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College Passes New Integrative Studies System

JORDAN TRAUTWEIN

New Integrative Studies (IS) requirements have been passed and will go into effect next fall. According to professor Susan Bruxvoort Lipscomb, Director of IS Requirements, "The biggest shift is a move to integrated core courses, an integrated core sequence in humanities that combines literature, history, and philosophy into three integrated." She explained this meant students would "study the history of ideas through primary texts

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Highlander Soccer Plays Tough At Nationals

KASEY CANNISTER

The Highlander men's and women's soccer teams competed in the Division I National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) National Championship last week in Kissimmee, Florida.

The men's season ended sooner than anticipated after losing each of their two games in the first round of play in the tournament.

In the women's championship, Houghton had one win and one tie in the first round, advancing them to the semi-finals where they ended their season, losing to Colorado Christian University, who went on to win the championship.

Going into the tournament the women were seeded 8th of 9 teams, and were placed in Pool B with the #2 and #5 seeds. "Our team played very well in the Pool Games and advanced to the Final Four by winning our pool" said Lewis.

Reflecting on last year's tournament, Jennifer Zachigna '17 said, "We had a



COURTESY OF JASON MUCHER

After strong regular season play, both the men's and women's soccer teams earned spots in the National Christian College Athletic Association's Division 1 National Championship.

strong performance on the women's side, making it to the final four in a tournament with a lot of talented teams."

She continued, "We would've loved to make it to the championship to defend our title, but overall we were definitely happy we were

able to make it as far as we did."

According to David Lewis, Women's Soccer Head Coach, the team lost 14 players from last year's National Champion Team due to graduation, injury, or academic conflicts.

"This team's focus was to improve in two levels: quality of soccer and quality of effort. They improved significantly throughout the season it showed in their post-season play. From start

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Students Create Record Label: Fader 15



COURTESY OF DUNCAN SHALDA

Four music industry students collaborated with music industry instructor Kevin Jackson to kickstart Fader 15 Records, an affiliate record label of the Greatbatch School of Music.

MICAH CRONIN

Four music industry students have joined with Director of Technical Arts and

Music Industry Instructor, Kevin Jackson, to create an independent record label. Kayla Bernard '17, Olivia Dobmeier '19, Duncan Shal-

da '19, and Ryan Burrichter '20 are Vice Presidents (VP) of the label, called Fader 15 Records. Jackson is President of the label.

See **FADER15** page 2

Sodexo Enters Bidding Remain At Houghton

MICAH CRONIN

Houghton College is considering bids from dining service companies. Sodexo, the company which currently serves Houghton, runs out on its current contract this May. Student Government Association (SGA) Executive Officer of Student Life Sergio Mata-Cisneros '19 said three companies have "submitted a proposal, one being Sodexo." Mata-Cisneros said a committee has been formed which is "working on reviewing the proposals. Currently Joanna [Friesen, SGA Student Body

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International //New Zealand Prime Minister Resigns



NATE MOORE

ANNA SCHILKE

On Sunday December 4, New Zealand’s Prime Minister, John Key, announced his intention to resign after eight years in the position. According to the New York Times, Key re-

signed with his family in mind. “For my wife Bronagh there have been many nights and weekends spent alone. My daughter Stephanie and my son Max have transitioned from teenagers to young adults while coping with an extraordinary level of intrusion and pressure because of their father’s job,” he said in the speech announcing his resignation. Key’s eight year term has encompassed a number of successes. WSJ reported his leadership has been marked with stability and prosperity for New Zealand. Key steered them out of a recession, rebuilt major cities after the 2011 earthquake, and ended a three decade old standoff with the U.S. over nuclear politics. He helped the country come to economic agreements with the U.S. and China, and he has partnered with

Australia, Britain, Canada, and the U.S. under the Five Eyes agreement in an intelligence agreement. According to Reuters, this October, New Zealand reported its second straight budget surplus. Should Key have chosen to run for a fourth term, his chances of winning were strong. Reuters reported a credible poll had his party ahead in support by a margin of 37.5%. Key was immensely popular among his constituents, and after his resignation the New Zealand dollar fell around a fifth of a U.S. cent to 0.7084. Key’s career started not in government, but in business. BBC stated he was formerly a Merrill Lynch foreign exchange dealer before he moved into parliament, and was then elected Prime Minister six years later. In his announcement speech, Key

also indicated his belief that renewal would be healthy for the government. He plans to wait until an election can be held for his Parliament seat, currently set for December 12, to officially hand in his resignation, according to BBC. Reactions from other government officials, both domestic and global have been overwhelmingly positive. New Zealand Green Party co-leader, Metiria Turei, stated on Twitter, “[I] fought every day against John’s politics but always supported his right to be a dad and a husband first. I wish him and his family well.” Another New Zealand party leader, Andrew Little also commented on Key’s resignation on Twitter. He said, “John Key has served New Zealand generously and with dedication. I wish him and his family the

best for the future.” Prime Minister of Australia, Malcolm Turnbull, had only five words on the matter, “say it ain’t so bro.” Although leaders may mourn his decision, Key is resolute. “I have never seen myself as a career politician” he stated in his speech. “I have certainly never wanted my success in politics to be measured by how long I spent in parliament.... all I can say is that I gave it everything I had. I have nothing left in the tank.... it’s time for me to come home.”★ Anna Schilke is a sophomore writing major.

