoreless, and both pitchers started strong. In the bottom of the third inning, Miami opened the scoring with two outs to take a 1-0 lead. The Demon Deacons nearly answered back off a double from senior Bobby Seymour, his second of the season. The bottom of the fifth inning was a big one for Miami, with five runs scored. Three straight pitches from Fleming resulted in a two-run home run, a solo home run and a wild pitch that made the score 6-0 in favor of the Hurricanes. The night would end there for Fleming, who pitched five innings and allowed six runs on six hits.

"[Fleming] threw the ball okay tonight and ran out of gas a little there," Wake Forest coach Tom Walter said.

However, the Hurricanes were not done yet. In the bottom of the sixth, Anthony Vilar hit a home run to right field, adding two more runs and extending the lead to 8-0. The knock gave him three hits and three RBIs on the day. Miami would add a pair of runs in the last two innings, and the contest ended with a 10-0 scoreline.

Wake Forest had three errors in the game, moving them to a total of 16 on

the season. Due to injuries and COVID-19 issues throughout the season, the Demon Deacons have been unable to find consistency, on the defensive side of the ball.

Saturday: Wake Forest 3, Miami 6

Despite a pair of homers and marked improvement at the plate, Miami once again prevailed over Wake Forest, 6-3.

Wake Forest freshman Rhett Lowder took the mound looking to find his groove after allowing five runs on six hits in a losing effort back on Feb. 28 against Notre Dame. In the prior outing, he lasted six innings and threw for ten strikeouts while only giving up two hits and one run.

Miami got off to a strong start with a single from Yohandy Morales, which gave the Hurricanes a 1-0 lead. The Demon Deacons bounced back in the top of the second inning off a solo home run from senior Bobby Seymour, which made the score 1-1. The nation's 2019 RBI leader and ACC player of the year would add a double in the sixth inning to complement his big day. Seymour is now just 23 hits away from 200 across his collegiate career. He'll look to become only the 28th Demon Deacon to reach that milestone.

Wake Forest would take their first lead of the series in the sixth inning off the bat of Brock Wilken. The freshman phenom hit a two-run home run to left-center field, following a double from junior Michael Turconi. Wilken's fourth home run

of the season made the score 3-1 in favor of Wake Forest.

Lowder was stellar throughout the first five innings before finally being knocked around by the Hurricanes in the sixth. Vilar hit a two-run home run — just as he had done a night before — for Miami, evening the score at three. Lowder finished the day with 5.1 innings pitched, allowing three runs on five hits with six strikeouts.

"Obviously we're pleased with Rhett Lowder's start. He really only made two bad pitches on the day," Coach Walter said.

Fellow freshman pitcher Hunter Furtade stepped in for Wake Forest in the sixth inning but surrendered a pivotal run to give the lead back to Miami at 4-3. The Hurricanes added two more runs in the seventh and eighth innings to make the final score 6-3.

Sunday's series finale scheduled for 1 p.m. was canceled due to return-to-play protocols. Following Saturday night's contest, Wake Forest informed Miami of their decision to cancel the game due to a lack of available pitchers. Wake Forest used eight pitchers over the prior two games and was still reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 protocols.

Following the series loss, Wake Forest dropped to 3-6 overall and 1-4 in conference play. Wake Forest will return home looking to right the ship with another series against ACC opponent Georgia Tech this weekend.

Dak Prescott and Dallas Cowboys reach deal

After his gruesome injury in 2020, the Cowboys showed faith in Prescott with a new contract

BY COOPER SULLIVAN

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The biggest off-season drama of the NFL is over. No more hastily made jersey-swap edits on Twitter, no videos of dumb fans burning their \$129 jersey, and the talking heads can finally move on to other speculations. Texas, put your mask back on and let out a deep sigh of relief. Your star quarterback is staying put.

On March 8, the Dallas Cowboys announced that they had reached an agreement with Dak Prescott to retain him as their starting quarterback. The four-year, \$160 million contract comes after many years of speculation and negotiation disputes. The 2016 fourth-round draft pick's rookie contract ended after the 2019 NFL season with no fifth-year option available. Prescott was then franchise tagged, meaning he and the Cowboys would have the 2020 season to continue long-term negotiations, during the upcoming season, Prescott would play at just below market value, earning about \$31.4 million.

Prescott played in the first five games of last season before suffering a grue-

some season-ending ankle injury against the New York Giants. Despite missing the majority of the season, Prescott still had more passing touchdowns than Cam Newton had in 15 games (nine to eight) and only 300 fewer passing yards than his replacement, Andy Dalton did in 11 games. During the Mississippi State gunslinger's tenure, the Cowboys have gone 42-27 with two playoff appearances. After Prescott's injury, Dallas went a dismal 3-7, and their overall offensive production declined.

Before the 2019 season, reports revealed that Prescott wanted a long-term deal with the Cowboys. Rumors that he was searching for a four-year contract and nothing less than \$40 million per year began circulating on Twitter and in team facilities. A source from Pro Football Talk shot the speculation down a week later, but if you do the math on Prescott's current contract, he is being paid an average of exactly \$40 million a year.

Prescott's agent Todd France negotiated the most guaranteed-at-signing bonus in NFL history, landing just shy of nine figures at \$95 million. Additionally, Prescott is guaranteed \$31 million more, placing him at \$126 million guaranteed, second only to Patrick Mahomes. Critics say that Prescott has not proven himself enough to earn such sums. Jerry Jones responded, probably while rubbing his money between his fingers.

"Most anything that I've ever been involved in that ended up being special, I overpaid for," he said.

