



EPIC Equipment Room Opens in Campus Center

BURTON BREWSTER
Regular Contributor

EPIC Adventures has found a home for its equipment rental service in the basement of the Reinhold Campus Center.

EPIC stands for "Experiential Programs & Intentional Community." The program's purpose is to provide opportunities for students to participate in hiking, camping, skiing, canoeing, and rock climbing. The program hosts day trips and overnight trips—often going on adventures beyond Allegany County. Outside of wilderness excursions, EPIC also offers training in wilderness first aid, CPR, and lifeguarding.

In the past, EPIC has rented out equipment to students on campus, so that they can go on their own adventures. However, EPIC faced difficulties due to the fact that they did not have a designated space out of which to rent equipment. Fortunately, the old printing room next to the Technology Help Desk in the basement of the Campus Center became vacant this year when the Printing Press (then known as Quick Print) moved into the Highlanders Shop.

The Equipment Room will share hours with the Highlander Shop. Alexeichik said it should be fully operation by the end



COURTESY OF CALEB FESMIRE

EPIC is renting out sleeping bags, skis, and other adventure gear.

of February, after equipment has been entered into an inventory system and staff have been trained.

When asked about what EPIC is planning to do with the new space, Allysha Bittinger ('20), a student intern with EPIC, said, "The EPIC equipment room is now a place for our gear rentals to be stored and inventoried. This will also be a space for students to hang-out and relax during open-hour

time slots in our lounge area."

Laura Alexeichik ('01), the director of EPIC Adventures, is hoping to start phasing out the "well-loved equipment" that has been left over from the 90's. She is also hoping to host a variety of workshops and trainings in the new space.

The room is already stocked with a large amount of outdoor supplies including backpacks, skis, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, snow shoes, hammocks,

and occasionally Kenai, Alexeichik's dog.

"Our gear was originally stored in several different camp closets in the Nielsen Center," said Bittinger, who helps with the operations and marketing of the program.

Alexeichik explained that, "We've always had the option to rent, it just wasn't advertised that much. There were a couple days when I put out an [all-campus] email saying, 'Huge snow

★ Correction ★

A January 31st feature incorrectly identified Noah Miller as Griddle Studios CEO. Christopher Thomas is the CEO.

today! Cross country skis for so and so. Meet in the gym between this time and this time." But while many students took the opportunity to rent equipment, the system in place had a lot of room for improvement. Previously, the only way to rent out equipment to students was to individually schedule a time and place where the equipment could be traded off. This has been solved by creating the storage closet, where all gear is kept with open hours for easier access.

Along with the new room, EPIC has begun a transformation in the way it is structured. A new committee system has been started where members will be assigned a specific area to specialize in. These areas include Event Planning, Marketing, Equipment Management, and Training committees. This

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2020 Woolsey Lecture Series to Center on Theology and the Environment

LUKE HUIZENGA
Regular Contributor

This coming Thursday, February 20th, Houghton College will be opening its annual Woolsey Lectures in Theology and Culture series. The series was named after Warren M. Woolsey, the late New Testament, philosophy, and missions professor who taught at Houghton. Associate Professor of Old Testament, Dr. Sarah Derck, said that the lecture series was given its name to "honor Woolsey's faithfulness to God's call as a scholar-servant."

The late Professor Woolsey not only taught at Houghton for over twenty-five years, he also lived and ministered across the United States and West Africa. His passion for missions was inspirational, said Dr. Derck. "Through his leadership, many students anticipated and heard God's call to connect the mission of Christ with people of many cultures."

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Students Share Personal Stories of Ethnic Identity and Racism at Mosaic Center Event



COURTESY OF RILEY GASTIN

Merris Ackon, Ramia Shoats, Nayellis Perez, EunJin Kwak, Brice Bogna, and Nathaniel Zedomi

PHOEBE MULLEN
Regular Contributor

The Mosaic Center recently hosted the Fly on the Wall event as a chance for minority students to read aloud their stories, and to participate in a panel moderated by Nuk Kongkaw ('11), director of the Mosaic Center. Panelists spoke about their experiences as minorities at Houghton and in the United States as a whole. A number of

the panelists were international or third culture students, which added an even greater breadth of perspectives to the discussion.

Nicole Soggs ('20), who read a piece aloud at the event, was encouraged to participate in Fly on the Wall by both Prof. Laurie Dashnau and Prof. Susan Lipscomb of the English and Writing department. "I like sharing my life stories with people—whether they're good

or bad, and I think it was a good opportunity for students from the majority culture to hear about an experience different from their own," Soggs said. "I hope that people learned to empathize... I hope that they saw us as Imago Dei, too."

Karissa Esala ('20) read an anonymous student's work aloud, and stayed to listen to others read aloud and speak.