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want to go, whether that be a major record label or an independent label, or a touring deal,” Burrichter said. “We’re not trying to make money,” Shalda said. “We’re taking people at Houghton College and pushing them to the level of excellency that they should be. We’re taking

people who want to do this as a career and pushing them to professional level recording, professional level marketing, and producing and publishing their music.” The record was born out of the Music Publishing and Marketing class, Shalda said. He said, “But it’s definitely branched out into the music industry major and the music school as a whole.” Shalda said Fader 15 Records may produce single

artist EPs. He said, “We’ve looked into other schools’ record labels, and they’ve taken one or two songs from each artist and made an album off of that.” Since Fader 15 Records has not chosen artists yet, these plans are “kinda touch and go,” Shalda said. “We’re gonna roll with it.” Shalda stated the response to the label’s call for samples and auditions earlier in the semester stirred interest on campus. He said, “We don’t

want to bite off more than we can chew, so we are planning on narrowing it down to just a few people that have the drive and motivation, who want to do this as their career.” The label hopes to release music by the end of the school year, Shalda said. “We are looking more towards having three [artists]” he stated, who the label would begin working with next semester. The artists’ work with Fader 15 Records would end

after they graduate,” Shalda stated. According to Shalda Fader 15 Records will produce no particular music genre. He said, “That was one of the main reasons we went with ‘Fader 15’. We wanted [a name] that was not genre specific. We want anywhere from gospel from gospel to rap to rock to techno- anything under the sun that’s good music. That’s what we’re looking for, good music.” ★

Want to write? Email us at editor@houghtonstar.com

SOCCER from page 1

to finish, they represented one of the most improved teams I have coached here at Houghton,” said Lewis. Men’s midfielder Jesse Toth ’17 said, “We didn’t do as well as we wanted as we lost both our games, but I am super proud of our team and what we accomplished this season.” He continued, “The National Christian tournament is a very competitive series with some of the best teams around the country. Being in Florida with your best friends is very hard to complain about. While losing was disappointing, when we put it in perspective, we knew we gave it all we had and left nothing on the field.” Toth reflected on the opportunity to have both Houghton soccer teams in Florida. This is the first time

in a few years both teams have been in the tournament at the same time. “Having both teams there was a blast. Our games were spaced out perfectly so we were able to watch each other’s games in their entirety.” He continued, “It was very cool to get to know some of the girls better. It is so different interacting with people when school is not the focus on people’s minds and you can just have genuine conversation, especially on such a long bus ride.” While in Florida, the women’s team completed a service project organized by Campus Crusade for Christ (CRU) and Feeding Children Everywhere. The men and women’s teams who made it to the semi-finals had the opportunity to participate. “We went to the CRU headquarters to help prepare meals for families to send to Haiti. It was a great time of fellowship with the other teams and a really successful effort to help families in need,” said Zacchigna. Although neither team brought home a national title, the opportunity for both soc-



COURTESY OF JASON MUCHER

Highlander women's basketball, led by Elle Reed '17 (above) and Hannah Manwaring '17 credited their season opening win against Alfred State to a strong defensive effort.

cer teams to compete in the tournament was a huge success as they needed both a good record and success in the region tournament in order to move to post-season play. Toth said, “It has been an absolute privilege to be a

part of the Houghton Men’s Soccer Program This team has taught me that it’s not about the result of the game. Win or lose, our main focus is glorifying God through our actions on the field. I truly believe that we accomplished

that at the national tournament.” The National Championship title was claimed by Southwestern Christian University for the men and Colorado Christian University for the women.★

SODEXO from page 1

President] and I sit as student representatives on the committee.”

Vice President of Student Life, Rob Pool, said there are faculty and staff representatives on the committee as well. Pool stated the rest of the committee is comprised of Director of conferences, Becca Crouch; Director of Operations for the president,

Cindy Lastoria; chief business officer, Dale Wright Assistant Director of Admission Events and Office Operations, Elizabeth Rutledge; Athletic Director, Harold Lord; Assistant Dean of Students, Marc Smithers; Athletics Marketing & Scheduling Coordinator, Marshall Green; and Phyllis Gaerte, Director of Alumni and Community Relations. Biology and Sciences professor, Ransom Poythress, is the faculty representative on the committee. Sustainability concerns will be addressed on the commit-

tee by sustainability coordinator, Brian Webb.

Aside from Sodexo’s bid, Pool said Metz Culinary Management and American Dining Creations have submitted proposals.

Derek Chase ‘19 expressed enthusiasm that the dining services contract is open for bidding. “I think it’s good to consider all kinds of new options, especially because I love to try all kinds of food,” he said. “I think it would be cool to see what other companies have to offer.”

