

The Houghton Star

Volume 82.6

October 30, 1989

MEADE RESIGNS

by Thomas Woods

(part two)



When New Testament professor Dr. David Meade resigned this month (see the October 20 *Star*), parts of his letter of resignation were made available to the *Star* for publication.

In his resignation, Meade expressed a "gratitude to God for the privilege of teaching so many fine young people whose thirst for God and knowledge has been a great source of inspiration." He further noted that the Division of Religion and Philosophy "represent[s] the jewel of the college," and that division chair Dr. Carl Schultz has promoted "a spirit of open inquiry and mutuality of purpose that mark the divisional faculty and students as unparalleled in their embodiment of the role of scholar-servant."

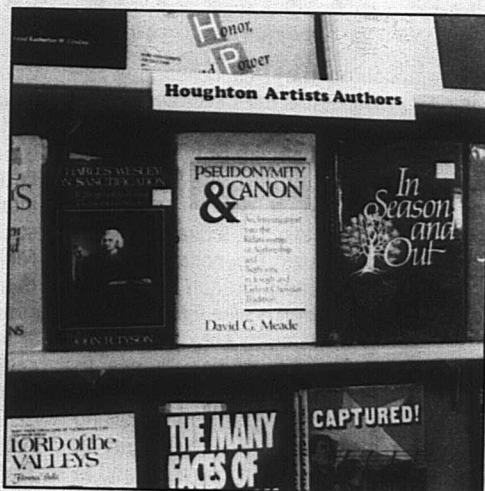
In a separate interview, Meade expressed his frustration with the issue of his resignation, but said that there is no point in rearguing his denial of tenure by the Board of Trustees.

When Meade's resignation was made public, the administration had planned to shoulder the responsibility of looking for a replacement, but since then it has allowed the Division to fulfill its normal duties and seek out

candidates. Who will Houghton College hire? To Meade's knowledge, there are no Wesleyans with Ph.D.'s in New Testament.

"The sad truth is that my expulsion was the result of a failure of [President Daniel Chamberlain and Academic Dean Clarence Bence's] leadership," Meade's resignation letter continues, leaving unanswered the question of what trials the new (most likely non-Wesleyan) professor will face: will he be denied tenure as well?

While Dr. Meade is "praying that Houghton doesn't destroy itself," he stated that he understands that "Christian colleges will survive because the people are more Christian than the institutions are."



The legacy continues: Dr. Meade's controversial book still resides in the campus store, along with those of other Houghton authors.

Photo by Dave Perkins

Science Faculty
Perspectives:
low-level
waste dump

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Field Hockey
Districts

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Radon Survey Results

by Dr. Frederick Trexler

The Environmental Earth Science class has just received the results of a screening survey of 30 homes and dorms in Houghton, Fillmore and Caneadea for concentrations of the radioactive gas Radon. Mineral grains in the ground contain small amounts of Uranium, which undergoes a series of radioactive decays leading to the stable element Lead. Radon-222 is the only one of the decay products which is a gas. It is transferred to water from the mineral grains, then finds its way up through the ground and into basements through cracks and drains. It is known that prolonged exposure to Radon-rich atmospheres causes lung cancer in miners. The average concentration in conventional houses is 1 pCi/l of air. The EPA recommends action if the level exceeds 4 pCi/l.

On October 5, the students gave activated charcoal canisters purchased from Teledyne Isotopes to selected householders, who were instructed to open them in a basement area for four days. We collected the canisters after the test period and shipped them to New Jersey for analysis.

Our results showed a significant correlation with the type of soil. Fifteen homes built on clay had an average level of 1.5, while four homes built on gravel averaged 6.6. All the college dorms were below 4, but two of the outside student houses registered 4.1 and 5.5. The highest reading of 19.1 occurred in Caneadea where half the basement had a dirt floor. We are recommending a follow-up survey in the living areas for these homes.



The Star is now accepting advertisements!

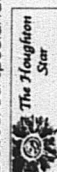
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Nielsen Runs for Office

by Kim Kerr

Ken Nielsen, Vice-President for Finance at Houghton College, is running for District 1 County Legislature this November 7 as a Republican. (You may not recognize his face, but if you are employed by the college, you will recognize his signature on your paycheck each month.)

Nielsen was born on Staten Island and graduated from Kings College. He received his Master of Divinity at Faith Theological Seminary. He and his wife Doris have been residents of Houghton for 28 years and have three children.

This is Nielsen's first time running for an elected office, however he has served on various committees. He, "considered running for office, and was

encouraged by [his] colleagues".

Nielsen is the Chairman of the County Industrial Development Agency, Chairman of the Allegany Area Economic Development Corporation, a director of Cuba Memorial Hospital, a director of the Private Industry Council and advisor for the Fillmore branch of Norstar Bank. Nielsen is also the President of Allegany County Area Foundation Inc. The Foundation "seeks to encourage educational, social, cultural, and civic projects benefiting the residents of Allegany County by maintaining an endowment fund to provide financial support for such projects".

Nielsen is especially concerned with the economic growth of Allegany

County and hopes to bring in new industry.

The office of County Legislator is a part-time position and is located in Belmont. The office entails various affairs in the county including areas such as health and social services. Nielsen is "opposed to nuclear waste dumping" as are many of the residents of Allegany County. "However", he stated, "there are other problems your legislature must face on a daily basis".

Even though this may be his first elected office, Nielsen feels that he has the "experience, interest and time" to represent the people of the District. He claims the office would not interfere with his position at Houghton.

