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the houghton STAR

Houghton College's Student Newspaper Since 1909

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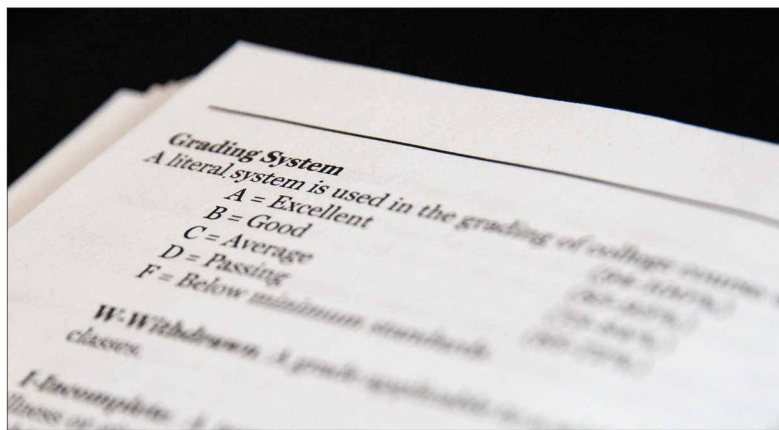
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January 31, 2014 Vol. 110, No. 14



Grading Scale Undergoes Changes for Next Semester



LUKE LAUER

A course catalog outlining the old grading scale.

BENJAMIN LAYMAN

The college has recently proposed a motion to relinquish the current grading scale in favor of a non-numerical rubric. The rubric would still retain quality points for determining GPA, but it would also establish value based on certain adjectives such as Excellent, Good, Average, etc. Each department would have the responsibility of maintaining grading criteria that are consistent across each discipline, the results of which would be funneled through the rubric.

The decision stems from multiple

sources, the principal cause being the results of a faculty survey taken in the Fall of 2012. The results, collated from 68 participants, discovered that more than half of faculty members (54.4%) substituted the official grading scale with their own, and an even higher number (61.5%) reported that they did not believe that Houghton's current grading scale was effective in portraying student learning.

Professor of education, Connie Finney, was especially critical of the cur-

See GRADES page 3

Faculty Attend Wesleyan Transgender Conference

SAVANNAH DOVIK

On January 24, 2014 representatives from Houghton College, Indiana Wesleyan University, and Oklahoma Wesleyan University were invited to attend a meeting at the Wesleyan Church Headquarters, in Indianapolis, IN, to look over a draft policy statement on the issue of transgender.

Representatives from each college typically consisted of an administrator and a theologian. It was decided that Dr. Richard Eckley, professor of theology and an ordained minister in the Wesleyan Church, and Dr. Robert Pool, Vice President for Student Life, would be the two representatives for Houghton. The group of representatives was called together by the Church even though the policy had already been through the denomination's general board "to further review the issue," as Eckley explained.

"I was hoping to help my denomination think through the foundational areas necessary for making a sound pastoral approach to this issue. The homosexual question has been addressed by all with little common ground," said Eckley.

Eckley described the trip as "a meeting of representatives of the

Wesleyan Church's colleges/universities to look over a draft policy state-

ment on the issue of transgender." A total of eight people were present at the meeting, each being given the policy draft ahead of time to be looked over prior to the start of the meeting.

Eckley expressed, "The transgendered person is a part of our churches, and therefore is more than a topic; it is a question about how the Church gives hospitality to the people that make up her congregation." At a time when transgender is a delicate topic, especially in the church, the policy is aimed to be a guideline to create a careful balance of honoring scripture, but also to know how to pastor and show love and support to people going through questions of expression.

"The policy statement is shaping up to be a kind of 'middle way' approach," said Eckley. Eckley explained how the Church seems to be taking a traditional approach to the Biblical, theological, and scientific research, while also not forgetting the importance of pastoral guidance in churches and learning communities.

"If there's a singular thing I learned, it's to be more Christ-like. More clear on what the scripture says and doesn't say, and not to be afraid to honor the

See TRANSGENDER page 3

New Women's Leadership Support Group Kicks Off

LAUREN BULL

A new group has recently emerged on Houghton's campus, going by the name of Deborah's Daughters. Described by Dani Johnson as an "emerging support group for women in leadership," the group was created for female students on campus whose vision of their future involves being leaders, in a ministry capacity or otherwise. Johnson, an assistant in Career Services, and Dr. Sarah Derck, an assistant professor of Old Testament, along with sophomore student Carly Congilosi ('16), founded the group in November of last year, and currently serve as the group's primary leaders.

The group grew out of discussions between Johnson, Derck, and other women in the Houghton community about the need for increased encouragement of young women "who want to either go into professional ministry or want to be leaders in some respect," Johnson said. When explaining the inspiration behind the group, Derck cited Johnson's "idea to network women on campus," as "it can be a very isolating thing to feel a call as a woman." The two recognized that, for female individuals, leadership is often complicated by traditions or views that limit women's involvement in this

capacity, and desired to create a safe, supportive environment where women can explore their potential in this area.

Things started out small, with Derck emailing a short list of female students, Congilosi included, about their interest in working to get the group off the ground. Congilosi stepped up to the challenge. When asked about her beliefs concerning women's involvement in leadership and ministry, Congilosi replied that she's "always believed that they should." Said Congilosi, "I wanted to be involved in a group that supported that... the more I heard about [the group] and the more we started to develop the idea of what it was going to be, the more interested I became in it."

From the time of its inception the group has increased in numbers to around 20 members, including Houghton College students of different years and women from the faculty, staff, and surrounding community. Meetings take place on a bi-weekly basis, rotating between different off-campus locations, and alternate between evenings of discussion, sharing, and prayer; and group activities or other events. Evenings often involve hearing from "women in our community who are

See WOMEN page 3

Three Floors to Close in Student Dorms Next Year



LUKE LAUER

Gillette Hall

SARAH HUTCHINSON

Residence Life and Housing has decided to close two floors in Gillette and one additional floor in Roth for the 2014-2015 school year. The floors to be closed are fourth main and old in Gillette and fourth west in Roth, which is cut in addition to the first floor in Roth closed at the beginning of this year.

The decision to close three floors was

made "in response to a low enrollment figure for the current year," said Marc Smithers, Director of Residence Life and Housing, and the closures are not an indicator of lower enrollment for the upcoming year.

Another reason for the decision was on the basis of the fact that there was "so much empty space in the residence halls," said Smithers, leading to concerns about proper stewardship of the build-

See DORMS page 2

NATIONAL // Updating the War on Poverty



LUKE LAUER

PETER MEILAENDER

Fifty years ago President Lyndon B. Johnson declared “unconditional war on poverty in America” and promised that “we shall not rest until that war is won.” The news recently has been full of assessments evaluating the war on poverty’s success and asking to what extent we have achieved victory. Most of these assessments conclude that, though the war on poverty has had some specific and limited successes—especially in decreasing poverty among the elderly—on the whole it has fallen well short of the lofty ambitions that inspired it and the goals it set for itself.

