

# ★The Houghton Star★

## Staff shuffling announced

Inti Martinez, staff writer

On January 24, Dale Wright, Executive Director of Human Resources and Budget announced several changes in Houghton College staff and administration. Most of the changes involve staff members being moved around within their departments, while other employees are leaving our institution. Here's a narrated tour of the recent job shuffling.

On the top floor of Fancher, we find David Stith very excited to move to Brooklyn, where he will be working as an album designer for some of his musician friends. He'll be leaving his Graphic Designer position at the end of February and will be leaving town in May after spending some time recording his music in the basement of the Center for Fine Arts. Stith said, "I've really enjoyed my nearly three years of work in Houghton College but I feel that it is time for me to move on and expand my artistic talents in different ways." Two Houghton grads, Rachel Brask, Assistant Graphic Designer and Mary Gibson, Graphic Designer will be taking over Stith's position in March.

Straight across from Stith's office cubicle, Christie Tanner is now working twelve hours per week organizing and archiving Houghton College's enormous collection of photographs and other media. Tanner's new position will conclude at the end of May, right before her wedding. Her former full-time position as Editorial Assistant for the Milieu and College Photographer has been eliminated temporarily and Doug Roorbach is taking over some of Tanner's former duties. At the moment, the Advancement Office, which includes the Office of Public Relations is under external evaluation and will receive recommendations so that it can further improve its structural organization and efficiency. Tanner hinted that creating an Office of Communications might be a good way to envision the future of the Public Relations office.

Downstairs, in the main floor of Fancher, Matt Reitnour, Assistant Director of Admission has been promoted to Director of Admission. In his new position, Reitnour says he, "will be responsible for preparing accep-

tance letters, which is a time intensive activity, since these are personalized letters." He will, also be, "coordinating the admission and scholarship committees, as well as continue training and supervising current admission counselors." Reitnour will help organize the selection process for the First-Year Honors Program and will report to Wayne Macbeth, who is now the Vice President for Enrollment and Marketing Relations.

In Reitnour's department, there was another change announced in way of Diane Galloway, Associate Director of Admission. She was promoted to Director of Student Retention. Through the Student Persistence Task Force Galloway has technically been working on improving student retention, but it wasn't until this year that she was officially promoted to this new position. Galloway expresses much satisfaction in what she does saying, "I will be working directly with the Academic Dean's Office and the Office of Student Life, in order to facilitate information to select students who might not be excelling academically or who have a hard time adapting to college life—even though they might be a perfect fit for Houghton College." Helping students declare a major, aiding them to find the right courses for graduation, advising on career decisions, and informing about seemingly unknown programs and services that Houghton offers are all responsibilities under Galloway's new position. She will still be working with admission-related publications, as well as with the Visit Office.

Downstairs from the Admission Office, in the Office of Advancement, there were also some changes announced. Julie Palmer, Houghton Fund Officer will become the Director of the Houghton Fund on June 1st, when Robin Ha leaves her position after working for eight years in Houghton College. Ha shared "I plan to volunteer with certain tasks in the Advancement Office after I officially leave the institution in June." She decided to leave Houghton mainly for family related reasons. Palmer and Ha have been working as a team in the Houghton Fund, which is designed to help cover institutional costs that cannot be covered with student tuition

money alone. Palmer has been directly in charge of the Phonathon program, which was created to request financial support from alumni, parents, and friends.

Palmer shared some information with The Star about an upcoming event involving her department. On February 8th, Houghton College hosted a dinner for local officials and business owners from Allegany County. In doing so, Houghton hoped to build relationships with local businesses that will eventually result in donations to the college. This year, The Houghton Fund goal is to raise \$750,000 for the college and Palmer hopes that some of this support will come from local businesses. "Considering the \$3 million that Houghton College spent in the last year in Allegany County, we think that the relationship between the college and local business is symbiotic and we hope they will begin to support the efforts of Houghton College," Palmer stated.

Moving a couple buildings away to Luckey, Gwen Mercer has decided to leave her current position as Student Financial Services Clerk due to a variety of factors. She has enjoyed her co-workers and her increased interaction with students and parents. Before taking this position last fall, Mrs. Mercer worked for three and a half years as Manager of the Maintenance Office. At the moment, she is not sure of her plans after leaving our institution.

Next door, in the Wesley Chapel and Center for Fine Arts Nate Pock has left his position as Supervisor of Recording, Technology, and Sound. Kevin Jackson has been hired as the new Director of Sound and Recording. Kevin has two decades of sound, recording, and engineering experience, including a staff position at Hamburg Wesleyan.

Moving into the virtual world, we find Alan Presher as the Webmaster for Houghton College. His vast experience in web communication and design promises to drastically improve many of the academic department and staff web pages. Just recently, the Business, Education, and Intercultural Studies departments have had their web pages redone by Presher. MacBeth says, "this is the first time Houghton College has had a formal

Webmaster who will be in charge of our homepage, department pages, and admissions webpage." MacBeth went on, "Presher's job will help improve the consistency in layout and navigation of our homepage." What's exciting about Presher is that, as a 1977 Houghton grad, he has offered to train several students to help him do his job more effectively and has mentioned the possibility of offering internships for Houghton College students! Even though he will be working from his home in Rochester, Presher will be on campus two or three times per month. ★

## CAB to host film festival

Rebecca Showvaker, design editor

CAB would like to invite everyone out for a fabulous evening of glamour on the red carpet. On Saturday March 24, 2007 CAB will be hosting the Houghton Film Festival in Wesley Chapel at 8:30 PM. Prizes will be awarded for the best films in the following categories: Music Video, Drama, Comedy, Documentary, Action/Adventure, Commercial, Horror and Editing.

Submissions must be no more than 5 minutes in length, must be free of harsh language, gratuitous violence and overly suggestive themes. Films must be submitted on DVD, VHS or computer file format and are due in the cab office by 6:00 PM on March 6, 2007. More information will be released soon. ★

## THANK YOU

Megan Roff, guest writer

The Junior and Freshmen classes collaborated together to raise money for the Houghton Food Pantry through a campus and community wide Bake-Off. There were many students, faculty and community members who donated their delectable goodies and recipes. The event had a great turnout and was a success! The Freshmen and Junior classes would like to thank everyone who donated their baked goods and also those who came out and supported us! Thanks to all of you, the Bake-Off event raised \$290.55! ★



# The great divide

Chris Stewart, faculty writer

Suppose you had a friend who went off to college believing that God had called her to be a translator for Wycliffe Bible Translators in order to bring the scriptures to a people without access to the Word of God in their "heart-language." Suppose further that you come upon her one day in the student center buried in a copy of The Wall Street Journal. Your curiosity aroused, you ask her when she became interested in Wall Street. She looks up at you, seriously and declares that she recently discovered that she had a special fascination and talent for economics and had, after much prayer and reflection become otherwise convinced that God had called her to become an investment banker or a fund manager for a Wall Street investment firm.

