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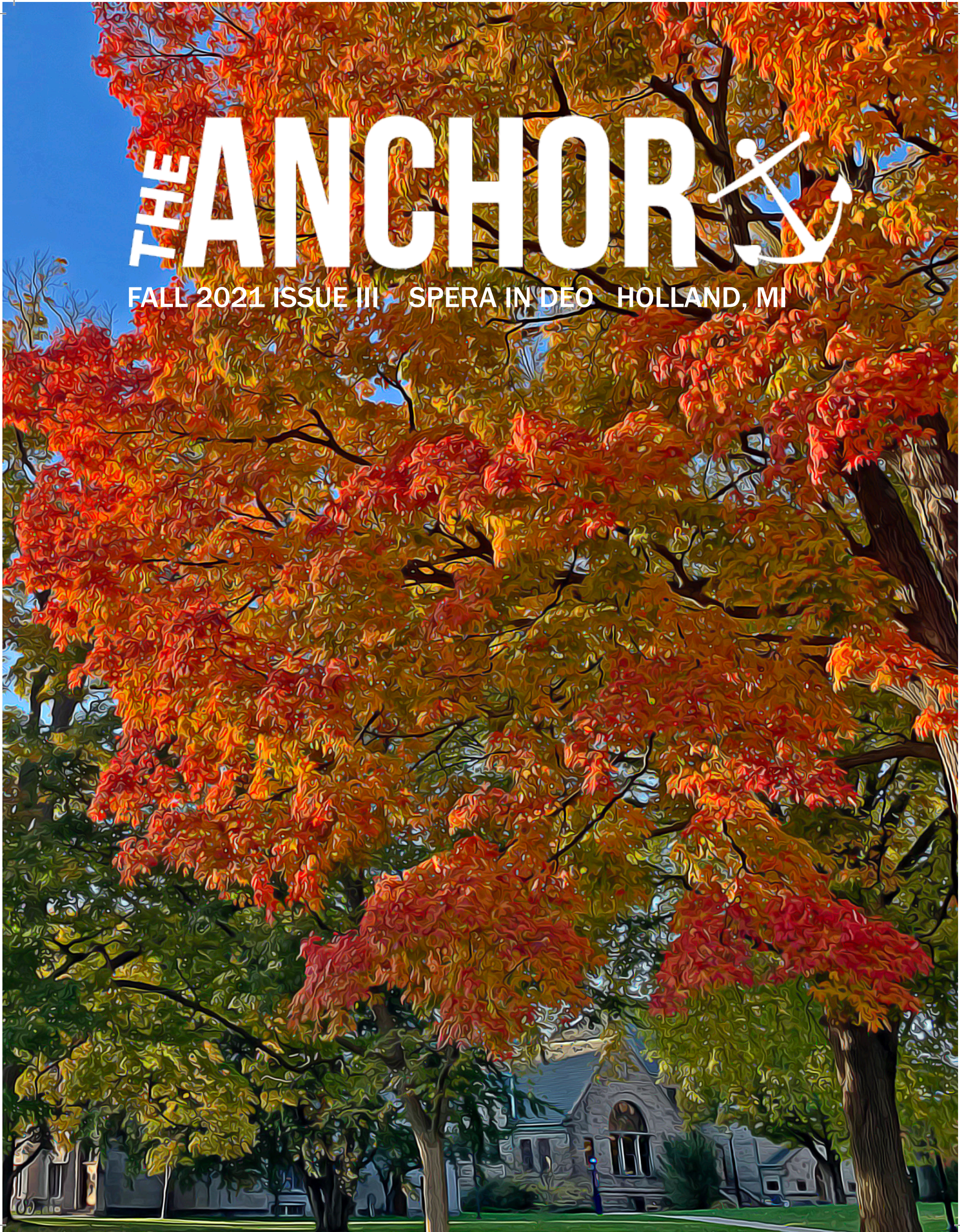
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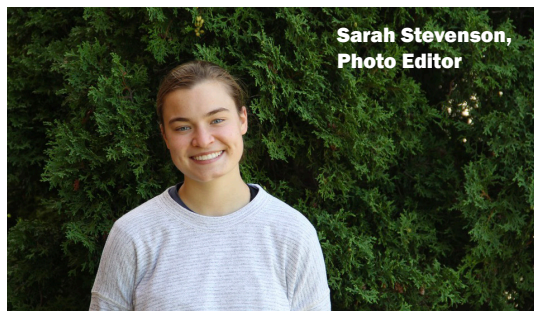
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THE ANCHOR

FALL 2021 ISSUE III SPERA IN DEO HOLLAND, MI



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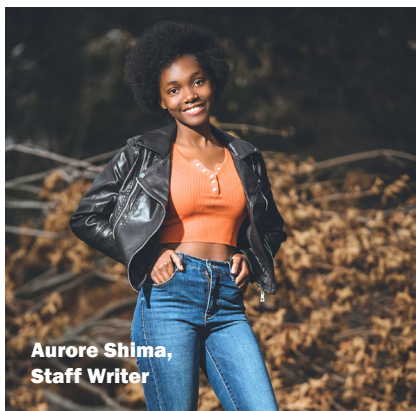
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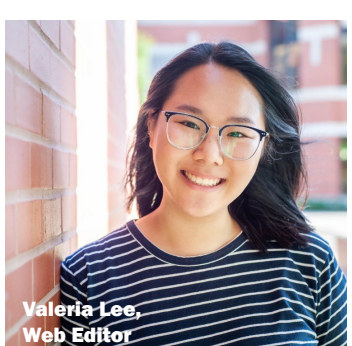
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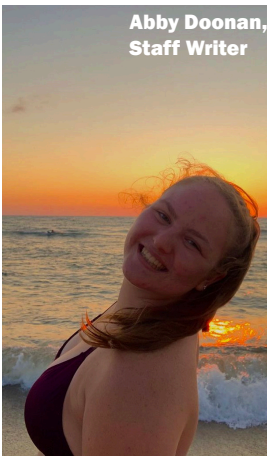
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THE ANCHOR



Last week Relient K announced their “Um Yeah Tour.” This announcement comes after a near five year hiatus from the band.

Relient K

Elijah

I had a very long, very conspiracy theory-esque letter written about Relient K's recent tour announcement and my speculations about what this means in terms of new music. I realized that I was essentially just gushing about my favorite band, which isn't an inherently bad thing, but I remembered a story that can serve the purpose just as well. Here's that story.

In 2016, Relient K put out their ninth studio album, “Air for Free.” They toured this album with fellow Christian alt-rock group Switchfoot. I was able to see their show in Indianapolis, which was quite exciting for me. I grew up on both of these bands and, while Relient K has definitely stuck with me in a more significant way than Switchfoot, both groups mean a lot to me. The other exciting part about this tour was that, with Jon Foreman (Switchfoot frontman) touring with Relient K, there was no reason “Deathbed” wouldn't be on RK's setlist.

For those of you out of the loop, “Deathbed” is an 11 minute track off the record “Five Score and Seven Years Ago,” and it ends with a feature from Jon Foreman. The song is written from the perspective of an old man dying in a hospital who, in his final days, finds Jesus and seeks repentance. As he is being taken into heaven, Jon Foreman enters, singing from the perspective of God, saying “I am the Way/Follow Me and take My hand/And I am the Truth/Embrace Me and you'll understand/And I am the Life/And through Me, you'll live again/For I

am love/I am love.” It's a beautiful ending to a beautiful song, and hearing it live is one of the greatest concert experiences I could ask for.

What made it even better was the woman in front of me singing the wrong lyrics. She didn't sing “I am love,” she sang “I am loved.” A small change that makes a huge difference. While the annoying, Relient K fanatic part of me was frustrated at this inaccuracy, the other part of me had to identify the reason for it in the first place and why that change in tense would result in such a significant difference in lyric interpretation. Maybe this woman isn't Christian and doesn't want to sing lyrics from the perspective of someone she doesn't believe in. And that's valid. Or maybe she is a Christian, and to sing “I am loved” is equally as powerful as acknowledging that God is the source of love.

I've come to appreciate this lyric change, especially since I'll never know the full story behind it. All I know is that someone had the courage to sing the wrong lyrics at a Relient K concert and made me view the entirety of an 11-minute song differently. What more can you ask for?

Maybe that's what I really love about Relient K. They don't put themselves in a box. I can go to a concert and hear a song about Marilyn Manson (that would never, ever be on a CD released by Gotee Records) or I can hear a song about what makes life tragic and heartbreaking and beautiful. And I can experience that with other people who love the band as much as I do.

I don't know what the future of

Relient K looks like, but I'm glad their back even if it's just for a tour and no album. Like you're about to read from Claire, gratitude is big right now, and not just for Thanksgiving. I'm thankful that two guys from Ohio named Matt could start a band that would shape my life. I'm thankful they're not going anywhere. I'm thankful to see them in Chicago in three months. I'm thankful for the beauty of music and the love it brings. I'm thankful to write letters for this newspaper every week. I'm thankful for a few days out of class.

