

the Houghton Star

FEATURE: unified field  
theory

unifies  
ultimate  
substance

Nominalism

22 Nov. 88

issue

vol. 81



## the humanities house

patty carole

A mustard-colored house with cute white trim is perched on route 19 to the side of the "Houghton College Christian Liberal Arts 1883" sign. Although eight attractive women live there, hardly anyone knows what goes on inside.

As the name implies, the Humanities House is for people who care about the humanities, which include literature, philosophy, history, music, psychology, and art. The house members have one mandatory meeting each month during which they discuss a book that they have read for the semester (this semester's book is *The Brothers Karamozov*) in conjunction with an article. So far, these discussions have only included women, aside from one male visitor and Ted Murphy, the house's advisor. The house meetings, however, are open to everyone, regardless of sex, race, color, or creed.

The Humanities House is the brainchild of Murphy, an art professor with an effervescent aura. If you meet him you'll see what I

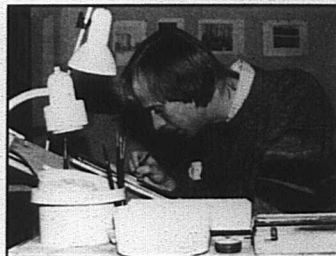
mean. I interviewed him about the house and its future.

### Why did you create the Humanities House?

I wanted a quiet neighborhood. No. We needed to have a more informal setting for students to talk about books, art, important subjects. When I was a student, I wanted to find out where the intellectual discussions were. They certainly weren't happening around me. I thought they might happen over lunch—no way. Then I stumbled upon a group who ate off-campus, and worked it out so that I could be a part of these conversations. Now that I'm in Houghton, I want to create that sort of situation in a house. I also want to break down some barriers within divisions. Students in music don't talk to students in art. I want to get that out of the way somehow.

### What do you look for in people who might want to live in the house?

I look for a level of critical skill. I expect that to be devel-



Ted Murphy

oped. Students are not born with that. But I expect them to care a great deal about issues.

**You are an art professor, yet the humanities encompass more than art. In what other fields are you knowledgeable?**

I was a philosophy major in college as well as an art major. I deeply love books and literature. I've often described myself as a painter and a reader. Books are a big part of my life. And music is as well.

### What benefits arise when people of similar interests live together?

It makes the humanities more crucial and central to either their individual lives or to the college. I think it has to happen with professors, too. If the professors can be more interested in these sorts of things, hopefully students can be more also. I want to have more faculty, administration, and community members involved with the house.

### Do you aim to make students more articulate from the discussions?

Yes. People have lost of the art of conversation. Television has been a cause of that. The best way to learn to talk is by reading and by listening to other people talk.

The art of conversation will be revived in the next Humanities House meeting on December 6. All are invited.





I'M SURE IT'S FRUSTRATING KNOWING THAT MEN ARE BIGGER, STRONGER AND BETTER AT ABSTRACT THOUGHT THAN WOMEN.



REALLY, IF YOU'RE A GIRL, WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU GO ON LIVING?



THE THOUGHT OF A JERK LIKE YOU BEGGING ONE OF US FOR A DATE WHEN YOU'RE 17.



HA! NOT ME! GROSS!



editorial(s): dave perkins

**T**here is a limit to what we can do with the size of staff that we have. If you ask us to do more in the *Star*—say, print the intramural standings—then we need to have someone to do the intramural standings. If we asked the current sports staff to do them, they would have insufficient time to report on varsity sports or sports issues.

We'd like to have more writers on the staff—not necessarily people who want to write every week, although that would be nice. Reporters who write once a month are fine.

It may be that if you write an article and send it to us without forewarning, we will print it. But the nature of editing a paper is such that surprises are generally a pain in the neck. If you have an idea for an article, or if you want to be assigned one, the best thing to do is to talk to Thom or me—then we'll know what we'll be getting during the coming week.

Suggestions like "the *Star* needs more variety" or "the *Star* ought to deal with things that are going on" are unhelpful. What kind of variety? What things are going on? If these are your suggestions, then talk to us about the answers to these questions, or offer yourself as a writer.

(about last week's play review)

I liked *Ten Little Indians*. I was glad I went, and I appreciate the effort that the cast, the director, and the stage crew put forth. I should have said so.

