



THE HOUGHTON STAR

The Student Newspaper of Houghton College

★ CAMPAIGN 2008 ISSUE ★

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November 30, 2007

Student Senators Demand Immediate Change in Dancing Policy

By Amy Buckingham

After postponing the vote for one week, the Student Government Association approved a resolution outlining their stance on the issue of social dancing at Houghton on Thursday, November 15. The resolution stated a strong position, as the SGA voted 17-0 to urge the Community Life Task Force to immediately discuss and change the dancing policy.

Prominent amongst conversations this fall has been the restriction of social dancing on Houghton's campus. Earlier in the semester, a forum on

dancing was held with panelists from the community including Prof. Chris Stewart, Vice President of Student Life Sharra Durham, Reverend Wes Oden and senior Jason Fisher. The forum explored the reasons behind the dancing restrictions and discussed possible avenues for moving forward. Students peppered the panelists with comments and questions about the dancing restriction. Recognizing a growing consensus among student opinion, the SGA decided it was appropriate to adopt a position in favor of altering the current dancing policy.

Fisher, a senator for the senior

class and student representative to the Community Life Task Force, first proposed that senate consider their position on dancing and prompt the Task Force to discuss this issue during the SGA meeting of November 8.

After a short discussion in which senators quizzed Fisher about the proposed resolution, it was moved that the senate wait a week to vote, despite previous surveys that hinted at the majority opinion of the student body. A split senate postponed the resolution vote until the meeting of November 15 to give class senators more time to consult with their constituents once

again on the dancing issue.

The resolution urges the Community Life Task Force to immediately discuss and alter the dancing policy, recommending that the Task Force "promptly make a change in policy that allows for social dancing to take place at Houghton College." The resolution makes clear that senate is in favor of a change in the dancing policy. The proposed change would mean that both off-campus and on-campus dancing would be allowed at Houghton, including themed dances hosted in accordance with and approved by the

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Men's Basketball: Improving Underclassmen Face Tough Conference Foes

By Ben Tsujimoto

Returning to the court after a promising 2006-2007 season, the Houghton men's basketball team looks to contend for the American Mid-East playoffs this year. Although the team finished last season with a 9-16 record overall, the Highlanders demonstrated that they could compete with top competition, losing in the final seconds to Point Park and playing admirably against Azusa Pacific and RIT. After a convincing victory in the home opener against College of St. Joseph's, the Highlanders split two games at the Rio Grande Tournament,

losing to San Francisco State in the championship. Despite the loss, the team's performance thus far has been encouraging; last year's freshmen have refined their skills, while the current freshmen have shown flashes of talent.

Obstacles stand in the way, however. After losing five significant contributors to graduation, including leading scorer Luke Mortenson, underclassmen will be forced into prominent roles. Building off their valuable experience as freshmen, forward Yannick Anzuluni, center Ahmed Abdelhamid, and guard Ben Kopp have demonstrated the commitment necessary to assume the vacant leadership roles.

The team's conference schedule is formidable once again; Houghton finished 1-9 against the same opponents last year. Walsh University, Notre Dame College, and Mount Vernon-Nazarene College are ranked in the preseason NAIA Division II National Poll. Point Park, the current North Division leader, is off to a blistering 6-2 start and will likely jump into the 'Top 25' as well.

Despite recognizing the division favorites, Coach Brad Zarges stressed the conference's overall depth, supported by Ohio Dominican's recent upset on Notre Dame's home court. Houghton's brutal schedule makes the

playoffs an ambitious goal.

After attempting two hundred more three pointers than their opponents last year, the Highlanders will employ a more moderate offensive strategy. "We will be relying on a more balanced attack from both inside the paint and on the perimeter. We still plan to play up-tempo, but we will be less reliant on shooting the three," Coach Zarges stated. Despite a revised approach, the lethal three-point shooting of guard Jon Van Skiver and forward Rimgaudas Valaitis should continue to be vital to the team's success, as the pair combined to sink nine three-pointers in the

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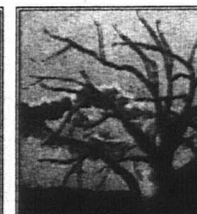
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WORLD OUT THERE

By Thomas Lerew and Jason Fisher

Poll: Most Prefer "Merry Christmas"

A recently released Rasmussen poll found that 67% of American adults surveyed prefer to be greeted in public with the phrase "Merry Christmas" as opposed to 26% that prefer "Happy Holidays." Major retailers such as Target and Wal-Mart have decided to replace "Merry Christmas" with "Happy Holidays" in their store greetings. The poll showed no difference of opinion between genders but noted that 88% of registered Republicans preferred the "Merry Christmas" greeting to that of 55% of registered Democrats.

Cyclone Devastates Bangladesh Coast

Authorities are estimating the death toll from a cyclone on the coast of Bangladesh will range from 3,000 to 10,000. Approximately five million people were affected by the 16-foot high tidal surge. Difficulty in reaching the disaster area resulted in food and water shortages following the November 15th natural disaster.

Giuliani, Romney Square Off in Debate

With just over a month left before the first votes are cast in the Republican primaries, front-runner Rudy Giuliani and Mitt Romney stole the stage in the latest Republican debate held last Wednesday. The most heated exchange was over immigration: Romney said Giuliani, as mayor, had maintained New York's status as a "sanctuary city;" Giuliani responded by accusing Romney of employing illegal immigrants at his home and creating a "sanctuary mansion." The debate ended on a lighter note, though the jabs remained personal. Giuliani boasted, "When I was mayor of New York the Yankees won four World Championships. Since I've left...the Yankees have won none." Romney quickly responded, "Like most Americans, we love our sports teams and hate the Yankees."

