



THE HOUGHTON STAR

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April 25, 2008

Creation Care Scholar Matthew J. Sleeth Headlines Earth Week

By Laura Jackson

This year's Earth Week celebrations welcomed Dr. Matthew J. Sleeth to campus. Sleeth, author of *Serve God, Save the Planet*, will fill the newly minted position of "creation care scholar" for a year at Houghton College. At one time he was a successful doctor of emergency medicine, but a string of developments led him to take a greater interest in the environment and make some radical changes in his life. He shared his story during chapel on Monday morning, kicking off a week of environmental awareness at Houghton.

Sleeth began Monday's chapel session

by explaining the scope of his life before Christianity and environmental work took hold. As he described it, he had been living the American dream in New England, but a vacation trip to an island changed the course of his life. While his family enjoyed the sea and sky of the island, his wife asked him a question that got under his skin like nothing ever had before: "What is the biggest problem in the world?" Sleeth answered simply, "The world is dying."

Sleeth returned to New England where he began to grapple with the problem of evil. He was not a Christian at the time but a self-described humanist and a strong believer in science. As various

members of his family encountered personal problems, he discovered an internal need for answers and ended up finding them when he picked up a Gideon's Bible and converted to Christianity. A short time later he began re-reading the Bible specifically to determine its view of the environment, as several of the challenges facing him were natural issues, like death. It was then, he said, that he discovered how "green" the Bible is.

After studying the creation story and noting how many other areas of the Holy Book refer to God's value of and love for creation, Sleeth decided it was time to prioritize his life. With the support of his family, who had also

converted to Christianity, he began looking at disposable cups, SUVs, and environmentally harmful practices in a new light. The family began making practical changes like getting rid of extra coats and seldom-used kitchen appliances, culminating with the decision to move to a smaller house.

After sharing his autobiographical story, Sleeth gave an overview of various sections of the Bible which had led him to think it was a "green" book in the first place. He pointed out that Jesus is continually referred to with nature-based metaphors such as the Tree of Life and a vine. Even John 3:16, Sleeth said, is essentially

• *Earth Week continued on page 4*

Schloss Lectures on Relationship Between Science and Religion

By Joel VanderWeele

On Wednesday, April 16, Houghton College welcomed Jeff Schloss, distinguished Professor of Biology at Westmont College, to campus for a number of presentations. Schloss gave a chapel talk, met with Professor Lipscomb's Ethical Theory class, and concluded his busy day of lecturing with an open forum entitled "Evolutionary Accounts of Religion: Science Set Free of Ideology Run Wild."

Schloss's chapel was based on Luke 19:14, in which Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for trying to quiet the rejoicing crowd, saying, "I tell you,

if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." Using stones as a synecdoche for the natural world, Schloss emphasized that although the stones will indeed cry out we should not use natural facts as proofs of God's existence, but instead as images which, as C.S. Lewis proposed, will help us to better understand the scriptures. Understanding that human life depends on the exact number of stars in the universe, the perfect placement of Mars, the size of the moon, and the delicate balance of chemicals on Earth is surely awe-inspiring, but it does not definitively show that God was the cause of such things.

To clarify this idea, he told the story

of a college-aged surfer who decided to remain on the beach one night until he had decided whether or not he believed in God. Later admitting the story was autobiographical, Schloss described the mental process that led him to the conclusion that although it was a nice idea, God did not exist. Schloss then moved to Hawaii to pursue the life of a beach bum and descended into a life of debauchery. It was there that he became dissatisfied with his life without faith and eventually experienced conversion during his most troubled hour.

From his personal experience, Schloss recognized that, while science could be inspiring in any number of ways, it was

not an effective tool for evangelism. As a Christian scientist, he emphasized that he did not want to "stone" his colleagues (like Jesse Bering, who is famous for saying, "I've got God by the throat and I'm not letting go until one of us is dead") with supposed scientific proofs of God's existence.

Instead of attempting to prove God's existence with scientific methods, Schloss studied human genetics and alternative evolutionary accounts of altruism. Proving that humans have the capacity for unselfish action is by no means an air-tight proof of God's existence, but it seriously challenges

• *Schloss continued on page 2*

Inside
this
Issue...

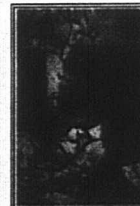
4th Annual Soup Run
Benefits Local Charities

Page 5



From the Editors' Desk:
A Rawlsian Judicial Policy?