How would you react? Would it jive with your theology? If not, I suspect that you've fallen into what I'll call (after many others) "The Great Divide" - "The Sacred-Secular Divide."

Mark Greene, the Executive Director of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (a Christian think-tank founded by John Stott over twenty years ago) describes it as a "syndrome" that pervades the church. We're all carriers. If my Bible-translator-turned-investment-banker example gave you pause, you tested positive. Symptoms of the SSD syndrome include the tendency to regard certain forms of work as sacred callings or "vocations" and others as mere occupations or "careers."

"Vocation" comes from the Latin vocare, which means "to call," and refers to the work a person is called to, by God traditionally, though the word is now frequently used as a synonym for the more secular term "career" or simply "job" (as in "vocational training"). We frequently talk about people being "called" to "the ministry" or to "the mission field." But many of us feel a lot less comfortable describing our work as computer programmers for Microsoft, marketing analysts for L.L.Bean, designers for Ethan Allen, editors for Oxford University Press, power forwards for the Chicago Bulls, accountants for Smith Barney, sales representatives for J.C. Penney, petroleum engineers for Exxon/Mobil, machinists for Ford Motor Company, second violinists for the New York Philharmonic, or principal dancers for the Rochester City Ballet as "callings." Unless of course

we also use our hard-earned specialized knowledge and skills to design a web-page, brochure, or newsletter for our home church on the side, serve on a ministry team for Athletes in Action during the off-season, keep the books for Youth for Christ or Royal Family Kid's Camp in the evenings, replace the alternator in the church van, or play or dance for the church worship team on the weekends. The work itself to which we devote the majority of our time, 9 to 5, five or more days a week, has no sacred significance. It doesn't really matter to God, or to God's kingdom. It's not motivated, informed, or affected in any deep or serious way by faith in Christ.

Christians suffering from the SSD syndrome tend to think of work in terms of a hierarchy that's been dubbed "the Evangelical pyramid." At the top are missionaries. Just below them are pastors and maybe doctors, followed perhaps by teachers, firefighters and midwives. The pyramid expands as you move down, passing lawyers, truck drivers, and insurance salespersons on your way to the bottom, where you find investment bankers, car dealers, and philosophy professors. "Full-time Christian work" is a phrase reserved for what pastors and missionaries do. The rest of us are, at best, part-time Christian workers working for God on evenings and weekends supported by our "day job" at Microsoft, L. L. Bean, Smith Barney, or wherever.

Great Britain, like the rest of Europe, has been described as "post-Christian." In Britain, only 7.5% of the population attends church at least once a month, and that's down 2% from 1990. A significant factor in this decline is the privatization and compartmentalization of the gospel - a disconnect of our own making between faith and the public sphere. North America is not far behind. The SSD syndrome is nourished by our failure to see the workplace as a key venue for social transformation and Christian witness. The re-evangelization of the West is going to require a more thorough re-engagement of the gospel and its implications with the places most of us actually spend the bulk of our waking moments; the office, the classroom, the studio, the store, the laboratory, the construction site. We've got work to do. ★

*The Star staff would like to remind readers that Editorials are opinion based and therefore slanted by nature. Opinion also opens itself up for challenge, so write responses! But make sure they question the writer's stance, not our reason for publishing.*

# Conspiracy

Kashmere Fitch, staff writer

I know what really goes on. Many suspect it, but I know. They have the ability to influence how an entire generation thinks. Millions of lives are at stake, as well as the future of America, and indeed the entire world. What they teach will leak through history, shaping and twisting the future all in the name of bettering our society. It starts small with an assignment here, a report there, and then all of a sudden they hit you with everything they've got.

Yes, they're out to get us, warp our minds, make our lives miserable, torture us beyond what is humanly possible to endure. No, it's not the CIA, nor is it the FBI, or MI-6, or even European Security. No, instead, it's the people we trust the most, the people in whose hands lie the proverbial "fate of the nation." You know who I'm talking about. We see them everyday. Those supposedly kind human beings who care enough about us to pass on what they have learned. Yes, they are our Teachers.

Now I know what you're thinking, she's just overreacting, it's really not that bad. And you'd be right, it isn't that bad...it's worse. But does she have any proof, you might ask? Oh yes, I have proof. For example, we hear of "faculty meetings." Supposedly, all the faculty gather around a conference table and discuss mundane things like new policies, what to do with funding, and who will sit on committees (which never accomplish anything, by the way) and other such topics. I know what really goes on. They call them "faculty meetings" because calling them "Ways in Which We Can Torture Our Student Meetings" would not be conducive to keeping the student body under control. Anyhow, the proceedings of these "faculty meetings" go something like this:

While peering over the rim of a torrid mug of tea, huddled around a huge oak table in a dimly lit conference room one teacher casually mentions that, in her English 301 class, her students have a twelve-hundred page research paper due in three weeks. "Really?" a science teacher asks, glancing at his class list. "This is fantastic! Three of the students in your class are in my class. I'll have a test that day."

"Which students?" a math teacher asks.

"Nathan Strubler, Hannah Kenning, and Frank Mannsfield." The science teacher says.

"Great! Hannah Mannsfield is in my class. I can schedule my two-hundred question midterm for the day before," the math teacher says, making a note on his schedule.

See? What we once ignorantly thought of as "just my luck to get all my tests on the same day" is really maliciously plotted and schemed out. They do this for all of their classes.

They carefully and painstakingly comparing class lists and purposefully planning due dates for papers, tests, and projects to make life as overwhelming and pretty much impossible for as many Students as they possibly can.

I'm not making it up. I have a friend who is a TA. First, I need to warn you that TAs must be handled very carefully. While they are still Students and taking classes and getting grades like the rest of us, they also, as part of their job, work closely with the Teachers. Although many TAs successfully complete their assignments of aiding struggling students and then move into jobs in their chosen fields, living in both worlds is highly stressful and some are inadvertently turned to the very cause they once fought against. These TAs are the ones we have to be wary of. If not carefully coaxed back to the light, they will be forever lost and will eventually become Teachers. I shudder at the thought of how such kind, caring, people can so callously turn their backs on their fellow Students and join the ranks of their one time torturers.

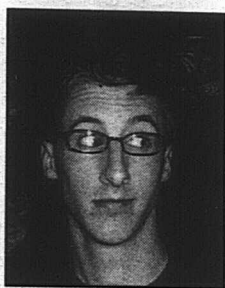
Anyhow, my TA friend told me she was running an errand for the Teacher she was helping and had to deliver some papers to one of these "meetings" and overheard the conversation. She said they were laughing. This is my whole point, they like to torture students. They enjoy making our lives as stressful as possible and then forcing us to take classes that give us homework about how to handle stress, which of course just adds to the problem of infinite amounts of school-work.

