Cheney keeps faith in U.S. democracy

In campus visit, Jan. 6 committee vice chair rebukes Republican party

by CHLOE ALEXANDER
Assistant Editor

Just days after the midterm election, U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney, the vice chair of the House committee investigating the Capitol insurrection, spoke at Mandel Hall on Nov. 11, where she discussed the rise of fascism with the Republican Party and the hope she has for the future of United States democracy.

The talk was organized by the University of Chicago Institute of Politics and was attended by nearly 200 people, including of former President Donald Trump.

Rep. Cheney, a Republican from Wyoming, said that after the events on Jan. 6, 2021, people more specifically Republicans cannot excuse the insurrection that occurred.

She believes her party needs to have a stiffer spine that does not tolerate lies about the results of elections.

“I also think though as a party, we need to be clear that we should not be embracing [Trump] even if he was indeed a winner because he’s doing and what he advocates is so dangerous,” Rep. Cheney said. “I think elections need to be understood that words matter.”

Rep. Cheney disclosed that committee members are working on a summary report of the Jan. 6 hearings that will inform people about the causes and events of the insurrection and additionally to stop the spread of misinformation.

Rep. Cheney said, “We’ll talk about Jan. 6. Jan. 6 is not a failure because its failure is the leg, the extent to which there was clearly an intelligence failure. But as a committee, we will not blame law enforcement for Trump’s armed mob that he sent to the Capitol to try to stop the electoral account.”

Rep. Cheney ran for re-election but lost the primary election on Aug. 16 and will not return to Congress in January.

This event was open to the UChicago community, including U-High students.

Cassia Collins, a U-High junior, attended the event because she appreciated Rep. Cheney for standing up for truth.

“She stood up for something that we don’t stand for, an insurrection, and she lost her seat for it,” Cassia said. “I respected her as a person for that, and I wanted to see her speak.”

Katherine Baicker, dean of the School of Public Policy asked Rep. Cheney how new media changes by region which leads people to experience very different realities based on where they live.

Rep. Cheney said, “I think that it is certainly true that we end up in silos and we only get information from people that agree with us. It’s also certain that our acciones are attempting to sow division and discord.”

“I also think that social media should be regulated and the social media algorithms need to be responsive for the misinformation and dangerous sites they push people to. Although there are many concerns with the United States, Rep. Cheney is optimistic about what’s to come with the country’s democracy.”

The audience question period included three University of Chicago students wearing gray suits who each listed a long series of facts before posing a question designed to make their own point.

According to U-High history teacher Cindy Jurisson and other UChicago students in the audience, UChicago students from conservative campus organizations have been doing this at different political events.

Rep. Cheney believes that the midterm election results, while not yet finalized, could be a win for the nonconformists.

“It was a really important and incredibly hopeful outcome for democracy,” Rep. Cheney said. “I think we have a long way to go, and we have a threat we’ve never had before, a former president that tried to overturn an election and prevent a peaceful transfer of power. We have a lot to do, but I really think that the outcome this week was certainly a step in the right direction, a very important step.”

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Midway photo by Ritten Mindayd

DEFENDING DEMOCRACY. Republican U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney speaks at a University of Chicago Institute of Politics event held Nov. 11 at Mandel Hall about the rise of misinformation and Capitol insurrection aftermath.

U-High students watched the Nov. 8 election results with their attention on how issues they care about—from climate change to racial disparities—will be acted upon by political leaders, and some students worried about the implications of elections at the national, state and local levels.

In Illinois, J.B. Pritzker was re-elected, I’m worried about the election outcomes with [Florida Gov.] Ron DeSantis, who has been adding new restrictions,” Rathin said. “Also, with [Florida Gov.] Ron DeSantis re-elected. I’m worried about the attitude toward transgender people in the U.S. right now.”

Rathin thinks the election results have multiple implications for the country’s politics.