Per Pro Football Talk, Prescott was also franchise-tagged on March 9. According to France, this is what both he and Prescott wanted, as it would force the franchise to pay a 44% increase on his contract should they tag the QB a third time. This would be unlikely, as Prescott's new contract is set to have a no-trade clause and a no-tag clause, thus preventing that third tag from occurring.

While a third tag would result in a hefty payday for Prescott, franchise tags are a source of contempt around the league. Dallas initially franchise-tagged their "franchise quarterback" on March 16 of 2020, but Prescott did not sign the \$31.4 million agreement until June 22, following a holdout of nearly three months. Athletes typically hold off signings when they are not pleased with the current offer and threaten to sit out until their desires, whether that be a long-term deal, an increased salary or a new team (as in the case of Deshaun Watson) are met. And, more often than not, the franchise is the party in the losing position as the athlete continues training away from the rest of the team while the team is essentially paying for said athlete to not show up.

Sometimes using the tag as a negotiation extension works successfully, as seen by the Derrick Henry case in 2020. Many players view the tag as a sal-

ary limitation and a cap on their ability to play for a team that wants them long-term. Current Minnesota Vikings quarterback Kirk Cousins played his last two seasons in Washington D.C. under consecutive tags, but unlike Prescott, he could not repair relations with the franchise. Cousins signed a fully guaranteed two-year extension with the Vikings in 2020, bringing his guaranteed money total to \$150 million.

But now, Prescott does not have to worry about another franchise tag in the immediate future. He got his deal and Dallas has their quarterback of the future back in blue and white. The only thing left to do: win the Super Bowl.

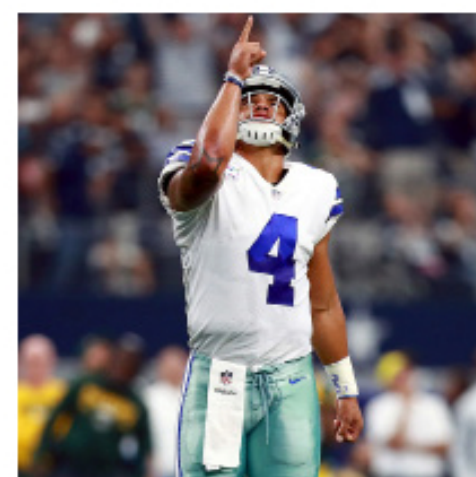


Photo Courtesy of sportscasting.com

Prescott got what he was looking for with a four-year deal.

Zlatan attacks LeBron for statements on justice

Zlatan Ibrahimovich has spoken out against James's push for social justice reform

BY MICHAEL PITTS
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Zlatan Ibrahimovic, the star striker on A.C. Milan, is celebrated as one of the most decorated soccer players of all-time, earning 31 total trophies from awards, tournaments and league championships. He has scored over 570 career goals, the third-most

among active players behind only Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo.

Unfortunately, Ibrahimovich has been in the news lately for the wrong reasons, as he recently criticized NBA star LeBron James for being a social activist.

James is known for being a philanthropist in his community, basketball star, global ambassador and icon. He has spoken out against social injustice, created a school for underprivileged youth and has multiple charities that serve his hometown community. One of James's

most famous acts for his community was opening a high school for at-risk youth called I Promise in his hometown of Akron, Ohio. This school has free tuition and provides school supplies at no cost, giving its students a chance to receive an excellent education and attend college.

Ibrahimovich claimed that a professional athlete's only job is to entertain the crowds and fans, not involve themselves with politics and social justice reform.

"Athletes unite the world, politics divide it," Ibrahimovich told reporters in a recent interview. "Our role is to unite the world by doing what we do best. Athletes should be athletes and politicians should do politics."

Ibrahimovich's statement led to the following response from James in a post-game interview:

"I would never shut up about wrong things. I preach about my people and I preach about equality. Social injustice. Racism. Systematic voter suppression. Things that go on in our community."

Later in that interview, James noted that he doesn't make these statements lightly.

"I'm kind of the wrong guy to actually go at because I do my homework," he said.

James also pointed out that other athletes are also speaking out and helping their respective communities. Leagues such as the NBA, MLB

and NFL are filled with social activists who stand up for their beliefs. Even the leagues themselves have campaigns, events and charities that benefit social justice and raise awareness for various social causes. For example, the NFL placed the "Black Lives Matter" slogan on all of their team's helmets this past season, while the NBA is allowing players to have social justice related quotes on the back of their jerseys.

Ibrahimovich's comments coincide with the "shut up and dribble" comment made by Fox News anchor Laura Ingraham towards James three years ago. Backlash quickly followed. Time will tell if the same happens in this case.

The call for athletes and celebrities to "stay in their lane" and focus on their craft is delusional, especially in the world we live in right now. As our country has grown more conscientious regarding social issues, protests have become more widespread.

These movements demand attention, and athletes have the following and platform to provide that. It is their right, as people, to speak their mind. LeBron should not "shut up and dribble." He has done so many positive things for this world and he should continue to do so. James is an athlete, but he is also an activist. It is inherently wrong to restrict a person who is just trying to do the right thing.



Photo courtesy of "Bro Bible"

"I'm kind of the wrong guy to actually go at because I do my homework," James said in response to Zlatan.

MLB teams prepare to host fans on Opening Day

Nearly every team in the league plans on allowing some fans for the first time since 2019

BY DELANEY MCSWEENEY
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Fans cheering, vendors shouting and die-hards fighting to catch a homerun ball. All of these could return for some of the Major League Baseball teams in as soon as two weeks. With Opening Day right around the corner, the MLB has been looking into various options that would allow fans to return to the ballparks following a season unlike any other.