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Summer Job and Internship Fair Coming to Campus

ANNA JUDD
Regular Contributor

This coming Thursday, February 20th, Houghton College will be holding its annual Summer Job and Internship Fair. At this event, students have the chance to talk to potential employers and find opportunities for the summer. Many of them are Christian ministries and camps, although a wide variety of organizations are represented. This year, there are roughly forty employers slated to come and participate, up from a number in the thirties last year. Dennis Stack, the associate director of the Office of Vocation and Calling, said he does not know exactly how long the job fair has been a regular event at Houghton, but that it has been quite a few years.

The organizations who attend find their way to Houghton through a number of different channels. According to Stack, while the college maintains a list of employers who have attended in the past, and may be

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Humans of Houghton: Alex Dearmore

ALLY STEVICK

Alex Dearmore is a sophomore at Houghton, majoring in English and Education. In his free time, Alex likes to spend time reading and writing, hiking, kayaking, and spending time with his hedgehog, Juliet. After considering forensic science, editing, and business as possible career paths, Alex settled on his current plan to be an English teacher because of his love of both literature and kids. When I ask him about a favorite class he’s taken at Houghton, he names Critical Approaches to Literature, a core requirement for the English major that he’s taking this semester. “I’m taking that with Professor Sharpe, and it is so much fun,” he says. “I think one of the things about it that is most appealing to me is that out of all the English courses I’ll take, this one kind of en-

compasses them all, and it’ll help me within all of them to know how to interpret things better, so I think that’s probably why I like it. I mean, I’m also in The Brontës, I’ve taken Literature of Faith and Doubt, and I really enjoyed those classes,” he explains, “but I feel like having taken this class would have helped me with those ones, so it’s just really interesting to learn the theory behind everything.”

Alex tells me part of the story of his faith experience before and during Houghton. “For a while I went atheist/agnostic,” he says, “because of some of the things that had happened in my hometown. Where I come from they’re very, very conservative Christian—and I’m not saying you can’t be conservative and a Christian—it’s just that the way Christianity was presented to me was, it’s a set of

rules, and they kind of extract love out of it in a way, and that was something that always really bothered me,” he explains. “And then coming to Houghton was the first time that I really got to see Christianity played out in a different kind of way, as more of a lifestyle, instead of this list of rules that you need to escape damnation. Probably one thing that a lot of people feel about Houghton, and something that I’ve felt, is that it’s renewed my faith in a way that I think—probably if I had not gone to Houghton, I probably would not be a Christian.” Throughout our interview something that Alex repeatedly highlights is the value of kindness. It stands out as a dominant theme in our conversation, and it was because of his concern with being kind, Alex explains, that he had turned away from the faith before coming to

Houghton. “Growing up in the church that I did, in the setting that I did, I did not associate Christianity with kindness at all,” he explains. “I thought, if I want to be a kind person I probably can’t be a Christian, those things don’t coincide. So, coming to Houghton I finally learned that it doesn’t have to be like that. There’s tons of kind, great people here who think deeply about things, and they’re Christian, deeply Christian. And that was something that was really refreshing for me to see.”

When I ask Alex for any advice he might have to share with readers, he gives me a theory of happiness. “I guess I’ve noticed in my life that, the things that make me happy - I always think, this will make me happy, or this will make me happy, my grades will make me happy, my friends, and I find at the end of the day

when I’m reflecting on my day and what’s happened, the things that kind of stick to me are the times when I’ve felt that I was able to show love to somebody else in a really genuine way,” Alex explains. “Those are the moments that I feel much more fulfilled then like, if I think, I did well on this test, or I did well on this, it’s always, how did I treat this other person? That’s something that, even in my own ‘struggle for happiness’ has always played a big part and could probably help other people too.” Alex summarizes this theory of happiness by saying, “Whenever you have a chance to help somebody or love somebody just do that to the best of your ability, because, I mean, that’s what God wants us to do more than anything else.” ★

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is to help the overall management of the program, as well as to get students involved.

When asked about why she joined EPIC, Rachel Caine (‘23), a member of the Marketing Committee, said, “I joined EPIC because I went on the Highlander Trip and found out it was an entire club. It’s not just for people who like the outdoors. It’s for people who want new experiences and who want to learn how to enjoy something they’re not used to.” ★

WOOLSEY *from page 1*

Speaking in the series this year is Dr. Ellen Davis, Professor of Bible and Practical Theology at Duke Divinity School. She comes to Houghton with an expansive career of writing, studying, and teaching. Davis has written eleven books and numerous articles primarily focusing on the relationship between biblical interpretation and how to approach today’s ecological crisis.

Brian Webb, Director of the Center for Sustainability, described Davis as “a national expert in eco-theology,” and said that he is “thrilled to have her speaking here on campus.” Dr. Derck said that Davis is “a world-class scholar...and an authority in many fascinating areas of study that bring the Bible and culture into conversation.” Both Webb and Dr. Derck have expressed excitement in having Dr. Davis come to speak here at Houghton.

Davis herself is also pleased with the opportunity to visit; she said it made her “glad to be asked to speak to undergraduates on a topic that is of special concern to me, from a biblical perspective.” Knowing Houghton only by name “and slightly

by reputation,” she is nonetheless looking forward to next week’s events.

