

Campus Times



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Ceasefire and Divestment Resolution Passes SA

BY MAYA BROSNICK
NEWS EDITOR
BY JUSTIN O'CONNOR
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The SA Senate passed a resolution calling for the University's Ethical Investment Advisory Committee (EIAC) to advocate for UR to end all investments in "war, violence, and occupation" and for the administration to publish a statement "explicitly recognizing the need" for an immediate, permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

"This bill does not only affect the violence in Gaza right now," EIAC Student Representative Wilson Peng said of the resolution. "It also affects genocides across the world, such as the ones occurring in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, Sudan. So it doesn't target anyone specifically."

The measure, sponsored by senior SA Senator Jacob Edwards, passed with 14 yeas and one abstention — abstentions count as "no" votes under SA rules. It was endorsed by 36 organizations, SA President Daniel Pyskaty and Vice President Elijah Bader-Gregory, and Peng.

Senate meetings in the Gowen Room are always open to the public, but attendance typically is scant. April 1 was different, with more than 30 students attending to voice their support.

Students shared personal stories of their relatives' experiences in Palestine and their own experiences as Jewish and Palestinian students, all with the goal of convincing the Senate to pass the res-

olution. One student read a poem by Palestinian poet Hanan Mikha'il Ashrawi entitled "From the Diary of an Almost-Four-Year-Old" that tells the story of a young child whose eye was shot out by a soldier.

Student speakers emphasized their beliefs that SA has the power and responsibility to put pressure on the University to act in accordance with student goals.

After the students in the gallery expressed support for the resolution, Pyskaty expressed his own support.

"My pen's ready to sign this once you all pass it," Pyskaty said. "I really hope that tonight you do. And I think that this is a really powerful statement that we can say the student body as a whole agrees with this and that the University should actually be taking these voices seriously."

SA Senate Speaker Caro Naranjo and Bader-Gregory agreed with Pyskaty.

"If you abstain, you say no to what this statement means at its core and what this resolution calls for," Bader-Gregory said.

Then, in an unusual move, the Senate asked everyone outside of the student government to leave the room after the students in the gallery finished speaking. They entered what is called "executive session," under which senators must clear non-SA members from the gallery, must stop all recordings and note-taking, and are forbidden from discussing deliberations that took place during the session.



CHARLIE LU / PHOTO EDITOR

"This is simply to ensure anonymity, and it will give student government officials the time to debate this in the space that they need to be able to feel comfortable debating this," said SA Senator Jacob Edwards, the resolution's sponsor.

Over the past ten years, executive sessions have exclusively been used to discuss appointments and personal matters, according to the SA Senate's meeting minutes and several former SA members. In this case, however, an executive session was used to deliberate and vote on a resolution, meaning that, aside from a tally, there is no record of how senators voted or why senators chose their votes.

"The voting part has been and is meant to be public in order to ensure transparency for the constituents," former SA President Sabeet Kazmi '23 told the Campus Times.

The SA Senate also did not enter the executive session properly. While their policies require a two-thirds vote of all senators, they motioned

to enter the session, did not vote, and then asked people to leave the room.

Supporters congregated outside the Gowen Room doors during the deliberations, before erupting into cheers after Edwards told them it passed.

The future impact of the resolution lies in the hands of the EIAC, UR's Investment Office, and the Board of Trustees Investment Committee. The latter two oversee the investment of the endowment, while the former advises them on ethical matters.

Peng, who is on the committee, said he intends to make the resolution's directive a priority.

"I will be here over the summer full time," he said. "So during the meetings over the summer, I will continue to advocate for this enormous issue."

Brosnick is a member of the Class of 2027.

O'Connor is a member of the Class of 2024.

SageFest's Total Pre-clipse

BY SHERENE YANG
OPINIONS EDITOR

April 5 marked the 14th annual SageFest, an event organized by the Sage Art Center, UR's studio arts building, and filled with themed activities and entertainment. This year's event, titled "Total Preclipse of the Sage," was themed around the total solar eclipse and included t-shirt printing, cyanotype making, cookie decorating, and so much more.

The reception located in the ASIS Gallery included art pieces from Studio Arts classes. It was only fitting to start an art festival with self-expressive works by talented students working in different mediums.

SageFest offered a variety of activities — a photo booth, zine-making, an eclipse silhouette onto which you trace your friend's outline, t-shirt printing, cyanotype photography, cookie decorating, and a time capsule for the future 2144 Rochester eclipse. As I wandered around, I saw bountiful colors scattered around the building with groups of friends making zines or pairs chatting while decorating cookies with "Today's Top Hits" playing in the background.

My very favorite activity was the cyanotype photography: a cameraless way to produce photos where you lay objects on top of a special fabric and allow chemical reactions to occur under UV light.

SEE **SAGEFEST** PAGE 2

Panel Clears the Air on Cannabis Topics

BY PAIGE MCCURDY
STAFF WRITER

So, what's going on with weed? The Alcohol and Other Drug Education Program (AOD) hosted a cannabis Q&A panel on Friday to help clear the air.

The panel covered a large variety of topics, including the idea of changing cannabis from a Schedule 1 drug, serving sizes, whether cannabis is a gateway drug, the history that influenced contemporary perceptions of cannabis, and more. The AOD brought together experts from across the University, including

a substance use specialist, biochemist, lawyer, and a UR policy representative.

The panel discussion was broadcast to five students in Sloan Auditorium. Two sheet pizzas and many canned sodas sat largely untouched throughout the event. Only two students sat through the entire event. Three left after only 15 minutes.

The panel discussed the struggle behind finding accurate information on the effects of different cannabis products.

"We are a little bit in the wild west, and there's a lot of anecdotal information,"

Dr. Harold C Smith, a UCC substance use specialist, told the audience. "Since we're all unique people interacting with drugs that are affecting various parts of our body, we may or may not all have the same response to the same product. It is something to keep in mind when weighing the validity of information you might find online."

Dr. Riley Kirk, a cannabis research scientist and co-founder of the nonprofit organization Network of Applied Pharmacy, emphasized that descriptions of how particular products

affect the user are not entirely reliable. "You're kind of in a unique place because as a consumer your own system is so unique and going to interact with this complex medicine in a slightly different way than a lot of other people. So being able to just read something on the internet and be like 'that is exactly the right product for me' without trying it, that's going to be a little difficult."

Dr. Kirk recommends comparing academic research to what is being said in the industry to get a balanced look. However, cannabis is still a Schedule I

drug, meaning the government considers it to "have the highest risk of abuse," severely limiting cannabis-related research opportunities in the U.S.