Page 7



Artist of the Week:
Rachel Blystone

Page 8

WORLD OUT THERE

By Joel VanderWeele

Earthquake Shakes Midwest

Early last Friday morning, the Midwest was shaken by a 5.2-magnitude earthquake. The quake was the largest to hit that region in over 40 years. The epicenter of the earthquake was seven miles below the earth near Mt. Carmel, Illinois, on the Wabash Valley fault line. After effects continued to shake the region through the morning, including a 4.5-magnitude tremor that rattled the skyscrapers of Chicago. Smaller tremors were felt in 21 states and some shakes were felt as far away as Florida. No major damage or injuries were reported.

Campaign 2008 Update

This week, the Democratic candidates squared off in the Pennsylvania primary. The contest, which was the first held since March 4, delivered Hillary Clinton a 10-point victory over frontrunner Barack Obama. Despite the win, the math still works against Clinton's favor, and she will require close to 60% of both the remaining popular vote and the super delegate vote to win the nomination. On the Republican side, John McCain scored close to three-quarters of the Pennsylvania vote; surprisingly, the forgotten Ron Paul garnered almost 130,000 votes and earned 16% of the total Republican vote. Having long ago locked up the nomination, however, McCain has continued to focus his attention on addressing his Democratic opponents. The next contests will be held on May 6 in North Carolina and Indiana.

Rice Shortage Expected to Worsen

A rice shortage is causing what many experts are considering a global crisis. The shortages, along with fertilizer shortages and higher energy prices, are causing a sharp increase in grain prices across the world, troubling

politicians and economists from Tokyo to Texas. According to studies done by the United Nations, food prices rose 35 % in the last year alone. Rice is the basic life source of over 3 million people, and is especially important to the economies of developing nations. In the Philippines, where 68 million people live on 2 US dollars a day or less, the rice shortage is exacerbating an already unstable social and political situation.

Zimbabwe Announces Unity Plan

After four weeks of election turmoil and uncertainty, a plan for an interim government in Zimbabwe has been announced by the state-run newspaper, The Herald. In the proposal, the government would be led by current President, Robert Mugabe, but would share power between the ruling and opposition parties. This proposal has met with strong opposition from many who believe that if Zimbabwe is to regain any political stability, it must get rid of Mugabe, who's ZANU-PF party has been in power for 28 years. Others believe that a legitimate election is impossible and that a shared-power government is the only realistic solution to a deep-seated problem.

Study links Food to Sex of Child

According to a study done by researchers from Oxford and the University of Exeter, the sex of a child may be determined by its mother's diet in the early stages of pregnancy. The study, printed in the journal "Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences" shows a link between high glucose levels and the birth of males. It is unclear what exactly causes the connection, but according to in vitro fertilization studies, research showed that glucose encourages the growth of male embryos and inhibits female embryos. There was also a strong connection between regularly eating breakfast and producing sons.

Schloss continued from page 1

much of what the scientific world has believed about human nature, making belief in God more plausible.

It was this field of study that Schloss explored in his open forum Wednesday afternoon. Schloss introduced his lecture with an explanation of Blaise Pascal's vacuum, which supposes that humans naturally have an infinite abyss within them in the "shape" of God that only He could fill, thereby making Him a necessary part of the human experience. Studying evolutionary and biological accounts of religion, said Schloss, is like examining the contours of Pascal's vacuum.

According to Schloss, the primary problem with most evolutionary accounts of religious belief is a misplaced focus on the biological function of religion. Schloss noted that it is important to maintain the distinction between the benefits of

belief and belief itself when discussing biological accounts of religions. For example, telling you that you would receive one million dollars if you could make yourself believe that a bridge was actually being built from the Chamberlain Center to the Chapel does not make it more likely that you could believe such a ridiculous story (saying, "I believe..." is very different from authentic belief).

One of the main reasons religious belief has continued to come up in scientific discourse is that human behavior continues to contradict the rules suggested by genetics, or "break the genetic leash." As far as science has been able to discern, humans are the only animals that knowingly put their lives in harms way for the sake of belief or moral integrity; no other creatures share this sensibility. Evolution theory is based on universal

Schloss continued on page 5

reading day
Tues. April 29th
11am-2pm
campus center lounge
photographs, cards,
bowls, jewelry, mugs,
prints, paintings, and more...
sponsored by the Artist Guild



Night of Square Dancing Marks Houghton's First-Ever School Dance

By Rebekah Miller

Houghton College sponsored an historic event this past Saturday on the Quad. For the first time since the founding of the college in 1883, Houghton held a dance – a hoedown – for the enjoyment of faculty, staff and students of the school. While the recently-held Gillette Hall Banquet featured a bout of spontaneous dancing, the Hoedown was the first planned dance sanctioned by the school.

