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## STAR Staff Arrested: "Too Much" Christmas Spirit

PEPPER MINSTIX

Earlier this week, the eighth and final member of the Houghton STAR staff was arrested by Houghton security for TMCS. The arrest took place around nine pm on Wednesday, when Officer Cane bodily tackled Editor in Chief Melissa Hodde in the middle of the quad. She was led away in handcuffs to the Chapel basement, where she joined the rest of her comrades. All eight members are currently pending trial.

According to the Officer Cane, who made the arrest, the prognosis isn't good. "TMCS is a serious crime," he commented, "and at Houghton we take it very seriously." TMCS – Too Much Christmas Spirit – is defined by the community covenant as "an overabundance or inappropriate emphasis on the holiday of Christmas." As Officer Cane went on to explain, administrative concerns around the holiday are about student distractions. "At Houghton," he said, "we insist on a learning environment that allows for total focus. This means no alcohol, minimal dancing, and absolutely no Christmas Spirit. I know it might seem harsh, but we have to take these rules se-



Free The Press!

COURTESY OF THE STAR

riously if we want the Houghton we all know and love to keep its sanity."

Per these regulations, all eight members of the STAFF have been charged for their actions over the last week. On Saturday, Kristen Savastano (News) was caught handing out candy canes to a visiting group of elementary students. Later that afternoon, Kayla Simmons (Features) was found to be in possession of those same candy canes, prompting her incarceration

on charges of aiding and abetting. All candy canes were confiscated by Safety and Security before the children left campus.

On Sunday, Anna Schilke (Opinions) was caught loudly singing "White Christmas" in the music building tunnel. Upon her arrest she confessed to several other crimes of a similar nature, including writing her own jazz piano arrangement of "Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire." A recording of this

song has been discovered and submitted for evidence, after which it will be burned.

Monday morning, Professor Susan Bruxvoort Lipscomb (Faculty Advisor) attempted to protest the arrests of Simmons, Savastano, and Schilke. Her defense to the Provost revealed that she too was guilty of TMCS and she was subsequently arrested. Later that day, Michael Sievers (Media Coordinator) was also charged with TMCS after a raid on his

off-campus house discovered not only Christmas lights, but a fully decorated Christmas tree complete with holly, ornaments, and an angel.

To round out the affair, on Tuesday around noon, Paige Collins (Columns) was caught petting and feeding a reindeer in the Houghton woods. This brought to light not only Collin's misdemeanor, but also revealed the disruptive presence of reindeer on college property. According to an inter-campus memo released the next day, animal services has been contacted and is expected to take care of the issue within a fortnight. Also on Tuesday, Tim Paschalis (Photos) was revealed to have accepted secret contract work from the North Pole on behalf of his design studio. Tim was removed from his position in the studio and arrested.

By the time Hodde was discovered plugging in the Christmas stars around campus and subsequently tackled on the quad, the students were already expressing concerns about the future of the newspaper. "I know it's supposed to be, like, about free speech," said Winston Churchill '21, "but I'm kinda concerned our

See **ARRESTED** page 2

EMPTY FLOORS BURNED  
TO PROVIDE HEAT  
SAINT NICOLAS SPARKS

Students should expect to see smoke rising from the campus on their return from Christmas break. Due to the diminishing populations in the women's dorms and the increasingly heavy chill of winter settling into the bones of Houghton campus, the board of trustees and the officer of finances have agreed that inflammatory action must be taken to keep Gillette and Lambein at survivable temperatures during the alleged "spring" semester. If the sixth floor of Lambein and fourth old and main in Gillette remain uninhabited and desolate, maintenance will begin the process of setting the rooms on fire. While the officer of finances confirms that this has absolutely nothing to do with budget cuts, he notes that the operation will remove the necessity of trapping precious heat from rising into empty rooms, while simultaneously cutting down the necessity for traditional heating by 85%.