"For a long time, to do federally sanctioned plant-touching research, you could only get cannabis from one source," Mathew Swinburne, the associate director for the Network for Public Health Law's Eastern Region, told the panel. "That source did not produce cannabis that reflects the cannabis we see in the dispensaries or on the street."

SEE **CANNABIS** PAGE 2

INSIDE THIS CT

CAMPAIGN FUNDING

PAGE 3 CAMPUS

AI EDUCATION

PAGE 4 OPINIONS

SUPER MARIO BLERZ

PAGE 6 CULTURE

DONUT-SHAPED EARTH

PAGE 8 HUMOR

CAMPUS

CANNABIS FROM PAGE 1

Cannabis is still federally illegal, adding barriers to research at facilities reliant on federal grants. Smith explained that at URMC, federal grants make a large portion of all grant money, so someone doing cannabis research could run the risk of everyone losing those funds. Cannabis' legal status also helps to perpetuate negative stigmas associated with the drug, Smith said.

'Cannabis' legal status also helps to perpetuate negative stigmas associated with the drug.'

"Imagine sitting at a Biochemistry faculty luncheon where you're talking about the department process, and Dr. Smith is working on THC. First thing they wonder is whether I'm high," Smith told the au-

dience. "There's no serious attitude towards cannabis in the research community, as it was because it was considered a drug, something that dealers provided. [...] That has changed, and thank goodness that has changed because now we are getting really more solid data from research."

The panel moved onto discuss whether cannabis hurts or helps anxiety.

"Well, cannabis does help in small doses, to kind of help relieve your anxiety. But the longer you're using it, the more you're using it, it becomes a more reverse effect, it impacts your anxiety," Sampson said. "Now with CBD, that does not [increase anxiety]. You actually still have a positive effect."

This leads to the issue of when someone should take

'This leads to the issue of when someone should take a tolerance break.'

a tolerance break, a period of time where someone takes a break from cannabis.

"I think when your daily habits have changed, you're starting to turn for the worse and having negative impacts. [...] It's a challenge to say that you're going to take a break and what does it look like," Sampson explained. "And you're going to do at least for 21 days, that is something that you have to take time and get the support that you need. You're definitely more than welcome to come to UCC."

'You're definitely more than welcome to come to UCC.'

A recording of the panel will be available on the AOD Education Program website for those unable to attend.

McCurdy is a member of the Class of 2025.

SAGEFEST FROM PAGE 1

The unexposed parts of the fabric under the objects turn white while allowing chemical reactions to occur in the exposed areas, turning the parts blue. What's even cooler is that the shadow that the light casts on the objects allows for an in-between shade of blue to form. The process of cyanotype photography was extremely intriguing and connected photography, science, and creativity all into one. Plus, the idea of creating images without a camera is such a fascinating idea.

While walking around, I asked a few people about their SageFest experiences and many around me shared the same sentiment: "I love it a lot. I think there's a lot of creativity happening," sophomore Nancy Fan said. Fan went to SageFest with a group of friends and participated in t-shirt printing and cyanotype photography. When asked about the eclipse, she showed great excitement, adding: "We're going to celebrate by maybe having a little

picnic outside."

It was also super cool to watch the t-shirt printing process. T-shirt printing is done in many forms, with the one during SageFest being screen printing, where you put the t-shirt over the platen at the base of the printing press, pull down the press head with the design stencil screen, and use a wooden squeegee to push the ink around. And when you pull up the press head, voila, the design is on the shirt. You then leave the shirt to dry and iron it to make sure the ink sets into the fabric. At the end, you get to take home a limited edition t-shirt.

SageFest also offered workshops, including a performance workshop led by the digital lab and an Arabic embroidery workshop. These activities gave room for collaboration and getting to know others, promoted a friendly environment, fostered creativity, and most importantly, got people excited about the total eclipse.

Yang is a member of the Class of 2026.

Spies With Occult Ties? Russian Professor Stirs Controversy

BY AENEAS WOLF
SPORTS EDITOR

Visiting Assistant Professor Dmitry Bykov made controversial claims concerning purported occultism amongst Russian secret service members during his April 2 talk that perturbed various professors present.

Bykov is the first speaker of UR's "Scholars in Exile" program, which hosts academics and intellectuals driven from their home countries due to political persecution. Bykov is a man who wears many hats; his profile on UR's website calls him a "journalist, biographer, public intellectual, novelist, poet, media personality, [and] professor of literature." Before teaching at UR, Bykov held teaching positions at Moscow State University, UCLA, and Princeton.

'Bykov is the first speaker of UR's 'Scholars in Exile' program.'

His page on UR's website also explains why he is teaching in the United States and not in his native Russia.

"In April 2019, as the result of his outspoken criticism of the Putin regime, Bykov was poisoned by the same Russian FSB operatives who a year later poisoned political opposition leader Alexei Navalny," the website reads. He was exiled from the country

in 2022.

"Being exiled in Russia is like winning a Pulitzer or Nobel Prize," he said. "It means you're a good writer."

To Bykov, the so-called "deep state" is a secret network of individuals who make important governmental decisions outside the public view. The members of Bykov's supposed Russian deep state include the secret police, who have worked under various names throughout the history of Russia.

In his talk, Bykov claimed the Russian deep state traced back 700 years to the origin of that secret police, which he said presided over Moscow while terrorizing political dissidents. This secret police had direct control of the government and used its power to keep tabs on Moscow's populace and terrorize political dissidents, according to Bykov.

Associate Professor Matthew Lenoe of the University's History Department felt that Bykov lacked evidence to substantiate his bold claims and was imprecise in his use of language, such as the term "occult." He believed he saw inconsistencies with Bykov's theory, as such secret police could not have existed in fourteenth-century Moscow, which, in Lenoe's words, "was a tiny principality without a government bureaucracy, much less a secret police."

Per his University profile, Lenoe has a PhD in Russian History from the University of Chicago and has taught at UR since 2006. Lenoe has published books on Stalin-era Russian history in both the Harvard and Yale University Presses.

Bykov also claimed that Ivan the Terrible employed special operatives, called "oprichnina," to surveil and torture potential political threats. Moreover, he claimed that these secret service members were also active occultists who believed in magic and attempted to conduct paranormal rituals. In contrast, Lenoe asserted that the "oprichnina" were not secret agents and magicians, but instead were fanatical warriors who swore blind loyalty to Ivan and openly pillaged the homes of noblemen whom Ivan suspected were traitorous.

