

**MOVIE REVIEW:**  
**SHYMALAN'S SPLIT** |  
FEATURES, P. 4

**BEARING WITNESS AT THE**  
**MARCH FOR LIFE** |  
FEATURES, P. 5

**WHY I MARCH FOR**  
**REGUGEES** |  
OPINIONS, P. 6

**WHAT DO WE DO WITH**  
**POLITICS?** |  
OPINIONS, P. 7

**ARTIST OF THE WEEK:**  
**MEREDITH GUFFEY** |  
FEATURES, P. 8

## Track to Compete at Championships



The men's and women's indoor track and field teams will compete in the NCAA Empire 8 Conference Championships tomorrow at Utica College.

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MICAH CRONIN

The Houghton Highlanders Indoor Track and Field teams will compete in the Empire 8 conference championships tomorrow at Utica College. Outcomes of the meet will determine eligibility for competition

in the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) indoor track and field championships.

"Right now, we plan to have 9 women and 7 men competing [at the NCCAA championships]," said head track and field coach, Patrick Hager. According to athletic

director, Harold "Skip" Lord, track and field athletes must place in the top six of their event at the Empire 8 championships, or the top four in relay events, to participate in the national championships. In addition, athletes must meet NCCAA qualifying standards.

The team is in high spirits going into the meet, according to team chaplain Melissa Bell '17. Bell commented, "This past week we had about 90% of the team [reach personal bests], and hitting that again or surpassing that would be an awesome way to send the team into nationals." Kasey Cannister '17, one of the women's team captains, concurred. She stated, "Our meet this past weekend, really demonstrated how strong we are becoming with so many personal records occurring."

Bell also noted men's pole vaulter Leland Roberts '19 is currently ranked first in the conference. "It would be a huge win if he could onto that spot," she said. Roberts broke the Highlander record in men's pole vault earlier this season with a vault of 4.42 meters. He held the previous record as well.

Sprinter and long jumper Malik Bullock '19 said, "I'm really excited to see the

See **TRACK** page 2

## Buffalo Musicians Kick Off Artist Series

MICAH CRONIN

The Spring Artist Series will commence tonight in the Wesley Chapel, featuring the band Wooden Cities. Adjunct music professor Megan Kyle plays the oboe in the ensemble and will be performing tonight as well.

The group has gained regional acclaim since their inception in 2011, performing in venues throughout Buffalo including the Albright Knox Art Gallery, Silo City, Hallwalls Art Center, PAUSA Art House, and the State University of New York at (SUNY) Buffalo.

See **SERIES** page 3

## President Mullen And Students Participate In D.C. Conference

JORDAN TRAUTWEIN

Students Colleen Shannon '17 and Becca Firstbrook '18 travelled to Washington with President Shirley Mullen to attend the Student Leadership Conference, sponsored by the National Association of Evangelicals.

The conference, which took place at the end of January, was centered on "faithful advocacy". While there, they had the opportunity to witness the inner workings of the political system and voice their own policy concerns.

Shannon shared her impression of the work she observed. She stated, "Despite

See **D.C.** page 3

## Gospel Choir Hits The Road

ANNA SHILKE

On February 12, the Houghton College gospel choir will travel to Rochester, and join the Browncroft Community Church worship team for all three of their services. In the past, the School of Music and the Houghton Symphony Orchestra have collaborated with Browncroft's worship team to orchestrate events such as the annual Christmas Prism Concert. "This is an excellent way to bring our visions and our goals into fruition," commented Jerome Bell, Leader and Director of gospel choir. Browncroft's worship pastor, Jason Harris, will be leading worship.

The gospel choir, created in the late 90's, features a variety of African-American music. Students who are a part of gospel choir have the opportunity to learn about the deep, passionate genre of gospel music. Practice, though said to be managed efficiently and productively,



RAHEEL DHINGRA

The gospel choir, created in the late 90's, features a variety of African-American music. This Sunday, the group will assist in worship at Browncroft Community Church in Rochester, NY.

is considerably casual, the choir learns not by music, but by listening along until the words are memorized.

Currently there are almost forty members, but gospel

choir is open to anyone who is interested, with practice taking place every Sunday night from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., and occasionally Thursday night for an hour. Cer-

tain occasions, such as the Homecoming college concert have yielded an addi-

See **GOSPEL** page 2



# International // Kenyan Wildlife Reserve Invaded



ANTHONY BURDO

MELISSA MACLEAN

Last week, over 30,000 cattle flooded the conserved plains of Laikipia, Kenya, as armed semi-nomadic pastoralists stormed tourist huts and grazing fields.

In early January, around 10,000 nomadic herders took their first attempt to drive their cattle into the settled land. However, the big hit came last week when

herders returned with spears and automatic weapons, which they used to burn down huts, and slaughter animals on the way.

Laikipia, a Kenyan county planted northeast of the Great Rift Valley, is home to conservancies, private properties, and endangered wildlife.