Several students objected

See **FLOORS** page 2

## Yule-Themed Live Animal Event



COURTESY OF TIM PASCHALIS

New live animal event to be held in Gillette

**BUSHY EVERGREEN**

The last live animal event of the semester is here! The Yule themed event will include polar bears, reindeer, penguins, and more in Gillette as well as walruses and narwhals in the pool at the Nielsen center. Photographers will be present at both locations.

This is our first time partnering with the Arctic Reserve

and Elves for Environmental Change and Global Warming Awareness Foundation, both organizations heavily involved in employing elves during the off-season. The Arctic Reserve holds one tour each year, travelling to universities and colleges primarily in Europe and Canada. One of the elves, Jingle-Belle, told us in a phone interview, "Our animals particularly love Scan-

dinavia, but we are so excited to introduce them to Western New York! It will certainly be an interesting experience for both us and them. The commute should be fine but we'll need to keep the polar bears and penguins apart, we don't want a massacre on our hands." As for the walruses and narwhals, "As long as they don't break through their tanks on the way they should be fine. There have only been two

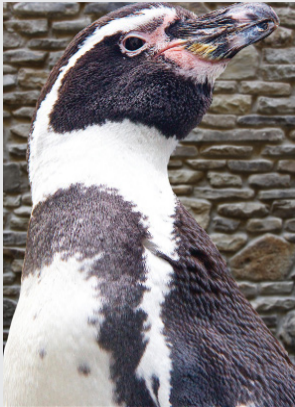
incidents with the narwhals this year and no fatal damage was done, so we've got high hopes for them. We are a tad afraid of what may happen if someone mistakes one of the walruses for a seal."

We had to ask: what reindeer will we be seeing on campus? An anonymous source told us, "Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen, and Rudolph will be busy training for Christmas Eve. Rudolph is currently making sure his nose is in tip-top shape to shine bright all night and each reindeer does a series of land and flight exercises as well as emergency training - but don't worry, we're bringing our next best reindeer with us!"

Who are they most worried about? The puffins! Jingle-Belle informed us, "While it's not breeding season, the warmer temperatures might convince them it is!" Another concerning animal is the Arctic Fox. "They can be quite sly creatures, we wouldn't want them to get loose. They love our kitchens back home and it wouldn't

See **YULE EVENT** page 2

# International // South Pole



TOPPER THE PENGUIN

For those college students who have somehow made it this far in life without ever looking at a map, I have an important distinction for you: penguins come from the South Pole and polar bears live in the North Pole. I hope this reminder is helpful, because when this time of year rolls around, all the attention goes to the North Pole. People either mistakenly believe penguins are running around Santa’s Workshop with the elves and reindeer, or the just forget about us completely. This is an utter tragedy. It is completely unfair that the North Pole gets all the attention come Christmastime, just because that’s where some guy in a red suit happens to live. Both poles exist in relative obscurity until November hits, and then it’s suddenly North Pole everywhere. Fake North Poles set

up in malls, snow globes with Santa’s Workshop, North Pole signs everywhere, not even pointing towards the actual North Pole. Don’t even get me started on the ridiculousness of the “seven layers of the Candy Cane forest” and the “sea of swirly twirly gumdrops,” and can you believe they dedicated a whole movie to a kid taking a train ride to the North Pole? They’ll make anything into a

movie these days. Where is the South Pole in all of this? Penguins are definitely cuter than reindeer, and we could totally pull a sleigh if we had some of whatever Mrs. Claus is feeding those deer. What’s more, the Antarctic is clearly superior to the Arctic. The Arctic isn’t even a real continent, it’s just a bunch of ice. And did you know that Antarctica has actual volcanoes? Those

would look so cool in a snow globe. Antarctica is also the only continent without reptiles, which is great because have you ever met a snake? Gross. Personally, I think Santa was being a bit hasty when he chose the North Pole to be his base of operations. He clearly wasn’t aware of the prime real estate available at the South Pole, or he definitely would’ve reconsidered.