Sarah Vande Brake ‘19 concurred. “Sodexo has had this contract for awhile, and while I personally don’t mind the food, I know many students have gotten tired of it and it might be time to explore other options for the school.”

For the committee, price is not the only factor considered in the bidding process. According to Pool, Houghton published a request for bids which included several factors such as “Quality Assurance,” “Strategic and Business Planning,” and

“Responsiveness to the College Community.”

“The committee will hear presentations from the three companies next week”, said Mata-Cisneros. After the semester break, Mata-Cisneros said the committee will continue deliberations and negotiations with the companies. The committee expects to “have all the contracts signed with the chosen company by February break” he stated. Houghton will release the information shortly after the contracts are solidified, Mata-Cisneros said. ★

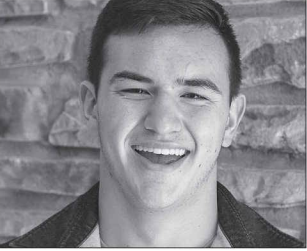
WORD ON THE STREET



“Alone time.”
-**Raheel Dhingra**, Sophomore



“Spending quality time with my parents and my sister, eating good food and sleeping a lot.”
-**Malik Bullock**, Sophomore

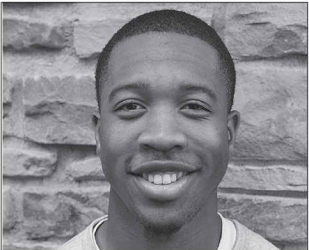


“Being around family and friends that I know and remember good times and make more good times with.”
-**Jonathan Libby**, First Year



“Homecooked meals and a shower that works well. That’s the best thing about break.”
-**Shehan Rodrigo**, Sophomore

“Lots and lots of reading- except they’re books I actually want to read.”
-**Michael Green**, Junior



“Sleep, family, good food.”
-**Timothy Lord**, Junior



“I’m excited about break because everytime I go home, I get to mess with my brother and he gets really mad and it’s funny.”
-**Sidney Samolis**, First Year



“I’m excited to go home and get a Christmas tree so my cat can eat it and puke for the next three weeks.”
-**Rachel Harrington**, Junior

What are you most looking forward to over Winter Break?

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in literature and philosophy.”

“We are drawing on some of the strengths that we developed as an institution with faculty being able to teach in an integrated humanities... We’ve developed those strengths through our honors programs. So we have faculty that can do that” Bruxvoort Lipscomb said. She continued, “Not all institutions have faculty that can teach integrated courses, but Houghton does because we have honors programs where we need to deliver courses in that way so now we’re offering that advantage to all students.”

Gena Hartman ‘19, who studied in the Honors at London program and experienced an integrated curriculum, said, “This is something I think about a lot as an education major, how we’re introducing material to people. That’s something I really enjoyed in London, that we have that context. I think people care more when they understand the context behind something.”

According to Bruxvoort Lipscomb, the new system would likely result in more classes that would be slightly larger. This would be similar to the size of current standard general education courses, such as Biblical Literature or Western Civilization. As a result, “All freshman students will be taking those humanity courses at the same time.” She commented, “That’s kind of exciting for me to be thinking that stu-

dents will be having these conversations. Everyone will be reading Plato’s allegory of the cave at the same time, so there will be a chance for people to be talking about these things outside of class.”

“That might make the freshman experience easier, that you automatically have something to talk about that you all know about,” Hartman noted. She later added, “I think that when you’re learning something at the same time you will have that common bond.”

Aside from the social benefits of informal discussion, she explained that from her experience, “It’s easier to understand when you have people around you to bounce ideas off of, other minds that may come from very different backgrounds.”

According to the final general education proposal, which was recently approved,

“An academically challenging education in the liberal arts and sciences requires core courses in mathematics, the natural sciences, and the humanities and exploration in the social sciences and the arts.” The proposal also stated, when developing the new requirements, faculty found it necessary to adjust the way these areas operated in order to fulfill this standard.

Bruxvoort Lipscomb reported there will also be general education science courses with their lab built into the class. Additionally, there will be a shift in the curriculum for these courses. She explained a general education Biology class, for example, “will focus on issues in biology but from a more general perspective on how science influences a society and thinking about what’s the interaction.” The importance of the change is that

students who are not science majors “need to understand they need to be scientifically literate on how science impacts society.” The classes will lead them to considering “what does science contribute, how does it shape society, and not just learning the basics of a discipline which students broadly in the liberal arts don’t really need to know... from the introductory level”

Writing requirements will also be impacted by the recent changes. Bruxvoort Lipscomb explained, “Everybody will have the chance to take a course that really focuses on writing, but that can happen within majors if departments are offering it.” She clarified that a writing enriched course would simply be one that required a total of at least 20 pages throughout the semester of “writing on which they get feedback”.★

Joining the P-Staff: Tales from Houghton’s New Vice President of Finance

EMMA CARPENTER

Vincent Morris, Houghton College’s new Vice President of Finance, started his first day on the job in September. “I suppose I could be considered part of the incoming ‘class of ’20,’” he joked. “Although I don’t know when—or if—I’ll graduate!” Morris moved to Houghton from Chicago, Illinois, over the summer, and has been pleasantly surprised by the weather thus far, prompting what he described as “naïve doubts about the true ferocity of winter in Western New York.”

