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Coffee, Chocolate, Conservation

Amelia Brown ('25)

Everyone knows Eli Knapp loves birds, but at the Coppa Conservation event at 7 p.m. on September 23, Knapp will share about his love of wolves, which began as a child and led him to Yellowstone National Park as an adult.

"Some of us outgrow our childhood interests and some don't," he said.

Knapp is a part of the group that did not outgrow their childhood interests but rather he turned them into his career. Today he is a professor, birder, field botanist, and animal expert. As Knapp studies the interactions between the environment and humans as he did in East Africa, the importance of conservation has



Coppa Co. Coffee House

COURTESY OF RYLEE ARCHAMBAULT

never left his mind.

"To diminish the world to just us, or just a few species, diminishes us and the expression of God's glory," he said.

Human's ever-increasing impact on the environment has led to habitat destruction and

loss of biodiversity, thus leading to less opportunities to encounter God's creation.

Brian Webb, the director for the Center for Sustainability, describes the purpose of the Coppa Co and Center for Sustainability event.

"We are hoping to

bring awareness to conservation issues, such as biodiversity and animal protection, and how our purchasing of items like coffee and chocolate can have a positive or negative effect on biodiversity," Webb explains.

Students that follow the Center for Sustain-

ability on Instagram can receive a free flight tray of Fair Trade coffee. Other drinks from Coppa Co are also available for purchase. All other community members can purchase coffee flights for four dollars. Endangered Species Chocolate, a brand that prioritizes conservation through donations and sustainably sourced ingredients, will be available for tasting.

Elijah Studt, a freshman, explained he will be attending the event because "I want to know what difference I can make" to conserve natural resources.

After an hour of live music from Selah Kurtz and Linette Taylor, Knapp will share stories about the animal en-

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Changes to Residence Hall Life

Jax Johnson ('23)

Fall semester has come to Houghton University and students have settled into their respective housing locations. While every year brings new beginnings, this year provided more than previous years with the dorm changes for the '22-'23 academic year. Due to the renovations in Shenawana, Lambein has been temporarily converted into a men's dorm, which, in turn, has made Gillette the only women's dorm this year.

Students like sophomore Jacob Holmberg are happy with these changes, saying, "Lambein is an upgrade to



Gillette Hall

COURTESY OF RYLEE ARCHAMBAULT

Roth. The rooms are bigger, there's more storage, and the showers are twice as big. It's also nice not having to walk up Roth hill every day. It makes me understand why girls outweigh the guys here at Houghton."

Others like junior Sarah Rider, a previous Lambein resident, are embracing their new

home. Rider discussed that she has enjoyed events such as the Great Gillette Race and the overall liveliness that comes with the new combined women's dorm.

"I have been so grateful to have been invited into the Gillette community and really like having all the girls living in

one dorm," she said "It feels more full in there and there are more people around and opportunities to do things with others."

Senior Izzy Murch, who was previously a resident assistant in Lambein and is now a Gillette RA, has bitter-sweet feelings toward the transition.

"While I was initially pretty sad about moving to Gillette my senior year after living in Lambein for the last three, I've found that the ability to connect with all on-campus women in the same residence hall has been incredibly rewarding and fun," she said. "Living in a new place has the RA position fresh for me and has given me the opportunity to work with 13 amazing women, which would have never happened if I still lived in Lambein. I still miss my creekside view, though!"

Senior Kathryn Groff, another Gillette RA who has moved over from Lambein, has shared her thoughts on her new experiences. "It definitely

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Meet the Staff



Megan Brown

Co-Editor-in-Chief

Megan serves as the co-editor-in-chief during this fall semester before she graduates in December, with degrees in Writing and in Communication with a concentration in Media Arts and Visual Communication. In addition to the STAR, she consults in the Writing Center. When Megan isn't applying to jobs, she's writing fiction, bopping to Harry Styles, and chatting with friends. ★



Victoria Hock

Co-Editor-in-Chief

Victoria is a senior double majoring in writing and communication. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, writing and watching TV. In addition to working for the STAR, Victoria is also an Intern in the Admissions Office. Victoria has been a frequent contributor to the STAR's News section since her freshman year, and is excited to step into a Co-Editor-in-Chief role after having served as the News Editor last year. ★



Josh Carpenter

News Editor

Josh is a junior who is double majoring in Communications and Writing. After graduating college, he plans to become a journalist with the dream to later become a novelist. Writing fiction has always been his passion but he's recently become infatuated with the world of networking in journalism. ★



Rylee Archambault

Photo and Media Editor

Rylee is a senior majoring in Communications with a Double Focus in Media Arts and Visual Communication and Integrated Marketing Communication. She is currently a freelance photographer and serves as the Houghton STAR's photo and media editor. In addition to the STAR, she is also a TA and proctor in the Mac Lab. ★

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counters he has experienced around the fire pit at Coppa Co. If you are still on the fence of whether to attend, Knapp has already considered this possibility.

