

Old Gold & Black

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WAKE FOREST'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1916

FEB. 10, 2022

"Covers the campus like the magnolias"

EXPLAINING THE WEAVER FIRE

Displaced individuals have returned to their homes and firefighters are now investigating the fire's cause

CONNOR MCNEELY, COOPER SULLIVAN, AINE PIERRE & UNA WILSON

Editor-in-Chief, Multimedia Managing Editor, Online Managing Editor & Asst. Features Editor

On Monday, Jan. 31, shortly before 7 p.m., a fire started blazing on a loading dock at the Weaver Fertilizer Plant on North Cherry St., according to reporting from the Winston-Salem Journal. Winston-Salem Fire Chief William "Trey" Mayo explained during a news conference shortly after 9 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 1 that firefighters arrived on the scene at 6:45 p.m., and attempted to contain the fire for the following hour and a half before ceasing.

600 tons of ammonium nitrate and 5,000 tons of finished fertilizer were found on and near the site when the fire began.

Emergency crews left the fire and moved their equipment away at about 8:30 p.m. on Monday in fear of a potential explosion. At about the same time, the Winston-Salem Fire Department issued a voluntary evacuation order for residents within a one-mile radius of the fire. An estimated 6,000 people evacuated from the area at the time.

The Winston-Salem Fire Department, with the aid of drone equipment, documented several smaller explosions throughout the evening within the Weaver Plant building, according to reports from WFMY News 2. Some of the blasts could be felt as far as Deacon Place.

"Our house shook with the explosion," an anonymous junior told



Katie Fox / Old Gold & Black

An estimated 6,000 people evacuated from the one-mile radius around the fertilizer plant. Roughly 1,000 of those people were Wake Forest graduate and undergraduate students.

the Old Gold & Black on Monday night.

Nearly two hours later, Wake Forest University released an email urging residents within the one-mile radius to evacuate their residences, including students living in the Deacon Place

apartment complex. Shortly after midnight, the university sent an email that classes would be canceled and advised students to "stay indoors and keep their windows closed".

In an email on Tuesday morning at 11:13 a.m., the university's

administration addressed the faculty, staff and students, writing that they believe that there is "no threat to campus at this time", and advising students, faculty and staff to relocate "as quickly as possible".

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Wake Forest students and faculty receive MLK award

The Building the Dream award-winners were honored at the annual MLK Celebration event

CHRISTA DUTTON

News Editor

The 2022 Martin Luther King Jr. "Building the Dream" award winners were recognized at the MLK Celebration, hosted by Wake Forest University and Winston-Salem State University (WSSU). The annual co-sponsored event was held on Feb. 3 at K.R. Williams Auditorium at WSSU and honored the late civil rights leader. This year's theme was "On Common Ground: Embracing Our Voices" and the keynote speaker was David Banner, an American activist, musician and

record producer. Originally scheduled for MLK Day, the event was postponed because of inclement weather.

According to a Wake Forest News press release, Building the Dream awards are presented to a professor, administrator or student from Wake Forest and WSSU who "exemplify King's qualities and promote diversity within the community".

The winners from Wake Forest include two faculty members and two students. The student winners include Bea Pearson, a senior history major from Mount Holly, NJ, and Jacob Thomas, a senior biochemistry and molecular biology major from Greensboro, NC.

Thomas, president of Wake Forest's Black Student Association, was nominated in part because of his commitment to amplifying Black voices on campus and building community among Black students.

"I make sure minority voices are heard comes through the different committees I've served on," Thomas said. "I've served on the Student Life committee for three years now, and I've also worked on various other committees that are related to race, diversity, equity and inclusion (RIDE). On each one, I take a temperature check of the Black community on campus before I report back. I try to make sure my decisions

align with things I think will better the experience for Black students."

Pearson was excited to be recognized as an advocate for justice and community service.

"I want a more just society, liberation for Black people and to see an end to poverty, and those are all things MLK spoke about," Pearson said.

Pearson continued: "I don't believe in being lukewarm. I believe in being an extremist for love, as [MLK] put it. You have to pick a side in the fight against injustice, and I picked my side."

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Old Gold & Black

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

A thank you to first-responders and the WFU administration

The fire that started at the Winston-Salem Weaver Fertilizer plant on Jan. 31 elicited a period of danger and concern and shed light on various environmental and social concerns. However, the brave and admirable actions of those in the Winston-Salem community who responded to the fire should be recognized.

Primary recognition should go to the first responders, who worked diligently to prevent what could have been one of the “biggest explosions in U.S. history,” according to Fire Chief Trey Mayo. Many have praised the Winston-Salem Fire Department and other Piedmont Triad fire departments that came to assist with their “textbook” handling of the fire. On the campus of Wake Forest, the engineering faculty and the EPA Emergency Response Team conducted im-

portant work by monitoring the air quality on campus and determining that while not optimal, the air was safe to breathe.

Additionally, Student Government’s leadership during a time of uncertainty was invaluable. We are grateful for the information Student Government consistently provided and for their commitment to representing and channeling the student voice.

Finally, we extend our gratitude for the work done by the administration throughout this difficult week. The university assembled a team of essential experts, who were able to disseminate helpful information to the student body about the fire. We also appreciate the administration’s commitment to listening to its students, and that it heard their concerns when extreme frustration was expressed.

In the aftermath of the fire, we will commit to covering more angles of last week’s events with the benefit of hindsight, time and careful consideration to provide engaging long-form journalism. There are many issues of environmental inequity within the Winston-Salem community that this fire has uncovered. The Old Gold & Black is fully invested in the reporting of these events and structural problems. In the meantime, we would like to raise awareness of the following resources for students as they return to classes:

TimelyCare, which provides free mental health services to students through text and video chat modalities.

The Office of Residence Life and Housing, per sources, is providing reim-

bursement for those who had to evacuate to hotels because of the fire.

For those who spent more than they could afford on off-campus food and housing and cannot find alternative reimbursement, the Chaplain’s Fund is available as a resource.

We encourage students, faculty and staff, especially those at the center of last week’s events, to give themselves grace as we return to normal campus operations this week.

Old Gold & Black

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF
WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY SINCE 1916

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Weaver: Explaining the details and aftermath

Continued from Page 1

In an email on Tuesday morning at 11:13 a.m., the university's administration addressed the faculty, staff and students, writing that they believe that there is "no threat to campus at this time", and advising students, faculty and staff to relocate "as quickly as possible".

According to the administration, there are about 1,000 students, faculty and staff that reside within the one-mile radius. The university offered help with evacuation for students through the department of residence life and housing. Winston-Salem officials also opened a shelter at the Winston-Salem Fairgrounds.

One of the reasons that the fire caused concern — and national news coverage — is because fertilizer fires have been known to wreak havoc on communities. In the summer of 2020, over 2,700 tons of fertilizer exploded in Beirut, Lebanon, killing over 200 people. In a 2013 West Texas explosion, 240 tons of fertilizer exploded, killing 15 people. Large-scale agriculture operations across the United States house considerable amounts of ammonium-nitrate, a synthetic fertilizer.

The Weaver fertilizer plant contained 600 tons of ammonium nitrate.

Dr. Stan Meiburg, director of graduate studies in sustainability at Wake Forest University, was optimistic about the air quality outside of the one-mile radius in the initial days of the fire. Meiburg served as the EPA's Acting Deputy Administrator from 2014 to 2017, capping his 39-year career with the agency.

"The reported concentrations of nitrous oxide outside of the one-mile radius area seem to be under the level of short-term concern," Meiburg said. "If the ammonium nitrate had been concentrated in the way that it had been in West Texas, there would have been a larger incident already."

Meiburg emphasized the need for faculty, staff and students to follow the advice of local public health authorities in the wake of the fire and praised the efforts of Winston-Salem's first responders.

"The Incident Command, who is the Winston-Salem Fire Chief, handled the situation well," Meiburg said. An EPA emergency response team arrived to Winston-Salem late Tuesday afternoon and deployed mobile monitoring sites, one of them at Alumni Hall.

Meiburg also explained that the weather conditions allowed the smoke to drift near Wake Forest's campus.

"The prevailing wind caused the plume from the fire to drift toward the Southwest, roughly following the line of Polo Road," Meiburg said. "An inversion layer, which is warm air on top of cold air, caused smoke from the plume to stay nearer to the ground overnight. As the sun heated up the air, during the day, the inversion layer lifted, allowing the smoke to disperse more widely throughout the atmosphere."

Mayo said during a news conference on Tuesday morning that the Greensboro Fire Department had arrived late Monday night and began monitoring the air quality outside of the one-mile radius and reported that there was no cause for concern.

"The threshold for immediate danger to life and health is 100 parts per million of nitrous oxide," Mayo said. Around 9 a.m. on Tuesday, air reports read 65 parts-per-million of nitrous oxide outside of the one-mile radius.

In a press conference Tuesday afternoon, Mayo reiterated the severity of the situation.

"There were 240 tons of ammonium nitrate on site [in Texas]," Mayo said.

"There are 600 tons on site here. If that doesn't communicate the gravity of the situation, I don't know how to verbalize that."

On Thursday Feb. 3, those displaced by the fire were able to return to their homes. Over the weekend, the evacuation radius continued to decrease, with the current radius being 275 feet as of Sunday Feb. 6.

According to the Forsyth County Office of Environmental Assistance and Protection (FCEAP), "good" air quality is forecasted for this week, meaning the air quality index is below 50 fine particles and poses no risk to health. Even though the air quality is returning to normal, other environmental concerns still linger.

City officials are warning people to stay out of Muddy, Mill and Monarcas creeks, which are downstream from the Weaver fertilizer plant, because of elevated chemical levels. No public water wells have been affected.

Now that firefighters are able to return to the site of the plant, an investigation into the cause of the fire has begun.

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Brathwaite exhibit visits Reynolda Museum

Kwame Brathwaite's photography exhibit "Black is Beautiful" is on display until May 8

KATHLEEN KERR

Contributing Writer

On Feb. 5, the first exhibit of Kwame Brathwaite's work, "Black is Beautiful: The Photography of Kwame Brathwaite", opened at Reynolda House Museum of American Art.

Brathwaite is a photographer that promoted the idea "Black is Beautiful" in the late 1950s and '60s during the second wave of the Harlem Renaissance. His photography focuses on embracing Blackness and not conforming to white beauty standards.

"Black Is Beautiful" gives visitors an opportunity to witness and learn from an artist who used his skill and technical capacity as an artist to influence change," Reynolda House Executive Director Allison Perkins said.

She continued: "This is one of the most important messages of the exhibition in addition to fully understanding the expression, 'Black Is Beautiful'."

Brathwaite first started taking photos at jazz clubs in New York City to portray his own experience through photos. After seeing pictures of Emmett Till's murder, Brathwaite, along with his brother Elombe Brath, began using art as a means for social activism.

Inspired by Marcus Garvey, a Jamaican activist who advocated for Black nationalism and Pan-Africanism, the brothers founded the African Jazz-Art Society and Studios (AJASS). The group consisted of artists, playwrights, designers and dancers. Together, they organized music events in Harlem and the Bronx. They used their events to promote economic and political empowerment for Harlem's residents as well as the Black nationalism movement.

The organization also founded the Grandassa Models, a group of Black women who worked to defy white beauty standards. These models created clothing based on recent African trends and featured them along with their natural hairstyles and darker skin tones in fashion shows located in Harlem. Brathwaite often photographed the Grandassa Models, which appear in many of his photos in the exhibit.

"Black is Beautiful" is sponsored by Bank of America and the Arts Council of Winston-Salem. Organized by Brathwaite's son, Kwame S. Brathwaite, and the Aperture Foundation, this exhibit has been to Los Angeles, San Francisco, Austin and now Winston-Salem.

"It was over three years ago that Reynolda House inquired about borrowing this nationally-touring exhibition to

share with Wake Forest University and Winston-Salem community audiences," Perkins said. "Little did we know then how the next several years would unfold in the midst of a global pandemic and the national focus on greater social and racial justice."

After the exhibition at Reynolda House, "Black is Beautiful" will be shown at the New York Historical Society and the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

In the coming months, the Wake Forest community will get involved in the conversation surrounding Brathwaite's art in order to elaborate on Brathwaite's photography and the idea of Pan-Africanism. On March 1, the Wake Forest University Black Student Alliance and Reynolda House will work together to show "Black is Beautiful" alongside an exhibit coming to stArt Gallery in Reynolda Village.

Additionally, Professor of Humanities Corey D.B. Walker will talk with Brathwaite's son at the Reynolda House on March 19 at 4 p.m., and Professor of Art History Jay Curley will talk about photography in the 1960s and '70s on March 2 at 3 p.m. Reynolda House will also host gallery talks during February, March and April on Thursdays at 11 a.m. that focus on different artists.