Morris’s career path prior to Houghton is eclectic and winding, yet unified by a core passion for students. He “served as a youth minister for an enjoyable de-

cade,” worked at Wheaton College as the Director of Risk Management, and most recently worked as a higher education consultant for colleges and universities in the United States and around the world. “I missed the influence for Kingdom work as a single higher education institution,” said Morris. “So I was open to listen when President Mullen suggested I consider joining the Houghton team.”

As the Vice President of Finance at Houghton, Morris is responsible for ensuring that the college’s financial resources are managed efficiently and effectively. “Many, many days [are] spent ‘rasslin’ with the budget!” said Morris, adding that a major challenge is attempting to keep tuition “at least sort of affordable” despite ever-rising expenses. He added, “[We] do want to meet payroll and keep the heat and power on for those who want to write a late-night paper or have a *Fallout* binge or shotgun Netflix shows or bake Christmas cookies or have an RDT or whatever. So that takes resource management.”

Morris serves as part of the president’s staff, a group of core advisors to president Shirley Mullen. The “P-Staff,” as Morris calls it, is comprised of vice presidents representing a wide range of college departments and offices, from student life to advancement and external relations. According to Jack Connell, Provost and Dean of the Faculty (as well as another member of the president’s staff), members of this team “collaborate closely together . . . in making the numerous administrative, strategic, and budgetary decisions that are required to operate the college.” Connell described Morris as “curious, creative, energetic, insightful, intelligent, and passionate about Christian higher education,” adding that Morris “brings a tremendous amount of experience and expertise” due to his consulting work with colleges and universities.

In addition to his official responsibilities, Morris has been able to engage personally with the Houghton community during his time here. “A local pastor asked me to a

delightful lunch-and-conversation early on,” said Morris. He also added that “several faculty and staff . . . have graciously invited me into their homes,” gestures he has appreciated doubly because he’s been “batch-ing it” while his wife ties up work at her art studio at Wheaton College.

Morris also played a key role in this year’s Christmas-tree-lighting chapel service at the college. After President Mullen oversaw the lighting of the tree, Morris came up to read “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever,” a book by Barbara Robinson about six unruly, irreligious children, the Herdmans, who secure the lead roles in a church Christmas pageant.

Morris began with a witty self-introduction, confessing to be “that guy at parties, that asks people to punctuate ‘God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen,’ and reminds people that we don’t really know that Christ was born on the twenty-fifth of December.” Nevertheless, he asked the audience to suspend their disbelief regarding potential inaccuracies in tra-

ditional Christmas pageants, for the purpose of engaging with the story.

And engage they did. The end-of-semester chapel remnant sat spellbound as Morris read for over half an hour. Bursts of laughter bubbled from the audience, as well as the orchestra onstage, as Morris deftly slipped into different voices to suit the characters, from nasally, tough-talking Imogen Herdman to pristinely snotty Alice Wendelken.

When asked what he’d like students to know about him, Morris shared a diverse taste in music, ranging from Beethoven to Mumford and Sons to Pentatonix to the *Hamilton* soundtrack. He also said that he owns “all the extensions and expansions for ‘Settlers of Catan’ and [has] a very large table in [his] apartment,” as well as “popcorn, cheese, chips, dip, apples, and often some special reserve deep-dish pizza in the freezer too... just sayin’...”

Broke, bored, and hungry college students, take note.★

A Bolder Boulder

Houghton Students Revive Yearbook

RACHEL ZIMMERMAN

For the past two years, Houghton has lacked in one of the quintessential college institutions: the yearbook. This year, however, Michael Carpenter ’17 has gathered a team of Houghton students to produce a yearbook for the 2016-2017 year. Noting that “it’s sad that Houghton didn’t have that for a couple of years,” Carpenter has taken the initiative to revive the yearbook. “We have to kick-start it,” said Michael Green ’17, a yearbook team member.

Both Green and Carpenter are prepared to “kick-start” Houghton’s yearbook, having had previous experience with yearbooks in high school. “I loved it,” Carpenter said. “I thought it was a great opportunity

to practice graphic design and photography with the end result being something special for a lot of people.” He has gathered a group of students who are also excited and dedicated. Seth Pearson ’20, another member of the yearbook team, expressed, “I feel like I am part of something special by helping to bring it back.”

Green noted the visible signs of progress. “We’ve had photographers at a lot of events lately,” he said, and added “I’ve been organizing what pages might go where.” The team is also in contact with Houghton’s clubs and teams, which they hope to clearly represent. “We’re trying to make it as comprehensive and accurate a compilation as can be,” Green said.