Santa might not be moving to the South Pole anytime soon, but that doesn’t mean we should slip into obscurity. Don’t forget the South Pole in your yearly festivities; we deserve attention too.★

*Topper the Penguin is a Penguin from the South Pole*



COURTESY OF UNSPLASH

## FLOORS *from page 1*

to the administration’s decision, having seen the campus-wide email which reportedly reached no one else in the midst of reminders about course evaluations. Setting aside emotionally-laden statements about the necessity of keeping roofs on the buildings and the difficulty of containing enormous fires, campus maintenance willingly responded to the remaining student complaints. In regard to the potential for uneven heat distribution, they recommend that students who previously occupied the

central rooms in each floor move to third main, third old and fourth new in Gillette and fifth floor in Lambein, since they will be most prepared to absorb the brunt of concentrated heat. Students who currently live in corner rooms are advised to move to the basements of each dorm, where the arctic temperatures will most closely resemble their former rooming situations. In response to concerns about air pollution in the lower floors, the administration would like to gently remind students that smoke has a strong tendency to rise. Additional measures to

transition the dorms safely into this new arrangement will be discussed in a meeting on Tuesday. Open hours will be re-evaluated in light of the projected temperature disparity between the men’s and women’s dorms, and the Center for Sustainability will be making a case for reduction of light and air pollution through the use of LED flashlights during nighttime monitoring. Students are encouraged to attend and share their voices at the 4am prayer meeting at the VIP balcony in the KPAC, and brunch with alumni at 7:45am in the second floor of Luckey. Through the efforts of these convenient and student-cen-

tered events, Student Life hopes to create a space for the highly representative opinions of three or four students who happen to walk by in search of palatable food. The feedback from these meetings will be considered for a few minutes at the next staff meeting, and in lieu of publishing them anywhere for student and staff perusal, they will be promptly released into oblivion. The first stages of incineration will begin on January 4th, in preparation for student arrival on the 6th. With the appropriate use of fire doors, the blaze is expected to continue providing heat for the buildings until cooler temperatures draw to a close in the middle of May. ★

## ARRESTED *from page 1*

entire newspaper staff has such blatant disregard for school rules.” Others are fully supportive. “I completely support the staff,” said Kris Kringle ’19, “It’s school policies that ought to change.” Whatever the student opinion, the fact remains that under the current administration, Hodde, Schilke, Lipscomb, Simmons, Savastano, Collins, Sievers, and Paschalis have been charged with first to third degree TMCS. Only their trials can confirm if they are indeed guilty. ★

## YULE EVENT *from page 1*

be inconceivable to find out they’ve taken over your dining hall! They love stealing food from us and certainly wouldn’t mind stealing it from you. There’s one in particular, Nugs, if she gets loose at home we can usually find her in a pile of chicken nuggets; she’s the one to watch out for!” The event will be held on December 12th from 3pm - 5pm. Sponsored by the Counseling Center. Disclaimer: Houghton College and the Arctic Reserve are not responsible for any injuries that occur from interacting with the animals. Although the Health Center will be open, the employees are not trained to treat injuries caused by large Arctic Animals such as the walrus, polar bear, and narwhal. Interact at your own risk! Do not feed the animals, they may eat you instead. Flash photography is prohibited. Please refrain from joking or asking about the South Pole, both the animals and the elves are sensitive to this matter.★



COURTESY OF TIM PASCHALIS

# STAR Rerun

## Al Manac and the Case of the Holiday Hooligan

DONALD J SOBOL

*This rerun column features various Houghton STAR articles from our archives. These articles do not contain current information, but are meant to show the past culture and events on Houghton Campus throughout the College's history This particular article is from Volume 94 Issue 12 of the STAR published on December 9th, 1998.*

Christmas was fast approaching Houghton and everyone was full of the holiday cheer-everyone except for C.C. Rider. C.C. Rider was a college dropout who spent half his day sleeping and the other half thinking up get-rich-quick-schemes. C.C. would often use these hair-brained Ideas to swindle

money out of the younger, neighborhood kids. Fortunately, someone always put a stop to it, that someone being none other than Houghton's resident crime-fighter-Al Manac.