The 2020 season was full of twists and turns for the MLB. During spring training last year, the MLB went into a complete shutdown, and play did not resume until July, bypassing the majority of the normal regular season. The league went on to play a shortened season of only sixty games, with very few fans allowed at the playoff games in November.

For a league that makes an average of \$12 billion per year, the MLB

has faced many financial difficulties throughout the pandemic. The largest came from the lengthy shutdown, which caused a deficit of \$3 billion due to a lack of ticket sales.

In an effort to recoup some of their losses, owners and league officials have been pushing for the return of fans to the ballpark. As of now, no league-wide decision has been made. Since each state has its own mandates and regulations, each team has been granted the ability to choose its own rules and protocols for the 2021 season.

Opening Day is set for April 1, which means teams must decide on protocols for allowing fans before then. Management for each team has been reviewing their respective situations to determine if, and how many, fans will be allowed.

The MLB released a statement saying that proof of negative COVID-19 tests and/or vaccinations will not be required to attend events.

The first concern for the MLB is the health and safety of fans and players. There are also fears about the potential for a power imbalance with teams being in different states with varying rules. For example, the

Texas Rangers will have full capacity at their games, allowing more than 40,000 fans inside their ballpark. This decision was made possible because of Texas' lack of COVID-19 regulations. On the other hand, the Los Angeles Angels will most likely have few to no spectators allowed because of California's strict mandates. This could draw into question the competitive integrity across the MLB this season.

Despite the risk of a power imbalance and the danger of heightened COVID-19 risks, the MLB has still made it clear that they want fans back in the stands. With new positive developments regarding vaccine distribution, the MLB has gained confidence that they can allow some fans at their events. With the MLB's newfound confidence, a semblance of normalcy can possibly be back for the 2021 season.

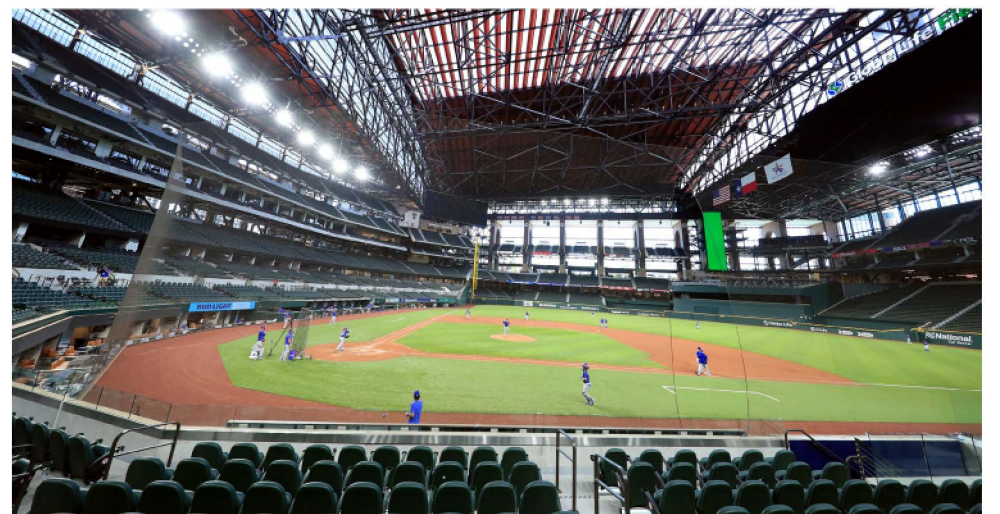


Photo courtesy of "Call to the Pen"

Globe Life Park in Arlington, Texas is prepared to accept their full capacity, now that the state has dropped COVID-19 mandates.

Childish Gambino album turns one

Surprise experimental album released at the beginning of pandemic brings listeners introspection and sense of peace one year later

BY COOPER SULLIVAN

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It's been a year since the world shut down. A year since we truly realized the fragility of life. A year since certainty became more valuable than money. A year since everything around us gave way and crumbled to pieces. Yet, no matter how hard we tried to distract ourselves, ignore our worries or use sleep as a blissful escape, the thoughts of helplessness and fear remained unrelenting. It seemed so foolish to accept these feelings as inevitable conditions of our diminishing mental fortitude, but that just proved that we are egocentric humans, believing that we are capable of everything under the sun. However, that was a year ago. We have come a long way since then.

A year ago, Childish Gambino mysteriously uploaded a project that was only available via his website. Fans were initially excited to receive new music from one of their favorite artists during such a hectic point in time. Still, they were quickly disappointed when the nearly hour-long album disappeared after only 12 hours. Could it have been an intentional artistic stunt by Gambino to emphasize and explore the themes of chaos and uncertainty? Had the server crashed due to heavy website traffic? Was it a marketing ploy? Who knows. Art is subjective. It allows for limitless interpretations and inquisitive interactions among the members of the fanbase, each no more plausible or idiotic than the last. That's the beauty of art.