While Carpenter noted the progress of the yearbook, he also expressed the difficulty of taking initiative to revive the yearbook. “It has been more complicated than I’ve wanted it to be,” he said. Because of the lapse in years of producing a yearbook, a transition process is lacking. “It’s not as much passing the baton as refashioning the baton,” Green explained. Yet Carpenter looks

forward to the finished product. “I enjoy the process,” he said. “Having something to take home, that physical book, makes all the behind the scenes work worth it to me.”

He added that the revived yearbook will include “pieces of Houghton yearbooks past,” such as old photography and design.

With the fall semester nearly at an end, the yearbook team is beginning to look forward to the finished product. “Soon we’ll be working a lot on taking students’ orders, advertising, that sort of thing,” Carpenter said. “We’re hoping that when we’re ready to take orders, students will be excited to do so.” He estimates being ready to take orders at the beginning of the spring semester, and emphasized that they are striving for an affordable price.

The team does recognize the concern for the value of yearbooks in the face of social media. “Considering how saturated our lives are with social media, yearbooks might seem out of date,” Green acknowledged. Yet he and Carpenter both stand by the benefits of a yearbook beyond social me-



Houghton's yearbook has not been published in two years, leading students to revive the publication themselves.

dia. “A yearbook represents everyone,” said Green. “It better depicts a whole of what goes on at Houghton rather than the little snapshot they might get in day to day life.”★

Where the Apple Falls

Cuttings from Isaac Newton's Tree Planted in Houghton

CARINA MARTIN

For centuries, elementary school teachers have told their students the story of the apple that fell from a tree onto Sir Isaac Newton's head, sparking an idea about a new theory of universal gravitation. Now visitors to Houghton College can find two young saplings, descendants of those famous apple trees, growing beside the Paine Science Center.

The trees were a gift to Houghton from president Taylor Reveley of the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg. The Virginia college received their trees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which in turn obtained cuttings of Newton's original trees from the Royal Botanical Gardens in London. William & Mary's Assistant to the Provost, Houghton alumnus Jeremy Martin, helped to facilitate the trees' journey to Houghton.

While the truth of the apple tree anecdote has never been confirmed, Newton's reputation as one of the most brilliant and wide-ranging scientific minds of all time has been assured since the publication of his three-part *Principia*, a seminal point in the development of physics. Over the years, the story of the Newton Tree has endured as a powerful emblem of scientific curiosity. A small cutting of the tree even made it as far as the International Space Station, when The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) astronaut, Piers Sellers, carried it on board the shuttle Atlantis in 2010.

Thus the arrival of the trees is perfectly timed, as this year's freshman physics class was the largest in several years and the department is poised to soon introduce an engineering degree. "It's kind of an exciting time for physics," said Mark Yuly, professor of physics and chair of the mathematics and natural science department. He continued, "And I think the tree is something that represents the past and represents the future."

According to the Houghton website, the trees were dedicated

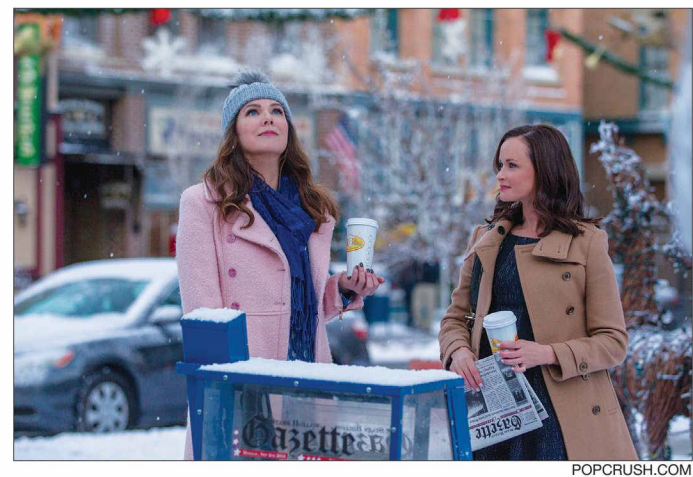
over Homecoming weekend, with speeches from college president, Shirley Mullen; professor of biology, James Wolfe; and assistant professor of physics, Kurt Aikens commemorating the occasion before an audience of alumni. A plaque beside the trees bears a quote from Newton himself and states, "It is the perfection of God's works that they are all done with the greatest simplicity. He is the God of order and not confusion."

Throughout his life, Newton wrote extensively on, not only science, but also theology and Biblical interpretation. For this very reason, Mullen believes the tree's significance extends far beyond its worldly fame, symbolizing the fundamental and forgotten unity between science and faith. "One of the great tragedies of the modern period is how in our culture science and faith have become separated," she said. "In many people's minds, they're actually viewed as antagonistic. That is so historically wrong, and so counter to what the actual history of faith and science has been. In a sense, this is a way of inspiring the retelling of a larger vision of faith and science."★



HOUGHTON.EDU
The trees were a gift to Houghton from president Taylor Reveley of the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA.