What might an updated war on poverty look like in the 21st century? In recent decades we have learned quite a bit about the factors that lead to and keep people in poverty. In particular, it has become abundantly clear that stable marriages and families are among the best predictors for avoiding poverty. Nick Schulz, in a useful little volume entitled *Home Economics: The Consequences of Changing Family Structure*, summarizes much of the evidence linking poverty to changes in family structure such as increases in divorce, single-parent households, and children born out of wedlock. Just a few of the findings that he reports:

—Ron Haskins and Isabel Sawhill of the Brookings Institution, after reviewing Census Bureau data, found that “if young people finish high school, get a job, and get married before they have children, they have about a 2 percent chance of falling into poverty and nearly a 75 percent chance of joining the middle class by earning \$50,000 or more per year.”

—Sara McLanahan and Gary Sandefur, in their book *Growing Up with a Single Parent*, report that “adolescents who have lived apart from one of their parents during some period of childhood are twice as likely to drop out of high school, twice as likely to have a child before age twenty, and one and a half times as likely to be ‘idle’—out of school and out of work—in their late teens and early twenties.”

—A group of researchers from the

Pew Research Center “compared the median household incomes of married adults with unmarried adults in 1960 and again in 2008. Half a century ago, the gap in household incomes was 12 percent. In 2008, the gap had grown to over 40 percent.”

This is just a small sampling from a large body of research confirming what is by now an indisputable fact: if you want to reduce poverty, you should want as many children as possible to grow up in stable families with their own two married parents.

This evidence could provide the fulcrum for a bipartisan coalition devoted to strengthening marriage and the family. Liberals, committed to the poorest and most vulnerable members of society and concerned with income inequality, should make common cause with conservatives, who emphasize the traditional family unit as a building-block of society. A coalition of this sort, seeking a common, pro-family reform agenda, could make new headway in the fight against poverty.

Although family issues are often politically divisive, some reform proposals could reach across the partisan divide. A waiting period between the filing of divorce papers and the actual finalization of a divorce, during which couples could be offered access to marriage counseling, might reduce the rate of divorce. Other reforms, such as increasing the child tax credit, might ease financial strains on families. More creatively, we might make the credit available only

to married couples, or introduce an additional tax credit targeted specifically at married couples that choose to forego a second income so that one parent can stay at home full-time with their children.

Strengthening marriage and the family is a daunting task. Family decline has been a product of complex cultural factors, and public policy is a blunt instrument for effecting large cultural change. Fifty years ago, however, Lyndon Johnson told Americans, “Very often a lack of jobs and money is not the cause of poverty, but the symptom. The cause may lie deeper in our failure to give our fellow citizens a fair chance to develop their own capacities, in a lack of education and training, in a lack of medical care and housing, in a lack of decent communities in which to live and bring up their children.” If we today remain committed to giving our fellow citizens “a fair chance to develop their own capacities,” we will require creative ideas about revitalizing the American family. ★

A longer version of this column will appear as an essay in the Lent issue of The Cresset (<http://thecresset.org>).

Peter is a professor of political science at Houghton.

WORD ON THE STREET

“I like the idea they just keep trying to improve things, although I don’t think it’s the most accessible change because I don’t really think it makes anything less complicated.”

—Josh Duttweiler, junior



“I really admire Houghton Sodexo, I appreciate ice cream, I appreciate the staff, and I think they have done an excellent and professional job. However, there are several items that need to be changed. There is, very little at times, a vegetarian entrée. It is not yet an option that vegetarians can have a full-fledged meal and still have their dietary needs met. Also, serving yourself—I understand that there’s some sanitary stuff, but at the same time, portion sizes and—whenever people ask for more—being refused, is not acceptable.”

—Joyce Crissman, senior



“I think it’s more hectic trying to get food and get out safely without bumping into people and knocking over drinks and things like that. I’m kind of afraid to get my food now a lot more than I was before.”

—Jessica Register, freshman

What do you think of the new dining hall changes?



“I kinda like it. It’s a nice change. Maybe I wish we could serve ourselves a bit, although we still can... no, I kinda like it.”

—Ben Moritz, sophomore



“The system of the way it’s set up is kind of weird because of the fact that it just creates more traffic because you have to go around the big posts enough where everybody is walking. So, I don’t think it has a great flow. But, the food has tasted a lot better since we’ve been back. There’re different choices and I kinda like what they’re doing, but it’s sad to see the vegetarian section gone.”

—Kayleigh Guerney, freshman

WOMEN *from page 1*

serving as professional ministers in some capacity, or have a leadership role,” said Johnson; “women who have come from similar backgrounds...but have sort of pushed the envelope a little bit, and faced those struggles themselves.” Mentorship is also an important component, with mature women meeting with female students on a regular basis, to support and encourage them in their growth.

The group’s purpose, however, is binary in nature. In addition to small group sharing and mentorship, their intentions include an outward focus as well. One of the goals of the small-scale mentor-

ship already in place is for the development of a program in which women students from Houghton act as mentors for younger women of middle or high school age, from Houghton Academy and the surrounding community. There has also been talk of future collaborations with other student groups in campus wide events focused on women’s empowerment. This future-forward vision involves men as well as women in dialogue about these issues. When talking about the group’s trajectory, Derck praised the “wholehearted support” of the group by the faculty in the biblical studies, religion, and philosophy departments and said that, when it comes time

to have more public discussion about these issues, “I think there would be no hesitation in inviting male panel members into that.” She further emphasized that while the group concentrates its efforts on supporting female students in particular, the group’s collaboration with other organizations will involve both men and women in partnership together.

While Johnson, Derck, and Congilosi have headed the group thus far, the desire for it to eventually become student-led has been clear from the start. Said Johnson, “I’m trying to step back as much as I can and let it be a student-led group.” This sentiment was echoed by Derck, who reiterated that she and the other fac-

ulty and staff members involved in the group “see ourselves involved as advisors in the future in a consulting kind of way... we definitely don’t want to be in charge.” With that, the group is open to any and all female students who are interested in these topics. “This group is not just for women that are planning or going into an official ministry position,” said Congilosi. “It’s for any woman who is interested in [this] topic and also wants to lead in some capacity, or use their future vocation as a ministry.”