Mike Huckabee Pulls Ahead in Iowa

The latest Rasmussen telephone survey of the Iowa caucus shows Mike Huckabee leading the pack with 28% of the vote in front of former leader Mitt Romney at 25%. Giuliani polled at 12% while Fred Thompson was the only other candidate in double digits at 11%. Compared to prior surveys the conclusion is undeniable: Huckabee is gaining support while every other candidate is losing ground. Polling at 8% as recently as September, Huckabee's rise has alerted the Romney campaign, who once led in all three early primary states. The Iowa caucus is the first primary election of the 2008 nomination race.

New Revelations in Stem Cell Research Process Encouraging

Scientists from the U.S. and Japan have transformed adult stem cells into cells that look and behave like embryonic stem cells. The recent revelation is expected to transform the political debate over funding for embryonic stem cell research as well as impact the messages of presidential candidates from both parties. Doctors use stem cells to create virtually any other kind of cell to treat various ailments and diseases. The research will be published in the journal *Cell*.

Recent Mideast Peace Summit Seen as Successful

Over 40 nations attended an international peace summit focusing on the Middle East at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD. At the end of the summit, President Bush announced a peace agreement to be reached in 2009 between Israel and Palestine. President Bush was joined by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas. The peace accord brokered by President Bush is seen to give greater credibility to the Bush administration among the international community.

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Office of Student Life.


The resolution also cited student opinion as the impetus for a change in policy. In a recent Polaris study concerning dancing, 87 percent of students favored a change in dancing policy that would allow for on-campus dance events. As representatives of the student body, many senators felt a responsibility to vote on the dancing resolution in reflection of the overwhelming opinions of their classmates.

Discussion included a mention of the Wesleyan church's stance on dancing. Church doctrine does not mention dancing in its articles of faith, nor does it prohibit it. The prohibition on dancing stems from the desire to guard the community from an undesirable atmosphere and to shield students from temptation. The majority of the student body, however, has demonstrated that it believes students can be responsible while dancing and should be allowed the privilege.

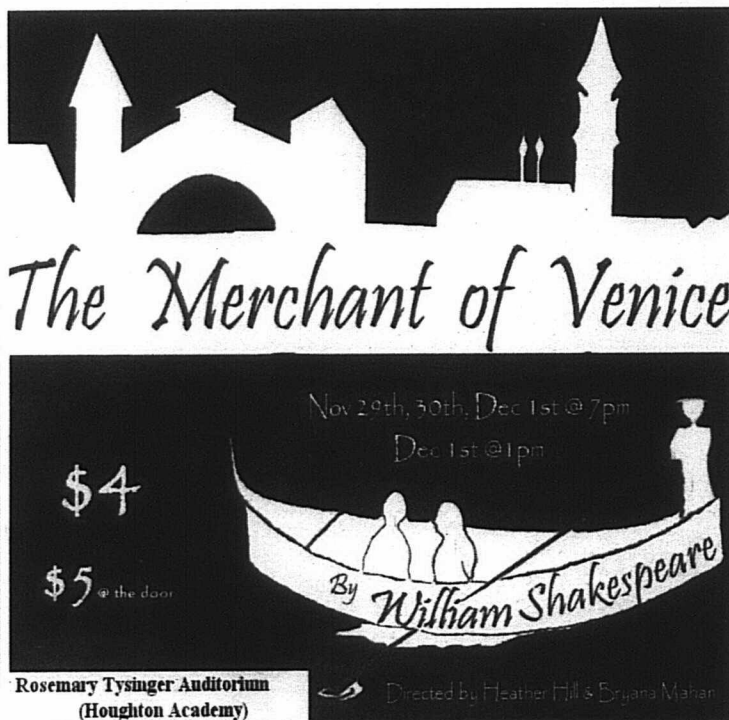
In recent years, many of the affiliated colleges and universities have reconsidered their stance on social dancing. These universities that have changed their position on dancing include Wheaton College in Chicago,

IL, who lifted a 143-year ban on social dancing in 2003. Gordon College, Messiah College and Grove City College all allow forms of social dancing. Joining Houghton in its social dancing prohibition are fellow Wesleyan institutions Indiana Wesleyan University

and Oklahoma Wesleyan University.

All of these considerations were highlighted in the SGA's dancing resolution as reasons for the Community Life Task Force to reconsider Houghton's stance on dancing as defined by the Statement of Community Responsibilities. The SGA moved to accept the resolution on November 15, and the motion was unanimously passed with only one senator abstaining. No spontaneous dancing was reported. 

The majority of the student body believes students can be responsible while dancing and should be allowed the privilege.



The Merchant of Venice

Nov 29th, 30th, Dec 1st @ 7pm
Dec 1st @ 1pm

\$4
\$5 @ the door

By William Shakespeare

Rosemary Tysinger Auditorium
(Houghton Academy)

Directed by Heather Hill & Bryana Mahan



Penn-York Conference Welcomes Students Into the Larger Academic Community

By Cecily Hardy

On Saturday, October 27, Houghton College hosted the Eighth Annual Penn-York Research Association Undergraduate Student Conference. Forty students from nine colleges and universities throughout western and central New York and northwestern Pennsylvania participated, with thirty sponsoring faculty members and administrators also in attendance.