Nonetheless, the play, in my

opinion, suffered from some over-acting and an emphasis of comedy over suspense. The purpose of a review is not simply to thank people for their effort, but to talk about the good and bad of the play. It is possible to enjoy a play and still offer criticisms.

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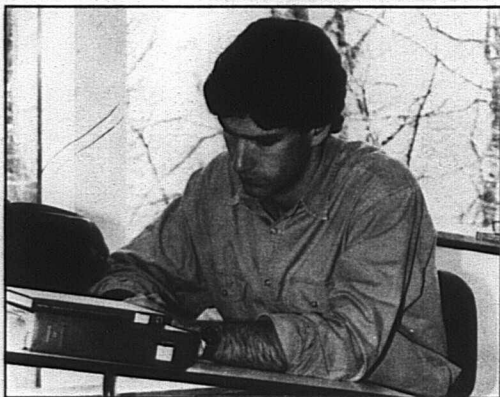
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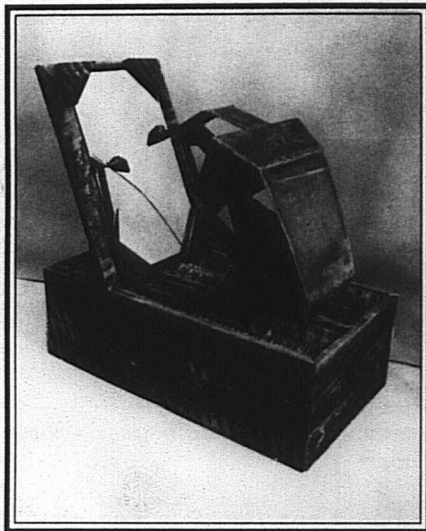
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The *Houghton Star* is a weekly publication dedicated to printing news of consequence. The attention of *The Star* is turned inward upon Houghton College. Naturally, neither the editors nor the college espouse every opinion found in *The Star*, since the articles often present opposing viewpoints. The editors recommend dialogue among faculty, staff, and especially students. Signed letters must be submitted by 9:00 a.m. Thursday. They may not exceed one double-spaced page in length; the editors reserve the right to edit all contributions.



*"I want to take incidents out of our lives and—however wonderful or terrible—communicate them."*



*Ecce Homo*

## titles don't do justice

Jonathan Strand's latest sculpture, *Ecce Homo*, depicts a man seated in front of a mirror. The figure is crouched over and his elbows are jabbed between his legs so that the body seems to curl toward a fetal position. "*Ecce homo*" is Latin for "such is man", which makes one wonder what Jonathan is getting at with his sculpture.

But Strand, a senior sculpture student, has some reservations about stating the meaning of art pieces. This is not because his art is devoid of meaning or because he could not do a good job summarizing the meaning of one of the pieces.

His reluctance stems from something very different. Strand believes that if the statement an art piece makes can be adequately contained in a sentence or a couple paragraphs, then the art piece wasn't worth the time. Instead, the correct response to the

question "What does *Ecce Homo* mean?" is "Take a look at it again." The art piece itself is the best place to look to find the artist's meaning. Language has limits and art has mysteries.

This does not mean that Strand has no direction to his art, or that he works in a sort of unconscious stupor. Though for a time his attention was set only on the technical aspects of art—the application of different design theories—Strand has become concerned with the content of his work. "I feel," he said, "that I have some things I can say, and Professor Baxter has challenged me to make a statement."

The "statement" Strand makes is purposefully subtle and modest. He has no delusions about his ability to preach moral absolutes: "I'm not interested in drawing moral conclusions about anything; instead, I want to take

incidents out of our lives and—however wonderful or terrible they are—communicate them."

Such art is open to interpretation. Strand is generally reluctant to title his art because he feels it predetermines how it will be experienced. He enjoys getting different interpretations from different people instead of prescribing an interpretation.

Generally, Strand works with highly refined plaster, ceramics or clay. *Ecce Homo*, is made of rough wood and plate steel.

Jonathan is unsure about his future. He may study architecture or art history and, of course, he could continue in sculpture. "Sometimes I can see myself as an artist," he said, "but that's a big risk. Maybe I'll take it; I don't know. I've taken a lot of risks in the past. It's a risk that all art majors think about."