The title of Davis’ lecture series is titled “Letting the Bible Renew Our Imagination About Our Relationship to the Earth.” She described the lectures as “looking at text from both Testaments... along with contemporary agrarian poetry.” Through interpretation of these texts, she said, “We will consider how the Bible can awaken and instruct our moral imagination with respect to... the work of God’s hands.” Her years of experience studying the Bible, combined with her research into the state of our environment, will add to discourse of increasingly prominent topics here at Houghton.

As the Director of the Center for Sustainability, Webb, has spent a great deal of time studying this topic as well. He pointed out that this is something that is becoming a greater problem and needs to be taken care of. “Environmental issues are some of the most important and challenging issues we are facing in the twenty-first century,” said Webb. He believes it is crucial that we learn more about the world around us and the significance of taking care of it. “Our disregard for basic principles of environmental stewardship are leading to numerous crises,” he explained, “[crises] that are negatively impacting both humans and God’s natural creation.” Webb says that the fact that this very subject is going to be addressed this year has already encouraged him greatly.

Dr. Davis’ main lecture will be given on February 20th and held in the Recital Hall of the Center for the Fine Arts from 7:00 to 9:30pm. Following the lecture, a reception will meet in the atrium outside the Recital Hall. Dr. Davis shall also

be speaking in chapel on February 21st. After the service, students will get the chance to speak with her over lunch in the Alumni Dining Room before she leaves.★

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“I really appreciated people’s willingness to share some really difficult and hurtful things that had happened to them, as well as really meaningful and touching things,” she said. “It was encouraging that despite... [the] additional pressures that students of color face, they are still willing to be a part of the Houghton community and desire to engage with people like me and to make this campus and the world a better place.”

The panelists who grew up in the United States spoke about their experiences growing up as minorities. International students talked about what it was like to come, in some cases, from countries where they were part of the ethnic majority, and the challenge suddenly having to deal with stereotypes and systemic bias. A student attendee, who did not wish to be identified, commented, “Even though I am friends with a lot of [the panelists], sometimes we don’t know how to ask the right type of questions... However, I felt like the panel gave us the opportunity to listen without the fear of asking the wrong type of question.”

Ramia Shoats (‘22) is an Ambassador in the Mosaic Center, and was asked to participate in the panel by Kongkaw. “It’s really easy for people to think that racism isn’t a thing anymore or that it doesn’t happen here at Houghton,” said Shoats, when asked why she got involved. “I feel like I have to hide who I am for others to be comfortable.”

After the event, Kongkaw led the minority students who had participated in the event to a debrief session in the Mosaic Center. Beth Phifer, the Resident Director of Lambein Hall, held a defrief for a relatively small group of audience members in the CFA. They explained at the event that they wanted to avoid students being put on the spot to defend their stories to audience members.

Esala, who stayed for the audience debrief, expressed concern about the low attendance of the event. “Why didn’t more people come? I know there are a lot more white students on campus than students of color, but the audience had a disproportionately small number of white audience members. There are always so many ways to use one’s time, but it was sad that more people didn’t take the time to come and listen to these voices that don’t often get heard.” Esala, Shoats, Soggs, and others expressed the desire for events like Fly on the Wall to happen more in the future. ★

JOBS *from page 1*

interested in returning, many of them reach out first, wanting to come and recruit at the fair. He says that the number of participants usually increases every year. Michelle Russell, a career specialist at the Office of Vocation and Calling, adds, “We have a list of organizations that we reach out to through mailings and we also have organizations come who [have] heard about us through past employees.”

Currently, Russell says, the Office of Vocation and Calling does not keep track of the numbers of students who apply for jobs or internship opportunities or get hired through the fair, but she says with confidence

that, “We do have quite a few students who come through.” Anyone who has been to one of these fairs in the past can testify that it is indeed a large and busy event, filling the main level of the campus center with tables, and crowds of students can be seen there exploring and talking to prospective employers.

Next spring, Houghton may see the job fair expanding. Stack referred to plans in the making to bring full-time employers to the college to interview graduating students for full-time positions, either as part of the current job fair or as a separate event. This would allow students to “come prepared for interviews, with a resume in hand,” and potentially find full-time post-graduation positions on the spot. “I don’t think Houghton has had a fair like that in many years, if ever,” says Stack.

This is hardly surprising, as there will be challenges involved in the effort to organize such an event. “Being a small college and rather remote, makes this more difficult, but not impossible,” says Stack, adding, “So it is worth trying—our students are amazing, and will impress any company looking to hire.” Russell notes that, while the Office of Vocation and Calling does not monitor the outcomes of the current summer job fair, they would do so if it was expanded to include full-time jobs for graduates. “At this point we would want to track who is applying and what the hiring results are so we would know what [our] successes are,” Russell says. If this event materializes in 2021, it will be another valuable opportunity for students to take advantage of.

The Summer Job and Internship Fair will be held in the Van Dyk Lounge on February 20th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. ★

Comics

Heart and Brain

Nick Seluk



Ever Wonder...