C.C. despised Al Manac and all his sleuthing abilities. If it wasn't for him, C.C. would be rich and have enough money to buy that Camaro he's always wanted.

One day he came up with a sure-fire money-maker even Al Manac wouldn't be able to crack...

Al Manac doing some reading on the Psychoanalytic view of Literary Criticism one day when James Villani plopped a quarter on the gas can. "I want to hire you!" he exclaimed. "What flew up your shorts in a hurry?" Al asked.

"I'll tell you. Two letters: C and C," he responded. Al

Manac frowned. What was that loser up to now? "That guy's tried everything in the book," Al Manac said. James smirked. "That's just it," he said. "So what's the deal?" Al asked. "I'll tell you about it on the way to C.C.'s house." The two boys walked off.

"You know how my father loves Christmas collectibles right?" James said. Al nodded. It was widely known all over Houghton that Mr. Villani held the greatest collection Of Christmas paraphernalia in the area. He has all the nativity sets, all the boughs of holly, every Christmas special ever made on video-tape, including the director's cut of A Very Brady Christmas and so on and so forth."So?"Alasked.

"Well, C.C. approached me yesterday and said he had the first every copy of The Night Before Christmas. "Whoa," Al said. "That's impressive. Is

this the book?"James frowned "No. I'm trading him my Gutenberg Bible for his book," he said.

"That's impressive," Al said. "That's got to be worth at least twenty bucks. But before you give him anything, let's make sure you're getting a good deal." The boys gave each other a high five then smiled at how cool they were.

They reached C.C.'s house and knocked on the door. C.C. Rider walked out in a bathrobe. He saw James and said: "Is that my book?" Al stepped up. "Wait just one second. I want to hear about your book." C.C. scowled at Al. "What do you want you little pipsqueak?" Al returned the stare. "Tell me about how you found this book."

C.C. folded his arms. "Well, I was on this May Term course last year while I still had the minimum GPA. We

went to Ireland, Scotland and Wales. I remember walking through all these castles. We stopped at 'em all Borthwick, Blarney you name it! Anyway, on our way back from Tintagel. we stopped at a small junk store. I saw this book and asked how much he wanted to sell it for. He said \$1000, so I knocked him down and stole the book. It's the real deal and has all the reindeer, from Donner to Dasher to Rudolph to Prancer." C.C. smiled at stared at the boy detective. "So what do you have to say?"

"Oh, just don't believe a word this lying monkey says," Al said. "He has no idea what he's talking about- and I can prove it twice!" ★

HOW DID AL MANAC TRAP C.C IN HIS OWN LIES?

(Solution next issue!)

# Houghton's Hidden History

## Twas The Night Before Chapel

### Christmas Chapel 1991

(Inspired by true events)

CHRIS CILENTO

'Twas the night before chapel and all 'cross school, students were studying when what they really wanted was to be curled up in bed, pillows covered in drool.

The wreaths had been hung in the chapel with care, in the hopes that students would actually come there.

The freshmen were gathered in study groups by class, while nightmares of exams caused fear that they wouldn't pass.

President Chamberlain from his office in Luckey, looked out 'cross the Quad and just knew the semester would not end quietly.

Then down by South

Hall there arose such a clatter, Safety & Security were called to see what on earth was the matter.

But the troublemakers were ready with their tools of the trade, and distracted the officers with eggs and smoke grenades.

The core group of fellows, whispering and laughing, broke into a friends car; it was a civil jacking.

Proud of their prowess and with no turning back, they took this small car and drove it up to the side door of the chapel with a smack.

More rapid than squirrels these pranksters they came, and they jimmied the door and opened it wide enough to push the car inside just the same.