Students interested in joining the group or learning more can contact Congilosi at carly.congilosi16@houghton.edu for further information. ★

New Theology Major Offered

CARLY CONGILOSI

Currently, any Houghton student interested in ministry, theology, world religions, or biblical studies has the option to major in either religion, Bible, or christian formation, but that’s about to change. A new major has been introduced to Houghton’s campus--theology. According to Dr. Michael Walters, associate dean for Biblical Studies, Theology, and Philosophy, in time the current religion major will be phased out and the theology major will take its place. Dr. Walters explained that the current religion major has always had a heavy theological emphasis, but due to restrictions for New York State’s Tuition Assistance Program (NYS TAP) funding, Houghton could not label the major “theology.” However, this has recently changed, allowing Houghton students who choose to major in theology to still be eligible for NYS TAP funding. All current religion majors have the option to finish out their major, or, if they are not very far along in the required coursework, will be given the option to switch to the theology major, which is currently awaiting New York State approval.

The theology major is not only intended for “typical” ministry students. While only a 30-hour major, it has been specifically designed to be completed in combination with other majors. It should be noted that if a student were to combine a second major with theology, the theology major will only be 24 hours. Said Walters, “What the theology major is intended

to do is to prepare people at a very foundational level to think biblically and christianly about the world, but also we are very excited about the component that we’re calling ‘theology and...’ which is our way of kind of looking at theology as a viable second major to couple with your art majors, your music major, your psych major, whatever, because people who are going into those fields are going into them as Christians, and they would really like to use those majors in a way that’s effective for the kingdom of God.” In addition to many of the courses current religion majors take, future theology majors can expect to take a new course taught by Dr. Eckley, which will be called “Church, Mission and Culture.” This class will put, said Dr. Walters, “...missional kind of footprint on the program...”

With changes occurring in the church and in ministry, and Dr. Walters long ago recognized the need to grow and change along with the world. During his recent sabbatical, he began to seriously consider how Houghton could adapt to changing times. After consulting current students and recent alumni and surveying pastors, the idea of a theology major was born. “We’re hoping that in very real way, our niche in the future is to listen to the God-given dreams of students. I believe God puts dreams in people’s hearts about how they can serve him, and we want to listen very carefully to those dreams and then help people to equip to realize those dreams.” ★

GRADES *from page 1*

rent grading system, citing philosophical problems with its attempt to artificially create a normal curve. “With the current grading scale, you have a small A, a larger B, an even larger C, and a small D. This pushes students toward C, the largest category. What should be a naturally occurring phenomenon ends up getting manipulated.” She regarded the new rubric as quite an improvement, with the caveat that C’s are still defined as ‘average.’

Dean Mills Woolsey said that prior to the survey there had been a few discussions, but after the studies were done, it really helped bring the conversation to a place where they could act on it. “If it were like 10% of the faculty then you would say, ‘oh, we’ve got to get after that 10%,’ but if it’s that significant, it means that there’s probably a problem with the system itself.”

The decision has passed through the Academic Council, gained approval from the faculty, with the final step being to publish the new rubric in the 2014-2015 catalog. This publishing would stand as a contract to the New York State’s Department of Education, while eliminating discrepancies between faculty members’ usage of alternate systems and creating more flexibility within each department.

Another primary reason which Dean Mills Woolsey cited was behind the decision lay in some of the negative reactions

that parents had to Houghton’s grading scale, especially in regard to their students’ eligibility for scholarships that are dependent on maintaining a certain GPA as well as an extensive conversation or the Houghton Parents Facebook page dated in March of 2012, revealed a parent’s concern that their child’s test scores which would typically be higher in many other schools, was weighed down a Houghton due to the stringency of the grading system.

Dean Mills Woolsey said that Houghton’s current grading scale has had a long established tradition here, but she also said that many other institutions especially those Houghton considers as sister schools such as Wheaton or Asbury, use a similar grading rubric. “The fact that most of the schools that we consider peer schools or that we benchmark with don’t use a numerical scale suggests that maybe we’re finally coming into some kind of a mainstream.” She cautioned against those who would claim it as dumbing down, saying that grading varies greatly from discipline to discipline “Some disciplines are very quantitative and they lend themselves to that numerical scale, and other disciplines are more qualitative. You have to somehow translate what you’re doing into numbers in order to make that scale.” Mills Woolsey believes that the rubric’s implementation will eliminate many previous problems that they have had, and that this new change is the right step forward. ★

TRANS *from page 1*

scripture,” said Pool. “I want any student to be able to come here and thrive.”

A second motivation for the policy, and reason for the meeting is guidance for the possibility of future litigation on the subject of hiring in Christian colleges and universities. In the past Christian institutions have faced legal disputes on the matter of transgender faculty. The idea is to prevent schools without a policy from being in a bad position to have a clear response in these cases. “Of course, as a theologian, I am not that excited about documents drawn up primarily for lawyers,” Eckley joked.

It is clear that the completion of the policy will not fix all problems, but it is definitely a start, as Eckley referred to the

meeting as “an attempt to refrain from judgmentalism and to offer understanding and compassion to those struggling with sexual identity dysphoria.” The college has taken a big step towards making the campus a place that welcomes all people, and with the policy colleges can have a consistent approach on doing so.

The final draft will be ratified within the next few weeks, where once completed, can be viewed online at the Wesleyan Church website.

Apart from the policy being put together by the Wesleyan Church, Houghton College has also begun to create a pastoral letter on homosexuality for its campus. The letter will aim to show how “as a community Houghton can help support, and pastor those with same sex attraction,” explained Pool. ★

DORMS *from page 1*

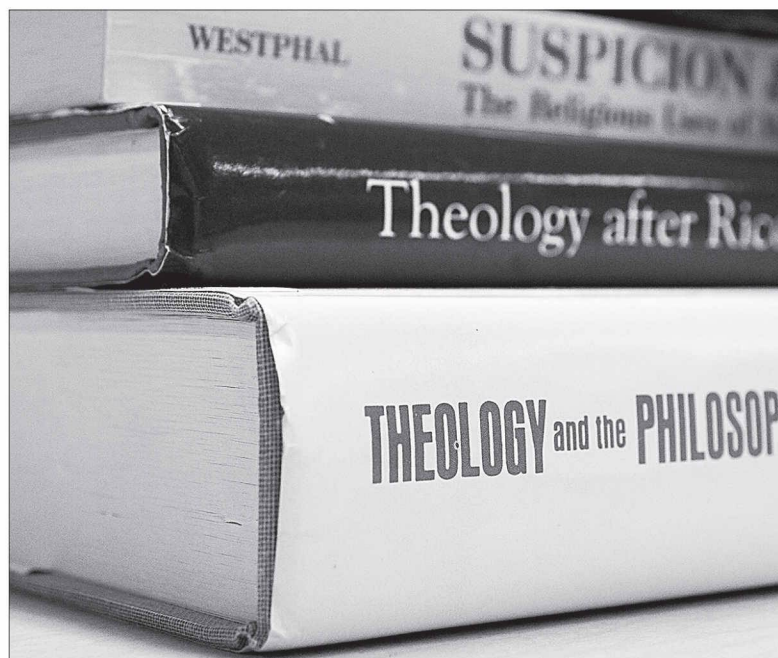
ings. The closures should cut maintenance and custodial upkeep costs for the residence halls and will save heating and insulation expenses. In addition, three RA positions will no longer be required for the closed floors.