...Whether Houghton Had its Own Song?

JOSIAH WIEDENHEFT
Columns Editor

Apparently it does! Or at least has. Several in fact. Though *And You Shall Remember... a Pictorial History of Houghton College* (written in 1982 by Frieda A. Gillette and Katherine W. Lindey) is just a treasure trove in general of interesting information about and photos from the school's history, it also reveals the existence of several school songs, sure to be an unexpected surprise for most current students.

Multiple sets of lyrics, and two different tunes, are listed, including "Come Back To Houghton"

*Come back to dear old Houghton,
She'll welcome you;
Come all together,
Back to our old school
Skies are blue at Houghton
Our school so dear!
All out for Houghton
And cheer, cheer, cheer!*

As well as Marietta Fancher's "Dear Houghton to You":

*Dear Houghton to you, we'll ever be true;
No other school like you we'll ever find; so we will mind
Your principles and your precepts grand; evermore for you we'll stand
You colors of old, the Purple and the Gold,
For constant victory will be. And so wherever we roam,
We'll think of our home, at Houghton dear, on the Genesee.*

And, of course, the enthusiastic (albeit perhaps a bit campy by today's standards) cheer of "H-O-U-G-H-T-O-N":

*If you're looking for a senior college,
Some small place to find out something new,
If you want to swell your worldly knowledge,
List to this advice I give to you:
Here's a school that's won our loyal favor,
Fine as any college in the land!
We will cheer it with a will,
This old school upon the hill,
For Houghton and her principles we'll stand!!
H-O-U-G-H-T-O-N
Houghton is the place where we get an education,
Hoton is the place where we all like to go,
Hoton is the place that is full of fascination,
That's what the students think--we know so!
If you want a school that will give you inspiration,
Make your courage bold,
Here's a school upon a hill--we'll cheer it with a will.
Three cheers, three cheers, three cheers, for the Purple and the Gold!*

Today we live on a campus where (at least to my knowledge), songs such of these are no longer sung, simply a faded memory to be dug up from some old book. Are we better off for it? Might we be missing something in lacking such an anthem, or are such things better off left in the past?... ★

Sudoku

Courtesy of www.sudokuoftheday.com

If you've never played sudoku before, the rules are simple!

- 1) Fill in each empty box with a number
- 2) Every row, column and 3x3 box must contain all the numbers 1-9, with no number repeated

The solution will be in next week's issue!

7			1					
1	4						8	9
		8	3	4				
4	5			1		8	3	
			8		4			
	2	6		7			4	1
				3	2	4		
6	3						7	2
					1			3

First Annual Ben and Jean Moss Exhibit Features Catherine Drabkin

VANESSA BRAY

The Ortlip Gallery in the Center For the Arts is currently exhibiting the works of painter and animator Catherine Drabkin. The exhibit entitled Shifting Rhythms features some of Drabkin’s paintings, mixed media prints and fiber stitched works from 1994 to 2019.

Drabkin’s art is the first to be displayed in the Ben and Jean Moss Endowed Exhibition. Before his passing last summer, artist Ben Frank Moss, a previous instructor at Dartmouth College and former Houghton student, endowed the college with \$100,000 to hold an annual exhibition every year in the Ortlip Gallery. Catherine Drabkin is the first recipient of this endowment, which is named in honor of Ben Frank Moss and his wife Jean Moss.

The Ortlip Gallery’s Director of Exhibitions, Alicia Taylor-Austin, had the following to say on why Drabkin was chosen to be featured in the First Annual Ben Frank and Jean Moss Invitational Exhibit:

“Ben was a mentor and friend to Catherine in her time teaching at Dartmouth College, and the two continued to support and encourage one another in the years that followed... [Ben] spoke about Catherine and her work and gave his highest recommendation for exhib-



COURTESY OF VANESSA BRAY

Catherine Drabkin’s work at the Ben Frank and Jean Moss exhibition in the Ortlip Gallery.

iting here at Houghton. Before Ben passed away, he provided a list of artists that this endowment could support by way of hosting these annual exhibits. Catherine was on that list and her work has been admired for years by faculty in the art department, so we selected her for this year’s show.”

The exhibit showcases over 45 pieces of artwork, all synthesized by the theme of intimacy through nature and everyday life experiences. “The spark of new work is often found in the everyday,” are the words written in Drabkin’s artist statement, which can be found on a table

upon entering the gallery. “Winter Garden,” “Ruined Steps,” “West Street Table” and “Red Milk Carton” are among some of the pieces that hang in the Gallery’s walls, showcasing the painter’s vision.

Drabkin credits her pursuit to capture the fleeting and intimate to the loss of loved ones. She says, “Letting go of the past and building a new evolving present with new experiences and new people is for me embodied in the work of painting and drawing. With every mark I put down, I lose something and discover something new, like the first steps of an adventure.”