"Any student who wishes to better understand the foundation of Black social activism and the teachings of Marcus Garvey — which inspired Kwame Brathwaite — should visit this exhibition," Perkins said.

This exhibit as well as the rest of Reynolda House Museum of American Art is free for students and employees of Wake Forest University and will be on display until May 8.

Contact Kathleen Kerr at kerrke21@wfu.edu



Photo courtesy of Reynolda Museum

A self-portrait of Kwame Brathwaite taken in Harlem.

POLICE BEAT

Underage Consumption/Drugs:

- During a fire alarm, alcohol was found on a desk in Luter. The student returned to the room and disposed of the whiskey in the sink. The report was filed on Feb. 5 at 12:35 a.m.
- An RA in Student Apartments called EMS to check on an intoxicated student. The student was allowed to stay in the room. The report was filed on Feb. 6 at 1:01 a.m.

Miscellaneous:

- A student was knocking on a private residence's door. WSPD escorted the student to his correct residence. The report was filed on Feb. 2 at 7:16 a.m.
- Unknown student(s) have taken cuttings from four different plants in the Reynolda Village greenhouse during the last two weeks. The report was filed on Feb. 4 at 10:15 a.m.

MLK: Recipients discuss achievement

Continued from Page 1

For Thomas, “Receiving this award affirms that work in diversity, equity, race and inclusion is actually important to the university,” Thomas said. “There is also importance in the fact that the award is shared between students at Wake Forest and WSSU because it is important to have that intercampus connectivity.”

He continued: “I want Wake Forest to feel like it’s a part of the greater community, and I want the individuals in the community to also feel that way.”

Pearson was honored by her nomination because of her admiration toward former winners and MLK’s social justice work.

“I’ve known a few of the past winners, particularly last year’s winner. Rue Cooper was like a mentor and big sister to me,” Pearson said. “I’ve seen a lot

of really powerful, amazing students, particularly Black women, who really trailblaze on campus, give back and serve to the utmost of their ability.”

Ashley Hawkins Parham, Wellbeing Program manager, and Dr. Danielle Parker Moore, assistant professor of education and the executive director of the Wake Forest Freedom School, are the 2022 faculty and staff winners.

Parham believes she was selected for the award in part because of her willingness to stand beside the marginalized and to amplify what they are saying.

“I think part of it is being willing to, respectfully, amplify what folks of marginalized identities are already telling us,” Parham said.

She continued: “As a white woman in 2022, it’s not my original idea that we need to be more equitable. I just try to advocate for and elevate the voices

of people who are telling us we need change and how to make change. I’m going to stand behind the folks that are saying what they need, and I’m also going to say out loud what I think, always being in collaboration with those who have expertise and have a vision for how to make Wake Forest more equitable and inclusive.”

Moore was selected for this award primarily because of her leadership of the Freedom School, a free six-week-long literacy-based summer program for rising third through eighth-grade students.

After working at Duke University’s Freedom School during her years as a graduate student, Moore wanted to create the same learning environment in Winston-Salem when she arrived here.

Moore was surprised when she received the award, and she was proud

the award brought recognition to the Freedom School, an initiative near to her heart.

“I was blown away that someone nominated me because they thought what I’m doing is worthy of even being recognized in the same vein as [the work done by] Dr. King,” Moore said. “It is such an honor because [the Freedom School] has been a passion project for me. To see it come full circle almost five or six years later is a huge honor.”

Moore was also extremely honored that her work is considered exemplary of Dr. King’s social justice work.

“To see that anything I’m doing is remotely considered to be something that is building and reflecting his dream is an honor.”

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Slave, Race and Memory Project hosts annual lecture

Emory law professor Dorothy A. Brown spoke on her research in discriminatory tax law

NATASHA HEISENBERG

Contributing Writer

On Tuesday, Feb. 1, Wake Forest welcomed Emory University School of Law Professor Dorothy A. Brown to speak in the annual Slavery, Race and Memory Project lecture series. The lecture, which took place over Zoom, is the first of many events scheduled to celebrate Black History Month and to provide the Wake Forest community with opportunities to hear from experts regarding the implications of slavery.

Professor Brown, author of “The Whiteness of Wealth: How the Tax System Impoverishes Black Americans — and How We Can Fix It”, discussed her research on the racially-discriminatory tax policies that exist within the United States. Brown provided the audience with a brief overview of each chapter of her book and further discussed the various aspects of financial law that are detrimental to African-American and Black individuals.

Brown entered the field to “get away from race”, having thought that tax law was a “color-blind area of the law”. However, a deeper investigation into the legislation has revealed to her the racism embedded in fiscal policy.

“You cannot tackle the racial wealth gap without addressing tax policy,” Brown declared.

Brown explained that attempting to comprehensively dismantle the systemic issues surrounding unjust tax laws proves challenging given the fact that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the United States Treasury Department are not required to report statistics categorized by race.

Brown added that this gap in public reporting has yet to be ameliorated by President Joe Biden’s first executive order on racial equity.

Additional areas covered by Brown in the lecture included unfair marriage

and property laws, as well as inherited wealth and college loan debt. As a self-described “data person”, Brown explained that her research relies on many disciplines, including sociology, political science and economics. According to Brown, the merging of these fields is essential to aiding and understanding these problems and serves to make the conceptual aspects of the law tangible.

“You wouldn’t associate tax law with race,” Vice Provost Kami Chavis said. “We think it’s innocuous.”

Chavis, who is a co-chair of the Slavery, Race and Memory Project Steering Committee, continued: “Even though slavery in the United States ended as an institution over a century ago, the vestiges of that institution still remain. In particular, Professor Brown’s lecture talked about how laws that were enacted post-Civil War disenfranchise Black people economically.”

Chavis emphasized the importance of the Slavery, Race and Memory Project, which was founded by Wake Forest University in 2016.

“We’ve done some important things, like shedding light on the University’s role in slavery and hopefully educating a whole new generation on how this American practice continues to impact people,” Chavis said.

Dr. Dean Franco, who also serves as a co-chair of the Slavery, Race and Memory Project’s Steering Committee, expressed the central role of the project in reckoning with the past and present effects of slavery.

“We are trying to create as complete a history of Wake Forest’s investment and enslavement, and its participation in dehumanizing and segregating practices in the 20th century as possible.”

Another facet of the project that Franco emphasized was the urgency to draw connections between policy and social injustices. Franco praised Brown for her clear and well-researched

presentation, which he explained demonstrated a “clarifying instance of what critical race theory is”.

Professor Brown concluded her lecture with a multitude of proposed solutions. Brown stressed the importance of continued involvement in political practices among those solutions that have the potential to alter these discriminatory areas of the law. Franco reiterated this point and echoed Brown’s call to action.

“Racism is not just this omnipresent and overwhelming thing, but actually has levers that you can pull or that you can dismantle,” Franco said. “That’s the goal, too — to figure out how to

dismantle those levers of racism. And that is one of the things Brown helped show.”

Wake Forest University, in partnership with The Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Center (URECA), offers research grants for students, faculty and staff to study the implications of slavery at Wake Forest and beyond.

A recording of Brown’s lecture and more information about these research grants can be found on the Slavery, Race and Memory Project’s website.

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Photo courtesy of Wake Forest University

Dorothy A. Brown is a School of Law professor at Emory University and author of “The Whiteness of Wealth”.

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OLD GOLD & BLACK

Editor's Note: This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2022

DEACON PROFILE *Christopher Ohl*

Dr. Chris Ohl is an infectious disease specialist currently working for Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center and serves as a COVID-19 adviser to Wake Forest University. Ohl received his B.S. degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1982 and his M.D. from the University of Wisconsin Medical School in 1986.

In addition to his positions at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center and Wake Forest University, Ohl teaches as a professor in the section of Infectious Diseases at Wake Forest School of Medicine.

Can you tell me about your background and how you arrived at your current position at Wake Forest Baptist Hospital?

I earned a scholarship from the Navy to attend medical school and then trained with the flagship training hospital in Washington, D.C. I initially got a lot of my experience with infectious diseases in outbreak management, now called “emerging infections.” After about 13 years of active duty, I wanted to make sure I had a future in academic medicine and landed in Greenville, North Carolina for three years. During that time, I dealt with public health responses to Hurricane Floyd in 1999. After that time, I was recruited to the Wake Forest School of Medicine and worked with antibiotic resistance. I’ve been here for 21 years, dabbling in emerging infections. It’s the best place I’ve ever lived, and I’ve been all over the world.

What is it like being a respected leader in the medical community and working as an adviser to Wake Forest University?

Because of my Navy background, I’ve had public health experience in which I would respond to outbreaks. During my time working at a communal hospital in Japan, there was a large typhoid fever outbreak in our aircraft carrier. We had to generate a hypothesis on where [the outbreak] came from and how it was being transmitted, gather data and make an intervention. It’s the same kind of work. It has been a bit challenging, but Wake Forest has made it rewarding. The university has strong leadership and a very finely tuned group of people to get the logistics done and to make things happen.

All in all, our experience with COVID-19 has been very successful. It was a little bit miserable before vaccination, as we learned how fast the virus can transmit on campus, and unfortunately, we had to get a little restrictive for a couple of weeks there. But we got through the semester, whereas other universities had to switch back to virtual learning.



Photo courtesy of Wake Forest Baptist Health

Could you give me your perspective on the current situation with the Omicron Variant of COVID-19?

The Omicron variant is a little bit different because it changed how it looks. The face of the virus, which interacts with the receptor in our body, changed. Thus, our body doesn’t recognize it quite as well. It’s kind of like grabbing the Joker, from the Batman movie and flipping his face makeup around so you don’t see him quite the same. So, our response to that was to pivot fairly quickly to the mandated booster vaccination because of early data compiled well before winter break. Not only did it keep students from getting the virus, but if they did get it, it would be nothing more than a cold and a minor infection.

We deal with colds every year on campus, it’s nothing new. But it also slowed the transmission, particularly in dorms and in parties — places where people would get together. The number of cases we’ve had in the last two to three weeks have actually been relatively minor. I think without that vaccination, things

would have been much more explosive, perhaps a bit more like last year. We haven’t had to go back to what we had to do last year, which is a success. Our case numbers are coming down over the last four or five days to the same level that we had last fall.

Do you see asymptomatic testing as a necessary option to contain the spread of COVID-19?

Asymptomatic testing was necessary early in the pandemic prior to vaccination. It provided information to help us understand where the outbreaks were occurring. In the pre-vaccination period, the other tools to help contain were to test people in quarantine and isolation, which was intensely disruptive. These were the tools we used before more and more of the university population got vaccinated. As people got the booster shot, particularly those who were more vulnerable like the Wake Forest service staff, we were able to back off from asymptomatic tests.

If you’re fully vaccinated and entirely asymptomatic, what would a positive

test mean for you? You’re less likely than an unvaccinated person or a symptomatic person to transmit the virus. It really wasn’t important to us as a tool to know where the outbreaks were happening. We made the decision to forgo asymptomatic testing this spring, and I stand by it. Many universities that still conduct asymptomatic testing are thinking about getting away from it because you end up isolating a lot of people. At some point, we will be safe, and I’m betting by the end of the semester that we’re going to be able to take our masks off.

Can you speak to the impact that your family has had on you during this time, and how they have helped you through some of the tough decisions that you have had to make?

My wife is also an infectious diseases doctor, so she helps keep an eye on the science that comes out. I also have a son who is 17 and a daughter who is seven. Our family is very close. Our whole family got the Delta variant in the last week of August. We were vaccinated, so we went through mild flu-like ailments while we were isolated together. It’s good to have people around you who are so loving and supportive during stressful times.

If you could give a piece of advice to students right now, what would it be?

As we enter into this third phase, it’s gonna be a lot more of doing what makes sense to you. It’s about protecting yourself and estimating how risk averse you want to be. Some people might have an underlying health condition. We have students who have had transplants, for instance, and who are going to want to wear a mask. You should be supportive of them and understanding. When the virus circulates a little bit more, whether it be COVID-19 or whether it be the flu, take that time to lay low. Maybe that’s not the best time to have a party — wait a couple of weeks. No one likes being sick, or wants to be sick.

As time goes on, the virus is still all over. So, people can start making some of those decisions on their own. It’s about being a good citizen. I’ll take care of my friends, colleagues, classmates and teachers. People can make those decisions on their own. You don’t need the government to tell you what to do. You don’t need school leadership and the CDC to tell you, it’s just common sense. Think about what you’re doing from an individual health situation and for the health of others.

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Candlelight and consumerism mark Valentine's Day

How the food of Valentine's Day creates a dent in your wallet and the economy

BY SYDNEY RASLOWSKY

Contributing Writer

Wrapped in a heart-shaped box and tied with a bow, you buy chocolates from the local store. From Trader Joe's, you buy fresh (yet inexpensive!) flowers that will likely sit in a random cup on your dorm room desk. Desserts are bought from bakeries for a "Galentine's Day" celebration. Reservations are made at whatever Winston-Salem joint that has space on Mondays.