According to Dr. Helene Lawson, Professor of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford and the conference's founder, "The history and purpose of the conference is to celebrate undergraduate student research in all areas." This purpose was certainly borne out in the interdisciplinary nature of the students' work, ranging from "College Students and Stress: A Glimpse inside Course Workload and Time Constraints" by Sandra Salamone (Hilbert College) to "Salivary Testosterone Levels in Children with Asperger's Disorder" by Hargun Singh and Ali Vargovich.

Several presentations had relevant contemporary applications to everything from science and medicine to popular culture. For example, Houghton College junior David King presented a poster titled "Using the Ant Colony Clustering Algorithm to Classify HIV-1 Sequences," detailing how HIV-1 has an extremely high mutation rate. In a brief talk accompanying his poster display, King explained that because of this fact, the virus is very hard to categorize and thus to treat. The purpose of his study was to design and investigate an alternate clustering algorithm, using the ant-based sorting algorithm as a base, in order to create new categories and classify unknown sequences accordingly. This research seems all the more significant in light of World AIDS Day.


Also of note was Houghton College junior Kyle Vitale's presentation titled "Milton and Pullman: Educational Philosophies and Choice in *Paradise Lost* and 'His Dark Materials.'" In his paper, Vitale explored how the values and limits placed on education

and wisdom in both texts, including the study of pedagogical figures, juvenile maturation, and the function of foreshadowing dreams reveal that Milton's premises serve as Pullman's ultimate values concerning choice. Given the controversy surrounding the upcoming release of the film adaptation of Pullman's book, *The Golden Compass*, it was interesting to think about the intersections among choice, religious conviction, thinking, and the imagination.

The conference provided a unique opportunity for students to interact with others in and out of their chosen fields. Student responses to the conference were enthusiastic. Houghton College junior April Bowers, who presented a paper along with junior Mindy Swancott, commented, "The Penn-York Conference was a great avenue for learning about topics that are being explored in other disciplines. Often we are so consumed in our own major that we overlook other subject matters. The conference was a great opportunity to reverse that 'major single-mindedness'

and open up our mental capabilities to a broader world of study." Kyle Vitale similarly commented, "I learned quite explicitly the process of making my work approachable to scholars of other fields of research... Such practice is quite valuable for future work, particularly with regards to a career in the classroom or researching and presenting work to large groups of diverse people."

These purposes were ones Houghton College President Dr. Shirley A. Mullen echoed in her keynote luncheon address, titled "Is Talk Cheap? What Is a Word Worth?" Encouraging those in attendance to avoid jargon and be sensitive to their audience's multiple backgrounds and interests, Dr. Mullen spoke about our stewardship of language as an ethical as well as academic imperative.

The Penn-York Conference embodies the tradition of a liberal arts college in its breadth and depth, not only in terms of the ideas presented but also the ideas generated. 

• *Basketball Continued from page 1*
opener.

Through this new offensive approach, Houghton will strive to remedy a past weakness: consistency. While the team could match the potent offenses of Azusa Pacific and Point Park for thirty-five minutes, a five-minute stretch of poor play would ultimately cost them the game. "We have been stressing consistency in all that we do," Zarges commented. "With that consistency, it should make for a very exciting year and will also set us up for several good years to come."

In the frontcourt, Abdelhamid and Anzuluni, members of the 2006 AMC North Division All-Freshmen Team, will take on additional offensive


responsibility. Abdelhamid, the center from New Zealand, has the strength to battle in the paint despite his lack of height, and his tenacity on the offensive glass leads to easy buckets. Over the summer, the sophomore played in the World University Games for New Zealand. Anzuluni, a 6'7" sophomore, has the length to block shots and interfere with passing lanes. During the

off-season, the forward participated in a professional summer league in Belgium as well as an exhibition game with the Congo National Team. With only two contributing seniors, these underclassmen will be relied on for production and leadership.

The two big men alone cannot be

expected to carry the load, as the Highlanders need consistent production from other sources. Returning guard Ben Kopp has added bulk during the off-season, improving his defense without hindering his smooth stroke. For the team to succeed, he will need to average double-figures in points and limit his turnovers. Underappreciated junior guard Bruce Mourhess, a lock-down defender, will shadow the opponent's best player; because of the talent in the AMC North Division, Mourhess will face a challenge in each game. Junior Billy Evans will share time at the point; he will be expected to provide consistency, poise, and leadership in an otherwise inexperienced backcourt. In terms of depth, the Highlanders will turn to big men Bryce Ireland and Dan Tomlinson for hustle and rebounding, while Ryan Shay and Scott MacBeth contribute athleticism on the wings.

Freshmen big men Nate Schrader and Jared Houseman round out the roster.

Freshman Jon Mannarino, the favorite to assume point guard duties from graduating senior Corky McMullen, possesses the floor vision and ball-handling ability to exploit defenses. A college offensive system, however, is not easy to digest as a freshman, especially for a floor general. Freshman off-guard Devin Paige will see significant playing time in the backcourt as well. His slashing ability should provide a tantalizing complement to Kopp's perimeter shooting. With eleven underclassmen on the roster, Coach Zarges admitted, "We have considerable work to do in the next month prior to opening North Division play in the AMC." 



