EPIC Equipment Room Opens in Campus Center

BURTON BREWSTER
Regular Contributor

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

The Equipment Room, called the “EPIC Gear Room,” will be open and ready to rent equipment on February 20th, Houghton College’s annual Summer Job and Internship Fair Coming to Campus.

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

LUKE HUIZENGA
Regular Contributor

This coming Thursday, February 20th, Houghton College will be opening its annual Woolsey Lecture Series to Center on Theory and the Environment.

2020 Woolsey Lecture Series to Center on Theory and the Environment

PHOEBE MULLEN
Regular Contributor

The Mosaic Center recently hosted the Fly on the Wall event as a chance for minority students to read aloud their stories, and to participate in a panel moderated by Nik Kongkaw (’11), director of the Mosaic Center. Panelists spoke about their experiences as minorities at Houghton and in the United States as a whole. A number of people—whether they’re good or bad, and I think it was a good opportunity for students from the majority culture to hear about an experience different from their own,” Soggs said. “I hope that people learned to empathize... I hope that they saw us as Imago Dei, too.”

Correction

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

Summer Job and Internship Fair Coming to Campus

ANNA JUDD
Regular Contributor

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

The organizations who attend find their way to Houghton through a number of different channels. According to Stack, while the college maintains a list of employers who have attended in the past, and may continue to do so, meeting in the gym between this time and this time.”

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

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

EPIC faced difficulties due to the fact that they did not have a designated space out of which to rent equipment. Fortunately, the old printing room next to the Technology Help Desk in the basement of the Campus Center became vacant this year when the Printing Press (then known as Quick Print) moved into the Highlanders Shop.

The Equipment Room will also be fully operational by the end of February, after equipment has been entered into an inventory system and staff have been trained.

When asked about what EPIC is planning to do with the new space, Allysha Bittenger (’20), a student intern with EPIC, said, “The EPIC equipment room is now a place for our gear rentals to be stored and inventoried. This will also be a space for students to hang out and relax during open-hour time slots in our lounge area.”

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

The room is already stocked with a large amount of outdoor supplies including backpacks, skis, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, snow shoes, hammocks, and occasionally Kenai, Alexeichik’s dog.

“Your gear was originally stored in several different camp closets in the Nielsen Center,” said Bittenger, who helps with the operations and marketing of the program.

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

Alex Dearmore is a sophomore here at Houghton, majoring in English and Education. In his free time, Alex likes to spend time with his family, write, sing, kayaking, and spending time with his hedgehog, Juliet. After considering forensic science, editing, and business as possible career paths, Alex settled on his current plan to be an English teacher because of his love for literature and kids. When I ask him about a favorite class he’s taken at Houghton, he names Critical Approaches to Literature, a core requirement for the English major that he’s taking this semester. “I’m taking that with Professor Sharpe, and it is so much fun,” he says. “I think one of the things about it that is most appealing to me is that out of all the English courses I’ll take, this one kind of encompasses them all, and it’ll help me within all of them to know how to interpret things better. Not just English, probably why I like it, I mean, I’m also in The Broneties, I’ve taken The Pragmatic Detective, Doubt, and I really enjoyed those classes,” he explains, “but I feel like having taken this class and having dealt with those, so it’s just really interesting to learn the theories behind literature.” Alex tells me part of the story of his faith experience before and during Houghton. “For a while I went atheist/agnostic, he says, “because of some of the things that had happened in my hometown. Where I come from they’re very, very conservative Christian—which and I’m saying you can’t be conservative and a Christian—it’s just that the way Christianity was presented to me was, it’s a set of rules, and they kind of extract love out of it in a way, and that was something that always really, really troubled me. “And then coming to Houghton was the first time that I really truly realized that I was not playing out in a different kind of way, as more of a lifestyle, instead of this list of rules that you have to adhere to. Probably one thing that a lot of people feel about Houghton, and this is something I know is that I renewed my faith in a way that I think probably if I had not gone to Houghton, I probably would not be a Christian.” Throughout our interview something that Alex repeatedly highlights is the value of kindness. It stands out as a dominant theme in our conversation, and it was because of his concern with being kind, Alex explains, that he had turned away from the faith before coming to Houghton. “Growing up in the church that I did, in the setting that I did, I did not associate Christianity with kindness at all,” he explains. “I thought, if I want to be a kind person I probably can’t be a Christian, that doesn’t fit with me. So, coming to Houghton I finally learned that it doesn’t have to fit that way. The interactions of kind, great people here who think deeply about things, and they’re Christian, deeply Christian, and that was something that was really refreshing for me to see.” When I ask Alex for any advice he might have to readers, he gives me a theory of happiness. “I’ve noticed in my life’s, that the things that make me happy - I always think, this will make me happy, or this will make me happy, my grades will make me happy, my friends, and I find at the end of the day that we do have quite a few friends, and I have a hedgehog, Juliet. Anyone who has been to one of these fairs in the past can testify that they are a popular event, filling the main floor of the campus center with tables, and crowds of students can be heard discussing both plans for the fair and talking to prospective employers.