In a subsequent interview, Bykov posited that high-ranking Russian officials, up to and including Vladimir Putin, subscribe to satanic ideals idealizing human suffering and hatred. Bykov went as far as to say the use of torture by clandestine Russian agencies is part of a greater agenda meant to promote suffering, which Bykov called "the natural state of the Russian citizen."

Wolf is a member of the Class of 2027.

Off Broadway on Campus' 'Back in the Game' Sends off Their Seniors

BY BONES JACQUES
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Off Broadway On Campus (OBOC) had its semesterly show titled "Back In The Game" April 5. While the overarching themes of the show (loud, fun, confident) were prevalent through much of the night, there were also moments of heartfelt connection and genuine love between the cast members.

The night featured numbers from an assortment of musicals such as "Love in Hate Nation," "Groundhog Day," "Rent," and many others. Of the show's various solos, some personal highlights included junior Luna Trumble in "Facade" from "Jekyll & Hyde," sophomore Alex Holly (who is a culture editor for the Campus Times) in "What I was Born to Do" from "Bring It On: The Musical," senior Jenny McIntosh in "Your Fault/Last Midnight" from "Into the Woods," along with many other talented voices.

My personal favorite number of the night was a duet by seniors Kerri Golden and Kyle Kristoff — "Suddenly Seymour" from "Little Shop of Horrors." Junior Samantha Tong said she was most excited for the audience

to see "What I Was Born To Do" from "Bring It On: The Musical." The number featured a whole cheer squad, and the cast seemed just as excited to perform as the audience was to listen.

The senior song of the semester, performed by four of the group's graduating seniors, was a heartfelt rendition of "Requiem" from "Dear Evan Hansen" that brought tears to my eyes. The song marked the end of senior OBOC President Kerri Golden's last show. Golden, who is off to grad school at the University of North Carolina in the fall, says that while she will miss the club, the people, and all the laughs that they shared, she's glad to be done with midnight rehearsals for now.

However, OBOC is in good hands. The incoming president of the club, junior Samantha Tong, is not only a talented performer but a student who is passionate about both STEM and the performing arts.

"I'm as prepared as I can possibly be," Tong said. "No one is ever fully 100% prepared, and I guess that's what I'm nervous about."

Jacques is a member of the Class of 2027.

COMMUNITY

Taking A Closer Look At Campaign Funding

BY NARM NATHAN
DATA EDITOR

With the 2024 presidential campaign underway, polling and delegate counts prove formidable ways of understanding where candidates are in their journey to the White House. Outside of traditional polling, funding receipts allow us to look at how candidates are faring financially, offering another angle into the level of support their campaigns receive. Candidates are required to submit their financial dealings to the Federal Election Commission (FEC), where relevant data regarding campaign funds are publicly available and routinely updated.

See Figure 1

By analyzing the distribution of funds raised, we can gain better insight into the characteristics of Joe Biden and Donald Trump's campaigns.

'Funding receipts allow us to look at how candidates are faring financially.'

Financial summaries provided by the FEC characterize the data in three major

categories: total contributions, transfers from other authorized committees, and total offsets to expenditures. Total contributions include the total amount of money donated to the campaign through individuals, committees, and other sources of funds. Transfers from other authorized committees and total contributions share the same sources; however, any funds raised from these authorized committees are funneled through to the overarching campaign. The nature of the first two categories are relatively similar in contrast with the total offsets to expenditures, which include refunds, rebates, or other payouts that diminish the total funds in a campaign's war chest.

See Figure 2

Looking at the financial distribution of the Biden campaign, it is immediately obvious that transfers from other authorized committees make up about two-thirds of the total allocated funds — and by filtering through the individual receipts, it becomes clear that a majority of these are donations to the Biden Victory Fund, a joint fundraising committee authorized by both the Democratic Party and the campaign itself. In

fact, much of the individual contributions within the distribution stem from fundraising. The itemized receipts under total individual contributions reveal a sea of donations from ActBlue, a political action committee tasked with fundraising the primary and general elections of Democratic and left-leaning candidates.

'In fact, much of the individual contributions within the distribution stem from fundraising.'

Compare this with Trump's finances, then, and the picture becomes incredibly different.

Few of the funds for the Republican candidate come from direct individual contributions. Instead, transfers from a far-reaching conglomerate of personal donations to the campaign through Trump's own fundraising efforts dominate his fundraising. Ninety-five percent of the campaign's funds come from the pockets of Americans across the country rather than political action committees (PACs). Though Biden has more funds than Trump, Trump is significantly outpacing Biden in small-dollar donations. Not included in this

data, however, are the vast legal fees the former president may have to pay out as a result of his ongoing criminal investigations. Outside of his eligibility to run for the presidency, this also provides interesting commentary as to the viability of the campaign going forward, an otherwise hotly debated topic currently. These financial summaries, then, provide an additional angle into the lens of who will win such a highly pivotal election.

With both candidates benefiting greatly from fundraising efforts, it becomes more important to analyze the distribution of these contributions in order to deduce the true source of these funds. Where super-PACs and major donations convolute the nature of a campaign's funding, small-dollar donations prove more valuable when gauging the support of individuals and households throughout the country.

See Figure 3

Small-dollar donations are defined by U.S. campaign finance law as contributions to any political campaign or associated committee strictly between \$1 to \$200. While the Biden campaign receives a majority of its contributions from such donations, it

is vastly overshadowed by the sheer amount of small-dollar donations contributed to the Trump campaign — with a shocking 95% of contributions being attributed as such.

'It becomes more important to analyze the distribution of these contributions in order to deduce the true source of these funds.'

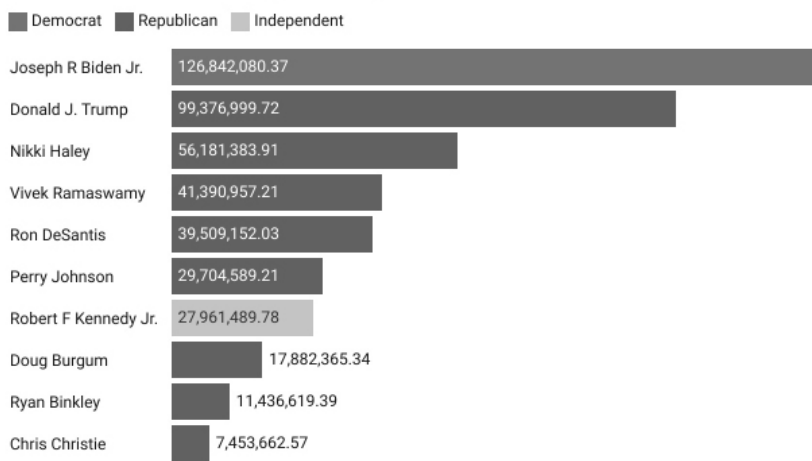
See Figure 4

As November approaches, staying updated with the state of campaign finances will become increasingly important as both candidates begin to embark on the financial strategy that will define the competition for the White House. With Trump's legal fees in the picture, it will be incredibly important to understand the disparities in funding and how they translate to campaign strategy going forward. The nature of these campaign finances, then, will be of much value as the election nears.