CAMPAIGN★2008★FOCUS

With the Iowa caucuses on January 5 just weeks away, the race for the presidency in 2008 is heating up. **Register to vote!**, and consider these student perspectives on who they're supporting in 2008.

Ron Paul: Defending the Constitution

By Marc Smithers


Let's face it. The 2008 Presidential Race is filled with people with confusing names. Barack Obama (Bah-Rock Oh-Bah-Mah), Rudy Giuliani (Jew-lee-ah-knee). It can get pretty confusing. Enter Ron Paul. Perhaps the simplest name of anyone to run for president, ever. If this isn't enough to convince you of his perfection for the presidential position, then perhaps I should elaborate on his campaign.

Ron Paul is a Constitutionalist, which essentially means that he always votes in favor of what the Constitution says. Most notably, this puts him in favor of the Bill of Rights, freedom of the internet, and state rights; also, this puts him in opposition of the Patriot Act, the draft, and the federal regulation of areas such as education, marriage, and abortion rights. He adheres to the constitutional view that any rights the Constitution does not specifically give to the federal government should be left to the discretion of the states themselves.

While some aspects of his campaign may seem a tad radical, such as his proposals to eliminate the Departments of Education, Energy, and Homeland Security, what is important to understand about Paul is that he does this all under the umbrella of the Constitution. He believes very strongly that the Constitution has been neglected by the federal government, and that the American people have resultantly been looking to the federal government as a parental figure, relying on it to solve their problems. This, he believes, has

led the federal government to become more powerful than the Constitution allows. He plans to reduce the power that the government has on its citizens, bringing it back to the local and state levels, to the people that make up this democracy. He says, "I am just absolutely convinced that the best formula for giving us peace and preserving the American way of life is freedom, limited government, and minding our own business overseas."

In terms of moral standpoints, Ron Paul is personally pro-life, opposes the death penalty, and in favor of leaving environmental reform issues to the states rather than the federal government. What should also be noted is that he is the only Republican candidate that has been against the Iraq War since its beginning. He is very much against America acting as the police officer for the rest of the world: "The obligations of our representatives in Washington," he says, "are to protect our liberty, not coddle the world, precipitating no-win wars, while bringing bankruptcy and economic turmoil to our people." He believes that he is a true Republican, being in favor of low taxes, limited government, and a non-interventionist foreign policy.

There are definitely parts of Ron Paul's policies that I do not agree with. But honestly, through my research of his platform, he seems to be the candidate that is most in line with what America needs most: a return to the Constitution on which it was founded. 

Marc is a senior History and Political Science double major.

Heroic Courage and Character

Who needs Chuck Norris? John McCain is an American hero.


By Jason Fisher

John McCain is the most appealing presidential candidate among the Republicans running in 2008. Before being elected to serve in the U.S. Senate, McCain served in the United States Navy, eventually reaching the rank of captain. While serving in Vietnam, McCain's plane was shot down and he was taken as a prisoner of war for five and a half years. During those years, he would find himself at the famed Hanoi Hilton, where he was tortured at the hands of his captors. McCain's political career began in 1982 when he was elected to Congress from Arizona. In 1987, McCain made the leap to the Senate floor. McCain has made one previous run at the presidency in 2000, losing the nomination to George W. Bush. McCain's strong platform in 2008, however, begs for a better result.

McCain's position on the current war in Iraq is one of common sense. It has been noted for years now that one of the initial mistakes made by war-planners was deploying an inadequate amount of troops to successfully complete the task. To fix the resulting problems, McCain suggests a "greater military commitment" to Iraq. Precisely because this is an unpopular proposal suggests that McCain has great confidence in his plan. This is a distasteful solution to many voters but may be the only viable option. Clearly, changes need to be made, but quick exits have obvious and serious consequences that should be avoided. McCain's commitment to winning the war is unquestionable and has been quoted as saying, "Iraq is truly the test of a generation, for America and for our role in the world. Faced with similar challenges, previous generations of Americans have passed such tests with honor. It is now our turn to demonstrate that our power, ennobled by our principles, is the greatest force for good on earth today."

It is commonly believed that the problem with the current health care system is its lack of availability, in essence, a cry for socialization. McCain, however, identifies the problem as more fundamental than availability. All health care woes stem from the rapidly rising cost of U.S. health care, something McCain is intent on addressing. Voters needn't be concerned that he is simply paying lip service to this important issue. For McCain, "nothing short of a complete reform of our health system and the way we pay for it will suffice." To accomplish his lofty expectations, McCain has prescribed a variety of remedies, including giving families more control over their health care dollars and removing the bias towards employer-sponsored insurance.

McCain has also vowed to "restore ethics" and "seal the pork barrel" of congressional spending. McCain views pork barrel spending as a reprehensible waste of tax dollars and has vigilantly fought in Congress to stop this common practice. McCain has noted that "earmarked dollars have doubled since 2004, and more than tripled in the last ten years...the time for us to fix this broken process is long overdue." McCain has also battled for campaign finance reform during his career as a senator. According to McCain, if he won the office of the president, he would "see to it that the institutions of self-government are respected pillars of government, not commodities to be bought, bartered, or abused."

This brief endorsement only hints at the nuances within McCain's campaign; a campaign that will hopefully propel him into the office of the president. For more information, go to www.johnmccain.com. 