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

This is hardly surprising, as there will be challenges involved in the effort to organize such an event. “Being a small college and rather remote, makes this more difficult, but not impossible,” says Stack, adding, “So it worth trying out our students are amazing, and will impress any company looking to hire.” Russell notes that, while the Office of Vocation and Calling does not monitor the job fair, they would do so if it expanded to full-time jobs for graduates. “At this point we would want to track who is applying and what the hiring results are so we would know how well our students are doing.” Russell says. If this event materializes in 2021, it will be an innovative and exciting opportunity for students to take advantage of...
...Whether Houghton Had its Own Song?

Josiah Wiedenhoeft
Columns Editor

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

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

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

As well as Marietta Fancher’s “Dear Houghton to You”:

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

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

If you’re looking for a senior college,
Some small place to find out something new,
If you want to swell your worldly knowledge,
List to this advice I give to you:
Here’s a school that’s won our loyal favor,
Fine as any college in the land!
We will cheer it with a will,
This old school upon the hill,
For Houghton and her principles we’ll stand!!
H-O-U-G-H-T-O-N

Houghton is the place where we get an education,
Horton is the place where we all like to go,
Horton is the place that is full of fascination,
That’s what the students think—we know so!
If you want a school that will give you inspiration,
Make your courage bold,
Here’s a school upon a hill—we’ll cheer it with a will.
Three cheers, three cheers, three cheers, for the Purple and the Gold!

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

★

Sudoku

If you’ve never played sudoku before, the rules are simple!
1) Fill in each empty box with a number
2) Every row, column and 3x3 box must contain all the numbers 1-9, with no number repeated
The solution will be in next week’s issue!
The Ortlip Gallery in the Center For The Arts is currently exhibiting the works of painter and animator Catherine Drabkin. The exhibit entitled Shifted: Catherine Drabkin embodies the theme of Drabkin’s paintings, mixed media prints and fiber stitched works from 1994 to 2019.

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

The Ortlip Gallery’s Director of Exhibitions, Alicia Taylor-Austin, had the following to say on why Drabkin was chosen to be featured in the First Annual Ben Frank and Jean Moss Invitational Exhibit: “Ben was a mentor and father figure to Catherine in her time teaching at Dartmouth College, and the two continued to support and encourage one another in their respective careers...” [Ben] spoke about Catherine and her work and gave his highest recommendation for exhibiting her here at Houghton. Before Ben passed away, he provided a list of artists that this endowment could support by way of hosting these annual exhibitions. Catherine was on that list and her work has been admired by faculty in the art department, so we selected her for this year’s show.”

The exhibit showcases over 45 pieces of artwork, all synthesized by the theme of intimacy through nature and everyday life experiences. “The spark of new work is often found in the everyday,” are the words written in Drabkin’s artist statement, which can be found on a table upon entering the gallery. “Winter Garden,” “Raveled Steps,” “West Street Table” and “Red Milk Carton” are among some of the pieces that hang in the Gallery’s walls, showcasing the painter’s vision.

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

In Drabkin’s artist statement, the theme of intimacy is embodied in the work of painting everyday, “are the words written in Drabkin’s artist statement, which can be found on a table upon entering the gallery. “Winter Garden,” “Raveled Steps,” “West Street Table” and “Red Milk Carton” are among some of the pieces that hang in the Gallery’s walls, showcasing the painter’s vision.