Houghton art professor Ted Murphy first viewed some of Drabkin’s work 23 years ago via an art magazine. One of the pieces he saw, “Interior With Oscillating Fan (1994)” is currently on display in the Ortlip Gallery. In regard to Drabkin’s work, Murphy said that “Catherine is a master colorist...her work reflects often on ‘found’ interiors and still life’s. She interprets her environment. Most people who look out a window see trees, buildings, clouds and fields. An artist also sees these things, but the artist must see also forms- triangles, patterns, colors, textures and contrast-

ing values. They see both at once ...entwined into a single vision... Catherine’s work is remarkable in the degree to which she captures the joy of color, the possibility for a shadow to be a cool blue grey adjacent to an intense spike of orange or violet... When I look at Catherine’s work, I sense that for her every moment of seeing is an opportunity to interpret and give form to her creative seeing. It is a magnificent show. I have spent hours there contemplating her vision and gifts.”

Whether you have hours to invest in viewing Shifting Rhythms or limited time to spare, Drabkin’s hope for any moments spent on looking at her work remains the same. “I hope,” says Drabkin, “that students take inspiration from my exhibition to draw, look, experience, and nurture the nuanced quiet corners of the world more intensely. I hope the community uses the exhibition as a lens through which to see color and rhythms that play across space through a painter’s eye, to see life as if for the first time all over again.”

The First Annual Ben Frank and Jean Moss Invitational Exhibition Featuring works by Catherine Drabkin, will be on display in the Ortlip Gallery until February 28. ★

Griddle Studios Gives Experience to Student Designers

GERI EDWARDS
Editorial Staff

SPOT and Lanthorn logos, philosophy posters, and CAB event flyers adorn almost every building on campus. We read them on the bulletin boards coming down the stairs, they catch our eyes as we walk down the hallways, and even pop up on our Houghton social media pages. But aside from their purpose of advertising that one lecture or club event happening in a few days, where do their designs come from? The answer, in many cases, is Griddle Studios.

Griddle Studios is a student-run design studio on campus, founded in 2018 by current seniors Noah Miller (‘20), Timothy Paschalis (‘20), Kyle Dunham (‘20), and Jacob Crawford (‘20). It’s mission is two-fold; not only does it provide Houghton College and the surrounding area with high quality design and branding services, but it also gives art and visual communication students real-world, professional experience that will be immeasurable for future careers. In an interview, Noah Miller (‘20) explained how Griddle began:

“So basically, Professor Cooley came to Tim and said he wanted to bring back a design studio, which was based off one the school previously had called ‘Caffeinated.’ So Caffeinated was just a studio...[students] just did the work for free. So Tim came and talked to me about it, because I’m actually a double major in both business and communications, but it kind

of just faded away. But the next semester...came the opportunity for the design studio that Tim mentioned. And so I said, ‘hey, what if we have like, a graphic design studio and an ad agency type thing?’”

Part of the process of getting Griddle approved was getting obtaining support from professors in the art, communication, and business departments. Professor Deborah Rice, the Department Chair of Business and Economics, reflected on Griddle’s journey from its beginning. “Griddle has really become a place for students to practically apply what they’re learning in the class,” she stated; “they generated the idea, prepared a business plan, and then presented it to the different departments... they did a phenomenal job in their introduction, they got our approval, and really have taken the initiative to run it. It’s been really cool.”

The initial organization of Griddle was internship-based; Griddle founders got permission to let Griddle interns get academic credit for their work. Miller explained, “we had Tim, Kyle, and Jake as creative directors, each had their own department in Griddle, and had their interns.”

While Griddle turned a healthy profit during their first year, the team began during the current academic year to look into ways to restructure the business. Christopher Thomas (‘20), who took over from Miller as Griddle CEO in fall 2019, commented, “I was running Griddle just the normal



COURTESY OF GRIDDLE STUDIOS

The official logo of Griddle Studios

way like we had before Noah moved up to [Houghton Student Enterprises], but then we came to a point where we wanted to provide more for the creative people in our group...so we had a big meeting where we all talked about it, and Noah mentioned this idea where we would make [Griddle members] work as independent contractors. So me, Noah, and our other co-worker Kyler Davis looked into it, and found it could work.”

Miller explained that part of the reason for the shakeup was that they were “starting to see less and less of a need for the internship credits, and the art department didn’t like the idea of interns and interning with us more than once. But that made things hard because we would

keep having them find more [interns] and there aren’t that many.”

With this restructuring, each independent contractor is now basically running their own business, which Griddle markets to its clients. This system makes it easier for the independent contractors to get paid directly; the money goes straight to them and then they pay Griddle a percentage of what they have made. “We have a great group of people,” Thomas said; “we’ve got a list of independent contractors that we’ve worked with and know what their work is. So when a client comes to us, for example, for a logo design... we would pick a contractor that we feel fits the job best, and then negotiate a price with the client.”

For the past year and a half, Griddle has been an integral part of our community life both on and off campus. Aside from the numerous logos, signs, and rebrands for the college, Griddle has also designed websites for both current students and alumni and advertisements for businesses as far as New Jersey. “I’m excited about what they’re doing,” commented Professor Rice; “they’re creative in a way I think communicates a good message to this age group...I’m excited about how they’ve initially established it to have a long life.”