NEWS



Uncle Ledley
Official Star Mascot

Uncle Ledley says:

The Star needs more staff reporters! If you enjoy writing, and are comfortable with deadlines, please contact Dave at extension 210.



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Pledge Committee's Goals Clarified

by Stephen Virkler

Michelle Pike, chair of the Senate Pledge committee, clarified the committee's purpose Thursday, stating that, contrary to what many people think, the committee is not going to "change the Pledge." She said that instead the major goal of the committee is to "change students' attitude on the Pledge" from a negative view to a more "positive" one.

In order to achieve this goal, the committee will attempt to "make the Pledge more visible" to the student body and to "clarify some of the wording" in the document, according to Pike.

Pike also mentioned that the term "Responsibilities of Community Life" is a more accurate name for the document than "the Pledge," since calling it a "pledge" makes it seem



like a burden, rather than a set of "expectations that will assist us in living together and in meeting our institutional goals." In that regard, Pike went on to say that it is not only students who must follow the guidelines set up in the Pledge; the trustees, administrators, faculty and staff are required to follow them as well.

Besides Pike (CPO 1388), the Pledge committee includes David Rogers (CPO 1450), Zach Bryan (CPO 111), Phil Carpenter (CPO 589), Miriam Dentler (CPO 208) and Kristen Skuret (CPO 1535).

Our Biological Inheritance At Risk

by Dr. James Wolfe

Mention the word "radioactivity," and the man on the street readily conjures up images of mushroom clouds and grossly mutated creatures. Yet radioactivity and its effects on living organisms are poorly understood by the general public. In order to deal with radioactive waste, we must become aware of the facts.

Radioactive materials are those which have unstable atomic nuclei, and consequently emit ionizing radiation. The three types of radiation include **alpha radiation** which consists of two protons and two neutrons and as low energy radiation can be stopped by a sheet of paper. **Beta radiation** comes from ejected electrons and can be stopped by wood or other dense materials. **Gamma radiation** consists of electromagnetic rays more powerful than X-rays and can only be stopped by a thick wall of lead or concrete. Radioactive atoms decay (i.e. change into other materials) and the time it takes for half of the atoms to decay is called the **half-life**. Half lives of radioactive elements range from days to thousands of years.

The Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act requires each state by 1993 to provide for disposal of low-level radioactive waste (LLRW) produced within its borders. The definition of LLRW is very hazy and can best be defined as all radioactive materials other than the highly radioactive fuel rods of an atomic power plant. **LLRW can be highly radioactive and have**

very long half-lives.

LLRW includes waste produced from utilities, academic institutions and medical facilities, government, and industry. In July 1989, **after the siting process began**, the Siting Commission "discovered" that of the radioactivity from the LLRW in New York state **98% would be from disassembled atomic power plants, including the highly radioactive reactor vessel and control rods**. Within the next thirty to sixty years (the projected lifetime of the LLRW dump), many of the atomic power plants in New York state are scheduled for disassembly. **At the present time**, the Siting Commission estimates that the dump would receive 4 semitruck loads of radioactive waste a week. If the dump site were located in Allegany County, local roads, including Rt. 19, would be used.

Dosages of radioactivity in terms of its potential damage to living tissue are measured in **rems** and millirems (one-thousandth of a rem). The average chest X-ray has a dose of 22 mrem. Ionizing radiation can cause damage to living organisms (including humans) by altering the DNA, the essential genetic material of cells. This damage may show up during the human victim's lifetime resulting in burns, leukemias, miscarriages, cataracts, and cancers of the bone, thyroid, breast, skin, and lungs. The genetic damage may only show up as a genetic defect in the immediate offspring or several generations later. Some

handicapped offspring of the "atomic soldiers" (those who witnessed atomic blasts) claim that their problems are due to damage of the genetic material their fathers carried.

It is **not** known at what level does ionizing radiation become harmful to humans, since some damage may not show up until generations later. Some natural mechanisms of DNA repair are known, but it is theorized their efficiency may be affected by age, general health, and environmental factors. As seen in the chart below, roughly half of the present annual exposure is from human activities. In addition, the background dose rose considerably after World War II with above-ground atomic testing. Those individuals who drank milk during the period 1945 to 1963 have radioactive strontium in their bones. This is an example of **biological magnification** where a toxic substance becomes more concentrated farther up the food chain. Thousands of reindeer in Lapland had to be slaughtered after they fed on reindeer moss (a lichen) which had absorbed and concentrated radioactive fallout from the Chernobyl accident.

We should be concerned about the biological effects of a LLRW dump in Allegany County. One of the criteria used for siting the LLRW dump is the presence of non-porous, stable soil. Yet Allegany County has one the highest rates of erosion for New York state and research is

(continued on page 5)

SCIENCE FACULTY PERSPECTIVES

(continued from page 4)

currently being done on the possible existence of an earthquake fault near the proposed sites. The Houghton community gets its water from groundwater interconnected to the Genesee River. Any contamination from a dump on the east side of the river would ultimately pollute the groundwater flowing into the Genesee and thereby contaminate the water supplies of Houghton and other communities downriver. **Contamination of groundwater has occurred at virtually all of the present LLRW dumps across the nation.** Any contamination could be spread by heavy rains and floods, which the Genesee Valley regularly experiences.

There has been discussion by the Siting Commission of the possible incineration of some radioactive medical and research wastes at the dump site. This action would release radioactive particles in the air and increase the exposure of all those living downwind. In a county with thriving dairy operations, there should be concern that grazing cattle will pick up any fallout from incineration and transfer it to milk. Despite the presence of a mile-square buffer zone around the actual containment facility, William Coch, M.D. has calculated that those living next to the buffer zone stand a 35% increased cancer risk.

