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Rev. Dr. William H. Brackney



William H. Brackney is a native of Washington, D.C. Following his undergraduate education at the University of Maryland (B.A. honors), he graduated from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and earned a second master's degree and Ph.D. with distinction at Temple University. His major areas were history and religion, and much of his doctoral dissertation, a study of the Antimasonic movement in western New York's Burned Over District, was completed as a resident at the Library of Congress.

Dr. Brackney was appointed assistant professor of history at Houghton College in 1976. He taught courses in western civilization, American history, social history, American religion, and church history, receiving the outstanding faculty member award in 1977. While at Houghton, he was interim pastor for congregations in Limestone and Machias in Cattaraugus County, and was active in Allegany County local history projects and the New York State Historical Association. He was the charter sponsor of the Houghton chapter of Phi Alpha Theta (international honorary in history), the first of its kind on Houghton's campus.

In 1979 Brackney became the curator of the Samuel Colgate Baptist Historical Collection in Rochester, New York, where he functioned as archivist and

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Dr. David Alexander



David Alexander's life has been shaped by and spent in the service of Christian higher education. A child of the Wesleyan/Arminian faith tradition, he grew up in a Church of the Nazarene parsonage, sister denomination to the Wesleyan Church. A 1977 honors graduate of Point Loma Nazarene University, it was there that David learned that life is lived in relationship—with God, teachers, mentors, students. The transforming affect of his Christian liberal arts experience compelled him to serve both church and university.

Upon graduating with a Bachelor of Arts from PLNU David and his wife Sandy served the church in Whittier, California. While on ministry staff he received a Master of Music in Choral Conducting from California State University, Fullerton, where his mentors were Harold Decker, David Thorsen and Gordon Paine. His thesis focus was "An Analysis of the Sacred Acappella Motets of Johannes Brahms." Desiring to work and serve at the collegiate level, the Alexanders moved from California to Illinois, where David earned the rank of Doctor of Education in Music Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. While at Illinois, he studied under Charles Leonhard and worked with Richard Colwell as an editor for the Council for Research in Music Education. Alexander's course of study focused

(cont'd on p. 5)



ExpressLane: Houghton's Marketplace

ExpressLane is a new service on Houghton's campus, and can be described as E-bay for Houghton, without the auctions. Students, faculty, and staff can just click and buy at their convenience.

ExpressLane is a semester long project for a new class being offered this year called Entrepreneurship. Professor Craig Fellenstein, who began teaching here this past Mayterm, does not teach his students traditionally through textbook readings, memorizing information, and exams. Instead, he is attempting to open the minds of students by integrating hands-on experience with classroom details.

Professor Craig Fellenstein is IBM

Corporation's Executive Consultant & Chief Architect for IBM Global Services, Integrated Technologies Services, as well as a prolific inventor and author. He is a leading expert in on-demand computing and other forms of advanced technologies integration.

ExpressLane began in the classroom. Students were assigned to groups at the start of the semester, and the assignment was to create a successful business that would run throughout the semester. Students' grades depend on how well they work together, an evaluation based on team evaluations and the profits generated by the end of the semester.

(cont'd on p. 2)



ExpressLane creators, (back, from left) Julie Farney, Patrick Montanye, Sebastian Loaiza, (front) Addie Willink, Patience Scaglione, and Andrew Ries.

Having Faith In Free Markets

Television shows like *The Apprentice* convince many Christians that business is in opposition to a life of faith. The candidates on the show are successful by proving that they are more talented than the other candidates, and their demonstration of this often takes the form of insulting their fellow candidates and excessively praising themselves. It can also be argued that a free market economy is successful because it promotes greed, and greed will make people work harder to make more money. Is any of this consistent with how we are to act as Christians?

Dr. Richard A. Halberg, professor of business and present holder of the Hoselton Chair of Private Enterprise and Ethics, addressed these questions this past Wednesday in a lecture titled "Having Faith in Free Markets: Considering a Christian's Responsibility in Society and the Economy." He considered what it means to be a Christian in a capitalistic economy. Instead of discussing this in terms of stewardship, Halberg declared that the term stewardship is too overused and has too many different meanings to be of use in a business context. He, instead, prefers the term fiduciary responsibility. A person who is a fiduciary manages his or her assets with care, skill, and prudence, and this person acts solely in the interest of others.