"Even if the stories fail, we still have hot chocolate and fire." ★

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is a learning experience having lived in Lambein the past three years, but it's wonderful to have previous Gillette RAs lead the way and with such patience," Groff said. "Additionally, it is an exciting opportunity as an RA to have all the women in one residence hall and focus in on what brings us together: women at Houghton, and cultivating a unique culture for future generations

of women who come to campus."

Resident Director of Gillette Hall Reagan Zelaya also expressed her excitement for Gillette's changes by saying that she is loving the opportunity to experience the unique culture of all of the women on campus, and is hoping that this experience can display a sense of unity without the division between Lambein and Gillette.

While the change in dorms has been an adjustment, it is also an opportunity for students to experience something new. Along with those new experiences are new dynamics created through different people living in a community. ★



Christian Welker

Opinions Editor and Website Coordinator

Christian is a junior majoring in History and Writing. He currently serves as the STAR's Opinion's Editor and Website Coordinator. In addition to working with the paper, he currently works at the University Library, and participates in Lyric Theater. When not doing school activities he loves writing, reading, and playing video games. ★

I Couldn't Agree Less: Debate in the Modern World



Christian Welker ('24)

I love to debate, sitting down with somebody who truly believes something I disagree with. I have spent hours sitting with friends, family, and even strangers on the internet, debating on all topics, from politics to religion, to what would happen if Time Travel was a reality.

However, it seems that as time passes, a debate has become less about exchanging ideas and more about beating your opponent in a shouting match. The "winners" of these debates are the people with a louder voice or more followers on their social media. This, combined with the echo chambers social media builds, which constantly feed people their opinions and views while blocking out alternative ones, makes it nearly impossible to share your idea without an argument and somebody feeling

hurt at the end of the conversation. It seems we have lost the ability to debate.

The added tragedy to this loss is Christianity builds an echo chamber around itself and makes it difficult, if not impossible, to effectively show the light of Christ to the people around us. Nobody is going to believe that God is love if the way they are being told is by a man screaming in their face about sin and evolution.

I believe there are two leading causes of this new idea of debate. First are the social media echo-chambers that I mentioned before. These constantly affirm that your beliefs are correct while connecting other aspects of your life to them and making you see these opinions as your identity. The second is the idea that all debates need to have a loser. We defend our positions vehemently be-

"It seems that as time passes, a debate has become less about exchanging ideas and more about beating your opponent in a shouting match."

apart from family, friends, and classmates who may have different opinions than us. We become convinced that those people are bad because they don't share the same view that we do and we don't want to associate with who we view as a "bad person." We break away from them and find more people who agree with us on everything, going deeper into the echo chamber and making it

so far as to view them as sub-human. These people become "heartless" or "too stupid to get it," clear dividing lines are drawn, and crossing those lines becomes a traitorous act.

So what do we do? How can we break ourselves out of our echo chambers and connect with those we've begun to see as less than ourselves? Over the summer, while working at a Christian Bookstore, a coworker would always tell me to "Remember their hearts," to remember that the other side is just as much of a human as you are. They don't believe what they believe because they are evil or idiotic. They have just as much heart as you do, as much love, compassion, and care for others. Pastor Wes Oden at Houghton Wesleyan Church said during a recent sermon, "When we look at someone, we need to remember, they are a child of God, made in His image." Being a child of God does not rely on being Republican or Democrat, Pro-Choice or Pro-Life, LGBTQ or Straight. Everyone is a child of God, no matter what. So remembering that is the first step to being able to communicate with the other side.