Nathan is a member of the Class of 2025.

FIGURE 1

Most funds raised by 2024 presidential candidates

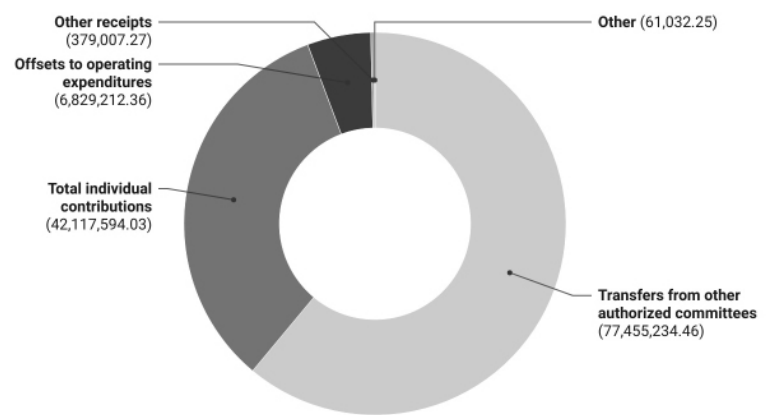


Source: Federal Election Commission - Created with Datawrapper

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

FIGURE 2

Total distribution of funds raised for Joseph R Biden Jr., 2021-2024

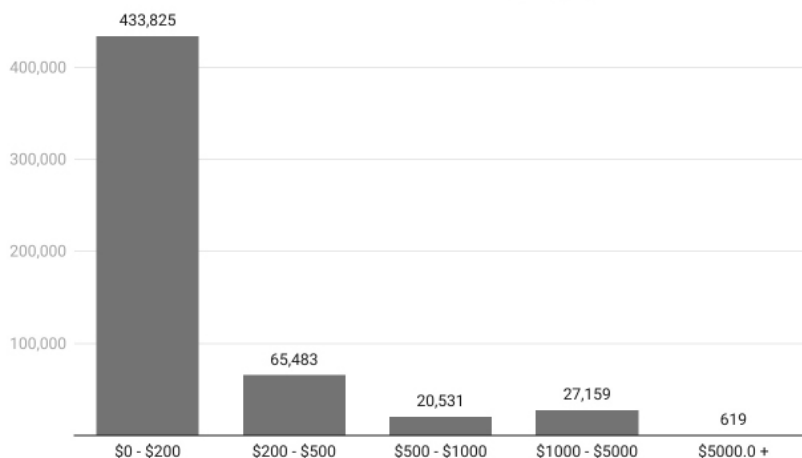


Source: Federal Election Commission - Created with Datawrapper

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

FIGURE 3

Distribution of donations to Biden campaign, 2021-2024

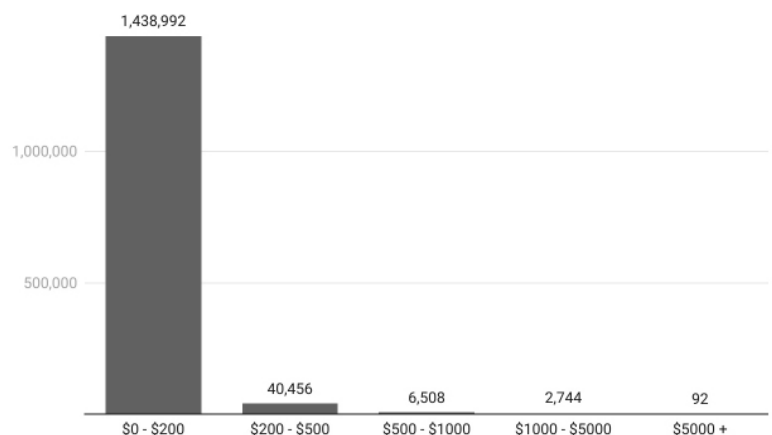


Source: Federal Election Commission - Created with Datawrapper

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

FIGURE 4

Distribution of contributions to the Trump campaign, 2021-2024



Source: Federal Election Commission - Created with Datawrapper

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

OPINIONS

EDITORIAL OBSERVER

The AI Divide: Creating a New Class System in Education

BY ELENA BACHMANN
NEWS EDITOR

Artificial intelligence is making its way into classrooms, hinting at a future where education is more personalized and dynamic. AI's ability to customize learning and provide immediate feedback could revolutionize how students learn, making education more effective and engaging.

Schools globally are starting to see the benefits of AI. For instance, adaptive learning platforms can now tailor lessons to each student's pace and style of learning, enhancing engagement and understanding. DreamBox Learning, an AI-powered math platform, has already demonstrated how such technology can improve students' abilities in problem solving.

'Schools globally are starting to see the benefits of AI.'

However, there's a notable concern emerging alongside these advancements — the AI divide, or the growing gap between those who have access to sophisticated AI tools and those who do not. A 2023 report by the Educational Data Trust found that wealthier school districts are three times more likely to have adopted AI-powered learning platforms compared to their under-resourced counterparts. We don't know what this technology will look like 10 years from now, but the current trend shuts out underfunded districts. It's in the big dog's best interest to do so, but it sucks anyways.

Let's look at an example. Online translators like Google Translate or SpanishDict are commonplace in language classes. They are free, and they work fine, but they often miss context — they translate a sentence word by word without understanding the whole meaning of the sentence. Wired found that "where Google Translate forms completely meaningless word chains, DeepL [an AI-powered translator] can at least guess a connection." Furthermore, users can edit words and sentences within the translations they are offered, choosing from AI-generated potential replacements.

The conversation around AI in education isn't just about technology; it's about

fairness and opportunity. This could impact not only their academic performance but also their future college admissions and job prospects, suggests a 2021 study by Georgetown University which found that AI skills are becoming increasingly sought after by employers.

Addressing the AI divide requires a concerted effort. Policymakers have the power to level the playing field by supporting AI accessibility in all schools, inspired by initiatives in Estonia and Finland. Ensuring transparency in AI's educational use is crucial to ensure it benefits all students equally.