The Siting Commission considers the low population density of Allegany County (50 per square mile) to be favorable to putting a LLRW dump here by limiting exposure and possible risk. The Commission, however, failed to consider the student

population of Houghton, and erroneously listed Houghton's population as 200 persons, far below even the non-student population. Because of the low density population, if (or should we say when) leakage and contamination occurred, **it would be statistically impossible to show that any possible birth defects or cancer cases were linked to the presence of a waste site.** Exposure of college students (either at Houghton or Alfred) to low levels of ionizing radiation from radioactive contamination might only show up years later, when it would be difficult to contact them or monitor health problems.

The projected life for the LLRW dump is thirty to sixty years. After the dump is full, it must be kept secure from entry or leakage. The state, however, will not assume responsibility after 100 years, at which point most of the radioactivity will still remain, and in some cases be present for thousands of years, depending on the half-lives of the radionuclides involved.

As a predominantly rural county, Allegany County has long relied on its land to not only provide for cattle as well as lumber, but to support large populations of game animals, including deer and turkey. **The Siting Commission has not taken any biological surveys at the proposed sites as to the existence of rare or endangered species or calculated effects of such a facility on the wildlife.** Failure to consider the larger environmental issues in siting the dump is inexcusable.

In all the discussion about the proposed LLRW dump in Allegany County, there is

sometimes the feeling, "well, it's got to go somewhere". **There are other options besides opening up a myriad number of waste dumps across the country and spreading highly radioactive material around.** Since 98 % of the radioactivity will come from disassembled nuclear power plants, it would be feasible to consider the course the United Kingdom where their outdated plants will be mothballed for 100 years and not broken up to release radioactivity. On-site storage of radioactive materials by those who produce them would force the producers to cut back their volume and not lead us into the "out of sight (in Allegany County), out of mind" mentality. A national solution might involve the establishment of a technologically superior facility in a non-populated area with little or groundwater flow, such as in the Great Basin, where underground nuclear testing has occurred for 26 years.

Most environmental problems in this country have arisen due to our failure to take the long-sighted view, to consider that all the creatures of the Creation share this small, balanced planet hurtling through the cold darkness of space. We should hope that our consideration of the LLRW issue would not be dominated by a hasty short-sightedness, but by considering the marvelous biological inheritance our Father has provided for us and all His Creation. Failure to take into account the whole Creation as evidenced in the diverse natural world we find at our doorstep is probably more of a sin than we would like to admit.

SCIENCE FACULTY PERSPECTIVES:

Calculation of Exposure to Ionizing Radiation (adapted from Miller, 1988)

Source of Radiation	Approximate Annual Dose mrems
I. Natural or background radiation	
Cosmic rays from space at sea level	40
add 1 mrem for each 100 ft above sea level	
Radioactive minerals in rocks and soil, range = 30 - 200 mrem	55 (U.S. ave)
Radioactivity in human body from air, water, food range = 20 - 400 mrem	25 (U.S. ave)
II. Radiation from human activities	
Medical and dental X rays	80 (U.S. ave)
living or working in a brick structure - add 40 mrem	
Smoking 1 pack of cigarettes a day, add 40 mrem	
Nuclear weapons fallout	4 (U.S. ave)
Air travel - add 2 mrem for each 1,500 mi per year	
TV or computer screens, add 4 mrem for each 2 hr viewing a day	
Occupational exposure	0.8 (U.S. ave)
Living next door to nuclear reactor, add 4 mrem - 76 mrem	
Living within 5 mi of nuclear power plant, add 0.6 mrem	
Normal operation of nuclear facilities	0.10 (U.S. ave)
Miscellaneous: luminous watch dials, smoke detectors	2 (U.S. ave)
Average annual total due to background	130
Average annual total due to human activities	100
Average annual total	230 mrem

Plenty of Hazards: Dr. Irmgard Howard

Thank you for the opportunity to write about environmental and health risks of the proposed nuclear dump—but I can't. Nobody can. There are too many "ifs", "maybes" and "haven't-decided-yets" on the part of the Commission.

I suppose I could give you the usual hogwash of best-case and worst-case scenarios. But in so doing, I might imply that I knew more than I do. However, this much I can say: by selecting a place of low-population density, the Commission has virtually assured that dump-

induced pathologies will be unprovable, due to low-power statistics and small sample size.

For example, unless there was a dramatic change of precisely the same kinds of miscarriages, birth defects or cancers within a few-mile radius of the dump, all cases of illness would be written off as falling "within expected limits." And, if some of the residents near the dumpsite should happen to be particularly healthy, someone in the future is sure to suggest that "low-level radiation may even be beneficial"—

in order to sway others to accept a similar dumpsite in their own area.

How can Houghton students become informed on this issue, one of the most far-reaching topics of their generation? For general information, they can consult the updated bulletin board found outside Schaller Hall in the science building. For specific hazards, they should read the Allegany County Technical Committee report of March 31 (ask at the front desk of the library).

(continued on page 7)

Nuclear Waste

Concerned Citizens' Report and Ramifications

by Dr. Frederick Trexler

On October 25, 1989, Dr. Ernest Sternglass spoke to the Concerned Citizens of Allegany County (CCAC) meeting at the Fillmore fire hall. He is a former engineer for Westinghouse, the company which made the first commercial nuclear reactor for generating electricity in 1958. Presently he is Emeritus Professor of Radiology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. From his personal experiences with radioactivity he presented an insightful account of the history of this nation's experiments with nuclear bombs and nuclear power, both of which produce radiation releases into the atmosphere and radioactive wastes requiring disposal.