Claire

Friends, I'm exhausted. I've hit the no-motivation, barely-scraping-by, craving-coffee-at-nine-in-the-evening point in the semester. I keep reminding myself that we're so close to break, but between me and my homemade pumpkin pie stands a literature paper, a newspaper print deadline, and a pile of paperwork that the Canadian government demands I produce before they will let me cross their borders on the way home. In moments like this, when my spirit feels like the droopy stems of my housemate's dying cilantro plant, it's so hard to reconnect with my reasons for gratitude.

Over the past few weeks, I and the other two residents of the upstairs floor of Blue Apartments have been filling out a gratitude journal that we've stuck to the door of our fridge. Every day, each of us has to think of one thing we're grateful for to add to the list. When I pack up and head back from the day's newspaper work, the blank space on the journal will be waiting for me at home. So what am I grateful for tonight?

I'm grateful that I get to do this job, even when I'm banging my head on the keyboard trying to get InDesign to work or editing every

Letter from the Editors

Oxford comma out of an article. It's a gift to read people's writing and know their perspectives, to facilitate their conversations and provide the issues we care about with a platform where they can be known.

I'm grateful for the chance to learn, even when I'm lost in the tangle of angled force vectors or bewildered by the enzymatic regulation of carbohydrate metabolism. The edge of my knowledge and abilities is not a comfortable place to sit, but it's the space where growth happens, and the mathematical and natural intricacy of the world is worth knowing in all of its beauty.

I'm grateful for the tree outside the window by my desk, for the way the Doxology resonates through Dimnent Chapel at the end of the Gathering, for the crunch and color of the radishes I bought at the farmer's market last weekend, for good conversations, good meals, good poetry, good friends. I'm grateful for every small and unseen way that my life is sustained and supported, and for the people who remind me that I matter. In these few days before Thanksgiving, I want to live in gratitude now—not only when I reach the end of hard times, but here in the midst of them.

Love,

Claire Buck & Eli Maxwell

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF



This may be a hard season, but my friends (and this beautiful tree) are getting me through.

Sarah Stevenson

LGBTQ+ Students Discuss Religious Trauma

Via Stebbins
Staff Writer

On November 15, Hope College's LGBTQ+ group, Prism, hosted their most widely attended general member meeting of the school year thus far: a lecture at the Keppel House about LGBTQ+ people's experience of religious trauma. Prism members gathered to view an informative PowerPoint presentation, discuss their own experiences and reflect on what action they could take to address religious trauma in the real world. Current president of Prism, Erynn Dickerson ('23), agreed to answer some questions about the talk for *The Anchor* and wished to stress that neither the Prism event nor her comments featured in this article are meant to provoke argument or stir controversy. "I think this event is important in getting the conversation started," she said. She was pleased at the turnout: "There were a lot of people there, some of whom I never expected to show up at Keppel House, and there they were for our talk about religious trauma."

The event was planned by Prism secretary and social work major Grace Kennedy ('22), who was unavailable for comment on this article. Most of the information presented stemmed from a research project she had done on religious trauma in LGBTQ+ college students. Kennedy began her talk by explaining what religious trauma is and why it is relevant to Hope in particular, as well as establishing boundaries of discussion. The talk centered around information and awareness rather than debate. Some of the other topics Kennedy went over were macro- and micro-aggressions towards LGBTQ+ students and resources available to them for dealing with religious trauma. According to Dickerson, the topic is seldom discussed and poorly understood by many students.

"Religious Trauma Syndrome" is not currently an official diagnosis in the DSM-5, and academic research into its effects and causes is still developing. It is defined as being any traumatic experience connected to organized religion that is incurred on a person. Most researchers agree that the primary cause is a person's religion or spirituality being used



Hope College Prism

to attack, control or belittle them and that it has the potential to develop in any religious community. Sometimes abuse is perpetrated by corrupt pastors and other religious authorities, whose power over members of their congregations can facilitate emotional, economic, and sexual abuse. It is also not unusual for abusive family members and partners of abuse survivors to use religion to control them. Low self-esteem and depression are often seen in survivors of this kind of trauma, because one of its most common causes is the assertion that the survivor's thoughts, feelings or actions are sinful or unnatural and will carry metaphysical consequences. It is difficult for the person suffering from religious trauma to leave the community that has traumatized them, since, in most cases, their self-esteem, social life or economic security have been tied to that group in a way that is difficult to dissolve. Keeping all of this in mind, however, the existence of religious trauma does not mean that religion is inherently a force of evil, nor do the good things that religion brings into the world erase the existence of religious trauma.

While LGBTQ+ people do not necessarily represent the majority of people with religious trauma, current research suggests that it affects them disproportionately to the general population. Many LGBTQ+ people report feeling alienation or anxiety when in religious spaces. Their stress is most often a reaction to their family or religious leaders, sometimes entire religions, telling them that their gender and/or sexual orientation are

wrong. Some report worrying for years that God no longer loves them or that they have let their family and religious community down. Christian college campuses are not exempt from the list of environments that may cause this stress. According to one study that Kennedy cited in her research, approximately one-third of four-year Christian colleges have explicit statements in their codes of conduct limiting LGBTQ+ students' access to resources or means of expressing themselves. Hope College only left this list a few years ago. "As the president of Prism I see plenty of queer people who have religious trauma and nowhere to go for help," says Dickerson.

This is exacerbated by the lack of awareness about this issue and support for people who may be struggling with it. The lack of support on Hope's campus was one of the topics discussed at Prism's talk, and most attendees agreed that having open and affirming staff, faculty and organizations with experience and training on these specific issues was one of the most

important steps. Some may wonder why it is important that explicitly affirming support for LGBTQ+ people's mental health be available — are non-affirming resources not enough? Dickerson explains, "If you're going to seek help for something, you want your identity to be validated. You want the people who are helping you to fully care about you and affirm you." No matter how well-meaning a non-affirming counselor may profess to be, she says, there is a much greater chance that working with them will exacerbate feelings of irrational shame instead of healing them.

Considering the fact that Hope College has both a rich religious culture and a sizable LGBTQ+ student body, it is unsurprising that this topic is one Prism chose to address. Some of the potential changes Kennedy suggested include hiring an openly affirming chaplain to serve at Campus Ministries, holding the organizers of on-campus events accountable for informing students about any content, speakers or activities that are likely to trigger religious trauma and training Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and Campus Ministries employees so that they would be better equipped to help students experiencing religious trauma.

If you think you or someone you know may be suffering from religious trauma as a result of your gender, sexuality or other factors, CAPS is available for counseling and Prism continues their work of creating a community for LGBTQ+ students. If you are interested in learning more about religious trauma, take a look at Van Wylen Library's online resources for more information on current scholarship.



Prism's executive board at the Midwest Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Asexual College Conference

Nhi Hoang ('24)

Hockey for Dummmies: Tripping, hooking, and... biscuits?

Emma Moore
Staff Writer

As autumn is quickly coming to a close, and winter will soon be upon us, Michigan's beloved winter athletics have one by one begun making their season debuts. The Hope College hockey team has managed to maintain a perfect record, and, with the season beginning in October and stretching all the way into February, Hope Hockey has already proved itself a team you don't want to miss. Say, however, you've always been more of a basketball fan, or you come from a state that doesn't even know what ice is. How will you ever manage to keep up with the die-hard hockey habitué? Follow along with the newest section of The Anchors' "Sports for Dummmies," and soon enough, you'll be as experienced in the world of hockey as a Canadian

Equipment and Playing Ground

Let's start out with the basics, shall we? Hockey is known most notably for the arena it's played in—an ice rink. The rink is composed similarly to the field used in soccer, including the half-way line in the center and a goal at each end, with a few minor exceptions including length, size of the goal, and ice instead of grass. Since the players compete on a frozen field, the athletes wear skates, heavy padding and are each equipped with their own hockey stick consisting of a shaft (the long top portion) and the blade (the curved bottom portion). The players use the stick to pass around a small, heavy disk called the puck, or, in hockey slang, the biscuit.

Overall Goal

Each team is allowed six players in the rink at once, including a designated goalkeeper (a defensive player that remains at the end of the rink to guard the goal). In NHL hockey, the game is divided into three, 20 minute sections. The objective of the game is to get the puck down the rink using the stick and into the opposing team's goal. The team with the most goals scored after the regulation 60 minute game wins. However, if the teams are tied at the end of the 60 minutes, the game will go into a five minute overtime period. During overtime, each team is allowed three players in the rink and a goalkeeper. As soon as one

team scores in overtime, regardless of how much time is remaining, that team is declared the winner

Beginning Play

Unlike many sports, where a coin is flipped to determine initial possession, in hockey, players fight to earn first possession in a faceoff. In the faceoff, one player from each team faces the circle in the center of the ring. A referee will be standing to the side of both players holding the puck, and, once ready, will drop it, leaving the two players to fight for possession. Whichever player makes contact with the puck and is able to maintain control long enough to pass the puck to a teammate wins the faceoff.