Using thick pieces of

wood to protect the shiny stage, they drove the car up and positioned it behind the curtain, in hopes of making the front page.

Then the lookout said "RUN" and they scattered like wind, but one smart fellow remembered to lock the doors behind them.

Security drove by but saw nothing amiss, just a few boys walking innocently across the grass, into the mist.

The morning came cold and clear, and the students all knew that the end was soon near.

They headed to chapel as was their custom, and waited for the curtain to part to signal the start of the sermon.

President Chamberlain stepped to the podium with

grace, grateful that it had been a quiet night, with nothing out of place.

He raised his right hand and curtain soon parted, the silence was so great that you could hear when a mouse... gasped.

He sprang from the podium to see what was there, and turned around to see what the curtain had shared.

When what to his wondering eyes should appear, but a 1989 Honda Civic DX hatchback sitting under the cross- right there!

His jaw dropped like a stone and his face turned sheet white, and then the chapel erupted in pandemonius laughter at the sight.

He spun on his heel and straightened his tie, and signaled the techs to please

close the curtain in prompt time.

Trying his best to regain the crowd, he soon realized it was hopeless and said "Merry Christmas to all! Good luck on your finals!" as he bowed.

The next Monday morning he sat in his chair, and scolded four young freshman who very narrowly escaped being expelled that year. ★

# Christmas Trees Graded



The Library Book Trees.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM PASCHALIS

**Library Book Trees**  
A, 98%

**Lucky Building**  
B+, 89%

The library when above and beyond this year, as always. This is the aunt with the Pinterest addiction who makes seven kinds of adorable snowman cookies. So much effort went into these book trees, and it shows. All the points for creativity. The attention to detail deserves even more points; beyond the sheer creativity of using the books, the ‘trees’ are wrapped in lights and ornaments, with little pine cones tucked in between books and situated on a cloud of snow. The overall effect is tasteful and not overdone.

**Roth**  
C-, 71%

Roth tried. They tried really hard. And it’s not too bad. This is definitely a tree decorated by dudes though. It’s that kid who’s still figuring out that girls aren’t impressed by bathing in cologne. The ornaments are pretty good, but not distributed well, and there’s just too much space at the bottom of the tree. But a great effort.

**Third Floor Library**  
D+, 68%

Here’s the younger sibling who tried, but didn’t quite get it right. This tree doesn’t lack festiveness, but it’s not very well executed. The decorations themselves are tacky, like they came from the Dollar General, and the garland looks like it’s been in the clearance bin since the Fourth of July. But they tried, and that’s what counts.

This tree is the classy aunt who brings the flawlessly cooked roast beef while somehow looking like she hasn’t stepped into a kitchen all day. The ornaments are simple but rich colors and the ribbon is an elegant touch. The lights on this tree were literally twinkling. This is definitely the classiest tree on campus, perfect for the building President Mullen graces with her estimable presence..

**Gillette Main Lounge**  
D, 65%

Ah, Gillette. We expected better from you. This tree is the friend who forgot about the Christmas party, wrapped herself in garland, and called it festive. The tree itself is small, poorly ornamented, lacking even a tree skirt. In the words of Charles M. Schulz, “If you are going to put up a tree this bleak, it better be in the context of the Charlie Brown Christmas.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM PASCHALIS  
Third Floor Library Tree.



Other Library Tree.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM PASCHALIS

**Lambein**  
C, 75%

Not a bad effort, Lambein. The Lambein tree would be the adolescent little sister that’s just figuring out how fashion works. The festivity is there and the distribution of ornaments is good, but the color scheme isn’t very cohesive. But Lambein redeemed herself with the mini Christmas tree in window, which definitely wins the title of cutest Christmas tree ever.