Schools and educators have a role to play too. Schools and educators must train their students to use AI as a tool. They can foster partnerships to share AI resources and focus on building universally essential skills like critical thinking and digital literacy. It's hard for students to form good relationships with AI if these tools begin as forbidden in the classroom. By establishing AI as a resource rather than an unauthorized aid, educators can tap into AI's potential to revolutionize learning and level the playing field. (Still, please follow your professors' policies on AI usage. I don't encourage cheating.)

Collaboration extends even beyond educational institutions. Tech companies and community groups have roles to play as well, such as offering AI expertise and support to schools lacking resources. AI is relevant to a lot more than education.

'The conversation around AI in education isn't just about technology; it's about fairness and opportunity.'

AI in education is a dual-edged sword, with the promise of transformative learning coming alongside the risk of deepening divides. As we embrace AI's potential, we must also commit to ensuring it serves as a tool for empowerment, not exclusion, paving the way for a future where every student has the opportunity to thrive.

Bachmann is a member of the Class of 2027.

EDITORIAL BOARD

D&C Staff Deserve Fair Contract Now!

This weekend, unionized reporters and photographers at the Democrat & Chronicle, Rochester's chief local newspaper, went on strike to demand a fair contract for their essential work after far too much greedy foot-dragging during negotiations by their paper's parent company, Gannett.

We find it disgusting that journalists struggle to receive basic wage and benefits increases while Gannett CEO Mike Reed's compensation has risen 14%, totaling a whopping \$3.9 million dollars.

Reed has raked in big bucks while running a

'Local journalism is essential for combating corruption, keeping malicious powerful interests at bay, and for building a shared sense of community through storytelling and awareness-raising.'

company into the ground. Gannett is gutting newsrooms across the country, including our local Democrat & Chronicle, of



KEVINHU / PHOTO EDITOR

resources and staff. The D&C only has 21 newsroom staff members, down from 86 in 2011, to report on a metropolitan area of over 1 million people — a herculean task. The few remaining reporters simply do not have enough hours in the day to cover the region.

Local journalism is essential for combating corruption, keeping malicious powerful interests at bay, and for building a shared sense of community through storytelling and awareness-raising. Continued newsroom cuts will lead to Rochesterians being left in the dark about what is happening around them — about who and what makes up their community.

Simply put, the Campus Times stands in complete solidarity with the striking

reporters at the D&C.

'We urge our fellow students to support them as well by avoiding reading the D&C for the strike's duration.'

We urge our fellow students to support them as well by avoiding reading the D&C for the strike's duration (you can read their joint strike paper at gannettunions.org/utica), donating to their strike fund (shorturl.at/ilHP8), joining a picket or two, and letting D&C and Gannett higher-ups know that you will only value their product if they value the reporters and photographers who put their blood, sweat, and tears into making it worth a damn.

This editorial is published with the consent of the majority of the Editorial Board: Justin O'Connor (Editor-in-Chief), Micah Bettenhausen (Publisher), Allie Tay, Henry Litsky, Mahnoor Raza (Managing Editors), and Sherene Yang and Helena Feng (Opinions Editors). The Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board make themselves available to the UR community's ideas and concerns. Email ct_editor@u.rochester.edu.

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Blindspots: Unconditional Aid Is Turning Israel Into a Rogue State

BY FINN ABBEY
COLUMNIST

The online version of this article (on www.campustimes.org) contains many hyperlinked sources.

Just over a month ago, President Biden announced the United States would begin airdropping food aid into Gaza. Normally reserved for troops surrounded by enemy forces or people victimized by natural disasters, the shift in American policy towards airdropping aid is emblematic of Biden's failed attempts to placate critics in his base while maintaining his deep deference to Israel. The United States, under Biden, is incapable of dictating military policy to a country that receives more than 3.5 billion dollars a year of its military aid.

Far from the "friends among nations" narrative advanced by many American institutions, the closeness between America and Israel is born of a complex web of shared military interests (hatred of Iran) and a shared love of American military contractors. Essential as well is the hope that, by providing vast sums of aid, America can curb Israel's less desirable impulses, a strategy that Biden has recently termed the "bear hug."

This has created a political environment that elevates politicians eager to fall over themselves in their support for Israel. Palestinians have had almost zero institutional leverage or say in American politics, so they are made a nonentity. Over time, as American politicians have competed to show who can be the most deferential to Israeli governmental whims, and as the young state has continued to enjoy unconditional aid, the Israeli political establishment has grown increasingly more demanding and unaware of how precarious their situation is. Far from reining in Israeli military policy, this unconditional aid has empowered a small regional power to drift further and further from international accountability.

This arrogance isn't new. For example, during the Obama administration, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu erupted at then-Secretary of State John Kerry for telling the former that he needed to acknowledge how settlements were hurting a potential peace process, shouting, "no one understands Israel but Israel." This outburst was directed towards the head diplomat of a country Israel was expecting to receive billions in aid from, in response to that diplomat asking for some basic acknowledgment of the settlements exacerbating hostilities.

For the most part, this defiance has remained a somewhat minor concern for American officials. Lobbying checks meant more than diplomatic thank you from Israeli officials ever could.

This blissful ignorance has soured since the start of Israel's war in Gaza.

As this new stage of the conflict rolls on, Israel continues to show a deep disinterest in international law or norms, bolstered by the knowledge that their primary backer is led by a man who describes his support for Israel as "unwavering." Israel has openly used starvation as a weapon of war (which is against international law), with protestors blocking key aid trucks and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant stating at the beginning of the conflict, "There will be no electricity, no food, no fuel, everything is closed. We are fighting human animals and we are acting accordingly." When an aid convoy arrived in February, Israeli soldiers murdered more than 100 seeking aid and blamed it on a crowd crush. Biden's choice to airdrop aid into Gaza, far more expensive and limited than entering through Israeli territory, is an admission of his unwillingness or inability to place even basic constraints on a supposed ally.

The Israeli military has recently received flack from the American press for drone striking seven aid workers from World Central Kitchen, just a fraction of the more than 200 aid workers killed by Israel since the start of the conflict, not to mention the more than 100 journalists killed by Israel, which confidently accuses many of them of being terrorists after the fact.

All of this is not to mention Israel's continued defiance of UN oversight, before and after Oct. 7. Israeli officials have consistently condemned even weakly worded resolutions that affirm the illegality of settlements. They've also consistently prevented the Special Rapporteur, a UN official tasked with maintaining the rights of Palestinians, from entering Israel or the occupied territories they are supposed to be monitoring.