Positions and Players

As mentioned previously, each team consists of six players on the ice at a time. Given that hockey is so fast-paced and involves large men confined in a relatively small arena, most positions aren't limited to strictly being offensive or defensive. Working from the end of the rink up, we have the goalkeeper. The goalie is a mostly defensive player, who remains posted at his team's goal. This position is especially difficult as the puck is very small yet considerably heavy, meaning it can slide across the ice at daunting speeds— sometimes even catching air. The defensemen are more versatile players. This position from an offensive perspective involves a player leading the puck from one end of the rink into the goal of the other, however, if played by a more defensive player, this position will often stay put in his designated area toward the defending goal, a more confined yet physical type of play with the purpose of getting the puck away from the goal and to his teammates.

Right and Left Wing are considerably self-explanatory offensive and defensive positions. Located on the sides of the rink, these players sweep the length of the rink, and, if played defensively, act as guards to the opposing teams defense so that another player can advance the puck. These players are also responsible for retrieving and gaining possession of the puck when it is passed into a corner, a difficult task to perform at such a fast pace on ice.

Finally, we have the center, who is located in the center of the rink. The center is often an offensive player and must be very knowledgeable about hockey strategies and rules. The center is also usually in charge of taking faceoffs and works hand-in-hand with his left and right wingmen.

Penalties

Whether this comes as a surprise to you or not, hockey is one of the most physical sports, next to football and rugby, so of course there's no doubt players will get a little too carried away and earn themselves a penalty. The most common penalty given is the minor penalty. These can be given when a player is guilty of tripping an opponent with their stick or skates (causing them to lose their balance or obstruct a play), hooking (the act of using hockey stick to hold back or restrain an opponent), high sticking (when a player lifts their stick off

the ice above the height of the goal's crossbar), or of other physical infractions such as elbowing another player. For most minor penalties, the offending player is removed from the rink and must sit in the penalty box for two minutes, and his team must play down one teammate on the ice.

Hockey truly is a thrilling sport. Given its unique arena, bulky competitors, and speedy play, hockey provides audiences with much needed entertainment and sensory stimulation. And with Hope Hockey dominating the ice this year, what a better reason to get out and support the team. With 13 games and matches remaining, and your newly bestowed hockey knowledge, bundle up, grab some snacks, and maybe even a warm drink, make your way to our home arena at Griff's IceHouse West, and start cheering your lungs out like the hockey enthusiast you are.



Hope's hockey program has had a perfect so far in their season. They started in October and will be on the ice until February.

Hope College Athletics

Volunteers Host Supply Drive for Lighthouse Immigrant Advocates

Bess Maume
Staff Writer

You may have noticed a table in the Jim and Marie Bultman Student Center (BSC), right outside of Kletz, with various items on it. This was the collection table for the Lighthouse Immigrants Advocates (LIA) Food and Supplies Drive run by the Volunteer Services here at Hope College. The collection began on Monday, November 15 and ended on Friday, November 19. In the beginning of the week, Volunteer Services at Hope sent out an email explaining what the drive consisted of.

What Does LIA Do?

Katie DeKoster, the Advisor of the Volunteer Services at Hope, explained the goal of the LIA, "Their Operation Afghan Refugee Legal Clinic was created in order to provide free legal services to the 280 Afghan refugees in West Michigan, to transition from temporary humanitarian parole to full asylum status. LIA is striving to give all refugees a feeling of safety, of stability, and to reduce confusion around legal responsibilities in immigrating to the United States."

As found on the LIA website, the Executive Director, Eva S. Alexander wrote "Lighthouse Immigrants Advocates has built a trustworthy rapport with the community over the past five years, inspiring action to invest in the immigrant and refugees' communities. At LIA, we recognize the value of welcoming everyone; it is why we offer a holistic approach in our efforts to bring stability to West Michigan families and communities through legal services, education, and advocacy." This reiterates the mission, which is "bringing social and economic stability to West Michigan families and communities through legal services, education, and advocacy". The LIA's core values are to serve, educate, advocate, engage, partner, and support.

The 2020 impact report shows that LIA opened 222 new cases, served families from 43 different countries, prevented 79 people from losing status, obtained approval for 185 cases, and reunited 31 families who had been separated by some form of immigration policy.

What was the Goal of the Drive?

DeKoster shared why Volunteer Services at Hope decided to help this specific organization by saying, "Our overall goal for this supply

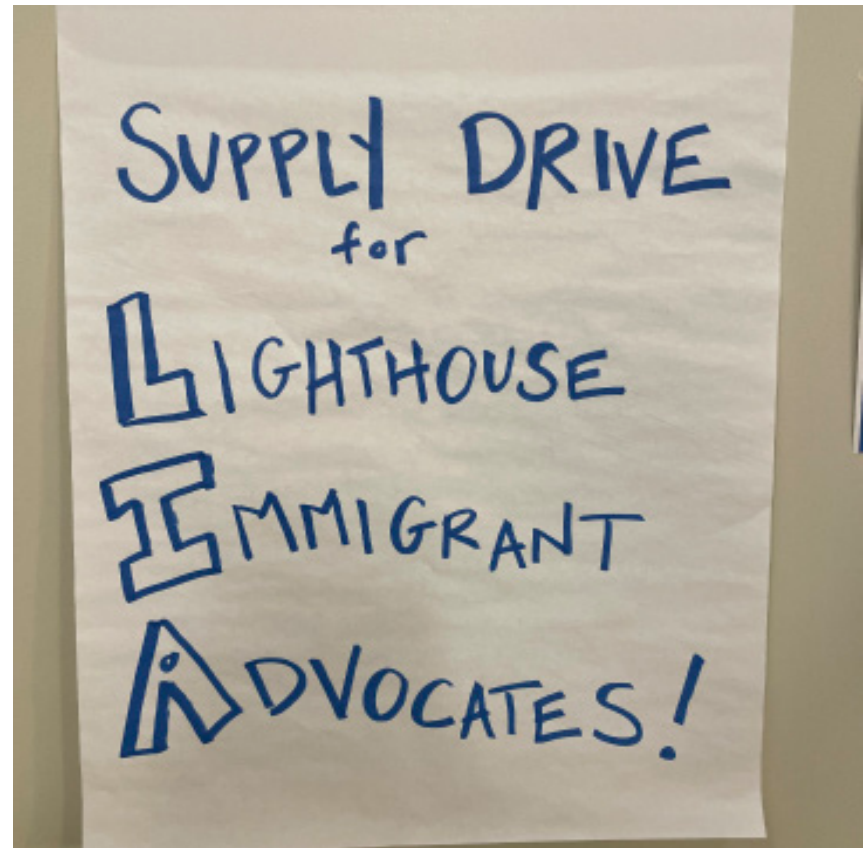
drive was two-fold. First, this is an easy opportunity for Hope students to support a local organization who is doing incredibly important work, while also supporting families who are new to our community. Second, we hope that this drive will introduce Hope students to Lighthouse Immigrant Advocates. A major part of our purpose is connecting Hope students to meaningful volunteer opportunities in the community."

How Can You Be More Involved?

Don't worry if you missed this drive, Dekoster explained, "Volunteer Services does small scale projects like this all throughout the school year. We recently saw online that Lighthouse Immigrant Advocates (LIA) was opening their "Operation Afghan Refugee (OAR) Legal Clinic" on November 3 and had put out a call for donations to support those efforts. People can absolutely donate to LIA at other times by visiting 735 Paw Paw Drive, Holland, MI, 49423 (enter off of 8th St) during normal business hours. We were hoping that hosting a drive in the student center would allow many more students to donate, by creating a central drop off location on campus!"

While explaining how else a Hope student could donate, if they missed the drive, DeKoster also said that there was a need for in-person volunteers for LIA, specifically those who are bilingual. "LIA has expressed a significant need for volunteers who are able to translate for refugees. If you are able to volunteer your time in that capacity, reach out to LIA via email at syore@lia-michigan.org."

DeKoster also shared in a request to share the upcoming events that Volunteer Services is planning for Hope "Finally, we would love for you to share about Hope Serves, our annual January day of service. Volunteer Services is partnering with Black Student Union (BSU), Latino Student Organization (LSO), Asian Student Organization (ASU), and Pan-African Student Association (PASA). We will spend the morning of January 15th, 2022 serving all over the Holland and Zeeland community. The sign-up will be shared campus-wide in December. Please let us know if you have any questions!" The Volunteer Services' email is volunteers@hope.edu.