CAB undertook the planning of this momentous occasion. The initial response was somewhat varied; some students were excited about the dance, and some found the idea of a hoedown somewhat lacking. Senior Eric Stevenson commented, "I didn't really think that a hoedown sounded like that much fun, but when I got there, it was awesome."

In line with the hoedown theme, the music featured a live bluegrass band as well as a square dance caller. Students filled the Quad Saturday night, decked out in country attire and the cowboy hats passed out earlier in the week. For those who wanted additional pieces of flair, complimentary red and blue bandanas that read 'Houghton Hoedown' were passed out. The scene was oddly reminiscent of the 1920's themed Inauguration Gala, minus the chairs and 1920s food. Instead, homemade chip dip was brought in, as well as apples with caramel.

Among the highlights of the dance was a featured mechanical bull. While many students dared to attempt the feat, most faculty declined the free ride.—that is, except for Dr. David Brubaker, who valiantly tried to master the relentless (metal) animal. Yet, even Brubaker only managed to tame the bull for a short while before he too was

thrown off. While no one lasted very long on the bull, most left the circle with smiles despite their defeat.

The main attraction was, of course, the dancing itself. Many of the dances focused around simple square dances that could be easily explained to those who had never before participated in such an event. Dancers learned new vocabulary such as 'promenade,' 'corner,' 'dig for the oyster' and 'dig for the clam' as the caller instructed each dance. Along with square dances, participants also engaged in the electric slide and a somewhat disorganized version of Cotton-Eyed Joe. Some dancers, when confused about the dance itself, simply made up their own moves.

While many appreciated the dancing, some were not thrilled by the event. Sophomore

Katherine Thompson commented, "While it was awkward holding my date's hand while dancing in a circle and looking at the caller, the dance was satisfactory." Professor Ted Murphy also commented later in an art class on the unfamiliarity of dancing at Houghton, saying, "Nancy and I dancing is like two statues dragging each other around."

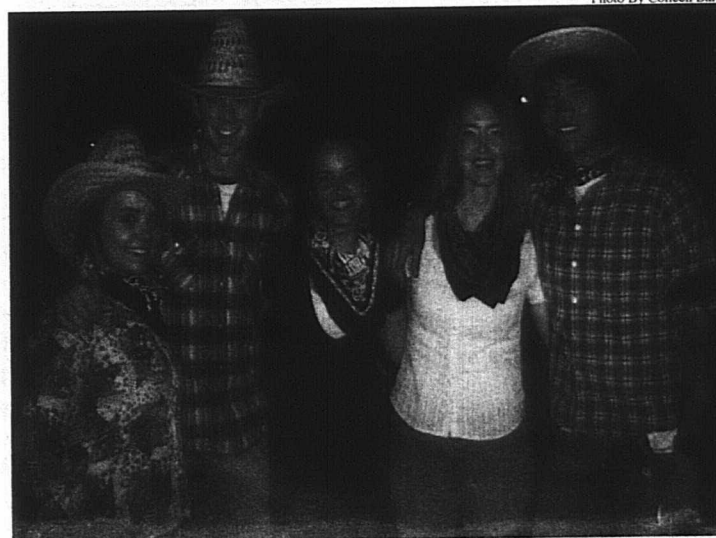
Nevertheless, the dance seemed to be a success. Fears of inappropriate dancing were crushed as students and faculty made squares and Virginia Reels but avoided inappropriate sensuality. Song choice was completely appropriate—the caller's lyrics merely described the dance without any reference to sexually inappropriate or derogatory content. In the midst of end-of-semester preparations, many students appreciated the night of entertainment and community fellowship and look forward to the second official Houghton-sponsored dance.



top: Josh Gottron and Greg Dabb enjoy the new freedom of dancing.

bottom: Most who attended the hoedown dressed appropriately for the theme.

Photo By Colleen Barry





Art Exhibition Preview: Students to Display Senior Works

By Stefan Zoller

This year's Senior Art Exhibition promises to be one of the best in recent memory. Eleven seniors (Elisabeth Amthor, Colleen Barry, Rachel Blystone, Katie Doner, Ronald East, Elizabeth Kelly, Jamie Kulick, Jocelyn Pugh, Michelle Rose, Lisa York, and Stefan Zoller) have each developed a body of work which comprises the show. Ted Murphy, professor of art at Houghton, states, "I believe this show represents some of the finest senior work yet exhibited at Houghton College. Many of the students are working at a 'post baccalaureate' (early graduate school) level. What most impresses me is the degree of intention explored in these works, how singular and focused these students are in taking their ideas into complex visually sophisticated form."