As if piling on massive reports and research papers isn't enough, the administrators, who are of course allies of the Teachers, decided that it isn't enough to simply tax our minds beyond what is humanly possible, they have to break down our bodies as well. Have you ever noticed how we are all forced to take "Lifetime Wellness?" Some small, athletic Teacher shouts and cajoles about how, to stay healthy we need to eat right, drink more water, and exercise. Right. How can we eat healthy if all the food available to us is first fried, then slathered in oil, and served with lard? Besides, what isn't doused in fat is unrecognizable as a digestible source of food and to be avoided at all costs. And who decides that the vending machines should be stocked with fat and caffeine laden candy bars? The Administrators. And what do they tell us to do when our brains are short circuiting and we can no longer see straight or think in coherent sentences? Drink more water and exercise. Sure, if the rust colored, metallic tasting well water doesn't kill us, we can relieve stress by running for five miles and then dying from exhaustion.

-CONSPIRACY continued on pg 6



## It's Valentine's Day...whoop de frikin' doo



Jimmy Dutton, columnist

Valentine's Day is a wonderful holiday that everyone can enjoy endlessly until the end of time. Just kidding, Valentine's Day is stupid. It's supposed to be a day that celebrates relationships, but it kind of just turns into a day that laughs at single people. If you're single on Valentine's Day it's like standing outside the doors of a really cool club but the bouncer won't let you in, so you try to leave but there is another bouncer there forcing you to stand and face your shame. Then a really pretty girl (or handsome guy) walks out and gives you a valentine that says "best friends forever." What a great holiday!

The evidence that Valentine's Day is an evil holiday is right in front of our eyes. I mean come on, look at the main color scheme of the day: red.

So if Valentine's Day equals red, and Satan equals red, then any math major will tell you that Valentine's Day equals Satan. Need I say more about that? Nope. All I know is that being in a relationship only distracts us from the one thing that is truly important... television. Oh, and homework...but only after television is done.

Some people view this day as one to celebrate their singleness, therefore spitting in the face of everything that Valentine's Day stands for! I applaud the efforts of these people because by separating themselves from what The Man has classified as the "norm", they have proven themselves to be the Martin Luthers of love. Keep up the good work, brothers and sisters.

Now to any guy who is reading this article and who might be in a relationship, I have some questions for you; some of them are small and unimportant, while others will cause you to do some serious soul searching. Like, what's in it for you? You shell out a good 30-50 dollars on a decent dinner and then another who knows how much on flowers (that are just going to die within a week anyways), and what does she give you? A hand made card that says "I love you. Love, Wal-let Vacuum," and a kiss on the cheek? Cool! That's like giving your mom an

iPod for Christmas and her present in return is a home cooked meal. It's not like she does it everyday or something. Now, you might say "but this time she wrote 'I love you' on a card instead of saying it...", but if you did then that would just be a lame argument. If you're paying a good 80-100 bucks on her then that card she gives you better be made out of gold, and the letters made out of candy. Only then could you call it even.

I'm still trying to find the Bible passage where Jesus celebrates Valentine's Day, and until I do I'll consider the entire day a sin. And since I'm a religion major I have the authority to make that call. If you want to challenge my call then you might want to think about changing your major.

In conclusion, I sent this article in five days past its deadline because I had no idea what to write about until two and a half hours before my very last deadline.

In conclusion to the conclusion, whether you celebrate the day alone, with your loved one, or choose not to celebrate it at all, I hope you have a Happy Valentine's Day (even if it is a delusional misguided happiness). ★

## Christian pessimism

Emily Buckingham, managing editor

I know too many pessimistic Christians who seem to feel that Christianity is inevitably destined to die in one way or another. There are those who believe the future of the world is completely doomed because there is no one to carry on their beliefs. The next generation, they complain, is completely devoid of morals and conscience. They are skeptical of those Christians who are on the opposite side of the spectrum. By contrast, the second group believes that Christianity is doomed because the first group has created a rigid, legalistic Christianity in which the people refuse to accept necessary change.

The first group's views, when generalized and probably blown slightly out of proportion, seem to be exemplified in the recent Kenyan controversy over an exhibit featuring the skeleton of Turkana Boy, a 12 year old boy who appears to have died 1.2 million years ago. The controversy of Turkana Boy stems from the idea that some are touting him as the "missing link" in the theory of evolution. (I can hear group one roaring defensively at the slight mention of that word.) In response to the Turkana Boy controversy, Bishop Boniface Adoyo, leader of the 35 evangelical denominations in Kenya said, "I did not evolve from Turkana Boy or anything like it. These sorts of silly views are killing our faith." Bishop Adoyo called for all Kenyan evangelicals to boycott the exhibit.

I have a question for the first group; if someone doesn't believe in the literal creation story, does that make their faith somehow dead or dying, as Bishop Adoyo said? I was under the impression that believing and having faith in the death, resurrection and saving power of Jesus Christ made someone a Christian. Maybe I'm wrong. Bishop Adoyo even goes as far as to say that the world was created 12,000 years ago. Apparently man was created 6,000 years after the world was created because each biblical day is equivalent to 1,000 years on Earth.

The first group also seems extremely resistant to any slight change or modification to their way of being Christians. I would reluctantly place my parents in this group, although they were not nearly as pessimistic as many Christians today. Being the extreme geek that I was in middle school, I would stay after class on Tuesdays and Thursdays to help my favorite teacher prepare for the next day. I don't really remember how the topic came up, but she told me that she was a Catholic. I remember telling her quite proudly and even a little disdainfully that I was a Christian. "I am, too," she replied. I remember being slightly shocked. She was not a Christian, I thought, she was -CHRISTIAN, continued on pg 6

## My rocking stereotype



Marc Smithers, columnist

Mine is brand named Cyber Acoustics. I have a friend whose is called Sony. Another person who lives on my floor has one that's titled IBM. What is your stereo type?

We live in a world that thrives on stereotypes. Maybe it's because we don't like surprises. By branding a certain group with a certain characteristic we don't have to wonder whether or not a person is different. They can fit nicely into a carefully constructed name, like Music Majors or Plateau Dwellers. But I say we take a closer look at these people whom we have written off as a certain type of person. No, this is not an exposé on a member of the Plateau Dwellers. I honestly think that we as Houghton students, though the world also has a huge problem with this, have a huge problem with stereotypes that are beginning to destroy our very core. And you know what happens when a core is destroyed. Volcanoes. That is what happens.

You may recognize me from a skit in SPOT that encouraged the very thing that I am attacking. I'm ashamed to say it, but I too find myself

dabbling in witty yet hurtful banter about the stereotypes that drag our wonderful campus down. But to be honest, most of the time it is all out of fun. Most of the time when someone makes a joke about Shen guys smelling, or Lambein girls being undateable they really don't mean what they're saying and are just poking fun at something that is guaranteed to get some laughs much like these are stereotypes. But when do they cross the line?