Tensions between pastoralists and settlers are nothing new to the Kenyan county. However, some hold the belief that the invasions are thought to be a direct result of a drought that Laikipia experienced last year.

This is the perspective of Matthew Lempurkel, Laikipia's North MP. "People are struggling over the available water and pasture for their livestock, which is our livelihood," he reported in Kenya's The Star this week. Pastoralists depend upon fertile grazing fields for their livestock's survival, and when water becomes scarce, grass becomes scarce as well. According to Kenyan cabinet secretary,

Mwangi Kiunjuri, it was expected that 1.3 million Kenyans would be affected by the drought. The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) confirmed this estimate, and added that the Samburu and Pokot communities were among the most vulnerable, which is where the invading herders come from.

However, after the attacks this week, some are starting to believe in an underlying motive. In 2008, Kenya experienced a violent political episode between the current president, Mwai Kibaki, and the opposed candidate, Taila Odinga. One of the landowners believes that this invasion is a result of the political tension spilling over. "This was all planned years ago, and is designed to peak in the run-up to the elections... Votes in exchange for grass and land grabs, the seizure of Laikipia by outsiders and the expulsion of rival tribes, ranchers and conservancies."

Another issue that the settlers are taking with this case is the indiscriminate killing of wildlife. According to reports, the herders have gone so far as to kill animals from Big Five, including six African elephants, lions, decapitated zebras, and even household dogs.

"Twenty years of time, effort, sweat, money... it's fallen apart in two weeks, destroyed," says conservation manager, Josh Perrett.

"Before, you would see elephant, a few hundred head of buffalo, Jackson's hartebeest, oryx, Grant's gazelle, impala. Now you see thousands of head of cattle, a lot of sheep and goats."

One of the larger wildlife conservancies, who depends on donor funds to safeguard its wildlife, has already canceled a \$5 million investment due to fears about the future of its wildlife. Another sanctuary for the endangered black rhino is also under serious threat.

On the other side, Max Graham, CEO of Space For Giants, attempted to explain these killings in a statement he gave last week. He said, "First, the herders are coming into conflict with elephants at water points, and shooting at them to scare them away. Second, some of these herders now in Laikipia, but not indigenous to the area, are traditionally hunters: to kill an elephant is a rite of passage in their culture."

However, despite the relocation and devastation to wildlife, residents are also being injured in the process, including one death reported last week.

President Kenyatta has since ordered all invading herdsman to leave the Laikipia area, but the government has yet to successfully halt the invasions. ★

*Melissa is a senior communication and international development double major.*

## TRACK from page 1

men's and women's distance medley relays. Coach [Hager] has put together a solid set of athletes." He continued, "I'm also interested in the men's 4x200 relay because we competed all day [before running the relay] at Ithaca and did pretty well, so it'll be interesting to see what we can do well rested and eager to compete."

Hager remarked, "Our men's team is quite improved from previous years. In my first two years, we really had nobody who could score in the top 6 in the conference, Indoors. This year, we have several, and even broke the 4 x 200m school record. It's really nice to have depth and 'options' on the men's side."

The women's team features Rebekah White '18 and Nikki Garns '17, two returning members of the 4x800

relay team who received All-American honors last year at the NCCAA nationals. Garns and White will be "key runners" at this weekend's meet according to Cannister. Garns will race in the 60 meter dash and 200 meter run, and White will race in the 800 meter run.

Cannister noted, "In our field events, we expect strong performances in High Jump, Pole Vault, and Long Jump by Gwen Stokes '20, Fiona Daloia '17, and Kalei Brautlacht '20, respectively."

White, Garns, and Daloia "continue to be athletes who compete at a high level" said Hager. He continued, "On both teams we have several young athletes who have worked hard to develop a strong team culture. This type of culture will really help us improve and take steps forward as a team."

The NCCAA nationals will be held at the Kerr-Pegula Field House on February 17-18. Since Houghton athletes will not incur extra costs from travel, hotels, and other incidental expenses, Lord stated that it may be possible



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Garret Kirkpatrick '17 competes in the men's longjump at the Kerr-Pegula Field House.

for an athlete to use one of the NCCAA-permitted "at-large" bids. This would occur if an athlete has NCCAA qualifying marks but does not place high enough in his or her

event at tomorrow's meet.

"While some will continue on to the National Championship, this is the last meet of our indoor season for many members of our team,"

Cannister said. "We strive to end our season with our best performances. We definitely anticipate and expect to see many personal records across our whole team." ★

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## GOSPEL from page 1

tional thirty plus members. The number of members is also contingent on points of the semester. For example, members during the spring semester are less frequent.