This is Valentine's Day, a day filled with love, gifts, spending and consumption for college students and adults alike. Let's see what it adds up to.

Valentine's Day isn't the only holiday with traditions that impact the economy: Easter, Christmas, and Hanukkah are also big events that promote consumerism. The candlelit dates and rush of chocolate concentrate around one specific day: Feb. 14.

A "Signature Chocolate Gift Set" from Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory on Silas Creek Pkwy in Winston-Salem rings up to \$54.95, a price that makes quite an impact on a college student's budget. When aggregated, choc-

olate shops rack up an influx of sales during the Valentine's Day season. In Winston-Salem alone, there exists an abundance of chocolate manufacturers such as Black Mountain Chocolate, Brasstown Chocolate, and even beloved chains like North Carolina-based Dewey Chocolate and nationwide chains such as Kilwins. Each of these stores has specific Valentine's Day campaign and unique packages, as well as preorder and pickup systems to help alleviate the rush. Cha-ching: \$55 on chocolates!



Photo courtesy of Sydney Raslowsky

Flower arrangements are a popular holiday gift that can get pricy quickly.

This year, Feb. 14th falls on a Monday, the day after Superbowl Sunday. These two food-heavy holidays will certainly be keeping restaurants busy with catering orders for home Superbowl parties as well as date-night Valentine's Day dinners. Places like Camel City BBQ Factory in Winston-Salem are likely to be packed with the Superbowl crowd. Both events pour money into food establishments and the economy.

Restaurants are aware that Valentine's Day is a prime money-making opportunity and are usually booked for the holiday. Even establishments such as Mozelle's Fresh Southern Bistro on 4th Street in Winston-Salem — which are typically closed on Mondays are open to capitalize on the date night. A romantic dinner for two at Mozelle's with appetizers (creamy edamame hummus and a decadent cheese plate), entrées (warming winter squash risotto and classic fried chicken with mac 'n cheese and peach chutney), dessert (luscious flourless chocolate torte with raspberry sauce), drinks and tip easily surpasses \$100.

Some restaurants do not offer a reservation option, such as The Porch Kitchen & Cantina in Winston-Salem,

not far from the Wake Forest campus. If reservations haven't been made somewhere yet, you can still hedge your bet at places like this.

On a wider scope, the economy reaps the positive effects of each box of chocolate purchased and each meal shared by couples. In fact, a whopping 58 million pounds of chocolate are estimated to be purchased in the week leading up to Feb. 14.

Culturally, Valentine's Day is a day known for its celebration of love, either with friends or a significant other. In actuality, it has a large impact on the local and national economy, contributing to small businesses and chains alike. It's celebrated across the country by young and old couples alike.

According to Statista, 53% of Americans are expected to celebrate the holiday this year. Additionally, in 2022, consumers are estimated to be spending \$24 billion on Valentine's Day goods. When you're biting into your chocolate truffle or twirling your pasta at a candlelight dinner, just imagine the millions of people doing the same.

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Folkknot brings 'Sea Shanties' into the limelight

Putting a spotlight on Wake Forest's own Sea Shanties band

CHASE BAGNALL-KOGER

Features Editor

According to their Instagram bio, Folkknot — Wake Forest's Sea Shanty orchestra — has been "making sea shanties since it was cool." The three-person musical group has brought this genre of traditional folk music to the Wake Forest community since it was first founded in 2020, both through live performances and its two albums that have been released.

"Sea Shanties" may seem to be a relatively obscure genre of music, but many students may be familiar with the concept from a burst of popularity that the genre received over social media; the song "The Wellerman" by Nathan Evans became viral on TikTok in 2020, bringing the unique sound into the limelight.

"It was wild to have our niche music sound reach the mainstream; we definitely benefited from it," guitarist Grey Hyatt said.

The founding members — alumnus Grey Hyatt and junior Marcos Lammel-Knebl — were brought together by a freshman-level organic chemistry class. After a nighttime lab led them to grab dinner together, and the discussion turned to their shared love of music and playing instruments.

"It came together because we all figured out that we liked that genre; the seafaring theme struck well with all of us, so we decided to go with it and make it our theme," Hyatt said.

The original combination of instruments was successful in recreating the

songs' melodies, but the members felt that the band could benefit from an addition that would create a "deeper sound."

Lammel-Knebl's solution began with an impromptu trip to Asheville, where he bought a \$200 accordion and began to teach himself how to play it. The accordion's over 200 buttons, none of which are visible to the musician playing it, took him "a few days to get comfortable with," but soon Lammel-Knebl began performing with the new instrument. Later, Folkknot also added cellist Nathan Faulk and further diversified their melodies.

Currently, Folkknot travels to bars to perform live, mostly at venues in the Piedmont Triad. Though COVID-19 restrictions in most breweries have been lifted, the band still has some trouble finding areas willing to have live music in some areas, such as vineyards.

"On an average week, I send out around 60 emails and hear back from maybe five percent of the places I contact. There's a lot of back and forth, but it's been mostly fruitful," Lammel-Knebl said.

Hyatt describes their first album, "A Disease Called the Sea," as a "concept album" loosely inspired by his grandfather's experiences in the royal navy as a young adult and lifelong love of sailing.

When recording "A Disease Called the Sea," each of the band members was quarantined in separate locations due to COVID-19 lockdowns, so the production process was unconventional — the entire album was recorded on iPhones.

Every member recorded their parts separately and sent them to each other for reference before the next piece was documented.

Hyatt then stitched together the pieces using the app GarageBand, and the final product was released on multiple streaming services, including SoundCloud, Apple Music and Spotify. In the future, the group hopes to remaster this album using the professional equipment that they have since purchased.

"We're hoping to release our music physically — whether that be on CDs or Vinyl — and touch up the sound as much as possible," Hyatt said.

Conditions for recording the second album, "A Life Well suffered," were more favorable; by 2021, when it was record-

ed, Folkknot had access to professional microphones and a recording room that allowed for more consistent acoustics.

Finding money for adequate equipment remains to be a challenge, but the band has reinvested their money earned from gigs into "investments" that will result in a louder and clearer sound during live performances.

"Playing music for a living would be a dream, but that's a huge mountain to climb," Hyatt said. "For now, I just want to keep writing new music and making a decent name for ourselves locally and see where it takes us."

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Photo courtesy of @folkknot on Instagram

Folkknot regularly performs at bars and restaurants around the Winston-Salem, Greensboro and Charlotte areas.

CRISPR speaks for the trees

Climate change is threatening forests, and biotechnology could be the tool to save it.

SEAN JONES

Staff Writer

If you've taken any biology class in your life, you are probably aware of the term homeostasis, which is the concept of retaining an equilibrium among elements — typically physiological — that work together to sustain life. Plants embody this idea adeptly.

From a biological standpoint, trees are actually under relentless attack from pests, from harsh weather, from poor environmental conditions, and from humanity. Unabating attacks from their environment require an equally robust defense, but climate change seems to be tipping the scales.

One significant player in this arboreal assault is the mountain pine beetle, *Dendroctonus ponderosae*, a fiend to forests that can fit on your thumb. Introduced to the lush woodlands of North America by European colonizers, the mountain pine beetle has been munching on North American forest for hundreds of years, mostly under the radar, as explained in a recent iBiology Case Study on saving the American Chestnut.

For most of North American history, these beetles have been unproblematic

participants in the life cycle of forests and trees that make up their habitat, but human-induced climate change is giving these beetles a leg up in natural selection.

The short life span of these beetles revolves around when they can produce new offspring, punctuated by periods of incessant munching on American Chestnut trees. These beetles, dictated by a magnificent temporal clock, listen to the seasons, note the shift in temperature and plan their periods of reproduction around the changing regional climate every year.

As trends in global climate reduce the harshness of winters in the North American forests where these beetles live, larvae

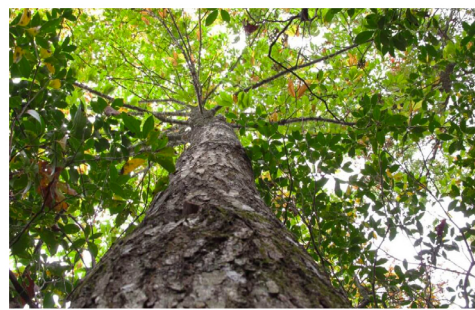


Photo courtesy of geneticaliteracyproject.com

Rising beetle populations have threatened the American Chestnut tree.

can remain viable throughout the winter, never experiencing a period of reduced reproduction. Resultantly, these tiny beetles chow down on pine trees across the United States and then lay eggs, which survive the winter, producing more beetles that do the same.

The solution to this problem might be much, much smaller than a beetle, but its implications are nothing short of monumental. CRISPR is a molecular biology technique that takes advantage of ancient bacterial immune systems used to recognize and combat invading viruses, called bacteriophages. In combination with special enzymes, titled Cas enzymes, a CRISPR-Cas system can recognize a genetic sequence and perform a special “cut” at a certain genetic site, allowing for the insertion or deletion of genetic transcript.

Laboratories around the world are currently using the CRISPR-Cas system to modify genomes, allowing for genetic testing of traits that could give some species in dire situations an advantage. Using this technology, it could be possible to “generate trees that will be more tolerant to drought, more tolerant to cold conditions” or ones that “grow faster, or are structured differently to hold more carbon,” wrote University of

Concepción professor Sofia Valenzuela Aguila.

Genetically engineering trees to be more resistant to conditions that harm greater forest health could be instrumental in maintaining the homeostasis of the forest as an entire system.

While CRISPR-Cas technology has been used often in biochemical contexts throughout the past decade, Using genetic editing at the level of an entire ecosystem would be a monumental task. After all, being the conductor of one of the world's greatest genetic orchestras would be quite a lot of pressure. According to Doria Gordon, lead senior scientist at the Environmental Defense Fund, “Biotechnology in forest health is more potential than real right now.”

Manipulating the genomes of tree species at a scale that realistically improves forest health is an impossibly tall task at this time, and there is hardly a map to guide scientists in how to reverse-engineer a perfect forest. Still, investments in tree health are necessary for retaining the health of entire ecosystems, and CRISPR-Cas gene editing could be the perfect armor for species that are bearing a thumb-size invasion.

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WFU Instagram account highlights ‘gingers’

The student-run social media page has gained decent popularity over the semester with over 300 followers

MEREDITH PRINCE

Features Editor

Wake Forest students who have been active on Instagram lately may have noticed the rise in popularity a certain Instagram account with the username @wfungers. Their Instagram bio reads, “Gingers of Wake Forest, DM us if you spot one.” Currently, the account has over 300 followers and 70 posts, all of which highlight members of the Wake Forest community that have unique red hair.

The account encourages students to send in photos of their friends and peers with red hair, whether it be a candid or posed photo. Although this type of social media account may seem strange to some, the creator of the account, who wishes to remain anonymous, was inspired by other “ginger” accounts they have seen at different universities.

“I have friends who go to Arkansas and they also have a ‘gingers’ Instagram,” the creator said. “There are a couple other [colleges] that I’ve seen that have similar accounts. I decided to make one during finals week when I was really bored.”

The creator decided to start the account out of a spur of boredom with hopes to create a funny platform for students to engage with. Following the creation of the account, they were surprised by the number of red-haired students at Wake Forest and wanted to spotlight that community.

“I didn’t really have a goal, I just thought it was really funny,” the creator said. “I wanted people to send stuff, so I would plug the account on Yik Yak and tell people to follow the account. I [also] just noticed that there were a lot of gingers at Wake.”

The account was created just before winter break but didn’t take off in popularity until students returned. The creator credits the rise in popularity to friends sharing the account and posts, as well as students seeing their friends’ photos on the page.

“I think in the beginning it started out very anonymous and people would send more “sneaky” pictures,” the creator said. “It definitely gained popularity when people would see their friends submitted without their knowledge. Some people would repost [the posts] on their story.”

While the term “ginger” varies in definition from person to person and is usually defined by a person with red hair, the creator is open to photos of anyone with relatively “reddish or orange hair.” The creator also enjoys posting submitted photographs of someone who is questionably ginger, allowing the comments to debate whether they fall under this category.

“If they are someone who is really not ginger but the picture portrays them as ginger, I usually post it and let the comments fight it out,” the creator said. “If someone’s [photos are] getting sent in, then clearly people think they’re a ginger.”

Although some popular Instagram accounts sometimes do a “face reveal” — sharing the identity of the creator — after they gain a certain amount of followers, the creator of @wfungers has no intention of exposing their identity.

“I feel like it would become too personal if people knew who I was, and then they would know who they were sending the pictures to,” the creator said. “I wanted to remain unbiased. Also, the account isn’t about me, it’s about the gingers.”