Shenawana, the dorm I live in, is known for being rich in tradition. For the most part I love every one of these. There is on tradition, however, that I absolutely despise. The Shen vs. Roth football game has been going on for quite some time. And while the intention of trying to promote dorm interaction and the like is great. As you would guess, it turns into a tool for dorm division. Though I don't think that this will ever stop and there is nothing wrong with having pride in the place where one lives or associates themselves with, it becomes a problem when it is used as a basis for ridiculing another because they don't belong to the same class or dorm that you belong to.

Now this sounds like a very after-school-special moral, and in truth, we've been told all of our lives to not go by the stereotypes that are associated with a particular group. Don't judge a book by its cover. Blah blah blah. But when will we actually start living this truth that we so often hear. We constantly judge and lay stereotypes on people even though we've been taught to do the opposite

our whole lives.

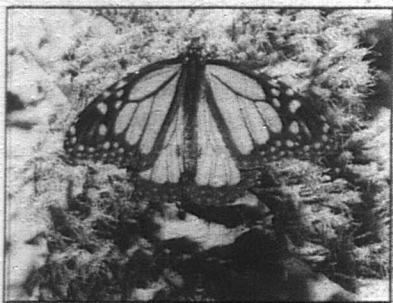
Christians are Republicans and oppose abortion and homosexuality. This is the largest stereotype that nearly the whole country believes in. I know many of us, including myself who don't fit neatly into this title. I don't intend this article to be a solve-all solution to the problems that are present in this college or this world. To be honest, I don't know of any solution to the plague of stereotypes other than start being nicer to people. What a solution! More than anything I just want to make you aware that we stereotype people all the time. Recognizing the problem is the first step to solving it. Stop pretending like you don't label people. It happens everyday. People who swear aren't Christians. People who are homeless are that way because they did drugs or drank their life away. People who were homeschooled know nothing about the world and are unhealthily sheltered. People who don't use big scholarly words when they talk aren't as smart as those who do. We do it all the time.

So instead of just accepting the label you've been given, begin to go against the standards that you have been defined by. Christians have been known forever as this group of people who abstain from doing things. But what is more important: the things we don't do, or the things we do do? ★





Little Majesties

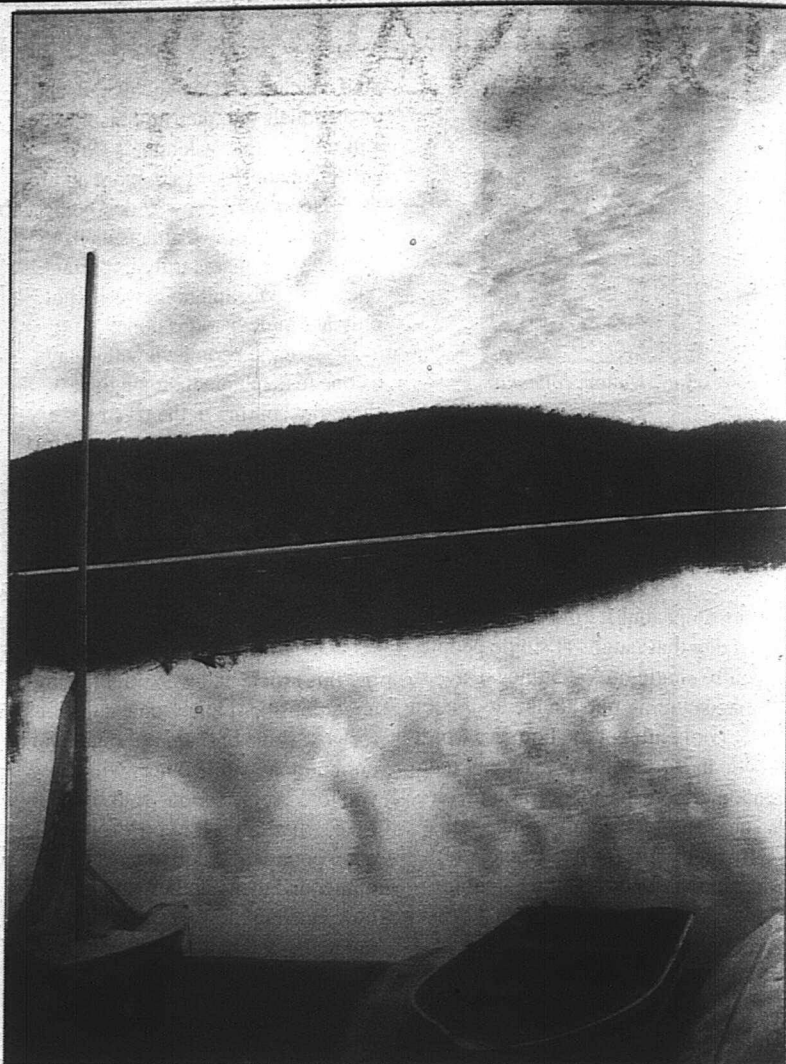


Hanging On

Kaitlyn Berger

I took these pictures while I was at Star Lake last semester. *Little Majesties* is of wild Blue Gentians on top of Algonquin Mountain, the second highest peak in New York. *Hanging On* is of a monarch butterfly we saw while visiting the Paul Smith's College butterfly house. *Sailing* is of a spectacular sunset over Star Lake with our sailboat in the foreground; I took it while sitting on the campus beach. ★

Camera Info: Nikon Coolpix 4300 Digital, 4.0 mega-pix



Sailing



NEW TO THE STAR IN 2007...

# STAR SHOTS

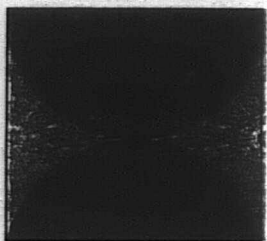
**Students, Faculty and Staff submit your photography and title** (any subject, *color photos are preferred but if you have a black and white shot that will knock our socks off, please submit it!*) along with a **100 word bio/explanation** of the photo and **camera info** (make, mega-pixel, etc) to

**Star@houghton.edu**

*Submissions can only be accepted in a digital format, we prefer 4 megapixel or higher for quality purposes and photos must be your own work and submitted unedited (except for contrast and cropping adjustments).*

## "Hissing Fauna, Are You the Destroyer?" by Of Montreal

Review by Eric Stevenson, staff writer



Here's a band that's been around for 10 years and if you're into dance rock, chances are you're a fan of Of Montreal. I've got to think that they get tired of having a preposition as the first word of their band name. "Hey, have you heard of Of Montreal?" probably gets old after a while. But despite their terrible name (which comes from a girl who Kevin Barnes, the front man, used to date in Montreal, while the band itself is actually from Athens, Georgia) they thankfully don't write terrible music.

Like the album title suggests, this is a concept album. According to the band, the whole album tells a story which details the transformation the lead singer takes from Kevin Barnes to Georgie Fruit. Maybe I'm just stupid, but I can't really find the story here. Sure, there are some weird stories here that I suppose could be shimmied together to make a transformation story, but they leave a lot of holes for the listener to fill. The song titles themselves offer lots of questions. For example, the following words appear in one song title or another and I had to look them up: "cato," "heimdalsgate," "gronlandic," "kongsvinger," and "faberge." If you recognize them, good for you. You're smart. Of Montreal is smart too. They just proved it.