# Houghton's accessibility to the handicapped

dave wheeler

Handicapped students are in the minority at Houghton. As a matter of fact, enrollment of handicapped students is so infrequent that there are no definite policies concerning disabled students in general; the college has dealt with each individual on a case-by-case basis. This, however, may change in the near future.

Director of Residence Life Jeanne Ortiz advocates "an environment which is more responsive to needs of the disabled on a physical, psychological, social, academic, and spiritual level." Ortiz, who has taught courses dealing with the relationship of handicapped students to their environment, is "concerned over the ways in which the campus has responded (or hasn't responded) to the needs of these individuals." To a large extent, they are "segregated from the mainstream of activities."

Ortiz stresses that Houghton, as a Christian community, should be concerned about how it responds to the disabled. Most people will be disabled, either temporarily (a sports-related injury) or permanently (accidents, the aging process) at some time. Ortiz would like to see Houghton supportive and accessible to handicapped students of all kinds, and perceived as such so that other potential students will see Houghton as a viable college choice.

For instance, Edinboro students Corey and Christopher Rhodes, both suffering from multiple dystrophy, would have liked to attend Houghton, but found it inaccessible enough to be potentially uncomfortable. They have stated that they would definitely consider transferring to Houghton if it became more accessible.

Until recently, Houghton's method for dealing with the disabled has been on an individual basis: a handicapped student would enroll, and accommodations would be worked out for that particular student.

For example, Patricia Carr, a pre-med student from Corning who is confined to a wheelchair for undetermined reasons, was allowed to schedule spring semester classes in October so that the classrooms involved could be moved to accessible buildings (such as the science building). Carr lives on the fourth floor in Lambein, ground level from the bridge. In addition, her room has been equipped with an intracampus telephone hookup. Carr's friends have assisted in transportation. "Consideration and empathy can go a long way," she said.

Director of Counseling Services Mike Lastoria considers the case-by-case method "noble, but not efficient." By this he means that "we aren't addressing handicapped students at large," and that "we need a committee that will

make some policy decisions and help implement some changes." Ortiz agrees with Lastoria; she would like the college to "look more systematically at the issue of disability, in addition to the case-by-case issues which arise that need special attention." Every handicapped student has specific needs, but their common needs would be better met through a general disabled-service organization. Carr said that Fancher's relocation would have been the ideal time to adjust the building for handicapped students. A general coordinating mechanism might be more inclined to anticipate such needs.

Already some progress has been made. According to Dean of Student Development Robert Danner, a memorandum has been sent to Dean Bence suggesting such a task force or committee. Also, the new academic building will join the science building and Lambein as buildings accessible to the handicapped.

Perhaps with a more generalized focus on the disabled (concrete plans for dealing with it as a whole, such as the reworking of buildings and stairwells), coupled with specific care and attention for the individuals, students like the Rhodes brothers could assimilate into Houghton. The staff is "looking for the best way to make this happen," said Ortiz.

# letters : trees and music



*The mutant hemlock*

Thom:

In your editorial, "Making Sidewalks," in last week's issue (Nov. 14), you made two ridiculous claims: "The grass is disappearing from Houghton," and "the trees are going with the grass."

While the quad alone contains some 45,000 square feet of grass, the cement path from the campus center to the parking circle consists of no more than 400 square feet of cement, assuming that it is roughly 63 feet long and 6 feet wide (yes, I did measure it). Furthermore, the rock path along the fence by the new academic building is temporary! The real sidewalk is buried under the rocks 10 feet away. The rocks were "strewn" on that 1060 square foot path (I measured that one, too) to prevent people from slipping in the mud during these rainy months. But don't worry: you'll be getting that 1060 square feet of grass back when the building is finished and landscaped. And perhaps you forgot the creation of

a whole field of grass behind and next to Fancher, where Gao used to rest?

As far as trees go, Thom, while it is true that trees were knocked down to demolish Gao and Woolsey, shift Fancher, and build the new academic building, the college has actively pursued the planting of new trees to make up for the loss of the older ones. For example:

Near Luckey  
3 new oaks  
Near the chapel  
2 flowering dogwoods, 3 young gray birches  
Near East Hall  
8 new locust trees, 6 young oaks, 11 young gray birches  
Near the Campus Center  
5 young oaks, 1 mutant hemlock, 17 young gray birches, 11 new "mystery" trees, 1 new dogwood  
Along the temporary path  
1 young oak  
Surrounding the parking circle  
4 young oaks  
Near Fancher  
1 young oak, 4 new "mystery" trees  
Near Brookside  
4 new oaks, 6 young members of the Rosaceae family  
Outside the science building  
2 young somethings

This totals to 90 new or young trees (there are hundreds of older ones!) scattered throughout the immediate campus area. How can you say that trees are vanishing?