"Gospel Choir means so many different things to so many different people," exclaimed Bell. "What I like most about it is the community. People of different ethnic, racial, and social backgrounds can come together and worship the same God." Bell further explained that the gospel choir spends time

in prayer and in the Word during rehearsals, making for a very inviting and Christ-centered atmosphere. "Most importantly, we get 'turnt for Jesus,'" said Bell

Travis Trotman '17, Assistant Director and leader of gospel choir, agreed. He stated, "There is just something about this choir that screams

community, love and great friendships. Another thing I like about gospel choir is the openness you have when you worship. Regardless of the song that we sing I always find that we as a group are always moving, extending our hands to the Lord or keeping a beat to the rhythm of the music."

"It's so authentic," added soprano member, Olivia Flint, '20. "It's the most passionate, authentic worship that I've ever been a part of. Jerome upholds this great foundation of what real worship should be like. God calls all of his people to worship—every tongue should worship him." ★



SERIES from page 1

The ensemble defies easy definition, according to a Buffalo Rising review. They are typically categorized as avant garde classical, improvisational ensemble, or a new music collective. “We have a strong interest in improvisation in various forms, which is the focal point around which we’ve organized this concert”, Kyle stated. “While what we do is rooted in the classical tradition that forms the foundation of much of the Greatbatch School of Music’s curriculum, our rep-

ertoire represents a sampling of more recent developments in classical music, including cross-pollination with other musical genres, offering students and community members an opportunity to have a new, hopefully exciting and interesting, musical experience.” The University at Buffalo, which boasts several alumni as members of Wooden Cities, noted that the group is well known for inviting audience participation after, and sometimes during performances. The purpose of these interactions is to “help widen the circle of contemporary music appreciation,” the ensemble hopes.

Artist Series performances cover a wide range of genres, according to music performance major Derek Chase ‘19. “They’ve had everything from a Brazilian jazz group to the Navy Chorus to a saxhorn band. While they might not all appeal to everyone, I feel that everyone can at some point see [a performance] that has their specific tastes.” Wooden Cities “seeks to increase the performance and awareness of contemporary classical music in Western New York through uniquely engaging presentations,” according to the band’s website. This includes performing a mix of work by young

composers, as well as “underrepresented” 20th and 21st century composers. The group said they seek to emphasize Buffalo composers, having recently performed the new composition “Examples of Excess” by University at Buffalo music professor James Currie. Wooden Cities also revived Buffalo native Lejaren Hiller’s 1968 work *Avalanche* in their first full length tour last summer. Wooden Cities also expands the traditional demographic of classical music audiences. Their most recent performance was at Greece Olympia School in Rochester, NY- and was done in cooperation with amateur

high school musicians. A Rochester City Newspaper review stated, “...the Wooden Cities vocalists performed it with poise and gusto. Their willingness to be vulnerable and silly was laudable...” Wooden Cities will begin their performance tonight at 7:30 and are expected to play until 9:00. Tickets to the event are \$15 for adults and \$7 for youth 18 and under. “I’m not really sure what to expect,” Chase said. “[Wooden Cities] seems to be a great mixture of contemporary music and classical, so I guess we’ll just have to wait and see.” ★

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D.C. from page 1

the tumultuous political atmosphere, Capitol Hill was still running very smoothly. Everyone had the mindset that we’re not just this moment. We are a country and we have a lot of people who depend on these systems.” She shared that a highlight of the trip was the opportunity to speak with representatives in person and practice advocating. She said, “I was able to talk to [Representative Tom Reed, NY-R] about the Do Something table, and in what ways we could be more effective in that advocacy work.” She continued, “The things we do here really do have an effect on Capitol Hill.” “This is the first time that we have taken students and they really represented Houghton in a wonderful way,” Mullen explained, and recalled the issues the students presented. She continued, “It was very inter-

esting because Colleen had already been in touch with Tom Reed’s office in Corning through her involvement with the Do Something table.” She also admired their discussion of global perspective and international opportunities. She said, “The concerns that [Colleen and Becca] brought did a great job of representing a global Christian higher education. As much as it is important that the president speaks, I think it has a greater impact when the student speaks.” She elaborated, “When you have students speaking very enthusiastically about what they learned and what they appreciated... I think it has real credibility.” Firstbrook found it did a lot “to enrich what it looked like to be an American citizen and live in America and have that kind of authority in my government.” She continued, “I didn’t realize the whole potential of what that meant until I found out about the executive order and it popped into my head that ‘Oh, I could have advocated against that. I have that authority to bring this issue that’s really important to



President Mullen, Colleen Shannon, and Becca Firstbrook practiced faithful political advocacy in Washington DC during the National Association of Evangelicals’ Student Leadership Conference.

me and bring it to the greater puzzle that is politics’.” Shannon noticed the same, and stated she is looking forward now to “encouraging others that you can make a difference, even though you are just one you are one person you are a person that matters,

especially when you are talking about something that matters to you.” As she reflected on the impact of her participation in the conference, Firstbrook noted in whatever work she finds as an international cultures major, “It’s equally important to work

in the policy realm” as it is to have a “boots on the ground” approach. She explained, “I think policy is something important for people to think about, no matter their major. I think if you have the opportunity to learn more about the system to take it.” ★



# Film Review: Shyamalan’s *Split*

JAKIN RINTELMAN

It is horrifying how much of our growth is the product of pain. Even more terrifying is the fact that an M. Night Shyamalan movie in 2017 was something that made me dwell deeply on the subtle ways that my experiences have shaped my personality and being. It’s important that you understand how viscerally this offends me, in order to understand the significance of any praise this movie deserves. The director of *Lady in the Water*, *The Last Airbender*, and *After Earth*, shouldn’t be able to convince a child to sympathize with a bunny dying of rabbit cancer in her mother’s fluffy, tear-soaked arms. And yet, I find myself uttering the impossible, with *Split*, Shyamalan has made another great film.