'The world faces a real risk of wider regional conflict.'

Now, as Iran gears up for retaliation after Israel bombed several of their officials in their embassy in Damascus, Syria, and Israel threatens an incursion into Lebanon, the world faces a real risk of wider regional conflict. This is where international institutions are supposed to matter. It would be the appropriate time for the US to put its foot down and stop Israel from blowing up the entire Middle East.

Now is the time for America to take a strong stance and stop financing a regime that doesn't want to follow the rules, before those rules lose all meaning.

Abbey is a member of the class of 2025.

Misogyny and Bigotry Plague the Heavy Music Scene



JOYLU/ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

BY HANNAH RUBINSTEIN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After our No Jackets Required set during Drama House's Halloween party, I had this guy come up to me to compliment the show. He said, and I quote, "I loved how you only sang songs by men."

At first, I had no clue what he meant or if I should be flattered. I took it in an "I loved how you gender-swapped your voice" way, when it probably could have been taken in a sexist way. This experience reminded me of how men largely dominate rock, metal, and heavier genres of music, whether it be writers, instrumentalists, vocalists, producers, or even tech people doing audio engineering.

I've always known this, but it rarely crossed my mind before coming into my first semester of college. I was so excited to be able to perform my favorite songs regardless of who wrote them.

'This experience reminded me of how men largely dominate rock, metal, and heavier genres of music.'

My music taste includes a mix of music from a variety of genres, bands, and artists of all races and genders. In actuality, I do find myself listening to a lot of pop-punk, a genre with a surplus of white male artists. A lot of pop-punk bands I listen to have probably taken inspiration from bands that are composed of alleged pedophiles and sexists such as Brand New and All Time Low. As a musician myself, I've dealt with sexism from guys who've undermined my skill on the guitar without ever actually hearing

me play. Overall, I believe that punk, rock, and metal scenes are difficult to navigate for feminine-presenting people.

Whenever I find a heavier band or artist that isn't white or male-fronted, I appreciate them more. It is hard to find representation and easy to find bigotry, which makes it very hard for feminine-presenting people or people of color to feel included in heavier genres of music. T. Heavier genres like hardcore, metalcore, and punk offer refuge for artists to release their anger and emotions but in a scene broadly dominated by white men, those who deviate from the norm can find it difficult to express their criticisms of the scene without being further excluded.

White men simply don't have to search for their representation — it's handed to them on a silver platter. Though this is an obvious trend within culture and media at large, I am more focused on its role in heavier music. They don't have to think about who is writing the music they listen to because they already have that representation and support. Bands fronted by people of color, queer folk, and feminine-presenting people have always existed, but because their white, cisgender male counterparts overshadow them, they struggle to find and build a following and are often belittled for their musical skill.

Mainstream rock is still predominantly white, straight, and male-fronted, which is heavily reflected in their fanbase. Further, a lot of heavier metal bands and musicians like ManoWar, Marilyn Manson, and Burzum pushed bigotry within either their lyrics or lifestyles. Even more well-known rock/metal bands like Guns N Roses, Slayer,

Korn, Nickelback, Limp Bizkit, and the Rolling Stones have songs romanticizing sexism, gendered violence, and even racism. Often, these artists do not face any harsh repercussions due to their highly-defensive fanbases. Songs with such disturbing content are bound to alienate minority groups that are already negatively affected by said prejudices in real life.

I'm sick and tired of playing and listening to the same white man's song. I want heavier music to release the anger that so many people have about bigotry and exclusion. And I'm over playing covers from bands that are only written and fronted by straight, cisgender white men. I'm exhausted by bands with feminine-presenting vocalists being seen as the only diversity rock needs. I want people of color, LGBTQ+, and women at UR to have a place to find confidence in their musicianship and to not feel excluded from a scene because of underrepresentation.

'I'm sick and tired of playing and listening to the same white man's song.'

Music is by and for everyone, and we aren't going to portray that message if we only play rock/metal from a white male lens. It's time for people to question what they listen to, why they listen to it, and to realize how important it is to listen to and support Black, Indigenous, gay, transgender, and feminine-presenting artists because of how long they have struggled to be heard.

Rubinstein is a member of the Class of 2027.

CULTURE

Colin's Review Rundown: Beyonce, Ariana Grande, Alpha Wolf, The War on Drugs

BY COLIN JONES
COLUMNIST

Ariana Grande's 'eternal sunshine' in a not-so-spotless time.

For fans of: Mariah Carey, Beyonce

It's no secret that Ariana Grande has lost much of the public's favor recently. After becoming embroiled in a cheating scandal that positioned her as the "homewrecker," fans and haters alike were disgusted by her behavior. There's certainly a conversation to be had about how many male artists do this type of thing (or worse) all the time and receive minimal criticism, but either way, it is undeniably not a good look for Grande.

Grande's seventh studio album "eternal sunshine" didn't help alleviate these criticisms with the album's lead single, "yes, and?," a groovy piece of dance-pop that calls out people who are overly critical of her without knowing her. While this is a valid statement for a celebrity to make in general, especially given the internet's discussion of Grande's body and weight in recent years, she specifically references the cheating controversy in a

rather snide way ("Why do you care so much whose **** I ride"- the word "dick" is censored in the song), which makes a pretty fun dance song feel a bit sour if you're paying attention to the lyrics.

I wouldn't normally mention this much of an artist's personal life when giving them a brief review, but in the case of Ariana Grande, this controversy has painted a backdrop for the album's rollout and seemingly influenced the album's content as well. This is a bit of a shame, as the album itself is, for the most part, a very solid album from Grande.

If you tune out on certain

'The lyrics are undeniably the worst part of the album.'

songs, there is plenty of enjoyment to be gleaned, but whenever Grande references the cheating controversy — or her current love for her new partner from the affair — it makes the fun pop music she's known for feel toxic and unrelatable. Not every track discusses these elements, but the ones that do, namely "true story" and "the boy is mine", are generally less

enjoyable.

The album does suffer from a fair handful of forgettable songs — although given Grande's vocal talents, they're still quite easy on the ears. But it also has a nice crop of great songs; the aforementioned "yes, and?" has an infectious vocal sample and intoxicating beat. Retro-influenced cuts like "bye" and "supernatural" boast classy instrumentals and memorable hooks. Standing out as the best ballad on the record is "imperfect for you."