During his years at Westinghouse he thought that nuclear power plants would be safer and cleaner than coal plants, which were darkening the atmosphere in Pittsburgh. The "Atoms for Peace" program convinced thousands of engineers and scientists that nuclear energy was the preferred source for the future.

Then studies from England in 1956 showed that when women had as few as four X-rays during pregnancy, their children experienced twice the rate of cancer and leukemia during the first ten years of life. In fact, the rapidly growing fetus is ten times more sensitive to radiation during the first trimester than an adult is. A dose of 75 mrem during that time doubles the risk of cancer

in the baby. (For comparison, the annual radiation exposure in Rochester from natural background is 131 mrem.) After years of disbelief, these results were finally confirmed in the US in 1971.

The next year Dr. Petkau of the Canadian Atomic Energy Laboratories discovered that low doses of protracted radiation can do as much damage to cell membranes through oxygen free-radical reactions as can short exposures of X-rays with 5000 times the dose. This is an efficient mechanism, at low doses, for destroying cells. The problem is, according to Dr. Sternglass, that the government-set limits of "safe" radiation doses are based on linear extrapolations of the effects of large doses from X-rays and the Hiroshima bomb blast. He lets us draw our own conclusions about the possible effects in this

county of the 25 mrem of added dose per year from the proposed low level radioactive waste dump, particularly among our children.

Dr. Sternglass is convinced by studies of Strontium-90 concentrations in milk that nuclear power plants emit detectable fallout as well as bomb testing. Data from farms around the Millstone nuclear power plant in Connecticut showed 25 pCi/l near the plant and decreasing concentrations with increased distance from the plant. (One picoCurie corresponds to 2 radioactive decays per minute.) He also used data from the annals of vital statistics of New York State to show that there was a rise in cancer mortality in Olean from 1971-75, which can be correlated with the nuclear fuel reprocessing activities at West Valley.

(continued on page 8)

(Dr. Howard, continued from page 6)

Here are some basics to consider. The State plan is for an all-purpose dump of about 640 acres. It would receive radioactive medical waste, radioactive research waste, radioactive industrial waste and radioactive nuclear power plant waste—just about everything but the fuel rods.

There might be an on-site incinerator (one of the "maybes") to prevent biological decay and to help reduce packing volume by oxidizing organic materials; here radioactive carbon dioxide and radioactive water would be released as gases to the environment.

Over the next thirty to sixty year loading period for the dump, it would receive many different types of toxic chemicals which would remain toxic

even after their radiation had essentially dissipated. Also, from Day One into the indefinite future there would be a continuous release of both radioactive and nonradioactive gases—even after closure of the dump.

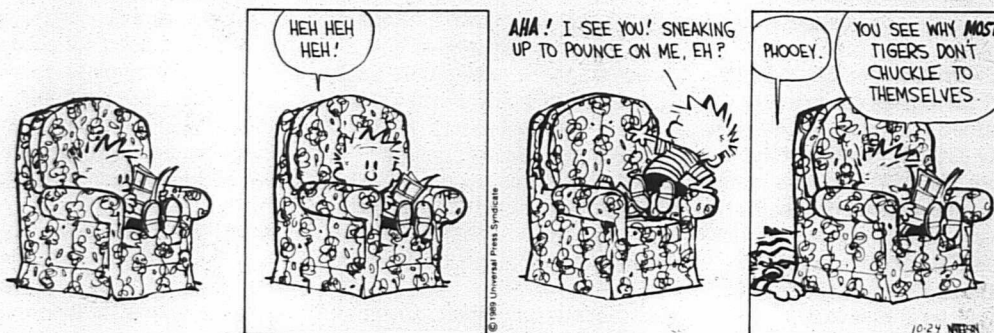
In addition, because the site must be kept free of plant roots or insects which could invade the structure and/or serve as vectors of radioactivity, herbicides and pesticides would be used regularly. These toxic chemicals can be carried off the site by rainfall and can then contaminate water supplies.

So, you see, although nobody can possibly estimate risks at this time, there are plenty of hazards to consider.

SCIENCE FACULTY PERSPECTIVE: Nuclear Waste

Calvin and Hobbes

by Bill Watterson



Concerned Citizens...

(continued from page 7)

During that same period for Allegany County, the cancer death rate went up 26%. He is convinced that small changes in background radiation do make a difference in cancer risk, even though the radiation doses are considered "safe" by government standards.

If this is true, then I estimate that we will be sacrificing one or two children per decade if we accept a nuclear dump here. In comparison, there will probably be far more deaths due to poisoning and child abuse than due to radiation-caused cancers. The siting commission is convinced that there are no significant health risks from the dump. I predict that they will be right for about ten years. Then, when everyone has become complacent, an accident will occur. It could be a fire, a spill during unloading, or a truck crash (driver on drugs?). The unborn children irradiated as a result of the extra releases of radiation will never know why they got leukemia. The Department of Health will say that it was just normal

statistics.

This presents us with a dilemma as Christians. My first thought was that the nuclear wastes should remain where they are produced, since the land is already dedicated to nuclear purposes. Security and monitoring already exist at such facilities. But on second thought, if the wastes add to the background radiation, are we not putting children in those areas at greater risk? So it comes to a choice between our children and their children. I do not have an answer; physics does not help me with this calculation. It should be possible to use the principles of time, distance and shielding to protect the public from the radioactive wastes stored in a properly-built repository. But the commission wants to store mixed wastes and will not tell us what kind of dump will be constructed. Since the state chooses to remain evasive about some critical issues, I will continue to oppose the dump because I do not trust the state to construct and operate it properly.