*Split* follows Casey (Anya Taylor-Joy), an unexpectedly capable teenage heroine. She doesn’t have friends, she sulks in corners while the cool kids celebrate their sweet 16’s. Casey is the kind of person you want to have around when a deranged man (specifically James McAvoy) kidnaps you and your ac-

quaintances and locks you all in a ten by ten cell deep underground. When this happens to Casey and her acquaintances, they learn that their abductor is afflicted with Dissociative Identity Disorder and that each one of his twenty three unique personalities has a different idea of what to do with them. This is when Casey learns what lengths she will go to in order to escape.

*Split* is the kind of movie that seethes and boils silently beneath your skin. It is equal parts innovative and quaint, restrained and madcap, sentimental and malevolent. There is a carefully teetering balance between schlock and drama that is always threatening to tip too far in one direction, but the moment of failure never comes. It serves as a testament to the values of careful direction and fine-tuned performances that this story manages to take such overused elements of modern horror and allow them to ferment, creating an atmosphere of distrust that lingers long after the screen goes dark. The cinematography enhances this even more, knowing how to hide pertinent visual information until the sheer frustration of the viewer seems to telekinetically influence the camera to move. This film is secure in its tone and its content in a re-

ally encouraging, and honestly invigorating, way. It’s not always masterful, but *Split* never lets the tension droop. Every scene is just efficient enough to move you onto the next before things get too uncomfortable, and not too soon to be accused of backing down from its subject matter.

James McAvoy is the primary reason *Split* works at all, and deserves all the praise he is being adorned with by pundits. There is an inherent challenge in taking on a role that requires one to inhabit what are essentially twenty three different people, each with their distinct sets of mental, physical, and spiritual characteristics. It is an even greater challenge still, to do so deftly. Somehow, he manages to do so. He’s so good in fact, that you when you see him contort his body and mind between many personalities in a single scene, you can catch of glimpse of someone deeply in love with their craft.

With *Split*, Shyamalan manages to take a premise that’s campy, unempathetic, voyeuristic, shoved into the Osh Kosh overalls of modern filmmaking that is the PG-13 horror/thriller, and mold it into something with surprising thematic coherence. It’s incredibly refreshing to watch a film in this muddled genre actually



The 2017 movie, *Split*, was directed by M. Night Shyamalan. The film follows teen, Casey (Anya Taylor-Joy), after she's abducted by a man with Dissociative Identity Disorder (James McAvoy).

have something important to say about human psychology, interaction, and trauma. If you were wondering why I haven't mentioned the trademark Shyamalan twist yet, I'll just say that if you've kept up with his filmography, you're in for a treat. It's nice to have you back M. Night. ★



Photo  
of the  
Week  
*Best of Break*

Andrew Myers '18



# Bearing Witness At The March for Life



GABRIELLE KETTINGER

Students Elizabeth Clark and Gabrielle Kettinger travelled to Washington, D.C. on January 27 to attend the annual March for Life. The March featured speakers like Vice President, Mike Pence, and Bishop Vincent Matthews.

CARINA MARTIN

On January 27 two Houghton students, Elizabeth Clark '18 and Gabrielle Kettinger '19, followed their interest in pro-life activism to the movement's most iconic gathering:

the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. According to the March's official website, the March first took place in January of 1974, and has continued as a peaceful demonstration to encourage lawmakers to end abortion. Before the march, Clark and Kettinger attended a rally that featured speakers like

Vice President, Mike Pence, and Bishop Vincent Matthews. Particularly moving to both Clark and Kettinger was the testimony of Ludmya "Mia" Love, a U.S. Representative from Utah and the first female black Republican in Congress, whose immigrant parents elected not to have an abortion. "Never would they

have thought that their daughter who they decided to have would be standing in front of all these people," Clark said.

Neither student considers herself an activist. Clark shared with a laugh that this was her "first time doing anything like this," but both are passionate about deepening their understanding. Both women left the march with a newfound dedication to advocacy and conviction about the power of public demonstration, due in part to the event's explicitly activist tone. "They said that we would be the pro-life generation," reminisced Kettinger. "The generation that would end abortion."