I honestly struggle with what to say about the rest of the music — it's just

'Despite my criticisms, I did enjoy this record.'

a good pop album. It is well-produced, well-performed, and generally enjoyable. Just keep the lyrics on the back burner.

Overall Rating: 7/10

Read the rest of the reviews at campustimes.org.

Jones is a member of the Class of 2027.

Midnight Ramblers Present "Super Mario Blerz" At Strong Auditorium Saturday

BY AENEAS WOLF
SPORTS EDITOR

One of the University's a cappella groups, the Midnight Ramblers, bid farewell to four seniors and introduced two new members at Saturday's "Super Mario Blerz" performance Saturday night.

'The show took inspiration from the "Mario" series of video games, complete with vignettes starring various Ramblers as the characters from the iconic franchise.'

The night began with an introduction to our protagonists, the brothers Mario and Luigi, at a party where Mario struggles to approach his beloved Princess Peach before she is abducted by Mario's nemesis,

Bowser.

Shortly thereafter, the Ramblers announced that they would honor their four senior members throughout the performance with tributes and solos by each graduating senior.

'They opened with Jacob Collier's "WELLLL," although the largest crowd pops were for "Toxic" by Britney Spears and "Smooth Criminal" by Michael Jackson.'

In between songs, established Ramblers introduced two newcomers, Reuben Bernstein and Anna Kim. Both Bernstein and Kim had solos during the performance, much to the delight of the crowd.

During intermission, the performers solicited fund-

ing for their upcoming album by allowing donors to vote on which song the Ramblers would perform next.

'The winning song was "Come Together."'

By far the most touching part of the night were the tributes to graduating seniors Alex Lederman, Adrian Calderon, Charlie Morse, and Noah Freedman. Ramblers exchanged kind words and shared fond memories of each senior before each of their solo swan songs.

Finally, the Ramblers concluded the night with "Kiss Him" before bidding farewell to the audience and their senior performers.

Wolf is a member of the Class of 2027.

"Late Night with the Devil": A Promising Film Tainted by AI

BY MARIAH LANSING
STAFF WRITER

"Late Night with the Devil" is a creative found-footage horror movie that originally premiered at the South by Southwest Film Festival in March 2023, now debuting to the public in theaters. Directed by Cameron and Colin Cairnes, the movie follows a documentary structure and plays into possession and ritual sacrifice tropes.

Jack Delroy, played by David Dastmalchian, is a late-night talk show host attempting to gain back ratings to save his program while grieving his wife, who died of an inexplicable cancer. Delroy decides to host a one-of-a-kind Halloween special in 1977, inviting a renowned psychic, a Vegas illusionist turned metaphysical skeptic, and a parapsychologist along with her subject — a young girl supposedly possessed by a demon she calls Mr. Wriggles.

The film's rising action shows promise as strange paranormal phenomena are caught on camera and witnessed by the live audience. Tensions are high between the guests and hosts of the show, adding to the mounting suspense. There are even hints that Delroy may be involved in a secret cult of the Hollywood elite, suggesting its role in his show's popularity.

However, in the last 15 minutes of the movie, the writing devolves into chaos. The promising subplots' points of intrigue are tied into a jumbled knot rather than a nice bow. It was clear that the writers wanted to create an ending resembling and triggering psychosis, but it was poorly executed.

The entire film is campy and cut-through with dry humor that is reminiscent of talk-show television of the 1970s, which makes it an entertaining watch despite the shaky plot. The grainy footage, lighting, and general demeanor of the actors when on "set" truly gives a nostalgic taste for a more grubby time of television chock-full of cigar smoke, shag carpet, and at times inappropriate banter.

The film's aesthetics follow themes of the 1970s and 1980s — political tensions, satanic panic, and the popularity of late-night television. The costuming and hair department truly nailed it with the 70s vibe, transporting the audience back in time. Beautifully set up and shot, the

colors and visuals of the movie make for an amazing coffee table book of still images. The found-footage setup is unique in the way that the entire movie is concentrated in one setting: the live set for the fictional "Night Owls with Jack Delroy." It's obvious that the entire cast and crew were having fun during the production.

One of the most notable and redeeming aspects of "Late Night with the Devil" is its use of practical effects, which solidified the idea that the film was set in 1977. It was gory and playful, reminiscent of early horror film effects. I was simultaneously cringing from the gore, and celebrating its cheesiness.

The largest point of contention about the film is not anything regarding the plot or filming itself, but rather the use of generative AI. The Cairnes claim their use of AI was brief, consisting of only "three still images," which are used as "interstitials" in the mock show to signify the start or end of a commercial break. However, these AI-generated images, despite claims that they were edited further, were quite obvious to any viewer who knows how to spot AI art. It is truly disappointing that three simple images could detract from a promising film so dramatically — the lack of basic detail in the AI-generated images created inconsistencies with the 70s aesthetic the film crew worked so hard to curate. Many people are upset with this use of AI because it takes away work from actual designers who have trained experience creating graphics such as the ones used in the interstitials. If we let these seemingly minimal uses of AI-generated images slide now, what will be permissible in the future? It's giving "I'm too lazy to pay a graphic artist for three slides," and many viewers are not here for it. Myself included.

While the concept of "Late Night with the Devil" showed much promise, only about 70% of the film lived up to said promise. The AI-generated art and basic plot holes took away from the overall experience and enjoyment of the movie. I wouldn't recommend spending your money on a marked-up ticket price — enjoy the film from the comfort of your own home when it is released to streaming on April 16.

Lansing is a member of the Class of 2025.



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HUMOR

Breaking News: Groundhog Finally Takes Revenge on Students!

BY ALEXANDRA LAJO LEONARDI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

We are reporting live from the scene where three students and two faculty members have gotten attacked and bitten near Susan B. Anthony Residence Hall. Everyone involved was taken into custody by Public Safety for harassing the beloved groundhog we all know and love.

However, in detainment, the students and faculty were acting a bit strangely. They seemed to be in a trance and wouldn't respond to questions asked. Instead of looking worried or concerned, they were scribbling what seemed to be math problems and equations on the walls.

The problems ranged from algebra to advanced calculus. No one could explain this phenomenon, until the groundhog was examined, and scientists found that his saliva contained a virus that made students do math nonstop. There is no cure as of now; however, URMC is working hard to come up with one as we speak.

'Scientists found that his saliva contained a virus that made students do math nonstop.'

Back to you, Rob.

Thank you, Hailey Bailey.

I am reporting live from the Medical Center where the groundhog is being further examined, and we have just gotten a live update that the groundhog can both do math problems and speak!