The account’s creator recognizes how Instagram accounts like theirs can help bring university communities together and is proceeding with the ultimate goal of having fun and providing comedic relief for Wake Forest students.

“As long as it’s fun and I have a fun time making captions and such, I’ll keep it going,” the creator said.

Although sending in anonymous photos of friends to an Instagram account can be humorous for some, students may run into the issue of sending photos of their friends without consent, especially when they are taken candidly. The creator has run into a few issues of students messaging them asking to have a photo removed, but they always respect the decision of those in the photos.

“I’ve had some drama with people messaging me immediately after I posted asking me to delete the photo,” the creator said. “One time someone sent in a picture and it had alcohol and Greek letters in the background, so they asked me to take it down, and I did. I respect when people want me to remove posts.”

Not only do active Wake Forest students engage in the account, but the creator has noted that alumni and even parents of Wake Forest students have begun following them and sending messages. The creator hopes to continue to expand the account’s following and expressed that they are open to any and all suggestions for the future of the account.

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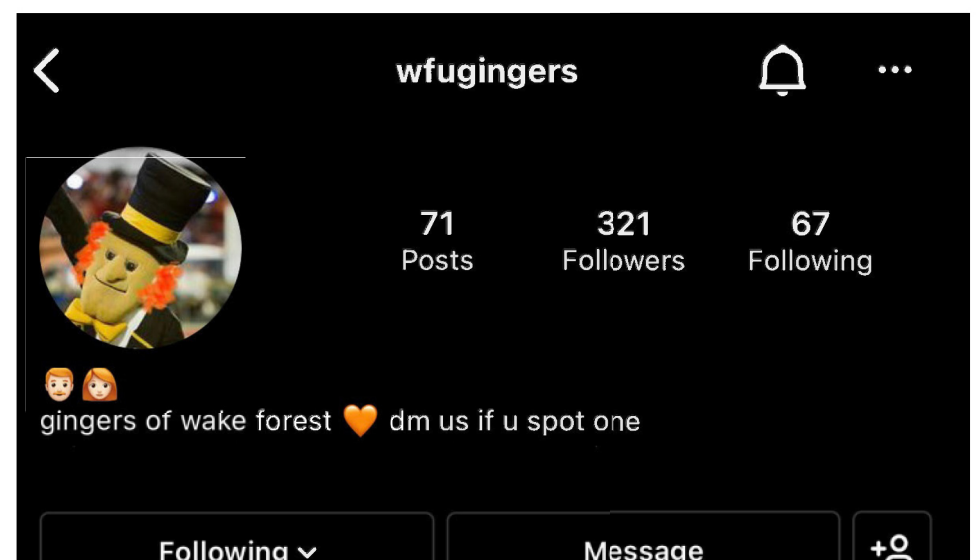


Photo courtesy of @wfungers on Instagram

@WFGingers accepts photo submissions through direct message of red-haired students to share with the Wake Forest population.

OPINION

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OLD GOLD & BLACK

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

No Humanitate

University prioritizes profit over people

Wake Forest has shown a consistent disregard for its students, failing to live up to its 'Pro Humanitate' motto

MARYAM KHANUM & SOPHIE GUYMON

Opinion Editors

When I, Sophie Guymon, committed to Wake Forest University nearly two years ago, I had high hopes for what was to come. After all, how could a university with a motto that literally translates into “For Humanity” have anything less than my best interest in mind? This motto is supposed to shed light on the greater purpose of the university — it should mean caring for one another in all aspects, and be taken a step further than a banal platitude.

Three semesters later, it saddens me to say that Wake Forest has displayed a pattern of prioritizing profit over people, failing to live up to their *Pro Humanitate* motto. There has been a demonstrated disregard for the lives and well-being of the campus community. This has been especially throughout the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

I. Response to COVID-19

In February 2021, Wake Forest faced its worst COVID-19 outbreak to this date, and to say they mishandled it would be an understatement. With 20% of the student body having tested positive within the first month of the year, we were let down by the institution we trusted to protect us. Not only did the university not reserve enough hotel space to house students who had been exposed to the virus, but they did not provide sufficient resources to those who were in quarantine. I, Sophie, personally experienced this when I tested positive for COVID-19 in Feb. 2021. Resident Advisers were also not given hazard pay after interacting with COVID-19 positive individuals, and staged a protest at the university gates as a result.

One year later, the university is no longer running surveillance testing, even though they have done so in the past. Case numbers are rising again due to the Omicron variant — which the university has hardly acknowledged. Quarantined students are not provided with the option to attend classes remotely, and isolation periods have been decreased to lengths as short as three days in order to make room for overwhelming numbers of cases.

Perhaps one of the university's most significant shortcomings is a lack of open communication with students, especially when it comes to campus safety. Students often learn of potential dangers to campus through social media platforms such as YikYak, rather than the Wake Alert system — whose responses to these dangers are often insufficient and delayed.

II. Title IX

YikYak also helped organize a student-led protest against the readmission of a student who allegedly faced multiple Title IX allegations in August. Following this decision, one of the women who filed a Title IX allegation against him chose to withdraw from the university, claiming that she was not informed of his readmission and no longer felt safe on campus. The subsequent protest drew hundreds of students. Throughout this entire ordeal, the university



Sophie Guymon/Old Gold & Black

While Wake Forest's *Pro Humanitate* motto is proudly displayed on the campus seal in Tribble Courtyard, many believe the university has not been living up to this motto.

failed to act for humanity. The other students in Poteat Residence Hall were not informed of this student's readmission, and this student's readmission was never actually acknowledged.

This is only a fraction of the abandonment and apathy that survivors of sexual assault have faced. The university has not provided these people with a safe environment away from those who committed crimes against them, nor sufficient resources to confront their trauma.

In Spring 2021, when Black women organized a similar protest titled “To Whom Do We Cry?”, it was not met with the same response and support as August's protest — from other students as well as campus administration.

III. Mental health support

This past Fall, students were informed that the counseling center would be switching to a new, single-session model, meaning that students would only be provided with one to four sessions of counseling to deal with their concerns or troubles, and those with a need for prolonged or long-term counseling would have to seek out off-campus resources. Once again, the university seemingly deserted students in need of help.

IV. Response to Weaver Fertilizer Fire

This pattern of indifference towards student well-being was most recently displayed in the university's response to the Weaver Fertilizer Fire. Wake Alert did not send out a message about the fire until 10:21 p.m., two hours after responders had arrived at the scene of the fertilizer plant. Students weren't informed of classes being canceled until 12 a.m. Tuesday, and weren't notified about the cancellation of Wednesday classes until late Tuesday afternoon. Throughout the ordeal, students only received two emails from President Susan Wenthe, with the majority of their questions and concerns being sidelined and ignored until Wenthe's second email on Feb. 3.

Around 1 p.m. on Wednesday, the university announced that classes would resume in person on Thursday, an announcement that made little sense due to the continued presence of irritant particulate matter in the air on campus, and the continuation of the voluntary evacuation order. This attempt to resume regular campus

operations was particularly jarring considering the actual proximity of the fire to the Reynolda Campus. While most of campus lies outside of the evacuation zone, areas of campus were actually within it, and some dorms, such as Magnolia Residence Hall, were less than 1,000 feet away.

This decision was only reversed after tremendous pressure was placed on the administration from students, faculty and parents. The university has made it clear that they intend to add those four days of missed classes back to the academic calendar — another nonsensical decision. These four days didn't function as a true break for anyone and as a private university, Wake Forest is allowed to be flexible in the number of days on its academic calendar.

V. Support for low-income students

While a lack of *Pro Humanitate* has been felt by every student at Wake Forest, it is especially apparent to those who do not come from privileged backgrounds.

“As someone from a more disadvantaged financial class, I see [a] lack of empathy from the administration. *Pro Humanitate* seems to sometimes only apply to the most privileged ... students here, [while others are] left to scramble to try and force their way into the 'loving' arms of the university,” said freshman Breanna Laws.

While the university has awarded many economically disadvantaged students impressive amounts of financial aid, it does little for these students once they arrive. There are resources in place for students from diverse backgrounds, but they're not advertised — rather, students are expected to know how to find and access these resources without being told.

First-generation students are often tossed into the water, unsure of how to navigate their college experience or what they should be taking away from their classes. Rather than being guided by the university, they're subjected to a sink or swim mentality.

VII. Support for international students

This lack of guidance and support from the university is also evident in the experiences of international students. As an international student who was unable to attend classes in person on campus for my first semester of freshman

year, Wake Forest did very little to help orient me, Maryam Khanum, when I finally arrived on campus for the Spring 2021 semester. I did not understand the area I lived in, did not know anyone and did not have access to any resource that could help acclimate me with my new surroundings. I was left largely to my own devices and was forced to integrate myself onto campus with very little assistance from the university.

Moreover, in early October, the Office of Residence Life and Housing told international students they would not be providing on-campus housing to those staying over Winter Break. This decision seemed callous in light of ever-changing quarantine and travel regulations that made it difficult to travel internationally, as well as the fact that the university had provided this housing in the past. Similar to the response to the Weaver Fertilizer Fire, this decision — which never should have been made in the first place — was only reversed after tremendous pressure on the university from many directions.

“Sometimes I feel like the university is really enacting *Pro Humanitate* in our surrounding communities,” said sophomore Yushuo Wang, who was personally affected by the housing issue this past fall. “But ... there [should be a] balance between on-campus and off-campus *Pro Humanitate*. Both the [international] housing issue and the fire ... make me feel it takes too much [time and] effort [for] the university [to] make a change, and it shouldn't be like that. ... I've seen so many students contributing and trying to overturn what the university has been doing ... If it's only the student body and some faculty and staff who are enacting *Pro Humanitate*, not only do our efforts not pay off but we feel depressed by the administration, [who should be] the key of our motto.”

The university needs to learn from its past mistakes and back its *Pro Humanitate* motto with action by making campus a safe and welcome place for everyone — rather than continuing to force the responsibility of improving campus on its students and staff.

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Mental Health

Online therapy appears ineffectual

Online programs perpetuate feelings of self-blame and hopelessness

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Mental health is now for-profit. Whether you're watching your favorite YouTuber's latest video, scrolling through TikTok or watching commercials on TV, you cannot exist on the internet without being bombarded with ads for therapy services. BetterHelp — which generates over 250 million dollars of revenue a year (Growjo) — has become especially aggressive in its marketing campaigns. There are a lot of upsides to spreading awareness surrounding mental health struggles and advocating for more accessible mental health treatments, but the increasing commercialization of mental health counseling may be more problematic than most have caught on to.

As consumers, we are being sold the idea that something is wrong with us — that our disappointment in the world around us is an internal problem, not an

external one — and that if we are simply willing to pay up, we can be fixed.

This situation feels reminiscent of other health crises in the 21st century — like when parents are told that their kindergartener needs to take addictive, brain-altering pills because they are too energetic in class and when people recovering from physical trauma are given opiates without any real support system or education regarding what they're taking.

I am not denying the fact that America is depressed and anxious, but I am curious as to why that may be. Sure, we can blame the internet, social media and iPhones — or we can even chalk it up to some kind of evolutionary phenomenon — but those explanations seem a bit too neat. Maybe Americans are starting to recognize the failure of the American dream. They are realizing that the government — whether blue, red or so incoherent it's hard to tell which — does not have their best interest in mind. They are realizing that other countries might do more for their citizens, and that toxic optimism can only get one so far. They are feeling the alienation of their labor

“We should make real, quality mental healthcare affordable and accessible, and ... do more to address ... societal issues.”

and concluding that hard work does not always equate to success.

Therapy is not going to work for everyone, yet we make people feel as if something is wrong with them when it doesn't. Further measures always need to be taken in the form of new, expensive pills.

In the fall, because I did not want to leave campus to go to therapy and I did not trust the campus counseling center, I tried BetterHelp out myself. The experience was awful. I don't think that I could have felt less connected to my therapist — she was constantly messaging other people during our sessions, she gave me advice that made little to no sense and I felt like our conversations went nowhere. Granted, I did not stay on the platform for long, and I never tried to talk to a different therapist, but the result was so disheartening that I became altogether hopeless about the situation.

Even worse, they continued to charge me even after I stopped attending sessions, because payment is for a specific time period, not per session. Your therapy is contractual.

I am in no way anti-therapy, and am well aware of the mental health crises the world is engulfed in, but it is time we stop letting large corporations push the narrative that our sorrow and alienation are entirely our fault. It is normal for us to feel hopeless about global warming, the unceasing possibility of nuclear war and the growing economic divide between the nation's wealthiest and the bottom 50%. It is understandable for the LGBTQ+ community to feel like part of society resents them and for Black, indigenous people of color to be upset by the systemic issues that hinder them.