"Half of it is about being a witness," Clark shared the experience. "We the people care about this issue and want to see it change. But it's also very educational and reaffirming. It's very popular, especially among people my age, to see only the grey areas and not think of anything as concrete. Reaffirming my belief that certain things are not okay was definitely very good for me."

Though media attention sometimes profiled the March for Life in opposition to the Women's March that had previously taken to the same streets, both Clark and Kettinger were adamant about the "women-focused" attitude they had seen in the crowd. "A lot of the women who were

marching had had abortions," Clark said. "It's not coming from a place of ignorance. They know exactly how this system works. It's a side of this issue that is ignored, that it can be very damaging to have an abortion."

Smiling, Kettinger recalled walking down the street and seeing groups of monks or nuns march past. In keeping with the religious tone of the event, Cardinal Timothy Dolan's address drew parallels between the Christian church and the "sanctuary of the womb" while also urging listeners to care for the environment and embrace refugees.

Dolan's comprehensive ideology and doctrine of tolerance was reflected in the crowd. "They didn't even want to call it a protest," Kettinger said. "It was such a joyful, loving celebration of life." Clark agreed, adding that there was "no violence, no yelling, just seeing the beautiful things in life and trying to protect life." Both women were also heartened by the event's broad definition of "life," which embraced discussions of domestic violence, care for the elderly, and the Black Lives Matter movement. "It's not just anti-abortion," Clark said. "It's about having an abundant, fulfilling life."★

# Laura White: Alumna and Author

RACHEL BELLEROSE

"It all started with a Hiccup. Hiccup and Toothless, actually," said Alumna Laura White '13 of her recently published fantasy novel. White, who writes under penname Elle Katherine White, began working on her book *Heartstone* as a student, after an evening of trying to divide her attention between reading *Pride and Prejudice* and watching the film *How to Train Your Dragon*. She stated, "Halfway through the movie I had the sudden image of Mr. Darcy riding a dragon and all I could think was 'This story HAS to exist.'" The fact that her story has gone on to be published is no small feat. From the time of its conception to its publication in January, the book has been four years in the making and has gone through multiple rewrites. White stated she had "Lots and lots of rejection...we went through several rounds of editing with *Heartstone* before going on

submission to a list of editors my agent thought would be interested. After that, it was . . . more rejection. Luckily there was one yes in that sea of no's, and that's how we landed with HarperVoyager. White visited her alma mater in October, both to promote her book and to encourage aspiring writers that publication is possible. She held a lecture and visited classes, speaking powerfully about the writing life and the need for diligent work while maintaining a gracious attitude. Professor of English, Stephen Woolsey, who taught one of White's classes at Houghton, stated, "She has a real calling or concern for the students here, wanting them to value their own gifts...calling them to a kind of courage in exploring those gifts and making the most of them." Students who attended White's talks certainly felt the passion that White has for writing and encouraging young artists in their craft. Sophia Ross, who attended the lectures, stated, "Laura had a lot of practical advice for us at each of her events. She

obviously works incredibly hard to balance her work life with her writing life. She's proof that being published by a big house isn't impossible, and I can't wait to see what she does next." HarperVoyager, White's publisher, is a branch of HarperCollins, and is the second largest consumer book publisher in the world. Not bad at all, for a Houghton grad. White stressed how important a writing community has been for her during the creative process, and recommended a similar path to aspiring authors. "Network with fellow writers at all stages in the career path," she said. "Writing is often a lonely endeavor, and you need a strong community to keep you sane." White also emphasized the importance of treating writing as a serious occupation. She worked as a marketing manager while writing her novel, but considered her writing to be the equivalent of another full-time job. She stated, "If you treat it seriously, other people will too; if you treat it like a casual hobby, so will the rest of the world."★



FACEBOOK.COM

Alumna, Laura White '13, began writing her book *Heartstone* as a student. The initial idea for the book formed after an evening of trying to divide her attention between *Pride and Prejudice* and the movie *How to Train Your Dragon*.



# The Problem With Political Memes



ANTHONY BURDO

MICAH CRONIN

I am a conscious human being with a decent sense of humor and consistent access to wifi, which is to say I love memes. Especially Gordon Ramsay memes. (And Harambe memes, Kanye memes, and my current favorite: CASH ME OUTSIDE, HOWBOW DAH). Memes are great because they are simple, condensed expressions of often complex cultural humor and even cultural critique, and social media platforms allow virtually anyone to participate in this new form of entertainment. At their

best, memes are funny, they're ironic, they're egalitarian, they're Micah-approved.

Any negative opinion I have about memes, then, is directed at those that are not true to what memes ought to be. There are, in my view, certain kinds of memes which are in fact destructive to our relationships, communication, discernment, and intelligence.

The memes I have in mind are those which serve as news for many individuals. These usually are of some sort of political persuasion, be it Libertarian, Green Party, Democrat, Republican, or anything in between.