This idea of placing the interests of others,

the beneficiaries, before one's own interests was a central theme of the lecture. He disagreed with Adam Smith's philosophy that by serving one's own interests a person will ultimately serve others. Instead, he posited that a business person, and a Christian especially, should seek first to serve the interests of others, and he or she may personally benefit or achieve self-interest.

"Good intentions are not enough," says Halberg. Skill is important and necessary when trying to handle assets with care and prudence. A desire to serve others cannot take the place of knowledge and ability. This is an important part of fiduciary responsibility. John Wesley, himself, called people to "improve prior practice" and to be continually learning to do our best with what we have.

How can a person know if he or she is upholding these standards of fiduciary responsibility? This can often be seen in that person's legacy. A personal legacy is based, as Halberg expressed it, on "who I am, not what I do." This is a person's convictions, values, and beliefs. A social legacy is based on how we serve others and demonstrate servanthood. Both of these legacies are very dependent upon a person's personal values, his or her faithfulness. The other two legacies, financial and corporate, are more based on his or her business success. Although, Halberg explains that a financial

legacy is based more on how we handle our wealth than necessarily how much of it we have. The corporate legacy is our workplace reputation. What kind of employees are we?

Dr. Chris Stewart, professor of philosophy, responded to Halberg's presentation. He expressed his agreement with the term fiduciary as opposed to steward. "Steward" originated in the Church, and it is more awkward to translate that into a business term than it is to use "fiduciary" which began in a business context. Stewart was particularly interested in the idea of a business person in a free market economy using his or her abilities to serve God. He quoted Eric Liddell from the movie *Chariots of Fire*, "When I run, I feel God's pleasure." Stewart argues that there is no difference in Liddell feeling God's pleasure by exercising his God-given talents than a person feeling God's pleasure when they make a good investment, because that is the talent God has given them. What is important is how we use what we have been given to serve God and others. ♦

-Laura Kristofferson
Staff Writer



(ExpressLane, cont'd from p. 1)

The profit that each individual business brings in will be donated to a charity. ExpressLane decided to donate their profits to Etien, the director for Advancing Native Missions. Koffi is currently working on translating a written form of the New Testament from his own language, Anyi. Anyi is the native language to the people in the Ivory Coast in West Africa and is without a written language. Willink feels that donating to charities is "the best part about the class."

Willink's group decided that what Houghton really lacks is a marketplace where students, faculty and staff can buy and sell things to each other. Some examples of items that ExpressLane would deal with are movies, textbooks that the campus store can't buy back, electronics, clothing, CD's, or even big items such as cars.

ExpressLane also offers advertising space for students offering services to other students. Students can post advertisements on the site if they cut hair, fix cars, knit scarves, if they offer tutoring services, et cetera. It's a way for students to make their special talents known if they want to pick up a little extra cash.

ExpressLane also has a grocery delivery service. If finding the time to get to Olean or

even to the Jubilee in Fillmore is trying, especially with the student work load here at Houghton, students can fill out a grocery list (a minimum of \$15.00) on the ExpressLane website. For those who submit their form by Wednesday, groceries will be delivered on Thursday to the destination specified on the grocery form.

A flower delivery service is also offered through ExpressLane: If students click on the Flower tab on the website, it will take them to a page where a wide range of pictures are displayed with prices for flowers that they will deliver for or to students.

ExpressLane is not here only as a class project, but as Willink put it, because several students are "hoping to provide a campus marketplace where students, faculty and staff can interact, helping each other, regardless of their busy schedules and time constraints."

The ExpressLane website is:
<http://campus.houghton.edu/orgs/Entrepreneurship/ExpressLane/> ♦

-Addie Willink
Guest Writer

Mousetrap

Directed Bruce Brenneman

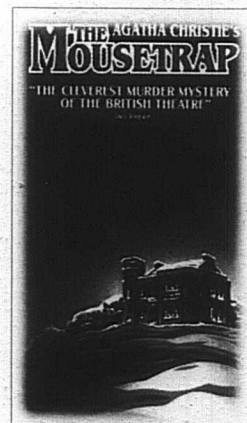
A murder mystery, by Agatha Christie

Houghton Academy's Rosemary Tysinger Auditorium

Thursday, Nov. 17th 8 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 18th 8 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 19th 2 p.m. & 8 p.m.