Instead of conditioning people into thinking that something is inherently wrong with them and they need to shell out thousands of dollars to fix themselves, we should make living more humane. We should make real, quality mental healthcare affordable and accessible, and we should do more to address the societal issues that loom over young people today.

Free Speech

Controversial podcast should remain on Spotify

Artists such as Neil Young are boycotting Spotify due to the Joe Rogan Experience (JRE) podcast

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The debate on free speech returned when 270 doctors and researchers sent an open letter to Spotify with concerns regarding some of the claims made on the Joe Rogan Experience (JRE) podcast. These specific concerns are directed at two recent guests, cardiologist Dr. Peter McCullough and mRNA expert Dr. Robert Malone, who have questioned the effectiveness of vaccines and the severity of COVID-19. The signatories of the letter claim that guests like these spread harmful misinformation and are a danger to the public.

A few weeks after this letter was published, Neil Young announced he would be pulling his music from Spotify in protest of the misinformation Joe Rogan was allowing to appear on his show. Several other artists followed suit, leading to a response from Spotify that backed Rogan. Spotify also announced that they would put COVID-19 disclaimers on certain episodes and would begin directing people to a COVID-19 information center.

Rogan released his own statement in support of Spotify's decision and said he

would try to bring on more balanced guests with opposing views right after hosting controversial figures like Malone and McCullough.

Now, I could have told you a month ago that Spotify would support Rogan. Not only is he providing an outlet for silenced voices, but he also attracts around 11 million listeners per episode, something Spotify paid \$100 million to have exclusive rights to. Rogan also appeals to a large and diverse audience that tune in for a range of topics and guests, as well as opinions outside of the mainstream media.

Let's face it, the media has dropped the ball with COVID-19. Changes and developments occur regularly, and the media has responded with a lack of honesty and open-mindedness to new information. For instance, if you were to claim that COVID-19 came from a lab in May 2020, you would be censored on social media and discredited on CNN. Now, it is a credible theory on the origins of COVID-19.

New information is always being learned about this subject, as reports surface on the effectiveness of vaccines, the risk of myocarditis or the development of treatment methods like Ivermectin. Are all these claims substantiated? I'm not sure, but just silencing these claims stops them from being evidenced and simply draws more attention to them.

“Society is moving towards a loss of public debate ... We must act now and not let corporate entities silence voices that could change people's minds.”

This is one of my biggest issues with people like Young. When we censor people and prevent their opinions from being heard, we direct more attention to them and inadvertently cause more people to subscribe to them in a “stick it to the mainstream” type of way. When people who are tired of the one or two opinions that are meant to represent the entire population hear of someone being silenced, they are drawn to it. When Young calls for the silencing of people who divert away from the mainstream, he is only giving more credence to those people.

The other issue I take with Young's decision is that he also told people to listen to his music. In his statement, Young promoted Amazon Music as a platform that was more aligned with his values and an app that people should visit instead. Yes, that is right, Young is supporting Amazon, with their inhumane treatment of workers and their dastardly environmental impact. Neil Young's decision to turn to them to fight the “deadly” Spotify (his words) is just moronic and shows how out of

touch liberal celebrities are from the rest of society.

I encourage you to form your own opinions instead of taking them from talking heads or celebrity tweets. What makes “JRE” so great is that it includes a variety of opinions on a variety of subjects. People listen because they know they will get some fresh take or new idea. It's also important to expose yourself to a variety of opinions that you may not necessarily agree with. I watched the Malone podcast, and I read what Dr. Vinay Prasad had to say when he scientifically went through some of Dr. Malone's claims instead of debasing them without evidence because they didn't fit a network's agenda.

Every day, stories like that of Young and Rogan display how our society is moving towards a loss of individuality and public debate. We must act now and not let corporate entities silence voices that could change people's minds. We need to wake up to the fact that no one is right all the time — whether it's the CDC, Fox or CNN. Debate needs to be encouraged in an open setting so that people can be exposed to a plethora of opinions. Our country was not built from a mainstream opinion, but from the opinions of many. We cannot lose sight of that, lest our freedom be taken away and never recovered.

Politics

Biden tasked with nominating new justice

Biden's choice will affect marginalized groups for generations to come

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Joe Biden campaigned on the promise of reaching across the aisle, but the first half of his presidency has demonstrated the impossibility of this task. His attempts to push forward “moderate” legislation — like the Build Back Better proposal — have been met by Republicans refusing to come to the table.

Biden is now faced with the task of replacing Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) Stephen Breyer, who announced his retirement in January. Despite pressure from both moderate Democrats and Republicans, Biden should avoid the urge to cave to a middle-of-the-ground pick, and instead select a justice who is willing to stand on the far side of politics. Clinging to the ideal of a moderate or apolitical court is a pipedream in the 21st century.

Court decisions have long moved past objective interpretations, and voting has

been consistently documented. Furthermore, confirmation hearings openly cite political biases and party allegiances. It is impossible to be neutral in a world where everything is politicized. Biden would be better off nominating someone who can ensure the future of progressivism in the nation's highest court, instead of sticking to his previous trajectory of privileging his political opposition over his leftist allies.

Biden has indicated a strong desire to stay true to his campaign promise of nominating a Black woman to the Supreme Court. While representation within political positions is important, it would be disappointing for Biden to treat potential SCOTUS nominees like boxes to check off. Nominating another swing vote to the Supreme Court will move the Court in a conservative direction. While the nomination is unlikely to set off immediate waves due to a conservative supermajority, the appointment is life-long and will likely see the Court's composition shift numerous times. Compromising now by appointing a judge who is already behind the curve of progressivism will greatly set back the pace of progress. Moreover, a

“Democrats are better off playing the game according to the terms they have been offered, which means radical, progressive action.”

moderate will only move further to the relative right as the influence of younger generations will come to dominate political discourse. The Court is asked to make important decisions regarding abortion rights, transgender inclusion, critical race theory and more, and both the frequency and scope of such cases being presented increases year by year.

The case for moderation centers around a closing window for Biden to cram a nomination through. Many fear a flip of control in the Senate after the midterm elections, which could end Biden's chances of pushing a nomination through. Centrist Democrats are quick to point to 2016, when Merrick Garland, nominated by Barack Obama, was refused for 293 days by a Republican-dominated Senate. However, this example demonstrates how important it is to make a groundbreaking pick. Garland did not undergo a Senate hearing, vote or complete any

part of the confirmation process due to the stubbornness of the conservative bloc. Republicans would have refused to cave — regardless of the nomination pick — due to a political divide that has only grown deeper in the past six years. Biden's best chances rest in taking a gamble. He has to assume that centrist Democrats like Manchin and Sinema would prefer a progressive pick rather than a prolonged vacancy that would provide the next president with the potential to irreversibly alter the balance of the Court.

While it is admirable to claim that we are reaching across the aisle, bringing unity and working together, we must acknowledge the reality of our current political landscape. It takes two sides to compromise, and as long as one side is unwilling, Democrats are better off playing the game according to the terms they have been offered, which means immediate radical, progressive action. Biden should consider nominees that will best serve the party's future, and secure key wins for the rights of women, LGBTQ+ individuals and disenfranchised racial minorities, rather than sticking to the status quo with a moderate pick.

Governmental Compliance

Blind compliance proves to be dangerous

European conformity to mask mandates displays a deeper societal thoughtlessness

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Today, Feb. 10, marks the end of the outdoor mask mandate enforced in Spain. Before now, the streets were filled with masked individuals adhering to the policy intended to slow the spread of COVID-19.

What struck me upon arriving here was the degree of compliance with which the general populace has obeyed the law.

During my first week abroad, I was in awe of how every person was diligently wearing their mask outdoors. In the United States, it has been nearly impossible to get even half of the population to follow the outdoor mask policies throughout the pandemic. It would certainly be impossible to convince the American public to wear their masks with the same compliance as the Spaniards have to date, especially this far into the crisis.

On the subject of social compliance, I have been led to a couple of questions, mainly concerning the stark difference in social compliance in European countries as compared to that of the U.S.

Another issue to take into consideration is the potential historical explanation for this difference, as well as the pros and cons of these distinct American versus European outlooks.

Obviously, Europe and the U.S. differ in their modern forms of government. While some monarchies still exist, like those of the U.K. and Spain, the royals themselves make very few influential decisions. However, the monarchical history of the past still impacts people today. From what I have observed, both in passing and in conversation, Europeans do not have the same sense of individual agency in regards to governmental policy as Americans. This makes sense when comparing the histories of Europe and the U.S.

Much of Western Europe was established on medieval serfdom, a system that did not allow individual thought between the governed and those who govern. Serfs did as they were told in exchange for security against warring parties and a small share of the crop they produced.

For much of European history, compliance had been a critical component of survival within organized society. There have certainly been exceptions over the course of European history in which the people united in order to counter governmental abuse, such as the French Revolution. However, gen-

“Europeans do not have the same sense of individual agency in regards to governmental policy as Americans ... [which] is inherently dangerous.”

erally speaking, power within Europe has historically been grossly concentrated within the hands of either the government or the Church.

The U.S. was established to be fundamentally different from Europe. The U.S. is imperfect in many ways but the core foundation of the formation of our society as a republic was to shift the concentration of power from the monarchical, feudal power distribution that existed in Europe. The Founding Fathers aimed to give the people an unprecedented voice, and this participation of individual citizens in determining policy is what differentiates the U.S. from Europe the most.

When comparing the general histories of Europe and the U.S., one might counter and say that modern Europe features aspects of democracy like the U.S. I would argue that while there is a presence of voting and a technical framework of democracy, the serf mentality of Europe is still ingrained in the populace. Compliance as a key component of survival still drives as many Europeans today as it once did a millennium ago.

That is not to say that compliance is inherently bad — in regards to the mask policy that prompted my meditation, it has likely helped mitigate the spread of COVID-19. What alarms me is my fear that people here do not wear their masks to help others — they wear them because it's the law and because they are told to obey. This sort of compliance is inherently dangerous because it is thoughtless.

Following rules just because they are the rules and not because they are thought to be just and reasonable has led to some of the greatest human atrocities across history. The modern dictators of European nations during and after World War II rose to power as a result of populations blindly following the law. The U.S. has never endured dictatorship — perhaps this is because we have never had a serf system or monarchies as the Europeans did.

I am not rejecting the idea of social compliance — it is often necessary for the greater good. The lack of unity in the U.S. when compared to Europe is often frustrating.

It is vital that we think about the role compliance plays in our lives and consider the question of whether we follow rules because they are the rules or because we believe they are right.

SPORTS

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OLD GOLD & BLACK

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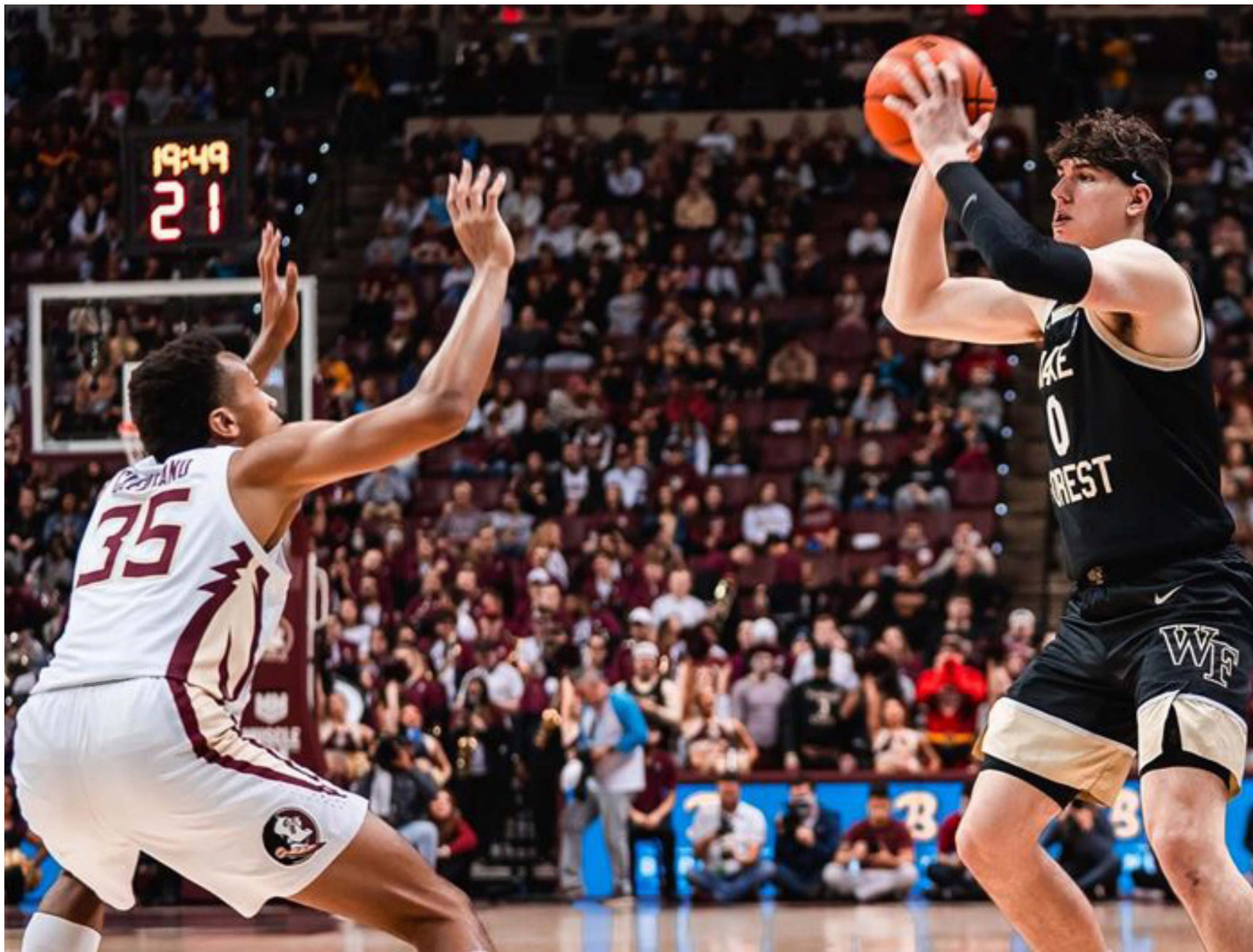