For example, on the same day of the Women's March on Washington I came upon a meme with the text "Claim Trump will destroy the country, [while they] actually destroy the country." The photo showed a group of young African American people sitting on top of a car, with fire, protesters, rioters, and police officers surrounding them at a Ferguson, Missouri protest in 2014. (I know this because I did a Google search on the image).

There are several problems here: the first, of course, is the blatant misinformation the meme spread by insinuating that the protests happening across the world that day were anything like the (arguably justified) unrest in

Ferguson. The second is the not-so-subtle racism embedded in the picture and text combination. There's a reason the creator of the meme used a photo of black protesters allegedly "destroying the country" rather than a photo of white people rioting. Which groups voted for Mr. Trump in droves, and which groups took to the streets following his election (and how)?

The third problem with this meme is that it uses the same method of humorous memes on news, which inevitably corrupts the truth. There is no way that the textual claim of the meme will actually communicate what those who are resisting Mr. Trump's administration are claiming about themselves, nor does it communicate what those loyal to Mr. Trump see as "destroying the country." Perhaps it is the opposite of "Make America great again?" We cannot know for sure if we are using memes as our guide.

It isn't only those in Mr. Trump's camp who do this. Many of my progressive/Democrat friends have shared a meme that by social media standards is pretty ancient, though it still pops up often in my news feed. The text, laid over a picture of Dwight Schrute from *The Office*, reads "You think being anti-abortion makes you pro-life? False. You

are simply pro-birth with no regard for the quality of life."

I suppose I agree with the very core of the sentiment, that one cannot be truly "pro life" without supporting political candidates and measures which would protect the sanctity of life after birth too. Yet I have to admit that this is what I am bringing to the meme: my own reasoned, nuanced idea which I've had years to ponder over. Is that kind of reflection what this meme is encouraging, though? I think not. In fact, I think this meme would have me lump all those who oppose abortion into a single group. It would have me ignore pro-life feminists and Democrats. It would have me lump those who wish to restrict abortion together with those who wish to restrict SNAP and Social Security disability benefits. It would have me uncritically assume that those who are anti-abortion/pro-life don't blink an eye at poor kids and struggling single moms.

There may be a connection to voting for anti-abortion/pro-life candidates and supporting other conservative political agendas, but that is something one learns from sustained attention to reputable news sources, not simplistic memes.

I admit, the problems I've noted with each of these specific memes are symptomatic of the

real issue. What makes the trend of political newsmemes so alarming is that so many uncritically absorb them with stunning ease. Perhaps this is because we have been trained to see photographs as solid proof of evidence; if we've got a photo, we don't need research. Perhaps we feel too stressed and busy to commit to being politically aware and active, so we share concise memes instead. The reasons are understandable, but they don't erase the fact that newsmemes do not and will never live up to the standard of reliable journalism. It seems to me that the most useful thing they're good for is sorting how your Facebook friends voted.

If you want real, quality news, stop believing memes. Stop reading fake news from Daily Dot, Daily Buzz, BuzzFeed, Huffington Post, Fox News, Mic.com, The Blaze, and Charisma News. Instead, close out your Facebook app and read the New York Times, The Washington Post, BBC, and Politico.com, all of which have apps for your phone and tablet. ★

*Micah is a senior theology major.*

# Why I March For Refugees



ANTHONY BURDO

DANIEL BELLEROSE

In a small cafe in Western New York I overheard a conversation that exemplified why I care about immigration issues. Three men sat in the early hours of the morning drinking coffee together, as they do every weekend: two locals, and one Asian-American man.

Together they laughed, discussed Trump's election, and their excitement over his recent decisions regarding immigration. "Trump's gonna make America great again!" one man exclaimed, as they chuckled together. But then

he paused, and turned to his Asian-American friend, "Are you gonna be okay? You know, with all this immigration stuff?" He was in support of large-scale immigration reforms, but when it came to his friend? He was worried. He cared because he had a relationship, and while it might not have changed his personal opinion, it certainly affected me.

His Asian-American friend is safe from the immigration reforms suggested by the Trump administration, but many refugees from around the world are not. Immigration from seven countries (Iraq, Iran, Syria, Somalia, Sudan, Libya, and Yemen) have been severely restricted for the next 120 days, giving the administration time to create a stricter vetting program for immigrants from those countries, with a ban on Syrian refugees indefinitely. The decision was made in response to the threat from Fundamentalist Islamic Terrorist groups like ISIL, which operate in majority-Muslim countries.

Starting the week after the executive order, I have been and will continue to protest this decision. From a purely humanitarian perspective, banning refugees from Syria

indefinitely is a travesty of justice. As 11 million refugees fled from life-threatening conflict, they found themselves on foreign shores seeking asylum. It then became the responsibility of the free nations of the world to aid them.