A great thing about this album is that it flows well. There are no silent pauses between songs, they just

flow right into one another and you can hardly tell. Upon my initial listen, I thought the first song was rather long but I looked to find that I was on track three already. That's always a sign that they're doing something right. The overall feel of the album nods at many genres including but not limited to rock, disco, electronica, techno, rave, and funk. Also, they seem to think that the laptop is just as worthy of an instrument as a guitar. It's definitely not a soundtrack to a day in Houghton, but rather an hour in a futuristic New York City.

Barnes's voice isn't anything special, but that's not to say that it's bad either. Its high point is when he issues a five-part harmony with himself in "Gronlandic Edit." It's the falsetto that really shines in that song.

The band claims that the turning point for the album is the exhausting eleven-minute track, "The Past Is A Grotesque Animal" which they decided to stick right in the middle of the album. I guess the first half is Barnes

and the second half is that Georgie Fruit guy. Even though it's the same guy, Barnes seems to sing better as himself. When he mutates into Mr. Fruit, his voice becomes more slapstick, in a way. It's not different the entire time, but it gets rather annoying on "Faberge Falls For Shuggie." It sounds like he's trying too hard to be "groovy" or "funky" but ends up sounding like a computer savvy nerd. That being said, it's a decent album. Nothing mind-blowing, but a solid record none the less.

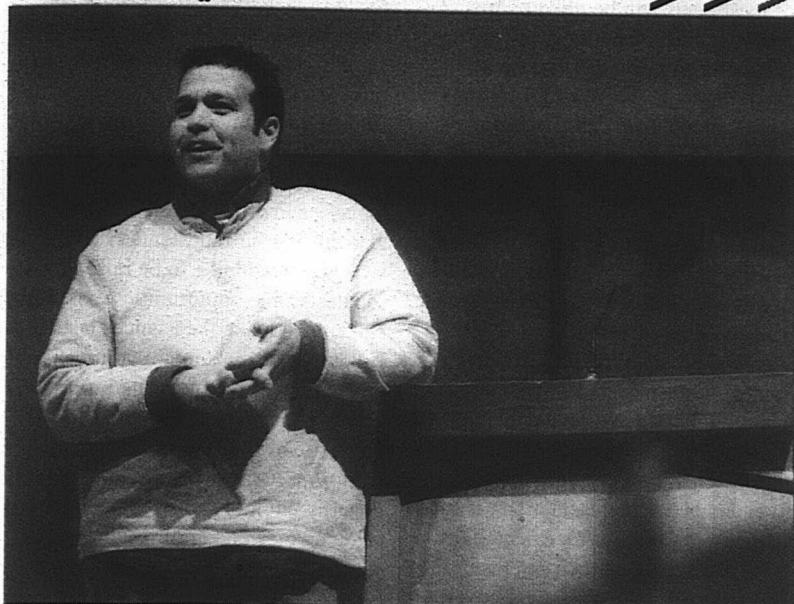
★★★★★

Listen to "Hissing Fauna, Are You the Destroyer?" and other songs by Of Montreal at <http://www.myspace.com/ofmontreal> ★



# DONALD MILLER

Chloe Ackerman, staff writer



## BIOGRAPHY

Miller grew up in Houston, Texas with his mother and sister. At 21, he joined a friend on a trip across the country to Portland, Oregon - where he lives today. In his writing Miller emphasizes rejecting formulaic Christianity, and encourages his readers instead to rediscover their own faith as an intimate relationship with God. Miller founded the Belmont Foundation, which mentors young men without fathers. Miller is also the Founding Director of the Burnside Writer's Collective, a group of Christian writers who contribute to an online magazine. He has spoken all over the USA and in Canada.

## LECTURES

We've read the books. Our friends tell us he has spoken at their colleges, and we've been jealous. We've waited for the faculty to announce that he would be the CLEW speaker or a guest for the 2006 Lecture Series. But we've been disappointed. So we've reread *Blue Like Jazz* and eaten up any interviews we could find, hoping that next year would be different.

And this year was different. Donald Miller opened the Houghton College's 2007 Lecture Series on Monday, February 5.

Miller's focus in chapel was on narrative and the personal story that God has given to each person. Beginning in the Age of Reason, Miller said, emotion was lost in religion and facts became the focus. As an example, he explained that today's Christianity looks for three points to a happy marriage. He called those points, and any other "steps" from "3 step programs," propositions. "Propositions give us five points to sum up our beliefs and permission to yell at those who disagree with us," he said.

However, Miller said that in focusing on the facts of the Bible, we lose the emotion. Miller believes emotion is the story that

God was trying to communicate in the Bible. "What if God wants you to tell a great story?" he asked the audience, then went on to described two things a good story needs: a protagonist who wants something good, and conflict. Miller explained that if the protagonist were to die, something profound would be lost. The protagonist must be seeking after some God-serving or community-building end in order to make a good story. "Conflict is biblical," Miller said, and then went on to explain that conflict came out of sin, but not necessarily the protagonist's sin. Conflict also comes when the protagonist wants something good. The greater the ambition; the greater the conflict. However, the story God wants for the protagonist is in conflict with the American ideology. Miller defined the American story as, "having money, being comfortable, being right, and not having conflict." That, Miller said, is not a good story.

In closing, Miller challenged each person to figure out what his or her goals would be and then to write it down after thinking about it for about a month. "Want good things," he said, "take

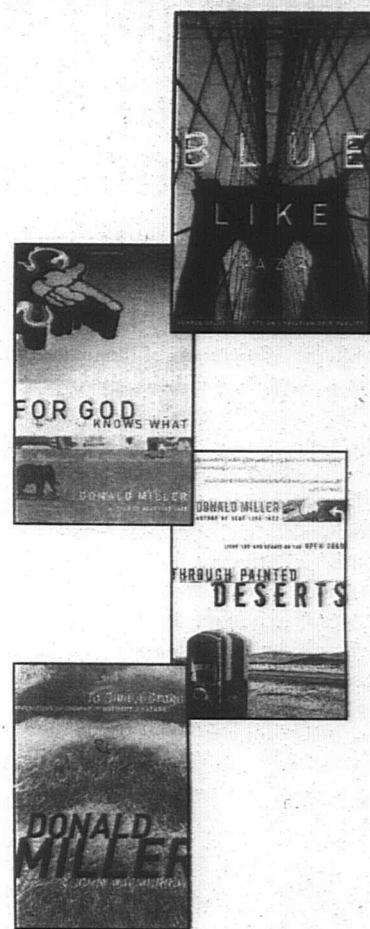
## BOOKS

**Blue Like Jazz** (2002) - Miller's compilation of non-traditional reflections on Christianity as he grows in his walk with Christ.