TV Review: *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life*



POPCRUSH.COM
Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life stars Lauren Graham (left) as Lorelai Gilmore and Alexis Bledel as Rory (right).

SOPHIA ROSS

When the television series *Gilmore Girls* appeared in its entirety on Netflix in October 2014, fans new and old were prompted to binge watch the WB classic. For seven seasons, the show followed former teen mom Lorelai Gilmore (Lauren Graham) and her teenage daughter and best friend Rory (Alexis Bledel) as they built a relationship with Lorelai's parents Emily (Kelly Bishop) and Richard (Edward Herrmann), supported Rory's journey from prep school Chilton to Yale University, managed their extremely flawed romantic relationships, and made their home in the small, quirky town of Stars Hollow, Connecticut. In the late 90's and early 2000's, the

series was known for its Sorkin-esque fast-talking characters, numerous pop culture references, and entitled, yet endearing leading ladies. When the show found a new home on the popular online streaming website, it also found a renewed place in pop culture, turning up in BuzzFeed lists and quizzes, Tumblr posts, and even the podcast "Gilmore Guys" in which two twenty-something men recap every episode.

The cultural revival of the show hit its apex when an actual revival was announced earlier this year by Netflix. Finally, fans could revisit all of their favorite Stars Hollow characters, learn where Rory's journalism career had taken her, and, most importantly, hear the final four words of the show that creator and executive producer Amy Sherman-Palladino had promised them a decade ago. The full main cast was slated to return, aside from

the late Herrmann, and Melissa McCarthy who played Lorelai's best friend Sookie St. James. Sherman-Palladino and her husband, executive producer Daniel Palladino, who were absent for last season of the show, were both on board. Expectations, unsurprisingly, were high.

Rather than filming a full new season of the show, Netflix announced that the revival would be a mini-series of hour and a half long episodes featuring four seasons in the lives of the Gilmores, appropriately titled *Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life*. All four episodes were released on November 25, coaxing fans away from the mall on Black Friday to sit in front of their computers and finally see what became of their beloved Gilmores.

A Year in the Life opens with iconic quotes from the original show's seven seasons, immediately identifying itself as a show intended for fans of the original series. Some scenes that longtime fans will find exciting, like Kirk's second short film, or the Life and Death Brigade's homage to *Across the Universe*, will be just plain confusing to new viewers. That's not to say that there isn't plenty in this series for non-fans and *Gilmore Girls* fans (or, as I prefer to call us, "Gillies") alike to be enjoy. From Paris Geller's (Liza Weil) freak out in a Chilton bathroom, to Lorelai's decision to do *Wild* (the book, not the movie), the series is as clever in its humor as the original. Even McCarthy makes a brief comic appearance in the fourth episode.

The show generally maintains a balance of witty comedy and emotional drama, including the kind of mother-daughter (namely Lorelai versus Emily and Lorelai versus Rory) shouting matches that are never overdone, but hit just the right note. All of the familial arguments are earned, as are their resolutions, after a thoughtful set-up and resolution by Sherman-Palladino. Most impressive is how Sherman-Palladino handles Herrmann's death. He isn't forgotten, in fact the Gilmore patriarch has an immense presence in the new show, mostly in the form of wall-sized portrait hanging in Emily's house. We are shown scenes from his funeral in the first episode, but he isn't seen until the final episode, in which Rory walks through her grandparents' house and imagines him still with her. While the scene could have been trite, it fits the show's ending well, giving viewers closure with Richard's character.

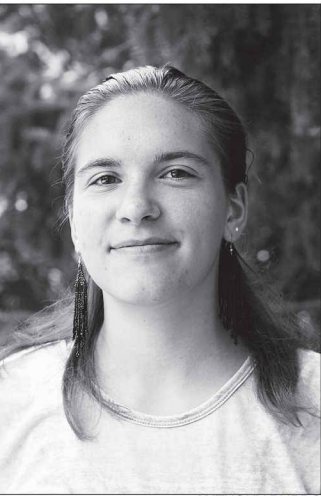
Providing closure to character arcs is one element that Sherman-Palladino has a difficult time with in this iteration of the series. She has stayed true to the original characters in the revival, and provides rich arcs for both Emily and Lorelai. But Rory does not seem to have grown up between the ages of 22 and 32. While her morals were always somewhat loose (Rory loses her virginity to her married ex-boyfriend and there's that one time she steals a yacht), it surprised me to find her in an ongoing affair with an engaged ex-boyfriend while she

also cheats on her "forgettable" boyfriend.

Instead of the hard-working Rory who once made articles on boring subjects for her high school newspaper shine with creativity, we are introduced to a Rory with only a few published articles under her belt, who spends her free time jetting between London and Connecticut to carry on her affair. The formerly tenacious character thinks it's beneath her to write for online media and gives up an opportunity writing a piece for Condé Nast after one day. The privilege that has followed her from Chilton to Yale to her first reporting job has obviously come to an end. Even in the last episode when she decides to write a book, she does not appear to have grown at all. And then there's the final four words.