The Hungry Surround Us

How Our Community Can Reach Out

What is the face of hunger? Is it the Compassion Children seen at concerts or on Discovery Channel documentaries, or is it the eight-year-old with her mother at the Mini-Mart? In Allegany County, the second poorest county in New York, about 20% of residents live below the poverty line. Statistically, one out of every five people that you pass in the Jubilee may be deciding between buying food for the week and buying medicine for their sick toddler. Since 2001, Houghton has raised money to provide Thanksgiving turkeys for the hungry in our county. Last year, over \$2000 were raised and given to families referred to the college by Social Services, Fillmore Central School, and those who use the food pantry at Houghton Wesleyan Church. Each family was given a ticket which could be redeemed at the Jubilee for a turkey, special-ordered at cost (wholesale) for the program. For only \$10, the cost of a couple drinks in the coffee shop, a whole turkey will be provided to a family.

Those on campus last fall will remember the brief chapel appearance of Dr. Brittain dressed in a turkey suit, which he had promised

to do as incentive for students to contribute. A similar incentive has been promised this year -- Dr. Brittain may look like he stepped into chapel from the Mayflower if the goal is met.

This year, the goal has been decreased to \$1 000, as other charitable collections this semester have already asked much of students. However, natural disasters from the Asian coast to the Gulf coast has not diminished the needs of families in this county. Kathie Brennemen relates, for example, that the emergency food pantry run by the Houghton Wesleyan Church, which provides for the needs of 50-60 families, is short both on funding and food. The number of people using the Angel Food program (a food subsidiary program recently started) more than tripled for their October distribution. People lined the street at the Youth for Christ building in Wellsville on Saturday waiting for the doors to open, so that they could pick up the subsidized food, according to the Wellsville Reporter.

The needs of this area are as pressing now as ever. On Monday, November 21st, students will be given an opportunity to contribute nonperishable foods to the food pantry as part

of the chapel's Harvest Festival. Donations to the Turkey Drive may be made at any time in the info center over the next week. "Times are hard for many people," says Kathie Brennemen, who coordinates the food pantry at Houghton Wesleyan, "but we need to remember that we are surrounded by many who are hungry, even in our own community." Brennemen went on to say that she's "often thought about the poor in this county but usually dismissed these thoughts, thinking that there are too many to make even a dent in the poverty, so why try? But we are supposed to be generous and help the poor."

Depending on the generosity of students at Houghton, we may see a Thanksgiving pilgrim guest star in chapel, and, more importantly, the real needs of the poor surrounding us may be met with Christian love and compassion. ♦

-Brent Chamberlain
Managing Editor

Under The 21st-century Socialism, Let The Oligarchs Tremble!

Words like socialism, communism, anti-capitalism, and Marxism, immediately stir up a noticeable level of defensiveness in the average American conservative. Several waves of the Red Scare and the Cold War along the 20th century are responsible for this phenomenon. These feared concepts and forms of government may be thought extinguished by the average American, but they are alive and well-supported in many parts of the world, including Latin America.

Supporters of left-of-center governments have seen that the capitalist and pro-"free"-trade model proposed by the U.S. government and its agencies has not worked, rather has only increased poverty and dependence on foreign entities and widened the gap between the rich and poor. Venezuela is a perfect example of this unfortunate relationship. For many decades, multinational corporations have mined oil, natural gas, and other natural resources out of Venezuela and returned only pocket change to the nationals. With President Hugo Chávez now in power, things have changed.

Hugo Chávez has been president of Venezuela since 1999, after winning the 1998 elections with an irrefutable voters' majority. Chávez is known around the world for his explosive rhetoric against the United States

government's perceived imperialistic and abusive foreign policy, among other things. (Note: Chávez is against the American government and multinational corporations, not Americans as such.) In the United States, the Venezuelan president is highly criticized within mainstream media and many Christians, for instance, Reverend Pat Robertson, founder of Regent's University (among other Christian institutions and organizations) who called for Chávez's assassination as a solution for his opposition to the U.S.