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

First Annual Ben and Jean Moss Exhibit Features Catherine Drabkin

While Griddle turned a healthy profit during their first year, the team began during the past year and a half. “This idea where we would make and know what their work is. So...” Thomas said; “we’ve got a list of independent contractors to get paid directly... the independent contractors to make it easier for the independent contractors to get paid direct... the independent contractors to make it easier for the independent contractors to get paid direct...”

The official logo of Griddle Studios.

GRIDLE STUDIOS

The official logo of Griddle Studios.

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

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

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

Griddle Studios Gives Experience to Student Designers

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

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

COURTESY OF VANESSA BRAY

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

MOLLY BRIZZELL
Regular Contributor

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

These are the first words spoken by the Mandalorian (Mando for short), the ruthless bounty hunter whose story lays at the forefront of Star Wars’ latest release, The Mandalorian.

The show dropped its first episode on November 12th 2019, the day Disney+ debuted. Ever since, it released one episode every Friday until it wrapped up with its eighth and final episode of the season on December 27th. It has been the buzz of the internet ever since, particularly for its character The Child—more commonly known as “Baby Yoda.”

The mysterious man who remains hidden under cold metal armor, known to the Mandalorians as “beskar,” takes viewers on a journey through life in the New Republic galaxy, shortly after the fall of the Galactic Empire. In terms of a movie timeline, this takes place nine years after the event of Episode VI: Return of the Jedi, but before Episode VII: The Force Awakens. Mando resides in the Outer Rim, an area of the galaxy with no laws. Morals there are questionable, and not all Imperial influence is dead.

Mando learns this when he accepts a bounty hunting job from a Greef Karga, a recent client guarded by several stormtroopers, who sends him off to take what he’s told is a “50-year-old asset.” He gets there and learns that it’s a 50-year-old baby—none other than The Child, a creature of Yoda’s spices. In the struggle to get back on the planet, Mando finds himself in a near-death situation, and even gets saved by the tiny green creature. Upon bringing it in for a hefty sum of beskar, Mando questions his decision about abandoning his savior, and turns around to do what’s right, ending up on the run with The Child and a large following of bounty hunters hungry to get their own pay.

Pedro Pascal, known for his roles as Oberyn Martell in HBO’s Game of Thrones and Javier Peña in Netflix’s Narcos, takes the lead in his best role yet as Mando. Pascal is limited to expressing emotions solely through his words and his body language because of the helmet the Mandalorian cannot remove (an important part of his Creed, or religion), but is still able to make the audience feel everything Mando feels, and create moments of high emotion without a facial expression to match it. He additionally masters the ability to be the ruthless hunter who becomes an adopted dad that is... well, not so great at parenting just yet. Mando is a man of few words, but Pascal makes every single one count.

The show follows a main character The Mandalorian—his past and the ruthless behavior of his Creed (an important part of his Creed, or religion), but is still able to make the audience feel every-thing Mando feels, and create moments of high emotion without a facial expression to match it. He additionally masters the ability to be the ruthless hunter who becomes an adopted dad that is... well, not so great at parenting just yet. Mando is a man of few words, but Pascal makes every single one count.

The show follows a main theme of redemption. This is even the name of the last episode in the season (Chapter 8: Redemption). Mando, who is hinted at having a past marked by pain, suffering, and violence, tries to right his wrongs in a world without morals by taking The Child under his wing. With this change in the mind also comes a change in his armor— from a dark red to silver, a color which represents redemption for the Mandalorians. Regardless of the suffering Mando endured in his past and the ruthless behavior he exhibited, he goes on to do what he must to protect The Child, and begins living up to what his armor represents.

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

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

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

As the Mandalorians say: this is the way.