“The election results paint a clear picture of what’s important to US citizens right now. Trump Republicanism is on a downturn with many of the election-denying Republicans underperforming,” Rathin said. “Personally, I am glad that [Pennsylvania] John Fetterman won a seat in the Senate, and I’m curious what this means for progressive politics going forward.”

Gender equality was one of the specific issues through which students viewed the election results. Abortion rights were as important to voters as inflation, according to exit polls. Reuters reported about “six out of 10 voters said they were ‘dissatisfied or angry’ about the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that overturned Roe v. Wade.”

In a Midway poll from October, 85% of students said abortion was the most important election issue.

Senior Hala Attia was among those who viewed the election through a women’s and abortion rights lens.

“I was scared for my rights as a woman during the election not knowing if my rights would be taken away or not, but with Prtizer, I feel safe,” Hala said. “This is a scary time for women, and we need someone who will keep our rights as protected as possible.”

Senior Donovan Miller said that the elected politicians are Democratic and hopes they focus more of their time and energy on communities of color.

Chicago voters will have another election soon. The municipal election for mayor, city treasurer, city clerk and city council will be Feb. 28. The strongest piece of advice Donovan has for eligible students in upcoming elections: vote.

“Some of you will be 18 in the presidential election, so I recommend voting very heavily,” Donovan said. “It’s important to exercise your rights.”

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-- by Louis Auxenfans

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Rite of passage: Seniors reflect on first voting experience

Listen and read online: In the Nov. 8 election, 18-year-old seniors could vote for the first time. The moment signified a rite of passage for a more engaged citizen and a moment of reflection on the cherished right to vote.

--- by Louis Auxenfans

Listen online: in the Nov. 8 election, 18-year-old seniors could vote for the first time. The moment signified a rite of passage for a more engaged citizen and a moment of reflection on the cherished right to vote.
New social media app designed as less toxic but remains potentially harmful

by CHLOE ALEXANDER
Assistant Editor

Four names and a question light up a student's phone. They can shuffle the names to get new choices or skip the question to get one of the 12 others they get for the hour.

After the recipient clicks on a name, the chosen person will receive “flamer” in their inbox indicating that they have been chosen by someone. The only information that will be given is the sender’s gender and grade. This is called giving “gas” — all part of a social game.

The new, anonymous social media platform is intended to bring positivity to the sometimes-harmful realm of social media.

Although the app’s agenda is to make the social media experience less toxic, with the questions predetermined by the app, there are still ways that it can negatively affect students’ mental health.

Whit Wistrand, a ninth grader, said he downloaded the Gas app because he saw his friends and classmates using were using it. “I mainly downloaded it because everyone else had it, and I really didn’t know what it was,” he said. “I don’t think it’s the app that’s dangerous, it’s people that are saying about others,” Whit said.

Despite the app’s open design, students don’t always follow what the creators intended the app to be. Whit said that when the app presents choices, he usually picks his friends, which is what most people do. “You look at the things you see in your inbox going to be from your friends. I’ve noticed you see all the activity and what people are saying about others,” Whit said. “People will choose other people’s names as a joke. And so there were moments of clear, absolute bullying of someone’s kind of bullying another person.”

Michel Bruner, a U-High counselor, has seen these kinds of apps before. No matter what the app claims as its goal, the setup is still the same. “In the camp that says they have a negative effect. It’s nice that someone is reporting to create an app that is positive and non-toxic, but it’s nice to see people who don’t get gased, and they’re going to be on the app wanting that positive feedback. It worries me.”

Michael Bruner, counselor

Mr. Bruner said. “But I think via the very design of the app they create toxicity, and they make people feel less-than, badly about themselves. One of the most toxic things is the light button on Facebook and Twitter.”

Although Gas doesn’t offer a “like” button like other social media apps, there are still ways it can reflect a person’s popularity. “There are people who rarely get gased.”