Sign in the Bultman Student Center advertising the supply drive.

Bess Maume



Lighthouse in their own words...

Lighthouse meets the individual needs of immigrants and refugees through its low-cost legal services. Lighthouse offers legal services for a nominal fee to those living at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG). Approximately 95 percent of Lighthouse's clients fall below this level. Furthermore, Lighthouse believes that everyone is entitled to low-cost, high quality immigration legal services. For this reason, there is a sliding fee scale for those living above 200 percent of the FPG. Lighthouse's outreach and education efforts are fundamental to realizing equity and social justice for immigrants and refugees. They are the foundation for the change we seek in West Michigan. In a world

of 'fake news' and fear-mongering campaigns to vilify immigrants and refugees, Lighthouse's education services are more needed now than ever. We visit churches, organizations, colleges, businesses, and schools, giving a variety of presentations on immigration law and policy. As Lighthouse builds a foundation for change with outreach and education, Lighthouse is also implementing a variety of advocacy projects. Lighthouse's advocacy efforts are necessary to realize change and reform at the local, state, and federal levels. Lighthouse advocates through position letters to state and local representatives, national campaigns like Public Charge, and active participation in efforts to change local policy towards immigrants & refugees.

Migrant crisis in Belarus-Poland: A conversation with Dr. Joel Toppen

Carole Chee
Staff Writer

Since early November, thousands of migrants have been camped in the Białowieża Forest at the border of Belarus and Poland, suffering in freezing weather with few resources. Most of the migrants came from Iraq, Syria or Afghanistan and remain on the patch of land, nicknamed “the jungle,” because neither country will grant them access. While many of the migrants have now been given housing in a Belarus warehouse, at least eleven migrants have died due to freezing conditions. Why is this crisis occurring? Dr. Joel Toppen, a political science professor at Hope College, explained the complexities of the situation and the context surrounding it.

The Politics

“The Belarusian president [Alexander] Lukashenko had an election last summer and claimed that he won 80% of the vote,” said Toppen. This was his sixth election, and it is generally believed to be rigged, with fraudulent results. As a result, multiple sanctions were placed on the dictatorial president, mainly by members of the European Union. According to the New York Post, Lukashenko seems to be attempting to create a refugee crisis to end these sanctions and gain favor with the EU. Over the past few months, Belarus loosened its visa requirements and increased flights by state-owned airline Belavia from the Middle East.

“The understanding is that Lukashenko basically invited these folks into Belarus with the understanding that they would then be moving west to Europe,” said Toppen. Thousands of migrants came thinking they would be able to cross the border into the EU, but were instead met with resistance and frigid conditions. Furthermore, according to the New York Times, Belarusian security forces are helping migrants cross into Poland, Latvia and Lithuania, even passing out wire cutters and axes to cut through border fences. “The short version is Lukashenko is a jerk,” stated Toppen. “He’s sometimes referred to as Europe’s last dictator, and he’s holding firm to that position.”

Poland also refuses to allow the migrants to cross its border. Toppen,

who is teaching his 25th year at Hope, pointed out that “though Poland is part of the EU, it is also governed by a right-wing nationalist party that has risen to power largely through their anti-immigrant platform. We’re seeing anti-immigrant sentiment everywhere and it [has] become a way for right-wing populace and nationalist politicians and parties to gain power, a very ‘Poland first’ type of ideology.” Because of Poland’s membership in the E.U., the country represents a doorway to the E.U. Polish border guards continue to refuse entry, however, using water cannons and tear gas to avert migrants.

Migrants vs. Asylum-Seekers

The majority of migrants gathered at the borders of Belarus and Poland have travelled there from Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. While some have come fleeing from failed states and dangerous environments in their home countries, most of them are seeking economic opportunity. This is still a significant goal, but these small differences alter the resulting terminology and legal ramifications.

Dr. Toppen explained, “According to international law, if people come to a country fleeing from persecution or civil war, for example, people who have a well-founded fear of being harmed upon return to their country, that host country is required to grant them asylum. If you’re seeking to cross a border for opportunity, then you’re not protected by international asylum laws.” Since these migrants are, largely, not asylum-seekers, surrounding countries like Belarus and Poland have no legal obligation to allow them entry. Still, according to NPR, the migrants are coming from war-torn and dangerous places and searching for a better life.

Larger Context

While this migrant crisis is a tragic situation, Dr. Toppen also emphasized the greater historical and political context. About four thousand migrants are attempting to cross these borders, but even larger groups of migrants have characterized the ongoing immigration challenges to the E.U.’s borders. In 2015, hundreds of thousands of migrants gathered



Migrant families prepare for the winter ahead

New York Times

in Turkey to cross into Europe. “Germany was accommodating and willing to take in large numbers of immigrants, and Poland was resistant,” explained Toppen. “So there’s this struggle within the EU about the acceptance of immigrants.”

Toppen also pointed out that this crisis is part of a greater problem made up of multiple different global political situations coming together. These range from U.S. invasions in the Middle East to a worldwide anti-immigration sentiment created by other local and global conflicts. “There’s no incentive for a politician or a political party in the US, in Europe, Western Europe to accept refugees and people who are fleeing these very awful situations,” said Toppen, reminding us to recognize the disparities in local policy. “President Trump held strong anti-illegal immigration policies and also rode this political wave of anti-immigrant sentiment. While campaigning, Biden was critical of that, but has kept a lot of the Trump-era immigration policies, and so I think that’s a real reflection

of the domestic political situation.”

How to Help?

What can we at Hope College do to help? Toppen admits that that is a difficult question to balance. “There’s not much of an appetite in the U.S. for trying to resolve the problems of the Middle East or of Afghanistan. There’s much more of a sense of trying to wipe our hands of it.” He recommends researching international aid organizations that can readily facilitate support for refugees.

Students, faculty and staff can also advocate for a global, intentional response to the crisis. Jan Egeland of the Norwegian Refugee Council explained that “both sides of this abject power play should take responsibility for these migrants, who are vulnerable people. They are men, women and children that have now come in some kind of a political crossfire. The EU and Poland are obligated to hear the case of asylum-seekers. That’s international law. And Belarus and Russia have to stop this using them as pawns on some kind of a chessboard.”

Women and the draft: Examining equality in the military

Katie DeReus
Section Editor

The United States military has been around longer than the United States itself. Like all things in the US government, the military has been slow to adapt to the changing modern world. The military was racially desegregated in 1948, but its relationship with women has been much more fraught. It was only in 2015 that all combat positions were made available to women, and women still do not occupy all levels of military hierarchy. However, things are now progressing more quickly than they did in the past. This year's annual defense policy bill includes wording that would require women to register for the Selective Service. This bill has already been passed in the House, and the Senate should be voting on the bill in the next couple of days.

Unlike more established gender equality issues, the concept of drafting women is not exactly cut and dry. Some Senate Republicans are opposed to this portion of the bill due to the fact that it further blurs the line between gender norms and erodes family values. Some Democrats support the bill on the grounds of gender equality. That being said, it seems both sides are struggling with the tension between gender equality and potentially requiring women to occupy a space dominated by men. When speaking with the Wall Street Journal, Senator Mitt Romney said, "I believe in the equality of women and I want to communicate that men and women are equal. At the same time, I don't want to put women in harm's way in a way which would impair their safety. So these conflicting sentiments have kept me from reaching a final decision." Many Senators seem to be grappling with similar sentiments; Senator Ted Cruz is opposing the Selective Service portion of the bill due to his sense of the biological differences between men and women. Senators like Joni Ernst and Kevin Cramer believe that leaving women out of the Selective Service indicates that women are not as valuable in the context of the military as men.

Additionally, this issue has created some unlikely coalitions. Representatives and Senators who hold far-left antiwar beliefs



As of 2015, there are no limits to the positions that women can hold in the U.S. military.

Business Insider

oppose the draft in general and oppose requiring to women to register for the draft in this instance. On the other side, far-right Republicans believe that it is morally wrong to require women to fight the country's battles, appealing to traditional gender roles. More moderate Democrats and Republicans have also come together on the grounds that women could bring lots of different skills and expertise to the military, especially in non-infantry areas.

Setting aside the disposition of Congress, it is important to look at the issue based on the data available. Research done by the Department of Defense indicates that requiring women to register for the draft would increase military preparedness and defense effectiveness. Kori Schake of the American Enterprise Institute also cites the reality that, "It's insulting to suggest America's mothers and wives and daughters couldn't contribute, whether the need were rebuilding levees after a natural disaster or repelling an invasion from our shores. America's daughters should be slotted into service as their physical and emotional suitability proves capable of, just

like America's sons." Additionally, according to NPR, seven out of ten Americans are ineligible to be drafted, so increasing the potential pool of recruits would better allow the branches of the United States' military to protect the United States in a time of crisis.