To contact or see more of Griddle Studios, check out their website at griddlestudios.com. ★

A Review of Disney+ Show, “The Mandalorian”

MOLLY BRIZZELL
Regular Contributor

“I can bring you in warm...
or I can bring you in cold.”

These are the first words spoken by the Mandalorian (Mando for short), the ruthless bounty hunter whose story lays at the forefront of *Star Wars*’ latest release, *The Mandalorian*. The show dropped its first episode on November 12th 2019, the day Disney+ debuted. Ever since, it released one episode every Friday until it wrapped up with its eighth and final episode of the season on December 27th. It has been the buzz of the internet ever since, particularly for its character The Child—more commonly known as “Baby Yoda.”

The mysterious man who remains hidden under cold metal armor, known to the Mandalorians as “beskar,” takes viewers on a journey through life in the New Republic galaxy, shortly after the fall of the Galactic Empire. In terms of a movie timeline, this takes place nine years after the event of *Episode VI: Return of the Jedi*, but before *Episode VII: The Force Awakens*. Mando resides in the Outer Rim, an area of the galaxy with no laws. Morals there are questionable, and not all Imperial influence is dead. Mando learns this when he accepts a bounty hunting job from a mysterious client guarded by several stormtroopers, who sends him off to take in what he’s told is a “50-year-



COURTESY OF DISNEY+

Picture of the Mandalorian

old asset.” He gets there and learns that it’s a 50-year-old baby—none other than The Child, a creature of Yoda’s species. In the struggle to get back off the planet, Mando finds himself in a near-death situation, and even gets saved by the tiny green creature. Upon bringing it in for a hefty sum of beskar, Mando questions his decision about abandoning his savior, and turns around to do what’s right, ending up on the run with The Child and a large following of bounty hunters hungry to get their own pay.

Pedro Pascal, known for his roles as Oberyn Martell in HBO’s *Game of Thrones* and Javier Peña in Netflix’s *Narcos*, takes the lead in his best role

yet as Mando. Pascal is limited to expressing emotions solely through his words and his body language because of the helmet the Mandalorian cannot remove (an important part of his Creed, or religion), but is still able to make the audience feel everything Mando feels, and create moments of high emotion without a facial expression to match it. He additionally masters the ability to be the ruthless hunter who becomes an adopted dad that is... well, not so great at parenting just yet. Mando is a man of few words, but Pascal makes every single one count.

The show follows a main theme of redemption. This is even the name of the last episode in the season (Chapter 8:

Redemption). Mando, who is hinted at having a past marked by pain, suffering, and violence, tries to right his wrongs in a world without morals by taking The Child under his wing. With this change in the mind also comes a change in his armor—from a dark red to silver, a color which represents redemption for the Mandalorians. Regardless of the suffering Mando endured in his past and the ruthless behavior he exhibited, he goes on to do what he must to protect The Child, and begins living up to what his armor represents.

What’s so refreshing about The Mandalorian is its mixture of new *Star Wars* content and sprinkles of nostalgia. We get to meet exciting new char-

acters, such as ex-rebel shocktrooper Cara Dune (Gina Carano), while also getting to visit familiar places like Tatooine. Every episode offers new adventure, keeping the viewers on their toes for what’s going to happen next. Along the way, these episodes bring hints of things that will be explored in the confirmed second season of the show, such as Mando’s past. The Mandalorian is everything a *Star Wars* fan could want: lots of fights, the Force, and perfectly placed funny moments.

This show does not only appeal to *Star Wars* fans either; being independent of the movies, there is no need to have in-depth knowledge about the *Star Wars* universe in order to enjoy it. The show is entertaining enough to draw in any viewer who’s curious, and the history of the *Star Wars* universe present in the show is not enough to hinder that experience. For anyone who’s trying to get into the franchise, this is a fun place to start.

So, whether you like watching a warrior who finds himself four-to-one in a fight and says “I like those odds” or a new dad who’s trying to figure out how to parent and protect a 50-year-old baby, there’s something for everyone in *The Mandalorian*. It’s got action, feel-good and funny moments, and a great amount of suspense. Plus, the second season is coming this fall, so there’s plenty of time to prepare for the greatness that’s to come.