President Chávez strongly endorses socialism, agrarian reforms, redistribution of property, and nationalization of public services. His popularity among the indigenous and the poor in Venezuela is very high. Chávez's Revolution seeks the implementation of Bolivarianism in Venezuela. Proponents of Bolivarianism trace its roots to an avowedly democratic socialist interpretation of the ideals of Simón Bolívar, an early 19th century Venezuelan revolutionary leader prominent in the South American wars of independence. Chávez has, in his speeches, listed a number of ideological streams that he sees as having contributed significantly to Bolivarianism. Most notable of these are the ideas of Noam

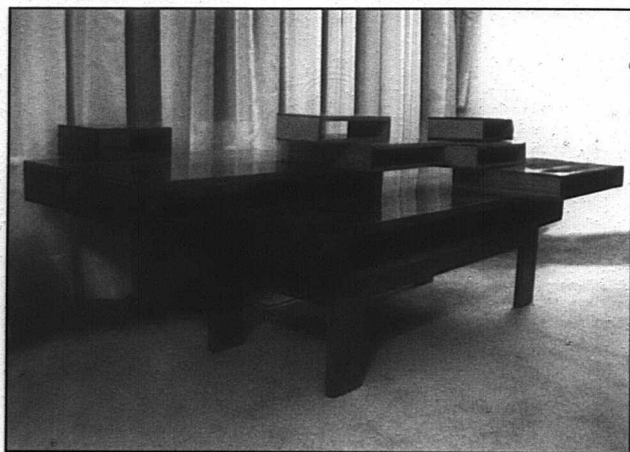
Chomsky, the world-renowned MIT professor and perennial social and political activist, and his libertarian socialist and anarcho-syndicalist sympathies. Vehement Bolivarian opposition to corporate state globalism and endorsement of populism also derive from Chomsky's writings.

I have personally been in touch with Mr. Chomsky; concerning the American fear of President Chávez, he says: "One thing about Chávez that really frightens U.S. planners are his calls for a Latin American integrated economic area, substantially expanding Mercosur but separate from the rich developed countries and the institutions they run, like the World Trade Organization (WTO) or North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) or Dominican Republic and Central American Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA) or the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), if it is implemented." President Bush has faced rampant opposition in Latin America, particularly from President Chávez.

The Bolivarian Revolution under Chávez has also refocused Venezuelan foreign policy on Latin American economic and social integration by enacting bilateral trade and reciprocal aid

(cont'd on p. 6)

Featured Artist: Sandra Hodgins



Coffee table by senior, Sandra Hodgins, polyurethaned wood. Much of the wood for the project was recycled from found objects. At the end of the spring semester a fellow sculpture student gave Hodgins a tip about some discarded desks in the Shen garbage heap. The salvage mission that

took place over the next few days demonstrates the lengths an artist will go to get materials.

"We were crawling through the dumpster, hoping that no one we knew would come along," she recalls. "We had to climb over piles of mattresses, and it had rained the night before, so they were all soggy

and smelly." The drawers from those desks were incorporated into the compartments that make up the table top, along with butternut boards obtained from a local sawmill. ("There were some interesting love notes on the backs of some of the desks before I put them through the planer," notes Hodgins.)

The total process of planing, joining, and laminating took her most of the summer, beginning in Mayterm. Each surface is painstakingly finished with two coats of shellac and four coats of polyurethane, with sanding in between each layer. She says she spent days of her summer just sanding. Hodgins is a self-proclaimed perfectionist and was determined to get an absolutely smooth gloss finish, although she admits it was sometimes tedious. "Wood seems so different than other forms of art because there are so many more technical aspects,"

she says. "It gives you a lot of time to think."

Hodgins likes the idea of functional art because it allows people to interact with her piece in a unique way. She wants people to be able to "touch it, use it and incorporate it into their lives" in a way that isn't possible in a gallery setting. At the same time, and she holds herself to sculptural standards such as making sure the design is interesting from all angles, and her dramatic use of cantilever pushes her pieces to the limits of technique. "I was trying to create a tension in the piece where the boxes were hanging over so much that people would wonder how it all stays together. In each piece there's an element of an experiment." ♦

-Kelsey Harro
Arts Editor



Films From The Library

The Conversation

In *The Conversation*, Gene Hackman plays the role of a lonely, slightly pathetic wiretapper named Harry Caul. He is perfect in showing the complexities of possibly the best private wiretapper in the country. After overhearing a conversation that may get people into serious trouble, Harry is reminded of one he heard once that ended up in the murder of three people.