Apparently, the groundhog's name is Big Boy Billy, and one day when he was taking a casual stroll around campus, a wizard that looked like Harry Potter came out of nowhere and snatched him up.

'The groundhog can both do math problems and speak!'

He then put him under an invisibility blanket and brought him into Rush Rhees. He went into a secret room at the very top of Rush Rhees where he finally let him go. The room was filled with potions and old books.

According to the ground-

hog, the wizard tricked him into drinking a green potion by disguising it as a salad with fruit. Big Boy Billy's weak spot is fruit — he will do just about anything to get his hands on some fruit.

After consuming it, Big Boy Billy was brought back outside and left at peace. However, his behavior changed, and, unlike before, Big Boy Billy realized that he could understand the students and was fascinated by math problems.

'He apologizes profusely and wishes them a speedy recovery.'

However, because of the wizard incident, he had grown to fear people. He became violent when people approached him wanting to take pictures, which is why he bit the three students and two faculty staff members. He didn't mean any harm. He just got so afraid. He apologizes profusely and wishes them a speedy recovery.

A few days later...

Breaking news: Groundhog Big Boy Billy just landed a job at UR as a math professor!

He will be teaching Math 141 in Gavett Hall 230. Registration for his class will open next week, and a ceremony celebrating his new position will be held on Oct. 1 at President Sarah Mangelsdorf's house.

'He will be teaching Math 141 in Gavett Hall 230.'

There will, of course, be unlimited fruit at the party. All are welcome to attend. Just register on CCC.

Back to you Rob.

Thank you for the update, Hailey Bailey. I am happy to hear that a tragic story has led to such wonderful news. Meliora!

Stay tuned for more news!

Next up: Students are building homes for the yellow jackets for the winter season, so they have a warm place to stay...

Leonardi is a member of the Class of 2025.

Shrimp Fried Rice?

BY MAYA BROSNICK
NEWS EDITOR

Shrimp fried rice: an age-old mystery. Is it fried rice containing shrimp? Or is it fried rice made by shrimp? I know, I know, you've seen the debate before. You, dear reader, are sitting there questioning what I, a humble college student, could possibly have to add to that well-argued debate. And that's valid. Experts have studied this far further in depth than I ever could. But there's an element that they aren't considering, the fact that so-called innocent shrimp leaders have been using unsuspecting humans as part of their justice system for millennia.

'Is it fried rice containing shrimp? Or is it fried rice made by shrimp?'

I subscribe to the belief that shrimp fried rice is fried rice made by shrimp. After all, fried rice contains multiple ingredients, and we don't call it shrimp-carrot-peas-etc.

fried rice. But if the shrimp are making the rice, then why are they putting shrimp in as an ingredient?

Those who support the shrimp have said that the shrimp chefs are sneaking in shrimp substitute, but I would argue that they are using the delightful dish to dispose of the unsavory members of the shrimp community.

Humans have the death penalty; shrimp have the rice penalty. Such a lethal sentence isn't a first resort for shrimp authorities — they do offer community service for first-time offenders — but the punishment is still all too often carried out.

Eighteen people were put to death in the U.S. in 2022, while, in the same timeframe, millions of shrimp met their delicious demise.

And that's not even mentioning the poor shrimp who fall into the bowl. Thanks to the draconian nature of the shrimp fried rice production industry, regulations in its production are horribly lax. There are no statistics for

how many shrimp have fallen in the bowls, but we know the number is higher than it should be.

'Humans have the death penalty; shrimp have the rice penalty.'

Shrimp leadership use the bowls to dispose of their social rejects. The shrimp with the limp goes in the bowl. Anyone President Shrimpy wants to go in the bowl, goes in the bowl. Political opponents, the disabled, the socially awkward — anyone can be sacrificed to the bowl, laid to rest on a crispy bed.

No one is talking about these atrocities. The innocent shrimp toiling away to create our favorite dish aren't being paid, and have no benefits. Not even dental.

This is the hero's crusade we must take up.

It's shrimple: Save the shrimp. Save the world.

Brosnick is a member of the Class of 2027.

Geophysicists Debut Model of Donut-Shaped Earth

BY RACHEL CAREN
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Improvements to geophysical mathematics has led to a stunning new revelation: Our Earth is actually a torus.

The Global Geophysicists Group (GGG) recently presented a new model for mapping the planet, including a staggering three-line proof describing the torical nature of Earth — a fancy sciency way of referring to donuts.

'Our Earth is actually a torus.'

While apparently more shapely and defined than what the local Dunkin' provides, torical Earth boasts a six mile-wide hole in its center. The initial Boston creme model was inexplicably devoured, but the GGG maintains that their strawberry-frosted successor is here to stay. The southern half of the donut unfortunately lacks sprinkles, as they keep falling off the bottom.

GGG also described the central hole as the "remnants of a partnership with the NBA," with the Moon being scheduled for a slam-dunk come next March.

In the past, Donut Earth Theory was considered scientifically impossible. Day and

night cycles wouldn't exist, thanks to the shape and rotation of the torus. Sunlight would strike the planet unevenly, resulting in vastly different climates and seasons depending on the donut's angle in relation to the sun — but, according to top GGG scientists, these fluctuations fall perfectly in line with the advent of climate change.

"Please respect my research," said Dr. Hanson Gregory, a part-time postdoc researcher and full-time Tim Hortons cashier.

'Climate change remains the problem of whatever generation will suffer the most from it.'

Completely preventable and utterly anthropocenic, climate change remains the problem of whatever generation will suffer the most from it. While the masses await death by microplastics and the mildly inconvenient paper straw, Exxon and high-capacity industry moguls are slated to see booming profits for the foreseeable future — until society runs out of dinosaurs to melt into fuel and stops believing that the dollar is ac-

tually worth anything. It's not even backed by gold or silver, guys. Come on. Have you ever even read about Nixon? Them's the books. Breaks. Books. That's a joke; they call that media literacy, you know. Maybe you've heard of it.

'The toroidal Earth model might give climate scientists a leg up against the oncoming climate apocalypse, or climatocalypse.'

Anyway, the toroidal Earth model might give climate scientists a leg up against the oncoming climate apocalypse, or climatocalypse, which regrettably sounds like some kind of an STD. First pioneered in early 2008 by a Dr. Rosenpenis, his legal name. Donut Earth Theory was later popularized by a hard-hitting VICE investigation.

In the wake of GGG's presentation, sales of Halo: Reach are expected to skyrocket — and we can remain firm in our belief that Earth remains the tastiest celestial body.

Caren is a member of the Class of 2024.