Before even entering the gallery, one will observe Elisabeth Kelly's ambitious installation sculpture suspended from the second floor, made of long, thin strips of wood, tied together at various points and angles by colored fabric. Tightly clustered areas unwind and

open up as the viewer moves under and around its weightless form, creating a visual experience which changes with every new vantage point. Lisa York's deftly thrown and altered ceramic pieces, however, grounds the viewer with their solidity and suggestion of natural forms. Several distinct but unified groups of work are displayed, each exploiting the prized qualities of clay.

Printmaker Rachel Blystone's lavish work succeeds through heavily layered surfaces, which are rich in both texture and color. Her imagery is largely non-representational, but often vaguely recognizable, as if its memory has been buried deep within the subconscious. Michelle Rose's narrative photographs, housed in three, multi-paneled window frames and suspended from the ceiling, provide the viewer with thoughtful snapshots of humanity and the earth. They are romantic and sober simultaneously, suggesting the relentless process of time.

Ronald East's virtuosic portraits are a delectable feast for the eyes, not only in their rendering of the human figure but

also in their composition and copious paint application. Several pictures feature vast amounts of flowing fabric, which steal the eye away from the figure, forming compelling "clothescapes." Photographer Jocelyn Pugh's stunning floral studies, magnified significantly beyond life-size, bring the viewer into an otherwise unattainable relationship with the flowers. Each work has a stark, black background, making the flowers' brilliant color stand out even more.

Colleen Barry's intimate series of collages using fabrics, found materials, and printmaking, are simultaneously bold and subdued. Bright colors and rich damask patterns are restrained at points by layers of semi-translucent fabrics and inks, giving her work a wonderful push-pull quality. Katie Doner's series of portraits, done with both painting and photography, each masterfully document a trace of the character and personality of each sitter. Dramatic lighting and off-center

framing are used successfully in each picture, showing carefully considered decision making on Doner's part.

Painter Elisabeth Amthor's work, which is focused on the abstracted

Murphy commented, "I believe this show represents some of the finest senior work yet exhibited at Houghton."

human form, creates violent, dark imagery aided in part by a narrow color palette and quick, halting brushwork. One of the many strengths of her work is the ease at which the eye moves around the

forms, maintaining a crucial harmony within each piece. Jamie Kulick's intricate floral paintings achieve high representation, but find their greatest success in their abstract compositional qualities. High contrast in regards to both color and background/foreground relationships catch the eye from a great distance away, despite their relatively small size.

This is a show which is without a doubt greater than the sum of its parts. Tremendous skill, ability, and hard-work are on display, and more than that, a great breadth of variety.

Earth Week continue from page 1

environmentalist: it reads that God "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son," not that God only loved the people in that world.

After chapel on Monday, students had the opportunity to attend an Environmental Issues Fair in the Campus Center. Signboards covered a great deal of information on subjects such as ecotourism, multinational corporations, fair trade organizations, pollution, the rising sea, and pesticides.

Other events were organized for the rest of the week around daily themes. Tuesday was dedicated to educating people about the environment by way of a fair and a documentary. On Wednesday, environmentalism was

linked to the arts; Java 101 hosted a coffeehouse with nature-driven art, poetry, and music. Thursday emphasized recycling and Friday will feature a campus-wide Hour Without Power and stargazing.

A number of organizations were involved in the planning that went on for this week. Nehemiah's Restoration, ESA, Houghton Environmental Club, the SGA, and the Student Life Committee all had a role: Clara Sanders, who represented the SGA as well as the Student Life Committee, noted that the planning didn't seem too overwhelming. "With everybody working on it, we organized [Earth Week] pretty efficiently."

Sanders went on to describe Earth Week as "an opportunity to...really

focus on environmental issues, which we should really be thinking about all the time. Here at Houghton we're so isolated; we see God's beautiful creation around us, but it's not always under constant siege. We don't always realize what we're precipitating by our consumerism and our lack of action."

Student reactions to Earth Week were generally positive. Jocelyn Pierro, who was involved with the committee organizing Earth Week activities, was handing out large green garbage bags on Monday so that students could keep track of their trash throughout the week. Why? "I think it's important to care about God's creation," she said. "He gives us all of these mandates that we take seriously, but I don't think we take [his mandate to care for the earth]

seriously enough."

While few would disagree that the earth is an important subject, some students lamented the timing of the events. "I think it's a tough time of the semester to change things, although we do need to change them," said junior Emma McConnell.

Yet according to sophomore Chris Berman, Earth Week has accomplished what it should - raising awareness of an important issue. It may be too much to expect decisive change quickly. Rather, he said, it's important to remember that environmental issues affect all of us "as students, as people, and as Christians charged with the keeping of our planet and its inhabitants."