Jason is a senior Philosophy and Political Science double major and also serves as news editor.



This Year, It's Simple: Don't You Be Shy Then, Vote for Joe Biden

By Mark Lempke

It happens in nearly every comic book ever written. The hero, battered but triumphant, stands over his vanquished opponent and muses, "Only my many years of experience have allowed me to defeat such a formidable foe."

Joe Biden's chief qualification for the presidency is his lengthy and exemplary service in the Senate. Elected in 1972 at the tender age of 29, Biden has been one of Delaware's senators for 34 years. Put in another light, that is twice as long as Clinton, Edwards and Obama's time in the Senate combined, as of 2007.

Two of a president's chief tasks include negotiating with Congress and implementing America's foreign policy. Four out of the last five presidents America elected were amateurish governors, unfamiliar with the intricacies of the federal government

and international relations. Our country has not been served well by this. A successful presidency requires mastery of both, and Biden's record in the Senate predicts that he will succeed at these challenges. When the Democrats have been in power, he served as the Chairman of the Judicial Committee (1987-1995) and the Foreign Relations Committee (2001-2003, and 2007). His efforts in the Judicial Committee have been widely credited with keeping uber-conservative Reagan nominee Robert Bork off the Supreme Court in the late 1980's. Meanwhile, his expertise in foreign relations is so renowned that many Beltway insiders believe Biden would have likely been Secretary of State under a President Gore or President Kerry.

Even so, experience alone does not necessarily make a good candidate. If that were true, a geriatric Strom Thurmond might have been considered

prime presidential timber. This begs the question, then – what does Biden stand for? Biden is the only one of the 2008 contenders to have developed a practical, detailed solution for stabilizing Iraq: promote each sect's (Sunni, Shiite, and Kurd) autonomy in its own region, with the bulk of power lying in these regions rather than Iraq's unwieldy central government. This plan may well be the only viable way for America to withdraw without precipitating a bloody civil war. Moreover, Biden is, alongside McCain, the only candidate with a child in the military, making his language of sacrifice more than hollow rhetoric. Like many of his fellow Democratic candidates, he has a healthcare plan, which would cover all children, and be made available to all willing adults.

Biden, like any candidate, comes with

liabilities. His capacity for committing gaffes is legendary. As the 99th richest Senator, he lacks the cash on hand that his opponents have accrued. Nor does he come with a built-in constituency; he lacks Obama's appeal to youth, or Edward's popularity among unions.

No, Biden's strength as a candidate derives from a factor less tangible and certainly less sexy – competence. When the election is over, and the soundbytes and aphorisms have receded, America will need a president with the political acumen to do the job. When choosing who to support in this crowded field of candidates remember – *don't you be shy then, vote for Joe Biden.*

Mark is a recent alum (Class of 2005) and is currently a doctoral candidate in history at SUNY Buffalo.

Polaris

This week's Polaris poll indicates that the majority of students are registered voters. 81% of students, we are happy to report, are registered voters, with just over half (54%) registered as Republicans. 21% are registered as independents, while 13% are registered as Democrats and 12% associate themselves with a different party.

The most popular candidate among both parties was Barack Obama, whom 27 students identified as their nominee of choice. Mike Huckabee and John McCain enjoyed similar support, with all other candidates polling a ways behind the top three.

Just 8% of the student body has thus far contributed to a 2008 campaign. Though the presidential election is still over eleven months away, the primary elections begin in early January in Iowa.

Close to two hundred students responded to this week's survey. Polaris is a student-run opinion poll conducted on Fridays.

Have you contributed (i.e. volunteered time, donated money, etc.) to a 2008 presidential campaign thus far?
No **92%** (134) Yes **8%** (11)

ARE YOU a registered voter?

Yes **81%** (117)
No **19%** (28)

REPUBLICANS:

If the presidential primaries were held tomorrow, which candidate would you vote for?

Mike Huckabee **27%** (24)
John McCain **27%** (24)
Rudy Giuliani **15%** (13)
Ron Paul **8%** (7)
Fred Thompson **7%** (6)
Mitt Romney **6%** (5)
Other **11%** (10)

DEMOCRATS:

If the presidential primaries were held tomorrow, which candidate would you vote for?

Barack Obama **64%** (27)
Hillary Clinton **12%** (5)
John Edwards **7%** (3)
Bill Richardson **0%** (0)
Joe Biden **0%** (0)
Chris Dodd **0%** (0)
Other **17%** (7)

With which political party are you registered?

Republican **54%** (78)
Independent **21%** (31)
Democrat **13%** (19)
Other **12%** (17)



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Reasons Not to Study Abroad (And A Few Reasons To Go)

As long as you're going for the right reasons, participating in an off-campus program may be the time of your life.

By Marcus Dean

Before trying to convince you, the reader, of the importance of considering off-campus study, I will start with several reasons not to do so.

1. There is nothing to do in Houghton, so next semester I'll go to London.
2. I am borrowing money, so I might as well study in Australia.
3. All of my friends are away so I'll sign up for Tanzania.
4. I hear the food is good on the Star Lake Campus.
5. I have never traveled outside of the United States of America.

Now for the more serious stuff. If Houghton is such a great place to study, and I believe it is, why do we put time, money, and effort into off-campus programs? Why do we encourage all students to experience learning in places as diverse as Tanzania and London?