**Fancher**  
B+, 89%

This is the cheerleader of Christmas trees. Decked out in purple and gold, this tree has more school spirit than I’ve had in the two and a half years I’ve been here. This tree also gets bonus points for accessories, as it’s beautifully complemented by pristine purple and gold presents and fluffy fake snow, and the whole office has not only this tree, but at least eight miniature trees. Amazing. Way to go all out Fancher, we expected nothing less. ★

**CFA**  
A, 99%

This is the pinnacle of Christmas cheer. This is the jolly old grampa that embodies the Christmas spirit so wholly you just can’t help but be filled with yuletide joy. “Size does matter,” Yukon Cornelius said, “when it comes to Christmas trees,” and this tree does not disappoint. Of course the ornamentation is perfect, the lighting is perfect, the garland is perfect. This tree is the kind of classic that will make you want to curl up next to a fireplace with some hot cocoa. ★



CFA Tree.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM PASCHALIS

**Van Dyk Lounge**  
C-, 71%

If the tree outside the Campus Center is the outdoorsy older brother, then this tree is the drunk uncle that shows up for Christmas. A bit skinny and lopsided, mediocre ornaments. Clark Griswold had this to say: “You know what makes me mad about this tree? These lights are not LED. We’re only allowed to have LED lights, but these are just some average lights.” ★

**Other Library Tree**  
A, 96%

As if the book trees weren’t enough to put the library at the top of our list, they have yet another wonderful tree. The special commemorative tree breaks from the classic red and gold with a pretty blue and silver color scheme. The presents at the bottom are a nice touch, along with the ribbon wrapping the tree. Also this tree definitely has the best angel, even if she looks a bit like Glinda the Good Witch.

Chapel Lobby  
C+, 78%

Outside Campus  
Center  
B+, 88%

This tree is the aunt who brings three suitcases for a weekend stay. There’s a lot going on: a lot of ornaments are crammed onto the relatively skinny tree and the string of beads. There’s no tree topper, but if you stand strategically it looks like the Jesus on the mural is floating on top of the tree, so bonus points for that.



Chapel Lobby Tree

PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM PASCHALIS

Chamberlain  
A, 95%

This tree is the cousin who is so put together she makes everyone feel bad at the state of their lives. The ornamentation on this tree is great with a balanced distribution of red and gold. It’s a good size, not too big but big enough to make a statement, although the tree itself isn’t a particularly good fake. The angel on top is a lovely addition. The only detraction comes from the stereo playing Christmas songs, which is nice if you’re just passing by, but terribly annoying if you have to spend more than ten minutes in Chamberlain. Overall a solid, classic tree.



Chamberlain Tree

PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM PASCHALIS

Shen  
A-, 90%

We’ll admit it, we did not expect much from Shen, but they surprised us this year. This tree is like the annoying cousin you haven’t seen in a couple years who suddenly became cool, although you suspect it might be just a facade for the holidays. Like the Fancher tree, this one is brimming with school spirit and purple and gold ornaments. The star on top is pretty, even if it’s leaning over a bit, and the only thing that could enhance the experience would be some garland. Honestly, this is the best Christmas tree of all the dorms (although we did notice the strategic placement of the acorn ornaments).

### Honorable Mentions

The art building tree is little, but covered in giant purple poinsettias, exactly what we would expect from the art department. The Campus Center has put ornaments on the fake deciduous trees in the lobby, a festive touch. Neilson has some nice, cute little trees, including what is probably the smallest tree on campus.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM PASCHALIS  
The Art Building Tree

# Gingerbread Cookie Recipe

## Directions:

MRS CLAUS

Gingerbread Cookies

Ingredients:

- 6 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup shortening, melted and cooled slightly
- 1 cup molasses
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Sift together the flour, baking powder, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, and cinnamon; set aside.

In a medium bowl, mix together the shortening, molasses, brown sugar, water, egg, and vanilla until smooth. Gradually stir in the dry ingredients, until they are completely absorbed. Divide dough into 3 pieces, pat down to 1 1/2 inch thickness, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 3 hours.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough out to 1/4 inch thickness. Cut into desired shapes with cookie cutters. Place cookies 1 inch apart onto an ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake for 10 to 12 minutes in the preheated oven. When the cookies are done, they will look dry, but still be soft to the touch. Remove from the baking sheet to cool on wire racks. When cool, the cookies can be frosted with the icing of your choice.