I won't spoil them for you, but I will say that they make it clear that Rory has a lot more growing to do. Does this mean more episodes? Opinions differ, after all, these were the intended final four words of the show. Personally, I think a return would not only be the best way to flesh out Rory's character arc, but it would be great for television in general. Despite Rory's lack of redemption at the finale, she, Lorelai and Emily remain three of the most complex and nuanced female characters written for television in the 2000's, and I would welcome a return. Where they lead, I will follow.★

Johnny Cash, Longfellow, and Peace



ANTHONY BURDO

JOANNA FRIESEN

I love Johnny Cash. Yes, I said love. Not like, not appreciate, not admire. Now that that is solidified, onward. Around Advent, my favorite song is “I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day,” and particularly the version sung by the aforementioned star of country western. This is adapted from a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow called “Christmas Bells.” In the

piece, Longfellow muses on the centuries-long tradition of the church proclaiming peace in contradiction to Christmas in the midst of the American Civil War. He laments; “and in despair I bowed my head; ‘There is no peace on earth,’ I said; ‘For hate is strong, and mocks the song of peace on earth, good-will to men!’”

How did Longfellow resolve this? He trusted that the witness of peace, even amidst war, would ultimately prevail, although in 1863 he could not see peace immediately. “Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: ‘God is not dead, nor doth He sleep; the Wrong shall fail, the Right prevail, with peace on earth, good-will to men.’” Symbolically, bells entail resurrection, celebration, and the marking of occasions.

What are we to do in the tensions of life? War and peace.

“What are we to do in the tensions of life? ...Especially at Christmas, there is the age-old temptation to suspend reality and exist in a sugar-coated bubble.”

“At Christmas, as odd as it sounds, it seems right to follow in the footsteps of Johnny Cash.”

Refugees and comfortable American suburbanites. Historical witness and present reality. Especially in Christmas, there is the age-old temptation to suspend reality and exist in a sugar-coated bubble. Turn on “Frosty the Snowman,” decorate a fake tree, spray pine perfume on it, veg out on frosted cookies, exchange gifts churned out in the factory of big box stores and materialism, and call it a night.

I really don’t like Christmas music. The music that fits at Christmas time are the songs

that get at this tension. These are the songs that are honest about the disjunctions of life, “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus,” “I Heard the Bells On Christmas Day,” and “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.” These songs admit that there is a gap between the hopes of Christmas, and the present reality. Although we celebrate, we recognize that peace is not normative, and must continue to be hoped for, even 2,000 years plus down the line.

We celebrate that Christ has come, yet in the same story Herod is slaughtering the innocents, and the holy family flees to Egypt as refugees. There is an expectation of peace, and an “already but not yet” tension. How can we celebrate Christmas, yet witness in faithfulness that acknowledges the tension?

For the sake of the full circle, back to Johnny Cash. My favorite song of his is

“Man in Black”. Here, he describes the purpose of his wardrobe. He consistently wore black, and if you listen to them right, most of his songs were preacher-songs, describing the pain and the ups and downs of human life. He wore black to identify with the “beaten down,” amidst the current culture of “streak of lightnin’ cars and fancy clothes,” reasoning that “I’d love to wear a rainbow every day, and tell the world that everything’s OK, but I’ll try to carry off a little darkness on my back, ‘til things are brighter, I’m the Man In Black.”

At Christmas, as odd as it sounds, it seems right to follow in the footsteps of Johnny Cash.★

Joanna is a senior theology major.

Operation Christmas Child: An Honest Evaluation



ANTHONY BURDO

MELISSA MACLEAN

Each year, SGA pairs with the Houghton Wesleyan church to take part in “Operation Christmas Child.” For the past two years, I have taken the role of coordinator as SGA Chaplain.

When I first started the event, it seemed so simple. We packed boxes, celebrated our numbers, sent them off in big trucks, and then waited to hear stories of kids opening these boxes. It was such a simple equation. “A” plus “B” equaled “C.”

However, as I began to grow deeper in my understanding of international development, everything

suddenly turned gray. I found myself asking questions such as, “How sustainable is their methodology?” or “Is this destructive to other cultures, especially non-westernized ones?” These are some of the questions I want to attempt to address.

Let’s first lay out context on the organization.

Operation Christmas Child (OCC) was originally started by Dave and Jill Cook in the United Kingdom in 1990, but later merged in partnership with Samaritan’s Purse in 1993.

According to their website, their mission is to “provide local partners around the world with shoeboxes filled with small toys, hygiene items, and school supplies as a means of reaching out to children in their own communities with the Good News of Jesus Christ.” They are based in 150 countries, including Native American reservations here in the United States.

Now that we have context, let’s start the analysis. There are two issues I want address: proselytization and Westernization.