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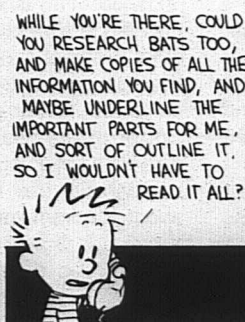
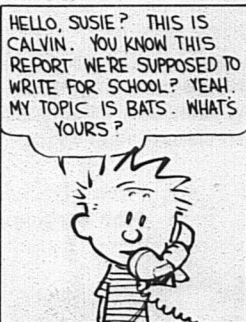
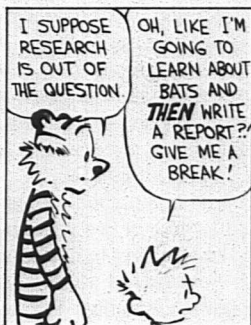
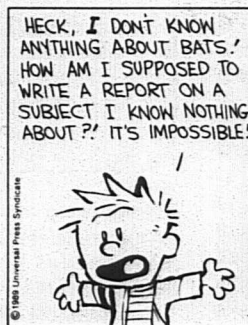
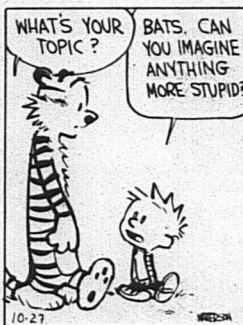
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Calvin and Hobbes

by Bill Watterson



IT'S CALLED "GROSS OUT." YOU SAY THE GROSSEST THING YOU CAN IMAGINE, AND THEN I TRY TO THINK OF SOMETHING EVEN GROSSER.



OPINION

To the school (not just the editor):

I've been reading in the *Star* lately that there is once again a controversy over the Pledge. Some defend it, believing it to be for "our protection," scriptural, and necessary for a Christian community. It is 2:00 a.m. here in Buffalo, so I presume it to be relatively close to that time in Houghton. I just returned to my townhouse from a trip to PJ Bottoms, a local "establishment" where UB students like to "forget their problems." Before the conservatives judge me and the liberals applaud me, please read on. I sat on the bank on the other side of the road fondly remembering some of the past nights of my life that I, too, was "forgetting my problems." (The most recent being in August of this very year.) I must for the first time publicly admit, partying is fun. I have always enjoyed it, but somehow when it's over, I still feel empty. Upon returning to sobriety, I realize I had forgotten my Father. And I repent. End of story (until I blow it again). You see, I'm addicted to parties. I try to avoid them, but sometimes I get so bored that I can't resist. That's when I fall.

I have another problem: I smoked for four or five years before turning my life over to Christ, which was in February of 1986. To this day, I get nicotine fits. Two weeks ago I could not fight it anymore and smoked four cigarettes. I'm not proud of that, but neither am I ashamed. You see, I am a man, created in God's glorious Image; yet, I am also a victim. A victim of Adam, Satan, my upbringing, and most importantly, myself. I fight myself everyday and often I lose. I don't deserve to be judged. For three years at Houghton I was ashamed of myself and had a horrid self-esteem. Now, I've grown up slightly and realize I'm human. Created in God's Image; yet fallen.

It has been said, and I maintain it's true, "You only learn what you teach yourself." As amazing as it may sound, it is very easy to stop learning when you start college. Colleges tend to encourage intellectual stagnation instead of intellectual curiosity and creativity. How? Students get so caught up in studies--no, not studies--in meeting deadlines, passing exams, memorizing only the facts needed to pass, writing papers just to get them done (using every shortcut possible, starting the night before they're due...), in pleasing the professor to get the grade, that they forfeit the real reason they are in college.

Why are you in college? Are you here to learn or are you here to get a piece of paper that represents classes endured, exams passed and assignments completed? I'll admit it. I'm here for the piece of paper. It didn't start out that way. It shouldn't be that way. I don't want it to be that way! But trying to learn here is

futile. Don't get me wrong--this is a great college, but the academic pressures are too great for me to learn anything!

What are we paying for, anyway? To feel stressed-out and brain-dead or to be intellectually challenged and feel enthusiastic about learning?

Did it ever strike you as weird that a professor can walk into a class and announce, "I'm canceling your paper because I don't have time to grade them. I'm just too busy"? Would you ever consider walking into class and saying, "I'm not going to write your paper because I have another one to write and I'd really like the time to learn something from my research"? NEVER!

Oh, that we all could have the guts to follow the example of Gertrude Stein, who once walked into class to take a quiz and wrote on her paper, "I do not feel like taking a quiz today." And oh, that our professors would respond as hers: "I know just how you feel--A+."

Learning vs. Survival

by Jenna Gieser



My Father loves me, my family loves me, my friends love me, and now I love me, too.

So, do me a favor. Get your finger out of my face. Stop throwing the Pledge in my face and the face of other Brothers and Sisters who are finding their way (and falling sometimes, too). When you stand before God on that glorious and frightening day, He's not going to ask you what I did and didn't do. He wants to hear about you from you. I'm not using

Scripture verses so you can't argue my "usage." I'm using the personal life of a feeling, bleeding human being who's had about all he can stand with this *dead end* debate. As Mark Shiner once said, "I'm a man who loves Jesus." Thank you, Mark, for a thought-provoking article. By the way, Mark, care to join me for a steak--(I still eat meat, too).

From a Brother—
Rob Vargeson

OPINION

Dear Jenna and Miriam,

Thank you for your letter from October 9 entitled, "Who Do You Follow?" Finally I see people who realize that God didn't call us to be snobs; we aren't *above* anyone else...rather we are called to love everyone.