With the introduction of the executive order, I believe it also became my responsibility to protest the ban. To march for the thousands of people whose lives

will be turned upside down, and may never recover. I march to show solidarity to these people. Every march I have attended thus far has had refugees from the countries on the list in attendance as well. They spoke passionately, thanked us for joining them in protest, and mourned with us over the decision. This form of mass solidarity is powerful, and many people who came up to speak left the stage with tears in their eyes, emotional at the display of camaraderie. It helped me to understand those truly being affected by the ban, not militant warriors, but women and

children, students and parents, simply trying to find a place to live.

According to Quartz, as of 2016, the US accepted 14,333 refugees from Syria. Due to the nature of this already long and difficult process, that number wasn't likely to rise quickly. With the recent executive order, this number will likely shrink, as green cards and asylums are revoked, and Syrian refugees are detained and put on planes out of the United States.

But if the decision would really protect American citizens from terrorist attacks, I would at least consider supporting it. The statistics surrounding Syrian refugees (and, in fact, refugees from all seven countries) however, do not support this. As of right now, there have been zero Americans killed by terrorists from any of the countries listed on the temporary ban, with most attacks on American citizens coming from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, and Lebanon, none of which have been included in the ban.

Despite all this, refugees from Syria have been labelled as dangerous, and are being turned

away from seeking asylum in the United States. The decision has been made regardless of the fact that most refugees from Syria are women and children, who would otherwise be resigned to live difficult lives in refugee camps, with limited resources and opportunities for their families.

So why do I march for refugees? I march because I believe that the United States has a responsibility to the suffering people of Syria, and to other countries being most affected by the refugee crisis. I believe that everyone has a right to safety, and to a legitimate process for seeking asylum in what has sometimes been the immigrant capital of the world. Most of all, I march because I understand that the refugee crisis is a human one, and that immigrants - like the gentleman in the cafe - can join the American community, form relationships and add to the beauty of our country. I march because refugees make America great.★

*Daniel is a senior international development major with minors in world religions and political science.*



# What Do We Do With Politics?



NATE MOORE

ANNA SCHILKE

“So was there, like, a huge breakdown at your college after the election?” Of all the potential questions I was prepared to answer about the election, this was never one I considered. Who I voted for, yes. Why I voted for them, yes. If my college was a sobbing, quivering mess on November 9? Not so much. Yet it’s a question I find myself having to answer. To grandparents. To aunt and uncles. To family friends. To the sweet gentlemen who administered my road test

on Wednesday, as I was trying to parallel park. (I passed, in case you were wondering.)

My gripe with the question, besides my own inability to answer it, is that I think it’s the wrong question. Please don’t misunderstand; I’m not trying to minimize the legitimate reactions of celebration and grief felt by Americans after the election. Those reactions were important, but as we move farther and farther away from the election, our immediate responses to Donald Trump’s victory can’t continue to take precedence. Of greater concern to me right now are the policies he’s announced since his victory, the splinter in our country, and the splinter in the church.

The last is particularly upsetting. No matter our political origins, I would like to think people of a loving and kind God could manage to show that same love and kindness, if not to the world around them, at least to each other. As a first time voter I can only hope the hatred and venom that parts of the church displayed during this election are not typical. Ultimately it is this behavior that I find concerning, far more than either Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton. The sorts of questions I want to be asked are “did you listen

to people who disagreed with you?” “Did you treat them with kindness?” It no longer matters who cried when and where. I want to know how our splintered churches are going to be made whole again.

My conclusion thus far: we need to look to what holds us together. Democrats or Republicans, we can agree in a common love for humanity. We can agree that God has given us stewardship of this earth and we need to take that responsibility seriously. We can agree that it is our responsibility to stand with and for the vulnerable. Proverbs 31: 8-9 states “speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.” On these tenants, we can find common ground.

What, then, do we do with politics? This presidential election vividly displayed that common principles do not always result in a unified decision. So do we abandon the political arena altogether? I don’t think that’s the answer. The problem with presidential elections is that they fool us into thinking that they’re the pinnacle of political engagement. They’re not. They’re a piece of a much bigger

system that affords its citizens all sorts of opportunities to stand up for their beliefs and put them into practice. The more we take our principles and use them to engage with post-election politics, the more we switch our focus from the things that divide us to the things that unite us.

These opportunities are not trite or irrelevant, especially on the lower levels of government. From a purely statistical standpoint, an individual has a much greater chance of changing decisions on a state or local level than on the federal level. It takes fifty percent of America to elect a president, but according to congressional staffers, it takes as few as fifteen Americans to sway a congressman’s vote. Fifteen! It’s as easy as a phone call or an email. Five minutes out of a day to talk to a staffer or type a message. Five minutes! Houghton College, surely we can handle five minutes.

Even more, we can do it together. Every Thursday, a group of students run the “Do Something Table” by the steps of the cafeteria during lunch. Their end goal: convince Tom Reed, the Congressional Representative of Houghton’s district to visit and in the meantime, sway his voting. Each week they prepare scripts for phone conversations and

information about legislation that they feel needs to be opposed or supported. They alternate between advocating for the vulnerable with better immigration reform, and for the earth by supporting wise environmental policy. And they do it with one another, standing in unity instead of division.

