Opinion

You're a fan, not a friend

Parasocial relationships are getting out of hand

By LILLIAN CURTIN
Opinion Editor

I would consider myself "chronically online." If you ask anyone about my current fascination with the Beckham family drama, they'd agree. I could tell you a few facts of the situation, but you'll never catch me protectively jumping at any of their defenses or attacking any of them. That goes for any celebrity or any person I don't know.

I don't know these people and their lives really don't affect me.

If you ask me, that's the beauty of it: being able to watch people go at each other's throats like an episode of "Baddies" without having to actually be involved. I love watching people be messy from the comfort of my bed, but that's where it stops.

Too many times I've seen people get in the nastiest TikTok feuds over defending or attacking people they don't know.

Yes Swifties, pop-star Taylor Swift counts too. She's actually one of the worst examples of people creating parasocial relationships and becoming involved in beef they just simply don't need to be in.

The other day on TikTok, I watched fans go absolutely feral over, and I quote, the "FIRST TAY GLIMPSE OF 2026."

Why are we talking like we've been locked in a basement and are seeing the sun for the first time?

As if I wasn't already aggravated enough, I made the mistake of looking in the comments. One fan was fawning over her drinking from a straw, talking about how cute she was… for drinking out of a straw.

Another user actually corrected the TikTok, and apparently, she was on a date with fiance, Kansas City tight end, Travis Kelce in Beverly Hills on Jan. 12. Hey, "amiah (taylor's version)" that's a bit strange, first, to know that, and second, to care enough to correct it.

It's now at the point where I can't tell if everyone is just way too easily impressed or paid promoters. I'm convinced it has to be one of the two.

Before anyone comes for me and my whole bloodline, pull your friendship bracelets back out from where you stuck them, because I'm not saying it's her fault. So relax.

I'm actually saying the opposite. If you're an obsessive Swifty that thinks she can do no wrong just because she makes great music, or because you like her vibe, please know I'm not attacking her. I'm attacking you.

The halo effect is real. She's a prime example of it.

Listen, I think her music is great, and I can relate to a lot of the heartbreak in it. But, instead of attacking her exes for decades, can we maybe stop and think about how we were not involved in their lives in any way, shape or form? So there is a possibility that, and hear me out here, we don't actually know what happened.

For all we know, she could've been some crazy psycho in the relationship. But because she's gifted lyrically, we get one side of the story, and that's gospel for a lot of her fans. She even had to tell them not to harass John Mayer when "Speak Now (Taylor's Version)" came out.

Imagine going to attack someone on behalf of a popstar you don't know. I have no problem with her, but she's not some helpless teenage girl. She's a grown billionaire in her late 30s. She doesn't need people she doesn't even know exist sending death threats on her behalf.

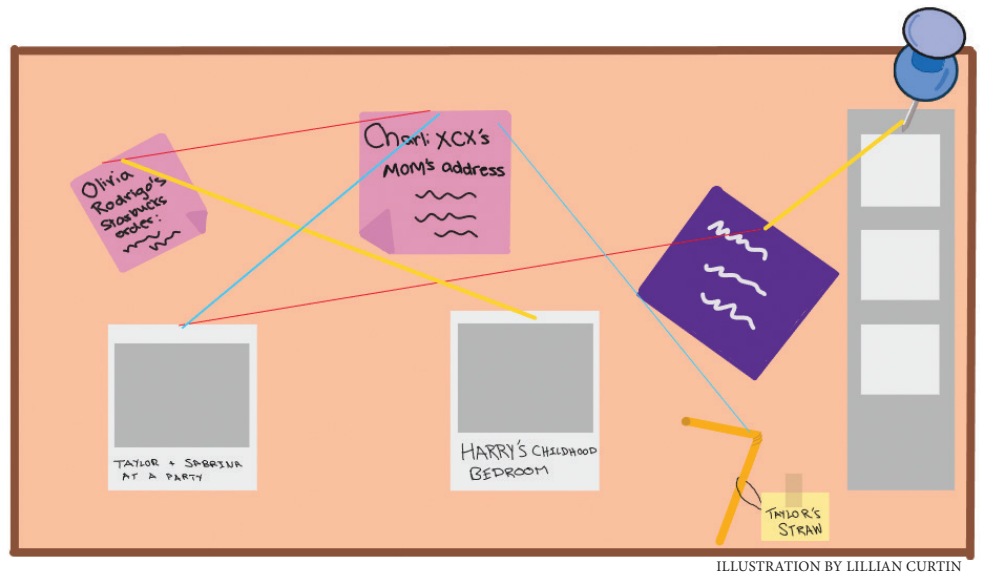


ILLUSTRATION BY LILLIAN CURTIN

The reverse happens too. Sometimes, strangers hate a celebrity so much that anything the celebrity does is put on blast.

Actress Blake Lively and actor Justin Baldoni are currently in a legal battle. Lively claims that Baldoni sexually harassed her on the set of "It Ends With Us." Baldoni countersued for defamation.

None of us know these people, yet everyone has their opinions on this case. Lively isn't very well-liked. I get it. She's had some rough moments in interviews and in public. But at the end of the day, this is a serious case, and no one should be making judgments when they're not a legal professional, a psychologist or know these people personally.

You claim a woman is lying about sexual harassment and your justification is merely that you don't like her. Yet, your way of "knowing" her is your curated algorithm of her most unlikable moments. I'm not a fan of hers, admittedly because of those moments, but I'm not going to pretend I know anything about her personally.

There's a difference between glazing a celebrity for no reason and then denying someone's experience of sexual harassment or sending death threats. That's the difference between just being "chronically online" and just being a weirdo. Get a grip.



ILLUSTRATION BY EMILY KATZ

The bridge vs the bookstore

Money spent on campus in the wrong places

By CAITLIN MUSSA
Contributing Writer

After being at Quinnipiac for only a semester, I noticed that the Mount Carmel Campus is constantly evolving. It seems like every time I turn around, there's a new addition or project being worked on.

For current and future students, these projects are and will continue to be valued, as they improve our college experience. However, I often wonder if the school is spending money and time in the wrong places.

As students settle back into campus after winter break, most of us have had to get acquainted with the new bookstore. I remember first seeing it and being wowed.

It's a modern and functional building that is definitely an upgrade from the old one. The new building, being more roomy, undoubtedly makes it an excellent addition to our campus.

However, after seeing how quickly it was constructed and put into operation, I have a bone to pick. Yes, the new bookstore is nice, but I ask myself, 'Did we really need a new bookstore? Why did the university see it as a necessity?'

According to Town of Hamden records, the estimated cost of the new bookstore was around $2.1 million.

Personally, a few other projects on campus could have seriously benefited from that money, including the bridge behind the library.

Yes, I am referring to the bridge that sits behind Dana and Irma Residence Halls, which has been broken since early in the fall semester.

We can all agree that this particular bridge being "out of order" has been an inconvenience in one way or another.

It's annoying to walk out of my way to get around the bridge, and I've even resorted to the rocks in the creek as a path. While this method may have worked in the fall, the snow and ice make it more slippery and unsafe than before.

I think I can speak for all Quinnipiac students living on the main campus when I say we were disappointed when we saw the bridge still boarded up, yet there was a brand new bookstore up and running.

I am grateful to have such a new and improved bookstore at our university, but it can be seen by some as more of a luxury rather than a necessity.

I hope Quinnipiac will prioritize improvements that have a greater impact on students' day-to-day lives.