It seems sometimes we get so wrapped up in our own little happy perfect Christian world, we overlook anyone who doesn't fit into our mode. If they don't go to prayer meeting or if they (dare I say it?)—break The Pledge—we must keep them at arm's length. After all, we don't want to be associated with sin, now, do we? (Guilt by association: a dreadful disease.)

Christ spent time with the taxpayers (this is even lower than the lushes and druggies of today). Dare we act like we are better than Christ by not befriending people who we think aren't worthy of the Kingdom of God?

None of us has the right to make judgment calls when Jesus has already told us *ALL* of us can only find one way into heaven and that is through Him.

Bella Werberg

Rant

"Are We There Yet?"

by Mark Skinner



"Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own."

Philippians
3: 12

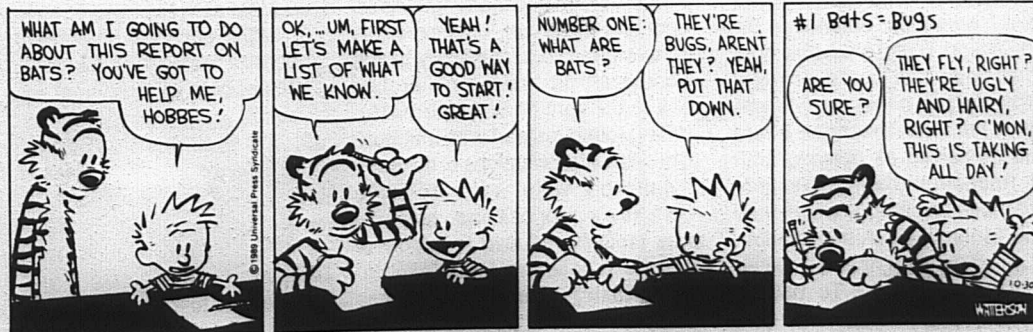
(I use the above text, not because in its context it has anything to do with community, but because it says what I want to say. So, all you amateur exegetes there, calm down. This isn't about exegesis, it's about life—two very different things.)

Dr. Allen once told me that he always called himself an amateur at everything he did. In that way, he explained, he was free to make mistakes, to experiment in his creation, without worrying about upholding an "image" people may have otherwise constructed about him. If he should ever proudly declare himself an "expert" on something, others could impose upon him the values attendant his area of expertise. As an amateur, he is liberated from the need to live a life of false pretense.

It seems to me that the Houghton community has declared "Proper Christian Living" as its area of expertise. And because of this, we are forced into denying that there are serious problems here. By labeling ourselves a Christian community, we impose on ourselves the fearsome task of appearing perfect before "the world" (that already knows better) and each other.

Maybe we should stop thinking of ourselves as a Christian community. Instead, perhaps we should say that we are a bunch of people trying like crazy to be a Christian community. In that way, we can honestly admit our shortcomings, learn from one another, and accept the faults and frailties of our fellow amateurs.

I am not here advocating mediocrity. Nor am I advocating a "theology of failure" that denies that we can make any progress. Rather, I'm advocating an uncommon humility; an attitude open to learning, open to forgiving, open to grace.



OPINION

Having only recently received a copy of the first *Star* of the semester, I have just read Jeanette Baust's "Message From the Outside." Recently, I have seen documentation on how one of my favorite authors was railroaded out of a supposedly conservative seminary for his belief in the continuing validity of Mosaic case-law. While reading the material, I experienced a feeling of "deja-vu" relating to the controversy surrounding the tenure denial of Dr. Meade, accompanied by some guilt due to my refusal to participate in the debate. For what it is worth, I believe I ought to contribute what I can to the debate and I am thankful that Baust's letter provides an opportunity to do so.

Baust expresses confusion over the issues of the debate. This is understandable since the Board of Trustees, as far as I or anybody I know can determine, either 1) had ridiculous reasons for denying Dr. Meade tenure, or 2) wished to hide their reasons. I, like most people I know, believe the real motive for the denial was Dr. Meade's published position on the pseudonymity of several books in the Christian canon. If this is true, then those involved in the decision are guilty of an evasion that is directly disobedient to Jesus' command that we show our brothers their fault (Matthew 18:15-17).

Unfortunately, the protestations were not merely over the board's methods in refusing Dr. Meade tenure. The fact is, most people I observed defending Dr. Meade found it reprehensible that he could be denied tenure for *any of his theological positions*. Baust warns in her letter that "[t]he board will be perceived as denying academic freedom and being unresponsive to those on campus whom they serve." I submit: academic freedom and Christianity are mutually exclusive of one another. To believe academic freedom is necessary in

order to find truth (assuming those at Houghton are interested in truth) one must ignore what the Bible says about the nature of knowledge. Christians are "to take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10: 5). Knowledge does not come through "neutral" investigation, but through "fear of the LORD" (Proverbs 1: 7). Indeed, there is no area of neutrality in relation to God (Matthew 12: 30), for all things are what they are by virtue of their relationship to Him (Romans 11: 36). This being the case, those in charge of a Christian college have every right and obligation to demand that the findings of the scholars they support adhere to the authority of Scripture. To assert that truth must be discovered "neutrally" without prior commitment to the Bible as God's Word is to deny the Faith.

Whether or not Meade's position was orthodox, the position of his defenders, in my experience, was not. Time and again they voiced outrage that their "liberal arts" education was being jeopardized by those who would judge Dr. Meade's position by religious criteria. The fact that Houghton claimed to be a Christian college that operated under the authority of Scripture was simply ignored. It was as if none of the students realized the college catalog contained a statement of faith.