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNSPLASH



# TWO VIEWS



## A White Christmas: Is Snow Necessary for Christmas Spirit?

LUTHER KRANK

I can’t listen to Christmas Carols anymore.

I don’t care if it’s November, or Christmas Eve, or the Fourth of July; the holiday has simply been ruined for me. “Frosty the Snowman” makes my teeth clench. “Let it Snow” makes my smile dim. And don’t even get me started on Bing Crosby and his infernal “I’m Dreaming of a White Christmas.” The fact they made a movie out of that travesty is crime against humanity.

At this point, you might be asking what my problem is. After all, I’m the guy with the cheerful personality and the fluorescent colored clothes. Some of my friends say I’m the brightest person they know and I’ve got a great sense of humor. Yet when it comes to Christmas, I can’t seem to muster up my ordinary exuberance, and it’s not just because the winter equinox is a hard time of year for me. I’ve become jaded towards Christmas because of the over emphasis on snow.

According to an extremely sketchy, badly sourced Internet blog, there are 44 countries in the world that never receive any snow. Most of these countries are in Africa and South America, and between them, they easily contain a third of the world’s population. Furthermore, there are many countries in the world who may receive snow but are unlikely to receive it on Christmas because of their differing season schedule. Australia, for example, is currently in the middle of summer and will be for the next four months. And then there are places in the world that might receive a bit of snow every ten years or so (looking at you, South Carolina) but can’t count on the substance to fuel their Christmas Spirit. Between these three categories, they contain

not just a few poor unfortunate souls, but the majority of global citizens. The North might have fir trees and chimneys and ice skating on its side, but tradition cannot overcome the fact that people experiencing a snowing Christmas are actually *in the minority*.

Yet as is the case in everything from the 1% to eighty’s hair, the power often resides with a small minority and allows them to foist their opinions upon the rest of us, even when we are incapable of responding. Think critically for a moment about how many Northern Christmas traditions are utterly impossible for some of the population. You can’t have a Christmas tree if fir trees don’t grow in your climate. You can’t make a snowman if it doesn’t snow. You can’t have sleighs, sleigh bells, or anything resembling reindeer if there’s no place for a sleigh to glide or a reindeer to feed. Who wants chestnuts roasting on an open fire when the AC is working overtime? And do they even drink hot chocolate in the tropics? There is no way to have an ideal Northern Christmas in Mexico. It simply doesn’t work.

By creating an experience most of the world cannot participate in, we in the North are excluding billions of people from our perceptions of Christmas. Worse yet, we are convincing some of them that their Christmases are subpar, from nothing more than a lack of H2O. Northern Climates, this must stop. Widen your understanding of Christmas. Widen your understanding of beauty. Be culturally sensitive to those who have a different understanding of what Christmas means. And above all else, please stop insisting the snow is necessary for a proper holiday. Next time you think of Christmas, think of palm trees. ★

*Luther is a first-year student majoring in Intercultural Studies.*

BING CROSBY

Last week, I was in Florida for a business conference. It was every man’s dream vacation: the sun, the coconuts, the slight breeze of the Gulf. There were Christmas cocktails and lights on palm trees; there was even a special Christmas parade. But to me – a man raised on a proper Northern Christmas – it felt absurdly wrong. There was no holly, no fires, and most of all, no snow. Sadly, without those things, Florida – like most warm climates – can only produce a lackluster Christmas.