Subsequently, the full album titled *3.15.20* was officially released on multiple streaming platforms a week later on March 22. Each track was titled with its start time with two exceptions: "Algorhythm" and "Time." Many

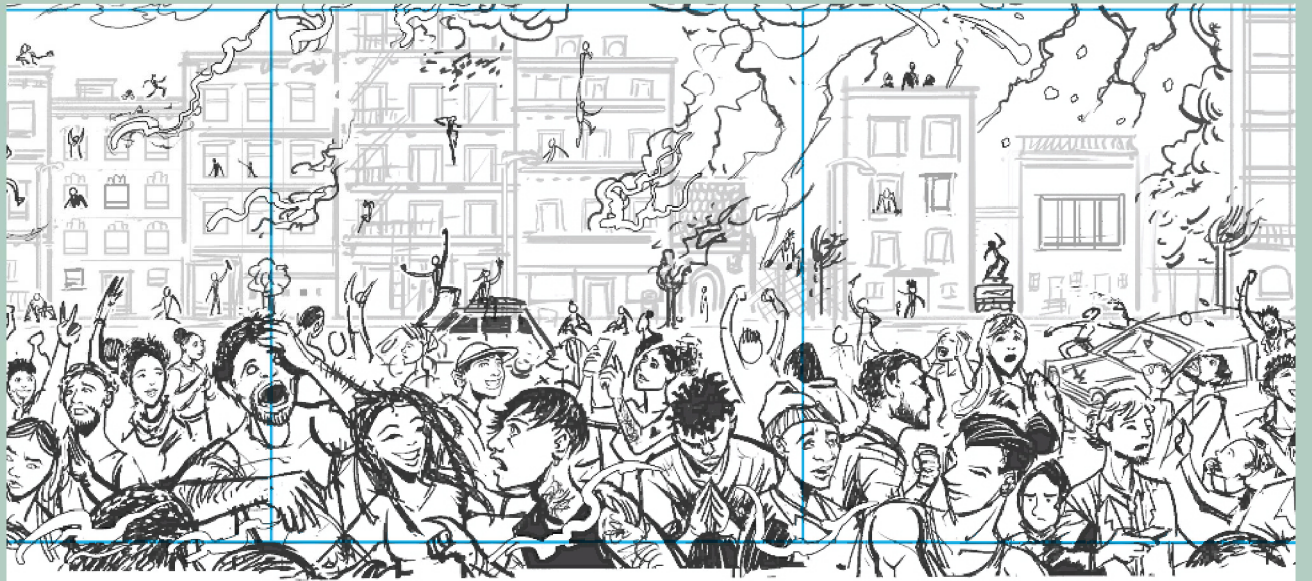


Photo courtesy of @spotify

Above is one of the original pieces of cover art that accompanied Gambino's initial release. The album featured 12 experimental songs that have been widely loved by listeners.

assumptions were made about this rather experimental project of Gambino's. Did it represent examples of complexity and infinity? Was it a rejection of the status quo? Did it reveal symbolic undertones or the continuation of minimalist aesthetic through its blank white square album cover? Am I tripping, or do I need to update my Spotify? Don't ask me.

As I set up the hammock in my backyard with no real expectations besides the oncoming season of hell, I closed my eyes and began to listen. The futuristic chorus of "we are, we are, we are" in the song, "0.00" enters my head. The phrase recurs continuously, repeatedly asking for someone, something, to answer the call. Before the answer is found, the next track, with a gritty electronic house-beat, starts playing. Each track seamlessly transitions into the next, showcasing the fluidity

and complexity that exist in everything — both music and life.

Gambino recruits Ariana Grande, 21 Savage, Ink and Kadhja Bonet to help add more flavors to an already colorful palette. However, he is more than capable of producing a spectrum of sounds, from his deep, monotonous vocals to his Prince-esque falsettos. Most notably, you can hear him employing many of these tactics together on "24.19." The guest appearances all provide additional perspectives about self. Perhaps the most emotional case comes from Gambino's own son talking to his father about love — the simple, innocent conversation to force introspection.

Furthermore, Gambino experiments with themes of uncertainty and chaos in these songs. "32.22" showcases a powerful marching cadence and chanting vocals, while "35.31" boasts the complete opposite with an upbeat guitar riff and absurd lyrics. Such exemplifies the dark yet comedic meaning to life. A fitting commentary for March 2020.

Within the span of two weeks, I had been dumped, had my worst case of the flu, lost my job and became abysmally numb to everything. I knew that I wasn't the only person going through something like this — depression and mental instability are nothing short of universal — but I couldn't accept that fact. All I knew was fear, uncertainty and hopelessness.

Laying on the hammock with a gray sky and cool breeze enveloping me, hearing these themes expressed so many times in ways better than either my parents or psychiatrist could, I finally understood. In the larger scheme of the world and in my own mind, I found peace and an answer, even if it only lasted for an hour.

A year later I revisit this album laying on Davis Field. Frisbees and pollen, I realized, aren't the only things I'm trying to avoid.



Photo courtesy of Jeff Kravitz

Donald Glover announced on Twitter prior to *3.15.20*'s release that this upcoming album would be the last under the Childish Gambino moniker.

Food | Flat Soda

Flat soda is good, guys, I swear

Flat soda excites with its delicious flavor that is simply unbeatable

BY SELINNA TRAN
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The best things in life are flat. Soda, the earth, Fergie's national anthem performance. I will preface that this article will not be one that argues the ostensible truth of the flatness of the earth. Rather, this article will be highlighting a dining decision that certainly does not have its deserved recognition — flat soda.

By now, you must know that your favorite culinary Magellan has received quite a bit of contentious feedback for her cuisine advice.

However, the fatalistic population of the Old Gold & Black audience will not deter me from daring to explore the culinary beyond. Life would be extremely monotonous if we chose to fit into the boring white bread molds that society asks us to.

Dare to make a choice that is different from those of others. The campus of Wake Forest University consists of bright thinkers and dreamers. Who is to say that that dream cannot extend to flat soda?

There is a sweet tang to non-carbonated soda that I can best describe as "sugar water." If that does not sound appealing or appetizing to you, you should consider instead the feelings associated with drinking flat soda.