Let's start with experiential learning. Not only is Australia a cool place to be—or so they tell me—it is that there are things that can be best learned in that unique place. It is not just that the Adirondack Park has beautiful scenery, rather environmental stewardship should be learned where the environment and people interact. Professor Arensen tells great stories about the Maasai, but it is not the same as hearing the Maasai describe their own culture. Glancing at a great work of art in a textbook cannot begin to compare with contemplating it on the wall of a museum in London.

I recently had a conversation with a non-Houghton individual who was proposing a new study abroad program that would include online study. My reaction was "nope." Off-campus study is about the relationship between the setting, the people, and the learning.


Why are Mayterm travel courses effective? To start with, nothing motivates learning Spanish like a homestay with people who speak NO English. The impact of development on a society is waiting to be experienced in Bolivia. The reality that Islam is a total way of life is felt in Morocco as students adapt how they interact, dress, and even walk down the street. A picture of a European cathedral is just not as awe inspiring as looking up and up into its vaulting arches or gasping at the sparkle of the Biblical narratives in stained glass windows.

Books are great! If you don't believe me, look at the shelves in my office. However, I know full well that I learn a lot from the experiences I have. So why not just do all experiential learning? I have also come to comprehend that theory and experiential learning go together. When I learn a theory or concept and then go out and experience it, I return to the classroom better able to understand and more fully learn the theory. I remember sitting in seminary classes with classmates who seemed not to get it. To me it was great stuff because I had a couple of years of pastoral experience behind me.

Furthermore, we cannot ignore that we live in a diverse world. A few years ago my family and I spent one year near Chicago. I was fascinated hearing multiple languages being spoken in local stores. It really hit home that we live in an ever-changing and increasingly diverse country. Study abroad programs are a great way to experience and understand cultural diversity. It is also a chance to know what it feels like to be an outsider. As Christians, we are to be empathetic towards the "foreigner" in our midst—check out the Old Testament. Experiencing being the "foreigner" should help to reinforce our empathy for the immigrant in the US.

Finally, we have to remember that

this is God's world. The beauty of Christianity is that it is not bound by the practices of a given culture. While it is true that Western civilization has too often been equated with Christianity, we recognize that God has allowed, and perhaps even mandated, the culturally diverse world in which we live. I firmly believe that heaven will continue to reflect this world's diversity. Therefore, it is imperative that we learn to appreciate and value cultural diversity. The study abroad programs are affiliated with teach students to understand, appreciate, and adapt to the host culture. One of my hopes is that by appreciating a culture in its context, students will return and become bridge builders between members of their own cultural society and those who are culturally different just down the street or at work.

So, who should consider an off-campus study experience? Every student who wants to leave Houghton College with an education that is rich, rewarding, and preparatory for today's world. Is it easy? No, but the best things in life never are. 

Marcus is a Professor of Spanish at Houghton College.

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STAR@houghton.edu



Letters

To The Editor

Dear Editor,

I recently attended a concert festival in New York City. Before the band LCD Soundsystem performed their final song, the front man announced, "This one's for you, New York City!" The band opened the song with a bumping drum beat, and then layered in a body-shaking baseline, some meaningful lyrics, a few face-melting guitar solos, and even a cowbell duet. The music built, created a wall of sound, reached its climax, and ended with a drum solo that would echo in my ears for days. It was an inspiring performance. The crowd went nuts; clapping, screaming, jumping, probably even some fainting.

Now, there are seldom concert festivals in Houghton, but we don't need rock concerts to appreciate someone's performance, we have Chapel prayer. But we don't really get into our chapel applause the same way that the audience did at the concert. Is it because the person delivering the prayer didn't include enough references to world missions? Is it because they didn't include prayer concerns about Allegany County? Maybe they weren't emotional enough. Maybe they were just uninspiring.

My guess is that many Houghton students don't even recognize when we clap or what we are clapping for. Someone starts a clap, and soon the whole chapel is filled with applause. My question is this: is the person delivering the prayer like the lead singer of LCD Soundsystem, putting on a performance with the hope that it's a crowd pleaser? Are the students filling the seats because they want to see a good show? If so, perhaps we should begin our prayers with, "This one's for you, Houghton College!"

Joel VanderWeele

Joel is a sophomore Philosophy and Math double major.

From the Editors' Desk...

The Alluring Logic of an Obama Presidency

No other candidate can match Barack Obama for substance, style and symbolism in the 2008 presidential election.

By William Airhart

The next president of the United States faces a difficult task. As global relationships are repaired and a difficult foreign occupation is addressed, our next president must also improve a paralyzed educational system and alter a healthcare system mired in crisis. And while a few hundred million Americans have the opportunity to have the final say in next year's election—barring judicial intervention, of course—much of the livelihood of 6.3 billion people will be determined by America's decision. As Roger Cohen has remarked, "Even the most open-armed multilateralist is not ready for hanging chads in Chad. But the broader point [is this]...The global community is ever more linked. American exceptionalism, as practiced by Bush, has created a longing for new American engagement."

No candidate better represents a new American engagement than Barack Obama. (For the sake of full disclosure: I have contributed financially to his campaign.) His biography is littered with international details: the son of a Kenyan father and a Kansan mother, Obama spent significant amounts of time in Hawaii and Indonesia while growing up. Interested in someone with a better grasp of the Muslim world? Unlike other candidates, Obama has actually lived in it. Since then, he's spent time both in the luxurious surroundings of the U.S. Senate and the poverty-stricken setting of the south side of Chicago as a community organizer. Interested in someone who understands the concern over the growing gap between the rich and poor? Again, no candidate better understands this than Obama.