A statement that got kicked around an awful lot when I was a student at Houghton was "the integration of faith and learning." As an incoming freshman, I believed this phrase referred to the study of the world (learning) and the interpreting of it in the light of Scripture (faith). What I found instead was that non-Christian interpretations of the word ("learning") were adopted, while Scripture's propositional authority was steadily reduced to whatever secular scholarship left unexplainable ("faith"). For example, many students believe that Genesis does

not teach a literal six-day creation since modern science teaches that the universe is much older than the Biblical account. On this basis alone, Scripture is deemed to be symbolic, not literal. Biblical authority is reduced in scope exclusively to the "irrational" side of life, such as providing motivation for community living or personal devotions. I do not believe that "the integration of faith and learning" I experienced in Houghton classrooms is consistent with the concept of the God who reveals Himself in Scripture. Instead, the god worshiped at Houghton is one who is only allowed to say what "scholars" determine beforehand (by their independent and "academically free" scholarship) he can and cannot say.

That Baust could not see how the issue was relevant to Dr. Meade's "fundamental commitment to the gospel and person of Jesus Christ" is sad, but all too typical of Evangelicals at Houghton. The dogmatic dualism is unquestioningly assumed: that one's scholarly position *cannot* call into question one's Christian commitment. Any other position is considered heretical (though no one would ever condescend to use so orthodox a term as "heretical"; instead, the ultimate curse would be invoked—"unloving").

As for myself, last year I played the coward. I believed that both Mark Shiner and Mick Williams had valid points but did not want to become actively involved, because in taking part in both sides of the debate I feared I would make enemies of both groups.

Sincerely,
Mark Horne

P.S. I too find materialism and individualism to be a problem...yet vastly preferable to the mysticism and collectivism so rampant on campus.

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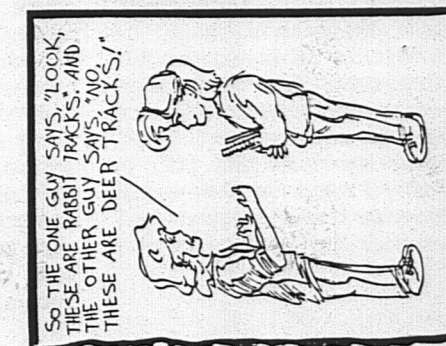
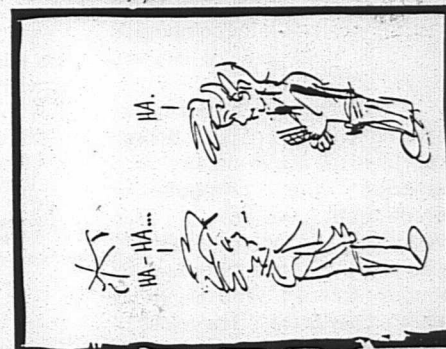
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Partially Suite

by Dave Wheeler

"They are meant to be models of clarity and harmonic color; they tend to avoid the ugly, to change suddenly, to laugh without a guffaw, to moan without a sob...and to make a point quickly...What may seem fresh to the listener is the composer's individual treatment of sounds already understood."

A program from a past recital featuring compositions by Dr. William Allen used the above statements to describe the composer-in-residence's works. This Wednesday, Dr. Allen and his wife Jane Allen will once more enthrall Houghton listeners with a recital they call "Partially Suite." The music of this program will concentrate on the domestic and the picturesque.

The recital will consist of piano music composed by Dr. Allen and performed by both Allens. All of the works are selections taken from six suites for piano Allen has written; thus the recital title. According to Dr. Allen, the title refers to the "scattered arrangement of suite movements in the program, and to the fact that not all movements are on the program," as well as being a pun on "sweet."

Many of the selections are dedicated to members of the Allens' family; "Glimpses of Narnia," for example, is dedicated to their youngest child, Rebecca Jane Allen. Rebecca drew the picture used on the poster and programs.

The recital will take place in Wesley Chapel on Wednesday, November 1, at 8:15 p.m.



Mary Hamilton

photo by Dave Perkins

"Positive Magic"

by Patty Carole



Catch some "positive magic." That is how Mary Hamilton describes her art. She is a block printer who uses the medium to create wonderfully bright and happy prints.

There is a joy in her art. She likes to think that her art serves the important purpose of simply making people think of something else. Sometimes it is just to make people happy. How simple! And yet, what power the artist has in changing the course of someone's mind. After looking at some of her art, you'll probably be as surprised as I was in noticing how uplifting her work is.

For instance, there's one print entitled "Lady Winter", inspired on a dark, snowy winter night. Ms. Hamilton's house is in an isolated spot, far away from any sort of civilization (sound familiar?). She was frightened being all alone that night, and then a friend called and said something like "Beware, beware, thou maiden fair. Take now

thy axe to keep hungry wolves away, and other beasts of malicious prey." The wording of this quote is changed, but you get the idea. Anyway, his remarks scared her even more, so she went to her studio and made some etchings. Surprisingly, they weren't of a terrified woman amongst salivating canines. No. We see "Lady Winter" smiling in the snow, surrounded by friendly "wolfies" that she cradles in her arms. They're so lovable. I would let my five-year-old niece pet one.

Meeting the artist, who is funny and down-to-earth at the same time, illuminates some delightful qualities of her work. And you can enjoy her prints for the rest of your life if you wish to buy one. She is a full-time artist and makes her living by selling all of her prints. But even if you can't shell out the cash, don't miss the experience of her art now in Wesley Chapel. She can even make Gypsy moths something to love.