Fourth Annual Soup Run Raises Over \$1000 for Local Charities

By Katarina Kieffer

While there are no doubt a few die-hard fitness addicts who head to the gym first thing in the morning every weekend, last Saturday morning saw over one hundred students, faculty, staff, and community members gathered at the Nielsen physical education center to check in for the Fourth Annual Soup Run.

The 5k race, open to both runners and walkers, is held to benefit local charity organizations. This year, donations from sponsors and participants' registration fees went to Wellspring Ministries in Angelica and Southern Tier Youth for Christ in Wellsville. Wellspring Ministries consists of a soup kitchen, food cupboard, and shelter that are run by several local churches—hence the name of the Soup Run.

A wide range of intensity was apparent in the various groups and individuals gathered in the gym prior to the start of the race; while the promise of a free t-shirt was likely the most attractive incentive for many participants, some were clearly there to compete. Runners prepared with warm-up jogs and stretches, while less intent participants chatted around the refreshment table, enjoying the apples, orange slices, and

bagels provided by the race sponsors. Still others carefully studied the map of the somewhat convoluted race route posted on the wall.

The race ranged across campus, twisting down the hill from the gym, past the academy, down past the townhouses, up the Roth hill, and around the quad several times before finishing back at the gym. The complexity of the route was not an issue, however, as there were assistants posted at the most confusing points to offer directions or shout encouragement to those who were struggling to keep pace.

Jessè Woolsey, one of the assistants at the water station half-way through the race, noted that "there was a lot of sweat and shortness of breath" at the midway point, but emphasized that he enjoyed his role as a volunteer as much as the runners and walkers seemed to enjoy their involvement: "I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me capable of handing off cups of water. When I distribute water, I can feel his pleasure."

The participants did indeed seem to enjoy the race just as much as the volunteers; sophomore Nate Forschler, who won the race with a time of 17:30, briefly commented on his win, "It was a good race, pretty close at

points." Junior Mark Satta, who came in fourth, commented, "It was very well organized and the weather was beautiful. It seemed like everyone had a lot of fun — I know that I certainly enjoyed myself. It was a great way to help out two great charities, get some exercise in, spend time with good friends, and motivation to get out of bed before lunch on a Saturday."

Crowd favorite Ben Lipscomb, professor of Philosophy, amazed most of the participants by pushing his two children in a stroller and posting a time of 22:45. "I am blown away," fellow participant Wesley Dean commented, "by the fact that Prof. Lipscomb was able to run the race, while pushing his two kids in a stroller, and still manage to beat most people."

Alaina Williams, a junior who helped organize the event, was pleased with the outcome of the event, and added that she hopes future events will enjoy the same measure of success: "The Soup Run went better than I could have imagined. There was an amazing turnout of both runners and volunteers. We really appreciate everyone who participated, and we are looking forward to next year."



Photo By Doug Roorbach

Soup Run winner Nate Forschler.

RESULTS

Overall Male: Nate Forschler 17:30
Overall Female: Ashley LaBoda 23:04
Under 13: Bjorn Webb 26:57
Under 18: Shawn Wright 23:39
18-24 Male: Rhett Kenney 17:44
Female: Jenny Miller 23:35
25-34 Male: Brendan Kirkbride 22:03
Female: Emily Kirkbride 25:06
35-44 Male: Matt Pelletier 22:28
Female: Betsy Webb 27:18
45-54 Male: Skip Lord 21:15
Female: Laurie Smalley 33:40
55+ Male: Glen Avery 24:21
Female: Diane Emmons 33:38
And a special congratulations to Ben Lipscomb who earned a time of 22:45 while pushing his two kids in a stroller!

• *Schloss continued from page 2*

self-preservation; but humans seem to break that mold.

Schloss gave three examples of current evolutionary explanations of religion. The Cognitive Spandrel theory insists that humans have an innate disposition towards belief in an immortal, all-knowing God and backs this claim with psychological and

is the Adaptationist account, which states that religion is a uniquely human solution to the problems of curbing bad behavior in a systematic way. The common thread through all of these

is the admission that genetic theories do not solely account for all of human action. Without fully endorsing any particular theory, Schloss pointed out how interesting it was

While science is powerful, Schloss emphasized, "Empirical data cannot confirm the existence of God."

behavioral studies of children of all backgrounds. The Memetic Contagion theory claims that ideas are so powerful that they help human action transcend genetic imperatives. The final theory

that fully scientific accounts of human behavior, developed primarily by non-believers, illuminate things like the possibilities for the human soul, free will, and sometimes even God.