But as Andrew Sullivan has described in a recent piece in the *Atlantic Monthly*, it isn't just Obama's biography that is

compelling. It's his face. "Consider this hypothetical," Sullivan writes. "It's November 2008. A young Pakistani Muslim is watching television and sees that this man—Barack Hussein Obama—is the new face of America. In one simple image, America's soft power has been ratcheted up not a notch, but a logarithm." Following on the heels of an administration that has divisively ruled from the margins of political discourse, our nation's next president must build a working majority and improve relationships both with our friends and enemies abroad. In this context, symbolism is a powerful tool of American diplomacy. Obama is more than a substantive candidate; he is the perfect symbol.

And make no mistake: Obama is a substantive candidate. On foreign policy, while it's true that Obama doesn't salivate over thoughts of waterboarding and wiretapping, he can hardly be described as a dove. He laid out his foreign policy vision in the July/August 2007 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, writing, "I will not hesitate to use force, unilaterally if necessary, to protect the American people or our vital interests whenever we are attacked or imminently threatened." As he himself has stated, Obama is not opposed to all wars; he is simply opposed to dumb wars. Obama's health care proposal extends coverage to every child under the age of 18, but unlike the plans of his chief opponents, does not mandate adult participation. (While many readers, I suspect, might shudder at the prospect of 'socialized medicine,' I also suspect that they already have

health insurance, and are rarely forced to make choices between paying the rent and seeing a doctor.)

Obama announced his candidacy for the office of president in February of 2007 in Springfield, Illinois. The symbolism was clear: Springfield is the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln, who, like Obama, served only two years in the U.S. Senate before becoming President. As Newt Gingrich commented of Lincoln, "He seemed to do alright." Obama's biographical

experiences and values best meet the problems facing America today. As Obama has quipped, "Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney had two of the longest resumes in Washington." Though it is oft-repeated, it is worth mentioning again: among top-tier candidates, only Obama recognized the dangers and pitfalls of an invasion of Iraq and opposed the war from its outset. Recent history has shown that

sound judgment and strong character trump a long resume.

Examining the presidential field, Sullivan writes, "Obama's candidacy is a potentially transformational one... The full logic of an Obama presidency stares directly—and uncomfortably—at you." The potent symbolism of an Obama presidency will alter global perceptions of American power and values, while substantive policy decisions will once again point America in the right direction. After eight years of presidential cacophony, it is finally time to Barack 'n' roll.

William is a senior Political Science major and serves as editor-in-chief.

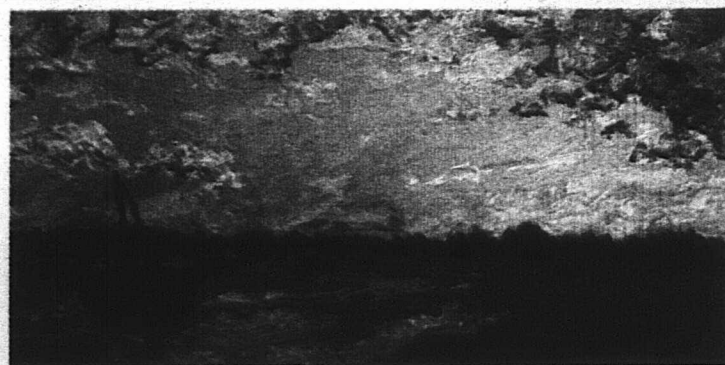
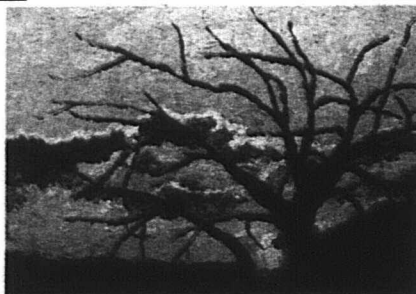
Obama is far more than a substantive candidate; he is the perfect symbol of a new American engagement and a powerful tool of American diplomacy. And in this election, symbolism is powerful.



featured artwork

LISA YORK

This year I have thoroughly enjoyed my experimentation with impasto painting which is applying paint very thickly with a palette knife. These are just a couple of the paintings that I have done this semester working from images that I took in Tanzania.



Left: Sunset in Ruah/Above: Water and Cloud Study

Lisa is a senior Art major with concentrations in Painting and Ceramics.

CROSSWORD: CAMPAIGN 2008

Submit completed puzzles with your name at the Star office. One correct puzzle will be selected at random and the winner will receive a \$20 prize!