First, proselytizing. To proselytize means to “induce

someone to convert to one’s faith from another.” Unlike the word “witnessing,” proselytization carries negative connotation of “force,” “against will,” or “unwanted.” Bryant Myers put it well in his book, *Walking with the Poor*. He says, “Our thinking and practice of transforming development must have evangelistic intent...though this is not a call for proselytism; neither is it a call to coercive,

“It is easy to point out flaws and mistakes, or on the other side, give a blind eye and neglect any wrongs; but to engage the gray is hard.”

manipulative, or culturally insensitive evangelism...rather, it is a call to be sure we do our development with an attitude that prays and yearns for people to know Jesus Christ.” So does OCC fall on the witnessing side or the proselytizing side?

To be honest, I came into this argument quite skeptically, thinking that their Greatest Journey program was a form of proselytization; however, after some research, I found that OCC explicitly addressed my question and titled it “Is this forcing religion on the child who gets a gift?” In their statement, they

openly addressed that, saying, “children do not have to do or say anything to receive their gifts.” So if we are to take them by their word, I believe it would be thus unfair to label them as proselytizers.

Second, westernizing. In the development world, this word carries a great deal of controversy. The thought of “white saviors” coming into non-Western cultures and giving them Western toys, laced with messages of “the West is best” is quite controversial. It is also argued to be a form of post-colonialism aid that reinforces

other cultures’ need for the Western white world to fix their problems. However, this line grows gray. For one, the organization states that they pair with local churches in attempt to initiate a “bottom-up” approach. Secondly, half of their ministry is in already Westernized countries. For instance, Houghton student Elizabeth Clark ’18, recalls her experience receiving an OCC box as a child in Estonia. She remembers it as a nice gesture, though nothing out of the ordinary, since her family was used to getting present on Christmas. But,

“to have something nice...or something that won’t break in five minutes...makes a child feel loved, cherished and important.”

So where do we go from here? I admit, I’m still wrestling, debating, and engaging with these issues daily. But my desire today is not to provide any answers to you, but rather to ignite a prompting in your heart to critically analyze and engage with the grays in this world. It is easy to point out flaws and mistakes, or on the other side, give a blind eye and neglect any wrongs; but to engage the gray is hard. But there is also beauty in gray. I used to always pray for God to give me black and white answers on everything. However, I’m finally starting to see that the gray not only forces me to engage both sides, but it also stands as a beautiful reminder of my complete and total need for God. So wherever you stand, try to step back and try and engage the gray. Who knows, maybe it is through that engagement that you will find the answer you were looking for.★

Melissa is a senior majoring in communication and international development.

Life Through the Lens of Death



NATE MOORE

MICHAEL SIEVERS

My father is a mortician, someone whose career is involved in the business of funeral rites, the embalming and cremation or burial of the deceased, and the planning and arrangement of the funeral services. To put it simply, he works with dead people.

Growing up, it was normal

for me to ride in the car with my dad on a late night “removal,” to walk to the funeral home after school to catch a ride home, or for the flowers on my dining room table to be a mix of whatever was left at the last services. I grew up surrounded by death. It is something I have experienced first hand as well. Be it close grandparents, aunts and uncles, or classmates, it is safe to say I have seen more than a normal amount of my contemporaries die.

You might think that constantly experiencing death and witnessing grief would spiral me into a deep state of depression, but surprisingly it hasn’t. In fact, it has had the opposite effect on me. Don’t

“Relationships and connections are more valuable in the end. When you are 92 and in the hospital on your deathbed, who is going to be there with you? Your success, or the ones you have poured your life into?”

“When you realize life is fleeting, it changes how you prioritize your intentions and time.”

get me wrong, grief and death have played their fair share of sadness in my life. However, being constantly reminded of the mortality of others, and myself, makes me handle life differently. When you realize life is fleeting, it changes how you prioritize your intentions and time. It makes a lot of seemingly huge issues in the world seem like petty distractions, and it makes the

gamble of faith seem all the more logical.

Let me explain.

Grades are important. Having things like a stellar resume and a steady supply of internships are important. Landing a killer job after graduation, being successful, and paying off loans are all important. However, if they are all I have when I leave college, my time would be a waste. Instead, I would be a robot who was efficient in taking the steps to be successful in life, but I would know no one. Relationships and connections are more valuable in the end. When you are 92 and in the hospital on your deathbed, who is going to be there with you? Your success, or the ones you have poured your life into?

That seems like a lot of big picture thoughts, but really in my everyday life, it makes me react to things from a different perspective. It shifts my priorities from the everyday into the long term.

It may seem morbid, but I think that we would all be a little better, a little kinder, and have more of a purpose if we lived life more like we were dying. After all, we are.

★

Michael is a junior majoring in communication with a concentration in media arts and design and minors in fine arts and sociology.



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.



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Artist of the Week

Maggie McDonald

//junior applied design major



NATE MOORE



Titles & Media

clockwise descending

Water 1, *digital photography*

Mug Life, *ceramics*

Water 2, *digital photography*

Steeple, *digital photography*

Abandoned, *digital photography*

Sage, *digital photography*