That being said, there is also the question of whether or not people should be required to register for the draft at all. Since the executive branch is actively able to wage wars through executive orders, people have been required to fight wars that were not declared by Congress, which functions as "the people's voice" in the U.S. governmental system. Some people may be willing to fight wars that are sanctioned by

the U.S. people, but not wars that are just sanctioned by the President, which poses an ethical dilemma for Americans like this who are drafted. It is also important to note that men and women have physical differences, which matters when it comes to the military's physical activities and strength requirements.

On the bright side, this situation shows that perhaps not all is lost between our politicians, and that there are issues that can shift the status quo and party loyalties. It would be good if the members of Congress were more willing to think critically and less dogmatically about issues like they are with this one, especially when it comes to gender equality.



Some activists believe that the Selective Service should be removed altogether.

Modern War Institute

Kyle Rittenhouse found not guilty: Facts vs. fiction

Jonah Hill
Staff Writer

This Friday, Kyle Rittenhouse was found “not guilty” on all charges related to the shooting of three people in Kenosha, Wisconsin during the summer protests and riots of 2020. Despite the trial being fully televised and the event being captured on camera from multiple angles and sources, a good amount of misinformation has surrounded the trial and the facts of the case. This article will aim to dispel some of the rumors that have caused tension in what is an otherwise clear-cut case, albeit with important implications.

Firstly, President Joe Biden did not call Rittenhouse a “white supremacist” during the trial. This rumor comes from a tweet in September of 2020 where Joe Biden accuses former President Donald Trump of refusing to condemn white supremacist groups during the Presidential debate. Biden stated, “There’s no other way to put it: the President of the United States refused to disavow white supremacists on the debate stage last night” and accompanied his statement with a 50-second clip which included a compilation of right-wing protests and riots from across the country that had taken place in the last few years. A picture of Rittenhouse was included in this clip, but did not imply that he was

a white supremacist; rather, it was an example of the right-wing violence that had taken place.

Secondly, Rittenhouse was not carrying his firearm illegally, nor did he purchase the firearm illegally. This charge was officially thrown out in court by the judge after the prosecution themselves agreed. Kyle did not technically buy the gun himself; it was bought by a friend who drove him to Kenosha that night. When Kyle turned 18, he was planning on buying it from his friend, as Illinois law bars a 17-year-old from purchasing or owning a firearm. While Wisconsin law does say that “Any person under 18 years of age who possesses or goes armed with a dangerous weapon is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor,” the statute then continues to say, “This section applies only to a person under 18 years of age who possesses or is armed with a rifle or a shotgun if the person is in violation of s. 941.28.” The statute of s. 941.28 describes the minimum length that a gun barrel may be to apply this charge. Short barrel rifles are considered more dangerous, as they are easier to conceal, much like how handgun restrictions are tighter than rifle restrictions. Simply put, Rittenhouse’s gun was not



Rittenhouse became very emotional when he took the stand last week.

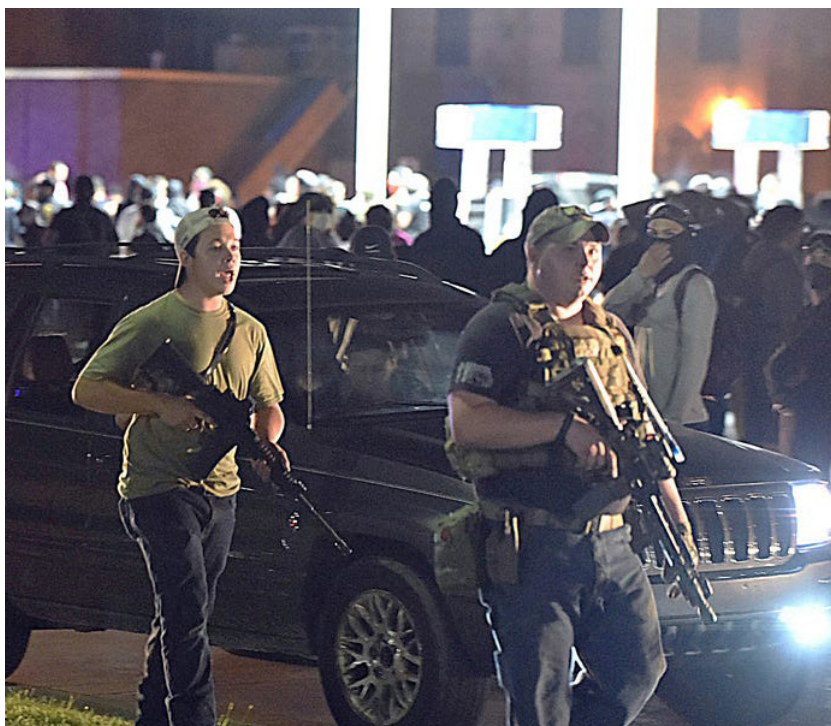
The Guardian

short enough for this law to apply.

Thirdly, and possibly most importantly, the trial was not an argument about the use of self-defense. The idea that Rittenhouse was in danger and used deadly force against attackers was hardly a point of contention during the trial. Both the prosecution and defense witnesses all agreed with the defense that Rittenhouse was in a dangerous, possibly life-threatening situation when he fired his gun. The point of the trial was whether or not self-defense should apply when you are the cause of the danger. Thomas Binger, one assistant district attorney assigned to this case, repeated his main point multiple times throughout the trial, “You cannot claim self defense against a danger you create.” This was the main disagreement of the trial: whether or not Rittenhouse created his own bad situation, and if he is allowed to kill, in self-defense, those whom he provoked. Ultimately, the jury decided that his use of self-

defense was legal in that context.

While much of the Rittenhouse case is fairly cut-and-dry, the implications that the ruling has on American society is more nuanced. Many have pointed out the differences in how the Kyle Rittenhouse case was handled as opposed to cases where people of color are jailed for decades on non-violent drug charges, or in some cases killed before they have the chance to have a fair trial. Kyle Rittenhouse had just about every benefit available to him to clear his name. Namely, he was able to afford bail due to online supporters and have competent legal support due to his well-off family. Many of these benefits are not afforded to those living in areas with less economic opportunity. While Kyle Rittenhouse may not be an example of the justice system failing, it stands out as an example of how our system can work for you if you belong to a certain demographic and have the right kind of family and community support.



Kyle Rittenhouse in Kenosha on August 25, 2020.

USA Today

The professors behind the curtains of visual and theatre arts

Sarah O'Neil
Staff Writer

The Anchor has been interviewing different faculty and staff members from the various arts departments on campus, highlighting the unique and impactful people we are privileged to learn from. This edition features Greg Lookerse, an assistant professor of art who teaches design, upper level studio classes, as well as Time Based Art and 3D design. Stephen Krebs is the Technical Director for the theatre department who is in charge of building sets and taking designs and making them a reality on stage. He also teaches the skills he has acquired to students in a class called Stage Production III.

What is your earliest memory of being involved in the arts? How did your creative journey begin?

Greg Lookerse: I remember there was one Christmas, I must have been four or five years old, and my grandma gave me this strange art set thing. It is one of the only Christmas gifts that I actually remember, and I remember playing with it the next day, and [being] fascinated. And that was my first realization that I liked drawing, which stemmed from drawing video game characters, Nintendo, comics books and a bit of that, like normal little boy interests in the 90s that led me through being creative.

Stephen Krebs: The way I describe it isn't really memory, it would be that it is my whole life. My first theatre experience was when I was only a few months old and I played baby Jesus, and it is a really hard place to go from there, after playing the son of God, to see what are the roles you are going



"Searching for a Honey Tree with Fear and Trembling," by Greg Lookerse, comprised of back brace, honey, a chair from a Catholic school and a copy of Johannes de Silentio's "Fear and Trembling." Kingston Gallery

to take and what other things you are going to do. I was probably nine or 10 when I actually started assisting with building things and getting to actually be painting the sets, building the sets, and all of that for the community theatre that my parents were involved in. Then when I went to college I never thought of it as a career, but I ended up getting my bachelors degree in engineering and then going to get my masters degree in theatre.

How long have you been here at Hope College? And what is making you stay?

GL: By and large, I think I have to say God. As in, when I flew out to interview, my wife said to me, "There is no way we are moving to Michigan" and I was like, "Yeah i know, this is a practice interview, don't worry about it." But I was enchanted by the building and the people. I had an amazing conversation with Dean Visser, and the idea of being able to teach the arts within a Christian context

really excited me. There were some weird hurdles along the way, but altogether it was God's leading and affirmation that was able to show me the potential of this place.