Thom, your lack of research has caused you to write something that is blatantly false. Accept responsibility and use the *Star* as a voice of the college, not just as a voice for your perceptions.

peter moughan

Dear editors:

The Senate has been asked for information on students' musical preference, since the music policy for public settings is under review by the administration. Why is it under review? They would have us believe it to be of concern to the moral and spiritual atmosphere here at Houghton. Given this, why are we passing out a survey to determine what should and should not be open for public consumption? Since when has morality been determined by public opinion? If it is a moral issue, than popularity is no means to discover truth.

Could it be that morality is not what is at issue here? Economics teaches us that all actions are determined by the desire to maximize profit. In our experience Houghton is not unaffected by this rule. Let us explain. Houghton maintains a moral standard by which students are to live. Dorm rooms and college-approved housing are a means to regulate student activities. Yet when we applied for our off-campus apartment, we were informed, quite plainly by Student Development, that the answer was based upon their ability to fill all college housing in order to receive as much money as possible. Given the statement of policy in the student handbook, we had assumed that this would be more of a moral decision.

As in our housing experience, we propose that the administration is making this appear to be a moral issue. We fear that the final decision will be made as a precarious balancing act to parents, alumni, and students, with profit being the deciding factor.

michael shelly  
kevin williams



# letters

## He never promised you a rose garden

The perspective on the environment attributed to Dr. Ken Boon in Dave Wheeler's article was more pagan than Christian. One of the distinctive doctrines of Christianity from its beginnings has been that our environment was created for us to use. God has given us the plants and animals to use as food (Gen. 1:30, 9:3; 1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Tim. 4:4). He commands that we increase the earth's productivity (Gen 1:28, 9:17; Deut. 6:3, 8:6-9; Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27). God promises that paradise, once a garden, will become a city (Rev. 21).

Dr. Boon's talk of "making proper use of what we have and leaving some for future generations" is disconnected from reality. The only reason we have the prosperity we have today is because our ancestors "raped and abused the environment." If our ancestors had not worked their butts off to subdue their environment, we would be trying to grow food, today, without tools. What view of reality does Dr. Boon believe brought about the disappearance of many deadly diseases?

In all the articles on stewardship in the *Star*, there seemed to be an implicit assumption that runs counter to the Christian concept of stewardship. The Bible commands personal responsibility and promises us the fruits of our labor (Proverbs). It demands that we make restitution for things that we have hurt that others have stewardship over (Ex. 22:1-6). Such personal responsibility assumes a world in which individuals have a rational basis for calculating the costs of their actions. By invoking "future generations," the foundations of private stewardship are destroyed. It is assumed that people cannot make correct decisions unless they follow the guidance of experts who must dictate to us what we should do with our property. How can we be held responsible for our actions if we are forced to rely on others for our standards of value?

I suggest we worry more about our own stewardship than that of others (Judges 9:7-15; Rom. 14:4; Gal. 6:4-5).

mark horne

Dear Thom,

Having read your "Apology" in last week's *Star* (Nov. 14), I am curious as to whether or not you voted on November 8. I also wonder why you are "indifferent and dispassionate" about the election. I am not as concerned with how Mike and George define freedom as I am with how they stand on the values that I hold as a Christian. Let me mention some of the issues that I feel are "Christian" issues. They are: abortion, sanctity of family, day care (government-run vs. parents' choice), poverty, euthanasia, fiscal responsibility, world peace, and freedom (your right to study piano, Plato, Ted Koppel, Christian Science Monitor, or Moby Dick).

I don't see how you can be indifferent about an election that could ultimately influence every other part of your life, including your "rights" as a Christian.

If you blame your feelings on the corrupt government, then I would say that is all the more reason to get involved.

ray parlett

THE TYRANNOSAURUS STALKS THE CRETACEOUS SHORES!