PHOTOS OF THE WEEK
Familiar snowy scenes photographed by Abby Weeks ‘23 (right) and Sydney Jameson ‘20 (below)
A Greater Love

Valentine’s Day suggests connotations of romantic love, gigantic boxes of chocolate, and red flower bouquets. That is all fine and dandy. I have always appreciated the festivities that come hand in hand with the holiday of Valentine’s Day. I enjoy a good Valentine’s Day, or “Galentine’s Day” (am I right ladies?), but I can’t help but think that there might be something wonderful and of greater depth behind the holiday of love. As a Christian, I see this holiday as an opportunity and even a challenge to remember how amazing love really is.

“What is love? Baby don’t hurt me, don’t hurt me, no more” (Haddaway). Love is a term that can actually be defined. We know that God is love (1 John 4:8). God actually personifies love itself. In the familiar “love chapter” of the Bible (1 Cor. 13:4-7), we find out that love is “…patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”

When I consider God’s standards for love, I find myself “falling in love” with this biblical kind of love. If someone is kind to me, patient with me, protects, hopes in, and even perseveres with me, then I feel treasured. This is a more radical love than what Cupid and our American culture talk about. The world tells me I am lovable when I fall short. Today, will you pray with me and ask God to help us love as he loves, on this Valentine’s Day? ★

Olivia is a senior majoring in Bible.

Valentine’s Day, Idolatry, and Grace

COURTESY OF JOHN DEAR

OLIVIA BULLOCK

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

“For some, Valentine’s Day is a great time to bond as a couple and express sacrificial love. For others, it’s a day to buy ourselves candy and make fun of the fresh-faced couples. Sometimes, we can get caught up in the seeming importance of it and mis-order our lives.

Personally, as a single person, I can overemphasize the importance of finding a significant other. It’s easy for me to spend too much time and effort pursuing a relationship — to the point that it occasionally overshadows my relationship with God. If you’re in a relationship, perhaps you love giving gifts to your significant other, but aren’t thrilled about giving to a ministry doing God’s work. As fallen human beings, it’s easy for our desires to become disordered.

Recently, I have been studying Psalm 78. This was written by Asaph as a “didactic” Psalm, intended to teach something. This study has been particularly convicting, and I think some of the principles Asaph lays out are helpful to think through. Asaph uses Israel as an example of what not to do. They have just been miraculously delivered from Egypt, and God has continued to sustain them in the wilderness by providing them with food and drink. Despite His love and care for them, Israel’s hearts were hard. In one particular episode, Asaph records, God provides food to Israel; He “rained down manna upon them to eat” (v. 24). He also gave them meat. However, this meat was both providence and judgment. Those who ate were killed by a plague. The grumbling and dissatisfaction of the people incurred the wrath of God.

Now, a cursory reading would seem to indicate Israel turned back to God after He judged them. After all, they searched diligently for Him (v. 34), right? Continuing to read, we see a deeper issue. Verse 36 tells us that “they deceived Him with their mouth, and lied to Him with their tongue.” I believe they very probably said and did all the right things. They might have been the marginal Christian today who shows up to church on a Sunday and worships because “that’s what Christians do.” They had the externals correct, but “their heart was not steadfast to Him.” God wasn’t their first love. Israel remained hard-hearted, and we are told they eventually turned to idolatry (v. 56-58).

What caused this? Why did God’s chosen nation, miraculously delivered and given sustenance by Him during their wandering, turn so easily from Him? Verse 42 gives us an answer. “They did not remember His power, The day when He redeemed them from the adversary, Who delivered them from their enemies, that God has done for them, and became stubborn and rebellious like their fathers before them. Asaph gives us an inherent correlation between remembering God’s power and His redemptive work, and obedience. He continues, saying that they forgot all the different things God had done to bring them out of Egypt. Their afflictions and obedience should have been directed towards God for all He had done for them, but they looked elsewhere.

Today, we can be like the Israelites — we can forget what Christ has done for us on the cross, dying for sins, and our obedience can become shallow. If we forget the cross, we can have the disordered desires of the Israelites and put things before God. Fortunately, there is forgiveness in Christ. We’re told that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and clean us from all unrighteousness. I’m thankful my idolatry doesn’t have to lead to condemnation. ★

Cory is a sophomore majoring in business administration and accounting.
The Good, the Bad, and the Lovely

CHRISTIAN MILLER

When asked to give my opinion on Valentine’s Day, I was surprised, mostly because I never thought much of it. When first I began to consider the holiday, I found naught, which is to say, no opinion. I supposed that, in its most basic sense, the function of the day was to celebrate our love and appreciation for significant others. There is a downside – of course – being that for those lacking and thus wishing thereof, the day might naturally be less a celebration and more a lamentable and unwished reminder. Of course, that very sentiment has been converted into a joke (perhaps to distract from the distressing truth).