We also need to break out of our echo chambers and remember that these views don't encapsulate everything we are. Go to subreddits or Instagram profiles with different opinions than you, talk to someone who disagrees with your beliefs, don't ar-

gue, listen. Everyone has a reason for seeing the world as they do, and if we know why they think that way, their beliefs will likely become less foreign to us. Thoughts also grow and change over time. Therefore, believing that you'd lose yourself if you alter your beliefs or become friends with someone who disagrees does not make much sense. Debates can be used as an opportunity to grow your opinions and views of the world in a calm environment, as long as both parties are willing to discuss it with you with clear heads and level emotions.

Viewing a debate as an exchange of ideas instead of a fight for survival, removing yourself from echo chambers that make it hard to hear alternate opinions, and viewing the person you are talking to as a human being and a child of God instead of a heartless monster are ways that we as people can grow. We will grow our connections between people, our knowledge on the subject, and our own opinions and beliefs. While getting angry can seem inevitable, we can choose what to do with that anger, whether we lash out at our "opponent" or calm ourselves down to continue the conversation with our friend, family member, or classmate. Debating calmly and kindly will help shape your own mind and opinions and allow you to grow as a person.★

"Remember that the other side is just as much of a human as you are."

cause we are afraid if we do not, the other side will "win the debate," making our opinion, our view, and our identity wrong and, therefore, inferior.

This view is dangerous for several reasons. It pushes us

even harder to hold a conversation with someone we view as different than us. In this process, it also becomes more likely that we become more extreme in our beliefs, vilifying those who disagree with us and eventually going

Have an opinion
you want to share?

CONTACT
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SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor
should be less than 600 words

SUBMIT TO
star@houghton.edu

Christian Welker is a junior majoring in History and Writing. In his free time he loves to write, read, and participate in friendly debate with friends and family.



The mission of the Houghton STAR is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have been the ideals of Houghton University since its inception. This is 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.

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The Houghton
STAR

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Movie Reviews by Caleb Tiedemann

The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent (2022)

Directed by
Tom Gormican

Now I may absolutely adore film, but I have very high standards for what constitutes a "good" film, which is why I am always wary of films that fall into the comedy genre. However, when searching for movies to watch this year, I stumbled upon a film that goes by the name of *The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent*. After watching the trailer about a week before actually seeing the movie I was interested, and the marketing only made me more excited. So I sat down hoping to see something enjoyable and funny. Lucky for me, it was just what I wanted.

When it comes to comedy, you get a mix of movies. Many claim to be comedic, but are just worthless and unfunny outings. I am sure the first time a guy got hit in the crotch on TV was like Jesus healing the blind man to comedic writers who believed they struck gold. Now, let's not deny, that is peak comedy, but today if you see that in a movie, it will not have nearly as funny of an effect as it did ten years prior. You're probably wondering why I made this whole paragraph, but there is a point. The point being that *Massive Talent* is genuinely funny. It does not rely on cheap gags alone. It relies

on the fact that you have some knowledge about film and culture.

The movie stars Nick Cage as Nick Cage (a daring casting choice) who is running out of luck and experiencing burnout. His career is dying as well as his marriage and relationship with his daughter. On the verge of financial collapse, he accepts an offer to make an appearance at a rich billionaire's birthday party. However, there is a twist: the billionaire, Javi (played by Pedro Pascal) is a super fan of Nick Cage, as well as a crime lord wanted by the US government. While Nick is pestered for information about Javi, the two of them start to become close friends and form a wholesome brotherhood, attempting to write a movie together.

From that brief synopsis alone you can tell that this movie is already something interesting. The whole movie is one big love letter to two things: movies and film, and Nick Cage. There are multiple references to Nick Cage's wacky and wild career, from his hits such as *Face/Off* and *The Rock* to things like his voicework in *Croods*. It talks of movies, classic and non, poking fun at them and the cinematic "system." Nick Cage is just awesome in this movie, he seems to enjoy his time on screen and really sells his act. But the star of this movie has to be Pedro Pascal as Javi. The whole time he acts like the biggest nerd and

is super convincing in every way, I literally loved his performance.

The cinematography was just gorgeous as the whole movie takes place in an exotic country. The costumes were nothing special, but I just really love floral button ups so the whole movie was tailored to my choice of summer ware. The humor was funny and it had me laughing throughout the entire film. Overall, I strongly recommend the

movie. If you do not want to take it from my word alone, check out the trailer because that was enough to convince me to see it. In my mind, it is the perfect 100 minutes to kick back and put your brain on autopilot. I strongly recommend the movie with one of the longest titles ever: *The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent*.

Final Grade: 9/10 (A-)

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