As of November 8, I was deeply concerned about the presidential election. I voted. I discussed. I ranted and I researched. I watched a debate. But after November 9, my priorities changed. I’ve stopped worrying over who holds office. My interest now lies in how I can be an agent for change in this world. My interest now lies in how I can be part of the healing of the nation and involved in protecting the things I’m called to protect. What I offer you here is one solution. There are others. But if you, like me, are done with questions about crying and are ready to do something, it is one you might want to consider. ★

*Anna is a sophomore writing major with minors in Spanish and piano.*



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

## Letter to the editor:

To the Editor:

Having been a member of CAB for the past three years, I would like to defend the false comments made about the New York City Bus Trip in the February 3 edition of the star in the Mystery Bus Trip article.

The article stated, “The event [Mystery Bus Trip], which cost \$30, was hosted by CAB in lieu of the New York City bus trip, according to CAB. The

NYC trip, which has sold out in the past, failed to garner enough student interest, leading to its cancellation last semester.”

Besides the trip being \$30, nothing in that paragraph is true and CAB did not state those facts.

To clarify, the New York City Bus trip is far from lacking student interest. A 55 to 65-passenger bus has sold out and had an extensive waiting list for the past several years. Additionally, this was the 2nd annual Mystery Bus Trip and

it did not replace the NYC trip by any means. In fact, both trips occurred last year.

For those wondering, the NYC Bus Trip regrettably had to be cancelled this Fall semester because all the local bus companies had no available buses on the day the trip was scheduled.

We attempted to move the date of the trip, but with such a busy college calendar, that was not possible.

CAB strives to put on one large event every month and the NYC trip was our big event for November. To replace that gap in our schedule, we planned the Sky Zone trip that occurred on November 19, the same day the NYC trip would have occurred.

With the Sky Zone trip, we were not replacing the NYC trip, rather we chose to plan a separate event to make sure students had an opportunity to get off campus and enjoy a fun event during that

month.

We look forward to hosting the NYC Bus Trip next Fall and plan to book the bus even earlier than we usually would, to make sure one is available.

Kasey Cannister (CAB Member)

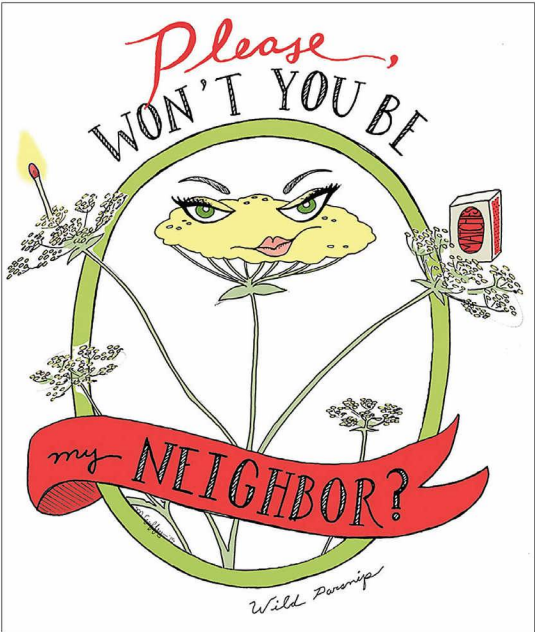
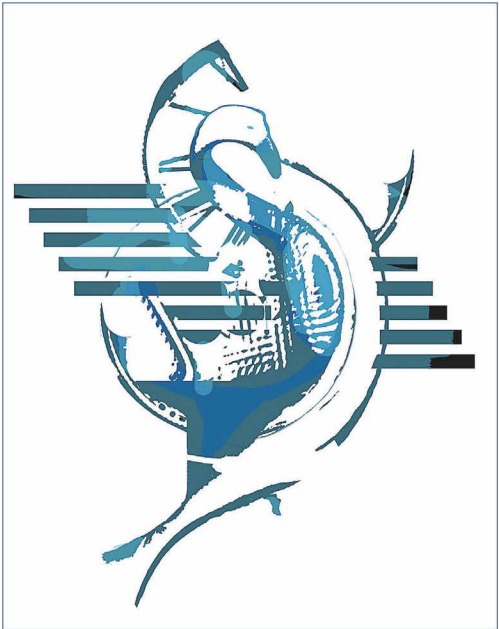


# Artist of the Week

Meredith Guffey  
//applied design & visual communication major



MICHAEL SIEVERS



“ In speaking of this desire for our own far off country...I feel a certain shyness...[It is] the secret we cannot hide and cannot tell, though we desire to do both. ”  
- C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

## Titles & Media

clockwise descending

Caffeine Phoenix, *digital drawing & collage*

Wild Parsnip invasive weed caricature, *mixed media*

Brussel Sprouts, *digital illustration over creative commons photograph*

Density, *digital drawing & collage*

Houghton Jazz Poster, *digital media*