SK: This is my third year at Hope. I really enjoy western Michigan. It is really beautiful here. We are right by the lake, and I have plans to get a boat in the spring. I like to go hiking and because of my more normal work schedule I could get a puppy, so I can take him on hikes and stuff. At Hope, what is keeping me here and working here is just such a good theatre faculty. They are very conscious of making sure I don't get burnt out and fixing problems. There is such a caring community here. I feel more like I am cared about by everybody than anywhere else.

What do you hope to show students beyond the things in a course description?

GL: I think it is this: one of the only things you really have is your

attention. And so my hope is that through my classes students begin to pay attention to more important things, and that is difficult because sometimes students don't want to pay attention to me, but sometimes I'm not the most important thing in the room. That's why I think all of my classes are geared towards this idea of "wake up and become more aware of how your life and your body function, and how that gives you more control over the one thing that is truly yours, which is 'what do I attend to in this moment?'"

SK: I think one of the things that I am passionate about is not just the building part of it, but industry safety. In the theatre industry we joke about the phrase "safety third" but I have experienced some very horrific accidents in my career. Thankfully none of them were accidents that personally injured me, but I have known people whose careers have been destroyed and people who have died [from accidents], which is very upsetting. So I am really passionate about safety so just trying to instill people to consciously make smart, safer choices which isn't just about following the rules. We also need to take safety individually and embody it and think about it and everyone has the right to stop something they feel is unsafe.



Hope Summer Repertory Theatre HSRT's 2021 season had all sets built by Technical Director Stephen Krebs



The Arts Section staff wishes YOU good luck on your final exams and a well-deserved happy holidays!

Must-see movies this holiday season

Katy Smith
Arts Editor

“Dune”

The star-studded film adaptation of Frank Herbert’s novel, thought of as the patriarch of science fiction. The film is a box office knockout, and many theatergoers are raving about its intensely immersive experience. NPR says, “The world of Frank Herbert’s novel feels big and immersive here in a way it never has on-screen, with its futuristic spacecraft, cavernous fortresses and, of course, terrifying sand worms.” So pack up your car full of friends and see this flick in IMAX before it’s gone!



Broadway star Ariana DeBose plays the iconic Anita in this rendition of “West Side Story.” Stephen Spielberg

“West Side Story”

The next Spielberg flick is an adaptation of the 1957 Broadway musical of the same name. With a screenplay by Broadway alum Tony Kushner and a White Way star-filled cast, the film is sure to fill audiences with the same excitement as the original 1961 adaptation. Sing a do-re-mi and get those vocal chops warmed up for this classic musical.

“Spider-Man: No Way Home”

The most highly anticipated Spider-Man movie will be released on December 17, and Marvel fans will finally be able to confirm whether or not Andrew Garfield and Tobey Macguire are truly featured. With the return of Willem Dafoe’s Green Goblin, Alfred Molina’s Doctor Octopus, as well as Sandman and The Lizard, fans are on the edge of their seats waiting to see if their corresponding Spider-Men will join them. Regardless, the film returns to Tom Holland’s Peter Parker and friends in the landscape of the Marvel Cinematic Universe post-Tony Stark.

“The French Dispatch”

Wes Anderson has reentered the collective consciousness of moviegoers with his latest film



Owen Wilson walks curious moviegoers through the trailer for “The French Dispatch,” but is not the film’s definitive main character. Wes Anderson

“The French Dispatch.” If you’re a fan of Anderson, this film is being regarded as the most “Wes Anderson” film to date. With a fast moving, slice-of-life demeanor, the film, in the words of New York Times critic A.O. Scott, “is a love letter to that spirit, and also a ghost story.”

“Sing 2”

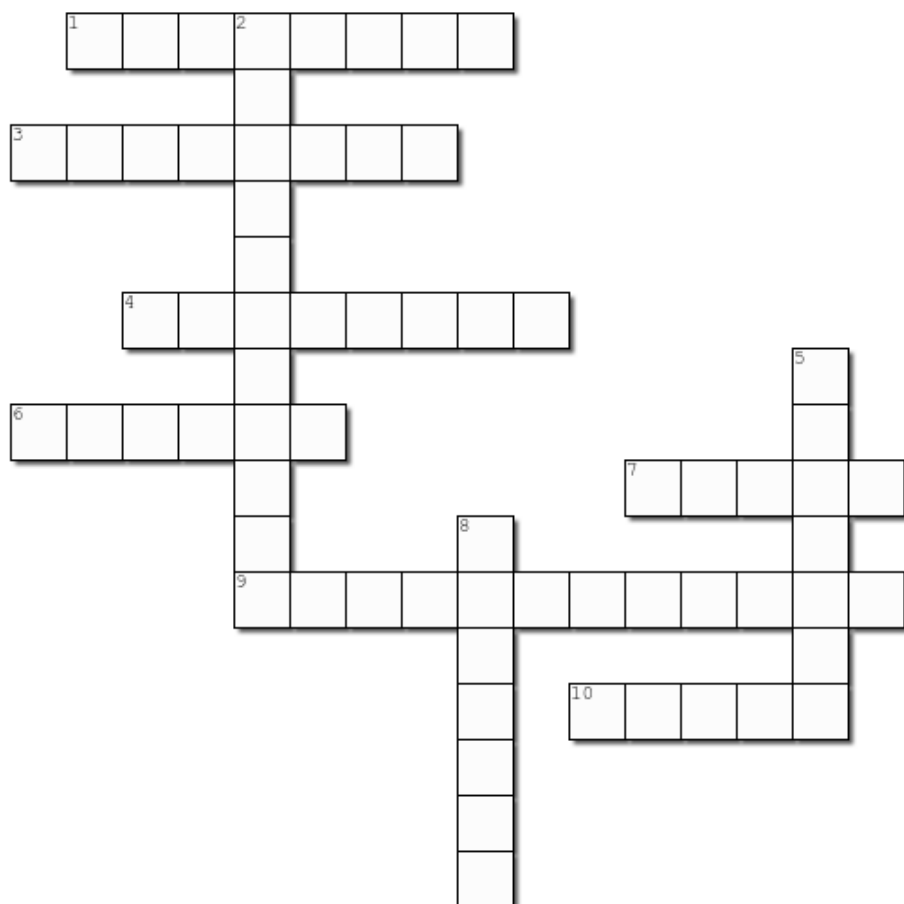
Do you need a movie to take your younger sibling to? “Sing 2” comes out on December 22 and is in line to be the children’s movie of the holiday season. It’s a sequel to the zany 2016 film about an anthropomorphic

animal singing competition that brings back most of its A-list cast.

“Spencer”

This fable centering on Princess Diana (Kristen Stewart) seems like a shoe-in for the Academy Awards. What was expected to be a biopic turned out to be an imagining of what might have happened when the princess decided to end her marriage. NBC’s Jude Sannith says, “It peels off Diana’s façade of flawless perfection, and takes us on a journey to the recesses of a struggling mind and tormented soul.”

Fall 2021 Arts crossword



Across

- This Music Department professor can be seen trilling on his flute at concerts.
- Art professor featured on the last page.
- Written by Sarah Ruhl and directed by Daina Robins, this was the second play put on by the Theatre Department.
- The last name of the Dance Department professor that graduated from Hope College in 2004.
- Department Chair who headed The Harry Borby Project in 2014.
- “Constructed Mysteries: _____ and Creative Practice” is the exhibit featured in DePree now.
- This character in “The Wolves” that tore her ACL. Hint: It’s a number.

Down

- Hope College Concert Series brought in Sammy Rae &...
- Music student known for his charm and jazzy saxophone playing. (Hint: It’s his first name.)
- The location of this semester’s H2 performance.

Include spaces in your answers

“The Bell Tower”: A journal of Christian thought

Aurore Shima and Claire Furjanic
Staff Writers

This year, Hope College is welcoming a new undergraduate student journal of Christian thought: “The Bell Tower.” By showcasing the connection between Christianity and learning across academic disciplines, “The Bell Tower” aims to create a deep Christian perspective on campus and to nurture a caring and ecumenical society here at Hope.

“The Bell Tower’ aims to create a deep Christian perspective on campus and to nurture a caring and ecumenical society here at Hope.”

“We want to invite people to explore how faith and academics connect with each other,” said Lydia Harrison (’23), the Editor-in-Chief of “The Bell Tower.” Harrison explained that the goal of the student journal is “to inspire the readers and help them think about what it looks like to engage with their faith in the work that they are doing.” “The Bell Tower” hopes that by doing so, it will be able to highlight the work that students are doing academically, as well as how it has changed or emphasized their gospel-based worldview. As a result, students will grow and develop their leadership in a globalized society by participating in an integrative learning community.

The purpose of “The Bell Tower” is to explore the intersection of faith and academics. According to Harrison, this student journal works to encourage and inspire both writers and readers “to help them think about what it looks like to engage with their faith in the work that they are doing.”