**Searching for God Knows What** (2004) - Miller questions the typical approach to Christianity as a five-step program or a one-time use product to buy. He encourages a more relational and personal approach to Christianity.

**Through Painted Deserts** (2005; originally published in 2000 as *Prayer and the Art of Volkswagen Maintenance*) - Miller chronicles his road trip from Houston, Texas to Portland, Oregon as he examines his beliefs and the meaning of concepts such as beauty.

**To Own a Dragon** (2006) - Written with John MacMurray; Miller's reflections on how growing up without a father affected his relationship with God and other men.



responsibility for your story. The first thing that will happen is you'll get afraid," but that's natural. It's conflict for the good protagonist. Miller then wrapped up the service with a prayer for the students.

In the evening lecture, Miller spoke on the role of the church in people's lives throughout the centuries. On a trip through England and Scotland, he found that churches were shaped like crosses, and yet were also modeled after castles. He called this the monarchy stage of the church. After the invention of the printing press, church became like a school and the pastor like a teacher. During the Industrial Revolution, the church was a conference room and the pastors the CEO's. Now churches are theatres, and the congregation is there for entertainment. The point, Miller said, was that the church has always tried to keep one foot in the world.

Miller focused on entertainment throughout the evening lecture, citing that Americans see 3000 commercial images a day. He then asked how many people had heard the phrase, "be profitable for the kingdom of God," in church. At the show of hands, he went on to explain that church has become an advertising agency, which follows the two rules of selling a product: convince the people that they aren't happy, and then convince them that they will be happy if they buy a product. This, he said, caused people to be let down

by Jesus. "How many of you have heard this message: There's a hole in your heart, and it's in the shape of a circle. You've tried to fill the hole with sex, drugs and rock and roll, but that square peg doesn't fit into the circle hole of your heart. Only Jesus fits in that hole. How many of you have heard anything like that?" Nearly every hand in the chapel went up. Miller went on to ask those who would call themselves Christians if they had ever had a bad day since becoming a Christian. Again, nearly every hand went up. "So Jesus is good for some things, but not for everything," Miller suggested, listing acne and cancer as things that Jesus can't be counted on to take care of.

Jesus, Miller then concluded, is not a product. Christianity is not something to be sold. God will give his children pain if they push in the wrong direction; he will not simply give them what they want when they want it. God is not designed around us. He gives us trials and pain so that we can gain wisdom and maturity, becoming better protagonists in our own story along the way.

The lecture ended with a time for questions and a book signing. The next guest in the lecture series will be Debbie Blue, minister at House of Mary in St. Paul, Minnesota on March 12 and 13, followed by Lauren Winner, author of *Girl Meets God and Real Sex*, on March 23 and 24.





# Thoughts and Ruminations on a Restructured Student Government

William Airhart & Christopher Krowka, guest writers

To begin, a PREMISE: Students no longer identify themselves primarily as members of their classes and subsequently policies and organizations should be adjusted to reflect this shift.

Currently, the student government senate is composed of 20 senators elected from their respective classes. Each class has equal representation: five freshmen, five sophomores, five juniors, and five seniors. Senators are also required to attend all class cabinet meetings and serve as the only official link between the senate and class cabinets.

This system is entirely class-based, and it should be noted that it continues to function adequately well.

However, concerns exist over the low level of student involvement in and awareness of student government. Positions often run uncontested and many students never even bother to vote for their representatives. When combined with the premise that students no longer identify themselves primarily as sophomores or juniors, our system of student governance leaves us with a bitter taste in our mouths, for our current malaise dictates that we should no longer be satisfied to accept only what works. We must ask ourselves, what would work better? Can we preserve the current class structure of our beloved institution while making additions or modifications to encourage student participation and foster a

stronger political environment?

Yes. A better system exists.

The proposed system will maintain the current number of senators at 20, but will change how they are elected. The foundation of the senate will remain in the classes with each receiving three seats. One of these seats will be filled by the class president, creating a strong link between class cabinets and the senate and eliminating the need for all senators to attend class cabinet meetings. The remaining eight positions in the senate will be filled by at-large candidates not limited to a particular class. Instead, these individuals will run on a platform of issues and ideas regardless of how many credits they have earned. They will not identify themselves by class, but only by the particular student issues which motivate them. The student body will have increased representation (with each student casting eleven votes each year instead of five) and better representation (as each student may vote for representatives who truly represent their interests). The class structure of student govern-

ment will be preserved but modified to reflect the priorities and values of students.

We are interested in changing the structure of student government because we want a system that maximizes student representation. We believe that the proposed system will result in increased participation and a more vibrant political environment on campus. The SGA adamantly desires more students to become involved in student government, and encourages them to take advantage of the opportunity for students to attend and speak on issues in senate meetings. You can also email your representative with issues you would like to be raised by the senate. Ample opportunities exist for students to make their voices heard. If you have a question or comment on this particular restructuring proposal, feel free to shoot an email to William Airhart or Christopher Krowka. The proposed restructuring of student government looks to strengthen the student voice and let it resound across campus. ★

## -CHRISTIAN

continued from pg 3

Catholic! I went home to my mom and told her that my beloved Mrs. Englert was a Catholic, and while I don't remember exactly what my mother said in response, I do remember her tone. Whatever she said communicated that somehow, even though Mrs. Englert may call herself a Christian, she wasn't quite as good of a Christian as we were because she didn't do Christianity like we did.

On the other end of the spectrum is the second group. I've heard more than a few people grumbling over the recent visit of Donald Miller. They didn't have a problem with what he said. In fact, they agreed with him

whole-heartedly. What he described was a Christianity with which they resonated. Instead, their complaint begins in that Houghton brought in a big name like Donald Miller and jumped through all the hoops associated with bringing in someone of such high face value. (I'm sure many of us read the caveat in the Scoop stating that Donald Miller's lectures would not be available online because of "contractual agreements.") The main contention of the second group is that despite all the steps that were taken to invite someone to campus representing one of the fresh voices in Christianity, people will still refuse to change.

The problem? Both of these different perspectives seem to believe that unless their style of Chris-

tianity continues and is embraced, "true" Christianity will die and be lost forever.

I have hope that my generation will prove both groups wrong. While our Christianity may not mirror that of our grandparents or our parents, in no way will it be somehow inferior. The opposite is also true. If the way we practice our faith doesn't change, does that mean it is somehow bad? No. In both scenarios, Christians are Christians. We don't have to agree with one person's way of expressing Christianity. But we do need to acknowledge that we are all a part of the body of Christ, and we need to respect that rather than attack it. In her book *Girl Meets God*, Lauren Winner writes in response to the unnamed "Y."

asking if she is a "Bible-thumper." "I would simply say Yes," she answers, "even though Y. would probably, on the basis of that answer assume that I think the public schools are godless and I have bad taste in art. I would answer Y. in the affirmative." Winner concludes, "because I look around [my church] at a motley crew of Christians, some of whom buy clothes at Wal-Mart and some of whom wear Vera Wang, and I know that these people are my people, polyester, Amy Grant, and all." ★

## CONSPIRACY

continued from pg 2

If that isn't enough, they also have the audacity to tell us to get enough sleep. How are we supposed to get enough sleep when the only way to get all our work done is to camp out in the library for a week, planted in one spot until we begin to take root? The only way to stay lucid for as long as possible while studying, before delirium takes over again, is to over consume large amounts of caffeine laced drinks and energy bars. So even when we try to sleep we can't.