I can already hear the objections. There’s some nonsense about cultural sensitivity, a couple remarks about the beauty of a global holiday, and a lot of complaints about Christmas music. But why shouldn’t I be able to sing “Jingle Bells” at the top of my lungs? I’m a proud advocate of a good, old fashioned, snowy Christmas. It’s what I was born into, it’s my roots, (I even staked my career on it). Perhaps I should be more appreciative of other cultures. But first and foremost, I’m appreciative of my own, and I believe I ought to be able to defend it with gusto. The Florida people can have their decorated palm trees and beachfront cookie decorating parties. As for me and my climate, we’ll be pulling out our parkas, and you can’t talk me out of thinking our experience is better.

Why do I think this? Firstly, it’s beautiful. Have you seen the world covered in icicles and unbroken white? Have you taken every ugly thing out of a view and replaced it with shimmering loveliness? Have you stood in the early morning of a new day and breathed the sharp air of a perfect winter morning? These are magnificent things. Furthermore, the traditions surrounding a Northern Christmas work with the beauty of snow instead

of against it. Why do we erect fir trees in our living rooms? It’s not because they’re cheap or easy to clean up (I have to vacuum pine needles out of my carpet daily). No, it’s because fir trees aesthetically pleasing with the snow, just as warm fires and holly and stocking hung from the mantel also all add a specific and matched sort of look to a winter Christmas festivity.

Secondly, White Christmases are dying. If global warming continues on its current trajectory, within two hundred years they will disappear altogether. In society, we have a name for this phenomenon: extinction. When animals go extinct, we protect them. When languages are dying out, we send specialists to preserve them. When cultures are slowly fading we document and try to revive them. Yet when White Christmases are in danger of becoming a relic of the past, we instead focus on “multiplicity of viewpoints” and “inclusion.”

Please hear me out. I’m not saying that warmer climates don’t have valuable traditions. Or that we shouldn’t – as a global community – recognize the validity and beauty contained in those traditions. But I also don’t think I should be required to think all traditions or cultures are equal. If my American citizenship gives me anything, it is the right to an opinion, and mine is that a snowy Christmas is better than a tropical one. Floridians can think differently. That doesn’t bother me. Just don’t tell us we have to agree. We managed the election with grace; surely we can handle a few friendly arguments about snow. ★

*Bing is a senior majoring in Vocal Performance.*

**Want to call into question the reputation of journalists everywhere by writing articles just like these?**

**Well, you’ll need to wait until our April Fool’s issue.**

# Letter to the Editor

Dear Santa,

My name is Houghton, and I want you to know that I’ve been a very good college this year. I’ve kept the community covenant and given it a nice new name, I’ve played nice with Robert and St. Bonna, and I’ve even tried to start an engineering program. I’m not sure if these acts of goodwill we be enough to get me proper Christmas presents and not just more mud in my stocking, but after listening to Dean Jordan talk about hope in chapel (he said it was a very good quality) I was inspired to send you a list anyways. I understand if you can’t get me everything, but at least half would be nice.

- Better KPAC stairs
- A smaller pulpit for the chapel
- A new provost
- A new dean of student life
- Good coffeeshop music
- A robust course selection
- A Houghton Walmart (and gas station and grocery store...I’d settle for any sort of economy)
- An escalator for Chamberlain
- A lazy river for the KPAC
- Sports teams that make it to the playoffs
- A newspaper that people actually read
- A larger student body

Thanks Santa! Even though you’re a pagan symbol, you’re still pretty cool.

Love,  
Houghton

P.S. We don’t have any chimneys on Campus big enough for a KPAC lazy river, so you can just drop all of the presents off on the quad in front of President Mullen’s office. Or write her a check. That would work too.



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

# SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor  
should be 250 words or less

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You can comment on articles online at [www.houghtonstar.com](http://www.houghtonstar.com)



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# Make Your Own Snowflake

2. FOLD ALONG HERE

1. FOLD ALONG HERE

Instructions

- 1. Fold newspaper in half along the first dotted line, against the natural crease.
- 2. Fold newspaper up diagonally along the second dotted line, so that the pattern is visible.
- 3. Cut along black lines, removing the gray areas.
- 4. Unfold!