“Maybe someday some group of folks will create an app that enables real connection. But, from my perspective now as I see it, there’s a filter between two beings. Whether it’s Facebook or Gas or whatever, it’s not great,” Mr. Bruner said.

A recent update allows people to use the app’s currency or send invitations to friends, revealing the first initial of the person who chose them. Whit feels the new feature ruined the app because it made him feel uncomfortable, eventually causing his interest to fade.

“It felt like a one-hit wonder, and I didn’t feel like it stuck,” Whit said, “like YOLO or send on Snap.”

‘Blonde’ reinforces misogyny, exploits Monroe’s character

by VICTORIA WASHINGTON
Audience Engagement Manager

In an Old Western saloon, Kay Weston sits on top of a piano legs crossed, in a tight-fitting yellow dress as a group of cowboys watch her sing “River of No Return.” A golden hue illuminates her, drawing the 1954 audience in to see yet another performance from the iconic Marilyn Monroe.

A recent storm of controversy surrounds Netflix’s “Blonde,” a filmic biography of Marilyn Monroe that focuses on suffering as a result of stardom. Despite Ana de Armas’ beautiful performance depicting Ms. Monroe through her early life to her eventual death in 1962, the film ultimately fails to represent Ms. Monroe fairly. As opposed to highlighting Ms. Monroe’s early life to her eventual demise, the film’s continued fascination with Marilyn Monroe’s likeness and character.

“Blonde” takes too many inaccurate liberties in documenting Marilyn Monroe’s life. In their traditional exhibition theory in Hollywood, women are simultaneous endearing and morally gray. While the current portrayal of Ms. Monroe ultimately fails to represent Ms. Monroe fairly.

“Blonde” is a current example of glamorizing female suffering and exploiting their stories even after death. Content Creator Mina Lee comments on society’s continued fascination with the life and career of a well-known actress with a video entitled, “It’s time: the obsession with Marilyn Monroe,” in which the creator takes a look at how the world has idolized Monroe, with her so-called “perfect” image who she is, without having seen any of her films.

In a 1975 essay; Laura Mulvey, a feminist film theorist, explains the phenomenon of the “male gaze” in Hollywood.

“Game of Thrones” history book by George R.R. Martin and -- and does the taping Targaryen family almost 200 years before the original series. Despite some inconsistencies, the cinematography, plot and feminist themes allow “House of the Dragon” to truly live up to its predecessor.

Within the fantasy genre, female characters are often tokenized, serving a single purpose usually as a love interest. “House of the Dragon,” however, completely diverges from that trend, with two female lead characters: Khanaa and her childhood friend Alcinent Hightower.

Rather than portraying women as one-dimensional, the show presents these two characters as both enduring and morally gray. As they vie for power, they both face a surplus of misogyny in a world defined by gender norms.

Similar to the original series, this show features astounding cinematography and animation. The detailed computer-generated drag-ons and ornate settings are captivating, illustrating this strange world beautifully.

While the unsatisfying writing in the final scenes of “Game of Thrones” did mar the show, “House of the Dragon” creators George R.R. Martin and Ryan Condal do a fantastic job of producing a compelling and heartbreaking script true to the source material.

Even though the plot itself remains fairly consistent with the “Game of Thrones” history, the awkward pacing of the show became glaringly obvious throughout the season.

Over the course of 10 episodes, “House of the Dragon” covers 19 years, including three significant time jumps. Despite some of the actors for young characters change in the 10-year jump between episodes five and six, others do not.

Similarly, the technology in “House of the Dragon” is identical to that of “Game of Thrones,” despite the changes between the two shows.

Regardless of these issues, “House of the Dragon” is an enchanting addition to the “Game of Thrones” universe, paling only slightly to the original series. With magic, manipulation and enduring familial conflicts, this complicated-yet-addictive show is perfect for any fan of the fantasy genre.

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Midway photos by Scott Harropresed

TAKING THE LEAD. “Game of Thrones” program took a leadership role in original.