It is then that the introverted and paranoid nature of Hackman's character comes to surface. He attempts to keep his electronic spying business separate from his normal life but fails, and what seems to be an impeccable spy job eventually drives Harry Caul into a sort of madness. He knows he has heard something he should not have, and the fear and memory of his past come back to haunt him.

Hackman's performance is excellent, weaving the suspense slowly into this thriller. A

slow-moving, smart film that gradually builds the storyline, *The Conversation* culminates in a twist to finish. Written and directed by Francis Ford Coppola, the 1974 movie also features a performance by John Cazale of *The Godfather*, as well as brief roles performed by Harrison Ford and Robert Duvall.

The movie is about paranoia, spying, and what happens to a man when he stumbles across something he shouldn't, what happens when he can't separate work from life. The slow-spinning, isolated and paranoid world of Harry Caul takes center stage as the main focus of this gradually building suspense thriller. ♦

-Adam Sukhia
Columnist



Spinal Tap

At this point in the semester, I need a good, solid laugh, like the good, solid hugs that Tom Cruise gives. I need to sit down and watch a film that physically engages my lungs and diaphragm to the point where I am in pain. I crave something similar to the comic snideness of *Family Guy*, and I know exactly where to go: the canon of Christopher Guest (a couple of elements of which are in our fine library). There just isn't a bad film among them: *Waiting for Guffman*, *Best in Show*, *A Mighty Wind*, and the film we will be talking about, *Spinal Tap*.

Produced as a collaboration between Guest (who also stars as the unforgettable character "Nigel Tuffnel") and Rob Reiner, *Spinal Tap* stands out in cinematic history as the creation of a new form of storytelling: the mocu-mentary. Before *Behind the Music* (which, essentially, are a collection of true jokes), there was the creation of the

mocumentary. The documentary-like style in which the film is made is reminiscent of the style of realism used in *Frankenstein*, where Shelley writes the novel as a collection of letters and a story directly related by the characters in it. *Spinal Tap* is a film version of this method of narrative, as commercial director-turned-documentarian Martin DeBergi follows around a mythical heavy metal band, whose members routinely do things like placing tin foil-wrapped cucumbers in their trousers. The rest is just magic.

So go ahead. You're already in the library. Pick up *Spinal Tap*, and you will have a plethora of hilarious quotes to volley with the cult following that has surrounded this film for decades. And, chances are, you will become a Christopher Guest film fanatic. ♦

-Stephen Sorensen
Columnist



Featured Poem: by Tineke Hegeman

Magnifique: to love myself

Pour Miriam, qui m'a écrit:

"Tu es une personne magnifique."

I remember butterflies,
Their stained glass windows

Opening

with the soaring
Of an organ's sacred hymn.
I remember the bewilderment
Of catching this mortal glass
in happy-go-lucky

Capers

on a sunny afternoon.
I think of the exuberant

Flash

Of amber gems
In a quiet woman's ears.
And I once rode
Into a wild lake sunset

Spooned out in marmalade gold,

It was liquid and alive -
Quite like the frozen moment
Of an unexpected, perfect curl.

These are fearfully
and magnificently
made.

And as I stand on this hillside
And listen
As the wind fills up - up - up
Only to beautifully empty itself
Just before it reaches me,
I remember that you said to me:

"You are a magnificent person."

(Brackney, cont'd from p. 1)

historian for one of the largest collections of religious material in North America. In 1986, he returned to Eastern Seminary as Vice President and Dean, also holding the chair in the History of Christianity. In 1988, he served briefly as acting president.

In 1989, Dr. Brackney was named Principal of the Divinity College and Dean of the Faculty of Theology at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Over the next 11 years, the school's enrollment grew to over 270 students, and the endowment increased to over twenty million dollars, including four endowed chairs and significant amounts of student aid. Cited by its accrediting bodies as "Outstanding," McMaster became one of the leading evangelical schools in Canada during this period. Brackney served as a national board member of the Canadian Bible Society, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, InterVarsity Canada, and the Houghton College Foundation of Canada, where he also served as president.