Smithers noted the positives, “Instead of cutting things, we’re pushing things together... It’s a way to save money, but we’re not getting rid of anything.” In addition, Smithers stated that too many empty rooms in a hall could be demoral-

izing to residents, in which case a more compact dorm could have its advantages.

The move could potentially affect current residents on the floors who would be hoping to “squat” their rooms for the next year. Smithers said that Residence Life and Housing is aware of this potential issue and thinking of appropriate solutions, though they have not arrived at an answer yet.

The floors will not be closed indefinitely and, according to Smithers, are expected to be reopened for the 2015-2016 school year. ★



Books in the Theology department.

LUKE LAUER

Houghton in Context: Women in Academia

BEN MURPHY

In 2008, for the first time, women earned more than 50 percent of awarded PhDs. Despite this shift in the majority, women are still nationally underrepresented as tenured faculty in higher education. According to a 2006 American Association of University Professors (AAUP) report, 31.2 percent of all tenured faculty members are women. This figure is actually slightly higher than the situation at Houghton, where 26 percent of all tenured professors are women.

Though there are surely manifold causes feeding into this discrepancy between qualified female PhDs and tenured women faculty with respect to both the nation and Houghton specifically, many point to the complications of family formation as a key-contributing factor. For example, in 2011, a writer for the Chronicle of Higher Education stated that, “Most women [professors], it seems, cannot have it all—tenure and a family—while most men can.” Similarly, Slate magazine ran an article describing the “baby penalty” levied against women in academia that reads, “family formation negatively affects women’s, but not men’s, academic careers. For men, having children is a career advantage; for women, it is a career killer.”

Though these and similar statements undoubtedly highlight issues for women academics across the United States, both seem to miss the mark when it comes to



Professors Kristin Camenga, Sarah Derck, and Rebekah Yates.

addressing the experience of mothers teaching at Houghton.

Dr. Sarah Derck of the Bible and Religion Department interviewed for her position at Houghton while pregnant. Though fully aware of relevant, federal anti-discriminatory laws, she says that she did feel nervous that her first child would somehow complicate getting a job. However, from day one at Houghton, she said, “every single conversation has been celebrating with me and [my husband,] Josh, [saying] let’s see what we can do to make this work.” Currently in the early stages of a tenure-track position, Derck said that this level of support has endured, bearing “evidence of a real valuing of family on Houghton’s campus.”

Also pursuing a tenure track position, Dr. Rebekah Yates of Math and Computer Science is equally quick to recognize the ways in which Houghton—and specifically her department—has proved supportive in being “aware of what happens when you have a child.” As Yates commented, the hyper-awareness on the second-floor of Paine may have something to do with the five children born to Math/Computer

Science faculty within the last two years. Identifying with women who may feel derided for deciding to have children mid-career, Yates did recognize what she called an “implicit double standard” that treats male and female parenting in academics differently. However, she was also quick to comment that she believes this trend stretches beyond academia to “pervade much of our culture.”

Dr. Kristin Camenga, also of Math and Computer Science, echoed her two colleagues quoted above in expressing that she has felt “affirmed in [her] role as a mother here.” When asked to identify specific ways that Houghton has supported her as a teaching mother, Camenga highlighted the college’s unusual policy of allowing tenure-track professors to modulate between two-thirds time and full time from semester-to-semester. This systematic “flexibility,” as Camenga described it, made a “significant difference” in allowing her to devote time and energy to young children when necessary.

The feelings of Derck, Yates, and Camenga with respect to feeling confident to pursue both tenure and raise a family

are corroborated by the details of recent rank and tenure appointments. Last year the college granted tenure to seven individuals. Five of these faculty members were women, and of these five, four have two or more children. These numbers stand in stark contrast to National Science Foundation (NSF) data that says, “across all disciplines, women with children [are] 38 percent less likely than men with children to achieve tenure.”

Like the rest of the nation, Houghton faculty exhibits a wide gender-gap in tenured faculty. And while it is true that family formation is simply one of many complex factors within this issue, the experience of several women at Houghton suggests that our campus is out-performing others in this specific area. So much so, in fact, that Yates speculated whether or not teaching and parenting at Houghton might actually be harder for young male professors. Perhaps excellent fodder for a later article, this question is surely a good indicator that, though nowhere near perfect, our community is doing something very right. ★

DAILY CALENDAR

31 / FRIDAY

- Athletics
6 PM | MBB @ Elmira College
8 PM | WBB @ Elmira College

1 / SATURDAY

- Athletics
10 AM | TF @ Empire 8 Championships
- Movie: “Fresh”
7 PM | CFA Recital Hall

3 / MONDAY

- Purple and Gold T-shirt Handout
12 PM- 4 PM | Campus Center Lounge

4 / TUESDAY

- Athletics
6 PM | MBB vs. Ithaca College
8 PM | WBB vs. Ithaca College

5 / WEDNESDAY

- Purple and Gold Wii Dance Competition
7 PM | Campus Center Lounge
- Student Recital: Rachel Spak, violin
8 PM | CFA Recital Hall

6 / THURSDAY

- Purple and Gold Pyramid Game Show
8 PM | Wesley Chapel

Sherlock Series Three Disappoints

STEPHEN HILL

After a two-year hiatus, Sherlock returned to television at the beginning of this year to the jubilant delight of thousands of fans around the world. For those unaware, Sherlock is a retelling of the classic stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in a contemporary setting. It provided the stage on which Benedict Cumberbatch, playing the titular character, burst into international acclaim, and it has not done poorly for the reputation of Martin Freeman in the role of deuteragonist John Watson, either. Written by Stephen Moffat (of Doctor Who) and Mark Gatiss, the show has thus far displayed a great ability to adapt Doyle’s original stories to a modern setting.

The third season had a tall order to meet. The dazzling success of the first two ended in the heights of mystery, as fans everywhere were left wondering how Sherlock had survived his apparent death while deceiving even Watson. We all loved that ending, and looked forward to learning the explanation, as well as witnessing Sherlock’s return to his beloved London.

Any writers would have been challenged to deliver on fans’ expectations, and unfortunately, Moffat and Gatiss



Martin Freeman and Benedict Cumberbatch star in Sherlock.