Schloss is currently working to shed light on the possibility of human altruism. He is studying the effects that religion and religious worship have on the "miracle hormone" oxytocin. According to Schloss, oxytocin promotes immunological health, increases resistance to addiction, and is the "bonding hormone" between mother and child. While he does not believe in a "health and wealth gospel," he does find the effects of religion on human health captivating. If human health is improved by altruism and religious belief, it seems plausible that this could be because God planned creation that way.

Ultimately, however, Schloss concluded, "Empirical data cannot

confirm the [existence of God]; you can believe that it's wish-fulfillment or you can believe that you had the desire for God because God put it there."

Many students expressed appreciation at the opportunity to hear from a Christian scholar who reaches beyond the borders of the church and is active in the broader world of academia. Micah Warf, a sophomore Philosophy major, commented, "He's the kind of guy the world needs more of; someone who makes no distinction between his life and his work, his faith and his practice. His passion for being a witness of Christ's redemption gives deep meaning and motivation to his vocation as an ethical theorist and biologist."



2007-2008 STAR Staff

would like to thank...

Prof. Ben Lipscomb

Existential Advisor

Pres. Shirley Mullen

Calm and Sincere

Prof. Dave Huth

Our Mac Lab Saviour

Ellen Hatch

Purchasing Guru

All of our writers

You're all a dream.

Wesley Dean

Indefatigable Photographer

The Majority of the Houghton Community

For the ample motivation when expressing disbelief at the idea of a weekly newspaper

Everyone Else We Forgot

You're all a dream, too.

This week's issue was fearlessly put together by Katarina Kieffer, next year's STAR editor-in-chief.

Margaret Boecker, Laura Jackson and Joel VanderWeele were also heavily involved. You can look forward to their work next year to embellish and embolden the traditions begun this year at the STAR.

Best of the Rest: Why Don't More Get Involved?

"Innovational" ideas that make a difference first require that you make an effort to get informed and get involved.

By Matthew Stein

I used to read the *Star*, and wonder if one day, I might be somehow featured in its pages, even if only in a passing quote. And now, I'm writing an editorial. An editorial is basically someone's opinion, so I thought I'd give my opinion on Houghton food.

Just kidding.

No, I'm going to give my opinion on something that I see happen on a daily basis: students working to get something done outside of their classrooms. Media students make stirring documentaries that win awards; students in Senate draft proposals that have a real effect on the college; students focused on writing hammer out some amazing poetry and publish it.

My opinion? It's awesome, but that's not what I'm going to talk about. I'm going to talk about what stops the rest of us.

While thinking about what to write on, I realized that I had never entertained the idea of writing for the *Star*, or being seriously influential in any other area of Houghton. I think a lot of us are that way. We hear chapel speakers speak, and see people write books; we see our fellow students produce videos that win awards, and we think, "I can't do that. I'll never be there."

What is the line between them and us? I would suggest that it's not very big. How many times have you looked around Houghton campus and seen something that made you think *Hmmm. That's innovational?* I've thought this a few times. It's mostly in small things, like how Java 101 includes taxes in the listed prices of their drinks; someone deciding to use the blank white space in the campus basement stairs as advertisements; the cafeteria decides to cook in 0-transfat oil.

Ok, maybe not innovations. But somebody came up with those ideas. Somebody said, "There is a way to

make this better," and then went on to do something about it. I'm sure you've heard this kind of thing before, the power in numbers and all of that. But I want to remind you that what you've heard is true: You have power.

I can guarantee that there are things you see in your life that you think could be changed. Well, don't just think about it; go do something about it. Houghton had its first Hoedown last Saturday, and I bet it wasn't because the college administration deciding that they suddenly wanted to get down and boogie.

Get out there and get active. Even if you don't want to lead the charge to eliminate chapel requirements, you can be a part of the pack. (Incidentally, I'm all for chapel requirements. That's my opinion on that.) And I would encourage you to take that mentality outside of college. With an upcoming presidential election, it's vital that you be informed of the facts.

My opinion? My opinion is that our generation of 18-20 something's is not the generation that it could be. Have you ever looked at what happening in our inner cities, in our schools, in our nation? Have you even wished somebody could do something, and thought, "Well, I hope they get here soon?"

Well, maybe that person is you. If all of you reading this decide to let the burden of caring about the rest of humanity fall to someone else, it'll end up falling on a select few shoulders. This is the point I'm making, this is my opinion: Just like these changes we see on a micro scale around campus were started by people who had a vision of change, the changes we need in this generation, and in this country, will start the same way.