Baylor University invited Dr. Brackney to become chair of the Department of Religion in 2000, part of the university's reach to become a leading school in the United States with a Christian orientation. Currently, Dr. Brackney is a tenured faculty member who focuses upon graduate and advanced undergraduate courses, as well as lecturing at George W. Truett Theological Seminary. He has mentored over a dozen doctoral students and authored two significant studies in the last three years, including a multi-volume set devoted to human rights and the world's major religions. His work has taken him to Latin America, China, and Europe where he has lectured, consulted, and studied in the field of Christian voluntarism, one of his ongoing interests. Currently, he is completing a study of Christian higher education for Mercer University Press.

A committed evangelical Christian believer, Dr. Brackney was licensed to preach in 1969 and ordained in 1971. As pastor of First Wesleyan Church in Washington, D.C., he was given elders orders in the former Capital District of the Wesleyan Church. Recognized in Who's Who annuals in the United States and Canada as a minister in higher education, he has been frequently in demand as a speaker in local churches, regional associations, and national denomination meetings.

Dr. Brackney is the husband of Kathryn G. Edens, a graduate of the University of Guelph (Canada), and an artist who works in elementary education at present. They have three adult children: Noel who is a senior lecturer in Russian and linguistics at the University of Surrey in England, Erin, a social worker in Texas, and Raphe who is a teaching assistant at University of Metz in France. ♦

(Alexander, cont'd from p. 1)

on the philosophy of education, conducting, choral music, church music and aesthetics. His dissertation addressed, "The Implications of Leo Tolstoy's 'What is Art?' for the Role of Music in the Evangelical Church."

The Alexanders then moved to Idaho, where Dr. Alexander taught on the music faculty of Northwest Nazarene University for five years. He was awarded the Professor of the Year citation for his teaching, served as Chair of Faculty Policy Council and directed Northwesterners, a select ensemble that traveled to Japan, sang in churches and produced Broadway musicals.

Moving to Oklahoma in 1991, David accepted the invitation to become Chair of the School of Music at Southern Nazarene University. Under his leadership, the number of music majors doubled, and one forth of the traditional student body became involved in studio or ensemble work. He coordinated and led musical mission tours to Russia, Hong Kong, South Korea, Australia and Papua New Guinea. He led major choral works by Mozart, Handel and Beethoven and was selected by the student body to receive the Excellence in Teaching award, a reflection of his work in the liberal arts core.

Along with his music colleagues, he researched and wrote the initial Self Study, enabling the School of Music to gain accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Music. Selected papers and addresses include: "Christian Higher Education and Bruegemann's Prophetic Imagination," "Toward a Practical Wesleyan Aesthetic," "Moments and Metaphors in the Life of Christ: Lessons in Art-Making & Worship-Giving," and "Postman's Amusing Ourselves to Death and its Implications for Spiritual Formation."

In 1998, David Alexander assumed the role of Vice President for University Advancement, a position he currently holds working with the Office of Admissions, the Office of Alumni Relations, establishing the Office of Communications & Marketing and the Office of Development. While in this post, the university has embarked upon the largest campaign in the school's history. In addition to working with the Advancement team, he also serves as Secretary of the SNU Foundation.

David and Sandy Alexander have been married for 28 years. David enjoys reading, golf and snow skiing. He serves on the Board of the 4,000 member Bethany First Church of the Nazarene, where he teaches a Sunday school class of 200 members. David and Sandy have two children: Matt, a PLNU graduate attending Columbia University School of Medicine, and Amy, a recent graduate of SNU. ♦

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In Response

Letter to the *Star*:

I have been reading Dan Perrine's opinion column with some degree of interest. I can appreciate how difficult (or even exhilarating, depending on one's motivation) it can be to present a liberal viewpoint in a largely conservative area. I especially appreciated the report of Colin Powell's message of hope that Dan reported on in the October 28th issue of *The Star*. A message of hope is always welcome. However, I find Dan's use of the derogatory nickname Dubya and his description of President Bush's foreign policy or political style as "yee-haw" to be both juvenile and disrespectful (not to mention unoriginal). Surely one can have a differing viewpoint without resorting to the childish practice of name-calling. I am sure that those who had respect for and loyalty to former President Bill Clinton did not appreciate him being referred to as Bubba or Slick Willie. It is very tempting to express our disagreement with disparaging terms. Indeed, we are bombarded with examples of that very thing each night on various political talk shows. I, myself, long for a return to civility in our discourse. Good manners and respect are always edifying.

Sincerely,
Carol Stonemetz

E-mail your response
to this or any other
article to the editor:
star@houghton.edu

Listen up!