PBS.ORG

didn’t quite manage it. Compared to the prior two seasons, the third one has thus far been a relatively unremarkable example of television. Catering to the curiosity of the fans, Gatiss spent the majority of the first episode, The Empty Hearse, focusing on Watson’s reaction to Sherlock’s return. As one of those curious fans, I was absolutely delighted by the emotion and concurrent humour involved with said reaction, but given the brevity of the episode, it was surely a mismanagement of time. It would have been business-as-usual in a show which featured seasons of normal length,

but Sherlock only has three episodes per season, and I felt as though this writing decision cost them. Because the episode focused so much on Sherlock’s return, the drama of the actual case—in which Sherlock is to prevent a terrorist bombing of parliament à la Guy Fawkes—is hurried and unfinished. We never learned enough about the antagonist to actual fear that he might succeed, and by the end of the episode he still felt like an empty threat. Consequently, the resolution rang hollow

See SHERLOCK on page 5

The Secret of Mim: Life as Academic Coordinator and How to Keep Paine from Imploding

THOMAS ECKERT

Mim Case is the reason that the Paine Center for Science has not yet imploded. By her title, she is the Academic Coordinator for Natural Sciences and Mathematics.

In her day-to-day life, she makes sure that everything in the building is running smoothly so that the professors are able to focus on their teaching. She may find herself orchestrating building maintenance or researching new programs. Sometimes, she proctors exams for students when they fall behind on work.

Mim moved to Houghton with her husband, Jon Case, in 2005. Prior to their residence in Fillmore, they lived in Melbourne, Australia. Jon had met several Houghton professors through the school's Down Under program while teaching at Kingsley College. During a furloughed trip to the United States, they got a call - "If you're stateside, come see us at Houghton."

The move was a huge change for the family. Melbourne is a city of 4 million people. Fillmore is a town of about 600. Mim is used to changing scenery. Although she self-identifies as a Texan from birth, she has held drivers licenses in seven different states.

Even still, Fillmore is a new experience for her. "I'm not really a country kind of person, so this has been a really different experience, but I'm learning all kinds of things," she said in our interview. Being an avid baker, she is happy that she can get fresh ingredients from local farms through community supported agriculture.

At home, she has quit cooking, "My husband does all that," she says, "He's a great Punjabi chef. This year he's beginning to try Chinese and Thai."

One thing that might catch your eye as you walk by Mim's office is Mim herself, standing upright in front of her computer. When she first came to Houghton, she found that she was in a lot of pain at the end of her workday. Doing some research, she discovered that her desk was too high for good posture. Her solution, however, was to get an even higher one.



Mim Case at her desk in Paine.

LUKE LAUER

Mim began using a standing desk, supplementary to her sitting one. If you ask her, she'll laud its use, "It's great! I use it so much that one day, I came in the morning and set my things on my chair and by four o'clock I realized they were still there. I had gone the entire day standing and didn't even notice it!"

Even if it weren't for her desk, Mim would spend much of her day on her feet running around just keeping the department working properly. Despite her busy schedule, she still finds time to make Paine a brighter place. She very proudly tells me about an idea she executed alongside Dr. Brubaker - a mosaic of Houghton science majors which together form a single image of the Paine building. Mim collected the photos and found a company to design it. It is hanging by the second floor entrance to Schaller Hall.

Outside of school, Mim is very involved with her church, Houghton

Wesleyan. She leads the missions convention work team. The church is looking to work more with Buffalo refugees in the next year. The focus of such missions work, aside from ministry, is to enable refugees with tools or skills that help them become more self-sufficient. She says, "It's great to see a different side of the city and to see how you can help."

When I asked Mim what she looks forward to in the upcoming year, her face lights up. Meic Pearse, professor of history, has asked her to be a part

of the East Meets West travel team. This May, she'll get to go to the Balkans with the honors program in order to provide logistical support. When she goes, she will bring her husband and daughter, Carolyn, too.

Mim's hard work is invaluable to keeping Paine together. If you have ever enjoyed a math or science class, stop by her office this week and thank Mim for making it possible. ★

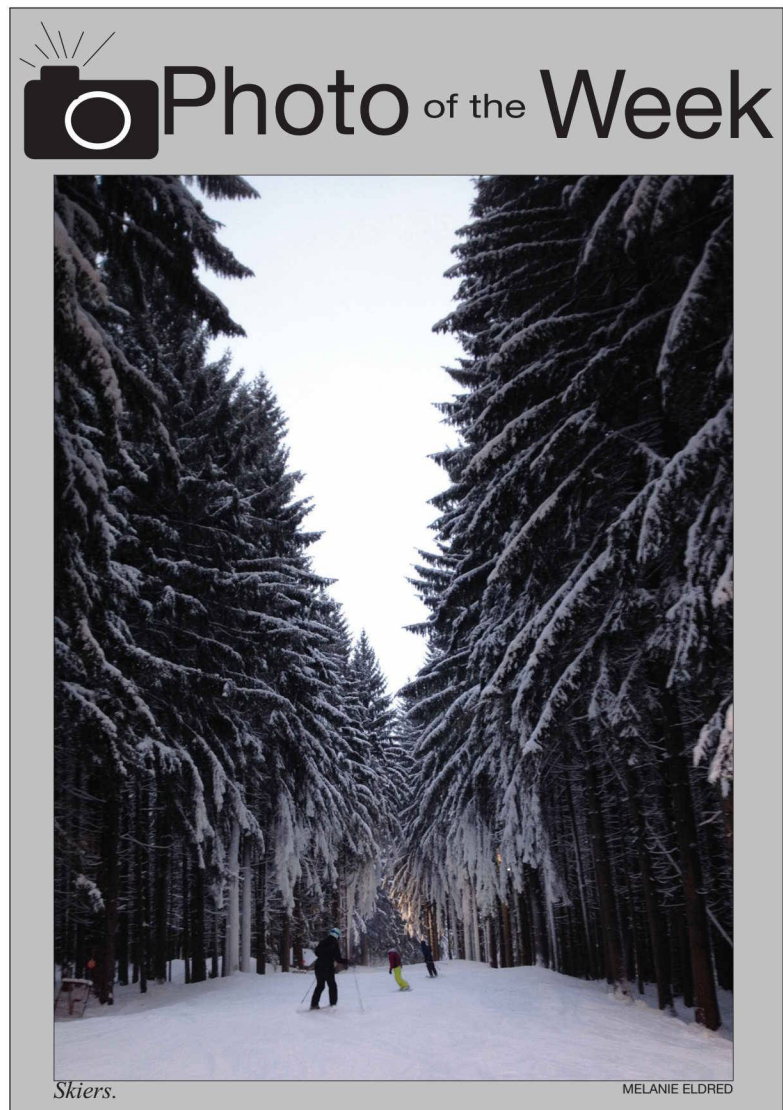
SHERLOCK from Page 4

as well.