And in a much more important sense, we of the church have the same responsibility. We are charged to go into the world and bring light there. We

live alongside our secular neighbors, but are we doing anything for them? In a society that increases in its opposition to responsibility to others, will we who claim to follow God make the bold move? Love your neighbor, Jesus says, and I think that's exactly what we should do. Loving includes caring, and if I care, I'll do something.

So here I am, providing my opinion, trying to practice what I preach. I'm trying to do something, get what I think is true and helpful out there for all of you. I didn't come up with this idea, of course. It was, in fact, Abe Lincoln who alerted me to it. In an 1861 letter to George D. Ramsey, commander of the Washington arsenal, Lincoln wrote, "The lady - the bearer of this - says she had two sons who want to work. Set them at it, if at all possible. Wanting to work is so rare a merit that it ought to be encouraged."

I think Lincoln was right: people then didn't much like work, and neither do people today. Luke 10:2 reminds us that there is a lot of work to get done, and not many people to do it. Let's work.

Matt is a junior Communications and Writing double major.

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From the Editors' Desk...

The Last Word: Toward a Rawlsian Judicial Policy

Objectively analyzing the student judicial policy is a delicate task. Drawing on John Rawls, however, can help us determine what protections students deserve.

By William Airhart

In recent weeks, a number of students have faced disciplinary hearings with the Office of Student Life as end-of-semester infractions have been reported. These students may or may not be guilty; regardless, what worries me most is the failure of our institutional processes to protect the rights of students when accused of violating our community responsibilities.

Both this newspaper and the SGA have argued this year that the student judicial policy should be revised. As I've listened to all of the arguments regarding the rights of the accused, including the right to remain silent and the right to face an accuser, I've never been able to shake the belief that students are being denied essential elements of due process. After all, we afford these basic protections to the least among us in society, regardless of race, gender, or social class; why would we deny these same rights to Houghton students?

In short, though our policy may be technically legal, it might still amount to an ethical sidestep. A seemingly insurmountable gap exists, however, between students and administrators trying to analyze the problem. Students naturally seek to expand their influence and petition for the inclusion of more rights; administrators naturally seek to preserve and extend their authority as much as possible. How can we get around such a dilemma and attempt to objectively analyze our judicial policy?

John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*, first published in 1971, can help us move forward. A work of political and ethical theory, Rawls' approach

can best be summarized as aiming at *justice as fairness*. He places us in a hypothetical scenario in what he calls the *original position*, in which we are stripped of all our identifying social characteristics. Behind this so-called *veil of ignorance*, Rawls stipulates, we don't know if we are rich or poor, white or black, male or female—we are blind to those features that may give us an advantage or disadvantage in society. As a group in the original position, we'll work to make decisions about constructing a just society. But because we don't know in what part of society we'll end up, Rawls suggests, we'll make decisions that maximize the standing of the least well-off in society. Will we be rich or poor? Male or female? We'll hedge our bets, Rawls believes, in order to ensure that if we can't be rich, then being poor won't be so bad, either.

Rawls draws a number of interesting conclusions from this thought experiment that I'm not interested in discussing here. His approach, though, can be emulated. Let's put hypothetical Houghton student John Smith and imaginary Houghton administrator Jane Roe in the original position, behind

Let's put hypothetical student John Smith and imaginary Houghton administrator Jane Roe behind the veil of ignorance.

the fabled veil of ignorance. Smith and Roe are now unaware of their status as either a Houghton student or administrator. We tell Smith and Roe that one of them has been accused of violating the community responsibilities as a student, and that they'll stand trial as soon as they are removed from the original position. Before they do, however, Smith and Roe must decide on the particulars of Houghton's student judicial policy.

Unsure of whether they will stand or administer a trial, Smith and Roe will

keep two things in mind. If they are the student, what rights will they insist on keeping in order to receive a fair hearing? If they are the administrator, what powers will they preserve in order to preside over an effective judicial process? After all, if things go poorly, the student could be kicked out of school, or the administrator could be unceremoniously fired. There are a multiplicity of facets of the judicial policy that we could

scrutinize with a Rawlsian approach; briefly, though, let's examine how Smith and Roe might decide on whether or not to extend to students the right to remain silent and the right to face their accuser.

First considering that they may become the administrator, Smith and Roe would be reluctant to extend such protections. There is an element of truth to the assumption that a student who refuses to speak has something to hide. Investigations would be conducted much more smoothly and efficiently if students did not have the right to face their accuser, as it would encourage more students to offer anonymous tips without the possibility of later being bullied by an offended third party. Disciplinary investigations would still be possible if students were allowed to face their accuser and to remain silent with the presumption of innocence, but it would be much more difficult.