Therefore, to compensate for the lack of sleep, most students slip into a sort of semi-coma state. While it has not been scientifically named, this condition is commonly referred to as the "Student Survival" state or the "I don't care anymore, I'm just trying to survive" syndrome, in which the affected student walks around with a dazed, stupid expression on their face oblivious to the surrounding world. A student can survive for about three months in this condition because it allows the brain to function while the

body consumes nothing but fat, rusty water, and caffeine and subsists on four hours of sleep a day. However, the maximum time a body can be in this state and still come out relatively sane afterwards is three months. Unfortunately, some students are never able to come out of this semi-coma and end up either dying or becoming Teachers themselves because all other opportunities are lost to them.

So, what it all boils down to is that college is nothing more than an elaborate experiment to see how quickly stress, cholesterol, and lack of sleep can kill us.

But what does life hold for those lucky few who survive? You go to four years of college and you think "yes I made it! Now I can get a job!" Wrong! Now, most good jobs want you to get a master's degree, because if you are not a master of something you are nothing. There you go, two to three more years of three hundred page research papers, staying up till four in the morning, and seeing how much caffeine your brain can handle until it finally short circuits and you collapse

in a heap on the floor.

And what's next? Will everyone be required to get a doctorate? They want to keep us under their control for as long as possible, so I wouldn't be a bit surprised. This is the way these people work. You'd think they were evil sadistic political extremists!

Hmm, come to think of it I've noticed some of the Teachers goose-stepping and others seem to enjoy wearing those funny fur hats with the

ear flaps. I bet they were hired by the government to undermine our generation. The ones they don't kill from abnormally high stress levels, clogged arteries, and exhaustion they kidnap and take back to their bosses. Yes, few survive, but those who do have been broken down enough that they are susceptible to anything. That explains why no one hears from their friends who graduate; they've been kidnapped and brainwashed!

Well, okay, I admit, the last sentence was just a theory. ★

## WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR THOUGHTS!

### Guidelines for letters to the Editor:

Letters to the Editor must be signed, denote which articles they are in response to, and should not exceed 500 words. Send all letters to the Editor-In-Chief, Lindsay Yandon via STAR@houghton.edu. All letters are subject to editing at the discretion of both the Copy Editors and the Editor-In-Chief. Letters are due on Monday at 5pm, one week before the next issue. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Letters that exceed 500 words can be sent in the form of a response column and will be printed as an article but should not exceed 750 words.



# February sports thoughts

Ben Tsujimoto, sports writer

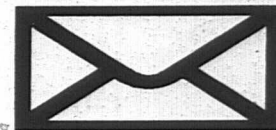
My Super Bowl XLI projection was inaccurate (I did predict the score of the losing team, however), yet the Indianapolis Colts' 29-17 victory over the Chicago Bears proved to be an entertaining game. The early turnovers were not surprising; two weeks of hype and pre-game jitters certainly contributed to the sloppy first half. The Colts exploited the Bears' primary weakness: the inconsistency of quarterback Rex Grossman. The Florida alum tossed two late interceptions and fumbled twice, spoiling the Bears' comeback attempt. Grossman's inefficiency limited Lovie Smith's game-plan; Chicago was unable to stretch the field with speedsters Bernard Berrian and Rashied Davis. The Colts' offense, however, took what the stingy Chicago defense allowed; most valuable player Peyton Manning completed short passes to Joseph Addai and Dallas Clark all night, moving the chains and maintaining possession. While Manning's first Super Bowl victory captured much of the

post-game attention, the performance of underrated safety Bob Sanders deserves recognition. With a critical interception and a bone-rattling hit on Cedric Benson to knock the ball loose, Sanders provided the aggression and toughness that the once-vulnerable Indy defense lacked. Congratulations to both Tony Dungy and Lovie Smith, two compelling examples of Christian character who demonstrated that even mild-mannered, conscientious coaches can succeed in the NFL.

We are only roughly one month away from March 11th: Selection Sunday for the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament. This year's field will be highly competitive; the deep Gators look to repeat, the youthful Jayhawks, Tar Heels, and Buckeyes desperately want to prove that underclassmen can perform under tournament pressure, while the Bulldogs and Salukis hope to shock the country as "Cinderellas." What players deserve attention? Texas freshman Kevin Durant has emerged as a candidate to dethrone Buckeye center Greg Oden as the likely top overall pick in the

NBA Draft next year. Durant is the complete package; he has the potential to be a hybrid of Kevin Garnett and Ray Allen if he continues to fill out his frame. Despite Durant's freakish skills, Oden still projects to be a franchise NBA center. He is unrivaled in terms of shot-blocking and rebounding, and his post-game on offense is rapidly developing. The depth of talent in the 2007 NBA Draft will be reminiscent of 2003, where LeBron, Carmelo, and Wade took the league by storm. Other players to keep an eye on include Kansas sophomore Julian Wright, North Carolina freshman Brandan Wright, UCLA sophomore Luc-Richard Mbah a Moute, Oregon guard Aaron Brooks, Wisconsin guard Alando Tucker, Texas A&M guard Acie Law IV, and Pittsburgh center Aaron Gray. Although they are not the 'sexy' tournament choices, Wisconsin, Texas A&M, Marquette, and Oklahoma State could sneak into the final four. At least ten teams have a realistic shot to win it all; watch the conference tournaments for a taste of March Madness. ★

## Sooj's Mailbag



In an attempt to address the professional sports interests of the Houghton audience, you are encouraged to either pose a question or suggest a topic for me to write about. If your topic/question is chosen, your name will be included in the article. There's your incentive. Send all ideas to:

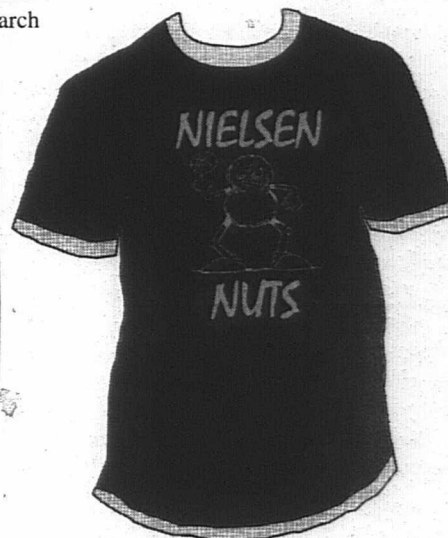
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## "Some Loud Thunder" by Clap Your Hands Say Yeah

Review by Eric Stevenson, staff writer



From a business standpoint, Clap Your Hands Say Yeah is one of the most interesting bands today. They sold about 200,000 copies of their debut album, which usually isn't saying too much...except they did it themselves. They had no record label and distributed the album with no help but their own. After that happened, many record deals were thrown at them but they decided to still take the solo route. With the newly released "Some Loud Thunder" they still don't have a record label and just go to the distribution companies without the middle man. Whether you like them or not, you have to give them respect

for being the first band to do that. In this era of internet blogging and mp3 sharing, bands are becoming more independent and these guys are the perfect example.