The *Star* would like to hear the memorable, witty, or just plain silly things said around campus. Send in your Quotables to star@houghton.edu

Dear Ms. Stonemetz,

I'd like to thank you for your Letter to the Editor in response to my articles. One of the rules of thumb of writing political commentary is that if you aren't provoking a reaction, you're doing something wrong. The other rule of thumb has something to do with getting paid, but that's one I've been ignoring for a while now.

The sad fact is that droll recitation of the news fails to catch the public interest anymore. Simply stating concerns never gets attention. Sure, a few political junkies like myself might pay attention, but most of the populace will express something along the lines of "Oh how horrible!" or "Meh" and go back to their reality shows and celebrity gossip. And while I admit that watching Tom Cruise make a fool of himself is quite entertaining, his beliefs on psychiatry or the rebound you can get off Oprah's couch are hardly the most pressing issues in America, much less the world at large.

No, in order to get the American people to pay attention to anything these days, it needs to either be entertaining or provocative. PETA activists do this by protesting naked; and, while I occasionally write these things in the buff, sadly that titillation factor doesn't transfer to any readers I may actually have. As a letter-smith, I have nought but my words to get people to read and think. Hence, I try to make political commentary entertaining and provocative. The edgy approach does, in fact, work: witness the success of *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report* on one end of the spectrum, and *Fox News* on the other. The danger, of course, is that people just might not get your sense of humor, or they might go beyond having their interest piqued and be genuinely and deeply offended by something you say or write. Even though, then, when people are upset and complain, they draw other people with other opinions out of the woodwork, and a chance at dialogue is born that might not have come to pass with "vanilla" commentary. One of the founding principles of this country is that the chance of dialogue is far more important than allowing individuals to remain un-offended. First Amendment, baby, yeah!

Now, in regards to your specific objections, I distinctly remember seeing the carefully-organized Bush campaign rallies (with their pre-screened applicants asking pre-approved questions) full of people waving "We Love You Dubya!" signs. Likewise, "Bubba" was often a term of endearment among Clinton supporters. So, how you take the nickname is all in the context, and your personal political affiliations. As for "yee-haw foreign policy," cowboy imagery carries very specific connotations in American culture. It implies a degree of brashness and daring, a straight-forward, stubborn approach

as opposed to cautious, diplomatic methods. Now, one could write this out and justify it every time you referred to Bush's foreign policy, or you could just say "yee-haw!" and expect that most people will understand what you're trying to convey. Moreover, "yee-haw!" jumps out more than a bunch of description, bringing us back to the previous paragraph.

Once again, I'd like to thank you for expressing opinions that I'm sure are shared by many other readers, and thus providing me with an opportunity to illustrate where I'm coming from with these editorials.

On an unrelated note, rather than devoting an entire article to discussing Bush's new Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito, I'd like to refer anyone to the Wikipedia article on him (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alito#Nomination_to_US_Supreme_Court). It's a reasonably good summary of his major decisions on the 3rd Circuit Court on issues likely to be revisited during his prospective service on the Supreme Court, enough for anyone who isn't taking Constitutional Law. ♦

-Dan Perrine
Columnist



-(Chavez, cont'd from p. 3)

agreements, including his so-called "oil diplomacy." Just recently, fourteen Caribbean countries signed a pact with Venezuela that allows these countries to receive oil under preferential conditions. Throughout Latin America, Chávez is trying to expand this type of diplomacy, the consequences of which the U.S. greatly fears.

Chávez faces great opposition in his own country, as well. The opposition tends to come from the elitist landlords and wealthy oligarchs who, before the Bolivarian Revolution, owned large Venezuelan companies and paid lip service to American interests. These oligarchs, as well as the wanna-be-oligarchs covertly backed by the U.S. government, wrought a short-lived coup d'état against President Chávez in 2002. To widespread regret, Chávez was back in power within two days. Since then, he has been promoting his 21st-century socialist agenda in Venezuela and helping the traditionally disenfranchised. ♦

-Inti Martinez
Guest Writer

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COMIC ARTISTS
Andrew Davis
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HEADING DESIGN
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On Christian Politics: Conclusions

And now, we return to our initial Scripture passage:

"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us." (1 Peter 2:9-12; NIV)