Once Smith and Roe seriously contemplated that they become the accused student, however, they would at once become sympathetic to these protections. The SGA was told this year that guilt would likely be assumed if a student insisted on remaining silent, and Smith and Roe might fear that, as the student, they would be unjustly accused

of a crime but have nothing left to say in their defense. Growing indignant, Smith and Roe might remember that the presumption of innocence and the right to face their accuser in court are staples of American due process of law. On balance, Smith and Roe would

Our judicial policy should not be focused on what we can get away with legally, but what we should do ethically.

conclude, while the administrator might gain from denying students these protections, it is the student who has everything to lose. In the Rawlsian original position, both Smith and Roe would alter the judicial policy in favor of students.

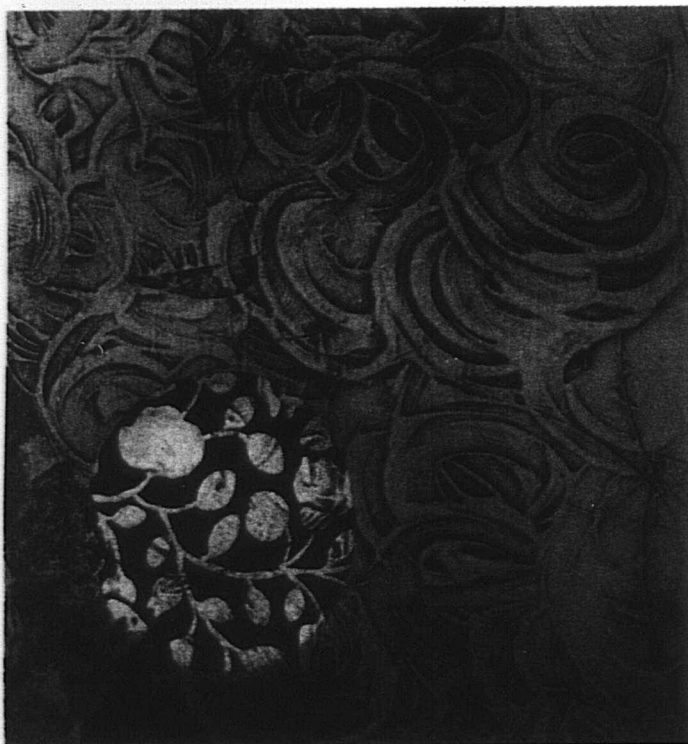
Rawls' approach is admittedly more complex, and his "ideal" theory has been criticized for being untenable and too far removed from reality. The beauty of applying a Rawlsian critique to Houghton's judicial policy, though, is that the conclusions we reach are entirely realistic. We can easily give students the same protections that administrators would insist upon, were the roles reversed. Employing Rawls' veil of ignorance, we can choose to display wisdom and give greater protections to the least among us. Our judicial policy, after all, should not be about what we can get away with legally, but what we should do ethically. Administrators should take note and conduct their own Rawlsian thought experiment. For too long, we've been overly focused on the legality of our judicial policy. It's the immorality of the policy that demands attention. Houghton students deserve better.

William Airhart is a senior Political Science major, and served the past year as editor-in-chief.



featured
artwork

RACHEL
BLYSTONE



Lemon-Lime #2, Monotype, Collograph, & Chin Colle

Note from the artist:

The ideas behind my work this past semester have moved beyond the conceptual and taken on a formal, technical approach. I'm focusing more on the printmaking media as the artwork itself, rather than expressing thoughts or feelings through ink. My interests have turned to the contrast between texture, color, linear design, and the different effects I can achieve through experimentation with different processes.



Rexie in Blue, Monotype & Silkscreen

Rachel is a Senior Art major with a concentration in Printmaking. Her work is currently on display in the Ortlip Gallery as part of the 2008 Senior Art Show.

SUDOKU
CHALLENGE

Submit completed puzzles with your name at the Star office. One correct puzzle will be selected at random and the winner will receive a Sudoku puzzle book!

DOTS	STAT	HAPPY
IRON	WACO	ACELA
SAGA	ALMA	AESOP
CLARENCE	DARROW	
OBSESS	SYLL	
	STEM	VEGGIE
ARM	HAYLEY	MILLS
BOIL	ODD	GULP
CONAN	O'BRIEN	MSN
SKI	BIB	EDIT
	TICS	ICEAGE
LUCREZIA	ABORGIA	
MOCHA	ENCL	KING
ECLAT	CATE	ETAL
THANE	HISS	LASE

This week's puzzle is by Eric Liddle, a freshman Math and Computer Science major from Albion, N.Y.

He is currently in London, but remains a diehard Sabres fan.

Answer to last week's crossword puzzle is printed to the left.

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