There is no fizzy carbonation that bites back and attacks your throat. In its place, is a smooth and delicious flavor. I must say that I do not often drink soda, but my favorite flavor is orange-vanilla Coca-Cola (served flat of course).

The burning feeling of soda is the primary pioneer of my disdain for regular soda. When I learned that there was a way I could enjoy the sweet beverage without having my throat be lit on metaphorical fire, I jumped at the opportunity. There is nothing like a wonderfully flat Coca-Cola to brighten your day.

This discovery was born out of a pure accident. As mentioned, I do not normally drink soda and it is seldom my

first option for a beverage. However, one day there was an extra can that was accidentally left to sit upon being opened. I noticed that everyone in my household had strayed away from it in disgust. Being the culinary adventurer that I am, I decided to be the brave soldier to drink this forgotten beverage.

Little did I know that I would soon discover one of my favorite beverages of all time — a simple, sweet and flat Coca-Cola. I will never go back to the days of drinking carbonated doo-hickey and I implore you, reader, to try some flat soda today.

You can create this delicious concoction very easily — just crack open your favorite soda flavor (maybe try orange-vanilla while you are at it) and the let can sit and "marinate." This "marination" process will essentially release all the nasty carbonation and bubbles that make soda a terrible beverage choice.

I always hold so much joy to share my culinary stories with the readers of the Old Gold & Black and I hope that flat soda is met with a warmer welcome than warm cheesecake. Flat soda may soon be a staple in your diet!

Games | "Minecraft"

"Minecraft" gives endless creativity

The popular game continues to evolve and improve in-game settings for loyal players

BY JOE CHO
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"Minecraft" is quite possibly one of the few rare games that transcend generations. Not only is it popular among different demographics, but it is also cross-cultural and easily recognizable in today's pop culture. Its longevity is truly a remarkable feat, a testament to its serotonin-stimulating, highly addictive nostalgic factor.

"Minecraft" was created by Markus "Notch" Persson in 2009. After being officially released to PC and iOS in 2011, Jens "Jeb" Bergensten of Mojang took over the lead development. In 2014, Mojang shifted gears and sold its company and game to Microsoft.

With more than 200 million sales across multiple platforms, "Minecraft" still reigns as the best-selling video game in history. With its first-person, infinite sandbox gameplay, players can unearth their innermost creativity and begin to lay down the foundations of their own personal adventure. The game also boasts over 130 million monthly active users who appreciate and enjoy the slice of escapism that it offers.

Picture this — 98. 99. 100% — plop. You are generated into a world unlike any other. You look around and gaze at the marvel of the creation around you. Forged by blocks and foraged with

blocks, reality can be whatever you want. No structure of authorities to challenge your autonomy. No divine agencies to hinder your volition. You are the main protagonist of this world, and you write your own story.

I remember my very first experience of logging on to a new world and starting out with nothing but a full health bar and endless possibilities awaiting me. I saw cubic trees, cubic seas, cubic animals. It was simple, maybe even primitive, but there was an appeal to this form of minimalism, unlike popular first-person-shooters or MMORPGs that tirelessly tried to reach realism.

Yet, this felt more like the real world where the sun governed the day and the moon governed the night, and I had the reigns to make the most out of it. In the game, I was a farmer and blacksmith by trade, but an architect and warrior by design. I made my own shelter, gathered my own food, crafted my own necessities, and survived against monsters and mobs through sheer self-determination. This game was truly monumental for a ten-year-old who wanted to feel competent at something and escape reality after school.

Back then, "Minecraft" was limited to single-player and multiplayer modes. Single-player itself had two modes which were survival and creative game modes. Hardcore mode was a variant of survival where the game settings are locked to the hardest difficulty. When a player died, he or she experienced permadeath. Since then, "Minecraft" has developed more game-mode variants such as adventure and spectator mode to spice up the single-player experience.

As for multiplayer mode, "Minecraft" servers were the way to go. Players could log on to popular servers like Hypixel, Mineplex and Desteria with special and unique server addresses. These servers hosted many mini-games such as parkour courses, spleef, prop hunt, survival games and bed wars. Some were dedicated fantasy worlds where politics and established factions were the premises of the game. Others were fan-made servers to emulate pop-cultural worlds like "Pokémon" or "Avatar: The Last Airbender."

In 2013, Mojang released "Minecraft Realms", a subscription-based server hosting service that eased the pain of people trying to manually create online servers within the confines of their homes and their internet service providers' restrictions. This expanded the multiplayer mode, which helped cultivate a rapport with its users, especially with the recent onslaught of the pandemic.

Periodically, Mojang delivers new updates that fix in-game bugs and glitches. Sometimes, they respond to fan feedback, as they did by adding more creatures or expanding the innate gameplay with the Village Pillage update on "Minecraft"'s tenth anniversary back in 2019. The most recent update was the Nether Update of 2020, which added four new biomes and mobs with distinct interactions. With such an ever-growing community, "Minecraft" tries its best to be an ever-evolving game. This is surely the case with its newest announcement of the Caves and Cliffs update which comes out this summer and has fans on the edges of their seats.

THE HOT LIST

TOP TEN

WSNC SPRING ACTIVITIES:

1. Go on a hike (Stone, Pilot, Hanging Rock)
2. Catch a Wake Forest baseball game
3. Post up at The Pit with a flat soda and a slice of warm cheesecake
4. Picnic date in Reynolda
5. Take another cool original picture on top of the Marriott parking deck
6. Check out Tanglewood Park in Clemmons
7. Spend the entire day in your dorm room doing a "Sound of Music"-level mountain of homework
8. Cry over your midterms until your eyes are red, only to get sent to the BW for pink eye.
9. Contemplate moving back home
10. Check out the neat firepits on Manchester!