The second episode, The Sign of Three, was slightly reminiscent of The Reichenbach Fall (the 2nd series finale) in its coverage of multiple cases which Sherlock hadn't been able to solve. While it only seemed right that the writers should deliver handsomely on the wedding of John Watson, this episode again felt unfulfilling. The majority of it was retrospective, delivered in the form of history's most awkward wedding speech, and it felt quite taxing by the time Sherlock wound to a close. Despite the fact that they tied all of the cases together at the ending and Sherlock was able to prevent a death during the reception itself, the entire episode still seemed as though Moffat and Gatiss had drawn inspiration from Michael Scott of The Office. While entertaining, it seemed out of place in Sherlock. Overall, the second episode was very disappointing. Most of the episode meandered without a clear antagonist to anchor it, and when he did show up it was without much hubbub or recognition. He was less engaging than a monster from Scooby-Doo, and the

episode suffered for it. In most shows, I would call this a "filler" episode, making it a real shame that they wasted both the Wedding of John Watson and Sherlock's first Best-Man speech on it.

Between the meandering and unfocused script of the second episode, and a first episode which, with its spectacled man and ominous music at the end, might well have been written to fulfill a checklist of "How to Introduce a Scary Villain," the season has been much less enjoyable than the preceding two, and has felt much less engaging. That is not to say that it is a selection of terrible episodes, because it really still is far superior to most other contemporary television shows. Rather, in the third season, Gatiss and Moffat failed to meet the high bar which they themselves raised impossibly high in their first two seasons. They put in a very good effort, though, and so I recommend that everyone who has not yet seen the season put the popcorn on and watch it ASAP—so long as you don't hold it to the same standards as you might the first two seasons. ★



Skiers.

MELANIE ELDRED

TWO VIEWS

Do you agree with Senator Marco Rubio that marriage is the greatest tool for lifting families out of poverty?



JED FIATO

Would marriage help solve America's poverty problems? Senator Marco Rubio seems to think so. Since the War on Poverty was declared 50 years ago there have been many theories and ideas about how to solve the problem of poverty. But Senator Marco Rubio has introduced a new theory.

No one could refute the merits of this argument. But how does this help those not raised in a home with married parents?

“marriage.” Senator Rubio keenly pointed out that marriage has become more and more unpopular over the past 50 years, but he believes that it is the greatest solution to the poverty problems that young people face.

So is marriage the ultimate tool that will fix America's poverty problems?

Now before we begin to critique Senator Rubio's bold statement, it is important to point out that in the Senator's speech he cites some interesting data concerning the links between marriage and a college education. Indeed, the Senator showed that 64% of adults who have a college degree are married in contrast to only 47% of adults who only have a high school diploma.

Rubio's theory goes like this: an individual's economic future is dependent not only upon having money and a good income but is also heavily dependent upon social capital. Marriage and a strong family structure create an environment that manifests social capital. When an individual is raised in a family that invests in him/her socially then the person will be better equipped

to handle the challenges in the future. Increases in marriage will cause increases in social capital, which will then increase an individual's opportunities for economic success.

No one could refute the merits of this argument. But how does this help the millions of children and adults who were not raised in a home with married parents?

Getting married would not make an unemployed person become employed. Getting married would not miraculously increase a person's low wages. Marriage would certainly have an impact on wealth inequality for future generations but it would not solve the poverty problem for people right now.

Another approach must be taken for those that are already entrapped by their poverty.

Right now, over 47 million Americans do not have health insurance, almost 50 million Americans are receiving food stamps and over 5 million Americans are currently receiving unemployment benefits. To make matters worse, it is estimated that over 15 percent of Americans are either unemployed, underemployed, or have completely given up on finding a job and have stopped looking for employment.

Lifting America out poverty will depend on whether lawmakers can find a way to increase employment, wealth, and wages. President Obama addressed this in his State of the Union speech. Ideas like raising the minimum wage to \$10.10, extending unemployment benefits for an additional 14 weeks, and lowering fees and costs for businesses that hire minority workers would have an immediate impact on the lives of poor people right now.

There are key factors that will contribute to solving these problems that have nothing to do with being married. Having a job, having a job that is full time, having a job that pays a sustainable wage, and having a substantial income that provides for a person's needs are all positive growth factors that contribute to a person's ability to provide for himself. The common link between all of those factors is income. Having the ability to purchase, having the ability to make your own destiny, and having money at your disposal are all keys to freeing a person from the prison of poverty. ★

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Jed is a junior political science major



SARAH HUTCHINSON

“Marriage” is a hard topic to broach in public debate, particularly in the context of economics. Many women, like myself, view it with a certain amount of trepidation when the subject comes up; the floodgates seem to be open to derogatory comments about “welfare queens” and single-motherhood, with poor women bearing the brunt of poorly-disguised scorn and highly insensitive gaffes. The conversation and ensuing media rigamortale can be so off-putting.

However, it's not a conversation that we should tune out. Some have suggested that the collapse of the married, two-parent family - the result of rising divorce rates, out-of-wedlock births, and rising numbers of couples who do not marry - has resulted in much of the poverty we see today.

Indeed, Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) recently made bold a speech on the fifty year anniversary of the War on Poverty in which he said “The truth is, the greatest tool to lift children and families from poverty is one that decreases the probability of child poverty by 82%. But it isn't a government spending program. It's called marriage.”

I would agree with Rubio, though with a few objections. To begin with, I don't think marriage is a panacea to the current economic climate. (Granted, it's not clear that in context of his speech that Rubio was assuming that it was.) I'm not even sure that it's “the greatest” tool to combat poverty, either. That lends itself too much to a messianic definition of marriage, which I don't think is appropriate. (It also seems to cheapen other equally important strategies to combat poverty.)

However, whether we like it or not, marriage and other social relationships do affect us and how rich and

how poor we are. As Nick Schultz of the American Enterprise Institute points out in “Home Economics: the Consequences of a Changing Family Structure,” economics is not solely a study of numbers and monetary transactions. The most important economic questions of our time - rising income inequality, depressed wages, and slow economic growth - cannot be answered without touching upon our social institutions. If this is the case, marriage must be addressed.

Marriage delivers on a number of good things that can help relieve poverty. For one, it seems to promote economic mobilization. Our modern version of marriage has all the promise to provide a stable home for children, helping them succeed later in life. Though they acknowledge that the effects of marriage are not the only factor, a new Brookings Institution study makes the claim that “children born into continuously married family [sic] have much better economic mobility than those in single parent families.” So, marriage seems to be good for the kids.

It's also good for the adults. In the absence of marriage, single parents, particularly single moms, have to struggle working one or more job, along with the regular housework and childrearing. According to a study undertaken by the Atlantic, poor women and

single moms are more likely to have higher levels of anxiety, to live with regret, to stress about their kids, and rely on their family and friends for money. Marriage can relieve some of the pressure by turning one income into two.