ACROSS

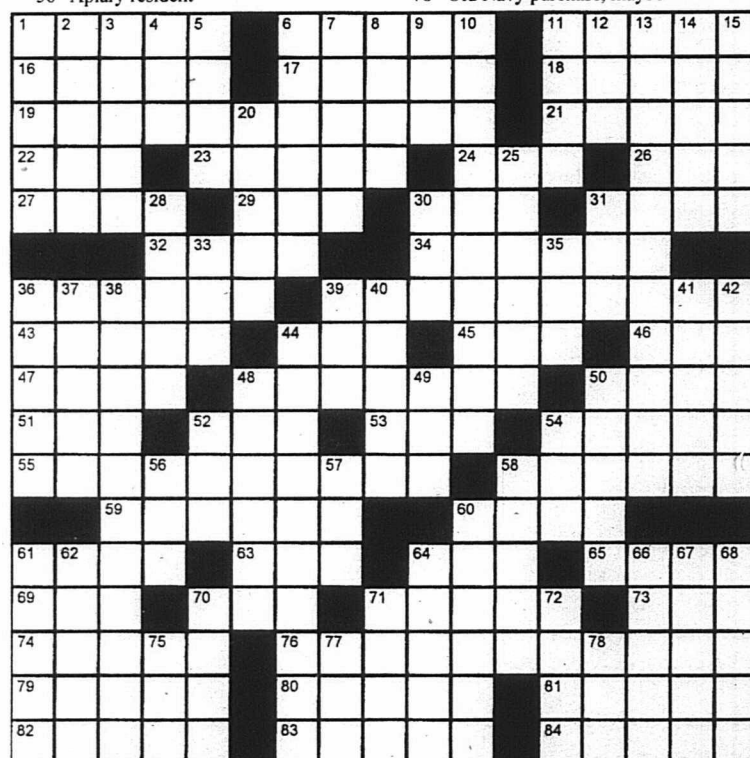
- 1 Anheuser-___ (onetime John McCain employer)
- 6 "Sic semper tyrannis" utterer
- 11 Pageant V.I.P.
- 16 "The House of Blue Leaves" protagonist
- 17 1957 hit by the Bobettes
- 18 "___ Pretty" (song accompanying John Edwards Youtube clip)
- 19 Candidate born in Hawaii
- 21 Composer Heitor Villa-___
- 22 ___ Lilly and Company
- 23 Youkilis of the Red Sox
- 24 ___ tower (gym piece)
- 26 Iced drink
- 27 Future atty.'s exam
- 29 Home of the Schmitt Interfaith Ctr.
- 30 Sault ___ Marie
- 31 Tribe allied with Kit Carson
- 32 Memo header
- 34 Olympic swimmer Ian
- 36 "White Heat" star
- 39 Candidate with an Hispanic campaign manager
- 43 China's second-longest river
- 44 Recipe direction
- 45 First-semester mo.
- 46 "The Six Million Dollar Man" handlers, briefly
- 47 Without much urgency
- 48 Jonathan who won the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor
- 50 They're good at returns?: abbr.
- 51 Word before Abner or Kim
- 52 Common preservative
- 53 Bullring cry
- 54 Canine passenger on Sputnik II, 1957
- 55 Waffling in a stump speech
- 58 Witness to many pilgrims, maybe
- 59 Great "Westernizing" Russian emperor
- 60 Gigantic
- 61 "The Audacity of ___" (book by 19 Across)

- 63 "Superman II" villain
- 64 "The Daughter of Time" mystery writer
- 65 Important caucus site
- 69 Kerfuffle
- 70 "Everybody Hurts" band
- 71 It might be drawn by a kid
- 73 End of some e-mail addresses
- 74 "48 Hrs." actor
- 76 Candidate Mike Huckabee ran in it
- 79 DuPont's "Fiber A"
- 80 Consumed
- 81 NFL QB Rodney
- 82 Pre-WW2 Japanese immigrant
- 83 Letter closing word
- 84 Dengue fever mosquito

DOWN

- 1 Loser to "The Departed" for Best Picture
- 2 Europe-Asia border mountains
- 3 Muscle fiber furrow
- 4 Place for a mole?
- 5 "Phooey!"
- 6 Schlocky flick
- 7 Gum made by Wrigley
- 8 "The Good Earth" heroine
- 9 President pro ___
- 10 Campaign issue covered in Michael Moore's "Sicko"
- 11 Subject to a Dear John letter
- 12 Item in headlines about Dennis Kucinich
- 13 It's introduced by a moderator
- 14 Crystal-bearing rock
- 15 "Someone ___ Dream" (Faith Hill song)
- 20 Edwards' running mate, once
- 25 Greek god of the wind
- 28 Like saloon piano music, maybe
- 30 Greyhound stop: abbr.
- 31 "Veronica Mars" network
- 33 Photo lab orig.
- 35 Fix, as an election

- 36 Tyke or tot
- 37 Control room concern
- 38 Election Day forecasters
- 39 "...he that is without ___"
- 40 Shower with praise
- 41 1970 World's Fair city
- 42 Passover month
- 44 Candidate whose first name is "Willard"
- 48 Allergy symptom
- 49 Certain lodge member
- 50 Desert greenery
- 52 Sandwich order
- 54 French article
- 56 Apiary resident
- 57 First or financial follower
- 58 Former title for Giuliani
- 60 Meat avoiders
- 61 City where John McCain was a POW
- 62 They're up in the air
- 64 Less controversial
- 66 Displayed awe
- 67 Took notes
- 68 Choreographer de Mille
- 70 "Penitent Magdalene" painter
- 71 Grp. known to be dry?
- 72 Auto parts brand
- 75 Sock part
- 77 ___ Ming (hoops star)
- 78 Old Navy purchase, maybe



This week's crossword puzzle is by Brad Wilber. Brad is the acting director of the Willard J. Houghton Library. His crossword puzzles regularly appear in the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, and the Simon & Schuster Megacrosswords book series.