Photo Courtesy of Wake Forest Athletics

MBB snags big win over Florida State

The victory marks the first time the Demon Deacons have won in Tallahassee since 2008

CHRISTIAN ODJAKJIAN
Staff Writer

Wake Forest (19-5, 9-4) emerged victorious in Tallahassee on Saturday, beating Florida State (13-9, 6-6) 68-60. The Demon Deacons closed the game on an 11-4 run to secure their first win at the Tuck Center since 2008.

"As bad as our offense was for a lot of the game with the turnovers, we never let our offense dictate the way we defended," Wake Forest Head Coach Steve Forbes said after the game. "I thought that was the key to the game."

When Florida State came to Winston-Salem on January 24th and lost 75-54, the Seminoles forced 22 Wake Forest turnovers. On Saturday, the Demon Deacons turned the ball over a season-high

26 times, 18 of which came in the first half.

"It was ugly," Forbes said. "But we were resilient, and we had less rebounds and turnovers in the second half, which gave us a chance to win."

Florida State's star guard Caleb Mills confidently nailed a pull-up three-pointer in transition to cut Wake Forest's lead to 57-56 with just under four minutes remaining in the contest. Unwavering, Wake Forest answered the Seminoles' push in a very loud arena, embarking on a game-sealing 11-4 run.

"We came up short against an older, more mature team that didn't seem to get rattled, even with all of the turnovers," said Florida State Head Coach Leonard Hamilton.

In the possession after Mills' big shot, senior forward Isaiah Mucius drilled a

three from the wing. Florida State scored to cut the lead back to two, but sophomore guard Damari Monsanto responded with a highlight-reel play. Monsanto dribbled the ball all the way up the floor with pace, looking a little out of control. He attacked the rim and sucked in the defense, before dropping off a smooth wrap-around pass to big man Dallas Walton, who slammed home a two-handed dunk.

After another FSU score, Wake led 64-60. With less than 50 seconds remaining, Monsanto caught a pass from Alondes Williams, and delivered a dagger three from the corner, directly in front of an ecstatic Wake Forest bench.

The Deacons were up 25-21 heading into halftime. Williams led the charge in the first half with 13 points but was the leading culprit in the turnover de-

partment with five. Wake Forest was fortunate to be leading considering the offensive woes. The Seminoles struggled shooting the ball before halftime, connecting on just 21% of their field goal attempts.

Junior forward Jake LaRavia was the engine to a strong start to the second half where the Deacons were able to settle into an offensive groove. The Indiana State transfer scored 14 points on 6-8 shooting in the second half, and finished the game with 18 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists.

For the second straight game, a Demon Deacon was just one assist shy of a triple-double. In the Feb. 2 win over Pittsburgh, Williams finished with 15 points, 10 rebounds, and nine assists.

See Basketball, Page 12

Basketball: MBB grabs crucial victory

Continued from Page 11

Against FSU, Williams finished with 23 points, eight rebounds and four assists.

"We need Alondes and Jake to play really well on the road, and they were outstanding today," Forbes said. "They were the two best players on the court."

Mucius chipped in 10 points, while Monsanto scored nine. Despite adding just three points, Dallas Walton added five rebounds, making a larger impact that the expanded box score was able to capture.

Wake Forest outscored their opponent by 18 points in the 24 minutes that Walton played. While the game has been recognized as a great road victory for the Demon Deacons, they were fortunate to play a Seminole team that wasn't anywhere near full strength.

Forward Malik Osborne, a veteran leader and the team's third-leading scorer, underwent ankle surgery last week and is done for the season. Their fourth-leading scorer, senior guard Anthony Polite, was held out of action due to a hand injury. Seven-foot-four freshman Naheem McLeod recently had surgery on his hand. On top of all of that, starting forward John Butler injured his ankle in the first half and did not return.

"You just shake your head and wonder where these basketball demons are coming from," Hamilton said.

The Seminoles fought hard on the defensive end and found ways to generate offense in the second half. Sixth-year walk-on forward Harrison Prieto was thrust into a larger role, playing a career-high 26 minutes.

Prieto answered the call, posting a 13-point 13-rebound double-double, shattering his career highs of five and four, respectively.

Florida State has dropped four straight games after winning six in a row, including beating Duke once and Miami twice. The Demon Deacons are now winners of six of their last seven, sitting in the clear upper echelon of the conference. According to KenPom.com, Wake Forest is favored to win five of their last seven games of the regular season.

After a trip to Raleigh to take on a reeling North Carolina State team on Feb. 9, Wake Forest will host an explosive Miami team at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 12.

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Football hires two new assistants

ESSEX THAYER
Sports Editor

Following the hire of Brad Lambert as Wake Forest's new defensive coordinator, the Demon Deacons have added two additional coaches to their defensive staff — James Adams as safeties coach and Glenn Spencer as linebackers coach.

Adams, whose hire was announced on Jan. 31, is a Wake Forest alum who lettered two times for the football team as a linebacker.

"James Adams has been a successful coach at every stop in his career," Wake Forest Head Coach Dave Clawson said in a press release. "He has a passion for football, his players and Wake Forest University."

Following a year as a graduate assistant with Wake Forest and a year with Wofford, Adams served as a secondary coach at Charlotte from 2011 to 2018 as one of the founding members of the program, along with Lambert.

In 2021, Adams teamed up with Lambert again at Purdue, where the Boilermakers won nine games for the first time since 2003.

"Wake Forest is home and I am excited to be returning to Winston-Salem and working with Coach Clawson and the entire staff and our student-athletes," Adams said in the release. "It's an exciting time to be a Demon Deacon."

On Feb. 7, Wake Forest announced Spencer as the second of the two assistant hires.

"We are fortunate to get a football coach with [Spencer's] experience and pedigree to join our staff," Clawson said of the hire. "He has a long history of coaching great linebackers and will bring another veteran presence to our staff."

After beginning his coaching career with a 10-year stint at Western Georgia, having spent three years as head coach, Spencer coached the defensive side of the ball for six years at Georgia Tech and Duke.

Then, he spent the next 10 years at Oklahoma State, the final five of which were as the Cowboys' defensive coordinator. In his first year as defensive coordinator with the Cowboys, Spencer was nominated for the Broyles Award, given to the top coordinator in the nation.

In 2018, Spencer spent one year coaching with Lambert at Charlotte, before joining Florida Atlantic University as the defensive coordinator in 2019.

Prior to his hire by Wake Forest, Spencer spent the past two years as the defensive coordinator at South Florida.

"Wake Forest is a great institution, and I am proud to join Coach Clawson and the entire staff in Winston-Salem," Spencer said. "[I] look forward to competing and coaching in this premiere conference."

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WBB's losing skid extends to eight

Jewel Spear led the Demon Deacons with 27 points against Duke

ESSEX THAYER
Sports Editor

This past week, Wake Forest women's basketball stayed close to home, facing off against two "Tobacco Road" rivals — Duke and No. 24 North Carolina. Looking to put an end to a six-game losing streak, the Demon Deacons lost both matchups.

In a 19-point loss against the Tar Heels, Wake Forest was hindered by poor shooting, only hitting 32.1% of their shots from the field. Sophomore guard Jewel Spear led the Deacons in points with 13, while junior forward Niyah Becker trailed her with 11.

After the loss, Wake Forest Head Coach Jen Hoover acknowledged the struggles of the team but recognized that the season isn't over yet.

"We are one of the youngest teams in this conference and going through some growing pains, but we will continue to attack the process," Hoover said. "There is a lot of fight left in this team and we will fight."

In a tight contest with the Blue Devils, Wake Forest shot the ball much better, including a 50% rate from behind the three-point line. Spear followed up a mediocre performance with one of her best, scoring 27 points. The sophomore's scoring gave her the edge for first place in the ACC for points-per-game with 19.3 points.

To begin the first quarter against North Carolina, the Tar Heels jumped out to an early 9-2 lead with help from the free-throw line. Following a made jumper by Becker to end the run, North Carolina embarked on another scoring streak, finishing the quarter by scoring seven of the final nine points.

After trailing by 10 in the beginning of the second quarter, the Demon Deacons fell into a deeper hole, dropping behind by 16. Midway through the quarter, though, Wake Forest received a boost from senior forward Christina Morra, who scored five consecutive points. A score from freshman guard Elise Williams brought the Deacons back into the game.

North Carolina then responded with five straight points leading to the media timeout. After the break, back-to-back baskets in transition were the catalyst for an 8-0 closing run for the Tar Heels, who went into halftime leading 40-15.

In the second half, Wake Forest came out fighting, scoring nine straight points to begin the third quarter. The fight brought Wake Forest closer into the game leading into the fourth quarter, yet they still trailed by 20 — a nearly insurmountable deficit.

To begin the fourth quarter, North Carolina made the deficit fully insurmountable, beginning the quarter with a 7-0 run. For the remainder of the game, Wake Forest fought — in fact winning the quarter 19-18 — but fell to the Tar Heels 59-78.

In the first quarter against Duke, it was the Demon Deacons jumping out to an early 7-2 lead off of scores from Spear, junior forward Olivia Summiel and junior guard Kaia Harrison. With six minutes left in the quarter, Spear knocked down another jumper, maintaining a five-point lead for Wake Forest leading into a timeout. After the timeout, Duke hit a three-pointer, but Becker immediately responded with two straight buckets. Despite two made shots near the end of the quarter, an and-one from Morra right before the buzzer gave the Deacons a five-point lead at the end of the first quarter.

To open the second quarter, Williams notched her first points of the night, but scores from inside the paint shrunk the Blue Devils' deficit to one. Following a made jumper from Spear, a three-pointer from Duke tied the game. On their next possession, the Blue Devils secured their first lead of the game.

But Wake Forest did not back down. After another score from Spear, Williams and junior guard Alexandria Scruggs both hit three-pointers to extend the Deacons' lead back to six. Duke did not back down either, embarking on an 8-0 run to reclaim the lead. After a made shot from Wake Forest and four free throws from the Blue Devils, Duke owned a 36-32 lead at halftime.

Coming out of halftime, Harrison immediately closed the Duke deficit to one with an and-one drive. Along with several scores from Duke, back-to-back three-pointers from Summiel evened the score at 43. Summiel knocked down a third three-pointer shortly after. Several traded scoring possessions kept the score close throughout the entire quarter, yet Summiel and Spear's persistence allowed Wake Forest to enter the final quarter leading by one.

To begin the fourth quarter, Duke opened up to a four-point lead, but back-to-back buckets from the Deacons evened the score. In response, Duke went 3-4 on their next possessions, extending their lead back to four. Despite an attempted Wake Forest response, Duke hit their free-throws down the stretch, allowing them to pull out an 81-76 victory.

Now on an eight-game losing streak, the Demon Deacons stand at 13th in the ACC with a 2-10 record in conference. The team will look to end the skid on Thursday at Clemson.

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Photo courtesy of Wake Forest Athletics
Sophomore guard Jewel Spear leads the ACC with 19.3 points-per-game.

CHRISTINA DENOVIO

Sports Editor

A sophomore on the Wake Forest Men's Tennis team, Filippo Moroni is also a part of an international squad that has been dominant this season. Originally from Valenza, Italy, Moroni traveled a long way to Winston-Salem last spring to join one of the top college tennis programs in the country. On Sunday, Wake Forest won matches against No. 7 Georgia and NC Central, continuing their strong start to the season.