Peter writes a little later on in Chapter 3: "Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. . . . Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened. But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." (vs. 8, 13-16; NIV)

If we are to have an effective witness to the world, then we need to start thinking in terms of the church, local and universal, as a Christian community and behaving accordingly. Christianity has thrived through the Centuries when the church has stood together as a witness to the light of life. Fulfillment of the Great Commission, to which we are all called, is to be done not just individually, but communally. Until we start treating our brothers and sisters in Christ with the grace, mercy, and love that God has shown us, and living out lives of integrity within the church, or the Christian polity, we have little hope of ever transforming our culture. People have to be able to look at the way Christians treat each other (and the way they treat non-believers, for that matter), and see a difference. When you look at your church, or Christian institution, or any other

community of believers to which you belong, and really examine the relationships between the people, do you see the love of Christ reflected, or do you see selfish people climbing all over each other in a fight for power and self-importance? Do you see the grace of God, or the scorn of men? Do you see the righteousness of God reflected by lives of upright integrity, or is it wrought with deceit and falsehood of all sorts? As you ponder these questions, they all lead to the more important question: Within your Christian community, when people look at your relationships and interpersonal dealings (or politics in practice), what do they see? What things do you need to work on in your life, to help create a community of grace, mercy, and love wherein we can encourage each other to live in integrity so that when people speak evil of us it is slander and not truth?

The good news in all of this is that God loves us, and wants to transform us into who He wants us to be. We must accept his love, and accept our inability, and surrender to Him, opening up the parts of our life that we have been unwilling or afraid to let Him touch (for He already knows they are there) and asking Him to strengthen our weak areas, laying claim to the freedom that comes through life in Christ Jesus.

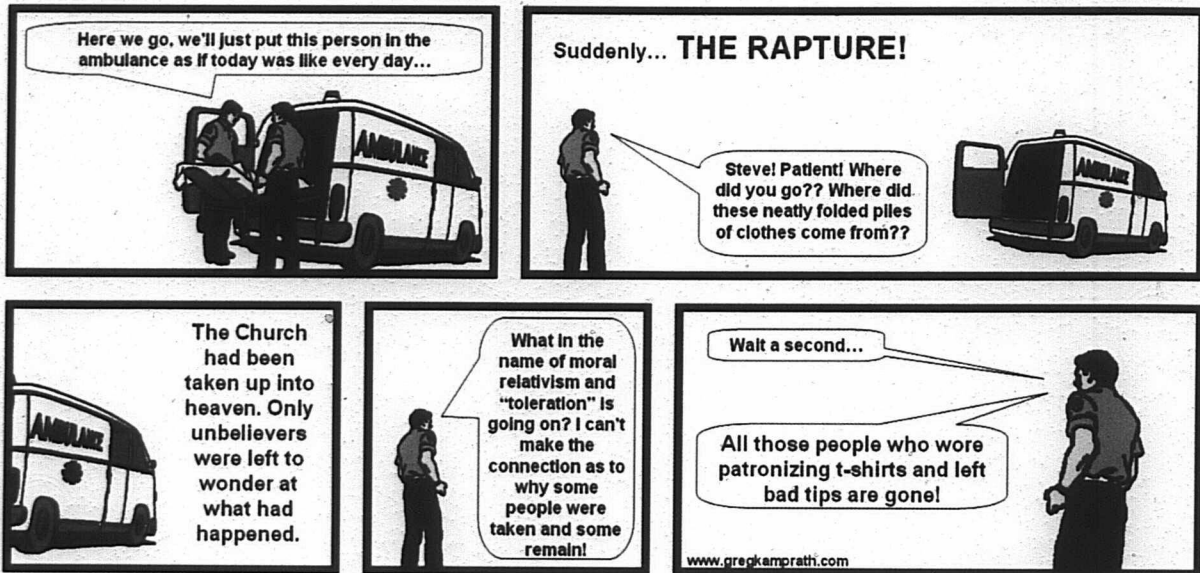
And now, I join Paul in praying that out of God's "glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled with the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:16-21, NIV; italics added) ♦

-David Clem
Guest Writer



*The Star is looking
for short essays written
by Houghton
students, staff, or
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Christmas traditions
for the final edition of
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The Camp Wrath Songbook



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by Andrew Davis



Joe and Ducko

by Joseph Freeman