THE 5-TON CARNIVOROUS LIZARD CAN RUN FASTER THAN A CHARGING RHINO! WHAT COULD BE MORE HORRIFYING?



STOP THAT CLOMPING AROUND!!



... BESIDES THE BLOOD-CURDLING ROAR OF ITS MOM...



# dear anti-styrofoam readers,

This letter informs the public about the greatly distorted and biased views of styrofoam products that were portrayed in the last issue of the *Star*.

1) Styrofoam is a hydro-carbon based product. If CFC (chloro-

rofluorocarbons) are not used in their manufacture (as stated in the article), then there will be no pollutants emitted when burned; only water and carbon dioxide.

2) Styrofoam is not biodegradable. However, all the trash

from Houghton (including the styrofoam from Big Al's) is incinerated in Cuba to generate steam which aids in the production of cheese. The point is: there is almost no chance of the cups from Houghton floating in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean by the year 2989.

3) If paper products cost three to four times more than styrofoam, then it must consume *more resources* to manufacture paper products. Accelerated consumption of limited energy resources defeats the purpose of using paper.

4) Furthermore, if trees cost more than petroleum, are they not a more scarce resource? The rain forests being cut for producing paper are *not* being replanted. The projection of the *extinction* of tropical rain forests of the world is set at year 2000.

5) As stated in the article, styrofoam is much more useful. It keeps cold cold and hot hot. Also your hands do not get burned or wet. Waxed, waterproof cups are just as non-biodegradable as styrofoam cups; they just cost more.

6) Use of paper products in Big Al's will probably raise the price of almost every item sold (increased expenses = increased price). I would be a bad steward of my money if I spent *more* for something with *less* functional value.

I am all for the protection of the environment. The difference between my position and the position held in the article "The Problem of Styrofoam" is that mine takes into account some myths about styrofoam and considers the stewardship of money and limited resources.

tim aihara

## volleyball

george wilson

When the women's volleyball team boarded the vans on Thursday, November 10, at 5:30 in the morning, their spirits were soaring. They faced a ten-hour van trip to Marion, Indiana, for the National Christian Collegiate Athletic Association National Volleyball Tournament—Nationals, for short—but they were seeded second.

Three days later, they returned after finishing in seventh place. Although they lost to Columbia College, Olivet Nazarene, and Milligan on Friday, and Huntington on Saturday, their spirits were still high.

The women agreed that the team played poorly on Friday. None of the teams they played that day were rated as highly as Houghton. Because of the three losses, Houghton drew Huntington, the number one seed, for Saturday's game. None of Huntington's previous victims, whether at Nationals or in district, had scored double figures in a single match (a match is best two out of three games). Although Huntington won, the Lady Highlander's scored in double digits.

Excitement was still the rule when the vans came back on Sunday; the team had had a

great time. The fun included: ordering one hundred shakes and one hundred sundaes at Ivanhoes, half the team getting stuck on an elevator for fifteen minutes, and Coach Lord—who claims that he never gets sick—getting a virus and losing his voice. But the most memorable event wasn't wild fun: President Chamberlain, who was in Indiana for a conference, gave up his non-refundable plane ticket and bought a new one so he could stay and cheer for the team.

Several players were cited for individual achievement by the National's committee. Cindy Antisdel, Nancy Banker, and Kara Christensen were named Academic All-Americans, and Judy Fox was named All-American. Fox, after speaking with co-captains and fellow seniors Diana Bandy, Cindy Antisdel, and Heather Werth, said: "As seniors, we will look back on this season with tremendous love for the team. We began the season with seventeen and ended with twenty—that shows some of the determination that this team has and the promise it holds for the future. It was a great year; we're sorry it had to end."





## a christian audience

spud wentzell

Athletic events have the potential to be a valuable experience at Houghton College. Sports provide the opportunity for fun, fellowship and the development and expression of God-given abilities. Christians who participate in and attend athletic events should consider each an opportunity to represent the Lord through their attitudes and behaviors.

Opponents, officials, and spectators are to be valued as human beings created by God, and should be treated with generosity, compassion and courtesy. It should be the desire of everyone to identify and support attitudes and behaviors that promote positive consequences for individuals and to eliminate those attitudes and behaviors that infringe upon the physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual well-being of another human being.