With No. 10 Wake Forest currently boasting a 13-1 record, there is pressure on every player to perform so that the Demon Deacons can keep their sitting position. Moroni has proven himself as an asset to the team during the 2022 season by racking up six wins at singles with only two losses. Twice already the deciding match has come down to Moroni, and in one of those two, he was able to propel his team to a win against No. 16 Michigan. At doubles, Moroni and his partner Eduaurdo Nava are undefeated through four matches.

Christina DeNovio: Did you have a favorite tennis player growing up?

Filippo Moroni: When I was young, my favorite player was Rafael Nadal, and then I switched to Roger Federer. Now, it's still Roger.

CD: How did you choose Wake Forest?

FM: I was playing at the Junior US Open in 2018, and it was there I first spoke to the Wake Forest coach, Tony Bresky. After we spoke, nothing really happened. It's not that I wasn't interested, it's just that I wasn't focused on the idea of college. And then I went to a tournament in Greece and someone gave my number to Bresky, and then we started talking and I came to visit. They recruited me because I was good as a junior. I visited Wake Forest and Clemson in September 2019. I was talking with other other colleges, but I chose Wake Forest in the end. I'm really happy about the choice I made. If I could go back I would choose Wake Forest again.

The program is good and the coach is good.

The team is very good overall. Even if you take out the tennis stuff, the team is very close. There is no beef between us. We always spend time together, so it's actually very nice to have them around even when we're not playing. I had already known two of my teammates since we were about 13 years old. We had played tournaments together when we were younger.

CD: How was the cultural shift moving from Italy to the United States?

FM: It was actually a lot more different than I expected. First of all, the food dif-

was
ferent

— that
was a big
one. Another

thing is that in America, everything seems faster, and everything is more advanced. I would see people using iPhones and new computers. If you go to Italy the technology is sometimes pretty old. The other difference I noticed is the way that people act towards each other. It is strange because in Italy people can be mean or rude to

Filippo Moroni

Deacon "Sportlight"

try and make themselves look better. If I want to be like the cool guy and there is someone that I don't like, then I'm going to say bad things about him or act tough. I feel like in America, everything is more respectful. People know how to act better in a group of people and be more polite.

CD: What's your favorite part of being on the tennis team?

FM: The fact that I get to play is something I really like. Also, the fact that I can always count on someone. Any new student can come here with nothing and make friends. I feel like, even in the worst of situations, I know that I always have my team. If something's going on or things are hard, I always have someone that I can talk to about it because I spend most of my time with my teammates.

We have so many international guys — it's always nice to get to see how different people act in different situations. To always be with someone, it's something that I think helps, especially when your life changes because you're in a new place and you don't know the language very well. At the beginning, being by yourself, you can do stuff with someone that you can count on everyday. It's really good — it gives you help and security.

CD: Do you prefer doubles or singles?

FM: I like both of them very much. If I had to choose, probably singles because I play by myself. But doubles is very, very fun, and I actually enjoy doubles a lot.

CD: How do you prepare on match day?

FM: Right before the match, I like to be by myself. I like to be alone and I try to focus. I'll talk to the coaches and see if they know the guy that I'm playing against. Leading up to match day, I try to spend as much time with the team as possible because we help each other a lot. On the day of the match, music is something that helps me a lot. Before the match, I'm always listening to music and I just try to focus.

CD: Are there any teams on the schedule that you're especially excited about playing?

FM: The entire team in general — myself included — is excited to play Ohio State, since we lost against them in the NCAA tournament last year.

CD: What's been your favorite Wake Forest tennis memory so far?

FM: I think the clinching point the other day against Michigan when I won the match. It felt really good, especially because I lost three days earlier in Tennessee. It was the same situation — I was supposed to clinch that match and I didn't. And then to do it at home, it felt very, very good. Everyone was pretty excited. At that moment, I really saw how close we are as a group. We are actually really nice and supportive to each other.

CD: What's your favorite thing to do with your teammates outside of tennis?

FM: My favorite thing is when we go out to dinner. We have so much fun. The team is from so many different countries and there are so many cultures



Photo courtesy of Wake Forest Athletics

Moroni and the rest of the tennis team travel to play South Carolina on Thursday.

mixed together — it makes it fun. We make fun of each other in a good way. Dinner's really fun, especially when everyone can make it and everybody's together because sometimes someone has to study or is too busy. Especially the days before the big matches, we always have a team dinner in order to build up the team and to get us ready for the next day.

CD: Do you have aspirations to play professional tennis?

FM: Yes, absolutely. That's the main goal after college. I'm still far away because I still have three years to finish.

CD: What's your major? Do you know what you want to do after tennis?

FM: I'm a communications major. I'm not sure what I want to end up doing. I am pretty sure I want to stay in the tennis world. I've been playing tennis since I was four, so I actually really like tennis in general. I don't know for sure because I can say something now and it can change tomorrow. Anything can happen.

My dad always told me to study because I can get injured tomorrow and that I can't play tennis for the rest of my life. It's important to have a plan B. If everything goes as planned and I go professional, then I definitely want to stay in the tennis world.

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Learn to land the perfect internship

Getting employers to notice your value can be hard, which is why you need these tips

SOFIA BAZANT

Staff Writer

With internship application deadlines on the horizon, you may be scrambling to assemble materials and preparing for potential interviews. I am in this exact process right now and, considering my lack of finalized summer internship plans, I can't imagine being a better person than me to give advice on how to secure your dream internship!

1. Authenticity is key.

You want prospective employers to get a feel for your personality. When an application asks for your socials, they mean your authentic social media, such as Tik Tok and VSCO. Also, include your "finsta" from middle school. They are definitely tired of seeing LinkedIn pages and boring professional websites. Let them know who you truly are.

2. Say exactly what the employer wants to hear, even if it is not quite true.

Are you applying to an international company, but can't speak another language? Don't



Aine Pierre/Old Gold & Black

Aine Pierre poses with friends from her summer internship.

even worry. You took that one year of Spanish in high school, and I'm sure some words will come back to you if they ask in an interview. Maybe you are applying for a publishing position when

you don't have a passion for reading. Go to the interview prepared to discuss your favorite book you read this month — they will never know you actually read "The Great Gatsby" in high school.

3. Do not proofread your cover letter.

Busy people like us don't have time to write a new cover letter with each application. It's smart to just fill in {insert company name} each time. If you accidentally submit a cover letter with the incorrect company name in the blanks, just know that it can be a great thing, because now the employer will know you have other options, and they will race against the competition to hire you.

4. "Tell me about yourself."

This is a trick question because no one likes bragging. You must be humble and mysterious in the interview and on your resume. I suggest avoiding discussing experiences that sound extravagant even if they pertain to the position for which you are applying. Stick to talking about broad skills without providing any evidence to back up your claims. This will maintain the mystery and keep the employer curious.

5. Apply as close to the deadline as possible.

You must know that success results from being fashionably late. After all, everyone says they "save the best for last", so it is only fitting that you apply on the day of the deadline. Just when the employer thinks they won't be getting more applications, your fantastic submission will come rolling in and they will be absolutely thrilled. Plus, you wouldn't want to look desperate by applying too early.

6. You do not chase, you attract.

This is the golden rule. You are such an incredible person that you are far more valuable to them than they are to you. It's common knowledge that legitimate and reputable jobs always hunt down their future employees. They should make it clear that they really want you — even though they don't know your experience. Ultimately, know your worth and be patient. After all, "success comes to those who wait around".

The perfect internship will find you.

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International student struggles with identity

Code switching in the international student community causes internal dilemmas

YUSHUO WANG

Staff Writer

"Which do you prefer, 'Olivia' or 'Yushuo'?" a professor asked me face-to-face.

Silence. "Um..."

I should have been used to this question after filling out so many Google Forms that asked about my preferred first name. However, this time there was somebody actually looking into my eyes and asking for an answer, and it took me many seconds to respond.

Unexpectedly, I ended up going with "Olivia". I could feel self-deception engulfing me the very moment the word flowed out of my mouth. A few seconds was just too short of a time for me to ponder the question, and I hate letting people wait.

So is "Olivia" just low-hanging fruit for anyone of a different race than me, or is it an answer that actually satisfies me? And where is the place for "Yushuo", my given name? I didn't find myself really thinking about these questions and coming up with a consistent answer until writing this piece. My interpretation of the phrase "preferred name" is so unclear — I missed the chance to dig it up because of dismissing the question.

Too often, I go by "Olivia" for others' convenience, especially professors who prefer doing roll call attendance. It's not that I don't like teaching them to pronounce my Chinese name — it's just strange, and maybe the strangeness comes from within.

Imagine me sitting in a classroom, hearing the professor call everyone's name with-

out a hitch. I'm ready. Ready for an "uh" or even a full stop when it comes to mine.

"Yushou? Yuosho?"

Shall I say "yes" or correct the pronunciation? I can hear two voices debating in my mind. I end up with "Olivia" while the whole classroom is staring at me, and I'm guessing their thoughts: "What's that awkward pronunciation?"

How much I wish I could be like other students and restate my given name, correct the stress on syllables or go by a nickname. But I just can't. Even if the pronunciation sounds similar, the tone is still important: the level and oblique tones in Chinese. It is "Yùshuò" to be precise.

All of my sheepish experiences only make my given name weigh more on me. Although I used to dislike it because of the mismatch between its boyish meaning and my actual personality, I find myself passionately — even proudly — writing it down in front of my foreign friends to whom I send Chinese postcards or handicrafts. I resist changing my Gmail name to "Olivia Wang", and I often write two names on homework assignments.

These actions do not stem from wanting to show off that I have two names. Instead, it goes back to where I'm from and who I am.



Photo courtesy of Yushuo Wang

Wang is an international student from China at Wake Forest University and frequently shares about her life in the Old Gold & Black.

Like many other Chinese kids, I received my given name from my grandma sitting on a stool — wearing her reading glasses — flipping through a thick Chinese dictionary and searching for a word to define me. The second character of my 3-word-name stayed the same as my elder cousins.

As I become an adult, I feel myself comparing my given name to others' names less and less. I know how my name was bestowed upon me from an older generation, how thrilled and delighted they were when they got the chance to delineate a bright future for a new child.

Does all of this mean that I don't like "Olivia"? Absolutely not! I like people greeting me warmly and loudly saying, "Hey, Olivia! How are you doing?", but I'm just not familiar with my English name like I am with my given name.

Now, I'm kind of thankful to those Google Forms. It is out of respect, not tradition, to ask others' preferred first names and pronouns. In my way, the word "preferred" means mutual understanding, and there's always a lot we can learn from each other. For me, "preferred" allows me to represent myself in class or friend circles but also to hold back and let others have the floor.

Perhaps this is why I go by "Olivia" and like people who feel comfortable pronouncing it. But I'll forever remember how somebody got me misty-eyed when sending me a text, "Happy birthday Yushuo!!!!" That's a lump of sugar.

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Mitski's "Laurel Hell" explores fame and relationships

Mitski returns to release her sixth studio album, which covers the difficulties of life

ALEXANDRA KARLINCHAK
Senior Writer

On Feb. 4, Mitski released “Laurel Hell”, her sixth — and potentially final — studio album. Her goal for the album was simple: to make meaningful music that served as an honest depiction of who she is.

With a runtime of only 32:25 minutes, the album explores the intricacies of different types of relationships. There is a fair share of upbeat heartbreak songs on the album, but a number of songs explore the relationship between both Mitski and her fanbase and between Mitski and herself.

The opening track, “Valentine, Texas”, starts slowly with the opening lyrics: “Let’s step carefully into the dark/Once we’re in, I’ll remember my way around.”

This likely refers to Mitski and her relationship with this album, as she announced in 2019 that she was finished playing music indefinitely. The lyric could also refer to someone returning to an old lover and learning to love them again.

This track then bleeds into “Working for the Knife”. I think this song refers to the selling of

her privacy and the world in which Mitski must exist in order to make music — she has painfully mixed feelings about her career.

“Stay Soft” is a synthy, electronic and almost ethereal piece that, according to Mitski, was originally meant to be a grungy rock song that is “about hurt people finding each other and using sex to make sense of their pain.”

“Everyone” explores Mitski’s rise to fame through metaphors and repetitive diction.

“I didn’t know what it would take/I didn’t know what it would take,” Mitski sings quietly. Both sentences are meant to be interpreted differently, one says she didn’t know what it would take to succeed as an artist and the other says she didn’t know what things, experiences and people being an artist would take from her.

The next track, “Heat Lightning”, is a direct reference to Mitski’s insomnia and winding anxieties. The lyrics about feeling powerless over an incoming storm combined with the lulling melody remind me of a self-soothing mantra I use when I feel an oncoming panic attack. Noticing a feeling and accepting that you will feel it is strong — perhaps even stronger than trying to fight it off.