As the Mandalorians say: this is the way. ★

PHOTOS OF THE WEEK

Familiar snowy scenes photographed
by Abby Weeks ‘23 (right) and
Sydney Jameson ‘20 (below)



A Greater Love



COURTESY OF ROSS ATHERTON

OLIVIA BULLOCK

Valentine’s Day suggests connotations of romantic love, gigantic boxes of chocolate, and red flower bouquets. That is all fine and dandy. I have always appreciated the festivities that come hand in hand with the holiday of Valentine’s Day. I enjoy a good Valentine’s Day, or “Galentine’s Day” (am

I right ladies?), but I can’t help but think that there might be something wonderful and of greater depth behind the holiday of love. As a Christian, I see this holiday as an opportunity and even a challenge to remember how amazing love really is. “What is love? Baby don’t hurt me, don’t hurt me, no more” (Haddaway). Love is a term that can actually be defined. We know that God is love (1 John 4:8). God actually personifies love itself. In the familiar “love chapter” of the Bible (1 Cor. 13:4-7), we find out that love is “...patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it

does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” When I consider God’s standards for love, I find myself “falling in love” with this biblical kind of love. If someone is kind to me, patient with me, protects, hopes in, and even perseveres with me, then I feel treasured. This is a more radical love than what Cupid and our American culture talk about. The world tells me I am lovable

when I am perfect and can do and be all the right things. But the Bible says that “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8). Notice that God initiated the love relationship with us, and he demonstrated his love, he didn’t just talk about it. God was patient with me and drew me to repentance with his kindness (Rom. 2:4). There is no record of my wrongs when I am viewed through the blood of the Lamb. God does demonstrate a life changing and life-saving love. I am compelled to live my life abiding in this kind of love. A greater Love draws me to himself. A better Love made a way, when there was no way. Are you interested in this kind of love? Repent, believe in, and live in this Love—his name is Jesus. If you do know this Love, then I “ask you and urge you to do this more and more” (1

Thess. 4:1). Have you been loving in the way you have been taught to love by our Lord and Savior? Are you easily angered with your brothers and sisters in Christ, who you are called to love? Are you proud? Do you dishonor others? Are you self-seeking? Do you keep a record of wrongs done to you by others? Well, I know that I fall short. Today, will you pray with me and ask God to help us love as he loves, on this Valentine’s Day? ★

Olivia is a senior majoring in Bible.

“When I consider ‘love’ when it comes to God’s standards, I find myself ‘falling in love’ with this kind of love.”

Valentine’s Day, Idolatry, and Grace



COURTESY OF CALEB FESMIRE

CORY MESSERSCHMIDT

For some, Valentine’s Day is a great time to bond as a couple and express sacrificial love. For others, it’s a day to buy ourselves candy and make fun of the freshman couples. Sometimes, we can get caught up in the seeming importance of it and mis-order our lives. Personally, as a single person, I can overemphasize the importance of finding a significant other. It’s easy for me to spend too much time and effort pursuing a relationship – to the point that it occasionally overshadows my re-

lationship with God. If you’re in a relationship, perhaps you love giving gifts to your significant other, but aren’t thrilled about giving to a ministry doing God’s work. As fallen human beings, it’s easy for our desires to become disordered. Recently, I have been studying Psalm 78. This was written by Asaph as a “didactic” Psalm, intended to teach something. This study has been particularly convicting, and I think some of the principles Asaph lays out are helpful to think through. Asaph uses Israel as an example of what not to do. They have just been miraculously delivered from Egypt, and God has continued to sustain them in the wilderness by providing them with food and drink. Despite His love and care for them, Israel’s hearts were hard. In one particular episode that Asaph records, God provides

food to Israel; He “rained down manna upon them to eat” (v. 24). He also gave them meat. However, this meat was both providence and judgment. Those who ate were killed by a plague. The grumbling and dissatisfaction of the people incurred the wrath of God. Now, a cursory reading would seem to indicate Israel turned back to God after He judged them. After all, they searched diligently for Him (v. 34), right? Continuing to read, we see a deeper issue. Verse 36

“As fallen human beings, it’s easy for our desires to become disordered.”

“Personally, as a single person, I can overemphasize the importance of finding a significant other.”

tells us that “they deceived Him with their mouth, and lied to Him with their tongue.” I believe they very probably said and did all the right things. They might have been the marginal Christian today who shows up to church on a Sunday and worships because “that’s what Christians do.” They had the externals correct, but “their heart was not steadfast to Him.” God wasn’t their first love. Israel remained hard-hearted, and we are told they eventually turned to idolatry (v. 56-58). What caused this? Why did God’s chosen nation, miraculously delivered and given sustenance by Him during their wandering, turn so easily from Him? Verse 42 gives us an answer. “They did not remember His power, The day when He redeemed them from the adversary.” Israel forgot the things that God has done from them, and became stubborn and rebellious

like their fathers before them. Asaph gives us an inherent correlation between remembering God’s power and His redemptive work, and obedience. He continues, saying that they forgot all the different things God had done to bring them out of Egypt. Their affections and obedience should have been directed towards God for all He had done for them, but they looked elsewhere. Today, we can be like the Israelites – we can forget what Christ has done for us on the cross, dying for sins, and our obedience can become shallow. If we forget the cross, we can have the disordered desires of the Israelites and put things before God. Fortunately, there is forgiveness in Christ. We’re told that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive them and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I’m thankful my idolatry doesn’t have to lead to condemnation. ★

Cory is a sophomore majoring in business administration and accounting.



The mission of the Houghton Star is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have characterized Houghton College since its inception. This will be done by serving as a medium for the expression of student thought and as a quality publication of significant campus news, Houghton area news, and events.