SPORTS

Houghton Third in Districts

by Nancy Metzler and Becki Burrichter

October 20 and 21 marked the start and finish of this year's NCAA District II field hockey tournament held here at Houghton College. Originally supposed to be a round-robin event, the cold weather of the weekend forced play to be shortened to only four total games.

On Friday, the first two games were played: Houghton vs. Eastern College and Philadelphia College of the Bible vs. The King's College. Houghton dominated the playing time over Eastern during their game, but Eastern, with a goal in the second half, won 1-0, advancing to play the day's other victor, PCB. PCB went on to defeat Eastern and claim first place for the weekend.

Saturday proved to be as bitter cold as expected, but due to Parents' Weekend and loyal fans, the bleachers did not suffer. Again, Houghton was in dominance, the play rarely passing the 50-yard line into Houghton territory. Houghton's attempts on goal were persistent and many, but off-centered until Amy Burcaw attempted with success 15 minutes into the game.

Lori Sheetz went on to score the final two goals of the game: once assisted by Burcaw, and once following a shuffle on the goal line. Play ended finding Houghton in the winners' circle in the game, and in third place for the weekend.



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The Houghton Star is a weekly student publication; its focus is on events, issues, and ideas which significantly affect the Houghton College community. Letters (signed) are encouraged and accepted for publication; however, they must not constitute a personal attack, they must be submitted by noon on Tuesday, and they should be no longer than two double-spaced pages. The editor reserves the right to edit all contributions.



Spinack's Take Championship

by Kevin Fuller



The Wild Things hosted the Spinack's Tuesday evening (October 24) to determine who would be the 1989 intramural softball champions. The Spinack's broke out to a 1-0 lead in the top of the first inning when Don Nagy's 2-out triple scored Kevin Fuller from first. The Wild Things came right back in the bottom of the inning as Don Dutton singled in a runner from third to tie the score at one.

The score remained deadlocked until the top of the third inning, when the Spinack's exploded for nine runs. Key hits from Tony Perkins, Lynn Christiansen, Shelly Hunter, Scott

Lewandowski and Mizue Yonaga helped the Spinack's bat around and take a 10-1 lead. Strong defensive play from Perkins and Chris Morris held the Wild Things to only three more runs during the game, giving the Spinack's an 11-4 victory.

"We played a solid game," said Spinack's outfielder Scott Lewandowski. "We had a great deal of substitutions, and everyone seemed to perform well when we needed it."

The 1989 intramural softball league, after making its fall debut, appears to have been successful in providing enjoyment to all four teams.



EDITORIAL

As I Was Saying...

by Dave Wheeler



Since the last issue of the **Star** came out, several people have approached me about my editorial (the one I so poetically called "Untitled"). Some offered valid and sincere criticisms of my portrayal of the Board of Trustees, while some commented on the "good job" I did "slamming the trustees."

While I accept the first, I take offense at the second. As I understand the term "slamming", it refers to a harsh criticism with malicious intent, generally linked with character assassination. When I became editor of the **Star**, I promised God and myself (and now I'm extending the promise to everybody else) that I would never use the **Star** for that purpose, and, as far as I know, I haven't (unless you count the reference to Timothy Leary in issue 82.2). I see the final page of the **Star** as space for the outpouring of snippets (once again): of ideas, thoughts and/or overall sensory overload I find wandering around in and cluttering up my brain, in the hope that they may be of some use to somebody. Sometimes they will be encouraging, sometimes they will not. Sometimes they will contain what I believe to be constructive criticism. Sometimes they will contain not much of anything and therefore get filled with whatever I have at hand (ex.: issue 82.3).

I do admit, however, that my editorial last issue was vague in places and lent itself to misinterpretations. I was not saying that all the members of the Board are blissfully (or non-blissfully) ignorant of Houghton and of the situations they deal with. Certainly there are some members who go out of their way to remain as informed as they possibly can, as has been pointed out to me.

Nevertheless, my position was and is that in dealing with such an important, vital issue as that of Dr. Meade's (or anybody's) tenure, they could and should have done a bit *more*. Had they probed further, with an attitude of charity, courtesy and reconciliation *foremost*, they *may* have discovered that an analysis of Dr. Meade as unorthodox was unwise, and that his value to Houghton outweighs any trivial differences with traditional Wesleyanism (or, broader, Evangelicalism).

I admit a degree of ignorance, and one of bias: I only had one class with Dr. Meade, the 100-level Biblical Literature. This class, however, was extremely valuable for me, as I learned to put aside my nonbiblical and/or extrabiblical notions about what was and wasn't true or scriptural—and analyze scripture itself for what it says and for how I

should therefore pattern my life. I came into Houghton a pretribulational, premillennial evangelical who believed that the Apocrypha and non-immersed baptisms were straight from the devil, and that the RSV wasn't too far behind them. I now realize that these beliefs were not based on the Word of God, but on myself. Dr. Meade played a crucial role in pushing me toward holding fast what was *good* from before and discarding what wasn't.

You understand, then, that if someone tells me that she can't find enough redeeming qualities in Dr. Meade to renew the man's contract, I'm inclined to say she isn't looking hard enough.

That is my position, and I'm sorry if the way I presented it last week portrayed the trustees as an ignorant bureaucracy; that was not my intent. I just think they should have done more work—which is why I said I wouldn't want to be a trustee, because it's far more of a responsibility than I can handle. I don't ever want to trust myself with that kind of responsibility, unless I'm absolutely sure I'll be flawless—which, as most people know, simply ain't me.