LOCALE OF THE WEEK

By: Cooper Sullivan



Photo courtesy of
juiceshopsmoothies.com

JUICE SHOP SMOOTHIES

Located a short drive from campus in the Thruway Shopping Center Juice Shop is the premier smoothie joint in town. Their delicious, reasonably priced beverages will quench any patron's thirst. Juice Shop hands out "Free Smoothie" coupons almost as much as they do brain freezes. A popular shop for all ages, the wait time is minimal and customer service is terrific. Juice Shop Smoothies is open from 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. on weekdays, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m.

TV Show Review | "Superman & Lois"

New DC Comics show starts season off strong

The CW releases "Superman & Lois", a show about the lives of Lois Lane and Clark Kent

BY ERIC OMOROGIEVA

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The past nine years have been full of twists and turns for the CW Channel's DC Comics Universe. Since the arrival of *Arrow*, the universe has expanded to cover multiple Earths and features popular heroes such as the Flash, Supergirl, Black Lightning and many more from DC's Legends of Tomorrow. For the past couple of years, these shows have exhausted their characters, trying to sell bad plots and disregarding continuity.

However, the CW has recently found a lifeline through a familiar and likable character: Superman. The announcement of "Superman & Lois" didn't immediately excite fans, as actors Tyler Hoechlin and Elizabeth Tulloh have already made appearances as Clark Kent and Lois Lane in "Supergirl". The two characters are now

depicted slightly differently, as a stronger iteration, turning the show into the CW's crown jewel. After just the pilot episode, the channel has ordered a second season following record-breaking premiere viewership. "Superman & Lois" follows Kent, Lane and their two 14-year-old twin boys on their move from Metropolis back to Kent's hometown of Smallville.

What impresses viewers about "Superman & Lois" right off the bat is the tone and vibe of the first episode, which immediately separates the show from its CW counterparts. Taking a similar visual feeling from Zack Snyder's 2013 film "Man of Steel", the first episode features a very upbeat and happy Superman, similar to those depicted during his early Golden Age comics of the 1940s. The Kent family is caught up in family turmoil, as their son Jordan continues to struggle with mental health issues, while his brother Jonathan is a successful football quarterback. Also, questions arise as to why their father is always out "working."

The death of Kent's mother, Martha, takes the family back to Smallville for her funeral. The family decides to stay there, allured by the promise of start-

ing fresh and working out their family conflicts.

The boys then learn of their father's true identity as Kryptonian Kal-El, who arrived on Earth from his destroyed planet and is trying to blend in as a human, while helping the world as Superman. Given Kent's Kryptonian abilities, the question arises of whether or not the children inherited any of them. Aside from all of this, there is the threat of Captain Luthor, but not the Lex Luthor you typically know.

This Luthor comes from a different Earth. He is a Black man who faced a ruthless and rogue Superman on his destroyed Earth, and has dedicated his life to preventing the same fate for this Earth.

The familial approach to the show is what makes Hoechlin's iteration of Superman so fascinating. We've never really seen Superman be a father on screen before, and he fits well in this role. Exploring Lois' career as a journalist is also an interesting component. The show immediately pulls Superman fans from their comfort zone in Metropolis, where Kent and Lane work at the "Daily Planet," to a more slowly

paced environment where new stories can be brought to the table.

This family approach, however, comes with a couple of downsides. The first of which being the troublesome father-child dynamic of the show. Jordan is quite the nuisance, having harsh mood swings when he is happy around his father and exhibiting brash behavior when he isn't. This grows old very quickly — hopefully, the boys' purpose in the show takes shape in future episodes.

"Superman & Lois" is worth a watch for both DC fans who had long given up on the CW's shows and for lingering fans who hope to see a cool Superman adaptation. Hoechlin's suit is awesome, the action is great (even with the CW's often low budget) and the premise promises storylines that can avoid the standard pitfalls that Superman stories usually succumb to. Captain Luthor seems like a worthy villain as well.

After three episodes, it definitely appears that this show truly has the ability to be the best CW DC Comics show, but that's only if executives keep their promise and do not overextend these characters and plotlines.

Movie | "Echo in the Canyon"

Documentary explores music movement of '60s

Laurel Canyon's music movement still relevant in today's music scene

BY ELLY HONAKER

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Recently, I watched a documentary, called "Echo in the Canyon", which is about the late sixties music movement made popular by its location in the Laurel Canyon of Los Angeles. In it was a tale of connectivity and shared artistic expression which are two things I find sorely lacking in today's music industry.

Music groups like The Mamas and the Papas, The Byrds and Buffalo Springfield intermingled to make a new sound that celebrated a transfiguration of poetry into the pop mainstream. Particularly with The Mamas and the Papas, the highest culmination of feeling swells when the voices of the many members of the group join together, their singularity dissipating for a moment as they achieve a shared sound. Hearing music like this makes one wonder if such profound unity has been expressed since.

The documentary outlined the impact of an organic environment on the artist, and it also explored the beauty that results when your neighbors become your collaborators: when the knock on your door results

in a more profound introspection of the self.

Such an environment makes one think back to the American expats in 1920s Paris — Hemingway and Fitzgerald sitting down for a cup of coffee after a night out together. A world of easy mobility and exuberance of spirit. This possibility for infinite connection seemed to inspire the widespread impact of the art it spurred. As I celebrated such a similar sensation ringing out of Laurel Canyon, I couldn't help but wonder where this spirit lies today. In a world now shut indoors what lies before us is a challenge to replicate the kind of organic community that Laurel Canyon so perfectly facilitated. How would artistic collaboration emerge in the pandemic era? New music I hear and see is enjoyable and can attain a level of transcendence, but it also appears so isolated.

