

University of Mississippi

eGrove

University of Mississippi News

8-25-2022

Author John Green Brings Hope for Humanity to Fall Convocation

Edwin B. Smith

Follow this and additional works at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews>

Recommended Citation

Smith, Edwin B., "Author John Green Brings Hope for Humanity to Fall Convocation" (2022). *University of Mississippi News*. 500.

<https://egrove.olemiss.edu/umnews/500>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Mississippi News by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

Author John Green Brings Hope for Humanity to Fall Convocation

New, transfer students also presented commemorative coin at event

AUGUST 25, 2022 BY EDWIN B. SMITH



Bestselling author John Green signs a book for a student following his keynote address at the university's Fall Convocation. Green's 'The Anthropocene Reviewed' is the university's Common Reading Experience selection for the 2022-23 academic year. Photo by Thomas Graning/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

OXFORD, Miss. – Despite gloomy news on everything from climate change to the economy, bestselling author John Green told students in the **University of Mississippi's** first-year/transfer class that he remains hopeful about the future, encouraging them to help move mankind forward.

Green spoke to some 4,000 students Tuesday (Aug. 23) evening as the keynote speaker for the university's annual Fall Convocation at **The Sandy and John Black Pavilion at Ole Miss.**

"I really believe that hope is the correct response to the strange goal of human consciousness," Green said. "Humanity in general, and you in particular, are good news. I know not everything is trash. I know there is cause for hope."

While writing "The Anthropocene Reviewed: Essays on a Human-Centered Planet" (Dutton, 2021), Green pondered over the complex conditions mankind's advances have created. Despite the problems caused by this progress, Green said he is broadly in favor of humans as a species.

"As far as species go, we are a little bit of a catastrophe," he said. "But we're also by far the most interesting thing ever to happen on Earth."

Green said "everything is interesting" if you pay attention to it.

"When I refer to 'attention,' I'm not speaking of any sense of focusing without distraction," he said. "By 'attention,' I only mean our consciousness itself.

"When I refer to attention, I am referring to your soul. I think whatever we pour our soul into is interesting."

Whatever people give their attention to can be quite valuable, the author said.

"What you do with your moments of attention, when taken together, will be known as your life," he said. "That's what learning ultimately is – the application of attention to your soul stuff."

Challenging students to live in the present, Green said he is confident that they will carry mankind forward to better times ahead.

Follow us on social



Campus Briefs

Students Learn 'Real Politics' in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates'

[Read the story ...](#)

More Posts from this Category

Thank You To Our Donors

Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy's new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying "thank you." "It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

[Read the story ...](#)

More Posts from this Category

Ole Miss In the News

Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve's

"The work of your life will be to care and to be cared for," he said. "Through the application of our immediate consciousnesses, all of us can be pillars and props to help each other and our species to advance and improve."

Earlier in his presentation, Green reflected upon his last visit to Oxford and his connections to Ole Miss.

"The last time I was in Oxford was in March 2005," he said. "It was a few days after the publication of my first novel. I had been invited here by the Oxford Conference for the Book, the first public event I ever participated in after I was a published author.

"One of my dearest friends from high school, Chip Dunkin, now teaches at Ole Miss, so I'm thinking about staying up all night with Chip, reading Stephen King novels and telling stories about our childhoods."

Green's message resonated with many in the audience.

"His view of how the world works is impressive in itself," said Christina Hutyra, a senior transfer student from Florida majoring in journalism. "I've already read several of his books and am looking forward to reading his latest one."

Following Green's address, incoming freshmen and transfer students each received a limited-edition challenge coin distributed by Columns Society members and First Year Experience Student Success Program staff. The theme depicted on this year's coin is the 60th anniversary of the university's integration by James Meredith in 1962.



Members of the incoming Class of 2026 recite the UM Creed during the annual Fall Convocation in The Sandy and John Black Pavilion at Ole Miss. The group is the largest freshman class in the university's 174-year-history. Photo by Thomas Graning/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services



Author John Green (left) and members of the Columns Society pose for a selfie. The students served as ushers during the 2022 Fall Convocation. Photo by Thomas Graning/Ole Miss Digital Imaging Services

Others on the program included Chancellor Glenn Boyce; Charlotte Pegues, vice chancellor for student affairs; Brent Marsh, assistant vice chancellor for student affairs and dean of students; and Lia Osman, Associate Student Body president. Campus deans and faculty representatives also appeared on stage.

Boyce said Green's message holds power for the incoming Class of 2026.

"Mr. Green was the 2006 recipient of the Michael L. Printz Award, a 2009 Edgar Award winner and has twice been a finalist for the Los

Angeles Times Book Prize," he said. "His book 'The Anthropocene Reviewed' offers you a new way to look at the world: as a thoughtful and enthusiastic reviewer who carefully examines all sides of issues, weighing the positive and negative, the strengths and the weaknesses, before ultimately arriving at a conclusion.

"It is an excellent lens for you to begin to explore the world as a true critical thinker."

Natasha Jeter, assistant vice chancellor for wellness and student success, said having the author and podcaster as the Fall Convocation speaker was rewarding.

"John invited us to join him in examining our human experience in concert with the planet," Jeter said. "The book and his convocation address inspired, challenged and motivated us to take action and make our community and the world a better place."

New students earlier received a special university edition of "The Anthropocene Reviewed," which was chosen as the 2022 Common Reading Experience selection. The book was nominated for the 2022 Andrew Carnegie Medals for Excellence in Fiction and Nonfiction and it also won the 2021 Goodreads Choice Award in the category of Best Nonfiction.

For more information on the Common Reading Experience, visit <http://umreads.olemiss.edu/>.

[Read the story ...](#)

[More Posts from this Category](#)

FILED UNDER: [NEWS RELEASES](#)