Altogether, marriage creates a miniature economy that has the potential to benefit all parties and, in the best marriages, this is fueled by a love and warmth that cannot be reproduced elsewhere.

That being said, the solution to poverty in the United States can't just be “get married,” nor should we expect that to be the solution for every individual.

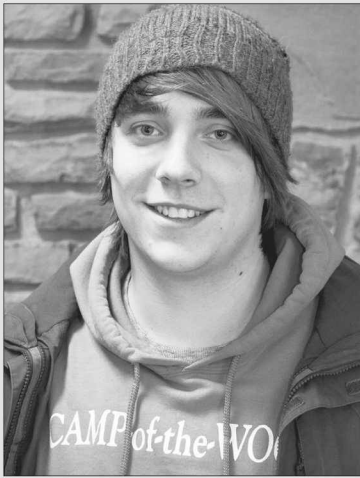
However, marriage is nonetheless an important aspect to resolving poverty and one of our greatest tools. Given its benefits, why don't we encourage it enough? Let's stop tuning out the conversation based on political rhetoric and start looking at marriage as the great thing that it is. ★

Sarah is a senior political science major

Marriage and other social relationships do affect us and how rich and how poor we are.

Marriage delivers on a number of good things that can help relieve poverty.

Awkward Couples Aren't Your Problem



LUKE LAUER

WYNN HORTON

There are times I sit alone and wonder, like, “Why God... Why would you, like, put these people in my life? By people, I quite obviously mean awkward couples! Seriously though, it’s like, OMG the most annoying thing in, like, the entire world totally. I see them when I eat lunch, when I get my mail from the basement of the CC, when I walk from one small campus building to another, and even when I am in the only coffee shop in Houghton. Like really though? Why are they so much everywhere? Couldn’t they, like not be in relationships or something? Isn’t there like, lots more attractive people who could kiss in public places and cuddle on

couches? I would be totes okay with it if they weren’t just so weird looking. Hot people cuddling in Gillette? I don’t think anyone would like, complain about that, like ever.”

Note: The views above do not reflect the views of the author and are entirely fictional.

I recently stumbled across the Twitter account: @HCawkcouples or HC awkward couples. To say that I was a little disturbed would be an understatement - disgusted would perhaps be a fitting alternative? As I scrolled down the page, my anger continued to spike as stalker-pictures of said “couples” rolled up the screen of my Mac. Along with the pictures were obnoxious comments pertaining to awkward couple tips and snarky c o m m e n t s designed only to make one’s self feel better at the expense of others. (By others here I actually mean the people whose pictures were taken and posted to social media without their knowledge.)

After my initial disgust wore off, I became sad for my fellow students – that we live day-to-day waiting for Houghton stereotypes to be fulfilled. However, I was more disappointed that

we - a body of students who claim to be followers of Christ – resort to such petty activities. Please understand, I am not a Bible-thumping, fire-brandishing troglodyte come to call God’s vengeance upon you. I am simply another student, another Christian, offering my feelings up (for what will most likely be public rebuke).

Now, let’s be honest, we – including me – have all made sarcastic comments about awkward couples or passing remarks regarding the people whose

To say that I was a little disturbed would be an understatement - disgusted would perhaps be a fitting alternative?

daily patterns seem to never differ. This established, my response to this Twitter page is this – SO WHAT? Why do you care enough about who dates who that you put the effort into maintaining a Twitter feed about the topic? It is, to put it plainly, entirely un-Christ-like. What part of “loving others” can be translated into “Tweet about those who are different than you?”

When we all leave Houghton and go out into the real world (and yes that is a thing), we are going to be confronted routinely by people who

How would you feel knowing that entire conversations are taking place online about the habits of you and your significant other?

are different than we are. More often than not there will be people who view us the same way. How would you feel if it were you? How would you feel knowing that entire conversations are taking place online about the habits of you and your significant other? Just get over yourselves people. There are times when the Grandma Rule needs to be applied: If you don’t have anything nice to say, don’t say anything at all. In the words of Mean Girls: “Calling somebody else fat won’t make you any skinnier. Calling someone stupid doesn’t make you any smarter... All you can do in life is try to solve the problem in front of you.” Seriously, people, if this type of moral can be presented in such a vapid movie, then can’t we figure it out too? ★

Wynn is a junior political science major



The mission of the Houghton Star is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have characterized Houghton College since its inception. This will be done by serving as a medium for the expression of student thought and as a quality publication of significant campus news, Houghton area news, and events.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,
My response to Ms. Wilson’s editorial “Only if You Absolutely Must” was rather conflicted. On one hand, I’d like to affirm her conclusion that marriage shouldn’t be the main goal of every young person’s life. Although Ms. Wilson speaks primarily about marriage within the context of contemporary Christian culture, I would go further, and say that American culture (wrongly) identifies romantic relationships as the goal of life. As Ms. Wilson suggests, one unfortunate result of this is that celibacy becomes a “second-rate” lifestyle, and single persons are expected to feel lonely and incomplete. (As evidence, simply look for the Houghton students observing “Singles Awareness Day” on February 14. Although I’m all for extending Valentine’s celebrations beyond those involved in romantic relationships, in which case “S.A.D.” is a humorous spin-off, the day’s title

smacks of a fundraising drive to cure the disease of singleness.) In short, I appreciate Ms. Wilson’s efforts to offer another alternative to the prevailing Christian rhetoric on marriage, one that’s less marriage-normative. Yet, on the other hand, I think that Ms. Wilson’s article tips too far and becomes unduly negative about marriage. Although it’s not clear to me the extent to which she herself believes that “Marriage is an earthly tradition, a vice,” I’m deeply uncomfortable with this characterization of marriage. Human relationships, including marriage, are an integral part of human flourishing, in which case it’s not appropriate to speak of marriage as a defect.

Best,
Abigail Bruxvoort, senior

Dear Editor,
It ruffled my feathers a bit to read your editorial last week, “Are Students Just Looking to be Entertained?” While I’m sure there are students that

choose not to be involved in activities and projects, I think this piece was incredibly unfair to the large number of students that are involved on campus. I personally am a part of more activities than it is probably wise to be, and I know many others like myself. It seems ill timed, coming off of a Praxis week where we focused on the practice of solitude, that you should accuse students of not doing enough. During Praxis week, a professor mentioned that for the number of activities offered on campus, an uninformed observer would expect our school to be much bigger. There simply aren’t enough students to keep everything we do here running, especially when

new opportunities are always being created. Enrollment is great issue, as you have presented it to be. Aside from that, academics are rigorous, campus jobs are a necessity for many students to remain at the school, and it is often hard to make time for something as simple as meeting up with a friend, because everyone has packed schedules. We all would like more people taking interest in our favorite pastimes, but in many cases it is not possible. I do appreciate some of your suggestions for small ways to get involved, as they are easy to make time for in our lives.