But really, I began to wonder how such a thing as Valentine’s Day came about in the first place. Unfortunately, due to the constraints of other academic tasks, I spared just a moment to review the history of Valentine’s Day according to the life-saving Wikipedia (a.k.a. the approved flotation device). It appears the namesake is several early martyrs of the Christian faith. The romantic association first comes to us from the celebration of an engagement between King Richard II of England to Anne of Bohemia in the year 1381; perhaps that lessens some of our enthusiasm, although for others (myself a historian) perhaps it actually increases our appreciation for the unusual day.

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

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

-Courtesy of Jennifer Jones

“The Opinions and Views expressed in the Houghton Star do not necessarily reflect the opinions and views of Houghton College or the Wesleyan Church (our sponsoring denomination.)

The Couple Problem

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

AARON MOORE

Imagine with me. You’re walking down the hall, on your way to class. You've got three tasks, I spared just a moment to review the history of Valentine’s Day according to the life-saving Wikipedia (a.k.a. the approved flotation device). It appears the namesake is several early martyrs of the Christian faith. The romantic association first comes to us from the celebration of an engagement between King Richard II of England to Anne of Bohemia in the year 1381; perhaps that lessens some of our enthusiasm, although for others (myself a historian) perhaps it actually increases our appreciation for the unusual day. Either way, it has become a modern phenomenon very conscious to our minds and certainly very prevalent in Targets and comedy TV shows. Perhaps even the day itself may cause break-ups (for those of us who fail to remember) or perhaps it may bring us closer together (for the prescient sort). Thus, being such a prominent and desired (or undesired) element of our lives, it seems the ramifications can come in many forms (hopeless and depressed romantics as well as happy young couples, for starters). Finally, returning to my personal opinion appearing to be relevant, I settled upon this view: that Valentine’s Day is a nice (in the dictionary sense) day. I believe it is always good to have those special occasions to set aside a little time and give a little significance to persons and emotions that matter most to us.

And now, with the arrival of that dreaded date of February 14th, they will be all the more annoying. Couples will be EVERYWHERE! Not only will the existing couples be hounding the candy aisles, but single people will be searching to become a couple! On this tragic day of all days, what are we to do? How do we solve the couple problem?

One way to deal with this problem is to incorporate the "Marriage Accelerationist" theory. What this entails is that when people are interested in each other, they skip the dating phase and move straight to marriage. It says in Genesis 2:24 that "the two will become one flesh." Married people are not couples, they are one. If everyone is either single or married, then there will not be any couples. This will get rid of couples once and for all. And from this, we can get rid of that dreaded holiday.

Some might say, “Aaron, that’s a bit extreme.” They say people will need time to get to know each other before they get married. Well, I think they will have plenty of time during marriage to get to know each other so I don’t see a problem. But I won’t be able to shake my criticality that easily. So I’ve devised a different plan.

We could instead make a holiday that celebrates singleness and the loss of love. This day would be August 14th and we would call it Saint Pancras’ Day. This is in honor of the Roman Christian who was beheaded for his beliefs. This symbolizes the separation of the couple. There will also be festivities. Kids will hand out little notes that say, “I like you as a friend,” little candy hearts will say “It’s over,” and smash hits like “Dancing with Myself” by Billy Idol will be blaring. Single people will be free to express their singleness and couples would be encouraged to end their relationships for the festivities.

During that blessed day, keep in mind the meaning of the season: you don’t need a partner pulling you down. You’re fine. You’re happy with who you are. You’re just bottling up your emotions under several layers of irony to cover up what you truly mean. Never forget.

Aaron is a senior majoring in philosophy.

The Houghton STAR

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Artist of the Week
Alicia Cline // Senior Studio Art Major

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