The upbeat, synthed-out nature of “The Only Heartbreaker” and “Love Me More” is comparable to that of the infamous 1980s hit “I Ran (So Far Away)”. Both songs complement each other, as they are both about relationships that are inter-nally dissatisfying.

In “The Only Heartbreaker”, Mitski begs her partner to mess up, so she can finally feel like the good guy. In “Love Me More”, she asks her partner to fill her up with love and drown her out. In other words, Mitski feels so empty that she romanticizes the idea of others giving her enough attention to make her happy, though she knows this is both unhealthy and impossible.

Following those two cheery-sounding yet depression-inducing songs is a fully depressing song: “There’s Nothing Left Here for You”. Thanks, Mitski! Its beautiful crescendo refers to all the love and time Mitski drained from herself, either for a partner or for the music industry as a whole.

“Nothing Left Here for You” is followed by another heartbreaking yet upbeat dance number titled “Should’ve Been Me”, a song in which Mitski states that her former partner is now dating a woman who resembles Mitski. She expresses pity for her former partner, hoping this new

woman holds all the good qualities but none of the emotionally unavailable tendencies Mitski herself exhibits.

In “I Guess”, Mitski sings only two verses: “I’ll have to learn to be somebody else/It’s been you and me since before I was me/Without you, I don’t yet know quite how to live.” In the following verse, she expresses that she is grateful for the sense of introspection this breakup gave her and expresses gratitude for her ex-partner.

“That’s Our Lamp” depicts the beginning of the end of a relationship in which the partners love, but do not like each other any longer. It is a bittersweet song, as Mitski reflects on the joyous parts of the relationship while feeling the deep pang of sadness informing her that the joy has dried up.

Whether this is her final studio album or whether she chooses to work under the knife is still unknown. All that is certain is that Mitski has changed the course of the indie rock industry forever. With Pitchfork rating “Laurel Hell” a 7.8, there is no doubt that this will be one of her best-performing albums to date.

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Directors show promise in debut works

Short films play a large role in the career of directors

OLIVIA FONDIE
Staff Writer

Short films are often forgotten, yet they are an art-filled format. Short films may feel too brief to be taken seriously, but they often pack more of a punch than many feature-length films.

Because they are not weighed down by corporate studio pressures to maximize audience reach and profit, short films allow directors to take more experimental liberties and freely express their personal vision.

Many well-known directors — like Sofia Coppola, Tim Burton and Wes Anderson — started by creating short films and submitting them to film festivals such as Sundance and Tribeca. I wanted to share with you some of the most disorienting, riotous and existential-crisis-inducing short films I have ever seen. You may not have heard of any of them, but if you give them a chance, I can assure you that they will leave you feeling stimulated, surprised and oh-so glad you experienced them.

Coppola, known for “The Virgin Suicides”, “The Bling Ring” and for being the only daughter of critically acclaimed director Francis Ford Coppola, has made a name for herself as a successful director. Yes, nepotism may have played a role in young Coppola’s success, but she has demonstrated her unique filmmaking style through her first-ever film: “Lick the Star”.

Burton is a filmmaker known for his distinctive gothic animation style and live-action films such as “The Nightmare Before Christmas” and “Beetlejuice”. You may have heard of the 2012 animated film “Frankenweenie”, but did you know it started out as one of Burton’s debut films in 1984? With actors such as Shelley Duval and Daniel Stern — as well as a distinctive black-and-white-coloration — this short film is a blueprint of Burton’s future success.

The film follows a young boy whose dog recently died. Frankenstein has the brilliant idea to try and bring his dead dog back to life. Little does he know that this will trigger mayhem in his small, suburban town. This short film was originally commissioned by Disney, but they later removed themselves from the project due to Burton’s eerie and not-so-child-friendly content and style. After Burton worked on successful ‘PG’ projects such as “Pee-Wee Herman’s Big Adventure” and “Beetlejuice”, Disney allowed his initial short film to be shown on the “Nightmare Before Christmas” DVD in 1992.

Anderson is another filmmaker with a very distinctive style that embraces symmetrical and pastel-clad cinematography. Anderson is best known

for films such as “Moonrise Kingdom” and “Fantastic Mr. Fox”. Anderson, like many filmmakers, casts the same actors in many of his films. Anderson and Owen Wilson — one of his frequently employed actors — met in a playwriting class in college. The pair actually banded together to write and create Anderson’s first-ever short film: “Bottle Rocket” (1994), which later became a feature-length film in 1996. The film, like others I have mentioned, is rendered in black-and-white, evokes feelings of nostalgia and simplicity while simultaneously drawing focus to the characters and plot. The story centers on two friends who are plotting a crime spree. The stars of this film are not unfamiliar to many Anderson fans: Wilson, as aforementioned, and the actor Luke Wilson. This film, unlike other Anderson films, is driven mainly by dialogue. There are a few close-ups, some dramatic shots and a jazzy soundtrack, but the quintessential Anderson style and color are absent. The film was submitted to Sundance, but it did not win any awards. Regardless of this defeat, Anderson’s career was launched after this film was released as a feature film in 1996.

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Photo courtesy of IMDb

Shot on 16-millimeter film, Coppola’s debut, “Lick the Star” captures the nostalgia of the 90s as well as preteen suburban life.

THE HOT LIST

TOP 10 ARTICLES OF CLOTHING

1. Socks
2. Top hat
3. Scarf
4. Pantyhose
5. Legwarmers
6. Overalls
7. Pants
8. Pajamas
9. Mittens
10. Crop top

Finding adventure in first trip to New York

Getting to New York City leaves behind lasting memories

ADAM COIL
Life Editor

I'm way behind on schoolwork, there's a fertilizer plant on fire a mile-or-so away, I can't go home, I'm sort of getting a headache when I walk around outside, people are saying the biggest explosion in U.S history might be imminent, texts are flying all over the place contradicting each other and I'm exhausted. What should I do?

I should go to New York City. Better yet, I should take the cheapest train I can find and leave in the middle of the night. And I should do this on a whim despite never having been to the city before.

Ishan and Shaila took me to the train station, a bus stop which really wasn't a bus stop — it was more of a parking lot behind a Denny's with a curb to sit on. As it turned out, I had purchased a bus ticket, not a train ticket. I was waiting with the other passengers, and there were only four or five people so I was feeling pretty good about my prospects of finding an empty seat and falling asleep. I started to feel a little less optimistic when the guy sitting next to me picked up a stray can of coke in the parking lot, drank it and urinated in front of us all at once.

The bus driver did not speak English, but he did scan my ticket and he put

my bag away, so he was alright with me. When I stepped onto the bus, my suspicion that seating was limited was confirmed when a lady in front of me yelled, "So where the **** is we 'posed to sit at?" Luckily for me, though, a middle-aged Indian lady scooted over and tapped the seat beside her just in time.

It was her first time going to New York as well.

It was nearly 3 a.m. and I was finally heading to New York — or at least I thought I was until the bus driver dug out a big, silver tool from under his seat and started making a racket outside towards the back of the bus. At this point, I wasn't even sure the bus was going to move again.

The night would continue to be plagued by these setbacks. The bus driver would have to scribble away on his notepad for five minutes. Another driver would come onto our bus, try on a coat and leave without saying a word. We would stop for gas or pick up other weary travelers. We would have to pull over on the freeway so that repairs could be made again and, at one point, our driver would even leave us and be swiftly replaced by another.

The cast of passengers was pretty interesting as well. Upfront, there was a woman in the ninth month of

her pregnancy — if not already in labor — laying with her head hanging over into the aisle and her feet on the window. To my left, across the aisle, was a bald man who also didn't speak English, but he smiled at me as he ate raw hotdogs from a little, plastic box next to him. Directly behind me, there was a gigantic man who woke up every 30 minutes or so, moaned into my ear and fell back asleep like clockwork. A few seats in front of me sat a man wearing what I could best describe as a pirate's costume, blasting a YouTube video with three likes (of which he was one) on a portable speaker. I guess he figured that we were all interested in the topic as well.

Now, I don't want to get sentimental or anything in this article, but I did have one nice moment in the middle of my trip around 5 a.m. or so. I was standing in the cold, waiting for the bus to get refueled when I saw standing next to me a kid who couldn't have been older than 14. He was all alone. I could tell he was a little scared — and I think he could tell that I was a little scared — so we looked at each other for a moment and gave each other a slight nod before returning our gazes to the concrete below us. Maybe we weren't as alone as we thought.

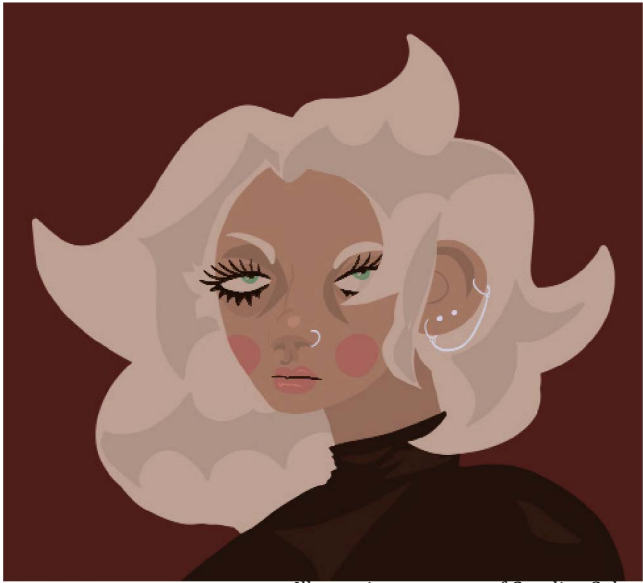
Eventually, we got back on the bus that was filled with smoke — thanks

to the bus driver, pretty much all of the passengers and the fact that there was no AC and the windows did not roll down — and we were beginning to drive away when an uproar from the passengers in the back arose. There was a lady still inside the gas station and her baby was on the bus. This incited what must have been the world record for the most times starting and stopping a bus in 5 minutes, as the bus driver and many of the passengers yelled at each other in different languages. Somebody from the back had to forcibly stop the driver from leaving. The driver wasn't bluffing either; we all watched him leave two people behind at a Krispy Kreme in Virginia just a couple of hours before.

Well, eventually I made it, and Brody picked me up somewhere in Chinatown. A lot more happened over the weekend which I can't get into right now because I don't have the space for the words nor the money for the defamation lawsuit. If you're under the impression that I had to leave a lot out of this story, you're right, and I wish I could tell you more. Since I can't, though, I'll tell you one last thing: take the train!

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CAROLINE SUBER
Artist Spotlight

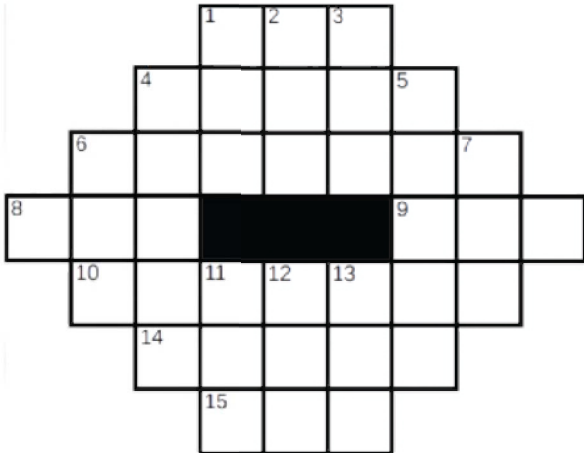


Illustrations courtesy of Caroline Suber

I love art for three reasons: I have a complete creative license, it allows me to visually express ideas and emotions and it helps me understand the world. Sometimes I see something and think, "I could draw that." I can also interpret things that happen to me visually in order to get some sort of understanding about my life. I also think that good art can act as a mirror for anyone who looks at it — many of you have probably been ridiculously bored with a conversation or felt pretty in a certain outfit.

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ADAM COIL
Life Editor



- Down:**
- 1. Choose
 - 2. Toliver or Quixote
 - 3. Before; to a poet
 - 4. Silicon, Sulfur, Platinum
 - 5. Tom Sawyer author with a killer mustache
 - 6. What a flare gun or smoke signals might mean
 - 7. Tok?
 - 11. A country that borders Argentina and Brazil; abbr.
 - 12. Sin over cos
 - 13. His ____ levels are over 9,000!
- Across:**
- 1. To joy or to a nightingale
 - 4. Old, like a friend of Gatsby's
 - 6. You might say this to your dog named after the father of gravity
 - 8. You accept these without reading them
 - 9. Like an archer
 - 10. Traveling companion, in Russian (1957)
 - 14. choo-choo, e.g.
 - 15. They lost to Wake Forest 98-76 last month