Sincerely,
Veronica Gerace, sophomore

SPEAK OUT

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less

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the houghton
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2013-2014

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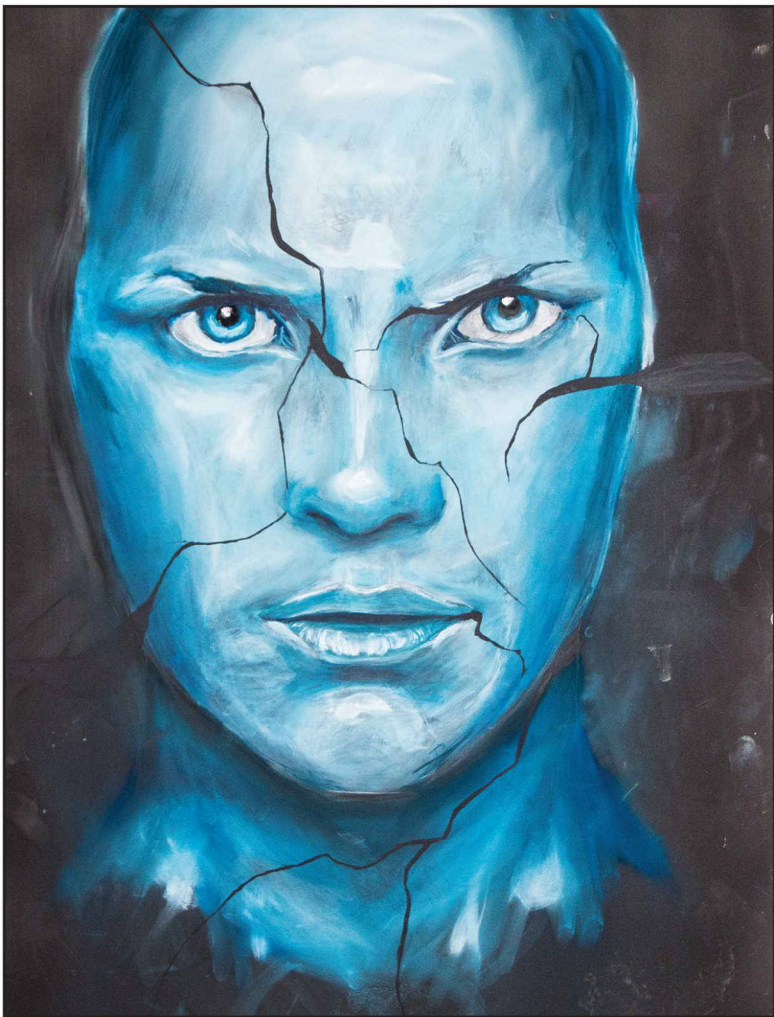
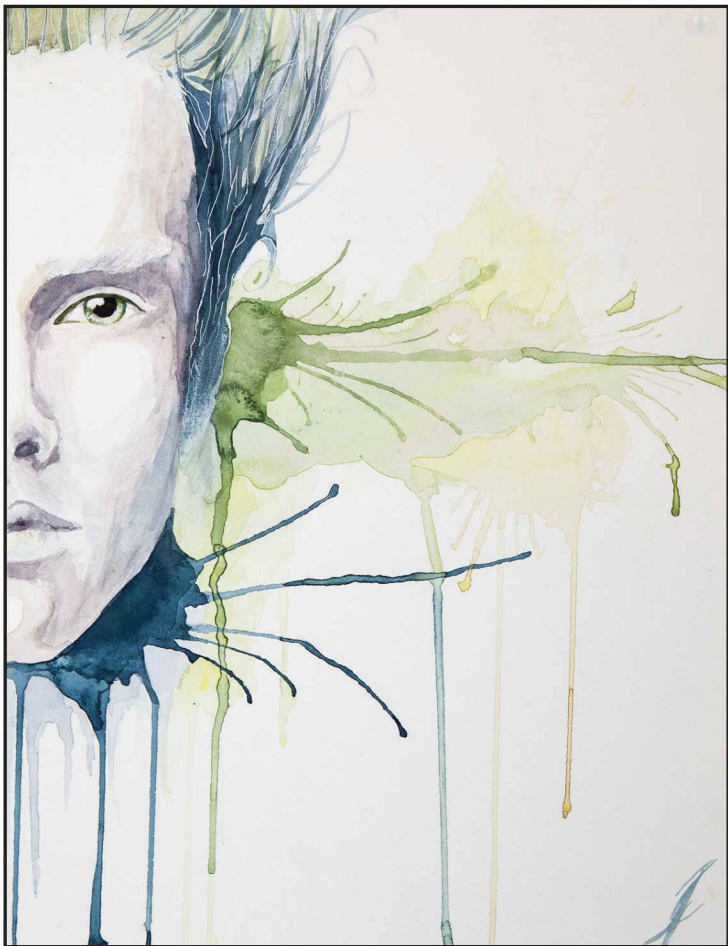
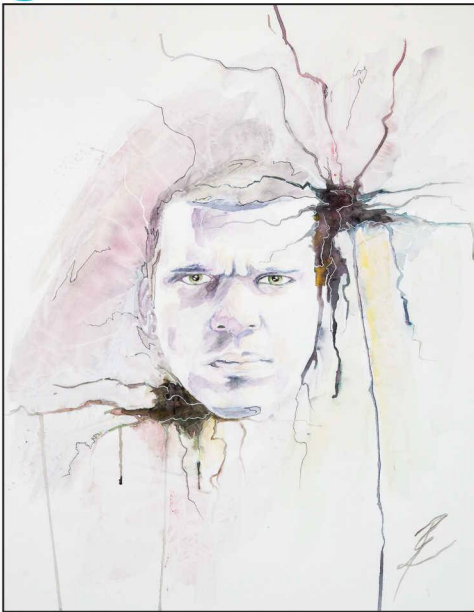
Artist of the Week

Rachel Longmire //senior art major

“For the past year, I have been working on different portraits. I have been interested in the psychological theories of emotional value of color. These paintings are made to challenge the boundaries between color and line and transcend the idea of traditional portraits.”



LUKE LAUER



Sudoku

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	8	9		2	4			
6					1	7		
	7				3	9		4
			5		6			
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			3	9		5	7	
	2							

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Titles and Media

Fight Me, food coloring and pen

Melting, Chalk, oil pastel, acrylic and spray paint on canvas

Cracked #2, Chalk Pastel, acrylic and spray paint on sheet metal

Under the Shadow of Your Wings, water color and pen

“Line is the rational, the structural, the formal, the honest, the reliable frame of mind, even more rectitude, seems inseparable. Color is identified with the emotional, rhapsodic, emancipated, formless, and even the deceitful part of Art.”

Charles A Riley