On to their music. As with their first album, they have a habit of starting with their worst song. But this time around, it's not the music that's bad about it, it's the production. They purposefully decided to make it sound like it's coming out of really crappy, blown speakers. Every time the bass drum kicks, you think you're stereo is broken. I don't know why they did this or think that it's a good idea. It nearly makes the song unbearable to listen to. You can get used to it after a while, but still, it's unwanted.

After you skip that track, the rest of the album switches off between clever pop songs (which made their debut so popular), and strange "lets make weird guitar noises" songs. The combination of the two make it an interesting and fun listen. It's not just random though, they do have an underlying sound that connects the whole

album.

What's really challenging about this band as to whether you'll like them or not isn't within the melodies and songs themselves, but rather it's in how Clap front-man Alec Ounsworth sings. It's like he's a drunk, prepubescent teenager. I hated it at first but as I kept listening, it oddly grew on me and now it doesn't bother me at all. In fact, I kind of enjoy it. It's dramatically different from any other rock singer you've ever heard. The closest would be David Byrne from the Talking Heads, except he enunciates.

The one thing Clap forgot to take with them from their last album is the warmth. This just doesn't have the personal feel that their self-titled debut did. It shines on a few songs but overall, it doesn't show that much.

These guys aren't the secret they used to be, and the fun of knowing who they are isn't exciting anymore. But still, their sophomore release is quality and a good grab. But if you're new to the band, start with their debut.

★★★★★

Listen to Clap Your Hands Say Yeah at <http://myspace.com/clapyourhands-sayyeah>

## Event ★★★ Advertising

Please send any campus event bulletins to the Editor via

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Remember we print bi-weekly. So we need to know as soon as possible about your event if you would like it included.





## SpRiNg SeMeStEr ScHeDuLe

# K@9

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*Kaleidoscope meets at 9.00 a.m. every Sunday in the Dining Hall on campus.  
Coffee, chat, and class create an ambience of friendship and fun within a spiritual dimension.*

# THE HOUGHTON ENQUIRER

## Singles face expulsion

In order to increase the amount of marriages amongst its students, Houghton College has decided to enact a new policy regarding its population of singles. Effective immediately, all students will have until December 15th of their junior year to become engaged, or else face expulsion. All currently single juniors will be allowed to remain to finish the spring semester, but must find a different school for the fall. All currently single seniors will be allowed to stay and graduate, but with the new school year's arrival, no one will be allowed to reach senior status without a ring by December.

The two juniors, who asked

to be known only as "X" and "Y", are posing as an engaged couple. "It's so ridiculous to have to walk around holding his hand all day," X says, "but we have to pretend if we don't want to leave."

"When people ask me why I don't kiss her, I simply say that we don't want to until we're married," Y adds. "No one seems to catch on." The College is taking several steps to help discover undercover singles, as well as to encourage coupling. One aspect of its efforts is the establishment of the Deadly Single Elimination Squad, a group of six students whose job it is to detect hidden singles like X and Y. But their task is not an easy

one.

"Facebook is a valuable tool of our operation," reports one of the DSES agents, "but it's often confusing to use. There are so many people who are listed as 'complicated' or 'in a relationship with T. Muffin Man' - it's nearly impossible to tell who, if anyone, is actually dating or not." To help produce more couples, the College is installing several new programs and incentives. To start, every couple will receive a scholarship upon proof of engagement. Open dorm hours will be extended from three p.m. to midnight, seven days a week, and the ban on social dancing will be lifted in order to hold monthly mixers where singles can mingle, and hopefully meet someone.

Lastly, the College is proud to announce the new million dollar expansion of the Gillette Hall main lounge, long a popular congregation spot for couples. The new "Gillette Lounge of Love" will feature brand new, deep red couches and carpets, candles, and other soft lighting to create the proper atmosphere, a sound system that will play Al Green, Marvin Gaye, and Luther Vandross ballads around the clock, and the pièce de résistance: a heart-shaped jacuzzi in the center of the lounge.

Needless to say, the new rule has sent hordes of single juniors scrambling for transfer student applications, and even more sophomores scrambling to start dating. ★

## Love Questions for Dr. Val N. Tinne

Dr. Val,

I often wonder at Houghton's "Ring by Spring" policy. Although it does indeed seem to exist and you are greatly rewarded when that sparkly stone gets on the right finger, it seems that the Student Life office is only weakly backing this policy. My boyfriend is off campus this semester and there is no way I'm getting my coveted "ring by spring." When my boyfriend is on campus I barely see him! He has far too much homework and has to try extra hard because of Houghton's higher standards and ridiculous grading scale. (I really think Houghton is the only place on earth where a 94% and above constitutes an A.) Then, when he finally has a few hours to spare, his free time doesn't happen to fall during Student Life's "open house" hours. Student Life seems to be working against their own goal! How does Houghton College expect to achieve the goal of "ring by spring" if their Off Campus Programs Office, Faculty and Student Life can't work together to make it happen?

- My Heart is in Africa

Dear Heart,

What you don't understand is that Student Life is using all of those things to their advantage. 56 years ago, a policy was put in place. That policy is what we have come to lovingly call "ring by spring." A few choice administrators had a very secretive meeting and decided that the best way to reach their goal (every female left ring finger bedecked with a ring) was to keep males and females apart as much as possible. Counterintuitive? I think not. The idea was that during those few and far between times they were together, both sexes would realize quickly what they were missing and would remedy the separation the only way they knew how: marriage. So, their purpose in sending your boyfriend thousands of miles away and keeping him out of your life while he is on campus is simple. They want you both to realize (usually erroneously) that in no way can you live without each other. So, hang in there Heart, your boyfriend is realizing that he doesn't want to spend another hour without you by his side. Expect a ring during Mayterm, when you're both back on campus and the work load is lighter. Engagement was Mayterm's original purpose, after all. When your boyfriend asks you to go on a nice afternoon walk through Letchworth, say yes and look pretty; a ring is coming.

- Dr. V

*\*This is satire... sarcasm... not true... it's ok to laugh!*

Find this funny? Want to write it?

If you are interested in writing these satire pieces,

please contact the Editor via [STAR@houghton.edu](mailto:STAR@houghton.edu)

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