I suppose the "34+35" remix is a collaboration of sorts that combines the personalities of Ariana Grande, Megan Thee Stallion and Doja Cat into a highly enjoyable tune. However, I must admit it feels anything but organic. I do find similarities in sexual innuendo akin to many of Michelle Phillips' slinkiest lines, but the comparisons end there. It is simply not Brian Wilson showing up to Roger McGuinn's house high on speed and producing the loopy wonder that is "Ding Dang". It is as if the collaboration by these three talented women was thought up for

them by fans of their music. They are like three synecdoches representing the same whole whose combination forms a predictable metaphor. I argue there is not a transcendence in that, though the music that emerges from it is enjoyable. There are no limits pushed, no unexpected glimmer of truth shines forth from the work.

I feel this extends to a broader thesis that explores why the only associations between artists I can find are on Spotify playlists. These playlists group the artists together for them: taking similar-sounds and mathematical algorithms to achieve an approximation of the type of natural connectivity that Laurel

Canyon embodied. Its frame of understanding is in the similarities of particular groups, not in juxtaposing and inserting differences in conversation with one another. Rather than artists finding association and challenging one another's artistic perceptions, they may instead capitalize on similarities with other like-minded creators.

I hope, somewhere, there is an environment like Laurel Canyon — one that uses community and friendships to push art into a higher realm of consciousness. A place where music has the pointed desire to bring poetry into the consciousness of its listeners and a boldness that stems from a dream of unity.



Photo courtesy of imdb.com

Musicians Jakob Dylan (left) and Tom Petty (right) were both interviewed for the music documentary "Echo in the Canyon".

Lifestyle Column | Royal Interview

Duke and duchess express truths about royal family

Oprah Winfrey interviews Meghan and Harry about their motives for leaving royal family

BY MICAH PORTER
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Throughout the course of a distressing interview with television host Oprah Winfrey, Duchess of Sussex Meghan Markle — along with her husband, Prince Harry — opened up about the hardships they've encountered since relinquishing their titles as English nobility. The interview, directed under the cautious guidance of Winfrey, highlighted the key factors motivating the couple's decision to leave their posts within Buckingham Palace. While the interview brought forth many aspects of Markle's private life that deserve attention and rapport, there are critics who label the conference between Winfrey and Markle as little more than a pity party, sewn together by the deception and forgery that prompted the couple to leave in the first place.

As a former actress, Markle chose to leave her acting career — as well as a role on US TV drama "Suits" — to marry the prince of England in May of 2018, after meeting on a blind date. Upon her induction into the royal family of England, Markle fully immersed herself into royal matters, ranging from meeting with government officials and visiting

local children's hospitals. The marriage had been going swimmingly, and on May 6, 2019, the couple had their first child, Archie. Yet, soon after their son Archie was born, the couple decided they would break away from the typical life prescribed to royal family members.

By neglecting to disclose the location of birth, failing to announce the birth from Buckingham Palace and holding a private christening, the royal couple made it clear that they would not be the royals that the public wanted, but rather live life as they preferred.

As expressed in the interview with Winfrey, a less than ideal trip to Africa with their newborn child caused the couple to reflect on their positions in the royal family, as well as their desire to become financially independent from the royal family. Failing to inform the royal family of their plans, Markle and Prince Harry dropped their bombshell onto Buckingham Palace, evoking a wave of confusion and disconcertion upon the entire family. And all at once, the couple was free.

Within the two hours of airtime that transported viewers along the rollercoaster of emotion that Markle endured during her time as royalty, many questions about Prince Harry's family, and the racial bias they may hold against Markle were raised. Days later, Buckingham Palace responded with a statement reading, "The issues raised, particu-



Photo courtesy of ABC

The royal family seated within Buckingham Palace, following the birth of Meghan Markle and Prince Harry's child, Archibald Windsor.

larly that of race, are concerning. While some recollections may vary, they are taken very seriously and will be addressed by the family privately. Harry, Meghan and Archie will always be much-loved family members."

Other key findings uncovered by Winfrey during the interview include how the couple married one another in secret before the television special of their wedding. Additionally, the couple reported their relationship with the Queen of England remains strong, despite tabloids attempting to cause drama regarding the Queen, her grandson and his wife. But perhaps most notable was the issue of mental security that Markle touched upon, in fact, Markle admitted she contemplated suicide at one point. Upon entering the royal family, Markle revealed she

was forced to give up her passport, wallet, and keys, and was unable to leave the grounds of Kensington Palace without special permission. Markle told Winfrey, "I left the house twice in four months." Palace officials likely feared what would come from her exposure to the public eye.

As the interview continued, Winfrey empathized with Markle, especially when she discussed how not a single member of the family came to her aid during her most trying times. In particular, after a tabloid reported that Markle made Duchess of Cambridge Kate Middleton cry over flower girl outfits, nobody from the royal house came forth to provide the true story. In actuality, it was the reverse: Middleton made Markle cry, or so Markle reports. However, Markle did mention that Middleton later sent her flowers and a note apologizing for the incident.

When Winfrey asked Markle why she didn't seek help, Markle said she asked to "go somewhere," but the royal institution declined her request, saying, "It wouldn't be a good look for the family."

Aside from being declined access to therapy, Markle reported members of the royal family made bold statements in regards to Archie's skin tone. While the couple failed to offer details as to who made such statements, Prince Harry confirmed their accuracy, saying, "I think it would be very damaging to disclose such information."