The Good, the Bad, and the Lovely



COURTESY OF JOHANNA FLOREZ

CHRISTIAN MILLER

When asked to give my opinion on Valentine’s Day, I was surprised, mostly because I never thought much of it. When first I began to consider the holiday, I found naught, which is to say, no opinion. I supposed that, in its most basic sense, the function of the day was to celebrate our

love and appreciation for significant others. There is a downside – of course – being that for those lacking and thus wishing thereof, the day might naturally be less a celebration and more a lamentable and unwished reminder. Of course, that very sentiment has been converted into a joke (perhaps to distract from the distressing truth). But really, I began to wonder how such a thing as Valentine’s Day came about in the first place. Unfortunately, due to the constraints of other academic tasks, I spared just a moment to review the history of Valentine’s Day according to the life-saving Wikipedia (a.k.a. the approved flotation device). It appears the namesake is several early martyrs of the Christian faith. The romantic association first comes to us from the celebration of an engagement between King Richard II of England to Anne of Bohemia in the year 1381; perhaps that lessens some of our enthusiasm, although for others

“I believe it is always good to have those special occasions to set aside a little time and give a little significance to persons and emotions that matter most to us.”

(myself a historian) perhaps it actually increases our appreciation for the unusual day. Either way, it has become a modern phenomenon very conscious to our minds and certainly very prevalent in Targets and comedy TV shows. Perhaps even the day itself may cause break-ups (for those of us who fail to remember) or perhaps it may bring us closer together (for the prescient sort). Thus, being such a prominent and desired (or undesired) element of our lives, it seems the ramifications can come in many forms (hopeless and depressed romantics as well as happy young couples, for starters). Finally, returning to my personal opinion appearing to be relevant, I settled upon this view: that Valentine’s Day is a nice (in the dictionary sense) day. I believe it is always good to have those special occasions to set aside a little time and give a little significance to persons and emotions that matter most to us. Much like Mother’s Day and Father’s Day, Valentine’s Day provides the opportunity to take one day out of the year to show our deep appreciation for those persons

who mean so much and do so much for us. It is an opportunity to show our especial appreciation for those persons who matter most to us in a romantic capacity. We have a tradition of making special days out of special things, and to me that seems a good thing. So, whether you wake up on February 14th and say, “I love you,” or “c’est la vie,” I hope you will either take the opportunity to express your love to your significant other, or instead laugh, make a joke, and smile, until that day arrives and you are on the happy end of it. ★

Christian is a junior majoring in business and history.

The Couple Problem



COURTESY OF BRYCE PRESTON

AARON MOORE

Imagine with me. You’re walking down the hall, on your way to class. You’ve got three minutes to get there. There’s a stream of people walking opposite you on your right. There’s a wall lined with lockers to your left. There are two people walking side by side in front of you. Not just any two people, oh no. A couple. They are talking to each other, probably saying sweet

and meaningful things. They start slowing down. You have to slow down too. They keep slowing, and slowing, and slowing, until they come to a complete stop. You are forced to stop behind them. There’s no way out. You can’t fit the crowd on your right, you can’t phase through the wall on your left. You can’t walk through the couple because that’s awkward. You are trapped. You scream inside, for you do not know what to do. Though this is not my story, I resonate with it, as I am sure that many of you do also. Couples everywhere are obstacles between us and where we would like to go. Whether they are walking slowly together hogging up all lanes of traffic, saying sweet things to each other in the dining hall within earshot of everyone else, or making out so

“You scream inside, for you do not know what to do.”

much that we don’t know what their faces look like, couples get in our way. And now, with the arrival of that dreaded date of February 14th, they will be all the more annoying. Couples will be EVERYWHERE! Not only will the existing couples be hounding the candy aisles, but single people will be searching to become a couple! On this tragic day of all days, what are we to do? How do we solve the couple problem? One way to deal with this problem is to incorporate the

We could instead make a holiday that celebrates singleness and the loss of love. This day would be August 14th and we would call it Saint Pancras’ Day. This is in honor of the Roman Christian who was beheaded for his beliefs. This symbolizes the separation of the couple. There will also be festivities. Kids will hand out little notes that say, “I like you as a friend,” little candy hearts will say “It’s over,” and smash hits like “Dancing with Myself” by Billy Idol will be blaring. Single people will be free to express their singleness and couples would be encouraged to end their relationships for the festivities. During that blessed day, keep in mind the meaning of the season: you don’t need a partner pulling you down. You’re fine. You’re happy with who you are. You’re just bottling up your emotions under several layers of irony to cover up what you truly mean. Never forget. ★

Aaron is a senior majoring in philosophy.

“Couples everywhere are obstacles between us and where we would like to go.”



Artist of the Week

Alicia Cline // Senior Studio Art Major



I became an artist because it is the only thing that I've ever found truly interesting. It's the only thing that I can see myself happily doing for the rest of my life. I have a tendency to fall for every new medium that I try. Currently, I am working through how to create a sense of cohesion within my work while utilizing different mediums.