Addressing that faith can sometimes lead to isolation, Harrison shared, “It can be really easy, as a person of faith, to get discouraged in an academic environment if you feel like your faith isn’t recognized, welcomed or honored.” Recognizing that faith and academics are often separated in everyday life, “The Bell Tower” seeks to draw that connection for students and eliminate isolation.



The logo of “The Bell Tower” incorporates the image of a steeple.

blogs.hope.edu/belltower

Gerrit Wiegerink, a senior at Hope, works as an editor for “The Bell Tower.” According to Wiegerink, “The Bell Tower” is vital and needed at Hope College because it fosters community life on campus. He says, “I am always reminded in chapel that when picking a college, choose the people, not the institution.” This Christian community impacts the students by encouraging thoughtful discussions of faith.

“The Bell Tower” accepts submissions of various forms such as articles, papers, poems and even artwork. Harrison shared that they are willing to publish “anything that is engaging with an academic discipline from a faith perspective.” In addition, Wiegerink mentions that there are no prerequisites needed to submit an intellectually engaging piece of writing. Alongside submissions, the journal is also looking for students willing to work behind the scenes. “We are looking for people interested in graphic design, publishing and business-minded individuals willing to help in fundraising and advertising,” Wiegerink says.

The journal is open to everyone and welcomes students from different undergraduate levels and backgrounds. Despite being a math major, Wiegerink works as an editor for “The Bell Tower.” “If one has a passion for helping others learn and see the world

from a different perspective, they should consider joining us,” he said. Alongside different fields of study, “The Bell Tower” is for all Hope students, regardless of their theological beliefs. Despite being a Christian journal, “The Bell Tower” takes an ecumenical standpoint. Harrison explained, “We recognize that even in the Christian church, there are differences in theology and belief and we want to hold that tension.” Currently, “The Bell Tower” is working to publish pieces from a Catholic frame of thought and various Protestant frames of thought.

Openness and engagement are encouraged by “The Bell Tower.” “We are here to have dialogue and to engage,” Harrison explained, “Whatever faith background you are coming from, having a space for thoughtful, serious and honest conversation builds community and helps us all grow, think and learn.” Wiegerink built on this by saying, “I walk around Hope College wishing I could get to know everyone, but there are so many people that I couldn’t get to know them all at once and their perspective on the world. Being involved in the journal helps me interact with people through their thoughts and view of the world.” “The Bell Tower” fosters this interaction and discussion by giving students an opportunity to hear from different

theological perspectives and learn from their peers. Wiegerink says, “I encourage students to step outside their comfort zone and challenge themselves intellectually. You never know what the outcome might be and how it might influence others.”

Lastly, “The Bell Tower” emphasizes that there is no right or wrong perspective. Wiegerink says, “We are here to showcase students’ thoughts, not judge them. The journal fosters a safe and learning environment where students’ opinion and take on issues or ideals on the world is respected and honored.”

As a liberal arts college, Hope challenges students to perceive the world from perspectives other than their own. As a result, students become more capable of stepping outside of their comfort zones in order to see things from both a gospel-centered and globalist perspective. “The Bell Tower” is looking for any students or recent graduates to join them in creating an open dialogue about the intersection of faith and academics through published writing.

Keep your eye out for “The Bell Tower” launching in the spring of 2022. If you are interested in submitting a piece or are just looking for more information about “The Bell Tower,” visit <https://blogs.hope.edu/belltower/>.

A deep dive into the Phelps Scholars Program

Aurore Shima
Staff Writer

As a liberal arts institution, Hope College has various programs available for students to help them excel at their future endeavors, such as the Phelps Scholars program. The Phelps Scholars program is a community-based learning environment that fosters interaction with different cultures and encourages students to learn about different backgrounds.

Nancy Sierra, a Hope graduate who works as an intern for the Phelps Scholars Program, described the program as a one-year community that encourages integrative relationships and discussions. Students who participate in this program live in the same hall to strengthen the community aspect associated with the program.

The Phelps Scholars program aims to equip students to thrive in a diverse world and become grounded in their own identities. To that end, Phelps Scholars take a First-Year Seminar focused on race and identity and are also required to take either Encounter with Cultures or Introduction to American Ethnic Studies in the spring of their first year.

Additionally, the program offers various cultural immersion trips. For example, Phelps Scholars visited a Bosnian cultural center and mosque in Grand Rapids.

The Phelps Scholars Program also emphasizes the importance of community involvement. Each Phelps Scholar participates in community service in various locations throughout the Holland area. Sierra described her

experience within the program as “transformational.” As an out-of-state student, Sierra said that the program provided her with a community of people who were open and eager to learn, allowing her to foster meaningful connections and relationships.

As a Latina woman, Sierra says the Phelps Scholars Program opened her eyes to issues and discussions of race. In high school, she was a part of the majority and in an environment with people from similar backgrounds, which did not allow her to step out of her comfort zone. Being in the program allowed her to grow in her identity and understanding of racial issues. The living-learning community provided her with a support system where she could interact with students.

“It is a safe community where one can share their thoughts, and everyone understands by respecting each other’s perspectives, which is comforting”

Similarly, Simone Greene, a freshman majoring in dance, says that she chose the Phelps Scholars program because it offered opportunities to learn about diverse backgrounds and teach others about her culture, something that she is passionate about. Greene says that her favorite part about being a Phelps Scholar is the insightful discussions in her First-Year Seminar course. “It is a safe community where



Phelps Scholars outside a Bosnian cultural center. Phelps Scholars instagram page.

one can share their thoughts, and everyone understands by respecting each other’s perspectives, which is comforting,” Greene said.

Sierra encourages students to involve themselves in this program, suggesting even students not in the program take either Encounter with Cultures or Introduction to American Ethnic Studies. She urges incoming students to join the program, especially if a student is nervous about finding a community at a predominantly white institution or is curious about learning about different cultures and combating racism. The Phelps Scholars Program also allows students to network with alumni, which opens up opportunities around and outside of campus.

On the other hand, Greene suggests that the course “Racial Identity” offered by the program, should become a general requirement that all students take. She says, “We signed up to partake in this program and take the class, but other students should be open-minded and take this course as well. It is beneficial to all people, especially students that lack interactions with different cultures or know very little about racial issues.” In addition, Greene states that within the program, she has gained knowledge about religious identities, racial identities and building interfaith communities. Greene mentions that students that are not a part of the program are missing out on learning from diverse cultures and stepping out of their comfort zones. They miss out on learning about different issues and their cause and how to find resolutions to conflicts in our global society.

For the Phelps Scholars

members, Sierra encourages them to be vulnerable and take advantage of what the program offers. “Don’t be afraid to ask tough questions and participate in the in-class dialogue,” she said.

Greene agrees that having a community filled with diverse backgrounds lessens the cultural shock that one might experience being at predominantly white institutions. Greene also says that students should involve themselves in the opportunities given to them because it helps them learn about various cultures and how they came about. “Don’t participate out of force; instead, see it as an opportunity to better yourself,” she said.

“Don’t be afraid to ask tough questions and participate in the in-class dialogue”

The Phelps Scholars Program is a community filled with diverse students willing to learn about each other’s cultures, traditions and backgrounds. These students are eager to educate themselves on race and have necessary, difficult discussions about issues facing the world and they do so not only inside the classroom, but also outside of it. This program is beneficial to all students and allows them to learn how to interact with diverse backgrounds, molding these students into the future leaders of our global society.



To foster community, Phelps Scholars live together in Scott Hall. hope.edu

How hunting can help us reconnect with nature

Nolan Kasher
Guest Writer

Since the beginning of time, mankind has hunted. The only way to survive was to hunt and gather, hence the first humans were called hunters and gatherers. Over time, we as a civilization have shifted heavily from our hunting and gathering origins to easier, energy-preserving alternatives. Instead of going out into the wild to kill and find our food, we can drive to our nearest Meijer or Walmart.

Throughout my life, I have never considered hunting. With balancing a schedule full of school and sports, the very little extra time I had left didn't include walking around in the woods looking aimlessly around for some form of life behind the various types of trees and leaves. It wasn't until two of my hometown friends decided they wanted to get a new bow and lent me their old one to just try out the sport that I knew this was something I could really connect with. People believe hunting is just about killing an animal, but it is so much more than ending an animal's life. In the times that I have gone hunting, there are a few lessons that I have learned.

The following are reasons why someone like you should try hunting. The first reason is that it teaches patience. The majority of



A deer during Michigan hunting season The Nature Conservancy

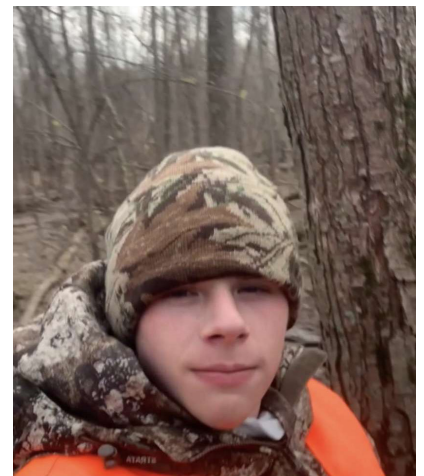
the time spent hunting consists of sitting or standing as still as you can, either in a tree or on the ground, just hoping not to get noticed by a possible surrounding animal. Being constantly on the edge of your seat trying not to fidget or make any sort of noise, as well as to be able to pay attention closely to your surroundings requires an immense amount of patience. The more patience you have means the less likely you are to move around, and the higher possibility of seeing an animal.

The next reason is to disconnect and get away from the digital world. The world we live in today is oversaturated by many different forms of technology. We are

constantly overrun with electronic devices. I never knew how much going a day or two without technology would benefit me. While being out in the woods with no service to connect me to the rest of the world, I found myself doing a lot of self-reflection and noticing the beauty that God gave us before mankind overran it with buildings and infrastructures. Some people do or notice these things without going into the woods or getting rid of technology, but when hunting, I found I am more aware of what I do and the thoughts I have without the imitation endorphins that technology provides for our society.

Lastly, hunting helps us connect to our food. Nowadays, most

people don't know where their food is from or just believe their food comes from the grocery store. Seeing food go from nature to the table is a very fascinating way to have a deeper understanding of how we survive. The ability to kill an animal in the most humane way possible and witness the transformation that our ancestors did for thousands of years really is a humbling experience. Although I haven't had that much experience hunting compared to others, these are a few lessons I have learned while hunting and reasons why you should try it out. Before you say no, you can't knock it unless you try it.



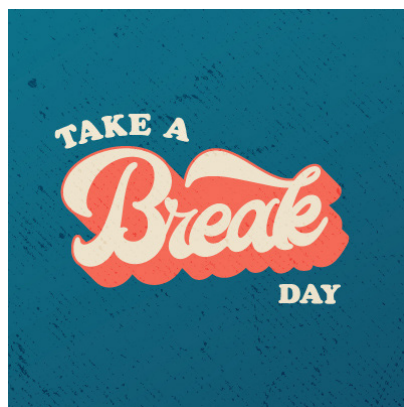
Nolan Kasher
Nolan Kasher hunting

Last year's schedule offered benefits. So why not go back?

Claire Dwyer
Staff Writer

Amid the uncertainty of last year with the COVID-19 virus surging and a tumultuous election season, a lovely reprieve came in the form of an abnormally long winter break, with final exams completed before Thanksgiving. Although unorthodox, this break was just what students needed, and not just in 2020.

The nearly eight week break that was extended an additional two weeks due to concerns about COVID-19 was a welcomed break for many students. The benefit of spending quality time with loved ones, especially during the holiday season, was a huge boost for the mental health of students. An extended winter break that would allow for finals before Thanksgiving could bring the same benefits every



Hope College
Break Day advertisement

year, allowing students enough time to fully relax before the next semester and to truly enjoy the holidays.

Although the accelerated semester was indeed stressful, many students

I have talked to have professed a willingness to begin the school year a few weeks earlier in order to avoid an accelerated semester, but to also have exams before Thanksgiving. The long semester feels taxing regardless of a four day weekend for Thanksgiving being added in the middle or not. Having an extended break to look forward to at the end of November would help with stress at the end of the semester.

An unexpected positive was the ability to use the break as an opportunity to earn some extra money before the next semester started. Many of my peers were able to earn significantly more money and have better job stability than during a normal break. This was critical for many students, alleviating some

financial pressure before the next semester started. Additionally, for many businesses, having students who could work throughout the entire holiday season must have been exceptionally helpful, especially with labor shortage concerns across the country. Although I have plans to work some during the upcoming break, being available to work an additional couple of weeks adds a lot of flexibility for many students. Last year, I personally used this extended break to volunteer with Meals on Wheels, an opportunity I would not have normally had the time to take advantage of.

Another benefit is that it allows students who live farther away to only have to travel home once during the holiday season. For students who



live far away, driving or flying home twice in three weeks during the busiest travel season of the year is a hassle at best and impossible at worst. I know of multiple students who are unable to fly or drive home for Thanksgiving because of the distance, time and cost. This is a

difficult disadvantage of being far away, especially for freshmen, who are already adjusting to being away from home for the first time. If Hope College wants to appeal to students who may live farther away, this could be a great benefit that draws in more students from across the country.

Finals before Thanksgiving could allow for these students to only have to worry about going home once and not worry about having to miss any part of the holiday season with loved ones at home.

Administration made a wise decision last year to alter the fall

semester schedule, and it is a schedule with numerous benefits to students and staff that is well worth revisiting for years ahead. The rallying cry since COVID-19 has long been “back to normal”, but some elements of the “new normal” may be worth considering.

A case in defense of literally everyone

Jonah Hill
Staff Writer

Is there anyone in the world who is truly irredeemable? Can you think of someone who did terrible things and had no justification or excuse for acting that way? Generally speaking, we all have people that come to our minds when asked that question. For some, it may be historical dictators like Stalin or famous criminals like Charles Manson. For others, it may be someone who has wronged them in their personal lives. Most everyone can agree on this, however: those who consistently harm others for their own personal gain are bad people.

Unfortunately, it's rarely that simple in a court of law, or even in the court of public opinion. Determining whether or not someone is at fault is a tricky task that involves diving into their past and their brain to figure out why they do what they do. A common way lawyers will defend their clients is to have them plead insanity. This tells the courtroom that the defendant was psychologically unable to understand laws and morals, and they should not be held accountable for the crimes they committed. Another way a defendant can be cleared is by proving coercion or entrapment. This usually applies to the government. For example, a police officer can't go undercover and harass someone on the streets, asking that person to illegally sell the officer a prescription drug that the officer claims to desperately need. Police officers cannot pressure someone into doing something that they wouldn't normally do. Most people would agree that neither the clinically insane nor the legally entrapped deserve to “pay for their crimes.”

However, this way of thinking implies quite a bit more than just lighter sentencing. Speaking ethically, regardless of what the law says, if you can't be held morally accountable for something an officer



Can we every truly judge a person fairly?

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coerced you into doing, then what would be different about something a friend or family member coerced you into doing? If anything, the friend or family member would have more influence over you than the “random passerby.” They could probably get you to do even worse things than prescription drug deals with enough pressure.

In the same way, societal pressures can be even more coercive than interpersonal ones. If you found yourself in a place in life where you couldn't afford food for yourself and your family, then stealing food from those who have an abundance may, in some circumstances, be morally justified. Living in an area with no opportunities to work or leave may lead to people dealing drugs, or even buying them, to escape their hopelessness.

Similarly, the ability to plead insanity shows us that brain function affects moral accountability as well. Should someone who was born

with predisposed violent tendencies be held to the same standard as someone who's never so much as squashed a bug? Even if they weren't born with it, being raised in a violent home leads to kids becoming more violent as they grow up and at no fault of their own. Ultimately, someone's actions and personality are wholly determined by factors of both nature and nurture, neither of which they have any control over.

If you're still not convinced, ask yourself this: what aspects of my personality and disposition did not come directly or indirectly from the way my brain naturally works or the way I was raised? It's unlikely you'll find an answer. It's a principle of psychology that every action we take is for a reason. Internal functions and external stimuli determine how we react to things and how we are changed afterward. In this way, every “bad person” that exists is just a victim of circumstance, someone who is either misunderstood or

simply raised wrong. It certainly doesn't sound like a fun thing to believe, as it simultaneously robs us of both free will and all accountability for our actions, but from a secular perspective, it's the logical endpoint of the current moral framework we use.

Many people, when asked why they believe the things they do about morality, will say that morals come from the religion they follow. Certain things are forbidden or required because the god or prophet of their religion forbids or requires them. This is one worldview that skillfully sidesteps secular predestination, but unfortunately cannot be relied upon in our legal system. The separation of Church and State requires the government to morally justify their laws independently from any religious teaching.

This view of accountability isn't exactly helpful in the legal system though. The idea that no one is at fault for their actions isn't how we process the world, and certainly isn't very helpful when trying to keep dangerous criminals off the streets. The biggest reason this issue is important arises in interpersonal relationships. The people in your life who you're closest to will sometimes appear to betray you. Sometimes there are people who seem to be mean for absolutely no reason at all. It's important to remember that there is always a reason for the action. Seeking to understand those who hurt you is an important step towards forgiveness and is ultimately better for you both in the long run. Once you understand why they act the way they do, it's much harder to be angry. It will also help you find a solution to the conflict without leaving yourself vulnerable to being taken advantage of again. In the end, it's always better to know what you're dealing with, and the best way to know is by seeking to understand.

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