Ultimately, the interview between Oprah Winfrey and the Duke and Duchess of Sussex highlighted elements of their story that headlines failed to reveal. While the couple certainly segregated themselves from the royal house, their motives may have been in favor of family, rather than via a duty to the crown.



Photo courtesy of ABC

Meghan Markle and Prince Harry sit with television host, Oprah Winfrey, during a two-hour interview in California. The couple reveals aspects of their private life previously unknown to the public.

LIFE: [Astrology Edition]

LIFE’S GUIDE TO THE SIGNS

In this issue, we let you know all about your sign and what it means! Astrology is all the craze these days, and the Life team is well-versed enough to tell you all about yourself — right? These will be harsh, though — we don’t sugarcoat things here.

CAPRICORN [Dec 22. - Jan. 19]

Lucky color: You don’t need a lucky color because you are strong, independent and fierce. However, stop being so gloomy all the time. I know it is lonely at the top, but if you weren’t so cold to everyone you met, you might find yourself with more plans than sitting alone in your Angelou Residence Hall single simultaneously being ahead and catching up on all of your various assignments. We predict that you may *or may not* have a midterm this week (scary how accurate we are, right?).

AQUARIUS [Jan. 20 - Feb. 18]

Our advice to you is to download Pinterest or maybe update your phone — your fashion choices are... questionable. We do admire your desire to change the world and your nonconformist personality. You don’t have to listen to us and you probably won’t given your free-spirited nature. We predict that you probably have experienced a feeling of happiness at some point in your life.

PISCES [Feb. 19 - Mar. 20]

Honestly, if you are a male Pisces - I am just sorry for you. Life must be so incredibly hard for you, having to manipulate every single person you meet. Kidding! Pisces are overbearing, but we believe that you have good intentions. Most of the time.

ARIES [Mar. 21 - Apr. 19]

Dude, why are you so angry all the time? You’re literally 5’1,” calm down dawg. You might be able to reach your unobtainable goals if you just didn’t try to take on so many things at once. Nobody likes an unfunny

jack-of-all-trades that thinks they have good music taste but, in reality, has terrible taste in both memes and music. I mean, who laughs at a super grainy picture with the caption: “Your’e Mom”?

TAURUS [Apr. 20 - May 20]

It’s okay to not be so hardheaded and stubborn for once in your life — you know that right? Let people in! But, we must say, Tauruses are friends for life and truly dependable people that you should seek out (even though they might chastise you for having an opinion). Also, you are amazing chefs ... if your idea of cuisine is Kraft Mac & Cheese.

GEMINI [May 21 - June 20]

Why are you so nosey? Stay in your lane, you two-faced pawn. Just because you were a theatre kid who memorized every “Hamilton” lyric doesn’t mean you have to remind us. Try to find some calm and stability in your life.

CANCER [June 21 – July 22]

We know that you want to go around giving your love to everyone, but you will just end up getting hurt. Try to learn to love yourself before giving all your love to someone else. It is okay to also not be so overly sensitive — nobody likes a whiner.

LEO [July 23 – Aug. 22]

Your ego is so big that we do not know if there are enough words in the English dictionary to describe it. We suppose there is good reason for you to be so egotistical given your natural talent and ability to pick up new things, but don’t be so stubborn all the darn time.

VIRGO [Aug. 23 – Sept. 22]

You need no one in your life. And we commend that. But you also have that giant indescribable pit of loneliness that no one else knows about. You cover it up really well, but let someone in! Doing so will not diminish your power or your do-it-yourself spirit, we promise. Oh, and stop asking hyper-specific questions on Reddit.

LIBRA [Sept. 23 – Oct. 22]

Let us guess, are you a poli-sci major? If not, you should consider being one, given how well you lie to people. I mean, you do it with the interests of the people in mind — right? A true politician. It’s crazy how much you lie considering how non-confrontational you are, but maybe the two go hand in hand. But hey, who knows...

SCORPIO [Oct. 23 – Nov. 22]

Perhaps you enjoy bringing down someone else’s day for your own personal glory or gain, or you judge them harshly for their dietary decisions — maybe consider being a little bit nicer to them. You are the friend that walks into Benson and makes the conscious decision to eat at Moe’s, and we believe that sums up everything that one really needs to know about Scorpios. But hey, you are a passionate individual who is also incredibly loyal. Maybe that quality makes up for your cold-blooded nature and insane decision to willingly enjoy Moe’s.

SAGITTARIUS [Nov 22 - Dec 21]

Does anyone even know a Sagitarrius? Anyone? No? We didn’t think so.

THE SIGNS IF THEY WERE EMOJIS...

🐐 Capricorn

♒️ Aquarius

🐟 Pisces

♈️ Aries

♉️ Taurus

♏️ Scorpio

♊️ Gemini

♐️ Sagittarius

♋️ Cancer

♌️ Leo

♍️ Virgo

♎️ Libra

BABYDEAC LEARNS...
ASTROLOGY

HEY BABYDEAC HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ASTROLOGY?

WELL I DONT KNOW MUCH, BUT I MEAN, IM A SCORPIO. BUT YOU KNOW ALL OF THAT MEANS NOTHING RIGHT? LIKE WHO WOULD BELIEVE ALL THAT?

A SCORPIO? THAT MAKES SO MUCH SENSE ACTUALLY...

WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT? HUH? ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT ME? YOU THINK YOU CAN HURT ME? NOTHING CAN HURT ME. I AM A COLD BLOODED SCORPIO.