The responsibility for creating and providing a distinctively different environment is the task of every individual associated

with an athletic event. It is for this reason that the following fundamentals for "sportsmanship" are presented.

1) **Demonstrate polite regard for the opponent.** The opponent should be treated as a guest; greeted cordially on arriving; given the best accommodations; and accorded the tolerance, honesty, and generosity which all human beings deserve.

2) **Publicly support the officials.** The officials should be recognized as arbitrators who are trained to do their job and who can be expected to do it to the best of their ability. Good sportsmanship implies the willingness to accept and abide by final decisions of the officials. Procedures for appropriate communications with officials are clearly defined in rule books. Degrading, ridiculing, or embarrassing another human being should not be acceptable behavior within human interaction.

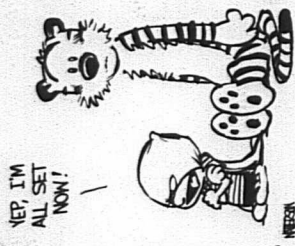
3) **Know and appreciate the rules of the contest.** A familiarity

with the current rules of the game and the recognition of their necessity for a fair contest is essential. Good sportsmanship suggests the importance of conforming to the spirit as well as to the letter of the rules. Spectators should not interfere with the administration of a game.

4) **Maintain self-control.** A prerequisite of good sportsmanship requires a personal understanding of bias or prejudice and the ability to prevent the desire to win from overcoming rational behavior.

5) **Recognize and appreciate skill in performance regardless of affiliation.** Applause for an opponent's good performance is a demonstration of generosity and good will that should not be looked upon as treason. The ability to recognize quality in performance and the willingness to acknowledge it without regard to team membership is one of the most highly commendable gestures of good sportsmanship.

*[these five points are originally from a bulletin issued in 1973 by the Board of Control of the Iowa School Athletic Association; they were summarized in Sportsmanship—Whose Responsibility? in 1975 by Clifford B. Fagan, Editor, National Federation Publications.]*



## Hey!

If you miss an issue of the Star, you can ask the librarian at the main desk for the issue. They are kept in a box under the desk. You can read it, but not keep it.

# The Minefield

mick  
williams

where is the philosopher of this age?

It is necessary to deal with many non-Christian and anti-Christian beliefs at a Christian liberal arts college. Indeed, many of us do so every day, but we often fail to study them with the requisite caution. They should be handled like radioactive waste; they are invisible killers if not handled with special precautions. These ideas come in many forms, but perhaps the most hazardous of all these is philosophy. Why do I feel that philosophy can be spiritually lethal? Because Paul says in Colossians 2:8, "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ." (Also see Acts 17:18-21, 1 Cor. 1:20-21, 1 Cor. 2:6).

The Scripture says that we must turn away from "the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith" (1 Tim. 6:20-21).

Well, given this, how can the average college student put these principles into practice? Having struggled with this myself, I can offer some insights:

1) Don't proceed to read worldly philosophy before you are solidly grounded in the Word of God. If you are not spiritually mature thanks to constant Bible study you will not be able to properly distinguish between good and evil. You can predict that philosophical evil will present itself as good, because for evil to be effective it must counterfeit good (see Hebrews 5:14, 2 Cor 11:14-15).

2) Read philosophy with the intent of counteracting its influence on others. Learn about evil in order to destroy it. Find those few parts in the philosopher's writings that give positive insight to the mature Christian, but discern every last bit of them in light of the complete truth contained in the Bible (see Hebrews 4:12-13; see also Bernard Ramm's The Devil, Seven Wormwoods, and God).

3) Don't assume that you are not competent to study philosophy without a professor holding your little pink hand every step of the way. You may have to read slowly, carefully, and use a secondary source as your springboard, but the well-read Christian can understand these works. Unless the authors were deliberately engaging in obscurantism, they should be comprehensible. For example, in tackling the great minds of Marxism-Leninism (Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Mao) and some of the ancient Chinese politico-military philosophers, I have found that one doesn't need a PhD, only diligence and the "critical thinking" ability a liberal arts education is supposed to enhance.

4) Finally, I have noticed a tendency toward chronic pessimism and cynicism among those enamored with philosophy—this stems from the unclean spiritual aspect of these beliefs. These people need to come to grips with what Paul said in Romans 1:21-22: "Their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools."